



Iran arrests more than 60 Christians

Human Rights Activists in Iran – Jan. 4, 2011: More than 60 Christians have been summoned by the Intelligence Agency or arrested in their homes by plainclothes agents thus far. The detainees were mostly arrested in Tehran and a number of other Iranian cities and were mostly temporarily released after interrogations and forced pledges. The large Christian community in Iran has been under great pressure by security forces on the days leading to Christmas and the New Year. Ali Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran warned against the growth and spread of home churches for the first time in a speech in Qom on October 19, 2010. <http://www.hra-news5.info/component/content/article/55-1389-01-14-13-18-46/6081-1.html>

IRNA state-run news agency, Radio Farda – Jan. 4, 2011: Tehran Governor Morteza Tamadon, compared evangelical Christians to the Taliban and Wahhabis and called their faith ‘a deviated and corrupt movement’ in Christianity saying that their leaders would be arrested and firmly dealt with.

Foreign Office Minister "deeply disturbed" by sentencing of Iranian human rights lawyer

UK Foreign Office Minister - 10 January 2011: Minister for the Middle East and North Africa Alistair Burt calls for Iran's authorities to overturn the sentence. “I am deeply disturbed to learn that lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh has been sentenced to 11 years in prison and that journalist Shiva Nazar Ahari has been sentenced to 4 years and 74 lashes on appeal. Both women have been convicted for no more than courageously doing their jobs and working for the constitutionally guaranteed rights of their fellow Iranian citizens. I call on the Islamic Republic of Iran’s authorities to overturn these harsh sentences.

I am also deeply concerned by reports that Jafar Kazemi and Mohammad Ali Haj-Aghaie may be imminently executed for ‘enmity against God’. The United Kingdom condemns the use of the death penalty, and appeals for these sentences to be commuted.” <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=532131482>



Female death row political prisoner under pressure to make false confessions

Human Rights and Democracy Activists in Iran – Jan. 7, 2011: Iranian–Dutch political prisoner Zahra Bahrami, is under severe pressure by Intelligence Agency interrogators and the assistant Tehran Prosecutor Reshteh Ahmadi to confess to drug related charges in court. This political prisoner and mother of 2 was arrested in the Ashura (December 27, 2009) protests and is interrogated almost on a daily basis. She is mentally tortured by interrogators who had in the past forced her under physical and mental torture to make false confessions about carrying narcotics.... When intelligence agents realized that the political charges against her led to waves of international reaction against the Iranian regime, they charged her with carrying and selling narcotics...Bahrami is currently detained in the female cellblock in Evin Prison.



Paralyzed political prisoner returned to prison from hospital while in critical condition

Human Rights and Democracy Activists in Iran – Jan. 5, 2011: On Monday January 3, 2011, political prisoner Hadi (Homayoun) Abedi Bakhoda, 50, who was hospitalized due to his critical condition (spastic paralysis and a neurogenic bladder) with the expenses of his family was returned back to Rasht Central Prison. A legal doctor has formally announced in a written order that due to his critical condition and paralysis and the need for constant medical care, he is unable to tolerate detention. The Prison doctor also stated this matter to the Revolutionary Court but despite efforts, the Intelligence Agency has kept him in prison. He has been jailed in the infirmary of Rasht Prison since November 8, 2009. ... He was also under severe torture in the 80’s in Evin and Qezelhesar prisons on charges of supporting the People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI). He was shot in the back upon his arrest in the 80’s and became paralyzed. His brother Hormoz Abed Bakhoda was executed in the 80’s for supporting the PMOI.