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Pakistan

LPP - New rules to bring more internal democracy

- IV Online magazine - 2008 - IV396 - January 2008 -

Publication date: Monday 7 January 2008

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Nisar Shah elected as new general secretary

More women comrades elected to National Committee

A staggering \$ 9500 pledged by 126 delegates

The two days Labour Party Pakistan conference concluded here last night with a big bang. Despite the imposition of emergency, 126 delegates and 35 observers attended the two days moot at the auditorium of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan in Lahore. The three sessions discussed the international, national and organizational perspectives with dozens of delegates participating in the heated debates.

Delegates from all parts of Pakistan arrived on a short notice of only 8 days. Not all the elected delegates were able to come but all areas were represented in the conference.

The conference started with reading of several solidarity messages received for the occasion. They included messages from Fourth International (France), CPIML (India), Democratic Socialist Perspective DSP (Australia), Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières (ESSF) France, CATDM (Belgium), RevolutionÄr Sozialistischer Bund (Germany), Labour Militant Voice (USA), Toni Usman (Norway), Afghan Labour Revolutionary Organisation (Afghanisatan), Olof Palme International Center (Sweden), Cuban Communist Party (Cuba), Revolutionary Communist League LCR (France) Japan Revolutionary Communist League(JRCL), Freedom Socialist Party (USA), International Socialist Organization (USA), VAK (India), NSSP (Sri Lanka), GFont (Nepal) and several other individual messages.

The international sessions was mainly focused on Venezuela, the war on terror and its effect on Muslim countries, the imperialist globalization offences and fight back and climate change. Comrade Nasir Mansoor introduced the wide ranging discussion.

While several comrades making criticism of some of the constitutional changes in Venezuela, but stressed the international impact of the revolution and the need to defend it. Comrades of the view that it was heavy dozier in one go and the time was not sufficient to explain the essence of the reforms needed for the Socialist transformation of the society. Comrade hailed Hugo Chavez for standing up to all the challenges and accepting the outcome in democratic manner.

The discussion on national perspectives was mainly focused on the recent movement of advocates, students, social activists and media. It was agreed that Musharaf regime is a weak dictatorship and has not been able to win support among the masses by his so-called growth in the economy.

The emergency was imposed mainly to get rid of independent judiciary before calling the general elections. The delegates unanimously approved the leadership of LPP decision to boycott the fraudulent elections. It vowed to bring the working class in the main of the movement by mobilizing the trade union movement. Comrade Nisar Shah introduced the discussion on Pakistan and stressed the need to do all for an end of the dictatorship. He has recently been released after 18 days in prison.

The organizational session saw a very lively discussion on different tactics of the party building. It was agreed to help

form a new student organization. The constitutional amendment to abolish the entire office bearer to a system of secretaries was approved unanimously. From now on, there will be five secretaries including Educational and cultural secretary, Labour secretary, Women secretary, Peasant secretary and youth secretary at national, provincial and district levels. A general secretary will coordinate the work and spokesperson of LPP at national level will be elected.

The constitutional amendment that no office bearer at national level be elected more than two terms (four years) was narrowly accepted with a margin of 7 votes. After a heated debate, the amendment was put to vote and was accepted.

The LPP new flag was unanimously accepted by the delegates. 12 designs for the new flags were presented to the delegates and a flag with a single white star in a red flag with Labour Party Pakistan written was unanimously accepted by the delegates.

A finance appeal was launched at the conference raising over 500,000 Rupees (US\$ 9500) in pledges. A women comrade who is leading a shanty town struggle for land rights announced Rupees 30,000 (\$500) surprised every one to their pleasure. This raised the moral of the delegates to pledge a record amount. Never ever, such an amount was raised from one single event with only 126 delegates.

The conference elected a 21 National committee in secret ballot. 28 comrades contested. Out of seven contesting women comrades, six were elected. There were only two women comrades in the previous 21 National Committee. Comrade Farooq Tariq topped the list by receiving 98 percent of the votes followed by a women comrade Nazli Javed. The 21 member National committee represents all parts of Pakistan.

In a brief meeting of National Committee, Nisar Shah was elected as new general secretary, Farooq Tariq as national spokesperson, Nazli Javed as women secretary, Nasir Mansoor Labour secretary, Hakim Khan Bahadur as Peasant secretary, Amir Hussani as Education and cultural secretary and Asim Akhud as youth and student affairs secretary. A seven member's National Executive Committee was also elected by NC. Talat Rubab who was elected to national committee was confirmed as editor of *Weekly Mazdoor jeditojhd*. It was unanimous decisions to elect representatives for all these different posts.

The public seminar organized by the Awami Jamhoori Tehreek at the same place in the afternoon on 9th December was attended by over 450 with many youth from different organizations. The speakers included the leaders of advocate and student movement. Sarfraz Cheema secretary Lahore High Court Bar Association, Mohammed Shah president Lahore district Bar Association, Nisar Shah advocate, all three spending at least 18 days in jails addressed the jam packed auditorium of HRCP.

Sundes Hurrain of Student Action Committee told the audience that about the arrest of 15 students and advocates defending the home of Lahore High Court Judge who had refused to take oath under new PCO. "We have started a hunger strike camp and will continue till the release of the 15.

Comrade Farooq Tariq stressed the need for a mass movement of advocates, students, trade unions, peasants, women organizations and civil society as whole to build an alternative to the big parties who are taking part in the elections. This election is farce and we must not take part in it and convince masses to boycott the poll.

There was a lot of enthusiasm in the seminar, making it more like a public protest meeting. A lot of slogans were raised against the military dictatorship.

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