

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

### **November 1**

#### **Iran's judiciary orders conservative-run news website to close. (Agence France Presse / AFP)**

Iran's judiciary ordered the conservative-run news website *Baztab* to close after receiving complaints that the site was "publishing false news," contrary to Iran's security guidelines and interests. The head of *Baztab* claimed that the Supreme National Security Council had ordered his site to be filtered, because of it publishing material regarding Iran's nuclear case, adding that he had only published material found in the rest of the Iranian media. The former head of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards, Mohsen Rezaie, is believed to run the website.

### **November 3**

#### **Iran university chancellor kept as "hostage". (Islamic Republic News Agency / IRNA)**

Chancellor of the University of Science and Technology Mohammad Taqi Salehi said that he had been held hostage by a number of students according to a pre-planned plot. Salehi said that upon leaving his office he encountered about 30 students who asked him for an appointment to meet him. Despite his approval of their request, he added, the students rushed towards him, beat him up, and dragged him towards a bus parked nearby. Then the students made a few telephone calls and drove towards the building of the Ministry of Sciences, Research and Technology, he noted. According to the chancellor, he was released after two hours following the negotiations between the hostage-takers and police forces.

#### **Several people arrested over recent unrest in Mianduab. (Iranian Students News Agency / ISNA)**

Three people accused of September 2004 unrest in Mianduab have been arrested. Nader Sadeqi, the director-general for political and security affairs in West Azarbaijan Province said that Sahand Ali Mohammadi, Bakhsh Ali Mohammadi and Abdollah Qasemzadeh gave themselves up to security forces. September clashes between the LEF and several individuals belonging to a religious sect led to the killing of several LEF members, including the commander of the Law Enforcement Force in Mianduab, his deputy and several attackers. The skirmishes continued for two weeks.

---

\* *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.*

**Travel ban imposed on Azam Taleqani. (Iranian newspaper *Hayat-e Now*)**

The Secretary-General of the Islamic Revolutionary Women's Society, Azam Taleqani, was banned from traveling overseas after her trip to the U.S., in which she made a speech at Stanford University.

**Journalist detained. (ISNA)**

Journalist and NGO Activist Mahboubeh Abbasqolizadeh was arrested and her computer case was seized. Her family members said they did not know of her whereabouts.

**November 6**

**University students hold protest meeting, free speech platform in Tehran. (Iranian Labour News Agency / ILNA)**

Students at the University of Elm va San'at held a protest gathering. The gathering was organized by the Guild of the University of Elm va San'at. The Guild said free student platforms and protest gatherings will be held for several days at 11:00.

**Weblog detainees moved to solitary confinement. (ILNA)**

The lawyer for the weblog detainees - Asghar Vatankhah, Mas'ud Qoreyshi, Javad Gholam Tamimi, and Mehdi Derayati – said he met his clients at the Public Prosecutor's Office for Region 9 (the airport). He said he became aware that three of his clients were placed in solitary cells.

**Women's anti-fundamentalist radio observed on shortwave, internet. (BBC Monitoring)**

BBC Monitoring observed a broadcast in Persian identifying as Radio Voice of Women [*Radyo Seda-ye Zan*] on 9495 kHz shortwave at 19:00-19:30 gmt on 6 November 2004. The programme is produced by a US-based organization called Women's Forum Against Fundamentalism in Iran, which has a web site at <http://www.wfafi.org>. The home page has a link to the radio's web page at <http://www.wfafi.org/radio.htm>. Most of the web site is in English, though details of the shortwave broadcast are given only in Persian. The schedule is stated to be 22:30-23:00 Tehran local time [1900-1930 gmt] every Saturday on 9495 kHz. Above this statement is a link to a downloadable mp3 audio file of the broadcast.

The web site carries the following mission statement: "The Women's Forum Against Fundamentalism in Iran (WFAFI) is committed to promoting a greater awareness of the challenges women face living under fundamentalist regimes such as that of Iran. Our tasks range from raising public awareness, conducting research projects and initiating outreach programs - to policy discussions and analysis. We firmly believe the political presence, participation and leadership of women are instrumental to achieving social, political and economic equality."

**November 7**

**Isfahan Court of Appeals suspends journalist's sentence. (ISNA)**

15th Circuit of Isfahan's Court of Appeals suspended the conviction of *Seda* weekly managing director, Fayeze Sharif. She was charged with 'insulting sacred values' and banned from press-related posts for 4 years.

## November 8

### **Iranian students protest over hardliner assault on academic. (AFP)**

Hundreds of Iranian students and academics held a rally in one of Tehran's main universities to protest at an assault on a top academic allegedly carried out by members of the militia. Members of the student Basij militia a week ago reportedly assaulted and briefly detained the head of Tehran's Elm-o-Sanaat university, Doctor Mohammad Taghi Salehi, following what they said was an unauthorised lecture at the university by prominent dissident Ebrahim Yazdi. The Basij has denied any involvement of its members.

## November 11

### **One internet activist freed on bail. (ILNA)**

Hanif Mazru'i, journalist and internet activist, was released on bail. Mazru'i was arrested about 50 days ago following the crack down against internet sites and the so-called internet activists, and the arrest of Shahram Rafi'zadeh, an editor at *Etema'd* daily.

## November 13

### **Court dissolves student union. (Iranian Students News Agency / ISNA)**

The Union of the Islamic Associations of University Students and Graduates [Etehadieh-e Anjomanhaye Eslami Daneshjuyan va Daneshamukhtegan] has been dissolved. Tehran Public Prosecutor's Office and the Islamic Revolution Court stated: "According to a verdict of Bench 26 of the Tehran Islamic Revolution Court and in the light of several actions taken by the Union of the Islamic Associations of University Students and Graduates against the country's security, and with reference to a complaint lodged to the court by the Article 10 commission of parties, the said group has been dissolved".

### **Judiciary shuts down travel agencies for "indecent" tours. (Iranian newspaper *Jomhuri-ye Eslami*)**

The Judiciary has closed down a few travel agencies which used to commit indecent acts by organizing one-day tours to the north of the country. According to reports by the Public Relations Office of Tehran's Public and Revolution Courts and Justice News Network ([www.ghest.com](http://www.ghest.com)), the organizers and leaders of such tours engaged in actions which were contrary to moral and Islamic principles, harmed public decency and promoted a filthy atmosphere. They were called "Happy, happy tours" and were advertised in newspapers, leaflets and e-mails in order to attract and register travellers who had to pay something around 12 to 20 thousand tumans per one-day trip. The tour leaders, some of whom had criminal records, used to take travellers to places out of public sight. A number of travellers got rid of their *hejab* at the beginning of the journey and by the sea, danced and sang to indecent music, arranged competitions which were contrary to moral and Islamic principles, did not observe religious dress code and wore inappropriate and unusual clothes during the trip and at their destination.

## **November 15**

### **Journalist released on bail. (ILNA)**

The 2nd Circuit of Tehran Public and Revolutionary Court issued a 500-million-rial bail for the jailed journalist, Rouzbeh Ibrahimi. He has been on temporary detention for 49 days.

### **Disciplinary Committee Sentences 18 Students. (Iranian website Baztab)**

University of Science and Technology's Disciplinary Committee issued the rulings for 18 students, charging 9 of them with battery and rebellion and 9 others with attacking Basij establishment and destroying its headquarters. Nine of the defendants were expelled from the university and 9 others were suspended from academic studies for 2 or 3 semesters.

## **November 19**

### **Workers in Kordestan held protest rally in Sanandaj. (ILNA)**

At a workers' rally in Sanandaj 5,000 workers signed a petition addressed to the Majlis Speaker. The rally was in protest to proposed and ratified bills, which have been against workers interests, in the previous and current terms of the Majlis.

## **November 20**

### **Bomber of Revolution Court building appeals against death sentence. (Iranian Baztab web site)**

After investigations into the dossiers of two people held responsible for bombing the building the Islamic Revolution Court in Tehran, the Branch Six of the court has condemned one of them to death. It was reported that Hojjat Z., a member of the Iranian People's Mojahedin Organization (PMOI, Mojahedin-e Khalq), is accused of bombing the building of the Revolution Court on 2 June 1999 and killing three people - Haj Hasan Salehi, Mozafar Nikzad and Wilhelm Aton - and injuring 22. At the end of the trial the court found the two guilty. As the main element responsible for the bombing Hojjat Z. was condemned to death and his culprit condemned to imprisonment. The dossier has been sent to the Supreme Court with the appeal of the accused.

### **More than 35 dead homeless people found every month in Tehran. (Iranian Baztab web site)**

The head of the autopsy hall at the Coroner's Office said that more than 70 unidentified bodies which undergo autopsy every month in Tehran are those of homeless people, and that in most cases there is no-one to identify and bury them.

## **November 21**

### **Iran bans public commemoration of dissident murders. (AFP)**

Iranian authorities have barred relatives of a dissident couple murdered by intelligence agents in 1998 from marking the anniversary in public in 2004, the couple's daughter said. Parastoo Foruhar, the daughter of Daryush Foruhar and his wife Parvaneh Eskandari, said "objections" to her plans for this year's ceremony "were so strong"

that the office of the governor of Tehran withdrew a permit issued two days ago. "We have decided to hold the ceremony at home tomorrow, and there will be no speeches, only prayers for their souls," she said.

### **November 23**

#### **More than 1,000 Iranian Kurd refugees fled camp in Iraq. (AFP)**

More than 1,000 Iranian Kurds have fled a refugee camp in Iraq and are missing amid insecurity near the town of Ramadi, the UN refugee agency said. More than 30 percent of the 4,200 Iranian Kurds in the Al Tash camp fled after a police station in the camp was attacked by armed fighters last week, the UNHCR said. Water and electricity to Al Tash have also been cut off, the UNHCR added, citing reports from its local partner agency in Iraq. Redmond said the refugees might be heading to northern Iraq or be trying to reach the Jordanian border further west.

#### **Weblog journalist reportedly disappeared. (ILNA)**

Safar Samiee-Nejad, the father of weblog writer, Mojtaba Samiee-Nejad, said he is unaware of his son's whereabouts. "Four officers came and arrested my son. They inspected our house and took several CDs, the computer case, poetry books and several family photographs," he noted.

### **November 24**

#### **Judiciary orders release of weblogger. (ILNA)**

Branch number two of the Prosecutor's Office for region nine of the general and revolutionary courts in Tehran has ordered the head of the Evin prison to free Ruzbeh Mir-Ebrahimi, one of the prisoners of so-called "web sites" dossier.

### **November 26**

#### **Iranian students to appear in court for action against state security. (Iranian Students News Agency / ISNA)**

Ten students of Sistan va Baluchestan University have been summoned to Bench 6 of the revolutionary court in Zahedan, charged with acts against the country's internal security and insult. Mohsen Haqqani, Alireza Zebarain, Ruhollah Azimi, Iman Zangeneh, Farshid Sandaqi, Neema Nahtani, Amir Aryana, Jaber Khaledi, Majid Golmohammadi, Amir Reza Barjesteh, all students of Sistan va Baluchestan University, have to report on 13 December to Bench 6 of the revolutionary court in Zahedan to answer charges of acts against internal security and insult.

#### **Journalist's brother arrested in Qom. (ILNA)**

Farid Modaressi has reported the arrest of his brother by the Qom Revolutionary Court. He said: "This morning officers from the Revolutionary Court searched my father's house in Qom and then arrested by brother. They said he would be released if I presented myself to the Revolutionary Court." Farid Modaressi was arrested and imprisoned previously for participating in meetings held in protest to the death verdict for Hashem Aqajari, and was recently summoned to branch 26 of the revolutionary court.

## **November 27**

### **Student activist given leave from jail for medical treatment. (ISNA)**

Manuchehr Mohammadi has left prison for medical treatment. Saying that his other son, Akbar, has been on leave for about two months for medical treatment as well, Mohammad Mohammadi called on the relevant officials to extend the leave of his sons to allow them to complete their medical treatment.

## **November 28**

### **Activist reportedly receives 1.5 year jail sentence plus 20 lashes. (ILNA)**

Mostafa Piran, the father of Payman Piran [jailed student activist] has been sentenced to a one-and-a-half-year jail sentence plus 20 lashes. Mostafa Piran's lawyer Abdolfatah Soltani said: "When I went to the relevant court to receive a copy of the sentence they refused to give it to me."

### **Iranian journalist barred from leaving the country. (AFP)**

A dissident Iranian journalist has been barred from leaving the Islamic republic after trying to fly to the Netherlands for a conference. "I was told at the airport that I am banned from leaving the country by a Revolutionary Court order," Isa Saharkhiz, a former culture ministry official and editor of the banned pro-reform monthly *Aftab*, said.

### **Former student leader's trial held in Tehran. (Iranian newspaper *Aftab*)**

The court hearing of the former member of the General Council of the Unity Consolidation Office (UCO), Farid Modarresi, was held at the 26th Circuit of the Revolutionary Court. He is charged with "acting against national security."

### **Labour activist on trial in Saqqez. (Iranian newspaper *Tose'eh*)**

Mahmoud Salehi's court hearing was held at the 1st Circuit of Saqqez Revolutionary Court. He has been charged with "cooperating with illegal groups and acting to stage an illegal gathering." Salehi was detained in Saqqez city during the Labor Day gathering.

## **November 30**

### **Iranian man hanged for rape, murder. (AFP)**

An Iranian man convicted of rape and murder has been publicly hanged in Karaj. Hossein Hassanvand, 25, was convicted of being a member of a local crime gang known as the "Vultures". Several other members of the same gang have already been hanged in Karaj.

*UNHCR Ankara  
Country of Origin Information Team  
Revised December 2004*