

Saturday August 20, 2011



STOP

KILLINGS IN KARACHI...

PROTEST: Members of civil society protesting in front of the National Press Club Friday. — Dateline photo by Sohail Shahzad

Political parties blamed for Karachi killings

■ ALMAS HAIDER NAQVI

ISLAMABAD — Condemning the worsening law and order situation in Karachi, representatives of civil society Friday blamed political parties for the target killings there.

The citizens of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, joined by *Insani Haqooq Itehad* (IHI) and workers of various political parties, gathered outside the National Press Club to condemn the growing violence in the port city.

They demanded strict action against the culprits and urged the government to ensure peace was restored quickly.

The protesters holding placards and banners chanted slogans against the government. They said

there should be London-like action against the culprits.

Human rights activist Farzana Bari said she feared if the violence in Karachi was not stopped, it could spread to other areas of the country. "This means tomorrow the whole of Pakistan will become what Karachi is today, if they don't stand up and unite to bring peace."

Naeem Mirza, representing the Aurat Foundation said "the country was going towards a point of no return," he said. The citizens of Karachi and human rights organizations have planned to hold a protest in Karachi today (Saturday).

Friday's protest was addressed by Simi Kamal, a human rights activist from Aurat Foundation, Anis Haroon, Chairperson Nation-

al Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Dr Rakhshanda Parveen (Creative Anger), Abreen Ajaib (Coordinator *Insani Haqooq Itehad*), Mazhar Ali (senior citizen) and human rights activist Jahan-gir Akhtar (who plans to go on hunger strike till death from September 12 for 'end to corruption in Pakistan', and 'Cut in military budget').

Simi Kamal, Alya Mirza and Anis Haroon, said this was just the beginning of the 'protest for peace' and they would continue it in the days ahead.

Wasim Wagha, Member *Insani Haqooq Itehad* (IHI), while giving some details of the future strategy said next Monday, the group would organize a candle light vigil.