



**Adnan Hassanpour, journalist, writer and human rights activist.**

Adnan Hassanpour, journalist and advocate of cultural rights for Iranian Kurds, was arrested on 25 January 2007, and was initially convicted of being a *mohareb* ('enemy of God') and 'acting against national security', apparently for expressing his views on Kurdish issues. He was handed down the death sentence, which was upheld on appeal by the Supreme Court on 22 October 2007. On 4 September 2008 his death sentence was overturned by the Tehran Supreme Court on procedural grounds and his case sent back to the lower court in Sanandaj, Iranian Kurdistan. A new trial was due to open on 6 September 2008 on charges of 'working for outlawed parties' and 'espionage', which carry up to twenty years of imprisonment if found guilty.

Adnan Hassanpour is a former member of the editorial board of the Kurdish-Persian weekly journal, *Aso (Horizon)*, which was closed by the Iranian authorities in August 2005 following widespread unrest in Kurdish areas. He had previously been tried in connection with articles published in the journal. He is a member of the Kurdish Writer's Association.

**Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, Journalist**



Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, editor of the banned weekly *Payam-e mardom-e Kurdistan* and Chair of the Tehran-based Kurdish Human Rights Organization (RMMK), was arrested on 1 July 2007 at his place of work in Tehran by plain-clothed security officers. Following his arrest, Kabudvand was initially taken to his house in Tehran, where security officers confiscated three computers, books, photographs and personal documents, before taking him away to the Intelligence Ministry's Section 209 of Evin Prison. He spent the first five months of his detention in solitary confinement, and was reportedly ill-treated. His family was unable to raise the bail that could have enabled him to be freed pending trial. Kabudvand's trial began on 25 May 2008, and he was sentenced at a closed trial on 22 June 2008 to eleven years in prison by the Tehran Revolutionary Court for forming a human rights organisation in Iran's Kurdish region. The sentence was upheld on appeal on 23 October 2008.

Kabudvand has previously been targeted by the authorities for his critical writings and activism. The weekly newspaper which he edited, *Payam-e mardom-e Kurdistan (Kurdistan People's Message)*, published in Kurdish and Farsi, was banned on 27 June 2004 after just thirteen issues for 'disseminating separatist ideas and publishing false reports'. On 18 August 2005 Kabudvand was convicted of 'disseminating tribal issues and publishing

provocative articles' and 'spreading lies with the intention of upsetting public opinion' by a revolutionary court in Sanandaj and handed down an eighteen-month suspended sentence and a five-year ban on working as a journalist. Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand has reportedly written two books on democracy and a third on the women's movement in Iran, which were not given publishing licences.

Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand suffers from a number of health complaints, including high blood pressure and kidney disease, and his health is said to have deteriorated as a result of ill-treatment in prison. On 19 May 2008 Kabudvand reportedly suffered a stroke in Evin prison and has been denied access to adequate medical care.



**Yousef Azizi Banitorof, writer, journalist and human rights activist.**

Yousef Azizi was sentenced on 20 August 2008 to five years in prison for 'acting against national security', 'propaganda against the regime', 'incitement to rebellion' and 'relations with foreign officials', after a two-year trial. He is believed to be charged for his reporting on the allegedly excessive use of force by security forces against demonstrators from the Arab community in the southwestern region of Khuzestan (known locally as Al-Ahwaz). Azizi is a member of the Arab ethnic minority, and is known for his writing in support of the rights of Arabs of Khuzestan. He is a founding member of the Iranian Writers Association and has published several books in both Arabic and Farsi.

Azizi was first arrested on 25 April 2005, and held in solitary confinement until his release on bail on 28 June 2005. Whilst on bail he and his family were subject to constant harassment and surveillance. The sentence was upheld by an appeals court in November 2008, and on 3 November 2008 Azizi fled Iran to escape arrest. He remains abroad. International PEN would consider Yousef Azizi to be in great danger if he were to be repatriated, and continues to fear for the safety of his family who remain in Iran.



**Mohammed Hassan Fallahiya, journalist.**

Mohammed Fallahiya, a member of Iran's Arab minority, is a journalist and managing editor of *Aqlam al-Talaba*, a student publication of Ahvaz University, Khuzestan province. Mohammad Hassan Fallahiya was arrested in November 2006, after writing articles criticising the Iranian government and reportedly contacting opposition groups based abroad. On 21 April 2007, Fallahiya was sentenced to three years imprisonment with hard labour. He was not allowed legal representation throughout the

judicial process, and is reportedly held in Section 209 of Evin Prison, Tehran, where he is at risk of torture and ill-treatment. Fallahiya suffers from sickle cell anaemia (a blood disorder that affects red blood cells), and heart problems, and is reportedly denied adequate medical care. The prison authorities have prevented his family from bringing supplies of his medication to the prison and it is feared that his health is deteriorating.

### **Iranian Kurdish journalist Kaveh Javanmard**

According to PEN's information, officials from the Ministry of Intelligence arrested Kaveh Javanmard, a journalist for the weekly *Krafto*, at his home in Sanandaj on 18 December 2006. He was held incommunicado in pre-trial detention at Sanandaj prison, where he was feared to be at risk of ill-treatment. Javanmard's arrest came during a wave of arrests, bans and acts of intimidation against the media following a visit to the Kurdish north by the Iranian President and the Culture Minister in September 2006. During this time the authorities reportedly targeted other staff members of *Krafto*. International PEN is deeply concerned about an apparent pattern of repression against journalists and human rights activists in Iranian Kurdistan, which has been ongoing since unrest broke out in the Kurdish areas of Iran in July 2005, and was violently suppressed by the authorities.

Kaveh Javanmard was sentenced to two years in prison at a closed trial on 17 May 2007. He was denied legal representation and the charges against him have not been made known, although he is believed to be held for his legitimate professional activities as a journalist. An additional year was reportedly added to his sentence in May 2008 on charges of 'acting against national security' in a separate case. He will reportedly serve his sentence at a prison in the northern town of Maragheh, 300 miles from his family home.

### **Said Matinpour, journalist.**



Said Matinpour, journalist for the Azeri-language weekly *Yarpagh*, was arrested on 25 May 2007, and held incommunicado in pre-trial detention in section 209 of Evin Prison for 205 days, where he was reportedly ill-treated and denied access to a lawyer and his family. On 26 February 2008, he was released on bail when his family was finally able to raise the 5 billion Rai requested (approx. \$550,000). On 11 June 2008, Matinpour was sentenced to eight years in prison, suspended, by a Tehran revolutionary court behind closed doors on charges of 'maintaining relations with foreigners' and 'publicity against the Islamic Republic'. His lawyer was not present at the hearing. His sentence was upheld on appeal.

Said Matinpour, aged 32, has a masters degree in philosophy from Tehran University, and has written for a number of publications including the

magazine *Mardom-e Now*. Matinpour is known for his writings protesting alleged human rights violations by the Iranian authorities and calling for increased political, cultural and linguistic rights of the Azerbaijani people in Iran, including the right to primary education and to publish in Azerbaijani language.