

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 13/098/2007

1 August 2007

Further Information on UA 113/07 (MDE 13/054/2007, 15 May 2007) and follow-up (MDE 13/077/2007, 22 June 2007) – Fear for safety/Fear of torture and ill-treatment/Medical concern

IRAN	Ahmad Qasaban (m) (spelling corrected)]	
	Moqdad Khalilpour (m)]	
	Pooyan Mahmoudian (m)]	Students at Amir Kabir
	Majid Tavakkoli (m)]	University, Tehran
	Majid Sheikhpour (m)]	
	Ehsan Mansouri (m)]	
	Abbas Hakimzadeh (m)]	
	Ali Saberi (m)]	

Five of the students named above were released on bail on 18 July. Ahmad Qasaban, Majid Tavakkoli and Ehsan Mansouri have reportedly begun a hunger strike in protest at their continuing detention. They are reportedly being subjected to torture.

The families of the three remaining detained students have reportedly been able to visit them twice since their arrest. On 24 July the families wrote an open letter to the Head of the Judiciary, Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, in which they describe publicly for the first time the torture and ill-treatment of the students. The three students reportedly told their families that seven of their interrogators simultaneously had beaten them severely with cables and whips. Their interrogation sessions sometimes lasted up to 24 hours or would take place in the middle of the night. They were kicked in the arms, chest and back and punched in the face and on the head, so that they fell off their chairs and were then thrown against the walls. They have been forced to remain standing for up to 48 hours and forced to stand on one leg for up to 18 hours. They have been prevented from receiving medical care. Interrogators also told them, falsely, that members of their families had been arrested, beaten or harassed, or were ill.

The families had previously written three times to Ayatollah Shahroudi expressing concern that their children were being physically and psychologically ill-treated to make them confess to crimes they had not committed, and asking him to take action to halt this.

Abbas Hakimzadeh and Ali Saberi, who are six months from finishing their studies at Amir Kabir University in Tehran, have reportedly been suspended for two terms and banned from entering university premises.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The crisis at Amir Kabir University started on 30 April 2007 with the publication of student newsletters carrying articles which university officials deemed insulting to Islam.

These newsletters, bearing the names and logos of four student publications, were distributed throughout the campus. They contained three controversial articles and two caricatures which could have been perceived as critical of the Iranian regime and insulting to Islam. Distribution of the publications took place one week before the annual elections to a student union, the Islamic Students' Association (ISA).

One article questioned the infallibility of the Prophet Mohammad, the first Shi'a Imam, Ali and the place of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Another criticised the government's crackdown on women's clothing, and a third ridiculed Islamic women's attire.

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

- expressing concern that Ahmad Qasaban, Majid Tavakoli and Ehsan Mansouri have been tortured and seeking assurances that they will not be subjected to further torture or ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to order an immediate investigation of these allegations and to make the findings public;
- asking why they were arrested, and what they have been charged with: this should be made public and communicated to the students and their lawyers immediately;
- calling on the authorities to release them immediately unless they are to be charged with recognisably criminal offences;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that they are given immediate and unconditional access to their lawyers, 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
Islamic Republic Street - Shahid Keshvar Doust Street
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie
Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Justice Building, Panzdah-Khordad Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3390 4986 (please keep trying)

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

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

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

Salutation: Your Excellency

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3355 6408

Email: hadadadel@majlis.ir

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 12 September 2007.