

# **The Role of Internet to fight corruption in Pakistan**

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**Published: July 3, 2011**

Pakistan has swiftly emerged as a country of multiple problems and rampant corruption during past two decades and ranks amongst the most dangerous countries for journalists. Poverty ridden people recently axed with another 14 percent rise in inflation and electricity spiked terribly 24 percent whereas the country remained under the cloak of darkness in sizzling heat because of power shortages of around 10 hrs a day.

The recent report released by the World Bank has acknowledged the fact that Pakistan is plunging into grave poverty after some positive growth in last decade.

From 2002 to 2010, the United States gave \$13.3 billion in security-related aid to Pakistan, and \$6 billion for economic assistance. More than \$3 billion were requested for 2011.

For the 2012 fiscal year, the Obama administration has requested about \$3 billion in foreign aid for Pakistan, and an additional \$2.3 billion to help the country's counterterrorism efforts. This money was good enough to wipe poverty out of Pakistan, enhance people access to clean water and nutrient food, eliminate energy crisis and put together a strong judiciary to prosecute the criminals and eliminate radicalism. Only the politicians, bureaucrats and high ranking public officials of Pakistan and Afghanistan have been the direct beneficiary of this colossal spending.

The U.S Senator John Kerry's proposed package to Pakistan is \$7.5 billion spanned over five years. Corruption, inability and incompetence of the government of Pakistan has brought the further aid to a halt as the previously given money only made politician and bureaucrats richer than ever.

The modernization of telecommunication and putting all the data on the net will help enormously to start a fight against corruption in Pakistan. The recordings of all incoming and outgoing calls to and from the public service departments would minimize the chances of brazen demands of bribery and abusive government officials. Central Board of Revenue-CBR, trial of politicians urging people for submission of online tips with incentives and privacy assurance, Police Stations, Banks and financial institutions must also be included in this network. Most of the police reports are not filed because of several reasons including embarrassment and uniformed crimes. If there is an option to file an online complaint, it would make a real difference specifically for women. Our fact finding visits and calls to The State Bank of Pakistan and Citizen Police Liaison Committee-CPLC was bitter and make these institutions look like serving the elites instead of ordinary citizens. The executives and decision makers of Pakistan are constantly back and forth to the countries of good governance and reputable in delivering to the public, but do not make this experience applicable in Pakistan. Perhaps, the existing

communication system in place in Canada can be used as an example for this corruption plagued country. This practice might be in place but not being used in the judicial system if ordinary citizens want to take the matter to the court complaining about bribery or abuse. Cheap and mini voice recorders would also be of great help to fight this government sponsored business of corruption and nepotism. In this era of technological revolution, the phone numbers of the government offices still sound busy or out. The authorities and offices must introduce Toll free calling in order to let poor people access the government for better service. Major Service providers in Canada like Rogers, Bell and Telus may help Pakistan to achieve the goal to make ordinary citizens of Pakistan to be heard and addressed with.

Many Latin American groups, NGO's and Institution are setting exemplary models like Respondanet, a US funded website supporting anti-corruption initiatives in Caribbean and Latin America, Sinocorrupcion in Peru and Probidad (Probitiy) of El Salvador. Dominican Republic, Mexico and Argentine are also making public officials assets available on the net.

The Dominican Alliance Against Corruption publishes the whole info of public official like bank account numbers, Identification numbers and home addresses to keep a check on corruption.

In Mexico all the government contracts are done online and the country is generating multi billion dollars revenues because of this system. In Argentina, a new law mandates its provincial governments to post all official transactions-budget, contracts, payroll information-on the Net for public scrutiny. China has already required its citizens for online tax filing.

Technology Standards Association (ITSA) in Kenya, the Institute for Democracy in South Africa's (Idasa) Open Democracy Advice Center (ODAC), Rhodes University's Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM). The Anti-Corruption Network's website in Central and Eastern Europe, Coalition 2000 in Bulgaria, In the Slovak Republic, the nonprofit E-Society Communications and Resource Center for Nongovernmental Organizations (CRCI-ONG) in Romania. In the Philippines, the USAID-funded Transparent Accountable Governance project and Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption are the working groups/ NGO's busy fighting corruption and making people aware of the combative procedures against corruption.

Kenya has the pride amongst African nations to use internet to fight corruption. With the support of German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), The Kenyan Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC) encouraging whistleblowers to disclose the identity of corrupt officials. The system was used by 450 individual which led to the investigation of 90 percent of complaints.

Back in the year 2000, a South Korean civic group got some 470 groups together and launched a campaign against unfit politicians called ' Alliance for the 2000 General Elections (CAGE). The

campaign carried out through emails and social media and people thrashed 70 percent of blacklisted candidates. Online Procedures Enhancement for Civil Applications or OPEN in Seoul, South Korea was introduced to fight against corruption. It enabled citizens to view the process of their permits and applications online to ensure the merits.

International organizations along with the Transparency International are working in collaboration with groups, NGO's and media to educate and aware people about how to withstand against corruption. The Anti-Corruption Ring Online is being managed by the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s Anti-Corruption Division, for instance, manages AnCOrr Web to create awareness through legal instruments, book references, journals, papers, reports and downloads.

The World Bank is also supporting governments against corruption through the Bank's Anti-Corruption Knowledge Center

The Latvian finance minister went too far by using webcam in his office to always be in the public eyes for transparency.

The corrupt and crook high ranking government official and public servants have already found internet an easy passage for creating off shore companies, money laundering and transactions. But at the same time, and using the same technology, this can be prevented by applying the methods of good governance, accountability, transparency and supremacy of law.

The resourceful incumbents have found every opportunity to use technology to steal public money. Globalisation, appealing websites of large banks and corporate culture has compelled bankers, CEO's and politician to cover and serve each others benefits for monetary gains and future reference for hard times. Like the politician of Pakistan and Afghanistan in particular are the direct beneficiaries of billions of dollars aid given to them on the name of war on terror. Politicians have fortified themselves with in their castles, blocking and confiscating more public property and increasing hardships to the commuters and passer-by's, bullet proof vehicles and avoiding public and media to answer the questions of power shortages, skyrocketing inflation, almost 10 people dead in Karachi everyday, bomb blast and ruined infrastructure of the whole country.

The recent example of how police in Vancouver used social media to put shame to the rioters is evident that how digital justice is possible. The pictures of rioters were sent to the parents, employers and on the facebook and Twitter for public condemnation.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) should follow the model of The Utstein Way created in 2003 by Germany, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom and

Norway. The project has worked remarkably in Asia with larger focus on Bangladesh. All the member countries of SAARC, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan have the record of wide spread corruption and infamous of having the corrupt politician.

The websites and public access of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial and municipalities of the Canadian governments make people feel like the useful part of the policy making and receiving the required public services. It has also made absolutely easier for people to communicate with the policy makers, file complaints and have a say.

Being the architect of the world political ups and downs and the most dignified political body, the US Congress has drastically gone through the passage of changes with the innovations and inventions in technological communications. The changing and innovative communication methods have always made the US Congress to deal with the citizens and address their problems more pragmatically and influence the world politics more vigorously. Thus the technology is narrowing the gap between people of Capitol Hill, Washington DC and the people living in Dakotas or Rhode Island. The use of Blackberry has a considerable role in the historical victory of Barak Obama.

The importance and influence of social media is really at work and in use to prevent corruption:

### **Twitter**

Twitter has gained 40 million users and a 62 percent increase in mobile use with in last three months. (Source: ClickZ) Now, there are more than 175 million registered Twitter users. It is unclear as to how many of these are regular, but the number of Tweets per day has rocketed to 95 million – an increase of 250 percent. (Econsultancy)

### **LinkedIn**

LinkedIn has grown by an impressive 100 percent from last year; it now has more than 100 million users across the globe. Interestingly, 56% of these users are from outside of the US. (Econsultancy)

### **Facebook**

Back in January 2010, the site had 350 million active users across the globe. It now has in excess of 640 million – half of which log in daily. Based on this figure, Facebook has seen a 40 percent increase in daily usage over the past 12 months. (Econsultancy) People are sharing more content on Facebook now too. On average, there are more than 7 billion pieces of content shared on the site weekly. This figure has risen from last year, when it was 3.5 billion. (Econsultancy) More than 250 million people use Facebook Connect every month. (Facebook)

Canada has a great reputation around the world as a peace loving nation especially in Pakistan and Canadian International Development Agency-CIDA is doing marvellous job in Pakistan with special focus on population comprising of 61 percent of the youth or under would turn into radicals, extremists and anarchists to survive and meet the basic needs of life.

During last decade, the poverty, corruption and insecurity in Pakistan has increased many fold. It might take more than hundreds of pages to explain the misery of 95 percent of the population instead of pouring aid by the donors.

Canada, Canadian soldiers and civilians have rendered great sacrifices for democracy, peace and welfare for the Canada, Canadian soldiers and civilians have rendered great sacrifices for democracy, peace and welfare for the countries. There must be a direct link between the citizens of both countries and for the completion of the Canadian projects. The politicians in Pakistan are like a rock wall between people and prosperity because embezzling public funds and tax evasion is the major source of their income. The top proclaimed politicians including the ruling and Opposition leaders are the major tax evaders. Ministers are not fired for not delivering the results instead the powerful member of opposition is offered the lucrative portfolios to lengthen the government. The formula of one thing at a time is the best way to begin with because Pakistan has endless list of problems and the government is totally incapacitate and ignored. The ethical and moral downfall of the incumbents is evident as the President, Prime Minister and Ministers never resign after mass massacre, unchecked inflation, sickness with commercial losses and death caused by the power outages and unable to deliver anything at all to the public. The living conditions of the people, their access to justice and basic needs of this nuclear state plays a vital role in making this world safer.

Source:

<http://pcij.org/imag/latest/anti-corrupt2.html>

<http://ict.ez-blogs.de/egovernment-fighting-corruption/>

<http://www.u4.no/index.cfm>

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