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Six address rally for dying Bram

By

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FOUR LEADERS whose long banning orders were relaxed last year will be among the six speakers who will address a "Free Bram Fischer and all political prisoners" rally organised by the Human Rights Committee.

The four are Mr William Barney Ngakane, Mr Don Mateman, a former trade unionist, Mrs Helen Joseph and Mrs Lillian Ngoyi. Sharing the platform with them will be Dr Beyers Naude of the Christian Institute and Mr E. Shabangu.

One of the rally organisers, Miss Sheila Weinberg, told the Rand Daily Mail Extra that the Johannesburg City Council had given permission for the rally to be held on Sunday.

"Initially we planned to hold it outdoors opposite the old market but because of the weather we decided on the Gandhi Hall," she said.

Bram Fischer was jailed for life under the Sabotage

Act and is now in his ninth year in jail. Specialists have found that he is dying from cancer of the spine, brain and hip and only has a few months to live.

His family have made repeated pleas for him to be released so that he can spend his last days with them. Several prominent South Africans and overseas leaders have also asked for clemency for Fischer.

But the Minister of Justice and Prisons — the only man who can free Fischer — Mr Jimmy Kruger, told Parliament last week that he would not free the ex-advocate.

The Human Rights Committee in a statement said Mr Bram Fischer came from a distinguished Afrikaner family: his father was a judge president of the Orange Free State and Bram is a grandson of a former president of the O.F.S.

He is a barrister of international repute, a former leader of the outlawed SA Communist Party and has appeared in many big political trials, among them the Rivonia and Treason Trials.

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Rally to call for Fischer's release

Staff Reporter

A MASS rally to call for the release of Bram Fischer and other political detainees has been arranged for 1 pm tomorrow, five hours after a ban on such meetings expires.

It will take place at the Gandhi Hall, 50 Fox Street, Johannesburg.

A rally scheduled for the same venue yesterday was cancelled after the city's chief magistrate, Mr N. H. Blem, announced a ban on Human Rights Committee meetings until 8 am tomorrow.

Yesterday the family of life-prisoner Bram Fischer former communist leader in South Africa, appealed to the Minister of Justice to allow Fischer to leave hospital immediately and go home for two weeks.

In a letter to Mr Jimmy Kruger, Fischer's son-in-law, Dr Tim Wilson, said the doctors treating Fischer for cancer had now said it would be beneficial for him to be allowed home for a fortnight for a "change of scene and to build up his strength before returning to hospital once more."

Dr Wilson was replying to a statement by Mr Kruger that he would consider parole for Fischer if he and his family came forward with "acceptable undertakings".

"They have never done this," said Mr Kruger yesterday.