



# LEARN

LAHORE EDUCATION  
AND RESEARCH NETWORK

**YEAR IN REVIEW  
2024**

# LAHORE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH NETWORK

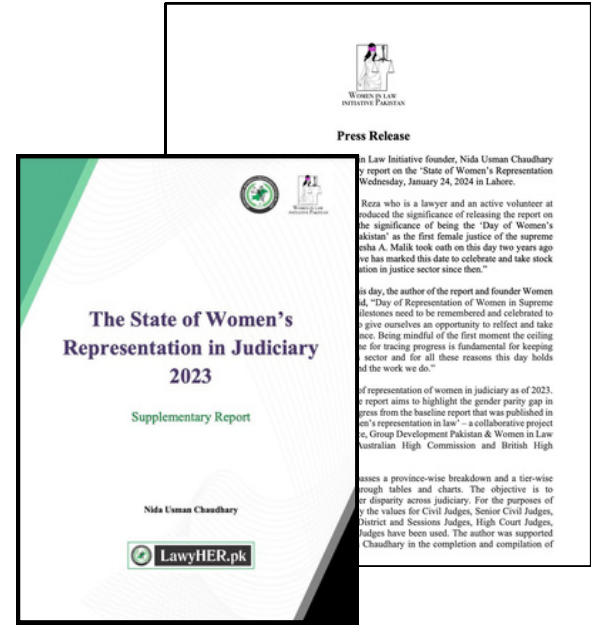
## WHO WE ARE

The Lahore Education and Research Network (LEARN), established in 2015, is a capacity-building and research organization based in Lahore. It collaborates with institutions, professional trainers, and experts to provide tailored world-class training, research, and development services. Focusing on legal education and practice in Pakistan, LEARN develops customized programs and workshops in areas such as academic writing, research methodologies, negotiation, and professional development. Additionally, LEARN offers policy input, analysis, and commentary on international and domestic legal frameworks for various organizations. It aims to bridge the gap between education, research, and practice, enhancing intellectual capacity and equipping trainees with practical skills and advocate for equal opportunities for female lawyers through Women in Law Initiative Pakistan.

LEARN specializes in a diverse range of areas, including law and politics, economy and development, trade and investment, rights and governance, education, and the environment. Its expertise extends to professional development through intellectual capacity building, skills enhancement, negotiation, presentation, networking, and industry practice. In the realm of academic development, LEARN focuses on academic writing, research methodologies, referencing, personal statements, applications, and career counseling. Additionally, it offers faculty development programs to improve teaching and academic standards. By combining skill-building and academic excellence, LEARN aims to address professional and educational needs comprehensively.

## 1. REPORT LAUNCH - 'STATE OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN JUDICIARY' | JANUARY 24

The year began with Ms. Nida Usman Chaudhary, presenting the findings of the supplementary report on 'The State of Women's Representation in the Judiciary' during an online launch event held on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, in Lahore. The session, was moderated by Aliza Masood Reza. The report provided insights on the state of women's representation in the judiciary for the year 2023 as a sequel to the 2020-21 baseline report.



## 2. LAUNCHING THE WOMEN IN LAW SOCIETY AT LAHORE SCHOOL OF LAW | JANUARY 31

The Lahore School of Law and Women in Law Initiative Pakistan signed an MOU to launch the "Women in Law Society" on January 31, 2024. The Lahore School of Law's Law and Policy Research Centre hosted a guest lecture on the "State of Women's Representation in the Judiciary," delivered by Nida Usman Chaudhary, founder of Women in Law Initiative Pakistan.



### 3. WOMEN IN LAW INITIATIVE TURNS 8 | FEBRUARY 1



### 4. WELCOMING MULTAN'S NEW CHAPTER LEAD | FEBRUARY 21

We welcomed **Fatima Sajid** in the role of Chapter Lead Multan. Fatima is a graduate of Bahauddin Zakariya University and works on various projects in Human Rights projects. She was also one of the core team members of the '100 Years of Women in Law' Exhibition this year.



### 5. FIRST MEETING OF THE 'WOMEN IN LAW SOCIETY' AT LAHORE SCHOOL OF LAW | FEBRUARY 26

The inaugural meeting of the 'Women in Law Society' at the Lahore School of Law was held earlier today. The session centered on introductions, exploring students' motivations for joining the society, and understanding their expectations. These engaging discussions were followed by a brief exercise aimed at recognizing inherent biases and perceptions around gender roles.



## 6. 'WOMEN SHAPING TOMORROW' | MARCH 3

The 40th anniversary of Bloomfield Hall School (BHS) was celebrated by a panel discussion called 'Women Shaping Tomorrow'. The event consisted of various legal professionals contributing to this event with engaging panel discussions on various topics. Women in Law founder Nida Usman Chaudhary and Alumni of BHS was invited as a panelist at this event hosted at Faletti's Hotel.



## 7. WOMEN IN LAW CHAPTER LEADS IN THE JUSTITIA ELECTION COMMITTEE 2024 | MARCH 5



Our founder Nida Usman Chaudhary and Balochistan Chapter Lead **Jalila Haider**, both Justitia Laureates (Nida in 2021 and Jalila in 2023), joined the Justitia Election Committee for 2024. This marked Jalila's first year as a jury member for the esteemed Justitia Award Ceremony held annually in Vienna, and Nida's third year in this prestigious role.



## 8. TMUC ISLAMABAD X WOMEN IN LAW INITIATIVE PAKISTAN'S SYMPOSIUM ON 'SIGNIFICANCE OF WOMEN IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM' | MARCH 8



This Women's Day, TMUC Islamabad in collaboration with Women in Law Initiative Pakistan hosted a special symposium featuring Ms. Patricia McKellar, Dean of the UG Laws Programme at the University of London, alongside prominent members of the legal fraternity. The speakers highlighted the vital role of women in the legal system and underscored the importance of integration and equality for women in law. **Advocate Sibah Farooq** proudly represented Women in Law Initiative Pakistan at this event.

## 9. INVEST IN WOMEN: ACCELERATE PROGRESS | MARCH 9

In this webinar hosted by Minority Concern, a panel of trailblazing women come together to discuss the various struggles and challenges women face within the workplace and its culture. Nida Usman Chaudhary spoke about harassment at the workplace law and its amendment in 2022 as well as about other challenges facing women particularly from diverse religious backgrounds. Other notable women in law included Sumera Shafique and Benazir Jatoi.



## 10. BARRISTER FATIMA SHAHEEN'S SHOW 'THE SOCIETY' ON PTV WORLD | MARCH 30

Barrister **Fatima Shaheen's** show *The Society* on PTV World featured CTO Ammara Ather, Women in Law founder Nida Usman Chaudhary, and Regional Head FOSPAH, Uzma Chughtai. They discussed the challenges faced by women in justice sector professions and the solutions implemented at governmental and institutional levels. The discussion also delved into the nuances introduced by the 2022 amendments to the Workplace Harassment Act.



## 11. THE 100 YEARS OF WOMEN IN LAW PHOTO EXHIBITION | 27-29 APRIL

The 100 Years Photo Exhibition was held at Alhamra Art Gallery Lahore from April 25-27, 2024 by Women in Law Initiative Pakistan. The exhibition was held to mark the 100 years of the Legal Practitioners (Women) Act of 1923 – a law which removed restrictions on women’s right and eligibility to practice law in the region.

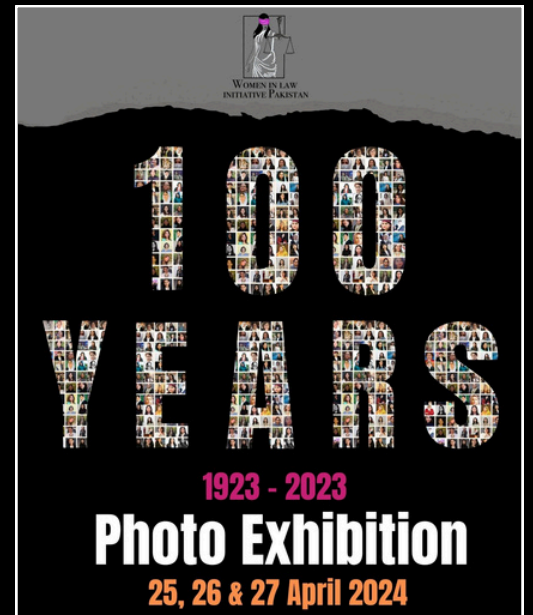
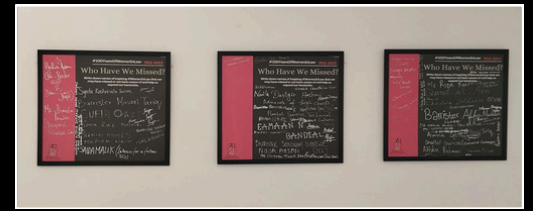
From Saidu Sharif to Turbat and Muzaffarabad to Larkana, the exhibition showcased the achievements of over 200 female legal professionals, including judges, academics, prosecutors, and students, from across Pakistan and abroad. Part of the Women in Law Initiative Pakistan’s #VisibilityMatters campaign, it built on the 2024 Calendar of Firsts featuring trailblazing women in the justice sector. The exhibition aimed to highlight women’s contributions in law and dispel the myth of a lack of qualified women for leadership roles.



**Guest of Honour – Opening Day: Ms. Sumaira Samad, Secretary - Women Development Department, Punjab | 25 April 2024**

**Guest of Honour - Closing Day: Hon’ble Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik, Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan | 27 April 2024**

The exhibition featured exhibits highlighting various aspects of women's contributions to law: the historical struggle of women, from Regina Guha's challenge to the word 'person' in legal practitioner act of that time not including women, women in the judiciary and bar leadership; a tribute to the AGHS Law Firm's founding partners, including Asma Jahangir; women excelling in niche fields like space law, climate change, and minority rights; Pakistani women serving abroad or in official positions; special categories for in-house counsels, practicing lawyers, academics, young lawyers, and students; diverse representation from various faiths, communities, and backgrounds, including differently-abled and transgender women; and a "Who Have We Missed?" section inviting attendees to expand the repository of female legal professionals.





## NOTABLE ATTENDEES



Henny de Vries - Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



Ms. Leslie Scanlon - High Commissioner of Canada to Pakistan



Mr. Peter Emil Nielsen - Deputy Head of Mission, Denmark

Notable visitors included Justice Nasira Javed Iqbal (retired), Salima Hashmi, Nayer Ali Dada, Nasrene Rehman, Nighat Said Khan, Mary James Gill, Nighat Dad, Bushra Qamar, Rabbiya Bajwa (a former Lahore High Court Bar Association vice president), Sabahat Rizvi (a former LHCBA secretary), Saeed ul Hassan Development Advisor and Deputy Head of Office of the British High Commission/FCDO, Muhammad Ahmad Pansota, Usama Malik (the Directorate of Legal Education director), Syed Muaz Shah, representatives from Prime Minister's Youth Programme and prominent members of the bar and judiciary

## 12. WOMEN'S RIGHT TO MATRIMONIAL PROPERTY CONFERENCE BY LEGAL AID SOCIETY | MAY 30 2024



Team Women in Law and its male allies, convened in Karachi for a three-day workshop and conference organized by the Legal Aid Society - Pakistan, Women in Law Initiative Pakistan and Musawah. It was the second edition of this critical dialogue on women's property rights in marriage.

## 13. WOMEN IN LAW WIN BEST SPEAKER AWARDS! IWDC'24 | MAY 30 2024

Nida Usman Chaudhary, Dileen Al Noori and Khadija Bentaleb from the women in law sector were recognised as the best speakers as part of International Women's Day Conference 2024. A conference brought together to share sector-specific updates, discuss challenges, and collaborate on building synergies, networks, and relationships.



## 14. WE CREATED A PODCAST SERIES! | MAY 30 - AUGUST 8 2024

The WIL X Qanoondan podcast series led by **Noorzadeh Raja** was launched in May 2024. The first episode focused on fair representation in government and committees. The 2nd on need for a gender lens in Climate policy-making & climate action'. The series concluded with a session on combating gender-based violence.



## 15. RSIL X WIL 'WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL LAW' MENTORSHIP | JUNE 15

The Research Society of International Law and the Women in Law Initiative launched the second edition of their 'Women in International Law' Mentorship Program. This year's mentors included Ayesha Malik, Deputy Director RSIL, Maha Husain, Research Associate RSIL, Nida Usman Chaudhary, Founder Women in Law Initiative Pakistan, and Dr. Maryam S. Khan, socio-legal scholar, Research Fellow at IDEAS and a member of Women in Law.



## 16. STUDY PRESENTED TO THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY | JUNE 15

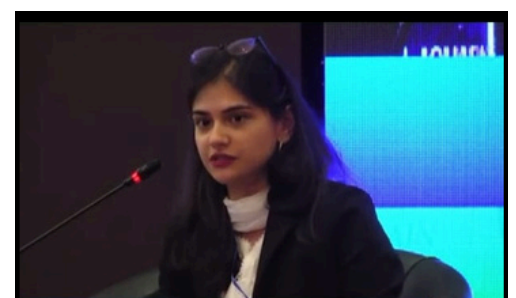
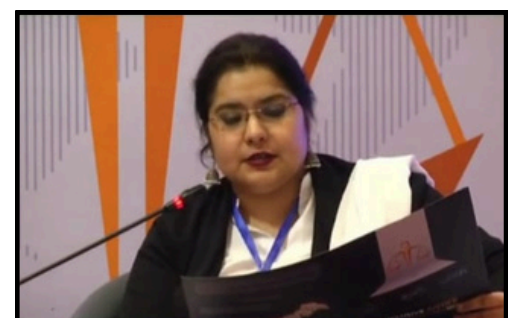


On June 15, 2024, Nida Usman Chaudhary presented her study on "Fair Representation in the Justice Sector," conducted with Anoshay Fazal, to Mr. Hayat Ali Shah, Director General of the Federal Judicial Academy.

## 17. INCLUSIVE JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM | JUNE 28 & 29

Nida Usman discussed gender representation in the judiciary, noting that the fight for inclusivity began over 100 years ago. She highlighted Pakistan's delay in appointing a female Supreme Court justice, argued that women's underrepresentation is due to socio-legal barriers, not just lack of effort, and she called for gender-conscious policies.

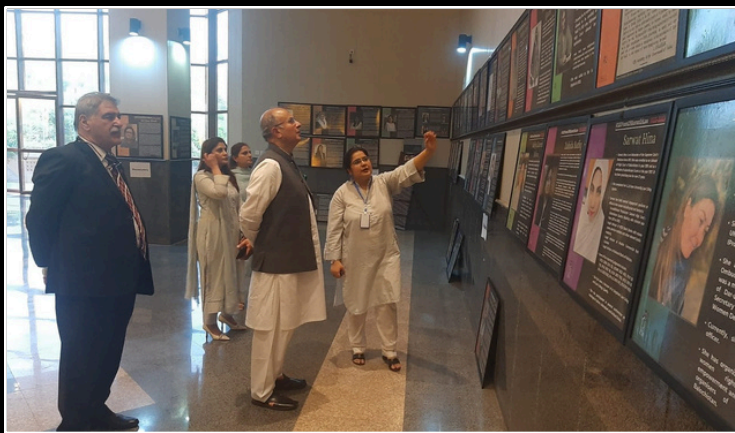
**Barrister Rida Hosain** discussed the importance of meaningful inclusivity and criticised the federal government and other stakeholders of consistently forming all-male law reform committees, even in 2024.



## 18. OUR EXHIBITION AT... THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL ACADEMY! | JUNE 27

The Federal Judicial Academy, Islamabad invited us to showcase our 100 Years Photo Exhibition as part of its Inclusive Justice Symposium from 27-29 June 2024. The exhibition was visited by foreign delegates including Justices and Judges from Thailand, Nepal and Philippines amongst others. The exhibition culminated with a visit by Senior Puisne Judge, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Supreme Court of Pakistan.

In a country governed by patriarchy, where women are marginalized and routinely overlooked for occupying prominent positions in the workplace, the Exhibition became a celebration of the revolutionary and inspiring women in law, which was noted by the Federal Judicial Academy.



## 19. WE WERE FEATURED ON 'THE LEGAL' MAGAZINE! | JULY 1

The July 2024 issue of 'The Legal' - magazine by Pakistan Legal Research contains a special report on Women in Law Initiative - Pakistan. Written by Aliza Ali, the issue took a deep dive into the objectives of the Women in Law Initiative and their contributions in the field.



## 20. IMPROVING PAKISTAN'S RESPONSE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE CONFERENCE | JULY 3

**Tabeen Sarmad** represented Women in Law at the Improving Pakistan's Response to Sexual Violence Conference held at PC Lahore. The Conference was organized by the Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of Pakistan, in association with AGHS Legal Aid Cell, UPSCALE, and Adam Smith International.

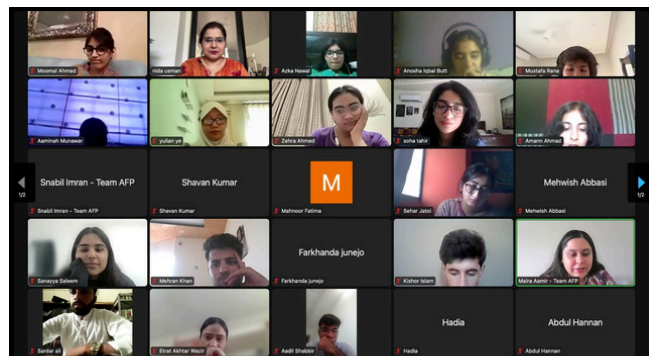
## 21. WORLD POPULATION DAY CONFERENCE | JULY 11 2024



On #WorldPopulationDay, PODA hosted a seminar on the impact of unsustainable population growth. Nida Usman Chaudhary emphasized treating population as a human rights and women's agency issue, critiquing the NFC Award's population-based formula. Women in law, including **Saira Muzahir, Sahira Adil, Tuba Jahangir, and Tabeen Sarmad** joined the discussion.

## 22. AKHUWAT FELLOWSHIP 2024 | JULY 5

Nida was invited as a guest speaker for the Akhuwat Fellowship 2024 to speak on Gender Sensitivity: Society, Self, and Law.



## 23. WE RELAUNCHED OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL! | JULY 13 2024



This year we brought our content alive via our revamped Women in Law Youtube Channel. Subscribe NOW for all updates and latest developments.

## 24. FEATURED IN DAFTARKHWAN FIRESIDE CHAT | JULY 13

In this interview, Nida discussed the need to make the legal field more inclusive for women. She delved into the challenges women lawyers face and explored how her initiative contributes and advocates for greater visibility and representation of female lawyers and pushes for legal reforms.



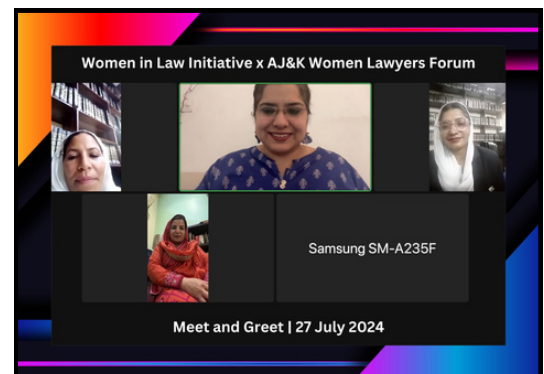
## 25. MEDIA APPEARANCE ON JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS | JULY 14



Nida had the opportunity to be part of this important conversation on judicial appointments and the myths around it on Voicepk.net with Akhtar Hussain, member of JCP, as a fellow panelist. This dialogue came following the historic appointment- Lahore High Court's first female Chief Justice Mrs. Justice Alia Neelum.

## 26. WOMEN IN LAW MEET AND GREET! | JULY 27 2024

**Bakhtawer Ashraf Khan**, our AJK WIL Chapter Lead, coordinated and made possible an inspiring and informative meet-and-greet session with the AJ&K Women Lawyers Forum. The event featured leading women lawyers from AJ&K, including ASC Bilqees Rasheed Minhas and ASC Kausar Awan, who shared insightful anecdotes from their experiences.



## 27. RSIL X WIL 'WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL LAW' MENTORSHIP PROGRAM CONCLUDES | AUGUST 2 2024

On 2nd August 2024, Women in Law Initiative Pakistan concluded its sessions as part of the second edition of Research Society of International Law (RSIL) and Women in Law Initiative Mentorship Programme 2024.



## 28. SESSION ON THE SUPREME COURT CLERKSHIP | AUGUST 15



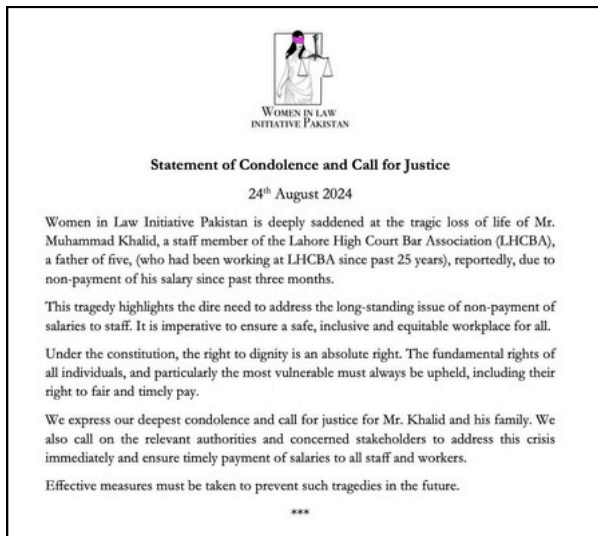
We organised a session for the Supreme Court clerkship with insights from a distinguished panel of law clerks. This included **Hareem Godil**, **Omar A. Ranjha**, **Bilquees Bano**, and **Haanya Channa**. The participants gained valuable perspectives on the pathways and experiences that lead to serving at the nation's highest court. We also compiled a useful guide for clerkship based on this session.

## 29. PAKISTAN MEIN INSAAF- A SERIES | AUGUST 20 2024

Nida Usman Chaudhary was invited at the inaugural session organised by **Rameen Nadeem**, a passionate A-level student and the force behind 'Pakistan Main Insaf', an Instagram platform advocating for justice. Rameen recently expanded her efforts by launching a thought-provoking podcast series, aiming to inspire meaningful dialogue and change. Their conversation centered on law and gender.



## 30. STATEMENT OF CONDOLENCE AND CALL FOR FAIR AND TIMELY PAYMENT OF SALARIES TO STAFF AND WORKERS | AUGUST 24 2024



Women in Law issued a statement urging the timely payment of salaries to the staff of the Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHCBA). This call to action followed the tragic loss of **Mr. Muhammad Khalid**, who passed away after enduring three months without pay. The Initiative emphasised the importance of financial security and dignity for all staff members, advocating for prompt measures to prevent such tragedies in the future.

## 31. WOMEN IN LAW AT UCL'S CONFERENCE | AUGUST 31

Nida Usman Chaudhary was invited as a panelist at UCL's National Law Conference on Impacts of Careers on Public Policy and Human Rights. The panel included distinguished experts such as Ayesha Malik, Nida Aly, Michelle Shahid, Ali Imtinan, and Rehan Safdar.



## 32. NIDA USMAN CHAUDHARY AS CHIEF GUEST | SEPTEMBER 1

Nida Usman Chaudhary was invited as the Guest of Honour at the LACAS Burki Model United Nations IV (LBMUN). Her presence added immense value to the event, inspiring participants with her expertise and commitment to justice, equality, and advocacy in the legal field.





### 33. HUMANITY ALLIANCE ORGANISATION'S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM | SEPTEMBER 4

Nida Usman Chaudhary and **Areeha Ijaz** served as panelists for a session on women empowerment during the HAO Summer Internship Program. Their insights and experiences inspired attendees, highlighting strategies for fostering gender equality and advancing women's roles in law and leadership.



### 34. WOMEN IN LAW ON GENDER SENSITIZATION AT BZU | SEPTEMBER 6

Nida Usman Chaudhary was invited as a guest speaker by Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) Multan for a session on Gender Sensitization and Challenges: An Overall Reflection. The discussion featured amongst others, Hon'ble Justice Mrs. Ayesha A. Malik as part of the panel, providing profound insights into gender equality and the challenges faced in fostering inclusivity. Dr. Samza Fatima moderated the session.



### 35. WOMEN IN LAW ON POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN | SEPTEMBER 10

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), in collaboration with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF), hosted a roundtable discussion on electoral participation and the political empowerment of marginalized groups, with a focus on women in Punjab. **Tabeen Sarmad**, Consultant Programme Support, attended the event as a representative of the Women in Law team. The discussion highlighted the barriers and challenges faced by women and marginalized groups in the political arena.



## 36. WOMEN IN LAW HOSTS A WEBINAR PART 1 | SEPTEMBER 14 2024

The online session 'Constitutional Court in Pakistan: Pros, Cons, and Perspectives' explored the need for a dedicated court to handle constitutional matters, separate from the existing judiciary structure. The Panelists delved into the advantages and challenges of establishing such a court, drawing on comparative insights from other jurisdictions. The discussion evaluated the potential impact on justice delivery, governance, and the rule of law in Pakistan.

**ONLINE WEBINAR**

**CONSTITUTIONAL COURT IN PAKISTAN? PROS, CONS & PERSPECTIVES**

Date: 14 Sept 2024 | Time: 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Panelists: Ahmad Hassan Shah, Jallia Haider, Dr. Maryam S. Khan, Sara Malkani, Sajjad Hameed Yousafzai, Hassan A. Niazi

Moderator: Nida Usman Ch

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## 37. WOMEN IN LAW ISSUES PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE 26TH CONSTITUTIONAL AMMENDMENT | SEPTEMBER 16 2024

**Preliminary Observations on the Proposed Constitutional Amendments**  
16 September 2024

The Women in Law Initiative Pakistan voices its concerns regarding the 'proposed constitutional package' in the form of the 26<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment bill. In particular, we highlight that:

1. The manner in which the constitutional package was presented goes against the spirit of a parliamentary democracy. The entire process was shrouded in secrecy, and there has been virtually no consultation with relevant stakeholders, including women and in particular with female legal professionals. To ensure consultation, there must be a clearly defined timeline for review and input. There has been no such opportunity provided, and the amendments process has been devoid of transparency, inclusivity, and participation.
2. In constitutional dispensation, where there is a written constitution the constitution is supreme. Parliament cannot legislate in violation of the constitution.
3. The independence of the judiciary is one of the salient features of the constitution and a principle that we strongly stand with. The proposed amendments, related to establishment of a constitutional court, appointments of its first Chief Justice, transfer of High Court Judges, enhanced role and powers of the JCP, cherry picking of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and other provisions related to judiciary as proposed, so long as they are inconsistent with the core principles of judicial independence and the separation of powers, cannot be condoned.
4. The revised composition of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan provides for no distinct clause to ensure female representation contrary to Articles 25 (3) and 34 of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973. It has been our long-standing demand that female voices must be included in the judicial appointment process. When there is no consultation, it inevitably adversely impacts women as their perspective is overlooked.
5. Women in Law Initiative Pakistan stands for Constitutional Supremacy, Separation of Powers, Independence of Judiciary, Fair Representation in Justice Sector, Transparent, Inclusive and Participatory Reforms Process and Reforms geared towards strengthening fundamental rights, rule of law, democracy and democratic values. We will gauge any attempts to reform the laws and constitution with the lens of these six principles and will not stand with any reforms that fall short on the threshold of these principles.

The observations called for transparency, inclusivity, and stakeholder participation in the amendment process, emphasizing constitutional supremacy and judicial independence. The statement critiqued the lack of consultation with relevant stakeholders, including female legal professionals, and highlighted the absence of provisions for ensuring fair representation of women in judicial appointments. The group reaffirmed its commitment to constitutional supremacy, separation of powers, and democratic values, urging reforms that align with these principles.

## 38. SEMINAR ON PARLIAMENTARY SOVEREIGNTY | SEPTEMBER 28 2024

The session explored whether parliamentary sovereignty truly provided unlimited power or if it was constrained by constitutional frameworks and democratic principles. It also examined the reasons behind these constraints and their role in maintaining a balanced/ effective system of governance. It included **Barrister Rida Hosain**, **Moiz Baig** and **Hassan A. Niazi** with Nida Usman as the moderator.

**Online Session**

**PARLIAMENTARY SOVEREIGNTY**  
*Boundless Power or Constitutional Constraints?*

Panelists: Rida Hosain, Moiz Baig, Hassan A. Niazi, Nida Usman Ch

### 39. WOMEN IN LAW X RSIL 'WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL LAW' MIXER | SEPTEMBER 20

The second Women in Law Mixer, organized by the Research Society of International Law (RSIL) Pakistan as part of the RSIL x WIL Women in International Law Mentorship Programme, was a networking event marking the culmination of the prestigious mentorship programme. It provided mentees with the opportunity to meet leading female legal professionals. This year, notable women such as **Huma Ejaz Zaman, Barrister Fatima Shaheen, Sarah Tarar, Habeeba Naseer, Sahar Bandial AHC, Nehan Zehra, Marium Khalid (PEECA), Hamdia Haq, Nimra Arshad, Mehreen Nadeem, Fatima Jan, Dr. Maryam S. Khan, Faiqa Dawood, and Aliza Masood Reza** supported, inspired, and guided the young mentees.



### 40. SESSION ON VAW AT PSCA | SEPTEMBER 28 2024

Nida Usman Chaudhary was invited to speak at a conference organized by the Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA) on Violence Against Women, alongside esteemed colleagues such as Dr. Uzma Khan, Bushra Khaliq, CTO Ammara Ather, journalist Ms. Ayesha Sagheer, and Momina Asad from UNFPA. Nida Usman Chaudhary highlighted the importance of safe, inclusive cities and emphasized that harassment is an act of power, not the victim's fault.

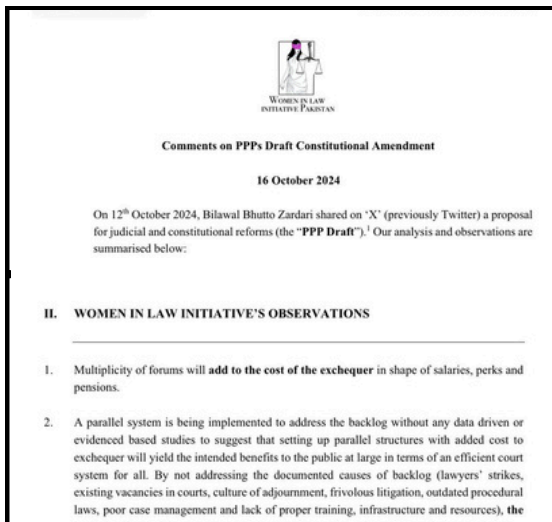


## 41. ROLE OF MENTORSHIP IN EMPOWERING WOMEN IN LAW | OCTOBER 14

The Pakistan Law Students Association organized a webinar titled "**Role of Mentorship in Empowering Women in Law**," featuring distinguished speakers Ms. Nida Usman Chaudhary and **Ms. Marium Khalid**, who shared their insightful perspectives on this important subject.



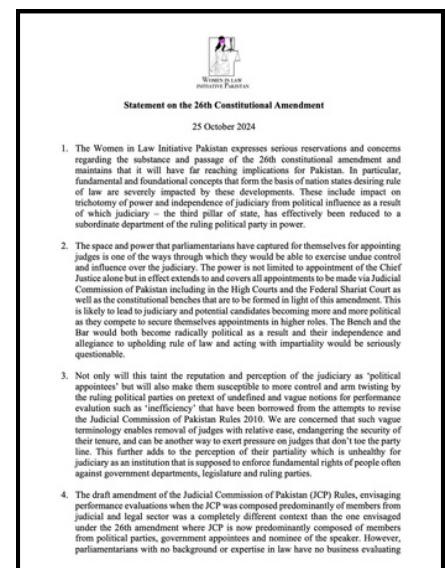
## 42. OUR COMMENTS ON THE 'PPP' PROPOSED REFORMS ON THE 26TH CONSTITUTIONAL AMMENDMENT | OCTOBER 16



On 12th October 2024, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari shared a proposal for judicial and constitutional reforms (the "PPP Draft") on 'X' (formerly Twitter). Women in Law Initiative Pakistan subsequently issued their analysis and observations on said reforms and highlighted provisions of concern related to fundamental rights, judicial independence, rule of law and women's representation.

## 43. OUR OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON THE 26TH CONSTITUTIONAL AMMENDMENT | OCTOBER 16

The Women in Law Initiative issued a statement expressing serious concerns and reservations about the 26th Constitutional Amendment. We emphasised that the amendment could have significant implications for Pakistan, particularly affecting the independence of the judiciary, fundamental rights and the trichotomy of power.



## 44. SCIZ LAW STUDENT UNION WEBINAR | OCTOBER 27 2024



The SCIZ Law Student Union hosted a webinar on 27th October 2024, featuring Nida Usman Chaudhary. The session focused on parliamentary sovereignty in the context of the recent constitutional amendment.

## 45. NIDA USMAN ON WOMEN'S HURDLES IN LEGAL EDUCATION | NOVEMBER 1 2024

Nida Usman Chaudhary, was invited by Pakistan Law Students Association, at Kinnaird to speak at the session. She discussed how societal mindset and gender stereotyping created barriers for women in legal education. She addressed the stigma surrounding the profession, acknowledging the hostile environment and unwarranted remarks women face. Nida also highlighted the lack of networking and mentorship opportunities for women and how gender bias and safety concerns in courts and *katcheries* resulted in unequal opportunities for women in legal practice. She was joined by esteemed colleagues from Pakistan and UK.



## 46. WE HOSTED OUR FIRST EVER 'MOVIE NIGHT' | NOVEMBER 2

November began with our first movie night, offering members an opportunity to network, socialize, and unwind. The event featured the screening of the classic film 'Legally Blonde'. It also had an open mic for the members to engage in any talk or dialogue they wished,

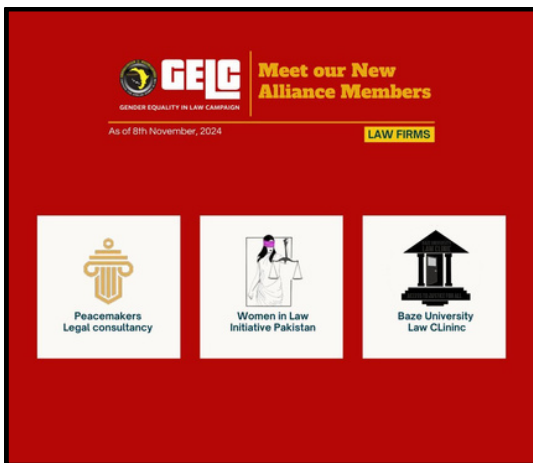


## 47. OUR ISLAMABAD CHAPTER GETS A NEW LEAD! | NOVEMBER 7

We were pleased to welcome Advocate **Zeneb Abid** who kindly volunteered to support our work in Islamabad/Rawalpindi as our Chapter Lead. She took on the role of coordinating activities to develop our Islamabad chapter, following the contributions of Barrister Jugnoo Kazmi, who has gone abroad for her studies.



## 48. WOMEN IN LAW JOINS THE GENDER EQUALITY IN LAW CAMPAIGN AND ALLIANCE IN AFRICA | NOVEMBER 7



This year we joined the Gender Equality in Law Campaign and Alliance by the Institute for African Women in Law (IAWL) as part of our women's rights and representation advocacy initiative. We stand united in our mission to promote gender equality in the legal profession and were proud to be one of the few, if not the only, members from outside Africa—an honor we deeply appreciated.

## 49. WOMEN IN LAW AT PODA PAKISTAN'S PRO -WOMEN LAWS CONSULTATION | NOVEMBER 11

The consultation was to form solutions for addressing prevalent issues such as child abuse through marriage, workplace harassment, honor killings, and forced marriages.. Nida Usman Chaudhary was invited as a guest speaker at the event. Women in Law members in attendance included **Zohra Hotiana, Sameen Sheikh, Aliza Masood Reza, Rabiya Bakhtawar Pirzada, Aliza M Reza** and **Tabeen Sarmad**, amongst others.



## 50. NIDA USMAN CHAUDHARY ON FOSPAH'S 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM | NOVEMBER 27

کام کی جگہ پر صنفی امتیازی سلوک کیا ہے؟  
جانے ندا عثمان چوہدری (بانی وومن ان لاء انیشیٹیو پاکستان)  
#16DaysOfActivism  
صنفی تفریق کا خاتمہ ہمارا عزم #NoExcuse

As part of FOSPAH's 16 Days of Activism, Nida Usman Chaudhary, founder of Women in Law Initiative Pakistan, emphasized the urgent need to address the issues of harassment and gender discrimination in the workplace through a video message.

## 51. WE INTRODUCED 'FLASH MENTORSHIP' SESSIONS! | NOVEMBER 30 & DECEMBER 10

Women in Law introduced Flash Mentorship Sessions for the coming year. Each month brought/will bring a new mentor. Flash mentorship is a short-term, focused mentoring relationship where the mentor and mentee engage in a brief, often one-time, interaction aimed at providing specific advice or guidance on a particular issue or challenge. Nida Usman Shared insights on how to stand out amid competition along with answering specific and focused questions while **Aisha Jagirani** was the mentor for December. She shared her insights and experience in space law as a career path. These sessions are available on our YouTube Channel.

**FLASH MENTORSHIP SESSIONS**

WOMEN IN LAW  
MENTOR OF THE MONTH  
DECEMBER 2024

**AISHA JAGIRANI**  
DIRECTOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS & LEGAL AFFAIRS  
ASIA-PACIFIC SPACE COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (APSCO)

TOPIC: SPACE LAW: JOURNEY, SCOPE AND CHALLENGES  
DECEMBER 10 2024 | 3:00 - 4:00 PM

**FLASH MENTORSHIP SESSIONS**

WOMEN IN LAW  
MENTOR OF THE MONTH  
NOVEMBER 2024

**NIDA USMAN CHAUDHARY**  
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ADVOCATE  
FOUNDER, WOMEN IN LAW INITIATIVE PAKISTAN  
LL.B (HONS), LL.M (LAW & DEVELOPMENT) LONDON

TOPIC: HOW TO STAND OUT AMID COMPETITION?

INTRODUCING...

**FLASH MENTORSHIP SESSIONS**

WITH WOMEN IN LAW  
MENTORS OF THE MONTH

## 52. WOMEN IN LAW ATTEND A SYMPOSIUM ON LEGAL EDUCATION AT BZU MULTAN | DECEMBER 12

On December 12, 2024, Nida Usman Chaudhary was a Guest of Honor at BZU Gillani Law College. She spoke on the challenges and future of legal education. Chaired by Justice (r) Sardar Ahmed Naeem, the session gathered representatives from various private and public sector universities. Nida critiqued the Legal Education Rules 2015 for limiting academic freedom and highlighted judicial and bar influences on education policy. Participants shared feedback to **Dr. Samza Fatima**. Nida also presented her studies on fair representation and the 2025 Women in Law calendar to Dr. Fatima. She was accompanied by Consultant - Program Support, Tabeen Sarmad.



## 53. THE WOMEN IN LAW CALENDAR FOR 2025! | DECEMBER 12

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the second Women in Law Calendar featuring female legal professionals based on thematic areas. The theme for 2025 was contemporary women in bar politics. This calendar was able to feature and represent women from all across Pakistan, from Karachi to Kashmir. It highlighted women in contemporary bar politics who inspire and lead by example. We are deeply grateful to all the featured individuals for their consent and support in making this initiative possible.



Dedicated to Amna Ajmal



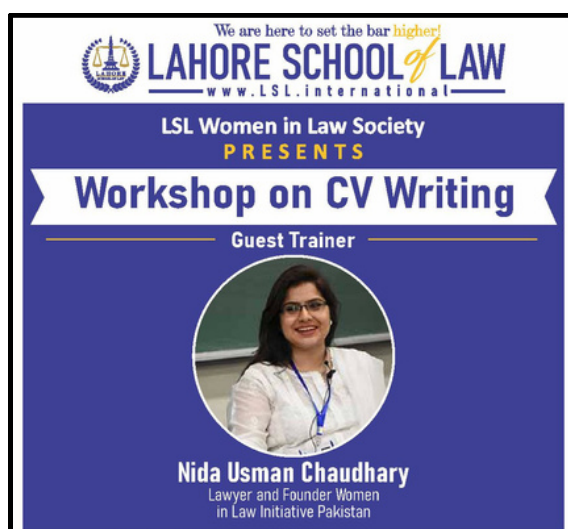
Late Ms. Amna Ajmal was an Advocate High Court and a prominent member of the Lahore High Court Bar Association (LHCBA). Her sudden demise in 2024 has left us all in shock. She had been a part of and led several committees set up by LHCBA and was instrumental in constituting the first ever Gender Equality and Diversity Committee (EQD Committee) of the Lahore High Court Bar Association in 2018. Amna loved her profession and was the life of the female bar room where she greeted everyone with a warm smile and genuine affection. We value her contributions to the EQD Committee and to the Women In Law Initiative Pakistan. Her fond memories will forever remain with us. Join us in our prayers for her. There truly will be no one like her. May she rest in peace, Ameen.





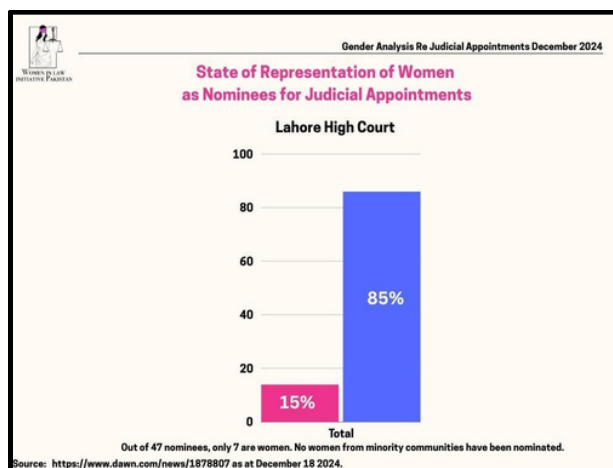
## 54. WOMEN IN LAW SOCIETY OF LAW'S CV WRITING WORKSHOP | DECEMBER 18 2024

On December 18, 2024, the Women in Law Society at Lahore School of Law organized a CV writing workshop led by Ms. Nida Usman Chaudhary. She emphasized the importance of tailoring CVs to job applications, using keywords for visibility, and maintaining clear, concise, and error-free formatting. After the session, she met with the Women in Law Society's cabinet, providing strategic advice on organizing impactful events, inspiring attendees, and setting the stage for future growth.



## 55. STATE OF REPRESENTATION OF JUDICIARY IN LAHORE HIGH COURT | DECEMBER 18 2024

Women in Law Initiative took note of the nominated appointments for the Lahore High Court. Women constitute only 15% of the nominees for appointments in the Lahore High Court, with no representation from minority communities. Additionally, the proposed JCP rules are anticipated to impose technical barriers, further obstructing women's representation and appointments in the higher judiciary.

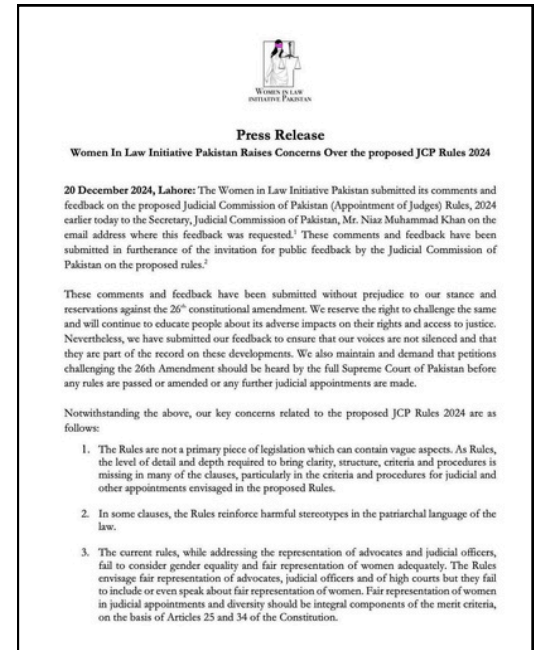


## 56. OUR STATEMENT ON THE PROPOSED JCP RULES | DECEMBER 12

We issued our statement on the proposed JCP Rules.

Our reservations focused on the lack of clarity in the rules as supplementary legislation, emphasizing the need for fair, transparent, and unbiased criteria for nominations, free from political influence.

We also highlighted the importance of true inclusivity through a gender equity approach and expressed concern where the Rules appeared to be in conflict with the Constitution of Pakistan 1973.



## 57. UCP LAW SOCIETY'S SESSION 'WOMEN LAWYERS: BREAKING BARRIERS' | DECEMBER 20 2024

Nida Usman Chaudhary joined the UCP Law Society alongside Advocate and faculty member Ummara Mushtaq for a session on "Women Lawyers: Breaking Barriers." During her first visit to UCP Law School, Nida praised the leadership of Dean Dr. Hadia Awan and Law Society President Nimra Ibrahim for creating a positive, inclusive environment. Nida discussed structural and invisible barriers in the profession, while Ummara shared her personal experiences, emphasizing overcoming challenges and adopting a growth mindset. The session showcased the inspiring impact of women leaders on UCP's students.



# FROM OUR OTHER CHAPTERS TO YOU!

Women in Law operates through regional chapters across Pakistan, with active representation in Lahore, Islamabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). These chapters work collaboratively to advance the initiative's goals within their respective regions.

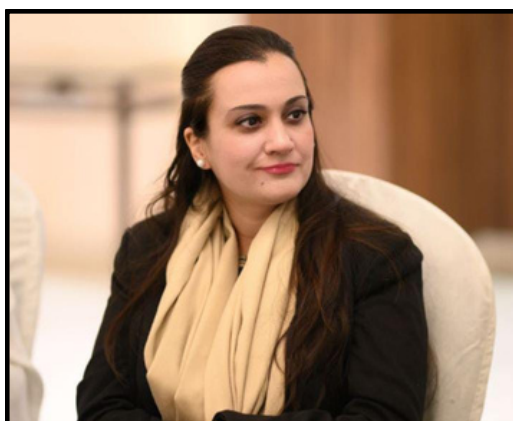


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LAHORE EDUCATION  
AND RESEARCH NETWORK

## ISLAMABAD CHAPTER

### 1. ZENEB ABID AT POPULATION CONTROL ISLAMABAD'S EVENT ON "TAWAZUN," | DECEMBER 12

Zeneb Abid attended an event organized by Population Control Islamabad on "Tawazun," an initiative focused on balancing resources and family planning to mitigate the effects of rapid population growth. The event included various stakeholders, such as human rights NGOs, lawyers, and government representatives. Zeneb participated in discussions regarding the impacts of population growth, particularly on women and children, including its link to child marriages and the increasing risk of climate change-related disasters. She emphasized that family planning and pregnancy rights are fundamental human rights for women.

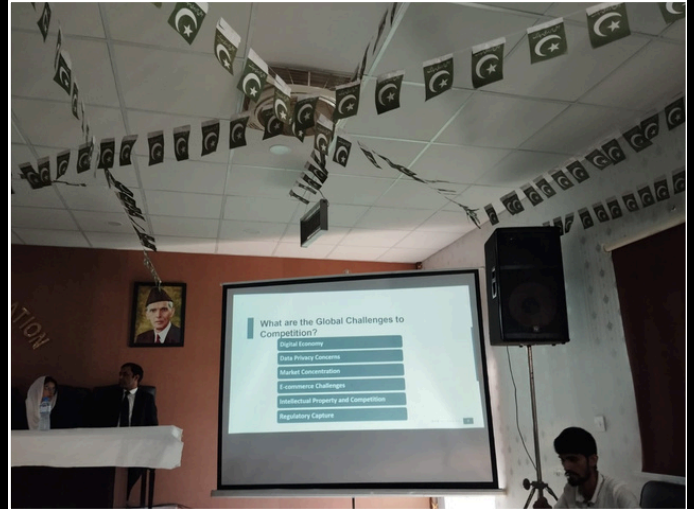


## 2. WOMEN IN LAW'S AWARENESS SESSION ON COMEPTITION LAW | SEPTEMBER 27

On 27 September 2024, Women in Law Initiative Pakistan, in collaboration with the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and supported by the Legal Awareness Committee of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA), conducted an awareness session on Competition Law and Practice for lawyers in Islamabad. The session aimed to raise awareness, particularly among female lawyers, about the law and practice at CCP and to encourage women's participation in specialized areas of legal practice. Secretary IHCBA, Mr. Shafqat Abbas, hosted the session, welcoming the IHCBA cabinet, including President Mr. Riasat Ali Azad. Nida Usman Chaudhary, founder of Women in Law Initiative Pakistan, delivered the welcome address, emphasizing the importance of this field for corporate and consumer lawyers. Ms. Sibah Farooq, Chairperson of the Legal Awareness Committee, provided a historical overview of competition law.

Mr. Salman Amin, CCP Member, offered the opening remarks, followed by a documentary on competition law and an in-depth presentation by Ms. Kishwar Khan, DG-Research CCP. The event included a panel discussion and Q&A moderated by Ms. Maryam Haseeb from CCP, with panelists Ms. Shazia Ashraf, Director of Exemptions at CCP, and Barristers Zainab Khan and Zainab Janjua. The session concluded with a closing address from IHCBA President Mr. Riasat Ali Azad, and shields and certificates were distributed to speakers and attendees. Notable attendees included former High Court Justice Advocate Jamila Jahanoor Aslam, senior advocates Ms. Kosar Awan and Ms. Bilquees Rasheed Minhas, and others. Ms. Zeneb Abid from Women in Law Islamabad Chapter supported event management.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS TO OUR WOMEN IN LAW TEAM!

Women in Law extends a special gratitude to the Legal Awareness Committee, Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA), Sibah Farooq (Chairperson and Member Executive IHCBA), Syeda Rida e Batool, Member Executive IHCBA, Barrister Zainab Janjua (Partner at Ajuris and representative of Women in Law), and Zeneb Abid (Chapter Lead, Islamabad) for their invaluable contributions to making this session a success. Thier collective efforts reflected a commitment to empowering lawyers with the knowledge and tools necessary to thrive in their practice. Thier dedication to promoting legal education via this session was truly commendable!



Sibah Farooq



Nida Usman and Syeda Rida e Batool



Zeneb Abid with Nida Usman Chaudhary



Zainab Janjua

## AJK CHAPTER

### 1. BAKHTAWER ASHRAF KHAN ORGANISING THE "THE ROLE OF LAWYERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL LITIGATION AND MITIGATION" SEMINAR | OCTOBER 29

Bakhtawer Ashraf Khan, representing the Women in Law Initiative as Chapter Lead AJK, and collaborating with the Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), organized a seminar titled "The Role of Lawyers in Environmental Litigation and Mitigation" in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), AJK. The event explored the intersection of law and environmental justice, emphasizing the role of legal professionals in promoting sustainability and environmental protection.

The seminar gathered law students, practicing lawyers, Supreme Court attorneys, and retired justices for a multidisciplinary discussion on environmental challenges. Notable speakers, including Advocate Supreme Court Madam Bilquees, Madam Kausar, and Chief Justice (R) Manzoor Hussain Gillani, highlighted the unique challenges female lawyers face in environmental litigation and the importance of judicial leadership. Contributions from the EPA's Director and Secretary added depth to the dialogue.

This initiative strengthened the legal community's commitment to climate justice by empowering participants with actionable knowledge and fostering collaboration for a sustainable future.





## 2. BAKHTAWER ASHRAF IN THE 26TH SOUTH ASIAN FEMINIST CAPACITY BUILDING COURSE | AUGUST 8 - SEPTEMBER 6

In August 2024, Bakhtawer Ashraf Khan, Chapter Lead for AJK Women in Law, was one of five women from her country selected to attend the 26th South Asian Feminist Capacity Building Course in Kathmandu, Nepal. This month-long program brought together women leaders and activists from across South Asia to address key issues like patriarchy, intersectionality, climate justice, women's reproductive rights, and conflict resolution, aligning with the Women in Law Initiative's mission to advance gender justice and human rights.

The course featured impactful sessions led by renowned feminist scholars, including Khushi Kabir, Amrita Chhachhi, and Azra Sayeed, and honored its founder, Kamla Bhasin, for her vision of a strong feminist network in South Asia. Using participatory methods like experiential learning and group discussions, the program deepened Bakhtawer's understanding of feminist advocacy and principles. This transformative experience enhanced her contributions to the Women in Law Initiative and strengthened her dedication to advancing legal and societal reforms for justice and equality.



# THIS YEARS ARTICLES

BY NIDA USMAN CHAUDHARY

1. TRANSPARENCY MATTERS

2. 'HILAL' RESIGNATIONS AND 'HARAM' APPOINTMENTS: WHAT ARE WE OVERLOOKING?

3. KHULA AND DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE: TWO SEPARATE RIGHTS

4. LEGAL MATTERS: HOW NOT TO REFORM!

5. VISIBILITY MATTERS

6. CHALLENGING 'IDEAL VICTIM' SYNDROME

7. BOOK REVIEW: PAYING THE PRICE

8. CONSTITUTIONAL COUP

9. WE DON'T NEED AN FCC

10. BILAWAL'S SHAME

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