

# Statement on the political situation, in defense of democracy and media freedom

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**Awami Workers Party (AWP)**

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PRESS STATEMENT

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The Awami Workers Party (AWP) has unequivocally demanded the restoration of all mainstream and social media networks, an opening of all thoroughfares in major cities and vowed to defend the democratic system against any unconstitutional steps to derail it.

The AWP has also warned that only an end to the use of religion to achieve political ends by right-wing organisations will prevent the country from being plunged into an unending civil conflict.

AWP President Fanoos Gujjar, general secretary Akhtar Hussain, deputy secretary Asmat Shahjehan, Yousaf Masti Khan senior vice president and spokesperson Farooq Tariq have slammed the ongoing dharna and protests across the country saying that this is not a question of democratic liberties but a cynical attempt by the religious right to play with the sentiments of ordinary Pakistanis and bring the country to a complete standstill on completely illegitimate grounds.

They said that it is clear that the entire protest movement is part of a long-term extra-constitutional strategy to undermine the democratic system by mobilizing religio-political organisations that have already taken the country and region to the brink of disaster.

It is therefore imperative for all democratic forces to close ranks and respond to such conspiracies, and the AWP stands at the forefront of this effort.

The AWP also demanded that the Election Commission of Pakistan answer for its registration of the Lubaik group as a registered political party despite the fact that it is completely defying all democratic norms by deliberately disrupting the normal functioning of the capital city and provoking violence.

The AWP has also demanded that the elected PML-N government restore the writ of the civil administration and stop giving up space to unelected state institutions. Additionally the PML-N must match its rhetoric about democracy by restoring media freedom at all levels and recognize that its suspending TV and social media access is fueling rumours that are further strengthening undemocratic forces.

The AWP also believes that the biggest losers in this whole episode are ordinary people who are completely voiceless politically and in whose name both retrograde entities like the LYR group and state institutions including the ISPR claim to be speaking. In fact, the working masses of Pakistan are completely alienated from the mainstream political process, as well as the actions of right-wing groups.

The AWP reiterates its commitment to a genuine politics of the masses and, as a first step, to exposing the realities of the current stand-off in the federal capital.

**Farman Ali**

Secretary Information

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