

<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article1322>



Pakistan

Against the repression of the democratic movement

- News from around the world -

Publication date: Monday 8 October 2007

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

Following a new wave of arrests in late September, Europe solidaire sans frontières has relaunched the international solidarity campaign that was organized after the arrest of Farooq Tariq and several hundred people in May-June 2007.

[<https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/farooqT-3.jpg>]

Farooq Tariq

The current situation is very unclear. Some of the arrested activists have been freed on bail, others not. But the charges have not been dropped. Some, such as Farooq Tariq, though freed on bail, are being charged under anti-terrorist provisions " extremely serious charges.

The situation in Pakistan is very tense in the run-up to the October 6th presidential elections. Things could quickly turn for the worse. Repression has been stepped up, including against the movement of lawyers and journalists.

In such conditions, it is very important to make a strong show of international solidarity.

Against the repression of the democratic movement!

Immediately free the detainees and drop the charges against Farooq Tariq and all those facing repression for their participation in the pro-democracy protests.

NEW SIGNATURES can be sent to us at the [ESSF](#).

HELP US spread the word about this solidarity campaign.

Pierre Rousset

Europe solidaire sans frontières (ESSF)

29 September 2007

Farooq Tariq and other activists re-arrested in Pakistan. Solidarity campaign relaunched

A solidarity campaign had been organized following the arrest of Farooq Tariq and hundreds of other in May-June this year. In a very short time 451 signatures were collected. The campaign ended when all the detainees were freed. But we knew that the situation in the country remained very tenuous, even though the military regime had been placed on the defensive on a number of occasions by the lawyers movement and pro-democracy protests.

Our fears were well-founded. Farooq Tariq was re-arrested on 27 September following a demonstration called by, in particular, the lawyers movement that has been organized against the presidential elections being held by General

Musharraf in highly undemocratic conditions. Farooq had been in hiding for three days, since the police had already tried to detain him at his home in Lahore; but he insisted on being personally present at the demonstration.

A dozen members of the Labour Party of Pakistan (LPP) were also arrested at the same time. Two days later, on 29 September, the it was party president Nisar Shah's turn to be arrested " also following an anti-Musharraf protest.

The situation in Pakistan is currently very unstable. The repression is spreading and the number of people detained has been growing. Farooq Tariq and his comrades are being held under the Anti Terrorist Act, which gives the authorities enormous latitude.

As a result, ESSF has relaunched the solidarity campaign that began in May.

To see the initial solidarity appeal and the list of signatories, click on the following link:

[For the immediate release of Farooq Tariq and the other prisoners detained after the wave of repression of the democratic movement in Pakistan](#)

Though the language of the appeal now has to be updated, it is essentially the same campaign. The signatures collected in May and June remain valid.

29 September 2007

“Released but struggle continue”: Farooq Tariq released on bail a€” LPP chairperson Nisar Shah and Salahudin Gandapur advocate arrested

This is to inform you that I was released this evening on 29th September 2007 after an anti terrorist court judge accepted my bail application. The court has granted bail for Rupees 30,000 (\$500) each to all 12 LPP activists but due to lack of time, I was the only one to be released in time after all the papers completed. All others will be hopefully released on Monday.

The judge who accepted my bail application at the anti terrorist court of Lahore was one the few judges who had resigned in protest against suspending the chief justice of Supreme Court of Pakistan during this year. He was recently reinstated. When my bail application was moved by Asma Jahanghir advocate, chairperson of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan alongside with several other senior advocates, he immediately agreed to the bail. Earlier another judge had rejected my application.

The decision was immediately condemned by all the advocates present. They said how the police can frame 12 LPP activists who are mainly brick kiln workers with anti terrorist charges. No media report of the so-called encounter with police where a police man was injured.

LPP activists raised anti Musharraf and anti court decision slogans inside the premises of the court. This was a real act of bravery by LPP activists. No one else has done that earlier. When the LPP activists heard by some friendly police men that orders has been given to arrest all those who are raising slogans, the LPP activists escaped before

the police come to arrest them.

I was accused of a physical attack on police alongside with 30 LPP members. During the “attack” on police, one police man was unconscious and we had torn his uniform. These were the charges faced by myself and 11 other LPP activists. This was a justification to charge us under Anti Terrorist Act (ATA), these are charges brought against most of the religious fundamentalists. This was first time that I was charged with anti terrorist act. This was a total lie.

What has happened is on the contrary. As I left the demonstration of advocates on the main Mall Road of Lahore on 27th September, I was followed by several police men in plain cloths on motorbikes who intercepted me at a traffic signal. I put up resistance for five minutes but more police force arrived and I was brought to a nearby police station. Two private tv channel journalist followed the police but they were manhandled by police.

When I was the first police report on that evening at the police station, I asked the police officer who was leading my arrest why you have total false charges against me. I asked him to bring the police officer who was physically attacked by me and was unconscious, he told me with a cynic smile “This is Pakistan, what else can you expect over here”. He told me sorry, this is not me but the high ups who want a strict action against you and your comrades.

Off course, he was acting on behalf of a military government who was watching the growing influence of LPP among the advocates movement and was not ready to sit quit. Over 200 activists of LPP were the main contingent of the political activists alongside with advocates’ demonstration on 27th September. Most of them had red flags.

But the joy of release was not there while dozens of LPP activists were outside the jail gates. LPP chairperson Nisar Shah Advocate was arrested in Islamabad alongside with several advocates and activists of Peoples Rights Movement. Dozens of advocates were brutally handled by police and they were serious injuries of many in Islamabad.

Another very close supporter of LPP in Karchi, Salahudin Gandapur advocate, member Sind Bar Association was arrested as well during a demonstration in Karachi. 11 social and trade union activists were also arrested in Karachi during a demonstration. LPP Sind has planned several demonstrations tomorrow in several cities of Sind including Karachi. Salahudin Gandapur is one of the main leaders of the advocate movement in Pakistan and he contested elections for national parliament in 2002 as an LPP candidate.

Police has also attacked the journalist in Islamabad and in Peshawar. Several have been injured. The military dictatorship of General Musharraf has been weakened by the second round of advocate’s movement and it is now trying to stop it by repression. I along 11 other LPP activists were the first victims of this repression on 27th September, but that go on till tonight and many more arrested and injured during and after the anti Musharraf demonstrations.

The struggle to overthrow this military government will continue through a mass movement of the working class alongside with advocates and other radical strata of society.

TARIQ Farooq

27 September 2007

Farooq Tariq arrested once again!

Dear comrades!

Farooq Tariq, General Secretary Labor Party Pakistan, along with 10 party members, was arrested once again on Thursday (27th Sept 07), from outside Lahore High Court, third time in last three months. He was under ground for the last three days as police was looking for him to arrest him. On Thursday he surfaced for a while to participate in lawyers protest rally against General Mushrraf. Labor Party fully participated in the rally to mark protest against the filing of nomination papers by General Mushrraf for the second presidential term. The moment Farooq tried to board his car after the termination of rally at about 12 noon, a contingent of Punjab police encircled him and arrested him without showing any arrest warrants. Police also arrested 10 other party members, most of them brick kiln workers, who were peacefully dispersing after the rally. Police drove them all to Old Anarkali Police Station and detained there.

When party comrades, friends and journalists reached the police station to meet detained comrades they were refused to see them. Police also refused to reveal details of the arrests. After four hour police allowed to see the arrested comrades, and by then they registered a case against them under Terrorist Act and 16 MPO.

Meanwhile in the afternoon, members of Labor party Pakistan held a protest demo in front of Lahore Press Club to condemn the arrests and demanded immediate release of the arrested comrades and all political prisoners. According to police the arrested comrades will be produced before the anti terrorist court on Friday. Human Rights activist Asma Jehangir, Rabeya Bajwa advocate and Abid Saqi advocate will defend Farooq Tariq and 10 other arrested party comrades.