

Bhatta Workers in revolt

Sunday 19 March 2006, by [TARIQ Farooq](#) (Date first published: 18 March 2006).

Bhatta Workers (Brick kiln) are in revolt. Thousands have protested today in three different cities of Pakistan. The largest demonstration was at Lahore where over 5000 workers protested against the Peshgi (advance) system and demanded that government should implement the Supreme Court decision in this regard. The demonstrations were organized by Pakistan Bhatta Workers Union, a union set up by supporters of Labour Party Pakistan in year 2004.

There demonstration today at Toba Tek Singh and NoshoroFeroz in Sind. At Toba Tek Singh police banned the rally and over 700 Bhatta workers were forced to have a public meeting inside the premises of Toba Press Club.

At Lahore, The district administration informed the Bhatta Workers Union in writing that the rally is banned and they will not be allowed to bring out the rally. The rally went a head after successful discussion with the Police. It was made clear to the police that rally will come out of Shimla Pehari at one pm in any case. Police gave in after they saw the numbers of the participants.

The rally participants were carrying the placards "No to bonded labour, No to peshgi system, Register the Bhatta, 500 rupees for 1000 bricks, We condemn the bosses strike, Pain of one is pain for all, Workers united will never be defeated, Workers of the World Unite, Long Live workers unity and solidarity, Long Live Workers Peasants alliance,

Mehmood But, general secretary Pakistan Bhatta Mazdoor Union warned the bosses that they better stop taking the peshgies and it has been declared illegal by the courts. He said the bosses strike is just to blackmail the government that it should side with the bosses. Bosses of the Bhatta factories are on strike for a month asking government to intervene against the outsiders within the union who are doing provocations and making the peace of the Bhattas disturbed.

I spoke of the historic achievement of the workers in abolishing the bonded labour system. The Peshgies are gone for ever, I declared, it can never return and bosses are doing their last dying efforts to vrevive the peshgie system by going on strike.

I also declared another day of action across Pakistan at district level on 7th April. It was storm of slogans by the workers. They came from all over Punjab, from 23 different districts. The workers movement made it possible that Lahore streets were once again full of red flags. The workers are in revolt and they are not going to go back. They are determined to fight back and are coming in thousands to Lahore to make the point hat they are here to stay. The Union is in full action and making another history that trade unions can become mass force if leadership is ready to fight back and take actions in time of need.

Please see some photos attached with the mail [Not reproduced here].

Farooq Tariq
general secretary
Labour Party Pakistan
40-Abbot Road Lahore, Pakistan

Tel: 92 42 6315162 Fax: 92 42 6271149

Mobile: 92 300 8411945