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Iran's Islamic militiamen will confront "riots", report

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By Parisa Hafezi

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran's Basij militia, who clashed with protesters after June's presidential poll, will confront any further "street riots", its commander said on Wednesday, ahead of a ceremony to mark the killing of a dissident couple.

The turmoil after the disputed June 12 election, in which President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won a second term, was the worst in Iran since its 1979 Islamic revolution. Authorities denied vote-rigging and portrayed the unrest as foreign backed.

Iran's judiciary said on Tuesday that five people had been sentenced to death and 81 have received jail terms of up to 15 years in connection with protests and violence after the poll.

Some Iranians had heeded calls to stage "street riots" which were broadcast by U.S.-based Iranian satellite television, the commander of the hardline Basij, Mohammadreza Naqdi, said.

"Those groups that chant slogans against the revolution's values ... should know that they will be confronted by Basij," said Naqdi, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The daughter of a dissident nationalist couple, stabbed to death by "rogue" Iranian security agents in 1998, has urged people to attend a gathering on Sunday to commemorate their killing, a reformist website reported.

The killing of Dariush Forouhar and his wife, who headed the illegal but tolerated Iran Nation Party, and at least two other secularist figures around the same time outraged many Iranians.

In previous years, security forces clashed with people at their memorial services, which turned into opposition rallies.

"Please join us on Sunday to commemorate the 11th year of my parents' murders," said Parastou Forouhar in a statement, the Mowjcamp website reported.

WARNINGS OVER RALLIES

Iranian authorities, seeking to avoid any repeat of the huge demonstrations that erupted after the election, have warned the opposition about staging "illegal" rallies.

"The opposition leaders are hypocrites because they are not committed to the Islamic revolution's values," said Salar Abnough, a Revolutionary Guards commander, the semi-official Fars news agency reported.

Since the June protests, opposition supporters clashed with security forces at two official commemorations, one held annually to support Palestinians and the other to mark the storming of the U.S. embassy in Tehran during the revolution.

Opposition leader Mirhossein Mousavi said his office was pursuing cases of protesters arrested since the vote, calling on people to "share information about their beloved ones who were detained, injured or killed" in the past months.

The opposition says more than 70 people were killed in the post-election violence. Officials say the death toll was half that and members of the

11/18/2009

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security forces were among the victims.

Thousands of people were arrested after the vote and over 100 reformers still remain in jail.

(Writing by Parisa Hafezi; editing by Peter Millership)

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