

Pakistan - An AWP/NSF gathering: Moot held to discuss ways to fight religious fundamentalists

Saturday 20 July 2013, by [HUSSAIN Saima Shakil](#) (Date first published: 18 July 2013).

LAHORE: Under the banner of one of the left-wing political forces in society, the Awami Workers Party (AWP), and the National Students Federation (NSF), a special discussion on 'How to fight against religious fundamentalists' was held at the party's central secretariat on Wednesday.

AWP leaders Farooq Tariq from Punjab, Nasir Mansoor from Sindh and Khalid Baloch from Balochistan, and NSF leader Irfan Chaudhry expressed their progressive views and unanimously urged the state not to hold negotiations with the Taliban or any other extremist group, saying that talks would further strengthen them in the country.

Farooq Tariq informed the gathering about the history and the current situation of religious fundamentalism in Pakistan, as well as the role of international powers, especially the United Nations, England and America, to strengthen and use such elements for their special agenda to control South and Central Asia, including China.

He said that Pakistan was bearing the brunt of religious fundamentalism, which was increasing day by day. He said that democratic governments could overcome the issue only by separating the state from such groups.

The AWP leader said that if the government would go into talks with religious fundamentalists (the Taliban) - who were already terrifying the people through different activities and challenging the writ of the state - it would further strengthen them in the country. "This step will allow them to reunite their forces."

Farooq Tariq said it could not be ruled out that religious fundamentalists could come into power in Pakistan, as they were being encouraged by the state, which was sheltering them through different laws and state-backed programmes.

He rejected the propaganda by some religious clerics that the bullet injury to Malala Yousufzai was a fake one, and the US wanted to use her for its purpose.

He said that Pakistanis should express their pride on her achievements and thoughts, as she was one of the most courageous girls who had challenged poverty and illiteracy among women.

Addressing the gathering, Nasir Mansoor said that though he was a communist and working as a trade unionist in Sindh, he had never faced any problem on religious grounds. He suggested the progressive strugglers to attach themselves to the real problems of the people, which would allow them to succeed in getting political power to change society.

Khalid Baloch, while expressing his views, said that he recently visited the troubled area of Hazara tribe in Quetta and found that financial issues were behind the attacks on them.

He said that in fact, all members of the Shia community, especially Hazaras, were shopkeepers or traders, having a good hold on the basic finances in the city. "The terrorists belonging to other sects were targeting them to snatch their position."

Kashif Hussain

P.S.

* From Daily Times, Thursday, July 18, 2013:

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2013%5C07%5C18%5Cstory_18-7-2013_pg13_2