

Press Release

CPDI Observed International Democracy Day with a Focus on Democratic Governance for Peaceful and Inclusive Societies



Islamabad, September 14, 2023: On the occasion of International Democracy Day, the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) organized a one-day seminar titled "Democratic Governance for Inclusive and Peaceful Society." The event brought together renowned experts and thought leaders to discuss the pressing challenges and opportunities surrounding democratic governance in Pakistan.

Democratic governance, characterized by transparency, accountability, and active citizen participation, plays a pivotal role not only in maintaining political stability but also in fostering sustainable peace and inclusive societies. This Seminar served as a platform to address these critical issues and explore ways to strengthen the democratic fabric of the nation.

Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali, the Executive Director of CPDI, underscored the significance of inclusivity and democracy in governance. He emphasized the need for decision-making processes that actively involve neglected and marginalized segments of society. Mr. Ali stressed that a peaceful governance system can only thrive if it is inclusive. He further outlined the objectives of the conference, which aimed to ignite debates and discussions on contemporary challenges facing Pakistan and generate and document ideas to enrich public discourse and policymaking on democratic governance and the promotion of peace and inclusivity.

Dr. Muhammad Waseem, a professor at LUMS, delivered a keynote speech on crucial nexus between democracy, inclusion, and peace. He further highlighted the profound impact of a weakened parliamentary system. He also raised concerns about sabotaged electoral processes and the gap between legislation and implementation, which has led to minimal adherence to the rule of law. He also questioned the extensions granted to caretaker governments and stressed the importance of participatory governance and public awareness of decision-making processes. Corruption was identified as a significant obstacle to good governance.

Mr. Zafarullah Khan emphasized the need to strengthen Pakistan's democracy. He noted the dissatisfaction of the youth with weak politics and the resulting implications for the democratic

system. Election delays due to constitutional misinterpretation were criticized, and he urged voters to make informed decisions based on performance.

Ms. Mehnaz Aziz, a former MNA, advocated for women's active participation in politics, suggesting that they be elected rather than appointed to reserved seats. She called for political parties to restructure themselves to promote greater gender inclusivity.

Mr. Ahmad Bilal Mehboob, President of PILDAT, called for reforms in political financing methods, with a focus on reducing reliance on interest groups. He expressed concern over low youth voter turnout despite their significant demographic representation and highlighted the need for improved local governance structures to bolster the economy.

Senator Sana Jamali highlighted the issue of unemployment and called for legislators and political parties to prioritize pressing concerns.

Haris Khalique from HRCP concluded the event by emphasizing the importance of empowering youth and adopting inclusive approaches. He pointed out that agricultural and judicial reforms, as well as strengthening institutions, are essential for enhancing governance and democracy.

CPDI's Seminar provided a comprehensive and insightful exploration of the challenges and opportunities facing democratic governance in Pakistan. It underscored the importance of transparency, inclusivity, and active citizen participation in building a stronger, more resilient democracy.

About CPDI

Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting peace, development, and good governance. With expertise in advocacy and governance, CPDI strives to bring about positive change in Pakistan.

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