

URGENT ACTION

TWO AHWAZI ARAB MEN EXECUTED, THREE AT RISK

Teachers Hadi Rashedi and Hashem Sha'bani Amouri, both members of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority, were executed in secret at the end of January. Three other Ahwazi Arab men remain at risk of execution.

On 29 January an official from the Ministry of Intelligence called the families of **Hadi Rashedi** and **Hashem Sha'bani Amouri** to inform them that the two men had been executed and buried a few days earlier, but would not reveal their place of burial. The official told the families they were not permitted to hold a public memorial for the two men and had only 24 hours in which to hold a private service. Their bodies may have been buried in unmarked graves in one of three cemeteries in Khuzestan province known colloquially as La'nat Abad (*the place of the damned*) and reserved for executed political prisoners. Ministry of Intelligence officials have told Hadi Rashedi and Hashem Sha'bani Amouri's families not to speak with human rights organizations or they would face legal consequences.

Hadi Rashedi and Hashem Sha'bani Amouri were transferred on 7 December 2013 to an unknown location from Karoun Prison in Ahvaz, Khuzestan province, sparking fears that they would be executed imminently. They had been arrested in September 2011, along with **Mohammad Ali Amouri**, **Sayed Jaber Alboshoka** and **Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka**, apparently in connection with their cultural activities on behalf of Iran's Ahwazi Arab minority. They were sentenced to death on 7 July 2012 after being convicted of charges including "enmity against God" and "spreading propaganda against the system". All five men were denied access to a lawyer and their families for the first nine months of their detention and are believed to have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated.

Mohammad Ali Amouri, Sayed Jaber Alboshoka and Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka remain in Karoun Prison where they are permitted weekly visits with their families. They remain at risk of execution.

Please write immediately in Persian, Arabic, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to give the bodies of Hadi Rashedi and Hashem Sha'bani Amouri to their families, not to execute the other three men and order retrials for them, in proceedings in line with international fair trial standards and without recourse to the death penalty;
- Urging them to investigate the allegations that the men were tortured or otherwise ill-treated and disallow as evidence in court any "confessions" that may have been obtained under torture;
- Calling on them to ensure the men are protected from torture and other ill-treatment, are granted all necessary medical treatment and are allowed regular contact with their lawyers and families.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 MARCH 2014 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid
Keshvar Doust Street,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Twitter: @khamenei_ir
Email: info_leader@leader.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
c/o Public Relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@dadiran.ir
(Subject line: FAO
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani)

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Hassan Rouhani
The Presidency
Pasteur Street, Pasteur Square
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: media@rouhani.ir
Twitter: @HassanRouhani (English) and
@Rouhani_ir (Persian)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fifth update of UA 137/12. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/053/2013/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hashem Sha'bani Amouri and Hadi Rashidi, along with Mohammad Ali Amouri, Sayed Jaber Alboshoka, Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka, were members or co-founders of the cultural institute Al-Hiwar, registered during the administration of former President Khatami, which used to organize events in the Arabic language, including conferences, educational courses, art classes, and poetry recital gatherings, in the south-western city of Ramshir. The organization was banned in May 2005 and many of its members have since been arrested.

All five men were arrested at their homes in early 2011, ahead of the sixth anniversary of widespread protests by Ahwazi Arabs in April 2005. Mohammad Ali Amouri was arrested 20 days after he had been forcibly returned from Iraq, where he had fled in December 2007. He was not allowed family visits for the first nine months after he was detained, and is understood to have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Hadi Rashidi had been hospitalized after his arrest, apparently as a result of torture or other ill-treatment. Family members have said that Sayed Jaber Alboshoka's jaw and teeth were broken during his detention and that Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka has experienced depression and memory loss as a result of torture or other ill-treatment. Hashem Sha'bani Amouri is said to have had boiling water poured on him.

Hadi Rashedi and Hashem Sha'bani Amouri had been shown "confessing" on a state television channel before the trial, in violation of international fair trial standards. Hashem Sha'bani was shown admitting that he was a member of the "Popular Resistance", a group which he said had ties to Saddam Hussein and Mu'ammar al-Gaddafi, the former leaders of Iraq and Libya. Hadi Rashedi was described as "the leader of the military wing of the Popular Resistance" and was seen saying that he had participated in an attack on a house containing four government officials.

In January 2013, the Supreme Court upheld their death sentences. In March 2013, the men began a 28-day hunger strike in protest at this decision, their alleged torture and other ill-treatment and the prison authorities' refusal to grant them medical treatment. All five men were transferred in August 2013 to an unknown location where they were held for between one and five weeks.

Four other Ahwazi Arab men, Ghazi Abbasi, Abdul-Reza Amir-Khanafereh, Abdul-Amir Mojaddami and Jasim Moghaddam Payam, were executed in November or December 2013 following their transfer from Karoun Prison to an unknown location on 3 November. Amnesty International understands that the families of the men were not told the exact date of the executions, either in advance or after they had taken place, and have not received the bodies of their relatives. A lawyer for one of the men has also said he had not been told beforehand of the executions despite legal requirements under Iranian law that lawyers must receive 48 hours' notification of any client's execution.

Names: Mohammad Ali Amouri, Sayed Jaber Alboshoka, Sayed Mokhtar Alboshoka, Hashem Sha'bani Amouri, Hadi Rashidi

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 137/12 Index: MDE 13/008/2014 Issue Date: 14 February 2014