Saturday, November 26,2011

Violence against women in private domain

Speakers decry absence of law to curb crime

OUR STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Speaking at different events organised to commemorate International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the launch of 16 Days of Activism on Violence against Women, the activists and non-governmental organisations said most of the violence against women takes place in the private domain and there is no law that allows state to take action against this kind of crime.

The International Day on Violence against Women was first declared on 1981 by the first Feminist Congress of Latin America and the Caribbean to commemorate the violent assassination of Mirabal sisters on November 25 in 1960 in Dominican Republic, In 1999. the General Assembly designated November 25 as the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women to direct the world's attention to the urgent priority of ending the pandemic of VAW which devastates lives, fractures communities and stalls develop-

The 16 Days of Activisms were started with the launched of different events including one million signature campaign titled "Take Action Now!!! Break the Silence to End the Violence against Women and Girls." The campaign is an initiative of Ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Alliance and the Ministry of Human Rights.

Advisor to the Prime Minister on Human Rights Mustafa Nawaz Khokher launched the campaign in an event that features mime presentation, song launch besides motivating speeches. The campaign is

the pending legislations in- omy and development of the cluding Domestic Violence and country. Acid Crime and Prevention Bill and issues related to women and girls in crisis, strengthening local work ination of Violence against around VAW, establish link between local and international work and demonstrating solidarity with victims.

Speaking on this occasion, Mustafa Nawaz Khokher said Pakistan is a signatory of numerous international treaties ganized by local organizations and covenants and imple- and the international commumenting these international nity across Pakistan and commitments through nation- around the world as part of the al legislation is the state's annual international campaign prime responsibility.

background and has witnessed cidents of VAW. "It is unfortunate that we as a nation are not able to provide proper legislapaign should not end in 16 rights. days but should continue 365 days of the year.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator Timo renders them undervalued and Pakkala highlighted the UN's efforts on gender equality and women empowerment. "Significant effort has been made in past to control VAW in Pak- all, men and women, need to istan but still a lot needs to be take an active role in addressdone," he said.

Ministry of Women Development, no national agenda for women is owned by the state. She urged the government to son of National Commission establish a body at federal level that can act as a watchdog (NCSW), highlighted the need on implementation of women to challenge militarism and related legislation.

Country Representative for UN Women Alice Shackelford peace, and human rights stressed the need to criminal- movements. She said that ize domestic violence. She said that VAW is not a private act as

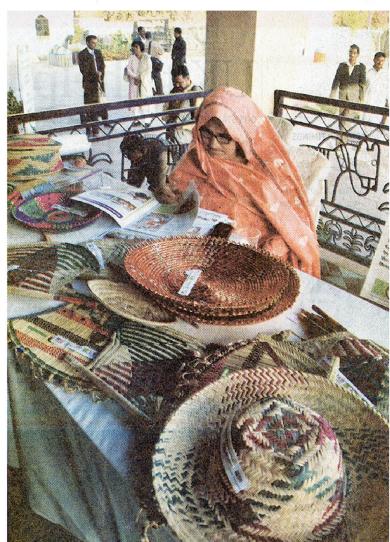
aimed at raising voice about it eventually affects the econ-

Another important event organized to commemorate the International Day for the Elim-Women was the 'Aurat Yakjehti Mela' organized by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Aurat Foundation.

The 'mela' is one in a series of events that are being ortitled 16 Days of Activism He said he belongs to a rural against Gender Violence. The campaign begins on November and heard about dreadful in- 25, International Day against Violence against Women, and ends on December 10, International Human Rights Day, to tive mechanism to stop this in-symbolically link violence justice." He said that the cam- against women and human

"I would like to call upon all of us today to redress the status of women and girls that vulnerable," said Dr. Andrew Sisson, Director of USAID Mission in Pakistan addressing participants of the event. "We ing and preventing violence, Senator Nilofer Bukhtiar changing gender attitudes, and said after the devolution of increasing the commitment by community and government leaders on the issue."

> Anis Haroon, the chairperfor the Status of Women end violence against women by bringing together women's, peace in home means peace in



ISLAMABAD: A lady displaying handicrafts during a function jointly arranged by US Embassy and Aurat Foundation at Lok Virsa to mark the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women.-APP