

April – June 2009

Summary Report

Arrests, Abductions, Incarcerations, and Raids

- On **April 4**, Miss Sahba Khademi-Delju of Hamadan was seized by several plain-cloth persons and then taken to an unknown destination. She was apparently incarcerated and held incommunicado for one week before being released on bail and surety on **April 14**.
- On **April 6**, Mr. Ali Ehsani of Semnan was summoned by the Revolutionary Court and subsequently incarcerated on the grounds of spreading propaganda against the regime and not having tags on all his merchandise. His bail was originally denied, but was eventually released on **May 3** after paying a bail of 50 million tumans (about \$50,000 USD).
- On **April 8**, Mr. Afshin Ehsanian, a resident of Shiraz, was summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence and arrested “because he was a Bahá’í”, according to those who arrested him. He was released on bail on **April 25**.
- On **April 11**, Ms. Sorour Sorourian, Miss Samira Ayoubi, Mr. Payman Aqdasi and Mr. Faraz Purhamzeh, all residents of Hamadan, had their homes raided, their personal properties confiscated, and all were incarcerated for one day before being released on bail and surety.
- On **April 14**, a resident of Babol (a city in the Mázandarán province), Mr. Mushafiq Samandari, was incarcerated because a neighbor filed a complaint stating that their son was “learning about the Bahá’í Faith” from them, the discussion of which is illegal in Iran. Circumstances of the arrest can be found [here](#). His trial apparently took place on **June 17**, but no verdict has been issued as of yet.
- From **April 9 to May 24**, the home of Mr. Yahya Hedayati was attacked eight times by unknown assailants riding on motorcycles. These acts of terror usually involved throwing rocks and breaking their windows so as to create an unsafe environment for Mr. Hedayati and his wife. More background on the recent terror in Semnan [here](#). This action was repeated with both Mr. Hedayati and Mr. Adel Fanaian, who has been imprisoned since January 5 of this year, on **June 14**. Further information about these two individuals can be found [here](#).
- On **April 25**, Mr. Vahdat Dana was arrested. More details [here](#).
- On **April 26**, Mr. Shahram Safajoo of Karaj was arrested and subsequently incarcerated in one of the city’s prisons. His house was also raided and many of his personal belongings confiscated. More details [here](#).

- On **April 27**, Mrs. Siyamak Iqani and Mrs. Susan Tebyanian-Jabbari were arrested. They were released on **May 3** on condition of bail of 150 million tumans (about \$150 million USD).
- On **May 20**, Mr. Shahram Hasim, a Baha'i from Tehran, left his house for work using his personal automobile and has not returned home since. This incident took place three days after he had received a message on his home phone from the office of NAJA [security force of the Islamic Republic]. More background on this story [here](#). Additionally, the Persian version of this particular report is located [here](#).
- Sometime in **June**, the sixth Baha'i women in Qaemshahr was convicted. Mrs. Firouze Yegan (Asadi), who was arrested on January 18, 2009, but released on February 3, was sentenced to one-year imprisonment.
- On **June 8**, Mr. Anvar Moslemi - who had previously been arrested on November 22, 2008 and released shortly thereafter - was sentenced to one year in prison for the baseless charge of "membership in groups opposing the nation or propaganda against the regime." More detail on this individual [here](#).
- On **June 17**, the home of Mrs. Manizheh Nasrillahi (Manzavian) in Mazandaran was raided by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence and she herself was also arrested. More background on Mrs. Nasrillahi [here](#).
- On **June 23** in Semnan, unknown assailants used rocks and stones to raid Payam Shahdeman's shop. On the same evening, unknown individuals used fire-making materials in an attempt to burn down the optometry shop of Akbar Pur-Husayni. However, they failed in their objective to burn down the shop, but managed to cause considerable damage.

Destruction, Defamation, and Sale of Bahá'í Properties

- On **June 25**, the Persian page of *Baha'i World News Service* reported that that the Baha'i cemetery located the village of Ayul in the province of Mazandaran, which had previously been confiscated and offered for sale, has been sold. No further details are available at this time.
- On a relevant note, in Sari, the local Baha'is have been instructed to pay a fine of \$300 on the charge of "altering the environment of a Baha'i cemetery", which means burying a deceased Baha'i.

The Seven Baha'i Leaders (Formerly the Yaran)

- On **May 12**, the Yaran were charged with "spreading corruption on earth" or "mofsede fel-arz." This charge potentially carries the death penalty under the penal code of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

- On **June 24**, it was announced that the Yaran’s trial would take place on July 11.

Victorious Moments, Releases, and Public Support for Bahá’ís

- On **April 6**, the former ad hoc administrative body of Iranian Baha’is, once known as the Yaran, were allowed to see their families yet again from behind glass windows. More on the status of the Friends and news of their impending trial [here](#).
- On **April 12**, it was reported that Sorour Sorourian and three other Bahá’í youth were being temporarily released. It should, however, be noted that the government can summon them at any time once again for incarceration. More background on this news [here](#). On this day, students at Durham University of the United Kingdom also passed a motion expressing their concern for young Bahá’ís in Iran who are excluded from higher education. Details on the motion [here](#).
- On **April 19** at a UN conference against racism and intolerance in Geneva, human rights groups challenged President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to eliminate severe discrimination in Iran, specifically mentioning the plight of the Baha’is in Iran. The full AFP report can be read [here](#).
- On **April 21**, the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown described the prejudice and discrimination faced by Bahá’ís around the world as “tragic” in a letter to the Baha’i community of the United Kingdom on the first day of Ridvan.
- On **April 25**, Haleh Houshmandi-Salehi was released on bail.
- On **May 15**, the United Kingdom government reiterated its concern for the seven Bahá’í leaders imprisoned in Iran on the first anniversary of their detention. Read the concern in full [here](#). On this day, the Canadian Foreign Minister of Affairs also issued a statement of concern regarding the imprisonment of the Yaran, located [here](#).
- Also in this quarter, the continuing persecution of Bahá’ís and other minorities in Iran has been highlighted in **Amnesty International’s** State of the World’s Human Rights 2009 report. Further details on the report [here](#).
- On **June 11**, an election procession in support of several Iranian presidential candidates chanted in support of various religious minorities, including the Baha’is. Watch the video [here](#).
- On **June 25**, the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center (IHRDC) condemned the Iranian regime’s abuse of the human rights of its citizens for merely exercising their fundamental rights to free expression and association. An elaboration of this statement [here](#).