Iranian woman reportedly paralysed in shooting over alleged hijab law violation

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A woman is reported to have been left paralysed after being shot by Iranian police who were attempting to stop her car over alleged violations of Iran’s draconian hijab laws.

According to human rights groups and sources inside Iran, Arezoo Badri was driving home in the northern city of Noor on 22 July when the police attempted to pull her over after her car was identified as being on an impoundment list.

Last year, as part of a clampdown on women defying Iran’s compulsory dress code, Iranian authorities [said they would use CCTV](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-65842130) to identify female drivers who were failing to cover their hair, and confiscate their vehicles.

[Human Rights Activists in Iran](https://www.hra-iran.org/), a nonprofit NGO, said it believed Badri might have been seen or filmed driving with her head uncovered in the days before the shooting and an alert had been placed on her number plate.

When police attempted to stop Badri on the 22 July, she allegedly failed to comply with their orders and police opened fire on the moving vehicle. A police commander in Noor confirmed to local media that a driver had been shot when they failed to comply with an order to pull over, but did not name Badri.

According to [Mamlekate](https://mamlekate.com/), an Iranian citizen journalists’ organisation, Badri fell into a coma after being hit by a bullet. She has been moved to a hospital in Tehran.

A Tehran-based physician who secretly treated survivors of sexual assault and people with pellet injuries during the “Woman, Life, Freedom” [protests after Mahsa Amini’s death](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/01/women-life-liberty-iranian-civil-rights-protests-spread-worldwide) in 2022 told the Guardian: “We have had no news on her condition because it’s a heavily guarded military hospital and owned by the police. I haven’t got any doctors from the hospital who will give information.”

Masih Alinejad, an exiled Iranian journalist, claimed she had received details of the shooting and photos of Badri from sources close to her family but that immediate relatives were being pressured not to publicly discuss her situation.

“When I first received the photos from the relative and heard that Arezoo is a mother of two children, I couldn’t stop crying and I kept thinking of my own son,” she said. “How will someone explain in the 21st century to those young children that their mother was shot by the police for the crime of not covering her hair?”