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Pakistan

Thousands demonstrate against neoliberalism and price hikes

- News from around the world -

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Over 3000 activists and supporters of Labour Party Pakistan took part in rally in Lahore 7 June against the ongoing neoliberal policies of the present Pakistan People's Party government. They were chanting slogans against the price hike, American imperialism and demanded an immediate end of policies dictated by imperialist companies and financial institutions.

[<http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/local/cache-vignettes/L250xH187/2-3a-156ae.jpg>]

There were similar demonstration in 30 other cities of Pakistan including Islamabad, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Hyderabad, Multan, Moro, Dault Pur and Layya. Labour Party Pakistan organized the demonstration and rallies with support of trade unions, social movements and peasant organizations as a day of national action against price hike. They also demanded an immediate restoration of the top judges and resignation of general Musharaf.

The Peshawar demonstration by LPP was broadcast live by the private television channel ARY World. Over 400 participated in the demonstration including over 100 women.

In Karachi, over 250 activists demonstrated at Regal Chouck. They were raising slogans against American imperialism and its policies towards the colonial countries.

At Islamabad, over 150 demonstrated at Aab Para Chouck against the price hikes and demanded a living wage of at least 12,000 Rupees for all the workers. They demanded action against those bosses who are attacking the workers forming the trade unions in different parts of the country.

In Lahore, there were over 1000 women participants who led the demonstration including the main leadership of Women Workers Help Line (WWHL), a working class women's organization. The main Mall Road was blocked for over two hours as the rally passed through his most busy and prestigious road of Lahore. Thousands on both sides of the road cheered the demonstrators. This was the largest demonstration against price hike so far in Pakistan by any political party.

The Mall Road was red with all the waving red flags for a long, long time. The demonstrators raised slogans in favour of Socialism and said the Socialism is the only answer to the problems facing the working class.

"Capitalism has failed in solving the basic problems of the masses; it is a message of consistent price hike and unemployment. We have to change the system and develop a party that could prepare a Socialist revolution," declared Farooq Tariq while addressing the public rally at Lahore. "We demand a minimum wage of 12,000 Rupees with an introduction of unemployment benefit for all adult unemployed; we want an end of privatization and cancellation of foreign debts. Reduce the military expenditure and spent it on the people," Farooq Tariq said. He demanded action against the owner of New Khan private bus company who have sacked 80 workers for forming the first trade union in the company.

Several trade union leaders including Moeen Nawaz Punno, Muhammed Yousaf Baluch, Bushra Khaliq, Azra Shad, Mehmood Butt also spoke at the occasion.

The leaders of the lawyer's movement also addressed the rally. The activists of Communist Mazdoor Kissan Party (CMKP) also participated in the demonstration. There were many slogans against General Musharaf. It was live demonstration with all the main print and electronic media present.

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Labour Party Pakistan has announced further demonstration in this regard during the month and taking active part in the long march planned by the lawyers movement starting from 10 June from Sukhar in Sind.