



Iran Summary November 2025

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Summary

Iranian officials continued to defend the country's nuclear program despite the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Directors demanding they permit United Nations (UN) inspectors to access Iran's nuclear sites and provide information on the regime's missing enriched uranium stockpile.

Meanwhile, several reports released in November revealed Iranian efforts to rearm Hezbollah through illicit Turkish and maritime routes and fund the group through UAE-based front companies, evading international sanctions. Other reports highlighted widespread Iran-backed cyberattacks, including one in which hackers leaked plans for Australia's purchase of military vehicles. Additionally, an exclusive *Iran International* report revealed the origins of the secretive hacker group, Department 40, and its threatening actions towards Iranian dissidents and regime critics worldwide.

Domestically, Iranians suffered severe water shortages amidst a months-long drought, prompting Iran's president to raise the possibility of relocating Iran's capital city. Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic carried out over 300 executions in November, contributing to record levels of state executions in 2025.

Nuclear

Despite claiming peaceful nuclear ambitions, Iranian leadership remains adamant on enriching uranium and rebuilding the country's nuclear facilities following the 12-Day War. Additionally, Tehran received assistance from Moscow with Russia's state nuclear corporation announcing that approximately 700 Russian citizens are helping construct units at the Bushehr nuclear plant.

- On November 21, Iranian officials [rejected](#) the IAEA Board of Governors vote demanding Iran cooperate with UN nuclear inspectors, threatening to retaliate in an unspecified manner.
 - » The vote comes after Iran refused to grant IAEA access to its nuclear sites or clarify details regarding its enriched uranium stockpile.
- On November 19, *Financial Times* [reported](#) that Iranian scientists secretly traveled to Russia in November 2024, allegedly meeting with companies to develop Iran's nuclear program.
- On November 18, Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's foreign policy adviser, Kamal Kharrazi, [stated](#) during an interview with *CNN* that Iran could consider negotiating the degree to which it enriches uranium.
 - » However, Kharrazi clarified that under any nuclear agreement, the regime must be able to enrich uranium.

- On November 17, Alexey Likhachev, the Director General for Rosatom, Russia's state nuclear corporation, [announced](#) that 700 Russians are helping construct two additional units at Iran's Bushehr nuclear facility.
- On November 16, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi [declared](#) that Iran has not enriched uranium since the 12-Day War.
- On November 2, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian [announced](#) that the regime would rebuild its nuclear facilities "with greater strength," following the 12-Day War.

Proxy Aggression

Reports revealed that Iran continues to supply Hezbollah in Lebanon through illicit Turkish and maritime routes, while also funding the group through UAE-based front companies. Meanwhile, the Houthis executed several accused spies while also smuggling illegal goods into Yemen, hiding weapons amongst humanitarian aid supplies.

- On November 27, *The Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) that Iran evades international sanctions to fund Hezbollah through UAE-based front companies.
- On November 24, following an Israeli strike that killed Hezbollah's Chief of Staff, Ali Tabatabai, Iranian forces [vowed](#) to seek revenge on Israel.
- On November 23, the Houthis [sentenced](#) 17 people to death, accusing them of spying for the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia.
- On November 20, Israeli authorities [announced](#) that Iran and Hezbollah are collaborating with Hamas to reconstruct Iran's Axis of Resistance following successful Israeli military operations against the regime's terror proxies.
- On November 14, *Ynet News* [reported](#) that Iran is actively rearming Hezbollah fighters through Turkish and maritime smuggling routes.
- On November 9, U.S. Treasury officials [revealed](#) that Iran provided \$1 billion to Lebanese Hezbollah this year following Israeli military operations against the group.
- On November 4, the UN [released](#) a report highlighting that the Houthis hid intelligence collection tools in shipments disguised as school supplies.

Malign Activities Abroad

Authorities worldwide helped thwart several Iran-backed plots, including an assassination attempt on Israel's ambassador to Mexico late last year. Israeli authorities also arrested several people accused of spying for Iranian agents in exchange for financial compensation, a growing trend amongst vulnerable Israeli citizens over the past two years. Additionally, Iranian hackers targeted aerospace, aviation, and defense organizations while *Iran International* exposed that Iran's Department 40 infiltrated several international digital networks and threatened regime critics worldwide.

- On November 30, Iran's semi-official *Tasnim News Agency* [reported](#) that Iran had interdicted an unnamed ship near Bushehr for allegedly transporting 350,000 liters of smuggled fuel.
- On November 21, *Iran International* [revealed](#) that the notorious Iranian hacker group, Department 40, also known as Charming Kitten, directly operates within the government's intelligence unit to spy on, and threaten, Iranian dissidents and to launch cyberattacks abroad.

- On November 20, Israeli police and Shin Bet [announced](#) that their forces had arrested a man in Beersheba in October for collaborating with Iranian agents.
- On November 18, Google's Mandiant Services [announced](#) that UNC1549, an Iran-backed cyber actor, compromised several aerospace, aviation, and defense organizations throughout the Middle East between 2023 and 2025.
- On November 16, Israeli prosecutors [charged](#) an Israeli man accused of spying and collecting military-related intelligence for Iranian agents.
- On November 14, Iranian authorities [seized](#) the *Talara*, a Marshall Islands-flagged vessel transiting the Strait of Hormuz.
 - » Iran [released](#) the ship's 21 passengers five days later on November 19.
- On November 13, Director for Canada's Security Intelligence Service, Dan Rogers, [announced](#) that Canadian authorities thwarted potential Iran-backed threats targeting dissidents.
- On November 10, Israeli authorities [arrested](#) a man for contacting Iranian agents and sending them videos of sites in Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan in exchange for crypto currency.
- On November 9, *Sky News Australia* [reported](#) that Iranian hackers leaked blueprints of Australia's \$7 billion plan to develop Redback infantry fighting vehicles on Telegram.
- On November 7, U.S. and Israeli officials [announced](#) that Mexican authorities helped thwart an Iran-backed assassination attempt on Israel's Ambassador to Mexico, Einat Kranz-Neiger.
- On November 5, Danish media [reported](#) that an Afghan man linked to Iran had been detained after a warrant was issued for his arrest in Germany.
 - » German authorities claim the man was helping Iranian intelligence agents carry out an operation against Jewish sites in Berlin.
- On November 2, Israeli prosecutors [indicted](#) a man from Tiberias after he spied for Iran in exchange for financial compensation.

Domestic/Human Rights

Iranians continued to suffer through a severe drought, prompting Iran's president to propose relocating the country's capital as the government rations water in Tehran and suspended electricity production at one of Iran's most critical dams due to low water levels. While authorities cracked down on critics' technology usage, the government carried out over 300 executions, contributing to record execution levels in 2025.

- According to *the Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA)*, the Islamic Republic [executed](#) at least 308 people throughout November, contributing to approximately 1,594 executions in 2025 as of November 30.
- On November 29, Iran [paused](#) electricity production at the Karkheh Dam due to extremely low water levels.
- On November 19, *Iran International* [reported](#) that over the past few weeks, Iranians who have defied government orders, including unveiled women, have noticed their phones' SIM cards abruptly malfunctioning.
- On November 18, officials looking for mobile phones at an Iranian girls' school in Shahr-e Rey [assaulted](#) several students during bag searches, prompting three teenaged girls to be hospitalized.

- On November 8, amidst the ongoing drought, the government [began](#) rationing water in Tehran and reducing water pressure overnight.
- On November 7, Pezeshkian [suggested](#) relocating Iran's capital, announcing that "If it doesn't rain in Tehran by late November, we'll have to ration water. And if it still doesn't rain, we'll have to evacuate Tehran."
- On November 4, Iran [released](#) Cecile Kohler and Jacques Paris, two French tourists whom Iranian authorities wrongfully detained in 2022.

Recent JINSA Products on Iran

- November 25: "[The Cross-Continental Threat: Iran and Venezuela's U.S.-Defying Partnership](#)," *Algemeiner*, LTG Raymond Palumbo, USA (ret.) and Yoni Tobin
- November 20: "[Operation Rising Lion: Insights from Israel's 12-Day War Against Iran](#)," Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), VADM Mark Fox, USN (ret.), LTG Robert Ashley, USA (ret.), Blaise Misztal, Ari Cicurel, Yoni Tobin, Jonah Brody, Sarah Havdala, and Rena Gabber
- November 3: "[America and Israel Won the Battle—But Iran Is Already Plotting the Next War](#)," *RealClearDefense*, Amb. Eric Edelman, Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), and Jonathan Ruhe