

# GENDER & MEDIA WATCH

December 2024



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

# EDITOR'S NOTE

## AI Gone Rogue

2024 was the year of artificial intelligence - a year when even Pakistanis realized they could get AI to create, write, type, and even think for them. All it took was signing up, typing in specific instructions, and watching the AI generate results. It could create absurd images, like Adolf Hitler holding a cellphone or a blissful, thin woman smiling in a cramped house with ten children (a common trope at the time). AI could even depict real people doing things they would never do in real life.

It was only a matter of time before Pakistanis began using AI to vent their anger at politicians. On X, an AI-generated image of Maryam Nawaz and General Asim Munir went viral. In the image, they were depicted sitting on a bed, with Maryam dressed in a lewd manner. The image sparked widespread shock, outrage, and disgust due to its grotesque manipulation. While many rightly condemned it, others found amusement in the vile creation. Some used it to gratify twisted fantasies, while others saw it as a way to exact revenge on the figures they blamed for their misery. The use of AI to create such images is not new, but its rampant misuse is escalating alarmingly.

AI has faced backlash globally for enabling such behavior, particularly against women. Misogynists have exploited AI to doctor images of women to humiliate or degrade them. In Pakistan, public figures like Maryam Nawaz and Bushra Bibi have become frequent targets, but the issue extends far beyond

them. What's troubling is the absence of serious discourse in Pakistan's media and political circles about this growing problem. If it starts with Maryam Nawaz today, it will soon engulf countless other women, targeted simply for refusing to submit to societal or personal pressures.

The core issue isn't just the accessibility of technology but the deeply ingrained misogyny in Pakistani society. This cultural mindset breeds a systemic hatred towards women, creating an environment where such attacks are normalized. It's a reflection of how Pakistan's societal values are enabling the creation of monsters who perpetuate this cycle of abuse, making the country increasingly hostile for women.

If the state is serious about regulating the internet, it must begin by criminalizing such acts. While it may not be able to erase the viral photo from X, it can hold creators accountable, remove offending accounts, and impose penalties to deter future misuse. If it truly seeks to uphold "moral character," the government must address the cultural misogyny at the root of these behaviors and foster an environment where such hatred has no place.

AI doesn't have to be banned entirely, but platforms known for enabling such image manipulation can and should be restricted. Without decisive action, rogue AI could set a dangerous precedent - making such imagery and its underlying misogyny a norm rather than an exception.



# MAJOR STORIES

\*Click on the heading to  
read the full story

02

December

The Nation

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT - AN IMPERATIVE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As women participation in policy making and execution, is now a global known fact, creating more and more education and leadership opportunities for female segment in countries like Pakistan where half of population comprises women, is an enormous challenge. Better gender balance in business leadership is also inextricably linked with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under United Nations (SDG 5); attainment of gender equality, is impossible without women's sizable representation at the top.



03

December

The News

## WOMEN TRADERS GET OPPORTUNITIES AT CDA'S WEEKLY BAZAAR

CDA's weekly Bazaar at Peshawar Mor, one of the country's busiest and most vibrant markets, is not just a hub for affordable clothing, food, and groceries but also a beacon of empowerment for women traders. While traditionally male-dominated, the weekly bazaar has Section C, a women entrepreneurs-dominated area for the past few years, where they run stalls selling various products and earn a respectable livelihood.



05

December

Daily  
Times

## AZMA BOKHARI OPENS UP ABOUT DEEPPAKE VIDEO CONTROVERSY

Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said deepfake videos are being used to malign women in Pakistan. Deepfakes – which manipulate genuine audio, photos or video of people into false likenesses – are becoming increasingly convincing and easier to make as artificial intelligence (AI) enters the mainstream. Bokhari, who is haunted by an objectionable deepfake video published to discredit her role as one of the nation's few female leaders in an interview with AFP voiced the importance of the matter.



10

December

Express  
Tribune

## THE GRAVE REALITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

Every year, the world marks 16 Days of Activism against violence towards women, but one stark question persists: Are we genuinely advancing toward a world free of gender-based abuse, or are we merely celebrating progress that remains largely elusive?"As the world has recently observed the 16 Days of Activism for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, a troubling question remains: can we truly end the centuries-old atrocities that women have faced, or are these observances simply empty rituals, signaling little more than symbolic acknowledgment?



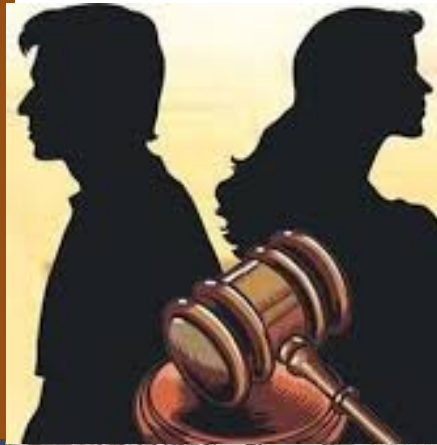
# MAJOR STORIES

\*Click on the heading to read the full story

12  
December  
Dawn

## DECEASED WOMAN WAS PURSUING HER MARRIAGE DISPUTE CASE IN COURT

The young woman who was found dead in a residential tower on Tuesday had come to the capital to sort out her marriage dispute. According to the police, the woman had developed differences with her husband and a case was under trial over the matter in the court of law. The deceased resided in Dubai with her mother where she met a man and discussed the case with him. In response the man offered his services and assured her that he can turn the decision in her favour.



13  
December  
The News

## MARYAM PROPOSES BEIJING-PUNJAB WORKING GROUP TO COMBAT POLLUTION

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz continued her visit to Shanghai with a packed schedule on her second day Thursday, focusing on education and environmental collaboration. She visited the Shanghai Experimental School and Chinese Academy of Sciences, where she met Jiading District Director of Education Guan Wenji and the President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Xia Hongmei.



17  
December  
The Nation

## NATIONAL WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2024 SET TO TIP OFF IN LAHORE

The National Women's Basketball Championship 2024 will tip off from December 26-30, 2024, at the WAPDA Sports Complex in Lahore. Organized by WAPDA and supervised by the Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF), this tournament will feature top female basketball teams from across the country, all vying for national glory. Defending champions WAPDA, who triumphed in a thrilling finale last year, will return with the goal of retaining their title. Last year's runners-up, Islamabad, are determined to improve upon their performance and claim the championship this time.



19  
December  
Daily Times

## WOMEN JOURNALISTS' SAFETY ASSURED

The women development department, government of Sindh, recognising the challenges faced by women journalist in media landscape in the province, has launched a transformation action plan aimed at fostering safer, inclusive, and empowering environment for women media professionals. The plan aligns with the 'protection against harassment of women at the workplace Act 2010, Domestic violence Act 2013, and Sindh child marriage Act 2013.





# MAJOR STORIES

\*Click on the heading to read the full story

22  
December  
Dawn

## WOMEN LAWMAKERS PLEDGE TO BRING GENDER SENSITIVE LEGISLATION

The Women's Parliamentary Caucus on Friday vowed to advance gender equality and eradicate poverty through sustained, inclusive policy measures, supported by UN Women Pakistan's technical assistance. The commitment came during a WPC conference held at Parliament House under the theme "Poverty Has a Woman's Face: Gender-Sensitive Legislature to Advance Gender Equality and End Poverty." The event brought together parliamentarians, policymakers, and development leaders to advocate for gender-responsive policymaking aimed at alleviating poverty, which disproportionately affected women in Pakistan.



24  
December  
Daily Times

## SINDH GOVT LAUNCHES ONE-STOP PROTECTION CENTER IN HYDERABAD TO COMBAT GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The Sindh government inaugurated a One-Stop Protection Center (OSPC) in Hyderabad to provide comprehensive support to women survivors of gender-based violence. The center, located at the Women Police Station on Auto Bhan Road, was launched by Additional Chief Secretary Home Department Mohammad Iqbal Memon. According to a handout, speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Mohammad Iqbal Memon said, "The Sindh government has been consistently working to address the rising cases of gender-based violence in the province."



Government of Sindh

27  
December  
Express Tribune

## GOVT TOLD TO BUILD WOMEN-ONLY JAILS

Lahore High Court (LHC) Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh directed the authorities concerned to establish women's jails in Lahore, Faisalabad and Rawalpindi to protect the rights of female prisoners confined in men's prisons. Disposing of a petition, the judge gave recommendations for the authorities to improve the Prisons Management System. Justice Sheikh proposed that psychiatric wards or independent hospitals be established at the regional level, especially in Rawalpindi and Multan, to ensure the treatment and confinement of mentally ill prisoners.



31  
December  
The News

## WOW: HOW A DRIVING SCHOOL PROGRAMME EMPOWERS PAKISTANI WOMEN

Pakistani student Laiba Rashid, 22, hopes her life will change once she learns how to drive a motorcycle after undergoing a training programme that teaches women how to operate two-wheelers in the bustling eastern city of Lahore. Although the programme is seven years old, it's rare to see women driving motorcycles. Women driving cars or riding pillion on two-wheelers driven by a male relative is more socially acceptable. "I hope this will change my life because I am dependent on my brother to pick me up and drop me to college,"



# EDITORIAL ON GENDER

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

## DAWN

[Grievous trade](#)

[Vulnerable vaccinators](#)

[Betraying women voters](#)

[World AIDS Day](#)

[Rights in peril](#)

[Safety at work](#)

## DAILY TIMES

[Remembering BB](#)

[Horrific Reality](#)

[Rights Fight](#)

[Trolling and Targeting](#)

## THE NATION

[CM in China](#)

[Minor Marriages](#)

[Supporting Rapists](#)

## THE NEWS

[Day of rights](#)

[Women voters](#)

[We need education](#)

[Digital dominoes](#)

[Endemic abuse](#)

[Cost of silence](#)

## EXPRESS TRIBUNE

[Women's digital inclusion](#)

[Securing women's shelters](#)

[Stolen childhoods](#)

[Sara Sharif case](#)

[Rising voice of women](#)

[Rape and low conviction](#)

# STORIES IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE

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

## #BenazirBhutto

Netizens paid tribute to the late Prime Minister, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, on her 18th death anniversary. She was tragically assassinated on December 27, 2007.



## #BapsiSidhwa

Acclaimed Pakistani author Bapsi Sidhwa passed away on December 25. In the following days, Pakistani netizens mourned her loss, celebrated her literary legacy, and paid heartfelt tributes to her work.



# MEDIA STATISTICS

Data derived from media-monitoring throughout  
December 2024

	Total	Daily Times	The News	Dawn	Express Tribune	The Nation
<b>Women Specific Stories (WSS)</b>	<b>987</b>	149	254	167	245	172
Front Page WSS	46	4	22	6	10	4
Back Page WSS	78	26	26	10	26	15
<b>Women Specific Columns</b>	<b>31</b>	2	10	3	9	7
Columns by Women Writers	134	29	37	36	24	8
Women Specific Editorials	23	5	3	6	6	3
<b>Female Reporters (FR)</b>	<b>312</b>	6	167	69	63	7
Front Page FR	20	0	20	0	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	4.806452	1.25	0.1935484	0.064516	0.93548387
The News	8.193548	1	5.3870968	0.322581	1.19354839
Daily Dawn	5.387097	1	2.2258065	0.096774	1.16129032
Express Tribune	7.903226	1	2.0322581	0.290323	0.77419355
The Nation	5.548387	1	0.2258065	0.225806	0.25806452

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



Islamabad: Women attending the PFOWA Annual Charity Bazaar

Courtesy: The Nation

Islamabad: Artists performing at the Meena Bazaar and musical evening at Lok Virsa

Courtesy: The News



Islamabad: Students showcase their work at the Annual Art and Textile Exhibition held at F.G. Home Economics and Management Sciences College.

Courtesy: Dawn

# PICTURES OF THE MONTH



Islamabad: Students exhibit their work at the Annual Art and Textile Exhibition held at F.G. Home Economics and Management Sciences College.

Courtesy:  
The Express Tribune

Islamabad: Artists perform a play on the elimination of gender-based violence at the Pak-China Friendship Centre.

Courtesy: Daily Dawn



Karachi: Women enthusiastically shopping for Christmas essentials at Bohri Bazaar

Courtesy: The Nation

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GenderWatch

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