

- 1) The incident had taken place during the night between 2nd and 3rd January 2005. The conduct of the PPL Management is deplorable and its commutation is clearly justified.
- 2) Under section 173 of the Pakistan Criminal Procedure Code 1898 (Act V of 1998), police is required to complete every investigation of a crime without unnecessary delay and as soon as it is completed the officer-in-charge of the police station is bound to forward, through the public prosecutor, a police report in the form prescribed to the concerned Magistrate (known as the Challan) whereafter proceedings are initiated.
- 3) It is further provided in section 173 that where investigation is not completed within a period of 14 days of the recording of the First Information Report (FIR), the Officer-in-charge of the Police Station shall, within 3 days of the expiry of the 14 days period forward to the Magistrate an Interim Report in the form prescribed, stating the result of the investigation made until then (known as the Interim Challan), and the Court shall commence the trial on the basis of such interim report, unless, for reasons to be recorded, the Court decides that the trial should not so commence.
- 4) In the present case, investigation is on its face either sloppy and extremely inefficient or the investigation team is under great pressure or influence and therefore not able to complete the investigation and submit the Challan.
- 5) The case having become a high profile case, efficient and honest officer or officers should have been appointed to conduct the investigation.
- 6) With a good efficient and honest team, the investigation could have been completed in a few days. The delay is unexplainable. Why has the police investigation team dragged its feet is a question that naturally raises doubts about the impartial and independent nature of investigation.
- 7) Later on a Judge of the Balochistan High Court was appointed under the Inquiries Act to hold an inquiry into the incident. It should be kept in mind that the Judge is acting as an Inquiry Officer and not holding a trial. He will submit his report to the Provincial Government after completing his inquiry. 15 days time was fixed for submission of the Report but the Report is still awaited.
- 8) In the meantime the victim and her immediate family suffers. It is extremely difficult to feel the extent of their suffering. It is unimaginable. The victim and her husband feel so harassed by the delay and also hounded by publicity that they want to leave the country. This would be unfortunate as the case against the culprits

will more or less collapse in their absence but one can understand their desire in the terrible situation they find themselves with no light at the end of the tunnel.

- 9) The civil society in Pakistan should step up the pressure with support from APPNA and other organizations abroad for immediate completion of investigation and then trial of the culprits commencing thereafter and being completed in a matter of weeks and not months or years. There should be meaningful protection of the couple and their family by the government till the trial is concluded.

Unless voices are raised, complaints made to the concerned authorities and public pressure built up, the case may drag on. What is being done by APPNA is really commendable. They should continue with their efforts and go on raising their voices for justice to the victim and that will be achieved if the investigation/inquiry is completed without any further delay and commencement of the trial against the culprits and its conclusion at the earliest. I may appropriately quote Late Robert Kennedy from one of his speeches :-

" Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

We must always keep in mind that we are not only fighting for justice only for Dr. Shazia but also for thousands of other unfortunate girls and women who suffer the same or other similar fate. Voice must continue to be raised against injustice specially suffered by vulnerable sections of our society that is the women. The struggle must go on. Results will follow.

Regards,
Nasir Aslam Zahid.