

International Liberty Association Newsletter

Rowlandson House • 289-297 Ballards Lane • London N12 8NP
W: www.iliberty.org.uk • E: info@iliberty.org.uk • T: 020 8452 3481

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the new year, 2021, with every good wish that, despite all the concerns and restrictions due to the ongoing pandemic, it will be a very satisfying year for you, and for the cause of defending human rights in Iran.

As our thoughts inevitably turn back to the achievements of the past year and forward to the possibilities of the new one, it strikes us that, at 21, this is the year this century comes of age, a century that has already moved on from the teen prefixes borne since the 1300s.

Our dearest wish is for this to symbolise the dawn of an era that heralds a globally more responsible and mature approach to living in and looking after our planet and its inhabitants, one that is also joyful and vibrant as people flow together in harmony and understanding to develop solutions to challenges based on peaceful cooperation and natural justice.

Social gatherings and celebrations are also very important and we are delighted that together we harnessed the technology to share the joy of 45 weekly meetings, creating a wonderful atmosphere for friends and volunteers alike, with music, song, poetry and ‘armchair travel’ as well as updates on Iran related current events.

We also joined 4 global online meetings with tens of thousands of human rights activists, including hundreds of dignitaries from all walks of life. These events really helped to focus attention on the human rights situation in Iran as never before, which is our most important goal.

As several high profile figures in Iran were ... continued on p.2

UN EXPERTS CALL FOR IRAN TO ACCOUNT FOR 1988 MASSACRE OF PRISONERS



On the eve of **International Human Rights Day** (10 December) the United Nations made public the communication sent by seven UN Special Rapporteurs to Iranian authorities demanding clarification for all the cases brought to their attention with regard to the massacre of political prisoners in 1988.

In their letter the UN experts said: “We are concerned that the

situation may amount to crimes against humanity.” They said if the Iranian authorities “continue to refuse to uphold its obligations under international human rights law, we call on the international community to take action to investigate the cases, including through the establishment of an international investigation.”

International ... continued on p.2

NO PROSPERITY WITHOUT JUSTICE

On 16 December 2020 the House of Commons’ Foreign Affairs Committee published a report titled “No prosperity without justice: the UK’s relationship with Iran”.

In the summary of the report we read: “Iran’s malign regional actions challenge the values which underpin British foreign policy. International cooperation, safeguarding human rights, and upholding the rule of law are all weakened by Tehran. The change of administration in the United States, the renewed nuclear activity in Iran and the recent attack on a senior nuclear scientist make this a moment when the UK’s relationship with Iran seems of special relevance.

“The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which sought to remove the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran, has been unravelling since 2018, and Iran continues to disregard its international human rights commitments



to the detriment of ordinary Iranians, people across the Middle East, and British nationals who have been arbitrarily detained.

“There are several actions the Government could usefully pursue to both influence the international response to current challenges and define an approach which is more effective for the UK. The rump JCPOA is imperfect: strengthening it to address its sunset clauses, provisions on ballistic missiles, and the inspection powers of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) could provide ... continued on p.2



UN experts call Iran to account for 1988 massacre of prisoners

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Liberty Association welcomed the move as a necessary step in the right direction. However we need to see more action on the part of the UN. The past 40 years have proven that inaction by the international community has emboldened the mullahs ruling Iran to use violence and torture as well as arbitrary detentions and large numbers of executions in order to hold the population under their thumb. Communication by the UN officials calling for an “independent and thorough investigation” is a major step forward in the movement calling for justice for the victims of the 1988 massacre in Iran.

In their letter the UN experts underlined that “an enforced disappearance continues until the fate and whereabouts of the individual concerned are established irrespective of the time passed, and that the family members have a right to truth which means the right to know about the progress and results of an investigation, the fate or the whereabouts of the disappeared persons, and the circumstances of the disappearances,

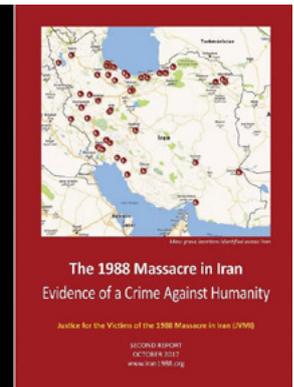
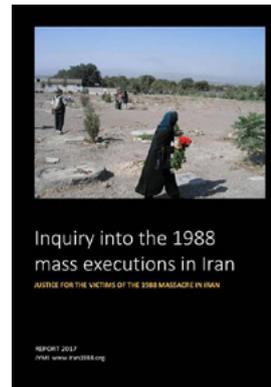
and the identity of the perpetrators. We stress that this obligation is applicable to any individual who has been allegedly forcibly disappeared or unlawfully killed, regardless of whether they were civilians or defined as ‘terrorists’ or threats to national security under national law.”

After the UN experts’ report, it is all the more imperative to refer the dossier of the 1988 massacre to the UN Security Council, so that the ruling leaders of the Iranian regime would face justice for being involved in the 1988 massacre and the executions of dissidents since 1980.

Rights groups have long pushed for accountability over what they describe as the extrajudicial executions of thousands of mainly young people across Iran in 1988. Those killed were executed without proper trials.

The letter, first sent to the Iranian government in September, says the UN experts “are seriously concerned by the alleged continued refusal to disclose the fate and whereabouts” of the people who were killed.

They say they are alarmed by the authorities’ refusal to provide families



with death certificates, harassment of the families, and other matters such as the destruction of mass graves and statements from the government denying the cases.

The experts call for independent investigations into all cases, the return of human remains to their families, and the prosecution of the perpetrators, among other things.

No prosperity without justice

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some short-term reassurance. In the long term, the Government needs to outline how it plans to address Iran’s wider destabilising activities and the alliances which will be necessary to achieve this. We encourage the Government to look at its traditional partners within Europe and the US, but to also build a strategy that works through its unique relationship with the Gulf states to broaden the ground for diplomacy and build regional and international consensus on the shape of the response to these challenges.

“...we recommend proscribing the

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in its entirety for its clear and enduring support for terrorists and non-state actors working to undermine stability in the region.”

Bob Blackman MP, the co-president of the International Committee of Parliamentarians for a Democratic Iran, issued a statement in this regard and “wholeheartedly” endorsed and commended the work done by his “colleagues in the Foreign Affairs Committee” and “their recommendations to the Government in dealing with Iran”.

The report calls for blacklisting and imposing sanctions against the IRGC,



the private army of the ayatollahs, that is responsible for gross human rights violations in Iran and the export of terrorism beyond its borders.

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executed in 2020, our campaigns managed to ignite world opinion to stay the execution of others and sent a strong message for imprisoned men, women and children, the prime victims of the regime’s abuses, that we and many other human rights organisations are on their side and defending their rights.

Of particular note, 2020 was a year that the international community made a determined call for action, as the demand for justice against the perpetrators of the 1988 massacre was taken up by 7 UN special rapporteurs and Amnesty International, while the UK Foreign Affairs committee called for the IRGC to be proscribed and much tougher

demands for human rights to be part of any deals with the regime.

These events plus the continuing protests of the people inside Iran itself have built a powerful and visible launch pad for our continuing campaigns to secure a better future for all.

Your continuing help and support means so much to us.



ACTION RATHER THAN WORDS NEEDED FROM EU GOVERNMENTS

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights** issued a statement on Monday 14 December 2020 condemning the abrupt execution of an Iranian journalist, **Ruhollah Zam**, who had been abducted in Iraq in 2019 after being lured by agents of the Iranian regime to travel there from his asylum in France, taken to jail in Iran and slapped with the vague charge of “spreading corruption on earth”.

Michelle Bachelet’s statement was preceded by similar expressions of outrage from European governments and policymakers, starting soon after Zam’s execution on Saturday 12 December. Despite all of these condemnations, the Iranian regime’s President Hassan Rouhani stated publicly that he considers it “unlikely” the incident will result in significant strain on Iranian-European relations.

Rouhani’s cavalier attitude is emblematic of the impunity his regime has come to expect even amidst continued expansion of Iran’s list of human rights abuses and crimes against humanity. Many of those incidents have resulted in an appropriate increase in foreign scrutiny of the regime, but unfortunately this has rarely led to a comparable increase in actual pressure being exerted on the regime over such issues.

Iran’s European economic partners did take the step of pulling out of an economic forum that was scheduled to be held in Tehran, but the event’s organisers have since declared that they look forward to it going forward at some later date, when tensions have subsided.

This lends credence to Rouhani’s assumption that relations



will not be much affected over the long term; and it diminishes the impact of the statements condemning Iran’s latest efforts to disregard Western criticism while violently cracking down on domestic dissent.

Clearly such criminal executions are intended to create an atmosphere of terror and to thwart the eruption of popular uprisings.

This strategy has only grown more important to the Iranian regime in recent years, as domestic unrest has become a recurring fact of life.

As the fallout from Zam’s execution continues, European governments should resolve to sever diplomatic and trade relations with Iran so as to make it absolutely clear that Rouhani is wrong to assume human rights violations won’t cause long-term harm to Iran’s international relations.

FORGOTTEN ANGELS OF IRAN

Ten months after the emergence of the novel coronavirus in Iran, fatalities have surpassed 199,000 according to activists inside Iran.

Governments all over the world are working hard to get Covid-19 vaccines to rescue their people. Many officials believe that medical staff who provide invaluable services in combating the health crisis must be the first receivers of the vaccine.

In Iran, however, the situation is completely different. Not only is there no sign of vaccination, but the government has yet to provide essential equipment for medical staff.

Many healthcare workers have contracted the virus which dramatically decreased the country’s available medical staff, putting them under further pressure.

“Of the roughly 145,000 nurses across the country around 60,000 have contracted Covid-19,” said the head of Iran’s Nursing Apparatus Organisation, on 17 December 2020.

Furthermore, authorities’ mismanagement has caused the death of a considerable number of these selfless people.

Health professionals also expressed their concerns over the mental and physical conditions of medical staff. “After nine months of bad working, mental, and physical conditions, more than 50 percent of nurses in the ICU section have contracted the coronavirus, 20 percent of which have been hospitalized in the ICU section themselves. This is a disaster,” said Alireza Sedaghat, head of the ICU department in Mashhad’s Imam Reza hospital, on 12 November 2020.

On the other hand, the ayatollahs’ terrible policies led many nurses and physicians to take refuge in other countries.

Nurses’ emigration would sink the country to more dilemmas, particularly, when the government faces a shortage of medical staff.

The ayatollahs’ mismanagement not only pressures these selfless people but endangers the country’s future by reducing Iran’s valuable human resources.

Moreover, while the government does not pay nurses’ arrears and delayed paycheques, it is unlikely to provide necessary items for medical apparatus and improve the country’s healthcare system.

Like other sectors of the society, medical staff in Iran have grasped that protests are the only way to draw attention to their inherent rights.

Can you imagine under these strained conditions Iranian nurses and medical staff, instead of going to work to save lives and being applauded for what they are doing, have to go to picket lines and demonstrations in order to get their wages and keep on with their torturous lives.





CHRISTMAS EVE WITH ILA



Revd Harry Lamb was the keynote speaker at our Christmas Eve celebration. Below are excerpts of his remarks.

It's a great pleasure to have been asked to give this Christmas Eve address to ILA supporters and volunteers. A very good evening to you all.

In any other year, I would have been

able to announce with confidence what we in my church would be doing today. It's the 24th December, it's Christmas Eve. Normally, we would be about to embark on the wonderful and familiar celebrations that have developed over the years. This year, as we all know too well, it's completely different. But, no matter.

I'm sure that we, alongside our brothers and sisters all around the world, of all faiths and none, will be doing our best. It's all we can do. It's what we must do. That's what hope is about. If we do our best, we hope that it will make a positive difference, however uncertain things may look at the time. I'm also sure that we, in our church and elsewhere, will be giving each other, and the world, messages of peace and joy. You will see those words, peace and joy, on banners and Christmas cards, you will hear them in carols and in the texts we read in church. For Christians, the foundation of that peace and joy is the person whose birth we remember on Christmas Day: Jesus, who we call Christ. Other faiths and traditions look to different foundations for peace and joy, but we

realise, particularly in gatherings like this, that we're all reaching out to the same thing: that absolute, deep, human need for a place of safety, a place out of which we can flourish and make our contribution to the peace and joy of others and of the world.

But then there's another meaning to "place": a place in one's heart. We need to be able to carry inside ourselves a source of peace and joy. This, together with hope, helps people to carry on even when things are grim, and the pressure from the outside seems unbearable.

So often, at gatherings like this, we receive messages from ILA workers and Ashrafis thanking us supporters for giving them hope. What can we say?

Thank you, thank you for the dedication, for living your lives, for the hope of the people of Iran, and the world, for deliverance from religious persecution. You give us hope for the future, for more places where peace and joy can flourish. It's such a privilege to be part of a community where we build each other up in hope and courage. We are very blessed to be part of it.

BISHOP JOHN PRITCHARD'S MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS



Bishop John Pritchard doesn't need an introduction because all of you know him very well, but he has a very special place in our hearts because of his stance towards the Iranian cause, defending justice and human rights for years and years. Below are excerpts of his remarks to our Zoom event on 16 December for the occasion of Christmas:

Yes, it is, it is a real pleasure to join you again, at the end of a year that, sadly, has not been a great pleasure, has it? Not the year that we'd have hoped for, this coming year, but anyway, happy almost-Christmas, whatever, to everybody. I do hope you're surviving the various Covid lockdowns and restrictions in – well, at least in relatively good heart.

What a year! I don't know about you, but I can hardly think of a year with such tumult from start to finish.

But of course our particular concerns here today are with the volatility of the Middle East, Iran in particular.

In the last few days, in Iran, we've had the execution of a brave journalist who dared to report on the popular protests that erupted in December 2017; back in September, we had those seven human rights experts, including the Special Rapporteur on Iran, warning the Iranian regime that they will call for an international investigation, if the regime doesn't stop its violations and investigate the deaths of 30,000 political prisoners and their families back in 1988.

We have a regime that has no respect for the norms of civilised behaviour, no respect for basic human rights, no respect for its own people and no respect for the nations to which it exports its own brand of terrorism: Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, etc.

As a Christian, of course, I'm bound to be thinking: what would the child of Bethlehem have made of all this?

At Christmas, we're celebrating a God who gets stuck in, who enters this locked-down world with a message of liberation and freedom: freedom to live, laugh and love without fear; freedom to enjoy a world where everyone is of equal dignity in the eyes of the only Supreme Leader who actually matters: the God of peace and justice. I must stop, I feel a sermon coming on.

But thank you for sharing these concerns so much that you've committed yourselves to the International Liberty Association and this really important work. If I had a glass I'd raise it to you, to the ILA and to 2021.



A POET'S DESCRIPTION OF ILA



Our good friend and supporter, **Paul Barrett** was the other speaker at our Christmas Zoom event. Below are excerpts of his speech and the lovely poem he recited:

The first thing I want to say is that we are in the Christian season of Advent, and Advent for Christians is about anticipation, keen anticipation but also patience, and above all waiting. And we wait of course for the birth of the Messiah. And it struck me that that really draws many parallels with ILA, because ILA are in the same position. They are awaiting with keen anticipation the possibility of an end to the rule of the mullahs in Iran, and just as all those thousands of years ago the Judean people were waiting for a Messiah who would come and throw off the yoke of the Romans.

But of course when God came to earth the people were expecting a warrior king who would defeat the Romans in battle. And of course what they got, as we heard from Bishop John, was a helpless babe in a manger who ended up apparently in defeat on a cross.

And what has impressed me over the brief time I've known ILA are their values. They show wonderful Christian values, and in fact in many respects often their ability to perform those values are rather greater than some Christian communities I know; they have love, they have patience, they have great generosity.

So the other thing that's extraordinary: I was at university with one of your friends who's on tonight, Nigel Hill, and I don't know if you can cast your mind back to June last year, when there was that amazing global conference, and that was the first time that I saw Nigel on the screen, and although we know one another we had absolutely no idea that we were both friends of ILA. And so subsequently we exchanged emails, and I hope you won't mind if I just quote some of the things he said, because I do agree with them: "Over the years, I have developed the greatest admiration for the Ashrafis and for the manner in which the ILA courageously, persistently, patiently and with such dedication promote their cause. They genuinely regard us as friends. They are a wonderful example of what can be achieved against the odds. I am particularly impressed by their multi-faith approach...The ILA volunteers are consistently kind, grateful, and appreciative to us."

Well, I agree with all those sentiments, and my Christmas gift to ILA tonight is a poem. It's a poem which has never been published, it's a poem which was written almost 100 years ago, and it's a poem which was given to my father who was a pioneer aviator, he was in the Royal Flying Corps. He went to America to try and get support and finance for, of all things, an airship; but in the course of his travels he came across a Professor Samuel McMeen of the Smithsonian Institute of Technology in 1922. And in 1922 he was given this poem, which I'm going to dedicate now to ILA. It's called "**The Dreamer**".



The dreamer is the architect of greatness.
His vision lies within his soul.
He never sees the mirage of facts
But peers beyond the mists and veils of doubt,
And pierces the walls of unborn time.

The world has accoladed him with sneer, jeer, and jibe,
For worlds are made of little men
That grudge a cheer and cheer a grudge,
Wherefore the paths of progress have been sobs
Of blood dropped from their broken hearts.

Makers of empires, they have fought for bigger things
Than crowns, and higher seats than thrones;
Fanfare and pageant, the right to rule and the will to love
Were not the fires that wrought their resolution into steel.
They are the Argonauts,
The seekers of that priceless fleece, the truth.

Throughout the ages, they have heard the voice
Of destiny call to them from the unknown vast,
With only cloth of courage at their mast,
And no compass save their hopes, they sail
Away undaunted for the far blind shore.
They sail uncharted seas because
They are the makers of the charts.

A wing of canvas beats the air, and adds
The highways of the eagle to the human path.
Through a throat of brass and a disc of glue
A song is caught, sweet and whole,
To last beyond the maker of the song,
Because a dreamer dreamt.

A tunnel ploughs the riverbed
And chains the island to the motherland.
What would you have, a fancy or a fact,
If hands were all with which we had to build?
Your home is set on a dreamer's plan,
The pictures on its walls are visions from a dreamer's soul,
A dreamer's pain wails from your violin.

Yet, though they chill, starve, and hurt,
But if they cling to truth, they will attain,
No matter where others have failed before.



FEEDBACK

During this past month we had hundreds of letters, emails, post cards and telephone calls from many of you after our mailings and Christmas events. We could not fit all in this page. It requires publishing a book. Yet we decided to print a few examples to share the inspiration with you all.

Diana: Please remember that there are people who are aware of your circumstances and who are striving to improve things for you.

In spite of everything I wish you all a warm festive season.

Mary: Please keep smiling. Do not give up hope. Life will get easier. Stay Strong!

Jennifer: The newsletter is always packed full of really interesting news. I read it cover to cover.

Valerie: Please convey my thanks to everyone at I.L.A. for their kindness. I do hope that Christmas was a peaceful time for you and that you will keep safe and well.

Gareth: Wishing you all the joys that Christmas brings and success in your undertakings.

Julia: Wishing you all a season of gladness, a season of cheer and a very happy new year!

Philip: With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year and praying that 2021 is finally the year when our dreams come true.

Patricia: Your endless kindness, thoughtfulness and strength in the face of many difficulties are inspirational. May the wonderful Iranian people soon find justice and peace.

Chris: Each of you is special and there are things that only you can do. Thank you to my friends at ILA for your Christmas Greetings, and above all for your untiring campaign for freedom, humanity and legality. May your light shame the darkness.

Janet: In spite of having lots of time during 2020, I was still writing my cards over the holiday! Anyway Christmas is not just for a day but for always! ... my poem on Zoom, I think it's appropriate for the coming of 2021 with all good wishes to everyone at ILA for Christmas and 2021.

Janet Well's poem, **'Hope'**, was so well received during the Zoom meeting that we decided to print it here for everyone to see:

*Darkness holds mankind in thrall,
Like embers cold or leafless branch,
In prisoner's cell, demolished home
or muddy transit camp,
Where hunger stalks or bigotry
and hatred tread,
And ugly poverty still blights our world
and justice is denied!
And yet, tho' pain and sickness may
exact a price, a grip on life is held.
A child, in spite of trauma and abuse,
looks up and gives a smile.
When Christmas comes, it brings to mind that,
hidden by the tinsel, is a babe,
Born into poverty, a refugee from politics
and strife,
Whose teaching shows the power to look
beyond what we expect or know
And, like a beam, from lighthouse on a
steadfast rock,
Or far-off star, that pierces velvet night,
Or candle flame, that throws a flickering light,
The way ahead is lit with hope.*





NEWS IN BRIEF

IRAN'S DEPUTY POLICE CHIEF: "BREAK HANDS AND LEGS OF TROUBLE MAKERS"



Iran's Deputy Chief of Police ordered violence against people who are labelled "trouble makers" during arrest, according to a video report by the state-run IRNA News Agency. The report showed the arrest of several so-called "troublemakers" or "thugs" who were blindfolded and made to sit on the ground. "If you detain someone during a clash and I see him standing here unharmed, you have to answer as to why he is unharmed," Deputy Chief of Police Qasem Rezaei tells the police officers standing around him. He brags: "you should break their hands and legs."

ANOTHER JUVENILE OFFENDER EXECUTED UNDER ROUHANI



Juvenile offender Mohammad Hassan Rezaei was executed at dawn on Thursday, 31 December 2020, in Lakan Prison, in Rasht, northern Iran. He was 16 at the time of the alleged offence 12 years ago. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a statement condemning the execution.

"The incident stood out as a late addition to the country's catalogue of human rights abuses for the year 2020. Three other juvenile offenders had been executed by the Iranian judiciary earlier in the year, and Thursday's case seemed to reaffirm the clerical regime's rejection of foreign criticisms of this practice and of other widely reported irregularities in Iranian jurisprudence", HCHR said.

IRAN SECRETLY EXECUTES THREE SUNNI POLITICAL PRISONERS ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

Three Sunni political prisoners: Hamid Rastbala, Kabir Sa'adat Jahani and Mohammad Ali Arayesh were executed on Thursday 31 December in Vakilabad Prison, Mashhad.



The three prisoners were transferred to an unknown location the day before and were deprived of family visits before their execution. Their families and lawyers were not informed about the executions in advance. They were desperately trying to obtain information about the three men since Wednesday 30 December.

On Sunday, 3 January 2021, they were told that the execution had been carried out three days ago.

PROTESTS CONTINUE ACROSS IRAN



The Iranian people began 2021 with protests and rallies for their inherent rights, of which they have been deprived by the theocratic regime. In this respect, Iranian citizens held at least two rallies in different cities to express their ire against officials' plundering and profiteering policies.

While the mullahs squander national resources on aggressive and oppressive measures, Iranian people once again came onto the streets to force the regime to recognise their fundamental rights. On January 1, people from different classes showed they cannot tolerate the regime's mismanagement and see protests as the sole means to achieve their basic rights.

BAHA'IS FACE ARBITRARY ARREST AND SEVERE HARDSHIP IN IRAN



Although there are more than 300,000 Baha'is in Iran, they are not recognised among the minority religions protected in the constitution, which include Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism.

Instead they are viewed as "infidels", and some of their beliefs – such as the equality of women – have put them at odds with Islamic clerics.

Baha'is describe their beliefs as centring around truthfulness, equality and human rights with an emphasis on the essential values of all religions.

The Baha'is hold strong beliefs in the value of community service and education, but they have long been forbidden to pursue higher education in Iran and they are prohibited by law from teaching and practicing their faith.

Hundreds of Baha'is have been arrested in Iran, including their entire religious leadership, and spent long prison terms for refusing to denounce their religion.

Last year, the Iranian Government removed the option to list "other" as a religion on national ID cards – which are required to obtain a driver's license, to open a bank account, and to conduct other basic official transactions.

This change has forced Iranian Baha'is to either "lie about their religious identity" or be blocked from essential services.



IRAN'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN 2020



The policy of “creating fear by use of heavy sentences” turned into the official policy of the Iranian Judiciary to counter likely protests in 2020. Ebrahim Raisi, a member of the Death Committees in the massacre of political prisoners in summer 1988, heads the Iranian Judiciary.

Human rights activists and organisations have published a number of reports on the torture of protesters. They said those arrested during the protests were harassed, tortured, beaten, flogged, given electric shocks, suspended from the ceiling, subjected to mock executions, waterboarding, sexual violence, forced injection of chemicals and denial of medical treatment.

Eyewitnesses and former detainees have narrated shocking incidents of violence during their detention. Many of them were held incommunicado without access to their family or lawyer, in solitary cells for long periods. They were interrogated and tortured to appear in televised confession shows. Those arrested included minors under the age of 18 as well as women, young people, children, teachers, workers, students, athletes, and artists.

In September 2020, Amnesty

International censured the Iranian regime for widespread violations of human rights in the wake of suppression of the nationwide uprising in November 2019. AI outlined a long list of cruel treatment of the detainees and their families. It stressed that the Police, Intelligence services and prison authorities had committed a collection of “shocking” human rights abuses in complicity with judges and prosecutors.

There are at least 34 prisoners of conscience and political prisoners presently on death row in Iran. Among them are 10 protesters arrested during nationwide protests.

Navid Afkari, a 27-year-old athlete, was arrested in Shiraz after the protests in August 2018. In complicity with the intelligence services, the Iranian Judiciary sentenced him and his two brothers to death and lengthy prison sentences.

Navid Afkari was executed in the Adelabad Prison of Shiraz on 12 September 2020.

Mostafa Salehi, another protester, was executed on 5 August 2020, for participating in the protests of December 2017–January 2018.

More death sentences were issued last year for those arrested during the protests in December 2017–January 2018, August 2018, and November 2019 in different Iranian cities.

In Tehran, three protesters were sentenced to death whose cases are presently being examined by the Supreme Court.

Handing down flogging sentences is also a common practice of the

Iranian Judiciary. The Iranian regime, however, made an excessive use of the cruel punishment of flogging against protesters over the past year.



They also issued heavy prison sentences for dozens of people for participating in protests.

Numerous shocking letters and reports from inside prisons or by former prisoners show that detained protesters are tortured to extract confessions from them.

Mostafa Salehi, who was hanged at dawn on August 5 in the Dastgerd Prison of Isfahan, was viciously tortured under interrogation. He spent 8 months in solitary confinement in the detention centre of the Department of Intelligence of Dowlatabad. He was held another 5 months in solitary confinement in the basement of Dastgerd Prison. During this time, his hands and feet were cuffed and he slept on bare floor without any blanket. His daily food was a small piece of dry bread. He was deprived of visitations for 14 months. His torturers broke his teeth and limbs and inflicted serious damage on his neck and backbone. Despite such tremendous pressure, he kept repeating: “I am innocent!”

Join us for 'An Hour with ILA'

Online weekly Zoom meetings

Every Saturday 5 to 6pm

Please send an email to info@iliberty.org.uk
so that we can send you details for connection