



Artpieces made by Iranians in memory of Armita Geravand

## Iran's Latest Hijab Victim Laid To Rest Amid Renewed Unrest

Sunday, 10/29/2023

Iran International Newsroom

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Security forces have arrested an unknown number of people who attended the funeral of Armita Geravand, the latest victim of Iran's hijab enforcement.

The Iranian teenager **died Saturday after about a month in coma** for brain damage she suffered during a violent encounter with hijab enforcers deployed at Tehran's subway stations. Her body was laid to rest at Tehran's Behesht-e Zahra cemetery amid a heavy security presence.

Hengaw, a Kurdish human rights group, said Sunday that several of Armita's relatives were arrested at her funeral service while the participants chanted against the regime. Her body was reportedly not released to the family until the security apparatus made sure that her family home, the hospital where she died and her burial site were surrounded by security agents.

At the funeral, not only were security forces stationed at the burial site, but at least three 360-degree cameras were installed there to record the service and detect anyone speaking against the government. Agents, who hugely outnumbered the funeral participants, also prevented people from recording the event and confiscated cell phones of the participants who tried to film the funeral.

It remains unknown what exactly happened on October 1 when Armita was confronted by morality police. The regime released doctored footage of her at the subway to exonerate its hijab enforcers. The widely accepted narrative is that a woman agent pushed her, and Armita fell and hit her head on the ground. However, authorities seem to have failed to convince Iranians, who believe hijab enforcers were responsible for her death. Authorities claim her head injury was caused by low blood pressure and fainting.





Armita Geravand's funeral ceremony at Tehran's Behesht-e Zahra cemetery on October 29, 2023

To prevent the repeat of anti-regime protests sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini at the hands of hijab police, Iranian authorities have **imposed a full ban on reporting about Armita's death**. Following the death of Mahsa Amini in September 2022, the Iranian clerical regime is worried about a resurgence of the extended anti-establishment protests and the 'Women, Life, Freedom movement' seen last year.

The circumstances of this latest case closely resembles that of Amini. In both instances, the regime denied any wrongdoing but pressured the families to refrain from speaking to the media.

The death of Armita has reignited anti-regime sentiments with people starting chanting slogans from their rooftops and windows on Saturday night.

Narges Mohammadi, the imprisoned human rights activist who recently received the Nobel prize for peace, issued a statement from prison saying, "Armita, full of the zest of life, was sent to her death because she had no intention of concealing her beautiful hair under compulsory hijab rules."



Prominent Iranian human rights activists Narges Mohammadi (left) and Nasrin Sotoudeh

Prominent female dissident Zahra Rahnavard, under house arrest since 2011 along with her husband Mir-Hossein Mousavi as leaders of Iran's anti-regime Green Movement, warned the Islamic Republic against fighting against Iranian women and girls. She called on the regime to abolish the "wretched law of compulsory hijab," or the "stigma of suppressing girls will remain on their foreheads forever." Rahnavard stated that the rulers of Iran see their survival in the

enforcement of mandatory hijab. The Green Movement emerged after the disputed 2009 presidential election, demanding the annulment of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election.

Prominent lawyer and rights defendant Nasrin Sotoudeh said in a statement, "Once again, another regime-sanctioned murder, this time of Armita Geravand, a murder that every Iranian feels very close to." She also called on people to hold rallies at subway stations "to protect our youth." According to information obtained by Iran International, Sotoudeh was arrested Sunday at Armita's funeral.

Prominent expatriate opposition figures including Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi, Canada-based Hamed Esmaeilion, exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, and the US-based activist Masih Alinejad have also condemned the killing of Armita Geravand.

Pahlavi, who has become a leading opposition figure since the Women, Life, Freedom protests broke out, said, "Those who killed Armita are the same ones who killed Mahsa Amini, the same ones who killed Majid Reza Rahnavard, the same ones who killed 1,500 in November 2019, the same ones who killed our youth in December 2017, the same ones who killed Neda Agha Soltan, the same ones who killed Fereydoun Farrokhzad, the same ones who killed Shahriar Shafiq, the same ones who killed Farrokhro Parsa..."

"The battle between us and them is a battle between good and evil, and until we win this battle, they will kill us and there will be no justice. Onward, together, towards victory for Iran," he added.

Iranian expatriate communities also held anti-regime demonstrations in memory of Armita in several cities around the globe, such as Hamburg and Frankfurt in Germany, Vancouver in Canada, and Stockholm in Sweden.

Reactions to Armita's death are also pouring in by foreign officials. The US special envoy for Iran, Abram Paley, said, "Iran's state-sponsored violence against women and girls has been devastating for so many families in Iran and abroad."

German member of the European Parliament, Hannah Neumann, said that Armita was killed "because some Islamist regime thinks it is okay to beat children to coma for not wearing hijab. A regime that betrays its youngest has no future." She also claimed that "The regime wanted to pick a moment where global attention is elsewhere to announce her death," referring to the Hamas-Israel war, a bloody conflict fueled by the regime.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said, "Armita was only 16. A child, a student with a whole life still ahead of her. The brutality of the regime has robbed her of her future." She added, "The future of Iran is its youth. The future of Iran is its women. The regime cannot suppress their desire for freedom."