Iran arrests Christian for not properly wearing hijab after assault

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By Benjamin Weinthal

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Iranian regime police arrested a young Christian woman, Fatemeh Mohammadi, last week for filing a complaint about being assaulted due to an alleged violation of the Islamic forced-hijab policy.

The website Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) wrote on July 12 that Mohammadi “was arrested by NAJA (Law Enforcement Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran) on July 9, 2019. She was arrested after a woman, Mousavi, harassed her because of her dress code and injured Mohammadi’s face. Mohammadi went to a police station to file a complaint against that woman but she was arrested instead.”

The woman, wearing the strict, full-body chador cloak, said that Mousavi assaulted Mohammadi, who was sitting on a bus, and demanded that she properly wear her head scarf. According to HRANA, "Mousavi attacked Mohammadi, pushed her chest with her hand and beat her face until her nails were covered in blood.”

The bus driver stopped the vehicle and the women went to a local police station where Mohammadi filed a formal complaint against Mousavi. But instead of arresting Mousavi, the police detained Mohammadi; she was released on bail on July 10.

According to HRANA, Mousavi defended her assault by stating that she is “enjoining good and forbidding wrong.”

Alireza Nader, the CEO of New Iran, a research and advocacy organization based in Washington, told The Jerusalem Post that “the regime has been encouraging regular citizens to confront women not complying with the compulsory hijab.”

The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps – a US designated terrorist organization – has been pushing a video in Iran promoting the Islamic chador.

Christian media reported that the 20-year-old Mohammadi converted to Christianity and was previously incarcerated on November 18, 2017. The organization International Christian Concern said: “Last spring, Fatemeh had completed a six-month prison sentence for membership in Tehran house church.

"She is a rare public Christian activist inside Iran, and has raised a number of issues to the forefront of conversation," the source continued. "She has publicly accused her interrogators of sexual harassment and published material questioning the government’s treatment of Christians. She has particularly raised awareness about how the government’s persecution of Christians is in violation of Article 23 of the Constitution, which says that ‘no one may be molested or taken to task for simply holding a certain belief.'”

Last week, the human rights NGO Amnesty International sent a public letter to the head of Iran’s judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi, demanding the release of three female anti-hijab activists.

According to the letter, the women “were arrested in relation to a video that was widely disseminated on social media. The video, shot on International Women’s Day 2019, showed them without their headscarves, distributing flowers to female passengers on a metro train in Tehran and discussing their hopes for women’s rights in Iran.”

Amnesty added that: ”They have been charged with serious offenses simply for peacefully protesting against Iran’s degrading and discriminatory forced veiling laws. Their prosecution is part of a wider crackdown since January 2018 on women’s rights defenders campaigning against forced veiling laws.”