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Calls for women rights resonate in capital

Discussions, cultural programmes held to highlight persisting issues

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People from different walks of life observed the International Women's Day on Sunday by arranging discussions and cultural programmes across the capital as well as Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) highlighting women's issues.

Awami Workers Party arranged a cultural programme at Aabpara Community Centre. Noted classical

dancer and teacher Indu Mitha, Amna Mawaz and others presented a dance depicting harassment of women and their struggle against a patriarchal society. The audience comprised working women and those from katchi abadis.

Moreover, effective legislation to prevent domestic violence and sexual offences against women was strongly demanded by thousands of women, men and youth at an event organised by AAWAZ, run by four major civil society organisations—Aurat Foundation, SAP-PK, SPO and SUNGI Development Foundation, to mark the day.

Panel discussion, resistance poetry, mime and musical programme featured at an event by AAWAZ

The event included a panel discussion, resistance poetry, mime and musical programme. The panelists included Senator Rubina Khalid, MPAs from K-P, Sindh and Punjab Meraj Khan, Nusrat Sehr Abbassi, MPA Tehseen Fawad, Aurat Foundation COO Naeem Mirza and journalist Asma Shirazi.

Khalid said "Although

there is an anti-rape law now, when it comes to registering a FIR and proving evidence, the law becomes in-effective".

Khan said immediate legislation to ensure women's rights, ending violence against women and effective measures for implementation is necessary to achieve gender equality and justice.

Seconding the opinion, Abbassi said women needed to be aware of their rights and the laws in place.

Fawad also emphasised over the need for gender-based legislation and effective measures for their implementation.

Mirza said men only earn but the money is then converted into care economy by the women who do the rest of the labour.

The event concluded with the adoption of a charter of demands that urged the federal and Punjab and K-P governments to legislate against domestic violence and declare it a crime.

The charter also demands that the parliament, through an amendment in the Political Parties Order, 2002, reserve at least 10 per cent quota for women on general seats in the general elections.

Meanwhile, hundreds of



ART FOR A CAUSE: Performances included classical dance, theatre. PHOTO: WASEEM NAZIR/EXPRESS

women took to the streets in the capital city of AJK to commemorate the day.

The rally was jointly organised by International Forum

for Justice and Human Rights and Passban-e-Hurriyat, an organisation of the 1989 Kashmiri refugees settled in AJK since 1989.

The women marched from Central Press Club to Charipan Chowk amid rain and chanted slogans in support of rights of women.