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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

Arien Mack

Social Research: An International Quarterly, Volume 75, Number 3, Fall 2008,
pp. v-vii (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/sor.2008.0025>



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We are distressed to report that once again, the most serious violations of academic freedom and free inquiry are occurring in Iran, where a professor of law, two AIDS researchers, and a physician have been imprisoned, all accused of acts against the state for which no evidence has been provided. The plights of all four are described below.

Given the seriousness of these violations, we urge you once again to act now on behalf of these scholars. In particular, we urge that you add your name to the petition demanding the release of Mehdi Zakerian, which you can do by visiting our website at <www.socres.edu/endangeredscholars>. Please also urge your colleagues to do so as well. The more voices of protest, the more effective it will be.

—Arien Mack

Information current, to the best of our knowledge, as of September 22, 2008.

IRAN

MEHDI ZAKERIAN, a prominent scholar of international relations and an assistant professor at Islamic Azad University in Tehran, was detained on August 15, 2008 in Tehran. There has been no statement of any charges against him, nor any information issued regarding his current location and condition. Dr. Zakerian, who is also chair of the International Studies Association of Iran and editor of the bilingual English/Farsi journal *International Studies*, was fired last year from his job at Tehran University. His detention has prevented him from attending the fall semester at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, where he had been awarded the position of visiting scholar.

DRS. ARASH and KAMIAR ALAEI, two brothers working on the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, were detained by Iranian security forces on June 28, 2008. No charges have yet been brought against them, but a Tehran prosecutor has accused them of trying to “recruit individuals” to overthrow the Iranian government, according to the Associated Press. The brothers helped establish a series of advanced HIV/AIDS clinics and a national HIV prevention plan. They also participated in the first US-funded people-to-people exchange with postrevolutionary Iran in 2006, visiting Tufts–New England Medical Center and other medical-related sites with a group of Iranian doctors. Kamiar, who has a master’s degree in public health from Harvard, was enrolled in a Ph.D. program at the State University of New York–Albany and was home in Iran for a summer break at the time of his arrest. The authorities have not released information about where the brothers are being held, but they are believed to be in Tehran’s Evin prison.

DR. MOSTAFA ALAVI was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment by an Iranian court on August 22, 2008. Dr. Alavi is a doctor and researcher who ran a nongovernmental organization called the Iranian Elite Association that sought to boost interaction between educated Iranians and global academic centers. He has reportedly been held in Gohardasht prison since March 2007 and initially stood trial in January 2008, when he was charged with “plotting against the regime.” Dr. Alavi suffers from numerous illnesses including diabetes and heart problems, and has been refused necessary medication whilst in prison.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed
‘Ali Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street—
Shahid Keshvar Doust Street

Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: info@leader.ir

Salutation: Your Excellency

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi
Shahroudi
Head of the Judiciary
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh
Qazaiyeh/Office of the
Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave.,
South of Serah-e Jomhouri
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir
(In the subject line write:
FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie
Minister of Intelligence
Ministry of Intelligence
Second Negarestan Street,
Pasdaran Avenue
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Salutation: Your Excellency

Salutation: Your Excellency

UPDATES

We are please to announce that two of the scholars we have featured in previous issues, **HU SHINGEN** and **'AREF DALILAH**, have been released.

On the other hand, Professor **EMADEDIN BAGHI**, who had previously been released on health grounds, has not only been returned to prison but his situation has worsened. Dr. Baghi suffers from serious heart and kidney ailments. On August 9, 2008, prison physicians declared his condition critical and asked that he be transferred to a hospital for specialist care. However, prison authorities instead ordered his transfer to section 209 of Evin prison for interrogations regarding his ongoing prosecution. Section 209 is a notorious section of the prison operated by the Intelligence Ministry. According to reports, Baghi's health continues to deteriorate.

The following scholars remain in prison: **KO AUNG HTUN** (Burma), **IGOR SUTYAGIN** (Russia), **ZHENG YICHUN** (China), **XU ZERONG** (China), **EMADEDIN BAGHI** (Iran), **USSAMA AL-MULLA** (Iraq), **ABDULLAH AL-HAMID** (Saudi Arabia). Their details, as well as means to support them, can be found on our website: <www.socres.org/angeredredscholars>.

—Written by John Clegg