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Pakistan

Second life sentence handed down to Baba Jan and Iftikhar Hussain

- News from around the world -

Publication date: Wednesday 29 October 2014

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For instigating prisoners to protest against inhuman conditions, Baba Jan and Iftikhar Hussain gets second life imprisonments.

Baba Jan and Iftikhar Hussain were sentenced for a second time to life imprisonment by the Anti Terrorist Court in Gilgit today in another case.

They were charged with instigating prisoners in Gilgit Jail to protest against inhuman treatment of jail authorities while Baba Jan was in jail for two years.

This was a fact.

He led a movement of the prisoners to demand just treatment for all those in jail according to the jail manual for prisoners. He demanded to provide healthy food, meat twice a week, milk, fresh bread and tea twice a day and all that was written as a right of prisoners.

He also demanded proper health facilities and doctor visit to all inmates on regular basis.

After the successful upsurge in the prison during 2011, which united for the first time Shia and Sunni prisoners, the jail authorities were forced to accept the demands and for weeks prisoners were provided food and health facilities according to the jail manuals.

He and Iftikhar Hussain were framed in another case while they were in prison for instigating prisoners under terrorist laws.

Today both got the second life imprisonments in this case.

Baba Jan is known as Bhaghat Singh of the valley. Bhaghat Singh, a freedom fighter against British colonial rule also led a movement for prisoners right to decent treatment.

Maybe Baba Jan and Iftikhar are the first political prisoners in Pakistan and Gilgit Baltistan history who got a life imprisonment for taking up the case of worsening prisoners rights.

He led the peaceful movement in which no physical attacks were made on any prison officials. Prisoners just refused to cooperate.

Awami Workers Party condemns this second life imprisonment to Baba Jan and Iftikhar. We want to make it absolute clear, there is no going back.

The PPP regime in Gilgit can go to any length hand in hand with scaled judiciary to punish the political activists but this will not break the will of Baba Jan and his comrades to change the system and with setting up examples of hardship and sacrifices.

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Long live Baba Jan, Iftikhar Hussain and their comrades !

We will not leave you alone !

A national and international solidarity campaign will continue!