



Celebrating International Women's Day- March 8, 2026

“From home to society Strengthening Rights, Make Actionable, and Justice to all Women and Girls.”

“From home to society Strengthening Rights, Make Actionable, and Justice to all Women and Girls.””- focusing on this theme Bangladesh Center for Workers Solidarity - BCWS is celebrating International Women's Day - 2026 on March 8 this year.

The movement to achieve the rights of working women, which began in 1857 in New York City, USA, focusing on reducing working hours in factories, implementing humane codes of conduct, and eliminating wage inequality, later resulted in the international recognition of March 8 by the United Nations in 1975 as the path to women's liberation around the world, regardless of place and time.

Despite the undeniable role of women in the advancement of civilization, women are still neglected, exploited and ignored in the patriarchal society due to social prejudices, religious fanaticism, oppression and discrimination. The context of Bangladesh is even more manifested in this regard. Although Bangladesh is committed to the advancement of gender equality, the practice of violence and torture against women and children has been increasing tremendously, but the establishment of women's development and equal rights has been continuously hindered. Along with this, due to the lack of establishing proper law and law enforcement and equal opportunities for women in all fields, gender discrimination has become a kind of culture by "normalizing" misogyny.

Women are subjected to domestic violence, discrimination in the social and workplace, and mental and physical abuse. Debasement of women, eve-teasing, rape, gang rape, sexual assault is common. According to information obtained from various studies, 36% of women in Bangladesh are victims of regular sexual harassment on the streets, public transport, educational institutions and workplaces. 76% of women are abused by their intimate partners. In 2025, 2,851 women and girls were subjected to violence, of which 786 were victims of gang rape and among of them 543 were under 18. In addition, the increasing misogyny and attacks on women across the country over the past few weeks have questioned women's safety. Online or cyber-attack has also added a new dimension to violence. It is not possible to stop this abuse and violence against women without strict implementation of the law by the state, changes in attitudes towards women, social values, women's empowerment and development, and public awareness.

Bangladesh ranks second position in garment exports worldwide. The role of this industry in the economy of Bangladesh is essential. The majority of GDP is earned from the garment industry. About 57% are women among 4 million workers working in this industry. But despite being the majority, the implementation of their rights and protection is relatively low. According to the writ petition No. 5916/2008 filed by the Honorable High Court, there are some specific guidelines for eliminating sexual harassment of women at work and for the protection of women, which are mandatory for all government and private institutions to follow. But despite the instructions of the Honorable High Court, many institutions are not implementing them, and due to the lack of specific laws and proper supervision, crimes are increasing day by day.

The Bangladesh government has signed in the ILO Convention-190 ratification on 20 November, 2025 to play an effective role in eliminating violence and harassment at the world of workplace.

Gender-based violence is a multidimensional problem. To solve this problem, the coordinated participation of the government, factories, institutions, and private organizations is required.

On this Women's Day this year, we strongly demand from the government to implement the following recommendations by the workers to prevent discrimination and violence against women in order to ensure women's liberation, women's rights, equality and empowerment-

- An effective Anti-Harassment Committee (AHC) must be formed in every factory as per the directives of the High Court and Bangladesh Labor Law.
- A comprehensive law and regulations must be immediately adopted to stop gender-based violence and harassment in all workplaces, educational institutions, streets and public gatherings and adequate investment must be ensured for its implementation;
- Gender equality must be given priority while preparing the national budget and the necessary funds must be allocated to the relevant sectors;
- To prevent discriminatory and aggressive attitudes towards women and the practice of patriarchal unequal power, awareness about women's rights must be created at all levels of society through various social and institutional activities and training;
- Safe working environment, safety of female workers and all women in the workplace and public transport must be ensured;
- Reform of labor laws and strict punishment for failures must be ensured;
- Speedy trial of complaints related to violence against women and harassment must be ensured;
- Propagation of misogynistic activities on digital platforms, personal or group attacks online, cyber bullying must be prohibited and cyber laws must be formulated and implemented;
- Maximize punishment for criminals must be ensured to stop rape and torture;
- Maternity leave must be extended to 6 months by eliminating the discrimination in maternity benefits for garment workers;
- Rights of women and children must be ensured in dealing with the effects of climate change;
- Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights of garment workers must be ensured.
- Increase women's leadership and participation at all levels of decision-making.

Thank You.



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