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Women MPs demand 10 per cent quota

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Women Parliamentarians from provincial assemblies of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Punjab and representatives of civil society organizations Saturday demanded mandatory quota of 10 per cent of general seats in the National Assembly, Senate and the provincial assemblies.

Attending a 2-Day National Consultation organized by Aurat Foundation, they reaffirmed their commitment to protect and preserve the provision of reserved seats in the constitution for women in the National Assembly, Senate and the provincial assemblies.

Sindh Deputy Speaker Ms Shehla Raza, Balochistan Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Dr Ruqiya Hashmi, Balochistan Minister for Women's Development Ms Ghazala Gola, MQM MPA Ms Heer Soho, PML-F MPA Ms Nusrat Saher Abbasi, PPP MPA Ms Humaira Alwani, PML-N MPA Ms Shameela Aslam, PPP MPA Ms Faiza Malik, PPP MPA Ms Amna Butt, PML-N MPA Ms Deeba Mirza, PPP MPA Ms Shazia Tehmas, PPP-S MPA Ms Nargis Samin and PPP MPA Ms Noor-us-Sehar participated in the event.

They asked the political parties to develop consensus among themselves to amend the Political Parties Act so as to provide mandatory quota of 10 per cent of general seats to women to mainstream them in electoral processes before the next elections, in addition to the already available reserved seats for

women."

"We believe that the provision of reserved seats for women is the Constitutional right of women of Pakistan under Articles 25, 34, 51 and 106, e.g. Article 25 (3) which states: "Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the protection of women and children".

They maintained that all the important legislation (laws/Bills on 'honour' killings, Women's Protection Act, Protection of Women from Harassment at Workplace, Domestic Violence Bill, Acid Control and Acid Crimes Prevention Bill and recently passed Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Bill) which had been carried out in the Parliament for the last nine years would not have been possible without the initiatives and consistent efforts of women parliamentarians across political parties.