

THE 74TH INDEPENDENCE ISSUE

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Letter from the editors

The independence day of Pakistan holds a great deal of emotions with it. It involves a lot of celebration for what has been gained and mourning for all that has been lost. With each independence day, we must realize that there is much to be changed still. This year with the Olympics we saw a great level of pride in the eyes of many Pakistanis. The devastating fact about this year's participants is that not a single one was supported by the state, they were all there by mobilizing their own resources. Every independence day we must take an oath to introspect, and see what it is within us as a state and as a nation that can be and should be amended in order for us to better ourselves

Editors: Amna Ali, and Wajeeha Khalid

A Study in Sports Champions

In its 74 years of existence, Pakistan has been able to acquire a total of 10 Olympic medals. Arguably this is not an unimpressive amount of medals for a developing country gripped in wars, political turmoils, and a general lack of resources. What is saddening about the 10 Olympian medals is that all 10 of these medalists won on their own account, mobilizing their own resources, selling goods they own to be able to have enough cash in hand to train for the Olympics.

The story of Muhammad Ashiq follows a similar trajectory. He competed in the 1960 and 1964 Olympics as a cyclist. Ashiq did not score any silverware at the Olympics but he has won [number] medals in other championships. In several interviews, Ashiq shares pictures of him with Prime Ministers and Presidents of the country and recalls the time he was titled a Pakistani hero.

Ashiq's patriotism runs deep in his story. He was initially adamant about becoming a boxer however after several injuries and his wife's insistence he decided to switch sports. This is when he switched to becoming a cyclist. This decision to switch sports entirely tells us about his patriotism. It shows us how much he wanted to represent his country on the international stage that the decision to switch games instead of leaving the game entirely.

Ashiq did not score any metal in the '60 or '64 but he had [number] medals under his belt from several other competitions like the Asian Games etc. In an interview with Dawn he says he recalled that he met several politicians in his time. This claim is demonstrated as during the interview the screen shifts to showing pictures of Ashiq with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and then to General Zia ul Haq.

Despite the heroic respect he got once upon a time Ashiq had then returned to driving a rickshaw to meet his daily expenses. This unfortunately is the story several athletes across Pakistan tell. The story of how the man who became an athlete to represent his country gets no recognition on the land he dedicated his life to.

Due to the media coverage, Muhammad Ashiq got in his late years when he resorted to driving a rickshaw everyone thought something would change but nothing ever did. A local school held a fundraiser for Ashiq but no news from the state. Officials of Punjab put the burden on Ashiq and said HE should come to see me not the other way around. In his later years while still driving a rickshaw Ashiq hung a new quote on his vehicle. It read "a nation that forgets its heroes will itself soon be forgotten" The most tragic part of this story is that Muhammad died a rickshaw driver with little to no attention paid to him on the national level. He was a patriot who was so desperate to represent the country that

despite his injuries from boxing, he resorted to an entirely new sport just to show he could show the world what Pakistan has the capability to make.

Muhammad Ashiq was hired by a company called NetSol as the brand ambassador. Ashiq passed away on 11th March 2018. It is unfortunate how we as Pakistanis were not able to do anything of significance for Muhammad Ashiq when he gave us so much. He represented Pakistan on multiple platforms. There is a great lesson we can learn from him on an individual level. His story is one of resilience and persistence. On a national scale, we have a much greater lesson to learn and many more changes to make in the way we treat athletes in this country.



The Legacy of Esquire Asma Jahangir

Mariam Chughtai of the South Asia Institute of Harvard University recalls Asma Jahangir the days after she left the world. She says the auditorium was full as Asma Jahangir, who passed away at the age of just 66, delivered the Harvard Asia Center's prestigious, annual Tsai Lecture in March 2015. Pakistani speakers at Harvard are quite rare, perhaps because anyone from the country who is consequential is, typically, also highly controversial. Asma Jahangir was of course both, but the difference was that even those who disagreed with her respected her fearlessness. She was Pakistan's conscience.



I remember first seeing her when I was a freshman at Kinnaird College, an all-women institution in Lahore, Pakistan. I sat at the very back of a large hall packed with young women, waiting to hear the great Asma Jahangir speak. We sat in awe of her bravery and most of us were also afraid for her life.

There were intense social debates taking place in Pakistan at the time, centred around a case she had taken on; her client was an adult woman who was asserting the right to marry without the consent of her guardian. She was facing down the religious right, which is not something many people attempt in Pakistan. Her fight went all the way to the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which eventually ruled in favor of a woman's unilateral right to marry whomever she wanted without need for permission.

Asma Jahangir took on many of these challenges, any one of which would be enough to gather a lifetime of deserved plaudits. She was not only the most prominent human rights lawyer; she was the most successful.

In a society where women are sentenced to be gang-raped and honor killings are justified in the name of culture, Asma Jahangir relentlessly pursued new laws to protect women. She represented the most persecuted victims in front of the Supreme Court. At a time when anti-blasphemy laws are frequently invoked to settle personal disputes and persecute minorities, Asma Jahangir represented Christians who were being held unfairly in jail, helping them get a fair trial.

She fought to restore children to the custody of their mothers.

She challenged the state to fulfill its responsibility of providing education, health, and employment to poor children, instead of trying them indiscriminately as juvenile offenders.



Her life was frequently in danger; she stood up to fearsome Pakistani regimes in the service of human rights and democracy. Tear-gassed, beaten, and imprisoned, she led fellow activists from the Women Action Forum in the first public protest against military dictator General Zia in 1983, demanding equal rights for women.

There were death threats, assassination attempts, and bullet holes in her office, but she continued to persevere right till the end.

I've often wondered how people like Asma Jahangir charge ahead despite these seemingly formidable odds. Religious political extremists labeled her anti-state and anti-Islam, stigmatizing her in the eyes of many. But in her struggles, you find a deep calm, anchored in the perpetual pursuit of justice.





The Story of Iqbal Masih

Iqbal Masih was born in Muridke, a small, rural village outside of Lahore in Pakistan. Shortly after Iqbal's birth, his father, Saif Masih, abandoned the family. Iqbal's mother, Inayat, worked as a housecleaner, but found it difficult to make enough money to feed all her children from her small income.

Iqbal, too young to understand his family's problems, spent his time playing in the fields near his two-room house. While his mom was away at work, his older sisters took care of him. His life changed drastically when he was just four years old.

In 1986, Iqbal's older brother was to be married and the family needed money to pay for a celebration. For a very poor family in Pakistan, the only way to borrow money is to ask a local employer. These employers specialize in this kind of barter, where the employer loans a family money in exchange for the bonded labor of a small child.

To pay for the wedding, Iqbal's family borrowed 600 rupees (about \$12) from a man who owned a carpet-weaving business. In return, Iqbal was required to work as a carpet weaver until the debt was paid off. Without being asked or consulted, Iqbal was sold into bondage by his family.

This system of peshgi (loans) is inherently inequitable; the employer has all the power. Iqbal was required to work an entire year without wages in order to learn the skills of a carpet weaver. During and after his apprenticeship, the cost of the food he ate and the tools he used were all added to the original loan. When and if he made mistakes, he was often fined, which also added to the loan.

In addition to these costs, the loan grew ever larger because the employer added interest. Over the years, Iqbal's family borrowed even more money from the employer, which was added to the amount of money Iqbal had to work off.

The employer kept track of the loan total. It was not unusual for employers to pad the total, keeping the children in bondage for life. By the time Iqbal was ten years old, the loan had grown to 13,000 rupees (about \$260).

The conditions in which Iqbal worked were horrendous. Iqbal and the other bonded children were required to squat upon a wooden bench and bend forward to tie millions of knots into carpets. The children were required to follow a specific pattern, choosing each thread and tying each knot carefully. The children were not allowed to speak to each other. If the children started to daydream, a guard might hit them or they might cut their own hands with the sharp tools they used to cut the thread.

Iqbal worked six days a week, at least 14 hours a day. The room in which he worked was stifling hot, because the windows could not be opened in order to protect the quality of the wool. Only two light bulbs dangled above the young children.

If the children talked back, ran away, were homesick, or were physically sick, they were punished. Punishment included severe beatings, being chained to their loom, extended periods of isolation in a dark closet, and being hung upside down. Iqbal often did these things and received numerous punishments.

For all this, Iqbal was paid 60 rupees (about 20 cents) a day after his apprenticeship had ended.

After working six years as a carpet weaver, Iqbal one day heard about a meeting of the Bonded Labor Liberation Front (BLLF) which was working to help children like Iqbal. After work, Iqbal snuck away to attend the meeting. At the meeting, Iqbal learned that the Pakistani government had outlawed *peshgi* in 1992. In addition, the government cancelled all outstanding loans to these employers.

Shocked, Iqbal knew he wanted to be free. He talked to Eshan Ullah Khan, president of the BLLF, who helped him get the paperwork he needed to show his employer that he should be free. Not content to just be free himself, Iqbal worked to also get his fellow workers free.

Once free, Iqbal was sent to a BLLF school in Lahore. Iqbal studied very hard, finishing four years of work in just two. At the school, Iqbal's natural leadership skills became increasingly apparent and he became involved in demonstrations and meetings that fought against bonded child labor. He once pretended to be one of a factory's workers so that he could question the children about their work conditions. This was a very dangerous expedition, but the information he gathered helped close down the factory and

free hundreds of children. Iqbal began speaking at BLLF meetings and then to international activists and journalists. He spoke about his own experiences as a bonded-child laborer. He was not intimidated by crowds and spoke with such conviction that many took notice of him. Iqbal's six years as a bonded child had affected him physically as well as mentally. The most noticeable thing about Iqbal was that he was an extremely small child, about half the size he should have been at his age. At age ten, he was less than four feet tall and weighed a mere 60 pounds. His body had stopped growing, which one doctor described as "psychological dwarfism." Iqbal also suffered from kidney problems, a curved spine, bronchial infections, and arthritis. Many say that he shuffled his feet when he walked because of pain. In many ways, Iqbal was made into an adult when he was sent to work as a carpet weaver. But he was not really an adult. He lost his childhood, but not his youth. When he went to the U.S. to receive the Reebok Human Rights Award, Iqbal loved watching cartoons, especially Bugs Bunny. Once in a while, he also had a chance to play some computer games while in the U.S. Iqbal's growing popularity and influence caused him to receive numerous death threats.

Focused on helping other children become free, Iqbal ignored the letters.

On Sunday, April 16, 1995, Iqbal spent the day visiting his family for Easter. After spending some time with his mother and siblings, he headed over to visit his uncle. Meeting up with two of his cousins, the three boys rode a bike to his uncle's field to bring his uncle some dinner. On the way, the boys stumbled upon someone who shot at them with a shotgun. Iqbal died immediately. One of his cousins was shot in the arm; the other wasn't hit.

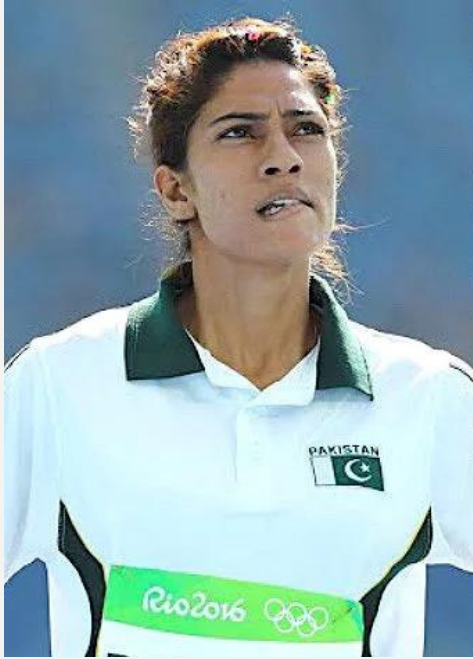
How and why Iqbal was killed remains a mystery. The original story was that the boys stumbled upon a local farmer who was in a compromising position with a neighbor's donkey. Frightened and perhaps high on drugs, the man shot at the boys, not intending to specifically kill Iqbal. Most people do not believe this story. Rather, they believe that leaders of the carpet industry disliked the influence Iqbal was having and ordered him murdered. As of yet, there is no proof that this was the case.

On April 17, 1995, Iqbal was buried. There were approximately 800 mourners in attendance.

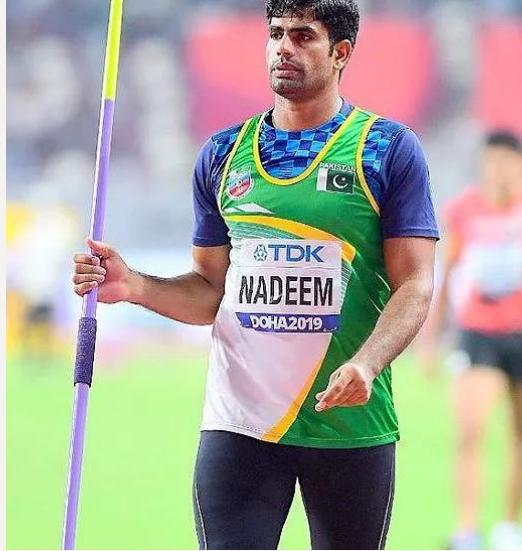




Pakistan in the Tokyo 2021 Olympics



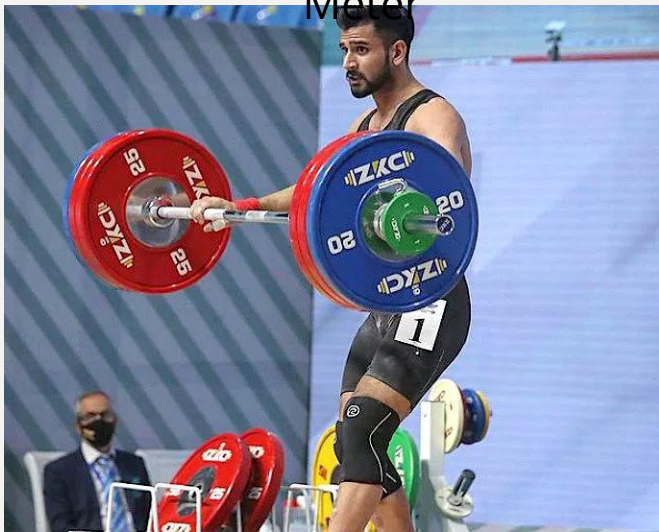
Najma Parveen, Women's 100
Meter



Arshad Nadeem, Javelian



Shah Hussain Shah,
Men's Judo



Talha Talib, Weightlifting



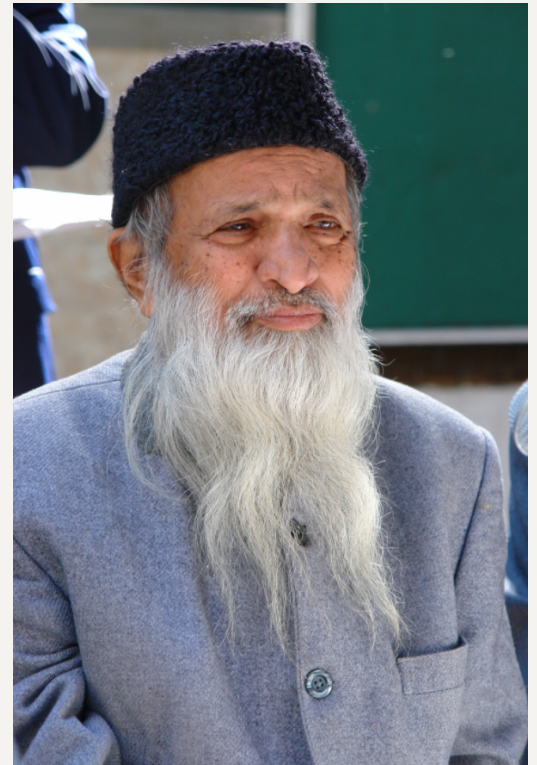
Mahoor Shahzad, Badminton



The shooting team: Muhammad Khalil Akhtar, Ghulam Mustafa Bashir,
and Gulfam Joseph

Honoring Edhi

Celebrating the existence of this nation, it is pertinent to honor the people who truly embodied freedom and tolerance. Among the top is Abdul Sattar Edhi, the epitome of what it truly means to be a human, to serve humanity with love and compassion. Abdul Sattar Edhi founded the world's largest volunteer ambulance service and is Pakistan's largest welfare education. You can call 115 from anywhere in South Asia, the Edhi Foundation will answer.



He was born before Partition Bantva, Gujarat, India on February 28, 1928, and passed away on July 8, 2016. His loss was insurmountable. At the age of 20, he dedicated his life to the service of humanity when he himself was under financial crisis. To him lines that divide all humans like religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, etc. were invisible; to him, everyone was the same and deserved compassion. He is famously quoted,

**“ People have become educated,
but have yet to become humans ”**

Edhi Foundation currently runs child adoption centers, outpatient hospitals, and an ambulance service. They also provide burial for unidentified bodies. There are cradles for unwanted babies outside Edhi Centers. Some regard Abdul Sattar Edhi's compassion as an anomaly. He never did anything for himself, remained uncorrupted till the end of time. He asked for money and people gave because he had established his credibility, his selflessness unlike any other.



His loss is irreplaceable, but we must honor and continue to uphold his morals, his principles. People of Pakistan are among the most charitable in the world but there is no one like Abdul Sattar Edhi. Today, his wife Bilquis Edhi and his son Faisal Edhi run the Edhi Foundation and require your help to fill the unimaginable void created by the loss of Edhi.



Malala Yousafzai

A Story of Resilience



Freedom cannot be celebrated without honoring the women who speak up against oppression, who stand up for their rights, and who lend their voice to the unheard. Pakistan has a long way to go in the arena of gender equality and education, but we are ready for those conversations and on the journey of change. Malala Yousafzai, an advocate for the education of girls and gender equality was born in Swat, KPK. During her childhood, she witnessed the growing influence of the Taliban in the region, who were against the education of girls. At the age of 11, she took a stand for education and at a press conference in Peshawar asked, "How dare they take away my right of education?". The same year she began writing for BBC, about her experience under Taliban oppression and began advocating for girl's education.

She quickly became a fighter for education rights and a symbol of defiance against the Taliban, who feared the threat they posed but would not be silent. Her voice grew louder when the Taliban banned female education. She was gaining international recognition. New York Times reporter Adam B. Ellick approached her about filming a documentary. She started appearing on television to speak against oppression receiving publicity and praise. Malala became the chair of the District Child Assembly of the Khyal Kor Foundation from 2009-2010. She received two National Youth Peace Prizes. As she continued to gain recognition, she also became a threat to the Taliban, whose only power is in terrorizing those who oppose them. Malala, however, was brave and raised her voice against them. Evidently, they resorted to silencing that voice, that refused to be terrorized.

On 9 October 2012, Malala was shot in the head by the Taliban on her way home from school. Airlifted to CMH Peshawar and later transferred to CMH Rawalpindi for better treatment, Malala kept fighting. It was decided to transfer her to Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, UK, for her treatment. The Taliban threatened that she will be killed if she returned.



Some Pakistanis hold a lot of resentment against her as she did not return to Pakistan and even claim that it was all staged. Malala Yousafzai, spoke up against oppression, was shot in the head, underwent numerous surgeries, treatments, and physiotherapy to regain function. She continues to advocate for gender equality and girls' education. Malala's Fund helps girls' education worldwide. Yet, there is still a considerable threat to her life in Pakistan. She cannot return to the country she was born in, her home, her culture, her roots.

Malala Yousafzai became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2014. Malala is recognized internationally as the image for girls' education recognized by millions. She continues to use her voice for the voiceless, which is a symbol of power and resilience not just for Pakistan, but for the entire world.



Celebrating **74** years of Independence



Pakistan; Our Pride

Celebrating Independence during Covid at HRDN

The Pandemic has affected almost all aspects of our life, but it has not affected our zeal and enthusiasm to celebrate independence day. Although our events took place virtually our spirits were the same.



Pakistan: My Pride

Friday - 13th August - 2021 @ 3:00 PM



**AIR COMMODORE (R)
KHALID CHISHTI**
Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military)
Sitara-i-Basalat



**LIVE ON
zoom**



f LIVE
facebook.com/HRDN.Net



ROBEELA BANGASH
CEO
Human Resource Development
Network



The Untold & Unseen of Mr. Jinnah



**AIR COMMODORE (R)
KHALID CHISHTI**
Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military)
Sitara-i-Basalat



**LIVE ON
zoom**



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ROBEELA BANGASH
CEO
Human Resource Development
Network

Thursday - 16th September, 2021 @ 3PM

Future Projects

- Women Voice Leadership project in collaboration with Oxfam to strengthen the capacity of women rights organizations (WROs) and women's rights activists thus raising awareness and working towards gender equality and women's rights.
- "Media Matters; Hybrid Training for Effective Visibility in Media", a media training program aimed at educating people about the dos and don'ts of using media, about the importance of media communication, and how you can productively use media and plan your strategy.



"Media Matters" Hybrid Training for Effective Visibility in Media

INTRODUCTION

The media is a powerful force in today's society because of its ability to influence opinions. Your team needs to understand the media landscape and communicate effectively to ensure your stories are told on your terms. The hybrid training has been designed to enhance and up skills the capacity of professionals for media Visibility of the organizations, their work & mandate.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This course is designed to provide you with sufficient practical skills that you can apply immediately. We equip participants with a list of "Do's and Don'ts" so that printable and interesting message is conveyed to the media. If you have a role that involves dealing with the media, then media training is for you – team leaders, communications staff, managers, directors and CEOs.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

- Understanding media
- Role of a communication professionals
- Making a basic communication plan
- Preparing the news material
- Do's and Don'ts of interacting with media
- Going beyond newsroom
- Arranging media events

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Creating your own news space
- Monitor your communications activities
- Practical skills
- Do's and Don'ts



WHO WILL BE YOUR TRAINERS?

Two experienced and highly qualified media persons of electronic and print media will equip your communications persons with changing realities of media and the essential skills required to interact with different types of media. This practical learning experience will provide a strong foundation of getting your correct message across the media.



Fauzia Kulsoom Rana
Broadcast Journalist

Fauzia Kulsoom Rana is a broadcast journalist who works with Aaj TV as Associate Producer. She remained attached with Radio Pakistan for 10 years as senior producer and anchor. She also hosted a show "Hasher Nasher" on a Web TV "DBTV". She is Convener of Women Journalist Association of Pakistan and was elected Joint Secretary for National Press Club for 2017. She is a delegate of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists and has been extensively involved in organising and conducting media training events.

MARK YOUR CALANDERS:

4th & 5th October, 2021

Registration: Get yourself register till 27th September 2021 at hr@hrdn.net



Myra Azam
Media Journalist

Myra Azam (pen name Myra Imran) is a print media journalist and works as a staff correspondent in The News, an English daily, in Islamabad. She is Vice President for Rawalpindi Islamabad Union of Journalists and twice elected as Vice President of National Press Club, Islamabad in 2017 and 2018. Myra reports on human rights issues especially those related to women pointing out the mindset behind gender discrimination. She is a researcher and a leadership trainer attached with Women Learning Partnership (WLP), a network of women leaders in Muslim world. Recently, she did a research on families of FATA journalists killed or displaced due to their journalistic work. She has been at the visiting faculty of International Islamic University and has participated in several radio and Television shows. As communication expert, she has worked with National Commission on the Status of Women, Ministry of Human Rights and UN Women.

TRAINING INVESTMENT

Training fee: 35000 for whole course.

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