FROM THE EDITOR

CAME March of 2013 and the planning profession in Pakistan lost its key stalwart. Parveen Rehman took with her a legacy of dedicated, selfless toil at OPP (Orangi Pilot Project) and beyond. Her untimely passing away has left an irreparable void in our community. We are grieved. May Allah rest her soul in peace Ameen!

As election time drew near, all political parties presented their manifestoes and objectives for planning and development. With a new government in power, some steps have been taken and significant changes are expected in the next quarter.

In this second issue of the CURP Newsletter we have attempted to cover the above and more news for the period of January till June 2013. Hopefully, you will find the contents of use. Please do let us know your opinion and suggestions for improvement. We are eagerly looking to your feedback!

NEWS

Parveen Rehman: A Fighter for the Poor Silenced

A media-shy social worker, who devoted her life to the development of the impoverished neighbourhoods across the country, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

“She was a courageous and brave lady, she was a true pupil of Akhtar Hameed Khan who worked in an environment where most people will avoid to work,” said Anwer Rashid, co-director of the OPP-RTI (Orangi Pilot Project-Research and Training Institute).

Arif Pervez, development professional and a friend of hers, said Ms Rehman had been receiving death threats for a long time, apparently from the mafia involved in grabbing precious land on the fringes of the city.

“She had been receiving threats on her life for a long time. We had discussed this several times but every time I advised her to take care of herself, she smiled, waved her hand and said what will they do, I have to work a lot and that too in the middle of the people,” Mr Pervez said.

Ms Rehman was an ardent compiler of the record of precious lands, which were on the fringes of the city in shape of villages but were speedily vanishing into its vastness because of ever-increasing demand by thousands of families who were shifting to Karachi every year from across the country.

She said on record that around 1,500 goths (villages) had been merged into the city since 15 years. Land-grabbers subdivided them into plots and earned billions by their sale.

“She documented everything about the lands that have been grabbed. Another sin of her was to help those whose lands had been grabbed. Yet, she never hesitated to go to the area where her life was constantly under threat,” Mr Pervez said.

Ref: http://dawn.com/2013/03/14/parveen-rehman-a-fighter-for-the-poor-silenced/
Dr. Nadeem ul Haque leaves Planning Commission

Dr. Haque confirmed that he had submitted the resignation on March 25, but it had not been sent to the prime minister by the bureaucrats concerned.

He said he was opposed to holding of meetings of the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) to approve 'selected projects' on the desire of some powerful bureaucrats and had cancelled such meetings.

Earlier, the bureaucracy had withdrawn the portfolio of minister of state for Dr. Haque, although his predecessors, including Ahsan Iqbal, Dr Akram Shaikh and Sardar Assef Ahmad Ali, enjoyed the status in addition to the post of Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Ref: http://dawn.com/2013/05/04/deputy-chief-of-planning-commission-resigns/

Ahsan Iqbal: The New Deputy Chairman Planning Commission of Pakistan

Mr. Ahsan Iqbal is the appointed Federal Minister for Planning and Development and Deputy Chairman Planning Commission of Pakistan, for 2013-18.

Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Member of National Assembly of Pakistan, is Deputy Secretary General of PMLN and served as Federal Minister for Education in 2008. He served as Chairman, Institutional Reforms Group, Government of Punjab during 2012-13. He also held the offices of Deputy Chairman/ Minister of State, Planning Commission during 1998-99 and Chairman, Pakistan Engineering Board.

He initiated Pakistan Vision 2010 Programme and developed Pakistan's first National IT Policy. He heads, Better Pakistan Foundation, a development think tank. He has also served on senior corporate sector positions. He has taught at various reputed national universities and lectured international universities, and leading training programmes.

Ref: http://www.pc.gov.pk/Deputy_Chairedman.htm

PC-I for Super Highway Construction Approved

PC-I of M-9 Project for the construction of Super Highway between Hyderabad and Karachi has been completed and it is to be executed soon after assumption of power by the new provincial government.

The Highway will provide better transportation facilities to the common man and especially to the industrialists of the province.


Govt announces 32% Increase in PSDP 2013-14

ISLAMABAD: The government announced a total Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) of Rs 1.155 trillion for 2013-14, as compared with Rs 873 billion last year, showing a 32 percent increase.

Among the total PSDP, an amount of Rs 295.518 billion has been allocated for the projects of federal government, whereas Rs 615 billion has been earmarked for provinces, to be spent through their Annual Development Programmes, while Rs 10 billion has been allocated for the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA), Corporations (WAPDA and NHA) have been allocated Rs 114.482 billion, Rs 5 billion for special programmes and Rs 115 billion for new development initiatives.

The overall size of the federal PSDP for 2013-14 stands at Rs 540 billion; however, this development outlay would be subject to budgetary announcements in the Finance Bill 2013-14 to be approved by the parliament, while Rs 615 billion will be spent by provinces.

* Total PSDP comes in at Rs 1.155tr with federal PSDP at Rs 540bn and Rs 615bn for provinces.

PSDP Releases 72.9 PC of Target

The government has released Rs169.9 billion, or 72.9 percent, to various ministries and divisions for development projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year against the full-year target of Rs233 billion.

According to official figures released by the Planning Commission, of the total Rs169.9 billion released, Rs85.5 billion has been released for infrastructure projects, Rs78.1 billion for social sector projects and Rs1.9 billion for projects in other sectors under the PSDP 2012-13 as of April 27.


NEWS ABOUT PLANNING INSTITUTIONS

Planning Commission to be Transformed

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to transform the Planning Commission into a knowledge-based think tank to guide the country’s decision-making forum from its current nature of just a project approving and monitoring agency.

Appointment of a full-fledged federal minister for planning and development is the first step towards upgrading the Planning Commission to an independent think tank as compared to a commission which was a division subordinate to the finance ministry that used to be headed by deputy chairman planning commission or at best by a minister of state.


Intelligent Transport System and Command and Control Center for MBS

The Urban Unit Punjab is has successfully designed, installed and commissioned a world class Command and Control Center and Intelligent Transport System for Lahore Metro Bus Service. The system provides smart traffic control solution for the Metro Bus Service (MBS) along with the normal ground traffic all along 27 km corridor. This technology driven and cost effective traffic management solution has been provided with in-house resources and in record time. The Intelligent Transport System installed by the Urban Unit is one of the world best adaptive traffic management systems i.e. Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System (SCATS) which can retain traffic counts of multiple days and utilizes that historical data to implement signal cycle plans.

Ref: http://www.urbanunit.gov.pk/Newsletters/Newsletters%20Archive/April%202013.pdf

Pakistan - Country Assistance Strategy

World Bank group Islamabad has prepared Country Assistance Strategy for Pakistan and is currently consulting various stakeholders for obtaining feedback.

The staff of the World Bank and consultants shall have meetings with different groups of professionals, business community, media organisations, academia and civil society groups to acquire their feedback on turns counts.

Pakistan: Second Sindh Education Sector Project- World Bank

The objective of the Second Sindh Education Sector Project for Pakistan is to raise school participation by improving sector governance, accountability, strengthening administrative systems, and measure student achievement. The components include: preparation of school budgets, both salary and non-salary components, following transparent, objective, and needs-based criteria; and third party support to the districts for managing and monitoring the flow and use of school budgets in line with applicable rules and regulations.


EVENT

Rethinking Urban in Pakistan, Collaborative Workshop at NED University City Campus Karachi, 1-2 January 2013

Organized by the Department of Architecture and Planning, NED University of Engineering & Technology, American Institute of Pakistan Studies, South Asia Institute, University of Texas – Austin and Habib University, Karachi.

Held at NED University's City campus on January 1–2, 2013, AIPS' collaborative workshop "Rethinking the Urban in Pakistan" brought several AIPS members together with anthropologists, urban planners, historians, artists, and activists to discuss how Pakistani cities are changing, and how these changes result in human costs and possibilities.

Ref: http://www.pakistanstudies-aips.org/content/rethinking-urban-pakistan-photos-and-final-report

“Dynamics of Land in Planning”, 8th Seminar on Urban and Regional Planning NED University Karachi, 30th March 2013

The Eight Seminar on Urban and Regional Planning was held on 30th March, 2013 at NED University of Engineering and Technology, Main Campus, Karachi. The event was organized by the Department of Architecture and Planning of the University. The theme of the seminar was “Dynamics of Land in Planning”. The papers presented during the sessions included both international and local authors.

Mr. Tasneem Ahmed Siddiqui, former chief secretary, government of Sindh, and chairman SAIBAN - Action Research for Shelter was the chief guest on the Occasion. Mr. Arif Hasan, Chairman OPP, paid a tribute to Ms. Perween Rehman, Director OPP and Rabiya Siddiqui, Assistant Prof. Department of Architecture and Planning, Dawood College of Engineering and Technology, presented her work.
INTERVIEW Mr. Saleem Aleemuddin; Director OPP-RTI

A discussion on possible directions of development for the CURP newsletter was done in July 2013 with Mr. Saleem Aleemuddin; Director OPP-RTI at the office of OPP-RTI where he shared his thoughts and said, “...the focuses of the newsletter should be more on Karachi and other major cities of Pakistan such as Lahore and Islamabad, the local events and issues of the megalcity Karachi must be emphasized...”

He suggested addressing the various important issues of Karachi including the “Qingqi Rickshaw” which has sprung up spontaneously and expanded enormously, virtually changing the whole traffic pattern and transport system of the city. He also identified the issue of rising number of beggars in Karachi that have fundamentally altered the entire pedestrian movement pattern and transference scheme.

For further issues, Mr. Aleemuddin recommended addition of, “...news about the local planning and academic institutions teaching planning subjects. Furthermore; an institutional introduction of the courses taught in the planning institutions may be propagated...”

PUBLICATIONS

“Strengthening booming cities in developing nations”.
Edited by Roy W. Bahl and Deborah L. Wetzel

“Instant City: Life and Death in Karachi”
By Steve Inskeep
Publisher: Penguin Books

“Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Peshawar, Pakistan”
By Irina Mosel and Ashley Jackson
Publisher: Overseas Development Institute

“Karachi-the mega city of Pakistan: A study of urban land use and land value pattern”
By Shamshad Akhtar
Publisher: Lambert Academic Publishing

“Institutional barriers to sustainable urban transport in Pakistan”
By Muhammad Imran
Publisher: Oxford University Press

“Shikarpur Heritage City-Sindh”
By, Dr. Anila Naem
Publisher: The Express Tribune

“Migration and Small Towns in Pakistan” by Arif Hasan and Mansoor Raza
Publisher: International Institute for Environment & Development

“Urban Pakistan: Frames for Imagining and Reading Urbanism”
Series Editor: Ali Khan Edited by Khalid W. Bajwa
Publisher: Oxford University Press

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Second International Seminar on "Sindh Through the Centuries", December 2013, Karachi
Ref: http://stc.smu.edu.pk/

International Conference 2013 on Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development, 30 Aug. - 1 Sept., 2013, Beijing
Ref: http://urbaneastasia.jimdo.com/spsd2013-beijing/

Second Pakistan Urban Forum “Managed Urbanization: The Road to National Development.”, 09-13 January 2014, Expo Center Karachi

The second Pakistan Urban Forum (PUF-2013), which is envisioned to be held in the second week of January 2014, aims to solicit presentations that examine issues related to the thematic areas outlined below. The Forum seeks to assemble diverse examples of research, urban planning and management practices that have been implemented or can be implemented in Pakistan to address contemporary issues related to the themes under discussion. Papers can focus on a single theme or more than one theme, as the case may be. Case studies, project and program reviews, institutional assessments, policy reviews, and theoretical discourse are encouraged.


The Forum would be organized with the technical assistance of the Punjab Urban Unit, being the secretariat of the Pakistan Urban Forum. Locally the lead partners would be Directorate of Urban Policy & Strategic Planning Sindh, Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi, NED University of Engineering and Technology, Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET), Jamshoro, and other relevant organizations, under the overall supervision of Planning & Development Department, Government of Sindh.

The Forum will provide stakeholders belonging to various professions, a perfect setting for dialogue to discuss various issues, key challenges and opportunities associated across the development sectors and exchange experiences and know how to best improve the capabilities of our cities, municipalities and concerned government agencies to cater for rapid urbanization and consequential management challenges.

Ref: http://pakistanurbanform.com/PUF/index2013.asp#

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