

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

|                                 |                                                                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bilagsnr.:</b>               | <b>974</b>                                                             |
| Land:                           | Iran                                                                   |
| Kilde:                          | Institute for The Study of War                                         |
| Titel:                          | Iran Crisis Update, November 16-November 30                            |
| Udgivet:                        | Udgivet i perioden fra den 16. november 2022 til den 30. november 2022 |
| Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet: | 15. december 2022                                                      |
|                                 |                                                                        |



### Iran Crisis Update, November 16

Nicholas Carl, Zachary Coles, Johanna Moore, Amin Soltani, and Frederick W. Kagan

November 16, 5:00 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

*Contributor: Paul Stanley*

**Protest activity continued to surge on November 16, occurring in at least 29 cities in 19 provinces.** Protests will likely continue throughout Iran on November 17—the final day of the three-day commemoration of the Bloody Aban protest wave in November 2019—and concentrate in Sistan and Baluchistan on Friday, November 18. Security forces are continuing to crack down and use lethal force but are not using their full capabilities, likely to avoid angering protesters further and creating more 40-day commemoration ceremonies around which demonstrators will rally. The regime continues to seem like it does not have a coherent theory about how to address the protests, likely due to disagreements within the political and security establishment.

**Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's efforts to discourage prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid from publicly criticizing the regime have likely failed.** Abdol Hamid tweeted on November 16, criticizing the clerical delegation that Khamenei sent to Sistan and Baluchistan Province.<sup>1</sup> The delegation—led by Friday Prayer Leader Policy Council Chairman Mohammad Javad Haj Ali Akbari—met with Abdol Hamid and other local leaders likely to communicate Khamenei's directive to stop instigating protests in the province.<sup>2</sup> Abdol Hamid accused the delegation of intimidating and threatening people rather than consoling them in his tweet. Abdol Hamid's public criticism days after meeting the delegation indicates that he will continue publicly condemning the regime crackdown and supporting protesters. Abdol Hamid and his supporters will likely inspire further protests throughout Sistan and Baluchistan Province during his Friday sermon on November 18 as they have done almost every Friday since the brutal regime crackdown in Zahedan on September 30.<sup>3</sup>

**A false claim is circulating online that the Iranian Parliament has sentenced 15,000 arrested protesters to death.** Many online users, including Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, have propagated this misinformation unwittingly.<sup>4</sup> This claim is based on the actual reporting that 277 parliamentarians signed a letter calling for the judiciary to harshly and rapidly

prosecute arrested protesters on November 6.<sup>5</sup> The judiciary has sentenced at least five protesters to death thus far and will likely execute more, but the regime has not likely decided to kill 15,000 arrested protesters. This misinformation is distracting public attention from the atrocities and human right violations that the regime is actually committing against its people.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Protest activity continued to surge, occurring in 29 cities in 19 provinces.**
- **Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's efforts to discourage prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid from publicly criticizing the regime have likely failed.**
- **A false claim is circulating online that the Iranian Parliament has sentenced 15,000 arrested protesters to death.**
- **BBC published a purported leaked audio tape revealing internal disagreements within the regime over the cause of and correct response to the protests.**
- **Unidentified gunmen shot and killed at least six people and injured at least 15 at a shopping center in Izeh, Khuzestan Province.**
- **Unidentified gunmen shot at Basij and Law Enforcement Command (LEC) personnel, killing two, in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province.**
- **The judiciary sentenced three protesters to death.**
- **The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) or one of its proxies likely conducted a kamikaze drone attack on an Israeli-owned tanker in the Gulf of Oman.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 37 protests took place in 29 cities across 19 provinces on November 16.** CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the locations below.

#### **Fardis, Alborz Province (population: approximately 181,174)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters demonstrated on a Fardis street during evening protests.<sup>6</sup>*

#### **Karaj, Alborz Province (population: approximately 1,592,000)**

- *One or two dozen protesters blocked a Karaj street and chanted "freedom, freedom, freedom" and other anti-regime slogans.<sup>7</sup>*

#### **Borazjan, Bushehr Province (population: 110,567)**

- *Several dozen protesters set fires and demonstrated on a Borazjan street. Regime security forces reportedly attempted to disrupt the protests.<sup>8</sup>*

#### **Shahr-e Kord, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province (population: approximately 190,441)**

- *Several dozen protesters chanted anti-regime slogans, set fires, and established roadblocks throughout Shahr-e Kord streets.<sup>9</sup>*

#### **Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 1,599,000)**

- *An undetermined number of Azad University at Tabriz students protested on campus and chanted anti-regime slogans.<sup>10</sup>*

- Several dozen protesters marched through Tabriz streets and chanted anti-regime slogans during evening protests.<sup>11</sup>

**Esfahan City, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 1,961,000)**

- At least 200 protesters demonstrated in an Esfahan park and chanted slogans against the regime and focused on economic grievances.<sup>12</sup>
- An undetermined number of protesters set two regime security forces motorcycles on fire in an Esfahan street.<sup>13</sup>

**Fouladshahr, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 88,426)**

- Footage from social media depicts at least 50 protesters fleeing from security forces advancing down a Fouladshahr street. Protesters set fires in the street and can be heard chanting anti-regime slogans.<sup>14</sup>

**Lar, Fars Province (population: approximately 62,045)**

- Regime security forces fired teargas and attempted to disrupt protesters demonstrating on a Lar street.<sup>15</sup>

**Shiraz, Fars Province (population: approximately 1,566,000)**

- Several dozen protesters set fires and chanted anti-regime slogans on a Shiraz street during evening protests.<sup>16</sup>

**Soumesara, Gilan Province (population: approximately 47,083)**

- At least 50 protesters marched through Soumesara streets and chanted “freedom, freedom, freedom” and “death to the dictator.”<sup>17</sup>

**Kerman City, Kerman Province (population: approximately 537,718)**

- Several dozen protesters marched through Kerman streets and chanted “freedom, freedom, freedom” and “death to the dictator” during evening protests.<sup>18</sup>

**Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province (population: approximately 946,651)**

- Several dozen protesters blocked Kermanshah streets and chanted “death to the dictator,” “death to Khamenei,” and other anti-regime slogans. Regime security forces reportedly used live ammunition against protesters, killing at least one.<sup>19</sup>

**Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province (population: approximately 3,000,000)**

- Several dozen protesters set fires on a Mashhad street. Footage from social media depicts a large grouping of individuals opposite to the protesters, possibly indicating the presence of regime security forces.<sup>20</sup>
- An undetermined number of protesters chanted anti-regime slogans and blocked traffic in Mashhad streets during evening protests.<sup>21</sup>

**Abadan, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 231,476)**

- Several dozen Abadan University of Medical Sciences students gathered along an Abadan street and chanted anti-regime slogans.<sup>22</sup>

**Ahvaz, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 1,185,000)**

- At least 100 Chamran and Jundishapur University at Ahvaz students marched and chanted anti-regime slogans on campus.<sup>23</sup>
- An undetermined number of protesters gathered and set fires in Ahvaz streets during evening protests. Footage from social media features multiple gunshots, possibly by regime security forces.<sup>24</sup>

**Izeh, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 119,339)**

- Several dozen protesters marched through Izeh streets and chanted anti-regime slogans during evening protests. Likely protesters set fire to an Izeh seminary.<sup>25</sup>

**Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 461,000)**

- An undetermined number of protesters set fires and established obstacles in Sanandaj streets during evening protests.<sup>26</sup>
- Approximately 50 Sanandaj University of Medical Sciences students chanted “freedom, freedom, freedom” during a demonstration in a building on campus. The students also marched through campus. Regime security forces confronted the protesting students and attempted to arrest them.<sup>27</sup>

**Saghez, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 165,258)**

- Several dozen protesters demonstrated and set fires in Saghez streets. Protesters gathered outside a Saghez hospital that was holding a teenager shot by regime security forces.<sup>28</sup>

**\*Kamyaran, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 57,077)**

- More than 200 protesters gathered on a Kamyaran street to demonstrate against regime security forces killing protest martyr Fawad Mohammadi on November 15. Security forces used tear gas and reportedly fired live ammunition at protesters, killing one and injuring at least 10 more.<sup>29</sup>

**Saveh, Markazi Province (population: approximately 220,762)**

- At least two dozen protesters gathered to demonstrate on a Saveh street during evening protests.<sup>30</sup>

**Ghaem Shahr, Mazandaran Province (population: approximately 204,953)**

- One or two dozen protesters marched through Ghaem Shahr streets and chanted “freedom, freedom, freedom.”<sup>31</sup>

**Abbasabad, Mazandaran Province (population: approximately 13,482)**

- Several dozen protesters gathered on a Abbasabad street and chanted anti-regime slogans during evening protests.<sup>32</sup>

**Birjand, South Khorasan Province (population: approximately 203,636)**

- An undetermined number of protesters marched through a Birjan streets and chanted anti-regime slogans during evening protests.<sup>33</sup>

**Tehran City, Tehran Province (population: approximately 8,700,000)**

- Possibly local workers protested and set fires at an industrial market in a neighborhood in southwest Tehran. Regime security forces dressed as firefighters reportedly attempted to suppress the demonstrations.<sup>34</sup>
- 50-100 Khajeh Nasir University of Technology students protested on campus while a university official delivered a speech. Protesters chanted “We don’t want Sepahi [IRGC] University, we don’t want it.”<sup>35</sup>
- 50-100 protesters chanted anti-regime slogans and set fires on Tehran streets during evening protests.<sup>36</sup>
- Several dozen protesters chanted “death to the dictator” on a Tehran street during daytime protests.<sup>37</sup>
- An undetermined number of protesters gathered within a metro station in Tehran. Security forces attempted to arrest individuals and disrupt the protests with pepperball rounds.<sup>38</sup>

**Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 193,501)**

- *Dozens of protesters marched through Boukan streets and chanted “death to Khamenei” and other anti-regime slogans during evening protests.<sup>39</sup>*

**Zanjan, Zanjan Province (population: approximately 430,871)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters blocked traffic and marched through Zanjan streets, chanting “death to the dictator” and other anti-regime slogans.<sup>40</sup>*

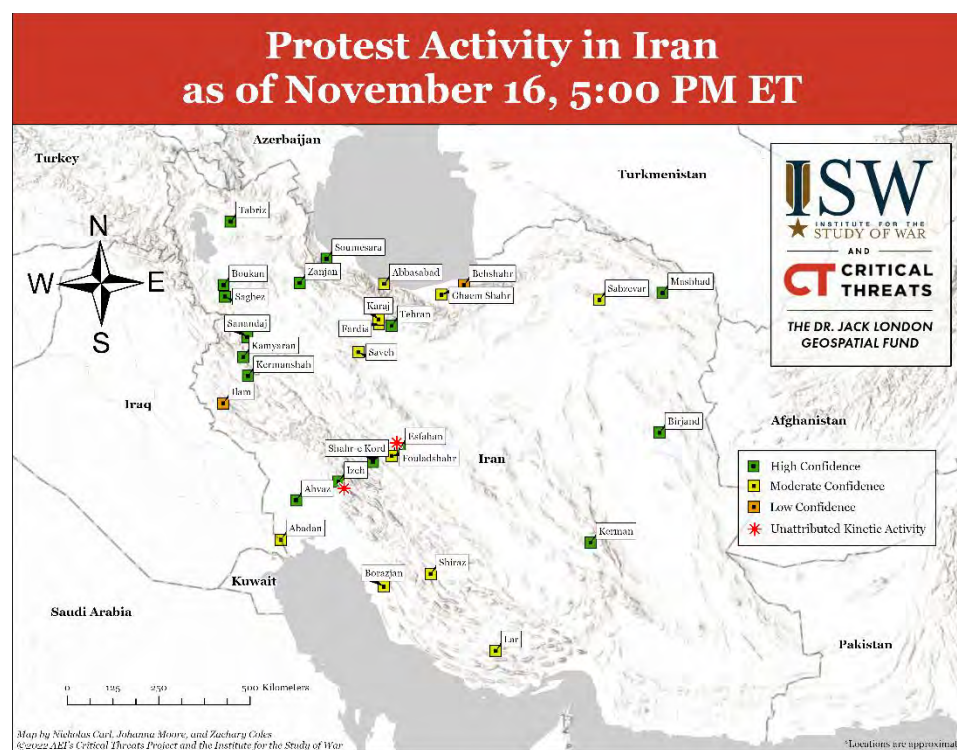
CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the locations below.

**Ilam City, Ilam Province (population: approximately 194,030)**

- *Footage from social media shows protesters fleeing down an alley, reportedly away from regime security forces pursuing them.<sup>41</sup>*

**Behshahr, Mazandaran Province (population: approximately 94,702)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters gathered in Behshahr streets during evening protests. Footage from social media depicts regime security forces using likely tear gas and flashbang grenades on protesters.<sup>42</sup>*



**BBC published on November 15 a purported leaked audio tape revealing internal disagreements within the regime over the cause of and correct response to the protests.<sup>43</sup>** BBC has not indicated how it authenticated and obtained the recording nor can CTP independently verify its authenticity. The recording, nevertheless, has no obvious indications that it is doctored or fake.

A senior Intelligence and Security Ministry official stated in the recording that internal disagreements have paralyzed the regime response to the protests.<sup>44</sup> These remarks accord with CTP's previous assessment that regime indecision and infighting has confused its response to the protests.<sup>45</sup> The official also acknowledged that domestic issues and the regime's brutality—rather than foreign influence and subversion—have driven many of the protests in recent weeks.

**Unidentified gunmen shot and killed at least six people and injured at least 15 at a shopping center in Izeh, Khuzestan Province on November 16.**<sup>46</sup> The victims include several men and at least one woman and one child. Two of the victims were Basij members. Iranian state media described the attackers as a “terrorist team.” It is unclear who is responsible for the attack. CTP recorded protest activity in Izeh for the first time on November 15.<sup>47</sup>

**Unidentified gunmen shot at Basij and Law Enforcement Command (LEC) personnel, killing two, in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province on November 16.**<sup>48</sup> It is unclear who is responsible for the attack.

**The LEC arrested an individual making Molotov cocktails and toxic chemicals in Tehran City, Tehran Province on November 16.**<sup>49</sup> The individual was reportedly preparing these materials in exchange for 30 billion tomans (roughly \$828,000) from an unknown source.

**The judiciary sentenced three protesters to death on November 16.**<sup>50</sup> The judiciary accused two of these individuals of attacking or threatening to attack security forces and the third of blocking roads and damaging public property. The convicted individuals can appeal these sentences. The judiciary has issued the death penalty for at least five protesters thus far since the protests began on September 16.<sup>51</sup>

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) or one of its proxies likely conducted a kamikaze drone attack on an Israeli-owned tanker in the Gulf of Oman on November 16.**<sup>52</sup> Tehran likely sought to retaliate for recent Israeli airstrikes in Syria and Israel's perceived role in stoking protests. The IRGC has increasingly attacked commercial vessels in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman as part of its regional escalation cycle with Israel since 2021.<sup>53</sup> The use of a Shahed-136 kamikaze drone in the attack is noteworthy given recent indications that Israel may support Ukraine in countering Russia's use of these same Iranian-made drones.<sup>54</sup>

**Kurdish military and political groups in Iraq and Syria may face increasing attacks from Iran and Turkey simultaneously.** The IRGC resumed its attacks on anti-regime Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan on November 14 in retaliation for their perceived role in stoking protests.<sup>55</sup> Iranian military leaders affirmed that they would continue attacks until these groups are unarmed or expelled from the border region. Turkish leaders have separately accused the Kurdistan Workers' Party of conducting the terrorist attack in Istanbul on November 13 and vowed to attack Kurdish targets in northern Syria in response.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://twitter.com/AbdolhamidNet/status/1592816361746882561?s=08>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-13>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-11>

<sup>4</sup> <https://globalnews dot ca/news/9279581/trudeau-iran-tweet-deleted-15000-death-sentence/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-6>

<sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592921362955665408?s=20&t=v1pig0E0YI9Wth0tMTj2Bg>

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592941364723187713?s=20&t=XVGHvxHIDLPIgzR8WsouGg>

<sup>8</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592963505212522497?s=20&t=MJZATQtsY\\_r44ET6KiVMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592963505212522497?s=20&t=MJZATQtsY_r44ET6KiVMw)

<sup>9</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592934053732229120?s=20&t=Nyckb42E7caBAdCmcHgGUw;>  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592907518195691522?s=20&t=nNRHLO9nTZB653KogRmwRg>

<sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592861315584118785?s=20&t=vM6LTqWfhgS0zONOpBZDqQ;>

<sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592929238000472064?s=20&t=RAkODnyKGVGcem0P7wv4zQ;>  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592921782121803776?s=20&t=5ld\\_S40PC4dTWjGxGBnzEQ;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592921782121803776?s=20&t=5ld_S40PC4dTWjGxGBnzEQ;)  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592900044818350080?s=20&t=k9VaqRkQDdc-vdPqeOp4eQ>

<sup>12</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592860661968535552?s=20&t=JCKUFXkpQ7u9yxEOtEHilQ>

<sup>13</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592983281896595456?s=20&t=1S5t6qzYFWYpppTD4HpE6g>

<sup>14</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592992216506859521?s=20&t=R8c9uLtwWdzyMD8gNETgnA>

<sup>15</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592928024634482688?s=20&t=DIUQg5ihjMvVQJpUcUi8eg>

<sup>16</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592985366621216768?s=20&t=Tq-RAwwRVtXKtfr-4WrcCQ>

<sup>17</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592861796222013441?s=20&t=XGzp0D34moaSLBKQVdmURw;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592859133916897284?s=20&t=wj5jCJYKbxP66H0tfKD-Ug;>  
[https://twitter.com/ToukAlii/status/1592889736469024773?s=20&t=rRRocPnGB8y8ZGJeJPczBhhjCr6b8R1j\\_b\\_a1bTILE](https://twitter.com/ToukAlii/status/1592889736469024773?s=20&t=rRRocPnGB8y8ZGJeJPczBhhjCr6b8R1j_b_a1bTILE)

<sup>18</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592943561691258880?s=20&t=Sp0Wre0VfVpJZAYEsM6D2Q;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592946917516144641?s=20&t=e0tbVZH-hdSs3UyGzYwywQ>

<sup>19</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592803259013795841?s=20&t=F5QhMj8zsRBxfzVhQMa5sw;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592927246695555073?s=20&t=25rYCMkfjO3ylkMW9tyhBQ;>  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592895152976060416?s=20&t=8jMRxR67Y4raKc1JUXh8aA>

<sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592844882783404032?s=20&t=XRSYPgclXNpkKfrDaDkeZw;>  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592843585174458368?s=20&t=mAewVA0\\_MRQOcYh34PaH5A](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592843585174458368?s=20&t=mAewVA0_MRQOcYh34PaH5A)

<sup>21</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592923727658094593?s=20&t=EfwnCBIWWNXl-ygehkSWJw;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592926675582717952?s=20&t=R3rED-TYbBiee1oFJpzB6A;>  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592922643031801862?s=20&t=yxaxjqd4lScg86FSB3HyLw;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592916973457149952?s=20&t=J34nGI8VJtuLx6Wv7IS2g;>

<sup>22</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592886029367021568?s=20&t=hHiKvBVCOLKPBsZ5KIPhKa>

<sup>23</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592892625698578434?s=20&t=FxnTVqDs02cbDFVq6Rmygg;>

<sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592923259296952320?s=20&t=s3N8kn-N6Qpe8xzvvRKehA>

<sup>25</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592919117648236546?s=20&t=oHXGu2CpZCzTGid75B1lrQ;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592918484530638848?s=20&t=QkUxndBTvVs58-PVv-Y8Q;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592913799954079745?s=20&t=miPVVbvWYUz-c-Cc7151Q;>  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592898451968512001?s=20&t=JqzKToVX-\\_B\\_uJFDXyOZQ](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592898451968512001?s=20&t=JqzKToVX-_B_uJFDXyOZQ)

<sup>26</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1592903630893600774?s=20&t=IGikY1hcNpOD5aHKCoCFX5w;](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1592903630893600774?s=20&t=IGikY1hcNpOD5aHKCoCFX5w;)  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592924448487006208?s=20&t=4uvSKep1anzQfLlXZEnw>

<sup>27</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592857780847013890?s=20&t=ojcDFKuMiL-vpV2v8U7sKw;>  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592859783652335616?s=20&t=MrhJG6lh-ZmMrtMmJ40tlg;>  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592924601990144001?s=20&t=3cMppQRvAl3RQ3IMtWcKBw>

<sup>28</sup> <https://twitter.com/Fseifikaran/status/1592929386097160192?s=20&t=oZ4YqlkHhK0Y9gq2mK0Ihw;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592947871854522368?s=20&t=FeP6YFF1MrCs7ykKEFEbvQ;>  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592907321193046017?s=20&t=C7ivVr1g2rYj4Nh47jKhsg>

---

<sup>29</sup> [https://twitter.com/jilamostajer/status/1592793112140984322?s=20&t=f1SwJE5YN8Q52BpUhCwzag;https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1592873032338604033?s=20&t=-0PETqU1BibZWfFuN\\_E5Jag;https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1592795048844103680?s=20&t=xXfcj7BULcggKFX05TgtVg;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592813196263706625?s=20&t=4Xv8Vmlvt03B7mwRW45Dfg](https://twitter.com/jilamostajer/status/1592793112140984322?s=20&t=f1SwJE5YN8Q52BpUhCwzag;https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1592873032338604033?s=20&t=-0PETqU1BibZWfFuN_E5Jag;https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1592795048844103680?s=20&t=xXfcj7BULcggKFX05TgtVg;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592813196263706625?s=20&t=4Xv8Vmlvt03B7mwRW45Dfg)

<sup>30</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592917888804933632?s=20&t=l6GQbUW\\_lx9biRJNJocn6g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592917888804933632?s=20&t=l6GQbUW_lx9biRJNJocn6g)

<sup>31</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592916358940876800?s=20&t=\\_NFDpJuPebaoMTcDipKrTw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592916358940876800?s=20&t=_NFDpJuPebaoMTcDipKrTw)

<sup>32</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592925393249800193?s=20&t=dhwtsDvHXRUKKUcKdHc98Q>

<sup>33</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592930844838342658?s=20&t=gJ5nDEeYwrTBap6TZO7WnQ>

<sup>34</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592814328394440706?s=20&t=ZcFk3N2NyczkSzVYeHb8jw;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592836199382941697?s=20&t=cM3xTTeXr2gFErF\\_ivwz7Q](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592814328394440706?s=20&t=ZcFk3N2NyczkSzVYeHb8jw;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592836199382941697?s=20&t=cM3xTTeXr2gFErF_ivwz7Q)

<sup>35</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592893932840812544?s=20&t=THzaj4A\\_U8o-oq2CLCs8sA](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592893932840812544?s=20&t=THzaj4A_U8o-oq2CLCs8sA)

<sup>36</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592946177502515206?s=20&t=l9r5BH2T\\_K0jLrJkF-Xv9w;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592922712514519040?s=20&t=9l15W\\_WybplBoihJWWBE8A;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592906850353442817?s=20&t=xFiTiGQ7EZmKc4qbh-Xv5w;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592946177502515206?s=20&t=l9r5BH2T_K0jLrJkF-Xv9w;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592922712514519040?s=20&t=9l15W_WybplBoihJWWBE8A;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592906850353442817?s=20&t=xFiTiGQ7EZmKc4qbh-Xv5w;)

<sup>37</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592899399319183365?s=20&t=d-q-9K-PDp1iT9HN0Ct55g>

<sup>38</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592896018806636544?s=20&t=VokCQUwstce12OLWPwciGw;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592894765045272576?s=20&t=X-IJ20l8S-D\\_xZ20-rv7Sg;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592888775973085186?s=20&t=9ubidcTHtVfuxqi\\_46hpTA](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592896018806636544?s=20&t=VokCQUwstce12OLWPwciGw;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592894765045272576?s=20&t=X-IJ20l8S-D_xZ20-rv7Sg;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592888775973085186?s=20&t=9ubidcTHtVfuxqi_46hpTA)

<sup>39</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1592896946615754755?s=20&t=-N7gRU5J2UGuhmqn7rEqrg;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592917968689987587?s=20&t=ZAOcSgDNwWXGa6zYj73ueA;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592932358311006209?s=20&t=v\\_fyxJnLcD8RzogLsz4FAA;https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592912525255143425?s=20&t=LhpnP\\_TQeVWLhZLoBKGyow](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1592896946615754755?s=20&t=-N7gRU5J2UGuhmqn7rEqrg;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592917968689987587?s=20&t=ZAOcSgDNwWXGa6zYj73ueA;https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592932358311006209?s=20&t=v_fyxJnLcD8RzogLsz4FAA;https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592912525255143425?s=20&t=LhpnP_TQeVWLhZLoBKGyow)

<sup>40</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592926044641644545?s=20&t=n0pQU0a3kPw8ktRC5K3QlW;https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1592923171690536960?s=20&t=Nn3FPa4PwRvjfJltNNeOw>

<sup>41</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592920468117651464?s=20&t=rKnpp3eF1ceCwSdscXlMjQ>

<sup>42</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1592943893884317696?s=20&t=HH7pcaCtqeTi5-Gt2brqlw>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Ck9Panlo3Cj/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY%3D>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/reel/Ck9Panlo3Cj/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY%3D>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-2;https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-3>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/25/2805503;https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/least-four-killed-terrorist-attack-irans-khuzestan-province-state-media-2022-11-16/>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-15>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/25/2805542>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.ilna dot ir/fa/tiny/news-1298820>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.mizan dot news/4517217>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/iran-judiciary-system-death-sentence-for-three-other-protesters/32133655.html>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/11/16/statement-by-national-security-advisor-jake-sullivan-on-the-maritime-attack-against-the-mv-pacific/>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/iran-file/iran-file-iran-intensifies-its-escalation-around-the-strait-of-hormuz>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/israel-edges-toward-air-defence-assistance-ukraine-2022-10-19/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-14>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkey-pursue-syria-targets-after-iraq-operation-against-kurdish-militants-2022-11-15/>



### Iran Crisis Update, November 17

Nicholas Carl, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Zachary Coles, and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 17, 5:00 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

*Contributor: LJ Trevette*

**Certain components of the ongoing protest movement in Iran may have reached the threshold identified in US military doctrine for a “latent and incipient” insurgency.** American counter-insurgency doctrine, using a modified version of the Maoist insurgency framework, defines the lowest level of insurgency as follows:

*“The first phase is latent and incipient. During this phase, activities include the emergence of insurgent leadership, creation of initial organizational infrastructure, training, acquisition of resources, and political actions, such as organizing protests. A group that eventually becomes members of an insurgency may simply be a legitimate political group at this stage. Governmental actions and changes in society can transform political groups into insurgencies.”<sup>1</sup>*

Components of the protest movement are approaching or have already achieved some of these requirements. The neighborhood youth groups and other protest organizations have seemingly continued playing significant roles in coordinating and planning demonstrations on specific days and in specific locations. These protest organizations are also encouraging and supporting citizens to attack and undermine the regime. The Mashhad Neighborhood Youth, for instance, published statements on November 16 and 17 calling on protesters to cooperate with one another to wage partisan warfare, block roads, and use explosives against security forces, among other activities, and referred to its “operational teams,” implying some level of organization.<sup>2</sup> The group advised protesters to wear protective clothing “according to previous training.”<sup>3</sup> The Mashhad youth group also stated that it is fighting a “full-scale war” against the regime—rhetoric that is consistent with the revolutionary tone used by other protest organizations in recent weeks.<sup>4</sup>

CTP has documented previous instances of protesters cooperating with one another. Protesters have coordinated extensively in certain locations in recent weeks using militant tactics to respond to the

regime crackdown.<sup>5</sup> Protesters are furthermore developing the infrastructure necessary to stage a protracted struggle against the regime, such as establishing an informal medical care network.<sup>6</sup>

CTP cannot verify that any of these youth groups and other protest organizations are in control of the movement or able to carry through on some of their directives. The regime has indicated that at least some of these groups have a local presence. Iranian state media reported on November 17 that the IRGC Intelligence Organization arrested over 25 members of the Oroumīyeh Neighborhood Youth.<sup>7</sup> An unidentified source spoke to *Mehr News Agency* claiming that the group organized the blocking of roads and destruction of public property. The Twitter account of the Oroumīyeh Neighborhood Youth has continued posting since the reported arrests.<sup>8</sup>

CTP is not prepared to forecast the trajectory of these protester networks or how they will behave in the weeks and months ahead. We have not yet observed clear signs of coordination across these groups at this time. CTP will continually update and reevaluate this analysis based on observed indicators, which we will continue reporting in these daily updates.

**Regime security personnel sustained relatively significant casualties on November 17.** At least six security personnel have died across Iran in the past 24 hours. Unidentified individuals stabbed and killed two Basij members and injured three more in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province.<sup>9</sup> Unidentified individuals also stabbed and killed a Law Enforcement Command (LEC) officer in Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province.<sup>10</sup> An LEC Special Units member died on November 17 after unidentified gunmen shot him in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province on November 16.<sup>11</sup> And two LEC Border Guards members died in an unspecified “accident” near Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province.<sup>12</sup> Anti-regime militancy and smuggling is common around Saravan.

**Protest organizations are trying to sustain the recent high protester turnout for at least three to four more days.** Protests have surged across Iran since November 15 in commemoration of the three-year anniversary of the regime’s crackdown on the Bloody Aban protest wave in November 2019.<sup>13</sup> The Karaj Neighborhood Youth called for these commemorative protests to continue until November 20.<sup>14</sup> The Countrywide Youth similarly called for these protests to continue until November 21.<sup>15</sup> Protest turnout in the coming days may offer insight into how influential these particular protest organizations are.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Certain components of the ongoing protest movement in Iran may have reached the threshold identified in US military doctrine for a “latent and incipient” insurgency.**
- **Regime security personnel sustained relatively significant casualties.**
- **Protest organizations are trying to sustain the recent high protester turnout for at least three to four more days.**
- **At least 40 protests took place in 33 cities across 18 provinces.**

- The regime may be trying to blame the Izeh attack on the Islamic State (IS) as part of an effort to associate the protests with terrorism.
- Anti-regime outlet *Iran International* published purported leaked memos from the Artesh Ground Forces.
- Likely Iranian proxies conducted a rocket attack on US forces in northeastern Syria.

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 40 protests took place in 33 cities across 18 provinces on November 17, despite reports of rain throughout the country.** Protest activity may surge in Khuzestan Province in the coming days as protesters seek to commemorate Kian Pirfalak, a ten-year-old boy whom security personnel killed when suppressing an anti-regime protest on November 16.<sup>16</sup> Security forces reportedly shot and killed fourteen-year-old Sepehr Maghsoudi in Izeh on that same date.<sup>17</sup> CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the locations below.

**Note: CTP is using asterisks to denote protests that included mourners commemorating killed protesters.**

#### **Bandar-e Ganaveh, Bushehr Province (population: approximately 64,110)**

- *Dozens of protesters gathered on a Ganaveh city street.*<sup>18</sup>

#### **Bushehr, Bushehr Province (population: approximately 223,504)**

- *Footage shows security personnel shooting at an undetermined number of protesters who lit fires on a city street corner.*<sup>19</sup>

#### **Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 1,559,000)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters gathered on a Tabriz city street.*<sup>20</sup>

#### **\*Esfahan City, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 1,961,00)**

- *Over 100 mourners marched to Ahmad Shokrollahi's 40-day commemoration ceremony in Esfahan. Security personnel killed Shokrollahi for participating in anti-regime protests.*<sup>21</sup>

#### **Fouladshahr, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 88,426)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters—but likely over 50--gathered on a city street. Protesters appear to have lit a fire in the vicinity of a Fouladshahr city square or street.*<sup>22</sup>

#### **Vilashahr, Esfahan Province (population: unknown)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters lit fires on a Vila Shahr city street.*<sup>23</sup>

#### **Neyriz, Fars Province (population: approximately 113,291)**

- *Dozens of protesters clashed with security personnel on a Neyriz city street.*<sup>24</sup>

**Masal, Gilan Province (population: approximately 52,368)**

- *Hundreds gathered on a Masal city street. Over 50 protesters lit fires and chanted anti-regime slogans later that evening. Footage shows security personnel purportedly throwing stones at protesters from a nearby rooftop.*<sup>25</sup>

**Sarableh, Ilam Province (population: approximately 12,393)**

- *Roughly 50 protesters lit a fire and gathered on a Sarableh city street.*<sup>26</sup>

**Paveh, Kermanshah Province (population: approximately 25,771)**

- *Dozens of protesters lit a fire and chanted anti-regime slogans on a Paveh city street.*<sup>27</sup>

**Sabzevar, Khorasan Razavi Province (population: approximately 243,700)**

- *A still image depicts dozens of protesters gathering and lighting fires on a city corner. Footage suggests that protesters set fire to security vehicles.*<sup>28</sup>

**Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province (population: approximately 3,001,000)**

- *Fewer than a dozen protesters were captured on video clashing with security personnel. Over 50 protesters lit fires on a city street. Some social media users reported that protesters damaged a local Basij building.*<sup>29</sup>

**Baghmalek, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 114,343)**

- *Dozens of protesters marched on a Baghmalek city street. Audible gunfire is heard on the video.*<sup>30</sup>

**Bandar-e Mahshahr, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 162,797)**

- *Dozens of protesters chanted anti-regime slogans on a Bandar-e Mahshahr city street.*<sup>31</sup>

**Ahvaz, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 1,185,000)**

- *Dozens of protesters chanted "death to the dictator" on an Ahvaz city street.*<sup>32</sup>

**Izeh, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 119,399)**

- *Footage shows large crowds chanting "death to Khamenei" while carrying the coffin of Kian Pirfalak, a ten-year-old boy whom security personnel killed in anti-regime protests on November 16.*<sup>33</sup>

**Bijar, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 50,014)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters gathered on a city street, and cars honked in solidarity.*<sup>34</sup>

**Ghorveh, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 78,276)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters lit fires on a Ghorveh city street. Other footage shows dozens of protesters running away, likely from security personnel.*<sup>35</sup>

**\*Kamyaran, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 57,077)**

- *Dozens of protesters gathered on a Kamyaran city street.*<sup>36</sup>
- *Hundreds of protesters chanted "martyrs never die" in front of Fouad Mohammad's house. Security personnel killed Mohammad for participating in anti-regime protests on November 15.*

**\*Saghez, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 165,258)**

- *Over 100 protesters gathered to mourn Daniel Pabandi, a 17-year-old boy whom security personnel killed for participating in anti-regime protests on November 16.*<sup>37</sup>
- *Footage shows that protesters targeted security personnel with fireworks and firecrackers at an unspecified location. A clip shows security personnel purportedly throwing rocks at protesters, suggesting that they had depleted their ammunition. It is unclear if these events occurred in the same location.*<sup>38</sup>

**\*Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 453,000)**

- *Hundreds of protesters marched on a city street to commemorate 40 days since security personnel killed four Sanandaj residents for participating in anti-regime protests. Footage shows protesters severely injuring a purported LEC officer. Social media users reports that security personnel killed two protesters. Security personnel reportedly attacked the Kowsar Hospital. Audible gunfire was reportedly all across the city.*<sup>39</sup>

**Doroud, Lorestan Province (population: approximately 121,638)**

- *Over 50 protesters lit a fire and chanted anti-regime slogans on a Doroud city street.*<sup>40</sup>

**Khomein, Markazi Province (population: approximately 76,706)**

- *Over 100 protesters marched on a Khomein city street.*<sup>41</sup>

**Qom City, Qom Province (population: approximately 1,201,000)**

- *Dozens of protesters chanted "death to the dictator" and lit a fire on a Qom city street.*<sup>42</sup>

**Eyvanekey, Semnan Province (population: approximately 13,518)**

- *Footage shows an undetermined number of protesters carrying a protester shot by security personnel. Roughly 50 protesters set fire to a regime-affiliated bank.*<sup>43</sup>

**\*Goyoum, Shiraz Province (population: approximately 7,297)**

- *Roughly 100, possibly more, protesters gathered to commemorate three years since security personnel killed Amir Alwandi for participating in the 2019 gasoline protest wave. Protesters chanted "we will stand by our wounded comrades until the end."*<sup>44</sup>

**Tehran City, Tehran Province (population: approximately 8,700,00)**

- *Dozens of protesters gathered in what appears to be a park or public square in Ekbatan in western Tehran.*<sup>45</sup>
- *Over 50 protesters chanted "freedom, freedom, freedom" on trashcan barricades on an undetermined Tehran city street.*<sup>46</sup>
- *Roughly 70-100 protesters gathered in the vicinity of the Sadeghiyeh district in Tehran.*<sup>47</sup>
- *Dozens of protesters gathered in the Gisha district in Tehran. NOTE: This may be the same protest as protest 2.*<sup>48</sup>
- *Dozens of protesters chanted anti-regime slogans in the Tehran City Theatre metro station.*<sup>49</sup>

**\*Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province (population: 193,501)**

- *Dozens—likely more--protesters lit fires and joined hands in a Boukan city street.*<sup>50</sup>
- *Hundreds of mourners commemorated Mohamad Hassan Zadeh and Salar Mojaver, whom security forces killed for participating in anti-regime protests on November 16. Protesters from Mahabad reportedly walked to Boukan to attend the funerals. One social media account compared Boukan to a warzone. Protesters reportedly set fire to several security vehicles and vandalized a store that is allegedly regime-affiliated for failing to participate in anti-regime strikes. Uncorroborated reports suggest that protesters penetrated and/or damaged a Boukan municipality building. Security personnel reportedly shot at protesters, killing one and injuring several others.*<sup>51</sup>

**Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province (population: 95,716)**

- *Dozens of protesters chanted "woman, life freedom" and "death to the dictator" and lit fires on a Piranshahr city street.*<sup>52</sup>

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

**Hamedan City, Hamedan Province (population: approximately 554,406)**

- *Footage shows an undetermined number of protesters clashing with security personnel. Protesters threw what appear to be Molotov cocktails at security personnel.*<sup>53</sup>

**Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province (population: approximately 946,651)**

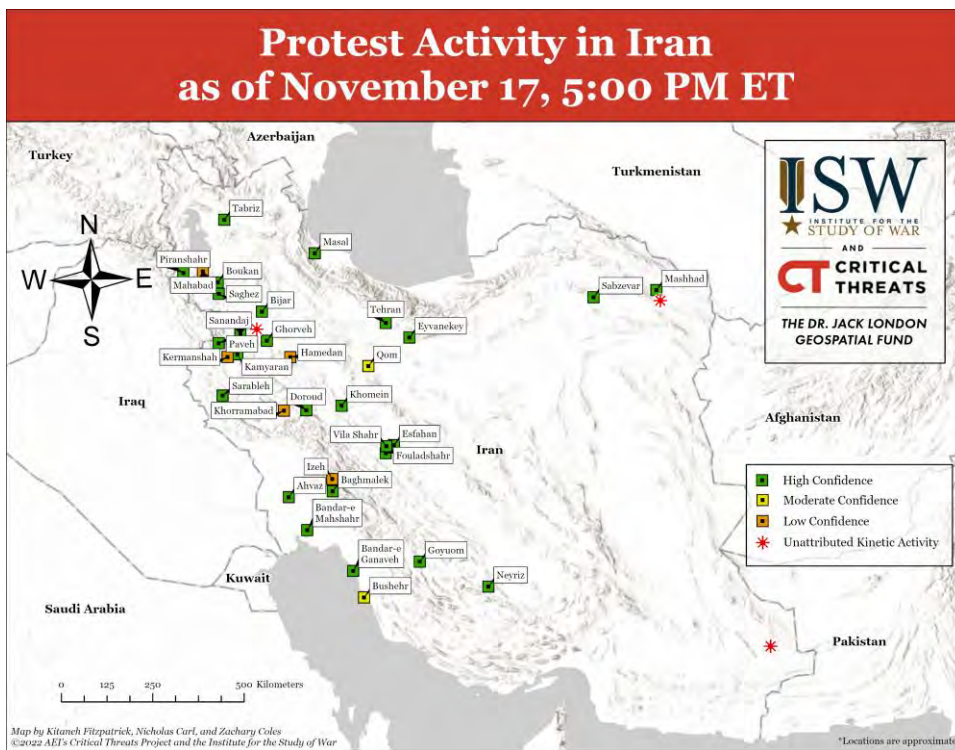
- *Dozens of protesters gathered on a Kermanshah city street. There is insufficient data to assess with high to moderate confidence that this event occurred.*<sup>54</sup>

**Khorramabad, Lorestan Province (population: approximately 373,416)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters gathered on a Khorramabad city street. It is unclear from available footage if this event meets CTP's threshold for protest activity.*<sup>55</sup>

**Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province (population: 168,393)**

- An undetermined number of protesters lit fires on a Mahabad city street, possibly suggesting that protests occurred on this date. It is unclear if this event meets CTP's threshold for protest activity.<sup>56</sup>



**The regime may be trying to blame the Izeh attack on the Islamic State (IS) as part of an effort to associate the protests with terrorism.** Iranian media outlets, including the Raisi-administration-controlled Islamic Republic News Agency, have circulated a seemingly fake IS claim of responsibility for the attack.<sup>57</sup> A BBC journalist argued that the statement is likely fake due to its grammatical errors and presentation.<sup>58</sup> The regime has intensified its information operation to link the protests to terrorism since the Shiraz attack on October 26 to delegitimize protesters and their grievances.<sup>59</sup>

**Anti-regime outlet *Iran International* published purported leaked memos from the Artesh Ground Forces on November 17.**<sup>60</sup> The Artesh Ground Forces reportedly issued a memo on November 7 requiring unit commanders to report daily whether any service members or their families participated in anti-regime protests or used anti-regime language. The Artesh Ground Forces reportedly issued a second memo on November 9, warning that anti-regime actors may sabotage military facilities. If true, these memos indicate that Artesh leadership is concerned about service members and their families joining and sympathizing with protesters. The English-language version of the *Iran International* article mischaracterized these memos, however, reporting that they “show that [Artesh] staff and their families have been supporting the popular anti-government protests since September.”<sup>61</sup> There is no information in the memos to corroborate this claim nor can CTP verify their authenticity.

**Law Enforcement Deputy Commander Brigadier General Ghassem Rezaei denied that LEC officers are tired on November 17—a remark which could frustrate the low-level security personnel heavily involved in the crackdown and killing citizens.** CTP has reported that security personnel are facing bandwidth constraints, exhaustion, and low morale since September 2022.<sup>62</sup> Rezaei stated that the security personnel's tirelessness is evident from “their cheerful faces.” Rezaei’s comments are particularly tone-deaf given the rate at which security personnel are dying.

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**An unidentified senior Western official told a BBC journalist that the IRGC Aerospace Force conducted the drone attack on the Israeli-owned tanker on November 16 from Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchistan Province.**<sup>63</sup> The IRGC Aerospace Force is the primary operator of the regime’s drone and missile arsenals.

**Likely Iranian proxies conducted a rocket attack on US forces in northeastern Syria on November 17.**<sup>64</sup> The attack caused no casualties or damage to the facility. The IRGC may renew its regular proxy attacks against US positions in Iraq and Syria to expel US forces from the region and also respond to Washington’s perceived role in stoking the protests.

**Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi held a phone call with Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly to discuss security cooperation against terrorism, among other issues, on November 17.**<sup>65</sup> Tehran and Ankara may increase cooperation against anti-regime Kurdish militant groups in northern Iraq and northern Syria in the coming weeks. CTP previously reported that Kurdish military and political groups in Iraq and Syria may face increasing attacks from Iran and Turkey simultaneously.<sup>66</sup> Vahidi is nominally responsible for administering the LEC in his capacity as interior minister. He likely plays a more prominent role in influencing regime defense and foreign policies, however, given his connections to the IRGC and his experience as the IRGC Quds Force commander from 1988 to 1998.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/web/fm3\\_24.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/fm3_24.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://twitter.com/Javanan\\_mashhad/status/1592780084876038145](https://twitter.com/Javanan_mashhad/status/1592780084876038145);  
[https://twitter.com/Javanan\\_mashhad/status/1593189464058527744](https://twitter.com/Javanan_mashhad/status/1593189464058527744)

<sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/Javanan\\_mashhad/status/1592780084876038145](https://twitter.com/Javanan_mashhad/status/1592780084876038145)

<sup>4</sup> [https://twitter.com/Javanan\\_mashhad/status/1593189464058527744](https://twitter.com/Javanan_mashhad/status/1593189464058527744)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-3>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-30>

<sup>7</sup> [www.mehrnews dot com/news/5634385](http://www.mehrnews.com/news/5634385)

<sup>8</sup> [https://twitter.com/ur\\_javanane](https://twitter.com/ur_javanane)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/26/2805901](https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/26/2805901)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.yjc dot news/fa/news/8285756](https://www.yjc.com/news/fa/news/8285756)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/26/2805785](http://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/26/2805785)

<sup>12</sup> [https://mehrnews dot com/xYTKh](https://mehrnews.com/xYTKh)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16>

<sup>14</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1593284968595263489](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1593284968595263489)

<sup>15</sup> [https://twitter.com/iran\\_javanan/status/1593000512961777666](https://twitter.com/iran_javanan/status/1593000512961777666)  
<sup>16</sup> [https://twitter.com/HichkasOfficial/status/1592964710185304065?s=20&t=vpkl\\_Zi7bsw\\_tEIVuf3fNA](https://twitter.com/HichkasOfficial/status/1592964710185304065?s=20&t=vpkl_Zi7bsw_tEIVuf3fNA)  
<sup>17</sup> [https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1593259539633258496?s=20&t=vpkl\\_Zi7bsw\\_tEIVuf3fNA](https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1593259539633258496?s=20&t=vpkl_Zi7bsw_tEIVuf3fNA)  
<sup>18</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593324230514458624?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593324230514458624?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>19</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593344477846011905?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593344477846011905?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593339285134098436?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593339285134098436?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>20</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593257105632411648?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593257105632411648?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593224311242121221?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593224311242121221?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>22</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593308749892145158?s=20&t=rqmVFiuFOI7eb-x\\_HsEfg](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593308749892145158?s=20&t=rqmVFiuFOI7eb-x_HsEfg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1593335310552899593?s=20&t=rqmVFiuFOI7eb-x\\_HsEfg](https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1593335310552899593?s=20&t=rqmVFiuFOI7eb-x_HsEfg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/chawshin\\_83/status/1593339340918235138?s=20&t=rqmVFiuFOI7eb-x\\_HsEfg](https://twitter.com/chawshin_83/status/1593339340918235138?s=20&t=rqmVFiuFOI7eb-x_HsEfg)  
<sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593287622725615616?s=20&t=GY4Ldo7\\_uiYwr9zyCjpbMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593287622725615616?s=20&t=GY4Ldo7_uiYwr9zyCjpbMw)  
<sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593311811826237440?s=20&t=fWkgptsadLqjcSHeLOTqFA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/indypersian/status/1593348889410682880?s=20&t=JvEkO5Rs9R0fojkfPR-xg>  
<sup>25</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593302315842273281?s=20&t=SEmslC6kx00V4b6AFb7bog> ;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593282755386818560?s=20&t=q7H0YLSBi3SDj3L3ksVjKw> ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593264205347622912?s=20&t=wfmC26yZzBYLkZ6eqpM\\_BQ](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593264205347622912?s=20&t=wfmC26yZzBYLkZ6eqpM_BQ) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593262184620068864?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593262184620068864?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>26</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593192853249085445?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593192853249085445?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>27</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593284888433725441?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593284888433725441?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>28</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593320626080649218?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593320626080649218?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593342007530979331?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593342007530979331?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>29</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593323881531674625?s=20&t=KTnaIDMXHWhE9gLwNR3d5w> ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593322568223694850?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593322568223694850?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593277221732507651?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593277221732507651?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593345534772772871?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593345534772772871?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>30</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593299778099634176?s=20&t=ETq1tZ-pJukLcXtKQizjrg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593310549294694403?s=20&t=NsY5hP3gc0fxmqRv087kzA> ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593312475344211968?s=20&t=7ImFO9BkYel1pK4Xh\\_Gd5Q](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593312475344211968?s=20&t=7ImFO9BkYel1pK4Xh_Gd5Q)  
<sup>31</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593284359313825792?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593284359313825792?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>32</sup> [https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1593335519873830921?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV\\_VrXfUMw](https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1593335519873830921?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV_VrXfUMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593360961729069061?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg>  
<sup>33</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593348869382967297?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593348869382967297?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/IranIntl\\_En/status/1593171291561160709?s=20&t=sCeUrOIhmrrzhYhHiKXEknw](https://twitter.com/IranIntl_En/status/1593171291561160709?s=20&t=sCeUrOIhmrrzhYhHiKXEknw)  
<sup>34</sup> <https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1593365519281041408?s=20&t=oodvWWUQul-oYmHZVPpd4A> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593289313076355076?s=20&t=EcdtwvnJXdr8wMx78AVNMg>

<sup>35</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593291909363007488?s=20&t=XwBfWQMS0sE\\_8AmKFcJ1Qc0SkDDtsKt425-0PMsMuM](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593291909363007488?s=20&t=XwBfWQMS0sE_8AmKFcJ1Qc0SkDDtsKt425-0PMsMuM) ; [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593285757602504705?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593285757602504705?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>36</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593313559932542976?s=20&t=Xbk3EoaDgF6kEH2B5w-UZA>  
<sup>37</sup> [https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1593180129433292800?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1593180129433292800?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/FSeifikaran/status/1593248458856894465?s=20&t=L2M3dFMF5OrDMN4MlJr18g>  
<sup>38</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593309338260705280?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593347985475342338?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg>  
<sup>39</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593259344287735810?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593259344287735810?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593234221820436480?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593234221820436480?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593232782041698305?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593232782041698305?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593217402124521472?s=20&t=dp7qPbEtxl2v4pvBxA9NaA> ;  
[https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593202886049046529?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593202886049046529?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;

[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593197499233505281?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593197499233505281?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1593188758551408648?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1593188758551408648?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>40</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593287030347284480?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593287030347284480?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>41</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593300862968991746?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593300862968991746?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593299423215370243?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593299423215370243?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593286342171103235?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593286342171103235?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593280451413778432?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593280451413778432?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593298628973674503?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg>  
<sup>42</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593354888217595908?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg> ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593363887746859014?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV\\_VrXfUMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593363887746859014?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV_VrXfUMw)  
<sup>43</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593303623466975233?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593303623466975233?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593264963958837248?s=20&t=3Br4Ly-wc5R8f3ep9aPJBA>  
<sup>44</sup> <https://twitter.com/fereshteh531/status/1593343009218699266?s=20&t=yJNnb2M9-PT-KPm2rRFNyg> ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593330750342021121?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593330750342021121?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>45</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593294055630409731?s=20&t=2F7ACUNv1GPET82wy0nBzw>  
<sup>46</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593291006979497985?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593291006979497985?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593290025948545025?s=20&t=bMFqE-F2vxxJSFRxTH8AQg>  
<sup>47</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593281118362636288?s=20&t=KlyPCzA4nEerHFQJ9at2yg>  
<sup>48</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593269292472143873?s=20&t=SIWfpuC1Y7Vm4bAQ8i9zOw> ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593268787868061696?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593268787868061696?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>49</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593250355835711488?s=20&t=frNDRXpjeGARpP72-Ldg>  
<sup>50</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593293123127595008?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593293123127595008?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>51</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593220068552343552?s=20&t=93db8Ls\\_2MgCogovrWd4\\_A](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593220068552343552?s=20&t=93db8Ls_2MgCogovrWd4_A) ;  
[https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593219200788856838?s=20&t=qg8gPfixCHiLCylUBmFyPw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593219200788856838?s=20&t=qg8gPfixCHiLCylUBmFyPw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593199762005696513?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593199762005696513?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1593181375401984000?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1593181375401984000?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593295340714721283?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg> ;  
[https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593228695388708864?s=20&t=N9qQhhkm\\_TY-swQuQeyglg](https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593228695388708864?s=20&t=N9qQhhkm_TY-swQuQeyglg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593281108526907393?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV\\_VrXfUMw](https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593281108526907393?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV_VrXfUMw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593327635370852353?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV\\_VrXfUMw](https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593327635370852353?s=20&t=B9zeATL5sqbsnV_VrXfUMw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593165653116346368?s=20&t=EMFeaYB5ATXkdV0BCudxUg>  
<sup>52</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593266465071067136?s=20&t=p7w-oiY2JhByO9LJFL\\_lw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593266465071067136?s=20&t=p7w-oiY2JhByO9LJFL_lw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/chawshin\\_83/status/1593271715831971841?s=20&t=plULRlm8J\\_MPit7m1BeZ8Q](https://twitter.com/chawshin_83/status/1593271715831971841?s=20&t=plULRlm8J_MPit7m1BeZ8Q) ;  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1593342142369652738?s=20&t=fWq9ruaiDCvEDM23UPfxSA](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1593342142369652738?s=20&t=fWq9ruaiDCvEDM23UPfxSA) ;  
<sup>53</sup> [https://twitter.com/Hashshaashin/status/1593302702598987776?s=20&t=Ogowiq-l0EfKV-1u\\_WAABQ](https://twitter.com/Hashshaashin/status/1593302702598987776?s=20&t=Ogowiq-l0EfKV-1u_WAABQ)  
<sup>54</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593351226497843201?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593351226497843201?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>55</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593282875062894595?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593282875062894595?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>56</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593288884074356736?s=20&t=r8WgW5CMABjMAynEeGtbEQ](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593288884074356736?s=20&t=r8WgW5CMABjMAynEeGtbEQ) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593343092920311808?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng\\_icMpyzdqIMw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593343092920311808?s=20&t=JtIBoffCng_icMpyzdqIMw)  
<sup>57</sup> [www.hamshahrionline dot ir/news/720798](http://www.hamshahrionline dot ir/news/720798); <https://donya-e-eqtasad dot com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/3917827-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B4-%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%88%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AB%D9%87-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B0%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D9%BE%D8%B0%DB%8C%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%AA>  
<sup>58</sup> <https://twitter.com/KianSharifi/status/1593139378842308609>  
<sup>59</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-6>  
<sup>60</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/202211179464>  
<sup>61</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211179779>  
<sup>62</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-13;%20https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-28>

---

<sup>63</sup> <https://twitter.com/nafisehkBBC/status/1593207214252380160>

<sup>64</sup> <https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1593339605260140547?s=20&t=i0Xti5ekCGzKX35Mjox2SQ>

<sup>65</sup> <https://irna dot ir/xjL3vx>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16>

<sup>67</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf\\_uploadanalysisThe\\_IRGC\\_Command\\_Network-1.pdf](https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf_uploadanalysisThe_IRGC_Command_Network-1.pdf)



## **Iran Crisis Update, November 18**

**Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Zachary Coles, Johanna Moore, Amin Soltani, and Frederick W. Kagan**

**November 18, 4:30 pm ET**

**The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).**

**The ongoing, anti-regime protests are likely creating fractures among senior regime officials within the Iranian security establishment.** Uncorroborated social media accounts circulated reports that the regime’s Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) held two emergency meetings that resulted in SNSC Secretary Ali Shamkhani’s resignation.<sup>1</sup> Anti-regime outlet Iran International previously reported that some hardliners were advocating for Shamkhani’s dismissal on November 6, citing an informed source.<sup>2</sup> Another unverified social media account reported that Saeed Jalili--a hardliner who served as the SNSC secretary from 2007-2013—blamed unidentified security officials for failing to violently suppress anti-regime demonstrations. The account additionally claimed that IRGC and Iranian Law Enforcement Command officials expressed concerns about bandwidth constraints and low morale among personnel.<sup>3</sup> CTP cannot verify these rumors and such accounts should be treated with skepticism. SNSC-affiliated Nour News Agency denied that Shamkhani has resigned on November 18, suggesting that the report had garnered enough attention to merit a statement.<sup>4</sup> Nour’s denial is not dispositive, as the outlet has been known to deny things that have turned out to be true.

**Regime officials and regime-affiliated actors alluded to disagreements over protest suppression tactics within the Iranian security apparatus on November 18, however.** A Raisi administration official stated that the regime could expeditiously end unrest as soon as “the relevant authorities were willing” on November 18, suggesting divisions within the regime about how much violence security personnel should use to quell protesters.<sup>5</sup> A regime-affiliated cleric in a Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari town similarly stated that officials who lacked the courage to do “great things” should be removed from power and replaced by others more capable of implementing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s vision.<sup>6</sup> Hardline editor Hossein Shariatmadari, who is reportedly a close confidante of the Supreme Leader,<sup>7</sup> additionally advocated for greater use of force against protesters on November 18.<sup>8</sup> Statements calling to violently escalate against protesters—and criticizing the officials who are purportedly failing to implement this tactic—corroborate CTP’s previous

assessments that critical nodes of the regime are unable to reach a consensus on how to confront the Mahsa Amini protests.<sup>9</sup>

Divisions within the SNSC—particularly Shamkhani’s resignation or ousting—would be especially significant given the importance of the council within the regime. The SNSC is the most senior national security and foreign policy decision-making body in the Iranian regime, and Shamkhani has served as the Supreme Leader’s personal representative within the council since 2013. Shamkhani has additionally held several senior security posts within the regime and is an extended member of the IRGC Command Network—the informal human network forged by service together in the Iran-Iraq War that has controlled the IRGC and, increasingly, joint IRGC-Artesh organizations—for decades.<sup>10</sup> Shamkhani is a trusted advisor of the supreme leader, and calls for Shamkhani’s resignation may be an indirect criticism of the Supreme Leader’s protest suppression response. Criticisms of Shamkhani—and holding him responsible for ongoing unrest—could alternatively suggest that Khamenei is playing a less active role in executing senior policy decisions than he typically would.

Shamkhani is a most unlikely public scapegoat. He does not have a prominent public persona and is most important as one of the most inside of insiders. He may have considerable influence over the course of SNSC discussions that determine the shape of the regime’s response to protests especially if the supreme leader is inaccessible or unable, mentally or physically, to fulfill his responsibilities. It is noteworthy that Khamenei has not appeared in public recently and has reportedly participated in other events without posting any current photos or videos.<sup>11</sup> The shadow of a possibly imminent supreme leader succession has covered the entire protest period and could be manifesting as a challenge to one of Khamenei’s closest and most trusted advisors and mouthpieces.

**The IRGC has threatened to launch a ground invasion into Iraqi Kurdistan in the coming weeks.** AP published additional information on November 18 about IRGC Quds Force Commander Esmail Ghaani’s November 14 meeting in Baghdad with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid – A Kurdish politician – and several other Iraqi and Kurdish officials. Ghaani reportedly warned that the IRGC will conduct ground operations against anti-regime Kurdish militants based in Iraqi Kurdistan unless the Iraqi army fortifies the Iran-Iraqi Kurdistan border and disarms all anti-regime Kurdish militias operating within Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>12</sup> The IRGC has intermittently conducted artillery, rocket, and missile attacks into Iraqi Kurdistan since Iranian protests began in September 2022.<sup>13</sup> The Iranian regime has blamed anti-regime Kurdish militias operating on both sides of the Iran-Iraq for fomenting Iran’s ongoing domestic unrest, as CTP has previously reported.<sup>14</sup>

The Iraqi constitution forbids the Iraqi army from entering Iraqi Kurdistan, and the Iraqi army likely lacks the military capacity to meet Ghaani’s demands.<sup>15</sup> A significant Iraqi army redeployment to Iraqi Kurdistan would likely enable ISIS to intensify operations in other areas of Iraq and undermine the popularity of the current Iran-friendly government in Baghdad. Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Prime Minister Masrour Barzani called on Iran to cease military operations against anti-regime militants in Iraqi Kurdistan and warned Iran that its domestic “tensions should not be exported to neighboring countries” in a November 17 statement.<sup>16</sup> Barzani’s remarks indicate that the KRG and

significant portions of the Peshmerga, the KRG's official military force, would likely actively resist any IRGC or Iraqi army efforts to operate against Kurdish groups within Iraqi Kurdistan. Iraqi and Kurdish politicians very likely will not accede to Ghaani's demands, suggesting he may have presented them with an unacceptable ultimatum to use as political cover for a planned ground invasion.

**Recent Turkish threats to also conduct military operations against armed Kurdish groups in Iraq and Syria increase the likelihood of an IRGC ground campaign in Iraqi Kurdistan and present Iraqi Kurdistan with the danger of simultaneous invasion from north and east.** Multiple senior Turkish officials have accused armed Kurdish groups of detonating the bomb that killed at least six people and wounded 81 more in Istanbul on November 13.<sup>17</sup> Turkish President Recep Erdogan and several cabinet-level officials warned that Turkey plans respond to the attacks by conducting military operations against armed Kurdish groups in Iraq and Syria.<sup>18</sup> The Turkish military consequently may intensify its air campaign against armed Kurdish groups in Iraqi Kurdistan. The US State Department's Erbil Consulate issued a warning to US citizens to avoid areas in northern Iraq and northern Syria due to a "potential Turkish military action" in the coming days, further substantiating the possibility of Turkish military operations in either or both regions.<sup>19</sup> Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi and Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu held a phone call on November 17 to discuss issues related to "security cooperation against terrorism," possibly including the prospect of conducting simultaneous military operations against armed Kurdish groups in Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>20</sup> A concurrent Turkish military operation would provide Iran with additional political cover to launch a ground invasion and, furthermore, increase the effectiveness of the invasion.

The potential renewal of Turkey's campaign against armed Kurdish groups in northern Syria may, however, impede close cooperation between the IRGC and Turkish military. Turkish rhetoric has emphasized that the November 13 terror attack is connected to alleged terror cells in the Manbij area of northeastern Aleppo Province.<sup>21</sup> Syria. Iran has historically prioritized protecting the Shia-majority towns of Nubl and Zahraa located approximately 75 kilometers from Manbij; Hezbollahi militants maintain a significant military presence around the villages.<sup>22</sup> A potential Turkish military operation aimed at Manbij may also include military activity nearby the Shia-majority villages, which Lebanese Hezbollah militants would likely fiercely resist. A direct military confrontation in northern Syria consequently may obstruct military cooperation between Iran and Turkey in Iraqi Kurdistan.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **The ongoing, anti-regime protests are likely creating fractures among senior regime officials within the Iranian security establishment and may have led to the departure of Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani.**
- **Iraqi Kurdistan is at risk of invasion by Turkish forces from the north and Iranian forces from the east.**
- **At least 33 protests took place in 31 cities across 13 provinces on November 18.**
- **Prominent Sunni Cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continued to criticize the regime's violent protest suppression response on November 18 during his weekly Friday prayer sermon.**
- **Protesters allegedly burned the former home of Islamic Republic Founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in Khomein, Markazi Province on November 17.**

## **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 33 protests took place in 31 cities across 13 provinces on November 18.** CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

**Note: CTP is using asterisks to denote protests that included mourners commemorating killed protesters.**

### **Ardabil City, Ardabil Province (population: approximately 529,374)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters set fire to a Basij base with Molotov cocktails during evening protests.<sup>23</sup>*

### **Bandar-e Deyr, Bushehr Province (population: approximately 18,454)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters gathered on a city street and cars honked in solidarity.<sup>24</sup>*

### **Bushehr City, Bushehr Province (population: approximately 223,504)**

- *Footage captures dozens of protesters reportedly beating an unspecified security officer.<sup>25</sup>*

### **Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 1,559,000)**

- *Hundreds of protesters gathered to commemorate Aylar Haghi and Ali Iraki, whom security personnel killed for participating in anti-regime protests. Security forces attacked protesters at the ceremony.<sup>26</sup>*

### **Esfahan, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 1,961,000)**

- *Social media footage shows security forces chasing an undetermined number of protesters down an Esfahan street.<sup>27</sup>*

### **\*Semirom, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 26,260)**

- *Over 100 protesters lit a fire and gathered on a city street.<sup>28</sup>*
- *Over 100 protesters gathered for the funeral to commemorate Morad Bahramian, whom security personnel killed for participating in anti-regime protests.<sup>29</sup>*

### **Shiraz, Fars Province (population: approximately 1,566,000)**

- *Dozens of protesters attended a commemoration ceremony for Shiraz protesters killed by regime security forces.<sup>30</sup>*

### **Ghazvin City, Ghazvin Province (population: approximately 402,748)**

- *Over 100 protesters gathered for Sepehr Esmaili's commemoration ceremony. Security personnel reportedly shot a child while attempting to suppress anti-regime protests.<sup>31</sup>*

### **Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province (population: approximately 946,651)**

- *An undetermined number of chanted anti-regime slogans.*<sup>32</sup>

**Paveh, Kermanshah Province (population: approximately 25,771)**

- *Dozens of protesters lit a fire and gathered on a city street. Protests reportedly occurred in multiple locations throughout the city.*<sup>33</sup>

**Izeh, Khuzestan Province (population: approximately 119,399)**

- *Hundreds—possibly over a thousand--protesters attended a funeral commemorating nine-year-old Kian Pirfalak, whom security personnel killed while suppressing anti-regime protests on November 16. CTP had erroneously reported that Pirfalak was ten –years old on November 17.*<sup>34</sup>

**Bijar, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 50,014)**

- *Dozens of protesters demonstrated on a Bijar street and chanted “death to Khamenei.”*<sup>35</sup>

**Ghorveh, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 136,961)**

- *Social media footage captures clashes between dozens of protesters and security personnel.*<sup>36</sup>

**Saghez, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 165,258)**

- *Dozens of protesters—possibly more- set fires and chanted anti-regime slogans on Saghez streets during evening protests. Iranian social media accounts claimed that protesters “took control of the streets” in unspecified areas of Saghez.*<sup>37</sup>

**\*Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 461,000)**

- *Over 50 protesters marched through a Sanandaj street to commemorate Aram Habibi, whom security personnel killed for participating in anti-regime protests.*<sup>38</sup>
- *Over 50 protesters set a fire on a Sanandaj street during evening protests.*<sup>39</sup>

**Sari, Mazandaran Province (population: approximately 309,820)**

- *An undetermined number of protesters set fire to a police station with Molotov cocktails during evening protests.*<sup>40</sup>

**Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 106,739)**

- *Dozens of protesters threw stones and advanced on security forces on a Chabahar street.*<sup>41</sup>

**Iranshahr, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 113,750)**

- *Dozens of protesters marched and chanted anti-regime slogans. Security forces opened fire on protesters.*<sup>42</sup>

**Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 56,584)**

- *Over 100 protesters marched through Khash streets and chanted “death to Khamenei” and other anti-regime slogans. One or two dozen protesters tore down a sign featuring the name of deceased IRGC Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani while they marched.*<sup>43</sup>

**Noukabad, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 5,261)**

- *Dozens of protesters marched through a Noukabad street and chanted anti-regime slogans. Audible gunshots can be heard in the background.<sup>44</sup>*

**Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 60,114)**

- *Dozens of protesters gathered after a Friday prayer sermon and marched down a Saravan city street.<sup>45</sup>*

**Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 587,730)**

- *Dozens of protesters gathered after Friday prayer sermons and marched through Zahedan streets chanting “death to Khamenei,” “death to the dictator,” and other anti-regime slogans.<sup>46</sup>*

**Tehran City, Tehran Province (population: approximately 8,700,000)**

- *Dozens of protesters marched through Tehran streets and chanted anti-regime slogans during evening protests.<sup>47</sup>*

**\*Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 193,501)**

- *Hundreds of mourners attended Milad Maroufi’s funeral, whom security personnel killed for participating in anti-regime protests. Hundreds of protesters gathered and lit a fire in an undetermined location.<sup>48</sup>*

**Khoy, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 198,845)**

- *Hundreds of protesters gathered on a city street. 50-100 protesters chanted anti-regime slogans less than 10 meters away from security forces. No violence reported.<sup>49</sup>*

**Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 91,515)**

- *Hundreds--possibly over a thousand--protesters gathered in what appears to be a city street. Authorities reportedly cut electricity. Protesters reportedly damaged a local police station.<sup>50</sup>*

**\*Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 168,393)**

- *Hundreds of protesters marched through Mahabad streets and attended commemoration ceremonies for killed protesters Ahmad Gagshi and Azad Hossein. Security forces used tear gas and reportedly killed at least one protester with live ammunition.<sup>51</sup>*
- *An undetermined number of protesters seized and set fire to an IRGC facility in Mahabad.<sup>52</sup>*

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

**Fouladshahr, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 88,426)**

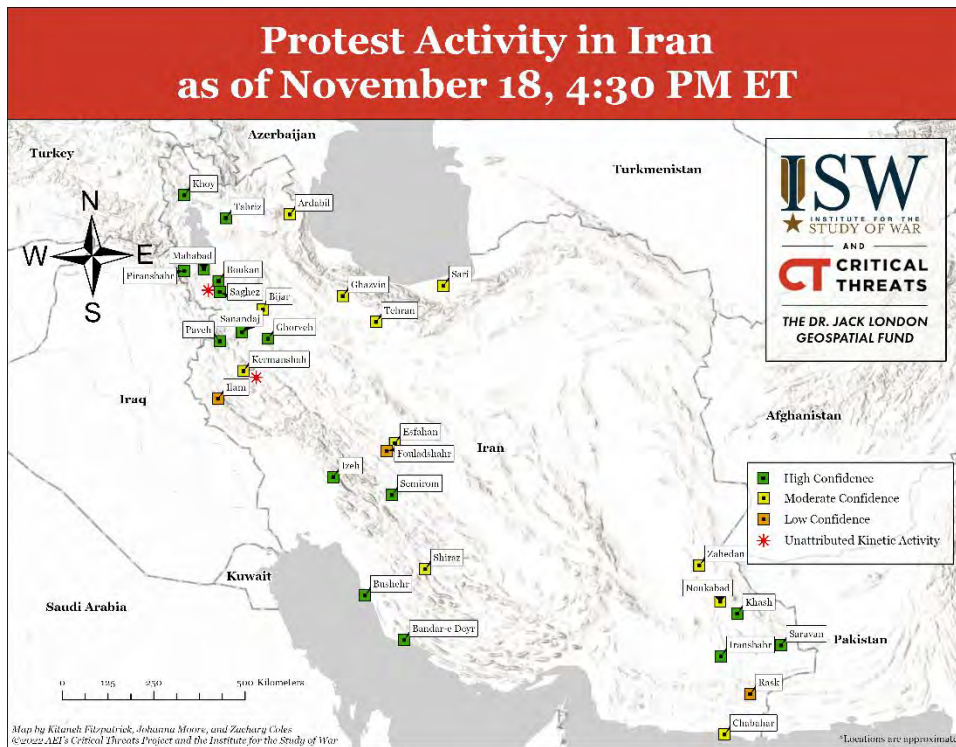
- *Social media footage depicts likely protesters setting fire to a sign featuring Ayatollah Khomeini’s name on it.<sup>53</sup>*

**Ilam City, Ilam Province (population: approximately 194,030)**

- Social media footage reportedly shows protesters fleeing security forces down an Ilam street during evening protests.<sup>54</sup>

### **Rask, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 10,115)**

- Social media footage depicts regime security forces deployed to a Rask street, possibly indicating that protest activity occurred in Rask.<sup>55</sup>



**Protesters allegedly set fire to the former home of Islamic Republic Founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in Khomein, Markazi Province on November 17.** Social media footage shows protesters throwing multiple Molotov cocktails at a structure that was purportedly Khomeini's former home.<sup>56</sup> IRGC-affiliated media and local officials circulated an image of the home undamaged and claimed that the attack never occurred.<sup>57</sup>

**Prominent Sunni Cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continued to criticize the regime's violent protest suppression response during his weekly Friday prayer sermon on November 18.** Abdol Hamid stated that Sistan and Baluchistan residents would not surrender to threats nor compromise their demands.<sup>58</sup> Abdolhamid traced the origins of the present unrest in the province to the regime's unfair treatment of Iranian Sunnis and the Baloch since the 1979 revolution.<sup>59</sup>

**The regime is continuing to sustain security personnel casualties.** IRGC-affiliated Tasnim News Agency reported that protesters killed Sahneh City IRGC Intelligence Commander Colonel Nader

Birami on November 18.<sup>60</sup> Tasnim also confirmed the death of a Basij member and IRGC officer in Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province on November 17. <sup>61</sup>

## Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments

See topline text.

- <sup>1</sup> <https://twitter.com/arixolin/status/1593422109992099841>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211069308>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://twitter.com/mamadporii/status/1593225737708113921?s=20&t=tjdqV3LkNRzHb6eiRgwOcw>
- <sup>4</sup> [https://twitter.com/nournews\\_ir/status/1593628571121160194?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD9OKY47qlnCMx6TW](https://twitter.com/nournews_ir/status/1593628571121160194?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD9OKY47qlnCMx6TW)
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.jamaraan dot news/-مړ-ز مان كه هم پوړوالن -ار ادمكېن دم يتواي مطن -ځال هر اخچمكن دد-1574443/59>
- <sup>6</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/27/2806151/>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/21/weekinreview/21worth.html?ref=world&pagewanted=print>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.mashregghnews dot ir/news/1436858/>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16>
- <sup>10</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf\\_uploadanalysisThe\\_IRGC\\_Command\\_Network-1.pdf](https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf_uploadanalysisThe_IRGC_Command_Network-1.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> [https://twitter.com/JasonMBrodsky/status/1593058786188857344?s=20&t=N7OVvLiQy1D918a97quA ;  
https://twitter.com/JasonMBrodsky/status/1593190992441937921?s=20&t=N7OVvLiQy1D918a97quA](https://twitter.com/JasonMBrodsky/status/1593058786188857344?s=20&t=N7OVvLiQy1D918a97quA ; https://twitter.com/JasonMBrodsky/status/1593190992441937921?s=20&t=N7OVvLiQy1D918a97quA)
- <sup>12</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/iran-middle-east-iraq-tehran-baghdad-c0b63cf0ad45f5e087eb67e1110437b6>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-8>
- <sup>14</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-6 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-5 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-4  
<https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-3> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-2> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-1> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-30> ;  
<https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-29> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-28>](https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-6 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-5 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-4 https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-3 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-2 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-1 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-30 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-29 ; https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-september-28)
- <sup>15</sup> [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq\\_2005.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq_2005.pdf?lang=en)
- <sup>16</sup> <https://www dot kurdistan24 dot net/ar/story/32787-%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%AD%D9%83%D9%88%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D8%B7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A5%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%81-%D9%87%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%; https://shafaq dot com/ar/%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%80%D9%80%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%88-%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%8A%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%81-%D9%87%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%AE%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AE%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1>
- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-63615076>
- <sup>18</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/18/analysis-is-turkey-set-for-a-new-military-operation-in-syria>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://iq.usembassy.gov/security-alert-u-s-consulate-general-erbil-iraq-november-18-2022/>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-17>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://www dot aa dot com dot tr/en/turkiye/istanbul-terror-attack-carried-out-by-terrorists-from-syrrias-manbij-region-turkish-official/2742200;>
- <sup>22</sup> [https://www dot al-monitor dot com/originals/2022/06/kurdish-syrian-iranian-forces-coordinate-ahead-turkish-operation;  
https://npasyria dot com/en/78819/](https://www dot al-monitor dot com/originals/2022/06/kurdish-syrian-iranian-forces-coordinate-ahead-turkish-operation; https://npasyria dot com/en/78819/)
- <sup>23</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593688386656763905?s=20&t=ttTUMBLHevt YuWMyhaaQ>

---

<sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593674907501531136?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw>

<sup>25</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593689749088247810?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw>

<sup>26</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593490048170721281?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593497979670904834?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593500363843321856?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>27</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593600314065682435?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>28</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593656501951930369?s=20&t=ueoD2czv3hDeN6OkBuwVYg>

<sup>29</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593549436466110464?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593534965836382208?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>30</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593646125659176962?s=20&t=9j6Eww\\_9TzwgroBmuFB9cQ](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593646125659176962?s=20&t=9j6Eww_9TzwgroBmuFB9cQ)

<sup>31</sup> <https://twitter.com/Fseifikaran/status/1593691222027141120?s=20&t=MN5FrtrGRRhARREr2dhSVA>

<sup>32</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593637720282189824?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>33</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593655315584753664?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw> ;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593655413387542531?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw> ;  
[https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593644236477722624?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593644236477722624?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw)  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593638313973497857?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-17> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593537033812824069?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593538633885274112?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>35</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593658834882396160?s=20&t=CU\\_tryHvCzbaxW768bmTEg](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593658834882396160?s=20&t=CU_tryHvCzbaxW768bmTEg)

<sup>36</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593678489395281926?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw>

<sup>37</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593645625421303810?s=20&t=FPaeMXkYwLab6cKcO59ubA> ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593684712337379329?s=20&t=CmBL6fB\\_ONI4uTxH4ZCH0g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593684712337379329?s=20&t=CmBL6fB_ONI4uTxH4ZCH0g)

<sup>38</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593589442937331715?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>39</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593660218935857152?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>40</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593683215100919808?s=20&t=REw5qWRnR\\_yn6cTYC-OIJw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593683215100919808?s=20&t=REw5qWRnR_yn6cTYC-OIJw)

<sup>41</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593580108228579330?s=20&t=00Dk1lvkExY9EvIYb\\_xT6Q](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593580108228579330?s=20&t=00Dk1lvkExY9EvIYb_xT6Q)

<sup>42</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593542620613152768?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593556545496834050?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>43</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593578022828908546?s=20&t=RR2824W4kq3ukww\\_2DbYQQ](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593578022828908546?s=20&t=RR2824W4kq3ukww_2DbYQQ) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593578503647141889?s=20&t=BVqNZkUDoOcMZHu7p3lf9w>

<sup>44</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593601421831819266?s=20&t=Lg05DnX-rnxDQbmituAovg>

<sup>45</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593546286627692544?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593603561031712769?s=20&t=q-55QtFWOerAyTgj6Hhdfw>

<sup>46</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593553727411159041?s=20&t=bilYJukyIH5SLTLyNp3neQ>

<sup>47</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593675274008289281?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>48</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593653800019034114?s=20&t=4LCOdjd-8Fo7B4-IWeX5rg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593542196942311424?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;

---

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593542335073239040?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/AkkasNabashi/status/1593668721440088065>

<sup>49</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593675500672745473?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593639007790964747?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593676489723084800?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>50</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593666746170351620?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593666746170351620?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593716919521116160?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>51</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593551428777385984?s=20&t=fXsHBs49zO05FLzibNA0w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593533038406864902?s=20&t=u805D53Giin6G2tjuKztqw> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593531441379524608?s=20&t=mtiH82VG0U1vcJhcbEzeQw> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593539181204148224?s=20&t=bUcO7pH-vENYNBjT9Xv4-A> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593544112082395139?s=20&t=bxgQNWnG7fcv0stltBpOQ>

<sup>52</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593539916734013441?s=20&t=uq58PiyjAhRRAPCm6gxfNg>

<sup>53</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593673412106485762?s=20&t=hV8D8u9YUzV\\_fi1SvWSpew](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593673412106485762?s=20&t=hV8D8u9YUzV_fi1SvWSpew)

<sup>54</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593636667373637633?s=20&t=75CoTK8svgvPa8j6CakQuQ>

<sup>55</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1593582387732135936?s=20&t=rlyp-46lVlDr17ea5DFpsw>

<sup>56</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1593458602622197761?s=20&t=ZpoXhuD90KY47qLnCMx6Tw>

<sup>57</sup> [https://www\(dot\)tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/27/2806099/](https://www(dot)tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/27/2806099/)

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/202211184742>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/202211184742>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/27/2806235/%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A6%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B3%D9%BE%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B4%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%B1>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/27/2806176/%D9%BE%DB%8C%DA%A9%D8%B1-2-%D8%B4%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%AA%D8%B4%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%B9-%D8%B4%D8%AF>



### Iran Crisis Update, November 19

Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Zachary Coles, Dana Alexander Gray, and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 19, 6:30 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

**Unverified reporting and social media footage suggests that the regime deployed the IRGC Ground Forces to violently suppress protests in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province on November 19.** An Iranian Kurdish human rights organization reported that Iranian officials had deployed a significant number of armed troops from the IRGC Ground Forces Hamzeh Third Special Forces Division in Ourmia, West Azerbaijan Province amidst reports of widespread unrest.<sup>1</sup> Footage circulating on social media shows numerous armored vehicles within and in the vicinity of Mahabad on November 19.<sup>2</sup> Other footage has audible sounds of artillery being fired.<sup>3</sup> Iranian social media users are reporting heavy gunfire, the indiscriminate use of violence--including shooting into residents' homes--and electricity cuts throughout the city.<sup>4</sup>

**This is seemingly the first time that the regime has deployed the IRGC Ground Forces as combat units to suppress unrest since protests commenced on September 16, marking a significant escalation in the regime's protest response.** IRGC Ground Forces personnel have been reportedly killed in previous incidents suggesting that elements of the IRGC Ground Forces have been involved in protest suppression, but this is likely the first time an IRGC Ground Forces unit has deployed with combat kit.<sup>5</sup> This deployment signals the extent to which the regime views ongoing protests as a threat.

**The commitment of IRGC combat units to unrest suppression could be related in part to uncorroborated reports about the formation of a new anti-regime Kurdish militia in Mahabad.** The militia referred to itself as the "Guerrillas of Ishtar" and claimed responsibility for killing three regime security personnel.<sup>6</sup> CTP cannot independently verify the veracity of this claim. The regime may have decided to escalate its violent suppression partly for fear that more organized violent resistance could emerge.

An IRGC Ground Forces deployment may also signal bandwidth constraints within Iranian security services; the IRGC Ground Forces historically participate in protest crackdowns when the Iranian Law

Enforcement Command has failed to contain upheaval.<sup>7</sup> The IRGC Ground Forces' reported deployment may additionally make the possibility of an Iranian incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan less likely, as the regime may struggle to balance the commitment of IRGC Ground Forces combat units to internal unrest suppression at the same time as it attempts a ground incursion, depending on the scale of both possible operations. IRGC Quds Force Commander Esmail Ghaani reportedly warned that the IRGC will conduct ground operations against anti-regime militant positions in Iraqi Kurdistan unless the Iraqi army fortifies the Iran-Iraq Kurdistan border and disarms all anti-regime Kurdish militias operating within Iraqi Kurdistan on November 18.<sup>8</sup>

**The regime's violent escalation in Mahabad may backfire and instead intensify anti-regime demonstrations.** Iranian social media users quickly called for nation-wide demonstrations on November 20 to condemn the regime's protest suppression tactics in Mahabad on November 19.<sup>9</sup>

**The number and scale of ongoing, anti-regime protests have already intensified in recent days.** Protest organizations have successfully extended protest activity beyond the Bloody Aban demonstrations planned for November 15, 16, and 17 and sustained momentum on November 18 and November 19.<sup>10</sup> Protest activity may continue at its current level for the next two days as protest organization groups are calling for further unrest until November 21, the final day of the Iranian calendar month of Aban.<sup>11</sup> This level of sustained protest activity marks an inflection in the pattern established by protesters in recent weeks, wherein high protest activity was followed by decreased demonstrations in the days thereafter. The scale of protests has also maintained its momentum in recent days. Footage shows that larger crowds have participated in anti-regime demonstrations on November 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 compared to prior days. The number and scale of protests in the past several days is similar to those at the beginning of the Mahsa Amini protest movement in mid-September 2022.

**Protests have also become increasingly violent--for protesters and security personnel alike—in recent days.** An Iran-focused human rights organization increased its estimate of killed protesters from 342 on November 16 to 378 on November 19, indicating that roughly nine percent of all Iranians killed while participating in the Mahsa Amini protest movement died within that three-day period.<sup>12</sup> Footage documenting funerals for killed protesters have also increased in number in recent days, further corroborating reports of increased violence. Estimates suggest that recent deaths have still not surpassed the death toll recorded in mid-to-late September, however. Iranian security personnel have sustained relatively significant casualties since November 15 as well, a change from protest activity in prior weeks. At least six security personnel died on November 17, two on November 16, and possibly three on November 15.<sup>13</sup>

**Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei continued to blame anti-regime demonstrations on Western actors in a speech in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province on November 19.** Khamenei framed popular protests as an extension of America's so-called soft power war waged against the Islamic Republic targeting Iranian youth. Khamenei noted that Iranian officials were also susceptible to and propagating Western soft power tactics, possibly corroborating reports of

fissures within senior members of the regime as CTP reported on November 18.<sup>14</sup> The Supreme Leader drew a rhetorical distinction between peaceful protesters and “rioters.”<sup>15</sup>

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Unverified reporting suggests that the regime deployed the IRGC Ground Forces to violently suppress protests in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province on November 19, marking a violent escalation in the regime’s response to protests.**
- **The number and scale of ongoing, anti-regime protests have intensified and become increasingly violent in recent days.**
- **Protests occurred in at least 20 cities in 10 provinces. 14 protests with 100 or more estimated participants took place in nine cities across six provinces on November 19.**
- **Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei continued to blame anti-regime demonstrations on Western actors on November 19.**
- **Israeli combat aircraft conducted airstrikes against multiple Syria Arab Army and IRGC or Iranian proxy militia positions in western Syria on November 19.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**Protests occurred in at least 20 cities in 10 provinces. At least 14 protests with 100 or more estimated participants took place in nine cities across six provinces on November 19. CTP is using asterisks to denote protests that included mourners commemorating killed protesters.**

**Note: CTP is only providing protest characterizations for demonstrations with over 100 estimated participants to prioritize reporting on developments in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province. The associated map contains all the demonstrations recorded by CTP.**

#### **Ardabil, Ardabil Province (population: approximately 588,000)**

- *Over a hundred protestors chanted “shameless” on a city street. LEC special units attempted to disperse many of the protestors from a city square with tear gas.*<sup>16</sup>

#### **Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 1,559,000)**

- *Hundreds of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences students marched on campus.*<sup>17</sup>

#### **\*Shiraz, Fars Province (population: approximately 1,566,000)**

- *Hundreds of mourners attending Sajjad Ghaemi's funeral ran from security personnel in the vicinity of a Shiraz highway. Footage from social media features audible gunshots and shows security personnel seemingly firing tear gas at protesters.*<sup>18</sup>

#### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 461,000)**

- *Hundreds of student protesters chanted anti-regime slogans on campus. Security personnel purportedly shot at Kurdistan University student protesters.*<sup>19</sup>

#### **\*Tehran City, Tehran Province (population: approximately 8,700,000)**

- Roughly 100 K.N. University of Technology students chanted anti-regime slogans on campus. Security personnel reportedly threw tear gas at protesters.<sup>20</sup>
- Hundreds of mourners gathered to commemorate Hamid Reza Rouhi, whom security personnel killed for participating in anti-regime protests.<sup>21</sup>
- Hundreds of Shahid Beheshti University students chanted anti-regime slogans on campus.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Qods, Tehran Province (population: approximately 316,636)**

- Over 100 student protesters gathered on campus. Footage shows security personnel violently arresting student protesters.<sup>23</sup>

#### **Khoy, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 198,845)**

- Roughly 100--possibly more--protesters marched on a city street.<sup>24</sup>

#### **\*Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 168,393)**

- Hundreds of mourners gathered to commemorate Kamal Ahmadpour, whom security personnel killed in on November 18 for participating in anti-regime protests. Mourners chanted "Martyr's don't die."<sup>25</sup>
- Hundreds of protesters gathered on a Mahabad city street and sat in support of anti-regime protests. Footage shows a fire lit on the same street. Iranian social media accounts reported that regime security forces cut electricity to the city and began shooting into large crowds of protesters during evening protests.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 91,515)**

- Roughly 70-100 protesters--possibly more-- chanted anti-regime slogans and lit a fire on a Piranshahr city street.<sup>27</sup>



**The Islamic Azad University's daily newspaper *Farhikhegan* published an editorial which claimed street protests had become urban war.** The editorial urged security forces to take decisive action and to use combat units against protestors.<sup>28</sup>

**Expediency Council Member Gholam Ali Hadadadel warned that the Islamic Revolution was in a “sensitive position” despite boasting of advances under the Islamic Republic.**<sup>29</sup> Hadadadel's statement contradicts Supreme Leader Khamenei's November 19 comments that protests had not damaged and could not damage the regime.<sup>30</sup> Hadadadel is the father-in-law of the Supreme Leader's son Mojtaba Khamenei, who wields considerable influence within the regime.<sup>31</sup>

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**Israeli combat aircraft conducted airstrikes against multiple Syria Arab Army (SAA) and IRGC or Iranian proxy militia positions in western Syria on November 19.** The airstrikes targeted likely IRGC command and control centers and precision-guided munition (PGM) production and storage facilities located in Homs and Hama Provinces.<sup>32</sup> Israeli combat aircraft also targeted and destroyed an SAA air defense system in Jableh, Latakia Province that the Syrian Ministry of Defense claimed was attempting to shoot down the Israeli aircraft.<sup>33</sup> The operation reportedly wounded one and killed four SAA soldiers.<sup>34</sup> The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights claimed some of the airstrikes targeted military sites near Masyaf, Hama Province.<sup>35</sup> The IRGC operates a well-known PGM storage and production facility in Masyaf, which Israeli combat aircraft have targeted repeatedly and as recently as August 25.<sup>36</sup>

**The Masyaf facility's short distance from a critical Russian military logistics node makes it a plausible channel for Iranian arms transfers to Russia.** Masyaf is approximately 50 kilometers from Hmeimem airbase, one of the Russian military's most important logistics hubs for the Syrian theater.<sup>37</sup> Russian National Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev met with Iranian President Raisi and Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani likely to discuss the sale of Iranian ballistic missiles and other PGMs – such as the Iranian Shahed-136 loitering munition that Russia has used on the battlefield in Ukraine – on November 9, as ISW previously reported.<sup>38</sup> The Washington Post claimed on November 19 that Iran and Russia had finalized an agreement on the transaction.<sup>39</sup> Iran could be using the Masyaf facility to expedite PGM production and shipments to Russia via Hmeimem airbase. Israel may have targeted the PGM production facilities in part to obstruct Iranian efforts to deliver the weapons to Russia.

**Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hossein and US officials discussed the continued presence of US forces in Iraq to support the fight against ISIS.** Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hossein met with a US delegation headed by US Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl on November 19 in Manama, Bahrain on the sidelines of the annual IISS Manama Conference.<sup>40</sup> Kahl's office published a press release after the meeting reaffirming that the US is committed to its strategic partnership with Iraq and to maintaining US forces in Iraq to support the fight against ISIS.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594074721444069376?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA>

- 
- <sup>2</sup> <https://twitter.com/mamadporii/status/1594076402763984898/video/1> ;
- <sup>3</sup> <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594074721444069376?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594074721444069376?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/eyadbon/status/1594078776689917955?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA>
- <sup>4</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594093135994437632?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/truskesadeghi/status/1594092266209132546?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-23>
- <sup>6</sup> [https://twitter.com/Jake\\_Hanrahan/status/1593676798595923969?s=20&t=jlBau7nerHZMNNibXi27ig](https://twitter.com/Jake_Hanrahan/status/1593676798595923969?s=20&t=jlBau7nerHZMNNibXi27ig); nuceciwan117 dot xyz
- <sup>7</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Whatever-it-takes-to-end-it.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/iran-middle-east-iraq-tehran-baghdad-c0b63cf0ad45f5e087eb67e1110437b6>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://twitter.com/Shahinloo/status/1594089716277825536?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Sadafbanoo/status/1594112846815952896?s=20&t=naMNHecc8pCx8l-SXoROhA>
- <sup>10</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1593284968595263489?s=20&t=DD8uLl9gOg4Z9Zed93qQ6g](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1593284968595263489?s=20&t=DD8uLl9gOg4Z9Zed93qQ6g)
- <sup>11</sup> [https://twitter.com/iran\\_javanan/status/1593000512961777666](https://twitter.com/iran_javanan/status/1593000512961777666)
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.iranhr.net/en/articles/5589/> ; <https://www.iranhr.net/en/articles/5594/>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-15> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16> ; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-17>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-18>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26144/>
- <sup>16</sup> [https://twitter.com/aznews\\_tv/status/1593988769685848067](https://twitter.com/aznews_tv/status/1593988769685848067);  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594008496713961474?s=20&t=W5294bc9aWHgSQKVYL1RIA>
- <sup>17</sup> [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1593983314565529600?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1593983314565529600?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA)
- <sup>18</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1594058021818486785?s=20&t=E6vhe7KENyLCbseyslRf-g](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1594058021818486785?s=20&t=E6vhe7KENyLCbseyslRf-g);  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594025202689921025?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA>;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594023166355161088?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA>;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594017245734150146?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA>;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594022249132167170?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA>
- <sup>19</sup> [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1593967980685262849?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1593967980685262849?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA);  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594016709391790080?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA>
- <sup>20</sup> [https://twitter.com/KhosroKalbasi/status/1593953478975651840?s=20&t=uttAwlinDJjrJ09b6\\_iCBg](https://twitter.com/KhosroKalbasi/status/1593953478975651840?s=20&t=uttAwlinDJjrJ09b6_iCBg);  
[https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1593997381284118529?s=20&t=NYhWtkukBjFQ1AtiYRayWg](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1593997381284118529?s=20&t=NYhWtkukBjFQ1AtiYRayWg)
- <sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/Vahid/status/1593974464609488896?s=20&t=cCGRccZ0\\_tYles9crn5pzw](https://twitter.com/Vahid/status/1593974464609488896?s=20&t=cCGRccZ0_tYles9crn5pzw);  
[https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1593992923569393664?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1593992923569393664?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA)
- <sup>22</sup> [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1593971049489743872?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1593971049489743872?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA)
- <sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/avan67659226/status/1593898636223586308?s=20&t=cCGRccZ0\\_tYles9crn5pzw](https://twitter.com/avan67659226/status/1593898636223586308?s=20&t=cCGRccZ0_tYles9crn5pzw);  
[https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1594014169619202053?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1594014169619202053?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA)
- <sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594034409497239556?s=20&t=ZzTCnbEvHclW0cb3v4F0cQ>;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594034054818562053?s=20&t=ZzTCnbEvHclW0cb3v4F0cQ>
- <sup>25</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593904614528921600?s=20&t=dbl7fBcYtIsC58wk9bUvha](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593904614528921600?s=20&t=dbl7fBcYtIsC58wk9bUvha);  
<https://twitter.com/shlerbapiri/status/1593895307984703488?s=20&t=BTyIA-zANX9hlwcY6SB0lw>;  
<https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1593881403200098304?s=20&t=9U7SN0dlgBlgbzfKfRlbgw>;  
[https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593908086745481220?s=20&t=DedLZZqHfcyG9qNrW8cDmw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593908086745481220?s=20&t=DedLZZqHfcyG9qNrW8cDmw)
- <sup>26</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1594038107577483267?s=20&t=EDrOVWpOcTjAeHD20e7Uzw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1594038107577483267?s=20&t=EDrOVWpOcTjAeHD20e7Uzw);  
[https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1594028242930999300?s=20&t=EDrOVWpOcTjAeHD20e7Uzw](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1594028242930999300?s=20&t=EDrOVWpOcTjAeHD20e7Uzw);  
<https://twitter.com/IHRights/status/1593915612400607233?s=20&t=hD1L3TXUdhNEYM2IJKoiwA>
- <sup>27</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1593980721659629568?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1593980721659629568?s=20&t=2-Vtc1Sy0KzmJcv1ZOyMtA)
- <sup>28</sup>
- <sup>29</sup> <https://www.irna dot ir/news/84947257/> خواسصلد-مقول بنطقى و-مخصر-حرفلبنزن دحق بنشون بن خوام کرد
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26144/>
- <sup>31</sup> <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm824>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www dot jpost.com/breaking-news/article-722802>; <https://www.syriahr.com/en/276664/>;
- <sup>33</sup> [mod dot gov dot sy/index.php?node=5642&nid=35040&First=0&Last=10900&CurrentPage=0&FD=&TD=&&ctr=655](http://mod dot gov dot sy/index.php?node=5642&nid=35040&First=0&Last=10900&CurrentPage=0&FD=&TD=&&ctr=655);

---

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.haaretz dot com/middle-east-news/2022-11-19/ty-article/.premium/four-reported-dead-in-alleged-israeli-airstrike-in-syria/00000184-8e54-d53f-a5fe-aed6dfea0000>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.syriahr.com/en/276664/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://israel-alma dot org/2022/10/24/if-you-defend-a-target-you-become-a-target/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/06/russia-expands-syrian-air-base-boost-regional-presence>;  
<https://www.mei.edu/publications/how-russia-made-hemeimeem-air-base-its-african-hub>; <https://www.voanews.com/a/middle-east-russia-expands-military-facilities-syria/6205742.html>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-9>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/11/19/russia-iran-drones-secret-deal/>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www dot kurdistan24 dot net/ar/story/32833-%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B4%D9%86%D8%B7%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B2%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%A8%D8%AF%D9%8A-%22%D9%85%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%81%22-%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%A3%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%87>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3224037/readout-of-under-secretary-of-defense-for-policy-dr-colin-kahls-meeting-with-ir/>

## IRAN CRISIS UPDATE, NOVEMBER 20

Nov 20, 2022 - [Press ISW](#)



Iran Crisis Update, November 20

Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Zachary Coles, and Frederick W. Kagan

November 20, 5:30 PM ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

**Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei likely issued an unpublished directive to violently suppress anti-regime protests within the past few days.** The Supreme Leader discussed protests in a speech in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province on November 19.[1] Khamenei's speech did not contain significant rhetorical inflections or escalations in the way he discussed quelling unrest compared to prior speeches made in the past several weeks. Several senior regime officials called for a decisive crackdown on demonstrations on November 20, however, as regime violence against protesters in northwestern Iran escalated, suggesting that Khamenei likely greenlit the increased use of force against protesters. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi stressed that responsible entities should take urgent and decisive action against "rioters" and blamed Western actors for unrest, mirroring Khamenei's November 19 rhetoric, on November 20.[2] IRGC Ground Forces Saheb ol Zaman Provincial Unit Commander in Esfahan Province Mojtaba Fada similarly promised a firm response to unrest "at the slightest hint from the [supreme] leader," likely referencing Khamenei's November 19 speech.[3] The unit published a statement announcing the arrest of a "terrorist team" that had killed security personnel in Esfahan Province and possessed firearms and hand-made bombs on the same day.[4] Artesh Executive Deputy Mohammad Mahmoudi additionally stated that the Artesh was at the peak of its operational readiness and was prepared to carry out all its assigned missions on November 20.[5] IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Ali Haji Zadeh also discussed the importance of following the Supreme Leader's directives in a meeting on November 20.[6]

**The inflection in regime rhetoric coincides with significant escalations against protesters, particularly throughout northwestern provinces, within the past 24 hours.** Reports shared on social media suggested that security personnel shot indiscriminately at protesters in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province on November 19.[7] Iranian authorities deployed elements of the IRGC Ground Forces from the Hamzeh Seyyed ol Shahada Northwestern Operational Base in Ourmia, West Azerbaijan Province to suppress protests in Mahabad on November 19, as CTP has previously reported.[8] Anti-regime outlet *Iran International* reported that local authorities told Mahabad residents that the local governor would deliver a speech but instead opened fire at the assembled crowd on November 20.[9] Footage shows regime personnel in technicals apparently shooting heavy machine guns, and heavy machine gun fire is audible in several videos.[10] Social media users have documented the increased use of force against protesters in other areas as well. Security personnel were documented shooting at protesters in several cities including Piranshahr and Takab in West Azerbaijan Province, Javanroud in Kermansah Province, and Marivan in Kurdistan Province on November 20.[11] Social media users additionally recorded footage of helicopters circling Mahabad and Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province.[12] Protesters continued to engage in anti-regime demonstrations despite this increased regime violence on November 20.[13]

**The increase in regime violence against protesters and the deployment of combat units of the IRGC Ground Forces could be related to rumors that Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani has been fired or has resigned.**[14] The rumors remain unconfirmed and, although Shamkhani has not appeared or made any statements since they surfaced his silence is not particularly unusual. Pressure on or removal of Shamkhani could reflect a change in the balance of power within the regime inner circle, however, of the sort that could have led to a change in the supreme leader's guidance about responding to the protests. It is equally possible, however, that

regime officials presented the supreme leader with reports on the situation and its trajectory that persuaded him to order the escalation in anti-protester violence without any changes in personnel.

**The IRGC Ground Forces Hamzeh Seyyed ol Shahada Northwestern operational base announced that it is reinforcing its forces on November 20, suggesting that crackdowns will likely endure and may extend to other cities throughout the region.** Social media footage additionally shows what appears to be at least 26 IRGC Ground Forces and Iranian Law Enforcement Command vehicles in Mahabad on November 20.[15] The Hamzeh Seyyed ol Shahada base statement warned of decisive action against purported US-affiliated “anti-Iranian” terrorist groups throughout the area, possibly setting conditions to deploy troops to other cities within Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan Provinces in the coming days.[16]

#### **Key Takeaways**

- **Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has likely issued an unpublished directive to violently suppress anti-regime protests within the past few days.**
- **The IRGC Ground Forces Hamzeh Seyyed ol Shahada Northwestern operational base announced that it is reinforcing its forces on November 20, suggesting that crackdowns will likely endure and may extend to other cities throughout the region.**
- **The IRGC attacked a series of anti-regime Kurdish militia positions in Iraqi Kurdistan.**
- **Protests occurred in at least 18 cities in eight provinces. At least six protests with 100 or more estimated participants took place in six cities across four provinces on November 20.**
- **Tehran Judiciary officials sentenced a sixth arrested protester to death on November 20.**

#### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**Protests occurred in at least 18 cities in eight provinces.** At least six protests with 100 or more estimated participants took place in six cities across four provinces on November 20. CTP is using asterisks to denote protests that included mourners commemorating killed protesters.

**Note: CTP is only providing protest characterizations for demonstrations with over 100 estimated participants to prioritize reporting on developments throughout northwestern Iran. The associated map contains all the demonstrations recorded by CTP.**

#### **Dashti, Hormozgan Province (population: approximately 4,695)**

- *Over 100 protesters chanted “from Dashti to Kurdistan, I will sacrifice my life for Iran” during evening protests at undetermined location in Dashti.*[17]

#### **Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province (population: approximately 946,651)**

- *At least 100 protesters marched down a Kermanshah street and chanted “death to the dictator.” Iranian social media accounts circulated footage of unidentified armed men shooting at unidentified targets, possibly at each other.*[18]

#### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 461,000)**

- *More than 100 Kurdistan University students protested on campus and chanted anti-regime slogans.*[19]

#### **Khoy, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 198,845)**

- *Roughly 100--possibly more--protesters marched on a city street.*[20]

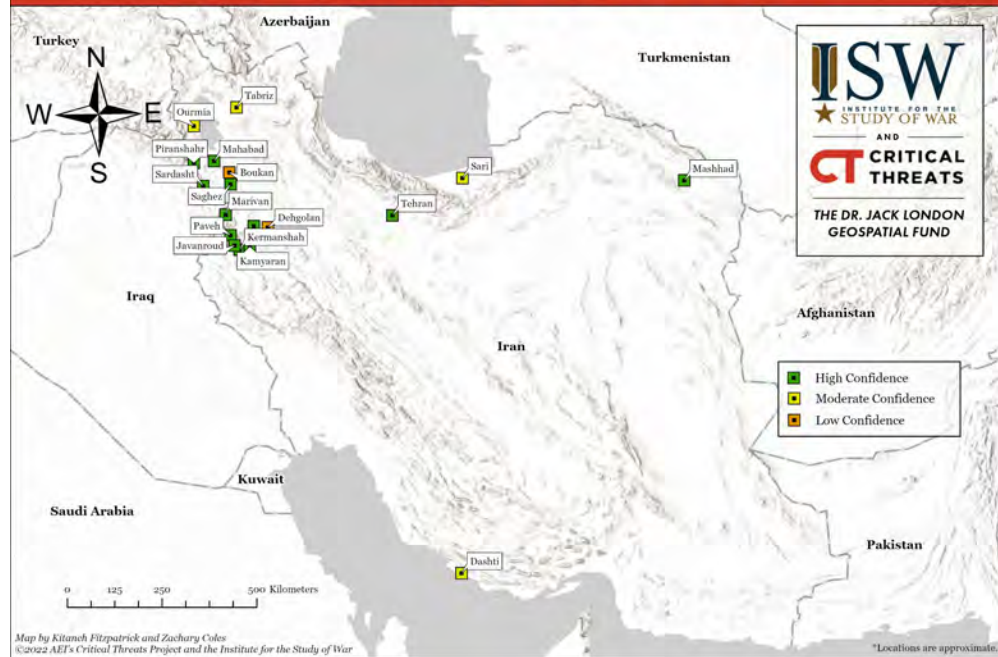
#### **\*Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 168,393)**

- *Possibly more than 100 protesters set fires and erected barriers with debris on Mahabad streets and chanted anti-regime slogans. Regime security forces reportedly opened fire on protesters. Footage from social media depicts several armored trucks/anti-riot vehicles and dozens of regime security personnel moving through a Mahabad street and also depicts regime security force personnel firing at an off-camera target with a machine gun mounted on a technical pickup truck.*[21]

#### **\*Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 91,515)**

- *Approximately 100 protesters chanted anti-regime slogans and marched down a Piranshahr street. Security personnel reportedly killed prominent local Shia cleric Tahir Azizi. Footage from social media depicts protesters fleeing down a Piranshahr street as security forces fire tear gas and live ammunition at them.*[22]

## Protest Activity in Iran as of November 20, 5:00 PM ET



Tehran Judiciary officials sentenced an arrested protester to death on November 20 for their alleged role in injuring a Basij member in an anti-regime demonstration in Western Tehran. This marks the sixth protester whom Iranian authorities have sentenced to death for participating in the Mahsa Amini protest wave.[23]

Prominent Sunni Cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid condemned reports of regime violence against protesters in Mahabad, Western Azerbaijan Province. Abdol Hamid stated that security personnel should refrain from shooting at protesters.[24] Abdol Hamid has become increasingly critical of the regime's protest suppression response in recent weeks and has incited protests in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan on several occasions.[25] Abdol Hamid may increasingly seek to expand his influence by connecting with marginalized ethnic minorities beyond those residing in Sistan and Baluchistan in the coming weeks.

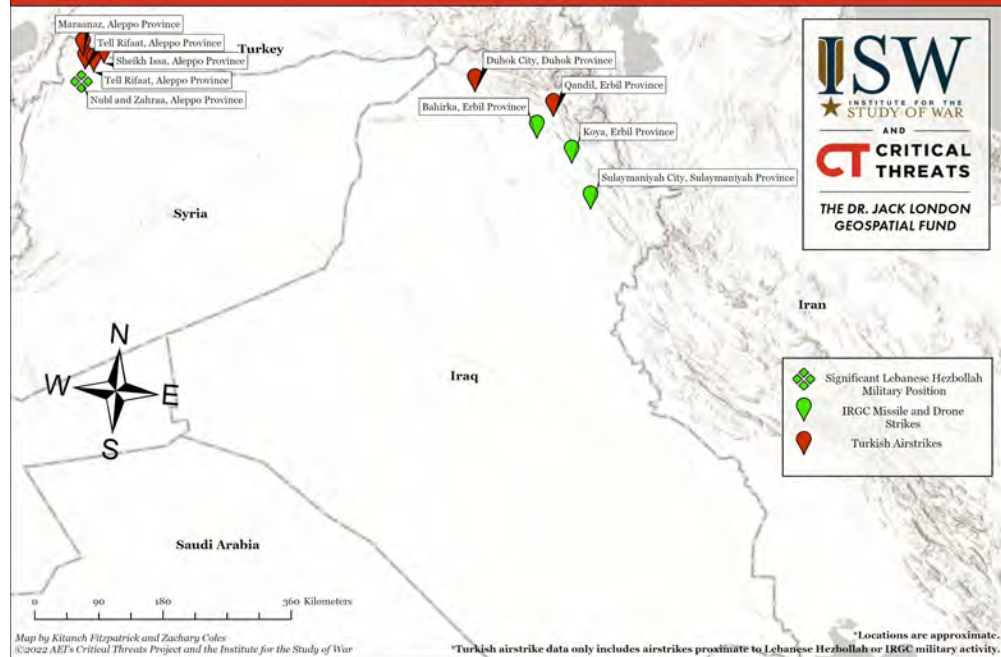
The *New York Times* reported that Iranian security personnel have inflicted severe eye injuries on hundreds of Iranians by firing rubber bullets and metal pellets at protesters at close range. The report detailed that security personnel are entering Iranian hospitals to identify and arrest protesters, often interfering with their treatment. Iranian ophthalmologists from three large hospitals in Tehran estimated that their wards had admitted more than 500 patients with severe eye injuries since the Mahsa Amini protests began on September 16.[26]

### Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments

The IRGC attacked a series of anti-regime Kurdish militia positions in Iraqi Kurdistan. The IRGC launched multiple missiles and loitering munitions at anti-regime Kurdish militia positions in at least three locations across Iraqi Kurdistan.[27] Footage from social media depicts a large explosion after an Iranian drone reportedly launched three missiles at a reported KDPI camp in Koya, Erbil Province.[28] Two likely loitering munitions hit alleged KDPI positions approximately 10 kilometers north of Erbil city.[29] Another loitering munition attacked an alleged Komala headquarters near Sulaymaniyah City, Sulaymaniyah Province.[30] The IRGC renewed air operations against anti-regime Kurdish militia positions on November 14 after approximately a six-week pause, as CTP previously reported.[31]

Iran and Turkey may be coordinating military operations in northern Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan to amplify the effect of the airstrikes and missile attacks, possibly to prepare for an incursion by IRGC Ground Forces and/or Turkish ground forces. The IRGC's re-intensification of its campaign against anti-regime Kurdish militias in Iraqi Kurdistan occurs as Turkey simultaneously conducts an expansive airstrike campaign against Kurdish militias in northern Syria and Iraq.[32] CTP has not observed evidence of any IRGC ground operations into Iraqi Kurdistan, but an IRGC Ground Forces contingent has mobilized to suppress protests across the Iranian border in Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province.[33] The IRGC Ground Forces in Mahabad may move across the border into Iraqi Kurdistan after containing unrest in Mahabad. Iran might also use Artesh elements to push across the Iraqi border while IRGC personnel remain focused on internal security.

# IRGC and TSK Attacks on Kurdish Militias November 19-20



Saudi media outlet *Al Hadath* aired a report on IRGC and Lebanese Hezbollah (LH) personnel transporting several hundred missiles from Syria into Lebanon. *Al Hadath* reported that LH and IRGC Unit 2250 personnel recently transferred an unspecified number of Fateh-110 and Fajr-3 missiles from a storage facility in Masyaf, Hama Province to Al Qusayr, Homs Province, Syria.[34] *Al Hadath* also claimed that some of missile payloads contained chemical weapons and that LH personnel would soon transfer the missiles from Al Qusayr to a base in the vicinity of Bint Jbeil, Nabatieh Province, Lebanon.[35] LH has multiple military bases near Bint Jbeil along the Lebanon-Israel border in Nabatieh Province.[36] CTP cannot independently verify this reporting; *Al Hadath* is a component of the Riyadh-based MBC Group media conglomerate.

LH media reported on Iranian security personnel dying in protests for possibly the first time since the current protest wave began. LH-owned *Al Ahed News* published an article on November 20 that mourned the deaths of one LEC and two IRGC personnel during clashes on November 16 in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province.[37] This is possibly the first instance Hezbollahi media acknowledging Iranian security forces have died in clashes with protesters.

[1] <https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/26144/>

[2] <https://president.ir/fa/140843>

[3] <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/29/2807087/>

[4] <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/556939/%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%DA%AF%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%84-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AA-%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%81%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%86>

[5] <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/557063/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA%D8%B4-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%AC-%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%88-%D8%A2%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%AF%DA%AF%DB%8C-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF>

[6] <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/557015/%D8%A8%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AB%D9%87-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D9%85%DB%8C%E2%80%8C%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF>

%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B4%DA%A9-  
%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C%D9%BE%D8%B1%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C%DA%A9-  
%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%82-%D8%A8%D9%87-  
%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%AA%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%D9%82%D8%A8%D9%84-  
%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA

[7] <https://twitter.com/truskesadeghi/status/1594092266209132546?s=20&t=nvhk...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594093135994437632?s=20&t=naMNHec...>

[8] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-19>

[9] <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211206594>

[10] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594347130646196224?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594361265157464071?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...> ; <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1594291905436827648?s=20&t=fV637N...>

; <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1594399008985866240?s=20&t=fV637N...>

; <https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1594428278537949185?s=20&t=TTbhY...>

[11] <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594408085136805888?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...> ; <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594383953351565313?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...> ; <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594368873578602501?s=20&t=6k3yShdpKG...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594376929494319104?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594380982437974018?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...>

[12] <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594220478595571712?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...> ; <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594225514725707776?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...> ; <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594226071041368064?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...>

[13] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594347130646196224?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...>

[14] <https://ir.voanews.com/a/irans-shamkhani-about-to-resign-after-failing-t...>

[15] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594325527434649603?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...>

[16] <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/29/2807396/%D8%AA%D9%82%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%B3%D9%BE%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B4%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%BA%D8%B1%D8%A8-%DA%A9%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D9%87%D8%A7-%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B7%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%87-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF-%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C%D9%85>

[17] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594364632558346243?s=20&t=LqvZeVd...>

[18] <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594376267528282115?s=20&t=kUlp-UKOmU...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594390420985106432?s=20&t=WlNnQma...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594369548085501952?s=20&t=9TcGHro...>

[19] <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1594333830567325696?s=20&t=E9VYlr...>

[20] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594034409497239556?s=20&t=ZzTCnbE...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594034054818562053?s=20&t=ZzTCnbE...>

[21] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594347130646196224?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...> ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594361265157464071?s=20&t=5mgL1dV...> ; <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1594291905436827648?s=20&t=fV637N...>

; <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1594399008985866240?s=20&t=fV637N...>

; <https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1594428278537949185?s=20&t=TTbhY...>

[22] [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1594434610431238147?s=20&t=qMPwwJQ...](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1594434610431238147?s=20&t=qMPwwJQ...) ; <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594429462711619584?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...> ; [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1594420965458739200?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1594420965458739200?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA...)

[s=20&t=qMPwvJQ...; https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1594409973110525953?s=20&t=ULE4\\_Aa...](#)

[23] <https://www.mizan dot news/4521595>

[24] <https://twitter.com/AbdolhamidNet/status/1594346724176588800?s=20&t=4hZJ...>

[25] <https://www.iranintl.com/202211184742> ; <https://abdolhamid dot net/persian/2022/11/11/12958/> ; <https://twitter.com/farzinkadkhodae/status/1591086896155099137?s=20&t=y2...> ; <https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1591079697093636096?s=20&t=9xqWMgPaTenY...> ; [https://twitter.com/Omid\\_M/status/1585964374522478592?s=20&t=9xqWMgPaTen...](https://twitter.com/Omid_M/status/1585964374522478592?s=20&t=9xqWMgPaTen...) ; <https://twitter.com/DrRohamAlvandi/status/1585161951046664197?s=20&t=9xq...> ; <https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1586099548614795265?s=20&t=9xqWMgPaTenY...>

[26] <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/19/world/asia/iran-protesters-eye-injuri...>

[27] <https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/story/29996-iran-renews-attacks-on-Irania...>

[28] [https://twitter.com/Tammuz\\_Intel/status/1594446065868058624?s=20&t=fvQFR...](https://twitter.com/Tammuz_Intel/status/1594446065868058624?s=20&t=fvQFR...) ; <https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/story/29996-iran-renews-attacks-on-Irania...> ; <https://twitter.com/RudawEnglish/status/1594453494374666240?s=20&t=fvQFR...>

[29] <https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/story/29996-iran-renews-attacks-on-Irania...>

[30] [https://twitter.com/IranIntl\\_En/status/1594461142222794752?s=20&t=8MO7EA...](https://twitter.com/IranIntl_En/status/1594461142222794752?s=20&t=8MO7EA...)

[31] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-14>

[32] <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkish-air-strikes-hit-villag...>

[33] [https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594343926839869440?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA\\_...](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1594343926839869440?s=20&t=TTbhYDuXA_...)

[34] <https://twitter.com/AIHadath/status/1594361581604831232?s=20&t=m6nS5ACqS...>

[35] <https://twitter.com/AIHadath/status/1594361581604831232?s=20&t=m6nS5ACqS...>

[36] <https://israel-alma.org/2021/05/04/six-hezbollah-military-sites-in-south...>

[37] <https://www dot alahednews dot com dot lb/article.php?id=47883&cid=116>

## Tags

Iran Project

### File Attachments:



Protest Map - 20 NOV.png



Attacks on Kurdish Militias 19-20 NOV.png

Like 21



1400 16th Street NW, Suite 515 Washington, DC 20036  
ph (202) 293-5550  
©2007 – 2022 THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WAR

Donate



### **Iran Crisis Update, November 21**

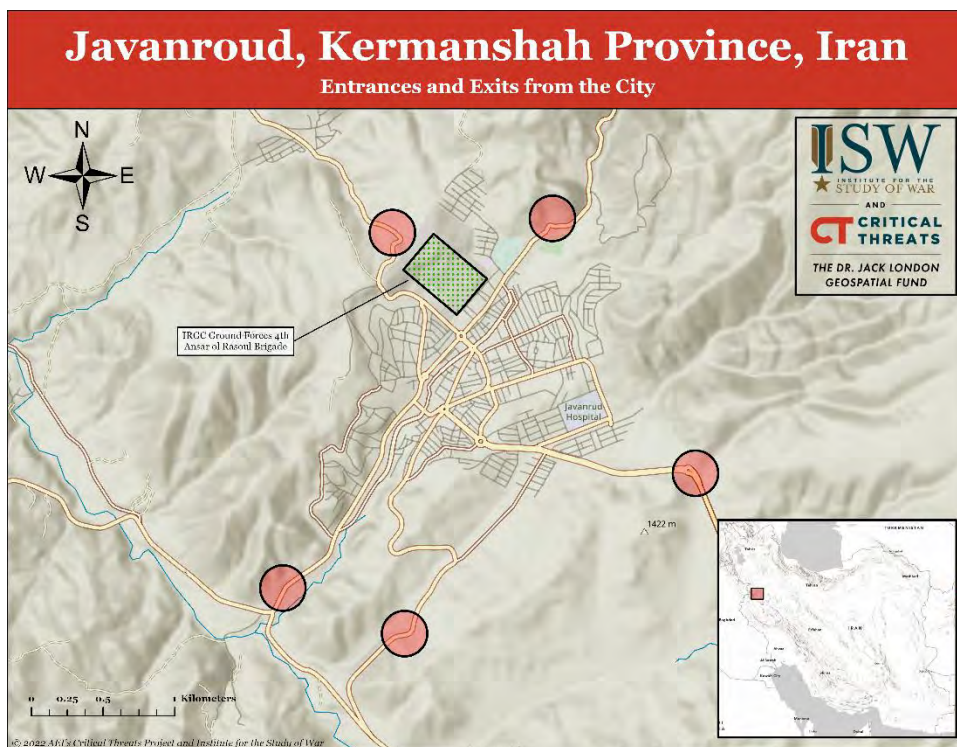
**Nicholas Carl, Zachary Coles, Johanna Moore, Dana Alexander Gray, Amin Soltani, and  
Frederick W. Kagan**

**November 21, 5:00 pm ET**

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

**Correction:** CTP has edited this text to correct two errors. A previous version of this update reported that security forces used nerve gas against protesters in Javanroud. They used hexachloroethane, according to social media reports, and CTP has adjusted the text to reflect this reporting. A previous version of this update also incorrectly reported old protests in Ghorveh and Tehran as happening on November 21. We have removed these protest entries from this day's update and map.

**The Iranian regime has adopted what increasingly resembles a counter-insurgency approach rather than a counter-protest one to manage the ongoing unrest.** Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC)-affiliated *Tasnim News Agency* reported that IRGC Ground Forces are clearing some cities in West Azerbaijan Province, including Boukan, Mahabad, Oshnaviyeh, Piranshahr, and other unnamed locations, of anti-regime elements on November 21.<sup>1</sup> These IRGC military units are likely using extreme force and indiscriminately killing civilians to quell protests. Security forces are conducting a brutal crackdown in Javanroud, Kermanshah Province as well. Security forces have isolated Javanroud, blocking major roads into the city, and shot live ammunition and the chemical compound hexachloroethane at protesters, according to social media reports.<sup>2</sup> The closure of these major roads will impede most travel into and out of Javanroud given the rugged terrain surrounding the city. The IRGC Ground Forces 4<sup>th</sup> Ansar ol Rasoul Operational Brigade is headquartered in Javanroud and could support the regime crackdown there and in nearby locations.<sup>3</sup> This increasing regime brutality accords with CTP's previous assessment that Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has likely greenlit the security forces to intensify their crackdown.<sup>4</sup>



The regime has likely lost control of parts of northwestern Iran at least temporarily. The deployment of the IRGC Ground Forces indicates the Iranian political and security leaders consider the protests an increasingly serious threat to regime survival. *Tasnim News Agency* reported that security forces managed to restore order to Piranshahr (although this claim could be exaggerated) but admitted that anti-regime elements are continuing to operate around the peripheries of the city.<sup>5</sup> The regime maintains a significant presence of Artesh and IRGC units in northwestern Iran; failure to control this region suggests that the regime may face even greater challenges in other locations throughout the country. The regime may face a particularly acute challenge in Sistan and Baluchistan Province, where anti-regime militancy and protests have increased in recent weeks.<sup>6</sup>

**The regime has expanded its internet and telecommunications disruptions, limiting the amount of open-source information available on the situations in northwestern and western Iran.** Netblocks and journalists reported major internet disruptions, especially around Kurdistan Province, on November 21.<sup>7</sup> CTP nevertheless recorded at least 16 protests in 12 cities in eight provinces on November 21, and the actual number is likely greater.

**Parliamentarian Jalal Mahmoud Zadeh called for an investigation into the regime crackdown in Mahabad on November 21—the latest dissent by a lawmaker representing a location in which the regime has conducted a brutal crackdown.**<sup>8</sup> The parliamentarians representing Saghez, Kurdistan Province and Chabahr, Sistan and Baluchistan Province have previously criticized the regime crackdown, as CTP has reported.<sup>9</sup>

**Iranian ambassador to Iraq Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadegh issued an ultimatum with a deadline in 10 days for Iraq to disarm Kurdish militant groups or face unspecified consequences on November 21.** Iranian and Turkish military forces will likely intensify their attacks against Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan and northern Syria in the coming days. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced

on November 21 that his Defense Ministry is evaluating resources needed for a ground invasion into Iraq and Syria.<sup>10</sup>

The Iraqi government lacks the political will and capability to fulfill Iran's demands, as CTP has previously assessed.<sup>11</sup> Kurdish political blocs have called for a special Parliamentary session on November 22 to address Iranian and Turkish airstrikes into Iraqi Kurdistan and have called on the international community to provide air defense systems to protect against future threats.<sup>12</sup> Pro-Iranian political blocs in Baghdad are reportedly attempting to prevent the session from taking place.<sup>13</sup>

### **Key Takeaways**

- **The Iranian regime has adopted what increasingly resembles a counter-insurgency approach rather than a counter-protest one to manage the ongoing unrest.**
- **The regime has expanded its internet and telecommunications disruptions, limiting the amount of open-source information available on the situations in northwestern and western Iran.**
- **Parliamentarian Jalal Mahmoud Zadeh called for an investigation into the regime crackdown in Mahabad on November 21—the latest dissent by a lawmaker representing a location in which the regime has conducted a brutal crackdown.**
- **Iranian ambassador to Iraq Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadegh issued an ultimatum with a deadline in 10 days for Iraq to disarm Kurdish militant groups or face unspecified consequences.**
- **At least 16 protests took place in 12 cities across eight provinces.**
- **LEC Fars Provincial Commander Brigadier General Roham Bakhsh Habibi announced the arrest of eight members of the Shiraz Neighborhood Youth.**
- **Several dozen Sunni clerics and religious leaders in Kurdistan Province issued a video statement expressing support for the protesters.**
- **Supreme Leader Military Adviser IRGC Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi warned that protests will continue unless the regime addresses the people's frustrations.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 13 protests took place in 12 cities across eight provinces on November 21.** Substantially more protests likely occurred than the 16 listed below, but regime internet and telecommunication disruptions have inhibited the flow of information out of Iranian cities. CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the locations below.

**Note: CTP has revised how it presents protest data to make it easier for readers to review. We are identifying different properties, such as size, for each recorded protest. We define small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and large protests as over one thousand. CTP will continue revising this approach to optimize how we present information in the most accurate and accessible way possible.**

#### **Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>14</sup>**

- **Crowd Size: Small**
- **Protester Militant Activity: Fires in the street**
- **Chants: Political**

#### **Javanroud, Kermanshah Province<sup>15</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Notes: Protesters gathered outside a local hospital containing protesters injured by regime forces during November 21 demonstrations.

#### **Javanroud, Kermanshah Province<sup>16</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Regime Repression: Live ammunition against protesters, casualties
- Protester Militant Activity: Unarmed clashes
- Notes: Security forces likely used hexachloroethane, a gas known to cause respiratory distress and vomiting, against protesters.

#### **Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province<sup>17</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Regime Repression: Live ammunition against protesters
- Chants: Political
- Mourners: For protest martyr Sina Naderi's 40-day commemoration ceremony

#### **Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province<sup>18</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Militant Activity: Unarmed clashes with security forces
- Notes: Individuals depicted in the footage likely are protesters. They may alternatively be counterprotesters or plainclothes security forces.

#### **Izeh, Khuzestan Province<sup>19</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Mourners: For protest martyr Ali Moulai's commemoration ceremony

#### **Abadan, Khuzestan Province<sup>20</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Militant Activity: Fires in the street
- Chants: Political

#### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province<sup>21</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Militant Activity: Fires in the street
- Chants: Political
- Demographic: University students

#### **Marivan, Kurdistan Province<sup>22</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Militant Activity: Fires in the street

### Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>23</sup>

- Crowd Size: Small
- Chants: Political

### Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province<sup>24</sup>

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Regime Repression: Live ammunition against protesters
- Protester Militant Activity: Unarmed clashes
- Chants: Political
- Notes: Crowd size may be much greater, but no footage is available to verify this assessment.

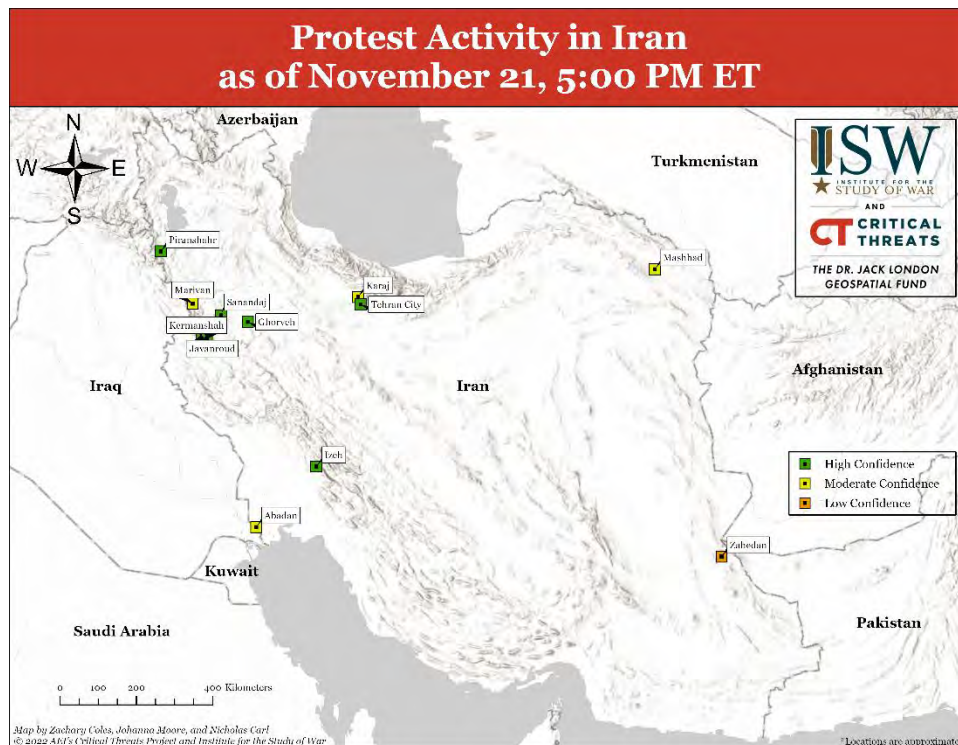
### Piranshahr, West Azerbaijan Province<sup>25</sup>

- Crowd Size: Small
- Regime Repression: Live ammunition against protesters, tear gas, casualties
- Chants: Political
- Notes: Crowd size may be much greater, but no footage is available to verify this assessment.

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the locations below.

### Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>26</sup>

- Notes: Footage from social media does not depict any direct evidence of protests, but fires on the street indicate possible protest activity.



President Ebrahim Raisi and his cabinet approved the nomination of Alireza Fakhari as Tehran provincial governor on November 20.<sup>27</sup> Fakhari is an IRGC officer who has held several government

positions and was a senior official in the Khatam ol Anbia Construction Headquarters —the IRGC’s civil engineering and construction firm. Raisi has appointed numerous IRGC officers to senior positions in the cabinet and to local governments since taking office in August 2021.<sup>28</sup> Fakhari replaced Mohsen Mansour, whom Raisi appointed as executive vice president on November 1.<sup>29</sup> These appointments may be enabling greater IRGC influence over the protest crackdown.<sup>30</sup> Provincial governors are part of the provincial security councils, which oversee domestic security in their jurisdictions.

**Social media rumors claimed on November 20 that low-level IRGC and LEC security personnel throughout Iran have expressed concerns about the safety of themselves and their families amid mounting security forces casualties.**<sup>31</sup> CTP cannot verify these rumors. They are plausible, however, given the increased rate at which security personnel are dying and being injured. Unidentified gunmen most recently shot and killed one LEC personnel and injured another around Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 21.<sup>32</sup>

**LEC Fars Provincial Commander Brigadier General Roham Bakhsh Habibi announced the arrest of eight members of the Shiraz Neighborhood Youth on November 21.**<sup>33</sup> Bakhsh Habibi accused the group of directing and stoking protests, making explosives, and cooperating with anti-regime group Mojahedin-e Khalq. These arrests demonstrate further that at least some of the neighborhood youth groups have a local presence. Iranian state media previously reported on November 17 that the IRGC Intelligence Organization arrested over 25 members of the Oroumiyeh Neighborhood Youth.<sup>34</sup> There are many different social media accounts that identify as the Shiraz Neighborhood Youth, making it difficult to determine whether the arrests have implicated the group’s operations.

**Several dozen Sunni clerics and religious leaders in Kurdistan Province issued a video statement on November 21 expressing support for the protesters.**<sup>35</sup> The individuals called for a public referendum on the Islamic Republic. The clerics showed their faces allowing their easy identification and risking regime punishment for their actions. Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid, who has incited protests in Sistan and Baluchistan Province in recent weeks, may have inspired these Sunni clerics and religious leaders. Abdol Hamid similarly called for a referendum on the Islamic Republic on November 4.<sup>36</sup> The video statement may indicate that Abdol Hamid’s rhetoric is resonating even with Iranian Sunnis outside of Sistan and Baluchistan Province.

**Supreme Leader Military Adviser IRGC Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi stated that protests will continue unless the regime addresses the people’s frustrations on November 21.**<sup>37</sup> Safavi made these remarks while speaking at the Imam Hossein University—one of the IRGC’s most prominent military universities. Safavi’s comments are somewhat surprising given that one might expect him to use harsher rhetoric speaking to fellow guardsmen while the regime intensifies its crackdown. Iranian political and security leaders may increasingly blame the Raisi administration if it cannot improve the economy. Safavi may be reflecting the supreme leader’s position, or what he believes the supreme leader’s position to be.

**The national Iranian men’s soccer team refused to sing the Iranian national anthem before their opening FIFA World Cup match on November 21.**<sup>38</sup> Their silence was resonant and well-publicized given the popularity of soccer in Iran, despite Iranian state media not airing the players standing quietly. This act was especially humiliating to the regime given the location of the World Cup in Qatar—a country that has tried to balance its relations between Iran and other Arab states throughout the Middle East. Some social media accounts

have claimed that Qatari security officers detained some World Cup attendants protesting against the Islamic Republic.<sup>39</sup>

## **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**There was nothing significant to report today.**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/30/2807929>; <http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/30/2807489>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211215741>; [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1594694215639900161?s=20&t=kdLgV-afZCLyubv9zE89iQ](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1594694215639900161?s=20&t=kdLgV-afZCLyubv9zE89iQ); <https://twitter.com/justinhogo/status/1594664727518801920?s=20&t=kdLgV-afZCLyubv9zE89iQ>; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594666253507256320?s=20&t=kdLgV-afZCLyubv9zE89iQ>; <https://twitter.com/factnameh/status/1594720071523278848>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Irans-Reserve-of-Last-Resort.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-20>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/30/2807929>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-11>

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/netblocks/status/1594742753656717319>; <https://twitter.com/KhosroKalbasi/status/1594727562969845763>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.etemadonline dot com/بخش سیاسی-583452/9-مآباد-فیاطق ککر تشرین-اعراض ات هرو دای-ا هتای کور دستان>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-10>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www\(dot\)rudaw.net/english/middleeast/21112022](https://www(dot)rudaw.net/english/middleeast/21112022);

[https://www\(dot\)irna.ir/news/84949578/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B2%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88-%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%B1%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%B1%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C%D9%85](https://www(dot)irna.ir/news/84949578/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B2%D9%85%DB%8C%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%88-%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%B1%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%B1%D8%B3%DB%8C-%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C%D9%85)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-18>

<sup>12</sup>

[https://shafaq\(dot\)com/ar/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%AF-%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86](https://shafaq(dot)com/ar/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A8%D8%B4%D8%AF-%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86)

<https://twitter.com/Iraqimofa/status/1594718531824017408>

[https://shafaq\(dot\)com/ar/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B4-%D8%BA%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D8%AD%D9%81%D8%B8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%80-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%BA%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A9](https://shafaq(dot)com/ar/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%B4-%D8%BA%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D8%AD%D9%81%D8%B8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%80-%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%BA%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A9)

<sup>13</sup> <https://twitter.com/truskesadeghi/status/1594674713917267974>

<sup>14</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594777624643272704?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>

<sup>15</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594648240263045120?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>

<sup>16</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594669081990340608?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>;

<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594664853590851585?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>;

<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594633089992515584?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>

<sup>17</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594655487189884928?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>

<sup>18</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1594791251773382656?s=20&t=rUtbGX3Uj5ketFOZWiuXHg>

<sup>19</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594761493564002304?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>

<sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1594800131160920065?s=20&t=rUtbGX3Uj5ketFOZWiuXHg>

<sup>21</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594670005467066368?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>;

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1594737886418841601?s=20&t=rUtbGX3Uj5ketFOZWiuXHg>

<sup>22</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda /status/1594751168026132486?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>

- 
- <sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1594714384844353536](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1594714384844353536)
- <sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594634749733228546?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;>  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1594633739694473216?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ>
- <sup>25</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1594645470470709248?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1594645470470709248?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;)  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1594654718663528450?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1594654718663528450?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;)  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1594697880748662784?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1594697880748662784?s=20&t=gf9PclBtyc-8HkaDqH5apQ;)
- <sup>26</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1594800500431810561?s=20&t=rUtbGx3Uj5ketFOZWiuXHg>
- <sup>27</sup> <https://president dot ir/fa/140841>
- <sup>28</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/briefs/iran-file/iran-file-meet-the-raisi-administration;>  
<https://www.iranintl.com/en/20211018354011>
- <sup>29</sup> [www.president dot ir/fa/140514](https://www.president dot ir/fa/140514)
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Whatever-it-takes-to-end-it.pdf>
- <sup>31</sup> <https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1594547881146564608>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/30/2807952>
- <sup>33</sup> <https://www.isna dot ir/news/1401083020772>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-17>
- <sup>35</sup> [https://www.instagram.com/p/CIOEW2RAN0\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/p/CIOEW2RAN0_/)
- <sup>36</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-4>
- <sup>37</sup> <https://www.irna dot ir/news/84949089>
- <sup>38</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/iran-soccer-team-silent-national-anthem-world-cup-game-rcna58121>
- <sup>39</sup> <https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1594725244904046592>



## Iran Crisis Update, November 22

Nicholas Carl, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Johanna Moore, and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 22, 5:00 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

*Contributor: Riley Simon*

**Note: CTP will not publish a daily Iran Crisis Update on November 24 for the Thanksgiving holiday. CTP will resume daily publishing on November 25.**

**Regime officials close to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei have expressed openness to political reform to placate protesters, although it is unlikely that any such reform would fundamentally change the regime’s behavior or nature.** Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary Ali Shamkhani discussed implementing unspecified “liberalizing measures” with reformist leaders, including members of the Khomeini and Rafsanjani families, in exchange for help quelling protests in late October, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.<sup>1</sup> Ali Reza Panahian—a cleric close to Khamenei and his son, Mojtaba—called for greater transparency and popular participation in government on November 22 as well.<sup>2</sup> It is unclear to what exactly Shamkhani and Panahian were referring, but these reports suggest that at least some in Iran’s political establishment are considering some semblance of reform to address the ongoing protests. Any such change would likely be limited and would not curtail the activities of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), which reports directly to the supreme leader.

Public remarks from Hassan Khomeini—the reformist grandson of Ruhollah Khomeini—on November 7 may have been a byproduct of Shamkhani’s appeal to the reformist leaders. Khomeini called for a “majority-based democracy” and indirectly criticized the Guardian Council—the state body constitutionally responsible for approving and vetting electoral candidates—in his remarks.<sup>3</sup> Khomeini also denounced violence and condemned the role of foreign actors in stoking protests. The Islamic Republic News Agency—a Raisi administration mouthpiece—circulated Khomeini’s remarks, as CTP previously reported.<sup>4</sup>

**Protest activity decreased across Iran on November 22 as the Persian calendar month *Aban* ended.** Protest coordinators and organizations had previously called on protesters to demonstrate throughout *Aban*, which ended on November 21, to commemorate the three-year anniversary of the regime's crackdown on the *Bloody Aban* protest wave in November 2019.<sup>5</sup> The reduced turnout on November 22 is therefore unsurprising and does not indicate that this protest wave is yet close to over. Some social media users have begun calling for protests on November 24.<sup>6</sup>

**The Iraqi central government may be coordinating with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to partially address Iranian complaints about Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan.** Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani announced that the Iraqi central government is considering deploying forces to border regions in response to Iranian drone and missile attacks into Iraqi Kurdistan on November 22.<sup>7</sup> Iraqi central government and KRG officials discussed the recent Iranian and Turkish strikes into Iraqi territory and border security on November 22.<sup>8</sup> Iranian political and security leaders have repeatedly demanded that Iraqi authorities disarm Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan in recent weeks.<sup>9</sup>

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Regime officials close to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei have expressed openness to political reform to placate protesters, although it is unlikely that any such reform would fundamentally change the regime's behavior or nature.**
- **The Iraqi central government may be coordinating with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to partially address Iranian complaints about Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan.**
- **Protest activity decreased across Iran as the Persian calendar month *Aban* ended, but at least 14 protests took place in 10 cities across eight provinces.**
- **IRGC Deputy Commander Brigadier General Ali Fadavi expressed implicit support for the regime using more brutality in its protest crackdown on November 21.**
- **The IRGC Ground Forces conducted a drone and missile attack on anti-regime Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan for the second consecutive day on November 22.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 14 protests took place in 10 cities across eight provinces on November 22.** CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in:

**Note: CTP has revised how it presents protest data to make it easier for readers to review. We are identifying different properties, such as size, for each recorded protest. We define small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and large protests as over one thousand. CTP will continue revising this approach to optimize how we present information in the most accurate and accessible way possible.**

**Bushehr City, Bushehr Province<sup>10</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small, energy workers
- Protester Activity: Strikes and protests

**Mohr, Fars Province<sup>11</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium

**Andimeshk, Khuzestan Province<sup>12</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fires in street, uncorroborated reports that protesters set fire to Andimeshk municipality building.
- Regime Repression: Plainclothes officers shot at protesters

**Dezfoul, Khuzestan Province<sup>13</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Notes: Shots of gunfire or teargas, unclear who was shooting.

**Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province<sup>14</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Kurdistan University Students
- Regime Violence: Reports of security personnel shooting at Sanandaj residents

**Shahr-e Rey, Tehran Province<sup>15</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>16</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium (encompassing Basij elements deployed for protest suppression)
- Regime Repression: Unspecified Basij involvement

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>17</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Tehran University Students

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>18</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium
- Protester Activity: Blocked streets

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>19</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Demographic: Motor workers, strikes and protests

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the locations below.

**Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>20</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined

**Podol, Hormozgan Province<sup>21</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fires in street

**Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>22</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Regime Repression: Audible sounds of gunfire

- Notes: No footage of protesters shown, but fire and sound of gunfire in a Zahedan street indicate possible protest activity



**IRGC Deputy Commander Brigadier General Ali Fadavi expressed implicit support for the regime using more brutality in its protest crackdown on November 21.**<sup>23</sup> Fadavi stated that the regime restrained itself in responding to the protests and could have ended them in six days. Fadavi noted that around 60 security personnel have died in the protests. Fadavi's remark is consistent with reporting from open-source analysts who estimate that 58 security personnel have died.<sup>24</sup> Fadavi's remarks follow reports of disagreements within the regime over the protest crackdown, as CTP previously reported.<sup>25</sup>

**Former IRGC Intelligence Organization Chief Hossein Taeb accused the West of plotting to overthrow the regime on November 22.**<sup>26</sup> Taeb has been an adviser to IRGC Commander Major General Hossein Salami since Supreme Leader Khamenei dismissed Taeb as IRGC Intelligence Organization chief in June 2022.<sup>27</sup> Taeb has historically maintained close ties to Mojtaba Khamenei.<sup>28</sup> Taeb has become an increasingly public-facing figure since his removal, regularly making public statements criticizing the US and Israel, as CTP previously reported.<sup>29</sup> Taeb may seek to use his public image to bolster his efforts at securing a new senior position within the Iranian security establishment. Taeb could even seek to replace SNSC Secretary Shamkhani if the reports about Shamkhani's dismissal are true, although Taeb's chances at getting this position at present seem very low.<sup>30</sup>

**President Ebrahim Raisi accepted the resignation of Rostam Ghassemi as roads and urban development minister on November 22.**<sup>31</sup> Ghassemi ostensibly resigned due to his poor

health. Ghassemi has faced several public controversies including corruption charges in recent weeks, which may have prompted his removal.<sup>32</sup> Photos have circulated online depicting Ghassemi with an unveiled woman in Malaysia in 2011 as well, fueling accusations of hypocrisy given the regime crackdown on anti-hijab demonstrations.

**Iranian Kurdish human rights organization Hengaw reported that IRGC elements attacked and ransacked residents' homes in Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province in the early hours of November 23.**<sup>33</sup> CTP cannot verify these reports.

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**The IRGC Ground Forces conducted a drone and missile attack on anti-regime Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan for the second consecutive day on November 22.** The IRGC reportedly struck targets in Kirkuk Province.<sup>34</sup> IRGC Ground Forces Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Pak Pour affirmed that the IRGC will continue attacking until these Kurdish groups no longer threaten the regime on November 22.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-protests-government-mahsa-amini-11669137860>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tabnak dot ir/fa/news/1151552>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bayanfarda dot ir/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%AD%DA%A9%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-8/3226-%D9%87%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%AF%DB%8C-%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AF%DA%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AE%D8%AA%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%88%D9%82%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D8%AE%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%86%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%85-%D9%87%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%AE%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%AE%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%82-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%84%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%B1-%DA%AF%D9%81%D8%AA-%D9%88%DA%AF%D9%88-%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%88%D8%A7%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%B4-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%84%DB%8C%D9%87-%DA%AF%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%87%D9%85%D9%87-%DA%86%DB%8C%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%B3%D8%A8%DA%A9-%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%AF%DA%AF%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D8%A7-%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B9-%D9%BE%D9%88%D8%B4%D8%B4-%D8%AA%D8%BA%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%B1-%DA%A9%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-7#\\_edncd8c06c0c182021ee1c9b9ed35961c7a2](https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-7#_edncd8c06c0c182021ee1c9b9ed35961c7a2)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-17>

<sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/OutFarsi/status/1595075632509374464>

<sup>7</sup> <https://shafaq dot>

<com/ar/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%B6%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B6%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AB-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B1-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF>

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://gov.dot.krd/mopa-en/activities/news-and-press-releases/2022/november/krq-and-iraqi-government-discuss-border-security/>

<sup>9</sup> [www.mehrnews.com/news/5638023](http://www.mehrnews.com/news/5638023)

<sup>10</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595081087411273732](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595081087411273732)

<sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595105743753347073>; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595105329825693702>

<sup>12</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595114250212896769?s=20&t=vPW\\_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595114250212896769?s=20&t=vPW_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;)  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595119628812193792?s=20&t=vPW\\_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595119628812193792?s=20&t=vPW_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;)  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595106708116090880?s=20&t=vPW\\_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595106708116090880?s=20&t=vPW_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;)  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595123197199806464?s=20&t=vPW\\_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595123197199806464?s=20&t=vPW_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;)  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595114250212896769?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595114250212896769?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA)

<sup>13</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595123960630255616?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595123960630255616?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;)  
[https://twitter.com/cheragh\\_aseman/status/1595171052392484888?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJlL0r86g;](https://twitter.com/cheragh_aseman/status/1595171052392484888?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJlL0r86g;)  
[https://twitter.com/javanan\\_Kh/status/1595162652757876737?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJlL0r86g](https://twitter.com/javanan_Kh/status/1595162652757876737?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJlL0r86g)

<sup>14</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595056764994850818;](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595056764994850818;)  
[https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595159599149355008?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595159599149355008?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA)

<sup>15</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595144167424155649?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595144167424155649?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;)  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595144786255949824?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595144786255949824?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA)

<sup>16</sup> <https://twitter.com/Mohalimoh79/status/1595096088142385152;>  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595077289175584774?s=20&t=Tm8Jb8SaJO50C\\_7yfe4sjA;](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595077289175584774?s=20&t=Tm8Jb8SaJO50C_7yfe4sjA;)  
<https://twitter.com/MAminAlam/status/1595048438076477440>

<sup>17</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595018449561927680?s=20&t=hbaFFTCpZCldDsMkhkO67A](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595018449561927680?s=20&t=hbaFFTCpZCldDsMkhkO67A)

<sup>18</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595097456014151680;>  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595097955941376000?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595097955941376000?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;)  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595179031493808133?s=20&t=Kfl8bosD4KqnrIOJDjBVNQ>

<sup>19</sup> <https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1595054343795138563;>  
<https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1595080113120759808?s=20&t=dzVWJqqhulPmkNrp0n7yLw;>  
[https://twitter.com/IranIntl\\_En/status/1594964227546120195?s=20&t=dzVWJqqhulPmkNrp0n7yLw](https://twitter.com/IranIntl_En/status/1594964227546120195?s=20&t=dzVWJqqhulPmkNrp0n7yLw)

<sup>20</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595108075606016000?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA;](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595108075606016000?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;)  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1595112858550951936?s=20&t=Kfl8bosD4KqnrIOJDjBVNQ>

<sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595152455431770117?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595152455431770117?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA)

<sup>22</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595108251225690112?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF\\_obA;](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595108251225690112?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;)  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1595175070573670400?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJlL0r86g>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.jamaraman.news/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B1-59/1574852-%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B4%DB%8C%D9%86-%D9%81%D8%B1%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87-%DA%A9%D9%84-%D8%B3%D9%BE%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D8%AE%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B4%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%AF-%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%85-%DA%A9%D8%B1%D8%AF%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%A7%DA%AF%D8%B1-%D9%81%D8%B1%DB%8C%D8%A8-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AE%D9%84%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%A8%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%86%D8%AF-%D8%A7%DB%8C%D9%86-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B2-%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%86%D9%85%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D8%B4%DB%8C%D8%AF>

<sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/Alfoneh/status/1594853537137459201>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-18>; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-16>

<sup>26</sup> <https://defapress.ir/fa/news/557447>

---

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/23/world/middleeast/iran-revolutionary-guards-intelligence-chief-hosseini-taeb.html>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/30119166.html>

<sup>29</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-10#\\_edn572685105675102fe1f4b933ee0f9f2422](https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-10#_edn572685105675102fe1f4b933ee0f9f2422)

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-18>

<sup>31</sup> [www.president dot ir/fa/140905](http://www.president.ir/fa/140905)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32144148.html>

<sup>33</sup> [https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595166152082481153?s=20&t=\\_36xwM8\\_lqUwHte9ffQSvg](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595166152082481153?s=20&t=_36xwM8_lqUwHte9ffQSvg)

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/01/2808396/](https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/01/2808396/)

<sup>35</sup> [www.mehrnews dot com/news/5638023](http://www.mehrnews.com/news/5638023)



### **Iran Crisis Update, November 23**

**Nicholas Carl, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Johanna Moore, and Frederick W. Kagan**  
**November 23, 5:00 pm ET**

**The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).**

**Note: CTP will not publish a daily Iran Crisis Update on November 24 for the Thanksgiving holiday. CTP will resume daily publishing on November 25.**

**Protest activity and strikes will likely increase in the coming days.** Protest coordinators and organizations have called for countrywide demonstrations from November 24-26 in solidarity with the protesters in Kurdistan Province.<sup>1</sup> The regime has deployed the IRGC Ground Forces to cities and towns throughout Kurdistan Province to brutally crack down on protesters, as CTP previously reported.<sup>2</sup> Twenty-nine neighborhood youth groups issued a joint statement on November 23 calling for the upcoming protests, demonstrating a degree of overt coordination that CTP has not previously observed.<sup>3</sup>

**The nature of the planned protests increases the risk to protesters.** Protest coordinators and organizations have called for protesters to congregate on the major city streets in each city.<sup>4</sup> Some social media accounts have published routes protesters should use in Tehran.<sup>5</sup> The advance notice that protesters will gather on these main streets gives security forces time to prepare and a single known location at which to concentrate security personnel. The scattered nature of the protests up until this point has strained security forces' limited bandwidth. Intelligence and Security Minister Esmail Khatib alluded to this vulnerability on November 9, as CTP previously reported.<sup>6</sup>

**Supreme leader succession is heavily coloring how the Iranian political and security establishment responds to the protests.** Mojtaba Khamenei—the son of Ali Khamenei and a potential successor—has reportedly held several private meetings in recent days possibly in part to reassert his influence within the regime. Mojtaba reportedly met with his political ally Hossein Taeb to discuss Taeb's return to the security apparatus after Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei dismissed him as IRGC Intelligence Organization chief in June 2022.<sup>7</sup> Taeb's removal may have degraded Mojtaba's reach into the security sphere. Mojtaba also reportedly met with Fatemeh Hashemi Rafsanjani—the daughter of former President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.<sup>8</sup> Mojtaba complained about his political

marginalization in the meeting, according to some Iranian outlets, although it is far from clear whether these reports are accurate.<sup>9</sup> These reports coincide with social media rumors claiming that Khamenei has rejected Mojtaba as a potential successor.<sup>10</sup> CTP cannot confirm any of these reports. These rumors and possible leaks underscore, however, the extent to which discussion about supreme leader succession and the associated political maneuvering likely remains prevalent in some regime circles. The struggle to determine who will replace Ali Khamenei may be fueling the intra-regime disagreements over protest suppression as well.

Mojtaba's meeting with Fatemeh Hashemi Rafsanjani is particularly noteworthy given the reports that Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani met with members of the Rafsanjani family to discuss cooperating to quell protests.<sup>11</sup> It is unclear whether Mojtaba's possible meeting was related to this matter.

Khamenei's rumored rejection of Mojtaba as a successor, if true, does not necessarily eliminate Mojtaba's chances at supreme leadership. The Assembly of Experts is the regime body constitutionally responsible for selecting the next supreme leader and will at least formally approve Khamenei's successor. Khamenei has likely communicated his preferences privately to his inner circle, but he cannot appoint his successor directly. He can instead try to shape the Assembly of Experts' vote that will occur after his death and the preferences of other regime power centers while he is still alive.

**Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated on November 23 that the Iraqi central government committed to disarming and removing Kurdish militants from the Iran-Iraq border region.**<sup>12</sup> Amir Abdollahian's comments follow discussions between the Iraqi central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government on border security on November 22.<sup>13</sup> Iranian political and security leaders have repeatedly demanded that Iraqi authorities disarm and remove Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan in recent weeks due to the militants' perceived role in stoking protests. It remains unclear whether the Iraqi central government will satisfy Iranian demands. Amir Abdollahian's comments may provide the regime—and the Raisi administration more specifically—an offramp after Iranian Ambassador to Iraq Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadegh issued an ultimatum with a deadline in 10 days for Iraq to address the Kurdish militant issue on November 21.<sup>14</sup> Iraqi officials have not commented on Amir Abdollahian's statement as of this publication.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Protest activity and strikes will likely increase in the coming days.**
- **The nature of the planned protests increases the risk to protesters.**
- **Supreme leader succession is heavily coloring how the Iranian political and security establishment responds to the protests.**
- **Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated that the Iraqi central government committed to disarming and removing Kurdish militants from the Iran-Iraq border region.**
- **At least 16 protests took place in 11 cities across 11 provinces.**

- Unidentified individuals attacked and killed a Basij member in Marivan, Kurdistan Province.
- An LEC officer died due to injuries sustained in protests in Baneh, Kurdistan Province on October 27.
- LEC Western Tehran Provincial Commander Keyvan Zahiri announced the arrest of two individuals planning to conduct a suicide attack in Quds City, Tehran Province.
- The LEC Intelligence Organization arrested two individuals making Molotov cocktails and explosives in Qom City, Qom Province.

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 16 protests took place in 11 cities across 11 provinces on November 23.** CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in:

**Note: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and large protests as over one thousand. CTP will continue revising this approach to optimize how we present information in the most accurate and accessible way possible.**

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>15</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Esfahan University students

#### **Alvand, Ghazvin Province<sup>16</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Demographic: Diesel workers

#### **Ilam City, Ilam Province<sup>17</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: High school girls
- Regime Repression: Security personnel reportedly attacked students

#### **Kal Davoud, Kermanshah Province<sup>18</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Protest Type: Koroush Pazakh's funeral. Security personnel reportedly killed Pazakh for participating in an undetermined act of dissent.

#### **Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province<sup>19</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Protest Type: Amir Javad Asadzadeh's funeral. Security personnel reportedly beat Asadzadeh to death for writing anti-regime slogans on an unspecified structure.
- Regime Repression: Security personnel attacked mourners.

#### **Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province<sup>20</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium
- Demographic: Local firemen

### **Dehdasht, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province<sup>21</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Regime Repression: Possible teargas.
- Protester Activity: Possible use of firecrackers or fireworks

### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province<sup>22</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Kurdistan University students and professors staged a sit-in to demand the release of detained student protesters.

### **Khorramabad, Lorestan Province<sup>23</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Protest Type: Hossein Zarinjoei's funeral. Security personnel detained Zarinjoei for criticizing the regime. Zarinjoei purportedly committed suicide in detention, although many social media users believe security personnel killed Zarinjoei in detention.

### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>24</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Demographic: Pars Higher Education Institute of Art and Architecture students

### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>25</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Allameh Tabataba'i University students

### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>26</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Amir Kabir University of Technology students staged a sit-in, chanted anti-regime slogans

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in:

### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province<sup>27</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Notes: Security personnel shot a 16-year-old, suggesting that protests occurred on this date, however it is unclear from available footage if this event meets CTP's threshold for protest activity.

### **Babol, Mazandaran Province**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Anoushirvani University students

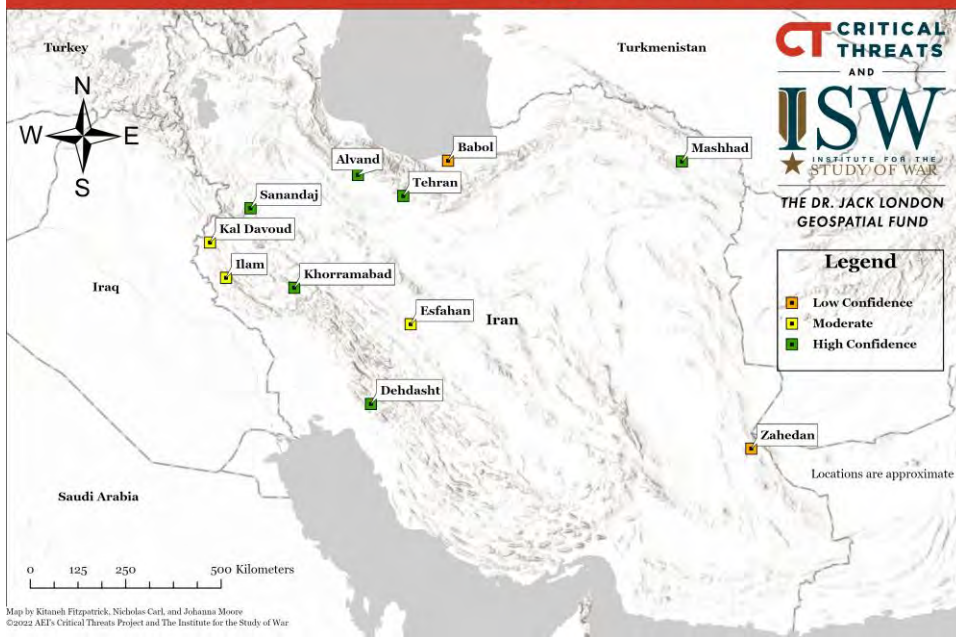
### **Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>28</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fires in street

### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>29</sup>**

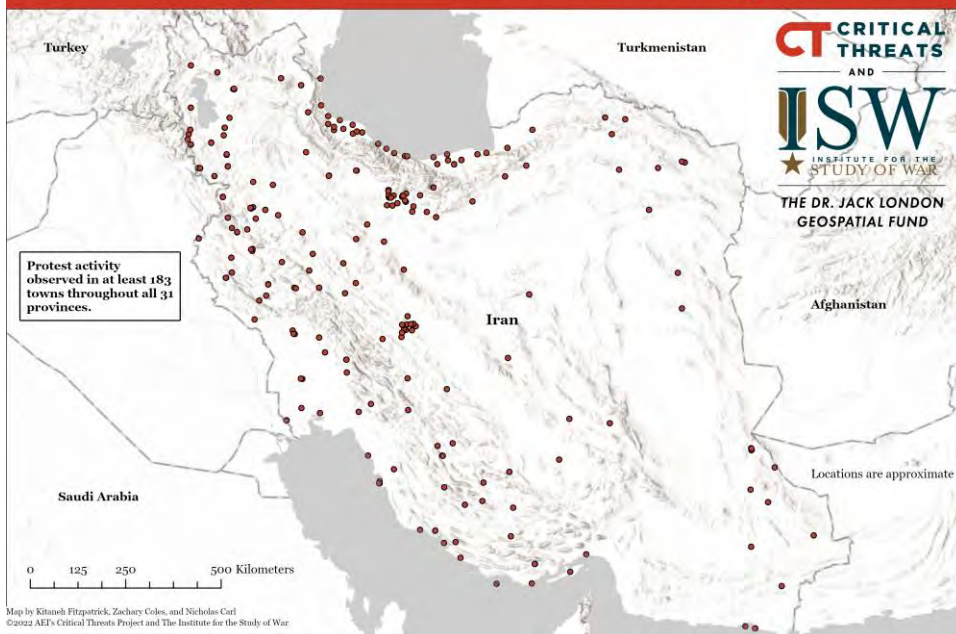
- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Regime Repression: Security personnel forcibly arrested and beat a civilian
- Notes: Audio and debris on street suggest that protests occurred on this date, however it is unclear from available footage if this event meets CTP's threshold for protest activity.

## Protest Activity in Iran as of November 23, 5:00 PM ET



**CTP has recorded protest activity in at least 183 cities throughout all of Iran's 31 provinces since anti-regime demonstrations began on September 16.** The actual number is likely higher considering ongoing telecommunication and internet restrictions imposed by the regime.

## All Recorded Protest Activity in Iran September 16 - November 23



**Unidentified individuals attacked and killed a Basij member in Marivan, Kurdistan Province on November 23.**<sup>30</sup> At least five security personnel have died in Kurdistan Province since protests began on September 16.<sup>31</sup>

**An LEC officer died on November 23 due to injuries he sustained in protests in Baneh, Kurdistan Province on October 27.**<sup>32</sup> Protesters threw stones and improvised explosives at the LEC officer, hospitalizing him until his death.

**LEC Western Tehran Provincial Commander Keyvan Zahiri announced on November 23 the arrest of two individuals planning to conduct a suicide attack in Quds City, Tehran Province.**<sup>33</sup> The LEC arrested the individuals on November 17.

**The LEC Intelligence Organization arrested two individuals making Molotov cocktails and explosives in Qom City, Qom Province on November 23.**<sup>34</sup> Iranian state media reported that the individuals disguised their workshop as a Basij base. The Basij Organization operates tens of thousands of bases across Iran. These bases are the central nodes around which local Basij members organize in each neighborhood. It is unclear whether these arrested individuals were actual Basij members who defected.

**The office of a prominent deceased ayatollah released a statement calling for the Islamic Republic to hold a referendum to prevent a civil war.** Hossein Ali Montazeri's son Ahmad Montazeri—a reformist cleric who has previously expressed support for the 2009 Green Movement—penned the open letter, echoing several Sunni clerics prior calls for a referendum.<sup>35</sup> Hossein Ali Montazeri had been the designated successor to Islamic Republic founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for a time in the 1980s. Ahmad Montazeri called on other clerics to speak out against the regime and is seemingly the first Shia cleric to suggest a referendum.<sup>36</sup> Clerics have not specified what a potential referendum would be, although it is likely that they are referring to a referendum on the regime like the 1979 referendum that established the Islamic Republic. That 1979 referendum consisted of a single question--should the Iranian monarchy become an Islamic Republic with a constitution to be approved by the people?<sup>37</sup> Those advocating for a referendum today could be calling for a straightforward vote on the same question.

**Parliamentarian Esmail Kowsari confirmed on November 23 that the IRGC Ground Forces deployed in Kurdistan Province ostensibly to fight Kurdish militants and establish security around the borders.**<sup>38</sup> Kowsari stated that security personnel from the LEC, Basij, and Intelligence and Security Ministry have died in the protests. Kowsari is an influential former IRGC brigadier general who has close ties to IRGC leadership and Mojtaba Khamenei.<sup>39</sup>

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**There was nothing significant to report today.**

- 
- <sup>1</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1);  
[https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1595341576603336706/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1595341576603336706/photo/1)
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-21>
- <sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1)
- <sup>4</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1)
- <sup>5</sup> [https://twitter.com/\\_re\\_z/status/1595161974240862208](https://twitter.com/_re_z/status/1595161974240862208)
- <sup>6</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-10>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://t.me/sahamnewsorg/79245>
- <sup>8</sup> [https://www.entekhab\\_dot\\_ir/fa/news/704466](https://www.entekhab_dot_ir/fa/news/704466)
- <sup>9</sup> [www.pyknet\\_dot\\_net/1401/04azar/01/mojtaba.htm](http://www.pyknet_dot_net/1401/04azar/01/mojtaba.htm)
- <sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/SaeedAganji/status/1595261551975534593>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-22>
- <sup>12</sup> [https://irna\\_dot\\_ir/xjL5JG](https://irna_dot_ir/xjL5JG)
- <sup>13</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-22>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-21>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595459091417243651?s=20&t=t--t57BNM2Y7zjBqOSDdvg> ;  
[https://twitter.com/Kolbarnews/status/1595441359737036801?s=20&t=Pf0dNK\\_IxkeqpN-NnBmJqw](https://twitter.com/Kolbarnews/status/1595441359737036801?s=20&t=Pf0dNK_IxkeqpN-NnBmJqw);  
[https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1595449806226341888?s=20&t=31cqjUWSDfjq\\_SAbjmVf-w](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1595449806226341888?s=20&t=31cqjUWSDfjq_SAbjmVf-w)
- <sup>16</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595322218636083202?s=20&t=t\\_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595322218636083202?s=20&t=t_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595324842152431616?s=20&t=Pf0dNK\\_IxkeqpN-NnBmJqw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595324842152431616?s=20&t=Pf0dNK_IxkeqpN-NnBmJqw)
- <sup>17</sup> <https://twitter.com/indypersian/status/1595478196987871243?s=20&t=uZZ62mvRyyTeziiomETvFA> ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595494723979984896?s=20&t=t\\_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595494723979984896?s=20&t=t_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q)
- <sup>18</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595472413172563969?s=20&t=g3\\_1wNnK0cgAudyP3oOEDg](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595472413172563969?s=20&t=g3_1wNnK0cgAudyP3oOEDg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1595497666032840704?s=20&t=g3\\_1wNnK0cgAudyP3oOEDg](https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1595497666032840704?s=20&t=g3_1wNnK0cgAudyP3oOEDg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/begoonah1/status/1595462074741784577?s=20&t=g3\\_1wNnK0cgAudyP3oOEDg](https://twitter.com/begoonah1/status/1595462074741784577?s=20&t=g3_1wNnK0cgAudyP3oOEDg)
- <sup>19</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595357685381226499?s=20&t=OUOT1mpmBo7MVW2DmYwZAA> ;  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595409003022090241?s=20&t=MYokrYYX6xAUCqawwbF-TQ](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595409003022090241?s=20&t=MYokrYYX6xAUCqawwbF-TQ) ;  
[https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1595442128577974272?s=20&t=TC7Mw4tfuRBwnE5mHplpGA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1595442128577974272?s=20&t=TC7Mw4tfuRBwnE5mHplpGA)
- <sup>20</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595408755327377409?s=20&t=t\\_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595408755327377409?s=20&t=t_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q)
- <sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595479580445478912?s=20&t=t\\_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595479580445478912?s=20&t=t_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q) ;  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1595498299783630853?s=20&t=6PieZnqzkPHBObQw1Kv26w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1595490824355450880?s=20&t=6PieZnqzkPHBObQw1Kv26w>
- <sup>22</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595411321901797382?s=20&t=t\\_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595411321901797382?s=20&t=t_shxZySXFJR7Uo9u709Q) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595385741684756480?s=20&t=Pf0dNK\\_IxkeqpN-NnBmJqw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595385741684756480?s=20&t=Pf0dNK_IxkeqpN-NnBmJqw)
- <sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595427393455390725?s=20&t=w1nkvx\\_ActuhemfKwSpUFg](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595427393455390725?s=20&t=w1nkvx_ActuhemfKwSpUFg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595429246004072450?s=20&t=w1nkvx\\_ActuhemfKwSpUFg](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595429246004072450?s=20&t=w1nkvx_ActuhemfKwSpUFg) ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595395162166935554?s=20&t=w1nkvx\\_ActuhemfKwSpUFg](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595395162166935554?s=20&t=w1nkvx_ActuhemfKwSpUFg)
- <sup>24</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595453327973748737?s=20&t=XAilyRzx2vAMSoG5UryXww](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595453327973748737?s=20&t=XAilyRzx2vAMSoG5UryXww)

- 
- <sup>25</sup> <https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1595462008031379463?s=20&t=HDvp3gUBRsC98wHOP7xzBw> ;  
<https://twitter.com/HassanRonaghi/status/1595436982271778816?s=20&t=vSBqJmbldIGHdSNualZCMg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1595439382470737921?s=20&t=vSBqJmbldIGHdSNualZCMg>
- <sup>26</sup> <https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1595439382470737921?s=20&t=vSBqJmbldIGHdSNualZCMg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/HassanRonaghi/status/1595436982271778816?s=20&t=vSBqJmbldIGHdSNualZCMg>
- <sup>27</sup> [https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595373482648420352?s=20&t=t\\_shxZySXFsrJ7Uo9u709Q](https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595373482648420352?s=20&t=t_shxZySXFsrJ7Uo9u709Q)
- <sup>28</sup> [https://twitter.com/farzinkadkhodae/status/1595454371436892167?s=20&t=z48-SWpqoJ3bcKig3F\\_aUw](https://twitter.com/farzinkadkhodae/status/1595454371436892167?s=20&t=z48-SWpqoJ3bcKig3F_aUw) ;  
<https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1595467129037672448?s=20&t=t--t57BNM2Y7zjBqOSDdvg>
- <sup>29</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595482659240787994?s=20&t=pGqTP0I46AyeT1MnoHBz5Q> ;  
<https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1595491103918395393?s=20&t=pGqTP0I46AyeT1MnoHBz5Q> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Vahid/status/1595422913599086592?s=20&t=pGqTP0I46AyeT1MnoHBz5Q>
- <sup>30</sup> [www.mashreghnews dot ir/news/1439139](http://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/1439139)
- <sup>31</sup> <https://twitter.com/Alfoneh/status/1595434003880116225>
- <sup>32</sup> [https://www.jahannews dot com/news/819981](https://www.jahannews.com/news/819981)
- <sup>33</sup> [https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/02/2808929](https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/02/2808929)
- <sup>34</sup> [https://www.irna dot ir/news/84951163](https://www.irna.ir/news/84951163)
- <sup>35</sup> <https://twitter.com/AbdolhamidNet/status/1588621247516069889> ; [https://www.instagram.com/p/CIOEW2RAN0 /](https://www.instagram.com/p/CIOEW2RAN0/)
- <sup>36</sup> <https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/110311-%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%B1-%D8%A2%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B8%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%AC%D9%84%D9%88%DA%AF%DB%8C%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%AC%D9%86%DA%AF-%D8%B1%D9%81%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%85-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1-%DA%A9%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%AF/>
- <sup>37</sup> <https://irandataportal.syr.edu/referenda>
- <sup>38</sup> <https://www.jamarn dot news/fa/tiny/news-1575058>
- <sup>39</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf\\_uploadanalysisThe\\_IRGC\\_Command\\_Network-1.pdf](https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/pdf_uploadanalysisThe_IRGC_Command_Network-1.pdf);  
<https://www.radiofarda.com/a/30119166.html>



### Iran Crisis Update, November 25

Nicholas Carl, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Johanna Moore, and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 25, 5:00 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

**Protests continued but did not surge across Iran on November 24 and 25 despite calls for protests.** Protest coordinators and organizations called for countrywide demonstrations from November 24-26 in solidarity with the protesters in Kurdistan Province.<sup>1</sup> Some protest organizations requested that protesters congregate on the main streets in each city, possibly to demonstrate large crowd sizes. It is unclear why these calls did not materialize. Security forces may have successfully preempted the planned protests, concentrating security personnel along the main streets and thereby deterring protesters, though CTP cannot corroborate this hypothesis at this time. CTP previously argued that the nature of the planned protests increased the risk to protesters because the advance notice gave the regime time to prepare and a single set of locations at which to concentrate security personnel.<sup>2</sup> The scattered nature of the protests throughout most of this wave has strained security forces' limited bandwidth.

**The regime's protest crackdown and abuse of arrested demonstrators will alienate large swaths of the population and entrench anti-regime sentiment throughout Iran for decades.** US-based NGO Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRAI) estimated on November 25 that the regime has arrested over 18,000 protesters thus far.<sup>3</sup> HRAI estimated that 110 of these arrested protesters are children and teenagers. These numbers, if true, are significantly greater than those from previous major protest waves in Iran. The regime arrested around 4,000 protesters during the 2009 Green Movement and around 8,000 during the 2019 Bloody Aban protests.<sup>4</sup> CNN published a report on November 21 detailing the horrific acts of sexual assault and violence the regime is committing against arrested protesters.<sup>5</sup> A young Iranian protester told NPR on November 23 that she would prefer that the regime killed her rather than arresting her.<sup>6</sup> These horrible abuses will continually fuel anger and resentment toward this regime, underscoring the long-term challenge the Islamic Republic is creating for itself by the brutality it is using to oppress these protesters.

#### Key Takeaways

- **Protests continued but did not surge across Iran despite calls for protests.**

- **The regime's protest crackdown and abuse of arrested demonstrators will alienate large swaths of the population and entrench anti-regime sentiment throughout Iran for a long time.**
- **Citizens in Mazandaran Province sent medical supplies to protesters in Kurdistan Province, according to Radio Farda.**
- **Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continued to inspire protests throughout Sistan and Baluchistan Province.**
- **Hacker group Black Reward defaced the website of IRGC-affiliated *Fars News Agency*.**
- **The IRGC Ground Forces has deployed armored and special forces units to unspecified locations in northwestern and western Iran, likely to crack down on protesters and deter further demonstrations.**
- **US-based NGO Human Rights Activists in Iran (HRAI) estimated that the regime has arrested over 18,000 protesters thus far.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 16 protests took place in nine cities across eight provinces on November 24 and at least 10 protests took place in nine cities across four provinces on November 25.** CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 24:

**Note: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and protests as over one thousand.**

#### **Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>7</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fire set in street

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>8</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Regime Repression: Security forces fired at protesters
- Protester Activity: Fire set in street

#### **Ghazvin City, Ghazvin Province<sup>9</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Workers

#### **Hamedan City, Hamedan Province<sup>10</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

#### **Mahidast, Kermanshah Province<sup>11</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium
- Protest Type: Seven-day commemoration ceremony for killed protester Farhad Khosravi

#### **Kamiyaran, Kurdistan Province<sup>12</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium

- Protest Type: Commemoration ceremony for killed protester Fuad Mohammadi

**Jakigour, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>13</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Notes: Protesters blocked road

**Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>14</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fire set in street

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>15</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protest Type: Seven-day commemoration ceremony for killed protester Hamid Reza Rouhi

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>16</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium
- Notes: These may be two different protests.

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>17</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fire set in street

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>18</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>19</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

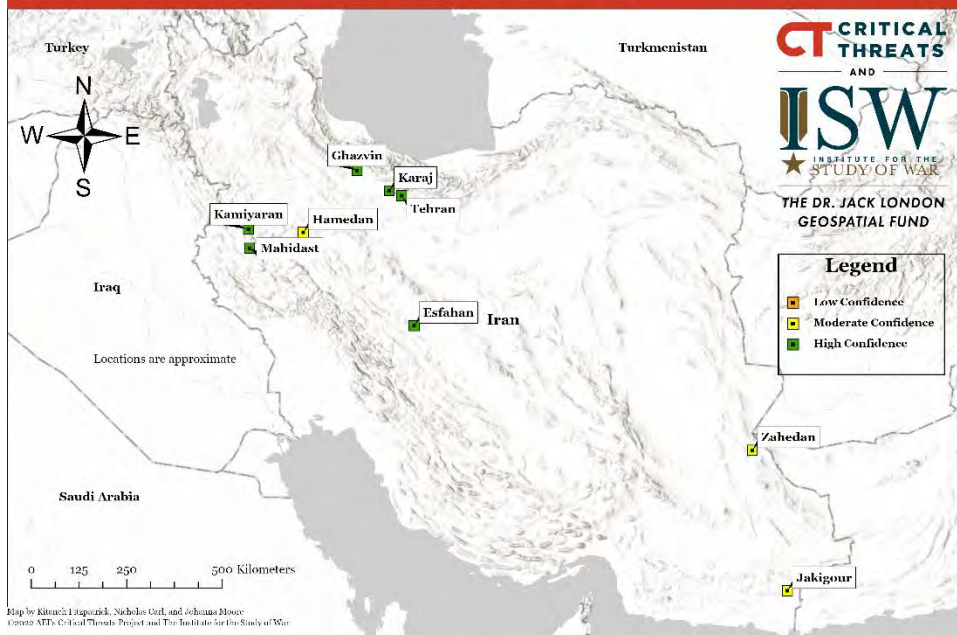
**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>20</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

**Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>21</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

## Protest Activity in Iran on November 24



CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 25:

### **Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>22</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium

### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>23</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

### **Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>24</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

### **Iranshahr, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>25</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to Medium

### **Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>26</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Regime Repression: Security forces fired at protesters

### **Nouk Abad, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>27</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Regime Repression: Security forces fired at protesters

### **Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>28</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

### **Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province<sup>29</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Large
- Regime Repression: Security forces fired at protesters

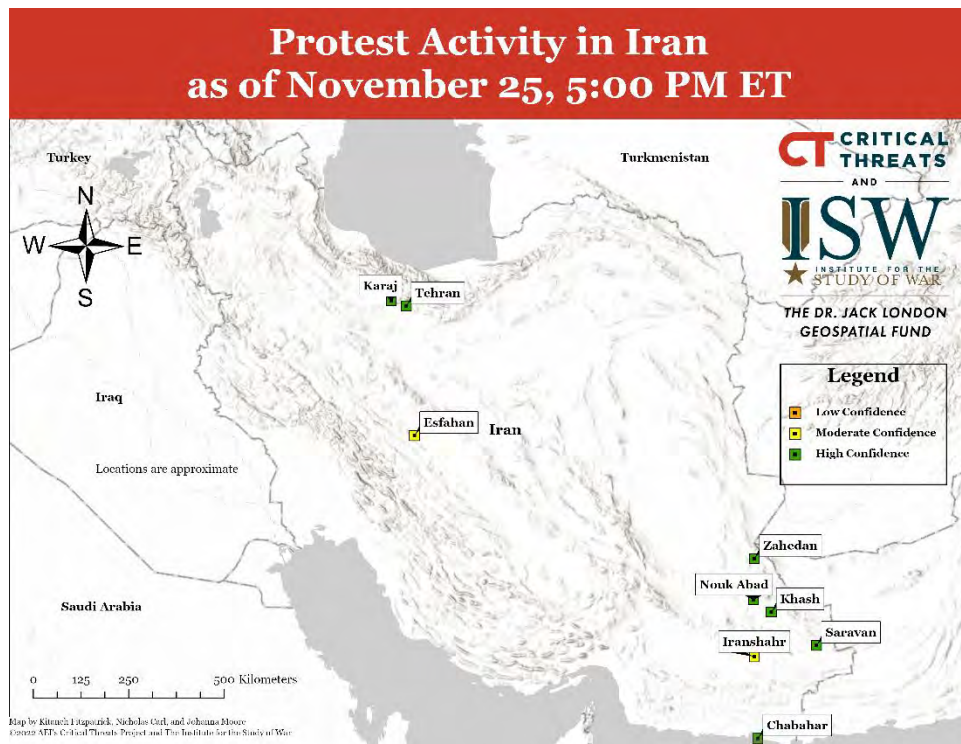
- Protester Activity: Protesters marched down street, blocked roads
- Notes: The location and timing of available footage suggests that protests extended into the evening, although at a diminished scale. Protesters set fire on a city street in evening protests.

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>30</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium (day) to small (evening)
- Notes: The location and timing of available footage suggests that protests extended into the evening, although at a diminished scale.

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>31</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small



**Citizens in Mazandaran Province sent medical supplies to protesters in Kurdistan Province on November 24, according to Radio Farda.<sup>32</sup>** This support reflects how at least some protesters are aiding and likely cooperating with one another throughout the country to resist the regime crackdown. Protesters have established an informal medical care network for injured demonstrators in recent weeks, as CTP previously reported.<sup>33</sup> These kinds of interactions could provide a foundation for greater cooperation among protesters across Iran.

**IRGC Commander Major General Hossein Salami threatened the West, Israel, and Saudi Arabia on November 24 for their alleged roles in stoking protests.<sup>34</sup>**

**IRGC Intelligence Organization Deputy Chief Brigadier General Mehdi Sayyari accused the US of leveraging popular economic frustrations to stoke protests on November 24.<sup>35</sup>** Regime officials frequently accuse the US of using economic and psychological means to incite unrest. Growing regime attention on how economic shortcomings facilitate protests could place greater

internal pressure on President Ebrahim Raisi and his administration to improve the economy. The Raisi administration cannot implement the necessary reform to meaningfully improve the economy, however, due to structural flaws and the IRGC's monopoly in various sectors.

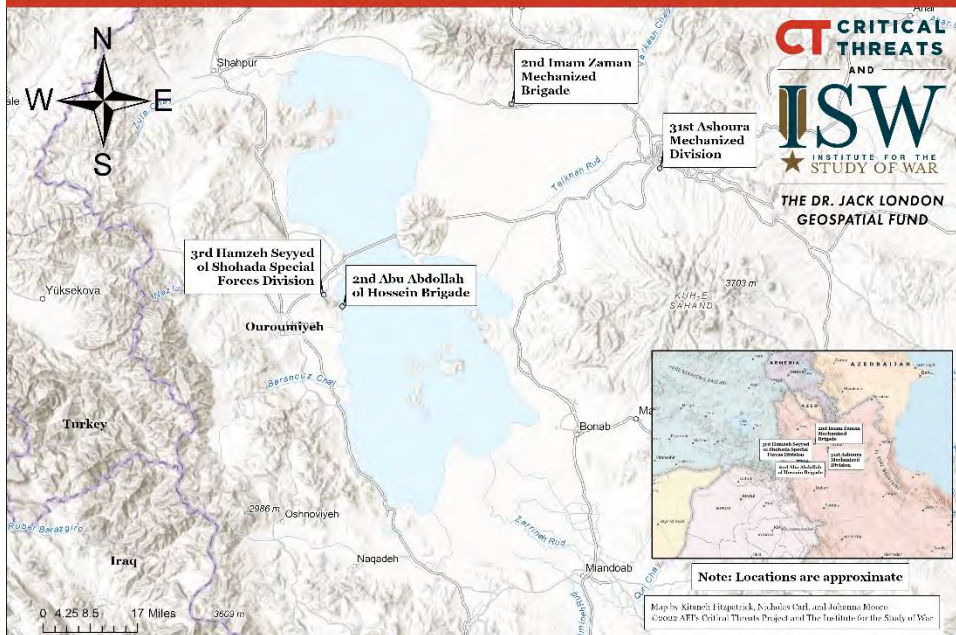
**Reformist Zahra Rahnavard published a statement on November 24 criticizing the regime crackdown.**<sup>36</sup> Rahnavard demanded that the regime “either kill me or surrender to the will of the people.” Rahnavard is married to reformist leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, who previously criticized the crackdown and expressed support for the protesters on October 1.<sup>37</sup>

**Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continued to inspire protests throughout Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 25.**<sup>38</sup> Abdol Hamid reiterated his criticisms of the regime crackdown during his weekly Friday sermon. He also expressed solidarity with Kurdish protesters in northwestern and western Iran, against whom the regime has deployed the IRGC Ground Forces. Protests occurred in at least six cities in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 25. Abdol Hamid's anti-regime message could increasingly resonate with Sunnis and other protesters in northwestern and western Iran, as CTP previously assessed.<sup>39</sup>

**Hacker group Black Reward defaced the website of IRGC-affiliated *Fars News Agency* on November 25.**<sup>40</sup> The group claimed to have recovered internal data, documents, and files from *Fars News Agency*. Black Reward previously hacked the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and published 50 gigabytes of documents related to the Iranian nuclear program on October 22, as CTP previously reported.<sup>41</sup>

**The IRGC Ground Forces has deployed armored and special forces units to unspecified locations in northwestern and western Iran, likely to crack down on protesters and deter further demonstrations.** IRGC Ground Forces Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Pak Pour announced these reinforcements on November 25.<sup>42</sup> He stated that these units will fight separatist militants. Social media reporting from West Azerbaijan Province has corroborated Pak Pour's claim. Social media accounts reported the IRGC moving armor from Oroumīyeh to Oshnavīyeh on November 24 and to Piranshahr on November 25.<sup>43</sup> These deployments may be from the IRGC Ground Forces' 2<sup>nd</sup> Imam Zaman Mechanized Brigade near Shabestar, East Azerbaijan Province, 3<sup>rd</sup> Hamzeh Seyyed ol Shohada Special Forces Division near Oroumīyeh, West Azerbaijan Province, and/or 31<sup>st</sup> Ashoura Mechanized Division in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province.<sup>44</sup> Seven tanks are visible in the videos posted.

## Major IRGC Units in Northwestern Iran



### Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments

The Iraqi central government and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) continued trying to satisfy Iranian demands for the disarmament and removal of Kurdish militant groups in Iraqi Kurdistan on November 24. Iraqi central government and KRG officials discussed deploying joint Iraqi Army and KRG Peshmerga brigades to the Iraqi borders with Iran and Turkey.<sup>45</sup> Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian indicated on November 23 that the Baghdad committed to meeting Iranian demands, as CTP previously reported.<sup>46</sup>

**Iranian-backed militias and Syrian regime forces conducted a joint exercise near the al Tanf Garrison, which houses US troops, on November 23, likely to threaten American service members.<sup>47</sup>**

1

[https://twitter.com/javanane\\_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1); [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1595341576603336706/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1595341576603336706/photo/1)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-23>

<sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/HRANA\\_English/status/1596163594697248771](https://twitter.com/HRANA_English/status/1596163594697248771)

<sup>4</sup> <https://agsiw.org/irans-november-protests-in-perspective/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2022/11/middleeast/iran-protests-sexual-assault/index.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2022/11/23/1138875930/young-iranian-protesters-explain-what-keeps-them-going>

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595825105346535424> ;

<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595835232066109440?s=20&t=HQWVUWrYe9OEaV0ajWYxVA>

- 
- <sup>8</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595839623950843904>;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595821309698646020>;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595856616078843905>;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596019010264797185>;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595823572949295109>
- <sup>9</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595740089610543104>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595833017703989254>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596022394790944771> ;  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595891108998938624?s=20&t=h\\_JwDYmdVCag3zxl7Fmo\\_g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595891108998938624?s=20&t=h_JwDYmdVCag3zxl7Fmo_g)
- <sup>12</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595774301009252352?s=20&t=WQRerluY94CkZLKWYtq0ew>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595775841317064706>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596081408522395648>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595777641252012032?s=20&t=t3rJGzywYRopbTULiQp9WA>
- <sup>16</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595826550473199618> ;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595827117740404736> ;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596018114688602112?s=20&t=66iUabxnZQkS2EcRmXKaRw>
- <sup>17</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595840395295870977?s=20&t=UuXBeXkep\\_zY2IkPy4E-kA](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595840395295870977?s=20&t=UuXBeXkep_zY2IkPy4E-kA)
- <sup>18</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595846662928334848>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://twitter.com/VOAfarsi/status/1595936657491959808?s=20&t=Je1iAf6X64dtBsg8QS6wQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595859107885600768>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596016309728206848?s=20&t=WQXyqSDg7uZc4llaGhtz2A>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595833806963019777>
- <sup>22</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596176050551418880?s=20&t=gwM7VmxJ2W-5TWBBlaebqA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1596227976412418048?s=20&t=gwM7VmxJ2W-5TWBBlaebqA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596205055065169922?s=20&t=gwM7VmxJ2W-5TWBBlaebqA>
- <sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1596221249780187136?s=20&t=x9fdJrj\\_qGep1PetTb\\_U-Q](https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1596221249780187136?s=20&t=x9fdJrj_qGep1PetTb_U-Q) ;  
[https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596196443840466944?s=20&t=Y-vVgeySnMo8\\_9eMsksmEw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596196443840466944?s=20&t=Y-vVgeySnMo8_9eMsksmEw)
- <sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596097473239552000?s=20&t=uYJaWXJvZ-WQs1VxD8P4Ng> ;  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596096209000833025?s=20&t=uYJaWXJvZ-WQs1VxD8P4Ng>
- <sup>25</sup> [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1596175895181594625?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1596175895181594625?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596094346608377856?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ>
- <sup>26</sup> <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596091345650810880?s=20&t=dYsJla5jOFjAIYEd6cRNiA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596109267953942528> ;  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1596088707823575040?s=20&t=tILmvYq08ogyDHG-1Gtv5w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/HbSarbaz/status/1596125939745935361?s=20&t=tILmvYq08ogyDHG-1Gtv5w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596084277107511296?s=20&t=tILmvYq08ogyDHG-1Gtv5w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/pooyanmokari/status/1596084799265181698?s=20&t=tILmvYq08ogyDHG-1Gtv5w> ;  
[https://twitter.com/IranIntl\\_Ar/status/1596087388966686721?s=20&t=tILmvYq08ogyDHG-1Gtv5w](https://twitter.com/IranIntl_Ar/status/1596087388966686721?s=20&t=tILmvYq08ogyDHG-1Gtv5w)
- <sup>27</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596109311310462977?s=20&t=7kLD9r38r2Um8qUZToPNCQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596109715376832513> ;

---

<https://twitter.com/ShahramRafizade/status/1596097532895035392?s=20&t=7kLD9r38r2Um8qUZToPNCQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1596225520911454210?s=20&t=7kLD9r38r2Um8qUZToPNCQ> ;  
<sup>28</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596097867135193088?s=20&t=OB8zSh98TaesxALeN3r7eA](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596097867135193088?s=20&t=OB8zSh98TaesxALeN3r7eA) ;  
<https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1596106688314183681?s=20&t=OB8zSh98TaesxALeN3r7eA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596094657943199744?s=20&t=OB8zSh98TaesxALeN3r7eA> ;  
<sup>29</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596087377373450240](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596087377373450240) ;  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596092776315092993](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596092776315092993) ; [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596104128589176833](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596104128589176833) ;  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596116406193782784?s=20&t=BfG8X05fN4bbj7Fpf6NYog](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596116406193782784?s=20&t=BfG8X05fN4bbj7Fpf6NYog) ;  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596118819658993666](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596118819658993666) ; <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596089149064642560> ;  
[https://twitter.com/farzinkadkhodae/status/1596120280103276544?s=20&t=bSxq3GLuSm\\_m6KchYmH-Hw](https://twitter.com/farzinkadkhodae/status/1596120280103276544?s=20&t=bSxq3GLuSm_m6KchYmH-Hw) ;  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596200893032300546?s=20&t=8Qw8kAVGR807ucyxe5oshQ](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596200893032300546?s=20&t=8Qw8kAVGR807ucyxe5oshQ) ;  
<sup>30</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596143300746309632?s=20&t=M4gdzxQ4sTcJ4wM4HbdY9w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596177790537277441?s=20&t=4B0R7wbClcP5NEBIHOYC8A> ;  
<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596174540362567680?s=20&t=xVpKB6vthqllHZ1929Tb3w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/etelaf10/status/1596166825288630272?s=20&t=xVpKB6vthqllHZ1929Tb3w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Ehsanism/status/1596156895282302976?s=20&t=xVpKB6vthqllHZ1929Tb3w> ;  
<https://twitter.com/FattahiFarzad/status/1596178217471471618?s=20&t=xVpKB6vthqllHZ1929Tb3w> ;  
<sup>31</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/159622954333081088?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1596233221930422272?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1596266099959803904?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ> ;  
<sup>32</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595853989773705218](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595853989773705218) ;  
<sup>33</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-30> ;  
<sup>34</sup> [www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811459](http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811459) ;  
<sup>35</sup> [www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811334](http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811334) ;  
<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/kaleme/29875> ;  
<sup>37</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-1#\\_edn39dce23411eca8fb90c06e727076998e12](https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-1#_edn39dce23411eca8fb90c06e727076998e12) ;  
<sup>38</sup> <https://abdolhamid dot net/persian/2022/11/25/13040/> ;  
<sup>39</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-21> ;  
<sup>40</sup> <https://twitter.com/KhosroKalbasi/status/1596197794771243008> ;  
<sup>41</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-23> ;  
<sup>42</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/04/2811628> ;  
<sup>43</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1595832661615992834](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595832661615992834) ; [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596062139206504448](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596062139206504448) ;  
<sup>44</sup> <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Irans-Reserve-of-Last-Resort.pdf> ;  
<sup>45</sup> <https://www.rudawarabia dot net/arabic/middleeast/iraq/24112022> ;  
<sup>46</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-23> ;  
<sup>47</sup> <https://www.syriahr dot com/en/277397/> ;



Like 50K

## IRAN CRISIS UPDATE, NOVEMBER 26

Nov 26, 2022 - [Press ISW](#)



Nicholas Carl, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Dana Alexander Gray, and Frederick W. Kagan

November 26, 5:00 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

**Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei publicly rejected the possibility of compromise or reform to placate the ongoing protests on November 26.** Khamenei reiterated his hard line on the protests and his accusation that foreign actors incited the unrest. He ended his speech with a Quranic verse that social media users interpreted as further affirmation that he will not make concessions.

[1] Khamenei made these remarks in a meeting with Basij members and lauded their role in protest suppression.

**Khamenei may have meant to use his speech to signal to other senior regime officials his disapproval of cooperating with reformists to quell the protests.** Some regime power centers have signaled their willingness to cooperate with reformists and possibly implement limited reform in recent weeks. President Ebrahim Raisi and Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani discussed implementing unspecified “liberalizing measures” with reformist leaders, including members of the Khomeini and Rafsanjani families, in exchange for help quelling protests in late October and possibly early November, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. [2] Other senior regime officials, including Mojtaba Khamenei, Judiciary Chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei, and Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi have met with reformist politicians in recent days as well. [3] If true, it is noteworthy that Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has seemingly not yet agreed to meet with reformists given that many of his counterparts across the Islamic Republic have. A prominent journal published by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) furthermore responded positively on November 21 to former reformist President Mohammad Khatami’s calls for dialogue to address protester grievances. [4]

Khamenei has conversely rejected reformist outreach. Mohammad Ali Abtahi—who is a close political associate of Khatami—stated on November 26 that Khatami wrote a letter to Khamenei about the protests. [5] Abtahi added that “there is no sign that [Khamenei] has considered” the letter. Khamenei’s apparent rejection of Khatami may indicate a divide between the supreme leader and some of his subordinates over how to engage the reformists. One should not overstate any such potential disagreement, however. It is highly unlikely that any senior regime officials considering cooperation with reformists would disobey or ignore Khamenei’s orders.

Many regime officials support Khamenei’s uncompromising stance toward the protests, on the other hand. IRGC Deputy Commander Brigadier General Ali Fadavi expressed implicit support for the regime using more brutality in the protest crackdown on November 21. [6] Some hardline media outlets have similarly called for security forces to use less restraint against protesters. [7] This rhetoric indicates that at least some regime circles prefer more repression rather than limited reform.

**President Ebrahim Raisi visited members of the Basij special forces on November 25, confirming their involvement in the protest crackdown.** [8] Raisi met with members of the Basij Fatehin battalions and lauded their role in protest suppression. [9] The Fatehin battalions are Basij special forces that have suppressed previous protest waves and deployed to Syria to fight for despot Bashar al Assad. [10] These forces operate sniper elements. [11] The Basij has established Fatehin units in every province, according to IRGC-affiliated media. [12]

Protests centered primarily around universities on November 25, highlighting once again the different demographics that comprise the protest movement. This movement includes university and high school students, minority communities in the border regions, urban elite, and many more. Each of these demographics has led the protests at a different point in this movement, granting it an impressive degree of resilience.

Protest coordinators and organizations have called for protests throughout Iran from December 5 to 7.[13]

#### Key Takeaways

- Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei publicly rejected the possibility of compromise or reform to placate the ongoing protests. Khamenei may have meant to use his speech to signal to other senior regime officials his disapproval of cooperating with reformists to quell the protests.
- President Ebrahim Raisi visited members of the Basij special forces on November 25, confirming their involvement in the protest crackdown.
- Protest coordinators and organizations have called for protests throughout Iran from December 5 to 7.
- Protests centered primarily around universities, highlighting once again the different demographics that comprise the protest movement
- At least 15 protests took place in four cities across four provinces.
- Dozens of local leaders from Baneh, Kurdistan Province issued a video statement condemning the regime crackdown and expressing support for the protesters.
- Iranian-backed militants fired two rockets at US patrol base in Hasaka Province, Syria.

#### Anti-Regime Protests

At least 15 protests took place in four cities across four provinces. CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 26:

**Note:** CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and protests as over one thousand.

#### **Karaj, Alborz Province[14]**

- Crowd Size: Small

#### **Karaj, Alborz Province[15]**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Demographic: Kharazami University of Karaj students
- Regime Repression: Security personnel filmed protesters

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province[16]**

- Crowd Size: Small

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province[17]**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Demographic: Esfahan University of Technology students

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province[18]**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Protest Type: Strike and protest
- Demographic: Steel workers

#### **Alvand, Ghazvin Province[19]**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Protest Type: Strike and protest
- Demographic: Industrial workers

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[20]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protest Type: Strike and protest
- Protester Activity: Fire lit in street
- Demographic: Automobile workers

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[21]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Amir Kabir University of Technology students

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[22]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: University of Science and Culture students

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[23]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Allameh Tabataba'i University students

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[24]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: University of Tehran students

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[25]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Kharazami University of Tehran students

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[26]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protest Activity: Fires lit in street

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[27]**

- Crowd Size: Small

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 26:

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province[28]**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protest Activity: Sit in
- Demographic: Sharif University of Technology students



Dozens of local leaders from Baneh, Kurdistan Province issued a video statement condemning the regime crackdown and expressing support for the protesters on November 26.[29] These individuals showed their faces allowing their easy identification and risking regime punishment for their actions. This statement is similar to previous video statement from several dozen Sunni clerics and religious leaders in Kurdistan Province expressing support for the protesters on November 21.[30]

#### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

Iranian-backed militants fired two rockets at US patrol base in Hasaka Province, Syria on November 25.[31] The attack caused no casualties or damage.[32] CTP previously reported that likely Iranian-backed militants conducted a rocket attack on US forces in northeastern Syria on November

17.[33] The IRGC likely directed these attacks to expel US forces from the region and also to respond to Washington's perceived role in stoking protests.

- [1] [https://twitter.com/fresh\\_sadegh/status/1596494118934511622](https://twitter.com/fresh_sadegh/status/1596494118934511622)
- [2] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-protests-government-mahsa-amini-116691...>
- [3] <https://www.iranintl.com/202211241814>
- [4] <https://amwaj.media/media-monitor/irgc-media-hint-at-dialogue-facilitate...>
- [5] <https://eslahatnews dot com/%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%B7%D8%AD%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%87-%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%A8%D9%87-%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A8%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AF>
- [6] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-22>
- [7] <https://amwaj.media/media-monitor/iranian-conservatives-demand-harsher-c...>
- [8] [www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/05/2811995](http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/05/2811995)
- [9] [www.president dot ir/fa/140988](http://www.president dot ir/fa/140988)
- [10] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Whatever-it-t...>
- [11] <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/10/irgc-to-expand-basij-spe...>
- [12] [www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536](http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1399/01/31/2240536)
- [13] <https://twitter.com/OutFarsi/status/1596515145114607616?s=20&t=twJQwoPLA...>
- [14] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596568134403690498?s=20&t=twJQwoPLA...> ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1596579365235486722?s=20&t=FzbzUR...> ; [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596575990410784769?s=20&t=FzbzUR...](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596575990410784769?s=20&t=FzbzUR...)
- [15] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596536215918067714?s=20&t=vezDyf...> ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596535690396946436?s=20&t=7-SQ1...> ; <https://twitter.com/vaasnaaa/status/1596576191531700227?s=20&t=7-SQ1a3i...> ; [https://twitter.com/Sahand\\_Ava/status/1596542232013987840?s=20&t=7-SQ1a...](https://twitter.com/Sahand_Ava/status/1596542232013987840?s=20&t=7-SQ1a...) ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596531234737364993?s=20&t=pLceLPfPp...>
- [16] <https://twitter.com/VIsfehan/status/1596549802598322176?s=20&t=twJQwoPLA...>
- [17] <https://twitter.com/VOAfarsi/status/1596595898875641857?s=20&t=qHRlekkB...> ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596454978499010562?s=20&t=qHRle...>
- [18] [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596464333696819200?s=20&t=XoJ5uR...](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596464333696819200?s=20&t=XoJ5uR...) ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596575891550871552?s=20&t=XoJ5uR...> ; <https://twitter.com/Lajbaz57/status/1596594539073970176?s=20&t=XoJ5uRym-...> ; <https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1596460936793305089?s=20&t=XoJ5...> ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596437215315480576?s=20&t=XoJ5uR...>
- [19] <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1596434826197966849?s=20&t=oP4XA...> ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596435023905067015?s=20&t=THwBzum2L...> ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596430803407339522?s=20&t=THwBzum2L...> ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596448393932390401?s=20&t=THwBzum2L...>
- [20] [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596434789854240768?s=20&t=INwjh...](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596434789854240768?s=20&t=INwjh...)
- [21] [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596432928405606400?s=20&t=PA8h05...](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596432928405606400?s=20&t=PA8h05...) ; <https://twitter.com/nikimahjoub/status/1596491486191030276?s=20&t=PA8h05...> ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596411580362952705?s=20&t=noWe62...>
- [22] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596443658903076865?s=20&t=CET0NNX...> ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596454346811662336?s=20&t=CET0NNX...>

[s=20&t=twJQwo... ; https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1596456399135207425?](#)  
[s=20&t=CET0NN... ; https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1596464649641332741?](#)  
[s=20&t=CET0...](#)

[23] [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596537100932874240?](#)  
[s=20&t=twJQwo... ; https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1596524497623924736?s=20&t=A5PivXCbl...](#)

[24] [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596538208250126336?](#)  
[s=20&t=C5zhan... ; https://twitter.com/indypersian/status/1596527693213978627?](#)  
[s=20&t=C5zhan... ; https://twitter.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1596541262571659264?s=20&t=C5...](#)

[25] [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596534433233920001?](#)  
[s=20&t=twJQwo... ; https://twitter.com/VOAfarsi/status/1596602191107616768?](#)  
[s=20&t=pLceLPFpP... ; https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1596509170076995584?](#)  
[s=20&t=pLceLPFpP...](#)

[26] [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1596584413072089088?](#)  
[s=20&t=twJQwo... ; https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596581290333331456?](#)  
[s=20&t=twJQwoP... ; https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596581121608716289?s=20&t=H9H0IOt...](#)

[27] [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596582204783697921?](#)  
[s=20&t=U4yatR... ; https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596582505288695810?](#)  
[s=20&t=qHRrle... ; https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1596589724197654528?s=20&t=U4yatR4dx...](#)

[28] [https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1596473265475981312?](#)  
[s=20&t=dfllu... ; https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596430591511375872?s=20&t=4mclTk...](#)

[29] [https://twitter.com/Kolbarnews/status/1596574986055356416](#)

[30] [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-21](#)

[31] [https://www.syriahr dot com/en/277597/](#)

[32] [https://twitter.com/CENTCOM/status/1596277600036470784](#)

[33] [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-17](#)

## Tags

Iran Project

### File Attachments:



Protest Map - 26 NOV.png

Like 12





**Iran Crisis Update, November 27**  
**Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Zachary Coles, and Frederick W. Kagan**  
**November 27, 5:00 pm ET**

**The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).**

**Iranian protest organization groups may be reinforcing their organizational capabilities as protest activity entered a relative lull over the past several days.** The Neighborhood Youth of Karaj issued a statement on November 26 suggesting that nation-wide calls for protests on November 24-26, which failed to significantly increase protest turnout, were poorly coordinated. The group stated that it had endorsed calls for protests on these dates but was not responsible for organizing them. Its statement suggested, in fact, that at least one such call that was attributed to it was a fake.

Calls for protests on November 24-26 suggested that protesters congregate in large crowds on pre-designated streets.<sup>1</sup> The advance notice would have likely provided security personnel with ample time to prepare, thereby increasing the risk to protest participants as CTP previously observed.<sup>2</sup> Calls for large crowds concentrated in a single location would have additionally decreased the effectiveness of the protests, as the scattered nature of anti-regime demonstrations has strained security forces' limited bandwidth over the past several weeks. The Neighborhood Youth of Karaj's hints that unknown actors published a call for more dangerous and less effective protests in its name raise the possibility that pro-regime actors might be attempting to shape protest efforts in ways that would facilitate regime crackdowns, although the group makes no such accusation. It is also possible that some other group or individual sympathetic to the protest movement issued the "fake" call unwisely but without ill intent.

The Neighborhood Youth of Karaj added that its organization consisted of field leaders and researchers who carefully selected protest dates and locations, suggesting that some anti-regime protest groups have established organizational structures.<sup>3</sup> The group's statement endorsed calls for protests on December 5-7, possibly providing the group with

enough time to regenerate necessary organizational capabilities and/or supplies. Another anti-regime social media user that frequently circulates calls for protests urged protesters to practice patience, start recruiting members, and collect ammunition in preparation for the next protest wave.<sup>4</sup>

**Regime and IRGC media channels published a video threatening to attack Azerbaijan using rhetoric similar to that used about Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War.** IRGC media channels posted “first we take Baku and then Jerusalem” alongside the video of a notional highway running from Iran to Israel via Azerbaijan (there is no such highway, of course).<sup>5</sup> The video includes text asking “where does the road to Jerusalem pass?”<sup>6</sup> The Iranian regime and IRGC have repeatedly published anti-Azerbaijan messaging that blames the Azerbaijani government for instigating unrest in Iran, as CTP has previously reported.<sup>7</sup> The November 27 video, however, alludes to an IRGC rhetorical refrain during the Iran-Iraq war that the Iranian regime used to justify mobilization for a ground offensive into Iraq late in the war: “the road to Jerusalem passes through Karbala.”<sup>8</sup> The phrase linked the Iranian offensive, part of Iran’s military operations against Saddam Hussein’s 1980 invasion, with the Islamic Republic of Iran’s express mission to export the Islamic revolution and ultimately liberate Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> Parallel messaging in the November 27, 2022 video suggests that elements of the regime are setting conditions to rally IRGC personnel to defend Iran against a similar attack supposedly perpetrated by Azerbaijan, presumably referring to the ongoing protests. The video’s appropriation of the “road to Jerusalem” line likely resonates with IRGC personnel, especially senior officers who fought during the Iran-Iraq war.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Iranian protest organization groups may be reinforcing their organizational capabilities as protest activity entered a relative lull over the past several days.**
- **At least six protests took place in four cities across four provinces on November 27.**
- **IRGC Commander Hossein Salami warned Israel, Saudi Arabia, the US and the UK against supporting anti-regime protests in a speech to Basij members in Sistan and Baluchistan Province.**
- **Regime and IRGC media channels published a video threatening to attack Azerbaijan using rhetoric common during the Iran-Iraq War.**
- **Cultural and parliamentary entities have proposed legal measures to expedite the suppression of protesters and reward elite members of the regime.**
- **Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Shia Al Sudani will travel to Tehran on November 29 ostensibly to mediate tensions between Iran and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least six protests took place in four cities across four provinces.** CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 27:

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>10</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fires lit in street

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>11</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Sharif University of Technology students
- Protest Type: Sit-in with signs

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>12</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Allameh Tabataba'i University students

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 27:

#### **Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>13</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protester Activity: Fires lit in street

#### **Ghazvin City, Ghazvin Province<sup>14</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small to medium
- Demographic: Textile workers
- Protest Type: Strike and protest

#### **Abadan, Ilam Province<sup>15</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Regime Repression: Security forces fired tear gas and bullets
- Protester Activity: Fires lit in street

**Note: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and protests as over one thousand.**



**Social media users documented strikes—specifically among truck drivers—throughout Iran on November 26 and 27.** Footage purportedly showed trucker strike activity in several cities, including Shiraz, Fars Province; Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan Province; and unidentified locations in Esfahan, Ghazvin, Kermanshah, and Tehran Provinces.<sup>16</sup>

**IRGC Commander Hossein Salami visited Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 27.** Salami warned Israel, Saudi Arabia, the US and the UK against supporting anti-regime protests in a speech directed at Basij members in Zahedan. Salami praised Sistan and Baluchistan residents and echoed regime rhetoric blaming ongoing protests on foreign actors inciting unrest through soft power tactics.<sup>17</sup> Salami's visit coincides with large-scale protest activity following Friday prayer sermons in Zahedan and other provincial cities for the past several weeks.<sup>18</sup>

**Cultural and parliamentary entities have proposed legal measures that would expedite protester arrests and empower elite members of the regime.** The Iranian health and science ministers approved a policy that facilitates disciplinary action for acts of dissidence, including “insulting Islamic or national rituals” and makes students liable for participating in university protests on November 27.<sup>19</sup> The Parliamentary Research Committee similarly drafted a plan that would intensify sentences relating to espionage or cooperation with “hostile” foreign governments. The plan reportedly specified that cooperating with anti-regime actors—including foreign

governments, think tanks, media outlets, and economic institutions—constituted “corruption on earth,” a crime punishable by death in the Islamic penal code. The plan conversely proposed that officials sanctioned or “persecuted” by malign foreign actors were eligible to receive benefits historically reserved for veterans.<sup>20</sup> Regime officials sanctioned by the US and the European Union are overwhelmingly members of the regime elite, many of whom benefit from regime corruption, and this plan would only further enrich and reward them even as ordinary Iranians suffer from the structural economic woes made worse by some of these sanctioned individuals. A Parliamentary Digital Economy Taskforce additionally ratified a plan that provides pre-verified, pro-regime digital actors with high-speed internet access on November 27.<sup>21</sup>

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Shia Al Sudani will travel to Tehran on November 29 to mediate tensions between Iran and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).** KRG Prime Minister Masrour Barzani and KRG President Nechirvan Barzani met with Iraqi and US-led International Coalition officials on November 27, closing out the diplomatic campaign they began by meeting with a plethora of Iraqi officials and political actors on November 22. The KRG likely seeks Baghdad’s support in halting Turkish and IRGC attacks in Iraqi Kurdistan, as well as deterring Iran from the ground invasion into Iraqi Kurdistan that it has repeatedly threatened to conduct. Prime Minister Masrour Barzani met with International Coalition Deputy Commander General Andrew Gardner likely to request additional diplomatic pressure on Turkey to halt its air campaign into Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>22</sup> Gardner and Barzani may also have discussed efforts to halt the IRGC attacks. President Nechirvan Barzani likewise met with Sudani, likely to request his support in negotiating with the Iranians.<sup>23</sup> Iraqi National Security Adviser Qassem Al Araji announced after the meeting that Sudani will travel to Tehran on September 29 to help defuse Iranian-KRG tensions.<sup>24</sup>

---

1

[%20https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1595341576603336706/photo/1](https://twitter.com/javanane_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-25>

<sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1596610159035416577](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1596610159035416577)

<sup>4</sup> <https://twitter.com/arixolin/status/1596405516640874497?s=20&t=uWoG9bK68cGGQb4E85bogg>

<sup>5</sup> <https://twitter.com/BeniSabti/status/1596887147549626369?s=20&t=2wKHUw8vUPbHm5OjlmLwtA>

<sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/BeniSabti/status/1596887147549626369?s=20&t=2wKHUw8vUPbHm5OjlmLwtA>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-19>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cna.org/archive/CNA\\_Files/pdf/cop-2013-u-005291-final.pdf](https://www.cna.org/archive/CNA_Files/pdf/cop-2013-u-005291-final.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.cna.org/archive/CNA\\_Files/pdf/cop-2013-u-005291-final.pdf](https://www.cna.org/archive/CNA_Files/pdf/cop-2013-u-005291-final.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596933822431436800?s=20&t=x1eoUQ46KrsORDO-32c19A>

<sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596809095050240000?s=20&t=uWoG9bK68cGGQb4E85bogg>

<sup>12</sup> <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1596822392940089344?s=20&t=klakolbTZ9zKiHx6wtaxyQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/VOAfarsi/status/1596866107461095424?s=20&t=klakolbTZ9zKiHx6wtaxyQ>  
<sup>13</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596845527097671680?s=20&t=ISMng1AC5-kKZW5W4BogNQ> ;  
[https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1596860374392807424?s=20&t=-LJYx1xc8QAHnod-ThESg](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1596860374392807424?s=20&t=-LJYx1xc8QAHnod-ThESg)

<sup>14</sup>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596942609267974145?s=20&t=uWoG9bK68cGGQb4E85bogg>

<sup>15</sup>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596923652074676224?s=20&t=uWoG9bK68cGGQb4E85bogg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Javanmardi75/status/1594031025167941639?s=20&t=utk63WsyHt8PbYcwq6nmQ>

<sup>16</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596797972523597824?s=20&t=wzeMpY8wqFzhS2M6G-Q-mA> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596894074287656962?s=20&t=AjKoGHcTmCjXeT4DUaaqNQ> ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596863740527357953?s=20&t=QBJ0Nn-jAS7CTMKRIOGkMA> ;  
[https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1596844639172321280?s=20&t=oNplkU\\_e0OknEI54ENq0oQ](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1596844639172321280?s=20&t=oNplkU_e0OknEI54ENq0oQ) ;  
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596821137723256832?s=20&t=uWoG9bK68cGGQb4E85bogg> ;  
<https://twitter.com/AmirToumaj/status/1596904687332077570?s=20&t=uWoG9bK68cGGQb4E85bogg>

<sup>17</sup> <https://tn.dot.ai/2812589>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-25>

<sup>19</sup> <https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/110491-%D8%AA%D8%BA%DB%8C%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%A2%DB%8C%DB%8C%D9%86%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B6%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B7%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%AC%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A6%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%B4%D8%AF/> ;  
[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=newssearch&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiz9erQrM\\_7AhXwFFkFHdNbAbAQxfQBKAB6BAGlEAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eghtesadnews.com%2F%25D8%25A8%25D8%25AE%25D8%25B4-%25D8%25A7%25D8%25AE%25D8%25A8%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B1-%25D8%25B3%25D8%25A7%25DB%258C%25D8%25B1-%25D8%25B1%25D8%25B3%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586%25D9%2587-%25D9%2587%25D8%25A7-61%2F537653-%25D8%25A7%25D8%25A8%25D9%2584%25D8%25A7%25D8%25BA-%25D8%25AC%25D8%25AF%25DB%258C%25D8%25AF%25D8%25AA%25D8%25B1%25DB%258C%25D9%2586-%25D8%25B4%25DB%258C%25D9%2588%25D9%2587-%25D9%2586%25D8%25A7%25D9%2585%25D9%2587-%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586%25D8%25B6%25D8%25A8%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B7%25DB%258C-%25D8%25AF%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586%25D8%25B4%25D8%25AC%25D9%2588%25DB%258C%25DB%258C&usg=AOvVaw3UJel60nrgvvEbtatxDUif](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=newssearch&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiz9erQrM_7AhXwFFkFHdNbAbAQxfQBKAB6BAGlEAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eghtesadnews.com%2F%25D8%25A8%25D8%25AE%25D8%25B4-%25D8%25A7%25D8%25AE%25D8%25A8%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B1-%25D8%25B3%25D8%25A7%25DB%258C%25D8%25B1-%25D8%25B1%25D8%25B3%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586%25D9%2587-%25D9%2587%25D8%25A7-61%2F537653-%25D8%25A7%25D8%25A8%25D9%2584%25D8%25A7%25D8%25BA-%25D8%25AC%25D8%25AF%25DB%258C%25D8%25AF%25D8%25AA%25D8%25B1%25DB%258C%25D9%2586-%25D8%25B4%25DB%258C%25D9%2588%25D9%2587-%25D9%2586%25D8%25A7%25D9%2585%25D9%2587-%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586%25D8%25B6%25D8%25A8%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B7%25DB%258C-%25D8%25AF%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586%25D8%25B4%25D8%25AC%25D9%2588%25DB%258C%25DB%258C&usg=AOvVaw3UJel60nrgvvEbtatxDUif)

<sup>20</sup>

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=newssearch&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjyq8G4sM\\_7AhWQKVkFHfkaAAwMQxfQBKAB6BAGHEAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.etemadonline.com%2F%25D8%25A8%25D8%25AE%25D8%25B4-%25D8%25B3%25DB%258C%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B3%25DB%258C-9%2F584355-%25D8%25A7%25DB%258C%25D8%25AB%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B1%25DA%25AF%25D8%25B1%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586-%25D8%25AA%25D8%25AD%25D8%25B1%25DB%258C%25D9%2585-%25D8%25B4%25D8%25AF%25D9%2587&usg=AOvVaw31gpKH3bVKChqUY3UoDA](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=newssearch&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjyq8G4sM_7AhWQKVkFHfkaAAwMQxfQBKAB6BAGHEAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.etemadonline.com%2F%25D8%25A8%25D8%25AE%25D8%25B4-%25D8%25B3%25DB%258C%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B3%25DB%258C-9%2F584355-%25D8%25A7%25DB%258C%25D8%25AB%25D8%25A7%25D8%25B1%25DA%25AF%25D8%25B1%25D8%25A7%25D9%2586-%25D8%25AA%25D8%25AD%25D8%25B1%25DB%258C%25D9%2585-%25D8%25B4%25D8%25AF%25D9%2587&usg=AOvVaw31gpKH3bVKChqUY3UoDA)

<sup>21</sup>

<https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmedia.dotic.ir%2Fuploads%2Forg%2F2022%2F11%2F26%2F166946901299771400.pdf&data=05%7C01%7C%7C14e9e8ec4d324256044108dad07f6c06%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638051542928498801%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWJi>

---

oiMC4wLjAwMDAilCjQljoiv2luMzliLCjBTii6Ik1haWwiLCjXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jF3enWcJT7JUK%2FmPqY4iZoq3TlrAL0xjdGVK3QR3DPs%3D&reserved=0

<sup>22</sup> [https://www dot shafaq dot](https://www.dotshafaq.com/ar/%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%80%D9%80%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9---%D8%B9%D8%B3%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A)

[com/ar/%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%80%D9%80%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9---%D8%B9%D8%B3%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A](https://www.dotshafaq.com/ar/%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%80%D9%80%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9---%D8%B9%D8%B3%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%82%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A)

<sup>23</sup> [https://www dot rudawarabia dot net/arabic/kurdistan/271120224](https://www.dotrudawarabia.net/arabic/kurdistan/271120224); [https://www dot rudawarabia dot net/arabic/kurdistan/271120224](https://www.dotrudawarabia.net/arabic/kurdistan/271120224)

<sup>24</sup> [https://www dot rudawarabia dot net/arabic/middleeast/iraq/271120224](https://www.dotrudawarabia.net/arabic/middleeast/iraq/271120224)

## Iran Crisis Update, November 28

Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, Zachary Coles, Johanna Moore, Dana Alexander Gray, Amin Soltani,  
and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 28, 5:00 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

**Social media users circulated calls for protests following the US-Iran world cup match on November 29 although it is unclear to what extent these demonstrations will materialize.** Some protest organization groups and other prominent social media users circulated calls for protests on November 29, possibly in an attempt to coopt or challenge pro-regime celebrations on city streets.[1] Some social media users disagreed with the November 29 call to protests and highlighted pre-organized protests scheduled for December 5-7.[2] Another anti-regime social media user circulated ways to support the protest movement until demonstrations resume on December 5, further suggesting that protesters remain focused on unrest planned for December 5-7.[3] The Neighborhood Youth of Karaj protest organization similarly alluded to requiring more time to reinforce its organizational capabilities and supplies before protests resume on December 5, as CTP previously reported.[4] Recent social media activity from groups purporting to be protest organizations suggest diverging approaches to coordinating unrest, one of which calls for large crowds and emphasizes continuous protest activity, the other of which seemingly requires more time and preparation. This rhetorical schism could indicate that protest organization groups remain primarily local and lack a coherent, nation-wide structure.

**Anti-regime Black Reward hacker group claimed to have leaked a conversation between Basij Deputy Commander Ghassem Ghoureishi and state-affiliated media actors referencing intra-regime fissures over ongoing protests.** Black Reward claimed a cyberattack on IRGC-affiliated Fars News Agency's website on November 25, which Fars later confirmed.[5] The recorded discussion between Ghoureishi and his subordinates purportedly originated from Fars' digital archives. The two-and-a-half-hour-long audio file confirmed extensive protest activity and other acts of defiance on November 15, including significant strikes in 22 of Iran's 31 provinces and almost complete store closures in Tehran city. Ghoureishi additionally stated that Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani, President Ebrahim Raisi, and Judiciary Chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei separately met with reformists at unspecified dates, possibly corroborating prior reporting that senior Iranian officials had met with prominent reformists to discuss strategies to quell ongoing unrest.[6] The audio file also referenced directives allegedly given by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to violently crack down on dissent. One of the speakers noted that Khamenei complained that members of the Expediency Discernment Council—a council that mediates between regime entities and advises the supreme leader—had failed to condemn demonstrations and separately warned LEC Commander Hossein Ashtari against failing to sufficiently suppress protests. The conversation similarly included referenced waning morale among security personnel.[7]

Black Reward has previously described itself as a group of anti-regime Iranian hackers who support the Mahsa Amini protest movement, although no entity has been able to confirm the group's identity nor the veracity of their information.[8] The group previously claimed to have hacked sensitive information relating to the Iranian nuclear program on October 21.[9] CTP cannot authenticate Black Reward's leaked audio file. The conversation does allude to intra-regime fractures congruent with CTP's prior reporting and assessments, however, and is completely plausible if not verifiable. CTP does not regard this audio file as independent confirmation of previous assessments, however, as it has not been authenticated by any reputable actor.

**The Iranian regime is coordinating with Qatari officials to suppress public acts of defiance among Iranians in Doha, including members of the Iranian national football team.** An anonymous FIFA security official told CNN that IRGC members chastised Iranian players for failing to sing

the national anthem in the November 21 match against England, suggesting that Qatar either assisted with or permitted IRGC extraterritorial operations in Doha. The source added that Iranian officials had threatened to torture the family members of Iran team players who demonstrated sympathy with anti-regime protesters and forbade them from interacting with foreigners.<sup>[10]</sup> *The New York Times* similarly reported on November 21 that Qatari officials banned Iranian fans from attending matches if they possessed pre-1979 Iranian flags, further corroborating reports of Qatari-Iranian cooperation to suppress anti-regime activity in Doha.<sup>[11]</sup> Anti-regime outlet *Iran International* additionally published a November 27 report claiming that Iranian and Qatari officials secretly coordinated to control which Iranians attend the World Cup matches.<sup>[12]</sup> The November 27 report included the leaked Black Reward audio file allegedly featuring Ghoureishi, wherein an official claimed that Basij officials had identified over 500 "counterrevolutionaries" attending the tournament.<sup>[13]</sup> Ghoureishi claimed that Qatari officials promised to prevent Iranian attendees from displaying pre-1979 flags and engaging in other acts of dissent.<sup>[14]</sup>

## **Key Takeaways**

- **Social media users circulated calls for protests following the US-Iran world cup match on November 29, although it is unclear to what extent these demonstrations will materialize.**
- **The anti-regime Black Reward hacker group claimed to have leaked a conversation between Basij Deputy Commander Ghassem Ghoureishi and state-affiliated media actors referencing intra-regime fissures over ongoing protests.**
- **The Iranian regime is coordinating with Qatari officials to suppress public acts of defiance among Iranians in Doha, including members of the Iranian national football team.**
- **At least 10 protests took place in six cities across six provinces on November 28.**
- **Social media users documented trucker strikes throughout Iran for the third consecutive day.**
- **IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Amir Ali Haji Zadeh announced that over 300 protesters and security personnel have died since anti-regime protests began on September 16, although this number is almost certainly higher.**
- **The Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) has stationed security forces at the Iran-Iraq border, decreasing the likelihood of an IRGC ground incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan.**

## **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least 10 protests took place in six cities across six provinces.** CTP assesses with high to moderate confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 28:

### **Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>[15]</sup>**

Size: Small

Demographic: Industrial workers

Protest Type: Strike and protest, third consecutive day

### **Karaj, Alborz Province<sup>[16]</sup>**

Size: Small

Demographic: High school students

### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>[17]</sup>**

Size: Medium

Demographic: Industrial workers

Protest Type: Strike and protest, third consecutive day

**Tehran City, Tehran Province[18]**

Size: Small

Demographic: Tehran University of Art and Practical Arts University students

**Tehran City, Tehran Province[19]**

Size: Small

Demographic: Allameh Tabataba'i University students

**Tehran City, Tehran Province[20]**

Size: Small to medium

Demographic: Shahid Beheshti University students

**Tehran City, Tehran Province[21]**

Size: Small

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 28:

**Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province[22]**

Size: Small to medium

Demographic: Technical University of Kermanshah students

**Sabzevar, Khorasan Razavi Province[23]**

Size: Small

Demographic: Hakim Sabzevari University students and professors

Notes: Photos and uncorroborated reports, no available footage

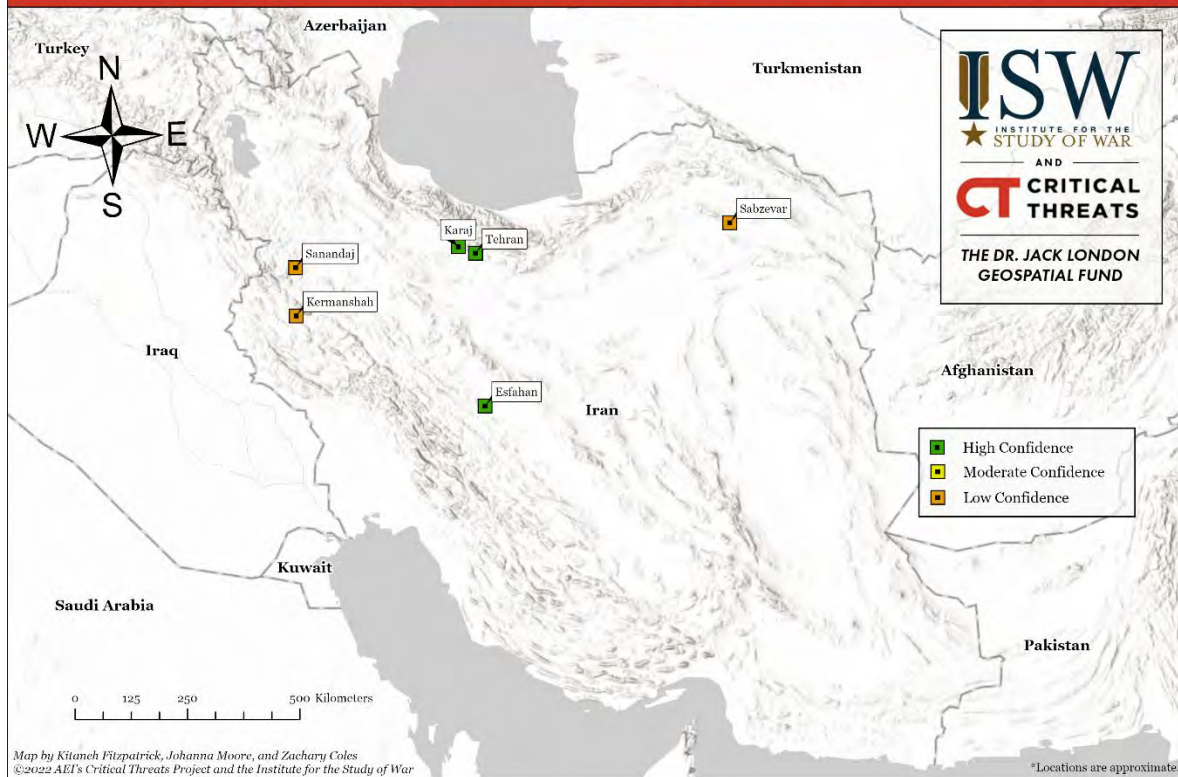
**Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province [24]**

Size: Undetermined

Protester Activity: Fire lit in street

**Note: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and protests as over one thousand.**

## Protest Activity in Iran as of November 28, 5:00 PM ET



**Social media users documented trucker strikes throughout Iran for the third consecutive day.** Some reported strike locations include Esfahan, Ghazvin, Hamadan, Kermanshah, Kurdistan, Lorestan, and Yazd Provinces.<sup>[25]</sup>

**The Iranian Judiciary released approximately 709 detained protestors under Judiciary Chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei's November 26 clemency order.**<sup>[26]</sup> Ejei clarified on November 27 that detainees must express "remorse" in order to receive leniency, and Ejei's order excludes protest leaders and protestors accused of arson or assault.<sup>[27]</sup>

**IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Amir Ali Haji Zadeh announced that over 300 protestors and security personnel have died since anti-regime protests began on September 16, marking the first official death toll in over two months.**<sup>[28]</sup> A state-run broadcaster last announced 41 protest-related deaths on September 22.<sup>[29]</sup> The current death toll is still likely higher than the figure presented by Haji Zadeh, however. An Iranian human rights organization placed the total death toll from the Mahsa Amini protest wave at 451 on November 28.<sup>[30]</sup>

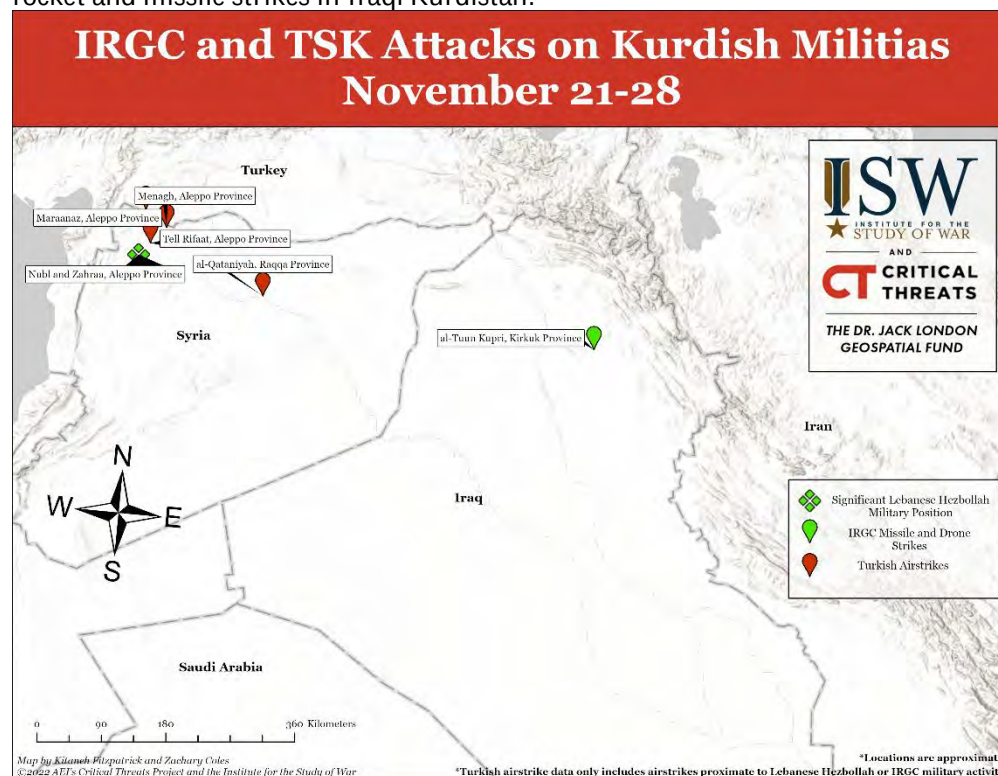
**Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei met with senior commanders of the Artesh Navy on November 28 to commemorate a naval holiday.** Khamenei's speech was focused on naval operations and did not mention ongoing, anti-regime protests.<sup>[31]</sup>

**IRGC-affiliated media reported that unidentified attackers shot and killed Basij Organization member Reza Dastani with an unspecified firearm in Esfahan City, Esfahan Province on November 28.**<sup>[32]</sup>

### Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments

**The Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) has stationed security forces at the Iran-Iraq border, decreasing the likelihood of an IRGC ground incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan.** Commander of the KRG 2nd Border Guard Brigade, Brigadier General Goran Saleh Khaled, announced on November 28 that security forces have deployed to positions along the Iran-Iraqi Kurdistan border.[33] IRGC Quds Force Commander Esmail Ghaani allegedly threatened that Iran would conduct ground operations into Iraqi Kurdistan unless Baghdad sends Iraqi military forces—notably not Kurdish military forces—to secure the border region, as CTP has previously reported.[34] Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanani released a statement on November 28 welcoming “official forces” along the Iran-Iraq border, however Baghdad-based *Al Mada* reported that Tehran is unhappy with the decision to station Kurdish forces on the border.[35]

The KRG deployment does not appear to meet Ghaani’s reported demands and may have angered Iranian officials, but it likely will decrease the prospect of the IRGC conducting ground operations against anti-regime Kurdish militants allegedly operating in Iraqi Kurdistan. The sizable KRG deployment and unfavorable terrain along the border make an IRGC ground operation unlikely to succeed. Armored and special forces units from the IRGC Ground Forces deployed to unspecified locations in northwestern and western Iran on November 25, as CTP has previously reported.[36] The deployment, however, is likely intended to aid in protest suppression in Iran’s restive Kurdish regions and to serve as additional leverage in negotiating with Baghdad and Erbil.[37] Iran may accuse Iraqi Kurdish forces of being ineffective in order to pressure the Iraqi government into security concessions to gain concessions and justify additional rocket and missile strikes in Iraqi Kurdistan.



[1] <https://twitter.com/Shahinlooo/status/1597218078659874816?s=20&t=tLewy0FV6fJjtD7admMYFg> ; <https://twitter.com/JavananBoushehr/status/1597304444420784129?s=20&t=7izahXtcqyGWPrDg0sbmnA> ; <https://twitter.com/Shahinlooo/status/1597218078659874816?s=20&t=cHElV4Oh36yfDpHEczlkjw> ; [https://twitter.com/Javanan\\_mashhad/status/1597221388477419521?s=20&t=tLewy0FV6fJjtD7admMYFg](https://twitter.com/Javanan_mashhad/status/1597221388477419521?s=20&t=tLewy0FV6fJjtD7admMYFg)

[2] <https://twitter.com/ArmiNoza/status/1597266036591845377?s=20&t=KhIY7nl0oQ9WaDYUrJUoRg> ; <https://twitter.com/shotorifeshari/status/1597258725081116673?s=20&t=KhIY7nl0oQ9WaDYUrJUoRg> ;

[3] <https://twitter.com/arixolin/status/1597145727804661760?s=20&t=2lqIMPrP7rbS4HP1kmmAKA>

[4] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-crisis-update-november-27>

[5] <https://twitter.com/KhosroKalbasi/status/1596197794771243008>  
; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-fars-news-agency-hit-by-cyberattacks-blames-israel/>

[6] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-protests-government-mahsa-amini-11669137860>

[7] <https://www.iranintl.com/202211287937>

[8] <https://www.cyberscoop dot com/iran-nuclear-emails-hack-leak-black-reward/>

[9] <https://twitter.com/Natsecjeff/status/1583570154486607872?s=20&t=DQGho3r559VqSnYTuyOM>  
A

[10] <https://www.cnn.com/2022/11/28/football/iran-soccer-family-threats-intl-spt>

[11] <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/21/sports/soccer/iranian-fans-persian-flags-protests-england-game.html>

[12] <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211279876>

[13] <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211279876>; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-21>

[14] <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211279876>

[15] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597190685366812672?s=20&t=VDzeZNbYKx48SysZP0p6t>  
w ; <https://twitter.com/AtenaDaemi/status/1597258567111049216?s=20&t=VDzeZNbYKx48SysZP0p6t>  
w ; <https://twitter.com/indypersian/status/1597270528871796737?s=20&t=VDzeZNbYKx48SysZP0p6t>

[16] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597138328918183936?s=20&t=OpiEtSbzWOTjkg5ZSYZS>  
Q ; <https://twitter.com/CoordinatingA/status/1597248715714367489?s=20&t=OpiEtSbzWOTjkg5ZSYZ>  
SQ

[17] [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597213698715947008?s=20&t=SWeK9\\_WHdOoH3YQ30f](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597213698715947008?s=20&t=SWeK9_WHdOoH3YQ30f)  
S2KA ; [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597221323469881345?s=20&t=SWeK9\\_WHdOoH3YQ](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597221323469881345?s=20&t=SWeK9_WHdOoH3YQ)  
30fS2KA

[18] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597250090401660930?s=20&t=U01o7AWDuX->  
bssOS3qflbw ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1597211025513730048?s=20&t=U01o7AWDuX->  
bssOS3qflbw ; <https://twitter.com/Bidarzani/status/1597225978216198146?s=20&t=U01o7AWDuX->  
bssOS3qflbw ; <https://twitter.com/HassanRonaghi/status/1597212284677685249?s=20&t=U01o7AWDuX->  
X-  
bssOS3qflbw ; <https://twitter.com/indypersian/status/1597215344069951490?s=20&t=U01o7AWDuX->  
bssOS3qflbw

[19] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597246680390602752?s=20&t=FtoisAQcfXyKhDjdqLzVS>  
g ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1597220972922228737?s=20&t=FtoisAQcfXyKhDjdqLzVSg> ;  
[https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1597239861047607302?s=20&t=RIIEBfEafAYI5SRSTeBFwg](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1597239861047607302?s=20&t=RIIEBfEafAYI5SRSTeBFwg)

[20] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597167528274325504?s=20&t=ViJ5bgCeR4z0mSC5C7xE>  
DA ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1597133582853582848?s=20&t=ViJ5bgCeR4z0mSC5C7xE>  
DA ; [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597160331759218689?s=20&t=Idkr0gx87181TBO-](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597160331759218689?s=20&t=Idkr0gx87181TBO-)  
mt9ghw ; [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1597149324407754752?s=20&t=FNKS3m4utKUADNjhg](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1597149324407754752?s=20&t=FNKS3m4utKUADNjhg)  
-FtLg

[21] <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1597300883016278024?s=20&t=FNKS3m4utKUADNjhg->  
FtLg

[22] [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597311146151010304?s=20&t=DsS78a\\_8Wdsd1f9KIBsS7A](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597311146151010304?s=20&t=DsS78a_8Wdsd1f9KIBsS7A)

[23] <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597252205077463041?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT-WdPHj->  
AMg

[24] <https://twitter.com/SrwaZand/status/1597283107136077824?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT-WdPHj->  
AMg ; [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597291308217176064?s=20&t=Idkr0gx87181TBO-](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597291308217176064?s=20&t=Idkr0gx87181TBO-)  
mt9ghw

[25] <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1597249192577089537?s=20&t=alzfhWM2JP3WgiSb5u6ph>  
Q ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597197464804929537?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT-WdPHj->  
AMg ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597264098718547968?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT->  
WdPHj-  
AMg ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597264676249042945?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT->  
WdPHj-AMg ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597207061666103301?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT->  
WdPHj-AMg ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597202919178539011?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT->  
WdPHj-AMg ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/159719686511740416?s=20&t=Zh6VWIYMizcT->

WdPHj-AMg ; <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597265102927167490?s=20&t=Zh6VWlYIMizcT-WdPHj-AMg> ; <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1597139562089922561>

[26] <https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/07/2813405/> آزادی-709 فبر-از-زن‌دین-دارای-شریطه-  
افق‌انتقانی-از-زن‌دان-های-12-سیت‌انگشور

[27] <https://www.isna.ir/news/1401090704339/> افراد-دروغگو-و-مدعی-را-اجتناب‌کرده-و-جهت‌دانتخاب‌خودی-  
مودی‌و-سردار-حاجی‌زادعی‌ش-از-۳۰۰-جان‌باخته-وشی‌دی‌در-قوله-  
انجیر-دایم

[28] <https://shahraraneews.ir/fa/news/137193/>

[29] <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-22/iranian-volunteer-militia-member-killed-by-rioters-irna-says?leadSource=uverify%20wall>

[30] [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1597364824320757760?s=20&t=eQ9L3N5UB8yCBttvljMEGA](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1597364824320757760?s=20&t=eQ9L3N5UB8yCBttvljMEGA)

[31] <https://www.leader.ir/fa/content/26166/> دی‌دارتعدادی-افزوم‌اند-هان‌ثرو-خرای-اتش

[32] <https://www.isna.ir/news/1401090704481/> ترویکی-افیسری-چان‌فخ‌الص‌ف‌ان‌خال‌ش‌برای‌شن‌اسطی‌و-هنگیری  
; [https://t.me/Sepah\\_Ir/73492](https://t.me/Sepah_Ir/73492)

[33] <https://www.kurdistan24.net/fa/story/207846->;  
[https://www.facebook.com/%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%84%D9%89-104446584295199/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%84%D9%89-104446584295199/?ref=page_internal)

[34] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-18>

[35] <https://shafaqdot.com/ar/%D8%B3%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%AD%D8%A8-%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%B1-%D9%82%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D9%83%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86>; <https://almadapaper.net/view.php?cat=279116>

[36] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-25>

[37] <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-25>



## **Iran Crisis Update, November 29**

**Nicholas Carl, Zachary Coles, Johanna Moore, and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 29, 5:30 pm ET**

**The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).**

**Some Iranian protesters celebrated the US victory over Iran in the World Cup on November 29.** Iranians in Alborz, Kermanshah, Kurdistan, and Tehran provinces, among other locations, cheered and gathered during and after the match in opposition to the Iranian national team.<sup>1</sup> Some reportedly launched fireworks in Saghez, Kurdistan Province after the American team scored a goal.<sup>2</sup> CTP cannot assess how widespread this sentiment may be among Iranian protesters, but the reported celebrations indicate how politicized the Iranian national soccer team has become among at least some protesters. Iranian citizens cheering a US victory over Iran underscores the depth of popular frustration against the regime.

**The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and its proxies in Iraq threatened on November 29 to incite conflict and unrest in Saudi Arabia—especially among the Shia population—likely in retaliation for the alleged Saudi role in stoking protests in Iran.** An IRGC-affiliated Telegram channel accused the Saudi government of planning to suppress Shia culture and identity on Tarout Island—an island off the Saudi coast in the Persian Gulf.<sup>3</sup> The Telegram channel reported that Tarout Island is predominantly Shia. Iranian proxy Kataib Hezbollah furthermore called for regional countries “victimized” by Saudi Arabia “to transfer conflict from their countries to the streets of Riyadh.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Some Iranian protesters celebrated the US victory over Iran in the World Cup.**
- **The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and its proxies in Iraq threatened to incite conflict and unrest in Saudi Arabia—especially among the Shia population—likely in retaliation the alleged Saudi role in stoking protests in Iran.**
- **At least nine protests took place in eight cities across seven provinces.**
- **Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continues to inspire public displays of dissent in the Iranian Sunni population.**

- A Basij member died due to an unspecified cause around Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province.
- Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani paid an official visit to Tehran likely to discuss Iranian drone and missile strikes into Iraqi Kurdistan and related security issues with senior Iranian officials.

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least nine protests took place in eight cities across seven provinces on November 29.**

The World Cup match may have reduced protest activity due to many Iranians likely watching the match. CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>5</sup>**

- Size: Small
- Demographic: Medical workers
- Protest Type: Strike and protest

#### **Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan Province<sup>6</sup>**

- Size: Small
- Demographic: Steel workers, truckers
- Protest Type: Strike and protest

#### **Marivan, Kurdistan Province<sup>7</sup>**

- Size: Medium
- Protest Type: Fire lit in street

#### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province<sup>8</sup>**

- Size: Small

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>9</sup>**

- Size: Small
- Demographic: Medical workers

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>10</sup>**

- Size: Small

#### **Ourmia, West Azerbaijan Province<sup>11</sup>**

- Size: Undetermined
- Protest Type: Fire lit in street

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 29:

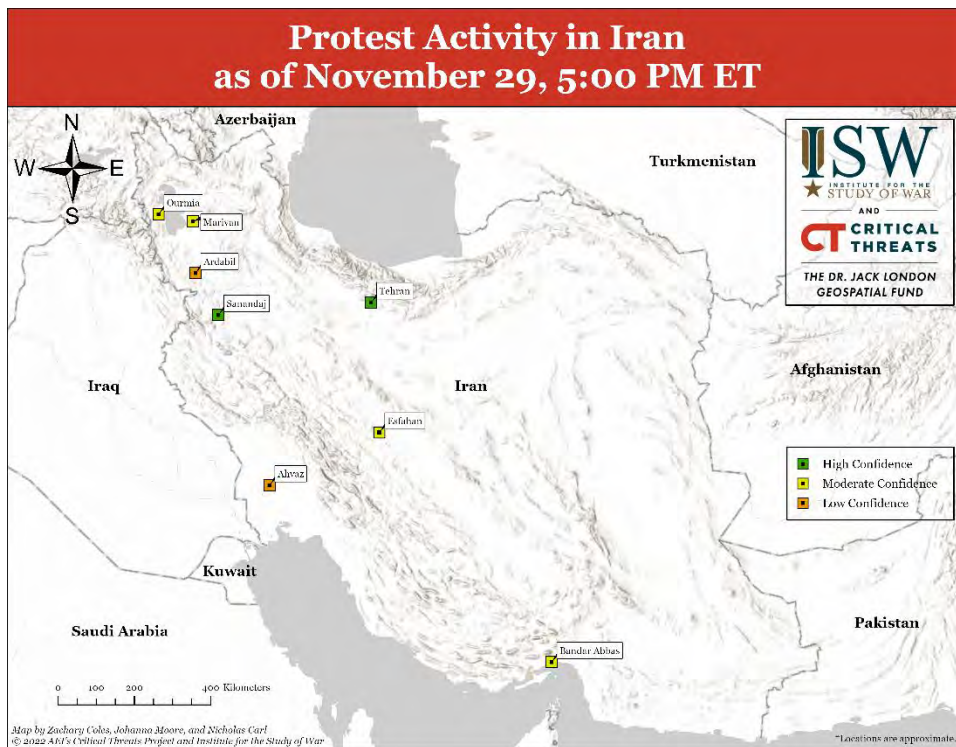
### Ardabil City, Ardabil Province<sup>12</sup>

- Size: Undetermined
- Demographic: Highschool students

### Ahvaz, Khuzestan Province<sup>13</sup>

- Size: Small
- Demographic: Industrial workers

**Note: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and protests as over one thousand.**



**Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continues to inspire public displays of dissent in the Iranian Sunni population.** Dozens of local Sunni religious leaders and scholars from Khash, Mirjaveh, and Taftan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province issued a video statement on November 28 criticizing the regime protest crackdown.<sup>14</sup> The individuals expressed support for Abdol Hamid.<sup>15</sup> This video statement is similar to previous video statements published by Sunni leaders in Kurdistan Province in recent days.<sup>16</sup> It is unclear whether these events are related, but some Sunni Kurdish clerics and religious leaders in their video statements have echoed Abdol Hamid, calling for a referendum on the Islamic Republic.<sup>17</sup>

**Unidentified individuals killed a local clerical leader in a village near Mehrestan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 28.**<sup>18</sup> Iranian state media reported that the death of the cleric was related to a tribal dispute.

**A Basij member died due to an unspecified cause around Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 29.**<sup>19</sup> Anti-regime militants commonly operate around Saravan and may have killed the Basij member. Around 60 security personnel have died since the protests began on September 16.<sup>20</sup>

**The IRGC Intelligence Organization arrested an alleged intelligence agent of an unnamed Arabian Peninsula country in Bandar-e Lengeh, Hormozgan Province on November 29.**<sup>21</sup> The IRGC Intelligence Organization accused the unidentified individual of planning unspecified “anti-security activities.”

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi praised Qatar for “respecting Islamic values” while hosting the World Cup during a phone call with Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on November 28.**<sup>22</sup> Iran has coordinated with Qatar to suppress public acts of dissent by Iranians in Doha during the World Cup, as CTP has previously reported.<sup>23</sup>

**Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani paid an official visit to Tehran on November 29 likely to discuss Iranian drone and missile strikes into Iraqi Kurdistan and related security issues with senior Iranian officials.** Sudani met with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, and others.<sup>24</sup> Official readouts emphasized bilateral economic and security cooperation. Iranian officials may have repeated to Sudani their demands for the Iraqi central government to disarm and remove anti-regime Kurdish militants operating in Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>25</sup> Law Enforcement Command Border Guard Commander Brigadier General Ahmad Ali Goudarzi signed a memorandum of understanding with Iraqi Border Guard Commander Hamed Abdollah Ebrahim on November 29 as well.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597710724675112961](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597710724675112961); [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597703867642400769](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597703867642400769); <https://twitter.com/yashar/status/1597734762818334720>

<sup>2</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597703867642400769](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597703867642400769); [https://twitter.com/y\\_fazeli/status/1597681674510532608](https://twitter.com/y_fazeli/status/1597681674510532608)

<sup>3</sup> <https://t.me/SEPAHCYBERY/57513>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/Tura313/35980>

<sup>5</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597623870231830530?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597623870231830530?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g)

<sup>6</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597528354290544641?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597528354290544641?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g);

[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597558123241574400?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597558123241574400?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g)

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1597719985916612609?s=20&t=2nyYGTqZYyElWuLWJXfB3A>

<sup>8</sup> [https://twitter.com/barin\\_omid/status/1597726037143703553?s=20&t=-FrVZqpMI81hQJbdlWLF3A](https://twitter.com/barin_omid/status/1597726037143703553?s=20&t=-FrVZqpMI81hQJbdlWLF3A)

<sup>9</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597528849637871616?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597528849637871616?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g);

[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597531246930034688?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597531246930034688?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g)

<sup>10</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597699062794682371?s=20&t=tvJZJw\\_jCjgvMZv5HUIKjA](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597699062794682371?s=20&t=tvJZJw_jCjgvMZv5HUIKjA);

[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597701147262799873?s=20&t=tvJZJw\\_jCjgvMZv5HUIKjA](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597701147262799873?s=20&t=tvJZJw_jCjgvMZv5HUIKjA)

<sup>11</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597626503998554112?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597626503998554112?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g)

<sup>12</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597501610787483648?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597501610787483648?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g)

<sup>13</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597663903290314752?s=20&t=tEH\\_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597663903290314752?s=20&t=tEH_PaPhtIKoh-ytEN5X-g)

<sup>14</sup> <https://t.me/sunnirightsfa/1716>

- 
- <sup>15</sup> <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32153873.html>
- <sup>16</sup> [https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-26#\\_edn06530ff9d5d3aa60a1576edbc10a96bd30](https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-26#_edn06530ff9d5d3aa60a1576edbc10a96bd30)
- <sup>17</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-21>
- <sup>18</sup> <https://www.irna.ir/news/84956161/>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://irna dot ir/xjL7ZW>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/Alfoneh/status/1595434754589196288>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/08/2813644>
- <sup>22</sup> <https://president dot ir/fa/141044>
- <sup>23</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-28>
- <sup>24</sup> [www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26171](http://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26171); [www.president dot ir/fa/141083](http://www.president dot ir/fa/141083); <https://fa.alalam dot ir/news/6459363>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-23>
- <sup>26</sup> <http://mehrnews dot com/xYYjp>



### Iran Crisis Update, November 30

Nicholas Carl, Zachary Coles, Johanna Moore, and Frederick W. Kagan  
November 30, 5:30 pm ET

The Iran Crisis Updates are produced by the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute with support from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). To receive Iran Crisis Updates via email, please subscribe [here](#).

*Contributor: Amin Soltani*

**Protest activity may increase on December 5-7.** An increasingly wide range of protest coordinators and organizations have called for countrywide demonstrations on these days. These organizers include neighborhood youth groups and Shirin—a Persian-language social media account that previously tweeted a political manifesto calling for the establishment of a democratic, secular Iranian republic.<sup>1</sup> Protest activity did not surge during the last planned demonstrations on November 24-26, however, possibly due to poor coordination.<sup>2</sup>

**The recent calls for protests may highlight the increasing organization and sophistication of the protest movement as well as some fractures.** Thirty neighborhood youth groups published a joint statement on November 27 announcing the planned protests on December 5-7.<sup>3</sup> More neighborhood youth groups signed this joint statement than the last one on November 22, which had 29 signatories.<sup>4</sup> A neighborhood youth group from Tehran notably signed the November 22 statement but not the November 27 one—the only group missing from the original 29 signatories. The Karaj neighborhood youth group refused to explain when a social media user asked why the Tehran group did not sign the second statement.<sup>5</sup>

The nature of the planned protests furthermore suggests that at least some protest organizers are adapting to more effectively counter regime repression. The Tehran Neighborhood Youth released on November 30 its own call for demonstrations on December 5-7 and offered more specific instructions.<sup>6</sup> The group advised against simultaneous protests and strikes because the reduction in regular traffic caused by strikes allows security forces to more easily crack down. The group accordingly called for countrywide strikes on December 5, scattered protests on December 6, and concentrated protests around universities on December 7.

**Anti-regime outlet *Iran International* published on November 30 a purportedly internal regime memo discussing the protests.**<sup>7</sup> *Iran International* claimed that it received the document from Black Reward—the anti-regime group that hacked *Fars News Agency* and claimed to have recovered internal data, documents, and files on November 25.<sup>8</sup> CTP cannot verify this document and is treating it with great skepticism. We offer no assessment of its authenticity apart from noting that the style and word choice of portions of the document seem unusual for native Persian speakers. We are nevertheless reporting some of the key points of the document to make them accessible in English.<sup>9</sup> The document claims the following:

- Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei believes that protests will continue for the foreseeable future. Khamenei called on the state security apparatus to more effectively fight in the “media war” against the West.
- Khamenei criticized President Ebrahim Raisi, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani, and Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Commander Major General Hossein Salami over their handling of the protests. Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf similarly criticized Raisi’s indecisiveness.
- Khamenei ordered the regime to discredit prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid for his role in inspiring protests. Khamenei ordered Law Enforcement Commander Brigadier General Hossein Ashtari to threaten to arrest Abdol Hamid after he refused to stop publicly criticizing the regime.
- The Interior Ministry found that most Iranians do not believe the protests will soon end nor do they trust state media. The ministry also concluded many protesters are no longer afraid of the security forces.

**Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani met with US-sanctioned Astan Quds Razavi (AQR) Custodian Ahmad Marvi in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province on November 30, possibly to discuss commercial or financial cooperation.**<sup>10</sup> AQR is a parastatal economic conglomerate that is responsible for the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad and controls a vast network of commercial interests active in agriculture, energy, financial services, information technology, and manufacturing.<sup>11</sup> AQR is a “vital economic artery” for regime officials and has ties to the IRGC.<sup>12</sup> Marvi is a close associate of Supreme Leader Khamenei and has headed AQR since March 2019.<sup>13</sup> The US has sanctioned both AQR and Marvi for their ties to Khamenei.<sup>14</sup> Iranian state media has not explicitly reported on the Sudani-Marvi meeting at the time of this writing but has published photos depicting the two together.<sup>15</sup>

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Protest activity may increase on December 5-7.**
- **The recent calls for protests may highlight the increasing organization and sophistication of the protest movement as well as some fractures.**
- **Anti-regime outlet *Iran International* published a purportedly internal regime memo discussing the protests.**

- Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Shia al Sudani met with US-sanctioned Astan Quds Razavi (AQR) Custodian Ahmad Marvi in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province, possibly to discuss commercial or financial cooperation.
- At least nine protests took place in seven cities across six provinces.
- An Intelligence and Security Ministry member died due to an unspecified cause in Zabol, Sistan and Baluchistan Province.

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least nine protests took place in seven cities across six provinces on November 30.** CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>16</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small

#### **Esfahan City, Esfahan Province<sup>17</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Medical workers
- Protest Type: Strike and protest

#### **Bandar Anzali, Gilan Province<sup>18</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Protest Type: Mehran Samak's funeral

#### **Saghez, Kurdistan Province<sup>19</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Highschool students

#### **Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province<sup>20</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Kurdistan University students

#### **Khorramabad, Lorestan Province<sup>21</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Medium
- Protest Type: Masoud Doulat Shahi's funeral

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>22</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Highschool students

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>23</sup>**

- Crowd Size: Undetermined

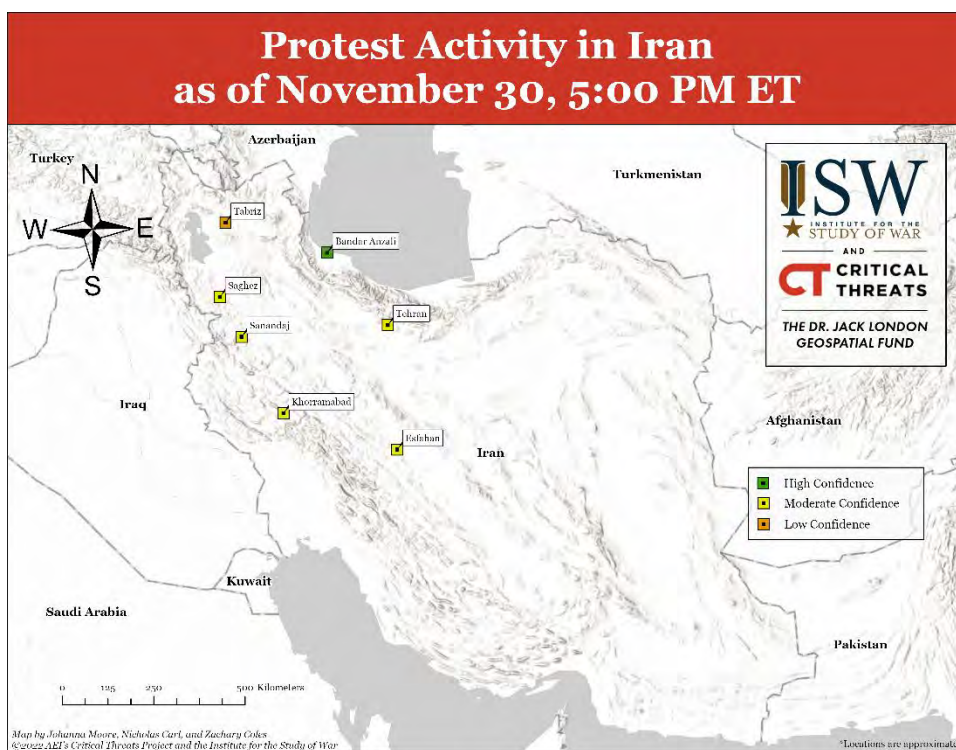
- Protest Type: Fires lit in street

CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations on November 30:

#### Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province<sup>24</sup>

- Crowd Size: Undetermined
- Demographic: Medical workers
- Protest Type: Strike and protest

**Note: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and large protests as over one thousand.**



**An Intelligence and Security Ministry member died due to an unspecified cause in Zabol, Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 30.<sup>25</sup>** Anti-regime militants commonly operate around Zabol and may have killed the intelligence officer. Over 60 security personnel have died since the protests began on September 16.<sup>26</sup>

**IRGC Deputy Commander Brigadier General Ali Fadavi stated on November 30 that many of Iran's problems are due to unspecified officials not properly following the orders of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.<sup>27</sup>** Fadavi may have been criticizing regime officials who have less enthusiastically supported the regime protest crackdown in his remarks. Fadavi expressed implicit support for the regime using greater brutality in its crackdown on November 21, as CTP previously reported.<sup>28</sup>

## **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**There was nothing significant to report today.**

- 
- <sup>1</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1596829675376070656](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1596829675376070656); [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_t/status/1598028102633857024](https://twitter.com/javanane_t/status/1598028102633857024);  
<https://twitter.com/MahsaAmini40/status/1597892449036222464>; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-18>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-27>
- <sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1596829675376070656](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1596829675376070656)
- <sup>4</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1595095807480717313](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1595095807480717313)
- <sup>5</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_k/status/1597145574008311809](https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1597145574008311809)
- <sup>6</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_t/status/1598028102633857024](https://twitter.com/javanane_t/status/1598028102633857024)
- <sup>7</sup> <https://www.iranintl.com/202211304302>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-25>
- <sup>9</sup> [https://issuu.com/iranintl/docs/b29\\_2\\_1\\_](https://issuu.com/iranintl/docs/b29_2_1_)
- <sup>10</sup> [www.mashreghnews dot ir/photo/1441464](http://www.mashreghnews dot ir/photo/1441464)
- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/supreme-leadership-iran/>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/supreme-leadership-iran/>
- <sup>13</sup> [www.leader dot ir/fa/content/22874](http://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/22874)
- <sup>14</sup> <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1234>
- <sup>15</sup> [www.mashreghnews dot ir/photo/1441464](http://www.mashreghnews dot ir/photo/1441464)
- <sup>16</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597903493117120514?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597903493117120514?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw);  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597936702450176001?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597936702450176001?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>17</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1598047954954293248?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1598047954954293248?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>18</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597938615740690434?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597938615740690434?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw);  
[https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1597966768768704513?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1597966768768704513?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>19</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597883756370878464?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597883756370878464?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>20</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597939089009168385?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597939089009168385?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597976527471226881?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597976527471226881?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>22</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597950112025972738?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597950112025972738?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw);  
[https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597967679658528769?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1597967679658528769?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1598023296129585152?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1598023296129585152?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>24</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1598025524173213696?s=20&t=\\_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw](https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1598025524173213696?s=20&t=_mzZldmeBeTK8P9qizDrQw)
- <sup>25</sup> [www.isna dot ir/news/1401090906289](http://www.isna dot ir/news/1401090906289)
- <sup>26</sup> <https://twitter.com/Alfoneh/status/1595434754589196288>
- <sup>27</sup> <http://www.defapress dot ir/fa/news/559007>
- <sup>28</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-22>