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Pakistan

# The Left Stands United Against Religious Fascism and State-Sponsored Terrorism

- News from around the world -

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**Hundreds of Left activists demonstrated in Lahore against Peshawar school massacre, and talibatisation of the state and society. The protest was jointly organized by Awami Workers Party (AWP) and Communist Mazdoor Kissan Party (CMKP) this afternoon at Charing Cross, Lahore. The rally chanted slogans against the rise of religious fundamentalism, Taliban and terrorism, demanded separation of state from religion.**

Farooq Tariq, General Secretary, AWP said that religious fundamentalism has emerged as the biggest challenge and an obstacle to development of our society. It has not only engulfed large section of the middle class but also a significant section of working class. However the Peshawar attack has shaken the consciousness in a very dramatic manner. Today all those who were supporters of Taliban are forced to speak against them, including right-wing political parties who have been actively supporting them including PTI and JI. He demanded arrest of Mullah Aziz and all those defenders of terrorism in Pakistan. He said that most madrasas have become breeding-homes of fanatic ideas and demanded that all the madrasas should be nationalised. He also demanded separation of state from religion.

Timur Rehman, General Secretary, CMKP presented a charter of demand/communique of the left that included demands: no dialogue with the taliban, nationalization of the all madrasas and converting into regular schools, delinking of links between the state and religious fascists, separation of the state and religion, and continued measures by the state to root out religious fascism.

Zahid Parvez, President Lahore- AWP and Comrade Arfan Ali from CMKP also addressed the rally. They said that hanging won't absolve the state and the government from many hard decisions. The continued islamization and militarization of the state, which was started by General Zia-ul-Haq, must be stopped. Baba Najmi also attended the rally.

The rally raised slogans against taliban, terrorism and expressed solidarity with the families of those who were martyred or injured in Peshawar school massacre.

*Press release issued 20 December 2014.*