



IRAN
HUMAN
RIGHTS

150+

IRAN HUMAN RIGHTS

DEFENDERS 2023

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This report has been prepared by Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO) and covers updates from 1 December 2022 until 1 December 2023.

Iran Human Rights is an independent non-partisan NGO based in Norway focused on the abolition of the death penalty, supporting human rights defenders and the rule of law.

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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 built by Mohammadreza Pahlavi to house political prisoners in 1972. Wards 209, 240 and 241, which have solitary cells are 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, countless prisoners were executed at the prison throughout the decades until its closure in August 2023. IHRNGO [considers](#) its closure as the intentional destruction of evidence of crimes against humanity committed in the 1980s.

Ghezelhesar Prison: Located in Karaj and built by Mohammadreza Pahlavi, the prison houses both political and ordinary crimes prisoners. The number of executions at the prison have spiked since the closure of Rajai Shahr Prison. Authorities have revealed plans to close the 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

Over a year after the start of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement, the plight of Iranian human rights defenders continues to be a matter of grave concern, as they face imprisonment, persecution, and harsh sentences for their unwavering dedication to advancing fundamental human rights in Iran. This Iran Human Rights report presents profiles of more than 150 courageous individuals, including lawyers, teachers, minority rights activists, women's rights activists, journalists, workers rights activists, environmentalists, families seeking justice, civil rights activists and artists, who have been targeted for their defence of human rights. Yet, this list is a small window into the deteriorating situation of human rights defenders in Iran. These defenders, collectively sentenced to more than 541 years in prison and 577 lashes, stand as stark examples of the ongoing crackdown on those working tirelessly to promote justice, equality, and freedom in Iran.

The report is published to mark International Human Rights Day, which this year coincides with the awarding ceremony of the Nobel Peace Prize to Narges Mohammadi, one of the defenders featured in this report. Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Narges Mohammadi holds profound significance for the plight of human rights defenders in Iran. As a prominent human rights defender, Narges has fearlessly defended the human rights of the most voiceless, championing minorities' rights, women's rights, and the abolition of the death penalty in Iran.

On the launch of this report Iran Human Rights (IHRNGO) calls on the international community to demonstrate a more active and resolute support for Iranian defenders, who stand unwaveringly on the frontlines of the battle for fundamental human rights.

Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, the Director of IHRNGO said: "As the international community bears witness to the alarming escalation of human rights violations within Iran, it is imperative to recognise the unyielding spirit of these individuals and to extend unwavering support to their cause". He added: "Awarding the Nobel Peace to Narges Mohammadi amplifies her voice and shines a spotlight on the resilience and determination of human rights defenders in Iran, while urging the international community to stand in solidarity with those who courageously advocate for a more just and free society".

Among those featured in this report, there are several lawyers who were targeted for representing "Woman, Life, Freedom" protesters. 26-year-old pro bono lawyer Maryam Arvin died under suspicious circumstances less than a month after being released from prison. Another lawyer, Amirhossein Kouhkan, represents the family of executed protester Mohammad Mehdi Karami. In August 2023, a week after his father Mashallah Karami was arrested, Amirhossein was also arrested when he went to follow up on his case. This report includes more than 150 human rights defenders who were jailed or had active

Introduction

legal cases between 1 December 2022-1 December 2023. It is important to note that this is a partial list and does not include the many defenders who have faced harassment, summons or threats. Many defenders have also not been included due to lack of accurate information and some were excluded at their specific request.

Nevertheless, this report is a window to the situation of human rights defenders in Iran over the last year. Defenders who have refused to stay silent even behind the bars. Through protests and hunger strikes within the confinements of prison walls and letters and voice messages, they continue to make their voices heard and to stand up for human rights, knowing the punishments they will face at the hands of their jailers. It should be noted that some defenders remain in prison due to their inability to afford bail.

In publishing this report, IHRNGO hopes it will provide new insights into the deteriorating situation 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. It also calls on the international community and all states with diplomatic relations with Iran, to demand the immediate release of all imprisoned human rights defenders. 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.



MASSOUD AHMADIAN

Age:
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Free
Judicial status: Awaiting judgement
Violations: Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Massoud Ahmadian is a human rights lawyer in Shiraz. He was targeted with his colleagues Mahmoud Taravat-Ruy and Nazanin Salari in November 2020. They were summoned to the Fars province Ministry of Intelligence to be questioned about their activities related to their professional duties. After ten questioning sessions, they were charged with “assembly and collusion against national security, propaganda against the system and colluding with enemy states” in the summer of 2021. On 21 May 2022, 400 Iranian lawyers issued a statement of support for Massoud, Nazanin and Mahmoud, demanding the baseless charges be dropped.¹

UPDATE

Another session was held in Branch One of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court on 31 May 2023 due to the legal flaws in the first case which it failed to resolve on two occasions. Yet, their case was still sent for trial which was scheduled for 11 November 2023. Ahead of their trial, on 9 November, bar associations and international lawyers’ organisations issued a joint statement to express solidarity with the three lawyers and called for protection of lawyers in Iran.² They are currently awaiting the judgement in the case.

KHOSRO ALIKORDI

Age: 44
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Awaiting implementation of sentence
Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment
Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Khosro Alikordi is a human rights lawyer who was targeted for representing families of slain “Woman, Life, Freedom” protesters. His clients included the families of Abolfazl Adinezadeh, Erfan Rezaei and political prisoners Fatemeh, Mohammad Hossein and Hossein Sepehri.

UPDATE

On 28 November 2023, Khosro shared a video on his Instagram account announcing that he had been sentenced to a year imprisonment for “propaganda against the system in favour of dissident groups.” Branch 1 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court also issued a two-year ban from practising law, leaving the country and use of social media as additional punishment. Khosro’s interviews with diaspora Farsi media and social media posts were used as examples.³



MARYAM ARVIN

Age: 29

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Deceased

Judicial status: NA

Violations: Suspicious death, judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, familial punishment, torture and ill-treatment

BACKGROUND

Maryam Arvin was a pro-bono lawyer and member of the Kerman Bar Association who not only represented protesters arrested during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests, but also people from the most marginalised communities including child workers. She was arrested on 30 November 2022 while representing protesters in Sirjan court in Kerman.⁴ Her mother, Tayebeh Nazari was also arrested when she went to follow up on her daughter’s arrest.

UPDATE

Just days after being released on bail on 12 December, Maryam sadly died under suspicious circumstances.⁵ Tayebeh Nazari stated her daughter’s death was caused by events in detention and that her daughter had been hooked up to an intravenous injection under the guise that it was “painkillers, supplements and relaxing.” Prison doctors had confirmed the injuries she had sustained in prison, per her mother. A week after the passing of her daughter, Tayebeh was tried in absentia and sentenced to 15 months imprisonment, 1 million tomans fine and 40 lashes for speaking out which was later suspended.⁶

SAEED ATAI-KACHOUI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 2 years and 6 months imprisonment

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Saeed Atai-Kachoui is a lawyer and member of the Alborz Bar Association who was arrested with his wife Mina Bozorgi Koushalshahi in Gohardasht, Karaj, during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests. He was held in Ghezelhesar Prison in unsanitary conditions.

UPDATE

On 6 February 2023, the Karaj Revolutionary Court sentenced Saeed to two years imprisonment for charges of “action against national security. He participated in the trial via a video call from prison and also received a two-year ban on practising law and leaving the country as additional punishment.⁷ In a second case, Branch 2 of the Karaj Criminal Court also sentenced him to six months imprisonment which was suspended. Saeed was released on bail on 8 February 2023.⁸



GHASEM BODI-BANAB

Age: 43

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Escaped Iran

Judicial status: 5 months imprisonment/new case

Violations: Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Ghasem Bodi-Bonab is a member of the East Azerbaijan Bar Association and the Bar's Human Rights Commission who was part of the Committee for Defence of Protesters which was established after the start of mass arrests during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests. He was arrested in Tabriz on 15 October 2022. On 10 November 2022, Ghasem was sentenced to five months imprisonment for "propaganda against the system" for his protester pro-bono work. His sentence was upheld by the East Azerbaijan Court of Appeals without a trial. Branch 112 of the Second Tabriz Criminal Court also issued an 8 million toman fine for "inciting people to war and killing each other to disrupt national security" in lieu of a 91-day custodial sentence on 19 November 2022.⁹

UPDATE

Ghasem was summoned to start serving his sentence on 22 April 2023. The East Azerbaijan Bar Association also filed a case for "propaganda against the system and breaching the attorney oath" in collusion with authorities. He managed to escape Iran after being released on bail.

AMIRSALAR DAVOUDI

Age: 42

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Evin Prison

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.¹⁰ On 13 April 2021, Amirsalar was prison-exiled from Evin Prison to Rajai Shahr Prison. 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 15.¹¹ On 26 June 2022, he surrendered to serve the rest of his sentence at Evin Prison.¹² The 2022 Ludovic-Trarieux International Human Rights Award was presented to Amirsalar in absentia on September 23.¹³ He survived the 15 October 2022 attack on Evin Prison during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests.¹⁴

UPDATE

On 22 May 2023, Amirsalar's appeal, request for conditional release and furlough were all rejected.¹⁵ He continues to serve his sentence in Tehran's Evin Prison.



MOHAMMADREZA FAGHIHI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 6 months imprisonment/new case

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

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.¹⁶ On 25 August, 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.¹⁷ Mohammadreza's house was also subsequently raided and his belongings confiscated. He was released on bail on 30 August 2021.¹⁸ He was sentenced to six months imprisonment on charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" on 19 June 2022 which was upheld by Branch 36 of the Appeals Court on 16 August.¹⁹ According to his lawyer, Mohammadreza rejected the offer of release in exchange for withdrawing his complaint.²⁰ On 14 October 2022, Mohammadreza was arrested at the lawyers' peaceful protest outside the Iranian Bar Association in Tehran after security forces attacked the gathering with teargas during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests. He was detained in the Greater Tehran Penitentiary²¹ and released on bail on 25 October.²²

UPDATE

On 20 October 2023, Mohammadreza was tried for charges of "assembly and collusion with intent to commit a crime against national security" for the lawyers' protest by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided by Judge Salavati. He was denied the right to his lawyer per the Note to Article 48 of the CCP.

REZA HAMZEI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Reza Hamzei is a human rights lawyer and member of the Qazvin Bar Association who was arrested during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests.²³ On 20 November 2022, Reza was sentenced to a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the system by Branch 1 of the Qazvin Revolutionary Court. He also received a two-year ban from practising law.²⁴

UPDATE

No update is available at the time of writing.



MOHAMMAD ALI KAMFIROUZI

Age: 40

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting trial

Violations: Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Ali Kamfirouzi is a member of the Markaz Bar Association. He was previously sentenced to a two-year suspended sentence and “60 trips to Shiraz” for “insulting the leader” in June 2020 for criticising Khamenei in a 2016 speech. The case against him was later dropped. He was re-arrested on 15 December 2022 when he went to follow up on his clients’ cases at the Evin Court in Tehran.²⁵ He represented journalists Niloufar Hamedei and Elaheh Mohammadi who were arrested for reporting on the state killing of Jina (Mahsa) Amini and a group of jailed student protesters.

UPDATE

Mohammad Ali Kamfirouzi was released on bail from the Greater Tehran Penitentiary on 9 January 2023.²⁶

ERFAN KARAMVEISI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Free

Judicial status: Awaiting trial

Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process



BACKGROUND

Erfan Karamveisi is a member of the Markaz Bar Association who represents protesters and activists arrested during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests.

UPDATE

Erfan was summoned to Branch 3 of Evin Court with his client, Jafar Ebrahimi on 9 November 2023. He has been indicted for charges of “propaganda against the system and publishing lies to distort public opinion.”²⁷



ARASH KEYKHOSRAVI

Age: 49
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 2 years imprisonment
Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement

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.²⁸ 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 27 October, where he was charged with "forming a group to disturb national security, propaganda against the system and membership in an opposition group."²⁹ Arash was released on bail on 25 December 2021. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment on charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" on 19 June 2022 which was upheld by Branch 36 of the Appeals Court on August 16.³⁰

UPDATE

For signing a statement against the Islamic Republic in November 2022, he was sentenced to a year imprisonment by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court. Arash surrendered to Evin Prison to serve his sentence on 25 September 2023.³¹

NEGIN KIANI

Age:
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, unfair trial

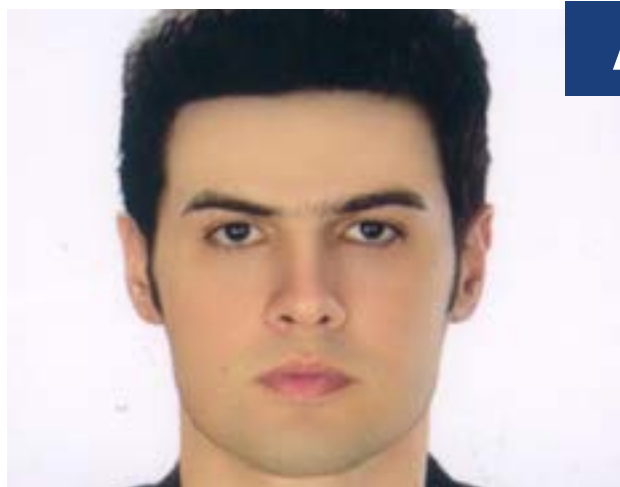


BACKGROUND

Negin Kiani is a member of the East Azerbaijan Bar Association who was arrested in Tabriz on 22 October 2022. Her lawyer, Jafar Afsharinia, cited the reason for her arrest as "representing the detainees and protesters of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests.³² Originally charged with "assembly and collusion against national security" by Branch 7 of the Tabriz Public and Revolutionary Court, her charges were later changed to "propaganda against the system" by the Tabriz Revolutionary Court. Branch 1 of the Court sentenced her to four months imprisonment and a two-year ban on leaving the country on 31 October 2022.

UPDATE

On appeal, Negin's custodial sentence was reduced to a 10 million toman fine. Her case was closed after she was included in the February 2023 general amnesty list.³³



AMIRHOSSEIN KOUHKAN

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Kachouii Prison (Karaj)

Judicial status: Charged

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Amirhossein Kouhkan is a human rights lawyer and member of the Markaz Bar Association. Amongst his clients, he represents executed “Woman, Life, Freedom” protester, Mohammad Mehdi Karami’s family.

UPDATE

On 22 August 2023, Mohammad Mehdi’s father, Mashallah Karami was arrested. Amirhossein who was following up on his case was summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence in Karaj on 30 August 2023 where he was arrested and transferred to Kachouii Prison. He has been charged with “propaganda against the system and forming a group to disrupt national security.” Both Amirhossein and his client have been incommunicado since arrest.³⁴

AMIR MEHDIPOUR

Age: 40

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 4 months imprisonment

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Amir Mehdipour is a member of the East Azerbaijan Bar Association and the Bar’s Human Rights Commission who was part of the Committee for Defence of Protesters which was established after the start of mass arrests during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests. He was arrested on 14 October 2022 and transferred to Tabriz Central Prison.³⁵

UPDATE

On 22 December 2022, Amir was sentenced to four months imprisonment and a two-year ban from leaving the country by Branch 1 of the Tabriz Revolutionary Court. Two days later, he wrote that his law licence had been suspended for five months by the East Azerbaijan Bar Association.³⁶



MOHAMMAD NAJAFI

Age: 46
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Arak Prison
Judicial status: 22 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

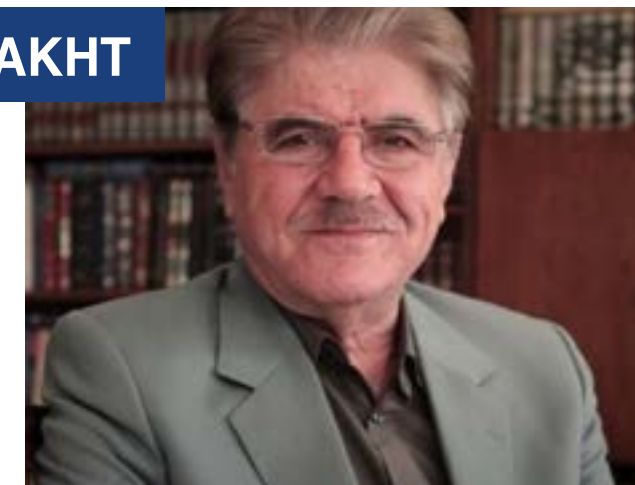
BACKGROUND

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.³⁷ 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 the mother of blogger, Sattar Beheshti who died as a result of torture in the custody of the Iranian Cyber Police in 2012. 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.³⁸ He went on medical furlough on 19 December 2021 after going on hunger strike and returned to prison on 11 July 2022 before completing the necessary medical treatment.³⁹

UPDATE

After being furloughed for medical treatment on 19 March 2023, he was informed of new cases brought against him for speaking out about the pressure and treatment of protesters. Branch 106 of the Arak Criminal Court sentenced him to two years imprisonment and 15 million toman fine for «publishing lies» and Branch 2 of the Arak Revolutionary Court sentenced him to a year imprisonment for «propaganda against the system.» He was summoned back to serve his sentence on 7 May 2023. He was subsequently transferred to Evin Prison in Tehran, far away from his family in Arak.

MOHAMMAD SALEH NIKBAKHT



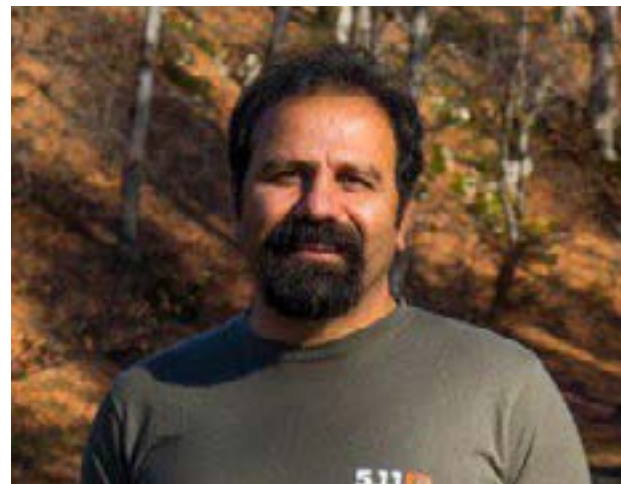
Age: 78
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Free
Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment
Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Saleh Nikbakht is a member of the Markaz Bar Association and a veteran lawyer who has represented many political prisoners. He is also a member of the “Association for supporting prisoners in Iran.” The family of Jina (Mahsa) Amini whose state killing became the catalyst for the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests are amongst his clients.

UPDATE

Mohammad Saleh Nikbakht was summoned to Evin Court on 11 March 2023 where he was charged with “propaganda against the system.” On 17 October 2023, he was sentenced to a year imprisonment for “propaganda against the system” and a two-year ban from social media use for his interviews with diaspora Farsi media.⁴⁰



MOSTAFA NILI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial, denial 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.⁴¹ 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. On 18 December 2021, was released on bail.⁴² Mostafa was sentenced to four years imprisonment on charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" on 19 June 2022. His sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Appeals Court on 16 August.⁴³ He was rearrested while en route to Sistan and Baluchistan province to work on protester cases on 7 November 2022. His four-year sentence was implemented and a new case opened against him.⁴⁴

UPDATE

Mostafa's appeal was granted in April 2023 and his four-year sentence was reduced to two years' imprisonment, with a fine imposed in lieu of the remainder of his sentence. The new case against him was also closed by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court per the public pardons in February. He was released from prison on 11 April 2023.⁴⁵

NAZANIN SALARI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting judgement

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Nazanin Salari is a human rights lawyer in Shiraz. She was targeted with her colleagues Mahmoud Taravat-Ruy and Massoud Ahmadian in November 2020. They were summoned to the Fars province Ministry of Intelligence to be questioned about their activities related to their professional duties. After ten questioning sessions, they were charged with "assembly and collusion against national security, propaganda against the system and colluding with enemy states" in the summer of 2021. On 21 May 2022, 400 Iranian lawyers issued a statement of support for Massoud, Nazanin and Mahmoud, demanding the baseless charges be dropped.⁴⁶ Nazanin was arrested in November 2022 after participating in a peaceful gathering of lawyers protesting against systematic breaches by the Judiciary and in support of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests. She was later released on bail. The charges in this case at Branch 2 of the Shiraz Criminal Court were "assembly and collusion against national security, encouraging people to engage in corruption and prostitution and to appear in public places without the religious hijab."⁴⁷

UPDATE

Another session was held in Branch One of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court on 31 May 2023 due to the legal flaws in the first case which it failed to resolve on two occasions. Yet, their case was still sent for trial which was scheduled for 11 November 2023. Ahead of their trial, on 9 November, bar associations and international lawyers' organisations issued a joint statement to express solidarity with the three lawyers and called for protection of lawyers in Iran.⁴⁸ She was tried for the November 2022 case on 5 and 7 November. She is currently awaiting the judgement in both cases.



MOHAMMAD SEIFZADEH

Age: 75

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Awaiting sentencing

Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Seifzadeh is a veteran lawyer and co-founders of the Centre for the Defence of Human Rights in Iran who has previously jailed 13 times for his human rights work. He was sentenced to nine years imprisonment and a ten-year ban from practising law for charges of “acting against national security” by establishing the Centre for Human Rights Defenders in October 2010. Two years later, he was sentenced to a further six years imprisonment by “death judge” Salavati for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” for signing a group letter in defence of Iranian people’s rights from inside prison. In December 2022, following the execution of protester Mohsen Shekari on 8 December, 45 Iranian activists including the lawyer, signed a letter to the UN Secretary-General calling for a strong reaction to stop the execution machine and repression of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” protests.

UPDATE

Mohammad was sentenced to a year imprisonment for charges of “propaganda against the system” and “publishing lies to disturb public minds” by Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided by Judge Ali Mazloum. His sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals shortly after. Both trials took place in absentia as he refused to attend or send a legal representative. He was summoned to sign a repentance letter and seek the Supreme Leader’s forgiveness after his sentence was upheld, which he refused to do. He is currently waiting for the Forensic Medical Organisation’s assessment of his fitness to serve his sentence. He was previously ruled unfit to serve but was nevertheless forced to complete his sentence.

ALI SHARIFZADEH ARDAKANI



Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Free

Judicial status: Charges dropped

Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Ali Sharifzadeh Ardakani is a human rights lawyer who represented death row protester Seyed Mohammad Hosseini. Ali was initially denied access to his client.

UPDATE

On 18 December 2022, he finally succeeded in seeing his client in Karaj Penitentiary. He wrote: “His stories were full of tears. From the torture, beatings while blindfolded, handcuffed and shackled, to being kicked until he passed out, from being beaten on the soles of his feet with iron rods to being electrically shocked all over his body, a man whose confessions under torture have no legal basis.”⁴⁹ Protester Seyed Mohammad Hosseini was executed on 7 January 2023.⁵⁰ The next day, Ali was charged with “publishing lies” which was later changed to “propaganda against the system” for the tweet about his client’s torture. The charges against him were ultimately dropped but he has been banned from social media use for two years.⁵¹



NASRIN SOTOUDEH

Age: 60

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 23 years imprisonment

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.⁵² Nasrin has faced pressure through the arrest of her daughter⁵³ and the freezing of both her bank accounts⁵⁴ and those of her husband, Reza Khandan.⁵⁵ She went on medical furlough on 23 July 2021. In 2021, her sentence was reduced to 23 years imprisonment without her appealing.

UPDATE

Nasrin was violently arrested at Armita Garavand’s funeral in Tehran after she tried to stop security forces from physically assaulting a justice-seeking mother on 29 October 2023.⁵⁶ She was released on bail on 15 November.⁵⁷ A new case of five charges has been opened against her for the arrest.

FERESHTEH TABANIAN

Age: 38

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Free

Judicial status: 3 months imprisonment/new case

Violations: Judicial harassment, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Fereshteh Tabanian is a human rights lawyer and member of the Khuzestan Bar Association. She represents November 2019 Mahshahr protesters and brothers Abbas and Mohsen Deris who had death penalty cases in both the Revolutionary and Criminal Courts.⁵⁸

UPDATE

On 21 December 2022, Fereshteh was sentenced to three months imprisonment for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 1 of the Mahshahr Revolutionary Court, the same court that issued the death penalty for her client.⁵⁹ Another case was opened against her for “publishing lies to disturb public opinion” by Branch 113 of the Second Ahvaz Criminal Court on 10 May 2023. She was denied entry to her trial for being “inappropriately dressed” despite wearing a hijab and modest attire.⁶⁰



MAHMOUD TARAVAT RUY

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting judgement

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Mahmoud Taravat-Ruy is a human rights lawyer and the former President of the Fars Bar Association who has represented many political defendants. He was targeted with his colleagues Nazanin Salari and Massoud Ahmadian in November 2020. They were summoned to the Fars province Ministry of Intelligence to be questioned about their activities related to their professional duties. After ten questioning sessions, they were charged with “assembly and collusion against national security, propaganda against the system and colluding with enemy states” in the summer of 2021. On 21 May 2022, 400 Iranian lawyers issued a statement of support for Massoud, Nazanin and Mahmoud, demanding the baseless charges be dropped.⁶¹ Mahmoud was rearrested in November 2022 after participating in a peaceful gathering of lawyers protesting against systematic breaches by the Judiciary and in support of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests. He was released on bail on 20 November 2022.⁶² The charges in this case at Branch 2 of the Shiraz Criminal Court were “assembly and collusion against national security, encouraging people to engage in corruption and prostitution and to appear in public places without the religious hijab.”⁶³

UPDATE

Another session was held in Branch One of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court on 31 May 2023 due to the legal flaws in the first case which it failed to resolve on two occasions. Yet, their case was still sent for trial which was scheduled for 11 November 2023. Ahead of their trial, on 9 November, bar associations and international lawyers’ organisations issued a joint statement to express solidarity with the three lawyers and called for protection of lawyers in Iran.⁶⁴ He was tried for the November 2022 case on 5 and 7 November. He is currently awaiting the judgement in both cases.

SINA YOUSEFI

Age: 39

Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer

Status: Escaped Iran

Judicial status: 1 year and 9 months imprisonment

Violations: Judicial harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Sina Yousefi is a human rights lawyer and member of the East Azerbaijan Bar Association and the vice-President of the Bar’s Human Rights Commission who was part of the Committee for Defence of Protesters which was established after the start of mass arrests during the “Woman, Life, Freedom» nationwide protests. He was arrested in Tabriz on 14 October 2022.

UPDATE

On 12 December 2022, Sina was sentenced to six months imprisonment for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 1 of the Tabriz Revolutionary Court. He was also banned from leaving the country for two years.⁶⁵ Another case was brought against him for his work at the Human Rights Commission and publishing a list of protesters detained in the first month of protests. Branch 112 of the Second Tabriz Criminal Court sentenced him to 91 days imprisonment and 15 million toman fine for “publishing lies online.”⁶⁶ In a third case, he was sentenced to a year imprisonment for “propaganda against the system” by the Isfahan Revolutionary Court for speaking out for the protesters in the Khaneye Isfahan death row case.⁶⁷ Protesters Saleh Mirhashemi, Majid Kazemi and Saeed Yaghoubi were executed on 19 May.⁶⁸ Sina managed to escape Iran while out on bail.



FARZANEH ZILABI

Age: 37
Activism/rights: Human rights lawyer
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 2 years and 6 months 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, notably 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. On 13 September 2021, Farzaneh was sentenced to a 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.⁶⁹

UPDATE

Farzaneh was sentenced to a year imprisonment for the charge of “propaganda against the system” and six months for “insulting the leader” by Branch 4 of the Ahvaz Revolutionary court on 21 May 2023.⁷⁰ She is currently out on bail, awaiting sentencing.

MARZIEH AMIRI

Age: 37
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: Case pending
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access, to lawyer, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, press censorship



BACKGROUND

Marzieh Amiri is an economic journalist and activist. Previously arrested at the 2017 nationwide protests and the International Women’s Day rally in 2019, Marzieh was sentenced to 148 lashes, 10 years and six months imprisonment by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court for charges of “assembly and collusion, propaganda against the system and disturbing public order”. The allegations were met with protests from members of the editorial board and the editor-in-chief of Shargh newspaper. She was released on a bail of 1 billion tomans on 26 October 2019. On 24 May 2020, her lawyer, Amir Raeisian told Shargh new agency that while Marzieh had received a summons to serve her sentence, at the behest of the judiciary, he had been orally informed that Marzieh’s sentence had been revoked and she would not be required to return to prison. On 31 October 2022, Marzieh was arrested during the nationwide “Woman, Life, Freedom” protests.

UPDATE

Marzieh was released on bail on 17 December 2022. On 30 January 2023, she was tried for charges of “assembly and collusion, inciting corruption and propaganda against the system” by Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. One of the examples of her crimes cited in court was that she had short hair, according to her sister.⁷¹



AMIRABBAS AZARMVAND

Age: 35
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, lack of access to lawyer, press censorship, familial punishment

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 and he was transferred to the solitary confinement cells of Ward 209 of 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 23.⁷² On November 6, Amirabbas filed a complaint against the Ministry of Intelligence for unlawful detention in solitary confinement along with tens of other activists. On 19 January 2021, he was sentenced to 3 years and 7 months imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and 8 months for “propaganda against the system.” He was violently arrested at a Women’s Day gathering on 8 March 2022 and taken to Evin Prison where his sentence was implemented. He was shot with pellet bullets and beaten in the October 15 attack on Evin Prison and transferred to Rajai Shahr Prison.

UPDATE

A complaint was brought against Amirabbas and several others from the night of the Evin Prison attack which was later dropped. He was released from prison on 11 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list.

KAMYAR FAKOOR

Age: 30
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 4 years and 4 months imprisonment and 50 lashes, new case pending
Violations: AArbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access, to lawyer, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, press censorship, 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 worker’s rights activists rallied in front of the Ministry of Labour building on Azadi Street in Tehran on 8 March 2021 and released on bail.⁷³ On November 2, Kamyar was sentenced to two years and 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.”⁷⁴ 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.” On 9 August 2022, he was sentenced to another year behind bars for “propaganda against the system” by Judge Iman Afshari.⁷⁵ Kamyar was arrested with his wife outside their home on 6 November 2022 during the nationwide protests and his one year sentence enforced. Held in Evin Prison, he was sentenced to another year imprisonment for «propaganda against the system» by Judge Salavati at Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

Kamyar was released from prison on 9 February 2023 during the mass prison amnesties. His sentence was reduced to 8 months on appeal. However, he was re-arrested while visiting jailed teacher Mohammad Habibi’s family with other activists on 28 April and his sentence was implemented. Kamyar was transferred to Ghezelhesar Prison by force on 3 September where he was held in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions with death row prisoners awaiting the gallows. On the same day, his lawyer announced that a new case had been opened against him and Jafar Ebrahimi for charges of “disrupting public order and peace, insulting prison officials and officers” by Branch 3 of Evin court.⁷⁶ Following a group hunger strike, he was transferred back to Evin Prison on 27 September where he is currently serving his sentence.



NILOUFAR HAMEDI

Age: 31
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 13 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest, prolonged solitary confinement, press censorship, access to lawyer, due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Niloufar Hamedei is a journalist at Shargh newspaper who was arrested on 22 September 2022 for covering the state killing of Jina (Mahsa Amini)⁷⁷ which became the catalyst for the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests. Arrested at her home in Tehran, she was taken to Evin Prison.⁷⁸ On 8 November 2022, at a press conference, the Judiciary spokesperson stated that she had been charged with “assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda against the system.”⁷⁹

UPDATE

On 18 December 2022, Niloufar Hamedei and Elaheh Mohammadi were transferred to Qarchak Prison where they were held without adherence to separation of crimes. They were transferred back to Evin Prison 3 May 2023. Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Niloufar to seven years imprisonment for “collaborating with the enemy state of America,” five years for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” on 22 October 2023.

YALDA MOAYERI

Age: 41
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest, press censorship, access to lawyer, due process



BACKGROUND

Yalda Moayeri is an award-winning photojournalist and a member of the Iranian Photojournalists Association. She was arrested on 20 September 2022 while photographing security forces beating protesters during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests and transferred to Qarchak Prison.⁸⁰

UPDATE

Yalda was released on bail on 20 December 2022.⁸¹ In an Instagram post on 6 January 2023, she said she had been sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system.” She also received a two-year ban on leaving the country, using a mobile phone and social media, living in Tehran and its surrounding provinces and two months of community service (cleaning the women’s park) and writing a 100 page research paper on the works of Morteza Motaheri, an Islamic cleric.⁸²



ELAHEH MOHAMMADI

Age: 36
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 12 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, press censorship, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Elaheh Mohammadi is a journalist at Ham Mihaan newspaper who was arrested on 29 September 2022 for covering the funeral of Jina (Mahsa Amini)⁸³ which became the catalyst for the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests.⁸⁴ She was arrested by IRGC forces while on the way to answer the summons and transferred to Evin Prison. In a joint statement by the IRGC’s Intelligence Organisation and the Ministry of Intelligence, Elaheh Mohammadi and Niloufar Hamedi were accused of publishing biased news and being connected and trained by “intelligence services.”⁸⁵

UPDATE

On 18 December 2022, Elaheh Mohammadi and Niloufar Hamedi were transferred to Qarchak Prison where they were held without adherence to separation of crimes. They were transferred back to Evin Prison 3 May 2023. Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Elaheh to six years imprisonment for “collaborating with the enemy state of America,” five years for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” on 22 October 2023.



ALIEH MOTALEBZADEH

Age: 57
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. She endured three years of prison in the bloody decade of the 1980s. On 18 October 2016, a day after returning to Iran from a workshop on women’s empowerment in Georgia, her home was raided and she was summoned by the Ministry of Intelligence a few days later and questioned about attending the workshop.⁸⁶ She was summoned by the Ministry of Intelligence again on 26 November, 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. On 11 October 2020, she surrendered to Evin Prison.⁸⁷ In prison, she was informed that her sentence was five years.⁸⁸ On 10 January 2022, she was transferred to Qarchak prison after Evin prisoners held a memorial service for Baktash Abtin. She went on medical furlough on 23 February and was violently arrested at Narges Mohammadi’s home on 12 April and taken to Qarchak Prison.⁸⁹ On 7 October 2022, it was reported that by the request of the Prisons Organisation, a new case had been opened against 14 female political prisoners including Alieh for refusing to be shackled and handcuffed when being transferred for court dates.⁹⁰ She was banned from visits for six months and informed of new charges against her on 23 April.⁹¹ Alieh was transferred to Evin Prison on 20 July and banned from phone calls without reason on October 17. Three days later, she was rushed to hospital and returned to prison that same night.⁹²

UPDATE

Alieh was released from prison after being included in the general amnesties on 9 February 2023. Alieh’s home was raided and searched on 10 May and she was given 5 days to surrender herself to Evin Court. She was one of the speakers at a two-day online event titled «Dialogue to Save Iran» in April, after which several speakers were arrested.

HELALEH NATEGHI



Age:
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: Case pending
Violations: Arbitrary arrest, prolonged solitary confinement, press censorship, access to lawyer, due process

BACKGROUND

Helaleh Nateghi is an environmental journalist at Merav news and a member of the Sabzkarān Balan environmental institute in Gilan. She was arrested with Nasim Tavafzadeh, the site’s editor, in Rasht on 11 November 2023.⁹³

UPDATE

Helaleh and Nasim were released on bail from Rasht Central Prison (Lakan) on 16 November 2023. While there is no information available about the charges against her, reports indicate that she was arrested for her reports on waste mismanagement in Gilan province and conditions in drug rehab camps. In particular, her coverage of the “Gam Avale Rahayi” camp (first step to freedom) where the dire conditions led to a fire which killed dozens of people.⁹⁴

KHOSROW SADEGHI-BOROUJENI



Age: 37
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released
Judicial status: Charges dropped
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

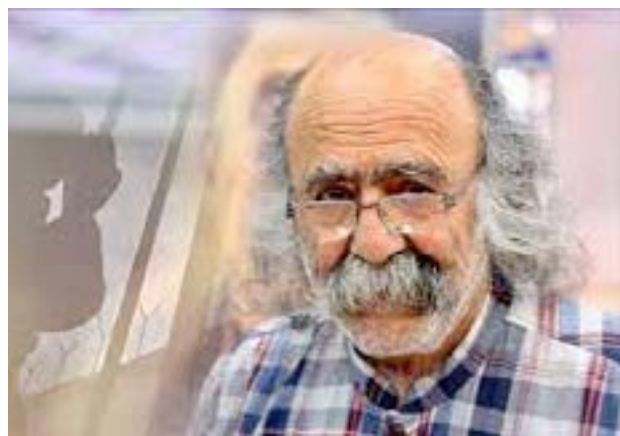
Khosrow Sadeghi-Boroujeni is a labour and social journalist and researcher. He was arrested for his reports and research into poverty and social inequality in May 2019. On 3 February 2020, he was sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security,” two years for “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. Khosrow was denied effective medical treatment, specialist treatment outside the prison and medical furlough.⁹⁵ He survived the 15 October 2022 attack on Evin Prison during the nationwide protests.

UPDATE

Khosrow was released after being included in the general amnesty list in February 2023. On 9 April 2023, he was acquitted of the “assembly and collusion against national security” charges by the Supreme Court.⁹⁶ He served two and a half years.

KEYVAN SAMIMI

Age: 74
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment/new case pending
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. Keyvan Samimi was summoned to serve his sentence on 19 August 2020 and was arrested on 7 December 2020 and transferred to Evin Prison.⁹⁷ He was transferred from Andarzgah 8 to Ward 209 of Evin Prison on November 11.⁹⁸ Keyvan Samimi was transferred to Karaj Penitentiary on 19 January 2022,⁹⁹ from there to Rajai Shahr Prison, briefly to Evin Prison, back to Karaj and finally to Semnan Central Prison on January 29.¹⁰⁰ He was transferred by force and trickery each time, physically harming him. On February 1, his sentence was temporarily suspended pending a Forensic Medical Organisation ruling on his health.¹⁰¹ On May 18, he was summoned for the ruling and was arrested and taken to Semnan Prison.¹⁰² He resisted attempts to transfer him to Evin Prison three times. In September 2022, his lawyer Mostafa Nili said three new cases had been brought against Keyvan since returning to prison. He was acquitted in one, sentenced to six months imprisonment in absentia for “propaganda” in the second case.¹⁰³

UPDATE

Keyvan was released from prison on 26 January 2023 after serving his sentence.¹⁰⁴ A new case was brought against him on 8 February.¹⁰⁵ On 20 April, the day before he was due to speak at a two-day online conference titled “Dialogue to Save Iran,” he was arrested for participation in an event of “stray sects under the support of the Zionist regime.” He was sentenced to five years imprisonment for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.¹⁰⁶ According to his lawyer Mostafa Nili, the charges are in relation to time he spent behind bars. Keyvan was released on bail on 22 May 2023. He has another case pending in regards to the online event.

MARYAM VAHIDIAN

Age:
Activism/rights: Journalist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 4 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, press censorship



BACKGROUND

Maryam Vahidian is a journalist at Shargh newspaper and ILNA news agency who was arrested by IRGC forces at her home on 27 November 2022 during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests.¹⁰⁷ She was transferred to Ward 2A of Evin Prison where she underwent interrogations.

UPDATE

Maryam was released on bail on 28 December 2022. Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced her to four years imprisonment for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” on 18 April 2023 which was suspended for five years.¹⁰⁸

AFKARI FAMILY

Activism/rights: Family seeking justice for son
Violations: Familial punishment, arbitrary arrest and detention, reprisal for seeking justice, torture and ill-treatment, children's rights, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

The Afkari family include his parents Bahieh Namjoo and Hossein Afkari, and siblings Elham and Saeed Afkari who have been seeking justice for their sons and brothers Navid, Habib and Vahid, protesters who were arrested in the aftermath of the August 2018 protests in Shiraz.¹⁰⁹ 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.¹¹⁰ 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.¹¹¹ Navid Afkari was executed on 12 September 2020.¹¹² With Vahid and Habib still in solitary confinement, Elham and Saeed Afkari became their brothers' voice.¹¹³ 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.¹¹⁴ 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.¹¹⁵ Habib Afkari was released from prison on 5 March 2022.¹¹⁶ In April, Vahid was beaten by prison guards, breaking four of his fingers after he protested against another prisoner's mistreatment. He also received death threats from prison officials. When the Afkari family went to file a complaint to prison officials, they were fired at two or three times with war ammunition.¹¹⁷ Elham was arrested with her toddler and husband on 10 November 2022.¹¹⁸ Her husband and daughter were later released but Elham was detained in the notorious Door 100 of Shiraz Central Prison where she went on hunger strike.¹¹⁹ State media reported she was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "intention to disrupt and cause insecurity through participating in calls by the state's enemies online."¹²⁰

UPDATE

Elham was released on 12 March 2023 but will be under house arrest with an electronic tag for the next five years.¹²¹ According to Saeed, their father, Hossein Afkari was taken to Qazvin Central Prison (Choobindar) on 3 May 2023.¹²² As of 1 December 2023, Vahid Afkari has been held in solitary confinement for 1,182 days.

MARYAM AKBARI-MONAFARED



Age: 47
Activism/rights: Sister seeking justice for siblings
Status: Semnan Prison
Judicial status: 15 years imprisonment/new case
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 brother 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 brother 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."¹²³ She was prison-exiled to Semnan Prison on 9 March 2021.¹²⁴ Maryam was informed that new charges of "propaganda against the system" were being brought against her for unspecified reasons on 16 July 2022. Behind bars, she is denied medical treatment and in an effort to isolate and pressure her, other prisoners are banned from speaking to her.¹²⁵ On 24 August, Maryam was physically beaten and strangled by prison officials in Semnan Prison and threatened with police charges for protesting the cancellation of her family visit because her daughters would not wear prison chadors.¹²⁶ Following the incident, Maryam was banned from visitation rights for three months, while already deprived of phone calls.¹²⁷

UPDATE

On 3 July 2023, Golrokh Ebrahimi reported that Maryam was facing six new charges in two cases brought against her.¹²⁸ In the first case for which she was transferred to Evin Court, she is facing charges of «propaganda against the system, assembly and collusion against national security, publishing lies, insulting the leader and encouraging people to disturb public order.» She is also facing «propaganda against the system» charges in the second case. Her letters from prison have been cited as the criminal acts leading to the charges. Maryam is currently held in Semnan Prison. She has served 14 years behind bars without a day of furlough.



FAKHREDIN EBRAHIMI

Age:

Activism/rights: Son seeking justice for father

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment

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

BACKGROUND

Kurdish political prisoner Mohiyedin Ebrahimi was a *kolbar* (“human mules” who carry goods across the border, mostly on their backs) who was arrested by IRGC forces on 3 November 2017 after being shot in the leg. His brother had been killed by border forces while also working as a *kolbar*. Mohiyedin was the breadwinner to 12 people including a physically disabled child and his brother’s family. Tortured to accept bogus charges of firearms possession and membership in political groups, he was denied access to a lawyer at trial, due process and a fair trial. He recounted the injustices against him to Iran Human Rights¹²⁹ before being executed in Urmia Central Prison on 17 March 2023.¹³⁰ His son, Fakhredin was beaten by prison guards at his last visit the day prior to his execution and detained for hours.

UPDATE

Fakhredin was arrested after being summoned by Branch 9 of the Urmia Public and Revolutionary Court on 3 April 2023.¹³¹ He was released on a bail of 100 million tomans the next day. Branch 113 of Urmia’s Second Criminal Court sentenced him to a year imprisonment and a two-year suspended sentence for “destruction of the security glass in the Court of Appeals” in May 2023.¹³² Like his father, Fakhredin was tried without a lawyer. He has appealed the decision.

MASHALLAH KARAMI

Age:

Activism/rights: Father seeking justice for son

Status: Karaj Penitentiary

Judicial status: Unclear

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



BACKGROUND

Protester Mohammad Mehdi Karami was arrested after participating in the 40th day memorial service for slain protester Hadis Najafi in a cemetery in Karaj. He was one of 16 defendants tried for the death of an IRGC officer at the scene. His torture-tainted forced confessions were aired prior to any legal proceedings, he was denied access to a lawyer, due process and fair trial. Mohammad Mehdi was executed for charges of *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth) with co-defendant Seyed Mohammad Hosseini on 7 January 2023.¹³³ As Mohammad Hosseini had no relations, Mohammad Mehdi’s father, Mashallah, became the voice of both, stating that he was now his son too. In reprisal for proudly talking about their son, state forces destroyed the family’s display of Mohammad Mehdi’s medals and burnt his clothes and further destroyed the greenery the family had planted around his grave. Mashallah refused to be silenced despite the harassment and threats.

UPDATE

Mashallah Karami was arrested on 22 August 2023. His lawyer, Amirhossein Kouhkan was also arrested when he went to follow up on his client’s case. On 3 November, it was reported that Mashallah’s wife and other son had been forced to flee their home after repeated raids by security forces.¹³⁴ Mashallah Karami has been incommunicado since his arrest. He was transferred to Ward 15 of Karaj Penitentiary on 22 November after being held in solitary confinement for three months.

FARANGIS MAZLOUM

Age: 53

Activism/rights: Mother seeking justice for son

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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. 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 denied medical care. 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."¹³⁵ On appeal, the assembly and collusion charge was dropped and the 18 month sentence for propaganda against the system upheld. Farangis was summoned multiple times despite being ruled unfit to serve her sentence. On 11 July 2022, her husband suffered a stroke. The next day, she suffered a stroke. Nevertheless, she was forced to surrender to Evin Prison on 2 August where she was denied adequate medical treatment. Farangis survived the 15 October 2022 attack on Evin Prison during the nationwide protests.

UPDATE

Farangis was released on 7 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list.

RAHELEH RAHEMPOUR

Age: 72

Activism/rights: Sister seeking justice for brother and niece

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 6 years and 4 months imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Raheleh Rahempour is a sister and aunt seeking justice for her brother, Hossein who was a political prisoner executed by the Islamic Republic in 1984. His brother's wife was pregnant at the time of arrest and gave birth to a girl named Golru Rahempour who was forcibly disappeared by authorities. On 2 February 2017, Raheleh was sentenced to a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the system" for her justice-seeking efforts. Her sentence was later upheld. On 30 July 2019, she was arrested to serve her sentence. However, her custodial sentence was converted to a fine during the registration process at Evin Prison. Raheleh was rearrested at a "Laleh Park gathering" on 12 November. Laleh Park is where families have gathered to seek justice for their loved ones for years. She was released on bail. For this arrest, she was sentenced to six years and four months imprisonment for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda against the system" by Judge Salavati presiding at Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

On 18 November 2023, Raheleh was arrested to begin serving her sentence at Evin Prison where she remains today.

NOVEMBER 2019 FAMILIES

Activism/rights: Families seeking justice
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, familial punishment, denial of medical care, reprisal for seeking justice, denial of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement



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 2021.¹³⁶ 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.¹³⁷ Families have faced continuous reprisals for speaking out since which has not deterred them. Many have also supported families of slain protesters from the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests, strengthening the justice movement they had themselves one day joined.

UPDATE

Manouchehr Bakhtiari and **Nahid Shirbishes**'s 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. Since then, his family, including aunts and uncles have faced reprisals for demanding justice for their son. In July 2021, Manouchehr was sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment. Behind bars, he has had to resort to several hunger strikes for being deprived of urgently needed medical treatment, held in prolonged solitary confinement and with dangerous crime prisoners. He was also tried for new charges of "propaganda against the system" in April 2023. Nahid Shirpisheh has been sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security." She has also been denied medical treatment, held in prolonged solitary confinement and beaten by other prisoners. Pouya Bakhtiari's parents are both currently serving their sentences for demanding justice for their son.

WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM FAMILIES



In September 2022, nationwide protests broke out after the state-murder of Jina (Mahsa) Amini which became known as the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement. In response to people's just demands across the country, the Islamic Republic deployed lethal force from the outset. Iran Human Rights has verified the killing of 551 protesters including 68 children and 49 women. Additionally, at least 22 protesters including four children and eight women have died by suicide or under suspicious circumstances. Grieving families were systematically threatened and pressured to not only remain silent but to go along with false pre-determined scenarios of suicide and underlying health conditions to conceal state crimes. Many were forced into giving interviews with state media to cement those false narratives. However, like justice-seeking families in the last 44 years, many also refused to be silenced or hide their children's tragic murders. Some of the most iconic scenes of the protest movement took place at gravesites where people turned up in their masses to stand with grieving families whose inspiring and heartbreaking speeches spoke to millions across the country and the world. However, families need not have been outspoken to face reprisals. From burying their children, celebrating birthdays and anniversary ceremonies to sharing a simple memory online, authorities cracked down on whatever may bring solidarity and unity.

This is a brief overview of the situation, as the repression and reprisals against all families are beyond the scope of this report. Below are just some of the families who have faced reprisal for seeking justice for their slain loved ones:

- **Jina Amini's family**
- **Milad Saedianju's family**
- **Nika Shakarami's family**
- **Javad Heidari's family**
- **Kian Pirfalak's family**
- **Mehran Basir Tavana's family**
- **Farjad Darvishi's family**
- **Shirin Alizadeh's family**



SIRUS ABBASI

Age: 42

Activism/rights: Civil activist/language rights

Status: Awaiting implementation of sentence

Judicial status: 6 years and 4 months imprisonment

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

BACKGROUND

Sirus Abbasi is a Kurdish civil rights activist, Kurdish language teacher and co-founder of the Rooznobar Zanst Kurdistan Institute, a cultural and educational focused organisation. He was arrested with his wife and co-founder, Farideh Veisi in January 2020 and subjected to torture to force false confessions linking them to opposition groups which they stated in a video of reasons they were refusing to attend their trial.¹³⁸ His brother was also arrested when he was following up on Sirus' case. Sirus and Farideh were arrested and forcefully taken to Branch 1 of the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court which handed down a one-year suspended sentence to each.¹³⁹ The case against his brother Azad was dropped due to a lack of evidence. On 4 October 2022, Sirus and Azad were violently re-arrested at the height of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" protests in Dehgalan. They were held in terrible conditions in solitary confinement for a month.

UPDATE

Sirus and his brother who had no legal representation at a trial which lasted minutes via video, were each sentenced to four years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security", 18 months for "disrupting public order" and 10 months for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 2 of the Dehgalan Criminal Court.¹⁴⁰ On 2 September 2023, Sirus announced that the Rooznobar Zanst Kurdistan Institute had been shut down by the authorities for "legitimising teaching Kurdish in schools, supporting arrested teachers and the Woman, Life Freedom protests."¹⁴¹ He was detained for three weeks in September.

MARYAM AFRAFARAZ

Age: 29

Activism/rights: Civil activist

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 95 days imprisonment

Violations: Arbitrary arrest, lack of due process, unfair trial



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.¹⁴² Maryam was released on a bail of 500 million tomans on 29 August. 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. On 20 June 2022, Maryam was sentenced to 95 days imprisonment by Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.¹⁴³ Her sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Appeals Court on August 16.¹⁴⁴

UPDATE

On 1 February 2023, Maryam's lawyer tweeted that her request for a retrial had been accepted and would be heard by a court of equal standing.¹⁴⁵



SARVENAZ AHMADI

Age: 28

Activism/rights: Civil activist

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, prolonged solitary confinement

BACKGROUND

Sarvenaz Ahmadi is a writer and children's rights activist who was arrested with her husband, Kamyar Fakoor on 6 November 2022 at the height of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests. She was released on bail on 8 December while awaiting trial.¹⁴⁶

UPDATE

Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Salavati sentenced Sarvenaz to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year for "propaganda against the system." Her sentence was reduced to three years and six months by Branch 36 of the Tehran Appeals Court on 12 March 2023. Sarvenaz was rearrested while visiting the family of jailed teacher Mohammad Habibi with other activists as a show of solidarity on 28 April and her sentence was enforced. Her lawyer Erfan Karimveisi said he had filed an appeal at the Supreme Court in August.¹⁴⁷

ZARTOSHT AHMADI-RAGHEB

Age: 57

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Ghezelhesar Prison

Judicial status: 6 years and 8 months imprisonment

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, with multiple cases against him. 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. He was arrested by security agents at his home on 27 August 2019 and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. He 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 4 of the Execution of Criminal Sentences of the Public and Revolutionary Court of Shahriar on 15 June 2020, where he was arrested. Zartosht was released from prison on 3 January 2021 after completing his sentence and pending his other charges.¹⁴⁸ Zartosht was re-arrested on 21 February 2022 and taken to Evin Prison, and subsequently transferred to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary and from there to Rajai Shahr Prison in March. On 23 May, he was informed that he was sentenced to a year imprisonment in absentia three months prior.

UPDATE

Zartosht was released from prison on 13 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list. However, he was rearrested at a protest against the mass poisoning of school children on 16 March and taken to Evin Prison. On 29 May, he was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national and international security" and 8 months for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. He was sentenced in absentia due to his refusal to be shackled and handcuffed. Zartosht has been on several hunger strikes behind bars, the latest of which was in October 2023 to protest the dire conditions he was being held in Ghezelhesar Prison.



SOHEIL ARABI

Age: 37

Activism/rights: Human rights activist/
photojournalist

Status: Released on bail, serving exile sentence

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 recipient¹⁴⁹ 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.¹⁵⁰ His sentence was later commuted to seven and a half years imprisonment which he served without a day of 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. In response to his demand, his mother, Farangiz Mazloum was arrested on 22 July 2019.¹⁵¹ While serving his 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. Due to an official mistake, Soheil was held in detention seven months longer than his sentence when he was released from Rajai Shahr Prison on November 16 after serving eight years. Immediately after release, he was exiled to Borazjan to serve his two-year exile sentence. In August 2022, he won the Freethought Champions Award at Celebrating Dissent 2022 along with Richard Dawkins.¹⁵² Following calls threatening sexual violence against his imprisoned mother, Farangis Mazloum in the midst of the nationwide protests, he surrendered on 10 October 2022 and spent a week in an unofficial IRGC building before being released.

UPDATE

Soheil was rearrested on 2 January 2023 due to his activism for Kurdish and Baluch protesters. He was released on 18 March after his father passed away from a stroke due to the state-imposed pressure. He continues to serve his exile sentence in Borazjan and to speak out for voiceless prisoners.

GOLROKH EBRAHIMI-IRAYI

Age: 37

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 5 years 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 has been arrested multiple times and spent years behind bars since. 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. Golrokh 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.¹⁵³ Golrokh was released from Amol Prison on 9 May 2022 after the consolidation of her sentences.¹⁵⁴ She was violently arrested on 26 September during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests.

UPDATE

Golrokh’s trial took place at Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 4 January 2023 and subsequently, on 13 April, Golrokh was sentenced to six years imprisonment for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security,” a year for “propaganda” and a two-year ban on membership of groups and parties and the confiscation of her phone. In April 2023, she sent a message to the “Dialogue to Save Iran” online conference, for which she was banned from visits.¹⁵⁵ Her family reported that she had refused to attend her appeal hearing or request amnesty on 19 June. On appeal, a five year prison term and additional punishments were upheld.¹⁵⁶ Golrokh continues to speak out against the death penalty and for the most voiceless prisoners while serving her sentence in Evin Prison.



FARHAD GHAHREMANI

Age: 33

Activism/rights: Anti-death penalty activist

Status: Released

Judicial status: Served sentence

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

BACKGROUND

Farhad Ghahremani is an anti-death penalty activist who was arrested at the protest against drug executions outside the Judiciary building in Tehran on 11 September 2022. Farhad's father, Mohammad Taghi Ghahremani was executed in 2011 and at the protest, he had given an impassioned speech. "I've felt this pain myself, I don't want my compatriots to be executed, they shouldn't be executed!"¹⁵⁷ He was detained in Evin Prison and injured during the attack at the prison 15 October 2022.¹⁵⁸ According to human rights defender Soheil Arabi, he was transferred to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary shortly after without receiving any medical treatment for his injuries. Farhad was tried via video conference and without a lawyer on 28 November. His charges included "assembly and collusion against national security" and "disrupting public order and peace." He was sentenced to six months imprisonment and 25 lashes.

UPDATE

Farhad was released from prison on 26 February 2023 after serving his sentence.

AHMADREZA HAERI

Age:

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Ghezelsesar Prison

Judicial status: 4 years, 7 months and 1 day imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Ahmadreza Haeri is a human rights activist who was first arrested on 12 May 2014 after he took part in a protest outside the President's office against the physical assault on political prisoners in Ward 350 of Evin Prison. He received a three and a half year sentence for "assembly and collusion against national security" which was later overturned by the Supreme Court. At retrial, he was sentenced to six months imprisonment and 74 lashes. He began serving his sentence on 25 July 2020 when he was whipped 74 times before being transferred to Fashafuyeh Prison.¹⁵⁹ Ahmadreza was conditionally released on 8 October. In 2021, he was briefly arrested at a protest against human rights breaches in Afghanistan. A new case was brought against him for "publishing lies and defamation and insulting allegations" for speaking out against human rights breaches in Iranian prisons. On 27 June 2022, he was violently arrested by nine IRGC officers and taken to Ward 2A of Evin Prison.¹⁶⁰ In August 2022, he was released on bail before being sentenced to three years and six months imprisonment for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda against the system" by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.¹⁶¹

UPDATE

Ahmadreza began serving his sentence after his bailer was threatened and his own bank accounts were frozen and his car seized on 9 May 2023.¹⁶² On 22 June, he was sentenced to a further three months and one day imprisonment in absentia for "publishing lies."¹⁶³ Ahmadreza had spoken out about the human rights violations against death row protester, Saman Seydi. He was forcefully transferred to Ghezelsesar Prison in September 2023.



REZA KHANDAN-MAHABADI

Age: 63

Activism/rights: Writer

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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

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. Reza was arrested and transferred to serve his sentence in Evin Prison on 26 September 2020.¹⁶⁴ Despite suffering from hypertension, arthritis in his neck and ongoing issues with his lungs, he was denied medical care outside the prison.¹⁶⁵ On 16 September 2021, he was the joint winner of the PEN/Barbey Freedom to Write Award.¹⁶⁶ On 13 October 2022, in the midst of the nationwide protests, he was transferred to Rajai Shahr Prison without notice or opportunity to pack his belongings.¹⁶⁷

UPDATE

He was released from prison on 16 February 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution.

MEHDI MAHMOUDIAN

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Civil activist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 8 years and 4 months imprisonment

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 conspiracy against national security, which was upheld on 19 October 2020 by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals. 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.¹⁶⁸ According to his lawyer, he would not be released as his four-year custodial sentence was being enforced.¹⁶⁹ In February 2022, he was sentenced to another 4 months imprisonment for “publishing lies” for a tweet.¹⁷⁰ On 20 June 2022, Mehdi was sentenced to four years imprisonment by Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court in the COVID-19 case which was later upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals.¹⁷¹

UPDATE

Mehdi is currently serving his sentence in Evin Prison.



FARHAD MEISAMI

Age: 53

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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 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. On 18 February 2022, an arraignment hearing was held in Karaj Revolutionary Court for the charge of “propaganda against the system” for his letters shared on social media.¹⁷² On 6 May 2022, Farhad went on hunger strike for 20 days in protest against Ahmadreza Djalali’s planned execution.¹⁷³ A new case was opened against him due to his letters of protest from prison and hunger strike which he refrained from attending due to the lack of notice.¹⁷⁴ On 2 October 2022, during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests, Farhad announced that he had begun a three-stage action from prison against the widespread of protest repression to coincide with the International Day of Non-Violence that would start with a hunger strike of solid food at the first stage, writing and translating texts on the topic and taking long walks at the third stage.¹⁷⁵

UPDATE

Farhad gained domestic and international support during his hunger strike which he continued until his release from prison on 10 February 2023¹⁷⁶ as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution.

AMIR EMAD MIRMIRANI

Age: 45

Activism/rights: Right to internet access

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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



BACKGROUND

Amir Emad Mirmirani, better known by his online name, Jadi, is an award-winning programmer and internet activist. He shared online tutorials about internet access and security as well as exposing efforts by state-affiliated tech companies working to cut the public from the internet and establishing a domestic intranet. He was arrested on 5 October 2023 as part of the crackdown on activists during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests.

UPDATE

Jadi was released on bail on 13 December 2022. In a video, he explained he had been sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” at the preliminary trial.¹⁷⁷ His case was closed after he was included in the February 2023 general amnesty list.¹⁷⁸



NARGES MOHAMMADI

Age: 51

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 9 years and 8 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, fired from her job for her activism in 2009, Narges has become one of the most prominent human rights activists. She was sentenced to six years imprisonment in 2011 which was enforced after her arrest on 5 May 2015.¹⁷⁹ 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 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.¹⁸⁰ The Court of Appeals upheld her sentence on 28 September 2016. 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 2020.¹⁸¹ On 24 December 2020, she filed a complaint about the sexual abuse and ill-treatment she suffered in prison, which remains unanswered. In a new case opened against her, Narges was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment and 80 lashes for the charges,¹⁸² which was upheld in September.¹⁸³ Narges was violently arrested and detained for hours after attending a protest in support of the Khuzestan protests in July.¹⁸⁴ She was rearrested at the ceremony of slain protester Ebrahim Ketabdar on October 16,¹⁸⁵ and 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.¹⁸⁶ On 24 January 2022, she was sentenced to eight years imprisonment and 70 lashes in a trial that only lasted five minutes.¹⁸⁷ She was transferred to Qarchak Prison on 19 January and hospitalised less than a month later on 17 February 2022.¹⁸⁸ She underwent an angioplasty procedure in hospital but was returned to Qarchak Prison the next day.

UPDATE

On 25 April 2023, she was summoned to Evin Court to face 8 new charges in a new case brought against her. She refused to appear in court and snubbed the court official who came to her ward.¹⁸⁹ In July 2023, she was summoned to Evin Court for the 11th time for the fifth case opened against her in six months. She has refrained from attending every time, refusing to acknowledge the Court’s legitimacy and announcing that the fabricated charges would not silence her.¹⁹⁰ On 4 August 2023, she was sentenced to another year imprisonment for the charge of «propaganda against the system» for a statement issued from behind bars about the rape and sexual assault of jailed women and a letter to Javaid Rehman, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran which was published by BBC World.¹⁹¹ She was denied outside medical treatment for refusing to wear the mandatory hijab until she went on a food and medical strike.¹⁹²

SOHA MORTEZAEI

Age: 28

Activism/rights: Student activist

Status: Evin Prison

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.” In February 2021, Branch 54 of the Tehran Court of Appeals upheld a six-year prison sentence for Soha.¹⁹³ She was arrested and detained for a day for attending a ceremony for poet and writer, Samad Shabani in March 2022. At the height of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests, she was violently arrested and sexually assaulted while on her way to work on 21 November 2022, beaten so badly that she had to be transferred to hospital before being returned to Evin Prison.¹⁹⁴

UPDATE

On 14 February 2023, Soha was transferred to Qarchak Prison where prison authorities refused to register her complaint against the sexual and physical assault with the Forensic Medical Organisation and further denied her medical treatment.¹⁹⁵ She was briefly furloughed for emergency medical treatment in March 2023.¹⁹⁶ She was transferred back to Evin Prison on 1 May 2023, where she is currently serving her sentence.



POURAN NAZEMI

Age: 53

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Awaiting trial

Judicial status: Facing death penalty charges

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

BACKGROUND

Pouran Nazemi is a writer and activist who has been arrested multiple times. In recent years, she was arrested at the forty day ceremony of slain protester, Pouya Bakhtiari on 26 December 2019, while visiting the family of executed protester Navid Afkari in Shiraz on 12 June 2021, at a rally in Tehran with other activists in support of the Khuzestan protests on 21 July 2021,¹⁹⁷ at the grave of Pouya Bakhtiari on 18 August 2021, and at a protest of Iranian and Afghan activists against human rights violations in Afghanistan on 8 September 2021. She was released shortly after each arrest.

UPDATE

Pouran was arrested at her home on 18 December 2022 during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests and released on bail days later. On 1 February 2023, she was arrested with her sister at a hospital in Kerman while visiting her sick elderly father released on bail less than a week later. On 19 October, it was reported that Pouran was facing charges of “insulting Islamic sanctities, *moharebeh* (enmity against god) and *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth) which all carry the death penalty.¹⁹⁸

ARASH SADEGHI

Age: 43

Activism/rights: Human rights activist

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 4 years and 3 months imprisonment

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 prominent human rights activist who was first arrested in 2009 in front of Allameh Tabatabai University in Tehran, along with a number of other students protesting the results of the controversial presidential election.¹⁹⁹ 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.²⁰⁰ 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. 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.²⁰¹ He was violently arrested and detained for hours after attending a protest in support of the Khuzestan protests in July.²⁰² He has continued to stand up for other political prisoners and speak out against human right breaches since his release from prison. Arash was re-arrested during the nationwide protests on October 12 and taken to Evin Prison. He survived the October 15 attack on Evin Prison during the nationwide protests.²⁰³

UPDATE

Arash was released on bail on 21 January 2023. On 25 January, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced him in absentia to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security,” eight months for “propaganda” and a two-year ban on leaving the country and presence in Tehran, his city of residence. On appeal, the sentence was reduced to 3 years and seven months for the first charge and eight months for the charge of propaganda.²⁰⁴ He also received additional punishments including two-year bans from leaving the country, membership in political groups, online presence, and two-year exile. The sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeal on 14 September 2023 and sent for implementation.²⁰⁵ Arash is not fit to serve his sentence.



AMENEH ZAMANI

Age:
Activism/rights: Human rights activist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: Awaiting trial
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, lack of due process, denial of medical care, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Ameneh Zamani is a children’s rights activist who was a member of an association called “Helping Children at Risk” and taught child workers. According to her mother, she was arrested at work 24 November 2022 due to her refusal to hand over her mobile passcode.²⁰⁶ She was taken to Ward 2A of Evin Prison in Tehran.

UPDATE

On 10 December 2022, Ameneh’s sister reported that her mother had been threatened to stay quiet or her other daughter would be arrested too.²⁰⁷ She was transferred to Qarchak Prison on 14 December and her case sent for trial for the charge of “assembly and collusion against national security.”²⁰⁸ Ameneh was released on bail on 19 December 2022.

ESMAEIL ABDI

Age: 47
Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 10 years imprisonment/awaiting retrial
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 re-arrested on 27 July 2015 by the IRGC Sarallah forces and spent 10 months in detention, after which he was released on bail. On 22 February 2016, Esmail was sentenced to six years imprisonment for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security” and “propaganda” by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Salavati which was upheld on 7 October 2016. He was arrested at his home on 9 November 2016 to serve out his sentence.²⁰⁹ 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.²¹⁰ He was transferred from Evin Prison to Karaj Penitentiary on 17 March 2021. In protest to the prison-exile, Baktash Abtin and Amirsalar Davoudi staged hunger strikes.²¹¹ On 20 November 2021, the Free Union of Workers announced that Esmail should have been released after serving his six-year sentence but his previous 10-year suspended sentence had been enforced to keep him behind bars.²¹² He was transferred to Kachouii Prison on the sixth day of his hunger strike against the growing widespread repression of teachers and workers on 6 May 2022²¹³ which he ended on 14 May at the request of his union and other political prisoners.²¹⁴ He was denied medical treatment and the recommended medical furlough at Kachouii Prison and transferred to the military ward.²¹⁵

UPDATE

Esmail’s request for a retrial was accepted by the Supreme Court on 23 November 2022 after several failed attempts.²¹⁶ Esmail was released on bail after 8 and a half years on 15 November 2023 pending his retrial.



SOLEIMAN ABDI

Age:
Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 8 months imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Soleiman Abdi is a secondary school teacher and member of the Kurdistan Teachers' Union - Saqqez and Ziwiye. He was arrested for "propaganda against the system" charges on 26 February 2023 after giving a speech at the gravesite of Jina (Mahsa) Amini in Aychi Cemetery in Saqqez. Soleiman was released on bail from Saqqez Central prison pending trial on 10 April 2023.

UPDATE

On 17 July 2023, Soleiman was sentenced to 8 months imprisonment and 70 lashes for "disrupting public order and peace through participating in illegal gatherings at Aychi Cemetery" by Branch 105 of the Second Saqqez Criminal Court. His custodial sentence was reduced to 720 hours of teaching people in a government program and the lashing sentence suspended for two and a half years.²¹⁷ However, on 5 September, the Saqqez Revolutionary Court sentenced him to 8 months imprisonment for "propaganda against the system."²¹⁸

AHMAD ALIZADEH

Age:
Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher
Status: Ilam Central Prison
Judicial status: 3 years and one day imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer



BACKGROUND

Ahmad Alizadeh is a teacher from Abdanan who was previously targeted for participating in the teachers' protests. He was arrested on 10 October during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests in Abdanan and released on a bail of 1 billion tomans 15 days later. Ahmad was forced into early retirement and a two-rank reduction.

UPDATE

Ahmad was rearrested in January 2023 and released on a bail of 400 million tomans 48 hours later. On 17 August 2023, Branch 1 of the Ilam Revolutionary Court sentenced him to six years and a day imprisonment for "forming a group of more than two people to disrupt national security, propaganda against the Islamic Republic and insulting the leader of the Islamic Republic" through participating in teachers' protests. His sentence was reduced to three years and a day on appeal.²¹⁹ Ahmad has also been given a two-year exile sentence to Fanuj in Sistan and Baluchistan province and a two-year ban on use of social media. He began serving his sentence in Ilam Central Prison on 5 November 2023.



ANOUSH ADELI

Age:

Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher

Status: Rasht Central Prison

Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment

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

BACKGROUND

Anoush Adli is a member of the Gilan Teachers Union who was first arrested at a Teachers' protest against other teachers being jailed on 16 June 2022 and released on bail days later.²²⁰ On 2 November 2022, along with Aziz Ghasemzadeh and Mahmoud Sedighipour, he was sentenced to a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the Islamic Republic" by Branch 3 of the Rasht Revolutionary Court.²²¹

UPDATE

His one-year sentence was upheld by Branch 18 of the Gilan Court of Appeals on 30 January.²²² Anoush and his colleagues filed an official complaint for being beaten during their arrest and forcibly disappeared which was rejected due to "lack of evidence."²²³ He began serving his sentence in Rasht Central Prison (Lakan) on 8 April 2023.²²⁴

ABDOLREZA AMANIFAR

Age:

Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 4 years and 8 months imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Abdolreza Amanifar is a teacher and member of the Bushehr Teachers Union who was first arrested at a teachers' rally in Bushehr on International Workers Day on 1 May 2022 and later released on bail. He was sentenced to four years and eight months imprisonment for charges of "action against national security, disrupting public order and peace and disobeying an officer's orders" by the Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

In a second case at Branch 4 of the Bushehr Criminal Court, Abdolreza was sentenced to three months imprisonment and 35 lashes for "disrupting public order" for participating at the teachers rally. The sentence was reduced to a 12 million toman fine.



ASGHAR AMIRZADEGAN

Age: 53

Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher

Status: Shiraz Central 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

Asghar Amirzadegan is a teacher and a board member of the Fars Teachers Union who has a history of two previous arrests and a one-year sentence which was later dropped. He was rearrested at a teachers' protest in Firouz Abad on 13 May 2022 and released on bail on 6 July.²²⁵ He was held in solitary confinement for 60 days and had to stage a hunger strike for being denied medical treatment behind bars. He announced that he was facing trial for new charges of "assembly and collusion against national security."²²⁶

UPDATE

Prior to trial, Asghar was arrested on 6 June 2023 and taken to Firouz Abad Prison to begin serving the one-year sentence in the case that had previously been closed.²²⁷ On 17 June, he was sentenced to five years imprisonment by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court.²²⁸ Asghar is currently serving his sentence in Shiraz Central Prison (Adel Abad).

MOJGAN BAGHERI

Age:

Activism/rights: Teacher

Status: Shiraz Central Prison

Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Mojgan Bagheri is a teacher who was arrested at her home prior to the scheduled teachers' protest in Shiraz on 12 May 2022.²²⁹ She was released on bail on 4 July 2022.²³⁰

UPDATE

On 17 June, Mojgan was sentenced to five years imprisonment by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court.²³¹ She was arrested to start serving her sentence in November 2023. A week later, a video showed the students at her school staging a protest where they chanted: "jailed teacher should be freed!"²³²



RASOUL BODAGHI

Age: 52

Activism/rights: Trade unionist teacher

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 5 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

Rasoul Bodaghi is a teacher and a board director of the Iran Teachers Union who has a history of arrests and jail for his union work and human rights activism dating back to 2009. He was last arrested on 22 April 2022 for participating in a peaceful teachers protest. Security forces broke the window in his home to arrest him. On 17 May, in a documentary aired by state television, Rasoul and the teachers unions were linked to two jailed French unionists. He was sentenced to four years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” which was subsequently upheld on 1 June.

UPDATE

Rasoul Bodaghi is currently serving his sentence in Evin Prison. He has been banned from family visits for defending the rights of other prisoners several times.

JAFAR EBRAHIMI

Age:

Activism/rights: Trade unionist teacher

Status: Ghezelhesar Prison

Judicial status: 5 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, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Jafar Ebrahimi is a teacher and the Iranian Teachers’ Trade Association inspector. He was last arrested on 30 March 2022, ahead of planned protests. He was held in solitary confinement in Evin Prison for over four months and denied medical care for his autoimmune disease and other health issues. On 10 October 2022, he was sentenced to four years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. He survived the fire at Evin Prison 15 October 2022. Jafar’s sentence was upheld in November 2022.

UPDATE

Jafar was transferred to Ghezelhesar Prison along with several other political prisoners where they were held in dire conditions. His health has severely deteriorated behind bars, yet he continues to speak out against human rights breaches and injustices.



ZAHRA ESFANDIARI

Age:
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: On electric tag
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer

BACKGROUND

Zahra Esfandiari is a teacher who was first arrested in Shiraz on 16 June 2022 during the crackdown on teachers. She was released on bail on 12 July 2022.

UPDATE

Zahra was tried by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court on 10 June 2023. She was sentenced to two years imprisonment for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security.” Her sentence was enforced through an electronic tag on 20 November.

MEHDI FATHI

Age: 48
Activism/rights: Retired teacher and pensioners’ rights activist
Status: Greater Tehran Penitentiary
Judicial status: 8 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, lack of separation of crimes, ill-treatment



BACKGROUND

Mehdi Fathi is a teacher who was first arrested for speaking out at the funeral of a student killed in a road accident. He blamed government corruption for the state of the roads and was subsequently arrested. On 10 March 2022, Mehdi was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment, a two-year ban on leaving the country or having a passport and two-year exile to Garmsar. He was also forced into early retirement. On appeal, five years imprisonment for “intent to disrupt national security,” a year for “propaganda against the system” and two years for “insulting the founder and leader of the Islamic Republic” were upheld on 22 April 2022. Mehdi was arrested at his home on 8 June and transferred to Shiraz Central Prison.

UPDATE

Mehdi is serving his sentence in Shiraz Central Prison.



ESMAIL GERAMI

Age: 68
Activism/rights: Retired teacher and pensioners' rights activist
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
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 in a peaceful protest of pensioners and activists outside the Ministry of Labour building in Tehran and released the next day.²³³ He was arrested at his home on 3 April 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 19 September. On 8 October, 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.²³⁴ On 24 July 2022, he was transferred to Evin Prison without prior notice. A week later, he contracted Covid-19, which exacerbated his epilepsy and other underlying conditions. Esmail was denied medical treatment for refusing to be shackled and handcuffed for the journey. He was sentenced to a further 11 months and 15 days imprisonment and 50 lashes by Branch 101 of the Fashufuyeh Public Court for charges of disrupting prison order which was later overturned by Branch 78 of the Tehran Court of Appeal. Esmail survived the 15 October 2022 attack on Evin Prison and was transferred to Rajai Shahr Prison where he was denied medical care.

UPDATE

Esmail was released from prison on 13 February 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution. He was briefly detained after being arrested at a pensioners' protest outside the Work Ministry on 21 November 2023.

AZIZ GHASSEMZADEH

Age:
Activism/rights: Trade unionist teacher
Status: Rasht Central Prison
Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, medical care denial



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.²³⁵ On 3 October 2021, his lawyer tweeted that Aziz's detention order had been extended, he was banned from visits and phone calls and access to a lawyer.²³⁶ Aziz was released on bail from Roudsar Prison on October 11.²³⁷ Aziz and two others filed complaints against their violent arrests on 5 July 2022 which was closed in February 2023 due to a "lack of evidence." He was tried for the charge of "propaganda against the system" in Roudsar and tried again for the same charges in Rasht. On 2 November 2022, Aziz was sentenced to a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 3 of the Rasht Revolutionary Court.²³⁸

UPDATE

The sentence was upheld on 30 January 2023 without any regard for the procedural error by the Rasht Revolutionary Court.²³⁹ He was transferred to Rasht Central Prison on 8 April 2023.²⁴⁰ Between 14-22 May, he was taken to the IRGC Intelligence Organisation for interrogation.²⁴¹ Aziz was informed that he was being investigated for 25 counts of administrative violations by the Gilan province Education Board which he called "vindictive."²⁴² He went on a ten-day furlough on 23 July 2023. Aziz sent messages of support for the protests from behind bars. He recorded a video explaining his charges and the reasons for his imprisonment to his pupils before going to prison.



MOHAMMAD HABIBI

Age: 44
Activism/rights: Trade unionist teacher
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: New case pending
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Habibi is a teacher and a member of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Union who was first arrested in March 2018 when he was beaten and pepper-sprayed in front of his students outside the school he taught at. He was released on bail a few days later, but was re-arrested on 10 May 2018, during a peaceful union rally. In August 2018, he was sentenced to seven years and six months in prison for "conspiracy against national security" with his membership of the Teachers' Union used as an example, "propaganda against the system" with articles and educational and union notes being used as examples, and 74 lashes for "disturbing public order for participating in trade union rally."²⁴³ Mohammad's sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals in late December 2018. While behind bars, he was fired from his job by the Ministry of Education. Mohammad was released from prison on 10 November 2020 after being included in the amnesty list. He was arrested along with other union members on 30 April 2022 and held in solitary confinement for more than 50 days.²⁴⁴ He was tried on 13 October 2022²⁴⁵ and sentenced to three years and seven months for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year for "propaganda against the system" on 23 October by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.²⁴⁶

UPDATE

Mohammad was released from prison on 8 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list.²⁴⁷ However, he was violently rearrested when security forces raided his home on 5 April and took him to Evin Prison.²⁴⁸ On 28 April, a number of activists were arrested while visiting Mohammad's family as a show of solidarity in Tehran.²⁴⁹ He was indicted and his case sent to Shahriar Revolutionary Court²⁵⁰ before being released on bail on 21 May.²⁵¹

ASGHAR HAJEB

Age:
Activism/rights: Trade unionist teacher
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 4 years and 8 months imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Asghar Hajeb is a teacher and member of the Bushehr Teachers Trade Union. He was arrested with his colleagues Mohsen Omrani, Abdolreza Amanifar and Mahmoud Mallaki at a teachers' rally in Bushehr on International Workers Day on 1 May 2022 and later released on bail. He was sentenced to four years and eight months imprisonment for charges of "action against national security, disrupting public order and peace and disobeying an officer's orders" by the Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

In a second case at Branch 4 of the Bushehr Criminal Court, Asghar was sentenced to three months imprisonment and 35 lashes for "disrupting public order" for participating at the teachers rally. The sentence was reduced to a 12 million fine.



ZEYNAB HAMRANG

Age: 53
Activism/rights: Retired teacher
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 5 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.²⁵² In July 2021, Zeynab contracted COVID-19 in Evin Prison along with several other political prisoners and was briefly sent on medical furlough. Zeynab started a food and medicine strike in protest against being deprived of medical leave, harassment and abuse by prison staff. She was released from prison on 17 October 2022 in the list of amnesties announced to mark prophet Mohammad's birthday.

UPDATE

On 12 March 2023, Zeynab was rearrested when she left her house to go to the gym and was taken to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. She was sentenced to five years of imprisonment for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Iman Afshari. She did not have access to a lawyer prior or during the trial.²⁵³

HASHEM KHASTAR

Age: 71
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Mashhad Central Prison
Judicial status: 18 years and six months imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, lack of separation of crimes, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, torture and ill-treatment, familial punishment



BACKGROUND

Hashem Khastar is a teacher who has endured years of imprisonment since 2009. He was one of 14 activists who signed a letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei demanding his resignation. On 2 February 2020, he was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment, three years of exile in Nikshahr and a three-year ban on leaving the country by Branch 4 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court which was later upheld on appeal. Hashem has been held in dire conditions, denied medical treatment to the extent that he was forced to pull out two of his own teeth, denied furlough and regularly banned from phone calls and visits.

UPDATE

On 11 July 2023, Hashem was sentenced to two years and six months imprisonment for charges of "insulting the leader and propaganda against the system" for his letters and messages from prison. The trial was online without a defence lawyer.



JAVAD LAL MOHAMMADI

Age: 55

Activism/rights: Teacher

Status: Mashhad Central Prison

Judicial status: 21 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, torture and ill-treatment,

BACKGROUND

Javad Lal Mohammadi is a teacher who was one of 14 activists who signed a letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei demanding his resignation. He was last arrested at his home on 13 October 2021 but also has several previous cases. On 31 July 2022, Javad was sentenced to a further 8 years imprisonment by the Mashhad Revolutionary Court. With his previous sentences, he has a 21-year sentence.

UPDATE

Javad has been held in dire conditions, denied medical treatment, denied furlough and regularly banned from phone calls and visits. He is serving his sentence in Mashhad Central Prison.

MAHMOUD MALLAKI

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 4 years and 8 months imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Mahmoud Mallaki is a teacher and member of the Bushehr Teachers Trade Union. He was arrested with his colleagues Mohsen Omrani, Abdolreza Amanifar and Asghar Hajeb at a teachers' rally in Bushehr on International Workers Day on 1 May 2022 and later released on bail. He was sentenced to four years and eight months imprisonment for charges of "action against national security, disrupting public order and peace and disobeying an officer's orders" by the Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

In a second case at Branch 4 of the Bushehr Criminal Court, Mahmoud was sentenced to three months imprisonment and 35 lashes for "disrupting public order" for participating at the teachers rally. The sentence was reduced to a fine of 12 million tomans.



PIROUZ NAMI

Age:
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment/new case
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer

BACKGROUND

Pirouz Nami is a teacher who was first arrested at a teachers' protest in November 2018. He was last arrested in Ahvaz on 22 October 2023 during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests. He was released on bail on 9 November.

UPDATE

Pirouz was sentenced to a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the system" and a two-year ban on activism and leaving the country by Branch 1 of the Ahvaz Revolutionary Court. He was also summoned by Branch 113 of the Ahvaz Criminal Court for charges of "publishing lies online, propaganda against the system and participating in an illegal gathering" on 23 July 2023.

HAMID JAFARI NASRABADI



Age:
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Yazdel Prison, Kashan province
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, medical care denial

BACKGROUND

Hamid Jafari is a teacher, writer and football coach who was first arrested for an article he wrote for his university paper. He was last arrested at his school in Kashan on 20 October 2022 during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests. On 29 November 2022, he was sentenced to 15 months and a day in prison for "insulting the leader" and 7 months and a day for "propaganda against the system" by the Kashan Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

On 5 January 2023, he was sentenced to two years imprisonment for "publishing lies" and a year for "disobeying an officer's orders" for his poems and writing on social media. The sentence was upheld but suspended for five years.



MOHSEN OMRANI

Age: 46

Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting sentencing

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. Mohsen 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.²⁵⁴ He was arrested at the International Labour Day gathering in Bushehr on 1 May 2022 and released on bail on 21 May. He was rearrested at a teachers' protest on 15 July 2022 and released on bail six days later.

UPDATE

On 23 January 2023, the Board of Education ruled to cut his salary by a third and deprive him of other benefits for six months for taking part in the teachers' protest.²⁵⁵ On 5 February, he was indicted for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security, disrupting public peace and order, and disobeying an officer on duty."²⁵⁶ He was released on bail on 3 May 2023. There are currently three open cases against Mohsen, with the trial for the aforementioned charges taking place on 22 May. On 14 November, he was tried for charges of "propaganda activities against the system" by the Bushehr Revolutionary Court.

ATEKEH RAJABI

Age:

Activism/rights: Teacher

Status: Mashhad Central Prison

Judicial status: 6 months imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Atekeh Rajabi is a primary school teacher and LGBTQIA+ activist who was fired from her job for supporting the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests in 2022. She was also arrested at a Mashhad teachers' protest against the nationwide chemical attacks on school children on 9 May 2023. Atekeh was released on a bail of 1 billion tomans on 14 May.

UPDATE

On 21 August 2023, Atekeh was sentenced to six months imprisonment by Branch 7 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court. She has been serving her sentence at Mashhad Central Prison (Vakil Abad) since 26 November.



HOSSEIN RAMEZANPOUR

Age:
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Bojnourd Prison
Judicial status: 3 years imprisonment and 74 lashes
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Hossein Ramezani is a teacher and member of the North Khorasan teachers' association. He was previously arrested for participating in a teachers' protests. On 15 June 2021, Hossein was sentenced to five years imprisonment and 148 lashes for "publishing lies to distort public opinion." On appeal, his sentence was reduced to three years imprisonment and 74 lashes.

UPDATE

On 14 March 2023, Hossein was arrested at his school and taken to prison to begin serving his sentence.

AFSHIN RAZMJOU

Age:
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Shiraz Central Prison
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Afshin Ramzjou is a teacher and activist who was first arrested at his home in Shiraz on 12 May 2022 during the crackdown on teachers. He was released on bail 17 days later.

UPDATE

Afshin was sentenced to five years imprisonment for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court. He was arrested to serve his sentence on 20 November 2023. Afshin is currently serving his sentence in Shiraz Central Prison.



MAHMOUD SEDIGHIPOUR

Age:
Activism/rights: Trade Unionist Teacher
Status: Rasht Central Prison
Judicial status: 1 year imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer

BACKGROUND

Mahmoud Sedighipour is a teacher and member of the Gilan Teachers Trade Union. He was first arrested at a Teachers' protest against other teachers being jailed on 16 June 2022 and released on bail days later. On 2 November 2022, along with Aziz Ghasemzadeh and Anoush Adeli, he was sentenced to a year imprisonment for "propaganda against the Islamic Republic" by Branch 3 of the Rasht Revolutionary Court.

UPDATE

Mahmoud's one-year sentence was upheld by Branch 18 of the Gilan Court of Appeals on 30 January. Mahmoud and his colleagues filed an official complaint for being beaten during their arrest and forcibly disappeared which was rejected due to "lack of evidence." He began serving his sentence in Rasht Central Prison (Lakan) on 8 April 2023.

MOHAMMAD HOSSEIN SEPEHRI



Age: 49
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Mashhad Central Prison
Judicial status: New case pending
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Hossein Sepehri is a teacher and one of the 14 activists who signed a letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei demanding his resignation. On 2 February 2020, he was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment, by Branch 4 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court which was later upheld on appeal. Mohammad Hossein was denied medical treatment behind bars despite being ruled unfit to serve his sentence.

UPDATE

Mohammad Hossein was released from prison on 29 May 2023. He was rearrested on 28 September and has been charged with "assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda against the system."



HOSSEIN VAHEDI

Age:
Activism/rights: Retired teacher and unionist
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 3 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, access to lawyer

BACKGROUND

Hossein is a teacher and on the board of the North Khorasan teachers association. He was sentenced to a year imprisonment for “publishing lies online to disrupt public minds” by Branch 103 of the Bojnourd Criminal Court on 27 November 2023

UPDATE

Hossein’s sentence was suspended for three years.

MOHAMMAD ALI ZAHMATKESH



Age: 59
Activism/rights: Teacher
Status: Shiraz Central Prison
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Ali Zahmatkesh is a teacher who was arrested at the Shiraz teachers’ protest on 14 May 2022 and transferred to Shiraz Central Prison. He was released on bail on 19 July 2022.

UPDATE

Mohammad Ali was rearrested on 7 March 2023 while participating in the teachers’ protest against the nationwide chemical attacks on schools. On 17 June, he was sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court. Mohammad Ali was arrested at his home on 20 November to begin serving his sentence.



IDRIS MENBARI

Age:

Activism/rights: Language/ethnic rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 11 years imprisonment and 40 lashes

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial, familial punishment, denial of medical care, cruel and unusual punishment, torture and ill-treatment, religious rights, ethnic rights, language rights, religious rights,

BACKGROUND

Idris Menbari is one of the directors of Nojin Cultural Association, teaching Kurdish language and culture. He was briefly arrested along with Zara Mohammadi and another Nojin member in May 2019 and later released.²⁵⁷

UPDATE

Idris was rearrested at his home on 18 December 2022 during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests that were sparked by the state-murder of Jina (Mahsa) Amini.²⁵⁸ His wife, Soma Pourmohammadi who is also a Nojin director, was arrested at the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court while she was following up on his case on 18 January 2023.²⁵⁹ According to Nojin’s Articles of Association, Idris refused to speak Farsi during interrogations. Instead, he responded to his interrogators in his mother language of Kurdish, which exacerbated the immense pressure he was under.²⁶⁰ Idris was released on bail on 29 January 2023. In October 2023, she was sentenced to ten years imprisonment by Branch One of the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court for charges of “forming a group.” He said examples of the charges against him included “following Hengaw (a Kurdish human rights organisation) on social media, participating in Jina Amini’s funeral, legitimising the Woman, Life, Freedom movement and leading Nojin Cultural Association in hosting workshops about federalism.” In another case brought against him at Branch 106 of the Sanandaj Criminal Court, he was sentenced to a year for charges of “disrupting public order” with time served, exile to Kermanshah Prison and 40 lashes.²⁶¹

ZARA MOHAMMADI

Age: 30

Activism/rights: Language/ethnic rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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



BACKGROUND

Zara Mohammadi is one of the directors 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.²⁶² 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.²⁶³ 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.”²⁶⁴

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, with her lawyers served with the verdict later.²⁶⁵ Zara’s request for a judicial review per Article 477 of the CCP was rejected and she surrendered to serve her sentence on 8 January 2022.²⁶⁶ She was denied medical treatment behind bars and kept with ordinary crime prisoners in breach of the principle of separation of crimes.

UPDATE

Zara was released from prison on 10 February 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution. Following her release, Zara recorded a message where she stated that she had not requested amnesty or forgiveness and had been forced out of prison.



KASRA NOURI

Age: 33
Activism/rights: Religious rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
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. In 2021, 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.²⁶⁷ 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.²⁶⁸ 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. On 27 August 2021, Kasra was transferred to an unknown location without notice, forcing his mother to stage a sit-in outside the prison to get a response. He later told his family he had been taken to the Shiraz police station to be interrogated about a joint statement that had not been published yet. On 5 September 2022, his lawyer tweeted that a new case with the charge of "assembly and collusion against national security" had been opened against him for the unpublished statement²⁶⁹ and he was transferred back to Shiraz Central Prison the next day.

UPDATE

Kasra was released from prison with delay²⁷⁰ on 16 March 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution. His release was made conditional on only his lawyer and family being allowed to wait outside the prison.

SERVEH POURMOHAMMADI

Age:
Activism/rights: Language/ethnic rights
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 10 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, religious rights, ethnic rights, language rights, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Serveh Pourmohammadi is also one of the directors of Nojin Cultural Association who was arrested on 29 January 2023 when she went to the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court to follow up on the case of the other arrested members of the Association. Her sister Soma, also a Nojin member, was arrested and jailed along with her. She was released on bail from Sanandaj Central Prison after the completion of the interrogation phase.

UPDATE

In October 2023, she was sentenced to ten years imprisonment by Branch 1 of the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court for charges of "forming a group."²⁷¹



SAREH SEDIGHI

Age: 29
Activism/rights: LGBTQIA+ rights
Status: Escaped Iran
Judicial status: Appeal stage
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, access to lawyer, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Sareh (Zahra) Sedighi-Hamedani is an LGBTQIA+ activist who ran a Telegram channel and was filming a documentary about the conditions of LGBTQIA+ people in Erbil. She was arrested by IRGC forces on 27 October 2021 which was reported by state-media.²⁷² In detention, she was subjected to “intense interrogations accompanied by verbal abuse and insults directed at her identity and appearance and threatened to execute or otherwise harm her and take away the custody of her two children.”²⁷³ On 1 September 2022, Sareh was sentenced to death by the Urmia Revolutionary Court on charges of *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth) through “promoting homosexuality, promoting Christianity and communicating with media opposed to the Islamic Republic.” Upon being informed of the charges, Sareh attempted to commit suicide and was transferred to Razi Hospital where her stomach was pumped before being returned to Urmia Central Prison.²⁷⁴

UPDATE

Sareh’s appeal was granted by the Supreme Court and her case sent for review on 16 January 2023.²⁷⁵ She was released from Urmia Central Prison on 18 March 2023 and managed to escape Iran. Sareh finally reached a safe country in December 2023.²⁷⁶



MOHAMMAD SHARIFI-MOGHADDAM

Age: 31
Activism/rights: Religious rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
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 authorities attempting to poison Gonabadi spiritual leader, Noor Ali Tabandeh. While in prison, Mohammad started a project to set up libraries in prison wards. In a letter from prison, he described the physical and psychological torture he was subjected to in order to induce forced confessions during his interrogations.²⁷⁷ Mohammad was transferred to Evin Prison on 24 July 2022²⁷⁸ and survived the 15 October 2022 attack on the prison.

UPDATE

Mohammad was released from prison on 11 March 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution.



PWHF

Activism/rights: Environmental activists
Judicial status: 4-10 years imprisonment
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 US." 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."²⁷⁹ Abdolreza was released on 7 March 2020 after serving half his sentence.

UPDATE

In a letter sent from prison in January, Sepideh recounted the physical and psychological torture they were subjected, including the promise that her husband Morad would be hanged that day at interrogation sessions.²⁸⁰ Morad Tahbaz was one of the people released after a prisoner exchange between American and Iran in September 2023. Sam Rajabi was released on 3 December.²⁸¹ The remaining five PWHF members are currently serving the rest of their sentences in Evin Prison.

SABZ CHYA NGO

Activism/rights: Environmental activists
Judicial status: Unclear
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention



BACKGROUND

Sabz Chya is a non-governmental organisation established by environmental activists in Marivan in 1999 after being refused a permit several times by authorities. The NGO works on protecting the environment, education, research and action against environmental damage.

UPDATE

In August 2023, as fires engulfed the forests around the Zagros mounts, Sabz Chia volunteers jumped into action. Without government support, videos emerged of people putting the fires out themselves. The NGO also used it as a training opportunity for the next generations. The organisation has accused the government of arsoning Kurdistan's mountains. In the lead up to Jina Amini's anniversary, security forces raided a Sabz Chia meeting, violently arresting more than 35 of their members. While most were released that day, they have faced harassment and threats. Those arrested include: Salar Azari, Kamal KohnehPoushi, Madeh Khoshnavaz, Kaveh Karimian, Kaveh Dastan, Jamal Ghaderi, Hiva Babai, Madeh Hemmatboland, Farhad Mowlavi, Naseh Hemmatboland, Loghman Kohnehpooshi and Sirvan Mollarahim.



REYHANEH ANSARINEJAD

Age:
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 4 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Reyhaneh Ansarinejad is a retired worker and workers rights activist who was previously briefly detained around 12 years ago. She was arrested at her home in Tehran by six security forces on 14 May 2022 and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison.²⁸² She was denied family visits until her release on bail on 6 August.²⁸³ She was rearrested while visiting Mohammad Habibi's family along with other activists on 28 April 2023 and released on bail on 8 May.²⁸⁴

UPDATE

On 27 July 2023, Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Reyhaneh to four years imprisonment for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security" through communicating with workers, teachers and students.²⁸⁵ She also received a two-year ban on membership in groups, political parties and media and online activities, as well as leaving the country.²⁸⁶ Reyhaneh began serving her sentence at Evin Prison on 6 November 2023.²⁸⁷

AMIR CHAMANI

Age: 39
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Unclear
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Amir Chamani is a workers rights activist who was first arrested in 2012 and sentenced to 9 months imprisonment]for charges of "insulting the leader and founder of the Islamic Republic and propaganda" by Branch One of the Tabriz Revolutionary Court, which he served at the time. He also received 40 lashes for "insulting the president." He was arrested again on 14 January 2020 and sentenced to six months imprisonment for "propaganda against the system in favour of opposition groups." He was released early after being included in the general amnesty list at the time. Amir was detained for six months in April 2020 and sentenced to a year imprisonment for propaganda charges with time served. He was rearrested in Tabriz during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests on 6 November 2022.²⁸⁸ He was transferred to Tabriz Central Prison where he began serving his sentence.

UPDATE

Amir was released from prison on 7 February 2023. It is not clear whether his release was part of the February general amnesty.



SHAPOUR EHSANIRAD

Age: 62
Activism/rights: Free Workers Union of Iran
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
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. For his arrest in 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.²⁸⁹ 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.²⁹⁰ Shapour and seven other political prisoners were acquitted of “disrupting prison order” on 7 November 2022.

UPDATE

Shapour was released from Evin Prison on 10 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list.²⁹¹

OSMAN ESMAILI

Age: 66
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Saqqez Prison
Judicial status: 3 years and 3 months 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

Osman Esmaili is a Kurdish worker and workers rights activist from Saqqez who has been arrested multiple times. He was first arrested on International Workers Day on 1 May 2015 and sentenced to two months imprisonment for “disrupting public order” which he served. Osman was rearrested on 1 May 2018 while at an International Workers Day gathering in Saqqez. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment for “propaganda against the system for the Workers Day gathering and sharing photos and videos of it online.”²⁹² He was released on 4 June 2021. He was briefly detained in October 2021 and April 2022. Osman was last arrested on 10 November 2022 during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests. He underwent interrogations in both Saqqez and Sanandaj.

UPDATE

Osman was released on a bail of 1 billion tomans on 17 April 2023.²⁹³ On 24 August, he was sentenced to 3 years and 3 months imprisonment for charges of “propaganda and membership in dissident groups (Komala)” which he denied in court. The sentence was upheld by the Supreme Court on 30 October.²⁹⁴ On 13 November, a video was published of Osman saying goodbye to his loved ones before he entered Saqqez Central Prison to begin serving his sentence.



SEPIDEH GHOLIYAN

Age: 28
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 2 years imprisonment/new case pending
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 tomans a month later. She later used social media to reveal details of the torture she and Esmail 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.²⁹⁵ 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 Zabihpour 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.²⁹⁶ On 21 June 2020, she began serving her five year sentence.²⁹⁷ She was tried for charges of “propaganda and publishing slander and defamation” in November 2022 which she attended via conference call.

UPDATE

On 15 March 2023, Sepideh was released from Evin Prison after completing her sentence. Outside the prison, she shouted “Khamenei the tyrant, we’ll pull you down!” Hours later, she was arrested while en route to Dezful. She later wrote that she had been badly beaten and threatened with rape in Ward 209 of Evin Prison.²⁹⁸ Sepideh was sentenced to two years imprisonment and a two-year ban from joining any groups or organisations, using a smartphone and residing in Tehran or its surrounding provinces for charges of “insulting the leader” by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 5 May 2023 which was upheld less than a month later. On the complaint of Ameneh Sadat Zabihpour, a public trial was scheduled for 22 August in which Sepideh said she would attend. However, the trial was held behind closed doors after Sepideh refused to wear the mandatory hijab, for which the judge said a second case would be brought against her. According to her brother, Sepideh spat in Ameneh Sadat’s face “on behalf of the people” at the end of the trial.

LEILA HOSSEINZADEH

Age: 30
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement



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 to five years imprisonment.²⁹⁹ Her sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals. Though she was pardoned due to an autoimmune disease in March 2020,³⁰⁰ she was summoned again to face charges of “disturbing prison order” in June 2020.³⁰¹ On 22 February 2021, 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.³⁰² Her sentence was upheld on 6 December 2021³⁰³ but before being sent for implementation, she was violently arrested the next day and released on bail on 2 January 2022. Leila was violently re-arrested at her home on 20 August 2022 and taken to Evin Prison.³⁰⁴ From there, she was transferred to Shiraz.

UPDATE

Behind bars, Leila was denied access to adequate medical care and treatment for her Crohn’s disease which was exacerbated by prison conditions. She was violently transferred to Evin Prison from Shiraz Central Prison on 5 January 2023 and ultimately released on bail four days later.



NASRIN JAVADI

Age: 66

Activism/rights: Free Workers Union of Iran

Status: Evin Prison

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 in prison on charges of “assembly and collusion against national security”, a year in prison for “propaganda against the system” and another year for “disrupting public order” and 74 lashes, a two year ban on the use of smartphones and membership and activities in political and 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.³⁰⁵ Nasrin was summoned to serve her sentence on 30 June 2020 which she refused to respond to.³⁰⁶ Nasrin surrendered to Evin Prison to serve her sentence on 2 July 2022 despite being physically unfit for prison. On 7 October, it was reported that by the request of the Prisons Organisation, a new case had been opened against 14 female political prisoners including Nasrin for refusing to be shackled and handcuffed when being transferred for court dates.³⁰⁷

UPDATE

Nasrin is currently behind bars in Evin Prison despite previously being ruled unfit to serve her sentence. Her union have expressed grave concern for her health, citing the multiple illnesses and ailments she suffers from.³⁰⁸

ASAL MOHAMMADI

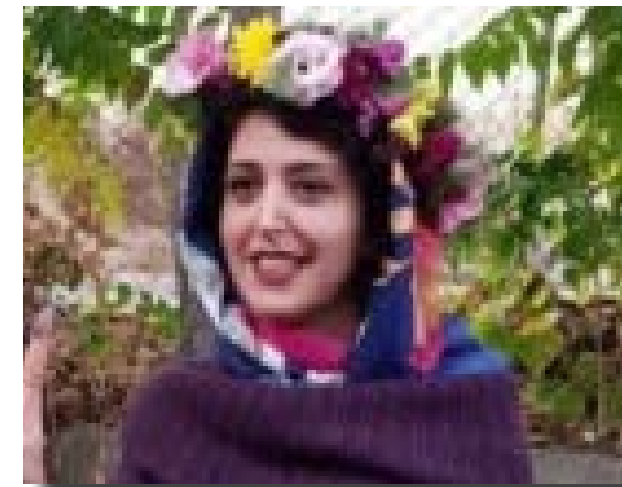
Age: 36

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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 worker’s 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 2019.³⁰⁹ In January 2020, another case was opened against her for “continuing her activism.” Asal was arrested again at the May Day Rally in 2021 and released hours later. On 6 November, she 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. On 30 January 2022, Asal was sentenced to a year and eight months imprisonment on charges of “assembly and collusion to disrupt national security by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court which was upheld by Branch 36 of the Appeals Court on 27 April 2022.³¹⁰ She began serving her sentence in Evin Prison on 11 July that year.

UPDATE

Asal was released after being included in the general amnesty list on 7 February 2023. She was rearrested while visiting Mohammad Habibi’s family along with other activists on 28 April 2023 and released on bail on 8 May.



KEYVAN MOHTADI

Age: 37

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment/new case

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

Keyvan Mohtadi is a writer, member of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA) and workers rights activist who was previously arrested at a bus drivers union protest. He was rearrested with his wife, Anisha Asadollahi on 9 May 2022.³¹¹ Their arrest was linked to French citizens Cecil Koehler, a member and international representative of the French National Federation of Education and Culture of the Work Force (FNEC FP-FO) and her husband, Jacques Paris, the former secretary general of the same union in the education sector (SNFOLC), who were arrested when they travelled to Iran as tourists.³¹² He was held in solitary confinement for 90 days without family visits or contact.

UPDATE

On 9 January 2023, Keyvan was sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda” by Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court.³¹³ His sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Tehran Court of Appeals on 14 March.³¹⁴ In April, Anisha reported that authorities had prevented Keyvan from receiving his medication for two months.³¹⁵ A new case was opened against him on 29 May.³¹⁶ He is currently serving his sentence in Evin Prison.

SHAHABEDIN NAZARI

Age:

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting trial

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. On 30 May 2020, 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.³¹⁷ Shahabedin Nazari surrendered himself to Evin Prison to serve his sentence on 27 January 2021 and was released on 5 April 2021.³¹⁸

UPDATE

Shahabedin was violently rearrested on 11 January 2023 and released on bail 19 February 2023.³¹⁹ He is currently awaiting trial.



HIRAD PIRBODAGHI

Age: 31
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Acquitted
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. 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 14 May 2021. He was furloughed on 25 May which was linked to his release. On 6 November, 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. Hiran was released on bail on 1 January 2022 after being tried by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court. He was sentenced to four years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and eight months for “propaganda against the system” on 24 February 2022.³²⁰ While awaiting the appeal decision in his case, Hiran was violently arrested at his home on 30 July 2022 and taken to Evin Prison.

UPDATE

Hiran was released on 18 March 2023 after he was acquitted of the “assembly and collusion against national security” charge with his other sentence served. He was detained for hours on 1 May 2023 while visiting the family of jailed teacher, Mohammad Habibi.³²¹

MEHRAN RAOUF

Age: 67
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 7 years and 6 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.³²² 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.³²³ 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.³²⁴ Translating and publishing books were cited as evidence of his membership in the Iran Communist Party. Shortly after his lawyer Mostafa Nili was arrested on August 14, his client case files including that of Mehran, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. His sentence was reduced to seven years and six months on appeal.

UPDATE

In a letter from prison, Mehran described the discrimination against dual-nationals who were excluded from the February general amnesty list. He has also been denied phone calls, visits and furlough.³²⁵ He continues to serve his sentence in Evin Prison.



DAVOUD RAZAVI

Age: 65
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Greater Tehran Penitentiary
Judicial status: 5 years imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Davoud Razavi is a member of the board of directors of the Union of the Workers of Tehran Unified Bus Company who has faced multiple arrests for his activism in the last 12 years. He was previously sentenced to five years imprisonment for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security and disrupting public order and peace through participating in an illegal gathering” in February 2016 which was suspended for five years by the Supreme Court. He was last arrested on 27 September 2022, during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Court.³²⁶ He survived the October 15 attack in Evin Prison.

UPDATE

Davoud was transferred to the Greater Tehran Penitentiary in April along with other political prisoners. On 7 June 2023, Davoud was transferred to Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court without prior notice to his lawyer and sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” for membership in his Union, participating in a gathering outside Parliament and city council, organising his union’s protests, participating in the International Labour Organisation conference and links with French unionists Cecil Koehler and Jacques Paris.³²⁷ Davoud was denied medical treatment at outside facilities for refusing to wear the prison uniform and when he was finally taken to a hospital, he was shackled and handcuffed and had to wait two hours every time he needed to use the bathroom.³²⁸ He has received no adequate medical treatment thus far.

HAJAR SAEEDI

Age:
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 4 years imprisonment/new case
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, forced televised confessions, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, prolonged solitary confinement



BACKGROUND

Hajar Saeedi is a Kurdish workers rights activist who was previously briefly detained in the Summer of 2018 for attending the funeral of environmental activist Sharif Bajour, who was killed while trying to put out the Marivan forest fires. She was rearrested on 7 June 2020 and released on bail two weeks later.³²⁹ On 5 August she received a four-year sentence for charges of “membership in a dissident Kurdish group, membership in the Communist Workers Party of Iran, participating in illegal gatherings and connection with workers rights activists.” The sentence was suspended for five years but she would have to go to the Ministry of Intelligence in Sanandaj every four months.³³⁰

UPDATE

On 18 May 2023, Hajar was arrested with seven other workers rights activists while visiting the family of slain “Woman, Life, Freedom” protester, Houman Abdollahi.³³¹ She was released on bail on 18 June 2023. There is no information about the new charges against her.³³²



HASSAN SAEEDI

Age: 46
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment/new case pending
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, denial of medical care, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Hassan Saeedi is a member of the Union of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (SWTSBC) who was first briefly detained in August 2018. Hassan was arrested again on 1 May 2019, along with other participants of the May Day rally. Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran, presided over by Judge Iman Afshari, sentenced him to five years in prison for “disturbing public order” and “assembly and collusion to disrupt national security.” The sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals. In late June, the Union of the Workers of Tehran Unified Bus Company reported that Hassan’s five year sentence had been revoked. Hassan was rearrested on 19 May 2022 when security forces raided his house through the roof.³³³ His arrest was linked to French citizens Cecil Koehler, a member and international representative of the French National Federation of Education and Culture of the Work Force (FNEC FP-FO) and her husband, Jacques Paris, the former secretary general of the same union in the education sector (SNFOLC), who were arrested when they travelled to Iran as tourists.³³⁴ He went on hunger strike on 22 June 2022 which ended after 39 days when he was returned to the general ward.³³⁵ Hassan was banned from family visits for months. In September 2022, his trial was postponed after he refused to be taken to court in a prison uniform. On 11 October, he wrote a letter after the forced confessions of Cecil Koehler and Jacques Paris were aired in which he rejected the state narrative and said he had met the two in a restaurant with Reza Shahabi and Davoud Razavi to strengthen ties between their unions.³³⁶ His trial was held without his presence on 15 October after he refused to wear the prison uniform again, denying him the right of defence.³³⁷ He was sentenced to five years imprisonment for “assembly and collusion against national security” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 23 October 2022.³³⁸

UPDATE

Hassan’s six-year sentence was upheld on 12 January 2023.³³⁹ His lawyer has spoken out against the legal flaws in the case including that the forced confessions had been aired prior to their trial.³⁴⁰ A new case has been brought against Hassan, Reza Shahabi and Keyvan Mohtadi.³⁴¹ In September, Hassan’s young daughter had a car accident that led to serious injuries. Yet, prison authorities denied his request for furlough to be with her.³⁴²

MAZIAR SEYEDNEJAD

Age: 42
Activism/rights: Workers rights
Status: Evin Prison
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment/new case pending
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 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 4 of the Ahvaz Revolutionary Court sentenced Maziar to three years imprisonment on charges of “membership in an opposition group.” 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.

UPDATE

On 16 January 2023, Maziar was sentenced to two years imprisonment for “membership in communist groups” and a year for “propaganda against the system” by Branch 15 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court presided by Judge Salavati. He was also sentenced to a two-year ban on leaving the country, membership in parties and groups and use of the internet as additional punishment.³⁴³ He began serving his sentence in Evin Prison on 21 May 2023 where he remains today.



REZA SHAHABI

Age: 50

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Evin Prison

Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment/new case pending

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

BACKGROUND

Reza Shahabi is a prominent workers rights activist and one of directors of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company (SWTSBC) who was first arrested and sentenced to four years imprisonment in 2010. His physical health deteriorated severely due to medical care denial and several hunger strikes to protest against violations of his and others' human rights. He was denied medical treatment even after suffering two strokes in December 2017. He was ultimately released on 13 March 2018. Reza was rearrested at the 2019 Workers Day rally and released on bail a week later. The charges from this arrest were later dropped. Reza was arrested again on 12 May 2022 in relation to French citizens Cecil Koehler, a member and international representative of FNEC FP-FO and her husband, Jacques Paris, the former secretary general of the same union in the education sector (SNFOLC), who were arrested when they travelled to Iran as tourists.³⁴⁴ Reza, who already suffered from poor health, was subjected to lengthy interrogation sessions twice a day in Ward 209 of Evin Prison which further deteriorated his health.³⁴⁵ He was sentenced to five years imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security" and a year for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court on 23 October 2022.³⁴⁶

UPDATE

Reza's six-year sentence was upheld on 12 January 2023.³⁴⁷ His lawyer has spoken out against the legal flaws in the case including that the forced confessions had been aired prior to their trial.³⁴⁸ A new case has been brought against Reza, Hassan Saeedi and Keyvan Mohtadi the details of which are not clear.³⁴⁹ Reza has been denied urgently needed medical treatment, in particular, surgery for his back. He continues to speak out against human rights violations and discrimination behind bars.

BAHAREH SOLEIMANI

Age: 43

Activism/rights: Workers rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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 2021 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 24 February. On 4 August 2021, 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."³⁵⁰ Shortly after Bahareh's lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on 14 August 2021, his client case files including that of Bahareh, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. She began serving her sentence on 2 January 2022 with her health deteriorating as she was denied access to adequate medical treatment.³⁵¹ The Forensic Medical Organisation continuously refused to accept evidence that she was not fit to serve her sentence.

UPDATE

Bahareh was released from prison on 14 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list.



MONIREH ARABSHAHI

Age: 53
Activism/rights: Women's rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
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 2019.³⁵² 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 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.³⁵³ Monireh was consistently denied adequate medical treatment behind bars and when she was furloughed, she was returned to prison without completing her treatment.

UPDATE

Monireh was released from prison on 15 February 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution. Upon her release, she recorded a video with her daughter chanting "Woman, Life, Freedom."

YASAMAN ARYANI

Age: 27
Activism/rights: Women's rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
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.³⁵⁴ 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.³⁵⁵ 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.³⁵⁶ On 23 February 2022, Yasaman was beaten up by ordinary crime prisoners after she met with the warden about her ban from using the library and other prison facilities. She was moved to another ward without any further action being taken after her father filed a complaint.

UPDATE

She was released from prison on 15 February 2023 as part of the prison pardons announced to mark the anniversary of the 1979 Revolution. Upon her release, she recorded a video with her mother chanting "Woman, Life, Freedom."



JINA MODARES GORIJ

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting judgement

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

BACKGROUND

Jina Modares Gorji is a journalist and women's rights activist who was violently arrested on 21 September 2022 as part of the crackdown on activists in the days after the murder of Jina (Mahsa Amini). Reporting on her trial in February, she said the judge at Branch 1 of the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court had been changed to the Sanandaj head of judiciary on the orders from Tehran. The new judge was flicking through the pages at trial, not having read her case prior. Jina was told to sign a letter of repentance and seek amnesty from "propaganda" charges which she refused, declaring that she had not committed a criminal offence.³⁵⁷ She also faced charges of "publishing lies, action against national security through forming an illegal group and collaborating with an enemy state."³⁵⁸

UPDATE

Jina was released on bail on 3 July 2023. Her bail was raised from 100 million tomans to 5 billion tomans.³⁵⁹ On 13 September, she was tried for charges of "forming a group to disrupt national security, membership in a domestic group to disrupt national security and propaganda against the system" by the Sanandaj Revolutionary Court.³⁶⁰

NARGES HOSSEINI

Age: 38

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 4 months imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Narges Hosseini is a women's rights activist who in 2018 became the second woman to stand on a platform waving her hijab on Enghelab Street. She was there for 10 minutes before being arrested. She was pressured to repent in exchange for a lighter sentence and bail, which she refused. She was sentenced to 21 months imprisonment for "promoting corruption" which was suspended for five years. Narges was rearrested during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests on 21 September 2022. She was sentenced to 3 years, 6 months and a day for charges of "membership in a group with intent to disrupt national security" and 7 months and a day for "propaganda against the system" on 20 November 2022. According to her lawyer, she was denied her legal rights during the investigation.³⁶¹

UPDATE

On 26 December 2022, Narges was released on bail from Kashan Prison pending her appeal.³⁶² Branch 36 of the Isfahan Appeal Court exonerated her of all charges except "propaganda against the system" which was reduced to four months. According to one of her lawyers, given that she had already served three months, she would "hopefully" not have to return to prison.³⁶³



MOJGAN KAVOUSI

Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Case sent for implementation

Judicial status: 5 years, 2 months and 1 day imprisonment

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

BACKGROUND

Mojgan Kavosi is a Kurdish language teacher, writer and women's rights activist who was first arrested in November 2019 and sentenced to six years, one month and 15 days for charges of "inciting the public to disrupt national security, membership in dissident groups and disrupting public order." Behind bars, Mojgan was denied medical care and subjected to degrading treatment. She was ultimately released on 5 January 2022.³⁶⁴ Mojgan was rearrested at her home in Noshahr on 23 September 2022, at the height of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests.³⁶⁵ Her original charges included *efsad-fil-arz* (corruption on earth), which carry the death penalty.³⁶⁶

UPDATE

On 29 December 2022, Mojgan was sentenced to 39 months imprisonment for "assembly and collusion against national security," 15 months and a day for "insulting the leader" and 8 months for "propaganda against the system" by Branch 1 of the Sari Revolutionary Court. She was released on a 3 billion toman bail days later.³⁶⁷ Her sentence was upheld by Branch 9 of the Supreme Court and her case sent for implementation in late November 2023.

SABA KORDAFSHARI

Age: 26

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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.³⁶⁸ 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.³⁶⁹ Saba was transferred to Qarchak Prison on 9 December 2020. 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. On 28 April 2022, Saba was acquitted of the "inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution" charges on 28 April 2022, leaving the 5 year sentence.³⁷⁰ She was transferred from Qarchak to Evin prison in July 2022. On 7 October, it was reported that by the request of the Prisons Organisation, a new case had been opened against 14 female political prisoners including Saba for refusing to be shackled and handcuffed when being transferred for court dates.³⁷¹

UPDATE

Saba went on several hunger strikes and was regularly denied medical treatment. She was released from prison after being included in the general amnesties on 9 February 2023.



LEILA MANSOUR

Age: 43
Activism/rights: Women's rights
Status: Released
Judicial status: Pardoned
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care

BACKGROUND

Leila Mansour is a women's rights activist who was arrested on 16 November 2022 as part of the crackdown on activists in the days after the murder of Jina (Mahsa Amini). She was released on bail from Evin Prison on 26 December 2022.

UPDATE

On 9 January 2023, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced Leila to a year imprisonment, 50 lashes and a two-year ban on membership in political or social groups and parties, leaving the country and residing in Tehran, her city of residence as additional punishment. However, her case was closed after she was included in the February 2023 general amnesty list.

RAOUFEH MIRBAGHERI

Age:
Activism/rights: Women's rights
Status: Awaiting sentence implementation
Judicial status: 8 months imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial



BACKGROUND

Raoufeh Mirbagheri is a women's rights activist who was arrested in Tankabon on 26 October 2022 as part of the crackdown on activists in the days after the murder of Jina (Mahsa Amini). She was released on bail on 27 November 2022 while awaiting her trial.

UPDATE

Raoufeh was sentenced to 8 months imprisonment for "propaganda against the system" and a two-year ban on leaving the country, membership in political and social groups, forming any groups and the confiscation of some personal property by the Sari Revolutionary Court.³⁷²



NAZANIN MOHAMMADNEJAD

Age: 35

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned

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

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 2 February.³⁷³ On 4 August, 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."³⁷⁴ The illegal group in her case referred to a book club held in a cafe.³⁷⁵ Shortly after Nazanin's lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on 14 August, 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."³⁷⁶ Nazanin surrendered to serve her sentence at Evin Prison 1 January 2022.³⁷⁷

UPDATE

Nazanin was released on 31 January 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list.³⁷⁸

NEDAYE ZANAN

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Asrin, Maryam and Akram released/Nahid jailed

Judicial status: Asrin, Maryam and Akram pardoned/Nahid serving 2 years and 3 months

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



BACKGROUND

Nahid Shaghghi, Akram Nasirian, Maryam Mohammadi and Asrin Darkaleh are members and collaborators of "Nedaye Zanane Iran Association" (Iranian Women's Voice Association) who work on women's rights issues. According to the association, "Nedaye Zanane Iran is a reflection of the efforts, sufferings, failures and successes of women in Iranian society and seeks to empower women to achieve a better life in the face of difficulties and discrimination." They were arrested in the summer of 2019. In December 2019, they were tried by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran, presided by Judge Iman Afshari, who sentenced each to three years in prison for "conspiracy to commit a crime against national security", six months for "propaganda against the system" and eight months for "committing a haram act such as unveiling." Their sentence was reduced to two years and three months on account of them not protesting the sentence. Akram Nasirian, Maryam Mohammadi and Asrin Darkaleh surrendered to Evin Prison to serve their sentences on 21 August 2022.³⁷⁹ On 7 October, it was reported that by the request of the Prisons Organisation, a new case had been opened against 14 female political prisoners including Asrin for refusing to be shackled and handcuffed when being transferred for court dates.³⁸⁰ Narges Mohammadi reported that Maryam had spent 23 months in inhuman conditions in solitary confinement.³⁸¹

UPDATE

Asrin and Maryam were released on 5 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list. Akram was released on 7 March 2023. In June 2023, Nahid Shaghghi was summoned to start serving her sentence.



ATEFEH RANGRIZ

Age: 35

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Awaiting trial

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

BACKGROUND

Atefeh Rangriz is a writer, translator and women's rights activist who was previously arrested at the International Workers Day rally on 1st May 2019 and sentenced to 11 years and six months in prison on charges of "conspiracy against national security and disturbing public order" by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran, presided over by judge Moghiseh. Atefeh was released on bail on 26 October 2019 and her sentence was reduced to five years imprisonment by the Tehran Court of Appeals in December 2019. On 24 May 2020, her lawyer told Shargh new agency that while Atefeh had received a summons to serve her sentence, at the behest of the judiciary, he had been orally informed that Atefeh's sentence had been revoked and she would not be required to return to prison.

UPDATE

Atefeh was arrested again on 10 September 2023 while she was in her hometown of Damghan for a doctor's visit. According to her mother, despite setting bail, authorities refused to release her on at least three occasions.³⁸² There is no information about the charges brought against Atefeh. According to the Free Workers Union, she was released on bail from Shahroud Prison on 21 October.

SEPIDEH RASHNU

Age: 29

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: 5 years and 4 months imprisonment

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



BACKGROUND

Sepideh Rashnu is a writer and women's rights activist who went viral in July 2022 when she stood up to a woman threatening her for not wearing the hijab in the female section of a bus in Tehran. She was arrested on 16 July and transferred to Ward 2A of Evin Prison. Two weeks later, state media aired an interview with the woman who had threatened her and one that had tried to defend her. The latter was forced to repeat the state narrative of events. Shortly thereafter, Sepideh's bruised face appeared on state television, where she was also forced to confess and repeat the state narrative. Sepideh was indicted on 20 August 2022 and released on bail on 30 August.

UPDATE

On 27 December 2022, Sepideh was sentenced to a five-year suspended sentence for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security, propaganda against the system and being without the hijab in public."³⁸³ In May 2023, Sepideh was suspended from her university for two months for violating mandatory hijab laws.³⁸⁴ For sharing the news on social media, Sepideh was summoned to face new charges.³⁸⁵ Sepideh was sentenced to four month imprisonment for charges of "publishing vulgar images online" without a lawyer at trial. The second sentence also unsuspended her first sentence and according to her lawyer, a third case has been brought against her.³⁸⁶



NAHID TAGHAVI

Age: 69

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.³⁸⁷ 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. 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."³⁸⁸ Shortly after Nahid's lawyer, Mostafa Nili was arrested on 14 August 14 2021, his client case files including that of Nahid, were found scattered outside Evin Prison. Maryam Claren, Nahid's daughter, has repeatedly expressed concern for her mother's underlying health conditions of diabetes and high blood pressure and that she was being denied medical care. Narges Mohammadi reported that Nahid had spent 200 days in solitary confinement.³⁸⁹

UPDATE

Nahid has been jailed without access to adequate medical care for three years. Her family and other jailed human rights defenders have raised the alarm about her deteriorating health to no avail. Her lawyers were informed that she would have been included in the February 2023 amnesty list "if she wasn't German."³⁹⁰

MARZIEH ZIARI

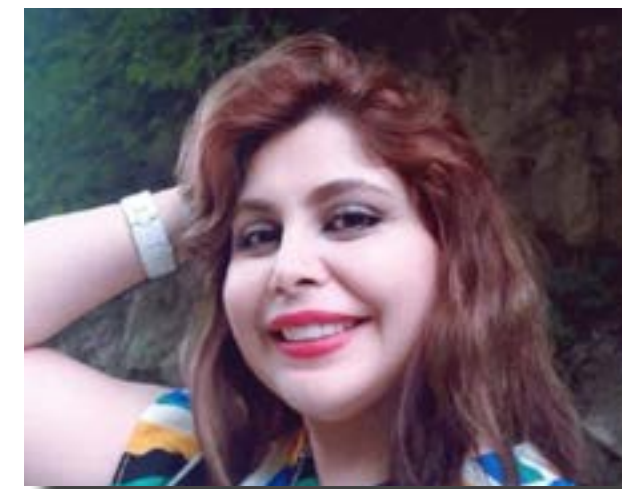
Age:

Activism/rights: Women's rights

Status: Released on bail

Judicial status: Case closed

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



BACKGROUND

Marzieh Ziari is a women's rights activist and the founder of the "Women's non-existent security" campaign, which sought security against the harassment of women. She was violently arrested at her home in front of her toddler by IRGC forces on 26 October 2022 as part of the crackdown on activists after the murder of Jina (Mahsa Amini) sparked nationwide protests. It was reported that she was threatened that her two year old child would be kidnapped and harmed as part of the psychological torture behind bars.³⁹¹

UPDATE

Marzieh was released on a bail of 1.5 million tomans on 11 January 2023. In May, she reported via her social media that she had been summoned by the IRGC intelligence organisation to sign a commitment letter despite her case being closed.



MOSTAFA AL-AHMAD

Age: 53
Activism/rights: Filmmaker
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 6 years and 4 months imprisonment
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial

BACKGROUND

Mostafa Al-Ahmad is an internationally award-winning filmmaker arrested on 29 May 2022 along with Mohammad Rasoulof for signing the May 29 statement from 100 cinematographers addressed to the country's armed forces whom they accused of "turning into the agents of people's oppression" and asked them to lay down their arms and "return to the arms of the nation."³⁹² The statement was issued after the brutal crackdown of protests in Abadan and several other cities, and the collapse of the Metropal building in Abadan. Mostafa was released on bail on 10 August 2022. Branch 26 of Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced him to 3 years and 8 months for "assembly and collusion against national security," 2 years and a 150 million tomans fine for "publishing lies" and 8 months for "propaganda against the system" as well as a two-year ban on leaving the country, membership in social and political groups and activities online as additional punishment.³⁹³ On 19 November 2022, his sentence was upheld by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeals.³⁹⁴

UPDATE

Mostafa Al-Ahmad is currently out on bail awaiting the enforcement of his sentence. According to reports, his ban on leaving Iran has already been implemented.

JAFAR PANAHI

Age: 63
Activism/rights: Filmmaker
Status: Released on bail
Judicial status: 6 years imprisonment, awaiting appeal decision
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, prolonged solitary confinement, access to lawyer, denial of medical care



BACKGROUND

Jafar Panahi is one of the most internationally renowned Iranian filmmakers who has faced decades of bans, arrests and imprisonment. His most recent arrest took place when he went to the Evin Prison court to follow up on the arrests of his colleagues and friends, Mohammad Rasoulof and Mostafa Al-Ahmad on 11 July 2022.³⁹⁵ At a news conference, the Judiciary's spokesman stated that he had a previous six-year custodial sentence for charges of "assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda" which was being enforced.³⁹⁶

UPDATE

Jafar Panahi was released from prison on 3 February 2023 after going on hunger strike in protest to the refusal to release him on bail despite his appeal being granted by the Supreme Court.³⁹⁷ His sentence was overturned by Branch 9 of the Supreme Court on 20 February and his case referred to Branch 21 of the Tehran Court of Appeals. He is currently awaiting the decision of his appeal.



MOHAMMAD RASOULOF

Age: 51
Activism/rights: Filmmaker
Status: Released
Judicial status: Awaiting judgement
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention

BACKGROUND

Mohammad Rasoulof is an internationally award-winning filmmaker and death penalty abolitionist. First arrested in 2010, he has experienced both censorship and punishments for his films throughout the years. In 2019, he was sentenced to a year imprisonment on charges of “propaganda against the system” for three of his films, including “There is No Evil” which offers different perspectives on the death penalty and “A Man of Integrity.” On 29 May 2022 he was arrested along with Mostafa Al-Ahmad for signing the May 29 statement from 100 cinematographers addressed to the country’s armed forces whom they accused of “turning into the agents of people’s oppression” and asked them to lay down their arms and “return to the arms of the nation.”³⁹⁸ The statement was issued after the brutal crackdown of protests in Abadan and several other cities, and the collapse of the Metropol building in Abadan.

UPDATE

Mohammad Rasoulof was released from prison on 13 February 2023 after being included in the general amnesty list. In August, Mohammad was tried for charges of “assembly and collusion against national security and propaganda against the system” with five years for the former and a year for the latter charge. He is awaiting the judgement in the case.

TOOMAJ SALEHI

Age: 33
Activism/rights: Rapper
Status: Isfahan Central Prison
Judicial status: Awaiting retrial/new case
Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and ill-treatment, access to lawyer, lack of due process, unfair trial, denial of medical care, forced televised confessions



BACKGROUND

Toomaj Salehi is a rapper who rose to fame through his protest songs which addressed a wide range of issues faced by ordinary Iranians including poverty, repression, corruption and impunity and demanded 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 21 September 2021. Undeterred, Toomaj released his first song on the occasion of Teachers’ Day after being released from prison and while still on bail, he continued with releases on the occasion of World Day Against the Death Penalty and the November 2019 nationwide protests.³⁹⁹ In November 2021, he was 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. His sentence was reduced to a six-month suspended sentence and a fine.

UPDATE

Toomaj was violently re-arrested on 30 October 2022 in the midst of the “Woman, Life, Freedom” nationwide protests. He was subjected to torture and ill-treatment, forced to repent on camera and denied medical treatment and access to his lawyer. In November, he was indicted of the charges of “efsad-fil-arz (corruption on earth) through publishing widespread lies (his tweets were used as examples), causing major damage, forming and running an illegal group in order to disrupt national security and collaborating with a hostile state and inciting and encouraging others to commit violent acts.”⁴⁰⁰ His lawyer, Amir Raeisian who was eventually granted access to his case, reported that he was only granted 30 minutes with his client prior to the trial, an insufficient time to even explain all the charges to him.⁴⁰¹ Toomaj Salehi’s trial took place between 18 June-3 July 2023 at Branch One of the Isfahan Revolutionary Court presided over by Judge Barati.⁴⁰² On 10 July, his lawyer reported that he was sentenced to a total of 18 years and 9 months imprisonment with time served.⁴⁰³ On 18 November 2023, Toomaj was released on bail after Branch 39 of the Supreme Court overturned his sentence and referred his case back to Branch One of the Isfahan Revolutionary Court.⁴⁰⁴ He was rearrested on 30 November 2023. Per his lawyer, a new case has been opened against him.



MEHDI YARRAHI

Age: 42

Activism/rights: Singer

Status: Released

Judicial status: Pardoned, new case pending

Violations: Arbitrary arrest and detention

BACKGROUND

Mehdi Yarrahi is an award-winning Iranian-Arab singer who was banned from performing after wearing a workers' uniform at his concert and singing a song in solidarity with the workers' protests in Ahvaz in 2019. The ban was subsequently lifted and re-enforced after he sang a song for the protesters killed in the November 2019 nationwide protests and made impassioned speeches at two concerts. Mehdi announced state media no longer had permission to use his work after Sepideh Rashnu was arrested for violating hijab laws in August 2022 and her forced confessions aired while her face still bore signs of the wounds and bruises caused by torture. With the start of the "Woman, Life, Freedom" nationwide protests in September 2022, he sang and dedicated three songs to the movement including "Woman" and "Life."

UPDATE

Mehdi was vocal against human rights breaches until he sang and dedicated a song called "Your hijab" dedicated to the women who were bravely defying mandatory hijab laws on the streets of Iran everyday. He was arrested on 28 August 2023 with the judiciary citing the reason as "publishing an illegal song against the morals and customs of an Islamic society." Mehdi was released on bail on 17 October 2023 pending trial for charges of "disturbing public minds, propaganda against the system and making and publishing videos against public modesty."⁴⁰⁵

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See page ۱۵ of the ۲۰۲۰/۲۰۱۹ Iran Human Rights Defenders Report for more details of her case: <https://iranhr.net/media/files/HRD-English۲۰۲۱-K۲YoPzS.pdf>
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