

Doc\_Number: EU000061

**Iran starts trial of election protesters**

Sat, 01 Aug 2009 08:07:29 GMT

**The first court session is under way in Tehran to consider the charges against a group of political activists and a number of 'rioters' allegedly involved in the recent post-election unrest in the Islamic Republic.**



Political activists and protesters stood trial in Tehran on Saturday on charges of "rioting and conspiring against the ruling system" in first trial following the presidential election.

The news of the start of the proceedings was reported to have been released by the Tehran Prosecutor's Office, according to the official IRNA news agency.

The report does not specify the number of those whose cases are being heard today, but IRNA reported that a number of leading opposition figures were among the accused at court.

Those named included former deputy foreign minister Mohsen Aminzadeh, former lawmakers Mohsen Mirdamadi, Behzad Nabavi and Mohsen Safaei-Farahani.

Also named were Mohammad Ali Abtahi one of the deputies of the former two-term President Mohammad Khatami and Abdollah Ramezanzadeh, one of Khatami's associates.

Earlier Iran's Judiciary announced that the trial of 30 'rioters' will begin today.

There are no reports as to when those arrested in provincial cities will have their day in court.

Following Iran's 10th presidential election on June 12, supporters of defeated candidates, Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, took to the streets in protest against what they described as massive "ballot rigging" and the officially-announced results that gave the incumbent Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad another term in office with almost two-thirds of the votes.

Over a thousand people were arrested in the aftermath of the election, some of whom have since been released. About 140 of them said to have been released in the past few days.

Tehran's Public Prosecutor's Office declared in a statement on July 29 that a number of suspects were identified from their photos taken during street unrests, and thanked the Iranian nation for help in identifying them. "People's help will lead to identification of more rioters in the near future," it promised.

Ten charges were listed, including attacking military centers with weapons and fire-bombs and attacking security forces; damaging public and private properties, distributing pamphlets against the sacred system of the Islamic Republic; relations with anti-Iranian terrorist groups such as the Mujahedeen-e Khalq Organization (MKO); and preparing reports for the foreign media and the "enemies."

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