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Iranian journalists Niloofar Hamedei (L) and Elaheh Mohammadi (R) were arrested by Iran in September 2022 over their coverage of Mahsa Amini's death. (Twitter)

## Iran accuses journalists detained over Mahsa Amini reporting of collaborating with US

Iran

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Iran's judiciary on Tuesday accused two female journalists detained since September after reporting on the [case of Mahsa Amini](#) of "cooperating" with the US government.

Iranian-Kurdish Amini, 22, died on September 16, three days after being [arrested by the morality police](#) in Tehran for allegedly breaching the country's strict dress rules for women. Her death triggered months of protests that quickly escalated into calls for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic.

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Judiciary spokesman Massoud Setayeshi said that the charges against Hamed and Mohammadi were not related to their reporting on Amini or their profession as journalists, according to the semi-official ISNA news agency.

“These individuals cooperated with the hostile government of America on occasions, and soon a full report on this issue will be available to the Iranian people,” Setayeshi said, without elaborating any further.

Dozens of journalists were arrested during the crackdown on the protests, but Hamed and Mohammadi have remained in custody since their arrests.

Hamed, a journalist working for Shargh newspaper, captured an image of Amini’s parents embracing each other at a Tehran hospital while their daughter was in a coma. Hamed shared the photo on Twitter, which served as the first indication that Amini’s condition was critical. Amini had been detained by Iran’s morality police three days prior to her hospitalization.

Mohammadi, a journalist with Hammihan newspaper, covered Amini’s funeral in Saqqez, her Kurdish hometown, where the protests initially erupted.

The two journalists have been held at Tehran’s notorious Evin prison since September and are facing the charge of “colluding with hostile powers,” which can lead to the death penalty in Iran.

In May, [separate initial court hearings were held](#) for Hamed and Mohammadi. At the time, Hamed’s husband said that she [denied all the charges against her](#).

Reporters Without Borders (RSF), a press freedom group based in Paris, labeled both trials as a “sham” and said that Hamed and Mohammadi were being targeted because they were among the first to bring public attention to Amini’s death.

In October, a joint statement issued by Iran’s intelligence ministry and the intelligence unit of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) alleged that Mohammadi and Hamed were CIA agents.

Iranian authorities consider the demonstrations that followed Amini’s death as “riots” instigated by foreign powers. The protests were met with a violent crackdown by the authorities, resulting in the deaths of hundreds and the arrest of thousands, according to human rights groups.

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