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SAUDI ARABIA – Jalal, Abdullah, Yousef, Hassan, Ali Jaffar, Jawad, Ali Hassan, Mahdi

Jalal Labad, along with seven other young men, Abdullah Al-Darzai, Yousef Al-Manasef, Hassan Zaki Al-Faraj, Ali Jaafar Al-Mabiouq, Jawad Qureiris, Ali Hassan Al-Subaiti and Mahdi Al-Mohsen, are under direct threat of execution. They were sentenced to death for offences committed while they were still juveniles. All of them belong to the Shiite minority and reside in the Dammam/Qatif area, capital of the Eastern Province. They are being prosecuted for their participation in anti-regime protests that have been ongoing since the Arab Spring. Some were arrested between 2017 and 2018, with the exception of Abdullah Al-Darzai and Jawad Qureiris who were arrested in 2014 and 2021 respectively. They were held in solitary confinement for several months, undergoing torture in order to obtain confessions. After several years of detention, they were brought to court where for the first time they were allowed to have a lawyer present.

They were arraigned before the specialized criminal court, and then for others, before the specialized criminal court, which are courts created to prosecute crimes related to acts of terrorism. In reality, these courts target anyone who opposes the regime's policies.

Confessions obtained under duress are used against them in court and are often the only evidence presented by the prosecution.

In spite of the judge being made aware of the torture they endured in detention, there has been no investigation into these allegations. Five prisoners, Jalal Labbad, Abdullah Al-Darzai,

Yousef Al-Manasef, Hassan Zaki Al-Faraj, and Ali Jaafar Al-Mabiouq, have already been sentenced to death by the Specialized Criminal Court of Appeal, and are awaiting a final ruling on their cases by the Supreme Court. Two others, Jawad Qureiris and Ali Hassan Al-Subaiti are awaiting appeal. Mahdi Al-Mohsen also faces the death penalty, but his current criminal status is unknown. According to our partner European-Saudi Organisation for Human Rights, it is possible that other people, who were minors at the time of similar events, may also face the death penalty.

In 2018, the Saudi government enacted a law that would end the death penalty for those who were minors at the time of the crime. A 2020 royal decree expanded the application of the law. However, there are some exceptions that prevent the complete abolition of the death penalty for minors.

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Action NDV 2023

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