

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 33/22/95

22 September 1995

Further information on UA 130/95 (ASA 33/17/95, 9 June 1995) and follow-up (ASA 33/19/95, 23 June) - Prisoners of conscience / Health concern

PAKISTAN Zafar Yab Ahmad, journalist

Mohammad Salim, worker with the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF)

new name: Ashraf, BLLF cashier

Zafar Yab Ahmad has been released on bail on health grounds from Camp Jail, Lahore. He was originally held on charges of sedition and was alleged to have undermined "Pakistani interest abroad" by having published reports about bonded labour.

Mohammad Salim, the accountant for the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF) and Ashraf, the cashier of the same organization, both of whom were arrested with Zafar Yab Ahmad, remain in detention in Camp Jail, Lahore. According to reports they both have full access to lawyers and BLLF members have been allowed to deliver food to them on a daily basis.

A petition has been filed by Zafar Yab Ahmad's lawyer to quash proceedings on the grounds that procedural requirements have not been fulfilled. A date for this hearing has not yet been set.

In relation to this case, the investigation into the murder of Iqbal Masih has been completed and a report has been submitted to the government. The report, which has not been made public, is believed to recommend a reinvestigation of the case by a senior police officer.

Ehsanullah Khan, the BLLF president and a co-accused in this case, has not been arrested as he is currently in Europe.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- welcoming reports that Zafar Yab Ahmad has been released on bail on health grounds;
- reiterating calls for the charges of sedition and conspiracy against Zafar Yab Ahmad and Ehsanullah Khan to be immediately and unconditionally dropped;
- calling for Mohammad Salim and Ashraf to be released if they are not to be charged with recognizably criminal offences;
- calling for the report of the investigation into the death of Iqbal Masih to be published and its recommendations followed up.

APPEALS TO:

1. President Farooq Ahmad Leghari

Office of the President

Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: +92 51 811390

Telexes: 54058 PSPUB PK

Telegrams: President Leghari, Islamabad, Pakistan

Salutation: Dear President

2. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto

Office of the Prime Minister

Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: +92 51 821968 or 821835 or 823144

Telexes: 5742 PMH PK

Telegrams: Prime Minister Bhutto, Islamabad, Pakistan

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

3. Mr Nabi Dad Khan

Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Ministry of Law and Justice

Pakistan Secretariat

Islamabad, Pakistan

Telegrams: Minister of Law, Islamabad, Pakistan

Salutation: Dear Minister

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Pakistan accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 November 1995.