

URGENT ACTION

DEATH ROW KURDS ON HUNGER STRIKE

Six Sunni men from Iran's Kurdish minority have been on hunger strike since 4 November, in protest at their death sentences and the conditions they are held in. All have been suffering health problems as a result.

Jamshid Dehghani, his younger brother **Jahangir Dehghani**, **Hamed Ahmadi**, **Kamal Molayee**, **Hadi Hosseini** and **Sedigh Mohammadi** began a "wet" hunger strike (taking water but not food) on 4 November 2013, in protest at being sentenced to death, having no access to a lawyer since their arrest, and being tried behind closed doors; as well as the conditions of their imprisonment, including inadequate sanitation.

The men were transferred to solitary confinement for 13 days after they started their hunger strike. Since then, they have been in poor health, suffering low blood pressure, fainting, and a burning sensation when urinating. Jamshid Dehghani and Hamed Ahmadi are believed to be suffering from stomach ulcers and have vomited blood at least four times since going on hunger strike.

All six men were sentenced to death after being convicted of vaguely worded offences such as "enmity against God" (*moharebeh*) and "corruption on earth" (*ifsad fil-arz*). The men have been informed that their death sentences have been upheld by the Supreme Court and their cases transferred to the Office for the Implementation of Sentences, the official body in charge of carrying out executions. The Prosecutor General of Tehran suspended their death sentences for one month, following international pressure, around October 2013, but that period has ended.

Please write immediately in Persian, English or your own language:

- Urging the Iranian authorities not to execute the six men (naming them) and order a retrial in proceedings which comply with fair trial standards, without recourse to the death penalty;
- Urging them to ensure that the hunger striking prisoners have access to adequate health care; and reminding them that they must never require health professionals treating hunger strikers to act in any way contrary to their professional judgment or medical ethics;
- Calling on them to make sure the men are protected from torture and other ill-treatment;
- Urging them to establish a moratorium on executions and commute all outstanding death sentences.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 22 JANUARY 2014 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khanenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid
Keshvar Doust Street
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info_leader@leader.ir
Twitter: @khamenei_ir
Salutation: **Your Excellency**

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
c/o Public Relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Salutation: **Your Excellency**

And copies to:

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Hassan Rouhani
The Presidency
Pasteur Street, Pasteur Square
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: media@rouhani.ir
Twitter: @HassanRouhani (English) and @Rouhani_ir (Persian)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 258/13. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/037/2013/en

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Brothers Jamshid Dehghani and Jahangir Dehghani were arrested on 17 June 2009 while they were at work. Kamal Molayee and Hamed Ahmadi were arrested on 15 July and 30 July 2009, respectively. They were not allowed to contact their families to say they had been arrested. All four were arrested by men in plain clothes believed to be from the Ministry of Intelligence and were taken to a detention centre run by the Ministry of Intelligence in Sanandaj, Kordestan. They were held in solitary confinement in Sanandaj and Hamedan in west Iran until February 2011, when they were first transferred to Evin Prison in Tehran, then Raja'i Shahr Prison in Karaj near Tehran, and finally to Ghezel Hesar Prison, also in Karaj.

All four men have said they were arrested for their peaceful religious activities, including holding religious classes for children and discussions at their local mosque.

The four men were accused, together with six others, of involvement in the assassination of a senior Sunni cleric close to the authorities on 17 September 2009. They have denied involvement in the assassination, saying they were arrested before it took place and were in detention when the killing happened. Amnesty International understands that they were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in pre-trial detention, that they were threatened with arrest of family members and that they were forced to sign papers without being allowed to read them.

The other six men who were arrested with them, Bahram Ahmadi, Asghar Rahimi, Behnam Rahimi, Mohammad Zaher Bahmani, Keyvan Zand Karimi and Hooshyar Mohammadi, were all executed on 27 December 2012.

The other two men also on hunger strike now, Hadi Hosseini and Sedigh Mohammadi, were arrested separately and were sentenced to death on vaguely worded charges in a different case from that of the other four men.

Iran's Kurdish minority live mainly in the west and north-west of the country. They experience discrimination in the enjoyment of their religious, economic and cultural rights. Parents are banned from registering their babies with certain Kurdish names, and religious minorities that are mainly or partially Kurdish are targeted by measures designed to stigmatize and isolate them. Kurds are also discriminated against in their access to employment, adequate housing and political rights, and so suffer entrenched poverty, which has further marginalized them. Kurdish human rights defenders, community activists, and journalists often face arbitrary arrest and prosecution. Others - including some political activists - suffer torture, grossly unfair trials before Revolutionary Courts and, in some cases, the death penalty.

Medical ethics generally require that health professionals do not participate in force feeding.

Names: Jamshid Dehghani, Jahangir Dehghani, Hamed Ahmadi, Kamal Molayee, Hadi Hosseini, Sedigh Mohammadi
Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 258/13 Index: MDE 13/055/2013 Issue Date: 12 December 2013