

IRAN: City council member in Iran sentenced to one year prison for defending Baha'is

Sensday.wordpress.com/Radio Farda (04.06.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2N8auzm> – A member of Shiraz City Council in Iran was taken from his home to prison to serve a one-year sentence on Sunday June 2, his wife said in a tweet.

Mehdi Haajati was first arrested and detained for ten days last September for defending the rights of the Bahai minority, [a group] which is severely persecuted by the Islamic Republic, especially the conservative clerics and hardliner security force. He was free[d] on bail.

His wife, Zohreh Rastegari, said in her tweet that a day earlier they received a text message that he has been sentenced to one year and they took action to enforce the verdict today.

[S]he told the official government news agency IRNA that Mr. Hajati has been transferred to Abdel Abad prison.

His legal trouble started when last year he tweeted, "In the past ten days I have knocked on many doors to get two Bahai friends released from detention, without success. As long as we face foreign enemies, our generation has a duty to reform the judicial and other procedures that endanger social justice". He was charged with assisting the Baha'is.

4 June update: A combined sitting of the Council and the Mayor has expressed regret at the imprisonment of the Councillor and has called for his release. (In Shiraz, the Mayor is elected by the Council, rather than being appointed by Provincial authorities.)