

UK Friends of Khwendo Kor

FROK

Autumn 2007

The Current Security Situation

Despite the alarming reports we see on our TV screens, the political situation in Pakistan does not seem to have created special difficulties for KK. We are reassured about this by the fact that a young team of documentary filmmakers (of whom more later) were able to go out to KK within a couple of days of the declaration of a state of emergency. They have been able to travel to see the various aspects of KK's work and returned to the UK without incident a few days ago.

However, the safety of visitors in Peshawar and some other areas should not lead us to underestimate the dangers which KK workers regularly face in more remote ar-

reas, whatever the political situation. Three recent incidents illustrate this.

While Maryam was in England completing her M.Phil. thesis this summer she spent several weeks in daily telephone contact with her deputy Aneela as they negotiated the release of one of KK's drivers and a female KK worker who had been kidnapped. The tension was extreme because they knew that to agree to the kidnappers' demands would put all their other drivers in danger, but to cease negotiations could mean this driver's death. The female worker was quickly released but the negotiations over the driver and vehicle continued for weeks. As

politicians, police, public opinion and the driver's relations were brought into play, the kidnappers' demands decreased and the driver was eventually released without payment, although the vehicle was lost. Those of us with Maryam at the time could only marvel at her and Aneela's skill in negotiation and ability to bear the tension.

Since her return to Pakistan, Maryam has been prevented by her family from returning to her home village in the Tribal Areas for Eid because of rumours of a plan to kidnap her there.

And two men carrying bombs were recently arrested in a field adjoining one of KK's regional offices - no proof that the bombs were intended for KK but it seems likely.

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NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The FROK Committee are aiming to send out a Newsletter two to three times a year.

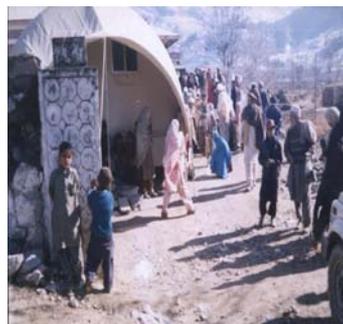
WHEN YOU'VE READ IT, PLEASE FREE TO PASS IT ON TO OTHERS AND SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE WORK OF KK AND FROK.

If your contact details have changed, please let the Membership Secretary, Marilyn Crawshaw, know (marilyn.crawshaw@btopenworld.com; or 50 Middlethorpe Grove, Dringhouses, York YO24 1LD.

KK's work in the earthquake area continues

FROK first supported KK with funds which helped provide safe premises for administration and training, and safer vehicles for travel to remote areas. At the time of the 2005 earthquake, we enabled KK to open a new office in the earthquake area and help people re-

build their communities as well as their homes. The work there continues, still funded by FROK.



Research News

Maryam's visit to England this summer was to complete an M.Phil. thesis which documents the process of negotiating with the funding charities, the Pakistani government, the local chieftains, and the religious authorities. Above all, KK had to convince the village people that girls' education was worth the danger of confronting the religious extremists, that it would not make their daughters unmarried or deprive their families of their labour and that they themselves could learn to manage the schools. All this had to be done against the background of the ongoing military operations of the Taliban, Pakistani and Western forces. When Maryam completed her thesis at the end of August this year, she was able to report that more than thirty schools were educating hundreds of girls in the Tribal Areas. KK had become the only NGO to achieve and maintain such results and there is an increasing demand from other villages for KK to work in them also.



Searching the web

"I am delighted that Ibrash Pasha, Regional Manager for Khwendo Kor's Dir office, has enrolled on the e-based Masters programme in Public Policy and Management"
Ellen Roberts,
Programme Director
<http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/spsw/gsp/pppm.html>

Fundraising—Your ideas welcomed!

If you have any ideas for fund raising, do contact the Secretary, Polly Griffith, 22 Whin Rd, York YO24 1JZ polly@ajgriff.demon.co.uk who will arrange for you to receive publicity materials.

The Committee also contacts Trusts for funding for KK projects and are currently seeking funding for a

micro-credit project. **If you know of Trusts who might be interested in this or any other KK project, please get in touch with the FROK Chairperson, Jonathan French** (jonathan@jffrench85.fsnet.co.uk or 85 East Parade, Heworth, York YO31 7YD).

FROK supports education and training of KK staff

FROK is now providing money for KK staff training at a variety of levels, both within the NWFP and, where appropriate, further afield. One KK worker has embarked on an on-line Masters degree in Public Policy and Management at the University of York that enables an international community of public service practitioners to study and learn together. We understand that KK is already benefiting.

We are also shortly to contribute towards local training costs for the teachers in KK schools.

STANDING ORDERS

We are extremely grateful to all our members who support us with standing orders. They are the bed-rock which enables FROK to function. They also mean we don't need to keep bothering you for your annual subscription. We're including a banker's order form on the back of this newsletter and hope that any of you who have not yet filled one in will feel able to do so.

Education and training: East West links

A new emphasis has emerged in our work with KK over the past couple of years inspired by links forged between the social work departments at the Universities of York and Peshawar, KK and the Cardigan Community Centre in Leeds. In the spring of 2006, Marilyn Crawshaw, a FROK Committee member and social work lecturer at York, liaised with KK to send two York students to Peshawar for six weeks as one of their placements. On their return, they completed their placement at the Cardigan Centre in Leeds which works with the Pakistani

community there. This initial visit was so successful that the pattern was repeated last March/May. In addition, Marilyn Crawshaw has been invited to spend some time at Peshawar University next spring working in their gender studies department. The advantages of these exchanges are many: FROK gains supporters with direct experience of KK's work who can give talks and guide the Committee; the Cardigan Centre gains trainee social workers with first-hand experience of a Moslem culture; KK has

the benefit of visitors who are eager both to help and to learn; and a link has been forged between the social work departments at York and Peshawar universities at a time when links between East and West seem especially important.

Fundraising and Events

While Maryam was in the UK this summer, she was working 12 hours a day or more to complete her thesis. We therefore could not arrange any events, apart from the AGM, where she could talk to members.

She was, however, contacted by the two young documentary makers who have just been in Peshawar. They planned with her this exploratory visit and, pro-

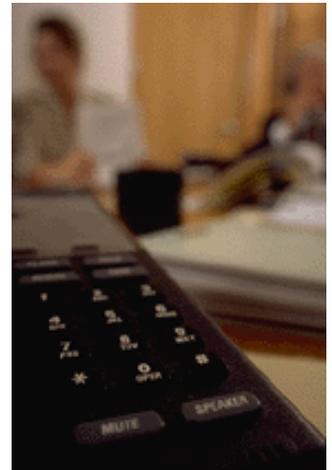
vided all goes well, will return to Pakistan for the actual filming. They hope, to sell the result to one of the documentary channels on TV and that in any case it will be useful for FROK publicity.

So by the time Maryam returns to the UK to receive her degree, we may be able to show it to you. We hope to have several events then, not only in York but also in Oxford and London, where groups

of FROK supporters are also now growing.

New ventures for FROK support to KK

A new area for FROK funding is contributing to health insurance costs for KK workers. Maryam explained to us that, unlike wealthier charities, KK cannot afford insurance for its staff although they face particular dangers. This is a factor which makes it difficult to recruit or hold onto good staff. FROK does not have the funds to solve this problem but, as a form of seed corn, will be funding health insurance for a small number of key staff for a limited period. We hope that this will enable KK to include the cost of health insurance in their applications to major charities for project funds.



The FROK Committee sends you Seasons Greetings and best wishes for all that is good for 2008.



Success in the Tribal Areas

Despite the difficulties, work in the Tribal Areas is having amazing success. When Maryam came to England in 2001, KK was already educating thousands of girls in hundreds of schools in the North West Frontier Provinces, training women to play their part in managing the schools, training

birth attendants and providing micro-credit for women's enterprises. However, no-one thought it would be possible to do the same in the remote and lawless Tribal Areas. Maryam wrote her M.A. thesis to describe how it might be done and then returned to Pakistan to put theory into practice.

Social Work students' visit to KK in Spring 2008

Plans are going ahead for two University of York social work students to spend part of their training with Khwendo Kor for the third year running. Depending on the security situation, the plan is for them to go for six weeks in Spring 2008. The situation may change before

then but we know that Maryam and KK would not sanction plans for such visits if she felt they would put anyone in danger.

Photo:

Back row, left to right: Polly Griffith (FROK), Marilyn Crawshaw (FROK and University of York), Maryam Bibi, Nic Gebbels (student), Sarah Luther (student)

Front row: Clare McGeever (student), Jay Boydell (student), Penny Bainbridge (Manager, Car-digan Centre, Leeds)



A get together in York during Maryam's recent trip to the UK for those involved in the social work student placements with KK and a community centre in Leeds



MEMBERSHIP, DONATION AND GIFT AID FORM

Contact details for UK Friends of Khwendo Kor (FROK)

Chairperson:

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01904 702060

1) Membership: Please enrol me as a member of FROK. I enclose my subscription of £10 (£5 concessions).

2) One-off Donation:

I enclose a cheque made out to 'FROK' for pounds.

3) Standing Order:

I wish to donate £5 £10 £20 £..... per month to FROK

Amount in words.....
.....

To the Manager (name and address of your Bank):

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.....

Post Code.....

Please credit the above amount to 'FROK'; Account No. 65100505; Sort code 089299

The Co-operative Bank, King's Valley, Yew Street, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 2JU

debiting my account no: sort code:-.....-..... starting on (date): or immediately on receipt of this order, whichever is the later, and thereafter on corresponding dates.

Signed.....

4) Gift Aid: I am a UK tax payer. I would like 'FROK' [UK Friends of Khwendo Kor] to claim back the tax on all my donations until further notice.

Name.....

Address
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Post Code

Phone Number.....

Email.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Please return to: The Treasurer, FROK, 50 Middlethorpe Grove, Dringhouses, York YO24 1LD

