



GENDER & MEDIA WATCH

September 2024



A monthly round-up of news stories about women and women's representation in Pakistan's news industry

EDITOR'S NOTE

Can Pakistan Take Celebrities Seriously?

There are two types of people: those who read the news but skip the celebrity section, and those who skip the news but eagerly consume entertainment updates. The latter usually involves typical stories about celebrities—updates on their love lives, the latest projects they're working on, or their opinions on trivial matters. While this is expected, it's also a bit reductive, considering the impact these artists can have on culture and society.

Globally, media coverage of celebrities often includes some fluff, but there's also room for thoughtful profiles and in-depth discourse on how their work influences public opinion, values, and social norms. In Pakistan, serious engagement with celebrities and their contributions remains rare. While English-language media occasionally features well-crafted profiles, there is no leading platform dedicated to analyzing the work and influence of public figures. Urdu newspapers, with their wide readership, have barely explored this aspect of cultural discourse. Instead, we see splashy photoshoots, but very few articles discussing celebrities' work, ambitions, or their roles in shaping Pakistan's entertainment landscape.

When celebrities are taken seriously here, it's usually for all the wrong reasons—whether it's a woman being criticized for wearing a gown deemed too revealing or an actor making an offhand remark. This gendered scrutiny has a disproportionate impact on female celebrities, who face constant judgment over their appearance and behavior, while their male counterparts are treated with far more leniency. This reflects broader societal norms where women, particularly in the public eye, are often judged more

harshly.

Moreover, the reductive nature of these interviews speaks to a deeper problem: the dismissal of celebrities as cultural influencers. Male actors are often asked about their romantic lives, while female actors face trivial questions about which Bollywood star they'd like to work with. These approaches not only trivialize their work but reinforce the idea that women, in particular, should be appreciated more for their looks than their talent.

However, celebrities have a significant role to play in shaping societal values and attitudes. Whether it's raising awareness about human rights, gender equality, or challenging social taboos, their voices can resonate deeply with the public. If the media took their contributions more seriously, it would allow for a broader conversation on the intersection of pop culture and social justice, giving the entertainment industry the respect it deserves. Celebrities like Mahira Khan have used their platforms to speak about mental health and gender issues, showing how powerful this intersection can be.

Behind the glamour are individuals who work hard to create meaningful art. They too long for coverage that allows them to talk about their craft and their impact on society without being reduced to mere spectacle. It's time for the news industry to elevate its coverage, offering thoughtful analysis that respects both the artists and their audience. By doing so, we not only enhance our understanding of pop culture but also recognize how it reflects and influences critical societal issues, including gender equity and human rights.

MAJOR STORIES

*Click on the heading to read the full story

02

September

Dawn

PINK WHEELS PROJECT LAUNCHED TO PROVIDE PROTECTION TO WOMEN

The Gujranwala Police launched a pilot project, Pink Wheels, with the support of chamber of commerce and industry to provide protection to women. Under the project, a special response unit, consisting of women police personnel, has been formed to respond to the abuse of women and their other issues. Ten Pink Wheels scooters have been purchased to be used by women officers in the response unit teams. Immediate response will be given to the complaints or information received on emergency 15 or the Police Women Safety App. The Pink Wheels teams will respond to domestic violence against women, rape cases, acid attacks and other calls for help.



04

September

Express Tribune

GIRLS SWEEP TOP SPOTS IN BISE EXAMS

In the FA and FSC Intermediate annual examination results by the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Rawalpindi, female students have claimed all top three positions across the board, with no male student securing a spot in the top ranks. The official announcement of the results is scheduled for Wednesday (today). Controller of Examinations, Tanveer Asghar Awan, announced that all position holders will receive prizes on Wednesday (today) at a ceremony presided over by Chairman Adnan Khan.



06

September

The Nation

CM MARYAM LAUNCHES SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME IN DG KHAN

Punjab Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif reached Government Primary School MC One in Dera Ghazi Khan where she inaugurated country's first and largest school nutrition programme. She visited every classroom, went to the seats of students and gave them boxes of milk. Madam Chief Minister herself opened milk packets for the children, which they finished under her supervision. She asked students their names and praised them.



09

September

The News

WOMEN RIDE PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC CRISIS INTO WORKPLACE

Amina Sohail veers through heavy traffic to pick up her next passenger the sight of a woman riding a motorcycle drawing stares in Pakistan's megacity of Karachi. The 28-year-old is the first woman in her family to enter the workforce, a pattern emerging in urban households coming under increasing financial pressure in Pakistan. "I don't focus on people, I don't speak to anyone or respond to the hooting, I do my work," said Sohail.



MAJOR STORIES

*Click on the heading to read the full story

13
September
The Nation

TEACHING HALTED AT GIRLS' COLLEGE IN KHYBER

Local female students expressed regret that the prolonged agitation by Koki Khel IDPs had severely impacted their studies and urged authorities to make alternative arrangements to save their valuable time. College Principal Ms. Nadia Irshad confirmed that all female staff are from Peshawar, leading to a complete suspension of teaching activities. She stated that online classes had begun to mitigate the disruption but urged authorities to reopen the Pak-Afghan highway to resume regular classes.



15
September
Dawn

SISTERS TORTURED FOR DEMANDING SHARE IN PROPERTY

According to details, the confrontation escalated when the sisters demanded their rightful share in inheritance. The men allegedly dragged the women out into the street, pulling them by their hair. One of the sisters fell unconscious due to severe beating. A distress call was made to the Virtual Women Police Station via the emergency helpline 15, which quickly dispatched a team to rescue the victims. The women were rushed to the hospital for medical treatment, while the accused brothers were arrested. The Safe Cities spokesperson said the Virtual Women Police Station is committed to addressing such cases, ensuring swift response and medical assistance to victims.



20
September
The News

PAKISTAN FEMALE PEACEKEEPERS RECOGNISED FOR THEIR PROFESSIONALISM

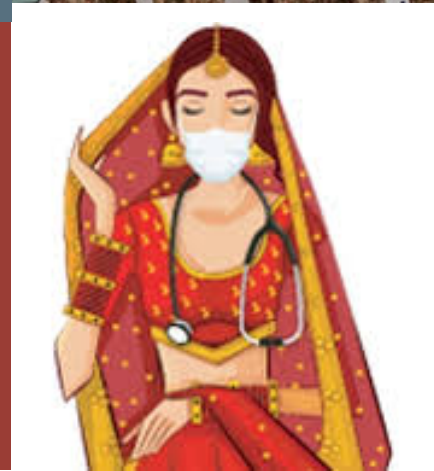
Two Pakistani female peacekeepers, Major Sania Safdar (served in UN Peacekeeping Mission Cyprus) and Major Komal Masood (served in Central African Republic), have been recognised for their outstanding performance and commitment in promoting the ideals of UN. Both the officers have been awarded with Gender Advocacy Award by Under Secretary General, Department of Peace Operations, UNHQ, New York, said the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement.



23
September
Daily Times

DOCTOR BRIDES AND PAKISTAN

Pakistan has a large and highly educated female population, with over 70 percent of all medical students being women. We need to identify the causes of low female participation in the medical workforce. Barriers such as societal pressures, workplace discrimination, and a lack of policies supporting work-life balance contribute to women's low participation in Pakistan's medical workforce. Addressing these obstacles and increasing the number of women in medicine is crucial for creating a more diverse and effective healthcare system that benefits everyone.



MAJOR STORIES

*Click on the heading to read the full story

26

September

Express
Tribune

A WOMAN'S INHERITANCE

In a welcome judgment, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of a widow and ordered the immediate transfer of her inherited property. The widow was embroiled in litigation for the past 26 years as the opposing party submitted false testimonies and filed bogus claims in an attempt to deprive the woman of her rightful inheritance. While the apex court finally settled the issue, no woman should endure decades-long litigation for what is rightfully hers. Inheritance laws in Pakistan, while theoretically providing for women, often fail to protect their rights in practice.



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September

Dawn

ONE HELD OVER SEXUAL ASSAULT ON WOMAN AT GOVT HOSPITAL IN KARACHI

According to the contents of the FIR, the complainant woman said she got her infant daughter admitted to the children's ward in Sindh Government Qatar Hospital on Sept 22. The woman said that when the fever of her daughter increased, the hospital staff asked her to bring an injection from a medical store. As she came out of the ward at around 2:30am, a young man grabbed her hand and took to a room where two more men were present, she said.



29

September

The news

EFFECTIVE STEPS STRESSED TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Punjab Safe Cities Authority (PSCA), On Saturday, organised a 'Violence against Women, Never Again' conference at its headquarters on Saturday. The conference highlighted the role of the Virtual Women Police Station in addressing violence against women in Punjab. The event brought together experts from the police department, education, UNO, media, and legal sectors. Managing Director PSCA, M Ahsan Younas, SSP Riffat Bukhari, CTO Ammara Athar, ASP Shehr Bano, and other police officials attended the conference.



30

September

The Nation

ENTERPRISE ASSESSMENT SESSION HELD WITH WOMEN

The Krafters Home-Based Workers Development Project team visited Mardan to engage with community-based women's clusters facilitated by Honey Future Innovative Foundation. The event involved 30 women community members from various areas of the village Chantar in Mardan district. After sharing the background of Krafters and its working methodology, orientation was provided on the engagement mechanism with home-based skilled workers. Interaction also focused on the launch of the app-based initiative, sample selection methodology, sample development for future orders, and skill evaluation of the master trainer and trained females.



EDITORIAL ON GENDER

What have editors said about gender issues in Pakistan? Click on the boxes and find out!

THE NATION

[Polio Problem](#)

[Regressing IT](#)

DAWN

[Malnutrition epidemic](#)

[Protect women](#)

[Rapes most foul](#)

[Deplorable remarks](#)

[HIV/AIDS outbreak](#)

[Fixing the flaws](#)

[Rape scars](#)

[Dire straits](#)

[World News Day](#)

THE NEWS

[Cycle of abuse](#)

[Universities or fashion
police?](#)

[The polio loop](#)

[Choose the truth](#)

EXPRESS TRIBUNE

[A woman's inheritance](#)

[World News Day](#)

[Killing for 'honour'](#)

[A welcome first](#)

[Prioritising education](#)

[Violence against vaccinators](#)

[Pink Wheels squad](#)

[Unsafe schools](#)

[Women's health](#)

STORIES IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE

A roundup of this month's trends and viral stories on gender-related issue on Pakistan's internet



#GandapurRemarks

At a rally, Gandapur mocked women journalists and CM Maryam Nawaz with intensely derogatory remarks about them. Pakistani society, as well as the civil society, called him out for his misbehaviour, demanding he retract his statements

#HibaBukhari

Actress Hiba Bukhari got trolled by an account named “Voice of Pakistan” online for wearing a dress that revealed her pregnant condition, rather than hide it.

Netizens rightly attacked the account for shaming a pregnant woman living her life



MEDIA STATISTICS

Data derived from media-monitoring throughout
September 2024

Descriptive						
	Total	Daily Times	The News	Dawn	Express Tribune	The Nation
Women Specific Stories (WSS)	908	189	219	162	202	136
Front Page WSS	30	9	9	7	1	4
Back Page WSS	88	35	30	2	35	19
Women Specific Columns	32	6	10	6	8	2
Columns by Women Writers	107	31	18	27	20	11
Women Specific Editorials	24	4	0	9	8	3
Female Reporters (FR)	233	0	130	53	49	1
Front Page FR	12	0	9	3	0	0
Back Page FR	11	0	9	2	0	0

Comparative Mean					
	WSS	Editorial(WSS)	Female Reporter	Columns (WSS)	Columns by Women
Daily Times	6.096774	1	0	0.193548	1
The News	7.064516	#DIV/0!	4.1935484	0.322581	0.58064516
Daily Dawn	5.225806	1	1.7096774	0.193548	0.87096774
Express Tribune	6.516129	1	1.5806452	0.258065	0.64516129
The Nation	4.387097	1	0.0322581	0.064516	0.35483871

1. Women-specific includes all the news stories, columns and editorials that are dedicated to women's achievements, problems, status etc.

2. All female sources that are named and not named (such as lady reporter) are considered female reporters.

PICTURES OF THE MONTH



A woman making bundles after harvesting the sesame crop at the farm in the outskirts

Courtesy: The Nation

Women coming to the office of BISP in Punjab to resolve their issues stand in rain and sewage water that still stands on the premises of the office

Courtesy:
Express Tribune



Women participate in a Mehfil-i-Millad organised by the Women Welfare and Development Centre in Islamabad

Courtesy: Dawn



PICTURES OF THE MONTH



Women Police under pink wheels project , initiated for women's safety, patrol a street in Gujranwala

Courtesy:
The News

Visitors view products displayed by students of the textile design department of Lahore College for Women University at Alhamra Art Gallery

Courtesy:
The Express Tribune



Chitral Madaklasht from the women's category receive their trophies from AJK President Sardar Mohammad Yakob Khan on the final day of the National Grass Skiing championship held at Toli Peer

Courtesy: Dawn



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GenderWatch

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CONTENT

If you want to read the full story, click on the link. Please subscribe!



MAJOR STORIES

Check out the stories that were published in the news this month on women's issues and their achievements in Pakistan!

DIGITAL SPHERE

Click to see what events and hashtags have been trending on the internet this month!



MEDIA STATISTICS

How many women reporters were on the Front Page this month? How many female guests were interviewed on TV? Check the GMW to find out!

