

Timeline of the Mahsa Amini protests in Iran

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Recent protests in Iran have resulted in a global call to action for women's rights, especially in religious nations. The protests began with the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman who was detained by the Iranian Guidance Patrol after wearing a hijab in a way that did not conform to the country-wide guidelines. Amini fell into a coma on September 16, 2022 due to injuries inflicted by the patrol.

That same day, protesters chanted outside of the hospital that pronounced Amini dead. The protesters, who shouted, "I will kill whoever killed my sister!" were pepper sprayed, with some being arrested by security forces. The following day, Sep. 17, Amini was buried in her hometown of Saquez. According to *The Guardian*, hundreds of people gathered at the funeral despite official warnings against it. Some women at the funeral removed their hijabs in protest, marching towards the local governor's office. As they grew closer, security forces opened fire.

Protests did not stop in Saquez, spreading to the provincial capital of Sanandaj. Accounts on Twitter show videos of protesters shouting, "Saquez is not alone, it's supported by Sanandaj," young people setting fire to car tires, and protesters throwing rocks at riot police through clouds of tear gas. Protesters in Saquez tore down posters of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei.

On Sep. 19, the Iranian government cut off mobile internet service in Tehran, where Amini was detained. Three protesters were killed by security forces in the Western Kurdish territory, with another man—23-year-old Farjad Darvishi—being killed by police while protesting in Urmia.

Voice of America stated on Sep. 20 that videos on social media showed anti-government protests in at least 16 out of Iran's 31 provinces. Later that day, Iranian state media confirmed that three people had been killed during Kurdistan protests. One victim was female, while the other two were young men—one of which was only 16 years old. In addition to civilian deaths, a police assistant was killed by protesters in Shiraz. In Kerman, a woman was filmed removing her hijab, cutting her ponytail underneath.

Major protests continued until the end of September, into October. On Oct. 3, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei dismissed the protests, calling them "riots" and implying that foreign enemies were behind them. Khamenei later called protest actions like burning Qurans and mosques and removing hijabs as "not normal, natural reactions." In addition to these statements, he stated that the Kurdish people are "among one of the most advanced groups in Iran, who love their homeland, Islam, and the establishment." BBC News reported on videos released on Oct. 4, showing schoolgirls removing their headscarves and chanting antigovernment slogans. In Shiraz, schoolgirls blocked traffic, while a group of schoolgirls in Saquez raised their middle finger at a

portrait of Khamenei and Khomeini. It is believed that the schoolgirls were showing their support for Nika Shakrami, a 16-year-old girl who mysteriously disappeared after a protest and was later found dead.

Protests grew heavier throughout the remainder of October, with little to no support from the government. The United Nations (UN) condemned the nation's officials for not acting and neglecting the voices of protesters.

On Nov. 2, Supreme Leader Khamenei was still under the belief that all of the protests were caused by a foreign nation. Despite this, Iranian police did react to a violent video showing a protester being beaten in the prone position, run over by a motorcycle, beaten again, and then shot at close range by an officer.

Mourning ceremonies for all who died in the protests occurred on Nov. 3. U.S. President Joe Biden stated that he would "free Iran" in a campaign speech that took place in California. During the speech, multiple demonstrators held signs and banners in support of Iranian citizens. Human Rights Watch reported that Iranian authorities had plans to increase violence and assaults against protesters and activists. That night, the Islamic government shut off the electricity in Chaharbagh, a neighborhood in Isfahan. Protesters continued to chant slogans, even in the dark.

On Nov. 4, Iran's president Ebrahim Raisi responded to Biden's statement in a live televised speech, saying that "Iran was freed 43 years ago," and called protesters "deceived traitors." Abdolhamid Ismaeelzahi, a high-ranking Sunni cleric, stated, "You should resolve your problem with this nation which once gave you your legitimacy. The majority of people are dissatisfied now. If you disagree, then hold a just referendum with international observers."

As of Nov 12., protests are still ongoing, with no sign of stoppage. They span across the nation in almost all provinces, including people of all ages, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. This is not the first time Iran has faced protesters, with another government-related protest happening in 2019 and spanning to 2020. Though this protest did not relate back to religion, it focused on economic issues felt by the middle to low class citizens that could not afford price increases imposed by the government.