

**[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:] Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRA)

[Date:] 19 Farvardin 1388 [8 April 2009]

Tumultuous Account of Minou Shahriari, the Baha'i Student Deprived of Education

Miss Minou Shahriari, an economics student at Semnan State University, was expelled from this university on 11 Esfand 1387 [1 March 2009] for being a Baha'i. The following is the text of Miss Shahriari's tumultuous account sent to the Committee for Pursuing the Baha'is' Right to Education:

The Story of My Last Presence at Semnan University:

A heavy environment was created by my entrance in the university. [Previously], I was told that I was being expelled from university because of my personal belief in the Baha'i Faith.

But [my last visit] to the university became permanent. [On my last visit], the university's vice president looked at me differently. He politely accepted my father and me and handed me all my documents with full respect.

The expulsion order was not his order. He was the executor of the order. The effects of this order, whether you like it or not, will overshadow my entire academic life and progress.

Perhaps, it will not be easy for him to carry out this order. Can the awakened conscience, far from the prejudice of every honourable Iranian, justify the expulsion of a student from the university, even with any ideas and [religious] belief? Honestly, does the esteemed vice president of the university not ask himself in private what danger this young girl posed for the university? What did this girl do that contradicts the principles and laws of the Islamic Republic?

Honestly, if this is the case, then who should defend me and all other expelled students? And who is closer than the professors and education officials at the university? How could you remain silent and execute the order for killing my scientific life? Are you really proud of this service?

Your action to ban a group of our country's youth, including Baha'is and others, from accessing the higher education is in conflict with the glorious historical achievements of the country of Iran.

How can it be explained to the people of the world, and especially to curious youth, that such obstacles are being imposed by authorities who consider themselves followers of Islam's teachings? What would be your response to the inquisitive minds of [the future]? And above all, how will you justify [your actions] before God? It [will be] up to the readers of history to judge. It will be up to the children of esteemed vice president of the University of Semnan to judge. It will be for the honest epistemophilic child of Iran to judge. The judgment is with you.

Is not Imam Husayn [PBUH] yours and my role-model? What was his message to you and me? About what do we ponder each year, during the month of Muharram? Did he also turn a blind eye to the truth? Did he sell his honour for a pittance? Did he sit back and look at oppression and shed tears or did he rise up?

Fourteen hundred years ago, Imam Husayn not only did not identify himself with the agent and executor of the oppressive rulers of his time, but he also rose up against the oppression at the cost of his wealth, honour, children, and above all, his dear life, and raised the banner of truth and justice amidst the dark night of oppression and bigotry.

Now what is the attribute of a lover of Imam Husayn? Are your tears really worth this year's Ashura [day of his martyrdom]?

I wholeheartedly accepted that the cold encounters of the honourable vice president of university education, during my previous meeting with him, was only due to his heavy workload and illness. It is fair that both meetings and encounters become immortalized and remembered in Iran's history.

The behaviour and encounter of the esteemed vice president for university education affected me. Will the injustice be uprooted in our dear land of Iran, as long as the culture of "I am only an executor, therefore I must be excused!" prevails in our society?

Yesterday my wish was to be accepted at the university. Today I was expelled from the university and may never be able to study again at university, but today I have another wish. Today, in every corner of the world, the hot whip of oppression has set fire to the weak bodies of millions of the oppressed in various ways and the cries and howls of the oppressed reach to heaven. It is my wish, first of all, that every courageous Iranian man and woman condemns any kind of oppression and injustice, and then bravely does not allow himself/herself to be a tool to execute cruel sentences. In the dear land of Iran, let us actually perform whatever we read about equity and justice in books and give sermons and speeches to others. But I know that for achieving this goal, keeping a vigil alone is not enough. Today, everyone is preparing for the Justice Entrance Examination.

Minou Shahriari

Committee for Seeking the Right to Education of Baha'is

Human Rights Activists in Iran