



elsewhere in Iran have occurred on many occasions, most lately in August 2021 and February 2022. However, this action comes after months of increasing persecution of Bahá'ís, with over 100 being targeted in raids or arrests in the last few days alone and dozens more being singled out since June.

Since the Islamic republic's foundation in 1979, Bahá'ís have faced persecution since the government does not respect their right to practice their religion freely. The Islamic republic acknowledges minority non-Muslim religions, including Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity, but not Bahá'ísm.

In Iran, Bahá'ís have been a target of state-sanctioned persecution since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. In the first ten years of this persecution, almost 200 Bahá'ís in Iran were slaughtered or put to death. Hundreds more were imprisoned or tortured, while tens of thousands lost employment, access to education, and other privileges merely because of their religious conviction.

The Iranian Resistance has also spoken out against the Intelligence Ministry's onslaught on the Bahá'í community, the imprisonment of many members of this religious minority, and the escalation of oppressive measures against this group in Iran.

Since June 2021, Islamic judicial authorities and security personnel have cemented their persecution of Bahá'í believers, conducting raids on more than a dozen homes, detaining tens—among them three former community leaders—and closing down businesses.

Dozens of Bahá'ís are now being held in jails around Iran due to the continuous persecution of Iran's Bahá'ís.

According to a statement released by the Iranian Intelligence Ministry, a large number of Bahá'ís have been detained on suspicion of being Israeli agents who have infiltrated schools to spread the Bahá'í religion.

Bahá'ís, who number approximately 300,000 in Iran, assert that their rights are routinely violated and that they are frequently harassed, compelled to leave their residences and places of business, and denied access to government jobs and higher education.

Bahá'ís living in Iran are confronted with very difficult and challenging circumstances. The entire Bahá'í community in Iran has been persecuted in an ongoing, multifaceted, and state-sponsored manner for over 40 years, and this persecution continues to this day. This persecution affects every community member, spanning generations and affecting every aspect of life, including death.

The government marginalizes the Bahá'ís in a number of ways: they are barred from speaking openly about their faith, they are systematically denied opportunities to advance economically, intellectually, and culturally, they are denied access to education, and they have their history and heritage systematically erased, among other things. In addition, they intend to wipe out

the Bahá'í people in Iran, so they do not exist.

More lately, in April 2021, Bahá'ís were forbidden by the government to bury their deceased in the section of Tehran's Khavaran Cemetery that had been set aside for them. After the confiscation and destruction of the former Bahá'í Cemetery of Tehran in 1981, this plot of land was given to the Bahá'ís, which can accommodate their burial needs for decades. But unfortunately, authorities from the Security Office of the Behesht-e Zahra Organization, which controls Khavaran, have forbidden residents from cultivating these areas. As a result, Bahá'ís had to choose between burying their loved ones in a little space between two existing graves or using a mass burial ground where thousands of political prisoners were buried during the early years of the Islam movement at most minuscule 50 Bahá'ís.

Meanwhile, the Bahá'ís steadfastly refused to use the site, and in the face of mounting international criticism, the authorities temporarily changed direction and removed the prohibition.

Due to the fact that the Iranian government does not acknowledge the religion, the Bahá'í community has long been subjected to persecution and prejudice. Moreover, the belief held by Bahá'ís, according to which there was another prophet after Muhammad, is incompatible with Islam. Finally, the fact that the Bahá'í people's international headquarters are located in Haifa, Israel, even though the religion's origins can be traced back to what is now Iran, only deepens Tehran's mistrust of the group.

Despite this, the Bahá'í are more prevalent in Iran than Jews, partly due to the Bahá'ís obligation to convert others to their faith. Additionally, they have a wider geographical distribution and higher social integration than any previous generation. Moreover, many, particularly the older generation, have no intention of leaving the nation despite the hardship and injustices they have endured. The spiritual and emotional ties to Iran are deep since it is their homeland and the location where their religion was born. Furthermore, the Bahá'í faith's origins were among Iran's elite, and it still has a lot of sway among the country's ruling class and even members of the Shia clergy. The current increase in government pressure is likely related to the regime's concern over the faith's popularity among young Shia, who may find Bahá'í more compatible with contemporary living than traditional Shia beliefs.

In recent years, Iran has experienced economic and health difficulties, which have affected the whole population, including the Bahá'ís. The Bahá'ís are affected by these crises in addition to the severe prejudice directed against them. In spite of the problems that are plaguing the country, the organized campaign of oppression that is being carried out against the Bahá'í community as a whole has become more severe.

The Bahá'ís have voiced complaints about the confiscation of land and property on several occasions in the past. The authorities have frequently alleged that they were owned by groups no longer permitted in Iran. However, the Bahá'ís have rebutted these claims by stating that the assets were

afterward passed to foundations controlled by the government.

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