



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 - April, 2001 Vol. 11/No. 1

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## SAY 'NO' TO GUNS!!

As the government launches its Arms Control 2001 Campaign, **Roland deSouza** identifies the causes which have led to the proliferation of illicit firearms in Karachi, adversely impacting on the quality of life of the citizens and puts forward some suggestions for improving the situation.

Pakistan does not need external enemies: we are doing a fairly good job of slowly destroying ourselves. Over the past 54 years, a culture of violence has insidiously pervaded the fabric of society, especially in "the City of the Quaid", to the point where Karachites have forgotten that we once used to live in peace and tranquility.

The city has been rent with increasing sectarian, ethnic, and crime problems, resulting in blood baths and significant loss of human lives. VIPs, sardars, waderas, politicians and feudals consider it their prerogative to maintain heavily armed escorts, political workers brandish weapons to intimidate everyone, and private security armed-guard business has proliferated.

### Shehri's proposals for the establishment of a Gun-Free Environment

- The members of the police or any other law enforcement authority, carrying unconcealed weapons, must do so only whilst in uniform and having requisite identification.
- Guns must not be permitted to be carried in a manner whereby the nozzle points at any person, to avoid accidental injuries / nozzles should ideally be pointed skywards.
- Stringent criteria for issuance of licenses be laid down and enforced without exception and not merely on the recommendation of any MPA, MNA or Senator.
- Computerized record with complete particulars of all new licenses should be maintained forthwith and records in respect of licenses issued previously must be computerized within three months. Such records should be available with the Federation and each Province and continuously updated and exchanged between them.



Guns are not welcome! The message should go loud and clear

Various dogmatic and obscurantist elements add to the chaos and confusion by interpreting religion and culture as allowing and encouraging the maintenance of weapons. The teachings of Islam, like those of all religions, promote peace and brotherhood and its guidelines on the subject are quite clear (see box).

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**EDITORIAL**

**Karachi:  
A new beginning?**

**A**s the nazims, naib nazims, councillors, ECO's, DCO's etc. settle in their respective seats and offices, one wonders whether they have even begun to realize the enormity of the challenge they are faced with. The plight and anguish of today's Karachi is heart-breaking. The crumbling city infrastructure whether it be roads, water supply, sewerage, power supply or waste disposal, offers a shameful and pathetic testimony to the criminal neglect shown towards the genuine needs of this city by all those who have ruled over its destiny. Democracy, autocracy, bureaucracy, whatever the creed they may have adhered to, none can escape the blame.

For a city which generates most of the country's revenue, this state of abject misery cannot possibly be explained by logic and reason. If a city, which in this age of globalization has the potential of becoming the industrial and commercial hub of not just the country but of the entire region attracting much needed foreign investment and enterprise can instead shamefully boast of crime being its most profitable enterprise, than what logic can explain this dichotomy!

Our planners have over the years shown a bankruptcy of mind and reason which again fails to withstand the test of logic. Just take one exam-

ple. Fifty years down the road and after countless World Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations etc. millions have gone down the proverbial drain, we still have not decided how to start tackling our transport problems! Do we need more roads, more flyovers, more rail transit, more expressways, (did anyone mention the word, mass transit!!) more buses (!) are questions which it would seem have tested and tormented to the hilt, the rather limited capacities of clear headed thought vested with our illustrious city planners and managers, past and present, as the solutions still elude them, contributing to the endless miseries and misfortunes of the common Karachite.

The list of problems defying the human capacity to deduce a reasoned analysis and judgement as to the causes of the melody is endless. Is it corruption? is it incompetence? is it a sadistic desire to inflict pain and misery? is it all of these combined? who knows? So the challenges facing the newly elected and appointed city officials are manifold. Set a vision for the city, give it a direction, fight corruption, enhance efficiency, but above all, it would be their resolve, commitment and will to succeed and prosper for the greater good of the city and not for themselves, which will provide a befitting ending to this newly enacted saga. □



### Experiences of other countries

The subject matter of gun-control is very controversial in the USA, where *more citizens die in handgun fire in just two days than in one year in Canada, Great Britain, Japan, Sweden, and Australia combined.* While the pro-gun lobby's stand is based on its particular interpretation of the *Second Amendment* of the US Constitution, the lobby is not supported in their view by many concerned citizens, including the powerful American Civil Liberties Union. We have all read of the famous *Million Mom March* in Washington DC last year where 750,000 mothers of America protested against the mushrooming of guns: the movement resulted in the establishment of 235 chapters of concerned mothers in 46 states.

Still, in the USA and other western nations, there are strict guidelines on when a low-enforcement official (*who is well trained in the use and safety of firearms*) may draw his gun and where he will try to shoot/disable a criminal. Every incident involving the use of firearms by a police officer is subject to a detailed inquiry and justification procedure.

Contrast this with the numerous *police encounters* we read about in the newspapers every now and then.

Some other international efforts in the field of gun-control include:

- In August 1998, thirty-three NGOs from 18 countries formed the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA).
- The 1st UN Conference on the *Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its*

### Shehri Proposals

*Cont. from Page 1*

- Confiscated illegal weapons must only be utilized by law enforcement agencies or destroyed.
- No person should be issued a licence unless it has been established that such person can wield the gun in respect whereof the licence is sought.
- Other than the law enforcement agencies the carrying of prohibited weapons, in particular the Kalashnikov (AK 47) be banned.
- No person who has been convicted of any offense or against whom a criminal case is pending should be granted a licence. Similarly, no such person should have the power to recommend the issuance of a licence.
- Government should make and implement policies for gradual withdrawal of all guns from society in a systematic and phased manner.
- Any person who ensures the seizure of weapons should be rewarded at least 25% of the market value of such seized weapon.
- Gun manufacturers operating in Darra area should be inducted to manufacture weapons for armed forces and sales by them to the public should be stopped.

## WHAT DOES ISLAM TEACH?

*Islam has sanctified life, forbids its taking and prescribes damnation for transgressor. The Holy Quran and Hadith confirm that in Islam life is sacred and killing is an unforgivable sin.*

*"Whosoever killeth a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all humanity, and who so saveth the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all humanity". (Surah al-Maidah, verse 32)*

*The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:*

*"A Believer remains within the scope of his religion as long as he does not kill anyone unlawfully" (Reported by Al-Bukhari)*

*"Do not become unbelievers after I pass away, killing one another". (Reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)*



*Aspects* was held in Washington DC last month (<http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/CA/B/smallarms/>).

- At that time, Amnesty International published a report *Human Rights abuses with Small Arms* to show that government and opposition groups in at least a hundred countries are using small arms in the violent abuse of human rights.
- The UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, wrote an article *Small arms, big problems* in the International Herald Tribune of 10 July 2000.

In 1999, at the invitation of the CPLC, a UNDP-sponsored mission from Colombia (*another country that has experienced gun-related violence*), came to Karachi to study the situation. It met with government officials, law-enforcement agencies, intelligence bureaus, political parties, civil society organizations, NGOs, newspapers and journalists, businessmen and trade bodies, transporters, etc. The whole report identifies some of the root causes of the problems and advocates approaches to their solutions.

"The causes of violence in Karachi range from the mere traditional, such as those as a result of the peculiarities of lop-sided urban development, the fight for turf by different mafias and vested interests, and the struggle over Karachi's particular demographic and political development."

**Causes of Violence**  
 Extract from "*Understanding Karachi: Planning & Reform for the Future*" by Arif Hasan

(see box).

**Government De-weaponization Campaigns**

A number of half-hearted efforts have been made by the government over recent years to remove guns from the hands of the citizens, but without significant success. The present campaign *Arms Control 2001* likewise leaves much to be desired.

A member of the Task Force to recommend strategies for *Arms Control 2001*, the CPLC Chief, who is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Ministry of Interior, has stated that the final shape of the proposal lacks the depth of the recommendations made by the *Task Force*. He felt that simple questions were still left unanswered, including:

- *Why should I bother to come forward and surrender a weapon?*
- *What do I get by exposing myself?*
- *What is so different about this plan that earlier initiatives did not have, yet they failed?*

The CPLC Chief had also submitted a set of recommended incentives, but these have not been adopted so far.

"To fight back, we need better laws and more effective regulations. States have established international norms in the areas of nuclear non-proliferation, and banned chemical and biological weapons and anti-personnel land-mines. Yet there is no such framework of binding norms and standards to eliminate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons."

**Secretary General  
 Mr. Kofi Annan  
 on Small Arms**

**United Nations  
 Conference on the Illicit  
 Trade in Small Arms and  
 Light Weapons in all its  
 Aspects, New York,  
 9-20 July, 2001.**

**Shehri – CBE's involvement**

Although slightly tangential to the organization's task in working to preserve the natural and built environment, Shehri has become more and more concerned about the deteriorating milieu of violence in Karachi, and has joined hands with other NGOs (including CPLC and HRCP) to protest against the proliferation of firearms. In 1994, Shehri, along with many other NGOs, tried to have the Supreme Court institute a *suomoto* Human Rights Case under Article

184 (3) of the Constitution.

Shehri has jointly organized a number of events in their *Say No to Guns* campaign:

- Public Awareness Seminar in February 1998  
 Entitled *Gun Free Environment - a pre-requisite for expounding Liberal Values*, it dealt with the areas of freedom of expression, sectarianism, ethnic strife, Islamic tolerance, private guards / intimidation, value of life, etc.
- Launching Ceremony in September 1998, in collaboration with CPLC and HRCP, the public was invited to the Karachi Press Club for the symbolic burning of guns and distribution of publicity materials, including posters and car-stickers.



## ROUTE MAP OF KARACHI

### Proliferation of violence & illicit firearms

YEAR	POPULATION	E V E N T S
1947 - 60	0.5 - 2 million	Major events in this period pertain to student agitation (1954-55 & 1957) and sectarian tension during Moharram. Karachi underworld limited to local toughs, mostly thriving on black marketing of cinema tickets, illicit liquor, gambling and prostitution. Weapons limited to knife, khurdum and country made revolvers/pistols. Firing incidents were considered unusual. Administration had to resort to firing on only half a dozen occasions to break up mobs/processions. Tear gas and lathi-charge considered serious administrative actions.
1960 - 65	2 - 2.6 million	Induction of migrant labour from upcountry in the city workforce in transport, textile and construction industry. Gradual changing of city culture and emergence of new underworld mafia. 1965 pro-Ayub Khan procession through Liaquatabad resorted to heavy firing and arson resulting in burning of over 1000 hutments at Gujur Nala.
1965 - 71	2.6 - 3.5 million	Control of trade unions, transport sectors passes on to the Pathans.
1971 - 77	3.5 - 4.5 million	Massive agitation on Language Bill 1972. Curfew imposed but agitation mostly confined to heavy stoning, arson and attack on state property.
1977 - 81	4.5 - 5.5 million	Massive PNA agitation against PPP government but firearms generally not used or displayed. Major instance of use of firearms exhibited by supporters of PNA during polling in districts South and West.
1981 - 85	5.5 - 6.6 million	Alleged State support to IJI, who openly displayed arms in Karachi University to intimidate rival student groups. Shia agitation against Sharia Laws. Sunni back lash mostly through attacks on Imam Bargahs and display of weapons at will.
1985 - 93	6.6 - 8.2 million	Watershed period, changing city scene. Bushra Zaidi case. Mobs attack Pathan owned transport. Pathan owners carry firearms for protection. Emergence of MQM. Urdu speaking mobs attacking Pathans with home-made bombs in Organi (1986). Public pressure against encroachments (mostly Northern/Afghan immigrants) Sohrab Goth ejection and massive Pathan reaction in Aligarh Colony, Orangi. Heavy use of firearms by Pathan mobs (1987). Altaf Hussain responds with appeals to Mohajirs to "sell your TVs/VCRs and buy firearms" (March 1988). Total failure of state agencies to protect communities (1985-88). Heavy weaponization of city. Karachi becomes market for gun runners supplying arms to all sides.
1993 - 96	8.2 - 9 million	State responds by crushing heavily and lightly armed MQM cadres. Post-85 situation temporarily saw reduction of the sectarian divide after the rise of MQM. Subsequent post-90 trend reflects terrorist attacks based on targeted killings by competing sectarian organizations. There appears to be a curious linkage and overlap between ethnic, sectarian and underground "mafia" organizations. Each seems to thrive on the other for supply of weapons and political support. Major cause of sectarian violence emanates on the issue of control of mosques, which provide jobs and commercial property (adjacent shops).
1993 - 99	9 - 10 million	Resurgence of MQM through political process. Arms available but less frequently displayed.
1999 - 01	10 - 10.7 million	Situation remains same. Political activists mostly underground but availability of arms unimpaired.



**The "Quality of Life" in Karachi?**

The residents of Karachi, both rich and poor, have over the years become hardened to the reporting of killings in the city. The peaceful gun-free environment of the 60s and 70s is fading from memory, and most of us are sadly coming to accept the bloody and violent present as our lot in life.

Karachi is the city that has witnessed the killings of a former Prime Minister's brother, Murtaza Bhutto, ex-Governor Hakeem Said, KESC MD Shahid Hamid, Maulana Ludhianvi, Maulana Quadri, PSO MD Shaukat R. Mirza, and numerous other high profile victims. Shehri's founder-chairman, Navaid Husain, was shot in 1997 in his office but has fortunately survived.

In the cave man days, each person protected himself, and his near and dear ones and their possessions. He progressively employed clubs, knives, and spear. With the development of communities, man made a *social contract* with society and delegated to society the enforcement and protection of a number of his basic rights. Among these were his right to security and right to life (also enshrined in Articles 4 and 9 of the Constitution of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan). In return, he undertook to carry out his duties as a citizen and pay his taxes.

But the state in Pakistan, especially in Karachi, is renegeing on this *contract*. It seems to be apathetic in providing effective security for the common citizen, irrespective of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth. Increasing dacoities, car-jacking, kidnappings, sectarian strife, ethnic mayhem, killings and violent crime, has eroded confidence in the law-enforcement ability of the state

and has lowered the quality of life for all, rich and poor. Consequently, more and more citizens are opting to protect themselves and their families as best they can: they are arming themselves, they are hiring security guards, they are erecting gates and barriers around their residential areas, or they are moving away from the city.

**What of the future?**

Can any city and country make significant progress under these circumstances? The last decade has

maintain law and order. Shehri's experience with law-enforcement in Karachi and implementation of rules and regulations in the government ministries, civil administration, police, and statutory bodies (like KDA, KBCA, KMC, KWSB, etc) leads us to believe that most of these exercises are elaborate *noora-kushti's*. Many officials are pretending to do their jobs, while all the time protecting themselves and the criminals with whom they collaborate. This is done either out of fear or for pecuniary/political gain.

**"Sustainable Peace in Karachi" Report of the Colombian Mission, February 1999, on Citizen's Rights and Security**

*On the basis to the conditions described and the strategy proposed, four actions were recommended as high leverage entry points for sustainable peace*

- Police reforms by organizing the **Karachi Metropolitan Police Force (KMPF)** as an entry point for the reconstruction of the public sector.
- The improvement of metropolitan living conditions through **community - based development**, as a high-leverage entry point for the strengthening of civil society.
- **A National Alliance Against Crime**, prioritizing arms and drugs as a high-leverage entry points against violence, organized crime, common crime, illicit enrichment, and money laundering, accompanied by the replication of the Citizen-Police Liaison Committee in other Pakistani cities to mobilize community support.
- **An exit Strategy Toward Decentralized Democratic Governance**, from the current state of exception in Karachi and the rest of Sindh that provides incentives for political and social solutions to conflicts through the strengthening of local governing institutions. □

witnessed the relocation of businessmen in large numbers to the north of Pakistan. Professionals of a particular persecuted sect are moving to the West. Numerous able and talented citizens are migrating or seeking asylum abroad.

As recognized in the early days of Pakistan by the Quaid-e-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the first responsibility of government is to

Why would any entrepreneur, local or foreign, wish to sink his money into a society where the basic norms of justice and order are missing? A major incentive to investors that can be provided by the powers that be and the economic development gurus of this country is peace and freedom from terror. □

*(Roland deSouza is Member, Managing Committee, Shehri-CBE)*

## SHEHRI ACTIVITIES

### 11th Annual General Meeting of Shehri-CBE

(Saturday, April 21, 2001, Shehri-CBE Office, Karachi)

The Eleventh Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Shehri was held on Saturday April 21, 2001, at 206-G, Block II, PECHS, Karachi from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The following Managing Committee members were present;

Qazi Faez Isa	Chairperson
Mrs. Victoria de'Souza	Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Amber Alibhai	General Secretary
Mr. Khatib Ahmed	Treasurer
Mr. Navaid Husain	M. C. Member
Mr. Raza Ali Gardezi	M. C. Member
Mr. Hanif Sattar	M. C. Member



The following General Body Members were present.

Mr. Muslehuddin	Mrs. Sareena Isa
Mr. Derrick Dean	Ms. Sumreen Mirza
Mr. Farooq Fazal	Mr. Rizwan Abdullah
Mr. Mohammad Ali Rasheed	Dr. Khairvee
Mr. Roland deSouza	Mrs. Bernadette Dean

#### Agenda

- i. To confirm the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
- ii. To adopt the General Secretary's report of Shehri's activities, for the year 2000.
- iii. To adopt the audited statement of Shehri's account for the year ended December 31, 2000.
- iv. To appoint and fix remuneration of auditors for the year 2001.
- v. To announce the names of the elected Managing

- Committee Members for period 2001-2002.
- vi. Any other business with the permission of the chair.

The meeting was commenced by the Chairperson, Qazi Faez Isa.

The first item of business was the approval of the minutes from the 10th Annual General Meeting. This motion was proposed by Mrs. Sareena Isa and seconded by Mr. M. Ali Rasheed and the minutes of the meeting were confirmed. The following comments were volunteered after the review of activities:

- Roland deSouza suggested that Shehri should narrow its focus and only do a few activities very well, thereby concentrating its limited financial and human resources on the projects that have the greatest chance of success. He suggested a visit to the Wetland Center for the education/awareness of Shehri members and their families.
- Mr. Roland suggested that every member should try and bring at least five members with him for the AGM, from the General Body Members, to enhance the number of participants. Mr. Muslehuddin requested for the membership mailing list, so that he can mark all those residing in his locality and thus assist in bringing at least 10 members for the next annual general meeting.
- The second item of business was the review of the year 2000 activities. Vice Chairperson Mrs. Victoria deSouza reported that Shehri has been asked to intervene in the issue of mangroves destruction in Mai Kolachi.

General Secretary reported on the development of the Shehri Park, and requested the members to participate in its maintenance and development according to their convenience.

Further a summary of workshops/seminars organized by Shehri during the year 2000 was read out. The General Secretary informed the members about Mr. Farhan Anwar's visit to the USA, upon invitation from the United States Consulate for participation in

the US State Department's International Visitors Programme. This was with regard to the *Devolution of Power Plan*. From there Mr. Anwar will be visiting Britain to attend the South Asian Forum *South Asia in the Age of Globalization* organized by Wilton Park in collaboration with the European Union and Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK. Annual Activity Report was proposed by Member Derrick Dean and seconded by Mr. Navaid Husain, the report was adopted.

The third item of business was the review of audited accounts, for the year 2000, which were audited by Ovais Haider Zaman, Chartered Accountants.

Khatib Ahmed gave a summary of Shehri's accounts. Amber Ali Bhai mentioned that for the year 2001, it was to be expected of each managing committee member, to bring in at least Rs. 100,000/- in donations. The following questions were posed from the audience:

- Mr. Rizwan suggested that the accounts should be audited and presented much earlier. The managing committee responded by saying that the accountants were not available before April due to Ramzan holiday season, New Year, Eid-ul-Azha and Muharram, but promised to make every effort to book the same auditors as early as possible for the year 2001 audit.
- Clarification of membership fees generated for the year 2000 was requested. The accounts showed that Rs. 17,100/- were received in membership renewal and new membership. At Rs. 300. per annum, this indicates that for the year 2000 Shehri had only



The General Body Members

47 paid members! Suggestions were made to increase membership and payment such as: letter writing, phone calls, membership drive, creating policy that requires MC members to involve 10 new members, and promoting life membership at Rs. 6,000 @ Rs. 300 for 20 years. The managing committee responded by saying that membership drives proved to be more costly than the success/profits generated by them as postage and phone calls taxes Shehri's financial and human resources. Navaid Husain, Amber Ali bhai, and Qazi Faez Isa decided to become life member.

- Mr. Mohammad Ali Rasheed asked why it is not possible to invest some of Shehri's money in a high-risk portfolio and run expenditures from the interest of the account. Sumreen Mirza questioned whether such a venture would violate Shehri's non-profit status. The managing committee responded by saying that Shehri probably does not at the moment have enough money in its accounts to invest. If enough life members were made perhaps that money could be invested as suggested. The audited accounts were proposed by Mr. Hanif Sattar, seconded by Mr. Farooq Fazal the audited

accounts were adopted.

The fourth item of business was the appointment of, and to fix remuneration of the auditors for the year 2001. It was decided that M/s. Ovais Haider Zaman Chartered Accounts will be retained as auditors for the year 2001 and their remuneration will be Rs. 5000/-. This was proposed by Mr. Rizwan Abdullah, seconded by Raza Ali Gardezi, for adoption.

The fifth item of business was the announcement of candidates and voting for vacant positions. Election Commissioner Sarwar Khalid announced that there were a lot of nominations that could not be considered because the person was not a paid Shehri member at the time of nomination. Therefore, these nominations were rejected.

The following persons won the election without contest: Chairperson; Khatib Ahmed, Vice Chairperson; Dr. Syed Raza Ali Gardezi, General Secretary; Amber Ali Bhai, MC Members; Navaid Husain, Roland deSouza and Qazi Faez Isa. The position of treasurer was open for which Farooq Fazal was nominated by Mrs. deSouza and Seconded by Amber Ali bhai.

Meeting was concluded by a vote of thanks from the outgoing Chairperson, Qazi Faez Isa. □



# Shehri workshop: Revitalization of Membership

(Saturday, June 19th 2001, Hotel Marriott, Karachi)

## Aims & Objectives:

1. Invite membership participation.
2. To highlight the tasks of sub-committees of Shehri.
3. To call for suggestions and views from members re. strengthening performance, to provide a better social, political and legal environment.
4. To enhance Shehri Membership

The workshop proceedings started with an introduction by the General Secretary Mrs. Amber Alibhai, welcoming the members who participated. All those present, took active part in the discussions that followed.

Members of the Managing Committee of Shehri, gave the background experience of Shehri's efforts towards environmental work in different fields. After every presentation, the member participants were invited to give suggestions and also give their opinions with regard to their participation in the future activities and projects of Shehri.

The names of members/project presentation were as follows:

Mr. Khatib Ahmed  
Enhance Shehri Membership

Mr. Faez Isa  
Rights of a Citizen  
Mrs. Amber Alibhai  
Citizens Help Desk

Dr. Raza Ali Gardezi  
Public Interest Litigation



(L - R) Qazi Faez Isa, Amber Ali Bhai

Mr. Imran Javed  
Shehri Park

Mrs. Mansoor  
Fund Raising

Mr. Isa spoke on Gun Free Society Campaign, which Shehri launched in 1998, and stressed the need for members to work on this issue and create awareness among the public

and in educational institutions against the use of guns, and work for a peaceful social environment. This call received a positive response from members. Publicity material viz. gun free stickers/pamphlets were provided to members to continue this task forward.

Dr. Raza Gardezi spoke on Public

Litigation that Shehri has filed in Courts against illegal/unauthorized construction, misuse of public amenity plots and against encroachments. Members were invited to take part in any litigation by providing their time and resources as Shehri is short of man power.

Imran Javed gave information and update on Shehri Park at St. 12, Block III, Clifton. Members were requested to collect donations, give their expertise in the development work on the park which has been leased for a further period of three years to Shehri-CBE. Mr. Javed related his experience with the residents and KMC, in developing the park, and gave the present status of the same, inviting donations and assistance from the members and from multi-nationals.



Khatib Ahmed

Dr. S. Raza Ali Gardezi



Shehri Members

Last topic on the agenda was fund raising, which was highlighted and names of donors and permanent supporters were announced. The members were briefed on the monthly expenses of Shehri which were Rs. 45,000/- and collection of the amount was not easy. The members were called to give assistance in whatever manner suitable for the above cause.

The members were interested in working with Shehri and the reason for their non-participation was partly due to lack of communication with Shehri. This fact was noted and Mrs. Mansoor was

assigned the task of writing letters to all members who were present and keeping them informed about the latest actions adopted by Shehri. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks and refreshments were served.

The following members have opted for working with Shehri on issues mentioned against their names.

Mr. Ahmed Kamran  
Gun Free campaign

Mrs. Rizwan Abdullah  
Gun Free campaign

Dr. Khairvee  
Solid waste management

Mr. Syed Haider  
Fund Raising (for which he has suggested a committee consisting of Faez Isa, Roland deSouza and himself to be set up to discuss this issue on a large scale).

Mr. Muslehuddin Ahmed  
has shown interest in working in for Law Cases two to three days per month.

Mr. Salman Haroon  
has opted to put in one hour at Shehri for volunteer service.

Mr. Mohammad Ali Rasheed  
has offered to work for Citizen's Help Desk.

Mrs. Yasmeen Qayyum  
Youth Activities

Each member was given two membership forms for enhancement of Shehri Membership. □

## SAVE KIRTHAR NATIONAL PARK CAMPAIGN: AN UPDATE

### **Shell pulls out of the Kirthar National Park**

The Shell Group agreed to a proposed asset swap arrangement with UK's Premier Oil to exchange its 49.9% holding in the Premier and Shell Pakistan BV joint venture for an extra 8% stake in the Bhil gas development in Pakistan's Kirthar concession (outside the Kirthar National Park area).

Shell terms this move as realignment of its operations in Pakistan, from exploration to production and development, while the environmental groups term it as a major victory in their campaign (May 2001).

### **Conservation law amended**

The Governor of the Sindh Province, Mr. Mohammadman Soomro, through a Notification issued

the order, allowing for exploration in the national parks of Sindh province (June 2001).

### **Public Hearings of Kirthar Project EIA held**

The Sindh Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) holds public hearings for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of Seismic Exploration in the Sindh Protected Area (SPA) of the Dumbar Concession Area. Noted environmental groups like WWF Pakistan and SDPI attend and register their strong protest and written objections (June 2001).

### **NOC issued for the Kirthar EIA**

SEPA issues a conditional No Objection Certificate to the EIA for the Seismic Exploration work in the Dumbar Concession Area (June 2001).



## JUDICIARY

### Setting priorities

*In two landmark judgements, the High Court of Sindh Province has established that environmental protection and steps for ensuring clean and healthy living should remain the top priority of the policy makers of the province. Shehri - CBE was the driving force behind the initiation of these public interest litigations.*

#### **Sindh High Court asks civic bodies to follow Supreme Court guidelines**

In a landmark judgement on a petition filed by Shehri-CBE and others, the Sindh High Court emphasises the need of strictly following the town planning laws and the importance of preserving and protecting open spaces and parks.

The Sindh High Court directed all those responsible for town planning and use of land in the province to strictly follow the provisions of Town-Planning Act, 1915 and the guide-lines laid down by the Supreme Court in various judgements.

This was spelt out in a division bench judgement, authored by Justice S.A. Sarwana, while allowing the public interest petition filed by Shehri and others pertaining to the sale of certain SRTC plots.

According to facts of the case after going into red and signing the bail out agreement with the provincial transport department earlier, to pay the liabilities of its employees, the corporation had in September 2000 decided to auction its various properties, including bus stands, depots, plots and colonies at Hyderabad, Sukkur, Larkana and Mirpurkhas.

On Oct. 12, 2000, Shehri and others filed a petition praying for declaring that disposal of SRTC amenity

land/transport workshops and terminals was contrary to the interest of the public, and their conversion to industrial/commer-

**The court also ordered that the provincial government shall prepare appropriate town-planning and development schemes under the provisions of Town-Planning Act, 1915, and shall ensure that these open lands/plots are not converted into commercial, residential or industrial use without a proper plan or scheme.**

cial and residential use was in violation of regulations, and town planning principles.

The petitioners, represented by Mr. Naimur Rahman advocate, had prayed for restraining the respondents from auctioning the property and parting with the physical possession of SRTC amenity plots or creating any third party interest.

The court had issued interim restraining order on Oct. 25, 2000,

which was extended from time to time.

Naimur Rahman had submitted that all plots in question were amenity plots which were being used by the corporation for the benefit of the public and these could not be sold as properties which can be used for commercial, residential or for any other use than for which they were being used by the corporation.

He had contended that because of the unplanned construction and breaches of the Building Control Laws, cities like Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur were already facing unhygienic living conditions.

Mr. Talmiz Burney, counsel for the SRTC, had stated that his client had acquired the properties mentioned in the advertisement from private parties which were not amenity plots. He had stated that his client shall sell the properties in question, subject to legal restrictions of use of land applicable at the time of sale.

Sarwar Khan, additional advocate general Sindh, stated that the provincial labour and transport department shall abide by the applicable laws relating to land use of the area already approved by the local government or any other relevant authority.