



**DETAINMENT
OF WOMEN ACTIVISTS
SIGNALS
HUMAN RIGHTS
CRISIS
IN IRAN**

AUGUST 2018

MONTHLY REPORT
Women's Committee
of the National Council of Resistance of Iran



Detainment of women activists signals human rights crisis in Iran

August marked an unprecedented surge in the arrest, detainment and mistreatment of human rights and [women's rights](#) advocates, human rights lawyers, and religious minority followers.

The intensifying crackdown has been considered as a crisis point in the situation of human rights in Iran and an attempt on the part of the ruling regime to silence any voice of dissent.

[Rassoul Sanaii Rad](#), political deputy for the IRGC, admitted earlier this month that 28 per cent of those arrested in the anti-regime protests were young women and girls.

"For the first time, 28 percent of the arrests in the protests were women," Sanaii Rad said. Referring to the arrests of women in the protests last winter, he noted, "Previously, the number of women arrested in the protests was 5 to 7 percent." (The state-run Mehr News Agency - August 15, 2018)

Human Rights Watch issued a news release on August 31, 2018, calling for the freedom of jailed protesters including 15 women in Iran prisons.

[The news release reads in part](#): "Iranian authorities should drop all charges brought against protesters for peaceful assembly and release those detained on that basis, Human Rights Watch said today. Since August 2, 2018, authorities have detained more than 50 people during protests in Tehran.

On August 11, 2018, an Iranian journalist, tweeted that authorities had detained 15 women they had [arrested during the August protests](#) in Qarchak prison in Tehran, HRW said.

Fatemeh Dizaji, Elaheh Bahmani, Khadijeh Kiani-zadeh, Hadiseh Sabouri, Sara Malek-Shirazi and Mojhdeh Rajabi are among those detained in Qarchak Prison according to this journalist.

The NCRI Women's Committee has not independently confirmed the names but these figures should be considered the least and [the actual figures of arrest and detention of women](#) during the August protests is higher.

The [Women's Committee](#) of the [National Council of Resistance of Iran](#) calls on the International Community, the UN agencies, and particularly the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, to take immediate measures to secure the unconditional release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, especially women, and stop their mistreatment in prisons.

New arrests and imprisonments

Relatives of 1988 massacre victims

Three women, Sussan Mehrani, 55; Mohaddeseh Mehrani, 50; and Elnaz, 28, (daughter of Mohaddeseh Mehrani), were arrested in Gorgan (capital of the northern Iranian Province of Golestan) on July 19, 2018, along with Dr. Mojtaba Mehrani, a 67-year-old dentist, and Masih Mehrani, 62.

They are relatives of Mohsen Mehrani, a member of the [People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran](#) (PMOI/[MEK](#)) who was executed in 1988 in Gorgan Prison during the massacre of political prisoners.

The fate and whereabouts of the detainees are not known. The news of their detention was leaked out in mid-August.

The mullahs' regime in Iran has apparently resorted to the arrest of a number of families of the victims of the 1988 massacre of political prisoners in Iran on the 30th anniversary of this great crime against humanity, fearing further expansion of the [Justice Seeking Movement](#).

Niloufar Homafar, Yasamin Ariani

Niloufar Homafar, 20, and Yasamin Ariani, 23, were arrested on August 2, 2018, in downtown Tehran, and have been imprisoned since in the Qarchak Prison of Varamin under undecided status.

They were out in the street to demand their basic human rights in step with [a new wave of protests](#) that was sweeping [cities across the country](#).

Yasamin Ariani was reportedly helping an elderly woman who had been thrown to the ground when hit by security forces.

The young women boldly posted a message via a mobile phone from inside a State Security Force van as they were being transferred to jail.



Sahar Kazemi, Zahra Modarres-zadeh

Sahar Kazemi, a civil rights and environmental activist and an athletics coach from Sanandaj, was arrested at home on August 9, 2018, and transferred to an unknown location.

Intelligence Department agents ransacked Sahar Kazemi's house in [Sanandaj](#), capital of the Iranian Kurdistan in western Iran.

Sahar Kazemi had been summoned several times to the Intelligence Department of Sanandaj where she was interrogated. Her husband, Madeh Fat'hi, was arrested last autumn and held for three months in a solitary cell in the detention center of the Department of Intelligence of Sanandaj.

Some 75 members of a group of [environmental activists](#) have been arrested since February 2018 on the charge of espionage.

Civil activist Zahra Modarres-Zadeh was arrested on August 9, 2018, by security forces in [Karaj](#), 20 kilometers west of Tehran.

Before Zahra Modarres-Zadeh, her husband, Reza Bozorgmehr, had been arrested. Despite persistent inquiries by friends and family, no information has been made available on the situation and whereabouts of the detainees.



Nagisa Shahbazi

Civil rights activist Negisa Shahbazi, an electrical engineer by profession, had disappeared since August 1, 2018, when security forces raided her residence in Ilam, western Iran.

Three weeks after her arrest, Negisa Shahbazi was transferred from the Detention Center of the Intelligence Department to the Central Prison of Ilam where her family was able to visit her.

Negisa Shahbazi is also an active member of the



“Cower” mountain climbing team in Ilam, who played a major role in extinguishing the recent fire of [Kabir Kuh](#) and criticized the Iranian government institutions for their inaction.

Prison sentences

Parisa Rafii

Parisa Rafii, a 21-year-old arts major at Tehran University, was sentenced on August 13, 2018, by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran to seven years in prison for “collusion with the intent to commit a crime against national security”, “propaganda against the system” and “disrupting public order.”

Ms. Rafii had been arrested on February 25, 2018, and detained for 23 days for participating in the December/January uprisings in Tehran. She had been released on bail on March 20, 2018.



Roya Saghiri

Tabriz University student Roya Saghiri was transferred to Tabriz Prison on August 25, 2018, to serve her 23-month prison sentence.

Ms. Saghiri, 24, was tried and sentenced to [23 months of imprisonment](#) by the 2nd Branch of the Revolutionary Court of Tabriz in July 2018 and the verdict was upheld by the Appeals Court.

Roya Saghiri had been arrested at Sa'at Square of Tabriz on December 31, 2017, along with seven other participants in the protests, and detained in the Women's Ward of the Central Prison of Tabriz, capital of the northwestern Iranian Province of East Azerbaijan.

She was charged with "propaganda against the system" and "insulting the leadership." Ms. Saghiri is also accused of “appearing in public without the religious Hijab (veil) by removing her scarf on the street.”



Mahin Taj-Ahmadpour, Neda Yousefi

[Mahin Taj-Ahmadpour](#) had been sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment by the Criminal Court of Tonekabon on May 2, 2018, on charges of "disrupting public order by participating in illegal gatherings" and "propaganda against the regime."

Ms. Taj-Ahmadpour, 46 and a street vendor from Tonekabon, had been [arrested during last year's popular unrests and uprisings](#). She was transferred to [Nashtarud Tonekabon](#) prison to serve her sentence on August 14, 2018.



Also, a young prisoner by the name of Neda Yousefi was sentenced to one-year imprisonment and 74 lashes. Ms. Yousefi was arrested in Shazand in the course of the nationwide uprising in December/January. Her verdict was issued by Branch 102 of the Second Penal Court of Arak.

[Shokoufeh Yadollahi, Sepideh Moradi, Elham Ahmadi, Sedigheh Safabakht](#)

Sufi women Shokoufeh Yadollahi, Sepideh Moradi, Elham Ahmadi and Sedigheh Safabakht, were sentenced each to five years in jail.

[Sepideh Moradi](#) was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in absentia on August 8, 2018, by Tehran's Revolutionary Court. She was also banned from leaving the country for two years, and from engaging in any social or political party or group or any activity in the social media.

Sentenced on August 13, 2018, [Shokoufeh Yadollahi](#) is in critical conditions due to [six-month denial of medical treatment](#) in prison. In addition to the five years' prison term, she has been deprived of social and media activity.



Ms. Moradi who managed the website of Gonabadi Dervishes has been accused of "association and collusion to act against national security."

Sepideh Moradi and Shokoufeh Yadollahi refused to appear in court to protest denial of lawyers to all Sufi detainees during legal proceedings as well as of other rights.

Earlier in late July, Sufi women [Elham Ahmadi, Sedigheh Safabakht](#) and [Sima Entesari](#) were also sentenced to five years in prison, each.

Inhuman treatment of prisoners

[Women prisoners in Qarchak Prison](#)

Sufi women imprisoned in Varamin's [Qarchak Prison](#) (a.k.a. Shahr-e Ray) were beaten up on August 2, 2018, by security agents on the grounds that one of them made a telephone call to her young daughter.

Security agents disconnected the call made by [Elham Ahmadi](#) and provoked her protest, later joined by other Sufi women. The Sufi women were subsequently attacked and beaten up by the prison's security force.

The reason for the raid on the incarcerated [Sufi women](#) was the public dissemination of an audio recording, allegedly done by Elham Ahmadi, which revealed the catastrophic state of medical treatment in Qarchak Prison.



The Sufi women were subsequently deprived of their rights to visitations and telephone calls.

Nasrin Sotoudeh

Agents of the Ministry of Intelligence [attacked](#) the residences of human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh and her sister-in-law on August 18, 2018, looking for a badge that read, "I oppose the compulsory veil."

Ms. Sotoudeh subsequently [issued an open letter](#) on August 22, 2018, expressing her objections and explaining why she refused to appear before the court or present her defense.

Human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh [refused to appear in court](#) to protest lack of independence of the Prosecutor's Office stationed at Evin Prison, saying it was dominated by the intelligence and security services. She also refused to provide any defense as an act of protest against the note to Article 48 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

She also protested the Prosecutor's Office's illegal citation of a list of lawyers endorsed by the Council of Guardians, in clear contradiction to Article 35 of the Constitution, to prevent the accused from exercising their right to [choose a lawyer](#).

Ms. Sotoudeh went on [hunger strike](#) on August 25, 2018, in protest to the authorities' lack of response to her correspondences. This is the fourth time the human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh is on hunger strike while in detention.

"Given that my correspondences with the authorities have not born any results, I have been compelled to go on a hunger strike beginning on August 25, 2018, in protest to my own arrest and numerous judicial pressures on my family, relatives and friends," she wrote in an open letter posted by her husband, Reza Khandan, on Facebook.

On August 27, 2018, [Reza Khandan](#) announced that in addition to [five previous charges](#), the authorities have now opened three new cases against Nasrin Sotoudeh.

The Prosecutor, the Prison Supervisor, and the Head of the Office of Implementation of Sentences in Evin Prison, went to the Women's Ward of Evin and informed her of three new charges; "urging a referendum", "assisting the formation of home churches", and "organizing protest rallies."

Ms. Sotoudeh's lawyer, Payam Derafshan, is presently incarcerated by the regime.

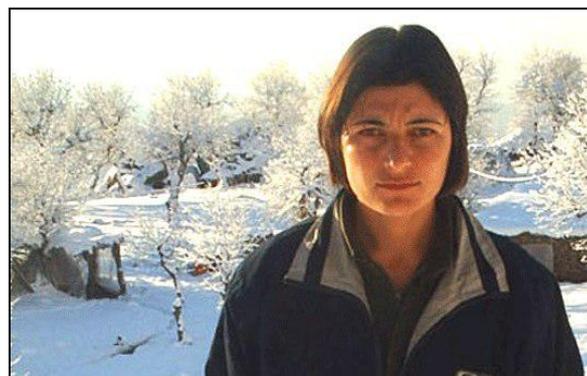
[Nasrin Sotoudeh](#) was arrested on June 13, 2018, and is currently incarcerated in Evin Prison upon a five-year prison sentence issued in absentia accusing her of alleged espionage, a charge which does not exist in her indictment. She is also charged with defending women who had protested against the compulsory veil. (The state-run IRNA news agency - August 14, 2018)

The [Women's Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran](#) condemned the arrest of human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, and called for her unconditional release from prison, while urging international human rights organizations to take urgent action in this regard.

Zeinab Jalalian

In a letter addressed to Khoy Prison authorities, Zeinab Jalalian informed them of the hunger strike of 10 prisoners in the women's ward in protest to being deprived of their basic needs and weekly visitations. She said they would continue their hunger strike until the new restrictions were lifted.

The hunger strike protest was in reaction to the confiscation of a cell phone discovered and confiscated



during inspection of their cell a few days earlier. Prison's security has opened a new file for Zeinab Jalalian and nine of her cell mates who have been interrogated several times.

[Zeinab Jalalian](#) has been [denied medical care](#) and access to medical facilities for 11 years despite her [deteriorating health conditions](#).

In an open letter, Zeinab Jalalian writes, "First, my eyes became weak, and afterwards my kidneys, my lungs, my blood pressure, and then my mouth began foaming, and eventually my teeth were damaged and infected. I have been forced to endure intense pain. As a political prisoner, I have no rights. The authorities have not taken me to see a doctor but have lied to the media by telling them that I have seen one."

Amnesty International stated in an [urgent call for action](#) dated June 15, 2018, that Zeinab Jalalian is [exposed to torture](#) by being denied medical care.

Mothers of political prisoners

In the first week of August, Ms. Farangis Mazloumi, mother of political prisoner Soheil Arabi, was not permitted to visit her son in the Greater Tehran's Penitentiary (a.k.a. Fashafouyeh Prison), despite her illness and the long distance she had to travel to see his son.

Soheil Arabi is a political prisoner who is being constantly harassed and mistreated for his strong stances against the regime. They intend to force him into take deranging medications so that they could transfer him as a psychopath to a mental hospital.

In another example of the regime's inhumane practices, Evin Prison wardens called Ms. Sedigheh Pishnamaz, the elderly mother of political prisoner [Farhad Maysami](#), at least twice on August 8, and had her listen to the voice of her son screaming under torture. The first call was made at 11 p.m. and the next around 4 a.m.

Ms. Pishnamaz suffered from muscular cramps due to the anxiety and horror caused by the calls, and her friends spent hours to help her get back to normal conditions.

Dr. Farhad Maysami, a former publisher of Exam Preparation Books from Ayandehsazan Publishing, was arrested on Wednesday night, July 31, 2018, at his office. This 48-year-old civil rights activist has been transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison.

