

Musalihati Anjuman: Conventional forum for domestic disputes resolution

ISLAMABAD—Gender Justice through Musalihat Anjumans - conventional regime for domestic disputes resolution is gaining popularity for its efficacy towards realizing noble ends within local norms.

The project of Musalihat Anjumans is being implemented by Local Government and Rural Development Ministry in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 20 selected districts of the country.

Total cost of the project is \$7.44 million and it would be executed from year 2007-11, National Project Director of the project Riaz Akhtar told APP. There are total 1,054 Musalihat Anjumans (MAs), working in 20 districts of the country.

Victims of social injustices report to these Anjumans (panels) for its swift and inexpensive justice, redemption from red-tapism and officialdom thus all

this contribute to a greater transparency, he added.

These Musalihat Anjumans are most effective in eradicating common social issues and resolution of local disputes such as domestic violence, matrimonial disputes, child abuse and vagrancy, forced beggary of females and disabled persons, exclusion of females from inheritance, marriage to Quran, barter marriages, Swara, Wani, Zhagh (asserting ownership over women of the enemy tribe), forced marriages and human trafficking, forced labor, public insult, assault and degradation of females, sexual harassment, dowry disputes arising after divorce, disputes relating to water courses and petty financial dispute, etc.

The official said Musalihat Anjuman, as its name reflects, is a community-based informal inexpensive and effective means towards dispensing justice.

A Musalihat Anjuman comprises of a panel of three Musaleheen (impartial persons) including a women to resolve issues through mediation, arbitration or reconciliation. Anyone can approach MA of his/her own union council (UC) regarding any of the issues given below and other related matters.

Cases to MA can also be referred through courts, elected representatives, policy and any other government or non-government organizations.

Musaleheen assist and encourage disputing parties to identify their issues, minimize misunderstandings, explore areas of compromise and generate options in an attempt to resolve the dispute amicably. They also attempt to ensure proper communication of the views of the parties to each other, assess risks and encourage voluntary dispute resolution.

All the cases brought into the notice of MAs are properly docu-

mented and shared with stakeholders (parties to the dispute), including relevant police stations. These resolutions adopted by Musaleheen are validated and accepted by both parties.

Mehfooz Jan, a household approach committee (Musalihat Anjuman) whenever dispute takes place between wife and husband, especially, the members of the committee are aware about the social status and values of the two parties."

Ghairat Khatoun was the view, "Thanks to these Anjumans, now I am living peacefully with my spouse after protracted ordeal".

Irshad Waheed Chaudhry, a councillor said one of the main reasons for the popularity of the Musalihat Anjuman Project was that these panels did not include political figures who could usually influence the decision.—APP Feature

Afza / File (Press Coverage)
This is APP's own story at "zero" cost to Project!
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Musalihat Anjumans gaining popularity

Islamabad

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