



Mostly clear,
with temps
around 70

BEVERLY PRESS

INSIDE

• Iran protest held
in Beverly Hills.
pg. 3

• Robbery suspect
sought. pg. 4

Volume 32 No. 45

Serving Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, Hancock Park and Miracle Mile

November 10, 2022

Thousands gather in solidarity with Iran protestors

BY JOEY WALDINGER

Tens of thousands of demonstrators marched through the streets of Beverly Hills on Nov. 5 in protest of the Iranian government, joining a global wave of opposition after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini. Amini died in the custody of the country's morality police after allegedly violating the regime's law that women must wear hijabs and loose-fitting clothes in public.

Nooshin Meshkaty, who helped organize the rally along with her son, Camyar, was born and raised in Iran before moving to Beverly Hills. Although she is sad to see the turmoil that Amini's death has spurred in her home country, which has experienced months of violent protests, she is hopeful it will lead to lasting change.

"In Iran, ... they say this is not a protest, it's a revolution," Meshkaty said.

The protestors gathered in front of Beverly Hills City Hall at approximately 1 p.m., and listened to speeches from Emmy-winning actress Shohreh Aghdashloo, actress and activist Nazanin Boniadi, and other Iranian leaders and entertainers. Beverly Hills Mayor Lili Bosse also addressed the crowd, as well as Beverly Hills High School Associated Student Body president Ashley Jourabchi and BHUSD Board of Education president Mary Wells.

The demonstrators then marched through the city, where they were joined by tens of thousands of more supporters, with drivers honking their horns and bystanders joining the pro-

cession that spanned almost two city blocks.

Bosse posted a video to Twitter that showed the dense crowd of supporters marching with flags and posters, following a line of women carrying large banners that read, "Women, Life, Freedom," and "Regime Change."

"I am very happy that it is happening in our city and I'm proud that it's happening in our city," Bosse said. "It's an extension of what our city values. ... We've always stood up for human rights."

Camyar Meshkaty, a business, marketing and management consultant, had never been politically active before, but like most other Iranian Americans, he has felt compelled to stand against the Islamic Republic, he said. He and his mother have attended rallies across Southern California, and he was able to secure the speakers by networking at demonstrations and through social media, he said. Although he oversaw most of the organizing, he was grateful that the Beverly Hills Police Department helped the rally run smoothly and that city leaders, including Bosse, have been supportive of the cause, Meshkaty said.

The Beverly Hills City Council on Oct. 11 passed a resolution condemning the Iranian government and calling on the United States to take action against the regime including enacting sanctions and freezing assets, and the BHUSD Board on Oct. 25 also passed a resolution condemning the Iranian government.

Camyar Meshkaty hoped that the rally would help residents turn their

outrage at the Iranian regime into concrete actions to help the revolutionaries fighting against it.

"We're really trying to utilize this event to help people take the different initiatives that are out there," he said. "People don't know how they can help. A simple post, a simple reshare, a simple conversation goes such a long way for what's happening there. It's really just amplifying the voices of the people in Iran, and [letting] them know, 'Hey, we hear you, we see you, this is what we're doing to help.'"

Camyar Meshkaty used the rally as an opportunity to gather signatures for petitions calling on the United Nations to remove the Islamic Republic from the Commission on the Status of Women, and another from Amnesty International that urges the United Nations to investigate potential crimes committed by the Iranian government against protestors. Both petitions have been signed by over one million people.

The Iranian government has responded to the protests with a violent crackdown that has caused 277 deaths and resulted in the arrest of as many as 14,000 activists, lawyers, journalists and educators, according to CNN.

Of the 290 members of Iran's parliament, 227 have signed a letter urging the country's judiciary to "show no leniency" to protestors.

"Imagine during the [Black Lives Matter] protests, ... people being shot in the streets, and being arrested and being executed," Camyar Meshkaty said.

Camyar and Nooshin Meshkaty

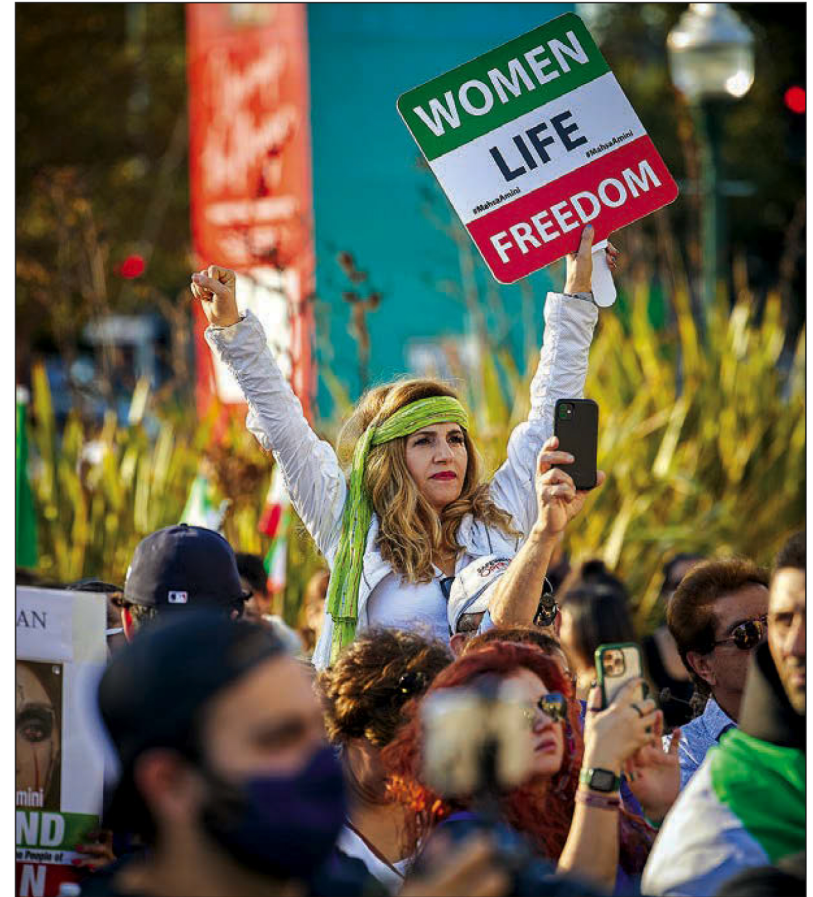


photo by Saman Assefi

Protestors against the Iranian government gathered in front of Beverly Hills City Hall on Nov. 5 before marching through the streets.

both said that the outcome of the protests could have consequences well beyond the borders of Iran.

"Women's rights and human rights isn't just a problem in Iran, it's a problem around the world," Camyar Meshkaty said. "There will be a domino effect across many countries."

Nooshin Meshkaty said that the Iranian government's support for terrorist groups is another reason that the protest movement is so important.

Noting the heightened security and surveillance in the U.S. following the 9/11 attacks, she said that Americans' freedoms could be further eroded if terrorists were to strike again.

"Them gaining their freedom is basically affirming freedom everywhere," Meshkaty said, referring to the Iranian protestors.

BHPD Lt. Giovanni Trejo said there was no property damage, injuries or arrests during the demonstration.