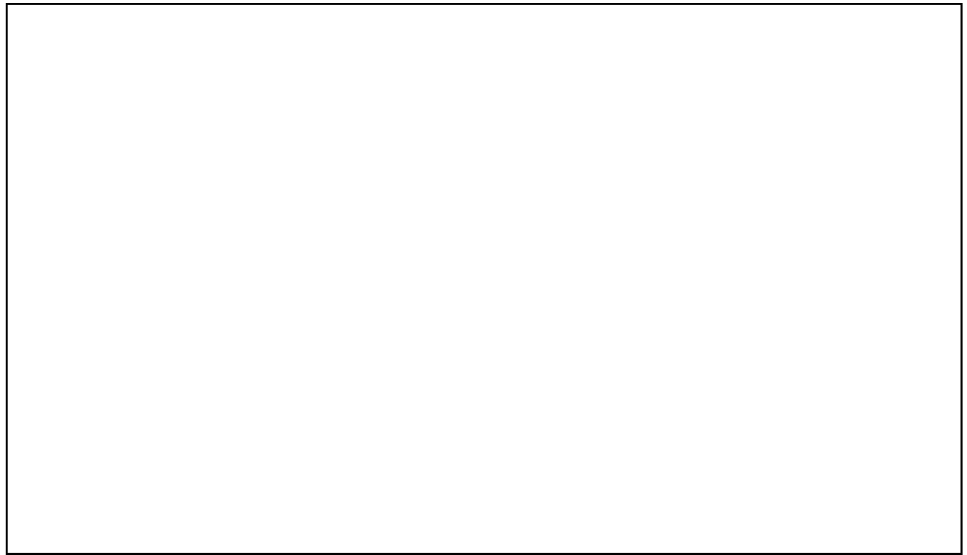


## Blast Damages Buildings of Girls' Schools



Newswire

**B**uildings of two girls' schools in the Kabal area of Swat in North West Frontier Province were damaged by a powerful blast on September 30.

Witnesses said that militants, who have been targeting women's educational institutions for a couple of weeks, had planted an explosive device in the

Government Girls' High School, near the Kabal police station, which went off, damaging part of the two-storey building and the wall of the adjacent Government Girls' Primary School.

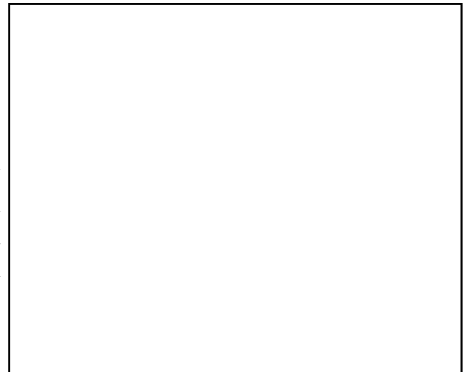
In different areas of Swat, there has been a surge in attacks on girls' schools,

**Cont. on page 23**

## Teenaged Suicide Bomber Kills 18

**E**ighteen people were killed and 17 suffered injuries when a teenaged boy aged between 12 and 15 years detonated explosives wrapped around his body in a passenger pick-up near Dera Ismail Khan on September 11.

**Cont. on page 23**



Dawn

## Juveniles Held During Crackdown

**T**he police in Lahore arrested 15 minor children and threw them in the lockup after charging them with disturbing law and order on the eve of the crackdown on PML –Nawaz workers on September 10.

SPARC learnt about the arrests when its Punjab Manager Law visited juvenile section of the District Jail Lahore and later reported it to the newspapers.

During the visit he found more than 15 children arrested under Section 188 of Pakistan Penal Code and Section 16 of MPO. The children were aged between 15 and 18.

It has been alleged that they were chanting slogans in favor of the former prime minister and holding posters, photos, banners and PML-N flags. The children denied allegations and told the law manager that they were not participating in the rally as they had just come out to see the procession. ■

## Teenager's Heroics Save Two Lives

A 15-year-old boy on Sept 22 put his life on the line and rescued two minor schoolgirls from drowning when they fell from a 100-foot-high suspension bridge over River Gilgit.

Hundreds of onlookers watched helplessly when Ibrar, a student of class VIII immediately jumped in to save the precious lives, witnesses said. The boy suffered injuries in his leg during the rescue effort.

Many NGOs and civil society organizations have announced that they will honor the young hero for his courage and humanism. Meanwhile, residents of nearby localities protested, closed the suspension bridge and demanded an inquiry against the contractor responsible for repairing the bridge at a cost of Rs1.6m but who had not done so even after a lapse of four months. ■

## CRRP National Workshop

Aga Khan University- Institute for Educational Development organized a one-day *National Experts Workshop on Designing a Civic Education Curriculum for Pakistan* on July 31 in Karachi.

The aim of the workshop was to see who would be the beneficiaries of the Civic Education, what would be the content and the strategies formulated to achieve this goal. The aim of the Civic Education is to create a civilized nation based on the precepts of democracy and rule of law.

The purpose of education is to bring forth the issues of child rights, human rights and civic education. However, our present curriculum does not cater to this very important discipline and therefore there is a need for preparing a curriculum on civic education and make it part of school education.

The participants, who worked in groups, enlisted the beneficiaries in that children topped the list followed by the media, parents, teachers and government functionaries. Fazila Gulrez and Salam Dherajo from SPARC attended the workshop. ■

## NGOs Threaten To Halt Work

Leading civil society organizations on September 26 threatened to halt their operations throughout the country if the government failed to stem the increasing number of attacks on NGOs by extremists in the NWFP.

A meeting convened to discuss the response of the civil society to the attack on the Dera Ismail Khan offices of Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO) also decided to convene a roundtable conference of NGOs, donor agencies, UN agencies and other stakeholders to develop a consensus on the issue of stopping all aid work in the country. The conference would also prepare a strategy for countering growing extremism in the country. UN agencies, which bore the brunt of extremist attacks earlier this year in Bagh, were also represented at the meeting.

The government, however, refuses to give this a serious thought and the NWFP Governor declined a meeting with the delegation of Alliance for Protection of Human Rights, comprising national NGOs. NGOs working in NWFP have been increasingly targeted by the extremists and almost a dozen incidents of attacks have been reported during the last couple of months. Threatening letters are being received by the aid agencies for the past few months.

Some of the noteworthy incidents are attack on Save the Children (US) offices in Battagram; attack on Sungi employees, abduction of an SPO driver in D.I Khan; snatching of vehicles of Khewandar Khor, Sarhad Rural Support Program (near Kohat), and SPO (D.I.Khan); and burning of a National Rural Support Program vehicle near Bannu. ■

## Runaway Boy's Flight to Freedom

A runaway Russian boy survived an 800 mile flight at temperatures of -50°C hidden in the wheel well of a Boeing 737. Andrei Lyssov, 11, had run away from his home in Siberia after an argument with his parents. He managed to bypass airport security to hide in the plane as it took off from the city of Perm on September 26.

Airport workers found the boy when the plane landed in Moscow and he dropped on to the tarmac. He was taken to a hospital where doctors said he was suffering from severe frostbite.

A spokesman said: "Parts of his clothing were frozen to his body. The fact the boy was from Siberia and was conditioned to extremely cold temperatures may have helped him to survive." ■

## US Detains Nearly 800 Juveniles in Iraq

US troops are holding nearly 800 children and teenagers on a Baghdad base. Boys who are largely illiterate and picked up for allegedly planting bombs are now the focus of a multi-million-dollar education project as reported on August 20.

Dressed in orange jumpsuits reminiscent of the uniforms of terror suspects held at Guantanamo Bay, the youngsters aged 10 to 17 attend a US-run school seven days a week, eight hours a day, in order to mend their ways.

Families are able to visit but for some it's simply too dangerous for them to risk their lives to come to Baghdad. And despite this being against the law, 16 juveniles have been held for more than a year. ■

## Mother Kills Daughter

**A** 12-year-old girl in Western India was killed by her mother after she made repeated requests to go to school, said a report on August 14.

The girl, identified as P, lived in Udaysar village in Rajasthan State, and wanted to go to school but the nearest one was a long distance away and her family could not afford to buy her a bicycle for the trip. In the end her mother lost her temper and hit her with a rolling pin and the girl lost consciousness. The mother, who has been arrested, tied a rope around the girl's neck, "hung her from the ceiling and rushed out screaming that the girl had killed herself," the policeman said.

The Rajasthan State government introduced a scheme to supply free bicycles to all school-age girls two years ago but it had not reached the deceased girl's village. ■

## Teenager Wants to Become a Suicide bomber

**A**n Egyptian teen was arrested on September 24, as he tried to sneak into Gaza to join suicide bombers there, the Interior Ministry said. The 16-year-old was arrested for a second time in six months at the Rafah crossing in Sinai and the ministry said "he confessed he wanted to meet with elements of Palestinian resistance in Gaza to explode himself in a suicide operation against the Israelis". ■

## Reaching Out to Juvenile Inmates: SPARC Signs MoU

**A** Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Inspector General of Prisons, Government of Punjab and SPARC to develop a comprehensive rehabilitation program for juvenile offenders at Borstal Institute and Juvenile Jail (BIJJ) Faisalabad.

SPARC will appoint teachers, a lawyer and a psychologist so that the juvenile offenders are given proper education, legal aid and emotional and other support. This will help to reform and rehabilitate them to become a good and productive citizens.

SPARC aims to provide legal aid to minimum of 100 children in a year and the psychologist will counsel two children on daily basis, thrice in a week and on need basis. SPARC will facilitate enrollment of children from lower to fifth grade and facilitate students of secondary schools to appear in eight and tenth grade exams.

SPARC will provide books and stationary to children as per need basis. It will sponsor annual sports events at Faisalabad Borstal. SPARC has planned three training sessions targeting 60 to 70 on-duty warders, head warders, and chief warders. One Orientation/ Training session for the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents of BIJJ.

The objective of this project is to support jail authorities (Punjab Government) to put in place a complete rehabilitation program for the juveniles in BIJJ Faisalabad while keeping in view the related Pakistani legislation and the relevant internationally recognized standards and norms. The project will contribute in the development of special rehabilitation program for juvenile offenders in financial, material and technical terms. ■

**77-Year-Old 'Child Rapist' Denied Bail:** The Lahore High Court (LHC) on September 25 denied bail to a 77-year-old man accused of trying to rape a four-year-old girl. The judge asked the trial court to decide the case within a month.

Complainant got a case registered against 77-year-old Shah, a shopkeeper, who he alleged had tried to rape his daughter (R) on June 4 when she went to buy sweets from his shop. He said he waited for (R) to return home, but when she did not, he went to the shop and heard her crying. He said as he entered the shop he saw that (R) was naked and the old man was trying to rape her. He said other people also saw the incident. He said Shah confessed to his crime in a village court. In his bail petition, Shah said that he was 77 years old and had not tried to rape the girl. ■

## Indian Girl Stripped in Class

A seven-year-old girl was made to strip naked by her teacher in a New Delhi school for not completing her homework, a police spokesman said on September 30. The minor was made to strip completely naked and stand on a desk in her class on Friday while other students were asked to boo her, the officer said.

“The teacher was arrested on a complaint by the parents but she has been released as it was a bailable offense”, the officer disclosed. “This is barbaric,” head of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, said in a report. “No one has the right to outrage the modesty of a child.”

The commission had issued a directive this year barring schools from calling students “stupid” or “mindless”. Although banned, corporal punishment is widely used to discipline children in Indian schools. ■

## Landmark Ruling on 'Bonded' Labor

An Indian NGO won in August what it believes could be a landmark court case for the rehabilitation of child laborers. In October 2005, Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA) rescued 129 child laborers from embroidery factories in Delhi.

However, the case registered by the police after the rescue was filed under the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000 which do not provide for rehabilitation of children. BBA then filed a case with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) against the office of the Sub-divisional Magistrate (Defense Colony).

They demanded that the case of these children be registered under the Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act 1976, as the children were working under ‘bonded’ conditions and were therefore eligible for rehabilitation under centrally-sponsored schemes. After almost two years, NHRC has upheld BBA’s stand by granting the issue of release certificates for the children, repatriating them to their native places and arranging for their rehabilitation. BBA believes this makes it a significant victory in the battle against Child Labor. ■

<http://www.bbasacccs.org>

## Indian Law Ministry Rejects Bill for Child Protection

In a major setback for India's Women and Child Development (WCD) Ministry, the Law Ministry rejected in September the Offenses Against Children Bill, saying the bill is just a repetition of provisions in other laws.

The legal affairs department of the law ministry said offenses of sexual or physical abuse against children are covered under different sections of the Indian Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. The ministry also said the Evidence Act

also covers child protection in a comprehensive manner.

Following criticism from the Supreme Court on the Domestic Violence Act, the Law Ministry was doubly cautious this time. The apex court had termed the Act a poorly drafted legislation.

The WCD ministry had covered all types of offenses against children including corporal punishment, emotional abuse by parents or teachers and different types of sexual abuse.

The ministry had also said that the bill would bring India in line with the UN CRC. ■

[www.hindustantimes.com](http://www.hindustantimes.com)

## Baby Selling Racket in Delhi

A woman suspected of running a fake employment agency that organized the rape of young women and subsequent sale of their babies to childless couples has been arrested for kidnapping and wrongful confinement, police said on September 4. The couple ran a job agency in New Delhi, offering maids to families, said a spokesman for the city police.

The couple allegedly lured young women and girls aged under 18 years through the agency with promises of work, but instead confined them to a small room where they were raped to make them pregnant, he said.

Their children were subsequently sold to childless couples, he said. Police arrested the wife on charges of rape, kidnapping, threat to life and wrongful confinement and were hunting for the husband. The scandal emerged when the CNN-IBN television news channel ran a story on the agency. ■

## Child Laborer Abused, Murdered

**T**welve-year-old Ashok was kidnapped, sexually abused and later killed by three laborers in Sanghar area. Ashok, who was a child laborer, worked in a cotton factory and helped supplement his family's income.

On September 19, three laborers of the same cotton factory kidnapped the boy. When the parents found out that the boy had not returned, they went out in search of him. After two days they found the boy's dead body in the cotton factory's store room.

SPARC's Child Rights Committee (CRC) Sanghar visited the victim's house and met with the family. They also followed the case with the police and pressurized them to apprehend the real culprits. The CRC also held a protest against the sad incident to create awareness among the poor families and the community. The issue was also picked up by the electronic media that helped to catch the three laborers involved in the heinous crime. ■

## Former Jockeys Walk Into Sunset

**B**asti Hamzawali in Muzaffargarh was once known a village of camel jockey children as 150 children from the village had been sent to the United Arab Emirates in last 15 years by their parents or agents. The UAE sent back these children to Pakistan last year and now these children have started a new life here, with the support of the Unicef and the district government, according to a media report published on September 30.

The district government has set up a school with the help of Unicef to enroll jockeys. The school has furniture, classrooms, drinking water facility, toilets and a library and 150 camel

jockey children are getting free education in the school.

This year, 171 camel jockey children from Muzaffargarh were reunited with their families. A total of 200 children from Muzaffargarh were sent to the UAE to serve as jockeys. Up to 30 children are still awaiting their families in a shelter centre of Multan because they were kidnapped at an early age and do not have any information about their village or families. A former camel jockey said he was happy he was getting education. "Through education, I believe that I will become a respectable man in the society," he said. ■

trafficking up to 10,000 boys from Africa and Asia. It has been illegal to use children as camel jockeys in the UAE since 1993, but rigorous enforcement of the law is relatively recent.

The lawyers said they were acting on behalf of thousands of families from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Mauritania and Sudan. The lawyers said the boys were obtained through abduction, false inducement or agreement, and then smuggled across international borders by people posing as the boys' parents. ■

## Four sisters die of Suffocation

**F**our sisters -- aged between 6 and 12 years -- died of suffocation in the Mirpur district of Azad Kashmir, police said on September 3.

Mohammad Bashir, a resident of Aisar, and his wife were away from home on Sunday when their daughters got into their automatic car to enjoy music but were locked inside. When the couple returned at around 6:30pm, they found three of the girls dead. The fourth was taken out of the car in unconscious condition but she too died on way to the hospital. ■

## 49 Children Reunited

**A**s many as 49 children from SPARC Drop in Center, Peshawar were reunited with their families. These children were picked up by the SPARC staff from the streets. After providing psychosocial counseling to the children the staff convinced them to go back to their homes which they agreed.

The children came from Karachi, Lala Musa, Chakwal Charsadda, Malakand and Mardan. SPARC Child Rights Committees working in these areas also helped in the reunification process. ■

## Lawyers Re-File Dubai Slavery Case

**U**S lawyers re-filed a class-action lawsuit against the deputy ruler of Dubai on September 24 for allegedly enslaving thousands of young children for camel races. The case was dismissed by a court in Miami two months ago, but is now being filed in Kentucky, where Sheikh Hamdan al-Maktoum has business interests.

It accuses the sheikh and many unnamed others of abducting and

## The Most Beautiful Rug

RugMark's Campaign to End Child Labor reached a wide audience this summer through a number of prominent media stories on July 27 "Principal Voices" RugMark was featured in a series on CNN International. It was a televised and online discussion of the major challenges facing the world today. RugMark's founder, Kailash Satyarthi discussed RugMark's work in the segment on Social Entrepreneurship. ■

## "The Young Heroes of RugMark"

RugMark's Young Heroes Tour is the focus of this provocative video on [dwell.com](http://dwell.com). The video features interviews with Jaya Bhandari and Sanita Lama, the two former child weavers from Nepal who shared their experiences with audiences along the East Coast and put a face on the issue of child labor.

In addition, the video includes interviews with the Executive Director of RugMark USA and Founder and President of Odegard, Inc., who discuss how consumer choices can improve the lives of children in South Asia. ■

[www.RugMark.org](http://www.RugMark.org)  
[Info@RugMark.org](mailto:Info@RugMark.org)

## Resources for Child Rights are State's Responsibility

The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its General Day of Discussion on September 21. The subject was "Resources for the Rights of the Child – Responsibility of States" ([article 4](#)). After initial presentations, the meeting split into two groups to discuss the "use of resources to the maximum extent" and

"available resources and their allocation to children."

Committee Chairperson emphasized that the inclusion of the provision is essential to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The meaning of 'maximum extent' and 'available resources' would be central to the discussions, she said. "We must bear in mind it is the responsibility of States to implement economic, social and cultural rights," she added

Member of the Committee of the Rights of the Child, said: "We are concerned not just with financial resources, but human and organizational too." He pointed out that when States sign the Convention, they must cooperate internationally as well as taking national responsibility. He spoke of a number of factors integral to the question of allocation of State resources, including political will, the system of taxation, and international cooperation. Issues such as military expenditure, independent tracking, the involvement of civil society and, particularly, the question of whether there had been genuine consultation with children, were crucial. ■

*CRIN at [info@crin.org](mailto:info@crin.org)*

## Poverty, Illiteracy Cause of Child Labor

Speakers at a workshop on September 8 at Peshawar expressed concern over the seriousness of the problem of the child labor in Pakistan and called for concentrated efforts to improve the situation. They said that improper implementation of relevant laws, lack of education and poverty were the root causes of child labor.

*Activating media in combating worst forms of child labor in Pakistan* was organized by the International Labor Organization, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Media-Mark. The workshop is part of the ILO's ongoing national media plan to sensitize the media people on the child labor problems in Pakistan.

The speakers said that the increasing ratio of child labor in the NWFP had been affecting economic growth and spoiling health and future of the children involved. "Punjab has the highest number of child workers with 60 percent in the national aggregate followed by 20 percent in the NWFP, 14 percent in Sindh and six percent in Balochistan," Moreover 70 percent of the total working children were illiterate.

NWFP Information Secretary said strict implementation of relevant laws was the only remedy to control child labor. He highlighted the SDC's efforts for eliminating child labor. Columnist Javed Chaudhry emphasized the need for initiating sincere efforts to protect children from child labor. ■

## Police Shift Held Boys to Unknown Place

The Civil Judge and Judicial Magistrate-II Mirpurkhas on July 24 submitted his visit report before the Sindh High Court Hyderabad Circuit Bench, mentioning that five teenaged boys were not found in the police station of Phuladiyoon during his visit.

He put a note along with the report before the judge that newspapers carried photos of five children, who were brought to the civil hospital for medical examination by the Sindhri police and reports suggested that boys had been tortured in a wheat theft case.

The issue was raised by General Secretary of the High Court Bar Association (HCBA) Hyderabad. On the other hand the Civil Surgeon of Mirpurkhas had sent X-ray films to Civil Hospital Hyderabad for determining their ages. The results were awaited. Earlier DPO Mirpurkhas ordered inquiry into the same case. ■

## Universal Periodic Review

The UN Human Rights Council has now selected the first countries to be examined under the new Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism. The countries listed will be reviewed over the course of next year's Council sessions.

The UPR aims to ensure that the Council examines the human rights records of all UN Member States equally. The new mechanism came out of the Council's reform process in response to complaints that the same countries are always singled out for criticism whilst others with similar human rights records for political reasons escape comment. The review is due to begin in February 2008.

Pakistan has been placed in the second session of the UPR. ■

[www.unhchr.ch](http://www.unhchr.ch)

## Taliban Targeting Children

In the early morning of October 2 a suicide bomber blew himself up in front of a bus carrying Afghan police officers. "The explosion killed 11 people including three children," read a statement by Afghanistan's Interior Ministry. Taliban claimed responsibility. On September 30 two children died and five others were wounded after a bomb planted in a toy exploded. A provincial police spokesman said the toy was purposely left in front of a house.

Afghan officials and international forces based in the country have repeatedly accused Taliban rebels of using children and civilians as "human shields" in their ongoing insurgency. During a military operation on September 19, "Coalition forces as well as aircraft identified several insurgents in one compound using children as 'human shields'", said a US military press release.

On June 15 a suicide attacker blew himself up while schoolchildren were coming out of a school, killing 11 children and wounding several others. Armed men allegedly associated with Taliban insurgents have also frequently attacked schools, schoolchildren and teachers in insecure parts of the country. As a result, about 400 schools remain closed in southern provinces.

In April, Taliban insurgents circulated a video depicting a 12-year-old boy beheading a man who was allegedly accused of anti-Taliban activity. International human rights organizations, religious leaders and the government of Afghanistan expressed outrage and denounced the video. Under international humanitarian law all warring parties must respect the safety of children and other civilians and avoid using them for military purposes. ■

## Forcible Recruitment of Youth in Fata

An armed religious outfit in the Bara-Khyber Agency has started forcible recruitment of tribal youths into their ranks according to a media report on August 1.

The so-called religious outfit has been at war with another group in the remote Tirah valley since April 2006. The bloody armed conflict between the two groups has so far claimed more than 200 lives while a large number of houses belonging to supporters of the rival camps were either demolished or set on fire. ■

## Clerics Vow To Check Human Trafficking

The Noor Education Trust has been able to win the backing of the prayer leaders in raising awareness about human trafficking that is fast spreading in the poverty-stricken areas of NWFP. The meeting was held to inform the clerics on the severity of the issue and request them to use their podium for discouraging the menace of human trafficking.

The Imam shared two case studies of women of his area. He said women were usually subjected to trafficking in the name of customary practices such as dowry, adding the reason for that was poverty, lack of education and the general acceptance of the society of such ills. Imam of another mosque vowed to play his role in the campaign against the

practice and pointed out that the major responsibility rested with the nazims who had the power to stop such ills in the community. ■

## Militants Thrash Polio Health Team

Despite claims by the political administration of making excellent security arrangements for health workers to administer anti-polio drops to children, armed militants on September 26 made a polio team hostage in the volatile Bajaur Tribal Agency and released them after severe torture.

When a 12-member polio team reached an area of Bajaur, dozens of armed militants made them hostage and damaged their ice-boxes in which they were carrying anti-polio drops to vaccinate children.

Earlier, the militants had warned polio team members not to visit their areas for according to them it is a conspiracy to reduce their population by such tactics. The polio drive, which started on September 24, was stopped in many parts of the troubled Bajaur Agency due to deteriorating security situation and growing attacks on security forces and government installations. ■

## 'Breastfeeding can Save 42,000 Infants Yearly'

Only breastfeeding for the first six months could save more than 41,800 out of 190,000 infants that died annually in Punjab, said director general of Punjab Health Department on August 2.

The Punjab government celebrated the 16th annual World Breastfeeding Week, which started from August 1- 10. He said in Pakistan, 78 out of 1,000 infants died annually and in Punjab, 72 infants died out of the 1000 born in a year. He said 22 percent of the infants could be saved had mothers adopted breastfeeding for the first six months. He

said babies who started breastfeeding within the first hour of life were more likely to survive than those who were denied their basic right.

He said most of the infants' death in Pakistan occurred between the first day and first week of their births. He said the best prevention of neonates' diseases was breastfeeding for the first six months. He said mothers' death rate at the time of birth was between 0.3 and 0.35 percent in Pakistan and in Punjab, mothers' death rate was below 0.3 percent. ■

## Iodine Deficiency Disorders Serious Health Concern

Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDDs) continue to be a serious health concern in Pakistan, said the World Food Program (WFP) on September 19.

WFP's Country Director said under a two-year program launched in July 2006, WFP along with Micronutrient Initiative, Unicef, the Ministry of Health and others are aiming to prevent, control and eventually eliminate the menace. WFP has identified 29 highly endemic districts in NWFP, Azad Kashmir, FANA and FATA as their target to cut down the prevalence of IDDs among the 24 million people in those areas.

As a result of the program success, the Punjab Health Department has now requested WFP and its partners to start similar activities in 15 of its districts. ■

## Child Specific HIV Drugs Required

The world's biggest AIDS conference at Sydney on July 26 called for the development of child-specific drugs to ensure millions of HIV-infected children live without damaging side effects from their treatment.

An estimated 2.3 million children are HIV infected, with around 600,000 new infections each year. Without treatment half of all babies infected will die before their second birthday. Yet only 15 percent of children who need treatment are currently receiving antiretroviral drugs, the IAS conference in Sydney was told. HIV-infected children on antiretroviral risk HIV encephalopathy, where the brain swells and damages tissues over time, reduced neuro-cognitive development and lower bone density. ■

## DG Khan Claims being Polio-Free District

The Dera Ghazi Khan District has been declared polio-free by the World Health Organization surveillance team, claimed the executive district officer (health) on August 17. A WHO team visited 232 areas in the district for counter-checking anti-polio vaccination campaign and found only three far-flung areas in Dera Ghazi Khan Tehsil where the campaign could not be properly launched, though it found publicity (display of posters) satisfactory. The WHO stated in its report that 99.5 per cent of the children in the district had been vaccinated.

There are many inaccessible areas in Dera Ghazi Khan's tribal area where the polio teams could not reach. People of these areas are still awaiting medical facilities. ■

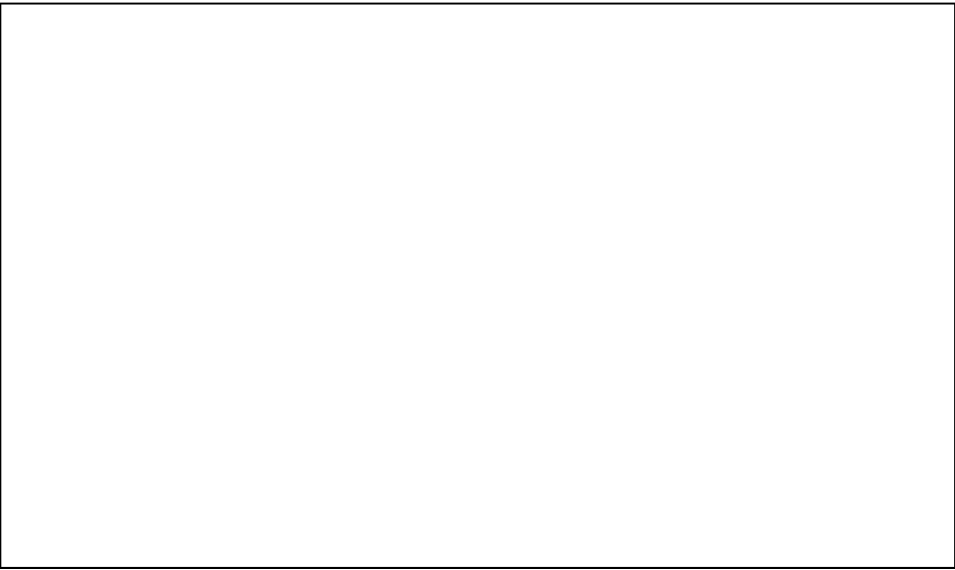


Dawn

## Health Facility For Children Awaits Opening

The newly-constructed children's complex at the DHQ Hospital Vehari awaits opening for the last five months because electricity has not yet been supplied to this facility as reported on September 24. Citizens have demanded immediate opening of this facility, saying that they had to take their sick children to Multan or Lahore.

The 50-bed complex equipped with intensive care unit has been completed at the cost of Rs30 million with the collaboration of Plan Pakistan, and is the first of its kind in southern Punjab. ■



## 19 Schools Rebuilt in Mansehra

The District Reconstruction Unit (DRU), Mansehra, had completed the reconstruction of 19 school buildings and work on another 147 projects was in progress, an official said on September 25.

Speaking at a press conference, the media and gender coordinator of the DRU, said the government was striving hard to rehabilitate the education, health, water and sanitation infrastructure and to enhance the livelihood resources of the earthquake survivors.

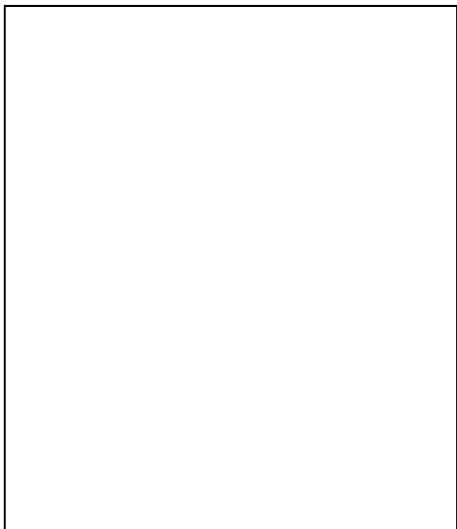
She said so far the reconstruction work, despite the completion of the reconstruction of 19 girls and boys schools, the reconstruction work on 50 schools would be started soon. ■

## 'Most Schools In Coastal Villages Closed'

Expressing concern over the closure of a large number of schools located in coastal villages, speakers at a seminar demanded that the government must fulfill its basic responsibility and take up the issue on priority basis. The seminar, State of Education In Coastal Villages, was organized by the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) at a government school on September 25.

Karachi PFF General-Secretary said that there were only 84 primary and secondary schools for half a million inhabitants of 400 villages along the Karachi coast. Seventy-five per cent of these schools were closed, he said, adding that of the total 30,000 children population only 1,300 were acquiring education.

Accusing the government of partisanship, PFF chairman said it was spending money on selected areas while depriving the old inhabitants of Karachi of basic facilities. He condemned the official apathy and vowed to launch a struggle for the education right of fishing communities. ■



## NCHD Ensures 100 % School Enrolments

Chairman National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) said on August 12 at Islamabad that all out efforts are being made for the provision of quality education to ensure 100 percent enrolment of children in schools (age 5-7 years) and reducing the dropout rate.

He said the NHCD programs have been launched to facilitate the provincial government and help it to achieve goals related to education and health. The Commission has ensured enrolment of 5 million children during the last four years, he added. The Chairman said the goal of the Commission was to fill the implementation gaps to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. ■

## Unicef Begins Emergency Education Program

Unicef will spend \$50 million in the earthquake affected areas of the NWFP and Azad Kashmir during 2007 in the fields of education, health, water and sanitation as reported on August 22.

Unicef Country Representative said Unicef had so far spent \$90 million in the affected areas and \$50 million more would be spent by the end of the current year. Executive District Officer, Education informed that 127,927 boys and 51,067 girls had been enrolled through the program in 1,536 boys' and 687 girls' schools. ■

## 50 School Buildings Dangerous

Monitoring teams have declared 50 school buildings rundown and recommended their demolition on August 2. According to sources, monitoring teams visited state-run primary, elementary and secondary schools in various areas of the Punjab and submitted a report to the education department.

It has also been learnt that the education department has gotten the provincial government's approval to reconstruct these buildings and allocated Rs90 million for the purpose. The education department said these buildings would be reconstructed under the Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program. ■

## Growing Problem of Ghost Centers in Punjab

Speakers at a seminar on September 12 criticized the Punjab Literacy Department for the thousands of ghost literacy centers in the province. The seminar was organized by the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) in collaboration with UNESCO and the ministry of education.

According to a participant, thousands of fake literacy centers, teachers' appointment without appointment letters, drawing of salary by unauthorized persons are only to name a few problems at Bahawalpur. This is in contradiction to data provided by the Punjab literacy department, which has failed to bring about any tangible result. "It is not a model which should be replicated in other provinces," he added.

Minister of State for Education on the occasion regretted that funds allocated for education were never completely utilized and the provinces always surrendered them on one pretext or the other.

National literacy program coordinator said the literacy program was operational in 117 districts and so far 71,281 adult literacy centers had been established in which 1,435,745 persons had become literate. He said the number of operational literacy centers was 50,000.

About future plans, he said 250,000 additional literacy centers would be established till 2010. A representative of the ministry of education said the Literacy Amendment Act 1987, which provided that a passport other than for Haj or a license should be issued only to a literate person, needed to be enforced with sincerity. ■

## Unique School in Parha Likha Punjab

The Government Primary School, Harwan, Rawalpindi is unique; it is co-education, has five rooms for 500 students, 200 of whom sit on benches while 300 squat on mats. There are five rooms to accommodate all the students. The over spill sits out in the open. And all rush homewards in times of need as the school has no toilets, disclosed a media report on September 5.

The credit for allowing the girls to join a boys' school goes both to the school administration as well as the parents. Both showed remarkable courage in taking the decision as in the atmosphere of growing religiosity and extremism, in which even baby girls are being forced to take the veil, they must have faced stiff opposition of the obscurantist.

Three of the rooms are in a poor condition and need urgent repair work to the roofs and walls. Though the school is unique, its problems are not. Almost all the schools of the division the *Parha Likha* Punjab are faced with similar problems. ■

Dawn

## Sanitation Facilities for School Children Urged

Senior educationists have called for provision of clean drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities in schools so that students could be saved from a host of ailments.

"The provision of appropriate water and sanitation facilities in educational institutions forms an essential component of the education system because the children without these facilities are vulnerable to diseases," said Special Secretary, NWFP Schools and Literacy Department, September 13.

He was addressing the participants of a three-day training course entitled *School Sanitation and Hygiene Education*, organized by the Provincial Institute of Teacher Education (Pite) with the financial and technical assistance of the Unicef-supported School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) Centre.

Pite established Pakistan's first School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) Centre in May this year. So far, over 150 education managers, administrators and supervisory staff of schools and literacy department had been imparted training under the program. Training manuals were also being developed in this regard. ■

Fahmina Naz A & B

---

## Consultation on Child Protection Held

Save the Children UK in collaboration with SPARC organized a consultative meeting of various stakeholders in Peshawar to assess the situation of child protection in Pakistan. The meeting was attended by people from the government departments, NGOs, CRCs, elected representatives, Tribal Union of Journalists, children and media persons.

Agenda of the meeting was to formulate a five year strategy for SC (UK) in NWFP and FATA. Six street children from SPARC Peshawar Drop in Center also attended the training. They shared about their problems, nature of work and about other working and street children. They also gave their valuable input in group work.

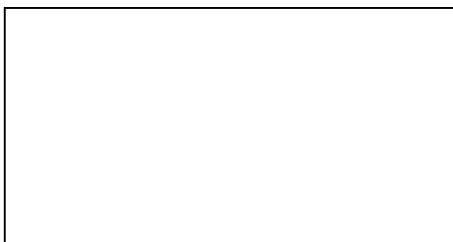


### Lahore

**August 22:** SPARC and Save the Children UK organized a consultation to assess the situation of child protection in Pakistan.

Save the Children UK is in the process of formulating its five year country program for Child Protection. For this purpose a Situation Analysis of Child Protection in Pakistan was being carried out and meeting with all the stakeholders including children was organized.

Speaking on the occasion Ms Salma Jafar, (Technical Director SC UK) and Mr Qindeel Shujaat (Executive Director SPARC) said that these consultations will help to identify violations of children's protection rights, discuss the challenges, opportunities and possible upstream and downstream interventions;



and discuss the strategic partnerships and the commitments of various stakeholders to the issues. Representatives from various NGOs and Government department participated.

### Quetta

SPARC organized a one-day consultation in Quetta on which was part of the SC-UK consultation on August 27, assessing the situation of child protection in Pakistan.

SPARC representative met with the NGOs, officer in-charge of the newly formed Child Protection Unit with the support from Unicef. The unit is being run by the AIG-Investigation Balochistan and Director Child Welfare Balochistan.

Seher, a NGO working with the juvenile prisoners in Balochistan organized a one-



day consultation on JJSO which was attended by the police and probation officers. SPARC's Mr Irfan also shared SPARC's initiatives and work in improving the lives of juvenile offenders.

### Karachi

SPARC Karachi in collaboration with SC UK organized a one-day consultation on *Situation Analysis on Children in Difficult Circumstances* on August 25.

A speaker highlighted the growing problems of forced marriages and conversion of minority children in Sindh. Discrimination in educational institutions was yet another problem faced by these children. Other key issues discussed included children in deep sea fishing, and shrimp cleaning by children as young as three years old. ■

---

## Need to Activate Probation Services Urged

SPARC Lahore organized a consultation meeting on *Role of Probation Department under Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000* on July 5, for the probation department and NGOs working for children who come in conflict with law.

Imprisonment of children awaiting trial or convicted of criminal offense must always be the last resort. Every effort must be made by the police, lawyers, and courts to find alternatives to custodial sentences. Regional Manager SPARC said that imprisonment adversely affects juvenile offenders' physical and mental health; it exposes them to violence and abuse and it teaches them new ways of offending rather than steering them away from criminal activity. Prisons are not the appropriate places to educate children or provide them with the knowledge and life skills they need to become responsible adults. Probation Officer Jhang said it was important to create awareness on the working and role of Probation Department among the police and jail staff.

The participants and all concerned authorities were asked to make concerted efforts to implement Section 10 of the JJSO and work for the activation of probation service. The JJSO that provides for the protection of children throughout arrest, trial and imprisonment should be implemented in true spirit so that children's rights are not violated. ■

---

## Children Paying for Militancy in NWFP

Children are the most neglected segment of the society was the consensus reached by the speakers attending the Provincial Conference on *The State of Child Right in NWFP*, organized by SPARC Peshawar on September 5.

Regional Manager SPARC, NWFP Jahanzeb Khan in his welcome address introduced the objectives and work of SPARC. Ms Nadia Gul of SPARC, Lahore spoke about the importance of Borstal Institutions for the rehabilitation and well being of juvenile offenders.

Minister for Social Welfare said that the provincial government had brought positive changes and had set up 23 educational institutions for disabled children, five welfare homes for males and two for females. He said that NWFP had taken a lead by providing free education up to matriculation. This, he added helped to raise the literacy ratio up to 34% in the province. "The government has established beggar homes for the poor and needy children while for drug addicts it has established rehabilitation centers," he added.

Mr. Afrasayab Khattak, former chief of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and provincial president of Awami National Party said that child labor is not due to poverty rather poverty is due to child labor. He regretted blasts at girls' schools across NWFP and Tribal Areas. He criticized the government for using gunship on its people irrespective of children, women and innocent man. He said that children were at the receiving end in the whole process of militancy as often they were used as suicide bombers besides being the most vulnerable to terrorist attacks. He called for a comprehensive mechanism for child protection and promotion. He said that we have signed

various national and international conventions on child rights but we are not serious in enforcing them. He promised to include child rights in his party manifesto.

Mr. Mushtaq Khan of Jamaat-e-Islami said that children are our future and we need to work for their well being irrespective of any discrimination. He stressed on the importance of education and suggested that all political parties should allocate at least 20% of their party budget for education of poor children.

Mr. Faqir Hussain of PPP (S) said SPARC has raised a very serious and sensitive issue of the state of working children. He suggested a national strategy to curb child labor and proposed a separate ministry for children. He assured to include child rights in his party manifesto.

Dr Seemi Jan of PML (Q) while underscoring the plight of juvenile offenders in jails said that separate detention centers for children should be established and called for a ban on domestic child labor. She said that it was also made a part of their party manifesto.

President Peshawar High Court Bar and Former MNA Mr Afridi said in FATA a separate judicial and administrative system is prevailing called the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) which is a draconian law and totally against human rights and child rights. He said that in the FCR the word child does not exist and therefore made no distinction between minor or major. He said in the Sections 22 and 23 the territorial and collective responsibilities of the FCR are a complete denial of child rights and child protection and suggested drastic changes in the FCR.

President Voice of Prisoners Mr. Noor Alam Advocate said that Borstal

Institution is a place where juvenile offenders and convicts are given technical training and education to make them useful and law abiding citizens of the society. There are no such institutions functioning in the NWFP.

He stressed on the police to determine the age of the juvenile accused before charging him of committing a crime. "If the police fail to do so it is the responsibility of the judge of the trial court to get his age determined by a competent forum," he added.

Secretary Law Shahid Naseem suggested a close and better coordination between the government and civil society for protecting child rights.

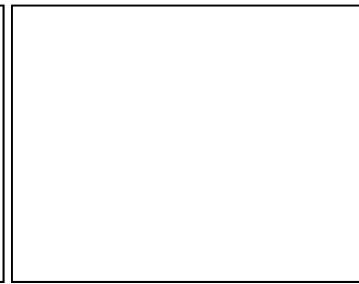
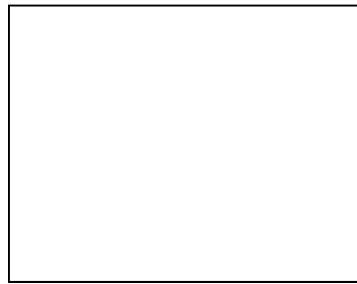
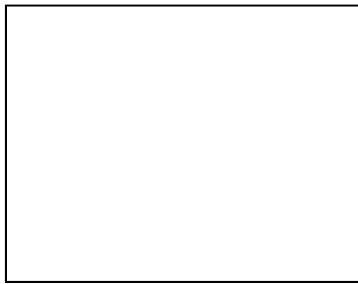
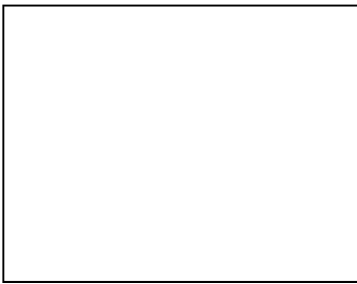
The conference was attended by members of the NGOs, media, CBOs, teachers and key stakeholders from various government departments.■

### SOPC 2006 Launched in NWFP

SPARC Peshawar held The State of Pakistan Children (SOPC) 2006" launching ceremony at Peshawar press club on July 4.

Minister for Population Welfare and Women Development NWFP highlighted the main points of the report and praised SPARC for presenting such a valuable and comprehensive report. Participants raised questions and concerns about the plight of children and government's performance regarding child protection and promotion.

The ceremony was attended by persons from media, NGOs, lawyers, elected representatives and officials from various government departments. At the end of the ceremony copies of the report were presented to the participants.■



## Protection is a Basic Right of Children

**P**overty, illiteracy, poor governance and country's political instability all contribute in the violation of rights of every citizen of the country. But children are the worst off because they do not have a voice.

Speaking at the Provincial Conference organized by SPARC Lahore on the theme *Child Protection Issues* on August 22, Mr Qindeel Shujaat, Executive Director SPARC said Protection is the basic right of children and we must ensure that they get this right. He emphasized on the poor implementation of laws regarding child rights which directly affects child protection issues especially those from the poor families. He said that contradiction in the implementation of the education policy has divided the society into advantaged and disadvantaged blocs.

Mr. I. A. Rehman, Director HRCP urged for collective efforts by civil society organization for improving the state of Pakistani children. He said that increasing poverty and poor social indicators co-exist with high defense spending, poor governance and social apathy. While regional security and defense issues dominate the national agenda, there is little attention given to pressing social issues. As a result we see increasing social and economic disparities that are not only causing social instability but also perpetuating a vicious cycle that traps the nation' poor and leads to violations of human rights especially child rights.

Mr. Bryan Hunt Principal Officer American Consulate Lahore urged for the proper implementation of the Pakistani laws and international standards on child rights for the bright and prosperous future of Pakistan

Nadia Gul Provincial Manager Child Rights Promotion SPARC Lahore shared that it is true that some sectors, such as education and health, require allocation of additional resources, but it is also true that Pakistan can find the required resources if it sets its priorities right. Child Protection issues need proper attention from concerned stakeholders she added.

Mr. Akhtar Balouch Regional Manager SPARC Karachi presented a comprehensive paper on role of media about Child Protection issues in labor industry.

Mr. Rashid Rehman SPARC Board Member said that the need of the hour was to work for the protection of children, especially those who are involved in bangle making and other exploitative economic

## Political Parties Should Take Up Child Rights in Manifestos

**S**PARC organized a one-day Provincial conference entitled *Protection of the Rights of the Vulnerable Children* in Hyderabad, Sindh on August 25. The objective of the conference was to discuss in depth the issues of the most neglected children and propose remedial measures in consultation with experts and activists belonging to civil society organizations, concerned government departments, bar association and political parties. The conference was designed to highlight the issue of child rights and to motivate civil society organizations and political parties to pay importance to the rights of children.

Mr. Akhtar Balouch highlighted the issues faced by the vulnerable children. He said that political parties have never given importance to children's issue. But now the time has come for political parties to take the up the issue of child rights in their political manifestos. Mr. Kashif Bajeer, of SPARC Hyderabad informed that about 460 children were in various prisons of Sindh at present. He emphasized that appointment of probation officers has not been carried out in Sindh. And added that proper implementation on JJSO would help in providing justice to juvenile offenders.

Mr. Nasir Aslam Zahid criticized the military governments and stated that no child will experience illiteracy if government stops investing in weapons and diverts the funds towards education and health of the people.

Mr. Jami Chandio said parents, teachers, society and the State would have to change their perception and give priority to children to evolve a responsible society. A Sociologist Dr. Saima Shaikh, shared that illiteracy was a fundamental cause of the vulnerability of children. She also pointed out that rapid growth in population specially in poor families also create problems in accessing fundamental rights such as nutrition, education, conducive environment and better place of work. Mr Hussain Ali argued that Pakistan is one of the few countries in the developing world who has been so responsive to adopt international conventions on child rights, but admitted that implementation has remained a problem throughout. He emphasized NGOs and Media to highlight children issues to make the State responsive.

Mr Dur Mohammad Bhatti spoke about the role and responsibility of the Ombudsman Department and offered all the stakeholders to refer child violation issues to the department as it can provide immediate relief to the victims. A religious scholar Allama Irfani was of the view that the mosque can be an effective institution which can ensure

## Inform Probation Officer

In an effort to improve the situation of children who come into contact with the law SPARC Lahore initiated a letter campaign. The letters, which were sent to all the Superintendents of Police of all the divisions of Lahore, requested that the Station House Officers (SHO's) of their respective areas be directed to inform the Probation Officer as soon as a juvenile is arrested.

According to Directorate of Reclamation and Probation provisions of this section as given in the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000 are not followed by the SHO's ■

## Training for Police Staff

**September 7:** SPARC Lahore organized a half day training session for assistant superintendents of Punjab Jails at Central Jail Staff Training Institute (CJSTI) Lahore. The topic of the training was *Child Rights and Juvenile Justice*. Mr. Rashad Aziz Regional Manager SPARC Punjab discussed the various aspects of detention of juveniles while Ms. Fahmina Child Protection Officer spoke about the UN CRC. Mr. Zaka Vice Principal CJSTI reflected on the rehabilitation aspects of institutional treatment in Pakistan. ■

## Panel of Lawyers

**September 5:** SPARC Lahore organized a consultative meeting with lawyers, probation officers, journalist and police officers on *Child Rights Legislation in Pakistan*.

The participants were informed about the JJSO and its provisions with a special focus on Section 3 and 10 of the above Law. The facilitator said that panel of lawyers should be established within the district. Following decision were taken at the end of the workshop:

- ◆ Letter would be sent to DIG Operation and Additional IG for compliance of Section 10 of JJSO.
- ◆ CRC will work for the activation of DCCWD in Faisalabad. ■

## Story Telling in Camp Jail

Ms Tasneem Peerzada of Rafi Peer Group and SPARC Lahore organized a story telling event at the juvenile section of Camp Jail Lahore. The story written by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jillani was about a nine-year-old boy. His mother had taught him to always tell the truth and in doing so he helped the robbers steal his mother's valuables. The robbers were impressed by his innocence and honesty and mend their ways. Juvenile inmates were impressed by the story and shared their personal stories about how they disobeyed their mothers and had landed in the jail. ■

## Free Legal Aid provided by SPARC Punjab

Serial No.	CRCs	Cases
1	Rahim Yar Khan	1
2	Faisalabad	4
3	Toba Tek Singh	1
4	Bahawalpur	1
5	Okara	20
	Total	27
	SPARC Lahore	25

## Juvenile Inmates Freed

SPARC Lahore's Law Manager Mr. Sajjad Cheema provided free legal aid to 29 juvenile offenders out of which 25 were bailed out while applications of three cases for bail of juvenile inmates were dismissed by the judge from July to September 2007. One juvenile was released, giving him the benefit of Section 382-B of Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

The CRCs in Punjab were able to release 27 juvenile offenders languishing in jails. ■

## Legal Aid to Juvenile Prisoners in NWFP

SPARC is striving to provide free legal aid to juvenile inmates. SPARC's Ijaz Muhammad Khan provided free legal aid to 21 juveniles prisoners from July to September 2007. While volunteer lawyers from Child Rights Committees provided free legal aid to 33 juvenile prisoners.

Break down of the legal aid is as follows:

Sr. No	Name of CRC	Cases
1	D I Khan	13
2	Swabi	10
3	Karak	2
4	Swat	3
5	Bunner	5
	Total	33
	SPARC Peshawar	21
Total	SPARC and CRCs	54

---

# SPARC CRC ACTIVITIES

## SINDH

### Cultural Event for CRCs

**August 24:** SPARC Sindh organized a cultural event for the CRCs working in Sindh in Hyderabad. Both male and females CRC members and other civil society organizations took part. The objective of the event was to celebrate the activism demonstrated by the CRC members in promoting and protecting child rights in Sindh.

### CRC Larkana

**August 20:** A one-day seminar on Child Rights Violations was organized in Larkana. The participants discussed the different aspects of abuse of child rights. They expressed concern on increasing cases of abduction of minor children in the district. SPARC's Kashif Bajeeer stressed on local administration to take serious initiatives to curb the menace of kidnapping.

### Central Jail Visit

**September 3:** CRC Larkana team visited the Central Jail Larkana and held a meeting with 11 juvenile prisoners in the jail. Later the team called on the jail administration and discussed legal aid for juvenile prisoners. The team also visited the Women Jail. They met six women prisoners and two children. It was observed that the jail school was not functioning. The CRC team asked the jail staff to provide proper facilities to the women prisoners.

### DVC Formed in Tharparkar

District Vigilance Committee (DVC) was set up in Tharparkar District due to the concerted efforts of the CRC Mithi. The decision to form the DVC was taken by the Executive District Officer earlier in a meeting on July 20. Later EDO, CDD

## CNICs for Bonded Laborers

**June 6:** Project Coordinator and Assistant Project Coordinator visited village Kamil Leghari Union Council Asgharabad and conducted a meeting with villagers and distributed 110 Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) among the villagers.

**August 1:** CRC Sanghar conducted a meeting with the assistant manager NADRA and discussed the CNICs which were not cleared. NADRA representative informed that 30 CNICs were ready and could be given to the applicants. Further, he assured that one NADRA representative will file and distribute the CNICs among the candidates/CNIC holders.

---

Tharparkar announced the establishment of the DVC comprising two sub committees i.e. Technical Committee and Monitoring committee.

In the first phase the technical committee will carry out survey and research in the areas where bonded labor prevails. The monitoring committee will oversee the state of bondage in the respective areas. Committees comprise people from the NGOs, media and government officials of concerned departments.

### Notification for DVC Issued

**September 14:** District Nazim issued a notification for the formation of District Vigilance Committee in Nawabshah. It comprises 13 members with District Nazim as the president, DCO as secretary, three female councilors, and a civil society activist. The setting up of the DVC was

**August 2:** CRC team visited village Salam Junejo and held a meeting with the villagers about the remaining CNICs and prepared a list of 50 villagers who will be given their CNICs.

**August 8:** As many as 85 bonded laborers got their CNICs in Taluka Shahdadpur following a meeting between the Assistant Project Coordinator Noor Hussein and assistant manager NADRA Shahdadpur.

During the month of August a large number of villagers and bonded laborers received their CNICs through the effort of the respective CRCs working in the districts of Sindh. Besides, list of names were given to the NADRA, of those villagers who had not received their CNICs or if there was an objection filed against the person.■

---

due to the consistent efforts and frequent demand made by the CRC Nawabshah. District CRC Coordinator is also a member of the committee. The committee was made effective from September 14.

### Petition Filed against Education Department

CRC Coordinator Shikarpur filed a case in sessions court, Shikarpur against the closure of Girls Primary Education School. The accused involved Education Department of the area. The owner of the plot of school had demanded compensation in terms of providing job in education department. However, District Education Officer denied and instead ordered to close the school. Child Rights Committee has started a campaign against education department and has made demand that all the closed schools should be opened immediately in the district.

---

## Consultation with Elected Representatives

A consultation with elected representatives of District Nawabshah was held on July 18, organized by the CRC Nawabshah.

Mr. Kashif Bajeer, Manager Child Protection SPARC, Sindh, said that SPARC works at the grass roots level and believes that the community should be educated and made aware in protecting and promoting child rights. SPARC supports initiatives taken by the concerned people regarding the protection of child rights.

Due to a lack of awareness and education, child rights violation is carried out with impunity in the society, said Zila Nazim, Nawabshah. She said violation of child rights begins from our first social institution i.e. family. Being illiterate, the parents treat their children like commodities, not caring for their physical, emotional or psychological needs. She said child labor is a byproduct of poverty and unemployment, and only by adopting people oriented policies can we effectively deal with these evils. She offered her support for any steps taken to protect the rights of children in the district and also help pass related resolutions from the district assembly, such as setting up of district vigilance committee, birth registration of children etc.

Taluka Nazim, Nawabshah said that he appreciated SPARC's campaign on protecting child rights in the district, in order to sensitize the elected representatives of the district. Executive Director, SDS, Hyderabad, said it was the responsibility of the educated class and the elected representatives of the district to work against child labor and anti child elements of the society.

## CRC Sukkur

**August 8:** CRC Sukkur organized a seminar to observe literacy day in Sukkur district. The Executive District Officer (Education) appreciated CRC's efforts and assured support in protecting child rights. A professor of Sociology shared, "We would have to ensure at least primary and secondary education in the district". Parents also demonstrated keenness for children's education.

## CRC Mithi

**August 8:** CRC Mithi in collaboration with National Commission for Human Development and Education Department of District Tharparkar organized a rally on Literacy Day in Mithi. A large number of participants marched from Press Club to District Education Office and chanted slogans for education for all. Later, a seminar was held to highlight the importance of education for a productive and good quality life.

## CRC Nawabshah

**August 8:** CRC Nawabshah organized a walk on the literacy day from D.C High School to Press Club. Taluka Nazim, EDO (Education) and a large number of teachers, trade union activists and citizens participated in the walk to help promote literacy in the society.

# PUNJAB

## Meeting in Muzaffargarh

**July 25:** SPARC and CRC Muzaffargarh organized a one-day consultation on the *JJSO and the Role of Police* with the objective of raising awareness of police officials regarding the role of police in the JJSO. Regional Manager informed that the JJSO was enacted in 2000 by the present government. The Ordinance provides for the protection of the rights of children involved in criminal litigation and is a significant and much needed addition to the existing corpus of child-friendly laws. Police officials including women police officials from Muzaffargarh police stations participated.

## Consultation in DG Khan

**July 24:** SPARC and CRC Dera Ghazi Khan organized a one-day consultation on the *JJSO and the Role of Police*. The objective of the event was to raise awareness of police officials regarding their role in the enforcement of the JJSO for the benefit of juvenile offenders. Probation officers also attended the consultation along with the police officers.

## Meeting in Jhang

**August 30:** SPARC Lahore and CRC Jhang organized a meeting on *Child Rights Legislation in Pakistan* with lawyers, police officers, probation officers and journalists. The participants demanded that the NGOs and civil society should play an

active role in children's registering process and arranging for legal aid for children who are behind bars. They also asked the District Vigilance Committee to help children in getting their civic rights.

## Toba Tek Singh

**August 16:** CRC Toba Tek Singh held a follow up meeting to discuss the absence of panel of lawyers in the district. The CRC members vowed to work for the setting up of a panel of lawyers in Toba Tek Singh.

## Campaign Workshop in Faisalabad

**July 19-20:** SPARC Lahore organized a training workshop with female members of the CRC Faisalabad on *Advocating for Child Rights*. The aim of the training was to build the capacity of the female members in designing and monitoring a campaign so that they could effectively lobby for child rights in their area.

# NWFP

## Selection Board for Jail Constituted

District Coordination Officer Swat has issued a notification for a selection board for the appointment of unofficial visitors to the District Jail Swat consisting of following members:

District Coordination Officer Swat, all members of national assembly/ member provincial assembly of District Swat

District Police Officer Swat, Superintendent Jail Swat and Mr. Shaukat Salim Advocate of CRC Swat.

Copy of the same letter has also been issued to the Secretary Home Department NWFP, IG Prison, DIG Malakand Region-III, Saidu Sharif and members/ secretary of the committee.

## DCRC Bannu Set Up

**June 26:** CRC Coordinator Bannu Malik Mir Hayat was selected chairman of the newly established District Child Rights Committee. The said committee was notified by the District Coordination Officer through a notification. The District Naib Nazim Convener Zilla Council Bannu had established DCRC Bannu. Three Union Council Nazims and three lady councilors were selected as its members.

### **CRC Upper Dir**

**July 21:** A committee for child rights was established at district level in district Upper Dir. The District officer Social Welfare Department Upper Dir issued a letter and nominated Mr. Zahid Jan Coordinator Upper Dir as a member of the District Child Rights Committee for upper Dir.

### **CRC D I Khan**

**August 18:** CRC Dera Ismail Khan organized a one-day workshop with journalists from print and electronic media on *Child Rights and the Role of Media*. Child rights, protection issues, role of journalists, media ethics regarding cases of violence against children, research publications and articles, documentaries on children issues were discussed. ■

### **Training Workshop for Lawyers**

SPARC Peshawar organized its first ever two-day training workshop for CRC lawyers on August 31. Fourteen lawyers from various CRCs of NWFP took part.

Topics included in the training were Child Rights and UN CRC, Right and Duty, the JJSO and implementation gaps and alternative to imprisonment. The lawyers appreciated the knowledge shared on the various aspects of child rights, the JJSO and promised to work for the protection and promotion of child rights and enforcement of the JJSO.

### **Consultation with Lawyers in Swabi**

**S**PARC Peshawar organized a one-day consultation with the Lawyers of Swabi Bar on August 24. The topics included child rights, child protection issues and JJSO.

SPARC's Legal Aid Manager Ijaz Khan and Protection Manager Amir Mughal facilitated the training session. The consultation helped raise awareness among the lawyers of their role and responsibilities in protecting the children who come in contact with the law and rights of the child.

### **Nowshera Bar**

A similar consultation was organized by SPARC on August 16 with the lawyers from Nowshera Bar. The workshop helped the lawyers know more about child rights, the JJSO and its provisions. They assured to play their role according to the JJSO and treat juvenile offenders in accordance with the law. ■

## **Court Grants Bail to Juvenile Prisoner**

**A** juvenile prisoner involved in a case of drug smuggling was released on bail by a local court here on August 1 at Peshawar with SPARC's intervention. SPARC filed a bail application for (J) under its Free Legal Aid Program for juvenile offenders.

The police arrested the 16-year-old on July 8 and charged him under Sections 3 and 4 of the JJSO for allegedly

transporting about 800 grams of hash. Peshawar Judicial Magistrate took up the bail application and SPARC's lawyer Ijaz Khan contended that there was no independent witness to the case against the accused. He also informed the court that the sections imposed against the petitioner were bailable. After arguments, the judge ordered the release of the juvenile prisoner on bail against two surety bonds, each worth Rs 100,000. ■

## **Police Remanded for Abuse of Juvenile Detainee**

**T**he Larkana circuit bench of the Sindh High Court on September 13 remanded an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) in police custody and directed to register a First Information Report (FIR) against him on charges of detaining and attempting to sodomize 12-year-old (F). Moreover the court referred the case to the medical superintendent and asked to submit a report within two days.

The boy alleged that the ASI picked him up and brought him on his motorcycle to his autaq (guest house) at 5 pm on Sept 11 when he was purchasing chicken meat in the market. After having snatched Rs1, 000, the ASI at midnight "subjected me to severe torture and attempted to sodomize me which I resisted," the boy said. ■

## **Malaysia for Death Penalty for Juvenile Offenders**

**M**alaysia's two top courts called on Malaysian Parliament on July 26 to 'plug loopholes' in the 50-year-old Federal Constitution and

Child Act 2001, thereby allowing the death penalty for juvenile murderers. However, judges are of the view that something must be done to modify the Federal Constitution and Child Act. A 17-year-old boy, who was convicted of murdering his teacher's daughter four years ago, escaped a death sentence after a three-member panel, ordered him to be released. ■

## Juvenile Law Vague on Age Determination: LHC

A full bench of the Lahore High Court (LHC) on September 22 has declared the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (JJSO) vague to the extent of determination of age of an accused for his/her trial in a juvenile court.

“The court has found that sub-section 3 of section 4 of the JJSO declares in most emphatic and categorical terms that the juvenile court shall have exclusive jurisdiction to try cases in which a child is accused of commission of an offense. But the entire Ordinance is completely silent as to how and at what stage a case shall reach a juvenile court and at what point of time and by whom a determination is to be made as to whether an accused person is a child or not,” the bench wrote in its judgment.

“Prior to sending challan, police must form a tentative opinion as to the age of the accused and the magistrate on receiving such record must examine it in entirety and make his own assessment. If the magistrate finds any deficiency, he may himself hold an inquiry to satisfy whether or not the accused is juvenile and his court is competent to try a juvenile. Otherwise he would send the case to the court which is competent to hear the juvenile cases,” the bench ruled.

The Ordinance creates an impression that an ordinary court would decide if an

accused was a child and needed to be tried in a juvenile court, the bench observed. “The Ordinance also fails to specify the mechanism whereby an ordinary court may determine whether the accused is a child or a major,” it added. “If an accused claims juvenility then he must raise it at the earliest possible, preferably during the course of investigation, otherwise difficulties would crop up,” the bench said. ■

## Education Helps Commute Death to Life Term

A prisoner, on death row until recently, has acquired higher education during his time in the Haripur Central Prison as learned on September 5.

S.F of Mingora was a first-year student when he was sentenced to death in July 2002 in a murder case despite being a juvenile. His trial started in April 2000. Meanwhile he got BA and MA (International Relations) degrees from the Hazara University while serving time on the death row. He improved his spoken English because of interaction with two South African jail mates. He is now working on a book, a collection of letters he wrote to his family from the death cell. Last month, the Federal Shariat Court commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment. He is now working as a teacher in the juvenile section’s school. ■

## Juvenile Gets Life Term Twice Over

The Anti-Terrorism Court, on August 31 sentenced life imprisonment twice over to a juvenile accused for kidnapping a seven-year-old boy for ransom and killing him in November 2006. The court also imposed a fine of Rs100, 000 and ordered attachment of property of the accused worth Rs100, 000. The accused was tried and convicted under Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, 2000.

(A) was prosecuted for kidnapping Mohammad Faisal for ransom on November 29, 2006 and killing him. According to the prosecution, the accused along with absconding co-accused demanded Rs400, 000 from the boy’s family for his release and received Rs35,000. However, they did not release the boy and killed him. The body was found from a well near Memon Goth. ■

## Media Violating Law on Juvenile Offenders

The print and electronic media in Pakistan have been using pictures and names of juvenile offenders and children in need of protection, contrary to codes of ethics and national and international legislation as reported on September 7. The government has yet to declare such practices as penal offenses.

Recently, the picture and name of a nine-year-old female victim of child prostitution, recovered from a brothel in Swat district, was splashed across different newspapers.

“The JJSO has many flaws as it covers only court proceedings and not other stages when a juvenile in conflict with the law is arrested,” said Chairman of the Voice of Prisoners. He added some categories, especially victims of sexual abuse, had also not been included in the law, which only deals with juvenile offenders. The law also does not provide for penalties for infringement of the law.

The International Federation of Journalists as well as the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development has issued guidelines for reporting on issues relating to children. ■

## Nine-Year-Old Girl Forced To Prostitute

A nine-year-old girl (K) was recovered by police from an alleged brothel in Swat on July 24. Ms K was sold by her drug addict father to Ms Safia for Rs 40,000 almost two years back. The local police on a tip off raided the said house and recovered the minor girl.

She told the police that her father had sold her to Safia who had been using her for prostitution. The girl revealed that daily three to four customers used to come and each paid at least Rs 1,000 to the lady and her husband.

Chief Justice Peshawar High Court took suo motu notice of the issue on July 25 and ordered that she should be shifted to Women Crises Center Peshawar. Here SPARC's Ijaz Khan and Amir Mughal met the girl and assured her of full support and also gave her clothes, shoes and food.

Earlier medical examination claimed that she was 13 years old but SPARC and CRC Swat Coordinator Mr. Shaukat Salim Advocate disputed the report and said that the girl was only nine years old. Later the court confirmed that the girl was nine years old. ■

## Ban Corporal Punishment: SPARC

Corporal punishment continues to be employed as a tool to discipline children in schools around the world. In some schools teachers regularly hit children in an attempt to maintain control within the classroom and to punish the child for poor academic performance.

"Corporal punishment not only hurts children physically but emotionally as well," said Nadia Gul, SPARC Provincial Manager Child Rights Promotion while launching a nationwide campaign on evils of corporal punishment in September. As part of the campaign entitled *Evils of Corporal Punishment*, SPARC organized different activities to create awareness on the menace of corporal punishment and how it negatively impacts on the emotional and personality development of the victim.

The activities taking place in Sindh, NWFP, Punjab and Islamabad included:

- ◆ A one day training for teachers on the evils of corporal punishment in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad along with 21 districts of Sindh, Punjab and NWFP.
- ◆ Talk shows on radio channels to raise awareness about alternatives to corporal punishment.
- ◆ Distribution of stickers against corporal punishment throughout the country.

- ◆ Letters sent to the Provincial Education Ministers regarding implementation of a ban on corporal punishment in the country. ■

## Jirga Treating Girls as Commodities

SPARC on September 16 said it would file contempt of court petitions against the trend of giving away girls as compensation for settling disputes. "This trend is alarmingly high and tribal elders are committing this crime despite the fact that it is prohibited by the Chief Justice of Pakistan," said Regional Manager SPARC Karachi.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan took suo motu action against a jirga conducted in Jacobabad that gave five girls as compensation to a victim's family in its verdict. The Supreme Court issued orders to police department to take action against the jirga and rejected the bail application of PPP's parliamentarian.

"Jirga system could be discouraged if such influential feudal lords are arrested and punished in accordance with the law," he said. Jirgas were regularly held in lower parts of Sindh also. "Such unlawful hearings are conducted and promoted by influential feudal lords and tribal elders to safeguard their self interests," he said, adding that jirga hearings continued unabated despite a ban on it imposed by the Sukkur bench of the Sindh High Court. ■

## 'I Will Never Go To a Madrassah Again'

"I will never go to a madrassah again," said 14-year-old (S) after returning home barefoot on September 20.

The child alleged that the madrassah head, Qari Mujahid, had sodomized him. Police registered a case against the qari and arrested him the same day.

In the FIR, the child alleged that on August 28 and September 20, the qari made repeated attempts to sodomize him. He said he escaped from the madrassah, got home and told his family that he would never go back.

He also alleged that there were three other students who had been sodomized, but they did not speak up because of threats of dire consequences. ■

## SPARC PLEA

SPARC on July 30 requested the media not to publish photographs and identification of juvenile offenders and children who are victims of violence.

In letters sent to different papers, Provincial Manager Child Protection, Peshawar said that section eight of the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, 2000, prohibits publishing such information in any newspapers, journals or magazine in any form which might disclose the name, address, school or any identification or particulars which may lead directly or indirectly to the identification of such a child nor shall any picture of the child be published. He requested newspapers not to publish the name and picture of the minor girl recovered from Swat. ■

# L E T T E R S

## To Play an Effective Role

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of quarterly magazine for the month of June 2007. We value your efforts and appreciate your research in writing of such enlightening and revealing articles. These articles had not only created awareness among us regarding the child issues but also enriched us with a sense of responsibility to play our effective roles to eradicate this menace of child labor.

The article "Trapped in Poverty" by Said Afzal based on child labor is highly informative. It is very true that not all work is bad for children. It becomes exploitative only when children are deprived of their basic rights to get education, proper health & nutrition and recreation.

I would also like to share some more information with you regarding the child labor. It is really alarming to find out that 71% of children are working in Agriculture and Fishing and 8.3% in factories. UN International Labor Organization reports that estimated 10 million children working in unfit conditions as domestic servants worldwide. The number is also rapidly increasing in Pakistan.

Pakistan has recently passed limiting child labor and indentured servitude but those Laws are generally ignored and some 11 million children aged 4-14, are still keeping the country's factories operating, often working in brutal and squalid conditions. I hope that you will continue sending us such informative material in future.

*Hina Maqsood  
Rural Development Foundation  
www.rdf.org.pk*

## A Mission Ahead

I am currently working with Church Ministry in Multan. I am equally eager to work for the welfare of needy children in imparting education. It is my mission to teach the poor children. I would like to work with SPARC and you can lend a helping hand through your publications including brochures and literature for my information. I also wish to be a part of your training programs and seminars.

*Ruffas Christee  
rev\_ruffas\_christee@yahoo.com*

## Child Labor in Cotton Production

I am conducting research for the Environmental Justice Foundation on the use of child labor in the worldwide cotton industry.

I am writing to ask if you have any recent data on the use of child labor in cotton production in Pakistan -- the numbers of children involved, where and why child labor is used, and conditions and dangers of working in the fields.

We are also looking for relevant photos for inclusion in the report as well as testimonies from children about their experiences and possibly statements from farmers. Would you be able to provide us with any of this type of material? I appreciate any assistance you can offer.

*Helen Kinsella  
helen.kinsella@ejfoundation.org*

## Working for NWFP

Swat Youth Front (SYF), is a non-profit organization working for Poverty-reduction, Literacy, Employment, Women Empowerment and disaster management in Malakand Region, NWFP since 1999.

Our vision is to collaborate with community, public and civil society organizations and strive for prosperous society, where all have equal access to opportunities irrespective of gender, color, race, religion and status.

*Badar Zaman  
Opt G PS  
Mingora, Swat*

## SPARC Peshawar's Plea to Abolish FCR

**P**resident Musharraf while once commenting on the status of FCR has said that the government would soon bring major changes/amendments to the Frontier Crimes Regulation but a few days later he said that the powers of the political agent must be increased to better the law and order situation of the tribal areas. Such dualism on the part of the head of the state shows non-seriousness of the government to the ills and problems of tribal people.

With the passage of time new acts and offences were added to the FCR in 1901, widening the scope of the regulation. All over the world governments are responsible for the safety of their citizens, but in FATA the inhabitants are responsible for the safety of the government.

The superior judiciary of Pakistan, including the Federal Shariat Court has made categorical judgments against the FCR and has recommended its repeal, but the corrupt bureaucracy/administration in the tribal areas has been claiming that the situation was not ripe for reforms in FATA.

Failure to act now would lead to eruption of the volcano of violence in the tribal belt that remained dormant in the past, but has now started flaring up after the so-called war on terror unleashed following the 9/11 incident.

## Upgrading Resource Center

Public library has been established in Sujawal Town since forty years. Students and members of public attend the library.

It is our earnest ambition to provide our readers wide variety of Islamic books, and publications to stimulate public interest in Islamic studies, foster Islamic spirit and guide our readers to pattern their lives according to the concept accordingly. The concept of Child Rights in light of Islam can be a useful contribution from your side. Please send us your publications and literature regularly. Our students and public are interested in learning about child rights.

*Abdul Aziz Mehdhro  
Sujawal Distt: Thatta, Sindh*

## Working in Southern Punjab

It gives me immense pleasure to introduce PHDF. It was established to work for community benefit projects in South Punjab region. We work in areas of women empowerment, agriculture development, children development, and health and disaster response in South Punjab. We are maintaining a resource library for university student, development workers, human rights activist, labor workers, trade union and community. The resource library has books on development and human rights, newspaper, clipping, journals and magazines, newsletters and research reports.

We are collecting information material for resource center. We would like to have copies of previous yearly reports of "State of Pakistan Children" so these could be used for references and research work. Estimated 500 people will benefit from our resource center in a year.

*Zahida Khan  
Khanewal Road, Multan*

## Reaching the Unreachable

Child labor is a heinous crime against society. In our daily lives we witness children doing all sorts of jobs from cleaning cars to repairing them at the workshop from domestic work to the brick kiln. Child labor is present everywhere in Pakistan and is prevailing in all parts of the world too.

Poverty is the basic and core factor. Mostly the cause is economic deprivation or economic reversal and ultimately the children have to face the burden of poverty. In this context our organization 'Prime' has set up a school in district Khanewal. Please include our organization in your mailing list and send the updated material.

*Malik Iqbal Hussain  
Kabirwala  
Punjab*

**SPARC Launches New Website:** SPARC has launched its website [www.sparcpk.org](http://www.sparcpk.org) with a new look. A specialized news search engine for child rights has been included along with a special corner for children views and contributions.

## SPARC Publications

We are a law firm located in Karachi. Protection of rights of children and women form a major part of our pro bono commitment. Please do let us know when and if you require any assistance in Karachi. We would also appreciate if you could please let us know how to obtain hard copies of the SPARC publications.

*Omar Sial  
Omar Sial & Associates, Karachi*

## Publications Received

Institute for Development Studies and Practices would like to thank you for sending Discourse and quarterly publications.

We have found your publications informative and it will help our staff and learners in the areas of their work and for their conceptual understanding regarding child rights, Issues and child education. IDSP is looking forward to your publications in future.

*Shazia Wahid  
Resource Center (RTF)*

## Seeking Knowledge

I am a regular reader of SPARC magazine for its useful information on child rights concerns.

Your magazine, of June 2007 had sound updates and awareness stuff. Your efforts on taking these issues are thought provoking for a common man.

I also work with a NGO Child Development Organization as a volunteer and your magazines help me to get knowledge and awareness especially on Child Rights.

In this regard, I request you to send me a copy of the said magazine as well as related material of your Organization.

*Riaz Hussain Soomro  
District Dadu  
Sindh.*

## Project Proposals

Sindh Rural Development Organization Kotri is a non-profit organization working for education, health, environment, women and children and basic Human Rights issues. SRDO seeks your cooperation in these fields. We would like you to provide us with your printed material/ literature.

*Mr Ali Anwar Abbasi  
Kotri Distt; Jamshoro*

## Need Information

We have read about SPARC activities on the website but we need more information.

We would like to share with you a little about Churches Save Property Association which is registered with the Government of Sindh. This is a non profit organization rendering its services for the physically and mentally handicapped children. The association provides physiotherapy and basic education to them.

*patraschurch\_save\_property  
@hotmail.com*

## Children Suffer with Jailed Mothers in Afghanistan

**F**atima lives with her mother and a younger brother in Pul-e Charkhi prison, in the eastern outskirts of Kabul. The 12-year-old was first brought to the prison four years ago, after a court sentenced her mother to 11 years for murdering her husband.

"There are six women and seven children living with us in a single cell," complained Fatima, who added that she finds it annoying living with "those naughty kids". Unlike other children in Kabul, both Fatima and her brother are deprived of an education, because there is no school in the prison, Afghanistan's biggest jail. "I dream of being able to go to school just like other girls," she said.

According to Afghanistan's criminal code, children who stay with an imprisoned guardian must have access to education. In practice, however, the country cannot implement this legal provision due to the shortage of resources, officials acknowledge. ■

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Positive Discipline:** This publication addresses the recommendations of the 2006 UN World Report on *Violence against Children* that calls for the elimination of all corporal punishment of children and the promotion of positive discipline. It dismisses the common belief that children learn through physical pain and aims to provide concrete answers to parents who want to raise their children without corporal punishment. The report was released in September 2007.

Website: [www.rb.se](http://www.rb.se), Visit: <http://www.crin.org>

**Kids Count 2007:** The Annie E. Casey Foundation released the 18th annual *Kids Count Data Book*, a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the United States in July 2007. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks for child well-being, Kids Count seeks to enrich local, state, and national discussions concerning ways to secure better futures for all children.

Website: [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)  
Visit: <http://www.crin.org>

**UN Report on Pollution Hazards:** With over 30 per cent of the global burden of disease in children attributable to environmental factors, the UN health agency launched the first ever report *Principles for Evaluating Health Risks in Children Associated with Exposure to Chemicals*, highlighting youngsters' special susceptibility to harmful chemical exposures at different periods of their growth, and the potential effects later in life in July 2007. The vulnerability of children is increased in degraded environments. Neglected and malnourished children suffer the most. One in five children in the poorest parts of the world will die before the age of five mainly because of environment-related diseases.

Website: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)  
Visit: <http://www.crin.org>

**Children in Migration:** Migrant children are one of the most vulnerable groups in Europe today. Some of them have fled persecution or war; others have run away from poverty and destitution. There are also those who are victims of trafficking. Human Rights Watch published in August a critical report on how the 900 unaccompanied children who arrived by boat from Africa to the Canary Islands in 2006 had been received. Such reports are particularly important as there is little official data on the reality of Europe's migrant children. In order to formulate a wise and comprehensive policy on this issue, we need more facts.

Visit: <http://www.crin.org>

**To End Child Labor:** CARE USA published a new report to provide realistic and concrete examples of how to tackle and eliminate hazardous and exploitative child labor. *Caution - Children at Work* calls attention to the institutional commitments and priorities outlined in CARE's *Organizational Policy Regarding Working Children and Hazardous Child Labor*, adopted in 2006. The theme of "galvanizing communities to end child labor" resulted from a strategic review of interventions to combat hazardous and exploitative child labor around the world - specifically, the significant contributions made by local communities.

<http://www.care.org>

**Human Rights Education:** The manual contains lessons and service-learning projects. The lesson plans are divided into five human rights topic areas: environment, poverty, discrimination, children's rights to education and health, and law and justice. This manual aims to: engage educators currently utilizing service-learning in the practice of human rights education; enable human rights educators and trainers to teach through service-learning; and provide the tools and building blocks for educators to promote human rights education and service-learning far beyond the scope of the activities included in this manual.

Website: <http://www.hrea.org>, Visit: <http://www.crin.org>

**Comic to Defend Child Rights:** Six super heroes have swept into Belfast to help launch a unique new *comic* aimed at promoting and defending the rights of young children. Herbie Healthy, Sophie Safe, Archie Achiever, Emer the Eco Girl, Donna Does-a-lot and Rory Rights will use their super powers to help in the fight to secure a better society for children and ensure their needs are kept at the heart of government and the community.

Website: <http://www.allchildrenni.gov.uk>

**Education's Missing Millions:** It has been estimated that one third of the 77 million children still out of school are disabled children. Globally, ensuring the inclusion of disabled children is critical to achieving the goal of universal primary completion (UPC) by 2015.

The research report *Education's Missing Millions* focuses on how the Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) Partnership is tackling the challenges of disability and inclusion in education. Its purpose is to: assess the disability responsiveness of FTI processes and education sector plans thus far; formulate recommendations to strengthen current processes, tools and partnership mechanisms; and identify new opportunities through which the FTI can better address the issue of disability and education.

Website: [www.worldvision.org.uk/main.htm](http://www.worldvision.org.uk/main.htm), <http://www.crin.org/resources>

## Blast Damages Buildings of Girls' Schools

Cont. from Page 1

video and CD shops etc. On September 9, a missionary institution for women, the Sangota Public School, was closed for a week after it received threats from a militant organization, accusing the school administration of propagating Christianity and obscenity.

The same organization also issued letters to a number of other schools asking students to wear *burqa* (veil). Following the threats, the education department issued a circular a few days ago, making the wearing of *burqa* mandatory for girl students.

Recently, a string of explosions damaged some schools, including the Government Girls' High School in Matta and the Government Girls Primary School in the Bedara area. An explosive device planted in the Government Girls High School in Qambar was defused by police a few days ago.

Students of girls' schools are in a state of fear and in some cases people have stopped sending their daughters to schools.

**Blast Rocks Mastung:** The Mastung town at Quetta was rocked on September 5 at night when an explosive device went off near a school. According to police, the device was planted close to the wall of the Government Polite High School that went off with a bang, causing panic among the residents. Windowpanes of the school building and nearby houses and shops were smashed. No casualty was reported.

**NGOs Targeted:** Two people sustained injuries when militants blew up the offices of two NGOs in Orakzai Agency on September 30, police said. The first blast occurred at the Women Welfare Centre office. The second blast in the Sarhad Rural Support Program office. ■

## Teenaged Suicide Bomber Kills 18

Cont. from Page 1

Officials said that police acting on information that a suicide bomber was traveling in a passenger pick-up chased the vehicle and intercepted it. As the policemen asked the boy to get off, he detonated the explosives wrapped, they added.

The explosion was so powerful that parts of victims' bodies were thrown far and wide. A leg of the bomber was found near the vehicle. A constable informed that the young bomber was wearing

white shalwar-kameez and a cap. "We could tell from the bulge that he is wearing something around his body", he said.

Eyewitnesses said after intercepting the pick-up, police ordered the boy to get off the vehicle, but he refused and soon there was a big explosion and the smell of gunpowder filled the air. They said that most of the bodies were badly mutilated. ■

## Protection is a Basic Right of Children

Cont. from Page 13

sectors. Mr. Iqbal Detho, Coordinator Child Bonded Labor Sindh, spoke on the situation of bonded child laborers in Pakistan.

Speakers from the government departments, NGOs and Judiciary spoke at length on the protection issues of children who come in contact with the law, are working as child laborers in the home and outside in hotels, workshops etc., facing corporal punishment in government and non-formal and religious schools.

Rashad Aziz Regional Manager SPARC Lahore said that it's the responsibility of all stakeholders to work for the protection of children jointly so that an environment is created where children can live a happy, fulfilled life. ■

## Political Parties Should Take Up Child Rights in Manifestos

Cont. from Page 13

child rights through condemnation of any kind of violence against children.

Mr. Jahanzeb Khan spoke about the SPARC Drop in Centre in Peshawar and the measures taken to rehabilitate street children. He also spoke about the sad plight of street children in the province particularly in Peshawar.

More than 40 representatives from the different CRCs also participated in the conference. Besides representative from the NGO sector, media, lawyers and government officials, representatives of leading political parties attended the conference. ■

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(Including Postage & Handling)

	Local Rs	Asia US\$	Europe/ N. America US \$
SPARC Newsletter	200	10	15
SPARC Newsletter with Discourse Quarterly Magazine	300 (per annum)	15 (per annum)	20 (per annum)
The State of Pakistan's Children	300	20	25
Books:	(per copy)	(per copy)	(per copy)
◆ Cries Unheard: Juvenile Justice in Pakistan	850	40	45
◆ Lengthening Shadows: Poverty -Affected Children	150	10	20

Please send your payments to SPARC or transfer in the following accounts:

SCF, Pak Rupees Account No. 7775-1, Habib Bank Limited, Jinnah Avenue Branch, Blue Area, Islamabad, Pakistan.

SPARC, US\$ Account No FCCD 8004, First Women Bank Limited, Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area, Islamabad, Pakistan. Routing No: 706431 Swift No: AMXAEI BUS 33A, American Express Bank, New York.

# Suicide and Parenting

Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for 15 to 24-year-olds, and the sixth-leading cause of death for 5 to 14-year-olds, according to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

Signs to look for in a teen who may be contemplating suicide include a change in eating and sleeping habits; withdrawal from friends, family and regular activities; violent and rebellious behavior; neglect of personal appearance; marked personality change; a decline in the quality of schoolwork; frequent complaints about physical symptoms, often

related to emotions; loss of interest in pleasurable activities; talk or writing about death; giving or throwing away important belongings.

Before the mid-1970s, suicide by adolescents appeared to be a rare event; in recent years, studies have shown one out of 10 teens contemplates suicide at some time, and nearly half-million teens make a suicide attempt each year. ■

## Unhygienic Milk and Biscuits Supplied to Schools

The district coordinator of the Tawana Pakistan Project filed a first information report on September 26, against the owner of a Lahore-based company, its manager of operations and in-charge of the company's warehouse in Badin on charges of supplying substandard and expired milk and biscuits to the government primary schools.

The project, run by the Federal Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education, aims to distribute milk and biscuits among the girl students of primary schools, as a means to encourage parents to enroll their daughters in schools.

He confirmed that he had found biscuits distributed at the main Sindh Government Girls Primary School in Badin carrying black fungal marks and could not be eaten. He sent samples of the biscuits and milk for tests, which revealed the milk was unfit for human consumption.

The ministry discussed putting a stop to the supply of diet after reports of

provision of expired milk and substandard biscuits; he said that complaints of vomiting after consuming the diet were pouring in from the children's parents. ■

## Taliban Hang Teenager

On September 30, armed Taliban men hanged a 15-year-old boy on charges of espionage for foreign forces based in Afghanistan, the administrator of Sangin District said.

For hours the dead body of the boy was hanging from a tree with warning notes stuffed in his mouth ordering locals not to collaborate with foreign troops.

The teenager had US currency in his pockets and a notepad with several telephone numbers on it, and was immediately sentenced to death, he said.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan condemned the hanging of a teenager boy by Taliban insurgents and said "We share the revulsion of the Afghan people that children and young people are being targeted so cynically," a spokesman said on October 2. ■



### ISLAMABAD

PO Box 301,  
Islamabad, Pakistan.  
Telephone: +92-51-229 1553/ 2291 559  
Email: info@sparcpk.org

### PESHAWAR

House 9, Qafila Road,  
Opposite CID Police Station,  
Defence Officer Colony  
Telephone: +92-91-921 8620  
Email: peshawar@sparcpk.org

### LAHORE

3, 5th Floor, Rahim Complex,  
31-E, Main Market, Gulberg II  
Telephone: +92-42-571 6142  
Email: lahore@sparcpk.org

### KARACHI

304, Third Floor,  
Kashif Center, Shahrah-e- Faisal  
Telephone: +92-21-566 1731  
Email: karachi@sparcpk.org

SPARC is an independent NGO founded in 1992, working for systematic & concerted action to promote & protect the rights of the child. This newsletter is part of SPARC's endeavors to give voice to the plea of millions of children dwelling in a state of abject poverty and neglect. SPARC is in consultative status with ECOSOC & UNDPI, & is a partner of Child Workers in Asia, Global March, Anti-Slavery, DCI, GCE & IBFAN.

Editor: Fazila Gulrez  
Assistant Editor: Asiya Arif  
Design & Layout: Waseem Ahmad  
Website: www.sparcpk.org

ISSN 1680-7979  
Library of Congress Card No 99921515

Supported by:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

