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## **Iran: Eleven men face imminent execution**

The death sentences of 11 men who were recently transferred to Tehran's Evin Prison must be commuted, Amnesty International urged after it came to light they could be executed as soon as 11 October.

Among those scheduled to be put to death as early as dawn on Thursday is Saeed Sedeghi, a shop worker who was sentenced to death in June after an unfair trial on drugs-related charges.

Amnesty International has the names of four other prisoners among those facing imminent execution.

"It's a cruel irony that news of these impending executions comes as people around the world are marking the [World Day against the Death Penalty](#)," said Ann Harrison, Deputy Middle East and North Africa Programme Director at Amnesty International.

"Iran is second only to China in the number of executions carried out annually. The Iranian authorities must take immediate steps to end their ongoing killing spree and commute these death sentences.

"Saeed Sedeghi and anyone else convicted after unfair trials must be afforded retrials in proceedings that meet international fair trial standards."

Saeed Sedeghi was on Wednesday transferred from Ghezel Hesar Prison to solitary confinement in Tehran's Evin Prison.

On 2 June 2012, Iran's Revolutionary Court had sentenced the shop worker to death after he was convicted of purchasing – along with three other men – and possessing 512 kg of methamphetamine ("crystal meth"). His state-appointed lawyer never met him nor had access to his case file before the trial started.

Like others sentenced to death under the Anti-Narcotics Law, he appears to have had no opportunity to appeal against his conviction and sentence, a violation of the right to a fair trial.

In addition to execution, the court handed Saeed Sedeghi a fine of 2 million rials (approximately US\$163) and sentenced him to 20 lashes for individual possession of 21 grams of opium and marijuana. He also told his family that he was tortured or otherwise ill-treated in detention, where he had three teeth knocked out.

In late July, he was brought before Branch 30 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court without the presence of his lawyer and made to sign a document apparently informing him that his death sentence was going to be carried out.

As of 9 October, the Iranian authorities are believed to have executed at least 344 people since the start of the year, including 135 executions that have not been formally announced. The majority of those executed were convicted drug trafficking.

The vast majority of executions in the country in recent years have been for [drug-related offences](#), despite there being no clear evidence that the death penalty serves as an effective deterrent against such offences – the country has one of the highest rates of drug addiction in world.

Amnesty International continues to urge Iran to review its Anti-Narcotics law to ensure the death penalty is no longer considered as a possible punishment.

“The death penalty – which statistics show has failed to deter drug abuse and trafficking in Iran – should never be considered as punishment for drugs-related offences,” said Harrison.

“We urge the Iranian authorities to urgently review the Anti-Narcotics law to remove the death penalty as a possible punishment, and to commute the death sentences of all prisoners currently on death row.”

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.