

# **Algeria: Waves of arrests of Ahmadis**

***Human Rights Without Frontiers is calling upon the Algerian authorities to stop harassing, arresting and imprisoning Ahmadis***

***By Willy Fautré, Human Rights Without Frontiers***

HRWF (06.02.2017) – In the last two weeks of January 2017, many Ahmadis were arrested during multiple police crackdowns in Algeria. Their names have not been made public. In Sidi Bel Abbès, two individuals were sentenced to three years in prison, three others were arrested in Tipasa, a group of seven were arrested in Alger, and seven others in Oran. Their sentences remain unknown.

## ***Arrest of six Ahmadis in November***

In November 2016, nineteen Ahmadis were arrested and subsequently sentenced to unknown prison terms. On 25th November, Algerian security forces raided a house in the coastal town of Béni Saf and arrested six Ahmadis while they were performing Friday prayers. Beni Saf is located in the northern province of Aïn Témouchent, around 300 miles to the west of capital Algiers. Security personnel seized prayer mats, books, and other documents related to the Ahmadiyya belief as evidence.

## ***Arrest of twenty Ahmadis in September***

In early October, Algeria's Minister of Religious Affairs and Wakfs, Mohamed Aissa, said he would work hard to prosecute the twenty Ahmadis that the Algerian Security Service had arrested in the city of Skikda on 30<sup>th</sup> September for performing Friday prayers at a private villa. The arrests were made under the pretext of 'public security'.

In November, Skikda's circuit court sentenced the Imam of the Ahmadiyya community to eight months in prison and fined him 300,000 Algerian Dinars (USD 2,800). The other arrested individuals were sentenced three months in prison and fined 30,000 Algerian Dinars (USD 270).

### ***Arrest of nine Ahmadis in June***

In June, the Research Division of the National Police (SRGN) shut down the community's main headquarters in the city of Bilda and arrested six people of the Ahmadiyya community from Blida. Soon after the security forces also arrested the National President of Ahmadiyya Community in Algeria from Bou-Ismaïl (Tipasa) and two other individuals from Algiers. The nine individuals were charged with endangering state security and undermining social integrity.

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