

**Mr. Ansar Ahmed BURNEY**

(Nominated by the Government of Pakistan)

Born in August 14<sup>th</sup> 1956 in Karachi, Syed Ansar Ahmed Burney is a pioneering human rights activist in Pakistan who has been working in this field for nearly 30 years ago.

***Education***

A graduate of Karachi University with a Masters in Law. Also received an honorary PhD in philosophy.

***Career as a Lawyer and Human Rights Activist***

Ansar Burney is a practicing lawyer and founder of the Ansar Burney Trust.

As a vocal and prominent student leader in the 1970s, Ansar Burney was a known voice for justice, freedom of speech and for human and civil rights during martial law in Pakistan.

In 1977 at the age of 20, Ansar Burney was arrested on charges of delivering speeches against martial law in Pakistan and was sentenced to 8 months rigorous imprisonment. Upon his release, he was again arrested by the martial law authorities and sent to Karachi Prison for a further 2 months detention. In 1979, he was arrested yet again for a third time and detained for a month.

During this time of detention in different prisons, Ansar Burney witnessed first hand the condition of prisons and the treatment of prisoners. During detention, he met innocent people who had been locked up without committing a crime or a fair trial.

He, therefore, decided to help those in need. After completing his law degree in 1980, Ansar Burney established the “*Prisoners Aid Society*” with the purpose of bringing reforms in prisons and to get the release of innocent and illegally confined prisoners.

Ansar Burney soon became the voice of innocent prisoners. As a result of his continued and selfless work, Ansar Burney has been able to secure the release of around 700,000 innocent prisoners from countries all around the world. These include persons locked up on false charges, those released from illegal prisons, sane persons illegally detained in mental asylums, illegal immigrants and those released from labour camps.

Ansar Burney has transformed the “*Prisoners Aid Society*” into a true human rights organization by the name of “*Ansar Burney Trust*” (ABT) – working for justice without discrimination and against all forms of human rights violations.

Ansar Burney has led legal missions, humanitarian relief teams and fought for the rights of the innocents in many parts of the world.

Ansar Burney is an authority on human rights in Pakistan and the Middle East. He has hosted and attended hundreds of National and International Conferences, groups and forums and has received over 200 awards and medals from home and abroad. He is credited with major social and legal reforms in Pakistan and has successfully led and won many international campaigns around the world.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2002, due to his outstanding achievements, Ansar Burney became the first person in the history of Pakistan to receive the National Civil Award “Sitar-e-Imtiaz” in the field of human rights. In 2005, due his two decade long successful international campaign to end modern day slavery of children working as child camel jockeys in the Middle East, Ansar Burney was declared an international hero by the US State Department in the field of Anti-Human Trafficking.

On 16 November 2007, Ansar Burney was sworn in as the Pakistan Federal Minister for Human Rights in the interim government. He has been given the responsibility to improve the human rights of all in Pakistan.