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Pakistan

Labour Party Pakistan leader killed in suicidal attack

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Comrade Abdullah Qureshi (72) is no longer with us. A member of North West Frontier Province (NWFP) provincial council of LPP died in a suicidal attack in Swat valley. He was one of the best known senior Left leaders of the valley.

[https://internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/abdullah_q_1_.jpg]

At present, a military operation is going on in the valley against religious fundamentalists and the majority of the valley is under the control of the religious fundamentalists. One of the main reasons given by Musharraf dictatorship for the imposition of emergency on 3 November 2007 was to free the valley from the religious fanatics.

Abdullah Qureshi was the pioneer of Left politics in the Swat valley. Born in 1935, he came from a working class background in the valley. He organized the first organization "Swat Rorwali" (Swat goodwill) in early Fifties. The organization spoke out against the Nawab of Swat and he was arrested several times for organizing the people's resistance against the king. He was deported from the valley in the early Sixties and his nationality was revoked. The Nawab of valley had the ultimate powers in the valley. He settled in Gojaranwala in Punjab. He was a close friend of Ajmal Khatak and Sikander Khan Khalil, the leaders of National Awami Party (NAP), the main Left party in the Sixties.

In 1968, the Swat valley formally joined Pakistan. Comrade Abdullah Qureshi went back to Swat to organize NAP. He was elected as general secretary of the NAP Swat. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto banned the party in 1974 and Abdullah Qureshi was one of those arrested at the time. He then went on to join Awami National Party (ANP), the new name of the banned party. He was not satisfied with the ideological confusion within the party and wanted more Socialism as part of the ANP. Later he joined Pakistan National Party of Bazinjo. He left Left politics after the fall of Soviet Union. He was very disappointed by these developments.

He joined the Labour Party Pakistan after it organized the largest May Day rally in 2006. Over 600 had joined the rally and they all came from different small industrial units of the valley. The red flags all over the valley inspired him to take a decision to join the party even at this age.

During the second NWFP provincial conference in June 2007, he was elected as one of the 21 member of NWFP LPP Council. Within the year, he had organized the party in different parts of the valley and LPP became the main party of the Left in the valley. Most of the Left activists joined the party after his decision to join the party.

Hakim Bahudar, Peasant secretary of the LPP and member of LPP national committee was a close friend of Abdullah Qureshi. He tells us more about Abdullah Qureshi "he had been very much inspired by LPP activities for some time. He was a regular reader of the Weekly Mazdoor Jeddojuhd (workers Struggle). After his decision to join LPP, party became very respected and prestigious in the completely valley. He was the symbol of Left politics in the valley."

Abdullah Qureshi was killed in the suicidal attack near the NangoLai area check post. He was passing through the area when the attacker blew himself up resulting in the killing of several other civilians. The incident happened on 9 December 2007. It was the day when the LPP fourth conference was taking place in Lahore. He and other delegates from the valley could not attend because of roadblocks and military operation. Only comrade Hakim Bahadur was able to escape from the valley to attend the conference organized on urgent basis.

The family did not want to disclose the news earlier because of fear of more attacks. They did not want the news to be public. The family fears that it was a targeted attack on him because of his Left ideas. The family is investigating

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this aspect and has asked the LPP NWFP to help in the matter. Now, with the permission of the family, LPP is announcing his death with great pain.

Although comrade Abdullah Qureshi was only for 16 months in the LPP, but his whole life was devoted to Left ideas. He worked in the most difficult circumstances. He joined LPP while there was an upsurge of religious fundamentalist ideas in the valley. He did not care about his life but more of ideas.

The LPP will hold memorial meetings all over Pakistan for comrade Abdullah Qureshi.