

# RightsNow Pakistan

human rights for all



## One Day Workshop on

# Human Rights & Democracy



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## Profile of the organization & Rationale for the event

RightsNOW Pakistan is a local civil society initiative. Governed by a vibrant board consists of renowned journalists, lawyers, development actors and human rights activists who develop its policies and strategies. RightsNOW Pakistan envisions a just, equal, democratic, informed society that respects human rights, rule of law, values diversity and acts nonviolently. In order to get there, RightsNOW Pakistan has its dynamic leadership, visionary Board of Directors with clear road map to achieve the target. RightsNOW Pakistan works on protection of human rights and human rights defenders, who play important role in the protection of human rights of community and individuals. It works on protection of religious minorities, women rights, and children. For more information, you are requested to visit our organization's website and blog respectively: [www.rightsnowpk.org](http://www.rightsnowpk.org) & [www.rightsnowpak.wordpress.com](http://www.rightsnowpak.wordpress.com)

RightsNow Pakistan organized One day training workshop at Tando Allahyar focused on the theme: **Human Rights & Democracy**. This event was organized on the demand of youth who are very eager in democracy, its survival, sustainability and future in Pakistan. It was found important and relevant to link this topic with human rights.

### The objectives of this workshop included:

- To enhance awareness about human rights, democracy and link between them
- To enhance the understanding of youth about democratic system in Pakistan.
- To sensitize youth about their role in democratic society.
- To promote awareness regarding importance of right to vote.
- To promote youth activism & their role in coming elections for ensuring the fair and free elections



Thirty youth from both rural and urban areas participated in the event. Workshop started at 9:00 AM. Mr : Saeed Jarwar opened the workshop and shared the rationale for organizing the event. He welcomed all the participants and encouraged them to introduce themselves through an activity. Facilitator used an interesting activity for the introduction which not only broke the ice but let everyone know about each-other's interest, work and education. It was followed by the introduction of RightsNow Pakistan, particularly its initiative on promotion and protection of human rights. Mr. Saeed discussed the role of youth, as a change agent and catalyst in the society. He added that RNP welcomes youth to join hands with RNP as volunteers and fellows for promoting rights-based approach. Mr Saeed Jarwar went through the objectives of this workshop one by one & expressed the hope that it will prove as spark in minds of participants for their journey towards a better society.

Mr. Saeed got immense applause for his creative way of conducting introduction.



Miss Ain Syed was the facilitator for second session. Miss Ain Syed, Management & Administration Officer, RightsNow Pakistan. Miss Ain's topic was "Human Rights". She adopted an interactive methodology and gave the participants full opportunity to participate in the session. She drew a picture of a baby & asked the participants to point out the rights and needs of this baby in their point of view. Participants were provided sticky notes and they were asked to write the needs and rights of that baby for his survival and good life. The participants actively participated in this activity and provided interesting answers. The sticky notes were pasted on sketch and facilitator read out



and debriefed the responses. Participants raised a question regarding the difference between needs and rights. The facilitator demarcated the difference between needs and rights, while the responses overlapping in both were also declared.

After that the facilitator explained the definition & history of human rights. While defining human rights, she added that the rights which are our entitlements because we are born as human are called human rights.



In second part of her session, facilitator discussed Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR). She mentioned the historical events which led the nations of the world to devise such declaration. She briefed about 30 Articles contained in UDHR. She divided the participants in 3 groups and they were given cards containing clues about rights given in the UDHR. Each group was given specific time for identifying the article to which the card belonged. They were also required to sort the cards and to paste on sheet. Each group took active participation and enjoyed the activity as well found it very fruitful. Each group gave a presentation. The Facilitator debriefed and appreciated participation of each group.



Miss Syed Ain also explained the role of International conventions, treaties signed and ratified by Pakistan. She also discussed Pakistan's obligations as a signatory state. At the end of her session, participants were told about their roles and duties as human rights defender. She added that if they find any violation of these rights, they should raise their voices against such injustice at local, national & international level. She told the participants that various tools can be used for raising voice for instance: Rally, pamphlet, Social Media, blogs & human rights reporting. At the end of the session, facilitator referred the website of RightsNow Pakistan and showed the list of treaties and conventions Pakistan is party to. Besides, report of human rights violations can also be sent to RightsNow Pakistan, she added.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Session: Democracy



Second session was delivered by Mr. Fahad Khawaja, an experienced and knowledgeable facilitator known for his activism and innovative training methods. He is engaged in initiatives of youth activism and community development and travel to farther and excluded areas to conduct workshops for youth on democracy. Session started with the brain storming, participants were asked what they think about word democracy. Facilitator was amazed when participants came up with very practical concepts of democracy. Afterwards, facilitator asked the participants to devise a key word for each letter in the word DEMOCRACY. The brainstorming resulted in different words which were close to the attributes of the Democracy. These proposed letters included:

- D.....Development**
- E.....Expression**
- M.....Mobility**
- O.....Ordinance**
- C.....Competition / Community**
- R.....Rights /Regulations**
- A.....Authority / Administration**
- C.....Change / Chance**
- Y.....Youth**

Facilitator stirred the discussion by bringing different definitions of democracy in. He quoted the definition given by Ibrahim Lincon i.e “Government of the people, by the people, for the people.” The participants took active part in discussion but raised different queries, which were answered by the facilitators. Among prominent queries were:

1. Is Pakistan democracy? If it is. Then why we are not governing the state and society asked by Hafeez Talpur a young mid career journalist.
2. If you elect a feudal from your society and he goes to parliament and rule the state and make property. Is he/she our true representative?
3. Election means democracy? asked by Kirshan Kumar
4. For the people, by the people and of the people ....are these governments anywhere in Islamic world?

5. What is the relationship between democracy and Islam? Why Islamic countries are not democratic? Why all popular democracies do not include any Muslim country?
6. What is the importance of vote and how it can be protected by the effective role of election commission?
7. What is the role of lawyers, youth, media and other actors in ensuring free and fair elections?

Facilitator managed the questions of participants properly and satisfied them through different examples. While responding to an interesting question of a participant, facilitator talked about indicators of a democratic state where rights are protected, where social justice exist, where suppression does not exist, where people elect their representatives without any coercion pressure, and exercise their right to choice, where media, judiciary and other institutions work freely and where people live with security.

### **Importance of Vote & Fair Voting Process**

Mr. Fahad described vote as key essence of democratic process. Vote is a tool of ensuring selection of right people for the right job. When right people come forward and make decision which reflects people legitimate desire. It is called democracy. Vote is important and use of vote is more important which need to be used with proper care and cautious. It is an effective tool for bringing about change. Through vote people can hold their elected representatives accountable; provided election conducted by the election commission should be free and fair from all aspects. While talking about the role of election commission facilitator said an independent and impartial election commission can ensure free and fair elections and ensure the entry of right people in the parliament. Thus effective role of election commission can have a wider impact on the governance of the country and ultimately on the improvement of human security. Finally facilitators highlighted the role urged the youth for taking active part in democratic process and use the power of vote for bringing about change in the system. He asked the participants to take their social responsibility as active citizen and play due role for resolving issues related with community and locality.

At the end of workshop, evaluation was made and the participants were asked to describe the positive and negative aspects of the workshop. The participants gave the feedback as follows:

- **Mr: Muhammad Akram said:** The facilitators were well versed in the themes they presented. We appreciate RightsNow Pakistan for organizing such knowledgeable events.
- **Mr: Jamshaid Ali Babur said:** Methodology adopted by the facilitators was very interesting and interactive.
- **Mr: Abdul Ghaffar said:** A learning environment was created which encouraged the participants to fully participate in the workshop. More females need to participate in such workshops. Because women vote ratio is always low in elections.
- **Mr: Mashooque Ali daudani said:** The chosen themes were really the need of hour and the sessions were eye opener for the participants. I always feel that right to vote is one of our precious right. We must defend it at any cost.
- **Mr: Nihal Chand said:** Such workshops should be conducted in our city with time to time. Youth should be trained as election observer who could play its role in the elections.
- **Mr: Asad –ullah said:** Proper perspective about human rights and democracy was brought into understanding of the participants and they also learnt about the link between these two.

- **Mr: Bashir said:** The workshop provided a good chance to understand local and international laws which ensure human rights of the citizens. It would be great if a separate workshop on election laws is organized and someone from election commission is invited who could respond our queries regarding the electoral process.
- **Mr Krishan Kumar said:** The workshop was full of knowledge and methodology adopted by the facilitator was very interactive. More interesting was the role of youth highlighted by the facilitator and we are ready to play it if we are made aware of the laws and rule of election. We can even support RightsNow Pakistan to monitor elections in the district.

For feedback, queries, questions and suggestions, write email to RightsNow Pakistan at [rightsnowpak@gmail.com](mailto:rightsnowpak@gmail.com) .For more detail visit our website: [www.rightsnowpk.org](http://www.rightsnowpk.org)

### Certificate distribution ceremony:

At the end of workshop certificates were awarded to the participants.

