



Iran Crisis Update, November 2

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Iran is signaling its readiness to attack Saudi Arabia and possibly Erbil ostensibly in retaliation for the Shiraz terror attack but primarily for the alleged role of the US, Israel, and Saudi Arabia in stoking protests. The regime raised the red flag of Imam Hossein above the Shah Cheragh Mosque—the target of the terror attack—in Shiraz, Fars Province on October 30.¹ The red flag represents revenge for an unjust death in Shia Islamic tradition. The regime takes down the flag once it has taken revenge. The regime raised the red flag last in Qom after the US killed Qassem Soleimani and before the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) conducted a ballistic missile attack on US forces in Iraq in January 2020.² IRGC Telegram channels posted videos depicting a hypothetical Iranian drone attack on Saudi energy infrastructure on November 2.³

An Iranian proxy Telegram channel recirculated on November 2 the Iran International report claiming that the regime flew around 150 proxy fighters from Baghdad to Mashhad to suppress protests.⁴ Iran International claimed on November 1 that the regime sent fighters from Kataib Hezbollah and other unspecified Iraqi militias.⁵ The Iranian proxy account reported that the regime also flew in personnel from Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba and did not deny the reports. The IRGC Quds Force used Kataib Hezbollah and Harakat Hezbollah al Nujaba extensively in its military intervention into Syria to defend the Assad regime.⁶

Key Takeaways

- **Iran is signaling its readiness to attack Saudi Arabia and possibly Erbil ostensibly in retaliation for the Shiraz terror attack but primarily for the alleged role of the US, Israel, and Saudi Arabia in stoking protests.**
- **An Iranian proxy Telegram channel recirculated the Iran International report claiming that the regime flew around 150 proxy fighters from Baghdad to Mashhad to suppress protests.**
- **At least 22 protests took place in 14 cities across nine provinces.**
- **Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei reiterated his claims that the West and Israel are stoking the protests in a speech to a group of university students.**
- **Parliamentarian Mohammad Saleh Jokar accused the Iranian diaspora of organizing terrorist attacks in Iran and called for their punishment.**
- **Kurdistan Chief Provincial Justice Hossein Hosseini announced the seizure of a cache of 49 hand grenades in Baneh, Kurdistan Province.**
- **Unidentified individuals shot at a Law Enforcement Command (LEC) station in Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan Province, injuring one police officer.**

Anti-Regime Protests

At least 22 protests took place in 14 cities across nine provinces on November 2. CTP has begun adding approximate populations to cities and towns in which protests occurred to track the degree to which the movement shifts between large urban areas and small towns and villages. Population data is drawn from the 2016 census.⁷ CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

Karaj, Alborz Province (population: approximately 2,000,000)

- *Several dozen Karaj University students protested in Karaj streets.⁸*

Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province (population: approximately 1,500,000)

- *50-100 Tabriz University students protested on campus.⁹*
- *Several dozen protesters marched through Tabriz streets.¹⁰*

Esfahan City, Esfahan Province (population: approximately 2,000,000)

- *25-50 Esfahan University of Art students protested on campus and chanted “we will stand until the end.”¹¹*
- *Several dozen protesters marched through Esfahan streets and chanted anti-regime slogans.¹²*
- *An undetermined number of protesters marched through Esfahan streets in the dark after the regime reportedly cut electricity to parts of Esfahan City.¹³*

Dehloran, Ilam Province (population: approximately 30,000)

- *An undetermined number of protesters marched through Dehloran streets and chanted “death to Khamenei” and other anti-regime slogans.¹⁴*

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

- *An undetermined number of Azad University of Mashhad students protested inside a building on campus.¹⁵*

Boukan, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 200,000)

- *An undetermined number of protesters marched through Boukan streets and set fires to obstruct traffic.¹⁶*

Marivan, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 150,000)

- *An undetermined number of protesters marched through Marivan streets and chanted “we are all Mahsa Amini.” The protesters marched in the dark, indicating the regime may have cut electricity to parts of Marivan.¹⁷*
- *An undetermined number of Payam Noor University students clashed with security forces while protesting on campus. Footage from social media shows students fleeing security forces attempting to detain them. Security forces killed a teenager attending the protests.¹⁸*

Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 450,000)

- *More than 100 protesters marched through Sanandaj streets and chanted “we don’t want a baby killing government.”¹⁹*
- *Approximately a half dozen protesters set a fire in the streets of Sanandaj.²⁰*
- *An undetermined number of protesters set a fire in the streets on Sanandaj and established barriers to prevent traffic flow.²¹*
- *Several dozen protesters clashed with security forces and chanted “from Kurdistan to Sistan, I sacrifice my life for Iran.”²²*

Nowshahr, Mazandaran Province (population: approximately 50,000)

- *500-1,000 protesters gathered at a protest martyr Hannanah Kia’s funeral. Security forces reportedly fired tear gas and live ammunition at mourners.²³*

Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchistan Province (population: approximately 600,000)

- *25-50 Sistan and Baluchistan University students protested on campus and chanted slogans that warned the regime against abducting students who are protesting.²⁴*

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

- *20-30 high school students protested in the streets of Tehran.²⁵*
- *One or two dozen Tehran University of Medical Sciences students protested on campus.²⁶*
- *An undetermined number of al-Zahra University students protested and chanted in the university cafeteria.²⁷*

- *Several dozen Beheshti University students protested on campus and chanted “shout for your life students.”*²⁸

Shahriar, Tehran Province (population: approximately 300,000)

- *Several dozen high school students protested on school grounds.*²⁹

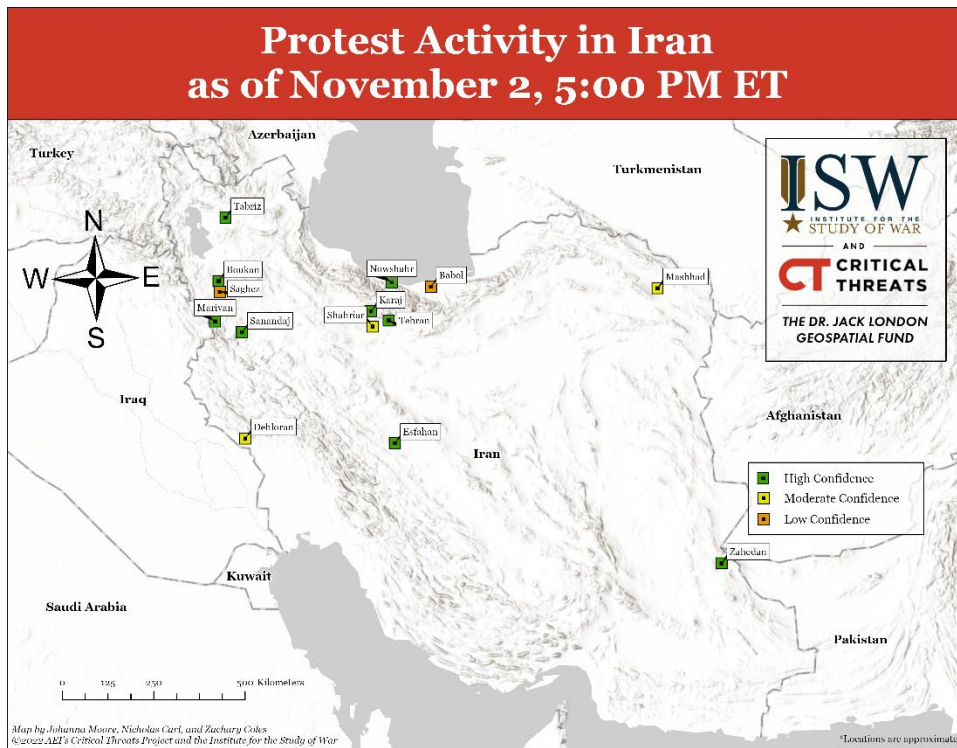
CTP assesses with low confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

Saghez, Kurdistan Province (population: approximately 150,000)

- *An undetermined number of protesters reportedly demonstrated in Saghez streets.*³⁰

Babol, Mazandaran Province (population: approximately 250,000)

- *An undetermined number of protesters reportedly demonstrated and blocked traffic in Babol streets.*³¹



Social media accounts reported that security forces conducted psychological operations in Tehran to deter and intimidate protesters on October 31. Security personnel fired sound bombs around residential areas.³² A security officer threatened protesters over a loudspeaker, stating that “we would even behead our own wives and children if necessary.”³³

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei reiterated his claims that the West and Israel are stoking the protests in a speech to a group of university students on

November 2.³⁴ Khamenei described the protests as part of the Western-Israeli hybrid war against Iran. Khamenei made his first explicit accusation that the US is waging a hybrid war against Iran in February 2022, though his advisors have made similar claims for many years.³⁵ Khamenei spent most of his speech criticizing the US and arguing that Washington has always sought to undermine the Islamic Republic. Khamenei continues to avoid addressing citizens' popular grievances.

Parliamentarian Mohammad Saleh Jokar accused the Iranian diaspora of organizing terrorist attacks in Iran and called for their punishment on November 2.³⁶ Jokar proposed revoking the citizenship of Iranians living abroad who instigated protests. Jokar is a former IRGC member who has historically supported harsh protest crackdowns.³⁷ The EU sanctioned Jokar in 2011 over human rights abuses.³⁸

Kurdistan Chief Provincial Justice Hossein Hosseini announced on November 2 the seizure of a cache of 49 hand grenades in Baneh, Kurdistan Province.³⁹ Hosseini also announced the arrest of two individuals related to the case and stated that they smuggled the grenades into Iran. Anti-regime Kurdish militancy and smuggling is common around Baneh, which is close to the Iran-Iraq border.

Unidentified individuals shot at a Law Enforcement Command (LEC) station in Khash, Sistan and Baluchistan Province on November 2, injuring one police officer.⁴⁰ Anti-regime protests and attacks have occurred in the areas surrounding Khash in recent weeks, which CTP has closely reported. Large-scale protests occurred in Zahedan throughout October 2022.⁴¹ Unidentified individuals killed an LEC officer in nearby Iranshahr on October 30.⁴²

Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry announced that Azerbaijani air, artillery, and special forces began a multi-stage military exercise along the Iran-Azerbaijan border on November 2.⁴³ The Azerbaijani exercise follows Iranian military exercises along the Aras River on the Iran-Azerbaijan border from October 17 to October 19.⁴⁴ Azerbaijan is likely signaling resolve in response to Iran's recent military exercise and repeated threats to retaliate for alleged Azerbaijani interference in domestic Iranian affairs.

Pakistani Baloch tribal leader Malik Munir Sheikh Hussein released a video statement condemning the Iranian regime for its violent suppression of protesters in Sistan and Baluchistan Province.⁴⁵ Sheikh Hussein is based in Quetta, Pakistan, where the Afghan Taliban and various Baloch militant organizations

have a presence.⁴⁶ Hussein's rhetoric could stoke attacks against the regime from anti-regime militants operating in Pakistan.

¹ <https://www.hamshahrionline dot ir/news/716240>

² <https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/04/mourners-chant-america-is-the-great-satan-over-death-of-soleimani.html>

³ https://t.me/sepah_pasdaran/115384

⁴ <https://t.me/Tura313/34917>

⁵ <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202211016600>

⁶ <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/profile-harakat-hezbollah-al-nujaba>

⁷ <https://www dot amar dot org dot ir/english/Population-and-Housing-Censuses>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1587745903930404864?s=20&t=HkNHEqm09r4pJwPbauKSMw;>

https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587748647483105280?s=20&t=OOGzm5_KOHAi6Cyda5BCRQ

⁹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587819083986219008?s=20&t=GJMAaoDQxiugjl59HwNhqA>

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587900721529327622?s=20&t=jll6lihgqizXTTzo4bJDg;>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587906839190343680?s=20&t=rdVuEmnfD7VKyE534UiKYg>

¹¹ <https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1587921362219585536?s=20&t=gcztlUgdEzYsCv11IGiV9w>

¹² <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587862642538020864?s=20&t=hC2mMMeEr6vWaMvD6T3HOQ;>

¹³ <https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1587892912846782466?s=20&t=8-3dlPb22id-LMaUE004ZQ;>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587862642538020864?s=20&t=hC2mMMeEr6vWaMvD6T3HOQ>

¹⁴ <https://www.iranintl.com/202211021670>

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587907222058991616?s=20&t=Gm2DHOkQqN200w88UzeKmQ>

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587861501649592320?s=20&t=7yKxR9YMVqajhg5HzKZddg;>

<https://twitter.com/IranIntl/status/1587907221991686150?s=20&t=pzhfrf6WmXIAp4E-Fq1ovg>

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/hbat1188/status/1587889463455145984?s=20&t=y7lI94M4FpDRgbTWBxtcQQ>

¹⁸ https://twitter.com/Hengaw_English/status/1587895727484801025?s=20&t=blcnDbatnagkB3Vzssmr7A;

<https://twitter.com/ManotoNews/status/1587747723415285760?s=20&t=8ErQT4Y7bEtBCQv00G2Ow;>

https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587805715997024258?s=20&t=Ni_68c_39FRCpNdTnGdf2g

¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587719258791886848?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587719358016622592?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

²⁰ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587720662445166593?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

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<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/158773633677166849?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

²¹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587861243783782400?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

²² <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587898995267047424?s=20&t=hH8Yikj1znRFNdSUC3eV4g>

²³ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587799572985905153?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

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<https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587856658667012099?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

²⁴ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587749074031329281?s=20&t=GkgCLpKiePDxgNo5RsF4JA;>

https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587781099668869123?s=20&t=4PuURjesZwYZ_-rZT3lWlW

²⁵ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587753416524238848?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

²⁶ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587795873890697217?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587853211897053185?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

<https://twitter.com/1500tasvir/status/1587742328558682116?s=20&t=Yv7jNssbGTKGXUxt1cOgQ>

²⁸ <https://twitter.com/ybeitollahi/status/1587848535835189248?s=20&t=y7lI94M4FpDRgbTWBxtcQQ>

²⁹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587858023883603968?s=20&t=Mmvquq77IhsRKe9BQhWKsg>

³⁰ <https://twitter.com/journalistsay/status/1587845301053935617?s=20&t=Gm2DHOkQqN200w88UzeKmQ;>

https://twitter.com/HengawO/status/1587823106940452864?s=20&t=AtTnR-8rN-_tCTkl6wo-gg

³¹ <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1587783545401085953?s=20&t=ePuFfbQNg9bTGppBeVT17w>

³² <https://twitter.com/borzou/status/1587405027672457219>

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- ³⁴ [www.leader dot ir/fa/content/26114](http://www.leader.ir/fa/content/26114)
- ³⁵ [https://farsi.khamenei dot ir/speech-content?id=49572](https://farsi.khamenei.ir/speech-content?id=49572); [https://www.isna dot ir/news/97110804066](https://www.isna.ir/news/97110804066)
- ³⁶ [https://www.hamshahrionline dot ir/news/717139](https://www.hamshahrionline.ir/news/717139)
- ³⁷ <https://justice4iran.org/9883/>
- ³⁸ [https://eur-lex.europa dot eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:267:0013:0018:EN:PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:267:0013:0018:EN:PDF)
- ³⁹ [www.salameno dot com/55397337](http://www.salameno.com/55397337)
- ⁴⁰ [http://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1401/08/11/2798144](http://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1401/08/11/2798144)
- ⁴¹ <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-28>
- ⁴² <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-30>
- ⁴³ [https://mod\(dot\)gov.az/az/news/xususi-teyinatli-quvvelerin-herbi-hisselerinin-telimi-baslayib-video-44359.html](https://mod.gov.az/az/news/xususi-teyinatli-quvvelerin-herbi-hisselerinin-telimi-baslayib-video-44359.html)
- ⁴⁴ https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-19?mkt_tok=NDc1LVBCUS05NzEAAAGHIqtyN5glqtQP9IF7bLjOU-RTW-44edxBmu IE1LyAVacpDq13ZweGEWJDz - JvE-EDJVHEOM1HL OrxTpM-nGuRY8PAhxKbk0B TIhM7AcNHJI# ednd3bd5508bbf593deb223ec368cb942862
- ⁴⁵ <https://twitter.com/Natsecjeff/status/1587876583553093637?s=20&t=gkKxI22KTgHA8dvmnlufCg>
- ⁴⁶ <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Vol2Iss5-Art2.pdf>