



IRAN PROTESTS

Feminists & WHRDs Detained



September 29, 2022

Since the start of mass protests following the death in custody of **Mahsa Amini**, who was arrested by "Morality" police for improper hijab, scores of ordinary citizens and rights defenders have been arrested.

These protests are significant because this is the first time the nation has protested to demand rights for women and accountability on the death in custody of a woman. Initially those protesting Mahsa's death expressed several demands, including accountability by the police for her death in custody, the dismantling of the "morality" police and an end to mandatory hijab laws.

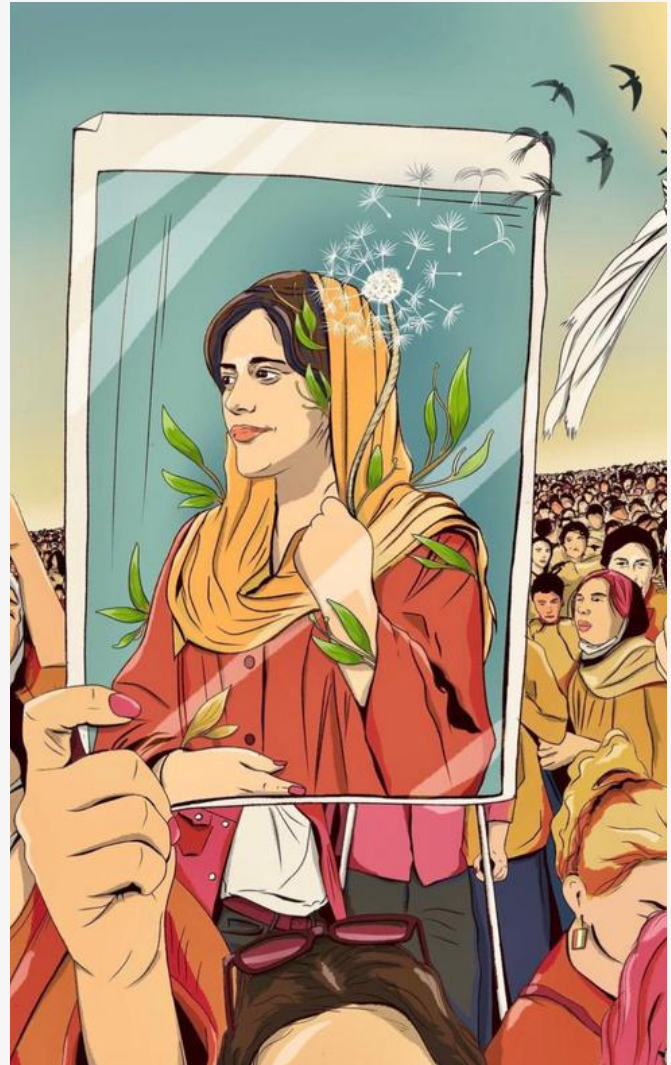


As the protests have grown, others with different demands and grievances have also joined, including those with economic demands, citizens fed up with corruption and state violence and those demanding democracy and political change. However, the large number of women present in these protests and the main slogan of protesters, **"Woman, Life, Freedom,"** the feminist nature of the protests is clear.

In the midst of protests, an unprecedented number of human rights defenders, journalists, and political, civic, community and student activists have been arrested as a preemptive effort to control the spread and continuation of national protests. Because the demands of the protesters are feminist and woman centered in nature, feminists, women human rights defenders (WHRDs), female journalists, and female students have been especially targeted and arrested since start of unrests.

In this report, second in a series, FEMENA has compiled a list of detained WHRDs based on credible reports, including news reports or social media posts from trusted individuals, family members and colleagues. We recognize numbers of those detained may be higher than what has been documented in our two reports. We also anticipate that these numbers will grow.

However, It is especially important to compile lists early on as a way of highlighting the arrest of lesser known WHRDs and activists. In this way, international human rights organizations can be aware of arrests and remain committed to following up on their cases in the weeks and months to come.



The continued arrest of WHRDs and this mass crackdown is especially alarming given the high number of women human rights defenders already in prison serving long prison terms or awaiting the implementation of prison sentences.

FEMENA will update the list to the extent possible to include names of additional WHRDs and activists arrested or info on those released.

We urge international human rights organizations and UN mechanisms to commit to following up on the cases of these defenders and pressing the Iranian authorities to release rights defenders as well as ordinary citizens arrested as a result of protests.



Yalda Moayeri

Photojournalist **Yalda Moayeri** was arrested on September 20, on Hijab Street in Tehran shortly after the protests erupted following the death in custody of Mahsa Amini.

Yalda announced on her instagram account that she was taken into custody by security forces and was being transferred to an unknown location.

Yalda is a talented photographer who has highlighted discriminations against Iranian women through her art.

Rizan Ahmadi

Rizan Ahmadi a woman's rights activist, poet and translator was arrested on September 20, 2022 after IRGC security forces stormed her workplace in Sanandaj, Kurdistan province. It is unclear where she is being held.





Narges Hosseini

Narges Hosseini a WHRD and one of the Girls of Revolution Street was arrested on September 22, 2022, in front of her home in the city of Kashan.

In 2018, along with a number of other women, who were referred to as the "Girls of Revolution Street," she stood on a platform and removed her scarf, placing it on a stick. She was arrested a few minutes after she took off her hijab in public and was sentenced to three months in prison on charges of "encouraging prostitution" and "non-observance of hijab".

Fatemeh Rajabi

Fatemeh Rajabi, a women's rights activist and journalist, was arrested in Tehran on September 22, 2022 after security forces stormed her home at midnight.

Fatemeh's reporting is focused on social and economic developments in Iran. She works at "Seven in the Morning" newspaper and "Bursa News Agency." It is not clear where she is being held.



Zahra Towhidi

Zahra Towhidi, political activist, reporter and a former member of Advar Tahkim Vahdat a national student union, was arrested on Thursday, September 22, 2022. It is unclear where she is being held.

Zahra was among students who had been banned since 2007 from continuing her education because of political activity. She was only able to return to university last year, and was studying for a Ph.D. in sociology.



Sarieh Sharifi

Sarieh Sharifi, WHRD, was arrested on September 22, 2022 in the city of Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province. It is unclear where she is being held.

Sareieh is an activist who advocates the right to education in mother language for children. While education in ones mother tongue is allowed by the Iranian constitution it remains forbidden in practice and those advocating it are often persecuted.



Mahsa Gholamalizadeh

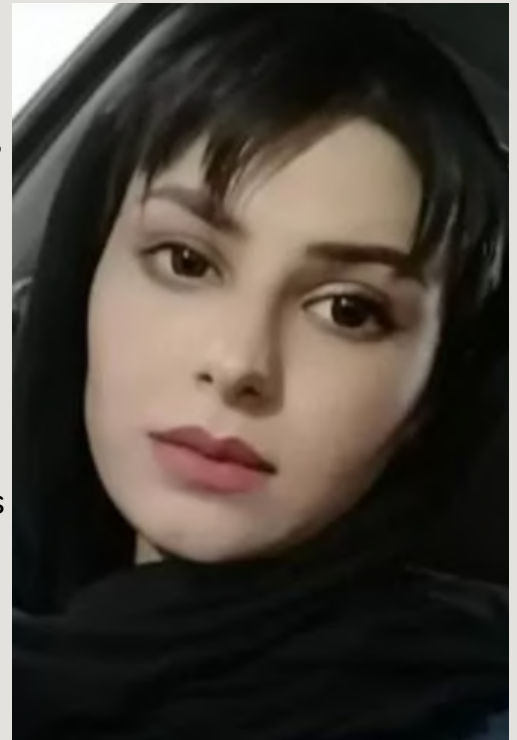
Mahsa Gholamalizadeh, a lawyer and women's rights activist, was arrested in Tehran on the September 24, 2022 after security forces raided her home. It is unclear where she is being held.

Security forces have arrested at least four human rights lawyers, including Mahsa Gholamalizadeh, since the start of protests following the death of Mahsa Amini.

Vida Rabbani

Vida Rabbani, journalist, and political commentator, was arrested on September 24, 2022 in Tehran.

In June 2022, Vida was sentenced to 5 years in prison, followed by a two year ban from posting on social media, engaging in political activities, and participating in gatherings. In court Vida faced charges of blasphemy for her tweets. Other charges included disrupting public order, inciting violence, assembly and collusion to act against national security, and "propaganda against the state."



Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee

Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee, a WHRD and writer, was arrested on September 26, 2022 after security forces stormed her home in Tehran.



Golrokh is a former political prisoner who has faced judicial harassment since 2014 for insulting the Supreme Leader and spreading propaganda against the state. In June 2019, while she was out on bail, new charges were brought against her for participating in prison protest. She was sentenced to an additional two years. On May 9, 2022, Golrokh was released from prison after her sentences were consolidated.



Maryam Karimbeigi

Maryam Karimbeigi, a WHRD, was arrested at her home in Tehran on Monday, September 26, by security forces.

Shahnaz Akmal, Maryam's mother, announced her arrest in a tweet shortly after security forces raided their home. Maryam had been detained earlier this year and tried on charges of "gathering and collusion against national security." She was sentenced to 5 years in prison. Maryam is the sister of Mostafa Karimbeigi, who was killed during the 2009 protests following the contested results of elections. Along with her mother, Maryam has demanded accountability from police for the killing of her brother.

Elmira Bahmani

Elmira Bahmani, a women's rights activist, was arrested on September 26th, 2022, after security forces stormed her home in the city of Rasht in Gilan province. It is unclear where she is being held.



Shadi Aslani

Shadi Aslani, an environmental rights activists in Sanandaj, was arrested on September 26, 2022, by security forces at her home. It is unclear where she has been held since her arrest.



Faezeh Hashemi

Faezeh Hashemi a former MP and WHRD, was arrested on September 27, 2022, in Tehran. Fars News Agency, close to the IRGC, reported that Faezeh was arrested for inciting rioters to protest on the streets.

Sara Saniei

Sara Saniei, WHRD, sculptor and artist, was arrested in her home in Tehran on September 27, 2022 after security forces stormed her home, confiscating her personal belongings. According to Ms. Saniei's family, they have not heard from her since she was arrested.



Mehrnoosh Tafian

Mehrnoosh Tafian, WHRD and a media activist from Andimeshk, Khuzestan, was arrested on September 28, 2022, in Ahvaz.

Mehrnoosh's media work has focused on environmental and labor issues. She has also covered women's issues in underserved areas of Khuzestan province.

Elaheh Mohammadi

Elaheh Mohammadi, WHRD, journalist, and reporter for Ham-Mihan Daily, was arrested on September 29, 2022. Earlier in the morning, Elaheh received a phone call and was summoned for questioning by the Intelligence Ministry. She was arrested on her way to interrogation.

Earlier on September 22, the security forces broke into Elaheh's home, and after searching for a few hours, they confiscated her personal devices such as laptop, phone, and her press card.



Elaheh is the journalist who covered Mahsa Amini's burial in Ham-Mihan newspaper after traveling to Saqqez for her funeral.

Mona Borzoui

Mona Borzoui, poet and songwriter, was arrested on September 28 at her home in Tehran. Prior to her arrest, on September 22, Mona Borzoui recited a poem on her Instagram account, which she had written in response to the killing of Mahsa Amini. The poem received a lot of attention on social media.



FEMENA supports Woman Human Rights Defenders, their organizations and feminist movements through analysis of trends and policy, documentation, fostering development of regional communities of practice and advocacy.

FEMENA's work is primarily focused on contexts of shrinking or closed civic space and contexts complicated by growing extremism and conflict.



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