

At a Glance

Weekly report on Human Rights Violation in Iran 23 April 2017

The 1988 massacre in Iran

Nasrin Sotoudeh: Investigate Iranian Presidential Hopeful Ebrahim Raisi for 1988 Mass Executions

April 17, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/nasrin-sotoudeh-investigate-iranian-presidential-hopeful-ebrahim-raisi-for-1988-mass-executions/>



Prominent Iranian human rights lawyer and former political prisoner [Nasrin Sotoudeh](#) has strongly criticized the candidacy of [Ebrahim Raisi](#) in Iran's May 19, 2017 presidential election.

“The competency of this candidate should not be approved for any reason until the events of 1988 are investigated and it is proven that he was not an accomplice,” she told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI). “In the meantime, we do have an audio file... that shows he did have a hand in those events.”

In 1988, Raisi was part of a four-man commission, later known as the “[death committee](#),” that implemented the extrajudicial [executions](#) of thousands of political prisoners.

The victims, who had already been tried and were serving prison sentences, did not know they were facing death when they then faced the inquisition-like proceedings.

At that time, Grand Ayatollah [Hossein Ali Montazeri](#), who was the heir apparent to the Islamic Republic's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, condemned the killings, telling members of the committee: “I believe this is the greatest crime committed in the Islamic Republic since the [1979] revolution and history will condemn us for it... History will write you down as criminals.”

Montazeri's son, [Ahmad](#), released the taped recording of that conversation in an [audio file](#) posted online in August 2016, bringing the massacre to the forefront of public memory.

That month he was [sentenced](#) to six years in prison by the Special Court for the Clergy for releasing the audio file.

While he did not personally prosecute Ahmad Montazeri, Raisi was the [chief prosecutor](#) of the court at the time of Montazeri's conviction.

“When you add it all up, [Raisi’s] resume looks very bad... If the veracity of existing evidence is not discredited and his innocence is not proven, we cannot pretend nothing happened and allow this man to be a candidate for president,” Sotoudeh told CHRI.

Raisi and the Special Court for the Clergy

Iran’s Special Court for the Clergy has proven to be “much tougher” in politically motivated cases compared to the Revolutionary Court, and blatantly violates human rights’ standards, Sotoudeh, who has defended countless political activists, told CHRI.

“Naturally, the work of this court is on Mr. Raisi’s resume—

the kind of work that he has been able to do, hidden in the dark, away from the public eye,” she said.

“No lawyer has ever come forward to criticize and review the rulings by this court because essentially no independent lawyer has ever been present at its proceedings,” she added.

Sotoudeh was a leading member of the [Defenders of Human Rights Center](#) when she was sentenced to [11 years in prison](#) in 2011 for her peaceful defense of human rights in Iran.

“The Special Court for the Clergy is much worse than the Revolutionary Court in violating legal tenants,” she told CHRI. “Deliberations in the Special Court for the Clergy are often behind closed doors.”

“At least in the Revolutionary Courts, thanks to 40 years of constant efforts by human rights activists, families can attend trial sessions and follow up on the cases against their loved ones,” she said. “But you can’t do any of that in the Special Court for the Clergy.”

“The families face a lot of severe restrictions when they have to deal with this court and they often don’t have any access to what’s going on,” she added.

After spending almost three years in prison, Sotoudeh was [released](#) on September 18, 2013.

“Only certain types of lawyers are accepted by the Special Court for the Clergy,” said Sotoudeh. “They have to be a member of the [Muslim Shia] clergy and are hand-picked by the court itself.”

“The rulings made by the court have been issued behind closed-doors and defendants are usually handed stiff sentences, such as those against [Hassan Yousefi Eshkevari](#), [Hossein Kazemeini Boroujerdi](#), and most recently [Ahmad Montazeri](#),” she added.

Sotoudeh continued: “This is Mr. Raisi’s resume. Now there is also the issue of what he did in the 1980s, which he has never wanted to address. But after the release of Mr. Montazeri’s recording, Mr. Raisi came out and defended his actions and didn’t deny his role in any way.”

In an April 2017 [interview](#) with CHRI, Ahmad Montazeri also strongly criticized Raisi’s presidential bid.

“(Raisi’s) direct and undeniable participation in the massacres in the summer of 1988 is very important,” he said. “If any of the candidates had attacked a person with a knife, he would have had a criminal record and would not get clearance from the authorities, never mind Mr. Raisi, whose record is very clear.”

Ahmad Montazeri also told CHRI he is waiting to release more recordings.

“When the conditions are right and the people in charge of the country are more tolerant, the rest of the audio files will be published,” he said. “Already a lot of transparency has been achieved (with the release of the first file).”

Ahmad Montazeri was detained on February 21, 2017 to begin serving his six-year prison sentence, but was granted [furlough](#) (temporary leave) and released the next day.

International Law Expert Denounces Iranian Presidential Bid of Rights Violator Ebrahim Raisi

April 17, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/international-law-expert-denounces-iranian-presidential-bid-of-rights-violator-ebrahim-raisi/>



The [candidacy](#) of [Ebrahim Raisi](#) in Iran’s May 19 presidential election “shows great contempt for human rights, the rights of the Iranian people, and the families of those killed in the 1980s,” international law expert Shadi Sadr told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

In 1988, Raisi was part of a [four-man panel](#)—with Hossein Nayeri, Morteza Eshraghi, and Mostafa Pourmohammadi—that ruled on the extrajudicial executions of thousands of political prisoners.

“With Raisi’s candidacy, the regime is sending a clear message that it does not care about crimes against humanity nor does it have any intention to investigate the crimes in 1988, and in fact will install those responsible for the massacre in the highest governmental posts in the country,” said Sadr, who was based in Iran until 2009.

“Under international law, what happened to the victims of the 1988 massacre falls under ‘[Enforced Disappearance](#)’ because the locations of the crimes and places where the victims were buried were never disclosed.”

“The families were never notified and the crimes have been covered up with lies and deceit,” she added.

To date, no one in Iran has been held accountable for the mass executions.

“It was very contemptuous towards all the families who lost loved ones in the 1980s, especially in 1988, for President [Hassan Rouhani](#) to appoint Mostafa Pourmohammadi as minister of justice [in 2013],” said Sadr. “At the time, many wrote letters to Rouhani to complain about it, but of course it did not make any difference.”

Established in 2010, Sadr now heads [Justice for Iran](#), a Germany-based organization that aims [to](#) “address and eradicate the practice of impunity that empowers officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran to perpetrate widespread human right violations against their citizens, and to hold them accountable for their actions.”

Raisi’s Rise

Raisi, 56, officially registered for the presidency on April 14, 2017.

Later referred to as the “[Death Committee](#),” the panel he served on in 1988 was created by the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who ordered the executions of thousands of political prisoners after the panel interviewed them.

The victims, who had already been tried and were serving prison sentences, did not know they were facing death when they then faced the inquisition-like proceedings.

In a [statement](#) announcing his candidacy, Raisi said he wanted to rectify the “wrong culture in the management of the country” as president.

Raisi began his career in Iran’s judiciary in the early 1980s and was deputy prosecutor of Tehran when he served on the four-man panel in 1988.

He was promoted to the deputy head of the judiciary in 2004 and held the post until 2014, when he became prosecutor general for a year.

In 2016, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei appointed Raisi to head [Astan Quds Razavi](#), one of Iran’s wealthiest religious institutions that effectively functions as a major business conglomerate.

Crimes Against Humanity

“Experienced international lawyers have investigated the 1988 massacre and most of them believe it was a crime against humanity and among the most serious crimes the world has seen,” Sadr told CHRI.

“If someone commits such crimes and is provided immunity for political reasons in his own country, he will not be immune from justice according to today’s international laws,” she added. “However, it is difficult to prosecute the 1988 crimes in international courts.”

Sadr explained why it’s difficult to prosecute Iranian human rights violators in other countries.

“It’s not impossible, but the first problem is that Iran has not signed significant human rights conventions that include mechanisms to prosecute human rights abusers, namely the [UN Convention against Torture](#), and Iran is not a member of the [International Court of Justice](#),” she said.

“Secondly, when the 1988 crimes took place, international law had not progressed very much and there were no mechanisms to hold human rights abusers accountable like we can today,”

continued Sadr. “And since the laws are not retroactive, crimes committed in the past cannot be prosecuted.”

“Raisi, Pourmohammadi, Eshraghi and Nayeri’s role in the 1988 massacre is clear, and with the release of the [audio file](#) of Ayatollah Montazeri’s meeting with the four, there are no more doubts left,” she added. “But even if they travel abroad or become residents of other countries, it will be hard to put them on trial for what happened in 1988.”

At that time, Grand Ayatollah [Hossein Ali Montazeri](#), who was the heir apparent to then Supreme Leader Khomeini, told the panel: “I believe this is the greatest crime committed in the Islamic Republic since the [1979] revolution and history will condemn us for it.... History will write you down as criminals.”

Montazeri’s son, Ahmad, released the taped recording of that conversation in an [audio file](#) posted online in August 2016, bringing the massacre to the forefront of public memory.

As punishment for releasing the tape, he was [sentenced](#) to six years in prison in 2016 by the Special Court for the Clergy, which Raisi headed as chief prosecutor.

The [Intelligence Ministry](#) also tried to [suppress and confiscate](#) the recordings.

Ahmad Montazeri is currently on [furlough](#) (temporary leave) and [told CHRI](#) he has more files to release when the time is right.

If Raisi becomes Iran’s president, he would have immunity from prosecution.

“International laws and conventions extend diplomatic immunity to political leaders and officials, and as long as they remain in their posts, they cannot be prosecuted in international courts or in other countries,” she said.

“They cannot be prosecuted even if they travel to another country because of diplomatic immunity,” she added.

It remains to be seen how Raisi’s past will affect his presidential campaign.

“You might not be able to prosecute a president whose role in widespread human rights violations has become clear,” Sadr told CHRI. “Nevertheless, it’s a shame for any country for its highest official to be known as a human rights abuser.”

“There will undoubtedly be a lot of political opposition and pressure against governments who invite him over to their countries,” she added. “For someone with that kind of background, becoming president will certainly not be without costs.”

Juvenile Execution

Iran: Halt imminent execution of two men arrested as teenagers

18 April 2017, 11:40 UTC

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/04/iran-halt-imminent-execution-of-two-men-arrested-as-teenagers/>



The Iranian authorities must urgently stop the imminent execution of two long-time death row prisoners who were children at the time of their arrest, Amnesty International said today.

One of the men, **Mehdi Bahlouli**, is due to be executed tomorrow morning in Karaj's Raja'i Shahr Prison, after more than 15 years on death row. He was sentenced to death by a criminal court in Tehran in November 2001 for fatally stabbing a man during a fight. He was 17 at the time of the crime.

The execution of the second man, **Peyman Barandah**, is scheduled to take place just three weeks later, on 10 May, in Shiraz Central Prison, Fars Province. He was arrested at the age of 16 and spent nearly five years on death row, after being convicted in August 2012, also for stabbing a teenager to death during a fight.

"Carrying out the executions of these two young men would be an outrageous breach of international human rights law that would cement Iran's position as one of the world's top executors of juvenile offenders," said Philip Luther, Amnesty International's Research and Advocacy Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"Mehdi Bahlouli has spent his entire young adult life on death row. His shocking ordeal epitomizes the cruelty of Iran's juvenile justice system which regularly sentences juvenile offenders to death in violation of international human rights law and then subjects them to prolonged periods on death row. The anguish and torment of living their lives in the shadow of the gallows also amounts to cruel and inhuman treatment."

Mehdi Bahlouli's family told Amnesty International that they received a call from the prison on Saturday informing them to attend for their last visit. He was transferred to solitary confinement on Sunday in preparation for his execution.

Iran's recently amended 2013 Islamic Penal Code gives judges the option to replace the death penalty with an alternative punishment if they determine that the juvenile offender did not understand the nature of the crime or its consequences, or his or her "mental growth and maturity" were in doubt.

In January 2017, Mehdi Bahlouli's request for retrial was denied. This decision blatantly contradicts the Iranian authorities' statement to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in January 2016 that "all adolescents who were under 18 at the time of committing the crime are granted retrials [under Iran's 2013 new Islamic Penal Code] and their previous verdicts are annulled by the Supreme Court."

"The Iranian authorities have touted the 2013 Islamic Penal Code as evidence that the country is moving away from the use of the death penalty for juvenile offenders. However, these two scheduled executions show these claims are empty rhetoric," said Philip Luther.

"Instead of intensifying the mental anguish and suffering of juvenile offenders by letting them languish on death row for long periods, Iran must urgently amend its penal code to completely abolish the use of the death penalty for crimes committed while under 18, commute the death sentences of all juvenile offenders and establish an official moratorium on executions."

Background

Since the beginning of the year, Amnesty International has received reports indicating that two young men, **Arman Bahrasemani** and **Hassan Hassanzadeh**, were executed for crimes that took place when they were under 18 years of age. The organization fears the true number could be much higher.

The organization has identified the names of at least 90 juvenile offenders currently on death row across Iran. Many have spent prolonged periods on death row – in some cases more than a decade. Some have had their executions scheduled then postponed or stayed at the last minute on multiple occasions, adding to their torment.

In January 2017, the Iranian authorities scheduled the executions of two other men arrested as children – **Sajad Sanjari** and **Hamid Ahmadi**. Both were halted at the last minute, following an international outcry.

According to Amnesty International's [report on death sentences and executions in 2016](#), Iran carried out at least 567 executions last year, including at least two executions of people who were under 18 at the time of the crime. The organization received information indicating that five other juvenile offenders may have been among those executed.

Execution

Revolutionary Courts Responsible for Majority of Executions

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2839/>

Revolutionary 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 (APR 14, 2017): Iran Human Rights' [annual report](#) on the death penalty in 2016 takes a closer look at the issue of due process and the role of the Revolutionary Courts.

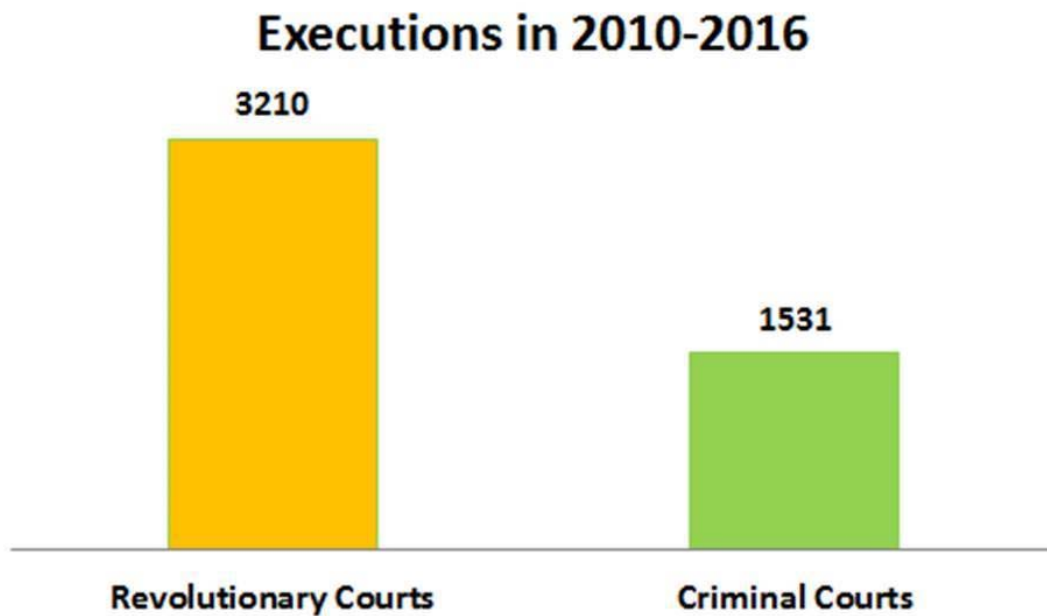
[READ FULL REPORT IN PDF](#)

The Revolutionary 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. 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 greater 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 the fact that the lawyers have insufficient “qualifications” to review certain files. Trials lasting only a few minutes, no jury, no defence lawyers and death sentences based on no evidence other than confessions extracted under torture are the hallmarks of the Revolutionary Courts.

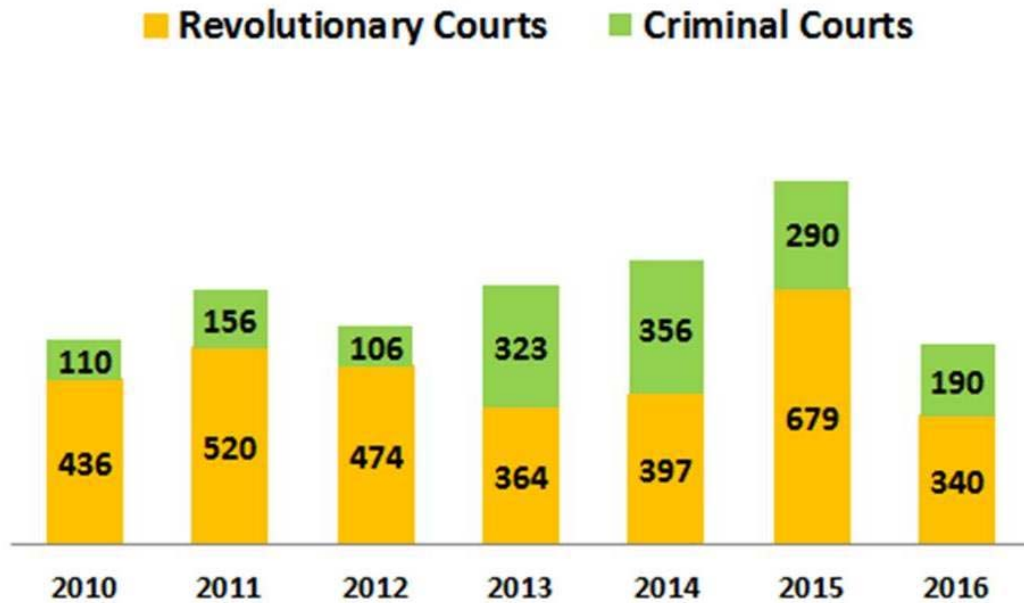
All cases regarded as security-related, such as cases involving political and civil activists, and others allegedly involved in corruption and drug-related charges, are processed by the Revolutionary Courts.

Revolutionary Courts responsible for the majority of executions

Revolutionary Courts are most well known for the summary executions of the political opposition in the 1980s. However, data collected by IHR shows that every year several hundred people are executed on the basis of death sentences issued by the Revolutionary Courts.



The diagram above is based on the IHR reports since 2010 and shows that 3,210 of the 4,741 executions (68%) in the last seven years were based on death sentences issued by the Revolutionary Courts.



At least 340 of the 530 executions in 2016 (64%) were based on death sentences issued by the Revolutionary Courts. Numbers for the previous six years are presented in the diagram above.

Revolutionary Courts also play a key role in the crackdown against human rights defenders and the abolitionist movement. In 2016 the Revolutionary Courts sentenced the human rights defenders Narges Mohammadi and Atena Daemi to 10 years and seven years in prison respectively for their activities against the death penalty.

On the issue of the lack of due process, the spokesperson of IHR, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam said: “A sustainable reduction in use of the death penalty is impossible as long as there is no due process. Revolutionary 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.”

Urgent: 11 Prisoners in Imminent Danger of Execution

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2840/>

Chances are that the execution sentences for these eleven prisoners will be carried out on Wednesday.



Eleven prisoners have been transferred to solitary confinement in Rajai Shahr Prison in preparation for their executions. They may be executed at any moment

Iran Human Rights (APR 18 2017):

Eleven prisoners at Karaj's Rajai Shahr Prison were reportedly transferred to solitary confinement on the morning of

Sunday April 16 in preparation for their executions.

According to close sources, the prisoners are all sentenced to death on murder charges. Iran Human Rights has obtained the names of three of these prisoners: Farzad Ghahreman, Mehdi Bohlouli, and Vahid Silani.

"Typically, executions are carried out on Wednesdays at Rajai Shahr Prison. Chances are that the execution sentences for these eleven prisoners will be carried out on Wednesday," a close source tells Iran Human Rights.

Urgent: Mohsen Babaie and 10 Others May Be Executed at Any Moment

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2845/>

The 11 prisoners may be executed at any moment.



Iran Human Rights (APR 18 2017): Eleven prisoners are reportedly in imminent danger of execution in Karaj's Rajai Shahr Prison. According to close sources, they may be executed at any moment.

According to close sources, the prisoners were transferred to solitary confinement on the morning of Sunday April 16 in preparation for their executions. All eleven prisoners are

reportedly on death row on murder charges. Iran Human Rights has obtained the names of five of these prisoners: Farzad Ghahreman, Mohsen Babaie, Mehdi Bahlouli, Seyed Hassan Hosseini, and Vahid Silani.

Close sources have informed Iran Human Rights that Mohsen Babaie was born in 1988, and he was arrested in 2011. "Mohsen was an accountant. In 2011, he and his business partner got into a physical altercation. His partner died after Mohsen punched him in the face. If the murder victim's son does not forgive him, Mohsen will be executed," a source close to Mohsen tells Iran Human Rights.

In a [recent urgent action](#) report by Amnesty International, Mehdi Bahlouli is described as 17 years old at the time of his alleged crime. According to Amnesty, another prisoner by the name of Peyman Barandah is scheduled to be executed at Shiraz Central Prison (Fars province) on Wednesday May 10. Peyman was arrested "at the age of 16 and spent nearly five years on death row, after being convicted in August 2012..." says the Amnesty report.

Iran remains one of the few countries which sentences juveniles to death, executing more juvenile offenders than any other country in the world. Juvenile executions are in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which Iran has ratified.

Iran: Mohsen Babaie and Six Others Executed at Rajai Shahr Prison

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2847/>

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



Iran Human Rights (APR 19 2017): Seven prisoners were reportedly executed at Rajai Shahr Prison on murder charges on the morning of Wednesday April 19.

These prisoners were among eleven who were [transferred](#) to solitary confinement on Sunday April 16 in preparation for their executions. The four other prisoners were reportedly returned to their cells, including Mehdi Bahlouli, who was reportedly 17 at the time of his arrest.

Sources close to Iran Human Rights have confirmed the names of three of the prisoners who were executed: Mohsen Babaie, Farzad Ghahreman, and Siamack Shafie.

Close sources have informed Iran Human Rights that Mohsen Babaie was born in 1988, and he was arrested in 2011. "Mohsen was an accountant. In 2011, he and his business partner got into a physical altercation. His partner died after Mohsen punched him in the face. If the murder victim's son does not forgive him, Mohsen will be executed," a source close to Mohsen tells Iran Human Rights.

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

Iran: Two young inmates executed in one day

April 18, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/18/iran-two-young-inmates-executed-in-one-day/>

In the early hours of Monday morning, two inmates were hanged in Tabriz Central Prison, northwest of Iran.

Vahid Fathollah Astani, 28, from East Azerbaijan, northwest of Iran. The later was identified only as Aliakbar.

These executions have not been made public by Iran's official media outlets. It is worth noting that a death row inmate was given a stay of execution just a few hours before he was due to be put to death.

Early on Saturday, another inmate was also hanged in Mashhad, northeast of Iran. Imprisoned at the age of 19, Meghdad was 22 at the time of execution.

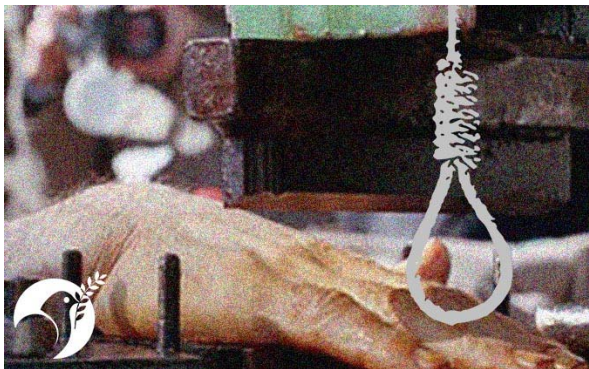
Iran alone accounted for 55% of all recorded executions in 2016, [Amnesty International](#) said. 66% of the death penalties were not reported at all and secretly carried out.

At least 182 executions have been recorded in Iran since the beginning of 2017, the actual number, however could be much higher.

Iran executes a man after amputates his hand

April 19, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/19/iran-executes-a-man-after-amputates-his-hand/>



On April 7th a convicted thief executed in Shiraz Adelabad Prison, south of the country. Iranian authorities had amputated his hand 10 days before his execution.

The brutal punishments have not been made public by judiciary officials.

Hamid Moeini was found guilty of allegedly theft and murder. He was sentenced to hand amputation and death on

December 13, 2016, according to the state-run Khabar Online website.

It is worth noting that two other inmates by the names of Vahid Fathollah Astani, 28, and Aliakbar were hanged on Tuesday.

At least 14 inmates have been transferred to solitary confinement in Rajayishahr Prison, west of Tehran in preparation for their executions.

Iran: Hand Amputation and Two Executions

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2846/>

One of the prisoners had his hand amputated by Iranian authorities prior to his execution.



Two prisoners were reportedly executed. One of the prisoners had his hand amputated by Iranian authorities prior to his execution.

Iran Human Rights (APR 20 2017): A prisoner was reportedly executed at Shiraz's Adel Abad Prison on theft and murder charges on Tuesday April 18. According to a report by the human rights news agency HRANA, the prisoner's hand

was amputated by Iranian authorities ten days before he was executed. HRANA has identified the prisoner as Hamid Moini.

Another prisoner was reportedly executed at Bandar Abbas Central Prison on drug related charges on Sunday April 16.

Close sources have identified the prisoner who was executed as Mohammad Sajdin, 37 years old. Mr. Sajdin was held in prison for three years and 10 months before his execution. In 2014, he was reportedly sentenced to death by the revolutionary court in Bandar Abbas.

8 Prisoners Executed in Rajai Shahr Prison in Karaj

Posted on: 19th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/8-prisoners-executed-rajai-shahr-prison-karaj>



HRANA News Agency – At least 8 prisoners, mostly charged with murder, were hanged in Rajai Shahr prison, in Karaj. Among them one prisoner was returned to his ward after getting deadline from the plaintiff.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), the death sentences of at least 8 prisoners were executed in Rajai Shahr prison in Karaj on February 15, 2017.

The identities of these prisoners which have been authenticated by HRANA, are as follows:

Mohammad Abdi / ward 2

Masood Babanezhad / ward 2

A'rash Bayat / ward 2

A prisoner with the surname of Aslani / ward 2

Bahram Yazdani

A prisoner with the first name of Naser, known as Naser Suzuki

Taher Rezaloo

A prisoner with the first name of Vaha'b

“Siamak Shafiei” is the prisoner who had been transferred to solitary confinement along with these prisoners, to be executed as a retaliation sentence, but he was returned to his previous ward, after he managed to get deadline from the victim’s next of kin.

Iran: Two more executions in Bandar Abbas and Borujerd

April 20, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/20/iran-two-more-executions-in-bandar-abbas-and-borujerd/>

In the morning of Thursday an inmate was hanged in Borujerd Prison, west of Iran. Mahmud Torabi who has been on death row for 8 years, was transferred to solitary confinement on April 19. He was found guilty of murder.

Another inmate was hanged on April 16, based on drug related charges in Bandar Abbas Central Prison, southern the country. Imprisoned for 10 years Mohammad Sajedin, 37, was

from Kuhban region of Kerman Province, central Iran. He was put to death in January 2015.

During the past two days, an inmate in Adelabad Prison of Shiraz, two in Tabriz Central Prison and at least 11 in Rajaishahr Prison of Karaj, were sent to the gallows.

[Eight of those executed in Karaj](#) were identified as Sirous Moradi, Vahid Silani, Siamak Shafiei, Hassan Javadi, Saeid Rashti, Mohsen Babayi, Farhad Mirzaei, Farajollah Hatami and Isa Ebrahimi.

Iran executes more individuals per capita than any other country in the world, according to Amnesty International annual report.

At least 197 individuals have been executed in Iran since the beginning of 2017.

Iran executes an individual during the Iranian national celebration

April 22, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/22/iran-executes-an-individual-during-the-iranian-national-celebration/>

An inmate was reportedly hanged on drug-related offences in Borujerd Prison, west of Tehran.

It is the second recorded execution in this facility during the recent month which was carried out in the first week of Persian calendar year and Iranian national celebration.

Imprisoned for six years Saeid Papi known as Saeid Keshvar, was a father of two and from Durud of Lorestan Province, west of Tehran. This execution has not been made public to this day by judiciary officials.

The latter, Mahmud Torabi, having been behind bars for eight years, was sent to the gallows on April 20. He was found guilty of murder.

60 percent of all executions in Iran are not reported by the judiciary and are thus regarded as secret executions.

At least 197 individuals have been executed in Iran since the beginning of 2017, meaning an execution has occurred every seven hours, at a per-capita rate higher than any other country in the world.

Iran is “among the top executioners,” according to Amnesty International annual report.

Judicial official underlines the importance of execution for drug related crimes

<http://www.farsnews.com/13960127001498>

The first deputy of Iran's Chief Justice cited criticism regarding a number of executions of criminals in a press conference.

"Recently in Bandar Abbas, two people identified as Behrouz Shirin Zaban and Mohammad Nourmalah were executed for carrying and moving narcotics", Mohseni Ejeie said.

"Or in Kerman two people identified as Abdulhamid Hossein Zehi and Faramarz Kohkan, who were active in a drug trafficking ring, were hanged... or in Karaj a person was sentenced to death for carrying drugs... what else can we do with these people except execute them?", he stressed.

"At any rate, we will act according to our laws... and will not show leniency", he added. (Fars state-run News Agency - Apr. 16, 2017)

Iran executes two young men one in public

April 22, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/22/iran-executes-two-young-men-one-in-public/>



A 21 year-year-old inmate on Saturday was publicly hanged in Babol, northern Iran, according to Mazandaran's public prosecutor. The victim was identified only as H.R and was found guilty of murder.

The execution sentence was issued by the first criminal court of the province and was carried out on Saturday after permitted by the "Head of the Judiciary." The public prosecutor added.

Another prisoner at dawn Saturday was hanged drug-related charges in Parsilon Prison of Khorramabad, west of Iran. Mehdi Mirzaei, 29, had been imprisoned for the past three years.

One Public Execution in Northern Iran

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/2850/>

A 21 years old man was hanged in public in the city of Babol (Northern Iran).



IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS (APR 23, 2017): One man was hanged publicly in the city of Babol Saturday morning April 22, reported the state run Iranian news agencies.

The state controlled YJC news agency reported that the 21 year old man was identified as H.R. sentenced to qisas death

penalty (retribution).

H.R. was convicted of murdering another man identified as R. F. 1,5 years ago.

The family of the murder victim and some officials were also present during the public execution.

Prisoners of Conscience

URGENT ACTION

Iranian human rights defender on hunger strike

Further information on UA: 127/15 Index: MDE 13/6096/2017 Iran Date: 20 April 2017

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/6096/2017/en/>



Iranian human rights defender Atena Daemi has been on hunger strike in Tehran's Evin prison since 8 April. She is protesting the suspended prison sentences imposed on two of her sisters, Hanieh and Ensieh, for "insulting public officers on duty". She has accused Iran's security bodies of harassing family members as a way to inflict further pain and suffering on political prisoners. Iranian human rights defender Atena Daemi, who is unjustly imprisoned for her human rights activities, started a hunger strike on 8 April in Evin prison. According to her family, she has since lost weight and developed heart palpitations as well as kidney and urinary tract infections.

Atena Daemi is protesting the suspended prison sentences of three months and one day imposed by a criminal court in Tehran on her sisters Hanieh and Ensieh Daemi on 23 March 2017 for "insulting public officers on duty". The court issued Atena Daemi with a prison sentence of the same length, added to her current seven-year sentence. The convictions were in connection with the confrontation that she and her sisters had with three Revolutionary Guards officials on 26 November 2016 when they raided her parents' house to arrest her.

Atena Daemi has said that the officials wore face masks and failed to present IDs or an arrest warrant. They beat and pepper sprayed Atena Daemi when she peacefully protested that the manner in which they were carrying out her arrest was illegal. They also punched her sister Hanieh in the chest when she tried to intervene to stop the officials.

Following her arrest, Atena Daemi filed a complaint against the Revolutionary Guards with the Office of the Prosecutor in Evin prison. However, the authorities did not process the complaint and said that "her complaint letter has been lost". Instead, seemingly in reprisal, they started criminal proceedings against Atena Daemi and her sisters. Amnesty International considers that the trial that led to their convictions was unfair and that Hanieh and Ensieh Daemi would be prisoners of conscience if imprisoned, targeted simply on the basis of their family relationship with Atena Daemi. In a letter written from inside prison on 8 April 2017, Atena Daemi said, "I will defend the rights of my sisters until my last breath. I will not allow security bodies, which already violate Iran's own laws, to treat our families as a means to inflict mental torture on us... I would rather die than be a slave of oppression."

Please write immediately in English, Persian or your own language urging the Iranian authorities to:

- Release Atena Daemi immediately and unconditionally, as she is a prisoner of conscience targeted solely for peacefully exercising her rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- Ensure, pending her release, that she has access to a qualified health professional who can provide health care in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent;
- Quash the convictions and sentences of Hanieh and Ensieh Daemi, which were issued after an unfair trial;
- Investigate Atena Daemi's allegations of torture or other ill-treatment, including being subjected to violence during her November 2016 arrest, and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice in fair trials.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 1 JUNE 2017 TO: Head of the Judiciary Ayatollah Sadeh Larijani c/o Public Relations Office Number 4, Deadend of 1 Azizi Above Pasteur Intersection Vali Asr Street, Tehran, Iran Salutation: Your Excellency Prosecutor General of Tehran Abbas Ja'fari Dolat Abadi Office of the General and Revolutionary Prosecutor Corner (Nabsh-e) of 15 Khordad Square Tehran, Iran Salutation: Your Excellency And copies to: President Hassan Rouhani The Presidency Pasteur Street, Pasteur Square Tehran, Iran

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below: Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation This is the third update of UA 127/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/5324/2016/en/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The authorities' attitude to Atena Daemi's hunger strike has been one of indifference. On 12 April 2017, the Associate Prosecutor (Dadyar) of Evin prison told the family, in a tone that they described as "cold and unempathetic", that Atena Daemi's situation is "none of his business". When faced by her parents' repeated pleas for assistance, the Associate Prosecutor of Evin prison threatened that the authorities could bring a criminal charge against Atena Daemi for her hunger strike.

In January 2017, the authorities charged Atena Daemi and her sisters with "insulting the Supreme Leader", "intentional assault", "obstructing public officials in the performance of their official duties" and "insulting public officers on duty". In February 2017, Atena Daemi and her sisters received an official letter from the Office of the Prosecutor indicating that the first two charges had been dropped. However, the other two charges remained open and Atena Daemi's sisters were required to pay bail of 400 million rials (equivalent to around US\$12,000) to remain at liberty pending further investigation of the charges. They did not receive any other information about the charges until 22 March 2017 when they received a summons to appear before Branch 1162 of the Criminal Court in Tehran the next day to stand trial. The trial session lasted about an hour. The court issued its verdict the next day, giving them each a prison term of three months and one day. The court suspended the sentences of Hanieh and Ensieh Daemi for a period of one year conditional on their "good behaviour".

In March 2017, Atena Daemi was transferred to the prison medical clinic after she experienced a temporary loss of vision in her right eye. However, she was returned to her cell the same day as the medical clinic did not have the necessary facilities to diagnose her condition. Amnesty International understands that she vomited repeatedly for the next two days, leading the authorities to eventually transfer her to a hospital outside prison. Doctors at the hospital said that she might have a condition involving an inflamed optic nerve and needed to receive a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan of her brain. However, the authorities returned her to prison the same day and have since failed to provide her with the MRI. They have also told her family that the procedure is expensive and the family must cover its costs once an appointment is booked for her. This is in breach of international law, which requires that states provide medical care for all prisoners, free of charge and without discrimination.

Atena Daemi had been sentenced to seven years in prison for peacefully defending human rights, including through: writing posts on Facebook criticizing the authorities' execution record; distributing anti-death penalty leaflets; participating in a peaceful protest against the 2014 execution of a young Iranian woman called Reyhaneh Jabbari; visiting the gravesite of those killed during the protests following the 2009 presidential election; and sending information about abuses against political prisoners to human rights groups based outside Iran. In the court verdict issued against her in April 2015, these peaceful activities were cited by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran as evidence of "gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security", "spreading propaganda against the system", and "insulting the Supreme Leader".

Atena Daemi was first arrested in October 2014. She was held in Section 2A of Evin prison – which is run by the Revolutionary Guards – for 86 days, including 51 days in solitary confinement. During this period, she was denied access to a lawyer even though she was repeatedly interrogated. For the first 28 days, she was held in a cell in Section 2A of Evin prison that she said was infested with insects and had no toilet facilities. She said her interrogators offered to grant her easier access to the toilet in exchange for her "co-operation". During most of her lengthy interrogations, she had to sit blindfolded, facing a wall. Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran sentenced her to 14 years in prison after a grossly unfair trial in March 2015 that lasted no more than 15 minutes. In September 2016, Branch 36 of the Court of Appeal in Tehran reduced the sentence to seven years.

IRGC Deprives Arash Sadeghi of Proper Medical Treatment

Posted on: 9th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/irgc-deprives-arash-sadeghi-proper-medical-treatment>



HRANA News Agency – Arash Sadeghi, imprisoned civic activist in ward 350 of Evin prison, has got a chronic inflammatory disease of the respiratory (asthma) and is still suffering from continuous stomach bleeding, however, despite the agreement of the prosecutor, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards still deprive him of going on medical leave and being admitted in hospitals.

A source familiar with Arash Sadeghi's situation told HRANA's reporter: "Arash is in a critical condition,

suffering from asthma and stomach bleeding. Although the prosecutor has agreed with the bail order, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards still deprive him of going on medical leave and being admitted in hospitals. Regardless of his medical leave, while prison forensic has requested his admission in a hospital, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards oppose that as well.”

Arash Sadeghi was transferred to Imam Khomeini hospital in Tehran on February 6, 2017 and was returned to the prison after some medical tests, while he had just ended his second hunger strike due to the prosecution’s promises to help.

This civil rights activist who had gone on hunger strike for a second time on January 22, when Golrokh Irai was arrested, was transferred to ward 350 on January 25, which is a place with minimum communication facilities with outside.

Mr. Sadeghi who started his second hunger strike just a few days after ending his first 71-day-long hunger strike, while being in a critical physical condition, has inappropriate health condition. Mr. Sadeghi had been transferred to ward 2-A of the Revolutionary Guards, in Evin prison, “under the pretext of” transition to hospital on January 25, 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 to address the accusations against his wife, Golrokh Irai, which he ended after 71 days with the promise of considering his demands by the authorities, when his wife left the prison on January 3.

However, just 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 that 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.

It should be mentioned that on his latest referral to the hospital the specialist 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, prison security and Sarallh Corps pressure, this prisoner was returned to Evin prison on February 6, 2017.

Various Security Charges Put on Mahmoud Masoumi

Posted on: 10th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/various-security-charges-put-mahmoud-masoumi>



HRANA News Agency – The interrogation of Mahmoud Masoumi, one of detainees in front of Dena building, was held in Shahid Moghadas Court in Evin prison. The investigator has put various security charges on him and announced that his trial date and branch will be determined and held, soon.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Mahmoud Masoumi was informed about his charges by the investigator of Branch three of Shahid Moghadas Court in Evin prison on February 11, 2017.

Mr. Masoumi has been accused of “gathering and colluding to act against the national security, through the interests and communicating with an opposition group outside the country, propaganda against the regime, insulting religious sanctities and supporting Shahin Najafi, insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic and the supreme leader.”

The investigator of the branch has announced that his trial date and branch will be determined and held, soon.

It should be noted that a number of supporters of Mohammad Ali Taheri, founder of Erfan Halgheh, were arrested in a gathering in front of Dena Tiers building, on Tuesday, May 12, 2016. Mahmoud Masoumi is one of these detainees who was transferred to Great Prison of Tehran (Fashavieh), in his first session of investigation in Shahid Moghadas Court in Evin prison on Saturday May 14, 2016, despite the bail issued for his freedom.

Mahmoud Masoumi, 21, from Gonbad Kavous, aircraft mechanic student at the University of Saha, was transferred from Great Tehran prison to his second session of investigation at Shahid Moghadas Court in Evin, on May 17, 2016, and then was transferred to ward 2-A of the Revolutionary Guards, in Evin prison with a detention warrant for two months.

Mr. Masoumi was transferred again to the Great Tehran prison (Fashavieh) for unknown reasons on June 6, 2016, and eventually, on June 13, was released from this prison on the bail of 2 billion IRR until his trial.

This civil activist was summoned to the Revolutionary Guards Intelligence office, later on September 6, 2016.

Saber Naderi Transferred to Central Prison of Sanandaj

Posted on: 11th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/saber-naderi-transferred-central-prison-sanandaj>



HRANA News Agency – After 70 days of solitary confinement and being interrogated, Saber Naderi, from Qorveh city, was transferred from intelligence office’s detention in Sanandaj to the Central Prison of this city. His court hearing will be held soon.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Saber Naderi, director of Shahir Narm Afzar Poya Company in Qorveh city, after 70 days of solitary confinement at the intelligence office’s detention in Sanandaj was transferred to the Central Prison of Sanandaj, on February 12, 2017.

A source close to his family announced this news and told HRANA’s reporter: “The Office of the Central Prison of Sanandaj has contacted one of his relatives and asked them to attend

the prison to take his belonging which had been seized from him when he had been arrested by the plainclothes agents on December 4, 2016.”

This relative of Saber Naderi had received the stuff but he was not allowed to visit him. “Nader has told his family in a short phone call that he had been transferred to the Central Prison of Sanandaj and he would be tried soon.” The source added.

HRANA had mentioned in the previous reports that the security forces surrounded all around the house first and then about 20 security forces simultaneously stormed into the house after opening the front door, inspected and cluttered all the accommodations and furniture in 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 the family members with guns and made them be silent.

Security forces, after one hour of inspection and examining, eventually seized and took two laptops inside the house, 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 to Shahir Narmafzar Pooya Company located in the second Floor, Sina Building, Shariati Street, and interrogated all partners of Mr. Naderi and inspected the premises and computers.

Navid Kamran Returned to Evin Prison by the End of His Furlough

Posted on: 14th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/navid-kamran-returned-evin-prison-end-furlough>



HRANA News Agency – Navid Kamran, political prisoner in ward eight of Evin prison, returned to this prison by the end of his leave.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Navid Kamran, political prisoner in ward eight of Evin prison, returned to this prison by the end of his six-day leave, on February 12, 2017.

Mr. Kamran had been sent on a four-day leave which was extended for two more days by the prosecutor.

HRANA had previously reported that this political prisoner suffered from sensory and mobility nerves in his right leg and his right hand.

Navid Kamran, civil rights activist who had been imprisoned in 2009, 2010, 2011, also had been arrested on September 6, 2014, along with Arash Sadeghi, Golrokh Irai and Behnam Mousivand, by the Revolutionary Guards Intelligence Agents, at his workplace and was transferred to ward 2-A of the Revolutionary Guards in Evin prison. He was interrogated and persecuted. He was released on the bail after several days.

Mr. Kamran was later tried along with his co-defendants in a court without a fair trial standards, and was sentenced to one and a half years imprisonment by Judge Salvati for the charge of “propaganda against the regime” in 2015, which was reduced to one year by the court of appeal.

This civil activist was arrested at his workplace to serve his imprisonment, by the Revolutionary Guards Intelligence agents, on October 4, 2016, and was transferred to Evin prison.

A Report about Damghan Prison / One Juvenile Offender on Death Row

Posted on: 15th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/report-damghan-prison-one-juvenile-offender-death-row>



HRANA News Agency – Damghan prison with an area of 250 square meters and about 130 prisoners, is one of the smallest prisons in the country and it has rarely been talked about it. The following report considers the situation in this prison and gives the identities of three prisoners on death row, including a juvenile offender (who was under 18 at the time of the crime).

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Damghan prison is located in Imam Khomeini

Boulevard in this city, and contains a small two-flat building with area of 250 square meters including 60 meters for walking. The building is 50 years old and is the old police building of the city.

This prison has 5 toilets and bathrooms for 130 people. The main problem, with this “clean” prison, is the prisoner’s very limited space.

On the first floor there are two rooms as the youth ward and health ward (non-smoking prisoners), on the second floor there are two rooms, each with an area of 70 to 80 meters for convicts and detainees (prisoners with temporary detention order), a chapel and ward of prisoners with “open verdict”.

Each room of this prison has a TV and a fridge.

According to the released prisoners from this prison; “Drugs trafficking, compared to most prisons, rarely happens or perhaps is less.”

Another problem that prisoners are grumbling, is about prisoners with “open verdict”. It is said that, by the law, Cooperative Foundation should take 5% of these prisoners income as premium, but the Cooperative Foundation of Semnan province deduct 20% of prisoners’ income.

There are currently three prisoners on death row, including a juvenile offender, charged with drug-related crimes, kept in this prison.

The identity of these prisoners which has been authenticated by HRANA, are as follows:

Farzad Nouraei / under 18 years old at the time of crime

Seyed Mehdi Shahcheraghi

Kazem Shahraki

Ailing Former Political Activist Held Without Charge by Intelligence Ministry

April 17, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/ailing-former-political-activist-held-without-charge-by-intelligence-ministry/>



Former political activist [Majid Asadi](#) has been detained without charge in Evin Prison's Ward 209 under the control of Iran's [Intelligence Ministry](#) since February 2017, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) has learned.

In an interview with CHRI on April 13, Mohammad Asadi said his son also does not have a lawyer.

“Majid has been in solitary, under interrogation for 50 days,” he said. “He doesn’t have a lawyer at this preliminary stage, but we might be able to hire one for him when the case goes to trial.”

“For the time being, all we’re hearing is that we have to wait,” he added.

Majid Asadi, 34, a former student activist at Allameh Tabatabaie University in Tehran, was arrested by agents from an unknown agency without a warrant at his home in Karaj, west of Tehran, on February 21, 2017.

The agents also searched the home and confiscated his laptop, mobile phone and some books, an informed source told CHRI at the time.

“Majid has back pain and has asked us to get his medical records from his doctor outside of prison and give them to the prosecutor so that he would hopefully take them into consideration,” Mohammad Asadi told CHRI. “He needs to be hospitalized for treatment.”

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

Mohammad Asadi told CHRI his son had given up his activism.

“Majid has not been involved in any particular political activity since he was released from prison in 2015,” he added. “He has been trying to heal himself and keeping busy with research and translation for a private company.”

Majid Asadi was previously arrested on July 3, 2008 by Intelligence Ministry agents and sentenced to four years in prison for “assembly and collusion against national security” in March 2010.

He served his term from October 5, 2011 to June 8, 2015.

Iran: Torturing prisoners by denying them access to medical care

April 17, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/17/iran-torturing-prisoners-by-denying-them-access-to-medical-care/>



Two inmates named Hossein and Asgar Taghavi, imprisoned in Tabriz Central Prison, northwest of Iran, went to the prison emergency clinic due to receive treatment for one of them who suffers from a hernia.

In response to them a prison doctor attacked, disrespecting and degrading the two brothers, ignoring their diseases.

They were transferred to solitary confinement and were reportedly beaten and placed under torture. No further information is available about their situation in solitary.

Kurdish prisoner of conscience Zeinab Jalalian is suffering from pterygium that urgently needs specialist surgery. Yet the authorities won't permit her despite being at a high risk of going blind.

Jalalian was arrested in 2008 and is currently serving a life sentence for her social and political activities in the fields of education and empower women. She has been denied of furlough despite being nine years in prison.

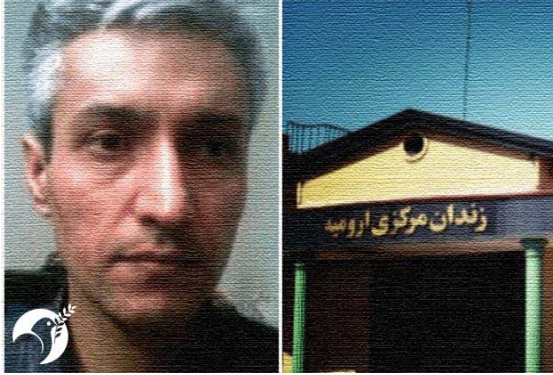
Authorities conditioned her transfer to hospital on arresting one of her family members as a guarantee. Jalalian however refused despite being in urgent need to medical treatment. Prior to this she had been placed under intense pressure to appear in a televised “confession” in return for furlough.

Amnesty International warned in October 2016, publishing a statement about Jalalian's health condition and losing her sight.

Iran: Political prisoner summoned and threatened by prison intelligence agents

April 17, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/17/iran-political-prisoner-summoned-and-threatened-by-prison-intelligence-agents/>



Kurdish political prisoner Saeid Sangar who is serving his 17th year of a life sentence in Urmia Prison, southwest of Iran, is being currently subjected to pressure and threats.

Prison guards recently raided on political ward, inspecting and destructing prisoners' property. They confiscated Sangar's notes containing his memoirs of his difficult time in custody.

In response to his protest against the attack authorities told him warders have the authority to control the private aspects of prisoners' lives.

He was summoned by prison intelligence service and was threatened to being deprived of family visits if he keeps recording the prison events in his diaries.

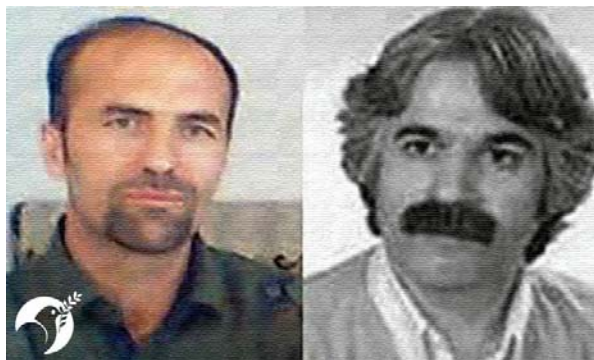
Saeid Sangar was arrested in 2000, at the age of 27. He was put to death for "enmity against God" and "establishing contact with Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK)." The execution sentence was commuted to life in 2003.

After spending two years in ward 209 of Evin prison, the political prisoner was transferred to Urmia prison in 2003. He was later transferred to Sanandaj prison, west of Iran, in November 2007, and once again back to Urmia prison eight years later in September 2015.

Iran: Political prisoners launched hunger strike in memorial of "Black Thursday"

April 17, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/17/iran-political-prisoners-launched-hunger-strike-in-memorial-of-black-thursday/>



Three political prisoners in Rajayishahr prison, west of Tehran have launched a three-day hunger strike to honor the events of 17 April, which has become known as "Black Thursday" by local activists.

Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, Mehdi Farahi Shandiz and Mehdi Amiri, have launched their hunger strike in memorial to Gholamreza Khosravi, one of the executed

political prisoners.

They have in a letter appreciated political prisoners' strength and stability, demanding the authorities immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners, ending the unfair trials and suppressing workers, teachers and all protesters.

It is worth noting that dozens of political prisoners were injured or put into solitary confinement in a raid on Evin's ward 350, where inmates with political charges are held. The guards wielded batons and used violence, leaving more than 30 injured. At least four inmates were taken to a hospital outside the jail because they were bleeding or sustained fractures. Thirty-two prisoners were also transferred to solitary confinement.

International human rights organization including Amnesty International condemned the raid.

“Be My Daughter’s Voice,” Pleads Mother of Hunger-Striking Activist Serving Seven Years

April 18, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/be-my-daughters-voice-pleads-mother-of-hunger-striking-activist-serving-seven-years/>



Imprisoned children and human rights activist [Atena Daemi](#) has been stricken with a kidney infection nine days after going on [hunger strike](#) to protest a new sentence issued against her and her sisters following a complaint by the Revolutionary Guards.

“Because of her hunger strike, Atena has lost a lot of weight and unfortunately, she is not even taking the antibiotics prescribed by the prison clinic to treat her kidney infection,” a source close to the Daemi family told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) on April 17, 2017.

That day, after visiting her daughter in prison on April 16, Masoumeh Nemati wrote a letter, a copy of which was received by CHRI.

“The authorities are not paying any attention (to Atena’s hunger strike). They are very busy with election slogans and can’t hear the voice of her worried mother or sad father,” she wrote.

“So, I am turning to the world, international organizations, defenders of children and human rights and all the media to be the voice of my Atena,” she said.

“Stop telling me that because of the [May 19] elections, this is not the right time,” added Nemati. “My daughter’s life is in danger. Be the voice of my daughter.”

In March 2017, Branch 1163 of the Quds Criminal Court [added](#) 91-days to Daemi’s seven-year prison sentence for her peaceful activism after she complained that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) used excessive force while arresting her at her home in Tehran and transferring her to Evin Prison on November 26, 2016.

The IRGC responded by accusing Daemi of “resisting agents carrying out their duty” and “insulting agents while on duty.”

In addition to Daemi's sentence, the court also issued suspended, 91-day sentences to Daemi's co-defendants and sisters, Onsieh and Hanieh, prompting her hunger strike.

"I would rather die than be a slave to tyranny," wrote Daemi in a [letter](#) to judicial authorities dated April 8, 2017, when she began her hunger strike. "I will not let the security agencies trample their own laws and abuse our families as a means of psychological torture to create a climate of fear."

An informed source close to the Daemi family told CHRI that the complaint filed by Daemi against the IRGC agents has still not been processed by the judiciary.

"They have not investigated Atena's complaint against the IRGC, but she and her sisters were prosecuted and given prison sentences after the IRGC sued them," said the source.

Shortly after her arrest, Daemi [accused](#) the IRGC agents of using pepper spray when they raided her home on November 26.

"They acted as if they had come to arrest a dangerous fugitive," she wrote in a letter. "When asked to produce a warrant, they attacked me."

"One of the agents, who I'm embarrassed to say was a woman, started to beat me," she added. "Then, when my younger sister tried to intervene, she beat her on the chest, too."

Iran: Atena Daemi's mother urged UNSR to improve prison conditions

April 21, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/21/iran-aten-daemis-mother-urged-unsr-to-improve-prison-conditions/>



Ms. Massoumeh Nemati wrote a letter to the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, Asma Jahangir, urging her to take appropriate measures to improve the situation of political prisoners in Iran.

Ms. Nemati is mother of imprisoned civil rights activist, Atena Daemi, who has been on hunger strike for 13 days in Evin Prison. She is protesting the imprisonment sentences issued for her sisters based on unfounded

charges.

Ms. Nemati explained about the conditions of her daughter during two terms of imprisonment. The first time, she said, Atena was arrested in 2015 and held 90 days in solitary confinement and tortured under interrogation. The second time was in November 2016 when the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) fabricated false charges against Atena and her two sisters. The court issued three months of imprisonment for each of the three sisters, something that provoked Atena Daemi to start her hunger strike.

Ms. Nemati urged UNSR Asma Jahangir to undertake suitable measures to attend to the situation of political prisoners in Iran, including her own daughter.

Iran: Horrible Prison Conditions and Neglecting Authorities

Wednesday, 19 April 2017 01:06

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22576-iran-horrible-prison-conditions-and-neglecting-authorities>



NCRI - Inmates in Gohardasht prison, west of Tehran, are facing serious problems.

Prisoners are deprived of the basic necessities, and their fundamental rights are neglected.

Low quality food, lack of adequate access to medical care and the dysfunctional heating system in need of repair are some of the problems that have made conditions for the prisoners extremely difficult.

It has been over a year since inmates of ward 10 of this prison have no access to warm water and are forced to use cold water for their washings.

The heating system in this ward has been constantly broken down in the past year and authorities have taken no action despite receiving money from the inmates for this very purpose.

The food is also very poor in quality, resulting in malnutrition or stomach and intestinal problems for the inmates. Many of the prisoners are seen throwing away half or even all of their food. They are then forced to pay for their own food.

The inmates are also deprived of any legal representation. These prisoners are literally forced to provide for all their necessary items, such as refrigerators, rugs and even food. Lack of medical care is also another major problem for the inmates. As their conditions have worsened some of the inmates are forced to pay for their own medical services despite the heavy costs.

Iran: Inmate Commits Suicide After Long Period in Solitary Confinement

Wednesday, 19 April 2017 01:03

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22575-iran-inmate-commits-suicide-after-long-period-in-solitary-confinement>



NCRI - An inmate of Birjand Prison, behind bars on drug-related charges, was held in solitary confinement for several months and committed suicide due to extreme psychological pressures. He committed suicide and lost his life.

Around two weeks ago another Balouchi prisoner by the name of Mohammad Nohtani had committed suicide. He was also behind bars on

drug-related charges in this jail.

“Mohammad had protested some time ago over his case not being looked into. He was transferred to solitary confinement as a result,” a source close to the Nohtani family said.

“After more than three months incommunicado, he no longer could tolerate the psychological pressures and harassment by prison authorities, committing suicide around 15 days ago,” the source added.

Birjand is the capital of South Khorasan Province, eastern Iran, home to a population of 178,020 people (2011).

Iran: Latest News From Prisons, the Situation of Conscience & Political Prisoners

Thursday, 20 April 2017 18:25

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22591-iran-latest-news-from-prisons-the-situation-of-conscience-political-prisoners>



NCRI - Threats of building new cases for two political prisoners:

Shahin Zoghitabar was called to information security and Farhang Pourmansouri was summoned to the inspection of the prison, on Tuesday, April 17th. At the information security, Shahin Zoghitabar was threatened by IRGC elements that if he gets involved in political activities or writes letters to those

outside of the prison, he would face a new prison case. At the same time, Farhang Pourmansouri was threatened that there was a complaint against him, claiming misconduct from the prison master “Mohammadi”. Therefore, a new case has been prepared for him.

Persecution of Political and Conscience Prisoners by the Authorities in the Central Prison of Zahedan:

Political and conscience prisoners in the central prison of Zahedan are frequently being insulted and harassed by prison officials because of their religious beliefs.

Friday, April 14th, a prison guard called Mohammad Kalkaly, a prayer of Sunni prisoners of conscience imprisoned in ward number three, with insults and inhumane treatment, before he ordered the shaving of his beard. According to a prison guard named "Rasti", the order of such act was given him by the prison warden. Also on April 11th, an ill prisoner, “Hyatollah Noutizehi” from ward number one of Zahedan central prison, after a seizure was brought to the prison’s clinic in a wheelchair. But in such a condition, his foot hit the prison key keeper's foot. Due to this, even with the prisoner’s unsuitable condition, he was taken to the prison’s quarantine unit instead of the clinic. An IRGC officer claimed that the prisoner deliberately kicked him in his complaint. Hyatallah Noutizehi was sent to solitary confinement for 20 days. He was dispatched to the prison’s quarantine, even though this prisoner should have been treated in the clinic due to his deteriorating health.

Five Year Prison Sentence for a Kurdish Political Prisoner:

The so-called number two revolutionary court branch in the city of Urmia sentenced a Kurdish prisoner, who is currently held in the central prison of the city, on charges of "acting against national security through membership in one of the Kurdish parties".

According to a human rights group of Kurdistan on March 4th, Bashir Pir-Mavaneh, a resident of a village around Urmia, has been arrested by the Information Ministry Security forces and is currently in their prison. He was interrogated for 12 days by them about his relationship with a Kurdish opposition party and then released to the central prison of the city. This Kurdish citizen has been sentenced in unit number two of the Urmia revolutionary court presiding by a so-called judge "Sheikhloo" with the delivery of a five year prison sentence. This political prisoner is now in number 13 of Urmia Central Prison, being held with ordinary criminals.

Beating of a Prisoner in Ward Eight of Evin's Prison:

Majid Abedinzadeh, a leading civil rights activist and witness of the infamous Kahrizak prison, is in ward eight completing his 3 year prison sentence. He was beaten by ordinary criminal prisoners last night.

Failure to comply with the principle of prisoner separation for political and criminal prisoners has precedent in the political prisoners being beaten. Other political prisoners, including Kayvan Karimi, Mehdi Rajabi, Amir Amirqooly and Waheed Saiadi-Nasir, were beaten in the general ward of Evin prison in recent months. It should be noted that ward eight in Evin's prison is for ordinary crimes and the regime's housing of political prisoners among them is to torture and pressure those prisoners.

Poet didn't show up in Court:

Habib Sassanian, a poet from Ardabil being held in Tabriz central prison, refused to appear in third branch of the revolutionary court in Tabriz presiding by Judge Bagherpour on April 18th in protest to disappearance of some of documents in his court records. A source close to the Sassanian family with knowledge about the latest situation of the prisoner said, "Habib Sassanian, following his beating on April 14th by prison authorities and in protest to his undecided situation after five days of a hunger strike, as well as missing some of the documents from his file in the Tabriz revolutionary court presided over by Judge Bagherpour, refused to appear in the court today and his trial was postponed until May 15, 2017." This prisoner, in May 2016 along with five other Azeri-Turks, was arrested in the city of Ardabil. The charges against this political prisoner were erecting a political group, spying for foreign countries, copying of confidential data from Iran's revolutionary guards and sending that confidential information to foreign countries. Habib Sassanian is still being held with illnesses and a lack of proper treatment in ward 12 of Tabriz central prison.

Transfer of a political prisoner from solitary confinement to the general ward of Evin's prison after the 472 days:

Kamran Qadri, an Austrian-Iranian citizen, has been sentenced to ten years in prison on charges of spying for enemy states. This is after 472 days of detention in solitary confinement

within Ward 209 (a ward associated with the Iran's Information Ministry) of Evin's prison. He is being transferred to the general ward of the prison on Monday, April 16th.

IRAN: The Political Prisoner Goes on Hunger Strike in Ardabil Prison

Thursday, 20 April 2017 01:47

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22585-iran-the-political-prisoner-goes-on-hunger-strike-in-ardabil-prison>



NCRI - According to the news, the political prisoner, Omar Farhang, went on a hunger strike on April 16th, in Ardabil Prison to protest against the unbearable pressures and the lack of medical care in the prison.

The family of this political prisoner lives in Urmia (northwest of Iran). He and his family have repeatedly requested of the Judiciary and the criminal warden to

transfer him to the hospital, but the authorities did not pay attention to these demands.

Omar Farhang was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment and was transferred to Ardabil Central Prison. He has served 9 years of his sentence so far.

The political prisoner has had tumors in the neck and throat for three years. Although the doctors diagnosed the need for an immediate surgery, the prison authorities and the Judiciary have done nothing for him during the last three years.

Iran: The Sabotage of Sending a Prisoner to the Hospital

Thursday, 20 April 2017 01:41

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22584-iran-the-sabotage-of-sending-a-prisoner-to-the-hospital>



NCRI - The political prisoner, Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, in Gohardasht (Rajai Shahr) Prison protested against the sabotage of the prison guards, since they refused to take him to the hospital for treatment.

The agents of the regime in prison said that they will not transfer Ebrahimzadeh to the hospital unless he wears the prison uniform and handcuffs. The political prisoner refused

and protested against the order.

Behnam Ebrahimzadeh had earlier requested that he go to the hospital alone and freely without handcuffs, shackles, and the prison guards. He also stated that he himself would pay the medical fees.

As his relatives said, the prison guards treat the prisoners offensively when they want to transfer them to the hospital and it usually causes the loss of time and a disruption in treatment procedures.

Behnam Ebrahimzadeh is serving time in Gohardasht Prison and he suffers from a serious health condition. His family had earlier requested that he go on a furlough for treating arthritis of the neck, a slipped disc, kidney failure, as well as to have an intestinal surgery. However, the prison authorities opposed his leave and stopped his transfer to the hospital.

It is noteworthy that Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, Mehdi Farahi Shandiz, and Mehdi Amiri have gone on hunger strikes in Gohardasht Prison for three days in act of protest, in order to commemorate a supporter of PMOI, Gholamreza Khosravi, who protested against the repressions and the violations of human rights in prisons. Their hunger strike also coincided with the anniversary of the brutal attack on the ward 350 of Evin Prison on April 17th, 2014.

Following the April attack, Gholamreza Khosravi was severely tortured and the prison guards exerted pressure on him in order to stop him from fighting. Nevertheless, he never yielded and the regime finally executed him.

Iran: Prisoner in dire condition after Being on Hunger strike for over 70 days

April 21, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/21/iran-prisoner-in-dire-condition-after-being-on-hunger-strike-for-over-70-days/>



Two death row brothers were reportedly attacked in Isfahan Dastgerd Prison, by the authorities on April 14, leaving severely injured limbs and broken noses.

Mehrdad and Moslem Khosravi were transferred to solitary confinement by prison security guards, and have been denied of any medical treatment.

In another case, an Armenian native by the name of Batirshah Mohammadof is currently kept in uncertain conditions in Rajaishahr Prison of Karaj, west of Tehran.

He ended his hunger strike protesting his dire condition in prison. He relaunched another in early March demanding to contact with his family and transfer to his country.

The warden told him we don't care about your hunger strike.

“I was transferred to a hospital outside the prison as a result of my hunger strike. I refused to inject a serum and was mistreated by the authorities. I haven't spoken nor contacted to my family for the past months. I am not even allowed to visit the ambassador of my country. I have been enduring harassment imposed by attorney authorities and the Ministry of Intelligence.” According to his taped voice.

Muhammad was summoned to the warden's office on Thursday by Kraj's intelligence agents and threatened to being transferred to solitary and internal exile to Isfahan if he continues his hunger strike.

Authorities React Harshly to the Strike in Ahvaz Prison

Posted on: 21st April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/authorities-react-harshly-strike-ahvaz-prison>

HRANA News Agency – Prisoners of Ahvaz prison (clinic) started a mass strike in protest against water and power outage. This strike was responded by violence by prison guards that was along with damaging prisoners' properties and transferring 7 prisoners to solitary confinements.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), prisoners of Ahvaz prison (known as clinic prison), located in Zargan area in Ahvaz, started a mass strike in protest against water and power outage.

An informed source told HRANA's reporter, "following the prisoner's strike, prison guards raided political prisoners' ward by the order of Karimi, head of the prison, Moshayeat Danesh (head of security of prison), Moradi (secretary of prison), and Niyazi (head of prison guards). Prison guards used tear gas and baton against political and general prisoners, whose population was close to 300 people. They not only beat the prisoners, but also damaged or destroyed some of prisoner's personal belongings."

This informed source continued, "Some of the prisoners who did not withdraw from their demand, were beaten more and 7 of them are kept in solitary confinement since 4 days ago and are still on hunger strike. Besides, blanket and heating appliances were not given to them, by the order of head of the prison. Water, gas, and power outage continues."

HRANA identified the name of prisoners who are kept in solitary confinement as: Mostafa Booriaei, Mohammad Booriaei, Nazem Berahi, Hakim Majdam, Milad Salemi, Hasan Dashti Mishan and Mahmood Mehdipoor.

Iranian film-maker released from Evin prison - human rights group

21 Apr 2017 01:55AM

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/lifestyle/iranian-film-maker-released-from-evin-prison-human-rights-group-8780876#.WPkYAHtkuHE.twitter>

Iranian filmmaker Keywan Karimi has been released after nearly five months in Evin prison in Tehran on charges of "propaganda against the state" and "insulting sacred values", the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), a news site run by a collective of Iranian human rights advocates, said on Thursday.

BEIRUT: Iranian filmmaker Keywan Karimi has been released after nearly five months in Evin prison in Tehran on charges of "propaganda against the state" and "insulting sacred values", the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), a news site run by a collective of Iranian human rights advocates, said on Thursday.

Karimi, 31, was released on Wednesday, HRANA said.

The charges stem from a documentary about political graffiti in Tehran made by Karimi called "Writing on the City". In 2015, Karimi was found guilty and sentenced to six years in prison and 223 lashes but an appeals court subsequently reduced the sentence to one year in prison.

Since late December, at least 22 journalists and activists have been arrested, according to the Center for Human Rights in Iran, a New York-based research and advocacy organization. Many are being kept in solitary confinement without access to their family or lawyers.

About a dozen of those arrested have been administrators of pro-reformist channels on Telegram, a social media platform used by millions of Iranians. They were rounded up in mid-March, though some were subsequently released.

The arrests have posed a challenge for Iranian president Hassan Rouhani, who promised to increase freedom for ordinary Iranians while in office and has registered to run in presidential elections on May 19.

The Iranian judiciary did not issue a statement about Karimi on Thursday but HRANA said that he had been let out of Evin on a "conditional release".

(Reporting By Babak Dehghanpisheh; editing by Ralph Boulton)

Iran: A Look at the News of the Prisons in Last Week

Friday, 21 April 2017 16:47

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22601-iran-a-look-at-the-news-of-the-prisons-in-last-week>



NCRI - Last week, political prisoners of Evin and Gohardasht prisons in a letter to the United Nations Human Rights Council condemned the attack on the women's ward of Evin prison.

The letter partially said: "The Prison Guards, under the command of the Organization of the Prisons, attacked the women's ward of Evin prison (who are political prisoners) and with humiliation and insult, destroyed all personal equipment and facilities. Therefore, we, the political prisoners of Evin and Gohardasht prisons condemn this repressive measure and inform your human rights body that these measures by the Organization of the Prisons are simply aimed at suppressing and intimidating prisoners in order to frighten them not to raise awareness about what is going on in prisons.

We, political prisoners, as victims of these atrocities are demanding from all human rights organizations, especially the UN Human Rights Council, an investigation and follow-up.

In another news, political prisoners Khaled Herdani and Ebrahim Firouzi wrote a letter to Ms. Asma Jahangir, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran, and demanded that any relation with Iran be conditional upon an end to executions and violation of human rights.

On April 10, Baluch political prisoner, Saber Malek Raeisi, was suddenly and without prior notice transferred to Evin solitary confinement while this prisoner had previously been exiled from Baluchistan to Ardebil Prison.

Saber Malek Raeisi is the youngest political prisoner who was 17 in 2009 when he was detained. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison and exile and now it has been 7 years that he is in prison, while this political prisoner committed but the Ministry of Intelligence and the IRGC Intelligence have taken him hostage and made his release conditional on surrendering of his older brother.

In a short conversation with his family in the presence of the regime's agents, he said he was in Evin prison.

Last week two important events in the international arena took place: First, the extension of EU sanctions against the Iranian regime for violation of human rights and of course prisons are among the sites that most human rights violations take place. Second, designation and sanctioning the regime's Prisons Organization and Sohrab Soleimani, brother of Qasem Soleimani, as one the regime's officials in the State Prisons Organization.

On April 13, the US Treasury Department in a statement said "Treasury Takes Action to Target Serious Human Rights Abuses in Iran". In part of the Treasury Department statement it is emphasized that: "Tehran Prisons Organization is responsible for or complicit in the commission of serious human rights abuses against political prisoners housed in Evin Prison, which falls under the authority of the Tehran Prisons Organization. Evin Prison is one of Iran's most notorious facilities, due to the detention of many prisoners of conscience and well-documented accounts of their mistreatment and abuse. Former prisoners of Evin Prison have reported harsh interrogations, forced confessions, psychological and physical torture, and denial of access to medical care."

The US Treasury Department highlights the brutal attack of Khamenei's henchmen on political prisoners of Ward 350 of Evin prison on April 17, 2014 and says: "In an April 2014 incident at Evin Prison, dozens of security guards and senior prison officials attacked and severely beat political prisoners being held in Ward 350. The attack lasted several hours and over 30 prisoners were wounded or injured. Some of the prisoners were placed in solitary confinement afterward and did not receive medical treatment, despite their injuries."

In April 2014 attack, Gholamreza Khosravi, a supporter of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), because of resistance and perseverance was tortured more than others and guards at Evin Prison exerted heavy pressure on him to give up his fight, but he did not give in and the regime executed him.

In another move with the efforts of Christian prisoners in Gohardasht prison in Karaj Hall 12, Easter ceremony and prayer was held.

Political prisoners and prisoners of conscience participated along with Christian prisoners in the Easter ceremony and prayers and prayed in unison for peace and for people affected by flooding.

Part of the prayer was: “God’s satisfaction is for those who have God’s compassion in their hearts and are committed to it and always pray him and have dedicated themselves for God’s good.”

“I Counted Neither as Dead Nor as Alive”; A Report about 7 Years of Imprisonment of Shir-Ahmad Shirani

Posted on: 22nd April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/counted-neither-dead-alive-report-7-years-imprisonment-shir-ahmad-shirani>



HRANA News Agency – Shir-Ahmad Shirani, Baluch prisoner who is serving the 7th year of his 22 years of imprisonment sentence in exile in Ardabil, have a shocking story about tortures that he experienced and violation of his rights as a human being.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), Shir-Ahmad Shirani, son of Chaker, born on September 21, 1983, single, from Zahedan and resident of Tehran, was arrested by the intelligence service on June 2, 2000.

Mr. Shirani had been under interrogation and torture for 2 years in solitary confinement of intelligence service’s detention centre.

He told his close confidants about these two years, “I was blind folded in solitary confinement and isolated from anybody even my family, inside a cell where toilet was inside it and was separated with a 0.5 meter wall, in the middle of the cell. Alongside other physical and mental tortures during those 2 years.”

He continued, “One of the notorious tortures was lashing with cable, in which they tie the body to a bed and lash underneath the feet with a large cable. It was performed many times on me through those 2 years, and its signs are visible. Also, breaking the nose and rim and electric shock were other tortures that were used. All of these tortures were carried out by intelligence service officers for getting confession from me and other suspects.”

“During this period we were not considered either alive or dead, and my family did not know if I was alive or not.” He continued.

“In all of the interrogations, we were blamed for everything which had occurred in the region and that was the direction of interrogation. Everything happened was the discriminatory and oppressive policies by authorities. Even all of interrogators and some of high rank security and judicial officials confirmed that my claim was true.

On the other hand, intelligence service was exploiting the fact that some of my relatives were considered as opposition, some of whom had been killed by the regime and some others, including my brother that lived with Rigi’s family for some time, was forced to live outside of country for their political activities.

The intelligence service used it in any way they wanted for reaching their goals, by committing actions out of their regulation.” He stated.

Mr. Shirani, after 2 years in solitary confinement, and following wet and dry hunger strike, was sentenced to 22 years in prison, on charge of “acts against the national security”, in a fabricated trial, and transferred to Zahedan prison.

Political prisoners of Zahedan, including Shir-Ahmad Shirani, were beaten by prison guards on May 25, 2012. These prisoners started a hunger strike in protest against religious insults by the prison authorities. Beating the prisoners was so severe, that at least 30 prisoners were injured in head and one prisoner was blinded.

After this incident, he was kept in solitary confinement for 2 months, and then transferred to Garmeh prison in Ardabil, on July 3, 2012.

Mr. Shirani described this prison to his confidants, “it was a small prison and had only one ward but the population of prison was more than its capacity. Most of prisoners were held there for drug related charges and robbery. There was no service and facility, the phone was 3 minutes per day and one washroom and one bathroom was almost always closed and out of order, due to overpopulation.”

After serving 6 months in this prison, he was transferred to drug addicts ward in Meshkinshar prison, without a prior notice and while he was blindfolded, on December 27.

This Balouch prisoner stated about the 3 years that he was held there, “For 3 years and half I lived with people who were drug addicted, homeless, or people who had lost their families due to their addiction. They did not have any personality stability, and behave like mentally ill people. They were mostly in their delusions.”

“However the authorities were ignoring the condition of the ward. Even when Dr. Jahangiri, head of Prison Bureau paid a visit to Ardabil prison, I explained my issue in a letter that I personally gave him. Unfortunately it did not have any effect and I was told that the order had come from higher authorities and they could only decide about them”. He said.

Shir-Ahmad Shirani was transferred to central prison of Ardabil on February 17, 2016, again blindfolded. He was kept along 5 other political prisoners who were exiled with similar condition, along 8 other prisoners, in 12m2 cell, while they were banned from having phone calls. These prisoners were always victims of violent actions of authorities, for belief and racial differences.

Some time ago, Mr. Shirani who is currently being held in ward number 7 of this prison, was transferred to the quarantine ward for 10 days as a punishment, for complaining about the bad behavior of a prison employee. Similar punishment has carried out on other political prisoners of this prison.

According to the prison’s physician, Shir-Ahmad Shirani, needs surgery operation in order to be able to walk in future, due to damages that are inflicted on his legs during torture and also medical negligence, but he has been deprived of it so far.

Besides, this prisoner is suffering from kidney and stomach illness and prison clinic just gives him painkillers.

Shirani's family, including his old father and mother, had been coming for visiting him from long a distance to Ardabil, but due to humiliating behavior of prison authorities, now they have stopped it.

If article 288 of Islamic penal act would be applied to this prisoner, he would receive reduction on his sentence, but security officials have intervened and stopped the process.

Currently, Shir-Ahmad Shirani is being kept along with 5 other political prisoners in exile, with the names of Ali Paxh-Gol, Abdulkarim She-Bakhsh, Maher Ka'bi, Mohammad Saber Malikraeisi, and Noor-Ahmad Hasanzehi, in a ward that is known as "death ward" in Ardabil prison.

Arash Sadeghi Suffers from Intestinal Colitis

Posted on: 23rd April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/arash-sadeghi-suffers-intestinal-colitis>



HRANA News Agency – Arash Sadeghi, civil rights activist, who is imprisoned in ward 350 of Evin prison, and was suffering from Asthma and stomach bleeding, following his long hunger strike, is diagnosed with intestinal colitis as well. Despite approval of the prosecutor, the IRGC still prevent him from being transferred to a hospital and deny his medical furlough.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), Arash

Sadeghi, political prisoner of ward 350 of Evin prison is in a critical condition.

His stomach bleeding has worsened during past days and he has bleeding constantly. His asthma that is the result of a lung infection, is progressing, and authorities are ignoring his condition even more.

On the other hand according to prison's physician he was diagnosed with intestinal colitis.

A close source to his family told HRANA's reporter, "Arash is still not able to eat properly. Besides, proper food and facilities for his condition are not available in ward 350. But still his request for having medical furlough is being rejected by the IRGC".

Arash Sadeghi was transferred to Imam Khomainsi hospital on February 6, and sent back to prison after few examinations, while he ended his second hunger strike after the prosecutor gave some promises.

This civil rights activist who had gone on hunger strike for a second time on January 22, when Golrokh Irai was arrested, was transferred to ward 350 on January 25, which is a place with minimum communication facilities with outside.

Mr. Sadeghi who started his second hunger strike just a few days after ending his first 71-day-long hunger strike, while being in a critical physical condition, has inappropriate health condition. Mr. Sadeghi had been transferred to ward 2-A of the Revolutionary Guards, in Evin prison, “under the pretext of” transition to hospital on January 25, 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 to address the accusations against his wife, Golrokh Irai, which he ended after 71 days with the promise of considering his demands by the authorities, when his wife left the prison on January 3.

However, just 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 that 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.

It should be mentioned that on his latest referral to the hospital the specialist 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, prison security and Sarallah Corps pressure, this prisoner was returned to Evin prison on February 6, 2017.

Vahid Sayad Nasiri on Hunger Strike in Evin Prison

Posted on: 23rd April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/vahid-sayad-nasiri-hunger-strike-evin-prison>

HRANA News Agency – Vahid Sayad Nasiri, political prisoner of Evin prison, has started a hunger strike, in protest to violation of separation of prisoners based on their crimes.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), Vahid Sayad Nasiri, political prisoner of section 4 of Evin prison is on hunger strike since February 15.

A close source to this political prisoner told HRANA’s reporter, “Few general prisoners insulted and beat Vahid. He then asked the authorities to respond. But unfortunately even principal of the ward did not accept to visit him.”

This source stated about the health condition of Mr. Sayadi, “Once he was examined, his blood pressure was 10 over 8 and his weight had reduced from 88kg to 85 kg. Besides, he fell in bathroom due to drop in blood pressure, and medical staff visited him in his cell.”

Need to be mentioned, appeal court of Vahid Sayad was held on December 14, 2016, but this prisoner has not received any sentence yet.

Previously, Mr. Sayad had started a hunger strike in protest to his undecided status on October 16, 2016. This political prisoner has been sentenced to 8 years of imprisonment, on charge of “sacrilege, insulting supreme leader and propaganda against the regime”. But after more than 13 months from his primary court, his appeal court had not been scheduled.

Following a long hunger strike, his appeal court was scheduled and Vahid Sayad ended his strike.

Women's Rights

Reformists Barred From Isfahan's May 19 By-Election for Parliament

April 17, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/reformists-barred-from-isfahans-may-19-by-election-for-parliament/>



After disqualifying the initial reformist winner, Iran's conservative Guardian Council has now barred most reformist candidates from running in the second-round election for Isfahan's vacant parliamentary seat.

The vote will occur when Iranians head to the polls on May 19, 2017 to elect their new president and city and village councils.

Reformist politician [Minoo Khalegi](#) won the [February 2016](#) parliamentary election in Isfahan, central Iran, after receiving the third highest number of votes in the city.

However, the Guardian Council, which vets all candidates, nullified her victory in March 2016 after photos emerged of her allegedly shaking hands with a man during a trip abroad.

Touching a member of the opposite sex who is not a relative is illegal in the Islamic Republic.

Reformist politicians who were approved to run in the first round of the election have been barred from running in the by-election.

"Last year [reformist politicians], including Kourosch Mohammadi, Masoud Hamidi and Alireza Ajoudani, had been approved and were able to stand in the elections for the 10th parliamentary session," [reported](#) the government's official newspaper, Iran, on April 12.

"Now, Ajoudani, Mohammadi and Hamidi have all been disqualified," it added.

On the other hand, conservative politicians Hamid Rasaie and Arsalan Fathipour, who were disqualified in 2016, have been approved for this year's election.

Based on Article 99 of Iran's [Constitution](#), "The Guardian Council has the responsibility of supervising the elections of the Assembly of Experts for Leadership, the president of the republic, the [Parliament], and the direct recourse to popular opinion and referenda."

The 12-member body, whose primary mission is to ensure that parliament complies with Islamic laws, consists of six clerics selected by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and six lawyers appointed by the judiciary.

With Khamenei and the judiciary both firmly footed in the conservative camp, their representatives in the Guardian Council have [rejected](#) numerous reformists in past elections.

After Khaleghi's disqualification, an unnamed relative was [quoted](#) saying that the Guardian Council was handed "personal and private photos that could have only been obtained by hacking her phone."

"There has been every kind of rumor and immoral talk surrounding me," said Khaleghi on March 23, 2016 in a [statement](#). "These actions are all aimed at questioning my reputation as a Muslim and as such are punishable according to Sharia law."

Iran: 30 young people arrested and beaten attending mixed-gender party

April 17, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/17/iran-30-young-people-arrested-and-beaten-attending-mixed-gender-party/>



More than 30 individuals were arrested for attending a mixed-gender party held in a villa near the Bahadoran area in Isfahan Province, central Iran.

The party held on April 13th, was raided by police who arrested the 30 at 9 PM.

They also beaten the participants while firing bird shots, according to a witness who escaped passing through the neighbor gardens.

None of the detainees has been released to this day and these arrests have not been made public by judiciary officials.

In recent months, arrests of Iranian citizens attending mixed-gender parties have increased in numbers.

This past February 44 young men and women attending a birthday party were arrested in Mashhad, northeast of Iran.

In the month of March eight were arrested during an all-women's party in the western part of the capital.

A report also emerged about the arrest of 120 youths who attended a party in Tehran. Up to 33 others have been detained after repressive police raided what has been described as a mixed-gender party in Ahwaz, southwest of Iran. 30 others were detained following a similar party in this city. All those were arrested for committing the crimes of dancing and partying, and further, the report states that the young women had violated the Islamic dress code.

The aforesaid are some of the arrests that took place solely in the first three months of the year under the excuse of being un-Islamic.

Such activities are protected under the rights to freedom of belief, religion, expression and association, and must never be criminalized.

Low Female Participation Rate in Iranian Elections Symptom of Gender Inequality

April 20, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/low-female-participation-rate-in-iranian-elections-symptom-of-gender-inequality/>



Women's rights advocate Nahid Tavasoli is the editor-in-chief of Nafe, an academic women's periodical.

The low number of female participants in Iranian elections is an indicator of inequality in the political, social and cultural fabric of the country, women's rights advocate Nahid

Tavasoli told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

Speaking from Tehran, the editor-in-chief of Nafe, an academic women's periodical, said Iranian women are denied many rights as citizens that affect their participation rate in politics.

"Women in villages work from dawn to dusk and carry out tough tasks, sometimes even tougher than men's work," she said.

"Sometimes, the situation in Iran seems completely paradoxical," said Tavasoli. "On the one hand, women can take part in various political activities, but only with certain restricting conditions. For instance, to become president, a women should be a proven 'political personality.'"

"In other words, her political knowledge should equal that of men," she said. "There are many women with that qualification, but in practice, they have never been given the opportunity to prove themselves."

On May 19, 2017, Iranians will head to the polls to elect their next president and their city and village councils.

"There are fewer red lines and obstacles to cross in running for a seat in the council elections, and I'm surprised so few women registered to become candidates," she added.

Unlike registrants for president or Parliament, council seat applicants do not require the approval of the Guardian Council, an unelected, 12-member body that vets candidates.

Figures [released](#) by Iran's official Election Headquarters show 17,885, or just 6.3 percent of the total local elections registrants (287,425) were women. That number is up about 1 percent compared to the previous elections in 2013 (5.4 percent).

"For women, having a presence in public means they can participate in politics," said Tavasoli. "That's the most basic right of every citizen, which cannot be taken away so easily. That would be completely unacceptable."

Tavasoli also told CHRI that women bear equal responsibility for their low participation rate in politics.

"If we take a serious look at the fight for our legitimate rights, women's indifference and lack of knowledge are responsible for half the problems," she said. "I put the ball in women's court because, unlike the early years after the 1979 revolution, today we have the chance to create solidarity and build foundations to realize our rights."

"But instead of building civil society institutions, we have spent most of our energy on individual efforts to get into politics, business or social and cultural fields," she added.

According to Tavasoli, women must work together to improve national gender equality.

"Inevitably, changing cultural norms should begin with women in the cities using their resources to raise awareness in the provincial towns and villages where women have not been educated about their basic human rights to be able to realize their potentials," she said.

"Some of the women candidates (in the local elections) are from an elite class of experienced political and social activists, or they are the wives and relatives of ruling officials," said Tavasoli.

"However, the more significant class of candidates is in smaller cities and villages, and it would be interesting to find out if these women were encouraged to sign up by family and friends, or if they were socially and politically mature enough to want to fight for equal rights," she added.

"In any case, we should note that women's participation in the elections or their presence on the political and social stage does not mean they have achieved equality with men in these areas," she said.

The country's official Election Headquarters director Ali-Asghar Ahmadi [has announced](#) that out of the 1,636 people who registered to become presidential candidates, 137 were women.

According to Article 115 of Iran's [Constitution](#), the president must be elected "from among religious and political personalities." However, no female applicant has ever been deemed to have that qualification by the Guardian Council in the Islamic Republic's previous 11 presidential elections.

On April 14, prominent political activist Azam Taleghani registered for the third time for the presidential election for this year's vote.

“The Guardian Council has never presented its argument for rejecting the qualifications of women candidates,” she told CHRI in an [interview](#). “It has never explicitly stated that women have been disqualified for being women.”

“The council’s position has not been completely negative,” she added. “It has the capacity to accept women’s participation by presenting a different and correct interpretation of the Constitution.”

In response to questions on the status of women in the presidential elections, Guardian Council spokesman Abbasali Kadkhodaie pledged on January 12, 2017 that the Council would clarify its position on Article 115 before the May 19 election.

To date, no announcement has been made.

Freedom of Expression

Censorship Undressed: Iranian State TV Cuts Broadcast Mid-Sentence

Posted [14 April 2017 12:48 GMT](#)

<https://globalvoices.org/2017/04/14/censorship-undressed-iranian-state-tv-cuts-broadcast-mid-sentence/>



Screen glitches occurred on IRIB's Shabakeh Khabar broadcast when the reporter mentioned the candidate registration of Hamid Baghaei, the former Vice President and close confidant of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Screen capture from a Fars News tweet of the broadcast.

In an unusual broadcasting flub this week, Iran's official state media network cut off the live video feed of a reporter in mid-sentence when she mentioned the name of presidential hopeful Hamid Baghaei, one of the more controversial politicians who has filed to run for president next month.

Baghaei served as vice president to former president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Both represent a frequently contested hardline political position, and both men now have registered to run for president in Iran's May 2017 elections.

The broadcast, which aired on the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcaster's Shabakeh Khabar channel, featuring a reporter identified as Ms. Nouri, was shot on location from the Ministry of Interior on Wednesday as prospective candidates filed their registration forms.

A video clip of the incident has gone viral on social media. The video plainly shows that within less than a second of the the reporter mentioning Hamid Baghaei, the broadcast feed abruptly cuts and goes back to the anchor in studio. As the anchor waits to resume the report, Nouri's voice can be heard asking her producers, “I shouldn't mention Baghaei?”

Shabakeh Khabar did not give their reporter the permission to announce the registration of Hamid Baghaei as a candidate.

The hashtag [#نگم بقایی رو](#), translating into the Nouri's question, “I shouldn't mention Baghaei?” started trending amongst Iranians remarking on the broadcasters censorship.

IRIB gets more shameless everyday. A broadcaster with lies, broken screenings, and censorship. There is a lot missing #I_shouldn't_mention_Baghaei

Candidate registration for the 12th Presidential elections of the Islamic Republic of Iran began on April 11 and will last for five days, followed by a period when the registrants will be screened for their political and Islamic qualifications by the hardline and religious body tasked with vetting, the [Guardian Council](#). The Council typically disqualifies the majority of registrants.

The Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcaster (IRIB) is known as a mouthpiece for Iran's hardline conservatives, echoing the concerns and opinions of this establishment. The IRIB's director is a position directly appointed by the country's highest power, the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei.

When it comes to reporting on elections, the IRIB's decisions about who to mention — and who to omit — are often seen as a reflection of internal sentiment about the prospective candidates. The interruption of Nouri's report is a sign that Baghaei may be disqualified from the running.

It is unknown whether Nouri already knew not to report on Ahmadinejad's registration as well, or if she was deterred post-facto.

Former controversial populist President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad announces his intention to run for President today in the May Iranian Presidential elections. He is flanked by Hamid Baghaei to the left, and Mashaei to the right Photo shared on Twitter, by Mohammad Ali Marizad.

Wednesday's registrations made headlines as former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, flanked by his close confidants former Vice President Baghaei and former Chief of Staff Esfandiar Mashaei, stopped by the Ministry to announce that he and Baghaei had registered.

This is a change in course for Ahmadinejad, who in September 2016 announced he would not join the race, after being warned by the Supreme Leader that his candidacy would cause polarization and harmful divisions in Iranian society. While also banned in 2013 from running for reelection, Ahmadinejad campaigned for the candidacy of Mashaei, who ultimately failed to win the Guardian Council's approval.

The IRIB is known for inserting bias and censorship into election reporting. During the 2013 presidential campaigns, several of the candidates remarked on the IRIB's unfair coverage and use of censorship. Rouhani accused the state broadcaster of defaming prominent figures during an [interview on 27 May 2013](#), while the reformist candidate Mohamad Reza Aref's campaign [accused the IRIB](#) of cutting his campaign appearances in an “inappropriate manner.”

While the broadcaster is watched by millions of Iranians, it is notorious for not giving airtime to those who do not fall in line with Khamenei and the clerical establishment, and for serving the interests of Iran's intelligence agencies, sometimes going so far as to air forced confessions of political prisoners under duress.

Press freedom violations recounted in real time January 2017

April 19, 2017

<https://rsf.org/en/news/press-freedom-violations-recounted-real-time-january-2017>



19.04.2017 – Narges Mohammadi begins serving second jail term

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is outraged by the continuing persecution of journalist and leading human rights defender **Narges Mohammadi**, who has just started serving a ten-year prison sentence on completing a six-year one. She received the [ten-year sentence](#) a year after her most recent arrest, [on 5 May 2015](#).

Mohammadi has a long history of persecution by the judicial authorities and has been arrested several times. During her spells out of prison, she has worked closely with Nobel peace laureate Shirin Ebadi at the Centre for Human Rights Defenders.

The six-year sentence followed her arrest at her home on the evening [of 10 June 2010](#). She was convicted two months later on charges of “meeting and plotting against the Islamic Republic,” “anti-government publicity,” and “collaborating with the Centre for Human Rights Defenders” and was given an 11-year jail term that was reduced to six years on appeal in March 2011.

Mohammadi suffered muscular paralysis as a consequence of the heavy-handed interrogation sessions to which she was subjected after her arrest in 2010. As a result, she was paroled in July 2012.

17.03.2017 - More journalists arrested

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) yet again condemns the persecution of journalists in Iran after at least three more were arrested in the past week.

The latest victims include **Morad Saghafi**, the editor of the magazine [Goft o Gu](#) (“Dialogue” in Persian), who was arrested at his Tehran home yesterday and was taken to an unknown location. His lawyer, Hamed Zargar, said neither he nor Saghafi’s family have been told why he was arrested.

Meanwhile, Ali Motahari, the deputy speaker of Iran’s parliament, yesterday asked the minister of intelligence to explain why a military unit recently arrested 12 editors of pro-reform information pages on the instant messaging service Telegram.

Motahari also criticized the detention of **Ehssan Mazandarani**, the former editor of the newspaper *Farhikhteghan*, on 12 March ([see RSF’s 13 March release](#)). His wife, **Malieh Hossieni**, a journalist with the newspaper *Farhikhteghana*, was fired the day after his arrest.

Although banned, apps and social networks such as Telegram, Facebook and Twitter nowadays play an important role in providing Iranians with news and information. Telegram says it has more than 15 million users in Iran.

According to [the Kalameh news website](#), **Ali Ahmadinia**, the administrator of the *Eslahat News* (Reform News) channel on Telegram, was arrested on 14 March and was taken to an unknown location.

RSF is currently very concerned about the health of two journalists who have been on hunger strike since their arrest. One is Mazandarani, who was arrested on 12 March (see above). The other Henghameh Shahidi, who was arrested on 9 March.

15.03.2017 – Former editor gets six-month jail term

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) condemns the six-month prison sentence that has been passed on Hossein Karoubi, the former editor of *Etemad Meli* (a newspaper closed since August 2009) for circulating the open letter that his father, **Mehdi Karoubi**, wrote to President Hassan Rohani.

In the [April 2016 letter](#), published in mostly foreign-based media outlets and on social networks, Mehdi Karoubi asks to be tried before a public court “*in order to present the evidence I possess about massive fraud during the 2005 and 2009 presidential elections and to show what has happened to young Iranians in the country’s legal and illegal detention centres.*”

Etemad Melli’s owner and a former parliamentary speaker, Mehdi Karoubi has been under house arrest since February 2011, a fate he has shared with former Prime Minister **Mir Hossein Mousavi** (the owner of the closed newspaper Kalameh Sabaz) and Mousavi’s wife, the writer **Zahra Rahnavard**. Mousavi and Mehdi Karoubi, who are both former presidential candidates, are being held illegally and are being denied their rights. Their state of health is very worrying.

RSF has meanwhile learned that Samna Safari, a journalist with the monthly *Andisher Poya*, was released on 11 March after the authorities determined that he had served his two-year jail sentence. Detained along with three other journalists in [a wave of arrests in November 2015](#), he was sentenced by a revolutionary court in March 2016 to five years in prison for “anti-government propaganda activities.” This was reduced to two years on appeal.

28.02.2017 – City of Qom suspends newspaper

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) condemns the decision by the city of Qom’s public prosecutor to suspend the newspaper [Shakheh Sabz](#) on [26 February](#), a day after it ran a story criticizing the level of violence in one of its poorest districts, which it likened to a “jungle.” The suspension was ordered after 136 parliamentarians supported a resolution accusing the daily of “insulting the population of the Holy City of Qom.” The newspaper’s name means “Green Branch.”

22.02.2017 – Ahmad Montazeri returned to prison

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) firmly condemns progressive cleric **Ahmad Montazeri**’s arrest yesterday. The editor of [the website of his late father, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri](#), he was returned to prison after being summoned before a special court for clerics. Tried behind closed doors and without a defence lawyer on 20 October, Montazeri was sentenced on 27 November to ten years in prison for endangering state security, ten years for publishing a “classified audio recording” and another year for anti-government “propaganda.”

He was prosecuted for posting [an old recording](#) on the website on 9 August 2016 in which his father could be heard criticizing the wave of executions of political prisoners in the 1980s.

For more information: [Ahmad Montazeri gets 21-year jail term as part of bid to suppress history](#)

17.02.2017 - Editor freed on completing jail term

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has learned that **Ehssan Mazandarani** – the editor of the newspaper *Farhikhteghan* and one of the victims of a wave of [arrests in November 2015](#) – was released on 9 February. He had been given a seven-year jail sentence [that was reduced to two years](#) on appeal, His lawyer said he was freed as a result of a decision that he had

completed his sentence. While in prison, he was hospitalized several times with heart and chest problems after a three-week hunger strike.

10.01.2017 - Website reporter flogged for getting facts wrong

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is appalled to learn that **Hossien Movahedi**, a local news website reporter, was flogged last week in Najafabad, a city 450 km south of Tehran, for getting one of his facts wrong in a story about the confiscation of mopeds from female students at a technological secondary school in the city.

Movahedi reported on the *Najafabad News* website on 14 June 2016 that the police seized 35 mopeds when, according to the police, it was only eight. Although he apologized for his mistake and although the police were allowed to publish their version on the website, the police pressed charges against him and a Najafabad court sentenced him to 40 lashes for “publishing false information.” This inhuman and medieval sentence was carried out on 4 January.

Iran has yet to ratify the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment.

06.01.2016 - Woman journalist freed on completing one-year jail term

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has learned that **Rihaneh Tabatabai**, a journalist who has worked for several reformist newspapers, was released yesterday on completing a one-year jail term on charges of endangering national security and anti-government publicity. She was arrested on 12 January 2016 to begin serving the sentence, which was originally imposed in November 2014 and was confirmed by a Tehran appeal court a year later. The sentence also includes two-year ban on political and journalistic activity in the media and online following her release. In all, [Tabatabai has been jailed](#) four times since 2010 in connection with her journalistic activities.

Iranian Media Banned From Covering Ahmadinejad’s May 2017 Presidential Campaign

April 19, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/iranian-media-banned-from-covering-ahmadinejads-may-2017-presidential-campaign/>

Iranian media outlets have been ordered to stop reporting on former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s third presidential campaign for the country’s May 19, 2017 election.

The Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) has learned that the order was issued by the Supreme National Security Council and Tehran Prosecutor Abbas Jafari Dowlatabadi.

Media outlets are allowed to report on Ahmadinejad in relation to issues unrelated to his campaign, an informed source told CHRI.

“Banning the press from covering news is not an unprecedented development,” a reporter in Tehran, who asked to remain anonymous, told CHRI.

“Now and then, we receive orders to ignore certain topics, and we have to comply or else we could endanger our newspaper’s existence,” added the source.

Current President [Hassan Rouhani](#), who chairs the Supreme National Security Council, will be seeking a second term on May 19.

The ban, relayed verbally to media chiefs, includes outlets close to the centrist Rouhani government as well as conservative ones, CHRI has learned.

Ahmadinejad, who was president from 2005 to 2013, fell out of favor with the Islamic Republic's conservative ruling establishment during his second term after repeatedly quarreling with top officials and because of his combative leadership style.

His reign was marked with large-scale and repeated [violations of human rights](#) in the country, including the government's violent crackdown on the peaceful, mass protests against his disputed election in 2009.

However, after the completion of his second term, Ahmadinejad remained in the ruling establishment as a member of the Expediency Discernment Council, which advises the supreme leader.

Since February 2015, media outlets have also been [banned](#) from reporting on former reformist President Mohammad Khatami (1997-2005).

In the last six months leading up to Iran's elections in May for president and city and village councils, [security agencies](#) have [arrested](#) more than 20 reporters, as well as political and civil rights activists close to reformists and the Rouhani government.

Cleric calls for ban of all concerts in Iran

The Mashhad Friday Prayer, Ahmad Alamolhoda, on April 18, referred to music in a speech in the Free Islamic University of Mashhad and said that he did not agree with holding concerts in Iran.

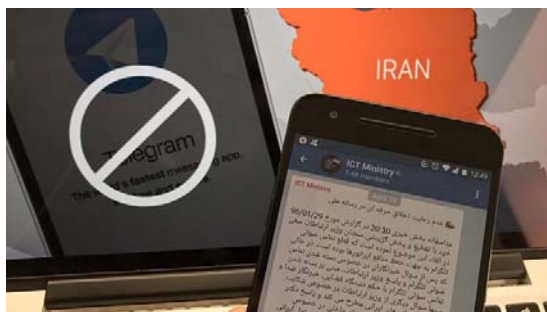
"Concerts kill art", he said.

"In other countries, concerts are a show of art and not a tool for entertainment and revelry", he stressed. (ILNA state-run News Agency - Apr. 19, 2017)

Iranian Judiciary Blocks Popular Telegram App's New Voice Call Service

April 20, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/iranian-judiciary-blocks-popular-telegram-apps-new-voice-call-service/>



Iran's judiciary has ordered internet companies to block the [Telegram](#) messaging application's newly released "Voice Calls" service, calling it a threat to national security, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) has learned.

An informed source said the order was issued in a [letter](#) to 20 internet service providers

(ISP) on April 17, 2017.

Telegram, widely used in Iran, began [rolling out](#) the service on April 9, but it was blocked the next day by the country's mobile phone operators. However, ISPs continued to allow clients to use the new service, CHRI's investigations indicate.

In a statement [announcing](#) the launch of the free, voice call service, Telegram said it had implemented encrypted security measures to protect users.

Such measures would make it more difficult for Iran's security forces to hack into citizens' accounts.

After Telegram's new service was blocked, users demanded an explanation on social media.

"Why aren't judicial officials up-to-date? How can voice communications damage national security?" [asked](#) one person with the username, "Deli Por Khoon" (Angry Heart).

The internet is [heavily restricted and censored](#) in Iran, with hardliners in the government viewing any form of internet freedom as a threat to the sanctity of the Islamic Republic.

Speaking at a military rally in Mashhad, northeastern Iran on April 20, 2017, General Hassan Nejat, the acting head of the Revolutionary Guards' Intelligence Organization, [said](#) a "revolutionary government" should stop the country's "continuing gravitation" towards the West before calling for Telegram to be banned.

"In a meeting with [President Hassan] Rouhani, we emphasized that allowing Telegram to initiate a voice calling service in Iran would prevent us from having any kind of control. But the president replied, 'Why are you opposed to any kind of technology imported from the West? Telegram is a symbol of technology and modernism.'"

The Rouhani administration has repeatedly called for less governmental control over the internet, which is heavily [restricted and censored](#) in Iran. This has invited the scorn of not only the agencies that police cyberspace, but also hardline politicians seeking to unseat him in the country's May 19 presidential election.

Rouhani reportedly [resisted pressure](#) from hardliners to shut down Telegram before Iran's [February 2016 elections](#) for Parliament and the Assembly of Experts.

Barred from appearing in traditional media outlets, Reformists and other allies of the president heavily relied on Telegram to reach the electorate in last year's elections.

The Iranian government's latest attempt to counter Telegram's popularity in the country violates [Net Neutrality](#) rules.

First presented by Columbia University Professor Tim Wu in 2003, Net Neutrality is the principle that "a maximally useful public information network aspires to treat all content, sites, and platforms equally."

According to Article 26 of Iran's [Charter on Citizen's Rights](#), [signed](#) by President Hassan Rouhani in December 2016, Iranians have a right to online freedom: "The government shall,

according to the law, guarantee freedom of speech and expression, especially in the mass media, cyberspace, including in newspapers, magazines, books, cinemas, radio and television, social networks and the likes.”

On April 19, Telegram CEO Pavel Durov [confirmed](#) that Telegram voice calls had been blocked.

“In Iran, where Telegram has some 40 million active users, Telegram voice calls have been completely blocked by the country’s internet providers and mobile operators following an order from the judiciary,” he said.

Labor and Guilds’ Rights

3 Workers Arrested in Shiraz

Posted on: 17th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/3-workers-arrested-shiraz>

HRANA News Agency – Three labour activists in Fars province were arrested by the security forces in Shiraz. There is no information about these activists’ situation and whereabouts.



According the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Shahab Karin Aghaei, Jafar Pazhoheshpour, and Hossein Esmaeili were arrested in front of Job Centre Department of Fars province, by the plainclothes agents, on Wednesday February 8, 2017.

These citizens were among the striking workers and protesters of “Iran’s Telecommunication Company” and have been active in organizing workers and employees of this company’s recent protests.

These activists’ houses were searched by the officers who had search warrants, and confiscated some of their belongings. They also were offensive toward their families.

Their families have no information about their condition and whereabouts.

Previously, employees and workers of I.T.I had gathered for several days to protest against leaving this company to some specific institutions and called for their last several months unpaid wages.

According to the sources close to the protesting workers, the county security and administrative authorities, “fiercely” confronted the workers.

Ethnic Minorities’ Rights

Kurdish political prisoner sentenced for sending letter to the UN

April 17, 2017

<http://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2017/04/17/kurdish-political-prisoner-sentenced-for-sending-letter-to-the-un/>

Kurdish political prisoner Yousef Kakehmami, already serving nine years in prison, has been sentenced to an extra five years behind bars. He supposed to be released on August 22, however was targeted of newly fabricated charges and his current status remains in limbo.

The Iranian regime is known for forging new judicial cases against political prisoners once their sentences come to an end. This tactic is used to refrain from releasing them.

Yousef Kakehmami, is from Mahabad in West Azerbaijan Province, was first arrested in 2007 and sentenced to serving a total of nine years behind bars.

He was placed under torture a Ministry of Intelligence detention facility in Urmia, northwest if Iran, for “propaganda against the establishment” and “having links with media outlets and human rights organizations”.

He launched a mass hunger strike in November 2014, protesting the transfer of criminal defendants and drug offenders to Ward 12, where political prisoners are held. They their hunger strike to protest against a decision to transfer to their ward 40 prisoners convicted of crimes such as murder and armed robbery, which made the ward more dangerous for them.

He was sentenced to a further five years behind bars by the branch 2 of Urmia court, without access legal representation.

Despite this new charges, the prosecutors presented his letter to the UN Special Rapporteur as evidence against him, and the judge questioned him about his communication with human rights organizations.

Amnesty international has recently issued a statement calling on the Iranian authorities to quash Yousef Kakehmami’s recent conviction which appears to be for his communication with the UN Special Rapporteur.

Iran: Wave of Arrests Targets Civil Activists and People in Oil Rich Provnice

Tuesday, 18 April 2017 16:49

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/22569-iran-wave-of-arrests-targets-civil-activists-and-people-in-oil-rich-provnice>

NCRI - Security forces in the city of Ahvaz the capital of oil rich Khuzestan province, South Western Iran, raided over the past week several districts in the city and arrested some of the residents.

The arrests are made on the eve of the 2005 protest rally in the city, according to ‘Alarabiya Net Farsi’ on April 15.

The 2005 protest rally was held after a letter attributed to Mohammad-Ali Abtahi, head of Presidential office at the time, was released, in which the province's demographic change policy was communicated to a number of organs in the province.

Ahvaz activists report that Ahvaz intelligence forces arrested five activists and took them to an unknown location on Friday night, April 5. The report also points to another young man, Khaled Chayan(Sharifi), 25, who was arrested by the Revolutionary Guards intelligence forces.

Also two cultural activists named Khalil Ghafeli, 37, and Mostafa Savari, 38, were arrested on Thursday April 4 by intelligence forces and taken to an unknown location. The security forces also confiscated the detainees' personal belongings, including some of their books, their PCs, and smart phones, the report says.

It should be pointed out the families of the detainees have not yet been informed of their whereabouts or status.

Two other men, Kazem Sorkhi, 45, and Amir Sorkhi, 25, were also arrested by security forces last week, while their families say that the two have been taken to Abolfazl Al-Abbas Headquarters, operating under Ahvaz intelligence office.

The security forces have used excessive violence during the arrests, so as to create a climate of fear, the reports say.

Ahvaz Arab people commemorate each year on these days the anniversary of 2005 protest rally, while the security forces make widespread arrests to prevent people from holding any kind of demonstrations.

A 17-Year-Old Activist Arrested in Ahvaz

Posted on: 23rd April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/17-year-old-activist-arrested-ahvaz>



HRANA News Agency – Ali Kab Aamir, 17, from Kian Abad in Ahvaz was arrested by the Ahvaz intelligence office at his house. The hand of the teenager broke while being arrested as a result of his resistance and protest of his family. It is said that his mother was shocked and is hospitalized due to her critical condition.

According to the report of Human Rights Activist News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Ali Kab Aamir's relatives told that during the home inspection, the family's computer and several mobile phones were

seized by intelligence ministry of Ahvaz and he was taken to an unknown location.

Kab Aamir's family referred to the intelligence office after his arrest but has received no news about his charge and place of detention.

Ali Kab Aamir studies at third year of high school and was involved in forming human chains to protest against pumping away the water of Karun River. He previously had been summoned several times to the intelligence ministry due to the use of placards in protests against the “Iranian military presence in Syria” in Al-Ghadir Stadium in Ahvaz.

Security forces in Ahvaz has arrested other Arab citizens, including Amir Zargani from Zergan in north of Ahvaz and three teachers named Isa Damni (Haddad), Mojahed Zargani and Naji Heidari.

Religious Minorities’ Rights

Iran’s Guardian Council Tries to Exclude Non-Muslims from Running But Parliament Resists Push to Curtail Election Rights

April 19, 2017 3:49PM EDT Dispatches

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/19/irans-guardian-council-tries-exclude-non-muslims-running>

Tara Sepehri Far *Iran Researcher @sepehrifar*



Authorities in Iran are threatening new restrictions on non-Muslims seeking to run in next month’s local elections.

Just one week before parliament is to approve a list of candidates, [a letter published this week by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati](#), the head of the Guardian Council, declared it is against Sharia (Islamic law) for non-Muslims to be candidates in Shia Muslim-majority areas in city and village council elections. These contests, along with the presidential election, are set for May 19.

Religious minorities, especially members of the Bahai faith, who are not recognized in Iran’s constitution, suffer from serious discrimination. Even religious minorities recognized in the constitution cannot run for the presidency, and their participation in parliament is limited. But the law for city and village councils is clear: [article 26 of the 1996 council election law](#) allows candidates from recognized religious minorities to run as candidates in city and village elections so long as they “believe in and demonstrate their commitment to their own religious principles in practice.”

In 2013, for the first time, a Zoroastrian was [elected](#) to the city council of Yazd to represent the city’s diverse Muslim and non-Muslim residents. The Guardian Council, an appointed body of 12 Islamic jurists who are in charge of monitoring parliamentary and presidential elections, has long arbitrarily disqualified large numbers of candidates running for office. Now it is seeking to unilaterally amend the 20-year-old council election law.

But it is Iran’s parliament that is legally empowered to vet city and village council candidates – not the Guardian Council – and so far, it appears that the parliament is standing its ground. Today, Esfandiar Ekhtiari, the Zoroastrian member of parliament, called the Council’s letter “unconditional.” And the head of parliament has requested that parliamentarians overseeing the vetting process act in accordance with the law and not change the procedure.

The real test for Iran's parliament will come next week when the list of candidates are announced. Then, we will know if these elected representatives have resisted the Guardian Council's dangerous inroads and kept space open for more Iranians of differing religions to represent their fellow citizens in political office.

Bijan Farokhpour Began Serving His Sentence in Shiraz Prison

Posted on: 16th April, 2017

<https://www.en-hrana.org/bijan-farokhpour-began-serving-sentence-shiraz-prison>



HRANA News Agency – Seyed Bijan Farokhpour Haghghi, Christian convert from Shiraz, went to Adelabad prison in Shiraz, to endure his imprisonment sentence.

According to the report of Human Rights Activists News Agency in Iran (HRANA), Seyed Bijan Farokhpour Haghghi, Christian convert from Shiraz, went to Adelabad prison in Shiraz, to endure his 2 years and six months imprisonment sentence.

This Christian convert has been sentenced to two years and six month imprisonment on charges of “acting against national security through gathering and collusion and evangelism”.

It should be mentioned that Mohammad Roghangir, Masood Rezaei, Mehdi A'meroon, Bijan Farokhpour Haghghi, Shahin Lahooti, Soroosh Saraei, Eskandar Rezaei, and Roksana Foroghi, Christian converts and members of a church network called Iranian Church, were arrested after security forces raided a house church in Shiraz.

All of these eight persons were released later on heavy bails.

Eventually, the members of this group were sentenced to a total of 24 years imprisonment, on Tuesday July 16, 2013.

Iran: Four women arrested in the south

Created: 19 April 2017

<http://women.ncr-iran.org/iran-women-news/3851-iran-four-women-arrested-in-the-south>

Four women were arrested by security forces in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas and in the island of Qeshm on April 18, 2017.

The arrested women have been identified as Mahnaz Jonnesar, Maral Rasti, Mehraleh Afshar and Nassim Ghanavatian. They are said to be adherents to the Baha'ii faith.

According to an informed source, security forces confiscated the women's personal belongings and equipment during inspection of their residences.

Former MP Urges Iranian Government to “Trust” and Allow Sunnis to Run For President

April 21, 2017

<https://www.iranhumanrights.org/2017/04/former-mp-urges-iranian-government-to-trust-and-allow-sunnis-to-run-for-president/>



In the run-up to Iran’s May 19, 2017 presidential election, a Sunni Muslim former member of Parliament has renewed his call for members of his faith to be allowed to run for the country’s executive office.

Article 115 of Iran’s [Constitution](#) requires the president to be a member of the country’s “official religion,” which, according to Article 12, is Shia Islam. Sunni Muslims comprise an estimated 10 percent of the Shia-majority population.

“I and all the other political activists who have fought for the (1979) revolution object to Article 115,” Hasel Daseh, a Sunni Kurd who represented Sardasht and Piranshahr in the 6th Parliamentary session (2000-04), told CHRI.

“The ban denies Sunnis who have made sacrifices for this state. It leads to disappointment and discord,” he added. “National solidarity won’t get anywhere like this.”

Daseh said his call had previously received support from prominent Muslim officials, including former centrist President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and former reformist President Mohammad Khatami, but they proved unable to convince their counterparts.

“When I was in Parliament, [Bahaeddin] Adab (MP from Kurdistan Province) and I tried to raise the issue,” he said. “We had meetings with [then Parliament Speaker] Hashemi Rafsanjani, [then President] Khatami and [Ali] Younesi, who was the Intelligence Minister at the time. We had a plan with some suggestions and they all agreed with us.”

“Even though they shared our views, they were not able to present a practical way forward without the approval of higher officials,” he added.

Iran’s Constitution guarantees the rights of Sunni Muslim citizens in accordance with their religious practices.

According to Article 12: “Other Islamic (Sunni) schools, including the Hanafi, Shafi’i, Maliki, Hanbali, and Zaydi, are to be accorded full respect, and their followers are free to act in accordance with their own jurisprudence in performing their religious rites. These schools enjoy official status in matters pertaining to religious education, affairs of personal status (marriage, divorce, inheritance, and wills) and related litigation in courts of law. In regions of the country where Muslims following any one of these schools of jurisprudence constitute the majority, local regulations, within the bounds of the jurisdiction of local councils, are to be in accordance with the respective school of jurisprudence, without infringing upon the rights of the followers of other schools.”

Despite being officially recognized in the Constitution, Sunnis experience [discrimination](#) throughout Iran, even where there are no legal restrictions against official religious minorities.

Their participation in the public sector is restricted and they have reportedly been prevented from building their own mosques in the capital city of Tehran.

Improving Sunni Rights

Daseh explained to CHRI how the rights of Sunni citizens could be improved in Iran.

“First of all, the authorities have to trust Sunnis,” he said. “There’s no other alternative. Then they have put their trust in transparency and cooperation with all citizens.”

“Until then, lack of trust, harmony and cooperation will be the biggest threats to territorial integrity and domestic security,” he added.

In the 38 years since the establishment of the Islamic Republic, no Sunni has ever served in a ministerial position.

The only Sunni in President Hassan Rouhani’s cabinet is Deputy Oil Minister Emad Hosseini. Iran’s current ambassador to Vietnam and Cambodia is Saleh Adibi, the only Sunni in the diplomatic corps.

“Nowhere in the Constitution are Sunnis banned from becoming ambassadors, ministers or governors. The problem lies in the ruling establishment’s composition and ideology. They are very cynical and distrustful. Some of it is also due to lack of understanding,” said Daseh. “We object to this situation and hope that eminent (Shia) theologians in Qom will enter this discussion and find a solution.”

“If it’s good for Shias to become president, why not Sunnis?” he added. “This question will negatively impact future generations.”

“If discrimination and inequality leads to disillusion, it could cause other problems like what we are see in neighboring countries,” said the former MP, referring to sectarian violence. “I hope Iran will never go in that direction. Let’s be rational and solve this issue with compassion and the people will see results.”

There are currently 21 Sunni representatives in Iran’s Parliament, up from 19 in the previous session.

In 2016, Mohammad Ghasim Osmani, a reformist MP from Bukan, became the first Sunni to be [elected](#) to the legislature’s chairing committee.