Woman Physicist Executed

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Woman physicist executed

On 27 December 1981 Ginous Mahmoudi, the foremost woman physicist of Iran, was executed by a firing squad in Tehran. Her crime: She was an active member of the Baha’i Faith, thus belonging to the largest religious minority of her country.

Ginous Mahmoudi was a well-known scientist in Iran. She was assistant director and later director of the department of meteorology of Iran, supervising the research of atmospheric studies in that country. In fact, the department of meteorology was built by her dedicated service of 25 years. She was also the president of the Iranian School of Meteorology.

Her scientific activities were brought to an abrupt end after the revolution of 1978-79, when a systematic, government-backed campaign to eradicate the Baha’i Faith as an independent religion in Iran was launched. Ginous Mahmoudi was fired from her position. The authorities even demanded that she return all salary she had received during the past 25 years on the grounds that it was illegal for a Baha’i to be hired by the government. A similar fate befell her husband, Houshang Mahmoudi, a respected and loved television personality and the founder of a well-known secondary school in Tehran. In spite of their own hardships, the Mahmoudis opened their home to shelter Baha’i families who were driven from their homes and had lost all their possessions. This situation continued until October 1981, when the revolutionary guards came and looted the Mahmoudis’ house. All their property was destroyed or carried away.

Houshang Mahmoudi was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Iran. On 21 August 1980 he, along with the eight other members, were abducted by revolutionary guards during a meeting of the Assembly. They were led away at gunpoint, and they disappeared. No explanation was ever offered by the Iranian government.

On 21 August 1980, in Washington, D.C. and published in the Congressional Record. The prepared statements as submitted to the Subcommittee have been published in World Order 16 No. 3 (1982).

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