

KARACHI : Anti-govt lawyer gunned down near SHC

Wednesday 12 September 2007, by [Dawn \(Pakistan\)](#) (Date first published: 11 September 2007).

Contents

- [Targeted killing?](#)
- [Anti-MQM feelings](#)

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI, Sept 10: A senior anti-government lawyer was shot dead by armed assailants riding a motorcycle near the Arts Council on Monday, police and witnesses said.

The lawyer, Raja Mohammed Riaz, who hailed from Pind Dadan Khan, was on his way to the city courts in a taxi when two assailants on a Honda-125cc motorcycle intercepted the vehicle on Din Mohammed Wafai Road and shot him dead at around 9.15am.

The cab driver, Mohammed Aamir, told police that a single shot was fired at the victim, who was sitting on the rear seat, by the pillion rider. He said he drove straight to the Civil Hospital.

Sources at the hospital said the lawyer received one bullet wound in the head which proved fatal. They said the bullet was fired from a very close range and it pierced through the victim's skull.

DIG South Javed Ali Shah Bukhari told Dawn that an FIR of the incident had been registered against unknown assailants on the complaint of the cab driver.

"Apparently, it is a case of a targeted killing," he said, adding that an investigation was under way.

Meanwhile, the lawyer fraternity observed a boycott of the court proceedings at the Sindh High Court and City Courts in protest against the killing of Raja Riaz, 52, who was a former vice-president of the Karachi Bar Association (KBA). He had remained a student leader in the past.

Targeted killing?

Condemning the attack, KBA Secretary Naeem Qureshi also termed it a "targeted killing", and expressed the view that the act was an attempt to frighten the legal fraternity. "But we will continue our struggle for the restoration of complete democracy in the country," he vowed.

He pointed out that Raja Riaz was killed hardly half a kilometre from the Sindh High Court premises, where a large number of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement workers had started gathering at that time to attend the hearing of a case pertaining to the May 12 violence in the city.

KBA Vice-President Qadir Khan described the incident a conspiracy to terrorise the legal fraternity, observing that a big majority of lawyers across the country had been running a campaign against

General Pervez Musharraf. Accusing the government of the attack, he said such tactics could not distract the legal fraternity from their mission.

He said the KBA would hold its general body meeting at 11am on Tuesday to discuss the killing and the situation arising out of the incident. "We will continue boycott of the courts on Tuesday," he added.

Mr Khan said the fraternity stood united and would continue its struggle for the rule of law and restoration of a true democracy in the country.

Anti-MQM feelings

A large number of lawyers gathered at the Civil Hospital after hearing the news of Raja Riaz's killing and the arrival of his body there. Amid a charged atmosphere, they raised slogans against the Muttahida Qaumi Movement.

Some lawyers recalled that the slain lawyer had an altercation with Khawaja Naveed, Vice-President of the Supreme Court Bar Association, in the bar room of the Sindh High Court last week. However, Khawaja Naveed has clarified that the exchange was of minor nature and there was a patch-up between them later.

Hundreds of people, mostly lawyers, attended the Namaz-i-Janaza of Raja Riaz, father of five, in Model Colony, Malir later in the day.

Family sources said the body would be taken to his hometown on Tuesday morning. They said the deceased's younger brother was also rushing home from Saudi Arabia on Tuesday.

P.S.

* From Dawn, 11 September 2007.