

Iran Protests Have Led to More Than 60 Child Deaths, Human Rights Group Says

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Photo of some of 60 children killed during the ongoing protests in Iran. KL./



By Kayhan Life Staff

According to a recent report by Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA), 450 people, including 63 children, lost their lives between Sept. 17 and Nov. 25 in the nationwide protests sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa (Zhina) Amini while in the custody of the morality police.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC or UNCRC) defines a child as "any human being under the age of 18."

The Iranian public and global community have been outraged and saddened by the tragic deaths of many children in the past two and a half months, including two 16-year-old girls, Nika Shakarami and Sarina Esmailzadeh, and Kian Pirfalak, a 10-year-old boy.

Most of these children were shot or beaten to death by the regime's security forces.

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Mahak (**Maedeh**) Hashemi, a 16-year-old girl, is the latest victim of the brutal crackdown. Mahak died after she was beaten over the head with a baton on Nov. 24 in Shiraz, the capital of the south-central province of Fars.

Iranian authorities released Mahak's body to her family only after they paid a large sum. The family is under pressure not to speak about her death to anyone, especially not the media.



Mahak (**Maedeh**) Hashemi. KL

According to a person who reportedly saw Mahak's body, she suffered a blow to one side of her head, and half of her face was covered with bruises.

Mahak was eventually buried in her birthplace of Bandar Kangan, in the southern province of Bushehr. The family was also forced to hold the third and seventh day of mourning, which, according to Islamic tradition, are held separately, on Sunday, Nov. 27.

Reza Kazemi, a 16-year-old boy, reportedly shot by security forces during a protest on Nov. 21 in Kamyaran, in the western province of Kurdistan, died six days later from his injuries in a hospital.



Reza Kazemi. KL./

Pictures of Reza's body covered with blood, taken minutes after he was shot, were published online.

Some teenagers arrested by authorities have reportedly committed suicide after their release.

According to the Coordination Council of Iranian Cultural Associations, Arshiya Imam-Gholizadeh Alamdari, a 16-year-old boy arrested for allegedly knocking a turban off a cleric's head, killed himself two days after his release.

Arshiya was arrested in Jolfa, in the northwestern province of East Azerbaijan, and spent 10 days in prison before being released on bail.



Arshiya Imam-Gholizadeh Alamdari. KL./

Authorities warned Arshiya's family not to discuss his death with the media.

The Coordination Council of Iranian Cultural Associations said only close family members could attend his funeral with a heavy presence of security forces.

The Coordination Council of Iranian Cultural Associations has denounced the crackdown on protesters and the killing of children. It has called on the state to cease killing children immediately.

While the international community has expressed support for the Iranian people and their struggle to claim their inalienable civil, legal, and human rights, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has been slow in condemning the killing of children in Iran.

UNICEF has come under criticism for not taking a more forceful stance towards the Islamic Republic for its alleged crimes against Children.

After remaining silent for months, it finally released a statement on Nov. 22, which said: "UNICEF condemns all violence against children and calls for an end to all forms of violence and abuse that have reportedly claimed the lives of over 50 children and injured many more during the public unrest in Iran."

"UNICEF also remains deeply concerned about continued raids and searches conducted in some schools. Schools must always be safe places for children." UNICEF has

directly communicated our concerns to the authorities in Iran since the first cases of child casualties occurred in response to the protests.”

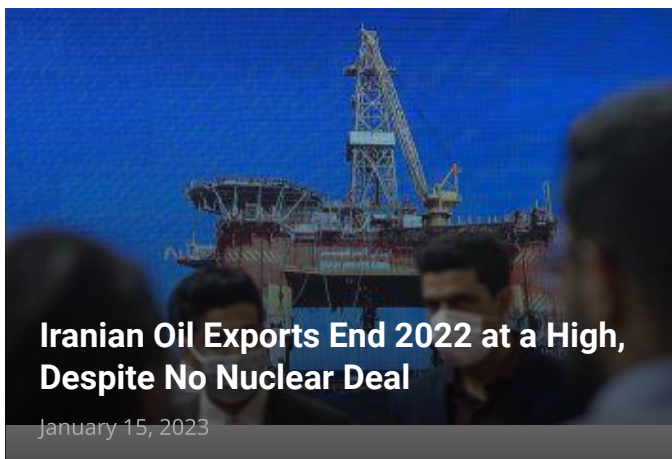
“The Islamic Republic of Iran is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and must respect, protect and fulfill the rights of children to life, privacy, freedom of thought, and peaceful assembly,” it added. “UNICEF urges the authorities to respect the rights of all children to peaceful assembly as a fundamental guarantee – no matter who they are or where they are.”

Meanwhile, many prominent Iranian and international arts and entertainment figures have supported the Iranian people’s struggle for their inalienable legal, civil, and human rights and condemned the brutal crackdown of protests and the tragic deaths of children.

Mahtab Karamati, an Iranian actress and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, wrote on her Instagram account: “I am aware of the reports on the heart-wrenching deaths and arrests of children and teenagers in recent protests, and the use of children younger than 18 years old to crush protests. I have brought this matter to the attention of UNICEF. We will pursue this issue.”

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