



## COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF REFERENDUM IN IRAN

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# Human Rights in Iran – June 2004

## EU gives Iran stinging rebuke over human rights

*AFP - Jun 20* - The European Union on Sunday gave Iran a tough rebuke over the Islamic republic's human rights record, saying it was "gravely concerned" at widespread abuses despite several rounds of talks with Tehran.

"The European Union continues to be gravely concerned at the continued and numerous violations of human rights in Iran," said a statement issued by Ireland, the current holder of the EU presidency.

"These include unequal rights for women; the use of torture in prisons and other places of detention, and a culture of impunity for perpetrators," said the statement released by the Irish embassy here.

It also pointed to "the lack of an independent judiciary, the use of the death penalty, as well as reports of the continued use of amputations and other cruel punishments; a continuing campaign against journalists and others who seek to exercise their freedom of opinion and expression, a flawed electoral process which impedes the democratic choice of the Iranian people, and discrimination on religious grounds".

## Death sentences

### Man sentenced to execution in public

*Jomhuri Islamic daily, May 30* – According to the decree issued by the Judiciary's Court in the Department of Justice of East Azerbaijan Province, a man has been sentenced to execution in public.

### Seven sentenced to death, two to amputation of hands, legs

*Kayhan daily, June 1, Sari* – Mohammad Reza Foulad Amoli, head of Mazandaran's judiciary, said four people, named Reza, Hassan, Mohammad Reza and Hamid Reza were sentenced to death on charges of waging war on God and spreading corruption on earth... He added, "In addition, three people named Haay Nabi, Nowrouz and Shahrzad who were affiliated with armed rebels were sentenced to death..." He said two others by the names of Hossein and Morteza were sentenced to have their right hands and left legs cut off on charges of waging war on God.

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He reminded that the rest of the accused have been sentenced to imprisonment, flogging, payment of bail and whipping for punishment.

### **Three people hanged in public**

*Iran National Television, June 9* - Ali Irvani, Safar Khodsiani and Omid Da'avati were hanged Monday in Shaqayeq square, Bozorg square and Shohada Bridge of Khorram Abad, capital of the western Iranian Lorestan Province. The State Security Forces were stationed on roofs overlooking the sites where the executions were carried out. They had the city under full control and were prepared to counter any protests.

### **Four sentenced to public hanging in Qazvin**

*Kayhan daily, June 20* - Four people in Qazvin will be hanged on charges of armed robbery. Mohammad Qassemi, head of judiciary in Qazvin Province, said the four people will be hanged in the week called Commemoration of the Judiciary.

### **Women to be executed**

*ISNA, June 20* - The judge of branch 1154 of the Tehran Criminal Court announced that Shahla Jahed was sentenced to execution. Abdol Samad Khoramshahi, Shahlaw's defense attorney said the death sentence has been sent to Iran's supreme court for approval.

### **Man sentenced to Public execution**

*Ghods daily, June 21* - A prisoner in the city of Tabriz was sentenced to public execution. The sentence will be carried out due to the legal process.

### **Three death sentences issued in Tehran, Tabriz**

*Peik-e Iran website, June 22* - The judicial system of the Islamic regime issued death sentences for three people in Tehran and Tabriz. In Tehran two people named Ali and Hatam were sentenced to death on charges of murder and robbery. In Tabriz, one person was sentenced to death on charges of murder.

Only during the first 3 month of the new Iranian year 60 people have been hanged in different Iranian cities and more than 20 other death sentences have been issued and will be carried out soon according to the authorities in the Justice ministry.

### **Four more death sentences in Tehran, Shiraz**

*Kayhan daily, June 28* - A man was sentenced to death by the judge of the 74<sup>th</sup> branch of the Tehran Penal Court.

*Khorassan daily, June 28* - The judge of Tehran's Penal Court issued a death sentence for a 27-year-old man.

*Kayhan daily, June 27, Shiraz* - Two young men 17 and 22 years old named Mojtaba and Aziz were sentenced to death by the 12<sup>th</sup> branch of the public court in Shiraz.



## **Arrests, Tortures and inhumane punishments**

### **Guests arrested in birthday party**

*Vaghaye Ettafaqieh daily, May 30* – Agents arrested 32 men and women at a birthday party. Abdollah Monadi said a number of women and girls present in this place were not covering their hair and were dancing in front of strange men.

Charged with formation of a center of corruption and prostitution, the landlord was sentenced to one year imprisonment and four years of suspended imprisonment. Others were sentenced to 74 lashes each for committing unlawful acts.

### **Mother of political prisoner: Son's fate still undetermined**

*ILNA, May 30, Tehran* – The mother of Sa'id Massouri, a prisoner accused of membership in the People's Mojahedin Organization who was sentenced to death on April 24, 2002, wrote an open letter to the Society in Defense of Prisoners' Rights protesting the sentence issued by the Sixth Branch of the Revolutionary Court.

She wrote in her letter that despite numerous requests from various government agencies and institutions, Sa'id Massouri's fate remains uncertain. Massouri's mother called on international human rights organizations to support and investigate into this case.

### **No info on whereabouts of 7 arrested students**

*Radio France Internationale, May 30* – The Student Committee Defending Political Prisoners in Iran announced in a statement that although three days have passed since the arrest of seven members of the Democratic Front and the United Students Front, there is still no information available on their whereabouts. The seven students were arrested during a protest outside the United Nations office in Tehran against recent student arrests.

### **Women's physical punishment center inaugurated in Kurdistan**

*Jomhuri Islami daily, June 1, Sanandaj* – In line with the policies of the State's Physical Punishment Organization to honor its clients and continue to provide services to the public, the first branch attending to women's affairs was inaugurated in Sanandaj.

### **38 men and women arrested in a party**

*Jomhuri Islami daily, June 6* – Twenty-four men as well as 14 women who had participated in a night party in Mashad were arrested by the Bassij forces of Mashad's Revolutionary Guards. According to the public affairs of the Bassij of Mashad, these people were dancing together in a house in the Ghasem Abad region. Those arrested were turned over to Mashad's public prosecutor's office. A number of satellite television antennas and CDs were confiscated.



### **5 Mashad university students sentenced to flogging**

*IRNA, June 7* – Five members of the Islamic Society of the University of Ferdowsi (in Mashad) were sentenced to 15 lashes by the 53rd branch of the Public Court of Mashad. These students were charged with disrupting public order. Those sentenced included Ms. Rajabzadeh, Ms. Sattari, Ms. Rashidian and Mr. Bagherzadeh

### **36 men and women receive flogging sentence**

*Qods daily, June 9* – The 36 women and men arrested at a party in Mashad were sentenced to flogging and payment of fines, said Ahsani Moqaddam, head of the executive Anti-Vice center in Mashad. They were giving music lessons in the gathering and the first row suspects were sentenced to 99 lashes and 80 whips in addition to payment of fines. The second row suspects were sentenced to payment of fines as well as whipping and the third row suspects were sentenced to pay fines. Also in Mashad, three people arrested on charges of robbery were sentenced to 26 years prison and 238 lashes.

### **Six youth flogged in public**

*Iran National Television, June 13* - Six youth were flogged in public in Fardis district in Karaj. Revolutionary Guards Commander Kyumarsi said the agents of the 23rd police station in Fardis arrested six youth and handed them over to judiciary authorities. The youth were sentenced to 80 lashes each by Judge Mostafa Barzegar on charges of disrupting public order. The sentences were carried out in public on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, causing outrage among Fardis residents.

### **Fifty youngsters arrested at a party**

*Khorasan daily, June 16* – State Security agents attacked a party in North Tehran. Fifty young girls and boys were arrested and sent to prison in this incident.

### **Torture of 24 year old man**

*Jomhuri Islami daily, June 26* - Following a quarrel between two men, the head of Ahwaz prisons detained one of them for 24 hours in a distressing position with handcuffs. This stoooped the circulation of blood in his hands and he became ill. He was transferred to a hospital, where doctors said both his hands must be amputated. The 24 year old man was identified as Afshin Siah Shahri and was a resident of Andimeshk.

## **Freedom of expression**

### **Stepped up arrests, crackdown on journalists**

*Hambastegi website, June 1* – Colonel Azim Hosseini, director general of the State Security Forces' anti-vice department, said at a press conference that employees of a news agency called SINA that had recently published a report

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on trafficking and sale of Iranian girls in Dubai, had been arrested. He claimed, "This news is absolutely false. The State Security Forces, judicial authorities as well as the public prosecutor's office will see to it that the individuals who made such claims be arrested."

### **Human Rights Watch says Iranian judges have "shut down" dissent**

*Associated Press, June 6* - Iranian judges have detained and tortured writers, student leaders and political activists in secret prisons and muzzled reform-minded newspapers to "shut down" dissent, Human Rights Watch said in a report Monday that holds out little hope the trend can be reversed. "There is widespread agreement that the political environment has become increasingly abusive and defined by force," Human Rights Watch said in a 73-page report based on interviews with former political prisoners. ... "The Iranian authorities have managed, in the span of four years, to virtually silence the political opposition within the country through the systematic use of indefinite solitary confinement of political prisoners, physical torture of student activists and denial of basic due process rights to all those detained for the expression of dissenting views," Human Rights Watch said.

### **Iranian police to launch new crackdown on vice**

*AFP, June 20, Tehran* - Iranian police are poised to launch a new crackdown on vice, targeting people disrespecting the Islamic dress code and shops selling skimpy clothing, a press report said Sunday.

"As summer begins, we are going to start controlling places prone to be grounds for corruption -- such as coffee shops, video stores, sports clubs and unauthorised cultural centers," a senior Tehran police official told the Fars news agency.

"This campaign and the punishments will be carried out within the framework of Islamic law," he told Fars, a news service linked to the Islamic republic's hardline judiciary. He said the moral drive would primarily target those inadequately dressed, but would also take in shops selling unsuitable attire, as well as other illegal goods such as banned audio CDs...

### **Summer of suppression**

*Kayhan daily, June 24* - Tala'ii, commander of Greater Tehran's State Security Forces, in a press conference announced the SSF's plans in the summer. Morteza Tala'ii announced that the State Security Forces are planning to step up control on public places such as parks, mountain resorts, sports centers, cultural/educational centers, video clubs, and coffee shops. He told reporters that because students have more leisure time in the summer, there will be more supervision on educational, cultural and recreation facilities. Tala'ii added that one of the vulnerable places that the young generation rushes to during the summer is educational centers, which will be under severe control. He also said coffee shops and cafes that don't have licenses will be closed down and if the licensed centers engage in illegal activities, they will be dealt with harshly. More police will be stationed in parks and mountains for further control.

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### **EU challenged over Middle East's biggest prison for journalists**

*Reporters Without Borders, June 28* - Reporters Without Borders today addressed an open letter to the European Union asking about the EU delegation that was in Tehran on 14-15 June taking part in a dialogue about human rights with the Islamic Republic. The organization criticized the continuing threats against members of the news media and the deterioration in the situation of imprisoned journalists.

"This dialogue, launched in 2001, has not yet led to any decrease in repression but it allows the Iranian regime to maintain 'good relations' with the European countries," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Robert Ménard pointed out in his letter...

Reporters Without Borders is also very concerned about the disappearance of journalist Iraj Jamshidi, who was imprisoned on 6 July 2003.

## **Women**

### **Women's physical punishment center inaugurated in Kurdistan**

*Jomhuri Islami daily, June 1, Sanandaj* - In line with the policies of the State's Physical Punishment Organization to honor its clients and continue to provide services to the public, the first branch attending to women's affairs was inaugurated in Sanandaj.

### **Iran's sex slaves suffer hideously under mullahs**

*Insight Magazine, Donna M. Hughes, June 8* - A measure of Islamic fundamentalists' success in controlling society is the depth and totality with which they suppress the freedom and rights of women. In Iran for 25 years, the ruling mullahs have enforced humiliating and sadistic rules and punishments on women and girls, enslaving them in a gender apartheid system of segregation, forced veiling, second-class status, lashing and stoning to death. Joining a global trend, the fundamentalists have added another way to dehumanize women and girls: buying and selling them for prostitution. Exact numbers of victims are impossible to obtain, but according to an official source in Tehran, there has been a 635 percent increase in the number of teen-age girls in prostitution. The magnitude of this statistic conveys how rapidly this form of abuse has grown. In Tehran, there are an estimated 84,000 women and girls in prostitution, many of them are on the streets, others are in the 250 brothels that reportedly operate in the city...This criminal trade is not conducted outside the knowledge and participation of the ruling fundamentalists. Government officials themselves are involved in buying, selling and sexually abusing women and girls....

*Dr. Donna M. Hughes is a professor and holds the Carlson Endowed Chair in Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island.*



### **Suppression through "the veil"**

*Radio Farda, June 18* – Chief Talaie, commander of Greater Tehran's State Security Forces, recently announced that the State Security Forces will take actions against the manifestation of mal-veiling in society and naturally these actions will start from Tehran and other large cities. Simultaneously, the Seventh Majlis that is represented by conservative hard-liners vowed to seriously fight what it calls "manifestation of mal-veiling".

### **Government stifles defiance of Iranian dress codes**

*Feminist Daily News, June 24* - In cities throughout Iran, government authorities have ordered a crackdown on women in lighter dress this summer. The conservative government, which took power in February, has ordered that any woman seen defying the Iranian female dress code will be subject to fines, prison and even flogging. The BBC NEWS quoted one police chief as saying the alterations made to the dress code are a source of "social corruption." He warned that any woman doing so will be punished.

## **Other news**

### **15 NGOs urge UN to appoint rights monitor for Iran**

*Radio Farda, May 30* – Fifteen human rights groups in Europe and North America wrote an open letter to Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, urging him to appoint a permanent observer to monitor the situation of human rights in Iran.

### **Iran ranks second in the world in execution - NGO**

*Radio Farda, June 24* – Just like previous years, the Islamic Republic of Iran ranked second after China in carrying out execution sentences. The non government Italian organization, "Hands off Cain", which issues reports every year regarding death sentences in the world, presented last year's report to the press in Milan...

### **The sound of death**

*Peik- e Iran website, June 29* – On June 25, on 22 Bahman Street in Isfahan gun shots were heard from 3 to 6 in the morning. The residents of this neighborhood claim that at the end of this street is a place for political prisoners named Kashefi Garden which seems very terrifying and every once in a while this noise informs the people that a large number of political prisoners have been executed. The issue worth pondering is why these acts are done in these hours when there are no other noises on the streets and when everything can be heard?

