

Thousands rally across Iran to protest Gaza massacre

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Demonstrators attend an anti-Israel protest in Tehran, Iran, November 18, 2023 [Majid Asgaripour/WANA/via Reuters]

Tehran, November 19 (RHC)-- Thousands of Iranians held rallies across the country against Israel's unrelenting bombardment of Gaza, with a top military commander warning that Israel was heading for a long and bloody war with Palestinian group Hamas.

The demonstrations on Saturday in the capital Tehran and other cities were held in “support of the oppressed children of Gaza” under the slogan “Palestine is not alone”, according to local media.

Israel’s air and ground campaign has killed an estimated 12,000 people in the Palestinian territory, including 5,000 children, according to Palestinian authorities. Israel has pledged to destroy Hamas in response to the group’s October 7 attacks which Israeli officials say killed about 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and in which about 240 people were taken captive.

“Palestine stands on the path of a war of attrition ... Israel will face a definitive defeat and end up in the dustbin of history,” Commander Hossein Salami from the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps told the rally in Tehran, which was aired live on state TV.

“The battle is not over. The Islamic world will do whatever it has to do. There are still great [unused] capacities left,” Salami said, without referring to any possible moves by Iran to join the conflict. “The Zionist regime [Israel] can no longer see peace and security. Muslims will take revenge on behalf of the oppressed people of Gaza, and this revenge has no expiration date.”

In Tehran, demonstrators waved Palestinian flags, while others held banners that read, “Down with America” and “Down with Israel,” according to the AFP news agency. Others set alight Israeli flags, while some waved the flags of Lebanese Shia group Hezbollah, Iran’s ally, which has been engaged in border skirmishes with Israel since October 7.

State television also showed some protesters carrying bundled white shrouds symbolising the children killed in Gaza, during the marches held in advance of World Children’s Day on Monday.

Similar demonstrations took place in other major cities including Shiraz, Kerman and Isfahan. Earlier this week, hundreds of body bags were laid out in Palestine Square in Tehran to protest against the continuing Israeli offensive on Gaza.

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