

Arbitrary Detention

**20**

JUN

17:23 UTC

Iran Alert: Authorities announce arrest of European national in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad province on June 20; avoid all travel, remain cognizant of risk of detentions

Current Situation:

- Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)-associated news agency reported that IRGC intelligence authorities arrested a European national in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad province on June 20.
- The suspect was arrested for "gathering information on sensitive and important sites" across Iran, posing as a tourist.
- Authorities stated that they seized a number of images of "sensitive sites" and locations in the desert regions of Iran, which were possessed by the arrestee.

Source: [Tasnim](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. Iran has repeatedly been accused of arresting and jailing foreigners and dual nationals in what human rights groups describe as "[hostage diplomacy](#)." This proclivity has occasionally heightened

concerns among Western governments, leading some of them to issue [travel advisories](#) and recommend that their nationals refrain from traveling to Iran.

2. While the details of the current instance are still unclear, it cannot be ruled out that this was another case of arbitrary detention by Iranian authorities. Tehran is likely extremely suspicious of foreign nationals, especially Westerners, at the current juncture amid its conflict with Israel. This is particularly in light of Israel's surprise launch of its operation against the country, in which on-ground Mossad agents participated in clandestine operations against Iranian targets. This has led Iran's security establishment to search for such operatives, a campaign that will likely persist for at least the duration of the war. **FORECAST:** Western nationals are likely to continue facing an elevated risk of detention in Iran at the current juncture.

Recommendations:

1. Avoid all travel to Iran at the current juncture due to the escalation between Iran and Israel.
2. Those within Iran are advised to evacuate the country due to the risks associated with the current conflict.
3. Remain cognizant of the elevated risk of arbitrary detention. Do not take photographs of sensitive or state-linked infrastructure, including IRGC-linked facilities, Iranian military or government buildings, installations linked to Iran's nuclear activities, or sites damaged in Israeli strikes throughout the country.
4. Both in-person and on social media, avoid discussing domestic and geopolitical developments about Iran, anti-government protests, Iran's nuclear program, tensions between Iran, the US, Gulf countries, and Israel, treatment of minority groups and opposition activists, the activities of the IRGC, and the policies and ideology of the Islamic Republic and the Supreme Leader. This is due to the potential for detention on national security charges.
5. Be advised that authorities may monitor communications from hotels and other facilities frequented by foreigners and that internet access may be limited.