



## **Iran Crisis Update, October 19**

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**Anti-regime protests have subsided in extent and scale in recent days but may increase on October 20 and 26.** Many instances of recent protest activity include fewer than 20 demonstrators and therefore do not meet CTP's threshold for reporting. The Tehran Neighborhood Youth called for protests on October 22 and October 26, the latter being the 40<sup>th</sup> day since the Iranian morality patrol killed Mahsa Amini.<sup>1</sup> Iranians commonly hold a commemoration on the 40<sup>th</sup> day after a person's death. Protest organizations may seek to use the 40<sup>th</sup>-day commemoration to reignite widespread demonstrations.

**The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) continued to threaten Azerbaijan militarily for allegedly hosting Israeli intelligence agents on October 19.** The IRGC Ground Forces constructed a bridge over the Aras River near the Iran-Azerbaijan border at the end of its three-day military exercise, which began on October 17.<sup>2</sup> IRGC armored and engineering elements crossed the bridge.<sup>3</sup> CTP cannot assess whether IRGC forces entered Azerbaijani territory because the exact location of the exercise is unclear. The IRGC likely sought to use the exercise to signal its capability to attack Azerbaijan and strike targets in Azerbaijani territory, however. CTP previously reported that Iranian officials and state media assert that Israel is using Azerbaijan as an intelligence base to instigate protests.<sup>4</sup> Tensions between Iran and Azerbaijan have flared over Armenia in recent months, which also likely informed the regime decision to conduct the exercise.<sup>5</sup>

### **Key Takeaways**

- **Anti-regime protests have subsided in size and scale in recent days but may increase on October 20 and 26.**
- **Anti-regime protests occurred in at least 10 cities in 8 provinces on October 19.**
- **The IRGC continued to threaten Azerbaijan militarily for allegedly hosting Israeli intelligence agents on October 19.**

- **Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei gave a speech praising Iranian academics in a meeting with Iranian university science students and faculty members on October 19.**
- **IRGC-affiliated Fars News Agency reported that most arrested protestors are younger than 35.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

#### **Anti-regime protests occurred in at least 10 cities in eight provinces on October 19.**

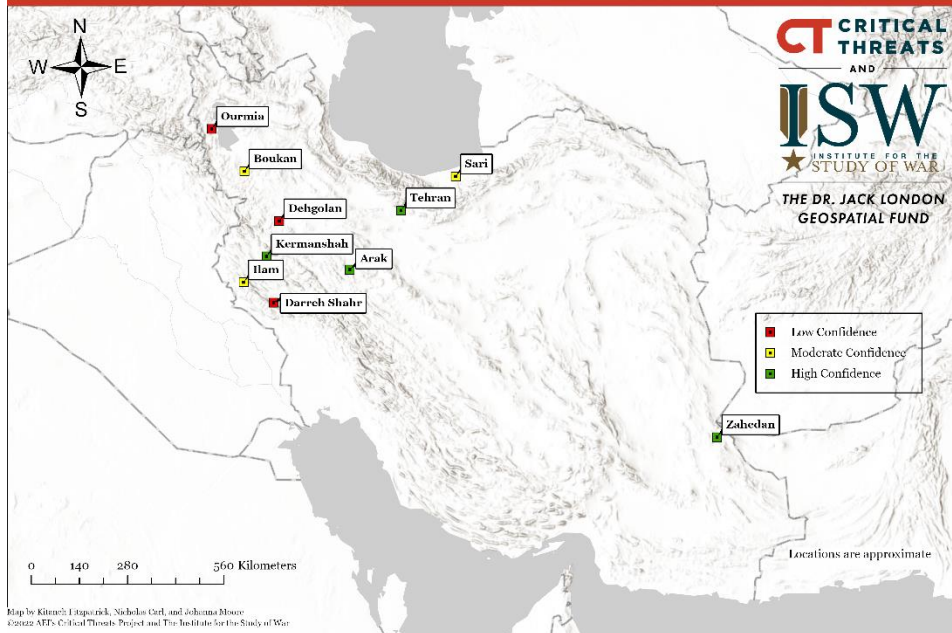
CTP assesses with moderate or high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

- Ilam City, Ilam Province (*undetermined number of protestors gathering at an intersection*)<sup>6</sup>
- Kermanshah City, Kermanshah Province (*dozens of Razi University students protested, chanting “As long as the clergy is shrouded, this country isn’t a country,” and “get lost Basij members”*)<sup>7</sup>
- Arak, Markazi Province (*dozens of protestors demonstrating on the street*)<sup>8</sup>
- Sari, Mazandaran Province (*over a hundred protestors demonstrating on the street*)<sup>9</sup>
- Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (*dozens of Zahedan University Medical Science students engaging in a sit-down protest*)<sup>10</sup>
- Tehran City, Tehran Province (*several protests throughout the city at different times of the day, cumulatively totaling hundreds of protestors. Security forces reportedly teargassed protestors in Ekbatan Town in Western Tehran*).<sup>11</sup>
- Boukan, West Azerbaijan Province (*dozens of students protesting on the city streets*)<sup>12</sup>

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

- Darreh Shahr, Ilam Province (*dozens of protestors demonstrating on the street*)<sup>13</sup>
- Dehgolan, Kurdistan Province (*undetermined number of protestors setting tires on fire to reportedly deter security forces from entering the protest area. This activity suggests that more protestors were present or may join the protest at a later time.*)<sup>14</sup>
- Ourmia, West Azerbaijan Province (*reports of clashes between security forces and officials, no footage available*)<sup>15</sup>

## Protest Activity in Iran as of October 19, 6:00 PM EST



**Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei praised Iranian academics in a meeting with university science faculty and students on October 19.**<sup>16</sup> Khamenei described universities as a “key pillar” of the Islamic Republic and a fundamental challenge to Iran’s adversaries. Khamenei dismissed Western reporting that ongoing unrest would collapse the regime. Khamenei did not make any other reference to the protests.

**Truck drivers and petrochemical and steel workers continued strikes across Bushehr, Fars, Hormozgan, and Khuzestan provinces on October 19.**<sup>17</sup> Haft Tappeh sugarcane workers joined the countrywide trikes on October 18.<sup>18</sup> An Iranian labor activist claimed that the workers ignored factory managers’ attempts to financially encourage them to return to work.<sup>19</sup>

**Iranian sport climber Elnaz Rekabi returned to Iran after competing in the International Federate of Sport Climbing Asian Championships in South Korea without a wearing a headscarf on October 16.**<sup>20</sup> The Islamic Republic requires female Iranian athletes to remain veiled in international athletic competitions.<sup>21</sup> BBC Persian reported that Iranian authorities seized Rekabi’s passport and telephone on October 18.<sup>22</sup> Hundreds gathered at the Imam Khomeini international airport cheering for Rekabi as she landed in Tehran on October 19.<sup>23</sup> Rekabi claimed she did not intentionally compete without a veil during an interview with state media.<sup>24</sup> Many social media users have compared the interview to a forced confession.<sup>25</sup> Sports Minister Hamid Sajjadi stated that his ministry would investigate the incident on October 19.<sup>26</sup> Rekabi could become an emblem of courageous defiance around which protestors rally in the coming days.

**IRGC-affiliated Fars News Agency reported that most arrested protestors are younger than 35.** Fars News stated that 42 percent of arrested protestors were under the age of 20, 48 percent were between ages 20 and 35, and 10 percent were over the age of 35. Fars News added that two percent of total detainees were government employees.<sup>27</sup> Iranian Finance Minister Ehsan Khandouzi announced that the regime will increase government employee salaries within one to two weeks, possibly to placate disaffected government employees.<sup>28</sup>

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments** **There was nothing significant to report.**

<sup>1</sup> [https://twitter.com/javanane\\_t/status/1582726896868917250](https://twitter.com/javanane_t/status/1582726896868917250)

<sup>2</sup> [https://t.me/Sepah\\_Ir/71045](https://t.me/Sepah_Ir/71045)

<sup>3</sup> [https://t.me/Sepah\\_Ir/71044](https://t.me/Sepah_Ir/71044)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-17>

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

<sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582829947776684033?s=20&t=H6Glet5UQOFvkPC0VvbFBw>

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582707544782303232?s=20&t=XcQYQG4jfd20AkvwZEJ-w;>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582694417831710720?s=20&t=XcQYQG4jfd20AkvwZEJ-w>

<sup>8</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582751462785892353?s=20&t=oiY28UTjhbD5iXCFNULIPA>

<sup>9</sup> <https://twitter.com/FarashgardFdn/status/1582821264707579905?s=20&t=PjvFFyBrEHuKG5onyPjOMQ>

<sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582698437341896706?s=20&t=UqrzUzOltNfzLhMe7a3bA>

<sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582716979584327686?s=20&t=XcQYQG4jfd20AkvwZEJ-w;>

<https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1582814352633384960?s=20&t=BjWRLjY6FUHFjzgtYEEEnWQ;>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582842925188120576?s=20&t=BjWRLjY6FUHFjzgtYEEEnWQ;>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582841573959573504?s=20&t=BjWRLjY6FUHFjzgtYEEEnWQ.>

<sup>12</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1582750464466042881?s=20&t=kjlz9JkmEo2K1UPHh4MNw>

<sup>13</sup> <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1582812917191233536?s=20&t=DU0EHrsLf4f3jZi6W-W8QQ>

<sup>14</sup> [https://twitter.com/1500tasvir\\_en/status/1582782755708227590?s=20&t=35NBx0My4NGs4YloHEHqXw](https://twitter.com/1500tasvir_en/status/1582782755708227590?s=20&t=35NBx0My4NGs4YloHEHqXw)

<sup>15</sup> <https://twitter.com/etelaf10/status/1582821445969022976?s=20&t=kjlz9JkmEo2K1UPHh4MNw>

<sup>16</sup> <https://farsi.khamenei dot ir/news-content?id=51177>

<sup>17</sup> <https://twitter.com/AtenaDaemi/status/1582425331704528896?s=20&t=kjlz9JkmEo2K1UPHh4MNw>

<sup>18</sup> <https://iranwire.com/fa/news-1/108695-%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B6%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%DA%AF%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%81%D8%AA-%D8%AA%D9%BE%D9%87-%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D9%88%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%84%D8%BA%D9%88/>

<sup>19</sup> [https://twitter.com/bakhshi\\_esmaeil/status/1582378686443323393](https://twitter.com/bakhshi_esmaeil/status/1582378686443323393)

<sup>20</sup> [https://twitter.com/IranIntl\\_En/status/1581720920833814529?s=20&t=3TEetF7vxCfhEfVph-yHhA](https://twitter.com/IranIntl_En/status/1581720920833814529?s=20&t=3TEetF7vxCfhEfVph-yHhA)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/iranian-athlete-who-competed-without-hijab-returns-to-tehran>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-63310328>

<sup>23</sup> [https://twitter.com/IranWireEnglish/status/1582633978749587457?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta;](https://twitter.com/IranWireEnglish/status/1582633978749587457?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta;)

[https://twitter.com/ksadijapour/status/1582536637203947520?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta](https://twitter.com/ksadijapour/status/1582536637203947520?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta)

<sup>24</sup> [https://twitter.com/maziarbahari/status/1582616791234347008?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta](https://twitter.com/maziarbahari/status/1582616791234347008?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta)

<sup>25</sup>

[https://twitter.com/maziarbahari/status/1582616791234347008?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta;](https://twitter.com/maziarbahari/status/1582616791234347008?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta;) [https://twitter.com/NeddieSoltani/status/1582710965224644615?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta;](https://twitter.com/NeddieSoltani/status/1582710965224644615?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta;)

<https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/158269996541059074?s=20&t=ll9XarbO7Wx5t1oPBsbKgg>

<sup>26</sup> <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/158269996541059074?s=20&t=ll9XarbO7Wx5t1oPBsbKgg>

<sup>27</sup> [https://twitter.com/maziarbahari/status/1582616791234347008?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta;](https://twitter.com/maziarbahari/status/1582616791234347008?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta;)

[https://twitter.com/NeddieSoltani/status/1582710965224644615?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M\\_oeWbta;](https://twitter.com/NeddieSoltani/status/1582710965224644615?s=20&t=oY6hSjeVIU8ty2M_oeWbta;)

<sup>28</sup> <https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/158269996541059074?s=20&t=ll9XarbO7Wx5t1oPBsbKgg>

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.entekhab dot ir/fa/news/699577/%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%B1%DA%AF%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%B3-%DB%B4%DB%B1-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%B5%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D8%B4%D8%AF%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%5B%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D8%AE%DB%8C%D8%B1%5D-%DA%A9%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%DB%B2%DB%B0-%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%B3%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%AF-%DB%B1%DB%B0-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%B5%D8%AF-%D9%87%D9%85-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%DB%8C-%DB%B3%DB%B5-%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%AD%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%AF-%DB%B2-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%B5%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D8%B2-%DA%A9%D9%84-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B2%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B4%D8%AA-%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%87%E2%80%8C%D9%87%D8%A7-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%AA-%D9%87%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%AF>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/07/27/2790410/%D9%88%D8%B2%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%DB%8C%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B2%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B4-%D8%AD%D9%82%D9%88%D9%82-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D9%88-%D9%87%D9%81%D8%AA%D9%87-%D8%A2%DB%8C%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A7%DB%8C%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF>