



PRESS RELEASE

MORE THAN 60 PERCENT WORKPLACES IN ISLAMABAD VIOLATE LABOUR LAWS: WOMEN WORKERS ALLIANCE

- Federal Ombudsperson says doors of her office are open and all complaints will be addressed within 60 days

ISLAMABAD, March 6, 2018: More than 60 percent workplaces in the federal capital are violating the labour laws which has detrimental effect on the working of women workers. These findings have been revealed by the Women Workers Alliance in a Convention here on Tuesday.

The Alliance had conducted the monitoring of various workplaces at the Public, Private and Industrial employment sectors and interviewed 250 women workers and found out that the working women are worst affected by the non-compliance of labour laws in these employment sectors.

Federal Ombudsperson for Anti-sexual Harassment of Women at Workplaces Kashmala Tariq in her key note address stated that the office of Federal Ombudsperson is open to the public and "You can visit the office anytime, with your concerns specifically including the issues of sexual harassment." She said her "office will address the complaints within 60 days of filing of the complaint." Ms. Tariq said it is important for the public in general and women in particular to raise their voice and speak for their issues.

Women Workers' Alliance Islamabad is being facilitated by the Trust for Democratic Education & Accountability under a project, Women Action for Better Workplaces, funded by The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The Alliance noted that the violations of labour laws in the public sector are assumed to be less than the other sectors, however, more than 70 percent of public sector organizations either do not have Protection against Sexual Harassment Committee, or even if the committee is notified it is not effective. The code of conduct against sexual harassment is not displayed in more than 90 percent of the public offices.

It has also been noted that daily wage employment in which more than 500 women teachers and 80 women are employed in one of the federal authorities is a gross violation of the labour laws. Most of these workers are working for the last five to six years and their wages have not been paid for the last six months. The Women Workers' Alliance called for immediate release of their salaries and demanded a permanent status for these workers.

Other demands on the charter adopted by the Women Workers Alliance included:

30 percent private sector organizations violate the Maternity Benefits Act and women are not paid maternity benefits in any form. The Alliance demanded effective implementation of the maternity benefits act and the employers who are violating the law should be penalized.

There are no washroom/toilet facilities in at least 20% of the public organisations and 10% of the private organisations. It must be declared compulsory for these organisations to provide the facility of separate washrooms for the women workers.

Approximately 40% private organisations, 70% public organisations and 100% industrial organisations do not comply with the Anti-Sexual Harassment at Workplaces Act 2010. It is demanded that in all these organisations committees on protection against sexual harassment at workplaces must be

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formed and if such committees exist they should be made functional. Arrangements must be made that its members are nominated as per law. The code of conduct on anti-sexual harassment should also be displayed at prominent places in these organisations.

In approximately 85% workplaces there are no arrangements for day-care centre facilities. For the ease of women workers day-care centre facility should be provided at workplaces and through amendments in the law it should be made mandatory for workplaces to have a day-care centre facility.

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