

# **Faiz Ahmad Faiz Centennial Celebrations in Lahore**

Saturday 12 February 2011, by [TARIO Farooq](#) (Date first published: 10 February 2011).

Dear all,

Yesterday, some of us went to see Faiz Ahmad Faiz photographic exhibition at Al Hamra Hall 11 Lahore. It was freshening to see Faiz from his young age to his last birthday celebration with his grand children. Also were happy to see Qamar Yourash along with Faiz Ahmad Faiz when he came to inaugurate his book, Yaranni Maikada. Qamar Yourash, a working class writer, had lived till last at Labour Party office and told us many of his associations with the great revolutionary poets and writers including Manto and Faiz.

At the age of 15, in 1970, I had a chance to serve Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Ahmad Rahi, Saroor Bara Bankwi and other great poets some tea and food at my parents home in Toba Tek Singh during the 1970 famous peasant conference. Over half a million attended this historic Kissan conference and demanded land rights. My grand father Choudry Shah Mohammad Aziz, publisher and editor Daily Business Report had invited these great poets to our home to stay during the conference. I went along Faiz Ahmad Faiz to the conference. And I still remember the great enthusiasm of the entire conference when they heard that Faiz has arrived. It was a spontaneous standing ovation.

Later at University of Punjab, in 1975/76, a young dashing lecturer came direct from US after completing his master to teach us applied psychology. He was Humair Hashmi, husband of Monezey Hashmi, daughter of Faiz Ahmad Faiz. I was president of the student association at the department and had won the election after defeating the right winger Islami jamiat Tuleba. So it was natural to be friend of Humair Hashmi and other left wing teachers like Maqbool Babri, Rafiq Jafar and Seemin Alam. Some of us started to go to Humair home in Model Town that was in fact Faiz Ahmad Faiz home. Some time, we would meet Faiz and listen to his advices.

We invited Faiz to be our chief guest at the annual farewell function of the department. he asked if we are able to provide security to him. The tension between the right and left was its peak. I had been beaten up several times by the gangsters of the IJT, so were they from our friends. We told him that we are very confident of our friends and we will do our best.

Faiz Ahmad Faiz came to University of Punjab, may be after long time, and was with us for several hours. I still remember his words "wisdom does not come from psychology but from real life". At my home, I have a group photo with Faiz Ahmad Faiz and what a proud group photo. While we insisted Faiz to sit in the center, he refused and asked me to sit in center. So in the picture, On one side of mine is Faiz Ahmad Fiaz and other our department chairperson Seemin Alam and next to them are Dr. Hamid Shiekh, Maqbool Babri, Humair Hashmi and other teachers.

I had to leave Pakistan when Zia took over and went into exile. While in Netherlands, we started printing a paper called Struggle. In 1982, Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Ahmad Fraz, who were also in exile in UK, came to Netherlands and to our office. He recited his famous poem, "Merey Dil meray Musafar, Huwa Hukam Phir Sey sadir, Key watan badar hon hum tum" He listened patiently to our

criticism of the Soviet system of Socialism and told us yes, socialism without democracy can not last long.

I was still in exile when he came back and died in 1984. I arrived back home in 1986 after eight years of exile. We attended the Faiz Amn Mela at football stadium in Ghari Chau and met many friends from Left with whom we had lost contacts. That traditions could not be sustained. Although few more were organised at open air theater in Bagi Jinnah Lahore

In 1992, we decided to organise Faiz Amn Mela ourselves. It was held at Griffin Institute on canal road at Mughal pura. Alice Faiz, and Abid Hasan Minto came to speak and we had a good fun of singing and Bhangra.

Another time, we celebrated Faiz birthday at Gulzar Labour Hall where Alice Faiz also came despite her very poor health.

Then we started Faiz Amn Mela at Open Air theater. Monezey Hamshmi and Salima Hashmi would come to attend these peoples Faiz Amn mela. Many known artists would come and sing songs. Few thousand posters of Faiz Amn Mela would attract many hundreds at Open Air Theater. I would go myself for fly posting of these posters among the working class areas of Lahore.

During Musharaf period, celebrating and organizing Faiz Amn Mela was part of our political strategy to popularize Left ideas among youth and also to oppose military dictatorship.

In 2005, we printed a special edition of Weekly Mazdoor Jeddouhd on Faiz Ahmad Faiz. farooq Sulehria worked very hard on this over 120 pages weekly on Faiz. We demanded that Sialkot airport should be named Faiz Ahmad Faiz airport.

Very happy to see that a nationwide Faiz Committee is organizing year long Faiz Ahmad Faiz centennial celebration in Lahore.

Government is also happy to cooperate. However, Faiz remain a source of inspiration for the ideas of Socialism and his poetry will remain one of the main vehicle to promote movements of the working class.

Here is the detail of the Lahore programme

**FAIZ FOUNDATION ANOUNCES ITS PROGRAMMES**

**FOR**

**FAIZ AHMED FAIZ CENTENNIAL CELEBERATIONS IN LAHORE**

7-13 Feb Faiz Photographic Exhibition 03:00 - 06:00 P.M at Al-Hamra Exhibition Hall

11<sup>th</sup> Feb: Books Launch 3:00 P.M at Al-Hamra Hall - II

11<sup>th</sup> Feb: International Mushaira 7:00 P.M onwards on PTV

12<sup>th</sup> Feb: International Colloquium 9:30 - 5:00 P.M at LUMS

12<sup>th</sup> Feb: An Evening with Shabana Azmi 6:00 - 8:00 P.M AlhamraHall - 1

13<sup>th</sup> Feb: International Colloquium 9:30 - 1:00 P.M at LUMS

13<sup>th</sup> Feb: Faiz Ann Mela (12.00–4.00 p.m.) (Open Air Theatre Bagh-e-Jinnah, Lahore)

Contact :

Daily Timings: 10:00am to 1:00pm (except Tuesdays) and during events (see calendar)

Address:

Faiz Ghar, House 126, Block F, Model Town, Lahore

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Dear Comrade Farooq

Surkh Salam

After reading your memories I think I should share mine too. During Zia dictatorship when political work was not allowed, we under the leadership of Com Ali Yawar, Kaleem Durrani and others organised a literary organization named "SANGAT" in Karachi. On the death of great poet Jash Malih Abadi in 1982 when Josh Saheb's Poetry or prose was banned to publish or televised we decided to organise a seminar "Josh Ka Adab Men Maqam". Mr. Faiz Ahmed Faiz on our request accepted to preside the meeting in Karachi Arts Council. What an occasion was that. Very big crowd was there to pay tribute to Josh in Faiz Saheb company. Ahmed Faraz who were "Soba Badar" at that time also attended the meeting and delivered his poem on public demand. I am proud to be the Sangat Secretary and stage secretary of that gathering. I don't have any record but right wing writers wrote in news papers that "Communist jalsa karne men kamiyaab ho gay". I don't remember what Mr. Faiz delivered in his speech but I still imagine standing beside the legend. I wish I could see the pictures of that moment available with Com. Ali Yawar, Ahmed Kamran or Dr. Saeed Ashraf.

In 1984 when Mr. Faiz left us Sangat organised a meeting in the same Arts Council Karachi to pay tribute to our great leader and poet "Faiz" in 1984. A seminar under the title "Faiz ka Aadarsh" was held. Mr. Ali Sardar Jafery and Apa Ismat Chughtai Saheba friends of Mr. Faiz Ahmed Faiz came on our invitation from India. Mr. Kaifi Azmi could not attend that seminar because of his illness. Faiz Mela was organised in coming years on larger scale.

Faiz said

" *Bala se hum ne na dekha to aur dekhne gey*  
*Farogh-e-Gulshan-o-sout-e-hazar ka mausam.*"

Regards

**Sadiq Jatoi**

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