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## Four Gay Men to Be Hanged in Iran for Sodomy

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Four men have been sentenced to death for sodomy in the Iranian town of Choram, a town in the relatively remote and undeveloped Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, according

to *Pink News*, Europe's largest gay news service.

Saadat Arefi, Vahid Akbari, Javid Akbari, and Houshmand Akbari are due to be executed soon, according to a report from the Human Rights Activist News Agency in Iran.

According to gay news site *JOOPEA*, the men will be hanged for sodomy according to strict interpretation of Shari'a law. The location of the trial and the speed with which the punishment it expected to be meted out reportedly makes it unlikely that international organizations will be able to intervene on the men's behalf.

A gay activist based in Iran told *Pink News* that "being gay is not a crime based on Iranian criminal law, but this is the most clear statement against same-sex acts in past months."

Mehri Jafari, a London-based Iranian human rights lawyer, was also quoted by *Pink News*, saying he was "horrified and saddened to have heard the news about these four men. Not only with regards to the execution which is about to take place, but the fact that is beyond our control."

Activists in Iran say that at least five other men have been hanged for homosexuality this year in Iran, though the reason for the punishment of some men was not identified to international human rights watchers.

**Source URL:** <http://www.advocate.com/crime/2012/05/14/breaking-news-four-gay-men-be-hanged-iran-sodomy>

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