



High Council for Human
Rights of the
Islamic Republic of Iran

**Special Efforts to Maintain Health,
Safety & Security of Inmates in Evin
Prison:
A Report on Fire Incident and Clashes
by Prisoners Convicted of Violent
Crimes & Theft**

**The High Council for Human Rights of The
Islamic Republic of Iran
(17 October 2022)**

In the Name of GOD

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Special Efforts to Maintain Health, Safety & Security of Inmates in Evin Prison:

A Report on Fire Incident and Clashes by Prisoners Convicted of Violent Crimes & Theft

On the night of 15 October 2022, the prisoners of Ward No. 7 of Evin Prison¹ – where those convicted of violent crimes, mostly different types of thefts, are held – deliberately and with a pre-thought plan set fire to the sewing workshop, which is located on the second floor, as a result of which the raging fire engulfed and swept through the ward. The aforesaid prisoners also clashed with correctional officers in order to bust out of the prison.

At the very commencement of the incident, the prison officials took the necessary measures to prevent the fire from spreading to the other buildings and wards and immediately relocated the prisoners to a safe place, i.e., the gym . Such a proper and critical reaction moved the inmates away from the fire, saved the lives of prisoners, and helped extinguish the flames. By taking appropriate measures, the situation in Evin Prison returned to normal after a few hours, and all the prisoners – even those held in Ward No. 7 – were able to contact their families and beloved ones.

Be advised that following the fire, certain prisoners of Ward No. 7 who had already prepared and planned for the incident, committed violent riots, attacked correctional officers and destroyed the properties on a large scale. In the meantime, other prisoners of the same ward, who were waiting for an opportunity to create insecurity and disturbance, joined their rioting fellows and helped them spread the riots, as a result of which considerable damage was inflicted on the prison' personnel and property. According to the regulations, especially on the strength of Article 14 of the Executive Bylaw of the State Prisons Organization, approved by the Chief of the Judiciary on 18 May 2021, the Security Unit of the Organization – which is tasked with establishing order, ensuring security and bringing under control such disturbances, riots and acts – stepped up and took the necessary measures in order to restore stability to and protect the security of the prison as well as the safety and security of other inmates. The clashes which took place between the prisoners convicted of violent crimes left several correctional officers and a number of other inmates injured. In the meantime, four of the

¹ It deserves a mention that Evin Prison is 57 hectares with 9 wards wherein a range of criminals and convicts are held.

rioting prisoners of Ward No. 7 have died due to smoke inhalation caused by the fire and fire-related injuries. 61 prisoners have also sustained injuries, but many of them received outpatient treatment. Only 10 of the wounded inmates were hospitalized, 4 of whom reported to be in critical conditions which despite of medical treatment passed away. It is noted that all 8 persons who passed away were prisoners with theft related offences.

Following the fire brigade's immediate and timely presence in the prison and the swift measures implemented by the personnel of the State Prisons Organization during the early hours of the incident which ultimately extinguished the fire and restored calm, the prisoners of Ward No. 7 were immediately transferred to another prison supervised and controlled by the State Prisons Organization to receive the necessary services and facilities, as the ward in question has been totally destroyed.

Most of the prisoners of Ward No. 7 have a long record of committing violent and dangerous crimes related to theft, who attempted prison break but failed to do so due to the implementation of security measures. Had they managed to break out from the prison, their escape would definitely be considered a violation of public order and the right of the society to safety and security. During the incident, the officers took the necessary measures in order to save the lives of other inmates, prevent the rioting prisoners from escaping, and maintain the health, safety and security of the society, according to the relevant regulations and laws.

It should be noted that no incident, injury or death has been reported with regard to other prisoners in other wards including those with security offences.

Following the criminal acts, the Chief of the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran has tasked the officials of the State Prisons Organization to facilitate the swift treatment of the victims of the Evin prison incident, even the rioting criminals themselves. Furthermore, the officials of the aforesaid Organization have been obliged to render all the necessary assistance and support to the families of the deceased and send delegations to meet and commiserate with them. In addition, His Excellency has also ordered that if a prisoner in Evin prison has hitherto been unable to contact the family, arrangements should be made for the inmate to talk with the loved ones tout de suite.

In the morning after the incident, the Secretary General of the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran visited different parts of Evin Prison, talked with the Head of the State Prisons Organization, underlined the necessity of fully observing the rights of prisoners, and provided the necessary guidelines. For their part, the authorities of the State Prisons Organization emphasized that the inmates' health, safety and security are of paramount importance to them and reassured the High Council for Human Rights that all the rights of the prisoners will remain fully respected.

Be advised that the sewing workshop set ablaze was opened in order to generate employment for prisoners and help their families. A wide range of measures has been implemented during the last 18 months to improve the prisoners' and prisons' condition: from job creation and skill training for them and helping their families to improving the inmates' health and treatment status, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the recent crime, some prisoners deliberately set fire to the centers established to improve the status of prisoners and help their families. By doing so, while carrying out criminal acts that caused the death and injury of some inmates, they also caused deep anxiety for the families of the prisoners. The judicial system has brought on its urgent agenda dealing with the crimes of the perpetrators of this disastrous incident.