



British police guarding the offices of Iran International in London in 2022

## New Revelations Emerge About IRGC Recruiting British Muslims

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Iran International Newsroom

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New revelations emerged about Iran's clandestine activities in the West, as the Daily Mail reported on Friday that Tehran is recruiting British Shias to spy on Jews and dissidents in the UK.

Citing Israeli and British officials, the report said that IRGC agents approach British Muslims visiting holy Shia sites in Iran and Iraq to recruit them for espionage purposes.

"They are told to return to the UK and gather information on prominent British Jews or targets such as synagogues," as well as regime opponents the report added.

Kasra Aarabi, of the United Against Nuclear Iran advocacy group, remarked that the IRGC has focused on employing British Muslims mostly originating from Lebanon, Iraq and Pakistan because UK-based Iranians are usually secular and anti-regime and thus, will not cooperate with Tehran's malign schemes.

Aarabi referred to annual Arbaeen religious mass gathering in the holy Iraqi city of Karbala as an occasion in which the IRGC recruiters are very active as the event gathers annually up to 20 million Shia pilgrims from around the world. Approximately 400,000 Shia Muslims live in the UK.



People march during the Shiite Arbaeen religious occasion in Iraq, in 2023

Following Hamas' October 7 onslaught, Israel has repeatedly warned the UK against the potential attacks by the Iranian regime and its proxies on British soil, an Israeli official announced. Back in October, it was also reported that Iran's agents were **stirring up unrest in the UK through Gaza protests**.

Daily Mail added that according to experts, some Iranians who have entered the UK apparently on student visas are in fact the regime's spies.

"We do not know the scale of Iranian agents inside Europe and the UK, but all it takes is for one to slip through the net," Daily Mail quoted an unnamed source as saying.

Meanwhile, a British government official confirmed that the IRGC has resorted to UK-based organized criminal networks when it intended to murder or kidnap its targets on British territory. According to Daily Mail, the IRGC has adopted such a policy as it is very hard for Iranian spies to operate freely in the UK.

In an interview with Iran International TV, political analyst Damoun Mohammadi called on European states to adopt a tougher stance with regard to Tehran's conspiracies against Iranian dissidents abroad, warning that Europe's inaction can result in the success of the regime's plots to intimidate its opponents.

According to the analyst, the Islamic Republic has been targeting its opponents in European countries since it came to power in 1979 but it has recently increased its malign operations as the activities of the foreign-based dissidents have expanded significantly.

UK's ITV revealed in December 2023 that **the IRGC was plotting to assassinate two Iran International television anchors** in London in 2022 amid Iranian anti-government protests.

Following ITV's report, British Foreign Secretary David Cameron **summoned Iran's chargé d'affaires**. Iran must be sent "an incredibly clear message that this escalation will not be tolerated," Cameron stressed.

Last year, Iran International temporarily relocated its television broadcast from London to Washington, DC, due to terrorist threats. The decision to suspend Iran International's broadcasting from the British capital was made after the arrest of an Austrian national named Mohammad-Hussein Dovtaev on February 13, 2023.

He was **detained while filming outside the network's premises**. The Central Criminal Court of England sentenced Dovtaev to **3.5 years behind bars** for attempting to collect information "likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism."

In October 2023, Ken McCallum, the Director-General of MI5, the UK's security service, stated that amid the war between Iran-backed Hamas and Israel, the Islamic Republic may be exploring new ways **to threaten the security of Britain**.

"Iran has been a rising source of concern and a rising source of task for MI5 over the last 18 months or so in particular," McCallum then said.

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