

URGENT ACTION

IRANIAN RIGHTS DEFENDER RELEASED ON BAIL

Human rights defender Emadeddin Baghi was released on bail on 23 June after almost six months' detention without trial. He is due to be tried on 7 July and Amnesty International would consider him to be a prisoner of conscience if he were convicted and imprisoned.

Emadeddin Baghi was released from Tehran's Evin prison on bail of 2,000 million rials (US\$200,000) on the morning of 23 June. Pictures which were taken after his release show that he has lost a considerable amount of weight while in detention.

He is due to face trial on 7 July on charges of undertaking "propaganda against the state" and "colluding to commit acts against national security". The charges relate to an interview he conducted with a government critic and senior cleric, Grand Ayatollah Montazeri, who died in December 2009. The interview, filmed about two years earlier, was shown on BBC Persian Television shortly after the Grand Ayatollah's death. Emadeddin Baghi was arrested a few days later.

Emadeddin Baghi was arrested at his house at 6.45am on 28 December 2009 by four armed plainclothes officials, who forced their way into his house, and, refusing to show any identification, severely beat his brother-in-law. When Emadeddin Baghi assured his wife and daughter that he would remain strong in prison, the officials told him he would not live long enough in prison to need to remain strong.

Filmmaker Mohammad Ali Shirzadi, who filmed the 2007 interview, was also arrested after it was broadcast. He has also been released on bail (see UA 107/10 and follow ups).

Amnesty International is calling on the Iranian authorities to drop all charges against Emadeddin Baghi relating to his peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression.

Protests in 2009 at the disputed outcome of the election were violently repressed, with scores killed. Thousands were arrested, many of whom were tortured or otherwise ill-treated, often to obtain forced "confessions". Hundreds have been tried unfairly, including in mass "show trials", many of whom are serving long-prison terms, often as prisoners of conscience. Some have been sentenced to death, and two executed.

For further information please see, *From Protest to Prison: Iran One Year after the Election*, (Index MDE 13/062/2010), June 2010, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/062/2010/en> and *Iran: Election Contested, Repression Compounded* (Index MDE 13/123/2009), December 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/123/2009/en>.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals. Amnesty International will take further action if Emadeddin Baghi is detained again.

This is the first update of UA: 05/10 Index: MDE 13/003/2010 Iran. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/003/2010/en>

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