



**Iran Crisis Update, January 10, 2023**  
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**The Iranian regime is refocusing on enforcing widespread adherence to the mandatory hijab law after briefly and informally relaxing such restrictions in previous months.** Women in Iran have increasingly gone out in public without a hijab in recent months, according to some media reports.<sup>1</sup> But the regime has taken several actions in recent days indicating preparations to resume mass enforcement. Iranian state media reported on January 10 that Prosecutor General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri has ordered the Law Enforcement Command (LEC) to impose the hijab requirement “decisively.”<sup>2</sup> Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei appointed Brigadier General Ahmad Reza Radan—an architect of the morality patrol—as the new law enforcement commander on January 7.<sup>3</sup> The LEC resumed using surveillance cameras to identify women not properly adhering to the hijab requirement in their cars on January 2 as well.<sup>4</sup> Regime officials may see an opportunity to again enforce the hijab requirement as protest turnout has decreased in recent weeks and security personnel have likely regained some bandwidth. Iranian authorities may be particularly eager to resume widespread adherence to the mandatory hijab law to promote to the public the impression that the unrest has receded.

**The Sari Revolutionary Court sentenced protester Javad Rouhi to death on January 10.**<sup>5</sup> The court convicted Rouhi of “corruption on Earth” and “waging war against God.” The Iranian Supreme Court can appeal these sentences.

### **Key Takeaways**

- **The Iranian regime is refocusing on enforcing widespread adherence to the mandatory hijab law after briefly and informally relaxing such restrictions in previous months.**
- **The Sari Revolutionary Court sentenced protester Javad Rouhi to death.**
- **At least three protests occurred in three cities across three provinces in Iran.**
- **Social media accounts have claimed in recent days that the regime has arrested and sentenced an unidentified former senior official on espionage charges.**
- **The Parliamentary Legal and Judicial Committee reviewed and approved articles of the draft legislation to establish a police force for adolescents and children.**

### **Anti-Regime Protests**

**At least three protests occurred in three cities across three provinces in Iran on January 10.** CTP assesses with moderate to high confidence that protests occurred in the following locations:

#### **Asalouyeh, Bushehr Province<sup>6</sup>**

- Size: small
- Demographic: oil industry workers
- Protester Activity: strike and protest
- Notes: oil industry workers held strike and protest to demand higher wages

#### **Esfahan, Esfahan Province<sup>7</sup>**

- Size: small
- Demographic: University of Esfahan students

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

#### **Tehran City, Tehran Province<sup>8</sup>**

- Size: small
- Demographic: Allameh Tabatabaei University students

**NOTE: CTP defines small protests as fewer than 100 individuals, medium protests as between 100 and 1,000, and large protests as over 1,000.**



**Protest coordinators and organizations have circulated calls for demonstrations and strikes on the following days:**

**January 13<sup>9</sup>**

- Type: commemoration ceremony for killed protesters
- Location: Karaj, Alborz Province

**Social media accounts have claimed in recent days that the regime has arrested and sentenced an unidentified former senior official on espionage charges.**<sup>10</sup> Some social media accounts claimed that the official may be former deputy defense minister Alireza Akbari, who served in the reformist Khatami administration.<sup>11</sup> Akbari is reportedly close to Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani and former Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani.<sup>12</sup> Unidentified sources told UK-based Amwaj Media that the regime actors responsible for the arrest and sentencing may have sought to politically damage Shamkhani or Larijani.<sup>13</sup> Other sources noted to Amwaj Media that the regime arrested Akbari several years ago and suggested that the more recent arrest is related to a different former official.<sup>14</sup>

**The Parliamentary Legal and Judicial Committee reviewed and approved articles of the draft legislation to establish a police force for adolescents and children on January 10.**<sup>15</sup> Hossein Ali Hajji Deligan—a lawmaker on the committee—stated that the regime plans to establish a database to track minors who commit “violations.” Establishing a police force dedicated to adolescents and children will likely take the regime several months and may suggest that some officials view the protests among Iranian youth as a long-term threat. Some human rights activists have estimated that security forces have killed around 70 minors since the protests began in September 2022.<sup>16</sup>

**IRGC Commander Major General Hossein Salami appointed Brigadier General Hassan Mortazavi as the commander of the IRGC Ground Forces Quds Regional Operational Headquarters on January 10.**<sup>17</sup> This headquarters is responsible for all IRGC conventional units and internal security in Sistan and Baluchistan and Kerman provinces. President Ebrahim Raisi and his cabinet approved the former commander, Brigadier General Mohammad Karami, as Sistan and Baluchistan provincial governor on December 25. The new commander, Mortazavi, has served in the IRGC Ground Forces since the Iran-Iraq War. He previously commanded the IRGC Ground Forces Sameh ol Aemeh Operational Headquarters, which oversees all IRGC conventional units and internal security in North Khorasan, Khorasan Razavi, and South Khorasan provinces.<sup>18</sup>

**Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf announced that the regime has resolved its “misunderstandings” with Azerbaijan on January 10.**<sup>19</sup> Ghalibaf paid an official visit to Turkey in recent days and met with Azerbaijani officials. Tensions between Tehran and Baku have mounted in recent months as Iranian officials have accused Azerbaijan of hosting Israeli intelligence agents, as CTP has previously reported.<sup>20</sup>

**A fire at a pharmaceutical factory in Qazvin Province killed four and injured three on January 10.**<sup>21</sup>

### **Axis of Resistance and Regional Developments**

**There was nothing significant to report today.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/women-go-without-hijabs-as-confusion-grows-over-irans-dress-code-enforcement>

<sup>2</sup> <https://isna dot ir/xdN6N3>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-january-7-2023>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-january-2-2023>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mizan dot news/4589463>

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- <sup>6</sup> <https://twitter.com/iranworkers/status/1612788770335490049?s=20&t=aGp2QQJDUE9HapYASlwQVQ>;  
<https://twitter.com/ICHRI/status/1612913671629570048?s=20&t=ukRcZ8U2xppK9UCk9WVWuQ>
- <sup>7</sup> [https://twitter.com/RadioFarda\\_/status/1612789122342719488?s=20&t=aGp2QQJDUE9HapYASlwQVQ](https://twitter.com/RadioFarda_/status/1612789122342719488?s=20&t=aGp2QQJDUE9HapYASlwQVQ)
- <sup>8</sup> [https://twitter.com/hra\\_news/status/1612839817431191553?s=20&t=mJB3McA2AjbzcfHJ-WlImAQ](https://twitter.com/hra_news/status/1612839817431191553?s=20&t=mJB3McA2AjbzcfHJ-WlImAQ)
- <sup>9</sup> [https://t.me/javanane\\_ka/524](https://t.me/javanane_ka/524)
- <sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/AbasAslani/status/1612331672787107840>
- <sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/SaeedAganji/status/1612878839155412999>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://amwaj.media/article/inside-story-trial-of-senior-ex-official-points-to-power-play-in-tehran>
- <sup>13</sup> <https://amwaj.media/article/inside-story-trial-of-senior-ex-official-points-to-power-play-in-tehran>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://amwaj.media/article/inside-story-trial-of-senior-ex-official-points-to-power-play-in-tehran>
- <sup>15</sup> <http://www.farsnews dot ir/news/14011020000963>
- <sup>16</sup> [https://twitter.com/HRANA\\_English/status/1612589346531540993](https://twitter.com/HRANA_English/status/1612589346531540993)
- <sup>17</sup> <https://defapress dot ir/566614>
- <sup>18</sup> <https://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Irans-Reserve-of-Last-Resort.pdf>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://isna dot ir/xdN6Jb>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-october-17>; <https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/iran-crisis-update-december-31>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://farsi.iranpress dot com/iran-i225721>