



# amnesty international

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## MEDICAL CONCERN

### AMPUTATIONS IRAN

Two recent reports of judicial amputation for theft have been reported in the Iranian press. Both reports appeared in the official daily newspaper Jomhuri-e Eslami (Islamic Republic). On 4 October 1988 the newspaper announced that Parviz Mansouri, who had been convicted of stealing jewellery and of possessing a gun, had the four fingers of his right hand amputated in addition to receiving a one-year sentence of imprisonment. An un-named Afghan national was sentenced to 60 lashes for his part in the same theft.

The second recent amputation was announced in Jomhuri-e Eslami on 18 October 1988. According to the newspaper it was the first amputation to be carried out in the town of Ahvaz in the south-west of Iran. The person convicted was not named.

Amputation of the fingers of the right hand as punishment for repeated theft is provided for in Iranian legislation, based on Shari'a (Islamic law). Amnesty International opposes amputation on the grounds that it constitutes a cruel, inhuman and degrading form of punishment which violates both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations' Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The number of amputations carried out in Iran is not known. In the course of 1988 Amnesty International has to date noted 15 amputations reported in the official Iranian press. It is believed that the actual number may, however, be higher. In February 1985 a purpose-built machine was introduced into Qasr prison. At the time of its introduction the press reported that the Tehran Faculty of Medicine and individual forensic experts had been consulted about its design. It is not known whether this machine is still in use in this prison or elsewhere.

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