

**FEMALE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND
CONDITIONS OF WOMEN'S WARDS
IN IRANIAN PRISONS**

SPECIAL REPORT BY THE NCRI WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Introduction:

At least 40 women are imprisoned on political, ideological and security charges in a number of prisons in Iran. However, this figure must be considered minimum, as the Iranian regime conceals most of the information about political detainees held in secret prisons.

Under the mullahs' rule in Iran, women are supposed to stay home and therefore, having any kind of political or civil rights activity is considered a serious crime for women and evokes greater retaliation by the government.

Prison conditions are also very poor and inhumane. As such, many of imprisoned women have developed various illnesses. Some of them have children but are deprived of visiting them. A number of prisoners and prison conditions have been briefly reviewed in this pamphlet.

Partial List of Female Political Prisoners



Maryam Akbari Monfared

Charge: Waging war on God by cooperating with the PMOI

Sentence: 15 years imprisonment and banishment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Maryam Akbari Monfared was arrested in January 2009 and sentenced to 15 years in prison. Ms. Akbari's three brothers and one sister were executed in 1981, 1984, and 1988 in connection with the PMOI. Another brother of hers, Reza, is presently imprisoned in Rajaii-shahr Prison.

Ms. Akbari's another two sisters and a brother are residents of Camp Liberty in Iraq.

Ms. Akbari wrote a letter to UN Special Representative on Iran, Mr. Ahmad Shahid. Ms. Akbari cited Judge Salavati who had presided her court, as telling her, "You are paying the price of your sister and brothers."

Ms. Akbari has three daughters. Her youngest daughter was 4 at the time of her arrest and is 12 years old, now.

Ms. Akbari's husband says: "Maryam is charged with waging war on God, while under their own laws, a person is accused of waging war on God only when he/she has taken up arms against the government. Salavati told me, 'I was kind to the kids by not giving her a death sentence.' "

Ms. Akbari's family twice paid 1,150 million toumans as bail for her freedom, to no avail. Instead, she has been kept in detention for six years without any leaves.

Ms. Akbari has become ill in detention and needs to be visited by a rheumatologist, but prison officials have prevented her from going to doctor and postponed the visit under various pretexts.



Fahimeh A'arafi

Charge: membership and cooperation with Erfan Halgheh

Sentence: 5 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Qarchak Prison, Varamin

Fahimeh A'arafi was arrested by the Revolutionary Guards Corps at her residence on August 25, 2015 and taken to Qarchak Prison of Varamin. She had not received any advanced written or verbal notice.

She had been arrested twice before. In April 2015, she was kidnapped on the street because she had protested deviation of the judiciary system. She was subsequently detained in solitary confinement in Evin and interrogated for 42 days.

Sarveh Abdi

Sarveh Abdi was a student of law in Payam Noor University in Piranshahr, western province of Iranian Kurdistan.

She was arrested on November 30, 2015, along with her brother and fiancé at her home in Sardasht.

For at least one month, officials did not give any information to her family on her whereabouts. She had been previously arrested in 2014, for printing the flag of Kurdistan, but was later released on bail.



Baharin Asgarieh

Charge: Unknown

Sentence: Unknown

Place of detention: Tehran

Baharin Asgarieh was arrested on August 25, 2015, during prayer in the shrine of Hazrat Massoumeh in the city of Qom. She was blindfolded and handcuffed and taken to an unknown location.

Ms. Asgarieh had been previously arrested in 2011. She was detained and interrogated for 40 days in Ward A of Evin Prison under mental and psychological torture, but was subsequently abandoned outside the city.

She is a single woman heading a household.



Motahharez Bahrami Haghighi

Charge: Waging war on God by cooperating with the PMOI

Sentence: 10 years imprisonment and banishment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

This 62-year-old prisoner is in danger of becoming totally paralyzed because of acute spinal disc problem and deprivation from medical care. At the time of arrest, she was already suffering from rheumatoid arthritis in the spinal cord and neck, thyroid complication and cataract. Despite having medical documents and doctors' confirmation of her need to receive treatment, officials have prevented her from getting treated.

In 2014, Motahharez Bahrami received suspension of her sentence but she is still detained despite all the follow ups and payment of bail by her family.



Rayhaneh Haj Ibrahim Dabbagh

Charge: Waging war on God by cooperating with the PMOI

Sentence: 15 years imprisonment and banishment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Ms. Haj Ibrahim was arrested during the 2009 uprising with her husband and father and mother in laws (Motahharez Bahrami Haghighi).

She suffers from intestinal colitis and is not able to eat anything. She also suffers from nervous pains in the waist and legs. She is deprived of receiving proper treatment.

Last year, the Prosecutor set a 900million-touman property bail to give her medical leave, but her family have been so far unable to provide such a heavy bail.



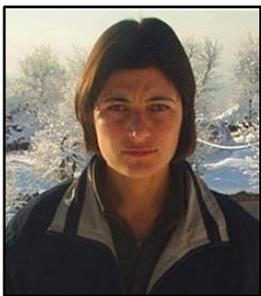
Fahimeh Ismail Badavi

Charge: Unknown

Sentence: 15 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Yasouj Prison

Fahimeh, 26, was a primary school teacher. In Decemer 2005, she was arrested along with her husband while she was 8 months pregnant. Her husband is one of the founders of Vefaq Party.



Zeinab Jalalian

Charge: Waging war on God by membership in PEJAK

Sentence: Life in prison

Place of detention: Prison of Khoy, Western Azerbaijan

Kurdish political prisoner, Zeinab Jalalian, was arrested at the age of 25 in March 2008.

Because of harsh treatment and severe beating at the Intelligence Department of Kermanshah, she suffered from internal hemorrhage, intestinal infection and impaired vision.

Prohibition of much needed operation on her eye, led to blindness in one eye.

Recent reports indicate that her other eye is no longer functioning and she has lost vision in both eyes. She also suffers from mouth thrush and despite repeated appeals for treatment out of prison, she has not been granted any leaves.

She has been under constant pressure to go on TV and make false confessions. Her medical leave has been conditioned on such a televised confession, but she has refused to cooperate with the regime.

It has been two years that Zeinab's family have not been allowed to visit her. Her only contact with them was a 2-min phone call.



Zahra Ka'abi

Sentence: Undecided

Place of detention: Undecided

Zahra Ka'abi was arrested by plainclothes agents in Mashhad on July 27, 2014, and taken to an unknown location. There is no information available on her fate.



Maryam Moghaddassi

Charge: Activities against national security by spreading propaganda against the state and cooperation with Kurdish parties

Sentence: 9 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Maryam Moghaddassi, Kurdish political prisoner, was arrested in 2010 during the protests against execution of Kurdish political prisoners Shirin Alam Hooli and four others. At least for four years, there was no information available on her.

On January 3, 2015, she was transferred to a hospital because of kidney complications.

She was on hunger strike for 12 days to protest horrible prison conditions and lack of attention on the part of prison officials. Her condition was so grave that she was transferred to a hospital in

Tehran, but her family was not informed of the hospital's location so that they could go from Kurdistan to visit her.



Mahnaz Mohammadi

Charge: Association, collusion and spreading propaganda against the state

Sentence: Five years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Mahnaz Mohammadi, producer of documentaries and a women's rights activist, turned in herself on June 7, 2014, to serve her five years in Evin Prison. She was deprived of having any contacts with people outside for at least 15 days. Her charges include cooperation with Al-Jazeera, German and American media, Radio France International, making a documentary called, "we are half of Iran's population," taking part in 2009 protest demonstrations, and participating in the funerals of martyrs of the 2009 uprising. Prior to this, she had been imprisoned for short periods in 2009 and 2011.

Ms. Mohammadi suffers from an illness reminiscent of Multiple Sclerosis (MS), and has to take special medications to prevent local paralysis and severe muscular pain.

Nargess Mohammadi



Charge: Propaganda against the state, association and collusion with the intention of acting against national security, formation of the illegal group, LEGAM

Sentence: 16 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Nargess Mohammadi, Vice President of the League of Advocates of Human Rights, was arrested on May 5, 2015, during a raid on her residence carried out without any warrants.

Ms. Mohammadi suffers from emboli in the lungs and muscular paralysis. She must consume 23 different medications every day. Prison officials hamper her treatment despite her dangerous physical condition and need to consume her medications.

Ms. Mohammadi had been arrested and detained another time in 2013. Because she suffered nervous seizures and it was proven that she is not able to tolerate prison conditions, she was released temporarily on a bail of 6 trillion Rials.

In mid January 2016, as she was serving her prison term, the Ministry of Intelligence filed another complaint against her and asked for maximum punishment because she had protested inhuman and offensive behavior of the agents accompanying her in hospital while she was supposed to be treated for her illnesses. The latest case has not been given to Ms. Mohammadi's lawyer even to study it.

Prison officials have not allowed this mother of 8-year-old twins to contact her children by phone. In protest to this situation, Ms. Mohammadi went on hunger strike beginning on June 27, 2016. Her hunger strike forced the regime to back off and grant her permission to contact her children from prison.

In a letter written at the outset of her hunger strike, she wrote: In my homeland and my country, as it is reflected in my indictment, I have been imprisoned on the charges of being a human rights activist, a feminist and opposed to capital punishment. They criminalized my being a human rights activist, however more painful is the fact that they have denied my right as a woman and a mother. The punishment of women and mothers like us, is incarceration not depriving us from hearing the voice of our dear ones!

Sedigheh Moradi



Charge: Supporting and effective activity to advance objectives of the PMOI
Sentence: 10 years imprisonment and banishment
Place of detention: Evin Prison

Political prisoner, Sedigheh Moradi, 55, has an 18-year-old daughter. She was arrested in April 2011 and served seven months in the Evin's Intelligence Ministry Ward 209.

On August 29, 2015, her blood pressure fell down to 6 over 4. Her cellmates rushed her to the prison's dispensary, but she was sent back to the cell shortly afterwards without any serious treatment as Intelligence Ministry's interrogators prevented her from being sent to a city hospital. She also suffers from stomach complications, serious pain in the jaw and teeth, arthritis in the neck, rupture of the meniscus and tendons of her leg, as well as visionary problems due to the blows of under torture. Each one of these illnesses merit being treated out of the prison.

Because of her meniscus and tendon condition, she must not go up and down the stairs whereas the location of the women's ward makes her do so.

Mrs. Moradi's family have made appointment with specialist doctors for her to be visited, but every time, officials have not allowed her to go. She suffers from severe pain so much that she cannot sleep at nights or do her personal chore.

She is a political prisoner of the 1980s and is a survivor of the 1988 massacre of political prisoners.

Fatemeh Mosanna

Charge: Effective cooperation with the PMOI

Sentence: 15 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Fatemeh Mosanna, DOB 1969, her husband Hassan Sadeghi, and their 17-year-old son, Nima, were arrested in March 2013 as they were about to begin a memorial ceremony for Hassan's

father who had just passed away in Camp Liberty, Iraq. Fatemeh was held eight months in solitary confinement in an undecided situation.

Although her family were released next year on bail, but Fatemeh was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment in July 2014.

Fatemeh was previously imprisoned during the 1980s arrests and executions at the age of 13 when three of her brothers were executed in the same years.

Sorayya Nakha'ii

Sorayya Nakha'ii is one of the instructors of Erfan Halgheh led by Mohammad Ali Taheri, who was arrested on October 25, 2015, by security forces. There is no information available on her charges or present circumstances.

She has earlier record of being arrested and detained.

Rojeen Paya

Charge: Supporting and membership in PEJAK

Sentence: 6 years imprisonment

Prison: Yasouj Prison

Rojeen is from one of the villages in Oroumiyeh. She was sentenced in 2010 to six years in prison. In June 2013, she was transferred from Oroumiyeh Prison to Yasouj Prison to serve her sentence.

Ziba Pour-Habib



Charge: Membership and cooperation with the Sufist group of Erfan Halgheh

Sentence: 3 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Ziba Pour-Habib, 56, is one of the instructors of Erfan Halgheh and one of the 26 activists of the group. She has been tried on the charges of "insulting the sanctities", "interfering in medical affairs", and "illegitimate earning of money".

She was taken to jail on July 1, 2015, to serve her prison term. Then she was transferred to Qarchak Prison in Varamin where prison conditions are harsh and political prisoners are held in the same place with common criminals.

Qadriyeh Qaderi



Charge: membership in the PKK and acting against national security by disseminating propaganda and organizing city networks for PKK

Sentence: 7 years in prison

Place of detention: Yasouj Prison

Qadriyeh Qaderi, a citizen of Turkey, was arrested in 2010. She was detained under torture in solitary confinement. This Kurdish woman went on a long hunger strike in April 2015.

Qadriyeh suffers from ear infection, sever headaches and numbness in one of her hands.

Specialist doctor has asked for CT scan, but prison authorities have prevented her from going to hospital.

This January and February, prison officials pressured Ms. Qaderi by ordering her to memorize the Quran otherwise she would be banned from having visits. Earlier, the judge had ordered her release on a bail of 100 million toumans.

Fatemeh Rahnama

Charge: Accused of effective cooperation with the PMOI

Sentence: 10 years imprisonment

Prison: Sepidar Prison of Ahwaz

Maryam Naghash Zargaran



Charge: Association and conspiring against national security and vilifying the ruling regime

Sentence: 4 years imprisonment

Prison: Evin Prison

Maryam Naghash Zargaran, children's music teacher and a new Christian convert, was interrogated a number of times since March 2011 until July 15, 2013, when she was summoned to Evin Prison to serve her sentence. Since then, she has been serving her sentence in the Women's Ward of Evin Prison.

The notorious judge Moghiseh, head of the 28th branch of the Revolutionary Court sentenced Ms. Zargaran to four years imprisonment on the charge of having activities against national security, but she has not been informed of her charges in court.

Ms. Zargaran's mother said her dossier does not contain any documents proving her charges. She noted, "During the trial, judge Moghiseh turned to his colleague and humorously asked 'How many years should I sentence her? Does 5 years sound OK?' The other mullah replied, 'No, she is

young.' Then judge Moghiseh said, 'So, I will write 4 years for her.' Is it proper for a judge to issue rulings while joking about them? Don't they have to rule based on law and circumstantial evidence?

Maryam Naghash Zargaran suffers from cardiac illness. During her incarceration, back disc, arthritis in the neck and hands as well as ear complications have been added to her pre-existing medical condition. In 2005, she underwent a heart surgery and doctors instructed her to stay absolutely away from any stressful environment.

The Christian prisoner Maryam Naghash Zargaran received a medical leave 17 months past her imprisonment. Upon return to prison, on November 12, 2014, she was forced to take off all her clothes in front of others and frisked in a humiliating manner.

Ms. Zargaran went on hunger strike to protest the status of her dossier, lack of medical attention, and the authorities' refusal to grant her conditional release or medical leave. On June 6, 2016, she was granted medical leave after eleven days of hunger strike. But the Prosecutor did not agree with extension of her leave and threatened to confiscate her bail bond. So, she had to return to jail on June 27, 2016, without completing her medical treatment.

Ms. Zargaran launched another round of hunger strike after her return, but prison officials have not yet agreed to her medical leave.

Roya Saberi-nejad Nobakht



Charge: Association and collusion against national security, propaganda against the state, insulting the sanctities and the regime's leaders

Sentence: 5 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Roya Saberi-nejad Nobakht, 47, is detained despite horrible physical conditions. She has been suffering three seizures during a week. The first time she had a seizure, she fell down and was injured in the head. The prison's on-call doctor gave her an injection and said she was fine. She was not allowed to leave to be examined in a city hospital.

Ms. Saberi-nejad has a dual British-Iranian citizenship and is one of the nine social network activists who was arrested in Shiraz in October 2014 by the IRGC upon return to country. She spent more than 18 months of her sentence with common criminals in the notorious Qarchak Prison.

Safieh Sadeghi



Charge: Waging war on God by membership in PEJAK
Sentence: 15 years imprisonment
Place of detention: Sanandaj Prison

Safieh Sadeghi was arrested in 2010 and taken under interrogation for four months. During this period, she was deprived of having any telephone contacts or visits with her family. She was under torture to force her make false confessions.

Ms. Sadeghi suffers from heart and kidney complications and is about to lose one of her kidneys. Despite medical diagnosis and doctors' instructions, prison officials have prevented her from being treated in a city hospital.

Roya Saeidi

Charge: Supporting a group opposing the regime
Sentence: Undecided
Prison: Evin Prison

Roya Saeidi, 56, was arrested at home in June 2013. After 70 days of solitary confinement in Evin's Cellblock 209, she was transferred to the women's ward.

Farideh Shahgoli



Charge: Disseminating some articles, anti-governemnt propaganda and insulting the leader in the Facebook
Sentence: 3 years imprisonment
Place of detention: Evin Prison

Farideh Shahgoli was summoned to Evin Prison on May 21, 2014, but was readily taken to the women's ward of Evin to serve three years of imprisonment when she reported to the Prosecutor's Office of Evin. She has a dual German-Iranian citizenship. In an open letter to Hassan Rouhani, she said that she had been pressured to make false confessions during 50 days of detention.

Na'imeh Taqavi

Place of detention: Tehran Prison

Na'imeh Taqavi was arrested on August 25, 2015, during a protest by supporters of Erfan Halgheh to the death sentence issued for the leader of this group.

There is no information available on her legal status or detention conditions.

Zahra Zehtabchi



Charge: Supporting and effective activity to advance objectives of the PMOI

Sentence: 12 years imprisonment

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Zahra Zehtabchi, 45, a social sciences researcher was arrested on October 16, 2013, along with her husband. She spent 10 months in solitary confinement. She has not had any leaves so far. She has two small daughters who are badly depressed.

In 2009, Ms. Zehtabchi was arrested for conducting a poll on the elections outcome.

Prison Conditions and Women's Wards

To better understand conditions of female political prisoners, one must learn about prison conditions and the conditions of women's wards.

Evin Prison



Living conditions:

The majority of political prisoners are held in Evin and women have a special ward.

Female prisoners are taken to this ward after they finish the process of interrogations.

Prisoners in this ward are deprived of making phone calls. This is particularly difficult for those prisoners who have children.

The Women's Ward is consisted of three halls. Two 12-square-meter halls and an 18-square-meter hall are connected by narrow corridors. All windows and openings to the prison yard are covered and sealed and the only openings are those which facing Evin's high mountains which do not provide sufficient sun light for prisoners.

Metal beds are lined up all around the halls. There are no mattresses. Prisoners are given rough soldiers' blankets which are laid directly on the metal bed with nothing underneath. In addition to being problematic for bones and muscles, in winter, the metal beds let the cold infiltrate the prisoner's body.

Hygienic conditions:

Most prisoners are sick and lack the energy to walk to open space to get fresh air. Their health conditions are aggravated by deficiency of sunlight.

Bathrooms and the kitchen lack ventilation, creating respiratory problems for the inmates particularly in summer.

Poisonous snakes, rats and other creatures were found in the ward on a number of instances.

Medical conditions:

The prison's dispensary is abysmal. There is no medical or emergency facility for prisoners. They do not receive their special medications on time. Sometimes, pills are placed in the wrong box, and given to the wrong patient. There have been many incidents where inmates suffered seizures and blacked out due to such mistakes or the symptoms of their illnesses became worse.

To receive her medication, a prisoner must first obtain an authorization by the head of the dispensary, then wait until the visitations day on Sunday, to give the prescription to her relatives to purchase her medicine from an outside pharmacy. Then she will have to wait until the next visit, to receive her medication from her relatives.

Referring to a medical center in the city is tremendously difficult as prison officials tend to prevent it under various pretexts. Even if the prisoner has a life threatening condition, she must first obtain an authorization from the head of the dispensary and the coroner; then she needs the endorsement of the Prosecutor who follows instructions of the Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS). Therefore, it may take several months to receive just an authorization.

By the time the prisoner receives a medical leave usually after 9 to 12 months, her illness has progressed to higher levels compared to the initial diagnosis.

Once in the hospital, the prisoner's treatment is usually interrupted midway by various roadblocks imposed by security guards and prison authorities.

Every entry and exit to and from the prison requires humiliating frisking. A prisoner must be handcuffed while she walks into the dispensary.

Additional restrictions:

On Tuesday, October 30, 2012, security guards raided the Women's Ward, inspected their personal belongings and frisked them in a humiliating manner.

The Women's Ward is constantly monitored by cameras. Male guards enter the ward without prior notice and in hours that they are not expected.

In summer 2013, all the air conditions were broken and there was not any ventilation at least until August.

In January 2015, prison authorities removed meat from the prisoners' food and cut off breakfast altogether.

In June 2016, according to a new directive, prisoners of women's ward of Evin have been deprived of correspondence and meeting with their families. All leaves were cancelled until further notice as well.

Whenever prison wardens encounter a protest or some form of resistance by prisoners, they threaten to relocate them to the notorious Qarchak Prison.



Ward 209 is the most dreadful ward of Evin Prison. Inmates are detained under torture. The ward is made up of 10 rows, each containing eight solitary cells. Due to over crowding, up to 10 people are kept in every cell. Each solitary cell has its own individual lavatory.

The torture room is located in the ward's basement where there are all kinds of medieval equipment for torture, including Apolo (a special bed for giving electric shocks to the prisoner while his head is covered by an iron helmet where his cries echo into his own ears), wired beds for flogging with cables, hangers from which prisoners are hanged from the ceiling by foot or by hands as they are tied behind their backs. No one except the personnel and convicts is allowed into the Intelligence Ministry Ward 209, even the highest officials.

The Metadon Ward: There is a hall, actually a big cell, in the women's ward that is always closed. Prisoners call it the Metadon Ward. Closed-circuit cameras are installed in this cell to monitor inmates round the clock, depriving them of minimum freedom of action within the limited space of the cell.

Prisoners are deprived of going out for break and they have to spend all hours of the day in that closed-door hall. The door opens only when food is distributed.

Qarchak Prison, Varamin

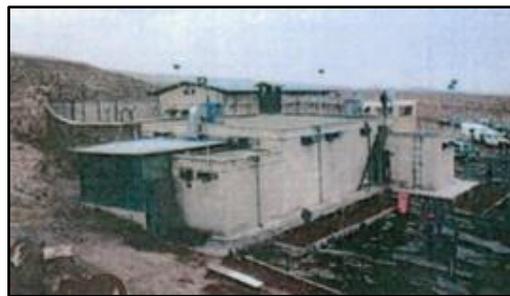
The conditions of this prison is so notorious that it is used as a means of pressuring political prisoners of Evin, as officials of the Prosecutor's Office and Evin Prison always threaten to transfer them to Qarchak Prison.

Living conditions:

Qarchak Prison is the main detention center for female prisoners. It is located in the deserts located east of Tehran in very bad weather conditions. 1,200 prisoners are detained there. Swamps and marshes surround the prison, so the prison is filled with insects and rats. The prison is comprised of seven big, dark and dirty silos. Every silo holds between 150 and 200 prisoners.

Beds are arranged in U shape, dividing the silo into numerous rooms. The beds are enough for only several dozen people and the rest of inmates have to sleep on the floor among the beds up to the door of the lavatories. There is no place for eating or mere sitting. Prisoners have to do everything on their beds.

The prison does not have any library and prisoners are not given even newspapers, which is especially difficult for political prisoners.



Prisoners with different crimes are not segregated in Qarchak Prison. Some 45 prisoners who are on the death row, live among criminals with various crimes.

Food conditions:

Prisoners are given three meals a day, but one can easily miss the meal if she is not fast. If a prisoner needs more food, or if she protests about having not received her food, she is beaten. Prisoners are hungry most of the time. There are times, when older prisoners cry from hunger when they see the guards eat bread and butter.

There is no variety in food. Boiled potatoes, macaroni and bread. Prisoners have not had any meat for years. The quality of rice is very bad and it is cooked with camphor. The best dinner in prison is boiled eggs and potatoes given once a week. Some nights, the dinner is a dilute soup containing a little grain, while it is contaminated with insects and other stuff.

Hygienic conditions:

The state of hygiene is deplorable in Qarchak. It has caused contagious, infectious diseases circulating amongst inmates. Infectious diseases of HIV and hepatitis are endemic amongst the prison population. No one is assigned to attend to those suffering from contagious illnesses and the sick prisoners are allowed to be inmate with other prisoners. They are not segregated from others and since there are no monthly medical check-ups, nor any laboratory medical tests, there is no accurate statistics available on the number of prisoners afflicted with hepatitis and HIV. Every silo with 189 inmates, has only four lavatories and four baths. Usually two of the baths and one toilet are out of order.

The baths have warm water for only one hour during the day and most of the prisoners have to bathe with cold water. In addition, the water is cut off during most of the day.

Prisoners drink water, wash dishes and clothes in the same baths and lavatories.

The floor of the toilet is always covered with a few millimeters of water. Since the slippers are torn, prisoners' feet get wet and contaminated every time they use the bathroom.

In the absence of enough toilets for prisoners, one can see stool scattered all over the silo's floor. Many prisoners are bald because the place is dirty and there are no cleaning and washing detergents. So, prisoners shave their hair to avoid lice.

Drinking water is not good and prisoners do not afford to buy mineral water, so they have to drink the prison's salty water.

The water used for bath or lavatory is salty and does not dissolve soap. As a result, prisoners cannot properly wash their clothes and they contract various skin diseases because of this situation.

In June 2015, there was no water for at least four days.

There is no ventilation in the siloes, which aggravates the unsanitary conditions. In August 2015, the sewage system was clogged and black water ran into the fresh-air room. The rotten odor of undrained sewage and unremoved spoiled garbage was intolerable for prisoners. Prisoners with respiratory problems had an especially difficult time.

The place where prisoners are allowed to take in some fresh air is not an open space but is actually a room with no ceiling which is large enough for only several dozen people. The state of hygiene is even worse in the quarantine ward.

Medical conditions:

On the other hand, there is no medical care in Qarchak Prison. Officials say they have no budget for this. There is a place called dispensary, but they do not do anything there even when there is an emergency case.

Some time ago, one of the prisoners died while delivering her baby because there were no soldiers to accompany her to a hospital.

Officials also prevent prisoners from receiving the medications their families bring for them under the pretext of controlling entry of narcotic drugs.

Prisoners buy their medications from the black market. The price of a tranquilizer pill (Profane) is 2,000 toumans.

Psychological punishments:

Prison guards' foul treatment of detainees has had damaging psychological impact on them. Those foul and indecent treatment are consisted of cussing, humiliation, degradation and sometimes assault and battery of the incarcerated women. Most prisoners with psychological problems are not transferred to a proper mental care center and cause serious problems with others such as rape, murder and affray. If an affray takes place in the prison, wardens do not step in or in any way intervene.

If a prisoner criticizes prison conditions, she would be transferred to solitary confinement where conditions are deplorable. An unsanitary bathroom is situated inside a small cell packed with several prisoners. Such conditions lead to confrontation amongst prisoners and rape.

There are also prisoners who have been awaiting execution for many years and are thus afflicted with psychological disorders. Instead of transferring such prisoners to a mental center they are held continually in solitary confinement to create more suffering for others.

There was an instance when a problematic prisoner raped and killed her cellmate with a florescent lamp. Prison wardens take advantage of this prisoner to threaten others. If any prisoner remonstrates, she is threatened to be transferred to the same cell with psychotic prisoners.

Additional problems:

Homo-sexuality has increased and there have been occasional instances of rape. A serious problem is detaining prisoners as young as 18 with prisoners 50 years and older who have committed serious crimes. Rape of young prisoners by older criminals is the young girls' nightmare.

Due to lack of the most basic facilities in the siloes, prisoners brawl all the time.

Infants in jail:

There is a special ward for mothers where almost 20 children under two years old are imprisoned with their mothers. Children above 2 years of age are handed over to the Welfare Organization.

Additional pressures by prison authorities:

On April 28, 2014, prison guards raided inmates and beat them up with batons and electric shockers. The raid was in reaction to women's protest to the closure of the fresh-air room and prohibition of smoking. A similar raid took place two years earlier.

In February 2015, prison guards made new arrivals take off their clothes and had trusted inmates inspect their vaginas and anuses. This caused fungal and infectious diseases. At the same, the so-called inspection was done so brutally that the prisoners were not able to sit properly for some time.

In July 2015, during the fasting month of Ramadan, loudspeakers blared threats of flogging prisoners who breached the fasting.

Ardebil Prison

Ardebil Prison is located out of town boundary. The women's ward of this prison has seen soaring population of inmates. In recent years, the number of prisoners has become larger than what the prison can accommodate.

Criminals committed felony crimes such as burglaries, moral indecency, and homicides are being held in this prison. Nevertheless, there is a 60-year-old prisoner who has been held in this prison because she can not afford to pay the blood money of a laborer who died in an accident while he was working at her house.

Also amongst prisoners, there is a young woman who is being held in prison because her brothers used her as the co-signer of their checks that bounced back. There is another woman who is held in prison because she was unable to pay the rent of the shop where she used to sell her odds and ends stuff and earn her livelihood. The above-mentioned people are also being held amongst other felons and murderers.

Rajaii-shahr Prison, Karaj

Due to the presence of dangerous criminals, bloody clashes among prisoners is a common incident in this prison. There have been three incidents of rape ending up in murder within the past two years. The main perpetrators of these crimes are detained in the cell neighboring the political prisoners.

Presently, there are 200 female prisoners in this prison, with a variety of crimes. There is only one bathroom and one lavatory. Usually, there is no water and prisoners can use the bathroom only for limited hours. Warm water is available only one hour a day and the rest of the day, prisoners have to take shower with cold water.

Diezelabad Prison, Kermanshah

The women's ward in this prison is packed. The cells made for three, are filled with seven prisoners. The cells are inspected every other day, the inmates' belongings confiscated and their books torn.

Prisoners get fresh air for only half an hour. The cells lack any form of ventilation, heaters or cooling system.

The prison's store sells only wafers, tea and artificial fruit juice and prisoners do not have access to any other item.

To extract confession, interrogators commonly threaten prisoners with rape.

Central Vakilabad Prison, Mashhad

Ward 5 of Mashhad's Central Vakilabad Prison is for female political prisoners.

The ward's doors are closed all the time except for two hours. Prisoners are not allowed to talk to or contact other prisoners.



The ward for female political prisoners is a very small room with a small 50-cm iron window which hardly allows the rays of light pass into the cell. The room used to be the prison's storage until 2.5 years ago.

The small size of the room does not allow prisoners to walk inside the cell while only five or six prisoners can simultaneously sit on the floor and other prisoners must stay on their beds.

Bath and lavatory are also located in this over-crowded small room and is the cause of many problems for the inmates.

Visits are banned for any petty excuse and prisoners are deprived of receiving or sending letters.

Adelabad Prison, Shiraz

The women's ward of Adelabad Prison is actually an old kitchen that only one-third of its space is useable. Part of its ceiling is open and in winters, cold weather gets in and rain flows inside and wets the place where prisoners sit and sleep. There is no sun light and the floors and walls are made of mosaics. Every prisoner has one or two blankets and therefore, the situation is very difficult for them.

The toilet is inside this small space. There is no ventilation and the flush is usually broken. There is no bathroom for the inmates and they have to use a long hose and connect it to the water tap of the dish-washing sink. One person holds the hose and another takes her bath while other prisoners are sitting nearby.

The waste water from dishwashing and bathing flows on the floor and the prisoners must sweep it with a sweeper towards a drainage near the cell.

Prison guards usually refuse to give three meals a day to the inmates while there is no store for women to buy anything for themselves.

Prison of Maragheh

The number of prisoners in this prison varies between 15 and 30 women. The ward is made of only one room made for 7 or 8 prisoners. The small space causes much stress for prisoners of this ward particularly that they are not separated according to the type of crimes.

There is no suitable bath or toilet, no proper place for rest and not enough food.

Prisoners suffer from infectious diseases like infection of urinary tracts. Such diseases are particularly prevalent among children living with their mothers in these wards.

Prison of Sanandaj

The women's ward of Sanandaj Prison is a big, dark salon. Ten three-story bunk beds arranged around the salon provide 30 beds for inmates to sleep. The walls are dark green and tall with no windows. There is only one fan in the center of the ceiling for ventilation.

Some 30 prisoners are detained in this ward for various offenses.

The ward has a small space of 5 or 6 meters for fresh air and prisoners are practically deprived of receiving fresh air, particularly that prisoners use this small space to dry their washed clothes, so no space remains for any one to walk and breathe fresh air. Lack of sun light has caused many diseases for prisoners.

Inmates are forced to wear the chador (head-to-toe black veil).

Political prisoners are deprived of visits and the telephones are usually broken for a long time.

Hygiene is really bad in this prison. The baths are very unsanitary. Women do not have sanitary napkins and washing detergents.

On the other hand, this ward lacks basic amenities and the mini mart of the prison does not carry the items inmates need to buy.

Sanandaj Prison also has a ward for young girls, where five girls aging 13, 16 and 18 are detained. One of the prisoners was flogged twice, first time 80 strikes and the second time 100, for having romantic relationships not approved by religious decree.

The other prisoner is 17 years old and she is incarcerated for fleeing from her house.

The other is 16 years old who is incarcerated for the criminal charge of drug trafficking, while her parents are so poor that they can not even afford to pay a taxi fare to get to the prison and visit their daughter.

Prison of Tabriz



This prison holds three times as many prisoners as its capacity. Many of the inmates do not have beds and sleep on the floor. Food quality is very bad. The prison's store sells the needs of prisoners at prices several times the original price. Since most of the prisoners are from poor families, they are not able to buy their hygienic needs like shampoo, toothpaste, tissues, toothbrushes, soap, etc.

Pregnant women do not receive any support. A number of them keep their infants with themselves after delivery, but do not receive even a daily allowance of milk.

Every prisoner can take a shower for only ten minutes during the week, so the smell of sweat bothers all prisoners. They also suffer from lice in their hair.

Prison guards humiliate prisoners and force them to do their personal chores and other works in the prison. They also force inmates to report on one another and this causes outbreak of brawls and quarrels among prisoners and there is a lot of stress for every one.

Prisoners are forced to wear the prison's heavy, thick veil upon leaving the cell.

Prisoners often suffer from psychological problems created during arrest or afterwards, and there is no psychological counsel available in the prison.

Orumiyeh Prison

There are 300 female prisoners in this prison. One hundred of them are on the death row.

Prison of Zahedan

This prison is filled with prisoners detained on drug-related charges who are on the death row. The prison is terribly over-crowded.

Prison guards and personnel are very cruel and disrespectful towards prisoners. A common practice in this prison is brutal beating up of inmates against the law.

Nutrition and medical care are not sufficient in Zahedan Prison. When there is the need to transfer prisoners to a city hospital, there is not much cooperation on the part of prison officials and the Prosecutor's Office.

In April 2014, the bread quota of prisoners was discontinued. Female inmates protested to the situation but their protest was answered with a brutal raid on their ward.

Special prison guards attacked female prisoners with batons and other tools and beat them up brutally. Some 20 women were transferred to solitary confinement in the quarantine ward, where prisoners are tortured.

Mahabad Prison



The prison's building is in a very dangerous state. Most of the walls are cracked.

The prison lacks the minimum heating and cooling systems. Food is made from very low quality material and is usually not edible. Prisoners, therefore, have to buy their own staples at double or triple the original price.

The number of female inmates in Mahabad Prison is near 50. They are accompanied by a number of children under three years of age, who stay with their mothers in the women's ward.

In November 2015, twelve jamming devices were installed in the various wards of this prison. On August 17, 2015, thirty female prisoners went on hunger strike to protest the pressures imposed on them by prison guards and officials.

Yazd Prison

There are some 150 prisoners in the women's ward of Yazd Prison.

Most of the women in this prison are mothers. Some who are pregnant, deliver their infants in the prison.

Some 10 to 15 mothers live in a 12-square-meter room with their children. The bath and lavatory are also located in this small space. Children are taken for fresh air along with other prisoners.

Some play jokes on the kids and some beat and slap them.

Another ward is a 14-square-meter room where 40 prisoners are detained. There are only six three-tier bunk beds, so only 18 people have beds and the rest have to sleep on the floor. Some have to sleep in the corridor, in the kitchen and in front of the bathroom.

Hygiene is very bad in this prison. Just in the early months of 2016, lice had spread all over one of the wards.

Only those prisoners who have beds receive bed sheets. So, two-thirds of the prisoners who sleep on the floor do not have any sheets. Blankets are also really filthy and prisoners have to wash them, themselves, while there is no place for drying them.

Prisoners store everything they have in a plastic basket and shove them underneath the beds which is not very clean.

There are four showers and four toilets for 150 people. Usually one or two of the toilets are broken. Water taps usually leak.

The kitchen is the place for conflicts. There are two 3-flame stoves in the kitchen for 150 people to cook their food using the things they buy from the prison's store.

The prison's store is a rat-ridden trailer located in the corner of the prison yard. All the knitting yarns are chewed in the middle. Everything is very expensive in the store, several times the original price. So, the prisoners who do not have any financial support from outside are not able to buy even their shampoo.

Most of the prisoners are very poor and they do not have warm clothing in winter. Prison officials do not allow those who afford to receive warm clothes and give to others, get more than two items from their families. So, a lot of inmates shiver in the cold and have no suitable clothes.

Family visits are also very stressful because usually the phones do not work and before the prisoners get to speak to their families, the time is up.

Borujerd Prison

Borujerd Prison is an old building with two large rooms of 45 square meters and 20 square meters. The prison accommodates 120 inmates, 15 of whom have infant babies at the time being. There are only a few beds and a number of inmates have to sleep on the floor.

The inmates are allowed to take a shower three times a week, and the time allowed for all of them is only two hours.

The food quality is very bad and in case an inmate wants to purchase food from outside of the prison, they rip her off by charging her 2 or 3 times the real price.

In every room, including the bathrooms and showers, there is a video surveillance camera and the inmates are not allowed to turn them off any time even at bed time.

There are only two female prison wardens and the rest of prison wardens are men who have no restrictions in entering the cells. They have entered, with no prior notice, while inmates were bathing or under shower and any inmate who remonstrates such sudden entries or improper appearance in the cells will be dealt with cuss words and name-calling.

The prison officially has a special "room for religious meeting" which is used by male prison wardens to satisfy their desires with the inmates.

Once a week, under the pretext of searching, prison officials ransack through the cells. In addition, the frisking takes place in a degrading manner when inmates enter or exit or when the inmate is viewed as suspicious.

The majority of inmates suffer from unhealthy psychological conditions.

One woman hanged herself in the bathroom after prison officials denied her request to hug her 3-year-old son on the day of prison visit.

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