

**AMERICAN HOSTAGE SIAMAK NAMAZI AT SERIOUS RISK FROM  
CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK IN IRAN'S NOTORIOUS EVIN PRISON**

*Today, Namazi also marks 1,602 days in prison,  
making him the longest held dual U.S.-Iranian hostage in decades*

Washington, D.C. – It was learned earlier today that Siamak Namazi, the American-Iranian hostage held in Evin Prison, is at serious risk of contracting coronavirus.

A prisoner in Siamak's ward, who slept just several cells down the same hallway, had acute respiratory symptoms, tested positive for coronavirus, and has now been taken to "quarantine." Although prisoners are now locked down in their cells, each cell holds at least 10-20 prisoners, making it very likely that many of the infected prisoner's cellmates, who remain at the prison in their cell, have also been infected. And until prisoners were confined to their cells today, during the daytime prisoners were able to circulate within their ward where they ate meals together as well congregated at the prison library, exercise facilities, and at a television lounge. Even having the prisoners confined to their cells is highly unlikely to have any effect as they still are allowed out individually to the common hallway to go to the restroom.

Making matters worse, the medical facilities within Evin Prison are rudimentary and medical personnel do not even have the most basic medications available for prisons with flu-like symptoms, such as medicine to reduce fevers. Although this one very sick prisoner was diagnosed with coronavirus and removed, many other sick prisoners who have asked to be tested for coronavirus have had those requests denied. In addition, the prison has only limited supplies for prisoners and guards to access disinfectants, which have not been properly distributed. The head of Iran's judiciary has said that to regulate the health of prisoners for coronavirus that imprisonments should be reduced as much as possible and qualified prisoners should be allowed to go on a furlough on an exceptional basis.

Jared Genser, the Namazi family's pro bono counsel said: "To keep Siamak at Evin prison in the midst of a coronavirus outbreak and without access to testing or even basic medicines constitutes cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in violation of Iran's obligations under the Convention Against Torture. They are responsible for the outbreak having happened in the first place and for his health, welfare, life, and that of all of the other prisoners. I urge Iranian authorities to facilitate Siamak's release on a furlough as rapidly as possible so that he can self quarantine without risk to any further exposure."

Today, Siamak Namazi also became the longest held American Iranian hostage in Iran. Amir Hekmati, a former U.S. Marine of Iranian descent, was held hostage by the Iranian regime for 1,601 days from August 2011 until the nuclear deal prisoner exchange in January 2016. As of today, Siamak has endured 1,602 days of wrongful imprisonment in Iran. Bob Levinson, who is solely an American citizen, has been held for almost 13 years.

Prior to his arrest, Siamak was an international executive and advocate on humanitarian causes. He was arrested by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on October 13, 2015 and subjected to torture, inhuman treatment, and flagrant due process violations. Nearly a year after his arrest, he was convicted of “collaboration with a hostile government,” the United States, and sentenced to ten years in prison.

“I am crushed that in spite of all my efforts, as well as those of the U.S. administration and others, we have thus far been unable to secure Siamak’s release from illegal captivity,” said Siamak’s brother Babak Namazi. “Instead, his detention has dragged on for over 1,600 days and he has become the longest held American Iranian hostage that Iran has taken. I call on President Trump to redouble the Administration’s efforts to free hostages and continue to urge him to uphold his campaign promise that innocent Americans won’t languish in Iranian prison.”

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