

## Union focuses on gender bias at workplace in Bahrain

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The workers' union will focus on combating gender discrimination at workplaces, a top union leader says.

Discrimination against female employees at the workplace is continues in Bahrain, according to General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions vice chairman Salman Mahfoodh.

He said the federation was taking steps to eliminate it.

He said the union would make efforts to promote woman workers' rights. "We will ensure that their rights are respected at the workplace. We have taken steps to promote their rights," he said during a session of the International Labour Organisation conference in Geneva. The federation has a women's committee which attends to cases and concerns of women workers. Women membership though remains a problem for the federation as only about 20 per cent of the estimated 40,000 members are are women.

According to a study three years ago, women workers in Bahrain are paid 20-30 per cent less than their male counterparts working in same positions.

An amended labour law addresses the women workers' plight. Mahfoodh said the problems concerning Bahraini workers were mainly related to wages and better environment in the workplace. The federation is lobbying the government for wage hikes for all workers in the government and the private sectors.