

Please send protest letters

Stop repression against struggling power loom workers in Punjab, Pakistan

Tuesday 20 July 2010, by [Labour Education Foundation \(Pakistan\)](#), [MAHMOOD Khalid](#) (Date first published: 20 July 2010).

More than 100,000 workers of power loom in Faisalabad district of Punjab province are on strike from today, July 20, 2010 for their demand of wage increase according to the announcement by Government in the budget 2010-11. Government announced 17 % rise in the minimum wage for the private sector workers. Labour Qaumi Movement (LQM), an organization of power loom workers in Faisalabad, Jhang and other districts, had been in negotiation with power loom owners since the last three weeks for wage increase. These negotiations were facilitated by the district administrations in both the districts. The power loom bosses are not accepting these just demands and are busy in poisonous propaganda against workers by labeling them as terrorists.

Thousands of workers from different areas of Faisalabad have marched despite a police ban on public gatherings. As the workers began their march, gangsters of power loom owners started straight firing in Sudhar area of Faisalabad. Sudhar is the suburb of Faisalabad where big number of power loom factories is located. This area has been a scuffle ground between workers and owners since last three years as the workers organized themselves effectively in huge number there.

Police have used tear gas and lathi charge in Faizabad and Ghulam Muhammadabad areas of Faisalabad without any provocation. In one such attack on workers in Faizabad area, Rana Tahir, the district president of LQM in Faisalabad, was injured along with score of others. 25 workers have been injured up till now by police tear gas and lathi charge.

In Jhang district, thousands of workers along with their families including women and children have picketed outside the District Administration Officer's office and are sitting there until the demands of workers are accepted.

Today, the power looms bosses in Jhang district have paid a half page advertisement in Daily Express Faisalabad asking government to suppress the workers' movement. The bosses alleged that Labour Qaumi Movement (LQM) is linked to Mutihida Qaumi Movement (MQM), a sectarian mass organization in Karachi and is part of the coalition government of Pakistan Peoples Party at Center and in Sindh. The bosses claimed that 15 days strike has cost them over 9 billion Rupees and 15,000 power looms factories are closed. They appealed the government to save Jhang becoming another Karachi. This notorious alliance between bosses and Punjab government is all out to suppress workers movements in Punjab.

We appeal you to send protest letters to the following addresses to demand:

- 1: Stop workers repression and respect workers right to assemble and strike
- 2: Increase the wages as notified by the Government of Punjab
- 3: issue social security card to every industrial worker

4: Lift ban on factory inspection in Punjab

5: Arrest the murderers of two labour leaders of LQM

PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

1. Mr. Asif Ali Zardari
President of Pakistan
President's Secretariat
Islamabad, PAKISTAN,
Email: publicmail president.gov.pk Phone 92-51-9204801-9214171 Fax 92-51-9207458

2. Mr. Syed Mumtaz Alam Gillani
Federal Minister for Human Rights
Ministry of Human Rights
Old US Aid building, Ata Turk Avenue , G-5, Islamabad PAKISTAN
Fax: +9251-9204108 Email: sarfraz_yousuf yahoo.com

3. Mr. Salman Taseer
Governor of Punjab
Governor House , Mall Road, Lahore, PAKISTAN
Fax: +92 42 99203044 Email: governor.sectt punjab.gov.pk

4. Chief Secretary of Government of Punjab
Punjab Secretariat Lahore, PAKISTAN
Fax: +92 42 7324489 E-mail: chiefsecy punjab.gov.pk

5. Minister of Law
Government of Punjab
Punjab Secretariat, Ravi Road , Lahore PAKISTAN
Fax: +92-42-99212004 E-mail: law punjab.gov.pk

6. Dr. Faqir Hussain
Registrar Supreme Court of Pakistan
Constitution Avenue, Islamabad, PAKISTAN
Fax: + 92 51 9213452 E-mail: mail supremecourt.gov.pk

7. Mr. Tariq Saleem
Inspector-General of Police, Punjab
Police Head Office, Lahore, and Punjab province, PAKISTAN
Fax: +92-42-99210064

8. Mr. Ashraf Khan Sohna,
Provincial Minister,
Labour & Human Resource Department,
Government of the Punjab, Civil Secretariat, Lahore.
Ph. 042-9210493, Fax: 042-9210496

9. DCO. Faisalabad
Tel: 0092 41 9200205, 0092 41 9200206, Fax: 0092 41 9200206
Email: dcofaisalabad punjab.gov.pk

Thank you,

Khalid Mahmood

P.S.

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