

November 7-9, 1983

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

Subject: President of Pakistan's visit to Northern Areas

The GM was invited by the Martial Law Administrator (MLA) Zone E to receive the President on arrival at the airport on November 7, 1983 and to attend a dinner in honour of the President, on the same day, hosted by the MLA.

In the evening the GM was informed separately by the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Northern Affairs, Commissioner Northern Areas and Deputy Commissioner, Gilgit that the President has desired to see him. After the dinner, the MLA walked upto the GM and said that the President wished to see him. The President enquired of the GM about the progress of the programme and mentioned that His Highness the Aga Khan had specially spoken to him about AKRSP and requested him to see the programme. On GM's invitation to the President to visit AKRSP, the President expressed his regrets to do so due to paucity of time but expressed the desire to have a discussion with the GM about any assistance and collaboration that AKRSP might be in need of from the Northern Areas Administration. The GM informed the President about the full support and help the programme has been receiving from the MLA and other officials.

The following morning the GM was informed about President's wish to see him in the evening. However, the meeting could not materialise due to President' protracted discussion with religious delegations.

On the morning of November 9, 1983, the GM was spoken to by Deputy MLA (Brig. Munir) and Col. Martial Law (Col. Beg) that Gm should accompany the DMLA to Hunza where President would like to meet him at lunch.

At the luncheon meeting (Mir of Hunza's home at Karimabad), first the President enquired of the GM if a boys school at Hunza could be upgraded to college level and a girls one to high school level in collaboration between the government and the Aga Khan Foundation. The GM informed the President about the mandate of AKRSP and offered to convey his wishes to the President of the Aga Khan Foundation (Pakistan).

On a query by the President as to what government could do to help the programme, GM requested for President's patronage and blessings. On being assured by the President that this was already there, GM mentioned about the adverse and baseless reports being made by Intelligence Agencies about the programme. On President's response that the Director, Intelligence Bureau meets him every week and has not made any such report, the GM drew President's attention to a recent report (said to be of 20 pages) submitted by the Inter-services Intelligence in which the GM has been dubbed as a CIA agent and the whole programme as anti-state in favour. The Commissioner (who was present) informed the President that AKRSP has made tremendous impact in a very short time and everyone has acclaimed its achievements. The President directed the MLA Zone E to tell the agencies concerned that it was not of their business to report on AKRSP in this way. The GM offered to explain and show anything connected with AkRSP which the agencies consider suspect.

The GM briefly explained to the President the strategy of AKRSP of organising small farmers which was based on the distillation of 150 years of world experience in this field in countries such as Germany, Japan etc. Recounting the activities of AKRSP, GM informed the President that so far 129 villages out of 216 have been contacted and nearly 100 organised around infrastructure works and credit interventions. On President's query if there were banks specially Agricultural Development Bank in the area, the GM stated that mere presence of banks would not ensure availability of credit to small farmers unless they are organised. It is for this reason that in the last three years despite availability of interest free credit, not a single loan was

disbursed by the banks. Whereas with the organisation of the small farmers, nearly 4,000 farmers have availed of the facility in less than 8 months. The GM also submitted to the President the need and importance of a broad based VO as an outreach of the Union Council for undertaking development planning and implementation of projects, without which the union councils cannot be effective.

The President observed that His Highness the Aga Khan had spoken to him about the programme and the President was keenly interested in its progress because if it succeeds in the Northern Areas, he would like to expand and replicate it in the rest of the country. He again enquired of the GM as to what he could do for the programme. The GM requested for an opportunity to explain the programme fully (with the help of slides) to the President and thereafter the President could decide for himself as to what type of assistance the programme is in need of which he could give. The President graciously agreed to do so in Rawalpindi and asked the GM to get in touch with his Military Secretary (Brig. Durrani).

(Before the President left Hunza, the Military Secretary contacted GM and informed that the President has asked him to make an appointment for GM at Rawalpindi. The GM promised to contact the Military Secretary on his next visit to Rawalpindi.