

Editor's Note

Raisi's Death a 'Monumental, Strategic Blow' to Iranian Regime

Last week, following the death of Ebrahim Raisi, the clerical regime's President, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, President-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), stated: This represents a monumental and irreparable strategic blow to the mullahs' Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the entire regime, notorious for its executions and massacres.

She added: "It will trigger a series of repercussions and crises within theocratic tyranny, which will spur rebellious youths into action."

NCRI-US Deputy Director Alireza Jafarzadeh told Fox News in an interview: "Raisi is viewed as a mass murderer by the Iranian people. ... As far as the regime is concerned, obviously this is a major blow to supreme leader Khamenei because he has worked for years to elevate Raisi to the position he had. ... This gives a big boost to the population."

Jafarzadeh also told Newsmax in another interview: "The regime is facing a major crisis because Raisi was a close, loyal ally to Khamenei. This is a strategic blow to the regime. ... The main mission of Raisi was to prevent the uprisings in Iran because of his background. ... But the biggest uprising in September 2022 that spread to over 200 cities happened right under the watch of Raisi. So, the one thing that the regime has no solution for is the people of Iran."

This week's featured article says: "It is somewhat ironic that Ebrahim Raisi, the "Butcher of Tehran", met his end in an American helicopter. When the US-made Bell 212 helicopter plummeted into a mountainside in northern Iran on Sunday, it ended the life of one of the greatest criminals in Iranian history. For him, it was a fittingly fiery end to a murderous career."

Human Rights

Two women executed in Iran

NCRI Women (May 18) - Two women were executed this morning in Iran. They have been identified as Parvin Moussavi and Fatemeh Abdullahi. A 27-year-old woman was hanged at dawn this morning, Saturday, May 18, 2024, in the Central Prison of Neishapur, in the eastern Razavi Khorasan province. Her name was Fatemeh Abdullahi and had been arrested and sentenced to death three years ago for murdering her abusive husband. At the same time, the death penalties for at least five prisoners were carried out early this morning, Saturday, May 18, at the Central Prison of Urmia, in the northwestern province of W. Azerbaijan. A woman named Parvin Moussavi, 53, was among the victims. Parvin Moussavi, who suffered from cancer, came from Maragheh in the East Azerbaijan province. She had two sons, aged 32 and 22. She was arrested and imprisoned four years ago. Parvin could not afford to pay for hospital treatment, so the prison authorities did not send her to the hospital. [Read more...](#)

20-year-old Jewish citizen, is facing imminent execution

Iran HRM (May 20) - Arvin Ghahremani (Nathaniel), a 20-year-old Iranian Jewish citizen, is currently at risk of execution. The Iranian judiciary had intended to carry out the execution of this prisoner on Saturday, May 18, 2024, but it was postponed until Monday, May 20, 2024. Based on the reports received by Iran Human Rights Monitor (Iran HRM), Arvin Ghahremani committed “intentional murder” two years ago at the age of 18 during a street altercation, causing the death of a Muslim citizen. He was arrested at that time and subsequently sentenced to death by the Iranian judiciary. Recently, Arvin Ghahremani’s mother made a plea for help through the release of an audio file on social media, asking people to help save her son from execution. The family is appealing to the public for intervention to save their son’s life, and the Iranian judiciary has given them until Monday, May 20, to seek a resolution. If they are unable to obtain consent, his sentence will be executed. [Read more...](#)

Execution of Khosrow Besharat, a prisoner of conscience, after 14 years of imprisonment

Iran HRM (May 15) - On the early morning of Wednesday, May 15, 2024, the judiciary of Iran carried out the execution of Khosrow Besharat, a political prisoner of conscience from Mahabad, who had been held in Ghezel Hesar Prison in Karaj. Khosrow Besharat, a 38-year-old political prisoner, had been imprisoned in Iran for nearly 15 years. He was transferred to solitary confinement in Ghezel Hesar Prison two weeks ago for the execution of his sentence. This political prisoner was transferred to solitary confinement alongside Anwar Khodaverdi, another co-defendant, and spent 15 nights in solitary confinement awaiting execution. Khosrow Besharat, a Sunni political prisoner of conscience, was arrested by the Intelligence Agency of Mahabad in December 2009 when he was only 23 years old. He was subsequently transferred to the Intelligence Detention Center in Urmia. He endured over a month of solitary confinement under torture. Khosrow Besharat was arrested along with six other individuals, including Farhad Salimi, Anwar Khodaverdi, Ghasem Abesteh, Davood Abdullahi, Kamran Sheikheh, and Ayoub Karimi, by security forces. They were detained and transferred to the Intelligence Detention Center in Urmia. [Read more...](#)

Five inmates executed in Iran's Urmia Prison

HRANA (May 20) - On May 18, 2024, five prisoners, including a woman, were executed at Urmia Prison in West Azerbaijan province for drug offenses. HRANA reports the individuals executed are Parvin Mousavi, the female inmate, alongside Ramin Lavandpour, Parviz Ghasemi, Yousef Saeedi, and Mansour Naseri. Each had previously been sentenced to death on charges related to drug crimes. No official sources or domestic media outlets within the country have provided coverage of these executions at the time of writing. In 2023, 66% of HRANA’s reports on executions lacked official announcements by judicial authorities and went unreported by media inside Iran, highlighting a troubling lack of transparency in due process. [Read more...](#)

Protests, Economy

Nationwide protests by retirees and workers amidst government repression

NCRI (May 19) - On Sunday, May 19, retirees and workers across Iran took to the streets in multiple cities, staging protests against the Iranian regime’s economic policies and demanding better living conditions. The protests were marked by slogans denouncing government corruption and incompetence, as well as calls for higher pensions and improved social services. In Tehran, retired educators rallied in front of the Planning and Budget Organization in Baharestan Square, chanting, “One embezzlement less, our problem will be solved.” Additionally, goldsmiths from the Hakimi shopping center protested against new tax regulations, adding to the city’s chorus of dissent. Retirees from the steel industry also staged a demonstration in front of the Steel Retirement Fund, reiterating their demands for better pensions. In Ahvaz, southwest Iran, retirees of the steel industry and the Social Security Organization held a significant rally. Demonstrators chanted, “Incompetent Raisi, go back to the seminary,” and “Neither threats, nor prison,

nor executions will stop us," signaling their defiance against the regime's repressive tactics. The protesters demanded higher pensions to keep pace with the rising cost of living. [Read more...](#)

Western Policy, Nuclear Weapons

[Exiled opposition group says Raisi death 'monumental blow' to Iran](#)

AFP (May 20) - The death of Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash is a major blow to the Islamic republic's clerical leadership, an exiled opposition group said Monday, predicting a succession of crises. The People's Mujahedin of Iran (MEK) and its political wing the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) have long detested Raisi, accusing him of involvement in the 1988 mass executions of thousands of their members and other dissidents when he was a young prosecutor. Raisi's death "represents a monumental and irreparable strategic blow to the mullahs' supreme leader Ali Khamenei and the entire regime, notorious for its executions and massacres", NCRI leader Maryam Rajavi said in a statement. "It will trigger a series of repercussions and crises within theocratic tyranny, which will spur rebellious youths into action," she said. The MEK accuses Raisi, as Tehran deputy prosecutor in the late 1980s, of playing a key part in the executions of thousands of political prisoners, mostly suspected members of the opposition group. Raisi at the time was a member of what opponents call a four-man "Death Committee" that sent convicts to their executions without a shred of due process.

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[Iran facing 'rebellion' as Ebrahim Raisi's death set to spark massive uprising](#)

Daily Express (May 20) - Iran has been sent a five-word warning by the country's leading resistance group following the death of President Ebrahim Raisi, which has been dubbed an "irreparable blow" to the oppressive regime. ... Following the death of Raisi, Mrs Maryam Rajavi, President-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), said: "This represents a monumental and irreparable strategic blow to the mullahs' Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the entire regime, notorious for its executions and massacres. "It will trigger a series of repercussions and crises within theocratic tyranny." It will "spur rebellious youths into action," she added speaking exclusively to Express.co.uk. Rajavi added: "The curse of mothers and those seeking justice for the executed, along with the damnation of the Iranian people and history, mark the legacy of Ebrahim Raisi, the notorious perpetrator of the 1988 massacre of political prisoners." [Read more...](#)

[Victims of Iran's 'Butcher of Tehran' speak of 'relief' after helicopter crash](#)

Metro (May 20) - A former political prisoner in Iran who came face-to-face with the Butcher of Tehran Ebrahim Raisi before his death in a helicopter incident has opened up about the 'relief' he felt. Ahmad Ebrahimi, who survived the 1988 massacre branded 'Iran's greatest crime against humanity', told Metro.co.uk Raisi's death is a major blow to the regime. At the age of 17, he was arrested in Tehran for supporting People's Mujahedin of Iran (PMOI), a political-militant organisation which advocates for overthrowing the government, and was sentenced to a suspended execution. His sentence was later reduced to seven years in Gohardasht Prison. Raisi, then deputy prosecutor general, was part of a 'four-man commission, later known as the death committee', which commanded the killings of 30,000 people. 'Raisi came to Gohardasht Prison, asking prisoners questions if they still support the PMOI. Many said they did and were executed. 'I did not do that, I was not brave enough. That was my personal encounter with Raisi. So many of my friends were executed in 1988. 'This was the aim of the regime – to break prisoners and force them to obey their ideology.' [Read more...](#)

[Presidential elections set for July, as Iran begins inquiry into Raisi helicopter crash](#)

The National (May 19) - Iranian Armed Forces chief Maj Gen Mohammad Bagheri has assigned a high-ranking delegation to investigate the helicopter crash in which President

Ebrahim Raisi and other high-ranking officials were killed. ... Mr Raisi's death "represents a monumental and irreparable strategic blow to supreme leader Ali Khamenei and the entire regime, notorious for its executions and massacres", said Maryam Rajavi, president of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, which includes the Mojahedin e-Khalq organisation. [Read more...](#)

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, the 'Butcher of Tehran,' killed in helicopter crash in remote region

New York Post (May 19) - Iran's hardline President Ebrahim Raisi was killed when a helicopter carrying the reviled leader known as the "Butcher of Tehran" crashed in a remote region of the country Sunday, officials and state media said. Raisi, 63, his foreign minister and other passengers were found dead after the rescuers discovered the helicopter crash site early Monday. ... Raisi won Iran's 2021 presidential election, a vote that saw the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history. He was sanctioned by the US in part over his involvement in the mass execution of thousands of political prisoners in 1988 known as the "death committee" at the end of the bloody Iran-Iraq war. [Read more...](#)

Iranian Resistance

Maryam Rajavi: Raisi's death delivers strategic blow to Khamenei, sparking crises and youth rebellion in Iran

NCRI (May 20) - Following the death of Ebrahim Raisi, the clerical regime's President, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, President-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), stated: This represents a monumental and irreparable strategic blow to the mullahs' Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the entire regime, notorious for its executions and massacres. It will trigger a series of repercussions and crises within theocratic tyranny, which will spur rebellious youths into action, she said. Mrs. Rajavi added: The curse of mothers and those seeking justice for the executed, along with the damnation of the Iranian people and history, mark the legacy of Ebrahim Raisi, the notorious perpetrator of the 1988 massacre of political prisoners. Mrs. Rajavi, honoring the 30,000 PMOI members and other combatants who were massacred—and forever remembered by the Iranian people—emphasized that the pursuit of justice will persist until the regime's overthrow. The destiny of all those who have executed and continue to execute Iran's sons and daughters serves as a lesson to be learned. [Read more...](#)

Featured Article

Ebrahim Raisi called me a terrorist (after I survived an Iranian plot to blow me up)

By Struan Stevenson
The Scotsman (op-ed)
May 20, 2024

It is somewhat ironic that Ebrahim Raisi, the "Butcher of Tehran", met his end in an American helicopter. When the US-made Bell 212 helicopter plummeted into a mountainside in northern Iran on Sunday, it ended the life of one of the greatest criminals in Iranian history. For him, it was a fittingly fiery end to a murderous career.

I've been a key supporter of the democratic Iranian opposition movement and a target for the mullahs' regime for more than 20 years. It sent a registered diplomat – Assadollah Assadi – with instructions to detonate a bomb at an opposition rally I attended in Paris in June 2018. Fortunately, Assadi and three co-conspirators were arrested and sentenced to decades of imprisonment as terrorists. Assadi was then disgracefully sent back to a hero's

welcome in Tehran in an outrageous prisoner-swap deal, in exchange for a young Belgian charity worker taken hostage by the mullahs.

Having failed to blow me up in Paris, Raisi's regime then listed the leaders of In Search of Justice, a Brussels-based NGO which fights for the freedom of the Iranian people, as terrorists. They are Alejo Vidal Quadras, a former European Parliament senior vice-president, Paulo Casaca and myself, both former MEPs and long-time supporters of the National Council of Resistance of Iran.

In November last year, a hitman attempted to assassinate Alejo Vidal Quadras near his home in Madrid. He was shot in the face but miraculously survived. All the signs are that the attempted killing was ordered by the mullahs, likely with the full cognisance of Raisi.

As deputy prosecutor in Tehran in 1988, he was one of four individuals whom the then Supreme Leader, Ruhollah Khomeini, appointed to a 'death commission' to massacre supporters of the opposition People's Mojahedin of Iran/Mojahedin-e Khalq. Thirty thousand political prisoners were summarily executed within a few months.

For his zeal as a merciless executioner, he was promoted to Tehran prosecutor. He later became deputy head of the judiciary, then judiciary chief, paving his way to the presidency as the ultimate, bloodstained hardliner.

Raisi was placed on the US Treasury blacklist in 2019 for serial human rights violations. Since then, as president, he has directed the execution of over 2,000 people, many young protesters detained during the nationwide uprising in 2022/23. Last year alone, Raisi presided over the hanging of 864 men and women, a 48 per cent increase on 2022.

Raisi's death has plunged the Iranian regime into an unprecedented crisis. Eighty million Iranians are sick of the theocratic regime, their corruption and incompetence, and their squandering the nation's wealth on foreign proxy-wars and terrorism, turning Iran into an international pariah. The ruling elite's factional feuding, as they struggle to cling to power, has brought Iran to its knees.

The Iranian economy has collapsed. The death of Raisi, seen as favourite to succeed the ailing 85-year-old Supreme Leader, will have so destabilised the regime that the rebellious and oppressed young people may now seize the opportunity to overthrow the ruling mullahs.

Struan Stevenson, a former member of the European Parliament, is the coordinator of the Campaign for Iran Change and chair of the In Search of Justice committee on the protection of political freedoms in Iran. His latest book is entitled Dictatorship and Revolution. Iran – A Contemporary History

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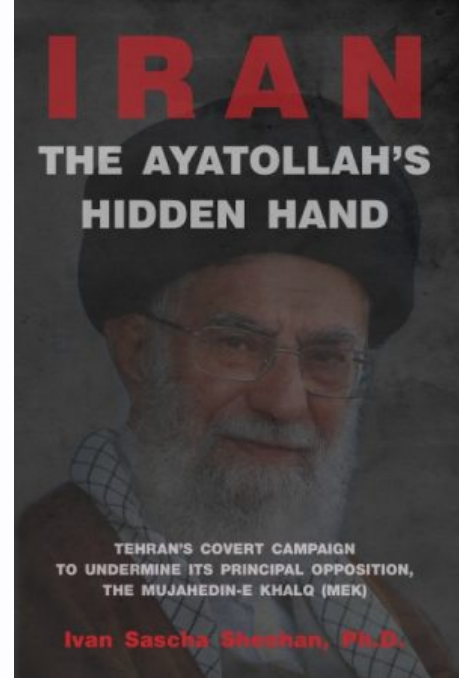
Suggested Reading

[Iran: The Ayatollah's Hidden Hand](#)

In this informative and well-presented volume, Professor Ivan Sascha Sheehan pulls back the curtain on the regime's propaganda franchise. He reveals the excessive investment of funding, infrastructure, and workforce frantically trying to convince Iranians and the world not to believe their own eyes and ears. After years of trying to ignore the MEK, hoping others would do the same, regime officials now seemingly cannot stop talking about how effectively the MEK's message and organizing efforts are empowering the national uprising. Sheehan's

research makes clear that the regime is scared, knowing that there is a blueprint and a competent political organization – run at every level by women – ready to help guide Iran to a legitimate constitutional future when the regime crumbles, just as happened with the Shah.

[Read more here.](#)



Website: www.ncrius.org/ Email: info@ncrius.org



About Iran Weekly Roundup:

This weekly is compiled by the US Representative Office of National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI-US). The NCRI is a broad coalition of democratic Iranian organizations, groups, and personalities founded in 1981 in Tehran. The NCRI is an inclusive and pluralistic parliament-in-exile that has more than 500 members representing a broad spectrum of political tendencies in Iran. The NCRI aims to establish a secular democratic republic in Iran, based on the separation of religion and state. Women comprise more than half of the Council's members. Mrs. Maryam Rajavi is the president-elect of the NCRI.

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National Council of Resistance of Iran - US Representative Office
1747 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 1125
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: 202-747-7847
Fax: 202-330-5346

NCRI-US | 1747 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 1125 | Washington, DC 20006 US

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