

IRAN NEWS BULLETIN

No. 36 | 2–9 October 2026

[This bulletin documents only the most significant acts of persecution and human rights abuses which the BIC has noted during the reporting period. It does not include those routine acts of discrimination to which Bahá'ís in Iran, whether as individuals or as a community, are subjected on a daily basis. The information presented in each bulletin is based on information available at the time of writing and may have changed subsequently.]

1. Bahá'í Prisoner Roya Sabet Denied Leave to Visit Ailing Mother and Later to Attend Her Funeral



FARS PROVINCE: It was learned on 8 October 2026 that Mrs. [Roya Sabet](#), a Bahá'í prisoner held in Adelabad Prison in Shiraz, was denied multiple requests for temporary leave to visit her mother, Mrs. [Nosrat Momtaz](#), while she was hospitalized. Her most recent request, submitted on 5 October 2026, was rejected, and Mrs. Momtaz died the following day. Afterward, Mrs. Sabet submitted a request to attend her mother's funeral and burial ceremony, but this request was also denied.

These decisions followed a series of earlier rejections of Mrs. Sabet's requests for medical furlough. During her imprisonment, she sustained back and neck injuries requiring specialized medical treatment, but several applications for temporary medical leave on this basis were not approved.

Mrs. Sabet had previously written to the authorities explaining that she had returned to Iran from the United Arab Emirates to care for her elderly and ill parents. Her father died in November 2025 while she was already in prison. Following his death, Mrs. Momtaz suffered a stroke and was hospitalized.

Mrs. Sabet, a Bahá'í resident of the United Arab Emirates and the mother of two children, was arrested in Shiraz in January 2024 by agents of the Intelligence Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. She was subsequently charged with, among other allegations, "membership in the deviant Bahá'í sect" and "propaganda against the regime."

She was later sentenced to a total of 25 years' imprisonment, of which 10 years are enforceable under applicable sentencing provisions.

On 25 October 2025, Mrs. Sabet was taken into custody to begin serving her sentence and transferred to Adelabad Prison in Shiraz, where she remained detained as of the time of writing.

2. No Charges, No Trial: Parsa Najafi Detained for More Than 120 Days



ISFAHAN PROVINCE: It was learned on 5 October 2026 that, more than 120 days after his arrest, Mr. [Parsa Najafi](#), a 20-year-old Bahá'í resident of Isfahan, remained in Dastgerd Prison without resolution of his case. His detention order had again been extended.

As of 9 October 2026, Mr. Najafi had been held in custody for approximately 126 days, yet judicial proceedings in his case had not

commenced and no formal charges had been announced.

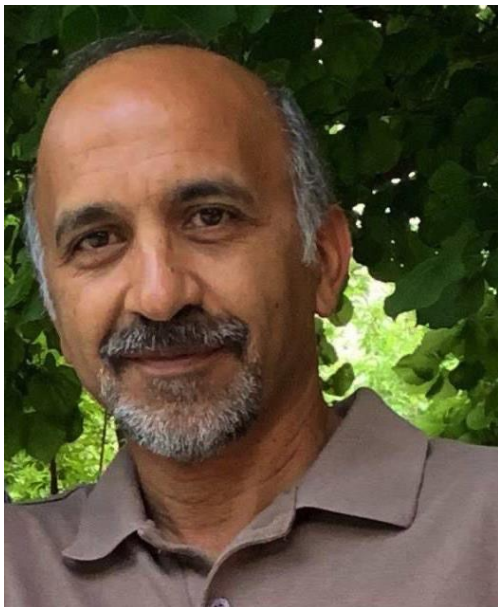
After nearly three months without access to telephone calls or family visits, Mr. Najafi's parents were recently permitted to meet with him. The visits were conducted separately and under supervision, and his parents were prohibited from discussing his case, detention conditions, or experiences in custody.

Concerns had previously been raised about Mr. Najafi's access to legal representation because his lawyer had not been permitted to review the case file.

Mr. Najafi was arrested by agents of the Isfahan Intelligence Department on 6 June 2026. At the same time, security agents raided his family home and confiscated personal items belonging to him and his family.

Following his arrest, Mr. Najafi was subjected to pressure and threats aimed at obtaining televised confessions. Security agents had also previously searched his family home on 22 December 2024.

3. Behzad Yazdani Detained for More Than Six Months Without Trial



FARS PROVINCE: It was learned on 4 October 2026 that, more than six months after his arrest, Mr. [Behzad Yazdani](#), a Bahá'í resident of Shiraz, remained detained in Adelabad Prison without a court hearing or resolution of his case.

Security agents arrested Mr. Yazdani at his home in Shiraz on 28 March 2026 and subsequently transferred him to Adelabad Prison, where he has since remained in custody.

Throughout Mr. Yazdani's detention, no court session has been held to address the charges against him. He has also been denied access to legal counsel and has not been permitted to review his case file. His family has received no clear information from judicial authorities about the status of the case, the possibility of his release on bail, or

the timeline for judicial proceedings; they have been told only that the case remains under review.

Further concern arose following the death of Mr. Yazdani's mother-in-law the previous week. The relevant authorities denied a request for several hours of furlough to allow him to attend her funeral and burial ceremony.

The case forms part of a broader series of actions affecting members of Mr. Yazdani's family. His wife, Mrs. [Romina Khazali](#), was arrested at her home in Shiraz by the Intelligence Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on 29 March 2026 and was released on bail on 21 June 2026.

As of the time of writing, no court date had been announced, and no information had been made available about the resolution of Mr. Yazdani's case or the possibility of his release.

4. Final Court Session Held for Bahá'í Detainee Artin Ghazanfari Amid Continuing Health Concerns



TEHRAN PROVINCE: On 29 September 2026, the fourth and final court session in the case of Mr. [Artin Ghazanfari](#), a Bahá'í resident of Tehran, was held before Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court, presided over by Judge Abolghasem Salavati. Accompanied by his lawyer, Mr. Ghazanfari appeared before the court and responded to the charges against him.

Mr. Ghazanfari faces charges including “deviant educational or propaganda activity contrary to or

disruptive of the sacred law of Islam” under Article 500 Bis of the Islamic Penal Code, as well as “membership in a group with the aim of disrupting national security.” In his case, the latter charge is based on the fact that he is a Bahá'í.

Mr. Ghazanfari is being held in Greater Tehran Penitentiary, where he has remained in detention for approximately eight and a half months.

Concerns about Mr. Ghazanfari's health have persisted throughout his detention. He has heart disease, asthma, and high blood pressure and has not received the medical treatment considered necessary for these conditions.

Both a prison surgeon and an internal medicine specialist have recommended that Mr. Ghazanfari be transferred to a hospital outside the prison for surgery. However, authorization for the transfer has not been granted, and his physical condition remains a matter of concern.

5. Three Bahá'í Youths Detained in Shiraz Denied Legal Representation and Communication



FARS PROVINCE: On 14 September 2026, three Bahá'ís—Ms. [Sarina Zaeri](#), Mr. [Barbod Sepehri](#), and Mr. [Arshia Jaberi](#)—were arrested in Shiraz during simultaneous raids on their homes by security agents.

The agents searched the three homes, confiscated personal belongings, and took Ms. Zaeri, Mr. Sepehri, and Mr. Jaberi, aged 20, 21, and 19, respectively, into custody.

The three detainees were subsequently transferred to Soroush Detention Centre in Shiraz. More than three weeks after their arrest, they remain detained without a court hearing or any announced resolution of their cases and have been permitted only one brief visit with their families.

They have also been denied access to legal representation and telephone calls. Their families have received no detailed information about the cases, the reasons for their continued detention, or any charges that may have been brought against them.

The continued lack of information about their condition has raised concern about their well-being, particularly for Ms. Zaeri, who has an underlying respiratory condition.

6. Twenty-Six Bahá'is Summoned for Ninth Court Hearing in Shiraz



FARS PROVINCE: On 27 September 2026, several Bahá'is in Shiraz received summonses in connection with the case commonly known as the "Shiraz 26 Bahá'is case." They were instructed to appear for the ninth hearing before Branch 1 of the Shiraz

Revolutionary Court.

One of the summonses specifies that the defendants must appear before the court at 9:00 a.m. on 11 October 2026.

The 26 Bahá'is named in the case are Mr. [Esmail Rousta](#), Ms. [Bahareh Nowrouzi](#), Mr. [Behnam Azizpour](#), Ms. [Parisa Rouhizadegan](#), Ms. [Samareh Ashnaie](#), Mr. [Farbod Shadman](#), Mr. [Farzad Shadman](#), Ms. [Lala Salehi](#), Ms. [Maryam Eslami Mehdiabadi](#), Ms. [Marjan Gholampour](#), Mr. [Mahyar Sefidi Miandoab](#), Ms. [Mojgan Gholampour](#), Mr. [Nabil Tahzib](#), Ms. [Nasim Kashaninejad](#), Ms. [Noushin Zenhari](#), Mr. [Vargha Kaviani](#), Ms. [Yekta Fahandeh Saadi](#), Mr. [Ramin Shirvani](#), Ms. [Rezvan Yazdani](#), Mr. [Saied Hasani](#), Mr. [Soroush Ighani Soghadi](#), Ms. [Shadi Sadegh Aghdam](#), Ms. [Shamim Akhlaghi](#), Ms. [Sahba Farahbakhsh](#), Mr. [Sahba Moslehi](#), and Ms. [Ahdieh Enayati](#).

The summonses state that the appearance is for judicial review of the case and require those summoned to attend at the appointed time and location with identification documents and any supporting evidence.

The case began in 2016 with the arrest of the 26 individuals, who were released on bail after a period of detention pending further proceedings.

Their charges were heard over three court sessions between June 2020 and May 2022 by Branch 1 of the Shiraz Revolutionary Court, presided over by Mr. Mahmoud Sadati. A preliminary verdict was issued in June 2022.

The charges included, among others, "propaganda against the regime in favor of groups opposed to the Islamic Republic," "managing anti-state groups," and "membership in such groups."

The court of first instance sentenced the 26 Bahá'ís collectively to 85 years' imprisonment, 24 years of internal exile, and 52 years of travel bans. The ruling was upheld on appeal, but the Supreme Court later overturned it and referred the case to a parallel judicial branch in Fars Province for retrial.

On 14 January 2023, Branch 1 of the Fars Province Court of Appeals acquitted all 26 defendants, and the case was closed following the issuance of the acquittal verdicts.

The case was subsequently reopened after the Chief Justice of Fars Province objected to the acquittals and requested the application of Article 477 of Iran's Criminal Procedure Code.

Under Article 477, if the Head of the Judiciary determines that a final judicial ruling is "manifestly contrary to Islamic law," he may authorize a retrial and refer the case to the Supreme Court for reconsideration.

A provincial chief justice may also request the application of Article 477 by submitting supporting documentation to the Head of the Judiciary.

Seyed Kazem Mousavi, the Chief Justice of Fars Province, challenged the acquittals under Article 477, resulting in the case being returned to Shiraz for further proceedings.

The new proceedings will again be presided over by Judge Mahmoud Sadati, who issued the original preliminary verdict.

7. Current Prisoner Population Details

MULTIPLE PROVINCES: Based on available confirmed information as of 9 October 2026, the BIC has verified that 65 Bahá'ís are currently detained or imprisoned solely for their beliefs in multiple locations across Iran. Of these, 34 are women and 31 are men. They are held in standard prisons, intelligence detention centres, IRGC-run facilities, and, in some cases, unknown locations. Many have been exposed to physical and psychological abuse, including lengthy abusive interrogations, prolonged solitary confinement, beatings, electric-shock torture, mock executions, forced confessions, and denial of access to essential medical treatment and medication.

In addition to the 65 individuals physically incarcerated, at least 19 others are currently serving sentences outside prison under electronic monitoring or temporarily on leave.

The detainees are located in Dowlatabad Prison in Isfahan, Vakilabad Prison in Mashhad, Hamadan Prison, Kachouei Prison in Karaj, Kerman Prison, Central Prison of Karaj, Evin and Fashafuyeh (Greater Tehran) Prisons in Tehran, Bukan Prison, Semnan Prison, Adelabad Prison in Shiraz, Dastgerd Prison in Isfahan, Yazd Prison, Qarchak Prison in Varamin, Shahriar Detention Centre and Soroush Detention Centre in Shiraz. A number of the detained individuals are being held in undisclosed locations, raising serious concerns regarding transparency, due process, and access to legal representation.

Women constitute the majority of those detained, and several detainees are held in facilities operated by the IRGC or intelligence services, indicating the security-related nature of these cases and their apparent connection solely to the detainees' religious beliefs.