

W Women Strengthening Democracy in Pakistan



UNDP Pakistan has prepared a series of profiles highlighting particularly dynamic women involved in the May 2013 elections. These profiles will spotlight empowered women strengthening democracy in Pakistan as polling officials, master trainers and trainees of the elections results management system, constables, candidates contesting in elections, senior superintendent of police and many more.

Zahida
Bukhari,
Lead Trainer,
Security Training for
Mitigating Electoral
Violence

Security training should be a mandatory part of every election held in Pakistan.

Zahida Bukhari,
Assistant Superintendent of
Police

“Women comprise almost 50 percent of Pakistan's population, now we need to be 50 percent of the police force as well. We must ensure gender justice.”

Zahida Bokhari, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Islamabad Capital Territory

Examining crime scenes, dispersing mobs and patrolling the city at night, it's all part of the job for Zahida Bukhari, 32, Assistant Superintendent of Police. She is the first ever lady officer in the police service from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Currently based in Islamabad, Zahida supervises some 300 security officials in two police stations. Her motivation to join the police was the challenge it presented. Juggling police work with family life is not easy particularly for a working mother. However, Zahida makes sure she spends quality time with her ten months old son. This can be challenging especially if you are working 18 hours day and Zahida says, “policing is my passion, not a profession.”

In her opinion, the main security challenges for these elections include elements of terrorism, sectarianism and extremism. Zahida is the lead trainer for the security training on mitigating electoral violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Over 14,000 security officials are being trained in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province alone, including 500 police women.

As part of her elections responsibility, Zahida is training master trainers across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and making sure they are equipped to further impart training to security officials. She says the training sessions

are unique as for the first time, the security officials are greatly aware of their election responsibilities. These include safeguarding the polling stations on 11 May and doing their duty with honesty, impartiality and transparency. Security officials will be placed in over 70,000 polling stations throughout Pakistan.

“The officials have realized their job is to provide security to the staff of Election Commission of Pakistan and voters on elections day. They have nothing to do with checking identification of the voters or ballot boxes,” Zahida said.

The lead trainers have given guidelines to security officials to make certain better coordination with the electoral staff of the Election Commission of Pakistan before, during and after the elections. Zahida feels the success of these trainings depends on how trainees apply the knowledge shared in the manual on elections day.

Zahida says, “I will be satisfied on 11 May when our security officials display absolute familiarity with electoral laws and code of conduct as specified in the constitution of Pakistan.”



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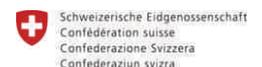
There is a huge responsibility on the law enforcing agencies due to the deteriorating security situation. For the 11 May elections, we have to make sure there is no security incident.

UNDP is assisting the police force to train its security officials in an effort to mitigate electoral violence and increase public security for the May 11 general elections. This is the first time ever in Pakistan that security officials are training for elections. Over 18,000 security officials are being trained in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Punjab, Sindh, FATA and Islamabad Capital Territory who will be engaged throughout the country on elections day.

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