

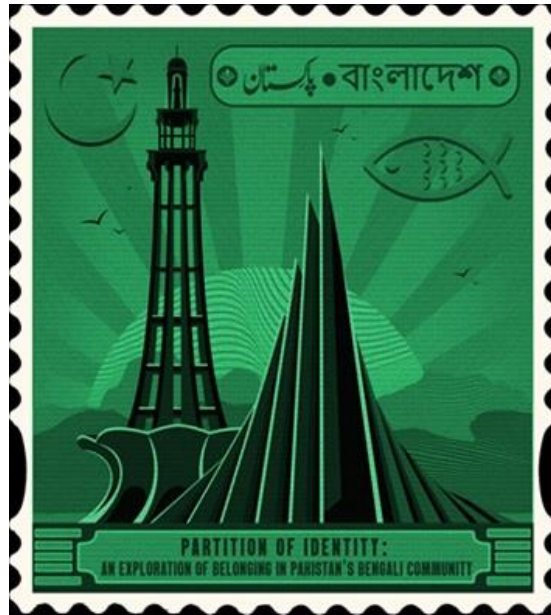


# Partition of Identity

An exploration of Belonging in Bengalis in Pakistan,

1971- Present

## PROJECT OUTPUTS AND IMPACT REPORT



POI is led by University College London, in collaboration with the Lahore University of Management Sciences, Imkaan Welfare Organisation (Imkaan) and the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS). POI is funded by the UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council.





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## Overview of Outputs

**ARCHIVE:** Oral History Archive (85 anonymised interview and a collection of artifacts)

### ARTS BASED WORKSHOPS:

1. With Children and Young People from Khel School, Imkaan
  - Machar Colony- My Neighbourhood
  - Exploring Identity: Me and My Dream
  - Exploring Identity & Citizenship: Letters to Prime Minister
2. With Artists at Indus Valley School of Arts and Architecture
  - Reimagining Research Narratives through Art

**CHILDREN'S BOOK:** 'Think in your heart first, think' – A comic book on statelessness published by Markings

### ART

- 'Monsters Behind Vines': A collection of Tales – by Areeba Aslam
- 'Captured Displacement' – by Axel Lucas
- 'Sea scape', 'Broken, but in dreams I believe' and 'Save me or it will be the end of us'- by Syeda Yumna Fatima
- 'Jalpari' – by Abdul Rehman
- 'Boat Building', a photo series – by Abdullah Khan

**ANIMATION:** The Others' an animation on statelessness-by Adan Shaikh

### DOCUMENTARY FILM: BHASHAILI (ADRIFT)

- Music Clip – Murshad a video from Bhashaili
- Music Clip – Kinara a video from Bhashaili
- A series of film screenings

**MUSIC VIDEO:** Amai Bhashaili Re – performed by Abdul Haleem – by Nabiha Rehan

**PHOTOS:** Photo collection (over 1000 images) of fieldwork, and project events





### **EXHIBITIONS:**

- Adhoori Shanakht – incomplete Identity: Growing Up Pakistani Bengali, Machar Colony Karachi
- Kaghazi Kashtiyān (Paper Boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story in Karachi, London and Kuala Lumpur
- A Night of Music and Poetry in collaboration with Nazrul Islam Academy

### **POLICY and ADVOCACY WORK**

- Letters to the PM – an advocacy campaign with Imkaan Welfare Organisation
- The Human Rights All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPGs) Briefing
- Submission of Evidence to the UK Parliament for the FCDO call.





## **Project Description:**

The Partition of Identity (POI) project examines the Pakistani Bengali community, tracing its history and exploring how, in their everyday lives, its members traverse the space between being Pakistani and being Bengali. We focus on those Pakistani Bengalis who arrived in Pakistan in the 1970s, following the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, and their children and grandchildren who were born in Pakistan. Estimates suggest that there are between 2.8 – 3 million members of this group living in Pakistan, but numbers are likely to be much higher. This is the first time a study has explored this community in such depth and has captured the accounts of members across generations.

## **The Partition of Identity (POI) project asks:**

1. How are Pakistani Bengalis historically and culturally represented in Pakistan?
2. How do these social representations and lack of citizenship rights influence how Pakistani Bengalis describe their identity and sense of belonging to Pakistan?
3. What forms of resistance have people from these groups developed in response to the lack of citizenship rights and access to resources?
4. How do members of the younger generations of Pakistani Bengalis understand the migration history and subsequent lives of their parents and grandparents, and how do they relate this to their own lived experiences in Pakistan?

Our partners were involved to differing degrees in the 3 research phases. In Phase 1 we conducted a strategic search through historical, policy and media documents for dominant depictions of the community. This informed the oral history interview work in Phases 2, with 55 adults and 30 young people. We also conducted art workshops with young people, gathering information on community representation. In Phase 3, artists and musicians re-imagined both state representation and also community representations to produce new outputs based on the community. To date we have created and developed a new oral history archive, art and music based on the research, a documentary, a website, an online exhibition, museum exhibitions, a children's book, animation, media articles, and published work<sup>1</sup>





## Timeline– Outputs and Impacts

**March 2022-** Filming of the documentary begins

**April 2022** – Art workshops with children at Khel School (4 workshops, in collaboration with two artists), followed by an exhibition of the children’s work in Machar Colony for community members. The exhibition was titled ‘Adhoori Shanakht’ (Suspended Identity)

**May 2022** – A series of art workshops led by Iqbal and Hasan in partnership with Indus Valley School of Arts and Architecture. Artists were shortlisted to take part in the workshop and material from here would form part of the Paper Boats exhibition

**October 2022-** Kremena Dimitrova joins the team and begins work on the comic.

**22 March 2023** - Project Blog <https://poistudy.com/tracing-the-story-of-the-pakistani-bengali-community/>

**23 March 2023:** Letters to Prime Minister Campaign with Imkaan Welfare organisation.

**18-26 May 2023,** Film screening and Exhibition, Kaghazi Kashtiyani' (Paper Boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story at Indus Valley School of Arts & Architecture (IVS), Karachi. Visits from local schools.

**20 May 2023:** Film screening, Bhashaili (Adrift) at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Maria Rashid and Humera Iqbal).

**26 May 2023:** A NIGHT OF MUSIC AND POETRY, with a performance by the Pakistani Bengali musician Ustad Abdul Haleem. The event was held in collaboration with Nazrul Academy, Karachi.





**16 November 2023:** Public Screening of Bhashaili (Adrift) at Rich Mix London (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**16 November-9 December 2023:** Film Screening and Exhibition, Kaghazi Kashtiyān' (paper boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story at Rich Mix, London.

**20 November 2023,** Public Screening of Bhashaili (Adrift) at UCL (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**21 November 2023,** Delivered evidence based briefing to UK parliament: APPG on Human Rights.

**22 November 2023,** Public Screening of Bhashaili (Adrift) at LSE (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**January 2024-** Screening of Bhashaili to the UNHCR, UK office.

**February 2024 –** World Conference of Statelessness (film screening, exhibition, panel and workshop).

**May 2024-** Screening of Bhashaili at Médecins Sans Frontières London office and UCL, Social Research Institute.

**2025 –** Launch of 'Think in your heart...Think', A comic book on statelessness published by Markings.







## Further Details of Outputs

### Oral History Archive

Oral history interviews were conducted in Karachi with 55 adult members of the community. Community members were of different ages, belonged to varying social strata, and exhibited diverse levels of political participation. Interviews were also conducted with 30 young individuals from the community (aged 13 to 18), where possible, from the same households as the adults, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of familial and social dynamics. Interviews were conducted in a range of field sites including Machar Colony (District Kemari), Zia Colony (District East), Moosa Colony (District Central), Tasier town (District Malir), Orangi Town (District West) and Ibrahim Hyderi (District Korangi). The interviews and accompanying artifacts have been anonymised and will be made available to researchers and the public to access. Consent was obtained by participants for this. It will be the largest collection of oral history interviews from the community to date.

### Images from the field

Celebrations at Khel School, Imkaan



Gymnasts at Khel School, Imkaan



Field Visits to Zia Colony, Taiser Town, Moosa Colony, Korangi Town and Machar Colony:





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One of ur participants sharing past paper-based identity documents



The Punjab Library, Newspaper archives





### Art Workshops with Young People



### Adhoori Shanakht- Exploring Identity & Citizenship in Pakistani Bengalis through Art

**Year:** Spring 2022

**Artists involved:** Amani Noor and Ahsan Javaid

**Location:** Khel School, Imkaan Welfare Organisation

**Description:** Artists Amani Noor and Ahsan Javaid co-led these workshops with POI team members. During the workshops, the young people explored their environment, experiences of living in Machar colony and by the coast, the citizenship challenges they face, their identity, and their hopes for the future. The workshops ended with an exhibition at the school attended by community members. Below we give further details of the workshops and you can watch a short film documenting the workshops [HERE](#).





### My Neighbourhood – Ceramic Workshop run by artist Amani Noor

Twelve young people aged 8-10 took part in this workshop which involved painting ceramics following a discussion and exercise about their neighbourhood and some of the challenges they face. The workshop also captured some of the knowledge children had relating to their surrounding costal environment. Many of the children’s families are involved in the fishing industry.





**Me and my dream - An arts workshop led by Amani Noor and Ahsan Javid.**

This workshop involved young people (40 children, all ages) who created a portrait that was in the format of an identity card photograph and another image of what they would like to be when they grow up. This workshop involved a discussion around some of the challenges associated with lack of identity status and citizenship in achieving one's goals. The images which were then painted on slates by the young people, were used to create a mural for the school. The workshops involved detailed discussions about key issues faced by the children and sparked multiple questions.



**Letters to the PM – an arts workshop led by Ahsan Javid and POI**

Letters addressed to the Prime Minister of Pakistan were developed during this workshop. The letters serve as a direct appeal to the government to take account of some of the challenges faced by Pakistani Bengali young people and their families linked to issues of citizenship and statelessness. These include access to education, employment, lack of opportunities and lack of infrastructure in their neighbourhoods. The letters were posted to the PM and also used for an advocacy campaign (described later).



**The SCIT (Synallactic Collective Image Technique) Workshop:**

This arts therapy-based workshop was led by Humera Iqbal and used the Synallactic Collective Image Technique with a series of 12 young people. Each participant shared a personal story around 'Life in Machar Colony' and each of these stories were then weaved together in a central tale. The final story and pictures made by group members was used to create a comic (detailed later).







## Workshops with Artists from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture

Title: Partition of Identity: Reimagining Research Narratives through Art

Year: Spring 2022

Led by: Irfan Hasan, Humera Iqbal & Anushay Malik

Location: Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi

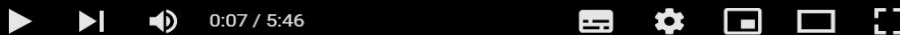
**Description:** These workshops took place with artists from Indus Valley School of Arts and Architecture. A group of shortlisted artists were introduced to the project research and were asked to reimagine this in different art forms. A series of field visits also took place, including to Machar Colony and Karachi harbour. The workshops were led Humera Iqbal, Anushay Malik, and artist Irfan Hasan and provided a unique platform for participants to engage deeply with the thematic concerns of identity, statelessness, and cultural expression of the Pakistani Bengali community based on research findings. An accompanying film was created which documented the workshops and the artwork that was created.

URL: [https://youtu.be/5A\\_cQXk4j4Y?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/5A_cQXk4j4Y?feature=shared)

The following film shows a series of art and research-based workshops that took place at Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi in Spring 2022 with student artists.

The workshops were led by Irfan Hasan, Dr Humera Iqbal and Dr Anushay Malik and form part of the Partition of Identity Research Project exploring the lives of Pakistani Bengalis. Many live in Karachi, Pakistan.

Part of the research explores statelessness and citizenship challenges faced by this community, but also the rich, culture and traditions of this group.



### PARTITION OF IDENTITY: Reimagining Research Narratives through Art

Unlisted





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The artists who took part in the workshops were:

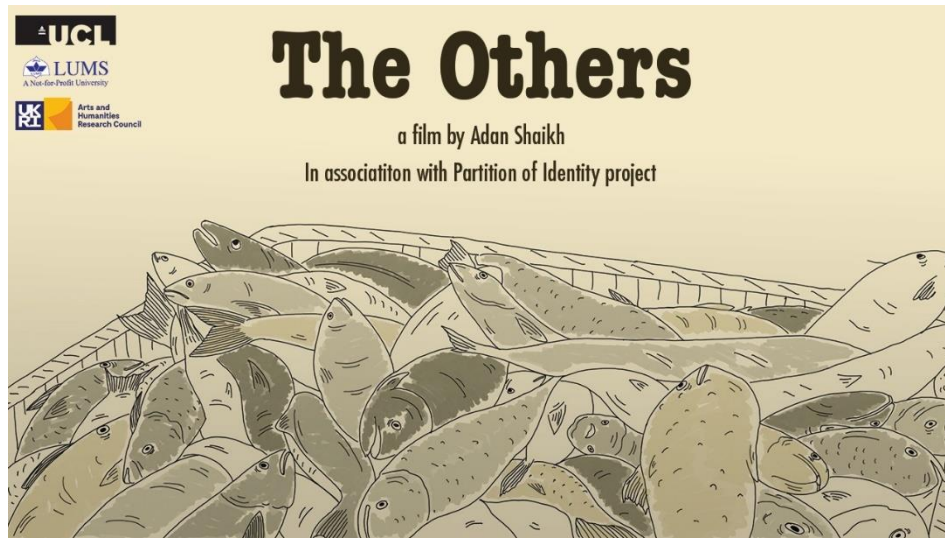
Abdullah Khan  
Adan Shaikh  
Areeba Aslam  
Axel Lucas  
Kremena Dimitrova  
Nabiha Rehan  
Syeda Yumna Fatima

Each developed a individual or series of pieces bringing together the research in a visual manner. This work is detailed below, and has been part of a series of exhibitions internationally.





## Artwork Developed



### The Others – An Animation by Adan Shaikh

URL: <https://youtu.be/SXZXWVA-7R0>

**Description:** The Others is an animated social commentary that depicts the impact of having one's identity taken away. The animation explores issues of 'othering', citizenship, and statelessness faced by members of the Pakistani Bengali community living in Karachi including those from Machar Colony. Everyday struggles such as accessing education and employment opportunities are shown. The film also delves into the impact of being considered foreign or 'alien', labels often associated with this group.

**About the artist:** Adan Shaikh is a Karachi based illustrator, new media, and visual artist who works with both digital and traditional art mediums. Her artistic practices primarily focus on gender, class, and identity discrimination prevalent in Pakistan. Adan documents and navigates the lack of safe public spaces for women and the role of women in a patriarchal society. She graduated from the Indus Valley School of Arts and Architecture in 2022.





## Monsters Behind Vines: A collection of Tales – Areeba Aslam



**Artist Statement:** Storytelling conveys the culture, history, and values that unite people. The artist collected tales either imagined or shared by children from the Pakistani Bengali community. While speaking with students from Khel school in Machar Colony, she heard accounts of jalparis (mermaids), jalparas (mermen), jinn and bhoots (ghosts). The stories bear invaluable information about spaces, culture and the imaginations of young minds.

**About the Artist:** Areeba Aslam is an illustrator and designer who graduated from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture based in Karachi Pakistan in 2022. Her interest lies in visual storytelling, with a focus on children's literature.





## Captured Displacement - Axel Lucas



**Artist's Note:** The installation depicts some of the key localities where the community live as pockets on the map of Karachi. The work is made from recycled plywood. Using a laser engraving machine five shapes have been cut from the wood to represent Pakistani Bengali colonies in Karachi, including Musa Colony, Zia ul Haq Colony, Bilal Colony, Ibrahim Hyderi and Machar Colony. I chose these specific places to highlight historical and contemporary patterns of settlement. The colonies shown are developed to scale, with Machar Colony, which is one of the largest in size, dominating the space compared to Musa Colony. The work highlights how many Pakistani Bengalis settled near the coastlines of Karachi as many in the community are linked to fishing. The net pattern engraved on all the five mapped areas symbolises how many Pakistani Bengalis are trapped around issues of citizenship.

**About the Artist:** Axel Lucas is a Karachi based multidisciplinary visual artist. His work centres on identity and control in the educational system, particularly linked colonial and postcolonial authority. His practice is expressed through installations and large-scale wall drawings. Working with different mediums, he is interested in creating visuals of restriction, repetition, conditioning, and the idea of critiquing authority. Axel recently received the Emerging Artist Award at the Karachi Artfest 2023.





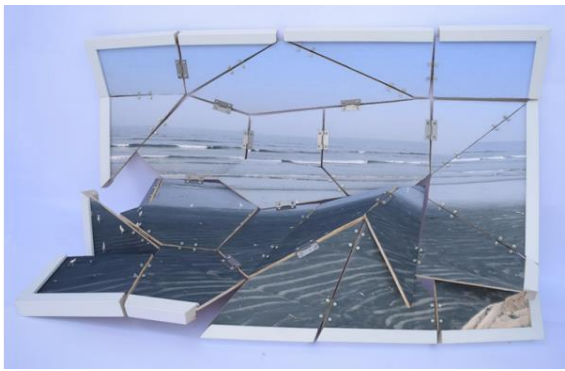
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**About the Artist: Syeda Yumna Fatima is a 4th year fine arts student from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture based in Karachi Pakistan.**



Piece 1 'Seascape'

The dark imagery here depicts the challenges faced by many Pakistani Bengalis living in Machar Colony, particularly around citizenship, but also around access to infrastructure and basic resources. These challenges impact entire families and generations. In the piece, with a little focus you can see that there is a tree branching out, symbolizing the notion of family, genealogy, and connection.



Piece 2 'Broken but in dreams I believe'

The sea is a key source of income and life for many from Machar Colony. Fish is a staple food and central to livelihoods. For fishermen, the journey of going out to sea on large wooden boats can be long and challenging. The crew is often at the mercy of nature and the vast expanse of the sea. Local folklore, music and fishermen's tales passed down to families, also capture the mysticism of the sea. In my piece I have tried to capture the many dimensions of the sea in the lives of Machar Colony dwellers.



Piece 3: 'Save me or it will be the end for both of us'

Adjacent to the densely populated area of Machar colony lie the mangroves which provide flood protection from the Arabian Sea. Poverty has forced some to build homes on stilts here, resulting in deforestation and outwards expansion into 'The Jungle'. This piece provides a reminder of the strong but also fragile connection between man and nature, particularly of the impact of climate change on rising water levels, the aquatic ecosystem and in turn the number of fish in the water.



## Jalpari – Abdul Rehman

**Artist Statement:** This piece was inspired by the connection between human-beings and the sea. While drawing a human figure and thinking of the fishing and the sea, Rehman was able to merge the two together to create “jalpari”.

**About the Artist:** Abdul Rehman is a self-taught artist based in Machar Colony, Karachi. He attends school at Imkaan Welfare Organization’s learning and recreational centre, Khel.



Boat Building, a photo series  
Abdullah Khan  
Film, 2022

## Boat Building – photo series

**About the Artist:** Abdullah Khan is a Pakistani independent filmmaker whose work deals with exploring unconventional topics and creating an impact. Khan’s aim is to explore narratives that seem simple from the outside but at the same time hold a complex structure within. Abdullah started a career in filmmaking to tell stories about childhood, silenced voices, and unnoticed traumas, using a naturalistic style. He graduated from the Indus Valley School of Arts and Architecture in 2022.

**Artist’s Note:** This photo series is inspired by the Arabian sea and the beasts that chart its rough waters. Hands that blister and reveal open wounds craft these very beasts. The ships portrayed in this piece are made by hand, measured by careful approximation showing the true power of what man can achieve when our differences are set aside, and we work as one.





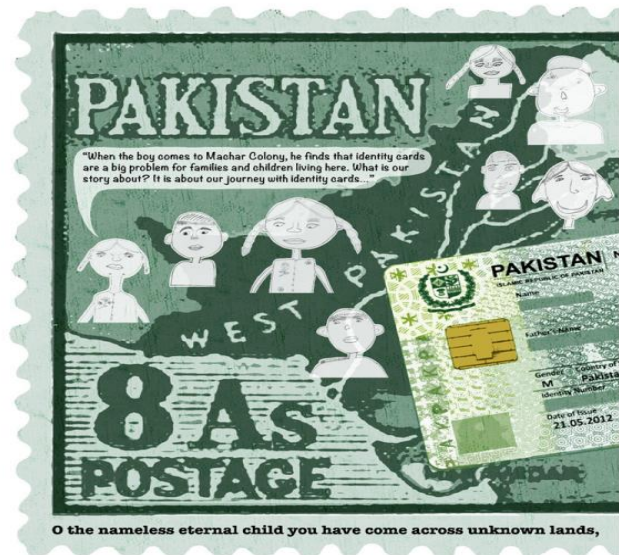


## 'Think in your heart, think' – A comic book on statelessness



This collaboration between social psychologist Humera Iqbal and illustrator-as-historian Kremena Dimitrova, is a 15 double-page limited edition comic book published by Markings.

In May 2022, Humera ran an arts therapy-based workshop with teenagers from Khel School in Machar Colony, at which each young person developed stories around the topic, "My Life in Machar Colony" (described earlier). These provided the basis for a script produced by Kremena, which she brought to life by interweaving the young people's drawings together with archival material. Traversing the personal and political, this carefully constructed comic book and educational resource, is available in English and Urdu.





**About the Artist:** Kremena Dimitrova is a London based illustrator-as-historian, lecturer in Visual Culture, and practice-based PhD researcher in decolonising history through comics at the University of Portsmouth. She specialises in socially engaged and site-specific creative interventions and visual storytelling in the cultural, heritage, and education sectors.



## Aamai Bhashali Re

**Form:** Music Video

**Producer:** Abdullah Khan and Nabiha Rehan

**Artists:** Pakistani Bengali musician - Abdul Haleem

**Location:** IVS

**Description:** This performance is a rendition of the popular poem by Bengali writer Jasimuddin. 'Aamai Bhashali Recaptures the importance of the rivers and seas to sailors and fishermen across the subcontinent, many of whom belong to the Pakistani Bengali community.



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## Film & Soundtrack

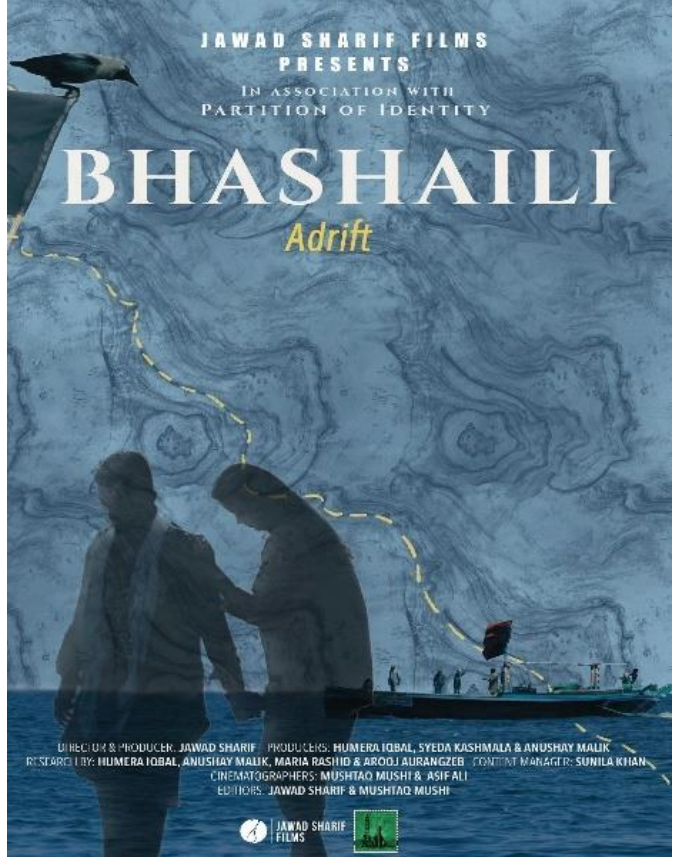
**Title:** BHASHAILI (ADRIFT) (2024)

**Director:** Jawad Sharif

**Producer:** Humera Iqbal, Syeda Kashmala, Anushay Malik

**Research Based:** Dr Humera Iqbal, Dr Anushay Malik, Dr Maria Rashid & Arooj Aurangzeb

**Year of Release:** 2024



Bhashaili or Adrift (2024) tells the story of Pakistani Bengalis living in Karachi, many of whom face issues around citizenship and Statelessness despite being in their fourth generation. We follow the everyday stories of young and old Pakistani Bengalis as they chase their dreams, find love, stand up for injustices, and face despair around their lack of recognition in Pakistan.

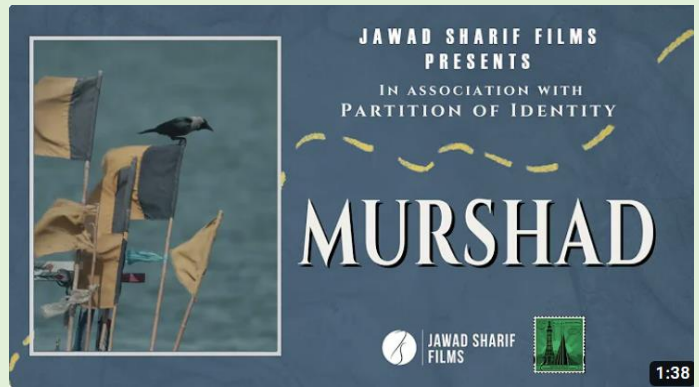


## Music Videos from Bhashaili (Adrift)

### Murshad - A video from Bhashaili

Performer: Nazural Islam

[Link](#)

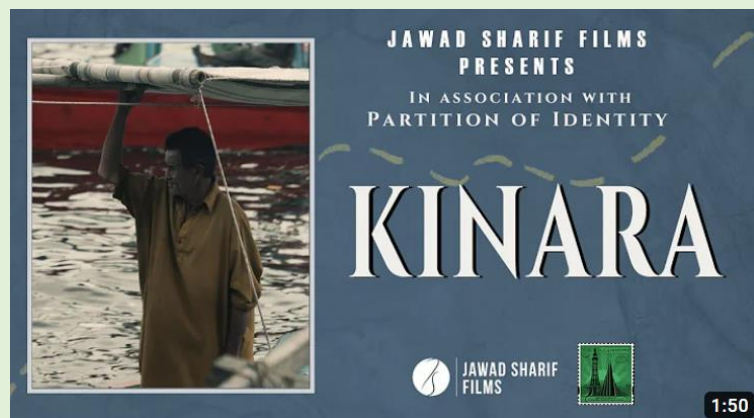


### Kinara - A video from Bhashaili

Producer: Jawad Sharid

Performer: Nazural Islam

[Link](#)





## Full List of Film Screenings:

**March 2024:** Public Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* at the World Conference of Statelessness, KL, Malaysia (with a panel discussion featuring, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal).

**Jan 2024-** Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* with a Q& A session at UNHCR London office

**Jan 2024-** Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* with a Q& A session at Médecins Sans Frontières London office

**Nov 2023:** Public Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* at Rich Mix London (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**Nov 2023-** Public screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* at the LSE (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**Nov 2023:** Public Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* at UCL (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**May 2023:** Public Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* at IBM Karachi (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).

**May 2023:** Public Screening of *Bhashaili (Adrift)* at Indus Valley School of Arts and architecture (with a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Shahid Shah, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid).



## ADHOORI SHANAKHT - ادھوری شناخت - Incomplete Identity: Growing up Pakistani Bengali

**Form:** Short Film

**Directed by:** Nabiha Rehan & Abdullah Khan

**Produced by:** Humera Iqbal

**Release Date:** 25 January 2023

**Description:** This short film showcases our series of art workshops with young people from Imkaan. The film was shared across social media platforms in March 2023. It quickly caught the audience's attention on Twitter, reaching over 300k views.

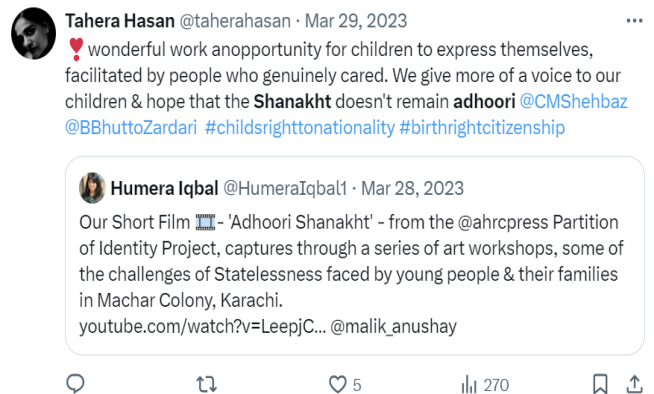
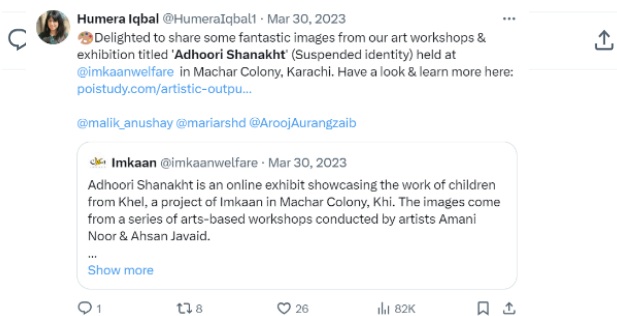
**URL:** <https://youtu.be/LeepjCdieg?feature=shared>



**Imkaan** @imkaanwelfare  
Adhoori Shanakht is an online exhibit showcasing the work of children from Khel, a project of Imkaan in Machar Colony, Khi. The images come from a series of arts-based workshops conducted by artists Amani Noor & Ahsan Javaid.

View the gallery here: [poistudy.com/policy-and-adv...](http://poistudy.com/policy-and-adv...)

6:49 AM · Mar 30, 2023 · 174.1K Views





## Exhibitions

### Overview:

Iqbal, N. A & Shah A. and Iqbal, H. (curators). May 2002. Adhoori Shanakht (Suspended Identity). at Khel School, Imkaan Welfare Organisation

Iqbal, H., Malik. A, Lucas A. and Shaikh, A and Rashid, M (curators). 18-26 May 2023. Kaghazi Kashtiyani' (Paper Boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story at Indus Valley School of Arts & Architecture (IVS), Karachi

Iqbal, H., Malik. A , Lucas A. and Shaikh, A and Rashid, M (curators). 16 Nov-9 Dec 2023. Kaghazi Kashtiyani' (Paper Boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story at Rich Mix, London (Also part of the Being Human National Festival)

Iqbal, H., Malik. A and Rasid, M (curators). Feb 2024. Kaghazi Kashtiyani' (Paper Boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story at The World Conference of Statelessness, KL, Malaysia

### Adhoori Shanakht (Suspended Identity):

Adhoori Shanakht (Suspended identity) was an exhibition showcasing the work of children and teenagers from Khel School in Machar Colony, Karachi. The images came from a series of arts-based workshops in Spring 2022 which the young people participated in. Artists Amani Noor and Ahsan Javaid co-led these workshops with POI team members. The workshop and exhibitions were captured in the short film 'Adhoori Shanakht'.







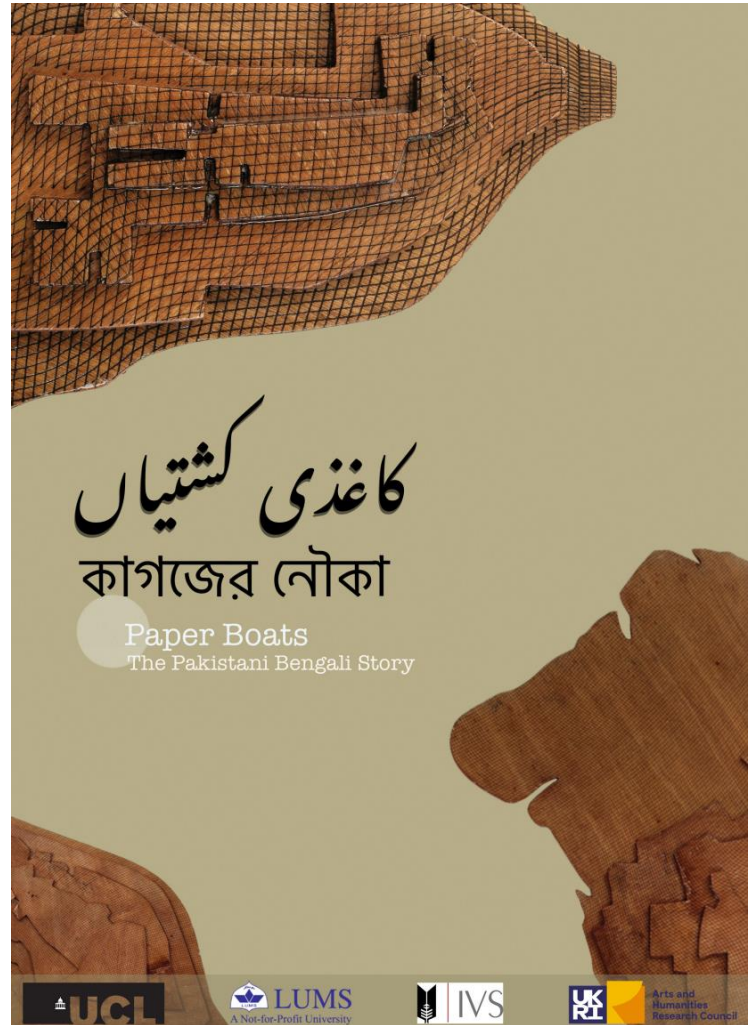
An accompanying **digital exhibition** showcasing the children and young people's work can be found on POI website [HERE](#)





## Kaghazi Kashtiyan (Paper Boats): The Pakistani Bengali Story

Kagazhi Khastiyan was an exhibition that opened up a window into the experiences of the Pakistani Bengali community. This community has long roots based mainly in the city of Karachi and spread across a variety of neighbourhoods. 'Kaghazi Kashtiyan' refers to the connection of the community to the sea, through the work that many of them do as fishermen, but it also refers to the precarious, paper – like fragility of their legal status in Pakistan because of challenges that they face around documentation and citizenship. The artists featured have drawn inspiration from community visits but also engagement with research from the study.



A copy of the exhibition catalogue can be found [HERE](#)

The exhibition was held in Karachi, London and Kuala Lumpur





## Karachi

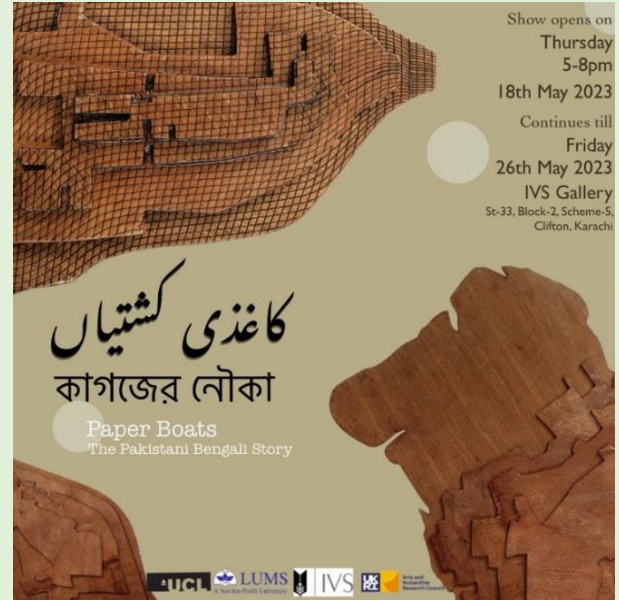
**Title:** Kaghazi Kashtiyani (Paper Boats):  
The Pakistani Bengali Story

**Date:** 18th May - 26th May, 2023

**Event:** Opening Night of Kaghazi Kashtiyani

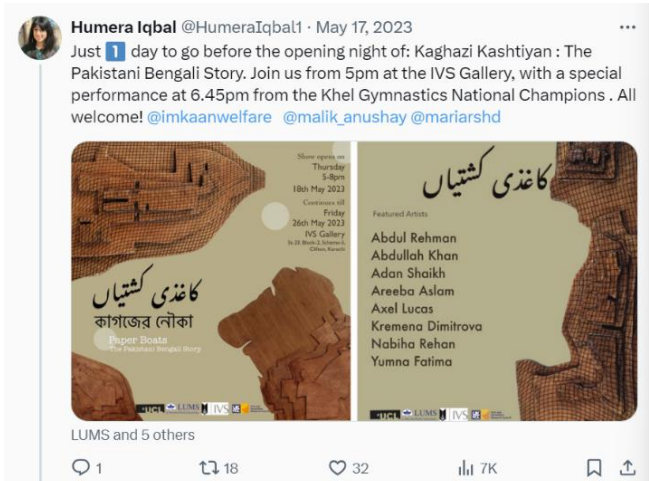
**Location:** The Indus Valley School of  
Art & Architecture (IVS) Gallery, Karachi

**Paper Boats:** Visitors were invited to create  
paper boats and leave messages on them about  
their experience of the exhibition



A short film showcasing the exhibition can be found [HERE](#):

## The exhibition in Karachi attracted attention through Social media



**The exhibition attracted over 900 visitors across 9 days (18<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> May)**

Exhibition visitors were invited to fold paper boats and leave their thoughts and feelings about the research and exhibition on their paper boats.



**School Visits:** We also invited pupils from Begum Hajira School, Zubaida High School & Goodluck Public School to view the exhibition and share their perspectives.



## A Night of Music and Poetry, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023

The Partition of Identity Project &  
Nazrul Academy, Karachi  
invites you to

### A NIGHT OF MUSIC & POETRY

With a performance by Pakistani Bengali Musician  
**Ustad Abdul Haleem**

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May  
6:30pm - 9:30pm  
Performance starts at 7 pm sharp.  
Courtyard  
Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture  
33rd St, Scheme 5, Block 2, Clifton, Karachi, 75600



As part of the exhibition in Karachi, we organised a night of music and poetry in collaboration with Nazrul Academy, Karachi. Here Ustad Abdul Haleem performed Bangla songs and renditions of the rebel poet -Nazrul Islam's works.





## Media Coverage of the Karachi Exhibition

The exhibition received national coverage in newspapers as well on TV.

### DAWN NEWS (Print):

## All aboard paper boats — all about Pakistani Bengalis

Shazia Hasan | Published May 19, 2023



LISTEN TO ARTICLE 0:00 / 5:22 1x 1.2x 1.5x

JOIN OUR WHATSAPP CHANNEL



'Save me or it will be the end for both of us' made from wood joined together by hinges by Syeda Yumna Fatima. (Right) 'Think in your heart first, think', a comic book on statelessness by Kremena Dimitrova and Humera Iqbal.— Fahim Siddiqi / White Star

The full article by Shazia Hasan published in DAWN NEWS can be found [HERE](#)





## AAJ TV Report: Kagazki Kashti



**Description:** The introduction of Partition of Identity Project and the Kaghazi Kashtiyān (Paper Boats) exhibition at IVS, Karachi, with description on the influential artworks

**Date:** 27 May 2023

**Platform:** Aaj TV Official.

The full report can be found [HERE](#)





## London

**Title:** Kaghazi Kashtiyani (Paper Boats):  
The Pakistani Bengali Story

**Date:** 16th November - 9th December, 2023

**Opening Night:** Thursday 16th November

**Location:** Rich Mix, 35-47 Bethnal Green Road,  
London

**Film Screening of 'Adrift'**- 16th Nov, 6pm-8.30pm with a Q&A



As part of the opening night for the Paper Boats Exhibition in RICH MIX, London, we screened BHASHAILI (ADRIFT) on the 16th of November in 2023. This was followed by a panel discussion featuring Jawad Sharif, Dr Anushay Malik, Tahera Hasan and Dr Humera Iqbal, chaired by Dr Maria Rashid. The exhibition, was promoted through social media accumulating over 10k+ views







The sold out opening night for this exhibition attracted around 170 people. The stories of Pakistani Bengalis collided with the inclusive cultural environment of East London in an interesting way. The exhibition gained attention from news outlets such as BBC.

**The London exhibition and film screening was also hosted as part of the national Being Human festival in the UK**



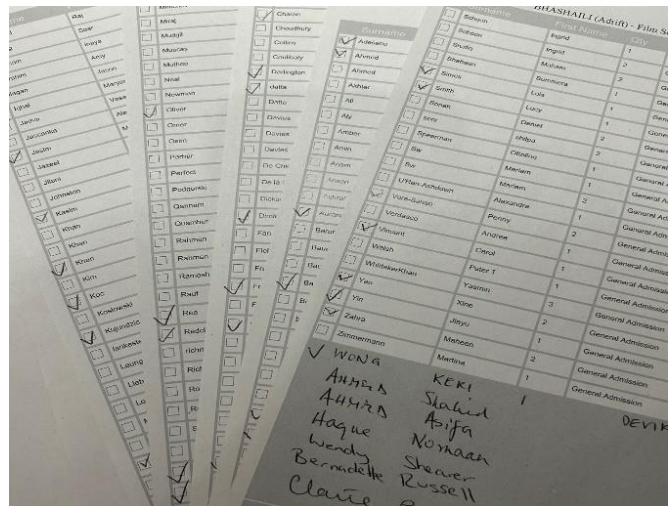


### Visitors Reviews:

The exhibition at Rich Mix London as well as in IVS, Karachi provided visitors with a profound insight into what it means to be stateless through the lens of the Pakistani Bengali community. Attendees' reviews, collected in notebooks at the venue, were notably thoughtful and positive.. Below are some examples of reviews from the event attendee:

- “Excellent work, very well described the efforts, and challenges being faced by the fisherman.
- “A moving exhibition that reminds me of the human wealthier behind identity and citizenship”.
- “It gives a new perspective to look at the problems. Someone else’s problem is everybody else’s problem”.
- “Amazingly curated display of outlook which passionately portrays the small community of Bengalis highlights their culture and brings light to their problems”.

NAME & ADDRESS	COMMENTS
NAME: Hira Mahmood ADDRESS:	A moving exhibition that reminds us of the human realities behind identity and citizenship
NAME: Syeda Noor ul Haq ADDRESS:	The concept has been well translated in the art work displayed.
NAME: M. Shahzad ADDRESS:	Excellent work, very well described the efforts challenges being faced to the fisherman and environmental needs/press
NAME: Mahsum ADDRESS:	Insightful exhibition. Specially come here for my friends. Thrilled to see their amazing work.
NAME: Zahra Sabir ADDRESS:	It gives a new perspective to look at its problems. Someone else's problem is everybody else's problem.
NAME: Anika Mahmood ADDRESS:	Extremely insightful!
NAME: Noushaba Ahmad ADDRESS:	Very moving. Thank you. Would have liked to see more facts on the women from this community.





## Malaysia, Exhibition at the World Conference on Statelessness

**Title: Think of Others- the arts and culture experience**

Kaghazi Kashtiyani (Paper Boats):  
The Pakistani Bengali Story

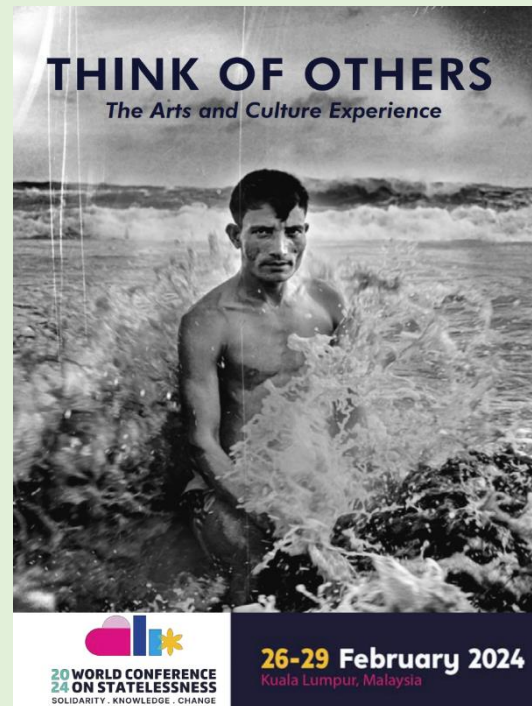
**Host:** 2024 World Conference on Statelessness

**Date:** 26th February - 29th February, 2024

**Location:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Activities:** Visual art exhibition, accompanying art workshops and a Film screening

The full catalogue can be found [HERE](#)



ISI @institute\_si · Feb 26  
🚩 The 2024 World Conference on #Statelessness in #Malaysia has started! It centers people with lived experience of #statelessness; and focus on 3 themes: #SOLIDARITY #❤️, #KNOWLEDGE #📖, #CHANGE #🌟 More info 📍 [bit.ly/3ItDOcS](https://bit.ly/3ItDOcS) #WCS2024



1 20 26 2.4K

The WCS is the largest global gathering of individuals with lived & learned knowledge of Statelessness. The larger art programme attached to the conference, titled "Think of Others" aimed to act as movement, depicting the complex issue of statelessness through the lens of art, encouraging thought, building empathy, unlocking inspiration, and challenging conventional views. Our 'Paper Boats' exhibition formed a key component of the larger exhibition.





**'Think of Others' Art Workshop<sup>ii</sup>:**

**Title: Postcards from a Dream: A Comic Workshop on Belonging**

**Location:** 2024 Word Conference on Statelessness, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Date:** 28th February

**Facilitators :** Dr Humera Iqbal Kremena Dimitrova, Diwakar Chettri Zahra Marwan

**Description:** As part of our engagement work tied to our exhibition, together with artists from Kuwait and Nepal, we ran a comic workshop with participants from the conference.





## Advocacy & Policy Work:

### Overview

**2023:** Letters to the PM. National Social Media Campaign with Imkaan welfare organisation addressing rights to education for stateless children in Pakistan. Pakistan.

**2023:** APPG Human Rights Briefing Session, 'Where do I belong? The Plight of Stateless Persons with focus on Pakistan and South Asia.' Provided spoken and written evidence. UK Parliament.

**2024:** Submitted Evidence on the issue of Statelessness for the FCDO 'Call for Evidence' (joint submission by UCL, Imkaan and ISI)

### Letters to the Prime Minister

These letters addressed to the Prime Minister of Pakistan were written by Pakistani Bengali children and teenagers living in Karachi. The letters serve as a direct appeal to the government to take account of some of the challenges faced by these young people and their families linked to issues of citizenship and statelessness. These include access to education, employment, lack of opportunities and lack of infrastructure in their neighborhoods.

The letters were developed following a workshop in partnership with Imkaan Welfare Organisation and led by artist Ahsan Javaid and POI team members in 2022. They formed part of a series of art workshops held in Khel School, Machar Colony.

The LTPM social media campaign was strategically launched on Pakistan Day—a symbolic action that underscored the political and social issues related to citizenship faced by the community. This timing maximized the campaign's relevance and emotional impact and positioned it within a broader discourse on national identity and rights, thereby attracting significant attention and engagement from various stakeholders.

Over 10 days, we posted a series of letters from the young people as well as media clips from the young people reading out their letters. This strategic use of social media enabled real-time engagement with a diverse, global audience, enhancing the visibility and influence of the campaign. Examples of the letters can be found below and the full set of letters and clips can be found [HERE](#).





Dear Prime Minister,  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Assalam-o-alaikum,

My name is Jamal [redacted] I belong to the Pakistani Bengali community. I reside in an under-developed area of Karachi, [redacted]. My problem is related to identity card. There is an unknown person in my family's data whose CNIC is blocked. We have been to the NADRA's (National Database and Registration Authority) office many times to get this issue resolved, but NADRA workers are not resolving this. They send us home on various pretexts. As a result of this, we cannot complete our education, we cannot work and we cannot fulfill our (daily) needs. If we cannot find work, we cannot lead a prosperous life and we cannot fulfill our dreams.

That is why I appeal to the Prime Minister of Pakistan to resolve our issue as soon as possible, so that we may lead prosperous lives and fulfill our dreams. Kindly resolve our issue.

Thank you,

Jamal Hussain,  
[redacted] Karachi  
26/05/22

جناب وزیر اعظم  
اسلامی جمہوریہ پاکستان  
السلام علیکم !  
صرا نام جمال [redacted] ہے میں ایک پاکستانی بنگالی کمیونٹی سے تعلق ہے میری رہائش کراچی کے ایک پسمندہ علاقہ [redacted] ہے۔ میرا مسئلہ شناختی کارڈ (CNIC) کے بارے میں ہے۔ سیرک فاؤنڈیشن ڈیپارٹمنٹ میں ایک غیر نرڈ ہے جس کی CNIC بکوں سے اس مسئلے کو حل کرنے کے لئے ہم نے کئی بار نادر (Nadra) دفتر گئے لیکن ہلکا مارے اس مسئلے کو حل نہیں کر رہے۔ کچھ ناکامیوں کے بعد ہم کو دعا گار دینے اس مسئلے کی وجہ سے ہم اپنی تعلیم مکمل نہیں کر سکتے۔ کام نہیں کر سکتے۔ اپنی ضروریات کو پورا نہیں کر سکتے۔ اگر ہم کام نہیں کر سکتے تو ہم اپنی زندگی نہیں گزار سکتے اور اپنا مستقبل زندگی نہیں گزار سکتے اور ہم اپنے خوابوں کو پورا نہیں کر سکتے۔ اس لیے میں حکم پاکستان وزیر اعظم سے اپیل کرتا ہوں کہ پھر اس مسئلے کو دلدازدہ حل کرنا کہ ہم خوشحال زندگی اور اپنے خوابوں کو پورا کر سکیں۔ براہ مہربانی ہمارے مسئلے کو حل فرمائیے۔  
"فقیرانہ"  
[redacted] کراچی  
26-05-22

YouTube Search



Sonia's Letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan  
Unlisted  
Humera Iqbal 15 subscribers  
Subscribed  
1 Like  
Share  
Save





**Imkaan**  
@imkaanwelfare

The most affected due to a lack of identity are the youth, with no access to vocational training or education. 'I want to be a soldier in the Pakistani Army' says Jashim of Machar colony. Watch the video to learn more.

#L2PM #imkaanwelfare #statelessness #citizenshiprights



5:11 AM · Mar 24, 2023 · 30.1K Views

Dear Prime Minister,  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Assalam-o-alaikum,

It is kindly requested that I am a Pakistani Bengali resident. My name is Sameera and I am a Pakistani and my name is Sameera. It's my request from the Prime Minister that those of us who do not have identity cards and those of us who are in [the field of sports], please have their identity cards made. If we do not have identity cards, we will not be able to move forward and make Pakistan proud. I want all of our identity cards made. I want my identity card made so that if there is a chance for me to go abroad for Table Tennis (competitions), I can go. This is my request from the Prime Minister. Thank you.

Well wisher,  
Sameera

25-5-2022

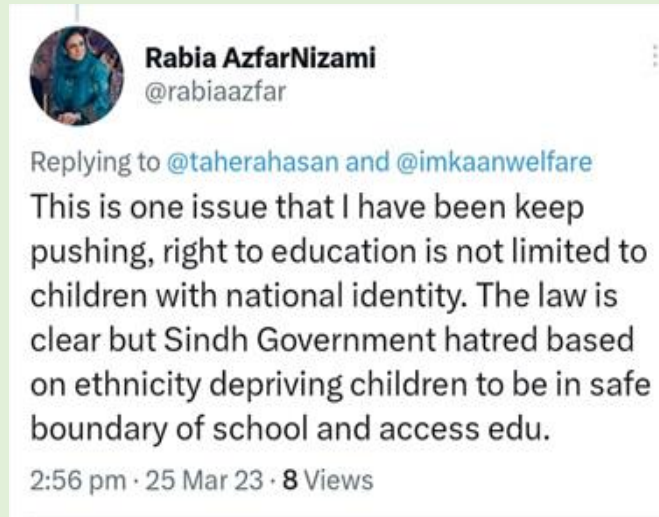
جناب وزیر اعظم  
اسلامی جمہوریہ پاکستان  
اسلام علیکم  
موجودہ وقت گزراؤ میں ہے کہ میں ایک پاکستانی بنگالی رہائشی ہوں  
اور میرا نام سمیرا ہے اور میں پاکستانی نہیں اور میرا نام سمیرا  
اور مجھے وہ چیزیں ملنے چاہئیں جو کہ میں نہیں مل سکتی  
ہاں انہی چیزوں کی ضرورت ہے اور جو اس وقت میں ہے  
اس سب کو انہی چیزوں کی ضرورت ہے اور انہی چیزوں کی  
ہاں انہی چیزوں کی ضرورت ہے اور انہی چیزوں کی  
اور پاکستان کا نام بھی رو میں نہیں کر سکتے اور میں  
جانتی ہوں کہ سب سب انہی چیزوں کی ضرورت ہے اور انہی چیزوں کی  
میں نے انہی چیزوں کی ضرورت ہے اور انہی چیزوں کی  
بہتر ہے کہ جاسکوں میرا میں یہی کہتا رہتا ہے  
درد میرا دل سے منظر ہے  
منبر انڈین  
نام، سمیرا  
Jameel  
گزارشی  
Date: 25.5.2022





**Social Media Coverage:** The analytical review of social media metrics, such as view counts, likes, shares, and the nature of comments, provides a quantifiable measure of the campaign's impact. The campaign attracted over social media over 628k views, 1633 likes and 738 shares from online users (note that this data comes from 2 key accounts). This engagement data suggests that the project effectively raised awareness and educated a broad audience about the challenges faced by the Pakistani Bengali community.\

**Rabia Azfar Nizami**, a member of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh from August 2018 to August 2023 also posted about the campaign.







## APPG Human Rights Briefing

**Title:** Where do I belong? The Plight of Stateless Persons, with a focus on Pakistan, and South Asia more generally.

**Location:** Port Cullis House, UK Parliament

**Time:** Tuesday, 21 November, 5:30pm

**Organizers:** All- Party Parliamentary Human Rights Group (PHRG)

**Those invited:** UK Parliamentarians, relevant NGOs/CSOs, FCDO officials.

### Objectives:

- To re-examine the phenomenon of statelessness, its current prevalence and the work of the UNHCR in this space;
- To highlight how stateless persons' enjoyment of rights is circumscribed, and their consequent marginalisation and persecution;
- To consider the lived experience of stateless persons of Bengali origin in Pakistan, and of those in South Asia more generally.
- To explore how the UK Government and Parliamentarians could help address statelessness, including that of specific communities, such as those in Pakistan, and protect those who remain stateless and suffer serious abuses as a result.

### Speakers:

- Zainnab Makele, Senior Protection Associate, UNHCR UK
- FILM EXCERPTS, following introduction by Jawad Sharif, Director of 'Bhashaili' (Adrift) and Dr Humera Iqbal (Co-producer and Lead Researcher)
- Tahera Hasan, Lawyer, and Founder and Director of Imkaan Welfare Association
- Dr. Humera Iqbal, Associate Professor of Social Psychology, Thomas Coram Research Institute, University College London





**Written evidence submitted by Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, Imkaan Welfare Organisation and University College London on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024**  
**International Development Committee**  
**Inquiry: In Development**

The following submission represents the collated views of legal and third sector experts from the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion<sup>1</sup> (ISI) and Imkaan Welfare Organisation<sup>2</sup> (Imkaan) and social science academic experts from the UCL Social Research Institute<sup>3</sup> (SRI) at University College London (UCL).

The *ISI* is the first and the only human rights NGO dedicated to promoting the right to a nationality and the rights of stateless people globally. *Imkaan*, based in Pakistan, is an NGO that works with marginalized and stateless communities, those impacted by challenges due to poverty and identity issues, particularly women and children. Alongside the multi-disciplinary, comprehensive work conducted at the *UCL Social Research Institute*, this collective is well placed to respond to this inquiry by the IDC.

#### **A. Executive summary**

**A.1.** Stateless people are amongst the most vulnerable and persecuted globally and fall between the cracks in relation to UK development and humanitarian efforts.

**A.2.** Statelessness can act as a driver of conflict and refugee flows internationally and within countries.

**A.3.** Statelessness disproportionately impacts women and children and hinders the attainment of multiple global sustainable development goals (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10 & 16).

**A.4.** The issue of Statelessness should be examined closely by the IDC in relation to recipients of ODA spending and the requirements of LDCs and LMICs of this spending, particularly nations in South and South-East Asia, Africa and Caribbean Nations with a focus on education, rights to health care and nationality.

#### **Main Submission**

#### **B. Why should the International Development Committee examine this area?**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.institutesi.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://imkaan.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/ucl-social-research-institute>





Despite the UNHCR's #IBelong campaign<sup>4</sup> which aimed to eradicate statelessness by 2024, globally an estimated 15 million people<sup>5</sup> continue to experience statelessness and are not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law. Further, the nationality of tens of millions is at risk. Statelessness is an issue which needs urgent attention from the International Development Committee (IDC) from a **human rights and development standpoint**. Stateless individuals are vulnerable to discrimination persecution and unequal treatment and lack basic protections granted to those with nationality including access to state institutions connected with education, healthcare, social security, justice, labour protection and housing. The complexity of the issue means that it can act as a **driver of conflict and refugee flows**. Statelessness occurs due to redrawing of borders, wars, states gaining independence and citizenship stripping in the name of national security. It is also caused and perpetuated by discrimination on grounds like race, ethnicity, gender and poverty. Stateless peoples often reside in the most **vulnerable localities susceptible to climate change** and face further **risk of displacement**.

### **C. Why is it the right time for the Committee to examine this area and why would this area benefit from parliamentary scrutiny?**

Given current global political instability alongside climate-based uncertainty, now is the opportune moment for the IDC to conduct a wider investigation to examine the issue. In seeking to investigate this issue, the IDC would be addressing key UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG10 (reduced inequalities), and SDG16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) as well as SDGs 3,4 and 5 (good health and wellbeing; access to quality education and gender equality). Given the stateless are among the most structurally disadvantaged people globally, the IDC is urged to prioritise statelessness in keeping with the core principle to 'leave no one behind'.

The hidden nature of statelessness means that stateless people are **falling between the cracks in relation to the UK's development and human rights programmes**. We urge that this issue is first examined closely in relation to firstly the **recipients of ODA spending**, and secondly the **requirements of LDCs and LMICs of this spending**.

No country including the UK is immune to Statelessness. However, there are certain nations with former and present close ties to the UK, including Commonwealth countries within which proportionate communities face deep challenges to their survival and thriving because of the denial of equal nationality rights and resultant statelessness. These LDCs and LMICs ODA recipient countries which warrant scrutiny

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.institutesi.org/resources/statelessness-in-numbers-2020-an-overview-and-analysis>





include those in **South and South-East Asia**<sup>6</sup> (Pakistan<sup>78</sup>, Nepal, Bangladesh<sup>9</sup>, Malaysia<sup>10</sup>, Myanmar<sup>11</sup> and India<sup>12</sup>) but also **Caribbean Nations** (Haiti and the Dominican Republic<sup>13</sup>) and **Africa** (Kenya<sup>14</sup>, South Africa<sup>15</sup>, Cote D'Ivoire).

#### **D. How could Government policy in this area be developed or improved?**

Government policy should seek to address within these nations, at a minimum, firstly the **right to education for all children** including stateless and undocumented children; ensuring that all stateless and undocumented people have **the right to public health care** and the call for **equal nationality rights** and non-discriminatory implementation of policies around the **right to citizenship**. Aside from a close investigation of ODA spending and the requirements attached to this spending, the IDC should additionally consider the extent to which the recent UNHCR's [#IBelong campaign](#)<sup>16</sup> made a difference around the issue of statelessness and the success of the UK contribution within this. Lastly the ODA should explore how the UK can support the newly launched [Global Alliance to End Statelessness](#)<sup>17</sup>.

#### **Acknowledgments**

This response has been prepared by UCL Social Research Institute, Institute of Statelessness and Inclusion and Imkaan Welfare Organisation with contributions from:

- Dr Humera Iqbal<sup>18</sup>, Associate Professor of Social and Cultural Psychology; Dr Victoria Redcliff<sup>19</sup>, Associate Professor of Political Sociology; **UCL Social Research Institute, University College London.**
- Amal de Chickera<sup>20</sup>, Director, **Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion**

<sup>6</sup> <https://nationalityforall.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/SEAP-2023-First-Edition-1.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [https://files.institutesi.org/UPR42\\_Pakistan.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/UPR42_Pakistan.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Dr Iqbal (UCL), has conducted extensive research on statelessness amongst the ethnic Bengali community in Pakistan, see <https://poistudy.com/tracing-the-story-of-the-pakistani-bengali-community/> & <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0ggf2rq> . They are soon to begin a study on the impact of statelessness on mental health.

<sup>9</sup> Dr Redcliff (UCL) has conducted extensive work in Bangladesh around the issue of statelessness:

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203096871/statelessness-citizenship-victoria-redcliff>

<sup>10</sup> [https://files.institutesi.org/CRC\\_Malaysia\\_2024.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/CRC_Malaysia_2024.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.institutesi.org/focus-areas/rohingya>

<sup>12</sup> [https://files.institutesi.org/UPR41\\_India.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/UPR41_India.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [https://files.institutesi.org/DOMINICAN\\_REPUBLIC\\_Together\\_We\\_Can.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/DOMINICAN_REPUBLIC_Together_We_Can.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [https://files.institutesi.org/UPR49\\_Kenya.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/UPR49_Kenya.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [https://files.institutesi.org/UPR41\\_South\\_Africa.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/UPR41_South_Africa.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://statelessnessalliance.org/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://profiles.ucl.ac.uk/48631-humera-iqbal>

<sup>19</sup> <https://profiles.ucl.ac.uk/66893-victoria-redcliff>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.institutesi.org/about-us>





- Tahera Hasan<sup>21</sup>, Founder and Director, **Imkaan Welfare Organisation**.

We would be pleased to speak further about our response. Please contact Dr Humera Iqbal (h.iqbal1@ucl.ac.uk).

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<sup>21</sup> <https://imkaan.org/director-and-management-team/>





## Academic Talks and Conferences:

- **2021** Partition of Identity: An Exploration of Belonging in Bengalis in Pakistan, 1971- Present. PRAXIS Nexus ‘Transforming Conflict and Displacement through Arts and Humanities’, University of Leeds, (online)
- **2021** Partition of Identity: An Exploration of Statelessness and Belonging in Pakistan. Invited talk at Open University School of Psychology Research Day, UK (online)
- **2022:** Exploring space and belonging in Machar Colony “In nature you have no limits”:  
intersections of arts, nature and wellbeing Knowledge Exchange Event on Eco capabilities, led by Professor Nicola Walshe
- **July 2022:** Partition of Identity – Exploring how social and historical representations impact contemporary citizenship challenges faced by Pakistani. International Society of Political Psychology, Annual conference. Athens
- **March 2022:** Partition of Identity: An interdisciplinary exploration of Statelessness and Belonging in Pakistani Bengalis. Invited talk at Lund University, SASNET event – ‘A nation and it’s fault lines’, Sweden
- **Feb 2022:** Partition of Identity: Exploring contemporary citizenship challenges faced by Pakistani Bengalis, part of an organised panel titled ‘Claim Making, Citizenship and Statelessness’. Annual Conference on South Asia, Maddison University, United States
- **Nov 2023:** UCL research Workshop, ‘Exploring commonalities in research on Bengali identity, citizenship and migration status post 1971’, London
- **Jan 2024** The victims and aftermath of partition and colonialism internationally panel - Monday, 29th January, 6pm, Cambridge Union, UK; During this event Dr Humera Iqbal discussed work from the Partition of Identity Project.
- **March 2024:** Interdisciplinary approaches to statelessness: A case study of Australia and Pakistan , a panel discussion with members from the Peter McMullan Institute on Statelessness .World conference of Statelessness, KL, Malaysia.
- **June 2024:** Family Life in Socially and Ethnically Diverse Societies. Invited Keynote. TFCF International Symposium on Exploring Family Support and Parenting Policies from a Well-being Perspective. Taipei, Taiwan.





## The Cambridge Union Panel

*the* CAMBRIDGE UNION

Aditi Kumar Dr Humera Iqbal Christos Karaolis

*The victims and aftermath of partition and colonialism internationally*

29th January, 6pm

The Library

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and International Studies, University of Warwick, where she is working with the Jammu and Kashmir diaspora communities in the UK, and has written on postcolonial theory and identity-formations.

Dr Humera Iqbal

Dr Humera Iqbal is Associated Professor of Social and Cultural Psychology at Thomas Coram Research Unit, University College London. She uses arts and film-based methods in her research and is Principal Investigator of the International AHRC funded study 'Partition of Identity: An exploration of Belonging in Bengalis in Pakistan, 1971- present'.

Christos Karaolis

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January 27

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**Title:** The victims and aftermath of partition and colonialism internationally panel

**Date:** Monday, 29th January, 6pm, 2024

**Location:** Cambridge Union, UK

**Description:** Partition and the impacts of colonialism have deeply affected numerous countries, often marked with conflict and political division. This panel brings together international speakers from a range of backgrounds to speak on this issue and the victims of partition and colonialism and aims to highlight the commonalities of their experiences. During this event, Dr Humera Iqbal discussed work from the Partition of Identity Project.

**URL:** <https://youtu.be/mlcZxPj5sbE?feature=shared>





## Academic Workshop

In order to share findings from our research as well as host a wider discussion in the area of citizenship and migration, we held a workshop at UCL inviting both scholars and activists.

**Title:** 'Exploring commonalities in research on Bengali identity, citizenship and migration status post 1971'

**Location:** UCL, London

**Description:** At a time when citizenship, wielded as a weapon of exclusion, appears as a theme resonating across South Asia, we invite scholars who are working on overlapping or parallel themes to come discuss some of these ideas with us with a view toward thinking about the potential of building a network or a shared publication.

**Attendees:** Sara Ansari, Antara Datta, Indrajit Roy, Victora Redclift, Ashraf Hoque, Amal de Chickera, Tahera Hassan, Maria Rashid, Anushay Malik, Humera Iqbal

### Questions:

1. How has the pivotal year 1971 featured in your research, and does it continue to shape the narratives of belonging among younger people who were affected by 1971 today?
2. How does your research navigate the paradox of increasingly policed borders amidst significant transnational flows of migrants, refugees and trade?
3. What social or narrative practices have people deemed as migrants or outsiders used to try and create a sense of belonging or "homing"<sup>1</sup>. How have these been policed or viewed as contentious by state officials and other residents?
4. Have you come across the interplay between the intimate and the geopolitical<sup>2</sup> in your work, particularly in contexts involving gendered citizenship laws, shifting cultural norms and, at the more extreme end of the scale, sexualized violence?
5. Is there a distinctive or exceptional quality to the way in which global Bengali migrants are viewed, especially after 1971?







## Media Impact and Inclusion:

**13 May 2023**, Exhibition Review, Shazia Hasan (2023), All aboard paper boats — all about Pakistani Bengalis, Access from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1754269>

**21 May 2023**, Exhibition Review, Farid Ul Hassan, Pakistani Bengalis, Access from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/pakistani-bengalis-farid-ul-hasan/>

**25 May 2023**, Film Review, Shazia Hasan, Adrift in troubled waters, Dawn's, Access from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1755644/adrift-in-troubled-waters>

**30 May 2023**, TV News Report, Qaisar Kamran, report on our Kaghazi Kashtiyān (Paper Boats) exhibition at IVS, Karachi, Access from <https://x.com/Humeralqbal1/status/1663461560705245185?s=20>

**2 November 2023**, BBC Podcast, New Thinking: Writing exile and overcoming statelessness, BBC Radio 3 Arts & Ideas, Access from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0ggf2rg>



## SPOTLIGHT:

**Title:** New Thinking: Writing exile and overcoming statelessness

**Platform:** BBC Radio 3 – Arts & Ideas

**Description:** Around 3 million Bengali Pakistanis now live in Pakistan it is estimated and a research project has been exploring their experiences, mixing oral testimony and art projects with analysis of recent history. Humera Iqbal explains their findings to presenter Sarah Jilani.<sup>iii</sup>

**Date:** November 2nd, 2023

**Length:** 32 minutes

**URL:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0gqf2rg>





## Photos & Visuals

A series of images from the project can be found on our flicker account [HERE](#)

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Fieldvisit_Zia Colony (Selected) 18 photos • 7 views	Fieldvisit_TAISER TOWN 7 photos • 3 views	Shahid & Zehra :) 50 photos
Jalpari (mermaids) and Underwater creatures 14 photos • 2 views	Fieldvisits_MACHAR Colony (selected) including Maps 63 photos • 1 view	Adhoori Shanakht (Suspended Identity)_Exhibition at IMKAAN 52 photos • 10 views





<sup>i</sup> POI Website (2024). This content can be accessed at: <https://poistudy.com/poi-study/>

<sup>ii</sup> WCS2024 (2024). 'Think of Others' full catalogue. Access at:  
[https://files.institutesi.org/Think\\_of\\_Others\\_full\\_catalogue.pdf](https://files.institutesi.org/Think_of_Others_full_catalogue.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> BBC Radio 3 Arts and Ideas. Access at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0gqf2rg>

