

# **IRAN: A Baha'i citizen, Elaheh Samizadeh, sentenced to an extra year in prison**

HRANA (25.05.2020) – <https://bit.ly/2WZXaQh> – Elaheh Samizadeh, a Baha'i citizen, has been sentenced to one extra year of imprisonment and two years suspension from holding all governmental and public jobs by Branch 105 of Shiraz Criminal Court.

Ms. Samizadeh had previously been sentenced to six years in prison by Branch One of Shiraz Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Seyed Mahmoud Sadati, on charges of “propaganda against the regime and membership in opposition groups” Based on the Article 134 of the Islamic Penal Code, Based on the Article 134 of Iran’s Islamic Penal Code, the charge with the highest penalty will be considered; this means that Ms. Samizadeh should serve five years in prison. Ms. Samizadeh is the mother of a toddler boy, and charges brought up against her of “propaganda against the regime” and “collaborating” with “dissident “groups” are because she worked as an instructor at “mother-child innovation courses” using her valid college degree obtained from official institutions. Charge of “forging a university degree” was brought up against her in July 2019 and caused her bail to be increased by 60 million Toman. According to the verdict that was communicated to Ms. Samizadeh on May 22, 2020, by Branch 105 of Shiraz Criminal Court presided over by Judge Fakharzadeh, “usage of scientific titles” which refers to her studies at BIHI (Baha'i University) is the underlying reason for her sentence of 1-year imprisonment and 2 years suspension from holding all governmental and public jobs. An informed source told HRANA: “She is accused of forging her diploma, while Ms. Samizadeh studied at the Baha'i Online University (BIHE) due to the Baha'is' exclusion from studying at country's accredited

universities. She has also received her degree from this university, and after making bail has been repeatedly summoned and interrogated over this fact.”

Earlier, Shahriar Atrian, Navid Bazmandegan, Bahareh Ghaderi, Nora Purmoradian, Soheila Haghghat, Shahnaz Sabet, and Soodabeh Haghghat, were also charged by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Seyed Mahmoud Sadati in the same case. The charges against this group include “propaganda against the regime and membership in an opposition group” which caused a 6-year sentence for every member of this group, an 8-year sentence for Niloufar Hakimi, and a 1-year sentence for Ehsanullah Mahboub Rah Vafa. From this group, Ms. Haghghat is also awaiting another trial in the criminal court, and Niloufar Hakimi has previously been sentenced to five years in prison by a criminal court. Taking Ms. Samizadeh’s new convictions into account, she and nine others implicated in this case have been sentenced to a total of 63 years in prison. These citizens were arrested by security forces in September 2018 and were all released on bail impending trial. HARANA reports the second part of Ms. Samizadeh’s case which went into the sentencing phase on May 22, 2020, has added a 1-year conviction to her previously 6-year sentence, and this addition brings up the collective sentencing of this group to a total of 63 years.

Bahai’s of Iran are deprived of all liberties and religious related activities, a systematic deprivation of liberty which goes against Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, that entitle any person to freedom of religion and belief, freedom expression individually or collectively and in a public or private setting. According to unofficial reports, there are more than 300,000 Baha’is in Iran. However, Iran’s constitution only recognizes Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism, and does not recognize the Baha’i faith. And this reason has given the

Iranian authorities an excuse to systematically violate the rights of Baha'i citizens over the years.

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## **IRAN: Four raids, one summons and one arrest in Isfahan**

Hrana (05.05.2020) – <https://bit.ly/3ce1NeD> – On May 3, agents from the Intelligence Arm of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards (IGRC) raided three Bahai homes in Isfahan in a coordinated operation. At the same time they raided and sealed the business premises of Mr. Shahzaad Hosseini (شه زاد حسینی), one of those whose homes were raided. He was summoned to appear at IGRC office on May 6. On May 4, his son Shaayaan Hosseini (شایان حسینی) was arrested. It is not known where he is being held. The third home that was searched belonged to Mrs. Hosseini, the elderly mother of Shahzaad Hosseini.

In the raids, the agents first pretended to be Corona virus officers, but then broke doors and windows in the houses. They seized some personal effects. When Shahzaad Hosseini heard by telephone that the home of his mother had been raided, went there and found that the agents had broken a window and the security mesh on the window and entered her house in a brutal way. Mrs Hosseini was in shock and was unconscious for a time. When the agents had completed their search, they summoned Mr. Hosseini to come to their offices on May 6. Meanwhile, unidentified persons broke into Shahzaad Hosseini's carpentry workshop, breaking all the locks and doors, stealing all his carpentry tools and his stock of timber. He and his neighbour there have reported the theft to police. When his son Shaayaan went to the workshop to lock it, he was set on by agents from the Isfahan IRGC, in the workshop itself. The agents took away

the remaining contents of the workshop and sealed it, and arrested him, as well as taking his mobile phone and his car.

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## **IRAN: Baha'is in jail from August-September**

*Five years for Baha'i membership.*



Kimia Mostafavi and Kiaana Rezvaani

Hrana (23.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2ldmHph> – The Revolutionary Court in Kerman has sentenced Kimia Mostafavi and Kiaana Rezvaani to five years in jail for membership in the Baha'i organisation, and to one year for “propaganda against the regime and in favour of opposition groups.” However, prisoners with consecutive sentences only serve the longer sentence. They were arrested in Kerman on 19 January 2019, and were released on bail five days later.

***Samin Maqsudi and Ghazaaleh Baaqeri-Taari: 5 years in prison for celebrating the birth of Baha'u'llah***

Hrana (22.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2ms1A2s> – The Review Court for Tehran Province, headed by Judge Zargar, has confirmed the 5-year sentence of Samin Maqsudi, a Baha'i from Tehran. She was initially sentenced on 21 May 2018 by Judge Moqiseh, a notorious abuser of human rights and of judicial procedures. This judge was responsible for the imprisonment of the seven "Yaran." She was charged with participating in Baha'i activities. The charges relate to the commemoration she had in her home for the bicentennial of the birth of Baha'u'llah on 21 October 2017.

Ghazaaleh Baaqeri-Taari, also from Tehran, was arrested on the same day and was sentenced to five years in prison for celebrating the birth of Baha'u'llah.

***Parisa Sobhaaneyaan Najafaabaadi: 39 days behind bars to start with***

Sen's Daily (19.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2lZSg5N> – Parisa Sobhaaneyaan Najafaabaadi, a Baha'i from the village of Mehrabad which is near Rudehen, has been released on bail from Evin Prison in Tehran pending her trial. She was arrested on 10 August 2019. The agents who arrested her at her home also seized some books and other personal belongings. She was released on 18 September 2019, for bail of 500 million tumans (107,000 euros ; \$US 119,000). The criminal charges were maintained.

***Three Tehran Baha'is in Gilavand burial case bailed***

Sens' Daily (14.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2lVj9Yp> – Mrs. Munireh Babil-e Soflaa'i, Mrs. Minou Zamaanipour and Mr. Ghollam-hoseyn Mazlumi, were arrested on 10 August 2019 in Gilavand, which is a village in Tehran Province. They were released from Tehran's Evin Prison on 4 September 2019. Their bail was 300 million tumans each (64,000 euros ; \$US 71,000).

Shamsi Aghdasi Azamian, a Baha'i from Gilavand, in Tehran Province, was buried in Gilavand Bahai Cemetery on 24 October

2019. Four days later, her body was exhumed by unknown individuals and abandoned in the deserts on the outskirts of Jaban. Security forces had previously told the Gilavand Baha'is earlier that they had no right to bury their deceased member in Damavand and that they should perform burials only in Tehran. As such, it is a reasonable assumption that government agents exhumed the body and dumped it in the desert. Four days after the burial, police told Mrs. Azamian's son in a phone call that the body of his mother had been found and he should take it to Tehran. He objected since the distance between Gilavand and Tehran is more than an hour, and, according to Baha'i burial rites, the body should not be transported more than an hour. The agents then took the body of Mrs. Azamian to Tehran without the consent of the family.

The charges are maintained.

#### ***Abu-Fadl Ansaari: 36 days in prison***

Sens' daily (10.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2maItZr> – Abu-Fadl Ansaari was released on bail in Karaj on 8 September 2019. He was arrested at his home in Karaj on 3 August 2019 and held in Raja'i Shahr prison. The charges against him are maintained.

#### ***Farid Modadam-Ziraki: 37 days in prison***

Sens' Daily (09.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2kGWPBD> – On 7 September 2019, Farid Moqadam-Ziraki, a Baha'i from Birjand, was released from detention after posting bail of 150 million tumans (32,000 euros ; \$US 35,000). He was arrested on 3 August 2019 by agents from the Ministry of Intelligence. The agents also searched his home and seized his personal effects. He faces charges of "aggravating the economic sanctions against Iran" and "undermining national security." He was interrogated by the Ministry of Intelligence for 26 days before being transferred to Birjand's Prison.

#### ***Rouhaa Emaani: 9 months sentence***

Sens' Daily (03.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2lx6f20> – Mrs. Rouhaa Emaani, from Kerman, was arrested on 3 September 2019 to begin her nine-month prison sentence. Mrs. Emaani was arrested in Yazd during a raid on her home on 12 May 2015, and released on bail on 1 July 2015. She was sentenced by a Revolutionary Court – as is usually the case for Baha'is. Revolutionary Courts try ideological offences, have a single cleric for a judge, and have no fixed procedures.

***Ru'in Kohansaal and Ruhollah Zibaa'i: 1 month behind bars***

Sens' Daily (02.09.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2lWp2F0> – According to two separate reports, on 2 September 2019, Ruhollah Zibaa'i and Ru'in Kohansaal were released on bail from Raja'i Shahr prison in Karaj after being detained for one month. They were arrested in Karaj on 3 and 4 August 2019 respectively. Abu-Fadl Ansaari was also arrested on 3 August 2019, which is the same day that agents from the Ministry of Intelligence in Birjand arrested Farid Moqadam-Ziraki. The Provincial command of the Ministry of Intelligence in South Khorasan Province had previously announced that they had arrested an unnamed Baha'i in Birjand who was allegedly attempting to tighten sanctions. Government-sponsored media have also claimed that Mr. Zibaa'i's arrest was in relation to a scheme to tighten the economic sanctions. He is described as conducting business activities in the Alborz and Southern Khorasan provinces.

Other reports speak of a number of Baha'is and people who are affiliated with Baha'is being summoned for questioning in Alborz Province, but no further details are available at present.

The physical condition of both Mr. Zibaa'i and Mr. Ansaari is poor. Mr. Zibaa'i has been released on bail "temporarily" rather than "pending trial," suggesting that this may be a medical release.

Mr. Kohansaal has been bailed pending his trial. It appears

that Mr. Ansaari is still being detained. He suffers from a heart condition and has recently had a pacemaker fitted.

The charges against Mr. Kohansaal and Mr. Zibaa'i are maintained.