

British MPs condemn Nuri Maliki's actions against Camp Ashraf

Sunday, 21 February 2010

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The Committee calls on Iraq to lift its unlawful ban on visitors and basic commodities such as food, fuel and medicine entering the camp."

The British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom

PRESS RELEASEMPs condemn Nuri Maliki's actions against Camp Ashraf

Members of the British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom on Wednesday strongly condemned recent actions by the government of Nuri al-Maliki against thousands of Iranian opposition members at Camp Ashraf in Iraq.

On Tuesday, the Iraqi government took a group of reporters to Ashraf to meet with agents of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security stationed outside the camp, falsely claiming that Ashraf residents refuse to allow relatives from Iran to enter the camp.

Our Committee has learnt that Iran's intelligence ministry has dispatched its agents along with relatives of Ashraf residents to the camp which houses 3,400 members of Iran's main opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI). As part of an agreement between Iran and Iraq to pressure the camp residents, Iraqi forces prevent the relatives from entering the camp. At the same time, they tell the relatives that the PMOI is preventing them from seeing their loved ones. Such psychological pressures on the residents and their relatives were greatly intensified yesterday when the government brought journalists outside the camp to interview the Iranian intelligence agents in a bid to misrepresent the circumstances of the denial of visitation rights.

Since U.S. forces handed over security of Ashraf to the Iraqis in January 2009, a draconian siege has been imposed on the residents, with Iraq forces preventing the residents' relatives, lawyers, journalists and doctors from visiting and fuel, food and medicine from reaching those inside. These measures, in breach of international law and the Geneva Conventions, take place at Iran's behest.

Last July, armed Iraqi forces stormed the camp, killing 11 and injuring 500.

The spectacle outside Ashraf comes as al-Maliki faces mounting international criticism for his role in barring 500 of his secular opponents from standing in the upcoming Parliamentary elections.

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The British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom
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