

2024

Armita Geravand

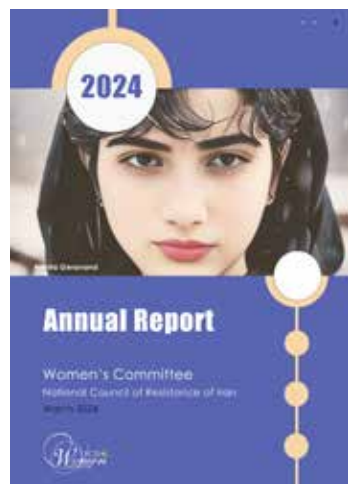
Annual Report

Women's Committee

National Council of Resistance of Iran

March 2024





Annual Report 2024

Copyright©2024 by Women’s Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI)
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

A publication of the Women’s Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran
March 2024

ISBN: 978-2-35822-021-7




-  women.ncr-iran.org
-  [@womenncri](https://twitter.com/womenncri)
-  [@womenncri](https://facebook.com/womenncri)

Table of Content

01	Preamble	02
02	Keeping the Flames of Protests Alight	04
03	Unyielding Courage	12
04	Vicious Clampdown in Fear of an Uprising	18
05	VAWG, State-Sanctioned and Institutionalized	58



Preamble

Around this time last year, the world marveled at the extraordinary courage and resilience of Iranian women standing against the oppressive forces of Iran's ruling religious dictatorship. What distinguishes this year is the even greater courage and heightened resilience demonstrated by Iranian women in the face of the intensified oppression imposed by the clerical regime.

This report aims to highlight the remarkable reality that, compared to the previous year, Iranian women faced even harsher conditions. Despite the regime's deployment of repressive forces, abundant resources, and misogynistic laws, they maintained their resistance, entering a more challenging phase.

The cover of this annual report features Armita Geravand, a courageous young girl who fearlessly defied the compulsory Hijab. By her resistance against the Hijab Patrols, she bravely challenged the entire regime, ultimately paying the ultimate cost—her life.

Female university students confronted security forces on their campuses, prompting the regime to deploy masked security forces and confiscate their student IDs. In the months leading up to the anniversary of the uprising in September, despite the earlier crackdown on society, 600 women in Tehran alone were arrested for taking to the streets.

In Rasht, brave women marched through the streets chanting “death to the child-killing regime.”

Bereaved mothers sought justice for their fallen children, transforming the solemn occasions of their memorials into opportunities for resistance. Dozens faced arrest and incarceration, illustrating another poignant chapter of bravery and defiance against the regime. They paid a heavy price for their actions.

Female political prisoners showcased scenes of remarkable resistance and bravery, even in chains. The regime, desperate to quell their defiance, resorted to attacking and firing upon them. However, this only underscored the resilience and high spirits of these political prisoners, whose message transcended prison walls, inspiring not just women and girls but all Iranian youths in cities and villages.

One such resilient prisoner, Maryam Akbari Monfared, serving the last year of her 15-year sentence without a single day off, received an additional three-year sentence for her continued resistance. The regime seeks to keep her incarcerated, fearing the influence of such a resilient and inspiring woman on society.

Massoumeh Senobari, accused of leading protests, has endured over a year in solitary confinement, isolated from other inmates. Another political prisoner, Zeinab Jalalian, remains in internal exile in the Yazd Prison. She has already started the 17th year of her life sentence.

A striking phenomenon is the increasing participation of women and girls from the Resistance Units in cities, conducting anti-repression operations despite the regime's crackdown and the severe punishment if caught. These emerging pockets of resistance organize the spirit of perseverance among women and youth, challenging all forms of the regime's suppression. They have assumed leadership in the struggle against the dictatorship, aspiring to achieve freedom and establish a democratic, pluralistic republic based on the separation of religion and state.

With such a notable presence and a willingness to shoulder responsibility, the struggle of Iranian women has evolved into a new phase, leading the charge in uprisings against the regime's overthrow.

As emphasized by Maryam Rajavi, there exists an immense, untapped power within women capable of steering the world toward freedom and equality when engaged in a resolute struggle. This transformative force is unfolding in Iran today.

The indomitable women of Iran persist in their fight for freedom. In this year's collection, our endeavor is to vividly portray the scenes of Iranian women's resistance and their collective endeavors to counter the regime's relentless attempts to extinguish the flames of the uprising amid appalling repression.

NCRI Women's Committee



Keeping the Flames of Protests Alight

Resistance, Resilience Amid Repression

The Year-Long Protest Movement in Iran Led by Women

Despite massive repression and an incredible number of executions in 2023, the Iranian people continued their protests throughout the year, and women were at the forefront of many of them. They used every opportunity to commemorate the protesters slain during last year's uprising, or express protest against the execution of imprisoned protesters, and chanted "death to the dictator." Various sectors of Iranian society took to the streets and cried out anti-regime slogans and demanded their rights. People's demands centered mostly around poverty, their livelihood, the government's predatory policies.

In addition to the 524 acts of protest during the nationwide uprising in the first three months of the year, they held 3,093 protests despite a naked crackdown by the regime.

According to the data compiled by the NCRI Women's Committee, women participated in some 2,185 protests and played a leading role in them.

Protests against chemical attacks on schools

Various capitals across Iran saw protests on March 7, against deliberate poisoning of students. Teachers and families of students called on the clerical regime to account and provide the security of schools. The protesters chanted, "Condemn the chemical attacks," "Death to the child-killing regime," "Security of schools is our inalienable right," and other slogans.

Teachers

Iranian teachers held the largest number of rallies in March to protest the poisoning of innocent students, in May to demand adjustment of their salaries, and in September on the anniversary of the Iran uprising in 2022.

On May 9, 2023, Iranian teachers held protest gatherings and rallies in 14 provinces despite intense security measures. They protested the Iranian regime's use of the ranking plan as a tool of suppression.

In their gatherings, the teachers chanted slogans such as "The imprisoned teacher must be released," "A teacher dies, but does not accept humiliation," "Chemical attacks must be condemned," and "Promises are not enough, our table is empty."

In some cities such as Rasht, Arak, Ardabil, and Langroud, protesters chanted slogans such as "Every teacher's cry is death to the oppressor, be it the shah or the mullahs' leader," and "Teachers are awake and abhor the Shah and the mullah."



Baluch Women

Women also actively took part in the weekly Friday protests, in Zahedan and other cities of the deprived Sistan-and-Baluchestan province, in the southeast, to voice their protest to the clerical regime's oppressive policies.

The clerical regime was fierce in cracking down on the protesters and every time, they made large number of arrests and wounded dozens of protesters. Nevertheless, Baluch women did not back down from joining the protests that demanded freedom and democracy for all.

Air Pollution

The women of Arak, in Markazi province, led extensive rallies and marches in the city on January 2 and 9, 2024, to protest the factories' use of fossil fuel (Mazut) which has drastically polluted the air in this city, demanding a halt to the use of Mazut by the nearby Shazand Factory.

Nurses

Iranian nurses took to the streets notably on November 18, 19, and 25, 2023, to demand their unpaid overtime fees, bonuses, and tariffs. They held their protests in Tehran, Sanandaj, Rasht, Yazd, Arak, Eslamabad-e Gharb, and Kermanshah.

Retirees

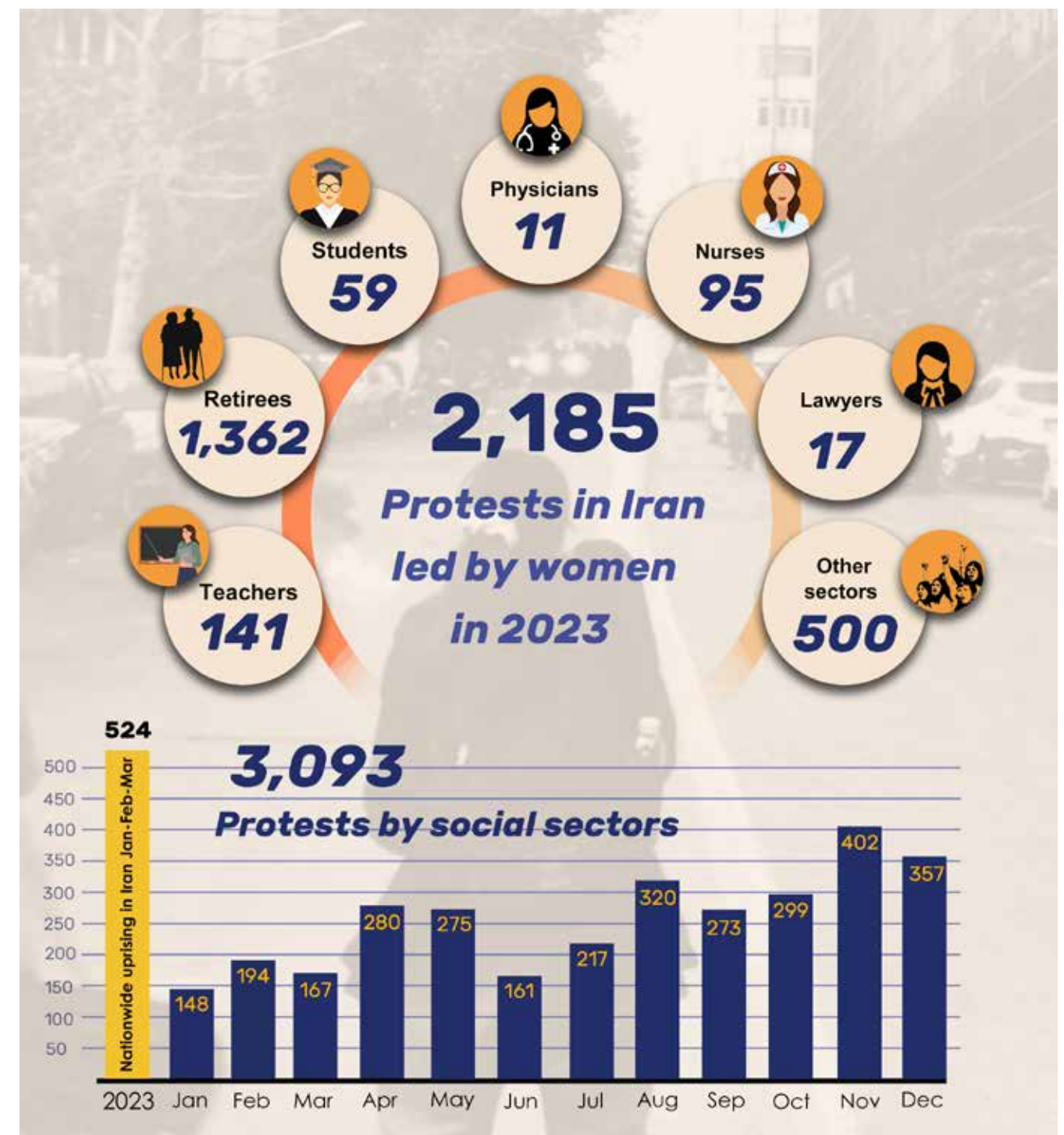
Every Tuesday, female retirees joined nationwide rallies in protest to dire living conditions and the clerical regime's failure to respond to their needs.

Lawyers

On August 26, 2023, female lawyers participated in a major rally in Tehran to protest the adoption of a bill by the mullahs' parliament that undermines the independence of the legal profession.

Protests against executions

- On May 19, thousands took to the streets, outraged at the execution of three imprisoned protesters in Isfahan. The regime made at least 100 arrests, including 40 women, only in Tehran to quash the protests.
- On May 22, freedom-loving women marched in the streets of Rasht, the capital of Gilan Province, northern Iran, and chanted anti-regime slogans. They protested the Iranian regime's spree of executions in the month of May, vowing to remain loyal to the martyrs of Iran protests and continue their path to the end.
- The month of May saw the executions of at least 146 prisoners in Iran, including three women and three political prisoners. On various instances, the families of execution victims and their young children held protest gatherings, urging the authorities not to execute their loved ones.
- These protests have continued to this date by the families of the victims, particularly their mothers, wives, and sisters, against the staggering rise in executions in Iran.





Remembering slain protesters

In a stark act of dissent on July 28, Iranian women and youths used the opportunity of Ashura, the most significant religious occasion in Iran and the Middle East, to organize a nationwide movement to commemorate the protesters slain during the 2022-2023 Iran uprising. Throughout the country, they visited the tombs of the country's beloved sons and daughters fallen for freedom.

Anniversary of the uprising

- Terrified by a resentful populace ready to erupt like a volcano, the regime mobilized some 44,000 intelligence agents, IRGC guards, Basij militants, plainclothes agents, and state security forces in Tehran alone to readily stifle any protest. Security forces blocked the streets leading to downtown Tehran. Helicopters hovered over the city.
- Despite the regime's heightened security measures and internet restrictions, protests and nightly skirmishes with security forces took place in various cities, including Tehran, Kermanshah, Mashhad, Sanandaj, Junaqan, Arak, Hamedan, Rasht, Karaj, Sabzevar, Lahijan, and Dehdasht on September 16. This occurred while the regime's military forces were on alert for several weeks.
- At least 600 women were arrested in Tehran on the anniversary of the Iran uprising, which shows the extent of their participation in protests despite the heavy price.
- In Qarchak Prison, the most notorious women's prison of Iran, inmates gathered on September 16 to mark the anniversary of last year's protests, and to protest inhuman prison conditions. Tragically, their peaceful demands

were met with a vicious raid. Prison guards callously fired pellet guns at the protesting women, injuring at least 20 individuals. Numerous inmates were beaten, forcibly moved from the general ward to solitary confinement. The situation escalated to where parts of the prison caught fire.

- On September 17, there were widespread confrontations between women and youths in Hamedan on the one hand and the regime's brutal IRGC and security forces on the other, with chants of "Death to Khamenei" and "Death to the Republic of Executions."

Young women and youths in Hamedan chanted, "We will kill whoever killed my sister," in the face of security forces. The protests took place in District 13 of the city. Video footage from the city showed one-on-one clashes between youths and security forces and the sound of shooting could be heard.

- Brave women took to the streets of Rasht (N. Iran) and Mashhad (NE Iran) and chanted anti-regime slogans in bright daylight. Young people rallied courageously in Lahijan, in Gilan province (N. Iran), on September 16, the anniversary of the Iran uprising. People chanted anti-regime slogans calling for the overthrow of the "child-killing" regime and the "bloodthirsty Khamenei" from their rooftops in various districts of Tehran, Urmia, Karaj, and other cities on September 17.

- A group of young Iranian women in a high school in Tabriz marked the anniversary of the bloody crackdown on worshipers in Zahedan on September 30, 2022, and commemorated their martyrs. The young Iranian women sat on the floor in a symbolic gesture reminiscent of the popular martyr of Zahedan protests, Khodanoor Lojeii.





Resistance Units carry out 3,000 anti-repression operations

- The IRGC Intelligence, the Intelligence Ministry, and the State Security Force announced the arrests of 357 individuals in Tehran, Karaj, Marvdasht, Boein Zahra, West Azerbaijan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad, and Kurdistan, as announced by various media outlets on September 17. They also reported the arrests of dozens of individuals affiliated with the opposition PMOI.
- Nevertheless, the PMOI Resistance Units (comprised of brave women and men) carried out 414 anti-repression operations in Tehran and 40 other cities at the height of repression in just two days, on September 15 and 16.
- The courageous women and men of Resistance Units carried out 3,000 anti-repression operations throughout the year 2023. These operations are inspiring to the people in cities and provinces across the country and have been widely reported on social media networks.



Bold protest in Evin Prison

On December 27, multiple prisoners in the women's ward of Evin Prison protested the Iranian judiciary officials' entrance of their ward and forced them out.

They protested their oppressive sentences and continued detention without trial. They chanted slogans against the mullahs' regime. Subsequently, prison guards broke into the ward, brutally assaulting the prisoners and escorting the judicial authorities away. The prison administration disconnected the political prisoners' telephone lines and issued threats of filing new charges against them. Additionally, they menaced the prisoners with internal exile to various locations, including the deprived province of Sistan and Baluchestan in southeast Iran. Some supporters of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), who are among the political prisoners in the women's ward of Evin Prison, are:

1. Shiva Esmaili: She was arrested on March 11, 2023. Mullah Iman Afshari sentenced her to 10 years in prison. Ms. Esmaili is suffering from cancer. Her son, Mehdi Vafaei, is also imprisoned for being a supporter of the PMOI/MEK.
2. Sudabeh Fakharzadeh: She was arrested on March 11, 2023, and sentenced to five years in prison by Iman Afshari.
3. Zeinab Hamrang: She was arrested on March 11, 2023, and Iman Afshari sentenced her to five years in prison.
4. Fereshteh Nouri: She was arrested on July 3, 2023, and sentenced to five years in prison.
5. Azar Mousazadeh Karvandi: She was arrested on July 30, 2023, and sentenced to five years.

Unbreaking Resolve PMOI Political Prisoners



Zahra Safaei



Arghavan Fallahi



Azar Karvandi



Zeynab Hamrang



Marzieh Farsi



Forugh Taghipour



Nejatnvar Hamidi



Masoumeh Yavari

6. Zahra Safaei: She was arrested on September 12, 2023, and sentenced to five years in prison. She is suffering from a heart condition.

7. Maryam Banou Nassiri: She was arrested in April 2023 and sentenced to three years and seven months of prison.

8. Arghavan Fallahi: She was arrested on November 3, 2022, and has been detained since without standing trial. She was arrested along with her father and brother, who are also imprisoned in Evin.

9. Parvin Mir-Asan: She was arrested on November 3, 2022, but has not stood trial yet.

10. Marzieh Farsi: She was arrested on August 21, 2023, and is set to be tried on the charge of "sedition," which is punishable by the death penalty or heavy prison sentences. She has cancer.

11. Forugh Taghipour: She was arrested in September 2023 and is set to be tried on the fabricated charge of "sedition," which is punishable by the death penalty or heavy prison sentences.

12. Nasim Gholami Fard: She was arrested in September 2023 and is set to be tried on the fabricated charge of "sedition," which is punishable by the death penalty or heavy prison sentences.

13. Elham Fouladi: She was arrested on December 12, 2023, and has not yet stood trial.



Unyielding Courage

In the heart of Iran, a group of resilient women stands as a testament to unwavering courage and unyielding strength, challenging the oppressive rule of the brutal mullahs' regime. In this part, we delve into the stories of these extraordinary individuals, illuminating the bravery that defines their struggle.

Free in Captivity

The 15-year ordeal of Maryam Akbari Monfared

On December 30, 2023, Maryam Akbari Monfared started her 15th year in jail without a single day off even for urgently needed medical treatment.

Maryam Akbari Monfared was born on December 14, 1975, and is the mother of three daughters. She is one of the most resistant female political prisoners who has chosen to live free without bowing down to the mullahs.

She was arrested and taken to Evin prison "to provide some explanations" at midnight of December 29, 2009, without saying goodbye to her daughters. But she never returned home. She was incarcerated because she seeks justice for four of her siblings executed in cold blood by the clerical regime in the 1980s. Her sister, Roghiyeh Akbari Monfared, had a little daughter when she was sent to the gallows among the prisoners massacred in the summer of 1988.

A Rainbow of Hope

Throughout the years she spent behind bars, Maryam has always inspired other prisoners. Her heart is as big as an ocean filled with feelings for everyone around her. One of her cellmates, former political prisoner Atena Farghadani, describes her as "a woman whose resistance was a rainbow of hope for all the prisoners."

So, prison authorities sent her to a remote prison to prevent her inspiring others. On March 9, 2021, they abruptly took her away to the Prison of Semnan and abandoned her among ordinary prisoners in violation of the principle of separation of crimes.

In Semnan Prison, she was deprived of visitations and of making ordinary phone calls to her family like other prisoners. Every call she makes must be in the presence of prison authorities and security agents.

After 14 years of imprisonment, political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared is suffering from various illnesses. The Ministry of Intelligence does not allow her to see a doctor outside the prison. The prison's doctor prescribed her special food, but her requests for proper nutrition and a visit to a specialist have not been answered.

Her physical condition has acutely deteriorated due to a lack of proper nutrition and access to treatment, and she is suffering from various side effects.



The price of remaining steadfast

The clerical regime's judiciary recently sentenced political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared to an additional three years in prison through two separate fabricated cases filed by the Ministry of Intelligence. These cases were heard in orchestrated courts in Semnan and Evin, hindering her release after completing a 15-year sentence. Consequently, she now faces a total of 18 years in prison.

The first case concerned her time in Evin Prison, which charged her with disseminating "propaganda against the state." The second case concerned her time in the Prison of Semnan for which she is accused of insulting Ali Khamenei, the mullahs' supreme leader, propaganda against the state, assembly and collusion (!), disseminating falsities and disrupting public opinion, and inciting people against national and external security through letters published in social media. Under the inhumane laws of the clerical regime, political prisoner Maryam Akbari was supposed to be released in 2019 after serving 10 years of her sentence. The primary 'crime' of this political prisoner over the past decade has been seeking justice for the martyrs, according to the regime's perspective.



Maryam Akbari's husband and three daughters

The breathtaking countdown

In a letter she wrote from prison last year, Maryam Akbari described her feelings. "Thirteen years is a breathtaking battle to pass second by second. Counting 13 years day by day (that is 4 thousand and 745 days) makes a person tired, let alone if she wants to spend 4 thousand and 745 days one by one in the middle of an unequal battle. It is not a 4,000-page story; it is the naked reality of life some fascists have imposed on us because we did not want to surrender." Maryam Akbari also wrote about being separated from her children. "Although I wanted to be with my children, what mother wouldn't? But I do not regret it, and I am more determined to continue my path. I have said this in every formal and informal interrogation session and am happy to repeat it!"

Keeping the faith

On the secret of remaining resistant, she wrote: "If you ask me, then how did I survive in the darkness of torture and exhaustion of time? I say that the blazing flame of faith in my heart has kept me going.

"Amid loneliness with empty hands, this warm and rebellious flame is what the interrogators want to steal from the prisoner from the first moment of her arrest so that her being freezes and surrenders to the yoke.

"But I kept it burning for all 13 years with the holy fury over the tortures I witnessed and pierced my heart! I laughed and made others laugh so I could stand firm because resistance is our heart.

"Faith in the cause that my brothers and sisters

died for. Faith in the path I stepped into and the clenched fists and firm steps of the young people who are now protesting in the streets against the dictatorship with their bodies and lives.

"Yes, faith in the innocence and oppression of my brothers and sisters, whom I never considered dead; they were and are the most alive for me. They grabbed my hand in every moment of my prison time. And now I find them in the streets of Iran."

We honor Maryam Akbari Monfared and pay tribute to this courageous Iranian woman's unquenchable flame of hope, unwavering faith, and resolute spirit. As she eloquently penned in her letter's conclusion: "Finally, one day, I will sing the song of victory from the summit of the mountain, like the sun. Tomorrow belongs to us."



Maryam Akbari's four siblings executed by the clerical regime in the 1980s.



Isolated Behind Prison Walls

Massoumeh Senobari Accused of Leading Protests

Political prisoner Massoumeh Senobari is detained in Fardis Prison of Karaj, a.k.a. Kachouii Prison, deprived of all her rights as a political prisoner.

Ms. Senobari is accused of leading the protests and sentenced to 7.5 years in prison.

Massoumeh Senobari is held in a solitary room in the women's ward. In contrast to other inmates, she has limited time to contact her family.

According to the court's verdict, she is not allowed to communicate with other inmates and must be detained in a "closed-door" prison. Her fresh-air time is limited to only one hour every few days. Other inmates are removed from the yard during her fresh-air time, so she cannot talk to others.

She was arrested in Karaj on December 13, 2022, and transferred to the city's Department of Intelligence. On January 4, 2023, she was transferred to the women's ward of Kachouii Prison after 40 days of interrogation.

The 1st Branch of the Revolutionary Court of Karaj tried her on March 5, 2023, and sentenced her to 7.5 years in prison for "participation in acts against the state through membership in the PMOI," and "propaganda against the state through participating in illegal gatherings, publicity campaigns, writing graffiti on walls, and distribution of the pictures of the PMOI leaders." Massoumeh Senobari was born in 1988 in Tabriz and has a daughter.

She was first arrested on February 24, 2019, and then she was brutally tortured. She could not walk



due to vicious whipping. She suffered from blurry vision due to blows to the head. She also suffered a broken leg and a cracked heel.

She had been sentenced to 8 years on charges of "propaganda against the state" and "insulting" the mullahs' supreme leader and was imprisoned in the Central Prison of Tabriz.

She was released in August 2019 on a bail of 600 million tomans but was arrested again on February 5, 2020. She contracted Covid-19 while in detention.

Political prisoner Massoumeh Senobari suffers from heart problems, but prison authorities did not let her receive the medication provided by her family. She was eventually released in 2021 and was re-arrested on December 13, 2022, amid the Iran uprising.

A Woman's Struggle for Justice

The Plight of Zeinab Jalalian



Zeinab Jalalian, the longest-held and sole female political prisoner serving a life sentence in Iran, has spent 16 years behind bars. Throughout her imprisonment, she endured torture and was denied the right to furlough, even for medical treatment. Additionally, she has been subjected to illegal and violent transfers between different prisons.

Her lawyers argue that, according to the new Islamic Penal Law approved in 2013, her ongoing imprisonment is unlawful, and she should be released.

Zeinab Jalalian is 39 years old. She was arrested in Kermanshah on February 26, 2008. During her apprehension, she endured vicious torture aimed at extracting false confessions from her.

Interrogators resorted to flogging, punching, slamming her head against the wall, and even threatening her with rape, but she steadfastly refused to cooperate.

Zeinab Jalalian remained in Khoy Prison until 2020. Subsequently, she experienced an illegal and forceful transfer between different prisons. Presently, she is held in Yazd prison in central Iran. The considerable distance from her hometown means she seldom receives visits from her family, and even communication through phone calls and visits is often restricted.

Zeinab Jalalian contracted Covid-19 twice, facing complications such as lung and asthma issues during her recovery due to inadequate medical care. Her health has further deteriorated due to pre-existing conditions, including kidney and digestive problems, oral thrush, and a tooth infection. Moreover, Zeinab Jalalian is now at risk of losing her eyesight in prison as she is being denied surgery for a worsening eye condition called pterygium.

Amnesty International reported that the deliberate denial of health care is a form of torture, aiming to coerce Zeinab into providing a videotaped "confession."

In a letter from prison in June 2018, Zeinab Jalalian wrote, "No one and nothing is strong enough to prevent me from reaching my goals. I am the strongest on my own and I will continue to tread along my path."



Vicious Clampdown in Fear of Another Uprising

Cracking Down on Student Freedoms

Repression and Resistance in Iranian Universities

For nearly a year, we, unified as “us,” stand together with a resounding message: “No.” We have nothing to say to you. The wounds you inflicted upon us in September still bleed, yet we endure, hand in hand, unwavering in our pursuit of freedom.

- Part of the message from students of Tehran University of Art

University is the hub of knowledge, attracting the most knowledgeable young minds. Throughout the two dictatorships of the Shah and the Mullahs in Iran, the university has consistently served as the cradle of freedom, the birthplace of opposition movements, and the epicenter for organizing protests in every era. During the nationwide uprising in 2022, universities became focal points for protests against the Mullahs’ regime. Students from 204 universities and higher education institutions across Iran participated in demonstrations. Daily protests occurred in at least 100 universities nationwide. Consequently, the Mullahs’ regime exerted significant pressure on the universities to quell the protests and stifle the uprising. On one hand, the Mullahs’ regime has augmented budgets, employment, capabilities, and the authority of intelligence and repressive agencies within universities. On the other hand, unprecedented pressure is being imposed on students. The extent of engagement with students is so broad that they are swiftly summoned to intelligence and security agencies, as well as

the disciplinary committee, for issues ranging from their choice of clothing and the wearing of compulsory hijab to participation in any form of gathering or protest activities. Such infractions lead to expulsion and suspension orders, along with exclusion from education, dormitories, and other related privileges. Furthermore, a regime official has disclosed plans to shutter eighty-two percent of universities to eliminate this focal point of protest. Mohammad Mehdi Dehghan, an official from the Ministry of Science, revealed, “Currently, there are 2,183 higher education centers in Iran, and this number is slated to be reduced to 400. This implies that only 18 percent of the existing educational centers will remain operational, while 82 percent will either be closed or merged.” (The state-run website tejaratnews.com, June 21, 2023) Nevertheless, Iranian students remain resolute in their determination to challenge the regime and bring about its downfall. In this section, we briefly examine some repressive measures targeting students, especially female students.



Repressive Tactics and Student Resistance

During 2023, more than 3,000 students were summoned to disciplinary committees and security institutions, marking a disturbing trend in the regime's crackdown on dissent.

- Some students received calls from security agents using unknown numbers, instructing them to appear at the Ministry of Intelligence to provide a "written commitment." These summonses often lacked transparency, with the security agency remaining unnamed and the purpose behind summoning the students unclear.
- According to Amir Kabir's student newsletter (August 17, 2023), within a six-month period, 2,843 students from various universities were summoned to disciplinary committees, where they were pressured to pledge not to participate in protests. It was only after this point that the

regime escalated its repressive tactics to an unprecedented level.

- On October 11, 2023, the security agency of Amir Kabir University of Technology summoned over 50 students to the disciplinary committee after scrutinizing security camera footage related to the 2022 protests. This intensified scrutiny extended to other universities as well.
- A particularly egregious incident occurred on December 10, 2023, when the head of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Tehran physically assaulted students. Subsequently, 30 students were summoned to the disciplinary committee, facing charges for participating in a protest rally following the assault. This exemplifies the regime's brutal response to any form of dissent within academic institutions.



Students hold placards reading: University is not a military garrison; stop clampdown on students!

Student Activists Facing Imprisonment

Throughout the past year, a wave of arrests and detentions has swept through the student population, leaving many in the clutches of the authorities. Here are a few notable examples of the plight faced by female students:

- **Sarina Mahmoud Salehi:** A 19-year-old animation student at the Technical and Vocational University of Karaj, was apprehended by plainclothes officers on March 2, 2023. Her supposed crime? Publishing news about students being poisoned within the university.
- **Mahshid Es'haghi:** A master's student in philosophy of art at Tehran University of Art, she fell victim to security forces in Shahrekord on May 30, 2023. She was subsequently transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison, where solitary confinement became her reality for 10 agonizing days.
- **Maedeh Adami Makri:** On June 17, 2023, amidst heavy presence of police and special forces, plainclothes officers descended upon the University of Arts in front of Bagh-e Melli campus. Ten students were forcibly arrested and bundled into an unmarked van before the authorities hastily departed. Among the detained was 22-year-old Maedeh Adami Makri, a drama and literature student at Tehran University of Arts. She is originally from Mahabad and found herself in the clutches of the Ministry of Intelligence's detention center in Ward 209 of Evin Prison.
- **Samaneh Asghari:** An industrial engineering student at Tehran's Kharazmi University and a fervent advocate for women's and children's rights. Asghari was arrested on September 14,

2023, at her residence in Tehran. Subsequently, she was taken to Evin prison. On December 16, 2023, it was reported that the 29th branch of Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced her to one year in prison.

- **Armita Pavir:** Pursuing studies in cellular and molecular biology at Azerbaijan Madani University, Pavir faced arrest by security forces on September 21, 2023. She was then transferred to the women's ward of Tabriz Central Prison. Apart from expulsion from the university, Pavir received a sentence of one year, ten months, and 17 days in prison.

- **Sahar Salehian:** On the inaugural day of the new academic year, student activist Salehian was arrested in Saqqez. A nursing student at Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences, she was apprehended by security forces on September 23, 2023.

- **Sepideh Reshno:** Born in 1994 in Khorramabad, Reshno, a bachelor's student in painting at Al-Zahra University, faced initial sentencing to two semesters of exclusion from education for non-compliance with mandatory hijab regulations on university premises. Subsequently, her sentence was increased to three years and 11 months in prison, currently under appeal.



- **Niloofer Mirzaii:** A graphics student at Al-Zahra University, Mirzaii endured severe consequences for her participation in protests. On April 12, 2023, she was barred from studying for two semesters, denied access to a dormitory, and eventually exiled to Yazd University. Mirzaii was arrested during the nationwide uprising, spending three months in prison. Later, she faced imprisonment in Qarchak Prison for over three months due to her participation in Armita Geravand's funeral.

- **Fatemeh Rahmati:** A disturbing trend in Iran involves the kidnapping of female students en route to the university or outside their dormitories. One such victim, 19-year-old Fatemeh Rahmati, an accounting student at Azad University from Abadan, was forcibly abducted by armed individuals on January 14, 2023. Witnesses reported a violent arrest where she was dragged on the ground, screaming throughout the ordeal. Rahmati was subsequently transferred to Sepidar Prison in Ahvaz.

Punitive Measures Against Defiant Female Students

Hundreds of students across Iran have faced expulsion orders, exclusion from education, and eviction from their dormitories because of participating in protests or failing to adhere to mandatory hijab regulations. Here are a few alarming instances:

- On February 5, 2023, Zabul University's Disciplinary Committee issued final dismissal orders for at least 16 students. Their alleged offense? Attempting to eat lunch in a mixed manner in front of the university, a demonstration of the severe consequences for even minor acts of defiance.

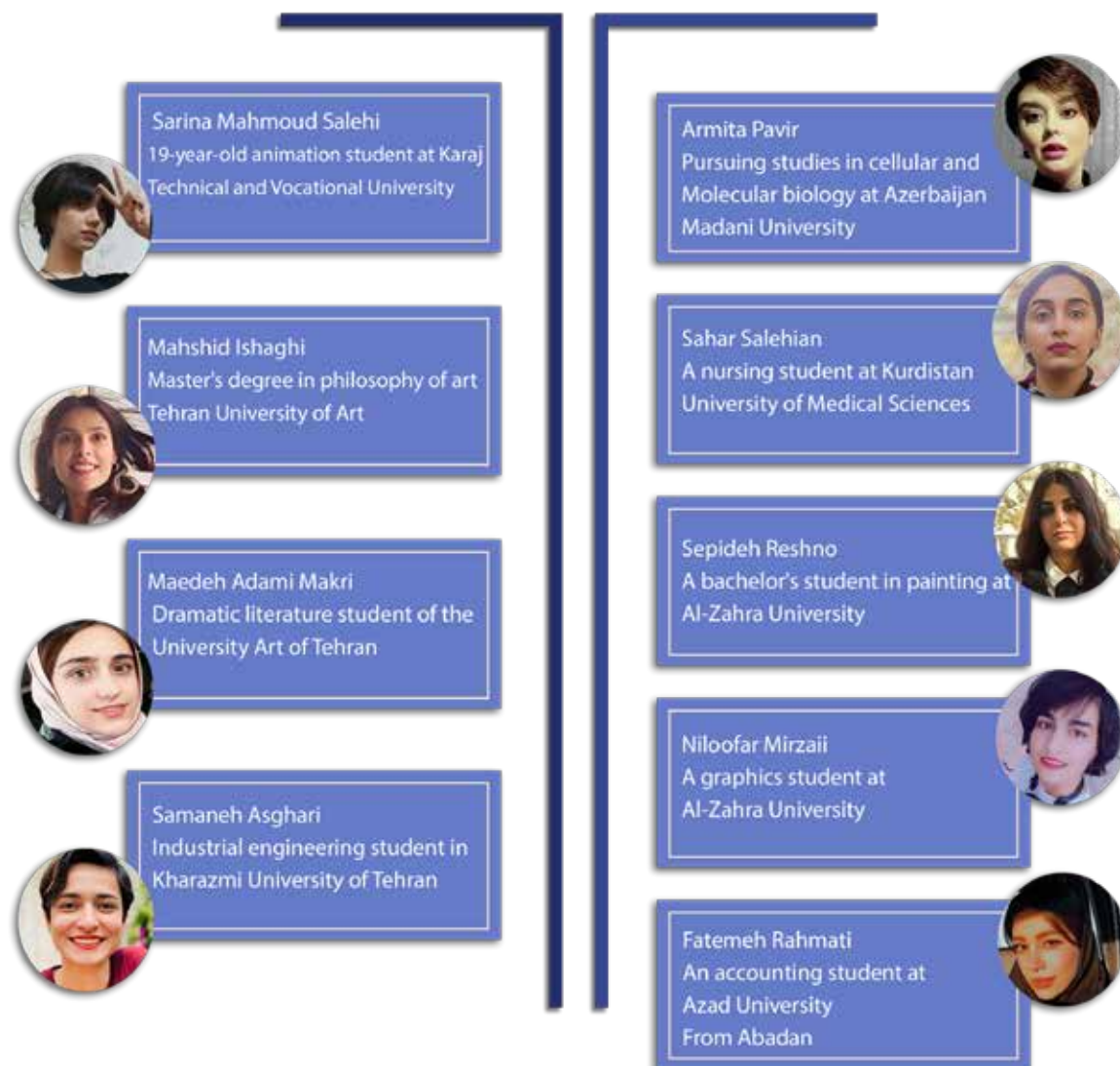
- In Tabriz, eight students studying medical science received sentences of deprivation of education and exile. Their crime? Protesting the widespread poisoning of high school students.

- On August 12, the student union councils disclosed that at least 200 female students at Bu-Ali Sina University of Hamedan were abruptly barred from the dormitory. The reason? Non-observance of the dress code and smoking.

- The disciplinary committee at Bandar Abbas University of Medical Sciences sentenced students in various fields, including nursing, intelligence, health, and emergency medicine, to executive or conditional suspension from their studies. Students also faced exile and forced transfer to other universities as punitive measures for participating in protests.



- According to the newsletter of Amir Kabir University of Technology on October 25, 2023, over 100 student activists at this university are confronting the threat of dismissal.





Shahin Dabestani

- On April 9, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences took punitive action by suspending 16 medical students, including Shahin Dabestani, from studying for one or two semesters. Their transgression? Protesting the poisoning of students in schools, illustrating the harsh repercussions faced by those who stand up against injustice.



Fatemeh Sadri Far

- A dental student at Qom University of Medical Sciences, Fatemeh Sadri Far faced a harsh sentence of suspension from academic activities for four semesters. Additionally, she was informed of the imperative to change her place of study.



Shaghayegh Akbari

- Shaghayegh Akbari, a Sociology PhD student at Tarbiat Moalem University of Tehran, received a suspension for two semesters (12 months).



Motahareh Gunehi

- A dental student and the political secretary of the Islamic Student Association at Tehran University's Faculty of Medical Sciences. Motahareh Gunehi faced expulsion from the university. In addition to expulsion, she received a severe penalty: a 24-month temporary ban from studying, highlighting the targeted repression against active student leaders.



Moloud Safari

- Moloud Safari, an art student at Al-Zahra University, along with several peers, was prohibited from entering the university on May 20, 2023, for not adhering to the mandatory hijab. Further, she received a disciplinary committee sentence of two semesters' suspension, exemplifying the harsh consequences faced by those challenging dress code regulations.

Stricter Hijab Rules

Escalation of Control Over Female Students

With the commencement of the new Iranian year and the enforcement of stricter hijab regulations for women and girls in late March 2023, there was an escalation in the repression faced by female students.

- On April 3, 2023, coinciding with the reopening of schools after the New Year holidays in Iran, Tehran University's "Herasat" — a branch of the Intelligence Ministry stationed at all universities — exerted pressure on female students to wear the maqna'e. The maqna'e is a black veil with a stitched front that descends to the chest, significantly more conservative than the conventional headscarf.

- Reports from Tehran University's Art College indicate that on June 17, 2023, female Herasat agents stationed outside the School of Cinema and Theater offered maqna'es to female students. Those who refused were warned that they would be prohibited from taking exams.

- In an alarming development, students not wearing the maqna'e were denied entry into the music department. However, a group of students gathered at the department entrance, enabling their fellow students to gain access.

- On the same day, Herasat forces in the girls' dormitories of the College of Arts hindered students from leaving without wearing the maqna'e, even those who did not have plans to go to the university.



Women's Clothing Rules at the University

1. Head, neck, and shoulder must be completely covered including the hair
2. Choose appropriate color for the covering
3. Wear a long and conventional coat
4. Wear pants that reach the ankles
5. Opt for conventional shoes
Suitable for the work environment
6. Use non-thin socks that provide full foot coverage



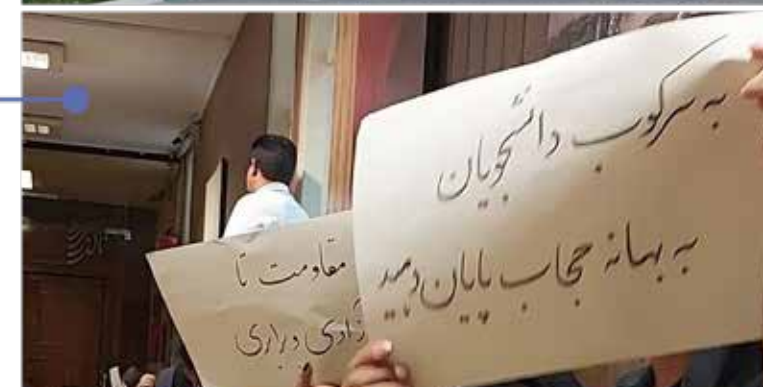
Unprecedented Repression in Iran's Universities

One month before the anniversary of the 2022 nationwide protests, students and higher education centers faced the most severe repression, surpassing even the crackdowns of 1999 and 2009.

- According to students, stringent security measures have been in place since the beginning of the new academic year (2023-2024). They report the installation of numerous closed-circuit cameras, with non-academic individuals constantly moving within the university premises.
- The implementation of facial recognition technology at university restaurants, aimed at identifying students, comes at a staggering cost of 700 million tomans (approximately 13,700 USD) for each university.
- Social media posts on September 25, 2023, displayed images of camouflaged vehicles parading inside Tehran University.
- Additionally, reports indicate the presence of Hijab patrols on university campuses, instructing students to adhere to mandatory hijab laws. In Mashhad's Ferdowsi University in northeastern Iran, despite increased gender segregation in university spaces such as cafeterias, libraries, and green spaces, security patrols actively confront students who interact with the opposite sex.
- The enforcement of stricter dress code guidelines serves as a pretext for suppressing students, becoming the most frequently cited justification by security forces to restrict and control university environments. Throughout 2023, numerous female students were denied access to education under the pretext of non-compliance with mandatory hijab regulations and participation in protests.
- University security, known as "Herasat," extensively utilizes recorded videos from university cameras to identify female students not adhering to hijab standards. Female agents stationed at university entrances scrutinize the clothing of female students, permitting entry only to those who cover their hair and wear long coats extending below the knee. This stringent enforcement underscores the extent to which dress codes are employed as a tool for control within the university setting.
- On October 15, 2023, at least 20 female students enrolled in Tehran's Allameh Tabatabai University's School of Social Sciences were handed official letters upon entering the school premises. These letters, issued on the university's official letterhead, served as warnings, stating that the recipients had not adhered to "clothing regulations." The letters ominously cautioned that failure to comply would result in "disruptions in their educational program."

A student holds a sign that reads, "Stop suppression of students under the pretext of (violating the rules of) Hijab."

A banner posted in the street warns women that walking in public without the compulsory Hijab would cost them 10 days to two months in prison and a fee of 50,000 to 500,000 Rials in cash.



A store is shut down for providing services to women without the compulsory Hijab.

Students hold a sit-in protest against a court ruling and arrests made for violating the mandatory Hijab.



- The university's Herasat forces have extended their reach by employing student members of the Basij, referred to as "student informant officers," and plainclothes officers within the university. Their role involves filming female students in classrooms and across the campus.

- In some instances, during the university's closing hours, Herasat forces tail female students to the exit, instructing guards to prevent them from leaving.

- Stricter measures have also been enforced within the girls' dormitories. In addition to installing cameras at the entrances of several girls' dormitories in Tehran University and Amirkabir University, numerous students have been summoned to disciplinary committees based on their attire outside the university. In certain cases, students faced bans from entering the dormitories as a consequence.

- University students in Iran have faced physical assaults from a range of security forces, including Basij members, plainclothes officers, and even the head of Herasat. These attacks often center on the pretext of students allegedly not adhering to mandatory hijab laws.

- On May 27, at Bahonar University of Kerman, a Basij member brutally assaulted a female student with a knife, citing the mandatory hijab laws as justification. Surprisingly, Herasat security forces did not intervene, but other students came to the victim's aid, preventing further harm.

- Around 2:30 am on June 15, 2023, approximately 50 students at Tehran University's School of Art, who were engaged in a sit-in protest against the compulsory wearing of the maqna'e, were subjected to severe beatings by the head of Herasat. The head of Herasat, as reported by the state-run Shargh Daily, issued "strange threats," including targeting the students with a "DSHK," a Soviet-era heavy machine gun.

- A shocking incident unfolded on November 20, 2023, at Tehran's Melli (Beheshti) University, where masked security officers attacked the library and classrooms of the school of psychology, literature, and humanities. They confiscated the student IDs of female students not wearing a hijab. In response, students from this university and others in Tehran initiated a two-day strike, refusing to participate in their classes in protest of the violent actions.



Harassment of Students Outside University Campuses

- More than 50 cafes in the vicinity of Tehran University and five cafes near Amir Kabir University have been forcibly shut down under the pretext of "violating hijab rules" and allegedly participating in activities "against the regime."

- Notably, university Herasat forces have extended their reach beyond campuses, conducting raids on cafes, and confronting female students not adhering to hijab regulations.

- In a further expansion of control measures, the regime introduced new patrols known as "Guidance ambassadors" at the onset of the academic year.

- These patrols operate around Amir Kabir University of Technology and Tehran University with the explicit purpose of confronting women and girls who do not comply with mandatory hijab regulations. Clad in identical attire, the patrols issue warnings, film students, and, disturbingly, engage in physical confrontations.

- "Guidance ambassadors" actively track female students and, if found alone, prevent them from entering the metro until they cover their hair. Additionally, they utilize body cameras to film women during these encounters, intensifying the intrusive nature of their actions.



An agent of Herasat pushes a female student down the stairs because she was not wearing the compulsory Hijab.



Academic Purge

Crackdown on Professors in Higher Education

In addition to the arrest of students, the regime has detained, summoned, banned, suspended, or expelled numerous professors for their support or involvement in the uprising.

With the expulsion of professors, certain university courses have been eliminated, and the admission capacity of others has been reduced.

- Following a series of meetings in December 2022, the National Security Council placed blame on university professors for the unrest, demanding their dismissal and replacement with 15,000 faculty members “aligned” with the regime’s policies.
- Described by government media as a “purification” and “homogenization of the higher education body,” this purge has impacted over 150 Iranian universities. Since October, 32,000 faculty members have been removed from various units and disciplines of Azad University.
- The dismissal of professors gained momentum just before the commencement of the new academic year, with a notable number of female professors being among those affected. They have faced severe consequences, including dismissal, suspension, or bans from teaching.

The names of these educators, who have dedicated years to their profession, underscore the extent of the crackdown:

- Mahshid Gohari, a professor at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, was abruptly fired in October 2023 after seven years of teaching.
- Professors Hamideh Khademi, Ameneh Aali (with a decade of teaching experience), Baharak Akhtardanesh, Raheleh Ali Muradzadeh, Lili Varharam, Aazin Movahed, Somayeh Sima, and Sara Malekan, along with Armita Siraj Zahedi, Zahra Ahmadinejad (a full-time professor at Tehran University of Medical Sciences), Neda Tolaei, Fereshteh Hosseini Shakib, and Parisa Pourmohammadi (an archaeology professor at Shiraz University’s School of Arts) were expelled between August and September 2023.
- Additionally, Fariba Mostafavi, a retired professor from Al-Zahra University and a 1st-degree international Tai Chi instructor of the Wushu Federation in Iran, has been in detention since November 2023.

<div>1</div> <div></div> <div>Mahshid Gohari Professor at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad</div>	<div>2</div> <div></div> <div>Hamideh Khademi Professor of Psychology at Allameh Tabatabai University</div>
<div>3</div> <div></div> <div>Ameneh Aali Professor of psychology in Allameh Tabatabai University</div>	<div>4</div> <div></div> <div>Baharak Akhtardanesh Professor of Veterinary Medicine Bahonar University of Kerman</div>
<div>5</div> <div></div> <div>Raheleh Ali Muradzadeh Faculty member at the University of Medical Sciences of Iran</div>	<div>6</div> <div></div> <div>Lili Varharam Professor of culture department and Ancient languages of Tehran University</div>
<div>7</div> <div></div> <div>Aazin Movahed Music professor at Tehran University</div>	<div>8</div> <div></div> <div>Somayeh Sima Professor of Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran</div>
<div>9</div> <div></div> <div>Sara Malekan Faculty assistant professor Management of Amirkabir University</div>	<div>10</div> <div></div> <div>Armita Siraj Zahedi Professor of industrial design in the Faculty of Architecture and urban development University of Science and Industry</div>
<div>11</div> <div></div> <div>Zahra Ahmadinejad Full time professor at University of Medical Sciences</div>	<div>12</div> <div></div> <div>Neda Tolaei Professor of painting and history of Al-Zahra University</div>
<div>13</div> <div></div> <div>Fereshteh Hosseini Shakib Professor of the University of Art</div>	<div>14</div> <div></div> <div>Parisa Pourmohammadi Professor of Archaeology at Shiraz University of Arts</div>



Crucial Roles and Tragic Toll

Plight of High School Girls in Iran

In the tumultuous history of Iran, marked by significant moments such as the 1979 anti-monarchist revolution and subsequent protests against the entrenchment of clerical rule, high school students have consistently played pivotal roles.

This held true in the 2022 nationwide protests, where female students, often leading the charge, became central figures in the struggle.

Schools emerged as focal points of rebellion and anti-regime protests. In numerous instances, students defiantly expelled agents and regime-affiliated school officials, rejecting participation in state-sanctioned ceremonies.

Slogans echoing “Death to the dictator” resonated through the protests, and students tore pictures of the regime’s Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, from their textbooks and trampled on them. In response, riot police were deployed, even entering girls’ schools with armored vehicles to quash the demonstrations.

The brutality of the regime’s crackdown on the 2022 protests is starkly evident in the tragic fate of at least 78 school students and children under the age of 18.

Security forces mercilessly killed them in the streets, with a significant number being teenage girls and high school students.

Seyyed Jalal Hosseini, the political deputy of the regime’s Basij Organization, disclosed that among the 30,000 protesters arrested during the 2022

uprising, a staggering 70% were under the age of 20. He further acknowledged the substantial presence of young women and girls in the uprising.

Witnesses attested that dozens of girls under the age of 18 faced interrogation and torture in Shiraz’s Adel Abad prison, southwest Iran, charged with offenses such as “waging war with God” and “corruption on earth.” In alarming instances, security forces abducted girl students actively involved in protests directly from their schools. The regime’s brutal attempts to suppress the uprising specifically targeted female high school students, underscoring the severity of their repression.



Regime’s Infamous Tactics: Diverting Protests Through Crisis Creation

A well-known strategy employed by the clerical regime to quell protests and opposition involves the intentional creation of crises.

Historical instances include the 1980 Iran-Iraq war, initiated by the regime’s founder and then Supreme Leader Khomeini.

More recently, the regime, under Khamenei’s sponsorship, orchestrated the Gaza war in October 2023 to avert potential uprisings within Iran. This diversion aimed to shift attention towards a devastating Middle East conflict while ruthlessly suppressing domestic opposition through numerous executions.

Amid the 2022 nationwide uprising, the regime resorted to the familiar tactic of creating crises to redirect attention away from the protests.

The chemical gas attacks on girls’ schools, a crisis that deeply impacted nearly all Iranian families, temporarily served as a means for the regime to extinguish the flames of the uprising.

This deliberate strategy underscores the regime’s persistent efforts to maintain control by manipulating public attention through crisis orchestration.

Chemical Gas Attacks on Girls’ Schools Across Iran

The ominous wave of chemical gas attacks on girls’ schools unfolded on November 30, 2022, coinciding with nationwide protests, as the Noor Academy in Qom, near Tehran, became the initial target.

Initially confined to schools in Qom, the attacks persisted until January 2023, with officials taking no action and vehemently denying the occurrences. On February 14, the chemical gas attacks extended their reach to Tehran and other cities. Within a mere five months, over 700 schools in more than 160 cities, predominantly girls’ high schools, fell victim to this sinister assault by May.

Despite the Ministry of Health, MPs, and various officials acknowledging between 5,000 and 13,000 affected students, these statistics only account for February 2023. Subsequent increases have not been disclosed by authorities or official sources.

Tragically, at least five children lost their lives in the attacks, with unconfirmed reports suggesting more casualties. This egregious act has left a devastating impact on the safety and well-being of students across Iran.



Uncovering State Involvement: Evidence of Organized Gas Attacks

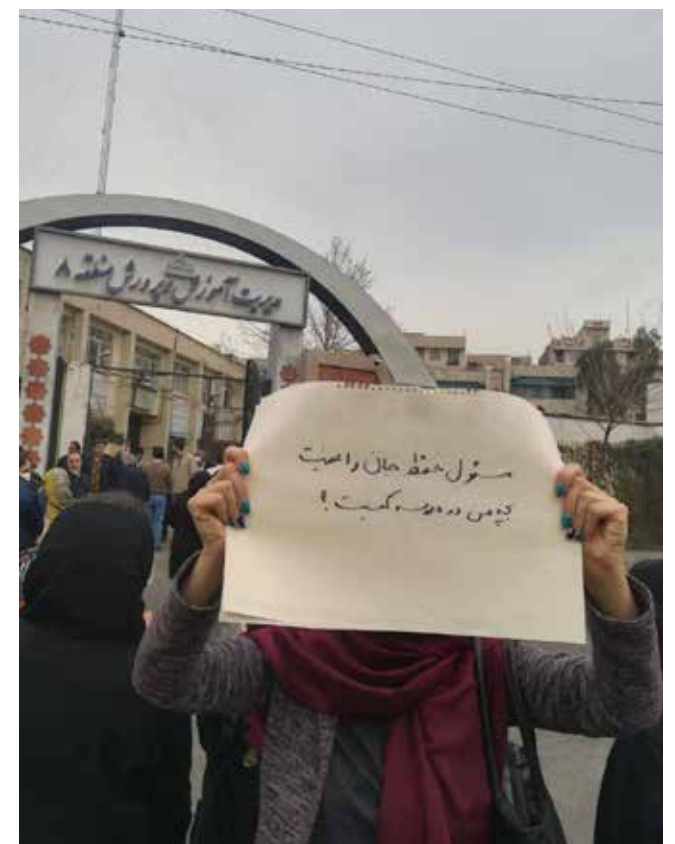
The prolonged inaction of the regime over three months, coupled with contradictory statements from authorities, stands as glaring evidence of the government's complicity in this heinous crime. Despite officials' claims in March about arresting the perpetrators, the wave of poisonings persisted even after schools reopened following the Nowruz holidays (the Persian New Year). Furthermore, the regime resorted to arresting protesting parents and individuals reporting or publishing news related to the chemical attacks on schools. Notably, hospitals and doctors were prohibited from disseminating information about the victims, with their test results exclusively funneled to the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and withheld from the public eye. These actions collectively point to a deliberate and organized state involvement in the gas attacks. The Iranian public found themselves perplexed as to why the regime, known for utilizing CCTV extensively to arrest protesters and dissenters, failed to employ this tool to identify and apprehend the perpetrators of the chemical attacks. A sentiment echoed by the Didban-e Iran state-run website on March 6, 2023, questioned the apparent lapse in the country's security institutions: "How can security organizations, which investigate, follow up, and make arrests in the shortest possible time if a problem occurs, not see anything in this situation?... The failure of the country's security institutions to deal with

the agents of poisoning is questionable and unacceptable."

Within Iran's oppressive climate, only the state possesses the necessary resources to orchestrate organized and coordinated attacks on such a nationwide scale. Strikingly, instead of relevant institutions like the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Intelligence assumed control of the case.

On April 28, the Ministry of Intelligence released a statement attributing the attacks to enemy agents attempting to destabilize the state. The statement denied the use of toxic substances, asserting that the release of non-toxic gases had caused panic among girl school students. This official stance not only raises further questions about the government's response but also underscores the complex web of misinformation and shifting blame surrounding the gas attacks.

The Ministry of Intelligence shifted focus to social media networks. Emphasizing their role in disseminating rumors and fear, the Ministry issued threats to arrest and punish those involved. The Ministry went further, promising to prosecute anyone making baseless accusations against the government and its affiliates.



A woman holds a sign that reads, "Who is responsible for the life and security of my child at school?"



Brave high-schooler detained and tortured for protesting gas attacks

In a courageous act of resistance, Bitā Shafiei, a 17-year-old student from Isfahan's Shahinshahr in central Iran, faced arrest after defiantly kicking a tear gas canister back at security forces during a gathering protesting the chemical poisoning of schools in her city.

During her trial, Bitā fearlessly confronted the judge and interrogators, boldly brandishing her middle finger and slapping the judge in the face. This act of defiance came at a cost, as she endured torture, resulting in a broken middle finger. Despite the adversity, her sentence was

suspended for one year, and she was eventually released.

The price of her protest extended beyond Bitā herself. Intelligence agents, in a late-night raid on June 26, 2023, targeted her home to arrest her. In her absence, her parents faced violence, and her mother, Maryam Abbasi Nikou, aged 42 and a mother of two, was arrested. Currently detained in Isfahan's Dolat Abad prison, Mrs. Abbasi Niko faces charges of "insulting the prophet," highlighting the lengths to which authorities are willing to go to suppress dissent.



Morality Police's Fatal Assault on 16-Year-Old Defying Hijab Laws

In a shocking incident that reverberated globally, 17-year-old Armita Geravand lost her life in October 2023 due to a fatal assault by the regime's morality police in a Tehran subway station. The striking similarity to the murder of Mahsa Amini the previous year, which sparked the 2022 protests, underscored the persistent brutality of the regime.

In the aftermath, Iran's intelligence agencies sought to suppress information, intimidating Armita's friends, classmates, and even her family from sharing details about the attack and her condition in the hospital. Threats were directed at her school, with intelligence agents warning against any communication or social media posts. Despite a state-run news agency presenting CCTV footage and claiming Armita fainted due to a blood pressure drop, crucial images from the subway's interior cameras were omitted. Public skepticism grew, prompting questions about the regime's narrative.

Eyewitnesses contradicted the regime's account, stating that on October 1, 2023, Armita's refusal to adhere to the hijab enforcer's directive led to a violent attack. She was pushed, hitting her head on the ground, and suffering a concussion. It is highly likely that she succumbed to the injuries three days after falling into a coma.

Security officials, fearing public unrest, withheld news of Armita's death. Even her mother, attempting to access her daughter's intensive care unit, was arrested.



On October 11, reports of Armita being brain dead were selectively released through limited state-run media, only to be denied shortly after. This strategic move aimed to gauge public reaction before the official announcement of her death on October 28.

Armita Geravand, a vibrant and talented individual with a black belt in taekwondo and a passion for painting, symbolizes the heavy price Iranians pay in their courageous struggle against the oppressive regime. Her story, alongside others like Bitā, epitomizes the resilience of those who resist tyranny, fueling the ongoing quest for freedom and democracy in Iran.



Teachers in the Crosshairs

Regime's Attempt to Muzzle Dissent Through Arrests and Firings

In the past year, the Mullahs' regime intensified its crackdown on teachers, resorting to arrests, summonses, and dismissals as tactics to stifle dissent. The Security Department and the Board of Administrative Offenses of the Ministry of Education have transformed into the executive arm of the regime's security forces, channeling their efforts into suppressing teachers' protests through baseless accusations.

Over the last two years, approximately 500 teachers have faced arrests, imprisonment, termination, or exile, all under fabricated charges. Simultaneously, numerous cases have been filed against other educators.

In various Iranian prisons, dozens of freedom-

loving teachers remain detained. Their charges include meeting with the families of victims from recent protests and sharing content in solidarity with the protests on social media.

To quell teachers' protest gatherings, the regime also resorts to removing or downgrading their ranks. A dismissed teacher revealed, "There are 300 to 400 teachers who had their ranks denied due to their involvement in trade union activities." Furthermore, the teacher emphasized a disturbing shift in the regime's tactics: "Previously, confrontations were primarily aimed at union leaders, but now any teacher participating in rallies faces direct confrontation." (State-run ensafnews.com, December 30, 2023)

Teachers and Educators Purged from Schools

As the 2023-2024 academic year commenced, the regime's Minister of Education made a startling announcement, signaling the removal of 20,000 school principals. Jalal Mahmoudzadeh, a representative of the regime's parliament from Mahabad, revealed that between 15,000 to 20,000 school principals were dismissed on grounds of political and religious reasons. (State-run didbaniran.ir, October 29, 2023)

The repercussions of this purge extend beyond administrative changes, with state-run websites reporting a shortage of 300,000 teachers. This alarming shortage poses a potential threat to

the education of the next generation, a tragedy with far-reaching and irreparable consequences. (State-run baharnews.ir, October 30, 2023) Mohammad Vahidi, an MP from Borujerd, provided further insight, stating, "At the beginning of the school year, 68,000 teachers were removed from the education system." He emphasized the immediate consequence: "That means 68,000 classrooms are now empty and without teachers, despite these educators having run these classrooms for the past 10 years." (State-run Rouydad24.ir, October 30, 2023)

Deportation, imprisonment, and increased repression of teachers

According to reports by sources associated with Iranian human rights defenders, at least 60 teachers were arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned in 2023.

- Zeinab Hamrang Seyedbeglou, a 50-year-old retired teacher and former political prisoner, was arrested on March 11, 2023, and was sentenced to five years in prison.
- On April 5, 35-year-old Kurdish teacher Fariba Zand Karimi was arrested after being summoned to the Sanandaj Intelligence Department in western Iran. Following her arrest, intelligence department agents stormed and searched her home. Mrs. Zand Karimi was put under pressure in solitary confinement to make false confessions against herself.
- On April 21, the Board of Educational Violations of Gilan province in northern Iran fired Mrs. Fariba Anami after issuing an illegal verdict. Mrs. Anami had been a high school teacher in Gilan and Anzali for more than 25 years. She is one of the hundreds of teachers who have only been pursuing their occupational rights.
- Mrs. Farzaneh Nazeranpour, a teacher living in Tehran, was sentenced to ten months in prison in March for "spreading propaganda against the state and disturbing public opinion." She was transferred to Tehran's Evin Prison on May 2 after her sentence was upheld in an appeals court.

- On May 9, teachers in 14 provinces held rallies to protest the violation of their basic rights, the arrest of teachers, the lack of teachers' ranking, and the serial poisoning of students while demanding the unification of teachers' salaries. A significant number of teachers were arrested during the rallies.

- Atekeh Rajabi, a teacher at the Abuzar Elementary School in a village in the northeastern city of Mashhad, was expelled from the Khorasan Province Department of Education on January 5, 2023, for supporting the nationwide uprising. She was arrested on May 9, while leaving home to join the teachers' protests in Mashhad and subsequently went on a hunger strike while detained at the Mashhad Intelligence Department. Mrs. Rajabi was temporarily released five days later but was sentenced to six months in prison on October 30. Four months of her prison time was suspended. She was transferred to Mashhad's Vakil Abad Prison on November 26, and released from prison on January 17, 2024, after serving the remaining two months in jail.

- Mrs. Fatemeh Tadrissi was arrested by security forces at the teachers' gathering in Tehran's Baharestan Square on May 9 and was taken to Qarchak Prison in Varamin. She was acquitted of the charges and was released from prison after two months.



- Maryam Jalal Hosseini was arrested on May 9, 2023, during the nationwide gathering of teachers in Tehran and was transferred to Qarchak prison. After more than two months, she was acquitted of the charge of “disturbing public order” and was released from prison.

She was once again detained on the anniversary of the uprising of the September 2022 protests and was transferred to Kachouii prison in Karaj. She is still detained in Kachoui Prison in a state of limbo and has been deprived of medical attention.

- In June, Mojgan Bagheri and Zahra Esfandiari, teachers from Shiraz in the southwestern province of Fars, were sentenced to five years and two years of prison, respectively.

- According to reports published on August 15, 2023, Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court sentenced and fined Tahereh Naghaii, the Secretary General of the Teachers’ Organization of Iran. Her punishments include six months of suspended imprisonment, payment of a fine, ban on leaving the country, and other social exclusions. She was charged with “spreading propaganda against the state.” Tahereh Naghaii was a high school teacher in the 5th district of Tehran.

- Kokab Badaghi Pegah, a physical education teacher at high schools in Izeh, was tried on June 17 along with 10 other active teachers in southwestern province of Khuzestan, and on July 18, she was temporarily dismissed from her job by the ruling of the appeals board investigating administrative violations of employees.

Kokab Badaghi Pegah



Fariba Anami



Shiva Ameli Rad



Farzaneh Nazeranpour



Zeinab Seyedbeglou



Sarveh Pour-Mohammadi



Fariba Zand Karimi



Maryam Jalal Hosseini



Atekeh Rajabi



Zahra Esfandiari



Fatemeh Tadrissi



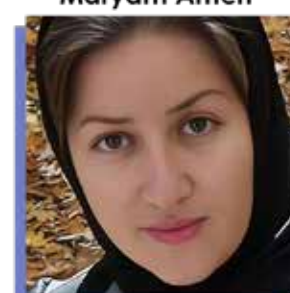
Tahereh Naghaii



Mansoureh Erfanian



Maryam Ameri



Mojgan Bagheri



Shahnaz Ramaram



Sara Siahpour



Farideh Ghahremani Far



Dr. Lida Esmaili



- Sara Siahpour, a teacher activist in Tehran, who was arrested on August 28, 2022, was sentenced to six years in prison in January 2023.

- Farideh Ghahremani Far, a 64-year-old Kurdish teacher from the western province of Kermanshah, was arrested in August and was transferred to an unknown location.

- Maryam Ameri, an Arab teacher activist living in the southwestern city of Ahvaz, was arrested in August amid a wave of arrests before the anniversary of the 2022 nationwide uprising and was taken to an unknown location. Maryam Ameri is a recorder of historical oral Arab stories, lullabies and songs.

- Shiva Ameli Rad was fired in September 2023 by the Marivan Department of Education without any administrative procedure and the possibility of appeal. She was dismissed for participating in an international ceremony without the mandatory hijab.

- Mansoureh Erfanian, a teacher in Mashhad, was arrested in October and transferred to Vakil Abad prison.

- Shahnaz Ramaram, with 28 years of service as a teacher, was dismissed in November for protesting the killing of Abulfazl Adinezadeh, a student who was killed during the 2022 protests in Mashhad.

- On October 27, Sarveh Pour-Mohammadi, a Kurdish language teacher in Sanandaj, was



Protesting teachers demand protection of girl students from chemical attacks and freedom of imprisoned teachers.

sentenced to ten years in prison.

● On August 9, 2023, Dr. Lida Esmaili, a teacher active in Gilan and Alborz provinces, was forced to retire and her years of service were reduced. This decision stemmed from the board's investigation into administrative violations by education employees in Alborz province. The charges were linked to her participation in teachers' protests and advocacy for free education for all students. During a teachers' rally in Bandar Anzali on February 22, 2023, Dr. Esmaili addressed rampant corruption in the government and emphasized the teachers' innocence, stating, "We haven't plundered the National Bank, the Educators' Reserves Fund, and the Development Fund. We don't own villas and gardens in Canada. We haven't stolen the country's documents. Our address is straightforward: at the school and in classrooms. There is no pride in arresting teachers."

In a separate protest gathering of teachers in Rasht in May 2022, she asserted, "As long as the educators' demands remain unmet, we will not vacate the streets. The streets belong to us until all our demands are addressed. Crackdowns, imprisonments, and prosecutions cannot force the teachers' movement to retreat even one step. The roots of educational policies in Iran and the ideological approach to education are entrenched in the macro political system's policies that all government factions endorse. Our demand is for the salaries of all working and retired teachers to be increased above the poverty line. We aim to halt the anti-education policies of privatization and monetization, which result in an upsurge of child laborers, children deprived of education, and the proliferation of social problems. We unequivocally condemn these detrimental impacts."

Legal Defenders Under Siege

Unprecedented Crackdown on Lawyers Advocating for Protesters

Lawyers, valiantly defending protestors, civil and political activists, have become primary targets of the regime's relentless repression—both during the 2022 nationwide protests and in the aftermath. Even social media posts discussing human rights and the unjust treatment of activists by the judiciary have not been spared from the regime's scrutiny.

According to a legal practitioner, the pressures on attorneys in the months following the uprising were deemed "unprecedented" within the last three decades. Disturbingly, from mid-September 2022 to late May 2023—spanning ten months after the 2022 nationwide protests—the regime targeted 129 lawyers either through judicial or security measures.

The regime's assault on legal professionals extended to the arrest of 55 lawyers across Iran, resulting in the filing of criminal records against them. Intelligence agencies and the judiciary orchestrated these arrests, aiming to obstruct due process and prevent lawyers from defending detained protestors.

The charges levied against these lawyers include "spreading propaganda against the state" and "encouraging corruption and prostitution." This targeted assault on legal advocates highlights the systemic intimidation and pressure on legal practitioners and underscores the harsh reprisals faced by lawyers advocating for justice and human rights in Iran.

From
mid-September 2022
to late May 2023
the regime targeted
129
lawyers
either through judicial
or security measures

The regime's assault
On legal professionals
extended to the arrest of
55
lawyers across Iran
resulting in the filing of
criminal records against them



Female Lawyers Face Harsh Repression

The regime's relentless suppression extends to female lawyers, with stark examples of their unwavering commitment to justice being met with severe consequences:

- **Farzaneh Zilabi:** In January 2023, Zilabi was handed a harsh sentence of one and a half years in prison. Known for her dedicated representation of Haft Tapeh sugarcane workers and numerous political prisoners, Zilabi valiantly defended the rights of pensioners and workers, often taking on cases pro bono.

- **Negin Kiani:** Also in January, Kiani, a lawyer and member of the East Azerbaijan Bar Association, faced punitive measures, including a fine of 10 million tomans, a two-year travel ban abroad, and the confiscation of her cellphone.

- **Kajal Vatanpour:** In January 2023, Vatanpour received a staggering sentence of two years and six months in prison, leading to her transfer to Ilam prison. Her ordeal began with a violent arrest on September 21, 2022, by plainclothes agents on her way home, subsequently taken to a security detention center in Ilam.

- **Tutia Partovi Amoli:** In May 2023, Amoli, a lawyer, and a member of the Central Bar Association, was summoned to court.

- **Marjan Isfahanian, Sara Hamzezadeh, and Samin Cheraghi:** Earlier, these three female lawyers faced summonses to the Evin Prison Prosecutor's Office.

- **Marzieh Nik Ara:** In May 2023, Nik Ara received a harsh sentence of one year in prison from the Revolutionary Court.

- **Forough Sheikh-ol Islami Vatani:** In June 2023, Vatani, a lawyer and member of the Central Bar Association, was summoned to Evin Prison's court and later sentenced to 10 years in prison in September.

- **Maryam Sadrnia:** In December, Sadrnia was arrested and transferred to an unknown location. It is essential to note the grave toll exacted upon female lawyers during the 2022 nationwide protests.

Three remarkable advocates—Maryam Arvin, Narges Khorrami Fard, and Mohabbat Mozafari, a law doctorate holder—lost their lives after their release from prison.

Allegedly, injections administered during their torturous detentions proved fatal. Their tragic deaths underscore the extreme measures the regime takes to suppress dissent and silence those championing justice.

Additionally, other female lawyers, including Asetareh (Maryam) Ansari, Nazanin Salari, Bahar Sahra'ian, and Fereshteh Tabanian, faced arrests and imprisonment during the 2022 protests. Their courage in confronting the regime's repression serves as a poignant reminder of the risks involved in advocating for human rights and justice in Iran.

(L-R) Asetareh (Maryam) Ansari-Marjan Isfahanian-Sara Hamzezadeh-Farzaneh Zilabi



(L-R) Negin Kiani-Maryam Sadrnia-Forough Sheikh-ol Islami Vatani-Bahar Sahra'ian



(L-R) Samin Cheraghi-Marzieh Nik Ara-Fereshteh Tabanian-Kajal Vatanpour



(L-R) Nazanin Salari-Tutia Partovi Amoli





Escalating Repression Against Journalists Post-2022 Protests

In its 2023 World Press Freedom Index, Reporters Without Borders ranked Iran 177th out of 180 countries in terms of press freedom. The clerical regime increased its already heavy-handed repression of journalists after the 2022 nationwide protests. Many journalists and reporters were arrested during the protests.

Until February 2023, 27 journalists, including 12 women, were still in prison. According to official and unofficial reports, at least 100 journalists were arrested or summoned since the beginning of the 2022 protests. In a report published on August 9, Sharq state-run Daily wrote that more than 90 journalists were arrested in different cities of Iran within ten months.



The ordeal of detained female journalists

Many female journalists were detained during and after the 2022 protests. Some remain in custody to this day, some were temporarily released on bail, while others chose to live in exile.

- **Niloufar Hamed**i, a photographer, and journalist at Sharq Daily, and **Elaheh Mohammadi**, a journalist at Ham-Mihan Newspaper, were detained in September 2022. They were arrested for publishing photos and reports on the condition of Mahsa Amini while she was in the hospital and later reporting on her funeral. Niloufar was sentenced to 13 years, and Elaheh to 12 years in prison for the false charge of “collaboration with a hostile government.” They were released from the women’s ward of Evin Prison on January 14, 2024, each on a temporary bail of 10 billion Tomans.
- In early January 2023, **Mehrnoosh Tavian**, a local reporter in Ahvaz, was sentenced to one year in prison and banned from leaving the country for two years.
- **Vida Rabbani**, a 34-year-old freelance journalist, is currently serving a six-year sentence in the women’s ward of Evin prison, where she faces various health issues.
- In May 2023, **Maryam Vahidian**, a labor journalist at the state-run ILNA news agency, received a four-year prison sentence.
- Sisters **Zahra and Hoda Towhidi**, both journalists, were detained in May and were imprisoned in the women's ward of Evin. Both of them were released in January 2024.





- **Azadeh Pirakouh**, a sports reporter at the state-run Iran Daily, was terminated on August 11, 2023, for writing an article criticizing the regime's sports minister.

- On July 25, 2023, **Marzieh Mahmoudi**, a reporter and editor at the tejaratnews.ir website, faced double fines and was subsequently exiled to Torbat-e Jam, a remote town on the Afghan border, all for a single tweet. By December 16, she had ceased her association with Tejarat News, citing the mounting pressure.

- On September 2, 2023, journalists **Elnaz Mohammadi and Negin Bagheri**, affiliated with Ham-Mihan and Haft Sobh dailies, respectively, received three-year suspended sentences and additional penalties. The charges against them included "conspiracy and collusion to commit crimes" and "collaboration with hostile foreign countries."

- **Elnaz Mohammadi**, the social editor at Ham-Mihan daily and Elaheh Mohammadi's twin sister, was arrested on February 5 and released on February 12, 2023, after being acquitted of the charges. On December 14, 2023, she disclosed that she had been compelled to resign from her job.

- **Nazila Maroofian**, a journalist originally from Saqqez (West Iran) but living in Tehran, faced arrest at least four times between November 2022 and September 2023. While a student at Tehran's Allameh Tabatabai University, she worked as a journalist for the Rouydad24 website. Following the publication of interviews with Mahsa Amini's father on Rouydad24, Nazila was detained and

coerced into making false confessions against herself at Evin Prison. Her ordeal included two mild heart attacks while in custody. After escaping Iran in the fall of 2023, she disclosed that she had been sexually assaulted by security forces during her time in prison.

- **Maryam Lotfi**, a reporter with Sharq Newspaper, was arrested and interrogated on October 1, 2023. The reason for her arrest was her visit to the hospital where Armita Geravand was in a coma. Armita Geravand, a 17-year-old, had been attacked by the regime's hijab patrols at the Tehran subway, leading to a concussion and cerebral hemorrhage. Tragically, Armita later passed away.

- **Leila Mirkhoshhal**, the former director of the Disabled People's Campaign, received a summons to appear at the Department of Security (Herasat) at Qazvin's Welfare Organization on October 10, 2023. Her whereabouts and condition remain unknown as of October 11. Leila, who suffers from spinal muscular atrophy, is disabled.

- On October 21, 2023, **Bahar Shabankarian**, a reporter at Etemad Newspaper, was summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence. This summons was related to her report on a robbery at the residence of Iranian director Dariush Mehrjooie and his wife, both of whom tragically lost their lives in the same week.

- **Negar Ostad Agha**, a journalist and senior editor at Etemad Online website, was arrested on October 31, 2023, during the funeral of Armita Geravand in Tehran. She was subsequently released from Qarchak prison on November 11.

- In November 2023, **Elaheh Mousavi**, an environmental journalist, was summoned to the prosecutor's office.

- Freelance journalists **Nasim Sultan Beigi and Saeeda Shafiei** were sent to Evin prison in November 2023 to serve a 3.5-year sentence.

- **Zainab Rahimi**, an environmental reporter, was summoned in February. Dismissed from the state-run ISNA News Agency in 2020 for specific content posted on Twitter, she faced charges of "spreading lies and harming public chastity" for republishing a news story about Armita Geravand on November 12, 2023. Zainab was released on bail pending the final decision on her case.

- **Manijeh Mo'azzam**, translator, and economic reporter of the weekly magazine Tajarat-e Farda, was arrested in her Tehran office on November 8. She was temporarily released on bail from Evin prison on November 27.

- On November 11, **Nasim Tavafzadeh**, editor-in-chief of the news website Moroor and founder of the environmental organization Sabzekaran Balan, along with **Halaleh Nategh**, a Sabzekaran member and Moroor reporter, were arrested by the IRGC intelligence in Rasht. They were released on November 16.

- **Maryam Shokrani**, an economic journalist and editor of Sharq Daily, was arrested on November 25 for republishing a report about Armita Geravand. She was released on bail on December 27.



Mehrnoosh Tafian

A local reporter in Ahvaz, she was arrested and jailed in January 2023. She was sentenced to one year in prison and a two-year ban on leaving the country



Maryam Vahidian

A labor journalist at the state-run ILNA news agency, she received a four-year prison sentence in May 2023



Elnaz Mohammadi

The social editor of Ham-Mihan Daily received a 3-year suspended jail sentence in September, forced to resign in December



Nasim Sultan Beigi

A freelance journalist, she was sent to Evin prison in November 2023 to serve a 3.5-year sentence



Saeeda Shafiei

A freelance journalist, she was sent to Evin prison in November 2023 to serve a 3.5-year sentence



Marzieh Mahmoudi

The editor of tejaratnews.ir was fined twice for a single tweet. She was subsequently sent to exile in a remote city



Maryam Lotfi

Sharq Newspaper reporter was arrested and interrogated on October 9, 2023, for attempting to prepare a report on the case of Armita Geravand



Zainab Rahimi

An environmental reporter, she was fired from ISNA News Agency, faced charges for republishing story on Armita Geravand





Ruthless Crackdown

Harassment and Suppression of Families of Slain Protesters

On the anniversary of the 2022 protests, the regime's security forces escalated their persecution and intimidation tactics against the families of slain protesters in an attempt to quell their voices.

Anticipating that memorial services could transform into anti-government protests, the regime initiated widespread suppression, arresting families months before the anniversary. Not only did the regime prohibit families from holding ceremonies, but it also went so far as to ban home memorial services—a deeply rooted tradition in Iran. In addition to arbitrary arrests and harsh restrictions preventing peaceful gatherings at the graves of the slain protesters, the regime stooped to the disturbing act of breaking tombstones.

- Amnesty International, in a statement on August 21, 2023, expressed concern: “Amnesty International considers the mental pain and anguish inflicted on mourning families by the authorities’ abusive practices to be a violation of the absolute prohibition on torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment under international law.”

The regime compounds the suffering of families by forbidding them from pursuing justice, truth, and compensation, or even placing a flower on the graves of their loved ones. In certain instances, the violation of the families’ rights has resulted in prison sentences and lashings. Forced summonses, interrogations by judicial officials or security forces, illegal surveillance, and even house arrests are among the measures employed by the regime.

Family of Mahsa Amini Placed Under House Arrest

In September 2023, on the anniversary of Mahsa Amini’s tragic murder, her family, who had announced their intention to hold a memorial service, found themselves placed under house arrest and subjected to threats against organizing the ceremony. On the anniversary itself, Mahsa’s father, Amjad Amini, was arrested. The family received a stern warning that Mahsa’s brother, Ashkan, would also face arrest if they proceeded with the memorial service.

In an additional measure to stifle any commemorations, security agencies enforced a prohibition on entry to the Aichi cemetery, where Mahsa is buried. Moreover, they flooded the side roads leading to Aichi, strategically preventing

people from paying their respects and honoring Mahsa’s memory.

In December 2023, the European Parliament awarded the Sakharov Prize to Zhina Mahsa Amini. However, the clerical regime banned the family of Zhina Mahsa Amini from leaving the country to receive this award and confiscated the passports of her father, mother, and brother at the airport.

The family’s lawyer attended the ceremony and received the award on their behalf. But upon his return to Iran, he was arrested at the airport, and the award was confiscated and never delivered to the Amini Family.



Amjad Amini and Mojgan Eftekhari, the parents of Zhina Mahsa Amini, were placed under house arrest on the anniversary of her murder by the Morality Police to prevent the outbreak of a potential angry protest.



- In June 2023, the mother of 16-year-old slain protester Artin Rahmani, who was killed in Izeh, in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, was summoned to the prosecutor's office for demanding justice. Security forces also detained Artin's uncle and some of his relatives.

- Mahsa Yazdani, the mother of slain protester Mohammad Javad Zahedi killed in Sari, in the northern province of Mazandaran, was detained in July 2023. She was sentenced to 13 years in prison for demanding justice.

- Farzaneh Barzekar, the mother of slain protester Erfan Rezaei, was also arrested on September 3, 2023, and taken to Qaemshahr prison in northern Iran. She was released on bail on September 27. On January 5, 2024, Mrs. Barzekar was sentenced to 24 months of jail time on charges of propaganda against the state and insulting Ali Khamenei, the mullahs' supreme leader. The jail sentence has been suspended for two years but she will have to pay a fine of five million tomans for publishing photos of herself without covering her hair. She has to pay another 15

Arbitrary Arrests

million Tomans. Disseminating falsities in cyber space, and has been banned from social media activities for one year.

- Mr. Mashallah Karami, the father of Mohammad Mehdi Karami, a young protester who was hanged in January 2023 on false charges, was arrested on August 22, 2023, and all his electronic devices were confiscated. The family's bank cards were also blocked. Security agents also destroyed all the memorabilia, medals, and belongings of Mohammad Mehdi Karami, burned his clothes, and destroyed the lawn around his gravesite.

- Four members of the family of slain protester Hadis Najafi were arrested in September 2023. They were forced to promise not to hold a memorial service and stay home. 20-year-old Hadis Najafi was killed in Karaj near Tehran during the 2022 uprising.

- In November 2023, Esrin Mohammadi was arrested by intelligence forces in the

western province of Kurdistan while printing banners for her brother's memorial service in a print shop. Her brother, Shahriar Mohammadi, was killed by security forces in November 2022.

- According to reports on September 23, 2023, the authorities of the Prison of Gorgan (northern Iran) called Ms. Fereshteh Mahdavi to bring clothes for her imprisoned son, Mohammad Reza Showqi, 23 years old. When Ms. Mahdavi went to deliver the clothes for her son, the State Security forces arrested and imprisoned her. She was temporarily released on bail in mid-October. She has been sentenced to 10 months in prison and 50 lashes for "disrupting public calm."

- On September 27, 2023, security forces arrested Sulmaz Hassanzadeh at a checkpoint between Bukan and Saqqez. Sulmaz Hassanzadeh, 29, is the sister of 28-year-old Mohammad Hassanzadeh from Bukan, who was killed by the clerical regime's repressive forces on November 16, 2022, during the nationwide protests.





No Birthday Ceremonies Allowed for Fallen Loved Ones

Celebrating the birthdays of fallen protesters at their gravesites as a means of preserving their memories has evolved into a poignant tradition embraced by the families of those who lost their lives at the hands of the regime.

However, fearing the potential resurgence of protests, the regime has taken a draconian step by prohibiting families from visiting the graves of their beloved ones on their birthdays.

On March 1, 2023, Zahra Saeedianju, the sister of Milad Saeedianju, who was tragically killed in the southwestern city of Izeh, visited her brother's grave to mark his birthday. In a shocking turn of events, she was brutally attacked by security forces who not only pulled her hair but also beat her with batons and callously trampled on her brother's grave. Adding to this distressing ordeal, Zahra was unjustly fired from her job on September 23. Subsequently, unidentified men on motorcycles threatened her with death.

The situation worsened as Zahra was detained in November, and it wasn't until December 10 that she was released on bail from Shaiban prison in Ahvaz.

The family of Mahsa Mogouii, including her mother, were arrested by security forces in July 2023 after celebrating Mahsa's birthday at her gravesite in Foulad Shahr Cemetery in central Iran. Mahsa Mogouii, 18, was shot and killed in September 2022.

In August 2023, security forces arrested Mr. Kourosh Vaziri, the husband of Shirin Alizadeh, one of the slain protesters from the central province of Isfahan. The arrest occurred in front

of his son and resulted in his transfer to Isfahan's Dastgerd prison. Mr. Vaziri and some friends were commemorating Shirin Alizadeh's birthday at her gravesite. Nasrin Alizadeh, Shirin's sister, was also arrested in September 2023.

These harrowing sequences of events shed light on the grave challenges faced by those seeking to commemorate their loved ones in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.



The photo of Yalda Aghafazli was damaged (top) and the victory sign on her tombstone removed (bottom).



Majid Kazemi was buried by security forces in a remote village. Still, his tomb was torched by government forces.



The writings on the tombstone of Mohsen Shekari, the first 2022 protester executed by the regime, were covered by paint.

Security Forces Desecrate Graves of Fallen Protesters

One of the regime's most heinous and inhumane actions involves the systematic desecration of tombstones and images commemorating fallen protesters.

Amnesty International's report documents the destruction of the graves of Mahsa Amini and 20 other slain protesters across 17 cities in Iran. Security forces employ various methods such as pouring tar or paint, setting graves on fire, and breaking tombstones during these acts of

desecration. Additionally, words like "martyr" or "fallen for freedom" are intentionally erased from the tombstones.

On November 13, 2023, Yalda Aghafazli's mother revealed that security forces had repeatedly destroyed her daughter's tombstone image. This disturbing trend highlights the extent to which security forces are willing to go in erasing any symbol associated with the fallen protesters.



The tombstone and picture of Behnam Layeghpour is broken by government forces in Rasht.



The glass frame protecting the photo and tombstone of Zhina Mahsa Amini was shattered by security forces.



Execution of Women in Iran

Setting a New Record in Crimes Against Humanity

Iran, under the rule of the mullahs, holds a staggering record for women's executions and per capita executions, surpassing all other countries worldwide. For the mullahs' regime, the death penalty serves as a tool for survival and control, used to suppress and silence the disgruntled populace. Despite international laws recommending alternative punishments for women due to their roles as mothers and guardians, Iranian women not only face imprisonment but also execution. The grim reality has intensified under Ebrahim Raisi's tenure, marking a disturbing surge in executions. In 2023 alone, the regime executed at least 864 people, setting new records for executions in Iran and the world. This toll includes 26 women, 20 political prisoners, and 5 children, underscoring the regime's brutal disregard for human rights.

Average Number of Women Executed Increases under Ebrahim Raisi

According to data compiled by the Women's Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), between August 2013 and August 2021, under the presidency of Hassan Rouhani, 118 women were executed in Iran. This translates to an average of 15 women executed annually during that period. However, in the era of Ebrahim Raisi, spanning from August 2021 to August 2023, at least 42 women were executed. This signifies an average of 21 women executed per year during his presidency, which is six more than the regime's previous president. Disturbingly, in 2023 alone, 26 women have been executed in Iran, surpassing even Raisi's previous record and exceeding the average during the previous president's tenure by ten. The Women's Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran urges the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, and the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, along with all advocates of human rights and women's rights, to strongly condemn the brutality of the mullahs' misogynistic regime. The NCRI Women's Committee calls on the UN International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran to visit women's prisons in Iran and conduct interviews with female prisoners.

EXECUTIONS IN IRAN IN 2023

Executed during 2023

864



26
women

20
political prisoners

5
children



Execution of women in Hassan Rouhani's government

between August 2013
and August 2021

118 women were executed

On average, 15 women
were executed in Iran every year



Execution of women in the government of Ebrahim Raisi

from August 2021 to August 2023

at least 42 women
were executed

On average, 21 women
have been executed
every year during Raisi's tenure

On average, 15 women
were executed every year



But in 2023, at least 26 women
They have been executed in Iran



Violence Against Women and Girls in Iran, State-Sanctioned, Institutionalized

Bravery vs. Barbarity

Ruthless Assault on Women Challenging the Regime's Dominance

The regime institutionalized gender apartheid within the Constitution and enacted stringent penal and civil codes that marginalized and subjugated women. Violence against women and girls in Iran is not merely a societal issue; it is institutionalized, and state sanctioned.

State officers enforcing compulsory Hijab have been authorized to perpetrate violence against women and girls in Iran. However, the regime's most vicious actions are directed at those brave women who dare to challenge its dominance. This historical aggression traces back to the 1980s when young women and girls demanding their democratic rights were violently arrested and incarcerated.

The regime's brutality knew no limits. Teenage girls supporting the PMOI democratic movement, which advocates women's equality and a democratic government, were ruthlessly executed even without establishing their identities. Interrogators were permitted to rape female prisoners to extract confessions or coerce cooperation against the nationwide resistance. Families received a box of sweets, a macabre offering after the execution of their daughters under the belief that virgins would ascend to heaven.

The regime's atrocities extend far beyond.

Pregnant women faced torture and execution, while the elderly and even young girls as tender as 10 or 13 were not spared. The '80s saw unimaginable horrors—the cage, the coffin, the residential unit, and other grotesque torture methods.

Thousands of women were executed for their political opposition, and in the 1988 massacre, countless enlightened women, especially the supporters of the vanguard PMOI movement, perished, with no survivors among the women's wards in various prisons.

Their sacrifices, however, propelled the women of the Iranian Resistance to the forefront of the movement. For more than 40 years, they have been leading the movement.

From these sacrifices and resistance also emerged generations of resilient women and girls in Iran who continued their path by participating in successive uprisings from 2009 to 2022. Their leadership proved to be indispensable.

Despite facing the regime's relentless crackdowns and enduring the worst forms of torture, the Resistance Units in Iran, comprised of young women and courageous girls, bravely lead anti-regime protests along with young male compatriots.

The nationwide uprising from September 2022 to March 2023 exposed the brutality of the mullahs' misogynistic regime.



Although the regime refrained from opening fire on the protests publicly, the regime's agents perpetrated vile acts against women. Young women faced unimaginable brutality, trapped solo and surrounded, bludgeoned to death or gang raped in the streets or abducted, sexually assaulted, and tortured to death.

The regime also targeted schoolgirls with chemical attacks, aimed to intimidate them from opposing the regime.

This systematic, state-sanctioned violence against women and girls in Iran remains unparalleled in modern history. So is the courage and resilience of women and girls in Iran who pay a heavy price for standing against the regime's savagery. They bravely confront violence, inequality, and the systematic violation of the rights of women in Iran with "resistance."

They steadfastly believe that toppling the misogynistic clerics is the only path to achieving their goals. So, Iran's women have vowed to pursue this objective hand in hand and remain resolute, no matter the cost.

Since the 1980s, rape and sexual assault in prisons have been systematically used by the clerical regime to break resistant prisoners, both female and male. During the 2022 Iran uprising, too, the Iranian regime's security and intelligence services used sexual assault and rape to intimidate the protesters, break their spirit of resistance, and force them to confess to falsities against their own will. Amnesty International published a report on December 6, 2023, highlighting the security forces' extensive use of sexual violence to intimidate and coerce protesters and dissenters. Titled, "They violently raped me," Amnesty International's report explains and documents how sexual violence was "weaponized to crush" the 2022 Iran uprising.

Unmasking the Culprits and their Atrocious Tactics

Detailing the disturbing experiences of 45 survivors from the nationwide protests, the report narrates accounts of 26 men, 12 women, and 7 children who fell victim to rape, gang rape, and various forms of sexual violence perpetrated by intelligence and security forces.

Of the 45 survivors whose cases Amnesty International documented in detail, 16 were raped and 29 were subjected to other forms of sexual violence. The rape survivors included six women, seven men, a 14-year-old girl, and two boys aged 16 and 17. Six of the 16 rape survivors – four women and two men – were subjected to gang rapes by up to 10 male state agents. Amnesty International found that intelligence and security forces perpetrated rape and other forms

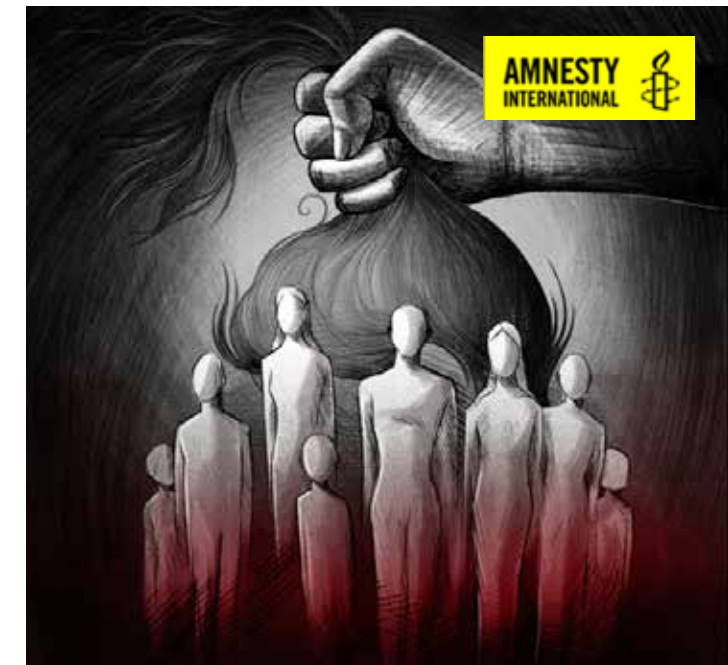
Sexual Violence Weaponized

A Tool of Torture Against Defiant Women and Youth

of sexual violence against detainees at the time of arrest, in vehicles during transfer to detention, and within detention places themselves. Detainees often faced hours of torture and other ill-treatment including rape or other forms of sexual violence, for the purpose of inflicting maximum humiliation and punishment. Once traumatized and disoriented, they were frequently interrogated and coerced into giving false "confessions," including of connections to foreign entities and receipt of funds to take part in protests.

The report explicitly identifies the culprits as agents from the Revolutionary Guards, the paramilitary Basij force, the Ministry of Intelligence, and branches of the police, including the Public Security Police, the Investigation Unit, and the Special Forces.

Moreover, the report notes that sexual violence was often accompanied by torture tactics such as beatings, electric shocks, denial of food and water, and atrocious detention conditions. Survivors were routinely denied medical care, exacerbating their physical and psychological trauma. Agn s Callamard, Amnesty International's Secretary-General, condemned these actions and noted, "The harrowing testimonies we collected point to a wider pattern in the use of sexual violence as a key weapon in the Iranian authorities' armory of repression of the protests and suppression of dissent to cling to power at all costs."



Confronting the Human Rights Crisis in Iran

The egregious acts of state-sanctioned sexual violence documented by Amnesty International demand swift and coordinated efforts to hold the Iranian regime accountable for its reprehensible actions. The international community should unequivocally condemn these atrocities and pursue decisive measures to ensure justice for the survivors and to put an end to the culture of impunity within the Iranian government.



Enforcing the Compulsory Hijab

The Most Prevalent Form of Violence Against Women and Girls in Iran

The Iranian regime thrives on the suppression of women, evident in its stringent enforcement of the compulsory veil, constituting the most prevalent form of violence against Iranian women and girls that is both state-sponsored and institutionalized.

The clerical regime's supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, labeled unveiling as "politically unlawful." He contends that adversaries exploit this issue to undermine the country's foundations and distort its identity.

A State Security Force official proclaimed the Hijab as a paramount element of national strength, targeted by external forces. He designated it as a regime "redline" that must not be crossed. (The state-run Tasnim news agency on July 23, 2023) This perspective underscores that the enforcement of compulsory veiling carries political significance beyond its so-called "religious" aspect.

For 45 years, the mullahs' regime has wielded the mandatory hijab as a tool to suppress the entirety of Iranian society. This requirement is considered a red line, any slight deviation is perceived as a threat to the foundations of the regime's sovereignty and "national security." Despite the heavy toll, Iranian women have not only resisted this imposed obligation, leaving the regime desperate in its attempts, but they have also actively connected with the nationwide movement for freedom and democracy.

Iranian women stand at the forefront, leading the struggle to overthrow this medieval regime. While other forms of violence affect specific strata of women and girls, activists and dissidents, students, and etc., the violence entwined with enforcement of the compulsory veil impacts all women from all ages, all walks of life, and in every city and village across the country. Those who violate this mandatory dress code are subjected to violence by Hijab patrols.

In 2023, in step with the Iranian women's increasing defiance of the mandatory imposition of the veil, the regime's agents escalated their brutality to unprecedented levels. In September 2022, Zhina (Mahsa) Amini was killed due to the brutality of guidance patrols. And in October 2023, Hijab monitors assaulted a 17-year-old student, Armita Geravand, inside a metro train in Tehran, which led to her death. Following is a timeline of the clerical regime's measures to clamp down on women starting in March 2023.

A Timeline of Clampdown on Hijab Opposition

March

- The Iranian regime intensified its campaign against opponents of the mandatory hijab, employing measures such as official insults, chanting, "Death to the hijab-less!" and the closure of businesses serving dissenters during the Nowruz holidays.
- By month-end, the parliament finalized a plan, involving fines, driving license and passport revocations, and internet bans for violators.
- Khamenei's representatives in Friday prayers encouraged law enforcement to stop violators, contributing to a harsh crackdown, including the closure of numerous businesses and tourist centers.
- Maryam Bani Razi, a nurse, was sentenced to 148 lashes, 8 months in prison, and dismissal from her job for not wearing hijab.

April

- Top officials increased their rhetoric, emphasizing the religious and legal significance of the hijab, labeling its removal as unlawful.
- The Ministry of Science announced that non-compliant students won't receive educational services. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health also declared restrictions for the students not following hijab rules.
- The Judiciary Head, Gholamhossein Ejeii, expressed urgency for parliamentary approval of the Hijab Plan and acceleration of legal processes.
- The State Security Force (SSF) announced an escalated crackdown on women's freedom of choice, utilizing facial recognition technology obtained from China. The regime intensified surveillance through closed-circuit cameras to identify women not covering their hair, confiscating their national social security cards.





- Banks, hospitals, metro stations, airports, movie theaters, and public services were ordered not to cater to women without head coverings.
- Businesses and employers were mandated to enforce hijab on female employees under the threat of closure of their businesses.
- The SSF closed and sealed numerous establishments, while university students were expelled, and women faced heavy penalties, imprisonment, flogging, job dismissal, and service deprivations by the Judiciary.
- A 59-year-old woman, mother of 10 children, died in an altercation with Basij agents enforcing the veil, at a tourist site in Kerman.
- On April 29, 2023, the students of Soore University in Tehran encountered an individual who attacked the students and intimidated them with a machete outside the campus. The university's security did not take any action to protect the students.

May

- On May 24, the state media reported that the Judiciary had proposed the "Protection of Hijab and Chastity" Bill to the government.
- The Interior Ministry issued a directive dated, May 30, addressing some of the government agencies, including Tehran's Municipality, and the Metro Company of the Capital, stating, "Entry of individuals who remove their Hijab to government-run places is conditional on their observance of the legal dress code."
- A female student at the Bamonar University of Kerman was stabbed for not observing the mandatory hijab.



June

- Many students of the University of Science and Technology were summoned to the disciplinary committee for failing to comply with the compulsory hijab regulations and what the university authorities deemed as "inappropriate" clothes.
- On June 8, the government submitted a bill, renamed "Supporting Hijab and Chastity" to parliament for approval with double priority. However, the parliament saw flaws in the bill as it only dealt with penalties. Therefore,

the parliament passed the bill to the Legal Commission for examination.

- On June 16, the State Security Force announced that since April 15, 2023, the SSF had sent nearly one million SMS warning messages to unveiled women in cars, confiscated 2,000 cars, and referred over 4,000 repeat offenders to the judiciary.
- The Iranian judiciary reported 2,251 cases filed against women who removed their hijabs, with 825 resulting in convictions in the first four months of the Persian year.

- Women faced severe consequences, including job termination, washing corpses, and janitorial work for defying the compulsory hijab.

July

- On July 16, the SSF announced that guidance patrols would be back to hunt down women who appear in public without covering their hair. However, they changed their name to Social Norms Police, who were stationed throughout the city with large white vans to apprehend women defying hijab codes.
- In response to the patrols, Iranians resisted, resulting in clashes in Rasht and Isfahan.
- The SSF withdrew from assaulting women but continued monitoring, leading to further clashes and arrests by anti-vice patrols and plainclothes agents.
- Various ministries issued directives instructing hospitals, tourist attractions, museums, and other facilities to prevent the admission of unveiled women.
- State Security Force actions included sealing and closing businesses, arresting managers and owners, and filing legal cases against female employees for violating hijab codes.
- The Legal Commission of the mullahs' parliament finalized the "Bill to Support the family through the Promotion of the Culture of Chastity and Hijab" with 70 articles on July 27.



August

- The Iranian parliament received the “Bill to Support the family through the Promotion of the Culture of Chastity and Hijab” on August 6 for deliberations.
- Fearing public reactions, the clerical regime’s parliament refrained from debating the bill in its open session and invoked Article 85 of the constitution which permits the formation of a committee to approve legislation for “experimental” implementation.
- Tehran's municipality employed 2,850 individuals, called Hijab-ban (meaning Hijab guards). With a monthly salary of 12 million Tomans, they are obliged to give warnings to the passengers and prevent them from getting on the metro without covering their hair. Hijab guards also hand over the women with improper veiling or no veil to the police.
- At Bou Ali University of Hamadan, 200 students, predominantly female, unexpectedly lost dormitory privileges.



Plainclothes agents illegally film people in the metro station.

Tehran’s municipality employed 2,850 individuals called Hijab-ban (or Hijab patrols).

September

- Simultaneous with the anniversary of the 2022 uprising and on the eve of the beginning of the new 2023-2024 academic year, the parliament adopted the Hijab and Chastity bill for a three-year trial, on September 20, but it will not be considered as a law until the regime’s Guardian Council approves it. In practice, however, many institutions began implementing its articles.
- The new Hijab law, comprising five chapters, imposes restrictions on women's freedom of choice in attire under the guise of protecting family foundations.
- Chapter one justifies these restrictions by claiming that behaviors promoting nudity, unchastity, hijab removal, malveiling, and actions against public chastity disrupting family calm, violate the constitution, and are banned by law.
- Chapter two mandates government agencies to provide staff with educational programs on Islamic life and the promotion of chastity and hijab.



- Chapter three obliges over 30 government entities to carry out various duties related to the law's implementation, including enforcing the compulsory dress code in schools, offices, universities, and hospitals. Notably, intelligence agencies are involved in imposing the compulsory veil.
- Chapter four links recruitment, employment, and promotions to adherence to chastity and hijab, while Chapter five outlines harsh punishments and fines for violators, extending to cyber space and social media, with businesses required to monitor employees' adherence to the veil.
- The Ministry of Sciences and Higher Education began enforcing strict dress codes for female and male students, recruiting vice patrols on campuses, depriving students of education or expelling them from school for not observing the dress code, and installing facial recognition technology in university restaurants to identify defiant students.
- UN Human Rights experts condemned Iran's Hijab law draft, stating that it could amount to "Gender Apartheid." Amnesty International also called on Iran to abolish compulsory veiling, release those detained for defying it, and abandon plans to punish women for exercising their rights.

October

- Armita Geravand, 17, was attacked by a Hijab patrol in a Tehran metro station on October 1. The attack was so severe that she sustained head trauma and went into a coma.
- From the outset, the intelligence services took control of the case, tightly restricting access to the victim by her family, friends, and media.
- The regime-controlled media presented conflicting accounts in an attempt to gauge public reaction to Armita’s death. Finally, at 9:57 am, on Saturday, October 28, 2023, the clerical regime’s official news agency IRNA announced, “Armita Geravand, a Tehrani student, passed away.”
- The authorities refused to hand over Armita’s body to her family, insisting that the family was not permitted to take her body to their hometown, Kermanshah. Armita Geravand was laid to rest on October 29, 2023, under stringent security measures in Tehran’s Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery.
- On October 15, in Tabriz, security forces assaulted a woman while shopping without covering her hair. Roya Zakeri, 31, with a master’s degree in computer sciences was shoved to the ground and injured her ankle. As she was chanting anti-regime slogans and crying, they beat her so much that she went unconscious. Security forces took her to a mental hospital.
- At least 20 young women, students of Tehran’s Allameh Tabatabaiee University, received similar letters, warning them that if they did not observe the new dress regulations, they would be expelled from school.



November

- On November 3, the UN Human Rights Committee expressed concern about discriminatory legal provisions, specifically mentioning the "Support the Family by Promoting the Culture of Chastity and Hijab Bill." The committee urged Iran to reform or repeal laws criminalizing non-compliance with compulsory veiling and disband the morality police monitoring dress codes in public.
- On November 20, 2023, masked security forces raided the library, psychology classrooms, as well as classes in the School of Literature and Human Sciences at Melli University. Their action involved confiscating student ID cards from female students who were not adhering to the compulsory hijab rule.
- During the month of November alone, and just in Valiasr Ave. in downtown Tehran Hijab patrols gave verbal warnings to more than 285,000 women. Such warnings led to 40 instances of altercations, four of which were referred to the judiciary for prosecution.

December

- Hijab monitors and plainclothes agents search passengers' personal belongings at the City Theatre Metro Station in Tehran. Plainclothes agents present in this station undertake measures, including "illegal filming of people under the pretext of Hijab warning, checking their mobile phones without written warrant and taking pictures from the telephone's registry, searching the passengers' backpacks and bags."
- The Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced a woman to one year in prison for walking her dog in a park, while not observing the compulsory Hijab.

January

- Roya Heshmati, 33, was flogged 74 times and fined for removing her veil in public.

Preventing Women from Harm

A Bill That Fails to Even Mention Violence

After 12 years of back-and-forth between the government, judiciary, and the regime's parliament, the clerical regime's parliament finally approved a bill on April 9, 2023, which initially intended to eliminate violence against women. The approved bill, however, is entitled "Preventing Women from Harm and Improving Their Security Against Abuse," failing to mention the word "violence" even once, let alone preventing it. After 12 years of foot-dragging, the regime presented a bill that essentially disregards the existence of violence against women as evident in its title. In its text, too, the word "violence" has been removed and replaced by the word "abuse." The new bill is a product of the merger of two previous bills; the government's drafted bill titled "Preserving the dignity and protection of women against violence" and the parliament's drafted bill titled "protection, dignity, and provision of women's security against violence." Unfortunately, the outcome is a bill filled with hollow words and phrases that are unlikely to be implemented.

Why did the Iranian regime finally approve this bill?

The bill was finally approved following significant global exposure of the clerical regime's criminal actions, notably after the murder of Zhina (Mahsa) Amini due to hijab enforcement and the brutal suppression of the 2022 uprising, which led to the

regime's expulsion from the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Notably, alongside direct government-led murders and brutalities, official statistics reveal a distressing surge in violence against women in Iran.

Shockingly, during the COVID-19 quarantine period, 77.2% of Iranian women experienced at least one form of violence. (The state-run Sharq daily, April 24, 2023)

The official statistics provided by the Iranian regime, known for its lack of transparency, cover a significant portion—three quarters—of Iranian women, marking a rate more than double the global average—one third—for violence against women.

Given this alarming track record, the gesture of approving the "Preventing Women from Harm and Improving Their Security Against Abuse" that fundamentally contradicts the nature and persistence of this misogynistic regime seems nothing more than a hollow gesture to deceive the international community and public opinion. Hassan Nowrouzi, the vice-chairman of the judicial commission in the mullahs' parliament, expressed opposition, stating, "In this bill, it is stated that if a man harms his wife twice, the woman can ask for divorce. This is contrary to Article 38 of the Civil Code. Moreover, where in Islam have Sunni or Shiite jurists, or even the Jewish or Christian jurists, ever sanctioned a woman's right to seek divorce due to minor violence?"



Avoiding using the term “violence”

The bill aiming to prevent “women from harm” conspicuously omits the term “violence” throughout its text. Instead, it focuses on policies that advocate gender segregation, further marginalizing women and restricting their freedoms within their own homes. Regrettably, this bill does not aim to address gender-based violence in Iran. It notably replaces the word “violence” with “abuse,” leaving ambiguity regarding its definition. Mental and verbal abuse, as well as common physical assaults, are entirely overlooked in the bill. Fatima Babakhani, a jurist and women’s rights activist, addressed the spread of violence against women: “The institutionalization of violence against women, failure to criminalize anti-social behaviors, the incompetence of the Judiciary, and the lack of a fair trial ultimately leads to the fact that violent offenders go unpunished.” (The state-run Sharq daily, October 13, 2021)

Preserving “family foundation” at the cost of women’s lives

The bill titled “Preventing Women from Harm and Improving Their Security Against Abuse” holds no significant legal impact on women’s status and security. Primarily, its aim appears to protect the family structure and uphold men’s rights. Fatemeh Qasempour, head of the women and family faction in the mullahs’ parliament, asserts, “(The bill) aims to strengthen family foundations while addressing women’s issues.”

Furthermore, Article 43 of this bill offers forgiveness for specified crimes under certain conditions, including cases involving relatives up to the second degree. Article 44 emphasizes that if the accused belongs to the woman’s family, the case, upon the woman’s consent, should initially be referred to a council for reconciliation in accordance with relevant laws. This process aims for peaceful dispute resolution. (The state-run ISNA news agency, February 15, 2023)

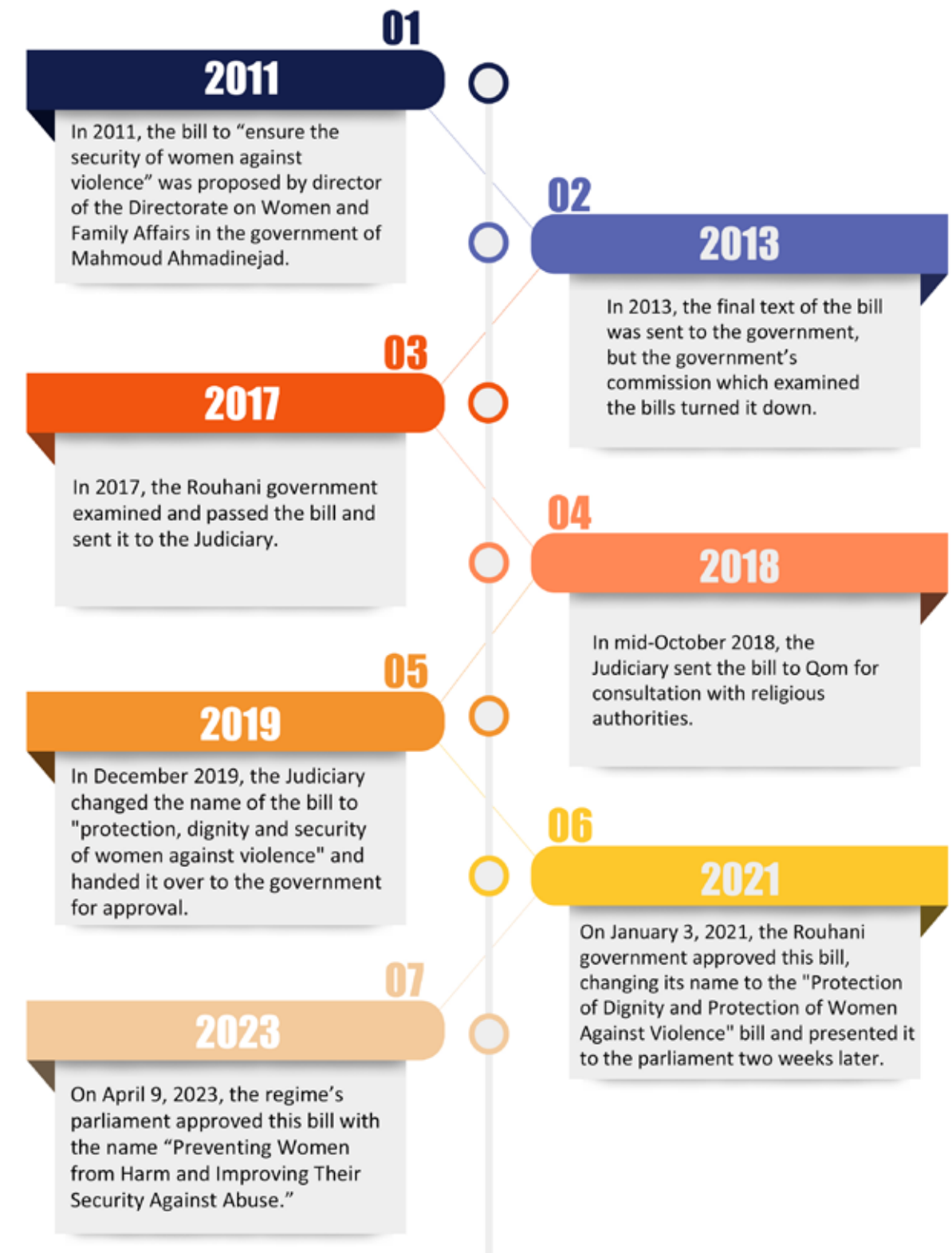
In essence, this law doesn’t support women facing violence from their husbands, fathers, or relatives up to the second degree. Instead, it mandates returning them to the crime scene for “peace and reconciliation.”

For instance, Romina Ashrafi, a 14-year-old girl who was beheaded by her father on May 21, 2020, pleaded in court that returning home would lead to her death. However, the judge disregarded her concerns and forced her back, a story emblematic of many Iranian women and girls’ experiences.

Furthermore, while Article 13’s note in the bill suggests welfare workers can intervene in cases of severe and immediate danger, it lacks clarification on what constitutes such danger or the conditions for intervention.

It should be noted that there are only 34 safe shelters for battered women throughout Iran, leaving many unaware of their existence.

The Journey of the Proposed Bill to Eliminate VAW through the Branches of the Mullahs’ Regime





Failure to Implement Justice for Honor Killings

The prevalence of honor killings across all provinces of Iran prompted the need for a law safeguarding women's security against violence. These killings often go unpunished, particularly when the perpetrator, usually the father, is considered the guardian of the daughter's life under the regime's penal law. This leniency disregards the severity of the crime and denies justice.

Article 29 of Chapter 4 in the new bill specifies penalties for intentional murder. If the murder lacks retribution and premeditation, it incurs a third-degree imprisonment of 10 to 15 years, and otherwise, a fourth-degree imprisonment of 5 to 10 years. This contrasts starkly with the regime's law, where the punishment for murder is death. In recent years, instances like Romina Ashrafi's father and Mona Heydari's husband serve as examples. They were imprisoned for a brief period and have the means to easily secure shorter sentences, potentially obtaining early release. Mona Heydari, 17 with a child, was beheaded by her husband. He then paraded in the streets of Ahvaz, while holding Mona's head and the knife with which he beheaded her.



Lenient punishments for heinous crimes

Forced marriage stands as a glaring example of violence against girls, yet the new bill lacks a precise definition of such coercion. Article 34 addresses forced marriage, stating that if a girl's guardian compels her into marriage, he would be fined and punished by imprisonment. However, the bill fails to clarify the fate of such marriages and whether they will be annulled and declared illegal. Moreover, if a girl is coerced into marriage at a young age, say 13 or 14, can she legally file a complaint against her guardian? Most forced and child marriages occur without legal registration, complicating matters further. Another question is how a young girl within a patriarchal system could oppose the decisions of her father, brother, and other male family members. After all, they have decided about her marriage, particularly that child marriages are condoned under the mullahs' rule. Article 104 of the Civil Code leaves the way open for the marriage of girls under 13 with court permission, guardian consent, and alignment with "expediency." Consequently, when the law recognizes and legitimizes violence against women and girls, such clauses about imprisonment and fining of the father are not legally binding.

Nothing more than a political bluff

The mullahs' misogynistic regime lacks genuine intent to curb violence against women. The rising number of femicides in Iran highlights the inefficacy of this bill, signaling a worsening situation for women. The bill "Preventing Women from Harm and Improving Their Security Against Abuse" fails to acknowledge women's autonomy beyond the confines of the family. According to misogynistic mullahs, women's security is synonymous with family security. Despite the regime's misogynist legal system, courageous Iranian women persist in challenging it. They are determined to secure their rights by toppling this regime, evident in the scenes of women's rebellion and protest during every uprising.





Silent Suffering

The Tragic Toll of Child Marriages in Iran

Child marriage constitutes violence against children. However, it is sanctioned by the clerical regime's laws and institutionalized in the constitution. Therefore, it has become commonplace in Iran, not because of cultural roots, but mainly due to the spread of poverty. Under the legal framework of the clerical regime, astonishingly, 9-year-old girls are legally considered adults. The sanctioned age for marriage of girls is set at a mere 13 years. Article 1041 of the Civil Code further exacerbates this troubling situation by permitting the marriage of girls under the age of 13, contingent upon court approval, guardian consent, and the ambiguous stipulation of "observance of expediency." This legal provision grants authority to fathers, paternal grandfathers, and judges to enforce marriages upon girls at any age, while notably excluding mothers from wielding any influence over the destiny of their own children.

Compelling Statistics

According to the Iranian National Statistics Center (NSC), from winter to the end of the fall of 2022, no fewer than 27,448 marriages of girls under the age of 15 were registered in various parts of Iran. More than 15,000 girls under the age of 15 have given birth in Iran over the past decade. While over one million girls under the age of 18 were married from 2013 to 2020 in Iran. (The state-run ISNA news agency, April 13, 2022)

The majority of these young girls become mothers at a very young age. A May 2022 report from the Registration Organization revealed that, in 2021, at least 69,103 babies were born to mothers between the ages of 10 to 19, with 1,474 babies born to mothers aged 10 to 14. (The state-run Etemadonline.com, May 21, 2023)

The state-run Arman-e Melli daily reported on July 27, 2021, that in every 24 hours, 100 marriages of girl children under the age of 15 are registered in Iran.

Child widows, whose lives have barely begun, are yet another sorrowful consequence of these oppressive laws. In May 2018, former member of the mullahs' parliament, Massoumeh Aghapour Alishahi exposed the existence of 24,000 child widows, all under the age of 18. (The state-run ROKNA news agency – May 28, 2018)

Severe Ramifications

Many young girls experience sexual intercourse with considerably older men, amounting to sexual violence against a child. Such relations are accompanied by coercion, verbal abuse, forced denial of education, and manipulation, which systematically strip these children of their rights. Often, these young brides do not even realize their rights have been denied. (The state-run salamatnews.ir, March 7, 2022)

Child brides are more vulnerable to various sexually transmitted and life-threatening diseases.



Complications such as high blood pressure during pregnancy, blood infections, and bleeding are more common among girls under 15, putting their lives at greater risk, especially as they are more prone to domestic violence and forced sexual relations compared to women married at a suitable age or to other children living in their family. (The state-run Baharnews.ir, January 30, 2020)

The psychological consequences of child marriage are equally devastating. Such unions often separate girls from their childhood, cutting off their relationships with their family and friends. Instead, they are thrust into the responsibility of adult life, burdened with household chores and childcare, which can lead to depression and anxiety.

The toll of these dire conditions can drive many of these girls to run away from home, attempt suicide, or even harm their spouses due to their

inability to tolerate the unequal circumstances and their inability to resolve issues. All of this leads to even graver consequences for them under the oppressive rule of the misogynistic mullahs' system.

Demanding accountability

As illuminated by the facts and documented evidence, the prevailing issues related to the marriage of young girls in Iran, especially early and forced marriages, find their root cause in the laws that condone such practices. It is imperative that the Iranian regime be held accountable for these grave violations of the rights of girl children. By demanding accountability, we can collectively work towards dismantling the structures that perpetuate the cycle of harm and advocate for a future where the rights and dignity of every girl child are prioritized and safeguarded.



Worst Form of Violence against Women

The Epidemic of Femicide and Honor Killings in Iran

Among the most pervasive human rights abuses in Iran is the systematic violation of the rights of women and girls. This disturbing trend is increasingly evident in the form of appalling acts such as honor killings and femicide. Despite this, the mullahs' regime maintains a lack of transparency regarding statistics on violence against women, particularly concerning domestic violence, honor killings, and femicide. Forensic medicine and welfare organizations are restricted from disclosing their documented data. Many of these tragic incidents are resolved within families and go unreported. Therefore, the reports and statistics provided by the media or official sources represent only the tip of the iceberg of the systematic violation of the rights of women in Iran.

The tip of the iceberg

Reports from state media have revealed alarming statistics: between June 2021 and June 2023, at least 165 women in Iran were killed by male family members, with 41 of these cases occurring in Tehran. (The state-run Sharq newspaper, June 25, 2023)

Another media outlet noted that the frequency of femicide in Iran has escalated dramatically. What used to be one murder every four days over two years has surged to one every other day in just two weeks within a month in 2023. (The state-run Etemad daily, October 7, 2023)

Another source reported that from March to September 2023, at least 52 femicides were recorded in Iran, with 29% of these occurring in Tehran. (Hengaw website, September 25, 2023)

However, the NCRI Women's Committee has documented at least 105 cases of honor killings and femicide in 2023. The compiled data specifically includes 71 cases of femicide and 34 cases of honor killings.



10% of the world's honor killings occur in Iran

The misogynistic laws under the mullahs' regime contribute to a disturbing rise in honor killings and femicide.

Article 1105 of the clerical regime's civil code considers the man – exclusively – to be the head of the family. Article 1114 of the civil code stipulates that a woman seeking a divorce must provide evidence that living with the man poses a life-threatening situation, with her testimony carrying only half the weight of a man's.

In many cases, a woman who has been beaten or stabbed is forced to return to live with the same perpetrator, even after complaining to legal authorities.

According to a government newspaper, around 20% of all murders in Iran are honor killings, while 40% are family-related. Statistics indicate a significant increase in honor killings in the western provinces during 2021, with continued growth in 2023. "The alarming rate, accounting for approximately 10% of global honor killings occurring in Iran, serves as a warning." (The state-run Sharq newspaper, June 25, 2023)

Lack of Adequate Punishments

The insufficient punishment for those responsible for such heinous crimes against women contributes to the prevalence of honor killings and femicide.

Article 29 of Chapter 4 in the new bill, entitled, "Preventing Harm against Women and Improving Their Security Against Abuse," specifies penalties for intentional murder.

If the murder lacks retribution and premeditation, it incurs a third-degree imprisonment of 10 to 15 years, and otherwise, a fourth-degree imprisonment of 5 to 10 years. This punishment contrasts starkly with the regime's law, where the punishment for murder is death, and every year, dozens of women are sent to the gallows for murdering their husbands in self-defense against domestic violence.

The headline from a state-run website starkly reveals the bitter reality. "Eight years in prison for cutting off a wife's head, 10 years for removing a scarf!" (The state-run Etemadonline.ir, January 19, 2023)

In a chilling case, the husband of Mona Heydari, a 17-year-old woman from Ahvaz, received an eight-year prison sentence for beheading her and parading in the streets with her chopped off head. Shockingly, this penalty is less severe than the 10-year imprisonment mandated for removing a headscarf.

The mullahs' patriarchal and misogynistic regime, governed by inhumane laws, fosters, and perpetuates such crimes. Honor killings and femicides have evolved into systematic violence, enchainning Iranian women and girls within their homes, schools, streets, and society at large. Even within the supposed safety of their homes, Iranian women and girls are not shielded from danger.



A Whopping Gender Gap

GGGR2023 finds Iran at the bottom of its index

The World Economic Forum released its latest Global Gender Gap Report on June 20, 2023. According to this report, Iran ruled by the mullahs' regime ranks 143rd among 146 countries in the world examined for this report.

The Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR), published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), examines the gender gap and discrimination against women in countries around the world and serves as a reference for measuring the level of gender justice among countries.

The WEF 2023 report ranks Iran 143rd in terms of gender gap among 146 countries in the world. This denotes a downward trend compared to previous years. In addition, among the nine countries in the South Asia group, Iran ranks eighth, only above Afghanistan.

According to the Global Gender Gap report, parity has backslid in Iran, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan, as the share of ministerial positions held by women has dropped in these countries since 2022.

Gender gap index

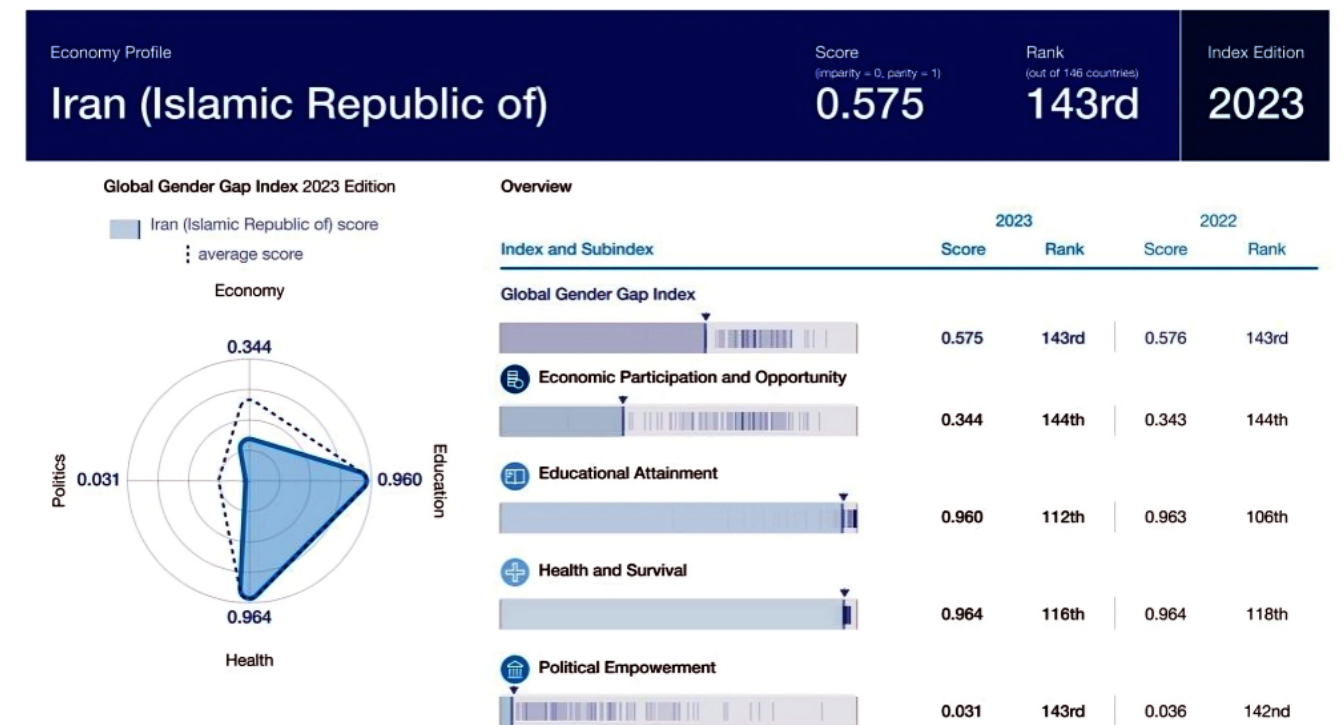
The index of the gender gap and discrimination against women consists of four subcategories: 1) Economic Participation and Opportunities, 2) Educational Attainment, 3) Health and Survival, and 4) Political Empowerment. The results of these four subcategories determine the country's rank from the perspective of gender justice.

Labor market and economic opportunities

Women's participation in the labor market and equal economic opportunities is measured with sub-indices such as women's participation rate, income compared to men's, and participation in high-level jobs.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2023, the gender gap index for economic participation and opportunities for Iran is 34.4%, with the labor force participation rate standing at 20.4% in the 146th rank. The Iranian regime continues to hinder economic gender parity with a stark income gap of 17.1 percent in the 145th rank. The percentage of legislators, senior officials, and managers stands at 21.9%, with professional and technical workers' percentage standing at 53.4%. Regarding wages for similar work, the gender gap rate for Iran is 54.2%.

Finally, the Political Empowerment subindex registers one of the lowest parity scores for Iran at 3.1%, with women in parliament at 5.9%, women in ministerial positions at 5.3%, and women as heads of state at 0%.



19% is the share of employed Iranian women

The mullahs' dictatorship in Iran and the institutionalization of a patriarchal and misogynistic culture in society are the most important reasons for the gender gap, discrimination against women, and unemployment among educated Iranian women. The Velayat-e Faqih not only disregards women's employment but, with all kinds of tactics, tries to push women to stay at home and bear children, excluding them from the community.

Based on the data published by the Directorate on Family and Women's Affairs, in January 2022, some 72% of university graduates are women.

However, their share of employment in Iran is about 19%, meaning that 60% of educated Iranian women are unemployed. Only 40% of skilled and trained women have entered the labor market. In addition, 70% of working women do not have stable jobs or incomes. This is despite the fact that it has been over 2 years since the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to economic and livelihood crises, many Iranian women have lost their jobs.



Women receive lower salaries than men

In Iran, under the rule of the mullahs, the salary of a woman is a quarter of that of a man. A female lawyer in one of Iran's southern cities, referring to discrimination against women in Iran, indicated, "In Iran, unfortunately, it has become normal for women to work as much as men but to receive lower wages. Of course, the conditions are worse for single women in cities. The further into deprived areas and small towns, the more we see of these problems and discrimination. As a lawyer, I have represented various companies and seen how female secretaries were paid less than male secretaries were. Among lawyers, men receive higher attorney's fees than women. Even male vendors are paid more than their female counterparts."

Institutionalization of violence against women

Discrimination against women in employment translates into pressure to keep them at home by encouraging early marriage and pregnancy. The unequal distribution of job opportunities has also deprived women of obtaining jobs over the years. A significant number of women in Iran, despite having university degrees, have turned to informal jobs, been forced to accept traditional roles at home, or taken jobs that pay lower salaries. Many working women are also forced to stay at home due to sexual harassment at work.

Discrimination against women is a tool to repress and stress all of society

Political factors drive patriarchal thinking in Iranian society, and many forms of discrimination are clearly institutionalized in the regime's laws. This is because one of the characteristics of the Velayat-e Faqih regime is misogyny, and the government itself is the main cause of all these sufferings. The mullahs want to strengthen the foundation of their awful government by promoting a patriarchal culture over society. Discriminating against women serves as a tool to suppress the entire country. However, Iranian women have defied the regime for the past 45 years. They have proven their equality by participating at the forefront of all protests and uprisings, and by leading the anti-regime protests across the country, which shows they have already empowered themselves to decide their own and their country's destiny.

IRAN

Iranian women have already empowered themselves to decide their own and their country's destiny



Iranian women have proven their equality by participating at the forefront of all protests and uprisings, and by leading the anti-regime protests across the country



Annual Report 2024



The indomitable women of Iran persist in their fight for freedom.

Women's Committee
National Council of Resistance of Iran

MARCH 2024

 women.ncr-iran.org
 @womenncri
 @womenncri

