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IRAN

Escalating Clampdown on
**OPPONENTS OF THE
MANDATORY HIJAB**

Escalating Clampdown on Opponents of the Mandatory Hijab

In March, the mullahs' regime escalated its measures to address opponents of the mandatory hijab, a campaign that began in December. Provincial officials and mullahs insulted opponents of the mandatory hijab from official platforms and urged congregants in the Friday prayers to chant "Death to the hijab-less!"

During the Nowruz holidays, businesses that served opponents of the mandatory hijab were shut down, and security personnel prevented access to airports and historical sites.

By the end of March, the mullahs' parliament had finalized its plan to address opponents of the mandatory hijab, and the Ministry of Interior issued an instruction requiring all women to observe the mandatory hijab.

The early days of April marked statements on Hijab by the regime's President, Judiciary Chief, and Ali Khamenei, the mullahs' supreme leader. Various ministries and authorities announced measures to prevent opponents of the mandatory hijab from accessing services or entering certain locations.



Ministries declare no services to the opponents of the mandatory Hijab

As schools and universities reopened after the Nowruz holidays, the Ministry of Science announced that it will not provide educational services to students who do not comply with the hijab regulations.

In an official statement, the ministry declared that all universities and higher education centers under its supervision will be unable to provide educational services or welfare to students who do not adhere to the hijab rules and regulations. (The state-run ISNA news agency - April 3, 2023)

The Ministry of Education also released a similar announcement, stating that it will not provide services to students who do not follow the rules of covering in schools. (The state-run Aftab website - April 3, 2023)

The cultural and student affairs deputy to the Ministry of Health further emphasized that the Ministry of Health will not provide services to students who do not observe Islamic hijab, and expressed gratitude to the students who comply with the veil. (The state-run ISNA news agency - April 2, 2023)



Removing the Hijab: An Unlawful Act and the Enemy's Plan

On April 1, Ebrahim Raisi, the mullahs' president, emphasized the legal obligation to obey the law, even if one does not believe in the mandatory hijab. Raisi urged all people to help the government enforce the hijab regulation and keep the society clean from corruption and unhealthy relations. (The state-run News Network TV - April 1, 2023)

The head of Judiciary also [announced](#) that opponents of the mandatory hijab will be prosecuted without leniency, as removing the hijab is considered an act of enmity towards the state and its values.

Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejeii emphasized in the first session of the Supreme Judiciary Council in the new Persian year, held on April 1st, that "enforcement officers are obliged to deal with any proven crime and any kind of deviation that is against the law and Sharia, which occurs in public..., and refer the cases to the relevant judicial authorities. Judicial authorities should also be careful in dealing with such cases."

He added, "Anyone involved in any way, including advisors, deputies, instigators, and partners in these issues, will be strictly prosecuted without any leniency." (The state-run Fars News Agency – April 1, 2023)

Ejeii added that removing the veil is an example of violating public chastity and the principles of Sharia and law, which the enemy supports. (The state-run Fars News Agency – April 1, 2023)

Two days later, [Ejei](#) announced his intention to ask the Judiciary to speed up the drafting and legal stages of approval if the parliament's proposed bill is not approved soon. (The Judiciary's Mizan News Agency - April 3, 2023)

In a meeting with the clerical regime's top officials, the mullahs' supreme leader Ali Khamenei emphasized that Hijab is both a religious and a legal issue, and removing it is unlawful, both religiously and politically. He also pointed out that the enemy has a plan to undermine the Hijab and urged for a calculated counterplan to protect the Hijab regulations. (The state-run News Network TV - April 4, 2023)

Interior Ministry's Plan and the Parliamentary Bill

The clerical regime's Ministry of Interior announced on March 30 that "there will be no retreat or tolerance in the principles and regulations of religion and traditional values." The statement emphasized that "the veil is an indisputable religious necessity and will always be one of the practical principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

The Ministry of Interior also stressed that Hijab is a principle that could not be doubted politically, culturally, and socially. The Ministry also announced its support for all those who promote virtue and forbid evil throughout the country. It said the Judiciary, law enforcement forces, and other relevant institutions will act with regards to those who break the norms.



Earlier, Hossein Jalali, a member of the regime’s parliament, had announced on March 26 the [finalization of an “entirely intelligent” plan](#) called “chastity and veil,” which included penalties such as fines ranging from 500,000 to 3 billion tomans, revocation of driving licenses, revocation of passports, and internet ban for celebrities and those who own channels and websites.

Mullah Jalali had said that this plan has been presented to the mullahs’ Supreme Leader and the Judiciary after 300 meetings with the Cultural Revolution Council and the National Security Council.

The clerical regime’s [agencies in charge of enforcing the mandatory Hijab](#) would monitor seven groups of places: inside the vehicles, inside public places and restaurants, government offices and departments, educational centers and universities, airports and terminals, the cyberspace, celebrities, and in the streets and public thoroughfares.



We Make Breaking the Hijab Law Costly

Ahmad Rastineh, deputy from Shahr-e Kord and the spokesperson of the cultural committee of the parliament, emphasized the need to impose strict enforcement of the Hijab law.

He stated that lawbreakers should quickly pay fines and costly fines should be imposed on violators. Additionally, strict punishments with executive guarantees should be imposed on those who do not comply with the law.

According to Rastineh, “Removing the veil is not just about improper veiling, but a complex plan designed by enemies to destabilize the country and disrupt social order.”

He stressed that Hijab is a law in the country, and everyone is obliged to follow it.

Rastineh also stated that breaking the Hijab law is a sign of attempting to disrupt social order, and officials should not allow this. The officials should enforce the law and the parliament should oversee its implementation.

Rastineh suggested that instead of criminalizing the issue, it should be treated as a violation of the law punishable with fines that people should quickly pay. (The state-run Rouydad24 - April 3, 2023)

Setting the stage for brutal suppression of opponents of the mandatory Hijab

Khamenei's representatives have devoted parts of their Friday prayer sermons to the issue of removing the hijab. They have called for people's participation in confronting violators of the compulsory veil, which paves the way for the brutal suppression of women and opponents of the mandatory hijab. This gives plainclothes agents, acting under the title of "people," a free hand to attack women anywhere, without being held accountable for their actions.

Mullah Ahmad Alam ol-Hoda, Khamenei's representative in Mashhad, has urged law enforcement officers and airport and terminal managers to stop individuals violating the mandatory hijab law. (The state-run Khorasan TV - March 31, 2023)

He stated that not being veiled is both anti-Islam and anti-law and warned that a person without a veil is acting against the law. He further emphasized that maintaining order is their responsibility and they should warn individuals not wearing the hijab. (The state-run Entekhab website - March 31, 2023)

Mullah Lotfollah Dezhkam, Khamenei's representative in Fars province, urged people to take action and help the government in enforcing the mandatory hijab law. In his Friday prayer sermon, he said, "The government cannot do this alone, but our people will assist their executive bodies and rub the enemy's nose. People should take matters into their own hands and organize themselves to wrap up this issue. The supreme leader said that this is the work of the people, it is the work of the public, so let them do it." (The state-run Fars Province TV Network - March 31, 2023)

Mullah Mohammad Baqer Laini, Khamenei's representative in Mazandaran province, also called on people to actively participate in enforcing the hijab law during his Friday prayer sermon. He stated, "We hope that our dear people will show their own vibrancy and movement in this field. Everything should be popular." (The state-run Shabestan news website - March 31, 2023)



"Hijab is the law and removing it is the enemy's conspiracy" - officials

For the past few months, a coordinated effort by various government officials has been underway to promote the mandatory Hijab as a legal requirement and label its removal as a threat to national security.

Some officials have gone as far as urging business owners and department heads to deny services to those who do not comply with the mandatory Hijab, while branding anyone who opposes it as a criminal. Office employees have also been required to follow the Hijab even outside of the workplace.

Amin Gudarzi, the political, security, and social deputy of the special governorship of Borujerd, Lorestan Province, emphasized that “Removing the hijab in commercial and public places is a crime and will be dealt with legally since the Hijab is a law in Iran.” (The state-run ROKNA website - December 26, 2022)

Ahmad Hossein Fallahi, an MP from Hamedan, emphasized that “The hijab is part of the law in Islamic Iran and is an Islamic obligation, and disobeying the law would lead to chaos, which no sane person would accept.” (The state-run Rouydad24 – February 18, 2023)

Khorramabad deputy prosecutor, Samad Heydari, stated that “Not wearing the hijab is a crime and that no person or entity has the right to obstruct the implementation of good and the prohibition of evil, and creating any kind of obstacle is a recognized crime according to the law.” (The state-run Entekhab website – February 16, 2023)

Mojtaba Al-e Yasin, the deputy governor of the Central Province, stressed that “employees are required to adhere to both Sharia and legal rules and regulations outside the administrative department. In case of failure to comply, the office of administrative violations will deal with the violating employee.” (The state-run Rouydad24 – February 21, 2023)

According to Bijan Nobaveh, a member of the Parliamentary Cultural Commission, said, “Shopping centers and malls are responsible for enforcing hijab rules and ensuring compliance with them.” (The state-run Entekhab website – March 14, 2023)

Hossein Shariatmadari, Khamenei’s representative in a Kayhan newspaper, in an editorial wrote, “Removing the hijab constitutes a security threat, and the existing leniency towards this behavior is unjustifiable under both Sharia and legal reasoning.”

Ali Abdullahi, the governor of Alborz province, mandated that all businesses must prevent women without hijab from entering tourism centers, recreation centers, and resorts. (The state-run Entekhab website – March 30, 2023)

The Qazvin Governorate issued a statement declaring that Islamic covering is mandatory for all citizens in public and government spaces, businesses, vehicles, and streets. (The state-run Fars news agency – April 2, 2023)

Mohammad Aghamiri, head of the construction committee of Tehran City Council, condemned the breaking of social norms and advocated for a municipal plan to deal with violators. (The state-run Entekhab website – April 4, 2023)

Abolhassan Mahdavi, a member of the Council of Experts from Isfahan, emphasized that everyone, including non-Muslims, must observe the hijab in public spaces in Islamic society. He further stated that “The hijab represents a flag in the Islamic society that the enemy is trying to tear down with all its might.” (The state-run Entekhab website – April 4, 2023)



Increasing Repression for Non-Observance of the Mandatory Hijab

In recent months, particularly during the Nowruz holidays, many reports have emerged regarding the closure of tourist centers, restaurants, cafes, pharmacies, and doctors' offices due to the issue of hijab. Examples of such incidents include the following:

On March 29, 2023, the Director General of the Department of Industry, Mining, and Trade of Gilan province announced the closure of five businesses in Rasht, Gilan's capital, for what he called "non-observance of hijab." These businesses were involved in the sale of glasses, pizza, coffee, hardware, and toys. He further stated that a court case had been filed against these businesses.

On the same day, a tourist entertainment complex in Amol was sealed by order of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor of Mazandaran province due to "women dancing and singing in public." The manager of this complex was sued.

On March 30, 2023, the commander of the State Security Force of Nowshahr, Akbar Darvishi, announced the closure of six cafes and restaurants in the tourist areas of Sisangan, Sitra and Siahroud for not complying with Sharia and Islamic standards, serving alcoholic beverages, and removing the veil. Darvishi added that those arrested during this period would remain in police custody until April 20.

On April 1, the state-run Tasnim news agency reported that a tourist spot in Dezful had been shut down and sealed for "allowing people without hijab." Mehdi Amadeh, the Public and Revolutionary prosecutor of Dezful, in southwestern Khuzestan Province, announced this.

Karim Akbari, the commander of an IRGC resistance area in Kashan, also reported on April 1, 2023, that in the past month, over 40 trade unions in Kashan had been closed for not observing the social norms and providing services to clients who did not wear the Hijab.

In Babolsar, the public relations of the Vice-and-Virtue headquarters announced on April 1, 2023, the closure of six businesses for "not respecting Islamic standards."

On the same day in Abadan, the city's Anti-Vice-and-Virtue headquarters closed three cafes for holding mixed events, dancing, and playing live music.

Mosayeb Mousavi, the Deputy for Supervision and Inspection of Mazandaran's Industry, Mines, and Trade Organization, announced that they had inspected 3,778 businesses and department stores. Out of these, 2,343 businesses received verbal or written warnings. Additionally, 338 businesses were shut down for not adhering to the issue of chastity and hijab. (The state-run Mehr News Agency - April 3, 2023)



The campaign to criminalize the removal of the hijab

On April 1, the Fars news agency reported that a signature campaign to criminalize hijab removal was launched not only by them, but also on various social networks and other platforms.

However, such campaigns may not hold much weight, as the hijab has already been declared mandatory by the highest government authorities, and those who violate it are subject to punishment and criminalization. These campaigns only fuel the atmosphere and pave the way for more repressive measures against opponents of the mandatory hijab.



Maryam Bani Razi

Opponents of the mandatory hijab face flogging and arrest

During the Nowruz holidays, a nurse from Oom was sentenced to 148 lashes, eight months in prison, and a two-year dismissal from government and public services for not observing the mandatory hijab. Maryam Bani Razi was filmed going to a bank in December without wearing the mandatory hijab. Despite a "warning," she refused to put on the hijab, and bank staff provided her with normal services.

In another incident, a [video from CCTV cameras](#) at a store in Shandiz city of Mashhad was published on social networks on Friday, March 31. The footage showed a plainclothes officer emptying a bucket of yogurt on the heads of two women who had entered the store for shopping but were not wearing the mandatory hijab.

The Torqabeh Prosecutor's Office's Public Relations Department announced that a warrant had been issued to arrest the assailant and the two women for committing an unlawful act by removing their hijab. (The state-run Mizan news agency – April 1, 2023)



The dairy shop in Shandiz that published the CCTV video of the encounter was shut down

On the same day, a video was circulated on social media showing security agents preventing opponents of the mandatory hijab from entering the historical complex of [Taq-e Bostan](#) in Kermanshah.

Another video posted on social media shows the management and personnel at Shiraz airport warning women without hijab to cover up before issuing boarding tickets. (The state-run Entekhab website – April 2, 2023)

On Wednesday, March 29, 2023, the prosecutor of Bojnourd, Javad Ilali, announced the arrest of a man and a woman for allegedly assaulting and disrespecting a woman who was promoting virtue.

Five employees of a tourism center in Varzaneh, Isfahan, were arrested for "conflicting and obstructing the activities of the forces promoting virtue and forbidding evil." (The state-run Fars news agency – March 31, 2023)

Around the same time in Yazd, three people were reported to be arrested for "reacting to the warning for observing the hijab in Dowlatabad garden of Yazd." The Vice-and-Virtue Headquarters of Yazd claimed that they followed the promoter of virtue, physically clashed with her, her daughter, and another woman.

There are also reports that the Guidance Patrol vans have been deployed in the city of Shiraz to test the public's reaction.



The behavior of a misogynistic regime

While more than 80% of Iranian people live below the poverty line and struggle to access necessities, the mullahs' regime is dedicating its time, energy, and resources to cracking down on opponents of the mandatory hijab and imposing heavy financial fines.

This is happening even though the government has failed to pay teachers' salaries, even during the Nowruz holidays. Moreover, the regime's recent restrictions on virtual space and disconnection of many virtual networks in the last six months have exacerbated social and economic issues faced by the people, yet extensive filtering persists.

Recently, a government media outlet questioned the high fine for not wearing a hijab, which is reportedly 3 billion tomans, when the ransom for a human life is only 900 million tomans. This highlights the disproportionate penalties for violating the mandatory hijab law.

Meanwhile, the clerical regime has not taken effective measures to stop the ongoing chemical attacks on girls' schools. After the Nowruz holidays, there have been further reports of female students being poisoned in schools. Of course, this is itself evidence of direct involvement of the clerical regime, namely, Khamenei and the IRGC, who are taking revenge on schoolgirls who actively participated in the 2022-2023 uprising.

Notably, the bill to prevent violence against women has not been adopted after 11 years.

The compulsory veil is [one of the pillars of the mullahs' dictatorial rule](#). The clerical regime made wearing the veil mandatory less than one month after seizing power. The regime suppresses society and imposes repressive rules by [cracking down on women](#). Undermining the mandatory Hijab [undermines](#) the regime's Islamic identity and [raison d'être](#).

Iranian women and girls, however, have defied the regime's coercion in any way they could over the past 44 years. They deeply understand that women's rights, like the rights of all Iranian citizens, could be achieved only by overthrowing the mullahs' inhuman regime.

There is no doubt that Iranian women will defy the so-called "alternative punishment" plan and turn it against the regime.