

PRESS RELEASE

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Government should improve the plight of child domestic workers in the country. Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights demands.

Islamabad: In Pakistan large number of children from age five to fifteen is found to be involved in domestic child labor. According to the survey of Federal Bureau of Statistics in 1996, total number of children workers is 3.3 million. It is unfortunate that these children are exposed to hazardous working conditions having no access to basic human needs like health, education and other facilities. It is also a fact that child domestic labors are vulnerable to physical and psychological torture as well. It was said in seminar organized by Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights in collaboration with ILO in Holiday Inn, Lahore. Chairman PCHR Mr. Riaz Fatyana MNA was the chief guest of the seminar. He said that the deteriorated situation on domestic child workers demands sustained, joint efforts by the government and civil society to ensure an environment conducive to children needs. He termed the statistical survey of FBS old said that to adopt a comprehensive strategy to deal with the menace, new and fresh survey is inevitable. Mr. Chairman added that though the government has taken many steps to curb bonded labor and child labor in the country, but they only concentrate on visible forms of Child Labour, leaving the invisible and much neglected form of Child Domestic Labour.

A seminar was also attended by number of officials from ILO and civil society organizations. Ms. Salma Jaffar, a Project Manager from ILO gave a detailed presentation on Domestic Child Labor in Pakistan.

Executive Director PCHR, Ms. Kashmala Tariq MNA, while delivering welcome address, appreciated the initiative of Ministry of Social Welfare to prepare a proposed bill for improving the conditions of Child Domestic Workers. She said that in Pakistan children working in homes, factories, hotels and shops etc. do not have access to education, health and all those requirements of life necessary for them being a child, and these poor children are unable to experience the life as the children of affluent families undergo. She underlined the need for strengthening the already existing mechanism for implementation of child labor laws, and also added that dire need is to replace child workers with adults and it is possible only if government mitigate poverty and unemployment in the country.

Presenting keynote address, Ms. Rifat Javed Kahlon, Director PCHR and Parliamentary Secretary IT and Telecommunication and Treasury PCHR maintained that the situation of child domestic labor is even more worse-off in rural areas due to lack of basic infrastructure for development. Expressing her concerns, she said that seventy four percent children in rural areas are engaged in agricultural sector, and these children are subject to exploitation because they have no social or legal protection. Ms. Rifat Javed Kahlon emphasized that by ensuring unanimity in policies and making legislation active, we can curb the menace in maximum.

Following numbers will be reachable round the clock for any information or help:
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