

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 283/05 (MDE 13/052/2005, 1 November 2005) and follow-ups (MDE 13/073/2005, 25 November 2005; MDE 13/100/2006, 12 September 2006) - Fear of imminent execution

IRAN

Shahla Jahed (f), aged about 37

According to press reports, the Head of the Judiciary in Iran has recently overturned the murder conviction of Shahla Jahed, who was sentenced to death for murdering her husband's first wife in 2002.

Recent reports from the Iranian newspaper, E'temad, say that Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi overturned the execution verdict against Shahla Jahed and ordered a fresh probe into the case after finding "procedural flaws" in the original investigation.

Shahla Jahed, a "temporary" wife of Nasser Mohammad-Khani, a former striker for the Iranian national football team and former manager of a team in Tehran, was accused of stabbing to death Laleh Saharkhizan, her husband's "permanent" wife, on 9 October 2002. Under Iranian law, men and women can have both "permanent" and "temporary" marriages. In a temporary marriage, men and women can commit to be married for a certain period of time, after which the marriage is null and void. Men can have up to four permanent wives, and any number of temporary wives. Women can only be married to one man at a time.

Shahla Jahed was initially sentenced to death in June 2004 and an appeal by her relatives, at the time, was rejected and the judges of Branch 15 of the Supreme Court upheld the sentence. Shahla Jahed's lawyer reportedly wrote a letter to the Head of the Judiciary, Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, requesting a review of the execution order in view of the fact that Shahla Jahed's case had not been properly investigated. In November 2005 the Head of the Judiciary reportedly ordered a stay of execution so that the case could be re-examined. However, the death sentence was upheld in September 2006.

Shahla Jahed is held in Tehran's Evin Prison. She may now be released on bail, although Laleh Saharkhizan's family are said to be continuing efforts to press for her execution.

Many thanks to all who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.