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# 'Human rights ministry is drafting laws to protect women, children'

By A Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Human Rights is working on drafting and amending various women and children-friendly laws, including the draft policy on violence against women which will soon be sent to parliament, said Ministry of Human Rights Director General M. Hassan Mangi.

Talking at a 'Show and Tell convention' hosted by the Aurat Foundation on Wednesday, Mr Mangi said: "We have successfully introduced some amendments to the criminal law and the age of criminal responsibility had been raised from seven to 10 years. We are also working on formulating a law against child pornography."

The ministry is working on devising laws to address child labour in the

Islamabad Capital Territory, he added.

"We are finalising the draft policy for home-based women workers and adopting it for implementation. The Law Reforms Committee in Senate is also reviewing laws to end violence against female workers," he said.

Also speaking at the event was Chairperson Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) Shaista Pervaiz Malik who said WPC has been at the forefront for ensuring women empowerment through active legislation.

She added that WPC is partnering with the civil society, national and international organisations to end violence against women.

Deputy Director National Police Bureau (NPB) Mehreen Maqsood emphasised on the need for training women police officials in how to respond to cases of violence against

women for which, she said, NPB needs support from the civil society.

Director General, Ministry of Health, Shafqat Javed said the issue of violence against women is also a public health issue.

"We need to see if the health policy also addressed violence against other sections of the society, such as the transgender community. There are a lot of gaps in medical services in addressing gender based violence, which should be addressed," he said.

Member KP Assembly Meraj Khan and chairperson of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus said that a united struggle of members of the provincial caucus has brought many achievements such as the formation of a separate ministry for women and the celebration of Women's Day in the provincial assembly for the first time.