



General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 December 2023

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-third session

19 June–14 July 2023

Agenda item 6

Universal periodic review

Written statement* submitted by Nord-Sud XXI - North-South XXI, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[29 May 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Economic Effects of Terror Attacks on Shias

The constant barrage of assaults on Shias in Pakistan has led to devastation of Shia families in Pakistan. Apart from the immediate impact of the physical violence which is the loss of life and grave injuries caused to the victims of those attacks, there has also been oh severe impact on the economic well-being of the Shia community in Pakistan.

There are multiple testimonies which sure the kind of economic devastation that terrorism leaves in its wake. The reported story of one Sakhidad may be seen in this context:

“My family has been living in Quetta for nearly 40 years before we moved here, our grandfathers lived in Ghazni, Afghanistan. I used to run a restaurant in the main bazaar, behind Quetta city centre. The business was alive between 2001 and 2013. I used to employ six staff, including one Uzbek. During the early 2000s, I managed to maintain it, but the circumstances became increasingly difficult as targeted killings mounted, especially along the Spinny road that my staff and myself had to take every day between home and work. For extra safety measures, i moved my business to Hazara town where it was safer. The first years were not satisfactory but they slowly took off. At the time most Hazaras were shifting their businesses within Hazara town, so it became a bustling place for doing business. As the security situation grew worse, the landlord, who owned the shop, decided to sell it, and I was forced to close down my business.”

Similar is the testimony of Gul Chehra whose husband was a tea seller.

“My husband left Afghanistan to resettle in Quetta at the age of 12 or 13. He ran a tea shop in Mariabad square. My husband was 35 years old when he was killed in a terrorist attack on Jinnah road on 2nd March 2022. The blast left three Hazara dead and 24 wounded. My sister, who lives in Mariabad called, asking if i had made calls to check in on him. I said i had but no luck. Then, she told me that he was among the dead. I panic. My heart broke. I fell to the ground and passed out. It is hard to express in words what we have been going through afterward. Really hard. I do not have a young son to take care of the family financially i had to sell my husband's shop to pay his debts. I have no one to support the family; I am left all on my own. What can I do? Until the victim was alive, I had a normal life. We had everything in the world.”

Life stories show that Shias are also being forced to close their businesses as a safety measure. As Khudadad has testified:

“My family has lived in Quetta, Balochistan for more than three generations. Our life was in very good shape financially, thanks to my father's lucrative business. My father, Haji Shabir Hussain, 45, was killed in his tire shop in the Hazara Ganji area on 11th March 2010. He left behind three sons and a wife. When my father was killed, I was only 11 years old, my older brother was 13, and the eldest was 15. My father ran the business for as long as I can remember, providing the family with a modest livelihood. After the incident, my mother decided that it was better to sell off the shop, because she did not want us to have the same fate as my father. My eldest brother had to take the burden to provide for the family. He struggled against all odds until he could familiarize himself with the new role”

The limited economic opportunities available to the Shias are being further stifled by the atmosphere of terror created for the Shias.

The UN is urged to take cognizance of the stifling of development of Shias as a result of the constant attacks against Shias and urge Pakistan to implement schemes for economic and social support to rehabilitate the communities which have been ravaged by terrorism.