

Background Note - Gharelu Kamgar Haq Abhiyan

Rational:

In India estimates say that there are 9 core women domestic workers and 61th round of NSSO 2004-2005 says that the number is 4.47 crores. In total domestic workers, 90% are women and children in the age group of 12 to 75 and also in this 25% are the below the age of 14 years. According to the NSSO 2005 this area is the biggest area of employment in urban India. This is the one area which is growing rapidly, it has increased 222% from 1990-2000. But the sad thing is that 84% of women domestic workers are still not getting the minimum wages (NSSO-2007).

Domestic workers, most of whom are women, work very hard to feed their families. They enter this work due to poverty and want to work themselves out of it. Domestic work is an important avenue of work for semi-literate or illiterate people, especially women in India since 73 percent of the female workforce is illiterate or educated only up to the primary level. This sector is significant to the economic progress of the country since it absorbs low-skilled or undereducated and acts as an enabler for educated women to enter the workforce or the labour market, as they can outsource household chores to hired domestic help. However, the sector is unorganised and domestic workers are unaware and do not understand their rights, unlike their counterparts in other organised sectors. Domestic helps in India do not enjoy protection from labour laws and suffer from lack of dignity, as society usually perceives them as 'servants' doing inferior work instead of recognising them as paid professionals who manage household chores. It's very important to highlights the issues and challenges of women domestic workers at state level so that they get their due recognition. As often women domestic worker could not get the due attention in informal sector.

Now we have a golden opportunity to raise and highlight the issues of women domestic workers as state assembly election are due in Uttar Pradesh in next year.

Objective of Campaign:

- To raise the voice of women domestic workers at state level.
- To demand political parties to include the issues of women domestic workers in their election charter of demands.
- To highlight the importance & urgency to recognize women domestic worker as special & most venerable group in informal sector.
- To highlight the issue of labour and social security laws for women domestic workers.
- To share the experience of various stakeholders working for women domestic workers.
- To build a consensus for collective action for the issues of women domestic workers.

Expected Output:

- Political parties will include the issues of women domestic workers in their election charter of demands.
- Stakeholder's especially political parties will realize that women domestic worker are special & most venerable group in informal sector and their issues should get priority.
- Issues of women domestic worker will be highlighted in state media.
- Government official, NGOs/CBOs, Networks will know the efforts.
- We will have a road map for collective action in the state for the issues of women domestic workers.