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[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

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J. Ditz

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## Iranian Officials Struggle to Halt Growing Demonstrations

Saturday saw a third night of growing public demonstrations in Iran, mostly centered in Tehran [but also erupting in cities across the country's west](#). The Iranian government has attempted to slow the rallies by announcing such gatherings are illegal, and shutting down some mobile communications networks to try to limit organizers' ability to inform their supporters.

The protests began small, as economic protests about the government's failure to come through on [pledges of economic growth and more jobs](#). These grew and fairly quickly turned into hostility toward Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the violent crackdowns



on demonstrators have only added to the size of the protests.

This has resulted in the largest anti-government protests in Iran since 2009, with [protesters shouting "death to the dictator" and clashing with riot police](#). While not as large, there have also been reports of counter-protests at some universities, expressing support for the government.

[At least three protesters were reported to have been killed](#) in the course of crackdowns on the rally. Exact figures on the deaths aren't totally clear, however, with some other reports suggesting an unspecified but substantial number of deaths.

While the protests appear to be wholly about internal politics within Iran, and the struggles with high inflation and unemployment, Israeli media was quick to try to portray it as an anti-Palestinian backlash by the Iranian public, since the protests began roughly at the same time Iran's parliament issued a statement recognizing Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital.

In reality, the protests appear to be fueled largely by attempts to crack down on the smaller economic protests, which are not particularly uncommon in Iran, and warnings that protests are now illegal are only adding to the sense of defiance among disaffected locals.