



A scene of Iran protests in 2022

Iranian Officials Apprehensive About Renewed Protests In September

10 hours ago 3 minutes

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A senior aide to Iran's Supreme Leader asserts that the regime remains firmly entrenched in a fortress, guarded by a devoted religious group under all circumstances.

Gen. Yadollah Javani, formerly known as the Political Deputy to the IRGC Commander and presently serving as the Deputy for Political Affairs for Ali Khamenei within the IRGC, addressed a gathering aimed at "strengthening the Basij militia." He conveyed that the Israeli evaluation of the 2022 protests in Iran indicated their disregard for the potency, authenticity, and social deterrent capabilities of religious Iranians.

Entekhab website in Tehran quoted Javani at the gathering in Mashhad that the enemies wanted to sow despair among the Iranian people and officials and suggested that the government should free their minds from the clutches of the enemy.

The use of jargon in this context suggests that Javani was deeply affected by the extensive protests that occurred throughout Iran over a span of several months. Social media analysts have pointed out that the General appears to

believe that the people supporting the current regime are a minority group and that they are surrounded by a larger opposition movement.

Javani's comment also sounded like a confession to the fact that the regime depends on this minority for its survival.

Gen. Yadollah Javani, formerly known as the Political Deputy to the IRGC Commander

Meanwhile, borrowing Khamenei's idea of the "explanation jihad," Javani called for propagating the regime's narrative about the protests, mindless of the fact that this narrative may maintain the regime's current supporters in the "fortress," but it is unlikely to convince other Iranians to join them. There are also indications that as Iranian sociologists have been warning, some of those who are leaving Iran are disillusioned former regime supporters.

The IRGC General suggested that the regime should propagate former IRGC Qods Force Commander Qasem Soleimani's school of thought. However, no matter what Soleimani's school of thought was, what most Iranians remember about him are the stories of giving **suitcases full of cash handouts to terrorist groups** in the Middle East.

He went on to assert that following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Islamic Republic effectively thwarted the United States' aspirations of global dominance. Javani further contended that the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement aimed to cultivate animosity among Iranian youth towards individuals of religious faith.

Contrary to this, the prevailing viewpoint among a majority of pundits and politicians is that the government's inability to effectively address the nation's economic challenges served as a significant catalyst for the burgeoning opposition among the youth. This sentiment is compounded by the perception that the authorities are erecting various barriers that impede young Iranians from pursuing their preferred lifestyles.

Meanwhile, mirroring Javani's statement, another event highlighted the evident apprehension among Iranian officials as the anniversary of Mahsa Amini's death in custody in September 2022 draws near. In an interview, Deputy Judiciary Chief **Sadeq Rahimi issued a warning**, stating that Iranian

intelligence agencies are prepared to identify individuals potentially inclined to participate in street protests in the upcoming days.

Rahimi particularly warned former detained protesters who were freed after serving some time in jail that their behavior will be scrutinized by security and intelligence officers.

Many of these individuals who were apparently pardoned by Khamenei, were arrested again after a few weeks and others, including the family members of those who were killed or blinded during the protests were arrested and jailed during the past few weeks.

Rahimi claimed without naming anyone or any country or presenting any evidence that "the enemies" are planning to disrupt peace and security in Iran during the coming weeks by provoking Iranian youths and creating problems for the people and the regime.

Neither Javani nor Rahimi addressed the core issues of economic challenges and constraints on social freedoms, which experts widely consider to be the primary driving forces behind the massive street protests by Iranians against the regime. These crucial factors have led millions to voice their discontent and take to the streets.

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