

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières > English > Asia > Pakistan > Gilgit Baltistan (Pakistan) > Baba Jan (Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan) > **Pakistan : Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights takes serious notice of (...)**

Pakistan : Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights takes serious notice of the Hunza Five case

Saturday 21 July 2012, by [LPP](#), [SHAH Nisar](#) (Date first published: 6 July 2012).

Today, the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights considered the letter sent by Labour Party Pakistan, demanding that the Committee have all the false cases against the Hunza Five withdrawn and oblige the Gilgit-Baltistan colonial administration to publish the findings of its own judicial inquiry into the Aliabad killings.

The Committee took serious notice of the case and have asked the relevant officials to immediately submit a report and have ordered the concerned officials to come to Islamabad and present themselves before the Committee.

The positive response of the Committee strengthens our resolve to continue the struggle until we achieve our aims.

Reproduced below is the text of the Labour Party Pakistan letter to the Committee:

5th July, 2012

To,

Mr. Riaz Fatyana

Chairman,

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Rights

National Assembly of Pakistan

SUBJECT: WITHDRAW ALL CASES AGAINST BABA JAN, IFTIKHAR HUSSAIN, AMEER KHAN, AMIR ALI & RASHID MINHAS, THE UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED POLITICAL ACTIVISTS OF HUNZA

Dear Sir,

As you may already know, the above-mentioned political activists affiliated with the Progressive Youth Front, have been in jail since September 2011. Multiple charges under the Anti-Terrorism Act have been filed against them in order to punish them for their support of some of the Attabad Lake disaster victims in their struggle to claim the compensation that was never delivered to them.

On 11th August, 2011, around 200 people protested for the rights of those families who had not received compensation as the Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan, Mehdi Shah, was visiting the town of Aliabad in Hunza valley. The police, instructed to remove the protesters by any means, started with a baton-charge, then used tear gas before opening fire with live ammunition. Their first victim was

Sher Afzal Baig, a 22 year old student. Then, when Baig's father tried to retrieve the body of his son, he too was shot. Both died. The valley erupted and a police station was burnt down by the protesters.

Baba Jan arrived 6 hours later. He organised the protesters and they were promised an investigation and firm action against the police officers responsible for the killing. The Gilgit-Balistan Law Minister and Speaker held a press conference in which they displayed an FIR that they claimed held the involved police officials responsible for the double murder. So, the protesters waited for the government to act.

It acted a week later. The FIR against the police officials turned out to be fake [1]. Arrest warrants were issued for numerous protesters including Baba Jan. While most of those arrested have been released on bail, Baba Jan and 4 activists remain behind bars. Twice they have been picked up from jail and tortured. First, starting on the 12th of September 2011, for three nights for three to four hours at a time, Baba Jan was beaten with sticks and had his feet crushed under boots, while, another activist (Iftikhar Hussain) had candle wax dropped on his genitals. Again on the 28th of April 2012, Baba Jan was tortured. Police and Pakistani Rangers (a paramilitary force) entered his jail cell and beat him up. They then whisked him to an unknown location where he was again brutally beaten, and to humiliate him, had his head shaved. He has fractured fingers and is being denied medical treatment. Further, he has been moved to Zulfiqarabad Jail, Gilgit, and put in a cell with hardened criminals.

Meanwhile, a judicial inquiry into the killing of Sher Afzal Baig and his father was conducted. Its findings have not been made public but journalists who have seen it claim it lays the blame on the police force and local bureaucracy for the incident.

As a result of a concerted campaign by supporters within Pakistan and abroad, the Gilgit-Baltistan administration seems to have finally understood that it cannot indefinitely prolong the illegal detention of the Hunza Five. As a result, this week, we celebrated the release on bail of Amir Ali and Rashid Minhas. The release of Baba Jan seemed imminent as well, when, allegedly on the instructions of the "sensitive" agencies, new charges under the Anti-Terrorism Act were added to the set of charges related to the rioting in Gilgit Jail on April 26th, 2012. It is now clear that the entire proceedings against the Hunza Five are politically motivated and constitute no more than a pretext to suppress the voice of the oppressed people of Gilgit-Baltistan.

We demand that the baseless cases against these courageous and innocent young political workers be withdrawn forthwith and the findings of the Gilgit-Baltistan government's judicial inquiry into the killing of Sher Afzal Baig and his father Sher Ullah Baig be made public.

Sincerely,

Nisar Shah

Spokesperson, Labour Party Pakistan

Attached herewith are the following case documents:

Copies of the FIRs registered against Baba Jan, Iftikhar Hussain, Ameer Khan, Amir Ali & Rashid Minhas

Order to police to arrange medical treatment for Baba Jan and Iftikhar Hussain, issued by the Administrative Judge of Anti-Terrorism Court No. 1 of Gilgit-Baltistan

Contempt of Court petition filed by the counsel for the detainees for denial of medical treatment as previously ordered by the Gilgit-Baltistan Anti-Terrorism Court

Asian Human Rights Commission Urgent Appeal Case AHRC-UAC-149-2011, giving details of the incidents of August 11, 2011 [2] and thereafter

HRCP statement, 5-May-2012: HRCP slams torture on detained activists in Gilgit [3].

Footnotes

[1] See Appendix 4: Asian Human Rights Commission, Urgent Appeal Case: AHRC-UAC-149-2011. Available on ESSF (article 25146), [Pakistan: The law minister of Gilgit-Baltistan produces fake FIR to still the protests against the killing of a father and son by police.](#)

[2] Available on ESSF website, (article 25146), [Pakistan: The law minister of Gilgit-Baltistan produces fake FIR to still the protests against the killing of a father and son by police.](#)

[3] Available on ESSF website, (article 25115), [Article 225115.](#)