

WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RESISTANCE OF IRAN
MONTHLY REPORT

FEBRUARY
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Iran



Introduction

The Iranian regime resumed ruling for harsh and cruel punishments for women in the month of February.

At least two women were sentenced to death, two women were sentenced to flogging, one to stoning and another to retribution by blinding.

Women were beaten up in public and arrested for improper veiling or attempting to enter sports stadiums. More women were arbitrarily arrested for defending human rights or proselytizing their beliefs.

Amnesty International in its annual report issued on February 22, 2017, pointed to the rampant arbitrary arrests of women in Iran and wrote, "The authorities renewed their crackdown on women human rights defenders and increasingly likened any collective initiative relating to feminism and women's rights to criminal activity."

Nevertheless, women played an active and prominent role in the social protests. They were at the frontline of all protests by teachers, workers, government employees and other social strata.

Women had a significant presence in the extensive demonstrations in Ahwaz in protest to continuous water and power outages and dire environmental conditions that lasted almost a week.

The Iranian Resistance's President-elect Maryam Rajavi sent a message to the people of Ahwaz and Khuzistan, especially the women and youths, and urged them to unite their ranks and escalate their protest demonstrations for their just demands.

Systematic violations of the right to life

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

Two women received death sentences in the month of February.

On February 16, 2017, the Iranian regime's Supreme Court turned down the appeal for re-examination of the case of **Zeinab Sekaanvand** who is sentenced to death. She was 17 at the time of alleged crime. Ms. Sekaanvand has denied the charges against her.

A young woman, 27, from the southeastern Sistan-o Baluchistan Province has been sentenced to death in Mashhad. The unidentified woman, **mother of six**, is charged with drug-trafficking.



Inhumane treatment and cruel punishments

Several cruel punishments were handed out in February.

The Criminal Court of Lorestan Province sentenced a man and a woman to **stoning** on February 3, 2017. The woman was identified as S.M. The verdict was issued for the public dissemination of a video clip showing the illicit relationship between a clergy and a woman in Gerab, Koohdasht. (The state-run Kashkan website, February 3, 2017)

A woman was sentenced to the **blinding** of one eye, and seven years imprisonment in Dehdasht, capital of the western Iranian province of Kohgiluyeh. (The state-run Tasnim news agency – February 3, 2017)

Another young woman in Tehran was sentenced to **99 lashes** and internal exile merely for calling and texting a man. (The state-run T.news website, February 4, 2017)

A 32-year-old woman by the name of Nahid was sentenced to 15 years in prison and **99 lashes** of the whip for illicit relations with a man who drugged, raped, filmed and blackmailed her. (The state-run Rokna.ir, February 18, 2017)

An elderly woman, Saharnaz Moussavi, was **beaten up** by Isfahan's Dastgerd Prison guards on February 11, 2017, and subsequently **abandoned** in the street when she inquired about her imprisoned son, Qanbar Ali Safari.

Mahdiss Mirghavami, an engineer, ended her own life after being **sexually assaulted** in the detention center of Kermanshah's Intelligence Department. She committed suicide by taking rice pills immediately after she was released. She had been summoned to the Intelligence Department on January 24, 2017, and detained for two days. Her family had been threatened by the Intelligence Ministry not to make their daughter's case public.

Prison Conditions

Human rights advocate and anti-death penalty activist **Shahnaz Akmali** was deprived of access to legal counsel and visitation by her family while in detention. Ms. Akmali was temporarily freed from jail on February 18, 2017, on a 100-million-touman bail (\$30,800) until her trial convenes.

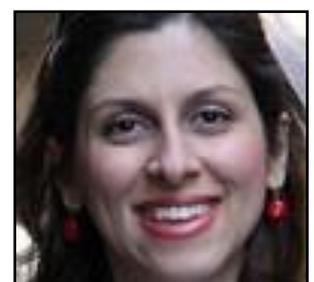
She had been arrested at home on January 25, 2017, by six security forces who took her to the Evin Prison. Agents of the Ministry of Intelligence (MOIS) later called her daughter, Maryam Karimbeigi and threatened to burn their house. Ms. Akmali lost her son, Mostafa Karimbeigi, during the 2009 uprising.

Kurdish political prisoner, **Oadrieh Oaderi**, is denied treatment despite acute ear infection, severe headache and numbness of her hand.

Prison authorities prevented hospitalization of **Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe** despite deterioration of her illness. The British-Iranian prisoner held at Evin Prison needs to be dispatched to hospital to be treated by neurologists.

Tahereh Riyahi, journalist, is in critical physical conditions in prison. Ms. Riyahi suffered seizures under interrogation. She is denied visits but in a telephone contact with her family she told them not to wait for her any longer.

Massoumeh Zia, held in solitary confinement at Evin Prison's Ward 209, is deprived of family visits. An informed source said Ms. Zia has not been permitted to have a lawyer. There is no information available on the details of her case.



Political prisoner **Soheila Minaii**, 27, was transferred to solitary confinement of Kerman Prison on February 22, 2017. She was due to stay in solitary for one week for insulting Khamenei, the mullahs' supreme leader, and other government officials.



Arbitrary arrests and detentions

Raheleh Rahemipour was sentenced to two years in jail on the charge of acting against national security, for pursuing the fate of her niece, Golrou Rahemipour, who was born in prison in 1983. Golrou was separated from her mother when she was only 14 days old. In response to her parents' inquiry, prison guards told them that Golrou was dead.



Massoumeh Sadeghi was arrested in a raid on her class by security forces in Isfahan on February 12, 2017.

Security forces raided the residence of civil activist, **Nora Najafi**, on Tuesday, February 14, 2017. They intimidated the residents and threatened to break into the house.



Civil rights and women's rights activist **Farzaneh Jalali** was arrested February 23, 2017, in Kermanshah (western Iran). She had been summoned by phone to the Department of Documents Registration but was arrested when she reported in.



Mehrnaz Haghighi, physician and civil rights activist, was arrested in the southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas on February 19, 2017, and taken to an unknown location.

Violations of basic freedoms and rights

Dorsa Derakhshani, member of the Iranian Women's National Chess Team and the sixth world champion in under-18 games, was deprived of participating in national tournaments for not covering her hair in the Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival. The director of Iran's Chess Federation, Mehrdad Pahlevanzadeh, said she deserves to be "seriously dealt with" for not observing the veil in Egypt. (The state-run Fars news agency, February 18, 2017)



Sunday, February 12, 2017, **eight young women** who attempted to enter Tehran's Azadi Stadium to watch the game between Persepolis and Esteghlal football teams, were arrested during inspections before passing the entrance gate. (The state-run ISNA news agency – February 14, 2017)



"The **unemployment** rate of young women in Iran reached its highest level in 20 years, in 2015," so declared the presidential deputy on women and family affairs, Shahindokht Molaverdi. She said, "The unemployment rate of youths has increased in recent years from 14.8 per cent in 1996 to 21.9 per cent in 2014." (The state-run Psychnews.ir – January 22, 2017)



Ethnic and Religious Minorities

Sholeh Ram and her husband, Shayan Rahimi, were arrested on February 1, 2017, in Zahedan by intelligence and security forces and transferred to an unknown location.



Social Conditions

A government official announced that only 18 per cent of **women heads of household** have jobs and employment. He said the number of female-headed households will reach 3.5 million by the end of this (Persian) year in March 2017. (Ebrahim Ghaffari, the state-run Tasnim news agency – February 12, 2017)

Girl children of Qeshm study in tents because the classrooms are very old and badly worn out and the government has not attended to their schools. (The state-run IRNA news agency – February 1, 2017)



Women top the list of those **deprived of education** in the southwestern province of Khuzistan in Iran. (Gholamreza Shariati, the state-run Mehr news agency – February 6, 2017)



Infant mortality rate in Iran is five times the developed countries', said Ali Akbar Sayyari, deputy Minister of Health. He said, "Every year, 15,000 infants lost their lives in Iran. That is, for every 1000 births, there are ten Iranian infants who die." He also stressed, "Every year, some 300 mothers die in Iran."



The latest official statistics show that **one woman is addicted** in Iran for every 9 male addicts. (Hamidreza Fat'hi, the state-run IRNA news agency, February 5, 2017)

In the evening of Saturday, February 11, 2017, a young woman from Mahabad hanged herself and died. **Pariya Mohammad Shiekheh**, 22, was a student of accounting at the Free University of Mahabad.



Shadi Khaliani, 14, committed suicide on February 15, 2017, by drinking acid due to restrictions she faced in the family. The horrifying incident happened in the city of Naghadeh in West Azerbaijan Province.

A young woman was **stabbed to death** by her father on February 2, 2017, in Qa'emshahr, northern Iran, for taking part in a night party. (The state-run Rokna.ir, February 6, 2017)

Prisoners' protests

Political prisoner **Maryam Akbari Monfared** wrote to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced Disappearances and urged them to probe the case of her siblings massacred by the Iranian regime in 1988.

In her letter on February 17, 2017, Ms. Akbari asked the UN experts to hold the regime accountable for the execution of her brother, Abdolreza, and her sister, Roqieh Akbari Monfared, in summer 1988.



Four political prisoners detained in the women's Ward of Evin Prison expressed serious concern about the detention of Shahnaz Akmali in Ward 209 of Evin Prison. Maryam Akbari Monfared, Nargess Mohammadi, Atena Daemi and Golrokh Iraee expressed their protest by sending out an open letter demanding immediate and unconditional release of Ms. Akmali.

Women's social protests

The people of **Ahwaz**, with prominent presence of women, began several days of demonstrations on February 12, 2017, in protest to frequent water and power outages and severe air pollution in the capital of Khuzistan Province. The protesters chanted, "Death to tyranny", "clean air is our right, Ahwaz is our city", among other slogans.

Intelligence forces and plainclothes agents attacked hundreds of people rallying in **Tehran's Vanak Square** in support of Khuzistan protesters on February 16, and arrested four women.

A number of women defending human rights and the families of death-row prisoners gathered on February 25, 2017, outside the parliament in Tehran and demanded **abolition of the death penalty**. The protesters were from Tehran, Charmahal-o Bakhtiari, West Azerbaijan, Isfahan and Qeshm.

A number of **retired teachers** including a remarkable number of women staged a protest in front of the Budget and Planning Organization on February 14, 2017 in Tehran and demanded their 30-year bonuses.

Teachers who have contracts with the Department of Education in Hamedan (western Iran), held a gathering on February 23, 2017, in front of the Governor's Office to protest the department's failure to pay their salaries for six months. Many of the protesters were women. Women teachers also staged a gathering on February 22, 2017, with the same demand outside the office of the parliamentary deputy from Hamedan.

A number of **workers and labor activists** staged a protest in Tehran on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, in protest to the Iranian regime's policies against workers. Female labor activists actively participated in the protest and carried large banners indicating workers' demands.

Hundreds of **retired teachers and staff** of the Education Ministry, including a large number of women, staged protest demonstrations on February 21 and 27, 2017, across from the Iranian parliament and demand balancing of their salaries with others.

Hundreds of people including a large number of women staged a protest demonstration on February 19, 2017, outside the Iranian parliament (Majlis). The protesters had placed deposits with the Caspian Credit, a company operating with a license from the Iranian Central Bank that plundered their deposits. The protesters demanded the government and the Central Bank to refund their money.

Another protest with active participation of women was held on the same day in front of the parliament in Tehran. People who have applied for **housing** from the Mehr Housing Foundation, demanded granting of their requests. They held placards protesting the government for their homelessness and undecided state.

