

Dated: 23 August 2016

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**WHO WILL PROTECT MY DAUGHTERS? THEY ARE SO FAR AWAY AND ALONE. APPEALS  
FATHER OF 12 YEARS OLD FAUZIA (NOOR BEGUM) AND 6 YEARS OLD ALISHBA**

**POLICE URGED IMMEDIATE RECOVERY OF TWO MINOR GIRLS TRAFFICKED  
FROM KARACHI TO BALOCHISTAN, ZIA AHMED AWAN (ADV.)**

Karachi, 26 August 2016, Madadgaar National Helpline Head Office: Two minor girls Fauzia (Noor Begum) and Alishba were trafficked from Karachi to Dera Murad Jamali, Balochistan by a Shafi Muhammad S/O Noor Muhammad resident of KachiAbadi, Lasi Goth, near Bismillah Masjid, New Karachi and Inayat S/O Mir Gul resident of Moosa Colony, Babar Road near MashaAllah Bakery while Police demonstrated typical administrative delays and failed to recover them, said Zia Ahmed Awan (Adv.), founder of Madadgaar National Helpline (1098), while speaking to major print and electronic media outlets in an emergency press conference organized by Madadgaar. Parents of the two trafficked minor girls were also present during the press conference who shared their case with media representatives.

Addressing the press conference, he said 12 years old Fauzia (Noor Begum) and 6 years old Alishba, daughters of Noor Nabi, went missing near their home in slum of Machar Colony, Kemari Town, Karachi during July 2015. They went out to buy some sweets and never returned. He said that the parents came to Madadgaar on 11 August 2015 and requested to help them in finding their daughters. Madadgaar supported them in contacting Eidhi Centers, the Police and other avenues of support in this matter. He said that for over a year, Police did nothing and no FIR was lodged but a mere missing children entry was lodged in register of Police Station Docks. He further discussed the plight of parents and how they tried to find their daughters all over the city with no resources and no one to guide them except Madadgaar.

At this point, Noor Nabi (father of trafficked girls), shared his views on how Madadgaar helped his family. He also pleaded to the Police to recover their daughters at the earliest.

Zia Ahmed Awan (Adv.) shared that Noor Nabi came to know about his daughters living in Eidhi Center at Sohrab Goth and went there on 9 August 2016. When he got there he found out that his daughters are not there. He called Madadgaar who reached out to Mr. Anwar Kazmi and informed him about this situation. He ensured Madadgaar that all the related information on this case will be provided urgently to Madadgaar by Eidhi. He said we found

that two persons took the sisters from there on 27 May 2016. One of them pretended to be Noor Nabi. At Eidhi Center only a photograph was taken as documentation of reunification and no other information or client history was taken before handing over the girls to that person. Zia Awan told the media that a letter was sent by Madadgaar to SHO Police Station Samanabad on 16 August 2016 with all documentation and file to lodge and FIR against the primary suspect. After much efforts and coordination with the DIG, DSP and SHO, the FIR was lodged on 22 August 2016. Zia Ahmed Awan (Advocate) shared that Police has apprehended a relative of Shafi named Farooq and other primary suspect Inayat, they are now in Police custody and they told that Shafi has taken the girls to Dera Murad Jamali, Balochistan.

He demanded that minor girls, Fauzia (Noor Begum) and Alishba, MUST be recovered safely as soon as possible by the Police and strict action taken against their traffickers. He said that we fear Police may release Inayat and Farooq and further demanded that proper investigation should be held of this case.

Zia Ahmed Awan (Advocate) said the incidents of trafficking and kidnapping of women and children were on the rise in Pakistan. He quoted Madadgaar National Helpline's statistics of registered trafficking cases. From 2010 to 2015, 364 cases were registered in total, 130 in Sindh, 200 in Punjab, 23 in Balochistan and 11 in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. He shared that till July 2016, this year, a total of 17 cases were registered. Out of them 9 were in Sindh, 6 in Punjab, 2 in Balochistan and none in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. He explained that statistics show a growth of trafficking by 46% since 2010 and these are just registered cases. Many of these cases go unregistered as Police do not bother taking it seriously.

He added that missing/kidnapped children, which are also in great numbers 6983 registered cases since 2010, are most vulnerable to inter-city or inter-province trafficking especially girls who might be trafficked to Afghanistan or Balochistan. Also, during Haj, Umrah time girls maybe trafficked with family to middle-east. The missing and kidnapped children and women may also be used for organ smuggling and as child brides. He said that once a child is trafficked, it becomes most difficult to track as there are no coordination mechanisms among provincial authorities that may inform prevention of inter-provincial trafficking of children. He highlighted not lodging the FIR is justice delayed hence Police is denying justice to children and their families. He warned that failure of Police will only give free hand to such mafia active across Pakistan and many more families will suffer the consequences.

Madadgaar National Helpline (1098) is working to eliminate violence against children and women at all levels Madadgaar services are available in Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta and its Head Offices at Karachi. It has a separate Missing Children Desk that is providing help to parents in finding their children.

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Issued by: Madadgaar National Helpline (1098)

15<sup>th</sup> May 2015**Press Briefing****Aisha Case History****SPEAK AND CHANGE**

Domestic torture and abuse is a widespread issue in Pakistan and victims include women belonging to all sections of society. They are beaten, mutilated and even burnt by their relatives often on quite petty issues. Often the women in houses are less aware of their rights and that is why they do not think that this is in fact violence against them or even if they can understand that they do not have so much strength in their voices to raise them against the male chauvinist approach.

Here in Madadgaar's office we have received one more case of pity women named Ayesha, 28 years old lady .Her father named Jawed Iqbal is a supplier by profession who supplies goods to local shop keepers and in this way he fulfills his house hold expenses. Jawed has 7 daughters and two sons. Ayesha is the elder one. Ayesha's mother has been died in 2001. Since then Jawed Iqbal is supporting his family being a single parent, even though he is not financially well settled. He decided to married his daughter Ayesha with Mansoor who was a Tailor. Ayesha married with Mansoor S/O Manzoor Ahmed two years ago on 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2013 and has a nine months old baby boy. She suffered extreme domestic violence and abuse from soon after her marriage. She faced an inhuman behavior of her husband and her in laws. More over, few days later after marriage she came to know that her husband was already married but nobody informed Ayesha's family regarding this marriage.

Her in laws used to taunt her that she is not efficient in house hold affairs. Her husband forbids her to meet with her parents and family members. She didn't have phone or any other source of contact with her family. Ayesha said she had to bear or face hunger in her in laws home because they did not give her food. Poor Ayesha was suffering all these inhuman activities just to remain stable her marital life. Mansoor was a tailor by profession but most of the time he did not have work and remained workless. Aisha used to do some work in leisure time at home and earned some money for her daily expenses. Whenever Mansoor needed money he demanded from Aisha and if she refused to give him money then he used to beat her brutally .More over Mansoor's mother Najma also encouraged and supported him in this brutality.

On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015 her husband and mother in law crossed all the limits of bestiality. They not only beaten her badly but Mansoor cut her hairs and her mother shaved Aisha's head with razor to embarrass her and to stop her to go to her parent's home. Further they snatched her 9 months old son , now his son is in her in laws custody. Her parents didn't know about the incident till two months. One day when her husband and mother in law



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was not at home she managed to escape from home and by somehow reached to her parents' home and told them the entire story how she was suffering from extreme domestic violence and abuse since last two years.

The helpless father brought her daughter to police station Liaquat Abad and submitted application against her husband for conducting inhuman attitude with her. She told the whole story of these savager mother and son to SHO Liaquat Abad. Aisha also reached to court to seek justice for her, where someone told her about Madadgaar and she along with her sister managed to reach Madadgaar National helpline for support and access to justice. At Madadgaar Aisha told her story of grievance in detail to Madadgaar staff. After providing psychosocial support the counselor of Madadgaar referred her to LHRLA for legal aid. At LHRLA Mr Zia Awan listened her case carefully and ensured her full support of his organization to access to justice and custody of her 9 months old son.

It is not only Ayesha who suffered domestic violence but there is also a large number of women and young girls who are suffering the same. According to Madadgaar National Helpline news paper data base ranging from 1st January to 31st December 2014 regarding violence against women at least **314** women and girls were raped in different parts of the country in 2014, whereas **173** suffered gang rape. Number of women and girls tortured in 2014 are **2569** in which **930** women were tortured by police. At least **595** women and girls kidnapped last year and **329** women fell prey to forced marriages including **133** cases of Vani.

A total number of **6338** cases of women abuse reported nationwide in year 2014 out of which Punjab had the highest number of cases recorded of **2564**, followed by **1864** in Sind, **1092** in Khyber Pakhtunkhawa and **818** in Baluchistan.

Issued By  
Madadgaar National Helpline



SPEAK AND CHANGE

06-12-2014

**Press Release**

**It's time South Asian governments take the concrete steps necessary to eliminate  
child marriage in the region: Zia Awan**

**Government should make commitment to end child marriage by  
2020 in Pakistan: Zia Ahmed Awan**

**Founder of Madadgaar shares 12- point Call for Action announced at Kathmandu to  
end child marriage in South Asia**

Karachi (Press Release) Founder of Madadgaar National Helpline Zia Ahmed Awan Advocate said that federal and provincial governments should strive utmost to nip the evil of child marriage in the bud from Pakistan. He was addressing a press conference organized at Madadgaar National Helpline office to highlight details of Kathmandu Call for Action. Organized by the SAIEVAC Regional Secretariat and the Center for Reproductive Rights and hosted by the Government of Nepal, a one and half day Regional Convening on Using Law to Promote Accountability to End Child Marriage was held from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Convening unanimously endorsed a Kathmandu Call for Action to end Child Marriage in South Asia.

Sharing the details of the convening, Mr. Awan told that Officials from the member states of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) adopted 12-point call for action, particularly focusing on how the lack of government accountability is leading to these human rights violations against young women. The call for the urgent actions to be taken by governments in South Asia is as under:

1. Formally recognize and denounce child marriage as a human rights violation that governments in the region are obligated to monitor, prevent, punish and address through legal remedies and administrative measures.
2. Review and harmonize national laws and policies relating to child marriage in line with constitutional guarantees of fundamental rights, commitments made in SAARC instruments and state obligations to respect, protect and fulfill human rights under international law and comply with reporting requirements and implement recommendations.
3. Eliminate discriminatory provisions concerning marriage in all laws, including personal laws by establishing a uniform minimum legal age of marriage of 18, clarify the legal status of child marriages within a specific time frame, creating safeguards to ensure the full and informed consent of parties to a marriage, removing burdensome requirements for ending a child marriage and amending specific provisions to ensure equal rights within marriage regardless of religious background.



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4. Ensure access to legal remedies for girls whose rights are violated as a result of child marriage by introducing appropriate laws, raising legal awareness, providing legal counseling and legal aid and enforcing penalties for violations of the law.
5. Harmonize child marriage prevention and prohibition laws with laws that protect against all forms of violence including sexual violence, require birth and marriage registration, determine property rights and ensure equal citizenship rights and other relevant laws.
6. Introduce legal reform recognizing marital rape as a punishable offense without establishing an age limit for its recognition as a crime and prescribing a lesser punishment.
7. Strengthen the enforcement of national laws prohibiting child marriage, specifically by ensuring that that local government officials have the authority and capacity to execute their responsibilities to prevent child marriages in local communities.
8. Ensure that girls who are married under 18 years, or have left a child marriage, have access to various forms of institutional support including psycho-social counseling, protection mechanisms including toll free help lines and opportunities for economic empowerment.
9. Ensure access to a full range of sexual and reproductive health information and services for girls and boys to inform them about the risks of early marriage and ensure immediate access to such information and services to married girls as a means to protect them against the risks and consequences of early pregnancy.
10. Support efforts by national human rights institutions to promote accountability for violations resulting from child marriage and ensure compliance with international norms and concluding observations issued by U.N. treaty monitoring bodies.
11. Support the inclusion of a specific target to eliminate child marriage under the goal on gender equality in the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.
12. Ensure the effective implementation of the Regional Action Plan to End Child Marriage in the South Asia by allocating adequate resources for its successful implementation in 2015-2018.

Zia Awan said that too many young girls in South Asia are forced into marriage and robbed of their childhood. Governments in the region have been complicit in violating the fundamental rights of young girls by failing to effectively prohibit and punish child marriages. It's time South Asian governments take the concrete steps necessary to eliminate child marriage in the region through law reform and enforcement. He appreciated the Sindh government for implementation of Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013. The Act bars the marriage of girls and boys before the age of 18. Males above the age of 18 contracting in child marriage and perpetrators involved in solemnizing shall be imprisoned no less than 2 years and may be extended to 3 years. He urged other three provinces to introduce such laws to curb the menace. He also demanded federal government to approve Madadgaar helpline number 1098 as toll-free number to extend helpline outreach to victim of child marriage. He demanded the government to make a commitment to end child Marriage in Pakistan by 2020 as government of Nepal made.

***Issued by: Madadgaar National Helpline***



SPEAK AND CHANGE

Press Conference

## **Court Orders Registration of FIR in Child Marriage and Conversion Case**

### **Under-age marriages and conversions blemish on society: Zia Awan**

Karachi, Jan 09: Noted human rights attorney Zia Ahmed Awan has said that the under-age marriages and conversions on blemish on our society and all stakeholders including government need to take serious steps to end the menace, adding this sensitive issue mostly affects children and young people; hence, it is also a grave violation of rights.

He was addressing a crowded press conference here Monday at the Madadgaar National Helpline along with parents of a female victim of under-age marriage and conversions.

Zia Awan, who is also founder of the Madadgaar National Child Helpline, National Child Commissioner for the Federal Ombudsman and Member of the Child Protection Authority Sindh said the cases of under-age marriages and conversions are being reported from almost all areas of the country and there is a dire need that all four provinces strictly implement the anti-child marriage laws. He said all people involved in arranging and facilitating child marriages and conversions should be deal with an iron hand. He said that in the regard the role of Ulema is crucial and they should ensure that the victims of conversion are not issued religious decrees for validation of their marriage contracts and conversion statements. He said strict action is also necessary against Nikahkhuwans and witnesses of such illegal marriages.

On the occasion, Venus and her husband Gul Nawaz told the media that an accused Shahzad had coaxed their underage daughter, Teresa, a 10<sup>th</sup> class student to elope with him. They said that accused Shahzad had managed to get fake decrees about conversion of Teresa to Islam and marrying him as per Islamic jurisprudence. They said that Teresa was an under-age girl and her alleged conversion and marriage is against the laws of land. They said that accused Shahzad is a bad character man and he had already married to another girl using the same tactics. They appealed to the higher authorities to dole out justice to them and help in safe recovery of their minor daughter.



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Zia Ahmed Awan said the parents of Teresa aka Kafia were running from pillar to post but no one helped them. Later, they contacted Madadgaar National Helpline which provided them urgent legal help and filed their case in a court of law, which has already ordered to lodge an FIR of the case.

Advocate Awan demanded of the government to strictly implement the child protection laws and also implement the international charters and instruments regarding the child protection, signed by the government of Pakistan. He said it also need community mobilization and arranging courses for police, judiciary, lawyers, prosecutors and other related stakeholders to sensitize them about the child rights. He appealed to the Inspector General of Police Sindh to take action against the SHO who had refused to lodge the complaint of the parents of Teresa. He also demanded action against the Nikahkhuwans, witnesses and other facilitators involved in this conversion and underage marriage case.

Sharing further details, Zia Awan said that on a criminal Misc. application filed by us, the court of Rajesh Chander Rajput, the 11<sup>th</sup> Additional Sessions Judge/ Justice of Peace, Karachi South, directed the SHO, Police Station Mehmoodabad to register the FIR of the petitioner and investigate the same strictly in accordance with law. He said that now the FIR is registered but under sections that were not part of our application in the court and different than the order and direction by the honorable court to lodge the FIR. Furthermore, no accused has been arrested as yet. Zia Awan demanded that Deputy Inspector General of Police (Karachi East) should immediately make sure the FIR is lodged under sections as per court order and our application, accused are arrested hastily and this case is investigated rigorously. He further demanded the Inspector General of Police (Sindh) and Deputy Inspector General of Police (Karachi East) to strictly punish the responsible police officers as per the law. He said that the major barrier in accessing justice in such cases is carelessness of Police, untimely action and lodging of cases under irrelevant and wrong sections of the law by the Police.

Zia Ahmed Awan said the according to the Section 3 of Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013 whoever being a male above eighteen years of age, contracts a child marriage shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to three years but shall not be less than two years and shall be liable to find.

According to the section 4 of the Act, whoever performs, conducts, directs, brings about or in any way facilitates any child marriage shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment with may extend to three years but shall not be less than two years and shall also be liable to fine, unless he proves that he the reason to believe that marriage was not a child marriage.

As per the section 8 of the Act, the offence punishable under the Act shall be cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable.

Issued by: **Madadgaar National Helpline 1098**





27-11-2014

**Press Release**

**SPEAK AND CHANGE**

**Government should take stern action against all the perpetrators: Zia Awan**

**Child trafficking network may indulge in transportation of Bajaur girls to Karachi: Zia Ahmed Awan**

**Not a single seminary or school should go unregistered in the country: founder of Madadgaar National Helpline**

**Karachi (Press Release):** Founder of Madadgaar National Helpline Zia Ahmed Awan Advocate said that government machinery has failed in delivering education to the grass root level, that's why 33 minor girl students from Bajaur Agency had been shifted to the Karachi in unknown circumstances. Regretting at the education system in Pakistan he said that instead of having a uniform education system in the country, our children are studying in seminaries, Urdu medium schools, English medium schools or O/A Level schools. He said that this institutional divide is dividing the whole young generation into different mindsets. He urged that to avoid such an incident in future, government should register all the seminaries in the country and not a single seminary should be operational without registration.

He said that according to the media reports, these girls were shifted to the Karachi in mysterious condition. These girls may be victim of a child trafficking network. Trafficked children are not only used for begging or prostitution but they are also being used as reinforcement to the terrorists for generating young suicide bombers. Zia Awan said that the concerned authorities should take serious action against all the culprits who are directly or indirectly involved in shifting the girls to Karachi and then from seminary to the house at Liaquatabad area. He urged the authorities concerned to investigate the matter to find out how these girls were transported to Karachi from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He also urged governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sind to take serious action of the incident, investigate the matter and guarantee safe and early return of the girls. He said that there is no single efficient law in the country against human trafficking between the provinces. Our parliamentarians at federal and provincial level should make laws to bridge this gap. Parents who sell their children for vested interest should also be brought to justice under new laws. Our law enforcement agencies should also be equipped with all the skills and training to halt the child trafficking within the country.

Mr. Awan said that it is state's responsibility to provide education to every corner of the country at local level. If the state had fulfilled its responsibility, the girls would never have been shifted to the Karachi for getting admission in an unregistered seminary. He said that parents should also be sensitized to send their children only to registered schools or seminaries.

He said that children should not be taken as a weapon to recover a loan from anyone. This kind of act is a heinous crime against humanity and government should take stern action against all the perpetrators. **(Issued by: Madadgaar National Helpline)**





08-03-2014

**Press Release**

**International Women's Day**

**SPEAK AND CHANGE**

**Equality for women means progress for all: Madadgaar National Helpline**

Madadgaar National Helpline celebrated International Women's Day to show solidarity with 51 percent population of the world. Expressing their views on International Women's Day, Madadgaar team members said that Countries with more gender equality have better economic growth. Companies with more women leaders perform better. Peace agreements that include women are more durable. Parliaments with more women enact more legislation on key social issues such as health, education, anti-discrimination and child support. The evidence is clear: equality for women means progress for all.

Message of Founder of Madadgaar National Helpline Mr. Zia Ahmed Awan Advocated was also shared in which he said that there is a dire need to speak up, individually and collectively, for ending discriminations against women and girls in Pakistan, whose basic rights are taken for granted and they are treated as exchangeable commodities. He said that respect for human rights and human dignity is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. He said women comprises more than half of the population of our country and without granting them their due rights, the dream of making this country a civilized nation could never be materialized.

Awan emphasized on the implementation on International treaties signed by Pakistan and implantation of constitutional rights granted to the women. He further highlighted that concern ministries are failed in creating social safety net/ social support system for the protection of women in general.

He further elaborated Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Convention provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to , and equal opportunities in, political and public life, including the right to vote and to stand for election, as well as education, health and employment. States parties must agree to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Zia Ahmed Awan said serious, urgent and concrete efforts are needed on every level to end discrimination and abuse of women. He demanded raising awareness about human rights at grassroots level, adding all discriminatory laws should be repealed. He suggested that bureaucracy, police, judiciary, parliamentarians, and media be sensitized about women rights. He said that more budgetary allocations should be diverted towards social sector, especially education and healthcare, as poverty and joblessness were among major causes behind violation of rights. He demanded empowerment of women and ensuring gender equality at every level. He said that constitution of Pakistan guarantees basic rights to women, but there is a need to implement laws in the letter and spirit.

He said that Malala Yousufzai, Arfa Kareem, Sharmeen Obaid Chenoy, Ayesha Farooq — the first female war-ready pilot of Pakistan- are rays of hope in our patriarchal society. We hope that on the next International Women's Day, Pakistan would be many steps ahead from her current social status.

