**Requests of Pashto Musicians from International Aid Organizations**

**Pashtomusic.org / Report**

The latest research by the Pashto Music Institute (PMI) reveals that Pashtun musicians have been under pressure from fundamentalist groups since the 18th century. However, these pressures intensified when the governments of Afghanistan and Pashtun regions fell under the influence of extremist elements, leading to various restrictions on music. In recent years, Pashto music has faced numerous challenges, prompting many Pashtun musicians to leave their homeland. Those who remain live under dire conditions. They now warn that Pashto music, as a form of human heritage, is at risk of extinction. International organizations responsible for protecting cultural heritage must step up to support Afghan musicians.

**Current State of Pashto Music**

Pashtun musicians face increasing challenges due to poverty, lack of sufficient training and financial resources, and poor regional security conditions. On one hand, international aid organizations' efforts to support this vital human heritage are minimal or non-existent. On the other, official restrictions on music have forced many Pashtun musicians to abandon their craft.

In Peshawar, an Afghan Tabla player, Mr. Sanam Gul, told (PMI):
“When we came to Peshawar from Afghanistan, some foreign officials and high-ranking representatives of international aid organizations met with us. They gave us firm assurances that they would provide all kinds of support to us as refugees. They also assured us that arrangements would be made for our relocation abroad from Pakistan. However, after that, we never saw those officials again.”

**The Need for International Assistance**

In a focus group discussion in Peshawar, Pashtun artists collectively called on international aid organizations, such as UNESCO, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and others, to take the following steps to protect and promote their art:

1. **Emergency Humanitarian Aid:**
Provide monthly basic food supplies to artists’ families, as many of their children are currently malnourished and in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.
2. **Preservation of Musical Art:**
Allocate financial resources for the production and dissemination of music, enabling musicians to continue practicing their craft.
3. **Training Programs:**
Establish capacity-building institutions for music and design medium- and long-term programs to enhance innovation and technical skills among musicians.
4. **Implementation of Copyright Laws:**
Develop advocacy frameworks to enforce copyright laws through partnerships with major online platforms, ensuring musicians’ rights are protected and they receive fair compensation for their work.
5. **Organization of Cultural Festivals and Concerts:**
Since Pashtuns lack a strong global diaspora capable of organizing widespread cultural events, international cultural organizations should assist Pashtun artists in hosting festivals and concerts. These efforts would not only fund Pashtun musicians but also strengthen international peace and stability through cultural exchange.

Rizwan Manur, another singer, told PMI:
"We call on artists and cultural organizations worldwide to help us preserve our rich cultural heritage so that it can be passed on to future generations in its full glory. International aid organizations must fulfill their responsibilities and take concrete steps to safeguard Pashto music."

Kamyn Gul, a clarinet player from Nangarhar, shared his views with PMI:
"We are not just singers; we are the voice of our region's dreams and emotions. Even the smallest gesture of support can help keep our culture alive. We hope the international community will provide urgent humanitarian aid to Afghan musicians."