Saudi Arabia Beheads Three More Individuals

Riyadh, June 10 (RHC)-- Saudi Arabia has beheaded three more people, including a foreigner, bringing the total number of beheadings in the country this year to 97.

The Saudi Arabian Interior Ministry said on Tuesday that two Saudis were beheaded in the city of Abha in the Asir region after being convicted of murder with firearm in separate cases. The ministry also said that a Syrian national was executed in Jubail, a Persian Gulf coastal city, after he was found guilty of smuggling methamphetamines to Saudi Arabia.

Under Saudi law, rape, murder, apostasy, armed robbery, and drug trafficking are all punishable by death. The kingdom's high execution rate has drawn criticism from human rights groups. According to Amnesty International, Saudi Arabia has one of the highest execution rates in the world.

Rights groups say Saudi Arabia indicts and then executes suspects without a fair trial. Last month, Christof Heyns, the UN's Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, said: "It seems that many of these trials are in secrecy and that lawyers are not available and they do not comply with the standards of fair trial."

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