

A Labour Party Pakistan statement

Lifting Emergency is a farce — Struggle to continue till the end of Musharaf dictatorship

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Labour Party Pakistan rejects the claim of general Musharaf that emergency is been lifted on 15th December. It is lifted with constitution amended with all the repressive measures protected by a decree. General Musharaf actions within 42 days of “emergency” can not be challenged by any court and it does have to be ratified by two third majorities by the future parliament.

This is just a farce. We condemn this dictatorial maneuvering and ask working class of Pakistan and internationally to continue its struggle till the overthrow of General Musharaf.

The lifting of emergency is littered with over 10,000 arrests of lawyers, political activists and students. Many thousands were forced to stay away from their houses under the threat of being arrested. Many hundreds were brutally beaten up and hundreds were injured. Top judges and advocate leaders are still in detentions.

The main aim of the emergency was to get rid of independent judiciary. That mission is accomplished with new hand picked judges installed at the Supreme Court and High Courts. All these repressive, dictatorial, undemocratic, brutal and unjustified action of general Musharaf from 3rd November is been “legalized”.

The real name of emergency was martial law; a rule imposed by the military commander in chief can only be described as martial law. No demonstrations were allowed. All the electronic and print media was put under watch and several were closed down completely. The private televisions channels were off the air for a mont h and GEO, the most popular private television channel, is still off the air till today.

The emergency was not a bumper on the road to democracy but a wall erected to stop the path to democracy. The wall is still is there.

The calling of elections under the emergency rule was another political maneuver to dodge the international growing opposition to military rule. The general elections on 8th January with all the repressive measure protected by amended constitution does not give an equal opportunity to all those interested in elections. The elections under the new care takers government from the same Musharaf supporters and hand picked judiciary and Election Commission will not be fair and free.

The boycott of these elections is the only option left for genuine opposition to General Musharaf. The boycott response of 25 political parties to the call of Pakistan Bar Council is the right strategy to further the struggle for restoration of democracy and independence of judiciary. Without the restoration of the judges who refused to take oath under PCO, there could be no guarantee for free and fair general elections.

Labour Party Pakistan will fight along other political parties and civil society organization for an immediate end of general Musharaf rule. Its candidates for national and provincial assemblies have taken back the nomination papers.