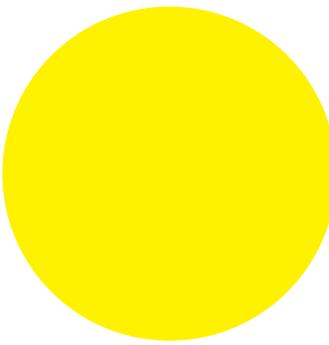




Pezeshkian prioritizes mental health amid unrest, seeks medical reassurance

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National Desk

The recent rioting in Iran that swept almost all 31 provinces claimed 3,117 lives, the state-run Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs (FMVA) said in a statement carried by national TV on Wednesday. "As per information received from the Iranian Legal Medicine Organization, in the recent terrorist incidents... 2,427 innocent Iranian citizens, including security forces and people from all walks of life, were martyred out of a total of 3,117 fatalities," the FMVA said.

The statement added that those martyred were targeted by "trained terrorists" with "cruelty and brutality" and in some cases, "bodies were burned, dismembered and beheaded."

According to the FMVA, many of the victims were "passersby" who were gunned down with the sole purpose of pushing up the number of casualties and some others were "protesters" who were shot dead in the crowds by "organized terrorist elements."

The foundation noted that the Iranian nation would bring to justice what it called "terrorists affiliated with the criminal Zionist regime" of Israel who had been "supported, equipped, and armed by the criminal leaders" of the United States.

Iran was hit by a wave of street protests on December 28 in several cities, including the capital Tehran, over economic woes driven by the depreciation of the national currency to a record low.

The protests, which the government on several occasions called "legitimate" and "rightful," turned extremely violent after armed terrorists infiltrated among the ranks of protesters in an effort to hijack their demonstrations.

Over 3,100 killed in riots incited by Israel, US in Iran

State foundation: 2,427 citizens martyred by 'trained terrorists'



Mourners attend a funeral for 100 people killed during recent violent riots, that swept through the Iranian capital, in Tehran on January 21, 2026. IRNA



INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

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Fresh initiatives needed to break impasse with IAEA

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE



Omid Khazani, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Grossi, said on Wednesday at the Davos summit that the impasse with Iran regarding its high-grade uranium stockpile and inspections of nuclear facilities, targeted by US and Israeli strikes in June, could not continue indefinitely. Following the US-Israeli aggression in June, Iran reduced its cooperation with the IAEA, and later revoked an agreement brokered by Egypt, after the UN sanctions snapback mechanism was triggered

in September 2025. Grossi said he was exercising "diplomatic caution" and would be compelled to declare Iran's non-compliance with the NPT if the situation persisted.

Omid Khazani, an international relations analyst, told Iran Daily that Tehran needed to shake off its inertia and propose new initiatives to break this deadlock.

IRAN DAILY: How do you see Grossi's latest stance? Does this position represent a shift in the agency's approach, or only a warning?

KHAZANI: The IAEA is part of the United Nations framework. Assessing its fairness and impartiality is one matter, but how Iranian diplomats and authorities view this matter is another. The system may not be entirely equitable; the IAEA chief might

hold biased views aligned with the US and Israel. However, this is part of the global order, and major world powers generally adhere to this framework.

Grossi, with an eye toward the UN secretary-general post, has demonstrated a lack of impartiality in his reports and engages in political maneuvering. Nevertheless, the fact is that he remains the reference point for Iran's nuclear dossier, and his reports guide the agency's decision-making power, allowing it to rally support against Iran and potentially refer the case back to the UN Security Council.

The IAEA's approach toward Iran will only become more stringent as Iran adopts a strategy of nuclear ambiguity, which the West finds difficult to accept. Especially with Israeli provocations, this strategy will not sit well with NATO, the US, and Western

Europe, and will likely radicalize the agency's stance. It appears the nuclear watchdog is moving in that direction.

What practical and diplomatic consequences would Iran face if the IAEA declares non-compliance with the agreements and how should Tehran handle it?

Grossi's upcoming reports on the status of Iran's 400 kilograms of enriched uranium and the condition of bombed nuclear sites could be seen as an attempt to build consensus against Tehran. Iran revoked the Cairo agreement in response to the instigation of the snapback mechanism, and its level of cooperation with the IAEA has reached a record low, although not entirely severed. Under these circumstances, the IAEA has the ability to report Iran's lack of cooperation

and compliance and ultimately refer the case to the UN Security Council.

Western countries have largely lined up against Iran, and Grossi's report could be the final piece of the puzzle. After a decade, since 2015 when Iran was brought under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, it could be brought under this chapter again, paving the way for more serious military action against the country's nuclear program and infrastructure. This could be part of a larger project.

Iran could argue that this is part of a global strategy led by the US and Israel, and that Grossi is part of this scenario. But it would be better for the country to pursue its own creative strategy since complaining about the IAEA will not bring about significant change.

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