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NCRI **Women's Committee**  
**Monthly Report**

*August 2014*



*The truth behind Rouhani's smile,  
faces that perished*

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## **Introduction**

We witnessed the blatant face-off between the mullahs' regime against Iranian women and repeated positions taken by Iranian officials to impose mandatory hijab and gender segregation in offices and public areas in the month of August. This began with gender segregation being imposed in the Tehran municipality and this measure is now spreading. Government agents and security forces stormed into streets more than ever this month, cracking down on women under the pretext of inappropriate hijab and clothing. The immediate result of this flagrant repression was increasing pressure on young women, pushing them towards poverty, addiction, corruption and finally suicide and self-immolation. A renowned Iranian poet, Ms. Simin Behbahani also passed away due to heart attack. The misogynist mullahs' regime did not allow her burial to be carried out as she had requested and the ceremony became a scene of social confrontation.

## **Systematic violation of right to life**

### **Execution and death sentences**

## **Execution**



The number of executions of women under Rouhani's tenure to the end of August reached 19.

On Thursday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, a detained woman was hanged in Kermanshah Central Prison in a group execution.

On Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, a mother was executed along with her son, amongst 5 others hanged in Zahedan Central Prison.

A detained woman was also among those executed on August 23<sup>rd</sup> in Zahedan Central Prison. Another woman was hanged on the morning of August 27<sup>th</sup> in the courtyard of Kerman's Shahab Prison.

## **Death sentences**

Other women are spending their final days on death row in prisons under the mullahs' dark dictatorship. Maryam is one example. She was forced to marry at the age of 15. She was attacked and severely beaten by her husband, which led to their divorce. But once again the family insisted for a second marriage which also led to constant differences and problems. When Maryam killed him, she was charged with a death sentence. The country's Supreme



Court temporarily suspended her execution because she was a minor at the time. However, finally the court again rule against her for retribution.

### **Imposing inhumane and cruel punishments**

Javad Larijani, deputy of international affairs in the Iranian regime's judiciary said, *"We are proud that our judicial system is based on 'sharia' and we are not disturbed of sentences such as retribution and stoning."* These remarks of course were not just aimed at creating a climate of fear, but also were implemented as two atrocious stonings were carried out by the mullahs' regime in the city of Iranshahr in the past month. A group of women in this city protested the stoning verdict issued for a woman named 'Zohreh Baran-zehi' on August 14, 2014. The rally was held outside the regime's judiciary office, with protesters demanding the revoke to this inhumane ruling.

### **Arbitrary arrests**

#### **Political arrests**

Amnesty International criticized the detention of journalists during the past month in Iran, calling on Iranian officials to immediately and unconditionally release all those arrested and detained in the past few months for peacefully practicing their freedom of speech, association and assembly. The statement was published after an Iranian-American journalist was arrested with his wife.

Internet activist 'Zahra Ka'bi' was detained along with 6 other individuals in Mashhad on Sunday, July 27, 2014. There is no information of their whereabouts to this day.

The Iranian regime's agents raided the homes of members of the Right and Justice Organization in Karaj on April 9, 2014, beating them severely and finally arresting the residents.

Mses. Somayeh Khalili and Mahin Sayar Sharabi were among those arrested and interrogated for 120 days while in solitary confinement in ward 8 by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps in Karaj's Gohardasht Prison. The interrogations were carried out with torture, using shockers, humiliating the prisoners by stripping them naked, severe beatings and addressing them with extremely foul insults.



## Social Arrests

Repressive forces have launched a new round of crackdown and humiliating measures against women these days, arresting them for the mullahs' fabricated crime of mal-veiling. 'Guidance' patrol units arrested a young woman for the 'crime' of lifting her headscarf in public on August 4, 2014. They took her away despite protests and clashes. This is recurring on a daily basis in the metro and other public areas. Police agents raided an area in Tehran and arrested some 30 young men and women under the charges of disturbing local families on August 19, 2014.

## Prison

### Jail sentences

Unfair jail sentences and pressure imposed on women continued this month. The fate of Ms. Afsaneh Bayazidi, a Kurdish college student arrested on June 26, remains unknown. Intelligence agents insulted her 65-year old mother who had waited for five hours outside their office demanding to see her daughter.



Zahra Zehtabchi, a sociology expert and social sciences researcher, remains under extreme psychological and physical pressure in solitary confinement in Evin Prison's ward 209 ten months after her arrest. She remains under interrogation while her charges are not clear.



Fatemeh Rabbani, arrested in September 2013 on charges of distributing a few pictures and statements of PMOI martyrs, has been in solitary confinement for 9 months. When her mother asked why her daughter has to be incommunicado, prison authorities answered, *"We don't have anyone to stay with her; if you want we can send a man."*

Golnaz Khosh-ahang was arrested by Maku security forces and transferred to Orumieh Central Prison two months ago along with 5 other Kurdish Iranians. She has been transferred to solitary confinement in the prison's women's ward.

Ms. Fatemeh Mothana, a political prisoner of the 1980s, was arrested with her husband, Hassan Sadeghi in February 2013. She has been sentenced to 15 years in jail. The reason for her arrest was holding a ceremony in commemoration of Hassan Sadeghi who lost his life in Camp Liberty due as a result of a medical blockade.



Simple social protests can also lead to long term jail sentences for women. One of the women arrested for rallying in Azadi Stadium for being prohibited to watch volleyball matches, remains in detention after 58 days.

### Fundamental rights violations

#### Crackdown on women

The Iranian regime's judiciary was working to pass a law to crackdown on women under the pretext of 'promoting virtue and preventing vice'. The regime officials began revealing their filthy viewpoints about women and the type of accepted hijab and women agents affiliated to this regime were hired to provoke confrontation with Iranian women.



Fahimeh Farahmandpour, the Interior Minister's advisor on women and family affairs said, *"Today, as the official responsible for the field of women and families in the country, I am expressing concern about a society where girls are growing up courageous and strong; we must be concerned of the future of a society where girls wear running shoes and walk around in casual clothing."*

It is in such a government that an agent of the mullahs' regime in Shahr-e Ray who was responsible for transferring detainees to court or detention centers, raped the arrested women with various justifications. However, it is in a system where women are systematically repressed that a man convicted of such a crime is released on bail and will most likely return to his previous post.

#### Child brides

Innocent victims of the Iranian regime's misogynist laws are little girls who in addition to all the general pressures imposed on them, must also face problems of early marriages. This issue is so disturbing that even Mehrangiz Marvati, former Majlis (parliament) member described child brides as a genocide or a massacre of girls. This "genocide" was made legal by the regime's Expediency Council in 2002 when it lowered the age of marriage for girls to 13. Worse, it added another sentence in the 2002 amendment stating, *"According to the request of a father or grandfather and the decision of the court, girls under the age of 13 can be engaged for future marriages."* These policies open the path for the exploitation of girls and violence against women.

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Seyed Amir Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, a member of majlis from Mashhad said, *“The number of announced early marriages is 40,000 cases from March 2013 to March 2014.”* (State-run IRNA news agency – August 6, 2014)

And Fahimeh Farahmandpour, the Interior Minister’s advisor in women’s affairs, said on August 21, 2014, *“The number of depression amongst educated girls is on the rise.”*

### **Situation of women**

The phenomenon of suicide amongst women, in addition to the numerous honor killings by their families is a result of the regime’s misogynist laws. In addition to this, the death rate of women as a result of incurable illnesses are found to be directly related to the inhumane policies of this regime.

A Kurdish woman living in the city of Piranshahr named Nasrin Hosseinpour committed suicide through self-immolation due to poverty on July 30, 2014.

According to state-run Asr-e Iran daily on August 20, 2014, from late March of this year, 27,888 individuals have been diagnosed with HIV/IADS in Iran, 11.3% of which are women. On this very day, state-run ISNA news agency reported that during the past year, nine women have lost their lives while giving birth in Lorestan Province. Also, was the disturbing report of a mother giving birth to her child in the hospitals’ toilet near the town of Kuhdasht because she was not allowed into the hospital. This is a state where its so-called ‘supreme leader’ speaks of the advantages of mothers having more children!



Recently, Shahindokht Mullavardi, a deputy in Rouhani’s cabinet said the number of single women in Iran is between 2.5 to 3 million. *“We are witnessing poverty becoming womanized and currently women have the lowest income amongst women in the region,”* she said.



Iranian actress Soraya Hekmat, after 35 years of acting, was forced to sell all of her belongings at the age of 61 to be able to send her two girls to universities. She set up a tent in the middle of the street because she could not pay her mortgage. These are the same streets under the mullahs’ anti-human rule where according to Javid Sobhani, a member of the Association in Support of Children Rights in Iran, at least 32% of middle school and high school girls have experienced child molestation.



Some time ago, a 17 year-old girl in Orumieh wrote a message on a 500,000 rial bill stating, *“For the amount on this bill that you are holding, my addicted father gave me away to our landlord for one night. Oh God, how much more? Why?”*

According to state-run ISNA news agency, a female university student in Tehran was not allowed into her dormitory because she had arrived ten minutes after curfew on August 25, 2014. She then went to various motels but all of them denied her a room, referring to the regime’s laws saying they will not accept *“Single women without a male family member with her and documents proving they are related.”* She had no other choice but to sleep in the street. The state-run news agency was honest to state that the story of this girl was similar to that of all Iranian women.

According to reports published by Iran’s Anti-Drug Department, 9.3% of 1,325,000 drug addicts in the country are women between the ages of 15 to 63, and the education levels of more than 67% of them is higher than high school level.



A video clip that went viral shows a six-year old girl called Elham, selling ‘glass’ drugs to her teacher in a medical center in Mashhad saying, *“My dad gives me four packets of these every day to sell to drug addicts...”*

Of course based on its nature, the mullahs’ regime focuses all its energy on increasing crackdown on women under the pretext of hijab, describing it as guaranteeing the security of this country, while it should be attempting to revive the pains and scars of Iran’s women.



On August 12, 2014, Mullah Jafar Shojuni officially threatened to flog women and said, *“They (women) deliberately carry out such measures in order to lower the society’s security. Wearing tight and short clothing, with various types of makeup are all defying measures against this regime. They must be apprehended and receive highest punishments. If those with mal-veiling know that whipping is awaiting them they will reform themselves.”*



Threatening women and a wave of forming repressive organs is published in various media outlets. Ashtari, deputy police chief of Iran, said, *“Specific orders have been codified and announced for airports to deal with wrongdoers. If such individuals are treated this way they will not dare repeat them and appear with bad outfits.”*

Abdulmajid Mohtasham, Secretary General of the Ansar Hezbollah, believes motorcycle patrol units don't need permission and the fight against 'mal-veiling' is not just the duty of the police. Hassan Karami, commander of the police special units, said forming women units will lead to weakening the enemy's spirits and reported the formation of an all-female anti-riot unit. He added, *“The intelligence work, interrogation and breaking up a rally held by woman is amongst the main activities of our police and the female anti-riot unit will enter the scene if rallies are held by women.”*

### Rights violations against religious and ethnic minorities

The increasing trend of arrests against religious and ethnic minorities was another step-up on the crackdown in the month of August.

On August 5<sup>th</sup> a Baha'i woman called Bahie Ma'navi was arrested by security agents in Shiraz. A Christian woman and her friend were also arrested two weeks ago under the charges of 'promoting against the system' and 'encouraging Christianity. They were transferred to Mahabad Central Prison on August 8, 2014.



Three Baha'i residents of Mashhad, including two women, were transferred to the quarantine ward of Mashhad's Vakil Abad Prison after spending two months in the city's intelligence bureau's temporary detention. The reason of their arrests remains unknown.



Another Baha'i woman named Ruhieh Ghavami-Nik, a resident of Karaj, was arrested and transferred to Evin Prison after being summoned by the Ministry of Intelligence on August 18.



A Christian woman and writer named Zeinab Babai was transferred to Mahabad Central Prison to serve her prison term. She had previously been arrested and sentenced to two years in jail along with one of her friends on charges of 'acting against the state' and 'encouraging Christianity'.



On the morning of Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, security agents went to the homes of a number of Baha'I residents living in Isfahan's Shahin-Shahr and arrested them after inspecting their residence and confiscating some of their personal belongings.

### Segregation of women

After Tehran's municipality segregated offices and work places last month, various officials in the mullahs' regime have focused their energy on defending these measures and expanding them.



Mullah Montazeri, head of the regime's Supreme Court administration said on August 12, *"We say with the utmost pride that such measures respect Islamic customs and relations between men and women, and opposing gender segregation is considered as opposing Islamic rulings."*



Gholam Hossein Ismaeeli, the head of Tehran's judiciary, said on August 5, *"Why must men still be sitting next to women in our offices and organizations? Gender segregation must be imposed in all organizations and entities."*



Amoli Larijani, the head of the regime's judiciary said, *"This measure is very much applauded. We shouldn't care what others think about what we do, and we also shouldn't be afraid that in time we are described as reactionary and retarded."*



The wave of gender segregation also reached the northern city of Ardebil. The mayor of this city said on August 11, *"I specifically said in the 'Promoting Vice and Prohibiting Virtue' headquarters of Ardebil's municipality that gender segregation must be implemented in many places. Gender segregation is the exact meaning of justice and creates a good security and spiritual atmosphere."*

Hamid-reza Shahraki Tanvi, the director general of the transportation department in Tehran Province said, *"In coordination with the emergency committee and cooperation with women caretakers, we are trying to launch an all-women taxis and bus company for very soon."*

A concert in Orumieh was to be held on August 9 and 10 but was cancelled. The Iranian regimes' culture and guidance office opposed and ordered the concert to be held once separately for men and again for women.

Also, Borujerd's (west) municipality said men and women must sit on separate benches in parks and cannot sit mixed in the benches.

Mehri Bagheri, a banking expert said, *"Mothers are not allowed to open bank accounts for their children. Opening such accounts must be carried out in the presence of the father or the male caretaker of the child."*



The cruel nature of this flow of segregation came to light this month when the misogynist regime refused to provide half of the insurance to school girls burned in a fire incident only because they are girls. Hossein Ahmadi Niaz, a lawyer for one of the burnt schoolgirls said, *"The so-called insurance company said due to the fact that they are 'girls' it is only willing to pay half of the 'blood-money' for the damages that were caused to these students. The blood-money was cut to half under the regime's Islamic penal code under which if 100% of the damages or burns caused is more than one third, the 'blood-money' for women is cut to half and if the percentage is less than one third, then the 'blood-money' is fully provided. Thus, 12 of the school girls having the most burns will receive less insurance money or equal to those with lesser burns. This has led to numerous protests and rallies by the girls and their parents."*



### Women protests

Burnt schoolgirls of Shin Abad and their families rallied outside Rouhani's office in Tehran on August 16, 2014 protesting the absence of response to their demands to better life standards, educational conditions and problems they have with getting insurance.



A significant characteristic of women's protests this month was the widespread stance against the crackdown by the regime's elements under the pretext of mal-veiling.

'Guidance' patrol agents began arresting a number of girls on August 13 in Tehran. The mother of one of these girls confronted the repressive forces and prevented her daughter's arrest.

A number of female Basij agents began insulting women for their clothing on August 13. Women in the area did not tolerate this and clashed with them.

A number of young girls were confronted by two female Basij agents in Tehran who demanded they cover their foreheads with their headscarves on August 12. The girls began yelling and screaming in protest and one took off her headscarf and demanded the Basij agents to get out of their way. They intended to arrest the girls but passersby interfered and clashed with them, forcing the agents to flee.

On August 19<sup>th</sup> in Tehran government agents intended to arrest a 20-year old girl but her father protested. A number of pedestrians came to the father's support and prevented the girl from being detained.