

Fears for Iran's 'Woman Life Freedom' protesters amid record executions



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The Islamic Republic was shaken by the largest - and most significant - wave of anti-government dissent in decades last year.

Concern is growing among human rights organisations over the fate of at least 20 protesters who took part in the **"Woman Life Freedom"** demonstrations in Iran.

Amnesty International says Iranian authorities embarked on a "killing spree" in November, fearing more executions are to come.

The NGO **writes** the Iranian government executed at least 115 people in November alone - double the number of executions carried out during the same period last year.

According to figures compiled by the Abdorrahman Boroumand Centre and cited by Amnesty, Iranian authorities executed at least 14 people in a single day on 15 November.

Iranian authorities have increased the use of the death penalty against individuals who were under the age of 18 at the time of the crime, Amnesty detailed.

Among those executed last month was 17-year-old Hamidreza Azari, still a minor when his death sentence was carried out.

Human rights organisations are not the only ones monitoring the deteriorating situation in Iran.

Last month, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned the country was carrying out executions “at an alarming rate,” having put to death at least 419 people in the first seven months of the year - a 30% increase from the same period in 2022.

The Norway-based Iran Human Rights (IHR) group also reported in November more than 600 people had been executed in Iran.

Many were executed for drug-related charges, while at least two individuals were executed for adultery.

More protesters’ lives at risk

This surge in the number of executions in Iran has set off alarm bells for human rights organisations.

Many now fear for the fate of those [who joined demonstrations last year](#) to protest against the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish woman who died while in the custody of the so-called morality police.

The response of the Iranian government to dissent, involving violent repression and mass detentions, shocked the world.

Following the protests that started in September 2022, the Islamic Republic has executed eight protesters.

“This spike comes against the backdrop of the Iranian authorities intensifying their use of the death penalty as a tool of political repression to torment and terrorize people in Iran and impose silence and subservience through brute force,” Amnesty International wrote in a recent report.

Of the 20 individuals charged with crimes related to the nationwide protests of 2022, there are five who have already been given the death sentence and are “at grave risk of execution,” according to Amnesty.

They have been charged with “enmity against God’ (moharebeh), ‘corruption on earth’ (efsad-e fel arz) and ‘armed rebellion against the state’ (baghi),” it added.

The NGO reported that four out of five of these individuals were tortured and ill-treated to force a confession out of them.

Some 15 others are at risk of being given the death sentence for their alleged crimes.