

PUBLIC

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13 November 2006

Further Information on UA 107/06 (MDE 13/042/2006, 28 April 2006) Fear of torture and ill-treatment/ Medical concern/ Possible prisoners of conscience - New concern: Fear of imminent execution

IRAN	Ali Matouri-Zadeh (m), aged 30] husband and wife
	Fahima Ismail Badawi (f) aged 26]
	Salma', aged eight months] daughter

Ali Matouri-Zadeh, a member of Iran's Arab minority and one of the founding members of Hizb al-Wifaq (or Lejnet al-Wefaq) an illegal political party in Iran, has reportedly had his death sentence upheld by the Supreme Court. He could be executed at any time.

On 9 November, the head of the Khuzestan Prosecutor's offices, Abbas Ja'afari Dowlat Abadi, reportedly announced that the Supreme Court had upheld the death sentence against ten out of 19 people accused of involvement in bomb explosions in Khuzestan, including Ali Matouri-Zadeh, and that they would be publicly hanged.

Ali Matouri-Zadeh was reportedly arrested on 28 February and held incommunicado in an unknown place of detention where he has been at risk of torture or ill-treatment. His wife, Fahima Ismail Badawi, and her mother were reportedly arrested at the couple's home a few hours later and taken to Sepidar prison, in Khuzestan province. Her mother was released a week later.

Fahima Ismail Badawi was eight months' pregnant when she was arrested and gave birth to a daughter Salma' in the prison on 25 March 2006. Both mother and child were then reportedly transferred to Karoon prison. At the beginning of June, Fahima Ismail Badawi was reportedly sentenced to 15 years imprisonment by Branch 3 of the Revolutionary court in Ahvaz. She had been a school teacher in Ahvaz city, in Khuzestan province and had studied mathematics at Dezfoul University, north of Ahvaz, where she became politically active.

On 4 November, the Judiciary banned Hizb al-Wifaq and declared it illegal on charges of instigating unrest and opposing the system. According to a statement from the Ahvaz Prosecutor's office "The Lejnat al-Wefaq party (Committee of reconciliation) is illegal and ... membership and connection with that party will be severely confronted".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Much of Iran's Arab community lives in the province of Khuzestan which borders Iraq. It is strategically important because it is the site of much of Iran's oil reserves, but the Arab population does not feel it has benefited as much from the oil revenue as the Persian population. Historically, the Arab community has been marginalised and discriminated against. Tension has mounted among the Arab population since April 2005, after it was alleged that the government planned to disperse the country's Arab population or to force them to relinquish their Arab identity. Hundreds were arrested and there have been reports of torture. Following bomb explosions in Ahvaz City in June and October 2005, which killed at least 14 people, and explosions at oil installations in September and October, the cycle of violence intensified, with hundreds more people reportedly arrested. Further bombings on 24 January 2006, in which at least six people were killed, were followed by further mass arrests. Two men, Mehdi Nawaseri and Ali Awdeh Afrawi, were executed in public on 2 March after they were convicted of involvement in the October bombings. Their executions followed unfair trials before a Revolutionary Court during which they are believed to have been denied access to lawyers, and their confessions, along with those of seven other men, were broadcast on television. At least 13 other Iranian Arabs are also reportedly under sentence of death, accused of involvement in the bombings,

distributing material against the state, having contact with dissident organizations operating abroad, and endangering state security. Amnesty International recognizes the right and responsibility of governments to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty as the ultimate violation of the right to life. Please see *Iran: Death Sentences appeal case – 11 Iranian Arab men facing death sentences*, AI Index MDE 13/051/2006, May 2006, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGMDE130512006?open&of=ENG-IRN>

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

- expressing grave concern that Ali Matouri-Zadeh may be in imminent danger of execution;
- urging the Iranian authorities to commute his death sentence immediately;
- asking for details of Ali Matouri-Zadeh and Fahima Ismail Badawi's trial proceedings, including the specific charges against them, whether they have been granted access to independent lawyers of their choice, and of any appeals they may have made against their sentences;
- acknowledging that governments have a responsibility to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but stating your unconditional opposition to the death penalty, as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violation of the right to life.
- calling on them to ensure that they are given immediate access to lawyers, their family, interpreters and any medical treatment they may need;
- seeking assurances that they are not being tortured or ill-treated;

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 OR istiftaa@wilayah.org

Fax: +98 251 774 2228 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")

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: info@iranjudiciary.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.