



Iran Crisis Update, December 6
Nicholas Carl, Kitaneh Fitzpatrick, and Frederick W. Kagan
December 6, 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](#).

Countrywide strikes continued throughout Iran on December 6. The extent of the ongoing strikes demonstrates the continued momentum of the protest movement even though strikes do not appear as dramatic as crowded demonstrations in images and videos. The regime has threatened strikers but cannot easily force them to stop.¹ Some businesses and shops that have not been able to close completely have instead refused customers service and transactions, according to some journalists.²

Protest turnout decreased significantly, however, possibly due to divisions and poor planning in the protest movement. CTP recorded protests in around five cities on December 6, despite widely-circulated calls for demonstrations from protest coordinators and organizations.³ Social media users indicated that some protesters were confused about the planned protests and others disagreed with designated locations.⁴ The relative uptick in protests and strikes that began on December 6 will likely continue on December 7, but protest coordinators and organizations will need to overcome these shortcomings if they are to sustain this movement.⁵

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei met with the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council (SCCR) on December 6, possibly to discuss the morality patrol and mandatory hijab law.⁶ Khamenei called for cultural reconstruction during the meeting but did not explicitly mention the morality patrol or hijab requirement. The SCCR is a regime policy body that prepares resolutions on cultural, religious, and social affairs, which Parliament then approves or rejects. SCCR members include President Ebrahim Raisi, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, and Judiciary Chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei--all of whom attended the meeting with Khamenei. Khamenei may have issued a final decision on whether to continue the morality patrol during the meeting. Prosecutor General Mohammad Javad Montazeri previously stated on December 1 that Parliament and the SCCR would issue an opinion on the subject by December 16.⁷

Western observers should avoid overstating a potential regime decision to end the morality patrol and misframing it as a meaningful concession. The regime would likely enforce the mandatory hijab law through various other means. Some regime officials have discussed using surveillance cameras with facial-recognition software to identify women not properly following the hijab requirement, as CTP previously reported.⁸ A parliamentarian suggested that the regime could block the bank accounts of repeat offenders.⁹ It is furthermore unclear whether a regime concession on the morality patrol would satisfy protesters given the wide range of their frustrations and grievances against the political establishment. The regime may, in fact, be attempting to put the issue of hijab back at the center of public discourse in the hopes of obfuscating or diverting the increasingly political and revolutionary tone of the protest movement.

Key Takeaways

- **Countrywide strikes continued throughout Iran.**
- **Protest turnout decreased significantly, however, possibly due to divisions and poor planning in the protest movement.**
- **Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei met with Supreme Cultural Revolution Council, possibly to discuss the morality patrol and mandatory hijab law.**
- **At least 13 protests took place in five cities across five provinces.**
- **Judiciary spokesperson Massoud Setayeshi announced the issuance of death sentences to five arrested protesters.**

Anti-Regime Protests

At least 13 protests took place in five cities across five provinces on December 6. CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

Karaj, Alborz Province¹⁰

Size: Small

Bandar-e Anzali, Gilan Province¹¹

Size: Undetermined

Demographic: Mourners

Regime Repression: Security forces shot at protesters, tear gas

Notes: Mehran Samak's seven-day commemoration ceremony

Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province¹²

Size: Small

Protester Activity: Fires lit in street

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹³

Size: Small

Area: Unspecified location in Western Tehran

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁴

Size: Medium

Demographic: Sharif University of Technology students

Notes: Students protested visit of Tehran City Mayor Alireza Zakani

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁵

Size: Small

Demographic: Allameh Tabataba'i University students

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁶

Size: Small

Demographic: K.N.Toosi University of Technology students

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁷

Size: Small

Area: Chitgar

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁸

Size: Small

Protester Activity: Burned Iranian flag

Area: Ekbatan

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁹

Size: Small

Area: Sattar Khan

Mahabad, West Azerbaijan Province²⁰

Size: Medium

Demographic: Mourners

Notes: Zaniar Abou Bakri's 40-day commemoration ceremony

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province²¹

Size: Small

Demographic: High school students

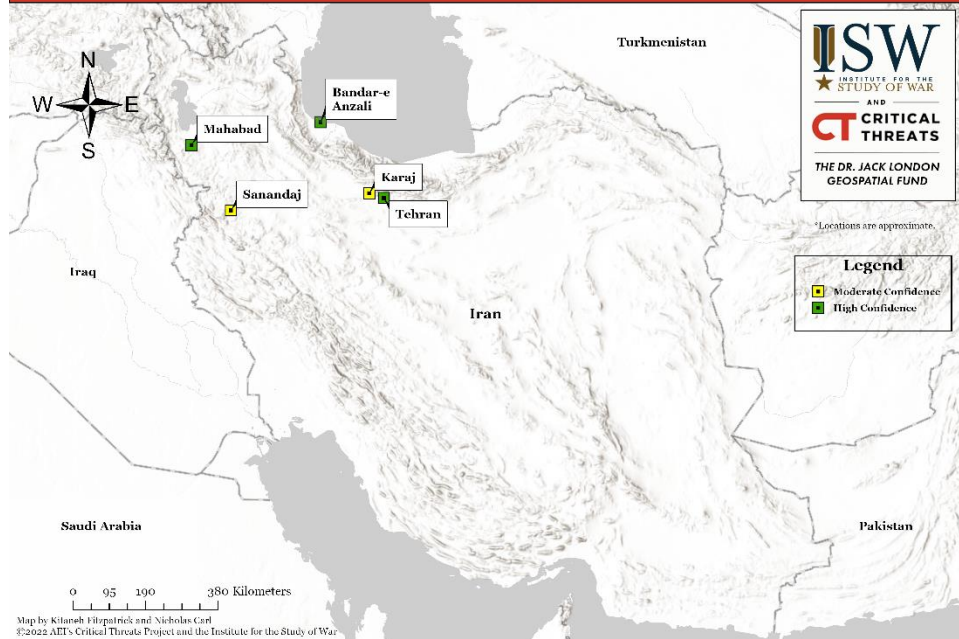
Tehran City, Tehran Province²²

Size: Small

Protester Activity: Fires lit in street

Area: Imamzadeh Hassan

Protest Activity in Iran as of December 6, 5:00 PM ET



Security forces arrested *Fars News Agency* Deputy Chief Editor Abbas Tavangar for his role in preparing the leaked *Fars News Agency* bulletin to the IRGC, according to Iranian state media and officials on December 5.²³ The Black Reward hacker group published this bulletin on November 30.²⁴ *Fars News Agency* confirmed the authenticity of the bulletin, which included internal reports on the regime protest response, but argued that the report only covered rumors.²⁵ Tavangar was affiliated with IRGC-affiliated *Tasnim News Agency* as well.²⁶

The Barandazan hacker group defaced the websites of over 16 Iranian universities and claimed to have infiltrated their databases on December 6.²⁷ The group promoted the planned protests lasting until December 7. The group also stated that it will publish some of the internal documents and files it recovered.²⁸

Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Ensieh Khazali cancelled a public event at the Amir Kabir University in Tehran due to security concerns.²⁹

Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid tweeted on December 6 that there are reports that the regime is sexually assaulting arrested women to humiliate them and force confessions.³⁰ Abdol Hamid called on the Judiciary to punish those responsible. CNN has previously reported on the horrific acts of sexual assault and violence that the regime is committing against arrested protesters.³¹ A young Iranian protester told NPR on November 23 that she would prefer that the regime killed her rather than arresting her.³²

Judiciary spokesperson Massoud Setayeshi announced the issuance of death sentences to five arrested protesters.³³ The Judiciary has thus far sentenced 11 protesters to death since the protests began on September 16.

The Hamedan Neighborhood Youth announced tactical objectives for protesters on December 6 and 7.³⁴ The group called on protesters to block roads and target surveillance cameras in specific neighborhoods in Hamedan.³⁵ CTP did not record protests in Hamedan on December 6, and it is unclear whether the group met or will meet these objectives.

Former reformist President Mohammad Khatami issued a statement on December 6 calling on the regime to heed protester demands.³⁶ Khatami criticized the regime's suppression of protesters, especially students. Khatami previously called for reform in an Instagram post on November 14.³⁷

The IRGC arrested 12 members of a "sabotage team" in Markazi Province on December 6.³⁸

Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments

There was nothing significant to report today.

¹ https://twitter.com/Yossi_Mansharof/status/1600164126969384966; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-december-5>

² <https://twitter.com/Lghara93/status/1600124753586532352>

³ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-30>

⁴ <https://twitter.com/MRTS3000/status/1600237279116607488>;

<https://twitter.com/ssssiran/status/1600196647283134466>

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

⁶ <https://www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26187>

⁷ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-december-2>

⁸ https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-december-5#_edn1a2c48e432a9cacc30b5fec38a26752c7

⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/persian/iran-63857875>

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600199215086710784?s=20&t=B5zRpLkTIm0zmLu0CZ8Vwg> ;

<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1600201096982560784>

¹¹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600159096098930690?s=20&t=1BNfQn0mb7XJFbnpnijl8Q> ;

<https://twitter.com/pouriazeraati/status/1600106651196878848?s=20&t=1BNfQn0mb7XJFbnpnijl8Q> ;

<https://twitter.com/mamlekate/status/1600203038295134208?s=20&t=1BNfQn0mb7XJFbnpnijl8Q> ;

<https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1600203131198984193?s=20&t=1BNfQn0mb7XJFbnpnijl8Q> ;

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600156503129952268?s=20&t=1BNfQn0mb7XJFbnpnijl8Q> ;

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600154070802571265?s=20&t=1BNfQn0mb7XJFbnpnijl8Q>

¹² <https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1600198436761935872?s=20&t=zXMhH7AGABdGmVyGe8QkDA> ;

https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1600205324396376064?s=20&t=gzCKgW9xQad0qzW_nyd1Mg ;

https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600167374442811392?s=20&t=XjpWvUF9wMy_EhfXTp6ePQ

¹³ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600203221552676866?s=20&t=F1eiZHq2TVjoKi1sR5ZYaw>

-
- ¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/bbcpersian/status/1600147515969400832?s=20&t=B5zRpLkTIm0zmLu0CZ8Vwg> ;
<https://twitter.com/FattahiFarzad/status/1600126881675841536?s=20&t=8UNGoKacnyGQqQxLAak7w>
- ¹⁵ https://twitter.com/bbcpersian/status/1600149755790708736?s=20&t=7tlpDXbFAuzVid7jdPD_Fg ;
https://twitter.com/FSeifikaran/status/1600076665379590145?s=20&t=7tlpDXbFAuzVid7jdPD_Fg ;
https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600180378228039681?s=20&t=7tlpDXbFAuzVid7jdPD_Fg ;
https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600161322771001344?s=20&t=7tlpDXbFAuzVid7jdPD_Fg
- ¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1600095122665848832?s=20&t=B5zRpLkTIm0zmLu0CZ8Vwg> ;
<https://twitter.com/bbcpersian/status/1600106681584988162?s=20&t=clyAbtIX2BSdzq-1e1YQCg> ;
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600098708535664640?s=20&t=B5zRpLkTIm0zmLu0CZ8Vwg>
- ¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600231960667860994?s=20&t=3-CkjXJpHGdreLpGLgkL4Q> ;
<https://twitter.com/gh0lch0magh/status/1600241177369853952?s=20&t=3-CkjXJpHGdreLpGLgkL4Q> ;
<https://twitter.com/DTehrany/status/1600214646199181312?s=20&t=3-CkjXJpHGdreLpGLgkL4Q>
- ¹⁸ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1600240169424420864?s=20&t=zv78Gc6Yzf1W-wmjIMZxGQ> ;
<https://twitter.com/DTehrany/status/1600218610957307904?s=20&t=IUzzSAzP5r-W440A7SbLeg>
- ¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600212578319609856?s=20&t=D43I7RO32nGogqk4R-2flw> ;
<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1600205455531380748?s=20&t=D43I7RO32nGogqk4R-2flw>
- ²⁰ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600162153264078849?s=20&t=B5zRpLkTIm0zmLu0CZ8Vwg> ;
<https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1600130357537689604?s=20&t=kStVvGqomD3TLOSOW0CqguA> ;
<https://twitter.com/SamRasoulpour/status/1600122939734904832?s=20&t=kStVvGqomD3TLOSOW0CqguA> ;
<https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1600110817382309888?s=20&t=kStVvGqomD3TLOSOW0CqguA>
- ²¹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600175059355983872?s=20&t=B5zRpLkTIm0zmLu0CZ8Vwg>
- ²² <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1600203434535231488?s=20&t=lzw3lefG8UkqdMmMT7Ev0w>
- ²³ <https://www.khabaronline dot ir/news/1703487>
- ²⁴ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-30>
- ²⁵ https://twitter.com/FarsNews_Agency/status/1598008500135038978
- ²⁶ www.bbc.com/persian/articles/c518321yy58o
- ²⁷ <https://twitter.com/brdz1401/status/1600015824630054914>
- ²⁸ <https://twitter.com/brdz1401/status/1600072321980661760>
- ²⁹ <https://donya-e-eqtesad dot com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%B3%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-62/3923580-%D9%84%D8%BA%D9%88-%D8%B3%D8%AE%D9%86%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%DB%8C%D9%87-%D8%AE%D8%B2%D8%B9%D9%84%DB%8C-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B4%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%85%DB%8C%D8%B1-%DA%A9%D8%A8%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B7%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C>
- ³⁰ <https://twitter.com/AbdolhamidNet/status/1600026410248044544>
- ³¹ <https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2022/11/middleeast/iran-protests-sexual-assault/index.html>
- ³² <https://www.npr.org/2022/11/23/1138875930/young-iranian-protesters-explain-what-keeps-them-going>
- ³³ <https://www.mizan dot news/?p=4544293>
- ³⁴ https://twitter.com/javanane_hmd/status/1600119938810753024
- ³⁵ https://t.me/hmd_javanan/286
- ³⁶ <https://t.me/khatamimedia/874>
- ³⁷ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-14>
- ³⁸ <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/15/2817245>