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Iran: Woman human rights defender Motahareh Gounei charged and released on bail

On 16 July 2025, **Motahareh Gounei** was released after posting a bail of 20 billion IRR at the Branch 3 of the Tehran Revolutionary and Public Court. Before her release, the woman human rights defender was charged with “propaganda against state,” “spreading disinformation,” “public appearance without hijab,” and “insulting the supreme leader”.

[Motahareh Gounei](#) is a woman human rights defender, student activist, and the former secretary of the Islamic Association of Students at the University of Tehran. She began her professional union work within the Islamic Student Association of the Faculty of Dentistry in 2019. She has been arrested on several occasions, including in May 2024 for her protest against the death penalty.

On 16 July 2025, Motahareh Gounei was released after being charged with “propaganda against state,” “spreading disinformation,” “public appearance without hijab,” and “insulting the supreme leader,” and posting a bail of 20 billion IRR at the Branch 3 of the Tehran Revolutionary and Public Court.

Since 23 June, until her conditional release on 16 July, her whereabouts remained unknown. There had been reports about her transfer to Qarchak prison and a so-called “safe house” run by the intelligence agents in Tehran following Israel’s attack on Evin.

On 14 June 2025, woman human rights defender Motahareh Gounei [was arrested in Tehran](#) after her house was raided by Iranian intelligence agents. She was arrested after publishing a social media post in which she criticised the Iranian’ government leadership and blamed them for the country’s situation. Following her arrest, Motahareh Gounei was transferred to Evin Prison, where she was held in a high security cell run by the intelligence agency.

During and after Israel’s attack on Iran starting on 13 June, Iranian state media reported the arrests of over 700 individuals on the national security charges, [including related to the “espionage law.”](#) Marginalised ethnic and religious groups and refugees are among the most targeted. During Motahareh Gounei’s arrest, she was shown an arrest warrant without any names mentioned on it, prompting concerns that other arbitrary arrests were executed in the same manner.

Previously, Motahareh Gounei had served a prison sentence of over five months from 7 October 2024 to 16 March 2025 based on a case opened against her in June 2024. The woman human rights defender had been sentenced by Branch 29 of Tehran Revolutionary Court to one year in prison on the charge of “propaganda against state endorsing opposition media” for her social media posts including protesting against death penalty. This sentence was reduced to five months at the Supreme Court.

Front Line Defenders welcomes the release of Motahereh Gounei. However, the organisation remains highly concerned about the charges being brought against the woman human rights defender.

Front Line Defenders urges the Iranian authorities to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally drop the charges against woman human rights defender Motahareh Gounei;
2. Cease the targeting of human rights defenders in Iran and ensure that they can carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisal and free of all restrictions, including judicial harassment.

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