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# Aurat Foundation celebrates International Women's Day

## ■ Recognises youth role models

ISLAMABAD  
STAFF REPORT

**T**HE Aurat Foundation organised an awards distribution ceremony on Thursday at a local hotel to celebrate the International Women's Day and pay tribute to the women who have achieved excellence in various fields.

The awards were distributed among the women who are role models for the youth, namely Malala Yousafzai (peace-maker), Samina Baig (mountaineer), Shahroo Malik (an artist), Marium Hote Malhar (a social worker) and Sara Nasir (a sports personality).

Malala Yousafzai said women's day cannot be confined to one day only, as women should be appreciated for the important role they play in the society.

She stated that the international women's day should be devoted to women like Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto who devoted their lives for socio-polit-

ical causes.

She said women needed to be given an equal status.

Yousafzai added that she was happy that with her efforts facilitated the peace process in Swat and that the girls in the area now have access to education.

Shahroo Malik she said she started off with fine arts as a hobby but later realised that fine arts can be used to spread awareness and social change.

She stated that the award has inspired her to work more for women's rights.

Sara Nasir said she was encouraged by her parents to learn Judo. Nasir is the only female karateka from Pakistan to have earned a gold medal in karate at a recognised martial arts competition, such as the one held at the South Asian Games in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in February, 2010.

Marium Hote Malhar said she belongs to a Seraiki area where girls have limited access to education. She recalled how she was not granted admis-

sion to any reputable institute due to her inability to speak English and her humble background.

She added that she got admitted due to her mother's tireless efforts and now her teachers say she has proved her worth.

She is a Head Girl Guide and has a successful Dengue awareness campaign to her credit. She stated that she hoped the government would make efforts to educate more girls from the Seraiki area.

Samina Baig said her elder brother taught her how to climb mountains. She added that she, together with her brother, climbed a 6400 feet high mountain, which had never been scaled before. "We named it 'Equality Mountain' or Koh-e-Brabari, because if a girl can climb a mountain, she can do anything," she said.

The Aurat Foundation also paid tribute to Arfa Karim, the youngest Microsoft Specialist, by observing silence for one minute and highlighting her achievements.