

PUBLIC

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EXTRA 60/99

Death pen

IRAN Turaj (m)
Da'ud (m)
Elna (f)

Amnesty International is concerned at reports that two men, Turaj and Da'ud, have been sentenced to death and that their female accomplice, Elna, has been sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for the murder of Elna's uncle, Hayatqoli and that each has also been sentenced to 74 lashes. The sentences were issued by a Tehran criminal court at the beginning of May 1999.

Additionally, each of the accused was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, with the flogging, for stealing items belonging to Hayatqoli. Turaj and Da'ud were sentenced to an additional two years' imprisonment and Elna to an additional six months, for setting fire to the victim's car.

According to statements reportedly made by the accused, Turaj and Elna were unhappy with Hayatqoli's refusal to let them marry. When Turaj and Elna, accompanied by their friend Da'ud, confronted Hayatqoli a scuffle broke out, which apparently ended in the two younger men strangling the victim using wire. The three are then reported to have bundled Hayatqoli's body into his car, driven to a remote place, and then to have set fire to it.

The police were alerted when a neighbour, hearing the argument between the three men, saw Turaj, Da'ud and Elna carrying the body to the car.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The widespread application of the death sentence in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where scores of executions were reportedly carried out in 1998, continues to be an area of concern to Amnesty International.

Although Amnesty International recognizes the rights and responsibilities of governments to bring to justice those suspected of violent criminal offences it is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate violation of the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment.

The organization also opposes the use of flogging as judicial punishment on the grounds that it constitutes torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. As such, it is unconditionally prohibited under international law.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/express/airmail letters in English or own language or your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that Turaj, Da'ud and Elna have been sentenced to flogging and urging that these sentences are not carried out;
- urging that the death sentences imposed on Turaj and Da'ud be commuted;
- acknowledging the serious nature of the crimes of which they have been convicted, but stating your opposition to the death penalty irrespective of the crime for which it is imposed.

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Ayatollah Khamenei, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

President

His Excellency
Hojjatoleslam val Moslemin Sayed Mohammad Khatami
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, The Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: President Khatami, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Minister of Foreign Affairs

His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Sheikh Abdolmajid Keshk-e Mesri Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr Mohammad Hassan Zia'i-Far
Secretary, Islamic Human Rights Commission
PO Box 13165-137
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
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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 June 1999.