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IRAN : FORB monthly digest – News about Baha'is and Christians in November

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about Baha'is and Christians in
November (07.12.2021)**

Baha'is

**Pedram Abhar's House searched while he remains detained in
unknown detention center**

Iran Press Watch (26.11.2021) – On Tuesday, November 23,

security forces raided and searched Baha'i citizen **Pedram Abhar**'s house in Tehran. On November 21, security forces arrested Pedram Abhar at his father's home in Shiraz.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, at the time of arrest, they also searched the house and confiscated several family belongings such as identity cards, passports, cell phones, pictures and books related to the Baha'i faith. While Baha'i citizen, Pedram Abahar is still in detention in an unidentified detention center, his house in Tehran was searched by security forces again on Tuesday.

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Pedram `Abhar arrested in Shiraz

Hrana / Sens Daily (23.11.2021) – <https://cutt.ly/AYhZts6> – **Pedram `Abhar** a 37-year-old Baha'i from Shiraz, was arrested on November 21. He works as a private tutor of English. He was driving from Shiraz to Bushehr and stopped for a few minutes' rest in Dast-e Arzhan (a village, but also the name of the area which is a bird sanctuary). As he was about to return to his car, he was surrounded by several unmarked cars, detained, and returned to his parents' house in Shiraz, which was searched. He and his family were then interrogated (presumably in the house). The agents seized birth certificates, ID cards and passports, phones, laptops and several hard drives. He was formally arrested and taken away. He is the 18th Baha'i arrested in Shiraz since April this year.

Victims of State oppression defy Iranian government's denial of the right to mourn

Iran Press Watch (26.11.2021) – The right to mourn is a human right, yet totalitarian regimes have long tried to deny this

right to families who've lost loved ones from state oppression. Public mourning can expose and embarrass regimes that seek to silence dissent, and the Islamic Republic of Iran is no exception.

In Iran, a well-known example of families being denied the right to mourn can be seen in the state's enforced ban on those wishing to mourn their loved ones in south Tehran's Khavaran Cemetery.

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Tehran 'stepping up hate campaign' against Baha'i minority

Iran Press Watch (26.11.2021)- CHICAGO: The Iranian regime has sanctioned a "campaign of hate" to fuel public animosity against the country's Baha'i religious community, Baha'i officials told Arab News.

Anthony Vance, Baha'i public affairs director in the US, said Iran has adopted laws that target its 300,000 Baha'is, barring them from universities and public sector employment, as well as confiscating their property and arresting their leaders.

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US Congress introduces resolution condemning State-sponsored persecution of Iran's Bahai's

Iran Press Watch (19.11.2021) – The US House of Representatives is preparing to vote on a draft resolution condemning the state-sponsored persecution of the Baha'i community of Iran in a bipartisan move.

Voices are mounting in Congress criticizing these violations against the Baha'i community.

The Iranian regime and its affiliated militias, like the Houthis in Yemen, are accused of persecuting the Baha'is.

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Baha'i Citizen Shiva Khalili arrested and released on bail in Babol

Iran Press Watch (17.11.2021) – On Tuesday, November 16, Baha'i citizen **Shiva Khalili** was arrested after being summoned and appearing at Branch 1 of the Public and Revolutionary Court of Babol.

According to HRANA, the news agency of Human Rights Activists, Khalili was released the following day on a bail of 700 million tomans until the end of legal proceedings. Shiva Khalili, a resident of Babol in Mazandaran Province, was summoned to the Revolutionary Court of Babol by phone.

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Christians

Iran's Supreme Court rules Christians did not act against national security

Article 18 (25.11.2021) – Iran's Supreme Court has ruled that nine Christian converts serving five-year prison sentences for their involvement in house-churches should not have been charged with "acting against national security", in what has the potential to become a landmark ruling.

While the ruling is not enough on its own to set an official "precedent", nevertheless it has the potential to influence all current and future cases involving Persian-speaking Christians.

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Disregard of the human dignity of refugees in Germany

Article 18 (10.11.2021) – A new report by a Christian charity in Germany is highly critical of its immigration service for failing to recognise the testimony of pastors when considering the claims of asylum-seekers professing to be Christian converts, the majority of whom are Iranian.

The report by Open Doors Germany, released in German in October and now in English, found that since 2017, of 5,207 Christian converts who received certificates from pastors testifying to the integrity of their faith – 3,081 of whom were Iranian – 2,045 subsequently saw their asylum claims rejected.

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Christian converts told to return to prison

Article 18 (09.11.2021) – Christian converts **Sasan Khosravi** and **Habib Heydari** have been summoned back to prison to serve the remainder of their one-year sentences for “propagating against the Islamic Republic by promoting Christianity”.

The two Christians have been on furlough since March, having only begun their sentences in February, but have now been told they must return to Bushehr Central Prison by Thursday, 11 November, to complete their sentences.

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Give Persian-speaking Christians a #place2worship!

Article 18 (09.11.2021) – Article18 has partnered with nine other Christian organisations in today sending a joint letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, asking her to seek answers from the Iranian regime to the question of “where Persian-speaking Christians can gather to worship freely without risking harassment and imprisonment on excessive charges”.

In the letter, the full text of which can be read below, we also ask High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet to call for the “unconditional release of Christian prisoners of conscience currently incarcerated or exiled for peacefully practising their religious belief”, and “an end to the ongoing crackdown on house-churches, their leaders and attendees”.

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Christian converts summoned to begin prison sentences for ‘deviant propaganda’

Article 18 (08.11.2021) – Three Christian converts have been summoned to begin three-year prison sentences for “engaging in propaganda that educates in a deviant way contrary to the holy religion of Islam”.

Amin Khaki, Milad Goodarzi and Alireza Nourmohammadi will be the first Christians sent to prison under the newly amended Article 500 of the penal code, which ARTICLE 19, an organisation dedicated to the protection of freedom of speech, has called “a full-on attack on the right to freedom of religion and belief”.

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