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<http://www.rsf.org/iran-supreme-leader-and-president-order-06-02-2013,44035.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Iran

Thug freed

Supreme Leader and president order media persecutor's release

6 February 2013

After being arrested and held overnight in Tehran's Evin prison, former Tehran prosecutor Saeed Mortazavi was released yesterday following a meeting between judiciary chief Sadegh Amoli Larijani and Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who clearly ordered his release.

Reporters Without Borders had repeatedly requested Mortazavi's arrest for the crimes that he and people under his orders have committed against journalists in Iran, but that was not the reason for his arrest on 4 February.

He was not arrested for this role in Canadian-Iranian photographer **Zahra Kazemi's** death in Evin prison in July 2003, for blogger **Omidreza Mirsayafi's** death in suspicious circumstances in prison after being arrested on his orders, or for his role in the deaths of several protesters at the Kahrizak detention centre after the June 2009 elections.

Mortazavi's arrest was just one of the side-effects of the all-out war being waged between Iran's rival government factions.

An unprecedented argument took place in the Iranian parliament on 3 February between parliamentary speaker Ali Larijani and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who accused each other of corruption and immorality.

It came after Ahmadinejad showed parliamentarians a video in which Fazel Larijani, a brother of both the speaker and the judiciary chief, could be seen seeking a bribe from Mortazavi in return for his faction's political support. It was secretly filmed by Mortazavi, currently an Ahmadinejad ally and head of a government social security agency.

Reporters Without Borders has for 11 years been accusing Mortazavi of carrying out crimes against news providers on the orders of [Khamenei](#) and [Ahmadinejad](#), both predators of freedom of information.

He should be tried not only for his role in the deaths of Kazemi and Mirsayafi, but also for the closure of around 100 newspapers and for the arrests, mistreatment (including torture) and jailing of hundreds of journalists and netizens when he was state prosecutor.

Ironically, Mortazavi was held in Evin, the prison where around 30 journalists and netizens are currently detained.

Some of them, including **Kivan Samimi Behbani**, **Ahmad Zeydabadi**, **Masoud Bastani**, **Issa Saharkhiz** and **Bahaman Ahamadi Amoei**, have been held since the crackdown that followed Ahmadinejad's disputed June 2009 reelection, when they were arrested on Mortazavi's orders.

Read [Thug who imposes the law in Tehran](#), a press release published by Reporters Without Borders on 1 July 2009.
