

# *Thousands of Iranians Take to the Streets in Support of Government*

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Tehran, January 3 (RHC) -- Hundreds of thousands marched in pro-government demonstrations across Iran Wednesday to reject the violent protests that began in the country last week.

The Iranian government has blamed U.S., Israel and Saudi Arabia for encouraging the violence, noted teleSUR.

The anti-government protests broke out on December 28 in Iran's second largest city of Mashhad, initially against price rises, and later expanded to other provinces.

At least 20 people were killed in clashes with the police. More than 450 protesters were arrested.

Demonstrators carrying national flags and portraits of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei marched in Qom, Arak, Kermanshah, Ahwaz and other Iranian cities.

According to Fars news agency, similar demonstrations will be held on Friday in Tehran province.

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