**Women's Activists Sentenced As Crackdown Continues In Iran**

May 18, 2010

Radio Free Europe

*http://www.rferl.org/content/Womens\_Activists\_Sentenced\_As\_Crackdown\_Continues\_In\_Iran/2045258.html*

Two Iranian women's rights activists have been sentenced to prison in absentia by a revolutionary court, RFE/RL's Radio Farda reports.

Shadi Sadr and Mahboobeh Abasgholizadeh received jail sentences of five and 2 1/2 years, respectively. In addition, Sadr was sentenced to 75 lashes and Abasgholizadeh to 30 lashes, according to their lawyer, Mohammed Mostofei.

Both women are currently living outside Iran.

Mostofei said the two were accused of "acting against state security by holding rallies intended to disrupt public security, violate law and order, and challenge security forces."

Abasgholizadeh spoke to Radio Farda on May 16. She said the court case against her is supposed to be related to a protest rally in November 2005. But she said handing down a verdict after such a long time means that the issue is not related to the November rally.

"Rather, [the verdict is intended] to suppress the women's movement and to isolate it from civil and social activities," Abasgholizadeh said. "This

verdict is completely unfair and has been given in absentia without any coordinated defense."

Meanwhile, the crackdown on reformists continues.

Mohammad Davari, editor of the reformist website Saham News, has been sentenced to five years in prison. He was found guilty of "acting against the government."

Davari helped publicize the alleged sexual abuse in the Kehrizak detention center of those arrested in the crackdown following the disputed June 2009 presidential election. Former presidential candidate Mehdi Karrubi said Davari was pressured by authorities to say that the sexual abuse story was made up.

Mahdi Mehmoudian, a member of the reformist political party Participation Front, was also sentenced to five years in prison on the same charges of "acting against the government." Mehmoudian, like Davari, had been involved in revealing the sexual abuse of detainees at Kehrizak.

Renowned Iranian film director Jafar Panahi is also facing legal charges. Panahi was arrested on March 1 and a court has extended his detention time.