

# **Urgent action needed to free women political prisoners in Iran**

**The lives of political prisoners are in danger**



**January 2022**

**NCRI Women's Committee**

**Monthly Report**



## Urgent action needed to free women political prisoners in Iran

### The lives of political prisoners are in danger

January saw the clerical regime ratchet up social clampdown in step with the growing discontent and the spread of popular protests. The stepped-up repression was vividly evident in the soaring executions and widespread arrests of civil activists and protesters, on the one hand, and in the escalated pressure on prisoners, especially those incarcerated on political grounds.

Dozens of teachers, including female teachers, were arrested over the past month during the [nationwide sit-ins and demonstrations](#) of Iranian teachers. Dozens more were dismissed from their jobs.



Prisoners also experienced greater pressure than before. New prison sentences were issued for civil activists in various cities, and some were summoned to serve their sentences. In some cases, security forces used brute force to transfer them to jail.

The clerical regime also violated the principle of separation of crimes by banishing political prisoners to remote prisons and among ordinary convicts.

The [Women's Committee](#) of the National Council of Resistance of Iran condemns all the harsh sentences. It urges the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other women's rights organizations to not remain silent in the face of repression, executions, and criminal sentences by the Iranian Judiciary and take urgent action to secure the release of political prisoners, particularly female prisoners.

The Iranian Resistance has persistently highlighted the urgent need for the formation of an international mission to visit Iran's prisons and talk to prisoners.

This month's report is a brief review on the conditions of those arrested on political grounds.

## Recent Arrests

Agents of the Ministry of Intelligence [arrested](#) high school teacher **Maryam Kabiri** as she was leaving her home in Tehran on January 13, 2022, the Coordinating Council of the Educators' Associations announced. Maryam Kabiri works as a teacher for exceptional students in Tehran's 2<sup>nd</sup> educational district.



The Intelligence Ministry agents ransacked Maryam Kabiri's house and confiscated her and her husband's mobile phones. Then, they transferred Ms. Kabiri to Evin Prison.

During her detention, Maryam Kabiri has contacted her family only once for a few minutes.

Maryam Kabiri's relatives said she was seriously ill, but the 6<sup>th</sup> Branch of the Evin Interrogation Department has refused to deliver her medicines, despite the family's insistence.

Agents of the Intelligence Department of Saqqez, in Iranian Kurdistan, raided the residence of **Zamaneh Zivieh** and [arrested her](#) on January 29, 2022.

Zamaneh Zivieh is 29 and mother of a young child. She graduated in Law from Payam Noor University of Saqqez. The Intelligence Department forces arrested Ms. Zivieh without presenting a judicial warrant. There is no information available on the place and reason for this arrest.



Forces of the Intelligence Department of Sanandaj, the capital of Iranian Kurdistan Province, arrested two female activists on January 4, 2022. **Suma Shapari** and **Mahsa Mohammadi** were taken to the department's detention center and they are interrogated every day.

Suma Shapari and Mahsa Mohammadi were subsequently taken to the quarantine ward of the Correctional Center of Sanandaj, also known as the women's ward of the Central Prison of Sanandaj.

## Implementation of Imprisonment Sentences

The Justice Department of Sanandaj summoned **Zahra Mohammadi**, a civil activist and a Kurdish language teacher, in January to [serve her five-year prison](#) sentence. The Supreme Court turned down Ms. Mohammadi's appeal to revise her sentence according to Article 477.

On her way to report to the prison authorities, Zahra Mohammadi met a [large crowd](#) who had gathered outside the prison to bid her farewell. After expressing her gratitude to the crowd, and briefly said, "I did not expect that you come here to be in my company as I am going to prison. This is truly



heartwarming, and I assure you that during all the moments of my prison time, the enemy would regret tying hope to incarcerating me.”

[Zahra Mohammadi](#) was transferred to the Correctional Center of Sanandaj on January 22, 2022, after spending two weeks in the quarantine ward.

Zahra Mohammadi, 30, lives in Sanandaj. She has a master’s degree in Geopolitics from the University of Birjand.

She was sentenced to 10 years in prison on the charge of “forming a group against national security” in July 2020. Later in October, her sentence was commuted to [five years](#).

Student activist [Leila Hosseinzadeh](#) [received a directive](#) on January 8, 2022, summoning her to the Implementation of Verdicts Unit of the Evin Courthouse. The directive gave her 5 days to report to the unit.

Earlier in December the 28<sup>th</sup> Branch of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran [upheld a 5-year prison sentence](#) for Leila Hosseinzadeh in a measure which contravened the regime’s punishment law. Leila Hosseinzadeh suffers from intestinal Crohn’s disease and is unable to endure prison conditions. However, she is deprived of receiving her medications or any medical care.

Political prisoner Leila Hosseinzadeh, 30, was arrested on December 7, 2021, while visiting Shiraz, the capital of Fars Province in southern Iran. After several days of interrogation and torture in the detention center of the Intelligence Department of Shiraz, she was transferred to Ward 209 of Evin Prison in Tehran. Then on December 23, 2021, the authorities returned her from Evin to the women’s ward of [Adelabad Prison](#) in Shiraz, and subsequently released her on a bail of 1.5 billion Tomans.

[Nazanin Mohammad-Nejad](#) [began serving her prison term](#) on January 1, 2022. She received a [sentence of three years and four months](#) in July.

Security forces raided the residence of Ms. Mohammad-Nejad in Tehran at night on December 9, 2020. They took her to the detention center of the IRGC Intelligence in Ward 2A of Evin Prison.

Born in 1988 in Mahshahr, [Nazanin Mohammad-Nejad](#) is a student of the Russian language at Tehran’s Allameh Tabatabaai University. She graduated in communications from Tehran University. She has written many articles about the conditions of students and women, and the multiple structural discriminations against workers, women, and other marginalized sectors.

[Bahareh Soleimani](#), 44, is a nurse residing in Tehran. She [reported to Evin Prison](#) on January 2, 2022, to begin serving her time in prison. She received a [sentence of six years and eight months](#) in July on charges of “participating in running an illegal group” and “propaganda activities against the state.”





Bahareh Soleimani suffers from asthma and the forensics office has verified that she is not physically fit to serve time in prison.

**Shadi Gilak**, a civil activist living in Tehran, was sent to Evin Prison on January 8, 2022, to serve a one-year sentence.

Shadi Gilak was tried by the Revolutionary Court of Tehran and sentenced to one year in prison on charges of “propaganda against the state.”

Shadi Gilak’s husband, Arash Johari, also serves his sentence in Evin Prison. Arash Johari is a labor activist. The Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced him to 16 years in prison.



**Shohreh Hosseini**, an [interpreter](#) and a civil activist, was [summoned to Evin Prison](#) on January 27, 2022, to begin serving her sentence. The Revolutionary Court of Tehran had earlier sentenced her to three years and three months in prison on charges of “assembly and collusion to disrupt national security,” “membership in opposition groups,” and “propaganda against the state.”



Civil activist **Fariba Assadi** was [arrested](#) on January 2, 2022, at her home in Tehran. The authorities have now transferred her to the notorious [Qarchak Prison](#) to serve her time in prison. The Revolutionary Court of Shahriar had earlier sentenced her to one year in prison.

Fariba Assadi is held among prisoners convicted of violent crimes and is not safe.

In a call to her relatives, she complained of the lack of clean drinking water, lack of separation of prisoners based on their charges, very bad quality of food, which is occasionally rotten, lack of access to medical treatment, severe restrictions, and physical and psychological torture of political prisoners.



Security forces [arrested](#) the female Kurdish activist **Sheneh Ahmadi** on January 8, 2022, to begin serving her three-month sentence.

Sheneh Ahmadi, 21, lives in Paveh, a city in Kermanshah province. She had been summoned by the Court of Paveh and is presently detained in Kermanshah’s Correctional Center.

## Harassing and Pressuring Political Prisoners

Political prisoner **Nejat Anvar Hamidi** is losing her sight.

Nejat Anvar Hamidi, 66, is going blind in the Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz, the capital of Khuzestan Province, SW Iran. She has been [deprived of medical care and sick leave](#) on the orders of the Intelligence Ministry.

Nejat Anvar Hamidi suffers from cataracts in both eyes and needs urgent operation.



According to the latest news on January 15, 2022, the prison's doctor has told her, "You don't need any operation until you go blind!"

On October 26, 2021, Mrs. Anvar Hamidi experienced bleeding in both eyes due to a lack of medical attention. Still, prison authorities refused to provide treatment.

Nejat Anvar Hamidi was incarcerated in March 2019 to serve her 15-year sentence in the Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz. She suffers from thyroid malfunction, high blood pressure, and blood lipid.

Sepidar Prison authorities have deprived her of receiving her medications. After the [outbreak](#) of the COVID-19 pandemic, she [contracted the virus](#) and was quarantined while deprived of medical care.

Nejat Anvar Hamidi was imprisoned for 28 months during the 1980s for supporting the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK).

She was arrested for the second time in 2017, along with her husband and daughter, for supporting the PMOI/MEK. She and her husband were interrogated and later sentenced to 15 years in prison for "membership in dissident groups on the internet" and "propaganda against the state."

In March 2019, she was taken to Sepidar Prison of Ahvaz to serve her years of prison term among ordinary prisoners in violation of the principle of separation of crimes.

Political prisoner **Saba Kord Afshari** was [deprived of visits](#) for two weeks, beginning on January 15, 2022. Presently, she is detained in the notorious [Qarchak Prison](#) in Varamin, southwest of Tehran.

An informed source reported that Saba Kord Afshari was having a cabin visit with her father on January 4, 2022, when her phone was disconnected before they finished their meeting.



Saba Kord Afshari did not leave the visitation hall in protest and demanded to say goodbye to her father. However, prison guards pushed Mr. Kord Afshari out of the hall with disrespect and intimidated him.

Eventually, the deputy warden of Qarchak Prison threatened Saba to deprive her of visits.

Political prisoner [Saba Kord Afshari](#) was thus deprived of visits for two weeks since January 15, 2022, based on a directive that she was not allowed to read. The order was issued without being examined by the Disciplinary Council.

This is not the first time Saba Kord Afshari is being subjected to pressure while serving her sentence in [Qarchak](#).

Saba Kord Afshari, 23, a spoken-out opponent of the mandatory Hijab, was arrested on June 1, 2019. The [Revolutionary Court of Tehran](#) handed down a [24-year sentence](#) for Saba Kord Afshari on August 19, 2019.

The sentence included 15 years for “promoting corruption and prostitution,” 1.5 years on the charge of “propaganda against the state,” and 7.5 years for “association and collusion against national security.”

Retired teacher **Zeinab Hamrang** has been hospitalized twice due to dire health conditions in early December. Her physical and psychological health is critical; nevertheless, she is [deprived of medical leave](#).

The retired teacher has high blood pressure and kidney problems. She also tested [positive for Covid-19](#) last July. However, the Iranian Judiciary officials have turned down her request for medical leave.

The Revolutionary Court of Tehran has sentenced her to five years in jail for “assembly and collusion against national security” and an additional one-year for disseminating “propaganda against the state.”

[Zeinab Hamrang](#), 45, from Ardabil, was arrested in early September 2020 in Khoy, in West Azerbaijan Province, as she and her daughter were passing through on a trip. She was subsequently transferred to the [women’s ward of Evin Prison](#) in Tehran on September 5, 2020.

**Saada Khadirzadeh** comes from Piranshahr, in West Azerbaijan Province. She is married with two children and was one-month pregnant at the time of arrest. Saada Khadirzadeh is presently detained in the [Central Prison of Urmia](#).

She had written two letters to the Prosecutor of Piranshahr and requested that her detention warrant be changed to release on bail. However, the inspector and the prosecutor of Piranshahr [turned down her request](#) and refused to allow her temporarily release on bail.



Ms. Khadirzadeh is in critical physical conditions. In addition to being pregnant, she suffers from hypertension, kidney problem, lumbar disc, and heart and nervous problems. These illnesses have made it very difficult for her to endure prison conditions.

According to the report by local sources, based on the certification of a specialist doctor, the lives of Saada Khadirzadeh and her 4-month fetus are in danger. The prosecutor, the inspector, and the authorities of the Central Prison of Urmia have rejected her request for conditional release even on bail, and despite medical certificate.

Security forces [arrested](#) Ms. Khadirzadeh on October 14, 2021. It is so far not known why and on what charges she was arrested.

She was [transferred](#) on November 8, 2021, from the IRGC detention center to the Central Prison of Urmia. She has been deprived of having family visits or access to a lawyer throughout her detention.



Despite nine months since the arrest and detention of [Golaleh Moradi](#), a Kurdish activist, she [remains in limbo](#) in the Central Prison of Urmia. Ms. Moradi has not had any trial and is deprived of having a lawyer.

Intelligence services accuse Golaleh Moradi of cooperating with Kurdish parties and participating in the murder of an IRGC member. Ms. Moradi has been tortured to make false confessions.

In an audio recording, Golaleh Moradi says, "The intelligence services have repeatedly intimidated me. They told me that if I do not confess to what they want, they would bring my two children and torture them in front of my eyes."

Forces of the IRGC Intelligence arrested Golaleh Moradi on April 17, 2021, after one of the members of the IRGC in Piranshahr was killed. Subsequently, they transferred her to Urmia and, after 45 days, detained her in the women's ward of the Central Prison of Urmia.

Golaleh Moradi has two sons, Taher and Matin Bazzazi, both 14. They were arrested and detained for some time but later released.

### Increasing pressure on resistant political prisoners

**Zeinab Jalalian** has been [detained 530 days incommunicado](#), under physical and mental torture. Her family is gravely worried about her conditions and health.

530 days have passed since Zeinab Jalalian last contacted her family; an informed source announced on January 12, 2022.

The Jalalian family and friends are extremely concerned about her conditions, holding the regime accountable for her health. Zeinab Jalalian has been deprived of calling her family despite her physical and mental conditions.

Prison authorities have declared that nothing will change for her so long as Ms. Jalalian does not express remorse in a televised interview.

Zeinab Jalalian, 38, was sentenced to death in 2009 on the charge of Moharebeh through "membership in PEJAK." The verdict was commuted to life in prison in 2011.

Ms. Jalalian has been in jail without any leaves since 2007, when she was arrested in Kermanshah. She suffers from [various illnesses](#), including asthma, pterygium, an oral thrush condition, and GI complications.

The Ministry of Intelligence has deprived her of medical treatment as a way of torture. She is presently under various forms of psychological pressure and deprived of her rights as a prisoner to express remorse and collaborate with the Intelligence Ministry.

December 30 marked [the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#) of the incarceration of **Maryam Akbari Monfared**. She has been imprisoned for 12 years without a single day of leave. She was banished to the Prison of Semnan among ordinary prisoners in March 2020.

She faced more severe restrictions in Semnan Prison, including being deprived of having a phone card. She can call her family only in the presence of a prison guard.

[Maryam Akbari Monfared](#) has three daughters. In June 2010, the Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced her to 15 years for alleged membership in the opposition People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK). Mrs. Akbari has never accepted this charge. She suffers from Thyroid malfunction and joint rheumatism.



[Maryam Akbari's sister and brother](#) were executed during the massacre of political prisoners in summer 1988. Another two of her brothers were executed during the mass executions in the early 1980s.

## Recent flogging and jail sentences for political prisoners

### 12 years of prison time for three opposition supporters

Three female political prisoners received a total of [12 years in prison](#) for supporting the opposition [People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran](#) (PMOI/MEK).

On January 6, 2022, Tehran's Revolutionary Court sentenced three female political prisoners to a total of 12 years on charges of "propaganda against the state" and "assembly and collusion against national security" through cooperating with the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran.

The three female political prisoners are **Makhsus Bukharaei**, 63, **Azar Musazadeh**, 59, and **Roghayeh Sultan Mirzaei**, 69. The former two received five years each, and the latter received two years.

The clerical regime's Judiciary also confiscated the garden belonging to Mrs. Mirzaei.

All three women were political prisoners in the 1980s and already spent long years in prison.

Mrs. Musazadeh's husband was among the [PMOI](#) political prisoners massacred in 1988.

Azar Musazadeh and Makhsus Bukharaei had also been arrested in the 2010s and imprisoned for several years.

### A 60-month sentence based on a fabricated case

Reports on December 16, 2021, indicated that the Revolutionary Court of Tehran issued a total of [60 months of jail](#) term for **Parastoo Mo'ini**, **Zahra Safaei**, **Forough Taghipour**, and **Marzieh Farsi**. The [court had convened on November 24](#), 2021.

The authorities of Qarchak Prison fabricated a new case for the four female political prisoners because they sent out a letter in June, calling for the boycott of the clerical regime's sham presidential election. Each of them has been sentenced to an additional 15 months in prison.

The four female political prisoners are supporters of the opposition People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK).

Parastoo Mo'ini, 21, is a student of computer sciences. She is detained in [Qarchak Prison](#) and her mother, Zahra Safaei, who is held despite dire health.

Zahra Safaei, Parastoo Mo'ini, and Forough Taghipour are serving their prison sentences of eight, six, and five years. Marzieh Farsi is illegally detained without standing trial.

The lives of the four female political prisoners are in danger in Qarchak Prison. The prison authorities had previously hired mercenaries to kill them by attacking them and pouring boiling water. In a vicious attack on December 13, 2020, some [20 prison guards attacked](#) the ward of these political prisoners and brutalized all of them.

### Eight years of prison term and 74 lashes

In the final days of January, the 26<sup>th</sup> Branch of Tehran's Revolutionary Court sentenced **Narges Mohammadi** to 8 years in prison and 74 lashes. She is additionally condemned to two years of

exile (banned from living in Tehran), two years of ban on political and social activities in parties and institutions, two years of ban on activities in the social media, communications (having interviews), and confiscation of her mobile cellphone.

Narges Mohammadi is a human rights activist and the vice-president of the league of human rights defenders in Iran.

Security forces arrested Ms. Mohammadi in mid-November in Karaj. They detained her in solitary confinement in the Intelligence Ministry Ward 209 in Evin Prison, and subsequently banished her to Qarchak Prison.

**Khadijeh Medipour** received [20 months of prison term](#).

Agents of the IRGC Intelligence arrested Khadijeh Mehdipour [three months ago](#), on October 10, 2021. Two days later, they transferred Ms. Mehdipour, 34 and a resident of Ivan-e Gharb, to the women's ward of the Central Prison of Ilam. She has been detained there since in violation of the principle of separation of crimes.

Ms. Mehdipour had been [arrested once before](#) on October 3, 2020, for her activities on social media. Her sentence was to pay 3 million Tomans in cash.

The Revolutionary Court of Ilam tried her on charges of "propaganda against the state" and insulting Khomeini and Khamenei, the regime's previous and incumbent supreme leaders. The court handed down a 20-month sentence to her.



"The intelligence forces initially intended to take Ms. Mehdipour to the Forensics and have her undergo neural and mental examinations. They planned to show that she is mentally ill," said an informed source. "But she firmly resisted this ploy. They also asked her repeatedly to write a letter of remorse, but she rejected the allegations."

The source added that political prisoner Khadijeh Mehdizadeh is not eligible for parole or early release because she has refused to express remorse.

Political prisoner Khadijeh Mehdipour has reportedly contracted the Coronavirus. Despite showing symptoms, including fever, weakness, and sore throat, she is deprived of medical attention and care in the Prison of Ilam.

The Criminal Court of Bukan handed down [three months of a prison](#) sentence for **Azimeh Nasseri**, a Kurdish activist from Bukan. Ms. Nasseri must also pay a cash fine worth 6 million Tomans.

Agents of the IRGC Intelligence in Bukan arrested [Azimeh Nasseri](#) on July 27, 2021. They detained her for nearly 40 days and then set her free on a bail of 200 million Tomans temporarily until the final disposition of her case.

The Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced **Sara Asgari** to six months in prison and payment of a 7-million-Toman fine. Sara Asgari's trial convened on January 17, 2022 at the 26<sup>th</sup> Branch of the Revolutionary Court of Tehran.



## Banishment of prisoners

On the orders of Tehran's Prosecutor, the authorities of Evin Prison sent **Aliyeh Motallebzadeh**, to [exile in Qarchak Prison](#) on January 10, 2022.

An informed source said after the announcement of this news, all the phones in the women's ward of Evin were disconnected Monday afternoon.

The [women's rights activist](#) and [photographer](#), Aliyeh Motallebzadeh, is the [vice-president](#) of the Association of Freedom of the Press in Iran. She began serving her sentence in [Evin Prison](#) on October 11, 2020.

The Revision Court of Tehran Province sentenced her to three years in prison in 2017. The court charged her with "assembly and collusion against national security" and disseminating "propaganda against the state."

Aliyeh Motallebzadeh was deprived of making phone calls after she filed a complaint on April 26, 2021, against detention prisoners in solitary confinement in Evin. The Prosecutor turned down her request for parole.

The authorities of [Evin Prison](#) in Tehran [abruptly transferred](#) the retired teacher **Massoumeh Asgari** to the Kachouii Prison of Karaj on December 22, 2021.

Prison authorities called her to meet with a courthouse official, but instead they pushed her into a car and relocated her to the [Kachouii Prison of Karaj](#).

They did not even allow her to take her personal belongings and even medications with her.

[Massoumeh Asgari is very ill](#). She suffers from diabetes, liver and kidney complications, and psychological and nervous illnesses.

A source close to her family said she takes 20 different tablets every day but did not have access to her medications for two days. She was not able to make any phone calls for three days.

Ms. Asgari is being held among prisoners convicted of ordinary crimes, in violation of the principle of separation of crimes.

The Revolutionary Court of Tehran sentenced her to five years in prison on the charge of "assembly and collusion against national security," a ruling that was later upheld by the Revision Court.

Massoumeh Asgari is the only guardian of her 16-year-old son.

