

**SPECIAL REPORT: POLITICAL PRISONER
MARYAM AKBARI MONFARED IS MOVED TO QARCHAK
AFTER COMPLETING HER 15-YEAR SENTENCE
WITHOUT A SINGLE DAY OF LEAVE**



NCRI Women's Committee
The National Council of Resistance of Iran

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Political Prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared Transferred to Notorious Qarchak Prison after Completing 15-Year Sentence

After extending the prison sentence of political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared for another two years, the criminal Iranian Judiciary committed another inhuman act on October 22, 2024, by ordering her transfer to the notorious [Qarchak Prison](#) for women in Varamin, where she has been held in solitary confinement as this report is being published.

Maryam Akbari Monfared finished her [15 years of imprisonment without a single day of furlough](#) on October 12, 2024. She spent the last four years of her sentence in exile in the Prison of Semnan among ordinary prisoners, violating the principle of separation of crimes.

The latest measure by the mullahs' Judiciary aims to increase the harassment and abuse of this resistant and resilient political prisoner who has remained adamant despite long years of incarceration, torture, harassment, and pressures that have undermined her health.

Maryam Akbari Monfared, who is one of the longest-held female political prisoners in Iran, should have been released in 2019 after serving 10 years in prison (two-thirds of her sentence) according to the regime's laws. However, the clerical regime's [judiciary kept her imprisoned](#) for an additional 5 years.

In January 2024, they condemned her to an additional three years of imprisonment through two separate cases fabricated by the Ministry of Intelligence, conducting two show trials in Semnan and Evin. Her new alleged crimes are "propaganda against the state," "insulting the leader (i.e., Ali Khamenei)," "assembly and collusion," "spreading lies and disturbing public opinion," and "inciting people against national security."

In a further act of inhuman repression, in June 2024, the Iranian regime's Judiciary issued an order to [confiscate the property](#) of Maryam Akbari Monfared and her relatives as punishment for her pursuit of justice for her siblings.



However, Maryam Akbari Monfared's main crime is seeking justice in 2016 for her sister and three brothers who were executed by the regime in the 1980s.

Alireza Akbari was killed under torture in September 1981, and Gholamreza Akbari was executed in 1985. Roghiyeh and Abdolreza Akbari were executed during the massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in 1988.

In this special issue of its monthly reports, the NCRI Women's Committee highlights the bravery, courage, strength, and character of Maryam Akbari Monfared, this petite woman who terrifies the regime with her resilience and unyielding spirit.

Additional 3-Year Sentence Imposed with Fabricated Charges

The clerical regime's judiciary sentenced political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared to an additional 3 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.

In its statement on August 28, 2023, the Secretariat of the National Council of Resistance of Iran stated, "The Ministry of Intelligence (MOIS) has initiated two new cases against Maryam Akbari Monfared to prevent her release. One accuses her of 'propaganda against the state,' while the other alleges 'insulting the Supreme Leader (Khamenei), incitement to riot, spreading falsehoods, and disturbing public opinion, inciting people against national security.'"

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In another part, the statement added that Branch 101 of [Semnan Criminal Court](#) had issued "an additional two years, along with a fine of 150 million rials, as part of a new, in-absentia ruling." Subsequently, the Evin Courthouse held a sham trial sentencing Maryam Akbari Monfared to another year in prison concerning the second case.

On July 17, 2023, the NCRI Secretariat announced in a statement that the Iranian judiciary transferred political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared from her place of exile in Semnan Prison to Evin Court on July 1. After being arraigned on five new charges, she was returned to Semnan Prison.

The mullahs' judiciary upheld the two rulings and endorsed the extension of her sentence by three years, at least two years of which will be implemented.

Authorities Move to Confiscate Family Assets as Sentence Ends

Political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared faced a new challenge in June 2024, as authorities moved to seize her family's property. According to the Sharq News Agency, the Executive Headquarters of Farman-e Imam (Khomeini's Order) launched a bid to confiscate her assets.

The development came as Maryam Akbari Monfared approached the end of a 15-year prison sentence in October 2024. Her defense lawyer, Mr. Hossein Taj, shared his concerns:

"By October this year, Mrs. Akbari Monfared will have completed her [15-year imprisonment without a single day of temporary release](#). In addition to this sentence, she faces an additional 2 years in prison for another case. Recently, yet another new case was filed against her at the request of the Executive Headquarters, invoking Article 49 of the Constitution for ongoing case oversight."

Mr. Taj elaborated on the grave implications: “The headquarters has levied serious allegations against Ms. Akbari Monfared’s family and relatives, seeking the confiscation of their property in favor of the Imam’s Order Implementation Headquarters. This matter has been referred to the 6th branch of the Revolutionary Court, specializing in Article 49 cases. The timeline for trial has yet to be set, with monitoring scheduled to commence in August.”

In response to these developments, her lawyer underscored a fundamental legal principle: “The principle of ‘the personal nature of crimes and punishments,’ recognized in jurisprudence, Sharia, international law, and the Iranian Penal Code, stipulates that punishment should be strictly individual and should not extend to relatives.”

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Maryam Akbari Monfared and her four siblings, slain in the 1980s.

UN Special Rapporteur Highlights Case of Maryam Akbari Monfared

Prof. [Javaid Rehman](#), the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran, wrote about Maryam Akbari Monfared in his report on “Atrocity Crimes” in Iran published in July 2024. In Section C, “Accountability mechanisms,” of Chapter VII, the UNSR brings up the case of political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared:

As mentioned above, in the prevailing environment it is impossible to seek [any form of accountability](#) at the domestic level for crimes committed during the 1980s. There are currently no avenues to seek truth and justice and no prospects of claiming reparations in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Indeed, those seeking accountability are frequently targeted, persecuted and punished. One poignant example illustrating this pattern of harassment and persecution is the case of Maryam Akbari-Monfared, a political prisoner in the country.

Ms. Akbari-Monfared displayed immense courage by [filing an official complaint](#) from inside prison on 15 October 2016, addressing the Iranian judiciary regarding the execution of her siblings during the 1988 massacre. In response to her pursuit of accountability, she has faced increased pressure while incarcerated, including the denial of visitations and her forced exile to a remote location, far from her children. Authorities have informed Ms. Akbari-Monfared that her release is contingent on retracting her call for accountability regarding her siblings’

murder. Despite enduring a 15-year sentence without a single day of furlough, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Akbari-Monfared's ordeal continues.

On 1 July 2023, she was summoned to the Courthouse of Evin Prison and arraigned on five new charges, subsequently receiving an additional two-year sentence. Information from sources within the prison suggests that her continued detention is aimed at coercing her into renouncing her pursuit of accountability.

The treatment of Maryam Akbari-Monfared serves as a stark illustration of the lengths to which Iranian authorities are willing to go to silence those seeking justice for [the victims](#) of the 1988 massacre and to suppress any [calls for accountability with impunity](#).

Having regard to the impossibility of obtaining justice at the domestic level, there are possibilities of accountability at the international level or in a foreign state outside the jurisdiction of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Efforts to engage the International Criminal Court are unlikely to be unsuccessful.



Maryam Akbari Monfared with her daughter, Sara, 3, before being jailed.

A Brave Woman Standing Like a Mountain Against All Odds

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 taken to Evin prison "to provide some explanations" at midnight of December 29, 2009, without being able to say goodbye to her daughters. But she never returned home.

She was incarcerated because she sought 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](#).

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, 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 from 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 15 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.

Amnesty International Raises Concern

Amnesty International also issued [an urgent action](#) statement on August 27, 2021, in which it raised concern over the condition of political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared. AI said Maryam Akbari Monfared was “ill-treated for seeking truth and justice.”

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AI wrote: “Prisoner of conscience Maryam Akbari Monfared has been held in cruel and inhumane conditions in a distant prison in Semnan province far from her family since March 2021, in reprisal for her open letters condemning the Iranian authorities’ human rights violations and seeking truth and justice for her siblings who were forcibly disappeared and extrajudicially executed in secret in 1988. She has been unjustly jailed for nearly 12 years.”

On the same day, it posted a [tweet](#) about women’s conditions in the prison of Semnan. Amnesty International wrote: “Women in Semnan Prison in Iran are enduring cruel conditions including poor access to flush toilets, shower, hygiene items and medical care for infections and lice infestation. @Mmhajmohammadi must allow inspections by international monitors including Javaid Rehman.”

The breathtaking countdown

In a [letter she wrote from prison](#) in December 2022, Maryam Akbari Monfared 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.”

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!

I stayed away from my children for 13 years, but I saw the crime with my own eyes for 13 years, and [my resolve became more robust](#).

This is a silent documentary about the oppression of women one can't bear to hear one of them, let alone live with hundreds of these tortured symbols and feel their pain with skin and flesh.

In 13 years, I saw dozens of children and hundreds of teenagers and young people the same age as my daughters, and I touched them and talked to them.



Maryam's family celebrate her birthday in her absence. Little Sara is first on the left.

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Keeping the Faith

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.

I saw Alireza (executed in 1980) in the clenched fists of that young man in Naziabad.

Roghiyeh (executed in Evin prison in the summer of 1988) stood up to the repressive guards. I heard the voice of Abdul Reza (executed in Gohardasht in the summer of 1988) in the continuous cries for freedom by young people his age.

I find Gholamreza (who died under torture in Evin prison in 1985) among the young people who are killed under torture.

Yes, they wanted to bury and keep them anonymous, but now we see how the brave generation continues the path of the same young people who did not surrender to Khomeini.

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Message to the “Fearless Daughters and Sons in the Streets”

With the news of every protest and every uprising, this rebellious flame of faith sparks in my heart while I am among women whose only hope of salvation is to break these iron doors.

To my fearless daughters and sons in the streets, I passionately long every moment to be with them; if you are arrested, don't trust the interrogators. They are not like us! The enemy is the enemy at any moment!

Increase your faith in your cause as much as possible. This faith is the only thing that can help you in the loneliness of solitary confinement.

I tell the families of the prisoners to ignore the promises, fears, and threats. You can only save your children's lives by having people cry out and repeat their names! No interrogator cares for your interest. Do not be silent. Just cry out!

To the grieving families, to every mother who sacrificed her loved one, and to all the brothers and sisters who lost a sibling, I bow to their martyrs and say that I share their grief. I reach out to them from behind bars and vow to stand by them firmer than ever to seek justice.

I am talking about 13 years of non-stop battle, but to summarize it in short, “Finally one day, I will sing the song of victory from the summit of the mountain like the sun.” Tomorrow is ours.

Revealing the Suffering of the Families of the Victims of the 1988 Massacre

In August 2022, political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared courageously responded to one of the regime’s former officials who made false claims about the families of the victims of the 1988 massacre.

Hossein Mousavi Tabrizi, the regime’s prosecutor general in the 1980s, said, “The families of those executed (in the 1988 massacre) could have complained, but they did not do so!”

Tabrizi’s remarks were one of the rare [admissions](#) of the clerical regime’s officials to the 1988 massacre, which they had concealed and denied until recent years. Mousavi Tabrizi commented in the wake of the [Swedish Judiciary upholding a life sentence](#) for [Hamid Noury](#), one of the perpetrators of the 1988 massacre in Gohardasht Prison in Karaj.

Political prisoner Maryam Akbari Monfared, who had been [banished](#) to Semnan Prison in March 2021, responded to the criminal mullah in [an open letter from behind bars](#). Excerpts of her letter:

Longing for the Sweet Moments of Justice

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I hear in the news that the children of [Hamid Noury](#) have complained that our father is being tortured!!! What a strange time.

On these very days, he lined up our loved ones and took them to the execution room. He is one of those people who may have seen Abdi’s last moments, and of course, he might have become mad at his bravery and resistance. Maybe he was the one who pulled the stool from under Abdi’s feet with all his hatred. He is happy and proud of the execution of thousands of people like Abdi. He made the prison hell for political prisoners to break their resistance.

Now he is in one of the best prisons. His words have been heard with justice, yet he claims to be tortured! If this is torture, then what was what our families, mothers, and my mother, Gorgi, endured?!

In the corner of my cell in the feverish heat, I surrender myself to the dreams of distant years when I was the same age as my children. I remember when I used to accompany my mother on her way to Evin and Gohardasht prisons.

I remember the last visit to Abdi. Then after months of staying in the dark, we were given a bag with his clothes bloodied under torture.

I remember when my mother went to a room full of (my siblings’) photos. She would close the door to be alone with her children, who were always young in those frames. She did not want me to see her tears.

I remember the day when this grief took her from us forever at the age of 40.

Are there any words to describe those tortures?

We have lived through the terrible 1980s decade, which is why we think of justice and seek justice so that Iran’s future generations would not go through such a horrible experience.

Justice is more valuable than love, even my motherly love for my children. I have risen to seek justice because I love my children.

The failure to bring the Shah and SAVAK to justice opened the way for this regime to repeat (what the Shah did). But we are determined to bring justice to Iran forever, and the conviction of Hamid Nouri is a step, although small but qualitative, in this direction.

We are happy to break the deadlock we were denied for three decades. Everyone wanted to discredit us and deny our pain from the government to other claimants! But we shouldered our pains all these years just for this moment—the sweet, promising moments of justice.

No escape from justice

I heard Mousavi Tabrizi declare that “the families could have complained, but they didn’t!”

Perhaps you have forgotten; let me remind you that the families did not even have the right to hold a (funeral) ceremony. In the same family mourning ceremonies, you would arrest them and all the guests and send them to prison.

You didn’t give the bodies of their loved ones to the families; you didn’t tell them where they were buried, and not even an address! And now, three decades after the massacre, are you talking about filing complaints? I did file a complaint after three decades. What did you do to me except make threats, banishment, and continued [illegal imprisonment](#)?”

No one can escape justice. I made a vow not to give up until every one of the masterminds and perpetrators of the massacre of our loved ones faced justice.

We have fresh wounds. Not three decades, not even three days have passed since what happened to us! As if it happened just today.

The heat of August still burns our hearts, and all these years, we suffered pain. But the day our calls for justice succeed, there will be some healing to our wounds. The massacre is still going on. The execution and [killing of innocent people](#) continue. The slaughter of protesters in 2009, 2017-2018, and 2019 are the continuation of the massacre in 1988.

Our persistence in seeking justice for the 1988 massacre is the same as our struggle for freedom. We persist in [seeking justice](#) so that no family will suffer anymore.

These days, I think of my loved ones, Roghiyeh, Abdi (Abdolreza), Alireza, and Gholam-Reza, who are alive in me. And I always remember them with a smile as if they were my guardians in this dungeon.

The dawn of justice will break through the dark and stormy clouds. On that day, we will feel the love with all our hearts. Victory is ours

Call for the Release of Maryam Akbari Monfared and All Political Prisoners

The Women’s Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran once again calls on the UN High Commissioner and Human Rights Council, the [Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran](#), the [Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women](#), and other human rights and women’s rights advocates to strongly condemn the inhumane treatment of political prisoners, especially female prisoners, by the clerical regime and take immediate action for the release of Maryam Akbari Monfared.