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## **Concerted effort needed for political rights to women**

\* Asma Jahangir says women face discrimination in politics

Staff Report

LAHORE: All stakeholders will have to struggle to ensure the rights of women in politics, participants of a regional conference on engendering democracies said on Wednesday.

The senior rights activists and experts expressed these views on the first day of the two-day international conference under the title of 'Reflection of Violence against Women in Politics'.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Chairwoman Asma Jahangir chaired the first session and said women should stand up against any bid to intimidate them, as they were a unit of the family and suppressing a woman meant suppressing the family.

She said all stakeholders, including the state, needed to play a role to ensure political rights of women and encourage their participation in the political process.

Discrimination: She said women had to face discrimination even in politics, as they were bound to abide by a specific dress code for entering the parliament. The other speakers said the women taking part in the electoral process had to suffer, as fingers of a number of women were chopped off as punishment for voting in the recent elections in some parts of Afghanistan. They said women were barred from voting or contesting elections in other parts of South Asia purely on gender basis.