



COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF REFERENDUM IN IRAN

1050 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036

Ph: (202) 772-4154 Fax: (202) 772-3101

info@referendum-iran.org website: www.referendum-iran.org

Human Rights in Iran – January 2005

Death sentences

Two executions in Mashad

Kayhan daily (state-run), Jan. 1 – Upon the order of the Public Court of Mashad, Mohammad Reza Marouf was sentenced to execution in public and flogging. The decree was carried out on Mashad's Hadayat Boulevard and the case of this 28-year-old man was closed with the hanging rope.

Also according to the order of the public court of Mashad, a man identified as M.R. was hanged in public in Doustabad region of Mashad.

Man hanged in public

Iran Focus, Jan. 6, Tehran - A 32-year-old man [Bagher Soleimani] was hanged in public yesterday in the town of Noshahr (northern Iran), after serving five years in prison for murder.

SSF shot young man at point blank range

Iran Focus, Jan. 5, Tehran – A young man was killed by agents of Iran's State Security Forces (SSF) in the town of Sanandaj (western province of Kurdistan) after he came to the aid of a young woman being assaulted by the SSF agents earlier this week.

The young man only identified by his first name Afshin reportedly attempted to defend the young woman and pushed back the security forces allowing her to escape. He then ran away since the agents were armed.

Witnesses have said that agents pursued and caught up with Afshin in Cyrus Street and rather than arresting him, shot him at point-blank.



Iranian authorities have officially announced 109 incidents were SSF agents have fatally shot citizens at point blank throughout the past year alone. The actual figure is believed to be much higher.

Iranian teenage hanged

Iran Focus, Jan. 20, Tehran - A young man who was accused of killing a member of Iran's security forces when he was a minor was hanged in the notorious Evin prison, Tehran.

Iman Farrokhi who was 17 at the time of the offence was on death row in the Tehran Centre for Reform and Education (Juvenile Prison).

Urgent Action: A 16-year-old student at risk of imminent execution

Amnesty International, Jan. 20 - Ali, a 16-year-old student, may be at risk of imminent execution for the murder of another student in his high school, which took place between mid-January and mid-February 2003. Amnesty International has recently learned that Ali was sentenced to death in June 2004 and his sentence has already been confirmed by the Supreme Court...

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Iran is a state party. Article 6 of the ICCPR states: "Sentence of death shall not be imposed for crimes committed by persons below eighteen years of age."

UN urges Iran to halt execution of young offenders

Reuters, Jan. 28, Geneva - A United Nations human rights body called on Iran on Friday to abolish the death penalty as well as amputation, flogging and stoning for people who committed crimes as minors.

The U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child "deplored" the fact that during its three-week session an Iranian was executed for a killing carried out when he was 17 -- contradicting Iran's statement that it had suspended the death penalty for people accused of crimes while juveniles.

U.N. officials said Iman Farrokhi, found guilty of killing a member of Iran's security forces at age 17, was hanged in Tehran's notorious Evin prison on Jan. 20.

At least two other Iranians who committed crimes as juveniles are believed to be on death row, activists said.



The U.N. body, which has 18 independent experts, issued its findings after examining compliance by 10, including Iran, of the 192 countries to have ratified the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Time to end the death penalty for children

Amnesty International, Jan. 31, Public Statement - Amnesty International urges all the relevant Iranian authorities, including the judiciary, to act in accordance with the Government of Iran's public pronouncements and take urgent measures to bring its law and practice in line with its obligations as a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) and end the imposition of death penalty on children.

On Friday 28 January 2005, following its consideration of Iran's second periodic report on its implementation of the provisions of the Convention, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee), the body of independent experts established under the Convention to monitor states parties' compliance with the treaty, urged Iran:

"to take the necessary steps to immediately suspend the execution of all death penalties imposed on persons for having committed a crime before the age of 18, to take the appropriate legal measures to convert them to penalties in conformity with the provisions of the Convention and to abolish the death penalty as a sentence imposed on persons for having committed crimes before the age of 18, as required by article 37 of the Convention."

A new victim for stoning in Iran

Etemad daily, Feb. 3, Tehran – The state-run daily Etemad reported today that a Tehran court has sentenced a couple to death by stoning and hanging.

Iran's Supreme Court has reportedly upheld the verdicts and has confirmed that the woman only identified by her first name Massoumeh will be stoned to death and her husband identified by his first name Ismaeil will be hanged.

The couple was accused of murder. The daily also reported that another unnamed individual identified only as an Afghan, also charged with murder, separately was handed down an execution sentence in Pakdasht (west of Tehran).



Arrests, Tortures and inhumane punishments

50 lashes, 5 years imprisonment

ILNA (Iranian state-run), Jan. 7 - Bina Darabvand who was arrested in a protest rally held in front of the United Nations headquarters in Tehran last August by families of political prisoners, was sentenced to prison and lashes... The judge sentenced the detainee to 5 years detention and 50 lashes. It is said that the detainee was guilty of participating in an illegal protest rally.

Freedom of expression

Journalist and web logger arrested

Reporters Without Borders, Jan. 20 - Reporters Without Borders has called for the immediate release of journalist Arash Sigarchi who was arrested on 17 January 2005, after responding to a summons from the intelligence ministry in Rasht in the north of the country.

He had been updating a web log that has been banned by the authorities, Panhjareh Eltehab (The window of Anguish), in which he had spoken out against recent arrests of cyber journalists and loggers.

AFP, Jan. 20 - An Iranian journalist has been arrested on charges of giving interviews to foreign radios, a newspaper reported Thursday. Arash Sigarchi, chief editor of Gilan-e-Emrooz (Today's Gilan) in the northern province of Gilan, gave interviews to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the US-funded Radio Farda, Shargh said.

Iran attempts to pull plug on web dissidents

Los Angeles Times, Jan. 24, Tehran - The arrest of online journalists and bloggers began last fall. The writers say they were tortured and forced to publicly denounce their work. Even technicians who worked on Web pages have been imprisoned....

Called before a presidential commission in December, Hanif Mazroui was among a handful of online writers who told of the torture they'd suffered behind bars. They had been beaten, left in solitary confinement and forced to make false confessions, they said. They'd been grilled about their past sexual relationships, they said, and denied access to lawyers...

Mazroui is still free, but soon after going public with his allegations of torture, he stopped responding to e-mails from the Los Angeles Times.



According to a Human Rights Watch report, Mazroui and the other online writers had been menaced by death threats.

In protest to Iran's mullahs man chains himself to UN HQ in Tehran

Paik-e Iran website, Jan. 31 – Today, January 31, a freedom loving revolutionary, Areo Seraji, went on hunger strike in front of the UN headquarters in Tehran and tied himself with chains to the gates in protest to the Iranian regime's suppressive behavior towards himself and other strugglers in Iran.

Areo Seraji who had come from Tabriz to Tehran for this reason, announced that he had been arrested and tortured in Tabriz and that he was released on bail.

Women

649 under-14 girls arrested in Iran capital

Iran Focus, Jan. 23 – The commander of Iran's State Security Forces in Tehran announced that 649 teenage girls under 14 years of age have been arrested in the Iranian capital over the past ten months.

The SSF chief told a press conference in Tehran yesterday, "Of the 59,121 individuals arrested in Tehran over the past ten months, 3969 of them were women; 649 were girls under the age of 14".

The SSF chief said that the Iranian capital was facing both a social and a security crisis, adding that his forces were prepared to crack down on anyone suspected of engaging in activities against the state.

Special UN rapporteur visits Iran on women's rights

Farda Radio, Jan. 31 - Special UN Rapporteur on Abuse against Women Affairs has traveled to Iran. She has been in Tehran since yesterday. Transferring urgent demands on deliberate cases of abuse against women, meetings with non-governmental and some governmental organizations and giving periodical reports to the UN Human Rights Commission is on her agenda.

Cosmetics exhibition closed by Iranian judiciary

AFP, Feb. 6, Tehran - Iran's judiciary has shut down a cosmetics and personal hygiene exhibition in the northeastern holy city of Mashhad after a judge apparently decided that only women should operate the stall.



"This judge came to the exhibition and grabbed some posters from the stalls and said that only women could run the booths," an informed official was quoted as saying by the official IRNA news agency on Sunday

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