



# TRUTH TRACKER

WATCHING OUT FOR PAKISTAN



**Probe into alleged corruption of PM's family enters crucial stage**

**Pg. 05**

When birth means death in balochistan

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Magazine By:





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**THE WHOLE JOURNALIST**

As a part of journalism profession we, at Media Foundation 360, have been seeing the problems and pressures journalists face within the organization and out in the field regarding their rights and security ranges from salary payment issues to murders and kidnappings. This is when we decided to be their voice and stand up for their rights.

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**CONTACT:**

4-A/1, Race View, Jail Road, Lahore.

Phone: 042-35408403

[info@mediafoundation360.org](mailto:info@mediafoundation360.org)

[www.mediafoundation360.org](http://www.mediafoundation360.org)



## Editorial

### State's pillars don't exist for Parachinar

Parachinar has suffered four terrorist attacks during first six months of 2017 - after Pakistan launched Operation Radul Fassad to clean up the country of terrorism. The latest twin blasts that hit Parachinar June 23 at Toori Market claimed more than 70 lives. The sad chapter that followed was the clash between protesters and Frontier Constabulary (FC), a paramilitary force, which left three civilians dead.

It is not the first time this sequence of violence following terrorism has happened. There were four incidents of terrorism and four clashes between the protesters and the FC officials that resulted in casualties. Every bombing was followed by a clash.

Parachinar is the capital of Kurram Agency and the largest city of FATA. It borders Paktia province of Afghanistan and Tora Bora. Toori Bangash and Aurakzai tribes are the biggest clans. And most of Toori Bangash are Shia Muslims.

Parachinar has been under Tehrik-e-Taliban-Pakistan (TTP) and its allied groups' attacks for the last several years. To stop the terror attacks, local tribes formed a peace committee that effectively countered TTP, and supported Pakistan forces against terror networks. In 2016, the government (Political Agent of Kurram Agency) abolished the peace committee and deployed FC in the area to keep order. The attacks and clashes arose in the wake of this deployment.

At the time this editorial is being written, the protesters of Parachinar are in their sixth day of a sit-in against the terrorism and FC's shooting at protesters. But none of the elected officials from the Federal Government has visited them to address their grievances. The FC says that its officials had only shot into the air to disperse violent protesters.

All of the state's pillars have adopted a mysterious silence over the scene in Parachinar. The legislature is busy in debate over corruption cases against Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family, and does not have time to discuss the 'petty issues' like Parachinar.

The Executive, PM and his cabinet are spending their all energies to pull the ruling family out of the crisis. Prime Minister Sharif abandoned his stay in London where he was supposed to celebrate Eid and came back in the wake of Bahawalpur oil container tragedy that claimed more than 150 lives. He announced huge amounts for the bereaved families and visited the area to express solidarity with those affected. But he too has no time for Parachinar.

Our activist judiciary is also quiet. The Chief Justice of Pakistan could have ordered a judicial inquiry into these clashes but he seems to not be bothered.

The fourth pillar, Pakistan's media, kept showing pre-recorded glamorous programs during Eid days and did not cover Parachinar's tense situation at all.

The government, at least, should order an inquiry about repeated clashes between the FC and locals to ease the tension and stop the cycle of violence.

*Mubasher Bukhari*

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## Editor's Note

### End of Time

The end of the world is a subject that has scholars pondering across the world. Scientific research has devoted their time to the signs of apocalypse. A recent scientific research quoted numerous signs of apocalypse as asteroids impact, expansion of the sun, solar flares and, bursts from gamma rays, etc. The leaders of the world may carry on their debates on the veracity of climate change, but it is also significant to study if human actions are exacerbating their own annihilation.

The recent decade has seen an unprecedented rise in wars with a substantial human toll. Still the warmongers are convinced that peace is achievable through war. Humanity is still to learn from its history. Only last year 31.1 million people suffered internal displacements due to conflict, violence and disasters. This is equivalent of one person being forced to flee every second.

Nationally, divisive politics and human greed caused bloodbaths in the month of Ramzan. The tragedy of Parachinar, Balochistan and the unfortunate fate of hundreds at Bahawalpur has left Pakistani Muslims with little to celebrate this Eid. These tragedies also raised important questions about our national values, and the social moral fiber of the citizen and leaders.

While nature presents a perfect harmony between its species for life, humanity has taken the law of the jungle quite literally. The primordial desire is for the survival of the fittest by any means possible. Both at home and world over politicisation of belief wreaks havoc on humanity and the planet. Pacifying gluttony has had its cost: whether for countries rich in fossil oils or for those trying to steal spilled oil on the road. One only hopes that the human cost teaches us to be aware of our responsibilities.

The technological advancements in war machinery has promised enemy losses at a breakneck speed. These have also ensured losses to life and environment at a pace unimaginable. Hence while the end of the world is often calculated, we usually desist from detailing the pace at which we are trying to annihilate our planet.

In case of Parachinar and the rest of the world, where religious faultlines widen, the hatred and mistrust of the other may very well hasten the end. Death of hundreds cannot be determined as triumph. It is up to us to determine whether we choose between an ecclesiastical or celestial Armageddon.

*Ameera Javeria*

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### Truth Tracker Team:

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## Accountability

# Probe into alleged corruption of PM's family enters crucial stage

**JIT probing into London properties of Pak PM's family cries media-wolfcrucial stage**



**Waqar Gillani**

**Islamabad:** As a high-level probe into alleged corruption of sitting prime minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif and his family enters crucial stage, political temperature is on the rise in Pakistan with anti-probe remarks by premier and his party creating fear of violence in coming days.

Moreover, the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) looking into the matter also complained against "hampering and hindering" by government institutions. JIT also reports how government is also pressuring the team through organized media campaign involving negative criticism on probe which is creating a "barrier", in its 12-pages compliant, urging the apex court of the country, which is supervising the probe, to take action.

JIT, formed on the orders of Supreme Court of Pakistan, these days, is grilling Pakistani PM Nawaz Sharif and his family for proving a legal money trail for the purchase of luxurious flats in London on a prime land. The properties were exposed in Panama Papers last years. The papers, exposed by International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) as a project, listed many influential political figures of the world acquiring illegal properties in other countries through offshore companies. In Pakistan, after several weeks of Supreme Court hearing on the matter, the final verdict ending up demanded a high level probe team for further investigations.

The highly scrutinized probe from media and civil society factions is scheduled to conclude by July 10, submitting its final report before the SC bench for appropriate action the allegations leveled on PM's family. JIT comprises of one representative from federal Investigation Agency, National Accountability Bureau, State Bank of Pakistan, Security Exchange Commission of Pakistan, Inter Services Intelligence, and Military Intelligence. There are also speculations in media of involvement of ISI and MI, through court. However, Pakistan army has thus far dismissed any claims of involvement in the matter.

As the JIT probe has entered final phase by summoning PM Sharif, and his younger brother Shahbaz Sharif, sitting chief minister of the largest province of Punjab, media speculation on are escalating. In the last week of his deadline, JIT has summoned PM's daughter Maryam Nawaz, considered as political successor of the PM, and re-summoned premier's two sons for a final statement.

On June 25, in a hard hitting statement in London, PM Sharif denounced the joint investigation team's (JIT) probe into his and his family members' offshore assets as a 'farce'. "Whatever that is happening in Pakistan is not accountability. It is nothing but a farce," he told reporters at his UK residence. "Our worst enemies are being called in by the JIT to testify. It is evident what they want," he said in his reported statement.

Earlier, many cabinet members of Sharif have also verbally attacked JIT in public

statement for the past few weeks, followed by a media debate on the issue.

Political scientist and prominent analyst of the country, Dr Hassan Askari Rizvi views the political situation is worsening day by day with the JIT proceedings. "It seems prime minister believes that the JIT report will not be in its favour and that is why they are damaging the credibility of JIT through a campaign which appears systemic," he says, citing recent harsh statement of PM Sharif against the probe after his son-in-law appeared before JIT. PM maintains that if charges against his family are proven in the investigations, it shall not be acceptable.

Justice Ejazul Ahsan, one of the SC judges, supervising JIT proceedings, in a recent hearing, observed "We know that the biggest campaign is being run on media to attack SC and JIT. We are aware of it and we will sort this out after finishing JIT task." In another remark, another judge Ejaz Afzal said, "Media cannot regulate us and define our jurisdiction. We dam care what media says or want to manipulate. We will do our job without any pressure."

More than 90 percent content of the report highlights press clippings, articles criticizing JIT probe and its jurisdiction, comments of government functionaries and other analysts and anchorpersons on talk shows, tweets of different media, political and civil society groups, a copy of the report available with TT shows. The complaint alleges government to back media campaigns to hamper and impede the accountability process.

Prayer of the JIT complaint mad before SC also includes urging the court to “order a suitable action against officer/officials of the departments concerned a segment of those who unfairly publicly comment in the media in relation to the JIT and SC, in the context as explained (above).”

JIT objected to media coverage of the proceedings of the SC implementation bench complaining “the news reports were creating hindrance in the way of the investigation.” Besides, media clippings and monitoring of talk shows, the JIT report included WhatsApp messages and Facebook statuses criticizing JIT role and proceedings.

JIT has tantamount a tweet containing Holy Quran verse by daughter of PM to belittle JIT and SC disparage the matter. An image attached with the tweet contains Arabic text, translated as “Allah is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.”

Attorney General Ashtar Ausaf Ali, replying to these “impediments”, criticized JIT wasting too much time and effort monitoring the electronic and social media rather than unearthing facts behind the allegations.

Askari believes media polarization is not new in Pakistan. It was well noticed in 1970s against Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and then

went on. “However, this time we see this polarization very sharp. Also because of presence of vibrant electronic media this time,” he said, adding, “And the situation after the expansion of JIT proceedings one can see drum beating in media on government’s tune.” He said JIT feels this campaign is damaging them and is attempt to make it controversial by the government.

“In coming days we can see more polarization in media and if the JIT report went against PM there are chances of political violence in the country too,” Askari feared.



## Human Rights

### Child maid’s rape cases on rise in Pakistan



**Pernia Khan**

**LAHORE:** Child workers in Pakistan, like 11 year old girls Rubina and Rukshana, have been raped, beaten, abducted and even murdered, and child rights activists are advocating for robust laws to punish the perpetrators.

Rubina, hired as a maid by a family in Jaranwala, went missing in June 2016. Local police ASI Rai Nasir abducted her and sent her to live with a local lady lawyer Sehrish. Nasir became a regular visitor to Sehrish’s house where he would rape Rubina.

Rubina’s family found her five weeks later in a miserable condition, her brother Muhammad Ashraf said.

She told her family she had been abducted by Nasir. When they confronted him he denied raping Rubina. After four months an FIR was launched but no-one was arrested.

Rubina’s case is just one of hundreds each

year in which young maids are physically tortured or abused but culprits go unprosecuted, as there are no laws against abusing child workers.

Senior Regional Coordinator of Sahil, Ansar Sajjad Bhatti, said that in 2016, 41 cases of domestic violence against child laborers were reported.

“Of those 41, 13 kids were abducted, 21 were raped including 11 who were gang raped, four were raped and murdered and two were sodomized,” Bhatti told Truth Tracker/News Lens Pakistan.

A detailed report on violation of child labor laws published in 2016 by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan found Over six million children in Pakistan are forced to work long hours for poor salaries, according to a 2016 report by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

Child laborers are subject to sexual, physical and verbal abuse, according to child rights activists.

According to the latest Labour Force Survey, 6.4 million children are labouring. The survey accounted for children 10-14 years of age, out of school and working

in agriculture, fisheries, transport, carpet weaving, food catering, motor garages, light industry and domestic services sectors.

Children working in domestic services are mostly subjected to exploitation, deprived of labour rights and run a higher risk of physical and sexual abuse by employers. Lawyers, NGO’s and government organizations fighting for domestic underage workers believe that the Domestic Workers (Employment Rights) Bill 2015 is the first to bring domestic workers under the jurisdiction of labour laws.

If it is passed by the National Assembly it will be the first kind of legislation in Pakistan, activists from Sahil and SPAARC say.

An annual report on State of Pakistan’s Children by Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) states that there are 264,000 underage domestic workers in cruel and unsafe working environments, often left to the mercy of employers who routinely subject them to physical and psychological abuse,

exploitation, and violence.

"Unfortunately, there is no legislation which merely focuses on domestic workers. Of the labour code, only two pieces of legislation mention domestic workers," Muhammad Mumtaz, legal advisor in the Child Protection Bureau of Punjab province, told News Lens Pakistan. "Lack of proper legislation is the reason many underage housemaids bear long working hours, poor salaries, taunts and beatings, sexual abuse, even murder, thus making their lives a living hell," Mumtaz said.

Farshad Iqbal, Research and Communication Officer of SPARC shared his 12 point position paper which emphasizes the immediate enactment of the Domestic Workers bill, which has been pending for three years.

"Currently there are no comprehensive laws protecting the rights of domestic workers exists," Iqbal told Truth Tracker. "It is high time that robust child protection units or bureaus should be must be established to provide adequate care to victims of violence, abuse and exploitation."

Rukshana, was employed in a family home in Lahore in 2016. Irfan and his wife Tabinda, her employers, used to four hours straight, her mother Shameem said.

"An F.I.R was launched and Irfan was arrested but her employer was given bail," Shameem told Truth Tracker.

The Punjab provincial government set up the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau to provide care, rehabilitation, education and training to destitute and neglected children.

Coordinator Waseem Abbas said there had been a total 65 cases in two years. Of those, only 27 FIR's have been registered so far.

He also said, "There has been no prosecution so far in any case due to non-existence of robust domestic workers laws," Abbas told Truth Tracker.

"Pakistan must ratify ILO C 189 to improve the status of workers and the State must initiate registration of domestic workers and their inclusion as a category in the labour force survey."

ILO C 189 is a Convention on Domestic Workers, setting labour standards for domestic workers.

Iftikhar Mubarak, a child rights activist who has worked with the (SPARC), says that "lack of laws indicates the lack of a system for data collection and entry."

Lawyer Sahil Ahmed, who has been working child labour exploitation cases, stated that "there are some laws which exist but do not apply directly to domestic workers."

He referred to the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children Act 2004.

"The minimum punishment for abuse on domestic workers should be 10 years and it should be a non-bailable offence," Ahmed said.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) 2014 annual report, Pakistan has the third largest children's workforce in the world.

"There is a dire need for policy advocacy," Mumtaz said. "Not only is legislation required, a sea change in attitudes is also needed if there is to be an improvement in the current situation of domestic workers who must be apprised of their rights."



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Contact:

4-A/1, Race View, Jail Road, Lahore.  
Phone: 042-35408403



info@newslens.pk

www.newslens.pk

## Accountability

# When birth means death in Balochistan



Malik Achakzai

**Quetta:** In Balochistan, giving birth is a near-death experience.

The absence of maternal health services, populations scattered over vast distances in far-flung areas and cultural taboos that keep women in labour away from doctors has seen 785 new mothers die for every 100,000 deliveries.

That rate, recorded in the 2012 Maternal Neonatal and Child Health report 2012, is two and half times the nationwide maternal mortality rate for the same year, which saw 297 mothers die for every 100,000 deliveries.

Balochistan's rate is nearly four times the global maternal mortality rate of 216 per 100,000, according to UNICEF figures for 2015. Only Nigeria, Sierra Leone and South Sudan have a higher rate than Balochistan, the UNICEF data on maternal and child health shows. Neighbouring Afghanistan had a rate of 396 per 100,000 in 2015, while India's rate was 174 per 100,000.

Saddiqa, 45, suffered the harshest experience of her life when she gave birth for the 11th time. Her twins were still-born. She had suffered exhaustion and fever during her pregnancy, but she received no medical attention. "I had felt weak the whole year. I had fever in my body. Dizziness would push me down to earth. No one took care. My weakness would have affected the health of my unborn children," she told Truth Tracker.

Like Saddiqa thousands of women across Balochistan experience the toughest phase of their life when they are pregnant. Culturally, however, taking pregnant women to doctors is considered a waste of money and a mark of dishonour. Birth and death should take place at home, according to rigid tradition.

If expectant mothers are brought to hospital, entire extended families travel to the hospital, as it is a sign that the mother is at risk of dying. Maternity ward corridors are crowded with relatives.

At the Civil Hospital in provincial capital Quetta, poor people clad in traditional Pashtun and Baloch robes with infants on their laps rest on blankets with small pillows. They have made the foyer of the maternity ward their second home, while they wait for relatives going through labour.

"Our people have no entertainment other than giving birth," Jamil Kakar, who was waiting for his sister in law in the maternity home, joked.

The hospital handles several pregnancy cases each day. Women have given birth even in rickshaw on their way to the hospital.

"We have followed the slogan to 'increase the number of Ummah' (Muslim population) but we never care for our women and the babies' future," Kakar said. Balochistan's Health Minister Rehmat Saleh Baloch believes the maternal mortality rate has improved since 2012, though there is no updated data.

Immunization coverage has increased to 64 per cent from 16 per cent, he said. "In Gawadar, Panjgur, Washok and the

rest of the province, no district hospital could do caesarean deliveries for the last 25 years. But we have now provided both specialized doctors and functional maternity homes to every district hospital," the minister told Truth Tracker.

But there are no doctors on call, no maternity homes, and nowhere for doctors to stay if they make house calls in far flung areas like Kohlu and Sibbi. In such area there are no expert Lady Health Workers to handle deliveries.

"No one treats pregnancy cases. The government runs advertisements but nothing exists on the ground," senior gynaecologist Doctor Sajidda Marri told Truth Tracker.

The government has no proper plan for awareness, nutrition, ambulances, punctuality of the gynecology units and maternity homes in far flung areas, she said,

"Low incomes force people to consult dahis (traditional healers) and old women instead of gynecologists, doctors and lady health workers," Marri added.

"Earlier, international organizations played an active role in providing services for women, especially maternal health services, and in compiling health data.

However a ban on these organizations forced them to leave the province."

The minister believes the violent insurgency that has seen multiple deadly bomb attacks in and around Quetta over the past decade has pushed many skilled gynaecologists to leave the province and move to Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates.

"We have only around 47 specialist doctors in the whole province. There are 300 gynaecology positions vacant," he said.

Many women giving birth die when unskilled dahis handle their deliveries at home. The mothers are only shifted to hospital when they are on the verge of dying, and they breathe their last in their hospital bed.

Most district hospitals are without gynaecologists. Those which have gynaecologists rarely send them to remote areas for deliveries because they are needed at the hospitals to keep the maternity wards functioning, says Ghazala Bashir, a senior Lady Health Worker from Chaman, the frontier town straddling the border with Afghanistan.

"Excessive bleeding, lack of health services, lack of awareness of how to handle pregnancies in hospitals, and the lack of nutrients and food are the reasons for our high maternal mortality rate," Ghazala told Truth Tracker.

"Chaman has a population of over one million, yet only 13 practicing Lady Health workers. They cannot cover every delivery case. Hence many women lose their lives while being treated by dahis," she said.

The health ministry funds a community-based midwife program for 1,200 midwives, training and equipping 900 of them. Of these 400 are deployed to provide "nutrition" to pregnant mothers, the minister said.

Hayatho Bibi, 70, is one of the traditional healers in Chaman.

"The majority of people are asking for my services instead of a doctor's service, because they are not ready to let their wives leave the home to give birth," Bibi told Truth Tracker.

Saddiqa is resigned to suffering in bearing children.

"Whenever I tell my husband that I need proper care, he replies: 'God takes care of everything, including your health and children.' So, I stop asking and mentally prepare myself for misery," she says.

"God know whether I would survive another delivery."

## Commentary

# Crisis puts future of Saudi reforms and GCC in doubt



**Dr. James M. Dorsey**

A Saudi and UAE-led campaign to force Qatar to halt its support for Islamists and militants is little else than a struggle to establish a Saudi-dominated regional order in the Middle East and North Africa that suppresses any challenge to the kingdom's religiously cloaked form of autocratic monarchy.

The Saudi and UAE effort goes to the heart of key issues with which the international community has been grappling for years: the definition of what and who is a terrorist and what are the limits of sovereignty and the right of states to chart their own course.

It's a battle that has pockmarked the Middle East and North Africa since World War Two, but kicked into high gear with the 2011 popular Arab revolts. Saudi Arabia and Little Sparta, a term used by some US officials to describe the UAE, waged a concerted campaign to roll back achievements of the uprisings.

The two states' effort has projected Saudi Arabia and the UAE as leaders in the fight against extremism. Yet, if successful, their campaign could empower a strand of supremacist Sunni Muslim ultra-conservatism that advocates absolutist, non-democratic forms of governance, and threatens to perpetuate environments that potentially enable radicalism.

While Saudi Arabia and the UAE differ in their view of Sunni Muslim ultra-conservatism, they agree on defining political Islam as terrorist because it advocates an alternative worldview or form of governance.

The outcome of the crisis in the Gulf, these differences notwithstanding, is



Photo Credit: TheNational.ae

impacting the larger Muslim world rather than only the Middle East and North Africa. A Saudi defeat of Qatar would cement the kingdom with its advocacy of ultra-conservatism, efforts to impose globally its anti-democratic values that make a mockery of basic human rights, and exploitation of the moral authority it derives as the custodian of Islam's two most holy cities, Mecca and Medina, as an almost unchallenged force in the Muslim world.

The irony of the Saudi-led campaign against Qatar is that it pits against one another two autocratic monarchies that both adhere to different strands of Wahhabism, the ultra-conservative worldview that legitimizes the rule of Saudi Arabia's governing Al Saud family.

Qatar, like Saudi Arabia, governed by an absolute ruler, who keeps a tight rein

on politics and freedoms of expression and the media, is an unlikely candidate for advocacy of greater openness and pluralism.

Yet, in many ways, the two countries are mirror images of one another. Both see strands of Islam as crucial to their national security and the survival of their regimes. Qatar, sandwiched between the Islamic republic of Iran and the Islamic kingdom of Saudi Arabia, both of which it views as potential threats, sees political Islam, the force that emerged strongest from the 2011 revolts, as the future of a region that is in transition, albeit one that is mired in brutal violence, civil war, debilitating geopolitical rivalry, and Saudi and UAE-led counterrevolution.

Saudi Arabia, struggling with the fact that its four decade-long public diplomacy campaign, the largest in history, has let

an ultra-conservative, often militant, inward-looking, intolerant genie out of the bottle that it no longer controls, sees Madkhalism, a strand of ultra-conservatism that advocates absolute obedience to the ruler, as the solution.

In doing so, Saudi Arabia is perpetuating the fallout of its public diplomacy that has been a key factor in Muslim societies such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh becoming more conservative, more intolerant towards Muslim and non-Muslim minorities, less pluralistic and less democratic.

It is a strategy that risks nurturing the kind of anti-Shiite sectarianism that serves the kingdom's purpose in its power

struggle with Iran as well as creating an environment that potentially fosters radicalism. Libya, a landscape of rival militias and governments, is an example of the Saudi strategy at work.

Much of the world's focus on post-revolt Libya, torn apart by armed militias and ruled by rival governments, has focused on the rise of the Islamic State (IS) in the country. Yet, equally devastating for the country has been the proxy war between Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt that depends on handouts from the two Gulf states for its economic survival on the one hand and Qatar on the other. Libya's travails that created opportunity for IS are in many ways the product of battling Gulf states that support groups representing

the rival strands of Islam they back.

As a result, Saudi Arabia and the UAE's darling, General Khalifa Belqasim Haftar, rather than being a beacon of struggle against militant or jihadist Sunni Muslim ultra-conservatism heads a force that is populated by Madkhalists, Saudi-backed ultra-conservatives that advocate a form of governance that in many ways is not dissimilar to that of the kingdom or IS.

Led by Saudi Salafi leader, Sheikh Rabi Ibn Hadi Umair al-Madkhali, a former dean of the study of the Prophet Mohammed's deeds and sayings at the Islamic University of Medina, Madkhalists seek to marginalize

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*Dr. James M. Dorsey is a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, co-director of the University of Würzburg's Institute for Fan Culture, and the author of The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer blog, a book with the same title, Comparative Political Transitions between Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, co-authored with Dr. Teresita Cruz-Del Rosario and a forthcoming book, Shifting Sands, Essays on Sports and Politics in the Middle East and North Africa*

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## Accountability

# Thousands of KPs schools without electricity, water: monitors



**Asad Khan**

**Peshawar:** Nearly 10,000 out of 27,000 schools are without basic facilities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, due to shortage of funds which is affecting thousands of students' study across the province.

According to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Annual Statistical Report of Government Schools (based on 31st October 2015) the total number of functional government schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are 27,261 in which 22,044 primary (13,579 male and 8,465 female) and 5217 are secondary schools (3208 male and 2009 female).

The overall enrollment in government

school is 4.2 million with 3.02 million in primary and 1.17 million are enrolled in middle and secondary schools.

The total number of working teachers in these schools are 125265 (81344 male and 43921 females in which 70876 in primary schools, 15207 in middle, 28186 in high and 10996 are in government higher secondary schools.

Every school consisted of three basic things including building, teaching and non-teaching staff and students and further it is the responsibility of government to provide four basic facilities including clean water, toilet, electricity and boundary wall for safety to every school.

However, according to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Independent Monitoring

Unit (responsible for ensuring that data for all key performance indicators are collected regularly on monthly basis) nearly 30 percent schools have no electricity facility, 17 percent schools have no facility of water, 07 percent are without boundary walls while 8 percent have no toilet facility for both staff and students.

According to Institute of Social and Policy Sciences comparison report 2016-17 stated that in 2014-15, Rs94 billion had allocated for elementary and secondary education while the percentage increase five percent during 2015-16 and Rs99 billion had allocated. Report showed that with the increase of 5 percent Rs 104 million allocated for elementary and secondary education in which Rs 8 billion keep for provision of missing facilities in schools.

However, the education experts declared that the allocated amount for provision of missing facilities were very low and Rs billion cannot fulfill the requirements,

Talking to The New Lens Pakistan a child right activist and education expert Imran Takkar said that education was on top priority of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government, however, allocated Rs 8 billion for provision of basic facility is injustice.

He said that 30 per cent schools across the province have no water facility, while around 10 percent are without toilets and 10 per cent are without boundary walls. He said that these are the basic facilities which not only encourage students but also their parents to enroll their children in government schools.

“I have seen several girls’ schools even in urban districts without toilet and water facility which discourage female education in our province,” Takkar said.

The child right activist shared that around 2.5 million children are out of schools across the province which is alarming for government.

He said that in Ormar union council three girls schools lying closed from 2005 due to lack of teachers while the concerned member of provincial assembly take no action despite repeatedly residents complaints.

He suggested government to take tangible steps for providing basic facilities in schools and restore the old status of government schools across the province. Sulaman Khan resident of Peshawar said that his two child enrolled in government school while they come home to make their self ease.

“Education is not priority of every government and education department that why people admit their children in private schools,” he said.

He demanded government to provide all basic facilities in school that their children get education in clean environment.

Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) member of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Amina Sardar criticized PTI government for not bring change in education sector. She said that this government only made promises and claiming while no such improvement they have seen in last four years.

The opposition MPA said that several districts have no high schools for girls while majority of girls schools in rural districts are without basic facilities.

She said that in Shanagla, Kohistan, Frontier Region Bannu, Lakki Marwat districts are without high education facility for girls. “One of the main reasons behind low female education ratio in province



is lack of basic facilities in schools,” she informed.

KP Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education Muhammad Atif Khan told New Lens Pakistan that Rs21 billion has allocated for provision of missing facilities in government schools. Minister shared that from 2008 to 2013 only 1369 schools boundary walls had constructed while in this government from 2013 to 2017 13638 schools boundary walls has constructed.

He said that just in previous five years from 2008 to 2013 water facility provided in 1987 schools while in PTI government so far 12198 schools provided water facility.

He said that in last five years 16016 group latrines has been constructed while in previous five years only 2065 latrine were constructed across the province schools.

Minister said that 12031 additional

rooms have been constructed in schools while 9856 schools provided electricity facility. He said that 5351 solar panels also distributed in rural areas schools where the electricity facility not available.

Minister further said that around 400 primary schools have upgraded to middle and 350 middle schools upgraded to high while 200 schools upgraded to higher secondary schools in different districts of the province.

Education minister said that around 30,000 new teachers hired across the province while 15000 more teachers will be appointed in coming year.

Atif informed that they have decided to remove all flaws from education sector and all basic facilities would provide to a single school of the province.



## Accountability

# Peshawar: Experts say design of rapid bus system flawed



Izhar Yusufzai

**PESHAWAR:** Urban transport experts say a Rs 49 billion Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system planned for Peshawar to provide ease to commuters has many technical design flaws and may fail to achieve its aim of transporting over 0.5 million commuters.

The BRT system will carry over 17 per cent of the city's total population or a total of 0.5 million passengers, according to the project proposal, a copy of which is available with Truth Tracker. The funds spent on the project will be provided by Asian Development Bank as soft loan, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Transport Minister Shad Mohammad Khan told Truth Tracker.

However, experts within the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa(KP) Transport Department have expressed concern over the preliminary design of BRT and have asked for changes.

One of the experts, who reviewed the BRT design, said the design lacks integration with the city's existing traffic.

"Without integration, the BRT execution will face problems from transport companies currently plying vehicles on city's roads and commuters will also suffer," the expert, who wished to be anonymous as he is not allowed to talk to media, told Truth Tracker.

Preliminary designs, seen by Truth Tracker, project a fleet of over 350 buses of 9-meter and 12-meter length with a network of 35 stations.

The smaller buses will drive on smaller roads outside the BRT corridor while longer buses will ply the main GT Road

inside the corridor. The BRT corridor has a length of 27 kilometers. In case the bus fleet falls short, more buses of 19-meter buses could be added to the fleet, says the project proposal.

Deputy Superintendent of Traffic Police Rahim Hussain said the BRT would affect the flow of traffic throughout the city. Traffic authorities plan to divert traffic from routes where BRT will be constructed.

"We have proposed several smaller roads across the city to government so that traffic should be diverted to those roads during execution of BRT," Hussain told Truth Tracker.

International guideline standards for BRT networks have been formulated by the Institute of Transportation and Development Policy, a non-for-profit organization based in US which works on promoting sustainable and equitable transportation worldwide.

Under those guidelines, every BRT preliminary design must include a component on integration of projected BRT routes with existing traffic.

Any new BRT system "should integrate into the rest of the public transport network," the guidelines state.

Currently five modes of transportation are used in Peshawar including buses, minibuses, wagons, taxis and rickshaws.

BRT's Project Director at KP Transport and Mass Transit Department, Sajjad Khan, said they have formulated a plan of integration for the existing traffic and also for the traffic management of the existing vehicles during execution of the BRT project.

Some shops vendors along the future

route of BRT have reservations about the project as they weren't consulted before preparation of the preliminary design.

Khan said they have been taken on board and their shops will be relocated as per the plan prepared by BRT management. "All the changes and details will be mentioned in the final design of BRT."

The BRT preliminary design also mentioned that the project may be affected due to security issues if government buildings fall along the BRT route, said Khan. "No Objection Certificates (NOC) to build BRT around government buildings have been sought from all stakeholders including security agencies in view of this," said Khan

The K-P Transport Association has held various meetings with transport officials and other government representatives about existing public transport buses.

Association President Khan Zaman said transport companies agreed with the government that they will adjust the buses in other routes of the cities in both urban and rural areas.

"We have first expressed reservations on BRT which will halt existing buses in the city but now the government has reassured us that these buses will be adjusted into the BRT fleet," Zaman told Truth Tracker.

He added that they have officially protested since all these details were not mentioned in the preliminary design of BRT.

Zaman said the government has also assured the transport companies that the government will financially help in getting new buses to replace the old ones.



# Media Tracker



Media Tracker lists the challenges and achievements of the journalists and media organisations worldwide. Here's a list of journalism at risk stories in the recent month. We would like to thank international media protection organisation and news outlets for their content.

- On June 25, men in civilian clothes took [Zafar Achakzai](#), a senior reporter at the Urdu-language newspaper [Daily Qudrat](#), from his home in [Quetta](#) and aren't revealing his whereabouts. His father and the editor of Qudrat, Naimat Achakzai, deemed it could be die to Zafar's social media postings. Zafar had allegedly criticised the security agencies handling of the lawmaker who had run over a traffic policeman in broad daylight. (CPJ)
- rench journalist [Stephan Villeneuve](#) of the [#5bis Productions](#) and Iraqi Kurdish journalist [Bakhtiar Haddad](#) with the "[House of Journalists](#)" were killed by an explosive device while covering Iraqi counter-terrorist operations in the district of Mosul, in northern Iraq. (RSF)
- [Vietnamese](#), [Pham Minh Hoang](#) was arrested, 23 June and, deported the next day to France. Earlier the police had arrested and charged Hoang in 2010 with attempting to overthrow the government, citing 33 articles he had written under his pen name, Phan Kien Quoc, criticizing one-party rule and Chinese influence. He was initially sentenced to three years in prison in 2012 but was released to serve three years under house arrest Media reports allege the blogger kept publishing. Hoang, a university math teacher and blogger associated with the California-based Viet Tan opposition group, holds French citizenship. (CPJ)
- Media outlets, journalists, NGOs and prominent figures on every continent are calling [UN secretary-general](#) for the appointment of a "[journalists' protector](#)" for the safety of journalists, in accordance with a proposal by Reporters Without Borders (RSF). The coalition is urging the United Nations and its Member States to back this position the political weight for the safety of journalists. The goal is to establish a concrete mechanism enforcing international law and reducing the number of journalists killed every year during the course of their work. (RSF)

# Promise Tracking

## PML-N breaks promise of converting 50% of the remittances into investments



Durdana Najam

### The Promise

Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz had promised in its 2013 manifesto that upon coming to power, it would convert at least 50 per cent of the remittances by overseas Pakistanis into investments.

### Background

Home remittances have dropped significantly over the past year. In February 2017, remittances fell by 7 per cent. For the first eight months of 2016-17, the decline had been 2 per cent. From 2010-2015, Pakistan was receiving the highest remittances among Asian countries with an annual growth rate of 14 per cent, followed by 11 per cent in Sri Lanka, 7 per cent in Bangladesh and 5 per cent in India.

Overseas Pakistani workers remitted \$19.91 billion in 2015-16, showing a growth of 6.38 per cent compared with \$18.72 billion received in the preceding fiscal year.

According to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the overseas Pakistanis sent \$17.46 billion in the first eleven months (July – May 2016/2017) as compared with \$17.84 billion during the same period in the last fiscal year.

Within Pakistan, Punjab receives 62 per cent of the foreign remittance, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa gets 28 per cent. The flow of remittances into Karachi has been small due to the migration of skilled and professional workers along with their families.

The future of remittances in Pakistan holds little promise, given the political and financial upheaval impacting the Middle Eastern countries. Due to a decline in oil prices, Saudi Arabia's oil income has suffered a 47 per cent drop, resulting in a 1 per cent decline in its GDP during 2016. Many workers had already left SA due to financial constraints.

Remittances have also decreased from the UK and USA and other European countries.

Since 2009, the World Bank has acknowledged the importance of remittances by including them in its measure of creditworthiness allowing the countries with high remittances to borrow more money than they otherwise could.

Remittances provide the receiving country with the needed foreign exchange that helps the developing countries alleviate the balance-of-payment and debt crises.

Remittances increase the household income of the recipients that help countries reduce poverty in the long run. Remittances also enable people to have a quality education, a rare commodity in a developing country where the public sector education system is often a neglected. Investment is another area where remittances make a difference. Money remitted home is usually reinvested in either real estate or other areas having multiple effects on the overall economy. Entrepreneurship gets a boost as the flow of money provides an opportunity for opening up new businesses.

### Tracking

Truth Tracker talked to the Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Revenue, Senator Haroon Akhtar, about the promise PML-N made about converting 50 per cent of remittances into investment. Akhtar seemed oblivious to the promise and said that the government had no such policy in place. He agreed



that over the years remittances have decreased, but he laid the responsibility of this decline on the financial situation abroad and the reduction in overseas Pakistani workers.

Another reason cited for the falling remittances by the advisor was the Anti-money Laundering Act 2010, which he said had discouraged the practice of whitening black money by remitting the money back home.

“To help people remit their money through legal sources, the government of Pakistan has given different incentives to banks.” Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf Vice Chairman, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, told Truth Tracker that the government had no clear policy concerning overseas Pakistanis, which he said had also affected the flow of remittances. “The effect of reduced remittances could be seen on the trade deficit, which has already risen to an alarming level,” he said. “Our trade deficit is in terrible shape and in the absence of FDI, remittances could save Pakistan from plunging into financial crises,” he added. “In case remittances continue to fall even further, we would have to borrow more to retire debt and pay for the import bills,” he explained. Qureshi said that the economic situation of Pakistan was bleak and there was a general disgruntlement in the business and trading community.

When Truth Tacker contacted Senator and Chairman Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, Saleem Mandviwalla from PPP, to seek his viewpoint regarding the government's desire to convert 50 per cent of remittances in investment, he said that this could only be done when the government was left with any money after meeting its existing demand of payment of debts and import bills. “Exports and remittances reflect the financial health of an economy; unfortunately, both are in bad shape.” Criticizing the government on its wrong economic policies and misplaced priorities, Mandviwalla said that export was not a part of the government's focus. He further added that Pakistan's economy had become import-based. “Aside from remittances, we had no alternative to earn foreign exchange. The FDI was in similar decline,” he argued. Talking about economic indicators, Mandviwalla said that the analysis of four areas of an economy was enough to understand where the country was heading. “These were: Export, manufacturing, employment, and agriculture. All these sectors had posted negative growth over many years,” he said. “That explains the condition of Pakistan's economy.”

### Independent view

Dr. Qais Aslam, Professor of Economics, University of Central

Punjab, Lahore, said that he had not heard about any such policy initiative from the government. However, Aslam said that remittances are very crucial for Pakistan. "The increased trade deficit in recent months, from \$ 20.3 billion to 3.00 billion was due to falling remittances."

Talking about the solution to the predicament, Aslam said that Pakistan could use its youth bulge to its advantage. "Why not train young people on different skills needed abroad? This would bring more foreign exchange to the country in the form of remittances," he explained. According to Aslam: "This policy of exporting skilled labour would also solve the problem of unemployment amongst the youth."

Unfortunately, the government was only focused on providing

benefits to the urban rich class that constitutes six per cent of the population. "All tax incentives and rebates are given to this class only, while the rest of the population has been trapped in an economic and financial crisis generated by none other than the government itself," Aslam said.

## Ruling

In light of the views and facts presented by the lawmakers and independent analysts, PML-N has failed to honour its promise of converting 50 per cent of the remittances into investment.



# Promise Tracking

## PTI's promise to improving KP mineral sector stands broken



**Rehmat Mehsud**

### The Promise

Chief Minister Pervez Khattak, while reiterating the pledge made by his government, said that it is high time for them to explore and utilize the rich natural resources of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) for the benefit of the people.

### Background

Addressing the launching ceremony of the very first Mineral Policy of his government, the chief minister had said that the majority of KPK's population is living in poverty and in a state of deprivation because the previous governments neglected the upliftment of their living standard.

"We are striving to build a society where there is equal treatment for rich and poor and where laws are applied evenhandedly. Political interference and bureaucratic discretion is being minimized and lopsided development is being done away with," he had said.

"A positive change in the lives of people is envisaged with the fast-paced development," he had observed.

PTI Chairman Imran Khan also addressed the ceremony, which was attended by ambassadors, investors, mining engineers and members of the business community from around the country.

The chief minister had said that the KP Mineral Policy 2014, a first for any province in Pakistan, is going to ensure that new developments in this industry will adhere to 21st-century rules incorporated in the Mines Safety Act.

"This policy provides a set of guiding principles and a program of action to further develop the mineral industry of the province by creating a business environment that will benefit the people," he said.

### Tracking

Anisa Zeb Tahirkehli, minister for labour and mineral development, failed to return both phone calls and text messages despite repeated attempts by Truth Tracker to get her version of the story.

However, Arif Yousaf, Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) and special assistant to the chief minister for law, said, "The PTI-led government aimed its first mineral policy at developing the sector, which was ignored by the previous governments."

He said that the provincial government has worked diligently



to revive the failing mining sector and it also helped establish cement factories in the province.

"The provincial government is all set to sign 12 to 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with different mine related companies to exploit natural resources for the well-being of impoverished people," he added.

In addition to the above, his government is linking agreements with local and multinational companies to extract precious stones in Kumrat Valley, Swat, and the Katlang region in an efficient manner.

"The provincial government is striving to introduce advanced technology in the mining sector for the extraction of precious stones in a professional way," he added.

Syed Jaffar Shah, MPA and a senior member of Awami National Party (ANP), said: "PTI has zero percent progress towards the development of the mineral sector."

He recalled that members of the PTI are involved in corrupt practices in the mineral sector and one of their former mining minister is still facing corruption charges in courts.

"Our marble industry is virtually headed towards catastrophe," Shah observed.

He questioned, "Had the KP's mining sector generated any revenue? Why did the PTI borrow Rs. 80 billion from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other financial institutions if that is the case?"

"The PTI is now promising to construct the Peshawar Transit

Bus System and the Swat Express Motorway but they are false promises,” he noted.

“They have made a joke out of the voters’ confidence in them so far, and the PTI has just a year left to honour all its promises,” he added.

Sahibzada Sanaullah, another MPA from Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), said that no new development activities could be seen in the mineral sector.

“I will tell you that unprecedented corruption is underway in the mineral sector. We have vast marbles in Bajaur and Chitral localities but the PTI government has not taken a single step to tap natural resources of the province,” he added.

In addition, he said that KP’s scenic Kumrat valley has world class granite, which needs to be extracted with modern technology but the PTI have their own agenda, which is to mint money from the rich mining sector.

### Independent Viewpoint

When approached for comment, Riaz Khan, an independent analyst and senior journalist, told Truth Track that nothing could be done to develop the KP mineral sector or natural reservoirs.

“First, the KP government has failed to show the know-how required to extract or carry out the excavation of precious stones, coal, gypsum or other minerals in an efficient, modern manner,” he explained.

“Precious stones such as emerald, topaz, ruby and peridot could be found in abundance in parts of KP such as Swat, Katlang, Hazara, Chitral and Kaghan,” he added.

The province is widely known for having huge reserves of

precious stones, which are situated in the Katlang and Swat region. In addition, the Hazara region of the province has known reserves of ruby-another kind of precious stone.

“Modern technology is needed to extract the hidden wealth efficiently, which would help improve the country’s economy and raise the living standard of people,” he suggested.

“Unfortunately, the PTI government does not have the sophisticated technology or the manpower required to excavate minerals from the province,” he observed.

Secondly, the PTI has allotted sites of the deposits to its own people, such as Jahangir Tareen, a lawmaker of the party.

Former mineral minister, Ziaullah, of PTI had been removed from his post after he had developed differences with the chief minister. He recalled that Ziaullah had a hand in massive irregularities of awarding mining contracts to those who supported the PTI.

“Today, people and contractors with close ties to the PTI have mining excavation allotted to their names,” he added. He said that the PTI has a mineral policy, but only on paper.

### Independent Viewpoint

Following the remarks and views of ruling/opposition lawmakers and independent analysts, Truth Tracker rules that the PTI has broken its promise to improve the KP mining sector to increase revenue and create job opportunities for locals



## Promise Tracking

### PPP failed to fulfil its promise of awareness about infectious diseases.



Durdana Najam

#### The Promise

Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) promised in its 2013 manifesto to launch behavioural change media campaign to prevent people from contracting infectious diseases.

#### Background

PPP has been in power in Sindh for the past eight years. From 2008 to 2016, there was no local government in place for the simple reason that local body elections were not held until the Supreme Court of Pakistan prevailed upon the provincial governments to perform this important constitutional obligation. All these years, Sindh was completely neglected in every regard. If law and order and terrorism had made people insecure, the lack of civic amenities such as sanitation had made them vulnerable to health issues. Karachi, the cosmopolitan city of Sindh and supposedly the hub of Pakistan’s economic activities, from where billions of rupees in taxes are collected every year has been turned into a garbage bin. Piles of rubbish line even posh areas. High rise buildings and narrow broken roads stinking with sewage water or garbage is just a single paradox out of many that make the city a case of misplaced priorities. Every day, the people of Karachi wake up to filthy roads where business worth billions is conducted every single day. Yet neither the government nor the owners of the businesses are interested in taking responsibility of the situation.



Last year in December, over 1500 people in Karachi’s Malir area fell victim to what the doctor called a mysterious disease they had no knowledge of. The patients complained of high-grade fever and loss of appetite along with severe pains in the body.

Many diseases that afflict the residents of Karachi are caused by filth and dirt. The government loses moral authority to educate its citizens on protecting themselves against infectious diseases when it is not providing them with a safe and clean environment. Perhaps that has been the reason why the Sindh government shied away from starting a robust media campaign to raise

awareness regarding health issues, as was told to Truth Tracker by PPP MPA from Sindh, Sharmila Farooqi in a telephonic interview.

## Tracking

While agreeing that the Sindh government has initiated no such media awareness campaign, Farooqi conceded that the situation of sanitation in Karachi particularly and in Sindh generally was questionable. She said that it was unfortunate that a large part of Karachi's population lived in squalid conditions that gave rise to infectious diseases. "The Sindh government has been caught unprepared several times when they have been unable to tackle a disease that suddenly surfaces and attacks the environs. I believe our government should start a massive cleanliness campaign coupled with creating awareness in people on how to protect themselves against viral diseases," Farooqi said.

Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi head, Hafiz Naeem Ur Rehman, told Truth Tracker that once upon a time, Karachi too was a clean city. He said that when the Mayorship of Karachi was in the hands of Jamaat-e-Islami from 2001-05, the city was both clean and green. "With the arrival of MQM at the helm of the affair," Rehman said, "Karachi was de-shaped using china cutting." According to him: "Viral diseases are a common occurrence in Karachi."

"Chikungunya is a mosquito-borne viral disease which has now spread all across Karachi. At the outbreak of this disease, the government was required to eradicate mosquitoes by fumigation and proper garbage disposal. However, the Karachi government has failed to do both. The result is that scores of people are contracting the diseases every day.

Chikungunya is a painful condition that brings fever and pains in joints," Rehman said.

Rehman added that the PPP government was both corrupt and incompetent.

"After the local government elections, it is now the responsibility

of the MQM to keep the city clean. It is wrong to say that the local government is deprived of funds. The Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC) has an annual budget of 23 billion; similarly, MQM is in power in four districts of Karachi, and each district has a total budget of almost Rs 40 million. There are plenty of funds, but there is no intention or political will to put the money where their mouth is," Rehman said.

## Independent view

Dr Umair Ahmed from Karachi told Truth Tracker that most of the cases of viral diseases were reported from localities known for poor sanitation conditions. He said that it was the responsibility of the KMC to eradicate mosquitos, improve sanitation conditions of the city and to prevent people from contracting viral and infectious diseases. He added that the government had to take the ownership of the city before it morphs into a hub for diseases.

"Prevention is better than cure. A media campaign that educates them about the disease along with prevention measures is significant," Umair said.

Lala Hassan, a veteran analyst, in his conversation with Truth Tracker, said that the onus of responsibility also lied on the shoulders of the general public who lacked rudimentary civic sense. He said that the Chinese company now hired for cleaning Karachi had put garbage bins in different parts of Karachi. "But, unfortunately, people are most often found throwing trash outside the bin," Hassan said. Government has to implement laws to make the general public responsible towards civic amenities.

## Ruling

The PPP government has broken to fulfil its promise of spreading awareness about infectious diseases through a media campaign.



# Promise Tracking

## PTI breaks yet another promise to provide KP districts with clean drinking water



**Rehmat Mehsud**

### The Promise

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led government, on various occasion, promised provision of clean drinking water to every district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

### Background

Each year, the provincial government allocates a budget in its Annual Development Programme (ADP) to make damaged water supply and sanitation schemes functional but opposition lawmakers and locals complain that the issue still persists.

Senior officials at district levels from the Public Health Department said. "Frequent power outages left several home appliances, water scheme machines and tube wells damaged."

They said that the elected representatives have been told about the shortage of water but the government has yet to take steps to resolve the decades old problem.

Earlier, Mufti Saeed Janan, Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) from JUI-F, has raised the water shortage issue in the provincial assembly.

He told the house that the damage to the water supply schemes has occurred due of frequent power outages and usage of



obsolete motors.

### Tracking

Truth Tracker contacted Shah Farman, minister for information and public health engineering, who said that the provincial government is adopting all measures to ensure provision of potable water to all districts of the province.

“We have a gigantic plan in place to provide pure and clean water to main cities and remote areas, which will help control water borne diseases,” he added.

He said that he would personally visit Tank, D. I. Khan, Bannu and Lakki Marwat districts to install solar panels for uninterrupted water supply.

“We have allocated Rs. 10 million for the provision of clean water and we will approve 70 water schemes in areas that need them. It is the start of our plan and we will introduce more schemes on a need-based criteria,” Farman noted.

However, Syed Jaffar Shah, another MPA and a senior leader of Awami National Party (ANP), said that the provision of clean drinking water is a really critical issue.

“People and animals drink water from a common pound in Tank district of KP and we had a heated debate in the assembly regarding this thorny issue in order to tackle it at the earliest opportunity possible,” Shah added. He said that this promise of Imran Khan will most likely meet the same fate as his earlier unfulfilled promises.

“Forget about promising drinking water for now, I’d like to know about a single pledge that the PTI has honoured so far,” he asked. He recalled that the provincial government has promised to provide Peshawar City with clean drinking water through the Mega Peshawar Water Project but that commitment has faded to the background.

“False promises and announcements are futile for public welfare, practical steps need to be taken in order to gain the public’s trust,” he said. He said that thousands of tube wells have been damaged or are dysfunctional but the PTI did not bother to make those water supply schemes operational. “It is unfortunate for the people of the province and PTI itself that the provincial government badly failed to resolve pressing issues that plague the masses,” he rued.

Sahibzada Sanaullah, another MPA and a stalwart of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), said that he did not observe any new water supply schemes being established by the PTI. “I witnessed when Chief Minister Pervez Khattak in his post-budget speech himself admitted that the PTI could not ensure provision of purified drinking water to parts of KP,” he remarked.

During the assembly’s latest session, the opposition and the government benches unequivocally admitted that people and animals are forced to use common ponds for drinking water in remote areas of the province.

“Even in my Dir constituency, women are forced to fetch water from a long distance. Each MPA is given Rs. 10 million for a water scheme but which area are you going to provide a water scheme to with this meagre amount?” he questioned. He suggested that the PTI-led government should announce an inclusive plan to resolve the deteriorating water issue on an emergency basis, or else water borne diseases could spread. “The PTI now claims that they are conducting surveys to install new water projects but I am wondering how it is possible to materialize this pledge at a time when they only have a year left to rule,” he added.

### Independent view

Riaz Khan, an independent analyst and a senior journalist, said that the PTI has totally trampled upon its promise to provide clean drinking water to parts of KP. “The provision of clean drinking water is serious, long-standing issue that affects southern districts such as D. I. Khan, Bannu, parts of Lakki Marwat and Tank,” he said.

“People and animals are forced to drink water from the same pond in various villages of southern districts,” he observed.

According to him, the lack of potable water is not the only issue, the irrigation problem is getting serious as the vast land of KP is lying barren due to the unavailability of irrigation water.

“They have planned to carve out an uplifting canal from River Indus to provide water to the cultivable land of southern districts but nothing regarding the materialization of this scheme has been heard so far,” he said. “Water shortage is a serious problem that has afflicted the southern districts for years and the past governments could not tackle the issue despite the fact that foreign governments and donors have offered funds for provision of drinking water,” Riaz added. He said that the consumption of contaminated water by children, women and elderly people of remote areas has led to the spread of life threatening diseases. “The PTI failed miserably to honour its pledge to provide water to each district of the province,” Khan reiterated.

### Ruling

After evaluating the views and remarks of ruling/opposition lawmakers and independent analysts, Truth Tracker rules that the PTI failed to ensure provision of clean drinking water to districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



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## Accountability

# Survey warns rise in HIV AIDS in key populations of Pakistan



**Waqar Gillani**

**Islamabad:** A recent survey of National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) reveals that some of the key population pockets in Pakistan are prone to HIV epidemic. Low level of awareness regarding contracting HIV and its preventions remain main challenges in curtailing the epidemic.

Based on the findings of a 2nd Generation HIV Surveillance, "Integrated Biological & Behavioral Surveillance (IBBS) in Pakistan 2016-17" (exclusively available on Truth Tracker) it has been recommended to scale-up medical services in the populous areas of Pakistan.

The most recent national surveillance data was collected in 2011 the rapid rate at which the epidemic is escalating updated information is imperative for devising effective strategy to prevent HIV, which signifies the need to conduct 5th surveillance round. To address the need for sufficient data UNAIDS & Global Fund planned a National scale study in 23 cities/towns to determine the prevalence and behaviors among vulnerable populations.

The report provides biological and behavioural information related to contacting HIV among four key populations: People Who inject Drugs (PWID), Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM), Transgender populations and Female Sex Workers (FSWs). Data was collected in 23 sites - 13 in Punjab, 6 in Sindh and 2 in Baluchistan and Khyber Paktunkhawah, each.

The survey, for the first time including Male Sex Workers (MSWs), finds Men having Sex with Men (non sex workers

men with gay tendencies) have risen up to 776,873 with estimated 3.4 percent prevalence of HIV Aids. While the estimated number of Male Sex Workers (MSWs) is 55,340 with 5.6 percent HIV Aids prevalence. The estimated number of female Sex Workers (FSWs) is 173,447 with 2.2 percent prevalence of HIV AIDS. The estimated figures of this survey find out as many as 113,422 PWIDs in Pakistan with 38 percent affected by HIV AIDS. Moreover, the number of HIV AIDS in Transgender (TG) was highest with 7.1 percent affected by HIV AIDS with an estimated population of 52,425.

This survey has been conducted after six years. Head of NACP, Dr. Abdul Baseer Khan Ahakzai told truth tracker that as of March 2017, an estimated number of HIV AIDS patients recorded in Pakistan is 133,299 out of them only 18,868 have registered themselves for treatment and counseling.

The NACP survey finds HIV AIDS is spreading in urban populations, mostly. With an estimated prevalence rate of less than 0.1 percent, Pakistan continues to have a low-level HIV epidemic among general population. However, serial surveillance results indicate that concentrated epidemics have already been established among key populations. As in several other regions, the HIV epidemic in Pakistan is characterized by high initial prevalence among injecting drug users (PWID), which has already expanded to Transgender /Transgender Sex Workers (TGs) with a potential to expand into female sex workers (FSWs) and gay couples. Although the estimated HIV burden of 0.1% appears low and relatively stable, it masks the overall progress of HIV epidemic in Pakistan and does not elucidate the deadly trajectory of the epidemic, he said. Underneath a fairly

steady and static HIV prevalence among general population, there is a proliferating epidemic which is continuously at a rise among key populations, which form the main agents in transmission and fueling of the epidemic in the country, he quoted the survey. There are no signs of the HIV epidemic reversing, declining, or even stabilizing among key populations, the survey indicates.

The study suggests "rights-based, evidence-informed, and community-owned programs that use a mix of biomedical, behavioral, and structural interventions, prioritized to meet the current HIV prevention needs of particular individuals and communities, so as to have the greatest sustained impact on reducing new infections." It further emphasizes Pakistan's needs to work on a robust monitoring and evaluation system at national, sub-national and program level. Program monitoring data can provide detailed information about the quality and intensity of interventions; including the proportion of those reached that utilize various program services. A significant number of countries have incorporated data from program monitoring efforts to provide information about progress and achievements, using unique identifiers to individually track service provision to key populations. A similar kind of effort can be initiated in Pakistan, coordinated by the NACP.

"We know with increasing certainty what disaster awaits if the response to AIDS continues to be inadequate. We also know how to strengthen that response in ways that will save millions of lives and billions of dollars. This plan is achievable, but only with strong leadership at every level of society." the study concludes.



## Accountability

# KP prisons—breeding ground for HIV and HCV diseases



**Wisal Yousafzai**

**PESHAWAR:** Palwasha Khan and her two children are living in the Central Jail Peshawar for the last two years. She has been diagnosed with Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). Khan has no access to professional doctors and nor are there enough medical facilities to bank upon in the Central Jail Peshawar. “My condition can get worse while those living with me can also get affected. The living condition in the prison is highly deplorable,” says Khan.

According to the data provided to News Lens Pakistan by the Prisons Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) through the Right to Information request, two male prisoners are affected with HIV while 53 men and two women are carrying HCV in 22 prisons of the province. Fourteen male and two female doctors, 38 medical technicians and nine female psychologists are looking after the inmates in the KP prisons overcrowded with 9,503 inmates, a figure well above the capacity the 22 prisons can hold – 8,091.

However, according to data submitted by the prisons department to the KP Assembly in response to a query from JUI-F lawmaker Najma Shaheen, in May this year, the overall capacity for male and female inmates is 7,793 and 298 respectively in four central prisons, 10 district jails, four sub-jails and as many judicial lock-ups. Currently 9,320 male and 183 female inmates are serving sentences in prisons across KP.

Noor Alam Khan, the chairman of the Voice of Prisoners (VoP), a non-governmental organization working in Peshawar, told News Lens Pakistan that there was no facility in Jails for conducting screening tests to determine whether the prisoners were infected with any communicable diseases such as HIV and HCV or not.

Yaseen Khan, a Central Jail Peshawar prisoner, told the News Lens that when he was incarcerated one-year back he did not have HCV. Now the doctors said he was suffering from this deadly disease. He blames the unhygienic condition of jail for delivering him this disease.

“There are not enough washrooms and most of them are not washed regularly adding to the miseries of the prisoners. One razor is used to shave as many prisoners which could have contributed in getting me infected with the HCV,” says Yaseen Khan.

According to Dr Umar Khan, medical officer at Khyber Teaching Hospital Peshawar, women are more vulnerable to HCV in prisons because of lack of gynecological facilities. He says unhygienic medical instruments are used to treat women in labour while old syringes are used to administer injections.

He further says that the law relaxes serving time for those prisoners who are either infected with communicable diseases, cannot be treated in the prison or those who are on the deathbed. None of this he says are followed in our prison system.

“There are 19 children between six months

to five years age living in the Central Jail of Peshawar. All of these children are vulnerable to diseases but no actions is being taken to rescue these kids from the deadly environment of the prison even when we have law such as the Child Protection Act. The government should make it mandatory to screen all incoming prisoners so that those who are carrying HIV or HCV are kept separated from other prisoners,” said Dr Usman

An official of the Central Jail Peshawar, requesting anonymity, said that there were 21 bed hospitals for male and five-bed hospital for female prisoners in central Jail Peshawar for 2200 inmates.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on prison Malik Qasim Khan Khattak told News Lens Pakistan that the provincial government were providing best health care facilities in all prisons of the province.

About the government’s effort to provide adequate medical facilities to the patients suffering from HCV and HIV the minister said that these diseases take time to be cured and the government was doing its best in this regard.

He further added that in the fiscal budget 2015-16 the KP government has allocated Rs. 30,500 million for maintenance of peace, through which free health treatment and all other health facilities would be provided in jails.

“We have always wanted to start a project on viral diseases in the Central Jail Peshawar with the support of health department KP. The recommendations for

the projects have been sent to the Health Department but due to lack of funds the project could not be initiated, but now we are hopeful to get it moving as soon as possible," Khattak added.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa on Law Arif Yousaf acceded to News Lens Pakistan about lack of medical facilities in KP prisons.

"I am fully aware of the fact that our prisons lack enough number of doctors, especially female doctors. These are basic

human right issues and our government is fully on board on these issues and is doing its best to overcome the problems faced by the inmates.



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