

PUBLIC

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UA 318/05      Death Penalty/Fear of Imminent Execution

IRAN              Shir-Agha (m)

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A man identified only as Shir-Agha has been sentenced to death for murder, and has just had his appeal rejected by Branch 27 of the Supreme Court. He could now be executed at any time. The Head of the Judiciary has the power to order a stay of execution and a review of the case at this stage.

According to the newspaper *Hamshahri*, in mid-2003 Shir-Agha had been having an illicit relationship with a married woman called Malekeh in Varamin, a suburb of the capital, Tehran. One morning Malekeh's husband, Seyfollah, came home unexpectedly and a fight broke out between the two men. Shir-Agha managed to overcome Seyfollah, and stabbed him to death. He and Malekeh wrapped the body in a blanket and threw it into a river. The two conspired to conceal the murder, but were later arrested and tried in Branch 7 of the Criminal Court under Judge Aziz Mohammadi and four other senior judges.

Shir-Agha was sentenced to *qisas* (retribution in kind) for intentional murder, and Malekeh was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for acting as his accomplice. The charge of an illicit relationship between the two will reportedly be referred to another court for investigation. If she is found guilty of adultery, Malekeh too could face the death penalty.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The organization has recorded 83 executions in Iran so far this year, although the true figure may be much higher.

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

- urging the authorities to commute the death sentence imposed on Shir-Agha;
- asking for details of his trial and any appeals, and of his legal representation;
- acknowledging that governments have a responsibility to bring to justice those suspected of criminal offences, but stating your unconditional opposition to the death penalty, as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violation of the right to life.

#### APPEALS TO:

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic  
His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Shoahada Street  
Qom  
Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:**                **+98 251 7 774 2228 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")**

**Email:**            **istiftaa@wilayah.org**  
**info@leader.ir**

**Salutation:**      **Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi  
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [irjpr@iranjudiciary.org](mailto:irjpr@iranjudiciary.org) (mark "Please forward to His Excellency Ayatollah Shahroudi")  
[iranjudiciary.org/feedback\\_en.html](http://iranjudiciary.org/feedback_en.html)

**Fax:** + 98 21 8 879 6671  
+ 98 216 640 4018  
+ 98 21 6 640 4019

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**COPIES TO:**

Minister of the Interior

Hojatoleslam Mustafa Purmohammadi  
Ministry of the Interior  
Dr Fatemi Avenue  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel  
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami  
Imam Khomeini Avenue,  
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Fax:** + 98 21 6 646 1746

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 27 January 2006.