

Friday March 9, 2012

## Women's Day — the anti-climax



ly.—Online

Women's Day by hosting a panel discussion to provide inspiration, motivation, excitement, connection and opportunity to the women entrepreneurs in Pakistan. The theme of the event was "Connecting entrepreneurs - inspire future", which highlighted the role and significance of women micro-entrepreneurs, particularly the rural women, in the national economy.

The highlight of the day might have been the simple but interesting event organised by Aurat Foundation. Barring the normal odes of self-praise, the foundation had invited five young women who have made a name for themselves internationally and locally by outperforming all expectations in their fields.

The panel included Malala Yousufzai, the young activist from Swat who raised her young but determined voice in favour of education for women; Sara Nasir, our very own Karate champion with a gold in SAF games, Shahroo Malik, a distinguished artist with many international awards, Marium Malhar, who launched a local campaign to raise awareness to fight dengue and Samina Baig, who has performed unparalleled

feats of mountaineering like climbing the never been climbed before 'equality mountain' with her brother.

Meanwhile, speaking at another programme, Allama Iqbal Open University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Nazir Ahmed Sangi said the AIOU had planned to set up 3,000 rural internet schools across the country. Three schools would be opened by July as a pilot project.

The event was arranged by women and gender study department of the university. The VC said the AIOU would give an equal opportunity to female students for participating in various distance-learning programmes.

Dr Sangi said the university had already taken various steps to facilitate female students at their regional campuses. These include construction of hostels in remote areas, allotment of separate rooms in each campus for eating and offering prayers.

In another gathering, students of the Russian language department at the National University of Modern Languages (Numl) paid tribute to their female teachers.

The students pledged that they would always respect and honour their female teachers, fellows, colleagues and other women in society.

And another Women's Day has come and gone. Events have passed, thousands have been spent, the samosas eaten and the cups of tea sipped - now let us wait for the impact.