

EXTERNAL

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Prisoner of conscience / Fear of torture

7 July 1997

PAKISTAN Humayun Far, journalist

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The whereabouts of journalist Humayun Far, arrested on 28 June 1997 in Islamabad, remain unknown. The government of Pakistan failed to bring him to court on 5 July as directed by the High Court. Amnesty International is concerned for Humayun Far's safety in detention, and believes that on the evidence it has received, Humayun Far is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his professional activities as a journalist.

Humayun Far, bureau chief of the Peshawar-based daily "Mashriq" was arrested at 9.30pm on 28 June. He and his wife were standing outside their home in Islamabad when unidentified persons, one of whom reportedly wore a police uniform, drove up, forced Humayun Far into their car and sped off.

Humayun Far's whereabouts could not be established by his family as local police stations denied holding him. However, on 30 June, Interior Minister Chaudry Shujaat Hussain told the National Assembly that Humayun Far was in the custody of a government agency which he did not name. He said Humayun Far was being held for providing classified documents to an unspecified neighbouring country and had thus engaged in anti-state activities.

Humayun Far's son filed a *habeas corpus* petition in the high court of Punjab. On 4 July, Justice Munir Sheikh ordered that the government bring Humayun Far before the court on 5 July. However, on that day the representative of the Interior Ministry reportedly told the judge that the government was unable to bring Humayun Far before the court without providing any further information. A further hearing is to take place on 8 July 1997.

Being held in incommunicado detention, Humayun Far is being denied all legal safeguards available under Pakistan law, including access to a lawyer and his family. Such detention facilitates torture which is habitually used in Pakistani detention centres.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Humayun Far and to provide him access to a lawyer and to his family;
- urging the government to ensure that Humayun Far is not subjected to torture or other forms of ill-treatment;
- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release him as a prisoner of conscience.

**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

**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 7 August 1997.