

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST ARRESTED IN IRAN

Navid Khanjani, a member of an Iranian human rights organization, the Committee of Human Rights Reporters (CHRR), was arrested on 2 March. Three other CHRR members are currently detained, and all are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Navid Khanjani was arrested at his home in the city of Esfahan, central Iran, at 11 pm by seven members of the security forces, who had a warrant for his arrest issued by the Revolutionary Court. The security guards searched his home, confiscated personal belongings, including his computer, and told him that he would be taken to Evin prison in Tehran the following day. Navid Khanjani made a phonecall on 4 March confirming he was in Evin prison.

As well as belonging to CHRR, Navid Khanjani is the founder of the Oppose Discrimination in Education Association. An independent organization created around October 2009, it advocates education for all and opposes the denial of access to education for reasons of ethnic or religiousness identity. He is a member of the Baha'i community, which is an unrecognized religious group in Iran. He was banned from pursuing his university studies because of his Baha'i faith and has since spoken out for the right to education for all over the past few years.

Three other CHRR members were released on bail this month after paying up to \$100,000 each. **Saeed Kalanaki** was released on 2 March, **Mehrdad Rahimi** was released on 9 March and **Saeed Jalifar** was released on 16 March. There is still no further information about the three CHRR activists who are still in detention in Evin Prison, **Shiva Nazar Ahari**, **Kouhyar Goudarzi** and **Saeed Haeri**. None of them has had contact with a lawyer and all are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, English, Arabic, French, or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release CHRR members, Navid Khanjani, Shiva Nazar Ahari, Kouhyar Goudarzi and Saeed Haeri immediately and unconditionally, as they appear to be prisoners of conscience held solely for their peaceful human rights activities;
- Urging them to ensure that they are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and granted immediate and regular access to lawyers of their choosing, their families and any medical treatment they may require;
- Reminding the authorities that confessions extracted under duress are prohibited under Article 38 of the Constitution of Iran and by Article 14(g) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 28 APRIL 2010 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic
Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of
Shahid Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran,
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info_leader@leader.ir
via website:
[http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?](http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter)
[p=letter](http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter) (English)
Salutation: Your Excellency_

Head of the Judiciary in Tehran
Ali Reza Avaei
Karimkhan Zand Avenue
Sana'i Avenue, Corner of Ally 17, No
152
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir
Salutation: Dear Mr Avaei

And copies to:
Secretary General, High Council for
Human Rights
Mohammad Javad Larijani
Howzeh Riassat-e Ghoveh Ghazaiyeh
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave., south of
Serah-e Jomhuri
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: +98 21 3390 4986
Email: bia.judi@yahoo.com (In subject
line: FAO Mohammad Javad Larijani)
Salutation: Dear Mr Larijani

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 347/09 (MDE 13/132/2009). For more information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/132/2009/en>, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/017/2010/en> and
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/023/2010/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The CHRR was founded in 2006 and campaigns against all kinds of human rights violations, including against women, children, prisoners, workers and others. On or around 21 January, Abbas Ja'fari Dowlatabadi, the Tehran prosecutor told Shiva Nazar Ahari's family in a meeting that: "Experts of the case have reported that the website for the Committee is linked to 'hypocrites' (the Iranian authorities' name for the banned opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, PMOI, which has a base in Iraq), and any collaboration with the Committee is considered a crime."

Most of the members of the "Oppose Discrimination in Education Association" (*Jami'iat-e Mobarzeh ba Tab'a'iz-e Tahsili*) are said to be Baha'i students who have been deprived of education as a result of being expelled or suspended, usually from universities. The organisation campaigns for the right to education for those excluded for reason of religious or ethnic identity or on grounds of gender discrimination.

On 11 February, Shiva Nazar Ahari told her family by phone that she had been transferred to a "cage-like" solitary confinement cell where she cannot move her arms or legs. Since her arrest on 20 December she has been held without charge or access to her lawyer. She added that she was still under pressure to accept "accusations," whose content she does not know.

On 10 March 2010, an Iranian human rights activist, Shadi Sadr, was one of the ten awarded the United States-based International Women of Courage Award. In her acceptance speech, Shadi Sadr stated that she dedicated the award to CHRR member and founder, Shiva Nazar Ahari, stating that "her courage has been exceptional and deserving of worldwide attention." She added that "They [the Iranian authorities] kept her for a long period in a cage-like cell so small that she could barely move her limbs." (see: <http://chrr.us/spip.php?article8819>)

Prior to their release, Saeed Kalanaki and Saeed Jalalifar were both arrested on 30 November 2009 and were held in a public section of Evin prison. Both men were forced to telephone two other CHRR members urging them to close the CHRR website. During the exchange, interrogators took the telephone away from them and threatened the other CHRR activists, telling them that if they did not stop posting information, they would be dealt with "either within prison or outside".

Saeed Haeri, Kouhyar Goudarzi and Shiva Nazar Ahari were arrested on 20 December by police officers and officials from the Ministry of Intelligence in Tehran. They were taken from a bus which was about to drive to the northern city of Qom, where the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Montazeri took place on 21 December. They are held in Section 209 of Evin prison, which is under the control of the Ministry of Intelligence.

Following the telephone threats the Ministry of Intelligence summoned four members of the CHRR to their offices in central Tehran on 1 January. Parisa Kakaie and Mehrdad Rahimi presented themselves and were immediately arrested. Mehrdad Rahimi is a student activist and deputy head of the Committee for Defence of the Rights of Citizens in the central office of Mehdi Karubi. He phoned his family in February and said that he was being held in a small cell with six other prisoners. He said the cell was so small that they could not even sleep comfortably; his interrogation sessions had lasted several hours, in an attempt to force him to make televised confessions.

Since the disputed presidential election in June 2009, thousands have been arrested, mostly arbitrarily and many have been tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Scores have faced unfair trial, including some in mass "show trials", with over 80 sentenced to prison terms, and at least 12 sentenced to death, although at least one has had his sentence commuted to a prison term. Waves of arrests, notably of political activists, students, journalists and human rights activists has been taking place since a Shi'a religious festival called 'Ashoura, on 27 December 2009 and Iran's national day on 11 February 2010.

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