

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/116/2006

03 October 2006

UA 265/06 Arbitrary detention/fear for safety/possible prisoner of conscience

IRAN **Keyvan Rafi'i (m), human rights defender**
Kheyrollah Derakhshandi (m), member of the Alumni Association of Iran and former student activist
Abolfazl Jahandar (m), journalist and former student activist
Dr Keyvan Ansari (m), Central Council member of the Alumni Association of Iran

The four men named above, all human rights defenders or former student activists, are all believed to be detained in Section 209 in Evin Prison in Tehran, where they are at risk of torture or ill-treatment. None of those detained has been granted access to a lawyer. They may be prisoners of conscience, held solely on account of their defence of human rights or their peaceful political activities.

Keyvan Rafi'i is the spokesman in Iran for an organization called Human Rights Activists in Iran. He was arrested on the street on 9 July. The exact reasons for his arrest are not known, but it is feared it may be in connection with his activities to publicize human rights violations in Iran. On or around 25 September, he was granted a short family visit during which he complained to his family about the conditions in which he is being held. He has reportedly been on a hunger strike since 23 September in protest at his continued detention without charge and his treatment in detention.

Kheyrollah Derakhshandi, a graduate in industrial management, and Abolfazl Jahandar were reportedly arrested on 19 August, along with two other men who were later released. Abolfazl Jahandar was a member of the general council of the Office for Fostering Unity (*Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat*), a student organization, before his graduation and is now a journalist who writes for the website Pooya News (www.pooyanews.com). On 29 August, Kheyrollah Derakhshandi's father reportedly said, "we have not been able to have any contacts with him since he was arrested. The entire family has gathered in front of Evin prison a number of times but we were told that we don't have permission to see him...our only information came from one of the representatives of the Revolutionary Court who told us ... that he is being held in section 209 of Evin prison." Since then, Kheyrollah Derakhshandi has reportedly been granted a family visit, but it is not clear whether Abolfazl Jahandar has received a visit from his relatives.

Dr Keyvan Ansari was reportedly arrested on 18 September outside his house. He is a member of the Alumni Association of Iran (*Sazman-e Danesh Amukhtegan-e Iran-e Eslami [Advar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat]*). He was able to telephone his family some time later and reportedly said that he was being held in solitary confinement in Section 209 of Evin Prison. His family has not yet been allowed to see him.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 5 September Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, gave a speech to a selected group of students, saying, "Our education system has been under the influence of secular and arrogant thinking for 150 years in a way that self-belief and identity were ignored and efforts were made to promote a secular system and secular thoughts in society... I tell young people that changing the secular teaching regime that has dominated for 150 years is a difficult thing ... We need to do it together. Measures have been taken before, but it is not sufficient". A number of students have been denied permission to return to university for the new academic year, apparently because of their political activities.

Sayed Ali Akbar Mousavi-Kho'ini, the Head of the Alumni Association of Iran, has been detained without charge in Section 209 since 12 June 2006 and has reportedly been tortured and ill-treated (see UA 181/06, MDE 13/075/2006, 30 June 2006, and follow-up). The Alumni Association, whose membership is open to

graduates of Iranian universities, has been active in promoting democracy and human rights in Iran. The office of the Alumni Association was raided by security forces on 18 September, and computers and other office equipment was seized. The association's website, www.advarnews.com, which posted news about the student movement and human rights, was forced to close, but has since reopened on www.advarnews.us.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Keyvan Rafi'i, Kheyrollah Derakhshandi, Abolfazl Jahandar and Dr Keyvan Ansari, and seeking assurances that they are not being tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally if they are held solely for their activities in defending human rights or other peaceful political activities or otherwise to promptly charge them with a recognizably criminal offence and to give them a fair trial;
- urging the authorities to grant them immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers of their choice and to any medical treatment they may require;
- urging the authorities to end any harassment of student or human rights organizations solely in connection with their peaceful defence of human rights or other peaceful political activities.

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

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: iranprobe@iranprobe.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: Please send emails via the feedback form on the Persian site of the website:

<http://www.iranjudiciary.org/contactus-feedback-fa.html>

(The text of the feedback form translates as: 1st line: name, 2nd line: email address, 3rd line: subject heading, then enter your email into the text box)

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

or via website: www.president.ir/email

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel

Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Imam Khomeini Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 6 646 1746

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 14 November 2006.