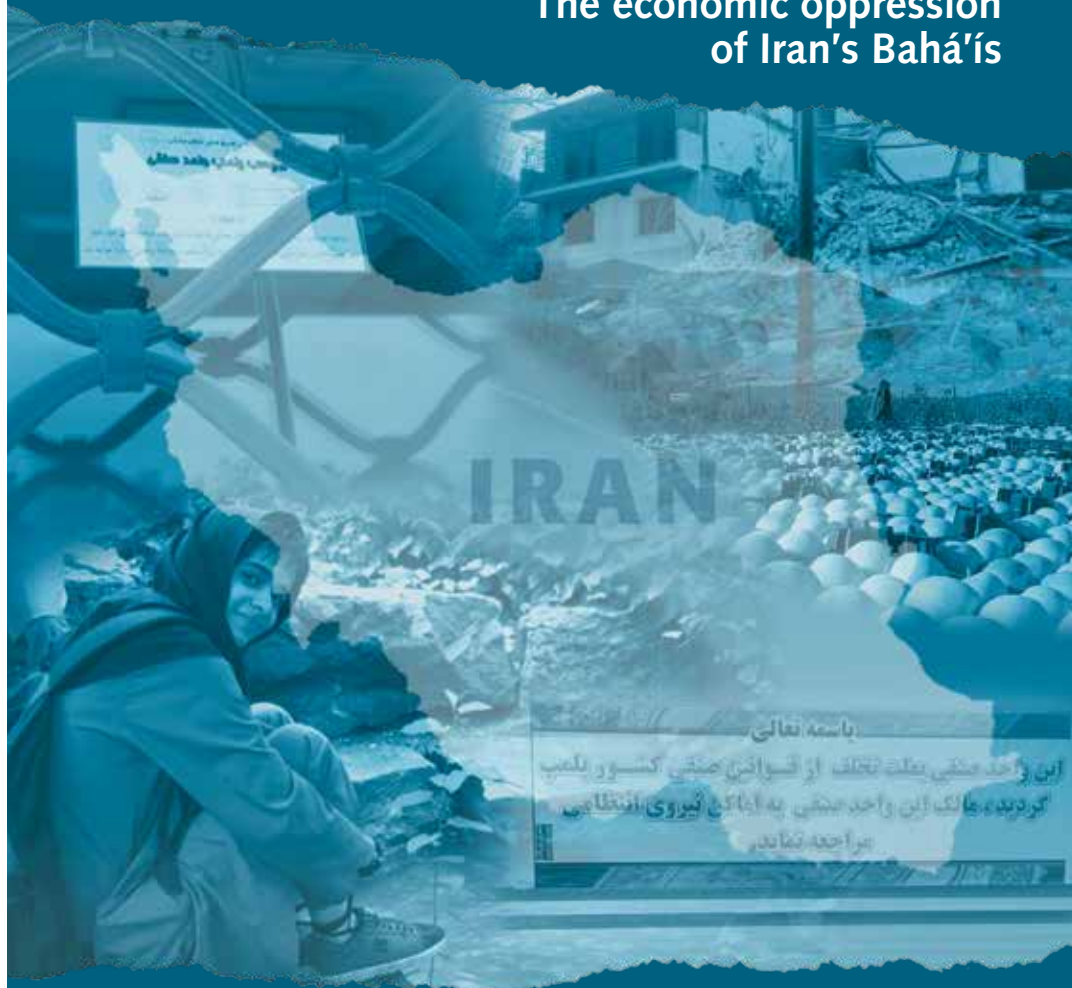


Bahá'í International Community

# **"Their Progress and Development Are Blocked"**

The economic oppression  
of Iran's Bahá'ís



A special report of the  
Bahá'í International Community  
October 2015

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[www.bic.org/Iran-Economic-Oppression](http://www.bic.org/Iran-Economic-Oppression)

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A note about the title of this booklet: “Their Progress and Development Are Blocked” is a phrase from a 1991 memorandum signed by Iran’s Supreme Leader that spells out a policy for the repression of Bahá’ís in social, cultural, educational, and economic areas. See page 23 for a full explanation.

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In the summer of 2014, a Yazd taxi driver requested a routine permit to carry passengers outside the city limits. Upon receiving confirmation of his request, he saw that authorities had put “perverse sect of Bahaism” in the religion field on the form.

As a Bahá'í, he was offended by the obviously derogatory categorization of his religion. He complained but was told by local officials that nothing could be done. The categorization was an automatic one, they said, following a system established by Amaken, the national organization that oversees religious “morality” in public places in Iran. So he crossed out the words “perverse sect” and duly signed the form.

Yet when he contacted Amaken, the man was told the problem was simply that he was a Bahá'í — and no such permit would be issued.

The driver's difficulty at obtaining the type of permit or permission necessary to earn a living is one of hundreds if not thousands of cases in recent years where Iranian Bahá'ís have been denied business licenses or otherwise faced official barriers to earning a livelihood.

## 1 Introduction

In the coming months, a wave of international corporations and companies are likely to enter Iran with the aim of negotiating new deals for trade and commerce. These deals will be worth billions of dollars — and they have the potential to improve the livelihood of Iranian citizens greatly.

Yet while Iran is opening its doors to business internationally, the government has kept the doors to Bahá'í businesspeople tightly shut — relegating an entire segment of Iranian society to the lowest ranks of the economy.

Since 2007, at least 780 incidents of direct economic persecution against Iranian Bahá'ís have been documented by the Bahá'í International Community — equivalent to two a week over the last eight years. These include shop closings, dismissals, the actual or threatened revocation of business licenses, and other actions to suppress the economic activity of Bahá'ís. This represents a minimum number, given the difficulty of getting accurate information about human rights violations from Iran.

Recently, for example, the government has sought to inhibit the economic activity of Bahá'ís by limiting the number of fields in which a Bahá'í can be legally employed, by shutting down their shops and farms, and by placing bureaucratic hurdles when they seek the most basic approvals. [See Chapter 2]

Another tactic in the economic campaign against Bahá'ís has been the use of anti-Bahá'í propaganda in an apparent attempt to drive customers away from Bahá'í shops. [See Chapter 3]

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The effort to deny young Bahá'ís access to higher education has consigned them to low-paying jobs or unemployment. [See Chapter 4]

None of this is new. Since the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Bahá'ís have been banned from all forms of employment in the public sector, a ban that includes any form of employment in public schools, hospitals, or other governmental-service providers. [See Chapter 5]

Despite promises by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that his government would be more tolerant and work to end religious discrimination, the persecution of Bahá'ís has continued under his administration.

For example, the anti-Bahá'í propaganda campaign has actually expanded since he took office in August 2013, with more than 7,000 articles, videos, or web-pages featuring anti-Bahá'í propaganda appearing in government-controlled or government-sponsored media.

Despite all this, there is ample evidence that many of Iran's people remain unpersuaded by these attacks, and, in fact, are increasingly willing to stand up for their Bahá'í friends and neighbors. This trend runs manifestly counter to the government's claim that the persecution of Bahá'ís is something arising from the grassroots that cannot be controlled by the government without risking public disorder.

The Iranian authorities must be held accountable for this insidious exclusion of Bahá'ís from the economic life of their nation. Bahá'ís are non-violent and non-partisan, and pose no threat to the government. In their economic activity, they seek simply to support themselves and their families — and, to the extent possible, to contribute to the development and prosperity of their country.



October 2013 photograph of two seals, the white rectangles placed on the doors, officially closing a workshop in Abadeh. The site had been used to provide employment for a number of Bahá'í youth.

## 2 A livelihood denied: stories of economic repression



A banner placed on the front of one of some 80 Bahá'í-owned businesses which were closed on 25 October 2014. It intentionally misleads by falsely stating: "This commercial unit has been sealed owing to violation of trading laws/rules. The owner of this commercial unit should report to the police."

Ghavameldin Sabetian's carpentry shop was a small operation. Mr. Sabetian, now in his 70s, worked only part of the day there, but it was enough to provide for daily necessities for himself and his wife — a small income that was especially important since his wife suffers from diabetes and thyroid problems.

But last April, authorities in the city of Sari, where the shop is located, swooped in and confiscated his business license and placed an official seal on the shop's doors, closing it to business.

His violation: he had shuttered the shop on a Bahá'í holy day that month.

Of course, the idea of punishing a Bahá'í for closing on his holy day seems as absurd as not allowing Christians to close their shops on Christmas, forcing Jewish-owned stores to stay open on Yom Kippur, or arresting Muslims for shuttering their establishments on Eid al-Fitr.

And so, rightly, Mr. Sabetian filed an appeal. On 17 June 2015, officials came to remove the seal. But first they wanted him to sign a pledge that he would notify them in advance when he would be closing for Bahá'í holy days in the future. And, at the bottom of the paper they asked him to sign, he said, there were several hand-written items that "were truly insulting and offensive to my religious beliefs."

So he did not sign, and his shop remains closed.

Mr. Sabetian's story is far from unique in today's Iran.



**Recent incidents reflect the latest element of Iran's long-running, government-directed campaign to suppress the economic livelihood of its Bahá'í citizens — a focus on closing small shops and businesses, which are virtually the only way left for Iranian Bahá'ís to earn a living.**

Confirmed economic incidents against Bahá'ís have continued unabated over the last eight years, averaging about 100 per year. These include shop closings, dismissals, threats against employees and other government actions that specifically target or affect individual Bahá'ís. Note that this figure is likely much higher in reality, but the difficulty of getting information out of Iran makes it impossible to have a full count.

In October 2014, Iranian authorities descended on some 80 Bahá'í-owned shops in the cities of Kerman, Rafsanjan, and Jiroft, placing official seals of closure on their doors and posting banners saying the shops had been closed due to “violations of trading rules.”

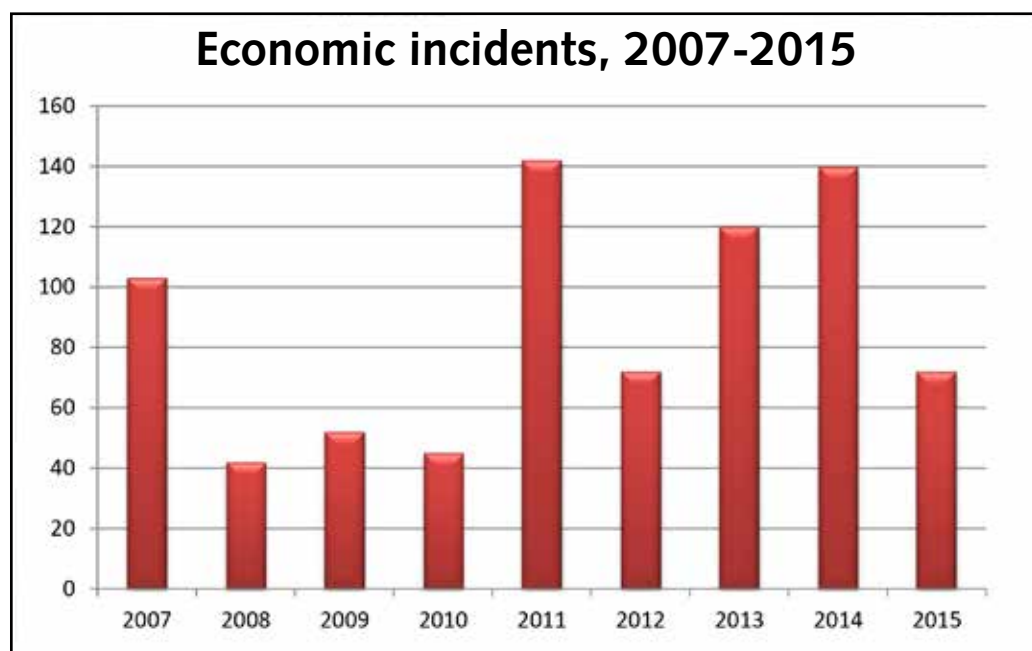
The shop owners, like Mr. Sabetian, had closed their establishments in observance of important Bahá'í holy days, and were told to report to the police. They soon learned that the “rule” they had violated was that they, themselves, had closed for a Bahá'í religious holy day — one that, in fact, overlapped with an important Muslim holy day, thus supposedly offending the “people.”

The shop owners were asked to sign a statement that included the following, “I hereby promise to close my business place according to the law and calendar of the country, and will observe my religious holy days in coordination with the Public Places Supervision Office (Amaken) and the Trades Union Council.” In other words, they were to observe national Muslim religious holy days, but not their own.

Later, some shopkeepers were able to negotiate a change only committing Bahá'ís to informing Amaken and the trade unions on which days they planned to close. Accordingly, the shops were allowed to reopen in January 2015.

But, a few months later, in April and May, agents of Amaken once again swept through those three cities and others in Iran, sealing at least 35 Bahá'í-owned shops after they closed to observe Bahá'í holy days during those two months.

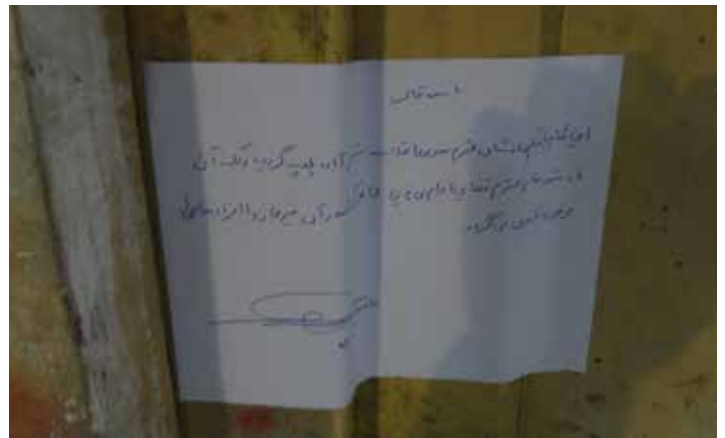
These recent incidents are about far more than a trampling of religious sensibilities. They reflect the latest element of Iran's long-running, government-directed campaign to suppress the economic livelihood of its Bahá'í citizens — a focus on closing small shops and businesses. This focus is significant since such small enterprises remain virtually the only way left for Iranian Bahá'ís to earn a living as a result of the aforementioned policies.



Since 2007, at least 780 incidents of economic persecution against Iranian Bahá'ís have been documented by the Bahá'í International Community. These incidents have occurred throughout the country, in virtually every province. They include shop and factory closings, the denial or non-renewal of business licenses, and dismissals from private businesses after the application of government pressure. This trend has continued under the administration of President Rouhani. Since he came to office in August 2013, the BIC has documented more than 200 incidents of economic discrimination or persecution.

Other incidents of official attacks on Bahá'í businesses include:

- In 2014, the authorities in Isfahan visited more than ten Bahá'í-owned shops and threatened to close them if the owners observed important Bahá'í holy days.
- In 2014, agents of the Revolutionary Guards prevented Bahá'í farmers from harvesting their crops in a rural area near Semnan. In response to a protest from one of the owners who wanted to enter his fields, one of the agents said, “The apples of this orchard are sent to Israel. We will leave here after the crop is finished [when the harvest time is over].”
- In February 2014, an optical shop owned by a Bahá'í in Tabriz was closed down by the authorities on the grounds of “market saturation” — although Muslim owners of optical shops in the same location experienced no such difficulties.
- In late 2013, at least 16 shops in Tonekabon were closed. They included a wide range of small businesses, such as clothing sales, dressmaking, refrigerator and alarm system parts stores, and a television repair shop.
- In late 2012, a large, Bahá'í-owned business distributing hygiene products in Tehran was shut down by authorities resulting in the dismissal of 70 employees. The owners were told they would never be allowed to reopen and were advised to leave Iran. Their stock was put on sale by government agents.
- In May 2012, intelligence agents raided and closed two factories in Semnan with full or partial Bahá'í ownership. One manufactured vertical blinds and employed 51 staff, 36 of whom were not Bahá'ís. The other, a lens grinding factory, had two Bahá'í and six other employees.



A close-up of a seal placed on the door of a Bahá'í-owned workshop in Abadeh in October 2013. It says: “This shop has been shut down by warrant of the general and revolutionary prosecutor of the city.”

## Bureaucratic delays and other tactics

In addition to periodic raids to close businesses and factories, Bahá'ís face daily discrimination on even the simplest of economic matters, such as the renewal of business licenses. These incidents seldom make the news or feature in reports on human rights violations. Yet individual Bahá'ís must constantly battle with authorities to keep their business licenses current or prevent their shops from being closed.

Several incidents in Yazd in 2014 — such as the story of the taxi driver in Yazd that introduced this report — illustrate how the government uses a variety of tactics, including excessive or false paperwork, bureaucratic delays, or even insults, to wear down Bahá'í applicants. In each case, despite repeated entreaties, the requisite permission to do business was denied. In addition to the case of the taxi driver, other cases in Yazd that year include:

- A 29-year-old Bahá'í businessman went to the local police station to submit the forms for a business license. He noticed that, despite having specified his religion as “Bahá'í” on the form, the authorities had changed his religion to “Jewish.” When he informed them of this, they changed the wording to “Perverse sect of Bahaism.” After further delays, and numerous inquiries, he was eventually told to fill out some security forms and bring his national identification number, his mobile telephone number, and the phone numbers of all the members of his family to the security office. Security officials also interrogated the man's Bahá'í employees, recording their national identification numbers and mobile telephone numbers, as well as those of all their family members.
- A Bahá'í tradesman sought to obtain a business permit from the union in charge of household repair shops. Because of his length of experience with union leaders, he quickly received the application documents, which were then submitted to the local Amaken office. Shortly thereafter, he was told by the union that Amaken had rejected his application. He went to the Amaken office to appeal and was told his application was refused because he would have to go to people's homes to carry out his work — something that, in the prejudicial reasoning of the government, might expose ordinary Iranians to an “unclean” Bahá'í. Moreover, he was told the Amaken office had received a circular instructing them not to give business licenses to Bahá'ís.

# The power of Amaken: How the Public Places Supervision Office operates

Many of the recent incidents involving the punitive closure of Bahá'í-owned shops in Iran have been undertaken by agents of a governmental entity known simply as Amaken, which is shorthand for *Amaken-e Omomi* — the Public Places Supervision Office.

Amaken was initially established in the 1980s to provide Revolutionary security forces the jurisdiction to seek out, raid, and arrest members of opposition groups that existed mainly underground, according to Houshang Bouzari, a former advisor to Iran's oil ministry.<sup>1</sup> It did this by requiring landlords to report the identity and occupation of people renting their properties. Mr. Bouzari told the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center in 2008.

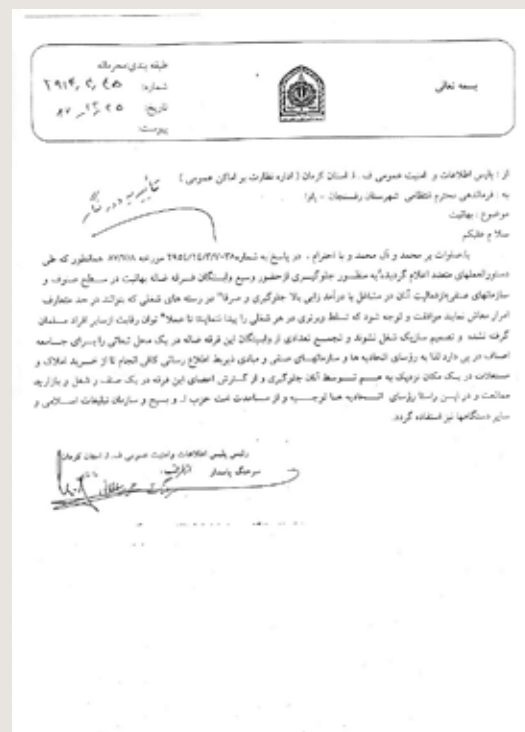
Amaken later came to be seen as an enforcer of Islamic values in public establishments, concerning itself “with monitoring ‘morality crimes’ such as physical contact between men and women and playing music,” according to Human Rights Watch.<sup>2</sup>

A 2010 report by the government of New Zealand categorized Amaken as one of the many branches of Iran's security apparatus, listing it alongside the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), the Ministry of Information and Security, and law enforcement agencies in general.

Bahá'í shop owners and businesspeople have long been familiar with Amaken, which has orchestrated the crackdown on the operation of Bahá'í businesses throughout Iran.

In October 2014, for example, an agent of Amaken told a Bahá'í in Semnan, where dozens of Bahá'í-owned businesses have been closed over the years, that: “Regarding any violation that we may overlook for others, we will apply the law with utmost scrutiny for you [Bahá'ís].” As well as smuggling merchandise, the lack of a business permit, overcharging, not paying insurance for employees, failing to submit invoices, these violations included having Bahá'í literature at work, discussing religion whilst working, and closing businesses on Bahá'í Holy Days.

The implication is clear: Bahá'ís can have their shops closed on virtually any pretext — with the obvious goal of eliminating Bahá'ís from any public space and depriving them of their income.



Persian original of 15 March 2009 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office of Kerman Province to Rafsanjan police commanders instructing them to restrict real estate purchases by Bahá'ís. See English translation on page 45.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.iranhrdc.org/english/english/publications/witness-testimony/3166-witness-statement-houshang-bouzari.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2004/irano604/5.htm>

## From bountiful orchard to unproductive wasteland

One of the side effects of Iran's economic oppression of Bahá'ís is its impact on the economic vitality of the nation as a whole. In sidelining thousands of Bahá'ís, many of whom — despite the Government's best efforts — are well educated, Iran has deprived itself of considerable human and financial capital.

In some cases, the government has gone so far as to actually destroy the productive capacity of Bahá'í-owned farms, factories and workshops.

Among the clearest examples of this has been a decades-long assault on the enterprises of the Khanjani family.



A bountiful harvest of apples at the Khanjani family farm before the government destroyed it.

In the early 1980s, the government confiscated an automated brick-making factory established and owned by Jamaloddin Khanjani and shut it down. As a result, several hundred people lost their jobs.

After Jamaloddin Khanjani's factory was closed, the family began to develop a 250-acre parcel of mostly arid land near Semnan by building reservoirs to capture the snow melt and other water-conserving technology. Among other improvements, they planted more than 40,000 apple and peach trees.

The orchard became extremely productive, yielding between 200 and 300 tons of food each year, while also employing some 50 people year round and 60 at harvest time.

In 2010, about two years after Mr. Khanjani was arrested and imprisoned, government agents came in with bulldozers and destroyed the reservoirs. In 2015, the family's farmhouse was razed. Elements of the Revolutionary Guards also dumped dirt and debris into the farm's deep wells, rendering them useless.

Siovasht Khanjani, the nephew of Jamaloddin, recently told a gathering of parliamentarians in New York about the episode. Noting that Bahá'ís are often jailed on charges of allegedly harming "national security," he asked: "What national security purpose is served by the destruction of vast farmlands?"

Other Khanjani family members and their enterprises have likewise faced confiscation or closure. A nephew of Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afraseyab Khanjani, had founded an optical factory in Semnan where he manufactured prescription lenses with high technology equipment from



Germany, employing eight people. The government closed the factory, auctioned the equipment, and locked away the entire stock — and all employees lost their jobs.

Niki Khanjani, Jamaloddin Khanjani's son, operated as a retailer of imported European eyeglasses in Tehran. In 2014, his entire inventory was confiscated without any reason given and he was imprisoned for months without charge.

Over the years, many members of the Khanjani family have also been imprisoned. In addition to Jamaloddin, two others are currently incarcerated. Navid Khanjani, Jamaloddin's grand-nephew, has been serving a 12-year sentence for his advocacy for education rights for minorities. Foad Khanjani, Jamaloddin's grandson, is serving a four-year sentence, also on baseless charges.

Jamaloddin Khanjani, it is important to add, is one of the seven imprisoned Iranian Bahá'í leaders. He, along with Fariba Kamalabadi, Afif Naeimi, Saeid Rezaie, Mahvash Sabet, Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Vahid Tizfahm, formed an informal leadership group that served to guide the affairs of the Iranian Bahá'í community in the absence of a formally elected Bahá'í national spiritual assembly, which had been banned by the government in 1983. Ms. Sabet was arrested in March 2008 and the other six in May 2008 on false charges of espionage and forming an illegal group against "national security." They were convicted after a six day trial in 2010 and sentenced to 20 years, the longest sentence of any prisoner of conscience currently in Iran.



Earlier this year, the government destroyed the Khanjani family farmhouse.

## A history of economic persecution: examples from two villages

The story of two villages and long running efforts to deprive Bahá'ís their of their farm-lands offers a glimpse of the degree to which the government has acted over many years in concert with local elements who desire mainly to seize productive property for themselves.

There have been Bahá'ís in the village of Ivel — a summer residence for sheep farmers from the surrounding region of Mazandaran — for more than a century and a half. Since the years immediately following the establishment of their Faith, the Bahá'ís have comprised about half of Ivel's total population living side by side with their Muslim neighbors in comparative harmony.



Images taken from a video, shot on a mobile telephone in the village of Ivel, show fiercely burning fires and several Bahá'í-owned properties reduced to rubble.

Following the Islamic revolution in 1979, the situation for Bahá'ís in Ivel deteriorated. Land was confiscated and attempts to regain it proved unsuccessful. Bahá'ís were denied access to health clinics and other institutions that they themselves had helped establish. Muslim children were encouraged by their teachers to harm their Bahá'í classmates.

In June 1983, the Bahá'ís were forced out of their homes and transported by bus to the nearest major city, Sari, only to be told by the authorities that they must go back. Returning to Ivel, they

were locked in a local mosque and pressured to recant their faith. More than 130 of them — including children and the elderly — were held captive for three days without food or water. Not succumbing to this coercion, they were allowed to return home. However, that same night, they were attacked by villagers. A few were taken off by the mob, others were injured, and more were forced to hide in a nearby forest.

Over time, the Bahá'ís of Ivel returned to their homes and began to work their land. In June 2010, however, unknown individuals moved in with heavy equipment and demolished some 50 homes belonging to Bahá'ís there.

Incited by elements inimical to the Bahá'í community, these anonymous agents blocked normal access to the village, while allowing trucks and front-end loaders to begin leveling the houses.

Amateur video, shot on mobile telephones and posted to the Internet by Iranian human rights activists, showed fiercely burning fires and what appeared to be several buildings reduced to rubble.

## **Pressure to flee in Kata**

The story in Kata, located on the outskirts of Yasuj in the south-western province of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, also reflects a long-running effort by anti-Bahá'í elements, with the support of the government, to seize and take over productive farmland.

There, about 50 Bahá'í families have been long term residents of the village — wishing only to farm their land peacefully.

Instead they have been subjected over the years to mob attacks, the burning of property, and other forms of pressure, aimed at forcing them off their land. And many did flee.

In October 2000, the Ministry of the Execution of the Decrees of the Imam informed the provincial justice ministry that the “possessions of the fleeing Bahá'ís situated in the village of Kata... were confiscated.” The provincial ministry was then provided with a list of properties belonging to Bahá'ís from Kata, and instructed that they be confiscated and the rents transferred to the officer of the Islamic Council of the village.

Their ownership of the land is undeniable: their families have been farming it for generations. And many Bahá'ís returned and sought to continue to farm their land.

But in 2004, six Bahá'í homes in Kata were confiscated, on the execution of the 2000 judgment.

In 2011, five Bahá'ís were summoned to court and ordered to relinquish their farm lands. When they objected to the order, three were imprisoned for six months. Their charge? “Forcible possession” of their own property.

The persecution continues. On 28 June 2015, a number of officials, representing the police, Ministry of Intelligence, and the local Basij, visited Kata and said that the Bahá'ís were not allowed to use confiscated land for cultivation, or other farming activities. Twelve Bahá'ís who had farmed the ancestral land were told to report to court.



### 3 The economic impact of Iran's anti-Bahá'í propaganda campaign

**“While there are a number of Jews in the city, they are different from Bahá'ís. Bahá'ís are unclean, according to official rulings (fatwas).”** — Imam Jom'eh, the Friday prayer leader of Rafsanjan, quoted in a 2014 article by Fars News.

**“Any association with them is to be avoided, unless there is the hope of guiding them [back to Islam].”** — From an 2010 article on the Alef website offering the views of religious leaders generally about Bahá'ís, offering guidance about dealing with them, such as whether to patronize their shops.

**“It is prohibited to make a deal or have association with Bahá'ís.”** — Ayatollah Makarem-Shirazi, quoted on the “askdin” website in 2013 in response to the question: “Can we partner with a Bahá'í in renting a store, working at the same place and then each pay half of the rent?”

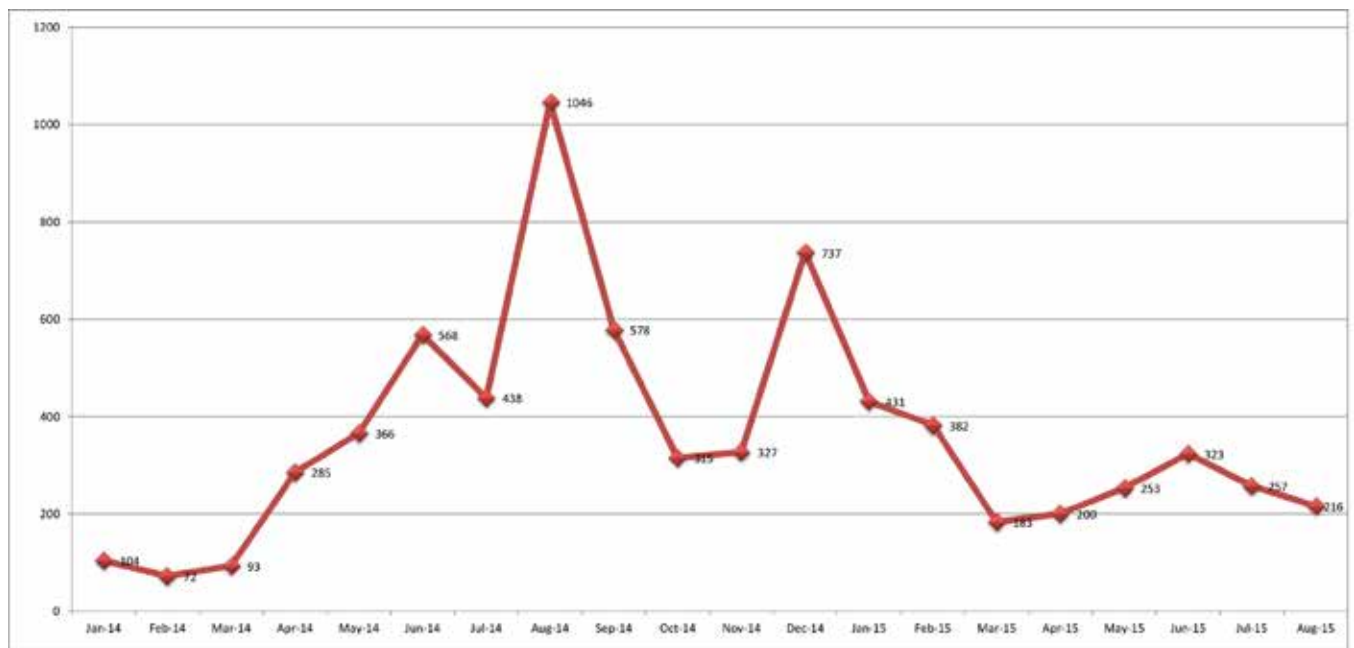
Since the Islamic Revolution, Iran's government has used official and semi-official media outlets to attack Bahá'ís, falsely accusing them of being “anti-Islamic,” “misguided,” “Zionist agents,” “morally corrupt” and, even, “Satanists.” These attacks have appeared in all types of media: newspapers, magazines, television and radio broadcasts and, increasingly, on websites.

The propaganda campaign waged by the authorities was documented in an earlier report of the Bahá'í International Community, *Inciting Hatred: Iran's media campaign to demonize Bahá'ís*. Published in October 2011, that report analyzed a sampling of the official and semi-official anti-Bahá'í propaganda issued during a 16-month period from late 2009 through mid-2011, documenting more than 400 articles, broadcasts, or Web pages that falsely portrayed Bahá'ís as the source of every conceivable evil.

The government's effort to vilify Bahá'ís in the media has actually accelerated under the administration of President Rouhani, despite his statement during his election campaign in 2013 that “All ethnicities, all religions, even religious minorities, must feel justice.” From January 2014 through August 2015, for example, more than 7,000 articles, videos, or web-pages featuring anti-Bahá'í propaganda appeared in government-controlled or government-sponsored media.

The overall aim appears to be to paint Bahá'ís as “the other,” and to create an atmosphere of hatred against them in their own country and among their fellow citizens. Yet while there is a correlation between this campaign and incidents of violence against Bahá'ís and their properties, there is also anecdotal evidence that the outrageous claims made about Bahá'ís have in other respects backfired, and that a growing number of Iranian citizens now have begun to reject the “taboo” against mentioning or defending Bahá'ís.

### Anti-Bahá'í articles in the Iranian media, January 2014-August 2015



From January 2014 to August 2015 there have been more than 7,000 anti-Bahá'í articles published in the Iranian media.

And, while there is no way to survey a patron who did not enter a Bahá'í shop to determine whether he was influenced by the media, it is hard to imagine that such an influx of anti-Bahá'í propaganda has had no effect.

Certainly, many of the recent articles, broadcasts and webpages that attack Bahá'ís in Iran seem calculated to suppress the economic activity of Iranian Bahá'ís. These articles repeat fatwas stating that Bahá'ís are “unclean” and suggest that good Iranians should refuse to associate with them or patronize their shops and businesses.

For example, a 2015 article carried by the Adyan “Religions News Agency” shows photographs of a Bahá'í-owned optometry shop in Zahadan, suggesting it carries out fraudulent billing practices. It then quotes Supreme Leader Khamenei's fatwa saying that business dealings with Bahá'ís are forbidden.

## Bahá'ís are official outcasts under Iran's clerical regime

Iran's religious leaders have issued a number of official decrees (fatwas) stating that Bahá'ís are unclean and should be held at a distance by ordinary people in Iranian society. These decrees have come from the highest level, including one from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei:

**All members of the perverse Bahaist sect are condemned as blasphemous and ritually unclean. Any food items or other objects that have been in contact with contagious dampness [sic] and have been touched by them should be avoided. It is incumbent upon the believers to counter-act the machinations and perversity of this misguided sect.**

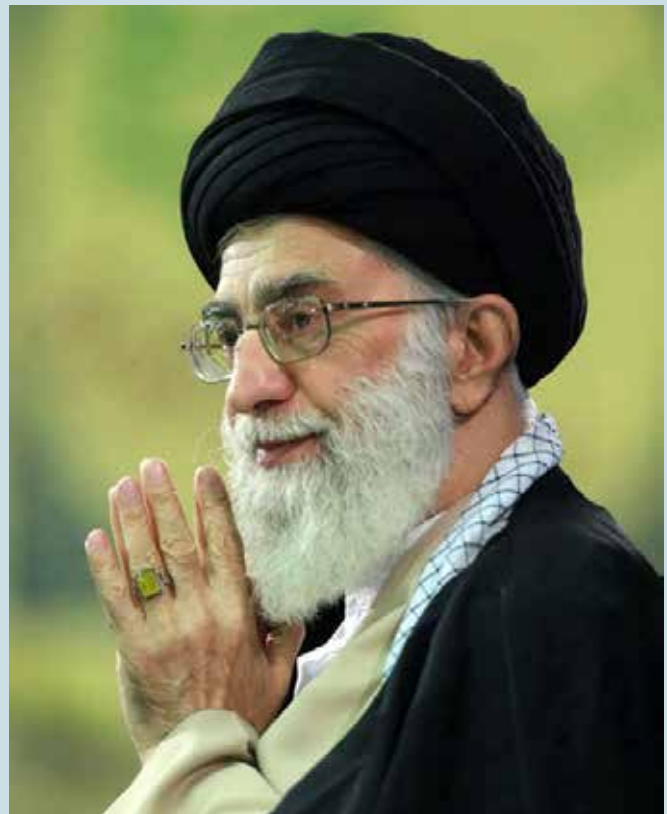
This edict and others like it have been used by officials as a pretext for denying Bahá'ís business licenses and permits — and also in the media as cause for ordinary Iranians to avoid doing business with Bahá'ís.

In 2012, for example, non-Bahá'í businesses in Khorramdasht, Karaj, were issued invitations to attend a sermon by two Shia clerics at the local mosque. The invitations emphasized that attendance was necessary and that invitees should bring their invitations with them. Attendees received a sermon against the Bahá'í Faith and a pamphlet that directed their attention to three fatwas from Shia leaders regarding interactions with Bahá'ís. These three fatwas were:

1) The decree by Ayatollah Khamenei cited above.

2) A fatwa by Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi dated 17 May 2007, which responded to questions that apparently arose in the city of Marvadasht as to whether people could patronize Bahá'í-owned shops. The questions included whether Muslims should consider Bahá'ís as unclean, whether their shops should be patronized, and whether it is permissible to share food or dine with them. Ayatollah Shiarzi answered: “Members of the perverse sect are [not considered] Muslims, and any form of association with them is religiously prohibited, except in cases where there is hope of guiding them [to the right path].”

3) A fatwa by Ayatollah Behjat, which stated: “Bahá'ís are unclean and association with them must be avoided.”



Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, has officially declared that Bahá'ís are “unclean” in religious fatwas.

*For a list of other anti-Bahá'í fatwas, see page 56 of the Appendix.*

## And, yet, the people are not persuaded

Despite efforts by the regime to paint Bahá'ís as unclean or otherwise unfit for society, the people of Iran are increasingly providing support for their Bahá'í friends and neighbors. Examples include university students standing up for an expelled Bahá'í [page 21], citizens who have signed affidavits saying they don't object to the burial of Bahá'ís in public cemeteries [page 17], or parents objecting to the dismissal of a Bahá'í teacher [page 16].

Other incidents that show clear grassroots support from Iranians, high and low, include:

- In November 2014 in Vilahshar, after agents of the Ministry of Intelligence shut down and destroyed a mushroom farm operated by two Bahá'ís, their customers rallied behind them and submitted an affidavit of support to the courts. As a result, the court ordered the plant to be re-opened.
- After a number of Bahá'í-owned shops were closed in Hamadan in 2013, some friendly Muslim business owners gave the Bahá'ís permission to use their own facilities to earn a livelihood — at considerable risk to themselves. Later, one of the Bahá'ís asked a non-Bahá'í shop owner for a discount on some purchases, saying he had been bankrupted by the government. The non-Bahá'í shopkeeper exclaimed: “No, you are not bankrupt. You have bravely resisted injustice. You are the pride of our people. Never say that you are bankrupt. We are proud of you.”

The embrace of Bahá'ís extends to former government leaders or officials, such as those who gathered with a group of Bahá'ís to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the arrest of the seven imprisoned Bahá'í leaders. Among them were: Nasrin Sotoudeh, a prominent human rights lawyer and defender; Muhammad Nourizad, a former journalist with the semi-official Kayhan newspaper; Muhammad Maleki, the first head of Tehran University following the Islamic Revolution, Masumeh Dehghan, an activist and wife of Abdolfatah Soltani, a well-known lawyer who represented the seven Bahá'í leaders and who is himself currently in prison; and Ayatollah Abdol-Hamid Masoumi-Tehrani, a senior Muslim cleric who has called for religious coexistence.



Influential Iranians, human rights activists, journalists and a prominent religious leader gather in an unprecedented show of solidarity to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the imprisonment of the seven former Bahá'í leaders in Iran.

## Fired on the accusation of “devil-worship”

In Yasouj, a Bahá'í teacher at a private school was fired after being accused of being a “devil-worshiper” — a common accusation in government-sponsored anti-Bahá'í propaganda — despite the overwhelming support she received from the school's director and parents.

She had been teaching creative arts at a private school and, on the International Day of Peace, she prepared cards, bearing a picture of the globe and children of various ethnicities holding hands, for students to wear on their shirts.

Someone took one of the cards to the Ministry of Intelligence and suggested that it was a Bahá'í emblem (i.e., the image of boys and girls holding hands) and, furthermore, that this was an emblem of devil-worshippers. A Ministry official summoned the director of the school and told her to fire the Bahá'í. The director protested but the official insisted on immediate dismissal.

The director called in the parents of the students, who comprised around 40 families, and told them that a problem had arisen and the program had been cancelled. He invited the Bahá'í teacher to explain. She informed the parents that a nice celebration of the International Day of Peace had been planned for the children, but because of her being a Bahá'í, the Ministry of Intelligence in Yasouj had instructed the school director to fire her and cancel the program. All the families objected to this decision, and some even went to the Ministry of Intelligence to express their displeasure. The Ministry did not reverse its decision, however.

The International Day of Peace is celebrated around the world on 21 September. Shown in the accompanying photograph are children carrying flags from members of the United Nations during a ceremony at its New York headquarters in 2015. But in Iran, a Bahá'í teacher was fired for showing to her students an image of children of various ethnicities, which authorities said was emblematic of “devil worship.” (UN Photo)





## The financial (and emotional) cost of burying the dead

Last November, an 86-year-old Bahá'í woman passed away in Tabriz. According to the religious laws of the Bahá'í Faith concerning burial, a person should not be laid to rest more than an hour's travel from his or her place of death. And so her family sought to have her buried in the city's Vadi-e-Rahmat Cemetery, which met that requirement.

But officials blocked that, saying the city's Muslim residents would object to the burial of a non-Muslim in their cemetery. They told the family to send her body to a Bahá'í cemetery in Miandoab, roughly two hours away.

It was not the first time officials have prevented Bahá'ís from being buried. From August 2013 through March 2014, fifteen Bahá'ís who died in Tabriz had to be buried in Miandoab, against the wishes of the families — and at considerable financial cost for transportation, long distance arrangements, and so on.

In an attempt to appeal to the conscience of the authorities, the family of the woman took an affidavit around to their friends and neighbors, asking if they objected to her burial in Vadi-e-Rahmat. Within a short time they obtained 48 signatures, many of them from Muslims, showing that the people approached had no objection.

When the authorities were presented with the letter, however, they held their ground — and the woman was buried in Miandoab against the family's desires.

The story illustrates how officials have prevented Bahá'ís from carrying out one of the most basic of human customs — the burial of their dead. It also suggests the economic cost of having to arrange burials at a great distance. Perhaps more significantly, however, it tells of the real support that Bahá'ís enjoy from the people of Iran.

That Muslim friends and neighbors would say they do not object to burial in proximity to Bahá'ís runs entirely counter to the government's narrative of them being “unclean.”

But the assault on Bahá'í burials goes far beyond blocking their access to a public cemetery — as does the economic impact. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Bahá'í cemeteries throughout Iran have been confiscated, vandalized, or even bulldozed by the government or with governmental complicity. These attacks have included firebombing mortuary buildings, toppling gravestones, uprooting landscape shrubbery, spray-painting anti-Bahá'í graffiti on cemetery walls, and even the exhumation of bodies.

This destructive activity comes at considerable cost to Iranian Bahá'ís. Local communities



The Bahá'ís of Yazd are on their third cemetery. The first was confiscated, while the second was vandalized numerous times, as shown in this photograph from December 2012, when many graves were destroyed and all of the trees cut down.



A photo of ongoing construction work at the Bahá'í cemetery in Shiraz, where the Revolutionary Guard has been building a "sports and recreation" complex since April 2014.

have had to purchase new lands, restore vandalized or destroyed properties, which had been beautified at great expense prior to an attack, and they must often bear the expense of transporting the deceased to other sites.

In Isfahan, for example, the original Bahá'í cemetery was confiscated in 1984. A new site, remote from the city, was then acquired, and steps were taken to beautify it with the planning of some 2,500 trees. In September 2008, those trees were cut down and the storage room containing furniture and tools was burned down. In March 2011, some 70 pine trees were uprooted and removed from the site.

The Bahá'ís of Yazd are on their third cemetery. The first, which featured a beautiful flower garden in the city's central area, was confiscated. Another piece of land was then given to the Bahá'ís in a desert area outside of the city. Despite its remote location, the Bahá'ís worked hard to make it attractive by planting trees. In 2007, many of those trees and numerous gravestones were bulldozed and later an earth embankment was constructed to prevent Bahá'ís from using it. In 2013, a third piece of land was allocated for Bahais. Situated in the middle of the desert, between two sandy hills, with no access road save through a garbage dump, the Bahá'ís have nevertheless begun plans to beautify this third plot of land.

The most dramatic recent example of such desecration has been the demolition of an historic Bahá'í cemetery in Shiraz by elements of the Revolutionary Guards to build a new "cultural and sports" center.

The cemetery is the resting place of some 950 Bahá'ís, many of whom were historic or prominent figures in the Bahá'í community of Iran. Interred at the site, for example, are ten Bahá'í women whose cruel hanging in 1983 came to symbolize the government's deadly persecution of Bahá'ís.

The site was confiscated by the government in 1983, although it had been largely left alone until April 2014, when the Guards began to move trucks and heavy equipment to the property and started excavation for the new building's foundation.

Despite international protests about the desecration, such as a call from three high level United Nations human rights experts in September 2014 for an end to the demolition, the Guards have continued to build on the site. As of August 2015, reports emerged from Iran saying that construction has accelerated and the main building was now "a few stories high."

## 4 Denying Bahá'ís access to higher education as economic oppression

- In December 2014 at Azad University in Najafabad, a Bahá'í was sent to the campus security office because she had entered “other” for her religion. There, an official asked her to state her religion outright. She said she was a Bahá'í. He responded: “Farewell, you may leave.”
- In September 2014, a Bahá'í student was expelled from Baharestan University. University officials expressed their regrets and praised the young woman's work, but said they had been told to dismiss her by the school's security office.
- In January 2014, a Bahá'í studying materials engineering in Kermanshah University had her student card confiscated and was expelled. When questioned, a security official said the decision was based on an “enactment” of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council — presumably a reference to the 1991 Bahá'í Question memorandum.

The government's long-running effort to block Bahá'ís from obtaining higher education, which has prevented thousands of young Bahá'ís from attending university or college, has had a major economic impact on the Bahá'í community, sidelining its youth to low-paying jobs or unemployment.

Without a degree from a recognized university, young Bahá'ís find it virtually impossible to obtain regular employment in an Iranian company or business, unless they are able to find a sympathetic employer, as taking on Bahá'ís comes with risks to proprietors, whatever their religion.

This ban has undergone several evolutions, as the government has sought to evade criticism by international human rights monitors for this policy. At first, the ban was enforced simply by preventing Bahá'ís from taking the national college entrance examination. In late 2003, however, likely in response to international pressure, the government indicated it would drop the declaration of religious affiliation on the application for the national university entrance examination, thus supposedly clearing the way for Bahá'ís to take the exam and enter university.

However, the government has since then used a number of alternative methods to block Bahá'ís from actually matriculating, such as reporting their test results as “incomplete” in the computerized database used by colleges and universities for admission. Further, if Bahá'ís manage to enroll, they are frequently expelled from university once it becomes known they are Bahá'ís.

That such expulsions are explicit government policy was made clear in a letter issued in 2006 by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology to 81 universities in every part of the country. [See page 40]





Stamped “confidential,” the letter states that if “the identity of Bahá’í individuals becomes known at the time of enrollment or during the course of their studies, they must be expelled from university.”

The directive flatly contradicts public and private statements of Iranian government officials over the last several years, who have sought to portray their educational system as open to Bahá’ís and free of discriminatory practices.

The government’s zeal in preventing Bahá’ís from obtaining higher education is further reflected by the recent arrest and imprisonment of 13 Bahá’í educators who were seeking to provide alternative education to young Bahá’ís through an ad hoc initiative known as the Bahá’í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE), which uses mainly online educational instruction to provide higher education equivalent to that provided by a normal college or university.

This 2006 letter from the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructed 81 universities to expel Bahá’ís if they are discovered. An English translation is on page 40.

## At universities, Bahá'ís find support from their peers and others

In 2014, Shadan Shirazi took the national mathematics exam and placed 113th out of an estimated one million students. Yet despite her high score, and her keen desire to learn, she was blocked from entering Chalus university. The reason: she is a Bahá'í.

Her story was widely spread on social media in Iran. More than two dozen Persian-language sites told Ms. Shirazi's story, recounting among other things the words of an official of the national educational testing organization, Mr. Morteza Nourbakhsh, as telling Ms. Shirazi and her family that as much as he might like to ensure she could enroll, his hands were tied by higher authorities.

According to one account, Mr. Nourbakhsh reportedly told Ms. Shirazi's father — who himself was denied access to university in 1986 — that: “We could not do anything for the Bahá'ís then and now we also cannot do anything for them.”

In October of that year, students at Chalus university placed a note on an empty seat in the classroom bearing Ms. Shirazi's name. When the professor had concluded the roll call at the beginning of the class, the students asked him why Ms. Shirazi's name was not included. The professor gave no reply, signaling that he, too, was aware of Ms. Shirazi's case.

Several times throughout the class students mentioned her name and that she had been denied access to higher education — this despite the fact that Ms. Shirazi was not a student of that class, and no one knew her personally.

In another example of the kind of support Bahá'ís who have been denied education have been receiving, a group of nearly three dozen lawyers in Kermanshah recently signed a letter objecting to a court decision that essentially upheld the right of the national education testing organization to prevent Bahá'ís from obtaining the results of their examinations, which are required for their entry into university.

This letter, signed by 33 attorneys in the city, lists articles from Iran's Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNESCO's Convention Against Discrimination in Education, and article 13 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in support of the Bahá'ís' fundamental right to education.



Shadan Shirazi, a Bahá'í student who took the national mathematics exam in 2014 and placed 113th out of an estimated one million students — and yet was blocked from entering Chalus University.

## 5 The exclusion of Bahá'ís from Iran's economy is official policy

**“Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians are the only recognized religious minorities.”** — Iranian Constitution, Article 13. (Bahá'ís are excluded.)

**“Keep away altogether from this perverse and misguided sect ... Yes, they are completely perverted.”** — Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, from a list of fatwas distributed circa 2010 in response to the question “Is Bahaism misguided and perverse?”

**“It is necessary that Muslims cut off their association or trade with this sect.”** — Grand Ayatollah Boroujerdi, cited from a list of fatwas regarding the Bahá'ís distributed circa 2010.

**“General status of the Bahá'ís within the country's system ... The government's dealings with them must be in such a way that their progress and development are blocked.”** — Excerpt from a 1991 document signed by then Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other political and religious leaders.

The effort to deny Bahá'ís a decent livelihood for themselves and their families is the official policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This fact is confirmed by decades of confiscations, shop closings, and other government-backed actions to liquidate Bahá'í businesses, as well as by a number of government policy directives and memorandums.

The assault on the economic foundation of the Iranian Bahá'í community began soon after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. As a first step, the government seized numerous properties and institutions owned by the Iranian Bahá'í community, some of which were razed. These included buildings used for meetings and worship, cemeteries, holy places associated with the Founders of the Faith, and a large hospital in Tehran.

The government also confiscated or froze the assets of several Bahá'í community funds and savings institutions in 1979. An estimated 15,000 individual Bahá'ís lost their savings in these seizures.

In 1980, the government began to dismiss Bahá'ís from public sector employment. Thousands of Bahá'ís in public education, government offices, hospitals and other government institutions were fired. Prior to being fired, many were asked to convert to Islam and were subsequently dismissed for “having beliefs contrary to Islam” after they refused to recant their faith. The ban on Bahá'ís in the public sector became official in 1981.

Throughout the 1980s, a number of large Bahá'í-owned business or factories were also confiscated or closed. One among many examples was the confiscation in 1980 or 1981 of an automated brick factory owned and operated by Jamaloddin Khanjani [see page 8], which employed several hundred people.



Soon after the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the government or its agents seized numerous Bahá'í-owned properties. Among the most egregious of these seizures was the confiscation and destruction of the House of the Báb in Shiraz, a significant Bahá'í holy place, which was confiscated by the Revolutionary Guards in April 1979 and later demolished in September 1979, as shown in the photo at left.

Numerous individual Bahá'ís have also had their homes or properties seized. A 2006 report from Miloon Kothari, the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, said at least 640 Bahá'í properties had been seized by the government in Iran between 1980 and 2006. “The properties listed included houses and agricultural land, but also Bahá'í sacred places such as cemeteries and shrines,” said Mr. Kothari. “The affected owners have allegedly not been given an opportunity to participate or receive prior information related to ongoing confiscation procedures.”

Mr. Kothari said many of the confiscations were made by Iranian Revolutionary Courts, and that some of the verdicts he examined declared that “the confiscation of the property of ‘the evil sect of the Bahá'í’ [were] legally and religiously justifiable.” In rural areas, he said, such confiscations were often accompanied by threats and physical violence before and during related forced evictions. Mr. Kothari said he was “concerned at the clear evidence of discriminatory conduct with respect to Bahá'í property, including housing.”

## The Bahá'í Question and other documents

In the early 1990s, likely in response to widespread international condemnation of wholesale killing and imprisonment of Bahá'ís, the Iranian government began to emphasize “softer” forms of persecution.

In 1991, this shift was codified in a high-level document, known as the Bahá'í Question memorandum. It outlines a series of repressive measures to be taken against Bahá'ís to “block” their development, including restrictions on education and economic activity, and provides conclusive evidence that the campaign against the Bahá'ís is centrally directed by the government.

**In 1991, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei signed a high-level document, known as the Bahá'í Question memorandum, that outlines a series of repressive measures to be taken against Bahá'ís to “block” their development, including restrictions on education and economic activity.**

Stamped “confidential,” the document was prepared at the request of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the then President of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The memorandum was signed by Hujjatu'l Islam Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani, Secretary of the Council, and approved by Mr. Khamenei, who added his signature to the document.

The memorandum came to light in a 1993 report by UN Special Representative Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, who said the document came as “reliable information” just as his annual report on Iran to the UN Commission on Human Rights was being completed.

The full document is reproduced in English in the appendix on page 37. Its economic provisions are stark. While it says Bahá'ís should be permitted “a modest livelihood as is available to the general population,” it also says they are to be denied “any position of influence.” However, the memorandum states, if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís, they are to be denied employment.

It also establishes an educational policy designed to exclude Bahá'ís from higher education. “They must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís,” it states.

That the 1991 memorandum is still in effect is demonstrated by a 9 April 2007 letter from the security unit of the Public Places Supervision Office (Amaken) to police commanders nationwide. The letter says Bahá'ís may not be issued work permits in a wide range of businesses, including hotels and tourism, the food industry, jewelry, publishing, and those related to computers and the Internet. Recently, there has been evidence that optometry has been added to this list.

Several provisions of the letter are especially significant. First, it indicates that police should “take measures to identify Bahá'í individuals working in craft businesses and collect statistics” on them. This language ominously echoes a directive issued about two years earlier by Iran's military headquarters calling on all security agencies to report on “all activities” of Bahá'ís for the purpose of “identifying all the individuals” who belong to the Bahá'í Faith. This letter, dated 29 October 2005, stirred considerable alarm among international human rights organizations after it was first publicized in March 2006 by Asma Jahangir, then the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, who expressed concern that “the information gained as a result of such monitoring will be used as a basis for the increased persecution of, and discrimination against, members of the Bahá'í Faith.”

The 9 April 2007 letter, echoing the language of the 1991 memorandum, goes on to say that the activities of Bahá'ís in “high-earning businesses should be halted, and only those work permits that would provide them with an ordinary livelihood should be allowed.”

That this policy has been fully implemented is clear from numerous incidents, such as:

- On 5 August 2007, a Bahá'í who had served in the National Iranian Oil Products company in Abadan was told that, “owing to your membership in the Bahaist sect,” his pension cannot be renewed. [See Appendix, page 50]



• In July/August 2007, in Marvdasht, a Bahá'í who is working in the film-recording business was told by an official from the Public Places Supervision Office: “Bahá'ís are not permitted to work in this field, and if you are found possessing any equipment relevant to this type of profession, all your equipment will be confiscated.”

• Also around August 2007, in Parsabad, where only three Bahá'í families were living, a memorandum was circulated by government offices instructing the local citizens not to give any business to, and not to associate with the Bahá'ís.

## Exclusion from the food industry because Bahá'ís are “unclean.”

In addition to redlining businesses like tourism, jewelry, and computer sales, the letter further restricts Bahá'ís from ownership or employment in virtually the entire food industry, suggesting that they are “unclean.” The list includes such occupations as catering at reception halls, working at buffets or in restaurants, employment in grocery shops, kebab shops, cafes, and poultry or other meat markets, as well as work in ice cream parlors, fruit juice and soft drinks shops, pastry shops, and coffee shops.

These provisions relate to concepts in Islamic law that define certain things as either “clean” or “unclean” and the degree to which clean or pure items (such as fresh water or unadulterated fruit juice) can become contaminated by contact — such as shaking hands or sharing food, or mixing with things that are defined as unclean, such as blood or bodily wastes.

That Bahá'ís have been put into the category of “unclean” is, of course, as absurd and offensive as the idea of “untouchables” in India or “burakumin” in Japan. But the religious leaders that rule Iran today have issued a number of fatwas that decree Bahá'ís are to be treated as ritually unclean and impure.



The 1991 Bahá'í Question memorandum, which established a national policy to explicitly “block” the “progress and development” of the Iranian Bahá'í community. The full text in English is reproduced on page 37.

## Bahá'ís specifically excluded from legal protections in Iran

The legal situation facing Bahá'ís in Iran is compounded by the fact that they have been specifically and officially excluded from all of the protections of citizenship within Iran's current legal system, in contravention of international law and covenants to which Iran is a signatory.

Soon after the Iranian Revolution, the country adopted a new constitution. While that document outlines various civil and political rights, it makes an important exclusion where Bahá'ís are concerned.

Article 12 of the Iranian Constitution defines Islam — and specifically the Twelver Shia branch of Islam — as the “official” religion of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Article 13 then provides for the rights of other religious minorities in the country:

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.

In other words, the Bahá'í Faith is quite specifically excluded from legal protections afforded to other religious groups. Moreover, Iranian courts have since made clear that this constitutional exclusion makes them “unprotected infidels” in the Iranian justice system.

That designation — that Bahá'ís are “infidels” and therefore lack certain protections under Iranian law — is the linchpin for impunity from prosecution for crimes against Bahá'ís and the “legal” exclusion from the economic sphere.

## The high cost of bail

Since 2007, more than 800 Bahá'ís have been arrested, while some 74 are currently in prison. Among the most absurd features of this crackdown is the high bails that are required by the courts if Bahá'ís are to remain free before trial.

The charges against Bahá'ís commonly include “activities against national security,” “espionage for Israel,” or “propaganda against the Islamic Republic” — accusations which are utterly false.

Yet they and their families are often hit with requirements for very high bail — frequently at a level that means they must mortgage their homes or businesses, drain bank accounts, or go deeply into debt. Some recent examples of high bail or bail that does not fit the crime are:

- In December 2013, a Bahá'í woman spent eight days in Gorgan Prison before she and her family were able to post a bail equivalent to US\$60,000.
- In late 2013, agents raided the home of a Bahá'í in Mashhad, arresting him and detaining

him in Mashhad prison. He was released in January 2014 after posting a bail equivalent to US\$78,000.

- In October 2014, two Bahá'í women in Shahinshahr were arrested. One was charged with propaganda against the regime and of printing and distributing pamphlets for the purpose of “misleading youth.” Her bail was set equivalent to US\$14,000. The other woman was charged with propaganda against the regime and operating a day-care center that included Muslim children in its care. She was released after bail equivalent to US\$26,000 was posted.
- In August 2014, authorities arrested five Bahá'ís in Tehran after agents of the Ministry of Intelligence raided the optical shop where they work. Bail for one of them, Niki Khanjani, was set equivalent to nearly a million dollars (US\$937,000). He is the son of Jamaloddin Khanjani, who is one of the seven imprisoned Bahá'í leaders. [See page 8]



## A resilient community

Despite the aforementioned legal barriers, the Bahá'ís of Iran continue to make efforts towards contributing to the betterment of their families and communities. While policy may inhibit their opportunities, the following three brief stories — each of a member of an ad hoc Bahá'í leadership group that has been imprisoned since 2008 — are symbolic of the community's resilience:

- Although highly educated and specialized in the training of the mentally and physically handicapped, Behrouz Tavakkoli was nevertheless fired from his government job as a social worker in the 1980s. In order to support his family, he established a small carpentry shop in the city of Gonabad.
- Mahvash Sabet was a teacher before the Islamic Revolution and rose to become principal at several schools. After the Revolution, like thousands of other Iranian Bahá'í educators, she was fired from her job and blocked from working in public education. She later used her professional skills to direct the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, an informal effort to provide Bahá'í youth with college-level learning.
- Afif Naeimi was unable to pursue his dream of becoming a doctor because as a Bahá'í he was denied access to a university education. An inheritance and some properties which were to be passed along upon the death of his father when he was young were confiscated by the authorities. Ultimately, he was able to earn a livelihood by managing a textile manufacturing company started by his father-in-law.

The seven imprisoned Bahá'í leaders, photographed several months before their arrest, are, in front, Behrouz Tavakkoli and Saeid Rezaie, and, standing, Fariba Kamalabadi, Vahid Tizfahm, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, and Mahvash Sabet.



## 6 International law and reaction

International law clearly forbids the kind of discriminatory economic policy used by Iran against Bahá'ís. It also proscribes discrimination in education and incitement to hatred.

Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), for example, prohibits discrimination on any ground such as “race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”

The ICCPR also expressly prohibits hate speech. Article 20 states: “Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.”

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) guarantees in Article 6 “the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.”

The ICESCR also prohibits discrimination in education. Article 13, for example, says: “Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means...”

UN bodies charged with monitoring compliance of these covenants have in recent years censured Iran for failing to live up to their provisions in relation to its Bahá'í citizens.

In 2013, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued a series of pointed recommendations to the Iranian government — recommendations that included a plea for Iran to ensure that all citizens, regardless of religious belief, enjoy full rights without any discrimination.

The Committee specifically referred to the Bahá'í community, expressing its concern that Iranian Bahá'ís face “widespread and entrenched discrimination, including denial of access to employment in the public sector, institutions of higher education, as well as to benefits of the pension system.” It recommended that Iran “take steps to ensure that members of the Bahá'í community are protected against discrimination and exclusion in every field.”

The International Labour Organization has also found Iran's policies and practices regarding Bahá'ís to be discriminatory. In 2013, for example, it expressed “deep concern” over continuing economic and educational discrimination against Bahá'ís in Iran.

In particular, an ILO committee charged with monitoring global compliance with the right to non-discrimination in employment and occupation said the case of Iranian Bahá'ís remains “particularly serious” because of “systematic discrimination” by the government.

The ILO committee's report, in its conclusions, “urged the Government [of Iran] to take decisive action to combat discrimination against ethnic minorities and unrecognized religious minorities, in particular, the Bahá'ís.”

The report also quoted worker, employer, and government representatives about the situation in Iran. Such comments are kept anonymous to ensure the committee's independence from pressure by governments.

"The worker members stated that in spite of numerous examinations of this case, no real progress had been made to comply with the Convention," said the report. "The lack of ability of the Government to repeal even the most patently discriminatory legislation and regulations was deeply regrettable."



The International Labour Organization (ILO) has repeatedly called on Iran to explain workplace discrimination against Bahá'ís. Shown here is the worker's group meeting, 104th Session of the ILO, Geneva, June 2015. (ILO photo: Pouteau/Crozet)

The worker members also proposed that a high-level mission be sent to visit the country as soon as possible, with the goal of fact-finding and setting a time-bound action plan aimed at ensuring compliance with the Convention. Employer members, likewise, "urged the Government to take concrete steps to ensure comprehensive protection against direct and indirect discrimination on all the grounds enumerated in the Convention."

Several governments, including the European Union and Canada, were also quoted in the report. The government representative from Canada, for example, said religious minorities faced persistent and pervasive discrimination.

"Members of the Bahá'í Faith were discriminated against in access to education, universities and occupations in the public sector; they had been deprived of property, employment and education. The Government's continued failure to respect its obligations under the Convention in the face of repeated calls for change by the Committee demonstrated a lack of seriousness and good faith," said the government member from Canada, according to the report.

## Iran's absurd denials of economic discrimination

When questioned in international forums, Iranian government representatives have denied that Bahá'ís are subject to official discrimination of any kind.

On 31 October 2014, for example, less than a week after some 80 shops were closed in Kerman Province, Mohammad Javad Larijani, head of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, said Bahá'ís “enjoy all the privileges of any citizen in Iran.”

He was responding to questions from other governments at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, during Iran's Universal Periodic Review. He told the Council:

**You know Bahais are a minority in Iran, and, as has been asked, they are dealt under the so-called citizen's contract.**

**Under this citizenship contract, they enjoy all the privileges of any citizen in Iran.**

**They are very much affluent people. They have plenty of factories, firms and economically they are very active. They have professors at universities; they have students at university.**

**So they enjoy all the possibilities and privileges.**

His statement is patently false. As the incidents cited in this report show, Iranian Bahá'ís are far from “privileged” in the economic sphere — and they are likewise excluded from higher education.



Mohammad Javad Larijani, speaking in 2012 at the UN Human Rights Council. (UN Photo)



## What does Iran do with all of the confiscated properties?

Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the government has confiscated thousands of Bahá'í-owned homes, farms, holy places, cemeteries, factories and other properties, not to mention pensions, bank accounts, computers, shop inventory, and other business or personal assets.

In court documents and public statements, the officials involved have claimed that because the Bahá'í Faith is a “perverse sect” or “illegal movement,” such confiscations are wholly justified under Iranian law.

In 2013, the Reuters news agency ran a major, three-part investigative piece examining what happens to such confiscated goods and properties. Based on a six-month probe, the article was titled: “Khamenei controls massive financial empire built on property seizures.”

The conclusion: that much of what the government has confiscated from Bahá'ís — and other religious minorities — has gone to enrich the empire controlled by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The first part of the series, published on 11 November 2013, describes how an organization known usually just as “Setad” but has the full name of *Setad Ejraiye Farmane Hazrate Emam* [Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam], now holds at least US\$95 billion in real estate, corporate stakes and other assets.

“Setad has become one of the most powerful organizations in Iran, though many Iranians, and the wider world, know very little about it. In the past six years, it has morphed into a business juggernaut that now holds stakes in nearly every sector of Iranian industry, including finance, oil, telecommunications, the production of birth-control pills and even ostrich farming,” said Reuters.

“Just one person controls that economic empire — Khamenei. As Iran's top cleric, he has the final say on all governmental matters,” the article continues, adding that, while his personal lifestyle may be spartan, the control of such a vast empire has “empowered” him.



A major investigative report by the Reuters News Agency in 2013 said the confiscations of properties from Bahá'ís and others in Iran have gone to enrich the empire of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The source of those billions, Reuters continued, has been “systematic seizure of thousands of properties belonging to ordinary Iranians” who are religious minorities, such as Bahá'ís, as well as business people and other Iranians living abroad.

The article went on to examine the case of a Bahá'í named Aminullah Katirai, whose extensive real estate holdings were seized in the 1990s.

The article said Mr. Katirai owned a house and land around the city of Hamedan in northwest Iran and that Setad confiscated about 750 hectares [1,853 acres] — the family's entire land holdings in the area.

“Court records documenting the property seizures that were reviewed by Reuters claim Katirai had collaborated with the prior government of the shah. Katirai's daughter says her father never had any ties to the shah's government,” the article said.

Mr. Katirai tried to appeal to government authorities, writing a letter to a parliamentary commission in 1993 stating he was being targeted solely because of his religion.

“In a response seen by Reuters, a commission representative cited Article 13 of Iran's constitution, which says that only Zoroastrians, Jews and Christians are recognized as religious minorities and have the right to practice their religion within the limits of the law. ‘The Bahá'í Faith is not among religion minorities,’ a translation of the letter stated. The commission refused to consider his case,” said the article.

## 7 Conclusion

**The persecution of Iranian Bahá'ís has not diminished since President Hassan Rouhani came to power in August 2013, despite his promises for an end to discrimination based on religion. In the economic sphere alone, there have been more than 200 incidents of economic persecution against Bahá'ís in Iran. These include shop closings, dismissals, and the denial of business licenses.**

In his speech at the United Nations in September 2015, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani stated that “today a new chapter has been started in Iran’s relations with the world.”

This “new chapter” — the normalization of relations — should create an opportunity for the international community to strongly and unitedly indicate to Iran that it cannot deprive a whole segment of its population of the right to a decent livelihood.

While violations of economic, social and cultural rights may attract less attention than civil and political ones, they can be equally insidious — and equally effective when the goal is the eradication of the Bahá'ís as a viable community.

Since President Rouhani came to power in August 2013, there have been more than 200 incidents of economic persecution against Bahá'ís. These include shop closings, dismissals, and the denial of business licenses. The government also continues to deprive young Bahá'ís access to higher education, effectively sidelining them to low paying jobs or unemployment.

Moreover, the government’s effort to incite hatred against Bahá'ís has not only continued but accelerated — a campaign that directly targets the economic activity of Bahá'ís and their families, through continuous suggestions that the general population should stringently avoid doing business with Bahá'ís.

Despite all this, the people of Iran are increasingly rejecting the government’s allegations about Bahá'ís, refusing to believe the anti-Bahá'í propaganda disseminated by official news agencies and often taking great risks themselves to help Bahá'ís find employment, education, or justice in general.

In episode after episode, ordinary Iranians, as well as activists, have stood up for their Bahá'í friends and neighbors, a patent refutation of the government’s claim that its measures against Bahá'ís are necessitated by the prejudices of Iranian citizens and the duty to keep public order.

Nevertheless, the need for continued international action is as great as ever. The last three decades have proved that Iranian authorities are indeed cognizant of international opinion and that pressure to meet their obligations under international human rights law can have an effect.

We call on businesses seeking to engage with Iran to raise the issue of human rights. We call on member states to ensure that Iran lives up to its international commitments. And we call on citizens to take actions that make known what is happening in Iran. Through such steps, our hope is that Iranian Bahá'ís will be able to more effectively contribute to the overall prosperity of their homeland alongside fellow Iranians of all walks of life.

## Appendix I — Documents from Iran

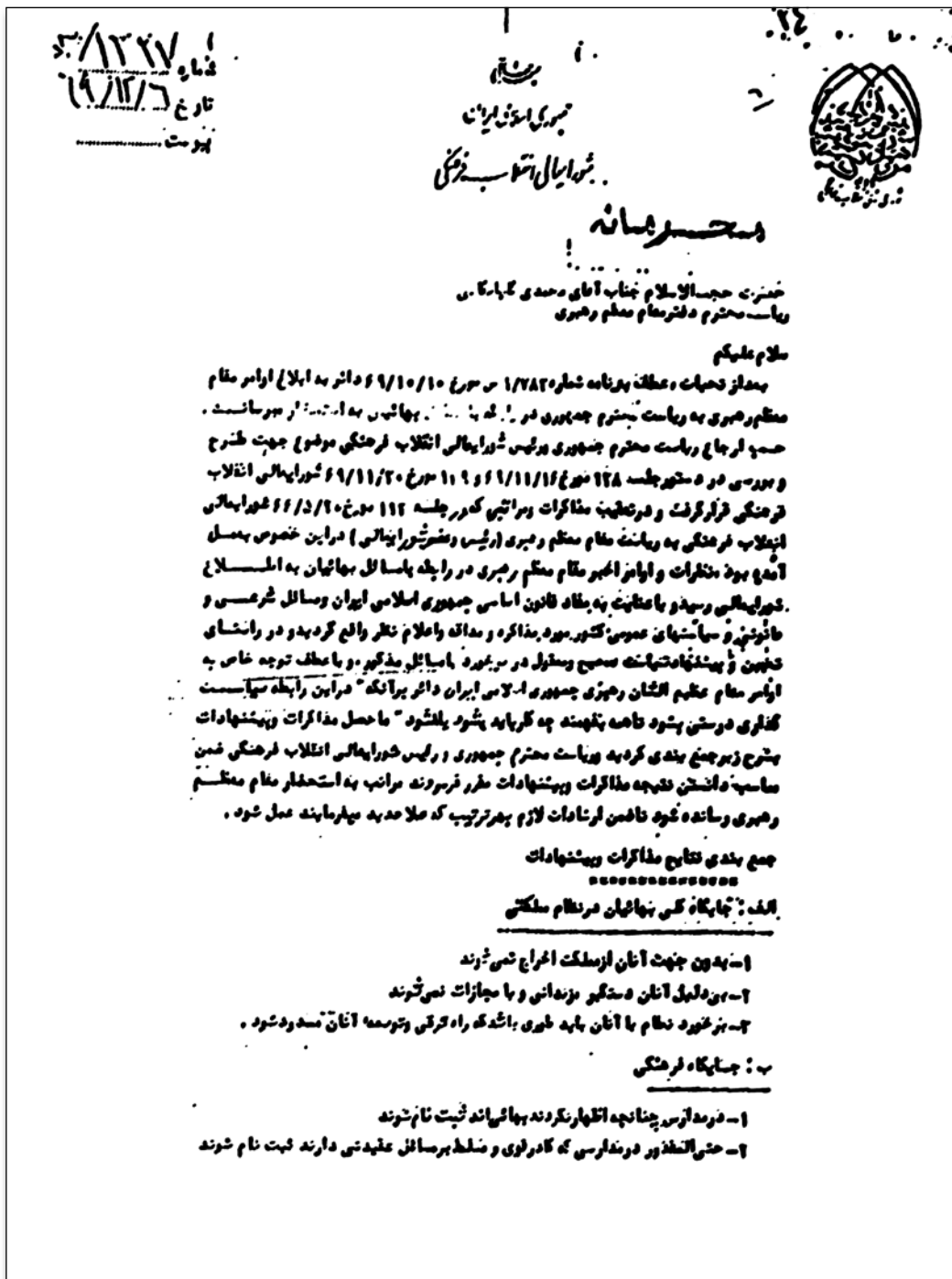
**The following documents, in the original Persian with a subsequent English translation, show conclusively that the persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran is official government policy. Many of these documents were once secret but were later obtained and released by the United Nations or human rights organizations.**

### Included are:

- The 1991 “Bahá'í Question” memorandum. Obtained and released in 1993 by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Iran, this confidential memorandum is endorsed by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. It outlines the Islamic Republic’s plan to block the progress and development of Iranian Bahá'ís.
- A 2006 letter from Iran’s Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructing 81 Iranian universities to expel any student who is discovered to be a Bahá'í.
- A 9 April 2007 letter to police commanders around Tehran that calls for tight restrictions on Bahá'í businesses.
- A 15 March 2009 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office of Kerman Province to Rafsanjan police commanders instructing them to restrict real estate purchases by Bahá'ís.
- A 30 August 2009 notice to a Bahá'í business in Semnan, cancelling their business permit.
- A 7 August 2011 letter to the Iran Insurance Company from the Prosecutor’s Office of Arak, saying that signing contracts with a Bahá'í is legally prohibited.
- A 5 August 2007 letter from the national oil company to a Bahá'í saying that, “owing to your membership in the Bahaist sect,” his pension cannot be renewed.
- An 18 February 2010 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office to the head of the Association for Union Affairs, requesting information about Bahá'ís in Karaj.
- A 15 June 2009 letter from the Federation of Suppliers of Automobile Spare Parts to the director of Union Affairs in Karaj, asking that the activities of Bahá'ís be prevented.
- A list of fatwas and decrees issued by religious authorities concerning Bahá'ís and commerce.



*Persian original of the 1991 “Bahá’i Question” memorandum outlining the Islamic Republic’s plan to block the progress and development of Iranian Bahá’ís.*



*English translation of the 1991 “Bahá'í Question” memorandum outlining the Islamic Republic’s plan to block the progress and development of Iranian Bahá'ís.*

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Text in square brackets added by translator]

In the Name of God!

The Islamic Republic of Iran

The Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council

Number: 1327/....

Date: 6/12/69 [25 February 1991]

Enclosure: None

CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

Head of the Office of the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei]

Greetings!

After greetings, with reference to the letter #1/783 dated 10/10/69 [31 December 1990], concerning the instructions of the Esteemed Leader which had been conveyed to the Respected President regarding the Bahá'í question, we inform you that, since the respected President and the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council had referred this question to this Council for consideration and study, it was placed on the Council's agenda of session #128 on 16/11/69 [5 February 1991] and session #119 of 2/11/69 [22 January 1991]. In addition to the above, and further to the [results of the] discussions held in this regard in session #112 of 2/5/66 [24 July 1987] presided over by the Esteemed Leader (head and member of the Supreme Council), the recent views and directives given by the Esteemed Leader regarding the Bahá'í question were conveyed to the Supreme Council. In consideration of the contents of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the religious and civil laws and general policies of the country, these matters were carefully studied and decisions pronounced.

In arriving at the decisions and proposing reasonable ways to counter the above question, due consideration was given to the wishes of the Esteemed Leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran [Khamenei], namely, that “in this regard a specific policy should be devised in such a way that everyone will understand what should or should not be done.” Consequently, the following proposals and recommendations resulted from these discussions.

The respected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the Head of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council, while approving these recommendations, instructed us to convey them to the Esteemed Leader [Khamenei] so that appropriate action may be taken according to his guidance.

Continued next page

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

A. General status of the Bahá'ís within the country's system

1. They will not be expelled from the country without reason.
2. They will not be arrested, imprisoned, or penalized without reason.
3. The government's dealings with them must be in such a way that their progress and development are blocked.

B. Educational and cultural status

1. They can be enrolled in schools provided they have not identified themselves as Bahá'ís.
2. Preferably, they should be enrolled in schools which have a strong and imposing religious ideology.
3. They must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá'ís.
4. Their political (espionage) activities must be dealt with according to appropriate government laws and policies, and their religious and propaganda activities should be answered by giving them religious and cultural responses, as well as propaganda.
5. Propaganda institutions (such as the Islamic Propaganda Organization) must establish an independent section to counter the propaganda and religious activities of the Bahá'ís.
6. A plan must be devised to confront and destroy their cultural roots outside the country.

C. Legal and social status

1. Permit them a modest livelihood as is available to the general population.
2. To the extent that it does not encourage them to be Bahá'ís, it is permissible to provide them the means for ordinary living in accordance with the general rights given to every Iranian citizen, such as ration booklets, passports, burial certificates, work permits, etc.
3. Deny them employment if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís.
4. Deny them any position of influence, such as in the educational sector, etc. Wishing you divine confirmations,

Secretary of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council

Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani

[Signature]

[Note in the handwriting of Mr. Khamenei]

In the Name of God!

The decision of the Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council seems sufficient.

I thank you gentlemen for your attention and efforts.

[signed:] Ali Khamenei

Persian text of the 2006 letter from Iran's Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructing Iranian universities to expel any student who is discovered to be a Bahá'í.

جمهوری اسلامی ایران  
وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری

شماره: ۹۳۷۵/۹۳۷۵  
تاریخ: ۱۳۸۵/۹/۱۳

**محرمانه**

**مدیریت محترم حراست:**

۱- دانشگاه اراک ۲- دانشگاه ارومیه ۳- دانشگاه اصفهان ۴- دانشگاه ایلام ۵- دانشگاه الزهراء (س)  
۶- دانشگاه بوعلی سینا ۷- دانشگاه تبریز ۸- دانشگاه تهران ۹- دانشگاه صنعتی امیرکبیر (ره) ۱۰- دانشگاه تبریز ۱۱- دانشگاه تربیت مدرس ۱۲- دانشگاه تربیت معلم تهران ۱۳- دانشگاه تربیت معلم  
انزلی ۱۴- دانشگاه تربیت معلم تبریز ۱۵- دانشگاه تهران ۱۶- دانشگاه خوارزمی ۱۷- دانشگاه  
رازی ۱۸- دانشگاه زابل ۱۹- دانشگاه زنجان ۲۰- دانشگاه سمنان ۲۱- دانشگاه سیستان و بلوچستان  
۲۲- دانشگاه شیراز ۲۳- دانشگاه شاهرود ۲۴- دانشگاه شهید باهنر کرمان ۲۵- دانشگاه شهید بهشتی  
۲۶- دانشگاه شهید چمران اهواز ۲۷- دانشگاه شیراز ۲۸- دانشگاه صنعتی اصفهان ۲۹- دانشگاه صنعتی  
امیرکبیر ۳۰- دانشگاه صنعتی شاهرود ۳۱- دانشگاه صنعتی خواجه نصیرالدین طوسی ۳۲- دانشگاه  
صنعتی سهند تبریز ۳۳- دانشگاه صنعتی تبریز ۳۴- دانشگاه علامه طباطبائی ۳۵- دانشگاه علم و صنعت  
ایران ۳۶- دانشگاه علوم کشاورزی و منابع طبیعی گرگان ۳۷- دانشگاه فردوسی مشهد ۳۸- دانشگاه گلستان  
۳۹- دانشگاه گردیس ۴۰- دانشگاه گیلان ۴۱- دانشگاه لرستان ۴۲- دانشگاه محقق اردبیلی  
۴۳- دانشگاه نماز ندران ۴۴- دانشگاه تربیت دبیر شهید رجایی ۴۵- دانشگاه ولیعصر رفسنجان (هج)  
۴۶- دانشگاه هرمزگان ۴۷- دانشگاه هنر ۴۸- دانشگاه جامع علمی-کاربردی ۴۹- دانشگاه بزد  
۵۰- دانشگاه علوم پایه دامغان ۵۱- دانشگاه یاسوج ۵۲- دانشگاه هنر اصفهان ۵۳- دانشگاه علوم و فنون  
دریایی خرمشهر ۵۴- دانشگاه قم ۵۵- دانشگاه ملایر ۵۶- دانشگاه شمال ۵۷- دانشگاه علم و فرهنگ  
۵۸- دانشگاه ارشد دامپزشکی ۵۹- دانشگاه خاتم ۶۰- دانشگاه تفریز ۶۱- دانشگاه بجنورد ۶۲- دانشکده  
فنی-مهندسی گنبدکاوین ۶۳- دانشکده امور اقتصادی ۶۴- موسسه غیرانتفاعی خاتم ۶۵- موسسه غیردولتی  
غیرانتفاعی سجاد مشهد ۶۶- موسسه غیردولتی غیرانتفاعی شهید اشرفی اصفهانی ۶۷- موسسه غیردولتی  
غیرانتفاعی علامه محمدتقی نوری ۶۸- موسسه غیردولتی غیرانتفاعی علمیه مستان ۶۹- موسسه غیرانتفاعی  
همران و توسعه روستایی همدان ۷۰- مرکز آموزش عالی دریاتورزی و علوم دریایی چلبهار ۷۱- مجتمع  
آموزش عالی مراغه ۷۲- دانشگاه مذاخه ۷۳- موسسه آموزش عالی جلدی شاپور دزفول  
۷۴- دانشگاه صنعتی شاهرود ۷۵- موسسه آموزش عالی سجاد مشهد ۷۶- دانشگاه مازان ۷۷- دانشگاه  
علوم کشاورزی و منابع طبیعی رامین ۷۸- موسسه آموزش عالی کار ۷۹- موسسه آموزش عالی  
نخج آباد ۸۰- موسسه آموزش عالی پژوهش صنایع ایران ۸۱- پژوهشگاه امام خمینی

**موضوع: ممنوعیت تحصیل افراد بهائیان در دانشگاهها**

**باسلام**

احتراماً، به آگاهی میرساند، براساس مصوبه شماره ۱۳۲۷/م/س مورخ ۶/۱۲/۶ شورای عالی  
انتخاب فرهنگی و اعلام مراجع تصمیمات امنیتی، لذا خاص بهائیان چنانچه در حین ورود به دانشگاه و  
با حین تحصیل مشخص گردد که بهائیان هستند، می بایست از دانشگاه اخراج گردند.  
لذا ضروری است جهت جلوگیری از ادامه تحصیل یا شادگان، موصوفه اقدامات لازم را به منظور  
نتیجه را به این مرکز منعکس فرمائید.

امیر زارعی  
مدیر کل حفاظت مرکزی  
۱۳۸۵/۹/۱۳

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM  
Persian]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [].]

Date: [?]/[?]/1385 [2006] [Emblem]  
Number: [Illegible] In the Name of God  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
[Illegible]: M/2/3/9378  
Ministry of Science, Research and Technology  
[Unidentified emblem]

Confidential

The esteemed management of the Security Office,  
[The 81 universities addressed in this letter are  
listed below.]

Subject: Banning of the education of Bahá'ís in  
universities

Greetings,  
Respectfully, we inform you that in accordance  
with decree number 1327/M/S, dated 6/12/69  
[25 February 1991], issued by the Supreme  
Revolutionary Cultural Council and the notifica-  
tion of the responsible authorities of the Intel-  
ligence [Office], if Bahá'í individuals, at the time  
of enrolment at university or in the course of their  
studies, are identified as Bahá'ís, they must be  
expelled from university. Therefore, it is necessary  
to take measures to prevent the further studies of  
the aforementioned [individuals] and forward a  
follow-up report to this Office.

Asghar Zári'í [Asghar Zarei]

Director General of the Central Security Office  
[Signature]

[The list of 81 universities]

1. University of Arák [Arak]
2. Urúmíyyih [Urmia] University
3. University of Isfahán [Isfahan]
4. Ílám [Ilam] University
5. Al-Zahrá [Alzahra] University

6. Bú-'Alí Síná [Bu Ali Sina] University
7. University of Bírjand [Birjand]
8. Imam Khomeini International University
9. Payám-i-Núr [Payame Noor] University
10. University of Tabríz [Tabriz]
11. Tarbiat Modares [Lecturer Training] Univer-  
sity
12. Tarbiat Moallem [Teacher Training] Univer-  
sity of Tihrán [Tehran]
13. Ádharbáyján [Azerbaijan] Tarbíyat-i-Mu'allim  
[Teacher Training] University
14. Sabzivár [Sabzevar] Teacher Training Univer-  
sity
15. University of Tihrán [Tehran]
16. Persian Gulf University
17. Rází [Razi] University
18. Zábúl [Zabol] University
19. Zanján [Zanjan] University
20. Simnán University [Semnan]
21. University of Sístán and Balúchistán [Sistan  
and Baluchestan]
22. Shahr-i-Kurd [Shahrekord] University
23. Sháhídh [Shahid] University
24. Sháhídh Bá-Hunar [Shahid Bahonar] Univer-  
sity of Kirmán [Kerman]
25. Sháhídh Bihishtí [Shahid Beheshti] University
26. Sháhídh Chamrán [Shahid Chamran] Univer-  
sity of Ahváz [Ahvaz]
27. Shíráz [Shiraz] University
28. Isfahán [Isfahan] University of Technology
29. Amírkabír [Amirkabir] University of Technol-  
ogy
30. Sháhrúd [Shahrud] University of Technology
31. Khájih Nasiru'd-Dín-i-Túsí [Khajeh Nasir ad-  
Din Toosi] University of Technology
32. Sahand [Sahand] University of Technology of  
Tabríz [Tabriz]
33. Sharíf [Sharif] University of Technology
34. 'Allámiy-i-Tabátábá'í [Allameh Tabatabaei]  
University
35. Iran University of Science and Technology
36. Gurgán [Gorgan] University of Agricultural  
Sciences and Natural Resources



37. Firdawsí [Ferdowsi] University of Mashhad [Mashhad]
38. University of Káshán [Kashan]
39. University of Kurdistán [Kurdistan]
40. University of Gílán [Guilan]
41. Luristán [Lorestan] University
42. University of Muhaqqiq Ardabílí [Moha-  
ghegh Ardebili]
43. University of Mázingarín [Mazandaran]
44. Shahíd Rajá'í [Shahid Rajaei] Teacher Train-  
ing University
45. Valíyy-i-'Asr [Vali-e-Asr] University of Rafsan-  
ján [Rafsanjan]
46. Hurmuzgán [Hormozgan] University
47. University of Art
48. University of Applied Science and Technology
49. University of Yazd
50. Dámghán [Damghan] University of Basic  
Sciences
51. Yásúj [Yasuj] University
52. Isfahán [Isfahan] University of Art
53. Khurramshahr [Khorramshahr] University of  
Nautical Sciences and Technology
54. University of Qum [Qom]
55. University of Maláýir [Malayer]
56. Shumál [Shomal] University
57. University of Science and Culture
58. Irshád [Irshad] University of Damávand  
[Damavand]
59. Khátam [Khatam] University
60. University of Tafrish [Tafresh]
61. University of Bujnúrd [Bojnurd]
62. Gulpáygán [Golpaygan] School of Engineer-  
ing
63. School of Economic Affairs
64. Non-profit Khayyám [Khayyam] Institute
65. Non-governmental and non-profit Sajjád  
[Sadjad] Institute, Mashhad [Mashhad]
66. Non-governmental and non-profit Shahíd  
Ashrafí Isfahání [Shahid Ashrafi Isfahani]  
Institute
67. Non-governmental and non-profit 'Allamiy-i-  
Muhadath-i-Núrí [Allameh Mohadas Noori]  
Institute
68. Non-governmental and non-profit Institute  
of Tabaristán [Tabarestan]
69. Non-profit Institute for Development and  
Rural Advancement of Hamidán [Hamedan]
70. Nautical and Marine Science Centre of  
Higher Education of Cháhbahár [Chahbahar]
71. Institute of Higher Education of Marághih  
[Maragheh]
72. University of Islamic Sects
73. Jund-i-Shapúr [Jundishapur] Institute of  
Higher Education of Dizfúl [Dezful]
74. Shíráz [Shiraz] University of Technology
75. Sajjád [Sadjad] Institute of Higher Education,  
Mashhad [Mashhad]
76. Mufíd [Mofid] University of Qum [Qom]
77. Varámín [Varamin] University of Agricultural  
Sciences and Natural Resources
78. Institute of Higher Education for Occupation
79. Najafábád [Najafabad] Institute of Higher  
Education
80. Iran Institute of Higher Education for Tech-  
nology Research
81. Imam Khomeini Research Center

Persian original of a 9 April 2007 letter to police commanders around Tehran that calls for tight restrictions on Bahá'í businesses.

شماره: ۱۵۶/۲۱  
تاریخ: ۸/۴/۰۷  
حوزه: تهران

(۱) جمهوری اسلامی ایران

از: پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی ف.ا.ا. تهران - اداره نظارت بر اماکن عمومی  
به: فرماندهان محترم انتظامی شهرستانهای تابعه - روسای پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی  
موضوع: بررسی صلاحیت افراد گروهکی و فرق ضاله بهائیت  
سلام

باصوابت بر محمد و آل محمد (ص) و با احترام، به استناد دستورالعمل و اسامیه از وزارت محترم پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی ناجا - نظارت بر اماکن عمومی (شماره ۱۴/۳۰/۵/۲/۳۱ و ورخه ۸۵/۱۲/۲۱) و با عنایت به افزایش مراجعات و استیگان به فرقه ضاله بهائیت جهت اخذ پروانه کسب و حضور موجه و قانونی آنها در جامعه اصناف پس از اخذ پروانه، ضروری است بمنظور کنترل و نظارت مستمر بر فعالیت آنان و حتی المقدور جلوگیری از حضور وسیع آنان در سطح صنوف حساس و مهم و سازمانهای صنفی و همچنین افراد گروهکی متقاضی پروانه کسب ضمن مد نظر قرار دادن موارد ذیل برابر دستور العمل شماره ۱۴/۳۰/۱۷/۱۰۰ مورخه ۸۲/۲/۱۷ (کمیسیون بررسی نهائی) که نوع پرونده های قابل طرح در کمیسیون را مشخص می نماید اقدام گردد.

الف) فرق ضاله بهائیت:

(۱) نسبت به شناسائی افراد بهائی شاغل در صنوف و جمع آوری آمار به تفکیک (میان پراکندگی، نوع رسته شغلی) اقدام نمایند.

(۲) از فعالیت آنان مشاغل با درآمد زانی بالا جلوگیری و صرفاً با صدور مجوز یا پروانه کسب در رسته های شغلی که بتوانند در حد متعارف امرار معاش نمایند موافقت گردد.

(۳) از صدور مجوز فعالیت برای افراد مذکور در رسته های شغلی حساس (فرهنگی، تبلیغاتی، اقتصادی، نظیر جراید، نشریات، جواهر و طلا سازی و ساعت و چاپخانه داران، و گیم اور سازان، موسسات توریستی و اتومبیل کرایه، ناشران کتاب و روشان، مسافرخانه داران، هتلداران، آژانسهای خیاطی، عکاس، و قلمبر داری، گیم نت، وایانه، کافی نت) جلوگیری بعمل آورند.

(۴) در راستای اجرای احکام شرعی برای پیروان فرقه ضاله بهائیت جهت فعالیت در رسته های شغلی مشروط به طهارت (۱- تالارهای پذیرائی ۲- رستوران و سلف سرویس ۳- اغذیه فروشان و مواد غذایی ۴- چلوکباب و چلو خورشت ۵- فودخانه ۶- فروشندگان مواد پروتئینی و سوپر مارکت ۷- بستنی و آبمیوه و نوشابه ۸- قنادی و شیرینی فروش ۹- مهمانر شاپ پیروته صادر نمیگردد.

تذکره: این دستورالعمل از تاریخ ۱۳۸۶/۴/۹ به اجرا در می آید.

*English translation 9 April 2007 letter to police commanders around Tehran that calls for tight restrictions on Bahá'í businesses.*

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

Date: 19/1/1386 [9 April 2007]

From: The Public Intelligence and Security Force, Tehran — Public Places Supervision Office

To: Esteemed Commanders of County Police Forces — Heads of the Public Intelligence and Security Force;

Subject: Review of the eligibility of individuals belonging to small groups and the perverse Bahaist sect


Greetings,

May peace be upon Muhammad and His family! With respect, and based on the instructions received from the Head of the Public Intelligence and Security Force (NÁJÁ) — Public Places Supervision Office (number 31/2/5/30/14, dated 21/12/85 [12 March 2007]) and with due attention to the increase in the number of requests from the perverse Bahaist sect to obtain work permits and their rightful and legal presence in the crafts industry once they have acquired their work permit; it is necessary, for the benefit of the ongoing monitoring and supervision of their activities and in order to halt — as much as possible — their extensive presence throughout sensitive and important craft organizations and also individuals from small groups requesting work permits, for measures to be taken with due consideration for the below points based on instruction number 100/7/30/14, dated 17/2/82 [8 May 2003] (Final Review Commission), which determines the cases to go before the Commission.

a. Perverse Bahaist Sect

1. Take measures to identify Bahá'í individuals working in craft businesses and collect statistics broken down by (their distribution and type of occupation).
2. Their activities in high-earning businesses should be halted, and only those work permits that would provide them with an ordinary livelihood should be allowed.
3. Issuing of [work] permits for the activities of the mentioned individuals in sensitive business categories (culture, propaganda, commerce, the press, jewellery and watchmaking, coffee shops, engraving, the tourist industry, car rentals, publishing, hostel and hotel management, tailoring training institutes, photography and film, [illegible] Internet, computer sales and Internet cafés), should be prevented.
4. In accordance with the religious canons, work permits will not be issued to the followers of the perverse Bahaist sect in business categories related to Tahárat [cleanliness] (1. catering at reception halls, 2. buffets and restaurants, 3. grocery shops, 4. kebab shops, 5. cafés, 6. protein [poultry] shops and supermarkets, 7. ice cream parlors, fruit juice and soft drinks shops, 8. pastry shops, 9. coffee shops)

*Persian original of 15 March 2009 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office of Kerman Province to Rafsanjan police commanders instructing them to restrict real estate purchases by Bahá'ís.*

|   |  |                   |
|---|--|-------------------|
| <p>طبقه بندی: محرمانه</p> <p>شماره: ۲۹۱۴، ۹، ۴۵</p> <p>تاریخ: ۱۷/۳/۹۵</p> <p>پیوست:</p> |  | <p>بسمه تعالی</p> |
|---|--|-------------------|

از: پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی ف. ا. استان کرمان ( اداره نظارت بر اماکن عمومی )  
 به: فرماندهی محترم انتظامی شهرستان رفسنجان - پاوا  
 موضوع: بهائیت  
 سلام علیکم

با صلوات بر محمد و آل محمد و با احترام، در پاسخ به شماره ۲۹۵۴/۱۴/۳/۷۰۳۸ مورخه ۸۷/۷/۸ همانطور که طی دستورالعملهای متعدد اعلام گردیده به منظور جلوگیری از حضور وسیع وابستگان فرقه ضاله بهائیت در سطح صنوف و سازمانهای صنفی، از فعالیت آنان در مشاغل یا درآمد زایی بالا جلوگیری و صرفاً در رشته های شغلی که بتوانند در حد متعارف امرار معاش نمایند موافقت و توجه شود که تسلط و برتری در هر شغلی را پیدا ننمایند تا عملاً "توان رقابت از سایر افراد مسلمان گرفته نشده و تصمیم سازی شغل نشوند و تجمع تعدادی از وابستگان این فرقه ضاله در یک محل تبعی را برای جامعه اصناف در پی دارد لذا به رؤسای اتحادیه ها و سازمانهای صنفی و مبادی ذیربط اطلاع رسانی کافی انجام تا از خرید املاک و مستغلات در یک مکان نزدیک به هم توسط آنان جلوگیری و از گسترش اعضای این فرقه در یک صنف و شغل و بازاریج ممانعت و در این راستا رؤسای اتحادیه ها توجیه و از مساعدت امت حزب ا. و بسیج و سازمان تبلیغات اسلامی و سایر دستگاهها نیز استفاده گردد.

رئیس پلیس اطلاعات و امنیت عمومی ف. ا. استان کرمان  
 سرهنگ پاسدار *[Signature]*  
 از طرف: *[Signature]*  
 دا نا

*English translation of a 15 March 2009 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office of Kerman Province to Rafsanjan police commanders instructing them to restrict real estate purchases by Bahá'ís.*

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

|                                |          |                    |
|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Classification: Confidential   | [Emblem] | In the Name of God |
| Number: 45/4/2914              |          |                    |
| Date: 25/12/87 [15 March 2009] |          |                    |

From: The Public Intelligence and National Security Force F.A.[A.] of Kerman Province  
(Public Places Supervision Office)<sup>1</sup>

To: Esteemed Commanders of Police Forces of Rafsanján [Rafsanjan]—PAVA [The Public Intelligence and National Security Force]

Subject: Bahaism

Greetings,

Peace be upon Muḥammad and His descendents! In response to [a letter] number 7038/3/14/2954, dated 8/7/87 [29 September 2008], as has been communicated through many instructions, in order to prevent the extensive presence of the adherents of the perverse Bahaist sect in trades and trade organizations, and their activities in high-income businesses, they should only be allowed to have enough income to survive, so that they do not obtain high positions in any business, take away competitive power from individual Muslims, and become the decision makers in a trade. The congregation of a number of the followers of this perverse sect in one area will have consequences for the trade business. Therefore, the heads of the unions and relevant trade organizations should be sufficiently informed to prevent them [Bahá'ís] from purchasing properties and real estate near each other in one location. The members of this sect should be prevented from having extensive presence in any one trade, business, or market place. The heads of the unions should be instructed on this matter and request assistance from Ḥizbu'lláh [Hezbollah], Basij [Basij], Society for the Promotion of Islam, and other organizations.

Head of Public Intelligence and Security Forces F.A.[A.] of Kerman Province  
Colonel of Islamic Revolutionary Guards  
[Signed] on behalf of Colonel Ḥamíd Sulṭání [Hamid Soltani]  
Dána'í [Danaie]

<sup>1</sup> ["Edare-ye Amaken": reportedly responsible for the enforcement of accepted moral codes in places of work and other offices.]



*Persian original of a 30 August 2009 notice to a Bahá'í business in Semnan, cancelling their business permit.*

بسم تعالی

اتحادیه صنف پوئگان شهرستان سمنان

تاریخ: ۸۸/۵/۲۴  
شماره: [REDACTED]  
پیوست:

[REDACTED]

با توجه به اینکه از طرف اداره نظارت بر اماکن عمومی نیروی انتظامی استان سمنان طی نامه ای به تاریخ ۸۸/۵/۲۴ پروانه کسبی شما را اسقاط صلاحیت اعلام نمودند و از اتحادیه صنف پوئگان سمنان خواسته شد که نسبت به ابطال پروانه کسب شما اقدام نمایند و هیئت رئیسه اتحادیه در تاریخ ۸۸/۵/۲۷ طی اخطار کتبی به شماره ۲۵۰ بابت پرداخت حق عضویت و در تاریخ ۸۸/۶/۳ طی نامه شماره ۲۵۹ از شما خواسته شد با در دست داشتن اصل پروانه و کارت عضویت به اتحادیه مراجعه نمائید و شفاهاً هم خدمتتان عرض کردیم ولی متأسفانه هیچگونه اقدامی جهت تحویل پروانه کسب به اتحادیه از طرف شما صورت نگرفت و اتحادیه بنا به وظیفه خود پروانه کسبی شما را ابطال نموده است و با توجه به اینکه پروانه کسبی شما باطل می باشد و هرگونه سوء استفاده از پروانه کسب از این تاریخ مورد پیگرد قانونی قرار خواهد گرفت لذا خواهشمندیم هرچه زودتر لاشه باطله پروانه کسب را به اتحادیه تحویل نمائید.



رونوشت:

- ریاست محترم اداره نظارت بر اماکن عمومی استان سمنان جهت استحضار و پیگیری
- ریاست محترم مجمع امور صنفی مشترک شهرستان سمنان جهت استحضار
- مدیریت محترم سازمان بازرگانی استان سمنان جهت استحضار

[REDACTED]

*English translation of a 30 August 2009 notice to a Bahá'í business in Semnan, cancelling their business permit.*

**[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]**

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

Date: 8/6/88 [30 August 2009]      In the Name of God      Clothing Trade Union of Semnan  
 Number: Number: [REDACTED]  
 Enclosure:



In view of the fact that the Public Places Supervision Office of the Police<sup>1</sup> for the province of Semnan has notified you, through a letter dated 24/5/88 [15 August 2009], that it has invalidated your business permit; the fact that the Clothing Trade Union of Semnan has accordingly been asked to cancel your business permit; that, furthermore, the Board of Directors of the Union provided you with a letter of warning dated 27/5/88 [18 August 2009], reference 250, concerning your membership payment and sent you a subsequent letter dated 3/6/88 [25 August 2009], reference 259, asking you to report to the Union Office with your original business permit and your membership card; and that you have also been notified verbally; [but that regardless of the foregoing], however, you have made no efforts to return your business permit to the Union; the Union has now fulfilled its responsibility by cancelling your permit. Given that your business permit is no longer valid, any misuse of it is subject to legal prosecution. Please return the invalidated permit to the Union as soon as possible.

Ibráhím Jandaqíyán [Ebrahim Jandaghian]

Director of Clothing Trade Union of Semnan  
 [Signature] 8/6/88 [30 August 2009]  
 [Official stamp of the Union]

cc:

- Respected General Director of Public Places Supervision Office for the Police of the province of Semnan, for information and further action;
- Respected General Director of Association of Unions of Semnan, for information;
- Respected Director of the Bureau of Commerce of the province of Semnan, for information

Letter number: [REDACTED]

<sup>1</sup> ["Edare-ye Amaken": reportedly responsible for the enforcement of accepted moral codes in places of work and other offices.]

*Persian original of a 7 August 2011 letter to the Iran Insurance Company from the Prosecutor's Office of Arak, saying that signing contracts with a Bahá'í is legally prohibited.*



*English translations of a 7 August 2011 letter to the Iran Insurance Company from the Prosecutor's Office of Arak, saying that signing contracts with a Bahá'í is legally prohibited.*

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

Date: 16/5/1390 [7 August 2011]

Number: [REDACTED]

Enclosure:

[Emblem]

Judiciary

Central Provincial Court of Administrative

Justice

Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office of the City  
of Arák

In the Name of the Most High

Respected Director of Iran Insurance Company

Peace be upon you!

Based on information received, you have signed a contract with [REDACTED] in relation to his optical business. He is one of the active members of the perverse sect of Bahaism. Bearing in mind that signing contracts with individuals belonging to the perverse sect is legally prohibited, you must therefore explain the situation in writing.

Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Ṭāhirī [Mohammad Hoseini Taheri]

Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor of the City of Arák

*Persian original of a 5 August 2007 letter from the national oil company to a Bahá'í saying that, "owing to your membership in the Bahaist sect," his pension cannot be renewed.*

تاریخ: ۱۳۸۶/۰۵/۱۳

شرکت ملی پالایش و پخش فراورده های نفتی ایران  
شرکت پالایش نفت آبادان

بسمه تعالی

باسلام

عطف به نامه مورخ [REDACTED] جناب عالی متعنوان مقام محترم ریاست جمهوری مبنی بر برقراری مستمری باطلاح غیرسالمند . شما طبق بند ۱۱ ماده ۲۰ قانون بازسازی نیروی انسانی وزارتخانه ها و موسسات دولتی وابسته به دولت از تاریخ ۱۳۶۱/۰۸/۰۱ بعثت عضویت در فرقه بهائیت به انفصال دائم از خدمت دولتی و موسسات وابسته به دولت محکوم و از خدمت در شرکت معاف گردیده اید .

با توجه به مراتب بالا برقراری مجدد مستمری . و جاهت قانونی ندارد .

رحمت ا... رحیمی  
سرپرست امور اداری شرکت پالایش نفت آبادان

تلفن : آبادان ۴۲۳۴۸۰۲۰۹ - ۳۳۳۶۰۳۲۰۶ - ۶۱۵۲۴۳۳  
آدرس : پتروشماره آبادان : جنبه فروغ رود ، صندوق پستی ۴۴ - ۷۳۱۶۵



*English translation of a 5 August 2007 letter from the national oil company to a Bahá'í saying that, "owing to your membership in the Bahaist sect," his pension cannot be renewed.*

**[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]**

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

|                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| [Emblem]                         |                                 |
| Date: 13/05/1386 [5 August 2007] | National Iranian Oil Products   |
| Number: [REDACTED]               | Refining & Distribution Company |
|                                  | Ábádán [Abadan] Oil Products    |
|                                  | Refining Company (Limited)      |

In the Name of God

Mr. [REDACTED] former employee, number [REDACTED]  
Address: [provided]

Greetings,

With reference to your letter dated [REDACTED], addressed to the esteemed presidency of the Islamic Republic of Iran in connection with instituting your pension, it is hereby conveyed that, in accordance with Paragraph 11 of Article 20 of the Restructuring of Human Resources Act for government ministries and establishments associated with the government, from 01/08/1361 [24 October 1982], and owing to your membership of the Bahaist sect, you have been permanently removed from your government position and any establishment associated with the government and have been exempted from serving in the company.

In light of the above explanation, any renewal of your pension arrangement is not legally admissible.

[Signed:] Raḥmatu'lláh Raḥímí [Rahmatollah Rahimi]

Administrative Supervisor, Ábádán Oil Products Refining Company

*Persian original of an 18 February 2010 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office to the head of the Association for Union Affairs, requesting information about Baha'is in Karaj.*

*English translation of an 18 February 2010 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office to the head of the Association for Union Affairs, requesting information about Bahá'ís in Karaj.*

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

The dawn of the revolution is the rising of the sun of independence and freedom.  
“Imám Khomeini”

**From: Public Places Supervision Office, Tehran**

**To: The Esteemed Head of the Association for Union Affairs**

**Subject: Submitting information about the Bahá'ís who are operating under the Union**

Greetings,

Salutation to Muḥammad, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him and His family.

Respectfully, please take appropriate measures to immediately release to our office particulars of the Bahá'ís who are actively operating under the union in the city of Karaj both with and without a business license according to the following chart:

|  |                     |                        |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|
|  | Line/Section        |                        |
|  | Name and Surname    |                        |
|  | Father's Name       |                        |
|  | National ID Number  |                        |
|  | Place of Birth      |                        |
|  | Date of Birth       |                        |
|  | Type of Work        |                        |
|  | Manager             | Responsibility         |
|  | Agent/liaison       |                        |
|  | Staff               |                        |
|  | Janitorial          |                        |
|  | Licensed            | Status of the business |
|  | Not Licensed        |                        |
|  | Period in operation |                        |

Head of the Public Places Supervision Office, Tehran

Sergeant Pásdár, Ḥabíbu'lláh Šádiqí  
[Stamp—No. 3/631]

29/11/88 [18 February 2010]

Persian original of a 15 June 2009 letter from the head of the Federation of Suppliers or Automobile Spare Parts to the director of Union Affairs in Karaj, asking the activities of Bahá'ís be prevented.

تاریخ: ۸۸/۳/۲۵  
شماره: [REDACTED]  
پیوست: [REDACTED]

بسمه تعالی

اتحادیه صنف فروشندگان  
لوازم یدکی اتومبیل کرج  
شماره ثبت ۳۰

رئیس محترم اتحادیه صنف فروشندگان  
رضی: عدم صلاحیت فرقه بابیت  
سلام علیهم

بسمه تعالی  
وقتاً که می‌فرموده‌ام ۱۱۹۵۰ صرفه ۸۷/۹/۴ در مدرسه‌های ایران که لب از فرقه بابیت که  
مدرسه، شبه اداره قمری که قرار می‌گیرند و دارای فعالیت می‌باشند و تالیف می‌کنند و با هم  
بنام مدرسه که از کف آن با جمع قمری که می‌نویسند و کتاب می‌نویسند و در آنجا که کتاب می‌نویسند  
و با نام دست راست لازم جهت جلوگیری از فعالیت آن فرقه در این شهر و در این شهر

رئیس اتحادیه صنف فروشندگان  
علی‌اکبر کرجی

کرج - میدان آزادگان ساختمان سپید، واحد ۱۶  
تلفن: ۲۲۴۲۳۱۹

*English translation of a 15 June 2009 letter from the head of the Federation of Suppliers of Automobile Spare Parts to the director of Union Affairs in Karaj, asking the activities of Bahá'is be prevented.*

**[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]**

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

Date: 25/3/88 [15 June 2009]      In the Name of God      Federation of Suppliers of  
Number: [REDACTED]      Automobile Spare Parts of Karaj  
Enclosure:      Registration number 30

To the Esteemed Director of the Association for Union Affairs, [REDACTED]

Subject: Lack of Credibility [Exclusion] of the Bahaism sect

Greetings,

Respectfully, concerning letter 11950, dated 4/9/87 [24 November 2008], with regard to the application for a permit [by members of] the sect of Bahaism—who are not approved by the office of Amákin [Public Places Supervision Office<sup>[1]</sup>—and those [Bahá'is] who are operating [in this field], so far the instructions in the said letter have not been properly executed by your respected association. Should the individuals [belonging to the said group] be still operating, appropriate instructions must be given to prevent their activities.

Head of Federation of Suppliers of Automobile Spare Parts

‘Alí-Akbar Qásimzádh [Ali-Akbar Ghasemzadeh]

[Address]

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<sup>1</sup> [“Edare-ye Amaken”: responsible for the enforcement of accepted moral codes in places of work and other offices.]



*Persian original of a list issued circa 2010 of fatwas and decrees by religious authorities concerning Bahá'ís and commerce.*

**مجموعه استفتا، فتوا و نظر شیخ تن از مراجع عظام تقلید در مورد فرقه ضالّه بهائیت**

**سوال‌های مطرح شده :**

- ۱) آیا بهائیت ضالّه و منحرف است؟
- ۲) آیا بهائیان نجس هستند؟
- ۳) بهائیان اجازه تبلیغ فرقه خود را در کشور از نظر شرعی دارند؟

**پاسخ ها :**

• مقام معظم رهبری حضرت آیت الله عظمی سید علی خامنه ای (دامت برکاته) بطور کلی از هرگونه معاشرت با این فرقه ضالّه و مشقه اجتناب کنید.

- ۱) بله کاملاً منحرف هستند.
- ۲) بله نجس هستند.
- ۳) چون موجب انحراف و گمراهی مردم می شود اجازت تبلیغ ندارند.

• حضرت آیت الله نوری همدانی

- ۱) فرقه ای ضالّه است و بسیار منحرف
- ۲) از سگ هم نجس تر هستند و فرقه ای می در آوردی است .
- ۳) تبلیغ فرقه آنها حرام است ، چون گرایش به کفر دارند و سبب تردد شدن ایمان ها می شوند.

• حضرت آیت الله مکارم شیرازی

- ۱) بله، بهائیان کافر حساب می شوند .
- ۲) بهائیان کافر و مرتد هستند و نجس
- ۳) از نظر شرعی تبلیغ این فرقه حرام است چون بهائیان نجس و کافر هستند .

• حضرت آیت الله وحید خراسانی

- ۱) بله
- ۲) نجس هستند چون کافرنند .
- ۳) اجازه تبلیغ فرقه منحرف و ضالّه خود را ندارند .

• حضرت آیت الله العظمی آقای بروجردی

لایم است مسلمین نسبت به این فرقه منحرف و مخالف و معاصی را ترک کنند فقط از مسلمین تقاضا داریم آراشی و حفظ انتظام را از دست ندهند . (مقصود از لزوم در اینجا عرفی نیست بلکه لزوم فقهی است که همان معنای واجب را می دهد )

• حضرت آیت الله العظمی محمد رضا اهری سوسی کلیایگانی

به نحوی که حضرت آیت الله العظمی آقای بروجردی قدس سره مرقوم فرموده اند لازم است مسلمین نسبت به این فرقه ضالّه معاشرت و معامله را ترک کنند و از عموم مسلمین تقاضا داریم آراشی و حفظ انتظام را رعایت نمایند . خداوند متعال همه را از شر و فتن آخر الزمان حفظ فرماید .

• نظر دانشمند ارجمند، حضرت حبیب الاسلام شیخ حسین انصاریان پیرامون فرقه ضالّه بهائیت :

اولاً : این فرقه را دشمنان استعمارگر برای مقابله با اسلام امیل، طراحی نموده اند، که باید از گرایش به آن فرقه اجتناب نمود، که سرانجامی جز ضلالت و گمراهی ندارد. بعضی از مذاهب ساختگی که در قرون اخیر پیدا شده اند، برای رسیدن به اهداف قوم خود، لازم دیده اند که قبل از هر چیز پایه خنثیت پیامبر اسلام (ص) را به گمان خویش متزلزل سازند، لذا بعضی از آیات قرآن را که هیچ دلالتی بر هدف آنها ندارد را به کمک تفسیر به رای (برداشت شخصی) و سفسطه بر مقصود خود منطبق ساخته اند که یکی از آنها آیه ۳۵ سوره اعراف است. آنها بدون اینکه قبل و بعد این آیه را در نظر بگیرند، میگویند: این آیه ( آیه ۳۵ سوره اعراف) با توجه به جمله « ای فرزندان آدم، چون پیامبرانی از جنس خودتان به سوی این آیت که آیاتهم را بر شما بخوانند [ به آنان ایمان آورید و آیاتهم را عمل کنید ] که فعل مضارع دارد دلیل بر این است که امکان دارد پس از پیامبر اسلام، پیامبران دیگری مبعوث شوند. ولی اگر کسی به عقب برگردیم و آیات گذشته را که از آفرینش آدم و سکونت او در بهشت و سپس رانده شدن او و همسرش از بهشت سخن میگوید مواجه کنیم روشن می شود که مخاطب در این آیات مسلمانان نیستند، بلکه مجموع جامعه انسانی و تمام فرزندان آدمند. زیرا شک نیست که برای مجموعه فرزندان آدم رسولان زیادی آمده اند. منتهی این عده از دین سازان برای افغان مردم، آیات گذشته را به دست فراموشی میسپارند و مخاطب در این آیه را خصوص مسلمانان میگیرند و از آن نتیجه گیری میکنند که احتمالاً رسولان دیگری در کار است. در این گونه سفسطه جملهای از یک آیه را از بقیه جدا میکنند و قبل و بعد آن را نادیده میگیرند و بر مفهومی که تمایل دارند تطبیق میدهند.

ثانیاً : پیروان فرقه بهائیت از آن جهت که دارای افکار و عقایدی کاملاً باطل و ضد حقیقت و خلاف شریعت ناب محمدی (ص) هستند، از نظر علما و فقهای اسلام نجس هستند و هر گونه ارتباط با آنها نیز جایز نمیشود و شرعاً نباید با آن ها معاشرت داشت.

ثالثاً : لازم است به بخشی از عقاید بهائیت توجه کنید تا خود قضاوت نمایید که آن ها چگونه راه خذلان و جهنم را در پیش گرفته اند و هذهای را نیز فریب داده و با خود همراه ساخته اند :

رهبر فرقه بهائیت شخصی به نام علی محمد باب است که خود را پیامبر (ص) میداند و ادعای نبوت کرده است. ازدواج محارم مانند ازدواج با خواهر را جایز میداند و حتی به مردان اجازه می دهد همسران خود را در اختیار دیگران قرار دهند. بهشت و جهنم را قبول ندارند، نبوت پیامبر اکرم (ص) را انکار میکنند، خود را صاحب شریعت میدانند، خود را در زمره پیامبران بلکه برتر و بالاتر میدانند، شریعت و کتاب ساختگی خود را که مقلد از مطالب بی اساسی و مخرقات است را تابع شریعت و کتب آسمانی قلمداد نموده اند. «علی محمد باب» که رهبر بهائیت است پا را فراتر گذاشته و ادعای الوهیت (خدایی) نیز نموده است.

*English translation of a list issued circa 2010 of fatwas and decrees issued by religious authorities concerning Bahá'ís and commerce.*

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM persian]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets [ ].]

**List of religious enquiries, the opinion and the decrees issued by six Grand Ayatollahs and sources of authority concerning the perverse sect of Bahaism:**

Questions:

1. Is Bahaism misguided and perverse?
2. Are Bahá'ís Najis [unclean]?
3. From a religious point of view, do the Bahá'ís have permission to teach their sect in the country?

Answers:

**The Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei:**

Keep away altogether from this perverse and misguided sect.

1. Yes, they are completely perverted.
2. Yes, they are Najis.
3. As they will misguide and lead the people astray, they should not be allowed to teach.

**Ayatollah Nouri Hamadani:**

1. It is a misguided sect and absolutely perverse.
2. They are even more Najis than dogs. It is a man-made sect.
3. Propagation of their sect is Harám [religiously forbidden], as they are infidels and will lead people to apostasy.

**Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi:**

1. Yes, Bahá'ís are considered infidels.
2. Bahá'ís are infidels, apostates, and Najis.
3. From a religious point of view, propagation of this perverse sect is forbidden, because Bahá'ís are infidels and Najis.

Continued next page

**Ayatollah Vahid Khorasani:**

1. Yes.
2. They are Najis because they are infidels.
3. They do not have permission to teach their misguided and perverse sect.

**Grand Ayatollah Boroujerdi:**

It is necessary that Muslims cut off their association or trade with this sect. I only ask the Muslims not to forget to keep the peace and order. (By necessity we do not mean the same way as it is used in common law; rather, from a religious point of view, which means it is obligatory.)

**Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Mousavi Golpayegani:**

In the same way that Ayatollah Boroujerdi has decreed, it is incumbent upon Muslims to cut off association and trade with this perverse sect. I ask all the Muslims to keep the peace and order. May God save us all from the evils of the end of the world.

The view of the esteemed scholar, Hujjatu'l-Islám Sheikh Hosein Ansarian concerning the perverse sect of Bahaism:

Firstly, this sect was created by colonialist enemies to confront the noble Islám. Attachment to this sect must be avoided, as it will have no end but misery and perversion. Some of the man-made religions that have appeared during the recent centuries—in order to achieve their evil goals—have found it necessary to, in their own mind, shake the Khátimíyyat<sup>1</sup> of the prophet of Islám. Thus, they have interpreted some verses of the Qur'án that have nothing to do with their goal and by fallacy have tried to make them in conformity with their own ideas. One of them is Verse 35 of A'ráf. Without quoting the before and after verses, they say that this verse which states, “O ye Children of Adam, whenever there come to you messengers from amongst you, rehearsing My signs unto you....” (believe in them and follow my verses), has a future verb that means it is possible for other prophets to come after the prophet of Islám.

But if we go back a little and look at the previous verses that talk about the creation of Adam and his life in heaven and then his being expelled from heaven with his wife, we clearly see that these verses are not addressed to Muslims; rather, [they were addressed] to the whole society and the children of Adam. There is no doubt that many prophets have appeared for all the children of Adam. But these creators of religions ignore the previous verses and state that these verses have been addressed to Muslims and then conclude that possibly there will be other prophets of God. In these fallacies, they separate one verse from the others and ignore the verses that come before and after it and adjust it to their own desired interpretation.

Secondly, because the followers of the sect of Bahaism have thoughts and beliefs that are

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<sup>1</sup> Belief that Muhammad is the last prophet

absolutely false and against the noble religion of Islám, according to the decree of the religious leaders and scholars of Islám, they are Najis and any association with them is not permitted, and from a religious point of view, association with them is forbidden.

Thirdly, it is necessary to look at some of the beliefs of Bahaism so that you can judge for yourself how they are pursuing the way of infamy and hell and how they have deceived a number of people into following their own way of life:

The leader of the sect of Bahaism was an individual by the name of 'Alí-Muhammad Báb, who considered himself a Messenger of God and claimed to be one. He allows marriage of those who are forbidden to each other such as one's own sister. He even permits men to offer their wives to others. They do not believe in heaven and hell. They deny that the Prophet of Islám is a Messenger of God. They consider themselves followers of a religion. They consider themselves among the prophets and even better and higher than them. They consider their own man-made book that is full of nonsense and baseless words, the nullifier of all the heavenly books and religions. 'Alí-Muhammad Báb, who is the leader of Bahaism, has even gone further and claimed to be God.

## **"Their Progress and Development Are Blocked"**

The economic oppression of Iran's Bahá'ís

A special report of the  
Bahá'í International Community  
October 2015

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