

8-14 May 2022



Pastor Matthias (Abdulreza Ali) Haghnejad

‘Nobody is prosecuted on religious grounds.’ These were the words Iran’s judiciary used in an official response to senior UN experts in January 2021. Yet, in the same response, it admitted to taking legal action against members of ‘enemy groups’ and ‘private churches’, who it accused of belonging to a ‘Zionist Christian cult’ with ‘anti-security purposes’.

Throughout 2021 the country’s religious minorities faced continued violations. CSW is aware of 59 Christians who were arrested, 34 who were detained and 30 who endured some form of imprisonment last year, though many more cases go unreported. Find out more at csw.org.uk/iran

Sunday 8 May

Pray this verse over all Christians currently imprisoned because of their faith: ‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned.’ (Isaiah 43:2)

Monday 9 May

Give thanks that nine members of the Church of Iran who were released between 30 December 2021 and 1 January 2022 pending a review of their sentences, were acquitted on 28 February of ‘endangering state security’ and ‘promoting Zionism’.

Tuesday 10 May

The nine Christian converts were released following a ruling by the Supreme Court, which stated that promoting Christianity in private homes should not be considered an illegal activity. Pray that this ruling would be upheld by the courts in every case.

Wednesday 11 May

Pastor Matthias (Abdulreza Ali) Haghnejad was one of the nine men acquitted in February. He was temporarily released on 30 December after nearly three years in prison, but was rearrested just over two weeks later on charges which were initially levelled against him in 2014. Pray for comfort and strength, as he faces a six-year sentence if convicted.

Thursday 12 May

Please pray for Pastor Yousef Nadarkhani, who recently returned to prison after two weeks of temporary leave. In February, a UN working group concluded that his continued detention is arbitrary, so we pray that such international pressure will lead to a breakthrough in the pastor’s case.

Friday 13 May

The Iranian judicial system is plagued with inconsistencies, and more favourable rulings often reflect the views of individual judges rather than indicating improvements in the system itself. Pray that all in positions of authority throughout the country would act justly.

Saturday 14 May

Loving heavenly Father, you alone can bring true and lasting change to Iran. We ask you to do a new thing in this nation today; to make a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland (Isaiah 43:19). May justice prevail and may those who have suffered so long finally be granted the freedoms they deserve. Amen.