

By: - Shoaib Sultan Khan

Subject: - **Speech at Launch of AUP at Governor's House on November 6, 2017**
Peshawar

Hon'ble Mr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, Governor KP and FATA

Your Excellencies the Ambassadors of EU & Republic of Germany

Distinguish Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honoured and most grateful to sponsors of the launch of Aid to Uprooted People (AUP) for inviting me to this august house where I was frequent visitor during my service in KP then NWFP, between 1963 and 1972.

When I look back on 65 years of my working career, 45 years ago I was posted in 1963 as Political Agent Orakzai and Darra Adam Khel combined with the post of Deputy Commissioner Kohat. I had no experience of serving in KP as after training in civil service, on the orders of the Prime Minister Suharwardy all West Pakistan domiciled of 1955 batch were posted to Eastern Wing and East Pakistanis to the West. However my father-in-law Dr. Abdur Rahim's father, Khan Bahadur Ahmad Din was one of the first Indian Political Agents of South Waziristan and was also associated with drawing up Durand Line. I was well aware of the characteristics of the Pakhtuns, so I taught. However, within a week of my taking over at Kohat, intelligence reported that two tribes in Orakzai are at war firing cannons at each other. I was most concerned and sent for the Political Tehsildar in charge of the area. He informed me this was all to welcome you. That mystified me further. He explained this has been started to attract your intervention, so that they are able to extort some concessions from the administration as the price for ending the so-called dispute. He advised me to do nothing because the cannons are being fired not at each other but in the wilderness of each other's area. True enough after three weeks it was all calm and I never heard of any dispute between the two warring tribes.

Akhunzada of Orakzai was the tribal chieftain and his ancestor in the twenties of last century had helped in recovering Miss Alice whom famous Ajab Khan of Darra Adam Khel had abducted from Kohat cantonment to avenge insult meted out to his mother. The British fixed an annual Rs.6, 000 allowance for the Akhunzada for his services in recovering Alice, who used to make a yearly visit to Political Agent to receive his allowance. Once I asked when he came to meet me where was he going, he announced he was off to Jalalabad. On seeing a query on my face he disclosed that he has to receive some allowances from them also.

One of the Malik's Darra Adam Khel Malik Sarmast used to wear a heavily bulging waist coat whenever he came to meet me. I was informed by my PA that the Malik carries all his money on his body. When I jokingly confronted him with this news, he allowed me to touch his waist coat which indeed felt bulging with packets of notes.

The tribal always met you on equal and friendly footing and were always willing to listen to reason. When in Darra Adam Khel they took me to their arms factory and showed their craftsmanship and asked for supply of electricity to their factories. They also accepted my request to allow Wah Ordnance Factory to set up to check the quality of arms for export purposes. Once when I took the Italian Ambassador on a visit to Darra factory they presented a Beretta pistol crafted by them. The ambassador could not distinguish it from the original and bought four more pistols to send to the company back home. Later, I pointed to the Ambassador the spelling mistake on the pistol and the fact that it was not made of gun metal, a concession for supply of gun metal from Ordnance factory they wanted. I tried but not with much success. They made a double barrel gun for me copying Churchill gun of England. I could not order them to take me in the tribal area but if a request was made they gladly agreed and once they took me to Tor Chappar up in the hills where they said no PA had gone since 1927. Darra Adam Khel connected Peshawar and Kohat and the road used to close from dusk to dawn. It was opened for 24 hours on guarantees given by the tribes living on the road side. Samana was a hill station in Hungo area adjoining Orakzai and had been abandoned. The tribal had no objection to the rehabilitation of the hill station and even convening the meeting of the district council there.

I was most impressed by the democratic way of the tribes. Every tribal had the courage and right to express his opinion however lowly or high he may be. In the annual meeting of the tribes for distribution of allowances, the presence of Maliks did not deter anyone to have his say. The code of Pakhtun Wali was so strictly adhered to by each one of them that I never found any law and order situation in Darra Adam Khel or Orakzai area neither ever any murders were reported from the area although Kohat district though very peaceful, suffered such incidents off and on.

Times have of course changed and any attempt at reviving, the old system or implementing lock stock and barrel the administrative set up of the districts of KP, is not likely to be successful. The need of the hour is, of course, where peace is prevailing to initiate a “Development Partnership” approach with each and every household of the tribe to revive the Social Capital. I wish if we had funds for development in the sixties for tribal areas, the Social Capital of the tribes was very strong and forging Development Partnerships with each and every household through tribes and sub tribes would have been possible without much ado and investment. Currently the challenge will be to foster a framework of grassroots institutions through Social Mobilisation where in each and every household, especially the deprived and the most vulnerable are given a voice in improving their household livelihood. Unless that is done, top down interventions like huge infrastructure will only make marginal difference to the impoverished and the poor households. Besides, macro interventions, which are also as essential as micro investment plans of each household. But without Social Capital the macro interventions fail to improve the livelihood of the large majority of the people.

European Union has been a great champion of fostering of Social Capital to ensure involvement of communities and their developments, and Rural Support Programmes are most grateful to Ambassador Contain for his personal interest and support to the approach. Currently in PEACE area over 15,000 community organisations covering nearly half a million households have been fostered. Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) was the first programme in Pakistan to adopt and replicate the social mobilisation approach in 1989 espoused by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral. However,

due to Pressler Amendment, USAID, which had sponsored SRSP, walked away in the second year of its existence. Thanks to the hard work put in by management especially CEO Masood ul Mulk since 2002 and European Union's support for peace programme in Swat and Malakand Division, SRSP is very well placed in implementing the Aid to Uprooted People (AUP) through a Development Partnership approach. On behalf of the Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN) and especially SRSP we would like to profusely thank KFW and GIZ for the generous support to AUP. The presence of H.E. the German Ambassador at the launch is a great source of encouragement and joy to SRSP and us all.

It augurs well that Honourable Governor himself is launching the AUP symbolising the critical support of the government, especially the FATA secretariat and Political Agents. SRSP has been most fortunate in getting unreserved help and support from the Pak Army in Swat and Malakand Division. In FATA again SRSP is most grateful to them for their patronage and support.