

Protection of women rights

Govt urged to establish watchdog

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ISLAMABAD – Demanding of the government to establish a watchdog at federal level to secure and ensure rights of women and for building their capacity, speaker at a seminar declined the understanding that devolution of Ministry of Women's Development (MoWD) would destroy the women's cause.

While discussing various aspects of 18th Amendment with members of civil society and media, speakers turned down the understanding of some sections of population and human rights groups that devolution of Ministry of Women's Development (MoWD) would annihilate the women's cause. They further argued that instead of opposing the devolution we should initiate a dialogue among the main stakeholders on to frame and decide the modalities of the devolution of the MoWD to provinces.

In order to share and discuss various aspects of 18th Amendment with members of civil society and media, Aurat Founda-

tion organized a seminar on Friday. The event was titled as '18th Amendment: Opportunities and Challenges for Provinces and Women'. The event was presided by Anis Haroon, Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW). Jami Chandio, Executive Director Centre for Peace and Civil Society, Rehana Hashmi, Executive Director Sisters Trust and Consultant with UN Women were the main speaker.

Anis Haroon, in her concluding remarks, declined the understanding of some sections of population and human rights groups that devolution of Ministry of Women's Development (MoWD) would destroy the women's cause. Such groups and sections of population wrongly think that provinces and provincial institutions are not sensitised enough to effectively take up the women issues, she said, adding, that most of resolutions regarding women's rights and issues were put and discussed in the Sindh Assembly; similarly resolution

were also presented in other Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, however, no issues of women's rights were taken up in the Punjab assembly.

Jami Chandio, in his presentation, said that under 18th Amendment, 102 clauses of the Constitution of Pakistan have been amended. The one major significance of 18th Amendment is that it has reversed the centralization of state institutions that was done by the British colonizers. The amendment has effectively formulated the provincial autonomy. A number of ministries, around twenty-one, were unnecessarily being kept with the federation while the issues they represent were more of provincial nature.

"Council of Common Interest (CCI) was a good-for-nothing institution and occasionally had meetings before the 18th Amendment, he said, adding, that in the post-amendment times now, the CCI frequently holds its meetings and discusses important issues and take decisions.