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Reformist website: Iran protester gets death sentence

 **REUTERS**

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TEHRAN (Reuters) – An Iranian court has sentenced to death a man who took part in opposition protests over a disputed election in June, a reformist website reported on Thursday.

Mowjcamp, which gave no source for the report, said Mohammad-Reza Ali-Zamani was informed of the verdict on Monday. It did not give details about the charges against him.

A semi-official news agency, Mehr, said in August he was accused of fighting against the Islamic establishment and active membership of a "terrorist" monarchist association, and other crimes. There was no immediate comment from the authorities.

There have been no other reports of death sentences issued against people involved in huge demonstrations that erupted after the poll, which the opposition says was rigged to secure the re-election of hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Ali-Zamani was among more than 100 opposition supporters, including senior reformist figures, who were accused of fomenting post-election street unrest in a series of mass trials that got under way in August.

Mowjcamp said he had made "extensive confessions" during his trial. Reformist politicians have condemned the court sessions as "show trials."

Reformist former President Mohammad Khatami, who backed opposition leader Mirhossein Mousavi in the election, has said confessions made at the trials were obtained under "extraordinary conditions" and were invalid.

Analysts see the mass trials as an attempt by the authorities to uproot the moderate opposition.

Under Iranian law, death sentences can be appealed to a higher court.

"He was transferred on Monday from Evin prison ward 209 to Revolutionary Court number 15, presided over by judge Salabati, and the execution verdict was communicated to him," Mowjcamp said in its report about Ali-Zamani.

In its August report, Mehr said he was also accused of propaganda activities against the Islamic establishment and taking part in rallies with the aim of undermining national security. It said he is 37 years old.

The June election plunged Iran into its deepest internal crisis since the 1979 Islamic revolution, when the U.S.-backed shah was toppled.

The authorities have portrayed the street protests as a foreign-backed bid to undermine the Islamic state. The opposition says more than 70 people were killed in the unrest, more than double the official estimate.

Rights groups say thousands of people were detained after the vote, though most have since been released. Last week, Iran freed one detained reformer, Saeed Hajjarian, on bail.

(Editing by Ralph Boulton)