

WOMEN IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE



Arbitrary trends and
illegal proceedings
victimizing female
political prisoners in
Iran

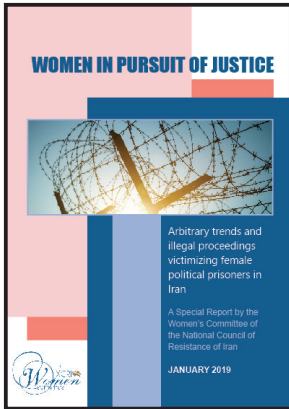
A Special Report by the
Women's Committee of
the National Council of
Resistance of Iran

JANUARY 2019



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Women in Pursuit of Justice

Arbitrary trends and illegal proceedings victimizing female political prisoners in Iran

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Introduction

Ever since the fanatic mullahs' rise to power in 1979, many dissidents have been facing imprisonment, torture, and executions. The main Iranian opposition group, People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), has reported over 120,000 of its members executed, one-third of whom are estimated to be women. The notorious massacre of 1988 carried out on Khomeini's fatwa (decree), claimed around 30,000 lives over the few months of summer that year. Incarceration of political opponents and human rights activists and repression of all forms of dissent comprise the predominant theme of the Iranian regime's rule ever since. As this study is being published, at least 86 women have been executed during Rouhani's tenure and a considerable number of female prisoners of conscience and political prisoners including those arrested during the uprisings of December 2017 and January 2018, are held behind bars. More than half of female political prisoners are detained in the Evin Prison. Although living conditions in Evin are horrific and inhumane, it is the only place where detainees are separated according to offenses. The rest of female political prisoners incarcerated in various prisons in Varamin, Urmia, Bukan, Tabriz, Khoy, Kermanshah, Zanjan, Ahvaz, Sanandaj, Kashan, Kerman, Marivan, Mashhad, Mahabad, Yasuj, Yazd, Semnan, and Shiraz, serve their unjust sentences amongst common criminals and often dangerous inmates. Prison conditions are abysmal and way below standard, in general. The situation, however, is worse for women given the misogynist nature of the Iranian regime and that the limited budget and facilities allocated to the Prisons Organization are primarily placed at the disposal of men whose numbers are several folds greater. Female prisoners are virtually deprived of their special psychological and sanitary needs and have to struggle even to obtain their basic daily essentials. These inhumane conditions persist while international laws extensively forbid political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights highlights the right to freedom of all human beings and specifically the freedom to proselytize their religion and thoughts. The declaration's Article 18 states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or

private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance". The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also states that no person shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest. Article 9 of the covenant states, "Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law." Other international laws discourage issuing prison sentences for women due to their roles as mothers and caregivers. Rule 61 of the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) reads, "When sentencing women offenders, courts shall have the power to consider mitigating factors such as lack of criminal history and relative non-severity and nature of the criminal conduct, in the light of women's caretaking responsibilities and typical backgrounds." Also, the "Cross-cutting issues" in the Handbook on Prisoners with special needs – UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – New York 2009), it is stated that, "Imprisonment should be used as a last resort for all offenders, taking into account the nature and circumstances of the offence, the risk the offenders pose to the public and the social reintegration needs of the offenders." The same article reiterates that, "All prisoners have a right to health, equivalent to that in the general community, as part of their basic human rights." Clearly, these standards are far from the conduct of the Iranian regime. Iran is a country where women are not only imprisoned for murder, robbery and social crimes, but for having different beliefs, drawing cartoons, writing a story against stoning or the death penalty, participating in peaceful protests, protesting against poverty and even for defending children's rights. In this study, the NCRI Women's Committee aims to shed light on the systematic violations of women's human rights in Iran in the process of arrest and imprisonment and hopes to receive support and attention by human rights advocates, lawyers, and relevant authorities from around the world.



1

Incarceration for exercising the right to peaceful protest

Peaceful protest to defend basic human rights is a right recognized in international laws and all states are urged to respect it.

The Constitution of the Iranian regime, too, has in principle 27 sanctioned the right to assemble and hold demonstrations provided that no one carries arms and that the event does not violate "Islam." Nevertheless, the clerical regime violates international laws, basic human rights, and even its own laws to severely deal with protesters. The regime also hands down heavy sentences for them. In the course of the December 2017-January 2018 uprisings against high prices and poverty, at least 500 young women and girls were among some 8,000 arrested protesters a number of whom died in prison under torture. There is still no information available on many of those arrested and the few who have been able to get in touch with the outside world from inside prison, have reported unfair punishments against themselves.

Sepideh Farhan

Sepideh Farhan Farahabadi was a graduate student of architecture and a civil activist who was arrested by security forces in January 2018. Agents of the Ministry of Intelligence (MOIS) took her to Ward 209 of Evin Prison where they could keep her under their own watch. For about one month, Ms. Farhan was detained and mistreated under interrogation without having access to lawyer. On February 17, 2018, she was freed from Evin on a 250-million تومان bail, but this was just the beginning. On July 7, 2018, when she had been called to report to the court, Sepideh Farhan found out that she had been tried in absentia on June 24, 2018, by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court and sentenced to 74 lashes and six years in prison. The young student had been sentenced to one year in prison and 74 lashes on the charge of "disrupting public order by participating in unlawful gatherings." She

was sentenced to another 5 years on the charge of "association and collusion to take actions against national security."

Roya Saghiri

Roya Saghiri, 24 and a student, was arrested along with seven other protesters on December 31, 2017, at the Sa'at Square of Tabriz, capital of East Azerbaijan Province. She was taken to the women's ward of the Central Prison of Tabriz. In June 2018, Roya Saghiri was sentenced to 23 months in prison by the 2nd Branch of the Revolutionary Court of Tabriz whose verdict was later upheld by the Revision Court. Roya Saghiri was charged among others with "propaganda against the state" and "insulting the supreme leader." Ms. Saghiri was also accused of "appearing in public without the religiously-prescribed veil through dropping her scarf on the street." She

Roya Saghiri, student of the Civil University of Tabriz, was summoned on August 25, 2018, to begin serving her 23-month sentence and she was taken to the Central Prison of Tabriz.

Mahin Taj Ahmadpour

Mahin Taj Ahmadpour, 46 from Tonekabon, was working as a street peddler before the uprising. During the January 2018 uprisings she was arrested along with 14 other persons. On May 2, 2018, Ms. Taj Ahmadpour was summoned by the 101st branch of the Penal Court 2 of Tonekabon where she was sentenced to six months in jail on the charge of "disrupting public order through participating in illegal gatherings." On August 11, 2018, she was sentenced to another four months in jail by the Revolutionary Court of Tonekabon on the charge of "disseminating propaganda against the state." On August 14, 2018, she was arrested and taken to the Nashtaroud Prison of Tonekabon to serve a total of ten months in jail.

Neda Yousefi

Neda Yousefi was arrested during the uprisings of January 2018 in the city of Shazand in Arak. She was released on bail but was later sentenced to one year in prison and 74 lashes by the 102nd branch of the Penal Court 2 of Arak in a trial presided by Judge Mohammad Reza Abdollahi.

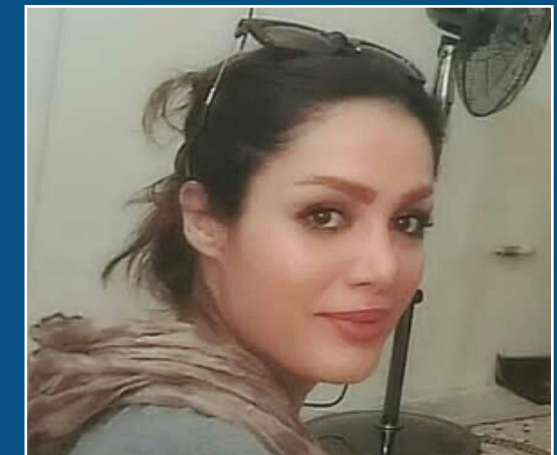
Sufi women

A violent crackdown on the protest of Gonabadi dervishes in Tehran on February 19, 2018, led to the arrests of a large number of protesters including women dervishes Sepideh Moradi, Sima Entessari, Shima Entessari, Avisha Jalaeddin, Shokoufeh Yadollahi, Maryam Farsiani, Nazilla Nouri, Maryam Barakouhi, Elham Ahmadi, and Sedigheh Safabakht who were taken to the women's prison of Qarchak in Varamin.

It has been reported that women are detained under dire conditions in the Qarchak Prison of Varamin. They are frequently deprived of their visitation rights. They are subjected to verbal abuse, including sexual slurs, and denied proper medical treatment.

In a report verifying the conditions of Sufi women in Qarchak Prison, Phillip Luther, Amnesty International's Research and Advocacy Director for the Middle East and North Africa, said, "These women from Iran's Gonabadi Dervish community should not even be imprisoned in the first place. It is deplorable that the Iranian authorities are seeking to intimidate and torment them further." (AI urgent action, May 25, 2018)

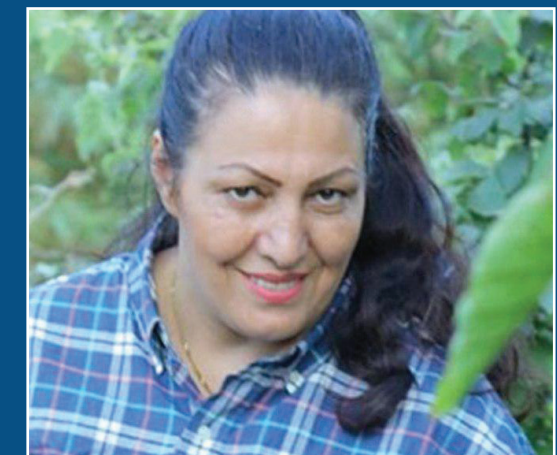
Amnesty International also noted reports that in a further deliberate attempt to abuse and degrade the



Sepideh Farhan



Roya Saghiri



Mahin Taj Ahmadpour

prisoners, the Gonabadi Dervish women have also been forced to pick weeds in the prison yard with their bare hands as a condition for being permitted telephone calls with their families and a couple of hours of fresh air during the day. Peaceful assembly and the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders acknowledges the legitimacy of participation in peaceful activities to protest against violations of human rights, and recognizes freedom of assembly as a very important element of this right (A/61/312, para. 76 and A/58/380, para. 24).



2

Violent arbitrary arrests

The arrest and imprisonment of people for their political or religious beliefs is contrary to the international law. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.”

The religious dictatorship ruling Iran has numerous organs to clamp down on the public, each of which acts independently to arrest anyone who opposes the regime. The State Security Force (SSF), the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), the paramilitary Bassij, and even the disciplinary committees at the universities are components of a vast network that cracks down on the Iranian people’s freedom of thought, expression and gathering.

These agencies arrest women in public, at workplace or at home without presenting legal warrants. At least 30 female political prisoners have been arrested without warrants and by use of force and violence.

In the majority of cases, including those of political prisoners Atena Daemi and Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee, the IRGC Sarallah Corps filed complaints as their private complainant. Then it sent a team of its own agents to make the arrest and then interrogate and determine the charges in subsequent stages. This organ also influences the stage of issuing verdicts without any effort to conceal its role.

Atena Daemi

Political prisoner Atena Daemi who is incarcerated in Evin prison for her activities in defense of human rights and against the death penalty, shared part of her arrest experience. In part of a letter that was leaked out of prison, she wrote, “They attacked our house today, November 26, 2016, while I was not raping any students, or embezzling any money, or issuing a death sentence for anyone. I was simply sleeping...!”

“On Thursday, November 24, 2016, I was contacted by the Revolutionary Court and told that they wanted to send me a subpoena and they needed my address. But they lied. Instead of a subpoena, they sent three agents to arrest me. Three agents who arrest women on the streets for being mal-veiled, invaded my privacy and watched me while I was not wearing a veil!

“According to the law, they must have sent me a

subpoena and waited at least five days for me to report in to the prison. Even if I did not go, prison agents or agents of the Directorate of Implementation of Sentences were the ones who could come and arrest me, not the Revolutionary Guards’ Sarallah Corps...

“We opened the door and asked to see their written warrant; they did not show any but roamed into the house... Again, I asked them to show their warrant but they attacked me. A woman started beating me and when my younger sister intervened, she pounded her in the chest. A male guard also attempted to use pepper gas against an unarmed and defenseless woman. They arrested me without letting me call and say goodbye to my parents who were on a trip...

“On the way, they kept threatening me that they would file spurious charges against me. They said, ‘We will cook up some soup for you (a Persian

proverb) so that you would forget thinking about coming out of prison!’” (Letter by Atena Daemi from the Women’s Ward of Evin Prison, November 26, 2016)

The IRGC agents had also filmed the arrest and intended to use the footage to pressure Ms. Daemi during interrogations.

Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee

Political prisoner Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee who is imprisoned in the Evin Prison has been charged with insulting the sanctities and disseminating anti-government propaganda and sentenced to six years’ imprisonment for writing an unpublished story against the inhuman punishment of stoning.

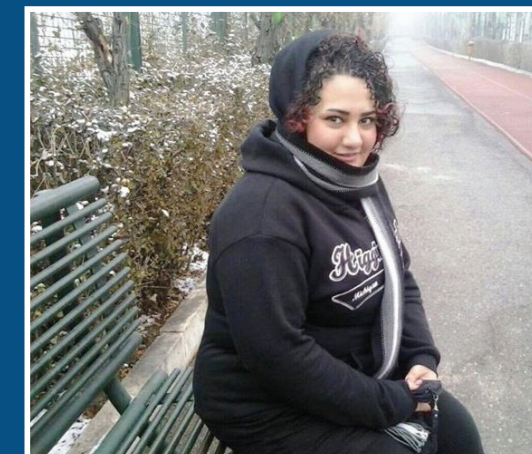
She was violently arrested by the IRGC without being shown the arrest warrant or any identifications. In response to Ms. Iraee’s request to take her Asthma medications with her, the IRGC forces told her that she would die in prison and there would be no need for her medicine.

Her trial had been held on a day when she had an appointment scheduled at a hospital to remove a brain tumor. She provided all the medical documents to the court, however, they issued a verdict in absentia and sentenced her to six years in prison. The lawyer she had chosen to represent her was not allowed in the court, either.

She was once released temporarily on January 22, 2017, following a 72-day hunger strike by her husband, political prisoner Arash Sadeghi, in protest to her illegal arrest. But the regime’s officials reneged on their promise and arrested her again with the same violent and illegal methods after Arash Sadeghi broke his hunger strike despite the Prosecutor’s admission that a breach had been committed in her case. The imprisoned couple were deprived of their weekly meetings and telephone contacts for one year, until they were recently allowed to see each other once. On January 24, 2018, Golrokh Iraee and Atena Daemi were brutalized under interrogation in Evin and forcibly transferred overnight to the notorious Qarchak (Shahr-e Ray) Prison in Varamin.

On February 3, 2018, they both went on hunger strike in protest to their illegal transfer to Qarchak Prison where the principle of separation of different categories of prisoners is not observed. Their demand was being returned to Evin Prison. On March 10, 2018, the personnel of Qarchak Prison roamed into the cell where Atena and Golrokh were being detained. They started humiliating and swearing at them and tried to transfer them by force to the mothers’ ward. The two prisoners prevented the attempt.

The next day, prison guards incited 18 dangerous prisoners to break into the Quarantine hall to terrorize the prisoners. They insulted Atena and Golrokh and attacked them, but 13 newly arrested women who were also detained in the same place prevented them from taking them away.



Atena Daemi



Golrokh Iraee with husband, Arash Sadeghi

Finally, a number prison guards including male guards entered the Quarantine and forcibly dragged them to the mothers’ ward.

Ms. Iraee was on hunger strike for 81 days. She lost 20 kilograms. The two prisoners were ultimately returned to Evin Prison after enduring much obstruction in receiving medical treatment after hunger strike.

Nargess Mohammadi

Nargess Mohammadi was arrested in May 2015 in a raid on her residence which was carried out without showing a legal warrant.

In 2012, the court ordered Ms. Mohammadi’s release indicating her “disability to endure punishment” because of emboli of lungs and muscular paralysis. She had also been arrested for her human rights activities and opposition to the death penalty.

Rahil Moussavi

Environmental activist Rahil Moussavi was also arrested by violence. Her right arm was hurt during the arrest. She was arrested for protesting to the drying of Karun River because of the Revolutionary Guard Corps plans implemented in Khuzestan Province.

Interrogation, torture, and other forms of cruel treatment

Torture is the main instrument by which the Iranian regime suppresses and intimidates its opponents. Any Iranian arrested for participating in the slightest activity against the inhuman policies of the ruling government is taken under torture.

Female political prisoners usually endure beating, flogging, suspending by the arms and legs, burning of their skin by cigarettes, and many other forms of barbaric practices. They are particularly threatened with rape and are in many cases raped to break their resistance.

In the 1980s, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards systematically raped virgin girls prior to their execution based on a fatwa by Khomeini, the regime's supreme leader. Maliheh Aghvami, Mahnaz Yousefzadeh, Mitra and Mandana Mojaverian and many other PMOI/MEK women were victims of this misogynist crime.

Elaheh Daknama is another example whose clothes were returned to her family after her execution. The Daknama family found a message written in Elaheh's own handwriting which read, "I was raped."

Sexual assault was a method widely practiced even during the 2009 uprising. A case in point was Taraneh Moussavi who was raped, brutally tortured to death, and her corpse burnt afterwards.

In general, in every interrogation session, there are five or six male interrogators who surround the female prisoner and attack and beat her. The prisoner is blindfolded during the interrogation to increase the fear and pain of the defenseless captive.

These pressures are aimed at breaking the prisoner and forcing her to make the specific confession sought by the interrogator to be used as the basis for unfair rulings against the detainee.

Zeinab Jalalian

Kurdish political prisoner Zeinab Jalalian is serving a life sentence in the Prison of Khoy, in West Azerbaijan. She was viciously tortured to make false confessions, but she did not give in.

She is suffering from GI infections and internal bleeding due to the brutal tortures she endured at the Kermanshah Intelligence Department. She is also suffering from severe eye injury as a result of the head bashings. In the absence of any medical care, these damages have led to the blinding of one eye, with her second eye following suit. The medical negligence still continues.

In a letter sent from prison in August 2018, Zeinab Jalalian wrote, "First, my eyes became weak, and afterwards my kidneys, my lungs, my blood pressure, and then my mouth began foaming, and eventually my teeth were damaged and infected. I have been forced to endure intense pain. As a political prisoner, I have no rights... I knew very well that if I requested treatment, I would not receive any answers, just like now."

Amnesty International stated in an urgent call for action dated June 15, 2018, that Zeinab Jalalian is subjected to torture by being denied medical care.

Afsaneh Bayazidi

Afsaneh Bayazidi is another Kurdish political prisoner who is detained in Kerman's Prison.

In a letter in September 2016, she wrote, "For 90 days, I was tortured by any conceivable means and method. In the early days of my detention, I was tortured so much that I was unable to walk. My legs and back were badly bruised all over. They beat me to the point that I was vomiting blood. They had absolutely no empathy. I was only a step away from death. Every time I mentioned the name of God, they would beat me even more and say, 'there is no God in the Intelligence Department.' At least twice, I was hung for several hours by my hands and feet.

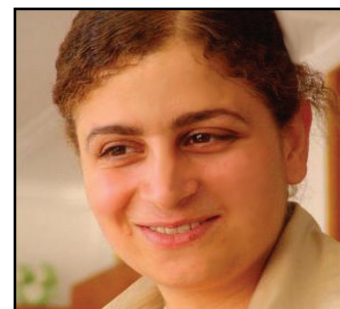
"I was blindfolded during the entire time of detention, interrogation, and torture such that my eyes have suffered injury and my vision is blurry.

"I have had asthma for 4 years but they took away my inhaler to torment and make me confess.

"I was threatened with 'sexual assault', with death and with detention of my mother. I was held in the bathroom of the Detention Centre of the Intelligence Department of Urmia for 11 days and they gave me my food right there. Even

animals are not treated in this way. Every night the agents passed by my cell and threw a kick so that I would not be able to rest. They called me a whore... In this way I was forced to make false confessions for them to cook a case against me; an inhumane scheme which finally got them what they wanted."

Ms. Bayazidi was viciously beaten up and sent to solitary confinement in September 2017 for writing a letter of protest to the mullahs' supreme leader, Ali Khamenei.



Esrin Aminzadeh

Esrin Aminzadeh, who is presently incarcerated in Sanandaj Prison, has been suffering from GI bleeding as a result of three months of extreme torture in the detention center of the Department of Intelligence in Saqqez.

Farideh Khoshnam

Farideh Khoshnam has been sentenced to 14 years of prison. She has received 80 lashes after 5 months of interrogation and torture as a result of which she is suffering from eye and leg injuries.

Sufi women

Sufi women have also been badly brutalized by prison guards in the Qarchak Prison of Varamin after getting arrested during civil protests in Tehran in February 2018. The beatings were due to a telephone call made by one of the Sufi women, Ms. Elham Ahmadi, who had called her small daughter to talk to her.

Another reason for the beating of imprisoned Sufi women was the dissemination of an audio file in the social media in which Elham Ahmadi had exposed the medical catastrophe in the Qarchak Prison. She and her cellmates were raided by prison guards and they were deprived of having visitations and telephone calls.

Excerpts from international laws

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment defines torture as: any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

The term "violence against women" in this declaration means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (Article 1)

Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following: (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs. (Article 2)

International human rights standards for prison officials

II. Right to Physical and Moral Integrity

All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated at all times with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person. 6

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

There are no exceptions. 7

Any statement made as a result of torture shall not be invoked as evidence in any proceedings, except as evidence to bring the perpetrators to justice. 14

International human rights standards for prison officials - 2005

IV. Health Rights of Prisoners

All cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments are completely prohibited, including corporal punishment or placing in a dark cell. 65



4

Solitary confinement and isolation

Political prisoners are directly transferred to solitary confinement following their arrest for a period of intensive interrogation under the control of agents of the Intelligence Ministry and/or the Revolutionary Guards Corps Intelligence. This process is accompanied by physical and psychological torture and various types of humiliating treatment.

Interrogations could last from a few days up to over a year and there is no law to define the length of this stage. The Intelligence Ministry interrogators have full authority over the prisoners and it is them who decide when they are done and what kind and what amount of pressure the prisoners must endure. Prisoners are held in absolute isolation, deprived of all interaction with the outside world. It is even impossible for them to contact their families. None of the agencies in charge provide any information on the prisoner's conditions or her whereabouts to her family or anyone else.

The prisoner is allowed to have only two sets of clothes and three army blankets. The cell door is opened only three times a day for three meals and the prisoner is taken to the bathroom three times a day. There is no way to control the heating or cooling system from within the solitary cell. A lamp, embedded in the wall, is lit 24 hours a day and the prisoner is not able to turn the light on or off. Prisoners do not even have access to a clock and the only way for them to estimate the time is the prayer call loudly blared into cells from a central system.

Isolation and solitary confinement is also used

as a punishment and is widely applied to political prisoners. The prisoner is sent to solitary confinement whenever she protests the prison authorities' inhuman treatment or unlawful measures. Solitary detention is also used when the prisoner manages to secretly send a letter out of prison. The use of solitary confinement or isolation is not accepted in international laws.

Article 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides that all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners also clearly express that solitary confinement, as a form of punishment, should be used infrequently and exceptionally.

It also stipulates in Article 31 that corporal punishment or punishment by holding a prisoner in a dark cell and any other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment are prohibited as a disciplinary measure. The Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners encourage the abolition or restriction of solitary confinement as a punishment.

Excerpts from international laws:

II. Right to Physical and Moral Integrity

The families, legal representatives and, if appropriate, diplomatic missions of prisoners are to receive full information about the fact of their detention and where they are held.²³



5

Prevention of visitations and phone calls

There are no criteria or standards for prisoners' visitation rights in the Iranian regime's prisons. Family visits and phone calls are used as a tool by prison authorities to exert more pressure on prisoners.

Prisoners can only communicate with first-degree family members for twenty minutes via a cabin meeting. A cabin meeting is a visit through a dirty and blurry window and through a headset that is controlled by prison authorities.

Many prisons, including the prisons of Khoy, Sanandaj and Yasuj, do not consider any visitation rights for prisoners.

Female political prisoners in the Sanandaj Prison are prohibited from visits and telephones are usually dysfunctional for long periods.

In the Prison of Yazd visits are done hastily and under stress. Headsets usually fail in the middle of meetings and there is no compensation for the time lost.

In Mashad's Vakilabad Prison, visitations are called off for various reasons. Prisoners are also denied the right to send and receive letters.

Sometimes, visitations and telephone calls are denied to punish prisoners. Political prisoners are punished when they protest arbitrary behavior and inhuman treatment by revolutionary guards or when they convey prison conditions to their families. If a prisoner sends a letter out of prison, she is severely punished. Punishments range from denial of visitations and telephone calls, to incarceration in solitary cells, to adding new charges to the prisoner's case, and in some cases sending the prisoner to internal exile.

Excerpts from international laws

International Human Rights Standards for Prison Officials

VII. Prisoners' Contact with the Outside World

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence.⁸⁴ All prisoners shall have the right to communicate with the outside world, especially with their families.⁸⁵

United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules)

Rule 23: Disciplinary sanctions for women prisoners shall not include a prohibition of family contact, especially with children.

Rule 26: Women prisoners' contact with their families, including their children, their children's guardians and legal representatives shall be encouraged and facilitated by all reasonable means. Where possible, measures shall be taken to counterbalance disadvantages faced by women detained in institutions located far from their homes.

Rule 43: Prison authorities shall encourage and, where possible, also facilitate visits to women prisoners as an important prerequisite to ensuring their mental well-being and social reintegration.

Rule 45: Prison authorities shall utilize options such as home leave, open prisons, halfway houses and community-based programs and services to the maximum possible extent for women prisoners, to ease their transition from prison to liberty, to reduce stigma and to re-establish their contact with their families at the earliest possible stage.



6

Judicial proceedings and illegal measures

Judicial proceedings do not conform to the regime's own laws, let alone international laws. The prisoner is confined to a solitary cell after being arrested to be forced under pressure and torture to make confessions against herself. During this period, the prisoner has no contact with the outside world to inform her family of her arrest and place of detention. Under such circumstances, it is totally impossible for the prisoner to have a defense attorney.

Zeinab Jalalian

Charge: Waging war on God through membership in PEJAK

Sentence: Life in prison

Place of detention: Prison of Khoy

Initially, she was sentenced to death for waging war on God through membership in PEJAK. Later, her sentence was commuted to life in prison but in the first place, it had been illegal to charge her with Mahrebeh (waging war on God) according to the Iranian regime's laws. Chapter 8, Article 279, of the Punishment Law defines Moharebeh as the following: "Moharebeh (or waging war on God) is using weapons to target one's life, property or family or terrify them in a way that makes the social setting insecure."

Whenever someone, with personal motive, aims a gun at one or more specific persons and their act does not target the public, also if a person aims a gun on people, but does not cause insecurity due to inability, the person is not considered a Mohareb. Zeinab Jalalian did not have any guns at her disposal at the time of arrest or any other time.

Article 288 of the same law states, "Whenever members of an outlaw group are arrested before confrontation and use of arms, they are sentenced to

third-degree imprisonment if that organization and its central committee exists. If the organization and its central committee were already dissolved, they are sentenced to fifth-degree imprisonment."

Based on this law, the third-degree imprisonment is between 10 to 15 years. While the sentence for Zeinab Jalalian was initially the death penalty later commuted to life imprisonment despite the fact that she did not carry any weapons.

The Iranian regime's officials who are aware of the illegal nature of their sentences, have repeatedly pressured Ms. Jalalian to do television interviews and make confessions against herself. They have even made her medical leave contingent on such interviews while one of her eyes has become blind due to torture and lack of treatment, and the other is going blind, as well.

Fatemeh Mossanna

Charge: Waging war on God through collaboration with the PMOI

Sentence: 15 years in prison

Place of detention: Evin Prison

Based on Article 288 of the Punishment Law, Fatemeh Mossanna has been handed down a sentence of 15 years in prison which is the maximum

sentence that could be issued for a member of an outlaw group.

Fatemeh Mossanna and her husband, Hassan Sadeghi, were simultaneously imprisoned for holding a funeral ceremony for Mr. Sadeghi's father who was a member of the PMOI/MEK. The is despite Article 141 of the Punishment Law which underscores that "penal responsibility is personal."

Ms. Mossanna also suffers from chronic rupture of her leg tendon due to lack of medical care in prison. In addition to such blatant violation of the law, the family's business and source of income has been confiscated and shut down by the regime. The authorities also intend to confiscate their house where Ms. Mossanna's mother and children presently live.

Fatemeh Mossanna's two brothers were executed in the 1980s. Ms. Mossanna was 13 at the time when she was incarcerated along with her mother who was imprisoned for supporting the PMOI/MEK.

Safieh Sadeghi

Charge: Waging war on God through membership in PEJAK

Sentence: 15 years in prison

Place of detention: Prison of Sanandaj

Safieh Sadeghi was viciously brutalized by intelligence agents during her interrogation period in solitary confinement to make false confessions. Forcible extraction of confessions is a routine practice of the Ministry of Intelligence (MOIS) in dealing with prisoners, in general, and with political prisoners, in particular. This practice is illegal even according to the Iranian regime's own laws. Articles 169 and 218 of the Punishment Law clearly state this.

Article 218 – Note 2: Confessions are religiously credible only when they are made in the court and before the presiding judge.

Article 169: Any confession that is extracted under compulsion, coercion, torture, or mental or physical duress is not credible and the court is obliged to re-investigate the accused.

Sepideh Moradi

Charge: Disruption of public order, assembly and collusion against national security

Sentence: 5 years in prison, plus a 2-year ban on leaving the country, membership in any political party, group or association and any activity on the internet

Place of detention: Shahr-e Ray (Qarchak) Prison

Sepideh Moradi was sentenced in absentia on August 9, 2018, by the Revolutionary Court of Tehran presided by Judge Salavati. Neither her or her lawyer



Zeinab Jalalian



Fatemeh Mossanna



Sepideh Moradi

were present in the trial. She had been summoned on July 14, 2018, by the 15th Branch of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran but did not report in, in protest to the Sufi prisoners' being denied their inalienable legal rights such as having access to lawyer.

Rouhiyeh Nariman

Charge: Baha'i conviction

Sentence: 2.5 years in prison

Place of detention: Prison of Shiraz

Rouhiyeh Nariman and her husband were sentenced for their faith and for teaching their pre-school child and several other Baha'i children at home.

The Baha'i couple asked the court to have their sentences implemented consecutively so that their child could stay with one of the parents, their request was turned down. On July 21, 2018, they were ordered to report in to the Directorate for Implementation of Sentences in Shiraz to begin serving their sentences.

Simultaneous imprisonment of both parents of a young child is carried out in accordance with the clerical regime's Constitution which has outlawed the Baha'i community in Iran in contrast to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which recognizes freedom of religion and belief as basic human rights.

Prisoners held under undecided status

Another common practice by the Iranian regime to put pressure on female political prisoners is holding them in an undecided status.

A prisoner with undecided status is someone whose interrogation has been completed and the Ministry of Intelligence has filed suit against her but her trial has not been convened. Sometimes, her court has convened but no sentence is issued for a long time. Detaining a prisoner in undecided status gives her interrogators an open hand to make any decision at any time on her fate or harass her by any conceivable method.

This practice has been rejected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and many other international laws.

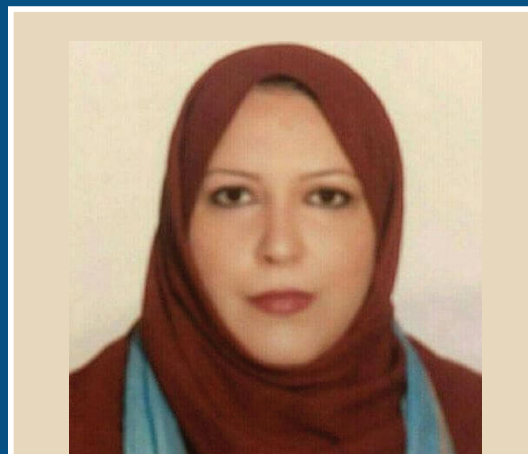
Some of the prisoners who have been detained in an undecided status are:

Marjan Davari

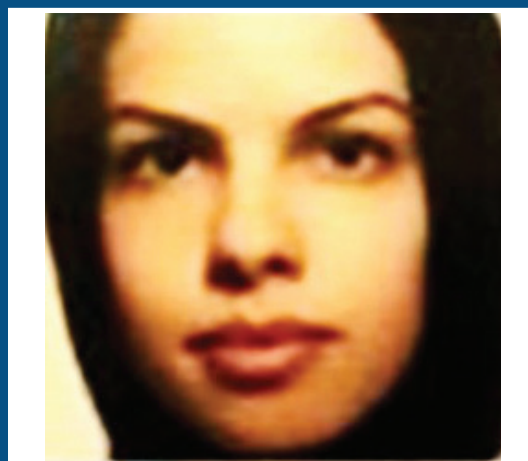
Marjan Davari arrested on September 24, 2015, was detained for almost two years in undecided status. Ms. Davari, 50, a researcher, translator and writer, was first interrogated at the Intelligence Ministry Ward 209 of the Evin Prison for three months and held in solitary confinement without having access to legal counsel.

She was subsequently transferred to the women's general ward in Evin on January 3, 2016. In February 2017 she was transferred to the Shahr-e Ray Prison, aka Qarchak Prison, in Varamin.

Marjan Davari was sentenced to death on March 12, 2017, by the 15th branch of the Revolutionary Court



Marjan Davari



Safieh Sadeghi



Rahil Moussavi

in Tehran. Her death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on January 6, 2018, by the Supreme Court. She is still detained in Qarchak Prison on charges of "spreading corruption on Earth," "collusion and complicity against the state," and insulting the mullahs' supreme leader, among others.

Golnaz Khosh Ahang who was arrested in 2014 on the charge of attempting to join a Kurdish party, was detained in undecided status; no news is available on her fate.

Rahil Moussavi was arrested on December 9, 2016, for protesting the desiccation of Karun River. There has been no news on her and she has had no contact with anyone outside prison; no news is available on her fate.

Zahra Ka'abi has been detained under undecided status since June 26, 2014; no news is available on her fate.

Sheilan and Kowsar Rahmanipour were detained in January 2015, for writing a protest letter to Khamenei. **Gita Rezaii Zeinali** was imprisoned in June 2014. None of them received any sentence and no news is available on their fate.

Na'imeh Taghavi, from Erfan-e Halgheh, was arrested on August 25, 2015, but there has been no information available on her legal status and detention conditions since then.

Negara Afsharzadeh (Karim Ova) was arrested in January 2014, and detained in an undecided state in Ward 209 of Evin Prison for at least 15 months before she was sentenced to 4 years and two months' imprisonment and 50 lashes. She has already served more than five years.

Excerpts from international laws

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 11: Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights - Article 9

2. Anyone who is arrested shall be informed, at the time of arrest, of the reasons for his arrest and shall be promptly informed of any charges against him.

3. Anyone arrested or detained on a criminal charge shall be brought promptly before a judge or other officer authorized by law to exercise judicial power and shall be entitled to trial within a reasonable time or to release.

It shall not be the general rule that persons awaiting trial shall be detained in custody, but release may be subject to guarantees to appear for trial, at any other stage of the judicial proceedings, and, should occasion arise, for execution of the judgement.

4. Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings before a court, in order that that court may decide without delay on the lawfulness of his detention and order his release if the detention is not lawful.

5. Anyone who has been the victim of unlawful arrest or detention shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

United Nations Standards Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

8. The different categories of prisoners shall be kept in separate institutions or parts of institutions taking account of their sex, age, criminal record, the legal reason for their detention and the necessities of their treatment.



Depriving prisoners of medical care

The Iranian regime's prison authorities do not see it as their responsibility to provide medical services to prisoners. The prisoners' health depreciates in prison; the sick gets sicker and the healthy suffer various disorders as a result of mental pressure as well as the inhumane and insanitary living conditions in prisons.

Prison authorities deny prisoners access to their medications even for terminal and dangerous illnesses. Amnesty International has reported that the Iranian regime has taken the prisoners' treatment hostage and exploited their basic rights to pressure them further.

Most prisons have clinics but they do not provide the simplest services and prisoners must buy painkillers and cold medicine from the prison's store. Special medications must be procured by the prisoner's family and go through a lengthy process of approval by the Prosecutor and intelligence officials before it gets to the prisoner and in many cases, the packages never reach the recipient. Most prisons do not have emergency medical services. When a prisoner has an accident or her health suddenly fails, it takes hours before the prisoner is issued permission to be transferred to a hospital. Clearly, this process is often ineffective. International laws require that prisoners have access to the highest medical care available to everyone in the country and free of charge. International human rights standards also stress that prison officials are not authorized to decide about the health of prisoners and this can be done only by the medical staff. The United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders also clarify that only the medical

staff shall be present during medical examinations and the guards and other people must leave the room, something that is too often violated by the Iranian regime.

Sufi women

At least 10 Sufi women from the Gonabadi Dervishes community have been frequently mistreated and insulted instead of being provided with medical care. These women who have been in Shahr-e Ray Prison since February 2018, suffer from various physical ailments including injury in the head, broken arm, and vaginal bleeding, due to harsh treatment by security forces during their arrests. They have been also deprived of receiving care for their previous illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

In part of its statement on the situation of Sufi women, Amnesty International states, "According to reports received by Amnesty International, the women have been subjected to hostile interrogation-style questions about their court cases and insults over their beliefs by doctors at Shahr-e Ray prison. There are concerns that doctors have also sought to degrade the women by exploiting cultural taboos around sexuality, asking the women intrusive questions about their sexual relations, such as whether they have "boyfriends" or are "sleeping

around with men."

Amnesty International cited a source saying that women requesting emergency medical care in the evening or at night have been refused treatment by doctors and nurses until the following day and even berated for purportedly disturbing the medical staff's sleep in the middle of the night.

Detainees also said a lack of stretchers and wheelchairs has resulted in fellow detainees being forced to carry sick prisoners out of their rooms and into the clinic, which has led to falls and other accidents.

Sepideh Moradi

Sepideh Moradi is one of these women who was beaten by clubs and badly hurt in the arm, elbow and fingers. Both of her legs also burned when security forces lobbed tear gas canisters at her, the scars of which still remained on Ms. Moradi's legs after five months. She has been deprived of the basic medical care she is in need.

Shokoufeh Yadollahi

Shokoufeh Yadollahi is another Sufi woman. She was taken to a hospital and had a CT scan done when it was diagnosed that she had lost her sense of smell. Nonetheless, she was returned to the quarantine ward of Qarchak without receiving the necessary treatment.

Ms. Yadollahi had been beaten on the head by security forces during the crackdown on the protests of Gonabadi Dervishes in February 2018, and suffered a skull fracture. She also suffers from vision problems, severe headaches and sinus infection.

Nazilla Noori

Having been through vicious torture in prison, Dr. Nazilla Noori was transferred to hospital on June 8, 2018, to undergo surgery. In hospital, security forces forced her to wear handcuffs and shackles and she was deprived of having anyone to accompany her.

Shahnaz Kian Asl

Another Sufi woman, Shahnaz Kian Asl, was transferred to the dispensary of Qarchak Prison of Varamin on Saturday, May 19, 2018, upon insistence of inmates but was returned to the ward without receiving any treatment.

Ms. Kian Asl has high blood sugar. Due to lack of medicine and suitable nutrition in prison, she suffered from serious symptoms such as stomach ulcer and gastritis, and a big mass appearing in her chest. Ms. Kian Asl was released from jail shortly after this incident due to her critical health condition.



10 Sufi women



Shokoufeh Yadollahi



Nazilla Noori



Shahnaz Kian Asl

Nargess Mohammadi

Charge: Disseminating propaganda against the state, association and collusion with the intention of acting against national security, formation of the illegal group, LEGAM (Against the Death Penalty)
Sentence: 16 years in prison
Place of detention: Evin Prison

Nargess Mohammadi suffers from emboli in the lungs and muscular paralysis. She had been previously arrested in July 2012 but released on a court verdict indicating that she could not endure detention because of her illnesses. Three years later on May 5, 2015, however, she was arrested again in a violent raid on her residence and transferred to the women's ward of Evin Prison. Prison officials have hampered her treatment despite her dangerous physical condition and need to consume 23 medications every day. As a consequence, she has been suffering from heart palpitations and high blood pressure. In December 2015, new problems emerged for Mohammadi upon her transfer to a hospital. Agents transferred her with handcuffs and did not remove them in the clinic. The doctor wanted to examine her and asked her to take off her jacket. Ms. Mohammadi asked the agents, "Don't you think you have to remove the handcuffs?" The agent answered, "This is for the agents to decide. If they want to remove them, they will and if not, they won't." The agents even stood between the patient and the doctor to prevent direct conversations during examination. They even went further when Ms. Mohammadi needed to "change her clothes," to be examined, they did not leave the room. Nargess Mohammadi protested this treatment which eventually caused her blood pressure to shoot up and she was ultimately transferred back to the prison's infirmary. Ms. Mohammadi's demand for her rights was a new pretext for intelligence officials to initiate a new case against her and request the maximum penalty, as a result of which her prison sentence was increased to 16 years in January 2016. Nargess Mohammadi has 9-year-old twins who live abroad but she is not allowed to contact them. In protest to this situation, Ms. Mohammadi went on hunger strike in June 2016. Her hunger strike forced the regime to back off after 18 days and grant her permission to contact her children from prison.



Nargess Mohammadi



Fatemeh Rahnama

Fatemeh Rahnama

Charge: Waging war on God by collaboration with the PMOI
Sentence: 10 years in prison
Place of detention: Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz

Fatemeh Rahnama is serving her ninth year in the Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz. She suffers from cancer and a special mental condition, but she has been denied treatment out of prison.

Safieh Sadeghi

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

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

Golnaz Khosh Ahang

Charge: Waging war on God through intending to join a Kurdish party
Sentence: Undecided
Place of detention: Central Prison of Urmia

At the time of her arrest, the Revolutionary Guards were pounding the region and Golnaz Ahang Khosh got injured. She was taken for interrogation despite her injuries.

Farideh Khoshnam

Charge: Acting against national security through effective communication with the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Intelligence
Sentence: 14 years in jail, 80 lashes, internal exile
Place of detention: Prison of Kerman

Farideh Khoshnam was injured with shrapnel when the Iranian Revolutionary Guards were pounding the region. She was arrested while injured and directly transferred to Urmia's IRGC Detention Center and interrogated for 40 days.

Razieh Hakimi

Charge: Waging war on God by intending to join PEJAK
Sentence: Undecided

Revolutionary Guards forces shot and injured Razieh Hakimi upon arrest. The Revolutionary Guards initially took her to a hospital, but transferred her to Urmia's IRGC Detention Center for interrogation only two days later before completion of her treatment. She remained injured in solitary confinement and was interrogated for one month. Razieh Hakimi was arrested in September 2014 and remains in prison on security grounds without receiving care for her infected injuries.

Excerpts from international laws

International human rights standards for prison officials-2005

IV. Health Rights of Prisoners

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is a human right.³⁶ It is a basic requirement that all prisoners should be given a medical examination as soon as they have been admitted to a prison or place of detention.³⁷

Any necessary medical treatment should then be provided free of charge.³⁸

Prisoners and all detained persons have the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.⁴⁰

Prisoners should have free access to the health services available in the country.⁴¹

Decisions about a prisoner's health should be taken only on medical grounds by medically qualified people.⁴²

Every prison should have proper health facilities and medical staff to provide for a range of health needs, including dental and psychiatric care.

Sick prisoners who cannot be treated in the prison, such as prisoners with mental illness, should be transferred to a civilian hospital or to a specialized prison hospital.⁴⁴

Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners - Principle 9

Prisoners shall have access to the health services available in the country without discrimination on the grounds of their legal situation.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Article 12 (1)

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) Rule 11

Only medical staff shall be present during medical examinations unless the doctor is of the view that exceptional circumstances exist or the doctor requests a member of the prison staff to be present for security reasons or the woman prisoner specifically requests the presence of a member of staff as indicated in rule 10, paragraph 2 above.



8

Hunger strike

Hunger strike is a last-resort measure that has turned into a common act of protest and resistance by Iranian political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The prisoners' frequent use of hunger strike indicates the regime's flagrant violation of their basic rights which leaves them nothing but their health and life to express their protest with.

In other words, a prisoner goes on hunger strike only when she has already tried all other legal avenues without receiving any answers.

Hunger strike has serious and irreparable effects on the health of prisoners.

During the hunger strike, prison authorities do not provide any medical care for the prisoner. Rather, they increase their threats and harassment to make her give in.

Once the hunger strike is over, there is nothing in the prison to help the prisoner recover. Neither do prison guards accept the things the prisoner's family bring; they also prevent any other assistance to the prisoner. Consequently, the adverse effects of hunger strike remain on the prisoner's health and get worse over time.

Nonetheless, political prisoners are willing to pay the high price to voice their protest and convey their message out. When the prisoner's message reaches her family, the public opinion and international forums, the regime has to step back and retreat. Although the regime's retreats are sporadic and transient and the prisoner never fully achieves her demands, but in light of the oppressive nature of the ruling regime, they should be considered a great victory for political prisoners who are held in inhuman conditions under torture and unbearable pressure which do not conform to international standards, to any extent.

Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee

Charges: writing an unpublished book on the cruel punishment of stoning

Sentence: 6 years in prison

Place of detention: Evin Prison, Tehran

A writer and a human rights activist, Golrokh Iraee went on an 81-day hunger strike, in protest to her unlawful exile to the notorious Qarchak Prison in breach of the principle of separation of prisoners' categories, demanding to be returned to the women's ward in Evin Prison.

Qarchak (Shahr-e Ray) Prison of Varamin is a disused chicken farm used as a detention center for ordinary and dangerous women criminals. Living conditions there are deplorable. Political prisoners are transferred there in breach of the principle of classification and separation of prisoners, to experience more physical and mental torture. Golrokh Iraee and her fellow inmate Atena Daemi started their hunger strike on February 3, and switched to dry hunger strike on February 10 for one week. The health of the two prisoners rapidly deteriorated in light of the deplorable prison conditions.

Atena Daemi and Golrokh Iraee had been summoned to the court of Evin on January 16, 2018, after their messages in solidarity with the protesters in the streets were made public. The two political prisoners refused to appear in the court since they had not received a written summon and were not informed of the reason for it. The summons was repeated four times, and the two women refused to give in to the illegal interrogations. Finally, on January 24, 2018, they were forcibly taken for interrogation to the IRGC Ward 2A in Evin with a new case fabricated against them. Atena Daemi and Golrokh Iraee refused to answer the questions so IRGC agents brutalized and transferred the two enchained women illegally to the Qarchak Prison. Ms. Iraee and Ms. Daemi were deprived of contacting their families and can call them only once a week in the presence of prison agents. They were held in conditions similar to solitary confinement. They were not allowed to leave the ward and no one had permission to visit them.

Amnesty International issued a statement on March 9, 2018, expressing alarm at the condition of Golrokh Iraee and demanding her and Atena Daemi's immediate release.

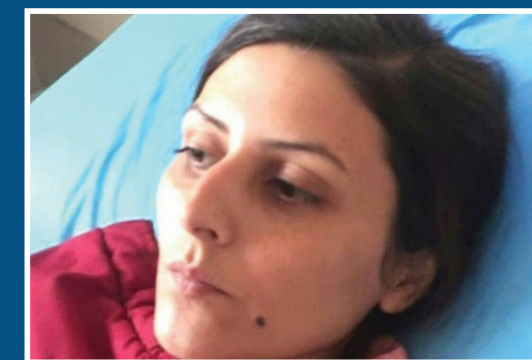
AI wrote, "Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee, who has been on hunger strike for 35 days, is in very poor health. In the past week, she was placed on IV fluids without her consent, and at times has been unable to move. She is suffering from severe cramping in her muscles, which the prison doctor has confirmed is a result of the hunger strike."

Ms. Iraee and Ms. Daemi originally detained in the Quarantine Ward, were again brutalized on Monday, March 12, 2018, and dragged to the ward of mothers where pregnant women and some 20 children are detained with their mothers. Considering the state of health of hunger striking Golrokh Iraee, the mothers' ward is an additional pressure on her.

Haj Moradi, deputy Prosecutor of Evin overseeing political prisoners, has told the prisoners' families that Golrokh will not be returned to Evin even if she dies. After 62 days, Golrokh Iraee was transferred to a hospital near Shahr-e Ray (Qarchak) Prison for her constant feeling of nausea and vomiting bile due to damaged gall bladder. The hospital's name was not announced.

No longer able to walk or stand up, Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee ended her hunger strike after 81 days on April 24, 2018, upon the appeals of other political prisoners and some 1,000 human rights advocates and families of execution victims and political prisoners. She was sent back to the notorious Qarchak Prison without completion of her medical treatment.

In light of the resistance and perseverance of the two



Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee

A writer and a human rights activist, Golrokh Iraee went on an 81-day hunger strike, in protest to her unlawful exile to the notorious Qarchak Prison in breach of the principle of separation of prisoners' categories, demanding to be returned to the women's ward in Evin Prison.

As a result of her perseverance, Golrokh Iraee and her fellow inmate, Atena Daemi, were returned to the women's ward of Evin Prison on May 10, 2018.

Hunger strike is a last-resort measure that has turned into a common act of protest and resistance by Iranian political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The prisoners' frequent use of hunger strike indicates the regime's flagrant violation of their basic rights which leaves them nothing but their health and life to express their protest with.

In other words, a prisoner goes on hunger strike only when she has already tried all other legal avenues without receiving any answers.

courageous women and the wave of domestic and international solidarity with them, the clerical regime had to finally give in and Golrokh Iraee and Atena Daemi were returned to Evin on May 10, 2018.

Atena Daemi

Charges: Propaganda against the state, collusion against national security, and insulting the mullahs' leader

Sentence: 7 years in prison

Place of detention: Evin Prison, Tehran

Atena Daemi, 30, a human rights and child rights activist, was violently arrested at home at 8 a.m. on November 26, 2016, in an unwarranted raid by agents of the IRGC Sarallah Corps. She was brutalized, intimidated and taken to Evin Prison. Her sisters were also beaten up at the time of the raid. On March 13, 2017, the three Daemi sisters (Atena, Ensieh and Hanieh) were falsely accused of beating IRGC agents and sentenced each to 91 days of imprisonment for "preventing implementation of the verdict" and "insulting public officers on duty." In protest to the unfair prison sentences issued for her sisters, Atena Daemi started a hunger strike on April 8, 2017.

In an open letter, she vowed, "I will not allow security agencies to trample their own laws and manipulate our families as a tool to psychologically torture us and create an atmosphere of terror in society. I am prepared to die but will never become a slave of oppression."

During her hunger strike which lasted 54 days, Atena fought back several times despite poor health and numerous complications caused by hunger strike, including nausea, vomiting, kidney pain, severe weight loss, blood pressure fluctuations, coughing up blood, kidney infection, and her body rejected water. The director of Evin's dispensary issued false reports, claiming that she did not have any medical problems. They did not allow her to be examined and hospitalized outside prison.

On May 31, the Revision Court revoked the prison sentences for Ensieh and Haniyeh Daemi and political prisoner Atena Daemi ended her hunger strike.

Again, Evin Prison officials not only failed to provide adequate treatment and medical care for Ms. Daemi, but accused her of making false pretenses of illness. The Daemi family had persistently pursued to obtain permission for Atena's treatment but every time, her transfer was stopped in the last minutes. As a result of such stonewalling, a simple renal and gallbladder problem diagnosed in April developed into a dangerous condition. Her gallbladder was full of stones and her kidneys were dangerously infected. Finally, on September 25, 2017, the warden of Evin agreed with Atena's gallbladder surgery but ordered that she should wear her handcuffs and shackles all the time while in hospital. She did not agree and was returned to Evin Prison.



Atena Daemi

In hospital after 54 days of hunger strike



Nasrin Sotoudeh

went on hunger strike four times to gain her rights and protest regime's unlawful measures

On October 7, 2017, Ms. Daemi finally underwent cholecystectomy and hospitalized at a Tehran hospital without handcuffs and shackles.

In January 2018, in the midst of the Iranian people's nationwide uprising, Atena Daemi wrote an open letter from prison and said, "We must consciously stand up to suppression. We must learn our lessons from Iran and the world's history, because history is constantly being repeated. No victory has been achieved easily. And no oppression has been everlasting."

It was in reaction to such bold pronouncements that Atena Daemi and Golrokh Iraee were summoned five times and finally violently beaten up on January 24, 2018, and transferred in the dark of the night to the notorious Qarchak Prison outside Tehran. On February 3, 2018, Atena Daemi went on another hunger strike for 12 days when her condition had become fatally dangerous.

Nasrin Sotoudeh

Charge: Espionage, defending women protesters against the compulsory veil, urging a referendum, assisting the formation of home churches, organizing protest rallies and sit-ins, membership in anti-death penalty association, etc.

Sentence: Five-year prison sentence issued in absentia

Place of detention: Evin Prison, Tehran

Human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, winner of international awards including the 2008 Human Rights International (HRI) Award, the 2012 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, the 2011 Pen Club Award, and the 2016 Women Have Wings Award, was arrested at home on June 13, 2018, and taken to the Prosecutor's Office of Evin.

Nasrin Sotoudeh went on hunger strike on August 25, 2018, in protest to the attacks on the residences of her family and relatives as well as against the judiciary's failure to respond to her demands including having access to a lawyer of her own choice. It was reported that she had fainted in the stairways of the women's ward on September 6, due to serious drop of blood pressure. She continued this hunger strike until October 3, 2018.

This is the second time Ms. Sotoudeh has been arrested. She was first arrested and imprisoned on September 4, 2010, for defending a number of protesters arrested during the 2009 uprising and activists defending women's and children's rights who faced the death penalty.

She was held incommunicado for 105 days in solitary confinement in Evin's Ward 209. She spent three years in prison during which time she went on hunger strike on three occasions.

She went on hunger strike from September 25 until November 15, 2010, nine days of which was a dry hunger strike. Her second hunger strike lasted from December 7 to December 20, 2010. She did not even drink water during these 13 days.

On October 17, 2012, she went on hunger strike for the third time to protest the government's ban on her 12-year-old daughter's travel abroad. She ended her hunger strike after 49 days on December 4, 2012, after the Iranian regime withdrew the travel ban.

Sufi women

Six Sufi women imprisoned in Qarchak (Shahr-e Ray) Prison of Varamin started a hunger strike on June 11, 2018, in protest to their mistreatment by prison guards. The hunger strikers were Shokoufeh Yadollahi, Elham Ahmadi, Sepideh Moradi, Nazilla Noori, Maryam Farsiabi, and Massoumeh Barakouhi. This hunger strike continued for 16 days.

Sedigheh Khalili, the mother of Sepideh Moradi, explained about the hunger strike of Sufi women. She said, "On June 11, when these women were outside, one of the prison guards closed the door and made them stay for three days and nights in a narrow dark corridor between the ward and the courtyard. On the same day, the women started their hunger strike. Three days later, on Wednesday, June 13, prison guards allowed them back into the ward, but shortly afterwards, 4-5 dangerous prisoners were incited by the guards to attack the Sufi women. That is when the latter started shouting Ya-Ali. Then the Special Guards raided the ward and female agents started beating them with batons and shockers."

Nargess Mohammadi

Nargess Mohammadi went on hunger strike for 18 days in July 2016 to protest being denied telephone contacts with her children. She forced the Iranian regime's officials to back down and grant her request.

Atena Farghadani

Former political prisoner Atena Farghadani also went on hunger strike for at least 34 days during her jail terms to achieve her own and other prisoners' rights.



A case in point: Maryam Akbari Monfared

Maryam Akbari Monfared, 43, with three daughters, was arrested in late December 2009, after she contacted her siblings who are members of the opposition People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). She was arrested and charged with Moharebeh or waging war on God through collaboration with the PMOI.

Maryam Akbari was essentially deprived of access to legal counsel throughout her legal proceedings and was sentenced to 15 years in prison in a 5-minute trial. Defending this unfair verdict, the court judge said, "I was nice not to issue a death verdict because of her children."

Maryam Akbari has served ten years of her sentence in Qarchak Prison of Varamin, Gohardasht Prison of Karaj, and the Metadon Ward of the Evin Prison without any furloughs. Presently, she is incarcerated in the women's ward of the Evin Prison. Her family has twice paid 1.15 billion toumans as bail to win her leave for medical treatment, but prison officials have refused to grant her.

The verdict issued for Maryam Akbari contradicts not only international standards of justice but the laws of the Iranian regime.

According to Articles 19 and 288 of the Punishment Law in Iran, the punishment for Moharebeh is between 10 to 15 years or a maximum amount of 550 million rials in cash fine. The same law defines Moharebeh as "using weapons to target one's life, property or family or terrify in a way that makes the social setting insecure."

Maryam Akbari has never taken up arms and has never been a member of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran. Moreover, Article 141 of the Punishment Law states that "penal responsibility is personal." But Maryam Akbari was told by the judge that she is "paying the price of her sister and brothers."

Maryam Akbari is suffering from various illnesses. She needs to see a rheumatologist outside prison, but this visit has been constantly hampered by prison guards. She has twice developed gall bladder stones under the inhuman prison conditions but the Prosecutor's Office did not authorize her transfer to hospital. Her surgery was ultimately done after several months of delay and after her family appealed to the public opinion to pressure the authorities.

She also suffers from severe pain in muscles and bones and acute pain in the knees. She is also suffering from thyroid problems and needs to be under a doctor's supervision. Despite so many physical illnesses, security officials have kept hindering her treatment.

Maryam Akbari is a survivor of a family most of whose members have been massacred. Maryam's brother, Abdolreza Akbari Monfared was arrested in 1980 at the age of 17 and sentenced to three years in prison for selling the PMOI newspaper. Judiciary officials refused to release him after finishing his sentence and finally executed him in 1988.

Maryam's other brother, Alireza Akbari Monfared,

was executed on September 19, 1981, for supporting the PMOI. Security forces raided Alireza's funeral ceremony and arrested Maryam's mother and sister. Maryam's sister, Roghieh Akbari Monfared, who had a young daughter, was sentenced to eight years in prison. She was serving the last year of her prison term when she was hanged in the 1988 massacre. Maryam's third brother, Gholamreza, was arrested in 1983 and executed in 1985 at Evin Prison.

Maryam's mother suffered a heart stroke and died after the executions of her children.

Another brother of Maryam, Reza Akbari Monfared, is presently serving a 4-year prison sentence at Rajaii-Shahr Prison in Karaj.

Maryam Akbari has put up a courageous resistance against the regime's illegal pressures since the beginning.

On October 15, 2016, she filed a formal complaint with the Judiciary demanding investigation into the executions of her siblings in the 1980s. She urged other families to undertake similar measures. She also wrote a letter to international organizations on December 22, 2016, and urged the UN to prosecute the perpetrators and masterminds of the 1988 massacre.

The first time, Maryam Akbari registered her complaint, prison authorities deprived her from having access to medical services in reprisal. Prison officials prevented her from going to hospital while she had already arranged all her medical appointments.

Evin's assistant Prosecutor told the Akbari family, "Her treatment plans have been cancelled because she has become too brazen."

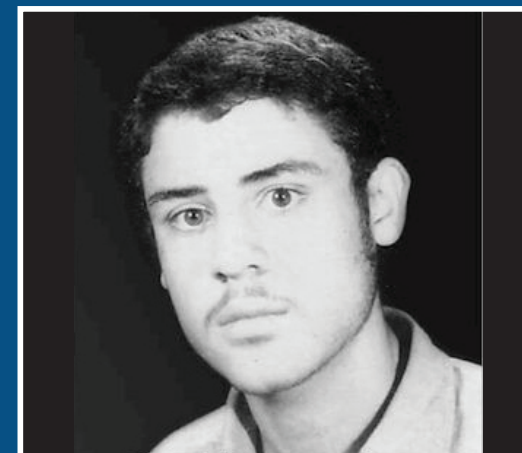
She was subsequently deprived of having family visits while the inmates in the women's ward of Evin are deprived of telephone facilities.

In November 2017, the UN Working Group on Forced Disappearances replied to Maryam Akbari's [request](#) stating that her sister and brothers executed in the 1988 massacre of political prisoners in Iran are [recognized as persons who were forcibly disappeared](#).

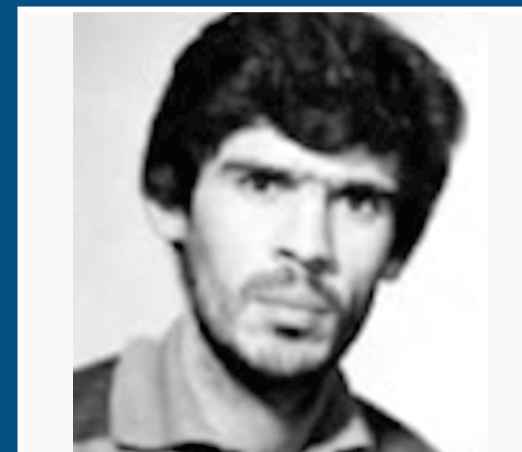
The Iranian clerical regime massacred 30,000 political prisoners in a few months in summer 1988 upon a fatwa by the regime's leader, Ruhollah Khomeini. Most of the victims were supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). One of Maryam Akbari's brothers and her sister were among the victims of this massacre recognized as a crime against humanity. For more information on this massacre, see www.iran1988.org



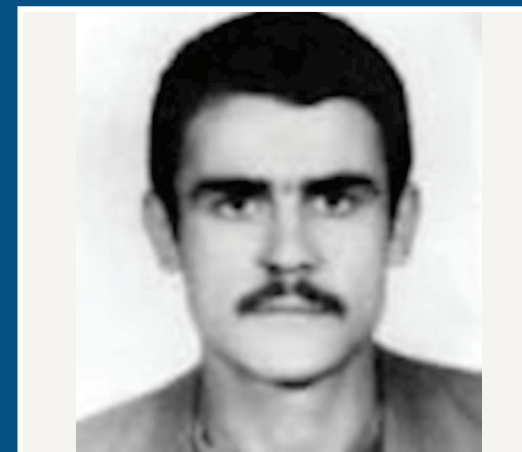
Roghieh Akbari Monfared



Abdolreza Akbari Monfared



Gholamreza Akbari Monfared



Alireza Akbari Monfared



10

Prison conditions

Systematically, the Iranian regime's prison officials do not abide by any [international standards](#). At the same time, the laws of the Velayat-e Faqih regime do not contain any standards for prison conditions and [treatment of prisoners](#). As a consequence, the prison conditions are deplorable and the conditions in women's prisons are even worse.

Women are extremely vulnerable in prisons dominated by the misogynist officials of a fundamentalist regime. It should also be noted that Iran's prisons are fundamentally structured for male detainees and their limited facilities are mainly at men's disposal.

Women are generally held in deserted buildings, rooms or warehouses, sometimes with no roofs or walls. These structures have not been built for the residence of human beings so the conditions in women's prisons are indeed calamitous.



Accommodation

Iranian prisons are generally overcrowded with the situation becoming worse in recent years as the clerical regime has become more unstable and more repressive. The [number of prisoners](#) are way above the capacity of every prison. In the women's wards, the number of inmates are usually between two to four times greater. In some prisons, the prison is so packed that prisoners have no room to walk.



Hygiene

Women are especially in need of clean and hygienic conditions. Under the mullahs' misogynist regime, however, the [sanitary conditions](#) in women's prisons are catastrophic. The women's wards are essentially places for incarcerating and depriving women of their rights and the infrastructures were not originally intended for a prison.

The number of toilets is never sufficient. In the Qarchak Prison, for almost 190 women in each silo, there are only four toilets and four baths half of which are always out of order. Warm water is available for only one hour a day and most prisoners bathe with cold water. And there is no water for most hours of the day. In some prisons, the prisoners' bathing time

is limited to ten minutes per week.

The restrooms are also the only place where prisoners can drink water, do their dishes and wash their clothes.

The amount of detergents and other hygienic goods prisoners receive is little compared to their needs so the prisoners have to buy what they need from the prison store at prices several times the price in the market. Considering the inflation and soaring prices, most prisoners do not afford to make such purchases.

In the Vakilabad Prison of Mashhad and Adelabad Prison of Shiraz, baths and toilets are inside their small cells. The bath is comprised of a relatively long hose which brings water from the dish-washing sink to the toilet. The prisoner has to bathe a short distance away from where other prisoners are sitting. The waste water from doing the dishes and bathing flows on the floor of the cell.

Many prisoners in the Qarchak Prison shave their heads to prevent lice from breeding in their hair. There is no shampoo in the prison and they have no way but shaving their heads.

There are snakes, mice, and other pests in some prisons.



Medical services

The inhuman prison conditions have caused nervous complications for many prisoners. They also cause osteoporosis, arthritis, rheumatism as well as knee, joint and back pain.

Prison dispensaries are under equipped. There are no emergency medical services. No medicine is given to prisoners. The medications procured by families are not delivered to prisoners under the pretext of drug control.

Prisoners have great difficulty in referring to civic medical centers. Even if the prisoner is in an emergency state, first the head of the dispensary and then the coroner must confirm the need. Then is the turn for the Prosecutor who helps advance the policies of the Ministry of Intelligence. It usually takes months just to obtain a permit for such a referral. Recently, officials in charge of the infirmary in the Evin Prison prevent prisoners from going to city medical centers. The measure has been approved by the assistant Prosecutor supervising prisons and the Prosecutor's Office has issued the permission despite the fact that many prisoners have to wait at

least four months to be visited by a psychologist, GI specialist or ophthalmologist.

One of the officials in charge of the infirmary in Evin, by the name of Khani, goes the extra length to prevent delivery of some medicines, first aid equipment, and disinfectants to the women's ward. He has told inmates that they should take all their pills at once with one glass of water every night in the presence of a prison guard.

Prisoners who have found these instructions as offensive, refuse to take their medicines and are forced to endure great pain as their illnesses deteriorate.

Dental work is done under extremely unsanitary and infectious conditions at high cost. For example, a routine tooth filling is done for 2 million toumans, and the quality of work is really bad. A considerable number of prisoners do not afford the high cost of dental work because they are either detained in prison simultaneously with their husbands, or are themselves single heads of household.

Infectious diseases, hepatitis and AIDS are common among prisoners and officials do nothing to improve the situation, not even by separating the infected prisoners.



Air conditioning and ventilation

Prison cells do not have any form of ventilation and all the windows are sealed. This creates a horrible breathing condition. Air conditions are also usually out of order, and inmates have to spend the hot days of summer in rooms without air conditioning. Most prisoners suffer from serious problems caused by insufficient natural light.



Exercise and fresh air facilities

Fresh air spaces for female prisoners are usually very small. These are not open areas but closed rooms with high walls and no roofs. Usually, there is not enough room for all prisoners. These rooms are also used for drying clothes.



Sleeping accommodation

No place has been considered for rest in the women's wards. There are a limited number of iron beds with no mattresses. Thin, rough blankets are the only liner between the prisoner's body and the hard metal bed.

The number of beds are not sufficient, either. In some prisons such as the Adelabad Prison in Shiraz, prisoners do not even have a single bed and have to spend all night on the cold, wet and insanitary floor of the cell.



Food

The amount and quality of food is way below adequate. Prison meals lack the basic nutritional ingredients. The food is usually consisted of a small amount of boiled potatoes, macaroni, some beans, and bread. Meat, milk, vegetables, and fruit are essentially non-existent. Prison authorities have recently cut down this already small food quota. The quality of rice is also very bad and cooked with camphor. The best meal is boiled eggs and potatoes served only once a week.

Ironically, one of the punishments is to deprive prisoners of their meager food.

The food usually contains hair and insects. In the Qarchak Prison, there is no good drinking water. The prisoners who do not afford to buy mineral water, have no option but to drink salty water.



Security, separation of categories

Prisoners are basically not separated according to their [crime categories](#). The only prisons where female political prisoners are separated are the Evin Prison in Tehran and the Vakilabad Prison of Mashhad.

In other prisons, political prisoners are detained among [social convicts](#) who are sometimes dangerous. In the Qarchak Prison of Varamin, political prisoners are held with nearly 45 death-row prisoners and inmates convicted of other crimes. In Urmia Prison, 100 death row prisoners are awaiting their execution alongside political prisoners. Prisoners with mental disorders are also held among other prisoners and do not receive any special treatment. These prisoners have on a number of occasions raped and subsequently murdered other prisoners.

Fights and quarrels are also common among ordinary prisoners without any effort by prison officials to contain them.



Contact with the outside world

One of the registered rights of prisoners is their right to contact their families and close relatives. This right has been taken hostage by the Iranian regime and is violated in one form or another in every prison. Many of the inmates imprisoned in the women's ward of the Evin Prison are mothers who are able to call their families from Saturday to Wednesday but when schools open, their children are home only on days when their mothers are not able to call. Despite prisoners' inquiry from prison authorities and agreement of the Prosecutor, the prison's warden Charmahali has turned down these requests. In some prisons, political prisoners are absolutely banned from having any visits. In other prisons, prisoners do not have the right to send or receive letters.

Depriving prisoners from making telephone calls or having visits is one of the tools prison authorities use to punish the prisoners.



Humiliation and degradation

Treatment of female prisoners by prison guards and officials is unprincipled and degrading. Humiliation, disrespect, and frequent beating of prisoners have destructive mental effects on prisoners.

The cells are inspected every two days and the prisoners' belongings are confiscated or violently destroyed. Closed circuit cameras are installed in all places, including the toilets, and prisoners are monitored round the clock.

In addition, prisoners are physically inspected in a humiliating manner every time they enter the prison. In the Qarchak Prison of Varamin, prison guards make the prisoners completely undress and use trusted prisoners to examine their private parts. This is done so harshly that the prisoners usually cannot sit down for several days.

Excerpts from international laws

Human Rights and Prisons - United Nations - New York and Geneva, 2005

III. Right to an Adequate Standard of Living

All persons deprived of their liberty shall have the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, drinking water, accommodation, clothing and bedding. 26

Accommodation for prisoners shall provide adequate cubic content of air, floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation. 27

Prisoners required to share sleeping accommodation shall be carefully selected and supervised at night. 28

Adequate food and drinking water are human rights. 29

All prisoners shall be provided with wholesome and adequate food at the usual hours and with drinking water available whenever needed. 30

Clothing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living is a human right. 31 All prisoners shall be provided with a separate bed and clean bedding, with facilities for keeping bedding clean. 34

IV. Health Rights of Prisoners

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is a human right. 36

It is a basic requirement that all prisoners should be given a medical examination as soon as they have been admitted to a prison or place of detention. 37

Any necessary medical treatment should then be provided free of charge. 38

Prisoners and all detained persons have the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. 40

Prisoners should have free access to the health services available in the country. 41

All prisoners shall have at least one hour's daily exercise in the open air if the weather permits. 55

VII. Prisoners' Contact with the Outside World

All prisoners shall have the right to communicate with the outside world, especially with their families. 85

A prisoner's request to be held in a prison near his or her home shall be granted as far as possible. 87

Prisoners shall be kept informed of important items of news. 88

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime - Handbook on Women and Imprisonment - New York, 2014

Rule 2: Women with caretaking responsibilities for children shall be permitted to make arrangements for those children, including the possibility of a reasonable suspension of detention, taking into account the best interests of the children.

Rule 5: The accommodation of women prisoners shall have facilities and materials required to meet women's specific hygiene needs, including sanitary towels provided free of charge and a regular supply of water to be made available for the personal care of children and women.

Rule 23: Disciplinary sanctions for women prisoners shall not include a prohibition of family contact, especially with children.

Rule 26: Women prisoners' contact with their families, including their children, their children's guardians and legal representatives shall be encouraged and facilitated by all reasonable means.

Rule 28: Visits involving children shall take place in an environment that is conducive to a positive visiting experience, including with regard to staff attitudes, and shall allow open contact between mother and child.

Conclusion

As it became evident in this study, the fundamentalist Iranian regime does not abide by any international laws or codes of conduct particularly when it gets to prisons and prisoners, particularly political prisoners and prisoners of conscience and women.

In studying the charges and sentences issued for women prisoners of conscience, it also became evident that the regime does not comply with its own Constitution, Civil and Penal codes, and the Punishment Law.

For the misogynous, fundamentalist clerical regime ruling Iran, women who choose to fight against official restrictions, deprivations and rights abuses to gain their own and their nation's trampled rights are considered the worst enemies. So, they have to endure maximum pressure and inconceivable cruelty on the part of the prison officials and guards.

In this study, we examined violent and arbitrary arrests of women for exercising their basic right to peaceful expression of opinion, peaceful expression of protest, peaceful demand for justice, peaceful defense of their clients, peaceful opposition to the death penalty, and even for a mere telephone contact with their families.

This study also shed light on these women's interrogation under torture coupled with solitary confinement and isolation, the illegal judicial proceedings that issue unfair sentences for them, and the authorities' denial of their medical treatment and family visits in reprisal for the incarcerated women's refusal to cooperate with the regime.

Such unjustified treatment forces women political prisoners to go on hunger strike to get help from outside to reach their minimum demands.

And finally we studied a case in point, the case of Maryam Akbari Monfared, a mother of three who has been imprisoned for calling her siblings in the opposition and enduring an unjustified 15-year sentence for the anti-government activities of her massacred sister and brothers.

Under the misogynist religious fascism of the mullahs, everything a woman does to gain her basic human rights is considered a national security threat and dealt with as Moharebeh or waging war against God, even when these women have not touched a gun or weapon in all their lifetime.

Even according to the regime's medieval laws, Moharebeh happens only when someone threatens other people's life, property or family by targeting them by some kind of weaponry.

The Women's Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran draws attention to the inhuman

conditions in Iranian jails and particularly to the inhumane conditions of women who are held in detention for their beliefs and political opinion. Their situation has become worse in the absence of any international accountability, sending Tehran a green signal to continue with their arbitrary and outlaw behavior.

The NCRI Women's Committee urges all international human rights and women's rights bodies, organizations, advocates and activists to join us in an international campaign to increase pressure on the Iranian regime to free all political prisoners, observe the standards of human rights in its prisons and in treatment of all female prisoners, particularly with regards to women who have young children.

We demand immediate freedom of the women who are imprisoned on political grounds for peacefully exercising their legitimate human rights.

The NCRI Women's Committee also appeals to the international community, the EU and the US, to make their relations and trade with the Iranian regime contingent on improvement of human and women's rights in Iran. A situation that is vividly symbolized in the freedom of women political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

The NCRI Women's Committee believes that the following essential goals and demands must be undertaken by all countries dealing with the Iranian regime:

- Freedom of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, particularly the female prisoners;
- Stopping practice of all forms of torture and cruel punishments in the prisons of the Iranian regime;
- Improvement of the situation of human rights in Iran and elimination of all forms of physical and psychological torture against prisoners under interrogation and during detention;
- Prosecution of the regime's officials in charge of the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in 1988, including the government Minister of Justice Alireza Avaii, and all others involved, as demanded by female political prisoners from their prison confinement.

Appendix: Cases of former political prisoners

To better understand the Iranian regime's illegal treatment of female political prisoners and violations of their most basic rights, studying the cases of a few former political prisoners and prisoners of conscience is enlightening.



Sedigheh Moradi

Sentence: 10 years in prison, internal exile

Charge: Supporting the People's Mojahedin

Organization of Iran and effectively acting to advance their goals

Time in prison: 6 years

Political prisoner Sedigheh Moradi, 57, mother of a 20-year-old daughter, was arrested in April 2011. She was interrogated and tortured seven months in Ward 209 of the Evin Prison. Her torturers tried to force her into making false confessions against herself on the state television. Her eyes suffered damages and her vision deteriorated under torture. In July 2012, Sedigheh Moradi was transferred to the Qarchak Prison in Varamin and spent several months in inhuman conditions and among dangerous convicts. Soon after, prison authorities were alarmed by her positive impact on prisoners and isolated her from other prisoners.

On August 29, 2015, her blood pressure dropped to 6 over 4. Her cellmates rushed her to the prison's dispensary, however, the MOIS interrogators did not let her be transferred out to a civic hospital. So she was returned to the ward without any effective treatment.

Ms. Moradi also suffered a meniscus tear and tendon injury while in detention. She had to avoid walking up and down the stairs, something that is impossible in the women's ward of Evin.

Ms. Moradi also suffered from stomachache, jaw pain, toothache, neck arthritis and sciatica and needed to see doctors outside the prison. Prison authorities did not let her leave the prison to receive medical care.

Sedigheh Moradi had been imprisoned twice before in the 1980s. She is a survivor of the massacre of political prisoners in 1988. In November 2016, she sent out a letter from prison and called for the prosecution of the perpetrators of the massacre. She wrote in part, "In 1981, I was arrested for supporting the [People's Mojahedin Organization](#) of Iran. During that time, I witnessed how they took away some of the prisoners from my side and sent them before the firing squads. At nights, we counted the coups de grace. I was arrested again in 1985. In 1988, I witnessed the massacre of prisoners from July to September. A large number of prisoners from the ward where I had been held, were separated from us and taken for execution.... I witnessed the executions of those who had finished serving their sentences. They executed a prisoner who was mentally deranged... There was a ward with only one survivor and the rest had all been executed... I will never forget those days and the images in my mind are eternal."

Sedigheh Moradi was freed on November 23, 2016, upon the ruling of the Review Court.

Atena Farghadani

Sentence: 12 years and 9 months

Charge: Spreading anti-government propaganda, acting against national security, and insulting parliamentary deputies by her drawing skills

Time in prison: Total of 20 months from 2014 to 2016

Atena Farghadani is a cartoonist, a human rights activist and a children's rights advocate.

She was first incarcerated on August 23, 2014, and deprived of continuing her M.A. for drawing a cartoon of members of the Iranian parliament. She was detained for two months, 20 days of which was spent in solitary confinement and under interrogation. She was deprived of having access to a lawyer and family visits.

This is when she went on hunger strike for the first time. She was on a wet hunger strike for 11 days followed by two days of dry hunger strike. She was frisked in an offensive manner. She found closed circuit cameras installed inside the bathroom and toilet. Ms. Farghadani experienced psychological and physical harassment by prison guards which she exposed after getting released.

For divulging her experiences in prison, she was summoned on January 10, 2015, to court where she was beaten up and arrested in front of her parents, and taken away to the Qarchak Prison of Varamin. On February 9, 2015, she started another hunger strike. After 21 days, she was hospitalized and subsequently transferred to the Evin Prison.

Ms. Farghadani explained that she wanted to protest against inhuman conditions for all prisoners in the Qarchak Prison of Varamin, and the transfer of political prisoners there including herself. She said she had decided to go on hunger strike after her repeated appeals to officials through legal channels had had fallen on deaf ears.

On June 13, 2015, Atena Farghadani had a meeting with her lawyer, Mohammad Moghimi, at the end of which they shook hands. Her lawyer was arrested and imprisoned in Rajaii-Shahr Prison and both were charged with having illicit relations. On the basis of this charge, judiciary officials forced Ms. Farghadani to undergo virginity tests. The regime's scheme failed after Ms. Farghadani's three days of hunger strike and both parties were cleared of the alleged charges. Ms. Farghadani's 12-year-and-nine-month sentence was later commuted to 18 months by the Review Court and she was released on May 3, 2016, after serving her sentence.

The human rights advocate and artist won two international awards. In 2015, while she was still in prison, she received in absentia the 2015 Award for Courage in Editorial Cartooning of the Cartoonists Rights Network International.

In 2016, just two days after regaining her freedom, Atena Farghadani received the Vaclav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent.



Negar Ha'eri

Sentence: Undecided
Charges: Various
Time in prison: Detained four times in 4 years

Negar Ha'eri, a civil rights activist and a lawyer, was first arrested along with her mother, Ariya Almassian, on May 1, 2011, for “supporting the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran by sending the video clips of the burial procession of a PMOI member (sic.).”

Before that in 2009, her license for practice of law had been suspended for undertaking her father’s defense who was accused of supporting the PMOI. The second time, she was arrested in July 2012, for following up on the alarming situation of her father, political prisoner Mashallah Ha’eri, who was detained at the time in Rajai-Shahr Prison and suffered from acute heart and blood circulation diseases. She was also charged with giving legal counsel to the families of political prisoners.

The third time, Ms. Ha’eri was arrested and taken to the women’s Qarchak Prison on June 22, 2014, for “disseminating anti-government propaganda and falsities by giving interviews to alien media.” She was detained in the Qarchak Prison for eight months in an undecided status. Judicial authorities extended her sentence several times, without providing any legal justification.

Ms. Ha’eri suffered an eye infection due to contaminated water in the Qarchak Prison. She later said that the prison’s hygiene was horrible as there were no cooling systems and frequent water outages during summer.

Ms. Ha’eri endured double pressure during her detention in the Qarchak Prison. She was deprived of making telephone calls for at least one month while other inmates could make 20 minutes of call every

day. Prison officials isolated her from other prisoners and warned the inmates against having any contacts with her otherwise they would be punished.

In mid-November 2014, prison guards raided Negar Ha’eri’s cell and thoroughly inspected it. They threatened her that if the news of the raid leaked out, she would be pressured even further. They said, “We will do something so you would die right here.”

On October 27, 2014, she was beaten up by ordinary prisoners who had been provoked by the prison’s warden. She suffered an injured eye in this incident.

Negar Ha’eri was formally fired from her job in November 2014. On February 25, 2015, she was released from prison on bail after eight months.

Subsequently, Ms. Ha’eri followed up on the condition of women imprisoned in the Qarchak Prison, for which she was summoned and arrested several times without being informed of any charges.

Ms. Ha’eri was arrested again on May 18, 2015, and imprisoned in the solitary confinement of Ward 209 of the Evin Prison for 10 days.






WOMEN IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE

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Iran



A Special Report by the
Women's Committee of the National Council of
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