



Press Release

Empowering of Women ensures National progress- Dr. Umar Saif opens Herself Women Convention

Lahore, July 9, 2017

“Being the 6th most populous country with more than 50% of the population comprising of women, it is our duty to step up and empower them to ensure the accelerated progress of Pakistan.” Dr. Umar Saif founding Vice Chancellor of Information Technology University (ITU), Chairman Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) and Adviser to the Chief Minister Punjab made these remarks while opening a day long convention to celebrate the first anniversary of PITB’s Herself project, held in collaboration with Facebook at Lahore.

Dr. Umar Saif said that by adopting the smart technology in various spheres of life, the women were excelling and contributing to the national economy, defense, education, law and order, science, financial institutions, industry and in the world of entrepreneurship.

In Universities, banking sector, hospitals, stock exchange, various industrial businesses, social services, armed forces, police, science and technology and leading multinational and national companies, the women of Pakistan were performing in lead positions with dedication, he added.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Shehla Javed, President Lahore WCCI. Punjab IT Board’s Herself Women Convention with turnout of almost 500+ women was the first of its kind, which highlighted all the right issues and asked for solutions from industry leaders. It was held to support and celebrate the women of Pakistan and also to acknowledge their struggles and achievements

Following the theme of *'Steps towards a progressive nation'*, the day was packed with several thought-provoking talk sessions, exciting workshops along with various other activities aimed at educating and motivating women to be an active participant in improving the quality of education as well as choosing from diverse career paths for women in Pakistan.

Facebook, an official partner on the event conducted online panel discussions, workshops and competitions from the Facebook HQ. The 3 winners of the Facebook competition namely Nisa Anwar, founder of Ottuto, Namra Tahir, founder of Creative Creations and Laraib Zamir, founder of Xgeekster were awarded Facebook credits worth \$350 by Ritesh Mehta, head of South East Asia Facebook’s #SheMeansBusiness and Ali Khurshid, Business Development Lead for Facebook Pakistan. Ritesh lauded the efforts of Herself in promoting women entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Pakistan is one of the star players for Facebook’s #SheMeansBusiness in South East Asia.

This panel discussion was a candid conversation between Nabeel A. Qadeer, front man of Idea Cronon Ka and the flag bearer of Entrepreneurship Wing at PITB and Mrs. Seema Aziz, owner of Bareeze and Care Foundation.

Some of the notable panelists included Nadia Nawiwala, Author of ‘Pakistan’s Education Crisis: The Real Story’, Fariha Ummar, Manager Women’s Economic Empowerment and Women Leadership at UN Women Pakistan, Sadaf Zarrar, Owner of SiddySays, Selina Rashid, CEO LotusPR, Zainab Abbas, Sports Journalist, Aisha Sarwari who worked for CNN and National Public Radio in the US and USAID. Herself’s graduated startups displayed their work and got appreciation as well as feedback from the guests and the attendees.