



Iran Women Fall Victims  
to Violence, Injustice,  
Flash Floods

**Monthly Report**  
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## Iran Women Fall Victims to Violence, Injustice, Flash Floods

The issues of Iranian women in February and March ranged from horrible cases of domestic violence against women and girls, honor killings, acid attacks, child abuse and early marriages to suicides including by pregnant women and young mothers, to violence against women prisoners in Shahr-e Rey (Qarchak) Prison, and stepping up pressure on political prisoners by unjust verdicts, most oppressive of which was the 38-year sentence plus 148 lashes handed down for the human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh.

All these issues, however, were overshadowed by devastating floods which inflicted horrendous damages and great losses of lives on the nation across the country.

### Devastating flash floods wash away lives and properties

In the final days of March and the beginning of the Persian New Year, Iran was hit by a wave of rainstorms which caused devastating flash floods throughout the country. Dozens of cities and villages drowned and thousands of people lost everything they had.

The state agencies and media have tried to minimize the number of casualties down to 19. However, scattered reports by people from various provinces set the number of deaths at 200 in the least, [most of whom were killed in Shiraz](#) after a 10-minute rain storm. Among those who lost their lives were dozens of women and girls.

The government aid was too little and too slow. Before sending aid workers, the regime dispatched the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the paramilitary Bassij to prevent any outbreak of protests. Interior Ministry officials have threatened to arrest and punish those who spread the news in social media in a bid to prevent further leaking of reports indicating the actual scale of damages.

Shocking has been the extent of damage caused by rain storms, not only in villages and rural areas, but even in metropolitan cities like Shiraz.

Government mismanagement and lack of funding for the public sector have led to natural disasters spinning out of control. Widespread embezzlement and corruption among regime officials have literally left no funds to provide for the people's needs. The role of the IRGC and corrupt officials of the regime are crystal clear for everyone.

Service and maintenance of waterways was the least the mullahs' regime could have done to prevent such floods. In Golestan Province, it has been several years that they have failed to dredge



Top, the 11-year-old daughter of a shepherd drowned in Susangerd, Khuzestan; bottom, La'ya Narimani, lost her life in Shiraz.



the Gorgan River. They have destroyed vast parts of the forests and pastures, and they have evaded to drain the farms and manage the watershed.

Roads built alongside the famous Darvazeh Quran of Shiraz have blocked water paths, resulting in massive floods. Deforestation and sale of Iran's soil to foreign countries, alongside a variety of violations of construction regulations, are further reasons behind the recent floods.

Survivors are left in horrible circumstances. There is no much sign of government aid workers; most of the assistance given to the residents of flood-hit areas is done by ordinary people from neighboring cities.

One lady in Shiraz who used to earn her living by dressmaking has been recorded in a video clip as saying, "It didn't rain much to cause such massive flash floods in our homes. My children have no more clothes, no notebooks. Everything has been washed away. I was working but everything belonging to people is all gone. The fabrics that belonged to other people. The windows have shattered and all our furniture has been washed away through the door. Everything that belonged to other people. All the clothing of my children.

"We have no clothes, no blankets, no food. Nothing is left. Where can we go? How could we abandon our home like this and leave? Our electric appliances are all in water. My sewing machine, my iron, ...

"This is my iron; how could it work for me. Where can I get another one? My whole life has been ruined."

Another woman says, "I have a year-old child. He needs powdered milk. He has got nothing to wear. No shirts, pants, socks or shoes. I have no socks on. It is cold and we have no warm clothing. All of our life-long belongings have been washed away. My mother-in-law and husband don't have any clothes. I borrow from the neighbor and give them to wear..."

A third lady says, "We have no food, no clothing. My child's got sick. He's got eye infection. Nobody has brought us eye drops. His foot is infected. Nobody's brought ointments. These things are what's important for us. Diarrhea and vomiting (are our problems) due to the sewage... We have been told not to drink water because it has been contaminated with waste water."





### 38-year sentence for human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh

After three years of imprisonment, the [human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh](#) was re-arrested on June 13, 2018, to serve a five-year sentence issued for her in absentia in 2016 on the charge of association and collusion with the intent of sabotaging national security, by citing a sit-in outside the Justice Ministry's Lawyers Guild.

While she was in prison, a new file was opened for her which included seven more charges. Her case was examined in December 2018 and again on February 4, 2019, by Tehran's Revolutionary Court in her absence and while the lawyer of her own choosing was also prevented from attending the trials and handling her case.

On March 11, 2019, Nasrin Sotoudeh's husband informed the public through his Facebook account that another 34 years and 148 lashes have been issued for her.

This ruling led to tremendous outrage across the world with Amnesty International calling the trials as "grossly unfair." The National Lawyers Guild of France has posted up her big picture on their building, declaring that "all French lawyers stand beside Nasrin Sotoudeh."

Ms. Sotoudeh has opposed her unfair trials and chosen not to attend them. In a letter published on March 30 in her Facebook account, she declared, "I do not wish to participate in any way in this game of injustice. Let the judges of the Revolutionary Courts play on their own."

The charges levelled against her are solely because of her peaceful human rights work, including her defense of women protesting the compulsory veil, and her outspoken opposition to the death penalty.

In her open letter on March 30, Nasrin Sotoudeh explained, "After being arrested on June 13, 2018, a new file was opened for me with seven new charges which led to the following sentences:



1. Association and collusion to sabotage national security – 7.5 years
2. Membership in LEGAM campaign (an anti-death penalty movement) – 7.5 years
3. Public activities against the state – 1.5 years
4. Encouraging corruption and prostitution – 12 years
5. Appearing in public without religious covering of hair – 74 lashes
6. Publication of falsities to distort public opinion – 3 years + 74 lashes
7. Disruption of public order and calm – 2 years

“So, the verdicts issued against me amount to a total of 38.5 years plus 148 lashes of the whip.

“According to Article 134 of the Islamic Punishment Code, when there are multiple charges, the judge separately designates the punishment for each. At the time of implementation, however, the highest punishment is first implemented.

“In this dossier, the maximum punishment is 12 years which is implemented first. The fundamental question, however, is what happens to the rest of the punishments?

“Again, according to Article 134, ‘If the maximum punishment is commuted, or balanced, or could not be implemented for some legal reason, then the next maximum punishment is implemented.’ In such cases, therefore, all the punishments must be decided upon until the convicted person is released.”

Nasrin Sotoudeh said her goal in writing this open letter is to reveal the process of unfair trials held not only for her but for many civil and political activists and followers of other faiths who are lingering in prison for long years under difficult circumstances.

She pointed out that she had been sentenced to 12 years in jail just for doing her duty in defending protesters to the compulsory veil. She added that her trial had been held in her absence and they did not allow even her lawyer to attend the trial.

Finally, Nasrin Sotoudeh reiterated, “The day is not far, when the sun of justice will also shine on our homeland. Until that day, we continue to practice patience and peace. May we reach this goal.”

### Confiscation of political prisoners’ business and house



An Iranian regime government agency confiscated first the business and then the house belonging to political prisoner Fatemeh Mossanna and her imprisoned husband, Hassan Sadeqi. The imprisoned couple are detained in Evin Prison and Gohardasht Prison, respectively.

The couple’s son, Iman Sadeqi, maintained, “[After confiscating a large portion of our properties](#), they have now confiscated our family’s only place of residence. According to the Penal Code, the court cannot seize a property the confiscation of which deprives the spouse, children and other persons under the guardianship of a convict from food, clothing and housing.”

Iman Sadeqi added that his parents suffer from various illnesses and need to receive medical care, but judicial authorities do not cooperate and do not allow them to be dispatched to hospital despite arrangement made at their family’s expense.

Fatemeh Mossanna and Hassan Sadeqi were supporters of the [People’s Mojahedin Organization of Iran](#) (PMOI/MEK) before they get married and both had been imprisoned in the 1980s.

Hassan Sadeqi was only 15 when he was arrested and imprisoned for six years. Fatemeh Mossanna, 13, and her mother, Ferdows Maboubi, were arrested and imprisoned for two and four years.

Three brothers of Fatemeh Mossanna called Ali, Mostafa and Morteza, as well as her sister-in-law were sentenced to death and executed shortly after. Ali Mossanna was executed while his wife and two daughters aged 4 and 6 were in prison.

Three decades later, the couple were arrested on January 28, 2013, along with their 16-year-old son and imprisoned in Evin. Their son was released shortly afterwards, but the couple remained under interrogation for a long time for holding a funeral ceremony for Hassan Sadeqi's father who had died at [Camp Liberty, Iraq](#), where the PMOI members resided.

Fatemeh Mossanna and her husband, Hassan Sadeqi, were subsequently sentenced to 15 years in prison each, on April 9, 2014, on the charge of having contacts with the People's [Mojahedin](#) Organization of Iran.

### Iranian prison officials continue to deny medical care to political prisoners



Evin Prison authorities prevented the transfer of [political prisoner Atena Daemi](#) for medical tests and medical care early in March.

Political prisoner Atena Daemi has long been suffering from persistent dizziness and numbness in the right eye area. The medical physician in Qarchak Prison had requested an MRI for her in May 2018, but she has not been transferred to the hospital for these tests and examinations.

Also, the judiciary official supervising the prison has not accepted her family's request for a visit for a long time, and they have not been able to get permission to transfer Ms. Daemi to hospital.

### Heavy sentences for peaceful activities

Political prisoner [Ensieh Abulhossieni](#) was sentenced to 3 years in prison. Civil activist Rezvaneh Ahmad Khan Beigi was sentenced to 4 years and 5 months in jail. Kurdish civil activist Sahar Kazemi and Massoumeh Askari, a retired teacher, received five-year sentences, each.

Former political prisoner of the 80s, Mahin Akbari, 57, was rearrested in February and imprisoned in Lakan Prison of Rasht.

Journalist Sanaz Allahyari remains in limbo at Evin Prison since January 9, while Ameneh Zaheri Sari, a student of accounting, is held with undetermined status in the Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz since December. Civil activist Hakimeh Ahmadi, a mother of two, has been detained in limbo in the Prison of Marand since mid-October. Baha'i citizen Maryam Ghaffarmanesh is also held under undetermined status since mid-September.



## Raiding inmates in Shahr-e Rey (Qarchak) Prison

Authorities of Shahr-e Rey Prison dispatched guards to crack down on inmates in wards 1 and 2 on February 8 and 9, 2019. The prisoners had tried to raise awareness that one of the prisoners needed medical care. The security forces, however, [responded with violence](#), using tear gas and pepper spray.

As inmates lit fire to neutralize the effects of tear gas, prison authorities used a fire engine to extinguish the fire while women were still trapped in their wards. They subsequently cut off the electricity, water and gas inside the ward and abandoned the soaked up prisoners despite cold weather. No one attended to the prisoners who had inhaled tear gas and pepper spray. The inmates were denied food for several days.

Forty inmates were [violently transferred](#) from Qarchak Prison to Ward 240 of Evin Prison on Saturday, February 9, 2019, and 25 were reportedly sent to solitary confinement in Qarchak, itself.

## Ironic remarks on VAW bill

The scale of arrests, imprisonments and sentences issued for women activists and their cruel treatment reveal the extreme lengths the Iranian regime has gone to crack down on peaceful dissent. The regime is ratcheting up pressure on political prisoners including female inmates to create an atmosphere of fear and terrorize a disgruntled and restless society.

Ironically, the clerical regime that arrests and imprisons people for any minor charge, is now justifying their 13-year blocking of the VAW bill saying it contradicts the regime's policy of de-imprisonment!!!

In [remarks about the VAW bill](#) called Provision of Security for Women, Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Eje'ii, first deputy minister and spokesman of the mullahs' Judiciary Branch, said the bill had to be fundamentally revised.

Eje'ii said, "The PSW bill contained numerous problems so much that it could not be reformed... One of the problems is that our general policy is de-imprisonment. In the PSW bill, however, imprisonment has been predicted as a punishment for every minor violation in this regard. And in doing so, it jeopardizes the foundations of families." (The official IRNA news agency – February 17, 2019)