URGENT ACTION

FAMILY MEMBERS OF POLITICIANS RETURNED

Professors Mazhar-ul-Hassan and Zahoor-ul-Hassan and Ghulam Shabbir, family members of political workers from the opposition party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), were forcibly disappeared in June 2024. These family members were targeted as part of a concerted effort to silence activists and political opposition members exiled abroad. Ghulam Sabbir returned on 3 August 2024, while Mazhar-ul-Hassan and Zahoor-ul-Hassan returned home on 6 September 2024 after intervention from Pakistan's high courts calling for their immediate recovery.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Mazhar-ul-Hassan and Zahoor-ul-Hassan, brothers of opposition party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) member Azhar Mashwani, were abducted in the early hours of 6 June 2024 by armed men who forcibly entered their residence in Lahore. Those entering the home consisted of plain-clothed men as well as officials in Counter Terrorism Department uniforms. A habeas corpus petition was filed at the Lahore High Court, but the police repeatedly refused to present them in court despite multiple directives from the court.

Ghulam Shabbir, brother of Shahbaz Gill, advisor to former Prime Minister Imran Khan, was abducted around 11:45 pm on 8 June 2024 when he left his residence in Lahore to travel to Islamabad. Ghulam's disappearance happened just a few hours after the police raided the family's ancestral home in Faisalabad at 8 pm on 8 June 2024.

Both Azhar Mashwani and Shahbaz Gill are exiled outside Pakistan after the ousting of the PTI from power in April 2022. They served in prominent positions during PTI's government from 2018 to 2022. Shahbaz Gill served as the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) when Imran Khan was Prime Minister, and Azhar Mashwani was the focal person to the Chief Minister of Punjab on digital media during from 2019 to 2022 when PTI was in power in the province. The enforced disappearance of their family members was aimed at silencing political opposition and intimidating them from exercising their right to freedom of expression while outside the country.

Ghulam Sabbir returned on 3 August 2024 after multiple orders from the Islamabad High Court calling for his release. Mazhar and Zahoor returned home on 6 September 2024 after being forcibly disappeared for 92 days. Their recovery came after a long legal battle at the Islamabad High Court. The court had noted that their disappearance violated right to life and liberty guaranteed under Pakistan's Constitution.

NAME AND PREFFERED PRONOUN: Professor Mazhar-ul-Hassan (he/him); **Professor Zahoor-ul-Hassan** (he/him); **Ghulam Shabbir** (he/him)

THIS IS THE SECOND AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 58/24

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa33/8255/2024/en/