

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 33/24/97

18 July 1997

Further information on Extra 94/97 (ASA 33/20/97, 7 July 1997) and follow-up (ASA 33/21/97, 8 July 1997) - Possible prisoner of conscience/disregard for pre-trial legal safeguards

PAKISTANHumayun Fur, journalist

During the hearing of the habeas corpus petition relating to the detention of Humayun Fur on 14 July, Humayun Far was again not brought to court as reportedly directed by the judge in the earlier hearing on 8 July. The Attorney General who was accompanied by two officers of the military intelligence service, Inter Services Intelligence, and of the military General Headquarters, asserted that serious allegations linked to the security of the country had been levelled against Humayun Fur. The Attorney General asked the presiding judge to adjourn the proceedings by two weeks so that more evidence could be gathered and to conduct future hearings in camera. Justice Mumtaz Ali Mirza of the Rawalpindi bench of the Lahore High Court ruled that the next hearing be held on 28 July in camera. He said that if the court deemed it necessary that Humayun Fur should be present at the next hearing, it would issue order to that effect.

Humayun Fur's wife and children met the prisoner in the office of the Superintendent of police; he was reportedly found not to have suffered ill-treatment in custody.

Pakistan law requires that nobody be detained without charge or trial, except those held under preventive detention laws, that everyone be brought before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest and that every prisoner be given access to a lawyer. None of these requirements have been fulfilled in the case of the detention of Humayun Far. The charges, if there are any, and the place of his detention have not been disclosed, he was not brought before a magistrate, remand was not given to the detaining authorities and his lawyer has not been able to meet Humayun Far.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Humayun Far if he is held solely for the pursuit of his professional activities;
- urging them to meticulously respect all the legal safeguards relating to arrest and detention available under Pakistan law, including access to a lawyer, if cognizable criminal charges have indeed been brought against him;
- urging the government to ensure that the orders of the High Court are obeyed and the prisoner is brought before it.

APPEALS TO:

When faxing, if unable to obtain a tone, try again later, preferably in office hours, Pakistan time.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif
Office of the Prime Minister
Islamabad, Pakistan

Telexes: 5742 PMH PK

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: 92 51 9208890 / 9201545

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
Islamabad, Pakistan

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: 92 51 9201472

Salutation: Dear Minister

President Farooq Leghari
Office of the President
Islamabad, Pakistan

telegrams: President Leghari, Islamabad, Pakistan

faxes: 92 51 9204067/9211018

Salutation: Dear President

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 15 August 1997.