

# URGENT ACTION

## MOURNERS ARRESTED ON WAY TO CLERIC'S FUNERAL

**At least five people, including human rights activists, have been arrested in Iran while on their way to attend the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Hosseinali Montazeri, a senior cleric who criticized the Iranian government's crackdown on demonstrators in the aftermath of the June contested presidential elections. Their whereabouts are unknown, and they are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.**

**Shiva Nazar Ahari** and **Kouhyar Goudarzi**, two human rights activists and members of the Committee of Human Rights Reporters (CHRR), and **Saeed Haeri**, were arrested by police officers and officials from the Ministry of Intelligence on 20 December in Tehran. They were taken from a bus which was about to drive to the northern city of Qom, where the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Montazeri took place on 21 December. Also on board the bus were civil society activists and relatives of some of those arrested following the disputed 12 June 2009 presidential election.

Two other men were arrested on 20 December in separate incidents. Press reports suggest that **Ahmad Qabel**, a religious scholar and student of Grand Ayatollah Hosseinali Montazeri, was arrested with family members. He was travelling to Qom from the north-eastern city of Mashhad, and is thought to be detained in Mashhad. **Mohammad Nourizad**, a filmmaker and former journalist on the Tehran daily newspaper Kayhan, was also arrested. Since the June 2009 presidential election he has written blogs critical of the authorities. He may have been arrested to prevent him from writing about Grand Ayatollah Montazeri.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Shiva Nazar Ahari, Kouhyar Goudarzi, Saeed Haeri, Ahmad Qabel and Mohammad Nourizad, if they were arrested in connection with the peaceful expression of their views or participation in a peaceful gathering such as the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Hosseinali Montazeri, as they would be prisoners of conscience;
- Urging the authorities to immediately disclose their whereabouts and to ensure that they are protected from torture and other ill-treatment and have access to a lawyer, their families and any medical treatment they might require;
- Urging the authorities to remove unlawful restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and assembly in Iran.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 FEBRUARY 2010 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei

The Office of the Supreme Leader

Islamic Republic Street – End of

Shahid Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran,

Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [info\\_leader@leader.ir](mailto:info_leader@leader.ir)

**via website:**

[http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?](http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter)

[p=letter](http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter) (English)

**Salutation:** Your Excellency\_

Head of the Judiciary in Tehran

Mr Ali Reza Avaei

Karimkhan Zand Avenue

Sana'i Avenue, Corner of Ally 17, No

152

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir](mailto:avaei@Dadgostary-tehran.ir)

**Salutation:** Dear Mr Avaei

### And copies to:

Director, Human Rights Headquarters of Iran

His Excellency Mohammad Javad Larijani

Bureau of International Affairs, Office

of the Head of the Judiciary, Pasteur

St., Vali Asr Ave. south of Serah-e

Jomhuri, Tehran 1316814737,

Islamic Republic of Iran

**Email:** [bia.judi@yahoo.com](mailto:bia.judi@yahoo.com)

**Fax:** + 98 21 5 537 8827 (please keep trying)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Shiva Nazar Ahari, Kouhyar Goudarzi and Saeed Haeri were arrested after being ordered off a bus hired by a number of people wishing to travel to the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Hosseinali Montazeri. Some five or six plain-clothes officials are said to have boarded the bus in Tehran and, referring to a list, made six people get out. Two were released immediately and got back on the bus, but those named above, along with woman human rights defender Mahboubeh Abbasgholizadeh, were arrested. She was released the following day.

During the bus's enforced stop, Fakhrossadat Mohtashemipour the wife of detained senior politician Mostafa Tajzadeh, reportedly asked that the security officials, believed to be from both the Ministry of Intelligence and the Law Enforcement Forces, produce identification but was told "Who are you to ask us for identification?" The officials confiscated the identification papers and mobile phones of those on the bus and told them that they could be collected the following morning.

Grand Ayatollah Hosseinali Montazeri had spoken out against about mass executions which took place mainly in 1988 and more recently had been an outspoken critic of the Iranian government's crackdown on peaceful demonstrators.

Amnesty International campaigned on behalf of Ayatollah Montazeri, who was arrested and tortured between 1974 and 1976, under Mohammad Reza, the last Shah of Iran. In 1976, Amnesty International reported that a number of his students had been brought to his cell and ordered to beat him. When they refused, they were beaten. In another incident, his then 85-year-old father was brought to prison by security officials and ordered to write a clemency plea for his son. He too refused but was later ordered to sign one already prepared by security officials.

Since the announcement that incumbent President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had won the 12 June election, which many people disputed, Iran has seen a series of demonstrations against the government. In the course of the unrest, the authorities have acknowledged 36 deaths, while the opposition claims that over 70 died. Over 4,000 were arrested, many of whom were tortured or otherwise ill-treated in detention centres across the country. Some have alleged they were raped, although the authorities initially denied this after cursory investigations and other measures which appear designed to hide, rather than uncover, the truth. Nevertheless, reports suggest that three officials have been charged with murder in connection with deaths in custody. Over 80 people have been sentenced to prison terms or flogging in connection with the unrest, including those sentenced after mass "show trials" which began in August. At least five have been sentenced to death.

For further information about the post-election events please see Iran: Election contested, Repression compounded (Index MDE 13/123/2009), December 2009, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/123/2009/en>

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