

Pakistan: AWP leads protest against water shortage

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TOBA TEK SINGH: Scores of farmers and other citizens on Tuesday took out a rally on the call of the Awami Workers Party (AWP) to highlight their issues.

The rally started from the grain market and the participants, who were chanting slogans and carrying AWP's flags, marched through city roads and reached Shahbaz Chowk, where a public meeting was held.

AWP Secretary-General Farooq Tariq said the citizens had been deprived of clean water due to shortage. The canal water supply was not feeding farmlands in the villages as the district was situated at tail ends of both Gogera and Jhang branches of the canal, he said.

He said the elected representatives of the PML-N had made a promise in the 2013 general elections that water shortage would be over within a year and a pipeline from Head Trimmu to the city would be completed soon but nothing significant had happened so far. The pipeline project has not been completed in the last several years.

He said the tail-end villages of the district were facing water shortage and the crops were being destroyed resulting in great financial loss to the growers for which the irrigation department was responsible. He demanded action against the department functionaries for their negligence.

The government, he alleged, was spending the development funds meant for districts on the Orange Line Train Project in Lahore. It had failed to solve the basic issues of Toba Tek Singh, he said.

The AWP leader praised police for arresting suspects and those involved in criminal activities.

AWP district president Chaudhry Muhammad Zubair demanded action against the jail officials who are allegedly stealing water from the canal for irrigating farmland and embezzling the budget meant to provide food to the prisoners.

Mr Zubair sought suspension of the Chutiana police SHO who, he alleged, was implicating workers and peasants in fictitious cases.

STRIKE: The district bar association (DBA) observed a complete strike on Tuesday to condemn the Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) officials for registering a case against some lawyers and delaying tactics of police in registering an FIR against Fesco officials for allegedly making lawyers hostage in Fesco office.

In a press statement on Tuesday, DBA President Mian Farrukh Iqbal and secretary general Mian Salman Ghani warned that if the case against senior lawyers was not quashed and FIR was not registered against Fesco officials, the bar would launch a movement against police and Fesco.

Earlier, the city police registered an FIR on the complaint of Fesco sub-divisional officer Tariq Hanif against former DBA president Asghar Ali Chaudhry, former secretary general Mian Faisal Anwaar,

Mehr Rab Nawaz Daddoana and seven others for allegedly torturing line superintendent Fasal Nasir in the office of Fesco executive engineer Anwar Tarar and damaging EXEN's office.

Meanwhile, senior vice chairman of power workers union Faisalabad region Ghulam Mustafa Paras condemned the alleged torture of a worker by the lawyers and demanded the immediate arrest of the suspects.

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