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## Police Crack Down on Government Workers' Protest in Peshawar

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– Categories: Crime



Police in Peshawar used tear gas and batons to disperse a sit-in staged by public sector employees at the Provincial Assembly Chowk on Friday. The protest, led by the All Government Employees Grand Alliance (AGEGA), had entered its fourth consecutive day after beginning on June 23.

The demonstrators had gathered to demand a 30 percent disparity reduction allowance, matching what is reportedly provided to federal government employees. In contrast, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provincial government had approved only a 15 percent increase

based on the 2017 initial basic pay scale. Protesters rejected this offer as insufficient and launched the sit-in to press for equal treatment.

The protest caused significant traffic disruptions in central Peshawar, particularly on Khyber Road and around the Assembly building. Government employees from various departments took part in the demonstration, vowing to continue until their demands were addressed.

Police launched the dispersal operation after talks between authorities and AGEGA representatives failed to yield results. Local sources confirmed that several protest leaders were arrested during the crackdown. While no major injuries were reported, minor scuffles between officers and demonstrators were observed.

The KP government, during its recent budget session, defended its decision to offer a 15 percent increase. Officials cited fiscal constraints and reduced allocations from the federal divisible pool as reasons for not matching federal-level allowances. They argued that the province lacks the financial space to implement a higher raise at this time.

Despite these explanations, employees insisted that they face the same inflationary pressures as their federal counterparts. AGEGA leaders accused the government of backtracking on previous commitments and said the approved increase does not address the economic hardships faced by provincial civil servants.

Following the police action, AGEGA announced its intent to pursue legal remedies against the arrests. The alliance also warned that protests would resume if detained leaders were not released and if negotiations did not restart in good faith.

As of Saturday, there had been no official statement from the provincial government regarding the police operation or the current status of those arrested. Security has been tightened around government buildings in anticipation of further protests. AGEGA has maintained that its members remain committed to a peaceful resolution but are prepared to escalate pressure if needed.