

Aurat Dharna to be held on 8th March 2021



The mission of the Aurat March is to unite women, trans and non-binary people for the cause of gender justice and bring about collective social change based on the principles of inclusion, dignity, freedom and equality. The dharna will raise voices on diverse issues affecting women, trans and non-binary people from all backgrounds. We express solidarity for the connected nature of our struggles and work together to dismantle systems of oppression and exploitation. We must create a society in which women, trans and non-binary people of all ethnic backgrounds and religious communities, from the working class, refugees and those displaced, and those with disabilities, are free and able to care for themselves and their families.

15 Point Agenda

The Aurat March seeks to achieve the following:

We demand an end to gender-based violence: this includes violence against women, trans and non-binary people carried out and promoted by patriarchal forces as well as state-backed violence targeting activists and communities.

As part of this, we demand from the Provincial Government

1. Establishing gender-based violence reporting cells across all police stations in Sindh and the rest of Pakistan. The reporting cells should be led by gender-sensitized women and khwajasira police officers with specialized training.
2. We demand the introduction of mechanisms such as help desks in police stations and courts, for women, trans and non-binary people to report violence and harassment.
3. We demand that government officials enforce effective sensitization of medical and counselling professionals to gender and sexual minorities and increase the number of women and transwomen MLOs across the province.
4. We demand establishment of shelters/safe houses and subsidized shelters for women, trans and non binary persons in each district in Sindh. With this we also demand increased funding for existing Dar-ul-Amans and shelters and increasing the number of functional shelters. We demand improving quality of crisis and shelter services, including by adopting policies fully consistent with survivors' freedom of movement.
5. We demand that the Sindh Government urgently passes the proposed bill against forced conversion to protect girls and women from forced conversions and forced marriages and take concrete actions to bring perpetrators to justice in a timely and efficient manner.
6. We demand an end to killing of girls, women, trans and non-binary people, particularly under the pretext of honour and all those responsible be prosecuted and punished as per the Criminal Law (Amendment) (Offences in the name or pretext of Honour) Act, 2016.
7. We demand that the state enforce the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, and demand the state recognizes informal work as part of this law. We further demand that the government direct private and public institutions to form committees to report and manage workplace harassment cases, and introduce a fine for non-complying institutions.

8. We demand the decriminalization of defamation and repeal of Section 499 and 500 of the Pakistan Penal Code, both of which are being used to initiate criminal investigations to threaten, intimidate and silence individuals who have come forward against their perpetrators and abusers.

9. We demand that Child protection centers in each district of Sindh should be made operational and functional and that they be given the authority to stop child marriages.x

10. We demand that the provincial bill proposed by the Trans community be passed and adopted with no prejudice.

11. We demand that workers of all genders earn a living wage and access to safe housing, quality education and affordable healthcare for themselves and their families. As a first step, we demand immediate enforcement of the minimum wage across all sectors, and for the minimum wage to be fixed on scientific grounds, taking into consideration the rate of inflation and other related factors that impact the life of a worker and their family.

12. We demand Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act be fully implemented and action taken against industrial units and other workplaces which lack basic safety equipment and protocols in place

From the Federal Government:

13. We demand an end to extrajudicial killings in Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir, and demand the release of all missing persons and for the constitution and legal system to be implemented strongly in these cases with no exception.

14. We protest the sexist treatment of trans and non-binary people in the media and demand a gender inclusive policy on media to be formed by PEMRA and implemented without prejudice.

15. We condemn the city-wide demolitions that began in 2018 and continue to rob poor people off their homes and livelihoods until now. Carried out under the banner of the 'Anti-Encroachment Drive', these demolitions are driven by development and political agendas. We demand dignified resettlement for those displaced by the anti-encroachment drive, according to the directives of the Supreme Court. They should be given alternative housing and livelihood in nearby areas so that their everyday lives are not disrupted