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12/03/09

## Iran: Top Student Leader Arrested

Source: <u>International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran</u>

Widespread Arrests, Expulsions, and Suspensions of Students Continue

Violations of their fundamental rights are unlikely to deter Iranian students from demanding

(2 December 2009) With the approach of the National Students Day, December 7, the authorities have stepped up persecution and prosecution of student activists throughout the country, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran said today. Authorities arrested prominent student leader Milad Asadi, a

member of the Central Council of the Student Union to Foste Unity (Daftar e Tahkim Vahdat), at his home on the afternoon of December. Three other members of the Central Council, Bahareh Hedayat, Mehdi Arabshahi and Farid Hashemi, were summoned on 29 November to appear before the Revolutionary Court on 2 December. Another member of the Central Council, Abbas Hakimzadeh, was arrested last week and remains

Asadi is a student of Khajenasir University, whose authorities suspended him from his studies on the day of his arrest. In April

2009, in an interview with the Campaign, he explained the concerns of the Student Union to Foster Unity as "students' collective rights, our right to study, our right to free expression, the freedom of association and assembly, which all the students all around the world are enjoying

The arrests of Milad Asadi and at least 90 students over the past three weeks are illegal under international law, and deserve scrutiny by United Nations Special Rapporteurs as per the <u>UN</u> <u>Resolution</u> soon to be approved by the General Assembly," said Aaron Rhodes, a spokesperson for the Campaian

"While the arrests are clearly an attempt to decapitate the student movement, violations of their fundamental rights are unlikely to deter Iranian students from demanding them," he added

A*mirkabir* News reported that Babak Ghiyasi, an agricultural student at Razi University in Kermanshah, was arrested on 1 December. He has been banned from entering the University, and three days following the end of the ban, as he was entering a ceremony of honoring students of distinction, he was kidnapped by unknown persons believed to be security agents of the Revolutionary Guards. No information has given about his whereabouts. There has been no information released about numerous other students who were recently arrested and remain in jail.

The authorities are also targeting human rights reporters to prevent the dissemination of news and information about recent arrests. On November 30, security and intelligence detained Saeed Kalank and Saeed Jalalifar, two members of the <u>Committee of the Human Rights Reporters</u> which is one of the main organizations currently reporting on human rights violations. Jalalifar was expelled from Zanjan University last year

University officials, acting hand in hand with security forces, have stepped up their actions against students through university Disciplinary Committees, suspending and expelling student activists on what are considered spurious grounds. The Campaign has learned that on 1 December: 12 students in Orumieh University were summoned to the Disciplinary Committee; 10 students in Khajenasir University were summoned and suspended from their studies for 12 semesters; and 30 students were summoned in Ferdowsi University in Mash'had (5 students of this institution are in jail after they were arrested following demonstrations on 4 November)

In addition, Mowi e Sabz reported that 12 students in Payam e nour University in Mash'had were suspended for a total of 18 semesters. Amirkabir University reported that 11 students were sentenced by the Disciplinary Committed; two were dismissed, and the others were suspended for a total of 12 semesters. Twenty-three students in Shahr Kurd University were also sentenced by the Disciplinary Committee

"It is deeply regrettable and a disgrace to the ideal of academic freedom when universities concede their independence and persecute students for their opinions and their legitimate activities," Rhodes

The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran calls for the immediate release of all illegally detained students and the cancellation of university disciplinary measures that have violated their right to education

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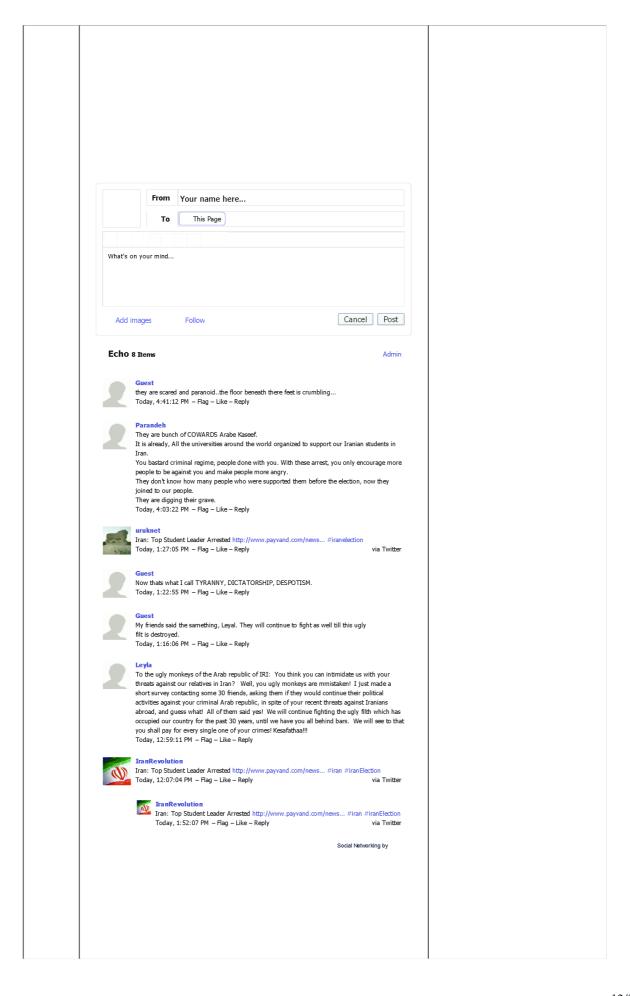




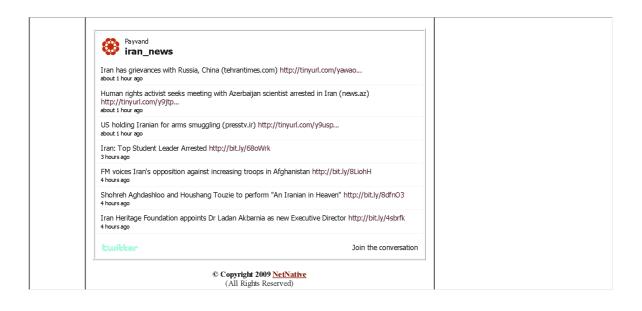
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