

Mullahs' laws reduce women to baby making machines



A special report by
NCRI Women's Committee

Population growth, mullahs' hoax to exploit women

Introduction

Iran is a large country with a population of 79 million. According to the official census conducted by the Iranian government, the average birth rate was 7 births per woman in 1980's; this rate has dropped to 1 birth per 85 women in 2014.

Widespread poverty and economic hardship are the main reasons behind this plunge. In light of the 21st century modern lifestyle and cultural shift, Iranian women demand their freedom as well as individual and social rights.

The government uses population growth as a tool for further suppression of women. Contrary to the beliefs of the public, both men and women, the misogynist government of Iran is deploying medieval tactics to force women back to their homes. They have passed an assortment of laws to accomplish this objective and rein in the danger of half of the population by sending them home.

By the logic of the Velayat-e faqih regime, government officials allow themselves to interfere in all the private matters of family life. On Khamenei's order, Iran's population must increase to between 150 and 200 million, of course, at the cost of suppressing and exploiting women.

Population growth chronology and policies

In a speech to his panegyrists in early April 2013, the Iranian regime's supreme leader Ali Khamenei brought up without any apparent relevance the issue of women's "special privileges" which in his opinion were none but homemaking, giving birth to children, and raising them. He emphasized that homemaking and giving birth to children are a great crusade and a feminine art which is accompanied by patience, love and passion.

<http://www.mashreghnews.ir/fa/news/211401>

Later in May, the regime's parliament started drafting a bill to fulfill Khamenei's wish. As expected, this bill was a tool for violating women's rights and freedoms. Article 9 of this bill has defined the priorities of employment in the public and private sectors as the following:

- 1- Men with children
- 2- Married men without children
- 3- Women with children

The amendment to this bill states: Five years after the enforcement of this law, it would be forbidden to recruit singles for membership in the scientific board of all public and private universities and institutes of higher education and research, and as teachers.

Subsequent articles in this bill are more blatant with regards to women. Articles 17 and 18 instruct the repressive Bassij and state security forces to intervene in family disputes and quarrels and try to reconcile the couples. The same instructions were addressed to lawyers

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and judges with promise of incentives. Obviously, women are the losing party under such laws.

Article 19: The Lawyers League and the Center of Judiciary Counsels are obliged to handle divorce cases in a way as to give priority to reconciliation between couples over separation.

Amendment 1: Lawyers deserve to receive their full wage regardless of the stage in which the case of family dispute is resolved by reconciliation.

Amendment 2: Based on the number of cases concluded with reconciliation, points will be registered in the lawyer's evaluation record and considered for promotion.

Article 25: The Judiciary branch is duty bound to pay special bonuses to judges who resolve divorce cases with the couples' reconciliation.

In April 2014, the regime's parliament that had encountered obstacles in ratifying its misogynist bill, introduced another legislation to remove the obstacles for implementation of the initial bill. According to the new legislation, the legal age of marriage and pregnancy was lowered even further. In the meantime, women's vacation had been predicted as nine months, but was eliminated by the Guardians Council.

<http://www.hamshahrionline.ir/details/255373>

All these bills, however, seemed not enough to satiate the mullahs' misogynist hysteria. The parliament passed yet another bill in late April to "increase fertility rate and prevent population decline". According to this bill, all measures related to abortion and vasectomy and all advertisements for birth control and reduction of pregnancy are banned and their perpetrators will be punished.

<http://kayhan.ir/fa/news/9873>

In April 2014, Khamenei announced the general population policies, emphasizing on the same laws:

- 1- Promotion of dynamism, growth and youthfulness of the population by increasing the fertility rate.
- 2- Removal of obstacles to marriage, facilitating and promoting marriage and having more children, lowering the legal age for marriage, etc.

<http://www.talarweb.net/home/1393/03>

In the summer 2014, new details emerged when the bill for increased fertility was finalized. The regime's officials in the parliament banned any surgery aiming to permanently prevent pregnancy and vowed to punish perpetrators.

<http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13940107000609>

In February 2015, Mohammad Esmail Motlagh, executive director of the Office of Health, Population, Family and School in the Ministry of Health, declared, "There are 11 million unmarried girls and boys in the country who have reached the age of fertility."

<http://www.asriran.com/fa/news/382048>

Regime's laws and lobbying

The official laws of the parliament and government were propagated from all official and unofficial forums. The mullahs' principles went beyond official and legal sentences, taking the form of advice and common language, revealing the depth of their medieval thinking. In a supposedly religious Q&A session broadcast by the state-run La'ab al-Mizan, a woman asks, "I am a 23 year old housewife with a 2.5 year old son. I have been passed the entrance exam and interview for admission to the seminary school. I am contemplating if I should go? Some say that taking care of my husband is more important. What should I do? Should I leave my son in a daycare center and go to school or should I stay home?"

A mullah named Taherzadeh answered, "It seems that raising your children and observing the needs at home are more important. A noble and spirited woman does not want to be her husband's lover, but a mother. This should not be the mother of one child, which is an amusement, but the mother of countless children."

<http://lobolmizan.ir/faq/1267>

Another state-run website shows a mullah's family with seven children.

<http://www.tebyan.net/newindex.aspx?pid=265933>



Azad University of Minoodasht published yet another abhorrent Q&A as complement for its course on Family and Population. The answer is given by Khamenei himself. Khamenei says a woman is not entitled to take birth control pills without her husband's permission. He states that IUD implants are permissible only if the husband agrees. Khamenei emphasizes that during the procedure "touching and viewing by the physician is not permissible"!

On the other hand, he emphasizes that men can undergo vasectomy at any time and without the consent of their spouses.

<http://popfa.persianblog.ir/page/10>

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The mullahs impudently convey their wishes to the entire society by offensive caricatures.

<http://www.talkhandak.com/1392/10/01/%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%AF-%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%B4%D8%AA%D8%B1-%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%AF%DA%AF%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D9%87%D8%AA%D8%B1-3/>



Bahman Bahmani, executive director of the Marriage and Enhancement office of the Youth and Physical Education Ministry, forgets his duty of observing sex-segregation at work environments and says, "One of our duties is to provide a suitable environment for people to get married; one way would be to encourage coworkers to get married."

<http://www.mehrnews.com/news/2521766>

Amnesty International opinion

In its statement on March 11, 2015, Amnesty International strongly condemned the above mentioned laws and wrote: "Women in Iran could face significant restrictions on their use of contraceptives and be further excluded from the labor market unless they have a child." These laws indicate "the extreme lengths the Iranian authorities are going to in order to encourage repeated childbearing in a misguided attempt to boost the country's declining population figures." Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Deputy Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International said, "The proposed laws will entrench discriminatory practices and set the rights of women and girls in Iran back by decades. The authorities are promoting a dangerous culture in which women are stripped of key rights and viewed as

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baby-making machines rather than human beings with fundamental rights to make choices about their own bodies and lives." She adds, "The bills reinforce discriminatory stereotypes of women, and mark an unprecedented move by the state to interfere in people's personal lives. In their zealous quest to project an image of military might and geopolitical strength by attempting to increase birth rates, Iran's authorities are trampling all over the fundamental rights of women - even the marital bed is not out of bounds." Amnesty International states that this bill would increase gender-based discrimination especially against women. By depriving women's rights to comprehensive family planning, authorities have violated women's human rights and have endangered their health. Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui adds, "Without such access, women will either have to carry their pregnancies to term when it is not their choice to do so; or risk their life and health by undergoing unsafe, clandestine abortions. Unsafe abortions are among the leading causes of maternal mortality worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2008 unsafe abortions led to the deaths of 47,000 women and caused disabilities for five million women."

This law allows for police and the judiciary system to interfere in private life of citizens and it puts more pressure on women who already are victims of family violence. "Under Iran's civil code women seeking a divorce already need to prove they are facing "unbearable hardship", while men can divorce without giving any reason. Men also have the exclusive right to have at least two permanent wives in polygamous marriages and as many wives as they wish in "temporary" (sigheh) marriages." Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui says, "The bills send a message that women are good for nothing more than being obedient housewives and creating babies and suggests they do not have the right to work or pursue a career until they have fulfilled that primary role and duty. The bills contradict the reality of Iranian women who have at least until recently constituted the majority of university graduates, and around 17% of the country work force."

"Despite claims by Iran's authorities, including statements by President Hassan Rouhani that men and women in Iran are treated equally, in reality this is far from the truth. Sexual violence and discrimination against women in Iran is rife and women in Iran are denied equal rights with respect to marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance, travel, and even in their choice of clothing. Iran's Penal Code penalizes women and girls as early as nine years old who fail to cover their hair with a headscarf and comply with compulsory dress codes with imprisonment or a cash fine. These laws are regularly used by the police to harass and detain women in public for their appearance and clothing. According to Iran's existing Civil Code, a woman would not be entitled to spousal maintenance if she refuses to comply with the "duties of marriage", which can include refusing to have sex with her husband or leaving the house without permission.

A woman's testimony in court is valued at half that of a man in legal proceedings and reparations paid for killing or causing injury to a woman are half those payable for same harms to a man."

Early marriages are very common in Iran. Iranian authorities try to adhere to laws in order

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to prevent women's progress and force them to conform to roles as mother and spouse.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/articles/news/2015/03/iran-proposed-laws-reduce-women-to-baby-making-machines/>

Social Calamities

By going over just a fraction of the news, one can easily conclude that not only Iran does not need a population boost, but this notion violates human rights of all people living in Iran.

An electronic journal affiliated with the government on April 16, 2015 announced that 80% of Iranians live under the poverty line. <http://vista.ir/article/264811>

The official Mehr News Agency in its latest report on women's employment wrote: Educated women make up half a million of the country's absolute unemployed force.

The unemployment rate for women under 30 years of age is 43 per cent.

403,000 of the total 3 million women with an occupation earn living by working overtime.

Unemployment of women is 2.3 times the men and 27 million women have absolutely no role in production or economy.

Ali Rabii, Minister of Labor and Welfare, said his ministry faces the following problems:

"decline in the age of single women running a household, the availability of only seasonal jobs for women, the employers' distaste for hiring women and their inclination towards hiring single women, and finally shifting of women's jobs towards public services."

<http://www.mehrnews.com/news/2530820/>

On April 15, Ghanon Newspaper wrote: "The statement on the employment exam of 13 agencies, announced that out of 2800 job opportunities, only 16 opportunities were for women and there were 500 jobs with no mention of sex preferences." This is while 2400 job opportunities existed for men.

The Minister of Labor and Welfare, Ali Rabii, announced, "Women's unemployment is twice that of men's."

Mostafa Eghlima, chairman of the Social Workers Association, says: "If we ask women not to work, its first drawback would be on marriage. Men cannot marry if their wife is not employed. Imagine a man with a monthly salary of 700,000 tomans. He has to spend all of that for rent. Now, how is he going to provide for other things needed for a living? If a divorced woman is unemployed, you can imagine how much social damage this can create? She may be forced to resort to wrongdoings; she will be under tremendous social pressure and she even may commit suicide."

<http://www.ghanoononline.ir/News/47145>

Hassan Mosavi Chalak, chair of Iran's Social Workers Society, wrote: "There are more than

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2,563,000 women who are breadwinners of their families. We pay them only one fourth the amount ratified by law.”

<http://tnews.ir/news/697C39757662.html>

Mohammad Hassan Zada, technical and revenue deputy for the Social Welfare Organization, says, “Research conducted over 18 months on women’s dismissals upon returning to job after maternity leaves shows that from 145,000 women who used their six-month maternity leave, 47,000 were dismissed by their employers upon returning to work.”

<http://www.iran-zanan.com/social/cat-71/005742.php?q=print>

Mullahs don’t respect and support Iranian mothers. Last year, a young woman from Kohdasht called Parvaneh was forced to give birth to her baby in the hospital’s toilet after officials refused to admit her to the hospital for delivery.

The official ILNA News Agency reported on April 11 of a homeless woman who gave birth to her baby as she was carrying loads. In fact, she gave birth to a premature fetus whose body parts had not fully developed. The woman is very weak and feeble, but she had to search for bottles in the trash and carry them in order to earn her living. This was the second time she had a stillbirth.

www.ilna.ir/بخش-اجتماعی-۲۶۸۴۸۴/۵-تراژدی-تولد-مرگ-فرزند-نی-زیاله-گر-دنوزاد-مردہ-ای-کہ-منتظر-دفن-است

The last statistics provided by the Iranian government on street children in Tehran was in 2010. According to this figure, more than 13,000 children are wondering in Tehran’s streets. This number is on the rise with the deteriorating economic conditions.

<http://www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/459483>

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