

Shedding light on the truth about Iran's human rights situation



## Iran Human Rights Monitor Monthly Report May 2018

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May 2018**

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### Introduction

May 2018 was marked by diverse cases of human rights abuse. This includes at least 16 executions, five flogging sentences issued by the judiciary, 17 cases of arbitrary murders, increased pressure on prisoners, beating street vendors and destroying people's houses by the municipality agents, cutting an elementary girl's hair for mal-veiling, and crackdown on nationwide peaceful protests staged by different social sectors.

One of the most important developments in the month of May was demonstrations in the southern city of Kazerun, against a plan to divide the city. The peaceful protests turned deadly on May 16, when the Iranian regime's security forces opened fire on protesters.

Iran Human Rights Monitor has learned that at least four protesters were shot dead, several injured and many arrests. They were identified as Omid Yousefian, Ali Mohammadian Azad, Reza Azhdari and Mehdi Jahantab. Ali Al-Ghasi Mehr, the head of Fars province's judiciary admitted two deaths and 48

wounded. (The state-run [Tasnim](#) news agency- May 19, 2018)

Numerous video clips from inside Kazerun show plainclothes agents shooting protesters from the judiciary building rooftop. Other videos, vividly depict the large number of security forces dispatched by authorities from nearby cities such as Shiraz, and even Tehran, to quell the protests.

As the protests continued, the Interior Ministry issued an official statement reiterating that it will "decisively deal with those elements who might have other goals in disrupting the order and social security." (The state-run [ISNA](#) news agency- May 17, 2018)



*Javad Norouzi took part in Kazerun protests. The state forces beat him, broke his nose, caused bleeding in his eyes & tore his lip.*

### Executions, arbitrary murders, deaths in custody

#### a. Executions

Iran HRM has registered 16 executions in the month of May. Seven were made public by the state media and three were carried out in public.

In Rajaii Shahr (Gohardasht) Prison, Karaj, names of 57 inmates were announced to the court in preparation for execution.

- Prison officials [summoned Ramin Hossein Panahi](#) on 19 May and told him that his execution would be carried out after 15 June, when the Muslim month of Ramadan ends.
- The case of Mohammad Salas, a Sufi bus driver, was referred to the office for implementation of sentences for his death sentence to be carried out. On April 24, Iran's

Supreme Court upheld the death sentence against Salas, 51, for allegedly driving a public bus through a narrow street during clashes between security forces and the dervishes in Tehran on February 19, killing the policemen. In an audio file release by his lawyer, Zeynab Taheri, He denies the charges, reiterating he was forced to confess after being tortured while under interrogations.

- Farideh Salehi from Marivan Township being in jail for 17 years is facing the danger of execution after Ramadan. In a call she said: "I have been freed on bail of 400 million tomans, provided by a nice woman since three months ago until the end of Ramadan so that I can provide the ransom money...unfortunately no hard I tried I couldn't collect the money demanded." She was arrested in 2001 charged with the murder of her husband. She is now 55.
- Jamiley Sadeghi, woman prisoner from Qarveh (in Kurdistan Province) jailed for 15 years in Sanandaj Central Prison has not been on any leave so far. A reliable source said that this woman was arrested in 2003 accused of murdering her husband. Jamileh was condemned to death after detention, by Qarveh Township's penal court and is on death row since then.

#### Executions carried out in May 2018

Name	Age	Date of execution	Place of execution	Official source
Azam Khazaie		April 30, 2018	Islamabad-e-Qarb Prison	
Abdolbaset Rahmani	25	May 3, 2018	Zahedan Prison	
A.F	27	May 5, 2018	Babol Prison	<a href="#">Young Journalists Club</a>
Reza Hamidi	26	May 9, 2018	Rajaie Shahr Prison	
Unnamed		May 12, 2018	Gorgan Prison	<a href="#">Rokna news agency</a>
Unnamed		May 12, 2018	Gorgan Prison	<a href="#">Rokna news agency</a>
Unnamed		May 13, 2018	Khalij-e-fars Boulevard, Bandar Abbas	<a href="#">Rokna news agency</a>
Vahed Bakhsh Kuseh		May 13, 2018	Zahedan Central Prison	
Mohammad Sarhadi	33	May 14, 2018	Zahedan Central Prison	
Khalil Agoush		May 14, 2018	Urmia Central Prison	
Soheil Mirbakhsh	25	May 14, 2018	Urmia Central Prison	
Mojtaba Kermanian		May 14, 2018	Ilam Prison	
Unnamed		May 15, 2018	Mashhad - in public	<a href="#">Rokna news agency</a>
Unnamed		May 15, 2018	Mashhad - in public	<a href="#">Rokna news agency</a>
Unnamed		May 16, 2018	Ardebil Prison	<a href="#">Tasnim news agency</a>
Jafar Firouzkhani		May 21, 2018	Isfahan Central Prison	

## b. Arbitrary murders

Iran Human Rights Monitor recorded 17 arbitrary murders. This include 9 [poor porters](#) who were shot and killed by the Iran's Border Guards and the SSF. At least four individuals were shot dead during the protests in Kazerun, southern Iran.



- Iran's armed forces shot a group of porter borders and killed one on Tuesday. The young porter is identified as Taher Hekmati, 33. He was married and had four children.



- May 8, Parviz Zare Zehi, citizen of Khash Township (southeast of Iran) was killed by the direct shooting of Relief Unit agents. The agents fled the scene after shooting. During the last 17 months this is the 70th Baluch killed by Disciplinary agents. There has been no positive reaction so far from the officials to solve this acute problem and the report of killings is censored in internal media.

- May 19, Saravan (in Sistan & Baluchistan Province) police shot at a vehicle carrying 4 bags of rice and killed a Baloch youth. He is not identified yet. Clip received from eye witnesses show that people protest the act and police forces are preventing them from taping the scene. During the last 17 months this is the 71st Baloch who has been killed or wounded in the shooting by Disciplinary agents. Last month in such a shooting at a vehicle with Afghan immigrants as passengers, 19 people were killed and wounded.
- May 20, a young border porter from Urmia was killed when Iran's armed forces shot at him. He is identified as Maysam Karim Ali, 27 and father of three girls.



- May 25, the agents of a post in Karti, subsection of Kirdof (located in Jusk Township in Hormozgan province) started throwing stones at a fuel vehicle. Stones hit the drivers' head, the vehicle went astray and the driver, Ramin Gorgij, 26 and a 25-year-old Rashed Baluch [were killed](#).

- On Tuesday morning, May 29, 2018, the Iranian armed forces targeted a group of border porters along the Sheno and Sidakan boundaries, killing one porter and severely injuring the other. The deceased porter was identified as Ribar Moradi, a 28-year old who was married and had a child.

## c. Deaths in custody

Two prisoners committed suicide while in custody due to harsh prison conditions. At least one inmate lost his life due to being denied access to adequate medical treatment.

- Mehdi Koohkan, 29, hanged himself when he was transferred to quarantine section of Zahedan Central Prison, and died. He was confined for robbery. "Mehdi Koohkan was psychologically ill and suffered from problems in his nervous system. He shouted and made noise because of his pains so he was taken to quarantine section where he hanged himself using the strip of her clothing", said and informed source.



- A prisoner by the name of Davood Jahankiri aka Davood Sari, committed suicide on Saturday, May 10, 2018 after he was transferred to another ward on the order of the head of the Rajae-Shahr Prison in Karaj; he died. Davood, 28, was condemned to death and to 25 years imprisonment on charges of rape and "corrupt on earth." An informed source said: "At first Davood was kept in advising section no. 3 of hall no. 8. When they transferred him to the advising section no. 6, he asked several times to return to his own section but his demand was ruled out. Then he committed suicide and died."

- A 40 years old prisoner, named Gholam Nabi Rigi, who was sentenced to death, died in Zahedan Central Prison due to lack of timely medical treatment. An informed source said that Gholam Nabi Rigi was kept in Zahedan Central Prison for about 8 months.

### Inhuman treatment and cruel punishments

- Branch one of Kalat Naderi penal court in Khorasan Razavi Province (east of Iran) has sentenced Alireza Sepahi Laeen, a Kurd writer and poet to receive 74 cable strokes for "offending the officials". He was summoned last year and arrested on Nov. 30, charged with "spreading lies and disrupting public opinion" and then freed on bail on Dec. 9.



- Tehran Province's branch 5 of NO. 1 penal court sentenced a man identified as Parviz, having unlawful relations with a woman to receiving cables and exile. As Javan Online reports the judiciary board cleared the convict of charge of rape but sentenced him to receive cable strokes and to exile for having unlawful relations. )The state-run Javan Online web site- May 21, 2018)

- Branch 36 of Tehran Province's revision court sentenced civil activist, Mohammad Mozafari, who was charged with "propagation against the establishment" to serve two years in jail, receive 74 cable strokes and pay a two million tomans fine; endorsing the same sentence issued by the preliminary court. The sentence was imparted to his lawyer today. Mr. Mozafari was formerly arrested on Feb. 15, 2015 and was transferred to ward 2A of IRGC's intelligence detention center at Evin Prison.



- Milad Kaji, a young 18-year-old Kurd citizen, was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. The Revolutionary Court of Sardasht has sentenced the youngster due to cooperation with the Kurdish opposition parties. He is currently serving his sentence in Sardasht Prison.



- Majid Moradi, a Gonabadi Dervish from Abdanan in Ilam province, 37, father of a four years old, and arrested during clashes in Golestan 7th St. in Tehran was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and receiving 75 cable strokes. The decree was issued by branch 26 of Tehran Revolution Court on charges of "acting against the national security through membership in anti-security sect



of Dervishes," Gathering and Collusion against national security," "defying the orders of (security) agents" and "disrupting the public peace and order."

## Arrests

Iran Human Rights Monitor registered 410 arrests across the country, 148 politically motivated arrests, 7 arrests on religious and ethnic grounds, and 255 social arrests.

- The state security forces arrested 10 individuals including two women in front of the regime's parliament who staged a rally to mark May Day. Two labour activists were also arrested on the same day in the western city of Sanandaj, Iranian Kurdistan.
- Three women were summoned to court and transferred to the Prison of Ahwaz on Sunday, May 13, 2018. Neda Sabeti, Forough Farzaneh and Nooshin Afshar who had been earlier freed from the detention center of the Intelligence Department of Ahwaz on Saturday, May 12, 2018, were re-arrested and placed in jail. All three women are followers of the Baha'i faith.



- Ali Hasan Heidari, Disciplinary commander in Famenin Township said the social security plan is activated in this township. Haidari said: "In addition to arresting 13 convict in this plan, 14 motorbikes and cars have been confiscated. "The convicts have been introduced to judicial bodies after their cases were filed," he added. Famenin Township is one of the townships in Hamedan Province, Northwest of Iran. (The state-run [Mehr](#) news agency- May 7, 2018)
- May 7, security forces in Hormozgan Province have arrested more than 40 environmental activists in various cities of the province, bringing the total number of environmental activists in jail to 55 as one activist, Mojgan Jamshidi, has observed on her Twitter page.
- Security forces violently broken up a teachers' rally held in front of the planning and budget organization building in Tehran, beating up some of the demonstrators and arresting at least 15 of them. The detainees were transferred to Evin Court with handcuffs and shackles.
- 20 young men and women participating in a night party at a private villa in south Khezer-Shahr in Feraydon Kenar Township (north of Iran) were arrested by NAJA. (The state-run [Rokna](#) news agency - May 18, 2018)
- The state security forces on May 20, raided a private party arresting 10 young men and women in the northern city of Rasht. (The state-run [Rokna](#) news agency - May 20, 2018)
- 10 activists from Azerbaijan northwest of Iran, were arrested in the city of Naqqadeh. These individuals have had no phone calls with their family members in the first days.

## Prisoners

At least 16 prisoners had to go on hunger strike to have their rights recognized under harsh prison conditions. Eight Ahwazi Arab detainees who had been arrested during the protests over the state TV insult, staged a hunger strike to protest high bailbonds set for them.

- It is for several days that eight people arrested in Khozestan's peaceful demonstrations have gone on hunger strike to protest prison's dire conditions and heavy bails. They are: Adeg Obayavi-poor, 25; Mehdi Majdi Obaydavi, Bagher Obaydavi, Bashir Tamimi, Hamzeh Saedi, Mohammad Shakhi, Ali Shakhi and Ahmad Afri, 29. These people are from city of Hamidieh and are arrested because they are Sunnis. They have been kept in Shayban Prison in Ahwaz for 10 months under custody without their files being referred to court. Their detention is constantly extended.
- Political [prisoner Soheil Arabi](#), held in the great Tehran Penitentiary has been on hunger strike for nearly one month while deprived of any visits. He is protesting harsh prison conditions and his illegal detention in a ward where dangerous criminals are held which violated Iran's own regulations on the principle of separation of crimes. The mother of political prisoner waited five hours Monday, to be able to visit her son, only to be told he is banned from prison visits.
- In protest to the decision of Rajaie Shahr prison's observing judge as not to endorse a leave for Ali Ashraf Parvaneh, serving for 18 years, he went on hunger strike on Tuesday, May 15, 2018. Mr. Parvaneh was arrested in 1999 on charge of armed robbery. He was first condemned to death and then it changed to 29.5 years' imprisonment. He said about his charge: "I didn't use any gun in the robbery. Because we live in Kurdish regions and everybody keeps a gun at his house, when I was detained they found my gun and then the agents changed my case to armed robbery."
- Iranian teacher trade unionist Esmail Abdi staged a 23-day hunger strike protesting what he calls the Iranian Judiciary's "arbitrary and illegal rulings" and "widespread violation of the rights of teachers and workers in Iran."
- Rohollah Mardani, a student from Tehran University and a teacher, staged a 27-day hunger strike in protest to his detention and his case not being attended to.
- Two brothers, Davoud and Baha-o-Din Ghassemzadeh, started a hunger strike on May 9 protesting harsh prison conditions and the undetermined state of their case. Davoud suffers severe spinal cord injury and kidney disease.
- Prison guards of The Great Tehran Penitentiary severely beat and broke the knee and shoulder of a young inmate, Morteza Chalehkesh on the pretext of breaking from the prison.
- [Maedeh Shabani-Nejad](#), 15, who was arrested in January for writing nationalistic and epic poetry in Arabic, remains in detention in Sepidar Prison of Ahwaz, southwestern Iran, because her family does not afford to pay the 350million-touman bail set for her release. Born in 2002, Ma'edeh Shabani-Nejad (Amouri) is a freshman at Reyhaneh High School in Abadan and is a brilliant student. She writes and publishes them on social media. The first time, Ms. Shabani was arrested was on October 17, 2017, when she was freed on bail after completion of her interrogations. The second time, she was arrested in her uncle's house in Ahwaz on January 25, 2018, by the IRGC's Department of Intelligence and transferred to the IRGC detention center. It was reported in late April that she has suffered GI hemorrhage and stomach ache under interrogation.

## Prisons

The high number of prisoners is just one of the consequences of 40 years of the regime's destructive policies. The state-run Jamaran Website reported on May 16, 2018, that 52 persons are imprisoned every hour. Hassan Moussavi Chelak, the head of Iran Social Aids Association, recently said that 459,666 inmates have been added to the prisons' population in 2017, "this means that 52 persons have been entering prisons every hour." Before that he had cited that increase in number of prisoners is a sign of "deteriorating moral values". He has said: "15 million judicial files show weakness of social morale in Iran."

Nevertheless, this figure must be considered as minimum due to lack of transparency of official sources disseminating the information on the arrests.

At'hareh Nejadi, President's deputy in programing and coordinating women and family affairs said: "Based on visits we had from country's prison(s), women are not under proper conditions in jails. Unfortunately, mothers who have committed unintentional crimes are in jail with their small children. Children who only remember life as inside the prison walls..."

About the average age of women according to her visits she said: "By the existing information, the average age was between 17 and 37. Of course there were also elderly women too." (The state-run [IRNA](#) news agency- May 5, 2018)

Asqar Jahangir, the head of Prisons Organization said: "We have about 18,000 prisoners related to financial crimes who are jailed for unintentional crimes. These inmates have financial convictions like they have written promissory notes or have been a surety and not being able to pay the money.

He added: "Also there are inmates who have had accidents in their workshops, written a NSF check, and not paid the alimony or dowry. The number of dowry cases are very high... "We have 3000 prisoners because of dowry from which 466 cases can be freed by paying less than 10 gold coins but because they cannot pay it, they are still in jail," he said. (The state-run [ISNA](#) news agency- May 17, 2018)

Asqar Jahangir pointed at the result of a questionnaire and said: "73% of prisoners have said that poverty is the reason for their imprisonment". "43% of prisoners are illiterate and suffer from cultural poverty. 17% of them are jailed for dangerous behaviors," he added. (The state-run [Mehr](#) news agency- May 22, 2018)

Mohammad Ali Qhasedi, the head justice for Ardebil Province (in northwest of Iran) said: "Currently the province's jails confine 770 prisoners sentenced for financial crimes. From this number 245 are there for not paying dowry, 78 for not paying alimony and 436 for other issues". "Unfortunately the number of financial convicts are more and there are 35,000 of them whose files are under scrutiny in different judicial systems," he cited. (The state-run [ILNA](#) news agency- May 23, 2018)

## Persecution of religious minorities



- On Friday May 4, 2018, security agents in Kerman prevented people to enter the mosque for Friday Praying at Jamaled-in-Asad Abadi neighborhood. The imam of the prayer, Molavi Abdolhakim Kord is from Baloch minority. (Baloch Activists Campaign- May 4, 2018)

- Hadi Salehi, a Sunni prisoner at Saghez Prison (northeast of Iran) was exiled. Faez Choopani the other Sunni prisoner of this prison was also exiled to city of Baneh. Hadi Salehi will serve

23 years and Faez Choopani six years. The Iranian regime has accused them of "acting against the national security" but these prisoners emphasized that they have just advertised for their religious beliefs.

- Yaresan women are held in deplorable conditions in the Qarchak Prison in Varamin, recently published reports from Iran say. Sepideh Moradi, Sima Entesari, Shima Entessari, Avisha Jalaeddin, Shokoufeh Yadollahi, Maryam Farsiani, Nazill Noori, Maryam Barakouhi, Elham Ahmadi and Sedigheh Safabakht have been detained since February 20, 2018, in Qarchak Prison under inhuman conditions. Ms. Sepideh Moradi suffered injuries in the hand, elbow and fingers while being arrested during the Yaresan protest in Tehran. Her legs got burnt due to security forces' use of tear gas, the scars of which still remain after three months. Ms. Moradi has been denied medical care. At the same time, these women are under pressure for their weekly visitations. Ms. Avisha Jalaeddin was deprived of visiting her young son. Prison authorities hardly accept the items provided for these women by their families and they are forced to buy their needed items at prices two to three times higher from the prison's store.



- On Friday, May 11, 2018, [Mehرداد Heyrani](#), a [Baha'i citizen residing](#) in Tehran was arrested and transferred to an unknown location by intelligence agents after his residence was searched and his personal belongings such as computer and religious books were confiscated. Announcing this news, an informed source said: "Mr. Heyrani was first arrested in his friend's house in Fardis (neighborhood) in city of Karaj by intelligence agents and was then taken to his home. While searching the house they confiscated his personal belongings including religious books and computer... and then he was

transferred to an unknown location."

## Basic rights



Two members of the Iranian regime's so-called parliament have recently raised alarm bells regarding food shortages in four of the country's provinces. 75 percent of Sistan & Baluchistan Province in southeast Iran are living in poverty, especially food shortages. (The state-run [ILNA](#) news agency – May 27, 2018)

"Sistan & Baluchistan Province ranks as the worst such province, followed by Hormozgan, Bushehr and South Khorasan," according to Mohammad Amini Fard, a representative from Sistan & Baluchistan in the regime's parliament.

"Sistan & Baluchistan Province ranks very low regarding development and unjust wealth distribution, and unfortunately due to the lack of natural resources and an 18-year drought, the province is facing an enormous food shortage. This is why villagers have migrated to the outskirts of cities such as Zabol, Zahedan and Chabahar," he said.



University studies show the provincial

population's is lower in height and weight in comparison to the country's averages, Amini Fard continued.

Alim Yar Mohammadi, a parliament member from Zahedan, highlighted the grave circumstances of 75 percent of the province's population grasping with food poverty.

"The people of this province's villages don't have adequate drinking water or even bread. By any standards they are living in very poor conditions," he said.

"This province is home to all kinds of illnesses and this cannot be denied. Even in the city of Zahedan more than 350,000 people lack adequate running water and water trucks provide for many parts of the city," Mohammadi added.

"When the people of this province don't enjoy adequate food supplies, it is highly likely people will start eating the meat of animals such as cats and crows. Various villages in the south near Chabahar are witnessing far worse conditions," he continued.

The debate over the livelihoods of the people in this province was followed after a few days ago when Hassan Shamshadi, a journalist of IRIB with a post on his Instagram page, published a photo mentioning: "What you see here is the food of a family. What do you think the food they are eating? contents? This family and many other families are eating cat's meat."