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Iran Beyond News

A News Letter by:

Organization of Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas

Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran



The state of human rights in Iran has been criticized both by Iranians and international human right activists, writers, and NGOs. The United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Commission have condemned prior and ongoing abuses in Iran in published critiques and several resolutions.

The government of Iran is criticized both for restrictions and punishments that follow the Islamic Republic's constitution and law, and for actions that do not, such as the torture, rape, and killing of political prisoners, and the beatings and killings of dissidents and other civilians.

Alleged restrictions and punishments lawful in the Islamic Republic which violate international human rights norms include: harsh penalties for crimes; punishment of "victimless crimes" such as fornication, homosexuality; execution of offenders under 18 years of age; restrictions on freedom of speech, and the press, including the imprisonment of journalists; unequal treatment according to religion and gender in the Islamic Republic's Constitution - especially attacks on members of the Bahá'í religion.

Reported abuses falling outside of the laws of the Islamic Republic that have been condemned include the execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988, and the widespread use of torture to extract repudiations by prisoners of their cause and comrades on video for propaganda purposes. Also condemned has been firebombings of newspaper offices and attacks on political protesters by "quasi-official organs of repression," particularly "Hezbollahi," and the murder of dozens of government opponents in the 1990s, allegedly by "rogue elements" of the government... ⇒ 3

The Charter of the Organization of Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas in Twenty First Century

This organization determinately defends progressive movements including: the worker's movement to improve their living conditions; the feminist movement; movements to preserve and improve the environment; and the international movement for the advancement of human rights... ⇒ 4



On going hunger strike

June 13 The Iranian Judiciary and prison officials are responsible for the death of Hoda Saber, a prominent dissident who died of a heart attack on 10 June, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran said today. Saber had been on a hunger strike.

According to public statements by Firuzeh Saber, Hoda Saber's sister, Hoda suffered a heart attack at 4:30 a.m. on Friday, but prison officials failed to transfer him to a hospital until 10:30 a.m.

"Iranian authorities have demonstrated once again their disregard for UN standards mandating proper care of prisoners, and they bear responsibility for this death," said Aaron Rhodes, a spokesperson for the Campaign.

Lives of Hunger Strikers in Peril

June 24 Iran's pattern of prison abuse and neglect demonstrates that the lives of prisoners of conscience are at risk, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran said today, with the publication of a new report, Death in Prison: No One Held Accountable. The Campaign holds Iranian authorities at the highest levels account-

able for the health and well-being of eighteen prisoners of conscience now on their sixth day of a hunger strike.

June 23 — 18 political prisoners in Evin and Rajai Shahr prisons have raised serious concern after launching hunger strikes.

12 of the political prisoners, who are held in Evin, began an indefinite hunger strike six days ago in protest to the deaths of two activists, *Haleh Sahabi and **Hoda Saber. Their names are: Emad Bahavar, Ghorban Behzadian Nejad, Bahman Ahmadi Amouie, Abdollah Momeni, Hassan Asadi Zeidabadi, Amir Khosrow Dalirsani, Abolfazl Ghadyani, Feizollah Arabsorkhi, Mohammad Reza Moghiseh, Mohammad Davari, Mohsen Aminzadeh, and Mehdi Eghbal.

According to reports, Abdollah Momeni and Abolfazl Ghadyani had been transferred to the prison's clinic.

Today, it was reported that six political prisoners from Rajai Shahr prison have joined the hunger strike in support of the protest in Evin. These prisoners are: Keyvan Samimi, Heshmatollah Tabarzadi, Isa Saharkhiz, Masoud Bastani, Ali Ajami and Jafar Eghdami

Authorities Responsible for the Lives of Prisoners on Hunger Strike



FROM LEFT: GHORBAN BEHZADIAN NEJAD, BAHMAN AHMADI AMOUEE, EMAD BAGHI, EMAD BEHAVAR



FROM LEFT: HASSAN ASADI ZEIDABADI, MOHAMMAD DAVARI, AMIRKHOSROW DALIRSANI, FEYZOLLAH ARAB SORKHI



FROM LEFT: ABOLFAZL GHADYANI, MOHAMMAD JAVAD MOZAFFAR, MOHAMMAD REZA MOGHISEH, ABDOLLAH MOMENI

June 20 International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran expressed serious concern for the lives of the prisoners on hunger strike. Authorities are responsible for deaths of political prisoners Hoda Saber and Haleh the Campaign added.

Since 18 June 2011, twelve prominent prisoners of conscience have joined a hunger strike protesting the recent deaths of Saber and Sahabi.



Free Mansoor Ossalou!

Mansoor Ossalou is the head of the Union of Tehran and Suburbs United Bus Company. He was arrested in July 2007 and sentenced to five years in prison. In 2010 another year was added to his prison term. He suffers from a number of health problems including a serious heart condition for which he was hospitalized in February 2011. At the end of April 2011, his heart condition was said to have worsened.

INDEPENDENT UNIONS FORBIDDEN

Now more than ever, Iranian workers need independent trade unions that are able to support and defend their rights; Yet independent trade unions are banned in Iran. There are two government-controlled bodies that claim to represent workers. However, they are not the representatives of the workers.

Iran's workers are fighting to protect their rights and their livelihoods. Prohibited by law from unionizing freely and independently, they are battling for decent wages, better working conditions and job security. They want their voices to be heard and their labour rights to be respected. The response of the government to workers' demands has been brutal – the authorities regularly attack, harass and detain trade unionists. Some are serving long prison sentences. The rights that workers are calling for are universal



Photo: Hamid Saedi

Under the administration of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad Iran's human rights record "has deteriorated markedly" according to the group Human Rights Watch,^[3] and following the 2009 election protests there were reports of killing of demonstrators, the torture, rape and killing of detained protesters and the arrest and publicized mass trials of dozens of prominent opposition figures in which defendants "read confessions that bore every sign of being coerced."

Officials of the Islamic Republic have responded to criticism by stating the IRI is not obliged to follow "the West's interpretation" of human rights," and that the Islamic Republic is a victim of "biased propaganda of enemies" which is "part of a greater plan against the world of Islam." According to Iranian officials, those who human rights activists say are peaceful political activists being denied due process rights are actually guilty of offenses against the national security of the country, and those protesters claiming Ahmadinejad stole the 2009 election are actually part of a foreign-backed plot to topple Iran's leaders.

History

The Islamic revolution is thought by at least one scholar to have a significantly worse human rights record than the Pahlavi Dynasty it overthrew. According to political historian Ervand Abrahamian, "whereas less than 100 political prisoners had been executed between 1971 and 1979, more than 7900 were executed between 1981 and 1985. ... the prison system was centralized and drastically expanded ... Prison life was drastically worse under the Islamic Republic than under the Pahlavis. One who survived both writes that four months under [warden] Ladjevardi took the toll of four years under SAVAK. In the prison literature of the Pahlavi era, the recurring words had been 'boredom' and 'monotony.' In that of the Islamic Republic, they were 'fear', 'death', 'terror', 'horror', and most frequent of all 'nightmare' (*kabos*)."

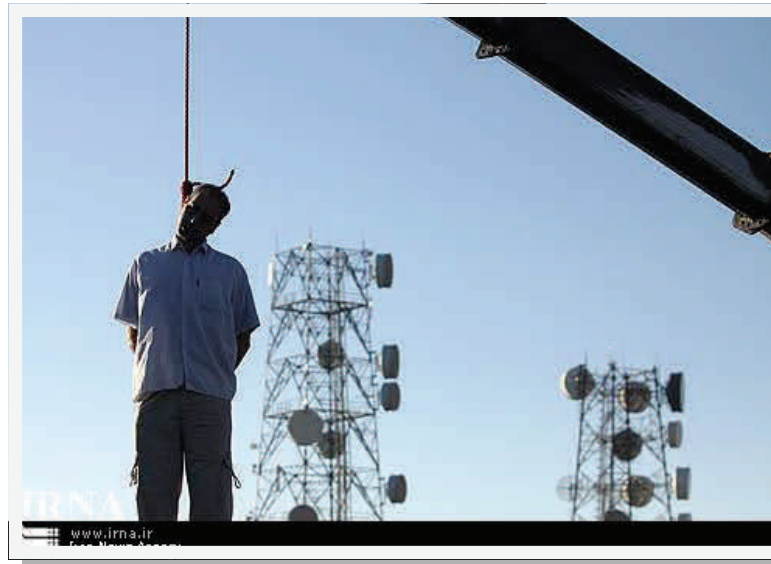
According to *The Economist* magazine,

The present government continues to close down newspapers, silence dissenting voices and ban or censor books and websites. In January 2007 security forces attacked striking bus drivers in Tehran and arrested hundreds of them. In March police beat hundreds of men and women who had assembled to commemorate International Women's Day.

International criticism

Since the founding of the Islamic Republic, human rights violations of religious minorities have been the subject of resolutions and decisions by the United Nations and its human rights bodies, the Council of Eu-

rope, European Parliament and United States Congress. According to The Minority Rights Group, in 1985 Iran became "the fourth country ever in the history of the United Nations" to be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly because of "the severity and the extent of this human rights record".^[18] From 1984 to 2001, United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) passed resolutions about human rights violations against Iran's religious minorities especially the Bahá'ís.^[17] The UNCHR did not pass such a resolution in 2002, when the government of Iran extended an invitation to the UN "Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression" to visit the country and investigate complaints. However, according to the organization Human Rights Watch, when these officials did visit the country, found human rights conditions wanting and issued reports critical the Islamic government, not only did the government not implement their recommendations", it retaliated "against witnesses who testified to the experts."



In 2003 the resolutions began again with Canada sponsoring a resolution criticizing Iran's "confirmed instances of torture, stoning as a method of execution and punishment such as flogging and amputations," following the death of an Iranian-born Canadian citizen, Zahra Kazemi, in an Iranian prison. The resolution has passed in the Assembly UN_General_every year since.

The European Union has also criticized the Islamic Republic's human rights record, expressing concern in 2005, 2007 and on October 6, 2008 presenting a message to Iran's ambassador in Paris expressing concern over the worsening human rights situation in Iran. On 13 October 2005, the European Parliament voted to adopt a resolution condemning the Islamic government's disregard of the human rights of its citizens. Later that year, Iran's government announced it would suspend dialogue with the European Union concerning human rights in Iran. On February 9, 2010, the European Union and United States issued a joint statement condemning "continuing human rights violations" in Iran.

the Islamic Republic regime of Iran is continuing the arrest, imprisonment and execution of political activists. There are growing concerns that if the regime is not stopped, it will commit even more horrendous atrocities.



The Charter of the Organization of Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas in the Twenty First Century

1 _ The Organization of Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas is a communist organization dedicated to the principle, "from anyone according to her or his talent and to anyone according to her or his needs". It opposes imperialism and capitalist monopolies. It considers socialism as the only alternative to the capitalist society, and it is the path to save humanity from war and want. The progress and full achievement of socialism is a global matter and must be synonymous with state weakening. The organization considers itself a part of the global socialist and worker's movement. It keeps society from decadence and destruction by relentlessly fighting neo-liberalism's aggression against the standard of living and livelihood of the people.

2 _ A socialist order is democratic, pluralist, and secularist. Socialism is based on the direct participation of the people in their own affairs and the recognition of people's right of self-determination. This organization opposes any: undemocratic socialism; coalition of the communist party and the state; suppressive, deterministic, and arbitrary socialism; interference in the private lives of the individual members of society; and socialism dependent on idolatry.

3 _ This organization considers the views of distinguished leaders and theorists of the global communist movement (Marx, Engels, Lenin) not as "frozen dogmas" but as "practical guidelines". To this end, we reject any form of ignorant, imitation, dogmatic, absolutistic, and backward thought; these are the greatest deterrents to the development of progressive and revolutionary ideas. Our theories focus on harmony between humankind and scientific discoveries. This organization is aware that limitations, challenges, weaknesses, and tight corners inevitably exist within theories. They can only be overcome by genuine devotion to the progress of society, as well as the incorporation of the scientific and technological gains of humanity. The organization rejects the idea that every question has a ready and prepared answer. Therefore this organization advocates tolerance, forbearance, criticism, research, and objective inquiry.

4 _ This organization advocates modernism and accepts that it is necessary to synchronize political advancement with the scientific and technological revolution of the end of the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. We are against obeying and following the traditional institutions, values and methods that distance us from scientific and technological developments that can be used to advance the interests and welfare of the people.

5 _ This organization struggles for political, social, economic, and cultural process of development and advancement. The principle of sustainable development, democratic, harmonious and continuous operation are the practical guidance of the organization. In planning for development and advancement, the organization, , treats and advocates, political development which will lead to the creation of a decentralized, democratic order based on political pluralism, and the disposition of democratic and key institutions for a deep rooted civil society as a priority in its principals.

6 _ This organization has been a consistent defender of social justice. It has defended the worker's right to organize, strike, supervise, and control their conditions. Between the different class positions, this organization has made the worker's interest's a priority. It also emphasizes: public ownership of education; hygiene and public health; a social security system; national water, electricity, and oil industries; and conservation of important mineral reserves.

7 _ This organization persistently demands the end to all kind of discrimination. These include gender, nationality, religion, and ethnicity. In the opinion of the organization, the principal unit of society is neither the family, nor any other institution. It is individuals enjoying equal rights regardless of ethnicity, religion, nationality, and gender. The organization adheres to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—including its covenants and other relevant international conventions. For this organization the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not a means, but an end. For example, this organization has and is against the ruling regimes of religious and gender oriented apartheid in Iran and defended the feminist movement of Iran.

8 _ On domestic and international levels, this organization is a consistent defender of environmental conservation, restoration, and improvement. It, therefore, rejects any unilateral project or destruction of the environment under the false pretension of economic improvements. ⇨ 5

9 _ Internationally, this organization advocates peaceful coexistence. This is done through the elimination of crisis, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction (such as nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare, etc...). This organization determinately defends progressive movements including: the worker's movement to improve their living conditions; the feminist movement; movements to preserve and improve the environment; the international movement for the advancement of human rights; cultural and artistic movements to modernize and enrich society; the international movement for population control; the movement to protect children; the movement for youth participation in the affairs of society; the movement for sexual rights; and the international movement against fundamentalism and racism.

10 _ The first step to achieve these ends in the Twenty-First Century is to overthrow the Islamic Republic and the system of religious supremacy (Velayat-i- Faqih). This organization finds that the only methodical remedy under the existing circumstances to the overthrow the regime (including all its factions and inner gangs) is through armed revolutionary struggles, in union with social movements, and the popular resistance of the people of Iran. This organization considers the overthrow of the regime to be its immediate duty and supports every endeavor in this respect.

11 _ Given the present conditions of Iran, this organization considers the National Council of Resistance of Iran (which is a coalition consisting of several different groups, organizations, and personalities with different ideologies, but with similar political goals) to be the democratic alternative to the regime of religious supremacy. Participation with the Nation Council of Resistance of Iran is based on uniting with one another to fight. Contrary to the opinion of some Iranian Marxists, this organization believes it is our upright duty to participate in this coalition.

12 _ This organization invites all Iranian communities who are struggling to actualize objectives similar to this charter to join its ranks. This organization invites democratic and progressive personalities to support and assist us in the struggle against the regime of the religious supremacy and to bring about independence, democracy, peace, development, and sovereignty for the Iranian people.

Down with the despotic regime of religious supremacy!

persecution of worker activists

The regime has stepped up its persecution of worker activists, dreading protests by workers following the introduction of a programme of austerity and elimination of subsidies. One labour activist, Behnam Ebrahimzadeh, worker of a polyethylene pipe-manufacturing company, has been sentenced to 20 years in prison and 10 years' deprivation from social activity. Also, Reza Rakhshan, leader of Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane Workers' Union, has been imprisoned since late December. Meanwhile, Mansoor Ossanlou, Ebrahim Madadi, Reza Shahabi and Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, of Tehran's bus workers' union, are all still in jail for their trade union activities.



Iran Khodro workers' letter to Director-General of the ILO

We, the workers of Iran Khodro, do not recognize these individuals as our representatives and demand that they be ejected from the International Labour Conference



From: The workers of Iran Khodro.
To: His Excellency Juan Somavia, the Director-General of the International Labour Organization

Dear Director-General,

It is necessary to bring to Your Excellency's attention that the individuals who are participating in the International Labour Conference as the representatives of Iranian workers are not, for the reasons that will be presented to you, Iranian workers' representatives.

1 - The selection of these individuals as the representatives of Iranian workers is contrary to conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organization, of which Your Excellency is the Director-General. According to these conventions the workers have the right to elect their representatives in free elections and governments have no right to intervene in the founding of free workers' organisations. These individuals have been selected by the government and represent the employers in Iran and have nothing to do with the workers of Iran.

2 - In Iran having of any form of independent and free labour organisation is illegal and is considered to be a crime. Iran Khodro, the company in which we work, has over 100,000 personnel, 40,000 of whom work in the central company and work under one roof but have no labour organisation or even a government-controlled organisation.

3 - Iranian workers, especially the workers of Iran Khodro, are deprived of having any labour organisation. In Iran any person who attempts to set up an organisation is sacked immediately and the representatives of the organisation are arrested and jailed. An example of this is the case of the Vahed Bus company workers.

4 - The government of Iran, and leading it the Labour Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose representatives have been invited by you as our - the workers' - representatives to the International Labour Conference, are opposed to all labour organisations in any shape or form. The Labour Ministry of Iran does not pay any attention to any human rights or even the Labour Code of Iran. And in accordance with this aim prevents independent labour organisations' elections.

5 - The government of Iran, with the help of the security forces,

prevents workers from achieving their rights, prevents any form of strike and workers' gathering, and arrests and jails striking workers. An example of this is the sacking of dozens of Iran Khodro and Iran Khodro Diesel workers during the past year. Also now the representatives of the sacked and unemployed workers are in prison.

6 - Since the workers of Iran do not have labour organisations and civil freedoms they are deprived of their basic rights and wages and right now 80% of Iranian workers are working on contracts or on daily wages when in permanent jobs. They have no right to express an opinion on their contract and on that basis give in to signing 'blank cheques'. And this clearly contravenes the conventions of the International Labour Organization.



Dear Director-General,

In a country where the workers are deprived of having of any organisations how, and according to which law, can a group be elected as workers' representatives and participate in the International Labour Conference?

We, the workers of Iran Khodro, see your acceptance of these individuals as the representatives of Iranian workers as a breach of the International Labour Organization's rules and especially contravening conventions 87 and 98.

tions 87 and 98.

We, the workers of Iran Khodro, do not recognise these individuals as our representatives and demand that they be ejected from the International Labour Conference.

We ask Your Excellency that in addition to condemning the government of Iran for its clear breach of the International Labour Organization's conventions, because of the arrest and imprisonment and sacking of workers, to demand the immediate release of imprisoned workers and end police investigations against these workers.

Dear Director-General,

We hope that the International Labour Organization and the Director-General can pass a resolution that brings about the implementation of the fundamental labour conventions, and above all, conventions 87 and 98 of ILO and the holding of free elections for the formation of free workers' organizations and the election of genuine workers' representatives. This will make it possible that [the genuine workers' representatives] can be present at future International Labor Organization conferences.

Iran Has Most Executions

Iran leads the way in the "worrying upsurge" in the number of executions in the Middle East and Asia, Amnesty International claims according to United Press International.

The United Nations last week voted to appoint a special human rights envoy to monitor the situation in Iran. Amnesty International said Iran carried out 252 executions in 2010, compared with 18 in Libya.

"Iran, Libya and Yemen experienced a worrying upsurge in executions ... and there are fears of mass executions in Libya as the (current) conflict there deepens," the watchdog group added. U.S. Ambassador Eileen Donahoe in a statement last week said Washington was "gravely concerned" about deteriorating human rights conditions in Iran. She said the situation in Iran since September "had worsened" amid reports of "acts of torture carried out by the government of the Islamic republic of Iran and death sentences of men and women by stoning."



Within the first 10 days of 2011 alone, the regime executed nearly **60 people** on various charges. Many political activists have received heavy prison sentences, many have already been executed
June 20: Three people were hanged in public, in the southeastern town of Zabol, early this morning.

The Iranian news agency Aftab reported that three men identified as Baboddin Barkazaei, Mohammad Poudineh and Vali Allah Mir were Publicly hanged in Zabol.

June 19: Two men were hanged in the central Iranian city of Isfahan, one of them was an Afghan citizen

June 19: One man was hanged in Shahr-e Kord prison (western Iran). He was executed on Saturday morning in the central prison of the city.

One man was hanged in public in southern Iran

June 14: One Man was publicly hanged in the city of Neyriz in the province of Fars (southern Iran)

June 12: Two men were hanged in the prison of Dezful in southwestern Iranian province of Khuzestan.

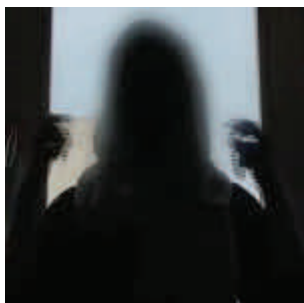
June 9: Two men were publicly hanged in public in (northeastern Iran) early this morning. Another man was hanged in Kerman on June 8th

June 2: Iran Human Rights reported that several people might have been executed in Tehran's Evin prison.

June 1: four people were hanged in the central prison of a city in southeastern Iran.

May 19: A judge in Tehran has decided to hand over Nima, a 4-year-old boy who has been subjected to severe physical abuse, back to his abusive father only ten days after he was taken to the Mofid Children's hospital.

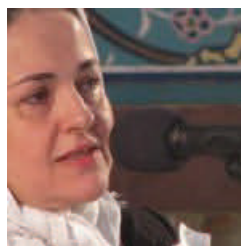
Rape and Torture: Legacy of the Post-Election Crackdown



(10 June 2011) On the second anniversary of the disputed June 2009 election and the ensuing repression, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran today released video testimony from a young female detainee describing in detail her severe torture and repeated rape after her arbitrary arrest.

Her forceful testimony challenges the Iranian authorities' official narrative, which denies widespread use of torture and rape by security forces against ordinary protestors.

Daughter of Deceased Dissident Dies Following Attack During Father's Burial



1 June 2011; Interference by security and plainclothes agents in the funeral of prominent Iranian political activist Ezatollah Sahabi, including beatings of mourners, led to the death of Sahabi's daughter Haleh, who suffered a fatal heart attack at the event today.

* Haleh Sahabi was a temporarily-released political prisoner

"The shameful actions of government thugs in this incident reveal a deep contempt for traditions that belong to all Iranians, and they have resulted in a tragedy," said Hadi Ghaemi, spokesperson for the Campaign.

A report by Amnesty international on workers in Iran

280,000 textile workers had the payment of their wages delayed for up to four months
Consequently



Workers in Iran have been gravely affected by an ongoing economic crisis. The value of the current minimum wage (equivalent to US\$303) is shrinking due to ongoing double-digit inflation. The gov-

ernment's program of subsidy reductions, which started in March 2011, is set to push up the price of water, electricity, petrol, natural gas and other goods and services.

Man workers have not been paid their salaries for long periods of time – in a 2009 report to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the government acknowledged that hundreds of enterprises have delayed payment of wages to workers accumulated wage arrears to many thousands of workers. For example, 280,000 textile workers, mainly in the northern Mazandaran province, had the payment of their wages delayed for up to four months. Consequently, many workers and their families fear being forced into poverty, especially those who are not guaranteed steady employment such as construction or seasonal workers or those on short-term contracts.

The situation is particularly dire for working women, who make up about a quarter of the workforce and who are often the first to lose their jobs in a downturn.