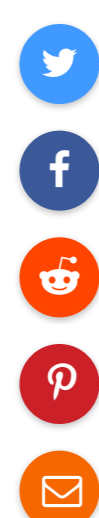


# Female-Led Protests About Mahsa Amini's Death & Hijab Law in Iran Have Gone Global



Miguel Costa  
VladTV Staff Writer

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Women of all ethnic backgrounds from various corners of the world are standing in solidarity for a social cause against the authoritarian government of Iran. The uprising was ignited by an occurrence on September 16th that saw a 22-year-old woman named Mahsa Amini arrested by the government's morality police (a police unit dedicated to regulating fashion/code of conduct) in the city of Teran for her alleged failure to comply with the country's dress code about wearing a headdress properly. Iran enacted this legislation in 1979, shortly after the 'Islamic Revolution,' the religious code became known throughout the country as the hijab laws. According to Mahsa's immediate family, her brother and father were on hand when the morality police approached their vehicle before removing Mahsa and placing her in a patrol car. Following the arrest, the morality police informed Mahsa's family of their plan to transport her to a detention center for about one hour so that she could receive a "re-education" about the responsibilities of being a Muslim woman in Iran. Therefore, the Amini family drove to the police station and waited for Mahsa to be released, but after a few hours went by, they were told by law enforcement that she was in a coma due to a heart attack or a stroke. Mahsa's brother, Kiarash, did subscribe to the explanation given to him by the morality police. Instead, he indicated that his sister had been the victim of foul play and perhaps police brutality.

"There were only two hours between her arrest and being taken to hospital," said Kiarash Amini during an interview with *IranWire*.

In an interview with *BBC*, Mahsa's father, Amjad, echoed that sentiment. He added more context to the events leading up to the death of his daughter, alleging possible abusiveness, neglect in regard to the body cameras belonging to the police officers on hand, and the immoral practices of the medical experts once Mahsa was transported to a hospital.

"[During Mahsa's arrest] My son begged them not to take her, but he was beaten too, his clothes [were] ripped off," Amjad recalled. "I asked [the police officers] to show me the body cameras of the security officers, and they told me the cameras were out of battery.

Amjad continued: "I wanted to see my daughter, but [the medical staff at the hospital] wouldn't let me in...There were bruises on her feet. I asked the doctors to examine her feet, [but] they ignored me. They are now lying."

Before-and-after video surrounding the highly questionable incident involving the Teran Police and Masha was captured on camera; bits and pieces were released to the public. The entire ordeal lasted for several hours; some of the footage depicts a group of morality police officers carrying Mahsa's body out of the facility on a stretcher while she was unconscious. Other clips related to that occurrence appear to have been edited. None of the footage is conclusive, but what is certain is that Mahsa passed away under the care of law enforcement officials. The controversial incident was followed by a confidential autopsy and an inadmissible explanation to the Iranian public resulting in an "unsolved case" that's "pending investigation." The people of Iran were told that Mahsa died from a heart attack that was prompted by a pre-existing heart condition. The unconvincing revelation was met with outspoken skepticism from Mahsa's family, who contested that the victim did not have any cardiovascular conditions beforehand. Mahsa's tragic death marked the beginning of a female-led revolution in Iran as her supporters accused the government of attempting to spearhead a fallacy regarding the events leading up to her passing. The name "Mahsa Amini" is now a social campaign that has remained steadfast in the hearts of Iranian women and men since tragedy struck on September 16th. The outcry for justice has evolved into a call for reform within the Islamic Republic, and it has turned Mahsa into a martyr of iconic proportions. In the past month alone, demonstrations/protests in support of Mahsa's family against the Iranian government have spread to the corners of the Earth, in major international cities such as Berlin (Germany), Seoul (South Korea), Toronto (Canada) Washington D.C., and Los Angeles (home to the largest population of Iranians outside of their homeland). The Iranian-American community in Reno (Nevada) recently spoke out in an effort to garner more support from women of all races in the name of Mahsa during a grassroots protest at the University of Nevada.

A trademark maneuver of resistance among female protesters is to publically cut their long hair as a sign of solidarity with Mahsa's family and an act of defiance against the "hijab." Another symbolic routine among protesters are the following rally cries: "Free Iran," "Women, Life, Freedom," "We just want our freedom," and "Say her name." Back in Iran, the resistance has come at a steep price as the bloody conflict between the country's security forces and civilians has resulted in over 450 patrons injured and approximately seven deaths. In fact, Iran security forces reportedly opened fire on a crowd of protesters during a demonstration in Mahsa's hometown on Wednesday, October 26th.

The day began with thousands of Iranians gathering in the city of Saqez to commemorate Mahsa's life at her burial site in the Aichi cemetery 40 days after her death (per Iranian tradition), but tension arose as police presence became more prevalent and within a matter of hours the amicable showing evolved into somewhat of a warzone between the government and the people. The bedlam in the western region of Kurdistan resulted in police cars being set on fire, women burning their headscarves, and a spirited march amongst the protestors toward governor Esmail Zarei-Kousha's place of residence.

With the 2022 FIFA World Cup set to begin in November, #mahsaamini has become a passionate campaign that is raising awareness about police brutality in Iran. The heartfelt movement is gaining more support from the country's national soccer team (IR Iran) and its fans. With the national soccer team set to take center stage in a matter of weeks, their backing of Mahsa's family has garnered reinforcement from celebrities. Unfortunately, many prominent voices who have dared to speak out against the Iranian government have been jailed—never to be heard from again. Meanwhile, the Biden Administration, back in the United States, has remained steadfast in its support of Iranian American women by condemning the Iranian government for its repressive response to their citizens. On Wednesday, the United States government began to impose sanctions, including financial stoppages and bans.

"We stand with the citizens and brave women of Iran," [President Biden](#) said during a public address in Irvine, California. "Women all over the world are being persecuted...It stunned me what it awakened in Iran...It's awakened something that I don't think will be quieted in a long, long time."

As the worldwide protests intensify, pressure is mounting on the Shitte regime in Iran. Protestors from all walks of life, from students to prisoners, are pressuring the Iranian government to end hajib and to give them more answers regarding the mysterious death of Mahsa Amini. With the help of women and politicians from all over the world, they just might get the result they want.