

Karachi: Human security with cut in defence budget stressed – Dialogue on peace

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By Our Reporter

KARACHI, June 12: Students of different universities in Sindh and India called for ensuring human security for regional peace and stressed the dire need for extensive academic and institutional collaborations between Pakistan and India.

The students in their two-day interaction resolved this at the conclusion of Fourth Regional Dialogue on Peace and Youth Cooperation arranged by the BARGAD, a Punjab-based NGO, in collaboration with International Relations Department of Karachi University on Monday.

Five students from the universities of New Delhi and Mumbai also participated in the dialogue during which the need for building linkages between the educational institutions of Pakistan and India was strongly recommended. Inclusion of human rights in the curriculum and removing hatred and biased literature and content from the history and textbooks taught in both countries was also emphasised.

The purpose of the dialogue was to provide opportunities to the selected students of Pakistan and India to promote peace and youth cooperation process in South Asia through thematic exchange of ideas, networking and advocacy.

The students and faculty members from the University of Karachi, NED University, Aga Khan University, Institute of Business Administration, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai University and Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology actively participated in the dialogue.

Five students from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Mumbai University and its affiliated colleges also attended the dialogue after hectic struggle to get visa and security clearance from the Interior Ministry of Pakistan.

This was the first such Pakistan-India dialogue between the students of Delhi, Mumbai and Sindh varsities.

In his opening remarks, BARGAD Board of Directors Chairperson Dr Qaiser Bengali said that the dialogue was an important step in demolishing all barriers of a certain mindset and finding solutions to the problems of South Asia, especially in the context of peace and security.

Sabiha Shaheen gave an overview of the BARGAD and highlighted the objective of the organisation.

Dr Sikander Mehdi, programme coordinator, in the plenary discussion on Peace Building and Youth in South Asia raised the issue of identity of the people of the region to secure region focusing human security. He called for contributing in the regional peace maintaining individual identities.

The chairperson of KU's International Relations Department Dr Khalida Ghous, while chairing the

session on “Non-military sources of conflict between India and Pakistan,” called for opening the minds and follow the line of developed countries to focus on human security.

The panellists of the session, Huma Baqai of Karachi University, Moonis Ayaz Sheikh of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai University, and Saima Jasam of Hennric Boll Foundation, a Germany-based INGO, urged the need to cut defence expenditures on both sides of India and Pakistan.

They said that security of the nations did not mean maintaining power and nuclearisation but assuring the provision of human rights and focusing on the non-military sources of security like development, removing poverty and strengthening civil society and institutions.

Addressing the session on Perspectives on Kashmir, Dr Moonis Ahmar urged the need to resolve the Kashmir issue through dialogue.

The students called for considering Kashmiris the real stakeholders of the issue and urged the need to address the issue according to the wishes of Kashmiris.

Prof A.R. Malik, Vice-Chancellor of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai University, appreciated the ongoing composite dialogue between the two countries and called for enhancing the circle of such debates.

He stressed the need for developing linkages between the academia on the both sides.

The dialogue ended up with a certificate distribution.

Dr Sikander Mehdi and Dr Mehtab Shah awarded certificates among the students.

P.S.

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