

Call for end to discriminatory laws

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ISLAMABAD - While demanding a democratic, secular, justice-oriented and peaceful Pakistan, civil society organisations under the platform of Insani Haqooq Itehad (IHI) Tuesday celebrated the 100th International Women's Day by holding a unique demonstration and organising a rally.

NGOs, women's rights activists and peoples from different walks of life participated in a unique and peaceful demonstration in Parade Chowk and later a rally in front of National Press Club. The participants were carrying 'Doves of Peace', which were prepared by the schoolchildren and teachers of Khaldunya High School and they were also putting badges with digits '83100' which means '100th birthday on 8th March.

Women rights activists and IHI members spoke on the occasion to mark the 100th International Women's Day. Rabeeha from Aurat Foundation read women's charter of demand as prepared by the members of Insani Haqooq Itehad. While talking to this scribe, she said that women of the country wanted to an end to discriminatory laws, which promoted intolerance and extremism in the country. "Today women of the country must be given basic human rights," she added.

Wasim Wagha, Coordinator Insani Haqooq Itehad, highlighting the theme of the event spoke that today was not a day to protest but a day to celebrate. He said women's charter of demand is a significant expression of this fact. He said that all the demands made in the charter were related socio-economic,



ISLAMABAD: Women's rights activists holding a rally at D Chowk to mark the International Women's Day on Tuesday.—Staff photo by Syed Mehdi

political issues which the people of Pakistan are facing. He said that people are facing the problems related to religious intolerance, sectarian violence. He said the charter also demanded separating religion from state functions, gender equality, balance between administration and justice systems, freedom of press, provincial autonomy, and agricultural reforms.

Rehan Hashmi, a renowned activist while talking to this correspondent said, "We are celebrating the approval of some laws pertaining to women rights however on the same time we are protesting against the prevailing religious extremism and intolerance." She further announced that Sister Trust had started a signature campaign to aware the women about their rights. She said this campaign will train the mothers about the next generation as violence and discrimination was increasing day by day in the society.

Syed Mumtaz Alam Gillani, former federal minister for human rights, also spoke on the occasion and said, "Woman being a daughter, sister, mother enjoyed sacred status in every society and we are proud that we have women's leadership in the country."

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faced by the flood affected women. Earlier, young singer Areeb Azhar and his group enthralled the participants with their music and songs on women's rights. Later, several women right activists organised a rally from Super Market to National Press Club where they gathered and chanted slogans in favour of women's right and demanded of the government to end all discriminatory laws and take concrete measures to stop increasing intolerance and extremism in the society.