

HOW WALES ARE SUPPORTING PROTESTERS IN IRAN

On September 16, 2022 - Mahsa Amini was arrested outside a metro station for “improperly” wearing her hijab by the Iranian morality police. While held in the capital city of Tehran under custody for her alleged violation of the hijab law, she tragically died. Following her death, protests have raged in the streets of Iran and Mahsa Amini has become the face of a women-led revolution that has taken over the globe...including sparking local movements here in Wales.

During the World Cup, the Iranian team sent a powerful message from Qatar by refusing to sing their national anthem. The silent protest spoke volumes as a game of football was clearly low on the list of priorities for Iranians. Here in Wales, many Iranians feel the same and an award-winning international artist and designer from Iran, Sahar Saki, decided to run a mural festival here in Cardiff to show solidarity. Coinciding with the Wales vs Iran football World Cup game, Sahar Saki joined Oxfam Cymru and WCIA on the steps of the Senedd to raise awareness about women’s rights in Iran on the 25 November. One of her murals was defaced by those who know little of the fight for freedom.



In Iran, there is a Persian festival Shab-e Yalda which represents a celebration of light over darkness. Artist Naz Syed sought to remind us of Yalda through their Winter Exhibition, 'Azadi' at Glanfa which celebrated Persian culture and heritage through a display of pom-poms. This medium was used as a reminder of the kaleidoscope of colours found in Iranian architecture. Bringing together the community through a display of pom-poms, people in Wales added messages of unity and solidarity

In October, at Cardiff's Central Square, a group collectively performed a harrowing re-enactment of the violence occurring in Iran. To show support for the protesters, onlookers wrote words of solidarity on a dress. They also chanted 'your silence is violence' to call attention to the lack of media coverage surrounding the protests within Iran and globally. While raising awareness, the demonstration, in association with Kurdish All-Wales also shone a light on Kurdistan and its people. Mahsa Amini was Iranian-Kurdish and as an ethnic minority, Kurdistanis experience discrimination on a daily basis. The rise in protests has united all Iranians together to fight against the regime for their rights.

