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Pakistan

Escaped by Seconds

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On the third day of my underground period, I escaped an arrest by seconds. It was all because of inexperience to live in a society that is full of high tech techniques to find a person.

[<https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/farooqdemocratic.jpg>]

Farooq Tariq

I called my partner on 6th November morning from a new SIM to send me clothes at the place where I was staying. My family has gifted me a new car recently to travel in little more comfort. I had been driving a Suzuki car 800cc for long time. I am one of the five brothers and we have three sisters. All the other decided to acknowledge my political activities by gifting me a new Toyota Corolla. The car has a tracker as well. We have a car driver who brings our two children to school and drop Shahnaz to her office. He came to bring my clothes.

I had to go to a new place in Lahore to work with some other comrades. I did not realize that car had the tracker and asked the driver to drop me at a certain place from where I could take a public transport.

As Allah Ditta was driving, he told me that he has been stopped two times yesterday by police who asked the whereabouts of mine. I got angry with him that why he did not tell me earlier. So I asked him to drive fast and drop me at the first available safe place. In the mean time, a police jeep was in front of us. He slowed down so we could come next to him. We also slowed down putting the traffic in problem at a busy road. While this went on for few seconds, The police jeep tried to come next to us. I asked Allah Ditta drive fast and turn the next road. He did that. The police jeep could not follow us.

I asked him that I must be dropped now. He stopped the car around a kilometer of the place we had this encounter. As he stopped the car, a police van stopped just next to us. Because we had already stopped the car, I jumped out of the car and while the police were still stopping their van. I rushed myself into a running three wheeler and asked the driver to drive fast. He was surprised but acted accordingly. There was a lot of rush and there was a lot of three wheelers around the place. So the police could not follow me.

The driver told me later that the police van followed him for another three kilometers and then let him go while could not find me.

In the afternoon, two plain clothes police officers came to the place I was staying for the night and enquired about me. I was not there. They had to leave in disbelief.

Five of us were together to work on the movement. We issued the press releases from there about our participations in the movement and that I will not offer arrest but will organize the movement in underground. We faxed the press releases to all the news media after checking the telephone number that would appear on the fax. It was LPP number but we were not at LPP office.

We bought some more SIMs on anonymous names. I had to arrange a new place to stay. My friends are fantastic. They are all waiting when I call them to stay the night. I am not staying at LPP comrade's houses as they are already under surveillance. I had a good night and good sleep after I arrived the place of my friend travelling over one hour in a public bus.

Yesterday, the picture of one of the LPP comrade Rabia Shahzadi was on the front page of some papers in Lahore.

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She is an advocate and was pictured while throwing stones on the police.

She told me later on the telephone that, at one time, she was the only one fighting with police. She saved herself afterwards in a library when police entered to arrest over 700 advocates from the premises of the Lahore High Court. She was full time for a short while then later went to practice as an advocate.

She went yesterday to different police stations to help the advocates who were in custody despite, being printed on front page.

Yesterday, In Islamabad, the advocate's movement was also led by Nisar Shah Advocate who is chairperson of LPP. He was in forefront of the demonstration of advocates in Islamabad alongside with LPP comrades. He is not arrested yet. Although, on 5th November, he just escaped an arrest from a demonstration in Rawalpindi.

At Karachi, LPP comrade Shakeel was dragged by police during a demonstration in front of Karachi Press Club on 5th November. This led some press photographers to intervene to save Shakeel. A fight started and that led to the arrest of several press photographers and political activists. It was mainly LPP comrades who had started the sloganeering in front of police while others were inside the press club building.

Police has raided the house of the secretary of LPP Punjab Afzal Soraya three times during the last two days but he is safe.

The plain clothes police came to the LPP office in Lahore and checked if I am there. They went to Good Books shop and remained there for some time on the pretext of buying books. They tried to ask about the whereabouts of the different comrades pretending that they are LPP supporters and want to join the party. The comrade in charge of the Good Books is an experienced comrade: he immediately realized who they are. He cleverly convinced them to buy Tariq Ali's book "Clash of fundamentalism" while offering all the comradely hospitality of tea and good political talk. Comrades told me the story after they left the office proudly telling that that they came to look for you but instead took a book that may change their minds.

Today is the morning of the fourth day and I am again writing this from a public net café and will open the mail for few minutes to send this story and leave the place.

Thanks for some comrades telling me more about the information technology and how to avoid the arrest.

I will try to write every two days all the main happenings of the underground life to share with the comrades in Pakistan and internationally.