

# NEWSLETTER

## EXPRESS FORUM



### "YDF Provides Support to Students Affected by Jarawala Incident"

In the aftermath of the Jarawala incident, where homes were destroyed by a mob, YDF has stepped in to provide essential support to affected students. A poignant statement from one student, expressing a longing for books and school, underscores the impact of the tragedy. Through our intervention, we have distributed books and school bags to these students, enabling them to resume their education and rebuild their lives.

### Express Forum Highlights Punjab's First Interfaith Harmony Policy

**Express Forum Highlights Interfaith Harmony Policy:** Punjab's First Interfaith Harmony Policy, a joint effort by #YDFPK and #HRMA, was spotlighted at the Express Forum. The policy aims to prevent conflicts like #Jarawala, fostering unity among diverse communities.

**Gratitude to Distinguished Panelists:** We extend thanks to His Excellency Bishop Sebastian Shaw, Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad, Mr. Ejaz Alam Augustine, and Mr. Shahid Rehmat for their invaluable contributions to advancing interfaith harmony in the region.

### Distribution of books and bags among affected students of Jaranwala incident:



## "YDF Launches Transformative Project: Minority Civic Agents Program"

Introducing the Minority Civic Agents Program by YDF, dedicated to enhancing civic participation and governance in minority communities across 8 union councils of Lahore and Faisalabad. At the recent Project Team Orientation meeting in Lahore, our team outlined key objectives, activities, and timelines for this initiative.

As part of the program, YDF is committed to establishing Citizen Governance Forums at the Union Council level and District Governance Forums at district levels in both cities. These forums will serve as crucial platforms for identifying and addressing service delivery issues faced by religious minority populations, in close collaboration with government service delivery departments.



## YDF's Contribution to International Day of Countering Hate Speech

f LIVE

LIVE WEBINAR

Youth Development Foundation

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COUNTERING HATE SPEECH

Join our webinar

MODERATOR  
**UROOJ SINDHU**

SPEAKER  
**DR. KALYAN  
SINGH KALYAN**

SPEAKER  
**JUSTICE (R)  
NASIRA JAVED**

SPEAKER  
**SHAHID REHMAT**  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR YDF

MONDAY  
19 JUNE, 2023

TIME  
03.00 PM

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YDF took action on the International Day of Countering Hate Speech by hosting a thought-provoking webinar. Through engaging discussions, we aimed to promote tolerance and understanding in our communities. Thank you to all who joined us in advocating for a more respectful and inclusive world.

## "Expressing Gratitude to Chief Information Commissioner Punjab"

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Chief Information Commissioner Punjab, Mr. Mehboob Qadir Shah, for his generous contribution to our Minority Civic Agents training program. Mr. Shah's insightful session on the Right to Information Act provided invaluable knowledge to our agents, empowering them to advocate for transparency and empower their communities.



### 3-Day Minority Civic Agents Training: Empowering Change

During our 3-day training program in Lahore, passionate agents from minority communities delved into discussions on local governance, leadership, advocacy, and more. They were equipped with essential knowledge, including the Right to Information Act training.

Furthermore, we were honoured to have Muhammad Yousuf, Deputy Director Human Rights and Minority Affairs, and Farooq Ahmad Khara, Deputy Director of Local Government and Community Development, share insights from their departments with our Minority Civic Agents. Their participation added tremendous value to our training program, further empowering our agents to drive positive change in their communities.



### National Minority Day Celebration: Honoring Diversity and Contributions



In a joint effort with the Punjab Government and Minority Civic Agents, Youth Development Foundation marked National Minority Day with a heartfelt celebration. This event served as a tribute to the invaluable contributions of minority communities, highlighting their rich history and acknowledging the challenges they continue to encounter. Together, we stand united in fostering inclusivity, embracing diversity, advocating for equal rights, and building a more equitable society for all.

## **Empowering Out-of-School Youth: YDF and CPDI Join Forces!**

YDF collaborated with CPDI for a powerful event aimed at out-of-school youth. Together, we focused on educating these future leaders about Fundamental Rights, Good Governance, and Inclusive Society. The diverse mix of male, female, and PWD participants made the day truly enriching. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to CPDI for partnering with us on this crucial mission to empower youth and build a brighter future.



## **YDF Hosts Special Community Session for Religious Minorities**



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## **Our Executive Director Recognized as Human Rights Champion**

We're thrilled to announce that Shahid Rehmat, our esteemed Executive Director, has been honored as a Human Rights Champion for the 5th time by the Provincial Ministry of Human Rights and Minority Affairs, Government of Punjab! This prestigious recognition is a testament to Shahid's unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in advancing human rights and promoting inclusivity.



## YDF Launches Historic District Governance Forum Lahore!

In an unprecedented collaboration with longstanding partners including the Human Rights & Minority Affairs Department, WASA, Lahore Waste Management Company (LWC), Local Government and Community Development (LG&CD), UC, and Civil Society Members, YDF has launched a groundbreaking District Governance Forum (DGF)!

This historic initiative represents a unified front for advocacy, resolution, and empowerment, paving the way for positive change. Dr. Shoaib Akbar, Secretary of Human Rights & Minority Affairs, emphasized the crucial role of DGF in advocating for minority rights and resolving service delivery issues.



## Recap from our Minority Civic Agents Program Orientation in Faisalabad!



During this session, attended by passionate individuals including two lawyers, a UC secretary, a representative from WASA, and our dedicated Minority Civic Agents (MCAs), we delved into project objectives, governance roles, and effective collaboration. 🙌 Exciting times lie ahead as we work hand-in-hand to empower our diverse community representatives!



## Embracing Unity and Diversity: A Momentous Christmas Celebration

"The day marked a momentous occasion as our Christmas celebration unfolded! Representatives from the Provincial Government Administration, Officials from the Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Department, Civil Society Representatives, Religious Leaders from diverse faiths, Lawyers, Youth, Women, PWDs, and the General Public had all gathered to make this event truly special. Together, we embraced the spirit of unity, diversity, and inclusivity. Grateful for the collective effort to make this celebration a beautiful tapestry of voices and perspectives!"



## Meet with YDF's Honored Alumni and Team Member

### Syed Farhan ali Shah, (Young Peacemaker, Alumni of YDF)

Syed Farhan Ali Shah, Founder and CEO of the Incredible Youth Society (IYS), completed his MPhil in Applied Physics from the Center for Advanced Studies in Physics (CASP) at Government College University (GCU), Lahore, where he was honored with the Role of Honor award. Farhan is a dynamic motivational speaker, student advisor, career counselor, trainer, social activist, host, writer, author, researcher, and visiting faculty in Physics at UCMS University, Khanewal. He is an alumnus of the Youth Development Foundation and has played significant roles as a lead organizer in events such as the Punjab Summit at the Governor's House in Lahore and the Diversity Tour organized by YDF in Murre and Lahore, considering YDF his second family.



### Sameer Ali Khan, (Young Peacemaker, Alumni of YDF)



Sameer Ali Khan, an active alumnus of the Youth Development Foundation (YDF), serves as a beacon of proactive change within the organization. As the Founder of Pakistan's first digital peace startup, "Collective Pakistan" ([www.collectivepakistan.com](http://www.collectivepakistan.com)), Sameer brings his expertise and passion for social inclusion to the forefront of his work. His commitment to amplifying the voices of marginalized communities aligns seamlessly with YDF's mission, making him an invaluable asset to the organization. Through his innovative projects and peace campaigns, Sameer continues to embody the values instilled by YDF, working tirelessly towards building a more inclusive and peaceful society.



# Youth Development Foundation (YDF)

YDF is a youth-led organization formed in 2010 with a vision to promote diversity, interfaith harmony, and peaceful coexistence in those areas more prone to violence, hate, and religious discrimination. Since then, YDF has expanded to 28 districts across Pakistan's Punjab, KP, and Sindh regions. These range from the most affected areas, including Southern Punjab and Interior Sindh. YDF has four offices in Lahore (Head Office), Multan, Karachi and Faisalabad, 21 full-time and four part-time employees. YDF has an outstanding diverse faith network of youth with over 20,000 (9,580 female & 10,420 male) that includes university students, community youth, and madrasa students.

YDF works with various stakeholders at different levels of government, i.e. District, Provincial and Federal. It promotes youth-oriented policies and strategies that celebrate cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity. Most recently, YDF has been working with the Ministry of Human Rights, Minority Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on drafting a strategy on "Interfaith Harmony" for Punjab province and appointed as Board member of Punjab Youth Volunteer Task Force for Corona Relief Facilitation Program (an initiative of Prime Minister of Pakistan). This exhibits a strong relationship of YDF being recognized as a Youth-in-Diversity organization among policy and decision-makers, transforming from a community to a policy development organization.

YDF has signed MOUs with 20 civil society organizations and nine public sector universities in Punjab, Sindh and KP. YDF also has a strong network of supporters and partners, including Emerging Leaders of Pakistan, Karachi Youth Initiative, Acumen Fellows, Pakistan-United States Alumni Network and Punjab Youth Council. In addition, YDF has worked with the European Union (EU), USAID, UKAID, USIP, UN agencies, World Faith Global, ICRD, Finland Church Aid, Swiss Mission Office and the Government of Punjab and Sindh.



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