



One Voice of Workers

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International Women's Day Observed In Country With Enthusiasm

Lahore Mar 09: The Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF) organized a conference on the eve of the International Women's Day. While addressing the conference, the speakers declared that the PWF would continue to strive hard for the elimination of discrimination against women in employment and other fields.

The president of PWF Mr. Muhammad Talib Nawaz and general secretary Mr. Khurshid Ahmad address the workers on this occasion they said they would work against sexual harassment at work and for the grant of equal pay for women workers. They said PWF would continue their efforts for the alleviation of poverty and ignorance in the country, adding that the PWF would raise women's income generation capabilities by providing them meaningful vocational training and edu-

cation. The speakers said the victimization of women for the practices of dowry, vanni and the killing of innocent women still existed, adding that in these circumstances, it was the state's duty to take measures for women's welfare. They said for a prosperous nation it was necessary for women to be given equal opportunities to be part of decision-making bodies at all levels.

They demanded the expansion of women schools, colleges and universities. They said the private sector should not be allowed to make a business out of education, adding that measures should be taken to abolish the double standard education system currently prevalent in the country. Women workers staged a protest to address their demands from the Mehfil

Auditorium to the Press Club. They were protesting for the end of violence, discriminatory customs and laws against women. They chanted slogans: "Meri mehnat, mera sarmaya, thekedar kahan se aya", "Kamtar ho na havi ho, aurat ka haq masawi ho". Before the rally.



Women workers participating in the rally

PWF - National Women Conference

Lahore Mar 30: National Women Conference was held under the aegis of Pakistan Workers Federation Women Committee. The Conference was presided over by Mrs. Huma Aziz, Chairperson, Women Wing of the Federation and attended by a large number of elected women trade union representatives from all parts of the country i.e. eight Regional Offices of the Federation along with women trade union activities.

The inaugural session of the Conference was addressed by Mr. Donglin Li, Director, ILO Office for Pakistan, Islambaad, Justice (Retired) Nasira Iqbal, Miss Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rehman, former Provincial Minister, Mr. Altaf Ezad Khan, Director, Labour Welfare, Punjab as Esteemed Guests along with Mr. Muhammad Talib Nawaz, President and Mr. Khurshid Ahmad, General Secretary of the Federation and Mrs. Tasneem Anwar, Secretary, Women Wing Committee of the Federation, Mrs. Saima Kazmi and Mrs. Dr. Fozia, Expert on Gender Issues. The

national press and electronic media gave wide coverage to this event.

The second session of the Conference was addressed by elected representatives of the Women Wing of the Federation from eight Regional Offices along with Mrs. Saima Kazmi. The Conference also reviewed the activities of the Women Wing of the Federation pertaining to organization of the women workers into trade union movement, defending and promoting gender issues as well as education and training activities being carried out by the Federation under the ILO Programme with the cooperation of CIDAW.

The participants appreciated the efforts of ILO for promoting the gender issues as well as urging the Government to accord better representation to the women at all levels in order to defend and promote their economic and social rights and enforcement of labour laws through Independent Labour Inspection

Machinery, creating awareness for equal pay for equal work in conformity with ILO Convention No.100, elimination of discrimination against women on the basis of sex in employment in accordance with ILO Convention No.111 ratified by the Government of Pakistan and allocate more resources for their vocational education and training and raising their employability which is lower than other South Asian countries and provide

- Continued to Page 2 -

Inside this issue:

Workers Renew Pledge To Continue Struggle For Progress	2
PWF National Youth Conference And Regional Youth Seminar	3

equal opportunities for their career development both in private and public sectors.

It also demanded to the Federal as well as Provincial Governments that they should ensure not only implementation of the existing labour laws but also provide basic facilities to the female workers such as fair wages, provision of safety and health at work place, Day Care Centers for their children, grant of maternity leave, payment of overtime in case they are required to work beyond normal working hours in accordance with the provisions of ILO Conventions and Payment of Wages Act, ensure implementation of other labour laws including Social Security, Old Age Benefits, Factories Act, abolishing abuse of Contract Labour, Temporary and Child Labour and provision of pick and drop transport facilities.

It also demanded that the Government should appoint Lady Labour Inspectors for enforcement of labour laws at work place and accord more representation to the women in the judiciary for disposal of the issues concerning the female work force expeditiously.

It also called upon the Government to amend the outdated labour laws as well as Industrial Relations Act, 2008 and bring them in conformity with ILO Conventions Nos.87 and 98 ratified by the Government of Pakistan and provide medical treatment to the secured workers and their families on the eve of their retirement under Social Security Ordinance as promised by the Prime Minister of Pakistan in the National Tripartite Conference.

It also demanded that the Government should abolish the abuse of dowry and other anti-social customs on the eve of marriages and impose ban on lavish parties on the eve of marriages in order to enable the poor families to arrange marriages of their daughters and ease their economic and social hardships.

It also called upon the Government to take special measures for welfare of the female workers including working in hazardous nature of jobs such as brick kiln, and abolishing the abuse of child and bonded labour, particularly, female workers and take measures for their rehabilitation through their meaningful education and training and provision of gainful employment to them.

The participants fully support the Decent Work Country Programme of ILO both for male and female workers in Pakistan.

It also called upon the Government to check price hike of essential commodities and raise wages of the workers commensurate with price hike and take measures to get opened the closed mills which has resulted million of workers including female workers jobless due to financial crisis, load shedding and suicide bombing in various parts of the country.

The House also condemned the killing of innocent workers and people through suicide bombing and drone attacks at the cost of humanity.

It also decided to organize the women workers into the fold of trade union movement in order to defend and promote their rights and urged the Government to accord more representation to the women in the decision making bodies as well as take strict action against those who commit crime against women.

The participants also decided that the major industrial trade unions would give more representation to the women in their executive Committees as well as in the national trade union centers in order to strengthen the collective voice of the women workers.

The Director, Labour Welfare, Punjab promised that the Government of Punjab would take special measures to enforce labour laws for welfare of the women workers including equal pay for equal work, provision of transport, payment of overtime, Old Age Benefits, Minimum Wages and ensure safety and health of the women workers at work place.



Workers Renew Pledge To Continue Struggle For Progress of Pakistan

Lahore Mar 23: Working class of Pakistan on Monday observed the Pakistan Day with great enthusiasm and vigour. They also vowed to continue work hard for the social and economic development of the country. Ceremony of hosting national flag and a meeting of the workers were held at Bakhtiar Hall under the aegis of Pakistan Workers Federation (PWF). A large number of workers attended the event.

The workers also prayed for prosperity of the nation and declared that they would continue work hard to achieve the

objectives of establishment of Pakistan in accordance with the determinations of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

They said they would also continue work to end poverty, ignorance, unemployment and price hike. They also pledged to work for independence of judiciary and freedom of press and bringing the labour laws of the country in conformity with constitutional provisions and ILO Conventions ratified by the government of Pakistan.

They appreciated the decision of restoration of the deposed judges. They demanded that all political parties should continue to work for economic and social development of the country and welfare of the workers. PWF President Ch Talib Nawaz, Deputy Secretary General Osama Tariq and others addressed.



National Youth Conference and Regional Youth Seminar were held at Lahore on 24 and 25 February, 2009 under the aegis of Pakistan Workers Federation. The inaugural session was held in the form of National Youth Conference which was participated by many hundred trade union representatives of the Youth Wings of the affiliated trade unions as well as representatives of the Youth Committee of the Federation from all over the country.

The inaugural session was addressed by Justice (Retd.) Supreme Court of Pakistan and renowned national intellectual and jurist Dr. Javaid Iqbal as Chief Guest along with Raja Jalil Ahmad, veteran journalists and ex-President of Punjab Union of Journalists and Mr. Javaid Haider, Chairman and Mr. Tariq Khan, Secretary of the Youth Committee along with Mr. Khurshid Ahmad, General Secretary of the Federation and other representative of the Youth Wing from the various Provinces.

Addressing this occasion Justice (Retd.) Supreme Court of Pakistan renowned national intellectual and jurist Dr. Javaid Iqbal and Mr. Khurshid Ahmad, General Secretary of the Federation declared that Youth are future of our prosperity and they are to play an important role for economic and social well being of the nation. Therefore, equipping them with modern knowledge and technology and organizing them into the fold of representative trade unions is very important to make concerted struggle for achieving the economic, social and political rights of the down trodden and dismantling the irrigational gap between the rich and poor in the society and, thereby, strengthening democracy and abolishing feudalism which is a legacy of the colonial era and monopolistic capitalism. They urged to the representatives of the Youth to galvanize their struggle with their young energy to tackle the problems facing the nation particularly the World of Work and for

raising employment opportunities and promoting Decent Work and establishing an egalitarian society through respect of fundamental rights of the workers and independence of judiciary and freedom of press and supremacy of Parliament and Equality before Law and abolishing of child and bonded labour in the society and promote welfare of the women which constitute half of the population of the country.

The national press gave wide coverage to this event. The participants of the seminar after detailed deliberations made following recommendations in the concluding session:

Recommendations: The participants appreciated the initiative of the Federation for holding this National Youth Conference followed by Regional Youth Seminar for the Young Trade Unionist and affirmed the belief that the Young Work Force has to integrate into labour movement to defend and promote their rights and attain goals of Decent Work. They also expressed concern that Pakistan despite having the largest youth labour force has not been availing benefit of their young energy due to lack of access to meaningful education and training facilities for the children on account of poverty of their parents and prevailing double education system in the country one for the rich and other for the poor. The consecutive Governments have been allocating almost 2 to 3 per cent of GNP for education which is so meager to tackle the issue as 89 per cent children are dropped in education at primary level on account of poverty of their parents. They called the Government to raise budget allocation at least 10% GNP for providing meaningful free education to each male and female child to raise their mental, physical and spiritual development with equal opportunity and providing meaningful skill and knowledge for raising employability and to meet the labour market requirements.

It also called that the Young Labour Force in the country has been facing precarious jobs in the form of temporary and

contract etc. in the various industrial and commercial enterprises due to non-organized work force into the fold of labour movement and exploitations of the employers and, therefore, they urged the need that national organization like Pakistan Workers Federation should allocate more resources to bring the young workers into the fold of trade union movement, particularly, in informal and rural sectors to defend and promote their rights.

They also called upon the Government that the abuse of contract and temporary employment may kindly be checked and the young workers both male and females should be brought on regular and permanent and labour laws of the country should be fully and strictly enforced to promote and defend the rights of the workers.

They also affirmed the belief that there is lack of recreation and sports facilities for the young labour force in urban and rural areas and it is obligation of the local and Provincial Governments to allocate more resources for recreation and sports facilities for the young labour force so that they may not become victim of narcotics and other evils.

They also called upon the Government that female labour force should be fully protected against sexual harassment at work place and protect their dignity of person.

They were also of the view that youth labour force should be provided Equal Pay for Equal Work particularly during apprenticeship in the factories.

They also stressed the need that all trade unions should have Youth Wing to promote organization of the Young Labour Force into the fold of trade union movement and national and regional Federations should publish special literature for promoting information and know-how about trade union movement to galvanize their struggle for defending and promoting the economic and social rights of the workers.

The participants decided to hold Regional Youth Conferences in order to mobilize youth at Regional level and bring them into the fold of Trade Union mold affectively. -Continued to Page 4 -



Pakistan Workers' Federation (PWF) - Newsletter

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PWF National Youth Conference And Regional Youth Seminar

- Continued from Page 3 -

They participants were also of the view that the Young Labour Force in the rural areas has very meager employment opportunities they are compelled to migrate to the urban areas causing a lot of social and economic hardships to them and their families. Therefore, the Government should give priority to provide them access to meaningful employment without sufferings of migration to the far flung areas for seeking jobs.

The participants also expressed serious concern over the prevailing law and order situation being faced due to backlash of Afghan War and impact of international financial crisis on the economy of the country as well as serious load shedding of Gas and Electricity resulting closure of industries and loss of jobs and young labour force has become first victim of these crisis and therefore called upon the Government to take special measures to develop national industries and agriculture in order to raise employment opportunities for the young labour force.

They also called for reinstatement of the sacked judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the interest of respect of principle of Independence of Judiciary.

They participants also expressed the need that the Government should enforce Employment of Children Act, 1991 and Abolishing of Bonded Labour Act, 1992 in order to eliminate the abuse of child and bonded labour in the society and to allocate adequate resources for

their meaningful education and training and to reduce their financial hardships and eliminate their exploitation in the society through social and economic inputs.

The participants also declared that there is need that Government should amend Industrial Relations Act, 2008 to make it in conformity with ILO Conventions Nos.87 and 98 ratified by the Government of Pakistan in order to get respected the fundamental rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining of the workers.

They also asked the Government to get enforced the labour laws in conformity with ILO Conventions No.81 ratified by the Government of Pakistan pertaining to establishing Independent Labour Inspection Machinery and compliance of international social standards in export oriented industries.

The participants also stressed the need that there should be more education and training facilities provided for the young labour force and equip them with the history of labor movement for its common objective in order to mobilize the spirit of strengthening the independent trade union movement as well as launch awareness movement among the young labour force and positive role of the labour movement for defending the promoting their rights.

They also called upon all political parties to include in their election manifes-

tos their commitment for economic and social well being of the young and raising their employment opportunities and Decent Work and urged the Government to adopt policies for the Young Labour Force in consultation with the trade union movement for providing them Decent Work.

The participants pledged to work more vigorously to organize Young Labour Force into the fold of Trade Union Movement through launching special campaign and use modern effective communications methods.

The participants appreciated the role of defending and promoting the Fundamental rights of the Young Workers and promoting Decent Work Agenda and adoption of Declaration on the subject of Social Justice for Fair Globalization, 2008 which also tackle the issues concerning Young Workers and assured full support to carry out its objective and appreciated the Technical Assistance for Capacity Building of Trade Unions to meet these challenges.

The participants decided to get more material published in their respective trade unions on the role of Young Workers Labour Movement and develop Workers Education and Training Programme and also hoped that Pakistan Workers Federation along with cooperation of ILO would continue to strengthen the role of young workers into the fold of trade union movement for defending and promoting their rights.