IRAN
Prisoner prayer list

This list contains the known names of the prisoners imprisoned for their Christian faith in Iran, as of March 2014. We believe that there are many more imprisoned for their Christian faith, whose names we don’t know.

‘Fate unknown’ means that we are not sure what has happened to these people after their arrest; they could still be in a prison, but they might have been released. Because of the pressure that is put on these people and their families – and the fact that the government doesn’t always give information about the whereabouts of these people even to the family – it is difficult to get information out of the country.

The list is arranged chronologically, starting with the most recent arrests. On the last page you’ll find names of prisoners that have been released.

5 March 2014, arrested in Khuzestan, fate unknown:
Amin Khaki (m)
Hossein Barunzadeh (m)
Rahman Bahman (m)
5 others were released after questioning. They are members of Pastor Behnam Irani’s congregation.
These men lived in Karaj and were forbidden by the regime to travel. Travel bans and arrests appear to be part of a new campaign to put pressure on active pastors of house churches that are known by the regime.

31 December, 2013, arrested in Tehran, fate unknown:
Sara Rahimi Nejad (f)
Majid Sheidaei (m)
Mostafa Nadri (m)
George Isaian (m)
Arrested during a house church meeting in the houses of one of these believers. They were beaten and their personal belongings were confiscated.

December 2013 (Christmas Eve), arrested in Tehran, fate unknown:
Hosseini (m)
Ahmad Bazyar (m)
Faegheh Nasrolahi (f)
Mastaneh Rastegari (f)
Amir Hossein Nematollahi (m)
These Christians were arrested during a house church meeting on Christmas Eve.

December 2013, arrested in Tehran, Evin prison:
Rasoul Abdollahi (m)
Sentenced to three years in Evin Prison.

December 2013, arrested university of Kerman, fate unknown:
Kiavosh Sotoudeh (m)
Jamshid Jabbari (m)
These two students were arrested near their university in 2013 and brought to an unknown location.

Summer 2013, Tehran, Evin prison:
Maryam Naghash Zargaran (f) (worries about health)
Sentenced to 4 years in prison.

9 August 2013, arrested in Tehran, fate unknown:
Parham Farazmand (m)
Sedigheh Kiani (f)
Sara Sardsirian (f)
Mona Fazli (f)
One other person belonging to this group, name unknown. Arrested during a meeting of their house church. Their personal belongings were confiscated, mobile phones were investigated and violence used against them. All members of the house church had to hand in their identity cards, but only five of them were arrested.

August 2013, arrested in Isfahan, fate unknown:
Sedigheh Amirkhani (f)
Mahnaz Rafiee (f)
Mohammad Reza Peymani (m)
Family members have tried to get information about the situation of these arrested Christians at the police and court numerous times, with no effect. Only Sedigheh has been able to call her family once and tell them about her imprisonment and the interrogations of the secret service.

July 2013, Karaj, prison:
Hossein Saketi Aramsari (m)
After time spent in solitary confinement, Hossein is currently imprisoned in a prison in Karaj. He is sentenced to one year.

July 2013, Shiraz, prison (originally arrested October 2012)
Mehdi Ameruni (m) (3 years)
Roxana Foroughi (f) (1 year)
Bijan Farokhpour Haghighi (m) (3 years)
Shahin Lahooti (m) (2.5 years)
Massoud Rezaie (m) (5 years)
Eskander Rezaie (m) (1 year)
Mohammad Roghangir (m) (6 years)
Soroush Saraie (m) (2.5 years)
Arrested during a prayer meeting in October 2012, after paying high ransoms they were freed again. In July 2013 they were all convicted on charges of ‘illegal activities’ and ‘propaganda against the Islamic Regime’ and imprisoned again.

July 2013, arrested Tabriz, fate unknown:
Yashar Farzin (m)
Farshid Modares-Aval (m)
Mohammed-Reza Pirri (m)
Arrested after house raids, questioned by secret services. Current fate unknown.

Spring 2013, Tehran, Evin prison:
Somayeh Bakhtiari (f)
Ronak Samavit (f)
Nasim Zanjani (f)
Accused of organising house church meetings. Were arrested separately during the spring of 2013 and sent to the women’s ward of Evin prison in Tehran.

March 2013, Tehran, Evin prison:
Ebrahim Firouzi (m)
Sentenced to one year in prison and a subsequent two year exile to Sarbaz, an isolated village on the border with Pakistan.

Arrested Christmas 2012, imprisoned, released on appeal and awaiting judgment:
Pastor Vruir Avanessian (m) (60+ years old) (worries about health)
Pastor Avanessian was arrested during a raid on a house church meeting celebrating Christmas. 50 believers were present at the meeting. Avanessian was released again in January 2013 and is now awaiting his appeal after being sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison.
July 2012, Karaj, Rajai Shahr prison:
Pastor Saeed Abedini (m) (worries about health)
Pastor Abedini is 33 years old, married to Nagmeh and father of two; Rebekka (7 years old) and Jacob (6 years old). He came to faith in 2000 and has been involved in house churches since. In 2005 he left Iran to go and live in the United States, where his wife lived for most of her life. He obtained dual citizenship and became a pastor in the USA, but kept returning to Iran. On a trip visiting an orphanage in 2012 he was arrested by Iranian authorities. It was not the first time he had been arrested, but this time, they refused to release him. He was sentenced to eight years in prison.

Saeed was taken to Evin prison, where he was kept in solitary confinement for the first four weeks. During his time in Evin he was tortured, causing his medical condition to deteriorate. In November 2013, Saeed was transferred to Rajai Shahr prison in Karaj, a prison notorious for housing violent murderers and rapists. In prison Saeed was robbed of his possessions. His health deteriorated because of the numerous beatings, but he was denied access to medical care. When Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the European Union visited the prison, they moved him to the hospital. But this charm offensive did not result in him getting any of the surgery he needed, and he was put in chains and sent back to prison as soon as Ashton left the country.

March 2012, Tehran, Evin prison:
Alireza Seyyedian (m)
Was arrested during a flight attempt. Sent back to Tehran, were he has been held since. He is sentenced to three and a half years in prison.

February 2012, Shiraz, Adel-Abad prison:
Vahid Hakkani (m) (worries about health)
Mojtaba Hossein (m)
Mohammed Reza Partoei (m)
Homayoun Shokouhi (m)
Have told trusted sources that they have lots of possibilities to share the gospel inside the prison.
Homayouns wife Fariba and son Nima (17) were also imprisoned, but have been (temporarily) released. Also pray for them.

May 2011, Karaj, Ghezal Hesar prison:
Pastor Behnam Irani (m) (worries about health)
Pastor Irani is 43 years old and was living in Karaj. He is married to Kristina, an Armenian Christian. They have two children: daughter Rebecca (11) and son Adriel (5).

Pastor Irani became a Christian in 1992, he became a pastor in 2002. In 2011 he was arrested and imprisoned for his faith. The first months he was held in solitary confinement. Now he is serving his six year sentence in Ghezal Hesar prison in Karaj. His health is weak. Praise the Lord that he recently received much needed surgery, but keep praying for his worrying health condition. Irani’s house was raided; books and DVD’s were confiscated. Kristina and the children, who were present at the time of the raid were frightened by the raid.

December 2010, Tehran, Evin prison:
Pastor Farshid Fathi (m)
Pastor Farshid was arrested at Christmas 2010, he is 35 years old and married to Leila. They have two children: Rosana and Bardia. He was sentenced to six years in prison.

In August 2013 he wrote in a letter how he was manipulated by his interrogators:
“I was told falsely that my wife had been arrested as well, and that I needed to give my [two] children’s custody to someone temporarily. I was also informed, falsely, that my dad had a heart attack and was hospitalised. Then they wouldn’t give me any follow-up news on whether he was dead or alive. It was all intended to put me under mental pressure.”
None of this was true. In fact his wife and children have fled to Canada. There is also positive news about pastor Farshid. According to Elam ministries, Pastor Farshid is ‘a beacon for Christ’, beloved by the inmates for his sweet nature.

Released
Pray also for those that have been imprisoned for their faith, but are released. Their struggle isn’t over yet. They need rest and recovery. It’s often too dangerous for them to have contact with other Christians because of spies. This isolated position can impede the restoration process. Often they are pressurised to not tell anything to anybody about what they’ve been through. They need the powerful love and consolation of the Lord.

From Evin Prison Tehran:
Mitra Zahmati (f) (summer 2011 - September 2013)
Maryam Jalili (f) (summer 2011 - September 2013
Mustafa Bordbar (m) (December 2012 - November 2013)
Sevada Aghasar (m) (August 2013 - 2 March 2014)

From Ahwaz:
Pastor Farhad Sabokrouh (m) (May 2013 - December 2013)
Shahnaz (f) (wife of Pastor Farhad) (released January 2014)
The Assemblies of God church has been closed, Pastor Farhad is not allowed to be pastor anymore, Shahnaz is forced to report to the secret services every four months.

Nasr Zamen-Decfuli (m) (May 2013 - December 2013)
Davoud Alijani (m) (May 2013 - January 2014)

From Shiraz:
Fariba Shokouhi (f) (few months in 2012) (husband still imprisoned)
Nima Shokouhi (m) (17 years old) (few months in 2012) (father still imprisoned)