

**MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON
“HUMAN RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES”**

HELD ON 30 AUGUST 2019

(Venue: ILS Law College, Pune)

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) organized a Regional Conference on ‘Human Rights of Domestic Workers: Issues and Challenges’ in collaboration with ILS Law College, Pune on the 30th August 2019 in Pune. Through this Conference, the Commission aimed to mainstream the issues of domestic workers and their right to decent work.

2. The Conference was held under the chairmanship of Dr. D.M. Mulay, Hon’ble Member, NHRC. It was also attended by Shri Jaideep Govind, Secretary General NHRC, Ms. Soso Shaiza, Hon’ble Member, National Commission for Women, Ms. Vaijayanti Joshi, Principal, ILS Law College, Pune. The Regional Conference covered nine States from the Western and Southern Regions of India which are Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It was attended by representatives from the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment and representatives from the State Human Rights Commissions (SHRC), Labour Departments of the State Governments, Domestic Workers’ Unions, Academicians, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and domestic workers from the said regions. Faculty members and students of ILS Law College, Pune were also in attendance. The list of participants is enclosed.

A. Inaugural Session

3. At the outset, **Dr. Tejaswini Malegaonkar, Faculty Coordinator, Human Rights Cell, ILS Law College, Pune**, quoted Nelson Mandela and welcomed all the esteemed guests present in the Regional Conference on Human Rights of Domestic Workers: Issues and Challenges. It was followed lighting of the lamp by the dignitaries.

4. **Ms. Vaijayanti Joshi, Principal, ILS Law College, Pune**, welcomed all and expressed her delight to be jointly organizing and hosting the Regional Conference. Briefly recalling the

history of ILS Law College, Pune which was established in the year 1924, Ms. Joshi informed that the College has the oldest Legal Aid Centre in India and has various other Cells established to impart socially relevant education. She further expressed her ardent hope that the Conference would involve fruitful discussions around the social and economic issues of the domestic workers in presence of the invitees who have been working with them.

5. **Shri Jaideep Govind, *Secretary General, NHRC***, also welcomed all the esteemed guests and expressed his pleasure to be part of the gathering. He elaborated on how socio-economic background of domestic workers make them vulnerable to trafficking, abuse and harassment, and stated this is a cause of concern given India's commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 8 which pertains to "Decent Work and Economic Growth". Acknowledging the fact that legislations such as the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 and Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2013 have been unable to make the desired impact on the lives of domestic workers, Shri Jaideep Govind expressed his hope that the deliberations of the Conference would lead to actionable recommendations which could be pursued with the Ministry of Labour and Employment. He urged the representatives of the State Labour Departments to utilize the platform to learn about the existing good practices and make efforts to replicate it in their respective States. He further invited all the organizations working with domestic workers to reach out to the Commission with their bright ideas to collaborate and appealed to them to sensitize domestic workers about how they can reach out to NHRC in case their rights are violated.

6. **Dr. D. M. Mulay, *Hon'ble Member, NHRC***, began his inaugural address by greeting all the distinguished guests present in the Conference. Sharing his perspective on human rights of domestic workers, he stated that it is not just about the mechanism that should be put in place to realize their rights, but also about the basic values of life such as liberty, dignity and equality enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, UN Charter and the Constitution of India. The realization of these values often seem to be absent in case of the 'insignificant' category of domestic workers. Expounding the unregulated nature of domestic work, the Hon'ble Member pointed that domestic workers often work in 5-6 houses every day, are paid abysmally low wages, are pestered by their employers and reprimanded for being late. Thus, he urged the

discussions of the Conference to be around the value of dignity and argued that the nation needed a change of heart, through an enabling legislative framework, to provide that dignity to the domestic workers.

7. **The Hon'ble Member** further opined the need to analyze the situation of domestic workers at the domestic level, local level and interstate level. The domestic level being the treatment meted out to them at home where they work, the local level being urban or rural area and the interstate level comprising the issues of trafficking of tribal girls to the city in the name of upward mobility. He also suggested the house to deliberate upon the skilling of domestic workers which would lead to upward mobility in real sense. In the end, he urged the participants to enable the Commission make it a continuous dialogue through the way of sending recommendations and ideas to it later on as well.

8. In the vote of thanks, **Dr. M.D.S. Tyagi, Joint Director (Research), NHRC**, expressed his gratitude to the Hon'ble Member for pointing out a very pertinent factor in case of domestic workers i.e. dignity of the work they do. Dr. Tyagi also thanked the Secretary General of NHRC for his valuable directions. Further, he expressed his delight to be able to organize the Conference in ILS Law College Pune with the constant support of the Principal and Convener of the Conference. Pointing out the multi-stakeholder participation in all NHRC Conferences, he thanked the representatives of the Union Ministries, State Governments, State Human Rights Commission, CSOs, domain experts, academicians, students and domestic workers for taking the time out and participating in the Conference.

B. Technical Session I: Domestic Workers in India: Issues and Challenges

Panel I: Denial of right to decent work

9. **Sister Lissy Joseph, State Coordinator, National Workers' Movement, Hyderabad**, started by presenting some case studies of domestic workers who were victims of migration, violence, harassment, torture and were even threatened to be killed. And hence, she stressed on the importance of establishing the employer-employee relationship for domestic workers. She

also spoke about the Wage Code Bill, 2019 and how it fails to cover these workers in its ambit. She then mentioned that although a few states have set minimum wages, provided social security and given the right to form and register trade unions for domestic workers, the overall national picture is grim. She pointed out that in 2016, even though the then Union Labour Minister Shri Bandaru Dattatreya had announced that they would bring domestic workers under the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) fold and would soon launch pilot projects in Delhi and Hyderabad in this regard, no such initiatives could be witnessed in reality. She proffered Domestic Workers' Regulation of Work and Social Security Bill, 2017 prepared by the National Platform for Domestic Workers (NPDW) and recommended NHRC consider it. She urged NHRC to lead the way so that a proper legislation comes into place which would include among other things- the right to collective bargaining, skill training through certificate programmes. She also asked NHRC to pursue the State Governments to take actions according to the legislations that are already in place and make them a reality so that the domestic workers no longer remain the helpless, faceless and a voiceless group.

10. **Dr. Sita Bhatia, Senior Professor, ILS Law College, Pune,** started by thanking NHRC for taking up this issue. She said that while the 21st century has witnessed economic globalisation and socio-economic industrial growth, it has also led to exploitation of various sections of the society, particularly the vulnerable groups in the unorganised labour force, of which domestic workers are a part. These workers are in need of social, economic and legal protection. She claims that although National Sample Survey Report of 2012 estimates about 3.4 million people working as domestic workers (of which more than 50% are women), in reality the total proportion of this workforce is much higher. Therefore, their problems need to be dealt with from a human rights perspective instead of a sympathetic approach. She pointed out that Right to Equality is a fundamental right and hence the domestic workers should be given equal respect at par with any other professions guaranteed by a legislation. This legislation, complemented by continuous awareness generation and public sensitization, would then be able to eventually eradicate the label of “modern slavery” and establish dignity of labour. It should also include proper skill training and thereby lead to empowerment of the vulnerable group. And it might be an opportunity for destitute women to choose this as a secured way of income who otherwise have to resort to prostitution. She concluded by saying if a legislation is enacted, it should be

implemented properly and the statutory institutions established thereafter should be inspected at regular intervals.

11. **Maj. Gen. Manik Sabharwal, CEO, Domestic Workers Sector Skill Council (DWSSC)**, started by focusing on the importance of employer-employee relationship and stressed on educating the employers. He cited an example of the regularization of the domestic work in Singapore, where before employing any domestic worker, employers need to undergo a course for a couple of days where they understand how they are supposed to treat the workers and also the laws and regulations they come under. Considering Indian people's current mindset towards domestic workers, there should be a proper mechanism on how to educate the employers about the rules and regulations. He further spoke about the 3 pronged vulnerability of domestic workers, i.e., 1) majority of them are migrant workers and hence do not have proper dwelling place which increases their vulnerability, 2) the place of work is limited to the 4 walls of the household which is secluded from the outer world and finally, 3) women have a risk of getting trafficked and being subjected to physical and sexual exploitation. As trafficking takes place mainly through the private placement agencies, he opined that every agency must be legally registered and obligated to ensure protection of the rights of migrant workers at the source, the transit, as well as the destination. In the end he mentioned that while skill training is important, research shows that skilled domestic workers want security of job, opportunity for career progression and better income prospects which can be provided for through a dedicated legislation for them.

12. Co-chair, **Smt. B. Udayalakshmi, Principal Secretary, Andhra Pradesh Labour Department**, shared the scheme for domestic workers currently operational in Andhra Pradesh. The Government conducted a detailed household survey (Prajha Sadhikara Survey in 2015-16) of all the houses in the State and identified 1.92 cr. unorganised workers, including domestic helpers, based on their self-certification. The data was tagged with respective Aadhaar Numbers and kept in the real time online governance portal. In 2016, the State Government decided to extend the Government insurance policies such as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Aam Aadmi Bima Yojna and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, which covers natural death (₹ 2 Lakh to family members), accidental death (₹ 5 Lakh to surviving family members) and

disability (₹ 2.5 Lakh), the premium for which was entirely paid by the State Government. To implement the schemes, one lady from the self-help groups, is designated as ‘Bima Mitra’ who is trained to use technological devices, and is responsible for visiting the location to confirm the demise/disability of the person and instantly shares the detailed information with everyone in the government. This then initiates legal procedures and compensation amount is disbursed within 15 days. She also mentioned that this model has been very successful and can be considered to be replicated throughout the country.

Panel II: Trafficking, abuse and harassment of domestic workers

13. Pointing out the intersectionality of caste, class and gender and the “hierarchy of work”, **Smt. Geeta Menon, Activist, Stree Jagruti Samiti, Bengaluru, Karnataka**, stated that domestic workers secure the lowest position in the workforce and are often discriminated. She further stated while sex trafficking is a much talked about issue, trafficking for forced labour is equally important but hidden and requires attention. Elaborating on the aspects of trafficking, she explained how companies/private placement agencies create fake paperworks that they can show if inspected. She then presented some cases where trafficking of children had been identified. Most of them were subjected to torture and only some could be rescued while the others had committed suicide. She mentioned how they struggled to book the employers and agents, but none of them have been convicted yet. She stressed on the fact that the domestic workers should be sensitised about their rights and how to apply and access them in daily life situations. She concluded by saying that there should be thorough monitoring by the Panchayats to identify the kinds of population living in their jurisdiction, since there is a high possibility that cases of migrant domestic workers are related to missing girl children. She further suspects that adolescent girls are trafficked from these areas and brought elsewhere where they are susceptible to sexual violence. She also requested that there should be some committee in the neighborhood of workplace comprised of Resident Welfare Association as well as domestic workers were the victims can voice their concerns and receive proper redressal.

14. **Shri Adrian Phillips, Founder-Partner, ASKD-We Resolve, Mumbai**, began his presentation by giving a picture of the recruitment process of domestic workers from the

employers' point of view. He elucidated that while original ways of recruiting domestic workers with the help of relatives and neighbours prevails, the role of placement agencies are emerging and becoming a big player in this industry. These agencies seem more suitable for the fast paced lifestyle of the employers where the latter on submitting a list of their requirements, get suitable contract-bound domestic workers who are regulated by those agencies. He said, agencies like these have a well-thought out plan on how to strategically take advantage of the vulnerabilities of these workers and control them. He also demonstrated how the trafficking network works and it is a mesh involving various partners scattered across the country. The person who gets trafficked are duped and are passed through many handlers over a short period of time and even from location to location. In cases where the employers are in fact able to suspect trafficking, they inform the competent authorities but ask not to involve the placement agencies since, they are the ones who are going to provide them their next domestic helper and thus corrupt placement agencies evade the law. So, even though the domestic worker reaches home, he/she most likely again gets trafficked somewhere else. Therefore, even if the placement agencies are registered, there needs to be a proper monitoring mechanism to ensure that they are doing their work legally. Shri Phillips further stressed on the fact that domestic workers are prone to getting abused in their workplaces and if he/she complains specifically against his/her employer, the entire locality gets to know about it and usually refuses to employ him/her in future. Besides, the percentage of conviction in such cases like this is abysmally low. As a result the domestic workers need to relocate and find work elsewhere. He concluded by stating that considering the current situation of domestic workers in our country, it is necessary for the GoI to bring about a comprehensive law which is in line with the ILO Convention no. 189. Further a law on regulation of placement agencies and amendment of the existing the labour laws is imperative for these workers to be able to enjoy labour rights.

15. **Smt. Medha M. Thatte, *Secretary, Pune City Domestic Workers Organisation, Pune***, spoke about the abuse and harassment faced by the domestic workers by their employers. She said that often domestic workers are made to work for years and denied any payment, especially those who are part-time workers. Moreover, they are also not given proper food to eat. She stressed that this is a result of lack of legislation and the employers use this opportunity to their advantage. She asked NHRC to take the lead and recommend the government to ensure that they

are getting social security benefits and minimum wages with providence for timely increase at par with the economic inflation. She also expressed that the employers need to provide daily allowance separately to the workers to help them lead a dignified life. She concluded by requesting NHRC, the State Governments as well as the Union Ministry to come up with a training module for the Police Force on the rights of the domestic workers and how to deal with alleged cases against workers in unorganised sector and respect their rights and dignity instead of resorting to assault.

16. A domestic worker, **Smt. Kusum Bhosale** from Pune City shared her experiences and views at the seminar. She said that she is looked down upon by her employers. Sometimes the employers ask them to do work such as cleaning ceiling fans without considering their age. Also, the employers ask the workers to come early in the morning (as early as 05:00 AM sometimes). She is often discriminated on the nature of the food she is given as compared to what the employers eat as well as the bathroom facilities and usage of elevators. She expressed the humiliation she feels when the employers happily take their dogs in the elevators but ask the domestic helpers to climb the stairs even if they are aged people or have medical ailments. All these have led her to believe that as a domestic worker, she does not have any rights at all.

C. Technical Session II: Mapping Domestic Workers in the Indian Legislative and Welfare Framework

17. **Shri Ajay Kumar Singh**, *Under Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment*, began by stating how the concerns raised in the previous session have already been considered for the Draft National Policy for Domestic Workers, which the Ministry is trying to finalize. Coming to the existing legislative scenario for domestic workers, Shri Ajay Kumar Singh pointed out that the Unorganized Social Security Act, 2008 which identifies domestic workers as wage workers under Section 2(n) enables them to avail various social security schemes run by the Centre and the State. Furthermore, the Draft Policy National Policy on Domestic Workers also recommends existing legislations such as Employees Compensation Act, Equal Remuneration Act, Payment of Wages Act, Minimum Wages Act, Trade Union Act, Interstate Migrant Workers Act, Maternal Benefit Act, Employees State Insurance Act, Industrial Dispute

Act etc. to be amended so as to include domestic workers. Subsequently, he elucidated upon the components of the Draft National Policy and how it recognizes several rights of the domestic workers such as the right to register as an employee, have fair terms of employment, wages, periods of work and rest, social protection, right to skill development of domestic workers, protection of domestic workers who seek to work abroad, grievance and dispute redressal, registration of workers' unions and many more.

18. Elaborating on the exiting welfare mechanisms for domestic workers, **Shri Ajay Kumar Singh** stated that domestic workers, who get registered as unorganized workers, are eligible to get insurance for natural death and disability under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY). For old age pension, the Government recently launched the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan Yojana- a voluntary contributory pension scheme which envisages to provide a monthly pension of Rs. 3000 to the unorganized workers. Further, Ayushman Bharat Scheme, which includes domestic workers, caters to the needs of health and maternity care. According to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's data, out of the 33 Cr. unorganized workers benefitting from the Ayushman Bharat Scheme, 3% have registered themselves as domestic workers. He concluded by assuring that the Draft National Policy on Domestic Workers would soon see the light of the day and would in turn look after the issues of domestic workers which await to be addressed.

19. **Smt. Sunita Mhaikar, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Industries, Energies & Labour Department, Government of Maharashtra**, talked about the legislative and welfare schemes available for domestic workers in Maharashtra. She revealed that currently two legislations namely, the Maharashtra Domestic Workers' Welfare Board Act, 2008 and the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, are administered for domestic workers. The Maharashtra Domestic Workers' Welfare Board Act was enacted in 2008, its Rules were notified in 2010 and the first Domestic Workers' Welfare Board was formed in 2011. Since then, 4.5 Lakh domestic workers have been registered, out of which only 1 Lakh are active at present. The functions of the said Board, as provided in the Act, are: registration of domestic workers, educational assistance, accidental benefits, medical benefits, maternity benefits, funeral assistance and others. Pursuant to these functions, the following schemes, namely Aam Aadmi

Bima Yojana, Maternity Benefit, Funeral Assistance and Sanmandhan Yojana are operated under this Act. Elaborating on the schemes, she stated that in Sanmandhan Yojana every registered domestic worker is given a one-time benefit of Rs. 10,000 on attainment of 55 years of age. For maternity benefit, Rs. 5000 is provided per delivery and in the past 3 years 269 domestic workers have benefitted from it. Under the funeral assistance, the nominee of the domestic workers receives an assistance of Rs. 2000 and as of date 116 domestic workers have been covered. She also apprised that a cabinet note to increase the funeral assistance to Rs. 10,000 has been moved awaits approval. The benefits under the Aam Admi Bima Yojana (AABY) are as under

Table 1: Benefits under the Aam Admi Bima Yojana (AABY)
[now converged with PMJJBY and PMSBY in 2017]

Benefits given		Number of beneficiaries (as of 2017)
Natural Death	Rs. 30000	16691
Accidental Death	Rs. 75000	835
Permanent Disability	Rs. 37500	21
Partial Disability	Rs. 37500	-
Education Scholarship	Rs. 100 per month to the domestic worker's children (up to 2 children)	780790

20. Further **Smt. Sunita Mhaikar** informed that 45000 domestic workers have been registered under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mandhan Yojana (PMSYMY) in Maharashtra. Taking cognizance of the concerns of domestic workers who have already attained the age of 40 years and not eligible to avail benefits of the said scheme, the Maharashtra Domestic Workers Welfare Board is working towards a mechanism to include them as well. She concluded by listing some of the issues and challenges that need to be addressed by the Labour Department of Maharashtra, such as approval of more schemes, sanction of funds which have been limiting the

functioning of the Boards, awareness generation about the existing schemes among domestic workers and extending PMSYM to all domestic workers.

21. **Shri R. K. Ravishankar, *Additional Labour Commissioner, Labour & Employment Department, Government of Tamil Nadu***, positing Tamil Nadu State's advancement from the rest of Country stated that welfare mechanisms for domestic workers was established way back in 1982 through the enactment of Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Work) Act. The Act aims to regulate the work of unorganized sector and provide the workers with social security. Currently, 17 Welfare Boards operate under the said Act and the Domestic Workers' Welfare Board, constituted in January 2007, is one among them. The Boards provide assistance in the following nine areas namely: education, marriage, maternity assistance, spectacles, disability, accidental death, natural death, funeral and pension. As of July 2019, 1,88,869 domestic workers have benefitted. The functioning of Boards is completely decentralized wherein 35 District Labour Officers are spread across 32 districts of the State.

22. **Smt. Kiran Moghe, *President, Pune Zilla Gharkamgar Sangathan***, pointing out the lack of legislative regulation of domestic work, she stated that since the year 1959 sixteen Private Member Bills for domestic workers have been placed in the legislative assembly and no Government has responded to these Bills. She opined that domestic workers have been excluded from the labour legislations primarily because domestic work is not considered economically productive work, the place of work is the private household and the nature of work is a highly personalized. Further, because of these reasons, the States where domestic work has been scheduled under Minimum Wages Act, it has been found that minimum wages are particularly low as compared to other occupations. She expressed her delight on the fact that a Draft National Policy is in the making, however she also explained how the policy has been under consideration since 2000s but has not yet seen the light of the day. Coming to the recently enacted Wage Code, she explicated how domestic workers do not figure in the definition of establishments and workers; and thus are excluded from it. In this regard, she sought clarification on whether the Draft National Policy will consider recommending the inclusion of domestic workers in the four Labour Codes. Smt. Kiran Moghe also pointed that the Government needs to shift from social security and welfare framework to a rights framework where the working condition of a

domestic worker is regulated, the worker gets weekly off, minimum wages etc. Bringing the House's awareness to other legislations, she pointed out that the legislation on trafficking and interstate migration does not include domestic workers.

23. **Smt. Kiran Moghe** concluded by making certain recommendations. First, registration of domestic workers and employers so as to get certain statistics about domestic workers which is currently unavailable. Second, enacting a regulatory legislation that provides domestic workers their rights. Third, making data available on the number of domestic worker beneficiaries under the social security schemes and increasing the age limit on the schemes. Fourth, increasing the efficacy of Domestic Workers' Board by providing it with sufficient funds and tripartite representation.

24. Having worked with domestic workers in Rajasthan, **Smt. Meva Bharti, *Mehnatkash Kalyan Evam Sandarbha Kendra, Jaipur***, communicated their demands with respect to the formulation of the national policy/ legislation. She expressed how domestic workers want both employers and the employees to be registered and do not want police verification as it gives the worker a feeling of being a criminal without admitting a crime. She also informed about the need to increase the old age pension given the economic conditions and provide maternity benefit of leave with pay to all domestic workers. She also apprised how migrant domestic workers often get denied of the social security schemes because of the lack of domicile. In the end, she concluded by saying that a legislation is imperative for domestic workers as they live vulnerable lives in absence of it.

25. **Brother Varghese Theckanath, *Director, Montfort Social Institute, Hyderabad***, began by recalling the Universal Periodic Review-III where Government of India accepted the recommendation to ratify ILO Convention 189 pertaining to domestic workers. As India is yet to ratify it, he brought to notice how countries with similar situations like India, such as South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Philippines, Mexico etc. have ratified the said Convention. Being a member of the Task Force on Domestic Workers, constituted by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in 2009, he revealed that the Draft National Policy was sent to the cabinet on several occasions but did not get approved. Given that it has been a decade and the international

framework and civil society awareness on the issues of domestic workers have changed significantly, he opined it is favorable that a legislation regulating domestic work may be enacted. Furthermore, given that it is envisaged to converge the labour legislations into 4 Labour Codes, out of which the Wage Code has already been enacted, he expressed his apprehensions with respect to the extent to which the Codes are in favour of domestic workers.

D. Technical Session III: Regulation of Domestic Work- A Road Ahead

26. This session was aimed at seeking recommendations which could be pursued with the Union Ministry. However, due to paucity of time only a few of recommendations could be taken and the rest were sought through e-mail submission. Following are some of the major recommendations that emanated from the same:

- a) **Clarity in the definition of domestic work:** The definition of ‘domestic work’ needs to be clarified by enlisting the tasks entailing domestic work so as to codify the unpaid work done by domestic workers in households.
- b) **Statistical visibility of domestic workers:** As there is no definite data on the number of persons involved in domestic work, it is recommended that domestic workers may be enumerated so as to understand the magnitude to which people engage in this field of work in this Country. Pursuant to this, inclusion of ‘Domestic Work’ as a category may be considered in the forthcoming Census of 2021.
- c) **Mandatory registration:** Both domestic workers and employers need to be registered to facilitate greater regulation of domestic work. Mandatory registration would also facilitate enumeration of domestic workers in the country.
- d) **Registration of migrant workers in home State:** There needs to be registration of migrant workers in their home state, through panchayats, before they migrate for work. This would ensure that the workers would be tracked in unforeseen situations like trafficking, bondage, etc.
- e) **Regulation of working conditions:** The working conditions of domestic workers need to be regulated through drawing up model contracts of employment between the employer and the employee which would specify the working hours, paid leaves etc.

- f) **Skilling of domestic workers:** Avenues for domestic workers to acquire skills such as handling, maintaining, electronic equipment in home, cooking, embroidery & tailoring, craft making and health and caring giving to elderly and patients need to be generated. Organizations such as Domestic Workers Skill Sector Council need to be promoted and awareness about such institutions need to be created among domestic workers and public in general.
- g) **Functionality of existing Welfare Boards in the States:** To ensure that the composition of the Domestic Workers' Welfare Boards are tripartite in nature and sufficient funds are made available through collection of 2% of the income tax or employers contributing to the one extra month's salary to the said Board.
- h) **Inclusion in Labour Codes:** Domestic workers need to be included in the Labour Codes. Ambiguity with respect to the status of inclusion of domestic workers in the recently enacted Wage Code needs to be clarified. In case they are not included, steps need to be taken to ensure their inclusion in the same.
- i) **Regulatory legislative framework:** To adopt a national legislation on domestic workers in line with International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 189 on domestic work. The legislative framework must regulate working conditions, inter-state migration, placement agencies, formation of associations/trade unions, right to collective bargaining, etc.
- j) **Replicating successful existing mechanism of extending social security:** The Government of Andhra Pradesh conducted a detailed household survey (Praja Sadhikara Survey in 2015-16) of all the houses in the State and identified 1.92 cr. unorganised workers, including domestic helpers, based on their self-certification. The data was tagged with respective Aadhaar Numbers and kept in the real time online governance portal. In 2016, the State Government decided to extend the Government insurance policies such as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Aam Aadmi Bima Yojna and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, which covers natural death (₹ 2 Lakh to family members), accidental death (₹ 5 Lakh to surviving family members) and disability (₹ 2.5 Lakh), the premium for which was entirely paid by the State Government. To implement the schemes, one lady from the self-help groups, is designated as 'Bima Mitra' who is trained to use technological devices, and is

responsible for visiting the location to confirm the demise/disability of the person and instantly shares the detailed information with everyone in the government. This then initiates legal procedures and compensation amount is disbursed within 15 days.

27. In the concluding remarks, **Dr. D. M. Mulay, *Hon'ble Member, NHRC***, appreciated the proceedings of the day and expressed his ardent hope that the discussions could be taken to the public domain by the means of involving the Member of Parliament in such deliberations so as to impress upon them the urgent need for working towards the rights of domestic workers. He said that the Conference has been able to bring forth the need to expedite the Government of India's plans for domestic workers in the near future and its harmonization with the international obligations. He further raised the need for evaluating the initiatives of the States and the extent of its achievements. In the end he concluded by saying that there is a need for greater public awareness about the situation of domestic workers, through media, so that it stirs the conscience of the society to work towards achieving dignity for their labour.

IMAGES FROM THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Image 1: Lighting of the Lamp



Image 2: Panel I discussing about Denial of right to decent work



Image 3: Panel I discussing about Trafficking, abuse and harassment of domestic workers



**Image 4:
Representatives from Union Ministry and State Labour Departments presenting about the legislative
scenario for domestic workers**



Image 5:

Representatives CSO/NGOs presenting about the legislative scenario for domestic workers



Image 6: The House discussing about the road ahead for domestic workers



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation
1.	Dr. D. M. Mulay	Member
2.	Shri Jaideep Govind	Secretary
3.	Smt. Manzil Saini	Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Heading Group II of the Investigation Division
4.	Dr. MDS Tyagi	Joint Director (Research)
5.	Ms. Tania Chatterjee	Junior Research Consultant
6.	Ms. Devosmita Bhattacharya	Junior Research Consultant

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation
7.	Ms. Soso Shaiza	Member

UNION MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation
8.	Shri Surendra Patel	Deputy Secretary to Govt. of India
9.	Shri Ajay Kumar Singh	Under Secretary to Govt. of India

STATE GOVERNMENTS

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation	State
10.	Smt. B. Udayalakshmi	Principal Secretary	Andhra Pradesh
11.	Dr. Manjunath	Welfare Commissioner	Karnataka
12.	Shri R. K. Ravishanker	Additional Labour Commissioner	Tamil Nadu
13.	Dr. D.C. Baxi	Additional Labour Commissioner	Gujarat
14.	Shri Chandra Shekaram	Joint Commission of Labour	Telangana
15.	Shri Shiddanagouda Patil	Labour Director	Karnataka
16.	Dr. S.B. Ravi Kumar	Deputy Labour Commission	Karnataka

17.	Shri Ashok Kumar Jain	Assistant Labour Commissioner	Rajasthan
18.	Smt. Sunita Mhaiskar	Assistant Labour Commission	Maharashtra
19.	Smt. Radha Seghal	Programme Officer	Maharashtra
20.	Dr. Swamy	GM OMCAT	Andhra Pradesh

STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation	State
21.	Smt. Vasundera. N	Registrar	Tamil Nadu
22.	Dr. K.A. Dhare	Registrar	Maharashtra
23.	Smt. Vibha MN	Legal Assistant	Karnataka
24.	Smt. Girija Shankar	Legal Assistant	Karnataka

NGOs/CSOs/DOMESTIC WORKERS' UNIONS/ACADEMICIANS/LAYERS

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation	State
25.	Shri Sandeep Chachra	Executive Director, Action Aid India, New Delhi	Delhi
26.	Maj. Gen. Manik Sabharwal	CEO, Domestic Workers' Sector Skill Council (DWSSC), New Delhi	Delhi
27.	Dr. Sister Lissy Joseph	Chairperson, National Domestic Workers' Movement (NDWM)	Hyderabad
28.	Shri Adrian Phillips	Founder-Partner, ASKD-We Resolve, Mumbai	Maharashtra
29.	Smt. Geetha Menon	Secretary, Domestic Workers Rights Woman	Karnataka
30.	Smt. Medha M. Thatte	Secretary, Pune City Domestic Workers' Organisation, Pune	Maharashtra
31.	Smt. Meva Bharti	Mehnatkash Kalyan Evam Sandarbha Kendra, Jaipur	Rajasthan
32.	Brother Varghese Theckanath	Director, Montfort Social Institute, Hyderabad	Hyderabad

33.	Smt. Kiran Moghe	President, Pune Zilla Gharkamgar Sangathana (CITU), Pune	Maharashtra
34.	Dr. Shivani Bhardwaj	General Secretary, NIRMANA	Delhi
35.	Smt. Chitra Gosavi	Legal Coordinator, NDWM	Maharashtra
36.	Shri Rajesh Joseph	Associate Professor, Azim Premji University	Karnataka
37.	Shri Dnyanesh Patil	Rashtriya Ghar Kamgar	Maharashtra
38.	Smt. Shruti Batra	Manager, JAGORI	Delhi
39.	Smt. Smita Khanijow	National Thematic Leader - Informal Work & Women Workers Action Aid India	Delhi
40.	Smt. Divita Shandilya	Programme Manager, Action Aid, India	Delhi
41.	Smt. Pranita Roy	Media	Maharashtra

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S. No.	Name of the Participant	Designation	State
42.	Dr. Sita Bhatia	Ex-Professor	Maharashtra
43.	Dr. Tejaswini Malegaonkar	Professor	Maharashtra
44.	Smt. Bhavna Wanre	Professor	Maharashtra

45-80.	Other Faculty/ Research Scholars/ Students of ILS Law College, Pune	Maharashtra
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