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Five sentenced to death over Iran vote unrest

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By Hashem Kalantari

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Five people have been sentenced to death and 81 have received jail terms of up to 15 years in connection with unrest after Iran's disputed election in June, state broadcaster IRIB reported on Tuesday.

Citing a statement by the public relations office of Tehran's provincial court listing verdicts issued so far over post-vote incidents, it said those sentenced to death were affiliated to or members of "counter-revolutionary groups."

The same court said last month that death sentences had been handed down against three people over the street unrest and links to exiled opposition organizations.

It was not immediately clear if the five cited in Tuesday's statement were the same as those reported by an Iranian rights group earlier this week to have been sentenced to death.

The IRIB report did not name any of the accused nor say when the sentences were handed down.

The presidential poll held more than five months ago triggered mass demonstrations by supporters of defeated pro-reform candidates, who say it was rigged to secure hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election.

Iranian authorities have rejected the election fraud charges and portrayed the street demonstrations as foreign-backed efforts to undermine the Islamic Republic.

Thousands of people were arrested as the Revolutionary Guards and an Islamic militia quelled the protests during Iran's worst internal crisis since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

VERDICTS "NOT FINAL"

Most of them have since been freed but more than 100 leading reformers, journalists and others have been put on trial accused of fomenting the unrest. The opposition has denounced the trials. Several jail sentences have been announced.

"So far, verdicts have been issued on 89 of the cases, of whom five have been given the execution sentence because of their affiliation to or membership in counter-revolutionary groups," Tuesday's court statement said.

Eighty-one people were sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to 15 years. There were also three suspended jail sentences.

"The verdicts issued here are not final and can be appealed," it said, adding the court issued the statement to "prevent the spread of baseless and unreal rumors regarding the manner of issuing of verdicts."

In October, the Iranian news agency ISNA cited the same Tehran provincial court as saying three people had been sentenced to death on charges related to post-vote unrest.

They were also accused of affiliation to a pro-monarchy group and the People's Mujahideen Organization of Iran (PMOI), which is an exiled opposition organization, seen by both Iran and the United States as a terrorist group. [Continued...](#)

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