

Friday, March 31, 2013

NGOs join hands to monitor polls from gender perspective

OUR STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Aurat Foundation and Gender Concerns International (GCI) have agreed to work together to jointly promote inclusive governance prior to, during and after the 2013 elections in Pakistan with an aim to monitor the 2013 general elections in Pakistan from a gender perspective.

Both the organisations have joined hands to establish Gender Election Monitoring (GEM) Mission for this purpose. The prime objective is to ensure that the gender agenda is addressed by the newly elected government and women's political participation is promoted in post-election Pakistan.

Director GCI Sabra Bano at a press conference held to announce the collaboration said under this initiative, 15 international and 50 local observers would monitor the coming elections from gender angle.

She said GCI, an international gender and development organisation, has conducted a series of unique GEM Missions and successfully monitored elections exclusively from a gender perspective in Tunisia Morocco and Libya. In Pakistan international observers mostly from Arab countries will monitor the elections so that Muslim coun-

tries can learn from the experience of each other. 'Emerging leadership of women in Arab world can learn many lessons from the successes of women right movement in Pakistan', she maintained. Speaking on this occasion, Manager Legislative Watch Group, AF Professor Farkhanda Aurangzeb said that not only the number and situation of women voters and women candidates would be observed under this project but the different aspects of women involved in the administration of elections will also be monitored.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed Thursday between the two organisations, Gender Concerns International and the Aurat Foundation will implement the advancement of the political participation of women in Pakistan by building the capacity of women's organisations and women in civil society organisations, women Parliamentarians and leaders.

Other core steps will include building the capacity of 50 or more domestic observers to monitor the 2013 elections in Pakistan from a gender perspective, strengthening women's self-organisations and ensuring interactions between women's organisations and female Parliamentarians.