

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Women's Committee
National Council of Resistance of Iran





Annual Report 2020


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At least
105 women
have been executed in Iran since 2013 under Rouhani

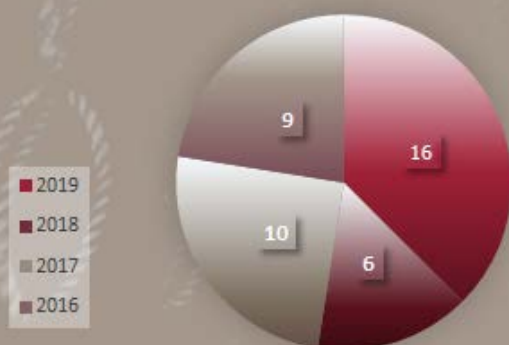
At least **15 women** are currently on the death row in Qarachak prison and many more in other prisons

Azam Maleki is sentenced to **double retribution**

Ashraf Kalhor has been on the death row for **18 years**

16 women hanged in 2019

More than double-fold increase compared to the previous year



600,000 girl children get married every year in Iran

234,000 marriages of girls under 15 were registered in 2017

37,000 child marriages under 14 were registered in 2018

Justice Ministry official:

“We do not seek to abolish the death penalty for children under 18!”

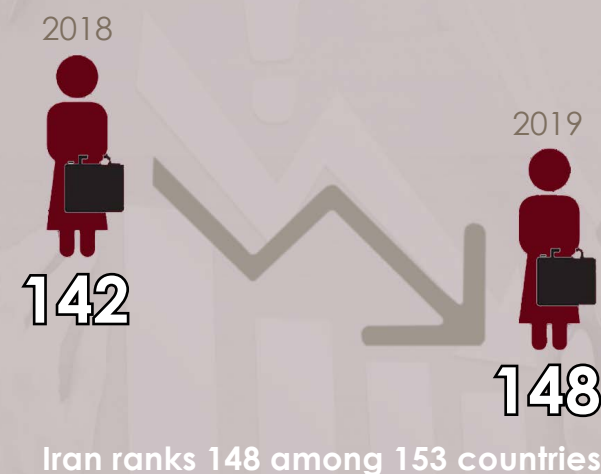
NGO representative:

“12 minors executed since 2017.”

At least **3** of the **12** executed minors were young women.



Whopping Gender Gap 0.584



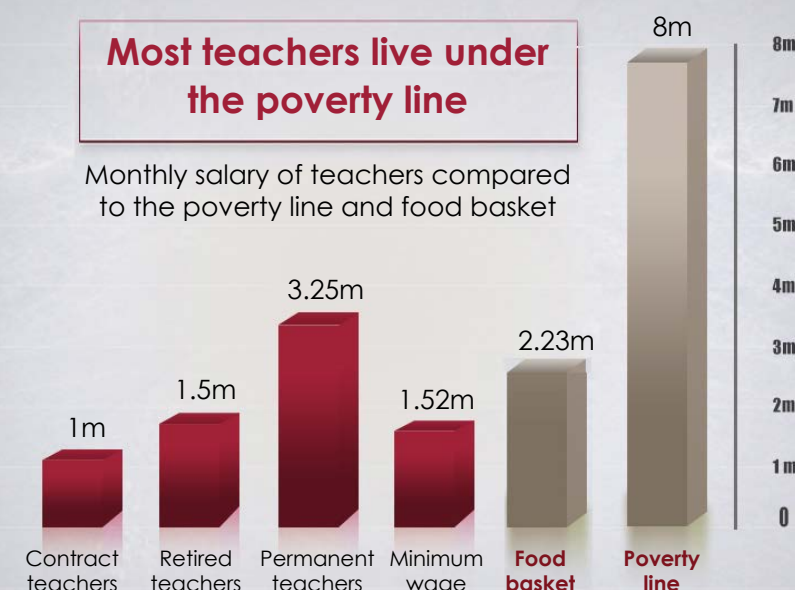
Women earn **one-fifth** of men

Iran ranks 149 among 153 countries on women's earnings



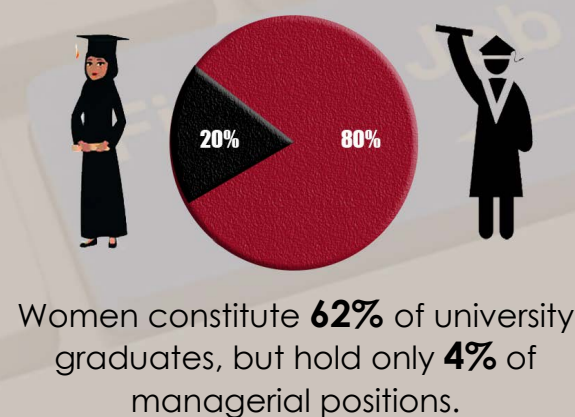
Most teachers live under the poverty line

Monthly salary of teachers compared to the poverty line and food basket

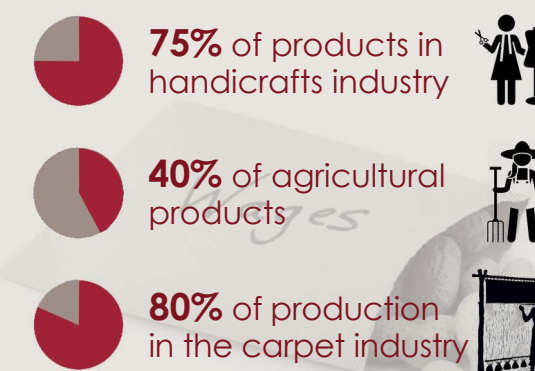


Educated women among homeless women who sleep in the streets due to unemployment and poverty

The unemployment rate of **educated women** is 3 to 4 times greater than men



Women work in **slavery conditions**, without enjoying their legal rights, although they are responsible for:



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Foreword

As Iranian women are taking the final steps in their quest for freedom and equality, the situation is becoming more polarized in the country.

On the one hand, oppression of women is taking on new dimensions. The rights of nurses, teachers and religious minority women continue to be ignored and violated.

Women and their children are the prime victims in the earthquakes and floods, abandoned without any form of government support.

Women are discriminated against more than ever in the job market, in education, arts, music, sports, etc. Poverty and its consequent social ills are becoming more and more feminized.

The age of homeless women, addicted women, prostitutes, suicide victims, etc. has dropped to mid-teens.

Child marriages are more commonly practiced in various provinces, further adding to the number of child widows and women heads of household who are as young as 14.

And the list goes on...

On the other hand, Iranian women have become more outspoken, spearheading the protests and uprisings.

They were so effective in leading two nationwide uprisings in the past year that the authorities were

compelled to acknowledge their role in the protests.

In the meantime, human rights defenders who are arrested and detained in abysmal prison conditions, continue their defense of human rights. They use every opportunity to expose the regime's crimes, support the protests in the streets, and even to report on the conditions of arrested protesters in prisons.

The brave women of Iran are fighting not only for their own freedom, but for the freedom of all Iranians. They lead the struggle of Iranian people towards freedom and equality, and their unflinching resolve will eventually realize this goal.

These courageous women have proven the "Generation Equality" in practice and women's international struggle for parity has become more meaningful with their sacrifices and contributions.

This year's report is an attempt to shed light on the various aspects of Iranian women's life and struggle.

NCRI Women's Committee



The past year saw two major uprisings in Iran where women were instrumental in leading the protests.

Protests in November 2019

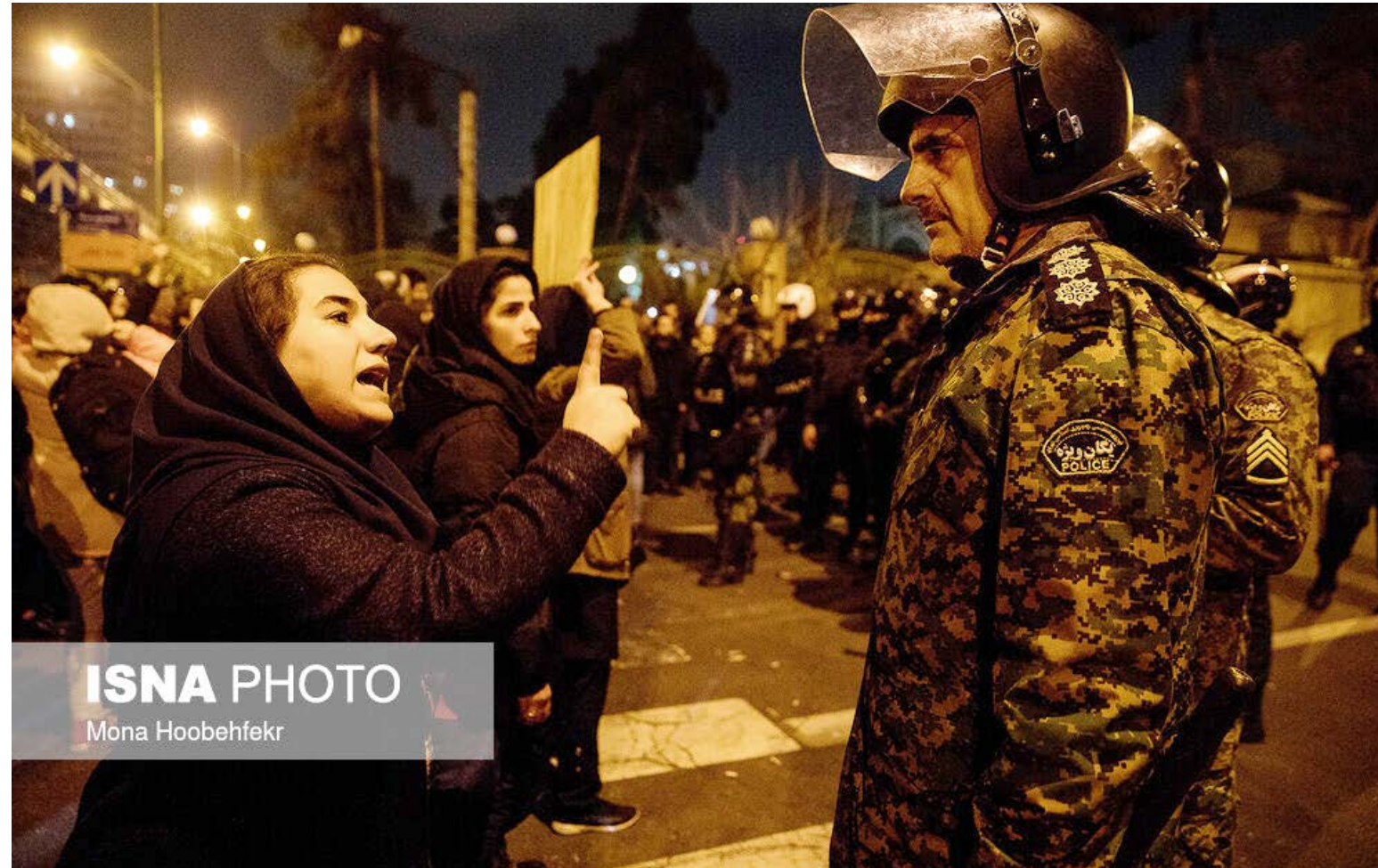
The first round of nationwide protests took place in mid-November 2019. The army of the unemployed and hungry, and the army of suppressed women and youth who have nothing to lose but their chains, were waiting for a spark to revolt against the oppressive mullahs. The uprising was sparked by the three-fold hike in fuel prices. Protesters chanted against the entirety of the religious dictatorship: "Death to the principle of Velayat-e Faqih", "Death to Khamenei", "Death to Rouhani" and "Death to the dictator." They also chanted, "Dictator, shame on you, let go of our country" and "the mullahs must get lost." The state-run media reported on women playing a "leading role" in many cities. They wrote women played a leading role in the cells of four or five people. They also encouraged people to join the protests.

The state-run Mashreqnews.com wrote on November 20, 2019, "Women had a remarkable role in the recent mischief. They had special role in various scenes in inciting the public to carry out acts against the establishment."

The state-run Fars news agency affiliated with the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) also wrote on November 20, 2019, "Some women played a pivotal role in leading the riots." Fars added, "Women's special role in running and leading the recent riots seemed remarkable. In numerous places particularly in Tehran suburbs, women who were apparently between 30 to 35 years old, had a special role in leading the riots... These women wore the same garbs, each had a different role; one filmed the riots, the other stopped the cars, and another one incited the people to join the ranks of riots..." The protests rapidly spread to 191 cities across Iran in just a few days.

The mullahs' supreme leader Ali Khamenei weighed in. Calling the protesters "thugs" and "hooligans," he

Women led two major nationwide uprisings in Iran



ordered the security forces to open fire on unarmed and defenseless protesters. Snipers targeted protesters from rooftops, shooting them in the heads and chests, and slaughtering teenagers as young as 13 and 14. Plainclothes agents shot protesters at point blank range and struck the wounded with the axe. They deployed heavy machine guns, helicopters, and military tanks to crack down on the protests. And the clerical regime set a new record in crime against humanity.

At least 1,500 people, including 400 women, were killed. Some 12,000 have been arrested.

The regime shut down the internet and blocked mobile networks to prevent leaking of the images of its bloody crackdown to the world.

This shocking crackdown against defenseless people in Iran is one of the most horrific crimes of the 21st century

and by any measure amounts to a manifest crime against humanity.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet expressed alarm at the continuing lack of transparency about casualties and the treatment of thousands of detainees, as well as continuing arrests reported to be taking place across the country.

"Verified video footage indicates severe violence was used against protesters, including armed members of security forces shooting from the roof of a justice department building in one city, and from helicopters in another," Bachelet said. "We have also received footage which appears to show security forces shooting unarmed demonstrators from behind while they were running away, and shooting others directly in the face and vital organs – in other words shooting to kill. These are clear



“ In numerous places particularly in Tehran suburbs, women who were apparently between 30 to 35 years old, had a special role in leading the riots. ”

violations of international norms and standards on the use of force, and serious violations of human rights." The High Commissioner said her Office had received information partially corroborating reports that Iranian security forces used machine guns against protesters in Jarahi Square in Mahshahr – including against people fleeing the area and people hiding in nearby reed-beds – resulting in at least 23 people killed, and possibly many more.

Remarks made by regime officials and authorities seemed to corroborate these crimes against humanity. Mohammad Javad Baqeri, the Friday Prayer leader of the city of Asalem in Gilan Province and representative of the mullahs' supreme leader in this city, revealed that at one of Tehran hospitals, an innocent nurse was directly shot in the forehead as she was watching the protests from a window and attempted to shoot films.

In his sermon at the Friday prayer on December 6, 2019, Baqeri brazenly said, "They don't give you candies amidst the fight and clashes. There are bullets. Someone was telling me last night that (in one of the early days of the protests) he was in a busy hospital in Tehran. A female nurse went to the window. She said she wanted to take films (from the protests). As she was attempting to take a film from the protests outside, a bullet struck her right in the middle of her forehead!"

1,500 including 400 women killed

By the time of publishing this report, the Iranian Resistance has identified 755 of those killed in the protests in November. Despite domestic and international calls, the Iranian regime has continued to refuse announcing the names and number of those killed.

The Women's Committee of the National Council of Resistance of Iran has compiled the reports, names and pictures of over 50 women killed in the uprising in November 2019.

However, on December 23, 2019, Reuters cited Iranian regime's Interior Ministry officials confirming that 400 women and 17 juveniles were among the 1,500 protesters killed during the November uprising.

Women of all ages, from the 14-year-old Nikta Esfandani to the 59-year-old Mina Sheikhi, mother of six, were among those ruthlessly killed by security forces. This is evidence of both the regime's atrocities as well as women's extensive participation in the protests.

Following are the names and conditions of death of a few dozens of the women who gave their lives in the protests.

1. Ameneh Shahbazifard, 34 and mother of three – Karaj, Alborz - - Her sons are 12 and 14 and her daughter is 4. Ameneh was shot by security forces as she was trying to help an injured protester. Her brother paid 4.5 million tomans at Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery to receive her body. He said in her death certificate, the reason for death was written broken skull, while her head and face were intact and the bullet had hit her neck.
2. Azadeh Zarbi, 28 – Shahriar, Tehran - She was found dead with her throat shattered by a bullet. She studied at the Azad University of Shahr-e-Quds.
3. Azar Mirzapour Zahabi, 48, a nurse and mother of four – Karaj, Alborz - On November 16, she was going home after two shifts of work at Shafa Hospital of Karaj, when she was shot in the chest by security forces.
4. Bita Khodadadi – Karaj, Alborz
5. Chan'ani, a young girl– Mahshahr, Khuzestan
6. Elaheh Rastegar – Tabar
7. Esmat Heydari - Kermanshah
8. Fatemeh Habibi – Bahrestan, Tehran
9. Fatemeh Haqverdi – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
10. Fariba Al-e Khamis – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
11. Fariheh Karimzadeh – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
12. Golnar Samsami, 34 and mother of an 8-year-old boy – Shahriar, Tehran - She was shot in the head by a sniper as she was waiting to catch a taxi and go home.

13. Halimeh Samiri – Abadan, Khuzestan- She was killed under torture, then her lifeless body was abandoned outside her father's house.
14. Hasineh Atighi – Mahshahr, Khuzestan
15. Hosna Bameri - Mahshahr, Khuzestan - 3-year-old girl died in the arms of her mother
16. Kowsar Baghlani – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
17. Kowsar Tab-e Matouqi– Ahvaz, Khuzestan
18. Mahnaz Mehdizadeh Nader – Karaj, Alborz - Mahnaz was shot three times by the State Security Force's special unit on November 16.
19. Maryam Esmaili – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
20. Maryam Eidani– Ahvaz, Khuzestan
21. Maryam Nouri – Robat Karim, Tehran
22. Marzieh Abbaszadeh – Robat Karim, Tehran
23. Massoumeh Darabpour – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
24. Mohaddeseh Moghaddam– Ahvaz, Khuzestan
25. Mina Sheikhi – 59 and mother of six – Tehran - On November 16, as she was watching the protests from the rooftop, she was shot three times in the chest.
26. Nasrin Baghlani – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
27. Nassim Ghorbani – Tehran
28. Nikta Esfandani, 14 – Tehran – She was shot in the head in Tehran's Sattar Khan Avenue. Her family finally managed to collect her body after three days.
29. Nikta Khazaii – Mehrshahr, Karaj, Alborz
30. Parvaneh Seifi – Robat Karim, Tehran
31. Reyhaneh Maleki – Ahvaz, Khuzestan
32. Samaneh Zolqadr – Tehran
33. Soheila Fallahzadeh– Ahvaz, Khuzestan
34. Shahla Baldi– Ahvaz, Khuzestan
35. Shahla Rezaeipour – Karaj, Alborz
36. Sepideh Hassani – Naghadeh, West Azerbaijan - She was a student who was shot to death by security forces in Tehran during the protests.
37. Shabnam Dayani – Shiraz, Fars – She and 12 others were run over by the vehicles of the IRGC-paramilitary force, the Bassij, on November 16. The Bassij agents subsequently opened a barrage of fire on all of them.
38. Shelir Dadvand – Bukan, Kurdistan
39. Umm-e Walid – Mahshahr, Khuzestan
40. Yas Soleimani – Shushtar, Khuzestan
41. Vida Shakibaii-Nejad – Kermanshah
42. Vina Houshang – Javanrud, Kermanshah
43. Zahra Sajedi – Abadan, Khuzestan
44. Zeinab Asakereh– Abadan, Khuzestan
45. Zeinab Nissanpour– Ahvaz, Khuzestan
46. Ziba Khoshgovar – Sanandaj, Kurdistan
47. A 13-year-old girl shot in the head – Behbahan, Khuzestan – eyewitness report



Left, Nikta Esfandani, 14, and above, Ameneh Shahbazifard and her 4-year-old daughter. Both were killed in the protests in November 2019 by snipers who shot them in the head and chest.

48. A female high school student shot by helicopter – Shiraz, Fars – eyewitness report
49. A female student from Saqqez – Sanandaj, Kurdistan – eyewitness report
50. A nurse in a hospital – Tehran – admission by Friday prayer leader of Asalem
51. A pregnant woman – Mahshahr, Khuzestan – eyewitness report
52. A pregnant woman – Saveh, Central – documented by video clip
53. A woman – Mahshahr, Khuzestan – eyewitness report
54. A young woman – Shahriar, Tehran – eyewitness report
55. An unidentified woman – Rasht, Gilan – eyewitness report

12,000 arrested and brutalized in jails

As mentioned earlier, the number of those arrested is estimated to be at least 12,000.

The Iranian state media reported that just on November 30 and December 1, 2019, more than 1,000 persons had been arrested in seven provinces. At least 3 female students were arrested in the last days of November. Local authorities announced the arrest of 11 women on November 28, December 4, and December 7, in Sirjan and Karaj, and on December 26, in Gilan Province.

The spokesman for the parliamentary National Security Committee announced on November 25 that 7,000 protesters had been arrested.

There have been numerous reports of ill-treatment against those arrested, including with the apparent aim of extracting forced confessions. The Iranian state television broadcast forced "confessions" by some detainees alleged to be protest leaders or affiliated with anti-government groups.

The arrested protesters have not had access to a lawyer, and have been deprived of due process.

Crimes against humanity continue in the most violent ways behind the prison walls.

A prisoner released from the Prison of Marivan, Iranian Kurdistan, had this to say about female prisoners:

"One day, they brought in a woman who had been detained for having contacts with foreign media. After several days, we no longer heard her screams under torture. They said she had died under torture."

In Evin Prison, interrogators are cruel in questioning the girls to force them into making false confessions.

Political Prisoner and human rights activist Narges Mohammadi sent a letter out of prison on December 1, 2019. In that letter, she wrote about a young woman only 20 years old: "The interrogator had caught her hair and dragged her around. Insulting her with very vile language, such that she couldn't repeat his words. Then he had opened his belt and banged it on the chair and table to frighten the young woman and have her say whatever they wanted in front of the camera. Not once, but several times." She also wrote about the conditions of a wounded young protester who had been taken to Evin Prison. "His appearance showed that bleeding, infection and swelling of his feet had overwhelmed him and that was why the interrogators of Ward 209 of Evin had brought him from solitary cell to the clinic. He was very young man from Islamshahr. I told him to insist on being treated for his leg otherwise it would be amputated. He said, 'I'm going to be executed. What's the difference with leg or without it? They have not even disinfected my wound since the day they arrested me.'"



Golnar Samsami was shot in the head by a sniper while waiting for a taxi.

Out of thousands of arrests, hundreds of students and children are still being detained and some have been transferred to the Juvenile Correctional Center.

Protests in January 2020

Less than two months later, a series of protests erupted in reaction to the killing of 176 innocent passengers and crew onboard a Ukrainian plane shot down by IRGC missiles. At least 16 female university students, as well as three female doctors and professors, were among the victims.

Women's leading role was most evident in these protests which started on January 11, 2020 in universities in Tehran and quickly expanded to 19 provinces with calls for regime change.

Slogans like, "Commander in Chief (Khamenei), resign, resign" and "IRGC commits crime, leader defends it" shook the pillars of the regime for four consecutive days. The protests continued on the fifth day during the funeral of the plane crash victims where brave Iranian girls and



ISNA PHOTO
Erfan Khoshkhoo

women turned the security forces' attacks into protests against them.

During the January 2020 protests, at least 300 people, including a significant number of women, were arrested. Two of which were reflected in the media.

Shora Fekri, a former student activist was arrested in Amol on January 12, 2020, for attending a memorial service for the Ukrainian plane crash victims. Shora Fekri, who holds an MA in economy from University of Mazandaran, is a professional poet and mountain climber.

Also, Vida Rabbani, a civil activist, was arrested by security forces at her home on January 15, 2020. The Iranian Judiciary spokesman confessed to some of these arrests. (The state-run ISNA news agency – January 14, 2020) The Guardian website reported on the protests: "Iranian authorities fired live ammunition to disperse protesters in Tehran on Sunday night, wounding several people."

Referring to the leading role of women, a witness told the Guardian that groups, many led by women, gathered in Tehran's central Azadi Square on Sunday evening wearing masks and scarves to hide their identities, confronting riot police and officers in plain clothes. Guarding quoted another female witness, who asked not to be identified and wrote, "They were firing teargas repeatedly. We couldn't see anywhere, and we were screaming. We were getting blinded. Forces were firing teargas back to back. A young girl beside me was shot in

the leg. It was terrible, terrible."

According to Guardian, she provided a video from near Azadi Square showing bloodstains along the pavement, one of several similar videos being circulated by Iranian activists on Sunday evening and Monday morning. "It's the blood of our people," a woman said in one clip.

Another video purportedly from near Azadi Square shows several people appearing to be wounded on the ground including a woman lying on a bloodied pavement. "They shot her with a bullet," a man says.

France 24 reported on the violence committed by security forces during the January 12 demonstration in Tehran causing women's injuries. France 24 wrote: "Two other videos were filmed 70 meters further east on Azadi Street. One shows two women wounded in the leg, with blood on the ground; the other shows a third woman, also wounded in the leg."

Amnesty International also touched on the shocking aspects of the brutality of security forces against women protesters, and wrote in a report on January 15, 2020, "The organization also received shocking allegations of sexual violence against at least one woman arbitrarily arrested by plain-clothes security agents and detained for several hours in a police station. Iran's security forces have once again carried out a reprehensible attack on the rights of Iranian people to peaceful expression and assembly and resorted to unlawful and brutal tactics."



Conditions of Women Political Prisoners

The situation for human rights defenders in Iran has become significantly more dangerous in recent years. As scores of protesters are arrested, detained, charged and even killed in anti-government protests, human rights defenders are viewed as a threat to national security. Therefore, the regime hands down the most unacceptable punishments for them. Despite their long prison terms and dire conditions in prison, these political prisoners remain steadfast in their cause to defend their people's human rights. They brave harsh punishments to send their inspiring messages out of prison and show the path to the public fed up with the regime's plunder and corruption.

Maryam Akbari Monfared

Maryam Akbari Monfared, 43, with three daughters, served her 10th year in prison. She was arrested in late December 2009, after contacting her siblings who are members of the opposition People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). She was arrested and charged with Moharebeh or waging war on God. Maryam Akbari was deprived of access to legal counsel throughout her legal proceedings and was sentenced to 15 years in prison in a 5-minute trial. Her family paid 1.15 billion tomans as bail, but prison authorities have refused to grant her leave for medical treatment even for one day.

In February, she and other political prisoners in the Women's Ward of Evin wrote a letter boycotting the regime's sham election. They wrote in their letter: "The Iranian people have declared their true and irreversible votes in the uprising of December 2017-January 2018 and the bloody uprising of November 2019 and afterwards by sacrificing their lives in the streets... The boycott and

rejection of the election is the Iranian people's pledge with the martyrs, especially the martyrs of the recent uprising."

Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee

Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee was arrested at home in Tehran on November 9, 2019, by ten security agents and taken to Qarchak Prison.

A writer and a human rights activist, Golrokh Iraee had been released on bail from Evin Prison on April 8, 2019, after serving half of the six-year sentence she had been serving since 2016 for writing an unpublished book about the inhumane punishment of stoning.

On June 18, 2019, Tehran's Revolutionary Court examined a new case filed against Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee and Atena Daemi sentencing them to three years and seven months for protesting the executions of three Kurdish dissidents.

Golrokh is denied the right to meetings or telephone calls with her husband, Arash Sadeghi, who is a political prisoner in Gohardasht Karaj serving a 19-year sentence for his peaceful activities. He suffers from bone cancer (chondrosarcoma) and has been denied chemotherapy after the operation he had.

Despite her harsh conditions in Qarchak, Ms. Iraee wrote from prison and called for the boycott of the regime's sham elections in February:

"Today, we refuse to participate in the insulting theatrics of a regime the hands of whose rulers are stained with the blood of our people... We will never deviate from our struggle for freedom. Tyranny and despotism have stood in our way for more than a century. But we will prevail, even if the road is rocky and our lives are our only weapons."

Atena Daemi

Atena Daemi, 30, a human rights and child rights activist, has been imprisoned since November 2016, and is serving a 5-year sentence in Evin Prison. Since her imprisonment, three new cases have been brought against her, one of which resulted in an additional 3 years and 7 months being tacked onto her sentence. She was transferred to a solitary cell on December 28, 2019. She suffers from multiple illnesses aggravated by her 54-day hunger strike from February to March 2018. But Atena has remained steadfast and unyielding. In a letter on May 26, 2019, she wrote: "The Islamic Republic regime is not feeling well... The recent apprehensions of civil and political activists advocating the rights of workers, teachers, women, students, writers, etc. are cause of concern. Of course, the only party that needs to be concerned is the ruling regime! In light of their weakness and such heavy suppression, the only way (for us) is to resist and remain steadfast to achieve the outcome that we have been pursuing for years."

Zeinab Jalalian

Kurdish political prisoner Zeinab Jalalian is sentenced to life in prison. She has been in prison for 12 years without even an hour's leave. She suffers from multiple health issues ranging from intestinal diseases to heart problems. In November 2019, she contracted influenza but prison authorities refused to allow her to go to the hospital, citing security concerns as a result of the uprisings.

She has been denied medical treatment in a bid to force her into making false confessions against herself. Her family posted a 1 billion Toman bail but authorities from the Ministry of Intelligence refused to let her out of prison for much needed medical treatment.

Despite the horrible conditions in the Prison of Khoy where she is detained, she sent out a letter in support of the protests in November 2019 in which she wrote:

"Most tragically, they open fire on innocent people. People who cry out because of their difficult living conditions and demand improvement of their situation, are answered with bullets of the Islamic Republic... So long as we breathe, we won't let the blood of these young people get wasted."

Nasrin Sotoudeh

Human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh faces 33 years in prison and 148 whippings. Rearrested in June 2018, she is held in the Women's Ward of Evin Prison. Throughout her unfair trials, she protested the judiciary-appointed lawyers by refusing to select one. She also refused to participate in the court hearings.

On December 9, 2019, in the wake of the bloody uprising in November, Nasrin Sotoudeh sent out an open letter denouncing the "ruthless attacks by the police and security forces" on the protesters. She wrote in her letter: "Those detained do not have access to lawyers of their choice and to due process of law. Government officials have called for broadcast of the confessions of the detainees against themselves."

Ms. Sotoudeh called for "independent investigations in the presence of trusted representatives and lawyers of people and civil activists, with the intervention and observation of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, to prosecute those who ordered and executed the slaughter of protesters."

She said many protesters were detained in "dangerous conditions." She called on the clerical regime to "hand over the remaining corpses of the victims to their families and allow them to hold dignified mourning ceremonies."

Narges Mohammadi

Narges Mohammadi, a human rights activist and Vice President of the LEGAM Movement Against Capital

Punishment, was sentenced to 16 years in prison. On December 25, 2019, she was forcibly transferred from Evin Prison to the Prison Zanjan without being formally charged with any crime. The chief warden at Evin Prison brutalized Narges Mohammadi who had resisted being transferred, and her bruised arms were bleeding.

Narges Mohammadi also wrote a letter from prison on December 1, 2019, in which she expressed her solidarity with the November 2019 uprising. In her letter she described the situation of arrested protesters she had met in Evin. She also wrote in her letter:

"The country's president threatens protesters, who in an act of civil (disobedience) stopped their cars in the streets, with persecution and boasts of their monitoring equipment and cameras. One must ask him, does he also have equipment to monitor those who pulled the triggers and opened fire on people? Do they have cameras in security wards in prisons where young people are enchained and tortured?"

"The Judiciary Chief threatens to take decisive measures and harshly punish the protesters, but he does not say a word about prosecution of those who shot people at point blank range. Is it conceivable to uphold rights and justice in such a system?"

"Slaughter of people who are fed up with suppression has been so ruthless and violent that could not be justified in any way. We can have only one demand and that is justice for those involved in the killing of defenseless people. And this must turn into a national demand."

Saba Kord Afshari

Saba Kord Afshari was re-arrested in Tehran on June 1, 2019, for protesting against the mandatory veil (Hijab). She was taken to the Vozara Penitentiary, where she was held in solitary confinement until June 11 and forced to confess under duress. Saba was sentenced to 24 years of imprisonment which was later commuted by the Revision Court to 9 years.

Yasaman Aryani

Yasaman Aryani was arrested on April 10, 2019, for protesting against the mandatory veil (Hijab). She was kept in solitary confinement for nine consecutive days, under constant interrogation, duress, and ill-treatment, to force her make false confessions. She was repeatedly threatened that her friends and family, particularly her mother, would be arrested if she did not cooperate.

Monireh Arabshahi

Monireh Arabshahi, Yasaman's mother, was arrested on April 11 for inquiring about her daughter. She is currently being held in Evin Prison. Ms. Arabshahi has continued to defend human rights while in detention. She has sent out several letters, exposing the intolerable conditions in Qarchak Prison and of women political prisoners.

Violent, Cruel, and Inhumane Treatment

The mullahs' regime systematically subjects detainees to severe physical and psychological torture under interrogation. However, for women detainees, the regime added beatings while in detention under various pretexts.

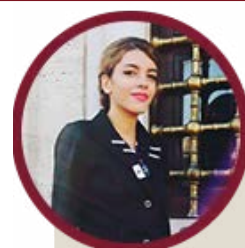
In July 2019, Ameneh Zaher Sari was severely beaten while being indefinitely detained in Sepidar Prison in Ahvaz.



Marzieh Amiri, a journalist, labor activist and student of Tehran University, was arrested May 1, 2019. Until June 8, 2019, she was under interrogation. She was held in solitary confinement for 17 days in Ward 2A of Evin Prison and Intelligence Ward 209. During her interrogations, she suffered an epileptic seizure due to harsh mental and physical pressures. She was subsequently transferred to the Women's Ward of Evin and temporarily released on bail on October 26, 2019.



Civil activist Zahra Mohammadi, 29, was arrested on May 23, 2019 for teaching Kurdish children their mother tongue. She was held for 194 days since the interrogators of the Court of Sanandaj refused to release her. As part of the intense interrogations, she was pressured into a forced confession. She was finally released temporarily on December 2, 2019 on a bail of 700 million Tomans. Zahra Mohammadi holds an M.S. degree in geopolitics from the University of Birjand.



Yasaman Aryani, Neda Naji, Atefeh Rangriz, and Sepideh Qolian were severely beaten by criminal prisoners in Qarchak Prison, on July 29, 2019, upon provocations by the prison authorities.



Environmental activists Niloufar Bayani and Sepideh Kashani were subjected to intense psychological and psychological torture and threats of physical torture and sexual abuse during 1,200 hours of interrogation.

In a letter in February 2020, Niloufar Bayani wrote, the agents forced her to "mimic sounds of wild animals" and threatened to inject her with "crippling ampoules and air ampoules. On January 16, 2019, Bayani wrote that "during long interrogations" agents "repeatedly made the most filthy sexual insults... in detailed, disgusting, imaginary situations and wanted to [force me] me to complete their sexual fantasies... Shockingly, every time I exposed this behavior and sought help from the authorities, the pressures, threats and acts of torture increased, and they repeatedly told me... not to do anything to irritate the regime."

Nazanin Zaghari was taken to the psychiatric ward of Khomeini Hospital in July 2019. The IRGC handcuffed and chained her feet at the time of transfer.



Neda Naji, a labor activist, was beaten in Qarchak Prison on July 6, 2019. She suffered blurred vision for long hours due to the many blows she received to her head.

Harsh Prison Sentences

One of the regime's methods of instilling fear in society and repressing activists is to issue harsh sentences for those whose only crime is exercising their basic human rights.

■ On December 14, 2019, **Sanaz Allahyari**, **Asal Mohamadi**, and **Sepideh Qolian**, civil activists, were sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment for taking part in a protest on the International Labor Day.

■ On July 31, 2019, **Yasaman Aryani** and **Monireh Arabshahi** were sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment for protesting against the mandatory veil (Hijab). **Mojgan Keshavarz**, another protester, was sentenced to 23 years of imprisonment.

■ On February 18, 2020, after two years of detention, **Niloufar Bayani** and **Sepideh Kashani**, two environmental activists, were sentenced to 10 and 8 years in prison, respectively.

■ **Neda Naji** was sentenced to 5 years and 6 months, on December 4, 2019. She had been arrested for taking part in a non-violent protest in Tehran on the International Labor Day.

■ **Raheleh Ahmadi**, mother of political prisoner Saba Kord Afshari, was arrested on July 10, 2019, as a means of pressuring her daughter. Raheleh Ahmadi was released on bail after a few days but was later tried and sentenced to 4 years and 2 months of imprisonment on December 16, 2019. She was taken to Evin Prison in mid-February 2020 to serve her sentence.

■ On August 13, 2019, **Marzieh Amiri**, a journalist, was sentenced to 10 years and 6 months of prison and 148 whippings for taking part in a protest on the International Labor Day.

■ On July 25, 2019, civil activist **Sepideh Farhan** was sentenced to 6 years of imprisonment and 74 whippings for taking part in the protests in December 2017-January 2018.

■ On August 6, 2019, labor activist **Nasrin Javadi** was sentenced to 7 years of imprisonment and 74 whippings for participating in the International Labor Day protest. She was also banned from using smartphones, participating in political groups or parties, or attending social gatherings.

■ Labor activist **Atefeh Rangriz** was sentenced to 11 years and six months in jail and 74 lashes.

■ On October 10, 2019, labor activist **Nahid Khodajoo** was sentenced to 6 years in prison and 74 lashes for taking part in the International Labor Day protest. She was also banned for 2 years from membership in any political group or party, or from attending any social gatherings.

Hunger strikes are a common way for political prisoners to protest violations of their human rights. Since there are no legitimate laws under the current regime, and since prisoners have limited or no access to attorneys, their only solution is to pay the price with their health and lives. In past years, women political prisoners have also used this method to achieve their rights.

■ Sanaz Allahyari went on a hunger strike from July 4 to July 15, 2019.

■ On August 6, 2019, Sepideh Kashani and Niloufar Bayani in Ward 2A of Evin went on a 5-day hunger strike while under horrible psychological conditions.

■ Farangis Mazloumi, held in solitary confinement, went on a hunger strike on August 16, 2019, to protest that her case had remained undecided.

■ Soheila Hijab, a lawyer and a women's rights activist, went on a hunger strike on October 31, 2019 to protest her continued detention despite having paid the bail bond.

■ Zahra Zar-e' Seraji, a political prisoner, went on a hunger strike on November 24, 2019, to protest authorities' failure to separate inmates based on their crimes. She was also protesting the lack of facilities, especially clean drinking water, in Qarchak Prison. On December 1, 2019, she was found to be in critical condition. Ms. Zare suffers from epilepsy.

■ Soha Mortezaei, a student activist, went on a hunger strike from December 27, 2019 to January 12, 2020, to protest the unreasonably high bail demanded for her freedom.

■ Leila Tirandari, a women's rights activist and a nurse, was arrested on December 28, 2019 in Sanandaj. She had undergone a kidney operation two weeks prior. She called her family and said she was on a hunger strike to protest the pressure on her to make false confessions.

Jailed activist women



Left to right: (first row) Mojgan Keshavarz, Farangis Mazloumi, Sanaz Allahyari, (second row) Nahid Khodajoo, Niloufar Bayani, Sepideh Kashani, (third row) Soheila Hijab, Soha Mortezaei, Asal Mohammadi, (fourth row) Leila Tirandari, Sepideh Farhan, Zahra Zar-e' Seraji, (fifth row) Saba Kord Afshari and her mother, Raheleh Ahmadi, and Nasrin Javadi.

Persecuted for one's faith

The Iranian regime is among the top violators of the rights of religious minorities. Baha'is and Christian converts from Islam are seriously discriminated against.

Followers of the Baha'i faith are systematically harassed and persecuted. They are denied equitable access to employment, education, political office and exercise of their economic, social and cultural rights.

Christians are harassed and arrested for practicing their rituals and for setting up house churches.

Considering that the Christian population in Iran is 300,000 at most, they experience disproportionate levels of arrests and detention, and high levels of harassment and surveillance.

■ Prisoner of conscience Fatemeh (Mary) Mohammadi, a Christian convert, was arrested and transferred to Tehran's Vozara Detention Center on January 12, 2020, after she participated in a ceremony commemorating victims of the Ukrainian plane shot down by the IRGC.

She was subjected to physical and sexual torture. She was sent to the courtyard and forced to sit on the asphalt floor in front of the toilets in the freezing cold weather. She was then questioned by three male interrogators.

Mary Mohammadi was denied food during the first 24 hours of her detention.

In addition to beating her, female officers conducted a physical examination and forced Mary to remove all her clothing, and do repeated squats. The officers threatened to strip her by force if she did not do it herself.

She is presently detained in Qarchak Prison.

■ Khatun Fathullah-Zadeh, a 61-year-old Christian woman, was arrested along with her husband by agents.

■ Soheila Haghighat, a Baha'i citizen, was arrested at her residence by seven IRGC intelligence agents who had covered their faces. The agents confiscated her computer, ID, bank cards, birth certificate, and passport.

■ Fa'ezeh Abdipour, a Dervish woman, was sentenced to 12 years in prison and 74 lashes, 2 years exile to Borazjan, and banned from public services and leaving the country for 2 years.

■ Yalda Firouzian, a Baha'i citizen, has been held in solitary confinement for almost 5 months solely because of her religious beliefs.

■ Samin Maghsoudi was transferred to Evin prison. In March 2019, she lost her two-month-old unborn child due to stress after the authorities called her to pursue her case.

■ Taraneh Torabi (Ehsani) was sentenced to 30 months in prison on charges of being a Baha'i while she had a 5-month-old baby.



At least
50
Christians and
Baha'i women
apprehended in
2019

■ During the arrest of Noushin Hakimi (Noohnejad), a Baha'i resident of Bandar Lengeh city, intelligence agents searched her residence and confiscated personal belongings without presenting a search warrant. Noushin Hakimi was then transferred to an unknown location.

■ Shahrzad Nazifi, a Baha'i citizen and motocross champion and trainer in Iran, has been deprived along with her family of participating in any competition or training others in this field without any official judicial verdict.

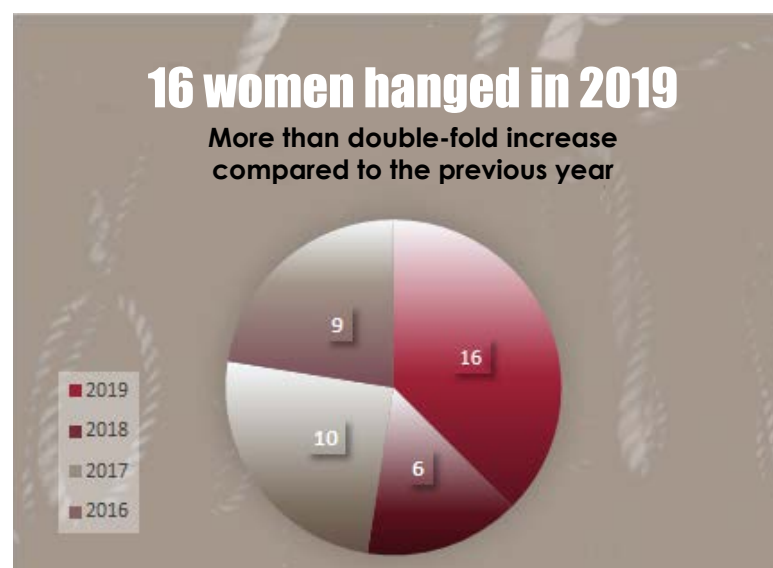
■ At least 16 Baha'i female students were denied admission to universities despite successfully passing the competitive National University Exam with high marks.

World's Top Executioner of Women

Iran holds the world's record for executions of women. Since 2013, when Rouhani took office, at least 105 women have been executed in Iran.

The executions of women take place in the absence of due process and after unfair trials. The women sentenced to death are themselves victims of forced early marriages, domestic violence against women, and other forms of injustice and discrimination against women which are prevalent in society under the mullahs' rule. According to international standards, women should not even be imprisoned due to their maternal role and duties. In Iran, however, not only women are imprisoned but they are sentenced to death and their children are abandoned without the care of their mothers. In some instances, the children have to go to prison along with their mothers. Use of the death penalty for women soared in 2019 in step with increasing crackdown on the disgruntled public. At least 18 women have been executed since January 2019, sixteen (16) of whom were executed in 2019. This compared to six (6) women executed in 2018, ten (10) in 2017, and nine (9) in 2016 gives a sense of the escalation of social clampdown over the past year. Although the Iranian regime is not transparent in providing the number of executions it carries out, the announced examples are truly shocking.

Somayyeh Shahbazi, 33, was hanged on December 4, 2019. Somayyeh served six years in the Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz while on the death row. She had committed murder in self-defense against rape which, even under the regime's laws, is considered an individual right.



Execution of minors

While Iran has executed more juvenile offenders than any other country in the world, Iranian officials have made it clear they do not intend to change their routine. Justice Ministry's deputy for legal and parliamentary affairs, Ali Farhadi, asserted in a parliamentary meeting that the ministry does not intend to abolish execution of juveniles under 18 years, saying the ministry is content with the status quo with regards to the execution of minors.

An NGO representative in the said meeting said 12 minors had been executed since 2017 and another 6 or 7 cases of execution of minors were also being processed. (The official website of the mullahs' parliament, icana.ir, December 25, 2019)

The latest victim of the executions of minors was Fatemeh R. executed around December 9, 2019, on the charge of killing her husband. She was 17 at the time of committing the crime. She had served 4 years in prison on the death row. (The state-run tnews.ir, December 16, 2019)

Justice Ministry official:

"We do not seek to abolish the death penalty for children under 18!"

NGO representative:

"12 minors executed since 2017."

At least **3** of the **12** executed minors were young women.

At least
105 women
have been executed in Iran since 2013 under Rouhani

At least **15 women** are currently on the death row in Qarachak prison and many more in other prisons

Azam Maleki is sentenced to **double retribution**

Ashraf Kalhor has been on the death row for **18 years**



Above, Somayyeh Shahbazi, and below, Fatemeh R., both hanged in December 2019.



Inhuman punishments

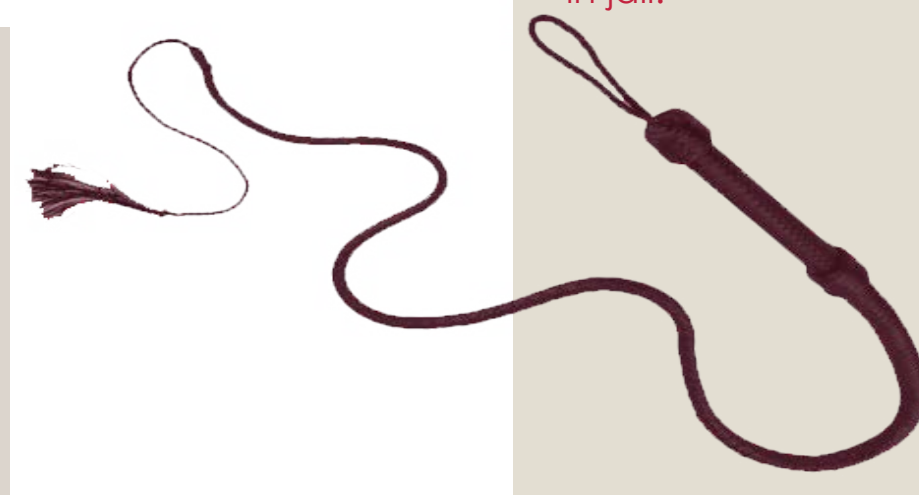
In addition to executions, the state continues to commit other inhumane crimes against women.

Sufi woman, Elham Ahmadi, was released from prison on August 13, 2019, after receiving 74 lashes for releasing an audio file that revealed the catastrophic conditions of Qarchak Prison and lack of medical care for imprisoned women.

Salbi Marandi, 80, received 70 lashes on November 28, 2019 for following up on the suspicious death of her son in prison. Having lost the ability to move her limbs after the flogging, she was carried to the women's ward of Khoy Prison (West Azerbaijan) to serve eight months in jail.

Elderly woman, 80, received

70 lashes
for following up on the suspicious death of her son in prison. Having lost the ability to move her limbs after the flogging, she was carried to the women's ward of Khoy Prison to serve eight months in jail.





Female prisoners in Iran face harsh conditions and have to bear tremendous physical and psychological pressure in detention. In many prisons, they cannot even call home or have visits. Following are conditions of four prisons, based on reports received in 2019:

Qarchak (Shahr-e Rey) Prison

The notorious Qarchak Prison in Varamin is the only all-women prison in Iran used for detention of women convicted of violent offences and as an internal exile for political prisoners. There is no separation of crimes in this prison and political prisoners are held along with ordinary criminals and dangerous prisoners. Also known as Shahr-e Ray Prison, the Qarchak Prison in Varamin is a disused industrial chicken farm in a desert area of eastern Tehran, falling far below international standards. Prisoners are held in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, without access to drinkable water, decent food, medicine and fresh air. Common complaints include urine-stained floors, lack of ventilation, insufficient and filthy bathroom facilities, prevalence of contagious diseases, and poor quality food containing small pieces of stone and salty water. Female protesters released from Qarchak Prison have reported that inmates were sexually abused by prison guards and authorities, to the extent that some have gone into a mental state. Prisoners are also denied proper medical treatment by doctors and other medical staff. There are concerns about the reliability of medical equipment at the prison clinic. There have also been reports that a lack of stretchers and wheelchairs has resulted in fellow detainees being forced to carry sick prisoners out of their rooms and into the clinic, which has led to falls and other accidents. Amnesty International has reported that women requesting emergency medical care in the evening or at night have been refused treatment by doctors and nurses until the following day and even berated for purportedly disturbing the medical staff's sleep in the middle of the night.

Abysmal conditions of women's prisons in Iran

Inmates with contagious diseases mix with others

Women released from Qarchak Prison have reported that more than 130 women detained in Qarchak Prison suffer from AIDs and Hepatitis, but they are held in various wards among other prisoners. There are also six prisoners suffering from scabies who are held with other prisoners, instead of being isolated. Qarchak Prison authorities have closed down the quarantine ward. As a result, new prisoners directly enter the wards without being tested for AIDs, Hepatitis, and other contagious diseases. Even if they are tested, they are admitted into the general wards regardless of their positive or negative results. Prison authorities have not taken any action to separate the sick prisoners from others.

Imprisoned mothers

One of the most tragic conditions is that of mothers who have their children locked up with them. Lack of access to suitable clothes for children and the wards' unsanitary conditions are only a small part of the problems mothers face in prison. In February 2019, when prison guards raided these prisoners, a 20-day infant who was staying with his mother in prison, died due to the tear and pepper gas used against the inmates.

Qarchak is a Hell!

Political prisoner Atefeh Rangriz sent an open letter on August 15, 2019, describing the situation in this prison: "Qarchak Prison is the nickname for hell!" Atefeh Rangriz also explained the conditions of wards: "There are ten wards here and there are approximately 120 to 150 prisoners in each ward. Except for the mothers' ward... "There are 11 cabins in ward five, and four triple-bunk beds in each cabin, which 12 people have to use... (The cabins) enclosed by two walls, one and a half meters from the ceiling, and about eight meters wide are the

place for eating, drinking and living. That means 12 people with their belongings have to fit in eight meters. "There are fluorescent lamps which are constantly on. They hurt our eyes. And then there are sounds that deafen our ears: the constant paging, threats, warnings, and numbers being called out in the morning and evening that tell us to leave the open air and go back to the wards..."

In another part of her letter, Atefeh Rangriz wrote: "Washing dishes and clothes here is considered to be hard labor, so there are workers who do this for a very low price. The salty water of this prison is also constantly denied and the baths here remind me of the age of gas chambers."

Transmission of dangerous diseases

Political prisoner Monireh Arabshahi also wrote an open letter on July 18, 2019, disclosing the medical deprivations of sick prisoners and the dangers of keeping them among other inmates. "When women arrive, medical check-ups are done and after being medically screened the people with contagious diseases are identified. In the clinic known as the triangular clinic people are screened and tested for AIDS, hepatitis, and etc. But what never happens is the announcement of the results of these tests and the separation of prisoners with dangerous diseases from other people. "The proximity of these people to healthy prisoners in the wards and cabins increases the likelihood of transmission of dangerous diseases. "Other human rights violations take place in Qarchak due to lack of adequate resources, including syringes for prisoners with diabetes. Sometimes women reuse the same syringe used by other patients to inject their insulin."

Violent raids against prisoners in Qarchak

Prison guards in riot gear severely beat and injured female prisoners and used tear gas, pepper spray, water cannon and firearms during raids inside wards 1 and 2 of Qarchak Prison in Varamin on February 7, 2019.

To neutralize the tear gas fired into the closed area, prisoners set fire to their beds and bed sheets. In turn, prison authorities used a fire engine to extinguish the fire while women were still trapped in their wards. They resorted to firearms to end the protest.

The raid was in response to a protest by inmates demanding medical treatment for one of the prisoners. As a result of this attack, a 20-day infant who had been born in prison died.

The authorities subsequently cut off the electricity and gas inside the ward and let the prisoners remain in the cold weather after being drenched by the fire engine. Despite inhaling large amounts of pepper spray and tear gas, the prisoners were left unattended until the morning. They also cut off water and denied food to the prisoners for several days. The prisoners gathered what food they had left and gave it to the "mothers' ward," to feed their children.

Twenty-five (25) women were transferred to solitary confinement. On February 9, 2019, forty (40) female prisoners were hooded and violently transferred from Qarchak to Ward 240 of Evin Prison.

Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz

Sepidar Prison in Ahvaz was established in 2009. The prison area is 700 square meters. Prison conditions are so bad that when Massoumeh Ebtekar, the president's deputy for Women and Family Affairs, visited the women's ward in Sepidar Prison in December 2018, they could not publish any photos of her visit. The female prisoners in the Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz are deprived of the most basic needs of a decent life. The prison cells are full of lice, insects, and cockroaches. Inmates who have to sleep on the floor are in a worse situation. The bathroom's sewages have problems. On many days of the week, the health center in the women's ward has no doctors or even nurses. Usually the prison's food has some kind of scraps of junk in it. Suicide and self-injury among these women are heavily prevalent, as they hope to be transferred to the health center and stay in a better condition for a few days or even ultimately die.

Agahi Prison of Karaj

The Agahi Prison of Karaj is run by the State Security Force. The detention center has a hall of around 30-square-meters, a 3-square-meter cell, a 40-square-meter covered area, three toilets and three showers, only one of which works.

The main hall of the Agahi Prison of Karaj is carpeted and is where 30 detainees are held. All the 30 detainees are given 10 green military blankets, which are very dirty and unsanitary. Due to lack of blankets, most people catch cold.

Women find it difficult to obtain hygiene products because there are no special stores for women. The bathroom doors are locked and are opened for only half an hour in the afternoons upon prisoners' pleas. Often there is no warm water for bathing. There is no soap. They give a third of a disposable cup of shampoo for several people to use. There is no laundry detergent. Prisoners dilute the detergent used for washing the toilets, to wash their clothes. And they have to beg to get some of that detergent. There is no place for drying their clothes. The toilet door is used to hang and dry clothes.

There is no place for prisoners to get fresh air. They do not give tea, hot drinks or fruits to prisoners. Breakfast is only a slice of bread and a small amount of cheese. Lunch and dinner are always cold and of extremely low quality.

In Agahi Prison of Karaj, prisoners are not allowed to contact their families.

Kachouii Prison of Alborz Province

Altogether, the Kachouii Prison has four halls. Every ward is a long hall housing some 54 prisoners. There are two rows of metal bunk beds, each for three prisoners.

The prison also has a clinic, a library, a workshop, and a 2-by-2-meter kitchen with a stove and a large samovar to prepare hot water.

There is also a courtyard full of pits and holes. This 200-square-meter courtyard is used for washing blankets and carpets and hanging clothes. Prisoners can walk around in this courtyard from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The area is very small for the prison population and it is not even possible to do exercises.

In ward 3, there is a television installed near the ceiling. The officer in charge of the ward holds the remote control. No newspaper is distributed. Prisoners are practically out of touch with the outside world and the only news they receive is from their families.

Everybody has to sleep silently in bed at 10 p.m., and at 7 a.m. after waking up, the prisoners in the ward are counted.

Food and hygiene

To drink water, if a prisoner has an empty bottle, she can fill it with water from the bathroom and keep it with her. A small amount of bread, sugar and tea is given to every five prisoners. The food quality is very poor, and mostly inedible.

All food and clothing and utensils are kept beneath the bed in plastic baskets.

There is a bathroom with 3 toilets and 2 showers at the end of the hall separated by a thick curtain from the living area.

To wash clothes, every 5 people are given one basin, which is actually a 20-liter gallon cut in half and the prisoners cut their hands on the sharp edges of the gallon.

Prisoners had to wait beside their clothes even in the cold to protect their clothes from being stolen while getting dried.

To contact families and relatives, there are only 4 telephones for the entire 250 prisoners in a corner of the hall where one prisoner assigns turns. Every other day, each person gets 15 minutes of telephone calls. They have to wait 2 hours in line for their turn.

There is a workshop in the southern part of the prison. More than 50 people go to the workshop's production rooms every day to do forced labor. These imprisoned women work from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and again from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Violence against Women in Iran

Fate of the bill on Provision of Security for Women

Iran has one of the highest statistics on violence against women. Yet the regime has been foot dragging for nearly a decade in the adoption of the bill on violence against women. As a result, violence against women has spread and intensified without being criminalized, to the extent that the regime's experts and officials have had to

acknowledge the gravity of the situation. According to experts, 66% of Iranian women have experienced violence in their lifetime. This is twice the global average but it must be considered a minimum as cases of violence against women are mostly not reported and the Iranian regime is not transparent on the statistics.

The clerical regime's

constitution and laws promote and sanction use of violence against women, forcible early marriages, child abuse, domestic violence, and honor killing among others. Meanwhile, the most common form of violence perpetrated against Iranian women is done by the State Security Force, the guidance patrols, Morale Police and other state agents who are in charge of enforcing the mandatory veil on women. Eight years after the proposal of the VAW bill, it was finalized by the Iranian Judiciary and sent to the government on September 17, 2019. The Judiciary changed the bill's name to "Protection, Dignity and Provision of Security for Ladies Against Violence" and removed at least 41 articles of the original bill. As a result, girls under 18, single women, victims of social ills and those subjected to such harms, are not covered by this totally overhauled bill. Neither does the bill criminalize sexual harassment, rape, and sexual exploitation of women and it does not contain any punishment for the assailants. The deterrent mechanisms and the punishments for committing violence

The deterrent mechanisms and the punishments for committing violence against women have not been defined in the new bill.

against women have not been defined in the new bill.

Another serious problem is the lack of effective and sufficient guarantees in the bill to prevent and thwart violence against women. It also does not refer to state-sponsored violence against women to enforce the compulsory veil, as the main systematic form of violence against women in Iran.

A member of parliament said the government had taken no action and the bill was not going to be passed to the current parliament before the elections in February 2020.

Therefore, the totally overhauled bill will not be deliberated on by the current parliament which will end in June 2020.



Girls under 18, single women and victims of social ills are not covered by the bill. Neither does the bill criminalize rape, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation of women, and punish the assailants.

Most common forms of VAW

Enforcing the mandatory veil

One of the most obvious examples of violence against women in Iran is the use of coercion, violence, arbitrary arrests and harassment of women under the pretext of enforcing the mandatory veil on women. In the waver of Article 638 of the Islamic Penal Code, the legislator has clearly stated that women who appear in public places without the veil are sentenced to imprisonment for a term of 10 days up to 2 months or are fined by 50,000 to 500,000 rials in cash. According to this waver, even a strand of hair being out is a problem, and it should be applied to girls 9 years and older. (The state-run ROKNA news agency - June 1, 2019)

The Tehran police also announced in a statement on February 23, 2018: "Encouraging women to shun the veil... is punishable by one to ten-year prison sentence and cannot be replaced by

A poll by the Iranian Parliament's Research Center says more than **70%** of Iranian women disapprove of the mandatory Hijab.



alternative forms of punishment."

According to a survey released by the Research Center of the Iranian parliament that was taken in the summer of 2018, more than 70 percent of Iranian women disapprove of the mandatory Hijab.

Twenty-six government organs in the Iranian regime are in charge of forcing Iranian women to wear the veil.

Commander-in-chief of the State Security Force, Hossein Ashtari, had said earlier, "Some 2,000 women who wear improper clothing are arrested every day in Tehran and some other provinces." (The state-run Tasnim News Agency - September 29, 2016)

Some outstanding examples in 2019 which provoked outrage in Iran and abroad:

■ On June 22, 2019, plainclothes agents of the State Security Force arrested five boys and girls who were playing "water guns" in a Tehranpars Park. According to video clips of the incident, a male plainclothes officer drags a young woman to a police car and throws her into the back seat as she screams and resists. (The state-run Fars News Agency – June 24, 2019)

■ In another video clip, a young woman was beaten by police at the Tehran Metro Station on June 2019. The clip shows a young woman crying as she explains how the officers beat her and pushed her to the ground.

■ In October 2019, a young woman was walking in a park in Shahr-e-Rey, an outskirt of Tehran. A State Security Force ordered her not to move until a female officer came to arrest her. The young woman continued to walk away. But the SSF officer jumped on her and threw her to the ground.

■ Three female activists, Monireh Arabshahi, her daughter Yasman Aryani, and Mojgan Keshavarz, were sentenced to a total of 55 years in prison for celebrating the International Women's Day in a metro wagon by removing their headscarves.

■ Saba Kord Afshari was also sentenced to 24 years of imprisonment for removing her veil.

Plans to spy on and harass women

Every year, the Iranian regime launches nationwide campaigns to enforce the mandatory veil. The campaigns in 2019 were called Nazer-1 and Nazer-2 plans.

According to these plans, security forces monitor women in their cars, in shopping centers and even in apartment complexes and report those who do not properly observe the veil. In many cases, legal cases are filed against the reported women.

One of Khamenei's deputies, Mostafa Izadi, stated that the Assembly for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice in 26 provinces of Iran has 30,000 members who directly report to the mullahs' leader, Ali Khamenei, every six months. (The state-run IRNA news agency – September 30, 2019)

Nazer-1 plan

By implementing the Nazer-1 plan, the regime sent a threat message to all vehicles in which the people inside did not observe the mandatory veil.

■ The Public Security Police in Tehran sent more than 105,000 text messages to the car owners under the Nazer-1 plan. There were 137 legal cases filed against the car owners. (The state-run Afkar News Website – October 9, 2019)

■ In Gilan Province, 66,000 texts were sent to Gilani citizens. (The state-run ILNA news agency – July 31, 2019)

■ In Khuzestan Province, police dealt with 5,000 cases of improper veiling in the cars in six months, 97% of which were in Ahvaz. (The state-run ISNA news agency – October 3, 2019)

■ In Semnan Province, with the help of 1,100 observers, 4,200 people were dealt with. (The state-run ISNA news agency – October 2, 2019)

■ In Gilan Province, alone, 28,238 women were dealt with in the first three months of the year, and written pledges were taken from 2,321 people, and cases were filed against 64 women in this province. (The state-run Mehr News Agency – June 4, 2019)

■ Seventy women cyclists were arrested in Tehran's Vali Asr Square for failing to properly observe the veil. (The state-run ISNA news agency – July 30, 2019)



Nazer-2 plan

The Nazer-2 plan covered public places. For example, 11 large shopping malls in Tehran were covered by the Nazer-2 plan. (The state-run ISNA news agency – October 9, 2019)

The Nazer-2 plan also covered apartment complexes.

■ The Commander of the State Security Force in Alborz Province announced that women who do not observe the veil in apartment complexes will be dealt with. (The state-run IRNA news agency - October 8, 2019)

■ Also, shops selling “unconventional” women’s clothing were sealed. (The state-run asriran.ir– January 18, 2020)

■ A shop in northern Tehran was sealed up due for displaying clothes without the veil and for using mannequins in the window. (The state-run Fanos website - September 2, 2019)

■ Hossein Rahimi, Commander of Tehran’s State Security Force, said, “Dealing with producers and sellers of unconventional clothing is a priority on the agenda of the police and those who openly violate the rules on veiling will be targeted by the police.” (October 21, 2019)

In Gilan Province, **28,238** women were dealt with in three months, and **2,321** women were forced to write pledges to observe the veil.

Child abuse

Child abuse is the top social ailment in Iran. The Child Protection bill is still in a state of limbo after ten years, being passed back and forth between the parliament and the Guardians Council. The majority of victims of child abuse are girl children. (The state-run ISNA news agency- April 16, 2019)

■ In a village near Marand, in East Azerbaijan Province, a three-year-old girl went into coma after being brutalized by her addicted father. (The state-run ISNA news agency – May 27, 2019)

■ In Damavand, Tehran Province, a two-year-old girl was burned by her father and stepmother. (The state-run Tasnim News Agency - September 1, 2019)

■ In Tehran, Mahsa, 11 years old, was raped by her stepfather and became pregnant. (The state-run ROKNA news agency – November 26, 2019)

70 women cyclists were arrested in Tehran for failing to properly observe the veil.

Domestic Violence and Honor Killings

Misogynistic laws and state-sponsored violence promote domestic violence in Iran.

■ In Bukan, Monireh Abu, 35 and eight-months pregnant, was hanged by her husband.

■ In Sonqor, Maryam Mohebbi, mother of two, was hanged by her husband for coming home late.

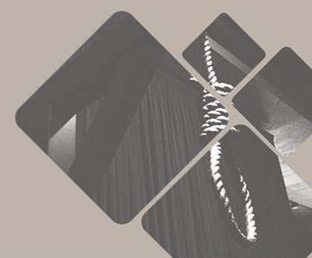
■ In Dehloran, Maryam Bakhtiari, 29, was hanged by her brother and subsequently beheaded.

■ In Urmia, Shiba Kamran, 21, was set alight by her parents-in-law.

Monireh Abu, 35 and eight-months pregnant, hanged by husband



Maryam Mohebbi, mother of two, hanged by husband for coming late



Maryam Bakhtiari, 29, hanged and beheaded by brother



Shiba Kamran, 21, set alight by parents-in-law

**Child marriages**

The biggest cruelty to girls and future women in Iran is the ominous phenomenon of child marriages that has been on the rise in recent years.

The legal age of marriage for girls in Iran is 13. The parliamentary Judicial and Legal Committee rejected the plan to increase the minimum age of marriage for girls in December 2018.

In addition to physical and psychological harms, child marriages contribute to various other social ills, such as child divorces, child widows, domestic violence against women, suicide, and murder.

■ In the small city of Dishmuk, in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, in southwestern Iran, 11 girls set themselves ablaze because of domestic violence and early marriages in the period from March to August 2019.

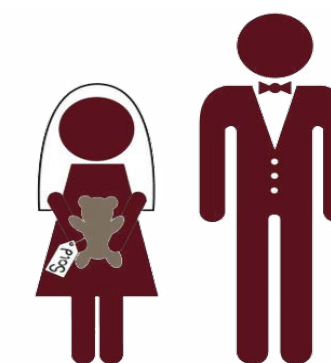
■ Ali Kazemi, advisor to the Judiciary’s legal deputy, announced in March 2019, that between 5 to 600,000 girl children get married every year in Iran. This figure covers only the officially registered marriages and does not include those which were not officially registered. (The state-run daily Entekhab – March 4, 2019)

■ The Organization of National Registry announced that 234,000 marriages of girls under 15 years of age had been registered in the period from March 2017 to March 2018 (Persian year 1396). 194 of these were marriages of girl children under 10 years old.

■ The general director for social and cultural affairs of Zanjan Province said: 37,000 child marriages under 14 years of age were registered in 2018. (The official IRNA news agency – June 12, 2019)

In the absence of any form of legal support for young women, forced marriages and domestic violence are among the main reasons of suicide:

■ Under pressure of forced marriages, Delina Rahmani, 18, and Sara Esmaili, 17, took their own lives in one of the villages of Piranshahr. Souma Khedri, 19, did the same in one of the villages of Baneh. These are just a few examples of this painful catastrophe.



600,000

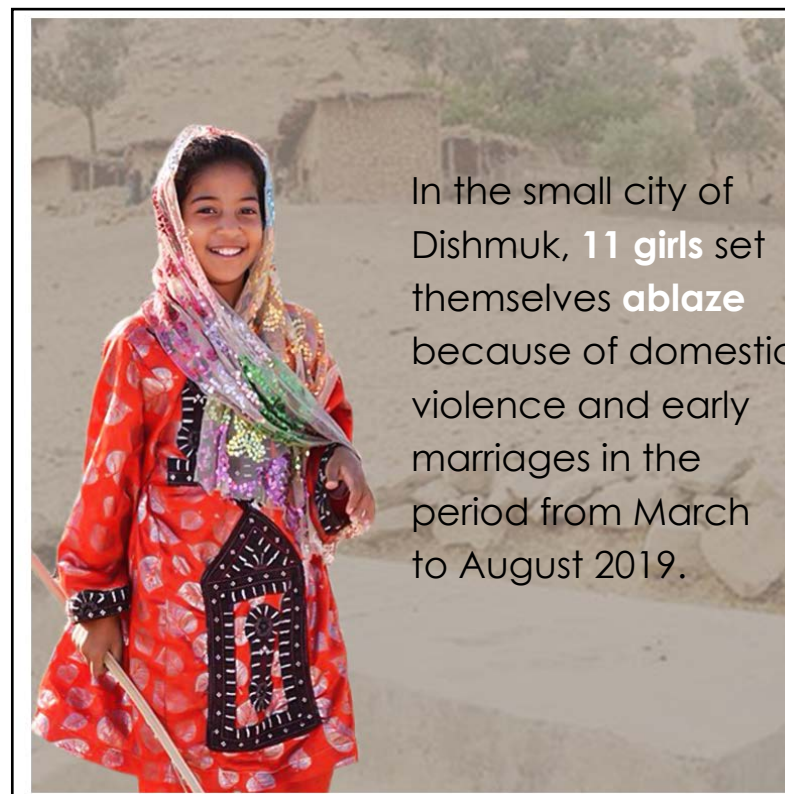
600,000 girl children get married every year in Iran

234,000

234,000 marriages of girls under 15 were registered in 2017

37,000

37,000 child marriages under 14 were registered in 2018



In the small city of Dishmuk, **11** girls set themselves ablaze because of domestic violence and early marriages in the period from March to August 2019.

Women lack access to decent work, pay, equal opportunities

Women's economic participation rate in Iran is among the lowest in the world. In its 2020 Gender Gap report, the World Economic Forum put Iran's gender gap index at 0.584, ranking 148th among 153 countries only before Congo, Syria, Pakistan, Iraq and Yemen.

■ In many countries there is an 80% economic participation (for both men and women), but in Iran this figure is around 40%. So, women have a very low economic participation in Iran. (The state-run ILNA news agency - May 4, 2019)

■ The work force in Iran is 21.3 million, only 3 million of which are women, at a time when there are at least 27 million women eligible to work.

■ Women in Iran face a variety of laws and obstacles that hold them back in the job market. According to Iran's National Statistics Center, 65% of unemployed women have higher education. (The state-run ISNA news agency - July 19, 2019).

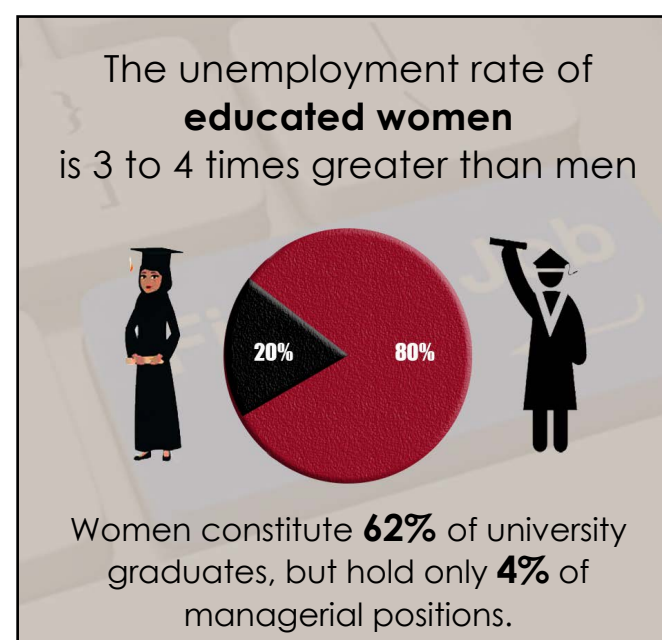
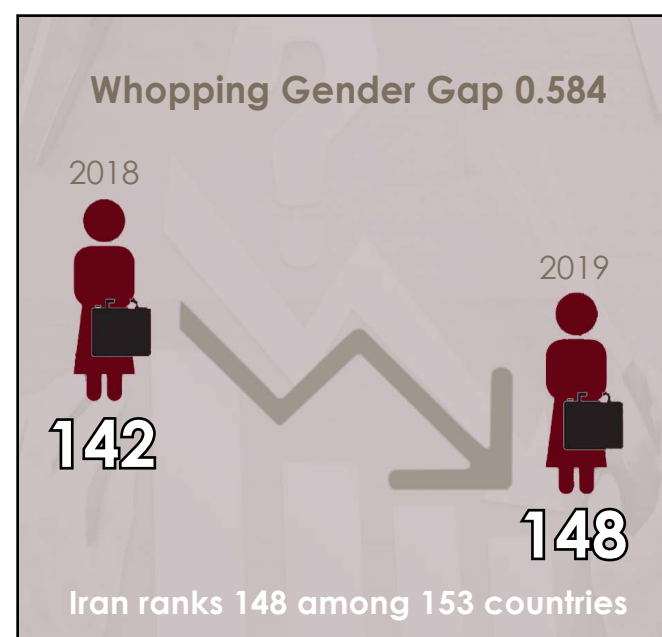
■ According to Massoumeh Ebtekar, director of the presidential directorate on Women and Family Affairs, the unemployment rate of educated women in most of the country is 3 to 4 times higher than that of men. (The state-run etemadonline.ir- October 21, 2019)

■ Women constitute 62% of university graduates, but hold only 4% of managerial positions. (The state-run Hamshahri website - December 1, 2019)

■ "Women make up about 50 percent of the population, but their economic participation rate is below 15 percent," said Ali Zainivand, deputy for political and social affairs in the Governorate of Sistan and Baluchistan Province. (The official IRNA news agency - October 3, 2019)

Status of female workers

Female workers in Iran face a deplorable situation. The job market is male dominated and women face many legal and structural barriers to their employment. For this reason, women are mostly employed in the



informal sector with extremely low salaries. None of their legal rights are respected and their working conditions resemble "slavery" according to Ahmad Amirabadi Farahani, MP from Qom. (The state-run ISNA news agency - May 1, 2018)

■ "There are no factors such as a suitable environment for breastfeeding and equal pay for female workers," said Zahra Darvishi, director of the Union of female workers in Shiraz. "There is no gender discrimination in the labor law, and the share of women is equal to that of men. But nothing has remained from the labor law except for a scrap paper." (The state-run ILNA news agency - November 20, 2019)

■ Massoumeh Ebtekar: Women in Iran are responsible for production of 75 percent of handicrafts, 40 percent of agricultural products, and 80 percent of the carpet



industry. (The official IRNA news agency - May 4, 2019)

■ Women hired in the green houses in Sanandaj have to work in horrific conditions from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in nylon tents exposed to extremely high temperatures. They earn only 37,500 tomans per day (1 million tomans or \$65 a month). None of them are insured. Excessive stress due to long hours of work in unbearable heat have caused many illnesses for these women.

The Iranian regime has not taken any steps to improve and achieve women's economic empowerment and is actually moving in the opposite direction.

■ In terms of economic indicators, according to the World Economic Forum's report in 2020, Iran ranks 149th in terms of women's earnings which is less than one-fifth of the earnings of men. (The state-run khabaronline.ir - December 29, 2019)

Gender segregation

Gender segregation continues to remain as one of the serious limitations for women in Iran.

■ The Criminal Court of Gorgan issued flogging sentences for 20 people, including eight women, for attending a private mixed-gender yoga class. The participants received 50 lashes, for "acting against chastity." (The state-run ROKNA news agency - September 30, 2019)

■ A National Welfare Organization official announced that if they receive reports of mixed swimming pools in kindergartens, the issue will be dealt with promptly. (The state-run Fars news agency - September 28, 2019)

■ Habibollah John-Nessari, acting commander of the State Security Force Special Units, said, "Why is it that today, in the kindergartens of the capital, our mothers and sisters put the hand of a 5-year-old girl in the hand of a boy, and under the excuse of having a party, they play music and have the kids dance together?" (The state-run Aftabnews.ir - October 2, 2019)

Women in music and arts

Iranian singers, artists, and celebrities continued to face numerous bans in 2019.

■ The singer, Soheila Golestani, was summoned to Branch 16 of the Public Court of Isfahan in March 2019 for singing and broadcasting her voice on the Internet.

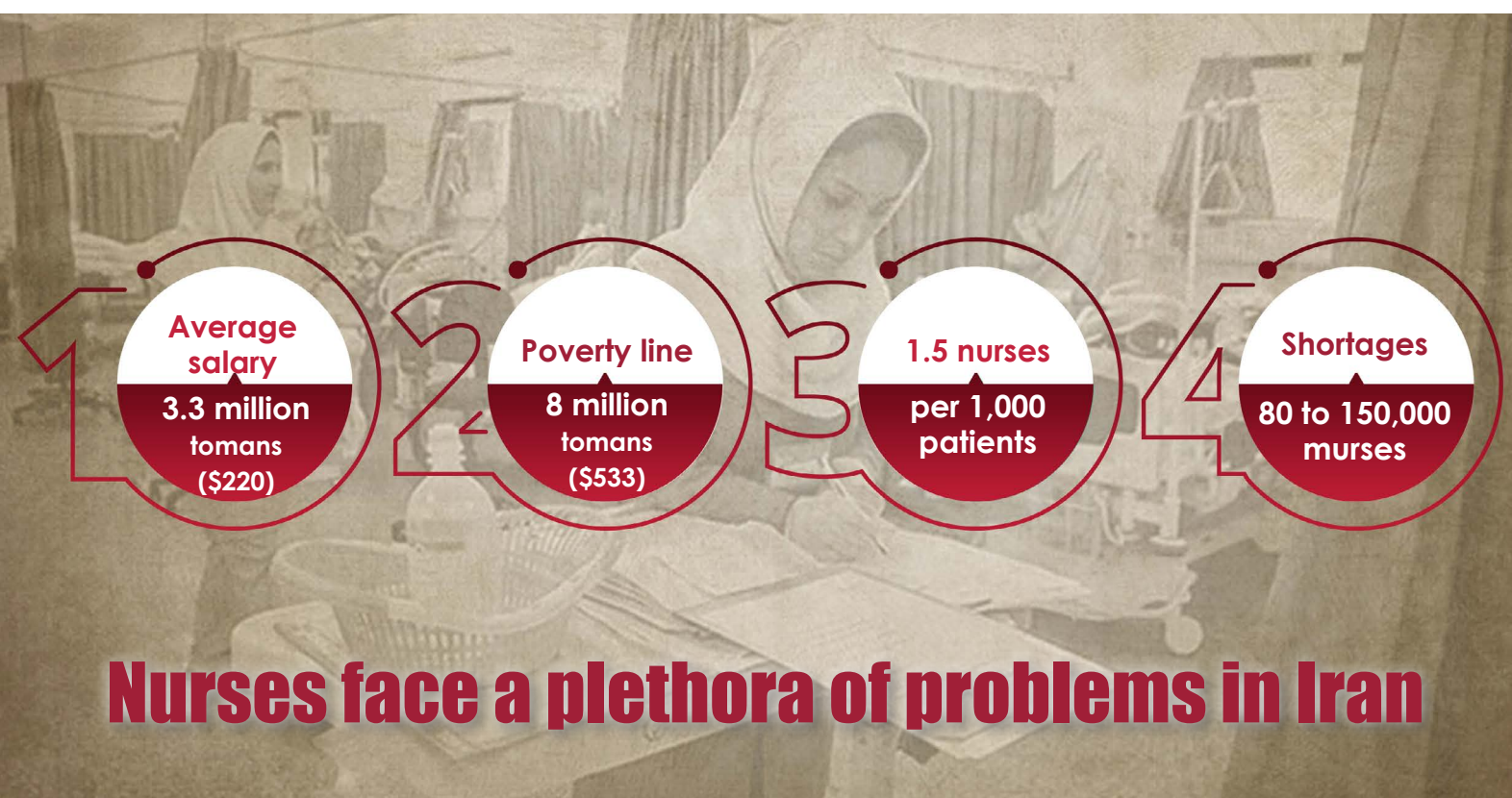
■ Negar Mo'azzam was prosecuted for solo singing for members of a tour in Isfahan. On May 21, 2019, Public Prosecutor and Revolutionary Prosecutor of Kashan, Mohammad Takbirgo, said she had been given a definitive sentence of 10 years' imprisonment.

■ Matin Sotoudeh, an actress, was summoned by Tehran's Prosecutor's Office on October 16, 2019 for her improper attire at her film's screening.

■ Six female singers were each sentenced to one year in prison for engaging in audiovisual work and contributing to the production and sharing of music on line. The verdict was upheld on October 16, 2019.

■ The all-women Delyar musical group led by Neda Behzad, featuring Nazli Soltanzadeh and Atefeh Norouzi as solo singers, was not permitted to hold its concert scheduled for July 18, 2019 at Omid Hospital in Urmia in support of cancer patients. (The official IRNA news agency - July 17, 2019)

■ In May 2019, female musicians were banned from playing in a charity concert in Qazvin. They were not allowed to even sit among the audience. By the order of Musa Khani, President of the Azad University of Qazvin, the female performers were not even allowed to enter the auditorium to watch the concert. For this reason, many musicians left the auditorium in protest. (The state-run ILNA news agency - May 23, 2019)



The nursing profession faces dire inhumane conditions which are getting worse over time. Some 80% of nurses in Iran are women.

■ The average income of female nurses is around 2 million tomans a month (\$133), but many work for as low as 500,000 tomans a month (\$33) without even having health insurance.

■ The average salary of a nurse in formal employment with all perks is 3.3 million tomans a month (\$220).

■ The situation of nurses in the city of Babol is a good example. These nurses are hired in various public hospitals on 89-day contracts, which do not require the employer to pay them insurance. Hospital nurses work 100 hours a month including night shifts. But they receive only 700,000 tomans (\$47) a month.

Most of these women live in surrounding villages and have to pay 400,000 tomans a month (\$27) for their daily commute. What is left from their salaries is not enough to

live on for the rest of the month. It should be noted that the poverty line in Iran stood at 8 million tomans a month (\$533) as of April 2019.

■ Mohammad Mirza Beigi, head of the Nurses Organization, announced that the delay in payment of salaries of nurses ranges from 8 to 22 months. (The state-run Arman Melli website – January 2, 2020)

■ In regards to shortage of nurses, Hossein Ali Shahriari, head of the parliamentary Health Committee, stated: "The shortage of nurses in private and public centers ranges from 80 to 150 thousand nurses." (The state-run Arman Melli website – January 2, 2020).

■ Due to a lack of government funding for new recruitment over the past two years, nurses have been forced to migrate and look for jobs in foreign countries.

■ To compensate for shortage of nurses, hospital staff give different tasks to people who accompany the patients to help provide them care.

This unprecedented phenomenon exists only in Iran in violation of medical laws and regulations.

■ In most European countries there are ten nurses per thousand. The global average is six nurses per thousand patients, and the lowest ratio is three nurses per thousand patients. In Iran, the ratio is one and a half nurses per thousand patients.

■ On March 2, 2019, the state-run Eghtesadonline.ir, reported: "We need between 120,000 to 150,000 nurses to reach international standards in Iran."

■ Asghar Dalvandi, former head of the Nursing Organization, also admitted, "We are short of about 125,000 nurses in Iran." (The state-run ISNA news agency – May 12, 2019)

■ A few months later, Dalvandi declared, "We have 30,000 unemployed nurses!" (The state-run Young Journalists Club - October 29, 2019)

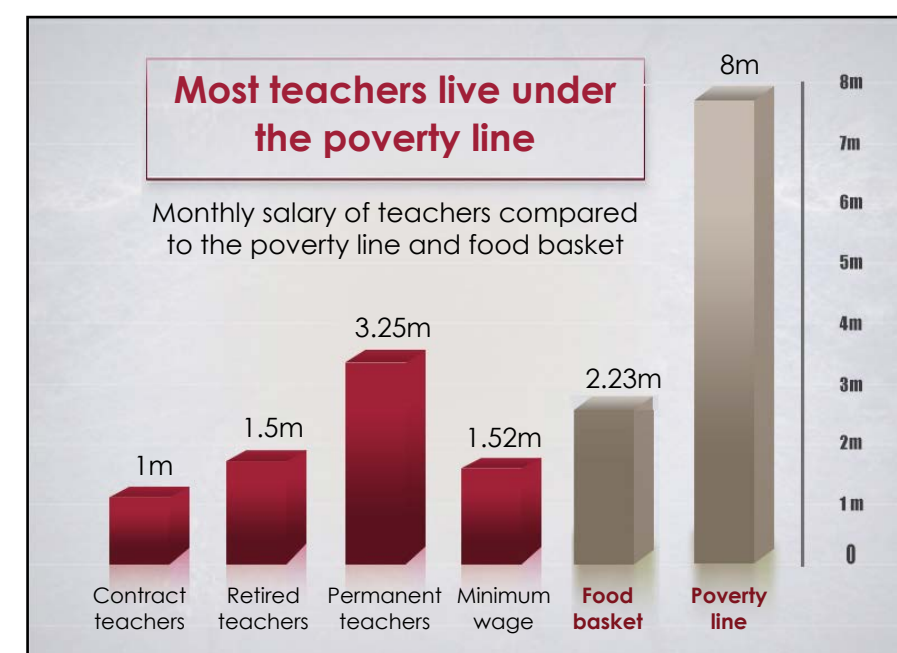
Teachers' pathetic conditions under the poverty line

Living conditions of teachers, half of whom are women, is far below world standards. Months of delay in receiving their salaries, deprivation of remuneration, overtime, insurance and entitlements are issues that make life difficult for teachers and in place of being concerned with the quality of children's education have had them worried about earning a living for their families.

According to statistics released by the state-run media in April 2019, the minimum cost of living for a family of four in 2019 was 8 million tomans while the minimum wage for 2019 was set at 1.5 million tomans. At the same time, the average salary of a teacher in formal employment is 3.25 million tomans and the salary of a retired teacher is about 1.5 million tomans. Most teachers in Iran work as private contractors and their salaries are below 1 million tomans. Even though teachers who work as contractors have a stronger academic and experience background, but are paid one third the salary of a formally employed teacher and face more difficult and gruesome working conditions. They are deprived of any privileges, provided no job security, and are overlooked during informal employment. Most contract teachers are women and none of them enjoy



Teachers on a sit-in strike



maternity leave. (The state-run Fars news agency - August 9, 2019)

A teacher with a Bachelor's degree said for teaching 24 hours a week, she received 970,000 tomans and a teacher with a master's degree received up to 1.1 million tomans. "Teachers have always had to have a second job to make a living," said former Education Minister Mohammed Bat'haii, adding, "if a teacher wants to live only on a teacher's salary, they will not be able to manage their lives at a medium level." (The state-run Tasnim news agency - March 3, 2019)

Tasnim wrote the second job of 69% of the teachers is taxi driving and 54% of teachers face poverty and lack of income.

Teachers are active part of protests

Women teachers actively participate in the protests against the inadequate educational system. A 3-day sit in was organized in March 2019 in 105 different locations in the country for 3 days.

At the Teacher's Day gathering on May 2, 2019, female teachers in Tehran were attacked by security forces.

In the rallies that were held in more than 16 cities in 14 provinces, female teachers were at the forefront. The last teachers' sit-in was in January 2020, which was held in ten cities. During the 2019-2020 school year, teachers and retirees participated in more than 200 sit-ins and protests.

Bearing the brunt, women heads of household are among the most vulnerable

There are over 3.6 million women heads of household in Iran and the number is steadily on the rise. Women heads of household are one of the most vulnerable sectors of society.

■ Many are forced to move to the slums because of poverty and high rents.

■ The age of women heads of household usually ranges from 18 to 60, but in provinces where child marriages are common practice, there are women as young as 14 or 15 who have to head their household, an NGO executive director, Zahra Rahimi, told the state-run ROKNA news agency on February 12, 2020.

■ More than half of these women are under 40 years old. (The state-run ISNA news agency - October 16, 2019)

■ 16% of women heads of household or nearly half a million, are under the age of 20. (Zohreh Ashtiani, MP, the state-run Shahrvand newspaper - July 10, 2018)

■ More recently, in submitting the government's budget bill to the parliament it was pointed out that support for women heads of household was unnecessary and their insurance budget had been removed altogether. (Simin Kazemi, a sociologist, the state-run asriran.ir, January 2, 2020)

■ Many women heads of household have the ability,

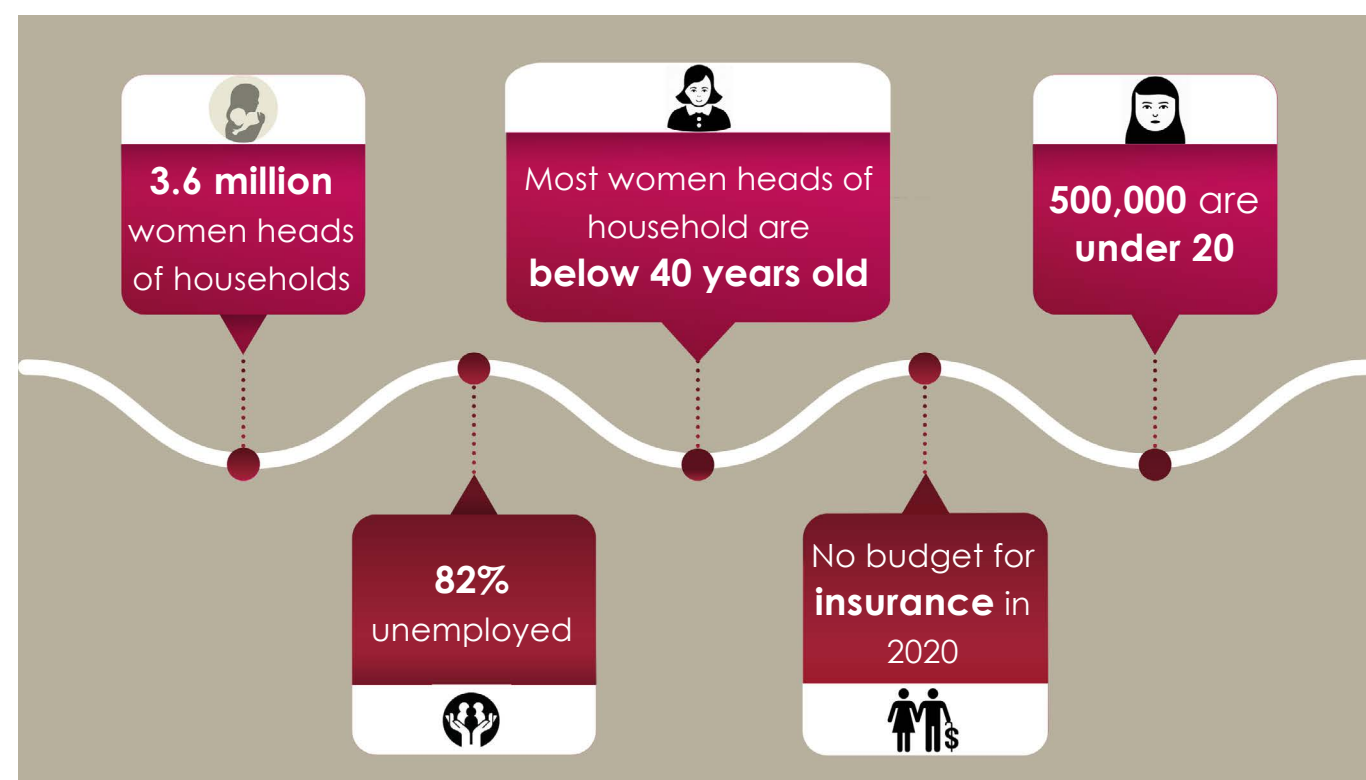
expertise, and motivation to work, but there are no opportunities for them. On April 20, 2019, the state-run ILNA news agency reported that 82% of women heads of households are unemployed and have no stable source of income. To avoid social harms, they have to resort to informal, high risk jobs like peddling different products in the corridors of metro stations.

■ Discrimination, inequality, unemployment and lack of social protection and security are the main problems that women heads of households are facing.

■ On September 29, 2019, the state-run Aftab website reported that 14,000 women heads of household had been removed from the list of families who received subsidies.

■ About 88% of women head of households eligible for state food assistance for pregnant and lactating women were excluded from the plan.

According to deputy secretary of labor, out of 40,000 women heads of households eligible for state food assistance for pregnant and lactating women were excluded from the Poverty Prevention Plan due to insufficient funds, and only 12.5% or 5,000 of them received any assistance. (The state-run IRNA news agency - February 12, 2019)



A tragic death, migrations mark Iran women's sports in 2019

Women's sports in Iran in 2019 could be highlighted by women's one-time, token entry into Azadi Stadium in October and the migration of several female athletes from Iran as the outcome of numerous restrictions on women athletes and lack of support for them.

Token admission of women to Azadi stadium after tragic death of Sahar Khodayari

For the first time in 40 years, Iranian women were able to formally enter Azadi Stadium in October 2019. This happened in the wake of Sahar Khodayari's setting herself alight which provoked worldwide outrage and brought extensive internal and international pressure on the regime.

Sahar Khodayari self-immolated in September in protest to her six-month jail sentence for attempting to circumvent the ban on women's entrance to sports stadiums.

Limited numbers of Iranian women allowed into

Tehran's Azadi Stadium on October 10, 2019, were shouting, "Blue girl, wishing you were here!" In this way, Iranian women showed that they owe their presence in Azadi stadium to the young woman, Sahar Khodayari dubbed as "the Blue Girl." Of the 100,000 seats at Azadi Stadium that were



Sahar Khodayari, the Blue Girl

essentially vacant, only 4,000 tickets were allocated to women. Couples were separated, and women were bused to the stands to prevent them from going to other places around the stadium. The women's platform was fenced up and female State Security forces stood guard to watch over the female spectators.

A one-time hollow show

The limited admission of women to Azadi Stadium under tight security control was a hollow show designed to deceive FIFA inspectors, which ended right there at the end of the 2022 World Cup qualifier soccer match between Iran and Cambodia.

The spokesman for Iran's Football Federation, declared, "Currently it is not possible for women to be present in league games." (The state-run khabaronline.ir - October 14, 2019)

The general director of the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports in North Khorasan Province, said, "The permit for women's entrance to sports stadiums is only for Tehran and not good for watching the games in other cities." (The official IRNA news agency - October 13, 2019)



Left, young woman holds up sign, "Blue girl of Iran, you have become eternal"; men installing fences around women's platform in Azadi Stadium to prepare for their admission on October 10, 2019.

Lack of public and private support

Women's sports teams and women athletes continued to be deprived of any public or private support in 2019, which had numerous consequences for them.

For example, female athletes and referees do not receive their bonuses, even though their salaries differ greatly from those of men.

■ The head coach of SAIPA women's futsal team, Niloufar Ardalan, in an interview said, "The lack of financial sponsors and broadcasting has made a huge difference in the wages of male and female players in most sports." (The official IRNA news agency- October 26, 2019)

■ Maryam Irandoost, the head coach of Malavan football team from Bandar Anzali, said, "The country's economic situation and its consequent financial problems are the reason this team has lost four players. After eight months of round-the-clock practices and having a contract, the players have not received even a penny." (The state-run ISNA news agency- April 17, 2019)

■ Soroor Sa'edi, a women's soccer referee: "Five other referees and I did our job for 22 weeks and we must be paid for 22 weeks of refereeing, but one season past the Women's Premier League, they have not yet paid our wages." (The official IRNA news agency- October 22, 2019)

■ World record holder female swimmer, Elham Sadat Asghari, does not receive any form of government support in Iran. The 35-year-old swimmer set a world record for 5300 meters swimming with handcuffs in 2019 and her name was registered by Guinness for a second time.

Medalists in poverty

The lack of support is such that some sports champions were forced into peddling.

In only one instance, Atousa Abbasi, the top record holder of women's bicycling in Iran and Asia, is peddling in the streets because of poverty and lack of support. Atousa Abbasi is the first medal winner among women



Tattered gloves of a female goal keeper provoked outrage and focused attention on the abysmal state of support for female athletes

in the Asian tournaments. She holds the record of speed since 2014, but has to peddle on the streets while taking her 3-year-old son with her.

Withdrawals and bans on domestic and world games

In many cases, women's teams were forced to withdraw from games due to lack of funds. The Steel Mill volleyball team won the women's Super League championship. But as the team had no financial support to participate in the Asian Cup, it had to cancel its plan to participate in the women's volleyball tournaments of Asia. (The state-run IRNA news agency- April 14, 2019)

Denial of facilities to women players

Denial of facilities and adequate fields to women players are other forms of gender discrimination. Men are given priority over women in the hours of use of sports fields. Women players are also forced to run competitions in the heat or air pollution which in some cases have resulted in physical injuries.

■ "The shortage of facilities and equipment and even the shortage of sports fields in women's sports is felt more than ever before," said Behnaz Moradkhani, a former coach of the women's national sailing team. On the other hand, gender segregation has

overshadowed the activities of this strata more than before. Female athletes have no sponsors. Compared to other countries, the facilities are worn out and scarce." (The state-run IRNA news agency – August 10, 2019)

■ The football match between Pars Jonoubi of Bushehr and Sepidar of Mazandaran was scheduled for May 5, 2019, at 10 a.m. in the hot weather of Bushehr. Several players of the Sepidar team of Mazandaran fainted out and lost consciousness. The supervisor of the team from Mazandaran, Nargess Zinati, said, "When we took the players to hospital, the hospital staff were stunned that they had played in that time of the day. They said, 'Who plays football in Bushehr at this hour? Even men do not play at this time!'" (The state-run ISNA news agency – May 6, 2019)

■ The Iranian women's soccer team was deprived of

competing at Azadi Stadium, which is the main sports field used for international competitions and main league games. Instead, their match with the Belarusian soccer team was held at the smaller Ararat Stadium. (The state-run ISNA news agency – February 23, 2019)

■ The Azarakhsh football team of Tehran which is the only team representing the capital in the league does not have a suitable field for its practices. They play in a field which is smaller than the standard football field. They cannot do any body-building.

■ In the 12th week of the Iranian women's football league, the Southern Pars Team of Bushehr sent only nine players, instead of 11, to play in the games due to lack of funds. It participated without its main coach and was accompanied only by a supervisor.

Migration of female athletes

Due to lack of support and numerous other restrictions for athletes, dozens of Iranian women athletes have fled to other countries.

■ In an interview with the state-run Fars news agency, Somayyeh Yazdani, women's bicycling champion in Iran said, "Our wherewithal is less than many other countries and not even comparable. We managed to obtain the best results with minimum wherewithal. Unfortunately, there are no clubs or sponsors. Certainly, Iranian women are able to win in every competition if they receive support."

The cyclist won the bronze medal at the Asian Cycling Championships in 2019 but joined the Spanish team Teka. (The state-run ILNA news agency – October 21, 2019)

■ In December 2019, three Iranian women athletes left the country. Kimia Alizadeh, a Taekwondo Belt, had won several world medals – including an Olympic Bronze. She left the country and emigrated to the Netherlands in December. One of her Instagram messages points to the main reason that athletes are leaving Iran: "I'm one of the millions of oppressed women in Iran."

■ Chess referee, Shohreh Bayat, 32, participated in the Women's World Chess Championship and said, "I really hope they will provide me something to ensure I will be safe if I come back to Iran."

■ Mitra Hejazipour, a chess grandmaster, was expelled from the National Chess Team on January 2, 2020, by the Iranian Chess Federation for boldly removing her headscarf during the World Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship in Moscow.



Somayyeh Yazdani



Kimia Alizadeh



Shohreh Bayat



Mitra Hejazipour

Feminization of poverty, spread of social ills

Economic instability and bankruptcy coupled with gender discrimination has led to feminization of poverty in Iran and to numerous other social ills. In the cycle of poverty, women resort to difficult and hazardous jobs such as carrying heavy cargos and sifting through garbage, sale of body organs, panhandling, sleeping in the streets, prostitution, addiction, and even sale of infants.

Over 80 per cent of the people of Iran live under the poverty line. The middle class has almost diminished and the salaries of the majority of people are below the 8-million-toman poverty line. Many workers and employees do not receive their meager salaries for months and even up to a year. The regime's experts admit that some 5 million people in Iran are living in extreme poverty and hunger. Poverty leads to painful scenes every day.

■ A woman working in the municipality of Arak attempted to set herself alight outside the city hall's entrance on July 19, 2019 to protest the severe reduction of salaries. Instead of attending to her concerns, the mayor of Arak had her fired from her job.

■ In another horrific incident caused by poor living conditions, the hair and skin of the head of a ten-year-old girl was peeled off when her hair got stuck in the motor of a water well. Fa'ezeh lived in one of the shanty towns of Sistan and Baluchestan Province and intended to take water for her family. (The state-run ISNA news agency – November 24, 2019)

Sistan and Baluchestan Province holds the record for the number of people living in shanty towns and slums. 700,000 residents of this province receive water by tankers.

■ The family of a 31-year-old woman who had committed suicide due to depression were not able to collect her body from the State Security Force because they were not able to pay 2 million tomans. So, they left the body in the city's morgue in Maragheh.

■ Abandoning infants has also become a relatively common practice caused by poverty. For example, a

three-day infant girl was abandoned outside a garden in the city of Esko. The baby had been placed in a plastic bag and left in the street. (The official IRNA news agency – December 5, 2019)

Sale of body organs

Iran is the only country where it is not illegal to sell body organs. Sale and purchase of kidneys are done openly and legally. Unfortunately, most of the people who offer their kidneys for sale are youths between 20 and 30 years who have been forced to do so under economic pressure. They sell even the most sensitive parts of their body like kidneys, cornea, bone marrow or liver. A considerable number of these young people are women who have to deal with the harsh living conditions with such disability. (The state-run khabaronline.com - January 19, 2019)

Economic bankruptcy coupled with gender discrimination has led to **feminization of poverty** in Iran.

The hair and skin of the head of a ten-year-old girl got peeled off when she was bringing water from a well.



Female porters

Working as a back carrier or porter (or *koolbar* as it is referred to in Farsi) is among the most difficult jobs. Profound impoverishment and destitution caused by inequality and unjust distribution of wealth in Iran, have brought about a growing number of porters which has now expanded to include women, too.

Halaleh Amini, MP from the Iranian Kurdistan Province, said in this regard, "It is most regrettable that we face women and girls who have to disguise themselves as men and join the long line of back carriers." (The state-run Tasnim news agency – October 10, 2019)

In addition to the extremely difficult circumstances of their job, porters are constant targets of security forces as they pave the tortuous roads through the mountains. Many smugglers do not give their cargos to women, and even when they do, they pay them very little.

Following are the remarks by some of the women porters, explaining their pain and suffering and the excruciating pain of this inhuman job:

■ Amineh, 60, a woman head of household from a village in Kermanshah, said that she has been working as a porter ever since she was 26 years old. She explained: "It was at the time when my husband had just passed away and it was very difficult for me to feed my four children. I was in a very bad situation. Therefore, once with a friend of mine, we bought 80 kilos of diesel and set out to carry it on a path which was full of land mines."

■ Another woman head of household who is a mother of three explained about the harsh conditions she faces as a woman porter, "If we get arrested, our cargo will be seized. Every time I go and come, I only receive between 50-100 thousand tomans (\$11-\$22)."

She added, "Most of the times, we have to hide in the cold and blizzard winter or under the hot sun, behind rocks for long hours in fear of ambushes or traps laid by Revolutionary Guards (IRGC)."

■ Tahmineh, 33, suffers from lumbar disc and is not able to work. She has been working since she was 21. Since her husband needed help to earn their living, she had to resort to this difficult job. Tahmineh and three other women from Salas-e Babajani and Javanroud buy gasoline from middlemen and pass it through the mountains by 10-liter jerry cans.

■ Hiva is a young woman from Kermanshah. Her father was a porter for seven years. One day, he went to the mountains and did not return. So, Hiva had to earn her family's living and for doing so, she became a porter. Initially, she was not used to carrying heavy loads and every time she carried loads, she suffered from back pain for several days.

■ Many women accompany their husbands to the



Working as a porter is among the most difficult jobs. Profound poverty have brought about a growing number of porters which now includes many women and even educated ones.

mountains, several times a month. Every time, they carry a load of 30 kilograms through the mountains for four to five hours. On the way back, they carry the same amount of weight.

■ Another woman by the name of Maryam has been a porter for eight years to raise her daughter. She said many people work as porters, even some who have a master's degree but cannot find any jobs.

■ Another woman with seven children has been working as a porter for seven years because her husband is a retired employee of the municipality.

Divorce

■ In line with addiction to narcotic drugs, unemployment, moral corruption, and slum dwelling, divorce is one of the five top social ills in Iran. (The state-run Tasnim news agency – June 15, 2019)

■ 4% of divorces concern girl children under 18 years of age. (The official IRNA news agency – August 3, 2019)

■ According to the latest figures announced by official agencies, there is one divorce for every three marriages in Iran. (The state-run Sazandegi website, August 4, 2019)

Addiction rapidly spreading

The mullahs' regime does not publish the true statistics on addiction and actually minimizes the scope of the problem. But all officials involved in fighting narcotic drugs agree about feminization of addiction.

■ The officially announced statistics on the population of addicts in Iran has been 2.8 million people, with women having a 10% share. (The official IRNA news agency – August 6, 2019)

■ The anti-drug police say there are 1,500 addicted women in 22 districts of Tehran. (The state-run salamatnews.com - November 12, 2019)

■ But the commander of the State Security Force of Gachsaran says there are more than 750,000 addicted women in Iran, and 45% of runaway girls get addicted. (The state-run salamatnews.com - August 19, 2019)

■ Earlier, Ali Hashemi, head of the Independent Committee Fighting Narcotic Drugs in the State Expediency Council, underlined the official concealment of the truth and said there are at least 14 to 15 million people addicted in the families." (The state-run ISNA news agency - August 11, 2015)

Considering the speedy spread of addiction in Iran and among women, one could guess that the number of addicted women in Iran is far above the official statistics and around several million. The addiction of women does not end here, as it leads also to the shocking phenomenon of addicted children.

■ According to official statistics, 5% of addicted women in Sistan and Baluchestan Province are pregnant while between 70 to 100 thousand infants are born every year. As a result, between 3,000 to 5,000 of infants born in this province are addicted. But there are serious problems in taking care of these infants. They have to remain in the quarantine for 10 to 15 days to quit addiction. For this, they need 100 to 170 beds every day, while they have only 10 beds. Due to shortage of beds, addicted infants are released from hospitals and turn into addicted street children. (The official IRNA news agency – December 4, 2019)



Prostitution

Poverty caused by wrong economic policies of the clerical regime coupled with discrimination against women in employment and economic participation, in the absence of government support, social protection and laws which would support women and girls who have bad or no guardians, has led to the spread of prostitution among women and girls. Like other realms, there is no transparent statistics available in this regard.

The only independent research in this regard was done four years ago which was rapidly silenced by the regime. The existing facts, however, indicate that the situation has only aggravated due to further spread of poverty in the country. Here are some recent examples:

■ Sorayya is a homeless woman in south Tehran. She was starving, so she sold herself to three men inside a dark grave in return for a falafel sandwich. Sorayya is just one of many homeless women who have a similar fate. (The state-run ROKNA news agency - December 17, 2019)

■ In Mahshahr, prostitution has become a way of survival for many women. (The state-run ROKNA news agency - December 9, 2019)

■ A young woman, 23, has been sexually abused and raped several times. She became homeless after her parents got divorced. She earns 100, 200 or 250,000 tomans every night by prostitution. (The state-run salamatnews.com - November 12, 2019)

■ Zari is another addicted woman who had to marry an addicted man. Her husband abandoned her after a while and she became homeless. She earns the money she needs for her drugs through prostitution.

Homeless women

There is no accurate statistics available on homeless women. Officials offer contradicting figures.

■ In November 2018, it was announced that the number of homeless in Tehran was around 15,000 and the shelters had the capacity for a maximum 5,000 of them. (The state-run Tabnak.ir, November 11, 2018)

Three years before, in 2015, government experts estimated the number of homeless women at around 5,000 (the state-run ILNA news agency – July 11, 2015) to 15,000 (the state-run Arya news agency – May 30, 2019). Considering the spread and feminization of poverty in recent years, the actual number of homeless women must be considered higher.

■ In subsequent years, it was revealed that the age of women sleeping in the streets had dropped to 15. (The state-run Tasnim news agency, September 27, 2017)

■ There are educated women among those who sleep in the streets. They have turned to the streets due to poverty and unemployment. The regime's measures to support these women is very limited and ineffective.

■ In recent years, it was reported that only two warm shelters have been built for women sleeping in the streets. The standard capacity of these warm shelters in Tehran is between 450-500 persons and is not sufficient to respond to the needs of homeless women in Tehran. (The state-run Young Journalists Club website – December 14, 2019)

■ According to some reports, women have inhuman conditions and are mistreated in warm shelters.

■ In Ahvaz, capital of Khuzestan Province in southwestern Iran, women are allowed to stay in the shelters only on weekdays from 8 a.m. till 2 p.m. This means that women have to stay out in the height of heat and at nights, they have no place to stay and cannot use these shelters. Some shelters have very strict rules and oblige women to show signed papers from judicial authorities in order to use the warm shelters. (The official IRNA news agency – November 10, 2018)

■ Instead of solving the problems of homeless women who sleep on cardboard boxes in the streets, the Iranian regime seeks to "castrate homeless women to



Age of women sleeping in the streets dropped to 15



Educated women among homeless women who sleep in the streets due to unemployment and poverty



reduce the dangers and expenses!" (The official BORNA news agency – September 6, 2019)

■ Homeless women include member of the national Wushu team who became addicted and then homeless due to poverty. Sheida, 26, has become an addict because of her family's poverty. It is four years that Somayyeh has become an addict due to poverty. Her child was kidnapped and she lives in a park. Another woman has a 7-year-old daughter. She says they cannot use the shelters because she is addicted.

■ Sara and Najmeh are homeless, too. They take turns to sleep at nights. They say if no one stays on watch, they are raped. They say they don't go to shelters because they are mistreated there. Najmeh has been gang raped several times.



Half of the 7 million child laborers in Iran are girl children

Girl children more vulnerable among child laborers

Child laborers, breadwinners of their families

The issue of child laborers has become more acute compared to the previous year. Although the regime is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child but it does not comply with any of its commitments towards children, including the ban on child labor. In the year starting from March 2019, Iran saw the spread and aggravation of the conditions of child laborers, particularly the situation of girl children in cities across the country.

■ The population of child laborers reaches more than 7 billion. At least half of these children are girls. (The state-run Tasnim news agency, September 27, 2019)

■ Little girls work in the streets to earn a small amount of money. Municipality agents mistreat and sexually abuse these girls. There are video clips showing these girls talk about being mistreated and abused by municipality agents.

■ On March 17, 2019, a 9-year-old girl child laborer by the name of Sadouri and her brother, Rashid, 11, died under the debris when their home was destroyed under heavy rain. The harrowing incident took place in south Tehran, in the farmlands near Shahr-e Rey. More than 200 families live in the desert-like area surrounding these farmlands for over 30 years. The houses built in this area are made of mud and wood and are not resistant to rain

and snow. The children who live in these homes are essentially child laborers and earn living by pan handling or peddling on the streets. (The state-run ROKNA news agency – March 18, 2019)

Children sifting through garbage

One of the jobs child laborers engage in is sifting through garbage. Girl children sifting through garbage to earn a meager living are victims of absolute poverty in Iran. The “Garbage Mafia” in Tehran takes advantage of them to make fortunes. Garbage gangs use derelict children and women, and addicts to collect garbage.

■ A member of the mullahs’ parliament said there are some 15,000 scavengers in the capital, 5,000 of whom are children. 40% of them are 10 to 15 years old and their families’ only breadwinners. (The state-run ICANA news agency - October 18, 2019)

■ Girl children sifting through garbage are more vulnerable to diseases than boys. Their long hairs are full of lice and they have not enough water to wash their hair. The little water they use is contaminated. (The state-run ICANA news agency - October 20, 2019)

More women committing suicide due to poverty

■ The latest statistics on suicides in Iran was announced by the Coroner’s Office in 2019 for the Persian year 1396 (March 2017-March 2018). According to this data, 4,627 people committed fatal suicides in this year, 3,000 of whom were women.

■ The data published by the Ministry of Health indicated that 73 percent of these suicides are committed by people living in the slums. This shows that economic problems have direct impact on social ills. (The state-run Etemad daily, October 14, 2019)

■ Maryam Abbasi Nejad, the Health Ministry’s deputy for prevention of suicide, announced that 100,000 suicides had been registered in the country in the year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019). (Kurdistan24 website, November 6, 2019)

Over the past year, there were shocking incidents of pregnant women and mothers with children committing suicide. In some instances, mothers committed suicide along with their children due to extreme poverty.

■ Sabri Dashti, 28 with one child, lost her life due to suicide.

■ Pershang Karimi, 22 and pregnant, hanged herself.

■ Fereshteh Kahrarian, 30 and six-month pregnant, doused herself, husband and little child with kerosene and set themselves on fire.

■ Leila Ramezani, 24, pregnant mother of a one-year-old, committed suicide on March 3, in Salas-e Babajani.

■ Parisa Nazari, 25, young mother of two, committed suicide in Sarpol-e Zahab.

Sarpol-e Zahab and Salas-e Babajani were both among the cities devastated by earthquake in November 2017 where people are still homeless and live in poverty.

■ In Ilam, Mina Shahidi, 38, mother of three, killed herself due to the unbearable pressure of poverty.

■ Esrin Zamani, 28 with a child, ended her own life in Sanandaj.

■ Maryam Ahmadpour, 33 and mother of three, hanged herself due to difficult problems in their life.

■ Zeinat Karami, 26 and mother of a child, took her own life by taking rice pills.

■ Elham Moradi, mother of a little child, ended her life.

■ Sarveh Ebrahimi, mother of a child, hanged herself.

■ A mother and her 11-year-old daughter took rice pills and ended their lives in Fars Province.

■ Elaheh Amiri, mother of 2-year-old toddler, hanged herself in a village in Saqqez.

■ A 34-year-old woman in Tehran hugged her 6-year-old son and jumped from the fourth floor of a building ending their lives.

■ Two women in Kermanshah by the names of Negar Ezzati and Zeinab Mohammadi set themselves alight due to poverty.

■ A 13-year-old girl by the name of Farideh committed suicide after giving birth to her child.



“ 5,000 child laborers between 10 and 15 years of age are breadwinners of their families ”

“ Girls sifting through garbage more vulnerable to diseases than boys ”



Taking shelter under a train, a flood-stricken woman in Khuzestan, attends to her child.

Lack of infrastructures takes a heavy toll on women and children

Corruption, fraud, mismanagement and adoption of wrong policies have destroyed the country's natural resources and its infrastructures. As a result, women and children paid a heavy price in the earthquakes and floods of 2019.

By razing large parts of Iran's jungles and forests to smuggle wood and reap profits, by constructing hotels and buildings in the natural course of rivers to earn more money, by changing river paths to build dams to serve its nuclear and military projects, the Iranian regime has vastly contributed to the death and destruction caused by natural disasters.

The people of Iran are defenseless in the face of predictable incidents. Even after every disaster, the regime fails to take urgent action and provide relief. Often, the limited relief provided by locals are stolen by government agents, and the affected people's protests in this regard are answered by brute force.

The Transparency International Organization on the Index of Administrative and Economic Corruption, ranked the Iranian regime 146 among 180 countries in 2019. (Transparency.org – January 23, 2020) This is despite lack of transparency on the part of the regime and its cover-up of the true dimensions of fraud, theft, bribery and embezzlement in the country.

Floods

The people of Iran started their new year with floods that swept all across the country in March 2019.

The heavy rainfalls in spring 2019 ravaged thousands of Iranian villages and towns and devastated people's lives. The scale of destruction caused by the devastating floods attested to the destruction of Iran's natural resources.

People are still struggling to cope with the damages caused by floods, and yet, in some areas, there were more incidents of flood.

In the past 40 years, the clerical regime's fraudulent agencies, particularly the Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), have reaped huge profits through destruction of the environment and nature including by construction of hundreds of dams and tunnels in wrong spots, diversion of the natural paths of rivers, confiscation and sale of lands on river banks, illegal blocking and construction in the natural paths of flood, deforestation to sell the wood and lands, etc.

They have done so without observing the basic rules essential to any construction. Consequently, they have left the people of Iran defenseless in the face of natural disasters. If the natural environment of Iranian cities and villages had not been so vastly damaged, the heavy

rainfalls could have been reigned in and the deprived people of Iran would not have suffered such extensive losses of lives and properties.

■ The lives of at least 12 million citizens across Iran were affected by this dreadful flood and they had to cope with many problems without adequate support from the government.

■ The European Commission for Humanitarian Aid declared it to be the worst natural disaster that has occurred in Iran over the past fifteen years, spreading to two thousand cities and counties in 31 provinces. More than half a million people were forced to leave their homes. It is clear that in such a condition, women face numerous problems.

■ At least twenty women including several girl children were killed in this flood disaster, eleven of them were from Shiraz. During this devastating flood, it was only the people who rushed to the aid of one another

as no effective action was taken by the government.

■ On April 14, 2019, Massoud Pezeshkian, the deputy speaker of the Parliament, disclosed that the regime neither wants nor it can respond to the people's needs. He said, "It is impossible for the government to respond to these problems just by passing legislations... When it gets to action, the government has no money to do it. It cannot dredge or repair the dams." (The official website of the parliament – April 14, 2019)

■ Again, in December 2019, flood struck Khuzestan, Fars, and Bushehr provinces with irreparable damages. The deprived women in these areas were the first victims of the disaster. The flooding in Khuzestan stretched into Razi Hospital in Ahvaz and disrupted its operations.

■ On December 16, 2019, four women who were hospitalized in the ICU at the cardiac unit of Ahvaz Hospital, died

because of the power outages and emergency power system failure affected by the flood.

Some of the people in these areas were deprived from tents for at least two months and had to go to the woods for shelter where they were in constant danger of reptiles and insects. (The state-run ILNA news agency – December 17, 2019)

■ In January 2020, heavy rains once again threatened the lives of people living in the deprived province of Sistan and Baluchestan. Nearly 40,000 rural homes were destroyed. 20,000 hectares of agriculture and 8,000 livestock were destroyed by floods. (The state-run Mehr News Agency – January 31, 2019)

■ Adobe houses and dumpsters were all flooded. Communication with 400 villages was impossible due to the blockage of the transmission routes. (The state-run Mehr News Agency – January 14, 2019)

■ Several villages disappeared under water. In

Zarabad and Konarak districts, people were hanging on top of the trees for several days without any means to escape the flood.

■ In a village near Zahedan, heavy rainfall led to the collapse of the roof of a mud house, badly injuring a 7-year-old girl.

■ Meanwhile, due to the floods, some crocodiles called Gando (Mugger Crocodiles) attacked the villages frightening the citizens.

The people affected by the floods have complained that the government spends millions of dollars on terrorist operations instead of donating funds to help the flood victims.

■ Ali Baytollahi, risk manager of the Research Center of Roads and Urban Development, admitted that with basic engineering, technical skills and minimum expenses, many of the floods in Iran could have been prevented. (The state-run salamatnews.com, January 14, 2020)

In the worst disaster in 15 years, at least **12 million** people and **2,000 cities** across Iran were affected by floods. More than **half a million** people were forced to leave their homes.



After years, earthquake survivors continue to live in tents and containers

By destruction of the natural environment and the infrastructures, the Iranian authorities are responsible for the scale of damages done by earthquakes and floods, and for leaving the people of Iran defenseless in the face of natural disasters. Women and children are the prime victims of natural disasters and suffer the most from homelessness, lack of hygiene, stress and psychological problems.

■ 17 years after the earthquake in Bam, the survivors are still living in the slums, and the people are still deprived of the minimum standards of urban living.

■ After 2 years, survivors of the earthquake in Kermanshah are still living a miserable life in tents and containers.

■ In June 2018, the authorities forced out around 40 families from Shahed 1 and 2 camps by cutting off their electricity and water. Consequently, the homeless families had to move to the streets.

■ At least four women and girls were killed in an earthquake that struck northwestern Iran on November 8, 2019.

■ Zahra Abedi, 10, was a victim of the quake. She



was still alive after being pulled out from under the rubbles. But she lost her life because there was no doctor in Varnakesh Village at the time when the earthquake happened. (The state-run IRNA news agency – November 10, 2019)

■ Hundreds more were injured in the 5.9 magnitude quake. The tremor affected six towns and 140 villages in West Azerbaijan Province, destroying 1,500 residential units and some public commercial centers. (The state-run IRNA news agency – November 8, 2019)

■ The director of the Emergency Organization announced that 60 percent of those hurt in the earthquake were women. 27 percent of the victims were between 21 and 30 years old. (The state-run Young Journalists Club – November 9, 2019)



■ Three months after the earthquake, the living conditions of people in this area are getting worse every day. Tents are not enough to protect people and children from the freezing cold weather in areas which are covered by snow one-meter high. The electricity in these villages doesn't have the capacity to allow people use their electric heaters. Water leaks from the roof and walls of trailers. No showers and baths have been built for the people. Bathing children in such circumstances is a very difficult task. In some areas, the debris have not been removed, yet. (The state-run IRNA news agency – December 14, 2019)

■ Pregnant women and infants are living in tents. The extremely cold weather and the lack of hygiene has caused a variety of infections and diseases. Even women with cancer are left without enough food. (The state-run IRNA news agency – December 11, 2019)

■ On January 27, 2020, a magnitude 5.4 earthquake struck the city of Shiraz and several aftershocks lasted for at least a week. During this earthquake, at least 53 villages were damaged. On the same day, a magnitude 4.2 earthquake struck Yazd Province. Although these earthquakes left no casualties, but the damage and destruction of homes and facilities cannot be replaced because people who live in these areas are extremely poor. Severe cold and snow have made it extremely difficult to have access to these areas.

Left, Zahra Abedi, 10, speaking to a local TV reporter. She lost her life because there was no doctor in the village on the day.

1,500 residential units were destroyed in **140** villages of West Azerbaijan, and people are still living in tents in the freezing cold weather



Iran holds world record for deadly road accidents

93% of female victims of road accidents were school girls

Lack of standard roads, transportation infrastructure, and adequate road signs, in addition to worn-out vehicles take the lives of many people in Iran.

■ The annual casualties due to road accidents in Iran are equal to the casualties of the eight-year war with Iraq. (The state-run IRNA news agency – December 2018)

■ With 800,000 accidents per year, Iran holds the world's record in deadly road accidents. As for the casualties, Iran ranks 189 among 190 countries.

■ The State Security Force Traffic Police announced, "Every half hour, one person dies in a car accident." Indicating that road fatalities had increased compared to the previous year, the SSF official added that 12% of the victims of road accident are children. (The state-run ISNA news agency – January 24, 2020)

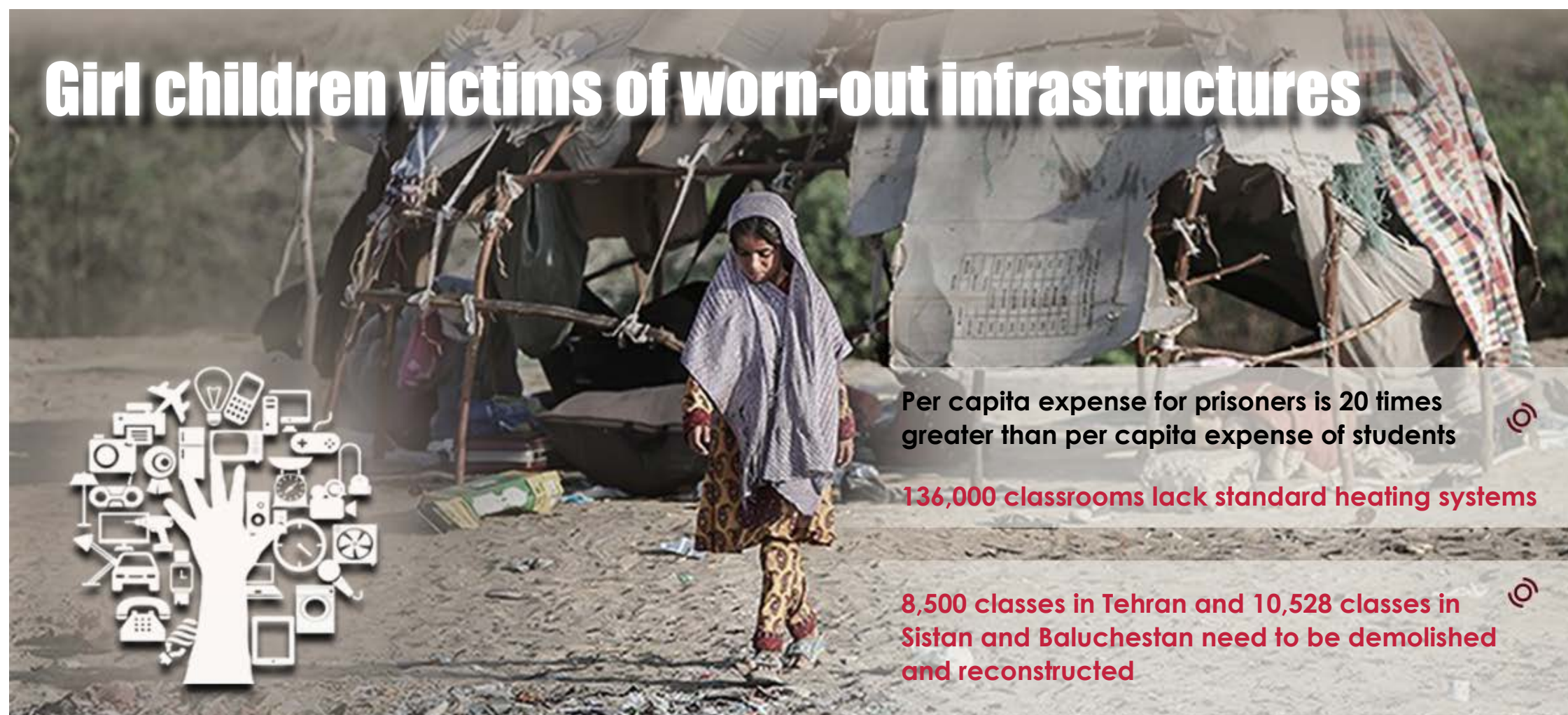
■ Sixteen women including a pregnant woman died in four bus accidents in various parts of Iran from January 9 to 20, 2020.

■ Even if women and girls are not directly victimized, they are affected by losing their husbands and fathers and by being abandoned without any form of support under the mullahs' rule which will eventually drive them into the cycle of social harms.

■ In 2019, the number of female casualties in car accidents was 18 dead and 90 wounded. A pregnant woman and 2 high school girls were among them.

■ Most of the accidents were related to worn-out school vehicles leaving at least 84 high school female students wounded.

■ This means that based on the incomplete statistics provided by the state media, more than 93% of the female victims of car accident in 2019 were schoolgirls. This further indicates the authorities' negligence in protecting the lives of children in Iran.



The Iranian regime spends billions of dollars on wars in Syria and Yemen, on missile tests and terrorist activities, on aiding its proxy forces in Iraq, and on suppression of the people of Iran. But it allocates a very small budget to the infrastructures for schools and universities.

■ The director of the Judiciary's Prevention Office admitted that in Iran, the per capita expenses for a prisoner is 20 times greater than the per capita expenses for a student. (The official IRNA news agency – December 9, 2019)

In light of the horrible prison conditions and denial of basic services to prisoners, one can imagine the conditions of Iranian students.

■ An Education Ministry official, Ali Allahyar Turkmen, revealed part of the fraud involved in the 2019 budget allocations when he said the increase in the budget was going to be provided by families of students. He also revealed that the 100 billion tomans (\$6.5 million) claimed as being added to the budget of schools for payment of their utility costs had been deducted from the budget of targeted subsidies. (The state-run Tasnim news agency – December 31, 2018)

■ The vice-chair of the parliamentary Education and

Research Committee acknowledged that a significant number of schools face the imminent danger of fire due to lack of safe heating systems. Ahmadi said 136,000 classrooms in Iran lack standard heating systems. (The state-run Mehr news agency – January 12, 2019)

■ The general director of Tehran's Renovation of Schools said 235 schools in Tehran are more than 60 years old. He added: "A total of 8,500 classes in Tehran Province need to be demolished and rebuilt and 14,500 classes need to be retrofitted with stronger building materials." (The state-run ISNA news agency – August 20, 2018)

■ The general director for Renovation of Schools of the country commented on the situation of schools in Sistan and Baluchistan Province, saying that from nearly 19,000 classrooms in this province, 10,528 need to be demolished and reconstructed. (The state-run ISNA news agency – September 5, 2017)

These figures do not take into account the large number of schools where classes are held in tents without having the minimum standards.

■ Over the past year, worn-out infrastructures of schools inflicted certain damages on the lives of girl children.

In February 2019 at a school in Kerman, 25 schoolgirls

were poisoned by inhaling carbon monoxide leaking from their heater in the class. (The state-run ISNA news agency – January 29, 2019)

■ In April 2019, Saba Sadeghzadeh, a graduate of Sahand Industrial University, who was visiting Tabriz to collect her degree, died due to gas leak from the water heater in the girls' dormitory. Another student suffered injuries. (The state-run ISNA news agency – April 20, 2019)

■ In a similar incident in the city of Gorgan in October 2019, gas leaking from the school's heating system poisoned 22 students. (The state-run IRNA news agency – October 16, 2019)

■ On May 29, 2019, three young girls, 8 and 9 years old, drowned in a water ditch when they went to drink water. The tragic incident took place in the village of Kamobazaar near Chabahar, in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, where people store rainwater in ditches called, Hootag, in the absence of piped water. (The official IRNA news agency – May 29, 2019)

■ The following month in the village of Sarbaz, a 10-year-old girl went to bring water from the river but was attacked by a crocodile and lost one of her hands. (The state-run asriran.ir – July 20, 2019)

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