

INTERNATIONAL
THE NEWS Home Latest National Sports World Business Entertainment Technology Health Oped v

Thu June 08, 2017

TRENDING: BUDGET 2017 PANAMA LEAKS CHAMPIONS TROPHY CPEC

Today's Paper e-paper

Message Us

Top Story

SM
Shahina Maqbool
January 26, 2017

Share



Dr Sania inches closer to heading World Health Organization



ISLAMABAD: Internationally acclaimed for her transformational leadership role in the health sector, Dr. Sania Nishtar—Pakistan’s candidate for the post of Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO)—raised the country’s global profile Wednesday by making it to the final round of elections for the prestigious position. She secured 28 out of 34 votes.

Dr. Sania is amongst two other candidates to have been shortlisted during the first round of voting held in Geneva, where 34 members of the WHO Executive Board cast their votes to shortlist three candidates from among six.

The shortlisted candidates, which include David Nabarro from the United Kingdom and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus from Ethiopia, will go into the second round of elections scheduled for May 2017, wherein the next DG of WHO will eventually be elected to replace WHO’s current director general Dr. Margaret Chan, who retires on June 30, 2017.

Dr. Sania, who is being seen as the hot favourite for the position, will be the first-ever Muslim woman and the first-ever woman from a developing country to head WHO, if elected in the final round.

The fact that Dr. Sania managed to secure 41 percent votes in the pre-polls as against 26 percent obtained by the second-highest contender, was the first evidence, backed by concrete data, of her very bright chances to head the apex health agency.

“My vision for the World Health Organisation is one in which WHO reclaims its primacy and earns the world’s trust as its lead health agency, and has the ability to foster and sustain partnerships to achieve the vision for health—universal attainment of the highest possible level of health and well-being,” Dr. Sania stated in her manifesto document, wherein she envisions 10 pledges for action to build further on WHO’s progress as the world’s only multilateral agency in health.

Dr. Sania is uniquely positioned to drive reform of the WHO as it grapples with health challenges of the 21st century. As a starting point, she has pledged the adoption of an accountability framework at WHO and in this connection has announced to make her own electoral campaign financing a matter of public record. One of her pledges talks about acceleration of the pace of reforms at WHO so that it transforms into an effective organisation, which achieves value for money and where robust evidence guides decision-making. Creating a performance-enabling environment, securing a budget that is proportionate to its scope of responsibility, and fostering a culture of partnerships to improve global health are a few other pledges that constitute her vision for WHO.

Dr. Sania is the founder president of the globally recognised NGO Heartfile, a powerful health policy voice in Pakistan and Heartfile Health Financing, an access-to-treatment initiative to support Universal Health Coverage in mixed health systems. She is a proven effective leader who delivers results. She is the recipient of the Global Innovation Award for her ability to think laterally, build partnerships, and exploit synergies for building systems.

Dr. Sania served as Federal Minister in the 2013 caretaker government of Pakistan with responsibility for Health, Science and Technology, Information Technology and Higher Education. During her term, she was instrumental in re-establishing the Ministry of Health. She has received Sitara-i-Imtiaz for her contributions.

At the global level, Dr. Sania is recognised and respected for her leadership and consensus-building role in global health. She has served on many international expert panels. She is deeply engaged in the international discourse on health and development as a thought leader and has attended over 200 major international conferences, consultations and policy fora over the last 15 years as invited expert, chair, resource person and keynote speaker.