

PUBLIC

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conscience
IRAN

Arbitrary arrests/ fear of torture or ill-treatment/ possible prisoners of

Between 20 and 30 students (male and female) associated with the student group Students for Freedom and Equality (*Daneshjouyan-e Azadi Khah va Beraber Talab*), including:

Rosa 'Essa'ie, (f) member of Iran's Armenian minority, student at Tehran's Amir Kabir University

Mehdi Geraylou (m), student at Tehran University

Anousheh Azadfar (f), student at Tehran University

Ilnaz Jamshidi (f), student at Free University of Central Tehran

Rouzbeh Safshekan (m), student at Tehran University

Nasim Soltan-Beigi (m), student at 'Allameh Tabatabai University

Yaser Pir Hayati (m), student at Shahed University

Younes Mir Hosseini (m), student at Shiraz University

Milad Moini (m), student at Mazandaran University

Between 20 and 30 students, including those named above, are being detained without charge mostly in Tehran but also other cities, following scores of demonstrations and mass student sit-ins linked to Iran's national University Students' Day, 7 December. They may be prisoners of conscience, detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and association, and it is feared that they could be tortured or otherwise ill-treated in detention.

Dozens of students have been detained over the last six weeks, following protests against the replacement of scores of professors and other actions apparently intended to further limit of freedom of expression on university campuses, including the banning of a number of student publications, and suspensions and expulsions of students from their places of higher education. Activists from the students' groups, the Office for Strengthening Unity (*Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat*) and Students For Freedom and Equality (*Daneshjouyan-e Azadi Khah va Beraber Talab*) were said to be among those who took part in these demonstrations.

According to a report from news agency *Agence France Presse* (AFP) on 11 December, a spokesperson for Iran's judiciary stated that it continues to hold up to 24 students, including some arrested in previous months; the Persian-language website: <http://takravi1.blogfa.com/> features 28 names. Most of those detained in Tehran are said to be held in sections 209 and 240 of Evin Prison and others in a state intelligence unit called *Daftar-e Paygiri* (Follow-up Office).

The recent student demonstrations – often involving hundreds of students – took place in Shahroud, east of Tehran; at Mazandaran University in Babolsar in the north of the country; and in Shiraz, in the south. One student in custody, Yaser Pir Hayati, is known to be a student at Tehran's Shahed University, an establishment solely for the children of Iranians killed during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). On 12 December, family members of those still detained gathered outside Evin prison and outside Iran's parliament building to protest against the incommunicado detention of their relatives.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Student groups have been at the forefront of demands for greater human rights in Iran in recent years. Since the election of President Ahmadinejad in 2005, there have been increasing restrictions on civil society in Iran. In April 2007, Minister of Intelligence Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie publicly accused student activists and campaigners for the rights of women in Iran of being part of an "enemy conspiracy".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Persian, English, Arabic or your own language:

- calling on the authorities to release all students detained in recent weeks if they are prisoners of conscience, held solely on account of the peaceful exercise of their rights, and for any others to be tried promptly and fairly, in accordance with international fair trial standards, on recognisably criminal charges or else released;
- seeking details of any charges brought against those in detention;
- seeking assurances that none of those arrested is subject to torture or other ill treatment;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that these detainees have unfettered access to relatives, legal representation, and any medical attention they may require;
- reminding the authorities that confessions extracted under duress are prohibited by Article 38 of the constitution of Iran, which says that "All forms of torture for the purpose of extracting confession or acquiring information are forbidden," and that Iran is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), of which Article 7 states that "No one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment."

APPEALS TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei

The Office of the Supreme Leader, Islamic Republic Street - Shahid Keshvar Doust Street

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@leader.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi

Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh / Office of the Head of the Judiciary

Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e Jomhuri, Tehran 1316814737, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Intelligence

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie

Ministry of Intelligence, Second Negarestan Street, Pasdaran Avenue, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

President

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Email: dr-ahmadinejad@president.ir

via website: www.president.ir/email

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Gholamali Haddad Adel

Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami, Baharestan Square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Fax: +98 21 3355 6408

Email: hadadadel@majlis.ir (Please ask that your message be brought to the attention of the Article 90 Commission)

and to diplomatic representatives of Iran accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 24 January 2008.