

Beyond the Youth

A Project of Youth General Assembly

NEWSLETTER



YOUTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY



President's Message

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Youth General Assembly has always focused on providing youth with a platform where their intellectual skills can be utilized to draft policies and resolutions that are presented before legislative institutions. YGA recognizes the importance of enabling and empowering the youth to participate in socially beneficial and humanitarian activities. Our Assembly commits itself to continue working on promoting and developing projects which encourage youth to serve society in the best manner. ”

Beyond The Youth Leadership

We are highly grateful to our BTY Leadership and the entire core team who worked from dawn to dusk for making BTY 2022 a huge success.

Our sedulous and hardworking individuals from all departments worked diligently for the cause & YGA is honored to have such an enthusiastic team among it.



Kamran Shakoor

Managing Director



Imtesal Awan

Additional Secretary General



Bakhtawar

Joint Secretary

About Youth General Assembly

Youth General Assembly is an autonomous assembly that has been formed in order to provide a credible platform that instigates the true sense of policy & strategy making, equitable administration, and non-customary legislative, and public speaking on social issues by empowering enthusiasm in youth for being the future ambassadors and democrats.

The aim is to inculcate the convening and confronting qualities amongst the youth to expand their perspective and knowledge regarding true democracy and parliamentary politics.

About Beyond The Youth

Beyond the Youth is a flagship event of the Youth General Assembly. This event helps enable young policy and strategy makers to come forward and showcase their leadership qualities. BTY provides a platform for the youth to present their ideas and policies which could serve to eradicate the socio-economic problems in the country. This event contributes towards bridging the generational gap between our policymakers and youth. Students get the opportunity to hone their intellectual capabilities and interact with industry leaders from all sectors.

BTY's Vision

A country, which comprises about 63% of youth, suffers from inadequate youth representation at the national level. We have not been able to train and equip our youth with the essential skills they need to become leaders in their communities. Our vision is to provide a sustainable platform for the youth, so they take ownership and responsibility for the country's development.

BTY's Core Objectives

- BTY has the core objective to provide Youth with a platform to have an unjudged interaction with policymakers and government officials so their voices are heard and they feel empowered.
- BTY aims to make individuals confident, empowered and truthful to their morals and showcase the true potential of youth to the world.
- BTY wants individuals to showcase and manifest the true definitions of being human and being democratic.

Beyond The Youth

Beyond the Youth organized by Youth General Assembly was held on 4th December 2022 in Ali Auditorium, Lahore. The conference started with an opening Statement given by Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik – the First Female Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Politicians, policymakers, bureaucrats, lawyers and youth activists joined the conference to share their thoughts on various pertinent topics like climate policy, judicial activism, constitutional crisis, youth bulge and closing the gender gap.

Beyond The Youth is undoubtedly the biggest youth conference of the year 2022. BTY hosted more than 500 enthusiastic youth and provided them with a unique learning experience. BTY was surely a worthwhile event for seekers and youngsters as the stage was set with excellent speakers, partners, and mentors for youth to learn and grow. BTY invited youth from all around Pakistan to participate and be a part of instructive panel discussions and keynotes at the conference, accompanied by giggles, learnings, performances and much more.

Keynote Speeches

Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik

Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik, the First Female Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, delivered her keynote speech on the topic of “Reshaping Gender Attitudes”. She highlighted the concerns related to women’s inclusion and drew attention toward the narratives that are built to alienate women socially and systematically.



Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik spoke about the two fingers test which was banned by one of her Judgements at Lahore High Court, the test was declared unconstitutional and against human dignity. She highlighted the reasons behind the failure of the system to implement laws that ensure women's security in Pakistan and raised her concerns that it is more about social alienation and victimization of women. "We are not willing to change the way we think", she addressed. Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik tabled the inclusion of gender perspective alongside the youth perspective and emphasized that the way forward for the youth is to bring a change in narratives, by using their voice, changing the mindsets and becoming inclusive and tolerant. At last, she addressed the young participants with her message, "each and every one of you has a legacy to leave behind, so become that youth that will lead Pakistan into a better tomorrow".

Makhdoom Muhammad Javed Hashmi

While addressing the audience at Beyond The Youth, Former Federal Minister and Former President of PTI & PMLN, Mr. Makhdoom Muhammad Javed Hashmi, threw light on the course of the history of Pakistan. He mentioned the significant role students could play in ensuring a government's accountability for its actions and policies while expressing his disappointment at how Pakistan was mishandled by incapable leaders. Mr. Hashmi inspired youth by narrating some incidents from the life of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Quaid wanted to see Pakistan as an independent state where the rule of law is ensured and Youth should play their part to ensure Quaid's vision. He inspired youth to learn from the mistakes of their leaders instead of just criticizing and lamenting history. Mr. Makhdoom Muhammad Javed Hashmi is indeed a man of knowledge and experience, his insights were rich, useful and welcomed by the Youth.



Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan

Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan talked about civilian supremacy and upholding the constitution of Pakistan into the country. He lamented that due to the unconstitutional practices, no prime minister was allowed to complete his tenure in the history of Pakistan, many had to suffer exile and some became politically irrelevant. He stressed on the importance of youth's political awareness and raised concerns over despite having an incredible youth bulge we are unable to provide useful and proper platforms/opportunities to the talented youth of Pakistan. Lastly, he advised the youth to become very vigilant about the blind following and urged the students to be sincere and dedicated toward their life goals. He inspired youth to achieve their maximum potential and his amazing insights provided a great learning experience for the participants of the BTY conference.



Syed Ali Musa Gillani

Mr. Syed Ali Musa Gillani, elected president of the Young Parliamentarians Forum, in his speech urged the youth to be politically aware, read out the manifesto of political parties and act responsibly about their right to vote. He highlighted the need for devising a comprehensive National Youth Policy to better facilitate the youth and shape the future of this country. Moreover, He criticized the role of the establishment and its interference in judicial and political matters. Institutes undermine the status of parliament jeopardizing its authority, he further added. He emphasized that the separation of powers of institutions is an important component of democracy which should be



given due attention. Syed Ali Musa Gillani congratulated President YGA, Mr. Fahad Shahbaz and his team for successfully organizing this conference and appreciated the efforts of the Youth General Assembly for providing youth with a platform where they can actually contribute to the solutions of various prevalent issues in the country.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja

Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, delivered her talk at Beyond The Youth. She congratulated Mr. Fahad Shahbaz, President of YGA, and his team for successfully organizing this event. She highlighted the importance of putting the potential of young minds to use for the betterment of Pakistan. "Youth is not only the future but the present of the country", she addressed in her talk. Ms. Shaza emphasized on the immediate need to mend the gender gap, since we are lurking behind in all statistics and highlighting the necessity to provide equal opportunities to the women gender, as it is impractical to expect the country to progress while leaving behind 50% of its population. She further mentioned how often cultural barriers restrict women from attaining financial liberty and enjoying equal opportunities. The youth being responsible citizens need to change their mindsets and create a gender-inclusive society, she said.



Panel Discussions

Rethinking Pakistan's Climate Policy

To discuss the topic of “ Rethinking Pakistan's Climate Policy” we were joined by Mr. Ahmad Rafay Alam (Environmental Laws Expert), Barrister Aneesa Agha (Energy & Climate Change Specialist) and Barrister Amir Zafar Khan (Attorney New York State Supreme Court). The discussion was moderated by Mr. Hassan Kamal Wattoo (Secretary General Youth General Assembly).



Barrister Amir Zafar Khan highlighted that in Pakistan we use low-quality fuel products in our transport sector which is harming our environment. He expressed his concerns regarding Environment Protection Act 1997 which is not well-equipped to deal with environmental and air pollution issues that are affecting us today. He shed light on the fact that how provincial and federal governments do not work together to come up with a sustainable policy to cater to environmental issues in Pakistan.

Barrister Aneesa Agha mentioned that governments in not just Pakistan but all over the globe are reluctant to implement environment-friendly laws. In these circumstances, one can only turn toward the courts to play an active and major role to cater environmental issues under the

umbrella of *sou moto* jurisdiction as these cases are of public importance at large.

Mr. Ahmad Rafay Alam shed light on the factors which drive climate change. Climate change is driven by phenomena like capitalism, consumerism, patriarchy and colonialism. “There are only 70 or 80 global companies that have produced two third of all the greenhouse gases historically” he mentioned. He urged the youth to make these global corporations accountable for the harm they have done to the climate by raising their voice against them.

Mr. Hassan Kamal Wattoo asked a very important question, will the battle against climate crisis be won in the streets or the courts? Mr. Ahmad Rafay Alam said it has to be on the streets because it is not the job of a court to solve the climate crisis as they are built to uphold the sacrosanct concept of individual property rights.

Judicial Activism and its Overreaching Impacts

To discuss a very pertinent topic of “Judicial Activism and its Overreaching Impacts”, we were joined by Mr. Hamid Khan (Former President of the Supreme Court Bar Association), Justice ® Nasira Javed Iqbal (Former Justice Lahore High Court), Senator Barrister Syed Ali Zafar (Former Federal Minister for Law & Justice) and Mr. Ahmer Bilal Soofi (Former Federal Minister for Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs). The discussion was moderated by Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota (Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan).



Senator Barrister Syed Ali Zafar shared his opinion on the judge's responsibility of upholding the rule of law by quoting the words of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the U.S.A. Chief justice of the USA expressed that "we are not trained to ride the unruly horse of public opinion but we are trained to walk on the slow path of rule of law". He criticized the intervention of the judiciary in parliamentary affairs. He said separation of power between governmental institutions is very important for any country to establish rule of law, and justice and to progress. Though he was in favor of judicial activism to a point when it is exercised for protecting civilian lives. He said that we need to establish accountability for judges. the freedom of speech should be encouraged. Judges are under the obligation to establish rule of law and if they fail to do so, they should be criticized rightfully. He anticipated that if we fail to restrict the judiciary to its constitutional boundaries, it will obliterate our judicial institutes.

Former Justice Nasira Iqbal also discussed the upward mobility of women in judicial institutions. She said now women are more interested to work in judicial departments because of the current appointments of women in the higher judiciary.

Furthermore, in response to a question asked by Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota that why, in Pakistan, are judges, lawyers and prosecutors not periodically assessed and trained to

ensure they are well-equipped with modern methods and techniques? she said judicial institutions are now more advanced than past. We have judicial academies that train judges. And the senior judges work on training junior judges and supervise their decisions. She also acknowledged the fact that there ought to be a more efficient system put in place.

Mr. Ahmer Bilal Soofi highlighted the concept of separation of powers between the Judiciary and other governmental institutions. Mr. Soofi said that judges interfere in cases concerning business and economics yet they aren't well-trained to handle such affairs. He criticized the over-interference of the judiciary in other governmental departments, he quoted an example of PIA authority. While addressing the concern of Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota which was whether the judges who decide cases on grounds of articles 62 and 63 can/should also be inquired under the same constitutional article, Mr. Ahmed Bilal Soofi said that we do need such a mechanism through which the accountability of judges could be ensured. There should be periodic assessments of all the judges to ensure that their judgments are not influenced by any form of biasness.

Mr. Hamid Khan said supreme Court should frame rules for its functioning. He further added that the supreme court itself is somewhat confused about deciding its limits to exercise its powers and sometimes under pressure from governmental institutions and the public it transgresses its boundaries. Mr. Hamid Khan, in response to a question raised by a participant, said the appointment of SC judges should be on the principle of seniority. He expressed that implementing this principle might mitigate the military's involvement in judicial institutions if not curb it completely.

Democracy and Constitutional Crisis in Pakistan

To discuss an important topic of “Democracy and Constitutional Crisis in Pakistan” we were joined by Barrister Aamir Hassan (Member Central Election Cell Pakistan Peoples Party), Mr. Amir Ul Azeem (Secretary General Jamaat E Islami Pakistan), Mr. Farrukh Shahbaz Warraich (Broadcast Journalist Urdu Point) and Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota (Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan).



Secretary General of Jamaat E Islami Pakistan Mr. Amir ul Azeem said political parties in Pakistan are not driven by any particular ideology, they do not have a clear mandate. These political parties are often funded by establishments to do their bidding. He highlighted the need to devise clear criteria for the appointment of Chief of Army Staff. No office bearer should be given an extension. He said that only by taking these steps we can weaken the influence of establishment in the political affairs. Barrister Aamir Hassan said that for the past 70 years, attempts have been made to depoliticize Pakistani society.

The narratives of youth are being shaped and turned against the politicians and the political structure of Pakistan by quoting examples of leaders who are installed by the establishment itself. Further, he highlighted the need for solving the constitutional crisis in a political manner. He mentioned that leaving each and every question of political importance at the discretion of the judiciary is hurting the country.

Mr. Farrukh Shahbaz Warriach shared the incident of a meeting between the Chief of Army Staff and owners of various media houses. He said the media played an important role in exposing the real faces of our political leaders.

Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota said if we have to weaken the influence of the establishment over our politics and institutions then our politicians will have to assemble on one common agenda. Otherwise, the establishment will keep interfering in the parliamentary affairs of this country. He also shed light on the dark era of the judiciary prior to 2007. He criticized the actions and decisions of then Chief Justice Supreme Court Mr. Iftikhar Chaudhary.

A participant asked Barrister Aamir Hassan about ensuring democracy within the political parties. He said why the trend of dynastic politics still persists in our political parties. Another participant asked our worthy panelists a very important question, when will politicians stop many excuses and giving justifications for their wrongdoings and putting the blame on other political parties?

Closing The Gender Gap: Myth or Reality



To share their views on the topic of “Closing the Gender Gap: Myth or Reality”, we were joined by Barrister Maleeka Bokhari (Former Parliamentary Secretary for Law & Justice), Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq (Chairperson Special Committee on Anti-Rape Act 2021), Senator Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur (Consultant Aesthetic Cosmotogist), Dr. Samia Raheel Qazi (Ex Member Parliament, Council of Islamic Ideology), Ms. Nayab Ali (Chairperson All Pakistan Transgender Election Network) and Mr. Salman Abid (Political Analyst & Policy Advisor).

Barrister Maleeka Bokhari said that women in parliament play and always have played an important role in making legal reforms, especially for women's empowerment. Participation of women when it comes to policymaking and decision-making is important to ensure inclusivity and diversity. Barrister Maleeka Bokhari said that our state entities and our state actors come to the roles with multiple inherent biases which undermine and weaken our legal system. She mentioned how the two fingers virginity test was given legal status until it was declared unconstitutional and against human dignity by Mrs. Justice Ayesha A. Malik.

Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq said that Pakistan has laws that protect women and ensure their due rights are given. Here, society has to play a positive role and give women the confidence to stand up for their rights. As a society, we have to change our narratives and perspective toward women and their issues. She highlighted the importance of political and religious leaders in building a positive narrative regarding women and reshaping gender attitudes. It is highly detrimental when leaders, teachers and public officials pass misogynistic remarks against gender-based crimes.

Dr. Samia Raheel Qazi highlighted the role of females in different sectors. She appreciated the work of all females in politics, business, bureaucracy and in other organizations and urged the government to create a suitable and safe environment for all working women in Pakistan. She also explained the importance of the family system in the development of Pakistan. She said that if we want strong women in society then firstly, we should make our family system strong, stable and healthy.

Senator Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur discouraged the culture of humiliation and torture of females. She said that we are living in the 21st century and we should not do character assassination of any female. She instructed the youth to understand the respect and status of females which is given to her by Allah almighty and the Constitution of Pakistan. She also advised the youth to respect the opinions of each other and discouraged extremist attitudes toward women and transgender persons. Furthermore, she highlighted the role of women in politics and emphasized on increasing the number of seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies.

Ms. Nayab Ali appreciated the role of the Youth General Assembly in providing a platform where inclusivity of all sectors is ensured and in raising awareness regarding the rights of transgender persons in Pakistan. She mentioned the reason why the administration is not able to implement gender-sensitive laws. A particular group of people with ulterior motives file petitions in Shariah courts against laws made for their protection and empowerment. She urged them to avoid this practice as this hinders the working of the administration. She said that society needs to show respect for transgender person's identities. Their identity or the word "Khawajasara" should not be used as an abuse or mockery. She emphasized on engaging transgender persons in policy and decision-making matters.

Mr. Salman Abid said that Pakistan is an over-legislative country. Because we've tried to translate everything through legislation. He said that the social fabric of our society is disturbed due to the fact that there's a gap between loads of legislation and the awareness among the public regarding all those legislations. He diverted attention toward the latest facts & figures, the ratio of divorces has significantly increased in Pakistan and the biggest reason is the lack of marriage counseling. We should provide counseling to our youth and stop promoting the typical perspectives and have a thoughtful approach.

Policy Recommendations for Framework on National Youth Policy

To discuss their views on the topic of “Policy Recommendations for Framework on National Youth Policy”, we were joined by Mr. Hassan Kamal Wattoo (Secretary General Youth General Assembly), Alizeh Akbar Meer (Judicial Associate Supreme Court of Pakistan), Mr. Mohammad Ali (Lawyer & Youth Activist) and Ms. Aleezay Saeed (President LUMS Law & Politics Society).



Mr. Hassan Kamal Wattoo called into question the ban on student unions. No civilized society should restrict its youth from political participation, it is not only undemocratic but immoral as well, the government should discourage the decades-old unconstitutional ban, he said during the discussion.

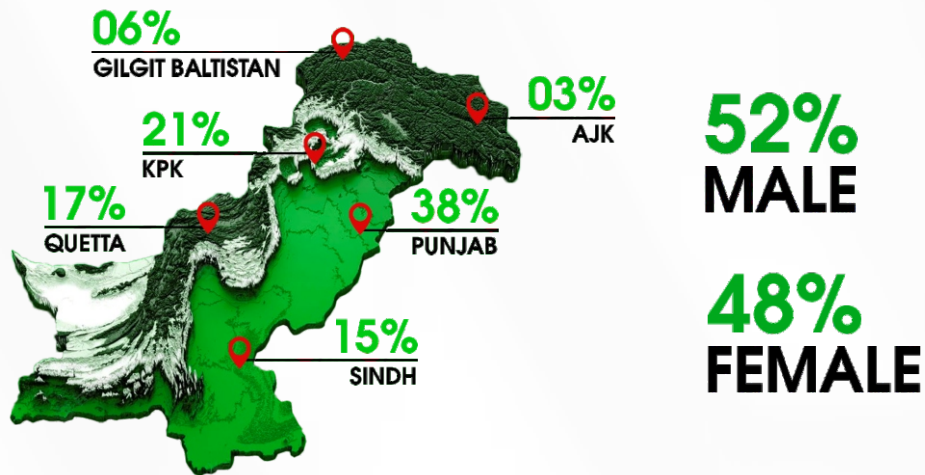
Mr. Mohammad Ali shared his views on bringing youth empowerment to the grass-root level. Various prestigious institute around the world encourage youth participation and provides them with a stage to share their ideas. We too can see our youth playing distinguished roles if our institutes start providing a considerable latitude to young people, he said.

Ms. Alizeh Akbar Meer appreciated the efforts of the youth and encouraged their participation in political matters. She said that youth is a majority in this country, their voices should be heard and concerns should be pondered upon.

Executive Summary

Participants **500+** Educational Institutes **62** Panel Discussions **05**
 Political Parties **04** Government Institutions **12** Speakers **34**
 SGDs **05**

Beyond The Youth Gathered More than 500 Young Minds from over Pakistan



Beyond The Youth Invited representative of Major Political Parties



PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE (N)



PAKISTAN PEOPLES PARTY



PAKISTAN TAHREEK E INSAAF



JAMAAT E ISLAMI PAKISTAN

Beyond The Youth Invited representative of Major Stakeholders



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN



GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF PAKISTAN



PAKISTAN SENATE
House of the Federation



SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN



PAKISTAN BAR COUNCIL



SUPREME COURT BAR ASSOCIATION



YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS FORUM PAKISTAN



HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION



Prime Minister's Youth Programme

Beyond The Youth 2022





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