Young Female Football Fan In Iran Sets Herself On Fire To Protest Jail

September 4, 2019

Radio Farda

<https://en.radiofarda.com/a/young-female-football-fan-in-iran-protesting-jail-sets-herself-on-fire-/30146238.html>

A young woman who set herself on fire on September 1 outside the public prosecutor’s office in Tehran is among football-starved Iranian women detained outside Iran's main sports arena, Azadi stadium.

"The 29-year-old is suffering from third-degree burns, and currently under life support," says the CEO/president of Motahari Emergency and Burns hospital in the Iranian capital city.

Meanwhile, the state-run news agency, Rokna, cited the sister of the victim, as saying, "They detained my sister on March 12, 2019, when she tried to enter Azadi Stadium, and watch Tehran's Esteqlal soccer club home match against the United Arab Emirates' Al Ain, FC."

According to Rokna, security forces arrested the woman who has bipolar disorder and is under treatment.

The security agents took the woman, whose name has not been released, to the infamous Qarchak prison, in Varamin south of Tehran.

She was later released on bail, Rokna reports, adding, "At the time of the self-immolation, the official in charge of the prosecutor's office told the girl that she faced a six-month sentence in jail. The girl protested but told that since the judge was on bereavement leave, a court would be held later to hear her protest."

The woman was so enraged she set herself on fire with the gasoline procured before visiting the public prosecutor's office.

Iran is the only country in the world that bans women from sports stadiums. The unwritten law has been supported by religious conservatives and political hardliners in Iran since 1980, a year after the downfall of the pro-West monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and the establishment of the Islamic Republic.

In the meantime, banning women from watching live soccer matches in Iranian stadiums is against regulations set by the International Football Federation FIFA.

Article 4 of FIFA's regulations stipulates, "Discrimination of any kind against a country, private person or group of people on account of race, skin color, ethnic, national or social origin, gender, disability, language, religion, political opinion or any other opinion, wealth, birth or any other status, sexual orientation or any other reason is strictly prohibited and punishable by suspension or expulsion."

FIFA has given the Islamic Republic until October to pave the way for women to freely enter sports arenas and watch men's live soccer matches. Otherwise, Iran could face removal from all international soccer events.