

Urgent appeal for Baba Jan, prisoner of climate change

Saturday 5 May 2012, by [ANGUS Ian](#), [Climate and Capitalism](#), [Natural Choices](#), [SHIELD Peter](#) (Date first published: 3 May 2012).

Last year, after devastating floods swept the Atta Abad Lakes region of Pakistan, police opened fire on a demonstration of people demanding compensation. Two people were killed.

Baba Jan, a federal committee member of the Labour Party Pakistan (LPP), was among the first to raise the issue of Atta Abad Lake flood victims. He toured Pakistan in 2011 to organise rallies and demonstrations to highlight the plight of villagers who have lost their homes to this newly formed lake caused by deforestation, soil erosion and climate change. He spoke to the national media in press conferences held in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad.



Baba Jan speaking at a demonstration for flood victims.

The corporate media finally took up the issue and some compensation was paid to the victims, however a new movement began to urge compensation for all affected, as some had not been compensated. In July, police opened fire at a protest rally, killing two people.

Instead of arresting the officers involved in the deaths, police laid fabricated charges against Baba Jan. He has been in jail since, and has been repeatedly beaten and tortured.

Pakistan supporters of Baba Jan have appealed for international support. Please send emails and letters similar to the one below to the Embassy or High Commission for Pakistan in your country immediately.

Ian Angus

His Excellency Mian Gul Akbar Zeb
High Commission for Pakistan
10 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J3

Email: parepottawa@rogers.com

Dear sir,

We have been informed by the Labour Party of Pakistan that Baba Jan, Waqar and other activists in Gilgit district jail were severely beaten and tortured by dozens of Rangers, Police and Frontier Constabulary in the early morning of April 28, 2012.

We are especially concerned for the fate of Baba Jan, who was taken from the Gilgit district jail by security personnel and transported to a place unknown.

We strongly protest against this violence and object to the prison authorities' ban on visitors to these political activists. It appears that the responsible authorities have failed in their duty to maintain safe custody of these prisoners. This kind of treatment of political activists is intolerable in a democratic Pakistan.

Please pass on to your government our urgent call for the immediate release of Baba Jan, Waqar and all other activists from custody, and for lifting the ban by Gilgit district jail authorities on visitors to these activists. Further, please determine and advise us of the location of Baba Jan and any others taken from Gilgit district jail.

The Gilgit district jail authorities should publicly indicate the health status of each of Baba Jan, Waqar and the other activists. They are considered to be in dire need of medical assistance, something the authorities should facilitate. We request that they be immediately released and be promptly transferred to hospital if necessary.

We are extremely anxious for the safety of the above persons, and wish to learn their legal and health status as soon as possible.

A very broad layer of people around the world is concerned about the fate of Baba Jan and his fellow activists, who are political casualties of the deepening global climate change crisis. They have been imprisoned for their roles in the campaign by poor local residents who were demanding compensation for the devastating landslide and flood in the Hunza Valley in 2010.

International flood relief campaigns for Pakistan have also increased public awareness of the situation. The success of future emergency appeals could be compromised if there were serious concerns that the victims of flooding and their advocates are being mistreated by Pakistani officials at any level of government.

We urge the Government of Pakistan to act immediately on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

Climate & Capitalism
An ecosocialist journal
Ian Angus, Editor

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<http://climateandcapitalism.com/2012/05/03/urgent-appeal-for-baba-jan-prisoner-of-climate-change/>

Urgent appeal for Baba Jan, prisoner of climate change

From Natural Choices

* http://www.naturalchoices.co.uk/Urgent-appeal-for-Baba-Jan?id_mot=10

Last year, after devastating floods swept the Atta Abad Lakes region of Pakistan, police opened fire on a demonstration of people demanding compensation. Two people were killed. Baba Jan, a federal committee member of the Labour Party Pakistan (LPP), was among the first to raise the issue of Atta Abad Lake flood victims, writes Ian Angus, editor of Climate and Capitalism

He toured Pakistan in 2011 to organise rallies and demonstrations to highlight the plight of villagers who have lost their homes to this newly formed lake caused by deforestation, soil erosion and climate change. He spoke to the national media in press conferences held in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad.

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High Commission for Pakistan
10 Range Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8J3

Email: parepottawa@rogers.com

or

His Excellency Wajid Shamsul Hasan
Head of Chancery
High Commission for Pakistan
34 - 36 Lowndes Square
London
SW1X 9JN

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Yours sincerely,
Peter Shield
