

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
لجنة حقوق الانسان الاسلامية في ايران

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Highlight Report

During the past Iranian month of Mordad (June, 15 –August, 15), the public opinion in Iranian society was focusing on the issue of a defendant's right for defense as a major topic and demand of the day. Naturally enough, the Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), too, took various measures, according to its mandate and capacities, to clarify the issue both in terms of theory and practice. Persistent work was done to remove the concerns on the part of Iranian Bar Associations nationwide which was created by a directive issued by the Head of Judiciary and would negatively affect their independency. A positive result was gained which entailed the official nullifying of the directive. Corresponding with the responsible legal authorities to ensure the accused's right to defense for those who were arrested during incidents following the elections in Iran, hearing the reports and protests by a large number of the families of people arrested in post-election events to ensure they enjoy their rights to defense and other human rights, making public and media announcements on the accused's right to defense and fair trial, compiling a number of research reports on the above-mentioned issues, running a workshop for the judges on the issue of fair trial and distributing expert articles on different issues were among the measures taken by the IHRC in the past few weeks. There are still some follow ups being underway the results of which will become apparent within the next month.

In addition to all these and given the fact that based on a last year ratification by the Organization Of the Islamic Conference (OIC) which designated August, 15 as the Day of Islamic Human Rights and Human Dignity, the IHRC, within the past month, conducted various programs to observe the occasion. The IHRC saw this as a chance to elaborate on the issue of human rights and the commitments of the Islamic states to remove concerns in this area and make theoretical productions. The Islamic states



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could use this occasion either as an excuse to justify their own performances in the area of human rights by hiding themselves behind the Islamic mottos and rich Islamic culture to oppose other cultures and civilizations or use it as a good chance to revive the Islamic teachings on the human rights. They should use the occasion to understand the true essence of divine values and try to combine the Islamic viewpoints on the issue of human rights with the international commitments which are accepted by all lovers of peace and seekers of truth so that the practical ways of improving human rights situations among nations are recognized till the Islamic nations, in the first place, and then the whole world community, realizes that even based on the Islamic Human Rights Declaration there is a long list of stated human rights available for them which the Islamic countries are bound to observe. Because now, they have no longer excuses to say that human rights is the product of western culture or just because some political powers are using it as a tool in service of their own goals, then we, too, could afford to ignore the human rights. In fact, highlighting the Islamic Human Rights Declaration and the demands made on it by the Islamic nations, apart from enjoying an ideological and faith-oriented aspects, will add to the international commitments of the Islamic governments. It would be natural that after that will come the phase of frank debates and close investigations of the contents of the Islamic Human Rights Declaration to make clear what flaws and shortcomings— besides its strong points – the Declaration is suffering from so that the Islamic states start their efforts to remove them. The point here is that the divine religions all have clearly emphasized on the peace, justice, spiritually and people's human rights and the problems existing in these regards stem either from the misconceptions those claiming to support them carry in this regard or because the followers of these religions have failed to act correctly to these sublime teachings in practice. Even in certain cases, they have committed wrongdoings under the cover of observing sacred rules and practicing the values. The Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission has been trying to make use of all resources and capacities of the world community based on legal and expert methodology, to enhance position of human being in contemporary world and improve the level of human rights observance.

Human Rights Monitoring

Different sections in the IHRC which are in charge of monitoring human rights situation both in and out of the country, have been recording hundreds of cases and compiling reports as part of their daily route of work during the past month. Those interested in having these records and reports on domestic issues which are compiled under 16 main categories could get them on CDs from the IHRC departments or study a bulk of information gathered from domestic media and press on the IHRC website. As for the performance of the section which monitors human rights in foreign countries, there are five complete reports on the human rights situation in five world regions namely Europe, the US, the Latin America, Africa, Australia and Islamic-Arab states. These records have been

focusing on each single country in the each region. The reports are available in the sale department. During the same period, many of the cases included in the reports on domestic human rights observance have also been referred to the legal department for further investigations. Most of these included cases which concerned those arrested in recent events and the claims put forward by them which required close inspections through the legal authorities. To this end, the legal department of the Commission, apart from listening to the vocal complaints of the families of arrested people or receiving their written cases, proposed a group meeting for them with participation of country's most distinguished lawyers which was held in July 27. In the meeting, families of many arrested people including the well-known political figures were able to voice their protests, criticism and legal demands. Following the meeting, Secretary of the Commission, in an interview with the Iran's Students News Agency (ISNA) recounted the points put forward with the families of the arrested people, stressing that the IHRC will do its best to follow up the points through legal channels. As for the court hearing sessions held for some of those accused of involvement in



recent post-elections events, the IHRC made fact finding investigations with the help of lawyers and other people related to the cases and also reflected its concerns to the high judicial authorities about the right to defense of accused people and the necessity of respect to standards of fair trial. In another short interview with ISNA in October 1, the evening of the same day when the first court hearing session for the arrested people was held in Tehran, the IHRC made its views and stances on the issue clear to all. In the interview it was announced that: “the procedure of fair judicial examination is today enjoying a clear-cut definition world wide, both in terms of the phases of probing and the characteristics of each phase and the credibility of the courts hearing the cases, the ways through which the cases and files were referred to the judiciary, both in terms of the legal rights of the defendants and tens of other issues all or most of which have already been included in the Iranian Constitution and the Criminal Law. One of the most important part of the judicial examination of cases which is in compliance of Islamic laws and regulations and is simultaneously considered as fair in contemporary global concepts is the observance of the defense rights of defendants. If a court is hold that in which the lawyer or lawyers supposed to defend the accused people have not been able to read the contents of the files to be able to work out the most appropriate way to defend their clients or the defendant/defendants have not been able to meet with their lawyers to get the best possible defense or they have not access to the needed laws and regulations, then one of the most basic components of a fair trial will be missing and the judicial monitoring bodies like the judges disciplinary court will be responsible for taking necessary measures to ensure that no right of any people is violated and the character of the judiciary system as a whole and the country is not tarnished...”

During the period to which this newsletter is referring, the automatic answering machines in the IHRC legal clinics both in the central office and provincial branches were also active. Apart from numerous legal counseling’s offered, a number of the reports received required special legal follow ups including a case reported from Tabriz prison and one from Shiraz prison which instantly followed up through contacts with related provincial judicial officials and it was made clear whether they were reliable ones in terms that some cases of human rights violations had really occurred or not.

In the section in charge of foreign monitoring, during the same period, a number of reports and cases were also accumulated which required follow ups and correspondence with different countries for which needed measures were taken.

Correspondence with the Iraqi officials about the inappropriate treatment of Iranian nationals, with Slovak officials about the worrying news on Hungarian-speaking minority living there, with Belgian officials about the violation of the rights of Muslims in that country, with Denmark about imposing of some unacceptable restrictions on Muslim women in army forces there are only a few cases of such attempts.



Events

Quite a remarkable number of academic, research and promotional gatherings were held in the past four weeks by the central office or in provincial branches which the most significant of them include:

- **Contribution to the Educational and Training Workshop on Children’s Rights** (July, 30, in Semnan province); two people were dispatched from the central office to deliver lectures and instruct the workshop which was held by the IHRC’s No. 6 regional office in coordination with the bodies sponsoring a gathering on children’s rights.

- **Research-educational program on “Supporting Rights of the Vulnerable Groups in Human Rights Standards”** (August, 6-Isfahan): the program was held in “Iran-e Farda Research Center” which acts as the IHRC temporary representative office in the province. The IHRC Secretary together with a member of Tehran University Faculty of Law took part in the event which focused on ways of supporting vulnerable groups in international human rights standards and the legal system of Iran and Islam. Representatives of a number of non-governmental organizations, legal and economic experts and representatives of some of province’s media and press also attended the gathering.

- **The research meeting on advancement of human rights in Islamic states, capacities and challenges** (August, 5 – Kermanshah), which was simultaneous with the “Islamic Human Rights Day”, was held by the IHRC’s No. 1 regional office in coordination with some of local organizations like the justice office and the provincial Bar Association. Several scholars dispatched from the central office including the deputy of Tehran University Law Department and a Supreme Court judge, delivered speeches in it. Like other similar events held on the occasion, a number of pamphlets were also distributed among participants.

- **The research meeting on “Advancement of Human Rights and the Obligations of Islamic States”** (August, 5- Rasht) which was held by the IHRC’s No. 3 regional office in coordination with the central office and the province’s justice department on the occasion of Islamic Human Rights Day. The central office dispatched a scholar specializing on Islamic rights to the events from the city of Qom. The above-mentioned speaker also took part in an interview with the provincial IRIB office. A number of pamphlets were also distributed among participants.



- **The research gathering on “human rights in Islam and the human dignity”** (August 10, Tabriz) which was held by the IHRC’s No. 7 regional office in coordination with the central office and a number of provincial bodies like the Islamic Azad University at the site of the same university. Several speakers delivered speeches in the gathering, including one of



the country’s distinguished law professors who was dispatched from the central office. The above-mentioned scholar also took part in an interview with the local press and media on the situation of citizens’ judicial security.

- **The research meeting on “Advancement of Human Rights and the Human Dignity from an Islamic Viewpoint”** (August, 10- Pakdasht) which was held by the IHRC’s No 4 regional office in coordination with the local justice department, city council and municipality on the occasion of Islamic human rights day. Two distinguished law instructors were dispatched to speak in the event from the central office. A number of local officials, too, participated in the event and a special report by the IHRC on the occasion was also distributed.

- **Research-education workshop on “Fair Trial and Human Rights”** (August, 13- Tabriz) which was



due to be held by the IHRC's No 7 regional offices several weeks ago but was postponed. It was held in coordination with the provincial justice department and the distinguished law expert dispatched from Tehran was in charge of the workshop. Pamphlets and papers on such issues as international standards for the independency of judges, independence of lawyers and attorneys, ways to treat prisoners, obligations and duties of – in observing human rights prepared by the central office were distributed among participants.

- **Research panel on “Capacities and Challenges Existing in Islamic States for Implementation of the Contents of the Islamic Human Rights Declaration”** (August, 4- central office) which was held on the occasion of the Day of Islamic Human Rights and Human Dignity as part of routine gatherings arranged by the IHRC with participation of a number of country's most skilled scholars and law experts. The panel considered such questions as “why and due to what factors did the Islamic states, who had already signed such international documents as the Universal Human Rights Declaration and International Conventions on civil and political rights and also economic, social and cultural rights embarked on compiling Cairo Declaration? Have they been successful so far in implementing it? What is to be done if contradictions arise in implementing the Cairo declaration and the international documents? To what extent has the content of Cairo Declaration influenced the international legal systems of the Islamic countries? And finally, what roles have NGOs and universities are supposed to play in this regard?

- **Some other “Symbolic Programs to Introduce and Promote Humanitarian Concepts in two Public Gardens”** (Shiraz- August, 5) in which educational material was distributed among the public on the human rights and children were asked to do paintings and drawings to express their ideas about peace and human rights.



Research

1. In recent few weeks, the IHRC has been conducting several theoretical projects as part of its routine activities the highlights of which are:
2. Compiling of an expert report on “Considerations about Compulsory Sterilization of Sexual Criminals from the Point of View of Fair Trial and International Human Rights Standards”
3. Compiling of an expert report on “Internet in Iran from the point of view of Human Rights Standards “
4. Final editing on the contents of “News Bulletin on Economic, Social and Cultural rights”
5. Compiling of an expert report on the rights of families of arrested people from the human rights point of view
6. Translation of a 50-page, internationally-recognized document on the rights of elderly people
7. Translation of the newsletter published by the IHRC public affairs department for June, 15-July, 15 into English and Arabic for international access
8. Compiling of a concise report on the articles in the latest issue of the periodical published by the International Red Cross
9. Compiling of a concise report containing legal considerations about the bloody developments in China's Muslim-dominated region from the point of view of humanitarian laws
10. Expansion of the contents of the second news bulletin on “Islamophobia”, publishing and distributing it
11. Compiling of a scientific report on the theoretical aspects of the Islamic Human Rights Day and Human Dignity which was both distributed nationwide and published for the public access.
12. Translation of a detailed report by the United Nations' High Commissioner on the national institutions which was just recently published upon the completion of questionnaires by the national institutions worldwide
13. Compiling of a scientific report by the IHRC International Affairs Department to the

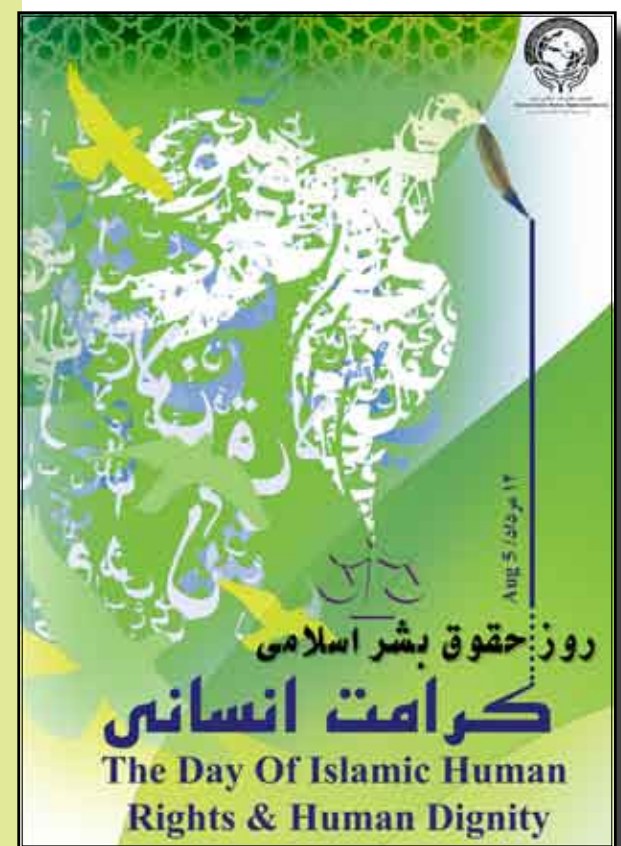


- questions put forward by the United Nations independent expert on international solidarity and human rights.
14. Compiling of a report by the IHRC international Affairs Department to the questions put forward by the United Nations' High Commissioner about the second phase of the world program for human rights education.
 15. Translation of a report by the representative of the United Nations Secretary General about trade and human rights
 16. Compiling of a periodical report on the bulk of statements and international reports on the situation of human rights in Iran.
 17. Starting of editing of a book on the rights of groups and societies in the Middle East and North Africa. The book was translated from English to Persian last year.
 18. Starting of translation of a book on fair trial (elaborations on the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Convent on Civil and Political Rights) and also starting of translation of material on the rights of victims of human rights violations
 19. Concentration of weekly meetings of IHRC's research committee on the rights of victims of post-election incidents in Iran and also the process of the universal periodical review of Human Rights situations by Human Rights Council (UPR), given the fact the UN's Human Rights Council will be considering human rights situation in Iran in its 2010 session
 20. Conducting of several case studies and putting up of its results in the corresponding section in the IHRC website on such issues as sexual harassment of men, freedom of will and its relation with some masochist behaviors, the 103rd anniversary of the Constitutional movement in Iran and its human rights aspects
 21. Translation of two reports on the elderly rights titled "Toward a Society for all Ages" and "Concepts in an Aging Society"
 22. Texting and compiling of a full report on the issues discussed in the research panel on "Potentials and Challenges Existing in Islamic States for Observing and Practicing Contents of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights as Approved by the Organization of the Islamic Countries"



Arts and Human Rights

Upon formation of an expert working group in the IHRC on arts and human rights during the past weeks which aims at gathering experts on different branches of arts, the duties and mandate of the working group was compiled. Then to spot the potentials of provinces, this working group designed a questioner and sent to the IHRC provincial offices asking them to introduce their province's potentials in this regard. Having done so, the coordinator of the working group visited the city of Shiraz in southern Iran on August, 13 to get a first hand view of the situation in provinces. He had meetings in the provincial office No 2 and is to visit other provinces as well just with the same purpose. During the time, several films with the themes of human rights were also gathered by the working group to set up a conclusive data bank of movies on the human rights. To keep the project as dynamic as possible, the working group will be conducting camera works on the human rights issues. The international department helped the working group to conduct research to spot the organizations and group in the international arena which are working on the human rights and



to assess their performances. The working group covers several areas of arts and it's working to attract and invite experts and skilled people on different branches of art including cinema, theatre, designing, painting, cartoons, photography, novels, poems, music, sculpturing and handicrafts. It will also welcome young students and those interested in arts to work with the working group as apprentices and do projects on different areas of human rights with educational or promotional purposes. During the past month, a number of design works were also conducted for the IHRC on different occasions including a poster for the International Day of Islamic Human Rights and Human Dignity.



Regional Offices



During the past month, the provincial offices, in addition to those programs in coordination with the central office which was already elaborated upon, conducted several other programs the highlights of which are:

- The regional office No. 4 moved into another building the address of which is already available via IHRC website

- During the past month, the IHRC considered proposals to set up regional offices in Lorestan and Yazd provinces and some actions were also taken in this regard

- Based on evaluations done of the performances of the provincial offices during the three months of spring, the office No .7 in Tabriz which is located in northwestern country got the best mark for its activities in different areas and was officially awarded as best by the IHRC.

- Some of the provincial branches prepared pamphlets to be distribute among the public including a 55-page one by Office No .7 and also by offices No. 12 and 13 titled Basharnews or another one titled "Get Familiar with some Human Rights Documents" by office No. 2.

- Some of the provincial offices had some field visits including one from a facility center for disabled war veterans in Shiraz or a center for elderly people in the same city or visit to a hospital in Semnan

- During the past month, a parliamentarian from the Gilan constituency visited the IHRC regional office No. 3 and hold talks with the human rights activists there. The office also had talks with the Friday Prayers Leader

in the same province, proposing that remarks and hints about the human rights be included in the Friday Prayers sermons. A program in the provincial TV station focused on the human rights issues through the coordination of this office.

- The number of meetings and sessions with provincial offices to promote human rights programs as part of the offices' route work was quite considerable in the past month



Other Activities

In the past month, numerous other activities were also conducted by the IHRC, the most important of which include:

- The 3rd bulletin on “New Developments in the Area of Women and Children’s Rights in International Arena” which was prepared before, was published and distributed
- The activities of the correspondent of the Iran’s Students News Agency who had the best performance in compiling reports on the activities of the IHRC while paying due attention to legal aspects and using appropriate literature were appreciated
- The IHRC representatives participated a special ceremony by the Tehran office of the International Red Cross on the occasion of the anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions which was also attended by a number of country’s most leading legal figures
- Attempts were made to arrange a meeting with the proposed judiciary head which came to no favorable results. This meeting is likely to take place after he takes office.
- Making inquiries from the person in charge of national institutions in the OHCHR about the weird and unusual procedure adopted in the annual meeting of Asia Pacific forum on National Institutions held in Jordan in which, contrary to the decade-long practice, Iranian national institution was not invited but in which the human rights situation in Iran was discussed and some points, too, was put forward in its concluding statement. This made the Iranian critics of some international mechanism to criticize the performance of the Secretariat of Asia Pacific Forum in Australia saying this was proof of its collaboration with foreign-based Iranian political opposition groups, while misusing the regional cooperation mechanism. The IHRC has not made conclusions in this regard yet and is awaiting explanations by the person in charge in the OHCHR to make an official announcement.



Upcoming Works & Events



The IHRC has been planning many different programs in several areas for the coming days. Some of them include:

- Publication of a news bulletin on “Economic, Social and Cultural” rights and also an expert bulletin on “Human Rights and the Islamic Dialogue in the Contemporary World” for nationwide distribution
- Completion and publication of a report on “Fair Trial and Human Rights” the contents of which have already been provided for two volumes
- Making of a call for papers for an Iranian journal on human rights which is due to be published in the coming weeks. This will be the first quarterly by this name in the whole world which will contain articles and analyses by experts on different human rights issues and young researchers put up in the internet.
- Compiling of an article to be presented for publication in an international English monthly by the name of Iranians for the use of Iranians living worldwide upon the request of the monthly’s officials
- Publication of a number of books prepared by the IHRC which had been postponed during the past few weeks for further editing and revising of the text
- Some format changes in the IHRC website and opening of a French section
- Designing, preparing and printing of a special cover for the human rights stamp which is to be inaugurated in fall. The stamp was published a while ago on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of UDHR following completion of complicated administrative procedures in Iran



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?
6. If you like to receive this monthly Newsletter regularly, please let us know your preferable **E-mail address by subscribing to this Newsletter through ihrc1@ihrc.ir**.

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