

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/19/99

20 July 1999

UA 170/99 Possible "disappearance"/Fear for safety

IRAN Manuchehr Mohammadi
Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad
Maryam Shansi (f)

The three student activists named above were arrested in Tehran on 13 July 1999. They are now reportedly detained incommunicado, and may be at risk of torture. Amnesty International believes all three may be prisoners of conscience.

Manuchehr Mohammadi and Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad are leading members of the *Anjoman-e Daneshjuyan va Daneshamukhtegan Melli* (National Association of Students and Graduates).

Maryam Shansi, also a student activist and a member of the *Jonbesh-e Demokratik-e Melli-ye Iran* (National Democratic Movement of Iran), had been attacked and beaten in her home by unidentified assailants on 12 June.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

These arrests follow the recent student demonstrations against new laws curbing press freedom. Demonstrations began in Tehran on 8 July 1999, when a group of students gathered outside university hostels in northern Tehran in a peaceful protest against the closure of the daily newspaper *Salam*. They were attacked by armed members of the vigilante student group *Ansar-e Hezbollah*, who were later joined by members of the security forces in an assault on the student residences in which at least one person was killed. (See UA 160/99, MDE 13/15/99, 9 July 1999, and follow-up, MDE 13/16/99, 13 July 1999; and Public Statement, MDE 13/18/99, 14 July 1999.)

The demonstrations increased in size, and spread to other towns, including Shiraz, Rasht, Esfahan, Mashhad and Tabriz. A number of student activists have been arrested in connection with the demonstrations, and several student activists have reportedly gone into hiding, in fear for their safety.

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

- urging the authorities to ensure that Manuchehr Mohammadi, Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad and Maryam Shansi are protected from torture and granted immediate access to their families and lawyers of their choosing;
- seeking urgent clarification from the authorities of the whereabouts and well-being of Manuchehr Mohammadi, Gholamreza Mohajeri-Nezhad and Maryam Shansi;
- urging that they be released immediately and unconditionally if they are detained solely for the peaceful expression of their conscientiously held beliefs;
- if they have been charged with recognisably criminal offences, asking for information on the laws under which they have been charged, together with details of their trial proceedings.

APPEALS TO:

1) 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, Islamic Republic of Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

2)President

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

3)Head of Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi
Ministry of Justice
Park-e Shahr, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Telegrams: Head of the Judiciary, Tehran, Islamic Republic of 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 31 August 1999.