

Nejat Newsletter

Issue No 22

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The List of Designated Terrorist Organizations Was Released Rajavi cult failed again in its lobbying efforts

Mojahedin ws,

April 23, 2008

http://www.mojahedin.ws/news/text_news_en.php?id=1640

Designation of Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the US State Department play a critical role in fighting against terrorism and is an effective means of curtailing support for terrorist activities and pressuring groups to get out of the terrorism business as asserted by the State Department. Through a fact sheet published by Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism on April 8, 2008, the current list of designated foreign terrorist organizations (FTO) was released. The name of Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization (MEK/MKO/PMOI), a terrorist Iranian group

also proscribed by some other countries including the country members of EU, occupies the row 29 of the total 44 names as it has been in the list since 1997.

To identify a FTO, as explained in the report, the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterror-



ism in the State Department (S/CT) continually monitors the activities of terrorist groups active around the world to identify potential targets for designation. When reviewing potential targets, S/CT looks not only at the actual

terrorist attacks that a group has carried out, but also at whether the group has engaged in planning and preparations for possible future acts of terrorism or retains the capability and intent to carry out such acts.

Re-designation of MKO as a terrorist organization underlines the fact that the organization has failed in its lobbying efforts to convince its supporters in the Congress to reconsider its outlaw position. Reportedly, MKO has been engaged in unproductive intelligence collaboration with American forces in Iraq to appease them since they are well aware of the hypocritical nature of MKO especially after was transformed into a cult of personality asserted in the State Department's report of April 30, 2007.

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'18 million Iraqis want MKO expelled'

Tue, 22 Apr 2008

A member of the Iraqi Parliament says at least 18 million Iraqis seek to expel the terrorist group Mojahedin Khalq Organization (MKO).

In a Monday meeting with the head of the Habilia Association in Mashhad, Hanin al-Kadu

said according to ongoing polls most Iraqis want the terrorist group out of the war-torn country.

"The people of Iraq and Iran have every right to want the MKO to be expelled from the country," responded Mohammad-Javad Hashemi-Nejad, head of the Habilia Associa-

tion.

The MKO has been blacklisted as a terrorist organization by many countries, including the US.

It assisted former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in the massacre of thousands of innocent Iraqis; it also carried out countless terrorist attacks inside Iran.

UNHCR deplores refugee expulsion by Turkey which resulted in four deaths



UNHCR,
April 25,
2008

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/EWS/4811e23c4.html>

GENEVA – Four men, including an Iranian refugee, drowned after a group of 18 people were forced to cross a fast-flowing river by the Turkish police at Turkey's southeastern border with Iraq, witnesses have told the UN refugee agency.

The incident took place on Wednesday 23 April at an unpatrolled stretch of the border, near the Habur (Silopi) official border crossing in Sirnak province in southeastern Turkey. According to eyewitnesses, the Turkish authorities had earlier attempted to forcibly deport 60 people of

various nationalities to Iraq through the official border crossing. The Iraqi border authorities allowed 42 Iraqis to enter the country, but refused to admit 18 Iranian and Syrian nationals. The Turkish police then took the 18, which included five Iranian refugees recognised by UNHCR, to a place where a river separates the two countries, and forced them to swim across.

According to the witnesses interviewed by UNHCR, four persons, including a refugee from Iran, were swept away by the strong river current and drowned. Their bodies could not be recovered.

UNHCR is in contact with the surviving refugees through its office in Erbil, in northern Iraq. They are deeply traumatized by the experience, UNHCR staff reported.

UNHCR had sent previous

communications to the Turkish government requesting that the five Iranian refugees, who had all been detained after attempting to cross into Greece in an irregular manner, not be deported. Despite UNHCR's requests, the refugees were put in a bus, together with other persons to be deported, and taken on a 23-hour trip to the Iraqi border last Tuesday. UNHCR had expressed in a number of communications sent to the Government of Turkey that it did not consider Iraq a safe country of asylum for these refugees.

UNHCR is seeking clarification from the Government of Turkey on the circumstances surrounding the forced expulsion of the refugees and the tragic loss of life.

Story date: 25 April 2008
UNHCR Press Releases

An extract of Nazi Biglari's interview with Ryan Crocker American Ambassador in Bagdad

Voice of America,

March 4th, 2008.

http://www.nejatngo.org/index_en.php?news_id=848

newsVOA.com

two?



Nazi Biglari: there are two Iranian dissident groups in Iraq: Mujahedin-e-Khalq and the Kurds of Iraqi Kurdistan. Do the Americans have any links with these

Ryan Crocker: we consider MKO as a terrorist group. They killed American military officials in Tehran and were a part of Saddam's intelligence ser-

vice. Everything is clear. We oppose all terrorist organizations wherever and wherever they are.

Nazi Biglari: what will you do with the Mujahedin Khalq in Camp Ashraf? Jalal Talebani has called them terrorist group and said that their presence in Iraq is illegal.

Ryan Crocker: this is a crucial question and we are negotiating the case with Iraqi administration. If they are supposed to leave Iraq, they should have a destination that should be designated.

Report on the First Series of Survivors of Mojahedin-e Khalq's Camp Ashraf in Iraq Arrive in France

News wire, April 06, 2008

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/04-06-2008/0004787254&EDATE>

PARIS, April 6, 2008
/PRNewswire-USNewswire/

Mr. Jamshid Charlang, 49 years old, alleged imprisonment and torture by the Mojahedin for criticising the group's leaders. He said during his imprisonment he witnessed the torture and murder of Parivis Ahmadi in an MKO run prison inside Camp Ashraf. The MKO prevented Charlang from seeing his wife and child for twenty years. After the fall of Saddam he escaped and reached

years old, were among others talking about the situation of Camp Ashraf which is protected by the American Army, but is still run internally by the uniformed military structure kept intact during the past five years.

In February 2008, Massoud Khodabandeh of Iran-Interlink reported from Baghdad after several meetings addressing the issue of foreign terrorism in Iraq. Iraq's government demand to expel all 3,000+ Camp Ashraf captives is stalled because no western country will de-proscribe the group so that asylum can be granted them. In the interim, Sahar Family Foundation was established in Iraq to help disaffected Mojahedin members who renounce terrorism find asylum, be reunited with their families and integrate back into mainstream life.

The Conference was organised by the Association for the Protection of Iranian Refugees in France. According to BBC reporting, the Association's spokesman Javad Firoozmand said this is only the first group to



At a press conference in Paris on April 5, 2008, the first series of survivors of the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organisation, aka the Rajavi cult or Saddam's private army, announced their escape from Camp Ashraf in Iraq and their arrival in Europe.

The Mojahedin, which is proscribed as a foreign terrorist entity in the US, UK, EU and Canada, was bombarded and disarmed by the US army back in 2003 and have been confined since in Camp Ashraf in Iraq.

Ms. Nasrin Ebrahimi, 26 years old, who served in the group for over 10 years explained how two years ago she used a military vehicle to escape the terrorist run camp and take sanctuary with the American Army. She alleged that Marjan Akbari, daughter of Bashir Akbari, was killed by the organisation about two years ago.



the American army camp before arriving in Paris.
Ebad, 33 years old, and Alireza, 36

arrive in France after the establishment of Sahar Family Foundation.

Efforts to Return Exiles to Iran Problematic

(Mike Shuster reporting from Tehran)



NPR:
Morning
Edition,
April 28,
2008

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89990562>

RENEE MONTAGNE, host:

Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Iran's government has regarded Camp Ashraf warily, but some Iranians are helping MEK members get back home. NPR's Mike Shuster reports from Tehran.

MIKE SHUSTER: Like Batul Soltani and thousands of others, Arash Sametipour could've been trapped in Camp Ashraf all these years. He joined the MEK in the 1990s, and in 2001 he was sent from Iraq into Iran to assassinate an Iranian general. The plot failed, he lost his right hand in a grenade explosion and was imprisoned in Iran. Now he runs the Nejat Society in Tehran, a non-governmental group that helps former members of the MEK who want to get out of the organization. Recently Sametipour was in Baghdad to meet with some of them, who he agrees are in an impossible situation.

Mr. ARASH SAMETIPOUR: Since these people, they did not have any legal documents and the situation in Iraq was really critical for them, we decided to provide them any humanitarian help that we could, and I think we were successful in that point.

SHUSTER: Of the MEK militants in Camp Ashraf, more than 200 have left the camp on their own and have been

living in the transitional camp the U.S. set up nearby. These people, Sametipour says, want to leave the MEK but don't necessarily want to return to Iran.

Iran's government still views the MEK as a threat and wants to see the group disbanded, according to Ali Resaid(ph), the director of the North America department of Iran's foreign ministry.

Mr. ALI RESAID (Iranian Foreign Ministry): They are a very serious and very dangerous terrorist group and it is recognized by European and even the U.S. government.

SHUSTER: Iran's government would like to take custody of the leaders of the MEK and put them on trial, says Sametipour.



Mr. SAMETIPOUR: They were involved in brainwashing process and terrorist operations inside Iran. Iranian authorities have announced that these people must be prosecuted in Iran. I think a list of 50 to 60 people are there who Iranians want them. They want them to be prosecuted.

SHUSTER: But it is the position of the Iranian government that the vast majority of those who live in Camp Ashraf are free to return to Iran without punishment, says Ali Resaid.

Mr. RESAID: For those of

them who have repentance of their activities, also those of them who are not seriously involved with any assassination or these sort of things, we have amnesty for them.

SHUSTER: The Nejat Society has tested Iran's offer of amnesty. Arash Sametipour says his group has helped repatriate several hundred former MEK members, and he says they are now living normal lives in Iran.

Mr. SAMETIPOUR: Right after fall of Saddam Hussein, Iranian government had announced officially that there is an amnesty for those who are willing to return home. We have talked to many authorities over here and this is a truth that, you know, when they come back over here to Iran there won't be any prison waiting for them. They can just live like any other citizen.

SHUSTER: When Sametipour was in Iraq recently he concluded that the U.S. is not really sure what it wants to do with those in Camp Ashraf. Some in the U.S. government, he fears, may still be tempted to use them as a bargaining chip with Iran.

That may also be the case between the government of Iran and Iraq. The issue was on the agenda when Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, traveled to Baghdad in early March for talks with Iraq's president, Jalal Talibani. Iraq's government may simply take custody of these people if they are released by the U.S. In that case their fate may figure significantly in the future of relations between Iraq and Iran.

Mike Shuster, NPR (the National Public Radio) News.

U.S.- Protected Iranian Exiles in Limbo in Iraq

(Anne Garrels reporting from Baghdad)



**NPR News
Morning
Edition
April 28,
2008**

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89990559>

RENEE MONTAGNE, host:

This is MORNING EDITION from NPR News. I'm Renee Montagne.

STEVE INSKEEP, host:

And I'm Steve Inskeep. Good morning. We're about to bring you up to date on a group that's called a terrorist organization or even a cult. It's called those things but it's under the protection of the U.S. military. It's a group of Iranians. They want to overthrow Iran's government and they are in exile right now in Iraq. We're going to hear this morning from both sides of the border about one of the stranger stories to emerge from the war. The story centers around the Iranian exiles who call themselves the People's Mujahideen, or MEK. Their U.S.-protected camp is called Camp Ashraf. NPR's Anne Garrels begins with the story of one woman who escaped them.

ANNE GARRELS: Last spring after living in Camp Ashraf for half her life, 40-year-old Batul Soltani made a run for it. She fled to the nearby American military compound. Though U.S. soldiers protect Ashraf from outside attacks, Batul says they do nothing to stop the MEK from continuing to persecute its members.

Ms. BATUL SOLTANI (Former Member, MEK): (Through translator) The MEK leadership remains in control

in the camp and we had no choice but to stay. We were under psychological and physical pressure. The U.S. does nothing inside Ashraf. They allow the MEK to terrorize the inmates.

GARRELS: Until the U.S. invasion, the MEK carried out cross-border attacks against the government in Tehran. It also helped Saddam Hussein target his enemies at home. The new Iraqi government made up of those former enemies has no love for the MEK. After the U.S. invasion, American soldiers disarmed the militants and set up checkpoints around the camp to protect its members from



Iraqi retribution. Some in the Bush administration and Congress believe the MEK could be a useful ally against the Iranian government, though U.S. officials say that view is no longer widely held. They and the Iraqi government would like the militants at Camp Ashraf to leave the country. A few hundred have fled but Batul says most cult members cannot act freely, either because they've been brainwashed or because of

MEK pressure.

Ms. SOLTANI: (Through translator) I never saw the Red Cross or American soldiers inside the camp. The MEK leadership manipulates anyone who comes in so they see only what they want them to see.

GARRELS: Recruited in Tehran as a teenager, Batul says her dreams of overthrowing the Iranian government turned into a nightmare. Once she and her young husband arrived in Ashraf, all couples were ordered to divorce. Her children were taken away.

Ms. SOLTANI: (Through translator) My son was six months old and my daughter was five. They said you can't keep your children here. We will send them overseas to Europe. I have not seen my children in 16 years.

GARRELS: MEK commanders also took away the members' documents and warned them they would be arrested by Saddam's security if they tried to leave. Then after the U.S. invasion, Batul says MEK leaders warned them the Americans would kill anyone who left. Batul says she stayed on hoping if she were a dutiful member she would eventually be reunited with both her children and her husband. Finally a year ago she stole a car, made a dash for a U.S. checkpoint, and was given refuge by the American military. She's now searching for her children.

Ms. SOLTANI: (Through translator) I am asking Iranians all over the world if they know anything about my children. The Mujahideen won't tell me where they are.

(cont. on the last page)

Repatriating after being paid by Mojahedin Khalq (Rajavi cult or MKO)!

Nejat Society, Tehran,
April 23, 2008

http://www.nejatngo.org/index_en.php?news_id=850

Nejat Society visited Mr. Mansour Asari

Nejat Association had talks with Mr. Mansour Asari who recently defected from MKO and joined his family in Iran, at Nejat NGO's Tehran office:

I'm Mansour Assari, the son of Mojtaba. I was born in Khansar, in 1972. In July, 2000, I was recruited by MKO in Turkey where I had gone to reach Europe later. Then they sent me to Camp Ashraf.

In 2004, after the organization was disarmed, I found an opportunity to leave MEK and join TIPF.

Immediately after I stepped in Ashraf, I figured out that I have nothing in common with MKO's ideology and functions. Every thing was contradictory to what I saw on MKO's satellite TV but I was afraid of expressing my opinion because they would cause too much pressure on me in their so called current operations (self-criticizing meetings).

I was told, in Turkey, that the exit of the organization is always open but in camp Ashraf, Masud Rajavi and Nasrin (Mahvash Sepehri) told clearly that any one who is willing to leave the organization, has to confess ,in front of the cameras, that he or she is the agent of Iranian Intelligence Ministry and then write and sign what she/ he has said. Therefore, I kept quiet waiting for a chance to leave.

In TIPF, no country would like to receive us since the MKO is on the terror list. In January 2008, I left TIPF, without any money and returned to Ashraf since the group had announced that they would give money to any one who wants to go to Europe. We were 5 people who returned to

Ashraf. There, Zhila Deihim, Reza Moradi, Mohammad Ali Salehi and Hamid Araste and Yousef Anbaz encountered us. We stayed with them for 21 days. Mohammad Ali Salehi talked to me to convince me to stay there, he took me to the entrance part. Ne'mat Oulaiee and Adel (Mohammad Sadat Darbandi) tried to keep me but finally I said to Batul Rajaiee: " I am insistent to leave " they paid 1800 \$, took my signature and receipt. I left Ashraf for Turkey where the defectors of the organization helped me be settled in Istanbul.

I called my family and explained everything. A few days after the Iranian's New Year, my parents came to Istanbul to visit me. They were always crying during our visit but I had no feeling. I



couldn't recognize them at first, because they had become too old. After a while, I felt my feelings starting to revive and began to cry. Up to that time, I had decided not to return to Iran since I thought it was treason to the organization. But the logic was replacing my fanatic cult-like thoughts. I felt that I loved my family and country. When I was assured that I would have no trouble in Iran, I decided to return with my family. They were ready to help me go to Europe but I wanted to go nowhere except Iran. I arrived in Iran this March without any problem. I plan to work here, building my new life.

In my opinions, all those who are

in MKO, are captives and deserved to be released. I was imprisoned in Ashraf psychologically and physically. In fact the fear of the peer pressure and mental bars, had kept me in Camp Ashraf. Most of the members of Ashraf have no way out. It is even difficult to leave Ashraf and Join the TIPF. When you are kept in a place like Ashraf, you feel the world is limited to that only place. They try to inspire the members the illusion of being the superior people of the world.

As a matter of fact, I had an extraordinary experience. I had totally forgotten all my family, emotions and love. Visiting my family helped me a lot, find my normal life style reviving my human emotions. Now, I realize why MKO is terrified by family contacts, why the cults see the families as their enemies.

The reality is that MKO paid the money to Mr. Assari and some other defectors to leave Iraq. But the question is that why MKO didn't do such a thing in all those previous years and didn't try to help the other separated members who had lost a big part of their life. At the first view one may think that MKO doesn't want them to return to Iran. But this reason is not acceptable since they could help the defectors in the past too but they didn't . The reason of such a change in MKO's behavior cannot be anything but the trip Mr. Masud Khodabande took in Iraq and the meetings he had with Iraqi authorities discussing the MKO affairs in Iraq and the result was the foundation of SFF (Sahar Family Foundation) . This action will absolutely be a changing point in MKO's activities in Iraq. At the present time the most terrifying problem for MKO is the members' joining to SFF since the testimonies made by these people will form an important part of MKO' criminal case in Iraqi courts.

Camp Ashraf Countdown by Anne Singleton

Anne Singleton,

April 10 2008



Background

In a message issued in 2006, Mojahedin leader Massoud Rajavi set his cult members a deadline of January 2009 by which time he told them if the Mojahedin had not overthrown the Islamic Republic of Iran, then all the residents of Camp Ashraf would be free to stay or leave: "Anyone who wants may leave, and I will myself throw out all those who are worthless. I will keep the rest who are pure, and then, I will tell them what they can do for me".

Although Rajavi has index-linked his group to the fortunes of the American Administration for the past five years, cult experts understand that such deadlines and threats are essentially meaningless in terms of actual action. But they are part of a powerful armoury of tactics which cult leaders use in order to threaten, frighten and coerce members into staying in a cult and not facing the outside world. Members of the Rajavi cult will certainly have been galvanized by fear provoked by this deadline. The worst fear of a Rajavi cultist is to be expelled from the cult and labelled an agent of the Iranian regime.

The main tactic which the Rajavi cult uses to inculcate artificial fear in members is to depict the world outside of the cult as peopled by 'the enemy'. The Rajavi cult members are indoctrinated with the belief that they face an imminent, all-

pervasive yet unspecified threat of annihilation from 'agents of the Iranian regime'; a generic label which encompasses everyone who challenges the false reality which the members live by. In this way they see even close family members as enemies. It can produce such a climate of fear that cult members do not even trust one another any more.

In this atmosphere of induced fear and paranoia, the clock on Massoud Rajavi's deadline is ticking. The focal point of events which will determine the future of his cult is Camp Ashraf. The following diary describes events at the camp.

(to read the full text of the article please refer to "Camp Ashraf Countdown by Anne Singleton" at Iran-Interlink.org)

<http://iran-interlink.org/?mod=view&id=3737>

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Group of Mojahedin Khalq (Rajavi cult) defectors arrived in France

BBC persian, April 06, 2008:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/story/2008/04/080405_bd-mko.shtml



Reported by BBC originally in Persian, a group of Mojahedin-e Khalq's detached members arrived in France. It is the first of a number of groups that managed to leave Iraq for a Western country.

In the past months, groups of separated members have struggled to get to Western countries through neighboring countries. Many of them were arrested especially in Turkish borders and were returned to Iraq. Following Saddam's fall, a big number of MKO's members held within the Camp Ashraf against their will, found the opportunity to escape the cult and take refuge in an American-run temporary facility not properly accommodated for the huge number of defectors.

A reported number of 380 have already returned to Iran under the auspices of the ICRC but there are still many who have failed to be granted refuge in Western countries.

Link to BBC radio report on the subject (Persian)
<http://iran-interlink.org/fa/?mod=view&id=4279>

Link to Aria Association report:
<http://iran-interlink.org/fa/?mod=view&id=4281>

Iranian Exiles in Limbo (cont)

(cont. from page 5)

GARRELS: Defectors say the Mujahideen keep those wishing to leave out of sight. Asghar Farzin says he was one of the lucky ones. An American colonel during an initial search of Ashraf five years ago discovered him by chance in an MEK prison.

Mr. ASGHAR FARZIN (MEK Defector): One day someone knocked my door. I saw American commander because I can explain for him in English, he sat next to me and listened to me.

GARRELS: With the help of the American officer and the Red Cross, he was able to leave Ashraf. But he says others still there need help and counseling.

Though they acknowledge a significant number of cult members are trapped, U.S.

officials speaking on background say it's not safe for American soldiers to go into the camp. U.S. and U.N. officials say they cannot force members to go back to Iran against their wishes. But the U.N. has not found other countries willing to take them. The clock is ticking.

Under a new status of forces agreement, the Iraqi government will likely take control of Ashraf by the end of the year. Caught at the end of a press conference, General Douglas Stone, who's currently in charge of Ashraf, made it clear he would like this mess to go away. He said it's going to be discussed with the Iraqis, adding, things like this don't go on forever, right? But after five years he still has no solution.

Anne Garrels, NPR News, Baghdad.

The use of proscribed Terrorist MKO by CIA and Pentagon in Iraq

The news was first published by ALseyassah in Arabic on April 20, 2008
<http://www.alseyassah.com>

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mohammad-Ali Hosseini, on Sunday denounced the US for supporting terrorism in Iraq.
<http://www.irna.ir/>

This is while the latest review of the US list of terrorist organisations released on April 08, 2008 has kept Mojahedin Khalq Organisation and its aliases on the list of FTOrganisations.

<http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/April/20080410111249xjsnommis0.111355.html>