

EXTERNAL

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Death penalty

5 September 1995

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana, aged 35, businessman,  
Iranian national**

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Amnesty International fears that Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana may be facing imminent execution in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). He was sentenced to death in July 1995 by a shari'a court in the Emirate of al-Shariqa (Sharjah) in the UAE, after it found him guilty of apostasy, an offence punishable by death under Shari'a laws.

Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana was arrested in June 1994 when he failed to pay a sum of money to a commercial company following an order from a civil court in al-Shariqa. While signing this court order, Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana reportedly wrote next to his name "God's curse from the Government of al-Shariqa". This phrase is said to have led to his arrest on suspicion of having wished God's curse on the authorities. However, at his trial he was acquitted of having insulted the authorities because he had used the word 'from' instead of 'on'.

During his questioning, Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana apparently told his interrogators that he was a prophet and it was at this point that he is reported to have been charged with apostasy. He is said to have subsequently told the court that he had spoken to God and that God had asked him to take the Qur'an to all the people in the five continents.

The court apparently appointed a Shari'a expert who spoke Farsi to explain to Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana that his claim constituted apostasy and he risked receiving a death sentence. The prisoner is reported to have responded: "I see things which you do not see, and I have... secrets which I cannot reveal to you... You cut my head off and you will see what will happen to you."

The court is said to have put Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana under medical observation by three experts in a specialized hospital in Dubai for 53 days. The three experts apparently reported to the court that the prisoner was not suffering from any health problems. However, the Iranian Consul-General in the UAE is reported to have disclosed that Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana had previously received treatment by Iranian doctors for schizophrenia.

Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana is reported to have refused to lodge an appeal against his sentence. However, the Iranian Consul-General is reported to have appealed on his behalf.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and is additionally concerned that the execution of Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana may be contrary to the Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty, adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in May 1984 (Resolution 1984/50), which state that the death penalty may be used only for the "most serious crimes", those with "lethal or other extremely grave consequences" and that it "shall not be carried out on persons who have become insane."

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

- expressing concern that Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana has been sentenced to death, and calling for his death sentence to be commuted if upheld on appeal;

- expressing concern that Hassan Ghulam Hussain Dana may be suffering from schizophrenia, and as such his execution would be contrary to the prohibition of execution of insane persons as expressed in the UN Economic and Social Council Safeguards on the death penalty.

*Mental health professionals are encouraged to send appeals.*

**APPEALS TO:**

His Highness  
al-Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan  
President of the United Arab Emirates  
Ruler of Abu Dhabi  
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Abu Dhabi  
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**Salutation: Your Excellency**

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**Telegrams: Interior Minister, Abu Dhabi, UAE**  
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**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of United Arab Emirates accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 29 October 1995.