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Pakistan

It is over 20 million now

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The flood is still on dangerous levels in several parts of Pakistan. The numbers affected by the flood have gone over 20 million. More torrential rains are forecasted by the weather department. This is been considered one of the most devastating flood in world history. UN has once again appeal for donations for Pakistan. There has been very slow response internationally to help Pakistan in this most devastating period.

After destroying most of Khaiber Pukhtoonkhawa and Southern Punjab, Sindh is now the focus of the worst floods in Pakistan's history. They reached the province after washing down the Indus River Valley, powered by unusually fierce monsoon rains that began in northern areas of the country some three weeks ago.

The deluge has left a trail of devastation, destroying roads, bridges and other infrastructure and overwhelming the government's ability to cope. It's affected some 20 million people, of whom an estimated 1,600 have been killed and about 5 million left homeless.

Labour Relief Campaign (LRC) has put up relief camps in several parts of Pakistan. The Lahore camp at Regal Chouck is raising money every day in thousands.

LRC was launched in October 2005 after the earthquake that killed nearly 100,000 in Pakistan. It has come into action whenever there is an emergency situation.

The member organizations of LRC include Progressive Youth Front, Women Workers Help Line, Labour Education Foundation, National Trade Union Federation, CADTM Pakistan, Labour Party Pakistan, Pakistan For Palestine and Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee.

Here is report of a union council in Khaiber Pukhtoon Khawa province by a team of four LRC members led by Farooq Ahmad, member of the federal executive committee of Labour Party Pakistan.

Pir Sabaq, a Union Council of Nowshehra district populating more than 34,000 is completely destroyed by the recent flood water came on 29th July. A tent city of more than 1,000 tents has been established there but most of the people are still forced to live in their homes partially destroyed by flood water, which can cause major building collapses any time resulting in loss of lives.

Not only almost all houses in this union council are destroyed but also the household items are swept away by flood water. Most of the people have lost their cattle and goats as well. People are left without any thing to eat, drink and wear.

Pir Sabaq is mainly the town of working class people who work in marble factories, stone crushing factories, construction sector and agriculture sector. Local people informed the team of Labour Relief Campaign, when it visited the areas yesterday, that more than 14 feet high waters were flowing over the roof tops in this town. This big flow of water came around 4 a.m. when people were sleeping in the comfort of their homes but speedily flowing high flood water did not give them any chance to save their belongings.

Small boats used for tourists in river Kabul, which are run by local working class people started helping in evacuation

of people as soon as the flood came. These boat owners did their best to help save lives of common people.

While the army helicopters, on arriving at the scene, first started evacuating military men's families and residents of big houses. People of the area realized this clear discrimination in army help. They informed the LRC team that many people stranded on roof tops of their houses waved their hands in air when they saw army helicopters coming for evacuation but of no use.

People have blamed that government did not inform them on time about the danger of flood. Some people have allegedly said that this water was allowed to flow from Warsik dam to save the military camps near dam.

The LRC team saw house of Pervaiz Lala, general secretary of LPP in Pir Sabaq, which was completely destroyed. He and his family are now without house as the majority of population of Pir Sabaq is at the moment. Pervaiz Lala informed the LRC team that they have arranged to set up a tent city of 150 tents in which more than 250 families have taken shelter.

Pervaiz Lala also informed that they did not eat for almost three days after the floods and now since two days an NGO has started providing some food to them. He also informed that not a single government official has visited this area so far. The information minister of KP province, Mian Iftikhar Hussain has said in clear terms that provincial government cannot do anything to help people in this disaster.

There is still water all across Pir Sabaq. Bad smell follows you everywhere. Diseases of stomach and skin have started targeting children. There is no clean drinking water available. Grave danger of spreading diseases is haunting people. Local government dispensary, the only medical facility for people in Pir Sabaq is totally destroyed.

People now are in need of: Food items like cooking oil, Wheat flour, milk, sugar, clean drinking water, vegetables, Clothes, Tents, Crockery and Medicine.

Here is an appeal we launched on 7th August that gives you some more information and the ways to help the campaign.

Appeal issued on August 7, 2010

More than 12 million people suffering from floods in Pakistan

Please donate to Labour Relief Campaign to help people of Pakistan is facing worst ever floods of its history. Torrential rains have unleashed flash floods in different parts of the country since last three weeks. Water levies broke leaving the people exposed to flood water.

More than 12 million people have suffered due to these floods. More than 650,000 houses have collapsed, mainly in villages.

Thousands of acres of crops have been destroyed due to flood water. Houses, live-stock such as cattle's and goats,

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household goods, clothes, shoes and other items have been destroyed. Residents of villages are currently without drinkable water, food, shelter and in need of clothes.

In particular, the situation is dire for children and women and they are in desperate need of food and clothing. Disease is spreading fast in the areas affected due to lack of drinkable water. In particular, flu, fever, diarrhea, cholera have been noted and are spreading.

The government's response has made matters worse. They failed to act immediately, leaving tens of thousands of people unaided. They came after twenty four hours to the make-shift camps with paltry amount of food bags to distribute. The gap between the food being distributed and the large number of people desperate to eat led to fighting breaking out making matters even worse for these desperate people.

Despite the fact that there is very little coverage in the media, the fact remains that the situation in Baluchistan is just as bad as in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa and western and southern Punjab. As usual, also, they are not at the top of the government's priority list.

Situation is turning out to be worse with heavy rains started since last night in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa province.

The Labour Education Foundation, Labour Party of Pakistan, National Trade Union Federation, Women Workers Help Line and Progressive Youth Front have set up Labour Flood Relief Camps in Lahore and so far have collected more than 300,000 rupees. Rs. 110,000 has already been sent to Baluchistan and more than 200,000 are on way to Southern Punjab to help flood victims.

We appeal our friends and organizations in Pakistan and abroad for donations of a monetary kind or in the form of drinking water, clothes (new), shoes, medicine.

If you wish to transfer funds, below are details of the account for sending money to the LRC.

A/C Title: Labour Education Foundation

A/C Number: 01801876

Route:

Please advise and pay to

Citi Bank, New York, USA Swift CITI US 33

for onward transfer to

BANK ALFALAH LTD., KARACHI, PAKISTAN A/C No. 36087144

and for final transfer to

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BANK ALFALAH LTD., LDA PLAZA, KASHMIR ROAD, LAHORE, PAKISTAN

Swift: ALFHPKKALDA

for A/C No. 01801876 OF LABOUR EDUCATION FOUNDATION.