

## Chronology of Events in Iran, September 2004\*

### September 1

#### **Kurdish armed group kill two Iranian officers in Orumiye region. (Iranian Baztab web site)**

It was reported that a group of "armed separatists" attacked Iranian officers in the village of Qoli-Sheykhan, in the border region of Sarv in Orumiye [near the border with Turkey], killing two of the officers.

#### **UCO members end two-day sit-in at Shiraz University. (Iranian news site Iran News Daily)**

The members of Unity Consolidation Office (UCO) ended their two-day sit-in at Shiraz University, which was staged in protest to revocation of license for holding their campaign at the university.

### September 2

#### **Farhang-e-Ashti managing director arraigned. (Iranian news site Iran News Daily)**

The managing director of *Farhang-e-Ashti* daily was summoned to court charged with "publication of sheer lies and slander". He was officially arraigned.

### September 3

#### **Iran vigilantes demonstrate, demanding clampdown on women's dress. (Reuters)**

About 500 vigilantes associated with Ansar-e Hizbollah took to the streets in Tehran, demanding authorities crack down on women who wear colourful headscarves and figure-hugging coats which they denounce as "prostitution". Tehran's authorities have announced a clampdown on women who do not dress suitably modestly but the crowd, mainly composed of long-shirted black-bearded men, called on the police and new conservative parliamentarians to do more. One member of the Ansar-e Hizbollah said this was the first stage of the group's campaign but he did not reveal what the next would be.

### September 6

#### **16 year old Afghan national reportedly sentenced to death by a juvenile court in Karaz. (Amnesty International)\***

Feyz Mohammad, a 16 year old Afghan national, has reportedly been sentenced to death by a juvenile court in Karaz. He was accused of distributing approximately 7

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\* Disclaimer: Reports contained in this document are selected from publicly available resources and edited by country experts. The information provided here is not, and does not purport to be, either exhaustive with regard to conditions in the country of origin surveyed, or conclusive as to the merits of any particular claim. Further information may be obtained from BO Ankara.

\* Editor's note: This report has not been confirmed by major information sources.

kilos of morphine, and being a member of a drug trafficking gang. Feyz Mohammad later appeared before a juvenile court in Karaz, and was charged with transporting, supplying, purchasing and selling 7 kilos of morphine. He was then sentenced to death, though it is currently not known whether the sentence has been appealed, or whether it has already been upheld by the Supreme Court. Feyz Mohammad was reportedly arrested along with four other members of the drug trafficking gang. The men, named as Moosa, Abbass, Kamal and Gholam Hossein, are reported to have been released on bail.

On 15 August 2004, Atefeh Rajabi, a girl who was believed to be 16 years old, was reportedly publicly hanged in Neka, in the northern Iranian province of Mazandaran, for "acts incompatible with chastity", following an alleged unmarried sexual relationship. According to reports, Atefeh Rajabi was not mentally competent, and was not represented by a lawyer at any stage of her trial. Her co-defendant, who was unnamed, was reportedly sentenced to 100 lashes. He was released after the sentence was carried out.

**Kurdish armed group reportedly killed 3 officers. (Turkish Anatolian News Agency)**

Kurdish armed group Pejak, considered to be affiliated with a major Kurdish armed organization operating in Turkey, PKK/Kongra-Gel, reportedly killed 3 Iranian security officers in clashes in Iranian Kurdistan.

**Armed "separatists" kill Iranian officers. (Iranian news site Baztab and Iran News Daily)**

Armed "separatist rebels" killed and wounded four Iranian officers in the city of Oshnaviyeh. These rebels also killed five and wounded four officers in three separate operations in the previous week.

**Islamic Association Secretary summoned to court. (ISNA and Iran News Daily)**

Solat Shojaian, secretary to the Islamic Association of Isfahan University, has been summoned to Isfahan Public Court 41st Circuit on Saturday September 18. He is charged with 'insults and publication of sheer lies'.

**Two killed in tribal clashes. (Iran News Daily)**

In a tribal clash in the vicinity of Dezfoul, one person was shot dead. In another confrontation between two tribes at Choghamish region, a man was killed by an automatic machine-gun.

**September 7**

**Student summoned to court for acting against security. (Iranian Labour News Agency / ILNA)**

A Tehran University Technical Faculty student said he was summoned to Bench 15 of the Islamic Revolution court. Hoseyn Etemadi-Bozorg stated: "I have received my summons and have been charged with acting against security. I will have to appear before Bench 15 of the Revolution court on 3 October. The summons is because of the June 2003 student protests. At the time, after appearing at Bench 15 for a number of times, Judge Salavati told me that my case would be forwarded to the disciplinary committee because I was a student. However, the case has been referred to the court again."

### **Sabzevar Islamic City Council member appeals his case. (Iran News Daily)**

A member of Sabzevar Islamic City Council, Ali Kordi, who was sentenced to two years in jail and 148 lashes by the 6th Circuit of Sabzevar Public Court, has appealed his case. He was initially charged with 'distorting public opinion and insulting high-ranking officials'.

### **September 9**

#### **Journalist convicted of “action against national security”. (Iran News Daily)**

Journalist and political activist Ahmad-Reza Shiri has been convicted of "acting against national security" and sentenced to a suspended one-year jail term. He will be on probation for five years. Shiri was also arrested for 21 days during the Seventh Majlis elections and later released on a 10-million-toman bail.

### **September 10**

#### **The first congress of the cadres of the Workers Communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist faction convened. (WCPI-Hekmatist)**

The Congress was held in the city of Guttenberg, Sweden, on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September 2004. 240 party cadres and observers attended the congress. The leading members of the faction, including Kourosh Modarresi, Mohammad Ghazvini, Iraj Farzad, Mozaffar Mohammadi and Fatekh Sheikh made speeches on various issues. The Congress elected a 45-member Central Committee to lead the faction.

### **September 11**

#### **Convicted rapist hanged in Iran. (Agence France Presse / AFP)**

An Iranian man convicted of raping a number of women and girls was hanged publicly in the town of Karaj. The man, identified only as Ghasem, 36, was executed at 8:30 am at a football field. He was one of three men convicted of rape. The head of the gang, named only as Parviz, was first lashed 99 times and then hanged publicly on August 25 in the same place. At least 63 people have been executed in Iran since January 1, 2004.

### **September 12**

#### **Evangelicals arrested in Karaj. (Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty RFE/RL Iran Report)**

Approximately 80 evangelical Christians were reportedly arrested on 9 September when police raided the Assemblies of God annual conference in Karaj. By 12 September, most of those arrested were released.

### **September 14**

#### **Kurdish journalists summoned to court. (Iran News Daily)**

The secretary of the women's desk at the banned Kurdish weekly *Payam-e-Mardom*, Tonia Kaboudvand and the editor of this weekly, Ajlal Aqvami, have been subpoenaed. Kaboudvand is charged with 'publishing anti-religious articles'.

### **Journalist released on bail. (Iran News Daily)**

Managing Director of *Tose'eh* daily Qoli Sheykhi appeared before Media and Administrative Court and was notified of his charges. He is charged with “spreading lies, insulting, spreading propaganda against the Islamic system, libeling and misusing photographs”. Sheykhi was released on bail.

### **UCO Official summoned to Revolutionary Court. (Iran News Daily)**

Member of central council of Unity Consolidation Office (UCO), Akbar Atri, was subpoenaed by Circuit 26 of Revolutionary Court charged with “action against national security”.

## **September 15**

### **Journalists summoned to court. (Iran News Daily)**

The secretary of *Payam-e-Mardom* weekly's economic desk, Kaveh Hussein-Panahi, and another member of this weekly Hassan Amini were summoned to 1st Circuit of Sanandaj Public Court. Hussein-Panahi is charged with “spreading baseless rumors” while Amini is charged with “publication of sheer lies and articles against the Islamic system”.

## **September 16**

### **Yazdi to stand trial. (Iran News Daily)**

The Secretary-General of Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI), Ibrahim Yazdi, will stand trial on September 18. He is charged with “acting against national security and keeping weapons and propaganda against the Islamic system”. He will appear before Tehran Revolutionary Court, after 52 sessions of interrogation. Meanwhile Yazdi's attorney announced: “By virtue of Constitution's 168th principle and Parties Law, my client should be tried in the presence of a jury. Otherwise, he will not attend the court hearing.”

## **September 18**

### **Iran-e Farda Society's rally illegal. (Iran News Daily)**

Director general for political and disciplinary affairs of Tehran Governor General's Office announced that his department has not issued a permit for Iran-e Farda Society to rally in front of Ministry of Interior to protest current interpretation of the Constitutional phrase, 'men politicians'. Demonstrators want to voice their protest against controversial interpretation of the phrase which bars women from running for president.

### **Nedaye Eslahat weekly's officials in Court of Appeals. (Iran News Daily)**

The last hearing of *Nedaye Eslahat* weekly's employees was held at 5th Circuit of Arak Court of Appeals. The defendants have been charged with “spreading lies, insulting and slandering.” The Guardian Council, Arak Municipality, several judges from Arak Justice Department and Arak police force are the plaintiffs in this case.

## **September 19**

### **UCO members sentenced to suspended jail terms. (Iran News Daily)**

A former member of the central council of the Unity Consolidation Office (UCO), Ahmad Moradi, was sentenced to a suspended one year term in prison. He was arrested during unrests in Zanjan in 2003. Moreover, a former member of Zanjan University's Islamic Association, Samad Mohammadi, who was arrested in the company of Moradi, was also sentenced to a suspended four-month jail term.

## **September 21**

### **Iranian judiciary vows to purge 'corrupt' filmmakers. (AFP)**

Iran's hard-line judiciary has declared it intends to "detoxify" the Islamic republic's movie industry in a bid to eliminate what it described as "corrupt" artists. "As long as the Culture Ministry does not act to clean up the cultural field of disgraceful elements, the judicial apparatus is obliged to act to detoxify the cultural field of corrupt elements," said the judiciary's message. Abolhasan Davoodi, head of the non-governmental Cinema House, was summoned and interrogated by police in the previous week for "repeated protests over non-observance of the Islamic dress code" during the movie award festival. He was sent to a Tehran hospital with suspected heart failure after his arrest. Other organizers were also detained, then freed on bail. Organizers of the independent Cinema House festival have acknowledged "with deep regret" that "some of those invited did not abide by the notices" reminding women to cover up properly.

## **September 22**

### **Iran's bloggers in censorship protest. (British Broadcasting Corporation / BBC)**

Hundreds of Iranian online journals have been protesting against media censorship by renaming their websites after pro-reformist newspapers and websites that have been banned or shut down by the authorities. Many of the websites, known as blogs or weblogs, have also posted news items from the banned publications on their websites. The protest was started by blogger Hossein Derakhshan, a student at Toronto university in Canada. Earlier in September, three reformist websites - Emrooz, Rooydad and Baamdad - re-appeared in a stripped-down form after having been blocked by the authorities. One of them moved the content of its site onto a blog as a means of getting around the block. It is thought that the number of Iranians keeping blogs is now between 10,000 and 15,000.

### **Afghan national hanged in Zahedan. (AFP)**

In Zahedan, an Afghan identified as Obaidullah Noorzehi was hanged in public. He had been convicted of abduction and anti-security acts, and was declared to be "corrupt on earth".

### **Two police officers killed in Miyandoab. (ISNA and RFE/RL Iran Report)**

The police chief of Miyandoab, West Azerbaijan Province, and another policeman were killed. The incident occurred when police clashed with villagers in the village of Seh-Tapeh. Miyandoab Governor Hamid Shokri dismissed claims that a Kurdish religious sect was involved in the incident.

## September 23

### **Iran hangs alleged armed robber. (AFP)**

An Iranian man convicted of armed robbery was hanged in public in the city of Ahwaz. The man, identified only as Mohsen Sh., had been convicted of attacking a shop with two accomplices. After injuring the shop-owner, the robbers fled while firing on police officers. The two accomplices, identified as Peyman B. and Shahin R., were also convicted of armed robbery and sentenced to have both their right hands and left feet amputated.

### **Journalists subpoenaed. (Iranian newspaper *Tose'eh*)**

The managing directors of *Donya*, *Khatereh* and *Chelcheraq* publications were summoned to the 7th Circuit of the Administrative Court. They are charged with “spreading lies and misusing photographs”.

## September 24

### **Online journalist freed but two others still held. (Reporters Without Borders)**

Iranian online journalist Babak Ghafari Azar, detained for two weeks for allegedly writing for the news website *Rouydad*, was released on September 21. Azar said two others arrested around the same time are still being held. Azar, who also works for the business daily *Hayat-e now*, was arrested at his home on 7 September after it was searched by the police. Shahram Rafihzadeh, the editor of the culture section of the newspaper *Etemad*, was arrested the same day, probably by the vice police. Hanif Mazroi, a journalist who used to work for several reformist newspapers, was arrested the following day when he complied with a summons to report to the ninth section of the Tehran prosecutor's office. Rafihzadeh and Mazroi are probably being held in connection with the blocking of the Rouydad news site ([www.rouydad.info](http://www.rouydad.info)) since 21 August on the orders of the Tehran prosecutor's office.

## September 26

### **Demonstrators block traffic in Tehran. (ISNA)**

Around 4.30 pm, a group of people gathered in Revolution Avenue in front of Tehran university. After some dancing, the serving of cakes and handing out flowers, the group started to chant slogans, which led to a traffic jam in Revolution Avenue as curious crowds gathered. Around 6 pm, the Law Enforcement Force, having issued a warning, asked the crowd to leave and dispersed those who were unwilling to do so. It appears that these individuals acted under the influence of the opposition abroad.

**Reuters report on the same news:** A rare pro-democracy protest in Tehran gained momentum with hundreds of cars pouring onto the streets, blaring horns and provoking an appearance from vigilantes, witnesses said. Local residents said Persian-language television channels from the United States had been broadcasting callers throughout the day who had exhorted Iranians to turn out for demonstrations. Two hundred riot police were drafted into central Tehran earlier in the day when more than 2,000 people started milling round the streets after a minor protest inspired by the U.S.-based channels, witnesses said. Some of the crowd said they had turned out because of a call by the mystic Ahura Pirouz Khalegi Yazdi, who has predicted the fall of Iran's government on October 1. He broadcasts on a California-based channel

and promised to charter aircraft to bring home the Iranian diaspora from the United States.

**Iranian newspaper *Etemaad* report of September 28 related to the same news:** The commander of the Law Enforcement Force, Commander Qalibaf, said some people were arrested in Tehran on 26 September following clashes instigated by "counter-revolutionary elements" and opposition currents. He said that in some areas there had been scattered clashes as well, and in the process some people had been arrested. There were similar but "unimportant" incidents in Esfahan and another city, he said. He said recent arrests of journalists were carried out on the instructions of the judiciary.

**Soroush attacked in Qom. (Iranian newspaper *Hambastagi*)**

Professor Abdulkarim Soroush was assaulted by more than 100 demonstrators in Qom after leaving the home of Hojjatoleslam Shobeiri, Ayatollah Shobeiri-Zanjani's grandson. The demonstrators attacked his car with stones and wooden sticks.

**September 28**

**One killed, 18 injured in clashes over bank closure in Fars Province. (Iranian TV channel Islamic Republic of Iran News Network)**

Clashes took place when a group of people in the city of Nurabad, in Mamasani [Fars Province], protested against the financial situation and bankruptcy of an interest-free bank. Security has now returned to the city and the situation is under control. One was killed in the clashes and around 18 people were injured.

**September 29**

**Another reformist journalist arrested. (Reporters Without Borders)**

Rozbeh Mir Ebrahimi, a former political editor of the reformist daily *Etemad*, was arrested without a warrant at his Tehran home on 27 September. Ebrahimi was arrested by "individuals who said they were police" but had no arrest warrant, his wife, Sulmaz Sharifi, said. Ebrahimi also used to work for other reformist newspapers that have been closed down, including the daily *Jomhouriyat*, which the judicial authorities banned on 18 July.

**Four died in clashes in She-Tapeh. (ISNA and RFE/RL *Iran Report*)**

A policeman and three members of an apparent religious sect died in a shootout in Seh-Tapeh. Miyandoab Governor Shokri said the group has "particular religious beliefs" and is led by Seyyed Nizam Mashmashi. Mashmashi has written twice to the governor to say that his followers were not involved in the violence. It also reported that police arrested six people in connection to the shootout and confiscated weapons.

**September 30**

**Iranian leader pardons, reduces sentences of over 1,500 people. (ISNA)**

Simultaneous with the anniversary of the birthday of the Lord of the Age [12th Imam, Mahdi], Ayatollah Ali Khamene'i agreed to pardon or reduce the sentences of a number of people sentenced by the country's courts. Ayatollah Hashemi-Shahrudi, the

head of the Judiciary, had proposed the pardon or reduction in the sentences of 1,660 people in a letter to the Iranian leader.

**Translator under incommunicado detention. (RFE/RL *Iran Report*)**

Iran's Writers Association urged authorities to Nusrat Mehregan, a translator from Karaj, now "detained for more than three months in unknown conditions."

*UNHCR Ankara  
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