

Hyderabad: Fisherwomen seek release of water into sea

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HYDERABAD, Sept 1: A convention of fisherwomen demanded on Sunday protection to fishermen from influential feudal lords who had occupied most of the sweet water resources in the province, issuance of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto card for catching fish and release of 35 MAF water into the sea to save the Indus delta.

The convention organised by the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum adopted several resolutions, demanding that the right of two million fishermen to catch fish in the sweet waters of the province should be restored, the fisherwomen should be extended small loans and basic facilities should be provided to fishermen's villages.

A resolution demanded that the government should take action against the influential feudal lords and landlords, who had occupied most of the sweet water resources, frame a new fisheries policy in consultation with fishermen and stop sale of islands and coastal areas.

The forum's central chairman Syed Mohammad Ali Shah condemned the excesses of contractors and landlords and influential people and said that tens of thousands of fishermen were still without basic facilities even in the 21st century.

He said that the fishermen had inherent right over the sweet waters of the province and warned that if any one tried to deprive them of their right, they would fight back.

He called upon the government to formulate a viable fisheries policy, which guaranteed the fishermen's right to catch fish in sweet waters of the province and ensured provision of all basic facilities to their villages.

He said that the jurisdiction of provinces over seawater should be accepted.

The forum's vice-chairperson Ms Tahira Ali Shah said that the presence of hundreds of fisherwomen at the convention was a clear proof of the fact that they were ready to struggle shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts for the rights.

Sindhiani Tahreek leader Ms Nazeer Qureshi, noted writer Prof Amar Sindhu, Ms Humera Noor, Ms Bhagi and Ms Maryam also spoke at the convention.

Bureau Report

P.S.

* From Dawn , September 02, 2008.

<http://www.dawn.com/2008/09/02/local18.htm>

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