

This Newsletter prepared by National Independent Institution of Iran for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights contains information on the Commission's highlights at the national and international level, as well as its events and initiatives on all human rights related issues.

## Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission



کمیسیون حقوق بشر اسلامی ایران  
Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission  
مجلس مشورۃ الامانة الاسلامیة فی ایران

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### Highlight Report

The month of Moharram (in tenth of which the third Shiite Imam Hussein was martyred along with 72 of his faithful followers about 14 hundred years ago), has a great significance in Iran where an overwhelming majority of the population is Shiite. In this month, everything and every action is influenced by the general atmosphere prevailing in the country. For this reason, all activities and programs during the period mentioned above were overshadowed by the Moharram special rituals. There was only one particular point about the period and it was the special preparations made by those opposing the results of the latest presidential elections in Iran who embarked on protests during the period especially on the day of Ashura (which is the most significant day of the massive public mourning rituals on the streets), resulting in extensive clashes which claimed the lives of a number of citizens and injury and arrest of many others. The incidents of the day were so sad that both sides of clashes –the government and the opponents of the results of the presidential elections – largely focused on it, producing extensive analyses and commendatory on them. The official authorities and the people sharing views and supporting them, described the Ashura (December 27, 2009) incidents as offensive to religious beliefs and sanctities, saying they were attempts to promote anarchism based on programs and guidance of political powers opposing Islam and the political system in Iran. The opponents, too, said what happened on the day was a severe case of disrespect to the public, terming it as “bloody Ashura”. Various videos and images were published of the incidents by foreign media and press. Following the incident of the



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day, just a few days later (December Dey 9, 1388 according to Iranian Tehran and other cities of the coun- authorities and in protest to the per- of the election results. Officials lat- said the day will be registered in with judiciary officials announcing demands of the people and will deal rioters. After the Ashura incidents, on the streets, a great number of were also arrested and detained in resulting in stricter and more se- over the country especially in me- atmosphere which entailed calls for was basically one of the places which of different human rights issues so on its mandate. Corresponding with inform them of the existing concerns ation, the public announcement of following up, in a random basis, vari- by the Commission. Likewise, ana- ent aspects of incidents were among IHRC regarding the most important During the same period, very frank the Central Office and provincial branches of the IHRC in addition to the steps taken to guarantee human rights in practice. However, the fact could not be ignored that the IHRC, due to the general atmosphere prevailing the coun- try because of the above-mentioned political and social developments, was unable to fully conduct its theoretical and promotional programs. The present report outlines different activities of the IHRC. It is hoped that the atmosphere in Iran will improve to a more open and more tolerating one in the coming weeks so that the recommendations offered by the IHRC on the rights of the public and rule of law and avoiding violence gets a better chance of implementation.



30, 2009 corresponding with calendar) rallies were held in try in support of the official formance of the opponents er on praised the rallies and Iranian National Calendar that they have heard the real even more strongly with the in addition to those arrested political and social activists prisons, naturally enough, vere security conditions all tropolis. In such an excited radical demands, the IHRC were regarded at the center that it could effectively carry related judicial authorities to regarding human rights situ- the concerns alongside with ous complaints were received lyzing and registering differ- the measures taken by the incident of the past month. attempts were made both by

## Human Rights Monitoring

As a regular procedure with the IHRC, in the past four weeks, internal and external monitoring units continued to monitor human rights situation on a daily and continuous basis. They examined and registered hundreds of reports and news items. These are available in the form of CD to all interested in the report on the internal monitoring of human rights situation based on the 16 selected human rights priorities. The bunch of reports and claims publicly published on the cases of violation or observ- ing of human rights in Iran which as been considered by the internal monitoring unit are regularly published on the IHRC website. Separate reports have also been compiled by the external monitoring unit regarding human rights situation in five world regions (Europe-America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific, Africa and Islamic-Arab countries) for each and every country which are available in the IHRC bookstore. During the time, a number of reports considered by the internal monitoring unit were handed to the IHRC Legal Unit so that they are followed-up like the written complaints received by the public. The majority of the news and reports received pertain to Ashura incident and the arrests following it. To follow-up the issue, the Legal Unit of Commission embarked on



corresponding with the judiciary officials one of which, dated Dec, 28, 2009, was addressed to Tehran Province's Chief of Justice. Based on the news pieces published in IHRC website on the same day, parts of the letter read:

“Following Ashura incidents in Tehran and a number of provincial cities, the IHRC Legal Unit – in a letter – extended condolences on the sad period of mourning for the martyred third Shiite Imam and while stressing the importance of observing Islamic sanctities and rituals, voiced concern on the incidents which took place and warned against its numerous diverse consequences from the human rights viewpoint. The letter, referring to the bitter incidents during the past few months after the last presidential elections, noted that a number of citizens have been killed, wounded or arrested and damage has been inflicted on public and private assets. It stressed that the developments received diverse, and even in some cases conflicting, coverage and even there were different accounts of the number of those killed during Ashura till the next afternoon. The letter also said: at the present juncture, the true lovers of the country and those who have the obsession of observing religious standards and the rights of human beings and, based on Quranic teachings, strongly believe that saving the life of a single human being is as precious and valuable act as saving the who humanity, that even the most minor cases of oppression and hegemony should be totally avoided and that what is stated in the third chapter of Iranian Constitution on the rights of the nation is not part of a fable story but rather a binding legal commitment to totally observed, particularly by people in power. The concern has become even more urgent now that what measures and in what manners the highest legal authority of the province, as the official source for restoring public rights (according to Article 156 of the Constitution) is undertaking its duties to comfort the society and ensure it that those in charge of implementation of justice are committed to guarantying and safeguarding the rights of people rather than racing for bringing people before courts, detaining them and executing verdicts. (Undoubtedly, staging trials and executing verdicts on those who have violated the rights of people is a natural and justified demand from the judiciary in due manner for administration of justice.)

Another part of the IHRC's three-page letter to Chief Justice of Tehran Province read:

“You are presently subject to this question posed by many of concerned and sympathetic law experts that why measures you have taken to stop the present developments? Have you explained to relevant officials that the most effective way to stop the present state of affairs was to show more respect to people and rule of law and refraining from using provoking and too exciting literature and conducts? Have you ever thought of making better use of the effective roles independent popular institutes, specially those which have the advantage of working with country's distinguished law experts, and seek advice from them in a more frank and consistent to gain the trust of the public by asking them to offer reports to the public so that the gaps are not filled by alien voices who have no faith in the very principles of the system in this country?

**A**t the closing part of the letter, having referred to news on some developments taken place from morning till noon on December 28, 2009 including the ones on the number of newly-arrested people, the number of wounded people and ....which were all significant cases from the viewpoint of citizens' rights. That is why the board to monitor and follow up the citizen rights of the Tehran Province Justice Department is naturally expected to most earnestly investigate different aspects of the issue so that law enforcement Officers and those who are sometime referred to as self-ruled forces are not able to act against laws and the public order and security is maintained by fully observing the human rights.

**T**he letter ended hoping for fresh strategies and tactics by Judiciary, law enforcement and security officials as well as personalities who have an influential role in national level soon so that the human, material and spiritual resources of the country are protected and safeguarded through the present critical conditions and no one feels ashamed before the Holy God as well as the history of the country for his/her unwise and improper behaviors.”



As a routine job, the Legal Unit of the Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission received a number of complaints during the past month in addition to the follow ups it made in regards with the social and political developments in the country from a human rights perspective. A few of such cases follow:

- A complaint letter by father of Payam Lotfi from the city of Shiraz regarding the rights of his son throughout the criminal procedures;
- Following up reports on certain incidents taken place in Mashhad Azad University;
- A complaint letter by Chanqiz Aqakhani from Tehran on his problems with municipality and the claim that his right for possession has been violated;
- A complaint letter by mother of Kamran Asa on the arrest of his son, calling for observing his human rights;
- A complaint letter by Ms. Havva Eftekhari on the legal procedure pertaining to her family problems, calling for legal counseling;
- A complaint letter by Mohammad Shahkarami from one of Tehran province towns who was asking for financial support;
- A telephone call from a Cameron national from Evin Prison who was asking for observing of his human rights throughout the legal procedure pertaining to accusations of trafficking;
- A complaint letter by Ms. Ma'asoume Touraji from the city of Sanandaj calling for financial supports;
- A complaint letter by Hajizadeh family from the city of Qazvin, calling for more precise investigations of the murder case of their son by judiciary officials.

## Events

A number of public programs were organized and held by the Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission both in Tehran and other provinces either independently or in cooperation with other organizations, the titles of which include:

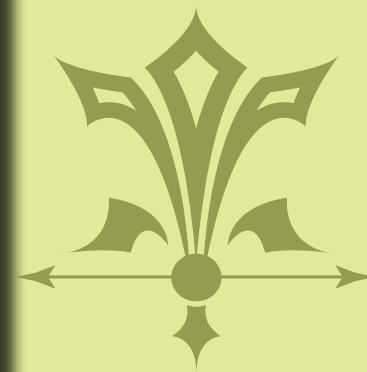
- Scientific and Expert Gathering on Family (Tabriz -Dec 23, 2009):

Following coordination with Office No. 7 and in cooperation with local organizations in the province of East Azarbaijan the Nationwide Gathering on Family Law was hold in Tabriz Dec 23, 2009. In addition to 88 articles received, university professors and scholars from various provincial Offices including those sent from Tehran Office delivered speeches to the events which were warmly received by media and press. Writers of best articles were awarded at the end of the gathering.



- Gathering on “a Review of the Rights of Families of the Accused, Convicted and Detainees in the Society” (Tabriz - Jan., 17, 2010):

The scientific-promotional gathering in the “Republic Hall” in the city of Tabriz focusing on the rights of families of detainees in national and international law, role of police and law enforcement officers in safeguarding rights of families of the accused, rights of families of arrested people throughout the follow up and judicial prosecution and finally the duties of governments in providing for the families of detainees.



- Scientific Panel on “Legal Aspects and Outcomes of Hate Speech from the Viewpoint of International Human Rights and Islamic Thought” (Central Office Jan., 17, 2010):



The panel was organized following some extreme cases of hate speech in the country with participation of law experts and scholars of Islamic sciences in the Central Office. It explored different aspects of the issue in Islamic thought, its conceptual aspects from the legal viewpoint, prohibition on hate speech in the international human rights, aspects of the issue in Iran’s legal system and ways to deal with it. The core ideas introduced during discussion were as a routine procedure published by “Fighq and Law” desk of ISNA news agency.

- Seminar on “Legal Aspects of Raising the Issue of Iran’s Demand for Compensations from Foreign Aggressors in the Past Century” (Central Office - Jan., 19, 2010):

A number of law professors and experts specializing in international issues, examined the issue - which was first raised by Iranian president – from the viewpoint of international law. The gathering, the core ideas of which was published by ISNA news agency, examined the concept of compensation in domestic laws as well as international law, the concept of aggression, tools and means of demanding compensations in both national and international levels and the role of non-governmental organizations in this regard. The results of discussion raised in the gathering are also useful for the organizations and institutes working on the issue and it was for the same reason that the IHRC received frequent requests that the views and ideas of the participating scholars be speedily sent to a special committee set up in presidential Office. Since the gathering was unable to fully examine the issue, a second session is to follow in the Central Office the report on which will be available next month.



## Research

As a routine work in the IHRC, a number of theoretical works were undertaken, some of which were completed. Highlights include:

- Compiling of a special brochure by the law working group titled "A Review of the Third Generation of Human Rights, Aspects of the Right of Self Determination and Aspects of Property Right and Common Heritage which is due to be used as part of the bunch of general education stuff by the Commission in different parts of the country.
- Continuing translation of a book of child labor from English to Persian which will be completed soon.
- Starting editing of a series of translated articles on the rights of solidarity which will hopefully published as a book soon.
- Compiling of a scholarly study on providing fair trial in light of justice-based or security-based approaches by humanitarian law working group as a case study which available to all in the IHRC website.
- The Research Committee, too, in the past two months considered two issues in two separate sessions with a number of distinguished law professors: "need for law experts to exchange views on ways out of prevailing situation in the country in regards with restrictions on human rights" and "evaluating regulations set by the chief justice referred to as the examples of criminal content of the law on computer-related offenses".
- Presenting of an article by one of the university professors working with the IHRC titled "Rights of Vulnerable People" to be published in the Iranian Human Rights Journal.
- Compiling of an article titled "Role of Religions in Expanding Peace: A Case Study by Armenian Elite" by one of IHRC's honorary colleagues who belongs to Iran's Christian minority. The material is available to all on the IHRC website.
- Presenting of an article by one of the university professors working with the IHRC titled "A Comparative Study of Laws and Legal Procedures in Muslim Countries in Regards with Articles 1 & 37 of Convention on the Rights of the Child" to be published on the Iranian Human Rights Journal.
- Translation of newsletters corresponding with the two previous months into Arabic and English for use of international readers.
- Translation of a part of a research article on rights of solidarity from the point of view of Islam and international humanitarian laws, the full translation of will be probably completed next month.
- Compiling of an article by the IHRC humanitarian law working group titled "solving the normal contradictories between international human rights and international humanitarian laws with focus on commitment for fair trial in domestic armed conflicts" to be published in Iranian Human Rights Journal.
- Compiling of an article by the IHRC Research Department on aspects of rights to privacy to be published in the section dedicated to "case studies" on IHRC website.



## Regional Offices

As is customary with the IHRC, during the past month, too, it embarked on various activities to utilize potentials of provincial Offices in the best manner possible in advancing human rights objectives. Each of these Offices carried out certain activities according to its capabilities in the past four weeks some of which follow (details of activities of provincial Offices are available in the IHRC website in Persian. Scientific gatherings or programs carried out in provincial in a large scale were already mentioned above and will not repeat to save time):

- A representative was dispatched to the regional Office No 2 based in the city of Shiraz from the Central Office to examine its performance. After two days of work there, the representative concluded that the Office really needed to work harder to meet the standards set by the Commission's department for contributions and provincial Offices. The Office later said it was making necessary arrangements for a gathering on correcting consumption styles and human rights in cooperation with the Red Cross representative Office in Iran. From among other activities by the same Office could be cited the compiling of a brochure on ethical lesions of Ashura from a human rights perspective, carrying out of some charity work for a number of affiliated organizations and individuals, participation of a number of Office members in a two-day workshop jointly organized by the Red Cross and the Red Crescent on humanitarian rights and compiling projects, establishing interactions with a number local organization to start joint cooperation and providing information on the set of stamps printed on human rights issues.

- Office No. 7 carried out a number of various activities during the past month including: hosting advisor to education minister and the ministry director general for women's affairs, hosting one of the province's former parliament members, holding a ceremony to pay tribute to active human rights assistants working with the regional Office, corresponding with a provincial company to get the car it had promised to present to the Office and keeping up the Office's news website (basharnews) and weblog which was regularly updated with the latest domestic and international news on human rights situation and the IHRC activities



- Central Office took the necessary procedures to hire a theological sciences student for Office No 5 who would be familiar with Islamic issues and finally managed to get such a person to start work for a test period. Preparations were also made the second meeting on theories on “requirements for offering a universal theory on Islam and human rights” as a joint project with the Research Center for Islamic Sciences and Culture in the first day of the coming month.

- Office No. 1 based in the city of Kermanshah urgently worked on the issue of forming its board of trustees and solving the problem of its headquarter. It is decided that the Office be moved to another province if the problem fails to solve.

- Office No. 6 based in Semnan province had a number of activities including: interaction with a number of local organizations for joint projects, assigning representatives in three of provincial cities to work as the IHRC representative, making necessary coordination with a number of physicians to offer charity work for the needy people, inspecting a rehabilitation center in the city of Damghan, setting up a photo exhibition, holding a number of education and special gathering in IHRC Office and disseminating information on the IHRC activities in cities covered by the Office.



## Other Activities



During the past month, a number of other activities were also carried out by the Commission, the highlights of which include:

- The latest volume of expert bulletin on rights of women and children in international arena which focused on theoretical issues raised during the summer was published.

- A book titled “Ten Papers” on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was sent to the publisher and will be available soon.

- Two new bulletins, namely “Economic, Social and Cultural Rights” and “Human Rights and Islamic Dialogue in the Contemporary World”, which were published late last month, were distributed in a number of provinces this month.

- The informatics department in the IHRC did the final designing work on news bulletins of the past two months, put it up in the Commission’s website and sent them to special recipients.

- An IHRC representative participated in a meeting in President’s Office upon an earlier invitation to explore legal aspects of Iran’s demands for compensations for the damaged inflicted by foreign states to the country in the past century and offer the Commission’s views on the issue.

- The IHRC self-sufficiency department took measures throughout the country to sell a special stamp on human rights and a book relating to it.

- An IHRC representative took part in a two-day academic gathering on “Women’s Rights in Legal Procedures” which was held by Tehran Prosecutor’s Office, human rights Office of the judiciary and the organization to defend victims of violence with participation of a number of foreign guests at the venue of foreign Ministry’s Office for Political Studies.

- Following a request by UNESCO Chair of Human Rights, Peace and Democracy at Shahid Beheshti University calling on the IHRC to contribute in a scientific gathering in March to review election laws, the Research Committee announced it will offer its views on reviewing Iran’s election laws and its basics as an article to be read to the gathering.

## Upcoming Works & Events



The IHRC will be working on a multitude of programs for future, including:

- Second session of theories on Islam and human rights slated for January 21, 2010;
- Second meeting on “Exploring Legal Aspects of Raising the Issue of Iran’s Demand for Compensations from Foreign Aggressors in the Past Century” dated for January 26, 2010;
- Examining the “Bill on Five-year Plan” presented to the parliament by government from a human rights perspective;
- Beginning a series of expert meeting on ethics and human rights in IHRC Office in the city of Qom.
- Continuing arrangements for the next meeting in the city of Qom on human rights theories focusing on new topics with participation of new speakers and critics;
- Conducting a number of special programs in provinces on the occasion of victory anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in country in 1979.



## Newsletter Survey

1. What is your overall opinion of the format and layout and also the content of the Newsletter?
2. Did you find this Newsletter helpful in keeping you up to date about coming events?
3. Do you have any additional suggestions or comments for being included in the future Issues? What additional feedback or suggestions do you have about the Newsletter?
4. What would you like to see more or less of in future versions of the Newsletter? Which section of the Newsletter did you find to be the most valuable?
5. Would you like to exchange your new publications with the Commission?
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