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Human Rights Violations Against the Bahá'ís in the Islamic Republic of Iran (August-December 2023)

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Abstract

This document provides a concise overview of the latest developments in oppression faced by Bahá'í citizens of Iran (August 2023-December 2023). It contains information we have received since our last submission. The first section delineates the discriminatory laws and state policies impacting Bahá'ís, and the second section includes recent cases which illustrate the practical implications of these laws. Cases from the second section may be shared publicly only in such a way that effectively obfuscates any sensitive information, including the identity and location of relevant individuals.

Introduction: Intensification of persecution

For more than four decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran has incited a multidimensional, systematic and state-sponsored campaign of hatred against the Bahá'í community in Iran. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, more than 200 Bahá'ís have been executed and hundreds imprisoned. While killings have ceased, the past four decades have witnessed a new, distinct wave of persecution against the Bahá'ís, in which they are left to suffer in virtually every aspect of life. Many young Bahá'ís are denied the right to higher education, facing exclusion from enrolment in both public and private universities. Thousands have been deprived of property, in which houses, belongings, land, holy places and cemeteries are destroyed, burned and confiscated. Baseless accusations and hate propaganda are spread by the Iranian authorities, with the aim of provoking the public to foster an environment of hatred against them. Bahá'ís are also met with violence and subject to arbitrary arrests, solely on the basis of their belief in the Bahá'í Faith, of which promotes social justice and equality. These severe social, economic and cultural restrictions represent a calculated strategy of slow strangulation, a tactic adopted by the Iranian government that seeks to torment Bahá'ís across all facets of life.

Within the past few months, several alarming developments have unfolded that entail a range of new and ever harsher methods of persecution. Since the beginning of October, more than 200 incidents of persecution, including over 50 arrests and imprisonments, have occurred in various cities such as Shiraz, Yazd, Isfahan, Hamadan and Karaj. These have been accompanied by increasingly violent home raids, disproportionately affecting women and the elderly, and have even resulted in hospitalisations and traumatic separations of mothers from their children. Notably, over two-thirds of those arrested and detained have been women, predominantly in their twenties and thirties, highlighting the escalation of attacks against women in recent months. Home searches have extended to the confiscation of cash, gold and property deeds, exacerbating economic challenges. In addition, denial of higher education challenges persist, in which a recent mandatory [declaration form](#) was introduced to Bahá'í students, forcing them to renounce their faith as a condition for educational access, representing a blatant violation of their fundamental right to belief and education. There has been a conspicuous rise in hate speech, where Bahá'ís have been accused of being behind the September 2022 protests, promoting permissiveness, being against Islam and Shiism, being spies for Israel and the West, and being part of a political movement that seeks to undermine the state. Bahá'í burial rights have been progressively eroded, in which the Iranian government has attempted to seize control of Bahá'í cemeteries across the country, carrying out forced burials of deceased Bahá'ís in the absence of family members and without observing Bahá'í burial rights.

Bahá'í civil rights under the law have also deteriorated, in which the Iranian government has implemented measures to obstruct the registration and recognition of Bahá'í marriages. Notably, an online digital registry system was recently introduced, that does not include an option for registrants to select “Bahá'í” or “other” as their religion. Any application that does not include information in this field is invalid, rendering the registration of the marriage impossible. The primary aim of these new tactics is to sow fear and confusion, to disenfranchise and further impoverish Bahá'ís, to prolong the harassment of individuals, and to instil feelings of uncertainty and thus rob all Bahá'ís of peace and security in their daily lives.

At the root of these disturbing trends of persecution lies the discriminatory laws and policies targeting the Bahá'ís. The Iranian government's persecution of the Bahá'ís is official state policy as evidenced by numerous state policy documents and memorandums:

- 1991 Bahá'í Question memorandum outlining overall policy to block the progress and development of Iranian Bahá'ís, including education and employment policies.
[Persian original / English translation](#)
- 29 October 2005 letter from Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces to intelligence agencies, the judiciary and police commanders calling for identification and monitoring of Bahá'ís.
[Persian original / English translation](#)
- 2006 letter to 81 Iranian universities from the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology instructing them to expel any student who is discovered to be a Bahá'í.
[Persian original / English translation](#)
- 9 April 2007 letter to county police forces about “perverse Bahá'í sect” prohibiting Bahá'ís from select businesses and occupations.
[Persian original / English translation](#)
- 27 September 2020 minutes of the Meeting of the Commission on Ethnicities, Sects and Religions in Sari, Mazandaran Province calling for the strict control and monitoring of the Bahá'í community.
[Persian original / English translation](#)

This report will expound on each law and outline relevant cases of persecution against the Bahá'ís in Iran that have emerged since August 2023.

Section One: Laws, state and policies which discriminate against Bahá'ís

This section delineates the laws, policies, and memorandums that systematically discriminate against the Bahá'ís. The result of Iran's legal framework, as noted by Shahin Milani, a legal analyst at the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center is “*institutionalised religious discrimination*”. Religious edicts by Iran's Supreme Leader and other senior clerics further solidify a systemic foundation for the marginalisation of the Bahá'ís." This has been accentuated by Iranian courts categorising Bahá'ís as "unprotected infidels," leaving them devoid of legal protections within the Iranian justice system. This classification as "infidels" serves as a pivotal point enabling impunity from prosecution for crimes committed against Bahá'ís. The specifics of these cases will be expounded upon later in this report.

1.1 Discrimination in the Iranian Constitution

The Iranian Constitution has been the main source of persecution against the Bahá'ís, exerting influence over various laws, documents, and policies crafted by the Iranian government over time.

Article 12 of Iran's Constitution establishes Islam as the country's official religion, and while Article 13 guarantees freedom of religion and equality before the law to its citizens, it stipulates that Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian Iranians are the only recognised minorities, allowing them to practise their faith, "within the limits of the law". This has opened the door to a broad interpretation of the constitution, resulting in the persecution of individuals perceived to contradict Islamic principles.

When challenged on the rights of Bahá'ís in Iran, Iranian diplomats have repeatedly stated that Bahá'ís are not recognised as a religion and therefore cannot be treated the same way. The domestic legal framework in Iran is based upon Twelver Ja'fari school of Shia Islamic law, which only recognises and protects the civil rights of Shia Muslims and the three officially recognised minority religions. Though it should be noted that even the recognised religions are not guaranteed the same rights as adherents of the official state religion. Thus, the non-recognised religions, such as the Bahá'í Faith, are denied the most basic safeguards and status under the law. In fact, the omission and effective criminalisation of the Bahá'í Faith via Article 12 and 13 of the Constitution has allowed the government to pass grave discriminatory policies and legislation, further embedded into the penal and civil code.

Articles 19 and 20 of the Iranian Constitution stipulates that regardless of ethnicity, tribe, colour, race, or language, whether man or women, all citizens enjoy protection and equal rights under the law, as long as they are "in compliance with Islamic precepts". Though this and other similar sections of the Constitution seemingly protect the rights of religious minorities, it intentionally does not provide a provision for recognizing religion or belief as a protected category and leaves space for a wide interpretation of the law and what constitutes "compliance with Islamic precepts".

This has meant that Bahá'ís are subject to rules and regulations which do not affect other citizens. In many areas of their daily lives, and in matters related to civil rights, Bahá'ís are denied the right to live according to the laws and teachings of their faith.

Sample Cases

The following are examples of cases of thousands of Bahá'íá who have been subject to discrimination due to their non-recognition in the Constitution:

- Mr. Soheil Safaie, an active member of the Bahá'í Faith, was sentenced to death by the Central Islamic Revolutionary Prosecution Office. The Supreme Court upheld this decision, stating that as a result of Article 13 "regarding non-recognition of Bahá'ísm", "his possessions, except for [what is required for] a normal life for his family" are subject to confiscation, and his execution is upheld.
- Upon the request of Mrs. Tahereh Abdollahi Moghari to receive sole inheritance of Mr. Abbas Mansour Ardestani, the court rejected her claim, and stated, "only Christianity, Judaism and

Zoroastrianism are recognized as religious minorities in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Bahá'ism is considered a perverse sect and is not recognized as a religion or a religious minority”.

- Two Bahá'í men, Abdolshoghi Tebyani and Sirous Mehrazar, who were shareholders of a company, were charged with promoting the Bahá'í Faith. The court decided to seize their company and assets, and stated in their verdict, “Article 12 of the Constitution recognises 3 religious minorities and others are not recognised. Hence, the order to confiscate Chablin Company and other properties excluding what is needed for a simple life style for their families...is confirmed.”
- Peyman Bahamin, Jalil Bahamin, Adel Bahamin, and Ehsan Bahamin, who filed a claim for proof of ownership, were refused to have their case heard by the Falard Public Court. In their verdict, the court stated that because the aforementioned individuals were Bahá'ís, and were “not officially recognised”, the decision was issued not to hear the case. The court also referred to Article 12 and 13 of the Constitution in their ruling.
- Ms. Hengameh Ahmadzadeh and Mr. Ali Ahmadi were charged with propaganda against the regime for their involvement in Bahá'í activities. In their ruling, the court stated, “the Constitution does not recognize the perverse Bahá'í sect”, and sentenced them to a total of 18 months imprisonment. Since the memorandum was written, the Bahá'í community has experienced persecution in all of the outlined areas of the document; Bahá'ís have been detained, imprisoned, and falsely charged with “spying”; they have been denied access to education and sources of livelihood; they have been stripped of all influence in Iranian society and deprived of their right to religious freedom. The government also made clear it would not prosecute those who attacked Bahá'ís, which led to a measurable rise in violent attacks on Bahá'ís and their properties.

1.2 The 1991 Memorandum

Article 4 states that “All civil, penal financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political, and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamic criteria. This principle applies absolutely and generally to all articles of the Constitution as well as to all other laws and regulations, and the fuqaha' of the Guardian Council are judges in this matter.” It then further establishes in Article 5 that in absence of the Hidden (Twelfth) Imam, the position of the guardian is assumed by the Supreme Leader (Valayateh Faqih). Articles 110 and 177 of the Constitution enumerates the power of the Supreme Leader, which gives him complete charge of every arm and activity of the government. Therefore, directives from the Supreme Leaders office and agencies that serve under him override any protection permitted under the constitution.

The implications of this can be seen in a secret 1991 memorandum—known as “The Bahá'í question document” which the BIC has analysed in its publications—that aimed at establishing policies for the treatment of the Bahá'ís in Iran. Brought to light by a UN Special Rapporteur at the time, the document,

stamped “confidential” was drawn up by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution (SCCR) in 1991 and was prepared at the request of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, by the authority given to him under the constitution. The memorandum was signed by Hujjatu’l Islam Seyyed Mohammad Golpaygani, Secretary of the Council, and approved by Mr. Khamenei, who added his signature to the document.

The memorandum specifically calls for Iran’s Bahá’ís to be treated in such a way “that their progress and development are blocked,” that they should only be “enrolled in schools provided they have not identified themselves as Bahá’ís”, that “they should be enrolled in schools which have a strong and imposing religious ideology”, “must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá’ís”, and to “deny them employment if they identify themselves as Bahá’ís”.

The document provides conclusive evidence that the campaign against the Bahá’ís is centrally directed by the government and its legal framework, systematically excluding the Bahá’ís from every sphere of activity; participating in the country's system, education and culture status, and legal and social status. The implications of this memorandum for the Bahá’ís in Iran are further explained in the proceeding sections of this document. The memo continues to be applied to Bahá’ís to this day as it is referred to in court verdicts as the reason for the expulsion of Bahá’ís from universities and places of employment.

The following sample cases demonstrate how the 1991 memorandum has been used to persecute the Bahá’ís:

- 26 Bahá’ís from Shiraz were sentenced by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court to a total of 85 years in prison, 24 years in exile, and were banned from leaving the country. They were also required to report to the provincial intelligence office daily for 2 years. Each of the 26 Bahá’ís were charged with assembly and collusion “for the purpose of causing intellectual and ideological insecurity in Muslim society.” The Bahá’ís had, in fact, been gathering across Shiraz as part of their efforts to address local community needs and to assess the severity of the region’s water crisis.
- In a jointly heard case, the Karaj Revolutionary Court sentenced 11 Bahá’ís to more than 36 years imprisonment, and also imposed monetary fines, bans on residing in their province, bans on leaving the country, bans on educational and cultural activities, deprivation of social rights, and other punishments. According to the verdict, all 11 individuals were charged with: 1) insulting and promotion of educational activities against Islamic Sharia; 2) participating in the formation of groups and managing individuals with intent to disturb national security by promoting Bahá’ism in children, and youth; 3) educational and promotional activities contrary to Islamic Sharia through education and promotion based on Bahá’í teachings in kindergartens; 4) propaganda against Islamic Sharia, through holding coaching courses.
- Mr. Bijan Rahmani, an owner of a clinic, was summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence Office, where he was interrogated and asked questions about what kind of people visit his clinic, whether they were Bahá’ís, and his role and responsibilities in the Bahá’í community. The authorities told him he would not be allowed to continue running his clinic. They attempted to make him recant

his faith, saying he would be permitted to remain in the clinic if he recanted. Mr. Rahmani refused to recant his faith.

- Mr. Farshid Mahdavi, a Bahá'í living in Mashhad who has been a driving instructor for 16 years, was summoned by the Police Ideological–Political Organization, where the officers took his business licence and prevented him from continuing his work.

1.3 Islamic Penal Code

Followers of religions which are not recognised in Iran's Constitution, including the Bahá'ís, are deprived of many of their basic rights, as they are not legally protected under the law. They face discrimination, arbitrary arrests, interrogations, and educational and economic restrictions and are considered najis (physically and spiritually unclean, polluting). As a result, Bahá'ís are treated disparately under the Iranian Penal Code as they are not afforded any protection under the Constitution. Similar to the Iranian Constitution, the Islamic Penal Code of Iran only recognizes “People of the Book”, meaning Christians, Zoroastrians and Jews. Similar to the Iranian Constitution which uses the law to justify persecution against the Bahá'ís, the Penal Code of Iran actively pursues policies to target them.

For example, the Penal Code only makes mention of *diya* (blood money) and *qisas* (retributive justice)¹ for Muslims and adherents of the three constitutionally recognised religious minorities legally depriving Bahá'ís of the right to seek justice. According to the Penal Code, the rights of both *diya* and *qisas* are exclusive to Muslims and places unrecognised minorities such as the Bahá'ís as unequal under the law and unable to seek justice equally. A fatwa from 1998 explicitly states that even if a Bahá'í is murdered, “their killing has neither *qisas* nor *diya*”. *Diya*, meaning blood money, is the money that a perpetrator of a murder pays as opposed to the death penalty or a punishment made for the crime committed. This effectively excludes Bahá'ís from seeking neither blood money nor *Qisas*, thereby justifying and encouraging individual-level crimes and acts of violence against them.

In 1993, a first degree murder was committed against a Bahá'í but because this individual was deemed an infidel under the law and not recognized by either the Constitution or the Penal Code, the murderer was not convicted and brought to Justice. In another example in 2017, a Bahá'í was murdered, however the perpetrator was sentenced to only “11 years in prison and two away from home”. This decision was made under the pretence that because the Bahá'í was not deemed equal under the Penal Code and retributive justice did not apply. These laws legally deprive Bahá'ís of the right to seek justice for crimes committed against them, and even encourage violence against them with impunity.

Below are some examples of cases in which Bahá'ís were deprived of justice due to *qisas* or *diya* laws:

- In a verdict for the murder of a Bahá'í man, the court ruled that because the victim was Bahá'í, it was not appropriate to conduct *qisas* and the defendant was excused from paying *diya* to the victim's next of kin.

¹ Retributive justice allowing victims to seek punishment for the defendant commensurate with the crime committed (eg. the punishment for a severed leg equals the amputation of the same leg of the.)

- After the abduction and brutal murder of Rouhollah Ghedami, a retired Bahá'í man, the court ruled that because the victim was a Bahá'í, neither *qisas* nor *diya* was applicable, and the defendants were acquitted of the death sentence, instead receiving an 18-month imprisonment term.

The most concerning legal development with regards to the Penal Code that discriminates against the Bahá'ís is the recently passed legislation aimed at criminalising various sects not explicitly recognised under Iran's Constitution. These amendments, namely Article 499 bis and Article 500 bis, which are now part of the Penal Code, have broad and disturbing implications, not least providing the authorities further legal justification for their systematic targeting of the Bahá'í community in Iran.

Article 499 bis

Article 499 bis of the Penal Code now states that anyone who “insults divine religions or branches of Islam, as stipulated by the Constitution” may be prosecuted. The punishment for this charge carries a sentence of up to 2 years. Article 499 bis lacks any precision or clarity that would enable individuals to know if they are committing a crime under these provisions, which was perhaps the intention of the amendment. The amendment gives Iranian authorities free rein to enact this article to any situation they see fit, and increases their ability to target dissenting opinions or beliefs. It also gives them wide discretion to implement more severe punishments. Furthermore, the amendment intentionally limits the scope of religions by including only those that have been recognised in the Constitution, which, as mentioned, excludes the Bahá'ís. As Bahá'ís are regularly labelled by the government as a “perverse sect”, “morally corrupt”, and “deviant”, this article severely increases the discrimination set out in the Constitution.

Article 500 bis

Article 500 bis now states that a person may be prosecuted if perceived to engage in “any deviant educational or propaganda activity that contradicts or interferes with the sacred religion of Islam in any ways such as making false or delusional claims in religious and Islamic domains”. Given that many persecuted Bahá'ís who are charged with proselytising the Bahá'í faith, and face charges such as “propaganda against the State” and “membership of an illegal group”, this article provides the Iranian government with additional tools to ramp up their persecution. Article 500 bis also increases punishment by one degree for any “connection of groups subject to this article with [entities] outside the country for the purpose of receiving support or organisational guidance”. Given that the Bahá'í Holy Land is located in Israel and that Bahá'ís are already accused of spying for Israel, this amendment is likely to further intensify the persecution faced by Bahá'ís.

These changes to the law further erode freedom of religion or belief in Iran and, in effect, outlaw any expression of Bahá'í belief. The danger, particularly with Article 500, is most obviously related to Bahá'ís practising their Faith, particularly teaching children and other elements of Bahá'í educational endeavours.

However, it may also include the mere declaration of one's religion as Bahá'í, even just when this declaration is in response to questions in particular administrative and civil processes. The vague nature of the law, leaving terms like "false" and "deviant" undefined, and not elaborating on what is meant by verbs like "insult", "interfere", or "contradict", grants extensive interpretive discretion to the prosecutorial and judicial authorities, and has proven to provide further legal justification for arbitrary arrest, detention, and judgement. One commentator stated that this law effectively offers a green light for Iran's law enforcement to crack down with additional tools on already persecuted individuals and groups for expressing their beliefs.

Indeed, a range of lawyers and experts have asserted that the targeting of Bahá'ís is the main purpose of the legislation and highlighted how their persecution will now enjoy the veneer of legality. Others have drawn attention to its wider impact on civil society and freedom of expression, though they have acknowledged the higher burden that will fall on minorities such as the Bahá'ís. In either scenario, it is clear that the adoption of this law leaves the Bahá'ís vulnerable to and unprotected from further persecution.

The following cases show how Article 499 bis and 500 bis have been used to target the Bahá'ís:

- Twenty-four Bahá'ís in Gorgan, Minoudasht and Gonbad-e Kavous, were sentenced in 2016 by the Revolutionary Court of Gorgan to prison terms ranging from 6 to 11 years. The 24 Bahá'ís were charged with "membership in such [Bahá'í] administration" pursuant to Article 499 and "teaching of Baháism in opposition to the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran" pursuant to Article 500.
- For his active involvement in the Bahá'í Faith, Mr. Azizollah Samandari was sentenced by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court to 5 years imprisonment, the maximum sentence, "pursuant to Article 499 of the Islamic Penal Code".
- Ms. Anisa Fanaian, a teacher of Bahá'í children's classes, was charged with forming and organising unlawful groups related to the Bahá'í faith, membership in unlawful groups, and engaging in propaganda against the regime. The court sentenced her to 4 years and 4 months of imprisonment, citing Article 500 in their verdict.
- Mr. Mahmud Badavam, a Bahá'í in Tehran, was charged with "membership in the perverse Bahaist sect with the intention to act against national security". He was sentenced by Branch 28 of the Revolutionary Court to 4 years imprisonment, "pursuant to Article 499 of the Islamic Penal Code".
- Mr. Foad Agah Dahaghani, a young Bahá'í man, was charged with propaganda against the regime for teaching the faith. He was sentenced to one year imprisonment "based on Article 500 of the Islamic Penal Code".

1.4 Subsequent memorandums calling for the persecution of the Bahá'ís

The deprivation of status and civil rights for Bahá'ís under the Constitution has allowed the Iranian government to target the Bahá'ís in all areas of life. Through systematic and close monitoring, the government has utilised educational and economic institutions to deny the right to education and livelihood to the Bahá'ís.

The non-recognition of Bahá'ís in the Constitution has been further supported by subsequent documents, such as the 29 October 2005 letter from Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces to intelligence agencies, the judiciary and police commanders, calling for the identification and monitoring of Bahá'ís. The letter was signed by the Chairman of the Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces, Basij Major General Dr. Seyyed Hossein Firuzabad, and was stamped “highly confidential.” The letter explains that all activities of Bahá'ís, including political, economic, social, and cultural, must be reported to Command Headquarters. The recipients of the letter, which include the paramilitary Basij Resistance Forces, demonstrate the intensity of the persecution, and that the Bahá'ís are viewed as criminal and therefore treated as such. Since the 29 October 2005 letter, moreover, other documentary evidence has emerged that tells of Iran's extraordinary secret effort to track down, identify, and monitor its Bahá'í citizens.

More recently, the 21 September 2020 decision by the Commission on Ethnicities, Sects and Religions in Sari, Mazandaran Province, called for the movements of Bahá'ís to be “rigorously controlled”, by “monitoring their operations”. Local and provincial police, the head of Sari's Intelligence Department, the commander of the local Basij paramilitary force, the head of Education, the Industry, Mining and Trade and the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism departments, and school and university officials, were all issued with the directive. The decision also ordered the Department of Education to “increase the level of alertness and awareness” among school teachers and principals regarding “their handling of Bahá'í students in order to bring them to Islam.” The clear plan to change children's beliefs is yet another violation of human rights, targeting not only the practice of one's faith, but also engaging in religious coercion.

The systematic home raids and seemingly arbitrary arrests that the Bahá'ís experience, as well as the fact that many individuals are subject to persecution repeatedly, prove that their monitoring and identification as Bahá'ís is a collaborative policy throughout the country.

The consequences of this are far-reaching and can be categorised into areas of *Personal Status, Education, Employment and Religious Practice*:

Personal Status

In a country where laws of personal status are solely based on one's religion, and there are no civil laws that determine these matters, the non-recognition of Bahá'ís in the Constitution (Article 13) leaves them stripped of the freedom to practise their faith. The Bahá'í marriage ceremony is not recognised as legal,

and marriages of Bahá'ís cannot be registered unless they are willing to recant their faith and marry according to the laws of one of the officially recognised religions. Refusal to legally recognise Bahá'í marriages led to the categorisation of Bahá'í wives as mistresses and Bahá'í children as illegitimate. As a result, Bahá'ís are often blocked from claiming their inheritances, contents of wills or Bahá'í inheritance laws in disputed estate matters are disregarded, and Bahá'í parents are prevented from obtaining custody during divorce proceedings. These discriminatory policies have been continuously reinforced, including in multiple *fatwas* (legal ruling on Islamic law), such as one from 2018 that states “Bahá'í heirs do not have the right of inheritance”.

The constitutional constraints and recent implementation of a digital registry system, which does not provide an option for registrants to select “Bahá'í” or “other” as their religion in the religious affiliation data entry field, as highlighted in the previous section, further reduces the options for Bahá'ís. Currently, Bahá'í marriage ceremonies lack legal recognition, forcing Bahá'ís to renounce their faith to register marriages. With couples being considered in an unrecognised *de facto* relationship, this has serious implications for any subsequent registrations of births and other social rights. Furthermore, this denial results in labelling Bahá'í wives as mistresses, children as illegitimate, and hinders the issuance of marriage certificates, marriage loans, inheritance claims, and parental rights during divorce.

The non recognition of Bahá'ís in the Iranian constitution and the labelling of Bahá'ís as “unprotected infidels” is also recognised by the attacks on Bahá'í cemeteries. Thousands of grounds of burial sites have been levelled by Iranian authorities in cemeteries across Tehran, Senman, Shiraz and Yazd. In Tehran, Ministry of Intelligence agents had barred Bahá'ís from using their own plots and had buried deceased Bahá'ís in a mass grave of thousands of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. Burying Bahá'ís there is an attempt to eliminate the memory of the mass grave against the expressed wishes of the Bahá'í community, out of respect for relatives of those buried at the site.

Education

The exclusion of Bahá'ís in article 12 and 13 of the Constitution has also allowed Bahá'í students to be continuously expelled on the grounds of their religion. It has been the grounds to debar the Bahá'ís from completing their high school education, inhibiting them from pursuing any form of higher education. The number of Bahá'ís who have been rejected from university due to not meeting the “general qualification” for university study continues to grow annually. Belonging only to a recognised religion by Iran's constitution (Article 12 and 13) is a general qualification stipulated on the education authority's own website. Following the revolution in 1979, the government clearly demonstrated their efforts to deny Bahá'ís access to higher education through very simple mechanisms, actively excluding Bahá'ís from attending higher education. These mechanisms included requiring “everyone who takes the national university entrance examination [to] declare their religion”. Applicants who indicate a religion other than Islam or the three recognized minority religions; Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Judaism are excluded from being able to take the exam and pursue higher education.

Further evidence of the government's policies appeared in a publication by *Sanjesh*, the national academic evaluation and measurement organisation of Iran's Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

Entitled “A guide to enrolling and participating in the National Entrance Examination” for academic year 2013, this 46-page publication presents detailed guidelines about the application process for students wishing to enter university in Iran, including criteria for admission. On page 5, the first eligibility requirement for participation in the national university entrance exam is: “Belief in Islam or in one of the religions specified in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism).” The criteria makes it once again clear that education in Iran is restricted to those who believe in Islam or in one of the three other recognized religions specified in Iran’s Constitution – thus excluding those who believe in the Bahá’í Faith.

Where there were any gaps that allowed Bahá’ís access to higher education, the 1991 memorandum made sure to address. The SCCR under the directives of the Supreme Leader took measures to further clarify how educational institutions were to deal with Bahá’ís seeking education. The memo stipulates that “1. *They [Bahá’ís] can be enrolled in schools provided they have not identified themselves as Bahá’ís.* 2. *Preferably, they should be enrolled in schools which have a strong and imposing religious ideology.* 3. *They must be expelled from universities, either in the admission process or during the course of their studies, once it becomes known that they are Bahá’ís.*”

Although article 30 of the constitution ensures that the government remains responsible for providing public education for everyone until the end of high school, the memorandum requires that when administrators are made aware of the affiliation of Bahá’ís students, they should be enrolled in a school with a strong and imposing ideology. In 2022, the Iranian intelligence agents entered a kindergarten class and distributed propaganda material against the Bahá’ís to teachers and students who were not Bahá’ís, and staged videos that these materials belonged to the Bahá’ís to incriminate them. This is just one of many examples of the application of the memorandum.

Other memos implementing Iran’s discriminatory laws that extend into the educational and economic spheres include a 2006 [letter](#) to 81 Iranian universities from the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, universities were instructed that once students are identified as Bahá’ís, “they must be expelled from university.” In 2007, a year for which the Bahá’í International Community has complete data, 1,037 Bahá’í students registered for exams. However, to block them from higher education, some 800 were told their files were “incomplete” and thus prevented from matriculating. Of the 237 who received their results, only 121 were admitted to university. Over the course of the academic year, more than 100 were expelled, and by May, only 17 students remained in school. In January 2014 a Bahá’í studying materials engineering in Kermanshah University had her student card confiscated and was expelled. When questioned, a security official said the decision was based on an “enactment” of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution — presumably a reference to the 1991 Bahá’í Question memorandum. Another tactic, in addition to the “incomplete files” message, has been to ask suspected Bahá’í students to report to the office of the national college testing organisation, where they are then verbally rejected, with nothing put into writing.

Another [letter](#) dated 17 March 2007 from the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, instructed a university to “prevent the enrolment of the Bahá’í applicants”, and to submit their names to the Ministry. Following this, university enrolment forms began to systematically include a declaration of religion, and, to date, many officials do not allow this declaration to be left blank. Even during the academic year,

university authorities have summoned students and demanded that they identify their religion. Whenever a student was identified as a Bahá'í, he or she was expelled.

The efforts of the government to deprive Bahá'í youth higher education also extends to shutting down the ad hoc institute created by the Bahá'ís for their youth and which primarily draws on the volunteer services of Bahá'í professors and lecturers who have themselves been dismissed from their university posts. This has resulted in the denial of education for thousands of Bahá'ís, leaving them no choice but to teach themselves the knowledge they are denied. Below are examples of two court cases where Bahá'ís were denied admittance to university due to the non-recognition of the Bahá'í faith in the constitution as well as the 1991 Bahá'í question document:

- A court verdict regarding the complaint of a young Bahá'í against the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology for expelling him from university for his beliefs states that the Ministry's decision is upheld due to the individual "cannot being a member of one of the country's officially recognised religions—to which the plaintiff has admitted—and, furthermore, with reference to a provision of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution [1991 Bahá'í question document]".
- A court verdict upholds the decision of the Ministry of Science, Research & Technology and the University of Payame-Nour to not admit a Bahá'í to university stating the decision is "is in accordance with the decree of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution [[1991 Bahá'í question document]".
- A letter from the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology to the court requesting that it "reject the plaintiff's complaint" against it for his expulsion from university and that the decision to expel the student is based on the observance of "the relevant laws and regulations approved by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution" as well as "the he legal principles of the constitution".

These three cases are only a few among the many examples of court cases and officials available here which clearly refer to the non-recognition of the Bahá'í Faith in the constitution as well as the provisions of the 1991 Bahá'í question document. Each year, hundreds of Bahá'ís continue to be expelled from university due to these two documents.

Employment and Economic Oppression

As stated above, the shortcomings of the legal framework, memorialised in the constitution, allowed for institutionalisation of discriminatory policies and practices in regards to access to employment. Article 4 of the constitution states that "[a]ll civic, penal, financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political, and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamic criteria." Therefore, any right towards employment and any omission thereof is strictly bound by a set of "Islamic criteria" which, according to

the Constitution, does not acknowledge the Bahá'ís (Article 13).² Furthering this, Article 20 highlights protection under the law to all “that are in compliance with the Islamic criteria”. Though Article 23, in theory, forbids the investigation of individual beliefs, the practice of *gozinesh*, a mandatory screening process set forth in the Selection Law based on Religion and Ethical Standards of 1995, results in discriminatory practices against those that do not adhere to/have knowledge of Islam as practised in Iran or are members of one of the three recognized religions in the Constitution.

Once the Bahá'ís were omitted from the Constitution and no protections were afforded to them, the Iranian government was able to find ways to deprive them of their employment rights based on their non-recognition within the Constitution. The 1991 memo referred to above further solidified this under the authority of the Supreme Leader. The memo stipulated that “*1. Permit them a modest livelihood as is available to the general population. 2. To the extent that it does not encourage them to be Bahá'ís, it is permissible to provide them the means for ordinary living in accordance with the general rights given to every Iranian citizen, such as ration booklets, passports, burial certificates, work permits, etc. 3. Deny them employment if they identify themselves as Bahá'ís. 4. Deny them any position of influence, such as in the educational sector, etc.*”

That is to say that Bahá'ís are banned from all public sector jobs, from any government employment, including in education, health care, or government institutions with only the private sector available to them. However, even in the private sector, Bahá'í-owned businesses are sealed when their owners cease to work in observance of Bahá'í holy days or their properties, such as farmland, are confiscated. In other cases, Muslim-owned businesses in the private sector are persuaded to fire their Bahá'í employees.

In late 1984, the Attorney General started issuing summonses demanding that all those Bahá'í civil servants who had been dismissed repay salaries they had received during their employment. They were threatened with imprisonment if they did not comply. Obviously, repayment of a lifetime's wages was beyond the means of most victims. Many were imprisoned as a result of failure to meet such an unconscionable demand.

On 5 August 2007, a Bahá'í who had served in the National Iranian Oil Products company in Abadan was told that, “owing to your membership in the Bahaist sect,” his pension cannot be renewed. This case and many others, provides further evidence of the government's approach to minimise the livelihood and ability for the Bahá'ís to contribute to Iranian society.

² In 1979, the government began dismissing Bahá'í civil servants without compensation. The government has systematically sought to drive Bahá'ís in the private sector to economic ruin as the Bahá'ís fall outside of “Islamic criteria ” and therefore do not experience the freedoms and opportunities enshrined within the constitution. In the early 1980s, the trading licences of most Bahá'í businessmen were revoked, the assets of businesses run by Bahá'ís were confiscated, and bank accounts of most Bahá'í businessmen were frozen further attesting to the systematic persecution of the Bahá'ís through the revocation of employment rights. More than 15,000 Bahá'ís have lost their jobs or sources of livelihood since the revolution and the enactment of the constitution. Almost every dismissal notice served on a Bahá'í employee, whether in the public or the private sector, stated that the reason for dismissal was membership in the Bahá'í Faith and that the individual's job would be restored if he or she would recant his or her faith.

Efforts aimed at the economic strangulation of the Iranian Bahá'í community are still being actively pursued. Perhaps the most significant evidence of this was the emergence of a letter, dated 9 April 2007, from the Public Places Supervision Office of the Public Intelligence and Security Force in the province of Tehran. Addressed to regional commanders of police and the heads of public intelligence and security forces, it instructs them to prevent members of the “perverse Bahaist sect” — along with members of other “anti-revolutionary political organisations” — from engaging in a wide range of businesses. These include “high-earning businesses,” “sensitive business categories” (such as the press, engraving, the tourist industry, car rentals, publishing, hostel and hotel management, photography and film, computer sales and Internet cafés), and food businesses which might offend Muslim concepts of “cleanliness.” The letter also mentions confining Bahá'ís to employment that provides an “ordinary livelihood”.

The 15 March 2009 letter from the Public Places Supervision Office of Kerman Province to Rafsanjan police commanders instructed them to restrict real estate purchases by Bahá'ís. The letter prevents Bahá'ís from “purchasing properties and real estate near each other in one location.” The purpose of this directive is to ensure that Bahá'ís do not have “high positions in any business.” The letter goes further, stating that Bahá'ís should only be allowed “enough income to survive”, and that they should be prevented from “having extensive presence in any one trade, business, or market place”, severely restricting their ability to earn a livelihood.

More recently, the government has found a new way to limit the livelihoods of Bahá'ís by confiscating their properties, farmlands and personal homes. A recent ruling by the Constitutional Court has now formalised these confiscations and “legitimised” the actions of the authorities by invoking Article 49 of Iran’s Constitution, which allows the government to confiscate “illegitimate wealth”. If this pattern of confiscation continues, it can potentially displace a large number of Bahá'í families across Iran.

Religious Practice

The exclusion of the Bahá'ís from the Constitution also means that they are prohibited from practising their faith as a religious community. Article 23-27 of the Constitution provides for freedom of expression, assembly, and association as well as the freedom to practise one’s religion, so long as the individual “refrain from engaging in conspiracy or activity against Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran” as stated in article 14. The Bahá'í Faith is considered by authorities in Iran as a “misguided sect” and Bahá'ís worship and religious practices are deemed as heresy or “activity against Islam”. Namely that protections under article 23-27 do not allow for Bahá'í gatherings, the freedom to express and practise their Faith, to have places of worship, and to publish and circulate Bahá'í literature. The government’s false categorization of the Bahá'í Faith as a “misguided sect” is premised on the theological notion that the prophet Mohammad is the Seal of the prophets and that the Bahá'í faith is a religion that came after Islam and therefore a heretic religion.

In 1979 following the creation of the constitution, members of three consecutive Bahá'í councils called the National Spiritual Assembly were arrested and executed, along with numerous local community leaders, reinforcing disrespect and inhumane treatment towards religious minorities such as the Bahá'ís. This injustice continues to ensue and was amplified in 1983, when the government prohibited membership in Bahá'í organisations, banning all Bahá'í administrative and community activities based on the absence of constitutional recognition. Presently, various forms of oppression continue, such as strict

limits on the right to assemble and worship and the wholesale dissemination of anti-Bahá'í propaganda in the government-led news media. Hundreds of attacks on Bahá'ís or Bahá'í-owned properties — including cemeteries — go unprosecuted and unpunished, creating a sense of impunity for attackers. Bahá'ís have faced prison or worse have been given the option of converting to Islam, with the promise that such a conversion would lead to their instant freedom, an option Bahá'ís have refused as truthfulness is a foundational principle for Bahá'ís and one which they have given their lives for.

In a letter dated 19 August 2006, Iran's Ministry of the Interior ordered officials throughout the country to step up the surveillance of Bahá'ís, focusing in particular on their community activities. Among other things, the Ministry requested provincial officials to complete a detailed questionnaire about the circumstances and activities of local Bahá'ís, including their “financial status,” “social interactions,” and “association with foreign assemblies.”

Section Two: Cases from August 2023-present

The laws and policies outlined above continue to impact the day to day lives of all Bahá'ís in Iran. They not only form the basis for the discrimination and state-sponsored persecution that has been meted out to the Bahá'ís in Iran in over four decades but have used state laws and policies to justify and legitimise this discrimination against the community. Bahá'ís continue to face all forms of persecution including arbitrary arrests, violent home raids, denial of employment and education, economic oppression, violation of burial rights, property confiscation, hate propaganda and other discriminations. This section outlines the most recent cases of persecution against the Bahá'ís in these areas and is based on the Special Rapporteur's call for submission documents. The sections include:

- Arbitrary Executions in 1981 and 1988 (the years requested by the Special Rapporteur)
- Arbitrary Arrests, Home Raids, Detentions and Sentencing
- Women Disproportionately Affected
- Surveillance, Home Raids without Arrests, Interrogations on Bail and Court Summons
- Right to Fair Trial
- Education
- Employment and Economic Oppression
- Personal State and Religious Practice

2.1 Executions in the 1980s

The non recognition of Bahá'ís in the Iranian constitution classifies them as apostates to Islam, setting the stage for historical and ongoing acts of persecution. Following the Islamic Revolution, a wave of harsh measures was unleashed against Bahá'ís, a notable case being the execution of ten Bahá'í women in Shiraz for teaching religious classes to Bahá'í children. The 40th anniversary of the execution of these 10 women was June of last year for which the Bahá'í International Community's UN Office called for a

global campaign in their honour and in honour of all Iranian women who have made sacrifices in the path of justice and equality. The campaign resulted in [unprecedented global support](#) for the long-suffering Bahá'í community in Iran.

The Iranian Penal Code, as outlined above, further compounds the challenges faced by religious minorities, including Bahá'ís, by outlining over 80 different offences. Many of these offences fall short of meeting the criteria for 'most serious' crimes under international law. Notably, charges such as moharebeh ("enmity against God") and sabb al-nabi ("insulting the Prophet or Islam") have been used to target and justify the execution of Bahá'ís only for their beliefs.

There were over 200 executions which took place after the Islamic Revolution. This submission presents only reported cases of executions from 1981 to 1988 as requested by the Special Rapporteur, reflecting a distressing pattern of persecution and a lack of accountability on the part of the Iranian government for these grave human rights violations in those years following the Islamic Revolution. The absence of accountability perpetuates a culture of impunity and highlights the urgent need for international scrutiny and advocacy to address the ongoing persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran.

2.1.1 Arbitrary Executions in 1981

Date	Name	Province	Additional Information
16-17th March 1981	Mehdi Anvari and Hedayatollah Dehghani	Fars (Shiraz)	Executed by firing squad. On 9 August 1980, he was arrested together with three other members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Abadeh, Hedayatollah Dehghani, Ebrahim Yazdani and Vajehollah Furuzan. They were detained in Abadeh for two days and then transferred to Adilabad prison in Shiraz. On 14 January 1981, Ebrahim Yazdani and Vajehollah Furuzan were released; however, he and Hedayatollah Dehghani were not freed. Their bodies were laid to rest in Shiraz on 18 March 1981, in the presence of their families and a large number of friends.
30th April 1981	Yadollah Vahdat, Ehsanollah	Shiraz	Executed by firing squad.

	Mehdi-Zadeh, Sattah Khoshkhou		They were detained a year earlier in Adilabad Prison.
14th June 1981	Mohammad (Sohrab) Habibi, Mohammad-Bagher (Soheil) Habibi, Hosein Khandel, Tarazollah Khozein, Hosein Motlagh, Firouz Naiemi and Naser Vafai	Hamadan	Executed by firing squad. They were arrested a year earlier on 13 August 1980. Their bodies showed evidence of severe torture before execution. They were seven members of the Local Spiritual Assembly in Hamadan
23rd June 1981	Hashem Farnoush, Bozorg Alavian and Farhang Mavaddat	Tehran	Executed by firing squad in Tehran. They were arrested in late 1980 and imprisoned at Evin prison for nine months. They were serving on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Karaj.
24th June 1981	Yadollah Poustchi, Badiollah Farid, Varqa Tebyanian (Tebyani) and Masih Farhangi	Tehran	Executed by firing squad. The manner of Varqa Tebyani's execution was unusually cruel in that he was shot one bullet at a time starting from his feet upwards over the course of nearly 7 hours.
26th July 1981	Nematollah Katibpour-Shahidi and Kamaloddin Bakhtavar	Khorasan Razavi (Kashmar)	Executed by firing squad in Kashmar. They were arrested a month earlier.
29th July 1981	Habibollah Tahghighi Hosein Asadollah-Zadeh, Manouchehr Khazei, Abdol-Ali Asadyari, Esmail Zehtab, Mehdi Baheri , Parviz Firouzi, Masrour Dakhili, Allah-Vardi Misaghi	East Azerbaijan (Tabriz)	Executed by firing squad in Tabriz. They eight made up four members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tabriz (Habibollah Tahghighi Hosein Asadollah-Zadeh, Manouchehr Khazei, Abdol-Ali Asadyari, Esmail Zehtab, Mehdi Baheri , Parviz Firouzi, an auxiliary board member (Masrour Dakhili) and an individual Bahá'í Allah-Vardi Misaghi.

			They were arrested and detained a year earlier.
5th August 1981	Hosein Rastegar-Namdar-	Tehran	Executed by firing squad. He was arrested at his home on 27 August 1980. He was first held at the central police station and after almost two months he was transferred to Evin prison.
29th August 1981	Habibollah Azizi	Tehran	Executed by the firing squad. He was arrested on 17 June 1980 during one of his trips to Iran from the United Kingdom, within two days of his arrival. He was first held at Komiteh number 9 in Ferdowsi Avenue, he later was transferred to Evin prison. Shortly after the execution of Habibollah Azizi, his 86 years-old frail mother, his two sisters and their spouses were arrested and detained.
11th September 1981	Goshtasb Sabet-Rasekh, Ataollah Rowhani, Ahmad Rezvani, Ezzatollah Atefi, Bahman Atefi	Isfahan (Daran)	Executed by firing squad. They were arrested two months earlier. The bodies of Bahman Atefi and Ezzatollah Atefi were taken back to Afus and buried in the Bahá'í cemetery in the presence of a few family members and the Revolutionary guards. The family was not permitted to bury the bodies in coffins or to perform the Bahá'í burial laws. The bodies of Ataollah Rawhani, Ahmad Rezvani and Goshtasb Sabet-Rasekh were probably buried by the authorities in a Muslim cemetery in Chikan. Their immediate family and Bahá'í relatives were not informed of their execution or burial.

23 October 1981	Yadollah Sepehr-Arfa	Tehran	On 30 August 1981 his home was attacked by 3 armed men. They forced him into their car and disappeared. His whereabouts was unknown to his family for months until 5 October 1981 when he was permitted to make a phone call to his sister. They discovered that he was being imprisoned at Evin prison. One month later, on 8 November 1981, his family was called to the prison. They were given his last will and testament and informed that he had been executed.
27th December 1981	Mahmoud Majzoub, Ezzatollah Forouhi, Kamran Samimi, Jinous Naimat Mahmoudi, Jalal Azizi, Mehdi Amin-Amin, Sirous Rowshani and Ghodratollah Rowhani.	Tehran	They represented the eight members of the National Spiritual Assembly, They were arrested during a National Spiritual Assembly meeting.

2.1.2 Arbitrary Executions in 1988

<p>Name: Behnam Pashaie</p> <p>Province: Tehran</p> <p>Date of Execution: November 1988 (day unknown)</p>	<p>Throughout his life, Behnam encountered terrible ordeals for being a Bahá'í. His house was burnt down, he was dismissed from employment, he was arrested and imprisoned for 7 months in Semnan and later transferred to Evin prison, was banned from visitation for over a year and was tortured severely while suffering greatly from poor functioning of his kidney. His body was not returned to his family; he was possibly buried by the authorities.</p>
<p>Name: Iraj Afshin</p> <p>Province: Tehran</p> <p>Date of execution: 26 November 1988</p>	<p>After the Islamic Revolution, his salary was discontinued on the basis of his adherence to the Bahá'í Faith. On 29 January 1986, he was arrested in his residence and for a period of six months there was no news of his whereabouts. For approximately two years he was transferred from one prison to the next until 26 November 1988, when he was executed by the firing squad. The news of his execution was communicated to his family one week after. His body was not returned to his</p>

	family; he was possibly buried by the authorities.
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2.2 Arbitrary Arrests, Home Raids, Detentions and Sentencing

After the Islamic Revolution, a distressing pattern of arbitrary arrests has persisted, disproportionately affecting Bahá'í individuals. Bahá'ís are commonly charged with “membership in such [Bahá'í] administration” pursuant to Article 499 of the Penal Code and “teaching of Bahaism in opposition to the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran” pursuant to Article 500 of the Penal Code.

This unjust practice is fuelled by constitutional non-recognition and discrimination, as detailed above, subjecting Iranian Bahá'ís to a relentless cycle of arrests, trials, and imprisonments. False charges, such as espionage and alleged "political" crimes, are imposed on them, despite their Faith's prohibition of partisan political involvement. Some individuals remain in detention without formal charges. A notable case involves the 2008 arrest and imprisonment of seven national-level Bahá'í leaders, including Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kalamabadi, who had their sentences extended for another decade in December 2022.

Unjustly long prison terms are handed down on fabricated charges like "membership of the deviant Bahá'í sect" or "social activities with the intention of propagating the heretical Bahá'í sect." Humanitarian efforts by Bahá'í community members, such as teaching underprivileged children and aiding earthquake victims, are also criminalised.

Currently, at least 70 individuals are either in detention or serving prison sentences, marking the highest number in the past six years. Additionally, around 1,200 Bahá'ís are mired in ongoing court proceedings or have been sentenced, awaiting summons to serve prison terms. Recent court decisions reveal a disturbing trend of increasingly harsh sentences, with tens of Bahá'ís sentenced to a combined total of hundreds of years in prison in recent weeks.

Article 49 of the Iranian Constitution requires the government to prove the legitimacy of such seizures under Islamic law. Misusing this law to justify the confiscations demonstrates the religious motivation behind the seizures. Consequently, numerous arrests within the Bahá'í community have occurred in homes, accompanied by violent home raids. Since October 2023, security agents have searched the homes of nearly 100 Bahá'í families, resulting in complete ransacking. Confiscations have expanded to include not only sacred books and electronic devices but also cash, bank cards, jewellery, property deeds, identity documents, passports, and even home-based tools. The confiscated items, often equivalent to significant amounts of money, are rarely returned, constituting state-sponsored theft. Armed agents have further intimidated Bahá'ís through physical violence, verbal aggression, and even threats at gunpoint.

Alborz

- 1) **5 August 2023:** Mahsa Tirgar Bahnamiri, Ramleh Tirgrnejad, Elham Shareghi Arani, Nakisa Sadeghi, Sadaf Sheikhzadeh, Shahrzad Mastouri, and Negin Rezaie were transferred to Kachoui

prison in Karaj. Simultaneously, Kamyar Habibi and Saman Ostovar were sent to Karaj Central Penitentiary to serve their sentences. In June of this year, Branch 12 of Alborz Appeal Court confirmed their convictions along with four others. The 14 Bahá'ís were collectively sentenced to forty years and seven months in prison, along with additional punishments, in a joint case.

- 2) **7 November 2023:** Ten Bahá'ís in Karaj were arrested, including Mr. Sahba Taef, Mr. Shervin Shabrokh, Ms. Nika Esmailpour (*see also 2.3*) Mr. Babak Zeinali, Mrs. Iren Rahmani, Mr. Iman Ehsani, and Mr Foad Taefi. At the time of the arrests, the officers searched the homes of each of these individuals.

15 November 2023: Each of these individuals were notified that they face charges of "being a member of a group with the intention of disrupting national security" and "propaganda against the regime"..

17 November 2023: It was learned that Mr Foad Taefi, despite 10 days since his arrest, remains in detention without charge. This man suffers from thyroid disease and requires regular medication. When his family tried to deliver the medicines he required, the investigator assigned to his case prevented him from receiving them. Since his arrest, this man has not been permitted to have any contact with his family which has increased their concern for his welfare.

8 December 2023: It was learned that that Babak Zeinali, Sahba Taef, Shervin Shabrokh, Iren Rahmani, Foad Taefi, and Reza Yazdi, all residents of Karaj, remain in custody without trial after the passage of more than a month since their arrest. They have recently all been transferred to Evin Prison in Tehran. They have been charged in the General and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office of Shahriar with “propaganda activity against the regime” and “action against national security and membership in anti-regime groups”.

9 December 2023: Mr. Sahba Taef, Mr. Foad Taefi and Mr. Reza Yazdi were released from Evin prison after each posting a bail of one billion tomans.

16 December 2023: It was learned that Mr. Babak Zeinali, Mr. Shervin Shabrokh and Mrs. Iren Rahmani, all residents of Karaj, remain in detention without trial in Evin Prison despite the passage of 39 days since their arrest. Mr. Zeinali and Mr. Shabrokh are in detention in Ward 4 and Mrs. Rahmani in the women's ward of Evin Prison. These individuals have to date been denied release on bail.

East Azerbaijan

- 3) **24 September 2023:** Mr. Sina Shahri, a resident of Tabriz, was summoned to the sentence enforcement unit of the city's prosecutor's office to serve his sentence. Mr. Shahri was previously sentenced to eight months in prison at the first level court for the charge of "propaganda against the regime". This verdict was later upheld by the Court of Appeal of Tabriz province;

27 September 2023: Mr. Shahri, presented himself at the prison to commence serving his eight-month sentence.

Fars

- 4) **16 August 2023:** It was learned that hat Mr. Behrouz Farzandi who is serving his sentence in Adelabad prison in Shiraz and was sent on medical leave in July 2022 due to heart disease has returned to Adelabad prison to continue his sentence on 29 July this year
- 5) **16 August 2023:** It was learned that the original sentence of Mr. Houshidar Zareie, a resident of Shiraz, was confirmed by the Court of Appeal of Fars Province. He was sentenced to six years of imprisonment, deprivation of social rights and a monetary fine in the primary court. According to the verdict issued by the Court of Appeals headed by Judges Kamran Zare and Shahrokh Jaber, he was sentenced to six years in prison for the charge of “propaganda against the regime, and sectarian propaganda in favour of groups opposed to the regime”. As an additional punishment, he was sentenced to be deprived of some social rights for five years, banned from working in cyberspace and banned from leaving the country with the cancellation of his passport for two years and to pay a fine of five hundred million tomans. With the application of Article 134 of the Islamic Penal Code, the term of the imprisonment will be limited to five years.

21 October 2023, The sentence imposed on Mr. Houshidar Zareie of five-years of home-based imprisonment with movement restriction by electronic ankle band monitoring was executed. Another part of his conviction, to pay a fine of 50 million Tomans, was implemented the previous day

- 6) **16 October 2023:** Mr. Hasan Salehi, Mr. Vahid Dana and Mr. Saied Abedi, all residents of Shiraz, were each sentenced by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court to a total of six years, one month and seventeen days of home imprisonment and movement restriction with electronic ankle bands, plus fines and social exclusions. According to the verdict, Messrs. Salehi, Dana and Abedi were sentenced to two years, seven months, and sixteen days of imprisonment under the charge of "membership in an illegal sect and enemies of the regime with the intention of disrupting the security of the country", and each to a further three years, six months, and one day of imprisonment for the charge of "sectarian propaganda activity contrary to the holy Islamic law". The electronic ankle band system limits their movement to within a thousand-metre range of their residence. In addition to the ankle band imprisonment, they were each sentenced to pay a fine of thirty-seven million and one hundred thousand Tomans in cash and to be deprived of some social rights for fifteen years as additional punishment.

Gilan

- 7) **26 September 2023:** Mr. Homayoun Khanlari (*see also 2.5*) who was previously sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment, was arrested and sent to Rasht Prison to serve his sentence.

Hamadan

- 8) **7 November 2023:** Nine Bahá'ís living in Hamadan were arrested by security forces, and the homes of many other Bahá'ís in the city were subjected to home invasions and searches. The identity of some of those who were arrested are: Mr. Naim Aghdasi (*see also 2.4*) Ms. Neda Mohebbi Ms. Jaleh Rezaie, Mrs. Atefeh Zahedi, Mrs. Zarrin Ahadzadeh, Mrs. Farideh Ayyoubi and Ms. Noura Ayyoubi (*see also 2.3 and 2.4*) Simultaneously with these arrests, the homes of many other Bahá'ís in Hamadan were searched by security agents, including those of Mr. Ata Rajabi and his wife Mrs. Zarrin Ahadzadeh, Mr. Kioumars Rashedi, Mr. Naim Aghdasi, Mr. Mozaffar Ayyoubi and Mrs. Farideh Ayyoubi and Ms. Noura Ayyoubi, Mr. Masoud Azarnoush and his wife Mrs. Atefeh Zahedi (*see also 2.3*) Mrs. Shoghangiz Saadatmand Manshadi (*see also 2.2.1*) Mrs. Khoshgol Rezaie, Mr. Hasan Rezaie and Ms. Jaleh Rezaie, Mr. Saman Khodayari, Mrs. Pوران Habibi (Khandel), Mr. Mehdi Khandel, Mrs. Jinous Shadabi, Mrs. Akhtar Kosari (Naiemi) (*see also 2.3.1*) and Mr Mohebbi. A large number of agents went to each home and conducted the searches.

Isfahan

- 9) **14 August 2023:** Mr. Arash Nabavi, an Isfahan resident, was arrested at his home by Ministry of Intelligence agents who conducted a search and confiscated personal belongings, including books, mobile phones, and tablets. His family was informed that he is under interrogation, but no details about the reasons for his arrest, his location, or charges against him have been provided. Mr. Nabavi resides with his parents in Isfahan.
- 10) **16 September 2023:** Houshmand Rouzbehan and Foroud Bahamin, residents of Baharestan were arrested by security forces. Mr. Rouzbehan was released the following day on bail. To date there is no information concerning the situation of Mr. Bahamin, or any details about any charges against both of them.

Khorasan Razavi

- 11) **12 November 2023:** It was learned that Mr. Sirous Zabihi Moghaddam (*see also 2.5*) a resident of Mashhad, was sentenced to a total of eight years in prison by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad. According to the verdict, he was sentenced to seven years in prison for the charge of "being a member of a group with the intention of disrupting national security" and one year in prison for the charge of "propaganda against the regime". The sentence is subject to appeal.

Mazandaran

- 12) **4 December 2023:** It was learned that Soha Sabeti, Behrouz Rahmani and Sanaz Alizadeh Roshankouhi, all residents of Sari, were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, fines and

supplementary punishments. According to the verdict issued by Branch 1 of the Sari Revolutionary Court and notified to their lawyer on 28 November 2023, Mrs. Soha Sabeti, has been sentenced to 33 months imprisonment, a 37.5 million toman fine and a 13 year ban from any educational and cultural activities, for the charges of "membership in a group with the intention of disrupting the security of the country" and "deviant educational and propaganda activity contradicting or interfering with the Holy Sharia of Islam". Mr. Behrouz Rahmani and Ms. Sanaz Alizadeh Roshankouhi were each sentenced to pay a fine of 25 million tomans and banned from any educational and cultural activities for ten years for the charge of "deviant educational and propaganda activity contradicting or interfering with the Holy Sharia of Islam". The court hearing on their charges was held on 7 November 2023.

North Khorasan

- 13) **13 November 2023:** Mr. Masoud Mahmoudi from Shirvan was arrested by six agents from the Bojnoord Intelligence Department, who searched his home and confiscated mobile phones, computers, and Bahá'í-related books. Mr. Mahmoudi, suffering from a medical condition, was not allowed to take necessary medications into detention. The lack of information about the reasons for his arrest or his whereabouts has heightened concerns for his welfare.

Tehran

- 14) **12 August 2023:** It was learned that Hami Bahadori, serving a five-year sentence in Evin prison, faces health issues but is denied proper medical care. Despite recommendations from the prison clinic for external treatment, relevant authorities have hindered his referral to a hospital, raising concerns for his well-being. His imprisonment stems from charges of "assembly and collusion" and "propaganda against the regime," initially linked to protests but later connected to Bahá'í community activities. Additionally, he faces a two-year travel ban, and personal property, including electronics and gold, has been seized. Article 134 of the Islamic Penal Code enforces his five-year imprisonment.

As of **22 November 2023**, he has been denied access to proper medical treatment while serving his sentence in Evin prison. He is currently suffering from multiple medical conditions which are exacerbated by his confinement and his requests for hospitalisation have been denied.

- 15) **13 August 2023**, Jamaloddin Khanjani, one of the former members of the Yaran of the Bahá'í community of Iran and his daughter Maria (*see also 2.3*) were arrested at their home and taken to Evin prison.
- 16) **13 November, 2023:** It was learned that after 118 days in Evin Prison, Kayvan Rahimian's arrest continued, with the court hearing held on November 1, 2023. His arrest order was extended for the fourth consecutive month on October 30, and authorities have blocked his temporary release on bail. The nature of the charges remains undisclosed.

- 17) **7 December 2023:** It was learned that Mr. Ataollah Zafar, a 79-year-old Bahá'í who is serving a two-year sentence in Evin prison, was transferred to Taleghani hospital on Monday, 4 December 2023, due to his poor physical condition, and remains hospitalised there. Due to his advanced age, he is suffering from a number of age-related conditions including cardiovascular disease. Mr. Zafar was arrested by security forces on 1 May 2023, and shortly thereafter, he was transferred from the detention centre of the Ministry of Intelligence, known as ward 209 of Evin prison, to the general ward of the prison.
- 18) **10 December 2023:** It was learned that that Mrs. Saiedeh Khozouei, Ms. Saba Sefidi, Mr. Iraj Shakour, Mrs. Samira Ebrahimi, Mr. Pedram Abhar and Mr. Arsalan Yazdani were sentenced to a combined total of 29 years and ten months in prison by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeal of Tehran Province headed by Judge Abbas Ali Houzan. Mrs. Saiedeh Khozouei and Mr. Arsalan Yazdani each sentenced to five years in prison, under the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime” and to a further one year in prison for the charge of “propaganda activities against the regime”. Mr. Shakour and Mr. Abhar were each sentenced to five years in prison, under the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime”. Mrs. Samira Ebrahimi was sentenced to three years and five months in prison for the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime” and a further one year in prison for the charge of “propaganda against the regime”. Ms. Saba Sefidi was sentenced to three years and five months in prison for the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime”. The sentencing of the initial Revolutionary Court decision was for a total of 32 years and 10 months and was reduced in this judgement as a result of the acquittal of Iraj Shakour, Saba Sefidi and Pedram Abhar of the charge of propaganda against the regime. According to the verdict, all of their property which was seized during their arrests, has been confiscated for the benefit of the government.

11 December 2023: It was learned on 11 December that Mrs. Saiedeh Khozouei, Ms. Saba Sefidi, Mr. Iraj Shakour, Mrs. Samira Ebrahimi (*see also 2.3*) Mr. Pedram Abhar and Mr. Arsalan Yazdani were sentenced to a combined total of 29 years and ten months in prison by Branch 36 of the Court of Appeal of Tehran Province headed by Judge Abbas Ali Houzan. The verdict was issued on 10 December 2023. Mrs. Saiedeh Khozouei and Mr. Arsalan Yazdani each sentenced to five years in prison, under the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime” and to a further one year in prison for the charge of “propaganda activities against the regime”. Mr. Shakour and Mr. Abhar were each sentenced to five years in prison, under the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime”. Mrs. Samira Ebrahimi was sentenced to three years and five months in prison for the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime” and a further one year in prison for the charge of “propaganda against the regime”. Ms. Saba Sefidi was sentenced to three years and five months in prison for the charge of “membership in a group opposing the regime”.

19) **30 September 2023:** Ms. Vida Ahrari, Ms. Mojgan Basiri, Ms. Shokoufeh Basiri and Mr. Jamal Ghadirzadeh, all residents of Yazd, were arrested by security agents and taken to an unknown location. They were all guests at Ms. Basiri's house when the agents entered the house and arrested them. After their arrest, the officers went and searched the houses of each of the women. To date no information has been received about the reasons for their arrest or their whereabouts.

6 October 2023: It was learned that that Ms. Vida Ahrari, Ms. Mojgan Basiri, Ms. Shokoufeh Basiri and Mr. Jamal Ghadirzadeh, all residents of Yazd, despite the passage of a week since their arrest, remain in one of the detention centres of the Intelligence Department of Yazd. Together with Mr. Ahmad Naimi and Mr. Iman Rashidi, who were also recently arrested in Yazd, are facing charges of “propaganda activity against the regime”.

17 October 2023: It was learned that that Mr. Ahmad Naimi, Mr. Jamal Ghadirzadeh, Ms. Vida Ahrari, Ms. Mojgan Basiri and Ms. Shokoufeh Basiri (*see also 2.3*) all residents of Yazd, remain detained in one of the detention centres of the Intelligence Department of Yazd. Despite the passage of more than twelve days since their arrest and repeated requests for information from the security and judicial authorities by their families, the relevant officials have refused to provide any information regarding their situation. They also face severe restrictions on making phone calls to their families.

20) **17th November, 2023:** It was learned that Mr. Iman Rashidi, a resident of Yazd, despite the passage of forty-three days since his arrest, remains in the detention centre of the Yazd Intelligence Department, without trial. He faces severe restrictions with communications and is only rarely able to make phone calls to his family.

1 December, 2023: It was learned that Mr. Iman Rashidi, a resident of Yazd, despite fifty-seven days since his arrest, remains in detention without trial in Yazd. Recently his arrest order was extended for another month. Shortly after his arrest he was transferred from the detention centre of Yazd Intelligence Department to the prison in Yazd.

2.3 Women Disproportionately Affected

Amidst this escalating pattern of attacks against the Bahá'ís, over two-thirds of those arrested and detained have been women, predominantly in their twenties and thirties. In some cases, they have been forcibly separated from their young children. Many of the raids on families with young children occurred when the children were present, intensifying fear and panic within the families. In one recent case, a young woman was arrested and jailed for five years merely for making enquiries with authorities about

the burial of her grandmother, separating her for the next five years from her five-year old daughter. Another woman with two children was recently imprisoned for 10 years after spending a year in detention without trial. Many of the arrested individuals have been detained without trial for extended periods, some in local prisons and others at specialised Ministry of Intelligence detention facilities. Several current cases have been in detention for periods of several months, and one for more than 247 days, each without trial and while being denied release on bail. These individuals were arrested for reasons which include providing social services to disadvantaged groups, including Iranian and Afghan children and the victims of a recent earthquake, which “the rest of the world would consider as providing community service”.

A concerning recent development emerged on 23 October, when agents of the Ministry of Intelligence raided ten residences belonging to Bahá'ís in Isfahan, confiscating all mobiles, laptops, flash drives, books, jewellery, identification documents and, in some cases, ownership deeds of the house. Ten innocent Bahá'í women were arrested and taken to an unknown location, with one being only 19 years old. Following these arrests, intelligence agents went from house to house, harassing and pressuring neighbours of these Bahá'ís to lodge formal complaints against them. Some reluctantly adhered to the instructions, under duress; yet later, some apologised to the Bahá'ís for accusations they were forced to make by security forces.

The following table shows the reported cases of arrests and imprisonments of Bahá'í women since August 2023. This is not an exhaustive list and is the minimum number of Bahá'í women arrested during this period.

Name	Province	Date of report
Mahsa Tirgar Bahnamir	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Ramleh Tirgrnejad	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Elham Shareghi Arani	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Nakisa Sadeghi	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Sadaf Sheikhzadeh	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Shahrzad Mastouri	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Negin Rezaie	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Sabin Yazdani	Alborz	6-Aug-2023
Suzan Eid Mohammadzadegan	Mazandaran	15-Aug-2023

Name	Province	Date of report
Mahsa Tirgar Bahnamir	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Niousha Badiie Sabet	Mazandaran	16-Aug-2023
Shabnam Tebyanian	Senman	21-Aug-2023
Anisa Fanaian,	Senman	21-Aug-2023
Roya Andakhs (and 7-year old daughter)	Mazandaran	30-Aug-2023
Roya Malakouti	Khorasan Razavi	30-Aug-2023
Sahar Mohebpour	Fars	26-Sep-2023
Roxana Vojdani	Fars	26-Sep-2023
Setareh Taami	Fars	26-Sep-2023
Bahareh Ghaderi	Fars	26-Sep-2023
Vida Ahrari	Yazd	30-Sep-2023
Mojgan Basiri	Yazd	30-Sep-2023
Shokoufeh Basiri	Yazd	30-Sep-2023
Neda Badakhsh	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Arezou Sobhanian	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Yeganeh Rouhbakhsh	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Mojgan Shahrezaie	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Parastou Hakim	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023

Name	Province	Date of report
Mahsa Tirgar Bahnamir	Alborz	5-Aug-2023
Yeganeh Agahi	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Bahareh Lotfi	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Shana Shoghifar	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Negin Khademi	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Neda Emadi	Isfahan	23-Oct-2023
Neda Mohebbi	Hamadan	7-Nov-2023
Jaleh Rezaie	Hamadan	7-Nov-2023
Atefeh Zahedi	Hamadan	7-Nov-2023
Zarrin Ahadzadeh	Hamadan	7-Nov-2023
Farideh Ayyoubi	Hamadan	7-Nov-2023
Noura Ayyoubi	Hamadan	7-Nov-2023
Nika Esmailpour	Alborz	7-Nov-2023
Iren Rahmani	Alborz	7-Nov-2023
Yekta Fahandej Saadi	Fars	18-Dec-2023
Shiva Khalili	Mazandaran	20-Dec-2023
Nafisa Saadatyar	Golestan	21-Dec-2023

1) **Case of Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi**

[Mrs. Mahvash Sabet \(Shahriari\)](#) (see Annex 2) and [Fariba Kamalabadi](#) (see Annex 3) two prominent female figures in the Bahá'í Faith, and former members of the Yárán, an informal leadership group overseeing the basic needs of the Iranian Bahá'í community, endured a decade-long imprisonment following their arrest in 2008. In 2022, five years post-release, Mrs. Sabet and Mrs. Kamalabadi, the sole female members, were once again detained, ultimately sentenced to a second decade in prison on December 11 2022, by Tehran's Revolutionary Court. The details of their case since August 2023 are as follows:

10 August 2023: It was learned that the 10-year imprisonment sentences for Mahvash Sabet and Fariba Kamalabadi were upheld by the Tehran Province Court of Appeal. Initially sentenced by the Revolutionary Court, Tehran, Mrs. Sabet, aged 70, faces health challenges in prison, requiring outside hospital treatment.

25 November 2023: Mrs. Sabet has been banned from making phone calls. This is a retaliatory response by the prison authorities to a recently published letter in which she wrote a description of her life and imprisonment.

Additional incidents of arrests and sentences that have affected Bahá'í women since August 2023 are detailed below:

Alborz

- 2) **6 August 2023:** Ms. Sabin Yazdani went to Kachui prison in Karaj to serve her three-year prison term. She was previously sentenced by the Karaj Revolutionary Court to 3 years imprisonment, 5 years deprivation of social rights, a 2 year ban on residence in Alborz province, a 2 year ban on leaving the country and a 2 year ban on involvement in any educational and cultural activities.
- 3) **16 November 2023:** It was reported that Nika Esmailpour (*see also 2.2*) who has a medical condition, has been denied access to necessary medications during detention, raising concerns for her welfare

Ears

- 4) **26 September: 2023:** Ms. Sahar Mohebpour, Ms. Roxana Vojdani, Ms. Setareh Taami and Mrs. Bahareh Ghaderi, all residents of Shiraz, were arrested by intelligence agents and taken to an unknown location. Ms. Mohebpour and Ms. Vojdani were arrested at their workplaces, and Ms.

Taami and Mrs. Ghaderi were arrested at their homes. The agents also searched their houses and confiscated some of their personal belongings, including religious books, laptops and mobile phones.

17 October 2023: It was learned that all four women remain in detention without charge. Despite the passage of more than 18 days since their arrest and repeated requests by their families for information from judicial authorities, the relevant authorities have refused to provide any information regarding the situation of these four women. This has caused significant concern for their families and relatives. To date Ms Taami has been permitted one brief telephone call with her family. As at the time of writing no information has been obtained about the reasons for their arrest, where they are being detained, or the nature of any charges against them.

- 5) **18 December 2023:** Six security agents went to the home of Mrs. Yekta Fahandej Saadi and arrested her. The agents threatened and intimidated the family, searched the house, and confiscated personal belongings, including books, jewellery and other items engraved with Bahá'í symbols, cash, children's toys, laptops and printers. The security agents also tore up and destroyed a number of property documents, including the house deed. Some family photos were also torn and discarded in a closet.

Gilan

- 6) **21 August 2023:** Mrs. Sousan Badavam, a resident of Rasht, has been sentenced to four years, one month, and seventeen days in prison with a ten-year deprivation of social rights by Branch 3 of the Rasht Revolutionary Court, presided over by Mehdi Rasekhi. The charges include 3 years, 6 months, and 1 day for "deviant educational or propaganda activities contrary to Islamic law," and an additional 7 months and 16 days for "propaganda activity against the regime." This was upheld by the Court of Appeal of Gilan Province on 24 October 2023.

Golestan

- 7) **5 August 2023:** Mrs. Neda Abdian was handed a sentence of five-months in prison plus a 10 million tuman fine for the charge of "propaganda against the regime" and "teaching contrary to the holy religion of Islam". Due to her health condition she intends to appeal and request mitigation in the sentence.
- 8) **21 December 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Nafisa Saadatyar (*see also 2.7*) a resident of Gorgan, was sentenced by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Gorgan to one year of imprisonment and four years deprivation of some social rights for the charge of "propaganda against the regime".

Hamadan

- 9) **7 November 2023:** Security agents extensively searched 33 homes and six women were arrested: Zarrindokht Ahadzadeh, Jaleh Rezaie, Farideh Ayyoubi, Noura Ayyoubi, Atefeh Zahedi, Neda Mohebbsi (*see also 2.3 and 2.5*) They remained in the detention centre of the Hamadan Intelligence Department after the passage of fifteen days since their arrest. To date they have been denied release on bail. All have faced severe restrictions on making phone calls to their families. No information is available about the reasons for their arrest or the nature of any charges against them.

Isfahan

- 10) **23 October 2023:** Agents of the Ministry of Intelligence, in groups of at least nine members, raided ten residences belonging to Bahá'ís in a number of districts across Isfahan. They conducted a complete search of each residence and confiscated all mobile telephones, laptops, flash drives, books and pamphlets, portraits and photographs, gold and jewellery, as well as identification documents such as national ID cards and passports, and, in some cases, ownership deeds of the house. Ten Bahá'í women, Neda Badakhsh, Arezou Sobhanian, Yeganeh Rouhbakhsh, Mojgan Shahrezaie, Parastou Hakim, Yeganeh Agahi, Bahareh Lotfi, Shana Shoghifar, Negin Khademi and Neda Emadi, were arrested and taken to an unknown location. One of the women is just 19 years old. Mrs. Negin Khademi (Soltani), Ms. Mojgan Shahrezaie, and Ms. Yeganeh Rouhbakhsh, residents of Isfahan remain in detention in Dolat Abad prison in Isfahan without trial after more than a month since their arrest.

8 November 2023: It was learned that the Bahá'í women from Isfahan remain in custody by order of Sajjad Pakdelnia, the investigator of their case. These women have not been permitted to receive visits from their families and many of them have been sent to hospital for treatment during detention. To date, there is no information about the reasons for their hospitalisation.

- 11) **22 November 2023:** It was learned that Yeganeh Agahi, Arezou Sobhanian, Yeganeh Rouhbakhsh, Shana Shoghifar, Mojgan Shahrezaie and Negin Khademi remain in detention after the passage of a month since their arrest. These six women are being held in the quarantine ward of Dolat Abad prison in Isfahan. It was reported that medical care within this section of the prison is often delayed, with prisoners waiting extended periods for suitable medication. Access to hot water for bathing is also restricted to a brief period each day. Follow-up by the families of these women with the authorities has to date proved unsuccessful, and no information has been provided concerning the reasons for their arrests or the nature of any charges against them.

Kerman

- 12) **11 August 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Nahaleh Shahidi Yazdi (*see also 2.5 and 2.8.3*) a resident of Karaj, and despite the passage of 136 days since her arrest, remains under arrest without charge in Kerman prison. Her home in Karaj has been sealed, her house key was taken

from her personal belongings and her home was searched without her being present. Agents confiscated her laptop computer, and some other personal belongings.

12 October 2023: It was learned that Mrs. Nahaleh Shahidi Yazdi, a resident of Karaj, despite the passage of more than six months since her arrest, remains incarcerated in Kerman prison without trial. The defence lawyer for Mrs. Shahidi Yazdi finally managed to meet with her after several months without contact. The relevant authorities promised to determine the assignment of her case by the end of the past week, but to date there is still no news of the assignment of the case to the court. She has also been denied the possibility of temporary release on bail.

24 October 2023: It was learned that Mrs. Nahaleh Shahidi Yazdi, a resident of Karaj, despite the passage of two hundred and ten days since her arrest, remains incarcerated in Kerman prison without trial. The court hearing of the case against Mrs. Shahidi Yazdi has not yet been dealt with despite assurances by the authorities. The relevant authorities have also opposed her temporary release on bail.

30 November 2023: It was learned that Ms. Nahaleh Shahidi Yazdi has remained incarcerated in Kerman prison without trial for 247 days since her arrest. In September of this year Ms. Shahidi Yazdi was accused of "propaganda against the regime" and "forming a group with the aim of disrupting the security of the country".

Khorasan Razavi

13) **8 August 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Sanaz Tafazzoli (*see also 2.5 and 2.8.3*) was sentenced to a total of 10 years and 9 months in prison according to the verdict issued by Branch 1 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court headed by Hadi Mansouri. Mrs. Tafazzoli was sentenced to six years and six months in prison for the baseless charge of "forming a group with the intention to disrupt internal security". She was sentenced to a further three years and seven months of imprisonment under the charge of "gathering and colluding with the intention of committing a crime against the security of the country" and another eight months in prison for the charge of "deviant educational or propaganda activity contrary to or disturbing the holy Islamic law in the form of a sect, group, crowd or the like". Other accusations against her were "Owning books and works related to the Bahá'í faith" and "forming an educational group for Bahá'í children".

14) **30 August 2023:** It was learned that after the passage of one month in temporary detention, the arrest warrant for Mrs. Roya Malakouti, was extended for another month. On 22nd October, Mrs. Roya Malakouti commenced her sentence of six years and eight months of imprisonment.

- 15) **21 October 2023:** Ms. Nasim Sabeti, Ms. Azita Foroughi (*see also 2.5*) Ms. Roya Ghane Ezzabadi and Ms. Soheila Ahmadi, all residents of Mashhad, were each sentenced to three years and eight months in prison by the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad headed by Judge Hadi Mansouri. Ms. Nasim Sabeti, Ms. Azita Foroughi, Ms. Roya Ghane Ezzabadi and Ms. Soheila Ahmadi, were each sentenced to three years of imprisonment for the charge of "Membership in a group with the intention of disrupting the country's security" and eight months of imprisonment for the charge of "propaganda against the regime". This verdict is subject to appeal.
- 16) **23 October 2023:** Mrs. Noushin Mesbah was sentenced to three years and eight months in prison by Branch 1 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court headed by Judge Hadi Mansouri. Mrs. Mesbah was sentenced to three years of imprisonment under the charge of "membership in a group with the aim of disrupting the order and security of the country". She was sentenced to a further eight months of imprisonment under the charge of "propaganda activity against the regime". This verdict is subject to appeal.
- 17) **26 October 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Golnoush Nasiri and Mrs. Farideh Moradi (*see also 2.4*) were each sentenced to three years and eight months in prison by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad headed by Judge Hadi Mansouri. Mrs. Nasiri and Mrs. Moradi were sentenced to three years in prison for the charge of "membership in a group with the aim of disrupting the order and security of the country", and a further eight months for the charge of "propaganda activity against the regime". They were denied access to a lawyer during their hearings by order of the Judge. The verdict is subject to appeal.
- 18) **28 November 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Shohreh Salekian, a resident of Mashhad, was sentenced to three years and eight months in prison by the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad. Mrs. Salekian was sentenced to three years of imprisonment on the charge of "membership of group with the aim of disrupting the security of the country" and for a further eight months of imprisonment on the charge of "propaganda against the regime in favour of Bahá'ism". The sentence is subject to appeal.

Mazandaran

- 19) **15 August 2023:** Ms. Suzan Eid Mohammadzadegan, a resident of Babol, was arrested by security forces from her private home without a court order. She has been taken to an unknown location. The lack of news about her whereabouts has created concern for her family. Ms. Niousha Badiiee Sabet, who was a guest at Ms. Eid Mohammadzadegan's home at the time, was also arrested. As of the time of writing there is no information about the reasons for their arrest, or where they are being held, or the charges against them.

16 August 2023: It was learned that Ms. Niousha Badiee Sabet, a 38 year old resident of Tehran was arrested by security forces in Babol on the evening of 15 August 2023 and taken to an unknown location. The lack of news about Ms. Badiee Sabet's fate has caused her family considerable worry. Ms. Badiee Sabet's case is being prosecuted by Branch 2 of the Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor's Office of Babol. Ms. Badiee Sabet is a psychologist and translator and has previously been arrested for her Bahá'í beliefs.

21 August 2023: It was learned that Ms. Suzan Eid Mohammadzadegan and Ms. Niousha Badiee Sabet, remain in detention in Babol prison, and since their arrest they have been denied visits and phone calls with their families. Despite their family's follow-up with the judicial authorities, the relevant officials refuse to provide any clear answers regarding the status of the case and the charges against them. Ms. Eid Mohammadzadegan had recently completed chemotherapy treatment, and at the time of her arrest was receiving continuing medical treatment under the supervision of specialist doctors. However, since her arrest, she has been denied proper medical attention and access to her doctor and required medications.

20) **30 August 2023:** It was learned that in mid-August Mrs. Roya Andakhs, a resident of Qaemshahr, was arrested and detained along with her seven-year-old daughter and was interrogated for several hours at the Ministry of Intelligence Office. Mrs. Andakhs lives alone with her daughter. At the Ministry of Intelligence Office, they separated her from her daughter and held each one in a separate room, during which time Mrs. Andakhs could hear her daughter distressed and crying in the other room. After several hours of interrogations, they returned her mobile telephone and laptop, and the mother and daughter were released.

Semnan

21) **21 August 2023:** Mrs. Shabnam Tebyanian, a resident of Semnan, was arrested by security agents and taken to an unknown location. Mrs. Tebyanian was arrested by the security forces as she was about to leave her home. The agents searched her house and confiscated a number of personal items, books and documents. Follow-ups by her family regarding her whereabouts have been unsuccessful. Mrs. Tebyanian was later released on bail on 27 August 2023.

22) **21 August 2023:** Mrs. Anisa Fanaian, a resident of Semnan, was arrested by security agents and taken to an unknown location. Security agents went to Mrs. Fanaian's home and arrested her. At the time of the arrest, the agents searched the house for about three hours and confiscated her mobile phone, laptop and all books and other documents related to the Bahá'í Faith. The warrant that was presented by the security forces for the arrest of Mrs. Fanaian was handwritten. Mrs. Fanaian was later released on bail on 28 August 2023.

25 November 2023: Mrs. Anisa Fanaian, who is currently released on bail, was advised of two new charges against her after being summoned to appear at the Semnan Prosecutor's Office. At

the time of her arrest, Mrs. Fanaian was accused of “deviant missionary and educational activities contrary to the Holy Sharia of Islam”, and after appearing in the Semnan courthouse, she has been further charged with “propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran” and “forming and managing a group with the aim of acting against national security”.

23) **7 October 2023:** It was learned that that following the rejection of an application for appeal by the court, Mrs. Shahdokht Khanjani, a resident of Semnan, was sentenced to 16 years in prison, a 50 million Tomans fine and deprivation of social rights by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Semnan. Mrs. Khanjani was sentenced to 10 years in prison under the charge of "forming a group with the intention of disrupting the security of the country", to a further 5 years in prison for the charge of "promoting the deviant and heretical Bahá'í sect", and an additional one year of imprisonment for the charge of "propaganda activity against the regime". She has also been sentenced to a fine of 50 million tomans, 15 years of deprivation of social rights, a two-year ban on membership and activity in any political, social and cultural groups and parties, and a two year ban on activities in cyberspace. Her plea hearing was previously held on 10 September 2023 in Branch 1 of the Semnan Revolutionary Court.

Tehran

24) **2 September 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Maria Khanjani, the daughter of Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani with whom she was arrested, remains in custody in Ward 209 of Evin prison, despite the passage of twenty-one days since her arrest. To date there is no information about the reason for her arrest or the charges against her.

25) **8 October 2023:** It was learned that that the sentences against three individuals involved in assisting the Tehran Bahá'í community with burials at the Bahá'í cemetery of Tehran, Messrs Valiollah Ghedamian, Ataollah Zafar and Mansour Amini, were reduced on appeal. Each was originally sentenced to five years imprisonment. Branch 36 of the court of appeal of Tehran Province, headed by Judge Abbas Ali Houzan, reduced the prison sentences of Messrs Ghedamian and Zafar to two years, and that of Mr. Amini to three years of imprisonment. The sentence against Mrs. Shadi Shahidzadeh, the only woman of this group, remained unchanged at five years of imprisonment.

26) **20 December 2023:** Ms. Shiva Khalili was arrested after presenting herself at the Babol Prosecutor's Office and was transferred to prison in Babol to serve her one-year sentence. In December 2021, Ms. Khalili was sentenced to one year in prison and the confiscation of her mobile phone as an "instrument of crime" by Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Babol for the charge of “propaganda against the regime”. In early 2022, the sentence was upheld by Branch 2 of the Court of Appeal of Mazandaran province.

Yazd

27) **19 October 2023:** It was learned that Ms. Shokoufeh Basiri (*see also 2.2*) a resident of Yazd, remains in the detention centre of the Yazd Intelligence Department. Despite enquiries by family members, the relevant officials have refused to provide any information about her situation. Despite the passage of fourteen days since the arrest, the family have only received a small number of brief telephone conversations with her.

2.3.1 Targeting elderly women

On 7 November, security agents extensively searched 33 homes in Hamadan province (*see also 2.2 and 2.4*) belonging to Bahá'ís, seizing personal items like identification documents, electronic devices, religious books, cash, property deeds, and gold items. Notably, these incidents disproportionately targeted elderly Bahá'í women, some in their 80s, subjecting them to abuse and intimidation. This highlights the brutality of the Iranian government's tactics. Cases include but are not limited to:

- Mrs. [Parvaneh Seifi](#), an elderly lady who was so stressed that she suffered a heart attack and had to be taken by ambulance to a heart clinic for resuscitation.
- Mrs. [Rouhiyyeh Rashidi \(Abdi\)](#), another elderly lady, became seriously ill and suffered a mild stroke and required resuscitation by paramedics. She was later transferred to a hospital.
- Mrs. [Khodabakhsh Khodayari](#), another ailing elderly woman, became very stressed as a result of the home invasion and was transferred to the local hospital's Intensive Care Unit.
- Mrs. [Akhtar Naiemi](#), who suffers from Alzheimer's disease and is cared for by a nurse, was subjected to aggressive behaviour and intimidation by security agents. When the nurse refused to open the door, they then broke windows and the door to enter the home, and aggressively commenced their search.
- The home of Mrs. [Shoghangiz Saadatmand Manshadi \(Sorourian\)](#), an 82-year old woman, was forcefully broken down, her belongings searched and upended and her residence damaged in her absence. Her husband was among more than 200 Bahá'ís executed by Iran's government after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

2.4 Surveillance, Home Raids Without Arrests, Interrogations on Bail and Court Summons

In some cases, homes have been subjected to intrusive surveillance through the installation of surveillance cameras trained on the doors of the homes of Bahá'í families, to monitor their activities and visitors. Several of the households that experienced raids were then pressured by the Iranian authorities, which threatened them with serious additional repercussions should they disclose details of their experience to

outside parties. Agents have also deleted smartphone videos, CCTV videos, and other records, in an effort to eliminate any evidence of their actions against the Bahá'í community.

A notable case involves the installation of surveillance cameras in the homes of Bahá'ís in Sistan and Baluchestan. This tactic is aimed at meticulously identifying and monitoring Bahá'ís, despite constituting a clear invasion of privacy and an affront to human dignity.

Additionally, many Bahá'ís are summoned and interrogated at the local Ministry of Intelligence Office. Those that have been released on bail are required to post exorbitant amounts either in cash or by posting their property deeds as collateral. Bails for Bahá'ís are now typically on the order of 20 to 80 times the annual salary of an individual employed in government service in Iran, placing a heavy financial burden on these Bahá'ís and their extended families. A recent example was of a young woman from Shiraz, in her early twenties, being required to post bail of an amount close to US \$200,000, a vast sum for any ordinary Iranian citizen.

The following are cases of home raids and confiscations (without subsequent arrests) as well as interrogations on bail since August 2023:

Alborz

- 1) **30 August 2023:** It was learned that Mr. Tafakouri in Fardis was summoned and interrogated for approximately 2 hours. It appears that this resulted from a complaint made by one of his neighbours about his Bahá'í activities.

Fars

- 2) **4 November 2023:** The home of Ms. Roya Sheikhi, a resident of Shiraz, was searched by security forces. Eight agents of the intelligence department entered Ms. Sheikhi's home and undertook a detailed search for three hours. All electronic devices, including the mobile phones of all of her family members, laptops, religious books, national identity cards, passports, and some work equipment were seized and taken away. To date, no information has been obtained about the reasons for the search of her home.

Hamadan

- 3) **7 November 2023:** 33 Bahá'í homes faced invasive searches, with agents using false pretences. Belongings, including personal documents and gold, were seized. The crackdown involved arrests, violence, and threats at gunpoint. Among those affected were Rozita Azarnoush, Masoud Azarnoush, Noghreh Azarnoush, Naim Aghdasi Yekta (*see also 2.2*), Behnam Ayyoubi, Farideh Ayyoubi (*see also 2.2 and 2.3*) Mozaffar Ayyoubi (*see also 2.7*) Manouchehr Ayyoubi, Kaveh Bayati, Enayat Takapouie, Arezou Jahangiri, Ziba Jahangiri, Shoja Jahangiri, Pوران Khandel, Mehran Khandel, Khodabakhsh Khodayari, Afshin Rashidi, Hamid Rashidi, Kioumars

Rashidirad, Ataollah Rajab-Ali, Khoshgol Rezaie, Hasan Rezaie Samoud, Shoghangiz Saadatmand, Parviz Seifi, Rouhiyyeh Rashidi (Abdi), Hamid Azizi, Pegah Mobin, Parviz Maboudi, Farhang Maboudi, Aminollah Moghimi, Ramin Moghimi, Akhtar Naiemi, Akbar Nourani. Some warrants were issued under family members' names. Elderly individuals faced severe stress, with three women hospitalised due to the invasions: Parvaneh Seifi, Rouhiyyeh Rashidi (Abdi), and an ailing Khodayari. Akhtar Naiemi, suffering from Alzheimer's, endured aggression. Shoghangiz Saadatmand Manshadi's home was ransacked in her absence, with a broken door.

- 4) **17 December 2023:** It was learned that on 1 December 2023, four security agents from Khomein, accompanied by an agent from Hamadan, went to the homes of Mr. Laghaollah Baghaie and his son Mr. Nabil Baghaie, which are situated in a two-level building. After carrying out a thorough search of Mr. Nabil Baghaie's home, they took some items with them. As Mr. Laghaollah Baghaie was not at home, they were unable to undertake the search of his home at that time.

Hormozgan

- 5) **24 October 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Maral Rasti was summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence Office of Bandar Abbas supposedly to claim her belongings which were previously confiscated from her home. On arrival at the office she was subjected to a three-hour long interrogation about her activities and relationships with others in the Bahá'í community.

Khorasan Razavi

- 6) **15 August 2023:** Mrs. Elham Salari was contacted by the Ministry of Intelligence Office of Mashhad to answer a series of questions. Mrs Salari was previously arrested on 6 October 2022. On 17 August Mrs Salari and her husband Mr. Farbod Foroughian were both questioned by the Ministry of Intelligence. After a period of questioning both she and her husband were released, but she was told that she would be summoned again.
- 7) **13 September 2023:** It was learned that Mr. Sirous Zabihi Moghaddam (*see also 2.2*) a Bahá'í from Mashhad, was contacted by the Ministry of Intelligence Office of Mashhad and asked to go to the Office to receive the return of confiscated items which had previously been taken from his home. When he arrived at the office, some of his documents were returned to him, but his mobile phone, laptop and memory cards were further withheld by the authorities until formally released in writing by the magistrate.
- 8) **11 November 2023:** Ms. Houriyeh Mohseni was summoned to Branch 903 of the Mashhad Prosecutor's Office. Ms. Mohseni was accused of "forming or managing or being a member of a group with the intention of disrupting the country's security". The case investigator, Mr. Mansouri

announced that the time and branch of the court will be decided soon to hear the case against Ms. Mohseni. Ms. Mohseni was then released after posting bail of three billion tomans.

Mazandaran

- 9) **16 October 2023:** The homes of 5 Bahá'ís residents of Qaemshahr were searched by security agents. At around 6:00 PM, thirty security officers, including five women, first entered the home of Mr. Soheil Haghdoost and searched it. During the search they seized a number of his personal belongings, including books, tablets, and mobile phones from both himself and from eight guests who were present at that time in his house. The agents then went to the home of Mr. Hosein Fanaian and searched it. Three other Bahá'ís were present in his house, Mr. Sohrab Laghaie, Mr. Ebrahim Laghaie and Mr. Foad Laghaie. The officers then went to their three homes and searched them. The agents confiscated personal belongings of these four Bahá'ís, including their books and mobile phones. In addition to the books and electronic devices the agents also confiscated the property deeds and documents of Mr. Haghdoost and Mr. Fanaian.
- 10) **4 December 2023:** It was learned that Melodi Samimi, Hosein Fanaian, Soheil Haghdoost and Raquel Ataeian, residents of Qaemshahr, were summoned to Branch 6 of the Investigation Branch of the Qaemshahr court to face the filing of a case against them. To date no information is available about the nature of any charges or the reasons for filing the case against these Bahá'ís. The homes of Soheil Haghdoost and Hosein Fanaian were raided by security forces on 16 October this year. Mrs. Samimi's daughter was present during the search of Hosein Fanaian's house. When Mrs. Samimi went to Fanaian's house to collect her daughter, she was also searched by security agents and her cell phone was confiscated.

Sistan and Baluchestan

- 11) **5 August 2023:** It was learned that a surveillance camera was installed in front of the house of a Bahá'í family in Zahedan. This camera was installed in a blatant abuse of the right to privacy in order that the movements of the family and their visitors could be monitored. At the time of the installation agents from the Ministry of Intelligence approached some of their neighbours, instructing them to refrain from associating with this family. One of these neighbours was summoned to their office and intimidated and told to disassociate himself from the family.
- 12) **17 December 2023:** It was learned that on Wednesday, 6 December 2023 two women went to the home of Mr. Hamid Eslami in Zahedan and entered the house under the pretext of vaccination screening. Four or five male agents then followed them in and entered the house, saying that they were from the Intelligence Office. A search warrant was issued in the name of Mrs. Mehrnoush Ramezanizadeh (Eslami). During a search of the house which took over 2 hours they confiscated Mrs. Eslami's mobile phone and laptop and her son's laptop and mobile phone. No arrests were made at that time.

Tehran

- 13) **10 November 2023:** It was learned that one of the Bahá'ís from Kermanshah was subjected to interrogation at Imam Khomeini Airport upon his return from Armenia. His passport, mobile phone and other documents were seized.

Yazd

- 14) **14 December 2023:** It was learned that the home of a Bahá'í couple in Yazd was searched by security forces. Mr. Mahmoud Aghdasi and his wife Mrs. Soheila Eslami had invited about thirty relatives and friends to their home on the occasion of their son's marriage. At nine o'clock in the evening, twenty agents of the Intelligence Department entered the house by breaking down the door and searched their house for two hours without presenting a court order. In addition to causing damage to a number of household appliances, the officers seized mobile phones, religious books, personal manuscripts and some jewellery during this search. Due to the tense situation and the violent behaviour of the security agents, a number of guests were severely shaken and stressed by the attack.

2.5 Right to Fair Trial

Given the exclusion of Bahá'ís in Article 12 and 13 of the Constitution, Bahá'ís are deprived of even the fundamental legal and social status granted to most Iranian citizens. The Iranian government has capitalised on this by abusing the legal rights of Bahá'í in court procedures. In legal proceedings, Bahá'ís must ask for justice and protection from the same authorities who are systematically inciting hatred against them and a judicial system built around the laws that codify prejudice against them.

Bahá'ís who are brought to court and put on trial based on false and unjust allegations are often mistreated, devoid of the due legal process. Many Bahá'ís are denied access to their lawyers up until the last moment, and these lawyers are given inadequate time to prepare their arguments. When 24 Bahá'ís were in Gorgan in 2016, their lawyer was threatened during a meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Intelligence and a cleric. When the defendants were finally summoned to court, their lawyer was given only 15 minutes to read 5,000 pages of court documents prior to the court hearing.

In addition, evidence that demonstrates the innocence of the Bahá'ís as well as the peaceful nature of their work is often disregarded or dismissed. Judges are heavily biased and often make crude and defamatory remarks against the defendant Bahá'ís. Nowhere is the official policy of discrimination against Bahá'ís revealed more clearly than in court orders and judgments. In both criminal and civil cases, judges or prosecutors often merely cite the fact that a defendant or plaintiff is a Bahá'í as evidence against them.

Cases since August 2023 include:

Gilan

- 1) **15 August 2023:** Branch 11 of the Court of Appeal in Gilan Province upheld the sentences of Mr. Vesal Momtazi and Mrs. Anisa Samieyan. The couple, sentenced by the Rasht Revolutionary Court, received a combined total of nine years, six months, and four days in prison. Mrs. Samieyan was charged with "propaganda activity against the regime" and "educational activity and deviant propaganda," while Mr. Momtazi faced charges of "propaganda activity against the regime," "insulting the leadership," and "insulting Islamic law," along with a fine. Despite a petition signed by over 50 supporters affirming their lawful actions, the verdict was swiftly confirmed by the Court of Appeal, and their lawyers were denied further engagement with the judge.
- 2) **21 November 2023:** It was learned that Branch 39 of the Supreme Court rejected a request for a retrial for Mr. Homayoun Khanlari (*see also 2.2*) who is currently imprisoned in Lakan prison in Rasht. In addition, his request to serve his sentence under the supervision of electronic ankle band monitoring was also rejected. He has been serving his sentence in Lakan prison in Rasht since 26 September 2023.

Kerman

- 3) **11 August 2023:** The relevant authorities have not permitted Mrs. Shahidi Yazdi's chosen lawyer to have access to her case. The authorities have denied access on the basis that they have not completed their investigations and interrogations and presented it to the prosecutor's office. Mrs. Shahidi Yazdi has selected one lawyer who has resigned due to the uncooperative approach of the judicial officials and she has been forced to select a second lawyer. It was learned that Mrs. Nahaleh Shahidi Yazdi (*see also 2.3 and 2.8.3*) a Karaj resident, was held in Kerman prison for 136 days without charges. Her chosen lawyer has been denied access to her case, with authorities citing ongoing investigations. Mrs. Shahidi Yazdi had to select a second lawyer due to uncooperative judicial officials.

Khorasan Razavi

- 4) **24 November 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Sanaz Tafazzoli (*see also 2.3 and 2.8.3*) a Mashhad resident, is currently serving a ten-year and nine-month prison sentence in Vakil Abad prison in Mashhad. Her sentence was confirmed on appeal in absentia, denying her due process. Mrs. Tafazzoli, unaware of the appeal court's timing, was unable to be legally represented or present a defence. She is now in the process of filing an appeal in the Supreme Court.

- 5) **11 October 2023**, a court session was held in Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad chaired by Hadi Mansouri to hear the charges against Mrs. Golnoush Nasiri and Mrs. Farideh Moradi (*see also 2.2*) During the hearing, Mrs. Nasiri and Mrs. Moradi defended themselves against the charges of "propaganda activity against the regime" and "membership in a group with the aim of disrupting the order and security of the country". They were denied access to a lawyer by the order of the head of the court.
- 6) **14 October 2023**: A court session was held to hear charges laid against Mrs. Noushin Mesbah. During the hearing, which was held in Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad under the chairmanship of Hadi Mansouri, Mrs. Mesbah defended herself against the accusations of "propaganda activity against the regime" and "membership in a group with the aim of disrupting the order and security of the country." She had been denied access to a lawyer by the order of the Judge. Mrs. Mesbah did not appear in person at her hearing, but rather sent her defence statement to the court through the online Sana system after Judge Mansoori refused to accept representation by Mrs. Mesbah's chosen lawyer.
- 7) **17 October 2023**: It was learned that a hearing of charges against Ms. Nasim Sabeti is to be held on Wednesday, 18 October 2023, at Branch 1 of the Revolutionary Court of Mashhad under the chairmanship of Hadi Mansouri. In a joint case, Ms. Sabeti and Ms. Azita Foroughi Motlagh has been charged with "social action with the intention of propagating the false Bahá'í sect and disrupting the country's national security". The judge did not allow them access to a lawyer of their choice and instead offered a court appointed lawyer to defend their case in court.
- 8) **9 December 2023**: A court session was held at Branch 1 of the Mashhad Revolutionary Court, chaired by Hadi Mansouri, to hear the charges against Ms. Houriyeh-Sadat Mohseni (*see also 2.4*) a resident of Mashhad. During the hearing Ms. Mohseni was denied the right to have her lawyer represent her and was forced to defend herself against the charges of "membership of a group with the aim of disrupting the order and security of the country" and "propaganda against the regime".

Mazandaran

- 9) **3 November 2023**: It was learned that the Court of Appeal in Mazandaran Province sentenced 14 Bahá'ís, including Ms. Bita Haghighi and Mrs. Sanaz Hekmatshoar, to 3 years in prison and fines of thirty million tomans each. Mr. Mani Gholinejad, Ms. Negar Darabi, Mr. Sam Samimi, Ms. Mahsa Fathi, Ms. Samiyeh Gholinejad, Mr. Mojir Samimi, Mr. Anis Sanaie, Ms. Afnaneh Nematian, Mr. Basir Samimi, Ms. Hengameh Alipour, Ms. Golban Fallah, and Ms. Nazanin Goli received sentences of two years and one month in prison, with fines of fifty million tomans each. The verdict was verbally communicated, and the accused were denied access to their written verdict or legal representation. They were instructed to pay fines within ten days.
- 10) **9 December 2023**: It was learned that that Ms. Banafsheh Asadian, Mr. Fares Fanaian, Mr. Foad Laghaie, Ms. Zahra Golabian and Ms. Nasim Samimi, all residents of Qaemshahr, each received a text message informing them of the filing of a legal case against them. Not long ago, the homes of

these 5 Bahá'ís and the homes of other Bahá'ís in Qaemshahr were searched by security agents, where they seized a total of 37 mobile phones, a number of laptops and tablets from both the homeowners and their guests. The security agencies have to date refused to return their personal belongings. The names of some of the Bahá'ís whose belongings were seized are as follows: Ms. Sanaz Babaie, Ms. Solmaz Bavili, Ms. Banafsheh Asadian, Mr. Joubin Yousefi, Ms. Nasim Samimi, Mr. Soheil Haghdoost, Mrs. Raquel Ataeian, Ms. Rojina Haghdoost, Mr. Fares Fanaian, Ms. Emilia Fanaian, Mr. Houman Taef, Ms. Anahita Koushk-Baghi, Mr. Ebrahim Laghaie, Mr. Foad Laghaie, Ms. Sepideh Movaffaghi, Ms. Shirin Kasiri, Mr. Samandari, Mr. Sohrab Laghaie, Ms. Zahra Golabian, Mr. Kourosh Rezaie, Ms. Fariba Shirvani, Mr. Nima Rezaie, Mr. Ferdows Rezaie, Ms. Bita Kamali, Ms. Leila Taghvaie, Mrs. Aghdas Safari, Mr. Akbari, Mrs. Sharifinia, Mrs. Fereshtian, Mr. Sepehr Hashemi, Ms. Melodi Samimi, and Mr. Hosein Fanaian.

2.6 Education

An alarming recent development in the Iranian government's ongoing campaign against Bahá'ís' access to higher education surfaced last month. Bahá'í individuals seeking admission to universities were asked to sign a [declaration form](#) renouncing their beliefs as a prerequisite for admission.

Forcing young Bahá'ís to choose between their studies and their faith is a blatant violation of both the right to education and the right to freedom of conscience, religion, or belief. It obstructs opportunities for employment and intellectual development, obliterating their prospects for a fulfilling career and prosperous future. Below are some additional developments that have unfolded since August 2023, concerning the denial of the right to education due to official Iranian state policy:

Alborz

- 1) **10 September 2023:** It was learned that Adib Vali, a Bahá'í imprisoned in Qezel Hesar prison in Karaj, was prevented from registering for university. In August 2023, after the announcement of the results of the national entrance examination on the website of the Educational Assessment and Evaluation Organization (*Sanjish*) Organization, Adib Vali went to this system to register at the university and was met with the message "Your file is under review". He was referred to the centre of the Tehran Assessment Organization to follow up on this issue, but the relevant officials refused to give any clear answers to him regarding this action. Finally, due to the continuation of this situation and the expiration of the deadline for enrolment, this Bahá'í youth has been deprived from continuing his studies at university.

Isfahan

- 2) **29 September 2023:** It was learned that The Ministry of Education has increased its monitoring of the registration of Bahá'í Children into private schools in Isfahan. A number of private schools have now declined to register Bahá'í children.

Various provinces

- 3) **4 September 2023:** It was learned that Bahá'í students who had participated in the National University Entrance Examination and were called to the Educational Assessment and Evaluation Organization (*Sanjish*) to complete the entry and selection process were given forms to complete which contained questions about their personal information, a biography of the applicant, their families and relatives, their activities and travels abroad. The applicants were also given a form comprising a written undertaking requiring them to disassociate themselves from the Institutions of the Bahá'í community in order to be accepted into the university, which appears to be contradictory to the Constitution and basic civil rights. The applicant's acceptance or non-acceptance into the university is contingent on the satisfactory completion of this form. A sample of the written undertaking and its translation is enclosed as Annex 1.
- 4) **4 July 2023:** It was learned that a newly implemented online enrolment process for first grade students in primary schools denied Bahá'í students from registering and being pre-enrolled for schools across the country. The online form required disclosure of religious affiliation but did not include any option for either Bahá'í or other. Some schools refused to enrol students unless the preliminary online enrolment had been completed. Representations were repeatedly made to the Education Ministry to amend the online form; however, these requests did not result in any change to the form for several months. Eventually some of the Bahá'ís engaged a prominent lawyer to take up the case who posted the following quote on social media:

“The elimination of the “other religions” option from the national website for the enrolment of elementary school children violates the education rights of the children of minority religions such as Bahá'ís, and this action is definitely and explicitly contrary to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Articles 28 and 30 regarding the compulsory nature of children's education, the prohibition of the extension of the parents' religion and customs to children, respecting the rights of the parents, and the obligation to observe the children's social rights, such as the right to education.”

It was learned on **17 August 2023** that, as a result of the repeated representations and requests for resolution of this issue by many Bahá'í families to officials at local, provincial and national levels across the country, the pre-enrolment website was finally amended to include an option for “Others” in the religious affiliation field.

2.7 Employment and Economic Oppression

In the past decades, over a thousand incidents of economic persecution against Iranian Bahá'ís have been documented by the Bahá'í International Community. These incidents have occurred throughout the

country, in virtually every province. They include shop and factory closings, the denial or non-renewal of business licences, and dismissals from private businesses after the application of government pressure. Below are examples of incidents related to the denial of employment and economic oppression since August 2023:

Alborz

- 1) **9 October 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Shima Salmanzadeh, a ballet teacher and resident of Karaj, was summoned to the Office of the Physical Education Organization in that city, where she was interrogated. She was required to fill out a form which contained a field for religious affiliation. Once she had indicated on that form that she was a Bahá'í, she was told that she did not have permission to work unless she declared Islam as her religion.

Golestan

- 2) **25 August 2023:** Mrs. Nafisa Saadatyar, a resident of Gorgan, was dismissed from her workplace following pressure being placed on her employer by the security agencies. Mrs. Saadatyar had worked as a scientific representative in a private company for fifteen years. After her arrest and release in January 2023, IRGC intelligence forces summoned the managers of her company and forced them to dismiss Mrs. Saadatyar. Mrs. Saadatyar and her husband Mr. Pouya Amri were first arrested on 21 January 2023 and released after 2 weeks after posting a bail of 500 million tomans.

Hamadan

- 3) **2 October 2023:** Mr. Mozaffar Ayyoubi, a resident of Hamadan petitioned the authorities to seek further clarification as to why his business remained sealed after 11 years. The Ministry of Intelligence sealed his business due to its closure during Bahá'í Holy days.

Isfahan

- 4) **5 August 2023:** The optical shop of Mrs. Jinous Talebi in Kashan was sealed.
- 5) **21 August 2023:** It was learned that Mr. Houshmand Talebi, a Bahá'í from Vilashahr, Isfahan was served with a new charge of “tarnishing public opinion”. This follows from his previous efforts and repeated representations to authorities in Najafabad to secure his rights in relation to securing the return of two of his vehicles which had been confiscated and held by authorities

since 2020. He was advised that in order to secure their release he would have to pay storage fees for the two years the vehicles had been detained, at a rate which he believed to be far in excess of fair parking costs, and to which he objected.

- 6) **12 September 2023:** Two document copying businesses belonging to Arshia Rowhani and Hamid Monzavi in Isfahan were sealed by agents of the Intelligence Department. The agents confiscated their laptops, mobile phones and photocopiers. Despite the passage of two weeks since the closure of these two shops, and repeated visits by the owners to the security agencies, the reason for the closure of their businesses has not yet been provided to them (*see Annex 4*)

Mazandaran

- 7) **14 September 2023:** Mrs. Tina Sokouti, a resident of Babol, was dismissed from her employment as an art teacher at a school. The head of the school indicated that threats had been made by agents of the Ministry of Intelligence to the effect that the business licence of the school would be revoked, and the business premises sealed should they continue to employ Mrs. Sokouti. In previous years, Mrs. Sokouti's university degree had also been withheld due to her Bahá'í belief.

Sistan and Baluchestan

- 8) **05 August 2023:** A warehouse belonging to one of the Bahá'ís in Zahedan, a distributor of motor vehicle spare parts, engine oil and filters, was raided and sealed by a team of twenty agents representing the Industry, Mine and Trade Organization, and the Intelligence Office. At the subsequent court hearing, and despite the fact that no proof of wrongdoing was forthcoming, the judge suggested that the best way to unseal the warehouse and for this matter to be resolved would be to pay a fine amounting to one quarter of the value of the goods in the warehouse.

Tehran

- 9) **13 August 2023:** The Ministry of Information announced that arrests of 9 Bahá'ís had been carried out in Tehran. The Ministry also announced that 40 pharmacies and warehouses belonging to these same individuals have been confiscated by the order of the judicial authorities. The Ministry also claimed in an announcement without providing any documentary evidence that these Bahá'ís were arrested due to "disruption in the pharmaceuticals market". In the announcement from the Ministry the identities and whereabouts of those detained is not mentioned (*see Annex 9*)

West Azerbaijan

10) **17 August 2023:** The shop of Mr. Behzad Vishlaghi (refrigerator repair shop) in the city of Khoy, was sealed by the authorities due to its temporary closure during a Bahá'í Holy Day.

2.8 Personal Status and Religious Practice

In a nation where personal status laws hinge solely on religion, the exclusion of Bahá'ís from constitutional recognition (Article 13) obstructs their religious practice both in the personal domain (marriage and censorship) and collective (community gathering and burial)

2.8.1 Marriage

The constitutional constraints and recent implementation of a digital registry system, which does not provide an option for registrants to select “Bahá'í” or “other” as their religion in the religious affiliation data entry field, as highlighted in the previous section, further reduces the options for Bahá'ís. Currently, Bahá'í marriage ceremonies lack legal recognition, forcing Bahá'ís to renounce their faith to register marriages. With couples being considered in an unrecognised de facto relationship, this has serious implications for any subsequent registrations of births and other social rights. Furthermore, This denial results in labelling Bahá'í wives as mistresses, children as illegitimate, and hinders the issuance of marriage certificates, marriage loans, inheritance claims, and parental rights during divorce.

A notable case since August 2023 is highlighted below:

Fars

- 1) **9 November 2023:** It was learned that that one of the branches of Bank Saderat in Shiraz has demanded that a young couple, who had previously received a 360 million tuman marriage loan, return the loan on the grounds of a statement by the bank's auditor that Bahá'ís are not eligible to receive a marriage loan and therefore must return the money.

Various provinces

- 2) It was learned on 28 November 2023 that the Government of Iran has introduced a digital registry of marriages across the country to replace the former paper registries. Formerly Notaries were able to register Bahá'í marriages and issue marriage certificates on determination that the marriage took place consistent with Bahá'í marriage law. Under the new digital system there is no option to select “Bahá'í” or “Other” in the religious affiliation field and leaving it blank is an invalid choice which prevents the issuance of a marriage certificate. This amounts to a government regulatory system implementing a basic deprivation of human rights in respect of freedom of religion or belief.

2.8.2 Burial Rights

The non-recognition of Bahá'ís which has justified their persecution is also recognised by the attacks on Bahá'í cemeteries. Thousands of grounds of burial sites have been levelled by Iranian authorities in cemeteries across Tehran, Senman, Shiraz and Yazd. In Tehran, Ministry of Intelligence agents had barred Bahá'ís from using their own plots and had buried deceased Bahá'ís in a mass grave of thousands of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. Burying Bahá'ís there is an attempt to eliminate the memory of the mass grave, the statement said, which is against the expressed wishes of the Bahá'í community, out of respect for relatives of those buried at the site. The following are examples of recent cases where Bahá'í burial rights were violated:

Alborz

- 1) **02 August 2023:** It was learned that The Karaj municipality had enclosed the Bahá'í cemetery at Zarnan with a fence, installing two gates for vehicles and pedestrians. However, they have not provided keys to the Bahá'í community for access, hindering maintenance. Additionally, the municipality requested a key to the maintenance equipment building on the property. Two Ministry of Intelligence agents are now stationed full-time at the cemetery, reminiscent of the seizure of control of the Bahá'í cemetery in Tehran.

Markazi

- 2) **21 August 2023:** It was learned that the authorities contacted Bahá'ís in Arak with the intention to sell by auction the parcel of land which has been used by the Bahá'ís as a cemetery for over 120 years, containing approximately 250 graves. The cemetery was confiscated in 1980 along with many other properties owned by the Bahá'í community throughout the country. The authorities told the Bahá'ís “the Bahá'í cemetery will be sold, but we cannot sell it to you. It will have to be purchased by a Muslim first”.

Tehran

- 3) **27 November 2023:** It was learned that Golestan Javid cemetery officials denied burial permission for Mrs. Afagh Khosravizand, who died on November 21, 2023. Her children were informed that she would be buried in the Khavaran mass grave instead of the Golestan Javid Bahá'í cemetery in Tehran. In response, Mrs. Khosravizand's children chose to donate her body for medical research. This incident reflects a recent trend where Behesht Zahra officials forcibly bury deceased Bahá'ís in the Khavaran mass grave without the families' consent.

14 December 2023: It was learned that the body of Mrs. Afagh Khosravizand (Rahimian) has been buried by the authorities in the Khavaran mass grave site adjacent to the Tehran Bahá'í Cemetery without the knowledge or participation of her family. The Rahimian family had

previously chosen to donate her body to science at the Tehran medical school. At first the medical school was willing to accept the body, but after some time, the medical school rejected her body and made the unjustified statements that the family is “unreliable and will cause trouble for the university” and that “the body was contagious” (*see also Annex 7*).

- 4) **8 December 2023:** It was learned that in the recent past the trunks of a large number of the pine trees beautifying the Bahá’í cemetery of Tehran have been cut. It appears that this measure is intended to facilitate the installation and use of security cameras by the Intelligence agencies to monitor the activities of Bahá’ís in the cemetery, a measure never previously required during the period of Bahá’í community management of the cemetery.
- 5) **8 December 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Minou Babaian had received an electronic notice from the Tehran Office of the Justice Department to attend a court hearing on 30 December 2023. The reason for the summons is a complaint made by Behesht Zahra Organization, citing non-payment of fees relating to a forced burial carried out arbitrarily by agents of the Intelligence office, acting on behalf of the Behesht Zahra, in the Khavaran Mass Grave section of the Khavaran Cemetery paying no regard to the burial practices of the Bahá’í community.

2.8.3 Freedom of association

The constitutional non-recognition of Bahá’ís in Article 23-27 in the Constitution as well as the 1983 ban in Bahá’í administrative and community activities has justified arrests and violent home raids that have taken place the past few decades. These include strict restrictions on prayer gatherings and worship, Bahá’í council meetings called Assemblies, classes at the Bahá’í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE), educational classes for children, charitable work for the needy and circulation of Bahá’í literature. The most notable case is the aforementioned execution of the ten Bahá’í women in Shiraz for teaching religious classes to Bahá’í children. Additionally, 54 young Bahá’ís were arrested for providing literacy and other classes to poor children in and around Shiraz in 2006. In August 2022 last year, Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence issued a statement of hate propaganda against the Bahá’ís, claiming they were part of an “espionage party” that was “propagating the teachings of the fabricated Bahá’í colonialism and infiltrating educational environments”. Finally, Bahá’ís are systematically denied access to civil and public spaces, including theatres and concerts, further isolating them from Iranian society.

Hamadan

- 1) **24 October 2023:** It was learned that Ms. Golsa Jahangiri, a talented Bahá’í musician from Hamadan, and a member of a music group in the city, was prevented from performing in the city. Recently the music group in which she performs went to the Office of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to obtain a permit to hold a concert in one of the halls in Hamadan. The Guidance Office, after being given the names of the group members, notified the conductor that “Two of the group members are not permitted to perform. You should dismiss them...” One of these members was Ms. Golsa Jahangiri.

Kerman

- 2) **September 4, 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Nahaleh Shahidi Yazdi (*see also 2.3 and 2.5*) was arraigned and charged with "formation of a group or society for the purpose of disturbing national security," seemingly related to her aid efforts in the south of Kerman Province after the earthquake in Bam.

Khorasan Razvi

- 3) **8 August 2023:** It was learned that Mrs. Sanaz Tafazzoli (*see also 2.3 and 2.5*) received a 10-year, 9-month prison sentence from the Mashhad Revolutionary Court. The charges include "forming a group to disrupt internal security" (6 years, 6 months), "gathering and colluding to commit a crime against the country's security" (3 years, 7 months), and "engaging in deviant educational or propaganda activities against Islamic law" (8 months). Additional accusations include "owning Bahá'í-related books" and "forming an educational group" for Bahá'í children.

Tehran

- 4) **29 August 2023:** Mrs. Nazila Haghar was sentenced to 5 years in prison following the decision of the Appeal Court to uphold her conviction of May 2023. In May 2023, Mrs. Haghar was sentenced in absentia by Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court, headed by Judge Seyyed Ali Mazloun, to five years in prison for "being a member of an illegal group with the aim of disrupting the country's security". One of the accusations levelled against her was that she was holding educational classes for children.

2.8.4 Freedom of opinion and belief

In addition to freedom of association, constitutional non-recognition and discrimination in the aforementioned 1991 memorandum has justified the limiting of freedom of opinion and belief among Bahá'ís. The memorandum states that government agencies must "counter the propaganda and religious activities of Bahá'ís." This is notably apparent on social media channels where Bahá'ís who have expressed support for the OurStoryisOne Campaign, honouring the ten Bahá'í women of Shiraz, have faced accusations by Iranian authorities. These accusations include spreading lies and inciting a hate campaign. Recent examples include:

Alborz

- 1) **22 August 2023:** It was learned that a new case against Mr. Payam Vali will be heard by Branch 3 of the Karaj Revolutionary Court on 17 September this year. In a new notice, the accusation

raised against Mr. Vali is listed as "spreading lies in cyberspace through the publication of criminal content". (*see also Annex 8*)

Golestan

- 2) **30 August 2023:** It was learned that three Bahá'í youth from Gorgan, named Shima Khoshaien, Radin Amri and Vaghef Taefi, were summoned to the Ministry of Intelligence Office and interrogated for approximately six hours. The mother of one of these youths, Mrs. Sheida Ghoddoosi, was also summoned and questioned, and threatened with arrest and imprisonment because of an Instagram post about the "OurStoryIsOne" campaign of the Bahá'í International Community.

The accusations towards Bahá'ís of conducting hate campaigns and spreading lies is ironic as one of the most revealing examples of Iran's strategy of persecution of the Bahá'ís includes a conspicuous increase of anti-Bahá'í propaganda and hate speech in official media. The Iranian government has further developed its coordinated media network, which includes state television, radio, news publications, websites, and now various social media platforms and accounts, to disseminate disinformation, falsehoods, and accusations aimed at Bahá'ís with the intention of fomenting and spreading fear and hatred against them. For example, the Bahá'í Faith has been portrayed as a "deviant, misguided sect" and a political "cult" that tries to undermine the state, as Zionists or agents for Israel, as spies for foreign governments, and as being morally corrupt. Further information on hate speech against Bahá'ís in the wake of the Mahsa Amini uprising is outlined in Annex 10.

On 30 August 2023, it was reported that a meeting was held with Dr. Mohsen Borhani, a well-known and influential lawyer in Alborz, in relation to the citizenship rights of the Bahá'ís and the discrimination and hate speech against the Bahá'í community. After the meeting, Dr. Borhani made the following post on social media:

"Having a belief is not only not a crime, and individuals cannot be deprived of citizens' rights solely because of having a particular belief. In Note 1, Article 310 of the Islamic Penal Code, ratified in 1392 (2013/2014), the legislature has justly protected the non-Muslims who are not part of an officially recognized religion but have Iranian citizenship, like the Bahá'ís."

The government's dissemination of hate speech and discrimination against the Bahá'í community is also a blatant violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), stating that "any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law." Since Iran is a signatory to the ICCPR and entrusted with protecting its citizens against religious hatred, it is inconceivable that the Iranian State would actively engage in such incitement.

The groundswell of support for Iran's Bahá'í community, from Iranians of all backgrounds inside out outside the country, is reflected in the thousands of contributions pouring in to the ongoing #OurStoryIsOne campaign. The Bahá'í International Community launched this

campaign in June 2023 to commemorate 10 years since the execution of 10 Bahá'í women in Shiraz, and to signal its support for equality and justice for all. Countless Iranians and others have responded. Our story is theirs; their story is ours.

Appendix

Annex 1 – Declaration forms for Bahá'ís to sign for University Entrance

بسمه تعالی

وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فن اوری
سازمان سنجش آموزش کشور
دبیرخانه هیأت مرکزی گزینش دانشجو

برگ تعهد نامه داوطلبین

تذکر مهم: تکمیل دقیق این برگ برای سیر مراحل گزینشی داوطلبین محترم ضروریت

شماره پرونده	رشته امتحانی داوطلب	سال آزمون

اینجانب فرزند متولد / / ۱۳..... با کد ملی صادره از
که بر اساس فرم شماره ۱ خود را بهایی و بهایی زاده معرفی نموده ام، در آزمون ورودی دانشگاه ها شرکت داشته و نتیجه
انتخاب رشته اینجانب اعلام شده است؛ لذا متعهد می گردم کلیه قوانین و مقررات آموزشی را رعایت و از
هرگونه اقدام تشکیلاتی و فرقه ای اعم از تبلیغ یا همکاری یا هیئت های منحل فرقه بهائیت پرهیز نمایم. اطاعت از قوانین و
مقررات نظام را بر اطاعت از بیائیه ها ، دستورالعمل ها و فرامین مرکزیت فرقه مستقر در سرزمین های اشغالی فلسطین
موسوم به بیت العدل و با رابطین آن ترجیح دهم.

امضاء اثر انگشت تاریخ

اینجانب فرزند متولد / / ۱۳..... با کد ملی صادره از
خود را مطیع محض بیت العدل به عنوان مرجع مصون و معصوم دانسته و متن فوق را نمی پذیرم .

امضاء اثر انگشت تاریخ

[TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

In the Name of the Almighty		The Ministry of Science, Research and Technology <i>Sanjish</i> ³ Organization The Secretariat of the Central Committee for <i>Guzinish</i> ⁴
Form Number 2		

Applicants' Written Undertaking Form

Important Note: Accurate completion of this sheet is necessary for the selection process of the Applicants

File Number	Applicant's Examination Field	Examination Year

I,, daughter/son of, born in .../.../13..., national identification smart card, issued by, have identified myself as a Bahá'í, born in a Bahá'í family according to form number 1. I participated in the National University Entrance Examination and the result of my field of study selection has been announced as..... Therefore, I make a pledge to observe all the education statutes and regulations, and to avoid all kinds of administrative and sectarian activities, including propagation or collaboration with the dissolved entities of the Bahaist Sect, and to prefer obedience to the statutes and regulations of the regime to obeying the statements, directives and the instructions from the centre of the sect, located in the occupied territories of Palestine, called the House of Justice, or its liaisons.

Signature

Fingerprint

Date

I,, daughter/son of, born in .../.../13..., national identification smart card, issued by, consider myself completely obedient to the House of Justice as an infallible authority and do not accept the foregoing text.

Signature


Fingerprint

Date

³ [*Sanjish*: The Educational Assessment and Evaluation Organization]

⁴ [*Guzinish*: The office for the assessment of religious standards for placement of students]

Annex 2 - An Excerpt of Mahvash's Sabet's Letter from inside Evin Prison in reaction to rising attacks on the country's Bahá'í community



نامه مهوش ثابت از اوین: بخش ۴
جمهوری اسلامی ما بهائیان را برای زندگی رد صلاحیت کرده است

پس از پنج ماه در یک روز سرد زمستانی در حالی که لباس‌های هنگام دستگیری‌ام که لباس‌هایی تابستانی و نخی بودند را بر تن داشتم به بند زنان اوین منتقل شدم. جسمم فرسوده و زانوانم در اثر اصابت به دیوار در اتاق بازجویی دردناک و متورم بود. دوباره به بند زنان اوین جایی که کمتر از پنج سال پیش، پس از تحمل ده سال حبس، زمین آن را در برابر همبندی‌های عقیدتی و سیاسی‌ام بوسیده و محل را ترک کرده بودم، بازگشتم. دوست و همراه یگانه‌ام فریبا کمال‌آبادی که او هم همه عمر "رد صلاحیت" شده است به استقبال آمد و خبر داد که ما هر دو به تحمل ده سال حبس مجدد محکوم شده‌ایم! همزمان با دریافت ابلاغ این حکم همسرم هم پس از سال‌ها مبارزه و دوندگی‌کلید خانه‌ای که حاصل کار و تلاش همه عمرش بود را به ناچار به مردانی تسلیم کرد که خانه‌مان را مصادره کرده بودند! و از خانه‌ای که دوستش داشت و حتی برگ درختان باغچه‌اش را می‌شناخت برای همیشه بیرون آمد. تازه دانستم که ما بهائیان برای داشتن یک زندگی معمولی در کشور آبا و اجدادی‌مان چهل و پنج سال است که مدام "رد صلاحیت" می‌شویم. به یاد می‌آورم وقتی سال‌های پیش به بازجو گفتم بالاخره که از این زندان بیرون می‌رویم با خونسردی گفت: بله، ولی افقی یا عمودی‌اش را ما تعیین می‌کنیم! حالا دیگر من افقی پیش روی خود نمی‌بینم و از عدالت حکومت درباره خود قطع امید کرده‌ام و مردم ایران را مخاطب قرار می‌دهم و می‌گویم که اگر حکومت کشورمان ما را برای زندگی "رد صلاحیت" کرده است شما نکنید! ما هم بمانند سایر مردمان این "مرز پر گهر" حق داریم زندگی شایسته‌ای داشته باشیم. از حقوق شهروندی برخوردار شویم. کار و کسب مناسب با قابلیت و توان خود داشته باشیم. دانشگاه برویم، روابط مبتنی بر احترام متقابل با هم میهنانمان داشته باشیم. همه حق دارند عقاید خود را داشته باشند و بر آن اساس زندگی کنند. همه حق دارند از آسایش و امنیت برخوردار باشند و از هرگونه آزار و تعدی توسط هر فرد یا هر گروه در امان بمانند و همه توش و توان خود را به جای دفاع از خود صرف آبادانی کشور کنند. هموطنان! داستان ما یکی است. لطفا شما ما را رد صلاحیت نکنید و روایت‌های ما را از زبان خودمان بشنوید!

مهوش ثابت، زندان اوین، آبان ۱۴۰۲

Full version available here: [Persian](#) and [English](#)

Annex 3 - An Excerpt from Fariba Kamalabadi's letter from inside Evin Prison in reaction to rising attacks on the country's Bahá'í community



**نامه فریبا کمال‌آبادی از زندان اوین در واکنش به موج سرکوب بهائیان:
«داستان ما یکی‌ست»**

صبح چهارشنبه ۱۷ آبان در تماس تلفنی با همسر امکان گفتگو با مادر دامادم خانم شوق‌انگیز سروریان را یافتم که برای معالجه و دیدار دخترش از همدان به تهران سفر کرده بود. از ایشان شنیدم که گروهی از مامورین امنیتی به منزلشان در همدان حمله کرده و در غیاب صاحب‌خانه در را شکسته و خانه را زیر و رو کرده‌اند. ذهنم بی‌درنگ به سال ۱۳۶۶ برگشت. به زمانی که شوق‌انگیزخانم و همسرشان به اتهام بهائی بودن دستگیر و از همدان به زندان اوین منتقل شده بودند. آنها در آن زمان سه فرزند خردسال ۴، ۶ و ۸ ساله داشتند که با دستگیری پدر و مادر از سرپرستی والدین محروم مانده بودند. پس از چند ماه بی‌خبری کامل از یکدیگر، سرانجام بستگان برای مدتی مدید، هر هفته هر سه کودک را به تهران می‌بردند تا در یک روز پدر و در روز دیگر مادر خود را ملاقات کنند و به همدان و مدرسه بازگردند. ناگفته پیداست که این قبیل دستگیری‌های والدین دارای فرزندان خردسال به‌عنوان یک اقدام برنامه‌ریزی شده که هنوز هم متأسفانه ادامه دارد، تأثیرات منفی جبران‌ناپذیری بر کودکان و والدین آنان بر جای می‌گذارد و مصداق است از «شکنجه کودک.»

Full text available here: [Persian](#) and [English](#)

Annex 4 - HRANA: Two business units belonging to Bahá'ís sealed in Isfahan

28/09/2023, 14:11

خبرگزاری هرانا | دو واحد صنعتی متعلق به شهروندان بهائی در اصفهان پلمب شد - خبرگزاری هرانا

چاپ خبر

خبر اختصاصی

تاریخ: ۱۴۰۲/۰۷/۰۶

دسته: اقلیت های دینی

لینک کوتاه:

کد خبر: 020706305



دو واحد صنعتی متعلق به شهروندان بهائی در اصفهان پلمب شد

خبرگزاری هرانا - روز سه شنبه بیست و یکم شهریور ماه، دو واحد صنعتی متعلق به شهروندان بهائی در اصفهان توسط ماموران اداره اطلاعات پلمب شد. همچنین شماری از لوازم شخصی و کار این شهروندان نیز توسط نیروهای امنیتی ضبط شده است.

به گزارش خبرگزاری هرانا، ارگان خبری مجموعه فعالان حقوق بشر در ایران، روز سه شنبه بیست و یکم شهریور ماه ۱۴۰۲، دو واحد صنعتی متعلق به شهروندان بهائی در اصفهان پلمب شد.

یک شهروند بهائی ساکن اصفهان در تماس با هرانا گفت: "مامورین اداره اطلاعات ضمن مراجعه به محل کسب ایشیا روحانی و حمید منزوی اقدام به پلمب مغازه های این شهروندان کردند. ماموران همچنین لپ تاپ ها، موبایل ها و دستگاه های فتوکپی این شهروندان را ضبط کردند".

وی در ادامه با بیان اینکه "این شهروندان بهائی در زمینه چاپ و تکثیر فعالیت دارند"، افزود: "علیرغم گذشت دو هفته از پلمب این دو واحد صنعتی و مراجعات مکرر این شهروندان به نهادهای امنیتی، تاکنون علت پلمب محل کسب این شهروندان به آنها اعلام نشده است".

پلمب محل کسب شهروندان بهائی توسط نهادهای امنیتی مسیوق به سابقه است و هر ساله گزارشاتی از پلمب محل کسب شهروندان بهائی در شهرهای مختلف ایران منتشر میشود.

Full text available here: [Persian](#). English translation available upon request

Annex 5 - Bahrouz Farzandi, a Bahá'í, and disabled war veteran, suffers from health deterioration in prison

14/09/2023, 09:38

سلامت بهروز فرزندی، آزاده و جانباز بهایی در زندان در خطر است



اخبار

سلامت بهروز فرزندی، آزاده و جانباز بهایی در زندان در خطر است

۲۲ شهریور ۱۴۰۲

خواندن در ۱ دقیقه



بهروز فرزندی، آزاده و جانباز بهایی در حالی به سی و سومین سالگرد آزادی خود از اسارت در جنگ ایران و عراق رسیده است که به اتهام پیروی از آیین بهایی در زندان شیراز بسر می‌برد.



سلامت بهروز فرزندی، جانباز و آزاده پیرو آیین بهایی که در حال گذراندن محکومیت خود در زندان شیراز است، در خطر است.

بهروز فرزندی، آزاده و جانباز بهایی در حالی به سی و سومین سالگرد آزادی خود از اسارت در جنگ ایران و عراق رسیده است که به اتهام پیروی از آیین بهایی در زندان شیراز بسر می‌برد.

دادگاه انقلاب شیراز، فرزندی را به اتهام تبلیغ علیه نظام و عضویت در جامعه بهایی به ۳۱ ماه و ۱۶ روز حبس تعزیری محکوم کرد. او روز شنبه ۷ مرداد ۱۴۰۲ پس از یک دوره توقف حکم و انجام معالجات پزشکی، جهت ادامه حکم به زندان شیراز منتقل شد.

این شهروند بهایی که بر اثر موج انفجار ناشی از بمباران هم‌چنین فشارها و سختی‌های متحمل شده در طی دو سال و نیم اسارت تحت درمان پزشکان متخصص اعصاب و روان، داخلی و قلب است، هم‌اکنون در محیطی نامساعد و پرتنش در بین جمعیت زیادی از زندانیان نگه داشته شده است.

فشار حاصل از زندان و محدودیت شدید هواخوری در بند، سلامت بهروز فرزندی را که پیش از زندان جراحی قلب داشته، به خطر انداخته است.

سلامت بهروز فرزندی، آزاده و جانباز بهایی در زندان در خطر است - 1/120433 - <https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/120433>

1/5

Full text available here: [Persian](#). English translation available upon request.

Annex 6 - Twelve sports centres in Babol seized and two people arrested for "promoting Bahá'ism"

11/09/2023, 09:28

خبرگزاری هرانا | افزایش فشارها بر شهروندان بهائی؛ دوازده مرکز آموزشی پلمب و دو تن بازداشت شدند - خبرگزاری هرانا

چاپ خبر

تاریخ: ۱۴۰۲/۰۶/۱۹

دسته: اصناف/اقلیت های دینی

لینک کوتاه: www.hra-news.org/?p=429258

کد خبر: 020619205



افزایش فشار بر جامعه بهائیان ایران

افزایش فشارها بر شهروندان بهائی؛ دوازده مرکز آموزشی پلمب و دو تن بازداشت شدند

خبرگزاری هرانا - رئیس کل دادگستری مازندران از پلمب دوازده مرکز آموزشی و ورزشی در شهرستان بابل به دلیل آنچه "تبلیغ دیانت بهائی" عنوان کرده است، خبر داد. به گفته اکبری، در این راستا دو شهروند بهائی نیز بازداشت و به زندان منتقل شده اند.

به گزارش خبرگزاری هرانا به نقل از خبرگزاری مهر، رئیس کل دادگستری مازندران از پلمب دوازده مرکز آموزشی در بابل خبر داد.

محمدصادق اکبری با اشاره به پلمب دو مدرسه و ده مرکز آموزشی و ورزشی دیگر در شهرستان بابل، مدعی شد که دلیل این اقدام "تبلیغ دیانت بهائی توسط این مراکز" بوده است.

به گفته اکبری، در این راستا دو شهروند بهائی نیز که از آنها تحت عنوان "مربیان سرشناس بهائی در ایران" یاد شده است، بازداشت و به زندان منتقل شده اند.

از هویت شهروندان بازداشت شده، محل نگهداری و اتهامات مطروحه علیه آنها اطلاعی در دست نیست.

شهروندان بهائی در ایران از آزادیهای مرتبط به باورهای دینی محروم هستند، این محرومیت سیستماتیک در حالی است که طبق ماده ۱۸ اعلامیه جهانی حقوق بشر و ماده ۱۸ میثاق بین‌المللی حقوق مدنی و سیاسی هر شخصی حق دارد از آزادی دین و تغییر دین با اعتقاد و همچنین آزادی اظهار آن به طور فردی یا جمعی و به طور علنی یا در خفا برخوردار باشد. بر اساس منابع غیررسمی در ایران بیش از سیصد هزار شهروند بهائی وجود دارد اما قانون اساسی ایران فقط اسلام، مسیحیت، یهودیت و زرتشتی گری را به رسمیت شناخته و مذهب بهائیان را به رسمیت نمی‌شناسد. به همین دلیل طی سالیان گذشته همواره حقوق بهائیان در ایران به صورت سیستماتیک نقض شده است.

Full text available here: [Persian](#). English translation available upon request.

Annex 7 - VOA: Demanding justice in Khavaran cemetery: Families locked out

28/08/2023, 10:35

حضور دادخواهان در خاوران: «مامور لباس شخصی» در ورودی را به روی خانواده‌ها قفل کرد



ایران

حضور دادخواهان در خاوران: «مامور لباس شخصی» در ورودی را به روی خانواده‌ها قفل کرد

۳ شهریور ۱۴۰۲



گورستان خاوران - آرشيو

گزارش‌ها حاکی از «برخورد خشونت‌آمیز» ماموران با تعدادی از خانواده‌های زندانیان سیاسی اعدام شده در دهه ۶۰ و تابستان ۶۷ در گورستان خاوران در شرق تهران است.

کانال تلگرامی «منشور آزادی، رفاه، برابری» خبر داد که اعضای خانواده‌های اعدام‌شدگان روز جمعه سوم شهریور به منظور «بزرگداشت یاد عزیزان خود در گلزار خاوران» تلاش کردند که مطابق معمول از طریق در ورودی گلزار بهائیان، وارد خاوران شوند.

گورستان خاوران، محل دفن دسته‌جمعی قربانیان اعدام‌های دهه ۶۰ و تابستان ۱۳۴۷ است.

بر اساس گزارش‌های رسیده به صدای آمریکا، این راه ورودی به خاوران به روی خانواده‌ها بسته بود و ماموران با شناسایی خانواده‌ها و ممانعت از بردن دسته‌های گل به داخل، اجازه ورود می‌دادند که در نهایت، شمار کمی از اعضای خانواده‌ها توانستند وارد گورستان شوند.

به نوشته کانال تلگرامی «منشور آزادی، رفاه، برابری»، آنها «توانستند به صورت پنهانی و با مخفی کردن گل‌برگه‌ها، سرگل‌ها و شاخه‌های کوتاه شده، گل‌ها را داخل کیف و ساک دستی خود جای دهند و داخل ببرند و خاک خاوران را گل‌باران کنند.»

بر اساس این گزارش، پس از آنکه اشخاص حاضر در گورستان خاوران برای گرمی‌داشت اعدام‌شدگان سرود می‌خواندند، «مسعود مؤمنی، مامور لباس شخصی که خود را مسئول سازمان بهشت زهرا در گلزار بهائیان و خاوران معرفی می‌کند» اقدام به بدرقتاری با خانواده‌ها و توهین به آنها کرد.

او در عین حال، در هنگامی که حاضران را مجبور به خروج از گورستان خاوران می‌کرد، در ورودی را قفل کرد تا مانع حضور دیگر خانواده‌ها در گورستان شود.

Full text available here: [Persian](#). English translation available upon request.

Annex 8 - Iranwire: Payam Vali accused of spreading propaganda against the regime on social media from prison

23/08/2023, 09:59

پیام ولی در زندان به نشر اکاذیب در فضای مجازی متهم شد



اخبار

پیام ولی در زندان به نشر اکاذیب در فضای مجازی متهم شد

۱ شهریور ۱۴۰۲

خواندن در ۱ دقیقه



پیام ولی شهروند بهایی محبوس در زندان قزلحصار به نشر اکاذیب متهم شد



دادگاه انقلاب کرج، «پیام ولی» شهروند بهایی زندانی در زندان قزلحصار را جهت رسیدگی به شعبه سوم دادگاه انقلاب کرج احضار کرد.

در متن ابلاغیه مذکور نوشته شده که آقای ولی موظف است ساعت ۹ صبح ۲۶ شهریور ۱۴۰۲ در خصوص شکایت علیه وی مبنی بر نشر اکاذیب در فضای مجازی از طریق نشر محتوای مجرمانه در شعبه سوم دادگاه انقلاب کرج حاضر شود.

این ابلاغیه الکترونیکی برای پیام ولی در حالی صادر شده که او ۱۱ ماه است که در بازداشت بسر برده و در حال حاضر در زندان قزلحصار کرج حکم شش سال حبس خود را می‌گذراند.

در چند ماه گذشته، پیام ولی به دلیل اطلاع رسانی از وضعیت خودش به خارج از زندان از سوی انوری، بازپرس شعبه یک دادگاه انقلاب کرج به «نشر اکاذیب در فضای مجازی» متهم شده است و به همین دلیل، پرونده جدیدی برای او در دادگاه انقلاب کرج باز شده است.

قابل ذکر است، این زندانی بهایی بارها از سوی بازجویان برای اعتراف اجباری در مقابل دوربین تلویزیون تحت فشار قرار گرفته است که عدم پذیرش خواسته بازجویان موجب شد تا با درخواست عفو او مخالفت شود.

<https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/119734-پیام-ولی-در-زندان-به-نشر-اکاذیب-در-فضای-مجازی-متهم-شد-119734>

1/5

Full text available here: [Persian](#). English translation available upon request

Annex 9 - Radio Farda: Widespread arrests and seizure of 40 Bahá'í pharmacies and warehouses in Tehran

14/08/2023, 09:51

موج تازه سرکوب بهائیان در ایران؛ بازداشت گسترده و توقیف «۴۰ باب داروخانه و انبار» در تهران



گزارش‌های خبری

موج تازه سرکوب بهائیان در ایران؛ بازداشت گسترده و توقیف «۴۰ باب داروخانه و انبار» در تهران

۲۳ مرداد/۱۴۰۲ راديو فردا



وزارت اطلاعات جمهوری اسلامی با انتشار بیانیه‌ای بازداشت برخی از شهروندان بهایی ساکن تهران و توقیف اموال آن‌ها را تایید کرده است

در جریان موج تازه سرکوب بهائیان در ایران نهادهای امنیتی روز یکشنبه ۲۲ مرداد ۹ شهروند بهایی را در تهران بازداشت و «۴۰ باب داروخانه و انبار» متعلق به آن‌ها را توقیف کرده‌اند.

وزارت اطلاعات جمهوری اسلامی روز یکشنبه ۲۲ مرداد در بیانیه‌ای اعلام کرد که یک خانواده بهایی و همکاران آن‌ها را که در زمینه «دارو و لوازم آرایشی و بهداشتی» فعالیت می‌کردند، بازداشت کرده است.

فعالان بهایی در این زمینه به راديو فردا گفته‌اند که اشکان، افشین و اردلان تیبانیان به همراه خواهر و داماد آن‌ها از شهروندان بهائی بازداشت شده هستند.

<https://www.radiofarda.com/a/a-new-wave-of-widespread-repression-of-baha-is-in-iran/32546250.html>

1/3

Full text available here: [Persian](#). English translation available upon request.

Annex 10 - Hate speech following Mahsa Amini uprising

In late July this year, a coordinated campaign designed to incite violence against the Bahá'í community was started on X with the hashtag [#امیرکبیر میکریم](#). Accounts linked to the regime's cyber army and Masaf, an institute supported by the IRGC, were identified as the main propagators. The campaign, orchestrated by figures such as Ali Akbar Raefipour, a known regime propagandist and conspiracy theorist, celebrated historical acts of violence against the Bábis, the predecessors to the Bahá'í Faith. This campaign not only sought to glorify past atrocities but also called for heightened measures of persecution and violence against Bahá'ís. Numerous hateful conspiracy theories and lies against Bahá'ís were spread, such as ...

The group "[restart](#)" known for violence and vandalism promoted violence against not only Bahá'ís but also other religious minorities in Iran. They used their own hashtags ([ریدم به بهایی ریدم تو بهائیت](#)) ([زرتشتی خارکصده](#) [جندههای بهایی](#) [ریدم به زرتشتی](#) [یهودی حرومزاده](#)) that promote hatred and violence against Bahá'ís, Zoroastrians and Jews. The founder of the group, Seyed Mohammad Hosseini, and his following, promote an absurd conspiracy theory that certain influential clerics and officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran are Bahá'í, Zoroastrian or Jewish, who enjoy sufferings of Muslims and defamation of Islam. It appears that the group's intention was to whitewash the regime, and to attribute its atrocities and crimes to religious minorities. Recently, they started promoting the idea that the recent protests were created by the aforementioned religious minorities, with the purpose of killing Muslims.

