



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Mahatma Gandhi

SHEHRI

JUNE 1993

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TOXIC SHOCK!



By Azhar Abbas

On Wednesday, May 5, 1993, Mubarak Ali, a junk dealer from Shershah, hired a Suzuki van and six laborers. He went to the Gulbai area near Balda Railway Station on Mauripur Road to collect 2.5 tons of a chemical dumped by an unknown factory in an open drain. Being ignorant about what kind of material they were handling, neither Mubarak nor the Suzuki driver or the hired laborers took any precautionary measures. The chemical became their worst nightmare. For Mubarak and driver Saif-ur-Rahman, it was their last errand. Saif died the same day, while Mubarak breathed his last in Civil Hospital, Karachi, three days later. Despite the mysterious death of Saif on May 5, the chemical which was dumped in a Shershah warehouse by Mubarak and his partner Ali Mohammed, after transferring it there from an open drain, remained there till Friday. The authorities remained quiescent, as

With inadequate or non-existent equipment and facilities in industries, the possibility of mishaps increases. Also, the improper disposal of toxic waste has become a major cause of environmental and health hazards adversely affecting the local population.

only one death was not enough to activate the administrative machinery. A policeman was, however, posted at the warehouse after the driver's death. However, it was an incident on Friday,

May 7, that alerted the authorities. The guard posted on the premises and a passer-by fell unconscious after inhaling toxic fumes from the chemical.

The district administration finally moved in and with the help of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's Fire Brigade Department and Bomb Disposal Squad, removed the chemical from the Shershah warehouse.

Till that time, none had realised the gravity of the situation, nor was anybody aware as to what kind of chemical they were dealing with. It was because of this ignorance that six of the firemen involved in the shifting of the chemical from the warehouse were afflicted and had to be admitted to different city hospitals.

Witnessing the growing rate of people falling victim to this substance, the rescue team led by the area Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) decided to get rid of the chemical— even before getting it properly analysed. Ignorance may be a blessing for some but in this case it proved disastrous. Without realising the consequences, the area SDM asked the fire brigade personnel to throw the chemical into the Lyari river.

The material remained lying in and around the Lyari river (under a bridge near Lyari Railway Station on Mauripur Road) for about 12 days. Parts of it were lying in an open drain—the original dumping site while some were left at the Shershah warehouse, even after the main chunk was shifted from there and thrown in the Lyari river.

It was revealed to the authorities after 12 days that the material was not only highly toxic but explosive as well and that it could cause severe environmental and health problems. Only after a series of news items

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TAKING THE LAW INTO OUR OWN HANDS

However much our legal system seems clogged with graft, inefficiency, mismanagement and corruption, it is still our only means of redress if we are to remain non-violent, peace-loving citizens.

The judicial system is fraught with fault. At the local level, it still awaits separation from the executive. It is grossly undermanned and under-womaned, that is to say the number of judges have not grown in proportion to the population. Judges are ill-paid and have to operate in abominable working conditions which are not conducive to clear, objective judgements. Competent lawyers are few and expensive as many others have degenerated into relying on influence and graft to achieve their client objectives.

Nevertheless, the situation slowly improves for those who wish to apply for Public Interest Litigation to safeguard or improve their environment. Basic knowledge of the law is thus our fundamental duty and responsibility. If we, the public, do not apprise ourselves of our rights, individuals who pursue private profit by neglecting, ignoring and indeed overriding public need will continue to forge ahead, finding loopholes where they can.

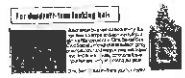
Activating legal processes that safeguard our rights have now become an obligation on the part of every conscious, educated citizen, both on our own behalf and on behalf of those who, burdened by poverty, cannot find a voice.

SHEHRI-CBE has initiated its Legal

Cell with the appointment of a qualified, experienced lawyer, Mrs. E.C. Pinto as incharge, Legal Cell. In addition, Mrs. Amber Alibhai, a competent and dedicated lawyer and SHEHRI member, continues to volunteer her services. Together this team has already proved that wrongs can be set right if we go about it diligently armed with knowledge of the law and some committed citizens.

The tropical rain forests are being destroyed at the rate of an area the size of a football pitch every second.

Sometimes Even Your Worst Enemies Deserve Special Care!



PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION

THE POOR MAN'S SOLE WEAPON

By Mrs. E.C. Pinto, Advocate

Human rights have been assured to us vide the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 classifying them as basic/fundamental rights (as given in Part II, chapter I captioned Fundamental Rights under Articles 8 to 28 of our constitution). In spite of this, almost 85 per cent of our people are unaware of their rights and the few that have an inkling of the same, find it difficult to make any headway for legal relief mostly because they are hampered by fear, poverty, neglect or indifference.

I once had the opportunity of meeting "The Poor Man's Judge" as he is commonly called. He was no other than Mr. Justice (R) P.N. Bhagwati (Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India). I listened to all that he had to say about "Public Interest Litigation". He was the first to construe, interpret and put into practice what he felt could be redressed of the grievances of the desperate, destitute

and down-trodden masses through Public Interest Litigation (PIL). Now the question arises: Where did the idea of PIL come from? It came from nowhere! It was always present in our Constitution. As far as the poor are concerned, Justice Bhagwati says: "The success of traditional legal service programmes depends upon two factors: (1) The person affected should be able to realise that the problem he faces is a legal problem and that a lawyer can help him, and (2) He must know where he can get such legal help."

Like any poor country, Pakistan has many deep-rooted differences such as caste, creed, colour, socio-economic status etc. The question of a poor man asserting himself in our society, his chances of awareness and the non-existence of litigation-oriented legal services combine to create a conducive set of conditions for PIL. In addition, the poor find it difficult to approach lawyers as they fear the need to pay high fees, they

fear their often well-established, moneyed and influential opponents, and they fear that they may not be heard. Our rural society is still traditional with emphasis on community life and paternalism. This makes a person dependent, indifferent and unassertive. It is generally felt that only violation of

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SHEHRI

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The article entitled Environment and Health: Chemicals, Hazards and the Environment printed in the March 1993 issue was written by Dr. Baharuz Naim, M.D., M.P.H., Member SHEHRI-CBE. His name was inadvertently left out and he was not registered.

Member of
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The World Conservation Union



Industrial areas all over the country pay no heed to safe methods of toxic waste disposal. The city administration and the civic bodies who are responsible do not have any contingency plans to deal with emergency situations arising from toxic chemicals. Even relevant by-laws to check this menace do not exist.

Continued from Page 1

appeared in the print media were the authorities compelled to get the chemical examined at the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. However, the PCSIR officials refused to have the material analysed, saying that they did not have the required equipment for the job. The material was then analysed by the Hussain Ebrahim Jamal Research Institute of Chemistry of the University of Karachi. The analyses of HEJ experts proved it to be Meta-dinitrobenzene, a highly toxic chemical that also had about 86 per cent explosive strength of Trinitroloene (TNT) and "could be used in an emergency when TNT was not available."

Analyses at HEJ also revealed that the chemical could cause failure of the respiratory system and cyanosis in which the color of human skin turns blue due to its adverse affect on blood haemoglobin. Exposure to it could also lead to vertigo, severe headaches, cramps, coma and finally death. Physical contact could cause skin irritation and eczema.

The heavily populated area around Lyari river ensures that thousands of people will be adversely affected. This may not show up immediately but like most carcinogens, this chemical will probably have long-term and insidious effects. The chemical has already mixed with the sludge of the Lyari river which will ultimately reach the human body after entering the food chain, through sea-food. Fortunately some independent experts in the field got involved including Dr. Mirza Arshad Ali Beg and Dr. Parvaiz Naim. Dr. Beg is ex-director of Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) and is presently Chairman, Standing Committee on Environment of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI). Dr. Naim is Deputy Programme Coordinator of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, IUCN- Pakistan.

The interest taken by these experts gave a boost to the issue and finally the chemical was taken out of the Lyari river and then, after a few days, disposed off on Sunday, May 23, in Baldia sub-division, some 25 kilometers away from the main city area of Karachi.

It was a day-long operation and the personnel of a number of departments participated in it, despite the fear that the chemical was toxic and could cause serious harm. For almost 12 hours, the entire District West administration, officials of law-enforcement agencies posted in the district, KMC's Fire Brigade Department, Bomb Disposal Squad and some other concerned people

remained involved in the operation to get rid of the toxic chemical. The personnel's fear was truly justified as about six officers had been seriously affected during the earlier operation of shifting the chemical. Despite taking precautions, a truck driver was affected by the fumes and was immediately rushed to a hospital. It is important, although sad, to note the apathy on the part of the media. Inspire of the fact that the toxic chemical could have caused serious environmental and health problems for Karachiites in general and thousands living on the Lyari river embankments in particular, none of the newspapers, except one, felt it to be of any worth. Nor only that the issue was not regarded as important enough for the city to give it front page coverage. Except for a few reports, and that too of the unfortunate deaths, nothing much was reported in the print media in order to keep the issue alive. It is ironic that issues such as these are not on the priority of our national papers. In developed countries, such issues are not only given priority, but there are also departments to deal with any such situation. Ironically, not a single department or agency in Karachi was ready to take responsibility to dispose off the toxic chemical.

The situation has become alarming. With inadequate or non-existent equipment and facilities in industries using toxic chemicals, the possibility of mishaps increases. Also, the improper disposal of toxic waste has become a major cause of environmental and health hazards adversely affecting the local population. Research and surveys done by experts reveal that a large number of people are either affected from slow poisoning or are getting skin diseases due to this. Although situations such as these are commonly witnessed in our society (even though ignorance of health hazards etc, often means that the patient is unaware that he is suffering due to environmental/pollution hazards from exposure at his place of work, through industrial waste-contamination of water/the food chain and so on), they are a rare sight in any developed country. Nevertheless, one does hear of instances where such mishaps do occur in these countries also. However, public reaction to them is so fervent and official response so prompt that the problem is often taken care of before they can constitute a serious hazard to society.

In our country, the general apathy and disregard for any sort of measures to prevent pollution and mishaps can best be given by an example of an industry in the Hub Industrial Area which had dumped a highly toxic material within its own compound. It was some sort of chlorinated acid, a

by-product of the industry, which the owners had failed to sell in the market. When the factory was visited by some experts, it came to light that the toxic material had seeped into the earth and was probably causing serious contamination of the water in adjacent water wells. This is only one case. Industries all over the country pay no heed to safe methods of toxic waste disposal. The city administration and the civic bodies who are responsible do not have any contingency plans to deal with emergency situations arising from toxic chemicals. Even relevant by-laws to check this menace do not exist. The agency responsible for dealing with solid and liquid waste management in the city is the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC). It has been made responsible under the Sindh Local Government Ordinance (SLGO) of 1979. However, the KMC is not properly equipped to deal with toxic material. Only its Fire Brigade Department looks after such situations but it is also poorly equipped and does not have the trained personnel required to combat a situation such as that which arose after the Shershah incident. After Shershah, people concerned about the environment voiced serious doubts about the present capability of the city administration and the KMC to handle such a situation. It was therefore discussed and suggested by concerned citizens that in addition to properly trained KMC and police personnel to combat such a situation, a committee of experts in the field should be formed to deal with such crises.

The priority of the officials should be: 1) to ensure that thousands of workers employed by the industrial sector using toxic chemicals should be provided with adequate protective gear.

2) to develop safe methods for transportation and handling of toxic material and dumping of its waste under the supervision of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials. The Sindh EPA could be allotted a piece of land far from the city for establishing a sanitary landfill.

3) factory owners, including big corporations, multinationals as well as small-time businessmen, who are

responsible for creating these disasters should be booked under relevant laws so as to establish deterring precedents.

The Shershah incident should be enough to open the eyes of those sitting at the helm of affairs in the government. The need of the hour is to take immediate steps in constituting a committee and a contingency plan to deal with toxic material. No doubt the citizens of Karachi, residents of the biggest industrial city of the country, are witnessing serious environmental degradation. They could be saved from seeing their worst nightmare come true - the Bhopal tragedy is still alive in our memories.

One ray of hope is that the EPA Sindh is in the process of forming a Committee which can be contacted immediately to deal with any similar mishap in the future. This was stated by Mrs. Mahtab Akbar Rashid, Director EPA Sindh, a few days after the Shershah incident. Let us hope that the EPA is true to its word and that this Committee does not remain on paper only, but starts performing its duties immediately.

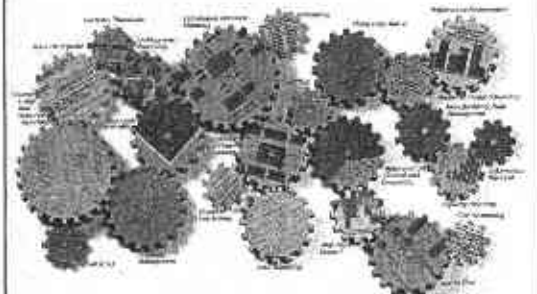
BERGER INTRODUCES LEAD-FREE PAINT IN PAKISTAN

Lead is an ingredient in many of the paints produced in our country, and even small amounts of it inhaled or ingested can accumulate in the body - the effects of lead poisoning, to which children are particularly susceptible, may include damage to the nervous system and brain, anaemia, abdominal pain etc.

Mineral of the hazards of lead, Berger Paints has decided, with immediate effect, to totally

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THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SHEHRI-CBE



The third AGM of SHEHRI-CBE and elections for the term 1993-94 were held on Saturday, April 24, 1993. Elections to the Managing Committee took place before the meeting which was conducted by Navaid Husain, Chairperson, SHEHRI-CBE. The Meeting began with the confirmation of the minutes of the last AGM held

in May 1992. After that, the Annual Report and the Audited Statement of Accounts for the year January 1, 1992 - December 31, 1993 were read out and M/s Hyder and Co. were reappointed as SHEHRI's auditors for 1993. Mr. Waris Hashmi, the Election Commissioner, announced the names of the successful candidates for the three vacant posts of

Executive Members of the Managing Committee as well as the Office Bearers who were elected unopposed. The new Managing Committee of SHEHRI-CBE is as follows:

1. Chairperson - Navaid Husain
2. Vice Chairperson - Qazi Faez Isa
3. General Secretary - Humaira Rahman
4. Treasurer - Khatib Ahmed
5. Executive Member - Danish Azar Zubay
6. Executive Member - Hassan Jaffery
7. Executive Member - Farhan Anwar

During the discussion that followed many important issues regarding SHEHRI were brought up with many members actively participating and expressing their views and opinions. The newest member of SHEHRI's staff, Mrs. E.C. Pinto, who is a lawyer, was introduced to all present. After the meeting which was held in the Goethe library, tea was served ●

TREE PLANTATION FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



To mark the occasion of World Environment Day, held on June 5 every year, SHEHRI-

CBE and FPAP (Family Planning Association of Pakistan) conducted a tree plantation campaign in Karachi. Three areas were chosen and approximately 100 saplings were planted in each area, to be followed up later with more plantation. Representatives of FPAP and SHEHRI visited the three areas viz. Rehman Colony, Old Golimar and Baldia Kalchi Abadi on May 27, June 5 and June 6, respectively. On all three days, members of SHEHRI gave short talks to the residents on the importance of trees, causes and effects of pollution and what they could do to better the state of the environment in their areas. Many residents enthusiastically supported the tree plantation campaign and were mobilised to spread the word of environmental protection among their families, friends and neighbours ●

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION



On April 29, 1993, SHEHRI collaborated with PASSP (Pakistan Association of Scientists and Scientific Professions), IEP (Institute of Engineers, Pakistan) and IEER (Institute of Environmental Engg. and Research, NED University) to organise an international seminar on environmental pollution.

The seminar, which was divided into four sessions, was addressed by several experts who spoke on every aspect of environmental pollution from sustainability to the legal aspects of environmental protection and pollution control. Apart from experts from Pakistan, the seminar was also

addressed by guest speakers from the U.K. and Bangladesh.

Navaid Husain (Chairperson, SHEHRI) spoke on environmental issues and SAARC and Dr. Mirza Arshad Ali Baig (SEED) read a paper on the status of environmental pollution in Karachi. Other speakers included Engr. Rehan Ahmed (NESPAC), Mr. Kamil Sheikh-Advocate, Dr. M.R. Sabayo (MUET) and Engr. Mohd. Mohsin Qureshi (DCET).

The concluding session of the seminar included recommendations made to the Government of Pakistan which included the creation of a data base and the laying down of quality standards for air, water, waste water and industrial effluents. Other recommendations included enhanced coordination between EPAs and NGOs, use of mass media for creation of awareness, education of individuals and the creation of a competent Executive Committee to aid the Environmental Protection Council (EPC) of Pakistan ●

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES:

1) **INTER-COLLEGIATE POSTER COMPETITION:** SHEHRI-CBE, in collaboration with Djarans (D.J. College Old Students Association) is organizing an inter-collegiate poster competition in Aug./Sep 1993. The title of the competition 'Towards a Better Environment', aims to generate ideas for a brighter, sustainable future. The title covers recycling, reuse, regeneration, sustainable development, reforestation, adoption of alternative energy sources etc.

Invitations have already been sent to approximately 35 colleges in Karachi requesting their participation in the event. The posters submitted will be exhibited at the Arts Council of Karachi after which a panel of five judges will choose the winners. Prizes will be given to the students who submit the three best posters and will be Rs. 5,000, Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 2,000 respectively.

Any colleges who would like to participate in the competition should

contact the SHEHRI-CBE office for further details.

2) **SEMINAR ON 'KARACHI-TODAY AND TOMORROW':** SHEHRI, in collaboration with the Karachi Theosophical Society, is holding a seminar on the above topic on August 6, 1993 to mark the 41st death anniversary of Jamshed Nasserwanji, known as the maker of modern Karachi, and a great philanthropist. Details in the next issue ●

EARTH DAY MELA



Thursday, April 22, 1993 was Earth Day and to mark the occasion, Leo Club organised a Mela in which several organisations participated. This mela, which was held at the ideal location of Hill Park, attracted a large number of visitors. WWF, IUCN, SCOPE, TRC, Caltex, SHEHRI and others had all

set up stalls on the premises. An EarthWalk and poster exhibition were also held as well as a short play acted out by school children. SHEHRI conducted a membership drive for children and about 30 children became Junior Citizen members of SHEHRI-CBE ●

SHEHRI-CBE's new members are:

137. Mrs. Amber Aghbal - Lawyer
138. Mr. Imtiaz A. Paracha - Businessman
139. Dr. S.A. Hasmi - Engineer
140. Mr. M. Tahir Qureshi - Forest Officer
141. Mr. Mushtaq H. Dawood - Engineer
142. Mr. Shahzadwar Saifur Bhatti
143. Mr. Muhammad Ismail - Founder of Pakistan Environment
144. Mr. Farhatullah Qureshi - Director, Control
145. Ms. Maryam Ishaq - Development Officer
146. Ch. Hasnat Hussain - Government Engineer
147. Mr. Raza Hussain - Hummason
148. Mr. J. J. C. English
149. Mr. J. J. C. English - PAFSA School for the Deaf
150. Syed Ali Raza - Environmental Engineer
151. Sardar Nur Ahmad - Advocate
152. Mr. S. Asim - Businessman
153. Mr. Kamal Ahmad - Businessman
154. Mr. Niaz Ahmad A. Siddiqi
155. Mr. Anwaruddin - Fellow, Sindhi Historical Society
156. Mr. Hassan A. Merchant - Banker
157. Mr. Ghulam Mustafa - Proprietor
158. Mr. Khalid Mahmood - Projects Manager
159. Mr. Abdul Ghaffar Malik - Social Worker
160. Mr. Fayaz Ahmed - Range Forest Officer

JOIN SHEHRI TO CREATE A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

If you wish to join SHEHRI please send this card to:

SHEHRI - Citizens for a Better Environment
208-C, Block 2, P.E.C.H.S., Karachi - 75400, Pakistan
Tel: 441768, 442578 Fax: 430228

Name: _____ Tel: (Res) _____
Address: _____
Occupation: _____ Tel: (Off) _____



Association For Protection of Environment

Reduce

Reuse

Recycle

Association for Protection of Environment (A.P.E.) is an environmental NGO that was set up in August 1992 mostly by environmental engineers and planners. The primary objective of the founders of A.P.E. was to create awareness among people and communities regarding environmental issues. A.P.E. conducts awareness campaigns on topics such as solid and liquid waste management including waste generation, collection, disposal and treatment.

Throughout its existence, A.P.E. has paid particular attention to waste management and has conducted extensive research in this field. The organisation promotes information and education regarding waste reduction at all levels and encourages and organises community participation particularly in low income localities and 'karchi abadis'. Workshops, seminars, lectures and training courses are frequently organised by A.P.E. for different target groups including laymen, government bodies



At a Workshop organised by A.P.E., from left to right are: Mr. Bervil Paulsson, World Bank Advisor, Dr. Iqbal Ali of IECER, Rehan Ahmed and Farhat Naz Rahman of A.P.E.

and local grassroots organisations. A.P.E. provides technical and financial assistance to small-scale

waste recycling enterprises and promotes income generation activities from waste, assisting in waste reuse

and recycling technologies. Activities organised by A.P.E. are often in coordination with federal, local and municipal governments, research institutions and agencies while A.P.E. also works to promote, collaborate, assist and mention links with other similar national and international organisations.

In addition to all these activities, A.P.E. regularly publishes information on aspects of waste management, reduction, reuse, recycling and resource recovery and encourages the formation of similar local groups and chapters in other cities of the country. Says Rehan Ahmed, President A.P.E., who is an environmental and public health engineer, "A.P.E. is trying to create awareness and disseminate information and education to the masses regarding waste minimization, proper collection, disposal and effective reuse." A.P.E.'s activities are not confined to Karachi alone. It has undertaken projects in other parts of Sindh and the Punjab. A.P.E. has been represented by its

members at several workshops and seminars conducted by organisations such as Institute of Environmental Engineering and Research (NED University), Karachi Leo Club, WWF, EPA Punjab, Central Jaycees, WHO and others. A.P.E. celebrated Universal Children's Day and conducted programmes highlighting environmental issues at two colleges in Karachi which were attended by over 1,500 students.

A Workshop for teachers of schools in the Kot Lakhpat slum area of Lahore was also organised to spread awareness about environmental pollution. In addition, A.P.E. has conducted workshops on 'Community Participation and Education for Solid Waste Management' and on 'Sanitary Landfills and Feasible Options for Solid Waste Disposal'. A.P.E. also supervises and provides guidance to students and others who are conducting studies on waste management.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Summit for capacity building to help developing countries formulate economic, social and environmental goals, plans, programmes and policies that lead to sustainable development. Fortunately, in 1989 UNDP had already initiated a proposal for a Sustainable Development Network (SDN) - which is viewed as an indispensable tool for implementing national Agenda 21.

Pilot SDNs have been launched in four continents viz. Asia, Africa, Europe and South America. By the end of the pilot phase over 25 countries will have been considered for SDNs and by the end of 1993, as many as 40 countries could be establishing SDNs. SDNs combine electronic communication, face-to-face meet-

ings, and other means of communication to link sources and users of information on sustainable development in government, research, non-governmental organisations, grassroots and entrepreneurial organisations on a global scale.

The SDN is more than an information network. SDNs foster informed dialogue and communications to empower stockholders - those who stand to be directly affected by development - to become more active participants in the public process. Roundtable processes as well as public or community participation in decision making are examples of the types of consultation that an SDN encourages and becomes involved with.

THE SDN IN PAKISTAN

The pilot phase of the project started in December 1992 with the appointment of Dr. Qamar Iqbal Daudpota as Coordinator and a team of researchers. The project has embarked on a series of tasks stipulated by UNDP and a Steering

Committee comprising representatives from UNDP, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, government ministries, NGOs and others.

During the initial phase the SDN team will:

Assess the country's needs and priorities in sustainable development including population issues, the role of women and other economic sectors in human development.

Identify local scientific/technical and other information resources, within and outside Pakistan that would fulfill these needs.

Produce an inventory of existing data networks and computer mediated communication activities or initiatives in Pakistan, and to assess how the SDN could utilize them.

Explore the possibility of setting up a Bulletin Board System in Islamabad

so that users with a computer and a modem can access useful information related to development, and be able to send electronic mail messages to other users locally.

Provide training for potential users of SDN.

Contribute to the discussion for improving the communications structure in Pakistan.



Association for Protection of Environment (A.P.E.)
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Tel.#: 7721035, 7724115
Sustainable Development Network (United Nations Development Programme)
P.O. Box 3099, 22 Bazar Road, G-6/4, Islamabad-44000.
Tel.#: 92-51-213274, 216874 ●

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, and held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, resulted in a global plan of action - Agenda 21 - endorsed by over 120 countries. The plan emphasizes the importance of environmentally sound technology, education, public awareness and training, and cooperation for capacity building. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had been given the lead responsibility at the Earth



READERS' VIEWS

THE POPULATION EXPLOSION
The world may have escaped the nuclear holocaust or may invent something to replenish the fast depleting ozone layer, but developing countries like Pakistan are haunted by a different specter, that of the population explosion or 'baby boom' - a problem that is organically connected to her development and which has turned out to be the biggest enemy of planning. Studies show that Pakistan's population has grown from 32.5 million in 1932 to 117.5 million today. Nine babies are born every minute i.e. 3.6 million people are added to the population every year. Pakistan's population growth rate is 3.1 percent per annum, which is higher than all other large developing countries. At this rate, Pakistan's population will be 240 million by the year 2015. Population control was started in the period of General Ayub Khan in the late fifties and has met the toughest resistance since then - the main

obstacle being cultural backwardness which has always found an excuse in religion. The clergy of the country, from the very beginning, has opposed population control on religious grounds. Also, the performance of population control agencies has been dismal. So far they have been painfully slow in disseminating information and education on population control. TV, radio, newspapers, folk festivals, theater and other communication means in vogue have never been effectively used. One fine example of the total ignorance of policy makers in population control can best be explained in the following lines: At a seminar on population control in Karachi, a discussion began as to who was the main obstacle in population control. A participant said that the clergy, using modern scientific implements like loud speakers, kept actively campaigning against population control. "People go five times a day to mosques, and listen to de tailed

sermons on Fridays. It would be good if our 'maulanas' too are educated on this issue," said the participant. And the Chief Guest, the then advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Begum Abida Hussain rose to her feet, defending clergymen with a unique argument: "It is not our 'maulanas' but the gynaecologists who are the main hindrance to population control since they have a material interest in the baby boom" she stated. This utterance by the "well educated and liberal" advisor provoked a journalist who asked a question that generated much applause. He asked "Would you enlighten me as to how much is the percentage of our population who can afford the services of gynaecologists? And do these people have large families?" The government, while accepting that the growth rate in the country is 3.1 percent per annum, has claimed that it has formulated a strategy to

Continued on Page 7



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GEF - MESSAGE FROM THE SOUTH

The GEF (Global Environment Facility) is a \$1.4 billion (1991-92), 54 government/state fund (of which Pakistan is also a member) which formally came into being towards the end of 1990. When announced, Southern states, governments and NGOs expressed certain reservations about the GEF- its governance, funding mechanism and

achieving its objectives will be in question.

iii) "The matter of syntax." To the regions, in GEF syntax the issues of the North are defined as "global", whereas the issues of the south are defined as "local". This bias pervades every aspect of the GEF.

iv) "Recommendations." The GEF

There was total unanimity in all the consultations that the World Bank should not be handling the GEF funds. The World Bank is not known for implementing environmentally-friendly programmes. Only two per cent of all its funds are earmarked for GEF; the rest goes into large development projects. Further, the World Bank is neither a democratic institution nor one which is transparent, accountable and open to the South.



modus operandi. To provide a platform for broad consultations and to allow an equal say to all southern nations affected by the GEF, WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) initiated a project- The Southern Green Fund- in which developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America were asked to try and identify, from an exclusively southern NGO perspective, the ideal global environment facility. More than a hundred NGOs participated in this project. Reproduced below are extracts from 'Southern Green Fund: Views from the South on the GEF' which can be loosely termed a general consensus of the southern states on the GEF. The regions of the South and some of the countries that participated in the workshop include:

- Latin America- Ecuador
- Africa- Nigeria
- South Asia- Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal
- Southeast Asia- Philippines, and so on.

I. IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES:
The consultations in all the four regions found the identification of environmental issues faced by each region to be classified into GEF-related or non-GEF related issues- that is, either as issues included in the four GEF priorities of Global Warming, Biodiversity, International Waters and Ozone Depletion, or issues which did not fall under these priority areas.

II. CONCLUSIONS:
ii) "These are not our priorities." The regions were unanimous in their observation that the GEF's priority areas are not representative of key environmental concerns of the South.

iii) "The GEF has an incomplete agenda." Until the GEF demonstrates its recognition of the relationship between poverty, pressures on the resource base in developing countries, and the environment; and unless it acknowledges pressing environmental needs in developing countries other than the four priority areas it has already identified, the GEF's agenda will be incomplete, and its success in

statement of priorities needs to be amended. Environmental concerns should be prioritized only when they have been analyzed in relation to poverty and under-development, and reconcile these with environmental

PAKISTANI NGOS' VIEWS ON THE SOUTHERN GREEN FUND

On one hand, the North demands a model of development and an economic pattern which requires the utilization of natural resources in a manner which is extremely damaging for the environment, and on the other hand it is now demanding environmentally sound practices. The demand for environmentally sound approaches also asks for a reverting back to some of the agricultural practices which were operational prior to the introduction of modern technology initiated during the period of flat modernization sponsored by the North; many of these old skills of the farming community are now lost. Many of the countries of the North continue to provide pesticides and fertilizers which are extremely damaging to the environment. The multinational corporations continue to deal in materials which are extremely hazardous to the local and global environment. The purveyors of these destructive elements are from the North- the very countries which are demanding environmental consciousness on the part of the South- yet the North is not demanding any corrective steps either from the development agencies or from the multinational corporations. Their intent for ecological soundness has to be therefore, viewed with a certain amount of reserve if not cynicism.

conservation. In essence, the regional report had this thought: "The North would ask us how to revert to practices in use before the introduction of modern technology, even as their own development and consumption patterns proceed in a manner that pays no heed to the environment. In doing this the North condemns the South to pay for its own excesses, while stunting the South's own aspirations for efficiency and ease."

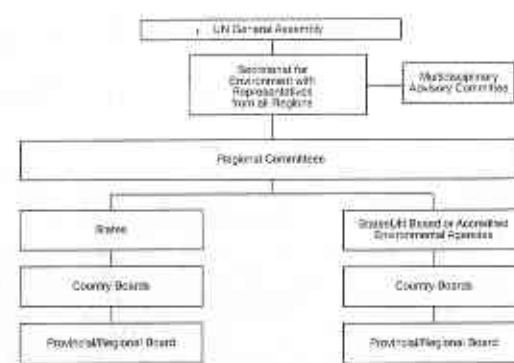
III. STRUCTURE OF GEF: NON-ACCOUNTABLE

Whatever differences there may have been in the regions' approaches to the GEF, there was unanimity in the observation that the World Bank should not be handling GEF funds, because:

- the World Bank is not known for implementing environmentally-friendly programs;
- only 2 per cent of all World Bank funds are earmarked for the GEF; the rest goes to large development projects which are not always environmentally friendly;
- the World Bank is not known for transparency, responsibility, accountability, and consultation;
- the history of the Bank shows scant sensitivity to the social and environmental impacts of its projects;
- the World Bank bears direct responsibility for the creation of widespread detrimental environmental impacts.

IV. THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT: QUESTIONABLE

It will be impossible to improve the environmental situation if there is no participation of the private sector particularly popular and non-governmental organizations, as well as the academic community and the private production sectors. Currently, the structure and processes of the GEF do not allow for, or encourage, greater involvement of the private sector



in efforts to protect the environment.

V. ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE

A synthesis of the four regions' recommendations results in the following structure: (See table above)

VI. OPERATING PRINCIPLES AND PREMISES

- the participation of the NGOs must be ensured
- there must be efforts to integrate, not separate, national and global concerns
- There must be basic respect for national/regional priorities.
- Concern for a sustainable future must focus on needs to establish sustainability for the present.
- Non-dependency on donors is a basic credo that NGOs would like to see operationalized.

VII. GEF FUNDING PROPOSAL OF THE SOUTHERN GREEN FUND

GEF funds in South Asia are being funneled mainly through international NGOs. Most of the funds are going through WWF and JUCN. At the PREPCOM meetings of UNCED, NGOs were allowed a place at an informal level, but in GEF even this

is not allowed.

i) How funds may be generated:

- Funds may be generated by:
 - charging a fixed percentage of GNP and/or GDP for environmental projects;
 - establishing an ecological tax for each nation;
 - setting aside portions of donor countries' Official Development Assistance for the environment;
 - tapping private sector fund sources (philanthropic organizations and business corporations);
 - patronage or gifts made by international organizations concerned about the protection of the environment;
 - contributions from countries who will decide on the means which suits them best for collecting funds.

ii) Some guiding principles:

- Polluters must be made to pay.
- Payment of consumption tax.
- The GEF restriction of country eligibility.
- Trade balances, debt and debt servicing between the North and the South has to be restructured so that poverty and environmental concerns do not vie against each other.

The international economic system further depletes whatever strained ecological resources the countries in the South possess. With the cheap transfer of these resources and massive debt burdens which the South has accumulated due to adverse terms of trade on the one hand and stringent lending policies of the North on the other hand, the total debt burden on the South is currently estimated at over \$250 billion, and every year between \$50 and \$60 billion is transferred from the South to the North. According to the latest UNDP report, the countries in the South are losing \$500 billion per year to the world's financial, trade and labor markets. And, according to the World Bank, a halving of the trade barriers in the US, Japan, and the European Community would raise developing countries' export by more than \$50 billion- almost as much as the development aid to the developing world. Further, the result of the environmental damage caused by massive emissions and other hazardous practices in the North are making the South a victim of climatic changes which are not fully acknowledged by the North. It can be stated, therefore, that while the North is the author of the world's environmental crises, it is pretending to be the world's savior through creating funds like GEF, which demand environmentally

sound practices on the part of the South. By controlling all the international agencies and having massive funds at their command, the North not only ends up "blaming the victims", but also asking the South to change their practices without any major changes in their own socio-economic life style and consumption pattern. There was total unanimity in all the consultations, whatever other differences there may be in their approaches to GEF itself, that the World Bank should not be handling the GEF funds. The World Bank is not known for implementing environmentally friendly programs. Only two per cent of all the World Bank funds are earmarked for GEF; the rest goes into large development projects. Further, the World Bank is neither a democratic institution nor one which is transparent, accountable and open to the South.

On these grounds Pakistan rejected the GEF altogether, the other countries had serious reservations about its priorities, modalities and commitment to the South. Compiled by Hassan Jaffery and Azra Amir. Excerpts from: 'Southern Green Fund: Views from the South on the GEF'.

Continued From Page 2

eliminate it from its entire range of decorative paints.

FACTS ON LEAD POLLUTION

46.1 ug/dl (microgram per decilitre) was the mean blood level of the traffic police constables stationed at the Cantt. Police post, the most heavily lead polluted area in Karachi. Individual levels around the Cantt. station ranged from 35 to 68 ug/dl.

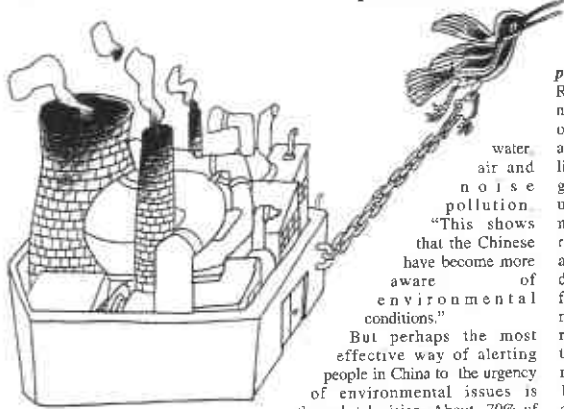
20 ug/dl can no longer be the maximum acceptable limit as irreversible neurotoxic effects can occur at blood lead levels of 7 ug/dl and hearing threshold defects in children at 4 ug/dl.

When lead petrol was finally banned in the USA, the mean blood level of the population dropped from 17 to 10 ug/dl with an estimated saving of 50,000 heart attacks and 70,000 strokes over a 10 year period.

Down

ENVIRONMENT . SPREADING THE MESSAGE

A Chinese musician who sings about the encroaching sand in inner Mongolia; a Bolivian radio soap opera that draws on listeners' knowledge of farming; change cloth in East Africa emblazoned with slogans; a Jamaican game in which progress around the board depends on your environmental actions; a five-month bike ride to influence Mexican text books; retelling myths with a moral in Uganda...all innovative ways of spreading the message of environmental protection.



water, air and noise pollution. "This shows that the Chinese have become more aware of environmental conditions."

But perhaps the most effective way of alerting people in China to the urgency of environmental issues is through television. About 70% of China's 1.1 billion people have access to television, vastly more than read the print media. Feature films, too, have had environmental themes. In his 1990 film, "The Atmospheric Layer Disappears", Director Feng Xiaoning accused humanity of environmental neglect. Pop singers are also chiming in. Tenghu, a singer-songwriter, warns in his songs of the sand encroaching on his native region in

CHINA'S MEDIA GET THE MESSAGE: Film-makers, journalists and pop singers are all helping to raise public awareness about pollution hazards and environmental protection. Not long after receiving a US\$13,000 bank loan to raise fish, an elderly Chinese farmer saw his dream project go belly-up. All his fish died, victims of pollution from a nearby paper mill.

With the environment now breaking into all forms of media and popular entertainment, public awareness is growing.

Zhang, the farmer, demanded compensation from the mill but was refused. He appealed to a local court and lost again. But Zhang was not easily deterred. After lodging 200 appeals in higher courts, he finally won his struggle, with the help of the press. A local newspaper was the first to report his story, followed by more widely read newspapers. The prominent coverage helped Zhang win widespread sympathy - and his court battle. "Zhang's case was just one of 3,000 environmental lawsuits filed each year."

Western Inner Mongolia. With the environment now breaking into all forms of media and popular entertainment, public awareness is growing. In China's first opinion poll on environmental matters, surveys found that four out of five respondents believed that the state of China's environment was not very satisfactory. More than one-third of those polled said that "damage to the natural environment" was the single most serious obstacle to China's economic development.

TWO-WAY RADIO NURTURES A

from local traditions and legends about farming and the environment, acted by indigenous people in their own languages.

Radionovelas broadcast by small native-language radio stations operated in Bolivia are as popular as any soap opera anywhere, with listener numbers soaring when they go on the air. The stories, which reach up to 2.5 million of Bolivia's six million people, relate directly and realistically to peasant life, and are aimed at stimulating thought and debate about the problems peasants face. Careful research goes into recovering local stories and legends relating to the environment; these are then incorporated into the radionovelas, which usually run into 180, 20-minute episodes. Listeners contribute their knowledge of the local environment and traditions directly to the radio stations during competitions. Radio San Gabriel, for example, ran a hugely popular contest aimed at recovering traditional knowledge about the potato, the principal Andean crop - expertise that is in danger of being lost as "modern" farming practices take over.

The radio asked listeners to describe ways of determining when to plant seed potatoes and of predicting the nature of the next growing season. More than 2,000 people responded, submitting entries an average of 10 pages long, complete with drawings and charts to illustrate their points. Radio is an excellent tool for rural communication because a radio set is inexpensive and does not require a formal electricity supply, which in any case is not available in the countryside. Radio stations are a perfect medium for poor, geographically isolated regions, where illiteracy rates are high. And locally run stations that encourage wide participation can provide a powerful counter to Westernising influences from cities. Indeed, they have played an important part in Bolivians' centuries-long and remarkably successful struggle to hold onto their culture.

VICTORY FOR MEXICO'S CHILD CRUSADER: Thanks to a small boy on a bicycle, Mexican children are now better informed about environmental matters.

Omar Castillo, 15, has already spent half his life campaigning for the environment. When he was 8, he walked 1,400 km from Mexico City to the fast-vanishing Lacandon rainforest, and later camped outside the president's palace in Mexico

"The earth is very sick. Only the children can heal the planet; we've got to take charge. No one else will."

City. Since then, he has also marched and biked across the country to protest against pollution and nuclear power stations. He believes children are the only hope: "I've talked to many children in Mexico and I know that they think as I do. All children want a rain forest to be there when they grow up. The earth is very sick. Only the children can heal the planet; we've

got to take charge. No one else will." Omar has fought hard to ensure children are as well informed as possible, by campaigning to have environmental education included in the school curriculum. He and his father undertook a five-month bicycle trip across the country to campaign for the introduction of environmental material into school science books. His extraordinary persistence paid off, with a pledge from the secretary of public education to include the material in text books. "Getting the environment into school books was my greatest victory," says Omar proudly.

FUN AND GAMES WITH A SERIOUS PURPOSE:

Environmental education in Jamaica is strictly practical; children learn as they do, and teach as they learn. Children at a primary school in Kingston have taken it on themselves to do something useful with the waste that clutters up the school yards. The Art Recycling Club, a group aged 7-9, turn old cartons, straws and plastic bags into cards, decorations and toy cars. Children in other schools have followed their example. In other areas, students run their own environmental groups, under supervision from teachers. Children in the clubs have pledged to protect the earth. Older children make up songs and games about the environment, often using popular folk or work song

guinea fowl, renowned for its eye-catching colours. For many years it has been fashionable to print slogans on khangas, bearing messages, the way other cultures might give greeting cards.

A popular khanga slogan formed part of a Tanzanian literacy campaign: "There is no end to education." A German NGO promoting family health designed a beautiful khanga with the slogan: "Children are a joy, but what about the health of the mother?" The khanga showed healthy foods for childbearing women, along with contraceptive methods - in other words, eat well and space your children. One of the first khangas with an environmental message has a border of fruits and leaves, and the words "You eat the fruit, why destroy the forest?" There is certainly scope for more messages of this sort to be conveyed brightly and colourfully around the streets and villages of East Africa.

THE MYTHS THAT WARDED OFF DESTRUCTION: Some activists and educators in Uganda think story-telling and plays that revive the conservation messages embedded in traditional beliefs could succeed where modern laws have failed.

In the small Ugandan village of Manze stands an "untouchable" forest. Neither timber nor firewood can be harvested from it without inviting misfortune or even death to

"Environmental protection is not a new, alien concept. It has been here with our great grandparents...reviving old myths could prove a fresh start towards raising public awareness."



tunes, to teach the younger children. Environmental quizzes are one popular game.

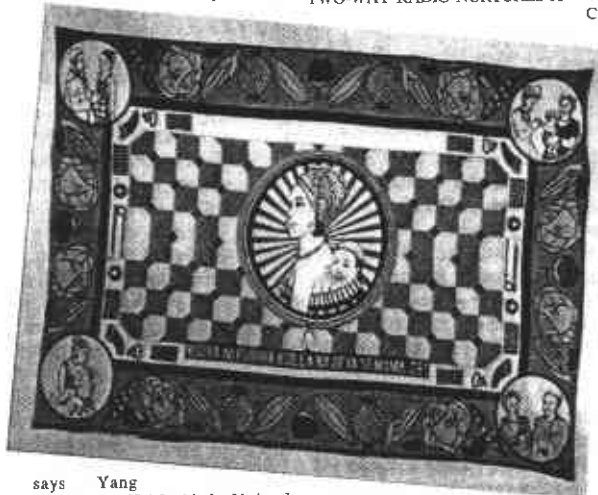
The children are now not only learning from and teaching themselves and each other, but are also finding ways to spread their environmental message. Soon the message will be available all over the country in the shape of an environmental board game produced by the clubs. The game features a map of Jamaica, and you progress around the board winning or losing points depending on whether your actions help or harm the environment.

FASHIONING AN ENVIRONMENTAL DRESS SENSE:

East African campaigners should take note of an educational medium that is so popular people would pay for it - and it looks good too. The khanga is a brightly coloured piece of cloth worn throughout East Africa as a skirt, top, sarong, headdress or baby carrier. Introduced more than a century ago by travelers from Indonesia, the Swahili name for the sarong derives from the word for the

oneself or the whole clan. The forest is believed to be the home of ancestral spirits, and while other forests in the area have been felled, this tiny one remains. Is this just a "primitive African superstition"? Not exactly, argues Lawrence Mulindwa, environmental trainer for the UNDP's Africa 2000 Network programme in Uganda. "We are now realising that these beliefs were the traditional African way of protecting nature from mindless destruction," he says. Mulindwa is exploiting this and other positive myths to try to reawaken the ancient concern for the survival of nature. Efforts are now being made to bring some of the valuable traditional beliefs back to life. Schools in particular use stories and knowledge of traditional, ecologically friendly practices to educate pupils, and, through them, the whole community. Even if people no longer take the myths seriously, they have good reason to respect the underlying messages. "Environmental protection is not a new, alien concept from Europe. It has been here with our great grandparents...that is what all these myths reflect. Reviving old myths could prove a fresh start towards raising public awareness."

(PANOSCOPE/PANOS January 1993) ●



says Yang Chaofai, an official with the National Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental protection offices across the country received 130,000 complaints in 1991, mostly about

CULTURE: Five times a week, Bolivian peasants rush to their radios to hear the latest installment of a 'radionovela' - everyday tales of Andean folk, woven



THE LATEST ON THE PAKISTAN NCS (NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY)

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED?

The formal acceptance of the document as Pakistan's environmental policy by Cabinet.

The setting up of three institutional 'homes' for the NCS: the NCS Unit in the Environment & Urban Affairs Division, the Environment Section in the Ministry of Planning, the Environment Section in Planning and Development, NWFP and the remaining of that department to the Planning, Environment and Development Department, and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). As time goes on, there will be more of these, and already the trend is towards that goal.

The 'ownership' of the NCS by a complex mix of institutions and individuals, both within government and outside it—research institutes, university departments and NGOs. Some of these lead NGOs are slowly becoming a nucleus which attract around them others to share their experience, partner them in projects and foster learning.

The development of the Action Plan for the NCS and the subsequent donor implementation conference, which clearly defined priorities, donor interest, and key players in the next five years of implementation. Perhaps even more significantly, it broke new ground in terms of incorporating an NGO and private sector portfolio into that of the

Government of Pakistan (GOP), for funding by the donors.

The natural resource sector projects that are now emerging for funding and support by GOP and donors, and those that are developed by NGOs and other institutions increasingly show reference to the philosophy and precepts of the NCS. There is of course the other side— not negative— but which forces one to pause and reflect. The sort of dangers ahead, just so we don't end up too smug and complacent, are:

Start with complacency itself. In professions like ours, it is instructive to don the hair shirt at regular intervals. It aids perspective, and helps with ground truthing. In an area where you start from ground zero, even 5 per cent seems a major

achievement. While it is extremely important to ensure that achievements of the NCS are given full and due recognition, it is equally important to recognise that both the product and the process are part of that same continuum of action mentioned earlier, and at no point is one in a static state where one can rest on one's laurels, satisfied at a job well done.

Although the NCS bases its continued development on reinforcing multi- and cross-sectoral modes of working, there is entropy and not enthalpy built into our system. The tendency is to sectoralise, disperse and to maintain the territorial status quo. If this is allowed to happen, the strategic direction of the NCS will be

lost, and it will revert to being no different from any Annual Development Programme. Projectisation is necessary, but it is critical to maintain the strategic overview, aim for programmes which subsume projects, establish linkages for coordination and an exchange of information, and consolidate whenever possible. While it is greatly reassuring to know that aid trends indicate continued support to the social sector and environmental initiatives of the South, it is important to establish indigenous leadership and priorities, if we are to ensure that aid flows support expressed national needs rather than reflecting donor country concerns.

We live in interesting times with the NCS. It enervates and it invigorates its workers. As with the process itself, the continuing challenge is to find the balance!

By Aban Marker Kabroji. Courtesy NCS Bulletin-IUCN, March 1993

Continued from Page 1

law is wrong whereas violation of human rights is overlooked. If one takes a look at Article 184(3) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1973), one finds ample room for supporting the human rights of the general public. The idea of PIL is slowly establishing

alleged against; appoint a legal aid lawyer and convert the said letter/petition summons (of his own free will) into a constitutional petition (case that can be remedied under the Constitution of Pakistan). After a due process of law, appropriate directions would be given to all concerned parties to solve the issue. To effect

media often pressurise the government to remove the inadequacies. The second strategy that ought to be adopted by social action groups is education of the masses, particularly the disadvantaged sectors. The public need to organise and mobilise themselves. They should be urged to cooperate with other groups situated in a similar situation. They should be motivated to use metalegal tactics to supplement and strengthen standard legal tactics to transform law and society. Another feasible plan would be to train para-legals or bare footed lawyers (someone who can give legal 'first aid') in the basic concepts of law, its procedures, tactics, and skills that are imperative to solve complicated problems. These 'lawyers' should be able to:

- (1) identify the problems of the poor
- (2) give voice to their demands
- (3) protect them against injustices
- (4) alert them against deprivation and exploitation
- (5) give them first aid in law.

Social action litigation should not be meant for a specific category of persons. On the contrary, any unreasonable infringement of human rights should be enough to spark off PIL to remedy the state of affairs. We too can take an active stand in our collective problems and bring matters to the government by means of PIL as well as metalegal tactics. For example, if we were to ask ourselves as 'shehri' (citizens), what are the environmental problems we face, they are: i) water pollution ii) air pollution iii) noise pollution iv) encroachments and illegal buildings that infringe on our access rights to public space such as pavements, parks, parking, fresh air, water, light etc. Water pollution encompasses: a) the unclean water that is supplied to us which is used for cooking, drinking, washing b) the water that is found in ponds, lakes, rivers where all sorts of effluents and industrial wastes are dumped, irrespective of damage to marine life, the food chain and side effects on human beings. Air pollution is caused by: a) chimney smoke emitted from indus-

tries/factories b) smoke emitted by vehicular traffic c) unwarranted use of pesticides and other chemicals, Noise pollution is caused by: a) garages and car show-rooms b) unscrupulous use of horns, silencers, ill-tuned vehicles c) disorganised manufacturing workshops.

Encroachments: these are areas where marauding builders try to reclaim land from ponds, lakes, parks or amenity plots or illegally construct commercial buildings in residential areas. There are others who even put up faulty construction in violation of building laws. Then you have the 'shadi' (marriage) hall which creates chaos and a din and infringes on the privacy of those living nearby—the list is endless. PIL helps define the legal needs of the public in their own language. It aims at elimination and prevention of various kinds of injustices. It involves novel, radical, more dynamic and multi-dimensional uses of law and the legal process and seeks to provide representation to groups of social and economic protest. It is directed towards the group-oriented approach to problems of rather than the individual-oriented method of treatment. Basically it is calculated to make the common man more powerful, self-reliant and capable of using the law as a potent weapon for various purposes. The courts need to be a debating forum where the claims of the poor can be agitated for and the rights which are struggling to be born but which are often stifled before birth, are actualized for the benefit of all. The legal and judicial process is beaching the vehicle for establishing the claims and demands of the have-nots which are struggling to find expression. Legal right as a human right is implicit in Articles 7, 8 and 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and more particularly, it flows clearly and inevitably from Clause 3(d) of Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

SHEHRI-CBE has recently set up a Legal Cell with a full-time lawyer to attend to the problems of

the public affectees who suffer infringements of their human rights from the environmental point of view. Environmental problems are a menace of modern times that encompass large numbers of people. All of us face environmental problems in one way or another—maybe in the form of air pollution, noise pollution, water pollution, so on and so forth. Just look around you and you will find yourself in the grip of it. Check the water you drink; look at the smoke emitted by cars, rickshaws, factory chimneys, not mentioning the racket created by silencer-less vehicles, workshops, garages etc. Look at the modes and methods of disposing of industrial wastes and effluents. Look at the car showrooms, shops and commercial dealings that have encroached on our residential areas, though not marked in our Masterplan. By the way, is there any Masterplan at all? Where are the building rules and regulations? How do the builders and influential elements get their plans/applications sanctioned? Where are the laws and the law givers and the law observers? The law is definitely mightier than the sword, if we only take the trouble to appreciate it and make the best use of it to our own benefit.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO SEEK REDRESSAL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS:

1. Write a letter clearly stating the problem with all relevant information regarding location, extent and causes of the problem. 2. Address it to the Chief Justice of the High Court or Supreme Court (Address: The Chief Justice, High Court of Sindh, Karachi and The Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Pakistan, Islamabad) with a copy to the Director EPA, Sindh (Address: F-1, 2-B, Block 7, Clifton, Karachi) and a copy to SHEHRI-CBE.
3. Collect as many "aggrieved persons" as possible. Add their names, addresses (and if possible, occupations) to the letter as signatories.



Courtesy: Sindh High Court

itself in our country, and the aggrieved person is often relieved to discover that the procedure is quite simple. Any infringement of human rights of a collective group can be remedied through PIL. All one needs to do is write an ordinary letter to the Chief Justice of the High/Supreme Court clearly stating the problems encountered, the adverse effects and the number of people affected, and send it by registered mail. On receipt of the said letter, the Chief Justice will take cognizance (apply his judicial mind to see) if the problem is sound enough to invoke the remedy as provided in the Constitution under Article 184(3). He will then send summons to the complainant as well as the parties

this and take it to the desired conclusion, it is imperative to have a legal service programme.

Social action groups could be formed keeping the following strategy in mind: i) by making socio-legal investigations for identifying the injustices the vulnerable group suffers ii) by identifying the deprivations of their human rights suffered by them, and iii) their social and economic entitlements under any law or regulations whatsoever. Once this is done, the social action groups can bring these findings to the notice of the government; if not for redressal, then to persuade and pressurise the government. Metalegal (anything outside the actual process of law) tactics of exposure of such drawbacks through the news

Continued from Page 4

reduce the growth rate to 2.6 percent during the eighth Five Year Plan. But keeping in view the performance of government agencies and corrupt bureaucrats, one can suspect that this objective too, will not be achieved.

By Prof. Dr. Farooq Hassan
Chairman, IUCN Commission on Environmental Law

EPC - AT LAST!! share your satisfaction over the recent holding of

the meeting of the Pakistan Environmental Protection Council (PEPC) in Islamabad earlier this month. As you know, the Council was set up under the Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance, 1983, the drafting of which I had the privilege of being associated.

I was conscious of the fact that this body will need to be activated particularly because environmental concerns did not receive the priority they deserved in the early eighties in Pakistan. It is for this reason that the PEPC contains a statutory requirement that the Council meet at least twice a year, I have been a

member of the Council for some years, and in spite of my repeated requests, the Council did not meet at all until May 1993. The first meeting of the EPC was presided over by the caretaker Prime Minister. The Council agreed to adopt water, air and noise standards. We agreed to give a one year grace period for the implementation of these standards which will come into force on June 30, 1994. On and after June 30, 1994, all developmental activities including the setting up of industries will have to conform with the emission and effluent control standards prescribed by the Council. However,

we agreed to give a grace period of upto two years to existing industries to conform to the new standards. However, where an industrial activity is causing massive degradation, we have the option to shorten the two years period. I advised the Council that this will be necessary in view of the critical degradation being caused by industries such as the tanneries in Kasur. Accordingly, we have the option to take action in such areas and classes of industries during the two year moratorium period.

The Council also favorably discussed the need to give economic incentives

so that the existing industries can conform with the new environmental order. It is expected that the national budget this year will carry important relief to enable environmental protection in the country.

Readers are invited to send in letters with their views, comments etc. However, we reserve the right to edit and print for reasons of space and/or clarity.

CAMPAIGN S.O.S— SAVE OUR SEAS

As environmentally aware citizens of Karachi, we all know that our beaches are full of litter which is causing untold harm to the marine environment and the

delicate coastal ecosystem, as well as ruining the aesthetic beauty of these recreational spots.

On June 26, 1993, SHEHRI CBE and National Youth Council of Pakistan

(NYCOP) collaborated to organise a Beach Clean up Day at Sandspit, Karachi. This was the first in a series of Clean Ups entitled 'Campaign S.O.S.- Save Our Seas', all carried out with a view to creating awareness about environmental pollution and degradation and stressing on the need for immediate action.

In all, about 300 people participated in this event, the first of its kind on such large scale. Many of the participants were senior and junior members of SHEHRI-CBE, their friends and families as well as members of NYCOP. A large number were also from the Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismail Council for Garden.

On reaching Sandspit at 8.30 a.m., the participants organised themselves into groups, and armed with large garbage bags, set off to collect whatever litter they could find. For 2 1/2 hours, the enthusiastic supporters of this campaign were collecting garbage all along the beach.

While the collection was going on, sorting of the garbage was taking place simultaneously. Most of it consisted of rubber, plastic waste and foam, paper and plastic cartons, pieces of wood, metal, glass and cloth and of course, the ever-present, ugly, plastic bags. In all about 100 bags were filled and deposited in the garbage truck which had been sent by ZMC West. After the collection, a certificate distribution ceremony was held with Mr. Navajid Husain (Chairperson SHEHRI-CBE), Dr. Mirza Arshad Ali Baig and Mr. Saud Siddiqui of Callex giving away the certificates. The ceremony was



Two enthusiastic junior members of SHEHRI wearing protective gloves, are seen carefully collecting garbage from around the bins

followed by refreshments.

The event was sponsored by Pepsi, American Express Bank, Caltex, Pakistan Steel Mills, Habib Bank Ltd and English Biscuits.

The event helped in raising environmental awareness among the

general public and in educating people about the fact that we ourselves can solve our problems if we take decisive action. SHEHRI plans to conduct many more such campaigns all over Karachi in the future ●



Some of the participants proudly showing off the garbage they collected



Some participants made sure that even the smallest scrap of litter was not spared! Photographs courtesy 'Daily Pakistan'



Resting after a hard day's work! Photographs: Syed Aqeel Ahmed

YELLOW CAB FEVER



Karachi is full of yellow cabs. Although meant to provide employment and resolve the transport problem, the scheme is

subject to rampant misuse. Bought and used as family cars, perhaps family planning may be required to check their growth! ●

ALL AROUND TOWN...

the many new car show rooms to have sprung up on Khalid bin Waleed Road in P.F.C.H.S. Karachi. Not only are these commercial establishments illegally set up in residential areas, but they also encroach on pavements and roads. How does the Karachi Building Control Authority (KBCA) justify the issuance of building permits on a road that has not been commercialised?

3 and 4 Yet another single story building has been demolished to make way for yet another multistory commercial structure. SHEHRI demands that the KBCA not issue any more building permits for high density living in this already overburdened city.



5 Nehr-e-Khayyam (better known as the Clifton 'Nallah') empties into the sea near Boating Basin. Recently, the Nallah has changed colour from the usual murky brown to a bright pink

shade! The explanation: dyes/chemicals from the industrial areas and untreated domestic waste are responsible for the Nallah's new look ●



1 A fitting reminder of what the late Jam Sadiq did to Karachi ... with a little help from friendly Director

Generals of the KDA (Karachi Development Authority)

2. The photograph shows just one of



RECYCLING FACTS

- Each four foot stack of newspapers recycled saves the equivalent of a 40 foot pine tree.
- Recycling one ton of paper saves one acre of trees.
- Recycling one glass jar saves enough energy to light a 100-watt bulb for four hours.
- Making new aluminum cans from recycled cans takes 95 percent less energy than producing aluminum from bauxite ore virgin material.



Courtesy Copley Township Recycling Dept.