
NCRI **Women's Committee**
Monthly Report

July 2015



Introduction

The month of July was full of protests and perseverance by Iranian women seeking their due rights. During the holy month of Ramadan detentions and pressures on women increased under the pretext of hijab; conditions of detained women inside prisons became harsher and young women were always targets of crackdown plans. Despite all this, Iranian women were never silenced and their protests continued as always.

Female nurses, protesting an illegal plan proposed by Hassan Rouhani's Health Ministry, protested for 40 consecutive days and rallied their gatherings outside hospitals and various medical centers. The families of those arrested also protested outside Tehran's judiciary office. In the last days of this month female teachers protested in large numbers against Rouhani government's repressive plans and injustice. Their demands were depicted in their slogans. They chanted, "We want freedom, we want equal rights, and we are all together, equal." Other developments in the month of July – of which reports spread very quickly – were further acid attacks on the faces of women and girls. However, the people of Mahabad and human rights advocates responded with major demonstrations.

Inhumane laws such as mandatory hijab or actions against women and youths in the streets were other measures carried out last month by the regime's so-called parliament and senior officials, all targeting first and foremost Iran's women.

Arbitrary Arrests

In the month of July the main pretext used by security agents for arrests and detentions was the month of Ramadan!



Police in Tabriz arrested 92 youths including 41 young women. The only charges raised against them was eating food at a coffee shop. (State-run Fars news agency – June 25, 2015)

In another case in Dezful, 26 young women were arrested in an area near this city. Their charges were taking part in a night party. (State-run

Tabnak website – July 21, 2015)

Prison

The conditions of imprisoned women and mothers, in their own words, were the subject of the most shocking reports this month. Women, already under harsh conditions, deprived of their motherly emotions and the Iranian regime doesn't recognize even their minimum rights. When they stage hunger strikes they are at times just small steps away from losing their lives.

Prison condition

In the past month we witnessed the health conditions of Ms. Bisma Jabouri, an Iraqi woman jailed in Iran, deteriorate after 82 days on hunger strike. She went into a coma and was merely



steps away from death before being transferred to a hospital.

Amnesty International issued a statement on the inhumane prison conditions of 27-year old activist Atena Daemi referring to basic rights violations against her, such as lacking a fair trial. (Amnesty International - July 1, 2015)



“I am a mother and my children have been visiting their mother from behind the windows of the prison’s meeting hall.” This was part of a letter written by a mother in her fifth year behind bars writing about prison conditions in Iran. Maryam Akbar Monfared, 40, stresses in this letter, “I was prosecuted without a lawyer and never had a chance to defend myself. My only request was justice.” (Iran Political Prisoners Society – June 24, 2015)



Narges Mohammadi is another mother who has been imprisoned in Iran. She describes detention in solitary confinement as: “They neither allowed me to phone my children nor see them. Being deprived of seeing my loved

ones was very much like losing everything.” (Deutsche Welle website – July 20, 2015)



Prison Sentences



In the month of July we saw a female political activist be sentenced to jail. Maryam Sadat Yahyavi, a social and political activist, was sentenced to 7½ years behind bars. Her charges: assembly and collusion with the intention to disrupt national security! (NCRI Women’s Committee – July 13, 2015)

Violations of Basic Rights

The month that passed brought about a shocking example of the violation of women’s most basic rights. “Young girl committing suicide while father in jail for years”, “More women sleeping in the streets, especially in Tehran”, “Acid attacks against women and girls”, “Iran ranking first in the Middle East for women self-immolating” and “crackdown plans” were amongst these cases.



At the beginning of this month we were shocked with the suicide of the daughter of Kurdish political prisoner Mohammad Amin Agoushi. This 23-year old young woman ended her life due to the pressures she was enduring in life without a father. Following this tragic incidents state agents prevented her father from holding even a simple ceremony.

State-run media have published various news reports on the issue of more homeless women being seen sleeping in the streets, especially in Tehran. One of those examples was the a report wired by the state-run Tasnim news agency that described these homeless people as 17

and 18 year old teenage girls who have spent most years of their lives on the streets. The state-run Ana news agency wired a shocking piece citing the deputy of social services in Tehran Municipality saying 3 percent of the 15% identified homeless people sleeping in the streets are pregnant women. (State-run Tasnim news agency – June 24, 2015) (State-run ANA news agency – July 13, 2015)



The crime of acid attacks against women was another subject that this month was considered amongst the main cases of rights violations against women. At least 4 women in Iran were targets of such horrific crimes. (State-run Khabar Online – June 27, 2015)

Abolfazl Abu-Torabi, a member of the Legal and Judiciary Commission in mullahs' so-called parliament specifically said there is no decrease seen in the number of acid attacks! (State-run Salamat News website – June 23, 2015)

The issue of suicides and self-immolation were other painful cases seen amongst Iranian women. In this regard the state-run Payam website stipulated Iran ranks first in the Middle East in the number of women committing suicide. (Payam website – June 26, 2015)

Crackdown against women and the most senior officials entering the scene to impose the utmost pressure on Iranian women and girls were amongst the main cases of human rights violations against women.



On this subject the state-run Rasa news agency published a letter from Rouhani to Khamenei to reconsider the various aspects of the 'enjoining good and forbidding wrong'. The plan criteria is aimed at having the

paramilitary Ansar Hezbollah members (special crackdown force) enter the scene to confront women. (Rasa News Agency – June 31, 2015) Following this report the state-run IQNA news agency cited the Fars Province public prosecutor saying women will be prevented from administrative offices on improper veiling charges. (State-run IQNA news agency – July 7, 2015)

Forming the 'Hijab Agents' unit was yet another repressive plan reported by the state-run Asr-e Iran website. These agents will be controlling women in their rooms and offices at work. (State-run Asr-e Iran daily – July 11, 2015)

And finally, Khamenei and Rouhani personally intervened and ordered further pressures on women's clothing and freedoms. In this regard the state-run Jahan News outlet wrote, "The plan on imposing hijab and virtue regulations will be reviewed under requests made by the president and supreme leader. It is noteworthy that the State Security Forces (SSF) plan known as 'promoting virtue and prohibiting vice' and measures by the SSF moral security police are not just for specific months of the year and they will be fully implemented."

(State-run Jahan News – July 17, 2015)

Religious and ethnic minorities

Religious minorities in Iran are amongst the main targets of crackdown, arrests and detention in Iran by the regime. They are deprived of their most basic rights and women of religious

minorities are facing additional crackdown, paying the price of being a woman and following such beliefs.



In this regard, a letter written by Farah Baghi is a Baha'i citizen detained in Yazd Prison (central Iran) speaks for itself: "I am a Baha'i citizen in Yazd Prison on charges of propaganda against the state and measures against national security.

Right now my brother (Fariborz Baghi) and I are in prison. We are demanding our rights be respected." (NCRI Women's Committee – July 7, 2015)

Another example of crackdown measures against the Baha'i community is preventing the burial of a deceased elderly woman. State agents are obstructing due to the fact that she is a Baha'i. The body of Mrs. Mohammadi-Far was left in a limbo in the morgue two days after her death." (NCRI Women's Committee – July 14, 2015)



Discrimination against women

In the month of July segregation against women was a subject that even reached the media. The state-run Youth Reporters Club stipulated day by day women face newer restrictions on their economic activities, including how they are hired, leaves and vacation time, salaries and wages, and not having their contracts extended. (State-run Youth Reporters Club – June 25, 2015)

The state-run Doniyaye Eghtesad wrote men are five times more active than women in the economy. (State-run Doniyaye Eghtesad – July 1, 2015)

The state-run ILNA website cited Rouhani's deputy in women's affairs, "Women didn't receive any votes for the plan to rationalize seats in the Expediency Council." (State-run ILNA news agency – July 13, 2015)

And finally, Hossein Mazaheri, head of the Isfahan seminary described segregation against women as a "necessity for the government" and said, "Men and women working side by side in education centers, such as schools and universities is against state objectives." (State-run Asr-e Iran daily – July 4, 2015)



Women's Protests



The month of July was the month of protests. A month in which the scope of these demonstrations staged by female nurses escalated significantly and they demanded reforms in a plan of action presented by Rouhani's Health Ministry. This plan aims to deprive nurses of their earnings and fill the government's pockets.



Demonstrations and gatherings held by female nurses covered the cities of Tehran, Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan, Kermanshah, Hamedan and Mashhad. They continued



their rallies on a daily basis outside of hospitals, medical centers and various institutions. (State-run Fars news agency – June 28, 2015)



In another development we witnessed a gathering by the wives of municipality workers rallying outside the Anzali City Council building. They sought to express their protests to the officials in person but their entrance into the building was blocked.



“We will not tolerate acid attacks against women” was the main slogan of popular demonstrations in Mahabad (west Iran). People had rushed to the streets protesting this horrific crime. One of the acid attack victims was Susane Ismaeel-Nezhad, a student studying construction in college. Her brother stipulated security entities

belonging to the regime are to blame for these crimes. (NCRI Women’s Committee – July 16, 2015)