

# IRAN: Baha'i Mitra Badrnezhad released

– Sen's Daily/ Hrana (07.03.2020)  
– <https://bit.ly/2UJnihn> – Mitra Badrnezhad-Zohdi was released from Sepidar prison in Ahvaz on 5 March, at the end of her one-year sentence. She was arrested in 2018 and charged with membership of the Baha'i organisation. Initially sentenced to five years in prison by a Revolutionary Court, her sentence was reduced to one year by the Review Court for Khuzestan Province. She began her sentence at the Sepidah Prison in Ahvaz on 21 September 2019, and was granted one 10-day furlough ending on 2 January this year.

## ***Additional information from HRANA***

Mitra Badrnejad (Zohdi), 51, reported to prison in the city of Ahvaz, southwestern Iran, on 22 September 2019, to begin serving a one-year prison sentence for being a Baha'i follower after being subjected to "psychological torture" in the custody of the Intelligence Ministry, her son, Rouzbeh Zohdi, informed the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

Iran's Constitution does not recognize the Baha'i faith as an official religion (such as Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism).

Badrnejad was convicted of "membership in the Baha'i organization" and "propaganda against the state" by Branch 2 of the Revolutionary Court in Ahvaz presided by Judge Zare (first name unknown), who sentenced her to five years in prison and two years in exile.

Upon appeal, her prison sentence was reduced to one year and the exile sentence was thrown out.

Security agents who confiscated not only her computers and phones but also her gold jewelry with Baha'i symbols on it arrested Badrnejad during a raid on her family's home on 2 March 2018.

"My mother was held in solitary confinement for 50 days in the Intelligence Ministry's detention center and Sepidar Prison in Ahvaz and then released on bail," Zohdi said. "We actually gave the deed to our house as collateral [for bail]."

"My mother said that on all the days when she was

interrogated, she sat on a chair, blindfolded, in front of a wall, and her interrogator stood behind her, insulting her with very ugly words. On one occasion, they threatened to deal with her sons and she was very afraid. Fortunately it was only psychological torture, not physical.”

Zohdi continued: “As far as I know, my mother’s charges were based on Baha’i functions she organized at our home and for having Baha’i books. Baha’is have religious functions every 19 days and some of them were held in my mother’s home.”