

Iranian terror suspect 'has close links to regime'

From [*The Telegraph*](#)

One of the Iranian men arrested on suspicion of [plotting a major terrorist attack](#) in Britain has close connections to the regime in Tehran, The Telegraph understands.

The suspect, whose family runs prominent businesses in Iran, was one of five people detained on Saturday in a joint operation involving counter-terrorism police and members of the Special Forces.

It is believed the suspected terror cell was hours from unleashing an attack on "a specific premises" when the men were arrested at addresses and locations across the country.

Iranian sources in the UK told The Telegraph that at least one of those being held has close links to the government in Tehran and is "very well connected".

The alleged use of Iranian nationals in an overseas terror plot would represent a possible change in approach, with Tehran usually preferring to hire criminal proxies to operate on its behalf.

On Monday, Scotland Yard confirmed that officers had been granted more time to continue questioning four of the men.



Counter-terrorism police raid a property in Rochdale Credit: Social Media

A 24-year-old arrested in Manchester was released on conditional bail to a date later this month. Three other Iranian men arrested in London as part of a separate operation on Saturday continued to be held. *They had been under surveillance for other reasons and it was feared the terror plot arrests would prompt them to either flee or dispose of evidence quickly, or both.*

Details of the potential target have remained under wraps, but it is believed to have been a premises linked to a dissident Iranian organisation. *We were told early on that the target was not any of today's VE Day 80th commemorations; I wasn't the only person who feared a synagogue was under threat.*

Members of the UK Special Forces are believed to have assisted counter-terrorism officers in Saturday's raids, with a defence source confirming it was a "cross-agency effort, which the military supported". *Again, while police can wear camouflage jackets as part of their kit, there was something more military about the carriage of certain officers caught on*

film; I thought maybe they were former army personnel.

People in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, where a 40-year-old Iranian man was arrested, described how masked men carrying firearms used flash bombs to storm a terraced property.

The suspect was led shirtless from the property before being taken for questioning.