

State of Human Rights in 2013



Human Rights Commission of Pakistan



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Sources

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Aiwan-i-Jamhoo, 107-Tipu Block, New Garden Town, Lahore-54600
Tel: +92-42-35864994 **Fax:** +92-42-35883582
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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank	CIA	Criminal Investigation Agency
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir	CII	Council of Islamic Ideology
ANP	Awami National Party	CJ	Chief Justice
ASI	Assistant Sub-Inspector [of Police]	COAS	Chief of Army Staff
ASJ	Additional Sessions Judge	CNIC	Computerized National Identity Card
ATA	Anti-Terrorism Act	CrPC	Criminal Procedure Code
ATC	Anti-Terrorism Court	CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
BHC	Balochistan High Court	DCO	District Coordination Officer
BHU	Basic Health Unit	DIG	Deputy Inspector General [of Police / Prisons]
CDA	Capital Development Authority	DPO	District Police Officer
CEC	Chief Election Commissioner	DSJ	District and Sessions Judge
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women		

DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police		the Conservation of Nature
ECL	Exit Control List	JI	Jamaat-e-Islami
EIA	Environment Impact Assessment	JJSO	Juvenile Justice Systems Ordinance
EPA	Environment Protection Agency	JUI (F)	Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlur Rahman Group)
EPI	Expanded Programme for Immunization	LHC	Lahore High Court
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas	LHV	Lady Health Visitor
FCR	Frontier Crimes Regulation	MNA	Member of the National Assembly
FIA	Federal Investigation Agency	MPA	Member of the Provincial Assembly
FIR	First Information Report	MQM	Muttahida (formerly Mohajir) Qaumi Movement
HEC	Higher Education Commission	MSF	Muslim Students Federation
HRCP	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan	NA	National Assembly
ICCPR	International Covenant for Civil & Political Rights	NAB	National Accountability Bureau
ICESCR	International Covenant for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights	NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
IDMC	Internal Displacement Management Centre	NEQS	National Environment Quality Standards
IG	Inspector General [of Police]	NGO	Non-government organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund	NIC	National Identity Card
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence	NIRC	National Industrial Relations Commission
ISPR	Inter-Services Public Relations	NSC	National Security Council
IUCN	International Union for	PAEC	Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission
		PATA	Provincially Administered Tribal Areas
		PFUJ	Pakistan Federal Union

	of Journalists	SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
PHC	Peshawar High Court	TB	Tuberculosis
PkMAP	Pakhtun Khawa Milli Awami Party	TJP	Tehrik Jafria, Pakistan
PMA	Pakistan Medical Association	TNSM	Tehrik Nifaz-e-Shariah Mohammadi
PML(N)	Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz group). PML-Q is Pakistan Muslim League, Quaid-e-Azam.	UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
PONM	Pakistan Oppressed Nations Movement.	UNDCP	United Nations Drug Control Programme
PPC	Pakistan Penal Code	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
PPP	Pakistan People's Party	UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
PPPP	Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians	UNHCHR	Universal Nations High Commission for Human Rights
PS	Police Station	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
PTI	Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
RHC	Rural Health Centre	WAPDA	Water and Power Development Authority
SC	Supreme Court	WASA	Water and Sewerage Authority
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation	WB	World Bank
SCARP	Salinity Control and Reclamation Project	WHO	World Health Organization
SCBA	Supreme Court Bar Association	WTO	World Trade Organization
SHC	Sindh High Court	WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature
SHO	Station House Officer		
SI	Sub-Inspector [of Police]		
SITE	Sindh Industrial Trading Estate		
SMP	Sipah Mohammad Pakistan		
SP	Superintendent of Police		

Glossary

[Terms commonly used in discourse on rights and laws]

Abadi: Settlement. Katchi abadi refers to temporary settlement of squatters

Asnad: Certificates awarded by educational institutions. Singular ‘*sanad*’

Amir: Literally, leader. Frequently used to refer to leaders of Muslim groups

Assalam-o-Alaikum: “May peace be upon you.” Muslim greeting

Atta: Flour made from ground wheat.

Azaan: The Muslim call to prayers

Azad: Free

Baitul Mal: Originally the state treasury in an Islamic state. In Pakistan the institution has been set up mainly for disbursement of zakat

Baitul Zikr: House of prayers and pious exchange. The term Ahmedis now use in place of ‘*masjid*’ or mosque, which was prohibited to them after they were declared non-Muslim

Basant: Spring kite-flying festival

Begar: Forced labour

Bhatta: Allowance. Now euphemistically used for amounts regularly extorted from industrialists, traders, professionals and other citizens by petty functionaries, militant groups or criminal gangs

Bheel: One of the castes into which pre-independence India’s Hindu society

divided its people. Bheel is among the 'lowest' and poorest in the hierarchy and mostly comprises farm labourers

Burqa: An outermost garment to shroud the whole female body

Chadar and chardivari: Literally, sheet of cloth and four walls. Associated with women the phrase signifies that a woman's place of honour is inside the four walls of home; and, if she must go out, she has to be wrapped from head to foot in a sort of winding sheet

Chak: Tiny rural settlement in the Punjab, usually designated just by number and a letter of the alphabet

Challan: The police's prosecution brief or charge-sheet. There are two categories of this: the first is based on a preliminary (first information) report, and the next, which is more formalised, follows from early investigations

Chapati: Bread made from wheat flour. A staple food item in many parts of Pakistan.

Chaudhry: Now also a common surname in Punjab, in its original sense it describes the head of a village's foremost landed family

Cheera: From the word meaning 'tearing up' it is a common method of third degree torture in which the victim's legs are spread out to the maximum and kept immobilised in that position. The agony quickly makes the man 'admit' in most cases whatever he is asked to confess by the police

Deeni madrassah or madrassah [Plural in Urdu Madaris]: Literally, a religious school. At present many of the institutions are run for sectarian and fundamentalist ends.

Deh: Small village

Dera: Extended residential site of an influential figure in a village or other area

Diyat: The blood money in return for which the next of kin of a murdered man may agree to forgive the killer. It is also monetary compensation for any lesser physical injury caused

Ehtisab: Accountability

Eidul Fitr: Festive occasion which marks the end of the Muslim month of fasting, Ramazan

Fatwa: Religious edict

Fiqah: Muslim jurisprudence

Gaddi-nashin: Occupier of the usually hereditary seat of custodianship of a shrine

Gherao: A number of persons' laying siege to someone superior to pressure him to listen, and hopefully to yield, to their demands. Literally, to surround

Hadd: Plural hudood: Islamic punishment

Hari: Sindhi peasant, tenant or farm labourer

Hujra: Retiring room of an Imam or any religious person or outhouse

Iddat: The period a Muslim woman is required to spend in relative seclusion after divorce or death of her husband

Iftar: The fare for breaking fast

Ijtihad: Research and reinterpretation of Islamic intent in relation to specific issues.

Ijtima: Congregation

Imam: Prayer leader

Imambargah: Shias' place of holy congregation

Isha: The Muslim prayer due after nightfall

Jirga: A gathering of elders, which especially in tribal societies settles disputes, decides criminal cases etc

Kalima: Quranic formulation of a basic Islamic tenet

Karo kari: A traditional, feudal custom which still continues whereby couples found in, or more often merely suspected of, adulterous relationship are summarily done to death by the family members themselves. The law takes a lenient view of this "crime of honour", which often leads it to be abused

Katchi Abadi: Settlement of homes, many made of unbaked bricks or timber and cloth, which have cropped up across the country.

Khan: A term frequently used to refer to an influential feudal in the area. Khan is also a common surname

Khateeb: Person who delivers religious sermons before prayers

Khidmat committees: Service bodies, comprising government nominees, required to check failures of public institutions and officials

Khula: Divorce in which the move for the dissolution of marriage comes from the wife's side. The procedure for this is different from talaq, the divorce pronounced by the husband.

Kutchery: Court. The kutchery of recent currency is the audience given by ministers or officials for receiving public complaints

Maghreb: Time at sunset. Also the Muslim prayer due then

Malik: A tribal chief. Other variants are Sardar and Khan

Marla: 25 sq yds or 21 sq metres. 20 marlas make a kanal

Masjid: Mosque

Mehfil: Gathering

Mehr: The money the groom pledges to the bride at the time of the wedding as a token of his earnestness

Moharrir: Police station clerk who records complaints and crime reports.

Mullah: Formerly an appellation for an Islamic scholar, now it often refers pejoratively to a semi-literate fanatical campaigner and pronouncer of the orthodox Islamic view in the community. Closer to its original sense are maulana, moulvi and alim (for religious scholar, plural ulema)

Muharrum: Muslim month of mourning, most devoutly marked by Shias

Naib Qasid: Peon

Najis: Something religiously regarded as impure, impermissible

Napaid bazo: Family's decision to wed one off ahead of birth

Nazim: Mayor -

Naib Nazim: Deputy Mayor

Nikah: Nuptials

Nikahkhwan: The officially appointed moulvi, a religious person, who solemnizes marriages

Nikahnama: The document making note of a marriage contract with various clauses listed under it to determine the agreement reached at the time of the marriage with respect to dowry, mehr and other matters.

Panchayat: A gathering of elders

Patharidar: The village feudal who quietly patronises and provides protection to criminal gangs or individuals while using them to tame his enemies and help in maintenance of his hold over the commonalty and his status among his peers. Some also have a cut in the dacoits' booty

Peshgi: Advance payment against labour

Pir: A religious figure who often, because he is believed to be spiritually close to some venerable saint of the past, acquires a wide following of his own. The devotees of a *pir* look up to him as a spiritual, and even a physical, healer, guide and source of salvation

Pucca: Literally solid. Generally refers to houses made of baked brick etc.

Purdah: Veil

Qabza: Forceful seizure and occupation

Qatl: Murder;

Qatl-i-amd: Premeditated murder

Qazf: False imputation of immorality against a woman

Qazi: A judge of an Islamic court; in Islamic tradition the man entrusted to mete out justice.

Qisas: Punishment identical to the crime: eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth

Ramazan: The Muslim month of fasting

Roti: Bread made from wheat-flour, traditionally accompanying meals

Sang chatti: Sindhi term – Same as *swara*

Swara: Gift of a girl in marriage in settlement of a tribal dispute

Shalwar: Loose pants tied at the waist with a cord. Shalwar kameez, a loose trouser worn with a long shirt, or kameez, is a common form of dress for both men and women

Tandoor: Open oven used to bake bread

Tazia: Replica of Imam Hussain mausoleum in Moharram procession

Tonga: Horse drawn carriage used as transport

Ulema: Persons learned in Islam and Islamic practice

Ushr: Islamic land tax

Vani: Tradition according to which women are surrendered for compounding a murder case. The same tradition is known as ‘*swara*’ in the NWFP

Wadera: Feudal lord, with all the connotations of (a) his repressive character in relation to the body of peasantry and community who live on and off the lands he owns, and (b) his influence with the local official functionaries and their superiors. Allied and more neutral terms are zamindar, the man who owns large tracts of agricultural land, and jagirdar, the person who has inherited extensive lands.

Watta Satta: The kind of parentally arranged marriage in which a brother and sister of one family are married to the siblings of another.

Zakat: A tithe Islam imposes on every Muslim as a fixed proportion of his/her income and wealth and meant as a contribution to help the poor and the needy

Zakir: Religious preacher who mostly recounts events of the Islamic past, usually now in Moharram at the annual commemoration of Imam Husain’s sacrifice at Karbala

Ziarat: Devout travel to and from prayers at the holiest shrines. A special Shia observance

Zina: Adultery. Rape is zina-bil-jabr

Introduction

Highlights

■ Law and law-making

- „ Parliament made around two dozen laws. Eight presidential ordinances were promulgated.
- „ Several security-specific laws were adopted. The president promulgated the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance.
- „ Important legislation took place in provinces. The highest number of laws was made by the provincial assembly of Sindh.
- „ All four provinces introduced laws for local government institutions but elections to local bodies were only held in Balochistan.
- „ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa became the first province to enact the right to information law. Punjab followed suit.

■ Administration of justice

- „ There was a heavy backlog of cases across all tiers of the judicial system. 20,000 cases were pending in the Supreme Court.
- „ The Supreme Court continued to use *suo motu* powers as legal experts highlighted lack of guidelines governing how the court took up and prioritised such matters.
- „ The National Judicial Policymaking Committee's call for increasing the number of judicial officers went largely unheeded.
- „ Security-specific laws aimed at countering terrorism raised

apprehension of denial of due process rights.

„ 68 citizens were booked under the penal law offences relating to religion.

■ Law and order

„ Over 14,000 murders were reported to the police. 694 people died in 45 suicide bombings

„ 357 police encounters were reported. 503 suspects were killed and 49 injured in the encounters. 50 policemen were killed and 99 injured.

„ 31 drone attacks killed 199 people.

„ 91 aid workers were attacked in Pakistan in 2013.

„ Hundreds of cases of kidnapping for ransom were reported.

„ 2,576 rape cases were reported from Punjab.

„ 3,218 people were killed in violence in Karachi, up 14% from 2012

„ Over 64,000 firearms, 561 grenades and 2.7 million bullets were seized. 72 million kilogrammes of explosives were confiscated in KP.

■ Jails and prisoners

„ More than 90 cases of enforced disappearance were reported. 129 mutilated bodies of suspected disappearance victims were also found.

„ At least 227 people were sentenced to death under different offences. Executions remained suspended.

„ 64% of the prisoners in severely overcrowded jails were under trial.

„ Hundreds of Pakistani and Indian fishermen and other civilians remained incarcerated in each other's jails.

■ Freedom of movement

„ Special provisions had to be made in Muharram for the safety of Shia mourners, including curbs on movement and banning entry of certain clerics in some cities.

„ Ethnic, sectarian and political violence in Karachi rendered many locations no-go-areas.

„ Pilgrim buses en route to Iran through Balochistan could only travel in convoys escorted by security forces because of threats of attacks.

„ Major highways in Balochistan connecting important cities

remained incomplete.

„ The substantial backlog of passports was finally cleared with over 450,000 passports issued in 2013.

■ Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

„ In the first few weeks of 2013, sectarian violence claimed the lives of over 200 Hazara Shias in Balochistan.

„ More than 200 sectarian attacks killed 687 people.

„ Seven Ahmadis lost their lives in targeted attacks.

„ In the deadliest attack ever against Pakistan's Christian citizens, over 100 people were killed in a Peshawar church.

„ A Muslim mob torched a predominantly Christian neighbourhood in Lahore after a Christian man was accused of blasphemy. 100 houses were burnt as residents fled.

„ Individuals charged with offences relating to religion included 17 Ahmadis, 13 Christians and nine Muslims

„ In Badin, dead bodies of two Hindus were dug up by mobs that claimed that the graveyards belonged to Muslims and only Muslims could be buried there.

■ Freedom of expression

„ 11 journalists were killed and many more injured while performing their duties in 2013.

„ Impunity continued for perpetrators of attacks on journalists.

„ Pakistan was on the 159th spot out of 179 countries in World Freedom Index.

„ Internet curbs grew. YouTube was not revived and other websites were blocked without prior intimation.

■ Freedom of assembly

„ Terror attacks remained a major threat to the freedom of assembly, targeting prayer congregations and funerals. Bombings killed hundreds of worshippers.

„ Restrictions like Section 144 curbs continued to be placed on public gatherings.

„ Many political, religious gatherings and protests against energy shortages turned violent. At least two people were killed, several more injured, and public and private property destroyed.

„ Police paid little heed to imaginative crowd management principles. Their response to any hint of disorder and violence was

often disproportionate to the provocation offered by the protesters.

■ Freedom of association

„ In the run-up to the elections, political leaders, offices and gatherings were attacked. ANP, MQM and PPP were the main parties targeted.

„ Workers affiliated with NGOs and aid organisations were attacked and many were killed, injured and abducted.

„ Laws targeting banned militant organizations were made but implementation remained wanting.

■ Political participation

„ An elected government completing its normal term marked a significant stage in Pakistan's search for a democratic polity.

„ The run-up to the polling day was marred by violence. People participated in the general election despite militants' threat to disrupt it. The turnout was a little over 55%.

„ The electoral rolls were found flawed and the authorities had to work overtime to meet the judiciary's directives and public concerns.

„ Women's share of seats in the country's legislatures fell to 19.5% in 2013, from 19.9 % in 2008. The number of women contesting general seats in 2013 was 218% higher than in 2008 (419 as against 192).

■ Women

„ 869 women were killed in the name of honour.

„ More than 800 women committed suicide in 2013.

„ Only 18.3% women had secondary or higher level of education and only 28% were formally counted in the workforce.

„ At least 56 women were killed solely for giving birth to a girl child.

„ There were only 560 women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's 60,000-strong police force. In Punjab, only 9 out of 146 SPs were women. Out of 474 DSPs in Punjab, only 35 were women.

„ Women's participation as voters and candidates grew in the 2013 election.

■ Children

„ 3 out of 10 primary-age children were not attending school.

The stunting rate among children younger than five had increased

from 41.6% to 43.7% in a decade. 800,000 children died in Pakistan each year, 35 per cent of these due to malnutrition.

„ 47,099 children were left out in the polio vaccination drive. The bulk of parents' refusal came from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (24,968)

„ 1,204 children became victims of physical violence in the first six months of 2013. 68% were girls.

„ Around 1,400 juveniles were in prisons.

„ 11 to 12 million child labourers were employed, half of them below the age of 10

■ Labour

„ Only 1.59 million workers, out of the 59 million labour force, had access to social security

„ The number of unemployed persons increased from 3.40 million in 2010-11 to 3.72 million in 2013.

„ 10 laborers died in accidents in the ship-breaking industry in one month alone.

„ An estimated 2 million Pakistanis were trapped in various forms of modern-day slavery.

■ Education

„ Pakistan allocated just under 2% of the GDP to education.

„ The country ranked 180th in terms of literacy rate among 221 countries in the world, behind China, India, Iran and Nepal.

„ Pakistan had almost 5.5 million children out of school, the second highest number in the world behind Nigeria. Pakistan also had the third highest number of illiterate adults in the world.

„ Average expected years of schooling in Pakistan were only 6.8.

„ A survey found 2,088 ghost schools, 1,008 schools under illegal occupation, and 5,827 non-functional schools in the country.

■ Health

„ Pakistan appeared certain to miss MDG targets on maternal health and infant mortality.

„ There was one doctor for every 1,127 people, one dentist per 14,406 people, one hospital bed for every 1,786 people.

„ 85 confirmed polio cases were reported across Pakistan, 60 of them from FATA alone. Pakistan was the only polio-endemic country to

report more polio cases in 2013 than 2012.

„ 20 polio vaccinators were killed in attacks on vaccination teams. Nine policemen protecting them were also killed.

„ More than 300 people were killed in the measles epidemic. Punjab was worst affected with 23,477 cases and 192 deaths.

„ Dengue claimed scores of lives across Pakistan. 16,000 patients were diagnosed with the disease. Swat district of KP was badly hit with 8,546 patients and 33 deaths.

■ Housing

„ Pakistan had a housing unit backlog of 9 million. Displacement amid armed conflict and natural disaster aggravated the situation.

„ 20,312 houses were destroyed in the floods.

„ 33% of people in Pakistan lived with no drainage system.

„ Slum dwellers in cities lived without most of the basic urban infrastructure.

„ Collapse of poorly constructed buildings caused hundreds of casualties

■ Environment

„ Despite grave environmental challenges, the issue was largely neglected in political party manifestos ahead of May 11 elections.

An international study counted Pakistan amongst the three countries most affected by extreme weather events. Another found Pakistan to be “one of the most water-stressed countries in the world”.

The 2013-14 budget allocated only Rs 59 million for Climate Change Division, compared with Rs 135 million in 2012-13.

Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar were among the top 10 most polluted cities in the world.

Fossil fuel-burning power plants, vehicular emission and fumes from industries remained the main air pollutants in the country. Dust and smoke particles in Pakistan were twice the global average.

Pakistan’s forest cover remained abysmally low. A brief policy change by the government in March led to movement of legal and illegal timber and felling of hundreds of thousands of trees.

Water-related diseases were the cause for 40% of all deaths in the country.

■ Refugees

„ Well over one million Pakistanis were displaced around the

country due to armed conflict and natural and man-made disasters.

„ Internal displacement occurred or continued in FATA, Khuzdar, Dera Bugti, Kohlu, Hunza-Nagar and parts of Karachi.

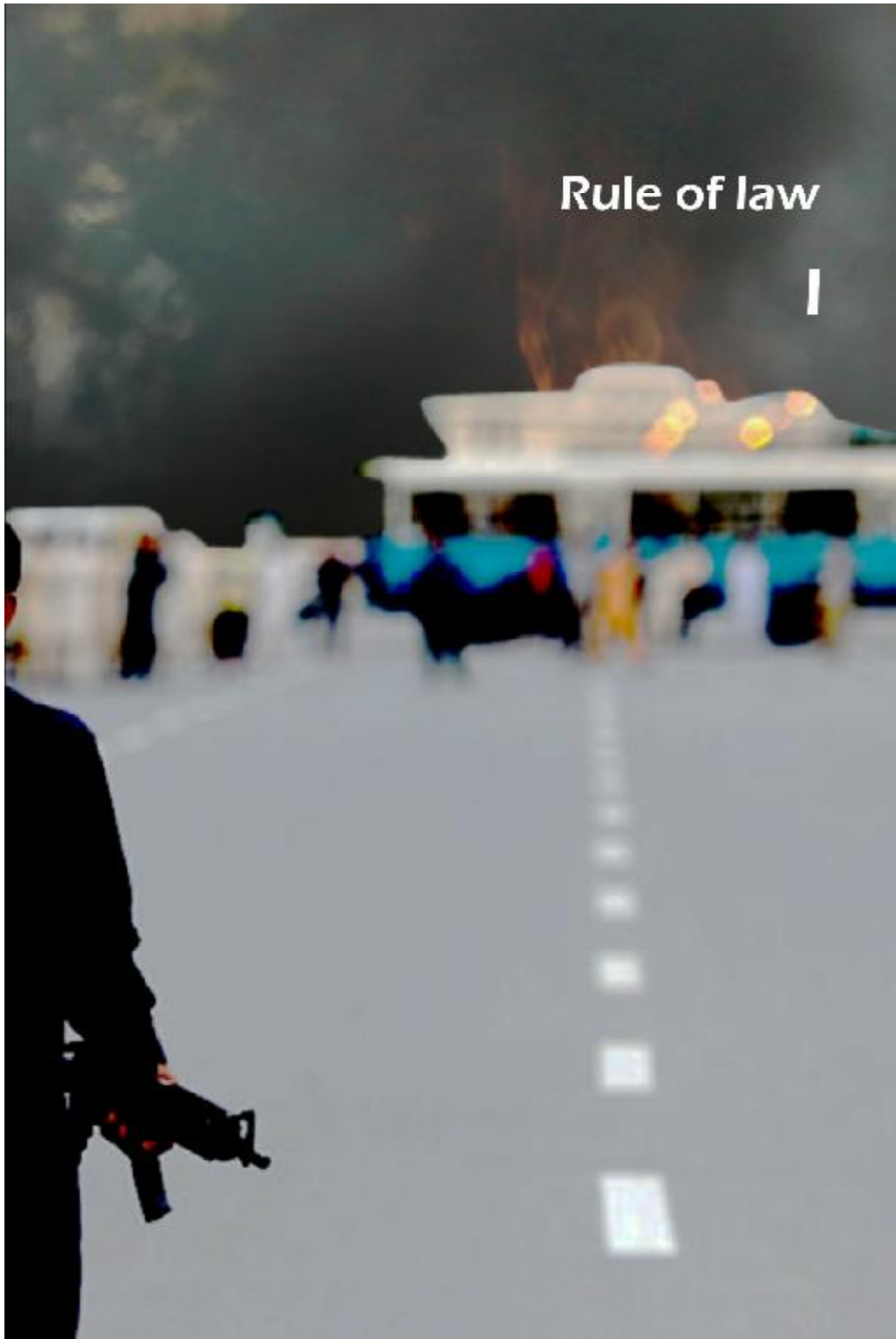
„ More than a quarter of a million Pakistanis remained stranded in Bangladesh in abysmal conditions.

„ 31,800 registered Afghans left for Afghanistan under the UNHCR voluntary repatriation programme. 1.6 million registered and an equal number of unregistered Afghans remained behind.

„ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa hosted nearly one million registered refugees; only 16,250 of these left for their country in 2013, the lowest in the last few years.

Rule of law

1



Laws and law-making

... fundamental rights, including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to the law and public morality, [shall be guaranteed] ... the independence of the judiciary shall be fully secured.

Constitution of Pakistan

Preamble

To enjoy the protection of law and to be treated in accordance with law is the inalienable right of every citizen, wherever he may be, and of every other person for the time being within Pakistan.

Article 4

Any law, or any custom or usage having the force of law, insofar as it is inconsistent with the rights conferred by this chapter [on Fundamental Rights] shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be void.

Article 8(1)

It is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or indirectly or through freely chosen representatives.

Article 21(1)

In 2013, parliament made around two dozen laws. With the country facing

grave challenges such as extensive terrorism and lawlessness, the focus on security-specific legislation was perhaps not unexpected. However, the discussion on these legislations often focused on national security, to the exclusion or at least neglect of constitutionally guaranteed human rights.

Important laws in this respect included two acts of parliament amending the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997. Both these acts were adopted within the same week in March. Also in March, an act of parliament was passed to establish the National Counter-Terrorism Authority.

The president promulgated several ordinances, mainly relating to security issues and the holding of general elections. In November, the president issued the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance. The provisions of this law attracted considerable criticism from civil society because of the impact on rights of the accused. The president also promulgated two ordinances on November 7 to amend Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

Most of the bills adopted at the federal level in 2013 had originated in the National Assembly and were referred to the Senate, the upper house of parliament, where they were passed.

Much improvement was possible in the quality of the legislative process, and at times in the level of interest of the lawmakers. Often drafts were not discussed at any great length or sufficient efforts were not made to create consensus and incorporate views emerging from the discussion on the draft.

The newly elected government was also faced with the important task of preparing a budget, which it passed in the form of the Finance Act in July.

The following laws were made during 2013:

Acts of parliament

- ◆ The Investigation for Fair Trial Act, 2013; February 20; for collection of evidence by means of modern techniques and devices to prevent and effectively deal with scheduled offences and to regulate the powers of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

- ◆ The Trade Organization Act, 2013; February 20; to provide for registration and regulation of trade organizations and to make sure that there is appropriate representation of all genders.

- ◆ The Trade Development Authority Act, 2013; February 22; to establish the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and to formulate an effective trade policy.

- ◆ The Pakistan Academy of Letters Act, 2013; February 22; to establish the Pakistan Academy of Letters to promote Pakistani language and letters and to ensure the welfare of writers.

- ◆ The Provincial Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2013; March 11; to

include internationally accepted hazardous and potentially dangerous violations in the list of declared traffic violations.

- ◆ The Pakistan Coinage (Amendment) Act, 2013; March 11; to eliminate decimal/old coins.

- ◆ The Dar-ul-Madina International University Islamabad Act, 2013; March 14; to establish a new university and remove hurdles in access to higher education.

- ◆ The South Asian Strategic Stability Institute University Islamabad Act, 2013; March 14; to establish a new university to contribute to the academic and policy-oriented research discourses about South Asian security and stability.

- ◆ The MY University Islamabad Act, 2013; March 14; to establish a new university to contribute to higher education learning in Pakistan by promoting innovation, research, training and learning in the fields of both social and natural sciences.

- ◆ The Maritime Security Agency (Amendment) Act, 2013; March 14; to establish Pakistan Maritime Security Agency as a law enforcement agency and a national government organization.

- ◆ The Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reforms Act, 2013; March 14; for expeditious disposal of complaints and to streamline the procedure for representation against the decisions of the ombudsperson.

- ◆ The Defence Housing Authority Islamabad Act, 2013; March 16; to establish the Defence Housing Authority, Islamabad.

- ◆ The Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2013; March 16; to regulate the registration and functioning of private educational institutions in the Islamabad Capital Territory.

- ◆ The Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2013; March 18; to curb growing menace of terrorism and attacks on armed forces, civil armed forces, law-enforcement agencies, civilian and government officers and installations and to punish those found involved with a view to creating adequate deterrence.

- ◆ The Anti-Terrorism (Second Amendment) Act, 2013; March 22; to strengthen certain provisions concerning the offences of terrorism financing and to provide more effective enforcement measures against such offences.

- ◆ The Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (PIMS) Islamabad, Act, 2013; March 20; to establish Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, Islamabad, and standardise medical education in general.

- ◆ The Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2013; March 20; to allow a candidate to file his nomination papers in person or through his proposer or seconder or through a duly authorised nominee.

- ◆ The National Counter-Terrorism Authority Act, 2013; March 22; to

establish National Counter-Terrorism Authority.

- ◆ The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Act, 2013; March 22; to remove difficulties experienced in protecting the enforcement and other related actions of the Commission and to ensure their continuity and effectiveness.

- ◆ The Global Change Impact Studies Centre Act, 2013; March 22; for establishing the Global Impact Studies Center to undertake scientific investigation to study the impact of climate change.

- ◆ The Abolition of the Discretionary Quotas in Housing Schemes Act, 2013; May 2; to abolish discretionary quotas in housing schemes in the public sector so that allotments are made in a fair, equitable and transparent way.

- ◆ The Finance Act, 2013; July 1; to give effect to the financial proposals of the federal government.

Ordinances promulgated by the president

- ◆ The PMDC Ordinance, 2013; February 14; to give the federal government power to appoint an administrator in charge of the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council.

- ◆ The Electoral Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013; May 9; to amend Representation of Peoples Act 1976 and Electoral Rolls Act, 1974.

- ◆ The Electoral Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013; May 9; to facilitate overseas Pakistanis in casting their vote from abroad.

- ◆ The Surveying and Mapping Ordinance, 2013; May 20; to regulate and implement surveying and mapping standards in the country and to enable the Survey of Pakistan to act as a national mapping organisation.

- ◆ The Civil Servants (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013; May 23; to make employees of the devolved ministries permanent civil servants in the organisations where they had been transferred and were working at the time of promulgation of the ordinance.

- ◆ The Protection of Pakistan Ordinance, 2013; November 7; to prevent acts threatening the security of Pakistan.

- ◆ The Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 (No. 7 of 2013); November 7; to amend Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

- ◆ The Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 (No. 8 of 2013); November 7; to amend Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

Laws made by the provincial legislatures

- ◆ Important legislation also took place in the provinces during 2013. The highest number of provincial acts and ordinances emerged from Sindh

during the year under review. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa became the first province to enact the right to information measure as a law. The province of Punjab also enacted a law on the subject later. While all provinces made laws for local government institutions, elections to local bodies were only held in Balochistan.

Balochistan Assembly

- ◆ The Balochistan Local Government (Amendment) Act, 2013; August 30; to bring into effect the local government laws so that local bodies elections could be held in accordance with the Constitution of Pakistan.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Elimination of Custom of Ghag Act, 2013; January 8; to eliminate the custom of Ghag - a practice whereby a man forcibly demands or claims the hand of a woman in marriage.

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Civil Servants (Amendment) Act, 2013; January 8; to give employees the right to pension and gratuity on retirement.

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Press, Newspapers, News Agencies and Books Registration Act, 2013; March 6; to ensure that owners of presses, newspapers and news agencies pay salaries to their employees as per the Wage Board Award.

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act, 2013; October 31; to establish and regulate local government institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act, 2013; November; to ensure transparency and access to information in the province.

Punjab Assembly

- ◆ The Punjab Animal Slaughter Control (Amendment) Act, 2013; August 19; to further amend the Punjab Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1963.

- ◆ The Punjab Local Government Act, 2013; August 21; to rationalise and reorganise the local government system in the province.

- ◆ The Punjab Police Order Amendment Act, 2013; August 29; to set a 25 percent departmental quota for promotion to the rank of sub-inspectors.

- ◆ The Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act, 2013; December 12; for providing transparency and freedom of information.

Sindh Assembly

- ◆ The Sindh Civil Servants (Amendment) Act, 2013; February 7; to protect out-of-turn promotions of police officers. Parties that opposed the bill said that it had been created to legalize out-of-turn promotions given to government officials. Lawmakers who supported the law said that it was made to protect promotions of those police officers who had played a pivotal

role in maintaining law and order.

- ◆ The Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013; February 13; to provide free and compulsory education to all children aged 5 to 16 years.

- ◆ The Sindh Protection of Breast-feeding and Child Nutrition Act, 2013; February 14; to prevent manufacturers and distributors from encouraging bottle-feeding and discouraging breastfeeding.

- ◆ The Education City Act, 2013; February 14; to establish modernized education and health facilities.

- ◆ The Sindh Arms and Ammunition Act, 2013; February 21; to make possession of illegal weapons a non-bailable offence and increase the imprisonment term to 14 years.

- ◆ The Sindh Higher Education Commission Act, 2013; February 21; to set up a provincial higher education commission.

- ◆ The Sindh Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 2013; February 27; for regulation, removal, storage, and transplantation of human organs and tissues for therapeutic purposes.

- ◆ The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013; March 8; to institutionalise measures to save and protect women, children and vulnerable persons from domestic violence.

- ◆ The Sindh Witness Protection Act, 2013; September 18; to encourage and protect witnesses and their families.

- ◆ The Sindh Prevention and Control of Thalassaemia Act, 2013; September 19; to prevent the spread of Thalassaemia.

- ◆ The Sindh Mental Health Act, 2013; September 19.

- ◆ The Sindh HIV and AIDS Control Treatment and Protection Act, 2013; September 20; to establish a commission for the prevention, control, care, support and treatment of HIV and AIDS.

- ◆ The Sindh Newborn Screening Act, 2013; September 23; to screen newborns for hearing impairments and create a sustainable newborn screening system.

- ◆ The Sindh Local Government (Amendment) Act, 2013; December 20.

Ordinances issued by provincial governors

Balochistan

- ◆ The Balochistan Free and Compulsory Education Ordinance, 2013;

March 12; to make primary and secondary school free and compulsory.

- ◆ The Balochistan Service Tribunals (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013; May 3; to amend the Balochistan Service Tribunals Act, 1974.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Ordinance (RTIO), 2013; August 13; to set up an independent information commission and make obstruction in access to any record a penal offence punishable with imprisonment up to two years.

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Promotion, Protection and Enforcement of Human Rights Ordinance, 2013; December 13; to enable the provincial directorate of human rights to investigate human rights violations and help the victims.

- ◆ The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Deserving Widows and Special Persons Welfare Foundation Ordinance, 2013; December 17; for establishing a welfare foundation to assist widows and handicapped persons.

Punjab

- ◆ The Punjab Local Government (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013; November 5; to amend the Punjab Local Government Act, 2013.

- ◆ The Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Ordinance, 2013; October 4; to establish a commission and designate public information officers for providing information to the desiring people.

Sindh

- ◆ The Sindh HIV/AIDS Control, Treatment and Protection Ordinance, 2013; May 22; for controlling and treating HIV and AIDS in the province.

- ◆ The Sindh Mental Health Ordinance, 2013; May 8; to provide for inclusion of a psychologist and a woman representative in the Sindh Mental Health Authority in order to address the overrepresentation of bureaucrats in the authority.

Recommendations

1. *The government needs to adopt prompt and effective mechanisms for implementation and enforcement of laws.*

2. *The provinces need to make better use of the legislative powers that they have been given following the devolution of important subjects to them under the 18th Amendment to the constitution.*

3. *How the parliament communicated with the people needed much improvement. At least the websites of the federal and provincial legislatures*

should contain a comprehensive list and updated text of the laws enacted and drafts under consideration.

4. Private members' bills, especially those moved by women lawmakers and parliamentarians from religious minorities, should be given due consideration.

Administration of justice

To enjoy the protection of law and to be treated in accordance with law is the inalienable right of every citizen, wherever he may be, and of every other person for the time being within Pakistan. In particular (a) no action detrimental to the life, liberty, body, reputation or property of any person shall be taken except in accordance with law, (b) no person shall be prevented from or be hindered in doing that which is not prohibited by law; and (c) no person shall be compelled to do that which the law does not require him to do.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 4(1) and (2)

No person shall be deprived of life or liberty save in accordance with law

Article 9

All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

Article 25(1)

There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.

Article 25(2)

The state shall ensure inexpensive and expeditious justice

Article 37(2)

No property shall be compulsorily acquired or taken possession of save for a public purpose and save by authority of law ...

Article 24(2)

Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and

peace in the world.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law

Article 6

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law.

Article 7

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the Constitution or by law.

Article 8

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 10

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 17(2)

No one within the jurisdiction of a State Party to the present Optional protocol [on abolition of death penalty] shall be executed.

Each State Party shall take all necessary measures to abolish the death penalty within its jurisdiction.

Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR

Article 1

A heavy backlog of cases across all tiers of the judicial system remained the foremost hurdle in realising the goal of expeditious justice. The courts' ability to do deal with the caseload was hampered also by delay in appointment of judicial officers. The most extensive interaction of the people at large with the judicial machinery was at the district level and it was at this level that delays were most pervasive.

2013 was a busy year for the superior courts although not everyone agreed with the manner in which the judiciary prioritised the cases that were taken up. The outgoing Chief Justice of Pakistan, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, continued to make headlines until he retired in December. He faced strong criticism for his judicial activism, often perceived by many as overstepping the domain of other pillars of state. The Supreme Court continued to take *suo motu* notices of the news items in the print and electronic media. Parliamentarians were disqualified for not having fulfilled the controversial piety requirements as demanded by the Constitution. Having convicted a prime minister for contempt of court the previous year, the SC continued in 2013 to aggressively

hand down contempt notices to politicians criticising it.

The courts dealt with a number of appointments to the national institutions including National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). The case of appointment of a former prime minister's son-in-law as executive director of the World Bank was also taken up by the court. The court also took notice of the rise in prices of petroleum products as well as electricity load-shedding in the country. The SC also dealt with cases of National Police Foundation and Employees Old Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) land scams and National Insurance Company Limited (NICL) corruption.

The Supreme Court took *suo motu* notice of burning down of Joseph Colony, a predominantly Christian neighbourhood in Lahore, by a mob that descended after a man accused one of the colony's residents of committing blasphemy. Police, although warned in advance, failed to stop the attacks on the small settlement of some 200 houses.

The SC also ruled that only judges with more than five years of service in superior judiciary were entitled to pension benefits.

The government decided to try former military ruler General (retired) Pervez Musharraf for treason under Article 6 of the Constitution. A special court was constituted to deal with the first case of its kind in Pakistan of a former military ruler being tried for treason.

Supreme Court cases

According to media reports in October, more than 20,000 cases were pending before the apex court. 45,040 complaints were filed with the Human Rights Cell of the SC between September 1, 2012 and September 7, 2013. *Suo motu* notices have been cited by legal experts as the primary reason for backlog of cases. Justice (R) Tariq Mehmood suggested that cases be distributed equally amongst all benches to clear the backlog. As many as 8,282 new cases were filed in the Islamabad registry of the Supreme Court whereas 7,832 cases were decided. 6,946 new cases were filed in the Lahore registry whereas 8,348 cases were adjudicated. 1,132 new cases were filed in Karachi registry and 972 cases were decided. The registry at Peshawar received 1,299 new cases whereas 1,314 cases were decided. In Balochistan registry, 438 new cases were filed while 470 were decided.

The National Judicial (Policymaking) Committee formally requested the government to increase the number of judicial officers and strengthen the court infrastructure. Only the Lahore High Court demand for appointment of 317 additional district judges and 696 civil judges had been met by the government of Punjab that sanctioned Rs 1 billion for the purpose.

Case of Sheikh Zayed Hospital and Efroz Chemicals

As the Supreme Court heard the Sheikh Zayed Hospital case, acting Punjab

health secretary Babar Hayat Tarrar gave an undertaking that autonomous status of the hospital would be retained. He reiterated that the provincial government had sent a reference to federal government to reconstitute the Board of Trustees of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan An-Nahyan Trust. The court did not constitute an interim committee to oversee the working of the institution on the health official's pledge that the matter would be resolved shortly.

In a case of deaths of more than 90 patients because of the use of substandard drugs at Pakistan Institute of Cardiology, Lahore, the counsel for the manufacturer offered to pay Rs 400,000 compensation to each bereaved family if the state dropped criminal charges against them. The case was adjourned after the lawyer was given three days to seek instructions as to how soon the compensations could be paid.

National Police Foundation land case

The Supreme Court had taken *suo motu* notice of a 2011 news report of a secret probe implicating a parliamentarian in the Rs. 6 billion National Police Foundation (NPF) scam. The media cited an NPF report to the Interior Secretary saying that MNA Anjum Aqeel had connived with some NPF officers to commit the fraud in procuring land for NPF Housing Society in Islamabad.

The SC found serious discrepancies in the allotment of plots and maladministration by the NPF employees. It held irregularities and illegalities committed by the Board of Directors in connivance with Aqeel in procurement of land as worst examples of corruption and corrupt practices. Towards the end of October, the court directed the NAB chairman to initiate proceedings against Aqeel and others responsible persons, and to submit a report within 90 days.

Imran Khan contempt of court case

The Supreme Court issued a contempt notice to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan for "scandalizing and ridiculing the court". Khan had used the word *Sharamnak* (shameful) to describe acts of the judiciary. Khan in a 20-page reply told the court how committed he was to the independence of the judiciary and upholding its dignity. The Supreme Court while referring to judgments including *PLD 2013 SC 413* (Dr. Tahirul Qadri versus Federation of Pakistan) reproduced Lord Dennings' comments made in *R. vs. Metropolitan Police Commissioner (1968)*. "Let me say at once that we will never use this jurisdiction (contempt) as a means to uphold our own dignity. That must rest on surer foundations. Nor will we use it to suppress those who speak against us. We do not fear criticism, nor do we resent it. For there is something far more important at stake. It is no less than freedom of speech itself."

Relying on principles of forgiveness and remission, the Supreme Court discharged the notice while no formal apology was made by the alleged contemnor. Considering the time consumed by the case and the publicity it

received many people wondered why such notice was issued in the first place.

More fake degree cases

In 2013, the Supreme Court continued to crack down on parliamentarians possessing fake academic certificates. Although the requirement of a graduate degree was no longer in place yet parliamentarians who had earlier made misstatements while contesting the previous elections were declared not to be fulfilling the requirements of *Sadiq* and *Ameen* under Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution. These constitutional provisions referred to a candidate's moral standing, and included an odd reference to their "practice and knowledge of Islam".

Samina Khawar Hayat, who was elected as a member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) from Punjab in 2008 on a seat reserved for women, was de-notified by the Election Commission on April 3, 2013 as it carried out verification of degrees of parliamentarians on Supreme Court orders. Hayat did not deny that the degree was fake but suggested that someone had appended the fake degree with her documents.

Hayat again became an MPA after 2013 general election on a women's seat. The Supreme Court took up her case relying on a June 4, 2013 report by an Urdu-language newspaper. The apex court held that Hayat did not fulfill the piety requirements. Relying on its previous judgment in a case of Allah Dino Khan Bhayo v. Election Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad and others the SC held that if a person is disqualified under section 62(1)(f) of the Constitution such disqualification would haunt him/her forever. Hayat was declared disqualified and the notification declaring her as a returned candidate on women's seat was declared invalid.

Case of Raja Azeem

The Supreme Court took *suo motu* notice of Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf's son-in-law Raja Azeem-ul-Haq's appointment as executive director/alternate executive director of the World Bank. Prime Minister Ashraf was said to have appointed his son-in-law to the post by using his discretionary powers. The prime minister's term in office ended with the end of the National Assembly tenure in March 2013. Raja Azeem appeared before the court on June 6, 2013 and filed a statement. He said that considering his young age and career ahead he wanted to avoid any controversy and did not want to cause embarrassment for Pakistan, and so, he had submitted his resignation to the World Bank. The case was adjourned and Azeem was asked to submit confirmation of his resignation.

Pension benefits for judges

The apex court also dealt with the pension benefits for judges of superior judiciary. The five-member bench unanimously held that only the judges who

had a service of more than five years were entitled to pension benefits. With a majority of 3 to 2 it was decided that the judgment should have prospective effect and benefits already extended should not be recovered from retired judges.

Appointment of NAB chairman

Leader of the opposition Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the appointment of the chairman of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The court relying on its judgment in Shahid Orakazi and another v. Pakistan through Secretary Law, Ministry of Law, Islamabad and another (PLD 2011 SC 365) held that 'consultation' has to be effective, meaningful, purposive and consensus oriented, leaving no room for arbitrariness or unfair play. The court also held that first priority in any consultation process had to be evolving a consensus. The court declared that the consultation in the appointment of NAB chairman was not made in accordance with Section 6 of the National Accountability Ordinance 1999 and the principles laid down by the SC. The NAB chairman's appointment was declared without lawful authority and set aside with immediate effect.

Joseph Colony violence

Joseph Colony, a Christian neighbourhood in Badami Bagh area of Lahore, was attacked by a mob after a blasphemy allegation against a resident of the area. Houses were set on fire and household goods looted and burnt. Before the court, the police admitted that it had failed to assess the gravity of situation but said that as a precautionary measure it had evacuated the locality. It said that when the aggressive mob moved towards the police officials they had to take refuge in the nearby godowns to save their lives. With police running for their lives the mob had an open field to create havoc. The court observed that fundamental rights as envisaged in Articles 9 and 14 of the Constitution had been violated.

Missing persons' case

The Supreme Court disposed of in May a case that had been filed by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) in 2007 for recovery of a large number of victims of enforced disappearance. After nearly seven years of hearings and a number of people on the HRCP list of missing persons being released from unacknowledged custody of agencies of the state, no action was taken against the perpetrators at the conclusion of the case.

On May 18, the Supreme Court disposed of through a short order HRCP's constitutional petition and observed that the petitioner could pursue the matter before a commission established to deal with the issue of missing persons. HRCP believed that the short order did not address the grievances cited in the petition and had therefore filed a review application. HRCP contended that the

jurisdiction of the court under Article 184(3) could not be replaced by a Commission, whose majority comprised non-judicial authorities, especially since the matter raised was of public importance and involved violation of fundamental rights, the enforcement of which fell within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. HRCP highlighted that 47 people on its list submitted to the SC were still untraced and the families of those people had not been given any access to the commission set up by the Government of Pakistan.

HRCP has also noted that during hearings before the SC over six years a number of the disappeared persons on the list submitted by HRCP were produced in the court and had given statements regarding their illegal abduction and confinement and made allegations against the security forces. HRCP also noted that the court had also not rendered a detailed judgement on an important matter of violation of fundamental rights pending before it for the last six years, nor on the several hearings it had held and several statements it had recorded during the proceedings of the case over the last six years, which clearly identified the perpetrators of enforced disappearances. HRCP also pointed out that its petition included a prayer for compensation for those who had involuntarily disappeared and reappeared, but the question of compensation does not find any mention in the judgement.

Internment and disappearance

In September, the Peshawar High Court directed the security forces to either shift all those kept in the illegal detention centres to the notified internment centres or free them. The high court observed that illegal detention was an offence under the Army Act and such cases could be tried by a civil court. The judge was hearing habeas corpus petitions regarding the enforced disappearance of over 150 persons.

The bench, which included the provincial chief justice, turned down a report submitted by the Defence Ministry, which expressed ignorance about the whereabouts of most of the detainees in these cases. A day earlier, the bench had rejected a similar report produced in cases of around 250 missing persons.

The court observed that the plea did not seem believable as a man, who had been freed from illegal detention, had said a day earlier that he was picked up and kept in illegal custody by the security forces. The bench pointed out that it was mandatory under Article 10 of the Constitution that every arrested person should be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of his arrest otherwise the arrest would become unauthorised and would constitute illegal detention.

Offences relating to religion

As many as 68 citizens were booked under Chapter XV of the Pakistan

Penal Code (PPC) which lists offences relating to religion. Fourteen of the accused were charged under Section 295-C. The punishment upon conviction under this provision was death. The offences under Chapter XV PPC are:

No.	Section	Offence	Maximum punishment
1	295	Defiling places of worship	2-yr prison or fine, or both
2	295-A	Malicious acts that outrage religious feelings	2-yr prison or fine, or both
3	295-B	Defiling a copy of the Holy Quran	Only one penalty, life term
4	295-C	Derogatory remarks about the Holy Prophet (PBUH)	Mandatory death penalty
5	296	Disturbing religious assembly	one-yr prison or fine, or both
6	297	Trespassing on burial place	one-yr prison or fine, or both
7	298	Uttering words or gestures that wound religious feelings	one-yr prison or fine, or both
8	298-A	Derogatory remarks about holy figures	3-yr prison or fine, or both
9	298-B	Misuse of titles reserved for holy personages or places	3-yr prison and fine
10	298-C	Propagation of faith by Ahmadis	3-yr prison and fine

Muslims

During the year under review, 19 cases for offences relating to religion were reported against 24 Muslims. Five of the accused were charged under the blasphemy provision 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). Among the arrested were two men who were reported to be mentally challenged, both charged under Section 295-B, and the female principal of a private school, charged under 295-C. An accused was acquitted of the charge under Section 295-C but convicted under 295-A. He was given a 10-year prison term and a fine of Rs 200,000. Another accused charged under sections 295-A and 295-B was convicted and awarded life imprisonment.

In February, police in the south Punjab district of Multan registered a case against Sherry Rehman, Pakistan's ambassador to the United States at the time, for allegedly committing blasphemy. The petitioner, a resident of Multan, had accused Rehman of committing blasphemy while speaking on the country's blasphemy laws in a TV programme aired in November 2010. When the police did not register a case, the petitioner unsuccessfully sought an order first from a lower court and then the Lahore High Court directing the police to register a case against Rehman. In January, a bench of Supreme Court directed

Multan police to take action in accordance with the law.

In late December, a senior pilot of state carrier Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) went on leave to protect himself from ‘extremist elements’ after being accused of blasphemy for allegedly using derogatory words about the ‘kalma’, or Islamic declaration of faith, and the Holy Prophet (PBUH). *[See the chapter on ‘Freedom of thought, conscience and religion’]*

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	Section of PPC	Charges	Remarks
1	4 persons whose names were not mentioned in the media report.	Warburton	295-B	Alleged burning of a copy of the Holy Quran	Arrested One of them was a madrassa teacher 8-1-2013
2	Nasim	Bhakkar	295-C	Accused of blasphemy during a speech in a religious public meeting	Arrested Jan 27, 13
3	A man whose name was not mentioned in the media report	Dadu	295-B	Alleged burning of a copy of the Holy Quran	
4	Umar Farooq	Jauharabad	295-B	Alleged burning of a copy of the Holy Quran	Arrested 10-3-13
5	Prof. Junaid Hafeez	Multan	295-C		Arrested
6	Ghulam Hussain	Lahore	295-B	Alleged burning of pages of the Holy Quran	Arrested March 2013 Reported to be mentally challenged
7	Saad Hammad	Sialkot	295-B	Alleged burning of a copy of the Holy Quran	Arrested March 2013 Reported to be mentally challenged
8	Yasin	Lahore	295-B	Alleged desecration of the Holy Quran	Arrested April, 213

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	Section of PPC	Charges	Remarks
9	3 persons not identified in the media report	Sukheki/Nankana Sahib	295-B	Alleged burning of a copy of the Holy Quran	Arrested
10	Afzal Butt	Sheikhupura	295-B	Allegedly drew sketches on pages of the Holy Quran	Arrested July, 2013
11	Malik Shafiq	Pakpattan	295-C		Arrested He was a prayer leader
12	Ms. Salma Fatima Tanveer	Lahore	295-C	Allegedly claimed to be a prophet and accused of circulating papers with offensive statements regarding the Holy Prophet (PBUH)	Arrested 02/09/13 She was the principal of a private school.
13	Unidentified	Okara	295-B		Arrested 03/09/13 Mentally challenged
14	Unidentified	Islamabad	295-B	Alleged burning of pages of the Holy Quran	Arrested September 24, 2013
15	Ms. Sherry Rehman	Karachi	--	Accused of committing blasphemy while speaking on blasphemy laws in a TV programme in November 2010.	17/01/13

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	Section of PPC	Charges	Remarks
16	Saqib	Gujran-wala	--	Allegedly delivered offensive remarks on a mosque loud-speaker	Arrested 20/11/13
17	Ghulam Haider	Bahawal-pur	--	Accused of tearing up a poster that bore verses of the Quran	Arrested 08/06/13
18	Raza Kharal	Toba Tek Singh	295-A & 298-A	Accused of posting offensive material on Facebook	Arrested 19/11/13
19	Eraj Sajjad	Lahore	295-C	Accused of committing blasphemy	A case was registered 14/12/13

Sentences/acquittals

Sr.	Name/s	District /City	Section of PPC	Charges	Remarks
1	Ghulam Ali Asghar	Chakwal/ Talagang	295-A 295-C	Misquoting a Hadith in Punjabi language	Acquitted under 295-C, convicted under 295-A. Awarded ten years and a fine of Rs. 200,000.
2	Jalal Chandio	Hyderabad	295-A 295-B	Burning a copy of the Holy Quran	Life imprisonment. Convicted 12 years after the alleged incident occurred.

Ahmadis

The Ahmadi community in Pakistan faced nine cases on religious grounds

in 2013. These cases were brought against 30 Ahmadis, and 23 of them were arrested. One of them was charged under Section 295-C of the PPC. One man was charged in two separate cases.

Sr	Name/s	District /City	Section of PPC	Charge	Remarks
1	Moeed Ijaz, Asmatullah, Raza Ullah, Ghulam Ullah	Lahore	295-B 298-C	Allegedly printed blasphemous material	Arrested 07/01/13
2	Atif Ahmad	Lahore	298-B	Accused of distributing Ahmadi literature.	Arrested 16/01/13
3.	Asmatullah Altaf Shah	Lahore	295-B 298-C	Altaf, a book binder who was not an Ahmadi, was arrested for undertaking book-bindings of some Ahmadi publications for Asmatullah.	Arrested 24/02/13
4.	Khalid Ishaq, Tahir Ahmad, Faisal Ahmad, Azhar Sharif, Abdul Sami, Tahir Mehdi	Lahore	295-B 298-C	Allegedly defiled the Holy Quran and distributed blasphemous content	Two of them were arrested
5.	Khawaja Irshad, Naseer Qureshi, Naeem Ahmad Khan, Abdul Rahim, Atta Muhammad, Ahmed Mehmood, Saqib Mehmood, Nauman Virk	Lahore	295-B		Arrested
6.	Mian Muhammad Shah, Yasser Zeervi, Yasir Mansoor and two others	Lahore	298-C	Accused of claiming to be Muslim and preaching the Ahmadi faith	Arrested 15/06/13
7.	Saleem Ahmad	Umerkot/ Kunri	298/C	Allegedly preached the Ahmadi faith	Arrested

Sr	Name/s	District /City	Section of PPC	Charge	Remarks
8.	Dr. Masood Ahmad	Lahore	298/C 295/C	Accused of claiming to be a Muslim	Arrested 25/11/13
9.	Sharif Ahmad, Nasir Ahmad Qamar, Laeeq Ahmad	Rajan-pur	298-C	Accused of distributing a pamphlet and preaching the Ahmadi faith in public	Sharif Ahmad arrested 19/12/13

Christians

A total of nine cases were lodged against 14 Christian citizens on religious grounds in 2013. Nine Christians were arrested in these cases. Four Christians, including two women, were arrested for allegedly sending blasphemous messages. Two Christians were acquitted during the year under review, while one was awarded life imprisonment. Three Christians were sentenced to death upon conviction in two blasphemy cases.

In Lahore, an entire Christian neighborhood was torched following allegations of blasphemy against a Christian man, Sawan. The police lodged a blasphemy case against Sawan reportedly to pacify the mob.

In Karachi, a Muslim man murdered a Christian in March by slitting his throat. As he committed the murder he was shouting that he was killing an infidel who had blasphemed against Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The victim's family said that the killer had a grudge against Masih and had come up with the blasphemy claim in a bid to justify his crime.

The Lahore High Court acquitted a Christian man, Younas, who had been sentenced to death for blasphemy six years earlier in Lahore, the country's second largest city.

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	Section of PPC	Charge	Remarks
1	Zafar Bhatti Ms. Gazala Khan	Rawalpindi	295-C	Allegedly shared offensive messages by SMS	Arrested
2	Sawan Masih	Lahore Badami Bagh	295-C	Accused of using derogatory remarks against the Holy Prophet (PBUH)	Arrested 08/03/2013 Trial in Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	Section of PPC	Charge	Remarks
3	Shafaqat Masih and his wife Shagufta Bibi	Gojra	295-C	Allegedly sent an offensive message by SMS	Arrested 21/07/13
4	Sattar Masih (a pastor)	Village near Lahore	--	Allegedly uttered derogatory remarks about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)	Not arrested
5	Baber, Ilyas & Robert	Karachi	298	Accused of hitting the names of the first caliphs of Islam with stones and sticks in a mosque during countrywide protest against a deadly church attack in Peshawar.	Arrested and released on bail 27/09/13
6	Asif Pervaiz	Lahore	295-A, B & C	Accused of sending offensive messages.	Arrested 02/10/13
7	Adnan Masih, (a Pastor)	Lahore	295-A, B & C	Allegedly wrote derogatory remarks on an Islamic book	Arrested 12/10/13
8	Saim Snober (a teacher at Medical Sciences (PIMS) Islamabad	Islamabad	--	Accused of asking derogatory question in an exam paper	Settled 28/03/13

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	Section of PPC	Charge	Remarks
9	Arif and Tariq (brothers)	Wazirabad (district Gujranwala)	295-B	Allegedly used paper with verses of the Holy Quran to make firecrackers	Tariq was arrested 29/10/13

Sentences/acquittals

Sr.	Name/s	District/City	U/S. PPC	Alleged Allegation	Remarks
1	Barkat Masih	Khairpur	295-C	Accused of committing blasphemy	Acquitted on Jan 28, 2013
2	Younas Masih	Lahore		Accused of interrupting a gathering of Sufi singing and making offensive remarks.	Acquitted by the LHC Lahore in April 2013. He was accused of blasphemy in September 2005
3	Sajjad Masih	Gojra / Toba Tek Singh		Accused of sending an offensive message	Awarded life imprisonment by the trial court on July 13, 2013

Comments on judiciary

While the Supreme Court continued to win plaudits for reining in the executive it also came in for some criticism in 2013.

Since the restoration of superior court judges, Chief Justice of Pakistan Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry had become a symbol of judicial independence in the country. Where he faced severe criticism for judicial activism and mishandling of charges of his son Dr Arsalan's alleged corruption, he also enhanced the respect for the institution. Justice Dorab Patel had said, "An independent judiciary means not only a judiciary which can resist pressures of governments but also the pressures of the public opinion." His critics say that that was where Justice Chaudhry failed and that he kept an eye on tickers on

TV channels and newspaper headlines with an obsession for glory. He was also criticised for the manner in which he sent a democratically elected prime minister home and continuously hounded an elected president and the previous government in what some considered to be personal rather than legal battles.

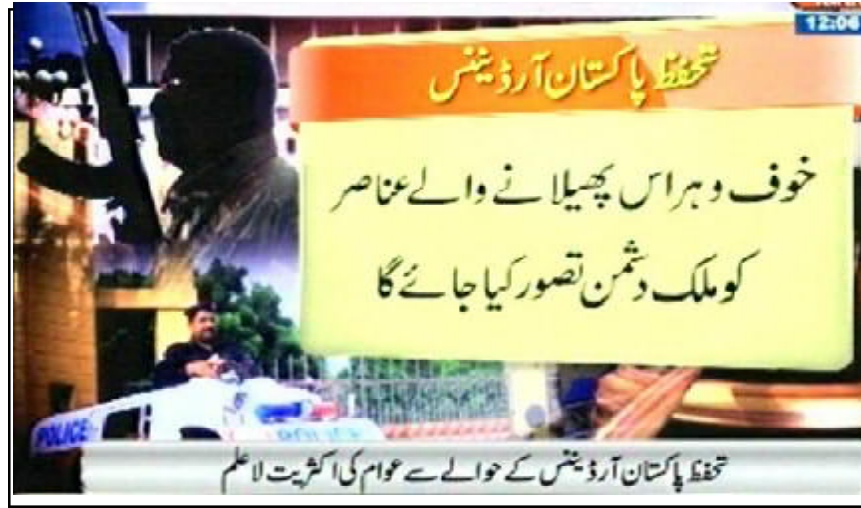
The Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists stated in a report that where CJP Chaudhry strengthened the human rights, his inconsistent choice of cases left the Supreme Court open to accusations of partisan intervention. The report said “the Court has often garnered public acclaim for demanding government accountability. But the Court has also come in for national and international criticism due in large part to the lack of guidelines governing how the Court takes up and prioritizes cases taken up using its original jurisdiction. At times, the Supreme Court has exercised its jurisdiction on the basis of media reports; at times it has responded to partisan petitions by political parties. Without transparent guidelines on how the Supreme Court takes up cases using its original jurisdiction, the Court’s decision to give priority to certain cases involving human rights violations over others at times appears arbitrary, giving rise to concerns that the Court has sometimes exercised its original jurisdiction in a political and partisan manner.”

The 99-page report, titled “Authority without Accountability, the search for Justice in Pakistan” termed the CJP as inconsistent in the way he ran the affairs of the court. Sam Zarifi, the Asia Director for ICJ stated that the ICJ commended the CJP for redefining the court as an independent institution and closing the door on military intervention. However, he said that “lack of transparency corrodes the court’s tremendous achievements and undermines the principles of rule of law that the court seeks to uphold.” The study also noted that expanded use of Article 184(3) of the Constitution by the court, if left unchecked, would weaken rule of law and independence of judiciary in the country. The report also emphasised that under international standards judiciary must not only be independent and impartial but also be seen as independent and impartial.

Protection of Pakistan Ordinance

In 2013, the government continued to enact laws to counter the threat posed by terrorists. The Fair Trial Act and the Anti-Terrorism (amendment) Act were followed by the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance (PPO), 2013. The PPO was approved by the President on October 20 and presented in the National Assembly on November 7. The ordinance was enforced through a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) from December 5, 2013. The ordinance aimed to make prosecution of terrorists more efficient but infringed upon fundamental rights. The preamble of the ordinance described it as protection against those waging war against Pakistan and acts threatening the security of Pakistan.

The PPO provided vague definitions for acts threatening the security of Pakistan. The ordinance failed to make a clear distinction between acts



Protection of Pakistan Ordinance attracted strong criticism.

endangering “security of Pakistan” and general law and order. Human rights activists expressed concerns that the ordinance could be used as a tool to suppress human rights in the country. The ordinance gave the armed forces and the security forces powers of the police. The PPO also gave too much arbitrary powers to the security officers making them on-the-spot judges. This raised alarm the law enforcement agencies were known to overstep their authority. Under the ordinance, a person could be given on remand for a period of 90 days which would allow time and opportunity to extract confessions. The preventive detention clause also allowed the government to detain a person for a period of up to 90 days. This was in clear violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The ordinance was also in violation of Articles 9 and 10 of the Constitution of Pakistan as it allowed law enforcement officials to fire even on apprehension of a scheduled offence and arrest without warrant on reasonable suspicion. Another criticism of the PPO was that it tried to give an impression as if it was against “alien enemy” but anyone who was not able to prove his identity on the spot could be prosecuted under it.

The ordinance also shifted the burden of proof to the accused. An accused facing charge of being involved in committing a scheduled offence was to be presumed guilty unless he proved his innocence. This was clearly against the basic principle of natural justice where one was presumed to be innocent until proven guilty. This raised concern because of the extensive scope of its misuse. Civil society organisations and the opposition political parties rejected the PPO.

Moratorium on capital punishment

The government persisted with the informal moratorium on capital punishment. Since 2009, the authorities have executed only one death row prisoner. There are around 8,000 prisoners on death row in prisons across the



Resumption of executions briefly seemed imminent for death row detainees.

country.

In August, the European Union (EU) cautioned Pakistan that lifting the moratorium would be viewed as a major setback in the 28-member bloc and possibly affect Islamabad's quest for duty-free access to European markets.

While the new government did not execute any death row prisoner until the end of the year, it maintained that it could not abolish the death penalty.

In reply to an HRCP request to the government to formally suspend the application of the death penalty, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights said:

“The Government is maintaining a moratorium on death sentences. However, this Ministry is not in favour of complete abolition of death penalty in view of prevalent law and order situation, particularly with reference to acts of terrorism. Death sentences punishable under Hudood laws also cannot be abolished in view of Article 2-A, read with Article 227 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

“The issue of the death penalty is primarily related to Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control and Provincial Governments. This Ministry is obtaining their comments and the final response shall be given after receipt of comments from all stakeholders.”

The final response promised in the Law Ministry's letter of 5 December 2013 was not received by HRCP till the time of this annual report's publication.

The public debate

The public debate on the subject received a significant input from Professor

Roger Hood, the internationally renowned campaigner against the death penalty, who gave a special lecture at a seminar organised by HRCP on October 10, 2013, the International Day for the Abolition of the Death Penalty. Particularly notable in the lecture were references to the steps taken in China and some Muslim countries to review their retentionist policies.

Recommendations

- 1. There is an urgent need to determine the principles and priorities for the use of suo motu powers. Taking up cases suo motu or giving attention to cases against the executive must not come at the cost of other pending cases.*
- 2. The contempt of court law should be used only sparingly.*
- 3. There is a need to reinforce the principle that a judge speaks only through his judgements.*
- 4. The number of judicial officers needs to be raised without further delay and the court infrastructure strengthened to address the inordinate delay in determination of pending cases. The help of the Bar should also be sought in assisting the courts to clear the backlog.*
- 5. Effective steps should be taken to facilitate the litigants by making the administration of justice expeditious, affordable and accessible.*

Enforcement of law

II



Law and order

No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest, nor shall be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice.

Every person who is arrested and detained in custody shall be produced before a magistrate within a period of twenty-four hours of such arrest...

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 10(1) and (2)

The dignity of man and, subject to law, the privacy of home, shall be inviolable.

No person shall be subjected to torture for the purpose of extracting evidence.

Article 14(1) and (2)

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 3

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 5

Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

Article 11 (1)

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family,

home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour or reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 12

A combination of criminal and terrorist activity, acts of terrorism, turf wars of criminal gangs with political patronage, sectarian violence and issues of capacity and keenness of law enforcement personnel to protect the people exposed the right to life and to property of the populace to grave threats in the year 2013.

Even as the government looked for ever stringent laws to deter terrorists and bring them to justice, the perennial question on the ability of those tasked with investigation and prosecution remained unanswered. Torture in police custody, most often to extract confessions, was a frequent complaint.

In many parts of the country, crime and lawlessness grew to such an extent that the people preferred to remain indoors after dusk. In FATA and in parts of Balochistan, travelling even during daylight hours was risky. Threats to citizens also came in various forms of extrajudicial killings at the hands of security and law enforcement personnel who were supposed to protect the people.

Unchecked weaponisation made a difficult situation precarious. The failure of government authorities to provide protection forced affluent citizens to engage private security guards; others acquired weapons for protection while the poor remained at the mercy of criminals.

Violence in Karachi grew unchecked despite security forces' operations. Nothing seemed to stop waves of targeted killings in Pakistan's biggest city. Violence and excesses by extremist militants raked Peshawar. Peace eluded Quetta for another year. The situation in FATA was grim even for areas which were not reeling under one phase of internal displacement or another.

The pre-poll violence early in the year was disproportionately high even by Pakistan's standards.

Violence against sectarian and religious minorities made them the most vulnerable of the lot.

Unjustifiably large numbers of police personnel were assigned to security detail of countless important figures in government and bureaucracy, further depleting the capacity of the department to protect the people.

The state of law and order

For a variety of reasons, many crimes are often not reported to the police. These include incidents of kidnapping for ransom, sexual violence and extortion demands.

Despite that, however, cases registered with the police give some indication of the crime landscape. The statistics provided to HRCF by the provincial



People protested against police failure to protect them from crime.

police departments and acquired from the departments' websites painted a bleak picture.

In Punjab, the most populous province, the police registered 390,932 cases for various offences. These included 6,095 murders, 6,874 attempted murders, 132 cases of kidnapping for ransom, 2,576 cases of rape, 2,768 of dacoity, 20,677 of vehicle theft and 6,441 of vehicle snatching. The police figures also showed that in Punjab 275 blasphemy cases were registered. The number of blasphemy cases reported from all over Pakistan during the year was a fraction of the figure quoted by Punjab Police. It was possible that many of the 275 were not blasphemy cases at all but cases registered under the various provisions of Chapter XV of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) which listed the various "offences relating to religion".

In Sindh, at least 4,074 murders were recorded, including 153 targeted killings and 146 people killed during dacoities/armed robbery. Highway robberies alone numbered 136 and there were 36 bank robberies. Cases were registered in 54 suicide bombings or bomb blasts.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, police registered 3,240 murder cases during the year, including 45 cases of the so-called honour killings. As many as 3,152 attempted murders, 127 incidents of rape and three of gang-rape were also reported to the police. As many as 91 cases of kidnapping for ransom were reported, while 630 vehicles were stolen and 247 snatched. Fourteen cases of blasphemy were registered, suggesting again that perhaps all "offences relating to religion" were being grouped together under the label of blasphemy.

In Balochistan, 645 murder cases and 480 attempted murder cases were registered. There were 209 attacks on public servants in the insurgency-hit province and 248 cases of abduction and 56 of abduction for ransom were

recorded. Thirty-three people were said to have been killed in the name of honour. Thirty-two rape cases were also reported. The province ranked high in acts of terrorism and the police had registered cases for 255 bomb blasts and 58 incidents of rocket firing. Two cases of blasphemy were also reported to the police, both in Quetta.

Weaponisation

In 2013, the glut and destructive potential of weapons across the country was astounding. The days when weapons recovered from criminals were daggers and knives were long gone. Criminals were now often better armed than the police and the weapons confiscated were of the kind seen in war zones. Access to weapons was easy in all parts of the country and there were even reports of weapons being rented on daily and hourly rates.

Not all provincial police departments provided statistics on illegal weapons confiscated, but the figures that were provided by Balochistan, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police were revealing.

In Punjab 45,635 cases were registered in 2013 under the Arms Ordinance for illegal weapons and 30,806 pistols/revolvers, 2,650 carbines, 6,545 shotguns, 3,333 rifles, 1,063 Kalashnikovs, 85 grenades, and 646,326 bullets were confiscated.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 3,995 rifles, 7,538 pistols/revolvers, 4,634 Kalashnikovs, 1,806 other similar assault rifles, 42 sten guns/machine guns, 450 hand grenades, 5,320 sticks of dynamite, eight light machine guns, 4,169 detonators, 13 rocket launchers, 41 bombs, five missiles and nearly two million bullets were seized.

In Balochistan, 901 persons were arrested and 869 cases registered for possessing illegal weapons. The quantities of weapons seized were much less than in the other provinces, with the exception of explosives; 72,188,560 kilogrammes of explosives were recovered. As many as 140 Kalashnikovs, 55 shotguns, 41 rifles, 644 pistols/revolvers, 26 grenades, three rocket launchers, two light machineguns, four rocket shells, 12 anti-personnel landmines, eight bombs, a suicide jacket, 21,934 bullets and 599 magazines of ammunition were the main weapons confiscated.

In August, the head of the paramilitary Rangers force for the province of Sindh informed the Supreme Court hearing a case about lawlessness and violence in Karachi that around 19,000 shipping containers of weapons and vehicles had gone missing during the tenure of the former minister for ports and shipping. He said that 78 percent of the illegal weapons being used in Karachi were foreign-manufactured. These included AK-47s and 9mm guns, which were mainly used in targeting killings and other murders in the city, the official informed the court.

And then there were hundreds of thousands of licenced weapons. In March, the Interior Ministry informed the National Assembly that on the

recommendations of parliamentarians the federal government had issued 69,473 licences of prohibited-bore weapons, essentially automatic weapons such as Kalashnikov and sub-machine guns, from 2008 to 2012. The figure meant that every member of the assembly had on average got 200 licences for prohibited-bore arms issued during the five-year period.

One reason that the Sindh Police chief had cited before a Supreme Court bench looking into the violence in Karachi in August 2011 was “the easy access to illicit weapons and misuse of arms licences”. The court had been informed that 180,956 licences of non-prohibited bore had been issued by the provincial Home Department in the previous five years and 46,114 licences of prohibited bores and 1,202,470 of non-prohibited bore had been issued by the Ministry of Interior in Islamabad.

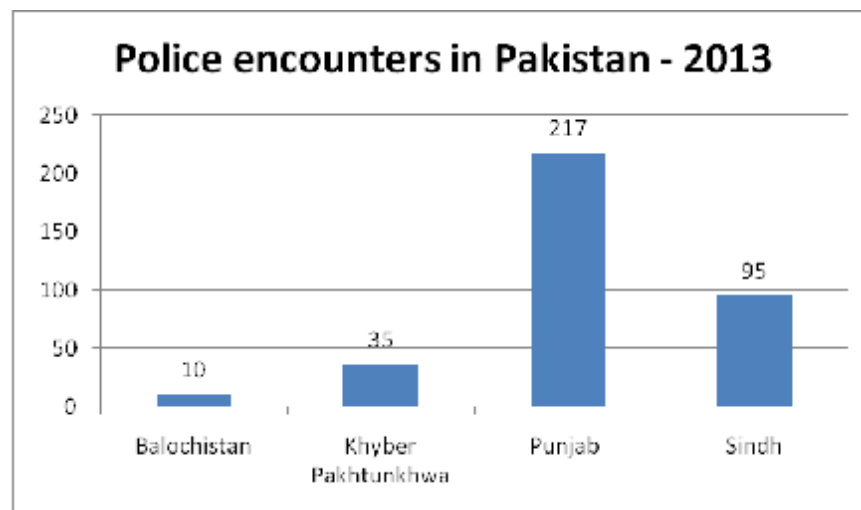
Small firearms were responsible for many unintended deaths in 2013. During the year, the media reported scores of cases of people dying because of celebratory gunfire at weddings and other events. With the amount of weapons available in the country, it was remarkable that everyday non-conflict armed violence was not higher.

Extrajudicial killings

Police encounters

Killing of suspected criminals in reported exchange of firing with the police continued unabated. Police received criticism for being either trigger happy or worse still staging the events to unlawfully kill individuals. An independent probe mechanism remained lacking and even departmental inquiries were exceptionally rare.

According to monitoring of the print media by HRCP, 357 police encounters were reported from across the country in 2013. The highest number, 217,



was reported from Punjab, home to around 60 percent of the Pakistanis, and the lowest (10) from Balochistan. Ninety-five encounters were reported from Sindh and 35 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As much as 61% of the encounters took place in Punjab, 26% in Sindh, 10% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 3% in Balochistan. A total of 503 suspects were killed in these encounters and 49 were injured. In 2012, HRCP monitoring had found that 403 suspects were killed in 350 police encounters across the country. The figure for 2011 was 254 police encounters leading to the killing of 337 suspects.

In 2013, only 46 out of the 357 encounters (13%) ended without a suspect being killed. In 280 of the total encounters (78%) neither a police personnel was injured nor killed. Yet in 97 percent of these cases (271 of the 280 cases), suspects were either killed or injured.

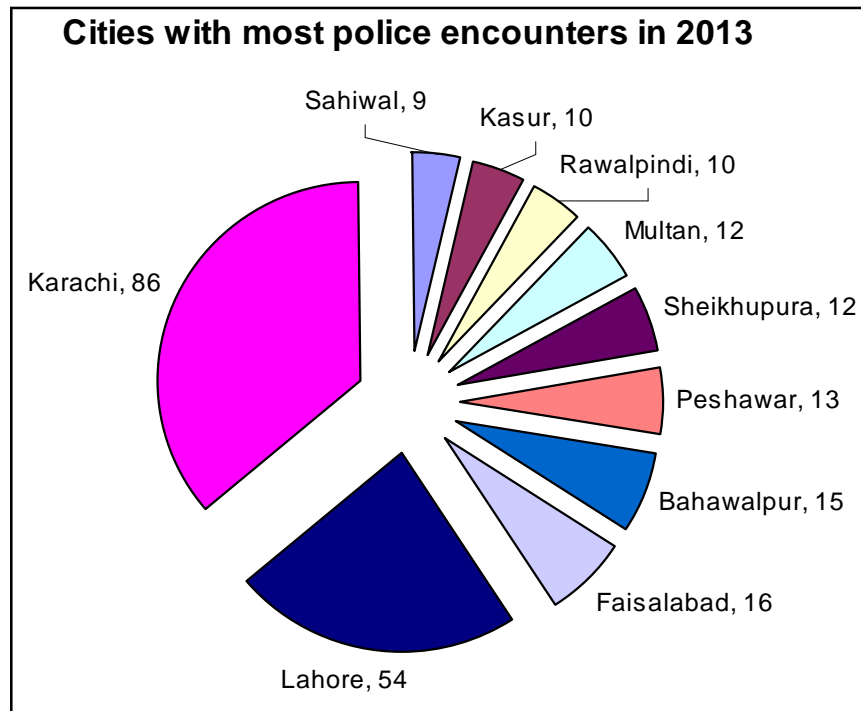
The ratio of suspects being killed in the encounters with police during 2013 was 1.4 % per encounter and of them being injured 0.19% for every encounter. While it might be difficult to know from statistics alone where the warranted and proportionate degree of force was used, percentages alone indicated the propensity for use of lethal force.

Statistics on police encounters in 2013

Number of encounters	357
Suspect killed	503
Suspects injured	49
Suspects arrested	122
Police killed	50
Police injured	99



Another 'encounter' where no cops were injured but all the suspects died.



The police encounters were more common in some cities than in others. Karachi topped the list by some distance with 86 encounters in 2013, followed by 54 in Lahore. Of the top 10 cities in terms of police encounters, eight were in Punjab, one in Sindh and one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Of the total number of encounters in the country, 237, or 66%, took place in these 10 cities.

The figure did not include statistics for targeted operations by Rangers in Karachi during 2013. In 22 incidents there, 44 suspects were killed, 3 injured and 4 arrested. Casualties among Rangers during these operations included one fatality and injuries to eight personnel. According to media reports, an inquiry had been ordered only in one case.

Bodies dumped in Sindh and Balochistan

Enforced disappearance has been a serious violation of human rights in Balochistan for nearly a decade. From 2010 onwards, many victims of enforced disappearance started returning as mutilated dead bodies left at deserted places. In 2013, 116 bodies were found across the province; 87 of them were identified and many of the families either suspected involvement of security agencies or accused them of extrajudicial killings. The other 29 bodies remained unidentified.

Political activists in Sindh also claimed that state agencies were responsible

for killing nationalist workers in the province in a similar manner.

Drone attacks

The US-operated drones continued to target locations in Federally Administered Tribal Areas. For the first time since the drone attacks began in Pakistan, an area outside FATA was targeted.

According to media reports a total of 31 drone attacks took place in Pakistan in 2013. All except two drone strikes took places in Waziristan: 24 in North Waziristan and five in South Waziristan. One attack took place in Khyber Agency and one in Hangu in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At least 199 people were reported to have been killed in the attacks and 34 injured.

There was no way to independently verify the identity of the people targeted because of virtual banishment of journalists and civil society organisations in areas where the drones fired their missiles but even from what little it could gather, HRCP was certain that the casualties included at least some civilians who had nothing to do with armed conflict, including women and children. However, the Commission could not ascertain what proportion of the casualties were militant extremists and how many were innocent civilians.

Vigilante justice

Amid pervasive lawlessness people grew increasingly frustrated over the authorities' failure to curb crime. Several times during the year the media reported incidents of citizens preferring to take matters in their own hands rather than waiting for suspected criminals to be tried under the law. These incidents not only demonstrated exasperation with the police and the criminal



Instant justice: A crowd beats a man suspected of theft in Lahore.

justice system but much more disturbingly it indicated progressive brutalisation of society. Three incidents from a single city cited here demonstrate citizens' eagerness to give way to violent tendencies when they felt that they had been wronged.

In August, a mob in Karachi apprehended one of the two robbers who were snatching money and valuables from motorists at gunpoint. The mob beat him up before finally agreeing to hand him over to the police. The man succumbed to his injuries at a hospital.

In October, a group of citizens in Karachi cornered two of the four robbers who had killed two men while exiting a bank. One of them was killed by the crowd while the other took refuge inside a shop. Only timely police arrival saved the second robber's life as the mob unsuccessfully tried to tear down the shop's shutters. The crowd demanded that the police hand over the man to them. Police had to fire into the air to disperse the mob.

In December, also in Karachi, two alleged robbers were lynched by a mob in an Orangi Town market. The two men were reportedly alive when the police arrived but the angry people refused to hand them over and continued to beat them until they died. Relatives of the two men called the killings a reprisal against a complaint filed earlier about gambling in the area.

Human rights defenders

Although violent incidents affected all citizens, some sections were targeted more specifically than others. Numerous incidents across the country during the year served as reminders of how dangerous being a human rights defender or a social worker had become in Pakistan. More than once people associated with HRCF were targeted, including Malik Jrar Advocate, member of the Commission's executive body and a former vice-chairperson for HRCF's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter.

He had gone to drop his children at school when armed men shot and killed him in Peshawar in February. Jrar was a fearless human rights defender, a tireless activist, a respected lawyer, and a non-violent person to the core. His murders remained free.

HRCF also voiced concern at the abduction of Haider Ali Advocate, a human rights activist, from Turbat in Balochistan. He was abducted allegedly by law enforcement agencies on November 27 when he was going home from the district courts. HRCF wrote to the authorities in Balochistan for Ali's immediate recovery and proper treatment in custody. His whereabouts remained unknown until the end of the year.

In December, HRCF strongly condemned the murder of its activist Ahmed Jan Baloch in Panjgur district of Balochistan. Ahmed Jan was shot and severely injured by armed men on a motorcycle in a market. He was taken to Panjgur's district headquarters hospital but in view of his serious condition was later being moved to Karachi when he passed away. The Commission demanded

A fearless social worker silenced

On March 13, renowned social worker Parveen Rahman was killed in a targeted attack in Karachi. She was on her way home from work when armed motorcyclists intercepted her car and shot and killed her. Parveen was the director of Orangi Pilot Project, which had become a model for participatory and bottom-up development initiatives. She had been receiving threats to her life for a long time. Parveen was believed to have offended the land mafia by documenting land grabs in the villages on the fringes of Karachi and by helping those whose lands had been grabbed. Police hinted that Taliban could also be involved in her killing. Parveen was mourned as one of the most committed and courageous defenders of the cause of the poor and the disadvantaged the country had. Condemning her murder HRCP said that it was not enough to shed tears over wanton killing of the best of Pakistan's sons and daughters. It called upon all citizens who cared for freedom, justice and human rights to stand up against those out to destroy their symbols of hope. HRCP also became one of the petitioners seeking the Sindh High Court intervention to expedite the search for and trial of the killers.



Parveen Rahman was given death threats by the land mafia.

the arrest of his killers and measures to make the work of human rights defenders less dangerous. As far as HRCP could gather, no steps were taken to meet either demand during the year. HRCP also stated that impunity for killers of rights defenders had emboldened the perpetrators.

The year 2013 was not any easier on aid workers. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), a total of 91 aid workers were attacked in Pakistan from January to November 2013.

They included 20 women. As many as 29 aid workers were killed, 41 injured and 21 kidnapped. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the most dangerous region where 37 (41 percent) workers were attacked. Among these, 20 were killed and 17 injured. Twenty-one were attacked in FATA; three of them were killed, seven injured and 11 kidnapped. In Sindh, where 20 workers were attacked, three were killed, eight injured and nine kidnapped.

Polio workers and their armed escorts were the largest group at the receiving end of violence. Eight of the fatalities and 17 of the injured were policemen escorting polio vaccinators. Eleven workers were attacked in Karachi, 18 in Khyber Agency, 14 in Peshawar and 11 in Swabi. Of the 21 people abducted, nine were released, on average after five weeks in captivity. The women were freed immediately.

Attacks on aid workers (Jan-Nov 2013)

Region	Killed	Injured	Abducted	Total workers attacked
KP	20	17	0	37
FATA	3	7	11	21
Sindh	3	8	9	20
Balochistan	3	2	1	6
Punjab	0	6	0	6
Islamabad	0	1	0	1
Total	29	41	21	91

Source: OCHA

According to media monitoring by HRCP, 20 polio vaccinators and nine policemen protecting them were killed in attacks on vaccination teams across the country in 2013. Most of the attacks occurred in FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Karachi.

Political violence

2013 was an election year and pre-poll targetting of political parties and their candidates added to the customary political violence. The Taliban threatened and carried out attacks against Muttahida Qaumi Movement, Awami National

Party and Pakistan Peoples' Party. The militants asked the people to stay away from these parties' rallies and gatherings. Election campaigns of all three parties were hampered as they were increasingly occupied with their safety. They alleged that the wave of attacks against them was part of a plot to bring right-wing parties to power.

Election candidates were injured and killed and election rallies and offices targeted in bombings and suicide attacks claimed by the Taliban. Political rivalries also resulted in clashes leading up to the elections.

In Balochistan, insurgent groups threatened violence against political parties contesting elections and Election Commission staff was targeted in attacks. Among others, the office and some candidates of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and National Party were targeted in Balochistan.

In March, candidates running for election in Bara, in Khyber Agency, called for the May 11 polls to be postponed because of the threats received from a militant group and the lack of an effective security plan for the candidates to carry out their campaign. The sentiment was voiced repeatedly outside FATA as well with some political parties saying that if their candidates or leaders were targeted they would hold the Election Commission responsible for its failure to ensure safety for the parties.

On May 10, HRCP expressed alarm over the rising levels of violence ahead of the elections, including the targetting and assassination of candidates and political workers, attacks on rallies and campaign offices and abduction of former prime minister Yousaf Raza Gillani's son from Multan, and demanded a much improved performance from the security apparatus on polling day to make the elections secure.

According to the Pakistan Security Report 2013 by Pak Institute for Peace studies, 422 incidents of violence against political leaders and workers took place during the year, claiming the lives of 527 people and leaving around 1,100 people injured.

Karachi

The most populous city of Pakistan remained a powder-keg of competing political interests, each patronising its own militant wing or gang of criminals. The general lawlessness and terrorist attacks in the city combined to form a lethal cocktail.

The degree of bloodletting was such that targetted killings and random violence claiming around a dozen lives a day seemed to be a routine day in Karachi.

Security operations launched, including those by Rangers personnel, only gave temporary respite from violence. While suspects were arrested, failure to investigate the cases and prosecute criminals was a serious concern.

Large parts of the city remained ethnically divided and ethnic and sectarian violence was rife. Doctors, lawyers and other professionals were targeted

because of their sectarian identity. During 2013, thousands of residents from Lyari had to flee their houses to save their lives from violence. The affected people included members of the Kutchi community and residents of Old Slaughter House Colony.

According to media monitoring by HRCP of killings in lawlessness in Karachi, 3,218 people were killed in violence in Karachi, up 14% from 2012 when 2,823 people were killed. The menace of targeted killings seemed to be better entrenched than ever as 1,006 citizens excluding political activists were gunned down in targeted attacks. The figure was 19% higher compared to 843 target killings of this nature monitored in 2012. As many as 268 political activists were killed in Karachi in 2013, while 356 had been killed in 2012.

A total of 111 persons were believed to have been killed because of their sectarian identity, compared to 104 in 2012. As many as 159 people were killed in police encounters, up from 107 in 2012.

In 2013, 136 children were killed in incidents of crime and lawlessness in the port city, compared to 114 in the previous year.

The turf wars of Lyari gangs claimed the lives of 110 citizens; 121 were killed in 2012.

The violence also took a heavy toll on police; 169 policemen were killed in Karachi in 2013, compared to 133 in 2012.

Balochistan

The change in the law and order situation that the people of Balochistan had hoped for ahead of the elections did not materialise in the conflict-ravaged province in the first few months of the provincial government's rule. The actors of violence were banned sectarian groups and separatist insurgent outfits but also included the security agencies.

The actual number of citizens becoming victims of enforced disappearance in the province might well be higher, but families of 18 missing persons contacted HRCP and shared details of their cases with the Commission. Many others refused to share details because they feared that their missing relatives would be killed. These cases coupled with the discovery of dead bodies of 116 individuals, many of whom were believed to have been abducted by agents of the state, did not inspire confidence of a positive change any time soon.

If all this was not enough, the province was pummeled by explosions and other acts of terrorism that targeted religious minority sects and public infrastructure, including gas and electricity installations. The Islamabad-based Pak Institute for Peace Studies called Balochistan the most seriously affected region of the country in terms of casualties in 2013. As many as 487 terrorist attacks were recorded there in 2013, killing 727 people and injuring 1,577. The fatalities included 560 civilians, 97 police officers and 26 militants.

Quetta, the provincial capital, was the most seriously affected area in



Supporters of two candidates clash on election day.

Balochistan where 398 people were killed and 1,043 injured in 112 acts of terrorism.

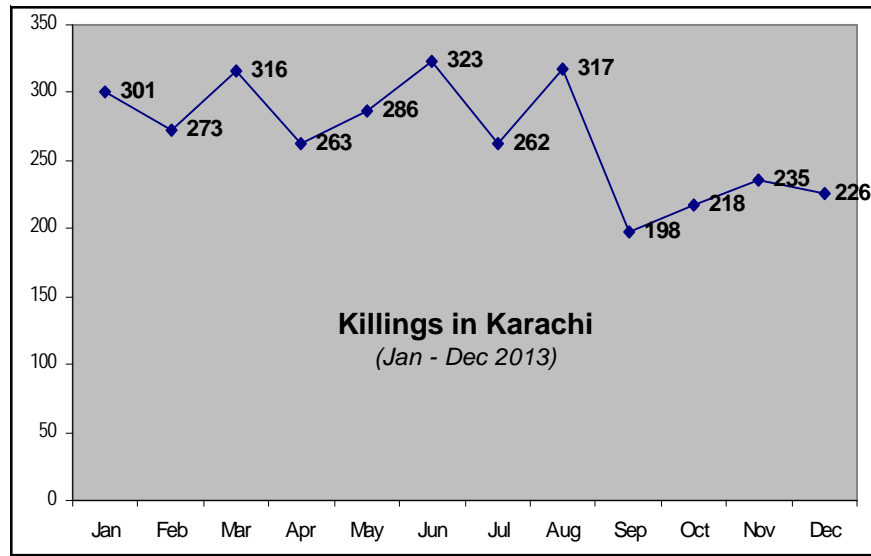
The sectarian killers struck early in Balochistan this year, killing over 200 members of the Hazara Shia community of Quetta in bombings in January and February. It was a measure of the people's desperation that they camped out in freezing cold for days, refusing to bury the bodies, until their demand to sack the government was accepted.

The lawlessness affected businesses and inter- and intra-province travel. Settlers, people who were not ethnic Baloch were targeted by separatist insurgents. In August HRCP slammed the execution-style killing of 13 labourers in Balochistan. Those killed, mainly from Punjab, were returning to their homes to celebrate Eid. An insurgent group claimed responsibility for the attack and sought to justify it by stating that the men worked for the security forces. However, the local police reports contradicted that claim.

FATA

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas bordering Afghanistan bore the direct brunt of an exceedingly merciless onslaught by a band of extremist militants. Forced displacement, drone strikes and abduction and killing of citizens by a combination of common criminal and militant elements were the other defining features of the region in 2013.

The security forces' operations in the region preceded expulsion of the residents from the area and there were some reports that after the military cleared an area of militants, the displaced persons were asked to commit that



on their return they would raise private militias to keep the Taliban out of their regions. The local economy had collapsed and the region that was known just a few years earlier for sending fruits and vegetable to the rest of the country now depended for almost everything on supplies from other parts of Pakistan. The seven tribal districts of FATA suffered 293 attacks in the year under review, killing 425 people and injuring 932.

Gilgit Baltistan

Even though in 2013 this remote northern region escaped large-scale killings of members of the Shia community on the solitary highway connecting it to the rest of the country, sectarian tensions were easy to ignite.

However, this year the region was hit hardest by the killing of 10 foreign mountaineers at a base camp of Nanga Parbart, one of the highest mountains in the world. Gilgit Baltistan's economy is driven largely by tourism and the tourists stayed away after the killings at the peak of the season. Closure of the road for maintenance, or later amid security concerns following sectarian clashes in Rawalpindi and the difficult of road travel in convoys of buses added to citizens' woes.

Suicide attacks

No part of Pakistan was safe from acts of terrorism in 2013 but some areas were hit particularly hard. The highest number of suicide attacks was reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA. Security forces, political leaders and sectarian and religious minorities were the target.

Two suicide bombers attacked Peshawar's All Saints Church in September, killing over a 100 people. This was the highest death toll ever in an attack



Peshawar was shaken by several suicide bombings.

against the Christian citizens of Pakistan.

Recommendations

1. *There are no shortcuts, nor any substitutes to proper investigation benefiting from modern techniques and effective prosecution of criminals. The law enforcement authorities should be asked to pay attention to both areas and should be relieved of their many miscellaneous tasks to focus on taking on crime in a robust manner.*

2. *There is simply no way to end bloodshed in the country without taking weapons out of the hands of citizens. This can happen only when the state can assure the people that their protection and safety is its first priority. The provincial governments should work together and Pakistan should also coordinate with its neighbours to end the glut of weapons and explosives.*

3. *The state must take steps to reclaim its writ in the conflict-scarred FATA and Balochistan regions with the caveat that actions against violators of law must be within the legal ambit and respect human rights.*

4. *The scourge of sectarian terrorism must be taken head on and dealt with once for all. Claims of support for sectarian killers among the law enforcement and security forces should be investigated and anyone found guilty should be prosecuted.*

5. *All political parties must join hands to end the senseless bloodletting in Karachi. They must let go of their militant and criminal surrogates. The governments, both federal and provincial, must not sit idly by as citizens get butchered. Killers must be caught, tried and punished to end impunity.*

Jails, prisoners and 'disappearances'

No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest, nor shall be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice.

Every person who is arrested and detained in custody shall be produced before a magistrate within a period of twenty-four hours of such arrest.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 10(1) and (2)

The dignity of man and, subject to law, the privacy of home, shall be inviolable.

No person shall be subjected to torture for the purpose of extracting evidence.

Article 14(1) and (2)

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 5

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 6

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 8

The prisons system was weighed down in the year under review by a range of problems, including corruption, overcrowding, mistreatment and

torture of detainees, poorly trained prison staff, and deficient accountability mechanisms. The preference for custodial sentences and the inclination towards detaining multitudes without conviction or even before their trial began was the biggest contributor to the overcrowding. A clear majority of the prison population in the country comprised under-trial prisoners, who were confined without a sentence often for years. Trials were disrupted at times because of logistical problems, lack of fuel for vehicles often prevented the under-trial prisoners from being taken to courts for their hearing. The detainees paid for these problems too, through prolonged detention without judicial determination of their cases.

Rehabilitation of convicts was no one's priority and the severity of overcrowding undermined what little initiative was aimed at prisoners' reclamation. Government officials conceded that narcotics and even weapons were not too difficult to acquire in prisons.

Prison staff demanding bribe to allow family meetings was also a common complaint, although some measures were taken to address that problem towards the end of 2013 in Punjab's 32 prisons. Media reports of recovery of thousands of cell phones from prisons across the country led credence to allegations of jail staff offering such facilities for money. Many criminals were said to be running their operations from inside prisons. In Punjab, prison staff was barred from using cell phones on the jail premises.

In November, the prime minister was informed during a briefing on violence in Karachi that there were 41 'fake' prisoners in Sindh's jails, enabling the actual criminals to remain outside. A body was formed to hold an inquiry.

Towards the end of the year, the Chief Justice of Pakistan said what all those exposed to the penal system knew already—that the prison system in Pakistan was based on the principle of retaliation and revenge.

After considerable second thought and issuing execution warrants for a large number of death penalty convicts, the new government eventually decided to persist with suspension of executions that had been in place since 2009.

The illegal practice of enforced disappearances refused to go away and ebbed and flowed in various parts of the country. The superior courts' hearings into the matter failed to deter the perpetrators or end impunity for their actions.

Overcrowding

One of the biggest problems for jail authorities and prisoners in most parts of the country was more people being crammed into jails than they were built for. Nothing played a bigger part than a stubborn refusal to consider modes of punishment other than imprisonment. Excluding Sindh, for which the prison authorities did not provide data to HRCP this year, as much as 64% of the detainees (38,097) at the end of 2013 were under trial. Data from previous



Extra security for important personalities came at the cost of common citizens.

years for detainees in Sindh suggested that jails in that province also suffered from the same disorder. Even the under-trial prison population (38,097), again with the exception of Sindh, was 16% higher than the overall prison capacity at 32,794.

There were 8,139 detainees in the 22 KP jails against the authorised capacity for 7,982. As many as 5,217 detainees in the province's prisons were under trial.

In Balochistan, things were slightly better. The authorised capacity of the 11 jails was 2,585 and the prisoners detained there were 2,862—only 277 higher. The under-trial prisoners numbered 1,288. The trend was reversed for juveniles however, as out of the total 107 detainees in the province's prisons, only three were convicted.

But nowhere was the situation more pressing than in Punjab, where 48,225 prisoners were packed into 32 prisons meant to hold no more than 21,527. Out of the total, 31,401 detainees were under trial.

At the end of 2013, in only three of the province's 32 prisons was the number of prisoners less than authorised capacity. In 18 prisons the detainees' numbers were over 100% more than the capacity allowed. Eight of these prisons experienced more than 200% overcrowding. At the Multan Central Jail 301% overcrowding was recorded; 919 detainees were held there against an authorised capacity of 229. Of the 48,225 prisoners in Punjab, only 16,824 had been convicted. These included 5,907 prisoners on the death row. The remaining 31,401 were under trial or awaiting their trial to commence. The

prison population included 783 juveniles, one of them a girl.

Odd one out

The total prison population of Gilgit Baltistan was 266, against the authorised detention capacity of 700. Gilgit Baltistan was the only region where the number of detainees was only slightly higher than the prison staff number, which was 249, and three were seven vacant positions on the staff too.

However, this region was also no exception to the high ration of under-trials. As many as 191 detainees in Gilgit Baltistan were under-trial.

Prisoners in Pakistan - 2013

Region	No. of prisons	Authorised capacity	Total inmates	Under-trial
Punjab	32	21,527	48,225	31,401
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	22	7,982	8,139	5,217
Balochistan	11	2,585	2,862	1,288
Gilgit Baltistan	7	700	266	191
Total	72	32,794	59,492	38,097

Women and juveniles in prison

Region	Women	Juveniles	Total prison population
Punjab	838	783	48,225
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	121	196	8,139
Balochistan	39	107	2,862
Gilgit Baltistan	2	0	266
Total	1,000	1,086	59,492

According to media monitoring by HRCP, no less than as 63 detainees, one of them a woman, were killed and 53 injured in prisons during 2013. As many as 28 detainees died from various diseases.

Healthcare facilities remained inadequate in prisons. The cramped conditions were also believed to adversely affect detainees' health. The quality of feed and improvement of conditions for prisoners in general did not appear to be a priority. The Punjab prisons chief stated that the government spent Rs 70 a day on food for each inmate, which surprised many.

In December, the Punjab prisons chief informed a three-member bench of the Supreme Court that two deputy superintendents and a jail warden had been suspended after a lizard was found in the food for women prisoners at

Lahore's Kot Lakhpat Prison the previous month.

In early December, a toll-free helpline was launched for all 32 prisons in Punjab to facilitate families and visiting prisoners to lodge complaints. The move was said to be aimed at making jail officials accountable, minimise corruption and facilitate visitors' access to jailers.

Prison break

An audacious jailbreak by Taliban in Dera Ismail Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the year was reminiscent of the one in Bannu in April 2012 and official negligence and incompetence were blamed for the assault which resulted in over 250 prisoners being sprung from the jail. There were some hints at collusion.

In July, around 70 attackers assaulted the Dera Ismail Khan, freeing over 250 detainees. Twelve people were killed including four jail wardens and four Shia prisoners, whose throats were slit.

Following this incident, the focus of almost all discussion on prisons and prisoners inevitably inclined towards hiking security at prisons and construction of new high-security prisons for detaining dangerous criminals.

In December, the Punjab prisons minister informed the provincial legislature that 12 new jails were nearing completion. He said 26,700 detainees in excess of the prisons' capacity were detained in Punjab. However, consideration of alternatives to detention was brought up neither by the treasury, nor by any of the opposition lawmakers.

There were long discussions about installation of cell phone jammers in



Taliban sprung over 250 prisoners from Dera Ismail Khan prison.

jails but they became operative only in Rawalpindi's Adiyala prison.

All at sea

Pakistan and India continued to detain each other's fishermen in 2013 for allegedly fishing across international maritime boundaries. Both countries frequently made such arrests as their maritime border in the Arabian Sea was poorly demarcated and many fishing boats lacked the technology needed to be certain of their precise location. Once detained, the fishermen were trapped in the overall dynamics of India-Pakistan ties and often languished in jail even after serving prison terms. Poor diplomatic ties between the two countries meant that fulfilling official requirements for return usually took a long time. The best hope for the detained fishermen in the circumstances remained release under the occasional "confidence-building measures" or humanitarian consideration by both governments.

The fishermen in Pakistan rallied a number of times during 2013 to demand release of their colleagues and relatives captured by Indian authorities while fishing in the sea. They complained that the government had not taken interest in bringing back the detained fishermen and appealed for its help to secure their release. Around 180 Pakistani fishermen were said to be held in Indian prisons.

In December, the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) supported the demands of a 10-member delegation representing Pakistan India Peoples Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFPD) and National Fishworkers Forum India, which had met the Indian prime minister to urge the release of all Pakistani fishermen from Indian jails. The PFF asked the Pakistani and Indian authorities to find a permanent solution to avoid arresting the poor fishermen. It proposed declaring a 100-nautical mile part of the sea a free zone for fishermen from both sides. The PFF also called upon the governments of both countries to avoid "cruel acts", a reference to firing on fishing vessels that had reportedly resulted in killing of a number of fishermen.

The media reported release of Indian fishermen detained in Pakistan in groups during the year. Pakistan released 45 Indian fishermen on May 25, 2013, one on June 17 and seven civilian Indian prisoners on July 9. In October, Pakistan was reported to have released 30 Indian fishermen, out of at least 40 arrested a few days earlier. The release was said to be based on humanitarian consideration and a policy to not arrest children and elderly fishermen.

In August, Pakistan released 337 Indian fishermen one day after the federal Interior Ministry announced that Indian prisoners would be released as a gesture of goodwill after confirmation of their nationality.

Even as the incremental release of the prisoners continued so did fishermen's arrests at sea. A permanent solution to end the misery for fishermen from both

sides remained elusive.

Pakistani prisoners in India

In July, Islamabad disputed a list of Pakistani prisoners shared by India for leaving out the names of 99 Pakistani prisoners in that country.

Pakistan and India had signed an agreement on consular access for prisoners in May 2008. Under the agreement, the two countries exchanged lists of prisoners on January 1 and July 1 every year.

The foreign affairs advisor to the Pakistani prime minister said that the list of Pakistanis detained in India submitted to Pakistan's high commissioner mentioned 386 Pakistani prisoners but Islamabad was certain that 485 Pakistanis were detained in Indian prisons.

According to the list India shared, 108 fishermen and 278 other Pakistani civilians were in Indian jails. But the Pakistan Foreign Office said that 172 fishermen and 313 other civilians were held in India. Pakistan's list was based on information received from the media, NGOs and applications from relatives of the prisoners.

According to the list provided by Pakistani authorities to the Indian High Commission in July, 491 Indian prisoners, including 437 fishermen and 54 other civilians, were detained in Pakistan.

The prime minister's adviser claimed that India had not released any Pakistani prisoner, not even the 31 civilian prisoners who had completed their sentence and whose national status had been confirmed. Under their bilateral agreement, both governments were required to release or repatriate prisoners

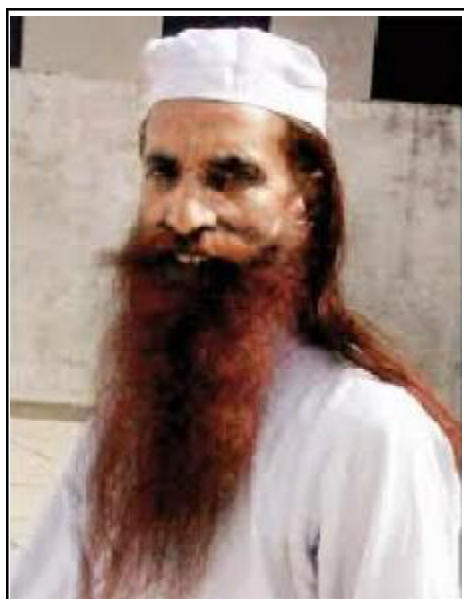


Pakistani fishermen return home after release from Indian prisons.

within one month of confirmation of their nationality and completion of sentences.

Prisoner's killing and 'retaliation'

In April, a group of detainees in a Lahore prison fatally injured Indian



prisoner Sarabjit Singh who had been sentenced to death in 1991 after being convicted of spying for India. He died in hospital while still in a coma. HRCP condemned the attack and called upon the government to punish the guilty persons. It also urged both countries to improve the lot of each other's nationals in their prisons.

Sarabjit died at a time when members of the joint Pak-India Judges Committee were visiting Pakistan in order to assess the conditions of detention of Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails.



The following week, Sanaullah Haq, a Pakistani was attacked in a jail in Jammu reportedly by a former Indian soldier convicted for murder. Sanaullah suffered extensive brain damage and died in a hospital soon afterwards.

The murder of the two prisoners briefly brought the focus on treatment of Indian and Pakistan prisoners in the other country's jails but no concrete steps were taken to improve conditions for them.

Sanaullah & Sarabjit: Their nationalities played the main part in their murders.

Death penalty

An informal moratorium on execution was in place in Pakistan when the year 2013 began and when the year ended. No executions took place during the year. However, in the latter half of 2013 an end to the five-year moratorium

and a resumption of executions seemed all but imminent. Although the government eventually decided to persist with the stay on executions in October, it appeared that Pakistan might not make the moratorium permanent anytime soon.

In July, HRCP voiced concern that contrary to the practice since 2008 a presidential order that stayed executions had not been reissued after its lapse in June. HRCP wrote to the prime minister and urged continuation of the moratorium. The Commission stated that with 8,000 death row prisoners in the country's jails and thousands more charged with or being tried for death penalty offences, never had more lives been at risk of being snuffed out by the state.

HRCP invited the prime minister to consider the numerous pressing reasons for HRCP's opposition to the capital punishment in Pakistan. The Commission pointed out that the deficiencies of the law, administration of justice, police investigation techniques and chronic corruption in Pakistan had not improved since the government first decided to suspend executions in 2008. The Commission highlighted the high probability of miscarriage of justice that capital punishment entailed and the fact that that was unacceptable when the punishment was irreversible. It reminded the government also that contrary to the much-vaunted argument of deterrence, the systematic and generalised application of the death penalty had not led to an improvement of the law and order situation in the country.

At the time when resumption of executions was being considered, the Taliban threatened to retaliate against the ruling party if a convicted Taliban was put to death. There were also apprehensions that resumption of executions could jeopardise duty-free access for Pakistani exports to the European Union.

While the government took no steps to explain to the people the reasons for the moratorium, HRCP organised on October 10, 2013, the International Day for the Abolition of the Death Penalty, a seminar in Islamabad to reiterate its stance on capital punishment. Professor Roger Hood, the renowned campaigner against the death penalty, delivered the keynote address and offered insight into



Shahrukh Jatoti: Men of means got away with murder.

the changes in some Muslim and other states' retentionist stance. Experts at the seminar called upon the government to persist with the moratorium until the death penalty was abolished in the country.

On October 10, HRCP activists across Pakistan held walks and rallies to draw attention towards the death penalty issue and to demand an end to capital punishment.

In the end, the federal government decided against resuming execution for the time being. A temporary stay of executions was ordered in mid-August after final execution warrants of a large number of death row convicts had been issued and execution arrangements finalised. HRCP welcomed the government's announcement and called for a thorough review of the death penalty regime in the country.

In early October, former president Asif Zardari, whose party had kept the moratorium in place for five years, urged the new government to review the offences carrying the death penalty. He offered his party's help to the government in reducing the death penalty offences.

Around the same time, several religious leaders opposed calls for ending the capital punishment and demanded swift execution of convicts.

The Sindh High Court chief justice stated in September that delay in the execution of convicts who had been awarded the death sentence was the only hurdle in restoration of peace in Karachi.

Although the new government did not execute any death row prisoner until the end of the year, it maintained that it could not abolish the death penalty. The interior minister stated that the government did not plan to abolish capital punishment or convert death sentences into life imprisonment.

In December, the Federal Shariat Court—a constitutional body authorised to examine whether laws complied with Sharia—ordered the government to delete life imprisonment as a punishment in blasphemy cases, stating that death was the only sentence in case of conviction and awarding any other punishment would be unlawful. The court observed that it had originally made the ruling in 1990 and directed the government to submit a report on implementation of the order within a couple of months.

In reply to an HRCP request to the government to formally suspend the application of the death penalty, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights stated through a letter on 5 December 2013 that the government was maintaining a moratorium on execution but the ministry did not favour complete abolition of death penalty “in view of prevalent law and order situation, particularly with reference to acts of terrorism.” It also stated that death sentences punishable under Hudood laws could not be abolished in view of Article 2-A and Article 227 of the constitution.

The ministry concluded that the death penalty was an issue related primarily to provincial governments and the federal Ministry of Interior and their comments would be sought before a final response was given. That response

was not received till the time of this report's publication.

According to official prisons data, the largest number of death penalty convicts in Pakistan was detained in jails in the province of Punjab. The 5,907 death penalty convicts in Punjab (including 85 women) at the end of December 2013 constituted one of the largest death row populations anywhere in the world. HRCP demanded that the Punjab government continue with suspension of execution of death row prisoners in the province's jails.

Death penalty convicts in Pakistan

Region	Convicts
Punjab	5,907
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	206
Balochistan	90
Gilgit Baltistan	15
Total	6,218

There were 206 detainees on the death row in KP, 90 in Balochistan and 15 in Gilgit Baltistan. HRCP had also requested data from the Sindh Prison Department but that was not shared until the printing of this annual report.

The courts continued to award capital punishment to convicts during 2013. According to media monitoring by HRCP, as many as 227 persons were sentenced to death during 2013. These included three women. Three of the convicts were Christian. The 227 convicts were found guilty of various offences including narcotics smuggling, kidnapping for ransom, murder, and blasphemy, among others.

Death penalty in Pakistan (2004-2013)

Year	Convicted	Executed
2004	455	21
2005	362	52
2006	445	83
2007	319	134
2008	237	36
2009	277	0
2010	356	0
2011	313	0
2012	242	1
2013	227	0
Total	3,232	327

‘Disappearances’

Cases of enforced disappearance were mainly reported from Balochistan,

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh in 2013. Dead bodies of many people, mutilated by torture, who were believed to be victims of disappearance were discovered in Balochistan. Enforced disappearance incidents were also reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Fewer incidents were reported this year from Interior Sindh, where nationalist political parties claimed that their activists had been abducted by agents of the state. The Supreme Court and high courts issued several orders for the government to trace and produce the missing persons.

The actual number of victims of enforced disappearance in Balochistan might have been higher in 2013, but families of 18 missing persons contacted HRCP office in Quetta and shared details of their cases with the Commission. Another 38 were reported to have been picked up from the Makran region of Balochistan. As many as 23 of these people had gone missing in Kech, six in Panjgur and nine in Gawadar. Thirty-two missing persons from Makran were released during the year.

The trend first noticed in 2010 of missing persons returning as disfigured corpses continued in Balochistan in 2013. As many as 116 bodies were found across the province; 87 of them were identified and many of the families either accused the security agencies of abducting and killing the missing men or suspected their involvement. The other 29 bodies could not be identified. In Makran, mutilated dead bodies of 23 missing persons were found.

Relatives campaigning against forced disappearances of family members walked from Balochistan to Islamabad in a gruelling 2,000-km protest march. Mama Qadeer Baloch, a 72-year-old retired bank clerk, led the 20-strong group of marchers. However, their odyssey did not lead to recovery of missing persons in the province.

As many as 37 cases of missing persons were reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2013. Twenty eight of these people had gone missing in Buner district of Malakand division, while seven had reportedly gone missing in Orakzai and Kurram agencies in FATA. Eight victims of enforced disappearance from KP were released in 2013. All of them belonged to Buner. One of the missing persons, who had gone missing from Dera Ismail Khan, was found to be detained in Lakki Marwat Internment Centre. Dead bodies of 11 missing persons were found in FATA and KP in 2013, seven in Jamrud area of Khyber Agency and two each in Nowshera and Dera Ismail Khan.

Seven cases of enforced disappearance were reported from interior Sindh. All the missing persons were said to be supporters or activists of Sindhi nationalist political parties. Bullet-riddled bodies of two of the missing men, Sajjad Markhan and Amir Khawar, were later found in Dadu. Three missing person were released and two remained missing as the year came to an end.

HRCP's petition disposed of

In May, the Supreme Court disposed of through a short order a constitutional petition filed by HRCP in 2007 for recovery of a large number of

victims of enforced disappearance. In over six years that the petition had remained pending, several people on the HRCP list of missing persons had been released from unacknowledged custody of agencies of the state.

On May 18, the Supreme Court disposed of the petition while observing that HRCP could pursue the matter before a government commission set up to look at the issue of missing persons.

HRCP filed a review application against the decision, saying that the short order had not addressed the grievances cited in its petition. It also contended that the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court under Article 184(3) could not be replaced by a commission, a majority of whose members were non-judicial authorities. It also emphasised that since the matter was of public importance and involved violation of fundamental rights, it fell within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. HRCP also highlighted that 47 people on its list submitted to the SC were still untraced and the families of those people had not been given any access to the commission set up by the government.

HRCP also noted that during hearings before the SC a number of missing persons on the list submitted by HRCP had been produced in court and had given statements regarding their illegal abduction and confinement by the security forces. The court took no action against the perpetrators even though in several hearings and statements recorded during the case the perpetrators had been clearly identified. HRCP also said that a relief sought in its petition for compensation for those who had involuntarily disappeared and then resurfaced had not been adjudicated upon. Until the end of the year the review application had not been taken up.

The Adiyala Seven

There appeared to be no end in sight to the ordeal of the families of the so-called Adiyala Eleven—11 men who had been picked up by the security agencies after their acquittal on terrorism charges and release from Rawalpindi's Adiyala Jail in 2010. Four out of the 11 had died in custody. The families of the remaining men continued their efforts to locate and meet them. In November, the Supreme Court ordered the defence secretary to submit a report in the case. An official of the FATA Secretariat informed the court that the seven prisoners were detained in Bannu and Haripur jails of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after being sentenced by the Lower Orakzai assistant political agent. The court observed that the men had been in custody for years and sought to know what crime the seven had been convicted of as the law enforcement agencies had previously failed to prove the charges against them. The chief justice also wanted to know how a new trial of the men could have been conducted. The lawyers for the missing men said that they had been tortured in custody.

Internment and disappearance

In September, the Peshawar High Court asked the security forces to either

release all individuals kept in illegal places of detention or shift them to notified internment centres. The bench, headed by the provincial chief justice, rejected a report by the Defence Ministry, which expressed ignorance regarding the whereabouts of most of the detainees in 150 habeas corpus petitions before the court. A day earlier, the bench had rejected a similar report produced in cases of around 250 missing persons.

The court observed that a man, who had been freed from illegal detention, had said a day earlier that he was picked up and kept in illegal custody by the security forces. The bench pointed out that it was mandatory under Article 10 of the Constitution that every arrested person was produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of his arrest, otherwise the arrest would become unauthorised and would constitute illegal detention. The chief justice observed that illegal detention was an offence under the Army Act and such cases could be tried by a civil court.

However, no steps were taken to prosecute any of the perpetrators of enforced disappearance this year either.

Recommendation

1. Urgent steps need to be taken to address the numerous problems afflicting the prison system. Individuals, including under-trial prisoners, must only be detained as a last resort. Trials should be expedited so as to ease the problem of overcrowding and spare the prisoners and their families unnecessary suffering.

2. The government should take concrete steps towards ending the death penalty and meanwhile it must persist with the suspension of executions. The reason for the five-year informal moratorium should be shared with the people.

3. Pakistan should work with India to find a permanent solution to the recurring detention of each other's fishermen. They should also consider the possibility of allowing prisoners to complete their sentence in their home country.

4. The government must make it a priority to put an end to the illegal practice of enforced disappearance. All individuals in unacknowledged official custody must either be produced in court or released. Those detained without due process must be compensated and the perpetrators tried for their crimes under the law.

Fundamental freedoms

III



Freedom of movement

Every citizen shall have the right to remain in and, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest, enter and move freely throughout Pakistan and to reside and settle in any part thereof.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 15

Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 17(1,2)

In 2013 frequent restrictions, both from state and non-state actors, posed challenges to freedom of movement for Pakistani citizens and foreigners alike. The citizens also faced restrictions on their right to reside and settle in any part of Pakistan.

The challenges included poor law and order situation, precarious movement through Balochistan and tribal areas, closure of the Karakoram Highway (KKH) which connected the Gilgit Baltistan region to the rest of Pakistan, and targeted attacks and sectarian killings. Delay in issuance of passports, arbitrary use of the Exit Control List hampered people's plans to go abroad. Violence followed by curfew, road blockades and protests, traffic jams courtesy officials' movement, ban on pillion riding and curbs on bonded labour also impeded people's movement in the country. The worsening of CNG rationing led to long queues of vehicles at the gas stations, unavailability of this cleaner fuel

for most of the week in some parts of the country, and the hike in fuel prices increased the cost of travel. Destruction of the infrastructure in the quake-hit Awaran district of Balochistan forced local residents to leave their home. In many cases lack of access to relief was difficult because of remoteness of the area or insurgents' attacks on relief missions and operations by the security forces meant that the people had to move in search of relief goods rather than these goods coming to them. The overstuffed state-owned enterprises—Pakistan International Airlines and Pakistan Railways—continued to perform inefficiently, affecting people's access to many parts of the country. Ban on entry of clerics to certain cities to prevent them from hate speech was also reported during the year.

Sectarian killings, curfew, ban on clerics

Road blockade as an instrument of restricting freedom of movement was used frequently and sometimes arbitrarily. Sectarian killings and increased tensions led to various restrictions being imposed. Entry of religious clerics was banned in major cities during the month of Muharram to prevent incitement to violence and hate speech. In Lahore 27 clerics were prohibited from making public speeches and 31 were banned from entering the city. Similar bans were imposed on clerics throughout Punjab; 60 clerics were banned in Taxila, 50 in Chakwal, 25 in Sargodha and nine in Narowal. The government notifications also banned sale or playing of audiotapes and public speeches that fuelled hatred of any sect, group or community.

One seminal example of the tension surrounding Muharram was the law and order situation which emerged in the city of Rawalpindi on Ashura (in



Curfew after a sectarian clash made life difficult for Rawalpindi residents.

November) after a Muharram procession coincided with a sermon in a Sunni mosque. The clashes left nine people dead and several injured. Curfew was enforced to control the explosive situation and mobile phone services were suspended. 5,000 policemen were deployed to control the situation. The curfew created severe hardship for residents as they struggled to get necessities of life. Violence also erupted in the southern cities of Multan and Chishtian due to protests against the Rawalpindi Ashura clash. Rallies to condemn the incident were held which again led to road blockades restricting the freedom of movement. There were subsequent killings of clerics in Karachi and Lahore. The killings were followed by protests throughout the country to condemn them, leading to roadblocks and traffic jams. Also protesters blocked the main roads and highways in many main cities across the country for a number of days in January and February after hundreds of Hazara Shias were killed in bombings in Quetta. The protesters also blocked roads leading to airports.

Political protests, VIP movement, blockades of national highway

Protests by different political parties restricted freedom of movement in all the major cities. The year started with protests carried out by Pakistan Awami Tehreek, which severely disturbed the flow of traffic in Islamabad. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) blocked the National Highway to obstruct the NATO Supply routes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Aside from the obvious inconvenience caused to traffic using the roads, blocking of national routes by political parties or anyone else was barred under the law but continued irrespective. PTI also carried out protests against inflation in December leading to shutting down of The Mall in Lahore for traffic. Other parties' protests for



VIP movement held up the people.

or against various issues had the same effect in several other cities.

Targeted killings in Karachi

Targeted ethnic, political and sectarian killings continued unabated in 2013. People remained in constant fear of outbreak of violence or becoming victims of random firing. Many areas continued to be marked as strongholds of certain ethnic groups and so remained no-go areas for others. Despite the government operation being carried out, killings continued unchecked. The operation against target killers often meant the imposition of a semi-curfew in the area. In November, the interior minister said that 9,000 suspects had been arrested in the second phase of the operation against target killers and extortionists. The operation was, however, yet to control or reduce the number of target killings by the time that the year came to an end.

Law and order situation in Balochistan and tribal areas

Movement through Balochistan and the tribal areas remained hazardous as the government struggled to establish its writ in these areas. Sectarian killing of Hazaras continued and two blasts in January in Quetta's Hazara Town left over 100 dead. The buses of Shia pilgrims en route to or returning from Iran could only travel in convoys with security escorts and some attacks were still reported. In October, an attack on a convoy resulted in the death of two FC personnel.

Residing in and travelling through Balochistan was hampered amid abductions of professionals and government officials on public highways. Those who were kidnapped included elected councillors from Kech district, doctors, custom officials and coal-miners. Kidnapping on public highways



Targeted killings raged on despite Karachi residents' protests.

made movement through the province dangerous. The blame for conducting the abductions continued to be put on both state and non-state actors. Major highways in Balochistan connecting important cities, including the Kalat-Quetta-Chaman road, remained incomplete.

The tribal areas continued to be out of the reach for citizens elsewhere in the country because of violence by extremist militants and because of security forces' operations there.

CNG crisis and petrol prices

Rise in petrol prices and shortage of the relatively cheaper CNG made travelling more difficult for the masses. Long queues of vehicles outside CNG stations was a common sight as people waited for hours for their turn. CNG stations also remained closed for several days and as petrol prices increased travel became too expensive for many. With the increasing number of vehicles and demand for industry, the shortage of CNG continued to be a crisis which required urgent attention of the authorities. The All Pakistan CNG Association (APCNGA) demanded the government introduce a 10-year CNG policy to solve the crisis.

Ban on pillion riding

The government suspended the mobile phone services in all major cities on Ashura during the month of Muharram and on Data Gunj Buksh's urs in Lahore which coincides with Imam Hussain's Chehlum. Mobile phone services remained suspended in Rawalpindi and Islamabad during curfew following sectarian clashes on Ashura. Pillion riding was also prohibited on several occasions as curbs on movement under Section 144 Criminal Procedure Code were repeatedly enforced in all major cities due to security reasons. This made travel difficult for the poor citizens who sought help from motorbike riders to get around. Gathering of more than four people was also frequently banned and for long periods.

As in previous years, suspension of mobile networks and ban on motorcycle pillion riding disturbingly became the preferred instrument of dealing with potentially volatile law and order



The pillion riding ban did not apply to all.

situations.

Passport delays

Delay in issuance of passports continued, especially in the first half of 2013, and people had to wait for unduly long periods before getting their passports, which forced them to alter or cancel their travel plans. In June, the Immigration and Passports director-general declared that “the backlog of urgent-fee passports has been cleared and over 450,000 passports of urgent category have been issued and sent to their relevant stations”. Despite these claims, delays continued to hamper travel plans of students and professionals throughout 2013. Both urgent and regular passports were delayed and citizens continued to complain about agents outside passport offices asking for bribe for quicker delivery of passports.

Exit Control List

The Exit Control List (ECL) is a tool exercised by the authorities to prevent people from leaving the national territorial boundaries. The ECL is a system of border control exercised by government under the Exit from Pakistan (Control) Ordinance 1981. Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) is responsible for formulating and monitoring the ECL. Lack of transparency regarding the ECL persists and people often find their name on the ECL only when they reach the airports. Prominent inclusions in the ECL in 2013 included General Pervez Musharraf, in connection with treason charges that he faced.

Hindu migration

With the rise in extremism Pakistan became a more and more difficult country for religious minorities. The Hindu community raised their concern about girls’ abduction and forced conversion to Islam. Migration of Hindu citizens to India or their unwillingness to return to Pakistan after going to India on visas of various categories was reported.

Forced displacement in Balochistan and Karachi

In September, a strong earthquake rocked Awaran and Kech districts of Balochistan. The insurgents attacked relief convoys and accused the security forces of using the natural calamity to consolidate their presence in the district. The affected people living in remote areas where relief was slow to arrive had to move to nearby districts where some of their basic needs could be met.

In the latter half of the year, members of Karachi’s Kutchi community were forced to leave their houses in Lyari area because of the persistent violence they had been facing.

KKH blocked, cutting off Gilgit Baltistan

Gilgit Baltistan is the only Shia majority region in Pakistan. The area is



Extensive work was done to improve Karakoram Highway.

accessible by land only through the Karakoram Highway (KKH). Sectarian tensions elsewhere in the country have often led to closure of the road or the Shia population hesitating to use it for fear of recurrence of the large-scale targeted killing of Shias in 2012 in particular. The road closure hit tourism hard, which was the mainstay of the region's economy. The Karakoram Highway was closed after sectarian violence in Rawalpindi in November. It remained closed for 13 days and left locals, tourists, students, patients, private and government employees stranded. Earlier in the year, the highway was also blocked for five days for maintenance. The blockade cut off the region as flights to Gilgit were frequently cancelled due to rough weather.

Lowari tunnel crisis

People were caught in a gridlock when, ahead of winter, the government rescheduled work on the 8.6 km Lowari tunnel, the only access route to the rest of the country for the 500,000 population of Chitral in winter. The tunnel was commissioned in late 2005. Over the next few years, this unfinished tunnel had remained open for winter traffic.

In 2011, public use of the tunnel was restricted to three alternate days in a week. This catered to the needs of the locals and there was no crisis.

But after the first snow in late November 2013, a new standard operating procedure (SOP) permitted three days of transit through the tunnel only every two weeks instead of one.

Hundreds of people were stranded in the snow. Those who could afford it spent weeks in Dir town's hotel rooms. Others slept in their vehicles or

turned back.

In Chitral, food supplies became scarce, sparking protests that finally forced the authorities to revise the SOP and open the tunnel twice a week—on Saturdays and Sundays—for six hours a day.

The authorities defended the new arrangement as the only viable balance between human suffering and project completion. The new deadline for the tunnel's completion was 2017.

Bonded labour

Bonded labour continued in interior Sindh and in brick-kiln industry in Punjab. The labourers were either kept in captivity by armed guards or their family members were virtual hostages, preventing them from moving freely or escaping the clutches of debt bondage. The continuation of slavery-like conditions for the bonded labourers was a verdict on the lack of effectiveness of the steps the government had taken to curb the illegal practice.

Recommendations

1. *The law and order situation across the country needs to be improved and safety of both local and foreign travelers ensured. The government must establish its writ throughout the country, including the tribal areas and Balochistan, and ensure that national highways are safe for travel and people protected from violence and lawlessness from non-state actors and the unfair practices of security forces.*

2. *ECL should be made public and its arbitrary use stopped. Nobody's name should be put on the list without informing him and giving him a hearing. There is also an urgent need to ensure that there is no delay in issuance of passports.*

3. *Efficiency of Pakistan International Airlines and Pakistan Railways must be improved and adherence to schedules enforced. Steps must be taken to provide CNG and petrol to people at affordable prices. Public transport system must also be improved to facilitate travel.*

4. *Special efforts must be made to eliminate the illegal practice of bonded labour that denies poor citizens the freedom of movement that the Constitution promises them.*

5. *Measures should be taken to prevent protests on highways and main routes. Efforts to persuade citizens that they do not need to block roads to have their concerns addressed should be an integral part of these steps. Places may be designated for holding political rallies and protests.*

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

... It is the will of the people of Pakistan to establish an order ... wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights, including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality

Constitution of Pakistan

Preamble

Subject to law, public order and morality (a) every citizen shall have the right to profess, practise and propagate his religion; and (b) every religious denomination and every sect thereof shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.

Article 20

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 18

No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.

No one shall be subject to discrimination by any state, institution, group

of persons, or person on the grounds of religion or other belief.

***UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of
Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief***
Articles 1(2) and 2(1)

The religious rights guaranteed to citizens and “every religious denomination and sect” by the constitution notwithstanding, Pakistan’s record in protecting members of its religious and sectarian minorities from faith-based violence and discrimination has been far from impressive in recent years. In fact, the year under review saw continuation of the recent trend of violence and impunity that seemed to reinforce each other. The growing problems for the minorities came from extremist militant groups seeking to justify violence and brutalities in the name of religion. Secondly, the challenges came from the local factors; and finally, from the government’s failure to protect members of minority religions and sects from faith-based violence or to confront hate speech, intimidation or intolerance. This year also nothing was done to weed out discrimination against non-Muslim citizens written into law or to introduce safeguards widely acknowledged to be needed in order to prevent abuse of the blasphemy law.

Numerous attacks claimed by extremist militant groups in various parts of the country targeted citizens from minority religious and sectarian groups. Much of the faith-based violence in 2013 targeted members of the Shia community, especially the Hazara Shias in Balochistan. All indications suggested that with extremists running amok life was going to be even tougher for religious minorities, sects and even moderate Sunnis. The bigotry and hatred were not the only troubling aspects. The use of violence by mobs and their ability to escape any punishment complicated matters.

The emergence of a new government following the May 11 general election was hailed as the first peaceful and democratic transition of power in Pakistan’s history and a milestone for the country’s shaky democracy. However, the religious minorities’ serious reservations regarding the quality of their representation remained unanswered. The main grievance was that the seats reserved in the legislatures for representatives of religious minorities were filled not by election but through nomination by political parties’ heads. This deprived the minority communities of the opportunity to hold their supposed representatives in parliament to account.

The Ahmadis called preservation of a separate voters’ list for them alone discriminatory and against the spirit of the joint electorate in vogue in the country. The community disassociated itself from the 2013 elections in order to register its protest.

The HRCP Expert Group on Communities Vulnerable because of their Belief—a forum that has since 2010 brought together representatives of religious minority communities with a view to finding answers to the challenges

confronting the communities on account of their faith—met twice during 2013.

In the first meeting in August, the deliberations focused on political rights and issues of representation of religious minorities in Pakistan. The theme of the second meeting of the expert group held in December was new challenges for religious minorities and ways to address them. The meeting looked in particular at a suicide bombing targeting a church in Peshawar in September; desecration of a Hindu's corpse in Badin district of Sindh; distribution of pamphlets in Sindh around the May 11 elections urging Muslims not to vote for non-Muslims; challenges for the Ahmadis; upsurge in hate speech and violence; and possibility of opening up space for religious minorities in the next local bodies elections.

The expert group reiterated concerns it had raised in earlier meetings and noted the failure of the authorities to prevent violence, other excesses and discrimination against religious minorities and end impunity for the perpetrators.

Sectarian violence

Members of the Shia Muslim community faced some of the most horrendous faith-based violence and hate speech during 2013. The year began with horrific acts of violence targeting the Hazara Shias in Balochistan. Sectarian violence continued throughout the year across the country, but most frequently in Quetta, Karachi, Peshawar, Hangu and Parachinar.

Within the first seven weeks of 2013, two massacres of the Hazara Shia community in Quetta had claimed the lives of over 200 people. Hundreds were injured in the two attacks.

Over 100 people were killed and nearly 200 injured in two explosions at Alamdar Road in Quetta on January 10. First a suicide bomber had blown himself up in a snooker club in a Hazara-dominated area. Ten minutes later, another bomb exploded as police and rescue workers arrived. Most of the casualties were Hazara Shias. Policemen, rescue workers and journalists were also killed in the second blast. Sectarian terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) claimed responsibility.

Such was the grief and outrage of the families that they refused to bury their dead until their demands for protection were met. Relatives, friends and members of Hazara community camped out at major intersections in Quetta, braving three nights in the city's freezing temperatures next to bodies of the bombing victims.

They only agreed to bury the dead on the fourth day after the prime minister talked to them and the federal government accepted their demands for protection by sacking the provincial government and announcing governor's rule in Balochistan.

February 16 brought more misery for the community as explosives placed



A familiar sight: The year began with mass murder of Hazara Shias in Quetta.

in a water tanker in Quetta killed at least 84 Hazara Shias, including many women and children. LeJ claimed responsibility for this attack as well.

Spontaneous protests erupted across the country to condemn the attack. Members of the Shia community blocked main roads and staged sit-ins in major cities. They also blocked access roads to airports. The families refused to bury the dead until the army was assigned to protect Quetta. The families finally decided to bury the blast victims on the fourth day after assurances of a targeted operation against banned extremist organisations involved in the attacks.

HRCF called the February attack a result of the government failure to crack down on militants and called upon the president to personally intervene to guarantee security of life to the Hazara Shias. HRCF also demanded that the president visit Quetta to demonstrate the government's commitment to protect Hazara citizens.

According to monitoring of incidents of violence and terrorist attacks across Pakistan by the Islamabad-based Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), more than 200 sectarian attacks took place in the country in 2013, killing 687 people—a 22 percent increase compared to 2012—and injuring 1,319—46 percent more than in 2012. In a reflection of the intensity of the problem in some parts of the country, around 91 percent of the people killed in sectarian-related terrorist attacks and clashes in 2013 died in Quetta, Karachi, Peshawar, Hangu, Parachinar, Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

As many as 57 Shias were killed and more than 100 injured in two explosions in Parachinar on July 26.

At least 45 people were killed and over 130 injured in a massive bombing

in Karachi's Shia-dominated neighbourhood of Abbas Town in March. The authorities and law-enforcement officials stayed away from the blast site for quite some time. The residents had to do rescue work themselves, pulling the bodies out of the rubble and shifting the injured to hospital.

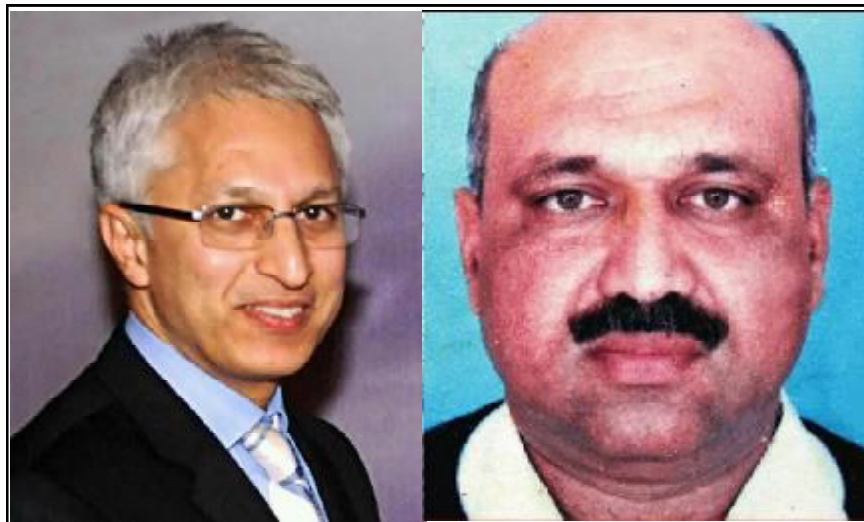
There were several other similar attacks which targeted Shias in mosques and markets and in drive-by shootings.

On a February morning, renowned eye surgeon Dr Ali Haider and his 12-year old son were shot and killed in a targeted attack in Lahore. The police believed that their murder was carried out by sectarian extremists since the doctor belonged to the Shia sect.

In February, Malik Jrar Advocate, a member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan's Council and a former vice-chairperson for HRCP's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter was shot and killed in Peshawar by armed men on a motorcycle. It was suspected that sectarian extremists had murdered Jrar. As the year came to an end, nothing concrete was done to bring to justice the murderers of either Dr Haider or Jrar.

Many more Shia doctors and lawyers and other professionals were killed in this manner in Pakistan in 2013. An op-ed writer for the respected Dawn newspaper wrote that Dr Haider's murder demonstrated that the life and property of Shias was no longer safe in Pakistan. The previous week, the same writer had urged Shias of Quetta and Peshawar to either relocate to Lahore and Karachi or seek asylum abroad.

A sustained hate campaign against Shias continued throughout the year, including wall chalking and clerics' diatribes, branding them infidels and calling for their murder. No efforts were made to proceed against the perpetrators. The political plenipotentiaries who permitted all this and remained reluctant to



Dr Ali Haider (left) and Malik Jrar were killed because of their sectarian identity.

challenge religious extremists subsequently wondered at the reasons for the surge in of fanatical sectarianism in Pakistan.

Religious minority groups

In 2013, the challenges for the various religious minority communities were not very dissimilar, but their gravity depended on factors such as the population, social status and geographical location of the communities.

The following sections only cover the main incidents reported in the media or highlighted by the respective communities or civil society and do not claim to present an exhaustive list of the considerable excesses against Pakistan's religious minority communities. An attempt has been made to capture the main trends and challenges.

Ahmadis

Ahmadis were declared non-Muslim in Pakistan through a constitutional amendment in 1974. A decade later, they were barred from identifying themselves as Muslims through an amendment to the Pakistan Penal Code (inserting sections 298-B and C).

The difficulties of Ahmadi citizens in Pakistan continued unchanged in 2013. They remained the target of a most sustained and vicious hate campaign. Several Ahmadis were murdered in targeted attacks and others were injured. On the one hand there was discrimination against Ahmadis, particularly in education and work, to the point where livelihood became difficult, and on the other they faced problems in burying their dead.

In March, an observation in a newspaper editorial thus summarised Ahmadis' situation in Pakistan: "They [Ahmadis] have no rights, no safeguards, and can be jailed for some of the pettiest 'offences' inventive and mischievous minds can think of."

According to media reports and information from the community, seven Ahmadis were murdered on account of their faith in 2013. There were 16 cases of assault on Ahmadis, some of these nearly fatal. In 2013, as in the previous year, the highest number of Ahmadis' killings was reported from Karachi. Six Ahmadis were killed in Karachi and one in Lahore. All seven were killed with firearms. Three Ahmadi men killed in Karachi were from the same family and were killed within a few weeks of each other.

In the 16 cases of assault, the Ahmadis were targeted usually with firearms but also with daggers and in one case in Gowalmandi area of Lahore a youth threw acid on an Ahmadi doctor. Cases of assault were reported from Badin, Nawabshah, Larkana and Karachi in Sindh and Lahore, Kasur, Sialkot and Jhelum in Punjab. One case was reported from Islamabad.

As members of other religious minority groups tried to test the effectiveness of the prevalent "joint" electorate system during the May 11 general election, the Ahmadis remained excluded and on a separate voters' list in the joint

electorate. In order to lodge protest against a failure to end this discrimination, the Ahmadi s announced their decision to disassociate themselves from the general election . Consequently, the Ahmadis did not get a chance to use the elections as an



New ways were conceived to harass Ahmadis on Eid.

occasion to find ways to address their concerns.

In October, police in Lahore, in the Punjab province, stopped a number of members of the Ahmadi community from slaughtering animals on Eidul Azha, proclaiming that the ritual of animal sacrifice on Eid was an Islamic injunction whereas Ahmadis were not Muslims. In at least two cases, police visited houses of Ahmadis and sought guarantees that they would not sacrifice animals found at their respective houses on Eid. One of the men was reportedly detained at a police station and not released until he provided a written undertaking that he would not sacrifice any animal. According to some reports, police had visited Ahmadis' houses after clerics made announcements in mosques that Ahmadis were following Muslim rituals. In Rawalpindi, the authorities did not allow Ahmadis to assemble for Eid prayers.

In all, 36 Ahmadis were booked in police cases under anti-Ahmadi laws in 2013 on what were often believed to be flimsy charges. The magistrates in lower courts usually denied bail to the Ahmadis while judges of higher courts were mostly unsympathetic or scared of the riotous crowds that packed their courtrooms during hearing of such cases.

In November, police in Lahore arrested a 72-year-old Ahmadi citizen, Masood Ahmad, who practised homeopathy, from his clinic and registered a case against him under Section 298-C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

The complainant in the case had reportedly visited Ahmad's clinic to seek medical advice. He asked the homeopath to explain the Ahmadiyya faith. When Ahmad responded, the complainant recorded his comments with a hidden device. He later gave the recording to the police as evidence that Ahmad had preached his faith and quoted from the Quran when he went to consult him. The elderly homeopath was arrested on the charge of posing as a Muslim for quoting from the Quran and moved to Camp Jail, Lahore. A judge refused him bail and advised the state attorney that the evidence called for charges under

sections 295-A and 295-C of the PPC. The former provision permits trial in an anti-terrorism court and the latter carries the death penalty. The elderly homeopath remained in jail as the year came to an end.

The intimidation and discrimination that the Ahmadis faced in burying their dead continued in 2013. In January, anti-Ahmadi extremists disinterred the dead body of an Ahmadi, Sanaullah, two days after his burial in a common graveyard in Dahranwali in district Hafizabad. In April, police in Rahim Yar Khan under pressure from local clerics disinterred the body of an Ahmadi woman, Seema Bibi, from a common graveyard in village 133-P, district Rahim Yar Khan.

Three cases of Ahmadis being denied burial in common graveyards were reported. These included two cases in Kuthuwali village in district Toba Tek Singh. One of the deceased was a one-and-half year old girl whose burial was prevented by extremists saying that a non-Muslim could not be buried in a “Muslim graveyard”. The child was finally buried four days after her death on land donated by a Muslim resident of the village. Previously, nobody in the village had objected to Ahmadis being buried in the common graveyard. The Ahmadis said that they had been living as a peaceful community and extremists from outside had stirred up trouble between the locals and the police had sided with the miscreants.

A week later when Ahmadis tried to bury an elderly woman in the common graveyard in Kuthuwali they were stopped again and asked to take the body to Rabwah, headquarters of the Ahmadi community in Pakistan. A day later she was also buried on the land donated by the Muslim villager. This time the extremists objected to that as well, saying that the land was an extension of the graveyard. Police allowed the burial under tight security after verifying ownership of the land and advised the family to “secure the grave”. A member of the group opposed to the burial, told a newspaper that a *panchayat* had decided that Ahmadis should not be allowed to use the graveyard as it was inappropriate to bury non-Muslims close to Muslims’ graves. He claimed that the police were favouring Ahmadis and the revenue department official who had verified the ownership of the donated land was also an Ahmadi. He said his group was trying to resolve the matter amicably but they would be willing to “embrace martyrdom for this noble cause”. The third case of denial of burial space to an Ahmadi occurred in Peeru, in district Jhang.

Although the law does not forbid Ahmadis from having minarets in their places of worship the authorities compel them to either demolish them or cover them up. In a number of cases, police demolished minarets of Ahmadi worship places on clerics’ demands in 2013. This was done in September at three worship places in Sialkot and at two in district Bahawalpur. The police ordered Ahmadis in village 312/JB, in Gojra, district Toba Tek Singh in July to cover up the minarets of their worship place in response to a complaint from local clerics. Ahmadis had to cover them with steel sheets.

An Ahmadi-owned newspaper and a printing press were targeted during

the year under review. In April, police in Lahore registered a case on blasphemy and terrorism charges against six Ahmadis associated with the Ahmadi daily newspaper, Al-Fazal. The accused included a hawker and editor and printer. Four accused were arrested.

In the case lodged with the police under sections 295-B and 298-C of the PPC and Section 11-W of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), the complainant accused the Ahmadis of printing and distributing the Ahmadiyya community newspaper Al-Fazal, which he claimed carried blasphemous content.

In a press statement, the Jamaat-i-Ahmadiyya Pakistan said that daily Al-Fazal was published only for Ahmadis, contained no blasphemous material and the allegations in the police case were fabricated. It accused a group of local clerics of following a newspaper hawker, Khalid Ashfaq, to the house of an Ahmadi subscriber, Tahir Mahmood, to deliver a copy of the newspaper and forcibly entering the house. They beat Khalid, Mahmood and his children and detained them for 45 minutes. They questioned them about the editor and printer of the newspaper so that they could be nominated in the complaint. Later they called the police and lodged a case. The Ahmadis said that a group of clerics, including a man named Hasan Muawiya—who frequently volunteered as a witness in anti-Ahmadi cases lodged with the police in Lahore—had been registering cases against Ahmadis in the capital city of Punjab. They said that instead of protecting Ahmadis' rights the government machinery had become a tool in the hands of a few extremists.

In a similar action in January, police and clerics in Lahore “jointly raided” a printing press owned by an Ahmadi and arrested the owner, three other Ahmadis and six non-Ahmadi workers. The non-Ahmadis were released and the rest booked under PPC sections 295-B and 298-C.

After numerous postponements, eventually the Sessions Judge heard and rejected the bail plea of the accused. They petitioned the Lahore High Court for bail in April. Extremists assembled in large numbers on the court premises in an apparent attempt to intimidate the judge. A big anti-Ahmadi banner was hung on the outer wall of the court. The bail petition was not heard on that day. In May, the bail petition was heard. The judge heard the arguments, after which he verbally approved the bails for the suspects. This announcement nearly caused a riot in the courtroom and the judge had to withdraw the order barely two minutes after he had pronounced it. He then referred the case to the chief justice for fixing it before another judge. A few days later all the accused were granted bail except one who was accused in another case. They had been behind bars for five months. No verdict had been given until the end of the year but the printing press had to close down, jeopardising the livelihood of the entire staff.

On May 28, 2010 terrorists had killed 86 Ahmadis in two simultaneous attacks on their worship places in Lahore. When Lt Gen Shuja Pasha, chief of ISI, the country's premier intelligence agency, deposed before a commission set up to probe the events leading up to the US killing of Osama bin Laden in

Abbotabad, he alluded to the 2010 attack in Lahore to demonstrate what was wrong with the country. His remarks on the issue were in para 497 of the Commission's report, which Aljazeera TV made public in July 2013. The para read: "The DG said the ISI knew that HVTs [high-value targets] had been caught in towns and cities. In Karachi there were "no go" areas where the ISI knew foreign miscreants lived. But the police dared not venture there. The situation was increasingly becoming true of Lahore and other cities. In Lahore the police protected those who attacked the Qadianis last year [2010] and even directed them to the hospital where the wounded were being treated. The provincial government had been informed of the situation but it took no heed of the advice and information provided by the ISI. No guards were assigned to the hospital as venal political influence intervened everywhere."

No one from the government responded to the comments.

A relentless anti-Ahmadi hate campaign, particularly diatribes in public rallies, continued throughout the year. Clerics assembled in Rabwah, on September 7 and indulged in hateful rhetoric. In October, the clerics converged again on Rabwah and transported approximately 9,000 people there to listen to their denunciation of Ahmadis. They exhorted the participants to wage a holy war against the Ahmadis and banish them from Pakistan. The authorities took no action against the hate-promoters.

Christians

Amid deadly attacks on churches and Christian neighborhoods, 2013 was one of the darkest years for the Christian community in Pakistan.

Five attacks on churches or policemen assigned for protecting the buildings were reported during the year under review, including the first suicide attack on a church in the history of Pakistan.

On September 22, two suicide attackers targeted the All Saints Church in Peshawar, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The attackers struck just as the Sunday service had concluded and hundreds of worshippers were about to leave. The attackers shot and killed two policemen standing guard outside the church. There remain wide differences regarding the number of fatalities in the attack; the government and the media reported around 85 people had died and over 100 injured. But members of the community claimed twice as many people had been killed. The outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the main extremist militant group blamed for most terrorist acts in the country, denied involvement. Another militant group claimed responsibility, saying that the assault was revenge for killing of innocent people in US drone attacks and adding that they would continue killing 'foreigners' in Pakistan as long as drone strikes continued. The federal and provincial governments announced three days of mourning but did not do much to go after the perpetrators. The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province announced Rs 500,000 compensation for the family of each deceased.

After the September 22 attack, policemen were stationed at major churches

Abandoned in Old Slaughterhouse Colony

Old Slaughterhouse Colony Lyari (OSCL), a Karachi locality where hundreds of Hindu and Christian families reside in abject poverty, was in the news in the last few months of 2013 because of violence and harassment of the religious minority communities there. Residents were caught in the turf wars of criminal gangs and spoke of denial of help from authorities and security personnel who were supposed to rid the area of lawlessness. In August, a Christian social activist of the area, Victor William Bhutta, was killed. His murderers were not apprehended. On October 26, two Christian activists Yusuf 'Joja' Iqbal and Younus Inayat were called out of their houses and killed by armed gangsters who had entered the colony premises. A grenade was also thrown into the compound, while the main gates were locked. Heavy aerial gunfire caused panic in the colony, and some residents approached a contingent of Rangers stationed about 250 yards away for help. The Rangers told them that no help could be given to them as they had no such orders from their superiors. After that the majority of the terrorised residents, around 600 families in all, started their exodus from OSCL, which continued over the next day. Terrified residents went to stay with relatives and friends elsewhere in the city, with no more than 15 families remaining behind. Some of the vacated quarters were looted by criminal gangs. The first news of the forced migration and murders was covered by the media after two weeks. On December 6, a Christian former councillor for the OSCL wrote a complaint to HRCP about the situation there. On December 9, 'R', a sister of the ex-councillor who had written to HRCP returned to her house to collect her belongings. She was accosted at gunpoint by five criminals who wanted to know her brother's whereabouts. They threatened and tortured her, and then gang-raped her. On December 10 HRCP sent the complainants' letters to the Sindh chief minister and the director general of Rangers. On December 12, with her family's support and urging, 'R', eventually filed a case with Baghdadi Police Station. She was taken to Civil Hospital for a medico-legal examination. Police had not made any progress in apprehending the culprits until the end of the year. HRCP sent

reminder letters to the government and law-enforcement agencies but no action was taken. On December 23, two days before Christmas, church services resumed at OSCL after two months but hundreds of families stayed away from the area because they feared for their lives in the absence of support from law enforcement authorities. On the first day of 2014 an HRCP fact finding team (FFT) visited relocated/affected families around Karachi. The displaced residents accused Rangers of complicity with criminal gangs in their forced eviction from the Christian/ Hindu neighbourhood because they refused to help them, even though they were in the immediate vicinity and were approached for help. Though HRCP was not shown any proof in support of the claim, the residents speculated that the Rangers wanted the OSHC space for their own use once the residents were out of the way. HRCP wrote to the Sindh chief minister and the Rangers director-general to look into the situation but nothing was done.

and a biometric system installed at All Saints Church. To express their solidarity with the Christian community in Pakistan and resist forces that were threatening peace, civil society activists formed a human chain outside St. Anthony's Church in Lahore and Our Lady of Fatima Church in Islamabad.

On the second day of protests after the church bombing in Peshawar, some Christians and Muslims clashed in Karachi. A Muslim man was killed during the clash, and three houses and five vehicles were torched in predominantly Christian areas of the city. Police registered cases on the charge of blasphemy against three Christian men after the administration of a mosque complained that the men who were part of the protest had hit the names of the caliphs written there with sticks and stones.

In April, unidentified people tried to burn a church in a village in Punjab's Vehari district. They damaged the building as well as scripture before fleeing.

Another attack was carried out in August at Assembly of God Church situated at Swati Gate, Peshawar. Of the two policemen assigned to this church, one was on duty when two armed men shot and killed him. In July, armed men had killed a police constable outside the same church.

In August, a church in Bahar Colony, Lahore was targeted in an arson attack by unidentified extremists. Copies of Bible, furniture and electronic equipment worth millions of rupees were burnt.

In November, at Symbol of God Church in Umeedabad, Peshawar, unidentified motorcyclists killed a policeman guarding the church.

In March, a Muslim mob set fire to a Christian-dominated neighborhood



Peshawar church attack was the deadliest ever against Christians in Pakistan.

called Joseph Colony in Lahore following accusations that a Christian man had committed blasphemy. More than 100 houses were torched. While the provincial government announced compensation for the affected families and reconstruction of the destroyed houses, the authorities were slammed for their failure to prevent the mob from torching houses. *[See details in the section on blasphemy law]*

A few weeks after the Joseph Colony attack, a clash occurred between Christians and Muslims in Francis Colony in Gujranwala district. It started when a Muslim prayer leader admonished a Christian boy for playing music on his cell phone outside a mosque. Soon after a mob ransacked Christian houses in Francis Colony. The police again failed to prevent the attack.

Three cases of marriage between Christian men and Muslim women that gave rise to conflict between the two communities were reported during the year under review. In one incident in June, a *Panchayat* told the Christian community living in a village in Sialkot to leave after they found that a young Christian man had married a Muslim woman. In the following month, another Muslim woman who had eloped with a Christian man and married him was threatened and the man's family was forced to leave their village in Sargodha.

During the same month in Sargodha, some landlords forced four Christian families to sign stamp papers that were then used to grab their property. The landlords also looted their houses and forced the families out of the area. The dispute had reportedly started when a Muslim woman married a Christian man from one of these four Christian families.

Three cases of alleged forced conversions also surfaced in 2013. According to the family, a 15-year-old Christian girl was abducted, converted to Islam, and married to an employee of a minister in Karachi. This incident took place



The Joseph Colony houses were rebuilt, the community's confidence was not.

in January and the police had allegedly been reluctant to act because of the influence of the minister.

Two Christian girls, aged 13 and 8, were allegedly abducted and married to Muslim men in Chichawatni district of Punjab. The girls' family announced this at a press conference in July.

In October, armed men in Islamabad broke into a Christian man's house and tried to force him and his two nephews to embrace Islam. The police arrested the accused.

A bizarre case of discrimination against Christian workers was reported in the media in July. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) had sent some Christian staff members to the Vatican in 2012 to attend the Pope's Christmas mass as part of CDA's pilgrimage programme for its staff. However, since most of the Christian staff lacked passports and were illiterate, selection was not made through the prescribed balloting process and 10 employees were handpicked and sent to Rome for a week. Upon their return they were informed that their selection was illegal in the absence of balloting and that each of them had to return Rs. 200,000. It was reportedly decided that Rs. 6,000 would be deducted from each employee's salary every month. One of the staff members reportedly informed the media that salary deduction had started in June.

Hindus

Hindus are the largest religious minority groups in Pakistan with a population in excess of two million. The Hindus continued to face discrimination and voiced their concern about forced conversion of young Hindu women to Islam

in 2013.

Those from the “scheduled” castes faced discrimination even at the hands of “upper caste” Hindus. A substantial number of scheduled caste Hindus in Pakistan are landless agricultural labourers in the rural areas of Sindh and Punjab. Many of them are in debt bondage.

In the lead up to the May 11 general elections, some scheduled caste Hindus held a demonstration in Mirpurkhas district of Sindh, complaining that the political parties had given tickets only to upper-caste Hindus and that more tickets should be given to representatives of the scheduled castes.

In the general elections, several political parties in Sindh named candidates from religious minorities to contest elections. But few did so in constituencies where they had a realistic shot at victory.

The Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) awarded tickets to Hindu candidates in two constituencies for the Sindh provincial assembly. In PS-61 constituency, the PPP candidate Mahesh Kumar Malani won after getting 42,137 votes, against the runner up’s 29,346 votes. Malani became the only member of a religious minority anywhere in Pakistan to be directly elected to a provincial or the federal legislature. The other Hindu candidate for the PPP, from PS-60, was Gianchand who lost to Arbab Ghulam Rahim, getting 34,796 votes to Rahim’s 53,437.

Both these constituencies were in Tharparkar district of Sindh. In this district, a local madrassa distributed a pamphlet ahead of the elections, urging Muslims not to vote for Hindus. The pamphlet described Hindus as infidels and added that voting for a Hindu candidate was the same as going against Islam. It was alleged that the madrassa had issued the pamphlet at the behest of an influential political family in the district. However, the family in question denied any link with the pamphlet.

The code of conduct for political parties and candidates, issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) ahead of the 2013 polls, specifically prohibited seeking votes in the name of religion or sect. Campaigning against any person on the basis of religion, ethnicity, caste or gender was also barred. However, the authorities and the ECP did not take any action after the pamphlet was distributed.

Elsewhere in Sindh, some important progress was evident even in the absence of election victory. Veero Kolhi, a “lower-caste” Hindu woman, became Pakistan’s first former bonded labourer to contest general election. She ran as an independent candidate from PS-50 Sindh Assembly constituency in Hyderabad district. She managed to get only 503 votes, compared to 35,652 obtained by the winning candidate, but her candidacy alone was interpreted as a milestone for women from the marginalised community and hailed by bonded labourers.

The Hindu and Sikh communities expressed concern over lack of a

mechanism to register marriages of citizens from their communities, and said that that contributed to married couples being exploited and harassed by the police and created complications in matters of divorce, maintenance and inheritance. In the absence of official record, couples often had to produce invitation cards to their wedding or wedding photographs as proof of marriage.

In July, the provincial law minister of Sindh announced constitution of a committee of experts to prepare a draft law on Hindu marriage and forced conversions in consultation with lawmakers from the Hindu community. Progress on the draft law was not visible until the year came to an end.

While precise numbers were difficult to ascertain, members of the Hindu community decried forced conversion of Hindu girls, especially in Sindh.

In June, Mahesh Malani, the Hindu lawmaker elected to the Sindh Assembly, claimed that increasing sense of insecurity among Hindus, caused by issues like forced conversion of Hindu girls to Islam, was forcing them to migrate to 'safer places'.

On February 24, nationalist political parties and civil society activists gathered outside the Karachi Press Club to observe a 'black day' to protest against the kidnapping and forced conversion of Hindu girls. Activists carried portraits of Rinkle Kumari, and chanted slogans against a parliamentarian who they accused of supporting Rinkle's abduction on February 24, 2012, and her subsequent conversion to Islam and her marriage to a Muslim man.

The protesters said that Sindh was the land of Sufis but some elements were sowing seeds of religious extremism by using extremists against democratic and liberal forces. They said that offenders using the name of religion got away with crime.

Growing intolerance and extremism in Sindh was manifested by an incident in Badin district of Sindh in October. Bhuro Bheel, a folk singer from Pangrio area of Badin, died in a road accident on October 5. He belonged to a Hindu community that buried its dead. Bheel was buried in Haji Faqeer graveyard in Pangrio where the community said several Hindus had been buried in the past.

Some Muslim youth warned the family the same day that a Hindu could not be buried in a Muslim graveyard. Announcements were reportedly made from a local mosque urging the Hindu community to remove the body or it would be removed. Hundreds of Bheel community members and Muslim supporters from Sindhi nationalist parties and civil society went to the police station to protest.

On the morning of October 6, a mob dug up the grave, removed Bheel's body, and placed it outside the graveyard. The body remained there for several hours as Bheel's relatives could not remove it for fear of the mob present in the locality. In the evening, a local landlord provided space for the body to be buried. Bheel's family accused local clerics of instigating the Muslim community and also inviting students from madrassas of nearby towns.

A senior provincial minister who visited the family in late October said

that a particular group wanted to encroach upon the graveyard land in Badin. The individuals who incited people to commit this crime were not proceeded against.

In December, the dead body of another Hindu citizen Allah Dino Bheel was dug out of his grave in Tando Bago, in Badin district. A Muslim cleric claimed that Bheel had been buried in an area of the graveyard that belonged to Muslims. The police intervened and buried the body in the same grave. After talks between local Hindus and Muslims, it was decided that a wall would be constructed to divide the graveyard between the two communities.

Sikhs

In Pakistan, Sikhs reside mainly in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) along the border with Afghanistan.

Sikh residents of various agencies of FATA have faced abduction, intimidation and attacks by extremist militants who have gained strength there over the last decade. While these groups seek to justify their actions in the name of Islam, in areas where they hold sway Sikhs have generally been targeted in kidnappings for ransom and various methods of extortion. There has been little official action in response to militants demanding and receiving *jizya* (protection money for non-Muslims in a Muslim state) from Sikhs in FATA. According to reports from the community during 2013, the Taliban in Khyber Agency of FATA gave written acknowledgement receipts for the *jizya* they received.

On January 8, the beheaded and mutilated body of a Sikh businessman Mohinder Singh was found in Jamrud, in Khyber Agency. Mohinder, a resident of Landikotal in Khyber, had been abducted from his herbal medicine shop two months earlier. A militant group claimed responsibility for his killing, accusing him of acting as a “spy” for a rival outfit. Mohinder’s brother had also been abducted earlier. He was released after militants shaved off his hair. In June, the government gave Rs. 500,000 as compensation to Mohinder’s family.

On January 21, unidentified persons kidnapped Sikh trader Rakbir Singh from Mohallah Jogan Shah in Peshawar, capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Rakbir was released 32 days later. The media reported that the police had played no role in his return and members of the community speculated that Rakbir’s family had paid ransom for his release.

Around 500 Sikh families reside in Peshawar, mostly in Mohallah Jogan Shah. Many of the Sikhs in Peshawar have migrated from Tirah valley in Khyber Agency as well as Orakzai and Kurram tribal districts of FATA due to the ongoing militancy and lawlessness there. Twenty policemen were deployed at Mohallah Jogan Shah following Rakbir Singh’s abduction in January, as the community voiced concern over insecurity amid incidents of kidnapping and mugging. In early February, all 20 policemen were withdrawn, prompting

protests by the Sikh residents.

In February, Charan Singh, a Sikh resident of Kurrram Agency, was abducted on his way to Kohat district for registration of his car. His whereabouts remained unknown until the end of the year.

Representatives of the Sikh community urged the Supreme Court to intervene after the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), which oversaw management of religious sites and attached properties of religious minorities in the country, gave some land of a Gurdwara in Lahore to Defence Housing Authority (DHA), an upscale housing society, in exchange for 200 plots in the society which were to be given reportedly to members of the Sikh community. The Supreme Court took *suo motu* notice of the matter and stayed transfer of the land to DHA. The chief justice observed that the ETPB had been created to protect the rights of Sikhs and had no right to exchange their properties. He said that under Evacuee Trust Properties (Management & Disposal) Act 1975, the ETPB should have approached the Gurdwara Committee for permission before proceeding with the land exchange. The court later declared an agreement for land exchange between DHA and ETPB void.

Following the May 11 general elections, Ramesh Singh Arora, from Punjab's Narowal district, became the first Sikh member ever to be nominated to Punjab Assembly. He was nominated by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on a seat reserved for religious minorities. In the provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf also nominated a Sikh, Soran Singh, on a seat reserved for minorities. Towards the end of August, the Pakistan Sikh Council raised concern over desecration of the Sikh holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib, at several Hindu temples in five cities of the Sindh province over a few months. The body's representatives called it a conspiracy to create discord between the Sikh and Hindu communities in Pakistan.

As in previous years, pilgrims visiting Sikhism's holiest sites in Pakistan thanked the government for looking after the sites. They demanded that visa processes for Sikh pilgrims should be simplified and made expeditious.

The expanding list

Some of the Muslim minority sects that had been spared much faith-based violence previously were also targeted in 2013. In August, hand grenade attacks on two community centres and worship places of Ismaili Muslim community killed two people and wounded 28 others, in Karachi. No one claimed responsibility but the police suspected Taliban involvement as the community had previously received threats from the extremist militant group. Prior to these attacks, the peaceful and progressive Ismaili community had only faced communal conflict in Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral.

In September, a father and son from the Bohra Muslim community were killed in a targeted attack in Karachi. Sectarian motives were suspected. The

attackers used a 9mm pistol, a weapon of choice for target killers in Karachi.

In October, a member of the Bohra community was killed and a relative injured in Karachi in what the police believed was a targeted attack on sectarian grounds. The family said that the deceased, a trader, had no enmity and got no extortion demand. Such demands were very common for traders and shopkeepers in the city.

Another Bohra was killed in Karachi in December. The police suspected sectarian motives for the targeted attack. Incidents of violence against members of the Bohra community had started being reported towards the end of 2012 when four members of the community were killed in separate targeted attack in Hyderabad within a span of 72 hours. A few months earlier, a bomb blast in a market in a predominantly Bohra neighbourhood of Karachi had killed six members of the community.

Over the last couple of years, Sufi shrines have been subjected to terrorist attacks in various parts of the country. On February 25, a blast at the Ghulam Shah Ghazi shrine in Shikarpur district of Sindh killed four people and wounded 27 others. Following the attack, the Sindh police chief called for reinforced security at the Sufi shrines, mosques and imambargahs. The Sindh Assembly passed a resolution on February 27 condemning attacks on religious scholars and shrines.

In December, an explosion outside the shrine of Baba Saheb in Charsadda, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, caused damage to an outer wall.

Blasphemy law

Accusations under the blasphemy law, often motivated by economic considerations and personal vendetta, continued as the occasional demand to introduce steps to prevent abuse of the law did not have much impact during 2013.

Although there have been many convictions under the law in Pakistan, death penalty has never been implemented against blasphemy convicts. However, dozens of people accused of blasphemy have been murdered before their respective trials ended, and sometimes even before the trials began.

Although religious minorities continued to suffer because of the law's misuse, many Muslims were also languishing in jails on blasphemy charges.

According to cases monitored by the National Commission of Justice and Peace, a well-known human rights advocacy organisation, 41 persons were charged under the Pakistan Penal Code's chapter on "Offences Relating to Religion". The chapter includes sections 295 to 298-C of the PPC. Section 295-C that covers blasphemy of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) carries the death penalty. The law provides life imprisonment for the desecration of the Holy Quran. The 41 people included 13 Christians, 17 Ahmadis and nine Muslims, while the religion of two accused was not known. Eight of these were charged under Section 295-C, while a judge hearing a bail application recommended

that another person, accused under Section 298-C of the PPC, should also be proceeded against under sections 295-A and 295-C. Out of the eight accused, three were women. The eight included three Muslim, four Christians and one Ahmadi.

Even when the supposed blasphemy was alleged to have been committed by only one person, in 2013 a whole community was made to pay.

The most striking case emerged in March when an entire Christian neighborhood in Lahore was torched following allegations of blasphemy against a Christian man, Sawan. The incident began when a young Muslim man accused Sawan of committing blasphemy. On March 8, a large crowd from a nearby mosque went to Sawan's home in Joseph Colony. The police lodged a case against Sawan to pacify the mob and took his father into custody after the mob had started beating him. Fearing for their safety, scores of Christian families fled the area overnight, apparently after police advised them to do so. The following day (March 9) the mob returned and ransacked and burned more than 100 houses as well as a church and pillaged many shops.

The police took Sawan into custody the following day. The media quoted a police officer that it appeared that the man had been falsely accused of blasphemy but the police were forced to register a case to placate the mob.

Pervaiz Rafiq, a Christian member of the Punjab Assembly on a reserved seat, resigned in protest against repeated attacks against minority communities.

The Punjab government announced half a million rupees for each family and paid for reconstruction of their houses. Following the tragic incident, the Christian community in Lahore as well as other cities staged protests. Some clashes were also reported between the protesters and police.

Similar organised arson attacks against Christian neighbourhood had previously occurred elsewhere in Punjab, mainly Gojra and Shantinagar. In 2009, around 60 houses of Christians had been torched in Gojra, Toba Tek Singh, and seven Christians were burned alive after alleged desecration of the Quran by a Christian. None of the perpetrators of the incident had been convicted



Only the brave civil society activists dared to demand blasphemy law reform.

until the end of 2013.

A fact-finding mission by HRCF into the Joseph Colony attack concluded that the police and provincial government could have prevented the attack as they knew of the possibility of an attack but failed to take the necessary measures. A few dozen policemen posted to protect the colony proved no match for the 3,000-strong mob.

Many leading religious scholars and parliamentarians spoke against the misuse of the blasphemy law. The Supreme Court ordered the police to protect the Christian community in Joseph Colony.

Allegations, conviction and acquittal

In December 2013, three people were sentenced to death upon conviction in two blasphemy cases. In one case, Riaz Ahmed, 34, and Ijaz Ahmed, 38, residents of Haroonabad, in Punjab's Bahawalpur district, were sentenced. They were accused of claiming in 2011 that they had seen God. The judge also fined each convict Rs 100,000.

In the other case, another resident of Haroonabad was awarded death for allegedly drawing pictures of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the walls of his room.

Two Christian men who had been arrested for committing blasphemy were acquitted this year. One of them was Barkat Masih, a 56-year-old Christian, accused of blasphemy in his hometown of Khairpur in 2011 by two Muslim men after he refused to hand over to them duplicate keys of a shrine where he worked as a sweeper. Barkat's lawyer said that the local lawyer community had been vocal against him for defending the case and the opposing counsel and his associates had threatened him for "supporting a man who had committed blasphemy". He said no security had been provided to him.

Another Christian man, Younis Masih, who had been arrested in September 2005 in Lahore on charges of blasphemy and sentenced to death in May 2007, was acquitted on appeal by the Lahore High Court due to lack of evidence. His lawyer successfully argued that there was no direct evidence against Younis and that the case was based on hearsay.

A cleric, Khalid Jadoon who had falsely accused 14-year old Christian girl Rimsha of burning pages containing Quranic verses—before it emerged that he had tampered with the evidence and was himself charged with the same offence—was acquitted by a court for lack of evidence. The prosecution failed to prove the charges while all the witnesses withdrew their accusations.

In February, police in the south Punjab district of Multan registered a case against Sherry Rehman, Pakistan's ambassador to the United States at the time, for allegedly committing blasphemy.

The petitioner, a resident of Multan, had accused Rehman of committing

blasphemy while speaking on the country's blasphemy laws in a TV program aired in November 2010. The petitioner had unsuccessfully sought an order first from a lower court and then the Lahore High Court directing the police to register a case against Rehman. In January 2013, a bench of Supreme Court had directed the Multan police chief to take action in accordance with the law.

Implications after release

The troubles for many individuals accused of blasphemy or desecration of Quran do not end even after their acquittal. During a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on National Harmony in April to discuss the Joseph Colony attack, a senator had noted as much, stating that it took blasphemy accused eight to 10 years to prove their innocence in courts and even after that they could not stay safe upon their release.

Human rights activists note the security implications even for the accused found innocent upon release. They say that the courts can only provide justice, but cannot guarantee security and the police can only ensure safety of the citizens for ever and relocation is often the only real option.

Rimsha Masih—the minor Christian girl from Islamabad falsely accused of desecrating pages containing Quranic verses before she was acquitted—and her family had been in hiding since her release because they had been receiving threats. Media reports suggested that Rimsha and her family had fled Pakistan in March and settled in Canada due to concerns for their safety.

A Chinese national, who worked as administration manager of a Chinese consortium building a major hydropower project in Azad Kashmir, was accused on May 17 of desecrating the Quran, prompting hundreds of workers to attack his company's offices. Less than a fortnight later, he was cleared of the charge as the police said no incident of desecration of Quran had happened. Lee was accused of throwing a copy of the Quran on the ground while moving the belongings of a Pakistani doctor after he had refused to vacate his room for relocation. A minister said that 35 people involved in violence at the project had been identified and legal action against them was being contemplated.

In late December, a senior pilot of state carrier Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) went on leave after being accused of blasphemy for allegedly disrespecting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The president of the airline's employees association had complained that the pilot had used derogatory words about the 'kalma' or Islamic declaration of faith and the prophet. A committee set up to probe the matter submitted its findings to the PIA chairman. The committee's findings had not been made public but it had been suggested that the pilot was found guilty and his sacking recommended. The pilot reportedly went on leave to save himself from "extremist elements" in the airline. His friends even suggested that he should

leave the country to save his life.

Calls for reform — and for status quo

Discussing the Joseph Colony attack, the Senate Standing Committee on National Harmony recommended in April stern punishment for people involved in making false blasphemy accusations. The committee suggested that the punishment for falsely accusing someone of blasphemy should be the same as that for committing blasphemy.

Addressing a press conference in March with several other religious scholars the day following the Joseph Colony attack, head of the official moon-sighting committee suggested that blasphemy accused should be tried by the Federal Shariat Court (FSC). The FSC is authorised to examine and determine whether the laws comply with Sharia. He demanded that procedural changes made for lodging blasphemy cases had made registration of such cases with the police difficult, leading to unrest among Muslims. He demanded that the changes should be undone.

In September, the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), a constitutional body responsible for giving legal advice on Islamic issues to parliament, briefly considered prevention of abuse of the blasphemy law but any notions for a change were quickly shot down. One of the clerics on the council said that abuse of the law was earning a bad name for Pakistan and religious scholars were being maligned. He proposed that those making a false accusation also needed to face death penalty because the words attributed to the accused were actually uttered by the accuser.

This annoyed some other members who demanded the cleric's resignation from the CII. The members opposing amendments to the blasphemy law, who were in clear majority, maintained that they did not want to discourage people from coming forward and lodging complaints against blasphemers. They said that Section 194 of the PPC already envisaged punishment for lodging a false case with the police and there was no need to amend the blasphemy law.

A day later, parliamentarians from Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), the third largest party in the National Assembly, called on lawmakers to review the blasphemy law in the wake of CII's recommendations that no amendments were needed.

PTI leader Javed Hashmi said that religion was being misused as a means to attain power. He said that the blasphemy law was "incorrectly made," due to which many innocent people were languishing in jails. Therefore, he said there was a need to review the law.

Lawmaker from a right wing party defended the blasphemy law and said it was very effective. He asked the PTI lawmakers to move a bill seeking an amendment to the law or to approach the CII or the Federal Shariat Court.

In December, the Federal Shariat Court (FSC) issued orders in a contempt

petition to delete life imprisonment as a punishment in blasphemy cases, stating that death was the only sentence in case of conviction and awarding any other punishment would be unlawful.

The court noted that in its ruling in 1990, it had clarified that life imprisonment should be deleted as a punishment, since irreverence of any prophet was intolerable and any blasphemer should be given only death sentence. The court sought a report from the government for implementation of the order within a couple of months.

Recommendations

1. Unless serious steps are taken to stop sustained hate campaigns against members of religious and sectarian minority groups and unless those fanning hate speech are brought to justice, the bloodletting in the name of religious faith cannot be stopped. Promoting harmony and tolerance through various avenues, including curriculum and by relying on role models, should be pursued. It is imperative that human rights of all citizens are seen not in the context of religious minority or majority but in the context of equality.

2. The blasphemy law is in urgent need of reform to prevent its abuse by extremists and opportunists. This need must be explained to the people by engaging religious scholars. The systematic and organised intimidation of judges in cases of blasphemy or desecration of scripture undermines administration of justice and must be prevented through well thought-out steps to ensure for suspects due process, and indeed justice.

3. There is considerable evidence that those involved in faith-based violence have penetrated law enforcement agencies. Rather than living in denial, these elements should be urgently identified and weeded out. Complaints of police siding with the trouble makers also need to be seriously investigated with a view to ending impunity.

4. Codification of personal law for Hindus and Sikhs should be a priority. This must be done in consultation with these communities.

5. Nothing has caused as great frustration and desperation among Pakistan's minority religious faiths as incidents of forced conversion and lack of action against the perpetrators. The state should introduce a mechanism to ensure that the girls in question and their families get justice without having to suffer harassment and threats from rowdy crowds in courts and powerful politicians patronising this repulsive trampling of rights.

Freedom of expression

Every citizen shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, and there shall be freedom of the press, subject to any reasonable restriction imposed by law in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court or commission of or incitement to an offence.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 19

Every citizen shall have the right to have access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law.

Article 19-A

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 19

The hard won freedom of expression of the populace faced severe challenges from the actors whose excesses this freedom was meant to expose. In a supposedly democratic country, citizens were seldom taken on board before their access to certain information was blocked. Journalists continued to be targeted while not a single perpetrator was brought to justice in the entire year. Those bent on curbing the freedom of expression were successful in intimidating many journalists into self-censorship for the sake of their safety.

Pakistan was in the 159th place out of 179 countries in the world, according

to the World Freedom Index report for 2013. It topped the list of most journalists killed in South Asia in 2013. No less than 11 journalists died practising a right guaranteed to them in the Constitution. The authorities did not take the required steps to make journalism a less dangerous undertaking in Pakistan.

Journalists and their support crew continued to risk their lives to deliver news. While the risk had steadily risen over the years, the average wage for journalists remained low even as inflation grew.

Steps were taken in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces to promote freedom of expression and enhance people's access to information regarding the working of the government. The measures, though well debated, fell short of the people's demands. Terms such as 'ideology of Pakistan' and 'national security' continued to be used to hinder access to information.

The public space for the practice of the freedom of expression dwindled as state control on social media and the Internet increased. Officials claimed a number of times that the YouTube ban would end soon but that did not happen during 2013. Other harmless entertainment websites were also briefly targeted because the content supposedly compromised national security.

On the Supreme Court's instructions, following a petition for media accountability by some television journalists, the Information Ministry made public a long list of journalists who had benefitted from its secret funds. Allegations of unethical behaviour and influence peddling have long hung over Pakistan's media. Some of the payments in the 15-page document did not appear to be particularly scandalous, with cash spent to pay for travel and accommodation for journalists accompanying dignitaries on official government trips, for example. Critics said the payments made to journalists were part of an effort to buy the government favourable coverage.

Safety of journalists

According to media reports, 11 journalists were killed in Pakistan in 2013. A journalist was killed in the line of duty every 33 days, which was the highest average among all South Asian countries. According to the 2013 annual report of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), anti-press violence had greatly increased in the country in the past five years. This trend contributed to Pakistan being the 8th most dangerous country in the world for journalists in 2013. Pakistan had held the 10th spot in the same rankings during the previous year.

The situation remained most precarious in Balochistan and Sindh owing to the poor law and order situation there. Journalists in Balochistan faced threats from many sides. They continued to be threatened and targeted by militants, both nationalist and Islamist, and state authorities.

In 2011, the Balochistan High Court (BHC) had prohibited the electronic and print media from airing or publishing statements or propaganda of an organisation that had been banned or was under observation under the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997. Any newspaper or channel which published

or aired such material could be tried under the law and face jail term. Even though no organisation was proceeded against on that ground in 2013, the journalists in Balochistan said that they were stuck between a rock and a hard place. They said that when militants sent them their statements for media coverage, they also threatened to kill them if the statements were not carried. A fatwa (edict) was issued by an affiliate of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in October 2013 which accused the media of propaganda and refusing to publish their statements. The fatwa also contained a warning that if the media continued its 'biased' reporting against the Taliban, they would start targeting media persons. The edict also included pictures of journalists Hamid Mir and columnist Hasan Nisar. This fatwa, initially released in 2012, was reissued in the wake of extensive media coverage given to Malala Yousafzai, the teenage advocate for girls' education who was shot by the Taliban in Swat in October 2012.

While the security situation in the country remained appalling, the journalists faced threats from politicians as well. On January 3, journalists covering the Senate proceedings stormed out of the session against the allegedly threatening remarks by MQM leader Altaf Hussain. The journalists returned only after assurances by senators that their concerns would be conveyed to the MQM. The journalists complained that the political party's leader had, in a telephone address, uttered abusive remarks about them, warning journalists of severe consequences if they "didn't change their ways". The MQM chief later offered an unconditional apology to the journalists.

Journalists continued to demand protection from the state in light of the growing threats and attacks against them. At a protest arranged by Khyber Union of Journalists (KhUJ) and Peshawar Press Club on the call of Pakistan



Media persons protest against killing of journalists in Quetta.

Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) on January 12, journalists condemned the authorities and media houses for not ensuring their safety. They said the slain media workers and journalists were not provided life or health insurance though the equipment that they handled was insured. The protesters demanded that standard operating procedures should be developed and implemented to ensure safety and protection for them. They called for setting up a special fund to support families of slain journalists.

The UN launched an Action Plan against Impunity in five pilot countries, including Pakistan, in view of the deteriorating security situation for the journalists in the country. Launched in March, the plan sought to support efforts to promote security and safety of journalists in Pakistan.

The caretaker prime minister approved the establishment of a welfare fund for journalists targeted in conflict zones. In case of death of a journalist or a disability suffered by her/him, financial assistance was made mandatory to reduce the burden on the family. It was decided that through PEMRA, the information ministry would allocate Rs 10 million for this fund.

Attacks on journalists in 2013

January

◆ Two blasts in a snooker club at Alamdar Road in Quetta killed 100 people. Three journalists—Imran Shaikh, a cameraman for Samaa News, Muhammad Iqbal, a photographer with News Network International (NNI) and Saifur Rehman, reporter for Samaa TV—who had arrived at the scene to cover the first blast were killed in the second. Three journalists were injured in the second blast.

February

◆ A correspondent of daily Jang in Larkana—who had survived an attack on his life and lost a son, two nephews, and a grandson for daring to report the crimes committed by a local feudal lord—was targeted again in February when the journalist's cousin was murdered. This happened even though the Supreme Court had taken *suo motu* notice of the feudal lord's excesses.

◆ Journalist Khushnood Ali Shaikh died in a road accident in Karachi. However, eyewitnesses and his family called it a targeted killing. The family said that he had been receiving threats. On the 26th, he ventured out to go to a grocery store. As soon as he got out of his car, another car ran him over. Eyewitnesses said the car deliberately hit Shaikh.

◆ Journalist and President of Miranshah Press Club Malik Mumtaz Khan was shot dead in North Waziristan by unidentified gunmen who were waiting for him in a vehicle with tinted windows. A TTP spokesperson denied involvement and condemned the killing, saying that Malik “was a good reporter

and served the tribal people well”.

March

◆ President of Kalat Press Club Mehmood Khan Afridi was shot and killed by unidentified assailants while he was in a PCO in Kalat town. The perpetrators fled the scene on a motorbike.

◆ Javed Chaudhry, columnist and anchor of a current affairs TV show, contacted Kohsar police in Islamabad to complain about threatening phone calls that he had been receiving from two numbers. The callers threatened to kidnap him along with his children and murder them. The police registered a case and forwarded the phone numbers to the relevant authorities.

◆ Three men on a motorbike fired into the air near a journalists’ protest camp in Lahore outside the Punjab Assembly. Five journalists from different newspapers were present at the hunger strike camp. The police collected empties and gathered information from the scene but the perpetrators were not identified or apprehended. .

◆ A demonstration was held in Lahore to condemn death threats made against senior photographer Azhar Jafri and his family by a banned sectarian militant organisation, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Pamphlets, inscribed with threats to Jafri and his family, were delivered at his under-construction house in Lahore. A similar warning was spray-painted on the walls of his house. Hundreds of media persons and journalists joined the demonstration, which also focused on the general increase in threats against and intimidation of journalists.

◆ In Sukkur, men from an intelligence agency entered a police station and illegally freed a suspect from lockup and took him away. The man had been arrested in a land grabbing case a day earlier. The personnel also took away the police station house officer (SHO) and two other policemen. When journalists arrived at the scene and tried to record the event, the personnel hit them with rifle butts. One photographer, Ibrahim Suhryani, was severely injured. The three policemen were released after a few hours.

April

◆ Journalist Ammar Sohail was covering a local fair in Okara when he was abducted by 25 unidentified people. The accused robbed him of cash and a mobile phone and tortured him.

◆ Two journalists working for a private TV channel went to Saidu Sharif Hospital in Mingora, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to gather information about those injured and killed in a road accident. Policemen at the hospital beat them up and threatened them of dire consequences. The Swat Press Club members and office bearers went to the police to register a case against the personnel involved. The journalists then decided to visit the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of police whose guard refused to allow a meeting and beat up another journalist, Shahid Ali Khan. The journalists proceeded to the local courts and



The list of journalists killed because of their work grew longer.

staged a protest there.

◆ In Gujranwala, four journalists were tortured and beaten for covering a case of police torture on a prisoner in lock-up. The under-trial prisoner had informed a court that he had been tortured in custody. When the journalists arrived at the police station to get the full story, policemen beat up and injured Hanif Khokhar, Ali Raza, Amjad Ali and Nasir.

◆ Balochistan newspaper daily Tawar’s bureau office in Karachi was attacked by unidentified men who stole expensive equipment and burned the office record. The Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) condemned the attack and highlighted that Haji Abdur Rehman, a journalist of daily Tawar, had been missing for more than a month while three journalists working for the newspaper had been murdered in the last three years.

◆ Arif Shafi, a journalist from Peshawar who worked with a news agency in Kabul, died in a University Road motorcycle bombing in Peshawar. He was on leave and was returning to Afghanistan to resume his work in Kabul. It was not clear if he was the target of the bombing.

May

◆ In May, The New York Times’ Islamabad bureau chief, Declan Walsh, was ordered to leave Pakistan on the eve of national elections. He was informed that his visa had been cancelled on account of “undesirable activities”. He was

given 72 hours to leave the country. He had not been given permission to return to the country until the end of the year, though the prime minister had promised to review the case.

◆ Ahmad Ali Joiya, a 25-year-old reporter who worked for several newspapers in Bahawalnagar district of Punjab was shot dead by a criminal gang for aiding investigations against them. He had been working on a crime story and had been facilitating the police in their investigations. He had earlier reported to have received death threats from Maqbool Alias Kooli Sassi, a criminal wanted for more than 150 counts of murder, robbery and kidnapping. He was not provided any security and was shot and killed in his village.

◆ Photojournalist Sardar Mehmoodul Hassan was beaten up by unidentified men in Peshawar when he was on his way home on a motorbike. He suffered multiple injuries. Journalists in Peshawar condemned the attack and demanded the arrest of the attackers and greater safety for journalists.



NYT Islamabad bureau chief was asked to leave the country.

July

◆ ARY television bureau chief and President of the Hyderabad Union of Journalists Farhan Effendi was picked up from his house in Hyderabad late one night. Armed men who identified themselves as Karachi police entered his house and took him away. Hyderabad Press Club staged protests for his release.

◆ Journalists in Peshawar were beaten up and locked up in a room for up to six hours by the administration and doctors of the Khyber Teaching Hospital. The journalists had objected to what they called negligence in the treatment of an injured policeman. The constable had died of injuries and the journalists had said that the death occurred because the policeman was not properly attended to. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister ordered an inquiry.

◆ Journalist Haji Hanif was on his way to the city of Gujranwala from Kotli Pir Ahmad Shah village when two unidentified armed men shot and killed

him.

◆ Essa Khankhel, a correspondent for The News and Daily Jang in Swat, issued a media statement saying that he was receiving threatening calls from an unknown number. The unidentified caller threatened him of dire consequences if he did not halt his reporting. Khankhel requested the government for protection.

◆ Huzaifa Qureshi, reporter for a private TV channel, was tortured by the sons of a former chief of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for presenting a detailed report on corruption in the much-hyped Employees Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) scam. When the report was broadcast, the chief justice of Pakistan took *suo motu* notice of the matter. He also ordered security for the reporter. Two sons of the ex-FIA official called Qureshi to their office and beat him up. A case was registered against the two brothers on the orders of the interior secretary.

August

◆ In a village near Wana, South Waziristan, the house of senior tribal journalist Zafar Wazir was severely damaged in an explosion. At the time of the explosion Wazir was not home. His family also remained safe. Wazir worked for Pakistan's only Pashto-language channel, AVT Khyber, and also for Dunya News.

◆ The office of the Express media group in Karachi was attacked by unidentified gunmen on a motorbike. The armed men shot around 20 times at the building, injuring two members of the staff. A case was registered against unidentified armed men.

◆ The tortured body of missing journalist Abdul Razzaq Baloch was found on the outskirts of Karachi. He was a sub-editor at the daily Tawar and



The Express media office was attacked in Karachi to send out a warning.



had gone missing in March from Lyari, Karachi. His body was so severely disfigured that his family had to visit the mortuary several times to confirm his identity. A note was left in his pocket with his name written on it.

September

- ◆ Israr Ahmad, a crime reporter for an English-language daily newspaper in Islamabad was given death threats by unidentified persons over the phone. He lodged a complaint with the police but they did not register a case. The National Press Council and Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) appealed to the government to take measures for the protection of journalists.

- ◆ A correspondent of English-language weekly Friday Times, Ali. K. Chishti was intercepted by police on his way home from work in Karachi. Half a dozen policemen dragged him out of his car and put him into a police vehicle. They took Chishti and his driver in their vehicle to Dau Dariya area and handed them over to men in plain clothes. They kept them there for nine hours and severely tortured them. The perpetrators told Chishti to leave the city within 24 hours. Local and international journalist bodies condemned the incident and demanded a thorough investigation and arrest of the policemen and the men who beat up the journalist.

October

- ◆ The chief reporter at Express Tribune daily newspaper, Rana Tanveer, received a threatening letter for highlighting issues of religious minorities. The one-page letter, bearing stamps of a Multan post office and Lahore Garden Town post office, was received at the Express Tribune office in Lahore. The letter called Tanveer an apostate for favouring Ahmadis and Christians. It stated that Tanveer should seek forgiveness from God and if he continued his practice, he would be killed.

- ◆ Lal Wazir, a journalist who worked in a local newspaper in Azam

Warsak, South Waziristan, was abducted in the tribal areas along the Afghan border by unidentified gunmen. Within 24 hours of his kidnapping, Lal Wazir was released at the local bazaar. He refused to speak about his abduction.

- ◆ Ayub Khan Khattak, a reporter for a private television channel, was shot dead in village Warana of Karak district allegedly by two residents of the same locality. It was reported that the two men had killed Ayub because he had filed a report against them.

- ◆ Two journalists in Islamabad, Shakeel Qarar from Dawn News and Qamarul Munawwar from Express TV channel, were beaten up by the son of a magistrate and his friends for recording a video as they assaulted and abused a policeman. The police officer had stopped a vehicle which had a revolving police light and tinted glasses. When the police officer tried to issue them a ticket, the magistrate's son and his friends abused him. When the journalists tried to cover the event, they were beaten up.

- ◆ Four journalists and emergency response personnel and policemen arriving at the scene of a bomb explosion outside an imambargah in Karachi were injured when a second blast took place.

December

- ◆ The offices of the Express media group in Karachi were attacked again when four armed men on motorbikes threw homemade bombs at the building and fired shots at the office building. When the security guard fired back, the assailants escaped.

- ◆ The Pakistan Taliban, headed by Mullah Fazlullah, said they would target journalists and media organisations, whom they accused of carrying fabricated statements ascribed to the Taliban spokesperson regarding Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and Pakistani cricketer Misbahul Haq. The Taliban said that their main consultative body had decided by consensus that journalists should be targeted.

Quality of content

The media industry really blossomed in Pakistan around a decade ago, when scores of electronic news and media organisations made their bow. Many have referred to this phase as a media revolution in Pakistan. Before that, news and entertainment channels, the few in existence, were controlled by the state. During the decade the media has strengthened the voice of the populace. But on the other hand, it has emerged as an industry that needs to be regulated. Their role has often been criticised and they have been blamed for engaging in sensationalism and offering little follow-up on a ceaseless bevy of 'breaking news'. On August 15, Muhammad Sikandar, a middle-aged man who was armed with automatic weapons and accompanied by his wife and two young children, engaged in a standoff with the Islamabad police that lasted more than five hours. Although the police's lack of tranquilizer guns and an unprotected civilian being sent to end the standoff were important issues,



News channels interviewed Sikandar on live TV.

the media's role in the episode was also severely criticised. Not only were the media persons standing dangerously close to the armed man and his car, despite repeated requests by the authorities, but some anchorpersons also called Sikandar and his wife live on their mobile phone and dangled in front of him the possibility of sharing his demands with the nation. Sikandar and his wife took this opportunity to state that they were merely demanding the enforcement of Shariah in the country. The behaviour of the anchor persons and their producers was not only criticised as irresponsible but also as a move which could potentially divide the people on whether Sikandar was a deranged person, a terrorist or a person trying to project himself as a good Muslim.

In another incident of irresponsible behaviour on the part of the media, a TV channel crew barged into a massage parlour in Lahore and accused the women there of being prostitutes. The programme was aired on February 9. This was the latest incident of media's moral policing and raiding a private building without any authority or search warrants. The incident was reminiscent of a similar episode by another television host in 2012 when she harassed young couples in a park in Karachi, supposedly to discourage them from "being dishonest to their parents". The show received extremely negative feedback from viewers but it apparently failed to restrain other show hosts.

In a similar show of TV hosts acting beyond their mandate, the host of a religious show came under the spotlight for handing out abandoned babies as a gift to childless couples. Some quarters criticised the show for an apparent lack of concern for the safety and wellbeing of the children. It was widely seen as a lottery in which a correct answer won you a baby. Though the charity organization responsible for providing the babies said that the foster

parents had gone through a thorough screening process before getting the children's custody, critics said that the well-being of the children was compromised for the sake of TV ratings. They asked the people to imagine the children's anguish if they found out that their parents had won them in a live game show on TV.

PEMRA's role

Media critics continued to point out that Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority's (PEMRA) role was increasingly degenerating into moral policing in a violation of its mandate. In February, PEMRA asked television and radio channels to avoid offending religious sentiments and corrupting the nation's youth through their Valentine's Day broadcasts. PEMRA circulated a letter which stated that celebrating Valentine's Day was against the national cultural and religious ethos. The letter said that such events had been perceived as a source of depraving, corrupting and injuring the morality of Pakistani youth.

An issue taken up on numerous occasions by PEMRA was that of excessive foreign content being aired by certain TV channels. On March 30, eight private TV channels were fined by PEMRA for broadcasting excessive foreign content. As per PEMRA rules, foreign content could not exceed 10% of a channel's total content, out of which only 6% could be Indian. In September, the government imposed a tax on broadcast of foreign plays, etc., by the media industry under the Finance Act 2013 and made PEMRA responsible for collection. The tax was to be collected for airing foreign content at the rate of Rs 100,000 per episode. There was, however, a lack of public discourse on the issue. Foreign dramas had earned extensive viewership in the country and to take steps to penalise their broadcast simply to protect local industry was seen as a curtailment of the people's right to choose what they wished to watch. Critics said that people's access to foreign content ensured greater competition for local industry and could lead to improvement in the quality of local content.

PEMRA also remained mired in a controversy over the appointment of its chairman who was dismissed and then reappointed during the course of the year. As a National Accountability Bureau (NAB) investigation of assets of PEMRA's chairman Rashid Ahmad was underway, the Supreme Court declared on a separate petition in January that his appointment was in violation of the Supreme Court's orders. Rashid Ahmad was accused of illegally holding the post and of corruption. According to Para 6 of the January 15, 2013 Supreme Court judgment, the person appointed to the post of Chairman must fulfil the requirements mentioned in the PEMRA ordinance. On December 16, the government dismissed the PEMRA chairman from his post, declaring the appointment illegal and violative of Supreme Court of Pakistan's guidelines and orders in the two cases. The very next day, the Islamabad High Court

(IHC) reinstated him as PEMRA chief by suspending the termination notification and granting a stay order. Two days later, on December 19, the federal government challenged the IHC order to reinstate Rashid Ahmad as chief of PEMRA, terming it violation of Articles 4, 9, 10-A and 25 of the Constitution. The Supreme Court dismissed the government's petition, ruling that the government should let the IHC decide the matter pending with it. On December 27, the IHC set aside the sacking of the chairman and reinstated him.

Accountability in the media

The credibility of the media, which had taken a long time to build and gain the trust of the masses suffered serious setbacks as a result of revelations concerning disbursement of secret funds to journalists, media persons, and anchors.

A petition filed by journalists Hamid Mir, Absar Alam and Asad Kharal in the Supreme Court said that certain journalists and media houses had received illegal funds from the Ministry of Information in exchange for questionable services. In 2012, when the court began its probe and froze the secret fund, the Information Ministry had denied the allegation.

Following a Supreme Court order in April 2013, a list of the 282 journalists was made public for having benefitted from the secret fund. The disbursements totaled just over Rs 177 million. Though the otherwise vibrant media was largely silent about the issue, some criticised the decision to make the list of beneficiaries public. Others believed that the public had a right to know if journalists were engaged in underhand deals under the cover of professional journalism.

Issues of legislation and policy

The year 2013 saw few new pieces of legislation but important issues were raised regarding the freedom of the media. In December, the final draft of the Cyber Crime Bill was prepared to be presented to the federal cabinet for approval. Once approved by the cabinet, the bill was to be presented in parliament for a vote. The bill was hailed by all quarters as a much needed initiative since the rise of telecommunications in the country. The government needed to ensure that people were secure from identity theft, financial crimes, cyber terrorism and other crimes of a serious nature. Efforts had been made in 2007 to pass The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Ordinance but the bill was not passed by parliament.

Different media groups came up with a set of complaints regarding the interference of the government in the affairs of the media. They said that the only way that media could become a watchdog and an accountability tool was if it was independent and managed by private individuals. In a press release issued on February 13, the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) demanded that the government withdrew its centralised ads policy. The new

policy as part of the Centralised Media Policy of 1964 denied the right of advertisers to select media houses. Instead it concentrated the power of selecting the advertising company to one person. That government appointed person thus controlled the revenue of the newspapers. The resolution also demanded that the government end its control over Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV), Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) and Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and make them independent and autonomous.

The Supreme Court formed a commission to propose how to maintain principles of media ethics and regulate content. The two-member commission comprised retired judge Nasir Aslam Zahid and former information minister Javed Jabbar. In July, the commission recommended that a Media Laws Review Task Force should be set up to update the rules concerning the media in view of the growing industry's needs. The 1,500 page report pointed out that 64 federal media laws and eight provincial media laws required a comprehensive review. It stated that the media should not be regulated exclusively through self-regulation but parliamentary bodies should be formed to create media codes of ethics. It also called for a reduction in the shareholding of the state in PTV and the governments control over APP and PBC.

Different media groups and unions also demanded that the 8th Wage Board Award should be announced, extending it not only to permanent employees of media organisations but also to contract workers, electronic media workers and camerapersons. The periodically announced wage board award decides the wages for working journalists.

In a move hailed as a victory for journalists and labour rights, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly passed a law on March 9 requiring the owners of printing presses, newspapers and news agencies to submit a declaration of paying salaries to employees as per the Wage Board Award. The law called Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Press, Newspapers, News Agencies and Book Registration Act, 2013 was passed unanimously and included penalties for offences including unauthorised dissemination of newspapers, running printing presses without declaration, etc. The Act replaced the old central press Act.

The government also called for some curbs on the freedom of expression to ensure that individual parties or persons were not directly targeted. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Qamar Zaman Kaira told a seminar on "Why democracy is obligatory for Pakistan" on February 25 that judges should bar the media from publishing or airing the remarks they made during hearing of cases to rule out the possibility of any perception of bias or targeting of any political party. He said that coverage by media organisations of judges' remarks could damage the election campaigns of political parties.

The Punjab Freedom of Information Act, which had been in the pipelines since 2011, was firmed up and passed by provincial legislators in December. The bill, called the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Bill 2013, drew criticism from the opposition as well as independent experts. Its aim

was said to be the provision of greater transparency and access for citizens to information regarding matters of governance. However, issues regarding the vague definitions of terms such as ‘national interest’ and ‘third party’ were highlighted by the opposition during debate. Section 9B of the bill, titled ‘Exceptions’ listed a whole series of instances in which access to information could be denied, under the excuse that such information could or was likely to cause harm to national defence or security, public order or international relations.

The provincial cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa approved the right to information law in July to guarantee people’s access to information and enhance transparency in affairs of the government. Under the law, all matters of the government would be displayed on the official website of the provincial government. The law would allow anyone to submit applications seeking information on matters of the state. The provincial government had also planned to introduce an Accountability Commission to take action against officials who ignored applications and requests for information. The cabinet decided that all auctions of the government were to be made in the presence of the media. Otherwise they would be considered invalid.

Financial issues

Journalism had become a difficult profession owing not only to the security situation but also because of delay or non-payment of wages. Although the 7th Wage Board Award was announced in 2001, complaints of lack of implementation persisted. In March during the course of a hearing of the implementation of the 7th Wage Board Award, the Supreme Court chief justice said there should be no compromise on the wages of media persons and journalists. It was pointed out during the hearing that certain newspapers were still paying a salary much below the designated wage and others were



Cable TV operators suffered amid power shortages.

delaying the payment of salaries sometimes for years.

Non-payment of wages as well as falling circulation of newspapers affected media houses to the point that demands were made for bailout packages to ensure that newspapers did not shut down. The All-Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) issued a press release on February 2 which stated that the newspaper industry was facing an acute financial crunch and required a bailout package by the federal government for its survival. They stated that the economic slowdown had resulted in a drastic fall in advertising revenue of newspapers and that the financial crunch had been exacerbated by the non-payment of advertisement dues of member publications by the federal and provincial governments over the last four years.

The launch of cable TV in the country had increased the citizens' access to information since information could no longer be controlled. However, this freedom was affected severely by the increasing power shortages. The power crisis in the country greatly affected the revenue of cable operators. The Cable Operators Association of Pakistan (CAP) stated during their annual convention on April 29 that electricity load-shedding was deeply affecting business, because of higher expenses on electricity generators, and reducing their revenues. The senior vice president of the association demanded that no channel should be allowed to intervene in the affairs of the cable operators and the 5% advertisement tax paid to PEMRA should be reduced. They also demanded restoration of 25 cable operators' licences in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which had been suspended for showing foreign content. The PEMRA chief met the cable operators and asked them to stop airing items of Indian channels which had not paid PEMRA's fee or had not passed the censor board's criteria.

Social media and the web

Even as the citizens protested against the government ban on YouTube, the year 2013 saw the government increasingly interfering in social media and limiting access to more websites. YouTube was banned in September 2012 to block access in Pakistan to a video considered blasphemous. Despite many announcements for unblocking the YouTube, the status quo had not changed till the end of 2013.

In December the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) announced that Google had agreed to introduce a localised version of YouTube with access already denied to specific videos deemed offensive to Muslims or against the ideology of Pakistan. This manner of censorship was criticised by human rights organisations and groups fighting for greater freedom of expression and information.

On November 19, PTA blocked Internet Movie Database (IMDB) without notice or any public discourse. Internet users learned about the blockade when they were denied access to the website. IMDB is a website that offers information regarding movies worldwide. The reason behind the ban was not

apparent to anyone and the move was strongly criticised. Though the ban was lifted a few days later, the PTA refused to provide a reason for its actions. Though the IMDB ban was lifted, at least one page of the website remained blocked. This was the page for a short film by David Whitney called ‘The Line of Freedom’, released in November 2013. The film showed a young student in Balochistan being abducted allegedly by the security forces and tortured and killed. Different websites covering events in Balochistan also remained inaccessible.

On October 4, the Sindh government banned instant messaging and internet telephony services like Skype, Whatsapp and Viber for three months for security reasons. The provincial information minister announced the ban, stating that such services were used by militants to carry out attacks. The government, however, did not continue the blockade after facing severe criticism from mobile phone users. It was due to bans such as these that The Freedom House, a US-based independent watchdog, declared Pakistan among the bottom



YouTube remained banned for another year.

10 countries regarding Internet freedom in 2013.

Freedom of expression for the populace

Amid a rising trend of the media regulation authorities in the country banning websites and seeking to regulate content on TV channels, the question of censorship was brought to light in discussions with public representatives. During a question answer session in February, the federal information minister said it was impossible to censor content on private TV channels. He stated that PEMRA did not have the capacity to monitor the numerous channels on air in Pakistan. The Supreme Court of Pakistan was yet to define obscenity and judging from precedent in other countries, it was a difficult task and often led to ambiguity. He also clarified that PEMRA was not a censorship body. Despite these claims, the government was said to be engaged in 'moral policing' on more than one occasion.

On April 5, the nomination papers of a PML-N candidate and noted journalist Ayaz Amir were rejected by a returning officer. The returning officer said that Amir had written two columns against the ideology of Pakistan and he did not meet the constitutionally required eligibility criteria. Amir had filed his papers from Chakwal and a complainant filed a complaint in the Election Commission of Pakistan against his candidature. Subsequently, Amir pulled out of the election and also quit his party.

In a similar incident, a petitioner approached police in Lahore on September 7 to file a complaint against columnist Ajmal Niazi, alleging that he had portrayed Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and God as secular in his articles and that he had hurt the sentiments of Muslims. When the police refused to register a case, the petitioner approached the Lahore High Court which directed the police to register a case against the columnist.

Some institutions of the government were provided protection against criticism under the law. No discussion could be held on their role without a notice being issued to the media house to refrain from such activities. On January 4, the Supreme Court, while hearing a case on media's role in the aftermath of the US forces' operation against Osama Bin Laden, held that no one would be allowed to make mockery of the army and the judiciary as both the institutions had protection under the constitution. Advocates of media freedom inquired how it would be possible to have a public discourse regarding the case. They said that the journalists and experts should be entitled to point out that Osama Bin Laden's house raided by US special forces was so close to a military academy and the military did not know about this and the US operation suggested an intelligence failure. They said that instead of denying free speech and discussion, the armed forces and intelligence agencies should have clarified their position to the nation and taken them into confidence about the events of May 2, 2011.

It was not out of the ordinary that the report of a judicial commission set

up to probe the events leading to the killing of Osama bin Laden in Abbotabad was not officially released. That had been the case with all judicial inquiries held in recent years. However, Aljazeera TV made the report public in July 2013.

Foreign content remained the subject of heated debates and protests. The National Assembly Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting asked the government to ban the airing of foreign content in any language during prime time. The committee recommended in January that if such programmes were allowed to be aired then they should be subtitled in Urdu or English instead of being dubbed. The permitted percentage of foreign content for TV channel was 10%. The committee also suggested banning all advertisements with foreign actors. Local actors and media persons also staged protests against the airing of foreign content, stating that the local industry was being negatively affected.

The media was also used as a platform for bridging divides and aiding the peace process among nations. The South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA) held a conference in Lahore and Amritsar to stress a dynamic, sustainable, peaceful and equitable relationship between India and Pakistan. They issued a declaration in which they demanded a South Asia with seamless borders and transnational connectivity through various means and at all levels. The conference in Amritsar was held on January 6 while the one in Lahore was held on January 8 and 9. Journalists from eight SAARC member countries participated and jointly declared that they rejected violence and extremism in any form and adhered instead to a humane, tolerant, pluralistic and democratic worldview.

Justice for a slain journalist

While cases like the murder of Saleem Shehzad remained unsolved, other cases highlighted the difficulties in bringing the perpetrators to justice. The trial of the suspected killers of Wali Khan Babar, a TV reporter targeted and killed in Karachi in 2011, had to be continued inside the central prison. In July, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) recorded the statements of the accused in the case. In November, the special public prosecutor of ATC-III Abdul Maroof, who was associated with the murder case, was attacked at his home in Karachi. Several assailants tried to break into his house through the roof at night. The prosecutor had been warned about a possible terrorist attack and fired at the assailants, forcing them to flee. Three years after the murder, it was clear that the case was still highly sensitive and those bent on curbing the freedom of expression of the people would continue to operate with impunity. Four of the accused were in prison, awaiting the court verdict which was expected early in 2014. Two of the alleged perpetrators of Babar's murder, Kamran alias

Zeeshan and Faisal Mota, remained at large.

Recommendations

1. People's access to documents pertaining to the working of the government, budget allocations, surveys and inquiry reports, should be ensured without reservations and delay.

2. Prosecution and conviction of the killers of journalists should be ensured so as to deter fresh attacks. The journalists facing threats should be provided security.

3. Journalists, especially those working in conflict and tribal areas, should be given health and life insurance and provided support commensurate with the risks they face. The families of the deceased or disabled journalists should be compensated.

4. The government should refrain from banning, blocking and restricting access to websites and pages on the Internet. Websites such as YouTube and others should be unblocked.

Freedom of assembly

Every citizen shall have the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of public order.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 16

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 20(1) *Freedom of Assembly*

The right to peacefully assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances is recognised and protected under international human law and Pakistan's constitution. Peaceful assembly — often characterised by marches and rallies — can give a public voice to those without access to their legislative bodies or those who lack representation through elections.

It is the state's responsibility to respect and guard the citizens' freedom of peaceful assembly even during non-violent political protests. The visibility of freedom of peaceful assembly reflects the level of a state's respect for this right. When people assemble peacefully to protest under the protection of the law, not only do they achieve their primary goal of expressing their opinions, but they also testify to the presence of freedom to exercise their rights defined by Article 19 of both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the constitution of Pakistan—the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

The concept of a peaceful gathering excludes any assembly that involves



Women health workers sought regularisation of service & payment of wages.

the use of force in any way, or events that plan to use force, threaten the use of force or incite people to use force. However, the individual rights of peaceful participants are not affected by acts of violence by others. Thus, the state response to disorder and violence must always be proportionate to the provocation offered by the protesters.

The authorities should also protect and facilitate spontaneous assemblies so long as they are peaceful. This includes a responsibility to provide the police with resources to protect assemblies and manage traffic, and to respond reasonably to spontaneous, simultaneous and unlawful assemblies.

Unnecessary restrictions should be avoided. Any restrictions should be proportionate and should be the least intrusive means of restriction or restraint to address the authorities' concerns. A threat to public order is the most frequently cited reason for prohibiting or imposing broad restrictions on assemblies. But the focus should be on the stated intentions of the organisers rather than the mere possibility of disorder, and the responsibility remains with the authorities to maintain order and facilitate public assemblies. The authorities should be expected to put in place appropriate measures to enable a peaceful assembly to take place, rather than using the possibility of disorder to restrict or prohibit congregations.

Restrictions may legitimately be imposed on an assembly's time, form and location. However, wherever possible, such restrictions should only be imposed after dialogue or consultation with the organisers, and an alternative time or venue should be offered instead of imposing a ban on the assembly.

Prohibiting a peaceful assembly should always be based on clear and verifiable evidence and as a last resort. The administration responsible for

public assemblies should be transparent. The organisers of assemblies should have an opportunity to challenge any concerns raised by the police or other bodies and should be able to appeal any restrictions in court.

The policing of public assemblies requires different skills and abilities from routine policing. Balancing of competing interests and rights requires police officers to be well trained in human rights and crowd-management principles and practices, and equipped to provide protection and maintain order.

In the year 2013, the country saw general elections in May. By December 31, the incumbent PML-N government had served half a year out of its five-year tenure at the Centre and in the province of Punjab and seen a plethora of political, religious, power and general protests by professionals such as doctors, paramedics, journalists, clerks, farmers, teachers and common people alike.

As a reiteration, the prime minister said that peaceful protests were an inalienable right of all Pakistanis and political parties. He directed the Punjab government to ensure no impediment in the way of this constitutional right of all citizens, including the political parties.

Terror attacks remained a major threat to the freedom of assembly targeting prayer congregations and funerals. Bombings killed hundreds of worshippers. Violence was also witnessed in protests with the responsibility see-sawing between the protesters and the police. At least two persons were killed and several others injured, and public property damaged during protests. Restrictions like Section 144 that related to public order continued to be placed on assemblies.

Power and fuel protests

2013 was a year of protests provoked mainly by power-rationing blackouts which were routine. People suffered from a shortage of electricity amid soaring consumer demand and low generation. The unprecedented level of wintertime cutoffs of cooking gas was a double blow to poor communities. In a contentious decision, the government ordered a sharp hike in CNG prices. Nearly half of the country's 3,400 gas stations closed down in protest, apprehensive that the prices no longer remained competitive. The closure led the people using CNG in their vehicles to scramble desperately to find the fuel.

The planned and unplanned electricity inflection nationwide of 12 to 20 hours, and natural gas load-shedding, hurt business, aggravated unemployment and sparked angry protests in several cities including Islamabad, the capital, Lahore, Peshawar, Multan, Faisalabad and Gujranwala with some protesters rallying outside government power offices.

Hearing a petition against “unannounced power blackouts and special load-shedding exemptions”, the Lahore High Court chief justice remarked that the people would not have been out on the street had they been given reliable electricity and gas supplies.

Protests quietened down in September after the government paid off the circular debt to the power producers and thus reducing the electricity load-



Protests against electricity load-shedding often turned violent.

shedding.

Religious and sectarian attacks and protests

In January, thousands of Hazara Shia men, women and children spent four nights camping in freezing temperatures in Quetta, refusing to bury the victims of a twin suicide bombing that had killed 92 people in the southwestern city. They buried the dead ending the four-day protest to demand protection after the provincial government was sacked. Refusing to bury the dead is an extreme protest in a society where the deceased are normally buried as soon as possible. In other cities across Pakistan, large solidarity protests were held by Shias and other citizens outraged by the killings in Quetta. Another deadly attack on Quetta's Hazara Shias in February led to similar protests and blockade of roads across the country for four days.

Protests were also held across Pakistan after a blast in Hangu killed 30 people and injured 56 in February. A bomber had detonated explosives fastened to a motorcycle in Hangu's Pat Bazaar that housed a Shia as well as a Sunni mosque.

Rallies swept across Pakistan in an outpouring of anger against an attack in Karachi's Abbas Town that killed more than 45 people and wounded more than 100 in March. Shutdown was observed in several cities which left most social and business activities suspended. Lawyers stayed away from the courts and observed a day of mourning. Thousands of mourners attended funerals for victims of the bombing in the Shia dominated neighbourhood. Men, women and children, many of them wearing black headbands, beat their chests and heads and sobbed as coffins passed by. Gunmen shot and killed three people returning from the funeral for some of the victims of the massive bombing.

Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) staged protests against the killing of its

provincial leader Shamsur Rehman Muawiya in Lahore in a drive-by shooting. In August, Sunni Tehrik took out rallies against the killing of Javed Farooqi and Jamaat-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat staged a sit-in to protest the killing of Maulana Akbar Farooqi, both in Karachi.

In November, as an Ashura Day procession marched through a Rawalpindi street, eight persons were killed and more than 80 injured as unidentified persons snatched guns from policemen standing on duty along the route and opened fire at people at a local Sunni mosque. The tensions also resulted in shops being set alight in Raja Bazaar. The army had to be called in to control the situation. A 24-hour curfew was imposed in parts of the city.

On December 17, religious leaders and workers protesting against the murder of Shia leader Allama Nasir Abbas Multani staged an 18-hour sit-in outside the Governor's House on The Mall in Lahore. The protesters including men, women and children from Tehrik Nifaz Fiqh Jafaria (TNFJ) and Majlis-e-Wahdatul Muslimeen (MWM) offered funeral prayer for the slain leader before dispersing peacefully.

The sit-in caused traffic jams in the city as all roads adjoining The Mall remained closed all the day, causing serious troubles for motorists, especially the commuters going to workplaces and students going to educational institutions.

In February, at least seven persons were injured when gunmen opened fire on an ASWJ rally at Liaquat Bazar, Quetta. Soon after the shooting, ASWJ leaders and workers reached Civil Hospital Quetta and staged a sit-in to protest



Christians in Lahore protest against burning of their houses.

against the incident. ASWJ activists also blocked the Jinnah Road.

In March, protests were held in several cities including Karachi, Lahore, Muzaffargarh, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Vehari and Sukkur against a mob attack on a predominantly Christian neighbourhood in Lahore. More than 3,000 Muslims had rampaged through Joseph Colony, a Christian area of Lahore after allegations that a Christian resident of the area had made derogatory remarks about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The mob torched more than 100 houses. No casualties occurred because the residents had fled the area apparently on the advice of the police. [*See the chapter 'Freedom of thought, conscience and religion'*]

Christians also shut down missionary schools in protest. Protests and vigils also took place across Pakistan as Christians demanded better protection after suicide blasts killed more than 100 people at a church in Peshawar.

The attack happened around midday at the historic All Saints Church in Kohati Gate, a bustling area of Peshawar, when two suicide bombers blew themselves up as hundreds of worshippers who had attended Sunday Mass were leaving.

Political and religious leaders condemned the attack, but angry crowds nevertheless took to the streets, denouncing the state's failure to protect religious minorities. Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar saw demonstrations against the attack, with protesters also demanding the authorities do more for minorities. More than 600 protesters blocked a major highway in Islamabad for several hours and 2,000 later gathered outside parliament. In Peshawar itself, protesters smashed windows at the hospital where many victims were treated.

Political protests

Relatives campaigning against forced disappearances of family members started an arduous 2,000-km protest march from Balochistan to Islamabad in October. Headed by a 72-year-old retired bank clerk, Mama Qadeer Baloch, the 20-strong group included nine young women and an 11-year-old boy. Despite their gruelling journey, little attention was paid to their campaign. The Supreme Court and high courts issued many orders for the government to find and produce the missing persons.

A strike was observed in Quetta and other Baloch dominated districts of Balochistan on a call by the Baloch National Front (BNF)—an alliance of various hardliner nationalist parties and organisations—to protest against the general elections in Balochistan. Newspapers were also not distributed in Balochistan due to security threats.

Early in 2013, Pakistan Awami Tehrik chief Maulana Tahirul Qadri led street protests in Islamabad against the PPP government and in Lahore against the incumbent PML-N government. In January, Qadri threatened to remain camped out near the federal parliament with thousands of supporters until his

demands for the resignation of the government were met. Announcing that an agreement had been struck with the government, Qadri ended his four-day protest. Since he marched from Lahore to Islamabad with his supporters, Qadri had set several deadlines for action on his demands that were consistently ignored by the government. Qadri spoke from inside his bulletproof and heated container while his supporters stood outside in pouring rain, braving the bitter cold of winter.

On the other hand, representatives of human rights organisations, NGOs, civil society, lawyers, artists and a large number of students of various universities lit candles on the Punjab Assembly stairs in favour of democracy. Carrying banners and placards, they chanted slogans against any unconstitutional move to derail democracy. Former president of Supreme Court Bar Association Asma Jahangir, HRCP Secretary General I.A. Rehman and Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Rana Mashhood Ahmad spoke on the occasion.

The PTI staged peaceful sit-in demonstrations in the country's largest cities, Lahore and Karachi, to protest alleged poll rigging. Hundreds of PTI supporters and activists joined the protests.

Protests were also held after PTI Sindh Vice President, Zahra Shahid, was gunned down outside her Karachi residence a day before polling was due at a Karachi constituency.

Demonstrations were held for and against the creation of a new province in Punjab. Civil society activists held a protest demonstration in support of a new Seraiki province and demanded the implementation of the recommendations of a parliamentary commission for the division of Punjab. On January 26, a parliamentary commission tasked with carving new provinces out of Punjab had decided on the proposed name for the new province in southern Punjab



Citizens came out to slam bloodletting by Taliban.

— Bahawalpur South Punjab.

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) held protests against killings—including those of its Sindh Assembly lawmakers Manzar Imam and Sajid Qureshi—and arrests of the party’s leaders and activists in crackdowns. Activities in the city on each occasion came to a halt, businesses, petrol pumps and shops remained closed for most of the day.

In Punjab, the PTI, along with the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Awami Muslim League, lashed out against the federal government at a rally in Lahore, speaking about inflation, continued drone attacks, the energy crisis and other problems.

In Sindh, the MQM staged protest against the provincial PPP government, criticising its plan for holding the local government polls under a controversial law in the province.

In the wake of a call for a complete shutter down by the Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM), most districts of Sindh along with Karachi observed a strike on September 3. The JSQM had called for a strike to protest what it called a fake report against their chairperson, Bashir Qureshi, issued by the Sindh government.

In June, people throughout Pakistan protested arson of a historical building in Ziarat, 80 kms southeast of Quetta. The country’s founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah had spent his last days in the building, which was declared a national monument following his death.

In September, hundreds of villagers blocked the Islamabad Highway and GT Road against the government’s move to acquire their land for what they considered less than the market price for a proposed economic zone near Rawat and surrounding areas. The protest brought the movement of traffic to a standstill, causing hardships for pedestrians and motorists, many of whom waited under the hot sun for several hours. The establishment of economic and multi-purpose zone was part of a mega Rs1.3 trillion (\$12 billion) project that included establishment of a twin capital across the Margalla Hills, construction of a new airport near Rawat and high-rise buildings on both sides of Islamabad Highway.

Protests were also held against privatization of state-owned railways and price hike.

Protests against drone strikes

In December, thousands of people rallied in Lahore in protest against continued US drone strikes in the troubled northwestern tribal agencies and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Around 5,000 protesters chanted anti-US slogans and called for an immediate end to the drone strikes at a rally organised by the Difa-i-Pakistan Council or Defence of Pakistan Council, a coalition of around 40 religious and political parties. *[See also the chapter ‘Law and order’]*

In November, the PTI started blockade of NATO supply routes through

the northern part of the country to protest US drone strikes on Pakistani soil. The PTI headed a coalition government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province through which the routes passed. The prime minister objected to the blockade, saying only the national government had the authority to take such action. But the PTI chief used his authority as the main political figure in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to rally local opposition to the US drone policy. His party workers established 24-hour checkpoints on highways that crossed



Drone strikes hit a raw nerve in the northwest.

the province and searched for trucks carrying NATO supplies. In early December, the US and international coalition forces suspended use of those routes because they feared for the safety of drivers who hauled NATO supplies in and out of Afghanistan. They diverted supplies through southern Pakistan or through northern Afghanistan into Uzbekistan.

Government employees' protests

In November, Balochistan plunged into a healthcare crisis as no doctor turned up to attend the patients at state-run hospitals as they demanded a safe and early recovery of Munaaf Tareen, a cardiologist who was kidnapped on September 17 in Quetta. Doctors had been on strike for 49 days and had not attended the patients at OPDs after 11:00 am, but Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) intensified their protest. Some doctors observed token hunger strike. Dr Tareen was the 26th doctor kidnapped for ransom from Balochistan. More than 80 doctors had migrated from Quetta due to deteriorating law and order while more than 20 had been shot dead. Some of them were first listed as 'missing persons' and later on their bullet riddled bodies were found at public



Teachers felt compelled to hold sit-ins to press for their demands.

places.

Young doctors serving in public hospitals of the Punjab demanding better remuneration and working environment remained on strike for several days. They also found allies in doctors working in other provinces of Pakistan. The boycott of emergency services was the biggest blow to poor patients who could not afford visiting private hospitals for treatment.

In September, demanding permanent status and payment of dues, Lady Health Workers (LHWs) from across the Punjab province staged a protest rally in front of the Punjab Assembly blocking The Mall and disrupting the traffic flow for several hours.

In March, hundreds of students studying in Sindh Education Foundation's (SEF) Integrated Learning Education Programme (IELP) gathered at Karachi Press Club along with their teachers to condemn the closure of their schools. The programme, which was launched in 2009, assisted budding entrepreneurs wishing to open schools in slum areas by giving them Rs 250 to Rs 300 per month for every child, between the ages of 5 and 18, studying in their institutions.

In June, clerks and teachers staged protest for increase in salary outside the Punjab Assembly in Lahore.

Protests against rape

In September, the gang-rape of a 5-year-old girl in Lahore prompted a wave of protests across Pakistan calling for better protection of children and justice for rape victims. Many women and some men took to the streets to

demand the arrest of the men responsible. Rape and other forms of sexual violence remain widespread in the country.

Lawyers' protests

In November, lawyers boycotted court proceedings and staged rallies to demand that high court benches be set up in five divisions of the Punjab.

Journalists' protests

Journalists throughout the year remained on the streets to protest against the killing of more than 10 colleagues in 2013, death threats, layoffs and attacks on media houses, and for implementation of the wage board award.

Farmers' protest

In April, more than 3,000 small growers and sharecroppers staged a sit-in at the main railway tracks near Nazir Flyover in Latifabad, Hyderabad, disrupting railway traffic. The farmers demanded release of their water share.

International issues

Pakistanis also took to streets to show anger at some incidents in other countries. Hundreds of protesters rallied in some areas of Pakistan in February to condemn the execution of Kashmiri activist Muhammad Afzal Guru in India. Guru, a one-time fruit merchant, was hanged at New Delhi's Tihar Jail after a court convicted him for involvement in a deadly attack on the Indian parliament in 2001.

Rallies were held in a number of cities to condemn a violent crackdown by the military regime in Egypt, killing at least 600 on August 14 alone, which targeted supporters of the ousted president, Muhammad Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In September, scores of left and right wing political activists, students, trade unionists and citizens staged protest demonstrations to condemn what they believed to be an impending US attack on Syria.

People also took to the streets in Karachi, Islamabad and Quetta to protest desecration of a holy shrine in Syria. The demonstrators chanted slogans against the United States and Israel, accusing them of sowing discord among Muslims.

In December in an outpouring of anger and grief over execution of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdul Qadir Molla in Bangladesh for war crimes, many people staged fiery protests across the country and urged Islamabad to take up the issue with the United Nations. Demonstrations were held in all major cities.

Violence

Besides burning tyres in the streets, rioters attacked utility offices, law

enforcers, banks and shops. Riots erupted in Bannu district in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province after the authorities shut off electricity because customers were not paying their bills. Five policemen were injured when protesters from 52 villages of the Khurrianwala and Balochni areas near Faisalabad pelted them with stones during a demonstration against a cut in the electricity supply by a private agency. The police resorted to baton-charge, injuring hundreds of villagers. The police chased the villagers, entered some houses and allegedly beat up women and children. The unruly mob looted several shops on Lahore Road. The police also arrested dozens of rioters.

Following the bombing in Karachi's Abbas Town in March, protesters torched eight passenger buses and two ambulances in different areas, with most of the incidents reported from Karachi's Sohrab Goth area. Some of those attending the funeral of Abbas Town victims set fire to buses in one Karachi neighborhood as they went to the cemetery. Several people were injured during firing in Abbas Town. Police also claimed several of their men who had sustained bullet wounds were in hospitals. An aborted attempt to abduct policemen was also reported from the area. Rescue teams deployed in the area were also targeted. Firing was also reported from Ancholi and Indus Plaza.

Some stick-wielding young men protesting against the killing of ASWJ leader Shamsur Rehman Muawiya in Lahore took out their frustration on cars and damaged vehicles, lashing at them with sticks. They also chanted slogans, burnt a few tyres and blocked roads.

At least one person was killed and another was injured in December when enraged protesters, linked to religious groups, opened fire while forcing shopkeepers and traders to close their shops in Liaquat Bazaar, Quetta. Within an hour after the protests began, Quetta wore a deserted look as all shops, eateries and trading centres were forced to close down.

Some Joseph Colony arson protesters broke into a Metro Bus office at Ferozepur Road in Lahore and damaged property. Police had to resort to tear gas shelling to disperse the protesters and prevent further damage.

In Multan, one boy was killed and one child sustained injuries as people protested against formation of the new province. It could not be ascertained who had fired the shot that caused the casualties.

In August, media persons protested after a scuffle broke out between them and PTI workers, injuring a cameraperson in Lahore. PTI had been protesting against what it called rigging in the by-elections that took place on August 22. Following the protest of media persons, the PTI Punjab president issued an apology, assuring that he would personally investigate the incident.

On January 17, police resorted to aerial firing, and used baton and teargas to disperse Bara students protesting the crackdown on peaceful tribesmen, who had placed bodies of 15 people killed in their tehsil outside the Governor's House in Peshawar. Police said 18 protesters were arrested during the action.

Several media persons covering the event also sustained minor injuries after being hit by stones during the action.

In February, young doctors created a rumpus during the Metro Bus Service inauguration ceremony in Lahore after failing to meet the Punjab chief minister. The young doctors had been holding a week-long hunger strike for their demands. Police launched a crackdown against the protest, arresting some young doctors who were dragged on the roads and thrown into police vans. Police also baton-charged parliamentarian Shaukat Basra who had arrived at the event to participate in the protest. Police accused Basra of inciting the doctors.

On December 3, teachers of the government-run ‘model’ colleges in Islamabad prevented their 40,000 students from sitting the mid-term exams to push their demands for allowances and job security. Male teachers stormed the four model colleges of girls where the principals chose to hold the exam and snatched the answer sheets from the girl students. By the evening, the agitators won a victory. In a meeting with the top officials of the Capital Administration and Development Division (CADD) and the FDE, the teachers secured “written assurances” that their grievances would be resolved.

Curbs

The Rawalpindi administration imposed Section 144 curbs for two days (Jan 15 and 16) to preempt the long march by Pakistan Awami Tehrik headed by Tahirul Qadri.

The Sindh caretaker government banned rallies, demonstrations and public gatherings across the province following the elections. Observers saw it as a move to counter protests and sit-ins in different cities with Karachi leading the trend where a number of political parties’ workers and supporters took to the streets against alleged rigging in the May 11 polls. As the parties defied the fresh restriction by the caretaker administration and decided to continue with their planned protest demonstrations and sit-ins in different districts, human rights activists and leaders of the legal fraternity did not buy the authorities’ theory that the ban was placed to protect the life and property of the common people.

The government move also came as a surprise to Human Rights Commission of Pakistan’s chairperson Zohra Yusuf, who said: “We strongly feel that the government’s move to ban rallies and protest demonstrations is not justified and is against the spirit of democratic norms. But at the same time I think that the parties should move forward from here when the Election Commission of Pakistan has already taken notice of and ordered repeal of polling in certain polling stations of NA-250. These elections mean a lot to the country. So one should not go to the extent that it makes a dent in the whole exercise which would definitely affect the democratic process negatively.”

In Hangu, the district government imposed Section 144 restrictions, barring

pillions riding, protests and the display of weapons. Large contingents of security personnel and paramilitary troops were deployed.

In July, the Senate Standing Committee on National Heritage and Integration suggested seeking proposals from the general public regarding safeguarding the open areas in front of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's mausoleum. The committee stressed that a workable mechanism be formed to impose a ban on holding political gatherings/rallies on the premises of the mausoleum in Karachi.

Recommendations

1. The state's failure to ensure security for gatherings of religious and sectarian minorities amounts to denying them the freedom of assembly. From pursuing security measures to bringing mischief makers to justice, and enhancing tolerance for religious and sectarian diversity, a multi-pronged approach needs to be worked out and implemented with support from civil society and community and religious leaders to ensure protection for religious gatherings.

2. Making political gatherings safe from terrorist attacks must become the government's priority as otherwise the exercise of democratic rights and political activity would be substantially undermined in large parts of the country. It is also imperative to block the easy access to firearms and explosives.

3. Excessive invoking of Section 144 curbs on assembly should be avoided. The right of peaceful assembly must only be curtailed in the rarest of instances and where damage to public interest can be proved.

4. There is an urgent need to impart specialised training to police and any other force tasked with crowd control to avoid the use of unnecessary force or provocation. They must also be reminded that abuse of the right of peaceful assembly by citizens does not relieve them of their duty to exercise restraint and only use the minimum required amount of force.

5. The huge demonstrations witnessed in 2013 are a reflection of the people's frustration over their inability to get the decision makers' attention. While facilitating the peaceful right of assembly, the government must ensure that people's demands are heeded before they spill over into the streets.

Freedom of association

Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 17

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful ... association.

No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 20(1,2)

Freedom of association is a fundamental human right, crucial to preserving culture, and creating a tolerant, inclusive and pluralistic society. It must bolster inclusive development featuring decent work and social protection, and ensuring social, economic and cultural rights. Therefore, it is a prerequisite for defending collective rights and protecting the freedom of minorities. The freedom of association is closely linked to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to the freedom of expression. It is also connected to the right to a fair trial, the right to life, rule of law, to be free from torture, and also the right not to join an association.

Any limitation on the freedom of association must respect the principles of pluralism and tolerance and the right should apply equally to women and men, youth, persons with disabilities, persons belonging to minority groups or

holding ‘unpopular or controversial’ opinions, or other groups at risk.

Unfortunately several breaches of this fundamental human right were witnessed in 2013 in Pakistan. Certain political parties, organisations working for the human rights, particularly women’s and religious minorities’ rights, and independent trade unions faced discrimination, threats or violence, harassment, persecution, intimidation or reprisals. There were attacks on non-governmental organizations (NGOs), threats against trade union leaders and labourers, and violence against political activists.

Political parties

The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) announced ahead of the May 11 general election that they would specifically target what they called Pakistan’s “secular” parties: Awami National Party (ANP), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP) and added that they did not expect any good from the other parties either. The parties that were spared remained ominously silent on the attacks on their rivals.

In the run-up to elections, the ANP faced at least six major attacks. On 16 April, a suicide bomber killed 16 of the party’s supporters when he blew himself up outside a political meeting in Peshawar. Senior ANP leader Ghulam Ahmed Bilour escaped with minor injuries. The target of the attack was his nephew, Haroon Bilour, whose father, an ANP provincial minister, was assassinated in December 2012.

Due to the security threats, the three political parties could not hold major rallies during their campaign. Former prime minister Benazir Bhutto’s son and the party’s chairperson, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, did not appear in public because of security concerns and a videotape of his recorded speech was instead



FATA residents had the first taste of party-based elections in 2013.

played at political rallies. Ms Bhutto was assassinated in a gun-and-bomb attack in Rawalpindi in 2007 as she campaigned during the last elections.

On March 31, ANP candidate Adnan Wazir, running for a KP Assembly seat from Bannu District, was among six people wounded by a roadside bomb targeting his convoy. The TTP claimed responsibility for the attack that killed two ANP supporters.

On April 10, Fakhru Islam, one of the party's candidates in the southern city of Hyderabad was shot dead. The Taliban claimed responsibility. The next day, another candidate, SM Shiraz, was slain in Karachi.

On April 12, Arbab Ayub Jan, the ANP candidate for the National Assembly (NA) constituency NA-4 in Peshawar, and his son Arbab Usman—an ANP candidate running for a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly seat—survived a bombing near their house.

The same day, militants hurled hand grenades at the house of Munaf Afridi, an ANP candidate for an NA seat from Khyber Agency. No casualties occurred.

On April 15, a bomb attack on Sanauallah Zehri, PML-N candidate in Khuzdar, Balochistan, killed four persons, including Zehri's son, brother and a nephew. At least 25 people were wounded.

On April 21, the house of National Party chief Dr. Malik Baloch was attacked in Turbat, Balochistan.

On April 21, two ANP activists were killed in Pishin, Balochistan, in an attack on an election rally.

On April 22, a grenade attack on an ANP office in Swabi left two injured.

On April 25, at least five people died and more than 10 others were injured when a blast ripped through an election office of the MQM in Karachi's Nusrat Bhutto Colony. A blast at an MQM election camp near People's Chowrangi in North Nazimabad left five people dead and 15 injured.

On April 26, 11 people were killed and over 50 others injured when a bomb blast hit the election meeting of ANP candidate Bashir Jan in Karachi.

On April 27, a corner meeting of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) came under attack when at least three people, including a woman, were killed and around 20 others were injured in Karachi's Lyari neighbourhood. The PPP candidate for PS-111, Adnan Baloch was among the injured.

On the same day, two people were killed and 25 injured in two separate blasts near the MQM election office in the city's Orangi Town area.

NGOs under attack

Through the freedom of association, civil society organisations can contribute to the progressive attainment of economic, social and cultural rights.



Civil society activists and rights defenders had to put up with many risks.

But the methods used to limit and violate their freedom are driven by suspicion towards the non-governmental sector and CSOs. They are seen with suspicion by the government, and also come under attack by non-state actors.

Attacks on NGO workers and civil society activists

Affiliation with NGOs and civil society or aid organisations was believed to be the reason for a number of attacks on their workers and activists.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), a total of 91 aid workers were attacked in Pakistan from January to November 2013, including 20 women. As many as 29 aid workers were killed, 41 injured and 21 kidnapped. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the most dangerous region where 37 workers were attacked.

Polio workers and the policemen providing them protection were the single largest group targeted. According to media monitoring by HRCP, 20 polio vaccinators and nine policemen protecting them were killed in attacks on vaccination teams in 2013. *[See the chapter 'Law and order']*

On 5 January, two aid workers with NGO Al-Khidmat Foundation were shot dead in the northwestern city of Charsadda.

On January 31, four male community workers of an 'NGO 'Hands' were kidnapped from the outskirts of Karachi. The organization had been providing health, education, relief and other development services to the inhabitants of

disadvantaged and marginalized areas.

On March 13, renowned social worker and director of Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) Parveen Rahman was killed in a targeted attack in Karachi. The OPP had become a model for participatory and bottom-up development initiatives. She had been receiving threats to her life from the land mafia for documenting land grabs in the villages on the fringes of Karachi and by helping those whose lands had been grabbed.

On October 4, unidentified gunmen kidnapped Noor Muhammad, the director of an NGO in Quetta.

Aid workers responding to the humanitarian needs after the September earthquake in Balochistan had to brave gunmen taking pot-shots at their vehicles and government restrictions on their movement and relief work.

According to IRIN, the country's humanitarian situation was dire, with 1.6 million Afghan refugees living in the country, 1.5 million people affected by this year's monsoon floods, around 1 million people internally displaced, and 15 percent of children under age five suffering from acute malnourishment. And yet, for humanitarian NGOs, Pakistan remained a difficult place to deliver aid, both because of the security challenges and the unnecessary paperwork involved.

Those working in the health sector were especially at risk. Threats to those associated with health work were underlined in November when 11 teachers were abducted in Khyber Agency, one of seven tribal agencies on the Pakistan-Afghan border, during a polio vaccination drive at their school.

The Economic Coordination Committee of the Pakistan government in November put in place a new framework under which INGOs needed to obtain government approval to carry on their work. It required a full disclosure of activities and funding sources, and stipulated that expatriate staff could only make up 10 percent of the workforce. The proposals were not welcomed by those working for INGOs.

Trade unions

Workers' rights are protected in several articles of the constitution, including Article 17, which covers the right to form trade unions. Labour law in Pakistan allows formation and joining of trade unions/associations to both the employers and the employees. There is a special law in Pakistan for trade union registration and settlement of industrial disputes, i.e., the Industrial Relations Act. After passage of 18th constitutional amendment, labour is no longer a subject on concurrent list and therefore the central government can no longer legislate on labour matters.

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), a confederation of

Anti-union discrimination

In April, management of Kraft Foods Pakistan locked out members of the Cadbury Pakistan Progressive Employees Union and attacked union leaders when negotiations over wages, benefits and job security reached a deadlock. Disciplinary action against union leader Muhammad Saleem was initiated to dismiss him, in violation of a valid collective agreement.

Police intervention in strike and refusal to bargain: In March, police raided a hotel in Karachi and arrested 50 union members and leaders participating in a sit-in protest. Criminal charges were filed against union leader Ghulam Mehboob who was detained for 14 hours. The hotel management refused to bargain with the union or to attend conciliation hearings

national trade union centres, in its report for 2013 put Pakistan among countries at risk with violations of trade union rights.

On April 4, trade unionists and civil society members gathered at the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan's (HRCP) office in Karachi ahead of elections to iron out a plan to remind political parties about the plight of the working class.

Banned organisations

Banned militant organisations, some of which were engaged in charitable activities, continued working under original or different names. They also took out rallies in various parts of the country on different issues.

Facing sanctions internationally, head of a banned organisation, Hafiz Saeed appeared at rallies, including one in Islamabad on September 6, denouncing India as a terrorist state as thousands of his supporters chanted for "holy war" against the rival nuclear nation.

Among other things, the Anti-Terrorism (Second Amendment) Act 2013 was passed to tackle the growing instances of banned organisations working under new names. As per the amended law "if any or all office-bearers, activists or associates of a proscribed organization form a new organization under a different name, upon suspicion about their involvement in similar activities, the said organization shall also be deemed to be a proscribed organization."

The amendment highlighted that if members or office bearers of a banned organization continued their involvement in prohibited activities, the government



Trade unions opposed privatisation plans tooth and nail.

could take action against these individuals.

It stated that such individuals might be stopped from travelling abroad, getting a passport, getting any kind of financial assistance including bank loans and credit cards. Additionally, any arms licences, if already issued, were to be deemed to have been cancelled and the arms deposited forthwith in the nearest police station.

Under a new section in the Act, the government could now order preventive detention of any person who had been concerned in any offence under the Anti-Terrorism Act. This detention period could be extended up to 30 days at a time, but could not exceed 90 days.

On March 4, the Sindh government expressed its intention to take action against banned organisations operating under new names in the province.

Recommendations

1. The state must ensure the freedom of association as enshrined in international and national instruments, with prompt and effective remedy if the right is denied to form/join an association.

2. A multi-pronged approach, which focuses on making the right easily enforceable as well as awareness raising about the importance of this crucial human right, should go hand in hand with steps to prevent non-state actors

from hampering realization of this right.

3. The risk for the women and men on account of their association with NGOs is unacceptable and must be dealt with on priority. The official reaction to violence or threats or incitement to violence against NGO workers must no longer be silence.

Democratic development

IV



Political participation

... the state shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people ...

Constitution of Pakistan

Preamble

... the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed ...

Preamble

... fundamental rights [shall be guaranteed] subject to law and public morality ...

Preamble

The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of elected representatives of the areas concerned and within such institutions special representation will be given to peasants, workers and women.

Article 32

... it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law ...

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 1

A bumpy path to electoral democracy

The year 2013 marked a significant stage in Pakistan's search for a democratic polity. An elected government completed its normal term, and so

did the directly elected national and provincial legislatures. A general election was held despite militants' threat to disrupt it and the problems created by the culture of disorderly functioning. The result was accepted by a large majority and a new government was installed amidst hopes that the public demonstration of commitment to democratic processes would provide the requisite underpinning to representative and responsible governance.

But the road was bumpy all the way.

At the beginning of the year the leader of a religious faction left his adopted home in Canada, led his sizeable following – men, women and children – on a long drive to Islamabad in cold and rain and staged the most colourful sit-in ever in the capital's central avenue in support of his demand for elections under a new Election Commission. The coalition government bought time by offering paper guarantees of the challenger's elevation to the status of a power-broker. Ultimately, the Supreme Court restored normalcy by cutting down the crowd-puller with a single blow. The Election Commission survived.

The electoral rolls were found flawed and the authorities had to work overtime to meet the judiciary's directives and public concerns, and in Karachi door-to-door checking of voters continued till almost the eve of polling.

Questions were raised about the possibility of simultaneous polling for the national and provincial assemblies as they completed their terms on different dates but the ruling coalition and the opposition found their way to an agreement and it was possible to fix May 11 for the general election – same day casting of ballots for the National and the four Provincial Assemblies.

However, there was no agreement on the many changes in the law the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had proposed and the government blocked the bill the ECP had drafted. In a showdown with the government on the conditions for acceptance of candidates' nomination papers the ECP came out the victor, though with the Supreme Court's blessing. The SC directive for giving the right to vote to expatriate Pakistanis was accepted and the required legislation done but it came too late to be practically enforced.

The ECP had drawn up an elaborate and manifestly ambitious plan to ensure a free and fair election worthy of a modern nation steeped in democratic culture but was disappointed by all the parties – the establishment, the political parties and the public – that refused to change. In the end the ECP was left clamouring for moralistic criteria for candidates' eligibility at the cost of its professional efficiency.

The procedure prescribed for the formation of caretaker governments rested on a certain degree of trust between the ruling coalition and the opposition which was found to be in short supply. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chose a retired judge as the caretaker chief minister without any fuss and Sindh followed suit soon afterward by finding a former judge acceptable to all parties. Balochistan also found a senior politician after a brief search. But a government-opposition agreement on the caretaker prime minister was not possible and it was left to the Election Commission to select a former judge from Balochistan, Mir Hazar Khan Khoso, for the post. But there too the decision was not unanimous.

Similar difficulties appeared during the search for a caretaker chief minister for the vital Punjab province and only the fear of the matter going to an unpredictable ECP persuaded the opposition to accept a government party's nominee for the slot.

The ECP had no difficulty in securing the army's services for maintenance of order during the election but it had to argue its case before the Supreme Court for obtaining the services of judicial officers to preside over the electoral process.

The run-up to the polling day was marred by violence here and there but far more disruptive of the election momentum was the threat from the extremist militants. The suicide bombings and targeted attacks severely restricted campaigning by candidates and their parties in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The ANP in particular was largely paralysed. To a lesser extent the PPP's election campaign also was affected by militants' threats. Both parties blamed the environment of terror as the cause of their poor showing at the polls though some other factors also were easily discernible.

The polling on May 11 confirmed the people's faith in electoral democracy as they ignored all terrorist threats to exercise their right of franchise, though the turnout was low in Balochistan and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Out of over 86 million voters a little more than 46 million turned out to cast their ballots, the turnout being 55.02 per cent for National Assembly election and 55.06 for the election to provincial assemblies, an overall figure of 55.14 per cent. The turnout figures varied from 11.37 per cent in South Waziristan in FATA to 87.77 per cent in Bahawalnagar district of Punjab.

The polling process went completely out of ECP's control with many irregularities reported from across the country – from election material, especially indelible ink, being in short supply, to lack of order at polling stations, and



Compared to 2008 polls, twice as many women contested election in 2013.

freedom enjoyed by the well-connected to indulge in multiple voting. The result for the National Assembly, after the addition of seats offered by independents, those reserved for women and the religious minorities was as follows:

Party	General seats	Women's seats	Minorities	Total
PML-N	145	35	6	186
PPPP	32	7	1	40
PTI	28	6	1	35
MQM	18	4	1	23
JUI-F	10	3	1	14
PML-F	4	0	1	5
JI	3	1	0	4
PKMAP	3	0	1	4
NPP	2	0	1	3
PML-Q	2	0	0	2
Others	8	0	0	8
Independent	8	0	0	8
(The results for 10 seats were awaited)				332

The result assured PML-N of a safe majority in the lower house of the parliament. The members of the ruling coalition (PPPP, ANP and PML-Q) suffered heavy defeats. While the PPPP managed to retain its hold on Sindh, the ANP lost at the centre as well as in its home territory of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) made a strong showing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (emerging as the largest single party there) and at the centre also, though it failed to beat the PPPP for the second place in the National Assembly and in the race for the office of the leader of the opposition. Of the religious parties, the JUI-F did better than others, and considered itself to be in a position to decide the balance of power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Jamaat-e-Islami was restricted to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from where it got all of its four National Assembly seats though its seats in the KP province enabled it to share power with the PTI. Several religious groups, such as JUI-S, Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadis (Sajid Mir), and Tehreek-i-Islami were wiped out at the central level.

The losers openly accepted their defeat but PTI made strong protests against what it called systematic rigging. It launched agitation and organised extended sit-ins at several places. Finally, it said that results had been tampered with in 25 NA constituencies. Its efforts for having the thumb impressions on ballot papers checked bore little fruit as the process turned out to be costlier and far more difficult than had been assumed and the NADRA chief's insistence on being impartial cost him his job. Nevertheless, by and large the people accepted the result as a fair indication of their will.

The newly elected members of the National Assembly were sworn in on June 1, 2013. The Election Commission fixed August 6, 2013 as the date for the election of the president but the Supreme Court advanced the event to July

30, 2013, and on that day the PML-N nominee, Mamnoon Husain, was elected president.

The very next day Justice (R) Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim quit the office of the Chief Election Commissioner as if he had had enough of a thankless job in an environment where uprightness was at a discount. The government's failure to find his replacement made it necessary for the Chief Justice of Pakistan to name one of his brother judges as acting CEC. The position was first filled by Justice Tasadduq Husain Jilani and, on his elevation to the CJ's position in the last days of the year, by Justice Nasir-ul-Mulk.

The final act in the 2013 general election was played out on August 22, 2013, when election to 41 National and Provincial Assembly seats, rendered vacant by a variety of causes, was held, and the defeat of some of the May 11 winners gave the people an idea of how little time the sands of politics took to shift.

Women's share in legislatures

Women's share of seats in the country's legislatures after the 2013 election fell to 19.5 per cent (228 seats out of a total of 1,170) from 19.9 per cent (235 seats out of 1,170) in 2008, according to a report compiled by Aurat Foundation. The breakdown is as follows:

<i>National Assembly:</i>	70 seats out of 342 (60 on reserved seats, 9 elected on general seats, one non-Muslim reserved), i.e. 20.5% - as against 76 seats, i.e. 22.2% in 2008.
<i>Punjab Assembly:</i>	76 seats out of 371 (66 on reserved seats, 9 elected on general seats, one non-Muslim reserved); i.e. 20.5% - the same as in 2008.
<i>Sindh Assembly:</i>	31 seats out of 168 (29 reserved seats, two elected on general seats), i.e., 18.5% - as against 30 seats, i.e. 17.8% in 2008.
<i>K-P Assembly:</i>	22 seats out of 124 (all on reserved seats), i.e. 17.7%; same as in 2008.
<i>Balochistan Assembly:</i>	12 out of 65 (11 on reserved seats, one elected on a general seat); i.e. 18.5%; same as in 2008.

Around 66.8 per cent (141 out of 211) of the women legislators elected in 2013 were new-comers – 37 in the National Assembly; 60 in Punjab; 20 in Sindh; 18 in KP; and 6 in Balochistan. 45 were in their second term, 23 in the third term, and one each in fourth and fifth terms.

The number of women contesting general seats in 2013 was 218 per cent higher than in 2008 (419 as against 192). Their success ratio was dismally low – 9 winners out of 135 on National Assembly seats and 12 out of 284 provincial assembly seats.

Anti-women biases persist

While an increase in women's interest in exercising their electoral rights

was evident in all parts of the country, and there were reports from certain rural communities where female voters were allowed to approach the polling stations for the very first time, organised attempts to prevent women from casting votes did not cease altogether. A couple of agreements among candidates/parties to the effect that no side would allow the women voters to come out of their homes were reported much before the polling day and there was little the authorities could do to defend women against such crimes. This despite a persistent demand by civil society organisations that unless the Election Commission started taking action against denial of women's right to vote, an end to this evil could not be expected.

The worst form of interference with women's democratic rights was an edict (*fatwa*) issued by a seminary in Sindh (Tharparkar district) that decreed that Muslim women's participation in elections was contrary to Islamic injunctions.

Expectations that the Election Commission would take affirmative action to promote women's participation in elections as independent and conscious citizens remained unfulfilled till the by-elections held on August 22 when the ECP withheld the result of NA-27 (Lakki Marwat) on reports that women had not been allowed to cast votes. The Peshawar High Court also ordered withholding of the result of NA-5 (Nowshera) and NA-27. The order was set aside by the Supreme Court on an ECP report denying prevention of women from voting. The court said any party aggrieved could go to an election tribunal.

No woman was made a member of the Election Commission despite the fact that retired women judges could be found for the job. Even otherwise the argument that the Election Commission members need not be limited to judicial experts had won sizeable support.

Religious minorities' rights

The 2013 general election was the third to be held under the system of joint electorate, i.e., voting for general seats on the basis of a single voters' list, but complaints of the religious minorities against iniquitous treatment remained unmet.

The members of the Ahmadiya community continued to be kept out of the joint electorate scheme. They represented their case against this flagrant discrimination to the Election Commission of Pakistan and failing to get any relief they announced their decision to continue to boycott the election process.

The members of religious minorities had many other grievances as well. An HRCP study of the election in six National Assembly constituencies where non-Muslims had substantial vote revealed disappointment and frustration among the minorities at not being accepted as citizens with equal rights.

The findings of the HRCP observers in the six National Assembly constituencies revealed a number of deviations from the standard electoral practices that could have been overcome if the local government authorities, the election supervisors and the political parties had taken a little more interest in enabling the members of religious minorities to freely exercise their right to

choose their rulers.

Some encouraging signs noted by the observers included the fact that members of religious minorities continued to offer themselves for election. In the five constituencies observed in Sindh there were eleven candidates from religious minorities in 2013 as against five in 2008. More majority community candidates approached the members of religious minorities for support and the latter, by and large, displayed considerable enthusiasm in participating in the electoral process, at least in the constituencies chosen for observation.

Female voters from religious minorities turned out in large numbers to cast their votes. In the Sindh constituencies under observation they outnumbered the female voters from the majority community.

The matters of concern were:

In Sindh the poor and disadvantaged members of religious minorities dare not defy the landlords or religious superiors on whom they depend for subsistence. Powerful candidates do not approach voters individually; they are delivered to the local Caesars as herds of sheep.

A most serious violation of the law was observed in NA 229, Tharparkar 1 constituency, where a pamphlet warning Muslims against voting for a candidate belonging to a religious minority was circulated. This was not only a gross violation of the election code and provisions of the Representation of the People Act but also of the Pakistan Penal Code. That no action was taken to punish the culprits confirmed not only the authorities' lack of interest in protecting the minorities' rights but also their incompetence in enforcing the law.

The minority community candidate in NA 226, Mirpurkhas-cum-Umerkot, felt threatened by religious pressure groups but was too frightened to name his tormentors.

Almost all minority community candidates complained of being asked by Returning Officers, during scrutiny of nomination papers, questions they thought derogatory of their faith.

Complaints of lack of security arrangements were common.

The 2013 election again proved that religious minorities cannot be brought into the political mainstream without some decisive initiatives by political parties.

Minority voters were observed complaining that they were deterred from casting their votes by different tactics, such as registration of their votes in far-flung areas. Members of a single family were in many cases registered at different polling stations.

Minority female voters were particularly targeted and harassed by rowdy elements and the polling staff. A large number of unauthorized personnel were allowed inside polling stations, many of them disguised as polling agents. They kept on influencing voters and the polling staff and creating hurdles in a free and fair polling process.

The low caste voters faced pressures not only from landlords and police

officers, they also bore the brunt of the upper caste Hindus' bid to perpetuate their hegemony.

Several prominent non-Muslims expressed dissatisfaction with the election arrangements. A Christian scholar said the minorities had kept themselves aloof from electoral matters, especially in Karachi, because they were let down by the ECP, the political parties, and also by the media. A former high court judge belonging to the Hindu community said the minorities could not play their due role in the general election for a variety of reasons. He said: "they (the minorities) have been subjugated by zamindars, sardars and nawabs. At some places they received threats and the panchayats decided to refrain from casting votes. It seemed that most of the minorities' members in Balochistan did not cast their votes. A large number of the members of the Hindu community had migrated from their homes and were not available at places where they were registered as voters."

Observers' findings

The Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), a conglomerate of 42 civil society organisations that carried out a detailed study of the electoral process, made the following observations in its analysis of National Assembly election results:

- ◆ While there was an increase in the overall number of votes, the number of registered voters in 100 constituencies was less than in 2008.
- ◆ The fact that women made up 43.6% of the voters (44% in 2008) suggested their continued under-registration.
- ◆ Discrepancies were noted in the voters' final lists and the total number of votes cast.
- ◆ The increase in the turnout was encouraging. As compared to the average turnout in 2002 and 2008 only six NA constituencies showed a decline in 2013.
- ◆ The percentage of rejected votes in many constituencies was unusually high.
- ◆ Many irregularities were noted by observers on the polling day.

The EU mission

In its final report, the European Union Election Observation Mission made 50 recommendations (on what it found amiss or irregular) that addressed various institutions but primarily parliament and the ECP.

A key recommendation called for the formation of a special parliamentary committee on elections/electoral reforms for a timely review of legislation based on international law commitments and a consultative process. To strengthen the overall legal framework the mission suggested consolidation of the electoral legislation, its easy accessibility to all stakeholders, and reform of the RTI law and bringing the ECP under its purview.

Nine of the recommendations were aimed at streamlining the working of

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مسلمانن غور ڪريو اسان جي ملڪ پاڪستان جو مطلب ڇا آهي. اسان انهي ملڪ پاڪستان جي لاءِ شجوه سريجي قدر گذرو. اڄ اسان مسلمان پنهنجي ملڪ پاڪستان جي حفاظت ڪرڻ جي بدران پاڻ پنهنجي مٿان غير مسلم اسلام جي دشمنن کي ورت، ڏيئي پاڻ جي مٿان غالب ڪري رهيا آهيون. اسان کي گهرجي ته اسان پنهنجي پياري نبي صلي الله عليه وسلم جي فرمان کي پنهنجي سيمي پر جابه ڏيئي انهي ڪافرن ۽ اسلام دشمنن جو مقابلو ڪريون جيڪي الله تعاليٰ ۽ ان جي نبي جا دشمن آهن. انهي ڪافرن جو چمي مقابلو ڪريون ته پوءِ اسان ڪامياب ۽ ڪامران آهيون. اڄ اسان پاڻ مسلمان مضمور ٿي چڪا آهيون. غير مسلم اسان تي غالب آهن. ڇو ته اسان پر ايمان ۽ غيرت نه آهي ته اڄ اسان ملڪ پاڪستان غورتن ۽ غير مسلمن جي حوالي ڪري ڇڏيو آهي. الله جي نبي جو فرمان آهي. ”جنهن ملڪ جي سربراهي ڪنهن عورت وٺي آهي ته اهو ملڪ تباهي جي ڪناري تي آهي“ اڄ اسان مسلمان عورتن کي بادشاهي جي ڪرسي تي ويهاري اڄ اسان عورتن کي ٽوپي لجرڪ پهراڻي روڊن ۽ رستن تي نچائي رهيا آهيون. اسان کي شور اچڻ گهرجي؟ اڄ مسلمانن جي غيرت جو جنازو ڪڍي چڪو آهي. غير مسلم تنظيمون عورتن کي اڳتي آڻي اسان جي غيرت کي لٽڪاري رهيا آهن.

انشاء الله غير مسلم جي تنظيم جو چمي مقابلو ڪندا سين. مسلمانو! ڪرايو الله جو ڪلام عورتن جي لاءِ ڪهڙو حڪم آهي. ”الله جو فرمان آهي اي نبي پنهنجي گهر وارن صومن سردن ۽ عورتن کي چئو ته گهرن جي اندر رهن، سينگار ڪري گهر کان ٻاهر نه نڪرن. جيڪڏهن مڃيوڙي جي ڪري يا عذر يا بيماري جي ڪري گهر کان ٻاهر نڪرن ته پردو ڪري پوءِ نڪرن.“ الله جي پياري نبي صلي الله عليه وسلم جي پياري نيائي قاطع الزهراء عنها آخري وقت پر وصيت ڪري ٿي ته ”منهنجو جنازو رات جو ڪڍجان، منهنجي جنازي جي مٿان ڪنهن ڌارئي مرد جو نظر نه پوي.“ اڄ اسان مسلمانن جون عورتون ڌارئي مردن سان هٿ ۽ هٿ ڏيئي هلن ٿيون.

المعيد . محمد رمضان لنگي

صدر مدرسه دارالقرآن والحديث (رجسٽريڊ)
جمعيت اهلحديث ڳوٺ مبارڪ لنگ ڪانماڙي
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مفتي محمد عبيد رمضان
مدرسہ دارالقرآن والحديث اهل حديث
ڳوٺ مبارڪ لنگ ڪانماڙي



A fatwa decreed that women's participation in polls violated Islamic injunctions.

the ECP, followed by suggestions for equalization of constituencies, and amendment to candidacy requirements so as to “remove vague and moral conditions open to subjective interpretation,” and for enhancing transparency and accountability of candidates’/parties’ financial affairs. Seven recommendations addressed the need to strengthen the freedom and operations of the media; another five dealt with development of safeguards in the polling and counting process; the need for stronger systems for settling electoral



Despite considerable pre-poll violence, election day was largely peaceful.

disputes was covered by five recommendations; no less than seven recommendations called for promotion of women's participation in elections and another four recommendations were aimed at promoting the religious minorities' participation. The final three recommendations on the need for political reform called for a clear definition of the caretaker governments' functions, democratisation of political parties, and extension of fundamental political freedoms to FATA and the grant to the FATA MNAs a right to legislate for their territory.

HRCP findings

In its preliminary report, issued a day after the election, HRCP felicitated the people for again affirming their faith in electoral democracy, and made the following points:

- ◆ The government must give due priority to holding the national census and fresh delimitation of constituencies should be carried out well before the next general election.

- ◆ Undue importance was given to the enforcement of the eligibility criteria and basis of disqualification added to Articles 62 and 63 of the constitution during the Ziaul Haq regime. Many of these conditions were liable to be subjectively interpreted and should have no place in any scheme of democratic elections. HRCP recommended that Articles 62 and 63 of the constitution should be restored to their original shape in the constitution of 1973.

- ◆ The pre-poll environment was seriously marred by large-scale violence. The authorities failed to provide a level-playing field to all parties.

- ◆ The failure of the authorities to enroll members of the Ahmadiya

community on the common voters' list also violated the principle of a level playing field. HRCP recommended the inclusion of the members of the Ahmadiya community in the common voters' list.

- ◆ The 2013 election was the costliest ever in the country's history, and the people with modest means were put at further disadvantage. HRCP recommended serious efforts to control election expenditures and adopt enforceable limits to campaign contents.

- ◆ Women were again denied their right to vote at numerous places, such as Lower Dir, although at a few places they did cast votes for the first time. HRCP recommended that adequate legislative and policy measures must be expeditiously enforced to ensure that women were not prevented from exercising their democratic rights.

- ◆ The May 11 election was rated by most of HRCP's observers as a most poorly managed affair.

- ◆ The way the polling process was disrupted in Karachi was quite a scandal. Polling did not start in a constituency because the ballot papers could not be delivered to the polling staff. HRCP recommended the creation of a system whereby the ECP and its provincial offices could watch the progress of polling and quickly resolve any problems faced by the polling staff.

- ◆ HRCP recommended a serious initiative to revamp the ECP, redefine its priorities, reduce bureaucrats' meddling in political matters, and grant due representation to women in key positions.

Detailed reports from HRCP observers in 63 selected National Assembly constituencies indicated that much more was wrong with the poll management than had been indicated in the preliminary report.

Parliament's performance

The country's 13th National Assembly that had come into being on March



In some areas women got the opportunity to cast their vote for the first time.

17, 2008 stood dissolved on March 16, 2013, after completing its five-year term, and it scored quite high on the performance scale.

One of the outstanding achievements was the adoption of the 18th Amendment to the constitution, drafted by a committee on which most of the parties in the house were represented and which caused far-reaching changes in the constitution. The provinces' demands for autonomy and due share in the establishment were conceded to a large extent. The concurrent list of subjects of legislation was abolished and most of the entries in it transferred to the provinces.

During its five-year tenure the National Assembly passed 115 Bills. These included quite a few measures designed to protect women's rights, such as the Criminal Law (Third Amendment) Bill of 2010, Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Bill 2010, Criminal Law (Second Amendment) Bill 2011, and the Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Bill 2011, all of which became Acts. A Bill adopted by the National Assembly but which did not go through the Senate was aimed at addressing domestic violence. The parliament also did not succeed in increasing the minorities' representation in the legislatures.

A special feature of the legislative work during this period was the government's decision to break from the tradition of obstructing and killing private members' bills by not allowing their introduction. During 2008-2013 the government not only allowed the introduction of private members' bills but also supported them. As many as 178 private members' bills were moved, of which 10 were duly enacted.

Some other features of the National Assembly's performance during the five years, as noted by Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), were:

- ◆ Out of the 336 resolutions moved the house adopted 73.
- ◆ A total of 15,213 questions were asked; 3,123 question, nearly 20 per cent of the total, remained unanswered.
- ◆ Women members distinguished themselves by moving a large number of resolutions, raising issues of public importance and rising on points of order.

Work in 2013

The dissolution of the National Assembly on March 16, general election on May 11 and the start of the new National Assembly's first session only on June 01, considerably affected the pace of legislation. However, before the National Assembly's dissolution 20 laws were enacted in 2013: The Investigation for Fair Trial Act; the Trade Organization Act; the Trade Development Authority Act; the Pakistan Academy of Letters Act; the Provincial Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act; the Pakistan Coinage (Amendment) Act; the Dar-ul-Madina International University Islamabad Act; the South Asian Strategic Stability Institute University Islamabad Act; the MY University Islamabad Act; the Maritime Security Agency (Amendment) Act; the Federal Ombudsmen

Institutional Reforms Act; the Defence Housing Authority Islamabad Act; the Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) Act; the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act; the Anti-Terrorism (Second Amendment) Act; the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University (PIMS) Islamabad, Act; the Election Laws (Amendment) Act; the National Counter Terrorism Authority Act; the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Act; and the Global Change Impact Studies Centre Act, 2013.

The only Acts adopted after June 01 were the Abolition of the Discretionary Quotas in Housing Schemes Act, 2013, and the Finance Act, 2013. But two important pieces of legislation enforced under the President's special law-making powers were: the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance and the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance.

However, during June-December the following government bills were introduced in the National Assembly.

The Constitution (Twenty-third Amendment) Act; the Services Tribunals (Amendment) Act; the Federal Employees Benevolent Fund and Group Insurance (Amendment) Act; the Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils (Amendment) Act; the Federal Court (Repeal) Act; the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (Amendment) Act; the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Act; the Federal Employees Benevolent Fund and Group Insurance (Amendment) Bill; the Cantonment Laws (Amendment) Act; and the Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government Act. [*See also the chapter 'Laws and law-making'*]

The political parties

The general election once again brought to the fore the many weaknesses of Pakistan's political parties, often identified as the principal obstacle to the growth of a genuinely democratic system in the country.

The concept of parties as properly organized structures was alien to most of the political outfits. A large number of the nearly 200 parties that showed interest in joining the electoral race, and of the 112 that did enter the competition, reflected the desire of their sponsors to be recognised as separate houses more than their ability to function as political entities.

Their lack of interest in organisational matters was evident from the fact that nearly a hundred of them delayed holding party elections, a perfunctory exercise at best, till the final date set by the Election Commission. The one party (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) that took the task seriously ran into all kinds of trouble, providing a measure of the public distaste for parties' internal democracy. The requirements of financial reporting also were reluctantly met.

The view that the political parties should reflect the pluralist nature of society had few takers. There was little evidence of giving members of the minority communities, women and the working people due place in party structures. The reluctance to put up non-Muslims or women to contest general

seats was fully evident all around. If a party did give a ticket to a non-Muslim it did so for a general seat that it had little hope of winning or for a seat with substantial number of voters of the same faith. Most of the parties chose to ignore the conservative elements' religious edicts forbidding the Muslims to vote for non-Muslims and women. The practice of preventing women from voting under agreement among candidates and political parties survived in certain parts of the country.

At the time of awarding of party tickets a great deal of inter-party traffic was seen. Those with the right connections and ample resources in cash or kind had little difficulty in changing their colours. Electability was the ultimate qualification for winning a party ticket, lower only in value than proximity to the party supremos.

All this certainly guaranteed a noisy and a most expensive battle of the ballots but offered little hope of Pakistan's capacity to promote stable, responsible and democratic politics.

Recommendations

1. There is urgent need to clarify the vision and essential tasks of the Election Commission and strengthen its administrative skills so that it may be able to efficiently supervise the electoral process at its various stages and especially on the polling day. It may be necessary to move away from exclusive dependence on judicial and bureaucratic sources for returning officers and the polling staff respectively.

2. The candidates' eligibility/disqualification conditions arbitrarily designed by Gen. Ziaul Haq are liable to subjective interpretation. All observers agree on the costly and utterly unnecessary confusion they have already caused and a greater havoc they could cause in future. All these conditions must be scrapped and Articles 62 and 63 as originally inscribed in the 1973 constitution restored.

3. It will be impossible to establish fair electoral practices in Pakistan until all eligible voters are listed on a single list and affirmative action is taken to enable the disadvantaged sections, especially women, members of religious minorities, and working people, to freely exercise their right to join the electoral process as both voters and candidates for election.

4. Democratic government cannot have sound foundations in Pakistan unless political parties democratise their structures, and improve their rating for transparency and accountability. Moreover they have a duty to allow due representation to women, minorities and workers/peasants in their decision-making councils. Further they must find ways of staying in contact with the electorate during inter-election periods.

Rights of the disadvantaged

v



Women

All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.

No citizen otherwise qualified for appointment in the service of Pakistan shall be discriminated against in respect of any such appointment on the ground only of ... sex ...

Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life.

The state shall protect the marriage, the family, the mother ...

The state shall ... [ensure] that ... women are not employed in vocations unsuited to their sex....

Constitution of Pakistan

Articles 25, 27, 35, 37

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights ...

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind ...

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law ...

Men and women of full age ... are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

Marriage should be entered into with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.

Mother and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1, 2, 7, 16, 21(2), 25(2)

The numerous problems for women including violence, discrimination,

inequality, denial of economic rights and lack of control over their bodies and lives continued unchanged in 2013. Often they faced violence simply for stepping out of their homes. Less than 20% were able to acquire higher or secondary education and only 28% women were formally counted as part of the workforce. Far too many incidents of violence against women and young girls—including rape, murder and often burning of victims' bodies—were reported during 2013. Three women were raped and killed because their murderer believed he could be cured of AIDS through his actions. The conviction rate remained low throughout Pakistan. Except for Sindh, no province introduced bills on domestic violence and generally on violence against women.

The May 2013 election presented an opportunity for women from traditionally conservative tribal and feudal regions to assert their political rights. Women from conservative areas like Lower Dir and Tharparkar were able to run in election. The elections recorded the highest ratio of women voting in Pakistan's history. It also provided a platform for the transgender to voice their concerns for the first time.

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap 2013 report placed Pakistan on the second lowest spot in the world in terms of gender disparity. The country, however, fared better in women's political empowerment.

Economic and social rights (challenges and opportunities)

Pakistan had the lowest participation of women in the labour force and formal employment in South Asia. The gender wage gap, i.e. the difference between wages paid to men and women for the same amount of work, remained wide despite more women entering the job market in Pakistan than ever before. According to the latest World Development Report of the World Bank, less than 50% women and nearly 80% of men had jobs worldwide. In Pakistan, the ratio was 28% for women and 82% for men. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, less than a quarter of all working women were in salaried positions.

According to the UN Human Development Report 2013, only 18.3% of women in Pakistan had reached a secondary or higher level of education compared to 43.1% men. In the absence of formal secondary and higher education up to that level women were at a distinct disadvantage when they looked for work in the formal sector.

A majority of women were employed in the rural agriculture sector. In urban areas, women were mostly engaged in the informal sector as home-based workers (HBW), and domestic help. Many minor girls working as domestic servants almost always earned much less than the minimum wage. They often worked around the clock without any break and were not protected under the laws meant to safeguard workers' entitlements. As in previous years, many cases of violence against domestic help were reported. In October, the Sindh chief minister said that a bill to give legal cover to the rights of home-



Counted in the workforce or not, women did more than their share of work.

based workers in Sindh would be tabled soon. No legislation for home-based workers was introduced until the end of the year.

The Punjab Women's Development Department collaborated with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) to initiate a project in Lahore to train 1,000 women as domestic workers on December 15. After improving their skills, the women were registered with placement service providers to find jobs.

Numerous studies worldwide link women's ownership of land to decreased poverty and greater family prosperity. Women in control of family finances were more likely to send their children to school and spend on healthcare as compared to men, according to a Bangladesh study. Though the laws in Pakistan do not discriminate against women's ownership of land, Muslim women are accorded half the share of males in inheritance. According to a study on women's land rights in Pakistan by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), the women who did hold titles to lands usually did not control them. In a land hearing organised by OXFAM and Sindh Agriculture and Forestry Workers Coordinating Organisation (SAFWCO) in Umerkot district on March 7, *hari* women shared their problems. The challenges for 150 *hari* women — who had been granted land in the Sindh government's land distribution programme for landless peasants — usually revolved around civil suits filed against them by landlords who disputed their ownership of that land. The study concluded that women's empowerment, especially in rural areas, could not be recognised until women controlled the means of production.

The legal and political arena

The year began with the Balochistan Assembly electing its first woman



Some of the most active lawmakers were women.

deputy speaker, Dr Fouzia Marri of the BNP-Awami. She was elected unopposed.

For the first time in Pakistan's history, a Hazara woman — Sughra Chingezi of Quetta — joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan (FSP) on December 14, marking a promising step forward for women in diplomacy.

For the first time during 33 years of its existence, the Federal Shariat Court had a female judge on December 31. Ashraf Jehan, 56, had previously served as an additional judge at the Sindh High Court (SHC).

On the other hand, although the Balochistan Assembly had 12 women lawmakers, the provincial coalition government did not give any representation to women or minority groups in the 14-member cabinet. Women parliamentarians called this gender discrimination. They said decentralisation was meant to make the government responsive to the needs of the population. But this aim was defeated if women and minority groups were left at the fringes.

On October 28, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government released Rs 10 million development funds for each male legislator and another Rs 20 million was to be announced for each of them later. However, women lawmakers were not allocated any development funds. Women from both the opposition and treasury benches walked out of the assembly session in protest. The chief minister had announced Rs 10 million for each female lawmaker but the funds had not been released.

Great concern was expressed over the reduction of representation for women in Punjab and Sindh in the local government laws and proposals. In Sindh, the ratio of seats reserved for women in local government elections was reduced to 11 percent from 33 % earlier. In Punjab, the ratio fell to 15%.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a draft bill proposed 33% representation for women in local government elections.

The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) remained in the spotlight throughout the year for its rulings which were slammed for being anti-women. On September 23, the CII decreed that DNA evidence could help rape investigation but could not be considered primary evidence with regard to identifying the rapist. It insisted that the primary evidence must be the eyewitness account of four adult males. The Council also rejected the Women's Protection Act of 2006, saying that its provisions were not in line with Islamic injunctions. It said the Hudood laws dealt with all offences against women and thus a separate law was unnecessary. Many civil society activists and lawmakers demanded the CII's dissolution because of what they called its regressive decrees.

On June 8, the Supreme Court observed during the hearing of a case that a girl was more secure in her father's custody than the mother's if both parents remarried. The chief justice said that only the father could ensure proper upbringing of a minor girl even if he had married again. The court observed that if the mother remarried, the stepfather would be a stranger to the child. Although motherhood is held in high regard in South Asia, decisions like these strengthened notions of women's frailty and inability to care even for their own children.

Inflicting pain, physical and psychological, is forbidden under the law. However, the term 'domestic violence' remained undefined in the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). During a training workshop in Lahore on September 12, the minister for population welfare said that legislation on domestic violence against women was to be completed and presented soon. That did not happen until the end of 2013.

In August, more than 1,000 human rights workers, lawyers and citizens signed a petition demanding that a mentally challenged woman, who had been sentenced to death in 1991 for a murder, should be spared the gallows.

Police in Multan lodged a blasphemy case against prominent woman politician Sherry Rehman after a local businessman had petitioned the Supreme Court. Two lower courts had rejected the man's pleas for directing institution of a case against Rehman. The case significantly increased threats for her.

Awami National Party (ANP) leader Najma Hanif was shot dead outside her house in Hayatabad, Peshawar, on August 16. Her husband, a former nazim of Swabi, and their 16-year-old son had died in a suicide attack on their car in 2011. No group claimed responsibility for the killing but it was believed that Najma had been murdered for the dual offence of being an ANP party member and a politically active woman.

Issues of the third gender

In Pakistan, there were an estimated 500,000 members of the transgender community. They had traditionally been accepted only as performers who



Many candidates from the transgender community participated in the elections.

attended functions to entertain others through dance or as beggars on the streets.

In 2011, a Supreme Court ruling had finally recognised them as a third gender rather than male or female. This allowed them to acquire national identity cards as members of the third gender. The May 2013 election was the first time that the transgender got an opportunity to participate as voters and as candidates.

Many came forward to take part in the general elections. These included Lubna Lal from Jhelum. Similarly, Bindya Rana contested for a provincial assembly seat in Karachi. She was a social worker and had helped rape victims and the unemployed. Neither of the two could win the election but they set an example for others to follow.

The sex disaggregated voters' data released by the election authorities was quiet on participation of the third gender as voters.

The year 2013 saw torture, rape and humiliation of the transgender community.

On January 22, around 50 members of the transgender community protested outside the Rahim Yar Khan Press Club against the alleged beating and theft of valuables from two transgenders at a function where they had performed.

On May 8, a transgender, 20, was raped at gunpoint in her house in F-11 on the outskirts of Islamabad but the police refused to file a case against the rapist.

On May 28, after a motorcycle blast in Imamia Colony in Peshawar, which caused the death of two people and injured 17 others, the eunuchs of

Girl students targeted

A powerful blast hit a bus carrying students of the Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University in Quetta on June 15, killing 15 girls and injuring another 22. Several girls suffered severe burn injuries as the bus caught fire after the blast. The attack was seen as a warning to women seeking to acquire education. When an HRCP fact finding mission to Balochistan visited the injured students, they said that they would never be defeated by acts of terrorism. Many wished to return to college as soon as they had recovered from their injuries.

the area were expelled because they were thought to have brought bad luck. Nearly 40 of their booking offices were closed as the locals called them 'the root of all evil'. In October, after a clash with the residents, the eunuchs had approached the police to file a complaint but their demand was not entertained. The eunuchs protested by blocking the GT Road, where the police beat them and seriously injured the president of their association.

Women and the electoral process

◆ **Badam Zari (*Bajaur*):** Badam Zari became the first woman to contest the general election from Pakistan's deeply conservative tribal region. Contesting the election from NA-44 Bajaur Agency, Zari wished to focus on providing girls with education as she herself had been deprived of it. She felt there was a need to build roads and provide health facilities for the locals. She did not win the election but promised to return stronger in the next polls.

◆ **Nusrat Begum (*Lower Dir*):** Nusrat Begum of Lower Dir filed her nomination papers from National Assembly constituency NA-34 as an independent candidate. She was the district vice president of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf but decided to contest election independently. She came from a humble background and she and her husband, who was a security guard at a local school, lived in a one-room house. Nusrat Begum convinced other women in the area to follow her lead and to vote in the conservative region of Dir.

◆ **Veeru Kohli (*Hyderabad*):** Veeru Kohli contested election from Hyderabad PS-50 as an independent candidate. Born to a landless *hari* from a scheduled Hindu caste, she was married to another *hari* when she decided to run away with her family and escape debt bondage. Even though she did not win the election, the fact that a woman from her community had contested on a general seat was seen as a welcome development.

◆ **Hajiani Lanjo (*Tharparkar*):** Hajiani Lanjo, a social activist and lawyer, became the first woman in Pakistan's history to contest election from Tharparkar. She contested for the NA-229 constituency and lost but her courage



Veeru Kohli lost the polls but showed other women the way.

to stand against powerful opponents was applauded by the civil society.

The general elections of May 2013 showed a positive picture of women’s participation, as voters and as candidates. According to UN Women, the voter turnout for women in the May 2013 general elections was 40% of all votes, the largest in Pakistan’s history. In 2008, 195 women had contested elections as against 448 in 2013.

A total of 147 women contested elections on general

seats from 105 National Assembly constituencies. At the provincial level, 301 women contested polls on 203 general seats.

Among the political parties, the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) gave the highest number of tickets to women to run on general seats, followed by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM).

Political party	Tickets awarded to women
Pakistan People’s Party	11
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz	7
Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf	4
Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid	4
Awami National Party	2
Muttahida Quami Movement	7

The scourge of political parties and candidates agreeing to ban women voters did not go away completely.

An agreement was reported in Upper Dir among all major political parties to bar women from voting in the general elections. As a result, only men voted to elect one National Assembly representative and three provincial assembly representatives in Dir. The agreement barred 138,905 registered women voters from the right to vote. A religious political party’s representative said that the ban was imposed in view of the security threat. He was quoted to have said “female voting could become a source of trouble among the political parties, and we wanted to avoid it.”

In the Bannu constituency of PK-70, local elders in collaboration with the



Active participation led to the highest ever turnout of women voters in Pakistan.

candidates barred women from casting votes in two female polling stations in the provincial assembly by-election on August 22. However, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister denied that women had been barred from voting anywhere in the province.

Some female election hopefuls were directly threatened by local elites to prevent them from disturbing the status quo. In January, PML-N's candidate from NA-200 Ghotki district, a woman, was attacked by five armed men who barged into her house and threatened her of dire consequences if she did not withdraw from the election.

Four female voters moved the Peshawar High Court in September, seeking re-polling in those polling stations of National Assembly in NA-5 (Nowshera) where women had been barred from voting in by-elections.

According to the Election Commission of Pakistan statistics, women voters' turnout was zero at 500 polling stations in Pakistan.

In Hangu in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) distributed leaflets in August which threatened death to women who came out to vote for the KP Assembly seat PF-42. The TTP had issued a similar warning in the May 11 general elections.

A petition in the Lahore High Court on June 11 sought elimination of the reserved seats for women in legislative assemblies. The petitioner pleaded that only privileged women were awarded these seats and since they were nominated rather than being elected, they were not the true representatives of the people. The petitioner also stated that reserved seats for women were illegal, unconstitutional and a burden on the national exchequer. The matter was

apparently not heard in 2013.

Civil society organisations demanded that the Election Commission declare null and void the local government elections in those areas of Balochistan where women were barred from voting. In a letter written to the ECP chief soon after the December 2013 local bodies elections, it was stated that women were prevented from voting in Nushki, Quetta, Mastung, Chaman and Chagai. Women staff was also missing at many female-only polling stations. The ECP failed to take any action following forced exclusion of women from voting, even though such actions constituted a crime under the law and the Election Commission had the authority to cancel results of elections where women were excluded.

Women and law enforcement

Women faced harassment regardless of which side of the law they were on. According to the official Punjab police statistics there were nine female superintendents of police (out of a total of 146 in the province), seven assistant superintendents of police (out of a total of 45), and 35 deputy superintendents of police (out of 474) in the province. There were only three women police stations in the province; one each in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad. Female police officers numbered but a few all over Pakistan and were often not given important positions. They were rarely seen on the streets supposedly because they had higher chances of being harassed. At the end of 2013, there were only 560 women in the KP province's 60,000-strong police force.

Police stations were a place avoided by most women, regardless of need. The police at places was involved in causing hurt and psychological trauma to women who visited police stations to register complaints.

Two women were injured, one critically and the other with a broken arm, when police raided their house in May in a village in Bahawalpur. The police, supposedly conducting a raid to recover liquor, forced their way into houses and harassed people. The protesting women were beaten with sticks and rifles. The two women belonged to the Hindu community. The police did not find any liquor in the raid.

A female student of Iqra University Islamabad was falsely implicated in a case over a fellow student's death on April 8 and kept in the Industrial Area Police Station the whole night to pressurise her into confessing. The boy was suspected to have committed suicide. The post mortem report proved the suspicion.

Female prisoners were confined in cramped spaces, with makeshift beds piled one on top of the other. The jail authorities mistreated them often and their families barely visited them because they had supposedly brought shame to the family.

According to figures available to HRCRP, there were more than 1,000 women in Pakistan's prison population. Lack of qualified female doctors in prisons

was a particular problem for these women. There were no separate juvenile cells for female prisoners.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government launched the Aik Hunar Aik Nagar (AHAN) project in Peshawar on May 26. The project aimed to impart skill training to women detained in jails. Under the plan, more than 100 female prisoners were to be provided skill training in central prisons of Peshawar and Haripur. Many more projects like that were required if women in jails were to be reintegrated into society as productive members.

Violence against women

In the year 2013, 56 women were murdered solely for giving birth to girls. According to media monitoring by HRCP, a total of 150 women were burned in acid attacks, incidents of gas leakage and stove burning. Forty-four of them died. As many as 389 incidents of domestic violence were reported in the media; husbands were the most common perpetrators. More than 800 women committed suicide in 2013, mostly owing to domestic issues.

According to a research study by Rutgers World Population Foundation (WPF) in Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Jaffarabad, and Naseerabad districts, 66% of total interviewed women said that they had experienced sexual violence, whereas 93% said that they had been subjected to marital rape, a form of violence which figures nowhere in the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). The survey also found that 77% of marriages were settled under some kind of customary practices like *vani*, *watta satta*, etc. Also, three fourths of women interviewed said that they had been subjected to physical violence.

According to Punjab police crime statistics, 2,576 cases of rape of women were registered in that province alone in 2013. According to official crime statistics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 127 cases of rape and three cases of gang-rape were registered. In Sindh, 27 cases of gang-rape were reported.

The conviction rate in cases of sexual and other violence against women remained critically low. Women senators staged a walkout from the Senate on December 13 to protest against the lack of convictions in rape cases in the capital.

The year 2013 saw the surfacing of quite a few harrowing cases of violence against women. A woman of Bhokan village in Okara had gone to see a doctor when a man kidnapped her on gunpoint and handed her over to four unidentified men. The culprits took her to Rahim Yar Khan and sold her for Rs 250,000 (\$2,500) to another man who detained and raped her for two months. She was subsequently sold and raped by her new buyer for another two months. She was sold six times in all and was raped and ill-treated by all the men who paid for her. She managed to escape on January 4 and shared details of her ordeal with the media.

In February, a man and his wife confessed to killing three women, including



Conscious citizens rallied to demand an end to sexual violence.

an 11-year-old. The man had raped the three before they were murdered. He reportedly suffered from AIDS and had believed that having sex with virgins could cure him. The couple abducted the 11-year-old who had come to them for tuition. The man had killed and burned her body after raping her to erase evidence of the crime. When the culprits were arrested, they confessed to murdering a 9-year-old girl and a 22-year-old daughter of a policeman. Such crimes were not only fueled by illiteracy and superstition, but also the perpetrator's belief that they would escape punishment.

In September, a case came in media spotlight when a 13-year-old girl registered a case against her stepfather for raping her several times and marrying her sister while he was married to their mother. The culprit, 27, was arrested from his house in Islamabad on September 3. He was booked on charges of rape and deceitfully inducing a belief of lawful marriage.

An officer of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) was arrested in Lahore on February 6 for sexually assaulting a young woman who he had promised a job.

Many cases surfaced involving the humiliation of women in the name of honour by jirgas and panchayats. A woman in Lahore was stripped naked, tortured and dragged through the streets of her village in March for trying to protect her son from a local gangster. Though a case was registered, the offenders were out on an interim bail.

In a Toba Tek Singh village, bodies of two youth, who had run away from their homes to contract love marriage a few days earlier, were recovered from two nearby villages on May 28. It was suspected that the girl's relatives had

killed her and the boy she had ran away with.

Madrassa teachers were also involved in raping young women students. A case was lodged against a madrassa teacher in Lahore on July 28 for abducting a female student, detaining her for two months, repeatedly raping her and then forging a marriage certificate, claiming her to be his wife.

Ahmad Aziz, a cleric in Multan, killed his wife and hacked her body into 10 pieces in August for refusing to wear a veil over her face and for sending their three children to school.

An oft-repeated notion in Pakistan is that a woman should remain within the confines of the house for her own safety. The proponents of such beliefs turn a blind eye to the violence women face within their homes. A resident of Dastagir Colony in Faisalabad attempted to rape his daughter-in-law on July 3. When the girl screamed for help and tried to escape, he cut her nose with a knife and beat her repeatedly with a stick. The neighbours intervened and took the woman to the hospital where her condition remained critical for days. The man had not cared that the victim was five months pregnant.

Other women were targeted simply for leaving their houses for work or shopping. On October 25, two women were shot and killed in Sheikhpura when they went to district courts to pursue the case of their murdered husbands. The sisters were allegedly killed by men who were from a rival clan and had murdered their husbands three years earlier.

In Chichawatni, near Multan, around 25 to 30 women and girls out shopping or on their way to school were stabbed by a gang of men in the month of October. The perpetrators were not arrested.

A nurse working at a government nursing school was found strangled in the Bhed Phulli locality in Sialkot on November 19. Her family claimed she had been raped and strangled by unidentified men.

On August 6, a woman moved the court in Lahore against her husband and in-laws who she said had killed her daughter on the orders of a faith healer. The Samanabad police initially refused to file a case and relented only on court orders.

A woman of Jinnah Colony in Jahanian, Bahawalpur, was burned when her husband threw acid at her on December 2 for giving birth to a baby girl. The 22-year-old woman said that as her husband knew she was pregnant with a girl, he would beat and abuse her, even in public. When she gave birth to the child at home, the man took the newborn baby girl away and threw her in a canal. When he came home empty-handed and his wife protested, he threw on her a jug full of acid that he had brought along. The woman was badly burnt.

A female constable in Kharerai village of Tehsil Matta, Swat, was killed by her father-in-law in September at her father's house. The constable had moved to her father's house to escape her abusive husband. However, her in-laws

took it as a slight and murdered her.

A resident of Faisalabad chopped off his wife's nose and tried to set her on fire for filing for divorce in October.

The Sindh Assembly passed a bill against domestic violence titled 'The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill, 2013'. Under the bill, anyone guilty of violence against vulnerable sections of society, especially women, would be liable to be sentenced to one year in prison and Rs 20,000 fine. The rest of the three provinces were yet to introduce any bill to curtail violence against women.

A mother of four girls ended her life in Lahore on November 5 by spraying kerosene oil on herself and setting herself ablaze. The 40-year-old woman apparently committed suicide after receiving beatings from her husband. The locals told the police the man was a jobless drug addict and would beat his wife often.

'Honour' crimes

In 2013, 869 women were killed in the name of honour in Pakistan. As many as 359 were killed in cases of *Karo Kari*. Such crimes persisted because of the impunity enjoyed by the killers. The law of Diyat allows the family of the victim to forgive the perpetrator. In honour crimes, the perpetrator is almost always related to the female by blood or by marriage. Thus the victim's family usually is related to the perpetrator as well, and conveniently forgives their kin, absolving them of the murder. Women's rights groups have demanded that cases of honour crimes should be dealt with under the PPC rather than the Hudood Ordinance to plug this gap in the legal system. However, the gap



Women paid for their lives for perceived slights to male relatives' honour.

and the impunity continued to encourage others to follow suit.

In Chiniot, Jaffar Ali Shah suspected his teenaged nieces of “inappropriate relations” with two young men. On January 11, he shot both the girls dead and courted arrest confessing his crime. He said he had done it for the honor of his family.

In January, a man chopped off his wife’s nose in Sargodha on suspicion that she was having an affair. The mother of five was hospitalised. She told the media that that was not the first time her husband had been violent to her. He had tried to choke her to death on three occasions previously. A case was registered against the man.

In Sukkur, an 18-year-old girl was shot dead in January, allegedly by her brother who had declared her “kari”. He believed she was having an affair with a man from their village and shot her while she was doing housework.

A couple which had married without their families’ blessings was killed in Khanqah Dogran in Sheikhpura in January, reportedly by the girl’s father and brother.

On January 22, two groups from the Junejo and Phulpotta tribes had a dispute over an incident of *karo-kari* in Shikarpur. A jirga decided that a member of the Phulpotta tribe was *kari* with a pregnant woman, wife of a member of the Junejo tribe. The man was ordered to pay Rs 800,000 fine to the Junejo tribesman. The accused paid Rs 200,000 on the spot and promised to pay the rest after two months. The woman was reportedly killed by her husband and his relatives.

In Kasowal, a man slit his wife’s throat because he suspected she was having an affair. He then went to the police station and admitted his crime.

Forced and underage marriages

Extreme poverty and a belief that timely marriage protected girls’ morals and relieved her parents of the responsibility to protect her were some of the main reasons for child marriages in Pakistan.

Under the Child Marriages Restraint Act 1929, the term ‘child’ is defined as a male under 18 years of age and a female who is younger than 16. Child rights advocates say that the very low fine under the law means that there is no deterrent for violators. Certain clauses in the law also make it difficult for the police to intervene in a timely manner to stop child marriages from taking place.

After the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the Child Marriages Restraint Act 1929 became void and was to be adopted by the provinces with amendments. Four years later, only Punjab had passed an Act. The Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act was said to be ready for presentation in the Assembly by the end of the year. Measures to increase the minimum marriageable age for girls to 18 were confronted with severe criticism in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly and were labeled as ‘western agenda’. The UN Committee on the Rights of Child has concluded in its observations and

recommendations that the minimum marriageable age of girls should be increased to 18.

On November 6, 16 civil society organisations launched the Alliance against Child Marriages in Punjab to try and increase the average marriageable age of the girl child. According to various studies, almost half of Pakistani women are married by the age of 19 and half of those deliver their first child by the age of 21. According to one study, the average age of marriage for girls in Jacobabad and Matiari was 13.

The police in Mandi Bahauddin raided a wedding party in January and successfully thwarted plans to marry an 11-year-old girl with a boy of 12. Both children's fathers were arrested along with the cleric who was to perform the nikah.

The marriage of a 13-year-old girl with an 85 year old man in Hafizabad was stopped by police in May. Their marriage had been arranged on orders of local tribal elders. The bridegroom and his relatives were arrested.

In September, an 11-year-old girl caught the attention of the police at a bus station when she cried for help while a woman and man tried to take her away. The police found on investigation that the girl had been sold to a 38-year old resident of Haroonabad, Bahawalnagar, for Rs 115,000 three months earlier. He married her later and kept her chained inside his house. She had managed to run away one day but had been caught by his 'husband' shortly before she was rescued.

The Lahore High Court took notice of the abduction and marriage at gunpoint of a 13 year-old girl in Gujranwala in October. A 40-year-old neighbour had kidnapped her and put a gun to her head to force her to agree to marriage.

Recommendations

1. *Ownership of land by women leads to reduced poverty as they are more likely than men to allocate finances for children's education and the family's healthcare. Land reforms should be carried out and women should be given their due share.*

2. *More women police stations should be opened across Pakistan to remove hindrances to women lodging complaints against excesses.*

3. *Legislation against domestic violence should be introduced in all provinces.*

4. *The minimum marriageable age of girls should be increased to 18. Also, in cases of child marriages, the police should be given the power to act without being formally invited to do so.*

5. *Women's share in local government representation should be enhanced to 33% in all provinces.*

Children

No child below the age of 14 years shall be engaged in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 11 (3)

The state shall protect the marriage, the family, the mother and the child.

The state shall make provisions for ... ensuring that children ... are not employed in vocations unsuited to their age ...

Article 37(e)

... Childhood is entitled to special care and assistance.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Preamble

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 3(1)

Every child shall have, without any discrimination as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property or birth, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his status as a minor, on the part of his family, society and the State.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Article 24(1)

Special measures of protection and assistance should be taken on behalf of all children and young persons without any discrimination...Children

and young persons should be protected from economic and social exploitation...States should also set age limits below which the paid employment of child labour should be prohibited and punishable by law.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Article 10(3)

Though declared the ‘year of child rights’ by the outgoing prime minister, 2013 proved a slow and unprogressive year for child rights. The child protection system underwent no major overhaul. Nor was there any decline in the number of child rights violations. Child protection did not emerge as a priority for the new government sworn in in June 2013 either.

Measles and polio posed the most serious threat to children’s health in 2013 as did ghost schools and rising number of out-of-school children to their education. For the first time schools became a target for suicide bombers. Pakistan is supposed to meet its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 100% primary enrolment and reduction of child mortality by two thirds by 2015. But given its current rate of progress this seemed highly unlikely as also observed by the UNDP in its Pakistan MDG Report 2013.

Pakistan failed to submit its periodic report, due since December 2012, on compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Most of the country’s commitments under the convention remained unfulfilled as evidenced by the escalating violence against children, poor state of child health and education systems, and weak legal protection framework.

Health

After a two-year delay, the Planning Commission of Pakistan launched the National Nutrition Survey (NNS) 2011 on September 17, 2013. According to the survey, the stunting rate among children under the age of five years had increased from 41.6 per cent in 2001 to 43.7 per cent in 2011 and the wasting percentage from 14.3 per cent in 2001 to 15.1 per cent in 2011. There had been no change in the percentage of underweight children since 2001, which was 31.5. Addressing the NNS-2011 launch, the minister for planning and development said the survey’s findings were grave and called for the imposition of nutrition emergency in the country. He said a national task force would soon be constituted to address malnutrition in the country.

A report titled ‘The Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Nutrition in Pakistan’, prepared by Save the Children in collaboration with Aga Khan University, calculated that 800,000 children died in Pakistan each year, 35 per cent of these due to malnutrition. The risk of death for a child suffering from malnutrition was nine times higher compared to a child with a balanced diet. To address malnutrition, European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) provided €3 million to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)



The state of the nation's children.

to work with partners to combat malnutrition among women and children affected by emergencies in Pakistan. These funds were to help UNICEF and its partners in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to increase the coverage of the 'Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition,' which was aimed at making lifesaving interventions covering a population of 1.9 million people and providing nutrition services to 266,000 people.

A UN report, titled 'Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed', released in September, found Pakistan among five countries where half of the world's under-five mortality took place and among three countries where more than 4 in 10 of all neonatal deaths worldwide occurred. Leading causes of these deaths were pneumonia and diarrhoea. According to the statistics released on World Pneumonia Day (November 12), pneumonia killed almost 92,000 children every year in Pakistan. Sindh was leading the other provinces in both the number of diarrhoea cases and the number of under-five deaths, which was 101 per 1,000 live births, according to research by Aga Khan University's Centre of Excellence in Women and Child Health.

Another UNICEF study titled "Surviving the First Day: State of the World's Mothers 2013", launched in May in Islamabad, identified Pakistan as having the highest first-day infant mortality rate in Asia which was one in 77 babies, accounting for 17 per cent of all under-five deaths in the country and making it the most dangerous place in the region to be born in. To be able to meet MDG4, Pakistan will have to slash the under-five mortality rate by 45 per cent, according to an Aga Khan University's Centre of Excellence in Women

and Child Health research shared in a seminar in August.

Pakistan continued to be one of the only three polio-endemic countries in the world. A rise in polio cases was registered from 52 cases in 2012 to 85 in 2013. The last polio case of the year was reported in December in South Waziristan, FATA. Majority of the polio cases were reported from FATA, particularly North Waziristan where immunisation activities had been halted by local leaders since June 2012. The rise in the number of polio cases may be linked to refusal by parents to get their children vaccinated. According to the data provided by World Bank, as many as 47,099 children were left out in the polio vaccination drive because of parents' refusal. The bulk of the objections came from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (24,968) followed by Sindh (14,978), Balochistan (5,068), Punjab (910), Federally Administered Tribal Area (889), Azad Jammu and Kashmir (32) and Gilgit Baltistan (3). Several polio workers were attacked and killed in 2013 to put a stop to the immunisation campaign. According to a report released by Prime Minister's Special Cell on Polio on World Polio Day on October 24, 2013, 27 vaccinators and their police guards were killed in the past year. Sixteen of those killed were from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Measles, which had hit the country in 2012, continued taking the toll with the same force in 2013, reaching a total of 12,951 cases and 290 deaths across Pakistan till June 2013 compared to 14,984 cases and 310 deaths last year. As many as 88 casualties occurred in Lahore alone, according to an inquiry committee of the Punjab Home Department. The WHO observed that severe flooding for three consecutive years was the main reason behind the measles epidemic and the drastic increase in the number of cases from 4,321 in 2010.

According to Pakistan Pediatrics Association (PPA) estimates, 1,000 to 1,200 school-going children aged six to 16 take up smoking every day in the country. The PPA stressed introducing an anti-smoking social marketing strategy for Pakistan to reduce smoking prevalence, especially among the youth. A study by the Institute for Global Tobacco Control and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, also released this year, affirmed that exposure to tobacco marketing and branding was associated with early initiation and increased tobacco use among the youth. The study found Pakistan among the countries where children as young as five years were exposed to marketing of tobacco products.

Education

Despite the addition of Article 25-A in the constitution of Pakistan, a large number of children remained deprived of basic education in Pakistan. In collaboration with the government, UNICEF and UNESCO released a report in September 2013 on out-of-school children. According to the report more than 6.5 million children were not enrolled in primary education and another 2.7 were not enrolled at lower secondary level in Pakistan, which meant that 3

out of 10 primary-age children were not attending school. At primary level, there were more girls out of school than boys and most children out of school belonged to the poorer households. The report also drew attention to a lack of reliable data on education and the need for better disaggregated data to help policymakers and education experts address the challenges faced by the education system. UNESCO's 'Education for All Global Monitoring Report' 2013-14 placed Pakistan as one of the 14 countries that were likely to have more than one million out-of-school children.

In an attempt to provide reliable and up-to-date data on education, Alif Ailaan and Sustainable Development Policy Institute released a report in June 2013 on Pakistan District Education Rankings. This report mapped the varying standards of primary education across Pakistan through specially developed education and school indexes and identification of areas where the system needed immediate attention and improvement. Out of a maximum education score of 100, only six districts were rated in the 80s and none in the 90s with Poonch in Kashmir marked as the highest-ranking district in the country scoring 82.94. Punjab topped the provincial rankings. Balochistan was the worst performing province. Along with the report, a special education and budget map was also released to enable users to access key education statistics for each district and to send a letter to elected representatives in each constituency urging them to address education issues in the area.

The UNDP Human Development Report 2013 stated that only seven developing countries in the world spent less on education than Pakistan.

According to Transparency International's Corruption Report 2013, Pakistan's public sector education system was infested with corruption and



Schooling in the time of floods.

the phenomenon of ghost schools was among the most troubling. Ghost schools are institutions that only exist on paper but regular funding is drawn for administration and salaries from the treasury. It not only deprives thousands of children of their basic constitutional right but results in the wastage of the already limited education funds. In 2013, the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered district judges across Pakistan to survey fake schools. The survey report submitted in November showed that 260,903 government and private educational institutions up to the level of secondary school existed in the country. Out of these, 2,088 were ‘ghost schools’, 1,008 schools were under illegal occupation, while 5,827 were non-functional. In Sindh, there were 1,962 ghost schools, 419 under illegal occupation and 4,285 were non-functional. Based on these findings, the Supreme Court recommended setting up accreditation boards in all the provinces and Islamabad to improve the school conditions and eliminate ghost schools. The apex court called for penal action against those responsible. It also urged the provincial governments to take steps to end illegal occupation of schools and asked the courts to expedite disposal of pending cases related to illegal occupation of school buildings.

An Act on children’s right to free and compulsory education was enacted only by the legislature in Sindh, while an ordinance was promulgated on the subject in Balochistan.

Rights violations and child protection

No significant legal development for child rights and child protection was witnessed in Pakistan in 2013.

Most bills introduced during the former government’s tenure remained pending. The bills included National Commission on the Rights of Children Bill, the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, the Child Protection (Criminal Law) Amendment Bill, the Charter of Child Rights Bill and the Child Marriages Restraint (Amendment) Bill at the federal level. The previous National Assembly passed the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill 2013 on the last day of its tenure. However, the bill lapsed as it was not approved by the Senate.

At the provincial level, Balochistan Child Protection and Welfare Bill, the Punjab Commission on the Rights of the Child Bill, the Right to Free and Compulsory Educations Bills in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab and the Prohibition of Employment of Children Bills in all the four provinces remained pending. Rules for the Sindh Child Protection Authority Act 2011, the KP Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 and the KP Borstal Institutions Act 2012 were also awaiting notification when the year came to an end.

An important development for child protection system in Pakistan in 2013 was upgradation of the child complaint office set up at the offices of the federal and provincial ombudsmen’s office in 2009. In May, the federal ombudsman appointed a national commissioner for children to address individual complaints of children and tackling issues related to the child protection system

in the country. The commissioner was required to ensure that all child-rights activities were conducted in compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The provincial governments were expected to follow suit and have separate provincial commissioners at the ombudsman's offices but no appointment was made until the end of the year.

None of the provinces succeeded in introducing a child protection policy. The Punjab Child Protection Policy, being drafted jointly by the Social Welfare Department and UNICEF since 2011, reached its final review. In November 2013, it was sent to the Planning and Development Department after which it was supposed to be sent to the Law Department for vetting.



Child workers were often beaten up.

Violence against children

In a report issued in September 2013 by Sahil, a nonprofit and nongovernmental organization working on child abuse, 1,204 children became victims of physical violence in Pakistan from January to June 2013. Of these children, 817 victims (67.86%) were girls while 387 were boys (32.14%). Punjab had the highest number of cases at 810, followed by Sindh with 226, Balochistan with 44, KP with 37, Islamabad Capital Territory with 71, Azad Jammu and Kashmir with 14, and Gilgit Baltistan with two cases. Child abduction and rape were the two main forms of abuse suffered by children.

Sahil also released a report on child sexual abuse cases in its annual publication titled *Cruel Numbers*. The report stated that 2,788 cases took place in 2012, the latest year for which data was available with the organisation, a 21 percent increase over the preceding year. This meant that on average eight children were abused every day. The data also showed that 71 per cent of the children who suffered abuse were girls and the age group most vulnerable to sexual abuse among girls and boys was 11 to 15 years. Child rights NGO Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) also compiled similar statistics in its latest annual report titled *the State of Pakistan's Children 2012*, according to which 3,861 cases of child sexual abuse were reported in 2012, out of which 68% happened in the Punjab and 71% involved a girl victim. Six per cent of the victims were aged 1 to 5, 16% were aged 6 to 10, and 22% aged 16 to 18.

Sahil found that 34 per cent of the 221 lawyers who participated in its

study were unaware of how a child was defined under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and almost half did not know about the various forms of sexual abuse.

Several child sexual abuse cases were reported and highlighted by the media in 2013, leading to huge public outcry and protests across the country. One incident that attracted most public attention was the rape of a 5-year-old in Lahore in September. The girl was raped multiple times after being kidnapped and was later left outside a hospital. The police were unable to arrest the culprits by the end of the year and during investigation found a vital portion of CCTV footage missing from the record that could have helped identify the culprit. Three days later, rape of a seven-year-old girl was reported, again from Lahore. The police were unable to identify the culprits. Many similar cases were reported later in the year too, including that of a 13-year-old girl raped and murdered in Sargodha, another 13-year-old girl, kidnapped, raped and killed in Karachi, two teenaged girls raped and shot dead in Gujranwala, and a prayer leader's attempt to rape and kill a three-year-old child when she was sent to a madrasa to study. In a single day in September, newspapers reported three incidents—the alleged rape of a 4-year-old by his school principal in Faisalabad, and the rape of another boy, also 4, and a 14-year-old girl. The teenager had been gang-raped by four men over two days.

Despite the rising number of sexual abuse cases being reported in 2013, only condemnations were issued and few concrete steps were taken. The Punjab police chief sought a report on child abuse cases in the province; the Lahore High Court took notice of molestation of a 13-year-old girl in Sargodha

and of a 5-year-old girl in Lahore and the Women Parliamentary Caucus urged the judiciary and authorities to prosecute the culprits.

Activists estimate that less than 10 percent of rape cases in Pakistan result in conviction as successful prosecution relies too heavily on witness testimony. Earlier in the year, the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) – the country's supreme Islamic advisory body – ruled against the admissibility of the DNA test as 'primary evidence' in rape incidents. The ruling was heavily criticised by various actors. It was for the federal and provincial law-enforcement agencies to



Bombings and attacks terrorised children.

improve their forensic services to achieve a higher rate of conviction.

Other forms of violence against children included their abduction and mistreatment by employers. Sindh police reported 113 cases of child lifting in 2013 compared to 121 the previous year. The KP police's crime statistics showed 24 cases of child lifting and 91 cases of children being kidnapped for ransom.

According to the Institute for Social Justice (ISJ), 21 cases, including 8 deaths of child domestic workers, were reported in 2013. All the cases were reported from Punjab province; all except two were girls.

Child labour

Pakistan was rated at 'extreme risk' in terms of child labour and ranked amongst the top 10 countries (out of 197 countries) where child labour was most prevalent, according to Child Labour Index Report, released in October by Maplecrof, a global risk analytics, research and strategic forecasting company. The Index evaluated the incidence and gravity of reported child labour incidents, along with the performance of governments in preventing child labour and ensuring the accountability of offenders. US Labor Department's 2012 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor said Pakistan made moderate advances in efforts to eliminate child labour compared to zero advancement in the year before.

At the national level, no data collection or countrywide survey was conducted. However, rapid assessment/sectoral surveys and studies were conducted in various districts of Pakistan to expand the knowledge base in these areas and inform policy and programme planning. Non-governmental organisations working for the safety of children, such as Sahil and SPARC, and ILO which focused on workers' rights estimated that around 11 to 12 million child labourers—half of them below the age of 10—were employed across the country.

The Centre for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (CIWCE) Pakistan in collaboration with IPEC published a report to assess health and safety hazards and risks faced by children in 10 sectors of economy—crop agriculture, brick-making, cotton production, date-picking, livestock-raising, mat-making, rag-picking, restaurant work, stone-working, and small workshops—in two districts of Pakistan, i.e. Sahiwal in Punjab and Sukkur in Sindh province. This report titled 'The Effect of Work on Children's Health' provided scientific evidence that children engaged in these occupations suffered serious health issues due to their work and their overall physical and psychological health was poorer than their counterparts' from the same areas who regularly attended school.

In the first half 2013, the Punjab Child Labour Unit conducted rapid assessment surveys in 12 districts of Punjab under the ILO's Combating Abusive



Economic pressures robbed children of their childhood.

Child Labor (CALC-II) project. These surveys were conducted in Muzaffargarh, Bahawalpur, Khushab, Sargodha, Dera Ghazi Khan, Okara, Gujranwala, Vehari, Attock, Toba Tek Singh, Mianwali and Rawalpindi. The surveys revealed comprehensive information based on which action-oriented policy decisions could be made for the eradication of child labour. The PCLU aimed to conduct similar surveys in all districts of Punjab. This survey identified 34 hazardous occupations where child labour was found in these districts. These included agriculture, brick-kilns, carpet-weaving, auto workshops, surgical goods manufacturing, rag and garbage picking, moulding, petrol pumps, cotton picking, coal mining, truck cleaning and working as tea boys and domestic workers, ceramics, soap making, machine manufacturing, steel fabrication, power, refineries, gas processing, and leather goods production. The ILO also conducted rapid assessment in Quetta and Loralai. The survey showed the major reasons behind child labour were poverty, parents' attitude and a lack of alternative opportunities. According to the Society for Empowering Human Resources (SEHR), more than 10,000 children worked as labourers in Quetta out of which 60% were garbage pickers. Balochistan was also the only province which was yet to adopt legislation to protect children from the worst forms of child labour after the 18th Amendment to the constitution.

The provinces failed to come up with comprehensive legislation to ban employment of children below 14 years of age as decided by the four provincial labour departments in 2012. The Prohibition of Employment of Children Bill 2012 to ban the employment of children below 14 years of age remained pending for cabinet approval until the end of the year. The draft of the provincial Prohibition of Employment of Children Bill also remained in queue for presentation in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assembly. The government of Sindh

developed a provincial policy for home-based workers in 2012. With regard to children, the policy called for complete ban on their employment under 16 years of age, but Sindh was yet to implement the policy. In Balochistan, a draft of the provincial Employment of Children (Amendment) Bill was prepared to ban employment of children below 14 years of age. The bill was submitted for vetting to the provincial law department, which was returned without vetting as it wanted removal of certain inconsistencies in the draft. The bill was not tabled again until the end of 2013.

Juvenile justice

Another year went by without the establishment of a juvenile court or regular provision of free legal assistance to juveniles involved in criminal litigation despite express provisions to the effect in the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (JJSO) 2000. AGHS Child Rights Unit, a project for the promotion and protection of child rights, conducted interviews of nearly 80 children from eight juvenile prisons of Punjab in 2013 and more than 95 percent complained of torture of varying degrees in police custody and many also complained that the police purposely framed them for crimes they did not commit. Almost 70% children interviewed had no legal representation. During their appearances in court, judges seldom inquired whether they had legal representation and most juveniles left the court after merely showing up before the judge. The Child Rights Unit observed an overall deterioration in the treatment of children in prisons in Punjab in 2013. Very little effort was made to ensure absence of contact between adult and juvenile prisoners, and both were transported to courts in the same vehicle together.

According to SPARC's Annual Report on the State of Children in Pakistan 2012, released in June 2013, 1,398 juveniles were in prisons across Pakistan in 2012, of which 179 had been convicted and 1,219 were under trial. Punjab had the highest share of juvenile prisoners, 814, of which 716 were under trial and 98 convicted.

Birth registration

“Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and Trends in Birth Registration”, a UNICEF report released in December 2013, identified Pakistan as one of the 10 countries with the lowest birth registration record in the world. Only 27% of the births were registered in Pakistan, according to the latest available statistics. Low birth registration had serious consequences for the child's future progress. The report stated that even when children were recorded, one in seven did not have a physical birth certificate as proof of registration. Among the reasons for not registering, the report found prohibitive costs, cultural barriers and fears of discrimination or marginalisation. Lack of resources also added to the problem; a few union councils in Lahore in June 2013 ran

out of paper for birth and death registration and the union council secretaries claimed that this was not an unusual problem.

After introducing the chip-based identity card for adults, the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) in August introduced a similar smart card for children under 18 years of age. The card had been called an 'entitlement document'. The new card for children was said to hold applications and data from the health, education and social sector such as vaccination records, academic records and polio registration. However, it was to be an optional card and Child Registration Certificate (B-Form) was to continue as the primary identity document for children.

Corporal punishment

The National Assembly unanimously passed the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Act in March 2013. However, the bill did not receive the approval by the Senate and automatically lapsed after the dissolution of the 13th National Assembly in March. Under the bill, any person who was guilty of inflicting corporal punishment on a child could be punished with imprisonment extending to one year or fine up to Rs 50,000 or both.

Corporal punishment continued in Pakistan largely because parents and teachers believed that children needed to be beaten up to be disciplined. A study 'Stopping the Fear: Why Teachers Use Corporal Punishment' by Plan Pakistan, an NGO which had been running a campaign against corporal punishment since 2008, revealed that out of 137 teachers interviewed in 32 schools, 75% believed that teachers were justified in beating students who were rude or disobedient. Similarly, 84% family members interviewed agreed that children who were rude to or disobeyed their teachers should be beaten. A research conducted by the Aga Khan University Institute of Education Development at 20 private and public schools in Karachi and Larkana in Sindh



Instant justice for slow learners.

revealed that parents and teachers beat the children because they were not aware of any other way to discipline them. The researcher for this study observed that in order to avoid misbehaviour amongst children, classrooms must be child-friendly and children must be able to use their time constructively in

schools.

The news media continued to highlight cases of corporal punishment but it did not appear to create much impact on the authorities. Some of the more serious cases reported in 2013 included that of a 10-year-old student at a madrassa in Bahawalpur who was so severely beaten by his teacher for not learning his lesson that he fainted and had to be hospitalised. Another 10-year-old from Mansehra suffered a fractured arm because of a beating by his teachers in November and was too scared to return to school after the incident. In Haripur, a child collapsed following severe beating by his teacher and required psychological counseling in addition to physical treatment to recover from the incident.

Street children and children with disabilities

No official data on the number of street children was collected in 2013 but the widely circulated figure estimated by civil society organisations exceeded 1.5 million. In November, the Sindh government expressed its commitment to map the number of street children in the province. It planned to establish a dedicated street-children wing as a part of the Sindh Child Protection Authority, which had been in the works since 2011.

The Child Rights Movement, a consortium of civil society organisations working to promote the cause of children, expressed disappointment that the Committee on the Rights of the Child's recommendations on street children in Pakistan had not been heeded by the State. The recommendations included a systematic assessment of children in street situations, providing them with adequate protection and assistance, nutrition and shelter as well as healthcare and education opportunities and respecting the rights of children in street situations to be heard when developing programmes.

On the upside, for the first time, Pakistan was scheduled to participate in the Street Child World Cup (SCWC) 2014 in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, as announced at a press conference in November. Participation in this competition was expected to provide the country's street children with an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and get recognition on an international level.

Children with special needs remained in the shadows in 2013, without any measures taken for their welfare and facilitation. The need for inclusive education was highlighted in a seminar by Alif Ailaan, a Pakistani alliance for education reform, where it was also stated that only four percent of the children with disabilities had access to school. Over the course of the year, only two initiatives relating to children with special needs were highlighted in the media. A school for special children was inaugurated in Islamabad in November with support from the Government of Japan, which would also provide classes on speech therapy, computer and cooking skills. A mobile assessment unit was set up in Lahore to identify children with special needs. The unit was aimed at identifying



Few institutions catered to mentally and physically challenged children.

children with special needs, including physical, psychological, visual, hearing and clinical.

Child marriages

The practice of *swara*, marrying off young girls as compensation to settle disputes between tribes, was reported several times in 2013, especially in the Swat region of Khyber Pakhtukhwa province despite it being declared unlawful. In several cases highlighted by the media, girls as young as five were offered as brides to settle disputes. Government figures showed that only nine *swara* cases were registered in 2013 in which 65 suspects were arrested by the police. But rights activists believed that the actual number of *swara* cases was much higher, and many cases went unreported.

According to Madadgaar National Helpline's database, 506 cases of early and forced marriages of women and children were reported in the first six months of 2013. Several arrests of clerics and grooms involved in contracting child marriage were reported to have been made. However, there was no information on how many of them were prosecuted and received punishment. Young marriages are linked to early pregnancies, aggravated by limited access to contraception. As per the findings of Pakistan Demographic Health Survey 2012-2013, the fertility rate among Pakistani girls between 15-19 years was 44 per 1,000 women and of this, only seven percent had access to contraception. Early pregnancies were related to a myriad of health problems. According to the data issued by Rahnuma-Family Planning Association of Pakistan (R-FPAP) in connection with 'World Population Day', observed internationally on July 11, the high maternal mortality combined with high fertility resulted in one out of every 89 women dying from pregnancy-related



Prohibition by law failed to deter child marriages.

causes, many when they were younger than 18.

No new law or amendment to the existing law on child marriage occurred in any of the four provinces. In Sindh, an eight-member committee of provincial lawmakers was assigned in August to prepare draft laws on child marriage in consultation with stakeholders. However, due to lack of coordination among the members, two drafts surfaced which had major differences. The only common feature was age, which was set at 18 years for both males and females and for which a private resolution was also adopted, prescribing minimum age of 18 years for both males and females as a compulsory condition for marriage. The bill remained subject to parliamentary rivalry and no consensus was reached by the year's end. A Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Bill 2013 was presented in the KP assembly in January 2013 but it did not receive support from most members.

Recommendations

1. Serious efforts and mass campaigns by the government and civil society are needed to save lives of thousands of children who die every year from preventable diseases. State spending must increase in the health sector, particularly on primary healthcare facilities.

2. The phenomenon of ghost schools must be addressed on a priority. Concerted efforts need to be made by the private and the public sector to reduce the number of out-of-school children by addressing the causes, i.e., gender disparities, poverty and child labour as well as lack of school facilities and learning and teaching materials. Corporal punishment must also be legally prohibited with serious sanctions. Children with disabilities must also be included in the mainstream education system instead of being isolated in special schools.

3. *All child protection bills at the national and provincial levels that lapsed after the assemblies completed their tenure in early 2013 must be re-tabled and brought into force without delay.*

4. *Child sexual abuse emerged as a very serious issue this year. With a rising number of reported cases, the state must respond by improving the investigation and evidentiary procedures and requirements to increase the number of convictions and to encourage the trend of reporting of such acts of violence.*

5. *A countrywide survey on child labour must be conducted in 2014 under all circumstances to devise a suitable framework to address the growing issues of child labour. The provincial child labour units must play a more proactive role in taking practical measures in eradicating child labour. The circular and rather paradoxical correlation of child labour, street children, education and abject poverty needs serious consideration, as each cannot be dealt with in isolation from the other.*

6. *The treatment of children involved in the criminal process must comply with the international and national standards mandatory for the prisons. The Juvenile Justice System Ordinance needs to be fully recognised as the fundamental law governing children involved in criminal litigation and applied in its entirety by judges, police and prison administration.*

7. *The law prohibiting cultural practices that result in early and forced marriages must be enforced more strictly.*

Labour

The state shall ensure the elimination of all forms of exploitation and the gradual fulfilment of the fundamental principle, from each according to his ability, to each according to his work.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 3

Slavery is non-existent and forbidden and no law shall permit or facilitate its introduction into Pakistan in any form. All forms of forced labour and traffic in human beings are prohibited. No child below the age of 14 years shall be engaged in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment.

Article 11 (1-3)

Every citizen shall have the right to form associations or unions, subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of Pakistan, public order or morality.

Article 17(1)

The state shall make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work ...

Article 37(c)

The state shall secure the well-being of the people, irrespective of sex, caste, creed and race, by raising their standard of living, by preventing the concentration of wealth and means of production and distribution in the hands of a few to the detriment of general interest and by ensuring equitable adjustment of rights between employers and employees, and landlords and tenants; provide for all citizens, within the available resources of the country, facilities for work and adequate livelihood with reasonable rest and leisure; provide for all persons, employed in the service of Pakistan or otherwise, social security by compulsory social insurance or other means; provide basic

necessities of life, such as food, clothing, housing, education and medical relief, for all such citizens, irrespective of sex, caste, creed or race, as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness or unemployment; reduce disparity in the income and earnings of individuals ...

Article 38(a) to (e)

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 4

Everyone, as a member of society, has a right to social security

Article 22

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 23 (1-4)

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holiday with pay.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Article 25(1)

State parties recognise the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 32(1)

The year 2013 did not offer any silver lining to the long-suffering workers of Pakistan. Despite continuous protests by labourers, peasants, working women and trade unions no substantial law or policy change was introduced to address their issues and demands.

Statistics at the end of the year suggested a rise in unemployment, inflation, and suicides.

Despite repeated promises, a census of workers was not carried out, with

the result that all figures published by the labour department were projections. The safety net for the labourers continuously dwindled. Out of a total labour force of 59 million in Pakistan, only 1.56 million had access to social security. Exclusion of a huge majority of labourers from this net due to one technicality or another rendered these laws meaningless.

Industrial and other workplace accidents claimed the lives of dozens of workers amid scant attention to their safety. Accidents like the devastating Baldia factory fire in Karachi in 2012 seemed to have been forgotten. Numerous cases of boiler explosion, roof collapse and inhalation of poisonous gases were dealt with through the occasional payment of meagre compensation. The ship-breaking and mining industries were the most hazardous for employment in Pakistan. The owners of Baldia factory in Karachi, where a fire had killed more than 270 workers, were released on bail and charges of premeditated murder against them were dropped. The report of an investigation into the fire was not made public despite appeals by HRCP and other civil society organisations.

In the year 2013, the minimum monthly wage was raised by Rs 1,000, taking it to Rs 10,000 (\$100). Workers continued to complain that the minimum wage enhancement was not in accordance with inflation and that many employers had not yet given workers the minimum wage announced by the government in 2012, which was Rs 9,000 a month.

Of all labour issues, the problems faced by agricultural workers in the country remained the least reported and highlighted. Protesting and demanding their rights at the fringes, these workers were left to fend for themselves. In the conflict-hit tribal regions of the country, access to fertilizer continued to be a problem amid curbs aimed at preventing the commodity's use in making explosives. Imposition of a uniform ban on fertilizer instead of regulating its transportation and sale adversely affected farmers and their income.

The labour market

According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the volume of unemployed persons increased from 3.40 million in 2010-11 to 3.73 million in the financial year 2013. According to the annual Pakistan Labour Survey, the unemployment rate reached 6.2%. Punjab was the only province in Pakistan where unemployment decreased from 2.10 million people unemployed in 2011 to 1.47 million in 2013.

At the start of the year, employees of CNG stations in the country held protests to highlight their plight after the closure of gas stations during the winter months. With the closure of CNG stations, tens of thousands of employees were at the risk of losing their jobs. The employees urged the prime minister to take notice of the situation. Many workers who were employed on daily wages were shown the door immediately after the closure of the CNG stations. In October, the federal government closed all CNG stations



Academic qualification did not translate into a job.

in Punjab for three months of winter, stating that providing gas for domestic use was the priority. The decision contributed to CNG stations' staff going out of work. Closure of industries owing to electricity and gas shortages also added to unemployment. Not only did this lead to closure of industrial units, even the functioning ones operated below capacity.

Around 2,000 employees of the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) were uncertain about their future after the government issued them a letter in October, stating that the operations of ERRA were being closed down. The workers had hoped that they might be accommodated in other government departments, but no such assurance was given to them.

In December, a festive month for Christians all over the world, 50 Christian daily-wage sanitary workers of Capital Development Authority (CDA) were sacked in Islamabad. Some of these workers had been with the CDA for decades but were fired without a proper notice. The workers staged a protest outside the Islamabad Press Club.

Amid fears of possible privatisation of state-owned Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), trade unions threatened boycotts and proposed an employee bailout package instead of privatisation of the airline. In September, the government announced its intention to privatise 26% of PIA's shares along with management control. The unions tried to stop the privatisation process by suggesting that the workers might collectively buy the company.

Although the overall rate of unemployment was on the rise and new jobs were unavailable, the female labour force of Pakistan showed some positive trends. According to the ILO's 'Punjab Employment Trends 2013', the average

annual growth rate of the female labour force in Pakistan was 8.8%, compared to 2.5% for men. Though the total male workforce at 24.9 million, was many times bigger than the female labour force (9.46 million), the greater annual growth rate showed that more women were entering the job market.

Working conditions, threats and violence

Workers and workplace safety issues did not get due attention from the media, the labour department or the government. Cases of boiler blasts, roof collapses and inhaling of poisonous gases failed to ring alarm bells.

Industrial units were reluctant to pay their social security contributions. In January, the Social Security Department issued notices to more than 1,000 factories for timely payment of social security dues. The letter also warned that non-compliance would lead to the defaulting industrial units being sealed.

Measures were taken to shift dangerous factories in Lahore, capital of the Punjab province, to the city's outskirts. In order to shift up to 7,850 illegal industrial concerns located in residential areas of Lahore, the district officer of industries suggested in March to the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) to consider declaring four sites as industrial zones. It was stated that the units categorised as dangerous in the first stage would have to be shifted to new sites if more accidents were to be avoided.

A survey to list all dangerous industrial units in residential areas was conducted when a boiler exploded in a Lahore factory in February 2012, killing 26 workers.

Other provinces, however, failed to resume factory inspections.

Accidents at workplaces and casualties among workers were reported



Work conditions exposed labourers to health risks.

from all parts of the country. Accidents happened frequently even in Lahore, where much attention was supposed to be focused on dealing with hazardous industrial concerns.

A fire broke out in a tractor spare-part manufacturing factory in Lahore January, causing serious burns to 10 workers. The fire started when a worker lit a match near the oil stored in the factory.

In March, a pipe-manufacturing unit caught fire in Quaid-e-Azam Industrial Estate in Kot Lakhpat areas of the same city; eight workers sustained serious burn injuries.

In May, a fire at the LDA Plaza situated on Lahore's Egerton Road, killed eight persons and injured several others. The incident exposed a lack of fire safety in the office of the very authority responsible for ensuring fire safety in buildings across Lahore. TV footage of employees jumping from the roof to save their lives exposed the extent to which LDA practiced what it preached.

A cylinder blast in a factory in Rawalpindi in January killed three workers and injured two others. The workers were refilling oxygen and nitrogen gases in cylinders for use at hospitals and pharmacies. The blast caused the roof of the dilapidated factory building to cave in, crushing the workers.

A factory worker was killed and five others injured when the roof of a factory collapsed after a boiler explosion on Jhang Road, Faisalabad, also in January. The factory owner, who was leader of the opposition in the Punjab Assembly at the time, announced compensation for the injured and the deceased.

Four days later a boiler exploded at a sugar mill in Layyah district, injuring eight workers, two of them with 95 percent burns to their bodies.

In January, the building of a factory where oxygen was filled in cylinders collapsed after a blast, killing three workers and wounding two others at Sangjani, Islamabad.

Later the same month, a gas cylinder blast in a go-down in Badami Bagh area of Lahore caused the death of two workers.

In October, during leather processing at a tannery in Kasur district, a rotating wooden drum dislocated and fell. When workers tried to fix the drum, poisonous gases leaking from it caused two workers to faint and fall into the drum. Both died.

In December, a boiler at a factory on Sargodha Road, Faisalabad, exploded, causing the death of two workers and injuries to 15 others. A case was registered against the factory's general manager and boiler engineer.

Many employers or contractors made their workers undertake hazardous jobs underground, in sewers, etc., without proper equipment to keep them safe from poisonous fumes.

In January, two employees of the Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) died from suffocation working on an underground cable in SITE area of Hyderabad. A PTCL union leader said that the employees had been forced to work in hazardous conditions underground although the area

was outside their line of work since installing underground cable was the work of the company's technical wing trained for such tasks.

In March, three labourers lost their lives in Kasur after they climbed down an 18-foot deep manhole filled with poisonous gases. A contractor had engaged them to replace manhole lids.

In May, three daily-wage workers, a man and his two sons, perished due to suffocation and breathing poisonous gases while cleaning a sewer. A Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) contractor had hired the three men to clean the sewer line in Mumtazabad Colony near Bahawalpur.

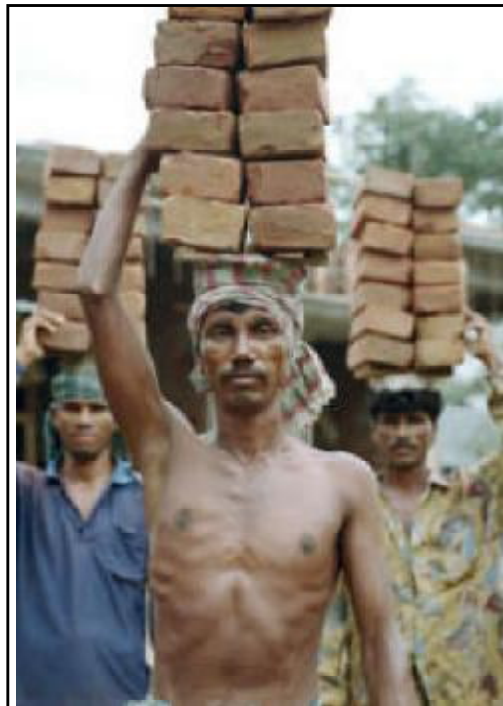
Workers were also subjected to immense mental stress and suffered from depression owing to a lack of job opportunities and sacking. A recently sacked factory worker in Faisalabad was driven to despair due to poverty and shot his wife and their five children before turning the gun on himself. The police said such incidents were on the rise in Faisalabad amid closure of factories resulting in layoff of nearly half a million people.

In February, two workers lost their lives and eight others sustained injuries as the roof of an under-construction flour mill collapsed on Ferozepur Road, Lahore, trapping the workers underneath.

A furnace oil go-down building collapsed in Gujranwala in February after an LPG cylinder blast, killing one labourer and injuring three others. Oil was being poured into containers when a fire broke out. The LPG cylinder exploded from the heat. The investigation officers declared that the accident could have been avoided had fire safety equipment been present. Following the incident, the Qila Deedar Singh town administration sealed four illegal commercial buildings and a furnace oil factory.

Workers were not safe from terrorism either. Targeted attacks against them in Balochistan and the tribal areas added further hazards to an already unsafe environment.

In February, unidentified militants shot and killed six labourers in Shadi Kaur area of Gwadar district in Balochistan. The labourers



Meagre wages for back-breaking work.

were working on a highway when four gunmen on motorcycles lined them up, checked their identity and opened fire.

In March, unidentified armed men on motorcycle shot and killed four employees of a solar energy company when they were travelling near Kalat on Quetta-Karachi National Highway.

In April, dozens of gunmen attacked a Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) grid station on the outskirts of Peshawar, killing seven workers and disrupting power supply to thousands of people. At least four employees were unaccounted for after the attack and it was believed that they were abducted by the militants. The attackers destroyed the grid station with explosives and rockets.

A lineman for Faisalabad Electric Supply Company was shot dead in April allegedly for reporting electricity theft at an outhouse owned by the man who was suspected for his murder. Hundreds of FESCO workers protested and demanded the killers' arrest. A case was lodged with the police but no further action was taken.

In August, five Punjab-bound passenger buses were stopped near Machh in Bolan area of Balochistan. Scores of Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) militants disguised as security personnel took 21 passengers in the mountains, where they executed 13 of them. Most of the men killed were labourers from Punjab who were on their way home to celebrate Eid. In November, three labourers were shot dead in Turbat, Balochistan. Six labourers were working on an under-construction building when armed men on motorcycles shot and killed three of them. The victims hailed from Gilgit and Buner.

In October, unidentified armed men kidnapped six labourers working for a private construction company in Kohlu, Balochistan. The labourers remained missing till the end of the year.

Every year around a 100 employees working for different electricity distribution companies died of electrocution and many more suffer from permanent disfigurement and injuries. In a meeting in July, labour leaders demanded that families of each deceased or injured worker should be paid Rs 2 million as compensation. They also called upon the government to bear the education cost for the affected workers' children.

While absence of safety measures introduced an element of risk to work in all industries, some industries were more dangerous than most.

Despite numerous accidents and attacks, employers in the troubled region of Balochistan continued to send workers into mines with complete disregard for their safety.

Eight coal mine workers lost their lives in Dukki, tehsil Loralai in January after they fell unconscious after toxic gas spread in the mine. All the victims belonged to Shangla in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In December, unidentified armed men abducted eight coal miners from the Shahrag coalfield area of Harnai, Balochistan. The incident happened two

days after a local bandit was killed while trying to rob the office of a local coalmine owner.

After the passage of the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010, lawmaking on the subject of labour devolved on the provinces and absence of an ordinance protecting the rights of mine workers was acutely felt. The civil society, in various consultations, urged the various provincial governments to address the legal vacuum in order to solve the problems of mining workers.

Hazards in the ship-breaking industry

The Gadani ship-breaking yard in Karachi is one of the largest in the world and employs around 15,000 workers. These workers hailed from all parts of Pakistan but the industry was dominated by men from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These labourers were expected to break down 40,000-tonne ships, some of which took years to build, without even the most basic of safety equipment, such as gloves, helmets or fire-resistant clothing.

Most of the labourers engaged in the industry were daily-wage workers and received no welfare benefits or contractual rights.

The majority of the ships broken in Pakistan was said to have been manufactured in the 1980s when regulations were not in place to bar the use of hazardous material in ship building. Substances like asbestos, which cause lung cancer, were commonly found in the ships' paint and other material.

In two weeks of July alone, six labourers died and many others were injured at the Gadani yard due to lack of safety equipment. Labourers said that only one old ambulance was available for all the ship-breaking establishments and that they were not paid any medical allowance and had to bear the expenses



Hazardous work at the ship breaking industry.

of their treatment.

Peasants' struggles

The problems faced by the largest sector in Pakistan in terms of people employed as well as contribution to the GDP were rarely highlighted in the mainstream urban-focused media. Mass protests and violence at the hands of landlords went unheeded. The skewed land distribution in Pakistan continued the cycle of poverty in rural areas. According to the Society for Conservation and Protection of the Environment (SCOPE), five percent of Pakistan's population possessed 64% of Pakistan's farmland while 50.8% of rural households were landless. According to a survey conducted by the Pakistan Kissan Trust to assess food security among farmers in Jhang, Layyah,

Justice delayed for victims of Baldia factory fire

The families of the workers who died in the Baldia factory fire in SITE area of Karachi lost all hope of getting justice when all accused were granted bail by the Sindh High Court. The previous year the prime minister had assured the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry that murder charges against the factory owners would be dropped supposedly in a gesture of goodwill towards the business community. The investigators dropped the charges of intentional and premeditated murder against all nominated persons on January 14. The police prepared a supplementary charge-sheet, stating that the charges were withdrawn after they found no evidence that directly tied the suspects to the death of the workers. During the proceeding of the Senate, the upper house of parliament, senators questioned the wisdom of trying in anti-terrorism courts workers of the Karachi Electricity Supply Company (KESC) who had been protesting for their rights, and dropping charges of murder against those responsible for the death of so many workers. Also, despite repeated calls by HRCP and Pakistan Institute for Labour Education and Research (PILER), a detailed investigative report in the case was not made public. In January, PILER announced at a press conference that a major European buyer of textile products from the Baldia factory in Karachi had agreed to pay \$1 million as compensation to the heirs of the victims. The nightmare was far from over for the families of 33 factory workers whose bodies had not been identified so far. They had to submit the death certificate in order to claim compensation. A Sindh Assembly lawmaker assured the aggrieved families that they would be issued death certificates so that they could claim compensation.

Khanewal and Muzaffargarh districts, 12.84% of the respondents ate once a day, 80.41% twice a day, while only 6.76% could afford three meals a day. Meanwhile, 99.9% of the respondents interviewed said that their food intake was insufficient.

The issues faced by the agricultural workers of Pakistan ranged from inefficient distribution of water, gas and electricity load-shedding, and a ban on transporting fertilizers to the high cost of agriculture inputs. During a consultative policy seminar in Karachi in April, all major political parties, including PML-N, PPP, PTI, MQM and ANP made commitments to bring about land and agrarian reforms after coming to power in the May 11 elections. However, manifesto commitments showed that labour rights were not a priority for any mainstream political party.

By the end of April, an estimated three million tonnes of bumper wheat crop harvested in Sindh was still lying in the fields exposed to the elements due to the caretaker government's failure to buy the crop from the farmers in a timely manner. The farmers feared that their crops would be destroyed if it rained and therefore they sold their produce to private buyers at whatever price they could get. The wheat was usually sold for Rs 1,050 per 40kg while the designated government support price was Rs 1,200 per 40kg.

In 2008, the government had launched a programme to distribute 212,864 acres of land among landless peasants, especially women, across the province of Sindh. Subsequent studies showed that the land given to some 1,600 peasants remained uncultivated owing to lack of possession and water unavailability. Another informal survey revealed that 56,187 acres had indeed been distributed but not to landless farmers. On April 29, dozens of women protested that



Peasants felt exploited and neglected.

despite getting the legal title, they had received no land to till.

The agricultural workers at Takht Bhai in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa blocked a major road in January to protest against unlawful revenue collection by the Irrigation Department.

During a gathering in January, hundreds of farmers from 14 districts of Punjab demanded a reduction in the markup on bank loans and provision of free electricity to tube-wells owned by peasants with less than five acres of land. It was highlighted that no attempts had been made to control the high price of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.

Farmers from several district of Punjab came together in Okara in March and blocked the GT Road and railway tracks to protest against prolonged electricity load-shedding, overbilling and denial of subsidies. In September, the federal government announced Rs 23 billion subsidy for agriculture. Under the scheme farmers were to be provided electricity for powering tube-wells at a flat rate of Rs 10.50 per unit until June 30, 2014.

The authorities banned the transportation of all fertilizer to Kurram Agency in March, adversely affecting the agriculture sector. The fertilizer supply was banned because of apprehension that it was being used to make improvised explosive devices in FATA and across the border in Afghanistan.

Dozens of protests were held throughout the year in villages across Pakistan by farmers against influential landlords who they said illegally diverted canal water to their own fields. According to a report by the Irrigation Department, 38,338 cases of water theft were reported in Punjab in five months. However, the police only registered cases against 12 percent of the accused. The report also stated that 57 officers and employees of the Irrigation Department and influential politicians were themselves involved in water theft.

Wages and pensions

In the absence of an effective system for redress against the employers not paying their salaries, employees were forced to stage mass protests. The increase in the minimum wage for the financial year 2013-14 failed to satisfy the workers. The All Pakistan Clerks Association (APCA) rejected the budget and locked the doors of offices and held a protest demonstration on June 14. The association said that the budget did not mention any increase in the salaries of government employees. In less than a day, the government constituted a committee to consider a raise in civil servants' salaries. The committee was assigned to submit a report within a week. In view of growing protests and criticism, the federal government announced in June a 10% ad hoc allowance for civilian workers and armed forces personnel, which was not to be merged into the basic pay.

The Punjab budget for the year 2013-2014 fixed the minimum monthly wage at Rs 10,000. The Rs 334 billion Khyber Pakhtunkhwa budget included an annual expense of Rs 12 billion owing to a monthly salary and pension raise of 15%. The provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also unanimously



Workers' protests seldom found receptive ears.

amended the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Civil Servants Act, 1973, giving 94,000 employees of the provincial government the entitlement to pension on retirement from service.

In 2005, a Contributory Provident Fund Scheme was launched which effectively took away the workers' right to pension. The scheme's aim was to reduce the provincial government's growing pension bills. Through the 2013 amendment, the right to pension was restored for the KP civil servants.

In its budget, Balochistan announced a 15% increase in the salaries of government employees from grade 1 to 16 and a 10% increase for officers of grade 17 and above. The pension of government employees in Balochistan was also increased by 15%.

Numerous protests were held throughout the year as employers withheld the salaries of workers for months on end. These included some employees of Pakistan Railway, and lady health workers employed by the Punjab government. The Ministry of Health explained that since services of the lady health workers had been regularised recently, they would receive a new salary package and there had been some delay since the salary was to be released by the federal government.

Hundreds of permanent, contractual and daily-wage workers of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) protested that they had not been paid their salaries for 15 months. The issue started after the devolution of the PTDC to the provinces. Employees wrote to the PTDC managing director in December, complaining that they had not been paid their wages since October 2012.

The president of Sajjan Union, a union of Christian workers of Karachi

Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), filed a contempt of court application in the Sindh High Court in December against the Sindh chief secretary, finance secretary and others over the non-payment of salaries to over 14,000 employees of the KMC and five district municipal corporations. The court ordered the payment of dues to the employees by December 20.

In March, an Employees Old-Age Benefit Institution (EOBI) official said that the state-owned Pakistan Television (PTV) was a defaulter for not having paid Rs 20.3 million in contributions for its staff. EOBI sent PTV a notice for clearing the dues. EOBI said that PTV had been depositing contributions for its permanent staff but not for contractual employees.

National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) in collaboration with EOBI launched the Pension Disbursement Project in April for disbursing pensions to EOBI pensioners through a chip-based Smart National Identity Card (SNIC). The live biometric verification system of the SNICs enabled recording of the proof of life of the pensioner and brought transparency to pension disbursement. NADRA and EOBI agreed to offer the SNIC free of cost and the disbursement centres were to be close to pensioners' address to avoid long queues and hassle.

Laws, policies and litigation

Despite the passage of three years since the adoption of the 18th Constitutional Amendment, some laws still awaited amendment by the provincial legislature for enforcement. According to experts, some important labour laws which required amendment or needed to be introduced anew included The Factories Act 1934, Employment of Children Act 1991, Workmen Compensation Act 1923, Minimum Wage Ordinance 1961, and the Bonded Labour Act 1992.

The promulgation of the Civil Servants (Amendment) Ordinance 2013 was approved by the president on May 24, making all employees of devolved ministries permanent civil servants in the organisations to which they had been transferred or were working in at the time of devolution.

The federal government decided to provide Rs 1.23 billion to the Punjab Workers Welfare Board (PWVB) in October, since a lack of funds had been hampering the completion of several welfare programmes. The minister for labour and human resources stated that Rs 107.5 million would be spent on scholarship, Rs 276 million on marriage grants, Rs 337 million on death grants, Rs 144 million on promotion of education in Worker Welfare Schools and Rs 300 million on the completion of development schemes.

In view of the growing number of women joining the workforce and facing discrimination and hostile work environments, the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat (FOS), in collaboration with the ILO's Gender Equality for Decent Employment project in November launched an online complaint system about harassment at the workplace. According to the project, approximately 70% of women who faced sexual harassment did not want to file a complaint with the

authorities owing to the complicated system. The grievance redress system consisted of a website of online complaints in English and Urdu, as well as an SMS tracking system.

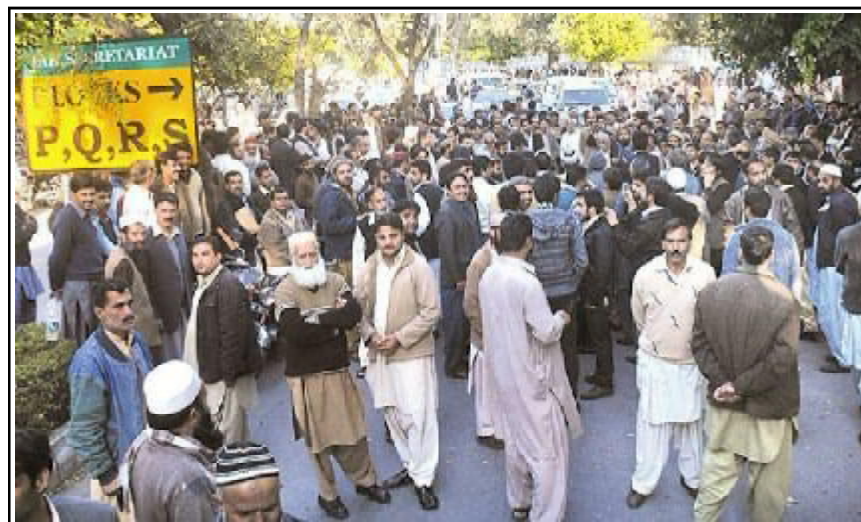
In a case which was hailed as a victory for labourers as well as a reminder of the inordinate delay in getting justice, in May the Supreme Court directed a major fertilizer company to reinstate 112 labourers sacked 22 years ago and also to pay them salary for the entire period. The case had started in 1991 when the present owners of the company had bought it; and the employees in question had been laid off. They had moved the Sindh High Court against their ouster. The court had decided the case in their favour. The fertilizer company had appealed the decision in the Supreme Court, which agreed with the Sindh High Court decision.

Protests

The workers were forced to come out on the streets to register their grievances. The workers and labourers of Pakistan observed a 'Protest Day' on September 4 and held big rallies in all major cities to protest against the price hike, privatisation of state-owned enterprises, rising unemployment and terrorist attacks targeting labourers.

Teachers seeking regularisation staged protests in Quetta in May. The previous government had introduced the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan package under which 5,000 teachers were recruited on contract in Balochistan. The teachers said they had been performing their duties for several years and the government should regularise their service.

The drivers employed for the Metro Bus Service in Lahore staged a protest in May against the working conditions. They said that they were repeatedly



Government employees were not impressed by the raise they got.

fined for minor offense such as driving even a little above or below the speed limit. They also complained that there was no waiting area and no proper drinking water facility for them.

All the protests held by employees during 2013 were far too numerous to be recounted in a brief chapter. Employees of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, All Pakistan Clerks Association, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), textile mills and power-looms, school and college teachers, peasants and trade union activists were among the many citizens who staged protests across the country to press for their demands.

Bonded labour

Pakistan was believed to have the third highest number of enslaved people in the world. According to the Global Slavery Index 2013, published by the Australia-based Walk Free Foundation, an estimated 2,000,000 to 2,200,000 people were in various forms of slavery in Pakistan.

Among the worst manifestations of modern-day slavery was bonded labour, which posed a serious threat to the well-being and lives of workers. Civil society organisations consistently kept up the pressure on the government to enforce existing legislation but the illegal practice of debt bondage continued.

In 2013, the authorities made half-hearted attempts to register labourers. National identity cards and social security cards were issued mostly to those former bonded labourers who had managed to escape from captivity. However, simply releasing labourers was not enough if they were left without proper livelihoods or if they face persecution from their former employers, as was usually the case.

The Punjab government had formed district vigilance committees and in July the Supreme Court asked the Punjab police chief “to circulate the Court’s directive to all law enforcement agencies, especially the DPOs [district police officers], to ensure that no case of bonded labour existed in their areas of jurisdiction”.

In November, a big rally of textile workers in Faisalabad drew attention towards the plight of bonded labourers. Some 10,000 labourers, including women, men and children, marched for many kilometers and protested in front of the Labour Department office.

Child labour

After the 18th Amendment and the devolution of ministries to the provinces in 2010, all four provinces failed to enact a law to ban employment of children below the age of 14. According to ILO, there are 12 million child workers in Pakistan. The provinces were bound to enact these laws under the ILO conventions ratified by Pakistan. In February 2013, the Punjab government gave consent to present the Prohibition of Employment of Children Bill 2012 for policy approval but it was still pending when the year came to an end. In

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the draft Prohibition of the Employment of Children Bill 2012 remained in the queue for presentation.

The Sindh government developed a provincial policy for home-based workers which also called for a ban on employment of children under the age of 16. The policy was yet to be implemented though. In Balochistan, the draft Employment of Children (Amendment) Bill was first submitted in 2012 but was yet to be made into a law.

The government had ratified ILO conventions 138 and 182 which called for elimination of all forms of child labour by the year 2016. The government had requested ILO for technical and financial assistance to initiate model projects to eliminate child labour. One such project was the Sukkur project, initiated in December 2009. A survey under the project found that more than 53,000 children were working in hazardous conditions in Sukkur district alone. The labour department in the district estimated that 77% children worked in activities related to natural resource management; out of them 53% were engaged in seasonal crop production and 24% in cattle rearing. The remaining 23% were engaged in off-farm activities, mainly working at motor vehicle workshops and tea stalls.

In recent years, many cases of violence against child workers, both domestic and commercial, have come to light. According to the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), 47 cases of violence against child domestic workers were reported between January 2010 and December 2013. Civil society organisations stressed the need for a bill on the rights of domestic workers, recognising them as labourers so that social security and other rights could be extended to them.

On March 24, a 22-year-old man escaped from a bonded labour camp



Only a few cared for abandoned children.

near Chaman, on the border with Afghanistan, together with a friend and arrived at a police station. He said that he had been kidnapped from Punjab 16 years ago when he was only six. He told the police that 10 other boys were detained at the forced labour camp.

A 12-year-old boy died in Gujranwala, in Punjab, at his employer's house in May. The employer said that the boy had hanged himself but a medical report proved that the boy had been murdered.

In June 2013, an 11-year old girl reached a shelter home in Karachi after escaping from a household where her father had sold her two years earlier for domestic work in exchange for Rs 2,000 per month. Her employer used to beat her.

Recommendations

1. *The growing energy shortage in the country should be tackled so that industries can develop and produce at full capacity, creating jobs for the multitudes of unemployed people.*

2. *Factory inspections should resume and a sufficient number of appropriately trained inspectors should be appointed so that workplace accidents can be prevented.*

3. *The minimum wage should be revised every year for all sectors of economy and should reflect the inflation rates.*

4. *Domestic workers should be recognised as labourers and brought under the protection promised to labourers under the laws of the land, including social security, minimum wage and a safe working environment. Wages should be paid on time and the employers failing to release the full wages on time should be dealt with under the law.*

5. *Labour-related laws which require a change following the 18th Constitutional Amendment or which need to be introduced should be adopted to ensure workers' safety and security.*

6. *Police officials should be held accountable for any instance of debt bondage in their jurisdictions in order to give impetus to efforts aimed at eliminating the illegal practice.*

7. *The population and labour census should be carried out so that the actual figures of population growth, unemployment rates, etc., can be judged and policies devised accordingly.*

Social and economic rights

VI



Education

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 26

o The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

o The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right:

n Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all;

n Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive

introduction of free education;

n Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;

International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Article 13

The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law.

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 25(A)

Education: a fundamental human right

The significance of education as a human right is difficult to overstate – education is a prerequisite for the exercise of all other human rights. The UN committee that oversees the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which Pakistan ratified in 2008, has called education a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights. In particular, education empowers the groups and individuals who are vulnerable to exploitation, and improves the quality and dignity of life.

Yet millions of children and adults remain deprived of educational opportunities in Pakistan, many as a result of poverty, largely because the state prioritises maintaining and bolstering its security apparatus as against providing essential public services to the people of the country.

The Pakistan constitution now recognises free basic education as a fundamental right and both federal and provincial laws have been promulgated to implement the right. However, not enough emphasis is being given to what “education” means. According to the ICESCR, education must be directed to the “full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”. It must enable all persons to “participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups”.

While Pakistan may be inching closer to providing a so-called education to more and more of its children, the question remains whether what is being taught is enabling them to become more tolerant and progressive, or whether it is perpetuating the same prejudices, bigotry, and biases that have been causing decay of the social fabric of the country.

In 2013, education in Pakistan followed the same poor pattern seen in previous years. Despite tall promises, budgetary allocation for education was

increased only marginally to just under 2% of the GDP; disparity between public and private education continued to grow; school curricula carried on spreading hate and bigotry; and widespread violence was yet again seen to disrupt educational activities in many parts of the country.

International rankings and literacy rates

According to a UNESCO report released in December 2013, 79% of the Pakistani population was illiterate, placing Pakistan at the 180th position in a list of 221 countries in the world. The illiteracy rate was reported as 72% in the 15 to 24 years age bracket, 57% in those aged 25 to 44 years, 46% in the 45 to 54 years age group, and 38% in people aged 55 to 64 years. This placed Pakistan below many of its neighboring countries including India, China and Iran in literacy rates.

The 2013 UN Human Development Report “The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World” also illustrated a similar picture. Pakistan scored 0.515 on the UN’s human development index, a comparative index composed from data on life expectancy, education and standard of living. This was a slight improvement from 2012 when Pakistan scored 0.513 and 2011, when Pakistan scored 0.512. However, the improvement was not much of a cause for celebration, as the low score placed Pakistan at the 146th position out of 186 countries, which was amongst the lowest in South Asia. For example, according to the HDI, expected years of schooling in Pakistan were only 6.8, whereas they were 10.3 in India, 8.1 in Bangladesh, 8.8 in Nepal, and 12 in Sri



School buildings were a luxury that many young students did not have.

Lanka. The HDI also showed that Pakistan had one of the lowest investments in terms of education and health – it spent only 0.8% of GDP on health and 1.8% on education.

Reiterating the same pattern, Pakistan slipped down to the 133rd position in ranking among 148 countries on the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum. Low enrollment in primary, secondary and tertiary education was said to be amongst the main reasons for a decline in Pakistan's competitiveness ranking.

Government policies, priorities, and practice

2013 was election year in Pakistan, and not surprisingly, education featured very prominently in all major party manifestos. During its campaign, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz pledged to increase the education budget to 4 percent of the GDP by 2018. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf claimed that if elected, it would increase the budget for education to 5% of the GDP. In a drastic measure, Pakistan Peoples Party extended its party slogan from "*roti kapra makaan*" to "*Ilm, sehat aur sub ko kaam*" (education, health and employment for all), emphasizing the priority of education for the party.

The PML-N came to power after a comfortable electoral victory. Very disappointingly, the budgetary allocation for education was only 1.9% of the GDP, a figure that has remained stagnant over the last few years. According to the UNDP Human Development Report 2013, only 7 developing countries in the world spend less on education than Pakistan. The significance of this figure was aptly emphasized by Alif Aailaan, a Pakistani organisation working on education, which said that it would only take one-fifth of Pakistan's military budget to pay for every child to complete primary school in the country.

Among the provinces, Punjab's allocation for education was the highest, with a budget of approximately Rs. 182 billion, followed by Sindh, with a budget of Rs 134 billion. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa showed the highest increase of a commendable 30% in allocations in the current year compared to 2012-2013.

The National Education Policy of 2009 set out to achieve universal and free primary education by 2015 and up to class 10 by 2025, aiming to bridge the public-private divide with private sector-oriented policies and incentives. Consequently, the Right to Education (RTE) Act, passed in December 2012 made it mandatory for the government to provide free and compulsory education to children between the ages of 5 and 16 years. However, given the dismal literacy rates in 2013 coupled with the low budgetary allocation for education, the lofty aims set out in the NEP and the RTE seemed impossible to meet.

On the legislative front, the National and provincial assemblies took some commendable steps regarding education in 2013. In March 2013, the National



Some schools served only as cattle sheds.

Assembly unanimously passed “The Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill 2013”. The law prohibits corporal punishment in educational institutions. It also provides that any person guilty of inflicting corporal punishment on a child shall be punishable with imprisonment extending up to a maximum period of one year or fine up to Rs. 50,000 or both.

Sindh became the first province to make a law providing free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of five and 16 years. The Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2013 seeks to implement Article 25-A of the Constitution, which states that education is a fundamental right of every child.

According to the law, all children whose parents could not afford to pay for their education or those who became victims of terrorism would be enrolled for free in private schools. The law further stated that every school must constitute a management committee of government representatives, teachers and school principals to ensure that the policy was implemented. According to the Act, both the school management and parents of out-of-school children could be fined or imprisoned if the law was not followed.

Shortly after the promulgation of the law in Sindh, the governor of Balochistan issued an ordinance, which declared that primary and secondary school education shall be compulsory and free in the province.

The most controversial educational policy adopted by the Punjab

government was the laptop scheme, which was introduced as a part of the “youth uplift plan”. Under the scheme, 100,000 laptops, costing the exchequer Rs 4 billion, were to be distributed amongst students. The scheme was met with widespread criticism that while millions of Pakistani children were out of school, the government was prioritizing laptops over fulfilling their basic right to an education.

Primary and secondary education

In its annual report “The state of Pakistan’s children 2012”, the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) reported that one fourth of the 19.75 million children in Pakistan aged five to nine were out of school. Out of these, seven million children (aged three to five) were yet to receive even primary schooling. Because of such bleak figures, Pakistan ranked the second with the most out-of-school children in the world with only Nigeria ahead of it.

At the provincial level, Punjab had the highest net enrolment rate for children in primary schools, which stood at 61%, followed by Sindh, with a net enrollment rate of 53%. About 51% children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were enrolled in schools whereas in Balochistan, only 47% children went to school.

In collaboration with UNICEF and UNESCO, the Ministry of Education, compiled a comprehensive report in 2013 that studied the state of education in the country. According to the findings of the report, over 6.5 million children were not enrolled in primary education and another 2.7 million children were not enrolled at lower secondary level.

Based on the findings of the report, the federal government planned to enroll 5.1 million children between the age groups of five and nine under a three-year National Plan of Action from 2013 to 2016. The plan aimed to cover four regions—Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Islamabad Capital Territory, Gilgit Baltistan and FATA—and was expected to cost Rs 188 billion.

The prevalence of “ghost schools”—non-functional schools that exist on paper and from where teachers continue to draw salaries—became a focal point of debate around the crumbling primary and secondary education system in the country.

In 2012, Sindh Rural Development Society, a local charity, petitioned the Supreme Court to investigate the phenomenon of ghost schools. The court took up the petition in February 2013, following which it ordered a systematic survey to be carried out by district and sessions court judges in the country to assess the state of primary and secondary government schools.

The results of the survey illustrated a troubling picture about the condition of education in Pakistan. A total of 260,903 government and private institutions up to the level of secondary schools existed in the country. Out of these, 2,088 were “ghost schools”, 1,008 schools were under illegal occupation, and 5,827 schools were non-functional. The most shocking numbers were reported

from Sindh, which was home to 1,962 ghost schools, 419 schools of which were under illegal occupation, and 4,285 schools were non-functional. While no ghost schools were found in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), the condition of schools was reported to be deplorable, with inadequate funding and access.

After considering the report prepared by district and sessions judges, the Supreme Court observed that existence of ghost schools and absenteeism of teachers were the two main problems facing primary and secondary education in the country.

Provincial disparity remained another glaring problem facing education in Pakistan. Balochistan, geographically the largest but the most underdeveloped province of Pakistan, was the biggest victim of an abysmal condition of education. Only 1.3 million out of a total of 3.6 million children in Balochistan were enrolled in schools in the province, a figure that was proportionally much less than the percentage of children going to school in other provinces. The number of primary, middle and high schools across the province was 12,600 with 56,000 teachers. However, according to the secretary of education in the province, 2,000 schools were not functional and over 3,000 teachers did not perform their duties.

Similarly, according to the Annual Statistical Report released by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Elementary and Secondary Education Department, there were 28,472 government schools in KP of which 27,975 were functional while 397 were non-functional. Moreover, 20% of the functional public schools had no boundary walls, 30% did not have a water supply, 42% had no electricity and 16% lacked toilet facilities.

Unless these troubling numbers are addressed on a priority, the vicious



Education suffered amid militants destroying schools.

cycle of poverty and underdevelopment in the provinces will continue to repeat across generations.

Despite strict laws to the contrary, corporal punishment continued in Pakistani schools. A study, “Stopping the Fear: Why Teachers Use Corporal Punishment”, was conducted by Plan Pakistan, an NGO which has been running a campaign against corporal punishment since 2008. The study found that most teachers and parents, particularly in low-income households, supported corporal punishment in the classroom. The research showed that the practice was more common in government schools than private schools, non-formal schools and madrassas.

Higher education

Pakistan’s performance in higher and tertiary education enrollment improved in World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Report. Pakistan moved to 121st place out of 148 countries, as opposed to 125th place in 2012.

The government indicated making higher education a greater priority by allocating Rs 57.4 billion in the annual budget. This allocation included Rs 18.4 billion for the proposed Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), a 23% increase from the Rs 15.8 billion allocated to it in 2012-2013. The remaining Rs 39 billion was allocated to increase the enrolment in higher education by 14% from 1.08 million students in 2012-13 to 1.23 million students in 2013-14.

The funds were being administered by Higher Education Commission (HEC), and their intended use included increase in scholarships and infrastructure development, which included establishment of new educational institutions, a department for higher education and upgrading and improvement



There were disagreements galore on decisions about higher education.

in the existing facilities.

The increase in budgetary allocation, however, was only half the battle won as educationists said that delays in release of funds continued to plague smooth functioning of higher education institutions and facilities. Vice chancellors of public sector universities, especially those in remote areas, expressed concern that because of delays in release of funds, they were unable to pay staff salaries and were forced to halt ongoing projects. The HEC too was affected by the delays in release of funds, and 6,000 scholars, both indigenous and foreign, suffered late payments of fees and stipends. It was also reported that the HEC was unable to pay salaries to more than 110 foreign professors hired by public sector universities.

The Higher Education Commission also remained engulfed in various controversies. It had been working without a permanent chairperson since 26 August 2013, when Dr Javaid Laghari's four-year term ended. On 27 November 2013, the Supreme Court directed the government to appoint a regular HEC chairman within 15 days. On the government's failure to abide by the Court's order, a former HEC chairman Dr. Attaur Rahman filed a writ petition on December 30, 2013 in Islamabad High Court for the appointment of a permanent and regular HEC chairperson.

The foreign PhD scholarship programme administered by the HEC continued to suffer from issues including delays in release of stipends to students and lack of coordination between the HEC and educational institutions. To make matters worse, it was reported that many students on HEC scholarships were unable to complete their doctoral studies in time and others refused to return to Pakistan after completing their degrees, calling into question the selection criteria and scrutinizing process of scholars by the HEC.

Private schools

The growing disparity between the quality of education provided by public and private schools continued to widen the differences between students belonging to the two education sectors. The majority of the country's student population was unable to afford the exorbitant fees charged by private schools, and had to resort to either public or madrassa education which in most cases was of a comparably lower standard.

Aware of their monopoly over education for the affording classes, private schools continued to increase fees at their whims. The fee hike was observed across Pakistan, even in schools operating in small houses in residential areas without sufficient facilities such as laboratories, libraries and playgrounds.

In an attempt to regulate private schools in the capital, parliament passed the Islamabad Capital Territory Educational Institutions (Regulation and Promotion) Act in February 2013. The objective of the law was to regulate private educational institutions to ensure that they followed a uniform policy on issues including curricula, duration of academic session and holidays or

vacations, rates of fee, qualification of teaching staff, etc. The Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Regulation and Promotion) Regulatory Authority (PEIRA) was formed in 2006, but was not given the powers to keep a check on the fees charged by the private schools. In light of the unprecedented fee hikes experienced in the capital, parliament finally passed the law to give the body some teeth.

The Punjab government had so far not established a regulatory body to control the fee structure of private educational institutions, even though various committees had been formed to make recommendations on how private schools should be regulated. In January, the Punjab government started a campaign to invite feedback from stakeholders, including students, their parents and teachers, for the establishment of an education commission to regulate working of private educational institutions. The regulatory body was to be set up under a private education bill, which was said to be in the drafting stage. This move, however, was strongly opposed by private schools in the province, which made it unlikely that such a body could be constituted soon.

In Sindh, private schools were regulated under the Sindh Private Educational Institutions (Regulation and Control) Ordinance, 2001, and Rules 2005 as well as the Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, which was passed in February 2013.

According to the Directorate of Inspection and Registration of Private Institutions, the regulatory authority under the law, 153 out of 1,395 private institutions in the region were either unregistered or had not renewed their registration. However, the directorate lacks the staff and funds for inspection and implementation of its mandate under the law.

The widely-held perception that private schools were more progressive and tolerant than government schools also witnessed a reality check when in November, the All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association banned a book by Malala Yousafzai—the schoolgirl shot by the Taliban in Swat on her way home from school in October 2012—from the libraries of its 40,000 affiliated schools and called on the government to bar it from school curriculums. The association claimed that Malala represented “Western propaganda”. The All Pakistan Private Schools Federation also banned Malala’s book in its affiliated schools, alleging that the book had made her controversial and she became “a tool in the hands of the western powers”.

Madrasa education

Despite fears that madrasa education may expose them to extremist religious views, ill-affording families had no choice but to send their children to religious schools. In September, for example, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa launched a free enrollment campaign to bring 2.6 million out-of-school children into the education system. Since then, 80,000 had been enrolled in primary and secondary schools. Around 12,000 children registered



Madrasa education remained largely unregulated.

in government schools, however, were found to be attending classes in madrasahs because their parents were unable to pay the fees.

Also in September, the federal government stepped up action on a comprehensive strategy evolved to bring madrasahs and religious schools into the mainstream. According to officials, there was still no record of the number of madrasahs operating in the country but the number could range from 10,000 to 20,000. However, since 2009, the government had undertaken a phased programme to register all madrasahs and government officials claimed the process was almost complete. Out of 10,430 madrasahs identified so far, 8,970 were registered with the Ministry of Education. According to reports, the management of at least 500 madrasahs was considered to be “hardliners”, involved in fueling extremism and accepting large funds from donors abroad.

According to the new government policy on religious schools, new madrasahs could only be opened after obtaining permission from the government. The administrations of madrasahs were also asked to review their syllabi to include subjects like English, mathematics, computer studies and science. These registered madrasahs were also being affiliated with education boards and universities for grant of recognised certificates after completion of studies according to the size and level of education offered at such schools.

Conditions at many madrasahs remained dismal and corporal punishment was a common practice. Reports from Gujranwala, Faisalabad, Peshawar and other areas alleged that children were subjected to torture and sexual abuse on a regular basis. In August, a madrasah teacher in Gujranwala beat up a seven-year-old boy, fracturing his arm, for not doing his homework. Similarly, in October, a 10-year-old student was brutally beaten up with a stick by his

teacher for not learning his lesson at a madrassa in the Tandlianwala tehsil of Faisalabad.

In August, the United States Treasury Department placed economic sanctions on the Taleemul-Quran-Wal-Hadith Madrassa, also known as Ganj Madrassa, in Peshawar. The Treasury Department said the madrassa was being used as a training and recruiting base for Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Taliban. In addition to freezing any of its assets that came under US jurisdiction, the sanctions also forbade Americans from having any business interaction with the madrassa. Reacting to the ban, the madrassa administration said the sanctions were unjustified and uncalled for as the school only taught students the Quran.

In September 2013, the police raided two madrassas in Gujranwala district of Punjab and arrested 21 foreigners studying there without official registration. According to the police, the madrassas belonged to Qazi Hamidullah Khan, a teacher of the Taliban leader Mullah Omar.

Curriculum reform

The right to education includes promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups. In Pakistan, however, 2013 once again saw not just millions of children out of school, but also the so-called “educated class” became more intolerant and bigoted. Educationists argue that an ideologically-driven education is a major reason behind this attitude.

A biased portrayal of religious minorities, women, India and “the West” in textbooks prescribed by state-funded textbook review boards was seen by many to perpetuate biases and stereotypes damaging social cohesion in the country, and was also thought to be amongst the root causes of prejudice and intolerance. Calls were frequently made for reform, but they yielded few results.

According to a study by Dr A. H. Nayyar titled “A Missed Opportunity: Continuing Flaws in the New Curriculum and Textbooks after Reforms”, which analysed the content of 27 Urdu textbooks and 30 English textbooks from class one to ten, the 2006 curriculum reform left much to be desired. Textbooks based on the New Curriculum 2006, which came into force in 2012, suffered from three serious flaws: they violated the constitutional protection available to Pakistan’s non-Muslim population by forcibly teaching them Islamic studies; they taught history woven around the assumption that Pakistan was an ideological state; and they contained material that was factually incorrect.

The study argued that textbook writers had worsened the distortions and biases in the new curriculum policy. Under the 2006 National Curriculum, for example, Jinnah’s August 2011 speech was considered only a call for freedom of faith. However, Dr Nayyar argued that textbook writers depicted his words to mean that in the new state, religious minorities will be protected rather than

clarifying that Jinnah did not want Pakistan to be a theocracy. Similarly, textbooks gave an ideological basis to Pakistan's foreign policy. For example, a Pakistan Studies textbook for class ten stated "In Pakistan, ideology and foreign policy are intertwined. Pakistan is an ideological state and is based on Islamic ideology."

Authors were also selective about historical facts. In describing the events of 1971, Dr Nayyar argued that Pakistani textbooks put the entire blame on the Hindu community of East Pakistan.

The year 2013 saw provincial governments take some disturbing steps to further damage the quality of education. In August, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa elementary and secondary education minister stated that Islamic teachings would be the basis of his government's curriculum reform. He indicated that the government would accept no limitations on religious education and dictation by any foreign NGO. The minister expressed the government's intention to "rectify the mistakes" made in the previous round of curriculum reform.

According to educationists, the move to reverse some of these positive curriculum changes would be a big blow to the movement in KP to promote peace, coexistence and tolerance.

In Punjab, the government imposed its narrow and intolerant vision of education on private schools as well. After the media's malicious campaign against the teaching of "comparative religion" at a private school, the Punjab government ordered authorities to seize and eliminate all reading material related to the course. The provincial government also constituted a committee to review 'objectionable material' in the syllabi of all private educational institutions across the province, stating that no school would be allowed to change the "basic ideology of the education system of Pakistan" and that "stern action would be initiated against the people behind such a conspiracy".

Violence and the pursuit of education

A major challenge to education in Pakistan was violence and attacks by various armed groups in different parts of the country. While the threat of violence for the last few years had been restricted largely to Balochistan and northwestern Pakistan, 2013 saw armed groups impede access to education in other parts of the country, specifically Karachi.

The year started off on a horrific note for education in the country when on 1 January 2013, seven teachers—six women and one man—working at an NGO-operated school were shot dead by unidentified gunmen as soon as they had exited the school in Swabi district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The organisation they worked for was called Support With Working Solution, which ran many health and education projects including polio vaccinations, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Attacks on educationists and educational institutions continued unabated.

In March, Shahnaz Nazli, a girls' school teacher, was killed in a drive-by shooting on the way to the school where she taught near the town of Jamrud in Khyber tribal district of FATA.

Schools were also subjected to attacks in pre-election violence witnessed in many parts of the country. In May, a boys' primary school and a middle school were attacked in Naseerabad district of Balochistan. The school buildings were designated as polling stations for the general elections, and were reportedly targeted to create hurdles in the electoral process in the province.

In June, Quetta witnessed one of the most horrific assaults on the pursuit of education when twin attacks by banned militancy sectarian outfit Lashkar-e-Jahngvi killed 25 people, majority of them female students. First, a university bus carrying female students home was targeted in a bombing. Fourteen female students from Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University were killed and 22 others were injured. Then gunmen attacked Bolan Medical Complex, a hospital treating survivors, where they killed another 11 people.

Religious schools belonging to the Shia sect were also targeted. In June, 14 people were killed and 28 injured after a suicide attack on a Shia religious school in Peshawar, just before Friday prayers.

In November, hours after promising not to launch any more drone strikes against Pakistan, a US drone attacked a religious school in Hangu, killing eight people, including three teachers and five students.

In Karachi a school principal, Abdul Rasheed, was killed and eight others, including children, were injured in a grenade and gun attack on a private school



Female teachers were targeted for their role in spreading education.

in the Baldia Town area.

Another facet of violence remained the presence and operation of militant student groups in universities. In September, the vice chancellor of Punjab University, in Lahore, said that Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT), the student wing of a religious-political party had been harbouring militants in the university hostels. The security forces also arrested a suspect believed to be an Al Qaeda associate from the hotels.

There were also multiple reports of students, mostly affiliated with the IJT, harassing and threatening teachers and other students. In December, for example, 21 students belonging to the same student wing were arrested after they allegedly beat up and kidnapped a teacher at Punjab University Law College in Lahore.

Gender discrimination

“My dream is to see every girl get an education in every country,” Malala Yousafzai said while speaking at the UN’s Social Good Summit in September. For Pakistan, however, it seemed unlikely that her dream would be realized anytime soon.

The issues surrounding female education in Pakistan were well summarised by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in March during its concluding observations on Pakistan. The committee expressed concern at the “pervasive gender inequality in the field of education, which is characterized by high illiteracy rate amongst women, the low enrolment of girls, particularly at the secondary level, and their high dropout rate, especially in the rural areas”. The committee also noted “the negative impact on girls of prioritization of boy’s education over girls, the lack of qualified female teachers and school infrastructure, and the long distances to school, all of which have a negative impact on girls’ education.” Finally, the committee expressed concern about the lack of measures to readmit girls in school after pregnancy, the high number of child marriages, reports of on-going violent attacks and public threats on female students, teachers and professors by various non-state actors, as well as the escalating number of attacks on educational institutions, in particular a large number of girls’ only schools, which according to the committee had disproportionately affected the access of girls and women to education.

Other reports and indexes confirmed the conclusions of the committee. The Global Gender Gap Report 2013, published by the World Economic Forum in collaboration with faculty at Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley, assessed 136 countries, representing more than 93 per cent of the world’s population, on how well resources and opportunities were divided among male and female populations. Pakistan was placed at the 135th position, followed only by Yemen, its score falling three spots since the study was conducted the previous year. In the region, Bangladesh was placed on the



Bombing of a women's university bus killed 15 students in Quetta.

75th place, while India was on the 101th position.

According to the index, Pakistan ranked second-worst in economic participation and opportunity and eighth-worst in terms of equal access to education. The current literacy rate for Pakistan was 69% for males and only 45% for females, while only 59% of girls attended primary school compared to 73% of boys.

According to UNESCO's Gender Parity Index, there were an estimated 82 girls for every 100 boys at primary schools in Pakistan. The poorest girls in Pakistan were twice as likely to be out of school as the poorest girls in India, almost three times as likely as the poorest girls in Nepal and around six times as likely as the poorest girls in Bangladesh. These figures came as a serious indictment of the state, which could no longer blame the poor condition of women's education on economic factors.

But why does female education continue to be such a major problem in Pakistan? According to the Pakistan Population Council, a research and capacity-building group, poverty was an obvious adverse factor for girls' schooling. When large families could only afford school for some of their children, daughters often lost out to sons. Other factors that hindered girls' education included access and long distances to school (with dangers of sexual violence); cultural constraints; early marriage and/or pregnancy; and lack of water and sanitation in schools.

Education for females was also a target for militants operating in the country.

On January 19, two primary schools for girls were damaged in separate

bomb blasts within the jurisdiction of Badaber police station near Peshawar.

In March, a man invading a school in the Ittehad Town area of Karachi killed Abdul Rasheed—educator and supporter of girls’ education in Pashtun-dominated areas of the city—along with a 10-year old girl student during an annual awards ceremony. Several other children, including Rasheed’s daughter, were injured in the gun-and-grenade attack.

On June 9, a government girls’ primary school was destroyed after unidentified militants planted bombs along the school building in Risaldar area of Charsadda.

On July 18, a government girls’ middle school was partially destroyed when a bomb planted by unidentified militants went off in Mama Khel area of Bannu.

Recommendations

1. *The right to education enshrined in the Constitution should be expanded to reflect Pakistan’s international human rights obligations, which include promotion of understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups.*

2. *The budgetary allocation for education must be increased at least to 4% of the country’s GDP. In order to meet this target, there is a serious need to rethink priorities and the government’s claim that education is a cornerstone for development, peace and harmony must be reflected in the budget.*

3. *Efforts must be made to ensure that girls are provided with a safe and comfortable environment to study. Training on how to be gender sensitive should be provided to all teachers and a review of the curriculum should be carried out to ensure it is gender sensitive. A healthy debate on curriculum reform should be generated; the Pakistan Studies syllabus in particular should not be treated as an ideological tool but should be a truthful reflection of the country’s history. All historical and other errors and biases in the curriculum should be removed.*

4. *The appalling conditions of schools across the country must immediately be corrected and minimum standards of comfort and safety must be enforced in all schools. The Supreme Court’s directives on ghost schools and dysfunctional schools should be implemented on a priority.*

5. *The government should prevent the occurrence of attacks and threats against educational institutions, including those which undermine women’s and girls’ fundamental right to an education, and to ensure that perpetrators of such acts of violence are promptly investigated, prosecuted and punished. Educational institutions subjected to violence should be promptly repaired and rebuilt. Students affected by violence should be reintegrated into other*

schools and universities as soon as possible. Violence on campuses must not be tolerated and strict action must be taken against perpetrators. However, elected students' unions must be encouraged and all barriers to legitimate student politics should be removed. A stringent, across-the-board prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and madrassas must be enacted and care must be taken to ensure that the law is also implemented.

Health

The state shall secure the well-being of the people, irrespective of sex, caste, creed and race ... provide basic necessities of life, such as ... medical relief, for all such citizens, irrespective of sex, caste, creed or race, as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness or unemployment. ...

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 38(a) and (d)

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of himself and of his family, including ... medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25(1)

The right to healthcare is not a fundamental right guaranteed in the Pakistan's Constitution, although Article 9—providing for the right to life—can be interpreted to include healthcare as necessary for a citizen's right to life. Provision of adequate medical services features in the Principles of Policy section of the Constitution which are not enforceable and so a citizen denied proper healthcare cannot move a court of law.

Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, having more than 180 million people. It also ranked sixth among the 22 countries of the world where communicable diseases still take a heavy toll. The country spent

just 0.35 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on health in 2012-13, according to the Economic Survey of Pakistan. In the previous fiscal, healthcare spending was 0.27 percent of the GDP. Despite the increase in the outlay, the people's health needs were not satiated leading to fears that the conditions would worsen with an increasing population growth rate, rapid urbanisation, food insecurity, environmental dangers and lack of access to safe drinking water.

Pakistan's health system continued to face many challenges in 2013. There was no national health insurance system and most of the people had to pay healthcare expenses themselves. The poor mainly relied on the overburdened and underfunded public healthcare system where the quality of care was generally below par. The quality of care and individual attention was generally better in the much more expensive private healthcare system. Only the rich could afford this privilege. The health cover was weak outside the main urban centres where people were particularly at the mercy of private clinics of questionable credentials. Constitutional changes through the 18th Amendment to the Constitution devolved healthcare to the provinces. In the post-devolution period, healthcare faced limited flow of funds, lack of ownership, weak monitoring and sustainability.

In line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (4&5) for 2015, the infant mortality rate had to be brought down from 59 deaths per 1,000 live births to 40, the under-five mortality rate from 72 deaths per 1,000 births to 52 and the maternal mortality rate from 260 deaths per 100,000 births to 140. But an assessment of the health sector, published in the medical journal *The Lancet* described Pakistan's progress towards meeting the MDGs for reducing child and maternal mortality as "unsatisfactory". The country had more child, foetal and maternal deaths than all but two of the world's nations. An estimated 423,000 children under-five died each year, almost half of them new-born babies. Family planning options were also limited and it was believed that a large number of unsafe abortions were attempted each year. Simple measures like training more nurses and midwives (currently outnumbered by doctors 2:1) could save more than 200,000 women and children's lives in 2015, the report said. A lack of adequate nutrition contributed to the high number of child and maternal deaths. Nearly 40 percent of children under-five were underweight and more than half were affected by stunting. Poor nutrition weakening the body's natural defence mechanisms aside, the report said malnutrition cost the country three percent of GDP every year, particularly through reduced productivity in young adults. The increased food cost had an impact on the nutrition status and impeded progress towards the MDG target.

In Pakistan, non-communicable diseases like cancer, diabetes and heart problems have replaced communicable diseases like malaria and diarrhoea in the past two decades as the leading cause of death and morbidity. This general trend has not been matched by corrections in the health system or government policy. Poor road safety, use of tobacco products and high levels of obesity all

lead to preventable deaths. Public health spending had declined from 1.5 percent of GDP in the late 1980s to less than 1 percent, according to the report—equivalent to less than 4 percent of the government budget.

The number of registered doctors increased in the last year from 152,188 to 160,289. The number of dentists and nurses went up from 11,584 to 12,544 and 77,683 to 82,119, respectively.

The ratio of population density versus health facilities was 1,127 people to one doctor, 14,406 people per dentist and an availability of one hospital bed for 1,786 people.

The rates of child deaths and maternal mortality fell, and the community-based Lady Health Workers programme was singled out for praise. But improvements were much slower coming than in other similar countries.

According to USAID statistics, there were only 6,000 midwives instead of the required 60,000. Of the \$22 (Rs 2,200) spent per person annually on health, \$14 (Rs 1,400) was out-of-pocket expense and only \$8 (Rs 800) were contributed by the government. Only 47% of the under-five children were covered under the immunisation programme. .

And so, in 2013, Pakistan remained one of only three countries where polio—a highly infectious crippling disease—posed a serious threat. Routine immunisation was followed by special campaigns every three months. Polio immunity was low, even among vaccinated children, because other viruses crowded the gut receptors to which the vaccine should attach.

Every 10th Pakistani was a hepatitis patient. The measles epidemic, continuing in the country since 2012, took the lives of more than 300 Pakistanis



Infant mortality rate was a long way off the MDG target.

in 2013.

Perils for polio vaccinators and their guards

Extremist elements' threats and attacks against polio vaccination teams grew to such an extent in 2013 that police guards were provided for security of to all polio vaccinators.

Several incidents of killing of polio vaccinators and their police guards still took place, temporarily halting the polio eradication campaign a number of times during the year.

In all, 20 polio vaccinators and nine policemen protecting them were killed in attacks on vaccination teams across the country in 2013. Most of the attacks occurred in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Karachi.

The extremists opposed vaccination drives often because they either saw them as a cover for espionage or a western conspiracy aimed at making the population of Muslim countries infertile.

Budget

The federal government allocated Rs 35.6 billion for health in the financial year 2013-2014 budget. Keeping Rs 9.9 billion for health affairs and services, it gave out Rs 25.7 billion to the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). In 2012-2013, Rs 22 billion were shared out for 17 ongoing schemes and one new plan. Under the PSDP, Rs 2.8 billion were apportioned for the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) along with Control of Diarrheal Disease and National Institute of Health (NIH), Islamabad. The Punjab province allocated Rs 97.37 billion for health, an increase of 25% over the previous budget. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government assigned Rs 22 billion for health in 2013-2014 as compared to Rs 10 billion in 2012-2013. The Sindh government kept Rs 17 billion and the Balochistan government allocated Rs 15.23 billion for health.

Maternal health and infant mortality

Maternal health and infant mortality remained a serious concern in 2013. Achieving MDGs targets by 2015 seemed ever more unlikely. Infant mortality rate at 59.35 deaths/1,000 live births continued to be a problem requiring immediate attention of authorities. The rate was higher for males at 62.56 deaths/1,000 births compared to 55.97 deaths/1,000 births for females. The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) remained high and was unlikely to be reduced to 140 per 100,000 births by 2015 as per the MDG.

According to the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey, the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) showed stagnation from 2003 onwards and was fixed at 30 percent. There was a need to introduce and educate couples about not just contraceptives but also about healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies which could greatly affect population growth rate as well as



The poor found some emergency care in public hospitals in big cities.

the health of the mother and the child.

The country director of international non-governmental organisation Population Council estimated that a million pregnancies were aborted every year, mostly in unhygienic conditions. The Population Council's study on post-abortion care in Pakistan revealed that in one year, 700,000 women visited health care facilities for complications which resulted from spontaneous or induced abortions by unsafe methods or with the assistance of unskilled midwives.

In 2013, the Sindh Government passed the Sindh Protection of Breastfeeding and Child Nutrition Act 2013, which made any publicity and assertion by any manufacturer or distributor discouraging breastfeeding and encouraging bottle feeding an offence punishable with up to two years in jail and a fine ranging from Rs 50,000 to Rs 500,000. The law also made it obligatory on manufacturers to publish in bold letters on their containers: "Mother's milk is best for your baby and helps in preventing diarrhoea and other illnesses."

Malnutrition

Pakistan suffered from acute food insecurity, particularly in the southern province of Sindh. According to Sindh Planning and Development Department, eight out of the province's 23 districts had "extremely poor access to food". Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), a policy analysis institute in Islamabad, had reported that 48% of Pakistan's population lacked sufficient access to food and was malnourished. Pakistan ranked 75th out of 107 countries surveyed by Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Food Security Index for 2013. Food price inflation rose to a record 34.09 percent as reported by Pakistan



Poverty and malnutrition went together.

Bureau of Statistics. In July the Government of Sindh reported that 71 percent of its population faced food security issues. Among households without secure access to food, 34 percent reported moderate hunger whereas 17 percent reported severe hunger. SDPI said that reasons for extensive food insecurity in Sindh were the same as in other parts of the country and could be attributed to a complex mix of poverty, poor governance and inequitable distribution. Climate change, insufficient emphasis on agricultural growth, urban development, growing population, fluctuation in fuel prices, inflation and displacement of people because of natural disasters such as drought and floods further exacerbated the situation, it said.

The price of medicine

The pharmaceutical manufacturing sector in Pakistan has been heavily regulated by the government of Pakistan. Pakistan imported some integral raw material from pharmaceutical manufacturers. The pharmaceutical companies in Pakistan complained that because of the fall in value of the rupee against the dollar in recent years their import bill had spiked and they faced increased challenge in providing cheap medicines. On November 28, the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) increased the prices of all drugs, except life-saving drugs, by 15 %. The prime minister, however, withdrew their notification the very next day. The pharmaceutical companies approached the Sindh High Court (SHC) and managed to obtain a stay order against the withdrawal of the notification.

On December 5, the Drug Regulatory Authority and Pakistan Pharmacy Council bills were presented to the Senate Standing Committee on Health. The committee chairman expressed alarm at the rising medicine prices, claiming that retailers were selling medicines at unauthorised rates, without approval of government or manufacturers. The secretary for National Health Services,

Regulations and Coordination (NHSRC) stated that a drug policy was being prepared and would be tabled soon.

Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012-2013

Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2012-2013 was conducted under the authority of the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination and implemented by the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS). The survey aimed at providing estimates of fertility and family planning, maternal and child health, women's and children's nutritional status, women's empowerment, domestic violence, and knowledge of HIV/AIDS for programme managers and policymakers to evaluate and improve existing programmes. According to the PDHS, the fertility rate (number of children per woman) for women in Pakistan was 3.8. About 73 percent of pregnant women received antenatal care from a skilled provider. Infant mortality rate was 74 per 1,000 live births whereas mortality rate under five years was 89 per 1,000 live births.

Mental health

The 18th Amendment dissolved the Federal Mental Health Authority as the provision of mental health was devolved to the provinces. The Mental Health Ordinance 2001 was scrapped leaving no law in the country dealing with mental health. In 2013, Sindh became the only province to have a law governing mental health with the Sindh Mental Health Act 2013. The president of Pakistan Association for Mental Health (PAMH) called the passage of the law a realisation that mental health had great bearing on the progress of any community or nation.

Experts noted that mental disorder was the fifth major non-communicable disease worldwide and one person in every fifth house in Pakistan was in need of psychiatric help. World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that Unipolar disorder (10 pc), schizophrenia (2 pc), substance and alcohol abuse disorder (4pc), bipolar disorder (2pc), dementia (2pc), epilepsy (1pc) and other neurological and neuropsychiatric disorders (5 pc) were the major mental disorders in Pakistan.

Infections and infestations

Polio

The number of reported polio cases increased from 58 cases in 2012 to 85 in 2013, up 40%. Several areas having extremely low routine immunisation coverage was highlighted as a major challenge. The majority of polio cases in 2013 were reported from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which registered 60 patients. At least 31 of these were from North Waziristan where there was a virtual ban on vaccination. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had 10

confirmed cases; Sindh reported eight and Punjab seven confirmed cases.

Officials attributed the increase to opposition from militants to the polio vaccination campaigns which were viewed with suspicion, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and adjoining tribal areas, and tens of thousands of parents refusing to get their children vaccinated. Attacks on and killing of vaccinators and policemen guarding immunisation teams also hampered the process.

Pakistan became the only polio-hit country to report more polio cases in 2013 than in the previous year. In 2013, polio cases were reported from only two other countries, Nigeria (50 cases) and Afghanistan (11 cases). According to global update on polio in 2012, Nigeria had 110 and Afghanistan 31 polio cases.

A WHO spokesperson in Pakistan said that more than 33 million children had been immunised during the polio vaccination campaigns in 2013 while 2.3 million children were recorded to have missed the campaign. More than 47,000 children missed the campaign due to parental refusals.

Talking to journalists, a WHO official noted that the polio virus strain found in Pakistan had recently been traced in the Gaza Strip and in Egypt. New Delhi made polio vaccination mandatory for Pakistanis seeking to travel to India. It was apprehended that others could follow suit if the situation did not improve.

Dengue

According to the WHO, dengue is the world's fastest-spreading tropical disease and represents a "pandemic threat", infecting an estimated 50 million people across all continents.

The disease is transmitted by the bite of a female mosquito and has been spreading fast due to increased movement of people and goods such as bamboo plants, used tyres as well as floods linked to climate change, as reported by the WHO.

In 2013, dengue epidemic was at its worst in Sindh with 5,500 patients diagnosed with the disease. At least 32 people lost their lives to dengue in Sindh as per the annual report of Dengue Surveillance Cell of the government. The director of the National Institute of Blood Diseases feared the actual number might have been higher and estimated that at least 15,000 people were affected by this disease in Sindh in 2013. Fumigation campaigns failed to achieve the desired results in Karachi. An official of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation said the fumigation failed to control the spread of the disease because of the use of substandard chemicals.

According to Punjab Health Department, at least 2,349 cases were reported in 2013. Despite fumigation and awareness campaigns, the spread of the virus could not be curtailed.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province was also severely hit by the dengue virus. The United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

(OCHA) said more than 7,000 people had tested positive for dengue in the Swat district of the province. The WHO said the figure for Swat district stood at 8,546 patients with 33 deaths from the disease in 2013.

WHO also observed that the striking feature was the spread of the disease to areas such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which did not fall in the traditional endemic belt in the south of the country.

Hepatitis

About 18 million Pakistanis were suffering from hepatitis B and C with 11 million suffering from HCV and 7 million from HBV virus. The chairman of Department of Medicine at Aga Khan University put the figure of hepatitis patients in the country at 13 million, with nine million suffering from hepatitis C and 4.5 million from hepatitis B. He stated that in spite of the high death rates, most people with chronic infections were unaware that they carried the virus, therefore, they were at high risk of developing severe chronic liver disease and could unknowingly transmit the virus to others. Doctors stressed that early detection and proper treatment were important to prevent liver damage. Doctors said that prevalence of hepatitis C was the second highest in the world. They attributed the high incidence to non-availability of vaccine, unscreened blood transfusions, repeat use of syringes by health care providers and drug users, use of improper and non-sterilised surgical and dental instruments, roadside dentists and barbers, administration of unnecessary injections, bad medical practice and quackery.

High risk groups included injecting drug users, health care workers and newborns to hepatitis B-infected mothers.

Measles

In 2011, child deaths as a result of measles, a vaccine-preventable disease, numbered 64. In the next year, however, an epidemic broke out which resulted in a record 306 child deaths owing to measles, 210 of them in the Sindh province.

In the year 2013, the Punjab province bore the brunt of the measles epidemic. According to information provided by the Extended Programme for Immunisation, 23,477 measles cases were reported from various parts of the Punjab in 2013 and 192 deaths were reported.

According to WHO, the measles epidemic worsened in 2013, with 290 deaths across Pakistan in six months alone. With diagnosis and statistics tabulation far from impressive across the country, it was certain that the disease had claimed the lives of at least 300 people in Pakistan in 2013.

The WHO also stated that Pakistan's health system had come under severe strain owing to three years of consecutive flooding. Even though vaccination at birth against measles was integral, it was also pointed out that it did not



Measles took a heavy toll on children.

always result in immunization. Malnutrition in a child also increased chances of getting measles.

Negligence and quacks

Unqualified homeopaths and *hakeems*, *pehlwan*s, medical assistants and all varieties of quacks continued to practise their versions of “medical science” on unsuspecting patients with little check. Similarly, medical assistants and roadside dentists continued to cash in on people’s desperation in the face of high healthcare and especially dental care costs. Most of them had no medical education or qualification. Unmonitored use of steroids was common amongst such practitioners, which could often prove fatal. The failure of the government to provide affordable medical facilities allowed these quacks to prosper.

In March, a three-month-old infant lost its life in the Kot Lakhpat area of Lahore after he was administered a wrong injection by a quack. The child’s father had taken him to the quack for circumcision. The wrong injection killed the infant instantly, after which the quack escaped. Despite the family’s protests, the culprit had not been arrested until the end of 2013.

Long waiting lists and negligence on the part of certified doctors in registered hospitals were also reported. On May 29, a four-year-old boy was allegedly killed by negligent doctors at the Sargodha District Headquarters Hospital. The boy was admitted to the hospital after a tamarind seed was stuck in one of his nostrils and the doctors suggested that it should be removed surgically. The next day a nurse administered an injection to the child. The boy died an hour after the injection. The family protested against the nurse and demanded action against her.

In a similar incident on June 22, a mother of three was brought to Rawalpindi District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) emergency ward due to

respiratory complications. While there, the woman was given an injection and within minutes she was pronounced dead. Her family staged a protest and manhandled the doctors.

Sale of almost all drugs at drug stores without prescriptions continued to be a grave concern. Availability of such drugs allowed people to indulge in self-medication and attempts at treatment without proper diagnosis or supervision.

Unregistered medical colleges continued to mushroom in the country. In August, the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) cautioned students against seeking admission in these colleges. They stated that students must check before their admission if the colleges were registered with the PMDC. They said that the Federal Investigation Agency would announce the names of the colleges which had failed to meet the criteria set by the PMDC.

Organ transplant law, poverty and exploitation

Over the last decade and a half Pakistan had gained reputation as an organ bazaar, with foreigners buying organs from poor people with the help of middlemen and unethical medical professionals. Numerous cases of cash for sale of kidneys in particular had been reported. The 2010 federal law on organ and tissue transplantation was scrapped following the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, under which health as a legislative subject was devolved to the provinces.

In February, the Sindh Assembly unanimously adopted the Sindh Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act; for regulation of transplantation of human organs and tissues for therapeutic purposes and to ban commercialisation of organ transplantation. The law allowed any person



Steep cost of healthcare drove many towards quacks.

who said so in her or his will to be an organ donor. In circumstances where a person had been declared brain-dead, the spouse, parents or an adult member of the family could authorise donation of any organ for transplantation at a recognised hospital. In order to avoid exploitation and sale of organs, the law stipulated that organ donation of Pakistani citizens would not be permissible to citizens of other countries.

In July, the Provincial Monitoring Authority, established under Punjab Human Organs and Tissue Transplantation Act 2012, decided to register hospitals and medical institutions conducting human organ transplantation in the province. The authority had the mandate to monitor transplantation and enforce prescribed standards for recognised hospitals. It could also investigate into allegations of breach of any provision of the 2012 act. The provincial health minister said the authority was aimed at curbing the illegal trade in human organs.

Media reports suggested that rackets involved in illegal transplantation continued to operate. In September, police from Lahore arrested three members of a gang allegedly involved in illegal kidney trade in a raid on a medical centre in the city of Rawalpindi.

The gang had reportedly supplied both patients and kidneys to its ringleader in Lahore. They were arrested after a man who had sold his kidney to the gang complained to the police that he had not been paid the agreed amount. The police also arrested five other people, who had been persuaded to sell their kidneys. These agreed to appear as witnesses in the case.

The investigator said that the gang members visited impoverished neighbourhoods and persuaded people to sell their kidneys. The gang allegedly approached donors and buyers and at times prepared fake relationship certificates to provide a cover for the illegal transplant.

Strikes by doctors young and old

Young doctors' strikes continued from the previous year into 2013, as they demanded a service structure, better salary and facilities and release of arrested colleagues. Strikes continued in January, especially in Punjab, as doctors boycotted out-patient departments (OPDs). These strikes increased the sufferings of poor patients manifold. The failure of the government to resolve the matter made matters worse.

Young doctors at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) in Islamabad closed down the emergency and threatened to go on a strike after two doctors were beaten up by a patient's relatives. The doctors demanded setting up of a permanent police check post and an alarm system at the hospital for the security of doctors and paramedical staff. The doctors called off the strike after they were assured of the installation of an alarm system.

In Peshawar, young doctors went on a hunger strike to press for their demands. The president of the Young Doctors Association (YDA) there said that they wanted a service structure, scrapping of the Medical Officer Act,

security for doctors, regularization of services of doctors registered with the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council and a permanent solution to the problems of house officers and trainee medical officers. The demands also included provision of free medicine, laboratory investigations, X-ray, CT scan and MRI, and free meals for patients in all public hospitals across KP.

In Balochistan and Sindh, doctors were systematically targeted by militants, some for their ethnicity or sectarian identity and others just for being agents of betterment and advancement. On October 8, in Orangi Town Karachi, a doctor was shot dead inside his clinic. Two gunmen arrived at his clinic, one went inside the clinic, killed the doctor and fled with his accomplice. The motive of the murder could not be ascertained but the police suggested that it could have had something to do with the fact that he served as a medico-legal officer at the Sindh Government Qatar Hospital. His family stated that he had not received any extortion demands. The Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) condemned the killing and demanded that the government provide security to doctors.

In September, cardiologist Dr Munaaf Tareen was kidnapped by armed men outside his hospital at Quetta's Pishin Stop area. His kidnappers demanded Rs 50 million ransom. The Balochistan chapter of Pakistan Medical Association said that Tareen was the 26th doctor to be kidnapped from Balochistan. The PMA threatened to strike in all government hospitals in Balochistan if the cardiologist was not recovered. On November 17, in the absence of concrete measures, doctors all over Balochistan staged strikes and closed all Outdoor Patients Departments (OPDs) in hospitals. The doctors had already been on strike for 49 days but the PMA ordered them to intensify their strike and attend to emergency patients only. The abducted cardiologist was released on December 1, allegedly after his family paid a hefty amount as ransom. The



As doctors went on strike, patients did not know who to turn to.

abductors were not arrested.

Recommendations

1. Budgetary allocation for health sector needs to be enhanced by all the provinces to make health care a priority. Primary health care should be focused in particular on providing safe drinking water, sewage systems and immunisation campaigns. Security should be guaranteed to health workers and vaccination teams. The government needs to carry out mass media campaigns in order to make people aware of viral diseases and enable them to take precautions to avoid them.

2. Healthcare providers should be facilitated to ensure constant care for the people. The public healthcare system should be strengthened to extend adequate coverage to every citizen, including those living away from the main cities. Steps should be taken to ensure that access to adequate healthcare does not become a question of affordability.

3. The drug regulatory authority needs to work more vigilantly by coming down on sellers of unregistered, substandard and fake drugs. The government needs to crack down on quacks and implement a clear licensing and registration process for any kind of alternative/herbal practice.

4. There is the need to formulate and implement a strategy to make as much progress as possible regarding MDG targets at this belated stage and to work towards setting and achieving targets beyond 2015.

5. Steps should be taken to make Pakistan polio free not only by providing security to vaccination teams but also by gaining the trust of the masses. Other vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles should also be eradicated through effective routine immunisation and, wherever necessary, special periodic campaigns.

Housing

The state shall secure the well-being of the people, irrespective of sex, caste, creed and race, by raising their standard of living .

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 38(a)

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and his family, including ... housing ...

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25 (1)

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions...

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Article 11 (1), 1

A World Bank study conducted five years earlier had concluded that Pakistan had a housing backlog of 7.5 million housing units. The backlog was estimated to grow by another 0.3 million housing units each year. By that yardstick, Pakistan had a housing shortfall of 9 million units at the end of 2013.

Destruction of houses in floods, earthquakes, internal armed conflict and militancy further aggravated the situation. In the absence of a household survey, accurate figures were elusive but it was clear that the country was in the

midst of a serious housing stock shortage with more than half the urban population living in squatter settlements. The provincial governments talked about regularising slums but made no effort to provide even the basic needs of the residents.

Housing societies kept encroaching upon fertile agriculture land without any check or regulation.

A lack of basic facilities in rural areas forced more and more citizens to move to cities, straining the already stretched urban infrastructure further. Commercial activity in residential neighbourhoods also made extra demands on the infrastructure.

Further burden on the housing stock came from over one million internally displaced persons, most of whom had been forced to flee armed conflict in FATA.

Accidents, fires and collapses

A plethora of urban development authorities could not prevent flouting of rules in construction. High-rise buildings were built although firefighters were ill-equipped to reach past the first few floors in case of emergency. The occasional notices issued to dilapidated houses and buildings were not followed up. Numerous accidents occurred throughout the year because of the poor quality of construction or lack of safety precautions.

In January, a man and his two children were killed and his wife seriously



The LDA Plaza fire exposed safety measures at the office of the authority responsible for ensuring compliance with safety and other by-laws.

injured when the roof of a house collapsed following heavy rains in Dir. The house was essentially a mud structure.

In the same month, seven people were injured when an under-construction building in Karachi collapsed on top of a shop. The injuries were said to have been caused because the shop on the ground floor had been allowed to operate though the construction of the building had not been completed.

Even official government buildings did not meet safety standards. In January, the building housing the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) office in Larkana, Sindh, collapsed. A woman was killed and another nine injured. The collapse had occurred reportedly because the building was dilapidated.

A few days later, a decaying house collapsed in the old walled city area of Lahore, killing five members of a family. Rescue officials said the dilapidated house had been further weakened by rains.

In March, three children died and four others were injured when a house collapsed in a slum in North Nazimabad, Karachi.

Rain appeared to be a major cause in the collapse of houses, roofs and walls. However, various departments dealing with disaster management did not take preemptive measures.

Five members of a family, including three children, were killed and five others injured when a house in Karak, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa collapsed due to rain in March.

In June, four children were among six people killed and many injured in separate incidents of roof collapse in Lahore amid a heavy downpour.

In July, a house collapse following heavy rain killed five member of a family, including three children, and injured 12 others in Gujranwala district of Punjab.

Later the same month, a house collapsed in a village of Rajanpur district following two days of heavy rain. Seven people were killed.

In August, five children were killed and four women injured in Hub, Balochistan, when the wall of an adjacent factory fell on a slum dwelling.

In November, a roof collapse in Swat killed seven members of the same family.

Land grabbing and scams

The sale and purchase of land remained a lucrative business in Pakistan. Many speculators engaged in such deal, often pushing the cost of land beyond the reach of most citizens in the middle-income bracket.

Many land scams were unearthed but it remained to be seen whether the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

In January, two officials of the Lahore development Authority (LDA)



Land owners faced difficulties in overcoming encroachment by the land mafia.

were sacked for conniving with land grabbers and facilitating illegal occupation of three residential plots.

In March, an Islamabad judge submitted a report before a three-member bench of the Supreme Court, stating that as many as 720 cases were pending in the Islamabad district courts regarding disputes over allotment and possession of residential houses in the capital.

In cases of land grabbing or consumers duped into buying plots in housing societies which took decades to develop, the pace of the judicial process received a lot of criticism. Often individuals avoided seeking legal action against land grabbers and reached compromises with them because cases in courts took years to conclude.

In March, the cause of the poor and the homeless suffered a major blow when Parveen Rahman, director of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), an NGO in Karachi which focused on low-cost sanitation, housing and education for slum dwellers, was shot and killed in a targeted attack in Karachi. She had received many awards on account of her work with residents of squatter settlements. She had reportedly been receiving threats to her life for a long time. She was believed to have offended the land mafia by documenting land grabs in the villages on the fringes of Karachi and by helping those whose lands had been grabbed.

In April, the Supreme Court took a *suo motu* notice of a major land scam in Karachi in which the Karachi Port Trust (PQT) and the Port Qasim Authority (PQA) illegally sold 1,600 acres of prime coast property worth Rs 88 billion to a residential project for Rs 15 million, at a cost of around Rs 2.5 per square

yard. The Supreme Court asked the KPT and the PQA to explain under what law they were entitled to sell government land.

In June, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) probed a case against a former Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) chairman for causing the board a loss of over Rs 1.9 billion for making an 843-kanal land deal with the Defence Housing Authority (DHA). The ETPB had struck the deal in exchange for 33 percent of the developed plots there. The former chairman, who was under investigation, had revised the deal, agreeing to receive 25 percent of the undeveloped plots. In the same month, the FIA unearthed another dubious deal by the same ETPB chairman concerning sale of land worth Rs 590 million to DHA Lahore. The Supreme Court declared the deal null and void in October. The three-member SC bench ordered criminal proceedings against the ETPB chairman.

A housing society developed by the Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA), spanning 1,800 acres that had taken over Rs 10 billion from people seeking a plot in the society in 2005 complained of lack of development in the society. Thousands of people purchased plots in the society inaugurated in 2005 with a promise that the society would have an expo centre, a stadium, a hospital, and a school by 2007. However, till the end of 2013, little development work was seen in the society.

Mushrooming housing societies continued to eat into fertile agricultural land and villages were converted into housing schemes. In November, residents of five villages in Nowshera, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, held a protest against the provincial government's decision to initiate a housing scheme on their land. They said the housing scheme on their land would amount to their financial murder.

People belonging to a collection of villages in Raiwind, Lahore, claimed that they had been harassed and forced into selling their land to a major housing scheme. They also claimed that the housing authority, in connivance with the police, was forcing them to sell the land at meagre rates, although there had been a significant rise in land prices due to development of housing societies in the area.

Housing finance and rents

House Building Finance Corporation (HBFC), a state-run institution, was the only specialised home-financing bank operational in the country. In the years 2006, 2007 and 2008, the HBFC helped construct or purchase 5,716, 6,812, and 6,130 houses, respectively. However, the number dropped significantly over the years owing to the international economic crisis, mainly in housing finance. In the year 2013, the housing finance institution was only able to help construct or purchase 1,614 houses. Such measures fell well short of addressing the 0.3 million housing unit shortage occurring in Pakistan

every year.

High house rents in major urban centres made life difficult for the people who could not afford to buy their own houses and had to spend a higher percentage of their income even for houses in relatively underdeveloped areas. A sharp spike in rents was especially noticed in areas where off-camp internally displaced persons had found shelter.

Illegal structures and sanitation

According to South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN)'s Sanitation Country Paper on Pakistan, 33% of people in Pakistan lived with no drainage systems. Nearly 23% of the population was still practising open defecation. Only 47% of Pakistan's population was using improved sanitation. A wide disparity existed between rural and urban areas with 72% urban dwellers with access to proper sanitation and only 34% rural dwellers.

According to Pakistan Development Review, published by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), heavy rains caused extensive local flooding and the storm water often mixed with raw sewage, especially in low-lying areas, spreading contamination and disease. The report said that due to lack of proper sewerage networks, sewage disposal and treatment had worsened over the years.

In a workshop organised by World Bank and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in July in order to discuss Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for sanitation, it was revealed that inadequate sanitation caused Pakistan annual economic losses worth \$5.7 billion or approximately Rs 343 billion.

In July, heavy rains paralysed the capital city of Pakistan because of poor drainage. The drainage system was choked after merely one day of rain and water entered government buildings, including the Prime Minister Staff Colony. The incident speaks volumes about the level of planning that goes into development of cities, especially the country's capital.

The Punjab emergency rescue and response service, Rescue 1122, prepared a report in December which declared that in Faisalabad district 737 shops, factories and houses were a safety hazard because of their dilapidated state. Some factories and shops were said to have substandard electrical wiring.

Protection of heritage

In January, the Punjab Archeological Department identified 16 historical sites in Lahore which were considered for addition to the list of protected sites under the Punjab Special Premises Preservation Ordinance (SPPO), 1985.

In January, a Mughal-era graveyard in Miran Pir in Thatta district was dug up and damaged by raiders, apparently in search of buried treasure. A joint team of the archeology and culture departments of Sindh visited the site to assess damage. The richly carved stones with Persian calligraphy were partially



Historical buildings were a magnet for influential property interests.

damaged.

The chairman of the Planning and Development Department promised the Punjab Archives Department the required funds for a modern complex for standardised maintenance of historical records. The secretary of the archives said the building had insufficient storage space and facilities. It was important to preserve the documents at the archives, including records dating back to the Mughal era.

Slums/ *katchi abadis*

The residents of squatter settlements and *katchi abadis* continued to live in despair as promises of regularisation did not materialise. Not having been provided by the government, the residents were forced to buy water, use gas cylinders and steal electricity from the power grid. The cost of life in big cities in the country forced more than half the population to live in illegal settlements.

The government's policy on slums and squatter settlements remained ambiguous. On one hand, residents of such settlements were promised property rights while on the other, they were evicted often and without notice.

The government of Punjab notified 3,460 *katchi abadis* throughout the province and awarded property rights to their dwellers in March. The award benefited around 1.7 million inhabitants as 180,725 kanals of land was transferred.

In December, the Punjab government announced to give ownership rights to 2.2 million residents of 326,516 units in squatter settlements. The governor



Half of the urban population lived in squatter settlements.

of Punjab said the ownership rights were to be given to the husband and wife jointly under the Katchi Abadis Regularisation Scheme 2012. Regularisation often did not translate into improved sanitation, proper housing or recreational facilities.

In January, residents of a squatter settlement in I-11 sector of Islamabad held a protest against eviction notices by the Capital Development Authority (CDA). The protesters, mostly settlers from Mohmand Agency in FATA, demanded that they must be paid compensation if they were expected to move. The CDA officials replied that since they had occupied land illegally, they were not entitled to any compensation. The residents said more than 15,000 people had been living in the area for more than 40 years but their rights were not being recognised. The CDA claimed that the area was a breeding ground for terrorists. The residents denied this and said they were fruit and vegetable merchants.

In February, hundreds of dwellers of a squatter settlement in Lahore staged a protest and blocked a key road to protest against the Punjab government notice to demolish 500 houses for building a new road from Ferozepur Road to Multan Road. The president of the Federation of Katchi Abadis said that around 500 families had been awarded ownership rights in 1985 as they had been living in these settlements since the 1960s.

Graveyards

The cost of graves continued to rise throughout Pakistan with the total cost of burial differing according to the religion of the deceased. An average Muslim marble grave in Punjab cost between Rs 20,000 (\$200) to Rs 25,000

(\$250). Cremation for Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab cost approximately Rs 10,000 (\$100). Graves in Sindh cost between Rs 25,000 (\$250) to Rs 30,000 (\$300). Encroachment on land reserved for graveyards was rampant.

In January, the Punjab chief minister approved Rs 1 billion for improving graveyards in Punjab under the Annual Development Programme 2012-2013. The chief minister ordered a survey of graveyards as per ratio of population in every district. The funds, released in October, were stated to go into construction of boundary walls, provision of water for drinking and ablution, and light arrangement.

In January, the local administration in Dherai Baba area in Swat issued one-week eviction notices to thousands of people in the 333-kanal area, saying that the land was meant for a graveyard. The 117 shopkeepers and owners of some 545 houses protested against the notice, stating that they had acquired the land legally.

In November, residents of Ajjowal village in Mandi Bahauddin staged a rally against illegal occupation of a graveyard by the land mafia. They complained that the police had not helped them in getting the land vacated and the attempts of the locals to reclaim it had led to severe clashes and injuries. The mafia was said to be building a farmhouse on the land allotted for the dead in the village.

Natural disasters and internal armed conflict

The Nullah Leh in Rawalpindi was a cause of concern for the residents of squatter settlements along its banks. On July 1, a landslide along the Nullah endangered some 20 houses which were on the verge of collapse as the water body burst its banks. Rain caused the foundations of many houses to be exposed and it was feared that houses would be swept away in case of further rains in the monsoon season. The same area had seen devastating flooding in July 2001, causing dozens of deaths and destruction in the locality.

According to disaster management authority officials, monsoon rains in 2013 affected 1,503,492 individuals across Pakistan. The floods affected 5,615 villages and destroyed approximately 20,312 houses. Monsoon floods have become a regular feature in Pakistan with flooding for fourth consecutive years.

In September, an earthquake in Awaran, Balochistan severely affected the sparsely populated area and flattened entire villages. According to a speaker of the Balochistan Assembly, 50% of structures in urban areas and 90% in rural areas of the district had collapsed.

By the end of July, there were one million internally displaced persons (IDP) in the country. According to statistics by United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), majority of the IDPs resided in the Jalozai camp in Nowshera, followed by New Durrani in Kurram Agency and Togh Serai in Hangu. Majority of the displaced families came from Orakzai Agency followed



Destruction in floods and armed conflict aggravated the housing shortage.

by South Waziristan. Amid talks of army operations in North Waziristan, FATA, there were fears that the number of IDPs in already crowded and cramped camps would swell. [See also the chapter 'Refugees']

Recommendations

1. *The emergency services in collaboration with local development authority should regularly carry out surveys of dilapidated and unsafe buildings in their area. The owners of dangerous structures should be notified and penalised if they fail to either improve or vacate the dilapidated buildings. Those who lack the means to find alternative housing should be supported.*

2. *The courts should expeditiously decide cases of land grabbing and land scams and ensure that the verdicts are implemented.*

3. *The slums and squatter settlements in the country should be regularised and provisions made for ensuring basic amenities for the residents there.*

4. *There should be a strict code of conduct criminalising the forced eviction of villagers and forcible purchase of their farmland to create or extend housing societies.*

5. *Local development authorities should allocate land for graveyards and ensure that the land is not encroached upon. Steps should be taken for making the burial cost affordable for all.*

Environment

All human beings have the fundamental right to an environment adequate for their health and well-being.

States shall conserve and use the environment and natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

States shall establish adequate environmental protection standards and monitor changes in and publish relevant data on environmental quality and resource use.

Proposed Legal Principles for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

Article 1,2,4

Clean environment: a human right

The right to a clean, healthy environment is now globally recognised as a fundamental human right. While not specifically enumerated in any of the major international human rights treaties or conventions, the United Nations and its treaty monitoring bodies have repeatedly said that the enjoyment of other rights such as the right to life and the right to health is not possible without a safe and friendly environment.

In 1972, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment declared that a person's environment, the natural and the man-made, are essential to his or her well-being and "to the enjoyment of basic human rights—even the right to life itself." This declaration became known as the Stockholm

Declaration on the Human Environment.

This was followed in 1994 by the declaration of principles on human rights and the environment, prepared by an international group of experts on human rights and environmental protection.

The Draft Declaration is the first international instrument that comprehensively addresses the relationship between human rights and the environment. It shows that human rights principles stipulate that all persons have the right to a secure, healthy and ecologically sound environment. This right and other human rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, are universal, interdependent and indivisible.

The UN Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) Committee has also addressed the right to a healthy environment. In General Comment 14 on the highest attainable standard of health, the committee has established that:

The right to health embraces a wide range of socio-economic factors that promote conditions in which people can lead a healthy life, and extends to the underlying determinants of health, such as food and nutrition, housing, access to safe and potable water and adequate sanitation, safe and healthy working conditions, and a healthy environment.

In 2011 the UN Human Rights Council initiated a study of the relationship between human rights and the environment. This led in March 2012 to the appointment of an independent expert who was asked to make recommendations on human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a 'safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment'.

In Pakistan, the right to a clean and healthy environment is not specifically recognised by the 1973 Constitution. However, in interpreting the rights to life and dignity, various Supreme Court benches have held that Article 9 of the Constitution, which guarantees life and liberty according to law, is not to be construed in a restricted and pedantic manner as life has a larger meaning which includes the right of enjoyment of life and maintaining an adequate standard of living.

In the landmark Shehla Zia case of 1994, in particular, the Supreme Court of Pakistan interpreted Article 9, the right to life, together with Article 14, the right to dignity, to conclude that a life of dignity demanded access to a "clean atmosphere and unpolluted environment".

Environmental issues, therefore, cannot be sidelined as secondary matters of public policy: just like other civil, political and social rights, the right to a clean environment is a fundamental human right that the State is obligated to protect.

Statistics

According to the World Bank, Pakistan loses up to six per cent of its GDP

annually because of environmental degradation. The organisation reported that environmental degradation costs Pakistan about Rs. 365 billion per year, and these costs fall disproportionately upon the poor. The most significant causes of environmental damage identified and estimated in the World Bank's report are: (1) illness and premature mortality caused by air pollution (indoor and outdoor), (almost 50 percent of the total damage cost); (2) diarrhoeal diseases and typhoid due to inadequate and contaminated water supply, and lack of sanitation and hygiene (about 30 percent of the total); and, (3) reduced agricultural productivity due to soil degradation (about 20 percent of the total).

A climate vulnerability report released by environmental think-tank Germanwatch in November 2013 counted Pakistan amongst the three countries most affected by extreme weather events in 2012. The think-tank released the Global Climate Risk Index 2014 at a United Nations climate summit in Poland, according to which Haiti, the Philippines and Pakistan were worst hit by climate-related catastrophes in 2012.

Environmental degradation and election manifestos

Despite these abysmal figures emphasising the extent of environmental damage in Pakistan, the issue was visibly neglected in political party manifestos leading up to the general elections in May 2013.

In April, environmental group International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) organised a dialogue to highlight environment on the elections agenda in Pakistan.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) did not attend the dialogue. Members of the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) stated that the party planned to engage industrialists and business people to build support for sustainable development, seemingly a very ambitious plan given that the businesses are generally the most resistant to environment-friendly policies. The Jamaat-e-Islami claimed it would respect nature and animal rights according to Islamic injunctions, using the historic model of Medina to counter environmental challenges. The only party that presented a detailed environmental policy was Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), which placed emphasis on creating a "green economy" through sector-based initiatives, including small-scale sustainable farming, eco-tourism and more effective water management undertaken at the union council level. The PTI also put forth a goal to reverse deforestation and increase forest levels from three to six per cent.

Even PTI's policy, however, appeared contradictory in places. In its agricultural policy, for example, the party advocated large-scale corporate farming, which called into question its commitment to "small-scale sustainable farming" laid out in its environmental policy. The PTI also did not indicate the

steps it would take to implement its ambitious environmental policies. For example, there was no clarity on how it would overcome resistance by powerful actors like industrialists, the timber mafia or multinational agribusiness firms, which have been hindering attempts to implement environment-friendly policies.

With the environment featuring so low in the priority lists of political parties, the lacklustre response to pressing environment issues by various government agencies later in the year came as little surprise.

Government policies

Budget

The environment was visibly not a priority for the new government, which began its tenure by slashing the budget for climate change projects. In the new budget announced for 2013-2014, only Rs 59 million (\$590,000 approx) was allocated for the Climate Change Division, compared with Rs 135 million in 2012-13.

Environmental activists condemned the cut in budgetary allocation, and expressed concern that it would have repercussions for agriculture, water and forestation. They also feared that Pakistan would lose support of international donors and organisations working on climate change. According to some estimates by environmental groups, the Pakistan Environment Protection Agency required approximately Rs 200 million only to complete existing projects.

National Climate Change Policy

In February, the Ministry of Climate Change launched Pakistan's first comprehensive National Climate Change Policy, providing a framework for addressing the issues that Pakistan faced or would face due to the changing climate. The policy was developed with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), after taking into consideration a report by the Planning Commission's Task Force on Climate Change and extensive consultations with provinces, federal institutions and civil society groups.

The stated goal of the policy is "to ensure that climate change is mainstreamed in the economically and socially vulnerable sectors of the economy and to steer Pakistan towards climate resilient development."

The policy recommends around 120 steps Pakistan could take to slow down the impact of global warming, as well as adapt sectors such as energy, transport and agriculture to make them more environmentally friendly. These measures included flood forecasting warning systems, local rainwater harvesting, developing new varieties of resilient crops, promoting renewable energy sources and more efficient public transport.

Environmental activists and experts appreciated the adoption of the policy, but expressed concern at the lack of an action plan, budgets and timelines to



Toxic waste was left exposed to the elements.

ensure effective and timely implementation. Questions were also raised about how the funds to implement the policy would be generated and also whether Pakistan's provinces had the capacity and expertise to put it to practice.

Failed foreign-funded projects

Lack of commitment by the government to implement climate change policies was illustrated by the failure of several foreign funded projects on the conservation of environment in Pakistan due to the Climate Change Division's inability to deliver.

The \$2.1 million National Environmental Information Management System (NEIMS) had been launched in 2008 in collaboration with the UNDP. The five-year project funded by the Government of Netherlands aimed at collecting environmental data in Pakistan to be used later for policy making. However, the project could not be delivered and the machinery remained dumped in storerooms for five years. The project was closed in November 2013 as the capacity of the technical staff could not be developed.

Similarly, the Rs 1.2 billion Environment Monitoring System (EMS), which was being funded by the Government of Japan, was also shut down due to shortage of funds. EMS was an initiative taken by the Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) which suffered several setbacks as even trained experts had to go without salaries for a year.

The programme had been initiated to assess the quality of air and water in major cities of Pakistan, and the data was intended to be used in preventing further degradation of the environment.

Need for law reform

Environmental experts and activists believed that not just the implementation,

but also the substantive provisions of many of Pakistan's environment laws were causing much harm to the cause.

The Capital Development Authority's (CDA) Islamabad Wildlife Ordinance, 1979, for example, provided that in order to preserve both flora and fauna in their natural state, the federal government might, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare any area to be a national park. It further added that the national park should be accessible to the public for recreation, education and research. The ordinance also made provision for road, construction of rest houses, hotels and other buildings in the national park along with other amenities for public.

Experts and some officials of Pak-EPA questioned why recreation had been made a priority for national parks, which were primarily meant for conservation and research. They also raised concern that any such construction as permitted by the law would damage the national park, defeating the purpose of the law and conservation effort.

Lastly, experts pointed out that while the law prohibited actions such as hunting, shooting, felling, burning or collecting of plants and trees, it also made an exception by allowing the authorised officer to authorise the supposedly prohibited actions at his or her discretion. This discretion, they argued, was often abused by authorising officers to allow constructions in national parks.

Using this ordinance as an example, environmentalists highlighted the dire need to amend environmental laws and argued that wildlife and its natural habitat needed tougher preservation and conservation legislation.

Punjab Environment Protection Council

At the provincial level, there was some effort to implement the Environment Protection Act 1997. In Punjab, an Environment Protection Council, as mandated by the EPA was formed under the chairpersonship of the provincial chief minister, and vice chairpersonship of the minister for environment protection. The 35-member council was to coordinate and supervise enforcement of environment protection policies.

Sindh Environmental Tribunal

The Sindh Environmental Tribunal, which was set up to hear complaints about pollution in the province, remained dysfunctional for more than a year.

Environmental protection tribunals were established pursuant to the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act (PEPA), 1997. PEPA was promulgated to ensure protection, conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of environment, the prevention and control of pollution as well as for the promotion of sustainable development.

The tribunal for the province comprised of a chairperson and two members. The post of chairperson was filled after a long delay but the posts of members

of the tribunal remained vacant.

Environment Protection Agency, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The most dismal situation was seen in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), where the provincial environment protection agency (EPA) continued to face extreme shortage of staff and other resources compared to other provinces. The staff strength of the KP EPA was 73 and it had a presence only in three of the seven administrative divisions of the province: Dera Ismail Khan, Hazara and Malakand. The EPA was working with only 55 staff while 18 positions remained vacant.

In contrast, Punjab EPA's staff strength was 700 and it had a strong district level setup across the province. Similarly, the Sindh EPA had 106 employees and had a main office at Karachi and divisional setups at Sukkur and Hyderabad, with expansion to district level in progress. The Balochistan EPA staff's strength was 509 and offices had been established in 21 districts.

The KP EPA was also facing shortage of resources for monitoring, awareness and implementation of its orders. The regular budget of the KP EPA was Rs 22.45 million and allocation of funds in the Annual Development Programme (ADP) was Rs 57.99 million, which appeared to be disproportionate to the budgets of other provinces.

According to reports, the Punjab EPA's regular budget was Rs 59.20 million and fund allocated in the ADP Rs 350 million. The Sindh EPA's regular budget was Rs 109 million and the allocated fund in the ADP Rs 199.5 million, while the Balochistan EPA's regular budget was Rs 131.7 million.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rangelands policy

Despite the shortage of staff and funds in the EPA, there was some cause of celebration in 2013 for environmental activists. In January, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government unveiled the province's first rangelands policy, which was drafted by Pakistan Forests Institute (PFI). The policy sought to improve the productivity of KP's rangelands, rehabilitate the degraded ones, conserve biodiversity and contribute to the national efforts against climate change, global warming and desertification.

Air pollution

While the link between heart disease and air pollution has been known for a while now, scientists now also believe that outdoor air pollution can cause lung cancer and increase the risk of autism among those who carry a genetic disposition for the disorder.

According to reports, more than 2 million deaths occur globally each year as a direct result of air pollution generated from human activity. Quite alarmingly, dust and smoke particles in Pakistan are generally twice the world average and five times higher than in the developed world.

The biggest causes of air pollution in Pakistan were reported to be fossil



Vehicle emissions were a large contributor to air pollution.

fuel-burning power plants and vehicular emission: combined, these two sources were responsible for about 90% of all air pollution in the country. The impact of air pollution was further compounded by the alarming rate of deforestation, lack of proper environmental protection policies, the uncontrolled rise in industrial pollution, and the use of coal for energy generation.

Two-stroke rickshaws

Two-stroke rickshaws continued to be an issue of focus, particularly in Lahore. According to a study of Pakistan-Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), a two-stroke rickshaw emitted twice as much carbon dioxide and 37 times more hydrocarbons than a four-stroke rickshaw, and so was a major contributor to air pollution.

In Lahore alone, tens of thousands of two-stroke rickshaws were operating unlawfully. In 2005, the Lahore High Court had given the government until December 2007 to remove all two-stroke rickshaws from Lahore's roads. The same year, the government had launched the Chief Minister's Green Punjab Scheme to provide subsidies for the purchase of four-stroke CNG rickshaws.

Efforts to ensure the switch from two-stroke to four-stroke rickshaws, however, had been inconsistent and ineffective at best. In April 2013, the Punjab Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched another campaign against two-stroke rickshaws in collaboration with the Lahore Transport Company (LTC) and the city traffic police. The campaign, however, failed to achieve its purpose due to disagreements among members of the LTC committee, the shortage of inspectors, lack of feasibility of alternatives, and a lax attitude towards implementation of the ban on two-stroke rickshaws. Providing alternative sources of livelihood for the people who derived their

income from two-stroke rickshaws also remained a cause of concern.

Another major cause of air pollution in Lahore was the use of rice husk, corn cobs and mustard husk in the place of gas and furnace oil to generate energy by as many as 200 factories in the city, particularly textile and paper factories. These fuels emitted high levels of ash particles and dust, adding to the levels of air pollution and also causing respiratory diseases among their workers and people living in surrounding areas.

In Islamabad, the rise in the number of vehicles emerged as one of the most serious causes of air pollution. According to Islamabad city administration, there had been a 100 per cent increase in the number of registered vehicles from 2008 to 2013. The rise in private vehicles had been attributed to increasing population, ease in obtaining car loans, and inadequate public transport.

Emissions from steel and marble factories in the industrial areas of Islamabad and Rawalpindi were also a major source of smog and air pollution. Dozens of such factories had been set up in both cities, which pumped toxic fumes in the air leading to a general rise in air pollution in the area. Residents who lived in proximity to the industrial areas frequently complained of chest congestion and asthma, which were reportedly linked to the rising levels of air pollution in the area. The year also saw a number of steel mills operating in the twin cities switch from gas to coal for energy generation, further increasing the level of pollution.

To combat rising levels of air pollution in Sindh, the Sindh High Court directed the motor vehicles' registration wing of the provincial excise and taxation department and the traffic police authorities to take action against the smoke-emitting public transport vehicles to protect the environment. The order was passed after a non-profit organization petitioned the court, seeking direction for the relevant departments to cancel fitness certificates of smoke-emitting taxis and auto-rickshaws.

Other large cities in Pakistan too remained badly affected by air pollution.



Getting clean fuel became ever more difficult.

According to data gathered by the World Health Organization over the last decade, Quetta, Peshawar and Lahore were three of the top 10 most polluted cities in the world.

Disposable plastic

Disposable plastics, in particular plastic bags, are among the major sources of environmental pollution in the world. They are generally non-biodegradable, when burnt release toxic fumes, endanger wildlife, and cause litter.

In Pakistan, 8,000 industrial units produce plastic bags. In Islamabad alone, 350 million plastic bags are used every year. Nationally, the number is estimated to be as much as 55 billion.

In February, the Ministry of Climate Change introduced legislation prohibiting the import, manufacturing, stockpiling, trade, supply, distribution, sale and use of all non oxo-biodegradable disposable plastic products. The legislation, called the Prohibition on Non-degradable Plastic Products (Manufacture, Sale and Usage) Regulations 2013, made illegal disposable plastic products made wholly or substantially of polyethylene, polypropylene or polystyrene unless they were oxo-biodegradable. Compliance was required in the federal territory from April 2013.

Such laws and regulations have been introduced in the past provincially as well. The Punjab government prohibited the manufacture, sale, use and import of polythene bags in 2002. Under the Punjab Prohibition on Manufacture, Sale, Use and Import of Polythene Bags (Black or Any Other Polythene Bag Below Fifteen Micron Thickness) Ordinance, those who violated the law were



Discarded plastic was a major source of pollution.

subject to a fine of Rs 50,000 and/or a prison term of up to three months.

The ordinance, however, was not implemented and in 2008 the Lahore High Court ordered the Punjab government to enforce the law by banning the use of plastic bags in the province.

Plastic scrap

From January to August, Pakistan imported approximately 18,200 metric tons of plastic scrap, with more than 95 per cent of the scrap being released from dry ports in Lahore. Over the last two years, 92,000 tonnes of plastic scrap had been dumped into the country, most of which originated in the Middle East and Europe. According to customs data 49 percent of scrap imported in August 2013.

was from OECD and EU countries, including the UK, Germany and Holland who have ratified the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, prohibiting the export of hazardous products to developing countries such as Pakistan, which do not have proper recycling facilities or other mechanisms to control the environmental hazards that can be caused by plastic scrap.

Water scarcity and contamination

Water scarcity and contamination are two of the major environmental concerns globally. Unfortunately for Pakistan, both these issues have reached alarming proportions in recent years.

An April 2013 Asian Development Bank report called Pakistan “one of the most water-stressed countries in the world, not far from being classified as ‘water scarce,’ with less than 1,000 cubic meters per person per year.” The report said that the country’s storage capacity was equivalent to only a 30-day supply, compared with the recommended 1,000 days for countries with similar climates. According to World Wildlife Fund Pakistan, by 2025, Pakistan will have 33 percent less water than it needed. WWF pointed out how the rise in population, unplanned urbanisation, irrational policies adopted by the government, dumping of wastes, lax law enforcement and loose governance had hurt groundwater quality and quantity.

These figures were even more disturbing because Pakistan had abundant water resources and heavy monsoon rains. However, while year after year, scores of people were killed because of flooding, Pakistan had few reservoirs to capture excess water which flowed into the sea each year. According to environmental experts, Pakistan was wasting 40 million acre-feet of water annually by dumping it into to the sea because of lack of water reservoirs. The result of this wastage was that many Pakistanis had no access to clean drinking water and farmers lacked water for irrigation.

Much of the water available was contaminated and unfit for human consumption. Water-related diseases caused nearly 60% of child mortality



Clean water was a distant dream for many.

cases and according to a report by the United Nations, 40% of all deaths in the country.

In August, the government informed the National Assembly that more than 80 percent of water samples collected across the country were found unsafe for drinking. It asked provincial governments to take measures against increasing contamination of water.

Water contamination remained a critical and largely unaddressed issue in 2013. Effluents and untreated industrial waste released by Sindh's two main industrial zones—Kotri and Nooriabad—continued contamination of fresh-water Keenjhar Lake. The lake provided drinking water to over 25 million people in Karachi, Thatta, Kotri and Hyderabad.

The Sindh government built an effluent treatment plant in the Kotri SITE area on the orders of the Sindh High Court at a cost of Rs 667 million. The plant was expected to be operational in December 2012 but was subjected to many delays and did not become fully functional even by the end of 2013, more than three years after the Sindh High Court's order.

The state of water contamination also remained dismal in other provinces. According to an Environment Protection Department (EPD) survey, 253 out of 392 tube-wells in Lahore pumped out water that was contaminated with arsenic. EPD also reported that over 65 percent people living in the city were consuming this contaminated water.

Another major cause of water contamination was landfill sites at Mehmood Booti, located in Lahore. The landfill, an authorised garbage dumping site owned by the City District Government Lahore, was not properly covered with a clay layer to avoid rainwater penetration. As a result, when rainwater

fell on the solid waste, the amount of leachate entering the sub-surface water increased, contaminating the water.

Pollution of River Ravi also rose as a key environmental concern in the Punjab. The government approved a project to set up water treatment plants to clean up water in sewage drains, including Hadiara, before it flowed into the river. The project was aimed at protecting the ecology of the Ravi, which the provincial minister for environmental protection admitted had long been treated as a sewage dump for the city.

In Islamabad, a survey undertaken by the Capital Development Authority's (CDA) Water Supply Directorate in collaboration with the Central Engineering Laboratory's Quality Control Cell found that drinking water supplied by 25 of the 37 plants was unhygienic, nine plants were dysfunctional, and only one filtration plant was supplying clean water.

Even those who could afford the luxury of expensive mineral water could not escape the peril of contaminated water. A quarterly report issued by the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) showed that 27 brands of water in the country were found contaminated with high arsenic content.

Rapid deforestation

Official estimates say Pakistan's forest cover is 4.5%. However, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Pakistan's forest cover lies at an abysmal 2.1% only. This figure is not only amongst the lowest in the region, but also worldwide. India's forest cover, for example, was estimated to be 23.1% whereas Bangladesh's forest cover was around 11.1%.

An assessment by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics pointed out that Pakistan was likely to lose most of its remaining forest cover within the next three or four decades.

Despite the importance of forests in helping preserve biodiversity, combating climate change, and supporting people's livelihoods, Pakistan has remained indifferent to protecting its forest cover since independence. So, Pakistan's forests have been depleting at an alarming rate. Forest cover is shrinking due to over-exploitation of forest resources for private incentives, lack of awareness and ownership by local communities, the power and patronage enjoyed by the timber mafia, and the absence of a comprehensive forestry policy.

2013 saw many of the trends from previous years continuing, with the exception of some important victories of environmentalists over the interests of the timber mafia and other interest groups.

Pursuant to an accession deal signed by the Government of Pakistan in 1952, local communities own the Diamer forests. However, the forests are managed by the Gilgit Baltistan Council, whose Chairperson is the prime minister of Pakistan. On 15 March 2013, a day before his term in office was to expire,



Deforestation continued despite bans.

the outgoing prime minister approved a policy that called for the disposal of 4 million cubic feet of both legally and illegally cut timber from Diamer in Gilgit Baltistan. Controversially, in addition to the legally-cut 2.0 million cubic feet of timber, which locals claimed had begun to decay, the prime minister's policy also allowed 1.9 million cubic feet of illegally-cut timber to be traded after contractors paid a fine to the government.

The policy, which was heavily criticised and decried by locals and environmentalists alike, lifted a ban on timber movement from Gilgit Baltistan placed in 1993 to prevent deforestation. Environmental activists claimed the policy had given a free hand to the timber mafia to chop new trees illegally and transport them down country in the guise of old timber and argued that the policy would cause massive deforestation in Diamer. Local activists claimed that at least 200,000 trees had been cut in Thor and Batoga valleys in Diamer between February and July 2013.

The federal government that took over after the general elections withdrew the controversial order on July 5, in what was a rare yet immensely significant victory of forest conservationists over interest of the powerful timber mafia.

Illegal tree felling, however, could not be curbed in the country. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government banned cutting of trees, prohibited all saw machines and also imposed a ban on the issuance of transport permits to protect forests in Hazara. Illegal cutting of trees, however, continued in the region as the powerful timber mafia with the support of local government and police officials openly defied the ban.

Apart from collusion of powerful interests, another important reason for lack of effective implementation was inadequate budgetary allocation.

In the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa budget for 2013-14, Rs 569.459 million were

allocated for forests under 46 schemes including 32 ongoing and 14 new ones. These schemes covered improving forest stock management, increasing forest cover by sustainable plantation through the outsourcing mode, better use of water resources, developing rangelands and rotational grazing for poverty alleviation. According to experts, the budgetary allocation for forests was too low to effectively counter deforestation.

The second largest juniper forest in the world covering an area of 247,000 acres in Ziarat, Balochistan also remained vulnerable to illegal felling of trees by the timber mafia, and to a smaller extent, locals cutting trees for cooking and heating. UNESCO's International Coordinating Council (ICC) of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) has declared Ziarat's juniper forest as a biosphere reserve. However, the government was yet to take effective steps for its conservation.

The government had been considering the construction of a tunnel through the Margalla Hills National Park to connect Islamabad and Haripur district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a part of Pakistan-China trade corridor. After pressure from some political parties and environmental activists, the chief justice took *suo motu* notice of the plan, and on October 25, the Supreme Court ordered the Margalla Tunnel Project to be stopped and the status of Margalla Hills National Park to be maintained. The court's move was celebrated by environmentalists but opposed by some traders and members of the business community, who considered the project of immense significance for trading in the area and hence of national importance.

In another small victory, the Sindh provincial forest department set a new world record in June by planting 750,000 mangrove saplings at Kharo Chan, Thatta, in a little over 12 hours. This was the highest number of saplings planted within a day anywhere in the world. It was highlighted that the real achievement would be making sure that the saplings remained protected and allowed to grow.

These few successes, however, were small when compared with the gigantic task of restoring Pakistan's lost forest cover. Without any comprehensive policies backed by the government, civil society, and the business community, the challenges posed by rapid deforestation were likely to remain unresolved.

Threat to wildlife

Mahasher fish, a species that flourished in Pakistan until the 1970s, was almost non-existent in the rivers of Punjab. Obstruction and fragmentation of water bodies, pollution, water diversion, habitat destruction and indiscriminate hunting were major reasons behind the rapid depletion of the species.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) had declared it an endangered species and in an attempt to preserve the species, Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) had declared Poonch River of Azad Jammu and Kashmir as Mahasher National Park, the first aquatic protected



A leatherback turtle was a rare and celebrated visitor to the shores of Gwadar.

area for a globally threatened species of fish.

As discussed in the section on water contamination, the contamination of Keenjhar Lake is a major threat to the environment. The Environmental Monitoring and Modeling Division of SUPARCO (Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission) carried out a Water Quality Assessment and Characterization of Toxicity of Keenjhar Lake following contamination of Haroolo drain, which flowed into Keenjhar Lake during monsoon season, causing death of a number of species. Their study found that contamination of the lake was not just making the lake's water unfit for drinking, but was also becoming a serious threat to its aquatic life.

In August, about 100 tonnes of dead fish, mainly mullets, were found floating in sea off Karachi. The incident was said to have coincided with the Lyari River bringing highly toxic chemicals from the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE) to the sea.

Pollution and contamination of water was also responsible for poisoning fish and other aquatic life in other parts of the country. Manchar Lake, previously home to a thriving fish and bird population, was reduced to a shadow of what it once was. The lake continued to be poisoned to dangerous levels by agricultural and industrial waste, not only threatening wildlife, but also forcing thousands of fishermen to relocate.

In 2013, the federal government issued 33 special permits to dignitaries of five countries of the Gulf region to hunt the internationally protected Houbara bustard during the hunting season in 2013-14. The bird is protected under national and international law, but according to the government, permits were given only to members of the royal family and Arab Sheikhs to maintain good

relations with their countries—namely the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait. Many people believe the meat of Houbara bustard to be an aphrodisiac.

The government’s willingness to grant permit for the hunting of the Houbara bustard is an indication of how high wildlife conservation was on its list of priorities. It also was a painful reminder that faced with power and money, environmental concerns almost always took the back seat.

The one silver lining to the state of wildlife in 2013 was the discovery of a living leatherback turtle in April in Gwadar near Surbandar village. According to WWF-Pakistan, leatherback turtles are very rarely found in the coastal areas of Pakistan. They were spotted a few times in the past, but were found dead.

Climate change and vulnerable groups

Climate change and environmental degradation are two of the most serious problems facing Pakistan today. However, environmental risks are unevenly distributed within society and may not be the same for everyone. Low-income groups that are traditionally marginalised, in Pakistan’s case women, for example, bear a disproportionate burden of the country’s environmental problems.

In November, Shirkat Gah, a women’s resource center, launched its report on “Climate Change and Women”. According to the report, women were going through behavioural changes, increasing health issues and mounting workload because of climate change. Women now had to walk to farther distances for fetching water and collecting wood for fuel, which increased their burden of



Karachi: Access to clean water was a struggle even in Pakistan’s biggest city.

work, resulting in less time for family and leisure.

It was the poor communities that were forced to reside in areas where climate change had a disproportionate impact, like flood zones and dry rural areas susceptible to draughts. Likewise, those most heavily dependent on natural resources were the most vulnerable—this included rural and urban poor, women and indigenous groups—who suffered disproportionately from the expected adverse impacts of climate change. When fish population in a given lake declined, the fisherfolk were the first to be affected and often had no option other than relocation. When a source of water such as Keenjhar Lake was poisoned, it was the poor communities without alternative water sources that suffered the most.

These consequences of climate change for vulnerable communities were even further exaggerated because of lack of social welfare schemes, framework for compensation, and other government support systems for the public in Pakistan. This reiterated the point made at the start of this chapter—the right to a clean environment was intrinsically linked to other rights including the right to life and the right to health.

Recommendations

1. *Politicians need to demonstrate greater political will and their party manifestos should reflect a more comprehensive approach towards environmental issues. The electorate should call for greater attention to environmental issues and also demand that the politicians and political parties fulfil their promises.*

2. *Specialised environmental agencies should work more intensively with politicians and decision-makers on addressing policy issues related to the environment including conservation and preservation measures.*

3. *Concrete steps must be taken to ensure that provincial environmental officials have the capacity and training to monitor and enforce environmental laws and to assess the impact of projects on environment.*

4. *The environment must be re-thought as a cross-cutting issue which must be integrated into all planning and development processes rather than dealt with in isolation. Concrete steps should be taken to raise awareness about these issues, especially among the youth, through changes in the curriculum, among other measures.*

5. *The disproportionate impact of climate change on the poor and women, as well as other vulnerable communities, must be understood and steps must be taken to reduce their burden. Effective adaptation strategies are needed to address these fundamental gender disparities of climate change.*

Refugees

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1

Pakistan remains home to millions of displaced persons. These include refugees and internally displaced persons. The former are composed largely of Afghan nationals forced to flee their country through various phases of armed conflict since 1979. The latter group consists mainly of those displaced amid military operations against extremist militants and general lawlessness in the FATA region. In 2013, citizens were displaced by an earthquake in Awaran district of Balochistan and those uprooted by the Attabad landslide remained displaced for the fourth year in Hunza region of Gilgit Baltistan. Tens of thousands of residents of Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts in Balochistan faced problems in returning to their native areas. In parts of Karachi, displacement took place amid rampant crime and violence.

The challenges for refugees in Pakistan in 2013 remained much the same as in previous years. For another year, Pakistan was the world's largest host country for refugees. It also remained non-signatory to the 1951 UN refugee convention and the 1967 protocol to that convention. However, Pakistan is subject to a more general duty to help refugees under international law and to observe the principle of *non-refoulement*—a prohibition on the return of

refugees to any territory where their life or freedom would be threatened. Pakistan, Afghanistan and the UNHCR were parties to a tripartite agreement, which regulated the presence of registered Afghans in Pakistan and a programme for their voluntary repatriation. Under this agreement deadlines had been set a number of times for the complete repatriation of Afghan refugees. The latest deadline, which expired in June 2013, was once again extended, at the last minute, until December 2015. The extension in stay for refugees for 30 months was praised as proof of Pakistan's recently elected government's commitment to treat refugees humanely and with dignity. Human rights organisations asked the government that a proposed domestic legal framework for refugees should establish legal protections consistent with international human rights law. There was little change in the situation in Afghanistan to indicate that complete repatriation would be possible by the extended deadline.

Well over a million citizens were involuntarily displaced for a variety of reasons during 2013. Pakistan neither took steps to make UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement part of national laws and policies nor benefited from them in any other way. The challenges for the internally displaced on account of conflict continued largely unchanged during various phases of forced displacement.

The displaced citizens' voting rights were reported to be affected during the May 11 general elections.

In 2013 also, Pakistan made no effort to bring back hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh since 1971.

Refugees

The refugee population of Pakistan consists almost entirely of Afghans. These include people who have fled persecution and human rights violations in their country, but many Afghans in Pakistan are also economic migrants.



Afghan refugees: packing up and going home.

There were at least 3.2 million Afghans in Pakistan at the end of 2013, making them “the largest and most protracted refugee population in the world”.

In 2006-07, a one-off registration exercise for Afghans in Pakistan was conducted. All those Afghans who registered themselves with Pakistan’s National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) at the time received Proof of Registration (PoR) cards. The holders of these cards were facilitated by the UNHCR and protected against expulsion. Since then, no new registration has taken place except for children born to registered Afghans. The validity of the PoR cards first expired in 2009 and had been extended later. Following the federal cabinet’s decision to extend the deadline for repatriation of registered Afghans until December 2015, NADRA was expected to issue renewed PoR cards in early 2014.

At the end of 2013, there were over 1.61 million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Some 37 percent of the registered Afghans resided in a total of 76 refugee camps across Pakistan, while the remaining 63 percent lived outside camps. According to statistics presented to the National Assembly in 2013, 1.6 million unregistered Afghan immigrants also remained in Pakistan. Many of the Afghans had arrived as early as 1979 when the Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan. The unregistered Afghans were entitled neither to any assistance during their stay in Pakistan, nor during repatriation. They were also not protected against expulsion. The government of Pakistan was said to be discussing a plan with International Organisation of Migration to facilitate return of undocumented Afghans to their country.

For all intents and purposes, repatriation remained the only solution on the table for almost all displaced Afghans in Pakistan. The fact that many Afghans had resided in Pakistan practically all their lives, combined with the ongoing violence, insecurity and lack of economic opportunity in their home country added to their reluctance to return. The foreign troops’ impending withdrawal from Afghanistan and the deadline extension for voluntary repatriation contributed to a sharp drop in the number of people opting to return to Afghanistan in 2013. Compared to 83,423 registered Afghan returning to Afghanistan in 2012 under the UNHCR-assisted voluntary repatriation programme, only 31,800 Afghans returned under the programme in 2013. This was by far the lowest number of UNHCR-assisted returns in a decade. The previous lowest figure was recorded in 2009 when 51,290 Afghans had returned home. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa hosted nearly one million registered refugees, but only 16,250 Afghans from there had left for their country in 2013, the lowest number in the last few years.

The reasons for the drop in the numbers included the problems being faced by Afghans after returning to Afghanistan. UNHCR officials were quoted in media reports that 400,000 returning Afghans had submitted applications for allotment of land in Afghanistan, out of which only 20,000 had been entertained and that 80 percent of integration centres set up by the Afghan

government inside the country had failed. However, there were still many Afghan areas where the environment was said to be conducive for the return of the refugees.

There were apprehensions that the number of returning refugees might decline further in 2014 because of the scheduled withdrawal of NATO troops and uncertainty in Afghanistan.

UNHCR-assisted repatriation from Pakistan to Afghanistan

Year	Repatriated individuals
2004	383,598
2005	449,520
2006	133,015
2007	364,476
2008	282,496
2009	51,290
2010	109,383
2011	52,096
2012	83,423
2013	31,800
Total	1,941,097

Source: UNHCR

The UNHCR was reported to be considering an increase in the return grant from \$150 to \$200 for each Afghan refugee returning home. They money was to be paid inside Afghanistan.

‘Security threat’

The extension in stay for the Afghans came on the heels of demands from several quarters to send them back at the earliest.

Amid a rise in common crime and acts of terrorism in Pakistan, suspicion often fell on Afghan refugees in FATA, KP, and elsewhere in the country where they were concentrated in large numbers. They were also blamed for grabbing businesses and economic opportunities from Pakistani citizens. Their contribution to Pakistan’s economy was generally not taken into account.

In November, the Peshawar High Court chief justice observed that the presence of 90 percent Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was becoming “a source of destruction” for the province. The judge was reported to have said that the federal government should equally divide the refugees among all four provinces to reduce the burden on KP. He said that the Afghan refugees in the country were being used by Pakistan’s enemies. In 2012, the high court had directed the federal government to repatriate Afghan refugees.

The government had challenged that order in the Supreme Court where the matter remained pending.

A number of times during 2013, some cities or parts of cities were briefly declared off-limits to the Afghans for security reasons. That happened particularly during or soon after the month of Muharram and around the general elections in May.

According to media reports in 2013, over 2,000 Afghan nationals were arrested under the Foreigners Act during the year for illegally staying in Pakistan. Sometimes they were handed over to Afghan border authorities without being jailed, but usually deportation followed brief imprisonment.

Harassment, extortion and ‘expired’ refugee cards

In July, the UNHCR welcomed a renewal of Pakistan’s commitment to provide protection and safety to over 1.6 million registered Afghan refugees. The UN refugee agency also appreciated instructions for law enforcement authorities to respect existing refugee cards until the cabinet decided on a new national policy for Afghan refugees, which was to include extension of PoR cards. The logistic challenges in renewal of PoR cards included the fact that some registered Afghans were issued their cards in 2010 in different locations from where they now lived.

In October, the UN refugee agency expressed concern that Afghan refugees in Pakistan were increasingly becoming victims of extortion, illegal detention and harassment. The UNHCR stated that hundreds of registered Afghan refugees had recently been illegally swept up and briefly held by Pakistani authorities during security operations. The UNHCR Pakistan representative



PoR cards protected registered Afghans against expulsion.

said most of the arrests came during operations in Balochistan and in the southern city of Karachi. “Normally every month there would be just a small number of arrests and releases... However in the last two or three months, particularly in the two operations [in Balochistan and in Karachi], these numbers have gone up into the hundreds every week or every month, so the number has significantly increased,” said the UNHCR representatives. He acknowledged that the refugees had been quickly released, but urged the law enforcement agencies to respect the rights of refugees and work on reducing the number of arrests. The representative emphasised that the arrests and detention were not a result of a policy of the government or any institution, but extortion in which some individuals tried to get benefit for themselves and released the refugee after a bribe was paid.

Speaking the same day, the minister for state and frontier regions mirrored the UNHCR’s concern and asked provincial governments and law enforcement agencies to avoid harassing Afghan refugees by accepting existing refugee cards as valid until updated cards were issued. The UNHCR and the government set up complaint cells and a hotline for those registered refugees who needed help.

Limits of generosity

Amid calls to expedite Afghan refugees’ repatriation, the minister for states and frontier regions (SAFRON), whose ministry looked at refugee-related issues, stated that Pakistan was under an obligation to not forcibly send the Afghans back. In September, the government informed the National Assembly that it planned to complete repatriation of Afghan refugees by December 2015. The SAFRON minister, however, stated that since repatriation was to be on a voluntary basis, it could not be said with certainty if the process would be completed by the new deadline.

In October, the same minister said that Pakistan would not welcome a fresh influx of refugees from Afghanistan should the situation in that country deteriorate after the withdrawal of foreign forces in 2014. He said Pakistan would use all legal channels in collaboration with the international community to block entry of Afghans on the border.

The minister said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had badly suffered under the burden and presence of the Afghans. He said that the people might not tolerate refugees anymore and might take to the streets to seek forced expulsion of refugees if their repatriation was not completed by the December 2015 deadline.

Nationalist political parties in Balochistan and elders of a local tribe urged the government to repatriate Afghan refugees living in Quetta. They claimed that a large number of Afghan refugees had obtained documents, which showed them as Pakistani nationals, and that they were purchasing property in Quetta. They said that the interests of the local people would be compromised if

Afghan refugees were allowed to permanently settle in Quetta.

The political parties reiterated the demand to send the Afghans back a number of times, saying that letting the Afghans settle in the province would not be in the interest of either the Baloch or the Pashtun residents of Balochistan. Addressing a protest rally outside Quetta Press Club in November, leaders of a nationalist party said that the situation in Afghanistan was almost normal and the Afghan refugees living in Balochistan should be sent back.

Towards a legal framework

The announcement to extend the deadline for repatriation of Afghans came as the government was reported to be finalising a new national policy for Afghan refugees. The government created a cabinet committee on Afghan refugees to implement the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, a regional policy arrangement with Afghanistan, Iran and UNHCR to find solutions for one of the world's largest and most protracted refugee situations. The strategy, endorsed by an international gathering in Geneva in May 2012, supported repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host countries.

In July, a UNHCR spokesperson in Geneva said the UN refugee agency looked forward to the adoption of the new policy, as it would provide a domestic framework for Pakistan's commitment to implement in letter and spirit the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees

In November, the Human Rights Watch said that Pakistan had not released any details of its proposed national refugee law nor made a commitment to ratify the UN refugee convention, which set standards for the treatment of



Registered refugees got support and counselling from a number of agencies.

refugees. It called upon the government to ensure that the proposed national law met international standards for the protection of refugees and asylum seekers. HRW emphasised the opportunity for Pakistan” to create a legal framework to protect millions of people” and called it “an important test of the government’s commitment to ensure that domestic legislation meets international standards”.

Besides the Afghans, the UNHCR in Pakistan also worked with 631 asylum seekers and refugees of other nationalities in 2013, these included Somalis, Iraqis, Iranians, Algerians and Syrians.

Non-Afghans facilitated by UNHCR

No.	Nationality	Cases	Persons
1	Algeria	4	17
2	Ethiopia	1	4
3	Ghana	1	1
4	Iran	26	46
5	Iraq	20	54
6	Myanmar	7	14
7	Palestine	4	4
8	Russia	1	7
9	Rwanda	1	1
10	Somalia	243	456
11	Sudan	1	1
12	Syria	8	13
13	Turkey	1	6
14	Uganda	1	1
15	Uzbekistan	1	6
	Total	320	631

De facto statelessness of Pakistanis in Bangladesh

2013 was another year when nothing was done to bring back more than a quarter of a million Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh since the 1971 war which led to East Pakistan becoming Bangladesh. This population had opposed the independence of Bangladesh. They wanted to go to Pakistan but could not do so due to complication in the repatriation process. Bangladesh had not accepted them as citizens and Pakistan had not taken steps to bring them back. They lived amid squalid conditions and abject poverty in 66 camps spread across Bangladesh. The slum-like conditions in these settlements had



Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh were stuck in squalid camps .

worsened over the years as the population had grown. Besides severe overcrowding, these settlements were beset by poor sanitation and lack of basic facilities. The group was also vulnerable to discrimination. No developments took place in 2013 to suggest that the four-decade long displacement of these people would end soon.

Internal displacement

Internal displacement remained widespread in FATA where actions of militant extremists, mainly the Pakistani Taliban, and military operations against them led to exodus of local residents. New displacement took place in FATA, just as residents of some of the seven tribal districts returned home.

According to UN OCHA, as many as 77,448 FATA IDPs had returned to their native areas by September. These included 61,578 from Kurram, 11,400 from South Waziristan, 3,354 from Bajaur and 1,116 from Mohmand. Another 1.02 million IDPs from FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were registered at the time.

The difficulties of the returning population were not covered adequately because of poor media coverage and threats to journalists in the region.

In September, media reports suggested that most IDPs from Bara area of Khyber Agency were reluctant to return because of damaged infrastructure, insecurity and confusion about restoration of the writ of the state. They said that besides destruction of their houses bridges and roads were also in a dilapidated state.

In late September it was reported that return of some IDPs from Tirah valley in Khyber had been suspended because a tribe had not agreed to form



Armed conflict forced residents to flee FATA.

peace lashkars upon their return to their area to ensure that militants did not return there. As many as 17,140 families had been forced to flee Tirah after clashes between two militant groups a subsequent military operation against them.

On December 1, the FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA) head said the government was making efforts to rehabilitate the remaining displaced families from Tirah. He said that all 72,000 displaced families from the Bajaur tribal region had been repatriated, 36,000 from Mohmand Agency were being facilitated to return. He said that the security forces had played a vital role and cleared Tirah valley where rehabilitation process was in progress and the remaining 72,000 families would also be repatriated soon.

He vowed that all IDPs from Orakzai, South Waziristan and Kurram would be repatriated soon.

Toward the end of the year, the Orakzai political agent visited two IDP camps in Hangu and informed the displaced people from Orakzai that their early return was unlikely because of uncertain conditions in the Orakzai tribal region.

In December, the Kurram Agency political agent said that arrangements for repatriating 5,000 individuals displaced from Kurram had been finalised and the process would begin in January 2014. The tribesmen had left their homes due to the militancy and military offensives. A survey to assess the damages done to the houses and government installations by the insurgents was to be launched soon. Around 18,000 families had been forced to shift to safer places due to five years of insurgency in Kurram.

A number of reports highlighted security problems at IDP camps. In the

worst instance, 17 people were killed and 28 injured in March when an explosion occurred at Jalozai Camp for IDPs as people queued to receive their rations. The camp administration had reportedly received threats three days earlier but no security measures had been taken.

The IDP also complained about lack of basic facilities at camps and poor planning. A number of times, protests were held against the suspension of power by Peshawar Electric Supply Company to Jalozai Camp. In November, the displaced persons at Jalozi Camp declined vaccination of their children against polio until their demands, including restoration of electricity and provision of food, were met.

Shaken and displaced

Forced displacement amid tribal feuds and armed conflict had displaced a large number of residents of Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts of Balochistan. The figure was said to be as high as 175,000. But their exodus and plight had not been followed as closely by the media as that of the FATA displaced. In July that changed when around 150 IDPs from Dera Bugti camped outside an Islamabad hospital because a young IDP had died and the Islamabad administration had restrained the hospital from handing over the body to the family. The administration apparently wanted to prevent the displaced from protesting in Islamabad.

The IDPs wanted to take the body to their native Dera Bugti for burial and also demanded to know when their area would be safe enough for them to return permanently. The body was handed over to the family only after the



The Awaran earthquake caused the latest wave of displacement in Balochistan.

Islamabad High Court directed the authorities to do so and to make arrangements for his burial in Dera Bugti.

In September and early October, parts of the Balochistan were jolted by a number of earthquakes, the strongest of which measured 7.7 on the Richter scale. It caused severe damage and casualties in Awaran district besides extensive displacement. Tens of thousands of people were reported to have left for safer locations after extensive destruction of houses. Most of the earthquake survivors from different areas of Awaran migrated to Lasbela, Hub, Uthal, Winder and some found shelter in Lyari and Mangho Pir areas of Karachi. Many of the affected were living in tents and relief had reportedly not been supplied to them either by the government or any non-governmental organisation. Edhi Foundation was reported to have arranged some water tanks, sanitation facilities and hand pumps for IDP families in Hub area, and also distributed clothes among children.

Displacement in Karachi

The ever deteriorating lawlessness in Karachi caused thousands of families to flee. With a surge in violence in Lyari over the summer months, thousands of families were reported to have fled the strife-torn locality and taken refuge in Badin and Thatta districts of Sindh, staying mostly at shrines and with extended family. The displaced families were predominantly from the Kutchi community. The provincial government tried to encourage them to return and some did too. Precise figures on their displacement were difficult to gauge because many families people kept returning to Karachi and leaving again within days. A community leader said that over 3,700 families had shifted from Lyari to Badin, Thatta, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and Tharparkar.

In August, reports emerged of around 600 Hindu and Christian families residing in Old Slaughterhouse Colony, a locality in Lyari area of Karachi, were being forced to leave their houses because of violence and harassment amid turf wars of criminal gangs. Some of the affected families had returned in December but the lawless and risk of violence remained high. [*See the chapter 'Freedom of thought, conscience and religion'*]

Floods

As in previous years, floods in the summer months caused displacement of more than 80,000 people. The National Disaster Management Authority reported that 84,000 people had been affected and the government was said to have provided shelter to the affected people at 21 relief camps.

Attabad displaced

The displacement continued in 2013 for thousands of people uprooted from Hunza region of Gilgit Baltistan, where a landslide had blocked the Hunza



An HRCP fact-finding team met the Attabad displaced in Aliabad camp, Hunza.

River to create a massive lake in 2010.

The four directly affected villages—Gulmit, Ghulkin, Shishkat (also known as Ayinabad) and Attabad—had a combined population of over 7,400 people. Around 3,000 IDPs continued to live in three temporary camps (Altit and Aliabad camps at Hunza and Shishkat camp at Gojal) established for them since January 2010. They did not know even at the end of 2013 how much longer they would remain in the camps.

Recommendations

1. *The government needs to formulate a better strategy for dealing with both natural and man-made disasters with a much greater emphasis on planning. Many of the problems currently being faced by the displaced population in Pakistan are a direct result of the authorities' failure in this regard.*

2. *Pakistan must take firm action to regain control of FATA once for all so as to avoid the recurring displacement and military operations against bands of extremists. The affected people must not be forced to raise private militias to stop militants from gaining a foothold in the supposedly cleared areas.*

3. *The ongoing displacement of Dera Bugti and Kohlu residents must end on priority. They should be supported in resuming their lives after being uprooted from their native areas for long.*

4. *A domestic legal framework for refugees that Pakistan is reported to be considering must establish legal protections consistent with international*

human rights law and must not be used to deny refugees' rights.

5. Pakistan must take steps to make UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement part of national laws and policies to mitigate the problems of the displaced populations during various phases of forced displacement.

6. There is no reason for the continued statelessness of the so-called Biharis stranded in Bangladesh since 1971. Pakistan must take steps to bring them back without further delay.

Appendices

Appendix - I

HRCP activities

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) carried out a wide range of activities spanning the entire spectrum of human rights during 2013 in order to raise awareness among citizens about basic rights and fundamental freedoms. The aim of many activities was to monitor the rights situation in the country and engage in advocacy to seek greater understanding and protection of human rights.

The various chapter and taskforce offices of HRCP throughout the country organised workshops, fact-finding missions, seminars, research and rallies on human rights issues. The HRCP Expert Group on Communities Vulnerable because of their Beliefs continued to hold meetings to highlight the issues and concerns of religious minorities of the country. HRCP Economy Watch monitored financial allocations for key human rights concerns in the federal and provincial budgets. Meetings were held in various districts to sensitise people about human rights. Public meetings were held in districts across the country to engage communities on citizens' concerns and their interaction with elected representatives to address those concerns.

On World Day against the Death Penalty, HRCP organised a seminar in Islamabad where Professor Roger Hood, Professor Emeritus of Criminology at University of Oxford, was the keynote speaker. Family members of death row convicts also shared their accounts. HRCP offices across Pakistan held rallies and meetings to demand abolition of the death penalty in the country.

HRCP organised a national convention of writers, poets and artists in Lahore to discuss their role in promoting human rights and peace in society.

The national convention built on the conventions that HRCP had held on the same theme in all four provincial capitals in 2012.

A national convention on the rights of peasants was organised to highlight the struggle of peasants in the country. This convention was a follow-up on activities focused on peasants' rights conducted in 2012. Pursuing its longstanding stance against bonded labour, HRCP continued to monitor the situation and called for active steps to bring change, especially in interior Sindh, where large numbers of workers and their families remained in debt bondage in the agriculture sector.

In November, a 'March to End Hunger' was held in Lahore to highlight a steep rise in food prices and inefficient food distribution and to stress the need for the government to ensure food availability and affordability for all.

A two-day convention on public education in September focused on language in curriculum, equality of genders, improving quality of and access to education, and the crises confronting the education sector.

HRCP offices conducted various fact-findings during the year under review. The two main fact-finding missions during 2013 visited the province of Balochistan in June and the Gilgit Baltistan region in October. The missions were aimed at assessing the human rights situation and the pressing challenges in both regions and the capacity and keenness of the government to address those. Members of the two fact-finding missions held extensive meetings with the stakeholders. Their observations and recommendations were published in the form of two reports.

HRCP staff and volunteers observed the May 11 parliamentary elections in 57 sensitive constituencies across the country. The observers looked at the



Lahore: March to end hunger.



Gilgit: Members of an HRCP fact-finding mission during a meeting.

pre-election, election day and post-election situation. The monitoring culminated in a preliminary report soon after the elections, and a detailed report was to follow.

HRCP, in collaboration with the International Commission of Jurists, organised a dialogue on Pakistan's engagement at the United Nations. Lawyers, human rights defenders and civil society activists attended the event and discussed ways to strengthen the role of human rights groups in ensuring that Pakistan's engagement at the UN was more constructive and to provide an alternative assessment of the government's record in fulfilling its obligations to promote and protect human rights.

In the monthly meetings held at all offices, HRCP members discussed human rights issues at the national and regional levels.

The HRCP Complaints Cell received a large number of queries, complaints and other communications.

The HRCP website and blog drew extensive comments on the Commission's stance and initiatives, and human rights issues in general. As many as 216 researchers from Pakistan and abroad visited HRCP's paper-based archives, which were the result of monitoring of 16 newspapers for around 100 human rights issues. HRCP continued to digitise its paper-based archives and at the end of 2013, the online archives at www.hrcparchive.com covered the years 2003 to 2012. Around half of the archives for 2013 had also been digitised by the end of the year. As many as 1,664 individuals from 51 countries around the world accessed the online archives in 2013.

A break-up of HRCP's main activities during the year follows.

Workshops/seminars/meetings

Jan 1, Hyderabad: Hosted a health dialogue on the outbreak of measles in

Sindh.

Jan 10, Karachi: Arranged a seminar titled ‘Understanding Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ at Abid Grammar School and CPLC School.

Jan 11, Multan: Meeting with deputy director of local government for Multan, to discuss access to water issues.

Jan 12-13, Pakpattan: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Jan 15, Sukkur: Meeting with civil society to discuss the increasing crime in Sukkur.

Jan 15, Hyderabad: Held a discussion with analysts and journalists who were to monitor elections across Sindh.

Jan 16, Hyderabad: Meeting with residents of the bonded labour camp in Hoosri to discuss the problems they faced.

Jan 16, Gilgit: Meeting with civil society representatives to discuss the absence of judges at the Gilgit Baltistan Supreme Appellate Court.

Jan 17-18, Lodhran: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Jan 19-20, Muzaffargarh: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Jan 23, Karachi: Meeting with members of the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) to discuss labour issues, particularly the garment factory fire in Baldia Town, Karachi.

Jan 29, Hyderabad: Lecture on human rights movements for civil society representatives.



Workshop on promoting humanitarian values and rights to counter extremism.

Feb 1, Multan: Meeting at Shah Ruken-e-Alam Colony with community members to discuss the right to water.

Feb 2, Islamabad: HRCF collaborated with Islamabad Culture Forum to hold a lecture entitled 'Postmodernism: A critique.'

Feb 4-5, Charsadda: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Feb 5, Hyderabad: Held a lecture on 'Votes and human rights' at the HRCF office.

Feb 6, Multan: Meeting with Director of Water and Sanitation Authority, Multan to talk about the water supply system and the public's demand for water.

Feb 7, Hyderabad: *Haris*, who had been working as bonded labourers at village Sakhi Jam Datar and had been released on the order of Sindh High Court, visited the HRCF office to talk about their ordeal.

Feb 7-8, Nowshera: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Feb 14, Islamabad: Representatives of the media were invited to a meeting on the Kohistan video case.

Feb 16-17, Chiniot: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Feb 17, Hyderabad: Arranged a meeting to discuss forced conversions.

Feb 19, Multan: Meeting with director works at WASA, Multan to discuss complaints of the local community about water and sanitation.

Feb 20, Islamabad: HRCF and Islamabad Culture Forum jointly organised a lecture on 'war and history.'

Feb 22, Hyderabad: Collaborated with Aurat Foundation to arrange a consultation on 'women's participation in the general election'.

Feb 23, Hyderabad: As part of Sindh Land Reform Movement (SLRM), a network of peasants for labour rights, HRCF launched a signature campaign for the rights of poor and landless peasants at Hyderabad.

Feb 26, Karachi: Arranged a seminar entitled 'Understanding the UDHR' at CPLC Public School.

Feb 28, Hyderabad: Held a meeting to discuss trends and data on bonded labourers that were released or had escaped from debt bondage.

Mar 1, Karachi: Presentation on 'Karachi's Labour Movements'. Civil society representatives participated and members of HRCF discussed trade union activities.

Mar 4, Hyderabad: A consultation with civil society representatives on the root causes of religious extremism.

Mar 5, Karachi: Meeting with Friedrich Naumann Stiftung to appraise the

law and order situation, elections, and the state of vulnerable groups.

Mar 6-7, Jaffarabad: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Mar 8, Multan: Community meeting in Basti Khuda Dad, Shair Shah, Multan to discuss clean drinking water and sanitation.

Mar 8-9, Jhal Magsi: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Mar 10, Karachi: An HRCP team along with representatives of the Supreme Court, Sindh High Court, Karachi and Malir Bar associations, met the families of a bomb blast victims at Abbas Town.

Mar 12-13, Loralai: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Mar 13, Multan: Community meeting for right to water in Nasirabad/ Mumtazabad, Multan.

Mar 15, Multan: Community meeting for right to water in Noor Sultan Colony, Multan.

Mar 19, Karachi: Arranged a seminar entitled ‘Understanding the UDHR’ at Peace Public School.

Mar 21, Karachi: In collaboration with the University of Karachi, HRCP arranged a seminar on the ‘Future of democracy in Pakistan.’

Mar 23, Multan: Community meeting in Zakaria Town to discuss clean drinking water and people’s right to health.

Apr 1, Multan: Meeting with the election commission staff to collect



Islamabad: Consultation on accountability laws and policies.



Meeting with families of missing persons.

information about arrangements for elections in National Assembly constituency NA 148.

Apr 2-4, Multan: Meetings with various political parties' candidates in NA 148.

Apr 3, Karachi: Held a panel discussion at Arts Council of Pakistan on the publication of a booklet of case studies on enforced disappearance written by Muhammad Hanif and facilitated by HRCP, entitled 'The Baloch who is not missing & others who are'.

Apr 4, Karachi: Consultation on manifestos of political parties before the elections.

Apr 4, Hyderabad: Meeting with the Christian community to discuss their representation in the general elections.

Apr 4, Islamabad: HRCP launched its annual report the 'State of Human Rights in 2012.'

April 7, Lahore: HRCP Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Apr 16, Karachi: An HRCP delegation met the Sindh provincial election commissioner to discuss the arrangements for the election.

Apr 19-20, Qambar Shahdadkot: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Apr 21-22, Larkana: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Apr 22, Hyderabad: HRCP collaborated with Sindh Community Foundation to initiate a series of meetings with candidates contesting for national and

provincial assemblies, and lobbied for the rights of women, religious minorities, children and other vulnerable segments of society.

Apr 26, Multan: Arranged a discussing on ‘Women workers’ rights and the hurdles they face at work’.

Apr 28, Multan: Arranged a meeting on ‘World Day for Safety and Health at Work’

May 1, Karachi: Training session for election observers for National Assembly constituencies NA-249, 250, 252 and 253.

May 2, Karachi: Held a training session for election observers for NA-240, 256 and 258 constituencies.

May 2, Multan: The election process was discussed in a meeting with international observers who had come to Pakistan to monitor the elections.

May 5, Hyderabad: Arranged a workshop on the role and responsibilities of election observers.

May 7, Hyderabad: Lecture on human rights and democracy for a youth group.

May 8, Quetta: Meeting with the Election Commission with regard to the HRCP election monitoring activities.

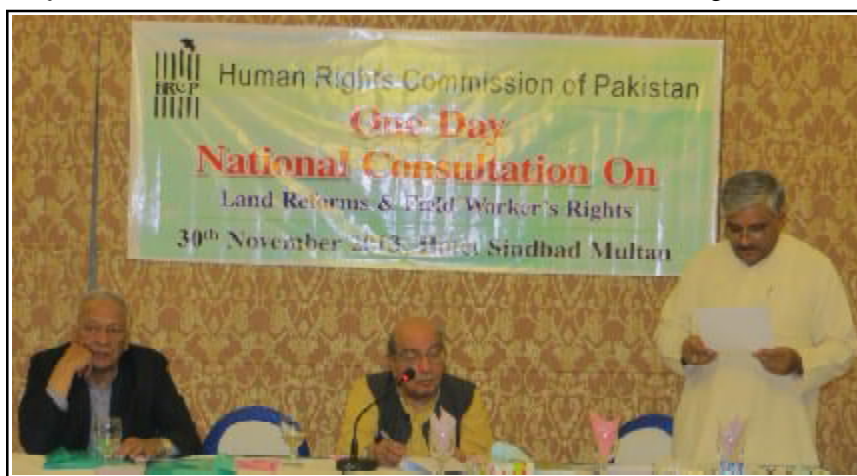
May 9, Peshawar: A training session was organised for HRCP election observers.

May 9, Islamabad: Meeting with a delegation from Myanmar that was visiting Pakistan to observe the elections.

May 11, Quetta: The HRCP Quetta office established an election cell on polling day to monitor the elections.

May 11, Karachi: HRCP teams observed elections in 21 districts of Sindh.

May 11, Islamabad: Members of HRCP and the Potohar Organization for



A national consultation on land reform was held in Multan.



Hyderabad: A rally on World Human Rights Day.

Development Advocacy (PODA) collaboratively monitored the general elections and sent complaints to ECP.

May 13, Sukkur: Lecture on basic human rights at Government Girls' High School.

May 19, Karachi: Monitored re-polling in 43 stations of NA 250.

May 22, Multan: Labour rights issues were discussed with trade union representatives.

May 25-26, Mianwali: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

May 29, Multan: Meeting with the director of environment, Multan to discuss supply of safe drinking water.

May 29, Multan: WAPDA Union's referendum observed and material about human rights distributed among the workers.

May 29-30, Kohat: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

June 2, Multan: A human rights awareness session arranged at Multan Law College.

June 4, Hyderabad: Released bonded labourers visited the HRCP office to discuss their issues.

June 8, Hyderabad: Meeting with officials of the Sindh Government's Hepatitis Programme.

June 8, Karachi: To discuss labour issues, HRCP collaborated with Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER) to arrange a meeting. Trade union leaders and lawyers were invited to the discussion

June 14, Hyderabad: Arranged a discussion on the human rights situation and the role of human rights defenders.

June 15-16 Islamabad: Training workshop for HRCP human rights monitors



An HRCP Expert Group meeting discussed religious minorities' political rights.

from 50 districts from across Pakistan.

June 20, Abbottabad: Public meeting on 'Citizens' interaction with elected representatives'.

June 20-21, Gwadar: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

June 21, Haripur: Arranged a meeting to discuss 'Youth rights and youth policy'.

June 23-24, Lasbela: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

June 25, Karachi: Arranged a seminar on 'UN International Day against Torture' at the Karachi Press Club.

June 26, Hyderabad: Organised a seminar and theatre performance on International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

June 28, Sukkur: Seminar on 'the role of women in local government.'

June 28-29, Qila Saifullah: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

July 1, Battagram: Public meeting on 'Citizens' interaction with elected representatives'.

July 2, Haripur: Arranged a meeting to discuss 'Youth rights and youth policy'.

July 2-3, Chaghai: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

July 3, Tor Ghar: Public meeting on 'Citizens' interaction with elected

representatives’.

July 6, Multan: Meeting with lawyers from Muzaffargarh District Bar Association to discuss human rights issues.

July 18, Quetta: HRCP monitored the Senate election.

July 19, Multan: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 19, Hyderabad: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 20, Mirpur Khas: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 20, Vehari: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 21, Bahawalpur: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 21, Sanghar: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 22, Khanewal: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

July 28, Malir: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 1, Multan: Meeting with Multan District Bar lawyers on Hiroshima Day to discuss the impact of weapons of mass destruction.

Aug 14, Islamabad: United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his wife, Ban Soon-taek, visited the HRCP office.

Aug 15, Umerkot: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 16, Mithi: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 17, Badin: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 2, Quetta: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 17, Karachi: Meeting of HRCP Expert Group on Communities Vulnerable because of their Beliefs. In the context of the May 11 general elections, the theme of the meeting was political rights & representation of religious minorities in Pakistan.

Aug 17-18, Mardan: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Aug 21, Malakand: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 22, Karachi: An HRCP delegation met representatives of the Rangers to discuss alleged human rights violations by the force.

Aug 22, Upper Dir: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 23, Lower Dir: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 23, Multan: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Aug 24, Ziarat: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 28, Jamshoro: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 30, Karachi: Presentation on ‘International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearance’.

Aug 30, Shangla: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Aug 30, Hyderabad: In collaboration with the Sindh High Court Bar Association, HRCP organised a seminar on ‘International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearance’.

Aug 31, Kohistan: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected



Sibi: A workshop on citizens’ concerns and their interaction with lawmakers.

representatives’.

Aug 31-Sep 1, Rajanpur: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Sep 7-8, Lahore: Convention on Public Education. Educationists were invited from across Pakistan.

Sep 10, Multan: Political and social activists were invited to a dialogue on ‘Democracy and the role of citizens’ in Multan.

Sep 11, Loralai: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 11, Chitral: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 12, Chitral: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Sep 12, Harnai: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 14-15, Skardu: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Sep 17-18, Karachi: Arranged a two-day consultation on bonded labour and tenancy laws, in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Sep 18-19, Astore: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Sep 20, Naseerabad: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 21, Jaffarabad: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 21, Tank: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 21-22, Hunza-Nagar: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Sep 22, D. I. Khan: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Sep 22, Khanewal: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Sep 23, Multan: A community meeting convened in Gulzar Town, Multan to discuss the social barriers that hinder women’s empowerment.

Sep 26, Muzaffargarh: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.



A district meeting to raise awareness about taking up human rights concerns.

Sep 27, Noshki: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Sep 28, Loralai: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 6, Khairpur: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 7, Shikarpur: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 7, Sukkur: Arranged a seminar to raise awareness about honour killings.

Oct 7, Lakki Marwat: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 8, Ghotki: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 8, Bannu: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Oct 9, Karak: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 9, Sukkur: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 9, Multan: Conducted a human rights awareness session at Technical Training College, Multan.

Oct 9, Islamabad: HRCP launched a report entitled “Religious minorities in elections: equal in law, not in practice.”

Oct 10, Islamabad: Seminar on ‘death penalty in Pakistan: the way forward’. Professor Roger Hood, Professor Emeritus of Criminology at the University of Oxford, delivered the keynote address. Other speakers included lawyers and civil society activists.

Oct 12, Mardan: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 13, Buner: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 14, Charsadda: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 25, Karachi: Arranged a presentation on ‘Growing terrorism and sectarianism in Pakistan’.

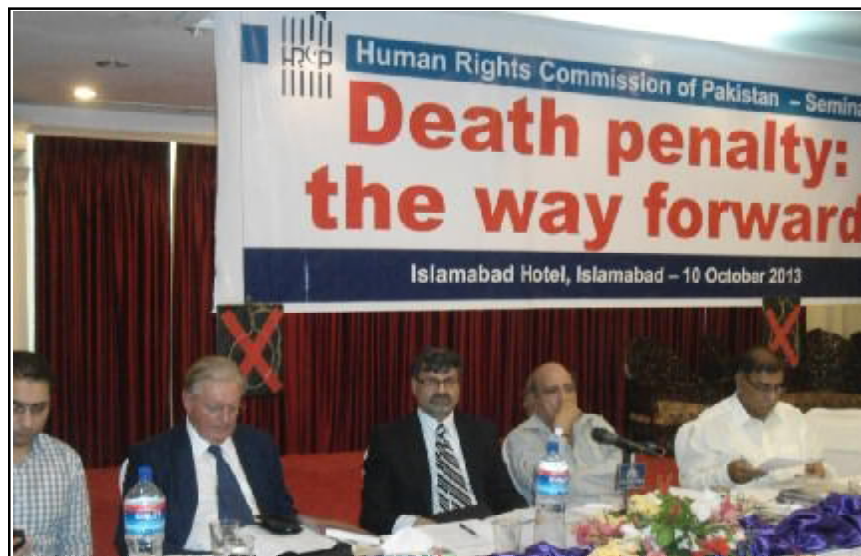
Oct 26-27, D. I. Khan: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Oct 27, Multan: Meeting held at Tehsil Shujaabad, Multan with peasants to discuss their issues and mobilise them to form an organisation to address the problems that they faced.

Oct 28, Sibi: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Oct 28, Sibi: Meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’ at Government Girls College.

Oct 29, Jhal Magsi: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.



Islamabad: Seminar on death penalty.

Oct 29-30, Peshawar: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Oct 30, Sibi: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’ at Community Hall Jaffarabad College.

Oct 31, Hyderabad: Held a meeting with NGOs and civil society representatives to discuss the digging up and desecration of Hindu folk singer Bhoro Bheel’s body and to draft recommendations.

Nov 3, Sujawal & Thatta: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Nov 5, Peshawar: Meeting with visiting representatives of Pak Afghan Youth Forum.

Nov 5-6, Khairpur: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Nov 7, Ziarat: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’ at Government Inter College.

Nov 7, Hyderabad: HRCP collaborated with Sindh Protection Cluster to arrange sessions on ‘protection in a humanitarian context’ and ‘GBV Media Guidelines.’

Nov 7-8, Ghotki: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Nov 9-10, Jacobabad: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Nov 11, Kharan: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Nov 12, Noshki: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Nov 16, Lahore: A discussion held in collaboration with the International Commission of Jurists on Pakistan’s engagement at the United Nations.

Nov 19, Chaman: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Nov 19, Islamabad: Arranged a national consultation entitled ‘Accountability laws and policies: the way forward’.

Nov 20, Bolan: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Nov 22, Multan: A dialogue was held at the HRCP office to discuss the right to food and food-security issues.

Nov 22-23, Lahore: Annual HRCP staff capacity building workshop. The focus of the workshop was report writing.

Nov 29, Karachi: HRCP arranged a presentation on ‘food security’.

Nov 30, Multan: Held the national convention on peasants' rights.

Nov 30-Dec 1, Jhelum: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Dec 2-6, Karachi: A training workshop held for HRCP district monitors and regional coordinators from Balochistan, Sindh and Gilgit Baltistan. The training included sessions to help the staff differentiate among common crime and violations of humanitarian law and human rights law. The staff was also trained on human rights monitoring and reporting as well as on understanding and factoring in security issues and preparing a security plan to enable them to work effectively while minimizing or avoiding risks.

Dec 3-4, Attock: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Dec 4, Karachi: Held a 'Dialogue on accountability laws and policies in Pakistan'.

Dec 5, Karachi: Arranged a six-day long Trainers' Training workshop on 'New challenges for Pakistan's religious minorities and ways to address them.'

Dec 5, Karachi: Meeting of HRCP Expert Group on Communities Vulnerable because of their Beliefs. The meeting focused on new challenges for Pakistan's religious minorities and ways to address those.

Dec 7, Lahore: Arranged a national convention of writers and artists.

Dec 7-8, Rawalpindi: Two-day training workshop on 'Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism'.

Dec 9, Lahore: Organised, in collaboration with the World Organisation against



Multan: A walk on World Water Day.

Torture, a consultation on progress made by Pakistan in implementing the Convention against Torture. Titled ‘Consultation on implementing CAT: opportunities & impediments’, the event was attended by lawyers and civil society activists.

Dec 9, Hyderabad: Arranged a talk on ‘Human Rights and Social Justice’ to celebrate Human Rights Day.

Dec 9-13, Lahore: A training workshop held for HRCPC district monitors and regional coordinators from South Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA.

Dec 10, Peshawar: Meeting with civil society, teachers and lawyers on women’s issues to celebrate Human Rights Day.

Dec 10, Quetta: HRCPC organized a seminar entitled ‘No progress without women’s empowerment’.

Dec 10-11, Chakwal: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Dec 14-15, Multan: Two-day training workshop on ‘Promoting humanitarian values and human rights in the fight against extremism’.

Dec 16, Karachi: Held a discussion on the implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pakistan.

Dec 17, Karachi: HRCPC Sindh chapter delivered a lecture on the UDHR at the Rotary Club.

Dec 18, Hyderabad: Meeting with the Christian employees of Hyderabad Metropolitan Corporation (HMC).

Dec 19, Muzaffargarh: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.



Quetta: Activists walk to demand food security.

Dec 28, Dera Ghazi Khan: Public meeting on ‘Citizens’ interaction with elected representatives’.

Dec 29, Thatta: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’.

Dec 30, Khairpur: Arranged a meeting to discuss ‘Youth rights and youth policy’ at Shah Abdul Latif University.

Fact-finding Missions

Mar 25, Hyderabad: Members of a fact-finding mission went to Soomar Mirbahar, a village in district Hyderabad, where land grabbers had killed a man and injured two others. Investigations revealed that the police had sided with the land grabbers.

June 3, Mirpur Khas: HRCP investigated the suicide of a young woman due to the mistreatment and humiliation she had to face at the hands of CID police officials.

June 22-25, Quetta & Gwadar: A fact finding mission visited Balochistan to assess the situation of human rights and governance there, especially in the wake of attacks on students and in the context of the change of the provincial government after the May 11 elections.

Sep 7, Dadu: A fact-finding mission probed the enforced disappearance and extrajudicial killing of Afzal Panhwar by security forces and the police in Kotri, district Dadu. He was targeted because of his political activities.

Oct 26-30, Skardu, Gilgit, Hunza-Nagar: A fact-finding mission visited Gilgit Baltistan to assess the situation of human rights and governance in the



Quetta: An HRCP team visited a hunger strike camp for missing persons.



HRCP teams conducted jail visits to gauge the state of prisons and prisoners.

region.

Nov 20, Haripur: A fact-finding mission investigated why the prison guards beat death row prisoners in Haripur Central Jail and kept them in an isolated room without proper medical treatment. HRCP learned that the prisoners were brutally beaten because they had voiced their complaints.

Dec 17, Charsadda: A fact-finding mission investigated the whereabouts of a woman whose brother had killed her husband. The woman's husband had allegedly sold her and in retaliation her 12-year-old brother had killed him. The boy was arrested but at that time no one knew what had happened to his sister. HRCP learned that she was living with her father.

Dec 21, Peshawar: The HRCP Peshawar office formed a fact-finding mission to look into the abduction of a young Hindu woman. Allegedly the police were not cooperating with the family of the victim because of their poor financial background. After talks with authorities and the police an FIR was registered.

Demonstrations/rallies /visits

Jan 10, Hyderabad: An HRCP team visited Seeta Town to investigate a blasphemy case.

Jan 26, Hyderabad: Visited the Hari camp in Hoosri and talked to released bonded labourers about their problems.

Jan 27, Karachi: Held a vigil for Pakistan-India friendship and peace in the region.

Feb 12, Islamabad: HRCP joined hands with Women's Action Forum (WAF) IHI, EVAW/G and PRHN to celebrate National women's day at Fatimah Jinnah F-9 Park. Informative material and books were made available to people who

visited HRCP's stall.

Mar 8, Hyderabad: Organized a walk and seminar on International Women's Day.

Mar 10, Karachi: Held a demonstration at Karachi Press Club to condemn violence against the Christian community in Lahore's Badami Bagh vicinity.

Mar 14, Hyderabad: HRCP joined hands with Hamdam and Awami Workers Party to arrange a demonstration to condemn the murder of Parveen Rehman, a social activist and director of Orangi Pilot Project.

Mar 14, Peshawar: Visited the Government Mental Hospital Peshawar to learn about the treatment of patients, the hospital capacity and infrastructure.

Mar 15, Peshawar: An HRCP team visited Jalozai camp to evaluate the condition of internally displaced persons and collect updated data.

Mar 22, Multan: International Water Day was observed and a rally was organized to support the Right to Water.

Mar 29, Hyderabad: Arranged a condolence reference for Aftab Ahmed, a human rights activist.

May 11, Peshawar: Visited polling booths in Peshawar, Nowshera and Mardan districts and coordinated with 13 constituency leaders to monitor violations during the elections.

May 29, Hyderabad: Held a protest for recovery of three missing Hari bonded labourers at Hyderabad Press Club.

May 30, Hyderabad: An HRCP team visited a squatter settlement near Qasimabad where a fire destroyed more than 80 wooden huts.

June 14, Hyderabad: Visited Hoosri Hari Camp and Bhahn Mori Hari Camp near Zeal-Pak, Hyderabad.

June 26, Multan: Arranged a rally on International Day in Support of Victims of Torture and lit candles in solidarity with torture victims.

July 2, Quetta: HRCP visited the CMH hospital and met victims of a bomb blast in Hazara Town.

July 8, Peshawar: Visited Jalozai camp to evaluate the condition of IDPs and collect data.

Aug 1, Islamabad: HRCP joined hands with the Insani Haqooq Ittehad (IHI) to hold a press conference at National Press Club to demand restoration of a separate and independent Ministry of Human Rights.

Aug 8, Quetta: An HRCP team visited CMH hospital and police line to meet victims of a suicide attack at the funeral of a slain police officer in Quetta.

Aug 16, Quetta: An HRCP team visited a hunger strike camp set up outside Quetta Press Club by Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP).

Sep 6, Karachi: Held a press conference about the Baldia Factory fire at Karachi Press Club.

Oct 10, Hyderabad: Organized a rally on World Day against the Death Penalty.

Oct 10, Multan: A demonstration was organised on the International Day against Death Penalty.

Oct 10, Karachi: Held a demonstration on 'International Day against Death Penalty' at Karachi Press Club.

Oct 28, Badin: An HRCP delegation visited a village in district Badin where the body of a Hindu folk singer Bhoro Bheel was dug out of the grave and desecrated.

Nov 7, Hyderabad: HRCP organized a demonstration for a Hari family from Badin that had been tortured by their landlord.

Nov 17, Hyderabad: An HRCP team visited the Hoosri Hari Camp to meet bonded labourers who had been recently released and discussed their issues.

Nov 28, Hyderabad: HRCP arranged a walk on World Hunger Day from Old Campus to Hyderabad Press Club.

Nov 29, Multan: Arranged a rally on World Food Day in Multan.

Nov 29, Lahore: Organised a 'March to End Hunger' from Punjab Assembly to Lahore Press Club. Civil society, including labour rights activists joined the march.

Dec 3, Hyderabad: An HRCP team visited members of Organization of Special Social Welfare who were on a hunger strike at Hyderabad Press Club.

Dec 10, Sukkur: Arranged a rally on International Human Rights Day.

Dec 10, Multan: International Day of Human Rights was observed and a peaceful demonstration was held at Nawan Shaher Chowk, Multan.

Dec 10, Quetta: HRCP organized a rally under the theme 'March to end hunger'.

Dec 10, Hyderabad: Organized a demonstration on Human Rights Day at Hyderabad Press Club.

Dec 21, Hyderabad: An HRCP team visited the Women's Police Station in Latifabad.

Dec 25, Hyderabad: An HRCP delegation welcomed and joined Baloch participants of the long march from Thandi Sarak to Hyderabad By-Pass.

Prison visits

Jan 4, D.I. Khan: Visited Central Prison D. I. Khan to evaluate the condition of prisoners.

Jan 26, Multan: Women members of HRCP visited Women's Jail in Multan to monitor the conditions for the detainees.

Jan 31, Haripur: Members of HRCP Peshawar office visited Central Prison

Haripur to evaluate the conditions there.

Nov 5, Karachi: Conducted a survey to evaluate conditions at Karachi Central, Women and Juvenile prison.

Nov 12, Malir: Conducted a survey to evaluate conditions at the male and female prisons in district Malir.

Nov 19, Hyderabad: Visited the women and juvenile offenders' ward at Central Prison Hyderabad.

Dec 10, Nushki: An HRCP team visited District Jail Nushki.

Dec 11, Sukkur: An HRCP team visited Central Jail Sukkur.

Dec 12, Mastung: An HRCP team visited Central Jail Mastung.

Dec 18, Rawalpindi: A six-member team headed by the HRCP co-chairperson, visited Adiala Jail.

Dec 20, Hyderabad: The HRCP Hyderabad office conducted a survey of NARA Jail, Hyderabad.

Complaints Cell

HRCP received 1,600 complaints during the year under review. The thematic breakdown of the complaints is as follows:

Nature of complaints

Excesses by the police/administration.....	626
Excesses by non-state actors/influentials	512
Violation of women's rights/domestic violence	264
Miscellaneous	158
Complaints from abroad.....	40
Total:.....	1600
Letters written to authorities	610
Replies received.....	204

Website

The HRCP website (www.hrcp-web.org) contains electronic versions of its publications, including the Urdu monthly magazine *Jehd-e-Haq*, press statements issued by the organization, and information about HRCP's mission and activities. The online archives section of the website is at: www.hrcparchive.com.

Publications

- ◆ HRCP Annual Report: State of Human Rights in 2012 (English/Urdu)
- ◆ The Baloch who is not missing & others who are

- ◆ Towards deepening democracy
- ◆ Balochistan - Giving the people a chance: report of a fact-finding mission
- ◆ Equal in law, not in practice
- ◆ National economy, human rights & poverty eradication
- ◆ The Death Penalty: Pakistan in world perspective
- ◆ When it rains... Religious minorities & new challenges
- ◆ Political empowerment of religious minorities
- ◆ Calendar 2014
- ◆ Jehd-e-Haq: 12 monthly issues (Urdu)
- ◆ *Ghaibistan main Baloch* (Urdu)
- ◆ *Auraton per tashadud aur karo kari* (Urdu)
- ◆ *Adeeb, fankar aur naujawanon kay haqooq aur masail* (Urdu)
- ◆ *Khait, khalyan aur dehkaan* (Urdu)

Internship programme

Five interns were selected for the Summer internship programme in 2013. They were:

- ◆ Kamil Chima, Harvard University
Research title: Imputation, Innuendo, or Insinuation
- ◆ Junaid Alam, Lahore University of Management Sciences
Research title: The Impacts of Sectarian Violence on Gilgit Baltistan
- ◆ Rabea Khan, Oxford Brookes University
Research title: The (in)effectiveness of Drone Strikes in Pakistan (social, political and economic impacts)
- ◆ Zahra Sohail Khan, Lahore School of Economics
Research title: Perceptions and Attitudes towards Domestic Violence in Urban Lahore
- ◆ Shayan Malik, University of London
Intern with the Complaints Cell.

Appendix - II

HRCP stands

Throughout 2013, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) expressed its views through press statements on issues and events affecting the rights of the people. Excerpts from the stands taken by HRCP during 2013 follow:

Freedom of expression

February 28: HRCP strongly condemned the murder of Malik Mumtaz, a journalist based in Waziristan, and called his killing a continuation of the disturbing trend of increasing violence against journalists. The Commission said: “The fact that Mumtaz is the fifth journalist to be killed in the first two months of 2013 highlights the vulnerability and the threats those in the journalism profession face.” Mumtaz’s murder and the past episodes were direct attacks on freedom of the media and the response of both the federal and provincial governments had been completely inadequate as journalists continued to be attacked with impunity, the Commission added.

Freedom of belief / sectarianism

January 11: HRCP has slammed the killing of over 100 people, predominantly the Shia Hazara, in a string of bombings in Quetta and other attacks in Mingora and Karachi on Thursday, and demanded that the government take immediate steps to clamp down on the murdering mayhem. The Commission said, “In the first few days of 2013, HRCP finds itself lamenting

for the second time large-scale sectarian bloodshed in the country. The callous targeting of members of the Hazara community in Quetta in two of those bombings has caused the highest death toll for any sectarian attack in a day in Pakistan so far. Lack of any apparent distress at these brutal attacks and absence of much urgency to nab the killers has understandably prompted human rights organisations in the country and abroad to accuse the state of looking the other way, if not of downright complicity, as more and more citizens of the Shia faith are mowed down in appalling attacks. If the government has any trepidation about its failure to stem the horrific spike in sectarian killings or the utter absence of its own writ, it has certainly done a good job hiding that. It defies belief how in a city like Quetta the attackers can manage to get through security checks and strike at will... Reflections are also in order on what could have been done to avoid fatalities among media workers in Quetta who were at the scene to cover the first bombing when the second explosion occurred. HRCP hopes that the government, media organisations and journalists' bodies would invest in safety of journalists through developing SOPs, safety gear and training on conflict reporting."

February 18: HRCP condemned an attack in Quetta that killed over 80 Hazara Shias and slammed the authorities' failure to crack down on Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the militant outfit openly claiming responsibility for attacking the persecuted community. "HRCP is at a loss for words at this latest catastrophe to befall the long-suffering Hazaras of Balochistan. How often have we witnessed carnage targeting the Hazaras over the last few months that the media has labeled Quetta tragedy or Hazara massacre? What happened in Quetta on Saturday highlights the consequences of the government's failure to crack down on known militant outfits. That also ought to be enough for any society that puts a premium on human life to hang its head in shame. In such a society, heads would have rolled. Not so in Pakistan. The people have been informed that this latest massacre was the result of an intelligence failure. Neither the victims' families nor civil society can care less about the claptrap being fed to the media to deflect criticism. The people are entitled to ask what steps, if any, had been taken after the deadly attack against Quetta's Hazaras last month in order to bring to justice the ruthless killers who have the audacity to claim responsibility again and again for their ghastly actions," the Commission said.

February 20: HRCP called upon President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Pervez Ashraf to take personal initiatives for guaranteeing security of life to the Hazara Shias in Quetta. While requesting President Zardari to visit Quetta, the HRCP chairperson, said: "Within the seven weeks of this year two massacres of the (Hazara Shia) community have already taken place in Quetta, claiming the lives of over 200 people, on top of hundreds of Hazaras killed in the last few years. The matter has become so grave that it has to be taken up

at the highest level. In view of the grave situation, we suggest that you visit Quetta in the next few days—regardless of the outcome of talks with members of the targeted community who have been staging *dharnas* to protest the killings—because in our opinion the elements responsible for the killing of Hazara Shias are not amenable to authorities subservient to you. They may, however, be amenable to your direct initiative. Such a visit would also reassure the long-suffering Hazaras of your government’s commitment to protect them.”

March 4: HRCP condemned two explosions in a predominantly Shia area in Karachi and slammed the unending targeting of citizen because of their belief. HRCP said that the usual government assurances following the bombing did not “assuage the pain of those directly affected and of the countless other Pakistanis who feel an acute sense of abandonment. Rather than praising the citizens for foiling attempts to instigate sectarian bloodshed, the government should nab the killers to end this butchery. It is ceaseless and senseless killing like this that has led to suspicions that the security agencies either do not have a clue on how to stop the bloodshed or they are involved. In such cases incompetence is only marginally less damning than downright complicity.”

March 9: HRCP expressed deep grief at an unchecked attack on over 100 homes belonging to the Christian community in Joseph Colony in Badami Bagh locality of Lahore. The shocking incident occurred after a Christian young man was accused of blasphemy. HRCP said that this latest attack showed that the Punjab administration had not learnt any lessons from previous incidents such as those in Gojra and Shantinagar and totally failed in providing protection to a minority community under siege. Instead of investigating the case, the police had arrested Christians while those who went on a rampage and could easily be identified from television footage had gone scot free, the Commission said, adding: “The attack is yet another shameful incident against a vulnerable community and further confirmation of the slide toward extremism in society on the one hand and, on the other hand, the apathy and inaction that has become the norm among the police. Handing out compensation cheques is not a solution; strong action against those responsible must be ensured.”

July 1: HRCP strongly condemned the killing of citizens in several bombings, including one in Quetta where at least 30 people were killed when an imambargah in a Hazara-concentrated locality was attacked. The Commission said in a press statement, “HRCP is extremely concerned and utterly dismayed to again find itself condemning another massacre in Quetta. The Commission wishes to categorically point out that the attack was neither unexpected nor unavoidable. The outlawed Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militant group has claimed responsibility. No surprises there either. The only question is what else would it take for the state to pursue the killers with anything resembling single-minded focus. Is there a red line that the killers are yet to cross which would force the authorities into action? Or is it just that peaceful citizens being mowed

stops being a travesty if the recurring massacres are spaced a few weeks apart? How much longer should we tolerate the ostensibly outlawed Lashkar-e-Jahngvi striking almost every week, unless someone wants to consciously look away as the group causes havoc?” HRCP also condemned an attack on a paramilitary convoy in Peshawar, in which at least 18 people were killed. The Commission called upon civil society organisations and all citizens to voice their outrage against the killings and demand of the government to put an end to the repeated blood-letting.”

January 23: HRCP slammed the rising death toll in the measles epidemic that had claimed the lives of nearly 500 children across the country in the previous few weeks. The Commission said: “There is no mystery as to why measles has had such a steep toll in the past month. The deaths occurred simply because the state-run immunisation programme either missed the children or the vaccine administered to them did not work. It is unheard of, utterly unacceptable, and quite frankly criminal, that in this day and age our children are losing their lives to a disease which can be prevented through a straightforward immunisation programme... The loss of any child’s life is an incalculable horror and yet over a month after the first deaths were reported the disease continues to claim children’s lives. This is a damning verdict on the state immunisation machinery.” HRCP demanded that the government immediately start crash immunisation programmes and subsequent booster to ensure that every child was covered.

Freedom of assembly

February 11: HRCP voiced serious concern over the police beating up doctors in Lahore and wished that the “long protesting medical professionals could have been dealt with without resorting to the use of force. HRCP believes that peaceful assembly and protest is one of the paramount human rights in any society which must not be curtailed. Although wielding their batons is the standard crowd control procedure for the police, it is exceedingly disappointing that a non-violent way could not be found to tackle the doctors if, and it is a big if, they were posing any threat to public peace... The authorities must engage the doctors constructively and without further delay and find a way out of this deadlock now.”

Death penalty

January 14: In a press statement, Asma Jahangir, former HRCP chairperson and a former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association strongly denied a statement attributed to her in a section of the media that while referring to the Delhi gang-rape case she had stated that “either the accused should be hanged or their sexual organs chopped off”. She said that she could never support barbaric punishments and had criticised those who

were demanding that these horrific punishments should be awarded to gang-rape culprits. She reiterated her stand that death sentence should be abolished in Pakistan.

July 1: HRCP called upon the president and the prime minister to extend the informal moratorium on execution of death row prisoners after a presidential order suspending hangings expired on June 30. Expressing its concern over the presidential order not being reissued after its lapse, as had been the practice since 2008, HRCP said that with at least 8,000 death row prisoners in the country's jails and thousands more charged with or being tried for death penalty offences, never had more lives been at risk of being snuffed out by the state in Pakistan. HRCP pointed out that none of the pressing reasons for HRCP's longstanding opposition to the death penalty in Pakistan had changed in any way since the government decided to put in place an informal moratorium on executions in late 2008. It requested the president to immediately issue an order extending suspension of executions.

July 5: HRCP urged the Punjab government to continue with four-year suspension of execution of death row prisoners in the province's jails. Punjab had the highest number of death row prisoners in Pakistan. In fact, over 6,000 death penalty convicts in the province were one of the largest death row populations anywhere in the world. In a letter to the Punjab chief minister, HRCP said that apart from more than 6,000 death row prisoners in Punjab's jails, there were thousands more charged with or being tried for death penalty offences. That meant that if hangings were to resume, nowhere else in Pakistan would there be more lives at risk of being taken away by the authorities than in Punjab. HRCP said that if the Punjab government had decided to resume executions it must take into account the numerous and pressing reasons for HRCP's opposition to capital punishment in Pakistan and reconsider any move to resume hangings.

October 4: HRCP welcomed the federal government's announcement to continue the moratorium on capital punishment and called for a thorough review of the death penalty regime in the country. The Commission said: "It is encouraging that the government did not succumb to pressure and acted not only in national interest but also did well by the norms of justice. HRCP is particularly happy to note that the government has cited the country's international commitments, which cannot possibly exclude human rights, as the ground for the decision. Although a good first step, the present decision will have meaning only if we have a complete review of the death penalty regime in Pakistan. And the sooner the better."

October 10: Speakers and participants at a seminar organised by HRCP unanimously opposed a generalised application of the death penalty and were also in agreement that in over two dozen capital offences on the statute books the death penalty was not mandated by Islam. At the day-long seminar in

Islamabad on October 10, World Day against the Death Penalty, entitled ‘death penalty in Pakistan: the way forward’, speakers from Pakistan and abroad discussed the various aspects of capital punishment. Professor Roger Hood, the renowned campaigner against the death penalty, in his keynote address covered the various aspects application of the death penalty and the abolitionist movement worldwide. Maryam Haq Advocate, from Justice Project Pakistan, highlighted the pervasive miscarriage of justice that those charged with death penalty offences suffered. Saroop Ijaz Advocate recounted the problems of criminal justice from the perspective of a defence attorney. Anees Jillani Advocate made the case for the juveniles though he opposed abolition of the death penalty. Aslam Khaki Advocate presented the Islamic point of view on the death penalty and agreed that death penalty for many offences could be abolished. Arthur Wilson made the case for justice for reconciliation and reformation and not for retribution.

Political participation

January 15: HRCP stated that following a Supreme Court order for the arrest of the prime minister, the threats to democratic dispensation had escalated enormously. The Commission said that it did not want to comment on the merits of a case before the honorable Supreme Court but did not believe that attempts to regulate politics through judicial hustling had ever been fruitful anywhere in the world. It added: “If nothing else, the judiciary has to weigh the consequences of its decisions on the state whose interest it is supposed to safeguard. With all due respect to the Supreme Court, it appears certain that the decision on the prime minister’s arrest will not escape censure by democratic opinion. Coincidentally, all of this is happening as the people are waiting to choose their representatives for the next five years. Many might consider that the Supreme Court has done much more than pour oil on raging flames. All these things put together make the task of the people of Pakistan to preserve the democratic character of the state infinitely more difficult. HRCP calls upon all political parties to realise their stake and that of the people of Pakistan in salvaging the idea of a democratic state out of all this chaos, because any derailment of the democratic system at this juncture will imperil Pakistan’s integrity and undermine the prospects of the future generations. They must join hands and agree on holding as soon as possible the general elections, which could perhaps help the people find their way out of the mess for which no party seems free of blame.”

April 05: HRCP noted with alarm a horde of undesirable developments across the country that it feared would circumvent people’s democratic rights and strengthen obscurantist elements. The Commission said: “Just when the citizens were hoping that the lead-up to the general elections would provide a breather from the downhill tumble, new tragedies have started unraveling across

the country—from people being stoned to death in the country’s northern parts, to the abduction of Salahuddin Mengal, a lawyer in Balochistan known for his criticism of security agencies, the spread of lawlessness, unemployment and diminishing writ of the state in ever larger parts. If all this were not enough, those ‘managing’ the election affairs have embroiled the people in issues that are as irrelevant as they are unnecessary. A charade is being played out in the name of scrutiny of nomination papers; candidates for the general elections are being asked questions that have no link whatever with the law and the constitution. The worst example is the disqualification of Ayaz Amir for writing an article. The disqualification binge is fast turning into a farce... This cull of candidates is set to defeat the very purpose of holding elections, and is aimed at inciting disputes and creating divisions among politicians and paving the way for conservative obscurantists. HRCP slams this latest plot to deny people the right to determine who governs them and demands that the Election Commission must no longer remain a spectator. HRCP also hopes and expects that the political parties would rise above petty politics to save the democratic dispensation from further erosion. The Commission fears that if the events of the past few days and weeks were not stopped then the dream of realizing genuine democracy in the country would become just that, a dream.”

April 17: Strongly condemning the attacks on political leaders, workers and their candidates, that had already resulted in many deaths, HRCP called upon the government to fulfil its duty of protecting the politicians and also urged upon all parties to face the threat of violence unitedly instead of being picked out one after another. The commission said: “HRCP is seriously alarmed at the series of murderous attacks on political leaders in different parts of the country, that have already claimed many lives. Over a dozen people were killed in Peshawar on Tuesday in a terrorist attack on an ANP meeting. The same day an attack on the convoy of Sanaullah Zehri of PML-N in Balochistan resulted in the death of his brother, a son and a nephew. Earlier an MQM candidate was killed in Hyderabad... These attacks point to an increasing trend of violence which, if not quickly curtailed, will certainly sabotage the election process. The climate of fear and intimidation surrounding the election campaign has a direct and adverse bearing on free and fair elections... Whereas all parties face a threat from extremist elements, there is clear evidence to suggest that some face considerably greater danger than others. The Commission finds the situation in regard to the ANP as particularly alarming... The Commission demands that the care-taker government takes all adequate and necessary measures for ensuring the safety of all political leaderships and workers. The government must give top priority to this task, to its primary responsibility. HRCP also expects the leaders of all political parties to rise above their inter-party differences and display solidarity in condemning these dastardly attacks.”

April 26: HRCP strongly condemned a bomb explosion outside an election

office of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) in Karachi and other acts of violence there and expressed serious concern at the continuing targeting of candidates, activists and election campaigns of certain political parties. The Commission said: “HRCP condemns the attack on the MQM election office in Karachi in the strongest terms and believes that the continuing attacks on the candidates and workers of some political parties unmistakably display an angle of partisan politics in which parties that advocate certain views are being attacked. If this targeted violence persists, it would render the elections meaningless and make the country hostage to fascist forces. The caretaker set-up and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) have repeatedly vowed security for the candidates and the election campaigns. If that security has indeed been provided it does not appear to have made a difference and has certainly not made the parties and their workers at the receiving end of this rather systemic targeting feel secure at all. It does not inspire confidence that not one perpetrator of the numerous attacks targeting the MQM and the Awami National Party (ANP) in the last few days has been arrested. HRCP also cautions all political parties against stay silent simply because those being targeted today happen to be affiliated with different political parties. If an onslaught like this cannot bring home the merits of solidarity and unequivocal opposition of elements whose wishes find expression only in butchery nothing will.”

May 10: HRCP on Friday slammed the ever rising levels of violence ahead of the elections, including the targetting and assassination of candidates and political workers, attacks on rallies and campaign offices and abduction of former prime minister Yousaf Raza Gillani’s son, and demanded a much improved performance from the security apparatus on polling day to make the elections completely secure. HRCP said the current elections had already become the most violent in the country’s history. Election candidates, their campaigns, rallies and political parties’ offices had been targeted across the country and more than 100 people, including candidates and political activists, murdered in pre-election violence. “The trouble-makers seem to be able to pick and choose their targets without much difficulty. The abduction of former prime minister Yousaf Raza Gillani’s son from a campaign rally on Thursday is a serious issue and demonstrates the vulnerability of even the supposedly better protected politicians... All this would be a test for the security forces who have long talked about their plans to make the elections completely secure. Their performance so far does not inspire confidence. HRCP’s acute concern on the eve of elections does not stem merely from threats and violence targeting this individual or that but much more from the manner in which the violence has already impaired the fairness of the elections almost beyond repair. Violence on election day will complicate the issues even further. HRCP expects that all institutions will stretch themselves to their absolute limit to ensure security of voters, candidates and polling stations on Saturday so that the people can

exercise their right to choose their representatives.”

May 11: HRCP has congratulated the people for demonstrating their faith in democracy despite threats to their lives. It also condemned all those responsible for interfering with the people’s right to vote in Karachi and elsewhere. In a statement after the conclusion of polling, the commission said the heavy turnout of voters offered a measure of the people’s faith in the democratic process in the face of violence and threats to their lives. Those elected must honour the principles of democratic management with the same zeal and commitment that the people have displayed on the polling day. It regretted the manner in which the electoral process was subverted in Karachi and at a few other places. The grievances of the parties that decided to boycott the polls must be expeditiously and independently probed and all legitimate complaints redressed. HRCP said that the polling arrangements throughout the country were generally inadequate and at many places bore the marks of incompetence and insensitivity to voters’ needs. The Commission concluded: “It is hardly necessary to emphasise that the result of today’s election should be respected as the will of the people and all efforts made to get along with the task of giving the people a democratic, egalitarian order that they have always desired and deserved.”

May 13: HRCP called upon all political parties to respect the May 11 verdict and avoid doing anything that could derail the democratic system. The Commission said: “Taking note of protests by some political parties against the election results, HRCP wants to remind all parties that the democratic process that has been revived in the country after much exertion must not be disrupted. We wish to point out that HRCP did not find any credible evidence of large-scale or systematic rigging in the country. This view is based on the findings of HRCP election observation teams on the ground across the country. These teams had the benefit of HRCP’s record of monitoring each and every election in the country since 1988. HRCP election monitors have certainly noted instances of individual malpractices here and there, and HRCP is concerned that the election process was badly affected in Balochistan by lack of adequate security. Serious complaints of irregularities have been received from a couple of constituencies and a long delay in the announcement of results has caused unrest. All these complaints in Balochistan and elsewhere must be fairly addressed. However, the people should be able to distinguish these irregularities from both systematic rigging and the inane display by the Election Commission. We sincerely hope that those who have lost in the elections would admit defeat gracefully, as has been done by the Awami National Party (ANP), rather than fueling emotions on the basis of allegations that are not borne out by evidence. The election results are also a warning for those who now take over that the people will judge them too on their performance and

governance.”

Rights of workers

February 13: HRCP called upon the government to immediately intervene to help five Pakistani crew members stuck on their ship at anchorage in India who had not been paid their salaries for months and only have food left for a few more days.

April 28: The National Coalition Against Bonded Labour (NCABL), an alliance of more than a score of organizations working for the end of bonded labour, at its general body meeting, called upon all political parties to make clear commitments for the eradication of all slavery-like practices in the country. The HRCP secretary general was also the chairperson of the NCABL. The general body meeting expressed its shock and dismay at the poor attention the political parties seeking power through the forthcoming election were paying to the ordeal of the country’s labouring masses, especially of the bonded workers. It seemed they had no time to take notice of Article 3 of the constitution that obliged the state to strive for an end to exploitation and the acceptance of the principle of taking from each according to one’s capacity and guaranteeing each according to one’s needs. These political parties could not be unaware of the exploitation of workers, trapped in various forms of bondage, in agriculture, in the brick-kiln industry, in carpet weaving factories and in mines, nor could they deny the plight of factory workers, landless tenants and farm labour. The NCABL called upon all political parties to make clear and firm pledge that: “They will give priority to measures needed to eradicate bonded labour in whatever form and wherever it exists; They will carry out land reforms and provide land to bona fide tenants; They will ratify and implement ILO convention 141 on unionization of agricultural workers; and, they will fully implement all the ILO conventions that government of Pakistan has ratified, especially the conventions 87,98,100, 111, 29,105, 138 and 182.”

August 7: HRCP slammed the execution-style killing of 13 labourers in Balochistan, reportedly hailing from Punjab who were returning home to celebrate Eid. The Commission said: “HRCP is appalled by the cold-blooded killing of 13 labourers by insurgents in Mach area of Balochistan. An insurgent group that is reported to have claimed responsibility for the attack has sought to justify the heinous act by claiming that the men worked for the security forces. However, the local police reports contradict that claim. And quite apart from all that, it has been established that the 13 men who had been forced out of passenger buses and abducted by the insurgents were all unarmed. Their subsequent execution-style killing is as horrific as it is condemnable and demonstrates further brutalization and desperation in the insurgents’ ranks. While HRCP has repeatedly reiterated its calls for respect for human rights in Balochistan, those calls are certainly not addressed only to the security forces

in the conflict-hit parts of the province. HRCP believes that those claiming to struggle for realization of their rights must also show respect for the fundamental rights of others and at all cost desist from committing grave human rights violations.”

December 02: The second Peasants’ Convention sponsored by HRCP called for removal of all obstacles to land reforms, adoption of appropriate laws to protect the rights of farm labour, and preparation of a five-year plan for solving agriculture sector’s problems. The state of agriculture and the various difficulties faced by peasants and landless tenants were analysed by peasant organizations and peasants’ friends in the human rights movement from the four provinces at HRCP’s second peasant’s Convention at Multan the other day. The participants endorsed the recommendations of last year’s convention and redefined their demands/targets. They also adopted a 10-point Multan Declaration listing their priority tasks for 2014.

Rule of law

January 4: HRCP expressed grave concern over the steep rise in incidents and manifestations of violence across the country and called for concerted efforts to undo the damage done to the social fabric by brutalisation of society. The Commission said: “HRCP notes with great alarm the rise in grisly incidents of violence all over Pakistan. Beginning with the abduction in Peshawar and cold-blooded murder of 21 Levies personnel, the killing of seven aid workers in Swabi, the murder of polio vaccinators in Karachi and Peshawar, the FC operation in Awaran, and now young doctors beating their seniors in Gujranwala, hardly a week goes by when violence of ever more disturbing nature does not make the headlines... The increasing inclination to take violence in our stride is as worrying as the pervasive violence itself... In a deeply brutalized society, violence today has become the standard response to every challenge, or perceived affront. What we see unfold everyday across Pakistan is violence begetting violence, plain and simple. The state and civil society have their hands full of challenges already but this one simply must take precedence over all else. This is not a matter of legislation, nor of law and order. The manifestations of violence demonstrate that the way people think has changed. Short of challenging and exposing that thinking, brutalization of society and the appetite for violence cannot be addressed.”

January 17: HRCP strongly condemned the killing of around 20 civilians in Khyber Agency and demanded that the claims made by the families that the deceased were killed by security forces personnel must be probed independently and to the families’ satisfaction. The Commission said: “The families of the deceased had brought their bodies to Peshawar, where they protested outside Governor’s House and later the Peshawar Press Club, demanding action against the murderers of their dear ones, many of who they claimed were in military

custody before their bodies were found. This is about the most serious charge that can be brought against any security force and needs to be investigated independently... In fact, one would expect both the government and the security forces to be much more keen than even the aggrieved families, to promptly and independently investigate the circumstances of the killings. It is difficult to image the desperation of those who believe that their only shot at getting justice is to not bury a dear one wrongfully robbed of life until they are publicly promised justice by someone in a position of sufficient authority... HRCP welcomes the fact that a judicial probe has been ordered into the killings and hopes that unlike similar probes in the past, the findings of this one will see the light of day.”

May 20: HRCP expressed alarm over escalating confrontation and violence in Karachi and appealed for all sides to act in a rational manner and focus on resolving the litany of challenges facing the country. The Commission said: “HRCP is appalled by the spike in tensions in Karachi and the murder of a senior politician belonging to Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf. We reiterate the hope that many matters that emerge out of elections would be resolved rationally and in a non-violent manner and without flaring up emotions. HRCP is pained by the murder of Zahra Shahid in Karachi as it has been shocked at the murder of two grandsons of an old HRCP activist, Pir Jan Baloch, who had disappeared in March, and points out without any hesitation that the blame for the killings does not lie with those alone who pulled the trigger but also with all those who introduced and promoted hate, violence and indeed terrorism in politics... We also expect that those responsible for ensuring the security of citizens would wake up to their duty without any further delay. The sooner the poll-related problems are resolved the better, as countless infinitely more serious challenges lie ahead than persisting with election squabbles, however important to a few individuals they may be.”

July 15: HRCP noted with grave concern a steep rise in the killing of citizens in Karachi violence in the first six months of this year. HRCP reported that as many as 1,726 people had been killed in violence in the port city until the end of June in 2013. HRCP highlighted that all the figures were based on newspaper reports. Those killed included victims of sectarian violence, targeted killings, as well as over a hundred people whose dead bodies were found in the city and who appeared to have died in incidents of violence. Over the same period last year, based on media reports, HRCP had counted the killing of 1,215 citizens in violence in Karachi. HRCP noted that in each of the six months in 2013, the killings were much higher than the corresponding period last year.

As many as 291 people were killed in January 2013 (compared to 153 in January 2012), 271 in February (149 in February 2012), 311 in March (182 in March 2012), 262 in April (258 in April 2012), 278 in May (244 in May 2012),

and 313 in June (229 in June 2012). Though the number of fatalities in violence was by no means small in the previous year, however, in 2013 the number never dipped below 250 in any month from January to June 2013. In 2012, in only three months—April, May and June— the number of citizens killed was over 200. For the first six months of 2012, the number of people losing their lives in violence was highest (258) in June. HRCP stated that despite the high number of people killed in the port city month after month, curbing the violence and the consequent killings did not appear to be a priority for the authorities. It said that the inability or unwillingness to improve law and order, and the failure to apprehend the killers and bring them to justice was as callous as it was inexplicable. HRCP expressed concern that the fatalities were increasingly being seen as mere statistics rather than loss of human beings which reflected a failure of the state to protect human life. The impact that the killings had on the families of the victims and society at large was not being given the attention that it deserved, the Commission added.

July 26: HRCP voiced concern over the discovery of 20 decomposed bodies in Bara area of Khyber Agency and demanded urgent efforts to establish the identity of the victims and to end the pervasive insecurity across the country.

The Commission said: “The decomposed bodies of 20 persons found in Bara, Khyber Agency, just goes to show how insecure human life has become in the country, especially in FATA. Irrespective of who the victims are, this is a new low in brutalization of society. If the deceased are common citizens this is a heinous crime. Even if they are militants and have been killed and their bodies dumped by the security forces this is not at a civilized way to deal with them. And who knows the dead could be members of the security forces. The first thing is to carry out a large search to establish the identity of the victims. And that would be quite difficult given of the large numbers of people becoming victims of disappearance and otherwise going missing across the country. This also shows the urgency of disposing of all cases of enforced disappearances without further delay. An inquiry should also be launched to explore the circumstances of the victims’ death with a view to finding the killers and bringing them to justice.”

Human rights defenders

February 8: HRCP strongly condemned the targeted killing in Peshawar of Malik Jrar Advocate, its Council member and a former vice-chairperson for HRCP’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter. While condoling with the family, HRCP grieved the loss of a fearless human rights defender and a fine gentleman. It called upon the government “for the umpteenth time to take measures to guarantee safety of human rights defenders and indeed all citizens and hopes that effective steps will be taken to bring Jrar’s murderers to justice.”

March 14: Calling Orangi Pilot Project Pakistan Director Parveen Rehman’s

brutal assassination a cruel blow to the country's civil society, HRCP its view that it was "not enough to shed tears over wanton killing of the best of Pakistan's sons and daughters. All those who care for freedom, justice and human rights must stand up together and resist the monsters that are out to destroy their symbols of hope and love."

May 28: Karim Lahidji, an Iranian lawyer and founder president of the Iranian League for the Defence of Human Rights, yesterday elected president of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) at the organisation's 38th congress in Istanbul. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) was a member of FIDH. Lahidji succeeded Souhayr Belhassen who headed the federation for six years. The organisation's vice-presidents elected on the occasion include Zohra Yusuf, the chairperson of HRCP. With the admission of 14 new members the number of national human rights organisations that had come together in FIDH had risen to 178.

December 2: HRCP expressed great concern at the abduction of Haider Ali, a human rights activist and Advocate. He was abducted allegedly by law enforcement agencies on November 27, 2013 when he was going back home from District Courts. Since then his whereabouts had been unknown. Two HRCP activists in Balochistan had earlier been killed by unidentified assailants. Their killers had not been apprehended. HRCP wrote to the Balochistan authorities for Ali's immediate recovery and to make sure that he was not physically harmed in custody.

December 27: HRCP strongly condemned the murder of its activist Ahmed Jan Baloch in Panjgur. The Commission demanded the arrest of his killers and measures to make the work of human rights defenders less dangerous. Jan was shot and severely injured by armed men on a motorcycle in a market in Panjgur on December 23. He was taken to the city's district headquarters hospital but after some time, in view of his serious condition, he was being moved to Karachi when he passed away.

Internal displacement

February 25: HRCP called upon the Planning Commission and WAPDA to immediately settle the claim for compensation of the Mirani Dam (Balochistan) affectees and end their long wait. The Commission said: ""About a score of peasants from Turbat in Balochistan have been camping opposite the Wapda House in Lahore, and taking turns at a token hunger strike, in cold and rain, for a whole week, on a mission they should not have been compelled to undertake. They represent the 15,000 or so families uprooted during the reverse flow of water from the Mirani Dam reservoir several years ago... Their claim to compensation is said to have been approved quite some time ago but no payment has been made. These protesters had come to Lahore in March last year also but were turned back empty-handed. Now WAPDA is

shifting the responsibility for doling out the cash to the Planning Commission. Whichever institution is responsible for ensuring justice to these poor people must do so forthwith and put an end to the matter that makes the state liable to censure and causes deep anguish and shame to the people.”

March 25: HRCP expressed deep concern at the prevailing situation in the Tirah valley, Khyber Agency and strongly condemned the bomb attack killing at least 17 people at Jalozi on a camp for those internally displaced by the violence in Tirah valley. The Commission regretted that the government had been unable to establish its writ in the valley, where the violence perpetrated by extremists had been continuing for several months. The Commission urged the Government to take the necessary and proper measures to immediately re-establish control in the valley. It also demanded that the government should make all adequate provisions to ensure the well-being and speedy rehabilitation of all those who had become internally displaced due to this conflict.

Women

March 8: On the eve of International Women’s Day, HRCP expressed solidarity with the women who were suffering due to growing violence and various forms of discrimination in the country. The Commission urged the government of Pakistan to not only take note of the struggles faced by these women but also take concrete steps to address the issues prohibiting them from coping with the rising violence in the country. The Commission also called upon all state and non-state institutions to set up committees in their organisations for the implementation of the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act 2010. HRCP also stated that women’s participation in all attempts at establishing peace and harmony among various groups absolutely vital and demanded that they must be offered all facilities to play this role.

May 31: HRCP expressed alarm and disappointment over a declaration by the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) that DNA test results are not acceptable as primary evidence in cases of rape. The Commission said: “HRCP wants to unequivocally state that the latest pronouncement of the CII is regressive, brings no credit to this body and certainly not to the country, but most important of all it is exceptionally insensitive and unkind to rape victims. Rape is a horrendous crime, which is far too common in Pakistan. Poor investigation methods and reluctance of witnesses to come forward out of fear mean that the balance is tilted in the favour of the rapist as it is. In these circumstances, it would be foolish to not depend on all the evidence that is available, especially something as incontrovertible as DNA test results. Rather than benefiting from scientific advances through DNA tests, which have proven to be an accurate method for identification, CII suggests discarding that without any prudent reason... Recommendations such as these demonstrate how dangerously conservative and out of touch with the times the CII is today and why there

are calls for its abolition, arguing that it is not needed in the presence of parliament, the judiciary and a vibrant media to scrutinise proposed or present legislation. At the very least, the pitiable fact that this entirely uncalled for recommendation did not encounter opposition in the CII is ground enough for urgent reconstitution of the CII in an inclusive manner with wide consultation. The new government must move without delay to undo the damage done by this reckless and injudicious pronouncement by the CII.”

September 17: HRCP voiced alarm over increasing violence against women in Pakistan. The Commission said: “HRCP has watched with grave concern the rising incidence of violence against women in Pakistan in recent days. Unfortunately, such incidents have always been commonplace in the country but now such reports are coming not from far-off places but from the main cities. Several cases of rape have been reported from the Punjab in the past few days, including that of the five-year old child. To give a scale of the problem, in the city of Lahore alone, police had registered 113 cases of rape from January 1 to August 31 this year. Over the same period, police in the provincial capital of Punjab had registered 32 gang-rape cases. The problem was hardly confined to Punjab. The plight of Kainat Soomro, a young rape victim in Sindh, and the excesses she had to endure in her efforts to bring her tormentors to justice were there for all to see. Her ordeal represented how rape victims who have the courage to pursue their rapists are left to fend for themselves. Earlier in the week, three women were shot dead by family members in the name of ‘honour’ in Kohat, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. According to media monitoring by HRCP, until the end of July 2013, at least 44 women had become targets of acid attacks, seven of whom had died as a result of their injuries. As many as 44 women had been set on fire; 11 had died in such attacks. As many as 451 women had been killed in Pakistan in the name of honour in 2013 by the end of July, compared to 918 killed in 2012. Furthermore, HRCP was acutely concerned that risks had grown for all those who tried to help the victims in any manner or tried to expose the excesses. HRCP called upon the authorities to include ending violence against women and impunity for the violators to its list of priorities in order to do justice by half the population of the country. HRCP hoped that these steps would include awareness raising and would not merely be confined to making changes in laws that then remained unenforced. The Commission also hoped that at least some meaningful steps would be taken to ensure a safe working environment for journalists and human rights defenders who trained a spotlight on violations of women’s rights.

Right to food

November 29: Participants of a ‘March to End Hunger’ event organised by HRCP called upon the government to ensure access to food for all, control prices of staple foods and initiate land reform. At the conclusion of the walk, the participants held a press conference at the Lahore Press Club. They pointed

out that rising inflation had made a balanced diet impossible for a majority of people. They said that even though the government provided food subsidies for the consumers, the benefit did not reach the poorest families and there was a need for targeted support for the most needy. HRCP demanded of the government and civil society to enhance people's awareness of the right of basic nutrition and food security through combined efforts. Other demands included:

- ◆ The need for land reform and proper utilization of land to ensure adequate production of food items.
- ◆ Provision of clean drinking water and sanitation since they are essential to the realization of all human rights.
- ◆ Curbing smuggling and hoarding of food, especially in times of crisis.
- ◆ Putting in place a mechanism to check prices of staple foods from rising, as well as reconsidering the minimum wage regime to ensure affordability.
- ◆ Introducing measures to control the high population growth rate.
- ◆ Facilitate research to improve crop yields and introduce improved storage and transport facilities.
- ◆ Put an end to the arbitrary conversion of fertile farmland into housing schemes.

Jails and prisoners

April 27: HRCP condemned the attack in Kot Lakhpat jail on Indian prisoner Sarabjit Singh as a dastardly act and called upon the governments of Pakistan and Punjab to punish the guilty persons. The Commission said a prisoner was wholly dependent for his safety on the keepers of the prison and, regardless of his offence, he was entitled to due protection against violence by wardens or fellow detainees. The Commission said: "In this case, the authorities have obviously failed to do their elementary duty. They should have taken special care of Sarabjeet Singh since his case is well-known and the fellow prisoners' hostility towards him could have been anticipated. The authorities should have also realized the adverse effects on relations with India if an Indian prisoner fell a victim to any foul play, to say nothing of murderous attacks on him. Only a short while ago India had complained of death by torture of an Indian who was detained at Kot Lakhpat and the matter is pending clearance. These cases also reveal the dangerous consequences of the growth of intolerance in Pakistani society which will cause the people of this land more harm than anyone else. The commission calls upon the governments of Pakistan and Punjab both to hold thorough inquiries into the latest horror story and bring all those responsible to book, and the sooner the better."

May 02: HRCP demanded action against all those who played any part in the assault on Indian prisoner Sarabjit Singh, a day after he died in a hospital.

It called upon Islamabad and Delhi to take urgent measures to prevent the incident from undermining bilateral ties and to improve the lot of detainees from the other country in each other's prisons.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the Commission said: "Not even the most naïve person can believe that a prisoner like Sarabjit in a death cell inside a jail can be targeted in such a brutal assault by prisoners without the knowledge and support of prison guards and the authorities. This is far more serious a crime than allowing someone like General Pervez Musharraf to escape from court. It was no secret that Sarabjit faced more threats than other prisoners on account of the charge that he was convicted of and yet his security was so completely compromised... Those in Pakistan who take pride in their vengefulness must feel some shame today, if they are capable of that. Those elements in India who are no less vengeful, intolerant and fond of jingoism than their Pakistani counterparts would no doubt write their own script now."

Enforced disappearance

April 29: HRCP has expressed serious concern at reports of apparently unauthorised raids and disappearance of several individuals in Kech and Gwadar districts of Balochistan and the killing of two political workers in Sindh. The Commission said: "It is a matter of great concern that the practices that have brought Pakistan to a precarious state continue even on the eve of the elections. HRCP believed that the authorities must take serious note of such reports without waiting for pleas for action from civil society. The Commission called for an independent probe to determine why the two men were picked up and murdered with a view to bring their killers to justice."

June 6: HRCP moved the Supreme Court of Pakistan to review an order disposing of a petition filed in 2007 for recovery of a large number of victims of enforced disappearance. On May 18, the Supreme Court had disposed of through a short order HRCP's constitutional petition regarding enforced disappearance of citizens filed in 2007 and observed that the petitioner could pursue the matter before a commission established to deal with the issue of missing persons. HRCP said that the short order did not address the grievances cited in the petition and therefore filed a review. HRCP highlighted that 47 people on its list submitted to the SC were still untraced. HRCP also noted that during hearings before the SC over six years a number of the disappeared persons on the list submitted by HRCP were produced in the court and had given statements regarding their illegal abduction and confinement and made allegations against the security forces. HRCP also noted that the court had also not so far rendered a detailed judgement on an important matter of violation of fundamental rights pending before it for the last six years. HRCP also pointed out that its petition included a prayer for compensation for those who had involuntarily disappeared and reappeared, but the question of compensation

did not find any mention in the judgement.

August 23: HRCP has noted with concern the continued dumping of mutilated dead bodies of missing Baloch men in Karachi and demanded that the killers are brought to justice. The Commission noted, “While the discovery of mutilated dead bodies is unfortunately hardly unusual in Karachi, it is a matter of grave concern that in recent months bodies of men who had gone missing in Balochistan have increasingly been found dumped in Karachi with chits bearing their names left in their pockets for identification. HRCP is gravely concerned over the abduct-kill-and-dump incidents in Balochistan and now the discovery of the missing persons’ bodies in Karachi. HRCP demands that the disappearance of the three men and their killing must be fully investigated with a view to identifying the killers and bringing them to justice.

August 29: HRCP has called upon Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to launch immediately a drive to put an end to enforced disappearance of citizens and also end the impunity for the illegal practice. In a letter sent to the prime minister on the eve of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances on August 30, HRCP urged him to immediately act “to making the horrible crime of enforced disappearance and impunity for that crime a thing of the past in Pakistan”. HRCP noted that enforced disappearance had “spread terror and insecurity not just among the victims and their families but also in society as a whole for over a decade now”. It said that although the issue had been taken up at the highest level, it remained unresolved. HRCP called upon the prime minister to take all necessary action to make this horrible practice history, and particularly urged him to: order all state agencies to cooperate in the recovery of all missing persons and desist from abducting citizens, keeping them in secret detention or killing them and dumping their dead bodies; end the widespread impunity for enforced disappearance. In fact, over the last few weeks, several state functionaries have been identified for involvement in enforced disappearances. The earliest possible start of proceedings against them would contribute at least a little to the people’s confidence; ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; arrange payment of compensation for families of the missing persons that have been suffering for years.

December 9: HRCP called upon Dr. Abdul Malik, chief minister of Balochistan, to immediately take appropriate measures for the recovery of human rights activists and other citizens abducted by the law enforcement agencies and order proper investigations into killing of citizens by law enforcing agencies. HRCP renewed its call for the recovery of Advocate Haider Ali, who had been abducted in Turbat on 27 November, and referred to the CM new cases of arrest-abduction and the killing of six persons last week. HRCP called upon the Balochistan Chief Minister to make sure that the human rights activists were not physically harmed in custody and to do his bit for getting the killing

of Baloch people stopped.

December 20: HRCP noted with deep concern media reports about a draft legislation concerning enforced disappearances that was likely to be tabled in parliament soon. The Commission said: “It is regrettable that one finds out about impending legislation on a critical human rights issue through media reports. We cannot think of any reason why the draft of such a law should be a hush-hush affair. It would have been advisable to hold extensive consultation with a view to seeking suggestions from civil society and affected individuals and families to erase the blemish of enforced disappearance from Pakistan once for all. From what details are mentioned in the media report, the bill aims to legitimize prolonged illegal detention of individuals and seeks to provide blanket impunity to intelligence agencies and security forces that engage in this blatant violation of human rights... Not only will such a law fail to curb enforced disappearance in Pakistan, it will also undermine the struggle of families of missing persons and civil society... HRCP cannot help but notice that the proposed law seems to side not with the victim but with the perpetrator of this reprehensible violation of rights. The proposed law, if adopted, will simply legitimise disappearance.”

Fact-finding missions

March 13: The preliminary report of an HRCP fact-finding mission to Joseph Colony held the police and the provincial squarely responsible for the horrible affair. The mission learned that police had told the Christian community to vacate their houses a day ahead of the neighbourhood being torched, stating that there was a possibility of violence. The police had also assured them of safety of their houses and belongings. Some of the residents expressed the fear that the local trader community might have played a role in escalating tensions and consequently in the carnage. A local candidate for the upcoming Trader Association elections was alleged to have played a subversive role in the entire episode and in particular the incitement to violence. The HRCP mission stated that it was disturbing that the local administration which was clearly aware of the possibility of an attack had failed to take adequate measures either before or even during the attack.

June 18: HRCP was sending a high level fact-finding mission to Balochistan in the wake of terrorist attacks in Quetta and Ziarat. The mission was to be headed by Asma Jahangir. HRCP said that the attacks had attained additional significance in view of the recent political change in the country. In view of the challenges that the terrorist attacks have posed to the people and the new government, HRCP was dispatching the high-level fact finding mission to Balochistan, headed by former Supreme Court Bar Association president Asma Jahangir. The mission was to meet senior government officials and politicians in the province.

June 25: The HRCP fact-finding mission to Balochistan had a press briefing

where some of the preliminary observations and recommendations of the mission were discussed. A comprehensive report was released later. The following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations

◆ There was almost unanimity among all interlocutors that HRCP met expressing some hope in the formation of the new government. It was considered to be a positive step which could lead to an opportunity for ending grave human rights violations in the province. However, the same interlocutors warned that they saw no signs of a change in policy within the security and intelligence agencies as the acts “kill and dump”, torture, extra judicial killings continue. Even while the new government was being sworn in, dead bodies were being discovered and there have been reports of missing people post elections as well.

◆ The fact finding received conflicting reports which could not be verified, that the pattern of terrorist attacks in the recent past indicates that some operational co-ordination exists between a number of terrorist organizations and Baloch militant groups. HRCP is in no position to verify this but finds that such allegations must be taken seriously, investigated fully and either dispelled or confirmed.

◆ Every group and individual as well as political elements that welcomed the installation of the new democratic government were keen that this opportunity should not be lost and the new government should be strengthened so that it can face the multiple challenges it faces in Baluchistan. The federal government was expected to fully back the provincial government in its developmental works in the province and in extending its writ over the province as well as establishing civilian supremacy over the military intelligence agencies.

◆ Law and order is dismal. Citizens are living in perpetual fear. They have no security of life and indignity at the hands of the security forces is routine. Kidnapping for ransom is rising and the abductors are almost never traced. Religious minorities are particularly vulnerable. Civil society organizations have virtually abandoned their work in the province. Women are particularly fearful and live in perpetual intimidation by extremist forces. Sectarian militant groups operate with impunity and consider reprisals against the state their right if action is taken against them by the law enforcement for carrying out terrorist activities.

Recommendations

◆ HRCP urges the government of Balochistan to appoint a human rights advisor so that the chief minister and the Cabinet are kept fully acquainted with the human rights situation in the province.

◆ At the same time, a provincial human rights commission should be

set up through legislation that ought to be autonomous and given wide powers to monitor and redress human rights violations.

◆ HRCP calls upon the security forces and intelligence agencies to operate within the Constitution and the law. There are credible reports of continued serious human rights violations, including disappearances of people, arbitrary arrests, torture and extra judicial killings. While the HRCP was in Balochistan, seven young men were picked up from Mathh area of Dera Bugti by the FC and subsequently summarily executed. Reportedly, their mothers were callously told to take a good look at the faces of their sons, as that would be their last opportunity to do so. The security forces and the intelligence agencies will hurt the democratic process and further alienate people from the State if they continue with their oppressive policies. HRCP demands that the administrative heads of the FC and the intelligence agencies should give a strong message to their forces desist to from committing human rights violations and that if any breeches occur, the perpetrators will be brought to justice.

◆ HRCP is convinced that the people of Balochistan fully support the restoration of peace and political stability. Baloch militants must respect the wishes of the people and cease their militant attacks on innocent civilians. While HRCP is fully aware of the risks to Baloch nationalists by State actors, it nevertheless expects them to denounce violence perpetuated by Baloch militant wings. There is an opportunity for Baloch nationalists and militants to embrace the new realities that are being presented through this democratic process. A weakening of this process will only strengthen the hands of undemocratic forces. As such it could lead to an escalation of violence towards activists in Balochistan. HRCP believes that this opportunity should be seized for a positive step forward and urges the Baloch militants to cease all forms of violence for, at least, a time bound period to give peace a chance. This would give the newly elected government an opportunity to come down hard on those actors within the state who commit human rights violations on the plea of national security. During this period, the government could put up a monitoring mechanism so that human rights violations by State agents are detected, investigated and perpetrators punished. This could lead to reciprocity for peace, rather than reprisal where eventually ordinary people have to pay heavily with their lives, liberty and their right to peaceful existence.

October 13: HRCP launched the report of a fact-finding mission to Balochistan. Apart from the overall human rights situation in the province, the mission looked at a terrorist attack on students of a women's university in Quetta and the subsequent attack at a hospital where the casualties were taken, and the bombing at Quaid-e-Azam Residency in Ziarat. It also held meetings with representatives of the new political administration and a cross section of society amid high hopes that the government would have the authority, commitment, representative character and sincerity of purpose to deal with

the problems that had the province had long suffered from. On the occasion of the report launch, the HRCP Executive Council expressed grave concern over reports of poor relief in Awaran and lack of access and demanded that the situation must be remedied without delay. Titled “Balochistan: Giving the people a chance”, the report is available online at: <http://www.hrcp-web.org/hrcpweb/wp-content/pdf/Balochistan%20Report%20New%20Final.pdf>

Torture

June 26: The large-scale instances of torture in custody were a common practice in Pakistan and there was no law in the country to stop this menace. The parliament should enact law for criminalization of torture. The government of Pakistan must respect all international treaties and ratify the optional protocol on torture. Despite prohibition of torture in the Constitution of Pakistan under Article 14(2), police and other law enforcement agencies were running detention and torture cells. These centers must be immediately closed and the perpetrators of Torture must brought to justice. These demands were made by speakers at a civil society seminar on 26th June 2013 “*Ending Torture: Protecting Human Rights*”, jointly organized by Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), South Asia Partnership-Pakistan (SAP-PK) and Anti Torture Alliance (ATA) Pakistan, in connection with international day in Support to Torture Victims.

Statements by HRCP executive body

April 6: HRCP expressed serious concern over systematic attempts to exclude candidates from elections and to sabotage people’s ability to elect candidates of their choice or to hold them to account.

In a statement issued by the HRCP Executive Council at the conclusion of its meeting, the Commission said: “It is manifestly clear now that the latest process of scrutiny of candidates is a witchhunt aimed at harassing and humiliating candidates. It undermines the essence of what democracy entails and shows a complete lack of faith in the people’s right and ability to choose their representatives.

HRCP acknowledges the ability of the political governments to overcome the challenges thrown at them one after the other, including establishment of the caretaker set-up. However, where we stand today is in large measure the result of the political governments shying away from acknowledging overt interference in active politics by state institutions who had no business doing that. That is why the process today is subject to manipulation by a number of vested interests of non-representative groups, institutions and bodies.

The people of Pakistan can tell the difference between fair and puritanical elections. The ‘selection’ of candidates in the last few days also raises other, deeper questions. The completely arbitrary barring of candidates by returning

officers at this scale cannot be without instructions and encouragement to take this tack. HRCP sees a clear and systematic sabotage of the democratic process to make the will of the people completely irrelevant. This deliberate and planned abuse of the process appears to be a bid to complete Zia-ul Haq's agenda to accommodate extremism into mainstream politics and to thrust theocratic rule down people's throats.

HRCP calls upon the political parties and the civil society to vigilantly guard against these latest attempts to liquidate democracy in Pakistan and resolutely reject any and all bids to delay elections under any pretext or to introduce unrepresentative rule. That would be exceedingly unwise and dangerous and something that Pakistan simply cannot afford at this juncture. HRCP also demands that the Election Commission intervenes to stop the asymmetric warfare on the electoral process.

HRCP also calls upon all political leadership to express their opinion openly on this devious plan of enforcing selective rule of a few so-called angels on Pakistan's fate. The sole voice denouncing such tendency has come from the head of only one political party. Others too need to shed their fear and speak up at this critical moment."

April 07: HRCP has called for urgent attention to address pressing human rights challenges across the country. The Commission in particular drew attention towards rising violence and intolerance against religious and sectarian minorities, absence of effective writ of the state over expanding areas, poor governance, a failure to curb enforced disappearance to the point where the numbers from Sindh now match those in Balochistan, dead bodies of missing persons being discovered, targeting of journalists and human rights defenders and considerable internal displacement.

In a statement at the conclusion of the Commission's annual general body meeting, HRCP said: "The Commission can appreciate that the authorities have a long list of violations to contend with, but it is the one-dimensional, stereotyped and merely reactive response to these violations that have made the lot of the people much worse than it would have been otherwise.

Intolerance continues unchecked as evidenced by growing incidents of violence against citizens who are not deemed to share the majority faith. The anxieties of Pakistan's religious and sectarian minorities are beyond description. Mob violence in the name of religion has gained currency. HRCP demands that early warnings must be taken seriously and followed up by meaningful action. The Joseph Colony attack on the Christian community in Lahore, which was more than enough to shame the nation, already seems to have been forgotten. Nothing has been done to inspire confidence that the butchering of Hazara Shias in Balochistan as well as Shias in Gilgit Baltistan would stop. Ahmadis continue to be murdered in targeted attacks on account of their belief and the authorities' sympathies certainly do not seem to be with the victims or their

families. Ahmadis also remain the only group on a separate voters' lists. Attacks on places of worship of minority religious and sectarian groups have become commonplace. Reports have been coming in from across the country of institutions being set up in the name of educational facilities where hate preach is taught. Distribution of weapons to certain sectarian groups has also been reported. More than ever, arbitrary and selective interpretations of religion and whims of cold-blooded killers are the measure of life and death in Pakistan. The people believe that the situation would not have been quite so precarious if at least some elements within the state machinery had not actively supported the trouble makers, or if the state as a whole had not acquiesced by its inaction. There is a dire need to introduce and implement without any further delay a law on incitement to violence on the basis of religion.

The lawlessness is now the norm in many parts of the country including FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. It is difficult to imagine how the state of affairs could be any worse if there were no government in place in Karachi. The average number of those killed on a normal day is at least a dozen. Dead bodies in gunny bags have been found in Peshawar in the last few months. Large groups of militants have launched attacks against government installations in places such as Peshawar and Bannu.

The conflict-related displacement goes on with minimal support for the displaced and almost no efforts to address the root causes of displacement. Bara tehsil of Khyber Agency has been under curfew for over a year. The plight of the people there is largely ignored by all concerned. Nearly a million people are internally displaced from FATA today on account of armed conflict.

As the judiciary indulges in all affairs of the state, it is perhaps its own domain that is the most neglected and lagging. The Supreme Court is no nearer to deciding petitions against enforced disappearance that it had first started hearing in 2007. The number of persons going missing in Sindh in 2012 rivals those in Balochistan now. The dead bodies of 72 people who were reported to have gone missing in Balochistan were found in deserted places in 2012.

The failure to implement international human rights treaties or even domestic law is made worse by a renewed appetite for introducing laws that undermine human rights.

The economic concerns of the people remain just that, the concerns of the people. It is an understatement to say that they have not been the priority of anyone in power.

The perils for those working for promoting and defending human rights have risen perceptibly. Many journalists and human rights defenders have been murdered in targeted attacks. Many others have faced threats and intimidation. In 2012 again, Pakistan was one of the most dangerous countries for journalists. Fourteen journalists were killed across the country. The threats

to journalists were perhaps the most grave in Khuzdar in Balochistan, where relatives of journalists were also killed in targeted attacks. The killers enjoyed complete immunity. The murder of journalist Wali Babar in Karachi remained a typical case of failure to bring the killers to court. Six witnesses in the case have been murdered. As things stand today, every high-profile journalist in Pakistan is under threat, as is every high-profile Shia for that matter. Political activists and politicians are being targeted as they campaign for elections in a very insecure environment. Targeting of political gatherings has become a common occurrence. How will the people have the confidence to come out and vote in this atmosphere of fear and violence is a critical question.

The stubborn refusal to benefit from the energies of women and members of minority communities has not at all helped in resolving these issues.

The HRCP AGM expressed grave concern at reports surfacing yet again of concerted moves to prevent women from contesting or voting in the 2013 general elections, e.g. in Torghar, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Mianwali and other locations. HRCP urged the Election Commission to publicly condemn such illegal and unconstitutional acts and take affective measures to stop and prevent them; to declare null and void the results of any constituency which show disproportionately low or no votes cast by women; and to announce this decision well in advance of election day. HRCP also urges all political parties, their supporters and the religious clergy to immediately condemn, reject and dissociate themselves from all such undemocratic moves to disenfranchise women voters or contestants.

This is a dangerous mix in an explosive situation. HRCP is aware of the limited role of the caretaker governments at the centre and in the provinces, and it hopes that they will function within their mandate, but they must protect the life, liberty and security of the people.

It is imperative that a new government that reflects the genuine will of the people takes over at the earliest to deal with these challenges. It is vital that the change comes through the ballot and not through the gun or *fatwas* by custodians of morality. HRCP also calls upon the political parties to pay attention to these issues in their manifestos, election campaigns and beyond. The media and civil society find themselves cornered again. Despite the threats, they must continue to train the spotlight on all these violations and hope that they find support from those who the people elect to extricate them out of this mess.”

October 14: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has voiced concern at the absence of clarity and direction in dealing with the many pressing crises confronting the state.

In a statement issued at the conclusion of its autumn meeting, the HRCP executive body said: “The Executive Council of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) expresses serious concern at lack of clarity and direction in

dealing with the multidimensional crisis confronting the state. The keenness to talk with the terrorists at any cost will be counterproductive. With every day that the terms for these talks remain invisible the people's anxiety grows that concession to the terrorists would come at the cost of their rights and even the tenuous writ of the state in areas controlled by the terrorists would disappear. Also evaporating are expectations that the state would be able to regain the ability to discharge its responsibilities to the citizens in the conflict-hit parts. HRCP is opposed to drone attacks anywhere in the world, but this alone is not the root cause of terrorism in Pakistan and overemphasis on it by policy makers is distorting the perspective. The fact remains that Pakistanis are being killed in drone attacks and many more are being killed in cold blood, often in gruesome manner, by the militants and that is not being seriously addressed by the political leadership. There is need to keep the broad situation in focus. HRCP believes that all the ills afflicting Pakistan stem from lack of a measured response to the militancy.

Changes in the law: The changes being considered in the law, particularly the amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), have led to serious concern that they would undermine fundamental rights. Electronically gathered data means that there would be surveillance, eavesdropping /bugging and threat to the right to privacy. There is also the risk of the record being tampered. The discourse on these changes must not be closed to the people. The decision must be made in a transparent and inclusive manner. The government must not yield to the temptation to take extrajudicial or unlawful measures to control lawlessness and must not compromise human rights in the quest for security.

Enforced disappearance: It is exceedingly unfortunate that Pakistan has not been able to move away from the illegal practice of enforced disappearance. The matter remains stuck in Balochistan and disappearances in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and to a lesser degree in Sindh are causing growing concerns. HRCP is of the opinion that impunity for the perpetrators in Balochistan is encouraging the spike in such violations in other provinces. The Commission urges the government to sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Cost of living: The escalating cost of living is depleting the people's ability to access basic rights, including health, education and food. They have been particularly hit hard by the rise in power tariff and inflation. It is vital that the wages must be raised forthwith, otherwise poverty would lead to crime, more suicides and mental illness.

Governance: The people of Pakistan have made great sacrifices for democracy and deserve infinitely better governance than they have seen so far. That the parliament is not playing its role is becoming more apparent by the day. This trend must be reversed. It is hoped that the federal and provincial governments would be able to set aside their differences and pull together to

get out of the quagmire.

Election process: The Council takes note of the controversy over the shortcomings and deficiencies in the election process, especially the use of ink and rechecking of fingerprints. Although the arrangement by the Election Commission left much to be desired and there were reports of manipulation by various parties, raking up this issue will belittle the whole parliament and these proceedings must not be allowed to undermine the representative character of parliament.

Corruption: Never had corruption had a greater or more direct impact on the people's lives and in denying them what was due to them. It is high time that the government and civil society both looked at the right to good governance, which includes a regime of accountability as a basic human rights issue.

Anti-polio campaign: It is revolting that those trying to save Pakistan's children from a crippled future are being repaid with bullets. More than 100,000 children in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been denied vaccination. The whole country should be up in arms against attacks on polio teams. The opponents of a healthy future for our children should be exposed and the children protected through a multi-pronged strategy including effective awareness campaigns. The vaccinators should be protected and honoured for their service.

Quake relief: It is now apparent that the scale of the earthquake in Balochistan that devastated Awaran is much greater than previously understood and that relief is not reaching the victims. Access to affected areas must be guaranteed.

Space for HRDs: Threats to human rights defenders (HRDs), and for HRCP and other rights organisations continue without a challenge in all parts of Pakistan. HRCP would like to remind the government again of its responsibility to ensure a safe environment for HRDs.

Conflict-hit areas: As lack of peace and security afflicts Balochistan, FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, not enough attention has been paid to the impact of conflict on people's lives. Measures to address their plight should no longer be afterthoughts.

Media's role: HRCP calls upon the media to exercise restraint while reporting terrorism and expects that it would continue to fulfil its responsibility to inform the people not only by breaking news but also following up.

Minorities: The violence against religious minorities in Pakistan is touching new highs amid apathy towards their plight and rapidly contracting space for non-Muslims. Proactive and preemptive steps to stem the deterioration are not visible. A well-directed effort to mitigate their suffering is direly needed."