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With 47 journalists in jail, Iran sets notorious records



Jailed reporter Shiva Nazar Ahari

New York, February 3, 2010—Iranian authorities are now holding at least 47 journalists in prison, more than any single country has imprisoned since 1996, according to a new survey by the Committee to Protect Journalists. While many of the detainees were arrested in the aftermath of the disputed June presidential election, CPJ's survey found that authorities are continuing to wage an aggressive campaign to round up independent and opposition journalists. At least 26 journalists have been jailed in the last two months alone, CPJ found.

The number of jailed journalists is the highest CPJ has recorded in a single country since December 1996, when it documented 78 imprisonments in Turkey.

"The relentlessness of the press crackdown in Iran demonstrates that authorities continue to fear new ideas and information," said CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon. "Our goal is not simply to document the brutality, but to let the government know that the world is watching."

CPJ's findings are based on a census of imprisoned Iranian journalists conducted on February 1. The survey is a snapshot of those incarcerated on that date. It does not include more than 50 other journalists in Iran who have been imprisoned and released on bail over the last several months. Five of those now in jail were detained prior to the 2009 crackdown.

The current detainees include internationally known figures such as Emadeddin Baghi, the author and human rights defender, and Mashallah Shamsolvaezin, an award-winning editor and press advocate. They also include journalists such as Mohammad Davari, an editor who helped expose prisoner abuse at the Kahrizak Detention Center, and Shiva Nazar Ahari, a human rights reporter who has been jailed twice in the last eight months.

In most cases, authorities have filed vague antistate charges such as "propagation against the regime," insulting authorities, and disrupting public order. But many cases are shrouded in secrecy, without even formal charges being disclosed.

Some detainees have already been sentenced to lengthy prison terms, lashes, internal exile, and lifetime bans on writing and other social and political activities. One is on death row. The cases of many



Mashallah Shamsolvaezin (AP)

others are pending. At least two face heresy charges that, upon conviction, would bring the death penalty. Emadeddin Baghi (AFP)

In light of the Iranian government's ongoing crackdown, CPJ will conduct monthly surveys of journalists imprisoned in Iran. (CPJ normally conducts a worldwide survey of jailed journalists each December.)

Iran is now far and away the world's leading jailer of journalists. China was holding 24 journalists behind bars when CPJ conducted its worldwide census on December 1, 2009. CPJ research shows the number in China has remained stable since that time.

Here are capsule reports on each journalist jailed in Iran:

Adnan Hassanpour, *Aso*

Imprisoned: January 25, 2007

Security agents seized Hassanpour, former editor for the now-defunct Kurdish-Persian weekly *Aso*, in his hometown of Marivan, Kurdistan province, according to news reports.

A Revolutionary Court convicted Hassanpour in July 2007 of endangering national security and engaging in propaganda against the state, one of his attorneys, Sirvan Hosmandi, told CPJ. The journalist was sentenced to death. A court of appeals overturned the death sentence in September 2008 and ordered a new trial on charges of "working for outlawed parties" and espionage, according to the BBC. In November 2009, a trial court convicted Hassanpour on the new charges and re-imposed the death sentence, the BBC said.

Mohammad Seddigh Kaboudvand, *Payam-e Mardom*

Imprisoned: July 1, 2007

Plainclothes security officials arrested journalist and human rights activist Kaboudvand at his Tehran office, according to Amnesty International and CPJ sources. He is being held at Evin Prison in Tehran.

Authorities accused Kaboudvand, head of the Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan and managing editor of the weekly *Payam-e Mardom*, of acting against national security and engaging in propaganda against the state, according to his organization's Web site. A Revolutionary Court in Tehran sentenced him to 11 years in prison.

Mojtaba Lotfi, freelance

Imprisoned: October 8, 2008

A clergyman and blogger, Lotfi was arrested by security forces on a warrant issued by the religious Clergy Court in Qom. Authorities accused him of publishing the views of Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri, who had criticized President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's positions.

Authorities did not specify particular articles or publications in which the views were supposedly cited. Lotfi was convicted of several charges, including spreading antistate information, and sentenced to four years in prison, according to news reports.

Hossein Derakhshan, freelance

Imprisoned: November 2008

On December 30, 2008, a spokesman for the Iranian Judiciary confirmed in a press conference in Tehran that Derakhshan, a well-known Iranian-Canadian blogger, had been detained since November 2008 in connection with comments he allegedly made about a key cleric, according to local and international news reports.

The exact date of Derakhshan's arrest was unknown, but news of his detention first appeared on November 17, 2008, on *Jahan News*, a Web site close to the Iranian intelligence apparatus. At the time, *Jahan News* reported that he had confessed to "spying for Israel" during the preliminary interrogation.

Derakhshan started blogging after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. A former writer for reformist newspapers, he also contributed opinion pieces to *The Guardian* of London and *The New York Times*. The journalist, who lived in Canada during most of the last decade, returned to Tehran a few weeks prior to his detention, *The Washington Post* reported.

In November, the BBC Persian service reported that Derakhshan's family had sought information about his whereabouts and the charges he faced and expressed concern about having very limited contact with him.

Nader Karimi Jooni, *Jahan-e-Sanat*, *Sharq*, *Gozareh*, *Fekr*, and *Siasat-e-Rooz*

Imprisoned: December 2008

Jooni, arrested in late 2008, was sentenced to 10 years in prison on January 11, 2010, at Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court. He was convicted on charges of mutiny, espionage, and acting against national security, [according \(http://www.kalame.org/1388/10/22/klm-8161\)](http://www.kalame.org/1388/10/22/klm-8161) to the reformist Web site *Kalame*. He denied the charges and said the case was politicized.

Jooni, who was an editor and writer for now-defunct publications such as *Gozareh*, *Fekr*, *Jahan-e Sanat*, and *Siasat Rooz*, was placed in Evin Prison's Ward 209, where political prisoners are held. He is an Iran-Iraq War veteran who requires ongoing medical care, according to reformist news Web site [Kalame \(http://www.kalame.org/1388/10/22/klm-8161\)](http://www.kalame.org/1388/10/22/klm-8161).

Ahmad Zaid-Abadi, freelance

Imprisoned: June 2009

Zaid-Abadi, who wrote a weekly column for *Rooz Online*, a Farsi- and English-language reformist news Web site, was arrested in Tehran, according to news reports. Zaid-Abadi is also the director of the Organization of University Alumni of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a supporter of defeated presidential candidate Mehdi Karroubi.

Mahdieh Mohammadi, Zaid-Abadi's wife, was allowed to see the journalist after he had spent 53 days in custody, according to the German public broadcaster Deutsche Welle. He told her that he was being held in inhumane conditions.

Zaid-Abadi was among more than 100 opposition figures and journalists who faced a mass, televised judicial proceeding in August on vague antistate accusations, according to local and international news reports. In November, he was sentenced to six years in prison, five years of exile in Gonabad, Razavi Khorasan province, and a lifetime deprivation of social and political activities, according to the Committee of Human Rights Reporters.

Omid Salimi, *Nesf e Jehan*

Imprisoned: June 14, 2009

Salimi, a photographer who worked for *Nesf e Jehan* newspaper in Esfahan, was arrested after being summoned by the Revolutionary Guards to pick up belongings confiscated during an earlier arrest, according to Human Rights and Democracy Activists in Iran, a local human rights watchdog. Salimi had been detained in December 2008 and had spent three months in prison on unspecified charges.

After his most recent arrest, Salimi was transferred to Evin Prison in Tehran, according to the Iranian Human Rights Activists New Agency. No formal charges have been disclosed.

Kayvan Samimi, *Nameh*

Imprisoned: June 14, 2009

Samimi, manager of the now-defunct monthly *Nameh*, is being held in Evin Prison after his arrest in Tehran, according to news reports. Samimi called his family in October to tell them that he was pressured to make a false confession, his lawyer told *Rooz Online*.

Samimi was charged with "creating public anxiety," and "congregation and mutiny to disrupt national security," his lawyer

told Zamaneh Radio. Samimi was found guilty of the charges on February 2, 2010, and sentenced to six years imprisonment and a lifetime deprivation of political activities, according to the U.S. government-funded Radio Farda.

Saeed Laylaz, *Sarmayeh*

Imprisoned: June 17, 2009

Laylaz, editor of the daily business journal *Sarmayeh* and a vocal critic of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's economic policies, was arrested at home on June 17, his wife, Sepharnaz Panahi, told the BBC Persian service. She said that officers searched their home and confiscated videotapes, hard drives, and letters.

Laylaz was among more than 100 opposition figures and journalists who faced a mass, televised judicial proceeding in August on vague antistate accusations, according to local and international news reports. He spent 100 days in solitary confinement at Tehran's Evin Prison before being moved to a group cell, where he was denied newspapers, pen, and paper, his wife told the Committee of Human Rights Reporters.

Laylaz was charged with "congregation and mutiny against national security, propagation against the regime, disrupting public order, and keeping classified documents," according to *Mowjcamp*, a news Web site supportive of the defeated presidential candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

After a two-hour trial in November, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison, according to the Human Rights Activists News Agency and online accounts. His wife told the news Web site *Kalameh* that the "classified document" that was a centerpiece of the prosecution was actually a published and widely available investigation into the Iranian judiciary.

Bahman Ahmadi Amouee, freelance

Imprisoned: June 19, 2009

Amouee, a contributor to reformist newspapers such as *Mihan*, *Hamshahri*, *Jame'e*, *Khordad*, *Norooz*, and *Sharq*, and the author of an eponymous blog, was arrested with his wife, Zhila Bani-Yaghoub, according to news reports.

Bani-Yaghoub, editor-in-chief of the *Iranian Women's Club*, a news Web site focusing on women's rights, was released on bail on August 19, according to the BBC Persian service.

Amouee was being held in Tehran's Evin Prison, part of the time in solitary confinement, according to news reports. Amouee's wife said the journalist was denied access to his family and lawyer for several weeks, according to *Mowjcamp*, a news Web site supportive of the reformist candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

On January 5, 2010, Amouee was sentenced to 34 lashes, along with seven years and four months in prison.

Issa Sahar-Khiz, freelance

Imprisoned: July 3, 2009

Sahar-Khiz, a columnist for the reformist news Web sites *Rooz Online* and *Norooz* and a founding member of the Association of Iranian Journalists, was arrested while traveling in northern Iran, the association said in a statement. Sahar-Khiz's lawyer said his client faces charges of "participation in riots," "encouraging others to participate in riots," and "insulting the supreme leader," according to *Rooz Online*.

Sahar-Khiz has had a long career in journalism. He worked for 15 years for IRNA, Iran's official news agency, and ran its New York office for part of that time. He returned to Iran in 1997 to work in Mohammad Khatami's Ministry of Islamic Guidance, in charge of domestic publications. Sahar-Khiz and a superior, Ahmad Bouraghani, came to be known as the architects of a period of relative freedom for the press in Iran. After Sahar-Khiz was forced to leave the ministry and was banned from government service in a trial, he founded a reformist newspaper, *Akhbar-e Eghtesad*, and monthly magazine, *Aftab*, both of which were eventually banned. Sahar-Khiz wrote articles directly critical of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader.

Massoud Bastani, *Farhikhtegan* and *Jomhoriyat*

Imprisoned: July 5, 2009

Bastani, a journalist for the reformist newspaper *Farhikhtegan* and *Jomhoriyat*, a news Web site affiliated with the defeated presidential candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi, was arrested when he went to a Tehran court seeking information about his wife, journalist Mehsa Amrabadi, according to local news reports. Amrabadi, arrested along with two other journalists on June 15, was released on August 25.

Bastani was among more than 100 opposition figures and journalists who faced a mass, televised judicial proceeding in August on vague antistate accusations, according to news reports. In September, his lawyer, Mohammad Sharrif, told the *Amir Kabir Newsletter* Web site that Bastani had spent weeks in solitary confinement.

On October 20, the news site *Norooz* reported that a court had sentenced Bastani to six years in prison for “propagating against the regime and congregating and mutinying to create anarchy.”

Bastani had been editor-in-chief of the now-banned *Neda-ye Eslahat* (Voice of Reform) weekly.

Marjan Abdollahian, *Hamshahri*

Imprisoned: July 9, 2009

The BBC Persian service and other news outlets reported that authorities had detained Abdollahian, a photo editor for the Tehran-based *Hamshahri* newspaper. Six days after her arrest, she called her family to inform them that she was being held in Evin Prison, according to the news Web site *Rooz Online*. No formal charges have been disclosed.

Saeed Matin-Pour, *Yar Pag* and *Mouj Bidari*

Imprisoned: July 12, 2009

A Revolutionary Court in Tehran convicted Matin-Pour of having “relations with foreigners and propagating against the regime,” according to local news reports. He was sentenced to an eight-year prison term.

Matin-Pour was first arrested in May 2007 and released on bail. He was rearrested in 2009 amid the government's crackdown on the press. The journalist worked for *Yar Pag* and *Mouj Bidari* newspapers in western Azerbaijan province, in addition to writing his own blog, according to local news reports. Matin-Pour suffers from heart and respiratory problems, and his family was not immediately able to secure a medical release for examination outside prison, according to the news Web site *Advarnews*.



More than 100 dissidents and journalists faced vague antistate accusations during a mass, televised judicial proceeding in August.

(AP)

Reza Nourbakhsh, *Farhikhtegan*

Imprisoned: August 4, 2009

Authorities took Nourbakhsh, editor-in-chief of the reformist newspaper *Farhikhtegan*, into custody after searching his home, according to news reports. Nourbakhsh also contributed to *Jomhoriyat*, a news Web site supportive of the defeated presidential candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

Nourbakhsh was among more than 100 opposition figures and journalists who faced a mass, televised judicial proceeding in August on vague antistate accusations, according to news reports. He was sentenced to six years in prison on November 3, although the exact charges against him were not disclosed.

Mohammad Hossein Sohrabi Rad, *Saham News*

Imprisoned: September 2009

Sohrabi Rad was arrested by Ministry of Information agents on charges of working with *Saham News* in preparing a documentary on prisoner abuse at the Kahrizak Detention Center, [according \(file:///%20http://www.hra-news.org/news/12071.aspx\)](http://www.hra-news.org/news/12071.aspx) to the reformist Web site *Asr-e Nou*. (The detention center was closed in July 2009 after evidence emerged of pervasive abuse of detainees.)

Asr-e Nou reported that Sohrabi Rad had been subjected to physical and psychological pressure at Evin Prison. Authorities transferred Sohrabi Rad from Ward 209, where political prisoners are held, to solitary confinement in Ward 240, according to news reports. A prison doctor said the journalist was suffering greatly in prison, [according \(http://hrdai.blogspot.com/2010/01/blog-post_3603.html\)](http://hrdai.blogspot.com/2010/01/blog-post_3603.html) to the Web site of Human Rights and Democracy Activists of Iran. He was married shortly before his arrest, according to the site.

Mohammad Davari, *Saham News*

Imprisoned: September 5, 2009

Saham News, a Web site affiliated with presidential candidate Mehdi Karroubi, reported that its editor-in-chief, Davari, had been detained. Seventeen days after his arrest, the journalist was allowed to contact his family, according to the *Tahavolkhani* news Web site. His mother said he was being held at Tehran's Evin Prison.

Davari was brought to trial on November 22 on charges of propagation against the regime, congregation and mutiny for disrupting national security, and creating chaos in public order.

In the weeks after the election, Davari had videotaped the testimony of inmates at Kahrizak Detention Center who alleged they had been raped and abused while in custody, according to the *Free Iranian Journalists* blog. (The detention center was closed in July 2009 after evidence emerged of pervasive abuse of detainees.)

Alireza Moghiseh, Iranian Journalists Association

Imprisoned: October 18, 2009

Moghiseh is a member of the Iranian Journalists Association and the prisoner-abuse fact-finding committee of reformist candidates Mir-Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, [according \(http://www.roozonline.com/persian/news/newsitem/article/2010/january/05/-b4d18a786f.html\)](http://www.roozonline.com/persian/news/newsitem/article/2010/january/05/-b4d18a786f.html) to *Rooz Online* and the news Web site *Sedayefarda* [\(http://www.sedayefarda.com/humanrights/106-human-rights/1748-1388-07-26-06-50-39.html\)](http://www.sedayefarda.com/humanrights/106-human-rights/1748-1388-07-26-06-50-39.html) .

He is being held in Evin Prison's Ward 209, where political prisoners are jailed, but little other information on his case has been disclosed, according to the same news reports. Moghiseh is an Iran-Iraq war veteran.

Javad Mahzadeh, freelance

Imprisoned: October 22, 2009

Mahzadeh, a journalist and novelist, was arrested on his way to work on the orders of the Revolutionary Court's prosecutor's office, according to local news reports.

Mahzadeh, a political analyst and a literary critic who wrote for the Web sites *Iranian Diplomacy* and *Baran*, is well-known in Iran for the novel, *Take Away Your Laughter*. Authorities confiscated a computer from his home, according to news reports. No formal charges have been disclosed.

Mazdak Ali Nazari, *Nasim Haraz Monthly* and *Journalism for Peace*

Imprisoned: November 2009

Nazari, who won the Iranian Journalists Association's Best Journalist Award in 2007, was arrested at his home sometime in the second week of November, according to news accounts and human rights groups.

Nazari was editor of *Nasim Haraz Monthly*, a cultural magazine, and editor-in-chief of *Journalism for Peace*, a critical Web site focusing on human rights. He is also author of the blog *Zemzemeh Haya Divaneh*. Nazari told his family about his arrest in a brief telephone call, but he was unable to relay details, including his whereabouts, according to *Roaz Online*, a Farsi- and English-language reformist news Web site.

Nazari had also worked for *Etemad e Melli*, the newspaper owned by defeated presidential candidate Mehdi Karroubi.

Sassan Aghaee, freelance

Imprisoned: November 22, 2009

Security forces raided the home of Aghaee, a seasoned journalist who contributed to a number of newspapers, including *Farhikhtegan*, *Etemad*, *Tose'eh*, *Mardom Salari*, and *Etemad e Melli*. He was also author of the blog *Free Tribune*.

Aghaee is being held at Evin Prison, according to news accounts. No formal charges have been disclosed. In a letter the journalist asked to be opened in case of his arrest, Aghaee said any confessions he might make in custody should be disregarded as coerced, according to the reformist Web site *Jaras*.

Saeed Jalalifar, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Saeed Kalanaki, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Imprisoned: December 2, 2009

Jalalifar and Kalanaki, who reported on child labor and political prisoner issues, were arrested after being summoned by the Ministry of Information, the reformist news Web site *Kalame* [reported \(http://www.kalame.org/feed\)](http://www.kalame.org/feed). No formal charges have been disclosed against the two, the U.S. government-funded Radio Farda [reported \(http://www.radiofarda.com/content/f35_JalaliFar_Kalanaki/1893145.html/content/f35_JalaliFar_Kalanaki/1893145.html\)](http://www.radiofarda.com/content/f35_JalaliFar_Kalanaki/1893145.html/content/f35_JalaliFar_Kalanaki/1893145.html).

Jalalifar and Kalanaki were the first of several committee journalists to be arrested for their work in exposing alleged human rights violations and government malfeasance. Jalalifar was unable to contact his family during the first 40 days of his confinement, [according \(http://www.chrr.us/spip.php?article7803\)](http://www.chrr.us/spip.php?article7803) to the committee's Web site.

Kouhyar Goudarzi, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Imprisoned: December 20, 2009

Goudarzi, a veteran journalist for the human rights committee, has been charged with *moharebeh*, or heresy, a capital crime, according to local news reports and the BBC Persian service. Held at Evin Prison, he has also been charged with propagation against the regime and participating in illegal congregations.

Visitors to the prison said Goudarzi's head was bandaged, although it was not clear how he sustained his injuries, according to the reformist online publication *Roaz Online*. The human rights committee said judicial authorities have sought to link the organization to external political parties.

Shiva Nazar Ahari, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Saeed Haeri, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Imprisoned: December 20, 2009

Nazar Ahari and Haeri were detained while on a bus taking them from Tehran to Qom to attend the funeral of Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri, the influential cleric who had criticized the government's conduct.

Nazar Ahari had been jailed for four months in the immediate aftermath of the disputed June presidential election. She was free on bail when she was rearrested in December. The reformist Web site *Kalame* said Nazar Ahari is in solitary confinement at Evin Prison's Ward 209, where political prisoners are held.

In a meeting with Nazar Ahari's family members, a prosecutor claimed that the human rights committee was affiliated with an armed opposition group, *Kalame* reported. Haeri's family was unable to visit the journalist until January 24, according to the [Amir Kabir Bulletin \(http://www.autnews.de/node/6632\)](http://www.autnews.de/node/6632), an online student news site critical of the Iranian government.

Nazar Ahari has been charged with illegal congregation, according to the committee's Web site. No formal charges have been disclosed against Haeri.

Mohammad Nourizad, freelance

Imprisoned: December 20, 2009

The BBC Persian service [reported \(http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2009/12/091220_na_nourizad_detained.shtml\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2009/12/091220_na_nourizad_detained.shtml) that Nourizad, a blogger and documentary filmmaker, was arrested after he wrote an open letter to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei urging him to apologize for the government's post-election conduct, and an [article \(http://mohammadnurizad.blogfa.com/\)](http://mohammadnurizad.blogfa.com/) criticizing the head of Iran's judiciary.

The government-run *Mehr News* said Nourizad is charged with "insulting authorities" and "propagation against the regime." On January 5, security officers raided Nourizad's home, seizing his computer and documents, [according \(http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7247/\)](http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7247/) to the pro-opposition news Web site *Jonbesh-e Rah-e Sabz*.

Held at Evin Prison, Nourizad has waged a hunger strike, [according \(http://www.hra-news.org/news/11905.aspx\)](http://www.hra-news.org/news/11905.aspx) to the Human Rights Activists News Agency. *Jonbesh-e-Rah-e-Sabz* [reported that \(http://www.rahesabz.net/story/8425/\)](http://www.rahesabz.net/story/8425/) Nourizad's wife was denied visitation rights.

Nourizad had once written for *Kayhan*, a newspaper closely associated with conservative elements in the government, but he distanced himself from the publication after the disputed June presidential election. *Kayhan* has repeatedly attacked Nourizad and his writing since that time, according to CPJ research. <http://news.gooya.com/politics/archives/2010/01/098659.php>

Emadeddin Baghi, freelance

Imprisoned: December 23, 2009

Baghi, the prominent Iranian author, journalist, and human rights activist, was arrested after being summoned to the security division of the Revolutionary Court, [according \(http://www.ayandehnews.com/news/16776\)](http://www.ayandehnews.com/news/16776) to the reformist *Ayandeh News* Web site.

When Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri died in December, the BBC Persian service aired a two-year old interview that Baghi had conducted with the influential cleric. Baghi was arrested soon after the rebroadcast. The government has sought to clamp down on publicity about Montazeri, who had criticized the conduct of the June presidential election.

Baghi has been arrested numerous times in the past. In 2000, he was [sentenced \(http://cpj.org/2000/07/journalist-sentenced-for-criticizing-regime.php\)](http://cpj.org/2000/07/journalist-sentenced-for-criticizing-regime.php) to five and a half years in prison on charges of "questioning Islamic law," "threatening national security," and "spreading unsubstantiated news" in articles detailing the roles of intelligence agents

in a series of politically motivated murders. He served three years in prison before being released. He was arrested again in 2007 and served several months for "acting against national security," according to local and international news reports.

Alireza Beheshti Shirazi, *Kalameh Sabz*

Imprisoned: December 23, 2009

Shirazi, editor-in-chief of the now-defunct reformist daily *Kalameh Sabz*, was taken from his home and brought to an unknown location, according to [international news reports \(http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/12/28/iran.arrests/\)](http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/12/28/iran.arrests/)

Shirazi had been [arrested \(http://cpj.org/2009/06/iran-releases-some-journalists-vilifies-foreign-pr.php\)](http://cpj.org/2009/06/iran-releases-some-journalists-vilifies-foreign-pr.php) and released in the aftermath of the disputed June presidential election. At the time, he had given interviews to foreign-language news media about the post-election turmoil.

Arvin Sedaghat Kish, *Farhang va Ahang*

Imprisoned: December 27, 2009

Kish, a writer for the culture and arts magazine *Farhang va Ahang*, was the first of three journalists for the monthly publication to be arrested, according to CPJ research. Kish, who is also a musician, wrote for other magazines and Web sites, including *Harmony Talk*, [according \(http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2010/01/100117_u01-117-atashi.shtml\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2010/01/100117_u01-117-atashi.shtml) to the BBC Persian service.

No formal charges have been disclosed.

Mostafa Izadi, *Etemad e Melli*

Imprisoned: December 28, 2009

Author and journalist Izadi was arrested at his home by security agents who also searched the property, [according \(http://www.advarnews.biz/humanright/10159.aspx\)](http://www.advarnews.biz/humanright/10159.aspx) to the reformist news Web site *Advar News*. He had worked for *Etemad e Melli*, a now-closed daily newspaper owned by defeated presidential candidate Mehdi Karroubi.

Between 1997 and 2000, Izadi was chief editor of the now-banned reformist newspaper *Ava Weekly*. Izadi is the author of a book about the life of recently deceased Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri.

Sam Mahmoudi Sarabi, *Etemad*

Imprisoned December 29, 2009

Sarabi, a journalist for the reformist daily *Etemad*, was arrested and placed in Ward 209 of Evin Prison, where political prisoners are held, according to [local news \(http://parlemannews.ir/?n=6690\)](http://parlemannews.ir/?n=6690) reports and the [BBC \(http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2009/12/091229_m_detainees_post_ashura.shtml\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2009/12/091229_m_detainees_post_ashura.shtml) Persian service. The Human Rights Activists News Agency [reported \(http://www.hra-news.org/news/12688.aspx\)](http://www.hra-news.org/news/12688.aspx) that prison authorities advised Sarabi's family not to make inquiries about his case.

Kayvan Mehregan, *Etemad*

Imprisoned: December 29, 2009

Mehregan is the editor of the political section of the reformist daily *Etemad*. Authorities arrested him at his office, according to local news reports. No formal charges have been disclosed against him.

Badressadat Mofidi, Iranian Journalists Association

Imprisoned: December 29, 2009

Mofidi writes articles and conducts interviews with national and international media outlets as secretary of the Iranian Journalists Association, according to local news reports. She had discussed the government's press policies in a December 22 [interview \(http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5046682,00.html\)](http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5046682,00.html) with the Persian service of the German

public broadcaster Deutsche Welle. No formal charges have been disclosed against her.

Mashallah Shamsolvaezin, Iranian Committee for the Defense of Freedom of the Press

Imprisoned: December 29, 2009

Shamsolvaezin, journalist and spokesman for the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Freedom of the Press, was arrested at his Tehran home, [according to \(http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8433464.stm\)](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8433464.stm) the BBC and local news reports. Six plainclothes agents entered Shamsolvaezin's home with a blank, or nameless, warrant, [according \(http://www.rahesabz.net/story/shams\)](http://www.rahesabz.net/story/shams) to the reformist news Web site *Rahesabz*. Shamsolvaezin demanded that police produce a warrant that included his name, but senior officers were summoned and took him away, *Rahesabz* reported.

Shamsolvaezin is former editor of the reformist dailies *Jame'eh*, *Tous*, *Neshati*, and *Asr-e Azadegan*, which were successively shut down by Tehran's Press Court between 1998 and 2000. He was [sentenced \(http://cpj.org/2000/04/iran-leading-editor-jailed.php\)](http://cpj.org/2000/04/iran-leading-editor-jailed.php) in April 2000 to 30 months in prison for insulting Islamic principles in an article that criticized capital punishment; he was released after spending 17 months at Evin Prison.

He was a [recipient \(http://cpj.org/awards/2000/awards00.php\)](http://cpj.org/awards/2000/awards00.php) of CPJ's International Press Freedom Award in 2000 for courage and independence in reporting the news. Most recently, Shamsolvaezin has been an outspoken advocate for a free press in Iran and has appeared frequently on television as a media analyst.

Abdolreza Tajik, *Etemad*

Imprisoned: December 29, 2009

Tajik, a journalist with the reformist newspaper *Etemad*, was arrested as he arrived at the newspaper's offices, the opposition Web site *Jonbesh-e-Rah-e-Sabz* [reported \(http://www.free-journalists.com/2009/12/blog-post_3001.html\)](http://www.free-journalists.com/2009/12/blog-post_3001.html). Tajik had been jailed for 46 days during the government's post-election crackdown.

Tajik's family has been prohibited from visiting him during his current detention, [according \(http://www.hra-news.org/news/12688.aspx\)](http://www.hra-news.org/news/12688.aspx) to the Human Rights Activists News Agency. Authorities have also prohibited his attorney from reviewing the case or meeting with the prosecutor, according to the agency. No formal charges have been disclosed.

Omid Montazeri, freelance

Imprisoned: December 30, 2009

Montazeri faces charges related to his participation in Ashura Day protests on December 28, 2009, along with his published articles and interviews with foreign news outlets, his aunt told the reformist news site [Farhang-e Goft-o Goo \(http://farhanggoftogo.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=787:2010-02-01-08-05-08&catid=35:2009-08-24-18-45-37&Itemid=54#JOSC_TOP\)](http://farhanggoftogo.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=787:2010-02-01-08-05-08&catid=35:2009-08-24-18-45-37&Itemid=54#JOSC_TOP). The site said Montazeri has denied all charges. Montazeri is being tried along with 15 other people, some of whom face charges as serious as the capital crime of *moharebeh*, or heresy.

Defense attorneys have been obstructed in their efforts to confer with Montazeri and review his file, the journalist's sister [told \(http://www.radiofarda.com/content/f35_Montazeri_Fahimi/1944406.html\)](http://www.radiofarda.com/content/f35_Montazeri_Fahimi/1944406.html) the U.S. government-funded Radio Farda. Government media have published Montazeri's "confessions," which his sister said appear to be coerced. She said she is deeply concerned about the physical and psychological conditions in which her brother is being held.

Montazeri was arrested a day after his mother, peace activist Mahin Fahimi was taken into custody, [according \(http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7244/\)](http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7244/) to *Jonbesh-e-Rah-e-Sabz* Web site. Montazeri's father was executed for his political activities in 1988.

Mahsa Hekmat, *Etemad e Melli*

Imprisoned: January 1, 2010

Etemad e Melli, the now-banned newspaper owned by defeated presidential candidate Mehdi Karroubi, was arrested at her father's farm in Saveh, outside Tehran, according to the news Web site *Norooz*. Hekmat's whereabouts and legal

status have not been disclosed.

In April 2009, Hekmat interviewed the prominent opposition journalist Seyed Ebrahim Nabavi, who is now in exile.

Hekmat's father, Ali, a former reformist newspaper editor, was also arrested at the family farm. CPJ is investigating the basis for that arrest. Several other people were also detained that day at the Hekmat farm but have since been released.

Parisa Kakaee, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Mehrdad Rahimi, Committee of Human Rights Reporters

Imprisoned: January 1, 2010

Kakaee and Rahimi, journalists for the Committee of Human Rights Reporters, were arrested after being summoned by the Ministry of Information, the reformist news Web site *Kalame* [reported \(http://www.kalame.org/feed\)](http://www.kalame.org/feed). Several other committee journalists have been arrested for their work in exposing alleged human rights violations and government malfeasance.

Rahimi told his family that interrogators said he would be charged with the capital crime, *moharebeh*, or heresy, *Kalame* said. The charge was formally announced in late January, according to the BBC Persian service.

Rouzbeh Karimi, Kargozaran

Imprisoned: January 2, 2010

A reporter with reformist daily *Kargozaran* and regular contributor to the reformist news Web sites *Advar News*, *Rokhdad*, and *Feminist School*, Karimi was arrested along with his wife, Forough Mirzaee, a human rights lawyer, at their Tehran home, according to local news [reports \(http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7022\)](http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7022).

His brother, Siamak, [told \(http://www.advarnews.us/organization/10207.aspx\)](http://www.advarnews.us/organization/10207.aspx) *Advar News* that officials have disclosed no formal charges.

Yadollah Eslami, Jonbesh-e-Rah-e-Sabz

Imprisoned: January 4, 2010

Eslami, former editor of the long-banned newspaper *Fath*, wrote most recently for *Jonbesh-e-Rah-e-Sabz*, a Web site that had backed reformist presidential candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

Eslami's family publicized the arrest on January 27 after losing hope for a timely release. Eslami, who is also a practicing ophthalmologist, was arrested at a Tehran medical facility, according to [Parleman News \(http://parlemannews.ir/?n=7076\)](http://parlemannews.ir/?n=7076), the official Web site of the minority factions in the Iranian parliament.

Behrang Tonkaboni, Farhang va Ahang

Kayvan Farzin, Farhang va Ahang

Imprisoned: January 6, 2010

Tonkaboni, editor-in-chief of the culture and arts monthly *Farhang va Ahang*, and Farzin, a reporter for the publication, were arrested at their office, [according \(http://news.gooya.com/politics/archives/2010/01/098651.php\)](http://news.gooya.com/politics/archives/2010/01/098651.php) to local news reports.

Police searched Tonkaboni's home, confiscating his computer and documents belonging to his mother, the prominent author Lili Farhadpour, news reports said. Farhadpour was arrested two weeks later. Authorities also seized Farzin's computer hard drive, according to the news reports.

Mostafa Dehghan, freelance

Imprisoned: January 8, 2010

Dehghan wrote about social issues for several newspapers and the women's rights Web site *Change for Equality*,

[according \(file:///%20http://www.rahesabz.net/story/7558/%20%20\)](#) to *Jonbesh-e Rah-e Sabz*. He is being held in Evin Prison's Ward 209, where political prisoners are held.

The Web site [Jmin News \(http://www.jminews.com/news/fa/?mi=39&ni=6132\)](http://www.jminews.com/news/fa/?mi=39&ni=6132) said Dehghan called his family in mid-January, but the journalist did not know why he had been detained.

Mehraneh Atashi, freelance

Imprisoned: January 11, 2010

Atashi, a freelance photographer, and her husband were arrested at their home, [according \(http://www.radiofarda.com/archive/news/20100118/143/143.html?id=1932144\)](http://www.radiofarda.com/archive/news/20100118/143/143.html?id=1932144) to the U.S. government-funded Radio Farda and other news sources. Agents seized some of the couple's personal items, including their computer, reports said.

Atashi, 30, worked with several domestic publications, such as *Soroush Javan* and *Hamshahri Javan* according to [Kalame \(http://www.kalame.org/1388/10/28/klm-8659\)](http://www.kalame.org/1388/10/28/klm-8659) Web site, and her work has been exhibited in the U.S. and Europe. Background on her husband was not immediately available.

Lili Farhadpour, freelance

Imprisoned: January 21, 2010

Farhadpour, a veteran journalist who has written about cultural and social issues for reformist newspapers, was arrested by security forces at her home. She is also the mother of Behrang Tonekaboni, editor-in-chief of *Fahang va Ahang*, who was arrested on January 6.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This alert has been corrected to reflect that Kayvan Mehregan and Badressadat Mofidi are not related.*

February 3, 2010 8:41 AM ET | [Permalink \(http://cpj.org/2010/02/with-47-journalists-in-jail-iran-sets-notorious-re.php\)](http://cpj.org/2010/02/with-47-journalists-in-jail-iran-sets-notorious-re.php)