

APDM enters Punjab

Monday 4 February 2008, by [TARIQ Farooq](#) (Date first published: 2 February 2008).

All Parties Democratic Movement first public meeting at Gojranwala was a massive success. With over 10,000 participating, the overwhelmingly mood was of boycott and the continuation of movement until the overthrow of Musharaf dictatorship. The public meeting was held at famous Sheranwala Bagh ground where most the large public meeting was held in the past.

The main speakers included Mehmood Achakzai, convener APDM, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, president Jamaat-I-Islami, Imran Khan, president Pakistan Tehreek Insaaf and myself. Several local leaders of the parties associated with APDM also addressed the meeting. After holding successful rallies advocating boycott of elections at Baluchistan and North West frontier Province, the APDM first public meeting saw a mood of rebellion and uprising against the military dictatorship.

The public meeting was held under strict security measures and through search was made of every participant entering the public meeting. This was the first mass public meeting after the suicidal attack in Lahore on the police on 11 December.

Labour Party Pakistan stickers and leaflet were distributed at the meeting calling for a boycott of this general election, for an immediate restoration of judiciary and release of the top judges. The dozens of LPP activists raising full throat slogans carried red flags of LPP.

During my speech, I congratulated the peoples of Baluchistan and NWFP for very successful APDM rallies and said that by organizing this rally in very difficult circumstances, the people of Punjab are not far behind.

“This is the most liar government that people of Pakistan has experienced so far. It is telling blatant lies all the time and Musharaf dictatorship has become the most hated dictatorship in the history of Pakistan. It has to go. It cannot survive for long. If election takes place, it is not a good news for Musharaf, if he rigs the elections, it is not a good news, if he does not rig it, it is not a good news, whatever happened, Musharaf will be a looser” I declared with massive applause by the audience.

When I demanded a minimum wage of Rupees 10,000, the participants of the rallies were clapping for some times. I also demanded an end of privatization, neo liberal agenda, and an end of military operation in Baluchistan, NWFP, Swat and tribal areas. I demanded an end of occupation of Afghanistan and no to militarization of politics.

Imran Khan took up the issue of minimum wages and he seconded the proposal and said that this is just the minimum and has to be linked up with the rising inflation. He said that present fight is between those who want a democratic Pakistan and a Pakistan free of exploitation and those advocating share of power with military dictatorship. He said PPP decision to take part in the general elections was a shameful act and it has given some breathing space to the military dictatorship.

Imran Khan went on to declare full solidarity with the advocate movement. He said that we take part in the general election only with an independent judiciary and independent election commission of Pakistan.

Qazi Hussain Ahmad also took the issue of minimum wage and said that we demand a wage equal to

10 gram of gold. He said that we need a democratic Islamic system. He spoke against the rising price hike and said that we will struggle until the end of Musharaf dictatorship.

Mehmood Achakzai convener APDM congratulated the people of Punjab for holding this mass rally. He said a democratic Pakistan with an independent judiciary is not only a bad news for Pakistani military generals but for all those so-called Islamic undemocratic repressive states. He said we do not want to break this Pakistan but we do not need a Pakistan that is arresting judges and ruled consistently by the military generals.

The meeting ended after four hours of proceedings with a very positive note. The next two mass rallies will be held in Faisalabad on 3 February and at Multan on 4 February.