

Bangladesh: Protest demonstration against global income inequality

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As part of the week against global income inequality, a rally was organized by the peasants-workers-landless-indigenous peoples' organizations in the streets of Dhaka.

Today, on January 20, 2019, at 11 pm, a protest meeting was organized in front of the Dhaka National Press Club, against the global income inequality called by Bangladesh Krishak Federation, Bangladesh Kishani Sabha, Bangladesh Adivasi Samiti, Bangladesh Shramik Federation, Bangladesh Landless Peasant Association and Bangladesh Labor Rights Forum. Badrul Alam, President, Bangladesh Krishak Federation chaired the meeting. Labour leader Abul Hossain, AAM Fayeze Hossain, Comrade Mukhlech Uddin Shaheen, Zayed Iqbal Khan, Subal Sarkar, Abdus Sattar Haolar, Jahanara Begum, Firoza Begum, Kamrun Nahar, Arzuman Ara Begum, Kader Hazari, Shah Alam Melkar, Swapan Ekka, Shamim Ara, Mohammad Rafiq and others spoke on this occasion.



Bangladesh Krishok Federation General Secretary Zayed Iqbal Khan speaking in the demonstratio.

As part of the week against global income inequality, a rally was organized by the peasants-workers-landless-indigenous peoples' organizations in the streets of Dhaka. Prior to the meeting a protest rally moved along various streets of Dhaka.

The World Economic Forum will assemble the world's wealthiest and powerful heads of states at the Swiss ski resort of Davos from 22-25 January 2015. This economic forum usually sets the agenda for their own interests under the pretext of poor countries' development but they do not care about the latter's opinion. As a result, hunger, starvation and poverty are increasing in evercountry after country.

Protests and demonstrations are being organized in 30 countries around the world for a week to highlight hunger, poverty and widespread income inequality to the public.

In today's rally held in Bangladesh, leaders emphasized the need for food and livelihood sovereignty and the right to food to end hunger & poverty. They said hunger & poverty is anthropogenic and the rich countries are mainly responsible for this. These rich and powerful countries are known as so-called donors. Their policy prescriptions are continuously creating inequalities in poor countries. The donor conditions are destroying the people of the poorer countries as the countries are forced to comply with them.

Speakers said climate change caused by them is endangering the whole planet. Bangladesh has to heavily pay for it even if it is not responsible for the causes. Extremely hostile weather, cyclones, floods, changes in weather patterns, elevation of sea level, acute salinity in the coastal areas, desertification process - all of these are negative impacts of global warming and climate change. They said that the state has to assume special responsibilities to eliminate hunger & poverty. The traditional eco-friendly agriculture must be reinstated instead of chemical-dependent agricultural processes.

The speakers also said that a just and democratic system is also inevitable to eliminate hunger and poverty forever.

They also said that illegal money-laundering, black money and extreme wealth in the hands of few are increasing income inequality in the country. Apart from this, the wholesale implementation of World Bank / IMF prescriptions is responsible for this. The multinational companies are adept at grabbing natural resources, globally.



Militant procession in the street.

They are pushing the world and nature to risk. Fossil fuels are assaulting the earth. Their actions are required to be brought under legal judgment. To protect this world and human civilization the use of renewable energy must be increased.

Finally, the speakers said that the number of rich is alarmingly increasing in this country. These rich people have amassed wealth illegally. The plundering economy is making the lives of ordinary people extremely difficult. They are involved in tax evasion and are beneficiaries of massive tax holidays and, are defrauding banks. Taking advantage of tax havens they are successfully able to deposit money into overseas accounts. They are building huge properties and assets in Malaysia and Canada to attain citizenship of these countries. The speakers urged the government to bring all these money back to the country and use it for poverty alleviation.

It is to be noted that the police hindered the rally as the Prime Minister was supposed to arrive at the at the administrative secretariat. The protesters crossed all the obstacles and gathered at the press club. The police created obstructions there as well and demanded that we end the programme with the president's speech. But it could not do so in the face of agitation by people. Almost every leader spoke however, no microphones were allowed to be used. Initially, the police tried to disrupt the rally, however, after being aware of the issues raised they desisted from doing so. Such conduct by the police is not acceptable in a democratic country. Intelligence agencies were also active on the scene. This kind of behaviour by the police administration under the pretext of the prime minister's security is unacceptable.

The leaders condemned the incident and said that it manifested the government's authoritarianism to curb freedom of public expression through rally, meetings and demonstration. Leaders urged the government to abstain from such behaviour and to respect the creative intellectual political activities of the people.

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