



NCRI Women's Committee

Monthly Report

October
2016

Introduction

October was marked by a number of important occasions which also focused attention on the situation of human and women's rights in Iran.

In a message on the World Day Against the Death Penalty, October 10, the Iranian Resistance's President-elect Maryam Rajavi called on the people of Iran to stand up to the Iranian regime's policy of executions. She renewed her call for the prosecution of the leaders of the Iranian regime in international courts for the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in 1988.

Maryam Rajavi also underlined the Iranian people's growing opposition to the regime's widespread use of the death penalty, and urged the international community to make their relations contingent upon end to the executions.

Iranian women and activist mothers also spoke out against the widespread use of the death penalty in Iran.

The anti-Death Penalty activist Sholeh Pakravan said, "When we see bloodied (trace of noose around the) necks of those executed, we must protest and ask why? The world must also intervene. Combatting executions must have priority over any talks. It must be pre-condition to every deal."

Another activist mother, Ms. Shahin Mahinfar, also declared, "Our nation that has suffered loss of many of her youths, cries out in one voice: No to executions; No to executions; No to executions."

The United Nations also addressed Iran's case, at the General Assembly in New York.

In his latest report to the UN General Assembly, Secretary General Ban Ki Moon pointed to the execution of 15 women in Iran from January 2015 to June 2016. He also expressed deep concern over constant discrimination against women and minorities.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, Mr. Ahmed Shaheed, noted in his report to the Third Committee that Tehran had rejected the UN recommendations to adopt the CEDAW and revise provisions of the Islamic Penal Code.

Mr. Shaheed also underlined the fact that the country remains in the bottom fifth percentile of 142 countries in overall equality for women.

Mr. Shaheed wrote that the Iranian regime's penal code continue to violate the country's international human rights obligations by criminalizing the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights or other acts that are not recognized as crimes under international law. "Moreover, those who violate national and international rights protections continue to enjoy impunity in an atmosphere that justifies serious human rights violations perpetrated by some officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including members of the judiciary."

Some 60 members of the European Parliament also issued a statement in which they condemned the 1988 massacre in Iran including the execution of several thousand women. They urged the European Union to condition all relations with that country on end to the ongoing executions in that country. They also urged the UN and its relevant bodies to form an investigation committee to bring to justice the masterminds and perpetrators of the 1988 massacre of political prisoners in Iran.

Systematic violations of the right to life

Executions, arbitrary killings, deaths in custody, and death sentences

Arbitrary killing

A three-year-old girl, Raghad Sawari, got killed when directly shot at by security forces in Ahwaz's Kouye Alavi neighborhood on Monday night, October 24, 2016.

A source close to the Sawari family told the media that security forces shot at the family's car from their own vehicle. The three-year-old died instantly, but her mother was seriously wounded and is presently hospitalized in Ahwaz's Golestan Hospital.



Death sentences

Zeinab Sekanvand, 22, imprisoned in the Central Prison of Orumiye, was informed on October 3 that her death sentence was going to be carried out imminently.

Ms. Sekanvand who had been forced into marriage at the age of 15, was arrested at the age of 17 for the alleged killing of her husband who always battered her.

Ms. Sekanvand later married a prisoner while in detention and was pregnant. She lost her baby just three days before being informed of the implementation of her sentence, on September 31. Apparently she was badly shocked when her inmate was transferred out for execution.



Inhumane treatment and cruel punishments

Amputation, flogging, torture and humiliation

In a shocking measure, school authorities in the southern Iranian village of Mokhtarabad in South Roodbar, Kerman, struck eight lashes of the whip to at least ten girl students and expelled them from school because their parents did not afford to pay 30,000 toumans (approx. \$8.5) demanded by the school's principal.

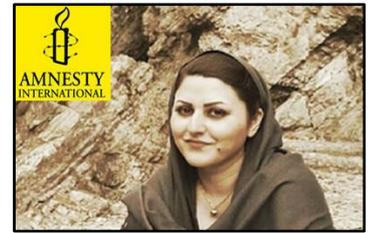


Arbitrary Arrests

Security forces violently raided the house of human rights activist Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee on October 24, 2016, breaking into the house and arresting Ms. Iraee without presenting any written warrant. Ms. Iraee was subsequently to the Evin Prison to start her six year prison sentence.

Amnesty International issued a statement, demanding that the Iranian authorities immediately and unconditionally release Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee.

In an earlier statement on October 6, AI said Ms. Iraee was facing years behind bars simply for writing a story which was not even published.



Meanwhile, security forces continued their arbitrary arrests of ordinary people for unwarranted reasons.

Forty people, including 15 women, were arrested in the State Security forces' raids on two private parties in the northeastern city of Neishaboor. (The state-run Fars news agency - October 3, 2016)

Sixteen girls and boys were arrested on Tuesday, October 11, 2016, in Tehran for celebrating the Iranian national football team's victory in north Tehran.

The IRGC also focused on models and made a considerable number of arrests across the country.

Six models, including three women, were arrested in Mashhad (northeastern Iran). Another 17 people were summoned to the Prosecutor's Office. Nine studios and salons were also sealed. (The state-run Mizan news agency - October 3, 2016)

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) arrested 11 models in Zahedan (southeastern Iran) on October 15, 2016, for publishing their pictures on the cyberspace, running clandestine ateliers, and promoting modelling.

The IRGC of the Central Province issued an official statement on October 19, 2016, announcing the arrest of 24 individuals who were active in the modelling business, including the models, themselves.

The statement added that nine ateliers, studios and women's hairdressers had been sealed and 41 individuals were also summoned.

Finally, the Secretary of the fashion working group, Hamid Ghobadi formally announced that all forms of fashion and modelling activities are going to be banned in Iran. Ghobadi said, "We have revoked the modelling bylaws and such activities are no longer going to be allowed in the country." (The state-run Fars news agency, October 21, 2016)



Prison

Amnesty International issued a statement on the situation of Kurdish prisoner Zeinab Jalalian who is denied badly needed medical treatment.

In its statement on October 19, 2016, AI wrote: "The authorities have refused to give her access to an eye specialist and to authorize her transfer to a hospital for urgently needed eye surgery and have only given her eye drops. They have also refused her repeated



requests for medical leave. According to her lawyer, some of her requests have been rejected outright while others have been accepted on condition that she makes videotaped 'confessions'. On one occasion, she says prison authorities told her that she had to have a virginity test before they would allow her to receive medical treatment."

Political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared was deprived of having visits, after she formally filed a lawsuit against the judiciary officials involved in the 1988 massacre and the executions of her sister and brothers. She urged an official probing into their cases.



Roya Saberi Nobakht who has been detained by the Iranian regime for activities on the social networks, has suffered from various seizures in prison and her health conditions have deteriorated. Prison authorities, however, have refused to provide her the medical care she needs.

Ms. Nikbakht is a dual national, a British-Iranian citizen, who has been sentenced to five years in prison.

The Review Court issued its final verdict for children and civil rights activist, Atena Daemi, sentencing her to seven years in prison. Ms. Daemi, 27, is charged with association and conspiring against the state, and insulting the mullahs' supreme leader.

Six Kurdish labor activists including two women were also sentenced to a total of 4.5 years imprisonment.



Rojeen Ibrahimy and Delnia Sabouri have been charged for disseminating anti-government propaganda and holding ceremonies for the International Labor Day. The two women had been summoned to the Department of Intelligence of Kamyaran and interrogated on May 21, 2016.



Basic freedom and rights abused

On October 6, 2016, mullah Alamo l-Hoda, Khamenei's representative to the Razavi Khorassan Province (northeastern Iran), announced in a speech that was wired by the official IRNA news agency said, "Reason and logic are not effective in dealing with women who wear leggings in the streets as examples and manifestations of those who have targeted Virtue and Veil. We need an operational organ that could stand firm and that (organ) is the State Security Force."

He further added, "You must see an unveiled or mal-veiled woman in the street as the infantry troops of the enemy and you must see her as the target of your operation." (The state-run Mazand Majlis website - October 8, 2016)



The deputy director of the Staff for Promoting Virtue in Boushehr Province (southern Iran) announced that by the end of the Iranian year (mid-March), some 100 councils will be set up throughout the province to force women to wear the compulsory veil.

Aalipour added, "To provide legal support for this institution, the Justice Ministry, the SSF command and other relevant agencies have made the necessary collaborations." (The state-run Tasnim news agency - October 2, 2016)

Deputy Provincial Governor of Hamedan announced on October 8, 2016, that 136 Councils of Promoting Virtue in government offices and departments throughout the province are monitoring women.

Elahi-tabar added, "The employees' directorate of the Staff of Promoting Virtue focuses its activities on four items: Virtue and Veil, citizens' rights, inspections of the employees' veil and virtue, and supervision of private offices." (The state-run Fars news agency - October 8, 2016)

Following the instructions of the Ministry of Education, a committee was formed in Tehran's



Khajeh Nassir Tousi University to deal with girl students who do not observe their hijab (or proper veiling).

The cultural dean of Khajeh Nassir University pointed out that if a student fails to act according to the Plan on Virtue and the Veil, the committee will deal with her. (The state-run Mizan website - October 1, 2016)

New restrictions are also going to be imposed on girl students of Ahwaz's Jondi-Shapour School of Medical Sciences in a bid to overcome their defiance of the compulsory dress code. The announcement was made by cultural dean, Farhad Hamzeh-louii, in an interview with the state-run ISNA news agency when he spoke of the school's year-long planning in this regard. (The state-run ISNA news agency - October 21, 2016)

Ahwaz is the capital of the oil-rich, southwestern Province of Khuzistan.

In other developments, a member of Tehran's City Council announced, "The trend of young women's escape to Tehran has increased 12% compared to last year."

Massumeh Abad added that some of these women and girls are ultimately imprisoned.

The deputy head of the Welfare Organization announced that the number of women sleeping in cardboard boxes in the streets and looking for food in the garbage is on the rise.



Moussavi Chelek said that in addition to prostitution, "looking through the garbage to find food and leftovers" is another way these women earn their living. He predicted that this phenomenon would soon surface in small towns as well. (The state-run ILNA news agency - October 8, 2016)



A member of Children's Rights Association announced that there are 36,000 divorced (girl) children under 18 years of age in Iran.

Tahereh Pajouhesh added, "Marriage in childhood is a kind of violence by itself. Girl children are forced to do housework, something that prevents growth of

their talents. We witness that many of these girls become depressed." (The state-run Tabnak website - October 9, 2016)

Religious and ethnic minorities

Nika and Nava Kholousi are prisoners of conscience held in Vakilabad Prison of Mashhad.



Together, they are sentenced to 10 years and six months imprisonment for being of Bahaii faith. The two sisters were arrested in March 2014.

Parvaneh Mehrabkhani, elite student of the Medical Sciences University of Qazvin, was expelled from university because of believing in Baha'ii faith.



Ms. Mehrabkhani was contacted on the phone on October 5, 2016, by the university's office and told that she was deprived of continuing her education.

She was a junior student of Laboratory Sciences and had only two semesters left to receive her degree.

Women's Protests

On October 7, 2016, a group of women who had applied for housing, staged a rally outside the Governor's office in Mashhad, capital of the northeastern Province of Khorassan Razavi. They protested against the officials' unaccountability and hollow promises on the delivery of the houses they had bought. In their gathering, the women chanted slogans against Rouhani's government and its failure to provide them the houses they had bought.



On October 6, 2016, a group of pre-school teachers held a protest outside the Governor's Office in Rasht, capital of the northern Iranian province of Gilan. They demanded to be officially employed. Pre-school teachers have staged a number of protest demonstrations since last year, but have not received any positive responses from the government. These women have to live on very small wages.

Girl students of the University of Qum expressed their protest on October 18, 2016, against discriminations and deprivations in the university policies.

They said all the educational accommodations at the Technical School of Massoumiyeh are exclusively at the disposal of male students and even on the special occasions, the school's main educational services are granted to male students. They also complained of the extremely low quality of education at the Technical School.

Girl students of the University of Neishaboor (northeastern Iran) staged a protest for three consecutive days to protest the chaotic and disorderly situation in their dormitories and increased boarding fee.



They signed a letter criticizing the authorities for not responding to their demands and urged them to take action in this regard. (The state-run ISNA news agency - October 19, 2016)

Dozens of preschool teachers in the northern province of Golestan staged a protest on October 20, 2016, outside the Governor's Office in Golestan. They demanded implementation of the new employment law. Presently, there are more than 700 preschool teachers in Golestan Province who face numerous problems and remain in an undecided situation.



The memorial ceremony for Reyhaneh Jabbari held on October 20, 2016, was raided and her mother, Sholeh Pakravan, was arrested.

Reyhaneh Jabbari, 26, was executed on October 25, 2014, after 7.5 years of imprisonment for defending herself against rape by an Intelligence Ministry official.



The second anniversary of Reyhaneh's demise was held at 3 p.m. at section 95 of Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery. Her mother made a daring speech demanding justice for the unfair execution of her daughter. Other participants declared solidarity with Reyhaneh's family and supported the campaign for abolition of the death penalty and prosecution of murderers of the Iranian youths and covered

Reyhaneh's tomb with loads of flowers.

Intelligence agents and security forces initially destroyed the equipment and chairs arranged for the memorial service and charged to disperse the people who had gathered for the ceremony but were forced to retreat in the face of the participants' protest.

In addition to Ms. Pakravan, a number of her friends and individuals who had participated in this ceremony were arrested, and released later.

A group of woman teachers declared their support on October 22, 2016, for the Secretary General of the Teachers Corporate Union of Iran, Ismail Abdi, and for labor activist Mahmoud Beheshti Langroudi, both of whom have recently received prison sentences. The teachers demanded justice and freedom of action for the activists.



A group of preschool teachers from various cities in the northern province of Mazandaran gathered outside the Governor's Office on Thursday, October 27, demanding to receive their salaries and enjoy their rights. They demand implementation of the law on employment of teachers. They also protested government officials for not delivering on their promises.



Supporters of prisoner of conscience Mohammad Ali Taheri staged a series of protests from October 19-30, demanding immediate release of Mr. Taheri who is kept in detention despite completion of his prison sentence.

The protestors most of them women held their protest rally outside the Baghiyatollah Hospital in Tehran.



A number of women were beaten up and arrested in the protest rally on October 21, 2016. Security forces hit a woman on the head with batons, causing her to pass out, and arrested her son.

On October 24, 2016, Special Guards forces intervened and a motorcyclist unit attacked the demonstrators with clubs, batons and pepper spray. A number of participants were injured and taken to medical centers and a large number arrested.



At least four women -Melika Kavandi, Nahid Babazadeh, Baharak Azarnia, and Zahra Shafii- were among those arrested. They have protested the violent and illegal behavior of security forces by going on hunger strike. A number of them have been badly beaten up but denied treatment and are presently suffering under bad physical conditions.



Security forces prevented the protesters' gathering on Thursday, October 27, 2016, and deployed female plainclothes agents to counter young women and girls who participated in this protest.

The protesters gathered again on Sunday, October 30, 2016, outside the UN office building in Tehran. Security forces intervened and tried to disperse the crowd. Mohammad Ali Taheri is founder of cosmic mysticism (Erfan-e Halgheh). He was arrested in May 2011 and sentenced to five years imprisonment, 74 lashes and 900 million tomans of cash fine. The Iranian judiciary has refused to release Mr. Taheri after serving his sentence and has extended his prison term on new charges.

Mr. Taheri has started his sixteenth hunger strike since September 28th.

Hysteric reaction to support for Resistance

The students of Tehran's Sharif Industrial University published the name and photograph of Maryam Rajavi in the special issue of the university's alumni magazine. The students' measure provoked wild reactions by the Iranian regime.

The state-run Jam News wrote that the Iranian Resistance's President-elect had been listed among "former students and prides of the university."



The state-controlled Iranian radio and television news network reported that 33 parliamentary deputies had issued a warning to the Minister of Science and Higher Education, "demanding explanation on the reason for printing (Maryam Rajavi's) picture in the special issue of the Sharif University alumni."

The state-run Mehr news agency also reported that the university's president has censured this measure and ordered suspension of all the on-campus activities of the alumni association which he claimed had no organizational ties with Sharif Industrial University. Mehr pointed out that all copies of the magazine had been collected and the necessary legal actions are underway against those responsible.

Nevertheless, all of the Iranian regime's major new media and social networks have widely reported and disseminated the news of publication of Mrs. Rajavi's picture in the Sharif University alumni's magazine.

Some of the regime's media have reported that the picture had been published in the previous year's issue as well.

