

# **USA: The Frameup of Purvi Patel - Indiana's barbaric anti-abortion law**

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IN A CASE worthy of medieval Europe – or, it turns out, 21<sup>st</sup> century Indiana — a woman who suffered a miscarriage was sentenced on March 30 to a 20-year prison term. As reported by Jennifer Chowdhury [1], Purvi Patel, went to the emergency room at St. Joseph Hospital in Mishawaka in July 2013, bleeding heavily. She had miscarried at home, delivering a stillborn fetus at 23-24 weeks of pregnancy, panicked and threw the remains in the dumpster.

She was convicted of “feticide and neglect of a dependent” under Indiana's barbaric anti-abortion law. Prosecutors charged that she had attempted to purchase abortion drugs online, but there was no evidence of drugs in her body.

“What this conviction means is that anti-abortion laws will be used to punish pregnant woman,” stated Lynn Paltrow, Executive Director for National Advocates for Pregnant Women. According to Deepa Iyer, Activist-in-Residence at the University of Maryland's Asian American Studies Program and former director of South Asian Americans Leading Together, “Purvi Patel's conviction amounts to punishment for having a miscarriage and then seeking medical care, something that no woman should worry would lead to jail time.”

Chowdhury reports that “Patel is the first woman to be sentenced under Indiana's feticide laws but she isn't the first woman to be charged. In 2011, Bei Bei Shuai, a Chinese American-woman, was held in prison for a year before feticide charges against her were dropped as part of a plea deal. Shuai was reportedly suffering from depression and tried to commit suicide while pregnant. She survived, but the fetus did not.”

As more and more states adopt vicious and punitive laws on the pretext of “protecting the unborn child,” cutting access to abortion down to almost nothing and forcing women to desperate and dangerous options, tragedies like the case of Purvi Patel will proliferate. [2].

Indiana is the same state that suffered a devastating nationwide backlash against its blatant right-of-discrimination law based on “religious conviction.” Isn't an equal if not greater response merited here?

**Against the Current**

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\* “The Frameup of Purvi Patel”. From Against the Current n°176, May/June 2015.  
<https://solidarity-us.org>

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## Footnotes

[1] <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/indiana-has-now-charged-two-asian-american-women-feticide-n332761>

[2] For a detailed analysis see Lynn Paltrow:  
<http://www.politicalresearch.org/2015/03/29/how-indiana-is-making-it-possible-to-jail-women-for-having-abortion/#sthash.3v2JPYMK.dpbs>