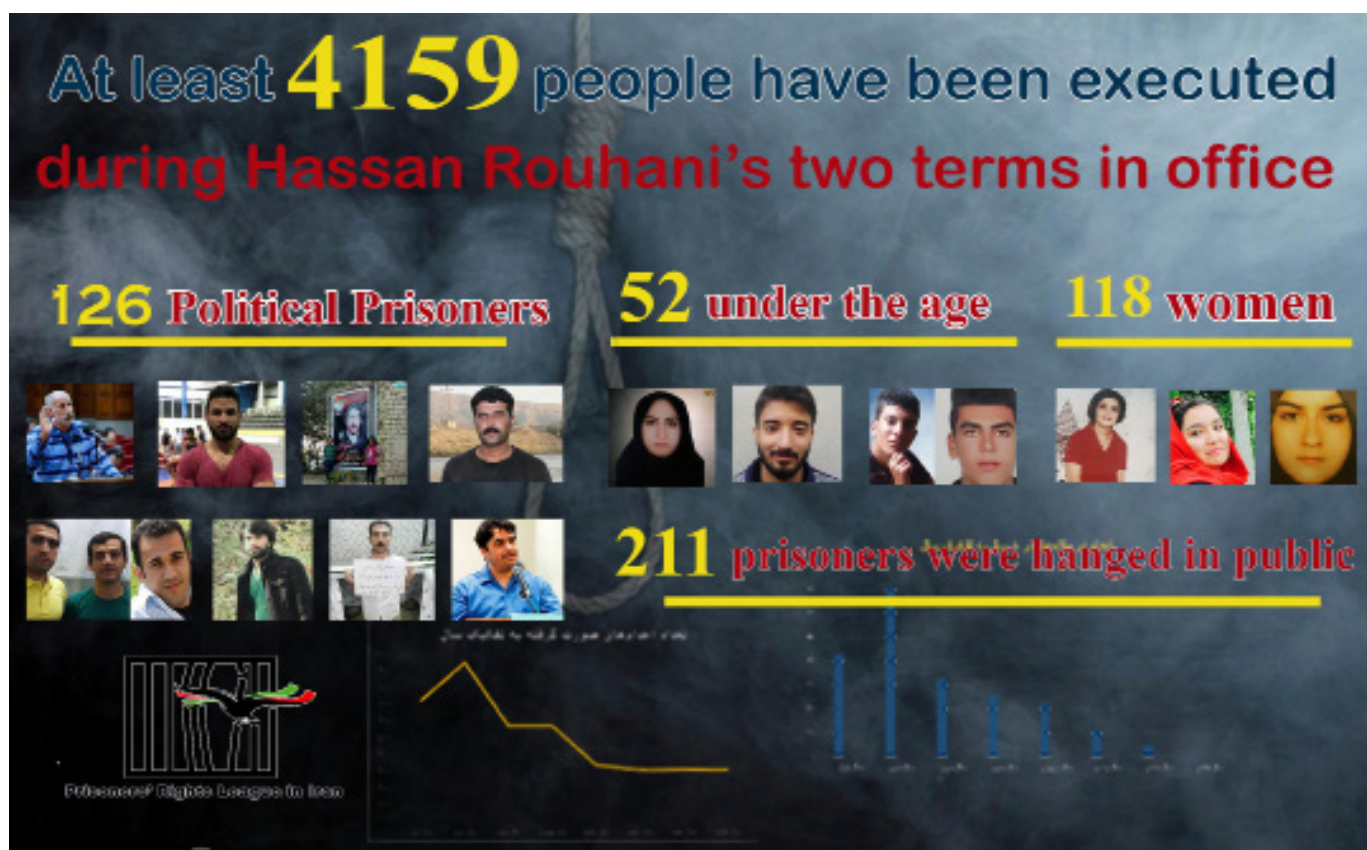


A report on the statistics of the

Executions

carried out during Hassan Rouhani's two terms
in office (August 3, 2013 – August 3, 2021)

The Statistics Center of the Prisoners' Rights League in Iran
(Breathing in Confinement), August 2021



Introduction

Gross violations of human rights, including detention, imprisonment, and deportation of civil, political, and ideological activists; expulsion and detention of teachers and students; repression of the journalists and reporters; repression of religious and ethnic minorities; as well as the brutal treatment of the protesters in December 2017, August 2018, November 2019, and the uprisings in Khuzestan in July 2021, will remain in the black record of Hassan Rouhani's two terms in office.

In addition, Hassan Rouhani's actions during the Covid-19 pandemic, with not providing vaccine, as well as refraining from quarantining the cities with concurrent economical support, leading to the death of hundreds of thousands of people, should be investigated in an International Court of Justice under the title of "deliberate murder of citizens". According to Alireza Zali, the head of Covid-19 headquarter in Tehran, they have even presented false statistics to the World Health Organization.

Therefore, the United Nations, its Special Rapporteurs, and human rights activists, must try to hold Hassan Rouhani accountable for gross violations of human rights, as well as violations of the international conventions in support of, and respect for the people's right to life and dignity. Hassan Rouhani must be brought to justice as a human rights violator and the cause of the death of hundreds of thousands of Iranians, during his eight-year presidency.

In this report, the Statistics Center of the Prisoners' Rights League in Iran tries to reveal the catastrophic dimensions of the executions in Iran, by presenting the number of executions carried out during Hassan Rouhani's eight-year presidency. It needs to be emphasized that the actual numbers of executions are undoubtedly more than the number recorded by human rights activists. The Iranian government has made every effort to ensure that the executions are carried out in secret, with only a small number of the executions are officially reported by the state media. Attempts by human rights activists living in Iran, to report the executions, bear a significant risk. As under the Islamic Republic law, it can result in being arrested and imprisoned.

Description of the experiences, the prisoners go through before being executed, requires a separate report. However, briefly explaining, the prisoners undergo extra-legal interrogations, as well as torture from the very moment of their arrest, which is being done with the intention of obtaining forced confession from them, to be used as evidence and proof for the crime. They also go on trial without the right to counsel. There are many other examples of violating the human rights of the prisoners in Iran, the most horrible of which is the inhumane way, the sentenced to death prisoners are being treated before execution. In many cases, neither their families nor their lawyers are aware that the execution is going to be carried out. According to local

activists, even the prisoners themselves are being informed of this just a few hours before being hanged.

According to the statistics, from the beginning of Hassan Rouhani's presidency on August 3, 2013, until its end on August 3, 2021, at least 4,195 people have been executed in various parts of the country.

One of the main concerns in Iran is the secret executions. During Hassan Rouhani's eight-year presidency, the official and state media in Iran, reported only about 30 percent of the executions, and the remaining 70 percent were revealed by the human rights activists and independent media.

Another gross violation of human rights which has been widely criticized by the international organizations, including the United Nations, is the execution of those who have been under 18 at the time of the alleged crime. Iran is one of the few countries in the world that continues to execute underage offenders, despite it being prohibited under the international law. During Hassan Rouhani's 8-year presidency, at least 52 prisoners, under the age of 18, at the time of the alleged crime, were executed.

Furthermore, according to the reports, during Rouhani's presidency, at least 118 women were hanged. The real figure, however, is thought to be higher.

During Hassan Rouhani's first term, the highest number of executions belonged to the accused of drug charges. However, after the amendment of drug law which came into force in 2017, the number of executions dramatically decreased. The new law restricted the issuance of death sentences, and also provided one degree reduction in the punishments for some drug offences.

Although the amendment did not cause the authorities of the Islamic Republic to completely abandon the execution of drug suspects, the lives of a significant number of prisoners were saved by the new law.

A member of parliament acknowledged that the executed prisoners could not have played a key role in the distribution of drugs. He said that they only transferred the drugs out of need and poverty, adding that some even for just "one Million Tomans". Yahya Kamalipour, deputy chairman of the parliament's legal and judicial commission continued: "I have been a judge and the head of judiciary for 20 years, and I am well aware of the situation of prisoners and their families. Ninety percent of drug-involved offenders were carriers who did so out of misery, such as providing money for their daughter's dowry or their mother's surgery. They even had transferred drugs for just one million tomans. We have abolished the death penalty for these

groups of prisoners.”

It is therefore obvious that members of marginalized groups of the society, including the poor, as well as ethnic minorities suffering from discrimination, are more likely to be executed for drug offenses. At least 1845 “truly innocent” prisoners were executed on “drug” charges during Hassan Rouhani’s first term of presidency.

During his second term of presidency, the charge of “murder” with 1,000 executions, accounted for the highest number of executions.

Since the beginning of the Islamic Republic, execution has always been used as a tool for widespread repression of dissidents and political and ideological opponents. This practice continued during Hassan Rouhani’s 8-year presidency, when 126 political and ideological prisoners were executed.

There are concerns that in most cases of executions, the relevant sentences were issued after trials which in no way complied with the standards of a fair trials. Most of the verdicts were based on confessions obtained via torture and other coercions. This in particular, applies to the political prisoners and the prisoners convicted of murderer.

In the case of political prisoners, some of their “confessions” were televised even before the trial, which violates the legal principle of “presumption of innocence”.

The authorities of the Islamic Republic do not publish much information about the number of prisoners sentenced to death in Iran. And the legal status of many detainees remains uncertain for months or even years. Lack of information makes it difficult for the prisoner’s families and lawyers to provide any help.

In Iran, many offences are punished by the death penalty. Crimes such as espionage, “moharebeh,” and “corruption on earth” are examples of the crimes that in addition to common charges such as murder and drug trafficking, carry capital punishment.

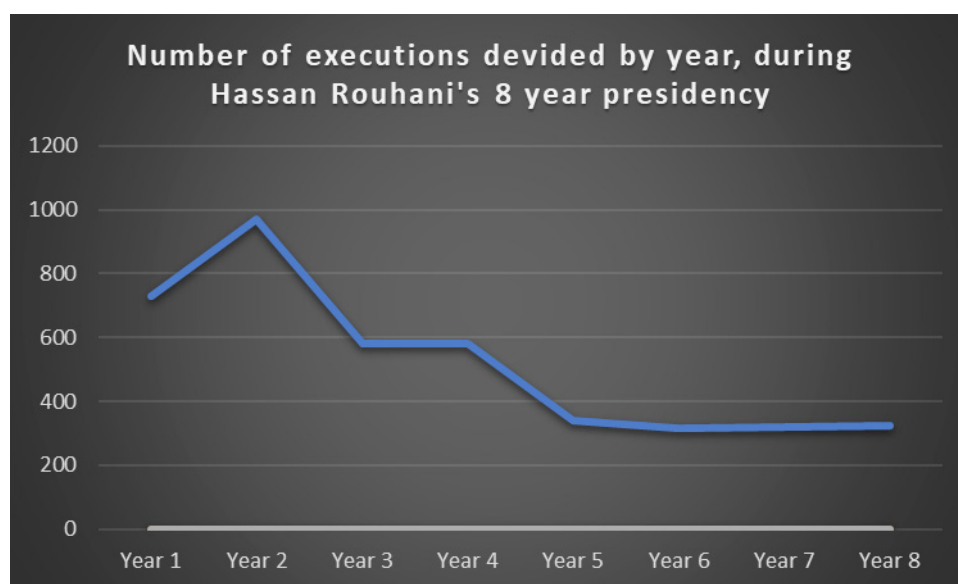
Execution in Iran is not limited to Iranian citizens. In many cases foreign nationals, especially Afghans, have been executed in Iran. According to our information, over the last 8 years, at least 62 citizens of other countries, including 61 prisoners from Afghanistan and a citizen from Iraq, have been hanged in Iran.

The Islamic Republic also uses the death penalty as a public punishment. A way to exert repression and create terror in society, such as the executions carried out in front of the public, for example in the city's main squares. During Hassan Rouhani's presidency, at least 211 prisoners were hanged in public.

According to the statistics, from the beginning of Hassan Rouhani's presidency on August 3, 2013, until its end on August 3, 2021, at least 4,195 people were executed in various parts of the country.

One of the main concerns in Iran is the secret executions which are not being announced by the state media. During Hassan Rouhani's eight-year presidency, the official and state media in Iran reported only about 30 percent of the executions, and the remaining 70 percent were revealed by the human rights activists as well as the independent media.

The below diagram shows the total number of executions divided by year, during Rouhani's 8-year presidency:



Number of executions divided by year, during Rouhani's 8-year presidency.

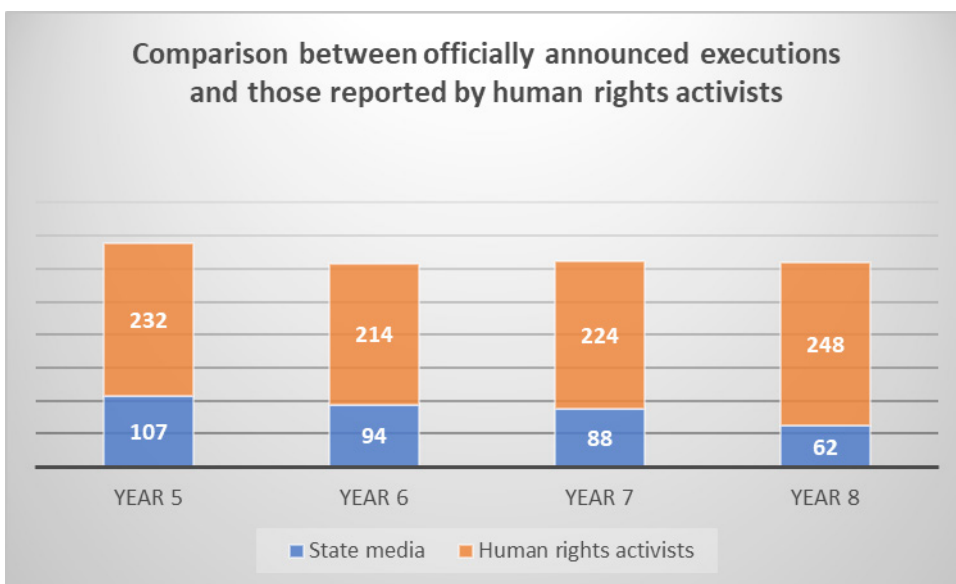
As the diagram shows, executions have dropped dramatically since the fourth year of Rouhani's presidency. The reduction coincides with the passage of a new penal code for drug-related crimes. Most of the executions in Iran were previously related to drug charges. As mentioned earlier, executions are mostly carried out in secret, without being officially announced.



Number of executions divided by year, announced by the state media.

As the above diagram shows, during Hassan Rouhani's two terms in office, the numbers of executions reported in state media have decreased each year, they are as well, much less than the actual numbers, indicating that the authorities of the Islamic Republic have a strong intention to keep the executions secret.

The chart below shows the number of executions officially announced, compared to those reported by human rights activists, in the second 4-year of Hassan Rouhani's presidency:

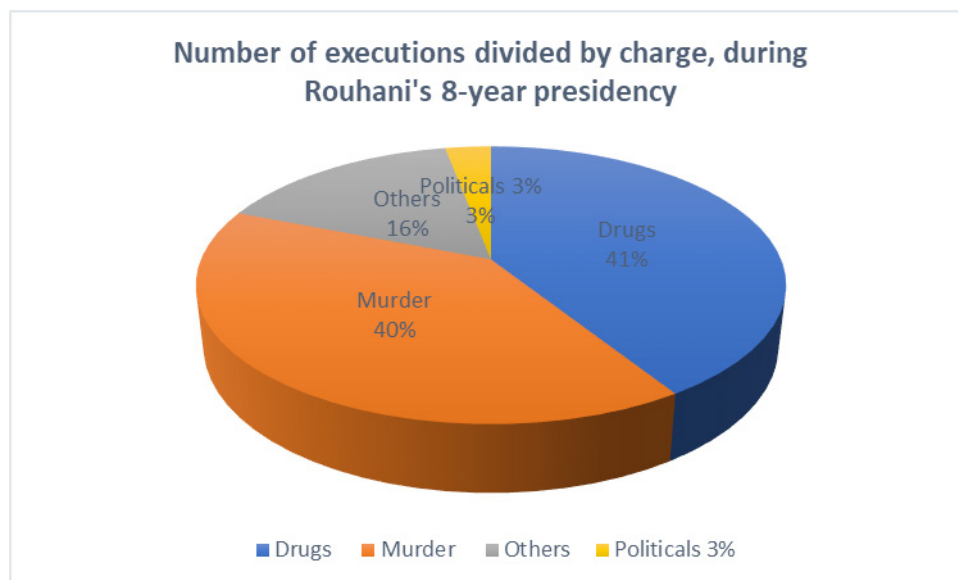


Comparison between the number of officially announced executions with the number of executions reported by human rights activists, during the second four-year of Rouhani's presidency.

The statistics of the Executions carried out during Hassan Rouhani's two terms in office

As it was mentioned before, fifty-eight percent of those executed during Rouhani's first term, were drug offenders. It means that at least 1,485 prisoners were hanged during Hassan Rouhani's first term on charges of transporting or selling drugs.

Therefore, during Hassan Rouhani's first term in office, many of the executed prisoners were accused of "drug related charges." After 2017, however, as the number of drug-related executions dropped, a significant decrease happened in the total number of executions. Though a large number of prisoners were still hanged on "murder" charges.



Number of executions divided by charge, during Rouhani's 8-year presidency

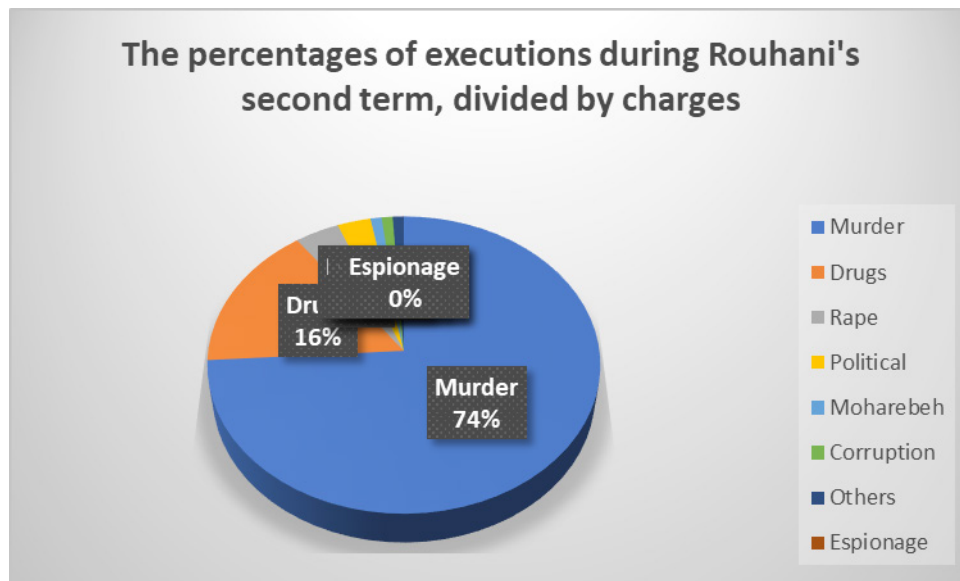
As the above chart shows, over the past eight years, executions on drug and murder charges have been at the top of the list of executions.

Charges such as espionage, moharebeh, and corruption on earth, which carry the death penalty in the Islamic Republic, accounted for 16 percent of all executions. During this eight-year period, 126 political and ideological prisoners were executed in various prisons.

A comparison of the number of executions before and after implementation of new drug amendment law shows that since enforcement of the amendment in November 2017, there has been a significant and unprecedented fall in the number of executions. In 2019, for the second year in a row, there was a decrease in executions for drug offences, significantly lower than the average of the previous 10 years.

Currently, executions for intentional murder (Qisas) account for the largest number of executions. Therefore, reducing the use of death penalty in Iran, requires a change in Qisas law and its consequences.

The chart below shows percentages of executions during Hassan Rouhani's second term in office divided by charge:



The percentages of executions during Rouhani's second term divided by charges.

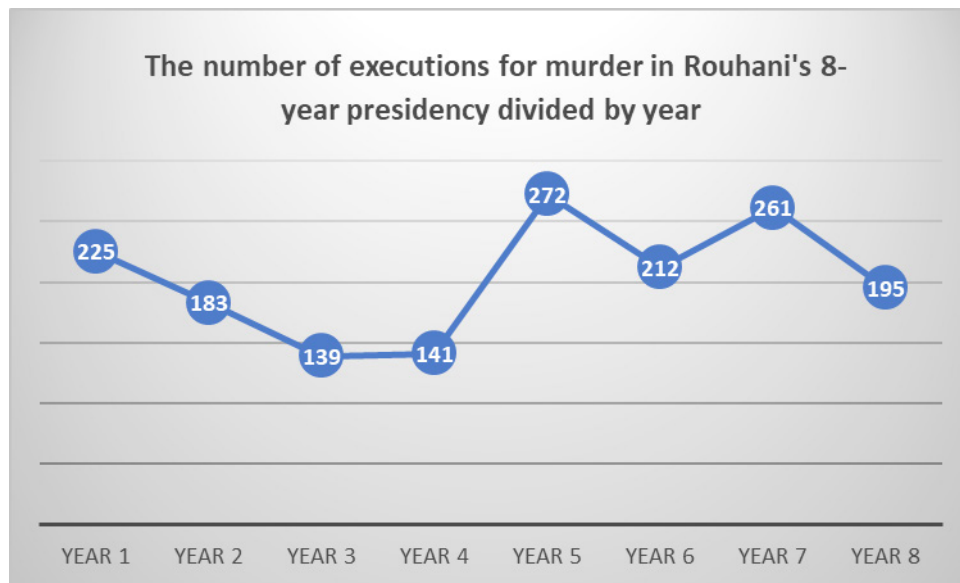
According to the chart above, contrary to the first 4-year, the highest number of executed prisoners (74%) were charged with murder.

The increase in executions of political prisoners in Rouhani's second term is also noteworthy.

In March 2019, Ibrahim Raisi, an infamous judge during the killing of political prisoners in the summer of 1988, and a member of "Death Committee", was appointed as the head of the judiciary by Ali Khamenei. The overall increase in the executions, and in particular the execution of political prisoners, such as Ruhollah Zam and Navid Afkari took place during Raisi's tenure in judiciary.

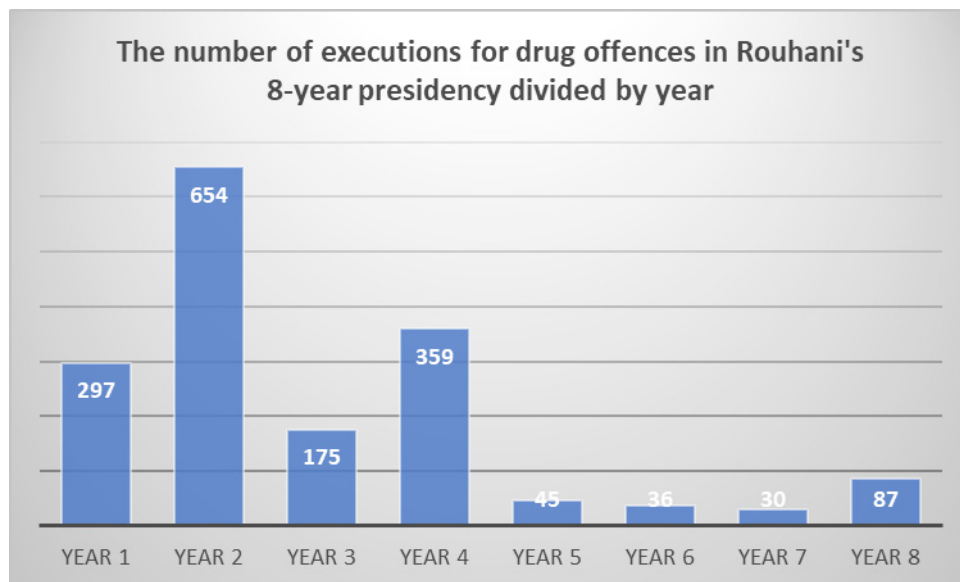
After Ibrahim Raisi was selected as president by Ali Khamenei, Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei with his black record in human rights violations was appointed to replace him in judiciary. The execution of drug offenders has risen since Ejei took over the judiciary.

The following two graphs show the number of executions for murder and drug offences and the third graph is a comparison between them.



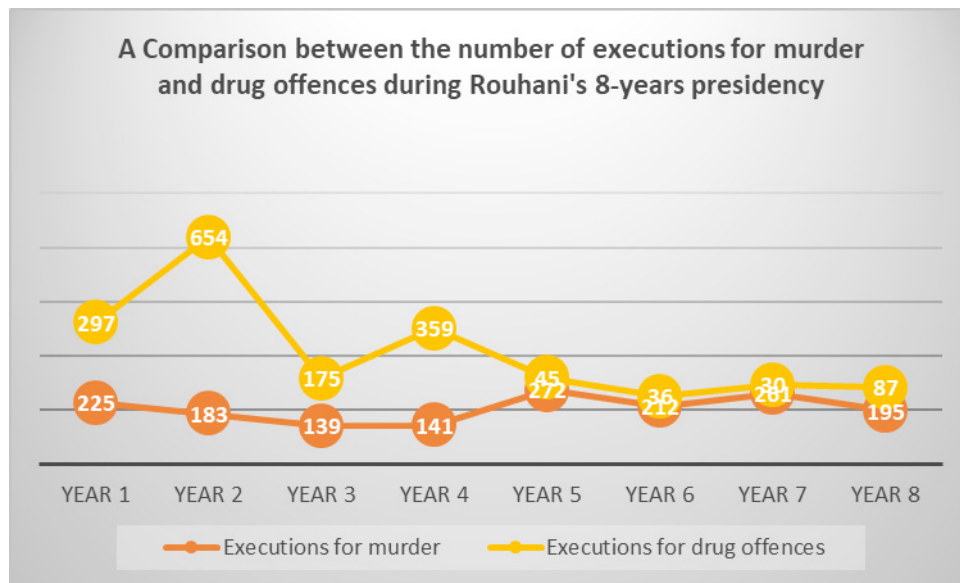
The number of executions for murder in Rouhani's 8-year presidency divided by year

The chart below shows the number of executions for drug offenses during the last eight years:



The number of executions for drug offences in Rouhani's 8-year presidency divided by year

The comparison of these two graphs clearly shows that after the amendment of the Penal Code for drug-related offences, in 2017 the execution of drug-involved offenders dramatically dropped. Simultaneously however, the number of executions for murder rose.



A Comparison between the number of executions for murder and drug offences during Rouhani's 8-years presidency

As shown above, concurrently with the passage of new drug amendment law, the number of executions for murder rose while the executions for drug offenses dropped.

However, with the appointment of Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei as head of the judiciary in July 2021, the executions of drug-involved offenders increased.

Execution of political prisoners:

During Rouhani's eight-year presidency, a total of 126 political prisoners were executed.

Hanging Jasem Heidari, Ali Khosraji, Hossein Sialouri, Naser Khafajian, Javid Dehghan Khold, Navid Afkari, Mostafa Salehi, Ruhollah Zam, Mohammad Salas, Zanyar and Loghman Moradi, Ramin Hossein Panahi, Shirkou Maarefi, Mohsen Aslani and Gholamreza Khosravi, as well as mass execution of Sunni prisoners, including Shahram Ahmadi, are examples of execution of political and ideological prisoners during Rouhani's eight-year presidency.

In the second term of Rouhani's presidency, the execution of Navid Afkari and Ruhollah Zam shocked the Iranian people as well as the international community.

Navid (Farshid) Afkari Sangari

He was single, born in 1993 and worked as a plasterer. Navid was also a national champion wrestler. He had

several national championship medals.



Navid Afkari and his two brothers, Habib and Vahid Afkari, were arrested in the summer of 2018 in connection with the nationwide protests in August of that year and were tried separately by the Revolutionary Court and the Criminal Court in Shiraz and sentenced to death, flogging, as well as imprisonment. Navid Afkari's death sentence was later upheld by the Supreme Court.

All three brothers were tortured to confess to the murder of a security agent at ABFA company in Shiraz.

After his story went public, the prominent wrestler Navid Afkari received a wave of international support, with famous athletic, artistic, and political figures, civil society activists and international human rights organizations called for his execution sentence to be revoked. In addition, an unprecedented Twitter storm organized to save his life.

However, despite the serious ambiguities in his case, in an inhumane and extrajudicial act, the authorities of the Islamic Republic, ignoring the universal demand, carried out the death sentence of Navid Afkari in Shiraz prison.

In an audio recording of his defense in court, which was posted on social media, he protests the torture of himself as well as his brothers, but the judge does not allow him to speak.

Another audio recording was also sent out of prison in which Navid Afkari addressing the Iranian people says: "They are looking for a neck for their noose." The audio file and in particular this sentence went viral and provoked public sympathy, anger and outcry.

Following the execution of Navid Afkari, his two brothers, Vahid and Habib, were transferred to solitary confinement, and as of this writing, they had been cut off from outside the prison.

Ruhollah Zam

He was a journalist, political activist, and admin of the Telegram channels of “Amad News” and “Voice of the People”. Mr. Zam was living in France but was arrested in October 2019 on a trip to Iraq, and was transferred to Iran. On Monday, October 14, 2019, the IRGC Intelligence Organization issued a statement announcing the arrest of Ruhollah Zam and a few hours later, a video of his confession was published by some local news agencies.

Zam was sentenced to death in Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran, presided over by Judge Salavati, and was executed on Saturday, December 12, 2020, in Rajai Shahr Prison in Karaj.

Two days before his execution, Ruhollah Zam had been transferred from the IRGC detention center in Tehran to Ward 8 of Rajai Shahr Prison in Karaj, known as the IRGC Ward. He was then transferred to Evin Prison on Friday evening, and after the last visit with his family, was returned to Rajai Shahr Prison. Ruhollah was on a hunger and thirst strike since the time of his transfer until his execution. At the time of his execution, Amin Vaziri the deputy prosecutor, along with several security agents, was present at the execution scene.

Mostafa Salehi

He was a 33-year-old construction worker, father of two, who was arrested in the City of Kahrizsang in Isfahan, during the December 2017 nationwide protests. Security forces charged Mustafa with killing a guard, though he never plead guilty.



Although there was no evidence of guilt in Mustafa's case, he was sentenced to death in the winter of 2018 in Branch 1 of the Criminal Court of Isfahan Province. Even though he resisted to confess, the sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court. Mostafa Salehi's case was kept secret, without media coverage, and he was finally executed on August 5, 2020, in Isfahan Central Prison.

Mohammad Salas

He was a Gonabadi dervish who was accused of running over and killing three police officers by a bus, during the protests in Golestan 7 on February 19, 2018. He was later sentenced to three times execution, one year in prison, as well as 74 lashes. The sentence was finally upheld by the Supreme Court.



According to Zeinab Taheri, Mr. Salas's lawyer, as well as his son and daughter, he had been arrested three hours before the incident and was not a bus driver.

In addition, in an audio file sent out of prison, Mr. Salas said that he was not the driver of the bus and that he confessed to the crime because of having been tortured for "several hours" at the police station.

Mohammad Salas was executed at dawn on June 17, 2018, despite the efforts of human rights activists.

Zanyar and Loghman Moradi and Ramin Hossein Panahi

Zanyar and Loghman Moradi were arrested in 2009 and later sentenced to death in Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran, presided over by Judge Salavati, on charges of membership in the Komala party as well as involvement in the murder of the son of the Friday prayer Imam in Marivan. However, the two detainees had repeatedly stated that they had been forced to confess to murder under pressure, threats, and severe torture.

Ramin Hossein Panahi was arrested in July 2017 and tried and sentenced to death in Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Sanandaj on charges of "armed rebellion against Islamic ruler" as well as "acting against national security." Ramin also plead not- guilty.

The three Kurdish political prisoners were executed on the morning of September 8, 2018, in Rajai Shahr Prison in Karaj.



In reaction to their execution, Philip Luther, Amnesty International's Research and Advocacy Director for the Middle East and North Africa, said:

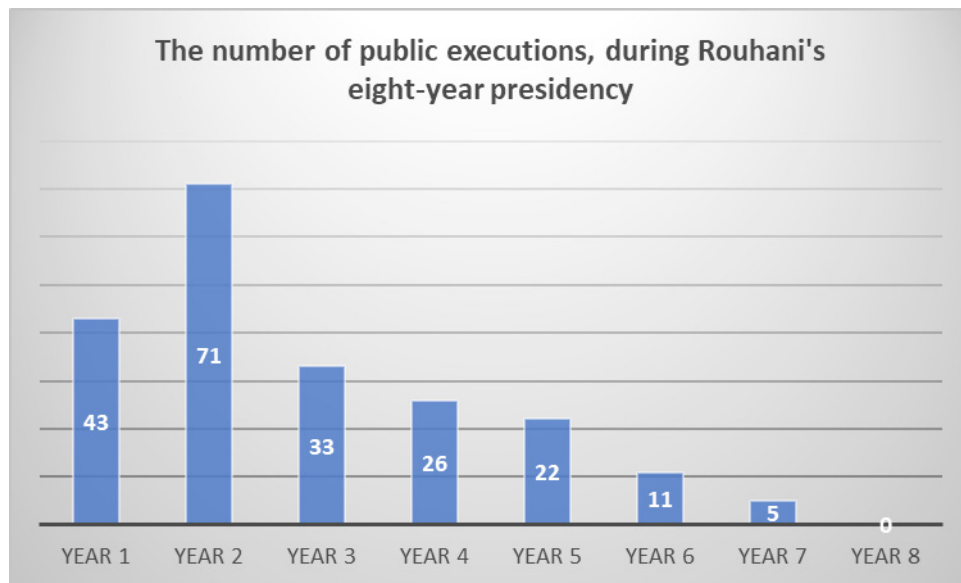
“We are horrified by the news that the Iranian authorities have executed these men, despite widespread condemnation of their death sentences and calls from UN human rights experts and other bodies to halt their executions. The trials of all three men were grossly unfair. All were denied access to their lawyers and families after their arrest, and all said they were tortured into making ‘confessions’.”

He added: “the Iranian authorities have once again demonstrated their brazen disregard for the right to life.”

Execution in public

Execution of death sentences in public has been used since the first days of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The practice has been widely criticized by the international organizations and human rights activists. However, the Iranian authorities insist on continuing to hang the prisoners in front of the eyes of the people. During Hassan Rouhani's eight years in office, the public executions have been ongoing until last year when they were halted because of Covid-19 pandemic.

During Hassan Rouhani's presidency, at least 211 prisoners were executed in public.



The number of public executions during Rouhani's eight-year presidency.

Executions in public have been repeatedly condemned by the international entities and human rights organizations, but officials in the Islamic Republic claim that it is for “public edification” and “crime prevention.” In reality however, this practice, in addition to infringing on the dignity of the convict and his family, promotes the cycle of violence in the society and is considered a kind of collective punishment involving even those who are watching the scene.

According to sociologists and psychologists, the presence of children in public execution scenes bears long-term consequences for them with negative effects on their entire future life. There are several reports of

children who have lost their lives, while trying to reconstruct the execution scene.

The Islamic Republic has in some instances carried out public executions on sports fields. During Hassan Rouhani's first term, at least two prisoners were executed on sports fields. On May 20, 2015, a prisoner was hanged in the sports field of Minab Municipality, and on September 22, 2016, another prisoner was hanged in the sports stadium of the City of Neyriz. The act provoked protests from the FIFA, which demanded it not to happen again.

Execution of children

One of the saddest aspects of executions in the Islamic Republic is the execution of juvenile offenders. An act contrary to the international principles which deserves to be tried in an international court. In the Islamic Republic, under 18 criminals in many cases, receive death penalties. Articles 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as Article 97 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Iran is a signatory, prohibit the execution of the under 18 offenders.

However, Islamic Penal Code in Iran, allows judges to deal with the girls after the age of nine and boys after the age of 16 as adults and punish them with death sentences. In order to escape the accountability to the international community, the Islamic Republic keeps child defendants in detention, and executes them after they reach the age of 18. Whereas the horrible period of imprisonment before execution is itself a kind of cruel torture for these children!

At least 52 child offenders were executed during Hassan Rouhani's presidency.



The latest case was a prisoner named Sajjad Sanjari, who was arrested in 2011 at the age of 15 for the murder of a man who allegedly intended to rape him. Sajjad, however, was eventually sentenced to death and was executed on August 2, 2021, in Dizelabad Prison in Kermanshah.

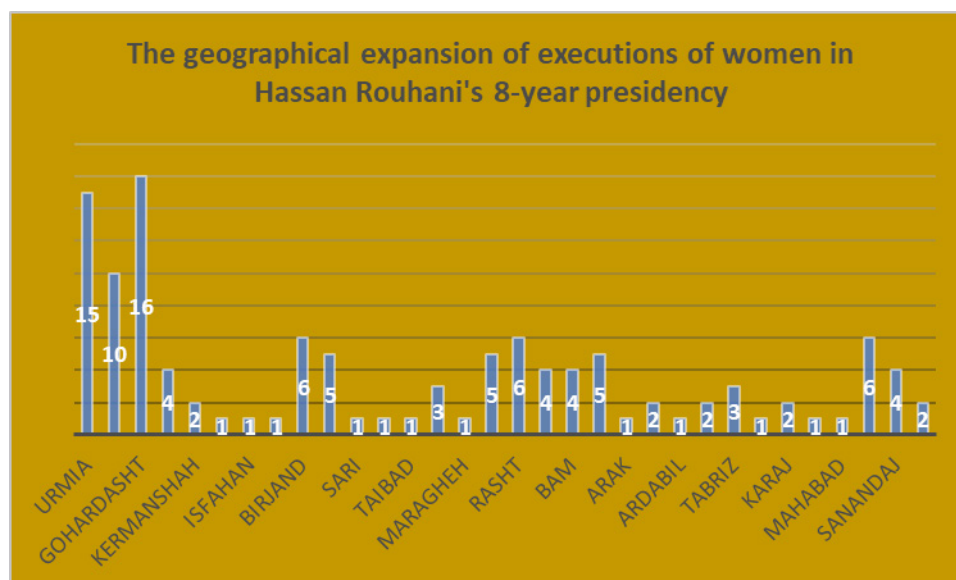
Amnesty International wrote in protest of his execution:

“During his first trial in 2012, the court had found that he had reached ‘maturity’ at 15 on the basis of his ‘pubic hair development’.”

Execution of women

At least 118 women were executed during Hassan Rouhani's presidency.

The charge for which women are hanged is mostly “murder.” Considering the lack of legal protection, women in Iran are defenseless against social harms. According to the statistics, most women in Iran have experienced domestic and social violence. Given the inequality of men and women in the laws of the Islamic Republic, as well as the lack of social and legal support, women are forced to defend themselves personally.



The geographical expansion of executions of women in Rouhani's 8-year presidency

In the end, the Prisoners' Rights League in Iran calls on all international bodies and human rights organizations to take immediate action to save the lives of prisoners currently on death rows on various charges.

Without a decisive international action, the government will continue to execute prisoners, especially children under the age of 18.