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## Minister: Some Terrorists in Kerman Bombings Arrested



The explosions ripped through a crowded area in southeastern Iran's city of Kerman on Wednesday.

TEHRAN – Iran's Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said Friday some agents linked to Kerman terrorist attacks that left at least 89 people martyred and scores more injured have been arrested.

Vahidi said the details of the arrests will be announced by the intelligence services.

On Thursday, Daesh claimed responsibility for the two explosions at a memorial for top anti-terror commander Gen. Qassem Soleimani in the southeastern Iranian city of Kerman.

In a statement posted on its affiliate Telegram channels, the terrorist group said two members had detonated their explosive belts in the crowd which had gathered at a cemetery for the anniversary of the U.S. assassination of Gen. Soleimani.

Earlier, an unnamed source told the official news agency IRNA that the first explosion at the cemetery in Kerman, Gen. Soleimani's hometown, "was the result of a suicide bomber's action".

"The suicide bomber in the first incident was a man who was completely dismembered as a result of the explosion and the iden-

tification of the suicide bomber is under investigation," it said.

"The cause of the second blast was most likely the same," the source told IRNA.

The site of the explosions, the source said, was respectively 1.5 km and 2.7 km from the burial place of Gen. Soleimani, where it was not possible to pass through the inspection gates in the area.

The United Nations Security Council in a statement condemned Wednesday's "cowardly terrorist attack" in Kerman and sent its condolences to the victims' families and the Iranian government.

The members of the Security Council underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organizers, financiers, and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice.

The Security Council urged all states to cooperate actively with the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to punish the criminals responsible for carrying the terrorist act.

Iran observed a day of mourning Thursday for those killed in the

terrorist blasts. People gathered at dozen cities across the country, chanting: "Death to Israel" and "Death to America".

Earlier Thursday, Iran's top security body tasked the country's intelligence, security and law enforcement organizations to promptly identify and punish those behind Wednesday's bombings.

The Supreme National Security Council held an ad hoc session to hear and review the reports of the organizations, deciding that "the intelligence agencies should quickly track down the clues obtained from the terrorist operation and identify and introduce its mercenary perpetrators".

"The role of the corrupt minds who always supported the terrorists in targeting innocent women, men and children in different parts of the world, should be accurately identified and reported in this incident," it said.

"The relevant institutions should take action to predict and prevent and deal decisively with the perpetrators and justly punish the perpetrators or supporters of this crime," it added.

## President Raisi to Visit Turkey in New Future

TEHRAN -- Iran and Turkey have agreed that President Ebrahim Raisi will travel to Ankara soon after he cancelled his planned visit following terrorist bombings in Kerman on Wednesday.

The visit, due to begin on Thursday, was delayed after a telephone call with President Raisi in which his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned the attack and offered condolences and the two presidents called to act jointly in the "fight against terrorism".

Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan called his Iranian counterpart Hussein Amir-Abdollahian Thursday night to "express condolences and solidarity of the government and people of Turkey with the government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran" over the terrorist attack.

Amir-Abdollahian thanked high-ranking Turkish officials, including the president and the minister of foreign affairs, and emphasized diligent efforts of the Iranian authorities to "accurately identify the perpetrators and orderers of this barbaric and terrorist act".

The two foreign ministers also agreed that the official visit by President Raisi to the "friendly and

brotherly neighbor Turkey" will go ahead in the near future.

Erdogan had first announced in November that "Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is coming to us on the 28th of the month" to focus on forging a joint response to the Israeli invasion of Gaza, but the visit did not take place due to conflicting schedules of their foreign ministers.

Both Turkey and Iran oppose the illegal U.S. presence in Syria and have strongly condemned the ongoing Israeli genocide against the Palestinians.

Late Thursday, Amir-Abdollahian took a call from his Syrian counterpart Faisal Mikdad who strongly condemned the terrorist bombings in Kerman and extended condolences to the families of the victims.

Mikdad stressed the need to hold the forces behind the crime responsible and make necessary coordination to uncover its perpetrators and for the world to get united against terrorism.

He also reiterated Syria's "full solidarity with the Islamic Republic of Iran, as people and leadership, and with all families of the victims who met to commemorate human memory of martyrs of

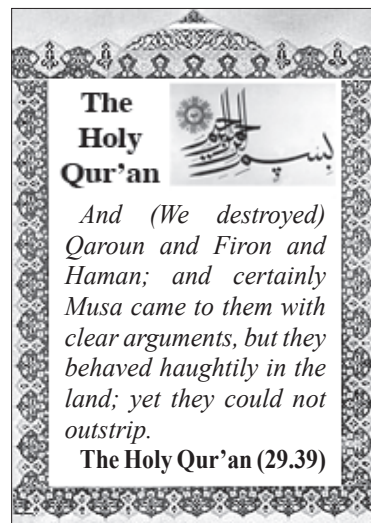
truth and justice, General Qassem Soleimani and Commander of the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, late Abu al-Mahdi al-Muhandis" who were assassinated in a US drone strike in Baghdad on Jan. 3, 2020.

For his part, Amir-Abdollahian expressed his appreciation for the solidarity of the Syrian people with the Iranian people "as the two countries have agreement on the necessity of combating terrorism in every way and resisting the growing Zionist tendency to take revenge on the Palestinians and their achievements in confronting the Zionist attacks on Gaza".

Pakistani Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani also spoke to Amir-Abdollahian and "expressed deep condolences over deaths in the dastardly terrorist attack that took place yesterday in Kerman", a foreign ministry statement said.

"On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, Foreign Minister expressed solidarity with the people of Iran at this moment of grief," it said.

Jilani "termed terrorism as a common threat to both Pakistan and Iran which needs to be countered by effective measures", it added.



### PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	12:10
Evening (Maghreb)	17:26
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	07:15
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	05:45

## IRGC: Plot to Create Insecurity Fell Flat

TEHRAN -- The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says the recent "indiscriminate and spiteful" terrorist attack in the southeastern Iranian city of Kerman was a failed attempt to induce insecurity in the country.

The IRGC said the terrorist attack was in revenge for high respect of the Iranian nation, particularly the brave young generation, for General Soleimani.

It warned the coward enemies that the Iranian nation would strongly continue General Soleimani's path and would prevent them from achieving their evil goals.

The statement said the heinous terrorist bombings showed that the enemies are unable to compensate for the defeats they had suffered by General Soleimani.

The Iranian Army also in a statement censured the terrorist crime in Kerman which killed innocent civilians, including women and children.

"This act of terrorism, which killed a group of innocent people, shows the brutality and savage nature of the enemies of Islam and the Islamic establishment," it said.

It added that the terrorist attacks also proved the enemies' hatred and enmity towards the noble Iranian nation.

The Iranian Army emphasized that the despicable act will not dent the determination and will of the Iranian nation in their fight against terrorism and will rather increase their unity and coherence.

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said on Wednesday that enemies think that they can achieve their illegitimate goals via acts of terror, but the Iranian nation has proven that such crimes cannot disrupt its cohesion, security and strategy."

## World Leaders Express Solidarity With Iran

TEHRAN -- Chinese President Xi Jinping has sent a message of condolences to President Ebrahim Raisi, saying he is "shocked to learn about serious terror attacks" in Iran's southeastern city of Kerman in which scores of people were killed on Wednesday.

"On behalf of the Chinese government and people, Xi expressed deep condolences to the victims and sincere sympathy to the injured and the bereaved families," state news agency Xinhua reported on Thursday.

"President Xi stressed that China opposes all forms of terrorism, strongly condemns terrorist attacks and firmly supports Iran's efforts in safeguarding national security and stability," it added.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad also sent separate cables of commiseration to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and President Raisi.

He "extended his sincere condolences to the families of the victims and the whole people across Iran over this bereavement", saying Syria's leadership and people share with them "this painful loss and wishes speedy recovery for the injured, state news agency SANA reported.

"President al-Assad underlined that such terrorist outrages targeting the civilians confirms the extent of failure the terrorists along with their backers have reached to and their disappointment in making peoples abandon their principles and national interests including de-

fending sovereignty and dignity."

President Raisi also received a telephone call from his Turkmen counterpart Serdar Berdimuhamedov who expressed his sympathy with the government and people of Iran.

"Definitely, the corrupt brains that planned this terrorist crime and the dirty hands that tried to do it will be decisively dealt with," Raisi said.

The president touched on the "failure of the Zionists to achieve their declared goals in its invasion of Gaza and the global outcry against the criminality of this regime".

"Historical experience has proven that such terrorist actions will not only have no result for the perpetrators, orderers and supporters of terror and terrorism, but will also reveal the criminal nature of this regime and its supporters to the people of the world."

Iran observed a day of mourning Thursday for those killed in the terrorist blasts that ripped through a large crowd marking the fourth anniversary of the U.S. assassination of top anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani.

The death toll was revised down to 89 from around 100, with hundreds of others wounded near Gen. Soleimani's tomb in Kerman.

Iran's emergency services chief Jafar Miadfar pointed to difficulties identifying dismembered bodies and said some victims were mistakenly counted "several times". He said 284 people were wounded and 195 are still hospitalized.

## Envoy: Iran to Hold Masterminds of Bombings to Account

UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) -- Iran's UN envoy says the country is to use "all available mechanisms" to ensure accountability for the perpetrators of earlier hugely deadly terror attacks that targeted the southwestern Iranian city of Kerman.

Amir Saeid Iravani, the Islamic Republic's permanent ambassador to the United Nations, made the remarks in a letter to the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the world body's Security Council on Wednesday.

Iravani denounced the blasts as "a heinous terrorist act and an appalling crime."

"This reprehensible act," the ambassador said, "deliber-

ately targeted innocent people."

The envoy asserted that comprehensive investigations were underway to identify and apprehend the perpetrators and organizers of this "premeditated crime."

He reiterated that Iran remained "steadfast" in both the pursuit of justice for the victims and the country's ongoing fight against terrorism.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Hussein Amir-Abdollahian said the Islamic Republic had started taking "legal measures" through the United Nations as part of its efforts to ensure accountability for those responsible for the Kerman attacks.