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Pakistani-occupied Jammu Kashmir

# **An urgent appeal to raise voices for the safety of political activist, human rights defender Shah Nawaz Ali Sher**

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**Jammu Kashmir Awami Workers Party (JKAWP) calls to raise voices for the safety of political activist, human rights defender Shah Nawaz Ali Sher arrested by the authorities in Pakistani-occupied Jammu Kashmir.**

Jammu Kashmir Awami Workers Party (JKAWP) central organizer Comrade Shah Nawaz Ali Sher was arrested in the Nakyal district of Pakistani-occupied Azad Kashmir on 17 May 2021. He was picked up by police outside court premises where he had gone to apply for pre-arrest bail. The local police had registered a First information Report (FIR) against him in compliance with an application from assistant commissioner Nakyal Muhammad Umer Farooq on false charges of inciting hatred among the masses.

A police case registered against him on 5 May alleged that he has discredited the work of the administration and interfered in their job through social media and political campaigning against them.

The comrade arrested, Shahnwas Sher, is a young advocate and social media activist who speaks out unceasingly against malpractice by the local administration and injustice to the ordinary public and working class. Shahnawaz has been critical of the policies of Pakistani establishment and intelligence agencies in ruling Azad Kashmir as its colony. He has defended the rights of indigenous people and advocated for a free and independent Jammu Kashmir in solidarity and support from international working class and peoples movement.

After the registration of the FIR, police raided his home and tried to arrest him, the police also harassed his family members for his arrest. He successfully managed to save himself from arrest during the Eid holidays with the help of local JKAWP comrades. The state wanted to arrest and torture him during the the holiday period as local courts were closed and no one could approach the court.

This is normal practice in Pakistani-controlled Jammu Kashmir to detain the people before they can approach the court. This practice is totally against the fundamental human rights of the arrested person and the existing judicial system.

On 17 May, he was on the way to the local court for pre-arrest bail but before he could reach the court, was arrested on the premises, which is against the norms of the justice system and the same treatment as given to heinous criminals. His right to pre arrest bail and safely to defend himself was forcefully snatched. He is now being tortured, pressurized and harassed in police custody according to the reports.

Comrade Shah Nawaz Ali Sher is one of the main leaders of JKAWP. We strongly condemn the false and fabricated charges against him by state. JKAWP is proud of his revolutionary struggle for the rights of oppressed people and the working class.

The Jammu Kashmir Awami Workers Party strongly believes that the unity of local and international working class is the only way to fight against injustice of brutal capitalist state structure and system.

Comrade Shah Nawaz Ali Sher has been part of the international struggle for the emancipation of the working class. He has participated in international global justice school Manila organized by International Institute for research and education (IIRE).

We need your support and solidarity for the release and safety of our comrade, international unity and solidarity is the only way to restrain Pakistan and its colonial administration from their brutality and oppression.

18 May 2021

**Please write to:**

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2. Chief Secretary AJK + 92(582)-2921034 E-mail csajk@gmail.com
3. Inspector General Police Azad Kashmir +92(582)-2930812 E-mail info@ajk.gov.pak

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