



IRAN
HUMAN
RIGHTS

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IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS

DEFENDERS 2021

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Iran Human Rights is an independent non-partisan NGO based in Norway. Abolition of the death penalty, supporting human rights defenders and the rule of law constitute the core of our activities.

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Definition of Terms & Concepts

SENTENCES

Ta'zir: Punishment for offences at the discretion of the judge

Hadd: Fixed punishment for offences mandated by God (Sharia)

Qisas: Retribution in kind

Diya: Blood money

LEGISLATION

Article 48 of the Code of Criminal Procedure:

“The accused can demand the presence of a lawyer from the start of detention. The lawyer can meet the detainee paying due attention to the confidentiality of the investigations and negotiations. At the end of the meeting, which should be no longer than one hour, the lawyer can give their written observations for documentation in the case file.”

Note to Article 48:

“Those charged with organised crimes and crimes against national and international security, who are subject to Article 302 of the Criminal Procedure, may choose a lawyer/ lawyers from the list confirmed by the head of the judicial system. The list of the lawyers is announced by the head of the judicial system.”

Article 134 of the Islamic Penal Code:

“In the cases of offenses punishable by *ta'zir*, where the offences committed are not more than three, the court shall impose the maximum punishment provided for each offence; and if the offences committed are more than three, [the court] shall impose more than the maximum punishment provided for each crime provided that it does not exceed more than the maximum plus one half of each punishment. In any of the abovementioned cases, only the most severe punishment shall be executed and if the most severe punishment is reduced or replaced or becomes non-executable for any legal reason, the next most severe punishment shall be executed. In any case where there is no maximum and minimum provided for the punishment, if the offences committed are not more than three, up to one-fourth, and if the offences committed are more than three, up to half of the punishment prescribed by law shall be added to the original punishment.”

Evin Prison: Iran's most notorious prison where Wards 209, 240 and 241, which have solitary cells called security "suites" and are controlled by the Ministry of Intelligence (MOIS):

Ward 209 Evin: dedicated to security prisoners under the jurisdiction of the MOIS.

Ward 2A Evin: dedicated to security prisoners under the jurisdiction of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC).

Ward 240: Originally MOIS cells but used for interrogations in recent years.

Ward 241 of the Judiciary Security Detention Centre: holds the judiciary's security prisoners.

Greater Tehran Penitentiary (Fashafuyeh): Originally built in 2012 with a capacity of 15,000 to house prisoners convicted of drug charges, political prisoners are regularly transferred there as a method of additional punishment. There is no separation according to crime, and political prisoners are kept with other prisoners charged with serious crimes.

Qarchak Prison (Varamin): Re-opened in 2011 as a women's prison and designed to house 500 inmates, it currently holds between 1,500 and 2,000 female prisoners from all over Tehran. The conditions at the prison have been described as dire, unsanitary and dangerous.

Rajai Shahr Prison: Formerly named Gohardasht, it was designed to house 3000 prisoners, while it is estimated to currently hold 8,000-12,000 prisoners. Like Fashafuyeh, there is no separation according to crime, and political prisoners are kept with other prisoners charged with serious crimes.

Vozara Detention Centre: While the centre is officially dedicated to individuals arrested for breaking morality laws such as sex-work by by NAJA (Iranian police), female activists are often taken there before being transferred to prison.

REVOLUTIONARY COURTS

Established in 1979 on the orders of Ayatollah Khomeini to try former officials of the Pahlavi government, Iran's Revolutionary Courts have continued to operate and are responsible for issuing heavy sentences to human rights defenders, journalists, dissidents and all those criticising the authorities. Additionally, they are responsible for the vast majority of all death sentences issued in the last 40 years.

Article 303 of the Code of Criminal Procedure determines the jurisdiction of the Revolutionary Courts as for: "crimes against national and international security, *moharebeh* (enmity against God), *efsad fil-arz* (corruption on earth), *baghy* (armed rebellion), assembly and collusion against the Islamic Republic of Iran or armed action or arson, destruction and loss of property in order to oppose the system, insulting the position of the founder of the Islamic Republic and the Supreme Leader, all crimes related to drugs, controlled substances, weapons, ammunition...and other cases according to special laws." Of those, *moharebeh*, *efsad fil-arz* and *baghy* carry the death penalty.

The courts are not transparent and Revolutionary Court judges are known for greater abuse of their legal powers than other judges. Revolutionary Court judges routinely deny lawyers access to individuals who are subjected to extensive interrogations under severe conditions.

A December 2019 European Parliament resolution affirmed that Iranian courts regularly fail to ensure fair trials, with the denial of access to legal counsel and denial of visits by representatives from consulates, the UN or humanitarian organisations, and permit the use of confessions obtained under torture as evidence; there are no independent mechanisms for ensuring accountability within the judiciary, and serious concerns remain over the politicisation of judges, particularly those presiding over Revolutionary Courts.

Introduction

The suppression of human rights defenders (HRDs) has continued with greater intensity by the Islamic Republic authorities in 2021. This report provides a brief account of over 100 human rights defenders in Iran. While this list may seem extensive, they only represent a fraction of human rights defenders who have faced rights breaches. Defenders who have struggled by peaceful means to attain the most fundamental human rights for themselves and the people of Iran. In response, they have been sentenced to a total of **479** years imprisonment and **907** lashes. Arbitrarily arrested and stripped of their right to a lawyer, due process and a fair trial, prison terms and degrading punishments like flogging are accompanied by prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical care, familial punishments and other forms of physical and psychological torture, as well as prison exiles that ensure the defenders' families have as little access to them as possible. Heavy fines and high bail amounts, bans on practicing their profession or losing their jobs, post-sentence exile and fabricated new charges, are used as a means of exerting additional pressure on the HRDs.

In publishing this report, Iran Human Rights draws the international community's attention to the situation of HRDs in Iran. Iran Human Rights Director, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam said: *"The world must not be a silent witness to the high price Iranian human rights defenders are paying for fundamental rights. The international community must in addition to defending the human rights defenders against atrocities, support their cause which is seeking a dignified life for all Iranians."*

The number of HRDs included in the 2021 report is double that of last year's. This is partially due to the movement for justice and accountability that started in the 1980s and which has been growing rapidly following the bloody crackdown of the November 2019 nationwide protests and the shooting down of Flight PS752 by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards' Corps (IRGC). The authorities have made rigorous attempts to silence the families through the softer approaches of offering *diya* (blood money) and the status of martyrdom for the victims, to threats and intimidation, neither of which has been successful. Maryam Akbari-Monfared who is a mother of three, has spent 12 years behind bars without one day of furlough because she is seeking justice for her four siblings who were killed in the 1980s. 75-year-old Gohar Eshghi, a mother who has been mourning in black since her son, blogger Sattar Beheshti was killed as a result of torture by Cyber Police in 2012, has faced threats and harassment in reprisal for seeking justice throughout the years. Days prior to the publication of this report, she was attacked by unknown men believed to be security forces. Manouchehr Bakhtiyari is serving three and a half years for demanding justice for his 27-year-old son, Pouya Bakhtiyari, who was shot in the head during the November 2019 nationwide protests.

The human rights defenders profiled in this report include lawyers, journalists, teachers, women's, workers and civil rights activists, environmentalists, minorities and whistleblowers.

Introduction

Behind bars for financial crimes, Shahin Naseri became an outspoken witness to the torture in detention of protester and wrestler, Navid Afkari. Fully aware of the consequences of his actions, he refused to be silenced until he was transferred to solitary confinement on the anniversary of Navid's execution. His lifeless body was transferred to the infirmary some days later. Already behind bars for blowing the whistle on government corruption, Shahin's cellmate, Farhad Salmanpour picked up his baton and became the outspoken witness to his death. On December 1, it was reported that Farhad was in the prison infirmary after being stabbed with a knife. Given this cycle of injustice, Farhad's life is at risk.

The justice movement also now includes defence lawyers who are serving time behind bars with their clients and those who demanded justice over the government's mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While this report may be a partial representation of all human rights defenders in Iran, it is also a window into the systematic repression of human rights and those that seek to achieve it. We hope that this report will provide new insights into the deteriorating state of human rights in Iran, offer accurate information to researchers and journalists, and assist human rights defenders and concerned citizens around the world in educating and informing about the fortitude of ordinary Iranians, seeking to improve the lives of others, at their own risk.

Through its publication, Iran Human Rights calls on the international community and all states with diplomatic relations with Iran, to demand the immediate release of all imprisoned HRDs. We also call upon civil society and members of the public all over the world to read their stories, learn their names, and join us in not only demanding their freedom and that of all HRDs but also amplifying their voices demanding basic fundamental rights for all Iranians.

SHAHIN NASERI

Age: 49

Activism/rights: Whistleblower

Status: Suspicious death in custody

Violations: Death in custody, enforced disappearance, prison exile, torture and ill-treatment, prolonged solitary confinement, access to a lawyer, lack of due process,



BACKGROUND

Shahin Naseri was a business expert who was arrested for financial crimes in September 2018 and serving his time in Shiraz Central Prison when he bore witness to the torture of protester and wrestler, Navid Afkari in detention. In his 4-page "investigation from the witness" testimony, he described hearing Navid shouting and detailed witnessing two plain-clothed officers beating him. His testimony was ignored by every court at every stage of Navid's legal proceedings. Denied access to a lawyer, due process or a fair trial, Navid had testified in court that he had been tortured to force false self-incriminating confessions which the judiciary denied after Iran Human Rights published the court documents and voice recordings.¹ According to the recordings, Navid had requested to call Shahin as witness, which was denied. Navid had also filed a written complaint on 17 September 2018 that Shahin Naseri had been threatened with reprisal if he testified in court. Iran Human Rights denounced and refuted the authorities' claims with court documents and pointed to Shahin's testimony as an eyewitness with no previous acquaintance or friendship with Navid, without naming him.² Following Navid's execution on 12 September 2020, Shahin became an outspoken witness who testified in his own voice of Navid's torture. He was transferred to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary (Fashafuyeh) shortly afterwards.

UPDATE

On the anniversary of Navid's execution on 12 September 2021, Shahin was transferred to solitary confinement after authorities discovered his intention to read a letter he had written to mark the occasion over the phone. Sources reported to have seen Shahin's corpse in the prison infirmary on the morning of September 21³ and that a government delegation visited the prison and his cellmates later that night after the phones were cut off. His cellmates all testified that Shahin was healthy, with no mental or health issues and would not have committed suicide. Iran Human Rights called for an independent fact-finding mission into his death after his family were contacted to collect his body the next day.⁴ In a press conference held on October 13, his cause of death was declared as drug poisoning by the judiciary, a cause which lacks all credibility according to his cellmates.⁵ Iran Human Rights continues to call for an independent fact finding mission into Shahin Naseri's death.



FARHAD SALMANPOUR

Age: 39

Activism/rights: Whistleblower

Status: Greater Tehran Penitentiary

Judicial status: 15 years imprisonment after consolidation of 4 cases

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, denial of medical care, prison-exile, lack of separation of crimes, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, access to a lawyer

BACKGROUND

Farhad Salmanpour is a former Office of the President employee who was accused of leaking information about Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi's \$150 million fraud during Ahmadinejad's presidency and publishing documents about the smuggling of drugs by elements of the Islamic Republic. He was last arrested by security forces on the street without an arrest warrant on 21 August 2019. He was held in solitary confinement in Ward 209 of Evin Prison for 45 days and subjected to the most severe torture in order to obtain a forced confession about his connection to Ruhollah Zam, the dissident director of AmadNews Telegram channel who was executed on 12 December 2020 after being kidnapped from Iraq.⁶ It was even reported that at one point, Farhad was brought face to face with Zam. He was prison exiled to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary, where he was denied medical care despite several injuries and illnesses and kept with prisoners convicted of violent crimes without regard for the principle of the separation of crimes. This led to at least one attack by other prisoners which he said was commissioned by prison authorities.⁷

UPDATE

In September 2021, Farhad Salmanpour blew the whistle again after Shahin Naseri's suspicious death in custody in the Greater Tehran Penitentiary. In reprisal for speaking out, a new case of fabricated charges was referred to the Fashafuyeh Revolutionary Court. He was sentenced to six years imprisonment on charges of "acting against national security through voice messages and interviews with foreign and anti-revolutionary television channels like Iran International and Channel 1, publicity against the Islamic Republic system and publishing propaganda."⁸ As the maximum sentence in his three previous cases was ten years imprisonment, he will have to serve 15 years overall after the consolidation of his sentences according to Article 134. On December 1, it was reported that Farhad was in the prison infirmary after being stabbed with a knife. Farhad's life is currently at risk.

AMIRSALAR DAVOUDI

Age: 40

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Out on bail pending retrial

Judicial status: 30 years imprisonment and 111 lashes

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, access to a lawyer, prison exile



BACKGROUND

Amirsalar Davoudi is a lawyer with a history of defending political prisoners and ethnic and religious minorities. He was arrested by security forces on 19 November 2018 and transferred to Ward 241 of Evin Prison. Prior to his arrest, security officers had raided his office and home, confiscating a number of his personal files and belongings. He was arrested in relation to his Telegram channel "Without Retouch," where he discussed breaches in the judicial process, the judicial harassment of lawyers and human rights abuses. On 1 June 2019, Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Salavati, sentenced Amirsalar to 111 lashes and a total of 30 years in prison: 15 years for "forming a group to overthrow the political system (through his Telegram channel), propaganda against the system, publishing lies and insulting officials and the leader" amongst other charges.⁹ Amirsalar went on hunger strike for ten days in February 2020 to protest his continued detention and being denied furlough due to COVID-19.¹⁰ He contracted COVID-19 in August 2020 and spent 14 days in prison quarantine.¹¹

UPDATE

On 13 April 2021, Amirsalar was prison-exiled from Evin Prison to Rajai Shahr Prison, with reports that Evin Prison was being cleared of political prisoners. His request for a retrial was granted by Branch 41 of the Supreme Court on June 13, and he was released on bail. A month later, Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court upheld the original ruling by Branch 15, which his lawyer has said they will appeal.¹² Amirsalar is currently out on bail pending his appeal.



PAYAM DERAFSHAN

Age: 40

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Medical furlough

Judicial status: 4 years and 6 months imprisonment

Violations: Violations: Judicial harassment, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, enforced disappearance, prolonged solitary confinement, cruel and unusual punishment

BACKGROUND

Payam Derafshan is a lawyer, human rights activist and Secretary of the Bar Association's Commission on the Protection of Lawyers who has represented many political and minority cases. First arrested and detained for a short period in 2018, he was rearrested on 8 June 2020 and sentenced to two years imprisonment and a two year ban on practicing law for "insulting the Supreme Leader" by Branch One of the Karaj Revolutionary Court. On 6 July 2020, he was sentenced to two years and six months imprisonment by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Iman Afshari for "propaganda against the system, publishing lies with the intention of disturbing public opinion and carrying unauthorised explosives and shockers." The trial took place in absentia due to Payam's ill health. On 10 August 2020, lawyer Saeid Dehghan tweeted that Payam's sentence had been upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals just two days after their 400 page submissions to the court.¹⁴

UPDATE

In a Twitter thread on 17 October 2021, Saeid Dehghan exposed the shocking details of how Payam was transferred to a safe house following arrest and injected with an unknown shot that made him tremor and bite off half his own tongue, sectioning him in the Amin Abad psychiatric hospital, how he was subjected to electric shocks and beaten by Prison Organisation soldiers. He was tried in absentia by Judge Afshari and sentenced to two and a half years of imprisonment and a two-year ban on practicing law, which was upheld by the Court of Appeals.¹⁵ Payam is currently on medical furlough which he has said may be revoked following the revelations.¹⁶

REZA ESLAMI

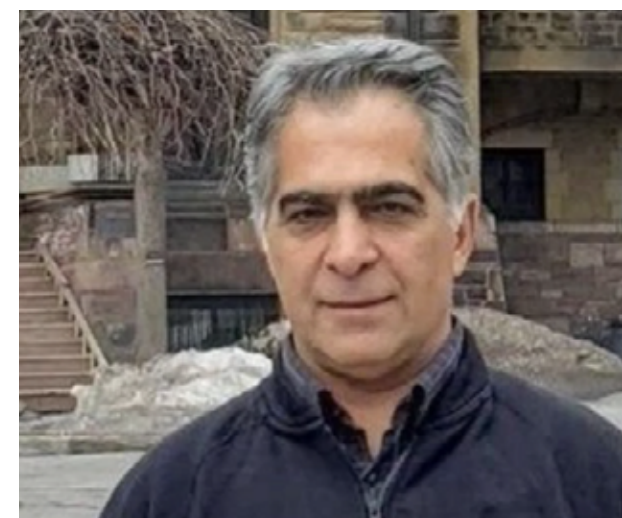
Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Reza Eslami is a dual-national human rights professor and member of the Shahid Beheshti University faculty. He was arrested by Ministry of Intelligence forces on 10 May 2020 and transferred to Ward 209 in Evin Prison. His office at the law faculty was also searched during his arrest and a number of his personal belongings, including his mobile phone and laptop, were confiscated. This is while according to the Islamic Republic's own laws, it is unlawful for military and security forces to enter university grounds. On 20 October 2020, he was sentenced to seven years imprisonment, banned from teaching and leaving the country on charges of "holding a five-day law training course in the Czech Republic" and being "in contact with US government officials based on funding from an American non-governmental organisation" for the event. Close sources told Iran Human Rights that the course was hosted by an academic institution in the Czech Republic for 15 students, which was sponsored by an American non-governmental organisation. In a recording from prison, Reza said: "There is no element of a criminal act which would be the contact itself, nor is there any criminal intent which would be the intention to make the contact, the criminal allegations are complete falsehoods and baseless."¹⁷

UPDATE

Upon appeal, Reza's sentence was reduced to five years by Branch 36 of the Tehran Courts of Appeal in October 2021. In interviews, his lawyer vowed to fight the ruling through all legal means, including requesting a retrial.¹⁸ Reza Eslami is currently held at Evin Prison.



MOHAMMADREZA FAGHIHI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations: Judicial harassment, torture arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Mohammadreza Faghihi is a lawyer and member of the Iranian Association for the Defence of Prisoners' Rights. On 14 August 2021, he went to file a complaint against the National Task Force Against Coronavirus and the Supreme Leader at the Tehran Citizen's Rights Protection Association for their mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to sources, 15 forces and two judicial officials entered the meeting and arrested all seven claimants.¹⁹ On August 25, Saeed Khalili tweeted that after going to Evin court to introduce himself as the lawyer in Mohammadreza's case, he was turned away at the door and told that there would be no lawyers or bail.²⁰ Mohammadreza's house was also subsequently raided and his belongings confiscated.

UPDATE

Mohammadreza Faghihi was released on bail on 30 August 2021.²¹ In a preliminary hearing held on October 27, he was charged with "membership in an opposition group."²²

ARASH KEYKHOSRAVI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations:



BACKGROUND

Arash Keykhosravi is a human rights lawyer who was previously arrested in 2018. He was also one of the lawyers who went to file a complaint against the National Task Force Against Coronavirus and the Supreme Leader at the Tehran Citizen's Rights Protection Association for their mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic on 14 August 2021. According to sources, 15 forces and two judicial officials entered the meeting and arrested all seven claimants.²³ While four were released days later, Arash was one of three who were detained in the solitary confinement cells of Ward 241 of Evin Prison. Other than one short call to his family at the time of his arrest, he was denied phone calls and access to a lawyer. A preliminary hearing was held on October 27, where he was charged with "forming a group to disturb national security, propaganda against the system and membership in an opposition group."²⁴ According to lawyer Saeed Khalili, no further dates have been scheduled in their case.²⁵

UPDATE

Despite repeated calls by the international community, Arash Keykhosravi continues to be held in Evin Prison with the other health rights defenders Mostafa Nili and Mehdi Mahmoudian.



MOHAMMAD NAJAFI

Age: 45

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Arak Prison

Judicial status: 19 years and 6 months imprisonment, new case pending

Violations: Judicial harassment, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement

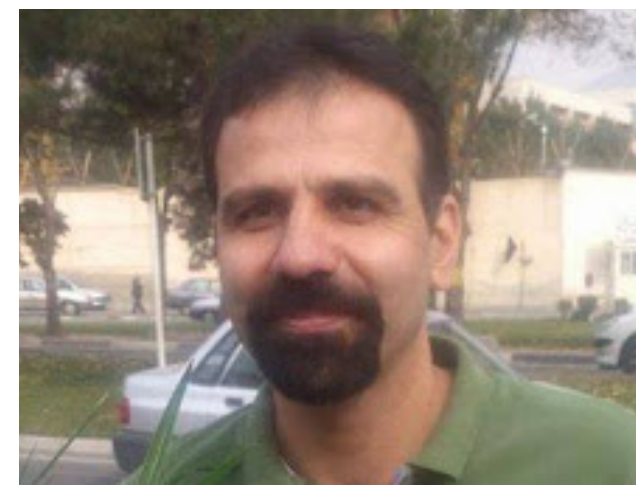
BACKGROUND

Mohammad Najafi is a lawyer and human rights activist whose arrests and cases for his professional and human rights activities have earned him a long rap sheet. Since 2018, he has been caught in a web of fabricated cases that overlap and ensure he is kept behind bars for years to come. In January 2018, he was arrested for the revelations he made in his most notorious case, the suspicious death of protester Vahid Heydari in custody, and sentenced to three years imprisonment.²⁶ In November 2018, Mohammad was sentenced to 10 years in prison on charges of “aiding an enemy state” for giving interviews to foreign media, two years for “insulting the Supreme Leader with ‘down with dictator slogans’” and one year for “propaganda for opposition groups and organisations”, by Branch One of the Arak Revolutionary Court. Mohammad’s 13-year sentence was upheld by the Court of Appeals in April 2019. He also has a ten year conviction from a previous case. In a separate case tried at Branch 102 of the Arak Criminal Court in November 2018, he was sentenced to one year in prison for “publishing falsehoods in cyberspace by a phone and computer with the intention to disturb public opinion.” Branch 102 sentenced him to another two years of imprisonment in January 2019, this time for “disturbing the public mind” through an open letter, criticising Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei. He was sentenced to a further six months in prison on 7 February 2020 by Branch 23 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court for making a speech at the home of Gohar Eshghi (page 28) the mother of blogger, Sattar Beheshti who died as a result of torture in the custody of the Iranian Cyber Police in 2012.

UPDATE

Mohammad Najafi suffered a heart attack on 1 August 2021 in Arak Central Prison and was denied medical furlough or specialist treatment outside the prison despite official promises. A hearing into the new fabricated charges against Mohammad which was scheduled for August 15 was also postponed for the second time.²⁷ His lawyer, Arash Keykhosravi (page 11) is also currently detained. At the time of writing, despite two months passing since his heart attack, Mohammad has still not been granted medical furlough to seek medical treatment outside the prison or provided with adequate medical care in prison.

MOSTAFA NILI



Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial, lack of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mostafa Nili is a human rights lawyer with a history of arrests and detention dating back to 2009. He has also represented many political cases throughout the years which is evident in this report. More recently, he was one of the lawyers who went to file a complaint against the National Task Force Against Coronavirus and the Supreme Leader at the Tehran Citizen’s Rights Protection Association for their mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic on 14 August 2021. According to sources, 15 forces and two judicial officials entered the meeting and arrested all seven claimants.²⁸ While four were released days later, Mostafa was one of three who were detained in the solitary confinement cells of Ward 241 of Evin Prison. Other than one short call to his family at the time of his arrest, he was denied phone calls and access to a lawyer.

UPDATE

According to one of his lawyers, Zahra Minuei, soldiers informed her that his case had been sent to the Revolutionary Courts and she was prevented from entering his case at the Evin court.²⁹ A preliminary hearing was held on October 27, where he was charged with “forming a group to disturb national security and propaganda against the system.”³⁰ According to Saeed Khalili, also on his defence team, no further dates have been scheduled in their case.³¹ Despite repeated calls by the international community, Mostafa continues to be held in Evin Prison with the other health rights defenders Arash Keykhosravi and Mehdi Mahmoudian.



GITI POURFAZEL

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Conditional release

Judicial status: 2 years and 3 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Giti Pourfazel is a retired lawyer and women's rights activist who was one of the 14 signatories to write an open letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, demanding his resignation in 2019 which led to her arrest on 19 August 2019. Released on bail following interrogations, she was sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security", eight months for "propaganda against the system" and a two year ban from membership in political groups. Her sentence was reduced to two years and three months on appeal.

UPDATE

Giti was furloughed in July 2021 after contracting COVID-19 in prison.³² On September 15, lawyer Mohammad Hossein Aghasi tweeted that Giti had been approved for conditional release but would be required to "avoid contact and association with individuals with deviant beliefs".³³

NASRIN SOTOUDEH

Age: 58

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Out on bail pending retrial

Judicial status: 30 years imprisonment and 148 lashes

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, access to lawyer, familial punishment



BACKGROUND

Nasrin Sotoudeh is a lawyer, human rights activist, member of the Iranian Human Rights Defenders Association and an activist against the death penalty. She has represented many political and minority cases. She is also the recipient of, amongst others, the Sakharov Prize. She was previously jailed from August 2010 to September 2013 for her professional and human rights activities. Since her most recent arrest on 13 June 2018, she was sentenced to five years in prison in absentia on the charge of "concealing a spy." In a separate case of seven different charges, she was sentenced to a total of 38 years imprisonment and 148 lashes. She will have to serve the longest, a 12 year sentence according to Article 134 of the IPC.³⁴ Nasrin has faced pressure through the arrest of her daughter³⁵ and the freezing of both her bank accounts³⁶ and those of her husband, Reza Khandan.³⁷

UPDATE

Nasrin Sotoudeh has been on medical furlough since 23 July 2021 which was last extended for 25 days on October 10.³⁸ In the last printout from prison, her longest sentence of 12 years was reduced to 10 years and her flogging sentence removed, which she has not been officially informed of.



FARZANEH ZILABI

Age: 35
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Out on bail
Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment
Violations: Judicial harassment and threats, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Farzaneh Zilabi is a lawyer who represented the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company in Shush, Khuzestan. She was summoned on a number of occasions while representing the Union but was last summoned to Ahvaz court in May 2021, a week after the head of the Supreme Audit Court of Iran announced that with “the support of the judiciary” the company had been nationalised and its ownership returned to public assets. According to both statements made by Farzaneh herself and her lawyer, she was consistently threatened by authorities to withdraw from the Haft Tappeh case.

UPDATE

On 13 September 2021, Farzaneh was sentenced to one year imprisonment and two-year-ban on leaving the country on the charge of “propaganda against the system” by Branch Two of the Ahvaz Revolutionary Court. In an interview with Emtedad, her lawyer Nasser Zarafshan said that he would be appealing the decision.³⁹ One of the main demands made in the most recent rounds of Haft Tappeh protests and strikes has been for the case to be closed against Farzaneh Zilabi. As of 1 December 2021, she is awaiting the decision of her appeal.

SOHEIL ARABI

Age: 36
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Exile in Bazarjan
Judicial status: 2 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, familial punishment, access to lawyer, due process, torture and ill-treatment, lack of separation of crimes, prison exile



BACKGROUND

Soheil Arabi is the 2017 Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom recipient⁴⁰ who in 2013 spent four years on death row after he was found guilty of *sab al-nabi* (insulting Prophet Mohammad) through his posts on Facebook.⁴¹ His sentence was later commuted to seven and a half years imprisonment which he served without a day’s furlough. In that time, he went on hunger strike several times, in protest to the arrest and harassment of his wife and family, and in 2019, in protest to the poor prison condition and to the death in custody of 21-year-old political prisoner Alireza Shir Mohammad Ali. Soheil had been fighting for political prisoners to be separated from dangerous crime prisoners prior to Alireza being stabbed to death by two death row prisoners. In response to his demand, his mother, Farangiz Mazloum was arrested on 22 July 2019.⁴² He was himself the victim of attacks in prison due to the lack of separation of crimes. Throughout his detention, Soheil has reported on the rights violations, dire prison conditions and been outspoken in defending both ordinary crime and other political prisoners including Narges Mohammadi, Golrokh Ebrahimi-Irayi and Atena Daemi.⁴³

UPDATE

While serving his previous sentence, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Iman Afshari sentenced Soheil to two years imprisonment and a two-year-ban from journalism amongst other restrictions in July 2021. He was charged with “propaganda against the system” for reporting about prison conditions and “disturbing public opinion” for protesting against the crackdown of the November 2019 nationwide protests. His sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals. According to his lawyer, Mostafa Daneshjou tweeted that due an official mistake, Soheil had been held in detention seven months longer than his sentence. After serving eight years behind bars, he was released from Rajai Shahr Prison on November 16. Upon being let out of prison, he was put in a car and dropped off in Bazarjan at 3 am, still in his prison clothes and without any money or a phone and told he would have to sign-in at the police station in the morning. Barzarjan is the designated place of his two-year exile from his last case.⁴⁴ The overtime he served will be subtracted from his two-year-exile. Since his release he has been vocal about the torture he endured and the human rights breaches against prisoners.



AMIRABBAS AZARMVAND

Age: 33

Activism/rights: Journalist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest, prolonged solitary confinement, press censorship, access to lawyer, due process

BACKGROUND

Amirabbas Azarmvand is an economics journalist at Samt newspaper and workers rights activist. He regularly wrote articles about the plight of the unions, workers and the most down-trodden in society within the guidelines of a state newspaper. Previously arrested in 2009, 2017 and 2018, he was arrested on 1 September 2021 when his house was raided by five Ministry of Intelligence officers in the morning. He was transferred to the solitary confinement cells of Ward 209 in Evin Prison. Despite bail being set in the early days, when his father was finally able to come up with the set amount, he was thrown out of Evin Court by the investigator, Haj Moradi. Amirabbas was subsequently transferred to Ward 2A of the prison in the custody of the IRGC Intelligence Organisation. He was released on a 500 million tomans bail on September 23.⁴⁵

UPDATE

On October 20, Amirabbas was summoned by phone which he refused to attend. A week later, the police (NAJA) telephoned his father and said that Amirabbas must immediately go to their Intelligence Protection's Seventh Base or he would have to go in his son's place. On November 6, Amirabbas filed a complaint against the Ministry of Intelligence for his unlawful detention in solitary confinement along with tens of other activists. He is currently out on bail pending his official charges and trial.

KAMYAR FAKOOR

Age: 27

Activism/rights: Journalist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 8 months suspended sentence and 50 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, cruel and unusual punishment



BACKGROUND

Kamyar Fakoor is an economic and environmental journalist, workers rights activist and rapper. He was arrested at a pensioners' protest where civil society activists, journalists and workers rights activists rallied in front of the Ministry of Labour building on Azadi Street in Tehran on 8 March 2021 and released on bail.⁴⁶

UPDATE

On November 2, Kamyar was sentenced to eight months imprisonment, 50 lashes and a 15 million tomans fine by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Iman Afshari, on charges of "propaganda against the system and spreading lies to disturb public opinion and order."⁴⁷ The sentence was suspended on conditions including "obtaining permission from a judicial official to travel abroad, participating in counselling sessions to control excitement and prevent hopelessness at the Mavay Institute of Psychology in Qom, reporting any job or residence changes and a ban on social and political activities on social media."



ALIEH MOTALEBZADEH

Age:

Activism/rights: Photojournalist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 3 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, lack of medical care

BACKGROUND

Alieh Motalebzadeh is a photojournalist and the Vice President of the Association for the Defence of Iranian Press Freedom. A day after returning to Iran from a workshop on women's empowerment in Georgia, her home was raided 18 October 2016 and she was summoned by the Ministry of Intelligence a few days later and questioned about attending the workshop.⁴⁸ She was summoned by the Ministry of Intelligence again on November 26, when she was arrested and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison until her release on bail on 19 December 2016. On 14 August 2017, she was sentenced to three years imprisonment on charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" for attending the workshops by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. Her sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeal in October 2019.

UPDATE

Alieh Motalebzadeh has so far served a year of her three year sentence in Evin Prison. She was briefly furloughed after contracting COVID-19 but her request for conditional release has been denied.

KHOSROW SADEGHI-BOROUJENI



Age: 37

Activism/rights: Journalist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 7 years imprisonment

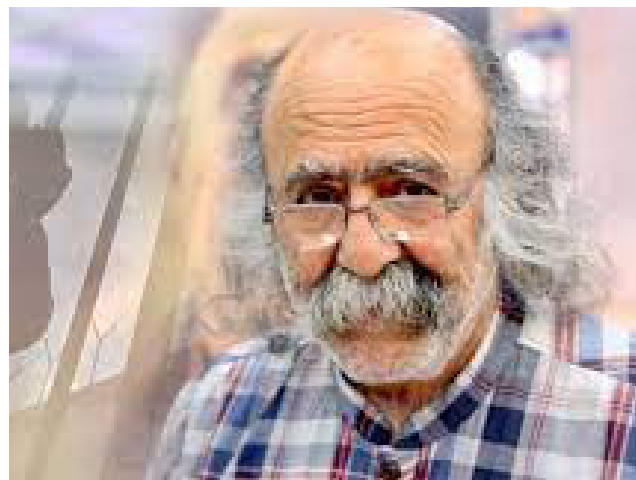
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Khosrow Sadeghi-Boroujeni is a labour and social journalist and researcher. He was arrested for his reports and research into poverty and social inequality in May 2019. On 3 February 2020, he was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security," two years for "insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic" and a year for "propaganda against the system" by the Tehran Revolutionary Court. On appeal, Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals upheld the first two charges and overturned the charge for "propaganda against the system." He was transferred to Evin Prison to serve his sentence on 9 September 2020.

UPDATE

Khosrow is in a bad physical condition in Evin Prison. Despite frequently seeking treatment at the prison infirmary, he has so far been denied effective medical treatment, specialist treatment outside the prison and medical furlough. Instead, he is given painkillers and steroids without a diagnosis from a doctor, and the corticosteroids he had to take in the absence of appropriate medication can cause side effects in the long term.⁴⁹



KEYVAN SAMIMI

Age: 72

Activism/rights: Journalist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 3 years imprisonment

Violations: Prolonged solitary confinement, arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, lack of medical care

BACKGROUND

Keyvan Samimi is a veteran journalist, editor-in chief of Iran Farda and the President of the Association for the Defence of Iranian Press Freedom. He was previously arrested a day after the 2009 presidential elections and sentenced to six years imprisonment by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on charges of “propaganda against the system and assembly and collusion against national security” on 2 February 2010, which was upheld by Branch 54 of the Court of Appeals. He served his sentence in Evin and Rajai Shahr Prisons before being released on 16 May 2015. He was arrested again on 1 May 2019 at the International Workers Day gathering and released on bail on 17 June 2019. Keyvan was sentenced to five years imprisonment by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 4 March 2020, presided over by Judge Iman Afshari. Following his request for a retrial, he was sentenced to three years on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security.” The sentence was upheld on appeal by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals on 28 July 2020.

UPDATE

Keyvan Samimi was summoned to serve his sentence on 19 August 2020 and was arrested on 7 December 2020 and transferred to Evin Prison.⁵⁰ He was transferred from Andarzgah 8 to Ward 209 of Evin Prison on November 11.⁵¹

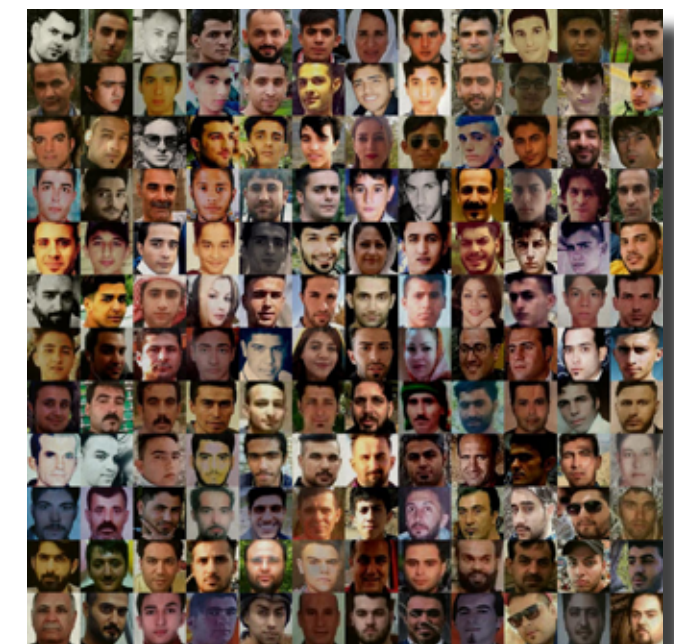
ABAN FAMILIES

Activism/rights: Families seeking justice

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, familial punishment, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, reprisal for seeking justice

BACKGROUND

Following the November 2019 nationwide protests which have become known as Bloody Aban (the 8th month in the Iranian calendar when the protests took place), family members of protesters killed by security forces started speaking out and demanding justice. The mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters who have demanded justice have faced reprisal including imprisonment, harassment and coercive pressure. Those listed are by no means all the Aban families but a representation of a fraction of the reprisals faced by the



families seeking justice. Testimonies from more Aban families were heard at the International People's Tribunal on Iran's Atrocities of November 2019, known as Aban Tribunal in November 2021.⁵² The pressure and harassment increased after the Tribunal and authorities cracked down as the families prepared to mourn their loved ones on the anniversary in November.⁵³

On 30 July 2021, a group of Aban families were arrested after staging a protest in Tehran demanding justice while holding photos of their slain loved ones, and released hours later.⁵⁴

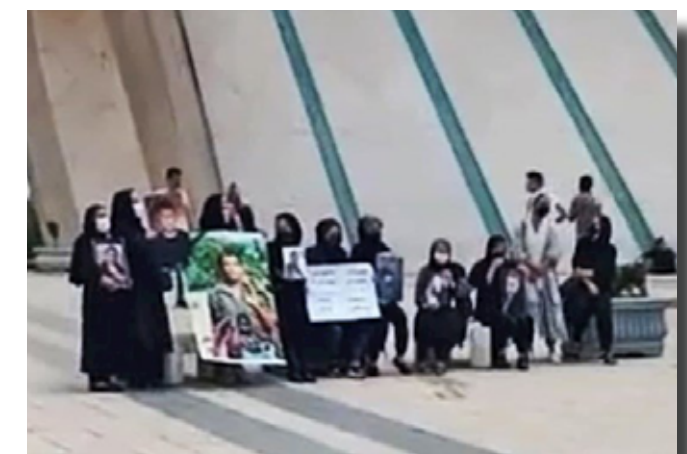
The arrestees were:

Milad Mohaghehi's mother

Sajad Rezaei's mother

Sakineh Ahmadi, Ebrahim Ketabdar's mother

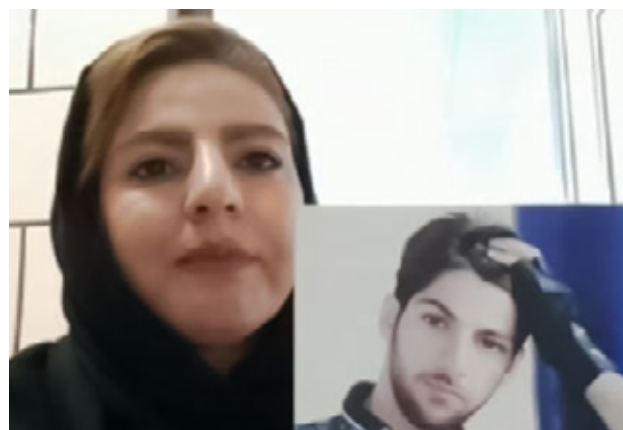
Mahnaz Karimi, Vahid Damvar's mother



Mahboubeh Ramezani, Pejman Gholipour's mother

Nasrin Rasouli, Hamid Rasouli's sister

Sedigheh Tourani, Farhad Mojadam's mother



FARZAD ANSARIFAR'S FAMILY:

Farzad Ansarifar was 27 years old when he was shot by security forces in Behbahan, Khuzestan province on 16 November 2019. In videos shared online, his sister, **Farzaneh Ansarifar** sought justice for her brother and was arrested in January 2020.⁵⁵ According to her father, **Amin Ansarifar**, his wife and

other daughter were surrounded by security forces who fired shots in the air when they went to find her. Furthermore, when her cousin **Alireza Ansarifar** went to the police station to find her, he was arrested upon his return home. Farzaneh was released on bail on 24 July 2020. Amin Ansarifar was one of the first witnesses to testify at the Aban Tribunal via video.

On December 4, Farzaneh reported that she had been summoned to appear in court on December 6 on the charge of propaganda against the system for "asking why did you blow my brother's brain? For which crime did they burn my house and car? For which crime did you imprison me?"



POUYA BAKHTIARI'S FAMILY:

Manouchehr Bakhtiari and **Nahid Shirbishes**' 27-year-old son Pouya Bakhtiari became one of the faces of the November 2019 nationwide protests after he was shot dead by security forces on 16 November 2019. His parents, uncle and a number of activists were arrested on December 23, as his family were preparing to hold a ceremony for him and released them on bail within a month.⁵⁶

Pouya's father Manouchehr was arrested again on 13 July 2020 and released on bail five months later, detained for a day along with Pouya's mother Nahid on 6 April 2021 and most recently on 29 April 2021.

In a voice recording from Karaj Central Prison where he is currently held, Manouchehr said he had been sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment for seeking justice for his son.⁵⁷ He was transferred to the dangerous crime ward on November 24 after being held in solitary confinement for ten days.⁵⁸

AFKARI FAMILY

Activism/rights: Family seeking justice

Violations: Familial punishment, arbitrary arrest, reprisal for seeking justice



BACKGROUND

The Afkari family include siblings Elham and Saeed Afkari and their mother Bahieh Namjoo who have been seeking justice for their sons and brothers Navid, Habib and Vahid Afkari, protesters who were arrested in the aftermath of the August 2018 protests in Shiraz.⁵⁹ Tortured to force false confessions, denied due process and fair trials, the Afkari brothers were sentenced before their case became known. Wrestler Navid Afkari was sentenced to death by both the Revolutionary Court and the Criminal Court in a case of gross violations and injustices.⁶⁰ After voice recordings of Navid were published online, he was transferred to solitary confinement on 3 September, and his brothers Vahid and Habib were transferred two days later in an attempt to stop them from speaking out.⁶¹ Despite a mass international campaign with sports federations, personalities, politicians and celebrities joining in to save his life, Navid Afkari was executed on 12 September 2020 in Shiraz Central Prison.⁶² With Vahid and Habib still in solitary confinement, Elham and Saeed Afkari became their brothers' voice.⁶³

UPDATE

On 12 June 2021, Saeed tweeted that his sister, parents and other relatives were beaten when they went to Shiraz Central Prison to protest Vahid and Habib being held in solitary confinement for 280 days. Elham and another female relative were arrested and released hours later.⁶⁴ On the anniversary of Navid's execution, his father was threatened in a phone call by people believed to be security forces and told that they would be arrested if they held a ceremony for him. Two hours later, Elham and Saeed Afkari were beaten and Saeed was detained for hours before being released.⁶⁵ As of 1 December 2021, Vahid and Habib Afkari have been held in solitary confinement for 452 days.



MARYAM AKBARI-MONFARED

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Sister seeking justice for siblings

Status: Semnan Prison

Judicial status: 15 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, prison-exile, familial punishment, coercive pressure, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care, reprisal for seeking justice

BACKGROUND

Maryam Akbari Monfared has been demanding justice for her siblings, 25-year-old Abdolreza who was arrested at 17 and executed in the 1988 massacre, 20-year-old Alireza who was executed by firing squad at 20, her sister 30-year-old Roghieh who had a 3 year old daughter at the time of her arrest and also executed in the 1988 massacre, and her 29-year-old brother Gholamreza who was killed under torture in 1985. Following the execution of her children in the 1988 massacre, Maryam's mother, Gorji Bashiripour suffered a stroke and passed away without knowing where her children were buried. Maryam was arrested on 31 December 2009 and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment on the charge of *moharebeh* (enmity against god) for a phone call from her dissident sibling in May 2010. On 15 October 2016, she filed an official complaint from behind bars for an investigation into the execution of her siblings in the summer of 1988. In an open letter, she discussed the killings of her four siblings and the pressure her family had endured in the subsequent years. Her complaint was rejected by the judiciary and she was warned that such petitions would exacerbate her situation and prevent her release. At trial, she was told by the judge that "she was paying for the activities of her brothers and sister." Undeterred, she sent another complaint two weeks later. She wrote: "I, Maryam Akbari-Monfared, demand investigations into the unlawful execution of my sister and brothers and disclosure of the details including the identities of those responsible for their deaths, acquisition of their charges and other documents in their files and inquiry into applicable relevant laws, in particular Article 34 of the constitution that recognises seeking justice as the inalienable right of every individual."⁶⁶

UPDATE

Maryam has now spent almost 12 years behind bars without one day of furlough. She was prison exiled to Semnan Prison on 9 March 2021 where she has faced increasing pressure to retract her complaint, and has no phone access to her three young daughters and travelling back and forth means that her family are restricted in their visits.⁶⁷

SHAHNAZ AKMALI

Age: 56

Activism/rights: Mother seeking justice for son

Status: Released

Judicial status: None

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, reprisal for seeking justice, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Shahnaz Akmal's 26-year-old son, Mostafa Karim-Beigi was shot in the head in the 2009 post-election protests. Since then, she has been an advocate for political prisoners, stood with other victim's families and continues to seek justice for her son. Shahnaz was arrested by the Ministry of Intelligence forces at her workplace on 25 January 2017, and after being taken to her home for it to be searched, she was transferred to the Ministry of Intelligence's Ward 209 in Evin Prison. She was temporarily released on bail on 18 February 2017. In November 2017, Shahnaz Akmal was sentenced by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided by Judge Ahmadzadeh to one year imprisonment on the charge of "propaganda against the system." The ruling was upheld in absentia on 30 September 2019, by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeal. She was arrested on 15 January 2020 after surrendering herself to Evin Prison and transferred to the women's ward. Shahnaz was furloughed from prison on 20 February 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19; on July 25, she was informed that she had been released early and would not be returning to prison.

UPDATE

Shahnaz continues to seek justice for not only her own son but also for other families, human rights defenders and political prisoners. On May 24, Shahnaz was prevented from entering Shazand county to visit Mohammad Najafi's family along with human rights defenders Narges Mohammadi, Mostafa Nili, Arash Keykhosravi and Abdolfatah Soltani. Their car was stopped before entering the city and they were told to turn back and return upon the request of the Ministry of Intelligence and on the orders of the Office of the Prosecutor.⁶⁸ Shahnaz is also one of dozens of activists to have filed complaints against their solitary confinement.



GOHAR ESHGHI

Age: 75

Activism/rights: Mother seeking justice for son

Status: Free

Judicial status: None

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, familial punishment, denial of medical care, reprisal for seeking justice

BACKGROUND

Gohar Eshghi is the mother of Sattar Beheshti, a blogger and civil activist who was arrested by Iranian Cyber Police on charges of “acting against national security through social media and Facebook activities” on 31 October 2012 and died of the injuries sustained under torture three days later. Gohar Eshghi refused to stay silent and pursued accountability. The alleged perpetrators were brought to her house shortly after Sattar’s death and she was forced to sign her consent to forgo her right to retribution after she was told that her daughter would be arrested if she did not.⁶⁹

UPDATE

On 3 November 2021, three days before Gohar was due to speak at a ceremony to commemorate both the anniversary of Sattar Beheshti’s death and all those killed during the November 2019 nationwide protests, her daughter Sahar’s house was violently raided. During the raid which began at 22:20, Gohar Eshghi suffered a heart attack and was unable to breathe for a few moments due to the security forces’ intimidating behaviour. Forces also prevented Sahar Beheshti from fetching her mother’s medication by beating and insulting her. Gohar Eshghi and all her family including her daughter Sahar and her son-in law Mostafa Eslami were arrested and released hours later.⁷⁰

FARANGIS MAZLOUM

Age: 53

Activism/rights: Mother seeking justice for son

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 1 year and 6 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, familial punishment, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care, reprisal for seeking justice



BACKGROUND

Farangis Mazloum is a mother who became her son Soheil Arabi’s voice when he was arrested and sentenced to death in 2013 (page 17). She has been routinely harassed for seeking justice for Soheil throughout the years. Farangis was arrested in July 2019 after releasing a video describing how her son had been beaten in prison and was being denied medical treatment. She was transferred to Evin Prison where she was held until she was released on bail on 8 October 2019. On 6 June 2020, Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Farangis in absentia to six and a half years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion and propaganda against the system.”⁷¹ On appeal, the assembly and collusion charge was dropped and the 18 month sentence for propaganda against the system upheld.

UPDATE

On 19 October 2021, Farangis was summoned to Evin Prison to serve her sentence. At the time, Soheil was still behind bars. He was released on November 16. Sentences for both Farangis and her son have been upheld and they will be separated by prison walls once again.



PS752 VICTIMS

Activism/rights: Families seeking justice
Violations: Harassment, reprisal for seeking justice, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

On 8 January 2020, minutes after taking off from Tehran, Ukrainian flight PS752 was shot down by the IRGC, killing 176 passengers and crew and an unborn child. Of those, 146 were Iranian and 138 had ties to Canada and had been returning from visiting their families in Iran over the Christmas holidays.⁷² Through their grief and anger, the families of the victims spoke out and soon started banding together to form the Association of Families of Flight PS752 Victims to seek justice for their loved ones. According to a report by HRW, family members in Iran have faced harassment and intimidation that includes: being warned to not give interviews to foreign media, being followed, summoning and questioning or interrogation of family members and friends who filmed memorial gatherings and those who criticised the authorities' actions.⁷³ According to Javad Soleimani whose 30-year-old wife Elnaz Nabiyyi was killed in the flight PS752, expensive items were "systematically" stolen from passengers and their phones were never returned except those that were completely shattered.⁷⁴

UPDATE

On 21 November 2021, the Islamic Republic held a closed hearing into the shooting which the families do not recognise and call a "kangaroo court". On November 24, the Association published its investigative report by its fact-finding committee which concluded that the shooting was intentional and "that high-ranking officials of Iran are responsible for the downing of Flight PS752 and not just a handful of low-ranking ... members, as per the claims of the government of Iran."⁷⁵ On November 28 when the second hearing was held, families of the victims protested outside the court with photos of their children, surrounded by a disproportionate number of security forces as most of them were denied access to the trial.⁷⁶ According to Azam Salmanizadeh, the sister of a victim, their complaint was against specific individuals whom the court had ignored and the families had not filed complaints against the defendants on trial.⁷⁷ Hamidreza Ghasemi who lost his daughter Kiana said the few families who were allowed inside, disrupted the court at several points to protest breaches.⁷⁸

BAKTASH ABTIN

Age:
Activism/rights: Filmmaker/writer
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment
Violations: Prison

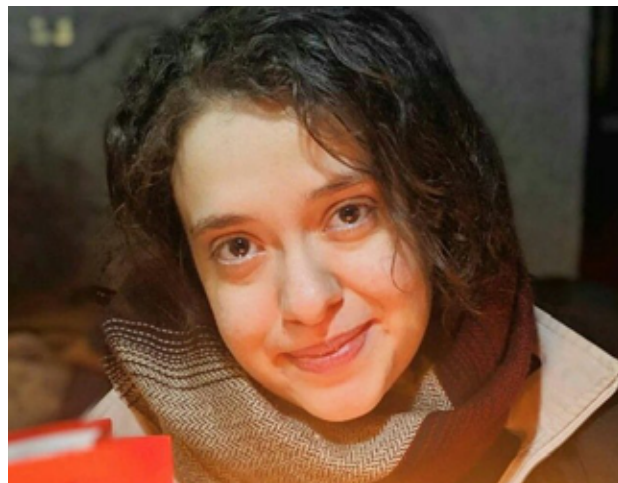


BACKGROUND

Baktash Abtin is a filmmaker and member of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA). In 2015, his home was raided and his written work and materials seized and he was briefly detained as he could not afford the bail set. He appeared before Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Moghiseh with his co-defendants and IWA colleagues, Reza Khandan Mahabadi and Keyvan Bajan on 22 January 2019. Baktash was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year for "propaganda against the system" by the same court on 15 May 2019. His sentence was upheld by Judge Ahmad Zargar when it was heard before Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeal in December 2019.

UPDATE

Baktash was arrested and transferred to serve his sentence in Evin Prison on 26 September 2020.⁷⁹ He was prevented from receiving outside treatment for pain in his groin area for four months before he was finally transferred to the Shohadaye Tajrish Hospital on July 18, where he was shackled to the bed.⁸⁰ Baktash and his IWA colleagues have received widespread support from both civil society and the literary world. On 16 September 2021, they were honoured with the PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award.⁸¹



MARYAM AFRAFARAZ

Age: 29

Activism/rights: Civil activist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting ruling

Violations: Arbitrary arrest, lack of due process

BACKGROUND

Maryam Afrafaraz is a civil activist and member of the Imam Ali Popular Student Relief Society. On 14 August 2021, she along with other activists and lawyers went to file a complaint against the National Task Force Against Coronavirus and the Supreme Leader at the Tehran Citizen's Rights Protection Association for their mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to sources, 15 forces and two judicial officials entered the meeting and arrested all seven claimants.⁸²

UPDATE

Maryam was released on a bail of 500 million tomans on August 29. She later said that the investigator asked security institutions what the charges against them were a week into their arrest, demonstrating the complete lack of due process. She is currently awaiting the legal proceedings in the case.

ZARTOSHT AHMADI-RAGHEB

Age: 57

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting ruling

Violations: Prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, denial of medical care, loss of employment



BACKGROUND

Zartosht Ahmadi-Ragheb is a human rights activist and death penalty abolitionist who has previously been arrested and imprisoned several times. Zartosht is one of the 14 activists who signed a letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei demanding his resignation. He was a firefighter at the Tehran Fire Department for 17 years but was fired from his job for his civil activities. In November 2015, Zartosht was sentenced to six months imprisonment by Branch One of the Shahriyar Revolutionary Court on charges of "propaganda against the system by publishing critical material on his personal Facebook page". He was also sentenced to nine months in prison for his civil activism on charges of "propaganda against the system" by Branch One of the Shahriyar Revolutionary Court in May 2017. He was arrested by security agents at his home on 27 August 2019 and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. Zartosht was charged with "propaganda against the system, insulting the leadership and insulting the heads of the three branches of state." After spending five months in temporary detention, Zartosht was released on bail on 13 January 2020. On 30 May 2020, Zartosht was summoned to Evin Court for "photographing prohibited areas." He surrendered at Branch Four of the Execution of Criminal Sentences of the Public and Revolutionary Court of Shahriar on 15 June 2020, where he was arrested.

UPDATE

Zartosht was released from prison on 3 January 2021 after completing his sentence.⁸³ On August 4, he staged a sit-in in front of Ferdowsi City Council following repeated and unreasonable searches of his home by security forces and confiscation of household electrical appliances, including mobile phones and televisions.⁸⁴ He has been staging regular protests for the right to return to work, in support of political prisoners and workers and against the death penalty. He is currently out on bail awaiting the ruling on charges of "propaganda against the system" for signing the



REZVANEH AHAMDI-KHANBEIGI

Age: 31

Activism/rights: Civil activist

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Rezvaneh Ahmad-Khanbeigi is a human rights activist who was first arrested in 2018. She was rearrested when 11 intelligence forces stormed her home on 18 November 2019 and transferred to the IRGC Intelligence's Ward 2A of Evin Prison following her participation in the November 2019 nationwide protests, where she was beaten. Rezvaneh's trial was held on 1 February 2020 at Branch 24 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court and in the judgement issued the following day, she was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year in prison for "propaganda against the system" for her peaceful participation in the November 2019 protests and Instagram posts in support of political prisoners' rights. On May 12, her husband, Behfar Lalezary announced on his Instagram page that Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals had upheld Rezvaneh's six year sentence.

UPDATE

Rezvaneh suffered from epileptic seizures in prison and was granted furlough in August 2020 and 25 June 2021 and subsequently released after being pardoned. However, she has regularly been summoned by the IRGC Intelligence Organisation.

KEYVAN BAJAN

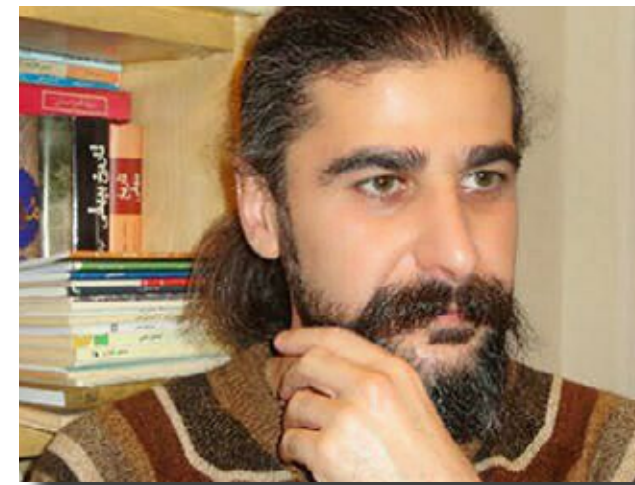
Age:

Activism/rights: Novelist/journalist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 3 years and 6 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, access to lawyer



BACKGROUND

Keyvan Bajan is a novelist, journalist and member of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA). In 2015, his home was raided and his written work and materials seized and he was summoned and questioned. He was briefly detained as he could not afford the bail set. He appeared before Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Moghiseh with his co-defendants and IWA colleagues, Baktash Abtin and Reza Khandan Mahabadi on 22 January 2019. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the system" by the same court on 15 May 2019. His IWA membership, publishing an internal news bulletin, preparing research for a book about the IWA's 50 year history, IWA statements, participating in memorial ceremonies at the graves of chain-killing victims Mohammad Jafar Pouyandeh and Mohammad Mokhtari, and participating in the annual ceremony for poet, Ahmad Shamlou were listed as examples of the charges. In December 2019, His sentence was reduced to three years and six months by Judge Ahmad Zargar when it was heard before Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeal on account of his clean criminal record.⁸⁵

UPDATE

He was arrested and transferred to serve his sentence in Evin Prison on 26 September 2020.⁸⁶ Keyvan and his IWA colleagues have received widespread support from both civil society and the literary world. On 16 September 2021, they were honoured with the PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award.⁸⁷ Keyvan suffers from hyperthyroidism and has been denied adequate medical treatment while in Evin Prison.



ATENA DAEMI

Age: 33

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Rasht Central Prison

Judicial status: 12 years, 7 months imprisonment and 74 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, familial punishment, prison-exile, access to lawyer, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Atena Daemi is a human rights, children's rights and abolitionist activist. First arrested in 2014, she has been entangled in multiple fabricated cases that have kept her behind bars since 28 November 2016 when she was arrested to serve her initial sentence of seven years for Facebook posts and activism against the death penalty. Atena was sentenced to an additional three months and one day on 3 April 2017 for "insulting the Supreme Leader, insulting state officials, propaganda against the system, resisting arrest and assaulting the arresting officer." She was sentenced to a further three years and seven months on 18 July 2019 for "insulting the founder and Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic and propaganda against the system," which was upheld in September 2019. Following a group sit-in in protest to the crackdown on the November 2019 nationwide protests, Atena was sentenced to another two year imprisonment and 74 lashes by Branch 24 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Amouzad on charges of "propaganda against the system and disrupting prison order" on 2 July 2020.⁸⁸

UPDATE

Atena was transferred from Evin Prison to Rasht Central Prison in handcuffs and shackles on March 16, just days prior to the Iranian new year, Norouz.⁸⁹ On August 12, she went on an indefinite hunger strike in protest to the frequent and unjustified restrictions on prisoners' right to telephone use which had forced her parents to travel from Tehran, leading to their contraction of Covid-19.⁹⁰ She broke her hunger strike after her demands were partially met on August 17 by sending a message from prison which she was punished for by having her phone rights removed again.⁹¹ Her phone rights were restored on November 24.⁹²

GOLROKH EBRAHIMI-IRAYI

Age: 35

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Amol Prison

Judicial status: 3 years and 6 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, familial punishment, prison exile, access to lawyer, prolonged solitary confinement, torture and ill-treatment



BACKGROUND

Golrokh Ebrahimi-Iraei is a human rights activist who was first arrested in 2014 and sentenced to six years imprisonment for "propaganda against the system and blasphemy." Her sentence was upheld on 22 December 2015 and she was arrested on 24 October 2016 to serve out her prison sentence.⁹³ After serving her three year sentence, Golrokh was released from prison on 19 April 2019. Six months after release, she was arrested again for a case opened against her while she was still in prison. She was sentenced to two years imprisonment and banned from any party or group participation by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court for "insulting the founder and leader of the Islamic Republic" and one year and six months for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. Singing songs in protest to the executions of Zanyar and Loghman Moradi were found to be "insulting the Founder and Leader of the Islamic Republic" and her letters from prison being published by human rights organisation were considered to be "propaganda against the system." Golrokh was arrested again on 9 November 2019 and held overnight in the Vozara Detention Centre in Tehran before being transferred to Qarchak Prison in Varamin.

UPDATE

Golrokh Ebrahimi-Iraei was forcefully transferred to the IRGC solitary Ward 2A of Evin Prison by being beaten by electric shockers in Qarchak Prison on 13 December 2020. After spending 43 days under interrogations in Ward 2A, she was returned to Qarchak Prison 24 January 2021, only to be prison exiled to Amol Prison hours later, where she is currently being held.⁹⁴



MARJAN ESHAGHI

Age:
Activism/rights: Student activist
Status: Out on bail
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Marjan Eshaghi is a political science student at the University of Tehran and a student activist. Along with her fellow students, she has been part of the struggle to stop the monetisation of their universities and campaigning for the establishment of independent student organisations. She was arrested by IRGC intelligence agents on 17 November 2019 while attending a student protest on the University of Tehran campus as part of the November 2019 nationwide protests. Marjan was transferred to Ward 209 in Evin Prison, where she was subjected to interrogations for 18 days before being released on bail. On 12 November 2020, she was sentenced to five years imprisonment by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Salavati on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” for participating in student protests.

UPDATE

On February 20, the Tehran Court of Appeals upheld Marjan’s five year sentence in absentia.⁹⁵ While she is currently out on bail, her sentence may be enforced at any time.

REZA KHANDAN-MAHABADI



Age:
Activism/rights: Writer
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Reza Khandan-Mahabadi is an author, literary critic, popular culture researcher and member of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA). In 2015, his home was raided and his written work and material seized and he was summoned and questioned. He was briefly detained as he could not afford the bail set. He appeared before Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Moghiseh with his co-defendants and IWA colleagues, Baktash Abtin and Keyvan Bajan on 22 January 2019. He was sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by the same court on 15 May 2019. His sentence was upheld by Judge Ahmad Zargar when it was heard before Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeal in December 2019.

UPDATE

Reza was arrested and transferred to serve his sentence in Evin Prison on 26 September 2020.⁹⁶ Despite suffering from hypertension, arthritis in his neck and ongoing issues with his lungs, he was denied medical care outside the prison.⁹⁷ Reza and his IWA colleagues have received widespread support from both civil society and the literary world. On 16 September 2021, they were honoured with the PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award.⁹⁸



MEHDI MAHMOUDIAN

Age: 43

Activism/rights: Civil activist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 4 years imprisonment, new case pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer

BACKGROUND

Mehdi Mahmoudian is a civil activist who was first arrested in 2009 and sentenced to five years imprisonment, which he served and was released in 2014. He was rearrested on 4 February 2020 for signing a letter of protest against the government crackdown on the November 2019 nationwide protests and released on bail 12 days later. On 22 August 2020, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Mehdi to four years imprisonment, a two-year-ban on membership in political parties and leaving the country on the charge of “assembly and collusion against national security”, which was upheld on 19 October 2020 by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals.

UPDATE

On 14 August 2021, he went to file a complaint against the National Task Force Against Coronavirus and the Supreme Leader at the Tehran Citizen’s Rights Protection Association for their mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to sources, 15 forces and two judicial officials entered the meeting and arrested all seven claimants.⁹⁹ According to his lawyer, he would not be released as his four-year custodial sentence was being enforced.¹⁰⁰ A preliminary hearing was held on October 27, where he was charged with “forming a group to disturb national security and propaganda against the system.”¹⁰¹

FARHAD MEYSAMI

Age: 51

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Rajai Shahr Prison

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, access to lawyer



BACKGROUND

Farhad Meysami is a civil activist, physician and teacher. On 31 July 2018, he was arrested at his office and transferred directly to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. The charges against Farhad were “propaganda against the system, assembly and collusion against the system and promoting and spreading anti-hijabism” for having badges that read “I protest the compulsory hijab” on them. On 1 August 2018, Farhad went on hunger strike to protest his arbitrary detention, the false allegations against him and the lack of access to his lawyer of choice. On 22 January 2019, his lawyer, Mohammad Moghimi said he had been notified that Farhad had received a six year prison sentence by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Salavati. The sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals on 21 May 2019. Farhad refused to appear in court in protest to the note to Article 48 of the Criminal Code of Procedure, which deprives the defendant of their right to choose a lawyer during the preliminary investigations.

UPDATE

Farhad Meysami has served three and a half years behind bars without a day of furlough. He is currently held in Rajai Shahr Prison. On November 30, he was threatened with new fabricated charges for sending a message on the anniversary of the assassination of Dariush and Parvaneh Forouhar.



NARGES MOHAMMADI

Age: 49

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 30 months imprisonment and 80 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, familial punishment, denial of medical care, access to lawyer, prison exile, sexual harassment, prolonged solitary confinement, cruel and unusual punishment

BACKGROUND

Narges Mohammadi is a human rights and anti-death penalty activist, journalist, deputy director of the Defenders of Human Rights Centre (DHRC) and member of Legam, the ‘step by step to stop the death penalty’ campaign. First arrested in 1998, Narges has acquired a record for her activism. She was fired from her job for her activism in 2009. She was sentenced to six years imprisonment in 2011 which was enforced after her arrest on 5 May 2015.¹⁰² On 18 May 2016, Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court sentenced her to ten years imprisonment on the charge of “founding an illegal group” for Legam, 4 five years for “assembly and collusion against national security”, a year for “propaganda against the system” for her interviews with international media and her March 2014 meeting with the EU’s then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton.¹⁰³ The Court of Appeals upheld her sentence on 28 September 2016. On 21 December 2019, Narges among others staged a peaceful sit-in against the state response to the November 2019 nationwide protests. On December 25, she was violently transferred to Zanjan Prison which she described in an open letter. She was released from prison on 8 October 2020.¹⁰⁴

UPDATE

On 24 December 2020, she filed a complaint about the sexual harassment and ill-treatment she suffered in prison, which remains unanswered. On 27 February 2021, she revealed that she was summoned to court in relation to the case opened against her while she was in prison which she had refused to attend. She was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment and 80 lashes for the charges,¹⁰⁵ which was upheld in September.¹⁰⁶ Narges was violently arrested and detained for hours after attending a protest in support of the Khuzestan protests in July.¹⁰⁷ She was arrested at the ceremony of slain protester Ebrahim Ketabdar on October 16,¹⁰⁸ and she was informed that her 30 month imprisonment and 80 lashes were now enforceable while in the solitary confinement cells of the IRGC’s Ward 2A of Evin Prison.¹⁰⁹

SOHA MORTEZAEI

Age: 27

Activism/rights: Student activist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, education ban



BACKGROUND

Soha Mortezaei is a student activist and doctoral candidate who was beaten and arrested by security forces on the evening of 19 November 2019, at the height of the November 2019 nationwide protests in the University of Tehran female dormitories. Despite ranking tenth in the national doctoral entrance exam in political science in 2019, her application was marked with “defected file” on the orders of the Ministry of Intelligence and she was effectively banned from continuing her higher education. She began a 19-day sit-in at the end of October 2019 to protest her education ban and “star” status (a term used for students who have stars next to their names, marking that they had either been banned from education or that they had been registered under special circumstances). For 19 days, she sat alone on campus with a placard, on which she had written her demands and issues created for her by the Ministry of Intelligence. On 9 November 2020, she was sentenced to six years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Salavati. According to her lawyer, Mostafa Nili, “Her sit-in at the university to protest being denied her doctoral degree was cited as the main example of the charges.”

UPDATE

In February 2021, Branch 54 of the Tehran Court of Appeals upheld a six-year prison sentence for Soha.¹¹⁰ While she is currently out on bail, her sentence may be enforced at any time.



MOHAMMAD NOURIZAD

Age: 68

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 15 years and 8 months imprisonment and 148 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, access to lawyer, prolonged solitary confinement, familial punishment, cruel and unusual punishment

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Nourizad is a human rights activist and freedom of speech advocate who has been detained and beaten by security forces on multiple occasions. He was last arrested on 11 August 2019 in front of the Mashhad Court of Appeals building. In June 2019, Mohammad was also one of the 14 activists who signed an open letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei demanding his resignation. On 18 January 2020, he was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment, three years exile to Izeh in Khuzestan (1000 km southwest of Mashhad) and a three year ban from leaving the country for “forming an illegal group and propaganda against the system” by Branch Four of the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad. On 2 May 2020, Mohammad attempted to commit suicide in protest to the pressure on his family. Three days prior, one of Mohammad’s sons, Ali had been sentenced to three-and-a-half years imprisonment for participating in the protests against the downing of Ukrainian Flight PS752 in January 2020. He was transferred to Evin Prison on 5 May 2020. On September 22, his lawyer tweeted that in a second case opened against him in Mashhad, the Court of Appeals had upheld an eight month prison sentence and 148 lashes. His son, Ali was transferred to Fashafuyeh Prison to serve his sentence on October 3¹¹¹ while according to his lawyer, the authorities had promised to keep him with his father at Evin Prison.¹¹²

UPDATE

In February 2021, Mohammad’s wife, Fatemeh raised the alarm at his deteriorating physical health after the Forensic Medical Organisation’s opinion that he was not fit to serve his sentence and that his detention was dangerous was ignored.¹¹³ On November 16, his lawyer tweeted that his sentence had been suspended¹¹⁴ and he was released on bail on November 17.¹¹⁵ In a video shared on social media, he said he had been on a three-week food and medicine strike and had been self-harming five times a day with 85 injuries sustained.¹¹⁶

ARSHAM REZAI

Age: 29

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Rajai Shahr Prison

Judicial status: 9 years and 1 month imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Arsham Rezaei is a painter who was arrested by IRGC intelligence forces in Tehran on 7 January 2019, during the nationwide protests.¹¹⁷ In the immediate aftermath of his arrest, security forces had used his phone to ask two of his friends to join the protests, which the court used as evidence to charge him with “assembly and collusion against national security” on 16 March 2019, when he was sentenced to a total of eight years and six months imprisonment. His other charges were “propaganda against the system”, for which, his use social media apps like WhatsApp and Telegram, and an anti-death penalty placard were used as evidence, and writing “death to dictator” in his personal notebook as evidence of “insulting the leadership.” Arsham was released on bail from Evin Prison on 13 November 2019. On 22 July 2020, his sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Zargar.¹¹⁸ Arsham spoke out for political prisoners and supported their families while he was free but was violently arrested at his home on 17 November 2020 to enforce his sentence.

UPDATE

On 20 January 2021, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Iman Afshari sentenced Arsham to 15 months imprisonment and 4 months of forced labour at the Ministry of Agriculture. His custodial sentence was reduced to 11 months on appeal. Arsham is currently held in Rajai Shahr Prison where he is denied the medical care required for the injuries he sustained during his arrest and his pre-existing stomach issues.¹¹⁹



ARASH SADEGHI

Age: 42

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Released

Judicial status: Early release

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, denial of medical care, unfair trial, familial punishment

BACKGROUND

Arash Sadeghi is a human rights activist who was first arrested as a student by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence on 9 July 2009 in front of Allameh Tabatabai University in Tehran, along with a number of other students protesting the results of the controversial presidential election.¹²⁰ He was rearrested in December 2009 and in May 2014. Arash was tried in Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court and sentenced to a total of 15 years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and conspiracy against national security,” “blasphemy” and “insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic.” The sentence was upheld by the Court of Appeals, ordering Arash to serve a 19 year sentence, including a previous four-year suspended sentence. On 7 June 2016, after the Court of Appeals ruling and while pursuing his case and that of his wife, Golrokh Ebrahimi-Iraei, at the Evin Prosecutor’s Office, Arash was detained and transferred to Evin Prison to serve his sentence.¹²¹ More alarmingly, Arash was diagnosed with chondrosarcoma, a rare type of bone cancer, for which he underwent surgery to remove a tumour from his shoulder. According to reports, despite the doctor’s orders that he be allowed to heal and recuperate in hospital after the surgery, security officials transferred him back to prison, causing infection and ultimately losing all mobility and feeling in his arm.

UPDATE

Arash was released from prison after serving five and a half years on 1 May 2021 due to the implementation of the Sentence Reduction Directive.¹²² Arash was violently arrested and detained for hours after attending a protest in support of the Khuzestan protests in July.¹²³ He has continued to stand up for other political prisoners and speak out against human right breaches since his release from prison.

TOOMAJ SALEHI

Age: 30

Activism/rights: Rapper

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Trial Pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Toomaj Salehi is a rapper who rose to fame through his protest rap which addressed a wide range of issues faced by ordinary Iranians including poverty, repression, corruption and impunity and demanded freedom, equality, justice and accountability. Previously arrested three years prior, Toomaj was arrested again at his home in Isfahan on 13 September 2021 and transferred to an unknown location. He was released on bail on September 21.

UPDATE

Undeterred by his arrest and detention, Toomaj released his first song on the occasion of Teachers’ Day after being released from prison and while still on bail, and continued with releases on the occasion of World Day Against the Death Penalty and the November 2019 nationwide protests.¹²⁴ On November 13, he tweeted that he had been acquitted of the charge of “inciting people to war and killing”, but the charges of “propaganda against the system and insulting the Leader” had been sent for trial.¹²⁵



IASPR

Activism/rights: Civil rights NGO

BACKGROUND

The Imam Ali Popular Student Relief Society (IAPSRS) is a non-governmental organisation and one of the best known and most effective charities in Iran. Established in 1999 by Sharmin Meymaninejad, it is run entirely by a network of volunteers, currently numbering 10,000 people. IAPSRS works on a wide range of issues, including poverty, education, healthcare and employment. One of the most crucial areas of their work is supporting youth affected by crime, especially those sentenced to death, who were under 18 at the time of the alleged crime. The organisation has managed to save over 50 teenagers from execution through mediation with the victims' families.¹²⁶ Sharmin Maymandinejad as well as IAPSRS' compliance officer, Katayoun Afraze and head of public relations, Morteza Keymanesh were arrested on 21 June 2020. On 17 August 2020, the Ministry of Interior set a 20-day deadline for the NGO to change its structure. Following the expiration of the deadline, Zahra Rahimi, the organisation's managing director and Sharmin's wife, was arrested on 6 September and released the next day.

UPDATE

While all members were released on bail by the end of 2020, in a statement issued on 21 February 2021, IAPSRS announced that the Ministry of Interior had given the NGO until 12 March to dissolve the organisation.¹²⁷ A Ministry of the Interior motion for the dissolution of the IAPSRS was granted by Branch 55 of Shahid Beheshti Judicial Complex in Tehran on 3 March.¹²⁸ Another case was opened against them by Branch Two of the 33rd District Court of Tehran. In their last update in June, IASPR said both cases are still ongoing.¹²⁹

ESMAEIL ABDI

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Teachers' Trade Unionist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Esmail Abdi is a teacher, civil activist and member of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Union who has been arrested and imprisoned for his union activities on multiple occasions. First briefly arrested in 2007, he was arrested on two other occasions before his house was searched by the Ministry of Intelligence and his personal belongings confiscated in May 2010. In 2011, the Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Pirabbasi, sentenced Esmail to 10 years imprisonment, which had been suspended for five years, on charges of "propaganda against the system" and "links to enemy states." He was arrested on 27 July 2015 by the IRGC Sarallah forces and spent 10 months in detention, after which he was released. On appeal, Esmail's sentence was reduced to six years imprisonment. He was arrested at his home on 9 November 2016 to serve out his sentence.¹³⁰ He was furloughed from prison due to the COVID-19 outbreak in prisons in March 2020 but was detained when he went to the Evin Prison Prosecutor's Office to extend his furlough on April 20, and returned to Evin Prison.¹³¹

UPDATE

Esmail has gone on several hunger strikes in protest to fabricated security charges against activists which has exacerbated his existing health issues. He continues to be held in Evin Prison.



ESMAIL GERAMI

Age: 67

Activism/rights: Retired teacher and pensioners' rights activist

Status: Greater Tehran Penitentiary

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment and 74 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, lack of separation of crimes, ill-treatment

BACKGROUND

Esmail Gerami is a retired teacher who has been advocating for the rights of pensioners. On 8 March 2021, he was violently arrested at a peaceful protest of pensioners and activists outside the Ministry of Labour building in Tehran and released the next day.¹³² He was arrested at his home on April 3 and transferred to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary. Esmail was sentenced to five years imprisonment, 74 lashes and a two million toman fine by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court for charges of "assembly and collusion with the intention to commit a crime." His sentence was upheld by the Court of Appeals on September 19.

UPDATE

On October 8, Esmail and four other political prisoners were physically attacked by violent crime prisoners in the 2nd Brigade of the Greater Tehran Penitentiary. Prior to the attack, they had complained about the lack of security and requested to be transferred to another ward in their meetings with prison officials.¹³³ Despite worldwide calls for his release, he continues to be held at the Greater Tehran Penitentiary.

AZIZ GHASSEMZADEH

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Teachers' Trade Unionist

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer



BACKGROUND

Aziz Ghassemzadeh is a teacher, singer and spokesperson for the Gilan Teachers' Union who was previously arrested in 2017. On 25 September 2021, the Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers' Unions organised protests in 40 cities across Iran due to the teachers' demands about their pay, pensions and job security, amongst others, not being met. Aziz took part and gave a speech at his local protest in Gilan. The next day, security forces raided his father's house and arrested him as he was giving a live interview to a Farsi satellite television channel via video. His mother can be heard pleading for her son not to be taken from her as he is handcuffed and blindfolded and taken away. According to his lawyer, his previous case was also a consideration in the arrest.¹³⁴

UPDATE

On October 3, his lawyer tweeted that Aziz's detention order had been extended, he was banned from visits and phone calls and access to a lawyer.¹³⁵ Aziz was released on bail from Roudsar Prison on October 11.¹³⁶



ZEYNAB HAMRANG

Age: 51

Activism/rights: Retired teacher

Status: Medical furlough

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Zeynab Hamrang is a retired teacher and Secretary of Education for Tehran's District 18 and an activist. She was arrested at her home on 12 January 2020, when her personal belongings were confiscated and she was released on bail shortly thereafter. Zeynab was sentenced to five years imprisonment on charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year for "propaganda against the system" by the Tehran Revolutionary Court. She was arrested while travelling to West Azerbaijan province in August 2020 and subsequently transferred to Evin Prison to serve her sentence.¹³⁷

UPDATE

In July, Zeynab contracted COVID-19 in Evin Prison along with several other political prisoners and was sent on medical furlough on July 20.

MOHSEN OMRANI



Age:

Activism/rights: Teacher

Status: Free

Judicial status: Trial pending

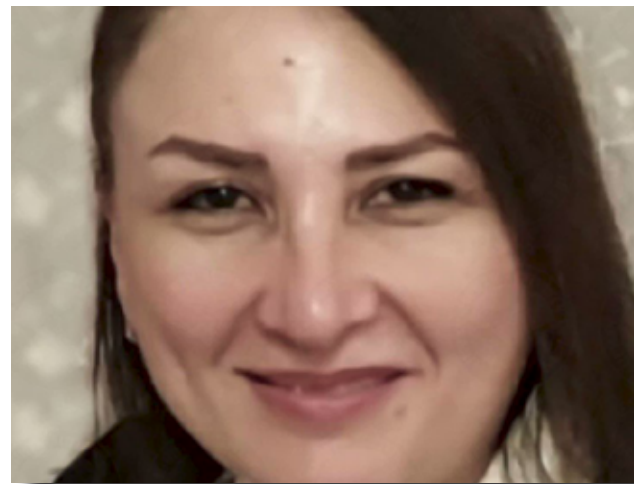
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mohsen Omrani is a teacher and member of the Bushehr Teachers' Union who was first arrested in 2015. In 2016, he was sentenced to five years and eight months imprisonment, 40 lashes and a fine, which was reduced to a year on charges of "propaganda against the system" on appeal. He began serving his sentence in May 2017 but suffered from various medical illnesses in prison where he was denied adequate medical care. He was released from prison on 19 March 2018.

UPDATE

Mohsen Omrani was summoned for interrogations about his trade union work as part of a new fabricated case against him on 26 May 2021 and his case referred to Branch Four of the Bushehr Investigator's Office.¹³⁸



ATSA AHMADAEI

Age:

Activism/rights: Religious rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 8 years imprisonment

Violations: Religious discrimination, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Atsa Ahmadaei is a Baha'i woman who formally requested to incorporate an NGO to support women. Though her request was rejected by the Interior Ministry due to her religious faith, she was arrested on 20 January 2019 and transferred to Ward 240 of Evin Prison before being released on bail of 200 million tomans after 45 days.

UPDATE

On 13 May 2021, Atsa She was sentenced to four years imprisonment for “forming a group to act against national security through requesting an NGO license from the Interior Ministry”, three years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion to act against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Afshari.¹³⁹ This is while her case had been at Branch 28 of the Court, presided over by Judge Amouzad for two years. However, it was unlawfully transferred to Branch 26 due to it being a Baha'i case and Judge Afshari insulted Atsa throughout the proceedings.¹⁴⁰

MARY MOHAMMADI

Age: 30

Activism/rights: Religious rights

Status: Free

Judicial status: None

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, religious discrimination, education ban



BACKGROUND

Mary Mohammadi is a civil activist and Christian convert. In 2019, she was sentenced to six months imprisonment by the Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, headed by Judge Ahmadzadeh, on charges of “acting against national security through propaganda against the system and membership in evangelical groups.” She served her sentence at the women’s ward of Evin Prison. She was beaten and detained by plain-clothed forces near Azadi Square on 12 January 2020, during a protest rally against the downing of Flight PS752 by the IRGC. Security officials first transferred her to the Vozara Detention Centre and following 24 hours of interrogation, handed her over to the Evin Prosecutor’s Office. At her arraignment hearing at Branch Six of the Evin Interrogation Unit, she was informed that she was being charged with “disturbing public order and peace by participating in an illegal gathering”. Mary was transferred to Qarchak Prison in Varamin and released on 27 February 2020, on a bail of 30 million tomans. Her trial was held on 14 April 2020 at Branch 1167 of the Tehran Criminal Court, where she was sentenced to three months and one day in prison and 10 suspended lashes.¹⁴¹ Mary, who was studying English translation at the North Tehran branch of the Azad University, found out that she had been banned from the university on 21 December 2019. Without elaborating, officials told her that she was not allowed to continue her studies at the university.¹⁴²

UPDATE

On January 20, Mary shared a Twitter thread on the harassment she has faced since her arrest. Mary’s employer was forced to let her go for “the sake of her one-year-old daughter” and that she had been briefly arrested for not having the appropriate hijab on January 18.¹⁴³ She continues to campaign for other imprisoned and persecuted religious minorities.



ZARA MOHAMMADI

Age: 30
Activism/rights: Ethnic rights
Status: Out on bail
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Zara Mohammadi is the director of Nojin Cultural Association, teaching Kurdish language and culture. She was arrested with two other members of the Association on 23 May 2019 and while they were released days later, she was detained for over six months.¹⁴⁴ She later said that she had been under duress to make false televised confessions that she was co-operating with Kurdish opposition groups, which she refused to do and was denied access to a lawyer.¹⁴⁵ She was released on bail on 2 December 2019. On 12 July 2020, she was summoned to Branch One of the Revolutionary Court in Sanandaj and sentenced to ten years imprisonment for “forming a group against national security.”¹⁴⁶

UPDATE

Zara received a text on 13 February 2021 informing her that Branch Four of the Provincial Court of Appeals, presided over by Judge Mostafa Tayari, had upheld a five-year prison sentence in her case. Her lawyers were served with the verdict later.¹⁴⁷

KASRA NOURI

Age: 31
Activism/rights: Religious rights
Status: Shiraz Central Prison
Judicial status: 12 years imprisonment and 74 lashes
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, religious rights, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, familial punishment, cruel and unusual punishment, prison exile



BACKGROUND

Kasra Nouri is a Gonabadi dervish, activist and former director of “Majzooban-e noor” website which covered news about the rights of the dervish community. First arrested in 2012, he has been arrested five times in the last decade. Kasra was last arrested at the Gonabadi dervishes’ protest in Golestan Haftom in Tehran in February 2018. As a means of exerting extra pressure, his mother and two brothers were arrested and handed long prison terms. At the time of his arrest, Kasra was studying for his MSc in Human Rights at Tehran University.

UPDATE

Earlier this year, hundreds of Tehran University students signed a petition to protest the recent decision to expel Kasra for non-attendance. The campaign succeeded and the decision was reversed.¹⁴⁸ In September, the President of Tehran University, Mahmoud Nili-Ahmadabadi wrote a letter to Head of Judiciary Mohseni Ejei, requesting that Kasra be released from prison. In response, Mr Nili-Ahmadabadi was removed from his position.¹⁴⁹ Imprisoned since 2018, Kasra was prison-exiled to Shiraz Central Prison from Tehran in April after 34 political prisoners went on a mass hunger strike, where he continues to serve his sentence.



MOHAMMAD SHARIFI-MOGHADDAM

Age: 30

Activism/rights: Religious rights

Status: Fashafuyeh Prison

Judicial status: 12 years imprisonment and 74 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, religious rights, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, cruel and unusual punishment

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Sharifi-Moghaddam is a student and Gonabadi dervish activist who was first arrested after security forces stormed a hospital during the December 2017/January 2018 nationwide protests. He was transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison where he was held for ten days before being arrested after Gonabadi dervishes and civil activists staged a sit-in outside the prison. He was rearrested 40 days later in relation to the Gonabadi dervishes' protest in Golestan Haftom in Tehran in February 2018. In August 2018, he was sentenced to seven years and six months imprisonment on the charge of "acting against national security", 18 months for "propaganda against the system", 18 months for "defying official orders", 18 months for "disrupting public order" and 74 lashes by Judge Salavati. He went on a 54-day hunger strike in protest against the authorities' attempted poisoning of Gonabadi spiritual leader, Noor Ali Tabandeh.

UPDATE

Mohammad has been held in Ward 2 of the Greater Tehran Penitentiary for the last two years. While in prison, he has started a project to set up libraries in prison wards.

PWHF

Activism/rights:

Environmental activists

Judicial status: 4-10 years imprisonment (54 total)

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, death in custody, prolonged solitary confinement, torture and ill-treatment, access to lawyer



BACKGROUND

Sam Rajabi, Hooman Jokar, Niloufar Bayani, Morad Tahabaz, Sepideh Kashani, Abdolreza Kouhpayeh, Taher Ghadirian and Amirhossein Khaleghi are all members of the Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation (PWHF), a non-profit environmental organisation. They were arrested on 25 January 2018 by the IRGC intelligence Sarallah forces. On 9 February 2018, PWHF's executive director, Kavous Seyed-Emami died under suspicious circumstances in custody. Their trials were held in November 2019. Morad and Niloufar were sentenced to ten years imprisonment for "collaborating with the United States." Hooman and Taher were sentenced to eight years imprisonment for "collaborating with the US government." Sam and Sepideh to six years imprisonment for "collaborating with the US government", Amirhossein to six years for "espionage" and Abdolreza to four years for "assembly and collusion against national security."¹⁵⁰ Abdolreza was released on 7 March 2020 after serving half his sentence.

UPDATE

In July, Sepideh Kashani contracted COVID-19 in Evin Prison along with several other political prisoners. On October 1, British Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss issued a statement on Morad Tahabaz's 66th birthday calling for his release.¹⁵¹



JAFAR AZIMZADEH

Age: 55

Activism/rights: Free Workers Union of Iran

Status: Released

Judicial status: 13 month sentence completed

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, lack of separation of crimes, denial of medical care, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Jafar Azimzadeh is a prominent trade unionist and Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Free Workers Union of Iran. First arrested in 2009 for holding a Workers Day ceremony, he was sentenced to six years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “disrupting public order”, a two-year ban on media activities, membership in political parties and organisations by the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Salavati. He went on a 63-day hunger strike in 2016 in protest to the repression of workers and workers rights activists. Jafar Azimzadeh was eligible for early release due to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, but a new case was opened against him before he could be released. He was sentenced to 13 months in prison by the Tehran Revolutionary Court on charges of “propaganda against the system.” He was kept with ordinary crime prisoners during his detention in Evin Prison, where he was beaten up by on several occasions at the instigation and under the watch of prison officials. He was also denied medical treatment after contracting COVID-19 and going on hunger strike in protest to the conditions in Rajai Shahr Prison, where he was transferred to in September 2020.¹⁵²

UPDATE

The Human Rights Defenders Award was presented to Jafar Azimzadeh in 2020 by the Defenders of Human Rights Centre. He was released from prison on 10 April 2021 after completing his 13 month sentence. Jafar was violently arrested and detained for hours after attending a protest in support of the Khuzestan protests in July.¹⁵³

ESMAIL BAKHSHI

Age: 38

Activism/rights: Workers rights/Haft Tappeh case

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, forced televised confessions, due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Esmail Bakhshi is a workers rights activist and representative of the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company in Shush, Khuzestan. He was arrested on 18 November 2018 while on strike, which began due to months of unpaid wages and mismanagement after the company was privatised. He was subjected to torture which he exposed through his social media.¹⁵⁴ Though pressured to withdraw his accusations of torture, he refused to back down and was arrested at his home on 20 January 2019. His forced televised confessions were aired on IRIB TV1 in their “20:30” news segment titled “Failed Planning” a day prior to his arrest. On 7 September 2019, he was sentenced to seven years for “assembly and collusion against national security”, two years for “insulting the Supreme Leader”, two years for “publishing lies”, one-and-half years for “propaganda against the system” and a year and a half and 74 lashes for “disrupting public order.”¹⁵⁵ Esmail was included in Khamenei’s Norouz pardon list on 18 March 2020.¹⁵⁶

UPDATE

Esmail continues to represent the Haft Tappeh workers, though he still has not been allowed to return to work. While he was pardoned in the Haft Tappeh case, his co-defendant, Ali Nejati’s pardon was reversed earlier this year.



MOHAMMAD DAVARI

Age: 27

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 3 years and 9 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Davari is a workers rights activist with a degree in civil engineering and is currently studying for his MA in political science. First arrested in August 2018 and sentenced to five months imprisonment on the charges of “publishing lies to disturb public opinion.” He was arrested again on 1 October 2019 and released on a bail of 1.5 billion tomans on 19 April 2020 after being subjected to months of interrogations. On 29 March 2021, he was sentenced to seven years and six months imprisonment for “membership in an opposition group” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by Branch One of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court. Branch One of the Fars province Court of Appeals reduced Mohammad’s sentence to two years and nine months for the first charge and the year for propaganda against the system was upheld on 19 September 2020. He started serving his sentence on 16 December 2020.

UPDATE

Mohammad was released on bail from Shiraz Central Prison on 28 October 2021.

SHAPOUR EHSANIRAD

Age: 58

Activism/rights: Free Workers Union of Iran

Status: Greater Tehran Penitentiary

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, lack of separation of crimes, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Shapour Ehsanirad is a prominent trade unionist, a board member of the Free Union of Workers in Iran, the former representative of the Saveh Profile Rolling Mill workers and a founding member of the Social Security Pensioners Workers Council. First arrested in 2009 for holding a Workers Day ceremony along with Jafar Azimzadeh, he has faced multiple arrests for his activism. He was last arrested in July 2019 and released on bail 35 days later. On 21 September 2019, he was sentenced to six years imprisonment by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court for “assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda against the system” and a two-year ban on group and party membership and a two-year exile in Sistan and Baluchestan.¹⁵⁷

UPDATE

Shapour Ehsanirad was arrested at his home in Saveh on 17 June 2021 and transferred to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary to serve his sentence. On October 8, he was physically attacked by violent crime prisoners in the 2nd Brigade of the Greater Tehran Penitentiary along with several other political prisoners who had complained about the lack of security and requested to be transferred to another ward in their meetings with prison officials.¹⁵⁸



SEPIDEH GHOLIYAN

Age: 26

Activism/rights: Workers rights/Haft Tappeh case

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, forced televised confessions, prison exile

BACKGROUND

Sepideh Gholiyan is a civil and workers rights activist. She was first arrested on 24 February 2017 and re-arrested on 18 November 2018, while reporting on the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company and released on a bail of 500 million toman a month later. She later used social media to reveal details of the torture she and Esmaeil Bakhshi had been subjected to by officers during their detention. Her forced televised confessions were aired on IRIB TV1 in their “20:30” news segment titled “Failed Planning” prior to her arrest on 20 January 2019. In September 2019, Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Sepideh to a total of 18 years in prison.¹⁵⁹ This sentence was reduced to five years on appeal at the Tehran Court of Appeals in December 2019. Sepideh made a complaint against IRIB, the editor-in-chief of the 20:30 news section and Ameneh Sadat Zabihipour for producing and airing her forced confession, but the court later acquitted the defendants and closed the case. Following the closure of the complaint against IRIB, Sepideh faced new charges of propaganda against the system but was released on bail. Though Sepideh was included in the judiciary’s amnesty list in May 2020, it was later revealed that her pardon had been revoked.¹⁶⁰ She surrendered to Evin Prison on 21 June 2020 to serve out her five year sentence.¹⁶¹ She was transferred to Bushehr Prison on March 11.

UPDATE

Following her furlough from prison on August 19, Sepideh released a short documentary titled “Peng” in which she exposed abuse and torture by prison officials and social workers in Bushehr Prison. In a Twitter thread, she also described Bushehr Prison as a “a place near the end of the earth” and detailed more abuse. Sepideh was summoned to Branch Two of the Bushehr Public and Revolutionary Court on September 20. She is facing charges of “spreading on-line lies and propaganda activities against the system.” She was arrested by over 30 security forces during a night raid at her home in Ahvaz on October 12 and transferred to Evin Prison where she first faced a month of interrogations in Ward 209 and is now serving her sentence in the women’s ward.¹⁶²

LEILA HOSSEINZADEH

Age: 28

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Leila Hosseinzadeh was a student at the Faculty of Social Sciences and secretary of the Student Union Council of the University of Tehran when she was arrested outside her house on 1 January 2018 for taking part in the December 2017 protests at the university. On 7 March 2018, she was sentenced by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided by Judge Mashallah Ahmadzadeh, to five years in prison for assembly and collusion against national security, a year for propaganda against the system and a two-year ban on leaving the country after serving her sentence.¹⁶³ Her sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals. Though she was pardoned due to an incurable disease in March 2020,¹⁶⁴ she was summoned again to face charges of “disturbing prison order” in June 2020.¹⁶⁵

UPDATE

On February 22, she was sentenced to five years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion to act against national security” by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court for celebrating the birthday of imprisoned student Mohammad Sharifi-Moghaddam on campus. According to her lawyer, the new administration at the court ignored the previous judge’s instructions regarding her inability to serve her sentence.¹⁶⁶ Leila is currently free while she appeals the ruling.



NASRIN JAVADI

Age: 63

Activism/rights: Free Workers Union of Iran

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Nasrin Javadi (Azam Khezri) is a workers rights activist and a member of the Free Union of Iranian Workers and a founding member of the Social Security Retired Workers Council. She was arrested on 1 May 2019 along with other participants at the May Day rally. She was released from Qarchak prison on a 100 million tomans bail in May 2019. In August 2019, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Iman Afshari sentenced Nasrin to five years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security”, a year for “propaganda against the system” and 74 lashes, a two year ban on the use of smartphones, membership and activities in political, social groups and parties” for “disrupting public order”. On appeal, the five year sentence was upheld but the two charges of “propaganda against the system and disrupting public order” were dropped.¹⁶⁷ Nasrin was summoned to serve her sentence on 30 June 2020.¹⁶⁸

UPDATE

Nasrin Javadi has thus far refused to respond to the summons and has requested a retrial at Branch One of the Supreme Court. Should the Supreme Court uphold the preliminary ruling, she will have to serve five years in prison.¹⁶⁹

NAHID KHODAJOU

Age: 60

Activism/rights: Free Workers Union of Iran

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, cruel and unusual punishment, unfair trial, access to lawyer, coercion and pressure

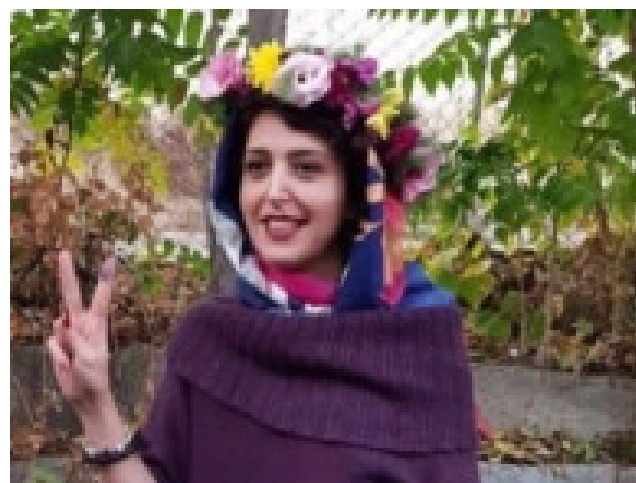


BACKGROUND

Nahid Khodajou is a member of the Free Union of Iranian Workers who was also arrested at the 2019 May Day Rally and subsequently released on bail. In October 2019, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Nahid to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security”, a year for “disrupting public order and peace” and 74 lashes. Her sentence was upheld in absentia by the Supreme Court. Nahid refrained from surrendering herself to serve her sentence due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of hygiene precautions in prison. To pressure her, her bank accounts were closed and her pension payments stopped. Furthermore, her bail guarantor was threatened on at least four occasions that their property would be seized if Nahid failed to surrender.¹⁷⁰

UPDATE

Though Nahid Khodajou is currently free, she may be arrested to enforce her sentence at any time.



ASAL MOHAMMADI

Age: 34

Activism/rights: Workers rights/Haft Tappeh case

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment/new case pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, forced televised confession, torture and ill-treatment, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Asal Mohammadi is a workers rights activist and a nurse who is studying for a PhD in pharmacology. She was part of a group of four journalists and editorial staff from Gam Magazine who covered the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company strikes which led to her arrest on 4 December 2018. Her forced televised confessions were aired on IRIB TV1 in their “20:30” news segment titled “Failed Planning” along with the other Haft Tappeh defendants on 9 January 2019. In September 2019, she was sentenced to 18 years in prison by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Moghiseh. Asal was released on a bail of 2 billion tomans on 2 November 2019. The Tehran Court of Appeals reduced her sentence to five years in December 2019.¹⁷¹ In January 2020, another case was opened against her for “continuing her activism.”

UPDATE

Asal was arrested again at the May Day Rally this year and released hours later. On November 6, Asal filed a complaint against the Ministry of Intelligence for her unlawful detention in solitary confinement along with tens of other activists. Hours later, she was arrested at her home with Hiran Pirbodaghi and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. She was released on a bail of 500 million tomans on November 22. She has not been officially charged at the time of writing and is awaiting trial.

PARVIN MOHAMMADI

Age: 60

Activism/rights: Free Union of Workers of Iran

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, unfair trial, lack of due process, lack of separation of crimes, access to lawyer



BACKGROUND

Parvin Mohammadi is a workers rights activist and the vice-president of the Free Union of Iranian Workers. She was last arrested on 26 April 2019 and sentenced to a year imprisonment on charges of “propaganda against the system” by Branch One of the Karaj Revolutionary Court in September 2019. She served her sentence in Kachouii Prison with dangerous crime prisoners and was released in April 2020.

UPDATE

In December 2020, she was informed electronically, that she had been sentenced to a year imprisonment in absentia by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Moghiseh on the charge of “propaganda against the system” for interviewing with a foreign-based media outlet in 2017 and making a speech about problems faced by pensioners. She was not informed of the charges or trial, making the sentence unlawful, even according to the Islamic Republic’s own laws. Furthermore, as the guarantor for bail set for Jafar Azimzadeh who was serving his sentence at the time, officials threatened to seize her home, refusing to return the deeds and even going as far as photographing the house.¹⁷²



NAZANIN MOHAMMADNEJAD

Age: 33

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 2 years and 8 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Nazanin Mommadnejad is a women's rights activist who is studying for her MA in Russian at Alameh Tabatabai University. She was arrested at her home on 8 December 2020 and transferred to Ward 2A of Evin Prison, where she was held for 57 days before being released on a bail of 1.3 billion tomans on February 2.¹⁷³ On August 4, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Nazanin to two years and eight months imprisonment for "participating in the running of an illegal group" and eight months for "propaganda against the system."¹⁷⁴ The illegal group in her case referred to a book club held in a cafe.¹⁷⁵

UPDATE

Shortly after Nazanin's lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on August 14 (page 13), his client case files including that of Nazanin, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. According to her sister, "she didn't even have time to discuss her appeal with him."¹⁷⁶ She remains out on bail while the legal proceedings are completed.

SHAHABEDIN NAZARI

Age:

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment

Violations: Lack of due process, unfair trial, arbitrary detention



BACKGROUND

Shahabedin Nazari is an architectural engineer and currently undertaking his MA in Middle Eastern Studies. A case was opened against him upon the complaint of the IRGC in Khuzestan for writing and giving interviews to domestic media about government corruption. He was sentenced to a year imprisonment on the charge of "propaganda against the system" by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Moghiseh, which was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals.¹⁷⁷

UPDATE

Shahabedin Nazari surrendered himself to Evin Prison to serve his sentence on January 27 and was released on 5 April 2021.¹⁷⁸



ALI NEJATI

Age: 59

Activism/rights: Workers rights/Haft Tappeh case

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, forced televised confession, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial, coercive pressure, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Ali Nejati is a prominent workers rights activist who in 2007, helped revive the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company in Shush, Khuzestan. While he has faced continuous harassment and arrests over the years, he was last arrested at the Haft Tappeh Workers strike in November 2018 and transferred to Shush Prison. His forced confessions were aired on national television along with the other Haft Tappeh defendants on 20 January 2019. Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Moghiseh sentenced him to five years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” on 12 December 2019. Ali’s name was included in the judiciary’s amnesty list in May 2020.

UPDATE

On 16 February 2021, the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company reported that Ali’s pardon had been rescinded and he was summoned to surrender to serve his sentence by the Evin Prison Sentencing Enforcement on multiple occasions. His failure would result in his bank account being closed, which it subsequently was.¹⁷⁹ His lawyer, Farzaneh Zilabi confirmed that her client’s pardon had been revoked due to a mistake on March 14.¹⁸⁰ Ali is currently free but his sentence remains enforceable at any time.

HIRAD PIRBODAGHI

Age: 29

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Hiran Pirbodaghi is an architectural engineer and workers rights activist. He was first arrested in August 2019 when he stood outside the Tehran Revolutionary Court to support the defendants in the Haft Tappeh trial. He was released on bail less than a month later but was rearrested when he went to pick up his personal belongings from Evin Prison under the pretext that the bail amount had increased. He was released on bail a week later.

UPDATE

Hiran was arrested again at the May Day Rally 2021 and released hours later. He was arrested and transferred to Evin Prison to serve his sentence on May 14. He was furloughed on May 25 which was linked to his release. On November 6, Hiran filed a complaint against the Ministry of Intelligence for his unlawful detention in solitary confinement along with tens of other activists. Hours later, he was arrested at his home with Asal Mohammadi and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison, where he remains as of 1 December 2021 and is under pressure to make false confessions.



MEHRAN RAOUF

Age: 65
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 10 years and 8 months imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Mehran Raouf is a British-Iranian workers rights activist and English teacher. He was arrested at his home on 16 October 2020 and transferred to Ward 2A of Evin Prison. Mehran's health deteriorated due to prolonged solitary confinement and he went on a hunger strike for a few days in March 2021 to protest.¹⁸¹ He was held in solitary confinement for eight months and deprived of legal representation in court, which his lawyer, Mostafa Nili filed a complaint against. His request for a pen and paper to write his own defence was also refused and he was later mocked in court for reading from a piece of cardboard he had found in prison.¹⁸²

UPDATE

He was transferred from solitary confinement on 12 June 2021 and sentenced to ten years imprisonment on the charge of "running an illegal group" and eight months for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.¹⁸³ Shortly after his lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on August 14 (page 13), his client case files including that of Mehran, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. Mehran is currently serving his sentence in Evin Prison.

MAZIAR SEYEDNEJAD

Age: 40
Activism/rights: Workers rights/Haft Tappeh case
Status: Out on bail
Judicial status: 3 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, forced televised confessions, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Maziar Seyednejad is a workers rights activist who was arrested in Ahvaz as part of the crackdown on the Workers Union of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company on 1 December 2018. He was transferred to Sheyban Prison in Ahvaz after completing his interrogations and was ultimately released on a 500 million tomans bail on 18 March 2019. His forced televised confessions were aired on IRIB TV1 in their "20:30" news segment titled "Failed Planning" along with the other Haft Tappeh defendants on 9 January 2019. On 19 December 2020, Branch Four of the Ahvaz Revolutionary Court sentenced Maziar to three years imprisonment on charges of "membership in an opposition group."

UPDATE

Maziar's sentence was upheld by Branch 16 of the Khuzestan Court of Appeals on 31 May 2021 and he was rearrested at his home in Tehran on 7 June 2021 and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. He was released on bail on 16 August 2021. On September 19, he was interrogated at Branch One of Evin Court after being summoned by phone.¹⁸⁴ Maziar remains out on bail but his sentence remains enforceable.



SAJAD SHOKRI

Age: 25

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 3 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Sajad Shokri is a workers rights activist who was arrested on 6 August 2020 while walking home in Tehran and taken to Ward 2A of Evin Prison where he underwent interrogations until being transferred to the general ward on 12 August 2020.¹⁸⁵ Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Afshari sentenced Sajad to three years imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” for taking part in the 2019 May Day Rally.¹⁸⁶

UPDATE

Sajad Shokri is currently serving his sentence in Evin Prison. So far, his request for furlough has been denied.

BAHAREH SOLEIMANI

Age: 43

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: 6 years and 3 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Bahareh Soleimani is a workers and women’s rights activist who was arrested on 16 October 2020 and transferred to Ward 2A of Evin Prison where she was held until early February before being transferred to the women’s ward. Her parents’ home was searched for two hours, causing her father who suffers from heart and lung issues from the Iran-Iraq War to become unwell. Bahareh herself also suffers from lung problems due to her work in the hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bahareh was released on bail on February 24. On August 4, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Bahareh to six years imprisonment for “participating in the running of an illegal group” and eight months for “propaganda against the system.”¹⁸⁷

UPDATE

Shortly after Bahareh’s lawyer, Mostafa Nili, was arrested on 14 August 2021 (page 13), his client case files including that of Bahareh, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. She remains out on bail while the legal proceedings are completed.



RAHA AHMADI

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: 2 year imprisonment completed

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Raha Ahmadi, a civil activist and campaigner against forced hijab. After Yasaman Aryani and Monireh Arabshahi (page 82 and 81) were arrested for handing out flowers and pastries to fellow passengers in a women's only carriage on the Tehran metro on International Women's Day 2019, she appeared in a video posted online, handing out flowers to passengers with other activists in the Tehran metro in support of the detained mother and daughter. She was arrested by plainclothes agents on her way to work on 4 August 2019 and taken to Vozara Detention Centre before being transferred to Qarchak Prison in Varamin. On 4 December 2019, Raha was sentenced to two years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security" by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided by Judge Salavati.¹⁸⁸ Her sentence was upheld by the Tehran Court of Appeals on 19 February 2020.

UPDATE

Raha was furloughed on a number of occasions during her detention, the last of which was from 10-27 March 2021, she was released from prison on 31 March 2021.¹⁸⁹

RAHELEH AHMADI

Age: 51

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Qarchak Prison

Judicial status: 31 months imprisonment/new case pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Raheleh Ahmadi is a mother who demanded justice for her daughter, Saba Kordafshari and was also with Monireh Arabshahi, Yasaman Aryani and Mojgan Keshavarz as they handed out flowers and pastries to fellow passengers in a women's only carriage on the Tehran metro on International Women's Day 2019. Raheleh was arrested at her home on 10 July 2019 in order to pressure her daughter, Saba to make a false televised confession against herself. She was transferred to the IRGC Ward 2A in Evin Prison, where her daughter was being held. Following interrogations, she was returned to Qarchak prison on July 12 and released on a bail of 700 million tomans pending trial. On 16 December 2019, Branch 26 of Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Afshari, sentenced Raheleh to a total of four years and two months in prison; three years and six months for "assembly and collusion to act against national security through cooperation with dissident media", and eight months for "propaganda against the system." She was acquitted of the charge of "inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution". Her sentence was reduced to two years and seven months in prison for not protesting the decision. Raheleh was arrested on 15 February 2020 after attending Branch Three of the Evin Court and transferred to the Women's Ward of Evin Prison to serve out her sentence.

UPDATE

Raheleh suffered from a ruptured disc from mental stress after her daughter Saba Kordafshari was separated from her and transferred to Qarchak Prison. and had to rely on a walking frame to walk.¹⁹⁰ Ten months prior to her due release, on 20 November 2021, she was summoned to Branch One of Evin court for a new case that has been opened against her for charges of "propaganda against the system." She issued a statement after the arrest of her and Saba's lawyer Mostafa Nili (page 13).¹⁹¹



HODA AMID

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 8 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Hoda Amid is a lawyer and women's rights activist. She was arrested along with Najmeh Vahedi on 1 September 2018 for running educational workshops on "terms of marriage" to educate women on their rights and laws governing marriage and the family. She spent more than two months in the IRGC's security Ward 2A before being released on bail. In December 2020, Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Salavati sentenced Hoda Amid to eight years in prison, a two year ban on certain social rights and a two year ban from practicing law. She was charged with "collaborating with the hostile America against the Islamic Republic on women and family issues." According to the verdict, by holding educational marriage workshops on "terms of marriage" and "dowry and housework", the two women were working "in line with the project of infiltration by weakening the foundation of the family with the aim of overthrowing (the government)" and "collaborating with the hostile America against the Islamic Republic on women and family issues."¹⁹²

UPDATE

Hoda's sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals on 18 February 2021.¹⁹³ She is currently out on bail but her sentence is enforceable at any time.

MONIREH ARABSHAHI

Age: 52

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Kachouii Prison

Judicial status: 9 years and 7 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Monireh Arabshahi is a civil and women's rights activist who on International Women's Day 2019, unveiled along with her daughter, Yasaman Aryani, Mojgan Keshavarz and Raheleh Ahmadi and handed out flowers and pastries to fellow passengers in a women's only carriage on the Tehran metro, which was filmed and shared widely. She was arrested 11 April 2019 and sentenced to 16 years imprisonment on charges of "assembly and collusion against national security, propaganda against the system and inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 31 July 2019.¹⁹⁴ On appeal, the sentence was reduced to nine years and seven months in prison by Branch 54 of the Tehran Court of Appeals. Monireh was transferred from Qarchak prison in Varamin to the women's ward of Evin prison on 13 August 2019. On 21 October 2020, her lawyer, Babak Paknia tweeted that he had been informed that his clients, Monireh and Yasaman were told they had a meeting with their lawyer, which was a lie and upon leaving their ward, they were transferred to Kachouii Prison in Karaj.¹⁹⁵

UPDATE

Monireh suffers from several illnesses including her thyroid and back (disc). Despite doctors stating that she needed immediate specialist care for her thyroid in December 2020, she was not immediately sent and when she was, she was returned without receiving adequate treatment. She was finally sent on medical furlough on a bail of 500 million tomans to have an operation to remove her thyroid and she returned to prison on July 23.¹⁹⁶



YASAMAN ARYANI

Age: 26

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Kachouii Prison

Judicial status: 9 years and 7 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Yasaman Aryani is a women's rights activist and an actress. On International Women's Day 2019, unveiled, Yasaman and her mother, Monireh Arabshahi, Mojgan Keshavarz and Raheleh Ahmadi handed out flowers and pastries to fellow passengers in a women's only carriage on the Tehran metro, which was filmed and shared widely. On April 10, she was arrested after security forces raided her house, confiscating her laptop and phone.¹⁹⁷ On 26 June 2019, Yasaman was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security, propaganda against the system and inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided by Judge Moghiseh.¹⁹⁸ The sentence was reduced to nine years and seven months by Branch 54 of Tehran Court of Appeals on 5 February 2020. On 21 October 2020, her lawyer, Babak Paknia tweeted that he had been informed that his clients, Yasaman and Monireh were told they had a meeting with their lawyer, which was a lie and upon leaving their ward, they were transferred to Kachouii Prison in Karaj.¹⁹⁹

UPDATE

Yasaman was furloughed from prison on 6 July 2021 and returned on August 3. She continues to serve her sentence in Kachouii Prison.

SOMAYEH KARGAR

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 6 years and 8 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Somayeh Kargar is a Kurdish women's rights activist who was arrested by security forces during a raid of her home on 16 October 2020 in relation to her online women's rights activism. She was taken to Ward 2A of Evin Prison where she was held in limbo for four months on what her family were told were "internet crimes." During a visit, her mother was warned against speaking in Kurdish with her daughter, to which she responded: "I can't express my feelings to my child in any language other than Kurdish."²⁰⁰ Somayeh suffers from a rare eye condition which was under the treatment of specialists in France. She was prevented from making her scheduled appointment due to her arrest and denied her medication which led to a deterioration of her condition in Evin Prison. She was transferred to Qarchak Prison after completing four months of interrogations.²⁰¹

UPDATE

On 4 August 2021, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced her to six years imprisonment for "participating in the running of an illegal group" and eight months for "propaganda against the system."²⁰² As a result of not being able to afford the set 500 million toman bail set, she was detained for an extra week before being released on bail on April 28. Shortly after Somayeh's lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on 14 August 2021 (page 13), his client case files including that of Somayeh, were found scattered outside Evin Prison.



MOJGAN KESHAVERZ

Age: 32

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Kachouii Prison

Judicial status: 12 years and 7 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Mojgan Keshavarz is a women's rights activist who along with Yasaman Aryani and Monireh Arabshahi and Raheleh Ahmadi unveiled and handed out flowers and sweets on a women's only carriage on the Tehran metro on International Women's Day 2019. She was arrested at her home in front of her 9 year old daughter on 25 April 2019 and taken to Vozara Detention Centre before being transferred to Qarchak Prison in Varamin. On 31 July 2019, Mojgan was sentenced to 23 years and six months at Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, presided by Judge Moghiseh; five years for "assembly and collusion against national security", a year for "propaganda against the system", ten years for "inciting and facilitating corruption through unveiling" and seven years and six months for "insulting Islamic sanctities."²⁰³ The sentence was reduced to 12 years and seven months by Branch 54 of the Tehran Court of Appeals.²⁰⁴

UPDATE

Mojgan was furloughed for a few days in August 2021. She continues to serve her sentence in Qarchak Prison.

SABA KORDAFSHARI

Age: 25

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Qarchak Prison

Judicial status: 9 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Saba Kordafshari is a civil and women's rights activist. First arrested on 2 August 2018, Saba was rearrested on 1 June 2019 and on 27 August 2019, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced her to 24 years imprisonment: 15 years in prison for "inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" through unveiling, seven and a half years for "assembly and collusion against national security", a year and a half for "propaganda against the system" along with social restrictions.²⁰⁵ On appeal, Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals acquitted her of the "inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" charges. On 30 May 2020, her lawyer, Hossein Taj, tweeted that in a phone call with Saba, she had told him that the 15 year sentence, from which she was acquitted by Branch 36 of the Appeal Courts, has been altered in the written appeal judgement, meaning that her sentence has been secretly and unlawfully increased up to 24 years.²⁰⁶ Saba was transferred to Qarchak Prison on 9 December 2020.

UPDATE

In March 2021, Saba Kordafshari was informed that her sentence had been reduced to 9 years by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals. She was furloughed from prison after contracting COVID-19 on 3 April 2021²⁰⁷ and returned to prison on April 10.²⁰⁸ On May 8, Saba went on a hunger strike in protest to the increasing pressure on her family and other political prisoners, demanding that her mother, Raheleh Ahmadi be released.²⁰⁹ She was released on a medical furlough on October 23 for her stomach issues but was returned to prison on November 4 before her treatment was complete.



TAHMINEH MOFIDI

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: Trial pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Tahmineh Mofidi is a women's rights activist and pilates instructor. She was arrested at her home on 2 January 2021 and transferred to Ward 2A of Evin Prison. Tahmineh suffers from bipolar disorder and requires regular monitoring by a doctor and her medication. In a phone call with a female IRGC Intelligence officer, her family were asked for 350,000 tomans to give her the medication they brought for her.²¹⁰

UPDATE

Tahmineh was released on a bail of 1.5 billion tomans on 2 February 2021. She is currently awaiting her trial.

NAHID TAGHAVI

Age: 67

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 10 years and 8 months imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Nahid Taghavi is a German-Iranian women's rights and workers rights activist who was arrested at her home in Tehran on 16 October 2020 for her human rights activism and transferred to the IRGC's Ward 2A of Evin Prison.²¹¹ She was kept in solitary confinement for 151 days before being transferred to the general ward but was returned to the IRGC ward 20 days later. Maryam Claren, Nahid's daughter, repeatedly expressed concern for her mother's underlying health conditions of diabetes and high blood pressure and that she was being denied medical care.

UPDATE

Her first trial was held in April 2021 and on 4 August 2021, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Nahid to ten years imprisonment on the charge of "running an illegal group" and eight months for "propaganda against the system."²¹² Shortly after Nahid's lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on 14 August 2021 (page 13), his client case files including that of Nahid, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. Nahid's health has continued to suffer in prison. She was transferred for an MRI in June after suffering from back pain and after over two months, the results confirmed that she required back surgery.²¹³ Nahid also contracted COVID-19 in July but was denied



NAJMEH VAHEDI

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Out on bail

Judicial status: 7 years imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Najmeh Vahedi is a sociologist and women's rights activist, and is currently studying for her postgraduate degree in women's studies. She was arrested along with Hoda Amid on 1 September 2018 for running educational workshops on "terms of marriage" to educate women on their rights and laws governing marriage and the family. She spent more than two months in the IRGC's security Ward 2A before being released on bail. In December 2020, Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Salavati sentenced her to seven years imprisonment and a two year ban on certain social rights for charges of "collaborating with the hostile America against the Islamic Republic on women and family issues." According to the verdict, by holding educational marriage workshops on "terms of marriage" and "dowry and housework", the two women were working "in line with the project of infiltration by weakening the foundation of the family with the aim of overthrowing (the government)" and "collaborating with the hostile America against the Islamic Republic on women and family issues."²¹⁴

UPDATE

Najmeh's sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals on February 18.²¹⁵ She is currently out on bail but her sentence is enforceable at any time.

Recommendations

Iran Human Rights calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to:

- Release all imprisoned human rights defenders immediately and unconditionally.
- Provide proper medical care for all prisoners in line with the international law and standards.
- Cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran, allow him to visit Iran and meet the human rights defenders in person.
- Guarantee freedom of expression and peaceful association and safeguard the activities of human rights defenders.
- Prosecute and bring to justice those who committed crimes against human rights defenders in prisons, including those who ordered torturing HRDs in order to extract forced confessions.
- Perform impartial and transparent investigations on the suspicious deaths in detention including that of Shahin Nasser.
- Avoid and prevent judicial pressure on human rights defenders, journalists and other activists, taking into account international standards in this respect.

Iran Human Rights calls on the international community to:

- Put the condition of the human rights defenders on the agenda of all bilateral and multilateral talks with the Iranian authorities.
- Call upon the Iranian authorities to release the imprisoned human rights defenders unconditionally.
- Support the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of the human rights in Iran.
- Use the UPR and all other UN mechanisms to put focus on the situation of human rights defenders in Iran.
- Hold Iranian authorities accountable for the harassment, persecution, torture and imprisonment of the human rights defenders.

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