

Criminology

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In an impressive but simple and dignified ceremony held at the National Police Academy (NPA), Islamabad, on May 8, 2009, the *Pakistan Journal of Criminology* (Journal) was launched. This Journal is the first research publication of the newly established Pakistan Society of Criminology (PSC). The ceremony was attended by judges, police officers, trainee officers of the NPA, media persons, diplomats, representatives of NGOs and CSOs and citizens concerned. The inaugural function was hosted by the NPA at its beautiful campus in the scenic Sector H-11 of the Capital City, Islamabad. Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly was the chief guest. The other distinguished guests at presiding chairs were: Mr. Moazzam Hayat, Director-General, Federal Judicial Academy, Islamabad; Mr. Mirza Muhammad Ali, Commandant, National Police Academy and Ms Alice Shackelford, Country Director, UNIFEM and Mr. Fasihuddin, PSP as Editor-in-Chief of the Journal. The Deputy Speaker was invited to open the ceremony by receiving the very first copy of the first issue of the Journal.

In his opening speech, Mr. Fasihuddin, introduced the Society and the Journal to the audience. Describing criminology, he quoted the words of Tim Newburn:

“Criminology is a strange beast, with its origin in medico-legal science and psychiatry in nineteenth century social reforms movements, with domination by sociology in the twentieth century, and now in the twenty first century, a new strand of technical and highly policy oriented scientific criminology is emerging.”

About the reaction of society towards crimes, he said that “we see crimes, we observe crimes, we read about crimes, we hear about crimes, but we don't study it, we don't analyze it, we don't take it as an issue, as a problem, as a disease, as a challenge and as a responsibility to do something about it.” He elaborated the concept of indigenous development of criminology that it “focuses on local issues, more discretely, more precisely, more meticulously, and then articulates and which results as policy choices, which are empirically supported, historically proven and culturally acceptable.” He highlighted the “inside-out” approach of understanding the field in Pakistan through which correct and calculated decisions can be made by the policy makers.

He also informed the audience that the Journal will be published quarterly and the next issue is dedicated to the subject of child rights and juvenile justice. Another important area highlighted by Mr. Fasihuddin was that the PSC is working on establishing an Institute of Criminology, Research and Justice Education in Pakistan with the help of a foreign university. About further publications of the PSC, he informed that the Society has published a book titled *Expanding Criminology to Pakistan* and is now making efforts to

publish an Urdu version of Prof. Kam C. Wong's book *Chinese Policing*. Further, the future programmes of the Society include holding of annual meeting on a thematic area, workshops and other such activities to promote the discipline of Criminology. At the end, Mr. Fasihuddin requested the academics, researchers, scholars and all concerned in judiciary, police and law enforcement to come forward and contribute their research for publication in the Journal.

Mr. Mirza Muhammad Ali, the Commandant, National Police Academy, in his speech highlighted the importance of criminology. He opined that “we must analyze and study human actions violative of law, but equally important is the study of human mind, environment and response to exploitative economic system which prompt a citizen to turn into a criminal.” “The study of Criminology is, thus, of paramount importance for the police to play a proactive role in crime control and advising the government on formulating correct policies about correlates of crime,” he observed. He appreciated the Society for initiating pioneer job of research and publications in the field of criminology. About Mr. Fasihuddin, he remarked: “As a pioneer of Pakistan Society of Criminology he has actually made us feel the urgency of the situation and has tried to make the police leadership abreast of the latest trends in policing. He is a man of unique abilities and unwavering determination. I am sure his efforts will bear fruit and this Society will turn out to be a think tank for discussion and evolving better crime control strategies under the present challenges of terrorism, militancy, extremism and rapid erosion of our value system.” Mr. Ali was pleased to offer the services of the NPA as a focal place for conducting conferences, seminars on these issues and help the PSC in achieving its mission of a more safe and peaceful Pakistan.

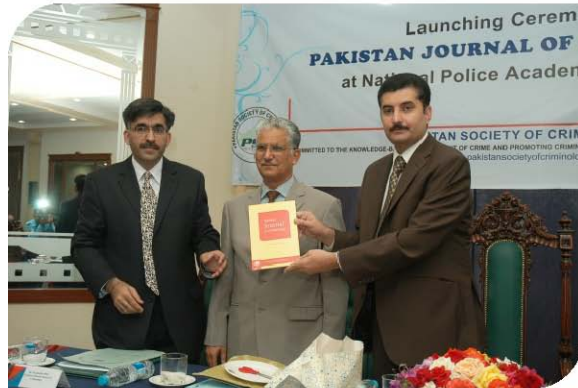
Mr. Moazzam Hayat, Director-General of Federal Judicial Academy opened his speech with remarks that “society cannot be reformed unless [police] culture is changed”. He emphasized that the police in Pakistan must consider changing its institutional behaviour so that citizens feel comfortable going to police for any of their grievances. He quoted the example of England where policepersons are called “bobby” by the citizens which shows their love and trust in the UK institution of police. He also emphasized that the lack of sufficient training of the police force is also a major cause for deterioration of the institution. About the Journal, he remarked: “The Journal published by the Pakistan Society of Criminology is a positive step towards combating crime. A good effort has definitely been made by the Society in determining various factors which are responsible for spreading evil in Pakistan.” He also evaluated the style and content of the articles published in the first issue of the Journal and appreciated the work. About the audience of the Journal, Mr. Hayat recommended that the Journal should also include simple articles / essays which can be read and understood easily by all ranks including juniors to seniors in the police and other relevant departments. This will help raise their understanding of the issue. He dilated upon the menace of suicide attacks and attributed this to “misguided religiosity” and to “poverty”. He concluded his speech aptly with: “by learning criminology, we can fight criminality”.

Ms Alice Shackelford, Country Director, UNIFEM also spoke on the occasion and was very appreciative of the initiative the Society had taken in launching the Journal. She highlighted the importance of research in advanced countries and informed that through such type of publications, the policy makers seek guidance for future policies and actions. She also explained the role of UNIFEM in Pakistan and the state of children and women related issues with which UNIFEM is dealing. She assured all the support of UNIFEM for further development of the Journal and the proposed Institute of Criminology.

Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, the Honorable Deputy Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan made his speech as chief guest of the function. He lauded the efforts of the PSC in conducting research and publishing research material in a very short period of time. Highlighting the importance of the Journal, he remarked: "This Journal will no doubt apprise the international community of the ground realities, the issues being faced by the law-enforcing agencies as well as by the nation, and the measures that are being taken." His Honor continued: "It is high time that criminological studies and research be taken very seriously in Pakistan, and efforts be made to compensate for the precious time we have already lost in this regard. This pioneer Journal is a proof that we are now moving in the right direction." He also appreciated the efforts of the Society in establishing itself as a data-bank for empirical studies and to work as a think tank in the field of criminology a rare phenomenon in our country. Mr. Faisal Karim Khan Kundi demanded the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) to evaluate and incorporate the syllabus of MSc Criminology in all national universities as drafted by Mr. Fasihuddin in his book, *Expanding Criminology to Pakistan*. He assured the Society of all possible assistance in establishing the Institute of Criminology.

The ceremony concluded with a note of thanks by Mr. Fasihuddin. He informed the participants of the website address of PSC which is www.pakistansocietyofcriminology.com. Copies of the Journal were distributed among the participants. The text of speeches, relevant pictures of the event and all other information relating to the work and role of PSC can be read at the above mentioned website. Researchers, think-tanks, policy makers and the public are encouraged to send their suggestions for improvement and feedback on the Journal and the PSC.

Glimpses



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