

# A journey from crawling to moving around

## **Our correspondent**

### **Islamabad**

Responding to a news item published in the May 21 edition of 'The News', the Disability & Polio Rehabilitation team of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has provided a wheelchair to 14 year-old Rangeena, an IDP at Jallozai camp.

Rangeena is suffering from cerebral palsy (brain damage due to decreased supply of oxygen) with mental retardation, spasticity and advanced fixed deformities of the upper and lower limbs. She cannot walk or move around and has no control over her bladder and bowel. Her two sisters are also suffering from mild mental retardation.

'The News' highlighted the plight of the girls' mother Akhter Bibi, who has had to carry Rangeena on her back to traverse a 15-hour distance on foot. All that the desperate mother wanted was a wheelchair for her daughter. Akhter Bibi and her family are among those who have been

displaced by the military operation in NWFP and are currently putting up at the Jallozai camp.

The WHO team responded to the woman's appeal by delivering a wheelchair, modified according to Rangeena's physical disability. With tears in her eyes, Akhter Bibi commented that the wheelchair meant the whole world to her daughter who, instead of crawling on the ground all the time, will now be able to freely move around. Rangeena was all smiles, as her siblings pushed the wheelchair around for her.

WHO Representative Dr. Khalif Bile informed that WHO, in collaboration with the Institute of Pakistan Orthotic and Prosthetic Sciences (PIPOS), Peshawar, is carrying out a detailed need-based assessment survey of Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) residing in the camps for internally displaced persons, as initial assessments have indicated the prevalence of both physical as well as sensory (hearing and visual) disabilities that have not received any type of rehabilitative services since their onset.