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UNESCO, UNGEI reaffirm commitment to Girls' education in Pakistan

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in collaboration with UNICEF, International Labor Organization (ILO) and other UN agencies including UNIDO organized a special event here to highlight "Girls' Right to Education".

Timo Pakkala, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, while addressing the event, emphasized that the girls' education is a must, in order to meet development targets in Pakistan.

Dr. Kozue Kay Nagata, Director, UNESCO Pakistan, in her opening remarks quoted from the global speech of the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms. Irina Bokova said, "I would like to dedicate this ceremony to Malala Yousafzai, a young brave activist for the right of girls' education in Pakistan, assaulted last week, because she wanted to go school". Also, Dr. Nagata added, "Gender equality in education constitutes a basic human right as well as an important means of improving economic outcomes".

The Director UNESCO said, "Although gender gap in Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) in primary and secondary schools is getting reduced in major urban centers such as Islamabad, Peshawar, Lahore and Karachi, the gender gap is still high in Balochistan, Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), rural Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, interior Sindh, and other conservative communities". She said.

Senator Farah Aqil of ruling PPP said that government gave priority of girls' education and with the support of UN agencies further boasts education in Pakistan.

Arshad Saeed Khan of UNESCO said that according mentioned report and said that, youth (between ages 15- 24) female literacy rate in Pakistan is 61% against 79% for males. However, youth female literacy rate is projected to be 72% (against 82% for males) by year 2015, whereas adult female literacy rate of older age group (15+) is projected to be 47%. This indicates that young Pakistani females are more educated than their mothers.

He further informed that gender-based ratio (female – male) of illiterate youth between ages 15 – 24 is, 64% - 36%. This shows that gender gap still exists. Nearly two thirds (63%) of the 5.1 million out-of-schools children of primary school age group are girls. There are more female adolescents (3.9 million) than male adolescence (3.3 million) who are out-of-school, as stated in the Global Monitoring Report.

The civil society, NGOs and UN agencies actively participated in the event to exchange views and urged for coordinated actions to promote girls'

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education in Pakistan.

This event was planned in lieu of UNESCO's Director-General, Irina Bokova's attribution to Malala Yousufzai during the international launch of Global Monitoring Report 2012 in Paris on 16th October, calling for global attention to the right of girls and women to education.



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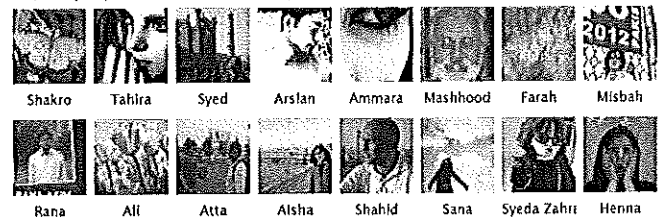
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