

Iran censures reformist paper

by UPI

TEHRAN -- An Iranian newspaper ordered temporarily closed is another sign of the government's increasing crackdown on dissent, it was reported Tuesday. Shargh, Iran's leading reformist newspaper, was ordered closed Monday for publishing an interview with Saghi Ghahraman, 50, an exiled Iranian poet known for poems explicitly exploring female sexuality, The Los Angeles Times reported. Iran's Press Review Board said the interview promoted immorality. It was the third time the board has temporarily shuttered Shargh, which has 400 employees. In the last several years, more than 100 newspapers in Iran have been ordered closed and journalists sentenced to prison for offenses against the government and insulting Iran's religious leaders, the Times reported. The government objects to all critical reporting, said Shargh's managing director, Mehdi Rahmani, as the paper distributed its final issue, which included a front-page apology for the interview. "We have a critical approach," Rahmani said. "They need some yes men. We are not yes men."

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