



On March 7, Ghorbanali Mazraekar spent another birthday in a Canadian prison

Maryam Namazie



March 7 was Ghorbanali Mazraekar's birthday; he turned 35 years old. But rather than spending his birthday going out for drinks and dancing, he spent it - for the second year in a row - languishing in a Canadian prison with the serious threat of deportation back to Iran,

i.e. torture and execution, hanging over him. Ghorbanali has already been tortured by the Islamic regime of Iran when he was only 17. He has spent years searching for refuge and protection from that regime yet the Canadian government continues to deny him the protection he deserves.

And while the Canadian government wheels and deals with the Islamic regime of Iran, a pillar of international terrorism, and gives it carte blanche to set up shop in Canada, it has the gall to claim that Mr. Mazraekar is a 'terrorist' because of his former association with the People's Mujahedeen

Organisation of Iran (PMOI), an Iranian opposition group it has recently and arbitrarily labelled terrorist. [As an aside, since 1998, Mr. Mazraekar has been a member of the Worker-communist Party of Iran.] While the classifying as terrorist of an Iranian opposition organisation is baffling - to say the very least - and has been given further comment elsewhere, it is clear that the Canadian government knows very well that Mr. Mazraekar was never involved in any acts of terrorism. While a member of the PMOI, he was involved in logistical support, participated in demonstrations, and worked as a cook among other

activities. He is being found guilty merely by association.

And because he has been deemed such, the Canadian government says he cannot even apply for refugee status and must be deported back to Iran. This is nothing short of an outrage. If the Canadian government fails to recall that it is a signatory to the Convention against Torture and many other rights conventions, then we should help remind it that that government is accountable for Mr. Mazraekar's life and safety. Mr. Mazraekar must be granted protection in Canada. His deportation to torture and execution in Iran must be stopped. Full Stop.

Open Letter from Maryam Namazie to Canadian Immigration Minister: Ghorbanali Mazraekar must not be deported to Iran

March 14, 2003

Mr. Denis Coderre
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Minister@cic.gc.ca

Re: Mr. Ghorbanali Mazraekar (Koorosh Niknam)
Imm. Division No.: 0003-A1-

01814
CIC Client ID No.: 45395525

Dear Mr. Coderre:

1. The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) is writing to express its most unequivocal concern regarding the Citizenship and Immigration

Canada's decision to deem Mr. Ghorbanali Mazraekar (35 years of age) inadmissible to apply for refugee status and deportable back to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mr. Mazraekar faces a serious risk of torture and execution should he be removed to Iran. IFIR calls on the CIC to review its decision and grant

Mr. Mazraekar admission and protection from torture and deportation.

2. IFIR is an international, non-governmental organisation with nearly 60 branches in over 15 countries worldwide, which promotes and protects the rights of Iranian refugees

continued page 2

Open Letter from Maryam Namazie, from page 1

and asylum seekers. As a record of our professional competence and credibility, various governmental, non-governmental, and inter-governmental agencies, including in Canada, have contacted IFIR for information on country conditions as well as on individual cases. In defence of Mr. Mazraekar's admission and protection from deportation, IFIR provides the following reasoning:

3. IFIR refutes the CIC's deeming of Mr. Mazraekar as inadmissible according to paragraph 19(1)(f)(iii)B of the former Immigration Act, i.e. a person who there is reasonable ground to believe are or were members of an organisation that there are reasonable grounds to believe is or was engaged in terrorism.

A. Mr. Mazraekar was expelled from school at 14. According to his own admission, he began associating with PMOI members when he was only 16 years old; like many young people in Iran outraged at the Islamic regime's brutality and repression, Mr. Mazraekar joined a political opposition organisation. As a result, he

was imprisoned for two years and seriously tortured at the young age of 17. He is still haunted by the tortures he faced in the Islamic regime's prisons.

B. The PMOI has recently been deemed a terrorist organisation by the Canadian government. While the arbitrary classification as terrorist of an opposition organisation is confounding particularly given the Canadian government's close relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, a regime renowned for its terrorism, Mr. Mazraekar was never involved in any acts of terrorism or violence. While a member of the PMOI, Mr. Mazraekar was involved in logistical support, participated in demonstrations, and worked as a cook among other activities. Membership in a group deemed terrorist does not coincide with acts of terrorism (if any) by the group. By merely admitting to associating with an organisation deemed terrorist by the Canadian government, Mr. Mazraekar is being found guilty by association, a violation of international standards and principles of criminal law.

C. Mr. Mazraekar ceased being a member of the PMOI long before it was deemed 'terrorist' by the Canadian government. Furthermore, since 1998, he has been a member of the Worker-communist Party of Iran (WPI), a political opposition party that has been at the forefront of defending civil rights and norms. As an active WPI member, he participated in meetings, rallies, demonstrations and other activities of the WPI's German committee. [Mr. Mazraekar applied for refugee status in Iraq, Denmark and Germany before reaching Canada in a desperate attempt to gain protection.]

4. IFIR asserts that Mr. Mazraekar will be at serious risk of torture and execution should he be deported to Iran. Canada's Supreme Court has recently curbed the circumstances in which so-called 'terrorists' can be deported to countries where they may face torture. According to the UNHCR, the prohibition of return to torture contained in Article Three of the Convention against Torture to which Canada is a signatory is not

subject to exception.

A. Mr. Mazraekar has already been seriously tortured by the regime. He is known to the regime because of his imprisonment and opposition activities in Iran, his family's history of opposition and his overt political opposition against the Islamic regime of Iran abroad. His affiliations formerly with the PMOI and now with the WPI are public knowledge. He faces serious risk of torture and execution if deported. The Islamic regime has stepped up executions and torture of political opponents and others in the past several years further increasing the seriousness of the torture and cruel and inhuman punishment he will face.

B. Moreover, the Canadian government has informed the Islamic regime's embassy in Canada of their plans to deport him and have submitted his identity papers to them. He has been pressured to sign papers requesting 'travel documents' to facilitate his deportation to Iran. He has steadfastly refused to sign such papers given that it would be

continued page 3



Mansoor Hekmat (1951-2002)

With the bloody suppression of the revolution in Iran and the imposition of an ultra-reactionary life on the people, tens of thousands of human beings, alone and without organisation, fled the Islamic Republic of Iran in search of security and tranquillity. Organising this vast human mass around the most modern and humane advances of humanity, unconditionally defending their right to asylum, and creating an international organisation without taking into consideration people's nationality, religion, sex and or political affiliation became an immediate necessity. Creating the International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) was Mansoor Hekmat's response to these conditions. As he said: 'Our entire life story is changing the lives of human beings.'

Open Letter from Maryam Namazie, from page 2

equivalent to signing his death warrant. The Islamic regime of Iran routinely interrogates and tortures asylum seekers who are deported back to Iran. In May 2002, two Iranian asylum seekers who were deported by the Australian government were arrested upon arrival and ordered to appear before an Islamic tribunal. Of two other male detainees who were returned to Tehran, one man apparently never left the airport where his family had been waiting for him and the other vanished from his home several days after being returned. According to an Amnesty International

Urgent Action, six people were executed between 7 and 13 October 2002, including Khaled Shoghi, who was deported from Turkey in 1997 and arrested and tortured. Also According to Amnesty International, 6 March 2002 Urgent Action 69/02, Karim Tuzhali was executed on 24 January 2002 at Mahabad prison, western Iran; he was a former asylum seeker who was forcibly returned on 20 June 1998. In March 2001, Kamal Mohammadian, an activist and political prisoner from Iranian Kurdistan, who had managed to escape to Iraqi Kurdistan and was handed

back to the Iranian government by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, was executed after years of torture. IFIR is aware of numerous such cases of torture after having been contacted by family members when an asylum seeker is deported to Iran, however, IFIR cannot reveal many of the cases due to the requests of deported asylum seekers' and their families who fear further repercussions and torture.

5. The International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR) reiterates its unequivocal support of Mr.

Mazraekar's application for admission and protection from torture and deportation. IFIR looks forward to the Canadian government's immediate intervention in this matter. Needless to say, the IFIR holds the Canadian government responsible for Mr. Mazraekar's life and security.

Sincerely,

Maryam Namazie
Executive Director

Cc: civil, refugee and human rights organisations and UNHCR

Send a letter of protest to the Canadian government Save Ghorbanali Mazraekar's life

Send a letter of protest to Canadian Immigration demanding that Ghorbanali Mazraekar be granted admission and protection from torture and execution. You can use the following sample letter of protest.

Mr. Denis Coderre
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1
Minister@cic.gc.ca

Re: Mr. Ghorbanali Mazraekar (Koorosh Niknam)
Imm. Division No.: 0003-A1-01814
CIC Client ID No.: 45395525

We are writing to express our most unequivocal concern regarding the Canadian government's decision to deem Mr. Ghorbanali Mazraekar inadmissible to apply for refugee status and deportable back to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mr. Mazraekar has already been seriously tortured by the regime. He is known to the regime because of his imprisonment and opposition activities in Iran, his family's history of opposition and his overt political opposition against the Islamic regime of Iran while abroad. He faces a serious risk of torture and execution should he be deported to Iran. We call on the Canadian government to review its decision and grant Mr. Mazraekar admission and protection from torture and deportation. Needless to say, we hold the Canadian government accountable for his life and safety.

Signed: Name
Organisation (if any)

Cc: ifir@ukonline.co.uk

JOIN IFIR

* I wish to join **the International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR)** as:

Member (£25.00 p.a.) Affiliated Group (£100.00 p.a.)

* I wish to make a donation of: £ I wish to subscribe to Hambastegi English or Iran Monitor: (£50.00 p.a.)

Name: _____ **E-mail:** _____
Address: _____

Please make cheques payable to the International Federation of Iranian Refugees and mail to P. O. Box 27236, London N11 2ZF.

* I wish to make a standing order:

To: The Manager of (your Bank) _____
 (Address of your Bank) _____
 Please pay **the International Federation of Iranian Refugees (IFIR)** the sum of £ each month / quarter / year (delete as appropriate) until further notice and debit my Account no: _____ Sort Code: _____ starting on (date): _____

Name: _____ Address: _____
 Signature: _____

[FOR OFFICE USE ONLY] To: **International Federation of Iranian Refugees**, Lloyds TSB bank plc. Sort Code: 30-99-86, account no. 0057223.

IFIR Country Directors

Australia: Arsalan Nazeri, Tel: +61 401005422, ifir@iprimus.com.au; Belgium: Hossein Pesh Ehsan, Tel: + 32 478 904 163, ifirbe@hotmail.com; Canada: Siamak Amjadi, Siamak_Amjadi@Yahoo.Ca; Denmark: Mahmoud Gasvini, Tel: +45 51603121, nahid@mail.danbbs.dk; England: Saeed Arman, Tel: +44 7931866985, s.arman@ukonline.co.uk; Germany: Nasrin Ramzanali, Tel: +49 172 5350946, ifirgermany@web.de; Holland: Magid Poostanchi, Tel: +31-613248331, ifir_holland@yahoo.com; Norway: Ghafar Gholamveysi, Tel: +47 40851738, ghafar@chello.no; Sweden: Esmaeil Moloodi, Tel: +46 70 492 0349, ifrs@hotmail.com; Switzerland: Mahmood Rahbary, Tel: +41 78 795 75 81, m_rahbary@hotmail.com; United States: Afsaneh Rahimi, Tel: +1 310 413 1578, RahimiA2000@yahoo.com.

For information on Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, India, Pakistan and Turkey branches, please contact IFIR Secretariat.

IFIR Contacts

Maryam Namazie, **Executive Director**
 Keyvan Javid, **Deputy Executive Director**

Visit IFIR site for latest
 international refugee news,
 urgent actions and press
 releases:

www.hambastegi.org

Editor: Maryam Namazie
Translators: Laili Panahi
E-mail: ifir@ukonline.co.uk
Tel: +44 7730 107 337; **Fax:** +44 8701351303
 P.O. Box 27236, London N11 2ZF, England
www.hambastegi.org