

IRANIAN DOMESTIC MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

13 - 19 JUNE 2011

INTERNAL HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES

(Source: Aljazeera.net website, Doha, in English 19 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source; text of report in English by Qatari government-funded aljazeera.net website on 19 June.

- Sadegh Zibakalam, a professor of politics at Tehran University, addressed the Mujahideen-e-Khalq issue and stressed that "the terrorist organization that the United States should be worried about is Iran, not the MEK ... When I think of Iran, I think of Hamas and Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic jihad. I think about their advance towards a nuclear state," Ridge said.
- "The reason that the MEK is such a thorn in their side is simply because they are looking to lead a different Iran, a peaceful Iran, a tolerant Iran, a non-nuclear Iran, and it's for that reason that I'm here in strong support, with a lot of other people, and have been for the past couple of years, Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives in the United States and elsewhere, to delist the MEK and protect the inhabitants as we find a safer havens for them to live and raise their families, and one time, hopefully, to replace the tyrannical regime in Tehran."
- "We ... know that the United States promised to protect the people of the MEK who are in Camp Ashraf," he said. "I hope that the United States government will keep that commitment and I hope that they will recognize that they are allies in the 'war on terror', and that they are not a terrorist group, and they should be delisted from the terrorist group in the United States, and enjoy the full support of the United States as they become an example for democracy in Iraq and a better democracy for people inside Iran."

(Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in English 1450 GMT, 18 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source.

- Iran's Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed the merger of Communication and Information Technology Ministry with other ministries for security reasons, MP Hoseyn Sobhaninia told Fars News Agency.

(Source: Fars News Agency website, Tehran, in Persian 0731 GMT, 19 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source.

- Fars news agency reported that Iran's Foreign Ministry will undergo restructuring reducing its departments from 10 to six.
- Fars quoted Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi who had earlier confirmed that: "At the moment the number of managers at the Foreign Ministry is more than the number of experts. Our aim is to reach a point where the number of experts will exceed the number of managers."
- According to Fars, The present 10 departments will be reduced to six by merging a few of them into one. The departments of Asia, Asia Pacific and Common Wealth will be merged into one department, the Middle East, Africa and Arabic departments will be merged into another and the departments of Europe and America will also become a separate department. The legal and international department will remain unchanged.
- The report added that in the new structure Amir Mansur Barqa'i will remain as deputy foreign minister, however, the department he is heading currently, the economics department, will be eliminated. Also the education and research department currently headed by Mostafa Dolatyar will be merged into the office of the foreign minister.

(Source: Islamic Republic News Agency website, Tehran, in English 0245 GMT, 18 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source.

- [Iran's] Police Commander confirmed that a document has been approved to make cyberspace in Iran sound and secure. Brigadier General Esma'il Ahmadi-Moqaddam told reporters that the document has articles to control Police + 110 websites and Police Feta (cyber police and information exchange).
- He called establishment of cyber and information exchange police (Feta Police) very important and said that this force has been established in all provinces of the country and is taking care of cyberspace crimes. New laboratories have been established and new forces are being trained in this concern, he confirmed.

(Source: Islamic Republic News Agency, Tehran, in Persian 0746 GMT, 16 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source.

- Abbas Amirifar, leader of the [pro-Esfandiar Rahim-Masha'i] Velayi Preachers' Association, who had been detained for more than 40 days by the Tehran General and Revolution Court, was released on Wednesday but was rearrested again.
- It is being said that he was detained on a charge related to the Towards the Advent CD [a film about the advent of the Hidden Imam, who Shi'is believe will return one day to establish the reign of justice on earth; films are available in VCD format in Iran].
- A relative of Amirifar said that he was held in solitary confinement for 40 days.
- He is being held in the court's public block and it has been said that the Special Court for Clergy arrested Amirifar on the same charge.

(Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in Persian 1235 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source.

- Tehran's prosecutor [Abbas Ja'fari-Dowlatabadi] reported on the investigation into the country's most important judicial case in Tehran prosecutor's office and said: "This case is related to oil directors; however, I cannot talk about the details] now."
- According to Mehr's correspondent "two weeks ago, six individuals who have been [amongst] retired or current employees of this organization [presumably the Oil Ministry] were arrested for 48 hours and, following investigations, they were released on bail by the prosecutor office."
- Ja'fari-Dowlatabadi noted that this case is one of the most important cases in the country, adding: "This case has some international aspects; however, the press should not quickly report on the allegations against these individuals because they cannot be made public. However we can say that this case is one the most important economic cases filed."

(Source: Reporters Sans Frontieres website, Paris, in English 15 June 2011)

Transmission by an external media source

- Reporters Without Borders deplored the death of journalist and writer Hoda Saber, and accused the Iranian regime of being responsible for her death while in prison.
- He was taken to hospital with chest pains on 10 June and died of a heart attack a few hours later. The Evin prison authorities did not inform his family, who learned about his death two days later on the internet.
- "We send our deepest condolences to his family and to all Iranian journalists," said Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Jean-Francois Julliard. "The authorities who arbitrarily arrested him failed to give him proper medical treatment. We support the family's complaint and demand that the prison deaths of all journalists and political prisoners in Iran be investigated."
- Saber, 52, worked for Iran-e-Farda, and had been in prison since being arrested on 12 August last year. He began a hunger strike on 2 June this year to protest against the death of his

colleague Haleh Sahabi. Prison officials were slow in sending him to hospital on 10 June, contravening article 103 of prison regulations.

- On 13 June, 64 political prisoners in Saber's Evin prison dormitory put out a statement saying that two hours after being taken to the prison clinic before dawn on 10 June, Hoder had been returned to his cell and shouted that he had been beaten instead receiving medical treatment and that he would file a complaint. A few hours later he was sent to Modares hospital where he died.

(Source: Fars News Agency website, Tehran, in Persian 1225 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- Tehran prosecutor Abbas Ja'fari-Dowlatabadi confirmed that "a suit was filed yesterday against Iran newspaper."
- He confirmed that "the managing-director of the paper will be summoned to the prosecutor's office and he should be responsible for his behavior." "We call on the media to remain committed to their mission."

(Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in Persian 1126 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- Tehran prosecutor Abbas Ja'fari-Dowlatabadi rejected Sarah Shourd's remarks on "abuse in Iran's prison", Mehr News Agency reported on 14 June.
- According to Mehr, Ja'fari-Dowlatabadi touched on "the trial of the three American nationals [Josh Fattal, Shane Bauer and Sarah Shourd]" and said: "The trial of the three charged individuals will be held in late Tir [July] or early Mordad [August]."
- Tehran prosecutor also commented on "Sarah Shourd's remarks on abuse in Iran's prison" and said: "I reject this lady's claims, because these detainees have had access to best facilities and they have been treated nicely. These remarks are quite unfair."
- Ja'fari-Dowlatabadi also explained why "the two previous hearings" for the aforementioned American nationals were not held and said: "The two previous hearings were not held because the prisoners were not transferred, and there was lack of coordination. We try not to repeat that in the upcoming trial."

(Source: Fars News Agency website, Tehran, in Persian 1032 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- The trial of someone accused of killing the "first martyr of the [13]88 sedition" opened in Tehran on 14 June 2011, but was subsequently adjourned to allow further investigation. (The "1388 sedition" refers the protests in Iran after the disputed presidential election of 2009.)
- The "martyr", Hoseyn Gholam-Kabiri, was said to have been a young member of the Basij - a voluntary force affiliated to the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps - who was run over by a Pride vehicle on 15 June 2009 in the Sa'databad area of Tehran.
- Fars News Agency website reported that, at the court session, Seyyed Reza'i, representing the prosecution, "referred to the evidence in the case, such as the complaint lodged by the next of kin, the coroner's verdict, the police report and witnesses' statements, and asked that the accused be sentenced for involvement in murder".
- The accused, who was not named, said that he did not accept the charge. He said: "The only mistake I made was that I drove without a driving licence. I didn't kill anyone."

(Source: The Green Voice of Freedom website, en.irangreenvoice.com, in English 13 June 2011)

Transmission by privately-facilitated media source

- In a shocking new revelation, 64 political prisoners held in ward 350 of Iran's notorious Evin prison have provided a more detailed account how inmate Reza Hoda Saber had been beaten up by state agents before his death on Sunday [12 June].
- According to opposition website Kalemeh, the prisoners were able to get their message across prison bars with the aid of Green Movement sympathisers inside Evin prison.
- On Sunday, Kalemeh reported that Hoda Saber, who had been arrested after the disputed 2009 presidential election, had died of cardiac complications after being transferred from Evin prison to Tehran's Modarres hospital. The website had said that Saber's heart complication had been induced by his hunger strike in prison.
- The list of signatories to the letter includes the names of many prominent activists, journalist and political figures such as Feyzollah Arabsorkhi, Ali Malihi, Arash Sadeqi, Qorban Behzadianezhad, Bahman Ahmadi-Amu'i, Emad Bahavar, Javad Emam, Emadoddin Baqi and Ramin Parchami.

DOMESTIC JOURNALISTIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

(Source: Tabnak news website, in Persian 0001 GMT, 18 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- E'temad newspaper has resumed publication, Tabnak news website reported on 18 June.
- According to Tabnak, the reformist paper which was banned in March 2010, officially resumed publication today, 18 June. The paper has been recently publishing pilot issues.

(Source: Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ardabil Provincial TV, Ardabil, in Persian 1445 GMT, 16 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- The state-run TV and Radio Organization of Iran's Ardabil Province launched the Aran international radio station for the people of the Azerbaijani Republic, provincial TV reported on 16 June.
- Radio Aran is the 36th international radio station of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) and the first international radio station of Ardabil Province, Sabalan TV said.
- At the radio station's inauguration ceremony, IRIB Deputy Head Mohammad Sarafraz attributed the wave of "Islamic awakening" in several Muslim countries to the Islamic Revolution and stressed the importance of the media's role in spreading religious and revolutionary ideals among Muslims.
- In his interview with Sabalan TV, Sarafraz commented on the launch of Radio Aran, saying: "People of the Azerbaijani Republic are very close to us both from the religious and spiritual angles and owing to our common characteristics. We are trying to communicate with them by producing different radio, TV and internet programmes."
- Sarafraz also said that Iran will launch a television network in Spanish in the next few months.
- Also speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Ardabil's Governor-General Saberi noted the significant role of the media in the development of every country and said: "Radio Aran has been available for the people of Azerbaijan and our international audience for several days already. Today this station is being inaugurated officially. Certainly, people will make the final assessment, however, the tests and assessments that have been carried out in these couple of days are very positive and optimistic."
- At the inauguration ceremony, the head of the state-run TV and Radio Organization of Ardabil Province, Sadeqi, talked about common cultural, linguistic, social and religious characteristics of the Iranian and Azerbaijani people and said that Radio Aran will air four hours of cultural, religious, scientific, social and news programmes for Azerbaijan and the Caucasus region.

(Source: Islamic Republic News Agency, Tehran, in Persian 0814 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- "All of the country's provinces now have their own newspapers," the deputy minister of culture and Islamic guidance, Mohammad Ja'far Mohammadzadeh, said on 14 June 2011, Islamic Republic News Agency, IRNA, reported.
- Iran has 31 provinces.
- "The deputy minister of culture and Islamic guidance for press and information announced; with permits issued for the publication of the following dailies 'Mehran' in Ilam Province and 'Aftab-e Lorestan' and 'Seda-ye Mellat' in Lorestan Province, all of the country's provinces have been issued with permits to publish daily newspapers," IRNA quoted the official as saying.
- Mohammadzadeh said 'Mehran', 'Aftab-e Lorestan' and 'Seda-ye Mellat' were weeklies that are now going to become daily newspapers.
- "Up to now over 4,000 dailies, weeklies and monthlies have been issued with publication permits and more than 4,000 people are waiting to receive permits for their publications," the news agency said quoting the official.

(Source: Islamic Republic News Agency, Tehran, in Persian 0705 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- An Iranian minister warned news websites and news agencies not to "fan the flames" of ethnic and religious differences in the country.
- "Fanning the flames of ethnic and religious differences is a red line for the activities of news websites," Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Mohammad Hoseyni said on 14 June, Islamic Republic News Agency, IRNA, reported.
- "Based on the constitution and the Majlis approvals, the Press Supervisory Board of the Ministry of [Culture and Islamic] Guidance monitors the activities of news websites and news agencies and one of the red lines for them is to encourage ethnic and religious differences... particularly at a time when there are efforts under way to take advantage of such differences within the country," the minister was quoted as saying.

(Source: The Green Voice of Freedom website, en.irangreenvoice.com, in English 13 June 2011)

Transmission by privately-facilitated media source

- Iranian activist and journalist Farid Salavati has been detained in the city of Esfahan.
- Salavati was arrested by security forces on 11 June at his home in Esfahan.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS

(Source: Islamic Republic News Agency website, Tehran, in English 1905 GMT, 16 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- "Iran has put the ball back in the court of the British government with regard to charges of being hypocritical about the pro-democracy uprisings in various Arab countries." (Direct excerpt)
- "Emphasizing incidents in one country and ignoring the crackdown of uprisings in other countries are instances of resorting to double-standards regarding the developments in the region," the Iranian Embassy in London said in a statement.
- The statement also pointed to some Western states, including Britain, claiming that they have "provided the tyrannous rulers in the region with logistical equipment and training to enable them to curb the uprisings. Britain has also faced internal criticism contrasting its policy towards enforcing regime change in Libya while welcoming the crown prince of Bahrain to London at the time when the regime in Manama is embroiled in a bloody clampdown against pro-democracy protests in the country."

- "The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly condemns these inappropriate remarks and denies firmly these untrue allegations which aim to tarnish Iran's popular image in the region," the Embassy said.
- "Iran believes that nations in the region seek to establish democracy without any foreign intervention; therefore, having double-standards in dealing with democratic wishes in the countries of the region is against legitimate ambitions of their people."

(Source: Press TV website, Tehran, in English 1029 GMT, 15 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- A senior Iranian official disclosed new plots hatched by certain Western powers to violate non-proliferation regulations and conduct illegal acts pertaining to weapons of mass destruction.
- "The British regime is renewing the Trident nuclear system which will last at least for one century," Deputy Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Baqeri said at the end of second International Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation in the Iranian capital of Tehran on Monday [13 June].
- "In a quite illegal move, the British regime signed a nuclear deal with France to share know-how needed to build and renovate nuclear bombs and to reduce spending to expand their nuclear arsenal," he added, Fars news agency reported.
- He further disclosed a reality about domestic situation in the US and stated, "The budget allocated by the US in 2011 for storage and development of nuclear weapons showed more than 50 per cent increase in comparison with 2001."
- "The US provides all-out support to the Zionist regime (Israel) which is the only possessor of nuclear warheads in the Middle East and has so far decried to implement the international law and resolutions of the UN Security Council."
- "The Israeli regime has a background filled with crimes, oppression and occupation and is expanding the number of its nuclear warheads at its covert nuclear facilities."

(Source: Press TV website, Tehran, in English 1006 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi warned against "plots hatched by the US and its allies to massacre Muslims across the world."
- "The global arrogance seeks to hatch plots against Muslim nations with the purpose of reducing their population. Massacre of Muslims is among its objectives," Rahimi said in a meeting with Iraqi Minister of State for Tourism and Archaeology Liwa al-Sumaysim in the Iranian capital city of Tehran on Monday [13 June].
- He added that most wars are waged against Muslim people across the world and stressed the importance of reinforcing unity and solidarity among Muslims, particularly the Iranian and Iraqi nations.

(Source: Islamic Republic of Iran News Network, Tehran, in Persian 0536 GMT, 14 June 2011)

Transmission by state-facilitated media source

- Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman urged the United States to provide proper living conditions and consular services to Iranian nationals held in US prisons.
- "Unfortunately, citizens of our country who are held in US remand centers and prisons without being able to exercise their rights, without access to consular services and without proper living conditions, are facing a dire situation," Ramin Mehmanparast said during his weekly news conference partly broadcast live by Iran's state news channel (IRINN).
- "One of these people is Mrs Shahrzad Mir-Qolikhan. Despite human rights claims by American officials - who always try to present themselves as human rights champions - unfortunately we witness an improper attitude to Iranian nationals, especially to Mrs Mir-Qolikhan," he said.

- He said US officials are holding Mir-Qolikhan in prison without any reason. He added that the Iranian government had urged to the United States to stop violating her rights. "If they do not want to be hated by nations, they have to give up double standards and first, pay greater attention to human rights in their own country and then, respect the rights of other nations," Mehmanparast said.

Report submitted by Stacy Topouzova, on the 20th of June 2011.