

## EXECUTED IN IRAN

# Penasquitos man mourns kin

By Joe Hughes  
Tribune Staff Writer

A Rancho Penasquitos man whose cousin was among 16 persons of the Bahai faith executed in Iran over the past five days says he had warning that his relative feared for his life.

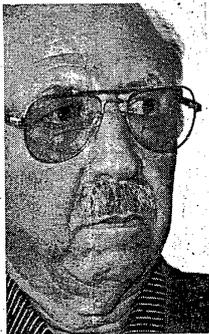
"I knew something like this might happen, but it came as such a shock, hearing it so suddenly," said Afnan Hassan, 60, who three years ago fled from Iran to San Diego with his wife and two daughters.

Hassan's cousin, Dr. Bahram Afnan, 48, a cardiologist, was hanged in a Tehran prison Thursday along with five other men. Ten women, including four teenage girls, were hanged yesterday, a spokesman for the Bahai faith said.

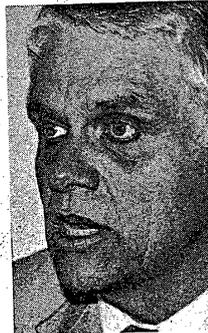
"He had been in prison eight months," a grieving Hassan said yesterday as he joined dozens of other shocked Bahais at their Linda Vista temple.

"We knew his sentence was death, but we kept hoping for an appeal to his conviction. But the Iranian government wanted him to recant his faith and convert to Islam; he refused."

At least 150 Bahais remain imprisoned in Iran and 141 have been executed since Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini came to power in 1979 after the fall of the late Shah Mohammed



AFNAN HASSAN  
"I knew it might happen"



DR. DWIGHT ALLEN  
Mobilizing world opinion

Reza Pahlavi.

The Bahais say the Moslem fundamentalists governing Iran are trying to crush their religion by arresting and executing many of its prominent members. The Bahai faith, regarded as heretical by Islam, was established a century ago in Iran, then Persia. Its principles include a belief in universal education, equality of the sexes, world unity and nonparticipation in partisan politics.

"My cousin had lived in fear before he was arrested," Hassan said. "The government had seized all his personal belongings — his house car,

business, money, everything. He had to suffer through long interrogations, pressure and torture."

Dr. Dwight Allen, an official with the National Bahai organization who was in San Diego yesterday, said Hassan's cousin and others imprisoned there had been forced to go through four "conversion sessions" in an attempt to convert them to Islam.

"There is some fear there will be violence against Bahais in this country," Allen said. "Our hope is to go to the public and tell them what is going on. We want to mobilize public opinion of the world."



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