

[PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

[Translator's notes appear in square brackets.]

[Personal information has been **redacted**.]

[The excerpt below is from the section of the article that pertains to the Baha'i Faith]

[Adapted from website:] Ferghe News

[Date:] 16 Esfand 1395 [6 March 2017]

Who is Behind the Sealing of the Baha'i Shops?

From time to time, especially after the Baha'i holy days, the news of the sealing of the Baha'i shops is heard here and there. The Baha'i holy days are nine in a year, during which the Baha'is are prohibited from working. Every fair-minded person, seeing such news, feels that the oppressed have lost their daily bread. He feels that injustice may have occurred. If a family earns a living from that shop, the whole family will be starving. There is no fair and committed person who does not condemn this move. But the question is, what is the essence of the matter? Is this the way it is portrayed? As mentioned, each story can be viewed from different perspectives, and it cannot be judged until all the facts have been revealed.

Note the following [article] published in the HRANA – Human Rights Activists News Agency, from a Baha'i after the sealing of his co-religionist's shop:

“In Baha'ism, there are nine days of religious holiday that sometimes do not coincide with the official holidays in the Iranian calendar, but according to the religion of Baha'ism, business and work is not permitted and Baha'is close down on these days. But the Public Places Supervision Office says we have no right to close down on these days, and the Baha'is do not accept it.”

As this Baha'i citizen points out, most of the seals are not because a Baha'i owns a shop or the owner is a Baha'i; the point is that most of these seals are due to the fact that Baha'is close their shops on days other than public holidays. In these cases, the country's official institutions have asked Baha'is not to close their shops except on public holidays.

A closer look at the sealing of the Baha'i shops so far has shown that, first, the Iranian government, according to the Baha'is themselves, does not seal their shops because of their Baha'i belief. On the contrary, the Iranian government urges Baha'i who own shops not to close their shops except on public holidays. The Baha'i organization seeks to achieve the goal of establishing a material and spiritual government similar to that of Christians of the fourth century A.D., during which each country must go through the stages of emancipation and independence. However, given that the Iranian government has not recognized the Baha'i organization, it urges Baha'i shopkeepers not to close their shops on these days, because this public movement, according to the government, is a movement towards the emancipation and independence of the Baha'i organization and is contrary to government policies.