

Chronology of Events in Iran, October 2004*

October 2

Two antiques smugglers sentenced to death in Iran. (Iranian radio Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran)

Two antiques' smugglers have been sentenced to death in the southern city of Jiroft. It was also reported that members of two other gangs who were involved in the selling of antiques and unauthorized digging have been arrested in Jiroft during the past few months.

October 3

Scores arrested in Isfahan and Kashan for rioting. (Agence France Press/ AFP)

Scores of people were arrested in the previous week in the central Iranian cities of Isfahan and Kashan when rioting broke out after a religious celebration, an official source said. According to an official in the Isfahan governor general's office, police detained 70 people in the historic city on September 30 after they "vandalised a number of charity donation boxes and traffic lights". The official said that seven people were detained on October 1 in the city of Kashan after several hundred young people took to the streets. September 30 evening was marked by large public gatherings across the Islamic republic to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of the 12th and last Shiite Muslim Imam, Mahdi. The religious festival, mainly marked by street parties, also coincided with a pledge from an exiled Iranian opposition figure and satellite television personality, Ahura Pirouz Khaleghi, to return home and bring down the 25-year-old Islamic regime. The official in Isfahan said the unrest there and in Kashan was not linked to Khaleghi's bizarre prediction that the regime would collapse on October 1.

Convict hanged in Ghaemshahr. (AFP)

A man, only identified as a "middle-aged" rapist of a 10-year-old girl, was hanged in public in the town of Ghaemshahr.

October 4

Iranian dissident banned from travelling to US, Europe. (Iranian Students News Agency / ISNA)

Emadeddin Baqi, who says he was invited to Europe and America to attend a number of conferences and meetings with European human rights organizations, has been

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barred of his trip. The head of the Prisoners' Rights Association Baqi said: "A day prior to the trip some people were noticeably chasing and controlling me. On [October 3] afternoon I saw two motorcyclists following me. I was certain that I was not banned from the trip even at Mehrabad Airport the customs department did put the exit stamp on my passport. But after passing through the customs, an officer approached us and confiscated me and my family's bags and passports." Baqi said he was told in writing that this was based on a request by the Special Court for Clergy.

"Armed robber" hanged publicly in Isfahan. (AFP)

An Iranian man convicted of armed robbery, banditry and drug trafficking has been hanged in public in the central city of Isfahan, the local judiciary said. The man was identified as Mehrzad Vajeb-al Hoghogh, a 30-year-old mechanic who already had a criminal record. He was convicted of heading a five-member crime gang. The judiciary, in a statement, said the purpose of the public hanging was to "inflict terror in the minds of the criminals." Before being strung up, the man was ordered to warn onlookers about the dangers of "socialising with inappropriate people."

October 7

Iranian Nobel laureate says threatened for her legal activities. (Iranian newspaper *Shargh*)

The Iranian Nobel peace prize winner Shirin Ebadi stated that within the period of 10 days, the entrance door of her residential home has been broken with an iron bar. She said: "I have been receiving threatening phone calls and letters for a long time, and I have reported them all to the Law Enforcement Force. People who are making such threats intend to make me believe that I am not safe in my own home. They are planning to force me quit my legal activities.

October 10

"Armed robber" publicly hanged in Ahwaz. (AFP)

An Iranian man convicted of armed robbery was publicly hanged in the southern city of Ahwaz. The man, only identified as Mohammad D., was convicted of involvement in four armed robberies and "had terrified people by shooting and injuring them (and) stealing money and cars", a court statement said.

October 12

Mohammed Ali Abtahi resigns from Iranian parliament. (UK newspaper *The Times*)

Mohammad Ali Abtahi, the Iranian Vice-President, had his resignation accepted, after saying that he could not work with the conservative-dominated parliament. A close ally of the reformist President Khatami, he first tendered his resignation in February.

October 13

Crackdown on Internet journalists in Iran. (Reuters)

Iranian authorities have arrested at least six Internet journalists and bloggers in recent days, colleagues and relatives said. News-based Internet sites and online journals known as Weblogs have flourished in Iran where the disproportionately

youthful population often turns to the Internet for information and entertainment. Journalists and relatives named the six arrested journalists and Webloggers as Shahram Rafizadeh, Babak Ghafouri-Azar, Rouzbeh Amir-Ebrahimi, Hanif Mazroui, Omid Memarian and Mostafa Derayati.

Human Rights Watch report of the same incident: Journalist and internet writer Omid Memarian was detained without charge. It was reported that agents of Iran's Judiciary working for the Tehran airport prosecutor arrested Memarian in his office. The authorities also searched Memarian's home and confiscated his personal notes and computer. Shortly before his arrest, Memarian had tried to attend a conference on Iranian civil society in New York. He had obtained a U.S. visa, but in Frankfurt, U.S. authorities refused to allow him to board his flight, saying that he was on a "no-fly" list but providing no other information. He was arrested a few days after his return to Tehran. Memarian has written extensively on youth-related issues in Iran and was a candidate in 2003 election for Tehran's City Council. He maintains a Web-log dedicated to a range of social, cultural and civil society issues in Iran.

October 14

Two Iranians hanged in Shiraz. (AFP)

Two men convicted of kidnapping, raping and murdering a six-year-old boy have been publicly hanged in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz. The two, identified as Mojtaba Amiri and Aziz Mardani, reportedly carried out the crime several months ago. After raping the boy, they were said to have chopped up his body into small pieces.

Journalist Ali-Reza Jabari released. (Reporters Without Borders)

Ali-Reza Jabari, contributor to several newspapers, was released after more than 18 months in prison. Jabari was sentenced on 19 April 2003 to four years in prison, 253 lashes and a fine of six million Rials (about 1,000 euros) for "drinking and distributing alcoholic drinks, adultery and incitement to immoral acts", a charge regularly used against secular figures. Jabari is an outspoken commentator who writes for the monthly *Adineh* and a member of the Iranian Writers Association

October 16

Iranian soldier kills guest in party raid in Karaj. (AFP)

An Iranian soldier has been charged with killing a party-goer during a raid on an illegal mixed-sex gathering. Security forces raided the party in the town of Karaj, and one soldier opened fire, shooting dead one of the guests. "The soldier has been arrested and charged with intentional murder," a judicial official said.

October 17

Iranian dissident back to jail after suspended term revoked. (AFP)

Iranian dissident intellectual Emadeddin Baghi said he risked being sent back to prison after an appeal court revoked a verdict that gave him a one-year suspended jail term. In December 2003, a Tehran revolutionary tribunal handed Baghi a one-year suspended prison sentence for "propagating against the regime" and having links with

opposition groups. "The verdict was illegal because it was issued in my absence, with no jury at a closed session," Baghi has complained.

Iran Judiciary source denies unwed girl sentenced to death by stoning. (IRNA)

An informed Judiciary source denied reports on a death sentence issued for a 13-year-old Iranian girl for having sex out of wedlock. The source stressed that the girl from the western city of Marivan in Kordestan Province had been sentenced to jail. Certain news websites had alleged that the teenager, identified only as Zhila A., had been sentenced by a local court to death by stoning after being found guilty of having had sex outside marriage. The source stated that the convict as well as another defendant in the case had been handed over to welfare authorities of Kordestan Province to serve their jail terms.

October 18

Iranian man who killed son gets three-year jail term, fine. (AFP)

An Iranian man who beat to death his son after he failed to get full marks in all his studies at school has been handed a three-year jail term and ordered to pay "blood money". It was reported that 10-year-old Mohammed was beaten to death by his father, 38-year-old Ali-Madad, after scoring 16 out of 20 in science. Under Iranian law, a father can not be condemned to death for murdering a child. The man was ordered to pay the Islamic blood money -- 220 million rials (25,000 dollars) -- to his wife. She has reportedly asked for a divorce.

October 19

Iranian police arrest reformist editor. (Iranian newspaper *Shargh*)

The editor of *Mardom Salari*, Javad Gholam-Tamimi, has been detained. Gholam-Tamimi was summoned by Bench-9 Court of Airport District. He was detained after being informed of the charges against him. Gholam-Tamimi is charged in connection with a case known as illegal web sites.

Iran revokes woman's stoning sentence, thief's amputation. (AFP)

The head of Iran's judiciary, Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahrudi, quashed a stoning sentence for a woman convicted of adultery and an amputation sentence for a thief. The woman, identified only as Seema, was sentenced to stoning and 100 lashes for adultery and 15 years in prison for being an accomplice in her husband's murder. The husband was reportedly killed by one of the woman's lovers. Shahrudi only quashed the stoning sentence. Shahrudi also ordered a review into the amputation of a 20-year old Iranian man, convicted of being a "Mohareb" (God's enemy) for armed robbery. As a result, the sentence was revoked and his convictions reduced to ordinary theft. The man, who was not identified, used to steal cars dressed as a woman.

October 20

Students publication suspended, Iranian agency reports. (ISNA)

A students publication called "From Saturday to Saturday" printed in the University of Shahr-e Kord [Chahr-Mahal Bakhtiari Province] has been suspended for six months. It was reported that the proprietor of the publication is the Islamic Association of the University of Shahr-e Kord and the committee overseeing all

students publications suspended “From Saturday to Saturday” for publishing an offensive article.

Three Iranian weeklies referred to courts. (Iranian newspaper *Iran Daily*)

Dossiers of three Persian weeklies have been referred to courts of Tehran and Ardebil provinces for neglecting warnings by Press Supervisory Board. Culture and Islamic Guidance Ministry's Press Department added that these publications have ignored numerous warnings issued by the ministry. It was reported that the Persian weeklies include Tehran-based “Seventh Book” and “Blue Sound” whose managing directors are Alireza Shahsavari and Mostafa Badeleh, respectively, as well as Ardebil-based weekly *Varavi* whose managing director is Salim Zahmatdust.

October 22

Activist barred from international travel. (Iranian Labour News Agency / ILNA and RFE/RL *Iran Report*)

Attorney Mohammad Ali Dadkhah, who was scheduled to visit France with Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi, said that the government has refused to issue him a passport. Dadkhah represents the family of slain Canadian journalist Zahra Kazemi.

Workers protest unpaid wages in Bushehr. (ILNA and RFE/RL *Iran Report*)

Bushehr nuclear power plant security personnel broke up a gathering of workers demonstrating against unpaid wages, and then the provincial welfare council dismissed some workers and transferred others. Isa Kamali, secretary of the Bushehr Worker's House, said that a Labor Ministry arbitration council is being prevented from investigating the case on alleged security grounds.

October 23

Iranian editor fined for publishing "indecent" pictures. (IRNA)

An appeal court in Esfahan has upheld punishments, including substitute fine for lashes, for an editor who is indicted on charges of libel and publication of indecent pictures in her weekly. A court of first order had sentenced Faezeh Sharif to 50 lashes as well as cash fine of 1.5 million rials for a series of convictions, including publishing pictures 'violating public decency' in her weekly *Seda*. The same court meanwhile had agreed to substitute the lashes with a fine of five million rials.

October 24

Seven members of Iranian exiled group return to Iran. (IRNA)

A celebration marking the return of seven members from the outlawed armed group People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI, also known as MKO) was held in Tehran's 'Olympic' hotel. The seven ex-PMOI members told reporters that they had escaped the US detention camp in Iraq and returned to the country. Another 16 ex-PMOI members who had returned to Iran during the past months also attended the ceremonies. The 'Anjoman-e Nejat' or the 'Rescue Association' which sponsored the event was formed in 2001 to render assistance to the PMOI families with the aim of encouraging them to leave the group. The interim Iraqi government's Human Rights

Minister Bakhtiyar Amin said in September 2004 that "3,322 of the total 9,877 inmates in Iraq's various prisons are PMOI members."

October 27

Sweden grants asylum to 384 stranded Iranian Kurds. (Associated Press / AP)

Sweden will provide asylum to almost one-third of 1,200 Iranian Kurds who have been stranded in a remote desert camp between Iraq and Jordan for the past 18 months, a U.N. refugee agency official said. The 384 refugees had been living in harsh conditions in a camp in the no man's land area before being moved recently to the Ruweishid camp inside Jordan to be prepared for traveling to Sweden.

October 28

Journalist arrested. (RFE/RL *Iran Report*)

The *Etemad* reporter Fereshteh Ghazi was detained when she appeared at the judiciary. The reporter's husband said the charges are unknown and he does not know where she is being held. It was reported that the arrest is tied to her online reporting, but the authorities intend to accuse Ghazi of adultery, according to Reporters Without Borders.

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