



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

-Margaret Mead

SHEHRI

JULY - SEPTEMBER 1997 Vol. 1/No. 21

INSIDE

- Role of NGO's
- Legal update
- Jheel Park
- Makers of Karachi
- A judge speaks
- Case study-Mingora
- Moenjodaro

Citizen's Activism: Drawing the line?

The recent second armed attack on the life of Navaid Husain of Shehri and arrest of Omar Asghar Khan of Sungi, has brought into sharp focus, the real threats posed to the NGO movement in Pakistan, the issue of the government sector – NGO/CBO relationship and in its perspective, the overall crisis of governance. SHEHRI discusses these issues and calls for the initiation of urgent action to resolve the crisis.

The NGO movement in Pakistan, if it can at all be termed as a proper movement, has had a chequered past. Although social issues like education, healthcare and human rights have been tackled in the informal sector since the early days of independence, matters relating to the degradation of our natural resources and built environment, have only fairly recently attracted the attention of NGO's and CBO's in a big way.

Social welfare, infrastructure development/maintenance and natural resource conservation are subjects, which quite naturally, should form the cornerstone of the internal policy framework of any people responsive government. It is the basic responsibility of the government of the day in any country to ensure that its citizens receive proper education, healthcare and housing facilities, alongwith easy, and as far as humanly possible, cheap access to safe drinking water, power and road networks. The larger urban centres require special attention, as they are faced with problems of a more complex nature. They should be served with properly functioning sewerage, drainage

and transportation systems, as well as with efficient and people friendly law enforcing agencies.

The fortunes of any government in the developed world, or for that matter, those of functioning democracies and representative governments anywhere in the world, rise and fall, as a direct consequence to the level of satisfaction they have been able to provide to their subjects, with regards the above mentioned issues.

However, in a major portion of the world, governments, due to a mix of historic, economic, social and political reasons, fail to ensure effective and positive governance, and at levels, which vary and differ from one country to another and from one region to another, the basic needs of the citizens remain largely unfulfilled. Localized activist NGO's and CBO's, mostly come into being, as a direct consequence of a weak government, or worse, an inactive and apathetic government. NGO's thus raise the level of awareness among the citizen's, and can either work with the governments in a participatory, supportive and watchdog role or can

unfortunately come in direct conflict with the government of the day. The latter role, though is undesirable, but can often not be avoided also.

In our country, particularly in the large urban centres, the relationship between the various governments and local NGO's/CBO's has been to say the least, unsatisfactory and strained. Shehri's own difficult and at times, acrimonious struggle in issues related with illegal constructions, land and coastal pollution and general



Navaid Husain: Testing the limits of citizen's activism?



SHEHRI

206-G, Block 2, P.E.C.H.S.,
Karachi-75400, Pakistan.
Tel/Fax: 92-21-453-0646
e-mail/address: shehri@
onkhura.com
(web site) URL: http://
www.onkhura.com/shehri

EDITOR

Farhan Anwar

MANAGING COMMITTEE

Chairperson : Qazi Faez Isa
Vice Chairperson : Vicky de'Souza
General Secretary :

Amber Ali Bhai

Treasurer : (Post Vacant)

Members : Navaid Husain
Khatib Ahmed
Hanif Sattar

SHEHRI STAFF

Co-ordinator :

Mrs. Mansoor

Asst. Co-ordinator :

Mohammad
Rehri Astral

SHEHRI SUB-COMMITTEES

- i) **Anti-Pollution**
Navaid Husain
- ii) **Conservation & Heritage**
Danish Azar Zuby
Humaira Rahman
- iii) **Media & Outreach**
Farhan Anwar
Humaira Rahman
Hassan Jaffery
- iv) **Legal**
Qazi Faez Isa
Amber Ali Bhai
Roland d' Souza
Victoria d' Souza
Khatib Ahmed
- v) **Parks & Recreation**
Khatib Ahmed
- vi) **Fund Raiser**
All Members

Sub-committee membership is open to all members of SHEHRI-CBE. Reproduction of articles is welcome provided the source is acknowledged. Views expressed herein do not necessarily express the views of the Editor/Editorial Board.

Contributions are welcome. Interested contributors should contact the SHEHRI office for writers guidelines. SHEHRI newsletter readership is from lower, middle and upper income groups, students, professionals, environmentalists, policy makers, NGOs and other organizations.

Composed by :
GRAPHISENSE PAKISTAN
Tel : 62 80 72

Printed by :
Gaziani Printing Press
Tel : 2638908
For the printing of this newsletter
SHEHRI-CBE

acknowledges the support of
The Friedrich-Naumann
Foundation

SHEHRI-CBE
acknowledges the support of
The Friedrich-Naumann
Foundation

Member of

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

EDITORIAL

Destination unknown?

The decision of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation to dump the projects of Women's Sports Complex, Gulshan-e-Iqbal and Indoor Gymnasium, Kashmir Road, has yet again brought to fore, the continuing policy of inconsistency being pursued by our successive governments - a fact which has done much to destabilize the society and shake investor confidence in our abilities to govern in a mature and responsible manner. Such decision making, which unfortunately does not seem to base on considerations of merit and fairplay, is being displayed at all levels of governance i.e. local, provincial and federal. Over the years, our bureaucracy has become inefficient in its functions and corrupt in its dealings - attributes which leave the rusty bureaucratic machine poorly equipped to withstand the persistent pressures of political interference. On the other hand, the democratically elected politicians, by taking arbitrary decisions on issues of public concern, are doing little to fulfill the expectations of their respective electorate. Rival political entities are expected to exhibit differing opinions on many issues, which get reflected in their policy decisions. However, the country needs to be steered more or less on a stable course to ensure progress and prosperity. We seem to make it a point to turn the wheels of the nation in opposing directions as turns are taken at the driving seat. What a way to approach an appointed destination. Maybe we are not sure of our ultimate destination anyway.

advocacy work, bear testimony to this fact. Even the few successful participatory and collaborative projects, have been achieved at great pains, the sustainability of whom can not be guaranteed.

The reasons are many. Over the last 20 to 30 years the workings of our local bodies and other civic organizations have been heavily politicized. As a result, rampant corruption has become the rule of the day and professionalism among the officers has been eroded to the level, that the number of professionally competent and honest government officials can now be counted on our fingers. Also, political instability has ensured that there is no continuity in government policies.

Projects started with much fanfare by one government are deemed unnecessary and wasteful by another and dumped unceremoniously. Only the poor taxpayer suffers. The dumping of Ladies Sports Complex, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, and Indoor Gymnasium, Kashmir, Road, are some recent examples.

For a long period, no local bodies elections have been held, an important contributing factor in the decay of these institutions.

NGO's are increasingly finding themselves assuming roles and entering areas of work, which should have been the domain of the government sector.

NGO's, conscious of this malaise, have now become increasingly vocal in their criticisms of these organizations. As a participatory approach between government and NGO's has in general failed, mostly due to non-action and a show of disinterest on the part of the government officers, NGO's are increasingly finding themselves assuming roles and entering areas of work, which should have been the domain of the government sector. This is where conflicts arise and people with

vested interests and much to gain try to take the easy way out. Navaid Husain and Omar Asghar Khan are living testimonies of this serious crisis of governance.

Of late, NGO's have also started forming alliances in order to magnify the impact of their efforts by putting up a more united front. Issues like the Karachi Mass Transit Project (KMTP) privatization of KW&SB, Anti-Terror-



ist Bill, child labour and other human rights issues have been thus tackled by local NGO's and the help of the judiciary has been sought in stopping illegal constructions and industrial / vehicular pollution, so that pressure is built on the government to ensure transparency in their workings and uphold the rule of law.

There is much talk these days of strengthening the role of the NGO's in local governance and management. However, it should be realized that NGO's also work under certain severe constraints. Very few NGO's are staffed with skilled and qualified technical staff, needed to effectively tackle the momentous challenges facing our large cities, such as Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad etc.

There are financial limitations and not least the issue of safety and security, as has been so forcefully and regrettably exposed by the murderous attack on the life of Navaid Husain.

The functions of activist organizations and the government sector, which should ideally be supportive and complimentary, are constantly overlapping and coming in conflict with each other. In an environment filled with crime and violence, where breaking of the law has become the rule rather than the exception, and where scant regard and

respect is paid to the mechanisms of justice, citizen's activism and advocacy work has indeed become a hazardous and life threatening practice.

Where can one, if it is at all possible, draw a line on citizen activism?

There is an urgent need to initiate debate on this issue. The role of the citizen's organizations and the government sector, in the future development and upkeep of our large urban centres has to be properly defined and if possible collaborative mechanisms between the two sectors be provided legal cover in certain specific functions.

We have to somehow revive our dying civic organizations on a war footing basis, if we care to nurture any hope of keeping our cities manageable. A good beginning can be made

by the holding of the long delayed and thus long awaited local bodies polls. The government organizations should realize that if their planning processes are divorced from the present ground realities, no permanent



and positive change can be brought about. The process of revival has to be transparent and people responsive, so that the confidence and trust of the citizens in our civic bodies is restored. This is essential, as the NGO's neither can, nor should replace the government sector in a city the size of Karachi.

The government should also provide due recognition to the invaluable role of the citizen bodies and instead of creating hurdles in their way, support them wholeheartedly in efforts which are sincerely made in the common good of all concerned. We know it is a big ask, but it is our only hope of ensuring a decent, humane and quality standard of living for our coming generations. □

DEAR READER'S

As you are aware, Pakistan is celebrating its 50th year of independence. To mark the occasion, Shehri Newsletter would be carrying special articles, interviews and profiles throughout the year, highlighting the past present and future environmental and development scenario of the country - Ed.



SHEHRI ACTIVITIES

Legal Sub-Committee update

The legal sub-committee of Shehri has been busy trying to bring about transparency and accountability in the working of KBCA, and other related agencies. As reported in our January - March 1997 issue, the Overseer Committee has been duly notified and since then meetings have been held on the first Tuesday of each month in the KDA Conference Room at the Civic Centre.

The Overseer Committee has already taken a number of good steps to help the public:

1. A Public Counter has been established permanently for the benefit of the aggrieved public, where on the payment of prescribed fee, the plans and documents of any project can be obtained, and other information and assistance is also provided. Besides the KBCA staff - there is Mr. Younus Bhatti, stationed by the Overseer Committee (his salary is met through donations) to help the citizens.
2. Public warning notices against illegal constructions have been made mandatory for KBCA to publish through the media within 10 days. (this helps people to know the true status of any construction)
3. The amendments suggested in the Sindh Buildings Control Ordinance '79 are being studied, and changes are being made. It is a long and tedious process as the old faces, do not like change. When completed the amendments will be made law, through due process.

Besides the forum of the Overseer Committee, Shehri has written to all levels of the Judiciary, excerpts of the letters are reproduced for information. This was done to make them aware of the advantage taken by the builders and KBCA, when injunctions are granted by the Courts in favor of the builder which restrain KBCA from performing its statutory duties.

Due to this effort the Judges are now becoming more specific in the wording of the injunction.

Shehri has held meetings with the Commissioner Karachi Division, Mir Hussain Ali, the result is that:

"The Commissioner directed the setting up of Vigilance Committees in each sub-division, with the SDM, DSP, concerned DCBs/KBCA, and representa-

THE PROBLEM

1. The public safety of buildings under construction is the responsibility of the KBCA. They ensure this by:
 - a) licensing professionals architects and engineers, who design and supervise the construction work
 - b) approving the architectural & structural plans of the proposed building
 - c) periodically inspecting & checking the construction work on site
2. However, when a builder starts to construct a building illegally in violation of approved plan and obtains a status-quo order (or an order restraining the KBCA) from a Court of law, all these public safeguards are nullified, as:
 - a) the KBCA-approved architectural/structural plan is no longer being followed,
 - b) the licensed architect & engineer withdraw their services or are suspended by KBCA,
 - c) KBCA cannot inspect or check the illegal construction

This dangerously constructed, unsupervised-under-law, building could fall, as "Faiza Heights" did in North Karachi recently.

3. The construction thus becomes a public hazard, both to the workmen and the future occupants, as the illegal builder continues to construct without lawful supervision, owing to the Court's restraining order against the KBCA or in spite of the Court's status-quo order.



tives of citizens / Shehri, to have fortnightly meetings to monitor and tackle the ongoing illegal construction. SDM will head the Committee" (meeting held on 30-07-1997)

Later, two meetings were held in the office of the DC East, Mohammad Hussain Syed (he has declined to hold further meeting, we have written to the Commissioner to investigate) in which all concerned of the DC East, Citizens and KBCA were present. After much deliberations it was found that the information provided by the KBCA to the Deputy Commissioner office was insufficient to arrest/stop the violation of the construction and all that the SDM/police department do is, arrest a few poor site workers. To stop this, a form has been designed. (Anybody interested in the form, can get a copy of it from the Shehri Office)

The KBCA will now have to fill and complete the form and provide it to the police/SDM at the time of filing an FIR or seeking maintenance of status quo order. The Deputy Commissioner East has further suggested that in all "cases" the District Administration must be specifically directed to enforce the court orders.

On the other side of the fence the Ministry of Housing and Town Planning, the KBCA and other related agencies are continuing with their illegal activities i.e. changing land use.

To give you an example of how they operate.

(1) List of the plots which the Ministry of Housing & Town Planning has illegally commercialized is published (see page 7)

Matters have a way of getting to the top. To stop/legalize all this on Sept 9th, 97 the Government of Sindh reimposed a ban on High rises. [reproduced on page 7]

The right noises were made. There after the Ban was lifted [reproduced on page 7]

Illegal conversion were made again. The residents of the areas concerned on receiving this information, immediately wrote to the relevant people. The Chief Secretary's response was immediate. We have asked him to take further action and examine all these cases as they will only add to the hardship of the residents.

Furthermore the residents should keep up their vigilance in reading the Public Notice's published in The Dawn, The News and Jang or any other newspapers that they try to slip it in, where they invite public objection.

THE CONSEQUENCES

- The Court has restrained the KBCA from taking statutory demolition/sealing action mandated by law on a building where the KBCA has already declared, through a notice issued under Section 7A of SBCO 79/82, that the construction is unauthorized and illegal.
- The builders can now continue to construct illegally and dangerously (without statutory and licensed supervision) with the implied permission of the Court.
- The KBCA also now does not own responsibility for the safety of continuing construction.
- The KBCA (who, along with the district administration and police, are actually colluding with the builders) can now sit back happily, blame the Court for the continuing illegal construction and pretend to be "helpless".
- Even criminal prosecution action by the KBCA and police grinds to a halt, ostensibly because of the Court's order in a civil suit ! The Court becomes the scapegoat !
- The KBCA legal advisors, do their utmost to stretch out the legal proceedings over months/years (which, in any case, tends to be excessively prolonged owing to the overload of cases and paucity of Judges) by not filing counter-affidavits; concealing facts; and generally putting up poor defense.
- The builder, without a Sale NOC from KBCA, starts to sell flats and shops, thus defrauding the public.



1. Reproduced below is the rule relating to change of land use as laid down in the [Kar R & R. T. P] (Schedule D Part II P [Change of land use of residential plots] of Karachi Building & Town Planning Regulations, Town Planning Regulations Part - II)

4. (a) No residential plot shall be converted into any other use except with the approval of MP & EC* (Authority under Sind Building Control Ordinance, 1979) after the recommendations of the Concerned Authority.

(b) The applicant shall apply to the Concerned Authority for the change of land use of the plot with full justification, which shall examine the application in the light of the Planning of the area, commercial facilities in the vicinity, road width, traffic flow and other relevant factors.

(c) The Concerned Authority shall also issue a public notice for the change of land use of the plot/plots in accordance with the provisions of these regulations and the expenses shall be borne by the applicant.

(d) The Concerned Authority shall also convey, the objections from the public, if any to the MP & EC (Authority under S.B.C.O. 79) for its determination.

(e) The applicant shall pay the prescribed scrutiny fee and other charges to MP & EC (Authority under S.B.C. Ordinance, 1979) and the Concerned Authority.

(f) Final No Objection Certificate shall be issued by the Concerned Authority, after approval of MP & EC (Authority under Sind Building Control Ordinance, 1979).

The areas in which these plots have been converted in violation of the ban, are already suffering acute short-

A PARTIAL SOLUTION

1. No restraining order (even "upto the extent of the approved plan", because even this is misused) against the KBCA's statutory mandate be given, as this leaves the continuing construction unsupervised under law, and therefore transfers responsibility of the correctness and safety of this construction to the shoulders of the Court.
2. In extreme and genuine circumstances, a status-quo order may be granted, explicitly instructing the builder that he is restrained from any further construction, and simultaneously instructing the KBCA that they are to immediately inform the Court if this status-quo order is violated. (Additionally, it would be helpful to issue directions to the concerned Deputy Commissioner and SSP to assist the Court in the maintenance of the Status-quo order)
3. The status-quo order must be given only after the builder submits 2 sets (one for the KBCA) of ten different photographs establishing the current stage of construction of the disputed buildings.

ages.

Shehri's reasons to oppose all unauthorized construction is that there should be specified areas for all commercial and residential activity. Flat sites should be clearly separate. Any areas where these conversions take place, must invite public opinion before converting. The areas must enhance their infrastructure facilities viza viz sewerage, water, electricity, roads, solid waste management and other related public services such as schools, hospitals etc. This effect of not maintaining a balance between the infrastructure and increase in plot ratio and change of land use causes acute degradation of the urban environment of the city, which we are witnessing in Karachi everyday.



WHAT GAMES WE PLAY!

Ban on construction of highrises reimposed

By our correspondent

RACH: The government of Sindh has once again imposed a ban on construction of structures beyond ground plus four storeys in Karachi. With the new imposition, the powers to relax rules have also been transferred from the provincial minister for Housing and Town Planning (H&TP) to the chief minister as the notification has been issued by the chief secretary and not secretary of the Ministry of H&TP as was the case in 1993.

holders/owners of buildings were allowed to construct more than ground plus four floors.

In April 1996 the building control authorities of the KDA and KMC were merged and on July 12, 1997, the Minister for H&TP Wassam Akhtar moved a summary stating that the ban imposed on highrises was hindering smooth functioning of his department and suggested withdrawal of letter No. PS/SE/17/M/1994/32 and notification No. SOH (HDA) 8-85/92 regarding functioning of the Karachi Building Control Authority.

On the basis of this summary...

Ban on highrise buildings lifted again

By our correspondent

RACH: The government of Sindh, a surprise move, has once again withdrawn the ban on the construction of structures beyond ground-plus-four storeys in the city.

The ban was imposed through a notification issued on August 25 this year. Following the withdrawal of the notification, the ban on highrises...

this year Minister for Housing and Town Planning Wassam moved a summary stating he imposed on highrise buildings hindering smooth functioning of his department and suggested withdrawal of the same. On the basis of this summary, Secretary Housing and Town Planning Shah Mansoor Akhtar issued a notification on August 25, 1997, whereby both the said notifications were withdrawn consequently the ban on highrises was lifted.

The News International, Tuesday, September 9, 1997

The News on Sunday, September 14, 1997

S. NO.	PLOT NO.	AREA	OWNERS NAME & ADDRESS	CONVERTED ON	LAWS / RULES VIOLEATED	REQUESTED BY OWNER
1.	C-12, Block 10, KDA Scheme No. 16, F.B. Area. Shahrah-e-Pakistan	600 Sq. yds	Abrar Ahmed Siddiqui S/o. Latif uddin Siddiqui R/o A-349, Block L, N.N. Abad	01-7-1997	In relaxation of the ban on Commercialization	
2.	No. 13 Block 3 Dehli Co-op Housing Society	Additional 4 floor	Mr. Nadeem Riaz	02-08-1997	The initial construction illegal, lease increase of plot ratio initial commercialization illegal	
3.	105-A, Sindhi, Muslim H. Society	600 Sq. yds	Mohd. Naeem Attorney of plot	12-07-1997	In violation of High-rise ban lease, plot ratio, etc.	
4.	L-1, Block 3 Scheme 36, Gulistan-e-Jauhar	3000 Sq. yds	Mohd. Bashir	19-06-1997	In violation of Commercialization ban, Public opinion not sought	
5.	1-16, RY-9, I. I. Chundrigar Road	514 sq. yds	Indus Bank through Rahat H. Khan CEO & MD	26-06-1997	In relaxation of rules and ban on high rises	Basement + G + Mezz + 13 Floor
6.	B-148 Block 15 Scheme-24 Gulshan-e-Iqbal	350 sq. yds	Najma Salim, D-10/1, Block 17 Gulshan-e-Iqbal	27-06-1997	Relaxation of ban on commercialization lease	
7.	184 Deh Safoorah Main	1000 sq. yds	Riaz Ilyas sub attorney	21-07-1997	Relaxation of ban on commercialization	G + 10 floor
8.	A-1, Block 13--A Shahrah-e-Faisal	272 sq. yds	Mst. Hajira Bibi sub attorney	4-08-1997	Relaxation of ban on commercialization, Road is not wide enough for Rd widening.	
9.	L-3 B1-7, Sch-24	168 sq. yds	Pervez Iqbal Butt	26-07-1997	Relaxation of ban on commercialization.	
10.	83-A, P.E.C.H.S. B1-2, K.B.W. Road	400 sq. yds	Zafar Ali Rana S/o Khuda Bakhs Bhatti	28-06-1997	Relaxation of ban on commercialization, Lease Violation	High-rise Comm Construction
11.	37 Block 7&8 Darulaman C.H.S. Shahrah-e-Faisal	1500 sq. yds After Amalgamation		10-07-1997	Relaxation of ban, done without any Public Notice, Lease violation plot ratio increased.	Commercial 2 2 Basement + G+10 floors
12.	83 E&83F PECHS, B1-2 K.B.W. Road	800 sq yds	Zafar Ali Rana S/o. Khuda Baksh Mohd. Yousuf S/o Sher MChammad	26-06-1997	Relaxation of Rules & ban on high rises.	
13.	154-A, B,C, PECHS Block 2, Karachi.	3000 sq yds After Amalgamation	Abdul Samad S/o. Mohd. Shafi Legal Attorney	1-08-1997	Relaxation of ban on commercialization. Lease, no legal requirement met.	Comm. Highrise
14.	154-S, Block 2 PECHS, Khushal Rd.	1000 Sq. yds	Mohd. Yasin S/o Abdul Karim	1-08-1997	Relaxation of Rules & ban lease.	Highrise Comm.
15.	FL-10, B1-14, Sch. 24			23-07-1997	Violation of ban lease by Ministry of H&TP	5th Fl. upwards
16.	Plot 9, B1-3, DCHS			04-08-1997	Violation of ban, entire construction illegal	5th & 6th fl.
17.	Plot 9, FT3 Frere Town Clifton.			04-08-1997	Violation of ban lease	Add 3&4th Flr.

(Prepared by the legal sub-committee of Shehri in public interest)



CONSERVATION

Jheel Park: A cry for help

Parks, playgrounds and other open spaces are becoming increasingly scarce in Karachi's fast growing jungle of concrete. Shehri recounts its association with the campaign to rehabilitate and revitalize an important park of the city and urges concerned citizens to join and contribute in this noble cause.

Parks and playgrounds are a vital component of the recreational facilities that a city provides. Besides fighting pollution by absorbing carbon dioxide and replenishing the oxygen content in the atmosphere, parks also relax and rejuvenate. Parks have, over the years, however, become a scarce commodity in this fast developing jungle of concrete, that is Karachi. In its ill-planned, haphazard development, apartment buildings, multi-storeyed shopping centres and office complexes are choking and often burying amenity plots. Far from developing new parks, land originally earmarked for parks and recreational areas, is being used to construct hideous high-rises.

Jheel Park: A Background

Jheel Park (renamed as Saleem-uz-Zaman Siddiqui Park, which for convenience sake, we will mention as Jheel Park in this article) in Pakistan Employees Cooperative Housing Society (PECHS), like so many other parks in Karachi, had been a silent victim of neglect. The park was conceived and developed by Syed Imam Ahmed, founder of the PECHS Society, as a recreational facility for the residents of the area. It was carved out of barren hillock. Syed Imam Ahmed had also supervised the construction of a platform, which served as a place of prayer, specially during Ramazan for taraviah. With the lakes and the grove of coconut palms swaying gently in the breeze, Jheel Park must truly have been picturesque at the time.

Once a nucleus of community activity and recreation, years of neglect and uncivil attitudes had reduced Jheel Park to a dumping site for the locality's garbage. The once clean spring water had become a stagnant pool, a breeding ground for mosquitoes and other parasites. But the authorities remained unmoved.

They had quite clearly demonstrated their disinterest in doing any thing to improve it.

Shehri's Role in the Development of Jheel Park

A concerned resident of PECHS approached Shehri-Citizens for a Better Environment (CBE) about the deteriorating condition of Jheel Park, the only remaining open space in the heavily congested area around Tariq Road. Shehri decided to play ball. An NGO with an urban focus, Shehri has brought together citizens with a shared concern for a better environment. Shehri's is a diverse portfolio; solid waste management, campaigning against illegal constructions,

preservation of architectural heritage and coastal pollution are just some of the issues the NGO's sub-committees have tackled. Having formed a 'Parks and Recreation sub-committee', Shehri had the institutional mechanism to take on the challenge. Jheel Park became the Parks and Recreation sub-committee's first project.



Jheel Park: Longing for a better future

After Shehri arrived on the scene, residents of the area realised, that they too had a role to play, an important one, and got together to form the 'Citizens Society PECHS' to lobby for the renovation of the park. Shehri prepared an initial profile of the project, suggesting several ways to provide better facilities to the visitors. Once the Citizens' Society approved the proposal, the next step was to coerce the authorities out of their inertia to take action. Mr. Saleem Khan, Administrator, Zonal Municipal Committee (ZMC) East at the time, took immediate interest. He even offered the services of ZMC East to work jointly with Shehri on the project.



When work began on Jheel Park in October 1992, the park was a mess. Its two lakes were in a pitiable state. The water in the lakes comes from a natural spring and is sweet. Its founder had once thought that the spring would provide drinking water to the locality. Had the park been maintained and kept clean, this might have been possible. But the negligence of the authorities and the apathy of certain residents who used the premises as a convenient garbage dump, ruled out any such possibilities. To make matters worse, wild reeds and grasses were growing in abundance in the lakes.



Community involvement can do wonders

The larger lake was drained of stagnant water, and the sewage and reeds were removed. Stone pitching of the larger lake was done to prevent the seepage of water, and stone steps leading down to the water were constructed on two sides.

The smaller lake was to be developed as an 'Eco-Pond'. A site for a 'Ladies Park', part of the original plan for Jheel Park - was chalked out. The women of the area were particularly active in the whole exercise. Those that were members of the Citizens' Society formed a ladies Club within the umbrella of the Society, to supervise the plantation of trees, plants and hedges in the Ladies Park. A children's playground was also part of the plan. An extensive tree plantation campaign was carried out on the park premises; 230 saplings were planted.

However constant changes in the local government set-up and continued show of apathy by the concerned officials, have frustrated Shehri's attempts to sustain the development work.

Present Status of Jheel Park

Frustrating though it may seem, it has become quite clear that the local government lacks the funds and, more often than not, the initiative to tackle the various civic issues at hand. For one, provincial administration never have the kind of development budgets, that they require. For another, the government agencies' relationship with the general public, has steadily deteriorated, leaving a wide gulf between them. Instead of looking towards the government for the solution of their everyday problems, people have realised that they must adopt the do-it-yourself attitude. The question is, how? Often citizens in their individual capacities do not have the institutional

framework, or the means at their disposal to do this.

Frustrating though it may seem, it has become quite clear that the local government lacks the funds and, more often than not, the initiative to tackle the various civic issues at hand.

NGOs like Shehri can fill the vacuum: by providing a forum where such issues can be discussed and resources pooled, towards a solution. A platform from whence citizens can learn to help themselves. NGOs with their roots among the masses, often succeed, where the government has failed. They can even work with government agencies to produce good results; The Jheel Park project could become a case in point. NGOs are also an effective tool for raising the level of awareness among the people; the forming of the Citizens' Society, PECHS is a clear manifestation of this.

In view of the apparent incapacity of the KMC officials to properly develop and maintain the city parks, Shehri feels that the involvement of private sector, working in co-ordination with the local residents and KMC through an "Adopt a Park" campaign could go a long way in effectively tackling this serious urban crises.

With this view in mind, negotiations were started a few years ago with KMC to facilitate a process, by which Shehri could be awarded, on behalf of the residents the possession of Jheel Park, which could then be developed by Shehri, as a recreation / amusement park, by involving private sector participation. In 1995, the Director General of Parks and Recreation, KMC, had given verbal assurances to Shehri, that such a mechanism could be developed. Presently negotiations with the present set-up of KMC, on formulating the modalities of the process are taking place. Shehri has also prepared a preliminary development and financial feasibility plan for the Park, and would welcome any help and assistance in this regard from concerned citizens. □

ANALYSIS

Looking ahead: The environmental scene in Pakistan

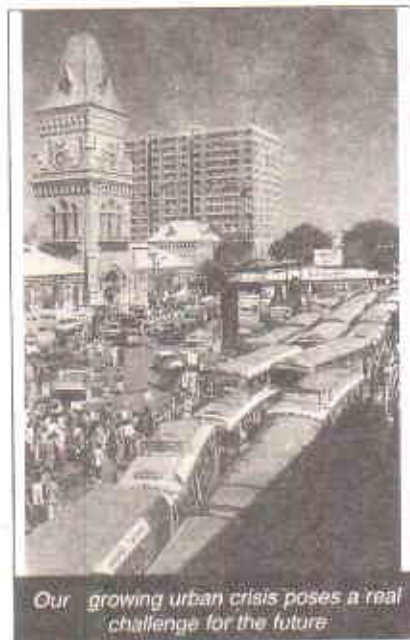
As the country celebrates its 50th year of independence, Farhan Anwar looks at the environmental scene in Pakistan, and identifies the challenges facing the environmental planners of today, as they seek for our coming generations, a better tomorrow.

As the world prepares to enter the 21st century, with mixed feelings of excitement on the part of some and anxiety on the part of others, and while Pakistan busies itself with celebrating its 50th year of independence, it has now become abundantly clear that the world's natural resources are being grossly misused and polluted, and unless they are exploited judiciously, the long term sustainability of human growth and development will be seriously endangered.

The issue of environmental preservation is fast assuming a priority status in the policy frameworks of most nations of the world. Subsequently, efforts to achieve a sustainable development process are in forward gear with ever increasing levels of human and financial resources being committed to meet the challenge. It is indeed a global challenge for the 21st century generation of this world.

This was not always the case. The onset of the 20th century was characterised by the significant inroads, that were made by the major powers in the field of industrial development. Scant regard was paid to the adverse environmental impacts of massive industrialisation and the resulting growth of consumerism. It was not until the early 70's that the first meaningful and comprehensive steps were initiated to

redress this dangerous trend. The lead role was provided by the United States government with the promulgation of its 'Clean Air' and 'Clean Water' acts. Underly-



Our growing urban crisis poses a real challenge for the future

ing the post World War II concern with all forms of pollution was the affluence of the American society.

The increase in production had contributed to an intensification of the degree of actual pollution, while the increase in the standard of living had permitted people the comparative luxury of being able to be concerned about this. The effect of pollution on human health was a major consideration. Coupled with this, the availability of ample public and private resources had given the society sufficient funds and skilled man-

power to provide the potential for dealing with the problem. Soon, the European countries and Japan followed suit and the environmental movement was in full swing.

Pakistan was slow to realise the importance of this issue and even when realisation did come, it was initially, not accompanied with the desired policy initiatives and political will. The Pakistan Environmental Protection Council, though formed in 1983, could not meet till 1993.

In the meantime, a major policy initiative was undertaken in 1989, jointly by the government of Pakistan, IUCN and the Canadian government, which was the preparation of *Pakistan's National Conservation Strategy (NCS)*. This comprehensive document, endorsed by the government of Pakistan in March 1992, identified 14 core programme areas for priority implementation which include the protection of watersheds, protection of water bodies, integration of population and environment programmes and management of urban wastes among other themes.

Recently, Pakistan's Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS) were prepared. Subsequently on January 20th 1997, the Federal Cabinet (caretaker) approved the Pakistan Environmental Act, 1997. They were later converted into a bill on 3rd September 1997



by the present legislature. So, it would appear that the basic frame work (though not without serious inherent defects) is in place and actual groundwork should soon follow. Although the future holds many exciting possibilities, there are certain visible hurdles that need to be overcome on an urgent basis in order to ensure the successful implementation of our environmental strategy.

Pakistan is faced with many diversified environmental challenges of an urgent nature. Our principle fresh water resource i.e. the Indus river is being increasingly polluted, the phenomenon of desertification is greatly reducing the productivity of our land, much of the population still receives polluted drinking water while the improper management of urban wastes is adding to the woes of our urban populace.

To effectively tackle such problems, we require highly skilled technical manpower and considerable financial resources. We have been found wanting on both fronts. While there may be quite a few varied mechanisms available to raise the required funds, such as the mobilisation of the private sector, technical manpower is not something which can be arranged that easily.

The developed world is combating the menace of environmental degradation by making use of modern technological innovations. In our country, sectors such as Science and Technology (S&T) and Research and Development (R&D) have never taken off due

to official neglect, as the required level of financial commitment was never made. Environmental engineering is a relatively new discipline, and thus our proficiency in this field even lesser than other fields of modern technology. Very few institutions of higher learning impart specialised training in this field and even those that do, suffer from dearth of modern facilities and are served by a teaching staff which lacks the proper training and experience.

In Pakistan, there is a great need of developing indigenous technologies, so as to reduce our dependency on expensive imported technologies, an issue which poses a serious threat to the economic viability of our environmental drive.

Since we have been introduced to this discipline of engineering only very recently, there is an alarming shortage of trained senior level experts in the private sector, who could help nurture the talents and capabilities of fresh entrants, while at the same time contributing positively themselves. However, a significant development is the entry of an increasing number of fresh environmental engineers in the job market, who are aiming to make a positive contribution in this field after having received specialised training abroad. However, they still lack the precious on-job training experience in a stimulating environment, which is a disturbing factor and casts serious doubts on their ability to effectively tackle the complicated challenges that confront them.

As environmental engineering tackles the dynamics of man's interaction with the environment, it addresses a wide range of technical, social and economic issues. There is the constant search for more effective pollution control technologies, which could save and protect our land, air and

water from the ravages of environmental degradation.

In Pakistan, there is a great need of developing indigenous technologies, so as to reduce our dependency on expensive imported technologies, an issue which poses a serious threat to the economic viability of our environmental drive. Pakistan, owing to its diverse geographical, ecological and social mixes, offers exciting prospects for somebody involved in their preservation. The state of our natural and human resources needs to be assessed thoroughly, so that a realistic and practical course of action can be evolved. Increasing pollution in our cities due to the issues related with rapid urbanisation, poses a stiff challenge for our city planners.

Fresh ideas and new approaches are needed, which can only be brought in by a fresh new work force. A good environmental engineer, apart from being technically sound, should also be socially interactive, with a keen insight into the economic realities of an environmental issue. He may also be required to play the role of a judge, balancing his or her views between the economic benefits and environmental concerns of the nation's development process. Expert help and guidance is required urgently from such environmental engineers, by our industries, municipalities and also the policy makers and regulatory agencies. As things stand today, we have to virtually start from scratch.

Over the years, a fairly vocal, active and diversified NGO movement has also taken roots in the non-formal sector, mainly owing to the impotency of the public sector to effectively tackle our environmental concerns.



However, it would appear that at present, the capacity of the NGO's to make a significant and positive contribution is fairly limited. Reasons are many, lack of technical backup, limited financing options, and non-cooperation of government officials and

organisations can be cited as a few major reasons for the NGO sector's limited success. However, there is no denying the fact that some good work is being done. Success stories, although isolated and few in numbers are raising hopes of a brighter and

more vigorous role for the NGO's in the years to come. If nothing else, they have succeeded in raising the awareness of the masses on this issue. □

(Farhan Anwar is Editor, Shehri)

Earth's Appeal

I yielded completely to man, bore him the fruit of my labour and he continued to take, to plunder, and pollute me. And I continued to give until I could give no more. For all the wealth I yielded unto him from the depths of my being - he cast me aside when I needed to replenish my cracked soil.

I remained devoted, for richer, for poorer, for better or for worse. And worse it got. He plundered me to near infertility, and cared not for what he did. I strain to satisfy his egomaniacal needs born of success. He forgets perhaps that it was I who gave him the grounding so he may rise to the success. All I hear is more, more oil, more diamonds, more sources of energy. I know I gave you the sweet taste of success when you suckled my breast. That generation that looked upon their mother Earth with respect, rather than the disdain you show me now. And I shall give no more.

More care is what I need, now.

Can you hear me?

Your demands increase even as I grow weary, and in sickness, you leave me. The black gold I yielded unto you from the depths of my being, you pump back into my waters? Do you not understand that a part of me dies each time a duck drowns from the covering weight of oil and additives? How is it that you expect healthy food from a sickly sea? Understand this - I am the reason you live and breathe. I produce so I can nurture you, so that you may feed off me. In a kinder mood I'd call you my dependents, today, I see you for the parasites you've become.

My plants grow under my care, so that they may regurgitate oxygen, as you give them carbon dioxide. That system worked well enough, my plants took in the gases, to give you breathable air, until you seek to sabotage your own means of life. That deathly smog is beyond my strongest trees, and they strive to inhale so that you may breathe...and they crumple up as the industrial smoke pervades their system. I hurt...can you not hear me calling to you?

(Fatima Zainab Najam)

The world mourns



The admiration was mutual

Within a span of six days, the world lost two women of unique substance and character, who had, in their own distinct styles, done much to alleviate the sufferings of countless disadvantaged people the world over. Diana, Princess of Wales and Mother Teresa offered hope and comfort to the sick, the dying and the neglected. Mother Teresa, through her Missionaries of Charity, cared and looked after those, like one of her own, who had none to call their own. Who can ever forget the famous handshake of Princess Diana, with an AIDS patient, an event which proved to be a watershed in the campaign to raise awareness on AIDS related issues. It took a woman of extraordinary character and courage to make that gesture. Shehri's management, staff and members join the countless millions all over the world in paying their respects and tribute to these lasting figures of humanity and compassion. May their souls rest in peace - Amen



COMMENTS

The makers of Karachi

As the residents of Karachi celebrate with their fellow countryman and women, the 50th year of Pakistan's independence, it is high time that the services of the great benefactors of this city are truly acknowledged, irrespective of the considerations of religion caste and creed - Abdul Hadi Khan pays tribute to the makers of Karachi, and urges the Karachites to accord them the status they deserve, in both words and in deeds

Karachi was not born in 1947. This is a fact that needs to be brain washed into the minds of Karachites. Accepting this fact is all the more important for Karachites as they already stand handicapped by a very short history. It was barely 150 years back, on 3rd February 1839, that the guns of HMS Wellesley boomed at the port of Manora to signal the rise of a great new metropolis in Asia. As in so many other colonies - French, Spanish or Portuguese - colonialism gave birth to a number of entirely new cities and towns. In most of the cases these places were important more in a capitalistic, colonial or military sense than for any historical reasons. Thus, it were cities like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, which formed the jewel of the British Empire in India, rather than Delhi, Lahore, Agra or Lucknow. Calcutta in fact, remained the imperial capital of British India for almost a century, before the British belatedly decided upon New Delhi for historical and political reasons. Karachi, it can be stated with confidence, was also an off shoot of colonialism.

This city once had her golden period. Today we stand very far from that era but much of the social pathos and utter rootlessness which characterize the city and people of Karachi today can be traced to the fact that we are living in a time and a society bereft of all historical connections with the

soil. Thus, today we see average Karachites completely unaware of their own city's past - the city's legends, myths and yesteryear heroes. There are very few who



can clearly outline Napier's role in the birth of this city - Napier, the conqueror of Sindh and the Founder of Modern Karachi. It was Napier who was to send that classic missive, 'Peccavi, I have sinned' (sic) that later became a legend in the annals of British Raj. The pun on the name of province so adroitly reflected the character of a person who went beyond the scope and terms of his assignment, carried out what he thought was in the best imperial interest i.e. the conquest of Sindh, all the same considered it a smart bit of 'rascality' and then had the audacity to

send the above message to the imperial authorities at Calcutta.

Napier's is a life which is definitely worth a study, if for no other reason than the fact that he liberated Karachi from the potential fate of a sleepy backwater which it would have remained in a Hyderabad based, feudal and despotic Mir ruled province. Moreover, he was the first person to realize the immense potential of the town as a natural port and as a logical source of export for the vast hinterland of Sindh, Punjab and beyond. His vision proved to be entirely correct and by as early as the year 1900, Karachi had become the biggest wheat exporting port of the East. Napier, furthermore, was the person who helped to harness the rampaging Indus River by improving the ancient canal system which used to drain off irrigation water into the desert areas. He abolished slavery, stamped out brigandage and did his best to destroy the system of usury and taxation that enslaved the poor. He replaced the existing brutal and arbitrary forms of punishment with a police and court system which was later to be copied over much of India. When seen in the backdrop of these singular contributions to the city and the province, isn't it shocking that the only reputation by which Napier's name survives in this city is more of the risqué rather than of the decorous variety.

If Napier was the visualizer, Bartle



Karachi: Another time, another age.

Frere can safely be termed the architect of Napier's dreams for Karachi. Bartle Frere was the British Commissioner-in-Sindh, based in Bombay, who did not let distance ignore the interests of the relatively far-off and small little town of Karachi. Carrying on the spirit of Napier, he expedited work on the Karachi Port and laid the concrete foundations for a modern and well planned, grid iron patterned city which would one day become an example, in so many ways, for the whole of South Asia. The development of Karachi Port did not take place easily. Frere had to fight tooth and nail with the vast interests of Bombay traders and sea merchants who understandably become anxious at the prospect of another natural and potentially successful port coming up in the vicinity. Such an event, they rightly feared, would certainly affect their clout, and more importantly, revenues. Frere, however, managed to get all obstacles removed and a plethora of studies later, substantive work on Karachi Harbour finally started in 1860 during his tenure.

Frere's second greatest contribution to this city was the establish-

ment of Karachi Municipal Corporation in place of the old Conservancy Board. He took this step in 1853 - 4 years prior to the War of Independence. This action highlights so graphically the contrast between the decaying Mughal rule, completely out of touch with the modern concepts of administration, and the upcoming British presence, heralding an era of science, technology and good governance. Frere was also to start the Karachi - Kotri Railway and the Karachi-Hyderabad postal system. The people of this city, at that time, were grateful enough to recognize their benefactors. They pooled up funds to build an imposing new edifice in the city and named it after him at his time of departure. This structure still stands today as Frere Hall, architecturally perhaps the most striking building of Karachi. The structure no doubt evokes a moment of awe from the thousands who pass across it every day but certainly elicits no sense of historical connectivity.

Then there were persons like Stratchen, Municipal Engineer Extraordinary, who provided Karachi with such distinctive structures as Empress Market, Merewether Tower, Victoria and Albert Museum, Denso Hall, Arts College and a number of other municipal buildings spread over the city. Each of these structures would later stand out as landmarks in their own right. However, the crowning glory of Stratchen would always remain the design and construction of a running water supply and a proper drainage and sewerage system for the denizens of this city. This, if nothing else,

should endear him to the hearts of the eternally water short and litter rich Karachites.

Continuing in the same vein, Preedy, McLeod, Elphinstone, Burns, Mansfield, Boulton and so on, all are names which now evoke only hazy memories but had a definite and pioneering role in the development of this city during the initial period of her growth. Erasing their names from road signs or structures certainly can not succeed in erasing their roles from the annals of this city.

Next, we come up to the person who was a larger than life figure even in his own period- Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta. If ever this city could claim to have a father figure, it would be him. The fact that his name is now completely missing from almost all social studies and history books taught in our schools and colleges can only be termed as playing fiddle with history. Given the title 'Maker of Modern Karachi', the deeds and the spirit of the man should have by now landed him a legendary status but what is termed the great black outs of our history we have succeeded in completely covering up his accomplishments.

Frere's second greatest contribution to this city was the establishment of Karachi Municipal Corporation in place of the old Conservancy Board. He took this step in 1853 - 4 years prior to the War of Independence.

Jamshed Mehta was the classic example of what a mayor should be. During his long mayorship, Karachi reached the zenith of its civic glory. The cleanliness of the streets, the spaciousness of the boulevards, the orderliness of the traffic, the organization of the market places, the standard of the civic services and the essential vitality



of the city life during his tenure became a byword for the whole region - an Asian mayors conference in those halcyon days, in fact, termed Karachi the 'Cleanest City of Asia'. This honour was more than a certificate of cleanliness - it was a certificate of potential; the promise that the city held. That was the time when the city came closest to meeting Napier's fateful prophecy to be the 'Bride of the East'. And Jamshed Mehta could have taken most of the credit for it. An eulogy of Jamshed Mehta can, in fact, be extended to the numerous munificent Parsis whose marks of philanthropy dot the whole of this city, from Jehangir Kothari Pararde to N.E.D. University. The dwindling number of Parsis in Karachi, amounting to no more than 2000 now, brings out the fact to accord them a special status in this city's rolls for the contributions they have made to the social, cultural and economic life of this metropolis.

A discussion about the personages in Karachi's history cannot be termed complete unless we take into account the various travelers who visited this city during the pre-British and early colonial rule, Burnes, Mc Naghten, Pottinger, Carless, Porter and a number of others have all left highly interesting accounts of the city during the early and mid nineteenth century. T.E. Lawrence of the 'Lawrence of Arabia' fame was to complain of the fact that 'we eat dust, and breath dust and think dust' during his stay in Karachi. However, the most colourful account remains the adventures of Sir Richard Burton in this part of the world.

Richard Burton was an extraordinary traveler and explorer. Even one basic fact about him is fantastic enough - he knew over 40 languages. His numerous exploits

included a pilgrimage to Mecca disguised as a Muslim - the first non-Muslim to do so, the discovery of Lake Tanganyika, translation of *One Thousand and One Nights* into English (to be banned subsequently by the guardians of public morals) and a number of spy missions all over the world including forays into various parts of British India. He visited Karachi during one of these clandestine missions on the instructions of Sir Charles Napier. Dressed as a Persian trader he stayed in the old city areas of that time, freely mixed with the local population and explored the local life in all its forms and hues. His account of the time, the people and the area is extremely fascinating. His keen sense of curiosity, and controversy, led him to investigate the locals, especially the ruling classes, in all avenues of their social conduct including their unique proclivities. No wonder the detailed report of his investigations in Karachi and about the native rulers in other parts of the province proved to be too hot to be ever made public by Napier. Burton can be given a key place in this city's history because it was primarily on his positive recommendation of the climate, geography and potential of the city that Napier finally decided to shift the capital of Sindh from Hyderabad to Karachi.

Lastly, Karachi is also one of the success stories of the Victorian Age. Ruling for 64 years from her

throne in London - the longest by any monarch ever anywhere, Queen Victoria lent her name to a whole age. During her paramount-

A discussion about the personages in Karachi's history cannot be termed complete unless we take into account the various travelers who visited this city during the pre-British and early colonial rule, Burnes, Mc Naghten, Pottinger, Carless, Porter and a number of others have all left highly interesting accounts of the city during the early and mid nineteenth century.

cy, the British Empire reached its zenith and it was during this period that a number of great cities were given birth to or flourished all over the empire. Karachi was a direct beneficiary of that period. The statue of Queen Victoria at the Frere Hall was, therefore, never out of place. Now lying in the backyard of the same gardens, it must be brought back and re-installed. The link with history must not prove this tenuous. Talking of statues, the removal of the Gandhi and the Dinshaw statues from near Chief Court and the Sad-

dar Area, respectively, only served to delink us from our past, rather than serving any patriotic aspirations.

To sum up, the black outs in our history must be removed. Period. Those who lay claim to the geography of this city must accept her history as well. 'The Dawn of Benares' and 'The Twilight of Oudh' were timeless, no doubt. Mahmood Ghaznavi to Aurangzib Alamgir were all great rulers, agreed. But it is now the time to look closer; it is time to own 'The Breeze of the Arabian Sea; and it is time to acknowledge the Mirs, Napiers and Mehtas of this land.

(Abdul Hadi Khan is a Planning Engineer and a member of Shehri)



COMMENTS

Passing judgement on the environment

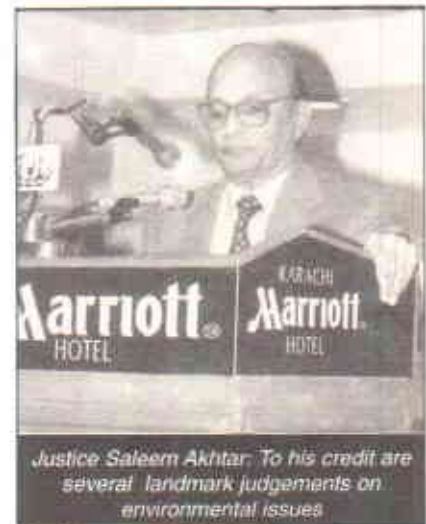
Justice (Retd.) Saleem Akhtar feels that in the years to come, the Judiciary will have a greater role to play in the fight against environmental degradation in Pakistan.

During the last three decades, reality of environmental degradation has consciously been realized by the world, resulting in international conventions, agreements and movements aimed at protecting and healing the environment. Now efforts are made to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. For long, unconsciously and without realizing how much we owe our existence to it, we have continued to deplete, degrade, the environment and damage it. Now we are faced with the challenge of forging a sustainable and equitable compact with global environment. Environmental abuse has been so great, that it is threatening flora and fauna, plains and forests, streams, rivers and sea.

The realization has now dawned, that environment is the key factor in the development, be it, industrial, economic or political. In our region, public awareness about environment has started in a limited manner, which alone is not enough to even check the onslaught. Illiteracy has added to the miseries. In developing countries, voluntary checks and balances are not in vogue and therefore, for prevention of all evil, one expects a law to stop it. Historical experiences have shown that even deterrent laws can not eliminate evils and crimes – they can only check it. Public opinion and moral pressure play a better role in strengthening the rule of law.

In our country like in any other developing country, till the early 1980's there was no comprehension to frame environmental law. The direct legislation in a limited manner was Pakistan Environmental Protection Ordinance 1983. There exist laws, which relate to environment, but when they were framed, the concept of environmental law did not exist – or if at all existed, nobody cared for it. IUCN has compiled a comprehensive report on it, in which 80 enactments have been enumerated, which have certain provisions relating to nuisance, factories, industries, drugs, labour, river, water, forest, motor vehicles and wild life etc. mostly for protection of public health and prevention of injury, damage or danger to human life. The laws concerning environment are scattered, disjointed and soft. Environmental considerations were not clear and comprehensive. The awareness about causes of environmental damage did not exist and therefore there could hardly be any demand for orientation of the legislative process towards meeting all challenges arising from environmental degradation. Thus there is no comprehensive legislation dealing with all environmental threats and problems.

In our Constitution, clause 24 of the Concurrent Legislative List speaks of 'Environmental Pollution and Ecology' and thus Parliament and Provincial Assembly has the power to legislate in that field. It took 11 years to promulgate Environmental Protection



Justice Saleem Akhtar: To his credit are several landmark judgements on environmental issues

Ordinance 1983, and many more years to bring it in operation. In fact it has been never implemented fully and honestly. It has been used as a window dressing for creating high profile image and more often for exploitation. In our country, legislation relating to environment is weak and on adhoc basis, having no conceptual base and unable to meet the growing problems. Laudable efforts were made by IUCN and other NGOs in drafting a proposed enactment entitled Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1995 but it did not see light of the day and was promulgated by a caretaker government as an ordinance which also stood repealed on 10th June 1997. We have returned back to those outdated fragmentary pieces of enactments of the past. The enactments have hardly helped in



development of environmental law. In such a state, when environmental law itself was in a vacuum, unable to meet the threats and challenges and unable to prevent environmental degradation, judicial activism was born out of the desire to interpret the law to provide justice to the citizens mainly dealing with problems and issues relating to social order, life, liberty, equality, procedural justice and effectiveness. Where the legislature is inactive or the executive does not take a realistic and judicious view of an enactment, to meet the demands of developing society, judiciary comes to the rescue to apply the law, taking into account the change and demand of time.

Several environmental cases were taken up by the Supreme Court, some suo motu as well and guidelines were laid down for future development of law. Environmental rights of a citizen was upheld, recognising it as a fundamental right to life. Environmental right was held superior to personal right and in case of conflict, later must give way to the former, and that the polluter must pay. The judgements born out of judicial activism set a precedent and a trend to look at environment as a live issue which affects all without any distinction or frontiers. The development of environmental law in Pakistan owes only to the superior judiciary. Many persons criticise and term such judicial activism as "unruly horse" but in my view a good rider can tame it and it is a better option than the cesspool which is allowed to simmer, choke

and burst, creating suffocation to people at large.

I foresee a greater and effective role of the judiciary in environmental field as in times to come the environmentalists who had a fairly smooth sailing so far may face organised opposition intellectually, physically and legally by vested interest.

The courts cannot be the only vehicle for development of environmental law. So far one has encountered partisan behaviour and unfriendly attitude of the authorities. In such circumstances environmental friendly NGOs and citizens have to play their role by creating awareness, educating the masses, confronting them with issues and pointing out to the remedies. Such a job is being done by various NGOs - and they should not be disheartened by setback, opposition, and obstruction, because it is nothing new.

If you look to the post Rio 1992 era you will be amazed to know that the industrialised world has failed to keep its promise made in Rio Earth Summit, towards the developing countries. The recent Earth Summit Review Conference in UN ended in a shamble. Such behaviour one must expect from every one in authority and power. G77 group of developing countries have clearly indicated that mere doling of aid is no solution to environmental problems. We need rule of law, fair democracy, justice with peace and above all an environment friendly atmosphere where our life may grow with nature.

I foresee a greater and effective role of the judiciary in environmental field as in times to come the environmentalists who had a fairly smooth sailing so far may face organised opposition intellectually, physically and legally by vested interests. A right wing think tank

has emerged with members in North America, Australia and Europe, coordinated by Washington based Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) who are evolving new agenda to privatise resources. They work with wise use movement which does not see eye to eye with the environmentalist movement. Environmentalists are called terrorists, traitors, extremists and fascists. You are aware that Green Peace were accused of "environmental terrorism". In such growing hostility, situation may arise, calling for an important role to be played by the judiciary to protect the rights of the citizens and bring sanity and balance for achieving harmony and sustainable development. □

(Justice (Retd.) Saleem Akhtar is a former Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, who authored several landmark judgements on environmental issues in Pakistan)

Environmental Protection Bill Passed in National Assembly

The National Assembly unanimously passed the Pakistan Environmental Protection Bill 1997, tabled by Syed Ahmed Mahmood, Minister of State for Environment, Local Government and Rural Development, in its session held on September 13, 1997. □



INTERVIEW

"The formation of Metropolitan Government's, in large cities, is the need of the hour" Tasneem Ahmed Siddiqui.



Tasneem Ahmed Siddiqui is a civil servant with a difference. Possessing a keen insight into the complex issue of urban development, he is a man with a vision. His dynamic and down to earth approach in tackling difficult problems has won him much acclaim the world over. Khuda Ki Busti, the Aga Khan Award winning housing scheme in Hyderabad, was a brain child of Mr Siddiqui. Presently he is serving as the Director General of the Sindh Katchi Abadis Authority. In this exclusive interview with Shehri, Mr. Tasneem Ahmed Siddiqui talks with Farhan Anwar on a variety of issues related with the urban development process in Karachi.

Q. What is the scale and proportion of the Katchi Abadi problem in Karachi and how did we get to this stage?

A. The level of urbanization in Pakistan is relatively on the higher side. There are historical reasons for this phenomenon. After gaining independence we tried to go for industrialization in a big way and rural development was ignored. No land reforms took place. The plight of the common villager underwent no change. Many were forced to migrate to the big cities, in search of better living. Karachi, being the only port city of the country and also the Federal Capital in the early years, bore the major brunt of this rural to urban migration. These migrants were more than welcome, as cheap labour was needed to run the industries. However, no serious steps were taken to provide them with proper housing. Population clusters were formed in the vicinity of industrial areas like Landhi and Korangi. After the 1971 debacle in East Pakistan, a much greater influx took place, and new *Katchi Abadis* were formed. Our housing policy is geared to meet the needs of the rising middle class, but the bottom 40% cannot afford formal housing,

so the Katchi Abadis keep proliferating. At present 40% of Karachi's population and 30% of the whole of Sindh's population resides in Katchi Abadis

Q. How was the Sindh Katchi Abadi's Authority (SKAA) formed, what are its functions, aims and objectives?

A. In the first twenty to thirty years after independence, the attitude of the government towards the plight of these Katchi Abadi dwellers was not very helpful, and the policy was to somehow get rid of them. In 1971, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) assumed power in a big way, riding the wave of awami popularism and slogan's like '*Roti, Kapra aur Makan*' were very much in vogue. The PPP government was more sympathetic towards the needs of the Katchi Abadis. However, not much real progress was made. In the 1980's, the local bodies system was given more importance, and in 1987 the SKAA was formed by the Sindh Government. It is an autonomous body with the aim of providing ownership of land to the Katchi Abadi dwellers and also improving their standard of living at the same time.

Q. What steps have been taken to tackle this issue?

A. In the first four to five years after its inception, the SKAA achieved very little and the response of the people towards the regularization efforts was not very enthusiastic. Much rethinking took place on the part of SKAA officials, and it was decided to lay emphasis on simplifying the procedures and reducing the red tape. As a first step it was decided to shift the concerned offices of SKAA in the Katchi Abadis, in order to make it easier for the people to approach and deal with the officials and vice versa. It was also decided to link the regularization of the Katchi Abadis with their development. After consultations with the local people, four main issues, apart from the ownership of land were identified. They were, water supply, sewerage, roads and electricity. In order to make the development process affordable and cost effective, it was decided to shun the common practice of hiring expensive foreign consultants and instead a participatory approach was adopted. Surveys were made to identify the development needs of separate areas and with the help of the local people and organizations like the Orangi Pilot Project



(OPP) a development process was initiated. A successful social sector development programme is also being undertaken. OPP is helping out in this area also. Health programmes, like immunization drives have been initiated.

Credit schemes are also an important part of the overall plan to improve the standard of living of these inhabitants. Through our efforts and due to the success of this participatory approach, the SKAA has been turned into a self financing body, having a lesser degree of dependence on government funding, then other similar nature organizations.

Q. Are you satisfied with the pace of regularization?

A. On the whole, the situation is fairly satisfactory. Katchi Abadis, which had been formed till 23rd March 1985, are being tackled by SKAA and at present 148 Katchi Abadis are under the preview of SKAA. It is expected that within four to five years, the whole process can be completed. However, let me add that KMC can do with a little bit of quickening in its pace of work.

Q. You talk a lot about reviving the local bodies. Given their present state of decay, how do you foresee their revival?

A. It has been proven that a centralized beauracrat system has failed to deliver the goods. There is an urgent need to decentralize the functions of organizations like KMC, with greater role and enhanced powers at the council-

lor level. A councillor is both more accountable and approachable than the present KMC beauracrat, and can help in solving the basic Mohallah level problems. A good beginning can be

made by holding local bodies polls.

The government needs to reconsider its land allocation policy. Even now their are about 2 lac empty plots in Sindh. In development schemes like Shah Latif Town, Hawksbay Scheme, land has been brought by speculators who are waiting for land value to increase.

Q. How do you see this present trend of privatization of utility services like KW&SB and the solid waste management system in Rawalpindi?

A. I am against the wholesale privatization of utility services, as I strongly

feel that the low income sections of the community will not be adequately protected in such a process. Certain portions of the utility services can be privatized, but total privatization will ultimately create great tensions and problems. Instead, the government organizations should be urged to improve their performance and be held accountable for their failures.

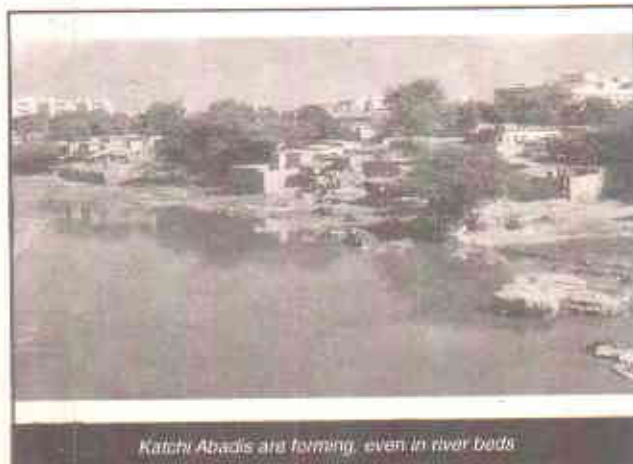
Q. Karachi, from a tiny city of a few million people in 1947, has now developed into a bustling megapolis. Your views.

A. In the initial period after independence, some good planning initiatives were undertaken but the plans could not be implemented due to administrative failures. Karachi was the capital in those days and conse-

quently various organizations like KDA, Contonment boards etc. which were purely beauracrat in nature were formed. The functions of the Mayor were bypassed by the Federal Govt. and purely municipal tasks were performed by them. Resettlement of refugees being one example. This mushrooming of a number of administrative and development organizations could not be controlled and any co-ordinated planning became impossible, with the result that we now have over 25 various landowning organizations functioning in Karachi, which have minimal or no interaction with each other. Levers of their control are held in various places. The need of the hour is the formation of a Metropolitan Government, as is the case with large cities, any where in the world. This is essentially an administrative issue, and need not be politicised. Karachi is still a managable city with vast growth potential and an abundance of natural and human resources.

Q. How do you assess the growing role of the informal sector and NGO's in the development process of Karachi?

A. The informal sector and the NGO's increasing role in the development process of Karachi



Katchi Abadis are forming, even in river beds



is a natural by product of government inaction and apathy, towards the problems and needs of the citizens. It is basically a survival mechanism. However, this role should not be glamourised. It's scope is limited. NGO's cannot take on the role of government. At best they can provide development and management models which can be used in the larger schemes of planning and development by the state apparatus.

Q. Tell us a little about 'Khuda Ki Basti'. What was the motivation and what have been the results?

A. This project came about as a result of the inappropriate land allocation policy of the government, which is one major reason why Katchi Abadis have come into being. Some land was

acquired in Hyderabad, and this project was initiated under the supervision of the Hyderabad Development Authority (HDA). So it was basically Governments Katchi Abadi for migrants. It was a very successful project and later on an organization by the name of 'Saiban' was formed, and another such development scheme was started in Ghara. Presently, a similar exercise is being carried out in Tehseer Town. The government needs to reconsider its land allocation policy. Even now there are about 2 lac empty plots in Sindh. In development schemes like Shah Latif Town, Hawksbay Scheme, land has been brought by speculators who are waiting for land value to increase. However, some good news is that the government has recently formed a study group, and this issue is being seriously looked into.

Q. You were part of a special 'task force', which was created during the previous caretaker government to put forward suggestions and plans on various subjects. I believe you prepared a report on the issue of urban development. What is the present status of that report?

A. It was a basic planning exercise. I had suggested a greater role for the local bodies with enhancement in their technical, financial and managerial capacities. The report also called for holding of local bodies polls. That issue has been linked with the holding of the national census. The report is still under review at various levels. Senior Minister in the Sindh Government, Dr. Muhammad Farooq Sattar, has also shown a keen interest in my proposals. Lets see what happens. We can only hope for the best. □

World's largest rubbish dump to be housing estate

By Claire Wallerstein

The world's largest rubbish dump is being recycled into the newest housing estate in the Philippines, which will provide homes for 25,000 poor scavengers who once lived and died on its stinking slopes. But the Smokey Mountain development, which has been a centrepiece of President Fidel Ramos's much publicized war on urban poverty, is not popular with all those it is meant to help.

People have lived at Smokey Mountain almost since it first appeared in 1954, when authorities trying to contain Manila's six million tons of rubbish a day started dumping it in Tondo, one of the city's poorest areas. What began as a small mound soon spread out of control, sprawling over a nine-acre area and containing 2.2 billion tons of rotting rubbish. The dump, as high as a 20-storey building, was nicknamed Smokey Mountain because of the methane gas which burned in its depths, belching out solid, black smoke.

Tessie Cayago, 59, a mother of nine, said: "Despite all the problems at smokey, we had to stay there since it was the only place where we knew how to make a living, and it was our home."

Her story is typical. The Cayago family moved to the dump in 1967 after her husband lost his job and could no longer afford their rent. Four of her children died there. But everything changed in 1993 when Mr. Ramos's gov-

ernment closed Smokey, and a year later launched a \$250 million goodwill project to rehouse the squatters on the site of the former dump.

The development, which will include a school, hospital and a small forest, is due to be completed by next June. The Helping Foundation, headed by the local parish priest, Father Ben Beltran, has set up dozens of schemes to prepare residents for life after Smokey Mountain.

"I am very impressed with the people," Fr. Beltran said. "They have no political training, and yet they are getting organized in the hope that the government will listen to what they want out of this move."

He said the scavengers had been unable to afford medication, and few children had completed school, because their parents needed them to scavenge. "We are now helping those children to finish their education so they can go on to get proper jobs and support those left without income by the closure of the dump," he said. Nevertheless, many scavengers resent losing their old livelihood. Many admit that scavenging will be the only way they can pay the monthly rent of about \$21 for their new homes. □

(Courtesy: Dawn/Guardian News Service)



PROJECT PROFILE

Issues of urban management: Case study - Mingora

Most of the published literature on urban issues in the Third World, is about capital or large cities, while intermediate cities, housing much of the nations population have not received the attention they deserve. SHEHRI profiles a research project which analysis the problems of Mingora, District Swat, identifies the causes of urban decay and sets guidelines for future development.

The city of Mingora, in the Swat District of NWFP province, recently provided the focus for a research study undertaken by the Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Developement (IUED) of the University of Geneva, Switzerland, and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) Islamabad, Pakistan, in which the Environmental Protection Society of Swat, acted as the local partner. This study was part of an ongoing international research project to analyze the local dynamics and to develop an urban management framework for intermediate cities in order to avoid / minimize the social, economic and environmental problems inherent in large cities. Two other third world cities - in Bolivia and Mozambique apart from Mingora in Pakistan were also selected for the purpose.

The objectives of this research project were manyfold, which included the drawing up of a profile of environmental problems, vulnerabilities and potentials and the promoting of good urban environmental governance through reinforcing the collective capabilities of local actors and the training of young academics and researchers. To advance these objectives, a people centered par-

ticipatory approach was adopted, with interaction between local government and community groups and between the actors in North and South.

Mingora, situated on the left bank of River Swat, is the district headquarters of Swat and its only urban centre. It is also the major transit, trade and industrial centre of the district. It is located at a height of 3200 feet from the sea

Agricultural output has stagnated on account of deforestation and ecological degradation on the one hand and lack of technological and business innovation on the other. Poor quality of tourist services are damaging the potentially very lucrative tourist trade.

level and is spread on an area of 25 square km. It is situated at a distance of 170 km from Peshawar and 254 km from Islamabad. Swat is a rich agricultural area, producing wheat, rice, corn etc. and a variety of high value added fruits and herbs. Mingora serves as the major market town for the produce of the district and is also an industrial centre with about 300 enterprises producing synthetic silk, cloth, cosmetics pharmaceutical products etc. Unfortunately, however, Swat's natural endowments have not been translated into a high standard of living for the people. Population is growing at a rate of 3% per annum. Agricultural output has stagnated on account of deforestation and ecological degradation on the one hand and lack of technological and business inno-

vation on the other. Poor quality of tourist services are damaging the potentially very lucrative tourist trade.

Mingora presents a picture of urban environmental decay. The city does not have a sewerage or solid waste disposal system. The entire industrial and domestic solid/liquid waste is disposed off in the Swat River - Encroachments and illegal zoning conversions have ensured that no open space is left in the city. Noise pollution, which is traffic related, is another nuisance.

To find out about the effects of this decay, a household sample survey was conducted to compile demographic, labor force, housing, income and expenditure, and health profile of Mingora city. Information was also obtained and annualized on the industrial and fiscal state of the city. A detailed study was also made of the political structure and the institutional arrangements in place for urban management.

It was found that the status of the industrial sector in Mingora is unstable and extremely vulnerable to government policy changes. The manufacturing sector, in general and the artificial silk cloth industry in particular, owes its existence primarily to three factors, one the tax free status of Mingora; two, to the tax free availability of imported raw materials and inputs of unchecked smuggling from Afghanistan; and three to the misuse of the export rebate facility available to artifi-



cial silk cloth manufacturers. However, the sector faces a crisis situation, as the national government has severely restricted the Afghan transit trade and has abolished the export rebate scheme.

The analysis of the socio-economic data also tends to provide a microeconomic confirmation of the macroeconomic conclusions about the low level economic equilibrium prevailing in Mingora. There is a high dependency ratio, as fewer hands are available to feed a greater number of mouth. The contribution of women in the work force is extremely low as only one out of ten house holds report working women. The bulk of the labour force are engaged in generally low value added economic activities. As such, though absolute poverty does not exist, the majority of the households can be classified as poor or lower middle class.

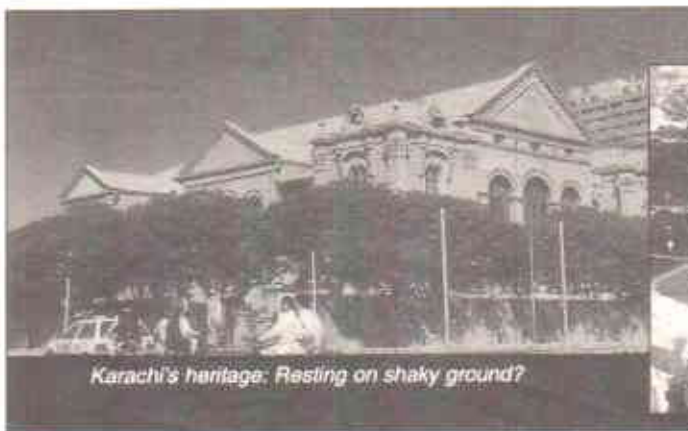
The inhabitants live in three broad types of houses. About 57% of households live in 'pucca' houses, 24% in 'semi-pacca' houses and 19% in 'katcha' houses. Those living in the plains are generally better off than those living on the hillsides. 27% of households live in rented houses. In 1988, the NWFP government decided to establish a housing estate at Kanu, on the outskirts of Mingora. However, the scheme has failed as it was conceived without relevance to socio-economic ground realities.

It was established that most of the urban environmental distortions have taken place due to the absence of any kind of urban planning and zoning laws in the city. A multiplicity - of least a dozen - of federal, provincial and local organizations / agencies are charged with authority and responsibility for the administration and development of Mingora

city. The problem is compounded by the fact that there is apparently no linkage and the scope of authority and responsibility of each of the organization/agencies overlap and at the same time lack co-ordination. There exists a state of institutional anarchy.

This research study was conducted under the supervision of Mr. Kaiser Bengali, Dr. in Economy, SDPI, Mr. Shaukat A. Sharar, Architect, Mingora, Mr. Alain Viaro, Senior Lecturer IUED / MARC, and Mr. Arlette Ziegler, Anthropologist, IUED. Towards the end of the research, a national seminar was held in Mingora to present the initial results of the research. The results were also presented at the colloquium in Geneva. In view of the findings of the research project, the need has been stressed to develop an urban management plan for the city on an urgent basis. □

URBAN PHOTO ALBUM



Karachi's heritage: Resting on shaky ground?



Growth sans planning



Anyone for a window seat?



To ensure a secure tomorrow, start investing in our children now



GLOBAL

The downside of recycling

Greenpeace believes that Europe should close its borders to hazardous waste. However, this view is diametrically opposed to the principle of free trade within the EU.

Just like their three-times table, almost everyone in the Netherlands knows Lansink's ladder. This ladder, developed in the mid-eighties by Christian Democrat MP Ad Lansink, ranks different ways of dealing with waste in order of preference. The best option is prevention, but recycling is a good second option. The least desirable methods of disposal are incineration and landfill. Lansink's ladder is one of the cornerstones of Dutch environmental policy.

When it comes to applying this method at European level, things get a whole lot more complicated. A waste substance that can potentially be processed, whether toxic or not, is regarded as an economic product and subsequently subject to free trade - one of the pillars of the EU. The principle of self-sufficiency applies throughout the EU only when it comes to disposal (after it has been established that the substance is not eligible for reprocessing in any way).

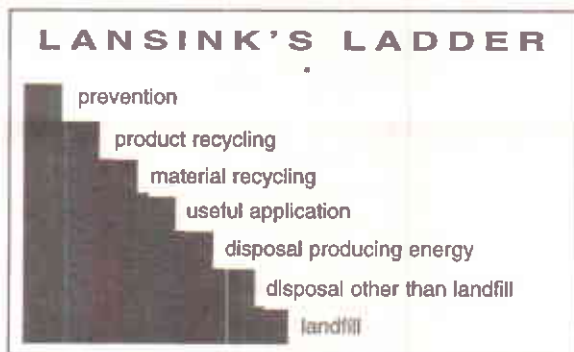
Critics fear that waste will increasingly find its way to countries that have less stringent environmental laws. Even now, 'strict' countries such as the Netherlands and Germany are net exporters, while Belgium, Great Britain and Southern Europe import more waste than they export. Some 160,000 tonnes of the 750,000 tonnes of hazardous waste the Netherlands produces each year, ends up abroad.

Greenpeace is therefore calling for a total ban on the international transport of hazardous waste. "Hazardous waste is growing by three per cent a year in the EU," says Sabina Voogd of Greenpeace. "This is only possible because companies can easily get rid of it. There is no incentive to look for alternatives to end-of-pipe emissions. An international transport ban would place responsibility for processing with national governments and industry and would be in line with the polluter pays principle." Greenpeace can draw support from the North Sea Declaration, in which the North Sea countries undertook to phase out all substances that are toxic; persistent or liable to

bioaccumulate in discharge to the sea. The industries that still discharge into the North Sea will have to find cleaner alternatives.

Greenpeace is not impressed by the argument that recycling - whether at home or abroad - is always an environmentally friendly solution. It says that recycling usually comes down to incineration. A great deal of hazardous waste actually ends up in cement furnaces (particularly in Belgium). Despite the strict emission requirements the EU has set for the incineration of hazardous waste, the European Commission has made an exception in the case of cement furnaces. Up to forty per cent of their fuel can consist of hazardous waste without their having to comply

with strict emission guidelines. This is a stroke of luck for industry. Instead of having to pay hundreds of guilders per tonnes to have their waste processed in an expensive waste incinerator that meets the emission standards, they can actually earn money from their waste. And cement producers benefit too, saving huge amounts on



their fuel bills.

The Dutch environment ministry believes Greenpeace's position is very noble, but feels the organisation is seeing things rather too much in black and white. Hans Meyer of the waste substances department points out that a transport ban would put an end to some good processing potential. Thanks to recycling, for instance, lead from batteries and silver from photographic film gets to have a second life. "The majority of the hazardous waste that leaves the country is destined for recovery," says Meyer. "The Netherlands doesn't have the facilities to process the waste it exports." But he agrees with Greenpeace to a certain extent. "A lot of people forget that prevention is the top step on Lansink's ladder. And that applies to Europe too." □

(Courtesy: Environmental News from the Netherlands, December 1996, # 6)



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

SHEHRI invites the residents of the city to share with us, their concerns, on issues which are adversely affecting their neighbourhood's environment. Please write to us, preferably with a supporting photograph, so that efforts are made and solutions sought - Ed.

Why has a public utility been allowed to turn into a public nuisance?

I am a resident of North Nazimabad. North Nazimabad was developed in the early years after independence and was considered a posh residential area with wide open spaces and also very wide roads. Later on, storm drains were constructed in between the roads. These storm drains were built for collecting the rain water for utilimate disposal.

However, due to various reasons, these drains have failed to serve their purpose and have now become collectors of garbage and filth of the surrounding area. They are now used by all and sundry for disposing the household garbage. In this way the drains get clogged and the environment is degraded.

In fact KMC has constructed garbage bins on top of these drains instead of doing something to stop this hazardous practice. Garbage also spills over on the road, causing

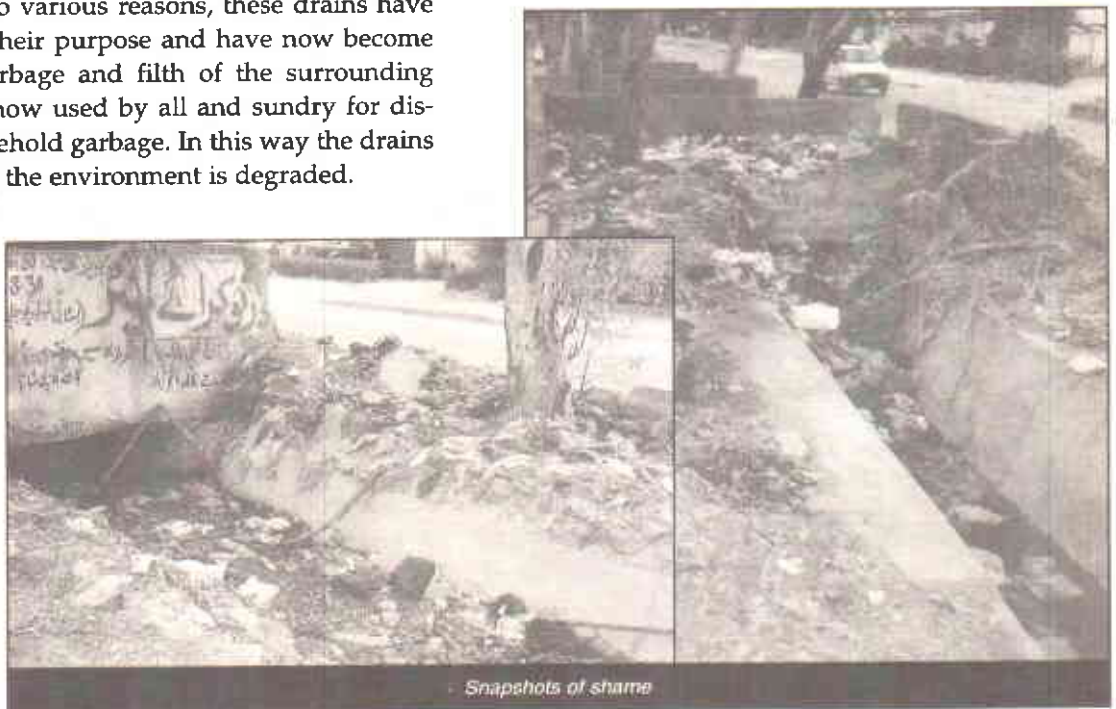
hardships for the pedestrians and it is also a potential cause of traffic accidents.

Our authorities in a show of utter disregard to the basics of proper urban sanitation principles have connected sewers with these drains to create further filth and misery for the residents.

I suggest that as a first step, these drains should be covered with slabs. Some drains have been covered, but most of them remain open. Alternative arrangements for garbage disposal be made so that garbage is not dumped in the drains and cleaning of the drains be done at regular intervals.

I hope that something is done immediately by concerned officials to solve this major problem of our area. □

(Uzma Murtaza Khan, North Nazimabad)



Snapshots of shame



JUNIOR SHEHRI

Sixteen Simple Steps

Here is a list of sixteen simple steps you can take to help heal the environment. Put a check mark in the box beside each step you take during a two-week period.

Make these steps part of your routine.

Packaging

- Select products that come in biodegradable packages whenever possible
- Buy products in returnable bottles, and return them.
- Wash and reuse glass jars.
- Rinse and reuse aluminum foil.

Paper Products

- Use cloth napkins instead of paper ones
- Buy greeting cards that have been printed on recycled paper.
- Reuse gift wrap.
- Recycle newspapers.
- Write on the back of a sheet of notebook paper, not just on the front.
- Reuse paper lunch bags or carry your meal in a fabric bag or lunch box.
- Save and reuse cardboard gift and shipping boxes.

Plastic Products

- Select nonplastic products whenever possible.
- When you shop in grocery stores or supermarkets, avoid putting fruits and vegetables in plastic bags. □

Plant a Tree or Garden

Plant a tree or garden. Select a spot in your yard that is large enough. Be sure that this spot receives adequate sunlight and that water drains from it readily. Condition the soil by loosening it and by adding organic material from your compost. To select appropriate trees or plants, read about what they need and how large they become in the information printed on seed packets and plant labels or in a garden book. For best results follow all instructions carefully.

Tips for Gardeners

- Weed often. Weeds take food from your plants and interfere with their growth.
- Cultivate gently. Using a hoe or trowel, loosen the soil around the plants. If the soil is packed too tightly, it is hard for food and water to reach plant roots and hard for plant roots to find space in which to grow and spread.
- Water frequently. You may need to water soil containing seeds or young plants as often as twice a day to keep it moist. You may need to water soil containing older plants with deeper roots only once a week.
- Feed regularly. Growing plants need a balanced diet of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. Read the label to be sure that the food you buy contains what your plants need. Follow the instructions so that you will know how often to feed your plants and how much food to give them. □

(Courtesy: Earth Book for kids)

Ode to Pakistan

This land of ours in which we live,
Sacrifices for which our elders did give,
And dreamt about night and day,
Is celebrating its 50th birthday.

The land of green and sea of blue,
The Quaid had thought it a dream come true,
Freedom from injustice and every kind of harm,
It would provide the Muslims with a much needed balm.

The land of liberty, Iqbal dreamed,
A heaven on Earth, or so it seemed;

The Muslims united and worked so hard,
That from their struggle they could not be barred.

Finally on 14th August, 1947,
A new era ushered in for all Muslim brethren,
On the map of the world appeared Pakistan,
Which was soon known as the fort of Islam.

Now, we being the next generation,
Should try to live up to the Quaid's expectation,
And raise our country to that astral height,
That the whole world would envy its might. □

– Kiran Bashir Ahmad



ASK SHEHRI

Most residents when faced with any civic problem do not know which person or organization to contact in order to solve their problem. In this column we invite the readers to share their worries with us and seek our help, which is always forthcoming - Ed.

Q. I am developing a garden in my house. I am in need of quite a few fresh saplings. From where can I get them cheap?

(Saida Bashir, Clifton, Karachi)

A. Contact: Director General, Parks & Recreation, KMC, Khialdas Park (Opp. Arambagh Thana) Tel: 2636393

Q. I am a student and am preparing a report on the issue of 'Transport Management in Karachi'. Where can I get some help on my report?

(Naveeda Ali, Defense Housing Authority, Karachi)

A. Contact: Director, Traffic Engineering Bureau KDA, (Annexe Bld.) Civic Centre, Karachi. Tel: 4933719

Q. There is a high rise coming up in my area, which I think is illegal. Whom should I contact?

(Kausar Qureshi, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi)

A. COB, Circle 'E' Mr. Rais Ahmed Jaffri, KBCA Building, Karachi. Tel: 4923598

Shehri needs volunteers

The various projects of Shehri are managed by its following six sub-committees:

- Anti Pollution
- Media & Outreach (Newsletters)
- Built Environment
- Legal
- Conservation & Heritage
- Parks & Recreation
- Fund Raising

Any person who wishes to help out in Shehri's ongoing and planned projects (cash / kind) should visit the Shehri Office for further information or contact the Shehri Secretariat through phone, fax or e-mail

JOIN SHEHRI TO CREATE A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

If you wish to join shehri please send this card to

SHEHRI Citizens for a Better Environment.
206-G, Block 2, P.E.C.H.S., Karachi-75400, Pakistan.
Tel / Fax : 453-0646

Name : _____

Tel. (Off) : _____ Tel. (Res) : _____

Address : _____

Occupation _____

SHEHRI MEMBERSHIP

Don't forget to renew your membership for 1997! Join Shehri and do your bit as a good citizen to make this city a clean, healthy and environmentally friendly place to live in!



HERITAGE

Moenjodaro: Left to the elements?

As the government decides to the wind up the 'Authority for Preservation of Moenjodaro', this most spectacular of all ancient cities, faces an uncertain future. Abdul Ghafoor describes the unique features of this ancient metropolis, and stresses the need for initiating appropriate conservation measures to prevent its imminent destruction.

It was recently announced that the government has decided to wind up the 'Authority for the Preservation of Moenjodaro, 23 years after it was created to save the 5000 years old world famous historical site. It was a project for which funding was provided by UNESCO, proportionate to the Government of Pakistan's contribution.

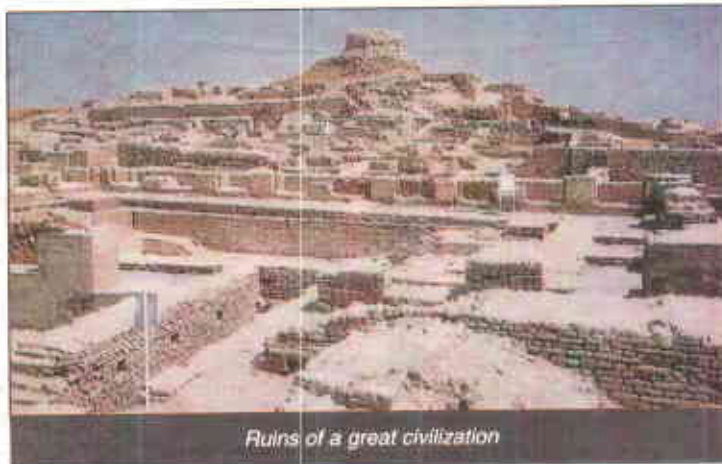
In the wake of the closure of this conservation programme, there are claims and counter claims by various concerned quarters about the programmes success. The Director General of the Archeology Department, Mr. Niaz Rasool feels satisfied about the pace of the conservation work, while world renowned archaeologist Mr. Ahmed Hassan Dani, feels that the programme has proved a total failure.

He feels that Moenjodaro was in better shape in 1973, when this programme started, as compared to its present status. Mr. Dani has gone so far as to say that the campaign has caused the 'death of Moenjodaro'. Now there are talks of setting up a "high powered board" for the protection and preservation of Moenjodaro. Whatever be the exact reality, there is no denying the fact that we have proven unequal to the talks of preserving what is proba-

bly our most important and recognizable historical site, which is now faced with a crisis situation.

"The Mound of the Dead"

Moenjodaro, or the "Mound of the Dead", is the site which houses the remains of a civilization which flourished about 4500-5000



Ruins of a great civilization

years ago, located at a distance of 350 miles from Karachi, near the city of Larkana. Moenjodaro was first visited and described in 1912, by the archaeologist D.R. Bhandaker. More excavations were carried out between 1924 and 1931. Today 100,000 square meters, or 10% of Moenjodaro, has been excavated.

The Citadel

Arriving at the entrance to Moenjodaro, the citadel is the first prominent feature to be seen, which rises to more than 20 meters above ground. Ascending the hill to the left we find the

buddhist monastery with the stupa in the centre of the courtyard. The 'Great Bath' at the foot of the stupa, to the west, is one of the largest structures of the city, measuring 25 x70 meters.

The Lower City

The lower city stretches east of the citadel area. It is more than 1000 metres long, and in its southern part, almost 800 meters wide. All the houses are more or less oriented towards the cardinal directions (N.S.E.W) and have their own wells, indicating a high level of water consumption. No other civilization of that time had such a sophisticated system of water supply and drainage. Covered drains run alongside most of the streets and lanes.

DK-G Area

It is the northernmost area of the lower city. Here we find impressive walls and famous buildings like the 'Chief House, which covers an area of more than 800 square meters.

VS-Area

Following the 'First Street', to the south and after having climbed a modern staircase, one reaches



after approximately 400 meters, the VS-Area, named after Vats, the excavator of 1925-26.

HR-Area

Named after Herald Hargreaves, the excavator of 1924-25, this is one of the prominent and the southern most quarter of the city. 'First Street', divides the area into two before it ends at a hill. Coming from north, one can study a large house in passing through a small lane to the north. The famous 'dancing girl', was found during the excavations in one the smaller houses at the southern edge of the excavated area.

Moneer Area

This area belongs to the late-urban phase (around 2100 B.C.) and shows a good deal of residential houses with bathing platforms.

DK-B, C Areas

In a remote spot, at the eastern most fringe of the city, in the DK-B area, the famous 'priest king', was

found in 1925. Today, one is more inclined to see his bust, not as the depiction of the ruler of the Indus Empire, but more probably as a house deity

Beliefs and languges



Moenjodaro Museum

The religion and rituals which shaped the lives of these people can only be guessed at. Seal representations of a three faced and horned god squatting with legs bent double and surrounded by an elephant, a tiger, rhinoceros and buffalo, suggest a forerunner to the Hindu Siva. There are also indications on seals and potteries that tree, particularly the pipal

or sacred fig trees, were worshipped. Animals, notably the bull, which is sometimes accompanied by a so-called "sacred brazier", or manger were apparently objects of veneration.

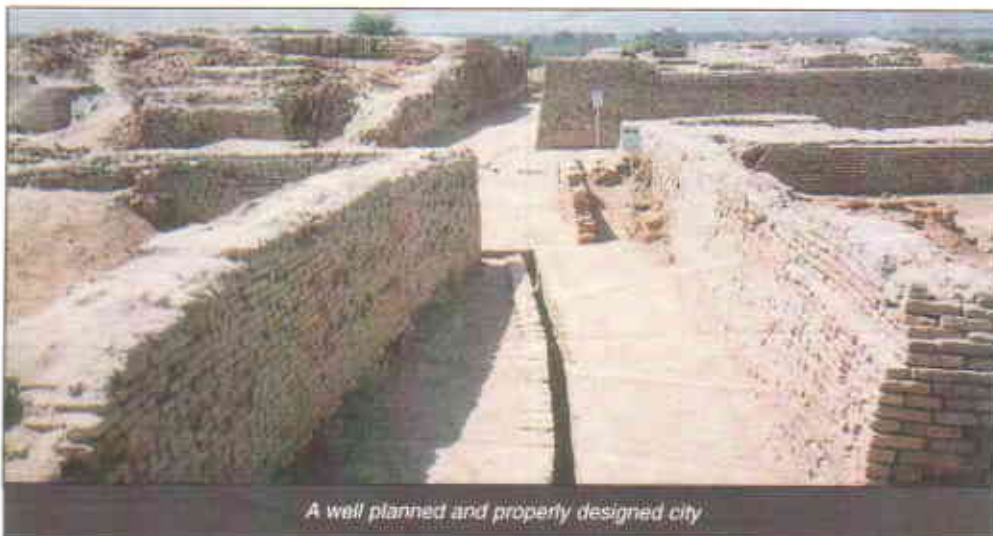
Languages, which were spoken are indicated by clearly rendered but unintelligible characters upon foods in the shops and even on some of the potteries.

What destroyed this firmly settled civilization? climatic, economic, political deterioration may have weakened it, but it is now generally accepted that they were destroyed by Aryan invaders in or about the 15th century B.C.

What must be ensured now, is that the remains of this, one of the most spectacular of all ancient cities are not destroyed by our apathy and lack of commitment towards issues related to heritage conservation. □

What destroyed this firmly settled civilization? climatic, economic, political deterioration may have weakened it, but it is now generally accepted that they were destroyed by Aryan invaders in or about the 15th century B.C.

(Abdul Ghafoor is a Civil Engineer)



A well planned and properly designed city