

PUBLIC

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UA 123/07 Prisoner of conscience/ Torture and ill-treatment/ Medical concern

IRAN Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya (m), journalist

Journalist Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya, a member of Iran's Arab minority, is serving a three-year sentence in Tehran's Evin Prison after writing articles criticizing the Iranian government and reportedly contacting opposition groups based outside Iran. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association, and is concerned that he may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment. He is reportedly being denied the medical treatment he needs.

Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya is the managing editor of '*Aqlam al-Talaba*' ('The Students' Pens'), a publication issued by the students in Ahvaz University in Khuzestan province; a correspondent for several Arab television and radio broadcasting news agencies including Abu Dhabi TV and Radio, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE); a journalist for the Lebanese '*al-Mustaqbal*' broadcasting corporation.

He was detained in November 2006 and reportedly held in Section 209 of Evin Prison, run by the Ministry of Intelligence. On 21 April, he was reportedly sentenced to three years' imprisonment with hard labour. He was not afforded legal representation at any point in the judicial process, in violation of international fair trial standards.

Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya suffers from sickle cell anaemia (an inherited blood disorder that affects red blood cells) for which he needs regular antibiotics and access to medical examinations. In addition, he suffers from heart problems, for which he also requires medication. According to Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya's family, the prison authorities have refused to allow them to bring in supplies of his medication. It is feared that his health may be at serious risk if he is not granted access to adequate medical care.

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 have been arrested and there have been reports of torture. Unconfirmed reports in April 2007 stated that ahead of the second anniversary of the April 2005 unrest, scores of Iranian Arabs had been arrested and later released.

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 2005, the cycle of violence has intensified, with hundreds of people reportedly arrested. Further bombings on 24 January 2006, in which at least six people were killed, were followed by further mass arrests. A total of 12 men have been executed as a result of their alleged involvement in the bombings.

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

- stating that Amnesty International considers Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya to be a prisoner of conscience, as he appears to be held solely in connection with the peaceful expression of his internationally-recognized right to freedom of expression and association and as such calling for his immediate and unconditional release;

- expressing concern for the health of Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya, and urging the judicial authorities to grant him immediate and unconditional access to the medical treatment that he needs while he is in custody;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that he is not tortured or ill-treated in detention.

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
istiftaa@wilayah.org

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: **FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi**)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir
via website: www.president.ir/email

Salutation: Your Excellency

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel

Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 3355 6408

Email: hadadadel@majlis.ir

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 6 July 2007.