

Iran executes Mossad-linked saboteurs

Four convicts who were found guilty of working with the Israeli Mossad spy agency and participating in armed kidnapping, intimidation and assault of security forces in the north-western province of West Azarbaijan were executed on Friday.

According to the judiciary's news agency, Mizan Online, the four were part of a ten-member sabotage group linked to Mossad, whose main objective was to identify Iranian intelligence agents who were foiling Israeli plots against Iran.

The main four convicts of the team, including three men and a woman, were hanged on Friday morning on charges of "corruption on Earth" and "waging war against God" (moharebeh) through intelligence cooperation with Israel with intent to undermine Iran's security, Press TV reported.

They were all tracked down and arrested after complex intelligence operations and close surveillance. The report of their arrest was published in October 2022. Head of the provincial Justice Department Nasser Atabati said then that the group members, under the direct supervision of Mossad officers, were instructed to locate individuals affiliated with Iran's security apparatus and obtain information from them through abduction, death threats, and brutal battery.

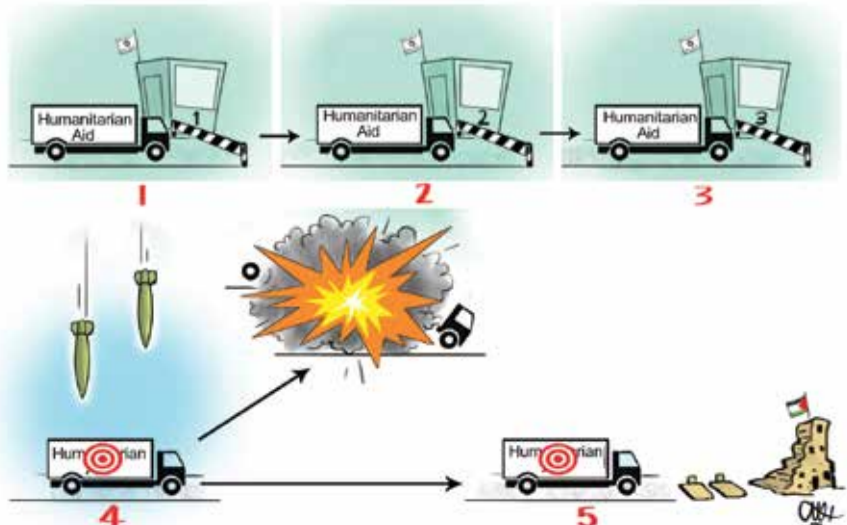
He added that the convicts had received money from Israeli agents and Mossad officers on several occasions for the tasks they had completed.

The official also noted that the detainees had communicated with Mossad officers via video calls, and had performed acts of sabotage in Iran's northwestern West Azarbaijan Province, the capital Tehran and the southern Hormuzgan Province.

The members of the team also set fire to the homes and cars of the people linked with the Iranian security organizations, Atabati said, noting they were even involved in several aborted assassination attempts against Iranian security forces.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran mourns IRGC general assassinated by Israel

International Desk

Thousands massed in the Iranian capital for the funeral of senior commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Seyyed Razi Mousavi, three days after he was assassinated by Israel in Syria.

The crowd in Tehran's Imam Hussein Square waved yellow flags imprinted with the message "I am your opponent" – a reference to Israel – in both Persian and Hebrew. High-ranking military commanders and government officials were also present at the ceremony. Israel has long fought a shadow war of assassinations and sabotage against Iran and its allies, but Mousavi's killing in Syria came at a time of

sharply heightened regional tensions over Israel's onslaught on the Gaza Strip since October.

Some of the mourners in Tehran carried pictures of Mousavi together with the revered Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, a former commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) foreign operations arm who was assassinated in a 2020 US drone strike in Baghdad.

Iran next week will mark the fourth anniversary of the death of Soleimani, who had run the IRGC's Quds Force for more than a decade.

Iran said an Israeli missile strike on Monday near the Syrian capital Damascus killed Mousavi, the most senior IRGC



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (C) leads funeral prayer for Brigadier General Seyyed Razi Mousavi on December 28, 2023, a senior commander in the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, who was assassinated by Israel in Syria.

● khamenei.ir

commander killed since Soleimani.

UN urged to act

Syria on Thursday said Mousavi's "martyrdom" on its territory was part of Israel's "aggressive policies," official news agency SANA reported.

In letters sent by the Syrian Foreign Ministry, Damascus called on the United Nations to act against Israeli actions which might "ignite the region," SANA said.



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei earlier on Thursday met with Mousavi's family and led a funeral prayer over the slain general's

body before it was taken to the central square.

The chief commander of the IRGC, Major General Hossein Salami, hailed Mousavi as "one of the most experienced and ef-

fective IRGC commanders in the Axis of Resistance."

He said Iran's revenge for Israel's assassination of Mousavi will be nothing but annihilation of the occupying regime.

UN: Israel doing 'monstrosity of our century'

International Desk

The UN special rapporteur on Palestine said what Israel is doing to the Palestinians is "the monstrosity of our century" as regime continues to massacre more Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

"What Israel is doing to the Palestinians, especially in #Gaza, is 'the monstrosity of our century', The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese, said in a message posted on her X account on Thursday.

She also referred to Western countries' inaction over the Israeli crimes against Palestinians, saying that "Western complacency is turning into complicity".

On Friday, Israel pounded south and central Gaza as Egypt was to host a high-level Hamas delegation

for talks to try and end the nearly 12-week conflict that has devastated the besieged Palestinian territory.

The Israeli military said its forces "are extending operation in Khan Yunis" in the coastal territory's south. Israeli shelling near Al-Amal in Khan Yunis killed 41 people over the past two days, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society said on Thursday.

The casualties in repeated Israeli strikes near the facility include "displaced persons seeking shelter", it said. The UN humanitarian office said an estimated 100,000 more displaced people had arrived in the already-teeming southern border city of Rafah in recent days following the intensification of fighting around Deir al-Balah and Khan Yunis.

The Israeli onslaught has left much of Gaza's north in ruins, while the battlefield has shifted ever further to



the south.

Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas in retaliation for the October 7 attack which left nearly 1,200 people dead.

Israel's relentless aerial bombardment and ground invasion in Gaza have killed at least 21,507 people, mostly women and children, according to the health ministry in Gaza. The Israeli army says 168 of its soldiers have been killed inside Gaza.

The UN says more than 80 percent of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been driven from their homes. Many now live in cramped shelters in the tiny territory or in makeshift tents around Rafah.

Meanwhile, an Israeli siege imposed after October 7, following years of crippling

blockade, has deprived Gazans of food, water, fuel and medicine.

Attack on aid convoy

The United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees said Friday an aid convoy came under fire by the Israeli military in the Gaza Strip, without causing any casualties.

"Israeli soldiers fired at an aid convoy as it returned from northern Gaza along a route designated by the Israeli army – our international convoy leader and his team were not injured but one vehicle sustained damage," UNRWA's director in Gaza, Tom White, wrote on X.

According to UNRWA, the incident took place on Thursday afternoon. Earlier on Friday the UN



People gather and mourn in front of 500 baby dolls wrapped in shrouds, in remembrance of the children killed in the Gaza Strip, in New York on December 28, 2023.

● CHARLY TRIBALLEAU/AFP

humanitarian chief, Martin Griffiths, wrote a post on X describing what he called "an impossible situation for the people of Gaza, and for those trying to help them". Griffiths said that aid convoys had been shot at, without elaborating. "You think getting aid into Gaza is easy? Think again," he said.

A Hamas official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP the delegation in Cairo would "give the response of the Palestinian factions, including several

observations" regarding the Egyptian proposal, recently put to officials from Hamas and another Gaza armed group, Islamic Jihad.

Hamas would also seek "guarantees for a complete Israeli military withdrawal" from Gaza, the official said.

Egypt's State Information Services chief Dia Rashwan said the plan was "intended to bring together the views of all parties concerned, with the aim of ending the shedding of Palestinian blood".

New York protest

People across the world still hold pro-Palestinians protests to show their anger at the Israeli regime.

On Thursday, hundreds of protesters took to the streets of the US city of New York, staging a mock funeral in a demonstration against Israel's continued heavy bombardment of the besieged Gaza strip.

Several women shrouded in black held baby dolls swaddled in white cloths to represent the toll the fighting has taken on children in the coastal territory.

"Today's action is to draw attention to the fact that, as of now, almost 10,000 children, just children alone, not counting everybody, not counting all Palestinians, have been killed... in Gaza," said archivist Grace Lile, 64.

Tehran advises neighbors to avoid comments on Iran's islands

International Desk

Iran's Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi advised neighboring countries not to damage their relations with a "great country" such as Iran by making unfounded claims regarding Iran's three islands in the Persian Gulf. Vahidi pointed to a recent statement issued by Russia and several

Arab countries on Iran's three Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb, saying that the baseless statements issued about the Iranian islands are claims that had been earlier made by others.

He made the remarks on a visit to the Abu Musa Island on Thursday. Iran summoned the Rus-

sian chargé d'affaires to Tehran on December 23 in protest at a recent statement issued by Russia and several Arab countries on Iran's three islands.

The final statement of the 6th Arab-Russian Cooperation Forum, which was held in Morocco on December 20, reiterated the United Arab Emirates' baseless claims

about the three Iranian islands.

The three Persian Gulf islands have historically been part of Iran, the proof of which can be found in and corroborated by countless historical, legal, and geographical documents in Iran and other parts of the world. The UAE, however, has repeatedly laid claim to the islands.