

social and political inclusion. The condition of registration with National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and to obtain computerized national identity card has established identity of women particularly rural women as citizens of Pakistan, which was not possible otherwise. This has increased the number of legible female voters in all constituencies of national and provincial assemblies.

Due to very low female literacy rate of

the country, women covered under BISP program are incapable of making full use of this technology like using ATMs etc for withdrawing money. It is therefore essential that training programs are arranged at all districts level to familiarize women with use of this technology.

For economic empowerment of women country must achieve true financial inclusion for women to ensure wider access to financial services beyond bank

accounts through digital net working with firms dealing with them both within and outside the country both for business and financial transactions.

Micro finance banks operating in the country, in order to enhance their outreach in rural areas through mobile banking must tap such clients, not only for financing purchase of cell phone, but also arrange for their clients orientation of this technology and related skills.■

A SESSION ON POLITICS OF ART, PUBLIC SPACE AND THE KARACHI BIENNALE HELD AT THE IBA



The Department of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts (SSLA), IBA Karachi in collaboration with the Karachi Biennale Trust conducted a panel discussion on The Politics of Art, Public Space, and the Karachi Biennale at the IBA, Karachi main campus. The session was attended by SSLA students, staff and faculty. The panel was moderated by Assistant Professor, SSLA Dr. Naveen Minai.

The panelists included Assistant Curator, Karachi Biennale 2019, Noor Ahmed; Trustee, Global Outreach Chair, Karachi Biennale Trust, Atteqa Malik; Head of Corporate Relations and Communications Department, IBA Karachi and President, Tehzeeb Foundation, Mrs. Malahat Awan; lecturer, SSLA department IBA, Palvashay Sethi.

Dr. Minai started the session by giving a brief history of global art exhibitions. "Venice Biennale of 1895 is where the idea of contemporary art exhibitions started. In the 1890s a lot was happening around the world which effected the understanding of arts and how it was perceived," she mentioned.

Speaking about the understanding of public art and spaces and the need for the Biennale, Ms. Malik said, "At the time when the Biennale was envisioned there was a lot of trouble going on in the city and the artist community which consisted of educators, curators, writers, artists sat together and brainstormed what can be done to (counter) the then prevailing situation. We

put art out of the galleries and placed it in public spaces to let the citizens engage with the art."

Ms. Awan emphasized on the need to add more physical and intellectual avenues and spaces in Karachi where such discourses can be organized. "For a city like Karachi, we need to have a handful of auditoriums to stage theater and music. Events like the biennale or Tehzeeb festival, Karachi Literature Festival, and ThinkFestIBA Karachi are attended by people because the public likes to explore art," she highlighted.

Talking about public intervention in public spaces, Ms. Sethi said, "Any conversation about art and public space cannot take place without having a simultaneous conversation about where and how those interventions are taking place."

Ms. Ahmed explained that the definition of public art varies according to the nature of the public. She added, "We didn't think about the definition of public art when we were designing the theoretical framework of the Biennale. What ultimately came down to is that we are trying to create these connections in the public realm and art would be the medium through which the connection will exist."

She referred to the power of an art form, and its connection with the public by giving an example of Allahwali Chowrangi; even though the structure doesn't stand today, yet people still connect to the architectural piece.●