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Iran admits 4,000 June detentions

Authorities in Iran say 4,000 people were detained in protests that followed June's disputed presidential election - many more than previously stated.

A spokesman for the judiciary, Ali Reza Jamshidi, said about 3,700 had been freed within a week, but that those involved in riots were in detention.



The government has come under pressure over its handling of protests

An opposition figure has also claimed at least 69 people were killed in the violence following the 12 June poll.

It is more than double the number the government admits died.

Iran is currently trying more than 100 detainees over their alleged involvement in the protests.

The trials - of leading opposition figures, activists, journalists, lawyers, workers at foreign embassies and two people with foreign nationalities - have been criticised by several foreign powers, opposition groups and human rights campaigners.

But authorities insist their legal proceedings are completely legitimate and conform to international standards of justice.

Figures increase

Speaking at a news conference, judiciary spokesman Mr Jamshidi admitted some 4,000 people were detained in June's post-election street protests.

But he said only 300 - who had been "involved in the riots" - were held for longer than a few days.

Supporters of the protesters had previously challenged government figures on the numbers of those

“ The Islamic Republic of Iran must stand firm against irrational demands ”
 Hassan Qashqavi
 Iran foreign ministry spokesman

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France has denounced the proceedings against Ms Reiss, but the action was defended by Hassan Qashqavi, a spokesman for Iran's foreign ministry.

"There was no ambiguity in the trial procedures - and there was no pressure to get confessions from the people on trial," he said on Monday.

Reports speak of a febrile atmosphere in Iranian political circles, as the leadership continues to face overt criticism over its handling of the post-election crisis.

One focus of controversy has been the conditions under which remaining the detainees have been held, with damaging claims forcing authorities to act.

The Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamanei, closed the notorious Kahrizak detention centre over allegations of abuse, and both the Iranian parliament and judiciary have established committees to investigate the post-election unrest and the government's response.

Official election results awarded incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a sweeping victory in the polls.

He is in the process of selecting a cabinet which will be submitted to parliamentary approval next week.

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