



Britain's Home Secretary Suella Braverman walks outside 10 Downing Street in London, September 9, 2022.

## Iran Is 'Biggest Threat To UK', Home Secretary Says

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Britain's home secretary Suella Braverman says Iran's Revolutionary Guard poses the a serious risk to UK's national security amid fresh evidence of its reach.

As **pressure is growing on the British government to proscribe the IRGC**, Home Secretary Braverman fears that the outfit is stepping up its activities, attempting to recruit members of organized crime gangs to target opponents of the regime.

The Sunday Times quoted a source close to the home secretary as saying that "The Iranian threat is the one that worries us the most."

"It's a big issue because they are getting much more aggressive, and their appetite is increasing. They are very defensive to anyone challenging their regime and just want to stamp it out," the source said, underlining that "They are increasing their agitation."

In February, Security Minister Tom Tugendhat told Parliament that the **Iranian regime was behind 15 credible threats** to kill or kidnap British citizens or people based in the UK in just over a year.

**British Minister of State for Security Tom Tugendhat**

However, last month, the government again rejected calls to proscribe the IRGC as a terrorist group in favor of expanding the criteria by which its supporters and affiliated companies can be put under sanctions. The UK Foreign Office seems worried that designating the IRGC as a terrorist group could permanently harm diplomatic relations.

The new sanctions regime would allow ministers for the first time to sanction Iranian officials and individuals for their activities both Iran and in the UK, where they seem to have increased their sway.

The Home Secretary's warning came just after Iran's IRGC commanders were revealed to be spreading extremist antisemitic propaganda in UK universities via a London student organization. The Sunday Times disclosed earlier in the week details of the close relationship between the Islamic Republic and the Islamic Students Association located in a former Methodist church in west London.

The association was set up to promote the religious and political philosophy of Ruhollah Khomeini, the founder and first Supreme Leader of the regime who ruled until his death in 1989.

The center hosts discussions with Iranian government officials and hardline clerics at Kanoon Towhid, an old church in Hammersmith that carries a portrait of Khomeini at its altar, as well as the Islamic Republic's flag.

According to an investigation by the Jewish Chronicle, since early 2020, at least eight IRGC leaders addressed British student audiences, trying to radicalize them. The speakers, some of whom are sanctioned by Britain for human rights abuses, have been involved in suppressing dissent within Iran.

Recordings obtained by media outlets exposed statements from commanders like Saeed Ghasemi, who claimed the Holocaust was "fake" and advocated for violence against Jews in "an apocalyptic war."

### **Hossein Yekta and President Ebrahim Raisi**

Another IRGC man who delivered lectures at the center was Hossein Yekta – a commander of IRGC's plainclothes agent during crackdown on protesters – who claimed Jews "created homosexuality" and urged his audience to "raise the flag of the Islamic revolution, Islam, and martyrdom."

The association's internal elections are also observed by representatives of the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. In January this year, Mohammad Hossein Ataee Dolatabadi, a former chairman of the association and a master's degree student at the University of Bradford, made a trip to Tehran, where he met Khamenei. He later received a 'blessed' keffiyeh, which is a traditional Arabic headdress, as a gift, a token of his allegiance to Iran's ruler.

Dolatabadi says he is no longer the chair of the organization since October 2022. Nonetheless, he remains the chair of its parent organization, the Union of Islamic Students Associations in Europe, according to Khamenei's official website.

The association's Telegram channel had reportedly made posts praising Qasem Soleimani, the former IRGC Quds Force commander who was killed in a US air strike in January 2020.

Alicia Kearns, the chair of the Foreign Affairs committee, condemned the organization's activities, stating, "To broadcast the jihadist and deeply antisemitic ideas of senior members of the IRGC to students across Britain is a brazen act of radicalization. We must pursue and prosecute those responsible for trying to incite violence here in the UK."

## **Iran Protests**