

ACAT (Harrow group) – prayer case of the month (*April 2021*)

Please pray as you feel led for **Samar Badawi** who was targeted in 2018 in a wave of arrests directed at women's rights activists in **Saudi Arabia**.



Now aged nearly 40, **Samar Badawi** has been an activist for women's rights in Saudi Arabia ever since she escaped to a women's shelter from her physically abusive father in 2008. She was then imprisoned for seven months in 2010 for 'disobedience' after accusing her father of abusing his guardianship when she decided to leave home. She has since campaigned against the rules enforcing male guardianship over women, which among other things, grants male custodians the right to prevent their daughters from marrying, studying or travelling without prior consent. In addition, she has campaigned in favour of women's right to drive and to vote, and she has also campaigned for the release of her brother and of her then husband, both imprisoned human rights activists.

She has received international recognition for her human rights work: in 2012, she won the International Women of Courage Award given by the United States Department of State for her human rights work which they considered pioneering, and for her encouragement of and inspiration to other women.

Held in Dhahban prison near Jeddah, **Samar Badawi** has now been charged under cybercrime law with posting on social media and communicating with foreign organisations for which she could face 20 years in prison. She has reportedly suffered physical and sexual violence during interrogation and has been held for periods of prolonged solitary confinement. Samar who has two children has now been allowed visits from relatives but has been denied contact with a lawyer to organise her defence.

If you wish: Send her a greetings card wishing her well and saying you are thinking of her to her UK contact group: c/o ALQST For Human Rights Ltd, Unit 24.7, Coda Studios, Samar Badawi Operation, 189 Munster Road, Fulham, London SW6 6AW

Update on Fr Stan Swamy. His petition for bail has been rejected.