

Salim Raza, memory of a trade union leader

Saturday 20 January 2007, by [TARIO Farooq](#) (Date first published: 19 January 2007).

Dear all,

Before coming to Nairobi, I and Bushra had booked the seats via Karachi to Dubai and Nairobi, The idea was to meet Salim Raza during the few hours we had in Karachi. Salim Raza was on his last leg, we heard from our friends in Karachi. While at Lahore airport, I got a call at 5am from Nasir Mansoor, that Salim Raza is no more.

While in Karachi, I went to his house to convey our condolences to the family. I said goodbye Salim Raza, hope, we continue the same path of organizing the working class that you had dreamed of.

It had met Salim Raza several times in Karachi before Labour Party Pakistan was formed in 1997. During a national committee meeting in Karachi during 1999, Salim Raza invited all of us to a reception in honor of Labour Party leadership. It was gathering of over 300 trade union leaders. It went very well. We started close relationship. National trade Union Federation was just formed and we started cooperating with it. But it was not before 2002, that LPP declared National Trade Union Federation as one organization where all LPP trade union leaders will join and built it.

Salim Raza was happy with the developments. he always encouraged me to take initiatives and full cooperations. From 2002 till 2006, I was invited all the times to be main guest of May Day gathering organised by NTUF in Karachi. This was like an annual event of the federation where they gave chance to LPP leadership to put up their political views to there trade union leaders.

We developed good working relationship during the time but with a very short interval during 2006. The last meeting I had with him was on 27th December 2006 at his house. he was very well and OK. It was talks with all of his main leadership to clarify the confusions we had in our working relationship. The meeting last well over two hours. We were late for the meeting because of blockade of traffic. Salim Raza was calling every two to three minutes to check our where abouts.

The meeting ended with a very good note. he has made tremendous delicious food for all of us about 10 of us. We decided to launch Pakistan Trade Union Solidarity Center. That was Saleem Raza last initiative.

The Canter is been announced at the World Social Forum Nairobi.

Saleem was a trade union leader who was totally opposed to neo liberal agenda. he asked me to write a document in 2004 for the NTUF congress which I did against the neo liberal agenda. The document was approved unanimously by the congress. he put all his wheight behind this document.

Our red salute to departing rather young Salim Raza with a commitment to develop the trade union movement in Pakistan and internationally.

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