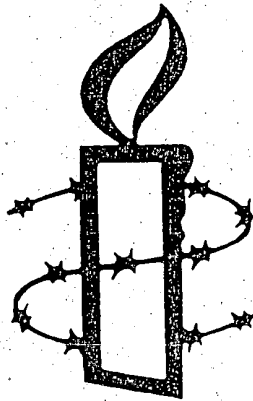


Amnesty International

IRAN

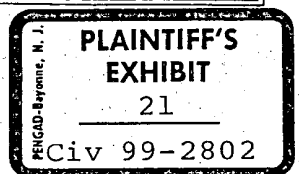
Victims of human rights violations



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IRAN

Victims of human rights violations

1. INTRODUCTION

The human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran is characterized by long-term political imprisonment after unfair trials, the widespread use of torture and the death penalty, and possible extrajudicial executions of opposition activists outside Iran.

Those targeted for such abuses are often involved, but sometimes just suspected of involvement, in underground opposition activities. Those currently held include members or sympathizers of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI); followers of Dr Shariati; left-wing organizations such as the Tudeh Party, Peykar and Razmandegan; Kurdish organizations such as the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and Komala; and groups representing other ethnic minorities such as the Baluchis and Arabs. Abuses against members of religious minorities such as Christians and Baha'is have also continued. In addition, women have been targeted for human rights violations, particularly during crackdowns for violations of dress regulations.

Amnesty International had planned to discuss the range of its human rights concerns, as summarized in this report, with appropriate government and judicial officials in Tehran, and to reiterate its proposals to bring human rights law and practice into line with international human rights treaties to which Iran is a state party. Amnesty International regrets that this has not been possible, despite the fact that during the last two years Iranian officials have stated publicly that the organization was invited to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran. Amnesty International welcomed these statements and repeated its readiness to send delegates to the country, proposing that the first visit take place in early 1993. As of October 1993 it had received no indication from the Iranian authorities that a delegation would be received in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although delegates from the organization were permitted to visit the country in 1991 to interview Iraqi Shi'a and Kurdish refugees, Amnesty International has not been permitted access for government talks or to observe political trials since 1979.

Amnesty International's concerns in Iran and the individual cases described in this report have been raised directly with the Iranian authorities. Where responses have been received these are reflected in the text. In most cases, however, no substantive response was forthcoming.

including a stomach ulcer, eye infection, problems with his left knee and an ear infection. All have reportedly resulted from or been aggravated by torture or ill-treatment in prison. He is held in Evin Prison.

Mohammad Ali Amoui, 69, and married with one daughter, has been imprisoned on political grounds since his arrest in 1983. He was arrested because he was a prominent member of the banned communist Tudeh Party⁴. He received a grossly unfair trial which was held in camera in Evin Prison. According to unconfirmed reports, he was given a death sentence, which apparently serves as a form of continuing psychological pressure on the prisoner to force him to repent. He was given no access to legal counsel at any stage during the trial proceedings or his imprisonment. He was also severely tortured during the first years of imprisonment and as a result needed an operation on his leg in 1992. The authorities have reportedly offered to release Mohammed Ali Amoui if he agrees to give a televised interview renouncing his political activities. He has refused to do so and is still being held in Evin Prison.

Mohammad Bagher Borzoui was arrested in Tehran around November 1982 and was tried by an Islamic Revolutionary Court in secret in Evin Prison in 1984. He was charged with being a leading member of Sazeman-e Razmandegan-e Peshgam-e Mostazafin (widely known as Arman-e Mostazafin), an organization which is based on Dr Shariati's ideas, and with acting against the Islamic Republic. He is believed to have been sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment. He had no access to legal counsel at any time during his detention or at his trial and had no opportunity to appeal against his sentence. He was held in prolonged solitary confinement in Gohardasht Prison (Karaj). He was reportedly tortured, particularly during the period immediately following his arrest, and put under a lot of pressure to give a video-recorded interview repenting his "crimes".⁵ He remained in Gohardasht Prison for a number of years, but is currently believed to be held in Evin Prison.

The Human Rights Committee, in its July 1993 comments, "deplores the lack of respect for due process of law, particularly before the Revolutionary Courts, where trials in camera tend to be the rule and where apparently no real possibility is provided to the accused to prepare a defence." [Paragraph 12]. The Committee went on to recommend that Iranian legislation and practice be brought into line with the provisions of Articles 9 and 14 of the Covenant, which provide that all persons should have the right to fair

⁴ The Tudeh Party was dissolved in May 1983. Before the end of that year its leadership and hundreds of its supporters were imprisoned.

⁵ Political prisoners in Iran are often forced to give filmed interviews repenting their activities, which are then either broadcast on television or kept with the threat of being broadcast in future.

continued detention. He has spent two of his eight years in prison in solitary confinement. It appears that Mehdi Dibaj has merely exercised his right to freedom of religion and speech, without using or advocating violence. These rights are guaranteed under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Iran has been a State Party since 1976.

Members of the Baha'i community also remain at risk of imprisonment and even execution for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs.

In its July 1993 comments the Human Rights Committee expressed concern at "the extent of the limitations and restrictions on the freedom of religion and belief, noting that conversion from Islam is punishable and that even followers of the three recognized religions⁶ are facing serious difficulties in the enjoyment of their rights..."

Samir Yasin Moslemyan, a member of the Arab community of Ahvaz, has reportedly been detained since his arrest in December 1987. No information about his trial and conviction are available. Reports indicate that he may have been subjected to ill-treatment or torture. He is currently believed to be held in Ahvaz Prison.

During 1993 there have been continuing reports of arbitrary arrests, detention, torture and execution of members of the Naroui⁷ tribe in Baluchistan-Sistan region, particularly in the Nosratabad district.

Abdollah Bagheri, was arrested at the beginning of November 1992 outside Marivan, close to the Iraq border. The precise date of his arrest and his present whereabouts are unknown. Abdollah Bagheri was accused of being a member of Komala. In a statement reported on 7 November 1992, the Information and Security Minister, Hojatoleslam Ali Fallahian, said that "Iranian intelligence services had arrested an official of the Marxist Komala movement" and that a military group backed by "counter-revolutionary elements" in Iran had been dissolved and its members executed. According to reports, the Komala "official" the Information and Security Minister referred to is Abdollah Bagheri.

In February 1993, the Iranian authorities wrote to Amnesty International stating that "Mr Abdollah Bagheri is a high ranking official of the Komala movement. He was arrested on the Iran/Iraq border for his illegal and armed border crossing and will be charged with terrorist attacks. He is responsible for many murders." In April 1993.

⁶The Iranian Constitution does not recognize the Baha'i faith.

⁷The Narouis, who are Sunni Muslims, have been seeking greater autonomy since the early 1980s.

least three members of the Barahoui tribe, also in the Baluchistan-Sistan area. Information regarding the precise charges and trials is unavailable.

Executions of political prisoners continued in 1993. In early August 1993, for example, Amnesty International learned of the execution of **Mohsen Mohammadi Sabet** in Rasht Prison while he was being held in incommunicado detention. The reported circumstances suggest the execution was carried out following legal proceedings that failed to meet minimum international standards for fairness and impartiality. Mohsen Mohammadi Sabet was reportedly arrested in September or October 1992 at his home in Rasht, and had been held in solitary confinement in Rasht Prison since that date. Details of any charges that may have been brought against him or of his trial are unknown. In a letter to the Iranian authorities in April 1993, Amnesty International asked for information regarding the precise charges brought against Mohsen Mohammadi Sabet and the date of the trial, and urged that he be given immediate access to a lawyer of his own choosing, and medical care if necessary. The organization received no reply to this inquiry.

Hundreds of people have been executed for drug-related offences in the last two years. In 1992 at least 190 people were reportedly executed for these offences. The true figure is believed to be much higher. Within five days in June 1993, 8,615 people were, according to press reports, arrested for similar offences. It is feared that many of those arrested in June have already been executed. While Amnesty International fully recognizes the need for the Iranian Government to take effective measures to punish illicit drug-trafficking, the death penalty has not been shown to have any special deterrent effects against such offences.

The Human Rights Committee said in its July 1993 comments that it "deplore[d] the extremely high number of death sentences...". The Committee recommended that "domestic laws should be revised with a view to curtailing the number of offences currently punishable by the death penalty and to reducing the number of executions". It added that "Public executions should be avoided and the accused should, in all cases, be provided with all the necessary guarantees, including the right to a fair trial..."

7. VIOLATIONS AGAINST WOMEN

In a nationwide crackdown on "vice and social corruption" undertaken in June 1993, hundreds of women were reportedly arrested in Tehran for allegedly failing to conform with the dress laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although most of them were believed to have been released shortly after arrest, on 22 June a number of them were

8. EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Amnesty International unconditionally opposes extrajudicial executions -- deliberate and unlawful killings by governments, which result from a policy at any level of government to eliminate or permit the elimination of specific individuals or groups -- and deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians by armed opposition groups.

Several leading members of Iranian opposition groups based abroad have been assassinated in circumstances suggesting that they may have been extrajudicially executed. On 17 September 1992 three KDPI leaders, Sadeqh Sharafkandi, Secretary General, Fattah Abdouli, member of the Central Committee and the party's Europe representative, Homayoun Ardalan, KDPI's representative for Germany and Nuri Dehkurdi, an interpreter, were shot dead in a restaurant in Berlin by masked gunmen. The KDPI delegates were in Berlin for a Socialist International convention.

In a statement issued on 19 September 1992, the Iranian Embassy in Bonn rejected charges that Iranian authorities may have ordered the killings, stating "We do not know who these people are or for what purpose they came to Berlin". The Iranian authorities have continued to categorically deny accusations of any involvement in the killings.

However, according to press reports at the end of May 1993, prosecutors in Germany have charged the Iranian authorities with having ordered the assassinations. The federal prosecutor's indictment asserts that "... the ringleader of the Berlin attack was Kazem Darabi, an agent of the Iranian secret service ..." and that "... an agent of the Iranian intelligence service, Kazem Darabi, received orders from superiors in Tehran to kill the Kurds during their visit to a meeting of the Socialist International here. He is said to have planned and carried out the shootings with the help of four Lebanese confederates. All are under arrest...". Two of the four Lebanese men accused of aiding Kazem Darabi, Youssef Amin and Abbas Rhayel, were named as members of the pro-Iranian Hizbullah "Party of God" militia. Another, Atallah Ayad, was said to belong to the Syrian-backed Amal. Trial proceedings have not yet begun.

Ali Akbar Ghorbani, a member of the PMOI, was abducted in Istanbul, Turkey, on 4 June 1992. His body was discovered in a forest near Yalova at the end of January 1993. Reports indicate that he had been severely tortured before being murdered. On 4 February 1993 the Turkish Interior Minister, Ismet Sezgin, was reported as stating that an "Islamic fundamentalist group with Iranian links" had carried out three political killings in Turkey. He said that Islamic Action was responsible for the killings of Ali Akbar Ghorbani, an Iranian national, as well as Turkish journalist Cetin Emec and writer Turan Dursun in 1990. He told a news conference in Istanbul that police had arrested 19 members of the previously unknown Islamic Action group and they had been

religious authority does not exempt the State party from its obligation to ensure to all individuals the rights provided for under the Covenant, in particular its articles 6, 9, 14 and 19".¹⁰

¹⁰These articles guarantee the right to life, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to fair trial and the right to freedom of opinion and expression, respectively.