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'Returnees' from Islamic universities for foreigners pose a danger to human and state security abroad/ Case study: Al Mustafa international University



HRWF (19.02.2018) - Foreign forms of controversial Islamic teachings introduced in various ways in Muslim majority countries threaten their traditional culture of tolerance and the peaceful relations between their various religious communities.

Iran attracts and trains foreign Shia theologians to export its theocratic model and Sharia practices which are incompatible with UN human rights standards.

Salafists and Wahhabis backed by Saudi Arabia and other states of the Arabic Peninsula are increasingly disturbing the homegrown peaceful Islam in Indonesia, the Maldives, and other countries in Central Asia.

The implantation of their Islamic universities and other educational institutions in such countries, in addition to the granting of scholarships for foreign education of imams and young students in theology, are part of their diversified strategies to export forms of Islam that are alien to local Islam, challenge the secular nature of some states and the separation of state and religion.

'Returnees' from universities such as Al Mustafa University in Iran pose a real danger to human and state security in their respective countries of origin.

Sentencing 'returnees' to prison terms, as it is the case in Azerbaijan or Kazakhstan, because they have been educated abroad in 'suspicious universities' is a violation of human rights. *However* it is the right of a state to protect its population against radicalization and foreign ideologies that promote segregation between Muslims and non-Muslims as well as between men and women, discrimination on such a basis, physical punishments, degrading and inhumane treatments, as it is the case in Iran, Pakistan or Saudi Arabia.

Hassan Dai's study entitled by "**Iran's global network of Islamic schools public**" published by the Iranian American Forum in 2016 highlights the extent of the strategy used by Tehran to export its theocratic system. In his paper, the author addresses the following issues:

- Foreign clerics in Iran and the creation of Al Mustafa
- Al Mustafa's network: Africa - Al Mustafa School in Congo
- Tuition and support for students and their families
- Number of students and graduates
- Al Mustafa's goal: export of Revolution
- Shiism
- Promoting hatred against Israel
- Al Mustafa, a recruiting pool of Quds force

Human Rights Without Frontiers is presenting you below large excerpts from this paper that is available at <http://iranian-americans.com/irans-export-of-islamic-fundamentalism-al-mustafa-global-training-centers-2/>.

Summary

In February 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini and a group of clergymen attached to him, seized the power in Iran. From the onset, Khomeini's regime utilized all the means and tools in its disposal to establish and fortify its brand of fundamentalism in Iran and export it throughout the Islamic world.

For the past 37 years, the Iranian regime has pursued a two-faceted strategy to export its revolution; in one hand, it has created and supported radical armed groups across the Middle East, on top of them the Lebanese Hezbollah. On the other hand, various “Cultural” and “religious” organizations were created in Iran to disseminate the regime’s ideology in the Islamic world.

Al Mustafa international university founded in 2007 is one of the most important among these organizations. Funded and controlled by the Iranian regime, Al Mustafa trains foreign Shia clerics, scholars and missionaries. Its main campuses are in Iran and have more than one hundred seminaries, Islamic schools and religious centers around the world. The Iran’s Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei is the highest authority of Al Mustafa University.

Al Mustafa has currently over 40.000 students, half of them studying in University campuses in Iran. There are nearly 10.000 female students and 3500 teaching staff.

Since 2007, nearly 30.000 clerics and Islamic scholars have graduated from Al Mustafa branches, a good portion of them have been hired by the university as teaching staff or missionaries sent to different countries around the globe.

Al Mustafa’s vast global network and its growing army of clerics and missionaries is a formidable tool to generate grassroots support in foreign countries for the Iranian regime’s ideology, its foreign policy, its position in the Islamic world and its quest to dominate the Middle East. Al Mustafa is also a recruiting pool for the Revolutionary Guards’ Quds Force or other Iranian Institutions responsible for terrorism or military activities abroad.



Al Mustafa's main campus in Qom

Number of students and graduates

Al Mustafa does not report the exact number of its students in Iran or in foreign branches. However, by examining Al Mustafa’s current and old website available in web archives, news reports or the declarations by the University’s executives, we reach the

approximate numbers of 40.000 current students of which 10.000 are women. Half of Al Mustafa's students are in Iran campuses. The University has had 30.000 graduates and employs 3500 teaching staff.



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Photo: M.H.Emami

AhluBayt News Agency

Al Mustafa graduates receive turbans

For example, Alireza Aarafi, Al Mustafa's President declared in August 2014 that 40.000 people study at the University. In February 2016, the head of "Information Science" department at Shiraz University gave an interview and detailed the number of foreign clerics studying in Iran and declared that 20.000 foreigners study at Al Mustafa campuses in Iran. In a speech on February 2015, President of Al Mustafa declared that 30.000 students had graduated since 2007.



RASA

Al Mustafa female students in Qom campus

Al-Mustafa has a distinct department for its female students called “**Bent-ol-Hoda High Education Institution**” with campuses in Ghom, Isfahan and Mashhad. According to an August 2013 report 9000 female students were studying in Al Mustafa, of which 6500 students in foreign branches. According to Hojatoleslam Safouraei, president of Bent-ol-Hoda, the new campus under construction in Ghom will open in the summer of 2016 with a capacity for 2000 female students.

Al Mustafa’s goal: export of Revolution

Al Mustafa’s vast global network and its growing army of clerics and missionaries is a formidable tool for the Iranian regime to export its brand of Islam and generate grassroots support for the Iranian regime’s ideology and assist its quest to dominate the Islamic world.



Iran Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei meeting with Al Mustafa students and staff, Qom, 10/25/2010

In his speech to Al Mustafa students and staff on October 25, 2010 in Qom, the Supreme Leader explained the Iranian mandate to spread “pure Islamic thoughts” and liberate the Islamic nation from the jug of global arrogance led by the United States. He emphasized the role that Al Mustafa plays in carrying out this mission: (English translation by Khamenei’s official website)

“The first lesson that the Islamic Revolution and the auspicious Islamic Republic taught us was that we should think beyond our borders and turn our attention to the vast arena of the Islamic Ummah. Our magnanimous Imam taught us that our attention should be focused on the great Islamic Ummah. Although Iran was extremely frustrated under the pressure of tyranny and colonialism during the rule of Shah, was being crushed by the

pressure, and it needed to be saved but, the essential pressure and historical aggression was focused on the Islamic Ummah.

For several centuries, the great Islamic Ummah, which has been in one of the most strategic locations in the world, was suffering from weakness, defeat, backwardness, colonialism and material and scientific poverty due to the interference of superpowers, greed of powerful governments and belligerence of the arrogant powers. The attention of our Islamic Revolution was focused on the Islamic world. Its attention was focused on helping the Islamic Ummah get rid of the arrogant powers' hand of oppression and aggression. We learned this from our Imam, and this has been the clear path of the Islamic Republic up until now. Part of the great work is what you are doing. You have gathered here from nearly one hundred countries in order to become familiar with the pure teachings of Islam."

On February 8, 2016, Al Mustafa's vice President declared: "Export of revolution has always been one of the most important goals for the Islamic Republic. Al Mustafa plays a role in preparing the ground and attain this goal. Al Mustafa has used the Islamic soft power in the region and prepare the ground for Iran's hard power (military) to be present in the Middle East and successfully oppose the global arrogance."

Similarly, the dean of language and culture department at Al Mustafa has also declared that "our goal is the export of revolution." In February 2015, the Supreme Leader's representative in Isfahan emphasized that "Al Mustafa has taken effective steps for the export of our revolution."

Al Mustafa, a recruiting pool for Quds force

Since the start of civil war in Syria and the Iranian military intervention to save the Bashar Assad regime, there have been numerous reports about Al Mustafa's students killed in Syria funerals held in Iran for them In March 2016, one of Al Mustafa's directors declared that "some of the fighters deployed to Syria are the University's students and clerics."

Alireza Tavassoli, the chief commander of Fatemiyon, the Afghanis division of revolutionary guards fighting in Syria who was killed in 2014, was one of Al Mustafa's clerics.

The Iranian revolutionary Guards employs different tactics to recruit new members or fighters for Syrian war. Each years, hundreds of thousands of very young Iranian students are organized in tours labeled as "Caravans of light" (Rahian -e- Noor) and sent to the old Iran-Iraq war battle field where the martyrs are venerated and the cult of martyrdom is promoted. The preachers remind the visitors that the war with Iraq was in fact part of the fight against global arrogance, a fight that continues today. The visitors are told that the martyrs are alive and watching them and asking them to join this holly war against the US and its surrogates.

Iranian regime uses the same tactic to recruit among Al Mustafa students or graduates. Each year thousands of Al Mustafa students from Iran campuses or branches outside Iran are sent to these battle field. This is a report on 700 Al Mustafa students visiting the battle fields and, another report about a 250 students and families. In this report by Iranian press, an Argentinian graduate of Al Mustafa who is teaching at the University branches, is taking a group of Latin American students to the battle fields to "venerate the Martyrs of war between Islam and global arrogance".

As a result of Al Mustafa's ideological teaching and financial incentives provided to the students, a good part of Al Mustafa clerics gradually become unconditional supporters of

Iranian regime. It is not surprising that many of them are sent to Syria and other places to assist the Quds force. Al Mustafa students in Iran are also ordered to participate in state-organized rallies such as the protest against Charlie Hebdo magazine for drawing Muhammad cartoon or the rally against Bahrain government.

Iranian Christian convert detained since before Christmas

World Watch Monitor (16.02.2018) - <http://bit.ly/2HwiYtJ> - An Iranian convert to Christianity arrested more than two months ago remains in prison in the conservative north-western city of Tabriz, according to rights group Article 18.

Ali Amini, known by his friends as Philip, was arrested by revolutionary guards at his workshop in the city on 10 December. His mobile phone and laptop were also confiscated.

His elderly father was present during the raid, and watched as his son was taken away. Amini is married and has two young children, aged one and three.

"Every year, pressure on Christians increases ahead of Christmas," Article 18 reported, adding that four other Christians were arrested over the Christmas period in 2017 – in Karaj, a city just to the west of the capital Tehran.

Four UN officials recently expressed concern over three other Christians sentenced to between 10 and 15 years in prison last year. Their appeals were due to take place on 4 February, but were postponed. A fourth Christian, Kaviyan Fallah-Mohammadi, was also sentenced alongside them.

"We are deeply concerned by the long jail sentences imposed at a previous hearing on Pastor Victor Bet Tamraz, Amin Afshar Naderi and Hadi Asgari for allegedly 'conducting evangelism' and 'illegal house church activities', and similar charges that, according to the authorities, amount to acting against national security, completely contrary to Iran's international obligations," said a statement by the four officials, including Ahmed Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, and Asma Jahangir, who was Special Rapporteur on Iran until her death on Sunday (11 February).

"We are additionally concerned about the lack of healthcare made available to them while in detention and, in particular, about the current health condition of Mr. Asgari, who remains in prison," they added.

Asma Jahangir previously expressed her concern about the treatment of Iranian prisoners, referencing a prison in Karaj, where at least one Christian – Ebrahim Firouzi – is currently being held and last year went on hunger strike to protest against Iran's treatment of Christians.

Amnesty International has also spoken out about the mistreatment of Iranian Christians in prison, referencing the case of Maryam Naghash Zargaran when it accused Iran of "cruel" denial of medical care in its prisons.

In their recent statement, the UN experts added: "We are aware of several other reported cases in which members of the Christian minority have received heavy sentences after being charged with 'threatening national security', either for converting people or for attending house churches.

"This shows a disturbing pattern of individuals being targeted because of their religion or beliefs, in this case a religious minority in the country.

"Members of the Christian minority in Iran, particularly those who have converted to the faith, are facing severe discrimination and religious persecution.

"The authorities must ensure fair trials for all, including the religious minorities in the country. We also urge the Government to immediately and unconditionally release all those who have been arrested and detained for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief."

Iranian convert to Christianity – 'If I went back, I'd be killed'

An asylum seeker who fled Iran over fears he would be killed for converting to Christianity is one of 300 to be baptised at a Cardiff church in the past two years.

Mohabat News (06.02.2018) - <http://bit.ly/2EXru3f> - Conversion from Islam to Christianity is punishable by death in Iran and converters said their decisions mean they can never go home.

Its constitution recognises the faith of Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians.

But people from a Muslim background are not free to worship in a church.

Daniel, not his real name, fled to the UK after authorities in Iran discovered he was worshipping Jesus in an underground Christian movement known as "house churches".

Now living in Cardiff, he officially converted from Islam when he was baptised two years ago.

Daniel, 31, said he was in no doubt he would be killed if he returned to Iran.

"If I went back, the authorities would arrest me. They would put me in jail and I would be killed, I would be hanged," he said.

"They will kill me, me and my family. I am not afraid because I will be meeting Jesus but I am afraid about my family."

Daniel claims an Iranian Christian convert friend was murdered and his remains were scattered outside the doors of four churches in his home city as a warning to others thinking of renouncing Islam.

In the past two years, 324 asylum-seekers have been baptised by Tredegarville Baptist Church in Cardiff, where 95% of the congregation are immigrants.

The majority baptised there are Iranian but some are Kurds and Afghans.

Pastor Phylip Rees, who has baptised many asylum seekers in Cardiff and helps with their bids to remain in the UK, said he was in no doubt the vast majority who attend the church were genuine in their faith.

He said he seen evidence Iranian converts at the church had suffered torture in their homeland, including one man who claims he was branded by the authorities.

Pastor Rees also rejected suggestions some parishioners could be using baptism as a way to secure permanent residence. He said he had refused to support applications previously when he had doubts.

Home Office guidelines for examining asylum claims state the credibility of a faith conversion "needs to be established to a reasonable degree of likelihood".

It said that was likely to include being baptised, preparing for baptism, attending worship and being known to the church's leadership and fellow believers.

The Home Office said: "Those who demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution in their country on account of their religion or belief are not expected to return there."

There are no official figures for genuine religious asylum seekers and some in the congregation said they had been waiting more than six years for a decision to be made about their claim.

But Iranian Christian groups are growing in number and can now be found in churches in cities including Glasgow, Liverpool and Birmingham.

Without them, Pastor Rees said the future of some churches would have been uncertain.

"Tredegarville would have closed but for this opportunity to join the Lord in his work of reaching these people," Pastor Rees said.

"I'm sure that the other churches would say that the people who are coming to them from other lands as refugees and asylum seekers are a blessing to them as they are to us."

Iran must ensure rights of Christian minority and fair trial for the accused – UN experts

OHCHR (2.02.2018) - <http://bit.ly/2E2djgj> - UN human rights experts* have called on Iran to ensure a fair and transparent final hearing for three Iranian Christians who are due to appear before the Revolutionary Court in Tehran this weekend.

"We are deeply concerned by the long jail sentences imposed at a previous hearing on Pastor Victor Bet Tamraz, Amin Afshar Naderi and Hadi Asgari for allegedly 'conducting evangelism' and 'illegal house church activities', and similar charges that, according to the authorities, amount to acting against national security, completely contrary to Iran's international obligations under the UDHR and the ICCPR" the four Special Rapporteurs said in a joint statement.

"We are additionally concerned about the lack of healthcare made available to them while in detention and, in particular, about the current health condition of Mr. Asgari who remains in prison," they added.

"We strongly call on the Government to ensure that the final review hearing on Sunday is fair and transparent, in accordance with Iran's obligations under international human rights law," the experts said.

The Revolutionary Court judge has the power to end the case, confirm the sentences or refer the case to the Supreme Court, with the men either freed on bail or jailed in the meantime.

The three Christians were given provisional jail sentences of 10 years at a previous hearing in July. Mr. Naderi received an additional five years for blasphemy.

The experts say they are also concerned that the prosecution of the three Christians is not an isolated case.

"We are aware of several other reported cases in which members of the Christian minority have received heavy sentences after being charged with 'threatening national security', either for converting people or for attending house churches," they said.

"This shows a disturbing pattern of individuals being targeted because of their religion or beliefs, in this case a religious minority in the country.

"Members of the Christian minority in Iran, particularly those who have converted to the faith, are facing severe discrimination and religious persecution."

The UN experts stressed that it was "of paramount importance" for the Iranian Government to abide by its obligations under international human rights law.

"The authorities must ensure fair trials for all, including the religious minorities in the country," they said.

"We also urge the Government to immediately and unconditionally release all those who have been arrested and detained for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief."

The UN experts notified the Government of Iran about their concerns.

Iranian pastor's wife sentenced to five years in prison for "Acting Against National Security"

Shamiram Isavi, the wife of Victor Bet Tamraz, who formerly led Iran's Assyrian Pentecostal Church, has been sentenced to five years in prison.

Mohabat News (29.01.2018) - <http://bit.ly/2EL3ujW> - "As far as we know, and based on Mrs. Isavi's own statements, no evidence has been presented in the case to show that she was engaged in spying or disturbing national security. She has denied all the charges," Kiarash Alipour, a spokesman for Article 18, a UK-based organization focusing on Christians in Iran, told the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) on January 25, 2018.

"Mrs. Isavi explained during the interrogation that when the Assyrian Pentecostal Church was shut down, she attended home churches and prayed with fellow Christians and discussed the Holy Book," added Alipour. "It's astonishing that a country's national security could be threatened by a gathering of Christian believers."

Isavi was charged with “acting against national security by organizing home churches, attending Christian seminars abroad and training Christian leaders in Iran for the purpose of espionage,” and found guilty by Judge Mashallah Ahmadzadeh of Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran on January 6, 2018.

Since March 2017, Judge Ahmadzadeh has sentenced 16 Christian converts in Iran to prison terms ranging from five to 15 years, according to Article 18.

Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Iran ratified in 1975, states that “everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.” However, the Islamic Republic views alternative belief systems, especially those seeking converts, as a threat to the prevailing Shia order.

Isavi and her husband were arrested in their home in Tehran on December 26, 2014, along with their son, Ramin Bet Tamraz, and 12 Christian converts.

On June 11, 2016, Ahmadzadeh sentenced Victor Bet Tamraz and Christian converts Hadi Asgari and Kavian Fallah Mohammadi to 10 years in prison each while convert Amin Afshar Naderi was issued a 15-year prison sentence. They are awaiting a decision on their appeal.

According to Article 13 of the Constitution: “Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians are the only recognized religious minorities, who, within the limits of the law, are free to perform their religious rites and ceremonies, and to act according to their own canon in matters of personal affairs and religious education.”

“No one in Iran is prosecuted for their beliefs unless they have committed a crime,” said Kazem Gharibabadi, the assistant for international affairs at the judiciary’s Islamic human rights division, on March 17, 2017.

However, Iran’s Christian community, particularly its convert community, faces systematic state persecution and discrimination due to its growth.

Despite President Hassan Rouhani’s pledges during his election campaign in 2013 that “All ethnicities, all religions, even religious minorities, must feel justice,” the targeting of Christian converts for state persecution and prosecution has continued unabated under his administration.

All Farsi-speaking Christian churches in Iran are currently banned. Only non-ethnic-Persians, such as Armenians and Assyrians, are allowed to practice their Christian faith.

“Christian converts can only attend home churches but they could face heavy sentences,” Alipour told CHRI.

100 Iranian Christians waiting to enter U.S. could be sent back to Iran

By Nina Shea

Washington Free Beacon (09.01.2018) - <http://bit.ly/2qMfz4U> - U.S. government action could send 100 mostly Christian Iranians stranded in Vienna back to Iran this week,

where their return during the harsh government crackdown on dissidents could target them for further persecution, human rights activists warn.

The deportation threat looms despite the Trump administration's and Congress's vocal support for protesters in Iran, who are waging the strongest nationwide uprising against the government in Tehran in eight years.

"These deportations, during a human-rights crackdown in Iran no less, could be a death sentence for these persecuted Christians and other minorities," Nina Shea, an international human rights lawyer who directs the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom, told the Washington Free Beacon. "They would undermine the important statements against Iran's repression by President Trump, Vice President Pence and U.N. Ambassador [Nikki Haley]."

"The administration needs to act fast to stop this travesty," she said, noting that the U.S. government could give the refugees notices denying them entry to the U.S. as early as this week. This would leave the Austrians with little choice but to send them back to Iran.

Activists say the timing of the deportation threat is also particularly troublesome for the Trump administration, after the State Department last week designated Iran among 10 countries "of particular concern" for "systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom."

The Iranian Christian refugees traveled to Vienna in January 2017 under a 27-year-old U.S. law passed by Congress to help Jews escape persecution in the Soviet Union. Under a 2004 update of the law, known as the Lautenberg amendment, the State Department has helped tens of thousands of Iranian Jews, Christians, and Baha'is who were at risk in their home country to resettle in the United States.

During the end of the Obama administration, the State Department initially signed off on plans to resettle the latest group of mostly Iranian Christian refugees but then placed a hold on them toward the end of last year before Trump took office, according to Anna Buwalda, executive director of the Jubilee Campaign. The Jubilee Campaign is a nonprofit organization that advocates for religious minorities who suffer persecution in their home countries.

Buwalda says she and other human-rights activists don't know why the U.S. appears to be on the brink of denying them entry to the United States, and no one at the State Department or DHS has provided any answers.

"This is part of the mystery, and nobody's been able to receive any information to explain it," she said.

One-third of the refugees were set to resettle in California, where many of their relatives who have already gone through the refugee resettlement process are located, according to the activists.

The Department of Homeland Security, which has an office in Vienna, helped interview and vet the refugees, along with HIAS, the global Jewish nonprofit that works with the State Department on Lautenberg program refugee cases, Buwalda said.

HIAS referred a request for comment to its partner, the State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. Neither the State Department nor the DHS provided a response.

The refugees, most of them Armenians and Assyrians, have been waiting in Vienna for a year as U.S. courts have weighed in on the constitutionality of the travel ban, and recently were informed they must go back to Iran, according to Shea and Buwalda.

It is unclear if the Trump administration is behind the deportation threat or if Austria is becoming impatient with these cases remaining in limbo.

Human rights groups are urging the administration to take action and are worried the refugees and other priorities involving religious minorities in hotspots around the world are falling through the cracks as key Trump administration posts remain vacant a year into his presidency.

"The U.S. has broken its promise to Iranian religious minorities," Buwalda said. "They traveled to Vienna at the invitation of the United States, with the understanding that they would soon be reunited with their American families. Instead, the groups of refugees have been forced to wait there for more than a year with no explanation. They have no source of income, and many have spent down their life savings."

"The U.S. government must solve this situation quickly and humanely," she said.

One key post that would normally handle Lautenberg program issues remains vacant. Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback's nomination to the State Department post of ambassador at large for religious freedom is in limbo after Democrats placed a hold on it late last year and blocked the Senate from approving him.

The White House re-nominated Brownback on Monday but has not publicly disclosed whether it intends to expend the political capital to lean on the Senate to quickly confirm him. Senate GOP leaders would have to devote at least three days of precious floor time to hold a floor vote on the nomination if Democrats continue to oppose him instead of passing him quickly by unanimous consent.

The White House did not respond to an inquiry into Brownback's nomination.

Catholic and other Christian leaders have praised the Trump administration's rhetoric on the issue. They point to the administration's National Security Strategy report, unveiled in late December, and its pledge to "protect religious minorities" abroad.

Pence in October received a standing ovation at a dinner devoted to religious freedom issue when he pledged that "help is on the way" to religious minority communities in Iraq struggling to recover from Islamic State genocide.

However, Trump also has yet to appoint a special adviser for international religious freedom at the White House's National Security Council and has kept a special envoy for religious freedom post downgraded in power, as it was during the Obama administration.

The faith office at USAID also remains without a leader.

Continued closure of the Baha'i businesses: 90 locations in Kerman, Sistan, and Baluchistan and East Azerbaijan

Iran Press Watch (02.01.2018) - <http://bit.ly/2Ffob7q> - The number of Baha'i-owned business under forced closure and seal by authorities in Kerman, Sistan, and Baluchistan and East Azerbaijan has reached 90. This includes the recent closure of 16 Baha'i shops in Tabriz, as well as the remained seal of previously-closed units.

According to the HRANA news agency, the human rights activist news agency in Iran, during the past two weeks 16 Baha'i commercial units were sealed in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province:

- Shahriar Khodapanah (eyeglasses distribution)
- Touraj Misaghi (eyeglasses)
- Kambiz Misaghi (eyeglasses)
- Parham Saberi (clothing store)
- Shiva Isa Khani (hair salon)
- Payam Zafaryab (eyeglasses)
- Behnam Aghabalai (appliance vendor)
- Mohammad Hokmran (appliance vendor)
- Anees Hokmran (eyeglasses repair)
- Farhad Nabati (eyeglasses)
- Behrouz Nourdel (eyeglasses)
- Enayat Molaei (photography)
- Behnam Shafiei (cosmetics store)
- Alireza Agha Balayi (coil winding)
- Navid Ighani (eyeglasses)
- Behrouz Isa Khani (household appliance vendor)
- It is reported that 17 shops in Kerman and 25 shops in Rafsanjan have remained sealed for about 32 months, despite all the follow-up and complaints by Baha'i citizens to the Administrative Justice Court.

The interruption of business of Baha'i citizens of Kerman province occurred in retaliation for their shop closure in observance of a religious holiday.

Baha'i-owned businesses in Sistan and Baluchistan Province which were closed and sealed by security forces on October 30, 2017, also remain sealed.

Additionally, 18 stores in Zahedan, four shops in Iranshahr, three shops in Saravan and eight shops in Chabahar have been closed and sealed.

Previous reports from HRANA regarding closure of the Baha'i-owned businesses of Sistan and Baluchistan list the following:

- Habib Tawhidi (Tohid Eyeglasses),
- Ahmad Ali Shokati (Eshragh Eyeglasses),
- Bright Light (Roshan Residential Glass),
- Behrooz Gholam Razaei (Building Sanitation Supply),
- Bijan Gholam Razaei (Parto Electric),
- Bahador Kamjou (Jupiter Eyeglasses),
- Andalib Todei (Dehkadeh Jahani Computer Service), and
- Azarakhsh barghi (Nikan stationary)
- While this report focuses on three provinces, forced closure of Baha'i-owned business has been occurring throughout the country.

In many cases, the details of the interrogations and the reasons for the forced business closure are not provided by authorities. However, based on the pattern, particularly in recent years, suppression of the Baha'i Community's ability to engage economic activity and the resultant economic insecurity has been a leverage used by security and Intelligence agencies to apply pressure the followers of this religious minority.

According to Article 28, paragraph Beh (ب) of the trade union law, business owners may close their shops for up to 15 days a year, without notice to the union. Despite this, law enforcement and security agencies continue to routinely forcibly close and seal the shops of Baha'is during closure for observance of Baha'i holidays.

Shahindokht Molaverdi, the Special Assistant to the President on Civil Rights Issues, said in a statement to the media on December 3, 2017, " As regards to the closure of commercial premises and the denial of Baha'i activities, there have been queries from the President's Legal Assistant, and we are discussing this through legislation in order to find a solution to the issue." In the meantime, forced closure of the Baha'is' businesses continues in Iran
