

Empowering youth: Provincial youth caucus launched

By Amel Ghani Published: January 7, 2015

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The project is being technically and financially assisted by Bargad in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Heinrich Boll Foundation. PHOTO: EXPRESS

LAHORE: A youth caucus was launched at the Punjab Assembly on Tuesday, with its members vowing to work towards youth empowerment.

Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan, the minister for education and youth affairs, and members of the caucus addressed a press conference on Tuesday.

“We have been planning the caucus for two years. When we formulated the Youth Policy in 2010, we felt the absence of an active youth caucus,” he said.

” The caucus’ executive committee consists of 11 members. They have been elected by members of the Punjab Assembly
Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan

Khan said that the caucus had been formed through an election. “The caucus’ executive committee consists of 11 members. They have been elected by members of the Punjab Assembly. All of them are below the ages of 45. Ehsan Riaz Fatyana, the youngest member of the Punjab Assembly, is also on the executive committee,” he said. He said that the caucus transcended party affiliations.

Talking to *The Express Tribune*, Khan said that initially the caucus would work towards forming an inter-provincial network with other young members from the legislatures of other provinces. “The caucus will also work towards forming a network with youth caucuses in other countries,” he said.

“The credit for the formation of the caucus goes to the young parliamentarians for coming together to work towards the welfare of young people,” he said.

Sardar Vickas Hassan Mokal from the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) is the chairman of the caucus. Mary Gill from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz is its vice chairperson, Mian Irfan Daultana of the PML-N is the secretary and Nabela Hakim Ali Khan from Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf is the treasurer.

Talking to *The Express Tribune*, Mokal said that the main agenda of the caucus was to work on youth empowerment. “The main areas where we want to focus for now are youth employment, providing students with career counselling and consulting women and minorities,” he said.

The project is being technically and financially assisted by Bargad in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and

Heinrich Boll Foundation. “We will continue to work with the caucus, providing them with meeting briefs to help understand issues,” said Sabiha Shaheen, the Bargad executive director.

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