

# NGOs, CBOs INGO



### Final arguments in Perween Rahman murder case today

Five accused facing trial in the Perween Rahman murder case have denied their involvement in the assassination of the renowned rights activist in Karachi eight years ago.

Rahman, who dedicated her life for development of impoverished neighbourhoods, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

The five accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati and three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai aka Swati, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan aka Ahmed Ali aka Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with the high-profile murder of 55-year-old activist.

The matter came up before the ATC-VII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison, on July 31 when all the five accused were brought to the court from the prison.

The judge was set to record statements of the accused persons as required under Section 342 of the criminal procedure code (CrPC).

*ATC records statements of accused in the high-profile case*

The accused individually recorded their statements and all of them denied the allegations of the prosecution about planning, abetting or killing Ms Rahman, the then director of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP).

After recording their statements, the judge fixed Aug 9 (today) to record final arguments from the prosecution and the defence sides. Earlier, the court had recorded testimonies of the witnesses of the prosecution, including the heads and members of five joint investigation teams (JITs), constituted by the provincial and federal governments from time to time on the directives of the Supreme Court to investigate the high-profile murder.

In March, the fifth JIT report revealed that Ms Rahman had named “land grabbers and extortionists” who, she said, were trying to illegally occupy the land of her OPP office. She had revealed this in an interview conducted by journalist Fahad Deshmukh and aired internationally two years before she was killed allegedly by the same group.

The JIT’s head, DIG Babur Bakht Qureshi, said that the team had not only examined the already available record but also probed the case with regard to suspected involvement of the water and land mafia in the killing of Ms Rahman.

“The team had interrogated politicians, journalists and land developers during the course of fresh investigation into the case,” it had added.

The report stated that slain Rahman in the interview aired internationally had mentioned having a dispute with accused Rahim Swati, who wanted to set up a karate centre on the land of the OPP office. In the interview, Ms Rahman had called Rahim Swati as “land grabber and extortionist”.

The probe team concluded that in the light of the evidence and statements of the witnesses it had emerged that Ms Rahman was murdered by Rahim Swati and his accomplices.

According to the prosecution, some of the accused during interrogation had confessed to their involvement in the crime and disclosed that local leaders of the Awami National Party (ANP) had allegedly hired Taliban militants to kill Ms Rahman.

It added that Shamzai and Swati, who were said to be local leaders of the ANP, were living near the OPP office and allegedly tried to obtain a designated area to build a karate centre, but Ms Rahman refused to allow it.

The prosecution also said that all the accused persons were present in a meeting held in January 2013 at Swati’s residence in which they planned Ms Rahman’s murder, adding that they hired a local commander of the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Moosa and Mehfoozullah aka Bhaloo, for the murder.

Initially, a case was registered under Sections 302 (premeditated murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code at the Pirabad police station.

Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 was subsequently incorporated in the case on the basis of a judicial inquiry conducted by then district and sessions judge (west) Ghulam Mustafa Memon on the orders of the SC.  
(By Newspaper’s Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 09/08/2021)

### Seven years on, Perween Rahman murder case lingers

The hearing of the murder case of social activist and proponent of low-income housing, Perween Rahman, was again put off on Tuesday.

An anti-terrorism court has accepted the plea of lawyers to give them more time to conclude arguments in the Orangi Pilot Project Director Perween Rahman murder case.

During the hearing held at the Anti-Terrorism Complex at Karachi Central Jail, the counsels sought time to make final arguments.

The court, while accepting the plea, adjourned the hearing until August 21.

Rahman, a postgraduate diploma in housing, building and urban planning from the Institute of Housing Studies in Rotterdam, Netherlands, was killed on March 13, 2013, when four gunmen opened fire on her vehicle near Pirabad Police Station, ending her 28-year-long career for advocating for land and basic services rights for the underprivileged.

She had been an outspoken critic of the land mafias in Karachi and their political patrons.

Raheem Swati, Imran Swati, Ahmed Khan, Amjad Hussain, and Ayaz Swati are under trial in the case.

**IO absent in Ali Wazir case**

Meanwhile, an ATC directed the investigation officer (IO) to appear at the next date of hearing of the hate speech case against MNA Ali Wazir.

The jail authorities produced Wazir before the court, but the IO was absent. Directing the IO to appear at the next hearing, the court ordered the provision of the case copies to the defendants.

During the hearing, Wazir's counsel submitted an application for his medical treatment.

The court sought a medical treatment report at the next hearing slated for August 17.

Wazir, who was elected to the National Assembly from South Waziristan's NA-50, is accused of inciting the public against the state and using derogatory language against the security forces at a public gathering of around 2,000 participants in Sohrab Goth on December 6, 2020.

The police arrested the lawmaker in Peshawar at the behest of the Sindh Police and flew him to Karachi to face trial.

Currently, the lawmaker is under custody while 10 of his suspected accomplices have acquired bail from the court.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, The Express Tribune, 05, 11/08/2021)

**Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum chairperson passes away**

Civil activist and Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF) founder and chairperson Muhammad Ali Shah passed away on Wednesday succumbing to post-coronavirus complications at the age of 65.

Aggrieved family members said Shah, who suffered from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), had tested positive for the deadly virus a few weeks ago. Shah died of a chest ailment shortly after he recovered from the coronavirus. "His last Covid test came out negative but his condition deteriorated because of his chest problem. The doctors had shifted him onto a ventilator a few days ago," Shah's daughter, Yasmin, told The Express Tribune.

Shah had spent his life fighting for the rights of the fisherfolk and advocating against the impacts of climate change and pollution. Grief swept through the coastal belt of Sindh and Balochistan at the news of his demise and many shut down their businesses in mourning. The late civil activist left behind six children and thousands of followers who mourned his death.

**Illustrious career**

Born in Ibrahim Hyderi - the biggest fisherfolk settlement in Karachi - in 1956, Shah was known as the champion for the rights of fisherfolk. He advocated their case before national and international forums and also served as the chairperson of the Asia region at the World Forum of Fisher People.

He advocated for the rights of detained fishermen, called for the protection of mangroves, struggled for the sustainable living of fisherfolks and campaigned against marine pollution and for the revival of the Indus Delta.

Formally founded in 1998, under his leadership the PFF soon became the representative organisation of fisherfolk.

"It was his struggle which compelled the Sindh government to abolish the contract system in fisheries. After the contract system came to an end, the fishermen became independent to catch fish from water bodies," said Mustafa Mirani, a close aide of the deceased.

Shah, who graduated from the University of Karachi, was active in student politics. His first foray into social work was with the launch of a community development organisation, Anjuman Samajhi Behbood, which focused on girls' education.

"Under Shah's supervision, we started Aurat Saheriyon Sath in 1978 to mobilise the community and educate girls. We succeeded in getting 36 girls enrolled in various schools and colleges. This was the start of our campaign," recalled Sindhi writer Ayoub Shan, a founding member of the PFF. Anjuman Samajhi Behbood was not confined to community services alone, but started campaigning for the rights of fisherfolk living along the coastal belt.

"Our current organization, the PFF, came into being when World Forum of Fisher People organised a global event for fishermen issues in India in 1997 and invited Shah sahab to it. I along with Shah and other colleagues attended the event. The next year we launched PFF," said Ayoub.  
(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune, 04, 19/08/2021)

**Short film on Perween Rahman's life screened at Institute of Business Administration**

The Rasheed Razvi Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (RCCHR) and the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) held a screening of a short film, Into Dust, on the life and works of the late social worker Perween Rahman at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) on Monday evening.



Directed by Orlando van Einsiedel, the movie begins with Perween (played by Indu Sharma) working in the Orangi Town area as head of the project. Not too long into the story, while she is in the back seat of her car, she is shot by a gunman riding a motorcycle. Then the film goes back five years to narrate how the social worker along with her colleague Anwar (Danish Husain) got to know about the water mafia that operates in Karachi, stealing 41 per cent of the city's water.

Subsequently, her elder sister, Aquila (Sudha Bhuchar), gets involved in the project after making an effort to find out who were the people behind her murder.

Taking part in a panel discussion about the film, former Karachi administrator Fahim Zaman said he had known OPP founder Akhtar Hameed Khan and Perween Rahman for a very long time. When her murder took place in 2013, he [Zaman] tried to look into the reasons for the killing. Whenever

he met those whose duty was to investigate the murder, and when he would ask them who the people were behind the killing, they would give a simple answer, "That's not my brief, my job."

*'No one could give a straight answer as to what's the motive behind her killing'*

IBA's Executive Director Akbar Zaidi said he found it very strange that the man at whose place he met Perween on a number of occasions, architect Arif Hasan, had no mention in the film.

"I find this very, very strange ... I can't accept a film on Perween Rahman that doesn't feature Arif Hasan in it. My association with OPP was through Hasan and Akhtar Hameed Khan. In 1983 in Karachi I used to work with Hasan and consider him my guru. I've learned a lot from him. Arif Hasan used to say that 'Perween is the most talented student'. Hasan and Perween often argued about things, but then she would return to him and say 'guru, what to do now'. She had a relationship with him till she breathed her last."

DIG Omer Shahid Hamid said he never met Perween Rahman, but has met her ghost. In 2018, five years after her murder, he as a police officer became the third or fourth person who was handed the investigation [of the case]. The crux was that no one could give a straight answer as to what's the motive behind the killing. "When I got this, it was like a cold case. I got all of my firsthand knowledge through the writings of Perween Rahman. That was where my eyes opened and different aspects of the investigation clarified. That's why I say I never met her but I have met and conversed with her ghost through her writings."

Touching upon the issues of water and land in bigger cities such as Karachi and Rio de Janeiro, he said there are shrinking municipal resources. The conflicts caused by that have political parties and mafias getting involved in them.

#### **'She was always smiling'**

Advocate Faisal Siddiqi said, "I really got to know her when she called me for a lecture in Dec 2012 on the Baldia factory fire. I was very pessimistic and despondent at the time, but that is where I really discovered her. My initial impression of her was that she's just crazy. Since then, whenever I saw her, she was always smiling. I've never seen a person smile as much as Perween Rahman. What a person who's able to smile in a city like Karachi! She would say to me about the Baldia case, tum to jeeto gey (you will win). She was an eternal optimist. That's the first reason we decided to take up her case."

(By Peerzada Salman Dawn, 13, 31/08/2021)

### **Outlawed TTP assassinated Perween Rahman at land grabber's behest, ATC told**

An antiterrorism court was told on Wednesday that prime accused Abdul Raheem Swati, an alleged land grabber, had planned the 2013 murder of renowned social worker Perween Rahman with the help of the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) over a dispute involving a piece of land in Pirabad.

Besides the prime accused Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati and three co-accused — Ayaz Shamzai, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan aka Ahmed Ali aka Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with the high-profile murder of the 55-year-old activist.

On Wednesday, the matter was taken up by the ATC-VII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison, for recording final arguments from the counsel of complainant Aquila Ismail.

Her counsel, Advocate Faisal Siddiqui, submitted that the prime accused Swati had purportedly got recorded his confessional statement before the then SSP Akhtar Farooqui, under Section 21-H of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 1997.

*Defence counsel to rebut complainant's attorney's arguments on 6<sup>th</sup>*

According to his confession, he disclosed that local leaders of the Awami National Party (ANP) had allegedly hired Taliban militants to kill Ms Rahman.

The confessional statement added that Shamzai and Swati, said to be the local leaders of the ANP, were living near the Orangi Pilot Project office and tried to obtain an area to build a karate centre, but Ms Rahman had refused to allow it, the counsel added.

Advocate Siddiqui said that all the accused persons were present in a meeting held in January 2013 at Swati's residence in which they planned the murder, adding that they hired local 'commanders' of the outlawed TTP, Moosa and Mehfoozullah aka Bhaloo, for the murder.

The counsel said that in an interview to a foreign radio service two years before her murder, Ms Rahman had called Raheem Swati a "land grabber and extortionist" and stated that the latter wanted to illegally occupy the land of the OPP's office.

He argued that Ms Rahman's interview corroborated the confessional statement of accused Swati.

Secondly, the counsel claimed that such a confessional statement of the key accused before a police officer was a legally admissible piece of evidence equal to a confessional statement recorded before a judicial magistrate.

To support his argument, the counsel cited rulings of the Supreme Court on the point of legality of the confessional statement of an accused before the district police officer in lieu of a judicial magistrate subject to the circumstances.

Concluding his argument, Advocate Siddiqui said Swati had also confessed that after the murder he had absconded to Swat to avoid his arrest, but he was tracked down and arrested by the police.

After recording his arguments, the judge fixed the matter for Sept 6 to hear final arguments from the counsel for Raheem Swati and Imran Swati.

Defence counsel for co-accused Hussain and Ayaz said they would submit citation on the point in writing on the next hearing.

(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 13, 02/09/2021)

**Verdict in Perween Rahman murder case on 28th**

An antiterrorism court has reserved its verdict till Oct 28 in a case pertaining to 2013 murder of renowned rights activist Perween Rahman.

Five accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati, Ayaz Shamzai, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan aka Ahmed Ali aka Pappu Kashmiri — have been charged with the high-profile murder of the 55-year-old activist.

Ms Rahman, the head of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) 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.

On Friday, the matter came up before the ATC-VII judge, who is conducting the trial in the judicial complex inside the central prison, for recording final arguments from the defence and prosecution sides.

After recording final arguments from the defence counsel, the state prosecutor and counsel for the complainant, the judge reserved the verdict to be pronounced on Oct 28.

Earlier, Advocate Faisal Siddiqui, counsel for complainant Aquila Ismail, submitted that key accused Rahim Swati, an alleged land grabber, had planned the murder of Ms Rahman and executed it with help of the Taliban over a dispute involving a piece of land in Peerabad.

He said that he had recorded his confessional statement before the then SSP Akhtar Farooqui, under Section 21-H of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 stating that local leaders of the Awami National Party (ANP) had hired Taliban militants to kill Ms Rahman.

The confessional statement added that Shamzai and Swati, said to be local leaders of the ANP, were living near the OPP office and tried to obtain a designated area to build a karate centre, but Ms Rahman had refused to allow it, the counsel added.

Advocate Siddiqui said that all the accused persons were present in a meeting held in January 2013 at Swati's residence in which they planned Ms Rahman's murder, adding that they hired a local commander of the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Moosa, and Mehfoozullah aka Bhaloo for the murder.

The counsel argued that the confessional statement of the key accused before police was a legally admissible evidence equal to the confessional statement recorded before a judicial magistrate under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

The court was pleaded to punish the accused strictly in accordance with the law.

The defence counsel for accused Rahim Swati, Imran Swati and Muhammad Ali alias Pappu contended that his clients could not be tried and punished merely on the basis of the evidence full of glaring contradictions.

Advocate Shah Imroze Khan argued that the victim had purportedly disclosed the name of some land grabbers and extortionists including Rahim Swati in an interview given to a foreign radio two years before her assassination, but she had also named some politicians including the Muttahida Qaumi Movement's Dr Farooq Sattar and party's former MPA from Orangi Town Abdul Quddos.

However, the Joint Investigation Team, constituted on the directives of the Supreme Court to probe the matter, did not mention the names of these politicians in its report, he added.

The counsel said that the prosecution had relied upon the purported confessional statement voluntarily recorded by Rahim Swati before the SSP Farooqui, which was highly doubtful, as there were serious defects such as the SSP did not give any plausible reason for recording his purported confessional statement himself instead of producing him before a judicial magistrate to record such a statement under Section 164 of the CrPC. (By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 14, 17/10/2021)

**Judgement in Perween Rahman murder case postponed**

An antiterrorism court on Thursday postponed pronouncement of its judgement in a case pertaining to the 2013 high-profile murder of renowned rights activist Perween Rahman in Karachi.

Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati and their three co-accused Ayaz Shamzai aka Swati, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan aka Ahmed Ali aka Pappu Kashmiri have been charged with murdering the 55-year-old activist.

Perween Rahman, the then head of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), who devoted her life to the development of impoverished neighbourhoods, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Thursday, the ATC-VII judge was set to finally pronounce his judgement, which was reserved on Oct 15 after recording evidence and final arguments during the trial.

*Prosecutor seeks filing of amended charges against the accused*

All the accused were brought to the court from prison.

At the outset of the hearing, special public prosecutor Neel Parkash moved an application on behalf of the state.

The prosecutor submitted in court that he had been given the case recently which had entirely been proceeded by his predecessors in different courts.

Mr Parkash said that he had gone through contents of the confessional statement of the main accused, Muhammad Raheem, alias Raheem Swati, which was recorded before the then SSP Investigation-(I) West Zone Akhtar Farooqui under Section 21-H of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1999.

He submitted that he had also gone through the statement recorded before the court by SSP Farooqui, who had clearly deposed about hatching of a conspiracy by the accused persons for committing the murder of Perween Rahman which is a matter of record.

Therefore, the prosecutor urged the judge to allow his application for framing an amended charge, against the accused persons with regard to hatching the conspiracy to kill Perween Rahman, under Section 120-B of the Pakistan Penal Code in view of the stated facts and circumstances.

The judge issued notices to the counsel for the complainant, Advocate Salahuddin Panhwar, and defence counsel Advocates Shah Imroz Khan and Ajab Khan Khattak to advance arguments on the application on Nov 3.

Till then, the judge postponed pronouncement of his judgement in the main case.

#### **Final arguments**

Earlier, while concluding final arguments, Advocate Faisal Siddiqui for the complainant, Aquila Ismail, had contended that the prime accused Rahim Swati, was a land grabber, who had planned 2013 murder of Perween Rahman and executed it with the help of Taliban over a dispute involving a piece of land in Peerabad.

He further contended that Swati had also got his confessional statement recorded before the then SSP Akhtar Farooqui, under Section 21H of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

According to his confession, certain local leaders of the Awami National Party (ANP) had hired Taliban militants to kill Ms Rahman. He added that Shamzai and Rahim Swati were living near the Orangi Pilot Project office and they tried to obtain a designated area to build a karate centre, but Perween Rahman had refused to allow it, the counsel added.

Mr Siddiqui said that all the accused persons were present in a meeting held in January 2013 at Swati's residence in which they planned Perween Rahman's murder, adding that they hired a local commander of the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Moosa, and Mehfoozullah, aka Bhaloo, for the murder.

The counsel said in an interview to a foreign radio two years before her murder, that Ms Rahman had called Rahim Swati a "landgrabber and extortionist" and stated that the latter wanted to illegally occupy the land of the OPP's office.

He argued that Perween Rahman's interview corroborated the confessional statement of accused Rahim Swati.

Secondly, the counsel argued that such confessional statement of the prime accused before the police officer was a legally admissible evidence equal to a confessional statement recorded before a judicial magistrate under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

To support his argument, the lawyer had cited rulings rendered by the Supreme Court on the point of legality of a confessional statement of an accused before the district police officer in lieu of a judicial magistrate subject to circumstances.

Concluding his argument, Faisal Siddiqui said Rahim Swati had also confessed that after the murder of Perween Rahman he had gone to the Swat valley to escape arrest, but he was tracked down and arrested by the police.

The court was pleaded to punish the accused strictly in accordance with the law.

On the other hand, the defence counsel contended that his clients could not be tried and punished merely on the basis of evidence that was full of glaring contradictions.

Advocate Shah Imroze Khan argued that the victim had purportedly disclosed the name of some landgrabbers and extortionists, including Rahim Swati, in an interview given to a foreign radio two years before her alleged assassination, but she had also named some politicians, including Muttahida Qaumi Movement senior leader Dr Farooq Sattar and its former MPA from Orangi Town Abdul Quddus.

However, the Joint Investigation Team, constituted on the directives of the Supreme Court to probe the matter had not mentioned names of these politicians in its report, he added.

The counsel further argued that the prosecution claimed that accused Swati had remained a general councillor and also sector in-charge of the Awami National Party in the area, adding that the ANP had no post of 'sector in-charge' in its organisational structure.

He maintained that the JIT had recorded the statement of journalist Fahad Deshmukh, who had interviewed Perween Rahman, after a delay of six years that did not make sense. In the purported interview, Perween Rahman had named 'landgrabbers' for attempting to occupy the land of her office, but the prosecution failed to establish the role of Rahim Swati as a landgrabber, he claimed.

Secondly, the counsel pointed out that the prosecution had relied upon the confessional statement purportedly recorded by Rahim Swati voluntarily before SSP Akhtar Farooqui, who claimed the latter was arrested on May 7, 2013 while he was actually arrested in 2016.

His confessional statement was highly 'doubtful', as there were serious defects such as SSP Farooqui did not give any plausible reason for recording purported confessional statement of Swati himself instead of producing him before a judicial magistrate to record such a statement under Section 164 of the CrPC.

If the accused had 'voluntarily' recorded his confessional statement then why his thumbprint impression was missing from the document, he questioned.

The counsel had also claimed that such a purported confession was kept by SSP Farooqui in his custody without 'sealing' the documents, which he had also admitted during his cross-examination.

The counsel claimed that there was no material evidence available with the prosecution against the accused since the incident was an "unseen occurrence" as the prosecution failed to examine any private witness from the crime scene despite the fact the incident took place in a Pakhtun market place.

Advocate Khan argued that the empties collected from the crime scene had also matched with a pistol used by another accused Qari Bilal, therefore, such forensic evidence also did not implicate Swati in the offence.

Regarding the role of accused Imran Swati and Ahmed Ali alias Pappu, the counsel said police had initially released Imran for being innocent under Section 169 of the CrPC, but later detained him for allegedly being a facilitator in the offence after an amended charge was framed in the case.

However, the punishment for such an offence is seven years while Imran's incarceration in jail has surpassed this period, he added.

Similarly, he argued that the prosecution alleged that Ahmed Ali had allegedly disclosed about a meeting in which it was decided to kill Perween Rahman, but such an offence also carries lesser punishment of imprisonment that he had already almost undergone.

Therefore, the counsel pleaded, the accused by acquitted of the "false and fabricated charges".

Initially, a case was registered under Sections 302 (premeditated murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code at the Pirabad police station.

Later, Section 7 (punishment for acts of terrorism) of the ATA 1997 was incorporated in the case on the basis of a judicial inquiry conducted by then district and sessions judge (west), Ghulam Mustafa Memon, on the orders of the SC.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 13, 29/10/2021)

### **Order reserved on plea to amend indictment in Perween Rahman murder case**

An antiterrorism court on Monday reserved its order on an application for framing amended charge against accused facing trial in the 2013 murder of renowned rights activist Perween Rahman.

Five accused — Abdul Raheem Swati, his son Mohammad Imran Swati, Ayaz Shamzai, Amjad Hussain Khan and Ahmed Khan aka Ahmed Ali aka Pappu Kashmiri — have already been charged with the murder of the 55-year-old activist.

Ms Rahman, the then head of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) who devoted her life to the development of the impoverished neighborhoods across the country, was gunned down near her office in Orangi Town on March 13, 2013.

On Monday, ATC-VII judge took up an application previously moved by the prosecution pleading to also indict the accused for hatching a conspiracy to kill Ms Rahman.

Defence counsel for the accused persons, however, had opposed the application arguing that it was a tactic to delay the pronouncement of the verdict in the case, which was already reserved on Oct 15 following the eight-year-long trial.

After hearing arguments, the judge reserved his order on the plea to be pronounced on Nov 24.

On Oct 15, the judge had reserved his judgement in the main case for Nov 3, but the same was postponed after the prosecutor moved the application.

In the plea, prosecutor Neel Parkash stated that he had gone through the contents of the confessional statement of the main accused Raheem Swati, which was recorded before the then SSP Investigation-(I) West Zone Akhtar Farooqui under Section 21-H of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1999.

The prosecutor stated that he had also gone through the statement recorded before the court by SSP Farooqui, who had clearly deposed about a conspiracy hatched by the accused persons for committing the murder of Perween Rahman, which is a matter of record.

Therefore, he had pleaded the judge to frame an amended charge against the accused persons with regard to hatching the conspiracy to kill Ms Rahman, under Section 120-B of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Initially, a case was registered under Sections 302 (premeditated murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code at the Pirabad police station.

Later, Section 7 (punishment for acts of terrorism) of the ATA was incorporated in the case on the basis of a judicial inquiry conducted by then district and sessions judge (west) Ghulam Mustafa Memon on the orders of the Supreme Court.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter, Dawn, 14, 16/11/2021)

### **Akhtar Hameed Khan's contribution to urban public projects highlighted**

The Akhtar Hameed Khan Conference on Social Development organised by the NED University of Engineering and Technology, at their City Campus on Saturday didn't just celebrate the life and times of the renowned social scientist and development practitioner but also looked at his kind of work and wisdom.

Speaking about his contribution in evolving urban public projects, architect and town planner Arif Hasan said that Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan's thinking was based on making one self sufficient.

"He wanted communities to work at providing basic infrastructure for themselves developing an understanding of each other while working collectively together," said Mr Hasan.

"He had good reason for this. He used to say that there has been too much physical and social dislocation due to which local governance systems are losing their roles as new communities with misplaced roots emerge. They need to get together again to work and bond," he said.

*The renowned social scientist's motto was simple living*

"Through his programmes for development, he wanted to spread awareness and teach the people some skill as well," he added.

**Orangi sanitation project**

Talking about the sanitation project in Orangi Town, Mr Hasan said that Akhtar Hameed Khan's sanitation project had several issues. He said that in 1981, when he appeared on the scene he found him looking for some solutions. "The UN adviser appointed by the BCCI wanted Doctor Sahib to move from Orangi to a nice spot with a nice office where international donors would feel comfortable. But he would not budge because he said that the people they wanted to help, the people of Orangi, felt at home at his Orangi office. He was also against air conditioning, which eventually had to be brought in for the computers.

"Then the UN advisers wanted students as social organisers while Doctor Sahib wanted community people appointed there. But the UN advisers saw them as just musclemen. The students, graduates actually, were seen more useful for documentation. Then when they needed a map of Orangi there wasn't one. A survey company was called. They provided an estimate. Doctor Sahib had a problem with their cost. He then wondered if the students could do the survey instead. We brought in 40 students from Dawood College and NED for the survey. These students would be roaming around Orangi. They would spend time with the people of the community and that helped them learn about katchi abadis, which they took back to their universities," he said.

"The social organisers were important, but they were not students or graduates. They were all from Orangi — a community activist, a plumber, a rickshaw driver, a land developer, which one would call an encroacher. But they were really our teachers. They taught us about the real issues of the area," he said.

He also said that in 1981 when he began his involvement with the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP), he was asked some key questions by Akhtar Hameed Khan.

"He asked me why a sanitation programme was so expensive. Why it required loans? Could it be made cheaper so that people could do it themselves? I explained that that government sanitation costs were six to seven times more due to various factors including old tendering ways and the way contractors were hired. Then our international loans doubled the government's costs. We had taken many development loans and say one rupee labour material would cost Rs20 as a result. We took this to the governor of Sindh who realised that projects worth Rs100 million could be done in Rs20m. Then if we brought in our own engineering standards while relieving the contractors also, the construction cost of Rs 4,000 would drop to Rs 600. Doctor Sahib found that quite affordable and acceptable.

"We looked at sanitation in two parts — internal development and external development. For the internal part, the people of the community would make sewers and the government would make sewerage plants. But our standards and way of work brought on several arguments. We were informed that the system will collapse. I was seen as some kind of a quack and the system I had designed was said to be under-designed. I said that I have not studied sanitation so they were welcome to call in a proper engineer. But Doctor Sahib was afraid that the new fellow would demand too much. So he stuck with me and said that 'we will sink or swim together'. Then the foreign experts who were sure that our system was a failure returned to find it holding up very well. They wanted our calculations, they wanted to team up for a joint patent of the design. We didn't want a patent. We wanted it used by all," he said.

**'Govt lost an opportunity of a century'**

Earlier, in his keynote address, Rural Support Programmes Network chairman Shoaib Sultan Khan spoke about Akhtar Hameed Khan's life, from Comilla (in Chittagong, Bangladesh) to Orangi.

He spoke about his innate qualities, his scholarship, his vision, his Buddhist way of life, his understanding of Quran and his passion for helping others.

"He had a versatile and complete personality. He was a complete human being whose motto was simple living. He carried praise for the British but he left civil service because he believed that they could not teach him anymore than he had learned from them. And then he became a labourer," he said.

"When I had first heard of Akhtar Hameed Khan from the younger brother of a colleague in Comilla, he was all praise about his principal. I had dismissed it as the babbling of a teenager. But then three years later, I myself came face to face with the man himself," he said before speaking at length about their lasting association.

"He wanted self-sustaining programmes and that is what he was doing with OPP. He said that the government was fickle and as it changed, it changed its mind. So he was not in favour of funding and grants. His greatest quality was flexibility and keeping an open mind. He had the vision and foresight to change circumstances and had faith in the self-reliance of people. The government didn't use his expertise, and in that it lost an opportunity of a century," he said.

In his welcome address, Prof Dr Noman Ahmed, head of the Department of Architecture and Planning at NED University, said that Akhtar Hameed Khan's life and work reminds us to follow his kind of thinking. "His work and the organisations he set up ask to be revisited by our youth. And that's the aim and focus of this conference," he said.

The many others who spoke included researcher Mansoor Raza, Senator Taj Haider, rights activist Karamat Ali, Rabia Siddiqui of Dawood College and Tasneem Siddiqui of Khuda ki Basti were also among the many who spoke and shared their fond memories.

Meanwhile, Anwer Rashid, Dr Mansoor Ali, Hafiz Rashid and Sumera Gul, who were also close associates of Akhtar Hameed Khan and worked with OPP at different times in various capacities, sent in recorded messages.

Community development practitioner Fayyaz Baqir joined in live from Canada.  
(By Shazia Hasan Dawn, 13, 21/11/2021)