

Friday, October 28, 2011

## ■ CONDOLENCE REFERENCE FOR NUSRAT BHUTTO ■

# 'Mother of Democracy fought for masses' empowerment'

ISLAMABAD

STAFF REPORT

The Aurat Foundation (AF) organized Thursday a condolence reference to pay tribute to the late Begum Nusrat Bhutto for her struggle for democracy and women's emancipation.

The speakers eulogised Begum Bhutto's service and recalled as how to she continued almost a decade-long political struggle for restoration of democracy and the constitution in the most repressive period of the General Zia-ul-Haq regime.

Poet and writer Kishwar Naheed read her poem to pay tribute to Begum Bhutto. On behalf of Anis Haroon, the chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), a participant also read her poem "Kab talak Zulm Rahega Kamran-o-Kamyab..."

The speakers said Begum Bhutto was a staunch supporter of women's rights and was the first woman head of a political party after former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's "judicial murder".

The participants expressed gratitude for the services rendered by

the "Iron Lady of Pakistan" and her long struggle for restoration of democracy during the most oppressive socio-political and violent times in the history of Pakistan.

Tahira Abdullah reminded the participants about Nusrat Bhutto's services as Red Crescent chairperson. She also paid tributes to 'three brave men in the history of Pakistan's judiciary' including Justice Durab Patel, Justice Abdul Haleem and Justice Safdar Shah, who had given dissenting notes in the court judgment on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's hanging.

The speakers said Begum

Bhutto had always been a fighter. She fought the battle for the empowerment of the people in the streets against the worst dictatorship of the country's history. Other speakers also included Senator Babar Awan, Zammurad Khan (Chairperson Bait-ul-Maal), Senator Saeedam Iqbal (PPP), Senator Farhat Abas Syed (wife of the late Syed Qamar Abas), Nargis Faiz Malik (MNA), Nasreen Azhar (NCSW member), Tahira Abdullah (rights activist), Senator Begum Surya Amir-ud-Din, Shah Khawar (former deputy attorney general) and Marvi Sarmad (rights activist).