

IRAN PROTESTS

FEMINISTS & WHRDS DETAINED

NO.6



November 2022

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It has been over two months since the start of the "Women, Life, Freedom" uprising in Iran. Despite brutal and bloody crackdowns and unprecedented numbers of arrests of both ordinary protesters and human rights defenders, Iranians have integrated resistance and the struggle for fundamental freedoms into their daily lives. Women are not only at the forefront of protests, they are using incredibly creative approaches to civil disobedience and boldly defying mandatory hijab laws.

These protests were sparked by the death while in police custody of Mahsa Amini, and are directly linked to the demand of women for fundamental rights and freedoms. The security and judicial systems have tried to quell protests through pressuring and arresting human rights defenders. Scores of women human rights defenders have been arrested since the start of the protests, and arrests continue. While a small portion of those arrested have been temporarily released on bail, their cases pending trial, the majority of WHRDs arrested continue to remain in prison in harsh conditions. Based on credible reports, over 170 WHRDs have been arrested so far, but these figures are conservative as not all arrests are being reported by their family members due to fear of repercussions. Through five reports since the start of the protests, FEMENA documented 118 arrests of WHRDs, including female university students. The current report highlights cases of 30 more WHRDs, bringing the total of cases documented to 148.



According to reports from the Judiciary, over 2000 indictments have been issued in relation to protests. Investigations have begun in some of these cases. Over the past two weeks, several detainees were tried in public hearings which failed to adhere to fair trial standards, including the denial of the right to legal representation. Many of those being tried are facing charges that carry heavy prison sentences. Some charges such as “Enmity with God” could carry the death penalty, and currently 21 protesters have received this charge in the preliminary court hearing. At least 3 protesters are in danger of facing execution.

Despite the repression, the protests continue across the country. In the face of extreme violence being perpetrated by the state, protesters use non-violent yet imaginative strategies for spreading their message, which encourage other citizens to join them. The widespread use of protest art and creative protest performances have amplified the voices and demands of protesters. Artistic performances, composing of revolutionary anthems and collective performance in universities across the country, graffiti art and creative acts of solidarity such as handing out affirmative messages on small pieces of paper in support of women who are appearing in public without the hijab, are some of the innovative strategies that protesters have used to amplify their messages.

As the protests continue, new sectors of society join the movement, some to oppose repressive crackdowns of the state and security forces, some to stand in solidarity with those who have been violently suppressed, some in opposition to the mandatory hijab, and others to demand fundamental freedoms and political change. In the most recent instance, several famous artists, athletes and celebrities, expressed support for the protest movement or revolution through overt expression of support or through acts of political dissent. Actress Taraneh Alidoosti published a picture of herself without the customary hijab, holding a sign that read “Women, Life, Freedom” in the slogan’s original Kurdish. Other actresses have followed suit.



Through these reports, FEMENA aims to document the detention of WHRDs following the protests and provide updates on their cases. However, we acknowledge that serious challenges in documentation and verification exist. There is little transparency on the part of the Iranian authorities and most families are reluctant and fearful about publicizing and sharing information about arrested family members.

FEMENA remains committed to supporting WHRDs by publicizing the arrest of women human rights defenders and providing status updates on their situation in prison and any judicial actions against them as much as possible, and by raising awareness on continued systematic security and judicial intimidations that WHRDs face. We hope this documentation effort will encourage others in the international human rights community to take note of every single individual arrested and follow their cases until they are freed.

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Kazhal Vatanpour

Kazhal Vatanpour, a Kurdish activist in Kermanshah province and a law student at Ilam University, was arrested on September 22, 2022 and was transferred to Ilam Central Prison. According to human rights groups, she is accused of propaganda against the state, cooperating with the opposition media, and colluding and assembly against the national security. The judge has extended her detention for further investigation, and her bail has been denied.

Jeyran Nikpeyman

Jeyran Nikpeyman, an author, women's and animals' rights activist, and animal physiology PhD student at Damghan University, was arrested at her home on September 29, 2022. After two weeks in Evin's Ward 209, she was transferred to Qarchak prison. The efforts for her release in the weeks following her arrest have failed.



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Faezeh Barahouei

Faezeh Barahouei, 23 years old, was arrested on October 3rd, 2022 by plain clothes security forces in Zahedan. On November 1st, "Faezeh Barahui", one of the arrested Baluchi girls' court session was held at Branch 2 of Zahedan Revolutionary Court. The security forces have accused this Baluchi girl of "leadership of riots" and the final verdict will be announced in twenty days.

According to reports, legal procedures were not properly followed at Faezeh's court session. She was denied independent legal representation and was not in a condition to defend herself. According to the relatives of Mrs. Barahui, she did not participate in said protests and she was arrested for pursuing the case regarding rape of a 15-year-old Baluchi girl. **She was temporarily released on bail on November 16, 2022.**

Maryam Mazroui

Maryam Mazroui, well-known photojournalist, was arrested on October 5, 2022. There is no further information about her condition. Maryam Mazroui was also active in the Stop Hazara Genocide global campaign.



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Azadeh Dehghani

Azadeh Dehghani, a translator, photographer and filmmaker, was arrested by the security forces at her home in Tehran on October 13, 2022, in connection with the nationwide protests, and is still detained in Varamin's Qarchak prison. Upon her arrest, Azadeh Dehghani was taken to Ward 209 of Evin Prison, and after a few days, she was transferred to Varamin's Qarchak Prison.



Several weeks since her arrest, the reasons for her arrest are not yet known. In 2010, she received First Prize in Iranology Photography by Iranology Foundation, and in 2016, her animation "Childish Blue" was awarded as best Short Animated in WE ARE WATER FESTIVAL in Spain.



Zahra Zare Seraij

Zahra Zare Seraij, a former political prisoner and civil society activist, was arrested by security forces in Varamin on October 16, 2022. In a phone call to her family, Zahra notified them that she was transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison. She was previously imprisoned for two years in 2017 on charges of "founding an illegal group."

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Saeideh Fathi

Saeideh Fathi, a sports journalist, has been arrested in Tehran and detained since the evening of October 16, 2022. Saeideh began her career as a sports journalist in 2002 and has been working with various newspapers and news agencies in Iran over the past few years.



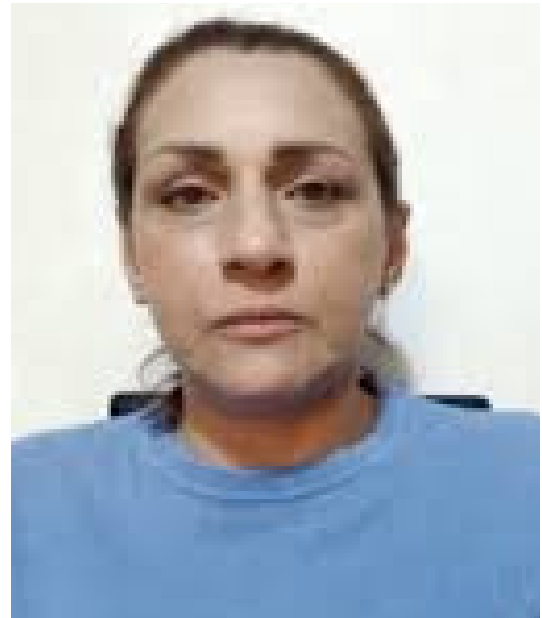
Kimia Pirmoradi

Kimia Pirmoradi, a graphic artist, and her brother, Nima Pirmoradi, were arrested at their home in Tehran on October 18, 2022, and are currently in Evin Prison. They are Iranian artist Aida Carpe's children. The charges against them are unknown.

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Pouran Nazemi

Pouran Nazemi, a civil society and human rights activist and writer, was arrested at her home in Tehran on October 19, 2022. She has been previously imprisoned several times.



Nasibeh Namifar

Nasibeh Namifar, a poet and literary activist from Gachsaran in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, was arrested on October 20, 2022. She was transferred to an unknown location and the charges against her are unknown. **She was temporarily released on bail on November 16, 2022.**

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Behnaz Amani

Behnaz Amani, an assistant professor at Azad University of Tehran, was arrested by security forces outside her home on October 20, 2022, and charged with assembly and collusion. She is detained in Varamin Women's Prison. She was not able to post bail and was to be released by using her paystubs as collateral, but she has not been released yet.

Arghavan Vosough Ansari

Arghavan Vosough Ansari, a poet and civil society activist, was arrested at her private home on October 22, 2022, in the presence of her two children, aged three and eight. She was transferred to Evin Prison.



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Shilan Kourdestani

Shilan Kourdestani, an activist and a member of the Jivano Women group, was arrested by security forces on October 23, 2022 in Sanandaj. According to sources, she was arrested after attending her grandmother's memorial service.

Faezeh Ayin

Faezeh Ayin, a stage designer, was arrested on October 25, 2022 at her father's house and transferred to Evin Prison. Faezeh's whereabouts are unknown. Faezeh is a stage designer and a student of Bahram Beyzai. Recently, she was the producer of a feature-length documentary, "Puppeteer", directed by Pooria Noori.



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Mahsa Yazdani

Mahsa Yazdani, a skating federation instructor, staged a one-person protest in memory of Mahsa Amini on the main street in Talesh on October 26, 2022. She was immediately arrested by security forces and reportedly transferred to Rasht's Lakan prison.

Raoufeh Mirabagheri

Raoufeh Mirabagheri, a feminist and women's rights activist, was arrested by IRGC intelligence on October 26, 2022, at Mahsa Amini's 40th Day ceremony in Tonekabon. The charges against her and her whereabouts are unknown.



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Roghieh Bigdeli

Ruqieh Bigdeli, a WHRD and former political prisoner, was arrested on October 26, 2022, after being summoned by phone several times. She was transferred to Qarchak prison immediately after she appeared at the Tehran Security Police office. The reason for her arrest remains unknown, and her charges are unknown. She was arrested in January 2019, and was sentenced to two years and eight months in prison, exile to Zanjan city, and paying a fine.

Mina Jondoghi

Mina Jondoghi, a children's activist, psychologist, and former board member of Society for Protecting the Rights of the Children, was arrested at her home on October 27, 2022. It is not known which security force is responsible for her arrest or where she is being held.



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Mahtab Shokrian

Mahtab Shokrian, an actor, theater director and professor at the Arts University, was arrested by security forces at her home in Tehran on October 27, 2022, and transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison.



Aida Mandegari

Aida Mandegari, a 28-year-old civil society activist was arrested by security forces on the street in Bandar Abbas on October 29, 2022. There is no information on her situation, whereabouts or the charges brought against her. A video of her handing out flowers to people is circulating on social media. Aida has not been given a reason for her arrest.

However, her performative protest of giving flowers to passers-by on the beach may have been the reason. She has reportedly gone on a hunger strike in protest of her condition.

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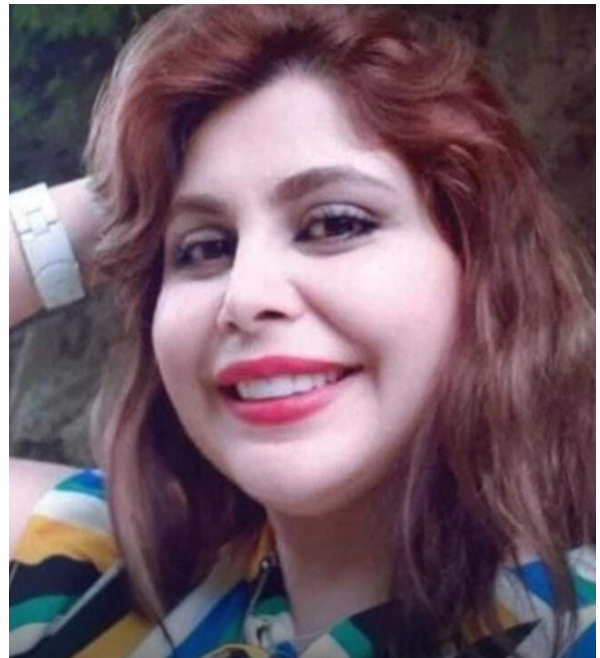


Sousan Razani

Susan Razani, a Kurdish workers' and women's rights activist was arrested by security forces in Sanandaj on October 29, 2022, while picking up her child from kindergarten. **She was temporarily released on bail on November 12, 2022.**

Marzieh Ziari

Marzieh Ziari, a feminist activist and founder of the “Non-existing Safety for Women Campaign”, was arrested by Amol security forces at her private home on October 31, 2022. The officers came to her home in three cars. When Marzieh did not open the door, they climbed up the wall of her house and arrested her in front of her child.



Marzieh was previously threatened because of her online activism. In the past, her home has been searched and she has been taken for questioning several times.

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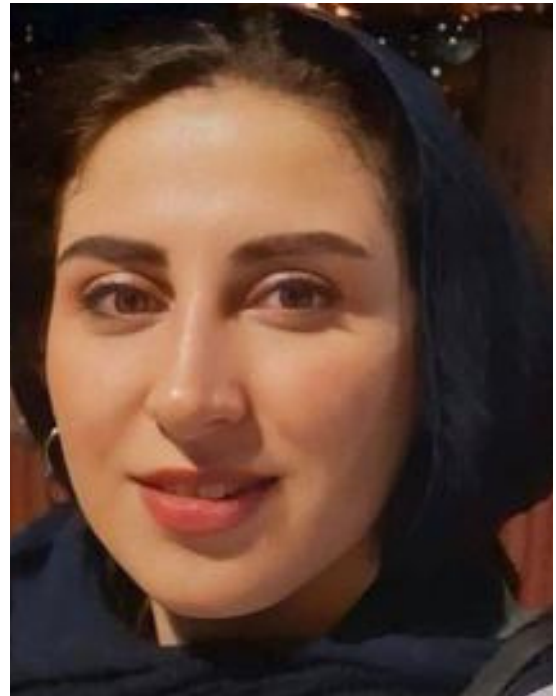


Marzieh Amiri

Marzieh Amiri, a journalist and social sciences graduate of Tehran University, was arrested by security forces on October 31, 2022, and transferred to solitary confinement in Ward 209 of Evin. The arresting security force and the reason for her arrest are unknown.

Maral DarAfarin

Maral DarAfarin, a journalist and women's rights activist, was arrested in Lahijan on November 1, 2022. In a video posted before her arrest she talked about receiving calls from an unknown number. She disappeared within an hour after the release of this video. Her whereabouts are unknown.



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Ghazal Masoom Shahi

Ghazal Masoom Shahi, a textile engineering graduate of Amir Kabir University, was arrested by security forces at her husband's office on November 1, 2022. The officers then went to their home and confiscated their electronic devices after searching the house. **She was temporarily released on bail on November 14, 2022.**

Maryam ChammeH

Maryam ChammeH, a civil society activist from Dehloran in Ilam province, was arrested by security forces on November 1, 2022. Her fate and whereabouts are unknown.



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Nazanin Salari

Nazanin Salari, WHRD and an attorney, and head of the human rights commission at Fars District's Bar Association, was arrested on November 1, 2022, in her law office in Shiraz. No further information has been released on the reasons for her arrest or potential charges brought against her.

Bahar Sahraeian

Bahar Sahraeian is a human rights lawyer in Fars who was arrested on November 1, 2022. Ms. Sahraeian has reportedly agreed to represent student activists in Shiraz on a pro-bono basis.



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Sarvenaz Ahmadi

Sarvenaz Ahmadi, a translator, children's and women's rights activist, and a student at the University of Social Welfare Sciences, was arrested on November 6, 2022, together with her husband, Kamyar Fakoor after security forces raided their home. She is a prominent women's rights and child labor activist and has translated several books on women's rights in the recent years.

Elham Afkari

Elham Afkari, WHRD and civil society advocate, was arrested on November 10, 2022, along with her husband and her three-year-old daughter. Elham Afkari is the sister of Navid Afkari, an Iranian wrestler who was sentenced to death and executed in Shiraz in September 2020. State-run media published a picture of Elham Afkari blindfolded and in a police car after her arrest and accused her of being an agent of the opposition media outside Iran. Her husband and daughter were reportedly released after being interrogated by Shiraz prosecutors. Elham turned to civic activism, demanding justice for her brother, Navid Afkari.




FEMENA supports Woman Human Rights Defenders, their organizations and feminist movements through analysis of trends and policy, documentation, fostering the development of regional communities of practice and advocacy.

FEMENA's work is primarily focused on contexts of shrinking or closed civic space and contexts complicated by growing extremism and conflict.



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