



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

January - March 1999 Vol. 9/No. 1

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KBCA Oversee Committee: A Model For Positive Change

The Karachi Building Control Authority (KBCA) Oversee Committee has been re-notified for another term. *Shehri* has played a pivotal role in both initiating and sustaining this effort aimed at bringing about transparency and the rule of law within KBCA. This process of citizen participation and public-private interaction offers a model and a guideline for much needed similar initiatives in other civic bodies to ensure good governance.

It is a matter of some satisfaction that the KBCA Oversee Committee has been re-notified (see box), despite strong resistance offered by vested interest groups.

Shehri and other committed citizens of the city kept up with their demands for the re-notification of the Oversee Committee and as a result, not only has the committee been re-notified but its powers and functions have also been enhanced.

During its first stint, the members of the Oversee Committee were criticized for not being able to follow up on most of their recommendations whose proper implementation was often not achieved.

To tackle this problem, a Secretariat of the Oversee Committee has now been set up. The responsibilities of the Secretariat include co-ordination of the committee activities and ensuring that the decisions of the committee are properly followed up.

Mr. Zaidul Wasti, Controller of Buildings, KBCA has been appointed as the Secretary of the Oversee Committee Secretariat, while a nominee of Shehri, Mr. Sarwar Khalid is acting as the Oversee Committee Secretariat Co-ordinator.

In the Oversee Committee itself, Shehri is directly represented by its member. Mr. Roland de Souza, while the Chairman of Shehri, Mr. Qazi Faez Isa, is represented in the Committee in his capacity as a noted legal expert of the city.



Break the law at your own peril!

It has been part of Shehri's agenda to empower the citizens by providing them information about the laws, rules and regulations which govern our civic bodies and facilitate their interaction with government agencies so that transparency is ensured. It is felt that this process has also resulted in improving the capacity of government officials to bring about positive changes in the system. □

A CHARTER OF REFORM KBCA OVERSEE COMMITTEE NOTIFICATION

NO. SO-Land (KDA)/HTP/3-89/99:- The Government of Sindh in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 4-B of the Sindh Building Control Ordinance, 1979 (hereinafter referred to as the 'ordinance') is pleased to appoint a Committee to oversee and monitor the functioning and operation of the Karachi Building Control Authority (hereinafter referred to as the 'Authority') for a period of three years and until further orders, The Committee shall comprise of the following members:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| (i) Secretary Housing & Town Planning Department | Chairman |
| (ii) Chief Controller of Buildings, KBCA | Secretary |
| (iii) Mr. Justice (Retd.) Haziqul-Khairi | Member |
| (iv) Director General, KDA | Member |
| (v) Director General, LDA | Member |
| (vi) Director General, MDA | Member |
| (vii) Legal Advisor, KBCA | Member |
| (viii) Chairman, Pakistan Engineering Council | Member |
| (ix) Chairman, Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners | Member |
| (x) Chairman of Association of Builders & Developers | Member |
| (xi) Nominee of SHEHRI-Citizens for a Better Environment | Member |
| (xii) Architecture Department, Dawood College of Engineering & Technology | Member |
| (xiii) Civil Engineering Department, NED Engineering University | Member |
| (xiv) Citizen with proven track record of interest in building matters nominated by the Governor: Mr. Ardeshir Cowasjee | Member |
| (xv) Advocate with a minimum of ten years of | |



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Vice Chairperson : Vicky de'Souza
General Secretary :

Amber Ali Bhai
Treasurer : Hanif A. Sattar
Members : Navaid Husain
Khatib Ahmed
Dr. S. Raza Ali Gardez.

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Mrs. Mansoor
Asst. Co-ordinator :
Mohammad
Rehan Ashraf

SHEHRI SUB-COMMITTEES

- i) Legal
- ii) Media & Outreach
- iii) Anti-Pollution
- iv) Parks & Recreation
- v) Gun Free Society
- vi) Conservation & Heritage
- vii) Fund Raiser

Contributions are welcome

Interested contributors should contact the SHEHRI office for writers guidelines. SHEHRI newsletter readership is from students, professionals, environmentalists, policy makers, NGOs and other organizations

Views expressed herein do not necessarily express the views of the Editor/Editorial Board.

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EDITORIAL

Where is the Metropolitan Government?

Of late, cause of much debate and controversy has been the process of forming metropolitan agencies for Karachi. While the process of establishing the 'Karachi Metropolitan Police', is said to be in an advanced stage, an ordinance for the constitution of a 'Karachi Metropolitan Transport Authority (KMTA) has already been prepared and notified. Although few among the genuinely concerned citizens would question the validity and need of cementing such institutions of local governance, the fear of the derailment of such systems arises from the fact that the initiatives are not the outcome of a normal course of events. By a normal course of events one may imply that first to be established is a strong government, truly metropolitan in its character and functions, which in due course of time gives birth to supportive satellite bodies like the ones we seem to be experimenting with - minus a metropolitan government! This serious administrative shortcoming is clearly reflected in the charter of KMTA which is far from metropolitan in its nature and content. However, this obvious flaw notwithstanding,

also not to be discouraged are the sincere efforts of the concerned citizens who develop and support these efforts in the hope that as these bodies evolve, somewhere along the road, hopefully in not too distant a future, they will receive the protective shade of a proper metropolitan government. This hope and prayer is a reflection of the extreme hardships the civil society faces in their efforts for bringing meaningful and lasting changes in our system and the difficult compromises made along the way. It is also a healthy sign that the local NGO's and other citizen groups, instead of adopting a confrontational attitude have decided to work with the government in evolving models and systems in which the state and civil society can draw upon the strengths of each other for the good of the city. Despite the hardships, the process goes on, as it always has. As Faiz Sahib very rightly said.

انہیں کے فیض سے بازارِ عقل روشن ہے
جو گاہ گاہ جنوں اُختیار کرتے رہے



Sub-Committee to look into building plans of highrises.

The Overseer Committee of KBCA, has formed a three member sub-committee, comprising of representatives of Pakistan Engineering Council, (PEC) Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners (PCATP) and NED University of Engineering and Technology Karachi.

All plans pertaining to ground plus four and above buildings are to be referred to the sub-committee to ensure that no violation of building bye-laws is committed in the approval of the plans. □



Mr. Roland deSouza, Shahr representative in the KBCA Overseer Committee

C-Pg. 1 (Notification)

active practice, nominated by the Governor Qazi Faez Isa. Bar-at-Law

Member

The organizations listed at number (viii) to (xiv) may be represented by such person (s) as the concerned organization in writing intimates to the Secretary of the Committee and unless otherwise notified in writing, the person who was initially representing the organization shall continue to do so. If an organization is represented by more than one person, such persons shall for the purposes of this notification be deemed to be a single member.

1. The Committee may undertake the following functions:

(i) To oversee and monitor the grant of approvals of buildings in accordance with the provisions of the Karachi Building and Town Planning Regulations, 1979 and/or any other regulations framed under the Ordinance hereinafter referred to as the 'Regulations'.

The Authority in case the same is in violation of its approved building plan and the Authority shall within fifteen days of the receipt of such intimation take appropriate steps in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

(ii) To issue directions to the Authority for the demolition of dangerous or unauthorized buildings. The Authority shall within fifteen days of the receipt of such directions implement the same in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance and/or the Regulations.

(iv) To draft and recommend amendments to the Regulations as and when deemed necessary.

(v) To draft and make recommendations for amending the Ordinance whenever deemed necessary.

(vi) To draft rules and regulations for giving effect to the provisions of the Ordinance.

(vii) To ensure that the Authority effectively enforces and implements the provisions of the Ordinance and the Regulations.

(viii) To recommend policy measures to the Authority and the Government in relation to the regulation of growth of the city both vertically and horizontally.

(ix) To suggest ways and means of making the Authority more efficient and effective.

(x) To recommend measures to protect and

preserve the built environment of the city.

(xi) To take measures to ensure that the provisions for amenity parks, playgrounds, public services and recreational areas in various housing and other schemes are properly used.

(xii) To make recommendations for the effective preservation and restoration of buildings of architectural, cultural or historical interest.

(xiii) To co-ordinate with any task force, advisers, experts or other person performing any functions under the Ordinance.

(xiv) To make law/rules/recommendations for layout and building plan.

(xv) To initiate action against any officer or employee of the Authority who appears to be acting contrary to the provisions of the Ordinance and/or the Regulations and/or is perceived to be indulging in corrupt practices (as the ordinary meaning of the word connotes) and submit a written complaint to the Government in respect thereof, which complaint shall be signed by at least five member of the Committee. The Government shall within seven days of the receipt of such complaint commence disciplinary action against such officer or employee.

(xvi) To make efforts to ensure transparency in the functioning of the Authority and to further ensure that requisite information is made available to the general public.

(xvii) Any other steps that the Committee deems necessary and expedient in order to effectively carry out its functions and in exercise of its powers set out herein.

2. All words used here shall have the same meaning as is assigned to them in the Ordinance and/or the Regulations.

3. The Chief Controller of Buildings shall be the ex officio Secretary of the Committee.

4. The Committee shall meet at least once a month on a fixed day and time.

5. Four members shall form the quorum of a meeting. In case the Chairman is not able to attend a meeting, the members present shall amongst themselves elect a Chairman for the meeting.

6. Decisions in a meeting shall be taken by simple majority. In case of equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

7. The Secretary shall keep proper record of



(Notification Cont.)

all proceedings of a meeting and shall provide copies thereof to all members within one week. In case the Secretary fails to take and record the minutes of a meeting, the same may be recorded by any member of the Committee, subject to the approval of the majority of members attending such meeting.

- 8. The member shall be entitled to receive assistance and information from the Authority and its officers and employees with regard to all matters relating to the functioning of the Authority. In the event of failure to render assistance or the failure to provide information or the giving of false or misleading information, disciplinary action shall be initiated by the Government against the concerned officer or employee upon the written complaint of at least four members, particularizing therein the matter complained of.
- 9. The Authority shall submit quarterly reports to the committee giving detailed particulars therein of its progress, achievements and reasons for any failures to achieve its targets.

- 10. Any recommendations/suggestions/proposals given by the Committee to the Authority or to the Government or any other concerned authority in exercise of the Powers conferred under this notification shall be in written form.
- 11. The Government, Authority, or agency receiving such recommendations/suggestions/proposals shall within fifteen days of the receipt thereof either accept and adopt the same or adopt the same with modifications.
- 12. In case the Government, Authority, or agency receiving such recommendations / suggestions / proposals decides not to accept or adopt the same with or without modifications, it shall call a meeting of the Committee members and try to bring about a consensus in respect thereof, failing which it shall give its reasons for rejecting such recommendations/suggestions/proposals.
- 13. No suit or proceeding or legal proceeding shall lie against any member in respect of anything done or intended to be done in good faith in the performance of functions or exercise of powers contained herein.
- 14. Any member who does not wish to retain his membership of the Committee may submit his resignation to the Government.
- 15. Any member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the committee shall no longer be considered to be a member of the Committee.
- 16. Any vacancy occurring in the Committee by virtue of death, resignation, minimum prescribed attendance or any other reasons shall be filled in by the Government by appointment of new members. In making such appointment in respect of the said vacancy by a member of a particular organization or of a particular and relevant qualification, the Government may ensure that only such person is appointed who is representative of a similar organization or who is similarly qualified.

(Syed Faisal Saud)
Secretary to Government of Sindh

No. So-land(KDA)/HTP/3-89/99 Karachi dated the, 9th March, 1999.

Empowering the Citizens



**Karachi Building Control Authority
KDA**

Civic Centre Annexe,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi
Ph: 493-6981, 493-2263

Attention Citizens

To assist the citizens of Karachi and to help establish transparency, the KBCA has been maintaining a

"Public Information Counter"

at the Civic Centre Annexe 1st Floor for the past two years. The general public is advised to visit the Counter and:

- ◇ register written complaints of any kind (which will be answered in writing within 10 days)
- ◇ obtain (within 5 days) copies of any approved building plans and related documents at nominal charges
- ◇ obtain written information (within 10 days) on citizens' problems/issues relating to the built environment.

Citizens are strongly advised not to invest in building projects (flats, shops, offices, godowns, bungalows, etc.) without first inquiring at the KBCA "Public Information Counter" and obtaining written information about the nature and extent of the "NOC for Sale". A copy of the "Model Agreement with Builder" is also on display at the Counter. Information of pending litigation on projects is also available.

Citizens are also cautioned that it is a criminal offence under SBCO '79 to occupy any premises (flats, shops, offices, etc.) without a KBCA "Completion/Occupancy Certificate". Penalties include fines and/or imprisonment.

The KBCA is here to serve and protect your interests. Visit the "Public Information Counter" and obtain the relevant information before investing your hard-earned monies!

This is your city! Preserve its built environment!
Karachi Building Control Authority



SHEHRI ACTIVITIES

Ninth Annual General Meeting of Shehri-CBE

The Ninth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Shehri-CBE was held at the Shehri office on Saturday, 3rd April 1999, in which office bearers for the years 1999-2000 were elected.

Ms. Victoria de-Souza, Vice-Chairperson, Shehri read out the minutes of Shehri AGM 1998, which were later proposed for adoption by Mr. Haider, a member and seconded by another Shehri member, Mr. Mohammad Ali Rasheed.

Ms. Amber Ali Bhai, General Secretary, Shehri, then gave details of Shehri's activities / projects of the year 1998 and also provided an overview of the projects for the year 1999, which is as follows.

Legal Sub-Committee

The participants were informed by Ms. Ali Bhai that the Karachi Building Control Authority (KBCA) Oversee Committee had been re-notified. This decision had been taken due to the tireless efforts by Shehri members and other concerned people of the civil society, in the face of strong resistance from vested interest groups.

The participants were also informed that not only has the Oversee Committee been re-noti-

fied, its powers and functions have also been substantially increased. Out of the total of ten Oversee Committee members, two are Shehri members. Shehri is directly represented in the committee by Mr. Roland de Souza, while the Chairperson of Shehri, Mr. Qazi Faez Isa, sits in the committee in his capacity as a noted legal expert

A long-standing demand of Shehri was accepted when the KDA Governing Body was recently reconstituted, with greater representation from the citizens.

Owing to the continued efforts of Shehri, a *Green Bench*, comprising of two senior High Court judges has been formed in the Sindh High Court to look into cases involving environmental concerns. Shehri members are now being asked by the local judiciary to help in such cases.

Shehri is also striving to introduce similar measures at the Supreme Court level.

Under the *Protection of the Sanctity of the Mazar Act*, 35 buildings in the vicinity of the Quaid-e-Azam mausoleum were termed illegal by the Sindh High Court. Later, the Supreme Court gave the builders relief. However, on Shehri's demand the case was sent back to the Sindh High Court, which again termed the buildings illegal and their demolition is presently taking place. Case against the illegal con-



(L-R) Ms. Amber Ali Bhai (General Secretary) Ms. Victoria de Souza (Vice Chairperson) Mr. Khalid Ahmed (Treasurer)

of the city.

A KBCA Oversee Committee Secretariat has also been formed to coordinate the activities of the committee. A nominee of Shehri, Mr. Sarwar Khalid, acts as coordinator of the Oversee Committee Secretariat.



Ms. Victoria de Souza chaired the AGM proceedings



Ms. Amber Ali Bhai described Shehri work for the year 1998



Mr. Khalid Ahmed presented Shehri's audited accounts for the year 1998



struction of *Fortune Towers*, on main Shahrah-e-Faisal, Karachi, is pending in which Shehri is a party.

In the infamous *Glass Towers* case, third party interest has been removed, due to which the builders have not been able to rent out the shops.

A committee chaired by Mr. Salim Thariani is presently updating the rules/regulations of Sindh Building Control Ordinance 1979 (SBCO '79). Shehri is represented in the committee by Mr. Husnain Lotia, a professional architect.

The present strength of the Shehri legal sub-committee stands at nine members and 31 legal cases filed by Shehri are pending in the courts.

Media & Outreach Sub-Committee

Four newsletters, in English and Urdu languages were brought out by the committee in the year 1998, which were well received in the public. Apart from the newslet-

ters, two-research projects were managed by Shehri member, Mr. Farhan Anwar. One project related to the sector of urban solid waste management and was titled

A long-standing demand of Shehri was accepted when the KDA Governing Body was recently reconstituted, with greater representation from the citizens.

Neighborhood Level Solid Waste Management in Karachi: Issues and Solutions. The second study, *Riding for a Fall: Analyzing the Public Housing Sector in Karachi*, looked into the problems facing the urban public housing sector of the city.

Efforts are also, presently underway to develop Shehri's own website.

Anti-Pollution Sub-Committee

Shehri adopted a park (ST-12, Scheme 5, Clifton, Karachi) under the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) *Adopt a Park*, Scheme.

However, due to the non-cooperation of the area residents, the project has failed to achieve the expected results. Shehri might have to return the park to back to KMC, if the present state of affairs do not undergo a positive change.

Gun Free Society

Shehri, in continuation to its ongoing media campaign which has already proven very successful (Gun Free Car Stickers) is looking into the possibility of placing a *Public Message Sign Board*, at some prominent spot in the city. For this purpose, donations are required.

Fund Raiser Sub-Committee

The participants were informed that certain donors whose wish it is to remain anonymous are contributing to Shehri on a regular basis. Part of the administrative cost of Shehri is thus met. Also, due to the efforts of Shehri members and Ms. Mansoor, Administrator, Shehri, substantial funds were obtained last year.

Shehri formed part of the Drafting Committee of Karachi Metropolitan Transport Authority (KMTA). In this committee, Shehri was represented by Ms. Amber Ali Bhai and Mr. Farhan Anwar. Shehri is also a part of the *Task Force on Municipal Affairs* formed by the Governor of Sindh.

Mr. Hanif Sattar and Mr. Khatib Ahmed of Shehri are part of a Task Force looking into Traffic Management at Tariq Road, and removal of encroachments.

The Annual Report for the year



Mr. Farhan Anwar of Shehri outlined the achievements of Media and Outreach Sub Committee



Members took keen interest in the AGM proceedings



1998 was proposed for adoption by Mr. Kaikobad Dinshaw, member Shehri and seconded by Mr. Chaudhry Nisar, member Shehri.

The audited report for year 1998 was presented by Mr. Khatib Ahmed, Treasurer, Shehri. It was proposed for adoption by Mr. Amin Haroon, member Shehri and seconded by Ms. Amra Javed, member Shehri.

Appointment of Auditors and their remunerations for the year 1999 were decided (same as in 1998). The appointment was proposed

for adoption by member Shehri, Mr. Derrick Dean.

The annual fee for the year 1999 (Shehri membership) was fixed at Rs. 300/- (any amount over and above would be acceptable).

The office bearers and members of Shehri managing committee for the year 1999-2000 were elected. (See box) The members present also gave their views on the workings of Shehri and suggested ways of improving its functions. □

Shehri-CBE Managing Committee (1999-2000)

Mr. Qazi Faez Isa	Chairperson
Ms. Victoria deSouza	Vice Chairperson
Ms. Amber Ali bhai	General Secretary
Mr. Hanif A. Sattar	Treasurer
Mr. Navaid Husain	Executive Member
Mr. Khatib Ahmed	Executive Member
Dr. S. Raza Ali Gardezi	Executive Member

Shehri Makes A Difference

Glass Towers One Step Forward

On 3rd of May 1999, the Supreme Court ordered the builders of the Glass Towers project to remove the portion of the building facing the Clifton Road, Karachi, as it might obstruct the future expansion of the road to the proposed width of 150 feet.

Shehri had been at the forefront of the campaign launched by concerned citizens, notably Mr. Ardeshir Cowasjee, against this illegal structure and the judgement of the honorable Bench of the Supreme Court sets another landmark in citizens struggle for a better environment. □

A Metropolitan Transport Authority At Last!

On the 4th of May, 1999, the Chief Secretary Sindh, through a notification declared the establishment of the Karachi Metropolitan Transport Authority (KMTA). The various transport authorities like the Regional Transport Authority (RTA), Traffic Engineering Bureau (TEB) and Karachi Mass Transit Programme (KMTP) are to merge in this single body, with the Secretary Transport Department, Government of Sindh, acting as the Chairman of the Governing Body.

Shehri, which participated in the drafting of the KMTA Ordinance and also communicated to the relevant officials its recommendations aimed at ensuring the metropolitan character of the body along with transparency in its functions, hopes that such will eventually be the case. □



URBAN MANAGEMENT

International Conference on Business Citizenship for Equitable Cities

(India Habitat Center, New Delhi, February 23-24, 1999)

An international conference to discuss the emerging global trends in urban management with particular reference to the involvement of organized private sector in local affairs was recently held in New Delhi, India. Shehri represented Pakistan in the conference and presented a paper on the issue of solid waste management in Karachi.

In the second half of this century cities have emerged as important places in the political and economic structure of a nation. Cities are where commerce, people, ideas and culture converge. As the world becomes more than 50 percent urbanized in the 21st century, the competitiveness of businesses around the world is intrinsically linked to the health and well being of cities.

Cities in Asia are growing at a magnitude that until recently most planners had not contemplated. Rapid investment in commerce, tourism and industry in the context of infrastructure, globalization in-migration and environmental impact has created challenges with politically and socially destabilizing effects. While the present picture is disheartening, local, state and national leaders in Asia and the Pacific Rim have begun to work towards a new framework for guiding development.

Until recently, business largely avoided working in inner cities and poor settlements. The scale of problems appeared to doom business initiatives to failure, thereby threatening to open way for unlimited claims on business resources. Currently, however, many businesses are joining with government and community groups as partners in rebuilding strategies.

While business cannot replace government or community organizations, either as donors or policy designers, they bring special



Shehri representatives (L-R)
Mr. Farhan Anwar and
Mr. Roland de Souza at the India Habitat
Center, New Delhi

capacities to a partnership. In Asia, some businesses have taken this step of entering into partnerships with local governments and community organizations to address a myriad of social and economic issues.

To discuss the implications of this trend and how best can the positive outcomes be replicated, an international conference was recently held in New Delhi, India. Its main organizers included the Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd. (HUDCO) of India, Asia Pacific Cities Forum (APCF), National Institute of

Urban Affairs (NIUA) of India, USAID, Decentralized Training for Urban Development (DTUD) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The conference was co-sponsored by CITYNET, Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Mahindra and Mahindra, Pest Control India and Urban Management Programme Asia.

NGO's / citizen groups and business groups from various countries gave presentations about their projects on the occasion. From the host country India, the projects which were highlighted included the project of Calcutta Old Town Hall Revitalization, Bombay First, Restoration of Waterways/ Ponds in Chennai, Association of Youth for Better India, Bombay, The Ahmedabad Effort, Tata Energy Research Institute etc.

A presentation was made by the representative of Colombo Municipal Council, on their experience in privatization of certain aspects of civic management.

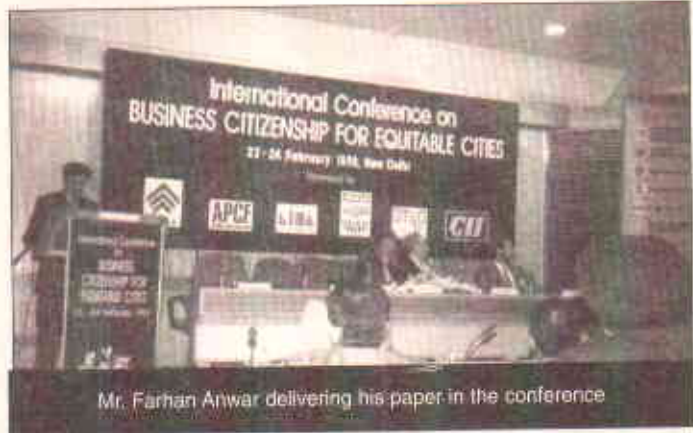
From the USA, Times Square Street Business Improvement District, New York and the America Project, Atlanta of the Carter Center were discussed.

Presentations were also made by representatives of Canada and South Korea. Pakistan was repre-



sented in the conference by Mr. Farhan Anwar, and Mr. Roland de'Souza of Shehri-Citizens for a Better Environment. Mr. Anwar made a presentation on the subject of solid waste management in Karachi city - the problems being faced in opening up the systems for citizen and private sector involvement.

The issues discussed in this stimulating exchange of experiences and ideas ranged from urban waste management to conservation of architectural heritage. At the end, in view of the various models of public - private enterprise which were highlighted, landmarks and strategies for future action plans were adopted. □



Mr. Farhan Anwar delivering his paper in the conference

The Cocoon

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly

One day a small opening appeared, he sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther. Then the man decided to help the butterfly, so he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon.

The butterfly then emerged easily

But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings.

It never was able to fly

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been.

And we could never fly.

— Contributed by Hanif A. Sattar,
Member, Managing Committee, Shehri-CBE

A Job well done!

Shehri members and management wish to congratulate Ms. Asma Jahangir (Chairperson) Mr. I. A. Rehman (Director) and Ms. Zohra Yousuf (General Secretary) for completing with great distinction their two years term of office, at the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). Their brave and tireless efforts in ensuring the protection of human rights, justice and fairplay in society are greatly appreciated and it is hoped that the new management carries on the good work with renewed zeal and commitment. □



CITIZEN POWER

NGOs : Role and Functions

Khatib Ahmed identifies the key role NGOs and CBOs are playing in the formation and implementation of development plans and strategies all over the world and explains their scope and areas of work

The citizens of Pakistan, in days past, had never known, experienced nor practiced the British form of Westminster Parliamentary Government they inherited on 14th August 1947. The people had traditionally practiced self-rule on small village, community levels through the Panchayat system with limited regional jurisdiction.

Political and administrative governance was the preserve of Badshahs, Rajas, Nawabs and aristocrats, implemented through a feudal system. These rulers even when fighting and capturing each others areas, left the working class in peace, as this segment was supposed to provide income and revenue to the victors. The common man was not supposed to involve himself in

governance but to keep working and producing goods and services of economic value to keep the wheels of state moving.

With the coming of the British, the people were ruled under the same feudal system, with the additional burden of being a colony. Their past rulers after being conquered by the British, ruled their own people on behalf of the British (as vassals and

agents). For the common man, life carried on in the age old pattern of subservience to rulers.

Industrialised Britain made India a supplier of raw materials and a consumer of its finished products. This destroyed the cottage industrial base of the country and the people saw their administrative, judicial and educational systems dismantled and replaced by the British system. Two centuries of mental conditioning that the



NGOs often act as facilitators between various stakeholder groups in the society

ruler knows best and was there to fulfill all needs has left the people without initiative. This policy, continued by feudals under the democratic system, is the main cause of the peoples reluctance/inability to actively participate in self governance. Psychologically the people still seem to be waiting for some one else to come and solve their problems.

A few popular instruments of citizens involvement are what can termed as 'Non Governmental Organizations' (NGOs), or Community Based Organizations (CBO's).

Emergence of Citizen Groups

The emergence of a large number of citizens support organizations is testimony to the fact that government organizations, autonomous bodies and other public institutions have not been able to provide the required level/quality of facilities, amenities and services to the public for which they were set up.

The question arises, Who are NGOs and CBOs?

The answer is that they are groups of private (non-government) citizens

who have taken it upon themselves to achieve certain socio-economic objectives for the benefit of the common citizen. These volunteer groups serve out of their conviction for a better tomorrow and contend that the assets of the city be treated as a trust for future generations and be preserved with due care and diligence. Members of NGOs and CBOs give volunteer service to fill the gaps in social services left by



public institutions, officials (who have been provided with the organizational infrastructure and are paid by public funds to provide those services to the people).

The activist role of the NGOs and CBOs has generally not been welcomed by government officials and functionaries whose shortcomings have been exposed, questioned and at times remedied in the public interest. In reactionary fashion these officials have begun to challenge the validity and credibility of these citizen groups by questioning their real intentions for organizing sustained efforts on behalf of the public. It is not only insinuated, but at times openly stated that the real purpose behind these activities is to receive pay-offs from the vested parties (whose harmful activities these citizens groups oppose). Citizen groups are also asked by these officials where they are registered and what right do they have to mount public interest campaigns.

It is Shehri's contention that each citizen is vested with the highest authority in the land-as a citizen of Pakistan which gives him the authority he needs to work individually, or collectively for the public interest. The work of genuine citizen groups does not include any activity detrimental to public or the country. On the contrary, they seek to redress injustices caused to the public by errant officials and to make improvements in facilities for the citizens relating to health, environment, transport and social-uplift. This the citizen groups are doing through their own funds and efforts without receiving, or even wanting to receive, any funds from the public exchequer (people's tax money).

The Commonwealth Foundation,

London, UK prepared a book titled *Non-Government Organizations: Guidelines for Good Policy and Practice* in response to proposals made at the First Commonwealth NGO Forum held in Zimbabwe in 1991. The following portions, sections have been taken from that book.

Key Defining Characteristics of NGOs

Broadly speaking, NGOs may be divided into two basic groups:

• **Care and Welfare**

Many NGOs are involved in what can be termed *care and welfare* activities inherited from the charitable work or philanthropy which flourished in industrialised countries from the 19th century onward.

• **Change and Development**

Some of the NGOs were historically involved in political action and advocacy of public interest causes. From the provision of services thus developed activities of a more strategic nature. As a result, their efforts brought about many changes in society (abolition of slavery, eradication of child labour, induction of adult suffrage, sustainable development, etc.)

All NGOs have four common characteristics, traits which are narrated below:

The work of genuine citizen groups does not include any activity detrimental to public or the country. On the contrary, they seek to redress injustices caused to the public by errant officials and to make improvements in facilities for the citizens relating to health, environment, transport and social-uplift.

i. **Voluntary**

The term voluntary means that:

- They are formed voluntarily; there is nothing in the legal, statutory framework of any country which requires them to be formed or prevents them from being formed; and

- There will be an element of voluntary participation in the organization: whether in the form of small numbers of board members or large numbers of members or beneficiaries giving their time voluntarily.

ii. **Independent**

Within the laws of society, they are controlled by those who have formed them, or by Board of Management to which such people have delegated, or are required by law to delegate, responsibility for control and management.

iii. **Not-for-Profit**

They are not for personal, private profit or gain, although

- NGOs may have employees, like other enterprises, who are paid for what they do. But in NGOs, the employer-Boards of Management - are not paid for the work they perform on Boards, beyond (most commonly) being reimbursed for expenses they incur in the course of performing their Board duties.

- NGOs may engage in revenue-generating activities. They