

IIRE-Islamabad (Pakistan): A Progress Report (Jan-Dec, 2013)

Initiatives taken by Islamabad International Institute for Research and Education

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Strengthening democratic, progressive politics through cadre building

Back ground:

Under the platform of international Institute of Research and Education Islamabad (IIREI) several educational seminars, workshops, study circles and meetings were organized having strength more than 700 including women participation. These activities were organized in Pakistani Administered Kashmir, Islamabad and in Toba Tek Singh. Overall purpose of these activities is to educate and trained the youth, workers, women and oppressed classes on the basis of rights based approach. As without understanding of fundamental and political rights it's difficult to move in right direction. Workers are being educated and trained about the significance and strength of workers unions and how they struggle to secure their rights. Students and youth being educate on progressive political approach as Pakistan is the grip of religious fundamentalism. So there is prime need to develop the progressive political cadre which could contribute to present the real face of the society.

Seminar on Right to Water:

Pakistan is one of the countries facing acute water problems particularly lack of drinking water availability. Contaminated water is major source of diseases across the Pakistan. Despite multiple commitments by almost all the government still public is unable to get clean and healthy water. Water pollution is one of the key environmental problems which are causing number of other problems. To highlight water related key issues the first seminar was held on the issue of "Water" in Toba Tek Singh on June 13, 2013 with around 100 participation. The focal objective of the activity was to discuss the issue of availability of clean water to the masses of Toba Tek Singh. People are facing deep crises of water, not getting clean and pure water even facing the problem of water shortage. There are spreading diseases due to using unclean water. Through discussion on the issue the concluding point was to form a committee to initiate a movement for clean and pure water supply. However a 26 members committee was announced to make the first step towards the movement

Workshop On Political, social & economic impact of globalization on Society

IIRE Islamabad organized workshop on Capitalist globalization which is shrinking the space for working and marginalized classes around the world. Like other countries working class in Pakistan is extremely suffering because of cruel capitalist polices. As Pakistan economy is being driven by IMF which always approved funds on the grounds of anti poor/ public conditions. State is withdrawing all social security's and subsidies just please and secure the funds from IMF and other international monetary agencies. So purpose of the event was to sensitize the working class that how anti working class polices are impacting the peoples. Efforts were made to sensitize the participants that only anti capitalists' movements can secure the common peoples interests and rights. For this

purpose the workshop was organized on July 7, 2013 to focusing the topic "Economic, Social and Political impact of Globalization on Society" and briefly discussed the whole aspect of the globalization. A large numbers of comrades attended workshop.

Opening Ceremony of the Book "A true Story of Mother (by Krishna Mehta)

Second Session of the workshop, we organized a book opening ceremony of Krishna Mehta, book "A true story of Mothers". The book was written in the context of partition of India on religion basis and its impacts on society.

Krishna was a Hindu Women faced tyranny and saw the cruelty used on the bases of religion was. This book portrayed a religious genocide where Muslims extremists played a dirty role. The writer is not only an eye witness of religious riots but also was a victim of it. In the event 50 participants were present including women.

National Conference on Kashmir issue

The State of Jammu Kashmir is a disputed territory between India and Pakistan, the total population of this state is around fifteen million. A large numbers of the Kashmiri youth are involved with nation Libration Movement for the reunification of their motherland. A small group of Kashmir Labor Party is working there. Kashmir dispute is real bone of contention between India and Pakistan; billion of the people especially working classes are facing poverty, lawlessness, social, political and economic uncertainty but the ruling classless are spending huge amount of budget on defense expenses.

The IIRE Islamabad organized national conference of progressive and nationalist parties on this important issue, the basic aim of the conference was to strengthen the network between the progressive left forces. This important conference was held on October 6, 2013 at Pakistani Administrative Kashmir; around 200 participants and representative of five left wing and nationalist political parties attend this conference. Local newspaper gave the huge coverage to this important event.

Opening of Library

Abbass Ahmed was a progressive writer and political activist he died in November 2012, during his life time he donated his books to IIRE for opening a library in his local town. There is no any other library in this area. We opened library in Paniola Kashmir which is running properly, a local committee of comrades are looking there affairs of this library with the coordination of iire Islamabad.

The local political activist and community is getting the benefit of this library. The opening ceremony of library was on October 6, 2013 .Large number of the people was attended this event.

Seminar: Human Rights violation under the shadow of Religious Extremism

Pakistan is facing religious extremism since the cold war era; several sectarian groups are working in different areas by spreading religious fundamentalism in particular. Only religious minorities are not under attacks, majority of the country, Muslims are also facing the brutality of these extremist groups.

Suicide attacks, bomb blasts and target killing of different religious, sects, is a routine practice by these groups. This is actually the violation of basic human rights. People are not free to move, to work, every time they are under threats. It is affecting working class; women and children in general.

On the occasion of international human rights day, IIRE-Islamabad organized a seminar to analyze the different aspects of this deep rooted crisis and for the purpose of educate the young activists. Around 50 participants attended the event.

Website:

IIRE Islamabad also started website, which is under construction. The web address is www.iireislamabad.org

Challenges:

Following are major challenges being faced by the organization.

- Financial constraints to organize the events at broader level like National, Provincial and other areas where people are in desperate need of political education, networking and alliance building. Due to limited financial capacities IIRE is unable to organize events more frequently with large number of participation and limited to only few areas like Islamabad / Rawalpindi and few districts of AJK. Whereas need of such activities is quite obvious and significant.
- Documentaries and publications one key social, political and working class issues can be produce but lack of financial capacity is major hurdle
- Pakistan is in the grip of militancy and religious fundamentalism which is threat for liberal, secular and progressive political forces and activities. It's quite challenging and threatening to organize and run the activities openly. So activities being organize in quite cautious manners and in low profile.

So efforts being made to carry on the activities at smalls scale level which will be gradually extending as number of political, social and human rights activists are approaching to join.

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