

PUBLIC

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UA 113/07 Fear for safety/ Fear of torture and ill-treatment

IRAN	Bejaz Ahmad Qasabian (m)]
	Moqdad Khalilpour (m)]
	Pooya Mahmoudian (m)] students at Amir Kabir Polytechnic
	Majid Tavakkoli (m)] in Tehran
	Majid Sheikhpour (m)]
	Babak Zamanian (m)]

At least six students, four of whom are connected with student publications, from Amir Kabir Polytechnic in the capital, Tehran, have been arrested and are believed to be held in the city's Evin Prison. Amnesty International fears that they may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Ahmad Qasabian, Moqdad Khalilpour, Pooya Mahmoudian, Majid Tavakkoli and Majid Sheikhpour are editors-in-chief of student publications. All men were reportedly detained apparently in connection with articles deemed by university officials to "insult Islamic sanctities", a criminal offence. These reportedly appeared on 30 April in several student publications.

According to reports, Ahmad Qasabian, the managing editor of "Sahar" was arrested on 3 May, and Moqdad Khalilpour, the editor of "Atiyeh" was arrested on 7 May. Three other students, Pooya Mahmoudian, editor-in-chief of "Rivar"; Majid Tavakkoli, editor-in-chief of "Khat-e Sefer" and Majid Sheikhpour, editor-in-chief of "Sar-e Khat", other student publications, were reportedly summoned to a Revolutionary Court on 8 May and were detained by judicial officials that afternoon.

Ahmad Qasabian is reportedly held in Section 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran, run by the Ministry of Intelligence and outside the control of Iran's prison service.

Another student, Babak Zamanian, the spokesperson for Amir Kabir's Islamic Students' Association, was reportedly arrested on 25 April, and appeared in court on the same day, charged with "acting against state security". This may be in connection with interviews he reportedly gave to radio stations broadcasting outside Iran. He had already spent several days in detention following these interviews. He is reportedly now being held in section 209 of Evin Prison.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following the publication of articles considered by some students to be controversial, clashes broke out between students and members of the paramilitary Basij, who see themselves as acting on the authority of the Supreme Leader, on the campus of the Amir Kabir Polytechnic, during which several students were reportedly beaten severely. Some students claimed that the controversial articles were forged, and had been produced in order to provide an excuse to crack down on student journalists and activists.

The arrests took place in the course of elections on 7 May to the board of the university's student union, the Islamic Student Association and some observers have suggested that these arrested may be an attempt by the authorities to disrupt the students' election process.

On 2 May the Justice Ministry spokesman, Ali Reza Jamshidi, reportedly said that an inquiry into the incident had been opened.

During a speech at Amir Kabir Polytechnic on 11 December 2006, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was interrupted by heckling and jeers as one student burned his picture and another hurled a shoe towards the stage.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of the six students (please name them);
- asking to be informed of the reasons for their arrest, including any charges against them, which should be made public and communicated to the students and their lawyers without delay;
- calling for their immediate release if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- calling for them to be granted immediate and unconditional access to their lawyers, family members, and any medical treatment they may require;
- seeking assurances that they not being tortured or ill-treated in detention.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street, Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir
istiftaa@wilayah.org

Fax: +98 251 7774 2228 (mark FAO Office of His Excellency Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie
Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir
via website: www.president.ir/email

Salutation: Your Excellency

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 3355 6408

Email: hadadadel@mailis.ir

and to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 June 2007.