

QUARTERLY REPORT
JULY-SEPTEMBER 2024

**IRAN: A HUMAN
RIGHTS REPORT
ON THE AZERBAIJANI
TURKS IN IRAN**

About the Foundation for Inclusive Society

The foundation for Inclusive Society (FIS), a nonprofit based in the United States, is dedicated to studying and empowering minority groups. Through conducting analyses and publishing reports on human rights and environmental issues, FIS strives to meet the needs of marginalized communities. Visit our official website, www.inclusivevision.org, to access our latest reports and publications. For inquiries, feel free to reach out to us at secretary@inclusivevision.org.

Summary

This report highlights human rights violations in Iran, focusing on the Azerbaijani Turks, from July to September 2024. During this period, various types of oppression have been noted, including executions, detentions, dismissals from jobs, and forced exiles.

Executions: At least 15 individuals were executed. Despite government claims that these individuals were guilty of significant crimes, organizations like Amnesty International continue to condemn Iran's use of the death penalty. Sharifeh Mohammadi, a labor activist currently detained at Lakan Prison in Rasht, has been sentenced to capital punishment.

Detentions and Releases: Azerbaijani human rights and civil activists have been repeatedly detained and put on trial, often without access to a fair trial. Some, like Morteza Parvin and others detained in Evin Prison, were subjected to degrading treatment and torture. In total, 15 individuals were detained, with some being temporarily released after the ending proceeding process.

Sentenced to prison: Several activists have been sentenced to imprisonment due to their participation in civil and political activities.

Dismissals from Employment: Activists such as Afshar Moheb Imche were dismissed from their positions due to their support for labor strikes and activism. These dismissals are part of a broader strategy to silence activists through economic pressure.

Exile: Abbas Lesani, an activist, was forcibly exiled to a remote area and relocated to Yazd City.

Unlawful Summons of Activists: Human rights activists, including Amir Badri and Fateme Gholipour, have been summoned by Iranian authorities, generally through informal and unlawful means such as phone calls.

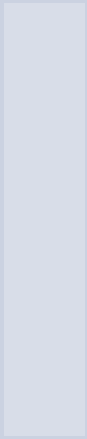
In total, this report documents the targeting of around 40 individuals, showcasing a wide range of state-led violations aimed at suppressing dissent and stifling activism in Iran. The ongoing repression illustrates the systematic and severe human rights abuses faced by Azerbaijani Turks.

Ban of Birth Certificate: The inability to obtain birth certificates for children, especially among ethnic minorities, poses a significant human rights issue in Iran. A recent case in Tabriz highlights these challenges. After a five-month legal battle, the family of a newborn, Alp Aslan, succeeded in obtaining a court order compelling the Civil Registry Office to issue the birth certificate, underscoring the systemic barriers faced by minority groups.

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Part One

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Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This report sheds light on the troubling state of human rights in Iran, focusing on the experiences of the Azerbaijani ethnic minority from July to September 2024. Over these months, we've seen a pattern of oppression, including executions, arbitrary detentions, job dismissals, and forced exiles. Inhuman treatment has heightened in minority and marginalized regions.

The Iranian government has never published official demographic statistics on ethnic and linguistic groups. Azerbaijani Turks represent the largest ethnic minority in Iran, with estimates of their population ranging from 23% to 37% ¹. Iranian authorities have also acknowledged the size of the Turkish ethnic group in the country. During his official visit to Turkey in January 2011, former Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi stated, "Forty percent of Iranians speak Turkish. We speak almost the same language. This is a significant link between Turkey and Iran." of reprisal.

Since the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925, which marked the beginning of an exclusive nation-building process, Azerbaijani Turks and other non-Persian ethnic groups in Iran have endured systemic discrimination. This structural inequality has manifested in various forms, including cultural suppression, a lack of education in their native languages, and restricted political representation. Following the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the grievances of these ethnic groups persisted, becoming even more complex as the new regime intensified its efforts to promote a singular national identity. The combination of longstanding marginalization and new forms of repression has left non-Persian communities grappling with entrenched inequalities and a struggle for recognition and rights within the broader Iranian state.

¹Secretary of the Council of Public Culture Mansour Va'ez, Islamic Republic of Iran, Asgharzadeh, A. (2008). Iran and the challenge of diversity: Islamic fundamentalism, nationalism, and the state. Palgrave Macmillan.

Due to systemic discrimination, many individuals, particularly those from marginalized communities, have faced serious repercussions for exercising their rights to free expression and peaceful assembly. The Iranian government's response to dissent often involves punitive measures, such as arbitrary detention and economic sanctions against activists, creating a hostile environment that discourages individuals from voicing their opinions or supporting movements for social justice.

This report presents previously uncovered and unbiased findings regarding the Azerbaijani Turkish minority, utilizing information gathered through our human rights network in the Azerbaijani regions of Iran. It outlines alarming statistics and addresses the ongoing struggle for justice and freedom within this community.

1.2 Methodology

The primary aim of this report is to draw attention to specific instances of human rights violations experienced by the Azerbaijani Turks in Iran. It sheds light on a spectrum of violations, including detentions and subsequent releases, forced exile cases, and instances where punitive measures, such as executions, were disproportionately severe.

Additionally, the report extends beyond mere documentation by offering recommendations to address the documented human rights violations, targeting the promotion of accountability, justice, and the protection of fundamental human rights. By highlighting these violations and proposing actionable recommendations, the report aims to contribute to a discourse aimed at rectifying the injustices faced by the Azerbaijani Turks in Iran, advocating for the protection and promotion of their fundamental human rights, underscoring the urgent necessity for action to safeguard their rights and dignity.

The information presented in this report results from extensive efforts by a network of Azerbaijani human rights activists both inside and outside Iran. This network has meticulously collected firsthand accounts, testimonies, and documented evidence of human rights abuses against Azerbaijani Turks in Iran. The information has been rigorously validated by the network and further reviewed by recognized human rights experts to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings.

A meticulous process is followed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the gathered data. Multiple reliable sources, including credible news reports, public records, and other reputable sources, are consulted and cross-referenced. This multifaceted approach helps corroborate the information and establish its authenticity.

The data collection process for this report involved the effort of the network of Azerbaijani human rights activists inside Iran, comprising 16 dedicated individuals. These activists played a crucial role in collecting and disseminating information on human rights violations occurring in the Azerbaijani region of Iran.

Various sources were used to collect data, including eyewitness testimonies, accounts from

the families of victims, published reports, and narratives shared by the protesters. These sources provide firsthand information and personal experiences, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the human rights situation.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the human rights violations faced by the Azerbaijani Turks in Iran, the collected data underwent a meticulous analysis and classification process. This ensured the information was structured, allowing for a thorough overview of the violations.

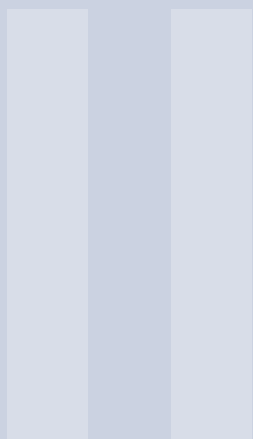
The collected data was carefully examined and organized into distinct sections, each focusing on a specific human rights violation. This classification enabled a clear and comprehensive presentation of the violations experienced by Azerbaijani Turks in Iran.

To ensure the authenticity and reliability of the collected information, the Foundation for Inclusive Society employed rigorous verification methods. This involved cross-referencing the data from different sources and channels to establish consistency and accuracy. By adopting this meticulous approach, the Foundation for Inclusive Society aimed to present a reliable and accurate portrayal of the human rights violations faced by Azerbaijani Turks in Iran.

Through the analysis and categorization of data, the report offers a comprehensive overview of the human rights situation, shedding light on the various violations and their impact. This systematic approach strives to comprehensively understand the challenges and injustices the Azerbaijani Turkish community faces in Iran.

The collaborative efforts of the Foundation for Inclusive Society, the network of Azerbaijani human rights activists, and human rights experts, and the careful verification process contribute to the credibility and integrity of the data presented in this report.

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Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment

2.1 Individuals Subjected to Capital Punishment

Government media in Iran frequently claim that those executed are individuals convicted of serious offenses like drug trafficking and murder, aiming to justify the executions. However, human rights activists and organizations including Amnesty International have strongly criticized the use of the death penalty, labeling it a cruel form of punishment and calling for its complete elimination in the country.

Human rights reports indicate that ethnic minorities in Iran face disproportionately high rates of execution compared to other groups. For instance, according to data from the Iran Human Rights Organization, at least 171 Baloch prisoners were executed in 2023, making up 21% of all executions that year despite comprising around 2-3% of Iran's population.. This points to a pattern of systemic discrimination and targeting of ethnic minorities in Iran's legal system.

Sharifeh Mohammadi, a labor activist currently detained at Lakan Prison in Rasht, has been sentenced to death by the First Branch of the Revolutionary Court in Rasht. Ms. Mohammadi has been sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court of Rasht, presided over

by Judge Ahmad Darwish Goftar. The charges brought against her include “armed rebellion against the state” (baghi) due to alleged links with a banned organization. Ms. Mohammadi had previously been informed of the charges against her at Branch 4 of the Rasht Prosecutor’s Office, under the supervision of Judge Rajabi. The charges include propaganda against the regime, actions against national security, and armed rebellion against the state (baghi).

On September 10, 2024, **Kiyomarth Alaei** was executed in Qazvin Prison. Three years prior, he had been sentenced to death for the charge of murder.

On August 31, **Mohammad Reza Abbaszadeh**, a prisoner previously sentenced to death for drug-related charges, was executed in Zanzan Central Prison.

On August 24, **Abbas Rashidi** was executed at Qazvin Central Prison pursuant to a conviction for drug smuggling.

On August 19, 2024, **Mazahir Eivazi** was executed by hanging in Zanzan Central prison. Three years ago, Mazahir Eivazi was arrested on murder charges and later sentenced to death by the judicial system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On August 3, 2024, **Hossein Salehi** and **Morteza Seifzadeh**, both previously sentenced to death on drug-related charges, were executed in Tabriz Central Prison.

On August 4, 2024, **Mehdi Hosseini** and **Amir Tasbihi**, two prisoners previously sentenced to death by the judicial system of the Islamic Republic of Iran on drug-related charges, were executed in Arak Central Prison.

On July 25, 2024, **Hamed Naderi** and **Ali Moharramkhani**, both previously sentenced to death on drug-related charges, were executed in Qazvin Central Prison.

On July 25, 2024, **Hasan Yousefazer** was executed in Urmia Central Prison following his conviction and death sentence for murder.

On July 6, 2024, **Ali Ezzati**, a prisoner previously sentenced to death on drug-related charges, was executed in Zanzan Central Prison.

On July 2, 2024, **Reza Ahmadzadeh**, **Bahram Moharrami**, and an individual identified only as **Mansour** (last name unknown) were executed in Tabriz Prison on charges of murder.

Detained and Released People

3.1 Detained and Released People

In Iran, the recurring cycle of arrests and releases affects various groups, notably human rights activists, political dissidents, journalists, religious minorities, and marginalized communities. The government often views these individuals as threats to national security and political order. Once detained, they frequently face harsh interrogation, and arbitrary charges, and are held for long periods without formal charges or due process. Many are denied access to fair trials and legal representation. While some are eventually released due to a lack of evidence or mounting international pressure, others remain incarcerated under severe conditions, often subjected to mistreatment or torture. This pattern underscores the persistent challenges to free speech and human rights advocacy within Iran.

The continuous crackdown serves to stifle dissent and silence those who attempt to challenge state authority, highlighting the ongoing struggle for civil liberties in the country.



Morteza Parvin
Tehran-Tehran



Bagher Hajzadeh
Tehran-Tehran



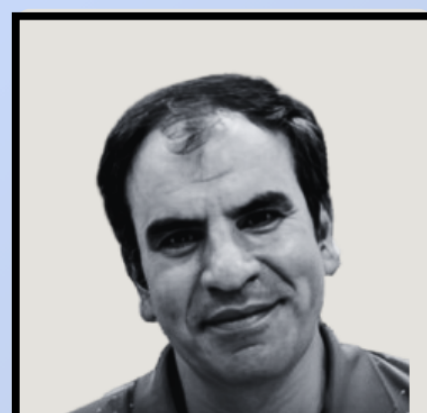
Azam Azmoudeh
East Azerbaijan- Tabriz



Ayaz Seyfkah
Tehran-Tehran



Sina Aghdasi
East Azerbaijan- Tabriz



Iraj Norasteh
East Azerbaijan- Tabriz

On July 3, 2024, **Morteza Parvin, Bagher Hajizadeh, Ayaz Seyfkhah, and Kamal Nouri**, who are currently detained in Evin Prison, received a summons instructing them to appear at Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. The summons was issued to convene a court session regarding their case. During the hearing, Judge Salavati displayed a derogatory attitude towards the Azerbaijani national activists. In response to their allegations of torture by security forces at the time of their arrest, the judge remarked, "If you had cooperated during interrogation, you wouldn't have been tortured."

On June 19, 2024, **Asad Pakrouh** endured a violent assault by officers from the First Branch of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Tabriz Police, resulting in head and facial injuries, including significant bleeding. Upon notifying his family and urging them to follow up on his condition, the officers proceeded to insult and threaten them. Subsequently, **Jabrael** and **Farhad Pakrouh**, two members of the family were also subjected to violence. The three Azerbaijani activists were assaulted with pepper spray and electric shock devices, in addition to being punched and kicked, which led to severe injuries.

The violence inflicted upon these individuals has been extreme, resulting in significant physical consequences. **Jabrael Pakrouh** has undergone three surgeries due to injuries sustained from the officers' assault and blows to the head. According to statements from **Jabrael Pakrouh** captured in a video, he has been admitted to the neurology department of Razi Hospital in Tabriz multiple times following the incident. Despite the time that has passed, he continues to experience blurred vision, difficulty maintaining balance while standing and walking, hearing impairment, drooping of the right eye, and muscle weakness throughout his body. This relentless suffering has severely disrupted his health and ability to lead a normal life, highlighting the profound impact of such cruel behavior.

After being subjected to physical assault by officers of the first branch of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Tabriz Police, the three individuals were subsequently transferred to the 14th Police Station in Tabriz. During their day-long detention, they were denied access to both medical services and legal representation, a clear violation of

their fundamental rights.

Following their release, the victims filed a formal complaint against the officers involved in the assault. The case was initially reviewed at Branch 9 of the Tabriz General and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office, which then referred it to the 108th Branch of the Tabriz Criminal Court. This court presided over by Gholamreza Mokhtari Sarai, was responsible for adjudicating the matter. Despite clear evidence of violent acts committed by the officers, the outcome was disheartening: Jabrael Pakrouh was ultimately fined, while Farhad and Asad Pakrouh were handed six-month prison sentences for "insulting and disobeying the orders of government officials.

On July 6, 2024, Azerbaijani activists **Davood Shiri, Javad Ahmadzadeh, Hossein Amani Nadarli, and Alireza Sabri** faced the second branch of the Revolutionary Court in Tabriz to defend themselves against the allegations made against them. The activists had previously requested a public trial through a legal submission, but despite the judge's refusal to hold an open court, they proceeded to present their defense in the scheduled session.

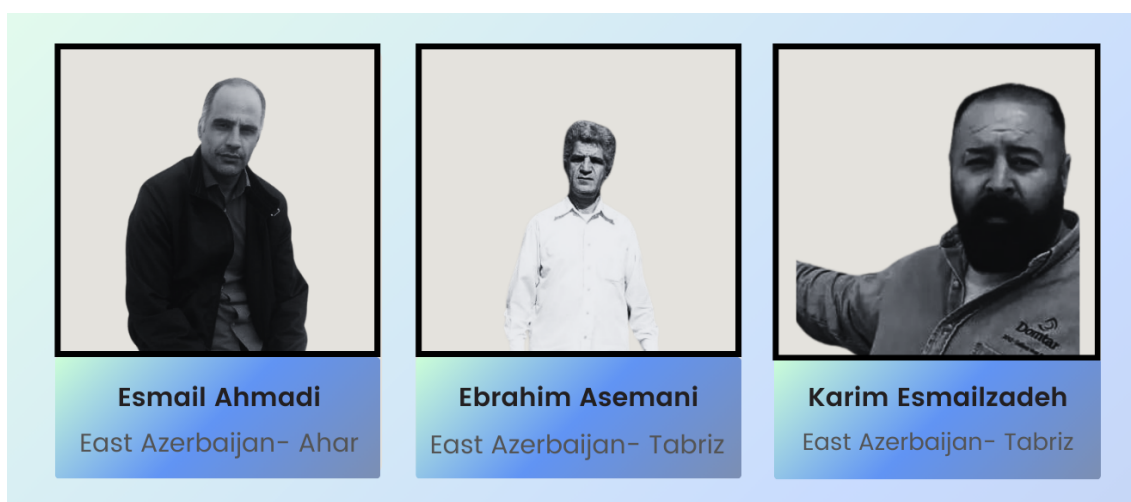
Taher Naghavi, an Azerbaijani lawyer currently incarcerated in Evin Prison, is being deprived of necessary medical attention. This neglect comes despite a doctor's recommendation for heart check-ups and tests related to blood pressure and thyroid conditions.

Esmail Ahmadi was released from Ahar Prison on July 24, 2024, after serving his nine-month sentence. The charges brought against him included "insulting Islamic sanctities," "inciting the public to commit actions against national security," "communicating with hostile organizations abroad," "spreading false information to disturb public opinion," and "propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran."

On April 7, 2024, the conviction of Esmail Ahmadi, a resident of Varzeghan, who was sentenced to 9 months in prison and 70 lashes after being charged with multiple offenses including "insulting the Islamic sanctities", "inciting people to commit crimes/crimes against internal/external security" through "connections with enemy media outlets", "spreading

lies”, and “propaganda against the state” upon the decision of court dated February 10, 2024, was upheld by the Appeals Court of East Azerbaijan Province. Earlier, on November 14, 2023, Ahmadi was summoned to appear at Branch 101 of the Criminal Court of Varzaghan.

On August 21, 2023, this Azerbaijani labor rights activist was detained by security forces in Varzaghan. This followed Ahmadi’s previous arrest for protesting the working conditions of miners in the Sungun copper mine in East Azerbaijan. He was released on August 24 from Ahar prison, facing charges of “disturbing public order” and “Insulting the authorities of the copper company” during the hearing in the prosecutor’s office.



On 29 September, **Ebrahim Asemani**, a civil activist, in a recent phone call from Tabriz Central Prison, revealed that after enduring days of interrogation at the Tabriz Intelligence Office, he has been transferred to the central prison. He also reported being tortured during the interrogations, which resulted in an injury to his leg. His family remains deeply concerned about his well-being and safety, urging human rights organizations and officials to intervene and offer support.

On September 16, 2024 three Baha’i citizens **Azam Azmoudeh, Sina Aghdasi and Iraj Norasteh** were arrested in their homes, in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan. The arresting agents conducted an investigation and seized the individuals’ electronic devices. Baha’i citizens in Iran have been subjected to harassment, deprivation and systematic discrimination

since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On September 23, **Asgar Faraji** was released from Tabriz central prison due to the recent general amnesty. An Azerbaijani activist, initially sentenced to 17 years and 4 months in prison and 2 years of exile, had his sentence reduced to 5 years on appeal. After serving 2 years and 3 months, he was released under a recent general amnesty. One of the charges against him was writing his personal memoirs in Turkish with the Latin alphabet.

On September 5, 2024 **Karim Esmailzadeh** was released from Tabriz central prison. On April 27, 2024, **Karim Esmailzadeh**, was sentenced to 6 months in prison upon the decision of the second branch of the Court of Appeal of East Azerbaijan dated March 12, 2024, was transferred to the hospital due to the deterioration of his physical condition. Mr. Esmailzadeh was sentenced to six months in prison on charges of "inciting and inviting people to violent acts in cyberspace." These charges were brought against him in connection with his protests against the Iranian government's environmental policies regarding Lake Urmia, which has largely dried up. His activities focused on raising awareness about the environmental crisis and criticizing the government's mismanagement of the lake's preservation efforts.

On September 15, 2024 **Sina Esmaili**, a athlete from Zanjan, was arrested and transferred to Zanjan's intelligence office after returning from a visit to Karim Esmailzadeh, a recently released prisoner, in Tabriz. His arrest was due to this meeting with Esmailzadeh.

On September 14, 2024 **Hosein Piri**, who is in the eighth month of their unlawful detention in Evin Prison, appeared in Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court and presented their defense against the charges brought against them.

On September 11, 2024 **Mohammad Reza Faghihi** appeared in Tehran revolutionary court and presented his defense against the charge brought against him. Mr. Faghihi was summoned to Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court last October to defend himself against charges of "assembly and collusion" and "disrupting public order."
Mohammadreza

Faghihi, a defense attorney, was previously arrested on October 12, 2022, along with two other lawyers by security forces during a gathering of defense lawyers. This protest took place in front of the Central Bar Association Tehran, in objection to the "violation of protesters' rights and Article 27 of the Constitution."

Sentenced Individuals

4.1 Sentenced Individuals

State-controlled news outlets in Iran often claim that those executed were convicted of severe offenses like drug trafficking or murder, aiming to justify these capital punishments. Despite this, organizations like Amnesty International have consistently criticized the death penalty in Iran, describing it as a cruel and inhumane form of punishment, and calling for its total abolition.

Moreover, ethnic minorities in Iran continue to face disproportionately high rates of execution. In 2023, data from the Iran Human Rights Organization reported that 171 Baloch prisoners were executed, constituting 21% of all executions nationwide. This overrepresentation underscores the systemic discrimination and bias against ethnic groups in the country's legal processes.

Azerbaijani civil activist **Mohammadreza Amani Nadarlou**, has been handed a prison sentence of three months and one day by the Revolutionary Court in Shabestar on charges of propaganda activities opposing the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The First Investigative Branch of Tabriz's Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office, after evaluating the case, dismissed the charges of "Disturbing public opinion" against **Farhad, Maryam, and Sajjad Pakrouh**. They were accused for publishing a video detailing their father, Jabrael Pakrouh's, legal case.

Azerbaijani civil activist and rapper **Milad Jalili and Salar Taherafshar**, was released from Tabriz prison on July 11th, while under electronic surveillance, Milad Jalili and Salar Taherafshar were sentenced to eight months and six months in prison, respectively, by the 2nd branch of the Revolutionary Court in Tabriz. These sentences were upheld without any changes by the 32nd branch of the East Azerbaijan Court of Appeals. Prior to Milad's imprisonment, Jalili had shared on Instagram that his sentence was a result of his involvement in political rap. His eight-month sentence was originally issued by the 2nd Branch of the Revolutionary Court in Tabriz and later upheld by the 32nd Branch of the East Azerbaijan Court of Appeals.

Dismissed from Employment

5.1 Dismissed from Employment

The Iranian government frequently dismisses civil activist, human rights activists from their jobs. This government effort is linked to discriminatory practices or suppression of fundamental freedoms. Individuals may be dismissed due to their political beliefs, activism, ethnic background, gender, or advocacy for labor rights, which violates international human rights standards. Such dismissals not only impact livelihoods but also send a chilling message to those advocating for justice and reform. In many cases, these actions are part of broader efforts to stifle dissent and limit freedom of expression and association.

Azerbaijani civil activist **Afshar Moheb Imche** was dismissed from his job after expressing support for the workers' strike at the Arta Namin industrial complex. Despite 17 years of service, he was terminated based on what he claims are false accusations, which he believes were instigated by pressure from state intelligence forces. On July 6, 2024, he shared a detailed account in Turkish on Instagram, explaining the circumstances of his dismissal and attributing it to the influence of intelligence forces on his employer.

Summoned Individuals

6.1 Summoned Individuals

The Iranian government frequently relies on summoning human rights activists as a strategy to suppress their efforts and limit their influence. While official procedures mandate that such summons should be issued in writing, intelligence officers often bypass these protocols. Instead, they employ more informal and unofficial tactics, such as verbal notifications or phone calls, in order to pressure and intimidate activists without leaving a paper trail. This approach serves as a key mechanism for controlling dissent and avoiding accountability.

Amir Badri, a civil activist, has been officially summoned by the Iranian Judicial Authority to appear at Branch 15 of the Tabriz Prosecutor's Office on charges of anti-regime propaganda, as detailed by Seyed Ali Mousavi Aghdam, the investigator assigned to his case.

Fatemeh Gholipour, a journalist from Tabriz, disclosed that a case has been opened against her after her interrogation by the Cyber Police (FATA) because of sharing news about a street fight. She revealed on X that she was summoned due to reporting on an attack on a Muharram procession in Tabriz. While released after questioning, she was informed

that she should expect a legal summons and was warned not to cover religious or procession-related news anymore. A violent confrontation erupted on Sunday, July 7th, between several individuals during a mourning procession in Tabriz. The clash led to the tragic loss of two lives, while 30 others, including pedestrians and locals, sustained injuries.

Vadood Asadi, a civil activist, was summoned by the third branch of the revolutionary court of Rasht on 10 September 2024 to defend himself against the charge that was brought against him. Farzin Rostami, a lawyer, who is representing Salar Taherafshar, received a summons from the Tehran Intelligence Agency during a phone call. He was released after one hour-long interrogation.

Exile

7.1 Exile

The Iranian authorities frequently resort to the tactic of exiling influential human rights defenders and activists to far-flung areas within the country. This method serves to severely restrict their ability to participate in or oversee social initiatives, effectively weakening their role in civil society. By moving these individuals to distant, often remote locations, the government not only limits their access to crucial support systems but also diminishes their capacity to advocate for justice and human rights. This approach highlights the state's ongoing efforts to suppress dissent and retain tight control over political and social narratives.

Abbas Lesani, an Azerbaijani civil activist from Ardabil city, was arrested on August 31, 2024 and transferred to Yazd City on September 1, 2024 to serve his 2-year exile in Yazd City. Abbas Lesani left Yazd city and returned to his hometown Ardabil city only hours after being transferred to Yazd city despite the ongoing sentence of mandatory residence handed down to him. Abbas Lesani was initially arrested on January 15th, 2019 and was sentenced to 10 years in prison and two years of exile to Yazd for the charge of

"founding or leading an organization that aims to disrupt national security" and for the charges of "acting against national security" and "inciting and encouraging the Turks in West Azerbaijan province through speeches and interviews" with the media against the regime. On February 21, 2023, after serving four years and two months of imprisonment in unit 7 of Ardabil prison he was transferred to Yazd City to serve his 2-year exile in Yazd City. However, Lesani returned to Ardabil by disobeying the sentence of exile to Yazd City because he considers the punishment was unjust and he thinks the punishment aimed at silencing his activism.



**Mohammadreza
Amani Nadarlou**

East Azerbaijan- Shabestar



Farhad Pakrouh

East Azerbaijan- Tabriz



Milad Jalili

East Azerbaijan- Tabriz



Salar Taherafshar

West Azerbaijan- Urmia



Afshar Moheb Imche

Ardabil- Ardabil



Fatemeh Gholipour

East Azerbaijan- Tabriz



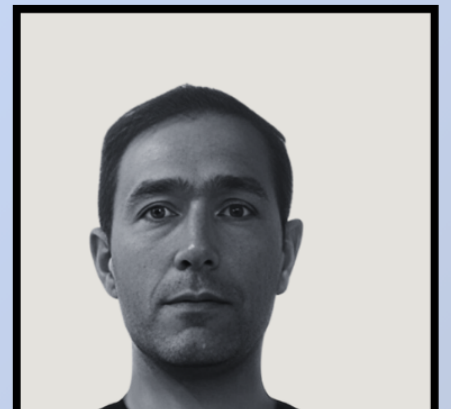
Amir Badri

East Azerbaijan- Tabriz



Abbas Lesani

Ardabil- Ardabil



**Hossein Amani
Nadarlou**

East Azerbaijan- Tabriz

Ban on Issuing Birth Certificate

8.1 Ban on Issuing Birth Certificate

In Iran, obtaining birth certificates for children from ethnic minority groups is a complex and often discriminatory process. Bureaucratic hurdles and government policies enforcing cultural assimilation disproportionately impact minorities like Azerbaijanis and Baloch people. Azerbaijani families, for instance, encounter significant difficulties when choosing Turkish names for their children, as registration offices follow a strict list of government-approved names—predominantly Persian and Islamic-shite religious names. Names that fall outside this list are frequently rejected, restricting cultural identity and self-expression. Similarly, Baloch families face their own set of bureaucratic challenges, reflecting broader systemic discrimination. These practices deprive children of access to essential services like healthcare and education, perpetuating cycles of inequality and infringing upon fundamental human rights. After over five months of persistence and legal efforts, a court ruling resulted in the issuance of a birth certificate for a newborn named "Alp Aslan." Ahmad Aghaei, the baby's father, initiated a nearly six-month legal struggle after the East Azerbaijan Civil Registry Office refused to issue the certificate. In the end, the Tabriz court mandated the registry office to grant the birth certificate for the Azerbaijani child.

Recommendations

The global community should step up diplomatic efforts to push the Iranian government toward respecting human rights. This includes calling for an end to executions and ensuring that detained individuals are granted fair legal proceedings.

Human rights organizations need to increase awareness of the struggles faced by Azerbaijani Turks and other ethnic minorities in Iran. Campaigns that expose incidents of abuse, including arbitrary detention and torture, should be organized to gather international attention and support.

Legal aid programs are essential for providing detained activists and their families with proper legal representation. Partnerships with international legal organizations could enhance these efforts and ensure justice is served.

Strengthening the monitoring and documentation of human rights violations in Iran is crucial. Training local activists to document these abuses accurately will enable better advocacy and reporting on the ground.

Providing financial and resource-based support to civil society groups working in Iran

can empower them to keep advocating for human rights, freedom of expression, and civil liberties. This will foster a stronger and more active civil society. Dialogue between the Iranian government and ethnic minorities, particularly Azerbaijani Turks, should be encouraged. Opening communication channels will help address their rights and grievances more effectively.

Educational programs targeting both the Azerbaijani community and broader Iranian society can play a key role in reducing discrimination and promoting equality. By educating people about human rights, these programs can become a driving force for social empowerment and change.

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