



Abolfazl Eghbali, the head of Woman and Family Research Institute

Architect Of Iran's Hijab Bill Sparks Outrage With Celebrity Ultimatum

Saturday, 01/13/2024

Iran Protests Iran

A key figure in drafting Iran's new hijab law has ignited controversy by suggesting that celebrities who resist compliance should contemplate leaving the country.

Abolfazl Eghbali emphasized the unique responsibilities of artists in adhering to the Islamic Republic's norms and laws, cautioning that they could face more severe penalties for violations.

"Their penalties in this bill are tougher and more severe because they are not ordinary citizens, and their behavior entails a series of social consequences," he told Dideban Iran news website on Saturday.

The bill, officially titled "Protection of Family Through Promotion of Hijab and Chastity Culture," secured parliamentary approval in September but encountered an unexpected setback. The Guardian Council, vested with ultimate legislative authority, rejected the bill, citing formal deficiencies and calling for revisions to clarify ambiguous terms.

Speculation is rife regarding the reasons for the rejection, with some attributing it to procedural issues and others suggesting the Council's cautious approach amid potential public discontent ahead of the upcoming March parliamentary elections.

The development unfolds against the backdrop of protests that followed the tragic death of Mahsa Amini in 2022. Actresses and female artists expressed solidarity by sharing images without hijab during the protests. The act of defiance led to tensions with the state broadcaster, resulting in the removal of the actresses from TV shows and movies or the discontinuation of the shows altogether.

Celebrities have been under increasing government pressure since the 2022-2023 anti-regime protests. Measures such as pay cuts, bank account freezes, and work bans have been imposed, with some personalities opting for exile after openly supporting the Women, Life, Freedom movement.

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