

KIIR NEWSLETTER



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Kashmir Institute of International Relations organized one day Conflict Transformation cum civil society Capacity Building Workshop at Mirpur Azad Jammu Kashmir on 15th of December 2013. Participants from diverse segments of the civil society, lend to due individual, collective and Institutional endeavors to encourage all out sincere efforts for peace and peaceful resolution of Kashmir Issue. Participants from cross sections of society of Mirpur and Bimber districts of AJK including, social and political activists, human rights activists, Lawyers, Journalist, Doctors, Academicians, students and Businessmen emphasized the need of creating a sustainable role of civil society of AJK .They stressed the need for great awareness among common masses about their role in peace making initiatives and endorsed the importance of peaceful means for the settlements of conflicts weather domestic or national as well as international.

The workshop was one of the series of workshops Kashmir Institute of International Relations and its partner organizations have been organizing to empower civil society in AJK and to ensure their due role for the peace building, conflict transformation and conflict settlement.

Sardar Amjad Yousaf, Executive Director Kashmir Institute of International Relations and Syed Waqas Ali Kausar acted as resource persons. The participants were exposed to modern tools and techniques of engaging themselves in conflict analysis, conflict transformation and conflict resolution through different civil society interventions. The participants felt dire need of missing role of the civil society of AJK in promoting the intra-Kashmir linkages. They believed that shared



analysis on Kashmir issue could only be achieved once all sections of society play their creative role in building cross-LoC networks of the civil society through their institutional linkages and enhanced dialogues.

Participants were exposed to make conflict analysis of Kashmir conflict and how it has affected them personally, society and people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir in general. Interesting conclusion was drawn after long discussions and every one had his own story to tell and his own reason to how he has acted so far and how he will do in future. But all the participants appreciated the initiative of KIIR and believed that such workshops have a great potential to highlight and promote better understanding of the Kashmir conflict and will be of great help to create a greater constituency for promoting a sustained civil society which will be helpful in creating more opportunities for linkages at community level in Azad Jammu Kashmir and between AJK, Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh. Participants hoped that such initiatives on the other side of the line of control will be helpful in pushing India to put an end to human rights abuses and will create a conducive atmosphere for the peaceful settlement of Kashmir dispute.

Prominent among the participants from different sections of the civil society included



ABOUT NEWSLETTER

Kashmir Institute of International Relations has started Quarterly Newsletter to highlight the activities that KIIR and its partner organizations and other civil society groups carry out for the promotion of peace building initiatives so that space for dialogue and reconciliation is created in the conflict ridden region. The main purpose of launching the KIIR Newsletter is to create awareness and sense of hope in civil society activists that their voice counts and does reflect in the future policy planning of the governments and policymaking institutions. In this regard KIIR is thankful to Conciliation Resources London(CR) for their support and Centre for Peace, Development and Reforms, Kashmir Initiative Group for their contributions. KIIR will welcome other civil society groups who are involved in Kashmir, to send their activities for circulation and sharing.

ABOUT KIIR

Kashmir Institute of International Relations is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-governmental organization established in 1993 in Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir. With the motto of "Peace through Dialogue" KIIR is working for a peaceful South Asia. KIIR believes that peace can only be achieved by the resolution of the Kashmir dispute through substantive dialogue between India, Pakistan and Kashmiris.

To achieve this goal, KIIR has engaged policymakers and policy implementers: Members of Parliament, Political Activists, Lawyers, Journalists, Academics and Social Activists. KIIR is working to enhance the capacity of Kashmiri civil society actors in the areas of reconciliation, negotiation skills and conflict resolution. The objective of these initiatives is to facilitate dialogue that is conducive to reconciliation and peace in the region.

former AJK CCI and FPCCI President Ch. Muhammad Saeed, Raja Muhammad Jamil, Ex-President AJKCCI, Sardar Ijaz Nazir, Advocate, President Mirpur District Bar Association, Ch. Munir Hussain Advocate, Mirpur Intellectual Forum, Engr. Tariq Mallick Retired Chief Engineer, Dr. Muhammad Amin



Chaudhry, Medical Practitioner-cum-political activist, Dr. Muhammad Ayub Qureshi (Medical Practitioner / Social worker, Raja Zaffar Maroof, Political Activist, Academician Prof. Zubair Ahmed Qazi, Altaf Hamid Rao, Journalist / Analyst, Sajaad Jiraal, Secretary General Kashmir Press Club Mirpur, Sohrab Ahmed Khan Journalist,

Mrs. Saeeda Akber, Educationist, Engr. Prof. Muhammad Iqbal, Radio journalist Muhammad Shakeel, Ms. Riffat Qureshi, Anchor Radio, Mrs. Aisha Mallick Research Scholar, Ms. Hina Ijaz Student, Ms. Madeeha Haqaan Research Scholar, Lady Dr. Zahida Qasim, Lady Dr. Farhat Zaffar, Mrs. Afaida Salam Academician, Mrs. Shah-e-Nabaat, Academician and others.

Women Peace Building Workshop

14 December, 2013 9.30 am to 4.00 pm
Regency Hotel, Mirpur-AJK

Recognizing the importance of Women's role in peacebuilding, Kashmir Institute of International Relations in partnership with Conciliation Resources London, started a series of Women Peace Building Workshops across different areas of AJK.



So far, within a time span of few months, almost 60_70 women from diverse professional backgrounds have been actively engaged and trained to assist any peace initiative at local as well as international level. Starting from Rawlakot and reaching up to the most remote area of AJK i.e. Neelum Valley, Women workshop in Mirpur- AJK was third in series. It was cordially attended by a vibrant and dynamic group of women with varied professional backgrounds including University Professors & College Teachers, Doctors, Lawyers, Radio Anchors, Social Workers and young students from Mirpur University of Science & Technology (MUST). All the sessions of the workshop were designed in a manner to provide an opportunity for interaction between the participants. After introduction of all the participants there was a brainstorming session on defining and understanding the key concepts like Conflict, Stages of Conflict, Managing Conflict, and the concept of Peace Building. This discussion was followed by activity Conflict Analysis using the ABC (Attitudes, Behavior, and Context) triangle as a tool. The participants worked in groups to analyze Kashmir Conflict according to ABC triangle- and shared their understanding about Perceptions & Attitudes of the parties involved, the impact of these attitudes on the Behavior of one another, and finally the emerging Context as a result of certain attitudes and behaviors. In the end of session I, one representative from each group presented the key points on chart in order to share their analysis with the other groups.

Session II focused on Conflict Mapping exercise which again was done in reshuffled groups. The participants were

briefed about how to use the conflict mapping technique to represent the conflict graphically, placing parties in relation to the problem and in relation to each other. While doing this exercise they were able to learn about each other's experiences and perceptions. The last session concluded with discussion on a key question: what role can women play in peace building? The participants shared a number of ideas where they can play active roles in community as Teachers, Doctors, Social Workers as well as aspiring active students.

The workshop proved to be productive because, in the context of AJK, it needs to be understood and recognized that there is a need for building the capacity of women and youth through promotion of knowledge and skills acquisition in the areas of conflict analysis, negotiation, conciliation, and advocacy in order to strengthen the participation of both women and youth as decision-makers at all levels and increase a culture of peace in their communities.



Civil society actors across LOC urge India and Pakistan to institutionalize CBMs on Kashmir

New Delhi: Future of Kashmir centric Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) is chiefly dependent upon the much needed initiative to institutionalize them, lest they should continue hanging in balance in view of heightened tension between India and Pakistan along Line of Control (LoC).

This has been underlined in a most recent study 'Institutionalizing Confidence Building Measures on Kashmir'. Co-authored by Shaheen Akhtar and Zafar Choudhry, the study is brought out by a Kashmir Initiative Group (KIG) in collaboration with



Conciliation Resources, London. While making a close examination of the net result of the CBMs, set in motion in the heel of a ceasefire along LoC in 2003, the study reminds that they were aimed at kicking off trade, travel and dialogue between two parts of the divided state, but their true potential is marred by operational difficulties. Persistent stalemate in the peace process has affected them badly.

“Travel across LoC remains limited due to clearance of difficulties, while the trade has remained a barter system. The ceasefire remains fragile and intra-Kashmir dialogue has yet to take of meaningfully”, the study lament

To imbibe a conducive environment, the study suggests, Pakistan and India should adopt a forward looking approach and agree on de-mining of area on LoC, besides expending “no man's land” area which may act as Zero Point LoC Market (ZPLoCM). It further says that they should embrace a policy of no construction without informing the other side so that trust deficit issue could be addressed effectively.

They report proposes the two sides to take a bold decision and relocate “heavy artillery to at least 30 km away from LoC”, besides agreeing on the reduction of troops over here.

The report also enlists the contribution of bus service across LoC in connecting divided families, but reminds that its utility can be enhanced tremendously by removing the operational difficulties in this regard.

Since 2005, over 22 thousand people travel across LoC through this service, “however, the process of obtaining a permit for travel is long and strenuous, and a limited number of people have been able to secure a permit”, the report underlines.

Trade across LoC was another very good initiative but till today this remains based on mutual trust between concerned parties

with no proper mechanism in place to address technical and market issues. Traders from neither side have a direct access to their target markets to assess prevailing trends and scope. “From the outset, this trade has suffered because of basic problems, including a lack of banking facilities and financial arrangements, communication and access to markets”, the report points out.

The report in the end suggests that to make CBMs more fruitful and result-oriented, the process of travel permit obtaining should be made easy, in addition to opening of new trade routes across LoC such as Kargil-Sakardu route. To make the trade a self-sustainable process, banking relations, communication networks, transport networks, regulatory networks and legal networks for dispute resolution be put in place.

It further suggests that Jammu and Kashmir Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry should be accorded official recognition by both India and Pakistan for regularization of trade and settlement of disputes among traders.

It further suggests that intra-Kashmir dialogue be kicked off without any further delay and parliamentary leaders should in particular be facilitated to meet frequently to create a suitable environment to settle the dispute peacefully.

The study was jointly launched in New Delhi by an Indian senior journalist & author Prem Shankar Jha, Ershad Mahmud, Co-convenor of KIG, Shujaat Bukhari, KIG convener, M K Rasgotra, ex-Indian foreign secretary, Tahir Aziz, Director programme Conciliation Resources, London.

Activities: Youth vision 2020 Meeting, Muzaffarabad

As a part of writing vision 2020 Youth Consultant CPDR Syed Waqas Ali conducted a daylong meeting with the



diverse group of youth at Muzaffarabad wherein young people from the diverse socio-political, economic and educational background actively participated and generated debate and discussion on broader contours of vision 2020. The dialogue on how the young people envision Azad Jammu and Kashmir in 2020 has generated debate with multiple perspectives on the broader contours ranging from Kashmir conflict, governance, socio-political issues, like quality education, health, basic necessities and economically empowered AJK in 2020. Youth valued the significance of peace building and cross LoC linkages and stressed the need to establish linkages



with youth and other cross section of civil society across the divide for having far reaching impact in addressing the conflict of Jammu and Kashmir.

The primary aim was also to enhance awareness of youth to identify and locate their own role as agent of change in the context of peace-building and enabled them to stimulate further debate on the ideas for moving collectively as a group.





Capacity building workshop

CPDR youth consultant Syed Waqas Ali and Executive Director CPDR Ershad Mehmud conducted youth capacity building workshop on “Responding to Conflict” on November 9, 2013 in Islamabad. Aim of meeting was to impart the skills and expertise in youth on conflict resolution through systematic and structured conflict analysis and youth led

intervention in a more creative and productive way for transforming conflict. Part of it was to build the capacity of the youth of AJK as a civic actor to play a more constructive and creative role in resolving issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Almost 13 youth core group members participated in a daylong meeting



Youth Advisory Board Meeting

Youth Second Advisory Board meeting was held in Islamabad on 21 Dec 2013 to deliberate on vision process. A diverse youth, seasoned and experienced Advisory

Board Members on Vision 2020 debated and proposed the dimensions and elements of “themes” of vision 2020.



About Kashmir Initiative Group (KIG)

KIG mission statement: "An intra-Kashmir peace-building platform, building bridges between community perspectives and policy-makers."

Aims of KIG

- To influence policy strategy
- To engage in advocacy
- To promote peace and reconciliation
- To empower local narratives through advocacy, research, and capacity-building
- To network/provide a platform for peace
- To provide Kashmiris more agency
- To bridge local level civil society with policy-makers

Members:

1. Dr. Shujaat Bukhari, Convener, senior journalist, Srinagar
2. Ershad Mahmud, Co- convener
3. Asma Khan Lone, Analyst, Islamabad/New Delhi
4. Dr. Shaheen Akhtar, Associate Prof. National Defense University (NDU), Islamabad
5. Fayaz Ahmed Dar, Researcher and Social Activist
6. Javid Hayat Khan, Researcher and Political Analyst, Berlin
7. M. Ismail Khan, Public Policy and Regional Cooperation Specialist, Islamabad
8. Dr. Parikshat Singh Manhas, Professor, University of Jammu
9. Sardar Amjad Yousaf Khan, Executive Director, Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) AJK
10. Shafat N. Ahmad, Lawyer and co-founder of Centre for Law & Development Policy, Srinagar
11. Zafar Choudhary, Journalist, Jammu

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