

PAKISTAN DEEP IN A DEBT TRAP

The imperialist financing agencies like IMF and WB claim as the saviors of developing countries. But, in reality, they are tools of imperialist loot and domination. They operate in a well articulated manner to draw the countries into their debt trap. The countries like India and Pakistan that are dependent on and tied to imperialist economy had gone through this course. While this debt trap had become a vicious circle for the borrowing countries where they are forced to move from one crisis to another more serious crisis, it had opened the gates wide for the imperialist lenders to loot the natural, human and economic resources of the countries and drive them into subjugation.

On June 22, 2019, Pakistan Govt. arrested a veteran TU leader and the General Secretary of Pakistan TU Defense Campaign – Qamar- Uz - Zaman Khan – in Sadiqabad in Central Pakistan. Reason: He organized a demon-stration against the Budget which was under the discussion at the time in Pakistan’s federal Parliament. The Pakistan people widely believe that the rulers in Pakistan are subservient to imperialism and are dictated by the IMF even in the preparation of Budget. Pakistan Govt. has responded to the people’s protest by intensifying the repression. Khan’s arrest is only a part of it. His whereabouts were kept unknown. It triggered of a spon-taneous social media campaign and protest in Pakistan. The activists and workers have gathered outside the police stations and demanded the whereabouts of their leader. Finally, the police had to accept that Zaman Khan is in their custody. Instead of releasing him, they have filed a case against him on the charge of creating a law and order situation.

In the meanwhile, the Pakistan’s federal Parliament has adopted the Budget for 2020. The IMF Executive Board has approved a \$6 billion, three-year loan to Pakistan. These acts have confirmed the correctness of people’s apprehensions and criticisms. The IMF Executive Board Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair David Lipton said, Pakistan needs ‘an ambitious and bold set of reforms’ as its economy is at a ‘critical juncture.’ He suggested that Pakistan needs to pursue ‘a multi-year revenue mobilization strategy to broaden the tax base and raise tax revenue.’ Imran Khan Govt. announced plans to slash civil expenditures, freeze military spending while promising to substantially raise revenues to stem a yawning fiscal deficit and pledging to collect 5.5 trillion (36 billion dollars) rupees in taxes. All this only point out that Pakistan rulers have toed to the policies dictated by IMF and their Budget is only an outcome of it. Coming days are going to be harsher to the Pakistan people. They have to further tighten their belts, bear more burdens in the form of increased taxes, prices and other costs of life. Pakistan will be open for more rabid imperialist loot and driven into more shameful subservience.

The voice of protest raised by Zaman Khan and workers is a pointer to the coming struggles in Pakistan. Pakistan people have a long and difficult battle to wage to get rid of the yoke of imperialism and its Pakistani comprador rulers.
