

# URGENT ACTION

## SIX MEN AT RISK OF EXECUTION AFTER GROSSLY UNFAIR TRIAL

Six men - Abolhassan Montazer, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar, Babak Alipour, Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi, Pouya Ghobadi and Vahid Bani Amerian - are at risk of execution in Iran. In October 2024, Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran convicted them of “armed rebellion against the state” (*baghi*) and sentenced them to death following a grossly unfair trial marred by allegations of torture and other ill-treatment to extract forced “confessions”.

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*Head of judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei*

*c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union, Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium*

*Dear Mr Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei,*

*Six Iranian men Abolhassan Montazer, 65, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar, 58, Babak Alipour, 33, Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi, 58, Pouya Ghobadi, 31, and Vahid Bani Amerian, 32, are at risk of execution after Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran convicted them of “armed rebellion against the state” (*baghi*) following a grossly unfair trial in October 2024 on allegations of being affiliated with a banned opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI). The men have repeatedly denied all accusations of taking arms against the state. The men were also convicted and sentenced to prison terms for other offenses, including “gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security”. They were arrested between late December 2023 and late February 2024 in Tehran and West Azerbaijan provinces, and subsequently held in section 209 of Tehran's Evin prison, which is under the control of the Ministry of Intelligence. According to informed sources, agents subjected the men to torture and other ill-treatment at the time of arrest and/or during interrogations including through repeated beatings, floggings, restricting access to toilet facilities, prolonged solitary confinement and death threats at gunpoint. They are all held in Evin prison, and an appeal to the Supreme Court remains pending.*

*The Iranian authorities have flagrantly violated the fair trial rights of Abolhassan Montazer, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar, Babak Alipour, Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi, Pouya Ghobadi and Vahid Bani Amerian, including, to access a lawyer from the time of arrest; to meaningfully challenge the legality of their detention; not be compelled to self-incriminate, including as a result of torture or other ill-treatment; and to be tried before by an independent, competent and impartial tribunal. Their trial was grossly unfair with at least three of the men seeing their lawyers at trial for the first time, which consisted of a single two-hour session. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, during trial, several of the men and their lawyers told the court that forced “confessions” were extracted under torture and other ill-treatment and could not be relied upon as evidence. No investigation is known to have been ordered by the court into these allegations. The authorities have denied and/or severely delayed access to adequate healthcare for the men, several of whom have serious health conditions.*

*I urge you to immediately halt any plans to execute Abolhassan Montazer, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar, Babak Alipour, Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi, Pouya Ghobadi and Vahid Bani Amerian, quash their convictions and death sentences and release them as their detention is arbitrary due to severely grave violations of their fair trial rights. I further urge you to provide them access to their families and lawyers, protect them from further torture and other ill-treatment and investigate torture allegations, bringing anyone found responsible to justice in fair trials and without resort to the death penalty. I urge you to immediately establish an official moratorium on executions with a view of abolishing the death penalty.*

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to informed sources, security agents beat Vahid Bani Amerian during his arrest in Tehran on 22 December 2023, leading to eye injuries, bleeding and bruising. He was then transferred to section 209 of Evin prison, where he was held in prolonged solitary confinement, in violation of the absolute prohibition against torture and ill-treatment, for two months. For the first two weeks after his arrest, Vahid Bani Amerian's family were denied information about his fate and whereabouts, thereby subjecting him to enforced disappearance, a crime under international law. Abolhassan Montazer was also arrested on 22 December 2023 in Tehran together with Vahid Bani Amerian and transferred to Evin prison, where he was held section 209. According to information obtained by Amnesty International, Abolhassan Montazer was also beaten during arrest and subsequently experienced severe physical pain, including chest and lung pain, impacting his breathing. While held in section 209, agents subjected him to harsh interrogations; held him in a cell without sufficient heating during the winter season of Iran, thereby causing him further distress and discomfort, and denied him access to adequate healthcare for his ongoing pain. Babak Alipour was arrested on 27 December 2023 in Tehran. On 23 February 2024, Pouya Ghobadi and Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi were arrested by border forces in Chaldoran, West Azerbaijan province, while they were attempting to irregularly cross the border out of the country. Prior to his arrest, Pouya Ghobadi was serving an "internal exile" sentence in Nikshahr, Sistan and Baluchistan province, from a previous case far from his family. On 28 February 2024, both men were transferred from Maku prison, West Azerbaijan province, to Evin prison. Pouya Ghobadi was held in section 209 of Evin prison for three months undergoing interrogations. Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi was held in section 209 for 82 days between 29 February and 22 May 2024 undergoing interrogations, and again from 2 July to 14 December 2024. During interrogations Mohammad Taghavi was denied access adequate health care and his required medications, including for gout. Following his arrest and while held in section 209, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar was flogged by agents, according to information received from an informed source.

During the trial before Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court, which also included two others who were not sentenced to death, namely Mojtaba Taghavi Sangdehi and Ali Taghavi Sangdehi, brothers of Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi, the eight men repeatedly denied all accusations of taking arms against the state. On multiple occasions, several defendants and/or defence lawyers told the court that forced "confessions" were obtained under torture and other ill-treatment. In addition to the death sentences, Abolhassan Montazer, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar, Babak Alipour, Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi and Vahid Bani Amerian were also convicted of national security related offences and sentenced to imprisonment. Pouya Ghobadi was sentenced to a prison term on a charged related to attempting to irregularly leave the country. Ali Taghavi Sangdehi and Mojtaba Taghavi Sangdehi were sentenced to two years and six years and seven months in prison, respectively, for national security related offences.

In the aftermath of the "Woman Life Freedom" uprising, the Iranian authorities have intensified their use of the death penalty to instil fear among the population and tighten their grip on power. In 2023, authorities [carried out](#) at least 853 executions, marking a 48% increase from 2022. In 2024, the Iranian authorities continued their execution spree, including against dissidents and ethnic minorities. They also issued convictions and death sentences following grossly unfair trials held before Revolutionary Courts. Amnesty International's research consistently shows that Revolutionary Courts lack independence and impose harsh sentences under the influence of security and intelligence bodies and following grossly unfair, summary and predominantly secret processes which undermine the right to a fair trial. The PMOI is a banned opposition group that advocates for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic system. At least two men, [Behrouz Ehsani and Mehdi Hassani](#) are at imminent risk of execution after the Supreme Court upheld their death sentences in early January 2025 in relation to their alleged support of the PMOI. Iranian officials regularly use pejoratives, including in state media, to refer to individuals with real or perceived affiliations with the PMOI. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. The death penalty is a violation of the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Persian and English.

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 30 April 2025.

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN:** Abolhassan Montazer, Akbar (Shahrokh) Daneshvarkar, Babak Alipour, Mohammad Taghavi Sangdehi, Pouya Ghobadi and Vahid Bani Amerian (all he/him).

## ADDITIONAL TARGETS

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