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# **Pakistan: Baba Jan, Waqar and all other activists be released from custody immediately**

Saturday 5 May 2012, by [KARUNARATNE Vickramabahu \("Bahu"\)](#), [NSSP](#) (Date first published: 5 May 2012).

05-05-2012

HER EXCELLENCY MS SEEMA ILLAHI BALOCH  
HIGH COMMISSION FOR PAKISTAN  
53/6 GREGORY'S ROAD  
COLOMBO 7

FAX: (11) 26 95 780

Dear Ms Seema Illahi Baloch,

**against the torture of Baba Jan, Iftikhar Ahmed and three others by Police and FC in Gilgit jail on 28 April morning.**

We have been informed by the Labour Party of Pakistan that Baba Jan, Waqar and other activists in Gilgit district jail were severely beaten and tortured by dozens of Rangers, Police and Frontier Constabulary in the early morning of April 28, 2012.

We are especially concerned for the fate of Baba Jan, who was taken from the Gilgit district jail by security personnel and transported to a place unknown.

We strongly protest against this violence and object to the prison authorities' ban on visitors to these political activists. It would seem that the responsible authorities have failed in their duty to maintain safe custody of these persons. This kind of treatment of political activists should not be acceptable in a democratic Pakistan.

We are writing to request that that you pass on to your government our urgent request that Baba Jan, Waqar and all other activists be released from custody immediately and that the ban by Gilgit district jail authorities on visitors to these activists be lifted. Further, we ask you to please determine and advise us of the location of Baba Jan and any others taken from Gilgit district jail?

The Gilgit district jail authorities should publicly indicate the health status of each of Baba Jan, Waqar and the other activists - their families are also very worried. They are considered to be in dire need of medical assistance - something the authorities should facilitate. We request that they are immediately released and, if necessary, be promptly transferred to hospital.

We are extremely anxious for the safety of the above persons, and wish to have information as to their legal and health status as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you soon about this matter as we are having emergency discussions with concerned prominent individuals, Members of Parliament in Australia, media and human rights organisations about future action on this case. Further, our European office is briefing organisations

and MPS in that region about this concern.

There is a very broad layer of people around the world who are concerned about the fate of Baba Jan and his fellow activists because they are seen as political casualties of the deepening global climate change crisis. They are imprisoned for their roles in the campaign by poor local residents who were demanding compensation for the devastating landslide and flood in the Hunza Valley in 2010.

International flood relief campaigns for Pakistan have also increased public awareness of the situation. The success of future emergency appeals could be compromised if there were serious concerns that the victims of flooding and their advocates are being mistreated by Pakistani officials at any level of government.

For all the abovementioned reasons, it would be a good idea for the Government of Pakistan to act most promptly on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Wickramabahu Karunarathne**

General Secretary , NSSP

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