

PUBLISH FROM ISLAMABAD & AJK



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# Daily Country News

The voice of country

national-international-entertainment-sports-economy

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ABC Certified

Vol.VII No. 213 Shawwal 17 1436 Monday August 3, 2015. Rs.05

ISLAMABAD RAWALAKOT AJK

## KPK farmers hold protest demos to protect NARC

Farmer associations warn of nationwide strike if CDA summary not turned down

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The farmer organization of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) held a protest demonstration in front of Peshawar press club and warned of nation-wide strike if the federal government does not turn down the summary moved by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for converting the agriculture research land of National Agriculture Research Center (NARC) into housing society.

The farmers associated with the KPK Farmers Association and Olive Farmers' Association gathered in front of Peshawar Press club and demonstrated against the Capital Development Authority summary, chanting slogans "No Compromise on NARC", "PM must reject Capital Development Authority summary", "Save NARC from land mafia" and so many other slogans.

The demonstrated marched towards press club and later the

representatives of the associations held a press conference to apprise the media about the onslaught attempt by Capital Development Authority on agricultural research land.

They highlight the importance of National Agriculture Research Center for the research and for overall development of the agriculture sector of the country.

"The farmers of KPK will protect the interests of agriculture sector for the larger interests of the nation and would come on the streets and roads throughout the country to defend the National Agriculture Research Center against land mafia, said President Olive Farmers Association, Israr Ahmed.

He said that the farmers will not refrain from shedding their blood for this sacred cause. "We will sacrifice our lives and shed our blood to defend national institutions like NARC," he said



and warned the government not to push the farming community against the wall, which would have catastrophic consequences.

He said that the moves like converting research land into housing society could only be expected from the enemies of the country as this is the only sector of the economy which not only feeds increasing population of the country but contributes a considerable share in the national GDP.

He said that the research conducted at the center saved billions of rupees of the national exchequer by introducing high-yielding and disease free varieties of crops and fruits, increasing milk and meat production besides developing and commercializing farm machinery.

It is due to National Agriculture Research Center research, Pakistan became honey-exporting country. The center introduced canola and rid the country

of bird-flu which resulted in lifting of ban on exports.

Speaking on the occasion, President Farmers' Association KPK said that if the National Agriculture Research Center is converted into housing society, it would be disastrous for future of the country.

"So we will protest against the move to save agriculture sector."

He said that NARC was the national asset which took 40 long years to be established to this level and if it is shifted anywhere else, it would not reach to the level of current stage even in 100 years.

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