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Pakistan

# LPP leader arrested for assisting climate change victims

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**Baba Jan, a federal committee member of the Labour Party Pakistan (LPP), has been taken from jail ... and the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) is torturing him on the name of “investigation”, fears the LPP. Baba Jan, surrendered himself to an “anti-terrorist court” in Gilgit Baltistan last week, had been on the run since July 2011, after police opened fire on a demonstration demanding compensation for those affected by the Atta Abad Lake floods last year, killing two.**

Baba Jan’s “crime” was that he organised rallies and demonstrations against the police killings.

The LPP has issued an urgent appeal for messages to protest against Baba Jan’s detention. The judge sent Baba Jan to prison on judicial remand. “He was dragged out of jail by the intelligence agencies”, alleges the alert. The Labour Party Pakistan demonstrated today at Islamabad National Press Club and has planned more demonstrations across Pakistan.

Instead of arresting the police officers involved in the deaths of the two activists, police registered 16 charges against Baba Jan and others. They arrested at least 36 activists, among them 10 members of the Labour Party Gilgit Baltistan. Baba Jan escaped arrest and was sheltered by the community; after a month underground, he decided to surrender. Currently, six activists including Baba Jan remain under arrest, facing charges that many know to be fabricated.

Baba Jan joined the Labour Party Pakistan in 2004 and was elected to the LPP federal committee at its congress in Faisalabad in 2010. Previously one of the main leaders of the Peoples Youth, he had left the Pakistan Peoples Party (LPP) youth wing to join the LPP and organised the Progressive Youth Front (PYF) across Gilgit Baltistan, the northernmost province in Pakistan.

Baba Jan was among the first to raise the issue of the Atta Abad Lake and toured Pakistan in 2011 to organise rallies and demonstrations to highlight the plight of villagers who have lost their homes to this newly formed lake caused by deforestation, soil erosion and climate change.

He spoke to the national media in press conferences held in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad.

The corporate media finally took up the issue and some compensation was paid to the victims, however a new movement began to urge compensation for all affected, as some had not been compensated. When the police opened fire on the July protest, killing two activists, Baba Jan and his comrades took up the case.

The Labour Party Pakistan appeals to all human rights organisations, political parties, trade unions, youth and peasant organisation raise their voices to save the life of Baba Jan.

*For more information, please contact Ihsan Ali, president of the Gilgit Baltistan High Court Bar Association and member of LPP federal committee (03462524792), or Nisar Shah, general secretary Labour Party Pakistan (0300 2147960). Please send protest messages to Farooq Tariq at farooqtariq@hotmail.com.*

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You can hear the message of Baba Jan before he presented himself to the court at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TM9...>