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Ressort: Politik

Who will prevail: the regime or the people?

The Netherlands, 12.01.2026 [ENA]

Protests continue in Iran. The current wave of large-scale demonstrations began on December 28, 2025. The events initially emerged in Tehran's shopping centers as economic demands against the sharp rise in inflation and the rapid devaluation of the national currency, the rial. Within a short time, however, they spread to many cities across the country and took on a political character.

According to information available as of January 12, 2026, more than 500 people, and according to some sources nearly 600, have been killed in the clashes, while thousands have been arrested. In an effort to suppress the protests, the authorities imposed a nationwide internet shutdown starting on January 8, 2026. These facts indicate that the current regime is deeply concerned about the unfolding events.

Naturally, the regime has reasons for this concern. The possibility that the protests could result in the collapse of the regime cannot be ruled out. It is no coincidence that many political analysts and journalists are paying special attention to this issue.

For example, in neighboring Azerbaijan, such views are also widely shared. Well-known journalist, political commentator, and Doctor of Philology Gulu Meharramli wrote on his Facebook page:

"Can Iran, which is moving toward an abyss, fall into ruin? It can. If the clerical regime led by Ali Khamenei fails to hear and assess the voice of the people and the appeals of President Masoud Pezeshkian, who expresses this voice in political terms. The Iranian president clearly states that the police and the army should not confront the people but should engage in dialogue with them. Whatever the people's grievances and demands are, they must be listened to."

The course of events, however, shows that the country's religious leadership holds a position different from that of the president. It is therefore not surprising that the authorities have organized pro-government rallies with the participation of their supporters. In a public address, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei thanked supporters who took part in the rallies organized by the authorities. As usual, he blamed the United States for the developments. The president of the United States has also not remained indifferent to the events in Iran and has expressed support for the protesters.

Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran's last shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, has also become increasingly active in

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recent days. By declaring his support for the protesters and stating that he is ready to return to Iran at any moment, he has effectively sent a message to the United States and the West.

However, a key question arises: does the Iranian people actually want him? Would the United States and Western countries provide him with real support? In my view, they should not. The Iranian people do not remember the last shah, his father, in a particularly positive light.

In my opinion, the key role in the processes unfolding in Iran is played by the Azerbaijani Turks living in the country, whose number is estimated at nearly thirty million. For context, under the Gulistan Treaty signed in 1813 and the Turkmenchay Treaty signed in 1828 between Iran and Russia, Azerbaijan was divided into two parts. The territory of today's independent Azerbaijan remained within Russia at that time, while a large portion of the country lies within present-day Iran.

Throughout history, there have been several opportunities for the reunification of these lands, but for various reasons this never materialized. This topic deserves a separate and more detailed discussion in the future. In this article, however, I would like to emphasize that Azerbaijani Turks have historically held an important political and social position in Iran, and they continue to do so today. It should also be noted that Iran's current president is of Azerbaijani origin. This fact alone speaks volumes.

I believe that those who seek regime change in Iran must take into account the interests of the peoples who hold real influence in the country.

How will events develop? Will the regime change? Time and history will tell. One truth, however, should not be forgotten: regimes of this type are not eternal. Even if not today, change will inevitably come sooner or later.

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https://www.european-news-agency.de/politik/who_will_prevail_the_regime_or_the_people-92852/

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:
V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDStV: Vugar Abbasov