

## Recognition of 1.3m domestic workers in labour law sought

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A network of twenty five social and political organisations Monday demanded recognition of the 1.3 million domestic workers in the country's Labour Law 2006 amendment to which is going to be enacted soon.

They also demanded for prevent all kinds of violence and deprivations against the domestic workers in the country.

The network, formed by Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) jointly with other twenty four social and political organisations, placed the demands at a human chain in front of the National Museum on the eve of 'the World Human Rights Day 2012.'

Assistant executive director of BILS Syed Sultan Ahmed coordinated the programme while social activist Syed Abul Maksud, secretary general of the Jatiyatabadi Sromik Dal (Labour Wing of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party) Md Zafrul Hasan, chairman of BILS Md Habibur Rahman Siraj, Asst Prof at the Department of Sociology in Dhaka University Dr Zia Rahman, politburo Member of the Jatiya Sromik Jote Ms Hena Chowdhury, Jatiya Garhasta Nari Sromik Union (an organisation for domestic workers' welfare) advisor Abul Hossain among others also spoke.

Hundreds of domestic workers across the capital participated at the human chain.

Md Zafrul Hasan, also joint secretary of BILS said, "Many of us speak on the eve of 'Human Rights Day' but we don't even ensure safer environment for the domestic workers in our own houses".

"The middle and higher income groups' behaviour with the domestic workers is still as master and slave," he said in self criticism.

"We need a change in our mind-set over behaviour and interaction with domestic workers," he said.

"As a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO), it is a prestigious issue for Bangladesh to give domestic workers recognition as its existing labour law which only could ensure human rights of thousands of people," he added.

Syed Abul Maksud, also a columnist said, "We can easily realise the condition of domestic workers when we look at the situation of the garment workers, the big contributor to the country's export earning".