

2011



# PFF struggle for Conservation and Protection of Mangroves Forests



Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum



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*The UN has declared 2011 as the International Year of Forests, a declaration endorsed by Pakistan. That the following tale unfolds even as the Government of Pakistan pays lip service to international declarations and treaties is symbolic of the innate inefficiency and negligence that have long been the hallmark of governance in Pakistan.*

## **Background**

Village Kakkapir lies in the crook formed by Mauripur Road as it bifurcates to go west to Hawke's Bay and east toward Sandspit. Sheltered from the sea by a natural raised spit of sand with a row of beach huts to the south, the village is surrounded by mangrove forests and sea creeks to the north and west. To the east, the spit of land on which the village is situated runs into more mangrove punctuated by land formations that make for a small sheltered harbor. The village comprises of some three families.

It is said that Kakkapir was established about a hundred years ago by fishermen hailing from Lyari which at that time was itself a fishing village. The families migrating out of Lyari are said to have taken up abode both in Kakkapir and Shamspir. The latter is an island separated from what is now called Hawke's Bay by a channel about four hundred meters wide. While Kakkapir has always been a permanent habitation, the residents of Shamspir routinely migrated to the mainland during the hottest months of the year when dangerously high tides brought a halt to all fishing activity.

The location of Kakkapir was perhaps selected for permanent occupation because of its natural situation: with the mangroves spread across three directions, access to and from the sea by a wide creek about three kilometers to the northeast, and the availability of a natural harbor, there could have been no better choice of abode for a community of fishing people.

One Yunus, later to become a Haji, by caste a Mirbahar (like most people of Kakkapir), formerly from Lyari, took up residence alternately depending on the season in Shamspir and Kakkapir in the early 1970s. Shortly thereafter, he is reported to have aligned himself with two infamous smugglers, the Bhatti brothers of Kemari. Successful in their illegal trade, these two men had connections deep within the bureaucracy, law enforcement agencies and the politically powerful elite. Through this platform Yunus cultivated his own links in the corridors of power. These were to serve him well in the future. Indeed, even though he quickly became very well-connected with the ruling PPP of that time, it speaks of this man's craftiness that he lost no ground after the military take-over of July 1977.

It was during the decade of the 1970s that this man established a duly registered Fishermen's Cooperative Society, with the ostensible objective of providing inexpensive plots for housing to poor fishing families. In reality however, this was his first attempt at grabbing land. How he manipulated the allotment of plots in the Society is now largely lost in the murk of chicanery and the passage of time. The few surviving elderly men who knew of his trickery, allege that he connived with corrupt junior level revenue officer to acquire a large tract of land in what subsequently became Yunusabad.

In order to maintain the façade of a cooperative housing society, Yunus did actually allot some of the plots to local fishermen. Subsequently, he proceeded to buy back the plots for himself. There is also the allegation that those unwilling to sell were brow-beaten into submission or even forcefully ejected from their property.

Whatever the case and howsoever he went about his business, Yunus did extremely well. By his own admission to this writer (preserved by digital recording) he is now the owner of plots worth tens of millions of rupees. The locality where the Fishermen's Cooperative Housing Society was to be established, is today known as Yunusabad and there are no prizes for guessing who name the township takes.

So far as Haji Yunus's connections with the high and mighty of Sindh are concerned, there is no secret. Qadir Patel, the local parliamentarian is a close friend of the man. Himself of a humble background, Patel was an ordinary worker of People's Students Federation in the 1970s. As wily as Yunus, this man ingratiated himself to the powerful PPP-backed Jamote family of Karachi. Once he had the family's confidence, he somehow contrived to inveigle Zulfikar Jamote's daughter and marry her. From then on this man's upward march as a PPP politician was unstoppable. Today he is a steadfast supporter of Haji Yunus forever ready to intervene on his behalf with the police or any other agency.

That is not the limit of connections that Yunus enjoys. As recently as March 2011, the provincial Home Minister Zulfikar Mirza attending a function at the Yunusabad residence of of Haji Yunus, went on record profusely eulogizing the man. Yunus's liaisons within the corridors of power received a further boost when his son Zulfikar was elected in 2002 as the Nazim of the union council in which the villages of Hawke's Bay and Sandspit fall.

## The battle begins

In the first couple of years of the current century, Haji Yunus came into conflict with the Kakkapir community. The reason was his destruction of the mangrove trees in the area and land reclamation for the purpose of plotting it out. Now, observation and experience spread across several generations had taught the fishing people that the inter-tidal mangrove swamps were nurseries for shrimps and prawns. They knew too that the denser the forest the better the crustacean population and vice versa. Moreover, folk wisdom also had it that these marvelous trees were effective bulwarks against tsunamis and cyclone-generated waves.



Since Yunus was directly threatening their very livelihood

and safety, community elders pleaded with the man to stop. But aware of his connections and afraid of angering the man, the fishermen could only cajole and plead. They had no backing to confront him and make an unequivocal demand for cessation of the unlawful deforestation activity. As for Yunus, so confident was he of his connections that he remained disdainful and dismissive of the poor petitioners who time and again confronted him.

In 1999, Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) initiated a mangrove protection project in Kakkapir. Complete with a walkway in the mangroves spreading north of Kakkapir, an observation tower and an educational centre, the project did quite well with a fairly high number of visitors the year round. Among the few locals that WWF hired, there was one Abdul Ghani of Kakkapir. It did not take long for his employers to come to regard Ghani as a valuable addition to the project. Soft-spoken and very civil, Ghani, a fisherman by profession, was admirably committed to the cause of mangrove protection. Coupled with that, he was a quick learner who soon had an admirable repertoire of technical knowledge regarding mangroves.

With encouragement from WWF, Abdul Ghani established Fishermen's Development Organization Kakkapir (FDOK or simply FDO). From this platform, strengthened by his

newly acquired knowledge about the importance of mangrove forests in the lives of fishing communities, Ghani found a voice that had never been his. He was now able to take on Haji Yunus as an equal. And so began a conflict between the well-connected land grabber of Yunusabad and the poor fishing community of Kakkapir.

Despite several meetings with him in which Ghani was accompanied by his colleagues from FDO, there was no effect on Yunus. He was simply not willing to desist from his relentless cutting down of mangrove trees and land reclamation activity in the area. The community invoked the Forest Act of 1927 which declares mangrove trees a protected species. Even so, far from ceasing his illegal activity, Haji Yunus did not so much as slow down his work. An early indication of the way things were shaping up is given by a news report of 6 July 2006 in the Urdu daily Jang.

The said news item concerns the petition of one Mohammad Haroon (of FDO) to the Sindh High Court against the cutting of mangroves and land transformation. The petition implicated Zulfikar Yunus, the Revenue Department and the provincial government in this illegal activity. The court passed an interim order in support of the petition and instructed a court official to ensure implementation of the order with the help of law enforcement personnel. The report adds Haji Yunus and his cronies obstructed the court official and the police, even going so far as to threaten the visiting team with death.

The honorable court also placed an embargo on the alteration of and selling of land in Kakkapir and surrounding area. That was in the beginning of July 2006.

It needs be conceded here that Yunus guided by his



insatiable greed for wealth and abetted by his cronies was not the first to indulge in wholesale slaughter of mangrove forests in and around Karachi. Post Qasim authority and Defense Officers Housing Authority have played their own pernicious parts. In the early 1990s the district administration relocated the city's truck stand to Mauripur and consequently cut down a vast swathe of trees near the Marine Academy on Mauripur Road. The newly denuded land was reclaimed the land by earth filling and on it was

raised a veritable city of truck stands, workshops, stores and residential buildings. By one estimate a hundred acres of mangroves were lost in this action.

As confrontation followed confrontation, Haji Yunus brought down pressure on FDO. On 16 July 2007, FIR number 155/07 was registered against unknown persons by Zulfikar Yunus. It alleged that five persons who from their language seemed to be Pathans entered his home at four o'clock early morning, broke down the door of his bedroom, terrorized his family and roundly thrashed him. It is singularly curious that the home that the complainant shares with his father has high walls and armed guards. Yet the police was ever eager to register this FIR.

What is even more interesting is that the charge sheet prepared by the police after the preliminary investigation, implicates one Akbar, a member of FDO, as one of the attackers. This discovery is perhaps symbolic of the mysterious workings of the Pakistan Police. On a serious note however, this was one of the early attempts by Haji Yunus and his team to browbeat his opposition into submission.

Although FDO did bring some collective strength to the community, it was still a long way from becoming a potent bulwark against the illegal activities of Haji Yunus. Thinking that the Pathan settlers of northwest Karachi would be in a position to defend them in the fight for their rights, the people of Kakkapir joined the Pathan-dominated Awami National Party. An ANP office was set up in the village, but if the community had any illusions about Pathan assistance in their battle against Yunus, there were soon dispelled. Disillusioned, the community distanced itself from the political party and in 2008 in a renewed attempt to become stronger yet, became a part of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum.

Meanwhile, even as Haji Yunus continued his unlawful felling of mangroves and earth filling of the swamp, Global Environment Fund (GEF) an auxiliary of United Nations Development Program (UNDP) engaged with FDO in an eco-tourism project. Funded to the tune of Rs 4 million, the initiative entailed a fully equipped information centre, and a pier for three fiber-glass outboard fitted boats. On the one hand, this project aimed at raising awareness among the general public concerning the importance of mangrove forests in order to garner support for their conservation. On the other hand, it meant to provide an alternate source of income to the community of Kakkapir (that was to operate the project) during the months of high summer when dangerous seas prevented all fishing activity.

As news of the simmering conflict between the fishing community of Kakkapir and the local land mafia became better known, a government notification appeared on the scene.

Issued on 22 November 2010, the Government of Sindh notification numbered F&W(SOII)5(18)2008 invoked the Forest Act of 1927 which declared mangrove forests as a protected species. Clearly, this new notification was issued with the intent of making the preservation of mangrove forest ever more specific in terms of areas notified as 'Protected Forests'. The notification was to come into 'immediate effect'. Schedule II of this new document clearly specified the protected areas within the limits of Karachi. These being the deltaic areas of KPT, Lyari and Malir rivers in Kemari and Saddar towns of Karachi city.

The document further goes on to specify the areas by coordinates of longitude and latitude. Village Kakkapir, Yunusabad and surrounding areas where Haji Yunus is engaged in his illegal deforestation fall within these geographical bounds. The document was copied to Senior Member Board of Revenue, Chairperson KPT, Chief Conservator of Forests, Sindh, and Personal Secretary to the Minister for Home and Forests. The last being none other than the honorable Zulfikar Mirza who is known to be a close friend of Haji Yunus.

It may be that this fresh notification was issued when someone in the provincial government became aware of the battle between land grabber and conservationists getting increasingly hot. However, this is currently not known. Be that as it may, the notification was to become effective immediately upon publication. Yet, seven months after its issuance, the team of miscreants led by Haji Yunus and his ex-Nazim son continue to destroy the mangrove trees of the area specified in the document.

### **Things come to a head**

In the course of his land grabbing, Haji Yunus encroached upon the WWF facility outside Kakkapir village as early as 2006. Inexplicably, WWF remained a silent bystander even as the man's activity undermined the very project the organization had undertaken with considerably outlay only a few years previously.

Emboldened by this passivity, late in 2010 Haji Yunus and his cronies demanded that Abdul Ghani (as President FDO) hand over possession of the building used for the GEF eco-tourism centre. The man, it is reported, wanted to establish his own office in the premises. Saying that no individual but a project owned the building and he or FDO had no authority over its ownership, Ghani refused to vacate the building or hand it over.

At about this same time, Haji Yunus took over the Kakkapir football ground. Since the best way of 'legitimizing' an unlawful annexation is the building of a mosque on the land



in question, the land grabber did just that. This blatant thuggery made the hitherto submissive community come out openly and vocally against the mangrove and land mafia. The community's refusal to hand over the eco-tourism center as well as their new-found rebellion heightened the long simmering conflict by several notches.

On 16 January 2011, Zulfikar Yunus and some twenty armed men descended upon the eco-tourism centre, broke the locks and having removed the computers and other office equipment set the furniture alight. As the building burned, the men destroyed the nearby pier. Thereafter, having removed the outboard engines from the three boats, they fired them completely destroying two of them. The gutted building of the eco-tourism centre was then taken over by Haji Yunus's men who put it under their own lock and key.



On 23 January 2011, one Fakir registered FIR number 43/2011 with the concerned police station. It recorded that the community centre had been burgled and a number of electric motors, water pumps and steel girders stolen. He nominated several office bearers of FDO including its president Abdul Ghani.

Two weeks later, on 1 February 2011, another person, by name Mohammad Shafi, registered another case with Mauripur police station. FIR number 53/2011 declaims that at ten o'clock on the night of 16 January, Abdul Ghani, Haji Abubakr and three other men of FDO accompanied by Mohammad Ali Shah, who heads PFF, came to the eco-

tourism office. The men, so the FIR alleges, were all armed and ordered Shafi and the others to vacate the building in order for a PFF office to be established in it.

This has to be tops among the most peculiar cases of the century. Here was FDO headed by Abdul Ghani working in association with UNDP-GEF and operating the eco-tourism centre and boating facility to earn a reasonable income from it. Yet, if one were to believe the two FIRs mentioned above, in a fit of madness Ghani, other members of FDO and Shah of PFF ganged up to, first, demand possession of a facility that was already in their control. Secondly, to destroy it when it was a source of income for them.

However, when Shafi refused, so the FIR states, the attackers set upon him and the others with the butts of the weapons they bore. The screams of the victims brought out a large number of villagers upon which, according to the FIR, the attackers fled firing in the air. Interestingly, the FIR makes no mention of the office suffering arson. In a telephonic conversation with this writer, Haji Yunus alleged that it was burned that same evening by the team led by Mohammad Ali Shah. However, for some strange and mysterious reason, Haji Yunus and his team failed to mention arson as one of the crimes committed that evening.

The question here is what happened between 16 January, the day of the attack and arson, and 1 February when the FIR was registered?

It is well known that an FIR can be registered with a police station in Pakistan only by, one, paying a hefty bribe or, two, by the direct involvement of local provincial or federal parliamentarian or any other influential person. On 17 January, the day after the sacking of the office, Mohammad Ali Shah, Abdul Ghani and Haji Abubakr went to the concerned police station with a written application for FIR registration. According to Shah, the Station House Officer flung the application back at the petitioners saying there was no way he was entertaining their complaint and that they were free to turn to whichever quarter they wished.

Mohammad Ali Shah and the office bearers of FDO then submitted a petition to Citizens-Police Liaison Committee pleading for the concerned police station to be pressured to registering their legitimate complaint. All they received was a patient hearing and nothing else. Seeing that nothing could be expected to come out of talking to CPLC, the team turned to the Home Minister's Complaint Cell. Again, all that Shah and the effectees of Kakkapir got was a sympathetic hearing. No action followed. It is noteworthy that even as late as the end of May, the police has refused to entertain the complaint of FDO – this despite the orders of Sindh High Court.



With no succor in sight, PFF called for a consultative meeting on 1 February 2011. Apparently, as word of this event got around, fearing that the occurrence of arson and theft at the Kakkapir eco-tourism centre could cause him trouble, Haji Yunus arranged for the FIR nominating the office bearers of PFF and FDO. It is remarkable that he did not include arson in his application to the police. One wonders how, having overlooked its inclusion in the FIR, he now explains its occurrence.

Invitees to the consultative meeting included the provincial Minister for Environment (from MQM), environmentalists from government departments and NGOs, several members of the civil society and Taj Haider of PPP. Following a presentation by PFF, both politicians made high-falutin declarations in favor of the Kakkapir community. Redress of their grievance against police bias was pledged and the immediate halt of the illegal cutting of mangroves was called for.

Other than the expending of this hot air, nothing else came out of this meeting. Subsequently, Mohammad Ali Shah repeatedly tried to contact both worthy politicians, one from PPP and the other from MQM but with little success. Letters were written to the provincial police chief, the President of Pakistan as well as the Home Minister (also holding the portfolio for Forests). Not one office responded.

One significant outcome of the consultative meeting was that the Forest Department was coaxed into registering an FIR against the illegal destruction of mangrove forests. Though the department nominated Haji Yunus, his son Zulfikar and several other cronies, the police registered the case against 'unknown persons'. However, by some abstruse

mechanism, the charge sheet prepared against this FIR named Mohammad Ali Shah, Abdul Ghani, Haji Abubakr and several others of Kakkapir as the culprits behind mangrove cutting. Strange indeed is the working of the police in Pakistan.

On 8 February PFF led a two-day protest March from Kakkapir to the Sindh Assembly. Ending at the ICI Bridge, Mauripur, on the first day, the marchers reached the assembly building on the following day. Demanding that the corrupt police officers supporting the land mafia be removed from office immediately, several hundred protestors from Karachi and outside threatened to forcibly enter the building to get a proper hearing.

It goes to the credit of Deputy Speaker Shehla Raza that she came out and assured the protestors that their demands will be met. She pledged that the illegal cutting of mangroves would cease forthwith and the police officers alleged to be supporting the



mafia would be removed from their posts within three days. It will not be out of place to mention here that during this march, Senior Superintendent of Police, Kemari also assured the protestors that the officer in-charge of Mauripur police station would be removed. That was on 9 February 2011. At the time of this writing in early June, none of the promises by the worthy Deputy Speaker have materialized.

## Fighting a losing battle

Repeated attempts by Mohammad Ali Shah to access Taj Haider eventually did result in a series of meetings. However, it was clear after the first that there was little Mr Haider would be able to do to address the concerns of the Kakkapir village. Meanwhile, the mafia headed by Haji Yunus was busily cutting down the mangrove trees and dumping truckload upon truckload of earth to fill in the newly denuded inter-tidal swamp.

It was on one of his visits to the Sindh Assembly about this time (mid-February 2011) that Mohammad Ali Shah told the officer from special police manning the entrance to the assembly building that in two days' time he was bringing thousands of fisher people from all over the province to protest the activities of the Kakkapir land mafia. Within hours Shah received a phone call from the Chief Minister. This resulted in a meeting between Zulfikar Mirza, the Home Minister, and Mohammad Ali Shah.



The meeting ended with the minister constituting a committee headed by MPA Lal Bukhsh Bhutto to examine the case and submit a detailed report within one week. Needless to record here that until the time of this writing, fully three months after the meeting, no report has materialized. However, one week after the meeting and formation

of the committee, the Home Minister went on record extolling Haji Yunus while visiting the latter's home in Yunusabad!

Shortly after the two-day protest march of early February, the land grabber's men had encroached upon the natural harbor where the Kakkapir fishermen moored their boats. The harbor was spacious enough for the three hundred odd boats of the village. On the last day of May 2011, this writer saw a much shrunken mooring place capable of holding no more than a hundred or so boats. Much of the rest of the area in the immediate vicinity stood denuded of its mangrove trees and partially filled in with earth. Nearby this scribe also saw a number of foundations of boundary walls.

Upon being asked where they would moor their boats especially when the seas of mid-summer became dangerous, Bashir of FDO wordlessly shrugged his shoulders, spread out his hands in helplessness, looked skyward and said. 'We don't know where our boats will go. We don't even know if we will be able to continue living in this village.'

Meanwhile, besides causing loss of office equipment and outboard motors putting paid to a system of income generation for the Kakkapir community, the arson of 16 January had another deeper and more pernicious effect. Bolstered with income from the eco-tourism project, the community had taken over an abandoned government school building to establish the first ever school in Kakkapir. The arson destroyed seven hundred copies of textbooks of various grades as well as some other teaching materials that were stored in the office.

It was only with the assistance of some members of the civil society who had long been associated with the mangrove protection work in Kakkapir that the school was got going again. These individuals (with Sohail Osman Ali, a Chartered Accountant and well-known social activist in the forefront) made liberal contributions to provide anew the materials lost in the fire.

With a view to pressuring the Kakkapir community in every possible way, Haji Yunus contrived to have the water supply to the village disconnected. Rather than buckle under this new difficulty, the community opted to purchase water by tankers. For poor fishing families who barely make ends meet under normal circumstances, this was a heavy burden.

In this modern day and age, it is difficult to keep real news under wraps. As word of the sacking of the GEF-funded word hit the press, a team of journalists from *Dawn* visited the area for detailed investigation. Headed by Faiza Ilyas, the journalists witnessed

mangrove timber being brought out from the forest and the swamps being filled in and parceled out as plots.

It is pertinent to note here that most of the buyers of these newly emerging plots are not local fishermen or their families. The new property owners in and around Kakkapir are mostly Baloch, Pathans and some Punjabis. There are also several Burmese and Bengalis, living in Pakistan as illegal, unregistered aliens. These outsiders make up a significant part of the manpower behind Haji Yunus and his unlawful activity.

Even as the area is turned into an ecological wasteland, its demographic complexion also simultaneously is being changed. What was once the home of only Sindhi and some few Baloch fishing families, is now fast being swallowed up by outsiders while the real owners of this land, people whose ancestors lived here for across several generations are slowly being turned into outcasts.

Unrelenting efforts by PFF and FDO paid some dividends when, after two hearings, the court issued a stay order against the cutting of trees in the mangrove swamps of Kakkapir and adjoining areas. The honorable court also ordered the police to intervene to implement this order. Subsequent police action (inaction, actually) flew in the face of the justice system of Pakistan because the cutting continues without let or hindrance.

Even though the police, openly in cahoots with the land mafia led by Haji Yunus, failed to enforce the court's order, the mere act by Abdul Ghani, the petitioner for the stay order, seeking judicial intervention infuriated Haji Yunus. Exactly one week after the passing of the court's order, two murders most tragic and committed in the most dastardly manner occurred.

### **Have they died in vain?**

On 5 May 2011, a function was held in Kakkapir to celebrate the founding day of PFF. An hour after the culmination of the function, at 6.30 pm, Zulfikar Yunus accompanied by about two dozen armed men descended upon Kakkapir. They broke open the door of the house of Haji Mohammad Siddique, an FDO activist. It needs be pointed out here that this elderly man had earlier been threatened with death by Haji Yunus for his support to FDO. He was now manhandled and terrorized and his sons badly thrashed and ordered to withdraw the judicial petition against cutting of mangrove trees.

Now while all this was going on, wedding celebrations were also afoot in another part of the village. One Musa, attending the function, collapsed and died. Some say he suffered a heart attack when the celebratory aerial firing began. Others tell of his collapse just

before the first shots rang out. Be that as it may, the death of Musa has a very peculiar twist.

Haji Yunus had an FIR registered against the three sons of Haji Mohammad Siddique for the murder of Musa. Indeed, the body of Musa did have a bullet injury. However, none of those who saw the man collapsing during the wedding celebrations recall any blood on his clothing. Hamida, the dead man's sister (interviewed 28 May 2011), says she was at the wedding not far from her brother and was immediately called to his side as he passed out. Hamida vehemently declares that there was no wound to Musa's body, nor blood on his clothing at that time. She was at hand when her unconscious brother was put in a van to be taken to the hospital.

Representatives from FDO firmly believe and allege that Musa was shot by Haji Yunus's men *after* he died on the way to the hospital. The aim was to implicate the most vocal activists from Kakkapir.

Meanwhile, after firing in the air and also at Siddique's house, the men withdrew. (Bullet marks were seen on 29 May as well as the broken door to the *otaq* or sitting room). Shortly after midnight, the attackers returned again. It must be recognized that by now, the other party must surely have activated their plan of turning Musa's death into a murder. This time they ran amok through the village indiscriminately firing at people's homes and in the air, ransacking homes, terrorizing women and children and thrashing whatever men they came across. Unable to stand up to them, most men (and a large number of women and children as well) fled to the safety of the mangrove forest. Fearful for their lives, most of them remained there until daybreak.

When the commotion died down after about half an hour, some men started trickling back to their homes. Among these were Abdul Ghani and Haji Abubakr, the leading lights of FDO. Unbeknownst to the terrified people of Kakkapir, the attackers had not withdrawn, however. They were hiding in the village. They pounced upon Ghani, Abubakr and one Mohammad Akbar and forcibly took them away. The kidnapping took place in the sight and hearing of a number of residents of Kakkapir.

Akbar contrived to escape and returned home. He reported that the kidnappers had roundly thrashed him and the others during which time, he managed to run away. The next morning, 6 May 2011, Haji Mohammad Siddique and Mohammad Ali Shah received calls from associates in Shamspar Island. Both men were informed that the bodies of the two activists kidnapped by Haji Yunus's men only hours earlier from Kakkapir had been fished out of the sea.



The police had thus far been reluctant to entertain anyone from FDO or PFF for the registration of cases. But now the presence of two dead bodies was too much even for a highly criminalized police force to get away without registering a case. FIR number 93/11 registered on the complaint of Mohammad Akbar (the man who escaped the kidnapping) named Haji Yunus, his son Zulfikar, Shakil, Haroon and Usman as the midnight attackers who kidnapped the three men at gunpoint.

A medico-legal examination was carried out the same afternoon, that is, 6 May. At serial 20 of the report has, 'Opinion as to the cause, or probable cause, of death.' The handwritten answer is, 'Cause of death reserved for chemical report.'

The chemical report numbered 5381/82 dated 21 May 2011, by the Director Laboratories & Chemical Examiner to the Government of Sindh categorically records the absence of alcohol from the stomach, liver and other internal organs of the deceased. Likewise, both bodies were free of any poisons or sleep-inducing drugs. The report also states that there was no blood on the clothing recovered from the bodies of Ghani and Abubakr. This latter implies that there were no external injuries. Though the report does not lay down explicitly that the two men drowned, that is, with seawater in the lungs or stomach, the implication nevertheless is that drowning had occurred.

None of the five men nominated for the kidnapping were ever arrested, however. They are said to have all absconded on the morning of the discovery of the two dead bodies. By one account, they were actually at the Yunusabad residence of Haji Yunus. It was from the safety of this house, it is reported, that the accused filed for pre-arrest bails.

In order to give the lie to the FIR for the murder of two innocent men, the common bail application of the accused persons states that since Mohammad Akbar had failed to approach the police until after the discovery of the corpses of Abdul Ghani and Abubakr, the incident of murder was concocted. Within days, all five accused were out on bail.

The truth is that having escaped from the kidnappers, Akbar hid in the mangrove forest for some time. Thereafter, he called the police emergency at 115 and even though he reported the kidnapping, he failed to move the police to action. Meanwhile, Mohammad Ali Shah having been informed of the kidnapping also called Mauripur Police Station about 3.00 AM. He was told that all was quiet in Kakkapir and that no firing or any other disturbance was reported.

In a telephonic conversation with this writer Haji Yunus gave his own version of the events of the night between 5/6 May 2011. Abdul Ghani and Haji Abubakr having been nominated in the murder of Musa were attempting to swim from Hawke's Bay to

Shamspir Island in order to escape arrest at the hands of the police. According to Yunus, the water of the four hundred meter-wide channel between the shore and the island being contaminated, the two men drowned.

Haji Yunus has probably never heard of or seen picnickers swimming in the same channel without being affected by the so-called lethal waters. In the same breath the man also alleges that both men being heavily intoxicated with alcohol were incapable of swimming the narrow channel.

This man conveniently overlooks the fact that both Ghani and Abubakr were strong, expert swimmers and divers. Ghani was a certified lifeguard as well whose family has photos of him receiving awards for his life saving work. If Abubakr who was in his mid to late fifties, had been in danger of drowning, Ghani could surely have taken him to the shore of Shamspir, especially when the channel is somewhat less than four hundred meters wide.

Yunus also informed this writer that the chemical examination of the corpses had shown the men had been drinking. Report 5381/82 mentioned above finds no trace of alcohol in their systems. However, it is well known how these things are manipulated and forged all the time in Pakistan and it should be of no surprise to anyone if Haji Yunus has a chemical examination report that does indeed find large amounts of alcohol in the stomach and liver of Abdul Ghani and Abubakr. At the same time it will be perfectly normal if the original report numbered 5381/82 of 21 May 2011, disappears from official record.

### **[An independent inquiry by HRCP.](#)**

On 8 May 2011, an independent fact-finding team from Human Rights Commission of Pakistan visited Kakkapir to ascertain the facts for itself. In a nutshell, the findings of this team are given under.

- That a land grabbing mafia was active in the area.
- That this mafia had inflicted large scale damage to the protected mangrove forests.
- That a long festering conflict between the land grabbing mafia and the fishing community of Kakkapir had come to full fruition in early January 2011.
- That on the plea of Mohammad Ali Shah of PFF, the Sindh Home Minister had nominated MPA Lal Buksh Bhutto to investigate and submit a report.
- That even after a passage of four months there is neither investigation nor report.

- That Abdul Ghani and Haji Abubakr were kidnapped by the men of Haji Yunus. It is of special interest that this report indicates that the fifteen odd cronies of Yunus and his son were accompanied by several policemen.
- That the bodies of two men, namely, Abdul Ghani and Haji Abubakr of Kakkapir were fished out of the sea on the morning of 6 May 2011

## Campaigns gets continued

After the murder of two activists two important events have been held: A mega Sit-in demonstration in front of Sindh Assembly and [convention of all parties' conference](#) and subsequent formation of Amami Jido Jahad committee. On 19 May, 2011 Pakistan Fisherfolk forum held a mega sit in demonstration in Karachi in front of Sindh Assembly



demanding the immediate arrest of Murderers of two PFF activists, immediate suspension of SHO Maripur and dislodging fake FIRs on PFF workers. More than five thousand people both male and female participated in rally coupled with emotionally charged slogans and cultural songs .However; thousand of fisherfolks were intercepted on various routes to stop their arrival on the spot. As a result, Thousands of fishermen were stopped at ICI Bridge in Karachi where police made firing on them. As a result six fisherman

including two women got injured. In the same way, thousands of fishermen were stopped at Thatta and Hyderabad Toll Plazas. Despite such hindrances, and cordon offs, PFF comrades gathered numbering into thousands and marched from Press Club Karachi towards the Sindh Assembly. Near the Sindh Assembly Police stopped them. As a result, Sit-in demonstration was held. After a while CCPO south Karachi came and requested PFF Chairperson to culminate the demonstration. The PFF chairperson made three demands: Arrest of Murderers of two PFF activists, suspension of SHO Maripur and police officials involved in firing on PFF workers and dislodging fake FIRs on PFF workers. CCPO ensured the realization of all three demands within three days. On such assurance, PFF culminated the demonstration and fisherman dispersed peacefully warning that if demands are not completed, PFF will again held demonstration having more than fifteen thousand fishermen.

On 17th June Representatives of all political parties under the umbrella of All Parties Conference (APC), convened by Joint Action Committee (JAC), have thrown their weight behind Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) activists seeking justice for the families of two of their comrades who had been murdered allegedly because of their struggle to



protect mangrove plantations along the coast. Those in attendance included Workers Party Pakistan's (WPP) Yusuf Mastikhan, Jeay Sindh Mahaz's Ghayas Chandio and

Abdul Khaliq Junejo, Manzoor Badayuni from the Pakistan People's Party, Shah Mohammad Shah of the Sindh United Party; Jamaat-e-Islami's Mohammad Hussain Mehenti and Muslim Pervez, Awami Jamhoori Party's Hanif Chandio, PPP-Shaheed Bhutto's Abdul Qayum, Pakistan Awami Party's Ghayasuddin, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Ateeq Qureshi, and Khawaja Izhar-ul-Hassan from the Muttahida Qaumi Movement. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan's (HRCP) Jam Saqi represented the civil society. A committee was also constituted to draw up a course of action to support the ongoing struggles of workers from the Karachi Electric Supply Company and Pakistan Railways. WPP's Yusuf Mastikhan will head the committee while PFF President Mohammad Ali Shah will be part of it. It was decided to convene a meeting on June 13 in Kakapir Village to devise a course of action. All parties conference formed Awami Jidojihad committee.

### **Struggle from other fronts:**

Pakistan Fisherfolk forum has continued this struggle from various fronts. It has written to various human rights Network and other Forums. As a result, Asian human rights commission has released various updates including appeals urging government of Pakistan to take due action. The members of World forum of Fisher people a biggest network of fisherman has written letters to embassies of Pakistan in their respective countries urging them to ask government of Pakistan to take immediate action against land grabbers. Besides, International network for economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), the largest global network of 180 organizations and 43 individuals from 66 different countries working for human rights has written a joint letter to President of Pakistan and other authorities as well to Ms Margaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur urging them to take immediate action for arrest of murderers of activists of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) and giving complete check to degradation of mangroves forests in the area.

### **End Note:**

Kakkapir residents allege that Abdul Ghani and Abubakr were drowned by Haji Yunus and his men and their bodies dumped in the sea. But Yunus and his gang know that dead men tell no tales. There are witnesses to the kidnapping of the two men; none to the actual murder. Given the connections Haji Yunus enjoys with the powerful of the province, there is every fear that all this will become 'circumstantial evidence' which may not be good enough for conviction.

Outsiders like Sohail Osman Ali and others who have been engaged with the Kakkapir community for a decade are fully aware of the vicious land grabbing activity of Haji Yunus and his son. Details of the conflict between Kakkapir and FDO on one side and the land grabbers on the other are known from the extensive coverage in the press. This

coverage was extensive especially after the conflict escalated in December 2010. Few details of this case are now hidden.

There is something extremely sordid in the way neither Shehla Raza, the Deputy Speaker of the Sindh assembly nor SSP Kemari could deliver on their promise of the removal of the SHO of Mauripur police station. Clearly there are powers much higher than these two that stand behind Haji Yunus and his cronies. This can also be gauged from the way PFF and FDO were never entertained by the police in their complaints against the land grabber.

Abdul Ghani and Haji Abubakr, two good men, who stood for the rights of their community are dead. Nothing that anyone can do will bring them back to life. All that the State of Pakistan can now do is to ensure justice. Only then will the two gratuitous deaths be redeemed. Even then, only in a very, very insignificant way.

*However, the campaign for protection and conservation of mangroves has not come into end. It has flourished with new spirit and vigor. Kaka Pir Villagers from the platform of PFF has revitalized their efforts because they own the issue. They are persistent because the campaign is driven by them, led by PFF and supported by Media houses, International human Rights and other networks.*

## Annexure:

### Annex-1: Mangroves declared as Protected Forests - Notification Sindh Government:

GOVERNMENT OF SINDH  
FOREST & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT  
Karachi, dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2010

#### NOTIFICATION

NO: F&W(SOII)5(18)/2008: With the approval of the Competent Authority (Chief Minister, Sindh) and in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 29 of the Forest Act 1927 and all other powers enabling the Government in this behalf, the Government of Sindh is pleased to declare the Intertidal Land (Mangrove Areas) of Thatta and Karachi districts described in the following schedules to be "Protected Forests" with an immediate effect. The provisions of Chapter IV of the said Act to be applicable to it:-

#### SCHEDULE-I

- 1) District (s) : Thatta
- 2) Tehsils (s) : Keti Bundar, Ghorabari , Kharo Chan and Shah Bundar
- 3) Locality : Indus Delta (Intertidal zone)
- 4) Area : 260,000 hectares or 2600 square Kms
- 5) Coordinates : 24° 13.945'N and 67° 16.492'E, 24° 13.489'N, 67° and 27.221'E  
24° 17.643'N and 67° 32.092'E, 24° 5.018'N and 67° 39.390'E  
24° 10.891'N and 67° 46.124'E, 24° 9.197'N and 68° 2.910'E,  
23° 51.699'N and 67° 58.472'E, 23° 43.160'N and 67° 51.228'E (List of selective boundary co-ordinates and satellite map are annexed hereto).

#### BOUNDARIES

##### **North:**

Northern boundary starts at grid reference no: 23 (24° 17.643'N and 67° 32.092'E) near Ghorabari drain and moves down ward following the intertidal interface passing through reference points 24 to 44 up to reference no: 45 on the right bank of River Indus (24° 4.972'N and 67° 33.808'E). The northern boundary further follows the reference points 46 to 57 ends near Shah Bundar (24° 9.197'N and 68° 2.910'E).

##### **East:**

Eastern boundary starts at grid reference no: 58 (24° 7.567'N and 68° 3.678'E) near Shah Bundar follows reference points 59, 60 and reaches up to reference point no: 61 (23° 43.160'N and 67° 51.228'E) at the mouth of Kharak creek.

##### **South:**

Southern boundary follows the reference point nos: 61 to 66 passing through sand bars created by various creeks from Kharak to Chan creeks. The end point of southern boundary is at reference point no: 1 (24° 13.945'N and 67° 16.492'E).

##### **West:**

Western boundary follows the reference point nos: 1 to 23 along inner boundary of Chan creek up to reference point no: 23 ((24° 17.643'N and 67° 32.092'E) near Ghorabari drain.

## SCHEDULE-II

- 1) District (s) : Karachi
- 2) Tehsils/Towns : Kemari Town and Saddar Town
- 3) Locality : Deltaic areas of KPT, Lyari and Malir Rivers (Intertidal zone)
- 4) Area : 1931 hectares or 19.31 square Kms (Polygon-1 to 13)
- 5) Coordinates : 24° 51.778'N and 66° 51.008'E, 24° 52.422'N and 66° 51.568'E  
: 24° 52.634'N and 66° 52.470'E, 24° 51.978'N and 66° 52.546'E  
: 24° 51.668'N and 66° 53.693'E, 24° 51.857'N and 66° 53.816'E  
: 24° 51.788'N and 66° 54.433'E, 24° 51.568'N and 66° 55.508'E,  
: 24° 51.492'N and 66° 56.278'E, 24° 51.941'N and 66° 58.077'E  
: 24° 51.952'N and 66° 58.307'E, 24° 51.345'N and 66° 58.690'E  
: 24° 50.536'N and 66° 59.519'E, 24° 50.102'N and 67° 0.422'E  
: 24° 50.334'N and 67° 0.731'E, 24° 50.294'N and 67° 1.281'E  
: 24° 49.541'N and 67° 1.454'E, 24° 49.012'N and 67° 1.042'E  
: 24° 48.613'N and 66° 57.988'E, 24° 48.403'N and 66° 57.517'E  
: 24° 50.017'N and 66° 55.385'E,

6) Boundaries

**North:**

Northern boundary starts at grid reference point no: 5 of polygon-1: (24° 51.795'N and 66° 54.843'E) and follows reference points 6, 7 up to 10 of polygon-1. The boundary follows the water works and salt marshes and touches the grid reference points 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of polygon-3. Then grid reference nos 6 and 1 of polygon-9 (24° 51.946'N and 66° 58.310'E) form the northern boundary of KPT area. The northern boundary further follows the grid reference point 1 of polygon-8 (24° 50.550'N and 66° 59.516'E) near Native Jetty Bridge, here mangroves are sporadic and water channels are quite wide. The boundary then follows the grid reference point 5 of polygon-8 and reaches to the point 3 of polygon-12 (24° 50.336'N and 67° 0.721'E) near Mai Kolachi. Then the northern boundary comes down to reference point nos 4, 5 near Sultanabad and reaches points 6 and 7 of polygon-12 near Hijrat Colony.

**East:**

Eastern boundary starts at grid reference point 7 of polygon-12 (24° 50.294'N and 67° 1.264'E) near Hijrat Colony, then follows the reference point 8 of polygon-12 and reaches to reference point 2 of polygon-13 (24° 49.700'N and 67° 1.192'E). It then reaches point 5 of polygon-11 near Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Park Boat Basin and follows the eastern boundary of Park up to grid reference point 1 of polygon 11 (24° 49.000'N and 67° 1.044'E).



**South:**

Southern boundary starts at grid reference point 1 of polygon-11 (24° 49.008'N and 67° 1.044'E) near Sea World Residency, then southern boundary reaches the reference point 2 of polygon-5 (24° 48.396'N and 66° 57.519'E) near Manora and then passes through reference point 1 of polygon-5 (24° 50.021'N and 66° 55.394'E). It then reaches point 4 of polygon-4 on Hawks bay beach and follows the grid reference point 1 of polygon-2 (24° 50.763'N and 66° 54.156'E) near Kaka Pir. The southern boundary further follows the Hawks bay/Sandspit road and passing through grid reference point 1 of polygon-1, point 2 of polygon-1, point 2 of polygon-2 and finally reaches at grid reference point 1 of polygon-10 near high tide water marks (24° 51.778'N and 66° 51.013'E).

**West:**

Western boundary starts at grid reference point 1 of polygon-10 (24° 51.778'N and 66° 51.013'E) on Hawks bay road, then follows the reference point 4 and 3 of polygon-10 and other western boundaries of polygons are passing through points 3 and 4 of polygon-1, 2 and 3 of polygon-2, 1 of polygon-3, 2 and 7 of polygon-4, 1 and 2 polygon-8 and 5 and 6 of polygon-9 (24° 51.930'N and 66° 58.077'E).

(List of selective boundary co-ordinates of 13 polygons and satellite maps of 13 polygons are annexed hereto).

**REFERENCE**

Satellite Images 1:50,000 procured from SUPARCO, Survey of Pakistan maps, Deh maps  
Projection: Geographic Coordinate System, Google Earth Pro with (Single frequency GPS receiver was used for the field data collection).


**Annexure-I** List of selective boundary coordinates of SBOR and KPT areas  
**Annexure-II** GIS Map of Board of Revenue and KPT areas

**MUSHTAQ ALI MEMON**  
**SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF SINDH**  
Karachi, dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2010

NO: F&W(SOII)5(18)/2008

A copy is forwarded to:-

1. Senior Member, Board of Revenue, Sindh.
2. Chairperson, Karachi Port Trust (KPT), Karachi.
3. Chief Conservator of Forests, Sindh, Hyderabad.
4. Conservator of Forests, Afforestation Circle, Thatta
5. P.S to Minister for Home and Forests, Sindh, Karachi
6. Publisher, Sindh Government Printing Press, Karachi for publication in the next issue of Government Gazette.

  
(MUHAMMAD SHAFIQ SHAIKH)  
SECTION OFFICER-II  
FOR SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

## **Annex-2: Report of fact finding Committee led by HRCP.**

### **Report of fact finding Committee**

Date of incident: May 5, 2011

Name of victims: Mr. Haji Abu Bakar, son of Haroon, Resident of Kakkapir village, Sandspit Maripur, Kemari twon, Karachi. President of Fisher Folk Development organization.

Mr. Abdul Ghani, son of Muhammad Siddique, Resident of Kakkapir village, Sandspit, Maripur, Kemari twon, Karachi. General Secretary social welfare org of Kakapir village.

Both were also office bearer of Fisher Folk and elected council member of City Government

Names of alleged perpetrators:- Mr. Haji Muhammad Younis, Former president of Pakistan Fishermen Cooperative Society, Resident of Younus abad, Kakapir village, Sandspit, Maripur, Kemari town, Karachi, Mr. Zulfiqar Younis, son of Haji Muhammad Younis, Former Town Nazim of Kemari Town, Resident of Younus abad Kakapir village, Sandspit, Maripur, Kemari Town, Karachi

2. Area of incident: Maripur police station Kakkapir village, Sandspit Maripur, Kemari town, Karachi Background: Two fisher folk activists - Mr. Haji Abu Bakar, President of Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum (PFFF) Kaka village unit and Mr. Abdul Ganai Mirbahar, General Secretary of Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum unit Kaka village Karachi Division were murdered by land mafia goons allegedly led by Mr. Haji Younis and his son Zulfiqar Younis on May 5, 2011. These two activists were being threatened by land mafia since January when they attacked their village and occupied the office of Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum Kaka pir unit at main Road of Sandspit.

After alleged murder of above referred PFF activists HRCP constitute a Fact –Finding team (FFT) team headed by Mr. Asad Iqbal But, Council member of HRCP. Other FFT members were;

1. Mr. Asad Iqbal But council member of HRCP
2. Abdul Hai HRCP
3. Mr. Hasan Athar HRCP
4. Mr. Kashan Kashi HRCP
5. Mr. Shafi seyal HRCP

6. Ms. Mehnaz Rehman Aurat foundation

7. Ms. Meryam -Do-

8. Ms. Rahima SPO

9. Mr. Umer Abas NOWC

10. Mr. Ovaisuddin HRCP

11. Mr. Shujauddin qurashi PILER

FFT reached the place of incident on Sunday, May 8th, 2011, at around 12.30 a.m to offer condolence to the victim's family and PFF workers. FFT was informed by the people that due to aerial firing in a marriage ceremony in Kaka peer village a worker Mr. Moosa Mir Bahar of Fisherman Co-operative Society resident of same village received gun shot and he later on died in the hospital. On May 5th 2011 villagers celebrated 13th birthday of Pakistan Fisher Folk forum at the village. An FIR was registered against Haji Abu Baker 2. Mr. Ghulam 3. Aijaz and 4. Mr. Ishaque . On the same night a police party headed by Haji Muhammad younus, Zulfiqar younus s/o Haji Muhammad Younus along with some 25 to 26 armed persons and SHO Nasrullah Khan along with police party in three Police mobiles surrounded the houses of Aijaz, Haji Abu Bakar s/o Haroon, Abdul Ghani. All of them were resident of Peer Kaka village, Sandspits, Maripoor Karachi.

On 10th May, 2011, FFT comprising. The above named members visited the residence of above three persons and interviewed their acquaintances and family members including women folks. They narrated that on May, 6th at 02. a.m. , police party and 25 to 26 arms loaded persons in civilians cloths broke into the main entrance gate of the village and beside this they thrown grenade on the unit office of Pakistan fisher folk forum. They broke into the house and misbehaved abused and beat men and women by grabbing those hairs, shouting and abusing them. They took away Abdul Ghani and Haji Abu Bakar.

Next day, brutally tortured dead bodies of both, Haji Abu Bakar Meerbahar and Abdul Ghani Meerbahar were found at Shumshabad (Ireland) at 8.00 a.m. on the morning of May, 6 2011.

To protect themselves younger boys of the village escaped and hide in nearby Mangroves.

Mr. Siddique the father of Aijaz, Akbar and others stated that the police are in collaboration with land mafia who is in close contacts with political and influential persons of PPP.

The team visited the whole village and found that despite of the appeal of fisher folk, the government authorities, the law enforcement agencies including the police failed to

protect the activists as well as the villagers. It's the opinion of the team that there is no rule of law and so land grabbing and cutting of mangroves for sale is unchecked and human rights defenders feel themselves unsecured and facing food, water and health insecurity. More over due to environmental degradation, fishing is becoming extinct day by day.

On May occasions Haji Abu Bakar and Abdul Ganai on behalf of villagers approached police of the area to take action against the land grabbers and register criminal cases because of their criminal activities but police failed to do so and contrarily registered fabricated cases against 18-25 villagers filed by the land mafia. Police attempted to arrest those villagers three to four times in February but women protested against the police whenever the police raided their area.

The land mafia even cut off drinking water resources. The villagers have to buy five thousands gallon of water tanks from the city every day and women get water from the tank for drinking and cooking.

The team visited the office of the Haji younus ...Uounus Abad Kaka village Sandspit Maripoor Road Karachi Mr. Abu Bakar s/o M.Umer the nephew of the Haji Younus narrated that on 5th of May, 2011 that they have been living here since 40 years. The day of incident he was presented in the marriage ceremony. One of his org. activists was shot dead by Aijaz, Abubaker, Abdul Ghani and. An FIR was registered against the killers, police raided the houses of the above culprits and arrested four persons but they were released on 6th of May, 2011 at 11 a.m. He denied the arrest of Abu Bakar and Abdul Ghani. He narrated that Abu Baker and Ghani were not swimmer both were flew away when police raided their house and try to reach at the Tapoo of the Shums pir and droned in the sea water. One of his relative yousuf informed that he put out the dead bodies from the water. Further more he denied the land grabbing. He stated that they are owner of the land from their forth fathers. Haji younus and his son are not available and don'ts know the where about.

The team visited the Mari poor police station, SHO was not presented Mr. ... ASI stated that he was not on duty at the day of incident. He narrated that the police party raided the houses of culprits for arrest, according to the FIR at 2. a.m on 6th of May, there were nothing women police with the police party, however, the effectives always complain against the police without any reason. He is not able to provide more information.

The team asked for further steps regarding the murder of their activist. Muhammad Ali shah the president of Fisher folk stated that:-

The President PFF Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah and General Secretary Mr. Saeed Baloch were launching campaign against the land mafia of Kaka Pir Village in particular and of the entire coast line. They have written several letters to the Sindh government, held rallies and hunger strikes.

On February 8, PFF arranged a march starting from Kaka pir village to Kiamari.

It is pertinent to mention here that land grabbing and the mangrove cutting in the mangrove forest area along the coast is continue in the area of Kaka pir village since 1990, causing serious concerns to the villagers.

During PFF march the seriousness of the present law and order situation in Kaka pir was reported to SSP Kiamari and Ms. Shelha Raza, Deputy Speaker of the Sindh Assembly, the assured that Station House Officer (SHO) Maripur would be suspended within three days and action would be taken against Haji Younis and his son Zulifiqar Younis (who was Town Nazim, Kiamari and involved in land grabbing) and queshment of fake FIRs against PFF Chairperson Mr. Muhammad Ali shah and action would be taken against land grabbers.

Previously a meeting with Zulifiqar Mirza, Home Minister of Sindh, was held in which he formed a committee in supervision of Pakistan People's Party leader Lal Bux Bhutto to investigate the grievances of Kakapir villagers in detail and submit report. But no action was taken till this date.

FFT feels that Sindh government has failed protect life and property of fisher folks such as right to life, food and land, which the Pakistan government guarantees in its Constitution and also by ratifying the international human rights laws.

An immediate investigation and arrest of alleged perpetrators are acquired.

Office bearers of the fisher folk, members of civil society and NGO's working in the area who are being threatened must be protected from land and drug mafias and land grabbers and other criminals.

Furthermore, FFT urges Chief Minister Sindh to intervene into the overall situation of fisher folks to curb criminal activities in Kakapir, protect people of the area and perpetrators should be brought to justice.

#### **Observations:-**

This is admitted fact that Abu Bakar, the nephew of the Haji Younus stated that they snatched the office of the fisher folk and right now it is under the occupation of his organization.

There is a lot of peace of burned iron found in the destroyed office of the Fisher Folk which witnessed that a type of bomb blast occurred

Abu Bakar and Abdul Ghani both were expert swimmer, and the family show their pictures and certificate getting prize as a swimmer.

Some young's confirmed both of them as a teacher of swimming.

Space between the Kakapeer and Shums I' land is near about 250 to 300 Meters. Reach the I'land by swimming is a easy task to any Fisherman.

This is a general information or practice that a person droved into the sea his/her dead body to take up over 40 hours to came up to the water. While Abu Bakar and Ghani's dead bodies found after few hours.

The posters and pictures of MNA's MPA's, chairperson and other top leaders are posted on the walls of the office of the Haji Younus shown the high profile shelter of the present Government.

Haji Yasin and Zulfiqar younus and others still not arrested while Two FIR were registered against them.

Reported by A.Hai

## **Annex -3: Asian Human Rights Commissions Appeals and updates:**

### **PAKISTAN: The villages of fisher folk are being grabbed by powerful persons from the ruling party**

22 January 2011

Dear friends,

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has received information that the land mafia from the ruling party is occupying the villages of fisher folk by using force and destroying the eco system of the coast by earth filling in the sea and cutting the mangrove forests. One infamous land grabber, Mr. Haji Muhammad Younus attacked a century-old fishermen's village, the Kakkapir, to vacate the village by its inhabitants, injuring many persons by firing at huts of the village. The police refused to file the FIR (first information report) owing to the involvement of powerful persons. Two fishermen who reported in writing about the incident to the police were searched by the armed men of the land grabbers to punish them for lodging a complaint. The land grabbers have occupied many villages and encroached upon them to make houses for commercial purposes. A vast area of the coastal line was filled with earth through land filling and converted into commercial areas.

#### **CASE NARRATIVE**

Mr. Haji Muhammad Younus and his son Mr. Zulfiqar Younus are activists of the ruling party, Pakistan Peoples Party, and infamous for grabbing land around the coastal area of Mauripur, Karachi and encroaching on the small villages of the fisher folk. Mr. Zulfiqar was also the Town Nazim (Mayor) of Kemari Town during the regime of former General Musharraf for five years. The major coastal area comes under the Kemari town.

On January 16, a group of about forty armed persons headed by Zulfiqar Younus attacked the Kakkapir village at 8.20 pm and fired automatic weapons for almost one hour at the huts, injuring many people. The villagers identified some attackers by name. Some identified armed men include Shakeel Ahmad S/O Siddique, Usman S/O Ali Muhammad, Faqeer S/O Usman, Ramzan S/O Ali Muhammad, Ishaque S/O Hussain, Shafi Muhammad S/O Haji Fazlu, Aslam alias Mamoo Jan S/O Haji Suleman and Majeed S/O Aali. Others can be identified when seen. During the attack they also damaged and fired upon the office of a social organization, working for the welfare and health care of the fisher folk, and looted the valuable assets of the office that costs, according to the villagers, about Rs. 300,000/=.

The local activists of the village informed the police by calling 15 but the officers did not respond to the complaint. Then the leaders of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, an organisation of the fishermen, called police to help and tried to lodge an FIR against the said group but the station house officer (SHO) Maripur, Mr. Nasrullah Khan, not only refused to do so but also insulted and asked the police to throw them out from the police station.

Then hundreds of fishing persons including women and children under the leadership of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum demonstrated against such lawlessness in front of Press Club Karachi on January 18, 2011. In reaction to the demonstration, some drunkard henchmen of the land grabber named Shakeel S/O Siddique, Shafi S/O Haji Fazlu, Muhammad Saleem S/O Urs and others again rushed into the village, abused and threatened the villagers that if any action was taken by the villagers then they would face serious consequences.

Two persons of the village, Haji Abu Bakar S/O Haroon and Abdul Ghani S/O Muhammad Siddique, who first lodged the complaint of attack on January 16, were hiding because the attackers have threatened that those persons will face strong reactions from their group as they have reported the matter to the police.

#### SUGGESTED ACTION

Please write to authorities informing them that the land grabbing belonging to ruling party is harassing the poor villagers of the fisher folk to grab their century-old village through force and intimidation. Please urge upon them to prosecute the police officials of Maripur police station for refusing the right of the aggrieved party to file a complaint and also take legal action against the perpetrators for destroying the eco system by acquiring the filling the sea and cutting the mangroves plants along the coastal area.

The AHRC is writing a separate letter to UN Special Rapporteur on the Question of Housing rights calling for his intervention into this case.



**PAKISTAN: Petition to President Zardarai urging the arrest of killers of fisherfolk activists**

May 16, 2011

Dear President,

The Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum draw your attention to the matter which extensively reflects the law of the jungle in Pakistan and more importantly demonstrates the sheer inhuman misuse of political and administrative power coupled with assault, mishandling and torture.

Mangroves forests are the breeding grounds for fish, the mating grounds for migratory birds and strong safeguards against violent tides. But pitifully, despite the great significance of mangroves, these sea plants in Pakistan have been left most neglected. The swamps of mangroves have been decreasing day by day owing to various underlying and immediate causes, both natural and manmade. So far, the area of mangroves has been reduced to 86,000 hectares from 600,000 hectares, recorded some years back. Keeping this bleak situation in consideration, the Forest and Wildlife Department, Government of Sindh, has declared the mangroves forests of Thatta and Karachi as "Protected Forests" through notification no: F & W (SO11)5(18)2008: dated 2nd November, 2010.

Despite the desperate condition of mangroves, land grabbing mafia has been unendingly encroaching upon the coastal land through reclaiming by earth filling. Many acres of mangrove has been reclaimed in the name of developing model villages in the administrative limits of Keamari and Bin Qasim towns of Karachi, creating threats to the local communities. Land grabbers, enjoying the backing of certain government officials and political leaders have destroyed wide areas by cleansing the mangroves forests, making the land for commercial purposes.

Against such destruction of Mangroves, Environment Friends of Kaka Pir Village, SandsPit launched campaign against the land Mafia from the platform of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum from January, 2011. They wrote letters to various concerned authorities to take immediate action to check the destruction. As a resultant, sea lord Haji Younis, Zulfiqar Younis along with accomplices attacked the Kaka Pir Village in January of this year, tortured the villagers and mishandled the women. After this attack the police refused to register the complaint by the Haji Abu and Abdul Ganai on behalf of all villagers and instead of arresting the culprits the police registered the fabricated cases against many of the villagers. The police attempted to arrest those villagers three to four times in February but the women protested against the police whenever they came. Besides, local sea lords with support of the police unleashed a series of fabricated cases against the fisherman of kaka Pir village in order to make them to quit from the cases.

But, Mr. President, the environment friends are fearless. They continued their unending and tireless campaign against sea lords and Land Mafia. They launched a mega campaign against all this from the platform of the Fisherfolk forum, a right based Civil Society Organization. PFF carried out various activities ranging from writing letters to civil

society organizations, concerned authorities, appeals to the Asian Human Rights Commission, the Supreme Court of Pakistan, held demonstrations, Hunger strikes and ultimately held a short march which started from Kaka Pir Village Kiamari on 8 February and culminated outside of press club the next day. In the midst, the marchers staged Sit In demonstration outside of the Sindh Assembly where SSP Kiamari and Ms. Shelha Raza, Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly ensured that SHO Mari Pur will be suspended within three days; secondly action will be taken against Haji younis and his son Zulifiqar Younis, Ex Town Nazim Kiamari involved in land grabbing and registration of fake FIRs against PFF Chairperson and violence of PFF local Community; thirdly a firm action will be taken against other land grabbers involved in land filling. Besides, a meeting with Honourable Zulifiqar Mirza, Ex Home Minister Sindh was held where he formed a committee in supervision of PPP leader Lal Bux Bhutto to inquire about the issue in details and submit the report. In light of decisions into the meeting, Honourable Home Minister has also telephoned you not to take any actions against anyone before the report is submitted. But, despite such promises land grabbing, mishandling of Kaka Pir Villagers and a series of Fabricated Cases against the villagers did not come to an end. So far five fabricated FIRs ( No : 43/11, 53/11 ,25/2011, 118/2011, 109/2011) have been registered against Kaka Pir Villagers including Muhammad Ali Shah, Chiarperson, PFF.

Mr. President, during the campaign, Haji Younis, Zulfiqar Younis along with their accomplices with support of SHO Mari geared up their threats posed to the Kaka Pir Villagers. Therefore, PFF Chairperson began to write to concerned authorities to remind them of their promises and to seek protection for Kaka Pir Villagers. On 15 February, He wrote letter to Shehla Raza, Deputy Speaker, Sindh Assembly that "In reaction to this peaceful campaign the sea lord, Haji younis, has reportedly planned to make onslaught and torture the villagers of kaka Pir in the disguise of a peaceful demonstration. Therefore, we extend our request to take action and provide us protection against the imminent and possible onslaught. We are extending you request to you instead of SHO Maripur because he himself has been involved in entire game of land grabbing and harassment of PFF workers". On 15 February, he wrote letters to Taluka Police Officer, Kiamar, DIG Police and IG police that "In reaction to this peaceful campaign Haji younis has reportedly planned to make onslaught and torture on the villagers of kaka Pir into disguise of peaceful demonstration. Therefore, we extend you request to take action and provide us protection against the imminent and possible onslaught. We are extending you request you instead of SHO Maripur because he himself has been involved in entire game of land grabbing and harassment of PFF workers".

On 3rd March he wrote letter to GIG Head quarter for taking due action against the land grabbers cautioning that their lives has been threatened.

But despite all these efforts, the government did not take any due action. Land grabbers grabed land unchecked .The station house officer (SHO) of Maripur police was left free to demonstrate his highhandedness. Therefore, Kaka Pir villagers continued their efforts from the legal front as well. Abdul Gani, the lead campaigner registered case against Haji Younis and his accomplices as well sindh Government, DIG Operation, West zone Karachi, town police Officer, West zone Karachi, SHO Maripur , Board of Revenue

Government of Sindh, Karachi against the Mangroves cutting. As a result on the Petition No: D.326 /2011, High Court Karachi gave stay order against cutting of Mangroves on 11 April, 2011.

Mr. President, The stay order by the court somehow posed a threat to the nefarious intentions of Land Grabbers to clean off entire land of mangroves and to do business of plotting. As a result, Haji Younis, and his father Zulfiqar Younis, their accomplices along with police team of SHO Maripur violently and shamefully broke on the Kaka Pir Villagers on 5 May at Night Time. They blasted the office of PFF, murdered two activist leaders: Haji Abubakar, Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum president of Kaka Village unit and Abdul Gani Mirbahar, General Secretary of Karachi division PFF. In urgent reaction, a FIR against the Haji Younis, Zulfiqar Younis No: 93/11 dated 6-5-11. The case was registered by the brother of martyred Abdul Gani, namely Akbar alias Aku at Docks Thatta, Liayri Town. Besides, Asian Human Rights Commission released Petition. But despite the lapse of many days Culprits are yet free. SHO Maripur is yet on job. And The Villagers of Kaka Pir Village are yet at risk.

Therefore, Mr. President, you are requested to take due action as check could be given to cutting of Mangroves ,Culprits should be brought to justice and SHO Maripur could be suspended and Kaka Pir Villagers can breathe a sigh of relief.

**PAKISTAN: Sindh government provides protection to the killers of the Fisherfolk Forum activists instead of the victims and their families**

**May 20, 2011**

The activists of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum and members of civil society was brutally baton charged and manhandled by the police in front of the Provincial Assembly building. Twelve protestors were injured including four women and eight men. The Forum had already informed the authorities some four days before that they would hold a sit-in outside the assembly in protest of the killing of their two activists.

The protestors were demanding the arrest of the killers of two activists of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) who were killed after their abduction by the two local leaders of the ruling party, the Pakistan Peoples' Party, and their henchmen. Before their abduction the henchmen of the land grabbers of the ruling party attacked the Kakka village, Karachi, warning the villagers to vacate the land otherwise they would be forcibly displaced. The village is centuries old and was registered by the then British government. The land has become prime land because of the development in the area. The perpetrators have already grabbed vast area of the seashore by cutting the mangroves and building illegal structures.

A good number of women also joined the protest who came from different cities of Sindh, including Karachi, Thatta, Badin, Sanghar, Dadu, Jamshoro, Hyderabad, Matiari etc. They gathered outside the Karachi Press Club and chanted slogans against the government and police for their failure to arrest the killers and demanded that the authorities bring the suspects to justice. The protesters then decided to march towards the Chief Minister's House to stage a sit-in but the policemen deployed a roadblock effectively blocking the artery leading to the Chief Minister's House and baton-charged the protesters. They fired tear gas shells in order to disperse the crowd but the PFF activists continued to protest.

The apathy of the situation is that the police refuse to file a First Information Report (FIR) even 14 days after the incident on the instructions of some powerful persons from the ruling party -- a total disrespect of the law by the very authorities responsible for maintaining the rule of the law.

The irony is that no other political party or member of the assembly joined the fisher folk's protest rally or condemned the killing of the two activists. The land grabbing at the coastal areas has never been criticised by the political parties of the government or the opposition.

It is regrettable that the Sindh provincial authorities are providing impunity to the

perpetrators by not ordering the police to file a murder case against the attackers. The murder of the activists took place 14 days ago yet no FIR has been filed. It is quite evident that the ruling party and government are either involved in such crimes or are happy to turn a blind eye to them.

The Asian Human Rights Commission urges the government to arrest the killers of the PFF activists and prosecute the station house officer (SHO) of the Mauripur police station, Karachi for not observing the law by refusing to file FIR. The police have a legal and moral duty to protect the victims and their families and not the very perpetrators of the violence.

**PAKISTAN: Police fail to arrest the murderers of two fisher folk activists whereas encouraging false charges upon the villagers**

**June 2, 2011**

Dear friends,

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) has received updated information from the fact finding team that conducted a fact finding mission concerning two deceased fisher folk activists murdered by a land mafia on May 6, 2011. The police initially refused to register the case against the alleged murderers, and the Medico Legal Officer did not report the torture marks on the dead body, despite the fact that villagers and the victims' relatives saw the marks. The police, along with land mafia thugs, came to arrest the deceased victims based on false charges concocted concerning the victims before they were killed. The police in this area have been serving only the land mafia, members of which are politically and economically influential locally, encouraging false charges and killings against the poor fisher folks. In November 2010, the Sindh Province administration declared the mangrove forest of Thatha and Karachi to be a protected forest. However, the government has failed to protect the forest as well as the villagers fighting for forest protection.

**UPDATED INFORMATION:**

The AHRC has been reporting a series of statements about two deceased fisher folk activists, Mr. Haji Abu Bakar and Mr. Abdul Ghani. The AHRC reports have criticized the police who initially refused to register the First Information Report (FIR) against the alleged perpetrators – Mr. Haji Muhammad Younis, and his son Mr. Zulfiqar Younis, notorious land mafia members, and their thugs in the area. The police have supported the alleged perpetrators by accepting fabricated charges against the deceased activists and by torturing villagers who peacefully protested and demanded the arrest of the perpetrators. It is also alleged that perpetrators bribed the Medico Legal Officer, who then did not

mention anything about the torture marks on the bodies of the victims in his report, despite the fact that the villagers and the victims' relatives witnessed those marks on the bodies.

The police registered the FIR (no. 93/11) against Haji Younis and Zulfiqar Younis, dated May 6, 2011 and submitted by the brother of the deceased Abdul Ghani, Mr. Akbar at the Docks police station in Docks Thatta, Liayri Town. The police have not launched an investigation into the case registered against the land mafia, which has a good relationship with influential politicians. Instead, the police have been interrogating and assaulting the villagers and fisher folk leaders, who had false charges registered against them by the land mafia. The unjust police action in favor of the land mafia resulted in the killing of the fisher folk activists.

According to the fact finding mission conducted on May 8, there was a wedding ceremony in Kaka pir village before the murder happened. During the ceremony, Mr. Moosa Mir Bahar, son of Mohammad Ismail, a member of a co-operative society of fishermen, allegedly had a heart attack in the middle of heavy aerial firing and died on the way to the hospital. Mr. Faqiro was also injured at that time. On May 5, Mr. Faqir Muhammad, son of Muhammad Usman Resident of Kaka pir village (who is known as a member of the Haji Younis's group), registered a fabricated FIR against Haji Abu Baker, Ghulam, Aijaz and Ishaq.

On the same day night, the police – along with Mr. Haji Muhammad Younus, Zulfiqar Younus and approximately 25 armed persons – came to Kaka pir village. Station House Officer (SHO) Nasrullah Khan of Maripur police station, along with police officers riding in three police vans and private vehicles, surrounded the houses of Haji Abu Baker, Abdul Ghani and Aijaz.

Starting at around 6pm on May 5, land mafia thugs roamed around the village and disturbed the villagers. They started violently assaulting the villagers at 2am, early in the morning of May 6. Together with a police team under the supervision of the SHO, the thugs destroyed the houses and assaulted the villagers. They also assaulted women in the village, grabbing their hair and shouting with verbal abuse. When they failed to find Abdul Ghani, they trespassed upon the office of Mangroves Eco Tourism and used a grenade to destroy office property such as a computer, furniture and other equipment. They also intruded into Mr. Haji Siddiq's house and disturbed his family.

Meanwhile, young boys and other villagers fled for their safety and hid themselves in the mangrove forest. However, when coming out of the forest at night, they were caught by the armed thugs and police, and were assaulted.

The police arrested four villagers, who were then released on May 6 at 11 am. Later on that day, the bodies of Haji Abu Baker and Abdul Ghani were found near Shams Pir Island coast, an hour away from Kaka Pir Village by boat.

False cases have been lodged against the villagers as detailed below.

1. FIR number 43/11 dated April 11, 2011  
Mr. Abdul Ghani, son of Muhammad who was murdered  
Mr. Shakeel, son of Juma  
Mr. Basheer Ahmed Haji Sidique
2. FIR number 53/11 dated February 1, 2011  
Mr. Haji Abubakar, son of Haroon,  
Mr. Abdul Ghani, son of Muhammad who was murdered  
Mr. Hashim, son of Muhammad  
Mr. Adam, son of Umar  
Mr. Aijaz, son of Muhammad Sidique  
Mr. Haji Muhammad Sidique, son of Salih Muhammad  
Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah (Chairperson of PFF)  
Mr. Basheer, son of Muhammad Sadique  
Mr. Muhammad Sidique, son of Muhammad Ibraheem
3. FIR number 25/11 dated February 1, 2011  
Mr. Akbar alias Akoo
4. Mr. Aijaz, son of Muhammad Sidique  
Mr. Muhammad Ali  
Mr. Hashim, son of Muhammad  
Mr. Abu Bakar, son of Haji Younis
5. FIR number 118/2011 dated April 3, 2011  
PFF workers and Kaka pir villagers
6. 5. FIR number 109/2011 dated March 21, 2011  
PFF workers and Kaka pir villagers  
For more details about the background and campaign, please see the statements below.

AHRC-STM-062-2011: PAKISTAN: Sindh government provides protection to the killers of the Fisherfolk Forum activists instead of the victims and their families

AHRC-UAU-024-2011: PAKISTAN: Call for immediate arrest of the murderers of two activist fishermen and stop the land grabbing

AHRC-UAC-008-2011: PAKISTAN: The villages of fisher folk are being grabbed by powerful persons from the ruling party.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

Approximately, 27 acres of the village's mangrove land, where fisher folk have been living for decades, have been stolen and sold for private profits by a land mafia. The land mafia does not have legal title to the land. The Forest and Wildlife Department of Sindh province, in its Notification (No. F & W (SOII)5(18)/2008 dated November 2, 2010), declared the mangrove forests of Thatta and Karachi to be "Protected Forest" with immediate effect under the Section 29 of the Forest Act 1927. The Forest Act clearly states that the 'Protected Forest' is the property of Government, or over which the Government has proprietary right, or to the whole or any part of the forest-produce to which the Government is entitled.

However, even after the Notification, the land mafia continues to cut the mangrove trees and occupy the land for their private profits. The Sindh administration has failed to protect the forest it declared to be "protected." The Forest Act requires the punishment of those who infringe the Notification, but the Sindh administration has taken no steps to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Meanwhile, the deceased Abdul Ghani had filed a lawsuit (petition no. D 326/2011) on the cutting of the mangroves against Haji Younis, the Sindh Province administration, DIG Operation of West Zone Karachi, Town Police Officer of West Zone Karachi, SHO Maripur Police Station, and the Board of Revenue of Sindh Province. On April 11, 2011, the High Court gave a stay order on mangrove cutting. The land mafia then allegedly murdered two fisher folk activists, ignoring the government Notification as well as the high court order.

**SUGGESTED ACTION:**

Please write to authorities to express your concern that the police failed to conduct an impartial investigation and to arrest the alleged perpetrators.

The AHRC will write a separate letter to UN Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights Defenders and on the Right to Adequate Food.



## Annex -4: Petition Letter of International Network for economic, social and cultural rights



International Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights  
Red Internacional para los Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales  
Réseau international pour les droits économiques, sociaux et culturels  
الشبكة العالمية للحقوق الاقتصادية والاجتماعية و الثقافية

1 June, 2011

**TO:**

Mr. Asif Ali Zardari  
President of Pakistan

**CC:**

Mr. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Prime Minister of Pakistan  
Mr. Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Chief Minister: Karachi, Sindh Province  
Mr. Syed Mumtaz Alam Gillani, Federal Minister for Human Rights  
Mr. Muhammad Ayaz Soomro, Minister for Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal  
Prosecution Service  
Chief Justice of Sindh High Court

**Board**

Mr. Hossam Bahgat  
Egyptian Initiative for  
Personal Rights, Egypt  
Ms. Julie Cavanaugh-Bill  
Western Shoshone  
Defense Project—WSDP,  
Neve Sogobia/United  
States

Ms. Shanthi Dairiam  
International Women's  
Rights Action Watch -  
Asia-Pacific, Malaysia

Mr. Renji George Joseph  
Alliance for Holistic and  
Sustainable Development  
of Communities, India

Mr. Legborsi Saro  
Pyagbara  
Movement for the  
Survival of the Ogoni  
People—MO SOP,  
Nigeria

Mr. Wilder Sánchez  
Chávez  
Confederación  
Campesina del Perú—  
CCP, Perú

Ms. Aye Aye Win  
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Ms. Nadia Gabol, Minister for Human Rights, Sindh Province  
Dr. Faqir Hussain, Registrar: Supreme Court of Pakistan  
Inspector General of Police, Police Head office, I. I. Chundrigar Road, Karachi  
Mr. Husain Haqqani, Pakistani Ambassador to the United States  
Ms. Margaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders

**RE: Requesting action against the murder of two fisherfolk activists and the threats and acts of violence directed against human rights defenders**

ESCR-Net is the largest global network of organizations and activists devoted to achieving economic, social and environmental justice through human rights, consisting of 217 organizations and individuals from 66 countries. We write to express our serious concern regarding the acts of violence and continued threats against leaders of ESCR-Net member Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) who have been legitimately exercising their right to expression and dissent. It is our understanding that requests for protection have been largely ignored or in certain instances actively repressed. We strongly condemn the attacks and ongoing harassment against the fisherfolk leaders, including the murder of two PFF leaders on May 5, as well as the obstruction of their access to justice in past months. We urge the Pakistani authorities to take all necessary measures to refrain from all acts of aggression against human rights defenders, immediately provide the protection required and to prosecute those guilty of the recent attacks.

According to our sources, members of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum that have mobilized to resist the clearing of mangroves along the coastal towns in the administrative limits of Keamari and Bin Qasim are facing ongoing threats and acts of violence in response to their defense of the human rights of affected villagers. Nearby communities have reportedly experienced increased food insecurity resulting from the loss of some 500,000 hectares of mangrove forests (from both natural and man-made causes) that serve as breeding grounds for fish, mating grounds for migratory birds and safeguards against damages from the tides. The environmental effects of the loss of mangroves have according to reports resulted in increased hardship in these fisherfolk villages. The acquisition of lands by private interests that stand to benefit from the clearing of the

mangroves for commercial development purposes has further aggravated this dire situation. In response, PFF has engaged in writing letters to concerned authorities, coordinating with the Asian Human Rights Commission and petitioning the Supreme Court of Pakistan, as well as convening a number of demonstrations, marches and hunger strikes.

Allegedly in response to actions taken to protect the mangroves, a group of about forty people attacked the fishing village of Kaka Pir, in Maripur, Kemari town, Karachi on the evening of January 16, 2011. The attackers reportedly fired automatic weapons at the homes of residents, resulting in multiple injuries. Several of the villagers were able to identify the perpetrators and attempted to file a report with the police. It was reported that the Station House Officer refused to register the report, insulted PFF leaders and ordered them to be thrown out of the station. A number of allegedly false criminal charges have also since been filed against fisherfolk leaders.

Less than a month later, on February 8, several members of the Sindh Assembly reportedly expressed assurances that 1) the above-mentioned Station House Officer would be promptly suspended, 2) action would be taken against the main instigators of the land grabbing and those who filed false charges against PFF leaders, and 3) further attempts at land grabbing would be swiftly addressed. A committee to investigate and report on the situation was also apparently formed. Yet, since that time, continued threats and harassment against PFF members has prompted the organization to write to the authorities and remind them of their promises and to seek protection for the villagers of Kaka Pir. Fisherfolk activists also filed charges against several government officials, police officers. Following this, on April 2011 the High Court of Karachi issued a stay on the cutting of mangroves. Notwithstanding, land grabbing and threats and attacks against fisherfolk leaders have reportedly continued.

Reportedly, the PFF office in Kaka Pir village was attacked on May 5 by armed persons, resulting in the murder of two PFF leaders: Mr. Haji Abu Bakar, President of Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum Kaka Pir village unit and Mr. Abdul Ganai Mirbahar, General Secretary of Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum Karachi Division. It is alleged that the Pakistani authorities have failed to launch a proper investigation or bring charges against the perpetrators. This has led to a sit-in held on May 19 by some five thousand people in Karachi to demand the arrest of the murderers. It is reported that several thousand fisherfolk were reportedly blocked at several points of entry into the city by the police, who allegedly fired on protesters at the ICI Bridge in Karachi, resulting in the injury of six fishermen and four women.

We strongly condemn the threats and attacks against these human rights defenders and urge all competent federal, state and municipal authorities in Pakistan to:


- Refrain from all future violent actions committed against fisherfolk, and bring all government officials to account for any involvement in such violence;
- Provide protection for fisherfolk being threatened and investigate the crimes committed, particularly the murders of May 5, in order to identify those responsible within the context of an independent and impartial criminal trial;
- Undertake all necessary measures to ensure fisherfolk's human rights to food, water and a healthy environment are protected from abuses by third-parties and take effective steps to prevent future threats and violence against the legitimate activities of human rights defenders;
- Apply the articles set out in the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1998, especially in relation to the obligation of the state to guarantee *“the protection...of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure*

*or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration” (Art. 12.2);*

- Guarantee the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties throughout the country, in accordance with the international human rights norms signed and ratified by Pakistan.

We urge the authorities to take all necessary measures to fulfill the Pakistani government’s fundamental obligation to protect citizens against such egregious human rights abuses. Finally, we ask to be kept us informed about any measures taken.

Sincerely,



Julieta Rossi

\* \* \*

**Members: International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**  
(Updated May, 2011)

Organization	Acronym	Country
Action Contre l'Impunité Pour Les Droits Humains	ACIDH	DR of Congo
Action for Social Rights - formerly Youth Movement for Peace and People's Rights	AfSoR	Sierra Leone
ActionAid International		South Africa
African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies	ACDHRS	The Gambia
Afro-Colombian National Movement CIMARRON	CIMARRON	Colombia
Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights		Palestine
Aliança para Promoção do Desenvolvimento da Comunidade de Hoji Ya Henda	APDCH	Angola
Alliance for Holistic and Sustainable Development of Communities	AHSDC	India
Amnesty International	AI	United Kingdom
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development	APWLD	Thailand
Asian Foundation for Human Rights and Development	FORUM-ASIA	Thailand
Asian Human Rights Commission	AHRC	China
Asian Institute for Human Rights	AIHR	Thailand
Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia	ACIJ	Argentina
Asociación Comité de Familiares de Víctimas de Violaciones a los Derechos Humanos "Marianella García Villas"	CODEFAM	El Salvador
Asociación Q'ukumatz		Guatemala
Association Africaine de Défense des Droits de l'Homme, représentation du Katanga	ASADHO/Katanga	Democratic Republic of Congo
Association for Women's Rights in Development	AWID	Canada
Association Nigérienne de Défense des Droits de l'Homme	ANDDH	Niger
Association of Environmental Lawyers of Liberia	Green Advocates	Liberia
BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights	BAOBAB	Nigeria

Bretton Woods Project	BWP	United Kingdom
Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation	BGRF	Bulgaria
Bulgarian Helsinki Committee	BHC	Bulgaria
Butere Focused Women in Development	BUFOWODE	Kenya
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network		Canada
Center for Constitutional Rights	CCR	United States of America
Center for Economic and Social Rights		Spain
Center for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Promotion	ESCR-PRO	Thailand
Center for Human Rights and Environment	CEDHA	Argentina
Center for Reproductive Rights	CRR	United States
Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL)	CWGL	United States
Center of Concern	COC	United States
Center on Housing Rights and Evictions	COHRE	Switzerland
Centre d'Information Juridique/Femme Justice Aide	CIUG/FJA	R of Guinee
Centre for Applied Legal Studies	CALS	South Africa
Centre for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Hakijamii)	Hakijamii	Kenya
Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation	CERA	Canada
Centre for Minority Rights Development	CEMIRIDE	Kenya
Centro de Apoyo Comunitario Trabajando Unidos	CACTUS	Mexico
Centro de Asesoría Laboral del Perú	CEDAL	Peru
Centro de Derechos Económicos y Sociales	CDES	Ecuador
Centro de Estudios de Derecho, Justicia y Sociedad (Dejusticia)	Dejusticia	Colombia
Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales	CELS	Argentina
Charter Committee on Poverty Issues	CCPI	Canada
Child Rights Information network	CRIN	United Kingdom
Collectif des Femmes du Mali	Le COFEM	Mali
Colombian Commission of Jurists	CCJ	Colombia
Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, A.C.	CMDPDH	Mexico
Comité de Emergencia de Garifuna de Honduras		Honduras
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative Organization	CHRI	India
Community Law Centre (University of the Western Cape, South Africa)		South Africa
Conectas Direitos Humanos		Brazil
Confederación Campesina Del Peru	CCP	Peru
Corporate Accountability International		United States
Desarrollo, Educación Y Cultura Autogestionarios Equipo Pueblo A.C.	DECA Equipo Pueb A.C.	Mexico France
Dignity International		France
EarthRights International	ERI	United States
Eastern Africa Coalition for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	EACOR	Kenya
Education and Research Association for Consumers Malaysia	ERA Consumers	Malaysia
Egyptian Center for Housing Rights	ECHR	Egypt
Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights (EIPR)	EIPR	Egypt
El Proyecto de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales	ProDESC	México
EnGendeRights		Philippines
Equalinrights		Netherlands

ESCR-Asia		Philippines
Estudio Para La Defensa De Los Derechos De La Mujer	DEMUS	Peru
European Anti Poverty Network	EAPN	Belgium
European Roma Rights Centre	ERRC	Hungary
FEDERAÇÃO DOS ORGÃOS DE ASSISTENCIA SOCIAL E EDUCACIONAL	FASE	Brazil
Fédération internationale des droits de l'Homme	FIDH	France
Federation of Women Lawyers	FIDA-Kenya	Kenya
Femmes Cote d'Ivoire Experience	FCIEK	Cote d'Ivoire
Food First Information and Action Network Organization	FIAN	Germany
Foro Ciudadano de Participación por la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos (FOCO)	FOCO	Argentina
Foundation For Human Rights And Democracy	FOHRD	Liberia
Frente Autentico del Trabajo	FAT	Mexico
Front Line - The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders		Ireland
Fundación Emmanuel Internacional	FEI	Dominican Republic
Global Action on Aging		United States
Global Basic Income Foundation	GBI	Netherlands
Habi Center for Environmental Rights		Egypt
Habitat Int. Coalition-Housing & Land Rts. Network	HIC-HLRN	Egypt
Harvard Project on Disability	HPOD	United States
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights		United States
Human and Environmental Development Agenda	HEDA	Nigeria
Human Rights Centre at the School of Law, Queens University Belfast		United Kingdom
Human Rights Law Resource Centre	HRLRC	Australia
Human Rights Tech		United States
Indonesian Legal Aid Society Association	Perkumpulan MBH	Indonesia
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)	IATP	Switzerland
Institute for Democracy in South Africa	IDASA	South Africa
Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti	IJDH	United States
Instituto de Estudios Legales y Sociales del Uruguay	IELSUR	Uruguay
INSTITUTO DE ESTUDOS, FORMAÇÃO E ASSESSORIA EM POLÍTICAS SOCIAIS	PÓLIS	Brazil
Instituto de Formacion Feminina Integral	IFFI	Bolivia
Instituto LatinoAmericano De Servicio Legales Alternativos	ILSA	Colombia
Interchurch Organisation for Development	ICCO	Netherlands
International Centre for Reproductive Health and Sexual Rights	INCRESE	Nigeria
International Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights	INTERIGHTS	United Kingdom
International Commission of Jurists	ICJ	Switzerland
International Human Rights Internship Program		United States
International Women and Mining Network	RIMM	India
International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific	IWRAP Asia Pacific	Malaysia
Justiça Global	JG	Brazil
Justice, Development & Peace/ Caritas Commission		Nigeria
Karimojong Community Child Welfare Initiatives	KACOCI	Uganda
KEBETKACHE WOMEN DEVELOPMENT & RESOURCE CENTRE		Nigeria
Kensington Welfare Rights Union	KWRU	United States
Kenya Land Alliance	KLA	Kenya

Kituo Cha Sheria (Center for Legal Empowerment)		Kenya
Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Center	LHAHRDEV	Nigeria
Land Center for Human Rights	LCHR	Egypt
Lawyers for a Democratic Society	MINBYUN	Republic of Korea
Legal Resources Centre	LRC	South Africa
Legal Resources Centre Organization	LRC	Ghana
Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal	MASUM	India
Maison des Droits de l'Homme du Cameroun	MDHC	Cameroon
Masimanyane Women's Support Center		South Africa
Mazingira Institute		Kenya
Media Mobilizing Project	MMP	United States
mines,minerals & PEOPLE	mm&P	India
Minority Rights Group International	MRGI	Uganda
Mouvement pour le Progres de Roche Bois	MPRB	Mauritius
Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People	MOSOP	Nigeria
Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens	MAB	Brazil
Multi-Initiative on Rights: Search, Assist, Defend	MIRSAD	Lebanon
Nairobi Peoples Settlements Network	NPSN	Kenya
National Economic and Social Rights Initiative	NESRI	United States
National Union of Domestic Employees	NUDE	Trinidad and Tobago
Network Movement for Justice and Development	NMJD	Sierra Leone
Observatoire Congolais des Droits de l'Homme (OCDH),		Congo-Brazzaville
Observatorio de Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas	OBDPI	Chile
Observatorio de Política Social y Derechos Humanos de INCIDE Social, A.C		Mex
Office of Human Rights Studies, Mahidol University	OHRSD	Thailand
Ogiek Peoples Development Program	OPDP	Kenya
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum	PPF	Pakistan
People Against Injustice	PAIN	The Gambia
People's Health Movement	PHM	Egypt
People's Movement for Human Rights Learning	PDHRE	United States
Poverty Initiative		United States
The Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy	PHRGE	United States
Programa de Justicia Global y Derechos Humanos		Colombia
Programa DESC, Universidad Diego Portales		Chile
Programa Venezolano de Educacion Accion en Derechos Humanos	PROVEA	Venezuela
Programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	PWESCR	India
The Project on Organizing, Development, Education and Research	PODER	Mexico
Rencontre Pour LA Paix Et Les Droits De L'Homme	RPDH	Congo-Brazzaville
Rights and Accountability in Development	RAID	United Kingdom
Samata		India
Shelter Forum	SF	Kenya
Social and Economic Rights Action Center	SERAC	Nigeria
Social and Economic Rights Action Center - Indonesia	SIDAN	Indonesia
Social Rights Advocacy Centre	SRAC	Canada
Socio Economic Rights Initiative (formerly Shelter Rights Initiative)	SERI	Nigeria

Socio Legal Information Centre	HRLN	India
Socio-Economic Rights Foundation	SRF	Kenya
Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa	SERI	South Africa
Sœurs Unies à l'œuvre	SUO	Benin
South Africa Human Rights Non-Governmental Organization Network, Tanzania Chapter	SAHRINGON-TZ	Tanzania
Southeast Asian Council for Food Security and Fair Trade	SEACON	Malaysia
Stakeholder Democracy Network	SDN	Nigeria
Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF)	SDF	Thailand
Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education)	TEBTEBBA	Philippines
TERRA DE DIREITOS		Brazil
Thailand Burma Border Consortium	TBBC	Thailand
The Democracy and Workers' Rights Center in Palestine	DWRC	Palestine
The Democracy Center		Bolivia
The Jus Semper Global Alliance	TJSGA	United States
The Kenya Human Rights Commission	KHRC	Kenya
Tierraviva a los Pueblos Indígenas del Chaco		Paraguay
Tribunal de Mujeres y Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales		Colombia
Uganda Environmental Education Foundation	UEEF	Uganda
Waso Trustland Project, Kenya		Kenya
Western Shoshone Defense Project	WSDP	United States
WITNESS		United States
Women in Law and Development in Africa	WILDAF	Ghana
Women's Economic Agenda Project	WEAP	United States
World Organization Against Torture	OMCT	Switzerland
Yiaku Peoples Association		Kenya
Zi Teng		Hong Kong
ZIMBABWE WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (ZWLA)	ZWLA	Zimbabwe

**Individual member: Name**

**Country**

Abdoul Aziz NIANG	Mauritania
Adams Aswani	Tanzania
Africa Magongo	Swaziland
Alicia Ely Yamin	United States
Alison Symington	Canada
Anna Cody	Australia
Ayman Bardawil	Palestine
Carol Jane Ransley	Thailand
Chris Grove	United States
Claire Mahon	Switzerland
D.J. Ravindran	Thailand
Danwood M Chirwa	South Africa
Daria Caliguire	United States
David Kinley	Australia
Deborah Ewing	South Africa

Dolamohan Singh Babu	India
Evelyne Schmid	Switzerland
Ganesh Devi	India
Ge Mingzhen	China
George Kent	United States
In-duk Ryou	Republic of Korea
Ingrid Gorre	Philippines
Jacques Tshibwabwa Kuditshini	DR of Congo
K'nyaw Paw	Thailand
Luisa Nardi	Italy
Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona	Switzerland
Malcolm Langford	Norway
Maria Herminia Graterol Garrido	United States
Mary Jane Real	Thailand
Maureen Meyer	United States
Michael Lerner	Cambodia
Minar Pimple	United States
Murielle Mignot	Angola
Patricia Ramirez Parra	Colombia
Paulina Garzon	United States
Pemii Benedict	Nigeria
Radhika Balakrishnan	United States
Raju Prasad Chapagai	Nepal
Rodrigo Bustos Bottai	Chile
Thomas Bruno Nzumbi	Tanzania
Tyler Giannini	United States
Vincent Calderhead	Canada
Yves Lador	Switzerland



## Annex-5: Media Coverage:

**DAWN**  
Karachi, Tuesday, January 11, 2011

# Fishermen vow to protect mangroves from land mafia

By Our Staff Reporter



**LARGESCALE** removal of mangroves for land reclamation has set alarm bells ringing in Keamari Town's Kaka Pij coastal village.—PFI

**KARACHI, Jan 10.** Coastal communities of Keamari Town in a meeting at Kaka Pij village vowed to launch a campaign to stop the cutting of mangroves in the area.

The area people blamed some local influential people for the cutting of mangroves, saying that they were behind the "game of encroaching upon land through earth filling and land reclamation".

Former union councillor Abdul Ghani, Haji Muhammad Siddique Panjwani and Haji Abu Bakar blamed a local influential person, who, they said, had collected national identity cards from the community people and was using their names to tamper with old revenue record in his favour.

They said that when they saw some new faces and unidentified people coming to their area and dealing in land they decided to stop the cutting of mangroves to save their natural resources.

They said they believed that their livelihood depended on these resources and mangroves played a key role in it.

The meeting attracted a large number of people belonging to different villages who unanimously decided that they would put up resistance to save the mangroves in the entire area.

"We are afraid of losing our land and natural resources. This reclamation of land by cutting mangroves forests and inviting land mafia for commercial purposes one day will compel the local people to leave their homes," said former councillor Abdul Ghani.

He criticised a local influential person, who, he said, had already sold out precious land through the same way to "outsiders".

The meeting was informed that more than 27 acres of mangroves forest had been cut in the name of building a model village comprising 300 houses for the community people.

The meeting participants said that despite the fact that they were voters of the ruling Pakistan People's Party, they were never taken into confidence on any move.

This proved that the PPP leaders were only benefiting some land grabbers and depriving the local people of their rights, they claimed.

They said that at least 300 boats from different coastal areas used the site inside mangroves forest for maintenance and repairing fishing nets during summer and winter.

Most boat owners instead of using the Karachi Fish Harbour prefer to use the local jetty near Kaka Village for landing their catch.

Similarly, they took shelter during the rough sea season for maintenance of boats there, they added.

They said that now they feared that after reclamation of land and cutting of mangroves no place would be left for the fishermen to anchor their boats at a safe area.

Pakistan Fishers' Forum chairperson Mohammed Ali Shah said that they had convened a consultative meeting on January 18 at Kaka Village and invited all stakeholders, including representatives of the community, WWF-Pakistan, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, KPFC Pollution Control Department, Environmental Protection Agency, Shabri and others to discuss the issue and design an effective strategy to save mangroves.

He said that the government authorities should realise the significant role mangroves played to avert cyclones, high tides and disasters and take action against such criminals destroying this natural shield.

**DAWN**  
Saturday, 7 May, 2011

# Martyrdom for mangroves

■ Killing of PFF office-bearers Abdul Ghani and Haji Abu Bakar enrages fisherfolk

**KARACHI**  
AMAR GUSIRO

The murder of two Pakistan Fishers' Forum (PFF) office-bearers - famous environmentalist and fisherman Abdul Ghani, who was struggling against mangrove cutting and illegal constructions at the city's beaches, and Haji Abu Bakar has enraged fisherfolk and shocked nature conservationists.

Ghani was kidnapped from his house located in the Kakapir village near the Hawksbay area of Sandspit along with another Abu Bakar late Thursday night. Their bodies were found near Shams Island on Friday morning.

According to witnesses, Ghani and Bakar were dumped in the sea after being brutally tortured. The news of the murders of these renowned activists spread like wildfire and hundreds of fisherfolk from Kakapir village, Salehabad and several other fishermen settlements took to the streets and staged a sit-in at the ICI Bridge on the Mauripur Road.

Due to the protest being staged at one of the main arteries of the city, vehicular movement was suspended and a large number of trucks, trailers and other goods carrying vehicles from the Karachi Port were unable to move. The protest lasted almost the entire day.

The demonstrators demanded registering an FIR against the culprits. In the evening, the police registered FIR No 93/2011 against former Keamari Town naib nazim Zulfikar Younus and his father Haji Younus, who hold a lot of influence in the Kakapir village.

"Haji Younus and his son had been threatening Ghani and other activists for their efforts against mangrove cutting and land grabbing along the coast. Both these men opened fire at Ghani's house on Thursday afternoon, killing a villager, Moosa Ismail. Later that night, they kidnapped Ghani and Bakar, Pakistan Fishers' Forum (PFF)'s Sami Memon said.

Ghani was a former union councillor and PFF-Karachi secretary general, running a small non-governmental organisation in the area, whereas Bakar was PFF-Kakapir Unit president.

Memon said that besides Karachi, fishermen in Hyderabad, Thatta, Badin, Sanghar, Qambar, Kashmore and Sukkur also protested the murders.

"Though Ghani had been receiving threats for a long time, he had organised a colourful event to mark the PFF's 13th Foundation Day on Thursday," he added.

He said that the police was informed about the threats, but no action was taken in this regard. Moreover, according to a local villager, Keamari Town SHO was aiding the culprits who had attacked Ghani's house, he added.

"Another PFF activist from the same village, Ejaz Haji Siddique, is still missing. He was kidnapped with the other activists," Memon said.

PFF Chairman Muhammad Ali Shah, who was leading the protest on the Mauripur Road, said that if the police failed to arrest the culprits, a large rally would be organised and the participants would march towards the Chief Minister's House to lodge their protest.

The PFF had launched a campaign against the land mafia to protect the mangroves on the entire coast, particularly near the Kakapir village.

In this regard, the PFF has already written letters to higher authorities, staged protest rallies and hunger strikes, and a march from the Kakapir village to the Karachi Press Club.

The protesters had staged a sit-in outside the Sindh Assembly where Deputy Speaker Shehla Raza assured them on behalf of the provincial government to resolve the issue and take action against Haji Younus and Zulfikar Younus.





THE land has been reclaimed after cutting down large tracts of mangroves in Kakapir village near Sandspit. The destruction of forests going on for two years has reportedly gained momentum these days.—Fahim Siddiqi/ White Star

## ‘Protected’ mangrove forests being destroyed

By Faiza Ilyas

KARACHI, Jan 29: A recent notification of the government declaring the province's mangrove forests as 'protected' seems to have no impact on the ground as gangs of land mafia continue to cut down these trees and reclaim the land to earn quick bucks, a survey of a coastal village near the Sandspit area revealed on Saturday.

In the absence of any law and order, members of the land mafia have literally made the residents of Kakapir village hostage in recent days by giving death threats to those speaking against the destruction of mangroves.

They allegedly destroyed and took over the office of a community-based non-governmental organisation which was running a boating service with the help of other NGOs to support the fishing community.

The only school in the village, being run by the NGO with the income from the boating service, has also been closed for 10 days due to the adverse conditions in the village, according to villagers.

Even water supplies through tankers are now being manipulated by local influential people involved in land-grabbing, they said.

Talking to *Dawn*, residents claimed that the police played the role of a silent spectator to the entire situation as gangsters roamed free and resorted to firing into the air every night.

"We are completely at the mercy of these hooligans. Instead of registering our complaints and taking action, they have registered FIRs against local people strongly opposing the destruction of mangroves," said Haji Mohammad Siddiq, an old fisherman. "After ransacking the office, they also took away the engines of four boats. This has affected the livelihood of around 40 to 45 people, including women, involved in running the

boat service," he said.

It was unfortunate that the government was hardly providing any basic health and educational facilities to the villagers and the little done by private organisations was now being destroyed.

The boat service was initiated as part of eco-tourism initiatives with the support of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the United Nations Development Programme. The service was a great support to poor fishermen, especially in June and July when fishing is banned by the government.

The community, comprising 300 families, had been actively involved with the NGOs in the conservation and regeneration of mangrove forests in the area.

Abdul Ghani, representing the Fisherfolk Development Organisation whose office had been taken over by land-grabbers, said the gangsters of a local influential man destroyed "everything in his office, including the educational material and gave death threats".

"The police have not yet registered an FIR, though the court has issued orders for it. I now fear entering my village."

The *Dawn* team also visited a reclaimed site in the village, where the land facing large tracts of mangroves had been demarcated. Labourers were found busy taking out wood from the forest and filling the pits. Village residents said the entire area earlier covered by mangroves was now being plotted and sold out.

"Mangroves are being destroyed on a very large-scale in the city's coastal areas, including Rehri goth, Ibrahim Hyderi, Chashma goth, Lat Basti and the areas from Tikri village (union council Mauripur) up to Kakapir village (Baba Bhit union council)," said Ayub Shan, information secretary, the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum.

"You will be shocked to see the level of devastation in these areas, especially in Rehri goth where mangrove forests which appear dense from a distance are completely thin from within if one has a closer look," he further said.

The wood was used as a cheap source of fuel or to manufacture match-sticks, said Ayub.

The entire area of mangrove forests along Sindh's coastline is now 'protected' after a Sindh government notification last month. Now, the forest department can act against violations under the Forest Act, 1927.

However, the administrative control is still under the respective departments: the Board of Revenue (260,000 hectares), the forest department (280,000 hectares), and the Port Qasim Authority (64,000 hectares).

Termining the Kakapir village a big setback to conservation efforts, Rab Nawaz heading the WWF-Karachi office said: "It's a sad reflection on our society. I think the situation should be handled tactfully and the Karachi Port Trust should take a stand as the land comes under its administration," he said, adding that mangrove forests must be under the management of a single department.

When contacted, a forest department official said the department was also facing resistance from land-grabbers, and an employee of the department was 'threatened' when he visited the site for a survey.

"Unfortunately, some local people are also supporting land-grabbers. Our employee has not been able to lodge an FIR against the offenders," he said, adding that the government notification on mangrove forests would be publicised and a meeting held with all stakeholders on board.

# Coastal communities show street power to rescue mangroves

■ Hundreds of fisherfolk stage rally to protest mangrove deforestation

**KARACHI**  
AMAR GURUO

**H**UNDREDS of fisherfolk including women carrying banners and placards took to streets on Tuesday and staged a rally from Kakapir village, Hawkesbay to the Karachi Press Club, demanding the government to take serious notice of mangrove deforestation.

The Sindh government has taken no notice of the massive cutting of mangrove forests along the Karachi coast, which continues despite protests by the residents of the area.

Residents from coastal villages of Gizi creek, Ibrahim Hyderi, Rehri, Lyari, Khadda, Kakapir, Younusabad, Shirin Jinnah Colony, and Baba, Bhit, Shamspir and Salehabad islands joined the protest.

They chanted slogans against the destruction of the natural shield of mangroves along the 129-km city coastline as the metropolis could become vulnerable to disasters.

The representatives of civil society groups and political activists also participated in the rally to express solidarity with the coastal communities.

Earlier, the protesters had gathered near the famous picnic point Sandspit to mark their protest against influential land

grabbers involved in mangrove cutting. They also held a demonstration at the ICI Bridge, suspending vehicular traffic for a long time and demanded setting up mangrove nurseries at the occupied beach land for rehabilitation of mangrove forests.

It was for the first time the communities raised their voice against local influential people. The enraged community activists slammed the role of police alleging them of patronising the illegal cutting of mangroves, saying despite protests and opposition, police are reluctant to take action against the influential.

The speakers at the rally said that the neglected and marginalised coastal communities were struggling to safeguard their right to live and livelihood. The community people are feeling insecure due to the illegal involvement of criminal land grabbers, enjoying the support of politically influential persons. Since the community people are aware about their rights, they will not allow anybody to deprive them of their basic rights. The cutting of mangroves would not only cause displacement of coastal communities but also put the citizens at stake.

In the recent past, a cyclone had panicked the people; hence, it is the responsibility of sauer elements to raise a voice and join the struggle to save the resources for future generations.

Local activists said that the fisherfolk



Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum activists stage a rally demanding that the government should take step to bring an end to mangrove deforestation. ONLINE

from villages near the Hawkesbay bring their boats and fishing nets for maintenance works in the mangroves during the two-month official fishing ban. In June

as compared to the Karachi Fish Harbour, where they also have to pay charges. Similarly, they also anchor their fishing vessels during the winter season near the

They said the unchecked cutting of mangroves may affect these boat owners, who have no better place for anchoring their boats. The participants of the long



DEPUTY Speaker of the Sindh Assembly Shehla Raza joins demonstrators protesting at the Arts Council traffic intersection on Wednesday against the destruction of mangroves along the city coastline.—Online

## Rally against mangroves cutting

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI, Feb 9: Activists of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) on Wednesday marched from the ICI traffic intersection on Mauripur Road in protest against the cutting of mangroves forests for commercial purposes and demanded an immediate action against elements involved in such illegal activities in Kakapir and Shamspir.

The protesters, led by PFF leaders, after passing through I.I. Chundrigar Road, staged a sit-in in front of the Sindh Assembly where they had a meeting with Deputy Speaker Shehla Raza outside the building.

According to a PFF press release, she assured the PFF leaders of early resolution of their problems, which also included taking action against police officials involved in the mangroves cutting.

Earlier, the protesters also staged a sit-in in front of the Central Police Officer to draw the attention of the authorities to take action against the police, which they said were patronising illegal cutting of mangroves forests.

PFF chairperson Mohammed Ali Shah said they had already warned the authorities that the citizens of the mega city were under threats as an organised mafia were destroying mangroves and using the land for commercial ventures, putting the people of Karachi at the mercy of cyclones and tsunamis.

The marchers also staged a brief sit-in outside the Karachi Port Trust building, demanding the officials concerned to play their due role to safeguard the coastal area, initiate development projects and take legal action against those destroying mangroves forests.



# Accused in PFF activists' murders 'guilty'

■ 11-member fact-finding team of HRCP and other organisations find the accused in PFF activists' murders guilty, stresses further investigation and arresting perpetrators immediately

KARACHI  
GAZI ASH

**A**n 11-member fact-finding team comprising activists of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and other organisations have found the accused in Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) activists Abdul Ghani and Haji Abu Bakar's murders guilty, Pakistan Today has learnt.

Asad Iqbal Butt, Owaisuddin, Abdul Hai, Hasan Athar, Kashan Kashi and Shafi Sial of the HRCP; Mehnaz Rehman and Mariam of the Aurat Foundation; Rahima of the Strengthening Participatory Organisation; Umer Abbas of the National Organisation for Working Communities; and Shujauddin Qureshi of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research were visiting the Kakapir village in Keamari Town to probe Ghani and Bakar's murders. The team met with the victims' families, the village residents, the police and the accused before preparing their report.

They said that the Sindh government had repeatedly failed to

endorse the international human rights law.

According to their report, they learnt during their visit to the village that at 2:00 am on May 6, three police mobiles carrying Haji Muhammad Younus, his son Zulfiqar Younus, around 25 armed civilians, Mauripur Station House Officer (SHO) Nasrullah Khan and a police party surrounded the houses of PFF activists Ghani, Bakar and Ejaz.

The PFF activists' family members told the team that the accused had broken into the village through its main entrance and hurled a grenade at the PFF unit office. The accused then broke into the activists' houses and beat up their family members, including women, before kidnapping Ghani and Bakar, the family members added.

The PFF activists' brutally tortured bodies were found at the beach of the Shams Fir Island village the next morning. The fact-finding team has stressed further investigation into the murders and arresting the perpetrators immediately.

The team learnt that the government officials and the law en-

forcing of law, land grabbing and cutting down mangroves for sale remains fishing is gradually becoming obsolete," the report revealed.

**Asad Iqbal Butt, Owaisuddin, Abdul Hai, Hasan Athar, Kashan Kashi and Shafi Sial of the HRCP; Mehnaz Rehman and Mariam of the Aurat Foundation; Rahima of the Strengthening Participatory Organisation; Umer Abbas of the National Organisation for Working Communities; and Shujauddin Qureshi of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research were visiting the Kakapir village in Keamari Town to probe Ghani and Bakar's murders. The team met with the victims' families, the village residents, the police and the accused before preparing their report**

disconnected water supply, and that the village residents are forced to buy water from the water tanker mafia every day.

They found out that on behalf of the village residents, Ghani and Bakar had approached the local police to take action against land grabbers, but the police failed to do so and instead, registered fabricated cases against 18 to 25 village residents on the complaint of the land mafia.

Police attempted to arrest the village residents three or four times in February, but the women protested against the police whenever they raided the locality.

When the team visited the office of Haji Muhammad Younus, his nephew said that the police had raided the houses of the village residents against whom complaints had been filed. Police had arrested four men, but they were released by 11:00 am on May 6, the nephew added.

He said that Ghani and Bakar were not arrested, and that they had escaped from the village during the police raid and had drowned in the sea.

On a visit to the Murree...

Ghani and Bakar were picked up. A police party had raided the activists' houses for arresting them, he added.

PFF Chairman Muhammad Shah told the team that during PFF's campaign to protect mangroves, several letters had been written to the police and the Sindh government. The PFF had also held several rallies and hunger strikes to draw the attention of authorities concerned for protecting natural resources, he added.

He said that the PFF has also called on Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah, then Sindh Home Minister Irfan Ulhaq, and Sindh Deputy Speaker Shehbaz Khan. He also mentioned Sindh Deputy Speaker Shehbaz Khan, Sindh Deputy Speaker Shehbaz Khan, and Fisheries and Livestock Minister Zahid Hussain Bhurgri in this regard. All these officials had assured the PFF of their full support and had asked the PFF leaders to wait some time so the grievances could be removed through legal action, he added.

Mirza had formed an inquiry committee under the supervision of Pakistan People's Party leader Lal Bux Bhutto to thoroughly in-

# The Frontier Post

Voice of the Federation

First national English daily published simultaneously from Karachi, Peshawar, Lahore & Quetta



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JAMADI-US-SANI 16, 1432 ----- FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2011

KARACHI EDITION



KARACHI: Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum staged a sit-in at the Arts Council on Thursday

## Fishermen demand justice

KARACHI (PPI): Hundreds of fishermen of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum on Thursday marched towards Sindh Assembly in pursuance of their demands regarding the arrest of alleged killers of two fishermen and staged sit-in at the Arts Council roundabout, bringing the traffic to a standstill.

Heavy contingents of police were deployed at the Sindh Assembly road to stop protesters from reaching the assembly premises. The protest rally then headed to Karachi Press Club and staged sit-in at Sarwar Shaheed Road for couple of hours, voicing their grievances against the police and demanded justice.

Rally was initially scheduled to march towards Chief Minister House but it could not make it as many other demonstrators were stopped in different parts of the city to join the rally, claimed protesters.

They alleged that Haji Yonus and Zulfikar Yonus were behind the killing of two fishermen, claiming law enforcement officials were harbouring them.

Speaking to media, President Pakistan Fisherfolk forum, Muhammad Ali Shah said 2,000 fishermen community members hailing from interior Sindh were stopped at the Super Highway to prevent them being a part of rally.

"We are protesting so that killers of our fishermen, Haji Abdul Ghani and Haji Abu Bakar, be arrested and added the killers are roaming freely under the shield of police high-ups", he said. He alleged SHO Mauripur was patronizing the criminals and demanded his immediate suspension.

Shah also took exception on the committee formed by the Chief Minister couple of weeks ago to address fishermen problems which yielded no results.

- [Political parties back efforts for justice for ... - Daily Times](#)  
10 Jun 2011 ... **Political parties back efforts for justice for murdered fishermen.** KARACHI: Representatives of political parties who attended an All Parties ...  
[www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page...10-6-2011\\_pg7\\_13](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page...10-6-2011_pg7_13) - Cached
- [Accused in PFF activists' murders 'guilty' | Pakistan Today ...](#)  
KARACHI - An 11-member **fact-finding** team comprising activists of the Human Rights ... have found the accused in **Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum** (PFF) activists Abdul Ghani and Haji Abu ... the police and the accused before preparing their **report**. ... Mirza had formed an inquiry **committee** under the supervision of Pakistan ...  
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- [National - Daily Times - Leading News Resource of Pakistan](#)  
10 Jun 2011 ... **Political parties back efforts for justice for murdered ...**  
[www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page...10-6-2011\\_pg7](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page...10-6-2011_pg7) - Cached
- [Clamorous calls for justice for murdered fishermen](#)  
10 Jun 2011 ... Karachi Representatives of all **political parties** that joined the ... for the **efforts** to obtain **justice** for the two **murdered fishermen**. ...  
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- [Political parties back efforts for justice for mur... - Silobreaker](#)  
10 Jun 2011 ... **Political parties back efforts for justice for murdered fishermen.**  
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- [Political parties back struggle of fishermen | Pakistan News ...](#)  
**Political parties back** struggle of **fishermen**. ... expressed complete support for the **efforts** to obtain **justice** for the **murdered** of two **fishermen** leaders. ...  
[www.onepakistan.com/.../105575-political-parties-back-struggle-of-fishermen.html](http://www.onepakistan.com/.../105575-political-parties-back-struggle-of-fishermen.html) - Cached
- [Destruction of mangroves & land mafia | Newspaper | DAWN.COM](#)  
22 May 2011 ... The activists of the **Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum** (PFF) have been **campaigning** against the land grabbers. It was this resistance that a group of ...  
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