

# URGENT ACTION

## DETAINED 70-YEAR OLD PROFESSOR'S HEALTH AT RISK

**70-year-old retired professor Dr Zafar Arif was arrested on 22 October and remains without access to a lawyer or medical care. He is a heart patient and there are grave concerns for his health.**

**Dr Zafar Arif**, a 70-year-old professor, was arrested on 22 October by the Sindh Rangers when entering the Press Club in Karachi, the capital of Sindh Province in the south of Pakistan. He was scheduled to deliver a second press conference on behalf of the Muttahida Quami Movement political party London (MQM) after an earlier one he delivered on behalf of the party on 16 October. On 22 October, Dr Zafar Arif was charged under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance for inciting public disorder and detained at Karachi Central Prison with two other party members, Kanwar Khalid Younus and Amjadullah Khan. Khalid Younus was released on 22 November, and according to Dr Zafar Arif's family members, Amjadullah Khan continues to be detained and is routinely beaten. Dr Zafar Arif remains detained in Karachi Central Prison without access to medical care or legal representation.

On 17 November, Dr Zafar Arif's detention was extended for a further 30 days by the Government of Sindh Home Department. According to the Deputy Inspector General of Police South Zone Karachi's report, his detention was extended because it was felt that his release would increase tensions between MQM London and MQM Pakistan, and would cause "disruption of public peace". On 20 December, the Home Ministry ordered Dr Zafar Arif's and Amjadullah Khan's release. However, according to Dr Zafar Arif's family, the media and other witnesses gathered outside the prison, both were rearrested minutes after their release by the Azizabad police and taken to the police station where he was held in custody overnight. Media sources claim they were both charged due to inflammatory speech.

Throughout his detention, Dr Zafar Arif has been denied access to a lawyer and medical attention. He is a heart patient who has undergone two heart bypasses. His doctor in the US has written a letter on 25 October to the Sindh Government, Federal Government and the Armed Forces of Pakistan, highlighting the importance of providing him with regular medication. However, this continues to be denied by the prison authorities.

### **Please write immediately in English or Urdu or your own language:**

- Urging the Pakistani authorities to ensure that Dr Zafar Arif is allowed immediate and regular access to a lawyer of his choice;
- Urging them to ensure that he is provided with adequate medical care, and to the same standard as is available outside prison;
- If there is credible evidence that he may have committed an offence, recognisable under international law and standards that he is granted a fair trial and all due process guarantees.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 FEBRUARY 2017 TO:**

President of Pakistan

Honourable Mr Mamnoon Hussain

President's Secretariat

Islamabad, Pakistan

Fax: +92 51 920 8479

Twitter: @Mamnoon\_hussain

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Prime Minister of Pakistan

Muhammad Nawaz Sharif

Prime Minister's House

Secretariat, Constitution Avenue

Islamabad, Pakistan

Fax: +92 51 922 0404 (PM Secretariat)

Twitter: @pmln\_org

**Salutation: Dear Prime Minister**

Chief Minister of Sindh

Syed Murad Ali Shah

Chief Minister of Sindh

Sindh Secretariat, Tughluq House

Shrah-e Kemal Ataturk

Karachi, Pakistan

Fax: +92 19 920 2000

Twitter: @Sayedmuradshah

**Salutation: Dear Chief Minister**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Amnesty International has received scores of credible allegations of violations committed by members of the police and the paramilitary unit, Rangers. The Rangers are deployed in Karachi under the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 (ATA 1997), which authorizes them to detain and arrest individuals suspected of terrorism-related offences as defined in that Act, which are tried in an Anti-Terrorism Court. The broad definition of offences under the ATA 1997 also gives the Rangers in Karachi the policing powers to act against individuals suspected of involvement in sectarian killings, kidnappings for ransom, and extortion. Individuals from all backgrounds, have been subjected to human rights violations by the Rangers in Karachi. Amnesty International is concerned that existing security laws and practices, and the absence of any independent, impartial and transparent mechanisms to investigate the Rangers and other state security forces, have enabled an environment in which state forces have near total impunity to perpetrate violations in Karachi.

Scores of political activists from the MQM and other political parties have been arbitrarily arrested. On the morning of 3 May, Aftab Ahmed, an assistant to a senior MQM leader who had been detained by the Rangers in Karachi, was brought to Jinnah Hospital complaining of chest pains and died the same morning. His body bore what appeared to be signs of torture. A day later and under public pressure, the Director-General of the Rangers for Sindh admitted that Aftab Ahmed had been tortured while in custody but denied that his forces were responsible for his death.

Dr Asim Hussain, a senior member of the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) and a former federal minister, was arrested by the Rangers on 26 August 2015 on charges of "being involved in offences relating to misappropriation of funds for enhancing and supporting terrorism activities" under the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and two other cases by the National Accountability Bureau for corruption. He was subsequently held by the Rangers under administrative detention at Sub Jail Mitha Ram Hostel Karachi between August and November 2015. Dr Asim Hussain claims that during this time, he was subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment by being made to stand in a dark room all night with his hands tied behind his back. He was also denied access to a lawyer and claims not to have received adequate medical treatment. On 22 September 2015, during the period he was held by the Rangers, he was admitted to the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) complaining of sweating, dizziness, uncontrolled blood-pressure, and a cardiac condition. According to a medical panel formed by the NICVD for Dr Asim Hussain's treatment, he was taken away from the hospital by the Rangers on 28 September in the middle of the night along with his medical records without the hospital administration being informed, despite his need for ongoing medical care. Since November 2015, Dr Asim Hussain has been transferred into the custody of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the Sindh Police and is held in Jinnah Hospital. His health has deteriorated considerably during this time – he has complained of an irregular heartbeat, sweating and chest pain, and in their report, the Medical Board at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre in Karachi have recommended a back surgery, which his family claim is being denied by the authorities due to the delays in his trial. Pakistan is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of which Article 9 stipulates the right to a fair trial.

Name: Dr Zafar Arif  
Gender m/f: m

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