

At a Glance

Weekly report on Human Rights Violation in Iran 12 March 2017

International Condemnation of Violation of Human Rights in Iran

U.N. Special Rapporteur Concerned About the Continued Practice of Public Execution in Iran

Wednesday, 08 March 2017 02:48

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22310-u-n-special-rapporteur-concerned-about-the-continued-practice-of-public-execution-in-iran>



NCRI - Ms. Asma Jahangir was appointed as Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran by The Human Rights Council of the U.N., during its 33rd Session. After completion of her study, she said she regrets that her study does not reveal any notable improvement in the situation of human rights in the country.

She says that the situation in areas like independence of judiciary and lawyers, freedom of expression, and use of arbitrary detentions continue to be of serious concern.

Human rights organizations tracking executions in Iran estimate that at least 530 executions took place in 2016. The majority of these executions were for not the “most serious” drug-related offences. Drug offenders are often deprived of basic due process and fair trials. They are held in long periods of incommunicado and pretrial detention, lack adequate access to a lawyer and/or to a proper defence, there are allegations that drug offenders are subjected to beatings and coerced confessions which are later used in revolutionary courts to secure their death sentences. The recently amended Criminal Procedure Code which mandates that all death sentences, including those for drug offences be reviewed by the Supreme Court does not seem to have led to any significant change in this respect.

The Special Rapporteur was also concerned about the continued practice of public execution. It is reported that some executions took place in public places in the presence of children, this has however been denied by the State Party.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has reportedly executed the highest number of juvenile offenders in the world during the past decade. Despite an absolute ban on the practice under international law, the Iranian penal code continues to explicitly retain the death penalty for boys of at least fifteen years of age and girls of at least 9 years for qisas (retribution in kind) or hudud crimes, like homicide, adultery or sodomy. As a result of the 2013 amendments to the penal code, judges are now required to assess the mental capacity of juvenile offenders before issuing a death sentence to determine if they understood the consequences of their actions at the time they committed hudud-related crimes.

Ms. Asma Jahangir notes as positive the adoption of article 1197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which acknowledges the right of the accused to remain silent during preliminary investigations, and of article 60, which explicitly prohibits the use of coercion, obscene/derogatory language, suggestive/deceptive or irrelevant questioning. However, she noticed that forms of torture are not defined in Iranian law and that the new code has not established the necessary procedures for investigating torture allegations. She also received numerous documented cases of persons allegedly subjected to torture and ill treatment with the view to extracting confessions from them. The practice of prolonged period in solitary confinement was documented and there are also numerous reports and instances where prisoners were deprived of family visits and/or of medical care.

In a report it published in July 2016, a non-governmental source highlighted 18 cases of denial of medical treatment and indicated that the objective of this practice was to intimidate and punish political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

In the case of Ms. Akbari Monfared, who was serving a 15 years in prison in relation to her membership in the banned opposition group known as the People's Mojahedin Organization Iran (PMOI), the denial of medical treatment reportedly took place after she published a letter demanding justice for her brothers and sisters who were reportedly executed in 1988. The Government responded to most of these cases indicating that prisoners were in good health condition and that they were benefiting from proper health and medical facilities.

In June, Ms. Narges Mohammadi, a prominent human rights activist went on her hunger strike for 20 days to regain access to her children. According to the Government, she was sentenced to one year in prison for propaganda against the system, five years in prison for assembly and colluding against the national security, and ten years for establishing and running an unlicensed and illegal group. The sentences run concurrently, and thus she is serving ten years' imprisonment.

In December, Ms. Nazanin Ratcliffe a British-Iranian charity worker whose detention was considered as arbitrary by the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, was reportedly pressured to choose between moving her two-year-old daughter into prison or signing a document renouncing all her rights regarding her child. At least 50 lawyers have reportedly been prosecuted since June 2009 for representing prisoners of conscience, political detainees or "national security" prisoners. On 20 May 2016, the Special Rapporteur's predecessor and other United Nations experts issued a joint statement expressing concern about the situation of lawyers and human rights defenders, serving heavy sentences for their peaceful activities or simply for carrying out their professional duties. The experts noted that in addition to detaining human rights lawyers, their continued targeting and harassment by the authorities had apparently "forced some lawyers to limit their professional activities or leave the profession altogether."

The Special Rapporteur welcomes the declaration made by President Rouhani in November about the necessity for news media to feel safe while doing their jobs and notes that similar declaration had been made in the past. However, on 18 May 2016, Iran's parliament adopted the Political Crimes Bill, which mandates the Judiciary to prosecute such crimes in open court, before a jury. Certain provisions of this law, including Article 1 appear to criminalize attempts to "reform the country's policies," and Article 2 reaffirms the Government's authority to criminalize the "publication of lies," as well as insults or defamation against

government officials such as the president and his deputies, the head of the judiciary, and parliamentary members. Moreover, the Government is reportedly preparing to introduce two bills to parliament, which, if passed, could further erode press freedom and freedom of expression in the country. The first bill is designed to replace the current restrictive Press Law, and the second would establish a state organization. Under Articles 609 and 698, of the Islamic Penal Code, criticizing government officials or publishing false news is punishable by 74 lashes. The government however drew the attention of the Special Rapporteur to the fact that “in Iran insulting committed leaders, great personalities and thinkers, is unthinkable and many countries including Iran have criminalised such insulting behaviours”.

Ms. Asma Jahangir regrets that no progress has been made towards the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the elimination of legal provisions, which discriminate women in various fields. It is particularly disturbing that blatantly discriminatory provisions such as those contained in the penal code which stipulates that the value of a woman’s life is equal to half of a man’s remain in force in the country. Of concern is also possible adoption of new discriminatory legal provisions against women.

Child marriage remains legally possible for girls aged 13 and for boys aged 15. Even younger children can be married with the permission of the court but the marriage may not be consummated until puberty. In June, a spokesperson for the Tehran-based Association to Protect the Rights of Children stated that child marriages had reached alarming levels and stressed that approximately 17 percent of all marriages in the country involve girls married with old men. Forced marriages are though prohibited by law.

And still, discriminatory laws and regulations that require women to observe the Islamic dress code, or hijab, continue to be enforced by security and law enforcement officials but also by citizens in accordance with the 2015 legislation.

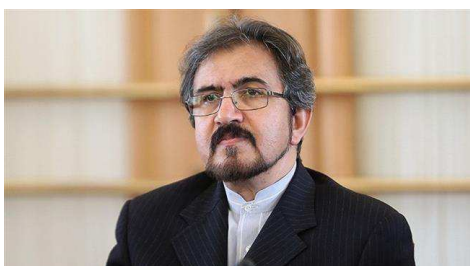
The situation of recognized and unrecognized religious minorities remains a matter of serious concern. Bahai’s continue to be systematically discriminated, targeted, and deprived them of the right to a livelihood. The Special Rapporteur urges the authorities to recognize that freedom of religion or belief entails the freedom to choose a religion or belief, and that measures restricting eligibility for civil, political, social or economic privileges, or imposing special restrictions on the practice of other faiths, violate the prohibition of discrimination based on religion or belief and the guarantee of equal protection under article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Mullah’s regime reaction on UN human rights report

Iran condemns UN human rights report

9 March 2017 15:03 (UTC+04:00)

<http://en.trend.az/iran/politics/2729786.html>



The Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bahram Qasemi condemned a recent UN report on the state of human rights in Iran.

Qasemi said the report of Asma Jahangir, the UN special rapporteur for human rights in Iran, is “unfair

and politicized,” the Foreign Ministry’s official website reported March 9.

The Islamic Republic has repeatedly stated that it doesn’t recognize a report which is prepared by a special rapporteur appointed on the basis of a resolution adopted on “political motivations of certain countries”, Qasemi added.

Asma Jahangir presented her 40-page report on details of human rights violations in Iran during the 34th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

In the report, Jahangir expressed concerns about no improvements in the human rights situation in Iran.

She also voiced concerns over juvenile executions, political prisoners being denied medical care, and the Iranian government’s use of torture.

The report stated that situation in areas like independence of judiciary and lawyers as well as freedom of expression continue to be of serious concern.

Qasemi said Iran has already submitted a detailed response to the special rapporteur over the “claims” raised in the report before she officially publishes it.

He further expressed regret that Jahangir had closed her eyes on Iran’s various developments in the field of human rights.

The 1988 massacre in Iran

Iran: Repression of those seeking truth and justice for 1980s killings needs to stop

March 8, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/iran-repression-of-those-seeking-truth-and-justice-for-1980s-killings-needs-to-stop/>



From right to left: Political prisoner Maryam Akbari-Monfared, civil rights activist Mansoureh Behkish, and Raheleh Rahemipour, who lost several family members in the 1980s after they were executed.

March 8, 2017–In a joint statement, 20 human rights organizations including the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) called on the Iranian authorities to stop the harassment, intimidation and prosecution of human rights defenders seeking truth and justice on behalf of individuals who were summarily executed or forcibly disappeared during the 1980s and their families.

Over the past few months, several human rights defenders, including **Mansoureh Behkish**, **Maryam Akbari-Monfared** and **Raheleh Rahemipour**, have been subjected to harassment, reprisals or prosecution on vague national security-related charges for their peaceful efforts to learn the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones. The persecution signals renewed efforts by

the authorities to suppress the struggle that has been ongoing for over three decades to reveal the truth about the gross human rights violations that were perpetrated by the Iranian authorities during the 1980s, including the extrajudicial executions of [several thousands](#) in 1988 and their burial in unmarked mass graves.

The latest wave of persecution of those seeking truth and justice appears to have been triggered by the release in August 2016 of an audio recording of a meeting in 1988 in which senior officials are heard discussing and defending the details of their plans to carry out the 1988 mass executions.

The audio recording has sent shockwaves across the country and prompted the authorities to admit for the first time that the mass killings of 1988 were planned at the highest levels of government. **Ahmad Montazeri**, the son of the late Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, who was at that time the Deputy Supreme Leader, has since been sentenced to imprisonment for posting the audio file on his father's website.

The undersigned human rights organizations are deeply concerned about these developments and call on the Iranian authorities to quash the convictions and sentences issued against Maryam Akbari-Monfared, Raheleh Rahemipour and Ahmad Montazeri; close the criminal case opened against Mansoureh Behkish; and immediately and unconditionally release Maryam Akbari-Monfared. The authorities should also ensure a safe and enabling environment in which it is possible for human rights defenders, including family members, to seek information about the mass killings, express themselves without any fear of persecution, and defend the rights to truth, justice and reparation, as a first step to ending impunity in Iran.

The undersigned human rights organizations urge the Iranian authorities to stop their attempts to silence human rights defenders and others seeking to shed light on past atrocities. Instead, they should respect their obligations under international human rights law to carry out thorough and impartial investigations into the serious human rights violations committed in the 1980s, including the 1988 extrajudicial executions, and ensure the rights to truth, justice and reparations for the victims and their families.

Cases of individuals targeted

Individuals who have been targeted in recent months for seeking truth and justice include human rights defenders Mansoureh Behkish, Maryam Akbari-Monfared and Raheleh Rahemipour, and the son of the late Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, Ahmad Montazeri.

Mansoureh Behkish was informed on 29 October 2016 that she had been charged with “gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security” and “spreading propaganda against the system”. The charges stem solely from her peaceful human rights work to seek truth and justice, including her work with the Mothers and Families of Khavaran, a group comprised of mothers and other family members of political prisoners summarily executed during the 1980s, and from holding commemorative gatherings at her home and going with other families to Khavaran, a deserted mass gravesite in the south of Tehran where Iranian authorities buried some of the thousands of political prisoners extrajudicially executed in the 1980s, including Mansoureh Behkish's sister, four brothers and brother-in-law.

Maryam Akbari-Monfared has faced reprisals since October 2016, when she filed a formal complaint from inside prison requesting an official investigation into the mass executions of political prisoners in the 1980s, including her brother and sister; the location of the graves where their bodies were buried; and the identity of the perpetrators involved. Officials have cancelled her medical care arrangements for her rheumatoid arthritis and thyroid problems and restricted visits from her family, including her three children, in retaliation. The prosecution authorities have also threatened her with new charges. According to her family, the Associate Prosecutor of Evin prison has said: “What does she want to know? Those who executed her brothers and sister have either died or become elderly and her brothers and sister are probably buried in Khavaran... Such complaints are of no use. They would only make her conditions in prison more difficult and impede her release or access to [prison] leave.”

Maryam Akbari-Monfared is serving a 15-year sentence in Tehran’s Evin prison on several charges, including “enmity against God” (*moharebeh*), after a May 2010 sentencing. Amnesty International’s research indicates that her conviction was based on the fact that she had made several phone calls to her siblings, who are members of the banned opposition group known as the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), and had once visited them near the PMOI-run Camp Ashraf in Iraq. She has consistently denied her alleged membership in the PMOI. She was never provided with a written judgement, setting out the evidence and legal reasoning relied upon to convict her. Her husband has said that during her trial session, the judge told her “she was paying for the activities of her brother and sister with the PMOI”. Her appeals were dismissed in a summary fashion with no reasons provided. Her request for judicial review is currently pending before Iran’s Supreme Court.

Raheleh Rahemipour was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment in January 2017 after Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran convicted her of “spreading propaganda against the system” for her peaceful efforts to learn the whereabouts of her brother Hossein Rahemipour, who was summarily executed in 1984, and his baby daughter Golrou Rahemipour, who was forcibly disappeared 15 days after she was born in Evin prison. The prison authorities took the baby away, ostensibly for medical tests, but never returned her to her mother. The family was subsequently told that baby Golrou Rahemipour had died, but the authorities never provided a death certificate, information about her death, or where she had been buried.

The court verdict issued against Raheleh Rahemipour cites her media interviews, her participation in peaceful gatherings while holding a sign that read “You killed my brother! What did you do to his daughter?”, and her signature on a petition in support of demands for truth and justice for those summarily executed as “evidence” of acting against national security. In May 2016, the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances sent a communication to the Iranian authorities with regard to the case of Raheleh Rahemipour’s brother and niece. The authorities had not responded by the end of February 2017. Raheleh Rahemipour remains at liberty, awaiting the outcome of her appeal.

Ahmad Montazeri, the son of the late Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, was sentenced to 21 years’ imprisonment in November 2016 after the Special Court of Clergy convicted him of several charges including “spreading propaganda against the system” and “revealing plans, secrets or decisions regarding the state’s domestic or foreign policies... in a manner amounting to espionage”. The court ruled that in light of Ahmad Montazeri’s family history and lack of a criminal record, he only needs to serve six years of the sentence. Ahmad Montazeri’s conviction stems from the publication of the audio file on his father’s website,

which the authorities said advanced the interests of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution, and the media interviews that he subsequently gave to media outlets based outside Iran. Ahmad Montazeri was imprisoned on 22 February 2017 to begin serving his sentence, but was granted temporary prison leave the next day. He was informed several days later that his prison sentence had been suspended.

Background

Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri was once in line to become the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's successor but he lost his status after he voiced strong opposition to the 1988 mass killings. In the audio file released by his son in August 2016, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri is heard saying: "The greatest crime committed in the Islamic Republic, for which history will condemn us, has been committed at your hands and, in the future, your names will go down in history as criminals."

Under international law, individuals against whom there is evidence of criminal responsibility for serious international crimes, including those with command responsibility, should be prosecuted and tried before a court established by law and with all necessary procedural guarantees, in accordance with international fair trial standards.

If found guilty, they should be punished with appropriate penalties, which take into account the grave nature of the crimes but which do not include the death penalty or corporal punishments.

Signatories:

1. Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation
2. All Human Rights for All in Iran
3. Amnesty International
4. Article 19
5. Association des Chercheurs Iraniens – ACI
6. Association for the Human Rights of Azerbaijani People in Iran(AHRAZ)
7. Association of Human Rights in Kurdistan of Iran-Geneva – KMMK-G
8. Front Line Defenders
9. Human Rights Activists in Iran
10. Human Rights Watch
11. Insight Iran
12. Center for Human Rights in Iran
13. Iran Human Rights
14. Justice for Iran
15. Kurdistan Human Rights Network
16. Small Media
17. The Baloch Activists Campaign
18. United4Iran
19. Universal Tolerance
20. Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)

A Call to Strip Immunities of the Perpetrators of the 1988 Massacre in Iran
Tuesday, 07 March 2017 08:48

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22302-a-call-to-strip-immunities-of-the-perpetrators-of-the-1988-massacre-in-iran>



NCRI - The Senior Member of the House of Commons and the Joint Chair of the British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom, Sir David Amess on Thursday March 3rd issued a statement by undertaking a meta-partisan initiative in line with the international movement with 80 Members of parliament for justice for litigating those who are responsible for the massacre of 30 thousand political prisoners occurred in Iran in 1988.

The House of Commons in a resolution initiated by Sir David Amess called on the British government to condemn the massacre of 30 thousand political prisoners occurred in 1988 as the crime against the humanity.

The resolution relies on the audio file released by Ayatollah Montazeri which referred to the execution of pregnant women and young girls. The resolution also stresses on the fact that the perpetrators of the massacre of 1988 like the Minister of Justice, Mostafa Pourmohammadi have obtained higher positions in the government.

The Common House calls on the UK to take appropriate measures in the UN Council of Human Rights and the Security Council to prosecute those responsible for these crimes in an international court.

In his statement, Sir David Amess referred to the resolution and stated: "the United Nations can no longer neglect the massacre of political prisoners occurred in 1988 while the number of executions is increasing in Iran. We are deeply concerned about the sharp rise of death penalties In Iran and particularly the execution of juveniles. According to the reports from Iran, 87 people have been executed by the authorities of the regime in January.

The right to live has been seriously threatened in Iran again. The culture of impunity for the violators of human rights, especially the perpetrators of the massacre of 1988 is the main reason for these dangerous and frightening changes."

Sir Amess in his statement referred to the recent remarks uttered by Sadegh Zibakalam that confirmed the massacre of MEK members. The remarks posted on a state-run website suggest that "thousands of members of the people's Mujahedin of Iran were killed without any trial, proof or evidence during the first years after the Islamic Revolution". Following the post, Sir Amess stated: "Sadegh Zibakalam discloses other evidence regarding government's involvement in the arbitrary massacre of tens of thousands political prisoners in Iran."

The Member of Labor Party in the Parliament for Selly Oak of Birmingham, Steve McCabe stated: "the Iran regime is not willing to prosecute the perpetrators of this massacre at all. Instead, they punish those who provide proofs and evidence about this crime and on the other hand, the perpetrators like the Minster of Justice, Mostafa Pourmohammadi are rewarded with high positions in the regime.

Under such circumstances, the British government and its allies are responsible for stepping forward in the UN to prosecute the Iran regime in order to receive justice for the families of the victims."

The Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords, the Lord Dholakia said: "the continuing impunity for these violators of human rights is unacceptable since many evidence prove that the perpetrators shall be prosecuted."

Sir David Amess pointed out that the next session of the UN Human Rights Council will be held in Geneva next week. He said: "this summit affords the opportunity for the UK to raise the issue urgently. We urge the British government to take effective measures in the UN in order to recognize and condemn this brutal massacre as the crime against humanity. We also call on the British government to ask the Commissioner for the Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, and the Security Council to carry out an investigation in order to try the perpetrators of the massacre of 1988, as also stated in the parliamentary resolution 448 supported by 80 Members of Parliament from all parties on the massacre of the political prisoners occurred in 1988 in Iran."

the Joint Chair of the British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom, Sir David Amess at the end said: "we expect the UN to consider our demand in the next resolution; the demand of all party Members of the parliament which was greatly supported by the House of Lords as well as the Western parliament Members regarding the condition of human rights in Iran. We call on the British government, the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to take necessary steps towards the goal."

Execution

Iran: Eight Prisoners in Imminent Danger of Execution

These eight prisoners may be executed at any moment. Their lives are in danger.

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2808/>



Iran Human Rights (MAR 6 2017): Eight death row prisoners in Iran are in imminent danger of execution after authorities transferred them to solitary confinement.

Two prisoners are in imminent danger of execution in Ghezel Hesar Prison
Alborz province, northern Iran

According to close sources, on Saturday March 4, at least two death row prisoners in Ghezel Hesar Prison were transferred to solitary confinement in preparation for their executions. The prisoners have been identified as Isa Charami and Mostafa Ghorbani. Mr Ghorbani is reportedly 23 years of age.

"Isa was sentenced to death on the charge of trafficking 160 kilograms of opium. He has been in prison for the past seven years. Mostafa was sentenced to death on the charge of trafficking three kilograms of crystal meth. He has been in prison for the past two and a half years," a close source tells Iran Human Rights.

Two prisoners are in imminent danger of execution in Garmsar Prison

Semnan province, northern Iran

According to a report by the human rights news site, HRANA, two death row prisoners in Garmsar Prison were transferred to solitary confinement in preparation for their executions. The report identifies the prisoners as Parviz Nedaie and Bahram Moradgholi. They were reportedly sentenced to death together on the charge of possession and trafficking 820 grams of narcotics.

Four prisoners are in imminent danger of execution in Zahedan Prison

Sistan and Baluchestan province, eastern Iran

According to another report by HRANA, four death row prisoners in Zahedan Prison were transferred to solitary confinement in preparation for their executions. Two of the prisoners are unidentified, the other two have been identified as Gol Mohammad Kiazehi and Davoud Behzad, who were reportedly sentenced to death on murder charges and have been in prison for the past seven years.

These eight prisoners may be executed at any moment. Their lives are in danger.

Iran: Seven Prisoners Hanged in One Day

Iranian official sources, including the media and Judiciary, have not announced these executions.

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2807/>



Iran Human Rights (MAR 6 2017): At least seven prisoners were executed in Iran on Saturday March 4.

Four prisoners, including two women, hanged at Rasht's central prison, Lakan

Gilan province, northern Iran

According to close sources, on the morning of Saturday March 4, four prisoners, including two women, were hanged at Rasht's central prison, Lakan. These four prisoners were reportedly transferred to solitary confinement before their executions. Three of these prisoners were sentenced to death on murder charges, but no information is available for the other prisoner. Only one of the prisoner names is known, Shah Mohammadi. A fifth prisoner was also transferred with them to solitary confinement, but was transferred back to the prison cell after receiving a postponement approval by the complainants on the case file.

Two prisoners hanged at Urmia's central prison, Darya

West Azerbaijan province, northwestern Iran

According to a report by the human rights new site, HRANA, on the morning of Saturday March 4, a prisoner was hanged at Shahroud Prison (Semnan province, northern Iran) on drug related charges. The prisoner has been identified as Ismael Arab Zamani, sentenced to death on the charge of possession and trafficking one kilogram and 800 grams of crystal meth.

Prisoner hanged at Shahroud Prison

Semnan province, northern Iran

According to another report by HRANA, at least two prisoners were hanged on the morning of Saturday March 4 in Urmia's central prison, Darya, on drug related charges. The prisoners have been identified as Najji Payam and Eshgh Ali (also known as Ashkan). The report suggests there may have been a third prisoner who was also executed along with Mr. Payam and Ali.

Iranian official sources, including the media and Judiciary, have not announced these executions.

IRAN: Annual report on the death penalty 2016

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2814/>

Revolution Courts which sentence hundreds of people to death every year are among the key institutions responsible for Iran's violations of due process and must be shut down.



IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS (MAR 7, 2017): The 9th annual report of Iran Human Rights (IHR) on the death penalty gives an assessment and analysis of death penalty trends in 2016 in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The 9th annual report of the organization Iran Human Rights (IHR) on the death penalty in Iran shows that in 2016 at least

530 people were executed in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although this number is significantly lower than the annual execution numbers in the past five years, Iran, with an average of more than one execution per day, remains in 2016 the country with the highest number of executions per capita.

Commenting on the relative decrease in the 2016 execution figures, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, the director and spokesperson of IHR said: **“We welcome any reduction in the use of the death penalty. But unfortunately there are no indications that the relative decrease in the number of the executions in 2016 was due to a change in the Islamic Republic of Iran’s policy. Our reports show that in just the first two months of 2017 Iranian authorities have executed at least 140 people.”**

On the occasion of the launch of the 2016 annual report on the death penalty in Iran, the organizations Iran Human Rights (IHR) and ECPM (Ensemble contre la peine de mort) call on Iran’s European dialogue partners to push for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty in Iran and for major reforms in the country’s judicial system which does not at this time meet minimum international standards.

The report puts special focus on the role of the Revolution Courts as a major source of arbitrariness and of violations of due process in the Iranian judicial system. The Revolution Courts are responsible for the vast majority of the death sentences issued and carried out over the last 37 years in Iran. According to IHR’s 2016 report, at least 64% of all executions in

2016 and more than 3200 executions since 2010, have been based on death sentences issued by the Revolution Courts. The Revolution Courts are less transparent than the Public Courts, and Revolutionary Court judges are known for the abuse of their legal powers. Trials lasting less than 15 minutes, lack of access to a chosen lawyer, and sentences based on confessions extracted under torture are the hallmarks of the Revolution Courts.

On the issue of lack of due process Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam said: **“A sustainable reduction in the use of the death penalty is impossible as long as there is no due process. Revolution Courts which sentence hundreds of people to death every year are among the key institutions responsible for Iran’s violations of due process and must be shut down.”**

The executive director of ECPM, Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan said: **“We call on every democratic State and all Iran’s European partners to make serious efforts to reduce the death penalty in Iran, and to include Human Rights, and especially the situation of the death penalty in Iran, in their bilateral and multilateral dialogues. It is only with constant and permanent pressure in the dialogue with Iran that a good outcome can be achieved.”**

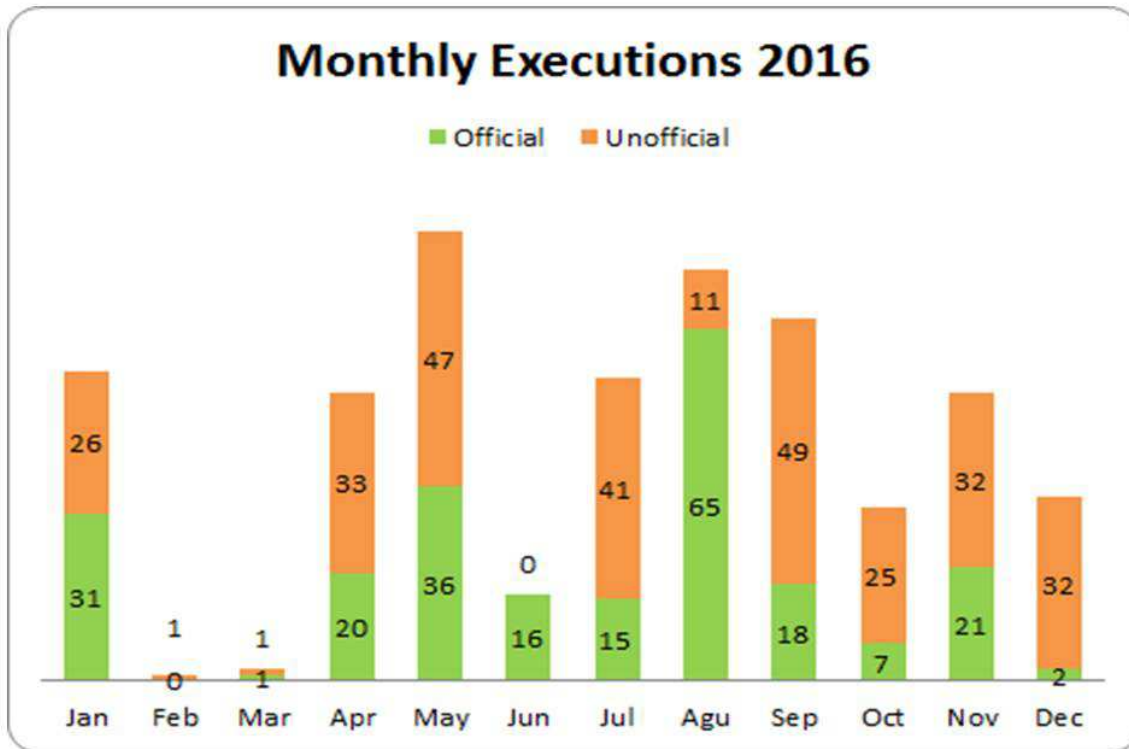
IHR and ECPM also call on the Iranian authorities to release Ms. Narges Mohammadi immediately. Narges Mohammadi was sentenced by the Revolution Court to 16 years in prison, 10 of those years for establishment of an abolitionist campaign. The human rights groups also call for an end to the crackdown on civil society and the prosecution of peaceful civil activists.

Annual 2016 Report at a Glance

- 530 people were executed in 2016 (45% decrease from 2015)
- 232 executions (44%) were announced by official sources
- 64% of the death sentences carried out in 2016 were issued by the Revolution Courts
- 296 (56%) were executed for drug-related charges
- 33 executions were conducted in public spaces
- At least 5 juvenile offenders were among those executed
- At least 9 women were executed
- 142 were executed for murder
- 251 of those sentenced to death were forgiven by the families of the murder victims

Executions trends in 2016

The 9th annual report on the death penalty in Iran shows that the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) executed at least 530 people in 2016. Although this number represents a significant decrease compared to the annual number of executions in the last five years, in 2016 IRI remains the world’s number one executioner *per capita* with an average of more than one execution per day.



Iran Human Rights 2016
www.iranhrnet



There is little, if any, indication that the significant decrease in the number of executions is due to a change in policy of IRI. Iran Human Rights (IHR) has reported at least 140 executions since the beginning of 2017, suggesting that even if the decrease in 2016 executions resulted from a political decision, it must have been temporary. Indeed, there was only one execution reported in the months of February and March 2016, coinciding with the two rounds of the Parliamentary elections and the Iranian new year Nowrouz. IHR has previously published a report showing that the execution numbers are low during the two weeks before elections.

Drug-related executions

In 2016, a debate about the lack of deterrence of the death penalty for drug offences took place in Iran, and in October 150 MPs in the 290-seat parliament endorsed a bill that would end capital punishment for minor drug trafficking. Despite this, at least 296 people were hanged for drug offences in 2016, most of them in the second half of the year. This accounts for about 57% of all executions in 2016. All people with drug charges are tried by the Revolution Courts, often without access to a lawyer.

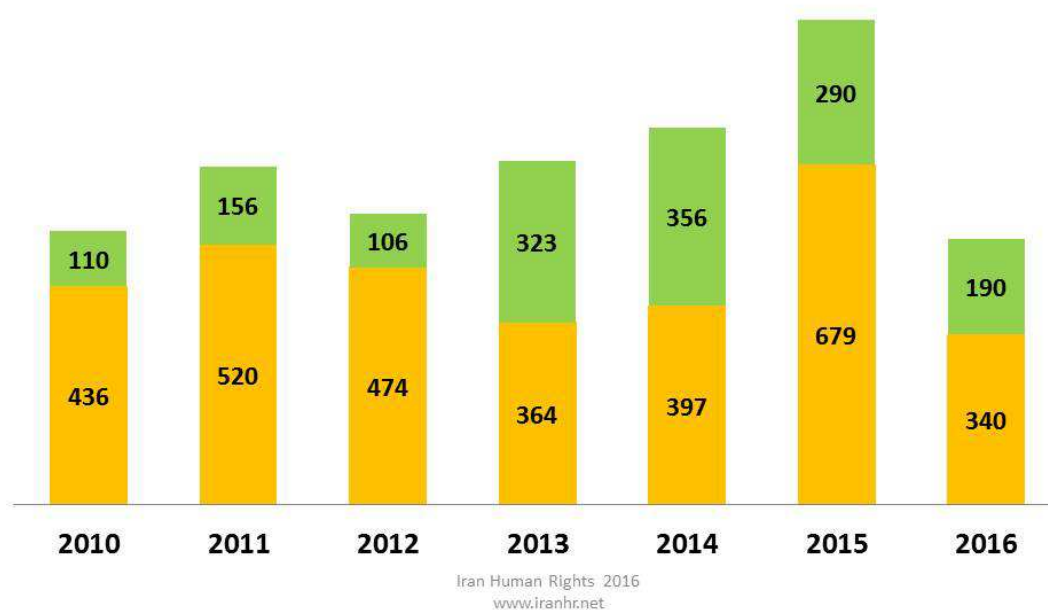
Revolution Courts responsible for majority of the executions

The Revolution Courts were established in 1979 by the first Supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini. They were temporary courts designed to deal with the officials of the former regime. However, more than 37 years later they continue to operate. All cases regarded as security-related, such as cases involving political and civil activists, and others allegedly involved in corruption and drug-related charges, are processed by the Revolution Courts.

These courts are responsible for the vast majority of the death sentences issued and carried out over the last 37 years in Iran. The Revolutionary Courts are less transparent than the Public Courts (both criminal and civil) and Revolutionary Court judges are known for grea



■ Revolution Courts ■ Criminal Courts



ter abuse of their legal powers than other judges. Revolutionary Court judges often deny access to legal representation during the investigation phase and prevent lawyers from accessing client files on the basis of confidentiality, or that the lawyers have insufficient “qualifications” to review certain files.

In 2016 at least 64% of all executions were based on death sentences issued by the Revolution Courts. According to the reports by IHR, Revolution Courts are responsible for more than 3200 executions since 2010.

Execution of 25 Sunni Kurdish prisoners: Confession under torture and minutes-long trials by the Revolution Courts



In August 2016, Shahram Ahmadi (picture) and 24 other Kurdish prisoners of the Sunni faith were executed, charged with cooperation with militant Sunni groups.

IHR has credible information that many of these prisoners had been subjected to torture to extract forced confessions. The death sentences were issued by the Revolution Courts after trial sessions lasting less than 15 minutes and without any possibility of defense. The prisoners were hanged without having a chance to see their families for the last time.

Execution of juvenile offenders, public executions and other inhumane punishments

In violation of its international obligations, Iran continued the execution of juvenile offenders in 2016. According to our report, at least 5 juvenile offenders were executed in 2016 in Iran. Three of the juvenile offenders were reportedly sentenced to death for drug offences. Iranian authorities also carried out public executions and other barbaric punishments such as amputations, and blinding of eyes. According to IHR's reports, 34 people were hanged in public spaces, in front of hundreds of citizens including children.

Abolition movement



The crackdown on the abolition movement reached a peak in 2016, as several activists were sentenced to long prison terms.

The Revolution Court in Tehran sentenced the human rights defender Narges Mohammadi (picture) to 16 years in prison, 10 of the years for establishing the abolitionist campaign LEGAM (Step by step to

abolish the death penalty).

However, the forgiveness movement, where families of murder victims are encouraged to choose forgiveness instead of the death penalty (retribution) kept growing. As in last year, the number of the families of murder victims who chose forgiveness in 2016 was significantly higher than the number of those who asked for a retribution death sentence for the murder convicts.



Legacy of Hassan Rouhani's first presidential period: Dialogue with the West and more death penalty in Iran

This 2016 annual report is being published with only a few months left in Hassan Rouhani's first presidential period. A review of Mr. Rouhani's 3.5 years as President shows that the number of executions under his presidency was significantly higher than the annual executions under the previous two periods under Ahmadinejad. Moreover, despite the excellent diplomatic relations between IRI and the EU after the Election of Hassan Rouhani in 2013, the issue of the death penalty has not been on the agenda of the bilateral dialogue between EU and Iran. This might be the reason why no specific reforms or changes in the policy with regards to the death penalty were applied during Rouhani's period. The EU has admitted that human rights and the issue of the death penalty were not on the agenda prior to 2016, and that for the first time in April 2016, the EU signalled that after the nuclear agreement and the lifting of sanctions, "frank exchanges on human rights issues" will be part of the renewed EU-Iran dialogue. The EU also mentioned in its October 2016 report on Iran-EU relations that "EU sees a major objective within the political dialogue to reduce the application of the death penalty; calls for an immediate moratorium on the carrying out of death sentences in Iran".

Recommendations:

On the occasion of launching this annual report, Iran Human Rights (IHR) and ECPM call on Iran's dialogue partners to:

- Place moratorium on the use of the death penalty, especially death penalty for juvenile offenders, death penalty for drug offences and public executions, at the top of the agenda in their talks with Iran
- Push for serious reforms in the Iranian judicial system, including dismantlement of the Revolution Courts
- Demand the immediate release of Narges Mohammadi and other prisoners of conscience

IHR and ECPM call on the Iranian authorities to:

- Impose a moratorium on the death penalty for drug offences, while they are considering a new revision of the Anti-drug law.
- Stop the practice of public executions
- Remove all the death sentences issued for offences committed at under 18 years of age
- Immediately release Narges Mohammadi and other prisoners of conscience
- Give all prisoners access to lawyers selected by themselves
- Dismantle the Revolution Courts
- Stop the persecution of lawyers

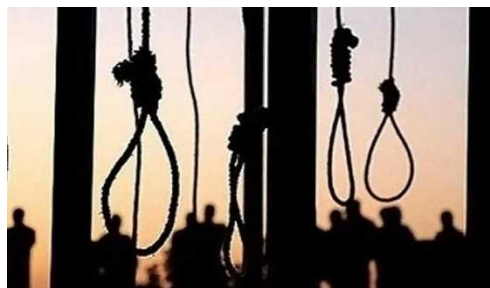
IHR and ECPM have been collaborating since 2011 for the international release and dissemination of the annual report on the death penalty in Iran.

IHR and ECPM see the death penalty as a benchmark for the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Five prisoners hanged in Iran

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2811/>

The execution was carried out in front of a crowd of people.



Iran Human Rights (MAR 8 2017): Official and unofficial sources have reported on the executions of five prisoners in various Iranian prisons. The executions were carried out between Saturday and Sunday.

Three prisoners hanged at Ghezelhesar Prison
Alborz Province, northern Iran

According to close sources, on the morning of Saturday March 4, a prisoner was hanged at Hamedan Central Prison on murder charges. The prisoner has been identified as Bahman Faridi, 35 years of age.

There are currently 22 prisoners in Hamedan Central Prison who are in imminent danger of execution after their death sentences were confirmed. Nine of these prisoner are in danger of execution for murder charges, the rest of the prisoners are sentenced to death on drug related charges.

A prisoner hanged at Hamedan Central Prison

Hamadan province, western Iran

According to the human rights news agency, HRANA, three prisoners were executed at Ghezelhesar Prison on drug related charges. The executions were reportedly carried out on Sunday March 5. Sources close to Iran Human Rights have also confirmed these three executions. The prisoners have been identified as Isa Charami, Mostafa Ghorbani, and Mehdi Jafari.

A prisoner was hanged in public in Buin Zahra county

Qazvin province, northern Iran

The Iranian state-run news agency, Mehr, has reported on the execution of a prisoner in public on Sunday March 5 in Buin Zahra (Qazvin province, northern Iran). The prisoner was reportedly on death row on murder charges. The report confirmed the execution by quoting the press department of the Qazvin Judiciary. According to the report, the execution was carried out in front of a crowd of people.

Iran: Two Prisoners in Imminent Danger of Execution on Drug Charges

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2812/>

They were arrested in 2010 on the charge of four kilograms of crystal meth.



Iran Human Rights (MAR 8 2017): Two death row prisoners in Dizel Abad Prison (Kermanshah province, western Iran) were reportedly transferred

to solitary confinement in preparation for their executions.

According to close sources, the prisoners were transferred on Saturday March 4. The prisoners have been identified as cousins Mehdi Nejati, 36, and Houshang Nejati, 38.

"They were arrested in 2010 on the charge of [trafficking] four kilograms of crystal meth. Their death sentenced to death on December 24, 2016 by the Kermanshah Revolutionary Court," a close source tells Iran Human Rights.

Iran: Four Prisoners Executed

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2813/>

Close sources believe the Iranian authorities plan to execute these three prisoners in public.



Iran Human Rights (MAR 8 2017): Two prisoners were hanged at Garmsar Prison (Semnan province, northern Iran) on drug related charges and two prisoners were hanged at Urmia's central prison (West Azerbaijan province, northwestern Iran) on murder charges.

According to the human rights news agency, HRANA, the two prisoners at Garmsar were hanged on Monday March 6 on the charge of possession and trafficking 820 grams of narcotics. The prisoners have been identified as Parviz (Behrouz) Nedaie and Bahram Moradgholi.

According to HRANA, the two prisoners at Urmia's central prison were also hanged on Monday. The prisoners have been identified as Ramezan Sabzi and Yousef Alizadeh (approximately 60 years old).

Close sources have reported on three death row prisoners from Urmia's central prison, charged with serial murder, who were transferred out of the prison. Close sources believe the Iranian authorities plan to execute these three prisoners in public.

Iran Human Rights had previously reported on two executions on drug related charges which were carried out at Urmia's central prison on Sunday March 4.

Iran: Two Prisoners Executed on Murder Charges

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2815/>

One of the prisoners was 21 years of age at the time he allegedly committed murder.



Iran Human Rights (MAR 9 2017): Two unidentified prisoners were reportedly hanged at Sari Prison (Mazandaran province, northern Iran) on murder charges.

According to the state-run Iranian news agency, Rokna, the executions were carried out on the morning of Monday March 6. The two prisoners allegedly committed a murder crime in March 2013. According to the report, one of the prisoners was 21 years of age at the time he allegedly committed murder.

Iran: Three Prisoners Executed

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2816/>

Iranian official sources, including the Judiciary and the media, have not announced the executions mentioned in this report.



Iran Human Rights has learned about the execution of three prisoners, one on drug related charges, the other two on murder charges.

Iran Human Rights (MAR 9 2017): A prisoner was reportedly hanged at Maragheh Prison (East Azerbaijan province, northwestern Iran) on drug related charges, and two prisoners were reportedly hanged at Zahedan Central Prison (Sistan &

Baluchestan province, eastern Iran) on murder charges.

According to close sources, the prisoner at Maragheh Prison was executed on the morning of Sunday March 5. The prisoner has been identified as Morad Seifi, 39 years of age.

"Morad was arrested in autumn 2013 [for possession of] one kilogram and 300 grams of crystal meth and 750 grams of crack on him. He was sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court," a close source tells Iran Human Rights.

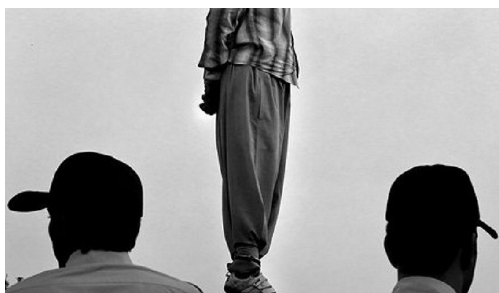
According to the human rights news agency, the Baloch Activists Campaign, the two prisoners who were executed at Zahedan Central Prison have been identified as Gol Mohammad Kiazehi and Mehrdad Vazifehdad. Mr. Kiazehi was reportedly held in prison for seven years before he was executed while Mr. Vazifehdad was held in prison for five years before his execution. Their executions were reportedly carried out on Tuesday March 7. Three other prisoners were reportedly also scheduled to be executed at Zahedan Central Prison on Tuesday, but their executions were postponed for unknown reasons.

Iranian official sources, including the Judiciary and the media, have not announced the executions mentioned in this report.

Iran: Unidentified Prisoner Executed in Public on Murder Charges

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2817/>

An unidentified prisoner was executed in public in front of a mosque in Yazd.



Iran Human Rights (MAR 11 2017): An unidentified prisoner was reportedly executed in public on murder charges.

According to a report by the state-run news agency, Jaame Jam Online, the public execution was carried out on Thursday March 9 in the city of Yazd in front of the parking lot of Mullah Ismail mosque. The report claims that the unidentified prisoner and his brother robbed a jewellery store in August 2015 and killed the jewellery store owner's son in the process.

Torture

Iran: Supreme Court Confirms Amputation Sentence for Prisoner

At least three other individuals in Iran have also been sentenced to amputation on theft charges.

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2805/>

Iran Human Rights (MAR 6 2017): Iran's Supreme Court has reportedly confirmed the amputation sentence of at least one prisoner on theft charges.

According to close sources, branch 32 of the Supreme Court has confirmed the amputation sentence for Mostafa Shahi, an individual who was convicted in June 2015 in a court in Urmia (West Azerbaijan province, northwestern Iran). In 2014, Mr. Shahi was reportedly arrested in Urmia by Iranian authorities on theft charges.

"Mostafa is 41 years old and father of a young girl. The theft was a result of poverty. To this day, Mostafa insists that he didn't commit the actual theft himself, but rather it was the individual who was with him. During interrogations, Mostafa was forced to accept responsibility for the crime," a close source tells Iran Human Rights.

According to a report by the local Iranian newspaper Farhikhtegan, at least three other individuals in Iran have also been sentenced to amputation on theft charges. According to this report, the individuals are two unidentified brothers and an unidentified accomplice. One of the young men was reportedly also sentenced to three years in prison, as this was his eighth theft charge.

Amputation and flogging punishments are cruel and inhuman torture, and torture is prohibited by international human rights standards.

Prisoners of Conscience

Saber Naderi Visited His Family for the First Time

Posted on: 2nd March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/saber-naderi-visited-family-first-time>



HRANA News Agency – Saber Naderi was arrested in Ghorveh city and was transferred to an unknown location, in December. His family is unaware of his whereabouts and fate and their follow up has had no results, so far. Sanandaj Revolutionary Court has orally announced to his family that his detention had been extended. The family has been able to meet

him shortly at the detention center in Intelligence Office of Sanandaj for the first time since the arrest.

A source close to Naderi family told HRANA's reporter: "Sanandaj Revolutionary Court has orally announced to the family of Mr. Naderi, director of the Shahir software Poya companies in Ghorveh city who was arrested on December 4, 2016, that his detention had been extended. But no information about the reason for his arrest and the charges against him have been provided."

The source added: "Finally, after 50 days, his family was allowed to visit him briefly on January 25, 2017 in one of the detention centers of Intelligence Office in Sanandaj. According to the family, he had lost a lot of weight and was in critical condition and became very weak and yellow, but the traces of torture were not visible on him. He has said that he did not know the reason of his arrest, so far but he was completely innocent and the charge against him were entirely baseless and false."

At the end the source said: "Security and judicial authorities have asked his family to persuade their son to cooperate and accept their indictment, and accordingly, they also have to address his situation, and get him out of solitary confinement and security prison and send his case to the court."

HRANA had mentioned in the previous reports regarding the arrest of this citizen of Ghorveh, that the security forces first laid siege all around the house and then about 20 security forces simultaneously stormed into the house after opening the front door and inspected and cluttered all the furniture and accommodations of his mother's house.

These forces unlike the existing rules, without the presence of a female agent, attempted to body search the women, and their personal belongings and in response to the family's protests, threatened them with guns and made them be silent.

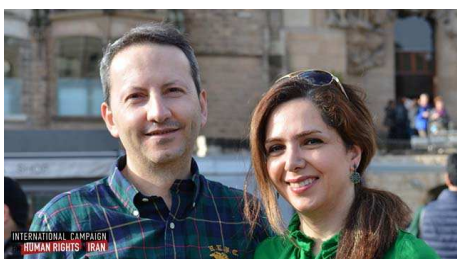
Security forces, after one hour of inspection and examining, eventually seized and took two laptops inside the home and one which belonged to the wife of Mr. Naderi, mobile phones of all members of family and a number of books and pamphlets.

At the same time, a number of security agents had stormed the Shahir Narmafzar Pooya Company located in Second Floor of Sina Building in Shariati Street, and interrogated all partners of Mr. Naderi and inspected the premises and computers.

Imprisoned Iran-Born Swedish Resident Refusing Food and Water in Desperate Bid for Justice

March 3, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/imprisoned-iran-born-swedish-resident-refusing-food-and-water/>



Rouhani Officials Ignore Jalali's Wife's Letters

Iranian-born Swedish resident [Ahmadreza Jalali](#) is protesting his detainment in Iran since April 2016

without charge and denial of access to due process by refusing food and water.

“On Thursday (February 23) Ahmadreza’s relatives in Tehran visited him in prison and said he had lost a lot of weight and was in a bad mental state,” Mehran-nia told the Campaign for Human Rights in Iran. “He also has chest and kidney pains.”

Jalali stopped eating food on February 15, 2017 and shifted to a dry hunger strike on February 24.

Officials within the administration of President Hassan Rouhani have meanwhile not responded to letters from his wife, Vida Mehran-nia, demanding justice for her husband.

“A month ago (January 2017), I wrote a letter to Hassan Rouhani and asked for his help,” said Mehran-nia. “For the sake of an innocent citizen behind bars, I asked him to look into the unjust treatment Ahmadreza has received and to investigate Judge (Abolghasem) Salavati’s death threats. I haven’t gotten a response yet.”

“Is this justice? I also wrote to the judiciary’s Human Rights director Mohammad Javad Larijani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif,” she said. “None of them have replied to me.”

Jalali has been repeatedly denied lawyers of his choice and told by his interrogators and the presiding judge before the start of his trial that he will be [sentenced to death](#).

“Judge Salavati rejected Ahmadreza’s first lawyer, Mr. Mahmoud Alizadeh Tabatabaee (prominent human rights lawyer),” Mehran-nia told the Campaign.

“Then, four months ago, the court accepted Ahmadreza’s new lawyer, Ms. Zeinab Taheri, but now that we are getting close to the date of the trial, Judge Salavati is saying he won’t accept her either, and Ahmadreza has to find yet another lawyer,” she said.

“Judge Salavati rejected Jalali’s lawyer and demanded that the lawyer be changed or a public defender would be imposed by the court,” she added. “Jalali said he would not change his lawyer and that if his lawyer was not permitted to attend the trial, he would not show up in court either.”

“What could all this mean other than the fact that Ahmadreza is innocent?” said Mehran-nia. “They have nothing on him and they just want to take away his ability to defend himself in court.”

“Ahmadreza had no choice but to go on a hunger strike to make his voice heard,” she told the Campaign.

Salavati is infamous for imposing harsh sentences in politicized cases.

In interviews with the Campaign, several lawyers have criticized Salavati for ignoring arguments by the defense in court and bowing to the demands of the prosecution, especially in cases in which the arresting authority was the Revolutionary Guards’ Intelligence Organization.

Salavati has presided over many cases against [dual nationals](#), including Amir Hekmati, Saeed Abedini, and Jason Rezaian, who were [released](#) in January 2016 in a prisoner swap deal with the US.

He is also the presiding judge in current cases against dual nationals including against Iranian-American [Siamak Namazi](#), his father Bagher Namazi, and British-Iranian Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

In all these cases, the victims have been held without due process and under unclear or unannounced charges, and denied full and proper legal representation.

“We kept quiet for nine months and didn’t say anything about Ahmadreza’s detention because we thought he would go free, as the authorities kept saying he would,” Mehran-nia told the Campaign. “But we’ve had enough of all this injustice.”

In April 2016, Jalali, who lives in Sweden with his wife and two children, was officially invited by Tehran University to speak about his knowledge and experience as a disaster medical response expert.

On April 24, 2016 he was arrested by [Intelligence Ministry](#) agents and held in solitary confinement in Evin Prison’s Ward 209 where he was interrogated for seven months.

The charges against Jalali have not been publicly disclosed.

The Judiciary’s ongoing [imprisonment](#) of dual nationals [contradicts](#) Rouhani’s repeated calls for expatriates to return to Iran. The growing number of arrests also reflects hardliners’ efforts to prevent the engagement with the West that the Rouhani administration has sought to encourage.

Iranian-British dual citizen [Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe](#), sentenced to five years in prison in September 2016, has been held since April 2016; Iranian-American businessman [Siamak Namazi](#), held since October 15, 2015 and his father, 80-year-old Bagher Namazi, held since February 2016, have both been sentenced to ten years in prison; Iranian-American [Robin \(Reza\) Shahini](#), held since July 2016; has been sentenced to 18 years in prison, British-Iranian [Roya Saberi Nobakht](#), held since October 2013, has been sentenced to seven years; and Iranian-Austrian dual citizen [Kamran Ghaderi](#), held since January 2016, has been sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Iranian-American [Karan Vafadari](#), held since July 2016, has not been sentenced yet.

6 Years of Imprisonment for a Refugee, After Returning to Iran From the Netherlands

Saturday, 04 March 2017 02:13

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22280-6-years-of-imprisonment-for-a-refugee-after-returning-to-iran-from-the-netherlands>



NCRI - The young man from southern oil rich city of Ahvaz who had sought asylum in the Netherlands got arrested by Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) Headquarters as soon as he returned to Iran. He was then sentenced to 6

years of imprisonment at the trial by the Revolutionary Court of Ahvaz.

On March 2nd, the website of [al-Arabiya](#) wrote in this regard: “Zia Savari aged 24 from Ahvaz returned to this city in March 2016 from the Netherlands. He then got arrested by IRGC Headquarters on April 14th 2016. He was charged with "membership in al-Ahwaz Liberation Movement" and "propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran" and sentenced to 6 years of imprisonment.

Before going to the Netherlands, Zia Savari had once got arrested by the security forces because he was involved in the incidents occurred after a football match. Having been released on bail, he sought asylum in the Netherlands thereafter.

Al-Arabiya quoted one of the human rights activists named Karimi Dahimi and wrote: “as Zia Savari encountered problems in the Netherlands including the lack of financial supports and asylum documents, the reeling situation of refugees and the negligence of The Netherlands Immigration Office (IND), he returned to Ahvaz. After his return to Iran, He became arrested since the Revolutionary Court of Ahvaz placed his family under pressure regarding the given bail upon the confiscation of their property.”

An Arab refugee in Netherlands named Isa Savari said: "Zia Savari was with me for a few days and he was not linked to any organization or political circle. He was not involved in any activities since his asylum case had not been clear. He did not even participate in the demonstrations held outside the Iranian embassy in the Netherlands as well."

Revolutionary Guards Seeking “Revenge” by Blocking Political Prisoner’s Hospitalization

March 6, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/revolutionary-guards-seeking-revenge-by-blocking-political-prisoners-hospitalization/>



Iran’s Revolutionary Guards are preventing the hospitalization of political prisoner [Arash Sadeghi](#), who needs urgent medical treatment for the effects of his prolonged [hunger strike](#), an informed source told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

“Arash Sadeghi is bleeding in the stomach and intestines and his kidneys are not working properly. He can hardly eat and he’s getting weaker every day,” said the source on March 3, 2017. “[Evin] Prison doctors have said that he should be hospitalized and get the treatment he needs.”

“It was a direct order from the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC),” added the source. “The judicial officials themselves have said the IRGC has to give permission (for Sadeghi’s hospitalization).”

“The IRGC want their revenge from Arash. They don’t want him to become a role model for other prisoners,” continued the source. “They were really angry about his hunger strike and that’s why they have prevented his hospitalization, despite the prosecutor’s approval,” said the source.

“Even his IRGC interrogator said, ‘We will not let you turn into a hero with your hunger strike or else every prisoner will think he can put us under pressure by faking a hunger strike,’” added the source.

“On one occasion (February 6), he was transferred to Imam Khomeini Hospital in Tehran, but that same day he was suddenly returned to prison and was not allowed to receive treatment,” said the source.

Political prisoners in Iran are singled out for harsh treatment, which often includes denial of medical care.

Arash Sadeghi, a 31-year-old civil rights activist, went on a 71-day hunger strike from October 24, 2016 to January 3, 2017 to protest the unjust incarceration of his wife, [Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee](#).

An accountant with no previous criminal record, Iraee was sentenced to six years in prison in March 2016 for writing an unpublished fantastical story about the practice of stoning in Iran and for the content of some of her personal Facebook posts.

On June 7, 2016 Sadeghi began serving a 15-year prison sentence for “assembly and collusion against national security,” “propaganda against the state,” “spreading lies in cyberspace,” and “insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic” for engaging in peaceful civil rights activism.

He is also demanding a reduction of his sentence to seven and a half years in accordance with [Article 134](#) of Iran’s Islamic Penal Code, which grants judges the authority to reduce prison terms to only the longest sentence in convictions involving multiple charges.

Sadeghi and Iraee were arrested on September 6, 2014 with their friends [Navid Kamran](#) and [Behnam Mousivand](#) at the couple’s stationary store in Tehran by agents of the Revolutionary Guards’ Sarallah Headquarters.

Kamran and Mousivand were issued one-year prison sentences for “propaganda against the state.”

Sadeghi’s hunger strike became the number one [trending topic](#) on Twitter on December 20, 2016. More than half a million people tweeted their support for his cause using the #SaveArash hashtag, according to CHRI’s research.

Iran: civil rights activist re-arrested

March 6, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/03/06/iran-civil-rights-activist-re-arrested/>



Majid Asadi, a 34 year-old former political prisoner, has been held in Tehran’s Evin Prison under interrogation since February 18th.

He had been working as a translator in a private company and the reason for his arrest is still unknown.

He suffers from a gastrointestinal disease after his hunger strike in March 2014 and his conditions have deteriorated due to being denied medical treatment during his time in prison.

Mohammad Amin Agushi's Pardon Request Rejected

Posted on: 7th March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/mohammad-amin-agushis-pardon-request-rejected#more-18675>



HRANA News Agency – Central Commission of Pardon in Tehran has rejected the request for of Mohammad Amin Agushi, security prisoner of Tabriz prison. This is while West Azerbaijan's Commission of Pardon had approved this request. This security prisoner is serving in prison since 2008.

A close source to Mr. Agushi told HRANA's reporter, "During a call that Mr. Agushi had with Central Pardon Commission in Tehran, he was told that his request was rejected. He then spoke with prison authorities about this injustice and he was told that the intelligence service officers added a report to his case, stating that the imprisonment had not changed him".

This informed source continued, "The military court has summoned him few time regarding his letters and warned him. Apparently, after this, the case was asked to be sent to Tabriz. Mr. Agushi requested for visiting military prosecutor in order to be able to discuss his illness and a year and half that is left from his sentence".

HRANA had previously reported that Mohammad Amin Agushi is being held captive in quarantine ward of Tabriz prison for 4 months in an uncertain condition. Mr. Agushi is suffering from kidney disease, back pain and shortness of breath. Lack of coordination between authorities left his case "semi-open" and as a consequence he was kept in a designated temporary location for 4 months.

Mohammad Amin Agushi was arrested on September 23, 2007 on charge of espionage and cooperation with Iraqi Kurdistan. After 7 months and 20 days of interrogations in central prison of Uremia and in solitary confinement, in Ramazan base of the intelligent service, he was released after 8 months on a bail of 1500 million IRR by branch number 2 of military court of Uremia.

He was plead guilty in all charges by judge Hafez Ghafarri and judge Samimi in branch number 2 of military court of Uremia and transferred to central prison of Uremia. After 4 months and after 5 sessions he was sentenced to death by fire squad, by judge Hafiz Ghafari.

After appealing, his case was sent to the supreme court and processed in branch number 31 by judge Mohammad Salimi, and the death sentence was confirmed based on article 109 of the constitution.

In 2010 the retrial request was approved and the case was opened again and was processed in branch number 31, but this time the sentence was reduced to 10 years prison in exile.

He was transferred to Zahedan prison in July 2012, and after one year and by the approval of prosecutor of military court, he was sent to furlough.

Iraj Mohammadi and Mohammad Amin Agushi were transferred to Tabriz prison from Zahedan, last March.

Saeid Eghbali Released Temporarily

Posted on: 7th March, 2017



<https://www.en-hrana.org/saeid-eghbali-released-temporarily>

HRANA News Agency – Saeid Eghbali, civil rights activists, who was arrested along Golrokh Irai, was released after being transferred to ward 2-A of the IRGC. He needs to appear in the court soon, regarding the laid charges.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), Saeid Eghbali, civil rights activist was arrested along Golrokh Irai, on January 22, and transferred to ward 2-A in Evin prison.

Mr. Eghbali, who is a friend of Arash Sadeghi and Golrokh Irai, had faced different charges during interrogations in ward 2-A, which is an amalgamation of his posts in social media.

Despite the short time of his detention, interrogators showed him a paper and told him that his case was sent to the court.

Insulting the supreme leader, insulting officials, disregarding orders of Quran and opposing death penalty, supporting security prisoners, being in contact with Shahin Najafi, sacrilege and attending the meetings of mothers of political prisoners and victims of 2009 and executions, are some of the charges against him.

A close source to Saeid Eghbali told HRANA's reporter, "It is interesting that the case was completed and sent to the court before the arrest was made. Saeid is told that he would be contacted by the court regarding submitting his cellphone, and after that he was released temporarily until his trial session".

Iran: Brutal Attack of Special Prison Guards on Section 4 of Evin Prison

Thursday, 09 March 2017 19:50

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22330-iran-brutal-attack-of-special-prison-guards-on-section-4-of-evin-prison>



NCRI - Political prisoners of Evin prison in a statement condemned the attack of special prison guards on prisoners and called for help for these prisoners while explaining the situation of prisoners and pressures exerted on them.

Part of the statement of political prisoners in Evin Prison is as follows:

"Today Tuesday March 7, prison guards and hired hooligans of judge Abolqasem Salavati attacked Section 4 of Hall 11 several times.

The number of prisoners in Hall 11 is fifty and last Wednesday, a prisoner named Seyyed Iman Mousavi, attempted suicide because of pressures of prison wardens and was immediately taken to hospital.

On Sunday night March 5, another prisoner named Mehdi Sarabi committed suicide due to big pressures and he too was transferred to hospital and after a quick check up was returned to Section 4 of Hall 11.

Twice daily and sometimes at nights, club wielding agents of prison named Bagheri and Mohammadi, the new head of Section 4, and other prison wardens beat prisoners with clubs and shockers and with tear gas so badly that they become bruised and dark.

Today five prisoners by the names of Reza Saki, Afshin Kiani, Seyyed Iman Mousavi, and Mehdi Sarabi were tortured so badly that they urinated blood, and Mohammadi, the Section chief, has beaten their fingers with club so much that their fingers have been broken and their hands and faces are swollen and bloody, and they were not even transferred to the clinic for treatment.

In Section 4 of Hall 11 crimes are being committed that in this month, three people committed suicide and every protest is faced with beating.

We are asking all human rights activists and defenders for help for these prisoners most of whom have been brought to this Hall by the order of Judge Salavati. Every day and most nights in the recent month, we, the political prisoners of Hall 12 have been witnessing the sounds of torture of these prisoners and can not tolerate to hear this much suffering of our fellow countrymen in the prison. We desperately ask for help for these prisoners because they are deprived of the least even medieval rights."

Long-term prison sentences without an attorney

March 9, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/03/09/long-term-prison-sentences-without-an-attorney/>



Political prisoners Emadodin Molazehi and Hafez Yaghub Jahandide were sentenced to 15 and 10 years behind bars, respectively.

They were put on trial in a closed court on Sunday without access legal representation.

The judiciary issued the sentences based on orders from the Ministry of Intelligence and the political prisoners' defenses were ignored at the trial, according to a source close to the defendants.

The two were surprised in court to realize they were also charged with “membership in ISIS” and “smuggling ammo and explosive”. Their cases were referred to the court before they were aware of such charges or had selected a lawyer, the source added.

Iran: Complaint of a Number of Prisoners to the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Friday, 10 March 2017 02:58

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22331-iran-complaint-of-a-number-of-prisoners-to-the-high-commissioner-for-human-rights>



NCRI - A group of prisoners in Gohardasht in a letter to the High Commissioner of Human Rights of the United Nations called for immediate action to prevent heavy noise diffusion on prisoners in this prison.

A statement issued by the prisoners says that increased noise has caused chronic headaches, nausea and unusual dizziness for them and in this

regard prison officials told them that it was your fault because you leak news of prison to outside. The text of the statement is as follows:

United Nations Human Rights Council

Hon. Zaid Raad AlHussien:

We are sending you this report while over the past 24 hours, more than 7 of our cellmates have been transferred to the hospital with chronic headaches, nausea and unusual dizziness and even there, except giving few pain killers, nothing else is done.

Prison doctors also know that with making several layered windows and doors and all air vents with sheet metal on the pretext of preventing prisoners' communications and transfer of news, and installing more than fifteen Static Transmitter and Jammer devices (ie one machine per five square meters), the situation would not be better.

Air pollution resulting from the lack of air circulation and waves and their interferences show evident effects. But prison officials say it is your fault for leaking prison news outside and later, higher authorities would blame us... !!!

From their viewpoints we are guilty and they are allowed to do whatever they want. In addition to the harsh conditions of the past, such as pressure and beatings and interrogations, arbitrary and later solitary confinements and faking files, the two above mentioned cases (blocking air vents and jammers) have recently been intensified a great deal, and no authority considers these issues as followable. Therefore we ask you to take urgent action.

Gohardasht prison in Karaj, March 2017

Iran: Political prisoner held in ward of dangerous criminals

March 10, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/03/10/iran-political-prisoner-held-in-ward-of-dangerous-criminals/>



Vahid Sayadi Nasiri, a political prisoner, has been held in Ward 4 of Tehran’s Evin Prison since November 12th where ordinary prisoners are jailed.

Authorities agreed to reply his requests following his 40-day hunger strike protesting his punitive transfer to this ward. However, 10 days later he has not been transferred to the political ward and is recently denied any telephone

contact or family visit.

It is worth noting that this prisoner was severely beaten on February 14th by two violent offenders causing him neck injuries.

Nasiri has been arrested in October 2015, and sentenced to eight years behind bars.

Grave and Baseless New Charges Against Imprisoned Iranian-American and Wife

March 10, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/new-charges-against-imprisoned-iranian-american/>



March 10, 2017—Serious and baseless new charges have been brought against Karan Vafadari and Afarin Nayssari, the dual-national Iranian-American and his wife who have been imprisoned in Iran’s Evin Prison without any evidence of wrong doing or due process for almost eight months.

The couple, art gallery owners in Tehran who are prominent in the Iranian artistic and cultural community, were [arrested](#) by Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Intelligence Organization at Tehran’s airport on July 20, 2016—ostensibly for serving alcohol in their home and hosting mixed-gender parties. The new charges, detailed in a [blog by Vafadari’s sister, Kateh](#) on March 8, 2016, include attempting to overthrow the Islamic Republic and recruiting spies through foreign embassies.

Their imprisonment, the latest in a long string of cases, reflects the determination on the part of the Guards and their cohorts in the Judiciary to intimidate dual nationals from western countries and exact a brutal cost for those who dare interact with diplomats and foreigners from the West.

The Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Karan Vafadari and Afarin Nayssari, whose imprisonment on completely unsubstantiated charges and without any evidence of wrongdoing represents a brazen defiance of the law.

“With complete impunity, the Guards and their accomplices in the Judiciary are destroying the lives of innocent people,” said Hadi Ghaemi, executive director of CHRI. “They grab

people and throw them into prison without any evidence or the ability to defend themselves, and then hand-pick a judge who will press home the attack with a conviction and harsh sentence.”

The case has been marked by continuous denials of due process from the start. As detailed in the [blog](#) by Vafadari’s sister:

Shortly after the couple’s arrest they were taken in handcuffs to their home and then to their gallery, where items of art were either confiscated or destroyed.

They were denied access to counsel for months and held for extensive periods in solitary confinement.

During intensive interrogations, Afarin Nayssari was told to spy on her friends in the art world and her husband; when she refused, she was returned to solitary confinement.

Most of the original charges were dropped by the prosecutor for lack of any evidence.

The earlier charges included serving alcohol in the home and organizing mixed-gender parties for diplomats—even though Vafadari is Zoroastrian and under Iranian law not subject to Islamic laws on alcohol and mixed gatherings.

The judge selected for the case was Abolqasem Salavati, a notoriously hardline judge routinely picked for dual national cases and other politicized cases in which the Guards and the Judiciary are seeking an unquestioning and harsh ruling.

At the preliminary hearing, the earlier charges dropped due to lack of any evidence were reinstated by Judge Salavati.

Judge Salavati did not allow the couple’s lawyer to be present at the preliminary hearing—and ordered the couple to dismiss their lawyer.

“Of course the Guards and the Judiciary are denying due process to those they imprison unjustly,” said Ghaemi, “because if they had to present evidence, allow full access to a lawyer, and let an independent Judiciary rule on the case, these people would all be immediately freed.”

The imprisonment of Vafadari and Nayssari also appears motivated by greed: the Islamic Republic has a long and documented history of unlawfully confiscating private property, especially that belonging to those with whom the authorities do not favor. The family of Vafadari reported continuous calls right after the couple’s arrest demanding money, and noted that the charges brought would allow the seizure of the couple’s extensive properties.

In a [public letter](#) by the former Italian Ambassador to Iran, Roberto Toscano, the Ambassador expressed outrage at Vafadari’s and Niasari’s arrest and refuted the authorities’ justification for their detention, saying that “One has to be truly gullible and the easy victim of propaganda” to accept such charges. He continued, “The reason must be a different one...political blackmail toward the US (of which they are also citizens), envy for their success, intimidation toward the Zoroastrian community, desire to grab their properties, [and] repression of contemporary art.”

Vafadari's sister, Kateh, has implored "all those who stand for civil liberties, artistic freedom, minority rights and Iran's self-determination...[to] [write letters of support](#) asking for Karan and Afarin's immediate release" to Iran's Permanent Mission to the UN and to Iran's Head of the Judiciary.

Dual National Robin Shahini Serving 18-Year Prison Sentence in Iran Proclaims Innocence in Letter

March 10, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/dual-national-robin-shahini-18-year-prison-sentence/>



"Don't let me remain in this prison as an innocent man."

[Robin \(Reza\) Shahini](#), an Iranian-American dual national sentenced to 18 years in prison in October 2016 during a visit to Iran, has proclaimed his innocence in a letter urging human rights groups and international organizations to work for his release.

"I came to Iran to visit my family (on May 25, 2016) because I thought the government's attitude towards citizens had changed (after [Hassan Rouhani](#) became president in 2013) and (the government) wanted to open a new chapter in its interactions with the people on the basis of human rights," he wrote in the letter, a copy of which was obtained on March 7, 2017 by the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

"But unfortunately on (July 11) I was arrested for false reasons and sentenced to a total of 18 years in prison in an [unfair trial](#) at Branch 1 of the Gorgan Revolutionary Court," he said.

Currently being held in Amirabad Prison in the city of Gorgan (approximately 190 miles northeast of Tehran), Shahini has been on [hunger strike](#) since February 15, 2017 to protest his unjust sentence and harsh prison conditions.

"My only sin was that as a responsible human being, I expressed my views about my homeland, which is the right of every citizen," he added. "Don't let me remain in this prison as an innocent man."

Sources close to Shahini believe he was arrested by the Revolutionary Guards' Intelligence Organization because of his social media and blog postings on Iranian politics, and because of comments he had previously made about Iran to Western media, including during interviews with Voice of America, which is banned in the Islamic Republic.

"I am now in Amirabad Prison in Gorgan," wrote Shahini in his letter. "This place is dangerous for my asthma and could kill me. I am under all sorts of restrictions here that obviously have an adverse effect on morale."

"On February 14, the prison staff came inside the ward to carry out an inspection," an informed source [previously](#) told the Campaign. "When they saw Reza's diary, they beat him

up and insulted him. They told him, ‘Do you think this is America? You think you can do whatever you like?’ and took his diary away.”

“But the diary is just one incident,” added the source. “Reza also gets insulted by Gorgan Prison staff because he lived in America. They call him names like ‘foreigner’ and ‘spy.’ He’s completely isolated and has become psychologically weak.”

In his letter, Shahini said he has “not been a member of any political group... But like any person, I do have political views.”

“I reject all forms of violence and oppose political schemes,” he said. “I believe that every citizen, regardless of position, status, ethnicity, religion or gender, has the right to express views on domestic or world affairs.”

Recalling the widespread protests against Iran’s disputed 2009 presidential election, Shahini wrote: “At the time (in the US), I too participated in peaceful demonstrations (for democratic reforms in Iran), which is the right of every citizen as recognized in the [Constitution](#) ... I have not engaged in any violent activities against any country or individual, but at the same time, I have tried to express my views as a student or a responsible individual.”

Regarding photos of him standing next to Iranian opposition figures living in exile posted on Facebook, Shahini said: “I have met many people at various gatherings in my life and posted some of the pictures, including with those who oppose the Islamic Republic. But I have not interacted with anyone who supports violent political action.”

Born in Iran, Shahini, 48, has been living in the US since 2000 and had settled in California, where he received a bachelor’s degree in international security and conflict resolution from San Diego State University.

On July 11, 2016 he was arrested while visiting relatives in Iran. Three months later, the dual national was sentenced to a total of 18 years in prison for “acting against national security,” “participating in protest gatherings in 2009,” “collaborating with Voice of America (VOA) television” and “insulting the sacred on Facebook” by the Revolutionary Court in Gorgan.

In cases involving convictions on multiple charges, [Article 134](#) of Iran’s Islamic Penal Code allows for only the longest sentence to be served, making Shahini eligible for parole after serving nine years for the charge that received the harshest sentence: “collaborating with enemy states through Voice of America.”

The judiciary’s ongoing [imprisonment](#) of dual nationals, usually arrested by the Revolutionary Guards’ Intelligence Organization or the Intelligence Ministry, [contradicts](#) Rouhani’s repeated calls for expatriates to return to Iran.

The growing number of arrests also reflects hardliners’ efforts to prevent the engagement with the West that the Rouhani administration has sought to encourage.

Iranian-British dual citizen [Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe](#), sentenced to five years in prison in September 2016, has been held since April 2016; Iranian-American businessman [Siamak Namazi](#), held since October 15, 2015 and his Iranian-American father, 80-year-old Bagher Namazi, held since February 2016, have both been sentenced to ten years in prison; British-

Iranian dual national [Roya Saberi Nobakht](#), held since October 2013, has been sentenced to seven years in prison; and Iranian-Austrian dual citizen [Kamran Ghaderi](#), held since January 2016, has been sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Iranian-American [Karan Vafadari](#), held since July 2016, and Iranian-born Swedish resident [Ahmadreza Jalili](#), held since April 2016, have not been sentenced yet.

Arash Sadeghi Transferred to Ward 350 of Evin Prison

Posted on: 11th March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/arash-sadeghi-transferred-ward-350-evin-prison#more-18695>



HRANA News Agency – Arash Sadeghi who had gone on hunger strike, concurrent the re-arrest of Golrokh Irai, his wife, was transferred recently to ward 350 where he has the minimum contact with outside.

According to the report of Human Rights News Agency in Iran (HRANA), this prisoner, who had started his second hunger strike after 71 days of hunger strike in the first go, is in a poor health condition and lack of medical care.

Mr. Sadeghi had been transferred to ward 2-A of the Revolutionary Guards, in Evin prison, “under the pretext of” transition to hospital, and after three days he was transferred to ward 350. His personal belongings including his “watch and wedding ring” have disappeared in this moving.

Arash Sadeghi, civil activist imprisoned in Evin Prison, had started a hunger strike, demanding a fair trial for his wife, Golrokh Irai and then ended after 71 days with the promise of helping by the authorities on January 3.

However, after two weeks of sending Golrokh on leave, and while Arash had ended his hunger strike, the authorities breached their promise and arrested Mrs Irai and returned her to prison, on January 22, so Arash, despite his very critical physical condition due to his long term hunger strike went on hunger strike again, to protest against the authorities breach of promises.

At the same time of Mr. Sadeghi’s second hunger strike, security forces transferred him to ward 2-A of the Revolutionary Guards and then to ward 350, to a quite isolated ward with a handful prisoners there.

A close relative of Sadeghi family told HRANA’s reporter: “At the moment Arash is held in ward 350, which has no phones and he is still on hunger strike. Arash was kidnapped under the pretext of taking to hospital, and after holding him in ward 2-A, he was transferred to ward 350. His personal belongings, including his watch and wedding ring were stolen in this moving.”

It should be mentioned that, specialist hospital doctor confirmed that he had stomach bleeding up to 12.5%, shortage of hemoglobin (anemia), serious and severe lung infection and had to be hospitalized for at least 4 to 5 days.

However, due to the prosecutor's, prison security's and Sarallah Corps' pressures and despite the doctors' resistance, he was returned to Evin prison.

It should be noted that the leave order for Arash Sadeghi which was issued on collateral, is now applicable, but this prisoner is still deprived of being sent on leave.

Women's Rights

Recent suicides highlight ongoing Iranian human rights abuses

By Soona Samsami, opinion contributor - 03/05/17 03:00 PM EST

<http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/international/322425-recent-suicides-highlight-ongoing-iranian-human-rights>



In January, a young woman in Iran committed suicide. Now, sadly, suicides have become increasingly common among Iranian women due to a variety of social ills, including state-mandated misogyny. But, in Mahdis's case, it happened one day after she was released from prison. She was sexually abused by Iranian suppressive forces.

At only 26, the aspiring engineer was taken into custody by intelligence agents on Jan. 24. She was not the same after being released. Her fate resembled that of a 23-year-old political science student who also took her own life after spending four months in prison.

Recently, Amnesty International released a damning report, condemning Tehran for "heavily" suppressing "the rights to freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly and religious belief."

"Women and girls," it added, "faced pervasive violence and discrimination."

The report went on to highlight the regime's "extensive use of the death penalty, carrying out hundreds of executions, some in public."

"At least two juvenile offenders were executed" in 2016.

Since the start of 2017, the theocracy has been conducting an execution every 8 hours, on average. In the first two weeks of February, 25 youth were among the victims, all under the age of 30. There are officially 160 juveniles on death row in Iran, but the real figures are much higher.

All this is happening under the regime's so-called "moderate" president Hassan Rouhani, who has managed to captivate some western businesses with trade opportunities after the Iran nuclear deal.

Meanwhile, the regime's assortment of suppressive forces have been unleashed to quash basic freedoms. Recently, a 14-year-old girl was beaten and arrested by "morality police" for wearing ripped jeans on her birthday.

Two women in the city of Dezful were arrested for riding a motorcycle. A local police commander told the state-run news agency that the women "committed an action against revolutionary norms and values by riding a motorcycle."

The mullahs have spent close to four decades suppressing dissent, torturing or killing people for their beliefs, legalizing and institutionalizing misogyny, executing opponents on the streets, chopping off limbs and stoning women to death.

But, the vast scale of their crimes does not stop there. In the summer of 1988, the Iranian regime executed as many as 30,000 political prisoners, most of whom were young supporters of the main opposition, Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK).

In an audio tape published for the first time last August, the regime's former no. 2 official, Hossein-Ali Montazeri, is heard telling other regime officials that the executions amount to "the biggest crime in the Islamic Republic, for which history will condemn us."

Montazeri, who died in 2009, had also admitted that girls as young as 15 and pregnant women were among the victims of the 1988 massacre.

On March 1, Six human rights groups with consultative status to the United Nations human rights body joined together to issue a statement to the current session of the Human Rights Council condemning the 1988 massacre.

These rights groups recommended that the UN high commissioner for human rights and the UN Human Rights Council appoint an international commission to investigate the massacre.

They also called on the special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iran, Asma Jahangir, and the special rapporteur on the promotion of truth, Pablo de Greiff, to conduct separate inquiries into the massacre.

In light of the regime's abhorrent human rights abuses, western governments cannot morally or strategically engage the mullahs. The United States should adopt a firm and principled policy that holds Tehran accountable for its crimes and terrorism and embraces the democratic aspirations of the Iranian people, the West's true allies.

Too many of Iran's young girls have been mistreated, abused, tortured and killed. Mahdis, should have been alive to rebuild Iran. If the thousands of young women and men were not massacred by a brutal regime in 1988 or throughout the past 40 years, they would have had an opportunity to create a democratic, peaceful, non-nuclear and generous Iran.

It is time to stop being silent about human rights abuses in Iran. Enough is enough.

Samsami is the representative in the United States for the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), which is dedicated to the establishment of a democratic, secular, and non-nuclear republic in Iran.

Iran: 11,000 women victims of domestic violence

Created: 06 March 2017

<http://women.ncr-iran.org/iran-women-news/3719-iran-11-000-women-victims-of-domestic-violence>



A government official announced that 12,000 cases of child abuse and 11,000 cases of domestic violence have been registered by the National Welfare Organization.

Habibollah Massoudi, the organization's deputy for social affairs, did not specify the span of time during which these cases have been recorded.

In the announcement made on March 4, 2017, Massoudi revealed that the bill to support children and youths has remained in the parliament for several years without being ratified. (The state-run ILNA news agency – March 4, 2017)

Iran: 30 young women and men arrested in party in Ahwaz

Created: 06 March 2017

<http://women.ncr-iran.org/iran-women-news/3721-iran-30-young-women-and-men-arrested-in-party-in-ahwaz>



Over 30 young men and women were arrested in a party in Kianpars district of Ahwaz, southern Iran. They were arrested on Friday, March 3, 2017, by moral security forces and remain in detention since.

Earlier in December 2016, fifty-four girls and boys were arrested in a party in [Abadan](#). In November another 23 persons were arrested in a mixed-gender party in one of the gardens of [Dezful](#). (The state-run IRNA news agency – March 3, 2017)

Ahwaz is the capital of the southwestern province of Khuzistan, and Abadan and Dezful are two of its major cities.

Iran: Activist woman remains incarcerated in undecided state

Created: 08 March 2017

<http://women.ncr-iran.org/iran-women-news/3736-iran-activist-woman-remains-incarcerated-in-undecided-state>



[Massoumeh Zia](#) continues to remain incarcerated in an undecided state after two months.

She is incarcerated in the notorious Ward 209 of the Evin Prison. Her family said investigations into her case have not concluded yet and no verdict has been issued for her release.

Ms. Zia was arrested on January 6, 2017, at the airport upon arrival from a family visit abroad.

Freedom of Expression

Iranian editor held months without access to lawyer

March 7, 2017 1:02 PM ET

<https://cpj.org/2017/03/iranian-editor-held-months-without-access-to-lawyer.php#more>



Iranian security forces raided the home of Tahereh Riahi, social affairs editor at Iran's government-funded [Borna News Agency](#), and detained her on December 27, 2016, according to [media reports](#) and human rights groups. Two months after her arrest, the journalist was still held in Evin Prison near Tehran.

The news website [Zeytoun](#) reported her arrest in a brief [news item](#) at the time. Iran's semi-official [ILNA news agency](#) reported at the time that the journalist was suspected of "propagandizing against the state," though she was not formally charged with any crime. According to the [Center for Human Rights in Iran](#), a New York-based advocacy group, prison guards on February 13 briefly allowed the journalist speak with her family on the phone. She told them "not to wait for her," the center reported.

In late February, the Iranian diaspora news website [Iran Wire](#) and the Farsi service of the U.S.-government-funded broadcaster [Voice of America](#) quoted unnamed sources as saying that interrogators physically abused Riahi, injuring her left eye. Borna's public relations office disputed those claims in a [statement](#). The news agency is funded by Iran's Youth and Sports Ministry.

Prior to working at Borna, Riahi had worked for several reformist newspapers, including [Sharq](#) and [Mardom Emrooz](#), according to the reformist news website [Kaleme](#). Security forces [arrested](#) her following Iran's 2009 presidential elections.

Iran is scheduled to hold presidential elections again in May. Iranian authorities have cracked down on independent or critical journalists ahead of past elections, [CPJ research](#) shows.

Labor and Guilds' Rights

A Baker Committed Self-Immolation in Ardabil and Died

Posted on: 5th March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/baker-committed-self-immolation-ardabil-died#more-18667>



HRANA News Agency – A baker committed self-immolation in front of the General Office of Industry, Mines and Trades in Ardabil province. He was transferred to a hospital in Tabriz with 90% burns and lost his life despite medical treatment.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), based on rumors, the Department of Flour and Bread in Ardabil had refused

to give flour to this baker, due to his previous debts, and accordingly the baker committed self-immolation as an objection, in front of the Department of Industry, Mine and Trade.

According to the latest information, this baker was transferred for treatment to Tabriz, but eventually lost his life in the hospital on January 14.

It is said that, a number of Commerce Department's staff had taken photos and recorded some videos from this incident, however, security forces confiscated their mobile phones and the pictures were removed from phones. Also the officers present at the scene threatened the people not to publish any news about the incident.

Ethnic Minorities' Rights

3 Arab Activists Arrested in Ahvaz

Posted on: 6th March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/3-arab-activists-arrested-ahvaz#more-18669>



HRANA News Agency – Eisa Domaney (Haddad), Mojahed Zargani, and Naji Heydari, three Arab citizens from Ahvaz, were arrested and taken to an unknown place by the security forces.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Eisa Domaney (Haddad), Mojahed Zargani, and Naji Heydari, three Arab citizens from Ahvaz, were arrested and taken to an unknown place by the Intelligence agents in Ahvaz at 3 am on Monday, January 16, 2017.

Eisa Domaney, 43, has two children and is a journalist and teacher of Arabic language. Mr. Domaney used to give speeches in scientific seminars. He also used to hold Arabic language classes.

Mojahed Zargani, 36, has a child and is a poet and a resident of the Zargan region. Mr. Zargani who was a student of Arabic Language and Literature, and also the owner of a shop, is one of the founders of a charitable organization.

Naji Haidari, 38, has two children and is a teacher and translator of Arabic Language and Literature. He is a resident of Mashali Street and is one of the Teachers' Union's activists and is a well-known teacher of Arabic in Ahvaz.

It is noteworthy that, so far, the families of these three civil activists have no accurate information regarding the reason of their arrest and their whereabouts.

Siamak Mirzaee Sentenced to 10 Years in Prison and 2 Years Exile

Posted on: 8th March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/siamak-mirzaee-sentenced-10-years-prison-2-years-exile>



HRANA News Agency – Siamak Mirzaee, security prisoner in Evin Prison, was sentenced to 10 years in prison and two years of exile to Tabas.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Public and Revolutionary Court in Baharestan in Tehran, presided by Judge Hasani, sentenced Siamak Mirzaee Turkish (Azeri) activist to 10 years in prison and two years of exile to Tabas on charge of “forming an illegal group with the aim of disrupting the national security.”

This sentence was issued while based on a 6-page verdict which was delivered to the lawyer of Mr. Mirzaee, no evidence has been provided to prove his charge.

“Belief to establish a federal system, the struggle for free elections without fraud on the basis of international standards, defending the right of education in native language for all oppressed nationalities in Iran and having books and articles in the field of ethnic studies in the personal library,” were the evidences which the judge considered as “destructive and actions against the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

This verdict accused him of “ethnic hatred”.

Mr. Mirzaee was graduated in livestock production engineering and is one of the starred students who were banned of education in 2010, who had been arrested by the security forces at his workplace and was transferred to ward 209 of Evin prison on July 14.

On November 12, Siamak Mirzaee had been transferred to the quarantine of general ward from ward 209 of Evin prison after 4 months and is still being held there.

He had previously also been arrested by security forces and was tried by the relevant judicial authorities in 2006, 2007, 2010 and 2011.

Iran: Police Fire at Five Students Having Fun in Baluchistan

Wednesday, 08 March 2017 21:46

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22323-iran-police-fire-at-five-students-having-fun-in-baluchistan>



NCRI - Police agents of the Iranian regime in Baluchistan fired at Sunni Baluch citizens resulting in two students of Khash being shot. Three other people were injured by punches and kicks.

On Thursday evening of 2nd March, five students from Khash who were driving in their car to Iranshahr “for fun”, were shot at and wounded by police.

Saman Shahnavazi was shot in the arm and neck and Asim Shahnavazi was shot in the leg.



Saman Shahnavazi, a student of building technology engineering, explained the issue: “The agents were plain clothed and first they threw nails under the car and we got a flat tire and then without any warning they started to fire at us, and ignored our cries that we were innocent and students”.

He added: “The agents fired at us for half an hour and finally came close to us but before calling the ambulance, they started to beat us.” Thus far many Sunni Baloch youths have been killed and injured in shootings by security forces. No authorities have ever taken accountability for these actions and officers have benefited from impunity.

According to local reports, last year (2016), at least 26 Baloch citizens were killed and wounded by gunfire from lawless police and security forces in Baluchistan.

Sajjad Afrozian Released on the Bail

Posted on: 9th March, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/sajjad-afrozian-released-bail>



HRANA News Agency – Sajjad Afrozian was released on the bail from the prison of Maragheh, until the trial. It is also reported that a bail of 3 billion IRR has been set for Mehdi Kokhian, other civil activist detained in this prison.

According to the report of Human Rights Activist News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Sajjad Afrozian, Turkish activist from Malakan, was released from Maragheh prison, by depositing a bail of 500 million IRR, on January 29.

Concurrently, the detention order for Mehdi Kokhian, other civil activist in this prison, who has been detained since December 19, 2016, was converted to a bail of 3 billion IRR.

It should be mentioned that Sajjad Afrozian had been arrested with beating by the security forces, and was taken to an unknown location, on January 15, 2017.

It should be noted that the officers stormed Mr. Afrozian’s house and inspected it abusively and violently, while refusing to provide any warrant, and caused residents’ fear and panic at home.

His mother who had objected to the conduct of officers, was beaten by them and was even threatened that if she would continue her protests, women officers would be sent to arrest her.

Security forces who were reported to be more than 10 officers, had been sent from Tabriz Intelligence Office, they also tried to arrest his brother “Fardin Afrozian”, but they were unsuccessful, because he was not at home.

Sajjad and Fardin, both have records of arrest.

It is also to say that Mehdi Kukhian and Karim Chaichian, two civilians from Malakan were arrested by security forces and taken to an unknown location. The officers searched their house and also seized their personal electronics and communication belongings, on December 19, 2016.

Mehdi Kokhian and Karim Chaichian had gone on hunger strike by sewing their lips since their transfer from Malekan Police to Maragheh prison on December 21, 2016 and were transferred to the quarantine ward in this prison.

Mr. Chaichian was later released on the bail but Mehdi Kokhian was transferred to Tabriz intelligence office.

The main reason for the arrests of these two was their activities in a Telegram channel called; “The city news of Malakan.”

Religious Minorities’ Rights

Iran: Five Turk activists summoned to court

March 6, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/03/06/iran-five-turk-activists-summoned-to-court/>



Five Turk activists have been summoned by the judiciary in the cities of Ahar and Tabriz, northwest of Iran.

Meysam Jolani, Akbar Abolzadeh, Morteza Safari, Majid Naghizadeh and Mansour Seifi from Ardebil, also northwest of Iran, have been summoned to Tabriz and Ahar’s courts, mostly for attending a ceremony marking “International Native Language

Day” back in 2015.

Prior to this a number of Turk activists were summoned to the same courts.

Iranian Catholic Converts Arrested in Northwestern Iran

March 6, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/iranian-catholic-converts-arrested-in-northwestern-iran/>



Two Iranian Catholic converts have been arrested in their home by the Revolutionary Guards in West Azerbaijan Province, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) has learned.

“At 7 a.m. on February 20 (2017), two plainclothes intelligence agents of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) entered the home of [Christian converts](#) Anoohe Rezabakhsh and her son Sohail (Augustin) Zargarzadeh in Oroumiyeh (city) without prior notice and searched the premises and took away personal

items such as religious and holy books,” Mansour Borji, the spokesperson for the [Alliance of Iranian Churches](#) known as Hamgam, told CHRI on March 3, 2017.

Borji added that both mother and son had converted to Catholicism from Islam.

No information was available on Anoohe Rezabakhsh’s background, but her son is a university student in his fourth year of undergraduate studies in psychology and is personally interested in religious studies, Borji, who is based in London, told CHRI.

In August 2016, the [Intelligence Ministry](#) arrested a Christian and four Christian converts near Tehran, CHRI [reported](#) at the time.

Ramil Bet Tamraz, Amin Afshar Naderi, Hadi Asgari, Amir Saman Dashti and Mohammad Dehnavi remain in Evin Prison in Tehran, Borji told CHRI.

Ramil Bet Tamraz, the son of Victor Bet Tamraz, the former leader of Iran’s Assyrian Pentecostal Church, was arrested on Christmas Eve in 2014 with two other people and accused of illegally printing and distributing Bibles for missionary activities. Amin Afshar Naderi was also arrested that night, according to Borji.

Both men were later released on bail.

Despite President [Hassan Rouhani’s pledges during his election campaign](#) in 2013 that “all ethnicities, all religions, even religious minorities, must feel justice,” the [targeting of Christian converts](#) has continued unabated under his administration.

Imprisoned Spiritual Leader Facing the Death Penalty Again for His Personal Beliefs

March 7, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/imprisoned-spiritual-leader-facing-the-death-penalty/>

Imprisoned spiritual thinker [Mohammad Ali Taheri](#) has again been tried for the charge of “corruption on earth” despite being cleared of the same charge in 2015, his sister Azardokht Taheri told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

If convicted, the founder of the banned Erfan-e Halgheh spiritual group could be issued the death penalty.

“We are very worried. The authorities have no respect for their own rulings. My brother was acquitted of ‘corruption on earth,’ but according to his lawyer (Mahmoud Alizadeh Tabatabaee), that charge was brought up again in court on February 27 (2017) even though the trial was supposed to be for the charge of ‘engaging in medical practices,’” Azardokht Taheri told CHRI on March 2, 2017.

The day after his trial, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) station aired a [propaganda video](#) featuring alleged former students of Taheri calling for his execution for his alleged promotion of “anti-Islamic” views.

“This program was shown to deceive the public,” said Azardokht Taheri. “Mr. Taheri has many students and they have always said that they got good results from his courses. Why weren’t they interviewed?”

“Nowhere (in the video) does Mr. Taheri say he has done anything wrong,” she added. “They aired only bits and pieces of his statements. We’re worried that it was aired for sinister reasons.”

In the heavily edited interviews, Taheri’s “students” claim he taught anti-Islamic ideas and encouraged them to distance themselves from God and Islam. One woman said her daughter stopped praying after attending his classes.

The video also included clips from Taheri’s lectures, all of which included no statements against Islam.

Some scenes also appeared to be taken from his taped interrogation sessions, in which he refuses to express regret for his personal beliefs.

Mohammad Ali Taheri, 60, was due to be freed in May 2016 after the completion of his five-year prison sentence for “insulting the sacred” and “immoral contact with women.”

In February 2015, he was [again interrogated](#) about alleged heresy in his books and sentenced to death for spreading “corruption on earth,” but the Supreme Court [rejected](#) the verdict in December and opened his case for reconsideration.

His latest trial was held at Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court presided by Judge Mashallah Ahmadzadeh.

Iran’s security establishment has come down hard on Taheri and [supporters](#) of the Erfan-e Halgheh spiritual group, viewing it and any other alternative belief system, especially those seeking converts, as a threat to the prevailing Shia order.

Judiciary Refusing to Release Ailing Baha’i Leader Imprisoned in Iran for Nine Years

March 7, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/03/judiciary-refusing-to-release-ailing-bahai-leader-imprisoned-in-iran-for-nine-years/>



[Behrouz Tavakkoli](#), an elderly former Baha’i community leader who has spent nearly nine years in prison for his faith, is legally eligible for early release, but his requests for a case review are being ignored.

His son, Naim Tavakkoli, told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) that his father, a 64-year-old former member of the Baha’i leadership council in Iran, is also suffering from heart disease.

“My father has heart problems because one of his arteries is 70 percent clogged and he needs an operation,” Naim Tavakkoli told CHRI. “One time he was transferred to the hospital, but was returned to prison without receiving treatment.”

“The doctors said that the operation would be expensive and his recovery would require special care that’s unavailable in prison,” he added. “Also, when they take prisoners to the hospital, they are put in chains and my father doesn’t want to go anymore under these conditions.”

Political prisoners in Iran are singled out for harsh treatment, which often includes denial of medical care.

“My father has been in prison since 2008 and although the family tried a lot to get him out on [furlough](#) (temporary leave), all requests have been denied without explanation,” he said. “Besides, my father has served more than two-thirds of his sentence and is eligible for early release.”

According to [Article 58](#) of Iran’s Islamic Penal Code, the deciding court can issue the order of conditional release for those sentenced to more than 10 years in prison after half the sentence is served.

“We’ve been running around trying to convince the authorities to release him, but we haven’t gotten anywhere,” he added.

Behrouz Tavakkoli and six other [Baha’i leaders](#), including Fariba Kamalabadi, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, Saied Rezaie, Vahid Tizfahm and Mahvash Sabet, were arrested in the spring of 2008.

In 2010 they were sentenced to 20 years in prison each for the charges of “carrying out espionage for Israel,” “insulting the sacred,” “propaganda against the state” and “spreading corruption on Earth.” Their sentences were later reduced to 10 years in prison each.

“My father had studied psychology and worked for the Welfare Organization in a center dedicated to finding employment for people with physical disabilities,” said Naim Tavakkoli. “In 1981, he was fired for being a Baha’i and was never able to go back to his job.”

“He was not even allowed to start his own business or open a bank account,” he added.

The Baha’i community is one of the most severely persecuted religious minorities in Iran. The faith is not recognized in the [Islamic Republic’s Constitution](#) and its members face harsh discrimination in all walks of life as well as prosecution for the public display of their faith.

In November 2016, an elderly Baha’i man was [stabbed to death](#) outside his home in the city of Yazd because of his religious beliefs.

3 Bahai Civilians Tried by the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad

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<https://www.en-hrana.org/18691-2>



HRANA News Agency – Three Baha’i residents of Mashhad named; Khashayar Tafazoli, Shayan Tafazoli and Sinai Aghdaszadeh, were tried by the Islamic Revolutionary Court, in Mashhad.

According to the report of Human Rights News Agency in Iran (HRANA), the court hearing for Khashayar Tafazoli, Shayan Tafazoli and Sinai Aghdaszadeh, three Baha’i residents of Mashhad, accused with “propaganda against the regime through the Baha’i propaganda”, was

held in Branch 8 of Islamic Revolutionary Court in Mashhad on January 28.

A source close to these citizens told HRANA’s reporter: “Due to lack of time, the trial was not finished and the next meeting was scheduled for February 13.”

These three Baha’is had been detained in July 2012, from three weeks to a month and a half. The mentioned trial is held for the same case.

It is noteworthy, three members of a Baha’i family and residents of Mahshad; Manochehr Kholosi and his two daughters; Nika and Nava, are now serving imprisonment sentences in Vakil Abad prison.

Iranian Baha’i sentenced to 5 years for practicing his faith

March 11, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/03/11/iranian-bahai-sentenced-to-5-years-for-practicing-his-faith/>

A member of Iran’s Bahai community has been sentenced by the 28th Branch of the Tehran Court headed by judge Moghise to five years behind bars for his religious beliefs,.

Keyvan Pakzadan was tried on January 22nd and notified of his sentence on February 27th.

Iran: Two Baha’i-owned business shut down in Karaj

March 11, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/03/11/iran-two-bahai-owned-business-shut-down-in-karaj/>



On Thursday two businesses owned by followers of the Baha’i faith, Farid and Farnoosh Pashayi, were shut down in Karaj, west of Tehran.

Iranian officials confiscated the two’s property and sealed their shops under the pretext of “selling smuggled goods”.

They presented the receipts proving their property is not smuggled. However, authorities have ignored them and seized their businesses, according to an informed source.

Iranian authorities have also sealed another newly opened shop, owned by a member of the Baha'i community by the name of Arash Kazemi, in Karaj.

Dozens of Baha'i shops across the country have been sealed by authorities in the past few years.

Iran: Elham Farahani denied access to medical treatment

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<http://women.ncr-iran.org/iran-women-news/3752-iran-elham-farahani-denied-access-to-medical-treatment>



Prisoner of conscience Elham Farahani has been denied access to physiotherapy after she broke her arm and was operated on twice.

She cannot properly move her arm and the specialist doctor has prescribed her 30 sessions of physiotherapy but prison officials have repeatedly cancelled her appointments for physiotherapy which must be done outside the prison. Ms. Farahani is suffering from great pain and there is a risk that her arm would not ever return to normal condition.

Elham Farahani, 54, is a Bahaii serving her four-year prison sentence in the Evin Prison. She and her husband and son are imprisoned for their faith.