



Iranian political prisoner

Shiva Nazar Ahari

Born June 10, 1984 in Tehran, Iran

Shiva Nazar Ahari is a women's and human rights activist and the spokeswoman of the Committee of Human Rights Reporters (CHRR), an Iranian human rights group founded in 2006. Shiva became a teacher of street children and of Afghan refugee children.

On June 14, 2009, two days after the fraudulent presidential election, Shiva was arrested at work. She was held in Evin prison and spent 33 days in solitary confinement. Shiva was released on September 23, 2009 on \$200,000 bail. After being released Shiva continued to work on prisoners' cases.

Shiva was arrested again on December 21, 2009 with two other activists while traveling from Tehran to Qom for the funeral of Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri. Shiva went on a hunger strike for two days. She fainted and was briefly transferred to the prison hospital.

Shiva was being held in a "cage-like" cell that was so small that she could not move her arms and legs. At the beginning of May 2010, Shiva was moved into a cell in Evin's Ward 209 (mostly solitary confinement). Following public appeals on her behalf by leading U.S. figures and human rights groups, Shiva was moved to the general ward of Evin Prison in June 2010. This led to an improvement in her conditions of incarceration.

The Revolutionary Court in Tehran sentenced Shiva to a total of six years in prison in a remote area on September 18, 2010. Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Pir Abbasi, convicted Shiva on all counts: *moharebeh* ("rebellion against God"), three and half years in prison, conspiracy to commit a crime "against national security," two years in prison, and anti-state propaganda, six months in prison. Shiva was also sentenced to 74 lashes.

Shiva's lawyer, Mohammad Sharif, filed an appeal, insisting that there was no evidence for the charge of *moharebeh*. His appeal was only partially successful. Shiva had been told that she would serve her six-year sentence in the notoriously harsh Izeh prison in Khuzestan (south west Iran), far from her family in Tehran. After her lawyer's appeal, Branch 36 of the Appeals Court acquitted her of one of the charges—colluding and conspiring against the regime—and changed her sentence to four years to be served in Karaj prison, which is closer to Tehran.

Shiva vigorously denied all these allegations when she went on trial on September 4, 2010 (she was handcuffed during the proceedings). Before her verdict and her lawyer's appeal, Shiva was released on \$500,000 bail on September 12, 2010 after enduring 266 consecutive days in prison (of which more than 100 days were in solitary confinement). Though she remains at home, Shiva is at danger of imprisonment by the authorities at any time.