

Philanthropist Urges Support for Pakistani Village of Chitral

Village Plagued by Economic and Social Problems

Tennessee, Memphis, Aug 17, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.IssueWire.com)) - Prominent Pakistani-American philanthropist Nighat Akbar Shah is calling on governmental and institutional stakeholders to pull her hometown, the village of Chitral in Northern Pakistan, out of its economic and social hardship.

Shah is Vice President of Shah Holdings, a Memphis-based property and real estate group, and an international impact investor and philanthropist.

She believes the underlying reasons for the crises affecting the isolated village in one of the most mountainous regions of the world, are diverse yet interconnected, and that the right resources are needed to solve the challenges.

“We know that the geographic location makes it a difficult place for a village such as Chitral to thrive, but its people are suffering and many of them are dying because of issues that are social, geographical, political, and economic. We need policymakers and relevant institutions to work together.”

Over the past 15 years Shah, working through her family business in Tennessee, has donated resources and conducted programs in Chitral, including subsidizing education, providing high-tech equipment to schools and hospitals, building a student hostel, and distributing Covid-19 care packages to residents of remote mountain areas. She is currently in the process of establishing a business startup incubator targeting disadvantaged youth and women.

More recently Shah launched her film company Adur Productions to specialize in impact films with her latest short film “Darya Kay Iss Paar” (“This Bank of the River”), which she produced, at the alarming rate of suicide in Northern Pakistan, winning awards.

Shah believes the most critical issue affecting Chitral is the absence of adequate healthcare services. “The obstacles include lack of basic resources, the absence of modern facilities and the poor performance of the government health department.”

The village of half a million people is currently served by only one district headquarters hospital in Chitral’s main city, along with a few privately run primary care institutions across the vast territory.

There are underserved areas where an alarming number of people live and die without ever having seen a doctor or a nurse, Shah said, adding that many untimely deaths occur because critical patients who need life-saving treatments are unable to reach the hospital in Peshawar in time. “Meanwhile the healthcare services that do exist in the village are inaccessible, unaffordable, and poorly-equipped, especially for secondary and tertiary level services.”

There are also logistical challenges such as inadequate telecommunications, poor medicine delivery, and transportation difficulties over challenging terrain that affect not just patients but also doctors and healthcare staff, she said.

Shah believes a holistic solution should integrate community engagement and education as lack of awareness about health issues has been a contributing factor to poor management of reproductive health, labor-related complications, and even death.

Unfortunately, those who are most affected are the marginalized segments of society including women, children, the elderly, and the physically challenged, she said, adding “But the government and respective private organizations are doing little and generally not focusing on the healthcare needs of rural communities.”

Shah advocates better planning across all initiatives by governmental health departments, partner private institutions, and the non-profit organizations operating in the region, and this should begin with improving living conditions, economic prospects, and agricultural resources.

“While it is true that solutions to healthcare access inequalities are complex as the problems themselves, scoping and identifying key issues are the first critical steps to correcting the problem.”

Darya Kay Iss Paar is produced by Nighat Akbar Shah and directed by Shoaib Sultan.
The film trailer can be viewed on <https://youtu.be/qH7h4Jdrs9c>. The original soundtrack is available at <https://youtu.be/kg96iammvUc> For more information about Adur Productions go to www.adurproductions.com

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Source : Adur Productions

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