



Iran Crisis Update, November 22

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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*.¹ 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.² 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.³ 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.⁴

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 2019.⁵ 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 24.⁶

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 22.⁷ Iraqi central government and KRG officials discussed the recent Iranian and Turkish strikes into Iraqi territory and border security on November 22.⁸ Iranian political and security leaders have repeatedly demanded that Iraqi authorities disarm Kurdish militants in Iraqi Kurdistan in recent weeks.⁹

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 Province¹⁰

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

Mohr, Fars Province¹¹

- Crowd Size: Small to medium

Andimeshk, Khuzestan Province¹²

- 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 Province¹³

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

Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province¹⁴

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

Shahr-e Rey, Tehran Province¹⁵

- Crowd Size: Small

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁶

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁷

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Tehran University Students

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁸

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁹

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

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

Karaj, Alborz Province²⁰

- Crowd Size: Undetermined

Podol, Hormozgan Province²¹

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

Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²²

- 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 21.²³ 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.²⁴ Fadavi’s remarks follow reports of disagreements within the regime over the protest crackdown, as CTP previously reported.²⁵

Former IRGC Intelligence Organization Chief Hossein Taeb accused the West of plotting to overthrow the regime on November 22.²⁶ 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 2022.²⁷ Taeb has historically maintained close ties to Mojtaba Khamenei.²⁸ Taeb has become an increasingly public-facing figure since his removal, regularly making public statements criticizing the US and Israel, as CTP previously reported.²⁹ 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.³⁰

President Ebrahim Raisi accepted the resignation of Rostam Ghassemi as roads and urban development minister on November 22.³¹ 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.³² 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 23.³³ 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.³⁴ 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 22.³⁵

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

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

³ <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>

⁴ https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-7#_edncd8c06c0c182021ee1c9b9ed35961c7a2

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

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

⁷ <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>

⁸ [https://gov dot krd/mopa-en/activities/news-and-press-releases/2022/november/krq-and-iraqi-government-discuss-border-security/](https://gov.dot.krd/mopa-en/activities/news-and-press-releases/2022/november/krq-and-iraqi-government-discuss-border-security/)

⁹ [www.mehrnews dot com/news/5638023](http://www.mehrnews.com/news/5638023)

¹⁰ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595081087411273732

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

¹² https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595114250212896769?s=20&t=vPW_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;
https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595119628812193792?s=20&t=vPW_kUkLOctFKbmb2xlvZa;
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https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595114250212896769?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA

¹³ https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595123960630255616?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;
https://twitter.com/cheragh_aseman/status/1595171052392484888?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJjL0r86g;
https://twitter.com/javanan_Kh/status/1595162652757876737?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJjL0r86g

¹⁴ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595056764994850818;
https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595159599149355008?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA

¹⁵ https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595144167424155649?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;
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¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/Mohalimoh79/status/1595096088142385152;>
https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595077289175584774?s=20&t=Tm8Jb8SaJO5OC_7yfe4sjA;
<https://twitter.com/MAminAlam/status/1595048438076477440>

¹⁷ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595018449561927680?s=20&t=hbaFFTCpZCldDsMkhkO67A

¹⁸ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595097456014151680;>
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<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595179031493808133?s=20&t=Kfl8bosD4KqnrI0DjBVNQ>

¹⁹ <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

²⁰ https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595108075606016000?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;
<https://twitter.com/IranIntlbrk/status/1595112858550951936?s=20&t=Kfl8bosD4KqnrI0DjBVNQ>

²¹ https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1595152455431770117?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA

²² https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595108251225690112?s=20&t=6rkqd9eidsKc6fDbpF_obA;
<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1595175070573670400?s=20&t=NCOyOrbPlduKrJjL0r86g>

²³ <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>

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

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

²⁶ [https://defapress dot ir/fa/news/557447](https://defapress.ir/fa/news/557447)

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- ²⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/23/world/middleeast/iran-revolutionary-guards-intelligence-chief-hossein-taeb.html>
- ²⁸ <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/30119166.html>
- ²⁹ https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-10#_edn572685105675102fe1f4b933ee0f9f2422
- ³⁰ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-18>
- ³¹ [www.president dot ir/fa/140905](http://www.president.ir/fa/140905)
- ³² <https://www.radiofarda.com/a/32144148.html>
- ³³ https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1595166152082481153?s=20&t=_36xwM8_lqUwHte9ffQSvg
- ³⁴ [https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/01/2808396/](https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/09/01/2808396/)
- ³⁵ [www.mehrnews dot com/news/5638023](http://www.mehrnews.com/news/5638023)