

“Orange the World: End Violence against Women Now!”
In focus: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence
Round Table Discussion Meeting with Women TU Leaderships
07 December 2021, National Press Club, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

BRIEF ACTIVITY REPORT

Title of the Programme	:	Round Table Discussion Meeting with Women TU Leadership.
Activities:	:	1. Roundtable Discussion. 2. Rally.
Date & Venue	:	07 December 2021, National Press Club, Dhaka
Nos of Participant	:	Total: 75 (Seventy five), M- 27, F-48
Objective	:	In focus:16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence
Topics if the Event (Key Note)	:	Demanding Ratification of ILO C-190 & framing Laws to Protect Women from Violence & Harassment at workplace & everywhere.
Presided by	:	Sheheli Afroz Lovely, Chairman, WRC Women Committee
Key Note Paper Presented by	:	Fahmina Kashem Mishu, Vice Chairman, WRC Women Committee.
Discussant of the session	:	1. Babul Akter, GS, BGIWF (BoT Member, WRC) 2. Ahsan Habib Bulbul, GS, SLF. 3. Naimul Ahsan Jewel, GS, JSJB (BoT Member, WRC) 4. Rashedul Alam Raju, Vice Chairman, WRC. 5. Jamil Ansar, National Programme Office, ILO-SDIR Project. 6. Shammin Sultana, Programme Officer, ILO-RMGP-2 & Chairman, Gender & Diversity Committee. 7. Chowdhury Ashiqul Alam, Chairman, WRC.
Open Discussion	:	1. Lutfun Nahar Lata, Member, WRC Women Committee 2. China Rahman, (BoT Member, WRC) 3. Ruhul Amin, (BoT Member, WRC) 4. Kutub Uddin Ahmed, Former Chairman, WRC.

Brief of the key Note Paper & Discussion:

WRC Women Committee organized a Round Table discussion and Rally as part of the 16 days activism on “Demanding Ratification of ILO C-190 & framing Laws to Protect Women from Violence & Harassment at workplace & everywhere.”

Sister Sheheli Afroz Lovely, Chairman, WRC Women Committee chaired the meeting.

The Round Table Discussion meeting started with **welcome address by the Chair Sister Sheheli Afroz Lovely.**

Fahmina Kashem Mishu, Vice Chairman, WRC Women Committee presented Key Note Paper in the meeting. In her presentation, she mentioned about the statistics of vulnerability of women's in the workplace and in the community. She also cited different data collected from different Research and study in this regards.(The Key Note paper is attached herewith). In her presentation, she proposed 9 (nine) points of recommendations for future Trade Union Action to protect women and gave emphasis on ratification of the ILO Convention 190 and forming Laws in the country.

As Special Guest **Mis. Shammin Sultana, Programme Officer, ILO-RMGP-2 & Chairman, and Gender & Diversity Committee** has express her deep concern about the women's situation in Bangladesh especially during the COVID Situation and express her concern about early marriage, women education, workplace safety of women workers etc. She explain about why Bangladesh should ratify ILO C-190 and what will be the impact. She also said that the present Law of the Land on |Women's protection need to be updated as the vulnerability goes higher day by day and the ways & pattern of torture is being changed e.g. kidnap, Rape, killing after Gang rape, etc. She said that the Trade Unions need to be more active and take immediate steps to ratify ILO C-190 & and update the existing Laws to stop all kind of Harassment & Violence at workplace as well as in the society.

Mr. Jamil Anser of ILO express his heartfelt solidarity with the programme undertaken by the WRC Women Committee at eav of the 16 days Activism, In his speech he gave importance to the role of Trade Unions to take collective initiatives with other likeminded organizations to achieve the goal. He also emphasis that without making a fearless workplace and the society, it will not possible to achieve the SDG. So, Trade Unions and the Women's organizations need to come forward with common voice and action to ratify C-190 without delay. So act now.

Mr. Babul Akter, GS, BGIWF (BoT Member, WRC) said that the Trade Unions are now united and organized to achieve the goals. We should strengthen our Advocacy, campaign.

In addition, other activities in our regular routine work instead of limiting the activities within only day observation. If we can raise our voice strongly than the Govt & the employers will be bound to take initiative to ratify C-190 and reforming the existing laws to make workplace free from harassment & violence.

Ahsan Habib Bulbul, GS, SLF said that this is the high to work together to raise a strong voice against harassment & violence not only against women but for all working peoples and for this only united movement is the only way to achieve the goals.

Naimul Ahsan Jewel, GS, JSJB (BoT Member, WRC) Said that except organizing joint movement and raising strong voice against harassment & violence, there is no alternative way to make a fearless work place as well as the safe society. All man & women must work together to create logical pressure to the Government to immediately ratify ILO C-190 and ensure proper justice.

Rashedul Alam Raju, Vice Chairman, WRC. Express his deep satisfaction for organizing the remarkable event at the eve of the 16 days activism.

Recommendations:

1. To confirm the workplace be free from all types of harassment and violence and to ratify the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190);
2. To amend the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 incorporating specific articles and measures to stop violence and harassment against women;
3. To develop a roadmap on safe work environment. Also, it w/require to bring change into the mindset of those are engaged into oppressing the workforce as they do not consider/take into account the psycho-social damage (i.e. loss of humanity, rights and dignity) concerned aftermath;
4. To focus on workplan aiming at to confirm safe, harassment, and violence-free workplace for women;
5. To establish appropriate creche and breast feeding corner at all workplaces;
6. To take initiative for gender-sensitivity training at all workplaces and establishments;
7. To increase the penalty and or corresponding punishment (which is at present highest at only Tk.25000) against indecent or unmannered behaviour towards women. Bangladesh Labour Act, section 332, has prohibited indecent or unmannered behaviour towards a female worker at workplace, which is repugnant to her modesty or honour. However, neither the law nor the rules have provided any specific definition nor elements concerned - what are to be construed as indecent or unmannered behaviours, causing the application of the section has been frustrated;
8. To act into a coordinated approach to map and prevent the abuses and harassments at workplaces;
9. To show zero-tolerance on violence and harassment against women and to form anti-harassment committees at all workplaces and establishments.

Organised by	:	Workers Resource Centre-WRC Women Committee
Participated by	:	NCCWE & IBC Women Leadership
Supported by	:	International Labour Organisation-ILO

Photos of the Activities are attached herewith in the next page

Photos of the 16 days Activity of the WRC, Bangladesh

