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Campaigns blog

Honoring Sarina Esmailzadeh, Iranian protester and YouTube creator, on her 17th Birthday



Sarina Esmailzadeh was a brave, creative & inspiring young woman

Posted 02 Jul 2023, 8:00am By [GuestBloggers](#)



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This blog is co-written by Mahsa Alimardani, ARTICLE19 and Nina Navid, Amnesty International UK. A version of this blog appeared on [Youtube](#).


Sarina was one of thousands of children who took part in the unprecedented uprising that swept Iran last year. She was part of a fearless generation. We won't

forget Sarina and the at least 43 more children killed by Iranian authorities for demanding a better future.

“Good God, let me give you my life, take me to church,” 16-year-old Sarina Esmailzadeh passionately sang Hozier’s 2013 hit song on a family road trip to the historic city of Kashan. It was her [first YouTube video](#) she excitedly titled “My First Vlog!”. That foreboding moment has now become viral, and instantly recognisable by many, as **four months later Sarina would be tragically killed** by Iranian authorities on 23 September 2022, a week into the nationwide popular uprising in the wake of Mahsa Jhina Amini’s death in custody.

Sarina would have turned 17 today, 2 July 2023. Her death serves as a reminder of the **Iranian authorities’ all-out crack down on protesters**, many of whom were children, who fearlessly took to the streets in search of a better future. One without political oppression, inequality and tyranny. The death toll of those unlawfully killed on the streets following the popular uprising that rocked Iran from September 2022 is in the hundreds, with at least [44 individually identified children](#) killed.

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Like many, Sarina took to the streets to fight for the dignity, rights and equal treatment of Iranian women and girls. **She represents the spirit of resistance among Iran's courageous Gen Z** who continue to lead these protests both on the streets and online. The artist [Hozier](#) reflected on the viral clip and Sarina's brave life and loss. "We talk about freedoms with no understanding of what it means to pay the ultimate price in fighting for it. This brave girl was only sixteen."

In honor of **Sarina's 17th birthday** — despite her tragic absence — the footprint she left behind in her vlogs endures. Sarina's death serves as a reminder of the courage and ultimate sacrifice of so many

protesters who courageously chose to risk everything in the hope of an Iran that will uphold human rights and provide a more secure future.

Sarina's legacy and her generation

Sarina's online legacy from her YouTube vlogs speaks to **the power of the internet and how it enables expression**, and in the case of Sarina, facilitates a legacy of dissent alongside the bravery of people like her, daring to dream and stand up for change.

In the midst of this historic moment, what has been poignant has been the bravery and lack of fear displayed by protesters and other dissidents, led mainly by women and youth, and continuing today, ten months into this movement. What started as an outbreak of nationwide protests has evolved into a campaign of **mass civil disobedience and political defiance**, notably as women and girls en-masse continue to reject one of the core tenets and symbols of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the mandatory hijab.

The revolutionary rallying cry "Woman, Life, Freedom", which has its origins in the Kurdish feminist movement, continues to be seen and heard across Iran – and indeed across the world.

Whilst state violence remains almost a certainty, the lack of fear against the authorities has been one of the most powerful weapons the Iranian people are wielding against the regime. Part of this bravery are the forms of dissident expression, from protests, to social media posts and videos posted online. This **defiance is now the DNA of a generation** and movement that has rocked the world.

This is one of the reasons why Sarina and her legacy are so important – a **16 year old protester who lived an authentic life of hope and bravery**, who risked everything for "Woman, Life, Freedom". While her time as a YouTube creator was brief, what she left behind is rich. In many videos we see, even before the current uprising, she was defying the mandatory hijab laws to navigate public spaces around Iran in little less than bandanas and the quintessential Gen Z bucket hat.

The world seen through Sarina

"My First Vlog!" is packed with internet memes scattered throughout the trip with witty quips between Sarina and her family about aspects of the Islamic Republic they disagreed with. From the mismanagement of some of the historic sites to disbelief at misogynistic religious verses written on the walls of the historic mosques they were visiting, **her YouTube oeuvre is a reflection of the everyday life of a thoughtful, intelligent and extremely aware sixteen year old girl**.

Well versed in internet culture, memes and sarcasm, but also excited by life, she documented simple pleasures like exploring [how to do makeup](#), or [making pizza for her family](#). In another video, she starts off by declaring "freedom is loading" as she goes into school for her final exams before a short summer break. After her exam she rejoices in her new "freedom" from school and documents a week of enjoying spending time with friends.

In one of her [most serious vlogs](#), she **reflects on her generation and their future and needs**:

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She tells her audience she has spent time in conversations with her peers to understand what the main concerns occupying their lives are. She observes that education is the only hope for them to seek independence and prosperity, but that path is littered with hurdles that are unique to the conditions of the economic, cultural and political situation of Iran. She mentions that the **happiness and security needed to be successful is dependent on freedom**, which she concedes is “where the discussion gets very dark”.

She outlines the lack of freedom and security women have within the Islamic Republic starting with the mandatory hijab law. “**What have I lacked to have been born in Iran?**” she asks, before exploring the pain of seeing the lives of her peers in L.A. or New York, enjoying life and freedom while her community is preoccupied with obtaining basic necessities like food, clothes and shelter. She goes on to lament that “it’s only natural that as a human you would look towards the better option...”.

During her pizza making video, a relative comes into the vlog to tease Sarina that she is an influencer in the making. Indeed, in the wake of her tragic loss, **Sarina is an influencer who is a symbol of her generation and their resilience and revolution.**

“If I don’t see you...bye!” signed off Sarina Esmailzadeh in her [last YouTube vlog](#) on 12 July, 2022. **Sarina’s life, voice, ambitions and bravery are the fabric of the tectonic shifts happening in Iran.**

On her 17th birthday, we can safely say, we will always see you, Sarina. Happy birthday.

Learn more about children's resistance in Iran:

- [Iran: Authorities continue to try to ‘crush the spirit of resistance’ killing at least 23 children](#)
- [Iran: families of children killed by security forces facing 'relentless intimidation'](#)

- [Iran: child detainees subjected to flogging, electric shocks and sexual violence in protest crackdown](#)

What is happening in Iran?

According to state authorities the total number of people detained in connection with the protests was above 22,000, with state media reporting that children made up a significant portion of this number. Many fell victim to unfair trials, as well as torture and other ill-treatment including sexual violence, to break the spirit of detainees, obtain forced “confessions” and push through sham trials.

In what can only reveal a deliberate strategy to crush the spirit of Iran’s youth protesters; children as young as 12 have been subject to the widespread commission of torture including rape, flogging and electric shocks in detention. Horrifyingly, seven protesters have been arbitrarily executed to date, with at least seven more individuals under sentence of death in relation to the protests.

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Sarina Esmailzadeh

May 16, 2023 in The Fallen for Freedom

Sarina Esmailzadeh (July 2, 2006 – September 21, 2022) was a 16-year-old teenager and a clever student of Farzanegan School in Mehrshahr, Karaj. On the 21st of September, she was killed by a [severe beating](#) of the baton on the head by the IRGC security forces during the 2022 nationwide protests in Karaj, Iran.

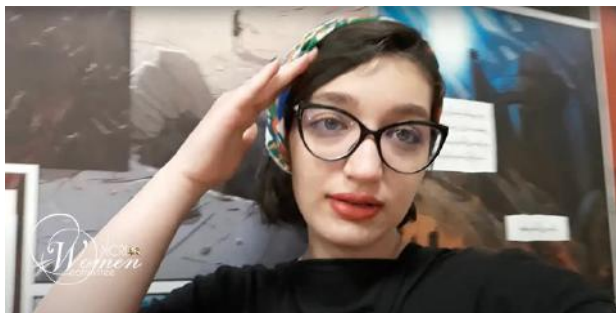
Sarina Esmailzadeh lived with her mother and older brother. Her father, Aref Esmailzadeh, passed away in 2013 when she was 7. Her mother has been seriously ill due to a brain tumor.

According to the posts published on Sarina's Telegram and YouTube channels, she was a freedom-seeking teenager who was against the [mandatory hijab](#) and [sympathized with the social problems](#) of the Iranian people.

In one of her videos posted on YouTube, she said: "We're not like the previous generation 20 years ago who didn't know what life was like outside Iran. We are aware of what is happening in the world today, and we ask ourselves what we have less than other teenagers in the world, making our concerns in life so different."

In her last video on Telegram (@sarinaez), she said: "My homeland feels like being in exile."

Sarina Esmailzadeh was killed at noon on September 21 after the [brutal killing of Mahsa Amini](#) by the IRGC's security forces and the start of the 2022 Iran protests.



After the end of her language class, she joined the public gathering near her school with some of her friends to support the protests. In this gathering, the security officers severely injured Sarina Esmailzadeh with [multiple baton blows on her head](#), causing her to bleed profusely from the head.

Her friends took her to one of the houses near the gathering place for treatment since

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On the same day, at 10.30 p.m., Sarina's friends informed her family of her death being... because until then, her family didn't know about her

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People at the gathering told Sarina's family that her body had been taken to the hospital by ambulance. Until the morning of September 23, the hospital's officials and its morgue did not give any information about the whereabouts of Sarina's body to her family.



Sarina Esmailzadeh's funeral

On September 23, 2022, at around 12:00 noon, the security forces called Sarina's family asking them to quickly go to the cemetery to receive and wash Sarina's body.

After the presence of the family, the officers did not allow them to contact their friends and relatives, and they were forced to hold the funeral alone.

For her family to identify Sarina, the security forces showed her face, which disclosed numerous injuries, and the right part of Sarina's forehead was completely smashed.

After Sarina's burial, Hossein Fazeli Harikandi, the head of Alborz Judiciary, claimed that Sarina Esmailzadeh jumped from the roof of her grandmother's house in Azimieh, Karaj on the morning of September 23 and committed suicide.

According to family acquaintances, many security forces, including female agents in private clothes, were present at her funeral in Sarina's grandmother's house in Azimieh, Karaj. Her mother told every attendant that Sarina fell from a building roof, even without them asking.



The same sources emphasized that the delivery of Sarina's body and burial were conditional only on such an announcement. Moreover, Sarina's family was pressured to repeat the same story on camera. They threatened her mother that she would never see Sarina's brother if she did not comply with their wishes. Sarina was buried in a two-story grave beside her father in Behesht Sakineh Karaj Cemetery.

On the fortieth day after her death, Sarina's classmates held a memorial ceremony, and they removed Khamenei's picture from their class's wall and installed Sarina's picture instead.

One of Sarina's classmates wrote: "Spring is coming. We can hear it! Runtay Seyyed Ali (referring to Khamenei), even if you kill us, even if you cut our heads off, even if you hit us, what are you going to do with the inevitable sprouts?"

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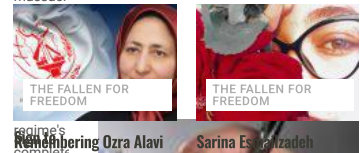
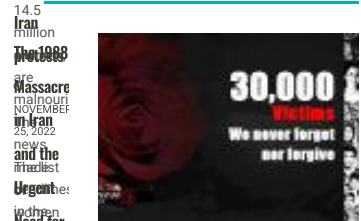
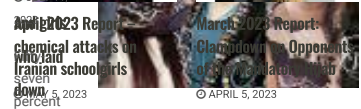
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IRAN - SULL'UCCISIONE DELLA SEDICENNE SARINA ESMAILZADEH AZIONI URGENTI



IRAN - Sarina Esmailzadeh

08 Ottobre 2022 : Sull'uccisione della sedicenne Sarina Esmailzadeh.

Sarina Esmailzadeh, una ragazza di 16 anni di Mehrshahr, a Karaj, è stata uccisa con molteplici colpi di manganello da parte delle forze di sicurezza durante le proteste del 22 settembre. Le autorità hanno mandato in onda le cosiddette confessioni di presunti familiari che dichiarano che la ragazza si sarebbe suicidata.

Dopo aver esaminato le prove e parlato con testimoni oculari e fonti affidabili, Iran Human Rights conferma l'omicidio di stato di Sarina e condanna fermamente le pressioni esercitate dalle agenzie di sicurezza sulla sua famiglia per costringerle a ripetere la falsa narrazione del suicidio. IHR richiede il perseguimento legale internazionale e che venga sanzionata la TV di stato iraniana, IRIB.

Il direttore di IHR, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, ha dichiarato: "Le autorità stanno usando istituzioni come l'IRIB come strumenti di propaganda per assolvere Ali Khamenei e le forze sotto il suo comando da omicidi come quello di Sarina Esmailzadeh; esattamente come hanno usato questo metodo per altri omicidi di stato come Mahsa Amini e Nika Shakarami". Ha aggiunto: "L'IRIB e tutte le istituzioni che contribuiscono a coprire questi crimini trasmettendo e pubblicando confessioni forzate e falsi resoconti, sono complici dei crimini e dovrebbero essere ritenute responsabili. I trasgressori dei diritti umani, compreso l'IRIB, i suoi direttori e giornalisti-interrogatori (che conducono interrogatori, non interviste) dovrebbero essere perseguiti e sanzionati dalla comunità internazionale".

Secondo le informazioni ottenute da Iran Human Rights, "Al termine della lezione di inglese, a mezzogiorno del 22 settembre, Sarina Esmailzadeh e molti dei suoi amici si sono uniti alle proteste popolari vicino alla sua scuola di lingue. Durante la protesta, le forze di sicurezza hanno ripetutamente picchiato Sarina sulla testa con un manganello fino a farla sanguinare abbondantemente".

Poiché era impossibile trasferire Sarina in ospedale, ha detto una fonte, i suoi amici l'hanno portata in una casa vicina per assisterla, ma Sarina era già morta.

Una fonte ha aggiunto: "La famiglia di Sarina non ha saputo cosa le fosse successo fino a quando i suoi amici che erano con lei alla protesta non li hanno contattati alle 22:30, informandoli che Sarina era stata uccisa dalle forze di sicurezza".

La stessa fonte ha aggiunto: "quando la sua famiglia si è recata sul luogo della protesta, le persone hanno detto loro che il corpo di Sarina era stato portato in ospedale da un'ambulanza. Ma la ricerca della sua famiglia negli ospedali e negli obitori si è rivelata infruttuosa e nessuna delle autorità competenti ha fornito loro una risposta chiara su dove fosse il corpo di Sarina".

Sarina Esmailzadeh era nata il 2 luglio 2006 e viveva con la madre e il fratello maggiore. Aveva perso il padre durante l'infanzia".

Gli agenti di sicurezza hanno contattato la famiglia di Sarina a mezzogiorno del 23 settembre e hanno chiesto di recarsi immediatamente al cimitero per ritirare il suo corpo preparato (lavato secondo la



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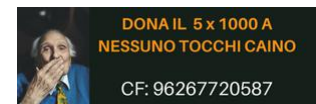
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Mohammad Javad Vafa'i Thani, un prigioniero politico simpatizzante dell'Organizzazione dei Mojahedin del Popolo dell'Iran (PMOI/MEK), il 19 luglio 2023 è stato condannato a morte nella Repubblica Islamica.

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tradizione islamica). Quando la famiglia ha raggiunto il cimitero, il corpo di Sarina è stato circondato dalle forze di sicurezza e non è stato nemmeno permesso loro di informare gli altri parenti stretti. La famiglia di Sarina è stata costretta a seppellirla sotto rigide misure di sicurezza.

Secondo fonti di IHR, le forze di sicurezza hanno mostrato alla famiglia Sarina solo il viso per l'identificazione e secondo la famiglia, sul suo viso erano chiaramente visibili ferite multiple e il lato destro della sua fronte era completamente schiacciato a causa della gravità dei colpi.

Da quel giorno la famiglia di Sarina è stata sottoposta a pressioni da parte di agenti della sicurezza e della magistratura per impedire loro di rivelare i dettagli e le circostanze della sua morte e perché avallassero la storia del suicidio.

"Da mezzogiorno del 23 settembre, tutta la sua famiglia, compresi la madre, il fratello, lo zio e la zia materna, è stata sottoposta a forti pressioni e minacce per forzare interviste televisive", ha detto una fonte vicina a Iran Human Rights.

Secondo la fonte, i familiari di Sarina sono stati più volte convocati in questura e in procura, dove sono stati interrogati.

La fonte ha aggiunto: "Rappresentanti della tv di stato IRIB erano presenti anche presso l'ufficio del pubblico ministero e la stazione di polizia. Gli agenti di sicurezza hanno detto alla famiglia di ripetere una serie di parole dettate davanti alla telecamera, ma la famiglia ha rifiutato. All'ufficio del pubblico ministero, alla madre di Sarina è stato detto di annunciare che la causa della morte della figlia era la caduta da un edificio, cosa che lei ha rifiutato ogni volta".

La famiglia di Sarina è stata sottoposta a pressioni, minacce e interrogatori così intensi da non poter nemmeno organizzare un funerale per lei. In una visita alla loro casa, gli agenti di sicurezza hanno strappato tutti i manifesti e gli striscioni degli annunci di morte.

Contemporaneamente, l'agenzia di stampa governativa Mehr, affiliata all'Organizzazione islamica per lo sviluppo, ha mandato in onda un breve video con una donna che affermavano essere la madre di Sarina Esmailzadeh, negando qualsiasi coinvolgimento dello stato nella morte di sua figlia. Nel video, la conduttrice ha anche cercato di insinuare che Sarina avesse una storia di tentati suicidi, e non stesse bene mentalmente.

Il 7 ottobre, il procuratore della provincia di Alborz, Hossein Fazeli Harikandi, ha annunciato che la sedicenne Sarina Esmailzadeh era morta dopo essere caduta dal tetto della casa della nonna nel quartiere Azimieh di Karaj. Ha dichiarato che la causa della morte è stata il suicidio, che la ragazza aveva già tentato in passato. Ha anche definito la notizia che Sarina era stata uccisa dalle forze di sicurezza come "affermazioni fatte da media ostili" e ha affermato che il luogo della sua morte era stato una delle "aree libere da disturbi a Karaj".

La Repubblica islamica ha utilizzato lo stesso scenario per Nika Shakarami, una manifestante di 17 anni uccisa dalle forze di sicurezza che secondo loro era morta dopo essere caduta da un edificio.

Nika Shakarami è scomparsa dopo aver preso parte a una protesta sul Keshavarz Boulevard a Teheran il 20 settembre. Nella sua ultima telefonata, ha detto di essere stata inseguita dalle forze di sicurezza. Il suo corpo ferito è stato identificato dalla sua famiglia dieci giorni dopo. Le forze di sicurezza hanno segretamente seppellito Nika in un luogo remoto dopo aver fatto sparire il suo corpo dall'obitorio.

Dichiarando che la causa della morte di Nika è stata la caduta da un edificio all'incrocio di Amir Akram, Mohammad Shahriari, capo della Procura di Teheran ha dichiarato: "L'edificio in cui è stato scoperto lo zaino di questa signora era nelle fasi finali di costruzione, e lì sono due fabbriche di abbigliamento già in produzione con operai e sicurezza. Nella sua autopsia non sono state scoperte ferite da proiettili di piombo o di gomma, e le indagini mostrano che questo incidente non ha nulla a che fare con le rivolte di strada".

Il 5 ottobre, l'IRIB ha mandato in onda le confessioni forzate della zia di Nika Shakarami, Atash Shakarami e dello zio: Prima che suo zio parli, si intravede un'ombra alla sua sinistra, e si sentono sussurrare le parole "dillo, schifoso!"

La zia e lo zio di Nika sono stati arrestati pochi giorni dopo l'uccisione della ragazza, e la loro "confessione" è stata ottenuta sotto costrizione.

In risposta alle confessioni forzate trasmesse in televisione, Iran Human Rights ha respinto le contraddittorie affermazioni della Repubblica islamica sulla sua morte basate su video sgranati modificati e confessioni televisive forzate basate su coercizione e maltrattamenti.

Il direttore di IHR, Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, ha dichiarato: "Le prove indicano il ruolo del governo nell'omicidio di Nika Shakarami; a meno che non sia dimostrato il contrario da una missione conoscitiva indipendente sotto la supervisione delle Nazioni Unite. Fino a quando non sarà formato un tale comitato, la responsabilità dell'omicidio di Nika, come per le altre vittime delle proteste in corso, deve essere attribuita ad Ali Khamenei e alle forze sotto il suo comando".

Fonti vicine alla famiglia di Sarina hanno riferito a IHR che un pubblico ministero è stato incaricato delle indagini, mentre ogni giorno la madre, il fratello e lo zio vengono convocati dalla polizia, e al loro avvocato

APPROVATA-DALL-ASSEMBLEA-GENERALE-DELL-ONU-NEL-2022-60370475)

► **RISOLUZIONE ONU 2022 (/DOCUMENTO/RISOLUZIONE-ONU-2022-60369490)**

► **RELAZIONE REVISORE CONTI BILANCIO 2021 (/DOCUMENTO/RELAZIONE-REVISORE-CONTI-BILANCIO-2021-60358036)**

► **NOTA INTEGRATIVA BILANCIO 2021 (/DOCUMENTO/NOTA-INTEGRATIVA-BILANCIO-2021-60358034)**

► **BILANCIO 2021 (/DOCUMENTO/BILANCIO-2021-60358032)**

VEDI TUTTI I DOCUMENTI (/DOCUMENTI/) ►

è stato finora negato dalle autorità giudiziarie l'accesso al fascicolo del caso.

Anche il certificato di morte è stato sequestrato alla famiglia il giorno della sua sepoltura, e da allora non è stato più restituito.

"In Procura hanno detto alla famiglia di Sarina di non rilasciare interviste ai media, in particolare ai media stranieri, in modo che il suo caso non diventi famoso come altri uccisi nelle proteste in corso. Anche i telefoni della sua famiglia sono intercettati dalle autorità e sua madre ha detto ai parenti che può sentire le voci sulle chiamate dal suo cellulare".

<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/5514/> (<https://iranhr.net/en/articles/5514/>)

(Fonte: IHR)

ALTRE NEWS



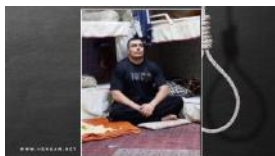
ITALIA - MANIFESTAZIONE DEL MOVIMENTO SPIRITUALE CINESE FALUN GONG

(/notizia/italia-manifestazione-del-movimento-spirituale-cinese-falun-gong-60379119)21 Luglio 2023 (/notizia/italia-manifestazione-del-movimento-spirituale-cinese-falun-gong-60379119)

Perseguitati dalla dittatura cinese

(/notizia/italia-manifestazione-del-movimento-spirituale-cinese-falun-gong-60379119)

Leggi tutto (/notizia/italia-manifestazione-del-movimento-spirituale-cinese-falun-gong-60379119)



IRAN - AYDIN EMAMI GIUSTIZIATO A ZANJAN IL 17 LUGLIO

(/notizia/iran-aydin-emami-giustiziato-a-zanjan-il-17-luglio-60379075)21 Luglio 2023 (/notizia/iran-aydin-emami-giustiziato-a-zanjan-il-17-luglio-60379075)Leggi tutto (/notizia/iran-aydin-emami-giustiziato-a-zanjan-il-17-luglio-60379075)



USA - ALABAMA. JAMES BARBER, 64 ANNI, BIANCO, È STATO GIUSTIZIATO

(/notizia/usa-alabama-james-barber-64-anni-bianco-è-stato-giustiziato-60379089)21 Luglio 2023 (/notizia/usa-alabama-james-barber-64-anni-bianco-è-stato-giustiziato-60379089)Leggi tutto (/notizia/usa-alabama-james-barber-64-anni-bianco-è-stato-giustiziato-60379089)



USA - OHIO. L'OHIO NON COMPIE ESECUZIONI DA 5 ANNI

(/notizia/usa-ohio-l-ohio-non-compie-esecuzioni-da-5-anni-60379087)21 Luglio 2023 (/notizia/usa-ohio-l-ohio-non-compie-esecuzioni-da-5-anni-60379087)Leggi tutto (/notizia/usa-ohio-l-ohio-non-compie-esecuzioni-da-5-anni-60379087)



ITALIA - PALERMO. INAUGURATA A PALERMO LA MOSTRA DI EMILIANO ALFONSI

(/notizia/italia-palermo-inaugurata-a-palermo-la-mostra-di-emiliano-alfonsi-60379064)21 Luglio 2023 (/notizia/italia-palermo-inaugurata-a-palermo-la-mostra-di-emiliano-alfonsi-60379064)

Un amico di Caino

(/notizia/italia-palermo-inaugurata-a-palermo-la-mostra-di-emiliano-alfonsi-60379064)Leggi tutto

(/notizia/italia-palermo-inaugurata-a-palermo-la-mostra-di-emiliano-alfonsi-60379064)



USA - OKLAHOMA. JEMAINNE CANNON, ORA 51ANNI, NERO, È STATO GIUSTIZIATO

(/notizia/usa-oklahoma-jemaine-cannon-ora-51anni-nero-è-stato-giustiziato-60379044)20 Luglio 2023 (/notizia/usa-oklahoma-jemaine-cannon-ora-51anni-nero-è-stato-giustiziato-60379044)Leggi tutto (/notizia/usa-oklahoma-jemaine-cannon-ora-51anni-nero-è-stato-giustiziato-60379044)

Privacy & Cookies (/privacy) - Contatti (/chisiamo/contatti) - Crediti (/crediti)

Nessuno tocchi Caino è una lega internazionale di cittadini e di parlamentari per l'abolizione della pena di morte nel mondo. È un'associazione senza fine di lucro fondata a Bruxelles nel 1993, costituente il Partito Radicale Nonviolento, Transnazionale e Transpartito e riconosciuta nel 2005 dal Ministero degli Esteri italiano come ONG abilitata alla cooperazione allo sviluppo.

Sarina Esmailzadeh

May 16, 2023

in [The Fallen for Freedom](#)

Sarina Esmailzadeh (July 2, 2006 – September 21, 2022) was a 16-year-old teenager and a clever student of Farzanegan School in Mehrshahr, Karaj. On the 21st of September, she was killed by a [severe beating](#) of the baton on the head by the IRGC security forces during the 2022 nationwide protests in Karaj, Iran.

Sarina Esmailzadeh lived with her mother and older brother. Her father, Aref Esmailzadeh, passed away in 2013 when she was 7. Her mother has been seriously ill due to a brain tumor.

According to the posts published on Sarina's Telegram and YouTube channels, she was a freedom-seeking teenager who was against the [mandatory hijab](#) and [sympathized with the social problems](#) of the Iranian people.

In one of her videos posted on YouTube, she said: "We're not like the previous generation 20 years ago who didn't know what life was like outside Iran. We are aware of what is happening in the world today, and we ask ourselves what we have less than other teenagers in the world, making our concerns in life so different."

In her last video on Telegram (@sarinaez), she said: "My homeland feels like being in exile."

Sarina Esmailzadeh was killed at noon on September 21 after the [brutal killing of Mahsa Amini](#) by the IRGC's security forces and the start of the 2022 Iran protests.



After the end of her language class, she joined the public gathering near her school with some of her friends to support the protests. In this gathering, the security officers severely injured Sarina Esmailzadeh with **multiple baton blows on her head**, causing her to bleed profusely from the head. Her friends took her to one of the houses near the gathering place for treatment since the conditions for transferring her to the hospital were not ready, but Sarina didn't make it and died there.

On the same day, at 10.30 p.m., Sarina's friends informed her family of her death being murdered by the security forces because until then, her family didn't know about her condition.

People at the gathering told Sarina's family that her body had been taken to the hospital by ambulance. Until the morning of September 23, the hospital's officials and its morgue did not give any information about the whereabouts of Sarina's body to her family.



Sarina Esmailzadeh's funeral

On September 23, 2022, at around 12:00 noon, the security forces called Sarina's family asking them to quickly go to the cemetery to receive and wash Sarina's body.

After the presence of the family, the officers did not allow them to contact their friends and relatives, and they were forced to hold the funeral alone.

For her family to identify Sarina, the security forces showed her face, which disclosed numerous injuries, and the right part of Sarina's forehead was completely smashed.

After Sarina's burial, Hossein Fazeli Harikandi, the head of Alborz Judiciary, claimed that Sarina Esmailzadeh [jumped from the roof](#) of her grandmother's house in Azimieh, Karaj on the morning of September 23 and committed suicide.

According to family acquaintances, many security forces, including female agents in private clothes, were present at her funeral in Sarina's grandmother's house in Azimieh, Karaj. Her mother told every attendant that Sarina fell from a building roof, even without them asking.



The same sources emphasized that the delivery of Sarina's body and burial were conditional only on such an announcement. Moreover, Sarina's family was pressured to repeat the same story on camera. They threatened her mother that she would never see Sarina's brother if she did not comply with their wishes. Sarina was buried in a two-story grave beside her father in Behesht Sakineh Karaj Cemetery.

On the fortieth day after her death, Sarina's classmates held a memorial ceremony, and they removed Khamenei's picture from their class's wall and installed Sarina's picture instead.

One of Sarina's classmates wrote: "Spring is coming. We can hear it! Runty Seyyed Ali (referring to Khamenei), even if you kill us, even if you cut our heads off, even if you hit us, what are you going to do with the inevitable sprouts?"

Tags: [Protests](#)[The girl child](#)[Violence against women](#)



Death of Sarina Esmailzadeh

On 23 September 2022, Iranian teenager **Sarina Esmailzadeh** (Persian: سارینا اسماعیلزاده) died of alleged severe beating on the head by security forces during the **Mahsa Amini protests** in **Karaj**, **Alborz province**, **Iran**, according to human rights organizations.^{[1][2]} She was 16 years old.

The local Justice Department denied any responsibility for her death, claiming that she died by suicide after jumping from the rooftop of a building, and similar claims were made by the authorities about 16-year-old **Nika Shakarami** who had also attended the protests and died under suspicious circumstances.^{[3][3]}

After their deaths, pictures of Shakarami and Esmailzadeh appeared on banners during protests and on posters in Iranian cities.^[1] Videos created by Esmailzadeh were shared online after her death,^[4] and hackers interrupted a government-run news broadcast in Iran with pictures of Esmailzadeh and other women killed during the protests.^{[5][6]}

Background

Sarina Esmailzadeh was born on 2 July 2006.^[7] Her father died when she was a child and she was raised by her mother and had an older brother.^{[1][7]} She attended a high school in Karaj for gifted students,^[1] and could speak English and French in addition to her native Persian.^[3]

Esmailzadeh was also a **YouTube** who created videos with her talking about topics such as music, food, and school,^[1] as well as restrictions on women in Iran.^{[5][4][3]} In one of her videos, after finishing school exams, she stated "Nothing feels better than freedom".^[8] In a YouTube video posted on May 22, she talked about restrictions on women in Iran and a need for freedom.^[5] In another video, she said, "We're not like the previous generation 20 years ago who didn't know what life was like outside Iran."^[9] In her last video on **Telegram**, she sang along to "Take Me to Church" by **Hozier**, and said, "My homeland feels like being in exile".^[3]

On September 22, Esmailzadeh is reported to have attended a protest with friends and then did not return home.^{[5][9]} After her death, her videos were shared online, and the video of her singing along to the Hozier song was widely shared.^{[5][4]}

Circumstances of death

According to **Amnesty International** and **Iran Human Rights**, Esmailzadeh was struck on the head repeatedly with a baton and bled to death.^{[1][9][7]} in the **Gohardasht** neighborhood of **Karaj**, near her language school where protests were taking place.^[10] According to an IHR source, she died before she could be taken to anywhere for treatment.^[7] The family was notified about her death later that evening by her friends who were with her at the protests. Her family was under pressure from security and intelligence agents to stay silent on the matter, especially in regards to communication with foreign media, and to support the authorities' version of the events. Similar pressures were exerted on the families of other victims of the protests.^{[11][2]}

Cover-up

According to *Iran International*, the Iranian authorities tried to cover up the circumstances of her death.^[3] On October 6, after reports spread on social media about her death, an Iranian official said Esmailzadeh had died by suicide after jumping from the roof of a building,^[4] and that family members of Esmailzadeh went to a prosecutor's office about the social media reports stating Esmailzadeh was killed during a protest.^[3] On October 7, the government-affiliated **Tasnim News Agency** aired a video that showed her mother stating Esmailzadeh had once attempted suicide with pills.^[5] The authenticity of the video of her mother has been disputed.^[3]

According to family acquaintances, more than 50 security agents were present at her funeral and prevented video recording.^[3] Her mother was quoted to tell every attendant that Esmailzadeh fell from a building roof, even without them asking. Her death certificate was taken by the authorities but never returned to the family, whose phones are being monitored. The family's lawyer was not allowed access to the case file of the investigation into Esmailzadeh's death, according to IHR.^[7]

Esmailzadeh's phone was never returned to her family, her **Telegram** channels' posts were edited after her death to show a depressed image of her with suicide tendencies.^[12] Some of her pinned messages were deleted as well. Her **Instagram** page was initially deleted after her death, but later 13 pages were created in her name, one with her original ID without her old posts. Only her **YouTube** channel shows an image of a lively happy teenager who loved dancing, music and pizza with a concern for freedom.^[12]

Esmailzadeh's mother repeatedly attempted to retrieve her daughter's body. She was mocked by security forces, who said that her daughter was a terrorist. After finally seeing Esmailzadeh's body, some news sources claim that she hanged herself at her home.^[13]

See also

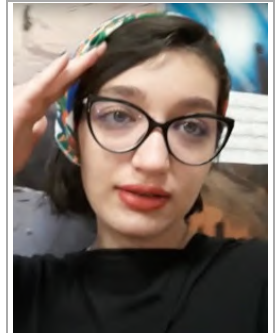
- Death of **Nika Shakarami**
- Death of **Hadis Najafi**
- Death of **Mahsa Amini**

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Death of Sarina Esmailzadeh



Native name	<div>سارینا اسماعیلزاده</div>
Date	23 September 2022
Location	Mehrshahr, Alborz province, Iran
Deaths	Sarina Esmailzadeh
Burial	<div>Behesht-e Sakineh</div>