

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/044/2006

03 May 2006

Further Information on UA 65/06 (MDE 13/028/2006, 23 March 2006) and follow-up (MDE 13/034/2006, 04 April 2006) - Medical concern/ Possible prisoners of conscience/ Fear of Torture and ill-treatment

IRAN Ma'soumeh Ka'bi (f), aged 28
 Imad (m), aged 4, son of Ma'soumeh Ka'bi
 Soghra Khudayrawi (f)
 Zeidan (m), aged 4, son of Soghra Khudayrawi
 Sakina Naisi (f), aged 40
 Hoda Hawashem (f) aged 24
 Ossama (m), aged 2] her sons
 Ahmad (m), aged 4]

Ma'soumeh Ka'bi and her four-year-old son Imad were reportedly released on 28 April after payment of bail. The other women and children are reportedly still in custody, but there is no further information about them. They appear to be held solely in an attempt to force their husbands and fathers to give themselves up to the authorities. If so they are prisoners of conscience.

Ma'soumeh Ka'bi, the wife of prominent political activist Habib Nabgan, was arrested along with the couple's four-year-old son at their home on 27 February. They were reportedly held at the Sepidar detention centre in Ahvaz from 8 March.

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, when 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.

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, the cycle of violence 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. Two men, Mehdi Nawaseri and Ali Awdeh Afrawi, were executed in public on 2 March after they were convicted of involvement in the October bombings. Their executions followed unfair trials before a Revolutionary Court during which they are believed to have been denied access to lawyers, and their confessions, along with those of six other men, were broadcast on television.

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

- welcoming the release of Ma'soumeh Ka'bi and her son Imad;
- expressing concern that the other three women and three children (naming them) appear to be prisoners of conscience, held solely in order to force their husbands and fathers to give themselves up to the Iranian authorities;
- calling on the authorities to release all of them immediately and unconditionally;
- expressing concern for their safety and seeking assurances that they are not being tortured or ill-treated;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all the detainees are given immediate access to lawyers of their own choosing, their families and any medical treatment they may require.

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

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

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

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 (mark "Please forward to His Excellency Ayatollah Shahroudi")
via the judiciary website: www.iranjudiciary.org/feedback_en.html

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: + 98 21 6 649 5880

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

Minister of the Interior

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

Email: ravabetomomi@moi.gov.ir

Fax: + 98 21 8 896 203

+ 98 21 8 899 547

+ 98 21 6 650 203

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

14 June 2006.