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**report**

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Arrest of Azerbaijani Activists in Interview with Lawyers and Friends

## Thirty-One Arrests in Two Weeks

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As civil society and political activists continue to be arrested in Tehran and other cities across Iran, security agents have arrested 31 Azerbaijani political activists in the past two weeks. In this connection, the Association for the Defense of Azerbaijani Political Prisoners in Iran (ADAP) released a report detailing the arrests of civil society activists in Tabriz, Urumiyeh, Ardebil, Rasht, Meshkinshahr, Moghan, Naghdeh, Soufian, Miandoab, Maku, Hamedan, Tehran and Karaj. In interviews with families and lawyers of the arrested activists, as well as human rights activist in Azerbaijan, Rooz has asked about the latest condition of the prisoners.

According to ADAP, the arrests were made across various cities in Azerbaijan after the government began imposing a heavy security presence in the area in response to calls for protests on the anniversary of the June 12 presidential election.

The spokesperson for ADAP, Yashar Hakakpour, said that security agents lacked arrest warrants in most cases, beat and insulted the activists and raided their homes. He emphasizes, "All of the activists are deprived of the right to meet with family and lawyers."

Hakakpour adds, "Officials in the judiciary refuse to disclose the charges against the activists, but in meeting with one of the families the prosecutor implicitly stated that the activists are accused of membership in illegal organizations aiming to undermine national security and translating a book from Turkish into Farsi."

According to Mr. Hakakpour, the arrested individuals have participated in peaceful programs to promote ethnic, linguistic, and other human rights in Azerbaijan, and to combat economic, social, environmental, cultural and historic discrimination.

ADAP reports that several experienced Azerbaijani activists, including members of non-governmental organizations, women's rights groups and student associations, as well as writers and journalists are among those arrested.

Abbas Jamali, vice president of the Eastern Azerbaijan and Ardebil Bar Associations' Human Rights Committee, who also represents two of the arrested activists, says, "The number of arrested activists is large. We now have to wait for interrogations to end. I and other Azerbaijan lawyers will defend our clients after carefully reviewing the cases and charges."

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