



Centre for Peace and  
Development Initiatives

# **Police Brutality against the blind: Mere Moral Outrage is never Good Enough**

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Enough**

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Ms. Ambreen Kanwal for submitting information requests and maintaining information requests' tracker;

Ms. Mahrukh Hasan analysing data pertaining to information requests;

Mr. Naveed Ashraf for designing this report;

## Background:

This report presents an account of initiatives undertaken by CPDI in collaboration with disability organizations and media in the wake of police brutality against the blind in Lahore.

Nation was shocked when Lahore police baton charged and manhandle the blind on December 03, 2014 who were protesting for the implementation of 2 % quota in government jobs. The print and electronic media gave extensive coverage to the police brutality which lasted for a week or so. Even during the media coverage of the police brutality, the moral outrage of the non-disabled for insensitivity manifested by the police was so intense that issue-specific debate i.e. absence of legal enforcement mechanism to implement 2 % quota for the disabled in the government jobs was hardly seen in the media. Even the sloganeering in the follow-up protest rallies gave vent to the feelings of moral outrage at the expense of any meaningful demands raised on the elected representatives to take policy initiatives to protect and promote rights of the disabled. After all, police brutality and the protest of the blind for their right were mere outward manifestation of a deeper malady of the inhuman and degrading treatment meted out to persons with disabilities on daily bases stemming from attitudinal, social and environmental barriers that the legislative, legal and administrative mechanisms have failed to remove.

Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI) as a researched based advocacy organization seeks to inform and reform laws, policies and procedures by engaging with media and relevant stakeholders. Following steps were taken by CPDI on the issue of police brutality against the blind as a part of follow-up on this issue.

- Protest Rally
- Engagement with Print and Electronic Media
- Engagement with Disability Organizations
- Analysis of Proposed Disability Law

## Protest Rally:

The follow-up started the very following day of the police manhandling of the blind protesters. CPDI organized a protest rally on December 04, 2014 in front of National Press Club, Islamabad. The rally was attended by members belonging to different civil society groups, journalists and persons with disabilities. CPDI took the lead in organizing the rally so that instead of expressing moral outrage, issue-specific demands could be raised to generate informed debate on the problems faced by the disabled. The following slogans written on the placards carried by CPDI staff testify this:

- 'Police be sensitised about rights of persons with disabilities'.
- 'Federal and provincial governments enact laws to protect rights of the disabled'.
- 'No sweet-talk, legislation to protect rights of the disabled'.

These messages were written in Urdu and English languages.

## Engagement with Electronic and Print Media:

Our effort of generating informed debate through the protest rally got attention of the electronic media. CPDI representative was invited by Absar Alam, Anchor person of [‘Bottomline with Absar Alam’](#), an Aj TV program broadcast on prime time which was aired on December 06, 2014. The other guests included Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, MNA, PMLN, Ms. Sharmila Farooqi, MPA, PPP and senior journalist Mr. *Wusat Ullah Khan*. We stressed the need for addressing the malady rather than wasting the energy on discussing its outward manifestation. We shared that disability is a social-construct and until and unless barriers in the physical and social environment are not removed, issues of persons with disabilities cannot be addressed. For this to happen, federal and provincial governments need to enact laws in the line of UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb shared that ‘Pakistan Disability Act 2014’ had already been drafted in collaboration with World Health Organization, (WHO) and federal and provincial governments will soon enact this law. After the program, we took copy of the law from Ms. Aurangzeb with a view to analyse this law and share our findings with media, disability organizations and policy makers so that a comprehensive law with enforcement mechanism is enacted to protect and promote rights of the disabled. We also participated in Channel 94 program [‘Weekend with Nadia Jamil’](#) broadcast on December 26, 2014 to contribute to the debate in the media on this issue.

## Engagement with Print Media:

We prepared following briefing for senior award winning investigative journalist Mr. Umar Cheema so that media continues carrying informed debate on the issues of the disabled.

### **The Disabled remain nameless, faceless and unaccounted for in Pakistan**

Despite the fact that a handful disabled persons were seen in the public life when they were beaten up by Lahore police on December 04, 2014 when they were protesting for the implementation of 2 % quota in government jobs, persons with disabilities largely remain unseen and unaccounted for in the country. According to 98 census, number of persons with disabilities stands at 32866 which is less than 2.5 % of the total population of the country. Disability rights activists have always contested this figure saying the number of persons with disabilities is much higher.

Owing to the stigma attached with disability, families tend to hide information about their disabled children. The staff involved in collecting data for 98 census was not trained to dig up information about number of disabled persons in a family. Furthermore, other than 2% quota in government jobs and 50% concession in fares of national flag carrier and Pakistan Railways, successive governments have not taken initiatives to rehabilitate persons with disabilities. Although Pakistan ratified UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2011, steps have not been taken to eradicate attitudinal, social and environmental barriers that persons with disabilities have to face on daily basis. This can be gauged from the fact that there is no disability law in place to promote and protect rights of the disabled in the country. As a result, there is negligible number of persons with disabilities living productive and functionally active life and the rest are confined to their homes or are seen as beggars on the streets.

PP government launched Disability Card for persons with disabilities with special logo designed on it on December 05, 2009. However, there are no incentives for the disabled to get these cards.

Umar Cheema had earlier filed an information request to NADRA under Freedom of Information Ordinance 2002 seeking following information.

1. Certified information about total number of CNIC holders in each province?
2. Certified information about total number of disability CNIC holders in each province?
3. Certified information about total number of CNIC holders in each district of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Balochistan?
4. Certified information about total number of disability CNIC holders in each district of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Balochistan?

Umar Cheema proved yet again why he is one of the most outstanding journalist not only in Pakistan but also in the world when he linked for the first time issues of the disabled with RTI and contributed an excellent investigative story headlined [No law in place to address issues of disabled](#) on January 16, 2015.

As the following table shows, data shared by NADRA on the RTI request filed by Umar Cheema depicts sorry state of affairs with regard to the visibility of persons with disabilities in Pakistan. According to NADRA statistics, a total of 96123992 people are Computerised National Identity Card, (CNIC) holders in Pakistan. Out of which only 148470 people are NADRA disability Card Holders which is mere 0.15% of the total CNIC holders.

A total of 54985550 Computerised National Identity Card holders live in Punjab out of which 45146, a mere 0.08% are disability card holders.

Followed by Punjab is Balochistan in terms of lower number of disability card holders in relationship with Computerised National Identity Card holders where out of a total 3668561 CNIC holders, there are only 3533 disability Card holders which is mere 0.09 % of the total CNIC Holders.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a slightly better situation among 4 provinces, where out of total 13301197 CNIC holders, 62079 (0.46%) are disability card holders. IN Sindh, out of total 21071129 CNIC holders, 31855 (0.15%) are disability card holders.

Total number of computerized national identity card holders and total number of computerized national disability card holders in provinces, FATA and federal:

<b>CNIC Holders</b>	<b>Disability Card Holders</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
96123992	148470	0.154456756

Out of 36 Districts in Punjab, Chiniot has the lowest number of disability card holders where out of total 662773 CNIC holders, 107 (0.016%) are disability card holders. Chiniot is followed by Narowal with 210 (0.02%) out of total 848439 CNIC holders and Mandi Bahauddin with 275

(0.03 %) of total 900930 CNIC holders. In relationship with total number of CNIC holders in Punjab, Attock with 1499 (0.175 %) is with the highest number of disability card holders followed by Rawalpindi 5358 (0.171 %) and Chakwal with 1499 (0.152 %).

Total number of computerized national identity card holders and total number of computerized national disability card holders in Punjab:

Sr. No	District	CNIC Holders	Disability card holders	Percentage
1	Bahawalnagar	1,393,452	697	0.050019663
2	Bahawalpur	1,687,831	1,107	0.065587135
3	Rahim Yar Khan	2,113,295	1,383	0.065442827
4	Dera Ghazi Khan	1,169,436	1322	0.113045947
5	Layyah	809,520	695	0.085853345
6	Muzafargarh	1,832,125	1,725	0.094152964
7	Rajapur	798,401	389	0.048722384
8	Faisalabad	4,048,286	2,346	0.057950451
9	Jhang	1,250,149	1,455	0.116386127
10	Toba Tek Singh	1,193,165	776	0.065037107
11	Chiniot	662,773	107	0.016144291
12	Gujranwala	2,492,528	1,753	0.070330203
13	Gujrat	1,752,181	886	0.050565552
14	Hafizabad	596,522	490	0.082142821
15	Mandi Bahauddin	900,930	275	0.030524014
16	Narowal	848,439	210	0.024751337
17	Sialkot	2,044,948	857	0.041908156
18	Kasur	1,611,800	553	0.034309468
19	Lahore	5,343,104	4,449	0.083266206
20	Okara	1,528,827	1391	0.090984788
21	Sheikhupura	1628781	1627	0.099890654
22	Nankana Sahib	518582	534	0.102973107
23	Khanewal	1442375	737	0.051096282
24	Lodhran	819525	704	0.08590342
25	Multan	2355204	2620	0.111243018
26	Pakpattan	898389	305	0.033949659
27	Sahiwal	1320812	923	0.069881255
28	Vehari	1439845	663	0.046046623
29	Attock	1095905	1924	0.175562663
20	Chakwal	985305	1499	0.152135633
31	Jhelum	865370	1170	0.135202283
32	Rawalpindi	3128799	5358	0.171247817
33	Bhakkar	777901	413	0.053091589
34	Khushab	751391	675	0.089833389
35	Mianwali	826822	1037	0.125419982
36	Sargodha	2052832	2091	0.101859285
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54,985,550</b>	<b>45146</b>	<b>0.082105208</b>

Out of 25 Districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kohistan has the lowest number of disability card holders were out of total 116753 CNIC card holders, 38 (0.03%) are disability card holders. Kohistan is followed by Upper Dir with 548 (0.1440%) out of total 380526 CNIC holders and DI Khan with 943 (0.1445%) of total 652250 CNIC holders. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Malakand



with 3827 (1.123%) is with the highest number of disability CNIC card holders followed by Swat 10634 (0.987 %) and Hangu with 2060 (0.835 %).

Total number of computerized national identity card holders and total number of computerized national disability card holders in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Sr. No	District	CNIC Holder	Disability card holders	Percentage
<b>1</b>	<b>Bannu</b>	<b>491,685</b>	<b>1,625</b>	<b>0.330496151</b>
2	Laki Marwat	361,612	921	0.254692875
<b>3</b>	<b>DI Khan</b>	<b>652,250</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>0.144576466</b>
4	Tank	159,669	508	0.31815819
<b>5</b>	<b>Abbottabad</b>	<b>674,601</b>	<b>1,286</b>	<b>0.190631203</b>
6	Battagram	221,541	827	0.373294334
<b>7</b>	<b>Haripur</b>	<b>548,146</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>0.228223867</b>
8	Kohistan	116,753	38	0.032547344
<b>9</b>	<b>Mansehra</b>	<b>787,886</b>	<b>2,957</b>	<b>0.375308103</b>
10	Tor Ghar	40,391	100	0.247579906
<b>11</b>	<b>Hangu</b>	<b>246,624</b>	<b>2,060</b>	<b>0.835279616</b>
12	Karak	345,907	1,833	0.529911219
<b>13</b>	<b>Kohat</b>	<b>452,977</b>	<b>1,834</b>	<b>0.404877069</b>
14	Buner	390,076	2,958	0.758313764
<b>15</b>	<b>Chitral</b>	<b>227,046</b>	<b>1,638</b>	<b>0.721439708</b>
16	Lower Dir	581,454	3,348	0.575797914
<b>17</b>	<b>Malakand</b>	<b>340,553</b>	<b>3,827</b>	<b>1.123760472</b>
18	Shangla	323,944	2,412	0.744573136
<b>19</b>	<b>Swat</b>	<b>1,076,732</b>	<b>10,634</b>	<b>0.987618089</b>
20	Uper Dir	380,526	548	0.144011185
<b>21</b>	<b>Mardan</b>	<b>1,080,056</b>	<b>3050</b>	<b>0.282392765</b>
22	Sawabi	781,291	3,423	0.438121007
<b>23</b>	<b>Charsadda</b>	<b>766,479</b>	<b>4,563</b>	<b>0.595319637</b>
24	Nowshehra	669,939	4,241	0.63304271
<b>25</b>	<b>Peshawar</b>	<b>1,583,059</b>	<b>5254</b>	<b>0.331889083</b>
	Total	13,301,197	62,079	0.466717394

Out of 31 Districts in Balochistan, Musa Khel has the lowest number of disability card holders where out of total 49528 CNIC holders, just 10 (0.020 %) are disability card holders. Musa Khel is followed by Dera Bugti with 19 (0.027 %) out of total 69127 CNIC holders and Kech with 60 (0.030 %) of total 195798 CNIC holders. In Balochistan, Zhob with 270 (0.253%) is with the highest number of disability card holders followed by Sibbi 143 (0.173 %) and Naseerabad with 250 (0.153 %).

Total number of computerized national identity card holders and total number of computerized national disability card holders in Balochistan:

Sr. No	District	CNIC Holders	Disability card holders	Percentage
<b>1</b>	<b>Awaran</b>	<b>61609</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0.048694184</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Kalat</b>	<b>104597</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>0.102297389</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Kharan</b>	<b>52620</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0.058912961</b>

Sr. No	District	CNIC Holders	Disability card holders	Percentage
4	Khustar	182408	101	0.055370378
5	Lasbella	207321	159	0.076692665
6	Maspung	87464	81	0.092609531
7	Washuk	36003	50	0.138877316
8	Gawadar	101139	54	0.053391867
9	Kech	195798	60	0.030643827
10	Panjgur	85802	35	0.04079159
11	Kachhi	89936	50	0.05559509
12	Jafarabad	235654	103	0.043708148
13	Jhal Maksi	40602	33	0.081276784
14	Naseerabad	162646	250	0.153708053
15	Sohbat Pur	56131	53	0.094421977
16	Chagai	75990	85	0.111856823
17	Killa Abdullah	197112	76	0.03855676
18	Pishin	204718	277	0.135308082
19	Quetta	680175	835	0.122762524
20	Nushki	71565	96	0.134143785
21	Dera Bughti	69127	19	0.027485642
22	Kohlu	38,941	40	0.102719499
23	Sibbi	82655	143	0.173008287
24	Ziarat	54811	38	0.069329149
25	Harnai	33080	23	0.069528416
26	Barkhan	53499	71	0.132712761
27	Kila Saifullah	91067	98	0.107613076
28	Lora lai	131013	225	0.171738682
29	Musa Khel	49528	10	0.020190599
30	Zhob	106368	270	0.25383574
31	Sheerani	29182	30	0.102803098
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3668561</b>	<b>3533</b>	<b>0.096304791</b>

Out of 28 Districts in Sindh, Omer Kot has the lowest number of disability card holders were out of total 415721 NIC card holders, just 59 (0.014 %) are disability card holders. Umer Kot is followed by Tando Ala Yar with 75 (0.022 %) of total 334626 CNIC holders, followed by Kamber Shehdat Kot with 147 (0.027 %) out of total 532045 CNIC holders. In Sindh, Thatta with 6040 (0.148 %) is with the highest number of disability card holders followed by Shikarpur with 2934 (0.55 %) and Sukkar with 1301 (0.215 %).

Total number of computerized national identity card holders and total number of computerized national disability card holders in Sindh:

Sr. No	District	CNIC Holders	Disability card holders	Percentage
1	Badin	693936	1245	0.179411358
2	Dadu	649431	1071	0.164913594
3	Hyderabad	1035821	1765	0.170396236
4	Thatta	406958	6040	1.484182643
5	Jamshoro	397552	138	0.03471244
6	Tando Mohammad Khan	252174	201	0.079706869

Sr. No	District	CNIC Holders	Disability card holders	Percentage
7	Tando Ala Yar	334626	75	0.022413082
8	Matiari	311974	111	0.035579888
9	Sujawal	326151	201	0.061627896
10	Karachi Central	2059196	1959	0.095134217
11	Karachi East	2283825	2624	0.114894968
12	Karachi South	1363053	1542	0.113128396
13	Karachi West	1539404	1516	0.098479671
14	Karachi Maleer	916683	1442	0.157306288
15	Jacobabad	442246	840	0.189939536
16	Larkana	658581	1027	0.155941334
17	Shikarpur	530053	2934	0.553529553
18	Kambar Shehdad Kot	532045	147	0.027629242
19	Kashmor	388188	229	0.058992035
20	Mir Pur Khas	627052	623	0.099353802
21	Sanghar	885789	824	0.093024411
22	Tharparkar	499986	187	0.037401047
23	Omer Kot	415721	59	0.014192211
24	Ghotki	625901	386	0.061671095
25	Kher Pur	924821	792	0.085638194
26	Noshehroferoz	661079	1077	0.162915476
27	Shaheedbenazirabad	704561	1499	0.212756596
28	Sukkar	604322	1301	0.215282581
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21071129</b>	<b>31855</b>	<b>0.15117842</b>

If persons with disabilities are to be brought into the mainstream national life, then the first step is the identification of persons with disabilities. How can federal and provincial governments devise policies for persons with disabilities when they do not know exact number of persons with disabilities?

### **Engagement with Disability Organizations, Media and Policy Makers:**

CPDI was invited by Pakistan Foundation Fighting Blindness, (PFFB) in a meeting of its board members to strategies the way forward in the wake of police brutality against the blind. We shared copy of the draft Pakistan Disability Act 2014 with the board members and stressed the need for institutional response for enactment of disability law with enforcement mechanism after analysis of the draft law. CPDI promised to conduct analysis of the law and share with PFFB, media and policy makers.

### **Analysis of Proposed Federal and Provincial Disability Law:**

1. The draft Pakistan Disability Act 2015, developed in consultation with World Health Organization, (WHO) and which is under consideration of federal and provincial governments for enactment lacks enforcement mechanism will largely remain ceremonial if not improved. Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI) has grave concerns about the utility of this law in protecting and promoting rights of persons with disabilities. CPDI conducted analysis of the draft Pakistan Disability Act 2014 and the key findings are as under: The proposed Council for the rehabilitation

of disabled persons should be given powers of civil court so that it could get data from public bodies pertaining to the issues of the disabled.

2. The proposed Council is vested with executive authority but it has not been elaborated upon.
3. The law should contain list of rights that are not resource dependant and such a list should be developed after consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities. The proposed Council should be empowered to impose penalty on officials for not getting these rights implemented.
4. The federal government should be bound to allocate funds and the Council shall develop criterion to select poorest of the poor disabled Computerised National Identity disability Card holders who will receive financial assistance through Benazir Income Support Program, (BISP).
5. The Council should be empowered to ensure implementation of 2 % quota in government jobs for the disabled. The Council shall ensure that companies registered with Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, (SECCP) with workforce of over 100 will ensure employment of at least 2 disabled person or pay to the Council monthly sum to be determined by the Council.
6. Deputy Chairperson of the proposed Council will be a disabled person but the process of the nomination of the disabled person has not been elaborated in the law.

CPDI shared this analysis with media through press release on January 08, 2014 and the same day held meeting with Dr. Anis ur Rahman, Vice Chairperson, Pakistan Foundation Fighting Blindness and shared with him the analysis of proposed disability law. CPDI has also shared this disability analysis with key elected representatives in federal and provincial governments through advocacy letters.

## **Conclusion:**

The expression of moral outrage on grave and serious incidents such as police brutality against the blind in Lahore did not contribute to the solving of the issues of the disabled, in fact, the moral outrage ended up drowning voices of the blind who were protesting for the implementation of 2 % quota in government jobs. CPDI followed-up on this story to further the cause of the disability rights movement in the country. It transpired through a TV program when a guest shared that the federal and provincial governments had drafted law to protect rights of the disabled. It was shocking to note that no disability organization had analysed this law and identified its shortcomings. Now that CPDI has conducted analysis of this law and shared it with disability organizations, media and elected representatives, it is hoped that lacunas in the implementation mechanism of draft Pakistan Disability Act 2014 will be removed and an enforcement implementation mechanism will be envisaged in the law so that rights of the disabled could be protected.

Umar Cheema filed an excellent story based on RTI request which brought into the public domain information held by NADRA about the total number of NADRA disability card holders in the country. This data should have been in the public domain in the first place. In fact, NADRA has vital information about the disabled which could provide important insights into the rural/urban divide as well as gender related information about persons with disabilities who have been able to acquire NADRA disability cards. NADRA should proactively disclose data about the disabled through its web site.

CPDI should continue training and facilitating journalists in filing RTI requests. There are immense possibilities of investigative reports based on information received through RTI laws.

Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI) is an independent, non-partisan and a not-for-profit civil society organization working on issues of peace and development in Pakistan. It is registered Under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984 (XLVII of 1984). It was established in September 2003 by a group of concerned citizens who realized that there was a need to approach the issue of peace and development in a an integrated manner. CPDI is a first initiative of its kind in Pakistan. It seeks to inform and influence public policies and civil society initiatives through research-based advocacy and capacity building in order to promote citizenship, build peace and achieve inclusive and sustainable development. Areas of special sectoral focus include promotion of peace and tolerance, rule of law, transparency and access to information, budget watch, legislative watch and development.



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