

# Iranian woman beats up cleric for criticizing her wardrobe

Tuesday 25 September 2012, by [KHAZAN Olga](#) (Date first published: 20 September 2012).

A cleric in Iran's northern Semnan province claims he was beaten up by a woman after telling her to cover up. Hojatolislam Ali Beheshti, a top religious figure in Shahrmirzad, told a passerby that she was "bad hijab" — a woman who is not fully in compliance with the country's Islamic dress code.

She at first told Beheshti to look the other way, but he repeated his demand. Beheshti told the Iranian Mehr news agency that the woman then pushed him to the ground and began kicking him.

"From that point on, I don't know what happened. I was just feeling the kicks of the woman who was beating me up and insulting me."

He said he was hospitalized for three days after the incident, and the region's prosecutor said he is "reviewing the case."

Such incidents are not rare, Radio Free Liberty reports. Several other women have clashed with the country's religious police, and Mehr names three other clerics who were "beaten up" by women they berated for their dress. However, it's rare for women to stand up to morality police in small towns, reports CNN.

Earlier this year, the Iranian government cracked down on the dress code, which has been in place since 1979. In July, 53 coffee shops and 87 restaurants have been closed in Tehran for serving customers with improper hijab or for other gender-related offenses, such as permitting women to smoke hookah pipes.

**Olga Khazan**

---

**P.S.**

\* Posted at 02:07 PM ET, 09/20/2012. Source:

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/iranian-woman-beats-up-cleric-for-criticizing-her-wardrobe/2012/09/20/fb15b1fa-0342-11e2-9b24-ff730c7f6312\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/iranian-woman-beats-up-cleric-for-criticizing-her-wardrobe/2012/09/20/fb15b1fa-0342-11e2-9b24-ff730c7f6312_blog.html)