

**SHIVA NAZAR
AHARI
IRAN**

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



**IRAN ONE YEAR ON
FREE THE
PRISONERS OF
CONSCIENCE**

PLEASE HELP SHIVA NAZAR AHARI

Shiva Nazar Ahari, a journalist, blogger and member of the Committee of Human Rights Reporters (CHRR), was arrested with two other CHRR members, Kouhyar Goudarzi and Saeed Haeri, on 20 December 2009. They were arrested while on their way to the funeral the following day of Grand Ayatollah Montazeri, a senior cleric critical of the authorities. Shiva Nazar Ahari, born in mid-1984, is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of her rights to freedom of expression and association.

Shiva Nazar Ahari had previously been arrested on 14 June 2009 and held for three months before being released on bail on 23 September. She had also been detained in connection with her student and human rights activities in 2002 and 2004, receiving a one-year prison sentence in 2005, suspended for five years.

Since her most recent arrest Shiva Nazar Ahari has been held for much of the time in solitary confinement. In February 2010, she told her family by phone that she had been transferred to a “cage-like” solitary confinement cell where she could not move her arms or legs. She has had limited access to her family, and no access to her lawyers.

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“But during the interrogations, more charges were brought out. For example, working against national security by being a member of illegal groups, by giving interviews to foreign media, and creating chaos by organizing mass protests and participating in them.”

Shiva Nazar Ahari in an interview with the Committee of Human Rights Reporters after her release in September 2009

According to her mother, in April 2010 Shiva Nazar Ahari was charged with “causing unease in the public mind through writing on the CHRR’s website and other sites” and “acting against national security by participating in [anti-government] demonstrations on 4 November 2009 and 7 December 2009”. Shiva Nazar Ahari denied attending the demonstrations, saying that she was at work on those days. If convicted of these charges, she faces a lengthy prison term, or even possibly the death penalty, as the judge has the discretion to decide if her “offence” is serious enough to amount to “enmity against God”. Her trial is set for 23 May 2010.

At least eight members of the CHRR have been arbitrarily arrested since the end of November 2009, of whom two – Shiva Nazar Ahari and Kouhyar Goudarzi – were still detained at the time of writing in May 2010. Others have fled the country for their own safety.

The CHRR was founded in 2006 and campaigns against a wide range of human rights violations, including those affecting women, children, prisoners and workers. It has come under particular attack since the June 2009 election. In January 2010, the Tehran Prosecutor accused the group of having links to the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran, a banned group, and said that “any collaboration with the [CHRR] is a crime”. The CHRR vehemently denies having such links.

ACT NOW

WRITE POLITELY WORDED LETTERS TO THE HEAD OF THE JUDICIARY:

- calling for Shiva Nazar Ahari to be released immediately and unconditionally as she is a prisoner of conscience, held solely for peacefully exercising her rights to freedom of expression and association;
- urging the Iranian authorities to ensure that while imprisoned, Shiva Nazar Ahari is granted access to her family, her lawyer and adequate medical care;
- reminding the Iranian authorities that collecting and publicizing information about human rights violations is a right guaranteed under Article 19(2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party, which includes “the freedom to seek, receive and impart information... regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of... choice”.

Send your letters to:

Head of the Judiciary
Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur Street, Vali Asr Avenue,
south of Serah-e Jomhouri
Tehran, 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency
Email: info@dadiran.ir, bia.judi@yahoo.com
(in the subject line: FAO Ayatollah Larijani)

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