

Pastor Robbed, Threatened at Knifepoint as Health Deteriorates in Iranian Prison

American **pastor Saeed Abedini** not only faces deadly conditions in Iran's Rajai Shahr Prison, but we can now confirm that he faces direct threats on his life from other prisoners.

Abedini's Iranian family was able to visit him yesterday—the second visitation allowed since he was transferred to the deadly new prison last month.

Abedini is facing constant threats to his very life in the new prison. There have been several nights where he has awoken to men standing over him with knives. Abedini's "cell" is only separated by a curtain from the rest of the violent prisoner ward he is forced to share, allowing dangerous prisoners—murderers and rapists—unfettered access to him 24 hours a day.

He has also been robbed at knifepoint several times, stripping him of what few necessities he has been permitted to purchase for personal hygiene.

As a result of the robberies, the utterly deplorable conditions of the prison and the lack of doctor-prescribed medication being withheld by prison authorities, Abedini's health has quickly deteriorated.

The pain in his stomach has returned, and he is now experiencing increased pain in what he described to his family as his kidneys. As a result of repeated beatings in Evin Prison, he suffered from internal bleeding. After months of being refused medical care, he was allowed to see a doctor and

was prescribed medication earlier this year. As a result of that medication, his physical condition had improved and his pain had subsided. However, since being moved from Evin to Rajai Shahr last month, Iranian officials have refused to allow him this critical medication, and his condition is worsening.

Abedini is being refused medication prescribed by Iranian doctors for injuries he sustained from prison beatings. This is one of the most deplorable human rights violations imaginable.

To make matters worse, the prison conditions and lack of basic hygiene have led to his body being covered head to toe in lice. Because of the lice and increased pain, Abedini has been having trouble sleeping. He is also experiencing symptoms of recurring urinary tract infections. There is no medication to stop the infections. He is now also experiencing significant joint pain.

Abedini's family reports that he has also noticeably lost weight in the new prison from lack of proper nutrition.

The conditions he faces are unfathomable. He faces direct threats to his life on an almost daily basis.

Iran has sent him to disappear. The Obama administration abandoned this U.S. citizen when given the opportunity to negotiate his release, even reportedly releasing an Iranian scientist for nothing in return. Abedini has been left for dead.

We must not forget him. We must take action now.

I, along with the American Center for Law and Justice's chief counsel, Jay Sekulow, am in Berlin this week meeting with foreign dignitaries and world leaders across Europe, urging them to use international pressure to free Abedini.

The time is now to pressure Iran for his release. Each day could be his last.

Join tens of thousands in standing with Abedini by signing our petition demanding international sanctions until he is freed.