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Iran Steps Up Crackdown On Female Singers



Bita Hajisadeghian is among several female singers in Iran who have been targeted by authorities. The singer and teacher from Isfahan was interrogated and accused of “harming public decency.”

Iran has escalated its crackdown on female singers in an effort to silence them. In past weeks, several women have been detained or summoned by authorities, while their Instagram pages have been shut down.

Since the 1979 revolution, women in Iran have been banned from singing solo in public. But despite the restrictions, many female artists have turned to social media to share their voices—often defying both the singing ban and the country’s strict hijab laws.

Among them is Golsa Rahimzamani, whose Instagram account was banned following an order by Iran’s Cyber Police. Reyhanoo, another singer, also had her page removed, while Bita Hajisadeghian, a singer and music teacher, was summoned by authorities in Isfahan and accused of “harming public decency and publishing indecent work.”

In February, singer Hiwa Seyfzadeh was arrested mid-performance in Tehran when plainclothes agents stormed the venue and took her away. She was later released, but her social media accounts were also shut down.

Last August, singer Zara Esmaili was detained after videos of her performing in public—including singing Amy Winehouse’s hit *Back to Black*—went viral. Her current whereabouts remain unknown.

In December, singer Parastoo Ahmadi created a stir after recording a performance with her hair uncovered, wearing a dress, and accompanied by male musicians. The video, uploaded to YouTube, quickly went viral—earning her praise for challenging both the ban on female singers and Iran’s compulsory hijab laws. Authorities briefly detained her and launched legal proceedings against her and her bandmates for what they called an “illegal concert.”

The crackdown has drawn criticism from many, including religious figures.

Pro-reform cleric Mohammad Taghi Fazeli Meybodi, from the holy city of Qom, dismissed the ban as baseless, stating that there is no religious justification for prohibiting women from singing.

Iran's music icon Googoosh, who was banned from performing at the peak of her career, has also voiced her support.

"This is a historic moment that future generations will talk about," she told Radio Farda in December. "More women will take the stage—there is no turning back."