

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 23/005/2008

07 February 2008

Further Information on UA 309/07 (MDE 23/039/2007, 16 November 2007) Imminent execution

**SAUDI ARABIA Sheikh Mastan (alias Mohammed Salim) (m) aged 30, married with one child
Hamza Abu Bakir, (m) aged 47, married with four children**

The two men named above, both Indian nationals, are at risk of imminent execution. There has been an upsurge in the number of people executed in Saudi Arabia since January 2008. At least 25 people have been executed since 8 January; eight of them for drug related offences and the rest for murder and armed robbery.

Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir are currently detained in al-Dammam Prison in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. They were arrested in January 2004 on charges of drug possession.

In June 2006, they were convicted and sentenced to death by a court in al-Dammam. However, they had no legal representation. Very little is known about their trial except that their convictions and sentences are said to have been upheld on appeal, meaning that they could be executed at any time.

They are reported to have been visited only once since their arrest and that was by a representative of the Indian Consulate on 29 May 2007.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty for a wide range of offences. Court proceedings fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Defendants are rarely allowed formal representation by a lawyer, and in many cases are not informed of the progress of legal proceedings against them. They may be convicted solely on the basis of confessions obtained under duress or deception.

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

- urging the King to halt the execution of Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir;
- appealing to the King to commute the death sentences of Sheikh Mastan and Hamza Abu Bakir and all those on death row in Saudi Arabia as a matter of urgency, with a view to the abolition of the death penalty;
- seeking clarification of the steps being taken to enable Sheikh Mastan, Hamza Abu Bakir and others to exercise effectively the rights to judicial review and to seek a pardon;
- expressing concern at the increasing number of executions in Saudi Arabia.

APPEALS TO:

King Abdullah Bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques
Office of His Majesty The King
Royal Court
Riyadh
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Fax (via Ministry of the Interior):

+ 966 1 403 1185

Salutation:

Your Majesty

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Fax: + 966 1 403 1185
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin 'Abdul 'Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Fax: + 966 1 403 0645
Salutation: Your Royal Highness

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 March 2008.