

Iranian Kurdish dissident likely to be executed after Ramadan

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Iran's Supreme Court has rejected an appeal by the lawyer of Ramin Hossein Panahi to have his client cleared of all charges that would result in an execution. Panahi is being accused by Iran of being a member of Komala, a Kurdish insurgency group demanding Kurdish autonomy in Iran. He faces execution, which according to Amnesty International, will be carried out soon after the end of Ramadan on the 15th of June.

Panahi was arrested on June 24th, 2017 in Sanandaj in a surprise operation conducted by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) targetting members of Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan. At the time, Mr. Panahi (24) was unarmed but was convicted on the basis of Article 287 of Iran's Islamic Penal Code, which punishes any member of an armed group rebelling against the Islamic Republic with the death penalty.

Panahi's family has also been targetted by the Iranian government.

"My brother Ramin has been sentenced to death, Afshin sentenced to eight and a half years in prison, my cousin Zubair Hossein Panahi sentenced to six years in prison and our brother-in-law Ahmad Aminpanah sentenced to five years in prison, all because one person was a member of a political party," Ramin Hossein Panahi's brother told the Center for Human Rights in Iran on March.

In May, U.N Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, Agnes Callamard, slammed the proceedings targetting Panahi, arguing that they failed to reach the criteria of a fair trial and said that her office was concerned that Panahi had been mistreated and tortured. In addition to a strong social media campaign, and a campaign started by Amnesty International, Panahi seems to had been temporarily spared of execution at the beginning of May.

Mr Panahi's trial took less than an hour in a court case where he was forced to "confess" to his crime while his body had visible marks of torture. Prior to arriving in court, Panahi was forcibly disappeared for four months, where he endured torture through beating with cables, kicking and punching in the stomach, and having his head hit against the wall. Throughout the whole period, he was denied medical care.

Nonetheless on the 21st of May 2018, Amnesty International still released an urgent action notice of Mr Panahi, saying that "his execution will be carried out soon after the end of the Muslim month of Ramadan on the 15 of June."

The Kurdistan Students Union (YXK) are launching an urgent TwitterStorm on Tuesday, the 12th of June, at 6pm CET in support of Ramin Hossein Panahi. Panahi's supporters also say they will have a twitter storm on Wednesday, the 13th of June 2018, to prevent the execution of Ramin Hossein Panahi. It will begin at 18:30 and end on 20:30 CET time.