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12-year old Ali Reza

Robert Gibbs
Photo: AP

Report: Iranian officers beat 12-year old to death

Boy reportedly received deadly blow to head while attending reformist mourning ceremony with father. White House spokesman retracts 'Ahmadinejad is the elected leader' statement

Dudi Cohen

Published: 08.05.09, 19:23 / [Israel News](#)

A reformist Iranian newspaper reported Wednesday that police who were dispersing an Opposition-related rally in Tehran had beaten a 12-year old boy to death in the process.

The incident was reported just hours after [President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](#) was sworn into his second term in office.

Acceptance

White House: Ahmadinejad 'elected leader' of Iran / Reuters

White House recognizes Ahmadinejad win but says US won't congratulate him

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The boy, Ali Reza (his last name wasn't published), was reportedly killed last week during a mourning ceremony for Neda Agha Soltan, who was shot to death on July 20. Thousands of people attended the ceremony at the cemetery in which she was buried, and clashes with security ensued.

The report says Ali Reza arrived at the ceremony with his father, and when the two attempted to leave they were separated. Ali Reza then suffered a massive blow to the head delivered by police, the report says.

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Thousands attend mourning ceremony at cemetery (Photo: AP)

This would make Ali Reza the youngest person to have been killed in the turmoil following Iran's disputed June 12 elections. The death toll currently stands at 30, but reports say the unofficial number is closer to 100.

Etemad Melli news reported Wednesday that the Iranian parliament had appointed an investigating committee in order to verify the claims. One committee member, Hamid Reza K, said he had not heard of the case but that he would speak to the boy's family.

The paper, which belongs to defeated reformist leader Mehdi Karubi, reported that the family had only succeeded in recovering Ali Reza's body four days after his death. The family refused to divulge details about his funeral.

The Iranian government said Tuesday it would indict a number of security and government officials suspected of abusing civilians during the riots that occurred after the elections. The state-owned IRNA said a number of judiciary officials may also be relieved of their positions and indicted.

Meanwhile, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs has retreated from his statement that Ahmadinejad is "the elected leader" of the Islamic republic.

Gibbs had been asked on Tuesday whether the White House recognized Ahmadinejad as the country's legitimate president.

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"He's the elected leader," Gibbs responded.

Talking to reporters Wednesday while en route to Indiana with President Barack Obama, the spokesman said, "Let me correct a little bit of what I said yesterday. ... I would say that's not for me to pass judgment on."

Gibbs said that Ahmadinejad has been inaugurated, "that's a fact." He said it must be up to the Iranian people to decide whether the election "was fair."

Associated Press contributed to the report



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