

# **Start of the lawyers' long march in Karachi: Labour Party Pakistan activists arrested and beaten up as well as dozens of lawyers and other political activists**

Friday 13 March 2009, by [TARIO Farooq](#) (Date first published: 12 March 2009).

Police in Karachi arrested today on 12 March three activists of Labour Party. Dozens of lawyers and other political activists were also arrested. They were part of the long march which started today this morning from Karachi after police failed to stop it. The march was stopped outside Karachi at Toll Plaza by police. All the participants were forcefully returned and those who resisted were arrested.

Here the police targeted Nasir Mansoor, national labour secretary Labour Party Pakistan and member of national executive committee of LPP. He was severally beaten up and his car was snatched. He was shifted to a hospital in an ambulance. Here, police arrested Shela Rezwani, LPP Sindh Committee member, Samina from Peoples Resistance and Sadiq and Khalid of LPP Karachi. Shela and Samina were released after hours but Sadiq and Khalid are still in police custody. Police also arrested the main leadership of the lawyer's movement over here. Most of the television channel broadcasted the arrests and beating of Nasir.

LPP has announced two protest demonstrations on 13 March against this police repression and arrests. The Karachi demonstration will be at 3pm in front of Karachi Press Club and Lahore demonstration will be held in front of Lahore Press Club at 4pm. We request all the political and trade unions and social activists to join the demonstration.

Despite this repression, dozens of LPP activists are making their way now by train and private buses to Lahore and then onwards to Islamabad for the sit in. One comrade from Karachi has already arrived in Islamabad to take part in the sit in on 16 March.

It is worth mentioning that when lawyers came out of the Sindh High Court building to start the long march, LPP and Awami Tehreek, both part of the Awami Jamhoori Tehreek, were the only political parties with their red flags that were accompanying the lawyers.

Over 20 comrades from LPP, mainly women were able to reach the High Court building despite the closure of all the roads and heavy presence of police around the building.

Over 40 comrades of LPP are participating the long march which started from Quetta. The caravan started from Quetta was not stopped by Baluchistan government. It is now proceeding to Sukhar in Sind. It is reported that Sindh police will arrest all of them when they will enter Sindh.

Despite all the police repression, the lawyers long march will go-ahead. In Lahore, thousands of lawyers and political activists took out a rally despite all the police despotism.

**March 12, 2009**

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Dear all,

GEO and other private television channel are broadcasting the beginning of the long march from Karachi. Around 20 comrades of LPP were able to reach the Karachi High Court building. The police were not allowing any one to join the lawyers.

Police have started arresting the lawyers and political activists. Despite that, when the first glimpse of the beginning of long march started appearing on the private television channels, red flags of LPP were quite prominent.

A comrade has told me just now that he has arranged a bus and has parked it near High Court building. No bus owner is ready to rent a bus to any one for long march. The comrades will use his bus for a five days travel to Islamabad for sit in.

This is a great show of resistance by the lawyers and political activists against the repressive PPP regime.

**March 12, 2009**

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**“Labour Party Pakistan has directed all its members to go for an all out effort to participate in the long march”**

Dear all,

Labour Party Pakistan has directed all its members to go for an all out effort to participate in the long march. LPP Sindh has planned two buses to join the long march tomorrow on 12 March from Karachi. Majority of LPP participants are working class women. They will join the long march despite all the threats of being arrested.

Here in Lahore, LPP representatives participated in an organizing committee meeting called by Lahore High Court Bar Association. LPP Punjab will also join the long march from Lahore with two buses. The long march participants will be welcomed by comrades of LPP in almost all the major cities on the route of the long march. The LPP Lahore will participate in the Thursday rally of the lawyers.

In Lahore, police made a failed attempt to arrest two main leaders of LPP late last night. Police was looking for the house of Azra Shad, chairperson Women Workers Help Line and a member national committee of LPP. In another attempt, Rana Asharaf, district secretary LPP Sheikhpura, made a successful escape from being arrested late last night. They both alongside with dozens of others will participate in the long march despite the police threats.

I have gone underground again late last night. Although, police had not turned up my home as was the usual case in such circumstances, comrades advised me to go to a safer place. This was due to my health problems. I will not be part of the long march physically as I am still on a rest after going through the angioplasty. However, comrades of LPP will not let anyone feel my absence by their

active participation. Before I left home late last night, I was interviewed by Kawish Television Networks (KTN) about the arrests and the effects. The anchor person, Manzoor Sheikh was curious to know what is happening in Punjab. I told him that it is not a national question. It is simple question of betrayal by PPP leadership who happened to be from Sindh.

It seems that PPP regime is on retreat after being very aggressive in stopping the proposed long march. They have arrested over 500 political activists. The strategy to deal with the opposition is very much the same as was the case under Musharaf. "Arrest the activists and not the main leadership" is the theme behind the whole sale arrests. The Prime Minister Yousaf raza Gilani told the a gathering that he will speak to president Zaradari tomorrow about the lifting of governor rule in Punjab. He made vague remarks of the possible new Punjab government. He also tried to say that he will resolve the issue of the judiciary.

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