

International Women's Day

Acknowledging Pakistani Women Change-Maker's on International Women's Day

Date: 10 March 2016

Islamabad, Pakistan – Pakistani women from different spheres of life were recognized and honoured across the country in numerous events commemorating International Women's Day 2016.



Over the years Pakistan has witnessed many women and young girls, at the international front, break stereotypes and overcome gender biases in the face of adversity. UN Women this year acknowledged local Pakistani women change-makers for their remarkable work in the fields of politics, education, medicine, law and judiciary, public security (police), social activism, health, business, journalism and the media.

These women "change-makers" were acknowledged through UN Women held/co-hosted events in the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and in Pakistan Administered Kashmir. Additionally, a survivor of acid throwing burns was also acknowledged for her strength and spirit in re-building her life as an educationalist.

Pakistani women "change-makers" acknowledged are:

From Balochistan

- **Rahila Hamid Khan Durrani** (Political Leadership)
A renowned politician, journalist, environmentalist and athlete, she is also the first women speaker of Balochistan Assembly, and first women speaker of any Provincial Assembly in Pakistan
- **Seema Kanwal** (Journalism)
She is awarded for her active coverage of polio campaign in the province
- **Anjum Parvez** (Education)
She is serving as Registrar to the Women University Balochistan. She has already received Star Women Award of South Asia Publication for her research work on gender issues
- **Sabra Islam** (Judiciary and Law)
A renowned lawyer working on cases related to workplace harassment, domestic violence and cyber-crime. She is also providing legal support, pro bono, to cases of needy women and women prisoners

- **Rehana Khilji** (Social Activism)
She is the first women of Balochistan who has worked on indigenous irrigation schemes and rural development sector in remote districts. She is also the first female in her sub tribe to go to school following which she opened the first home school in her village promoting girls education – Rehana is also a Programme Officer for UN Women Pakistan
 - **Dr. Maryam** (Health)
She is the Medical Superintendent of Benazir Hospital Quetta which provides quality health services to needy communities • Abida Maqbool (Business) - She works with home based workers as well as on national and international level trade expos, where she is linking local women with the market for their product promotion and sale
 - **Bushra Kamal** (Business)
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 - **Shabana Habib** (Public Security - Police)
She is the first female Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) with the traffic police force in Balochistan. She is also trained in police intelligence services
 - **Najma Baloch** (Survivor of Acid Throwing and Educationalist)
Her husband did not like her going to college so threw acid on her body while her was holding her child in her lap. She survived, but her child did not. Following plastic surgery and in re-building her life, she was became a teacher for vulnerable and poor children. She is now a Government teacher and completing her M.Phil.
- From Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**
- **Bibi Javed Bittani** (Education)
Acknowledged for her services in the uplifting of education in D. I. Khan and the adjacent tribal belt
 - **Badam Zari** (Politics)
The first tribal women to file nomination papers to contest the 2013 general elections. Hailing from Bajaur tribal agency she contested the election to work for the welfare and betterment of tribal women. who have suffered immensely living in a tribal system
 - **Shabina Ayaz** (Social Activism)
Recognized for her social and peace activism, and as an emerging women leader - Shabina is also the Resident Director of Aurat Foundation, Peshawar office
 - **Gullalai Bibi** (Social Activism)
For her activism as the emerging women leader.
- From Pakistan Administered Kashmir**
- **Farzana Yaqoob** (Political Leadership)
A prominent political leader, Minister for Social Welfare, she has initiated several benchmark projects that are significantly empowering women at the grassroots level. She is always at the forefront for women development
 - **Nasreen Aziz** (Education)
As a Chairperson of the Charagh-e-Manzil of Special Person, despite her disability, she is providing education to hundreds of children for many years. She is facing life's challenges with dedication and carrying on with passion to motivate numerous others
 - **Dr. Anum Najum** (Social Activism)
A senior medical practitioner by profession, she is the voice of disabled persons in the valley. For years, she has been advocating for improvements in the quality of life of disabled persons. She faced the challenges of disability herself but never gave up her dream to create a better world for others like her
 - **Nargis Aftab Raja** (Judiciary and Law)
Now a retired Chairperson of the Kashmir Tribunal, she has served the judiciary for sixteen years on various positions including Traffic Magistrate, Forest Magistrate, Judge Family Court, Additional District Judge and Session Judge
 - **Tabinda Kokab Gillani** (Media)
A career media person, her voice is familiar to millions of people in the valley. Starting from AJK radio, her journalistic talents soon took her to AJK TV, and later on to one of the most respected media organizations in

the world - BBC Radio. Her stories reflect a deep commitment towards women empowerment and became catalyst for several transformations in the community

- **Tanveer Latif** (Education) - For years, she has been making great contribution in the field of education. She was awarded 'Tamgha-e-Imtiaz' by the Government of Pakistan for her long illustrious career where she has helped educated hundreds of women and supported many initiatives for promotion of female literacy
- **Midhat Shehzad** (Social Activism)
As the Joint Secretary for the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs, she is a peace activist by commitment and has represented the women of Pakistan Administered Kashmir on several national and international forums. Her leadership role is behind the success of many social initiatives
- **Dr. Bushra Shams** (Social Activism)
Promotes the cause of women's rights, strengthen platforms for dialogue on gender issues including development of the Gender Development Forum and CEDAW Committee. She has also played a key role in formulation of legislation against harassment and domestic violence – Bushra is also a Gender Advisor for UN Women Pakistan
- **Samiya Sajid** (Business Entrepreneurship)
A widow with four children, she was faced with unexpected challenges in life. She ventured into a territory, restricted solely for men – a cable network company. Her business is growing rapidly
- **Rahat Farooq Raja** (Judiciary and Law)
As an advocate in the Supreme Court, her contribution in the field of women's access to justice is acknowledged. A member of Commission on the Status of Women, SOS Village and the bioethics committee, she is also the legal advisor of Women Chamber of Commerce
- **Rifat Shams** (Business Entrepreneurship)
An influential tycoon, an inspirational name in business - working as entrepreneur to empower women - and in the development sector
- **Fehmida Farid** (Journalism)
Her physical disability has not prevented her from achieving a Masters in Economics, or becoming a student of MA English, best debater, freelance writer for different magazines and a poetes.

For more information:

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- See more at: <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2016/03/iwd-pakistan-women-change-makers#sthash.BsZakVaz.dpuf>