

Iran blasts U.S. accusations of Trump assassination plot

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US media reports claim that an Iran plan to target Republican presidential hopeful is unrelated to attack in Pennsylvania. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani speaks during a press conference in the capital Tehran on October 3, 2022. (Photo by ATTA KENARE / AFP)

Tehran, July 17 (RHC)-- Iran has angrily dismissed United States media reports that it has been plotting to assassinate former U.S. President Donald Trump. A foreign ministry spokesman on Wednesday stated that Iran rejects the "malicious" allegations that it has plotted an attack on the Republican presidential

hopeful. However, Nasser Kanaani asserted that Iran aims to prosecute Trump for ordering the assassination of a senior military official in 2020.

Citing unnamed U.S. officials, CNN reported on Tuesday that US authorities recently learned of an Iranian threat on Trump's life. That led U.S. secret services to beef up the former president's security. However, that did not prevent the attack on Trump at a rally on Saturday. The US report states that the Iranian threat was not connected to the shooting in Pennsylvania, which was allegedly carried out by a lone 20-year-old gunman.

Kanaani said that Iran "strongly rejects any involvement in the recent armed attack against Trump or claims about Iran's intention for such an action, considering such allegations to have malicious political motives and objectives".

Iran is, however, still determined to "prosecute Trump" for his role in ordering the killing of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commander Qassem Soleimani in 2020, he insisted.

U.S. authorities have long been on alert over potential Iranian retaliation for the killing of Soleimani. Tehran has promised "harsh revenge." It is feared that targets could include former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and former national security advisers John Bolton and Robert O'Brien, all of whom kept security details after leaving the government, reported CNN.

The initial report claiming that security for Trump has been ramped up in recent weeks after intelligence agencies received information on a potential Iranian plot to kill him did not name sources.

However, National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson then issued a statement confirming that intelligence regarding an Iranian threat to Trump is "a national and homeland security matter of the highest priority".

She also confirmed that the investigation into the attack in Pennsylvania "has not identified ties between the shooter and any accomplice or co-conspirator, foreign or domestic."

Secret Service spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said agencies were "constantly receiving new potential threat information and taking action to adjust resources as needed".

"We cannot comment on any specific threat stream other than to say that the Secret Service takes threats seriously and responds accordingly," he added in a statement.

The US Department of Homeland Security, which handles anti-terrorism and border security, has not reacted to the alleged threat.

The report about Iran comes as the U.S. Secret Service faces intense scrutiny over the Butler County shooting, with questions over how a gunman was able to open fire at Trump from an exposed rooftop some 150 metres (500 feet) away.

U.S. President Joe Biden has ordered an independent review of the agency's handling of the incident.

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