



People chanting anti-regime slogans on streets during a protest rally in Tehran

Iran's Regime Intensifies Crackdown Ahead Of Protests Anniversary

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With the anniversary of Women, Life, Liberty protests on horizon, the Islamic Republic regime has intensified its intimidation campaign to discourage potential unrest.

Families of protesters who died during the uprising as well as civil and human rights activists and students are the main target of the regime's repression apparatus, that wants to silence the most prominent popular voices.

Dozens of the victims' families and protesters who were detained and released during the nationwide rallies in the past year have been arrested or summoned, with reports coming from several provinces, including Tehran, Gilan, Kordestan, West Azarbaijan, and Esfahan (Isfahan).

On Thursday, security forces detained Kourosh Vaziri, whose 35-year-old wife Shirin Alizadeh was killed by regime agents while she was filming protests alongside her husband and child in Mazandaran province last September. Security agents ordered the family not to mark her birthday this week, which they had to accept, but the agents went for the husband and arrested him anyway.

A police motorcycle burns during a protest over the death of Mahsa Amini in Tehran on September 19, 2022.

Mahsa Basiratavana, the sister of Mehran Basiratavana – shot dead by security forces in November – was also arrested on Thursday. Mahsa Basiratavana is among a dozen more **residents in Gilan province who have been arrested this week**, including five women's rights advocates, a photographer, a poet, a graphic designer, and three pharmacists.

On Wednesday, family members of Komar Daroftade – a 16-year-old boy who was shot from close range in Piranshahr, West Azarbaijan province – were detained and interrogated.

In the capital Tehran, the security forces detained Negar Sardari at her residence and transferred her to an undisclosed location on Wednesday. She is the spouse of Mehdi Etemad-Saeed, a theater actor who was detained several weeks ago.

Elaheh Askari, a photographer and blogger, has also been detained by the Ministry of Intelligence in Tehran. Hamidreza Askari, her brother, wrote on his Instagram page: "On Thursday, after my sister visited the passport office to retrieve her passport, she was detained and transferred to Evin Prison."

Photographer and blogger Elaheh Askari

Hengaw Human Rights Organization, a Kurdish rights group, said Thursday that at least 15 people have been arrested in Kurdish majority cities in the past few days. "Government forces, without presenting any judicial warrant, raided the homes of these citizens in Mahabad and Oshnavieh, instilling fear and intimidation, and subsequently arrested them and transferred them to undisclosed locations."

These are only several instances in an escalating string of government clampdowns on activists, **students, educators**, and writers in the lead-up to the September 16 anniversary of Mahsa Amini's death at the hands of police.

Over the past several weeks, the intelligence ministry and the Revolutionary Guard (IRGC) intelligence organization (SAS) have been **reaching out to individuals who were arrested during the anti-regime protests**. They are warning them not to participate in any demonstrations on the anniversary of the protest movement, according to sources in Iran who spoke to Iran International.

Those summoned by the intelligence agencies have been asked to sign pledges to stay at home for a week, and some have even been required to take time off from work, ensuring their absence from any protests. They have been threatened with arrest if they are found engaged in any pro-protest movement activities in public or on social media.

Political analyst Ali-Hossein Ghazizadeh said Friday on X that the Intelligence Ministry's campaign of arrests and intimidation has been "unprecedented" even for the Islamic Republic. "The problem with these incompetent intelligence agencies is that they fail to understand the nature of society's

behavior,” he said, adding, “They fail to grasp that when the roots of discontent have spread to the extent that you are compelled to conduct such massive arrests across the country and from various strata of society, the regime has lost the reins of control.”

He noted that when a society is determined to revolt, security measures can only delay it for so long, predicting that “The people will return to the streets, with even stronger motivations to overthrow this regime. Motivations that the Islamic Republic itself is providing for them.”

On Thursday, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei held a **meeting with a large group of Revolutionary Guard commanders** and praised them for their performance, which has resulted in the deaths of 500 civilians, with thousands more injured and tens of thousands arrested. So far, seven protesters have been executed, and several others face execution.

Earlier in the week, hardliner cleric and member of the Iranian Assembly of Experts Ahmad Khatami issued a **stern threat against any future protesters**, saying that they would be met with forceful suppression, as if the current rounds of suppression are not forceful.

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