



Iranian riot police use a water cannon to disperse protesters during a demonstration outside Tehran's Amir Kabir University on Jan. 11, 2020. (AFP via Getty Images)

MIDDLE EAST

Iranian Authorities Fire Rubber Bullets, Teargas at Protesters: Rights Groups

Trump warned the Iranian regime: 'Don't kill your protestors'

BY VENUS UPADHAYAYA, EPOCH TIMES

January 13, 2020 Updated: January 13, 2020

The internet was awash on Jan. 13 with disturbing videos of rubber bullets and teargas fired on Iranian people protesting against the shooting down of an Ukrainian passenger jet that was carrying at least 82 Iranian citizens. Iranian Human Rights organizations confirmed the reports of authorities firing on protesters over the weekend.

“Reports of riot police and security forces shooting rubber bullets at protesters and firing [tear gas](#) came from Azadi Avenue in Tehran,” said the [Iran Human Rights Monitor on its website](#) on Sunday. “Video clips of women wounded by security forces were posted on the Internet.”

The

[protests](#)

started on Saturday afternoon as mournful gatherings for the Iranian lives lost in the crash and soon turned into people chanting “death to liars” and seeking Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s resignation after the authorities confessed that the Iranian military mistakenly shot down the plane.

The news of the protesters openly chanting slogans against Khamenei, whom the Islamic regime designates as the “Supreme Leader,” was confirmed on Saturday by

[Al Markazia, a Lebanese Central New Agency](#)

“The protest by thousands of Iranians in Tehran and a number of other cities in the past three days, in which people were chanting slogans like ‘Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, resign, resign,’ makes it palpably clear that the Iranian people demand the overthrow of their leaders,” Hossein Abedini, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of Resistance of

[Iran](#)

, told The Epoch Times in a message.

“The protesters openly blamed and challenged the IRGC (Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps), the regime’s power base for decades. This vividly indicates a new phase of more defiance in Iran as the regime has become much weaker,” said Abedini, who is also an expert on Iran’s Nuclear Program.



The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI)

[describes itself](#)

as “an enduring democratic political coalition, founded in Tehran in July 1981.” In a

[statement released](#)

on Sunday, The NCRI confirmed protests in at least 17 provinces so far.

Videos Online

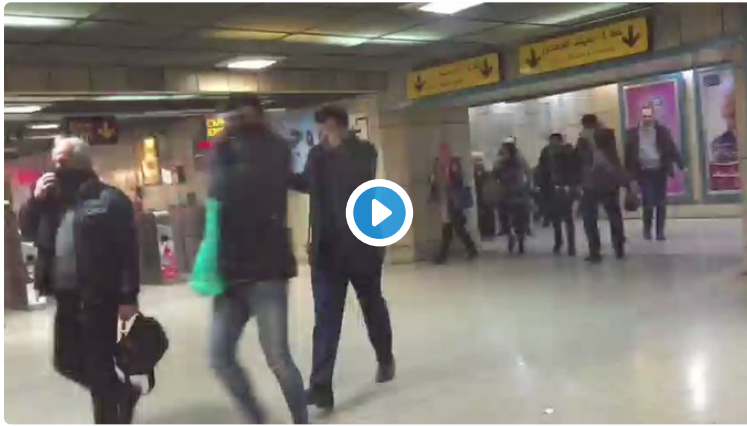
Various videos of the Iranian authorities allegedly firing on protesters on Saturday and Sunday have appeared online over the weekend. A few videos shared by Iran Human Rights Monitor (HRM) on Twitter show tear gas being fired at protesters inside a “Metro station” in Tehran on Sunday.



IRAN HRM @IranHrm · 7h

The state security forces fired tear gas in a metro station in Tehran,
[#Iran](#) during yesterday's [#IranProtests](#)





IRAN HRM
@IranHrm

More video footage of the state security forces firing tear gas in a metro station in Tehran, [#Iran](#)
Thousands of [#Iranian](#) people took to the streets Sunday with authorities using teargas to break up a 2nd day of [#IranProtests](#)




♡ 10 3:13 AM - Jan 13, 2020



💬 15 people are talking about this




A disturbing video shows blood spilled on Tehran's Azadi street as people gather around a woman reportedly shot in the leg. Iran HRM, however, couldn't "independently verify the date of the video."



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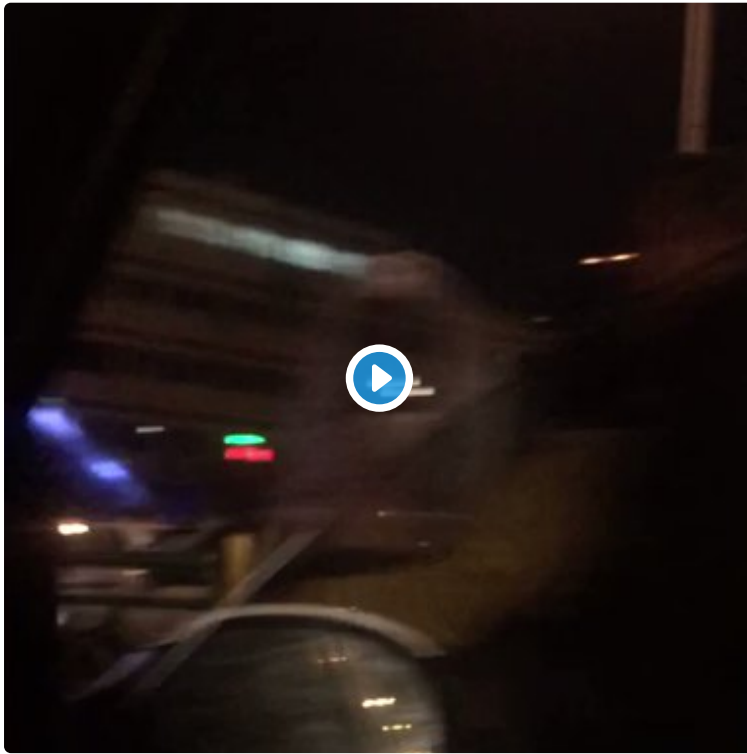
IRAN HRM @IranHrm · 23h
Replying to @IranHrm @khamenei_ir



Replying to @IranHrm @Khatamehel_ii

Jan 12, Tehran, [#Iran](#)

Reports security forces attacking protesters coming from Azadi Street.
Eye witnesses say that the regime forces prevent people from
filming. [#IranProtests2020](#)



IRAN HRM

@IranHrm

WARNING DISTURBING VIDEO

The video is said to be taken tonight in Tehran's Azadi Street, [#Iran](#)

The video shows a woman who is shot in the leg.

We cannot independently verify the date of the video.

[#IranProtests2020](#)



2:10:29 / 0:29

♡ 9 11:58 AM - Jan 12, 2020



[See IRAN HRM's other Tweets](#)



Another video reportedly was taken at the Moein Metro on Sunday. “State security forces attacked peaceful protesters using batons and tear gas. Trains are not allowed to stop at this station,” said the caption of the video.



IRAN HRM @IranHrm · 23h



Replying to @IranHrm @khamenei_ir

Jan 12, Tehran's Azerbaijan Street, [#Iran](#) [#Iranian](#) protesters rip picture of [#QassemSuleimani](#) the regime's Qods Force commander who was killed in an American drone strike. [#IranProtests](#)



IRAN HRM

@IranHrm

Jan 12, Moein Metro, Tehran [#Iran](#)

Reports say that the state security forces attacked peaceful protesters using batons and tear gas.

Trains are not allowed to stop at this station. [#IranProtests2020](#)





♡ 7 11:29 AM - Jan 12, 2020



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There are also reports of memorial services conducted for the victims of the Ukrainian plane crash by the students of Tehran University's School of Management, Khajeh Nassir University, the University of Science and Industry in Tehran, Bou Ali University of Hamedan, the University of Damghan, Noshirvani University of Babol, and Paris University of Karaj.



Iran HRM also reported stories of two students—Nabi Tardast and Mohammad Esmaili—who were arrested during the Sunday protests and whose whereabouts are allegedly unknown.

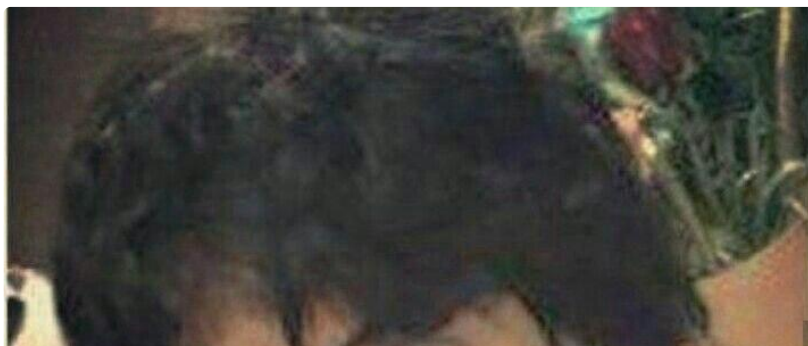


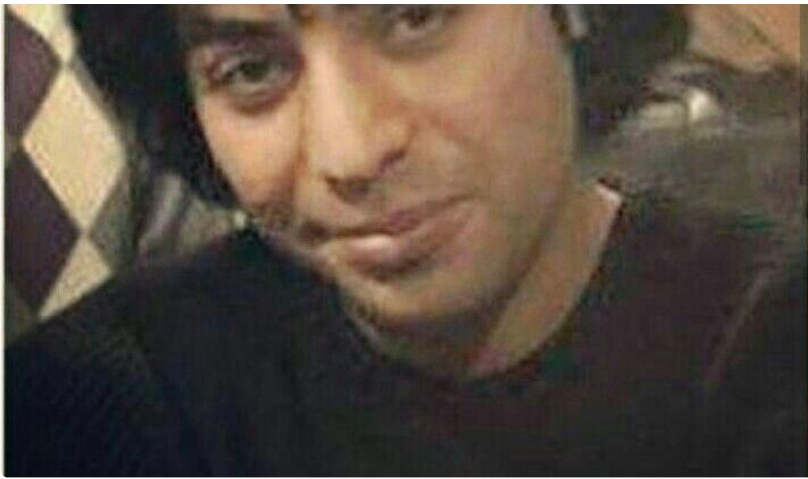
IRAN HRM
@IranHrm



Nabi Tardast, master student of sociology at Razi University of Kermanshah, W [#Iran](#) was arrested during yesterday's [#IranProtests](#). His condition & whereabouts are still unknown.

Thousands of people were protesting the regime's denial that it shot down a Ukrainian jetliner.





♡ 9 3:27 AM - Jan 13, 2020



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IRAN HRM

@IranHrm



Mohammad Esmaili, a senior photography students at Tehran University was arrested during yesterday's [#IranProtests](#). His condition & whereabouts are still unknown. Thousands of people were protesting [#Iran](#) regime's denial that it shot down a Ukrainian jetliner.



♡ 9 3:22 AM - Jan 13, 2020



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Protests videos and reports of the Iranian regime firing at the protesters were also reported by [MEK Iran](#)

, an Albania-based organization that works for an Iran free from “oppression and Dictatorship.”



NCRI-FAC ✓
@iran_policy



#IranProtests

The repressive #IRGC forces attack the University Students using tear gas and firing live ammunition.

The crowd calling on #IRGC thugs, "Shameless, shameless,..." #FreeIran2020 #IRGCTerrorists



♡ 48 12:35 PM - Jan 11, 2020



💬 49 people are talking about this



Last week, the Iran HRM had quoted a local news agency about the arrest of four men in Shahreza, Isfahan province, on Jan. 6 on charges of “insulting Qassem Soleimani” on social media platforms, referring to the top Iranian general recently killed in a targeted U.S. drone strike.

The prosecutor general and revolutionary of the city of Shahreza, Amir Hossein Razaz Zadeh condemned the four men for “propaganda against the system” and “blasphemy.”

“Publishing content that insults the personality of martyrs is tantamount to the crime of spreading propaganda against the state,” he said, according to Iran HRM.

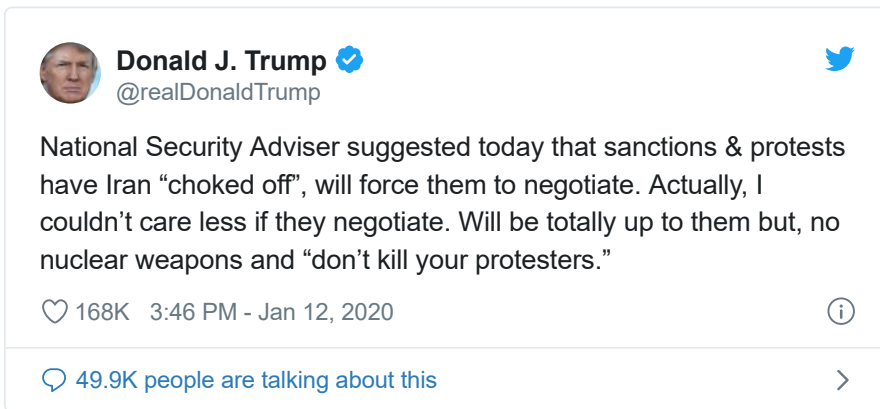
“In terms of the sanctity of martyrdom, it is considered blasphemy and will end in arrest and detention,” said Zadeh.



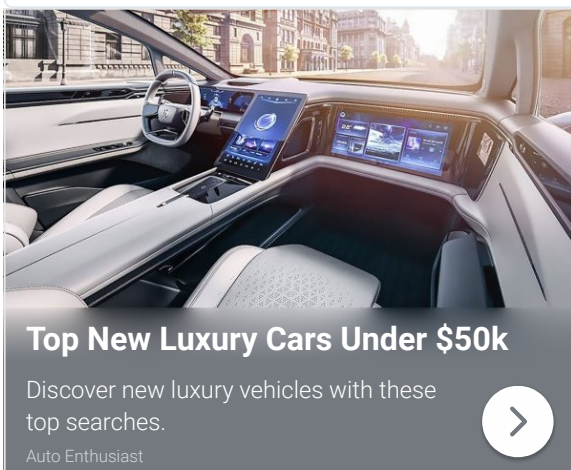


President Trump's Warning

President Donald Trump issued a warning to the Iranian regime on Sunday night: “don’t kill your protesters.” He also said the “sanctions & protests have Iran ‘choked off’, will force them to negotiate.” The President left a message in both Farsi and English on his Twitter in a more personal touch toward the protesters.



In another message written in Farsi on Twitter on Saturday, Trump expressed his support for the protesters: “To the brave and suffering Iranian people: I have stood with you since the beginning of my presidency and my government will continue to stand with you. We are following your protests closely. Your courage is inspiring.”



Iran's IRGC on Saturday acknowledged that it accidentally shot down the Ukrainian jetliner that crashed earlier this week, killing all 176 people aboard, after the government had repeatedly denied Western accusations and mounting evidence that it was responsible.

The plane was shot down early Wednesday, hours after Iran launched a ballistic missile attack on two military bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq in retaliation for the killing of Soleimani in Baghdad. No one was killed in the attack on the U.S. bases.

General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the head of the Guard's aerospace division, said his unit accepts full responsibility for shooting down the plane. In an address broadcast by state TV, he said that when he learned about the downing of the plane, "I wished I was dead."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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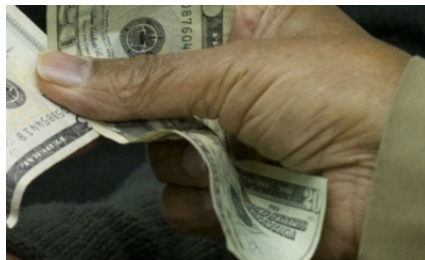
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