



Iran Crisis Update, November 25

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November 25, 5:00 pm ET

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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.¹ 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.² 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.³ 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.⁴ CNN published a report on November 21 detailing the horrific acts of sexual assault and violence the regime is committing against arrested protesters.⁵ A young Iranian protester told NPR on November 23 that she would prefer that the regime killed her rather than arresting her.⁶ 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 Province⁷

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

Esfahan City, Esfahan Province⁸

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

Ghazvin City, Ghazvin Province⁹

- Crowd Size: Small
- Demographic: Workers

Hamedan City, Hamedan Province¹⁰

- Crowd Size: Small

Mahidast, Kermanshah Province¹¹

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

Kamiyaran, Kurdistan Province¹²

- Crowd Size: Medium

- Protest Type: Commemoration ceremony for killed protester Fuad Mohammadi

Jakigour, Sistan and Baluchistan Province¹³

- Crowd Size: Small
- Notes: Protesters blocked road

Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province¹⁴

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁵

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁶

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁷

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

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁸

- Crowd Size: Small

Tehran City, Tehran Province¹⁹

- Crowd Size: Small

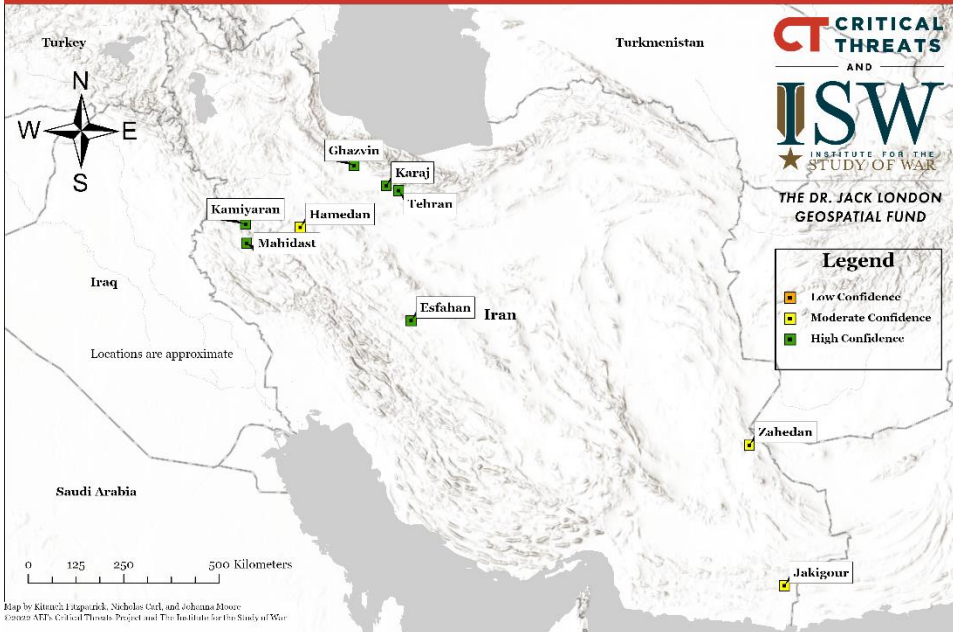
Tehran City, Tehran Province²⁰

- Crowd Size: Small

Tehran City, Tehran Province²¹

- 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 Province²²

- Crowd Size: Small to medium

Esfahan City, Esfahan Province²³

- Crowd Size: Small

Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²⁴

- Crowd Size: Small

Iranshahr, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²⁵

- Crowd Size: Small to Medium

Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²⁶

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

Nouk Abad, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²⁷

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

Saravan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²⁸

- Crowd Size: Small

Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province²⁹

- 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 Province³⁰

- 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 Province³¹

- Crowd Size: Small



Citizens in Mazandaran Province sent medical supplies to protesters in Kurdistan Province on November 24, according to Radio Farda.³² 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.³³ 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.³⁴

IRGC Intelligence Organization Deputy Chief Brigadier General Mehdi Sayyari accused the US of leveraging popular economic frustrations to stoke protests on November 24.³⁵ 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.

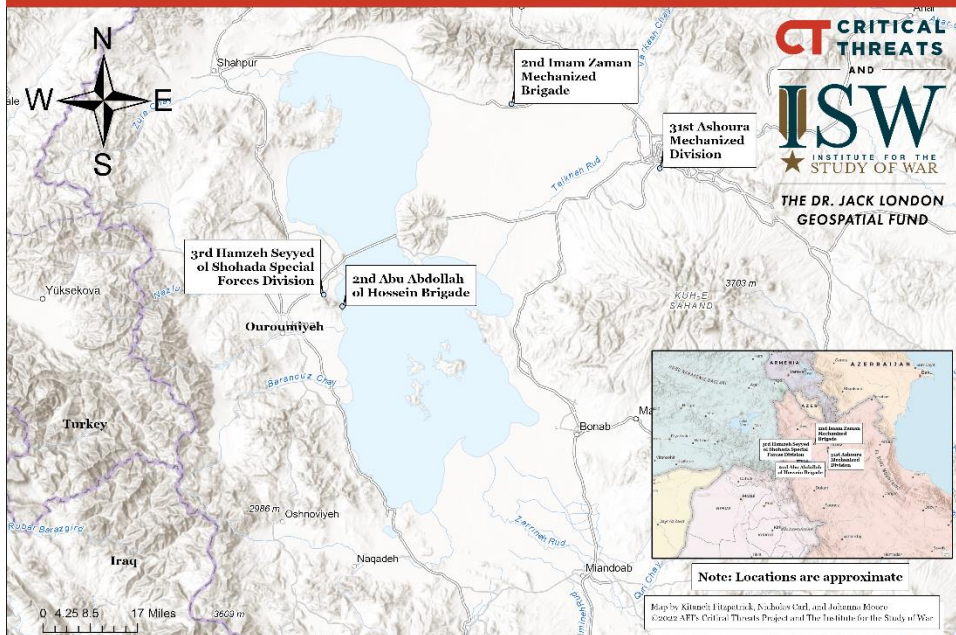
Reformist Zahra Rahnavard published a statement on November 24 criticizing the regime crackdown.³⁶ Rahnavard demanded that the regime “either kill me or surrender to the will of the people.” Rahnavard is married to reformist leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, who previously criticized the crackdown and expressed support for the protesters on October 1.³⁷

Prominent Sunni cleric Moulana Abdol Hamid continued to inspire protests throughout Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 25.³⁸ 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.³⁹

Hacker group Black Reward defaced the website of IRGC-affiliated *Fars News Agency* on November 25.⁴⁰ 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.⁴¹

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 25.⁴² 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 Oroumiyeh to Oshnaviyeh on November 24 and to Piranshahr on November 25.⁴³ These deployments may be from the IRGC Ground Forces' 2nd Imam Zaman Mechanized Brigade near Shabestar, East Azerbaijan Province, 3rd Hamzeh Seyyed ol Shohada Special Forces Division near Oroumiyeh, West Azerbaijan Province, and/or 31st Ashoura Mechanized Division in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province.⁴⁴ 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.⁴⁵ Foreign Affairs Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian indicated on November 23 that the Baghdad committed to meeting Iranian demands, as CTP previously reported.⁴⁶

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.⁴⁷

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https://twitter.com/javanane_ir/status/1595078930301583361/photo/1; https://twitter.com/javanane_k/status/1595341576603336706/photo/1

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

³ https://twitter.com/HRANA_English/status/1596163594697248771

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

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

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

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

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

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- ⁸ <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595839623950843904>;
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- ⁹ <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595740089610543104>
- ¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595833017703989254>
- ¹¹ <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596022394790944771> ;
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- ¹² <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595774301009252352?s=20&t=WQRerluY94CkZLKWYtq0ew>
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- ¹⁷ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1595840395295870977?s=20&t=UuXBeXkep_zY2IkPy4E-kA
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- ²⁰ <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596016309728206848?s=20&t=WQXyqSDg7uZc4llaGhtz2A>
- ²¹ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1595833806963019777>
- ²² <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596176050551418880?s=20&t=gwM7VmxJ2W-5TWBBlaebqA> ;
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- ²³ https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1596221249780187136?s=20&t=x9fdJrj_qGep1PetTb_U-Q ;
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- ²⁵ https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1596175895181594625?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ ;
<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596094346608377856?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ>
- ²⁶ <https://twitter.com/RadioFarda/status/1596091345650810880?s=20&t=dYsJla5jOFjAIYEd6cRNiA> ;
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- ²⁷ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1596109311310462977?s=20&t=7kLD9r38r2Um8qUZToPNCQ> ;
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<https://twitter.com/SedayeShahrivar/status/1596225520911454210?s=20&t=7kLD9r38r2Um8qUZToPNCQ> ;
²⁸ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596097867135193088?s=20&t=OB8zSh98TaesxALeN3r7eA ;
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²⁹ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596087377373450240 ;
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³⁰ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596143300746309632?s=20&t=M4gdzxQ4sTcJ4wM4HbdY9w> ;
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³¹ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1596229543333081088?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ> ;
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<https://twitter.com/iranwire/status/1596266099959803904?s=20&t=L1ySzRRUpdmezoBhmmOMsQ> ;
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³⁴ www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811459 ;
³⁵ <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/03/2811334> ;
³⁶ <https://t.me/kaleme/29875> ;
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³⁸ <https://abdolhamid dot net/persian/2022/11/25/13040/> ;
³⁹ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-november-21> ;
⁴⁰ <https://twitter.com/KhosroKalbasi/status/1596197794771243008> ;
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⁴² <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/09/04/2811628> ;
⁴³ https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1595832661615992834 ; https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1596062139206504448 ;
⁴⁴ <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Irans-Reserve-of-Last-Resort.pdf> ;
⁴⁵ <https://www.rudawarabia dot net/arabic/middleeast/iraq/24112022> ;
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