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Lurs are an Iranian people living in the mountains of western Iran and eastern Iraq, with the Iraqi Luristan region (Failiestan) consisting of Diyala, Wasit and Maysan Governorates. The four Luri branches—Bakhtiari, Mamasani, Kohgiluyeh and Lur—share a common language, Luri, a Western Iranian language spoken by four million people. For centuries the Failis have lived in the border area between Iraq and Iran on both sides of the Zagros Mountains.

Flag of the autonomous nation of Luristan

Tareq Lur Faili of the autonomous government of Lurestan of Iran reports:

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The territories occupied by Lurs include three provinces: Luristan (the land of Lors), Bakhtiari and Kuh-Gilu-Boir Ahmed. In addition, Lurs constitute a significant proportion of the population in several provinces including Khuzistan, Fars, Ilam, Hamadan and Bushehr. Traditionally *Lur-i-kuchek* corresponded to the modern provinces of Luristan and Ilam. Luri music, Luri clothing and Luri folk dances are some of the most distinctive ethno-cultural characteristics of this ethnic group.

Historically, Iranian governments have avoided recording ethnicities to keep non-Persian communities in the dark about their actual sizes, allowing the state to downplay their significance.

Successive Iranian regimes have worked to change the demographics of ethnic minority regions in order to ensure that Persian dominance is unchallenged, particularly in the resource-rich areas of the Lurestan areas.

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Luri women are free to participate in different social activities, to wear colorful traditional clothing and to sing and dance in different ceremonies. Their music, clothing and folk dances are among the Lurs most distinctive ethno-cultural characteristics. Dasmâl-bâzi dance, Mamasani, Iran

Minorities in Iran like the Kurs are treated with disdain and denied the most fundamental rights, including the right to learn or be educated in their indigenous languages or culture or learn their own history or even to hold cultural gatherings celebrating their heritage.

Any Lurs citizen wishing to get a scholarship abroad, attain an academic position at an Iranian university or work in the military or security sectors knows that the first condition and requirement is that they convert to and adopt the *Velayat-e Faqih* doctrine. Even then a panel of religious judges must review the request.

Meanwhile, if a person wishes to establish an activist group or party, they know that they will be unsuccessful unless they meet four essential criteria: They must be a full Iranian citizen (not statless) Lurs are stateless.

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Music and dance play an important role in Lorestani culture.

Velayat-e Faqih doctrine are regarded, and whether this makes any difference to their treatment by the Iranian regime. Unfortunately, even for minorities who practice the regime's creed, ethnicity trumps religious sect, as is seen from the horrendous abuses of theirs, whose sectarian affiliation has had no perceptible effect on stopping the regime's brutal persecution.

Our land is called Lorestan which has the seventh position in producing honey in Iran. We have since ancient times produced honey. Our lands were taken by Iranian government since 1981 for government sponsored production. But our people are left out of profits from the honey production. Iran is world third largest producer of honey, but at a price for our communities.

In March of 2021 enacted harsh policies against the lurs and other pastoral nomadic peoples and ethnic minorities in order to centralize and modernize honey production through the Iranian nation-state. The government executed, exiled and imprisoned 32 Lurs leaders, and tribespeople fell under the authority of the government forced the to cease their migrations and settle in villages; the areas chosen for settlement were inhospitable to

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nomadic lifestyle.

Starting in 2018 many Lur seen increased settling in villages, continued an impoverished nomadic existence, or undertook urban wage labor. Most Lurs settled or planned to settle, aware that only land ownership and agriculture offered some security. They had difficulty finding affordable productive land, and increasingly the settlers depended on the wages of family members who worked in the city.

We have suffered discrimination in law and practice, including in access to education, employment, child adoption, political office and places of worship, as well as arbitrary detention, and torture and other ill-treatment for professing or practising their faith.

In January, parliament further undermined the right to freedom of religion and belief by introducing two articles to the penal code that prescribe up to five years' imprisonment and/or a fine for "insulting Iranian ethnicities, divine religions or Islamic denominations" or for engaging in "deviant educational or proselytizing activity contradicting … Islam".

The Lurs community have yet be vaccinated against the coronavirus. After a year of our leaders requesting the Covid vaccine the Iranian government has denied our request. Our community was denied medical care by Iran government at start of Covid outbreak. Iran government has allowed Covid to spread throughout our community.

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