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'Mela' marks Women's Day

Our correspondent

Islamabad

Civil society organisations and human right activists organised a 'Mela' at the Fatima Jinnah Park in Sector F-9 here on Tuesday to commemorate National Women's Day. The event featured seminar, theatre, music performances and stalls of exclusive handicrafts and home-cooked snacks.

With Women's Action Forum (Islamabad), Insani Haqooq Ittehad, Pakistan Reproductive Health Network and the EAW Alliance as main organisers, the 'Mela' was meant to pay tribute to women's movement in Pakistan.

Different NGOs set up stalls to display advocacy material, whereas snacks prepared by violence victims from Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Crisis Centres and Darul Aman were on sale at the event. Visitors took keen interest in handicrafts made by violence victims. Theatre performances were also part of the event highlighting different aspects of violence.

On February 12 each year, the women of Pakistan reaffirm their resolve to continue the struggle for their rights as equal



ISLAMABAD: A girl paints a flowerpot at the Fatima Jinnah Park. — Hanif Khattak

citizens and for a peaceful and just society.

Prominent among who spoke on the occasion were Chief Executive Strengthening Participatory Organisation (SPO) Naseer Memon, Professor Farkhanda Aurengezeb, Nighat Rizvi from Amal, Nasreen Azhar and Sheema Khan.

Senior WAF member Nasreen Azhar highlighted the background of the day. Other speakers mentioned the situation of violence against women, acts of terrorism and conflicts and their effects on women, children and other vulnerable groups.

While expressing their deep concern over killings of people on the basis of their ethnic and religious identities, they urged the government to ensure the safety and security of people as enshrined in the constitution of Pakistan.

Speakers demanded the government to ensure free, fair and timely elections and equal participation of women in politics in coming elections. They also urged effective steps to make sure that women are not deprived of their constitutional right to vote.