

# NCRI **W**omen's Committee Monthly Report



Monthly Report

NCRI

Women's Committee

*January 2016*

## Introduction

The brutal crackdown and violations of women's rights continued throughout the first month of 2016 in Iran. Long jail sentences were given to human rights activists and prisoners who were constantly deprived of their fundamental human rights. Medical care continued to remain inadequate, to the point of withholding necessary and vital medication. The dire situation of young women in a juvenile disciplinary center was subject of an in-depth report published by The Guardian, providing the names of a number of these prisoners and images of their conditions in Iran's prisons.

Statistics published by the Iranian state-run media January 2016, showed the significant number of unemployed in Iran and the extent to which women have been marginalized from active roles in the society.

Protests and rallies staged by female college students continued as in previous months. Students of various universities in Iran's Qazvin Province protested against the unsanitary and unsafe conditions of dormitories and demanding correction of this situation.

## Prison Conditions

"Waiting to die" was the title of a report posted by *The Guardian* on its website portraying the status of young women in Iran. The report states the names of a number of female detainees and explains the pressures and restrictions imposed on them, which is apparently the tip of the iceberg.



A letter by the civil activist Shokufeh Azar Masule, was published in state-run media in January regarding the status of imprisoned women. Shokufeh disputed the allegations raised against her and questioned the entire due process. She explained how she was denied visits, because only close relatives were allowed and she had none. Shokufeh spent more than two weeks in ward 209 of Evin Prison under interrogation.

Narges Mohammadi, a prominent human rights activist and mother of two, is suffering from lung illnesses and muscular paralysis. Her dire condition demands special care and medication. However, the prison authorities and officials have prevented her from having any such access.



## Unemployment and Human Rights Abuse

In the past month, women's unemployment and marginalization were among the top subjects published in the state-run media with various statistics.

State-run Aftab News referred to women's job status and education in Iran: "Statistics show the number of educated yet unemployed women has reached 65.5%."

From a total of 5,305,000 female college graduates, 1,282,000 have jobs and 546,000 are looking for jobs.

State-run Aka News cited the deputy for women and family affairs in Rouhani's government: "The number of single mothers across the country has reached 2.5 million."

In the meantime the state-run Tasnim news agency referred to youth unemployment reaching 50%! These are very significant numbers. The highest unemployment rates are in the age range of 20-24 where 27.8% are jobless; 49.3% of women in this age group are unemployed, this source added.

The state-run IRNA news agency wired another story based on reports issued by the Iran Statistics Center. In the summer of 2015, unemployment among young women in urban areas of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province (south) reached 100%!

This is proof of the diminishing opportunities for women's participation in social activities and employment.

Officials in a Tehran hospital took one of a woman's newborn twins hostage for 27 days as the mother was unable to pay the maternity fees for both of her babies.

"During these 27 days I have gone to my limits to provide for the hospital fees. However, it was all futile and now I have to pay almost 70 million Rials (around \$2,000). I went to the hospital a few times but they wouldn't release my child."



On January 16, a young woman around 25 years old committed suicide in Tehran's Darvazeh Dowlat metro station.

"This afternoon, a young woman around 25 to 27 years of age threw herself on the rails of line 4 of Darvazeh Dowlat metro station and unfortunately lost her life," said Tehran Metro

Company spokesman Ehsan Moghadan.

## Religious and Ethnic Minorities

During the past month, a Baha'i college student was expelled from her university merely for her religious convictions.

Elham Pakru Miyandoab was studying for her master's degree in computer and software engineering.

Upon being summoned by the university's security, she was also banned from studying in a private institute by the name of "Asr-e Shabake" for being a Baha'i.



## Women's Protests

In January, numerous rallies and protests were staged by female students in various universities across Qazvin Province in northwestern Iran. They staged a rally on 14 January outside the Qazvin governor's office protesting the poor dormitory conditions and state officials' inaction in seeing to their problems.

They held placards written: "What happened to our demands?" / "Depressed students, corrupt dormitory officials and fruitless efforts" / "Irresponsible universities".

