

PROFILE

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weakening the regime's foundations. People have started chanting slogans like "Death to Khamenei," a direct sign of rebellion against religious authority.

External Pressure and Israel's Strategy

In 2025, Israel's attacks on Iran's nuclear sites and senior IRGC officials introduced a new strategic direction. These attacks were not merely to destroy military targets but seemingly aimed at creating an atmosphere conducive to regime change.

Is a Coup Against Iran's Hardline Khamenei Regime Possible?

Iran, a country in West Asia, has long been a center of religious, political, and ideological conflict. After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iran became an "Islamic Republic," where power was consolidated under religious rulers like Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. Over the past four decades, Iran has endured strained relations with the United States, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Western countries. However, the current circumstances hint at the beginning of a new era. In recent years, internal political instability, economic decline, human rights violations, and external military pressures have raised questions about the stability of the Khamenei government. The question arises: Is a coup against Khamenei's regime in Iran possible in the near future?

Structure of the Iranian Regime

Iran's political system is deeply rooted in a fusion of religious and military power. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei holds all constitutional powers, including authority over the judiciary, military, foreign policy, media, and parliament. Additionally, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) functions as an independent military-political force, exerting influence over Iran's economy and foreign relations.

This governance system is highly efficient and ruthless in suppressing both external and internal dissent. That is why all previous protests and uprisings have either been crushed by armed forces or dismissed under the guise of religious nationalism.

Economic Crisis and Public Discontent

Iran has been under economic sanctions for years, particularly following unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. Oil exports have declined, the currency has rapidly depreciated, inflation is at its peak, and unemployment has driven millions of youth into despair.

These conditions have fueled public discontent. Numerous mass protests, especially led by women and youth, have erupted in recent years. The protests following the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022 are a clear example. However, these movements were brutally suppressed.

Nevertheless, the growing anger and social imbalance are

Experts believe that Israel now operates under the assumption that Iran's current regime is nearing its end and only needs a decisive push. This argument is based on Iran's collapsing economy, public outrage, and emerging cracks within the power structure.

However, the success of such a strategy is questionable, as history shows that foreign interference often strengthens regimes under the banner of nationalism.

Could the IRGC Break Away from Power?

If any institution in Iran can challenge Khamenei's rule, it is the IRGC. With political, military, and economic influence, the IRGC has emerged as a parallel power center. If it perceives that national survival is at risk under Khamenei's leadership or that external pressure has become intolerable, an internal process of power transition could begin.

So far, no public rift has emerged between the IRGC and Khamenei. But if a transfer of power becomes necessary, it is likely to happen through internal consensus rather than foreign intervention.

The Role of the United States

Currently, the U.S. avoids direct regime change strategies. The Biden administration applies pressure through human rights, women's rights, and democracy concerns but refrains from military intervention. Possibly, the U.S. believes that aggressive tactics might provoke nationalist reactions in Iran, undermining reform opportunities.

Role and Mentality of the Public

The Iranian public is increasingly questioning the legitimacy of religious leadership. On one hand, the youth demand modernity, employment, and social freedom; on the other, the older generation remains bound by religious nationalism. This generational divide could shape Iran's political future.

If at any moment public anger finds organized leadership, widespread resistance movements could shake the foundations of the regime. However, no such leader or organization has emerged yet that can directly challenge the ruling system.

Future Possibilities

- 1. If Ayatollah Khamenei dies or steps down, the process of power transition could be highly contentious. Power centers might clash over succession.
- 2. If foreign pressure and public dissent peak simultaneously, an internal faction may attempt to change the regime.
- 3. If differences arise between the IRGC and religious leadership, the regime's structure could be seriously disrupted.

Conclusion

At present, a coup against the Khamenei government in Iran does not seem likely. The primary reason is the regime's strong military and religious structure. Although public discontent, economic crisis, and foreign pressure exist, these elements have yet to exert decisive influence to bring down the regime.

However, if all the above factors become active simultaneously in the future, internal power struggles or controlled power transitions cannot be ruled out. It is evident that Iran now stands at a crossroads where every decision will determine its political future. Whether this future leans toward democratic transformation or further religious extremism—only time will tell.