

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

Notice: Undefined index: et_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1216

IRAN: Water shortage protests of Ahwaz people spread as anger boils over

Water shortage protests spread in Iran as anger boils over

Will the Al Ahwaz protests inspire Hindus of Bangladesh to demonstrate too?

By Rachel Avraham

TheJ.ca (28.07.2021) – <https://bit.ly/3rEWDkC> – “We are thirsty,” protesters have chanted in the province of Khuzestan, as bullets and tear gas have been fired at them to disperse angry crowds in a region where temperatures approach 50 C. Calling Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei a dictator, they accuse the government of Iran of creating a scarcity of water in 700 villages by diverting it for use in oil drilling and for populations in other provinces. Citizens were already suffering as the worst drought in Iran in half a century is underway.

Eighty percent of Iran’s oil fields and sixty percent of natural gas reserves are located in the region and incoming president Ebrahim Raisi will face continued protests against policies seemingly designed to force ethnic Arabs off the land.

In an exclusive interview, Hamid Mutashar, the founder of the Ahwazi Liberal Party, proclaimed: “On July 15, the people of Ahwaz revolted due to a lack of water. The people demonstrated in Muhammarah, Ma’ashur, Busaiteen, Sweya, Umdia and Hamidiyah. In Al Zaiya, Al Salinhiday and in Ma’ashur, the people closed the main roads to the city by burning tires.”

Since then, the protests inside Iran have become widespread, which led to the regime increasingly clamping down on them. At least eight civilian casualties have occurred. Human Rights Activists News Agency, HRANA, reported that the Intelligence Ministry arrested Iranian Azeri activist Siamak Koushi, released him after a few hours and then the Revolutionary Guard Intelligence Organization arrested him again (one of a hundred such detentions). He was also arrested last year during the war between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The question remains, will the Al Ahwaz protests be an inspiration for the Hindus of Bangladesh and other repressed minorities inside of Iran and across the Islamic world, or will these protests share the same fate as the Green Movement?

Brenda Shaffer, a senior energy advisor at the Foundation for the Defence of Democracies, wrote: "At present, other anti-regime forces are unlikely to join the Ahwazi protests. Indeed, most of Iran's mainstream opposition does not support the political activity of Iran's ethnic groups, which they fear could undermine the integrity of Iran."

"The impact, for now, is likely to remain isolated to the oil and gas industry sector, where ongoing protests could disrupt production," she added. "Regime crackdowns will almost certainly continue."

Nevertheless, even though the Persians of Iran have not joined these protests yet, there have been reports of Azerbaijanis, Baloch and Kurds protesting in solidarity with the Ahwaz protesters. All three groups face repression in Iran very similar to the Ahwaz. As one Iranian Kurdish source noted, "The protests in Iran have gone national among Iran's ethnic minorities. The people don't want the mullahs to rule anymore."

As one Free Balochistan Movement activist added: "If we want to defeat the tyrannical state of Iran and free our land and nation from slavery, we need to move towards a political

alliance. The people of Kurdistan, Ahwaz, Balochistan, and South Azerbaijan have come to advance their struggle for independence and to wage a joint struggle for national salvation.”

However, while the Ahwaz, Kurds, Baloch, and South Azerbaijanis have united in Iran, the Hindus of Bangladesh have yet to wage their revolution, even though their grievances are very similar to the Ahwaz of Iran.

Shipan Kumer Basu, who heads the World Hindu Struggle Committee, noted in an exclusive interview that Hindus are frequently accused of insulting Islam and imprisoned in Bangladesh for allegedly committing this crime, yet whenever Muslims insult Hinduism, no one blinks an eye.

“The government is working to advance legislation, which will result in the deportation of Hindus from the country, just as many Ahwaz in Iran faced eviction orders,” he added. “The minorities in the country are systematically repressed. The time has come for them to revolt, just like the Ahwaz in Iran.”

***Rachel Avraham** is a political analyst working at the Safadi Center for International Diplomacy, Research, Public Relations and Human Rights. She is the author of “Women and Jihad: Debating Palestinian Female Suicide Bombings at the American, Israeli and Arab Media.”*

Photo credits: alsharqiya.com

Notice: Undefined index: et_footer_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1266

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1266

Notice: Undefined index: et_footer_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

Notice: Undefined index: et_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1268