

Note for Record
June 25-27, 2014

By: Shoaib Sultan Khan
June 30, 2014

Subject: Meeting with the Chief Minister, Baluchistan

At the Baluchistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) Board meeting, which to my pleasant surprise Saeed Ahmad Qureshi also attended as Adviser to BRSP. The CEO BRSP Nadir Gul reported the progress of inclusion of funding for Union Council Based Poverty Reduction Programme (UCBPRP) in the Provincial ADP that despite firm assurance, only Rs. 50 million had been provided in ADP. I suggested that the matter should be taken up with the Senior Politician Mehmood Khan Achakzai MNA and he be apprised that how over last so many months, presentations were made to officials and Ministers of the Baluchistan government one of which I attended presided by the Minister of Planning and prior to that even Chief Minister was briefed by Nadir, Shandana and Shahida at Islamabad.

Normally Mehmood Khan Achakzai (MKA) stays in Islamabad to participate in the National Assembly but to my pleasant surprise Nadir informed me in the evening that he was in Quetta and would be happy to see us next morning. He received us at his modest house, very unlike political abodes of MNAs, with great warmth and affection being well known to Sardar Naseer Tareen, Chairman BRSP. I marveled at his memory when he recalled his meeting in a remote village in Mianwali where I had driven from Islamabad and so had he to attend the funeral of Imran Khan's father. He listened to me patiently for more than an hour recounting my 61 years career in CSP, UN and AKF and the salient features of UCBPRP along with a clip of the Chief Minister Sindh's budget speech relating to Rural Support Programmes and their achievements through UC Plan especially empowerment of women. Nadir also informed him that EU has expressed an interest to fund UC Plan if Government of Baluchistan also funds it. Mehmood Khan suggested taking up four districts two each in Baloch and Pushtoon areas.

Thereafter, MKA left us and went to another room and reappeared after some time. He informed us he had spoken to the Chief Minister and asked him to see me. On Chief Minister's suggestion that I should come to the Provincial Assembly to meet him, MKA did not agree and asked him to

see me when he is not busy in other things and on MKA's suggestion, agreed to see me the next morning.

I was due to leave for Islamabad in the afternoon to be in time for the RSPN Board meeting which I had scheduled in the evening. I spoke to Shandana and requested her to go ahead with the Board meeting because of my scheduled meeting with the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister Dr. Abdul Malik met us in the cabinet room along with ACS (Development) and Secretary Local Government (LG) Department Asad Gilani. Asad is also an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of BRSP. After a long time I found an official of the Government of Baluchistan taking real and sympathetic interest in the working of BRSP. The CM knew Sardar Tareen and Nadir Gul well. It was my first meeting.

The Chief Minister listened to my presentation and to my request that the Provincial Government might consider MKA's suggestion of taking up four districts with a funding of less than four billion over a five year period to be able to secure EU funding as EU has done in case of Sindh Province. The budget speech clip from Sindh Chief Minister's speech was also showed to CM. I suggested Rs. One billion allocation in the current ADP.

The Chief Minister gave us a sympathetic hearing and asked Secretary LG Department to prepare a concept note on the UC Plan presented by me within a couple of days for a decision in the matter. The ACS while leaving the meeting assured allocation of funds for UC Plan.

The Secretary LG Department who forcefully supported our case, asked Nadir for a discussion on the Concept Note and promised to finalise it by Monday. Nadir on returning to office, sent him a note incorporating Union Plans PC-I of SRSP and the latest of EU PC-I of Sindh. On my request, Shandana also sent the concept note she had prepared on UC Plan for USAID assistance.