

URGENT ACTION

RIGHTS DEFENDER AT RISK OF FIVE YEARS IN PRISON

On 16 September, Kouhyar Goudarzi, a member of the Committee for Human Rights Reporters (CHRR), had his five-year prison sentence upheld by an appeals court. He is currently at liberty but if imprisoned, he will be considered a prisoner of conscience. Two other members of the CHRR are currently imprisoned and are prisoners of conscience.

On 2 January 2012, human rights defender **Kouhyar Goudarzi** appeared before Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran, Iran; this session was postponed at Kouhyar Goudarzi's request as his lawyer was not present. When brought before the same court, he was charged with "spreading propaganda against the system" and "gathering and colluding against national security". The court insisted that Kouhyar Goudarzi had links with the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) – a banned Iranian opposition group with a base in Iraq – and that he had previously been arrested for "gathering in front of the United Nations Office and advocating for the removal of the PMOI from the list of terrorist organizations. The CHRR stated that Kouhyar Goudarzi did not have links to PMOI and had never been arrested for this reason. On 7 March 2012, he was told he had been sentenced to five years' imprisonment to be spent far from his home in Zabol, Sistan-Baluchestan Province, eastern Iran. His sentence was upheld on 16 September.

Two other members of the CHRR are currently serving prison sentences imposed solely for their peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association. On 22 August 2012, **Navid Khanjani**, also a member of the Association to Oppose Discrimination in Education (AODE), began serving a previously-imposed 12-year prison sentence in Raja'i Shahr Prison in Karaj near Tehran. He was arrested with dozens of other volunteer relief workers at a relief camp for earthquake victims in East Azerbaijan. On 8 September 2012, journalist and human rights defender **Shiva Nazar Ahari** started serving a four-year prison sentence in Tehran's Evin Prison.

Please write immediately in Persian, English, Arabic or your own language:

- Calling on the Iranian authorities not to implement Kouhyar Goudarzi's prison sentence as he would be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association.
- Calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Navid Khanjani and Shiva Nazar Ahari as they are prisoners of conscience;
- Urging them to end the harassment of CHRR members and other human rights defenders, in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and their obligations under international human rights law. .

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 NOVEMBER 2012 TO:

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid
Keshvar Doust Street,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info_leader@leader.ir
Twitter: "#Iran Leader

@khamenei_ir must free Navid Khanjani
& Shiva Nazar Ahari, & not imprison
Kouhyar Goudarzi"

Salutation: Your Excellency

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
[care of] Public Relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street
Vali Asr Ave, above Pasteur Street
intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Secretary General High Council for
Human Rights
Mohammed Javad Larijani
c/o Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St, Vali Asr Ave
South of Serah-e Jomhuri
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kouhyar Goudarzi was released from prison in December 2010 after serving a one-year prison sentence for “spreading propaganda against the system” and other charges. He was arrested again on 31 July 2011 by men believed to be from the Ministry of Intelligence. Neither his family nor lawyer was able to find any information on his whereabouts or obtain official confirmation of his arrest for about three months after his arrest.

Following his arrest Kouhyar Goudarzi was reportedly taken to section 240 of Evin Prison. He was later transferred to section 209 of the prison, where he was held in solitary confinement until the end of 2011. It is believed that during this time Kouhyar Goudarzi went on a hunger strike for 17 days but ended his hunger strike as his health deteriorated. On 30 November 2011, after nearly four months in solitary confinement, he was informed that he was accused of “spreading propaganda against the system by giving an interview to *Der Spiegel* magazine” and “gathering and colluding with intent to harm state security through membership in the Committee of Human Rights Reporters”. He was released on bail of 1 billion rials (US\$88,000) on 12 April.

Shiva Nazar Ahari was arrested immediately after the disputed presidential election of 2009 and held for some three months. Shiva Nazar Ahari was arrested again in December 2009 along with two other CHRR members while on their way to the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Montazeri, a senior cleric critical of the Iranian government.. Shiva Nazar Ahari was sentenced in September 2010 to 74 lashes, converted to a fine, and six years in prison after conviction of “enmity against God”, “gathering and colluding to commit a crime against national security” and “spreading propaganda against the system.” Her sentence was reduced on appeal to four years’ imprisonment after her conviction for “gathering and colluding” was overturned.

Navid Khanjani, a member of the Baha’i religious minority, was sentenced to 12 years’ imprisonment on 31 January 2011 for offences relating to his work for human rights organizations including “causing unease in the public mind” and “spreading propaganda against the system”. His sentence was upheld by the Appeal Court on 10 August 2011. He faced an unfair trial on 20 December 2010 in Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. An appeal held in August 2011 confirmed the 12 years handed down by a lower court, and added a four million rial (US\$327) fine..

On 22 August 2012 police and plain-clothed security forces reportedly attacked a relief camp offering supplies for earthquake victims and arrested Navid Khanjani, along with dozens of other volunteer relief workers who had gone to help victims. Held since his arrest in a Ministry of Intelligence detention facility, Navid Khanjani was transferred on 24 August to Tabriz Prison and; accused of “distributing unclean and non-hygienic goods”. He underwent a two-day “dry” hunger strike (refusing water in addition to food) on 25 August to protest his arrest and detention. On the afternoon of 25 August he was taken from Tabriz Prison. His location was initially unknown, but it was later reported that Navid Khanjani had been held in Section 2-A of Evin Prison . He was transferred on 5 September to Section 4 of Raja’i Shahr Prison.

Saeed Ha’eri, also a CHRR member, has also received a two-year prison sentence, which was upheld by an appeal court. He is currently at liberty, but may be summoned to serve his sentence at any time.

The CHRR – founded in 2006 – campaigns against all kinds of human rights violations, including those against women, children, prisoners and workers. It is banned by the Iranian authorities and its members have continued to face intense harassment and prosecution since the disputed presidential election in June 2009.

Name: Kouhyar Gourdazi (m), Navid Khanjani (m), Shiva Nazar Ahari (f)
Gender m/f: both

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