

## [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:] Khodnevis

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Three Months After the Death of Ataollah Rezvani; Criminal Analysis of the Murder of an Iranian Citizen by Dr. Aria Haghgou

Ataollah Rezvani, Who Was Killed by a Shot in the Head

On 3 Shahrivar 1392 [25 August 2013], the news of the murder of an Iranian citizen living in Bandar Abbas was published in the media. From the very first hours of the news of the murder, the fingers of blame were pointed at the intelligence and security agencies because of the victim's belief in the Baha'i Faith, his record of social activities in Bandar Abbas and his sporadic clashes with some influential institutions in the city, such as the office of the Friday prayer leader in Bandar Abbas.

... From the very first hours of the murder, I followed the death of Ataollah Rezvani, a Baha'i citizen living in Bandar Abbas, and tried to gather information about this incident. ... Unfortunately, in this case, the Bandar Abbas Intelligence Office and the city's judiciary have not made any progress, and disappointing news is being heard about the process of pursuing this murder through official and legal channels.

Accordingly, I found it necessary to analyse the murder from the perspective of an independent lawyer. ...

### A) Summary of the Facts Three Months After the Occurrence of the Incident

On the night of 2 Shahrivar 1392 [24 August 2013], the late Ataollah Rezvani went missing and on 3 Shahrivar 1392 [25 August 2013] at noon, his lifeless body was discovered by passers-by in one of the deserts around Bandar Abbas. According to the police, the car was discovered with the murdered body inside it. ... At the scene of the murder, no weapon (murder weapon) had been found. According to the intelligence officials, citing a forensic report and a weapons expert, the weapon used for the murder was a pistol, which in Iran is called a "shah kosh".

After the special investigator from the Bandar Abbas murder squad had attended, and the preparation of the [report], the body was transferred to the forensic medicine department, and after completion of the forensic report, [Ataollah Rezvani's body] was buried. By the order of the investigator of the Bandar Abbas Criminal Court, the case was handed over to the criminal department of the city's intelligence police for follow-up, establishment of the cause of the murder, and identification of the suspect or possible suspects.

### B) Important Criminal Data in This Case

By examining the information on the case collected by the victim's family...

1. No history of mental health problems has been reported in relation to the victim
2. In relation to the late Mr. Rezvani, it was reported that he had no financial or family problems or disputes ...
3. A person named Karim Mirzaie was the last person who was with Ataollah Rezvani before his murder. This young Afghan worker has been missing for about two months and no information is available about him. Before disappearing, Karim Mirzaie told the victim's family that he had been summoned to the Bandar Abbas Intelligence Office where he was severely reprimanded and threatened by intelligence agents for having an interview with Rezvani's family lawyer.
4. Sometime before this incident, anti-Baha'i statements reached their peak in Bandar Abbas as the Friday prayer leader of this city repeatedly spoke harshly against the Baha'is of the city from the pulpit.
5. According to the Rezvani family, several weeks before the incident, the victim was threatened directly and indirectly by some security institutions and officials of the office of the Friday prayer leader of Bandar Abbas. [Mr. Rezvani] had even been told that to save his life he should leave Bandar Abbas and migrate to another region.
6. The mobile phone of the late Mr. Rezvani is still missing and the Intelligence Office and the judge of the case refuse to issue an order for tracking it. Technically, it should be noted that the telecommunications department can track cell phones even when they are turned off and provide accurate information about the location of the phone.
7. The range of the bullet of the handgun called shah kosh is very short. ... However, no bullet was found at the scene.
8. According to the forensic report, the bullet was fired from the front of the head above one ear and exited from the back of the head in the opposite direction.

#### C) Analysis of Criminal Data

- 1- Considering the exit of the bullet from the head, it could certainly be determined that the shooting was carried out at close range.
- 2- At the time the body was discovered, the victim was sitting in the car seat, behind the steering wheel, and it appeared that the bullet had entered from the front of the head and exited from behind. There was neither any damage to the lining inside the car nor any scratch by the bullet. (Figures 1 and 2)
- 3- ... There was no spill or trace of blood inside the car on the seat and its interior. ... Therefore, according to the criminal investigation and scientific police, the shooting had taken place outside the car. ... Therefore, someone outside the car shot the victim and the killer transferred the body to the car.
- 4- With the elimination of the suicide hypothesis, in order to solve the mystery of this murder according to the criteria of criminal investigation, three main questions must be answered: first, the motive of the murder; second, the suspect or possible suspects; and third, describing the process of the murder (steps taken to commit murder).
- 5- The motive for the murder in connection with this case cannot be theft, because nothing other than the victim's cell phone was stolen. Financial dispute is another common motive for the occurrence of murder in Iran. Owing to the lack of records of financial disputes related to the

victim, this motive also appears weak and is not noteworthy. Family or honour disputes can also be another motive for murder, but such motives cannot be considered, due to the victim's family status and the victim's moral background; he was known to have demonstrated good behaviour.

The most important hypothesis regarding the motive of this murder can be the ideological and religious differences between the killer and the victim. Thus, the victim's belief in the Baha'i Faith and his significant social activities led to the decision to physically remove him. This theory is reinforced by the reports of common good and social activities of the victim, because apparently these activities were not to the liking of the security and religious officials of Bandar Abbas, especially the Friday prayer leader of the city, who has repeatedly expressed his concern about the social activities of the Baha'i sect.

- 6- In the first instance, the Intelligence Office and the case investigator should investigate the members of the office of the Friday prayer leader of Bandar Abbas regarding their alleged threat to the victim. The most important step in finding clues to potential intimidators is to request a complete list of conversations of the victim in the weeks leading up to the murder. With a careful and simple review of this list, one can search for the telephone numbers related to the security authorities or the office of the Friday prayer leader or those attributed to it in this list. If the telephone numbers of these people are found in the list of calls to the victim, the claim of the victim's family regarding a threat against him by the office of the Friday prayer leader and security authorities will be proven because the victim had no business or administrative relationship with these authorities.

In the absence of phone numbers of individuals and authorities which are anonymous and not identifiable to the victim's family and close friends should be pursued.

In the next step, the person or persons in whose name the telephone lines are registered should be summoned and investigated.

- 7- The disappearance of the victim's mobile phone is the most important reason for hypothesizing that the masterminds and perpetrators of the murder were in contact with the victim before the incident; in fact, it was premeditated murder. The killer or his accomplices contacted the victim before the murder took place and took him to the crime scene or whatever place they had in mind. The disappearance of the victim's mobile phone reflects the fact that the organizers of the murder did not want the last calls of the victim and possibly some of the phone numbers in the memory of the phone to fall into the hands of the victim's family.
- 8- The disappearance of the mobile phone, along with the proof that the murder occurred outside the place where the body was discovered, reinforces the hypothesis that the organizers of the crime took the victim's mobile phone from him and then took him to the murder scene without his mobile phone. The fact that the case investigator has not traced the victim's cell phone also indicates concern over the fact that the real location of the murder was other than the location where the victim's body was found. In fact, the telecommunications company can easily announce the location of any of the conversations made by the victim in the last hours of his life based on the relevant telecommunication tower, and the disclosure of this information apparently provides clues to the victim's family that the murder planners did not want to disclose it. This shows the careful planning for the execution of this crime and also the complete mastery of the murder planners in the criminal investigation process in Iran.
- 9- The disappearance of a young Afghan worker who was the last person to have met the victim may lead to the hypothesis that the worker had information that could have provided clues in an interrogation or technical interview, and it is for this reason that the organizers of the murder

silenced the Afghan youth in some way. This shows the multiplicity of planners and perpetrators of the murder and that the organizers of the murder were engaged in the removal of all clues after the crime was committed and had the opportunity to do so.

- 10- The type of weapon used to commit the crime, as well as the occurrence of the murder just by firing a single bullet into the victim's brain, proves two points:
- 11- The victim was under the control of the killer and did not resist the murder because if the victim had resisted, the killer would have to shoot more than one bullet to break the victim's resistance.  
...
- 12- The killer is professional, both in the use of this type of weapon and in the commission of murder. Accurate shooting at specific points in the brain which results in death from a single bullet demonstrates the killer's mastery of his nerves and his skill in using weapons. Also, shooting from a close distance to this point in the head shows that the killer is fully acquainted with the methods of professional killing using this weapon.

The bullet fired from the right side of the head to pretend that the victim was right-handed and had shot himself in the head indicates that the killer was fully familiar with the principles of professional killing and knew how to make it look like suicide. However, because it was not possible for him to hold the victim inside the car, he was forced to commit the murder in another place and then bring the body into the car. This was the weakness of his work in terms of professionalism, and to avoid it, he had no choice. ...In other words, the killer apparently did not consider that the evidence on how the blood was spilled and the effects of the shooting inside the car would be examined expertly. For this reason, he fired the shot from the right side of the head so that, at first sight, the victim's family would not be able to prove that it was not suicide. However, every murder at the time of its occurrence has certain particular conditions that the plotters and executors, although professional, cannot predict and control, and this is the entry point for detectives and experts of scientific police into complex and professional murders.

Therefore, referring to what has been said, the summary of the criminal analysis of this case to date, according to the criteria of criminal investigation and scientific police, is as follows:

- Death did not occur due to suicide
- Murder was designed and carried out by a group of people, not just one person
- The murder was designed and carried out by a professional group familiar with security principles
- The victim did not show any resistance against the assailant at the time of the murder
- The killer was a professional and fully skilled in using a handgun

Now, according to this information, one wonders whether the judicial authorities of Bandar Abbas can and are willing to pursue the murder of an Iranian citizen through their legal authority while maintaining their independence, or do they want to turn a blind eye to these tangible and scientific and logical facts?

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