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Iran: Atefeh Rangriz sentenced to seven years in prison

On 22 November 2024, the Damghan Revolutionary Court sentenced woman human rights defender **Atefeh Rangriz** to seven years imprisonment on the charge of “forming a group with the intention of acting against national security,” seven months imprisonment on the charge of “propaganda against state,” and a two year ban from activities on social media and online.

[Atefeh Rangriz](#) is a woman human rights defender advocating for women, children and worker’s rights in Iran through her translation of the work of international feminists and activists, research on human rights situations in Iran, and social media activities. She has been prosecuted in the past for her labour rights activities, particularly in relation to her campaigning in conjunction with the [Syndicate of Workers of Haft Tappeh Cane Sugar Company](#) which is a trade union for the workers of the Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Agro-industrial Complex.

On 22 November 2024, Atefeh Rangriz was sentenced to seven years in prison on the charge of “forming a group with the intention of acting against national security,” seven months in prison on the charge of “propaganda against state,” and a two year ban from activities on social media and online, for creating a Telegram group where she published her translation of the work of the Argentinian Feminist Verónica Gago into Farsi. Should article 123 of the Islamic Penal Code apply, the defender must serve the most severe of the three sentences, seven years in prison, together with the complementary punishment. The above sentences were handed to Atefeh Rangriz shortly after she was returned to Shahroud Prison, having been denied an extension to a medical furlough granted in November. She has otherwise been imprisoned since June 2024.

These sentences relate to the charges issued on 29 June 2024, when Atefeh Rangriz was present at a hearing held at the Damghan Public and Revolutionary Prosecutor’s Office. The woman human rights defender was charged with “forming a group with the intention of acting against national security,” “propaganda against state,” and “spreading disinformation in the virtual world with the intention of disturbing public opinion”. Atefeh Rangriz was arrested and imprisoned after the hearing as the new charges breached her conditions of bail from a previous case.

This is not the first time the woman human rights defender has been targeted for her human rights work. On 10 September 2023, in the advent of the anniversary of “woman, life, freedom,” Atefeh Rangriz was arrested and detained in Shahroud prison until 21 October 2023, when she was released on bail. On 14 November 2023, Atefeh Rangriz was also charged by the Shahroud Revolutionary Court who consecutively sentenced the woman human rights defender to two years, seven months and sixteen days in prison on the charge of “collaboration and membership in the hostile groups with the state,” and to seven months and sixteen days in prison on the charge of “propaganda activity against state.”

The sentence handed down to Atefeh Rangriz on 24 November 2024 was communicated with the woman human rights defender and her lawyer after she was returned to prison following a medical furlough granted in November 2024. She was granted this medical furlough because of her deteriorating health whilst in detention. Atefeh Rangriz's request to extend the medical parole to undergo CT angiography was rejected last week.

Front Line Defenders expresses its concern regarding the continued judicial harassment of Atefeh Rangriz as it believes the woman human rights defender is being targeted for her peaceful human rights activities to promote women's rights via advocacy and research in Iran. The organisation is particularly concerned about the health situation of the woman human rights defender and her apparent lack of access to timely and adequate essential medical treatment whilst in detention.

Front Line Defenders urges the Iran authorities to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Atefeh Rangriz and quash the convictions against her;
2. Ensure that Atefeh Rangriz has access to timely medical care, whilst in detention, as required by the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
3. Cease the targeting of human rights defenders in Iran and ensure in all circumstances that they can carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisal and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.