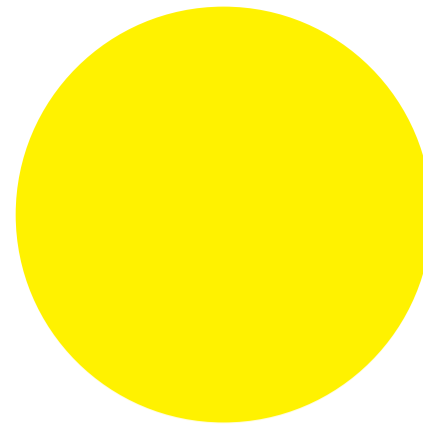


## Today's conflicts more dangerous than Cold War

Joe Biden's stark choice

### Cease-fire in Gaza or regional war in Middle East

4-5 >



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# Senators outraged after deadly attack on US outpost

Iran denies role in Jordan drone strike

7 >

## Attacking Iran would backfire

EDITORIAL

US Republicans are beating the drums of war after an overnight drone strike in Jordan killed three American servicemen and injured dozens more. Democratic President Joe Biden, now under pressure from his political rivals to hit back, has pointed the finger at "Iran-backed militant groups operating in Syria and Iraq" for launching the bloody attack on an outpost in Jordan's northeast on the border with Syria. He has vowed to respond but the Republicans are egging him on to what Senator Tom Cotton calls "devastating military retaliation against Iran... both in Iran and across the Middle East."

These are the first US military fatalities in the region since the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip began Oct. 7, despite more than 150 attacks on American forces by resistance forces across the Middle East in support of the Palestinian group Hamas that has been fighting back the Israeli offensive.

Iran has denied any involvement in the recent attack but has already warned the US that the conflict in the Palestinian enclave could spill over into other parts of the region if the Israeli war machine is not flagged down. The warning fell on deaf ears and Washington now appears to be paying the price for its unwavering support for a regime that has killed more than 26,000 Palestinians, mostly civilians, in a densely populated area in almost four months with US-made weapons.

Biden should be vigilant against political provocations and should not be duped into a direct military attack on Iran to take vengeance for a strike launched by a third party. Iran does not dodge responsibility for an act it has committed. The glaring examples are the downing of a US drone off its Persian Gulf coast in 2019, and a brazen missile attack on American forces in Iraq in retaliation for the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani in 2020.

Firstly, any insane move will definitely instigate a proportionate response from Iran, which could lead to a full-blown war in an already volatile region.

Secondly, military action against Iran is not expected to bring victory for an embattled president who is lagging behind by large margins in the face of a wounded Donald Trump.

A new war in the Middle East would be in no one's interest as the region cannot stand destruction and bloodshed anymore. Let's hope that wisdom will prevail in the White House, and Biden will not fall for the hawks' calls for locking horns with Iran.



# Leader Tours Iran's Homegrown Products Exhibition

2 >

Iran exports nearly \$30b worth of oil in 10 months: **IRICA**

2 >



Iran, Pakistan to set up consultative mechanism, deploy liaison officers

7 >



Culture minister emphasizes importance of arts in education system

8 >



## Iran exports nearly \$30b worth of oil in 10 months: IRICA

Iran exported \$29.9 billion worth of oil products in the first 10 months of the current Iranian year (started March 21, 2023), registering a 10% growth in terms of value compared to the same period last year, announced the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Some 113 million tons of goods, valued at \$40.5 billion, were exported from the country between March 21, 2023, and January 22, 2024, with oil, luggage trade, electricity and techno-engineering services excluded, Mohammad Rezvanifar added, according to Tasnim News Agency.

He noted that Iran's exports of non-oil products showed a 9.4 percent growth in weight, and an 11 percent decline in value.

In this period, 32.7 million tons of goods, valued at \$54.3 billion, were imported into the country, registering an 11.6 percent growth in value, and a six percent growth in weight, he noted, Mehr News Agency reported.

The IRICA head said that more than 11.9 million mobile phone sets, valued at \$2.5 billion, were imported into the country from March 21, 2023, to January 22, 2024.

In the same period, more than 21 million tons of basic goods, valued at \$16.3 billion, were imported into the country, Rezvanifar added.

The country's total value of trade stood at about \$94.8 billion, he said, adding that the country's trade deficit was \$13.8 billion.

# Leader tours Iran's homegrown products exhibition

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei paid a visit to an exhibition displaying Iran's homegrown products and new technology-based firms' capabilities in 40 booths at the Imam Khomeini Husseiniyeh in Tehran on January 29, 2024.

The most important feature of the year's exhibition was domestic production with a focus on NTBFs and the manufacturing supply chain, IRNA reported.

The latest achievements and products of knowledge-based companies in various sectors such as energy, oil and petrochemical industry, automotive industry, mining, mineral and metal industries, communications, information technology and satellite manufacturing, food and agriculture industries, medical equipment, handicrafts, air, sea, rail, and land transportation, textile industries, and housing and household appliances

were showcased in the exhibition.

The capabilities of NTBFs in designing and manufacturing equipment for oil well drilling, the petrochemical industry and catalysts were one part of the exhibition.

Additionally, start-ups active in the field of electricity and power plants also presented their achievements and capabilities during the event.

In the exhibition, electric vehicles, motorcycles and their charging devices, as well as fuel-efficient car engines were presented.

The event included various sections explaining plans for transforming major industrial companies into knowledge-based organizations, as well as activities of start-ups.

The exhibition also spotlighted the steel industry, the capabilities of NTBFs in this field, and their involvement in mineral industries such as the copper industry.



● leader.ir

## Iranian minister's Uzbekistan visit fruitful: TPO



The deputy director of International Business Pro-

motion of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)

highlighted the achievements of a visit by Iranian

Minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade Abbas Aliabadi to Uzbekistan, emphasizing that the Iranian administration aims to make use of political capacities to expand economic relations with countries in the region. "Considering the approach of the current administration for maximum utilization of political capacities for development of economic and commercial relations, this opportuni-

ty can be used in the best possible manner," Mohammad-Sadeq Qanadzadeh said on Monday, referring to Aliabadi's recent trip to Tashkent, according to IRNA.

Qanadzadeh said the central banks of Iran and Uzbekistan agreed during the trip to activate the banking exchange mechanism and to introduce commercial banks to advance technical negotiations between the two countries.

The Uzbek government also accepted the most favored nation (MFN) principle in its dealings with Iran after several years of fruitless talks, he said, adding

that the two sides signed a preferential trade agreement (FTA).

The official further explained that the two sides reached extensive agreements under which Iran will participate in the overhaul of gas turbines and establishment of a regional service center for the repair and overhaul of oil, refinery and power plant equipment in Uzbekistan.

Tehran will also cooperate in the construction of gas pressure boosting stations for Uzbekistan and will participate and invest in the construction of thermal power plants in the country, Qanadzadeh added.

## Oil, gas industry productivity growth hits 16.3%



Iran's oil and gas industry has witnessed a 16.3 percent productivity growth during the 6th National Development Plan (to end March 19, 2024).

The oil and gas industry's productivity has soared to 12.6 percent, from -3.7 percent, as domestic economy's productivity rate has reached 3.7 percent from 0.8 percent, showing the country's productivity and economic growth is indebted to the oil industry more than to other sectors, Shana reported. The incumbent administration has focused on

beating off economic challenges since it took office in August 2021. A glance at statistics related to economic activities of different sectors shows that the slogan adopted in the summer of 2021 has been put into action.

The country's economic growth has witnessed increases since the 13th administration took over. Signs of hope for finding a way out of the 2010s stagflation have now appeared thanks to the 13th administration's efforts, as the average economic growth in 2021 and 2022

rose to 4.2 percent.

The oil and gas industry has played a greater role when compared to other sectors in achieving economic growth for the country. According to figures released by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the oil industry registered 19.8 percent and 25.6 percent growth in the spring and summer 2023, respectively - 22.7 percent on aggregate in the six months - having a 16 percent role in increasing Iran's gross domestic product (GDP).

The SCI data also showed that Iran's economic growth in the summer of 2023 stood at 7.1 percent, if the oil sector's growth is included; 4.2 percent, if excluded.

On Sunday, Iran's oil minister referred to 182 big projects in oil, gas, petrochemical, refining, and distribution sectors, saying that out of which 132

projects worth over \$28.5 billion have become operational.

According to Javad Owji, 15 upstream and downstream projects worth \$2.2 billion have been inaugurated and 50 others valued at \$47.5 billion are underway. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the feasibility of producing fuel from methanol has been also inked, mentioned Owji, adding the plan's execution will last two years. He said a 1.2-million-barrel increase in daily oil production, a 50-million-cubic-meter rise in daily gas output, a 63-million-cubic-meter jump in daily crude gas refining capacity, a considerable increase in the collection of flare gas (equivalent to 10 mcm), and a 48,000-barrel rise in shared oil fields' daily production are part of the inaugurated projects' outcome.

## Italy reveals energy plan at Africa summit

African leaders gathered at a Rome summit on Monday to hear Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's much-hyped plan for the continent, aimed at transforming Italy into an energy hub.

Far-right leader Meloni has vowed to reshape relations with African countries by taking a "non-predatory" approach inspired by Enrico Mattei, founder of Italy's state-owned energy giant Eni, AFP reported. The so-called Mattei Plan hopes to posit Italy as a key bridge between Africa and Europe, funneling energy north while exchanging investment in the south for deals aimed at curbing migrant departures across the Mediterranean Sea.

Meloni said the plan would initially be funded to the tune of 5.5 billion euros (\$5.9 billion), some of which would be loans, with investments focused on energy, agriculture, water, health and education.

Representatives of over 25 countries attended the summit

on Monday at the Italian senate - dubbed "A bridge for common growth" - along with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and representatives of United Nations agencies and the World Bank. Meloni told them that Europe and Africa's "destinies" were interconnected and she was determined to co-operate "as equals - far from any predatory temptation, but also from that charitable approach to Africa that is ill-suited to its extraordinary potential for development".

There was no reference to Italy's colonial past in Libya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and what is now Somalia. Guests included African Union Commission chair Moussa Faki Mahamat, Tunisian President Kais Saied, Senegal President Macky Sall, as well as the presidents of the Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Other countries, including Algeria, Chad, Egypt and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),

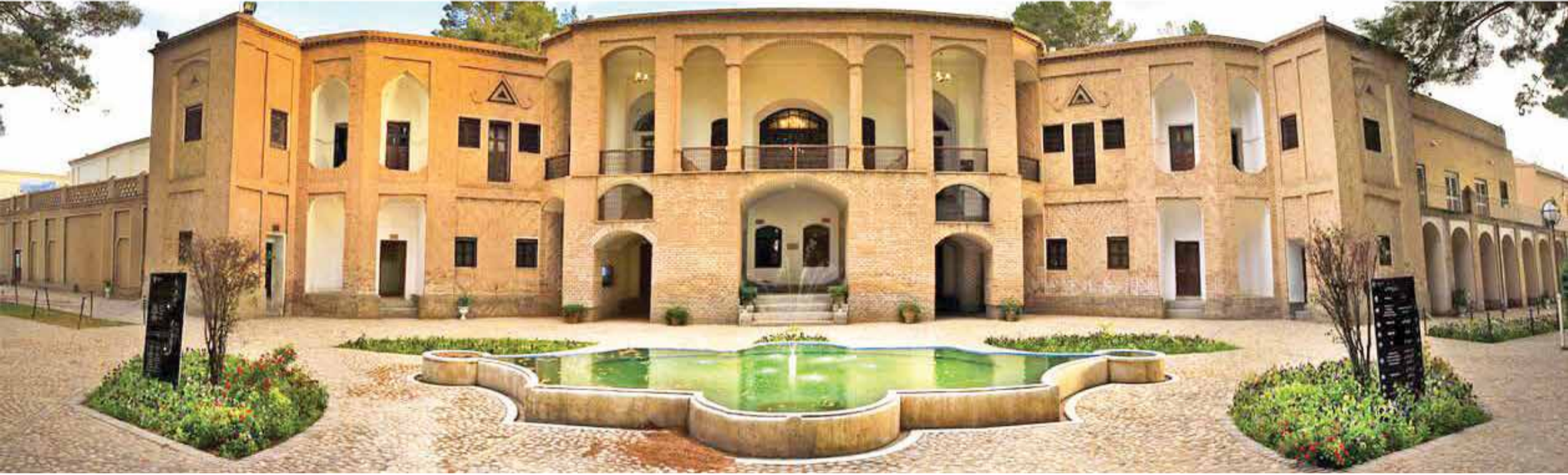
were represented by ministers. The AU's Faki said Africa was "willing to discuss the content and implementation" of the plan but pointed out: "We would have liked to have been consulted beforehand."

Rome holds the presidency of the G7 group of nations this year and has vowed to make African development a central theme, in part to increase influence in a continent where powers such as China, Russia, India, Japan and Turkey have been expanding their political clout. The summit comes just months after Russia held its own summit with African leaders.

Other countries, including China and France, have held similar initiatives.

Meloni said the Italian plan would start with a series of pilot schemes - from modernising grain production in Egypt to purifying water in Ethiopia and providing training in renewable energies in Morocco - with the aim of then extending them across the continent.

# Akbarieh Garden in South Khorasan Province leaves a lasting impression on visitors



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## Iranica Desk

The unique architectural style of Iranian gardens is well-known both in Iran and around the world. The first Iranian gardens were established alongside the qanats, a system of underground aqueducts. This concept of forming gardens originated from Iranian ingenuity, as the digging of qanats was pioneered by Iranian engineers. These gardens are characterized by three distinctive structures and designs: firstly, they are situated along the path of water flow; secondly, they are enclosed by high walls; and thirdly, within the gardens, there is a summer mansion and a pool. European travelers referred to them as “Persian Garden” or “Persian Paradise”. This unique and innovative design has left a lasting impression on visitors and continues to be celebrated for its beauty and functionality. The name and fame of Iranian gardens are not only renowned within Iran, but also globally. The unique Iranian architectural style employed in the construction of these gardens is the most significant aspect that sets them apart from any other. There are exceptional and valuable Persian gardens, some of which are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List due to their historical significance and antiquity. One of these globally acclaimed gardens is the Akbarieh Garden, in Birjand, South Khorasan Province. Like other Persian gardens, it is a testament to the beauty and incorporation of natural elements in its architecture. The creator of the garden, drawing on empirical knowledge, has crafted a space that has preserved and rejuvenated the natural environment within the garden. Akbarieh Garden, covering an area of approximately 45,069 square meters, is renowned as one of the most prominent Iranian gardens in Birjand and is included in Iran’s National Heritage List. Situated in a mountainous region, the garden comprises two main buildings, with one attributed to Heshmat al-Doleh, the father of Ibrahim Shokat al-Molk, and predating the other. This particular building dates back to the late Zand and early Qajar periods. The second building within the complex is a ceremonial structure commissioned by Shokat al-Molk.

## Historical background

The construction of Akbarieh Garden occurred in multiple phases from the early to late Qajar period. The garden served as a residence, reception venue, and governmental affairs center. Following the passing of Ibrahim Shokat al-Molk, his son, Assadollah Alam, who served as a court minister, utilized the garden as his residence on various occasions throughout the year. Subsequently, Assadollah Alam dedicated the garden to the Astan Quds Razavi. In 1992, the property was handed over to the Cultural Heritage Organization. Akin to other Iranian gardens, Akbarieh Garden features a pavilion positioned at the central intersection of horizontal and vertical axes. This architectural layout is inspired by the pattern of the four gardens from the Achaemenid period. Akbarieh Garden was built using Iranian architectural style, with the architect of its main building being Allah Dad Ja’fari, who began its construction in the early Qajar period. The architects of this mansion were also influenced by Russian architecture to create a design that goes beyond traditional Iranian architecture.

## Heshmat al-Doleh Mansion

Akbarieh Garden consists of several mansions, the oldest of which is the Heshmat al-Doleh Mansion in the eastern end of the complex, built on two floors. The ground floor has two halls and a relatively long corridor, connecting the three main parts of the complex: the main garden, southern garden, and the stable.

## Central mansion

The central mansion of Akbarieh Garden is located on the western front and was used for hosting and entertaining guests. This mansion, considered the central core of the garden, features fine decorations and views. The central pavilion is built on two floors and has carvings, lattice work, stained glass windows, and gypsum decorations with Islamic and geometric patterns.

## Northern garden

The northern garden is another part of the complex, located on the northern front of Akbarieh Garden and larger than the southern garden.

## Southern garden

The southern garden is surrounded by service spaces, the central mansion, and the western wall of the stables. One of the important elements of this section is a relatively large square pool that occupies a significant portion of the garden space.

## Akbarieh Garden’s library and museum

Various sections of Akbarieh Garden are

currently utilized by the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization of South Khorasan Province. The section constructed in the early Qajar Period serves as both a library and the College of Art of the University of Birjand.

## Museum of South Khorasan’s National Celebrities

Recognizing the need to introduce and preserve the memory of notable figures and dignitaries from South Khorasan Province and Birjand, the Museum of South Khorasan National Celebrities was established in Akbarieh Garden. This museum quickly gained public attention and houses artifacts and belongings related to prominent figures and personalities of the province.

## Birjand Museum of Anthropology

In 1993 the Birjand Museum of Anthropology was inaugurated in Akbarieh Garden with the aim of providing a better understanding of the people of this region. The museum showcases the traditional lifestyle and belongings of the ancient inhabitants for the public to explore.

## Birjand Archaeological Museum

Situated on the first floor of the central mansion in Akbarieh Garden, the Birjand Archaeological Museum is renowned for its collection of antiquities, ancient pottery, old weapons, and more. It is considered the most famous museum within the complex.

## Best time to visit

South Khorasan Province is located in a warm and dry region. If you are not fond of hot and dry weather, it is better to visit Akbarieh Garden during the spring or autumn seasons, so you can enjoy the pleasant weather and the seasonal views of the garden. The winters in this region, despite all the beauty it holds, will be cold and dry. Therefore, if you do not like extreme cold, this time of the year is not the ideal time to visit.

## Attractions around Akbarieh Garden

Located on top of one of the highest hills in the city, Birjand Castle is considered the largest historical building in Birjand. Constructed during the Safavid era, it has been reconstructed several times and stands today as a lasting monument in the heart of the historical fabric of Birjand. The Kolah Farangi Citadel is another notable attraction in Birjand, known for its unique architecture. Dating back to the Qajar period, this monument is famous for its amazing ziggurat-like architecture and is listed as a national heritage of Iran.



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# Today's conflicts more dangerous than Cold War



By Patrick Cockburn  
Orwell Prize-winning  
columnist

## OPINION

Wars in the Middle East and Ukraine are the wild cards that may determine the outcome of elections in the US and UK in the coming year. The best-laid plans of political leaders and central bankers are at the mercy of conflicts that they do not control — and may fail to understand. Who would have predicted six months ago that Gaza would explode and the US would green-light an open-ended Israeli assault that has already killed 25,000 people? Who would have guessed that in reaction to this bloodbath, a group in Yemen, the Houthis, would blockade one of the world's great trade routes passing through the Red Sea? The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered Israel yesterday to prevent any genocidal acts against Palestinians in Gaza, highlighted the calamitous conditions of those trapped in the enclave, and sought to give them a measure of protection. But Israeli compliance on the ground is dubious, and the war has already ballooned into an international crisis that is likely to escalate further.

### Nasty surprises

Other nasty surprises may be just around the corner. Gaza is turning out to be a detonator for a much wider crisis. What would happen, for instance, to inflation in the US and UK if not just the Babal Mandab at the entrance to the Red Sea but the Strait of Hormuz leading to

the Gulf, through which passes a fifth of the world's oil trade, became unsafe for shipping?

Politicians and economists are traditionally naïve and ill-informed about how wars and crises will upend their carefully modelled expectations. They

have only recently noticed that the nature of warfare itself has changed since high-precision missiles and drones are no longer the monopoly of a few military powers.

In the Iraq war in 2003, it was only the US and a few of its allies that pos-

sessed such weapons, but now they are commonplace in the arsenals of almost every military force in the world. You no longer need a powerful navy to impose a blockade on your enemies but can do so with drones and missiles.

### Nature of warfare

These military changes help explain why war is becoming an increasingly attractive option for many states and movements and why in the 2020s new wars erupt every few months.

The world order is becoming more fragile, militarily and politically. We have seen this in Gaza and in Yemen, but also in Sudan, where a ferocious civil war is killing tens of thousands of people and has forced more than five million to flee their homes. Nobody is paying much attention to this savage conflict, with its potential to destabilise a large part of Africa, and even fewer noticed last summer when Azerbaijan, well-equipped with drones by Turkey, took over the embattled enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, forcing some 100,000 Armenians to take flight.

### Mass migration

I have always been amazed by the way in which Western powers so often underestimate the blowback from wars they initiate. The cliché term for this is "unintended consequences", but this flatters the perpetrators, as the likely consequences are often all too obvious.

France and the UK, backed by the US, overthrew Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 using local proxy forces. Libya collapsed into anarchy, destabilising North Africa — with the result that a great surge of immigrants started to cross the Mediterranean to reach Italy, where their arrival had a profound political impact. Much the same happened in Syria,

where the West was happy to see a war without a winner devastate the country, compelling millions of Syrians to flee to Turkey and later Europe in a mass migration that contributed to the UK vote for Brexit and created lasting turmoil over immigration in Germany.

The blindness of Western leaders to the self-destructive impact of foreign wars on their own political careers is also striking. An instinctive sense of racial superiority in the US and UK has led them again and again to underestimate their enemies, be they in the mountains of Afghanistan, the slums of Baghdad, or the ruins of Gaza.

### A walkover

Another reason why politicians get mired in wars they cannot win is simply that they underestimate the riskiness of war, where last year's winner is this year's loser. President Vladimir Putin committed one of the greatest political errors in history when he invaded Ukraine in 2022, ludicrously expecting a walkover. But last year it was the turn of Ukraine and its Western backers to overplay their hands, launching a counter-offensive that failed with heavy casualties, while Western economic sanctions turned out to be far less effective than

had been hoped.

Yet, though there is no credible plan to bring the war to an end, Trump's promise to do just that is viewed with horror by political and media establishments in the US and Europe.

In some respects, wars today are more dangerous than during the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union. Then the risk of a nuclear exchange was taken seriously as a constant threat and measures were taken to avoid it. But today, wishful thinkers downplay the menace posed by nuclear weapons.

### Dread of presidential candidates

President Joe Biden has managed to get the US involved in three wars — Ukraine, Gaza, Houthis in Yemen — any of which might blow up in his face and wreck his re-election plans. What he presumably intended as a show of American determination in Gaza has become a demonstration of weakness and indecision. He has managed to identify his presidency with a merciless Israeli war effort whose horrendous impact on two million Palestinians was graphically spelled out by the ICJ in its interim judgement.

For all his embrace of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his extreme right-wing cabinet, Biden has found that he has little influence on its actions, though he will be held responsible for them.

If the war does not end soon and spreads further, Biden may well suffer a self-inflicted political and economic "October surprise," the dread of presidential candidates, which would lead to his defeat in November.



## Further thoughts

Donald Trump and Joe Biden have got what they most want: each other as the opposing candidate come next November. Pundits issue ritual warnings about it being early days yet — and then go on to overinterpret the results from the Iowa caucuses and the primary in New Hampshire, to be followed by the upcoming one in South Carolina. Trump and Biden are more or less certain to be the candidates, but otherwise, political volatility is even greater than normal: both men are of an age when death or disability may intervene.

Biden is locked into three wars — Ukraine, Gaza, and Yemen — any one of which might produce a devastating crisis. I try to keep in mind that three US presidents were seriously damaged by events in the Middle East: Jimmy Carter (Iran hostages), Ronald Reagan (Iran-Contra), and George W. Bush (Iraq war). Biden could easily be the fourth. Biden would like Trump as an opponent because of the significant number of college-educated Republicans who may refuse to vote for him. This could well turn out to be true, as exit polls in New Hampshire found that four out of 10 of those who voted for Nikki Haley said their chief motive was dislike of Trump. Only 64 percent of Republican primary voters say that they were certain Trump supporters come November, while 87 percent of Democrat primary voters — many of them unhappy with Biden over immigration and Gaza — said they will still vote for him.

Democrats draw comfort from such figures, but there is an element of wishful thinking in this. Back in 2016, Hillary Clinton's campaign believed that distaste for Trump would win the election for her — and this turned out to be calamitously wrong. A legal conviction of Trump before election day might help, but he has so far been expert in using his multiple court appearances to dominate the news agenda and portray himself as the victim of unjust persecution. He may be able to go on milking his legal troubles for publicity and sympathy right up to presidential election day.

The full article first appeared on [inews.co.uk](https://www.inews.co.uk).

Yemen's Ansarallah movement, also known as the Houthis, displays missiles and drones at a military parade in Sanaa, Yemen, on September 21, 2023.

● GETTY IMAGES



USS Carney firing interceptors at missiles and drones launched from Yemen over the Red Sea on October 19, 2023.  
● US ARMY

## Joe Biden's stark choice

## Cease-fire in Gaza or regional war in Middle East

By Medea Benjamin & Nicolas J.S. Davies

Authors

## OPINION

In the topsy-turvy world of corporate media reporting on US foreign policy, we have been led to believe that airstrikes on Yemen, Iraq, and Syria are legitimate and responsible efforts to contain the expanding war over Israel's slaughter in Gaza, while the actions of the Houthi government in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Iran and its allies in Iraq and Syria are all dangerous escalations. In fact, it is US and Israeli actions that are driving the expansion of the war, while Iran and others are genuinely trying to find effective ways to counter and end Israel's invasion of Gaza while avoiding a full-scale regional war. We are encouraged by Egypt and Qatar's efforts to mediate a cease-fire and the release of hostages and prisoners of war by both sides. However, it is important to recognize who are the aggressors, who are the victims, and how regional actors are taking incremental but increasingly forceful action to respond to genocide.

A near-total Israeli communications blackout in Gaza has reduced the flow of images of the ongoing massacre on our TVs and computer screens, but the slaughter has not abated. Israel is bombing and attacking Khan Yunis, the largest city in the southern Gaza Strip, as ruthlessly as it did Gaza City in the north. Israeli forces and US weapons have killed an average of 240 Gazans per day for more than three months, and 70% of the dead are still women and children.

Israel has repeatedly claimed it is taking new steps to protect civilians, but that is largely a P.R. exercise. Israel is still using 2,000-pound and even 5,000-pound "bunker-buster" bombs to dehouse the people of Gaza and herd them toward the Egyptian border, while it debates how to push the survivors over the border into exile, which it euphemistically refers to as "voluntary emigration." People throughout the Middle East are horrified by Israel's slaughter and plans for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza, but most of their governments will only condemn Israel verbally. The Houthi government in Yemen is different. Unable to directly send forces to fight for Gaza, they began enforcing a blockade of the Red Sea against Israeli-owned ships and other ships carrying goods to or from Israel. Since mid-November 2023, the Houthis have conducted about 30 attacks on international vessels transiting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. None of these attacks have caused casualties or sunk any ships.

In response, the Biden administration, without congressional approval, has launched at least six rounds of bombing, including airstrikes on Sanaa, the capital of Yemen. The UK has contributed a few warplanes, while Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and Bahrain also act as cheerleaders to provide the US with the cover of leading an "international coalition".

President Biden has admitted that US bombing will not force Yemen to lift its blockade, but he insists that the US will keep attacking it anyway. Saudi Arabia dropped 70,000 mostly American (and some British) bombs on Yemen in a seven-year war, but utterly failed to defeat the Houthi government and armed forces.

Yemenis naturally identify with the plight of the Palestinians in Gaza, and a million Yemenis took to the streets to support their country's position, challenging Israel and the US. Yemen is no Iranian puppet, but as with Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran's Iraqi and Syrian allies, Iran has trained the Yemenis to build and deploy increasingly powerful anti-ship, cruise, and ballistic missiles.

The Houthis have made it clear that they will stop the attacks once Israel stops its slaughter in Gaza. It beggars belief that instead of pressing for a cease-fire in Gaza, Biden and his advisers are instead choosing to deepen US military involvement in a regional Middle East conflict. The US and Israel have now conducted airstrikes on the capitals of four neighboring countries: Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. Iran also suspects US and Israeli spy agencies of a role in two bomb explosions in Kerman in Iran, which killed about 90 people and wounded hundreds more at a commemoration of the fourth anniversary of the US assassination of Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani in January 2020.

On January 20, an Israeli bombing killed 10 people in Damascus, including five Iranian officials. After repeated Israeli airstrikes on Syria, Russia has now deployed warplanes to patrol the border to deter Israeli attacks and has reoccupied two previously vacated outposts built to monitor violations of the demilitarized zone between Syria and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

Iran has responded to the terrorist bombings in Kerman and Israeli assassinations of Iranian officials with missile strikes on targets in Iraq, Syria, and Pakistan. Iranian Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian has defended Iran's claim that the strikes on Erbil in Iraqi Kurdistan targeted agents of Israel's Mossad spy agency.

Eleven Iranian ballistic missiles destroyed an Iraqi Kurdish intelligence facility and the home of a senior intelligence officer, and also killed a wealthy real estate developer and businessman, Peshraw Dizayee, who had been accused of working for the Mossad, as well as of smuggling Iraqi oil from Kurdistan to Israel via Turkey.

The targets of Iran's missile strikes in northwest Syria were the headquarters of two separate ISIS-linked groups in Idlib province. The strikes demolished both buildings at a range of 800 miles, using Iran's newest ballistic missiles called Kheybar Shekan or "Castle Blasters," a name that equates today's US bases in the Middle East with the 12th- and 13th-century European crusader castles whose ruins still dot the landscape. Iran launched its missiles not from northwestern Iran, which would have been closer to Idlib, but from Khuzestan province in southwestern Iran, which is closer to Tel Aviv than to Idlib. So, these missile strikes were clearly intended as a warning to Israel and the US that Iran can conduct precise attacks on Israel and US "crusader castles" in the Middle East if they continue their aggression against Palestinians, Iranians, and their

allies.

At the same time, the US has escalated its tit-for-tat airstrikes against Iranian-backed Iraqi militias. The Iraqi government has consistently protested US airstrikes against the militias as violations of Iraqi sovereignty. Prime Minister Sudani's military spokesman called the latest US airstrikes "acts of aggression" and said, "This unacceptable act undermines years of cooperation ... at a time when the region is already grappling with the danger of expanding conflict, the repercussions of the aggression on Gaza."

After wars in Afghanistan and Iraq killed thousands of American troops, the US has avoided large numbers of military casualties for the last 10 years. The last time the US lost more than a hundred troops killed in action in a year was in 2013 when 128 Americans were killed in Afghanistan.

Since then, the US has relied on bombing and proxy forces to fight its wars. The only lesson American leaders seem to have learned from their lost wars is to avoid putting US "boots on the ground." The US dropped more than 120,000 bombs and missiles on Iraq and Syria in its war on ISIS, while Iraqis, Syrians, and Kurds did all the hard fighting on the ground.

In Ukraine, the US and its allies found a willing proxy to fight Russia. But after two years of war, Ukrainian casualties have become unsustainable, and new recruits are hard to find. The Ukrainian parliament has rejected a bill to authorize forced conscription, and no amount of US weapons is likely to persuade more Ukrainians to sacrifice their lives for a Ukrainian nationalism that treats large numbers of them, especially Russian speakers, as second-class citizens. Now, in Gaza, Yemen, and Iraq, the US has waded into what it hoped would be another war free of US casualties. Instead, the Israeli assault on Gaza is unleashing a crisis that is spinning out of control across the region and may soon directly involve US troops in combat. This will likely shatter the illusion of peace Americans have lived in for the last 10 years of US bombing and proxy wars, and bring the reality of US militarism and war-making home with a vengeance.

Biden can continue to give Israel carte blanche to wipe out the people of Gaza and watch as the region becomes further engulfed in flames. Or he can listen to his own campaign staff, who warn that it's a "moral and electoral imperative" to insist on a cease-fire. The choice could not be more stark.

The article first appeared on [Salon](https://www.salon.com).

## Iran bags three medals in Karate1 Premier League



● MEHR

Iranian representatives to the Karate1 Premier League have finished the competition winning a gold medal, a silver, and a bronze one.

The three-day tournament, which is the most important league event in the world of Karate, ended in Paris, France, on Sunday, reported Mehr News Agency.

On her way to the final game, Iran's Atousa Golshadnejad defeated all her rivals in the 61kg weight class. She also beat Anita Serogina, a powerful rival from Ukraine and the number two of the world ranking, in the final match to become Iran's only gold medalist of the tournament.

Mobina Heydari, another Iranian female karateka, lost 4-2 to her rival from France, to receive the silver medal of the 68kg weight class.

Iran's Ali Meskini defeated his Kuwaiti rival in the third-place game of the 60kg weight category of men to snatch the bronze medal.

## Iran's Azimi wins silver at Grand Prix Ivan Yarygin

Iranian freestyle wrestler Mohammad-Mobin Azimi claimed a silver medal in the 2024 Golden Grand Prix Ivan Yarygin held in Krasnoyarsk, Russia.

He lost to Magomed Kurbanov 7-2 in the final as Iran had sent eight freestyle wrestlers to the competition, reported Mehr News Agency.

Iran's Azimi emerged victorious against his rivals from Russia Arsen Ali Musalaliev 7-4, Nazhmudinov 4-0 to reach the quarterfinal.

In the quarterfinal, Azimi defeated Azamat Zakuev from Russia 8-6 to qualify for the semifinal.

In the semifinal, the Iranian freestyle wrestler beat another Russian opponent Shamil-Imam Gadzhialiev 9-0 to reach the final.

The preliminary stage of the sporting event was held on Sunday in 74, 86, 92, and 97 weight categories.

Iran's national wrestling squad comprised Adel Panahian (74kg), Ali Savadkoudi (86kg), Mohammad-Mobin Azimi (92kg) and Abolfazl Babalou (97kg) competed with rivals on the first day of the tournament.

All Iranian freestyle wrestlers were eliminated from the tournament except Azimi.

The 2024 Yarygin wrestling tournament was held in Krasnoyarsk, Russia on January 25-28.

This Grand Prix is held in honor of two-time Olympic Champion Ivan Yarygin.



● MEHR

## Tajikistan stun UAE on penalties to move into Asian Cup quarter-finals



Tajikistan players celebrate with coach Petar Segrt after they won the UAE in Ahmad bin Ali Stadium, Al Rayyan, Qatar on January 28, 2024.

● REUTERS



Asian Cup debutants Tajikistan booked their place in the quarter-finals with a dramatic 5-3 penalty shootout win over the United Arab Emirates after a 1-1 draw on Sunday.

The United Arab Emirates and Tajikistan went head-to-head in the last 16 of the Asian Cup in Doha on Sunday. Asian Cup debutants Tajikistan booked their place in the quarter-finals with a dramatic 5-3 penalty shootout win over the United Arab Emirates after a 1-1 draw on Sunday, reported Mehr News Agency.

Alisher Shukurov buried the final spot-kick in Doha to send the Central Asians - ranked 106th in the world - into a showdown with either Jordan or the 2007 champions Iraq.

Tajikistan goalkeeper Rustam Yatimov saved from Caio Canedo with the UAE's second penalty of the shootout.

Tajikistan looked set for a famous victory when Vakhdat Khanonov scored with a 30th-minute header, only for Khalifa Al-Hammadi to equalise in the 95th minute and send the game into extra-time.

The UAE reached the semi-finals at the last two Asian Cups but Paulo Bento's side bow out to a Tajikistan side ranked more than 40 places lower than them.

Led by charismatic Croat Petar Segrt, Tajikistan drew with China and beat Lebanon in the first round. In another game held earlier on Sunday, Australia defeated Indonesia 4-0 to advance to the quarterfinals of the Asian Cup.

Two goals in the first half put the 2015 continental champion in control in the second-round clash at the

Jassim bin Hamad Stadium with Martin Boyle's header adding to an early own goal from Elkan Baggott.

Late strikes from Craig Goodwin and Harry Souttar scuppered any hopes that Indonesia, playing its first game at the knockout stage, may have had of getting back into the match.

"We knew they would come out here with nothing to lose today, we knew they would come and fight and run," said Australian forward Jackson Irvine, who had a hand in two goals. "In the first half they caused us some problems with their energy and intensity but our experience and professionalism shone through in the second half and I think we had too much for them on the day."

The Socceroos were 2-0 ahead at the break despite having just one attempt on target. The opener came in the 12 minute as Irvine's cross from the right took a deflection off defender Baggott, who plays for Ipswich Town in England's second tier, into the net.

Indonesia had chances, coming close after just six minutes but Rafael Struick fired over from close range. With half-time looming, Yakob Sayuri fired wide while unmarked on the left side of the area.

There was still time for Australia to extend its lead on the stroke of half-time. Gethin Jones swept in a curling low cross from the right and Boyle's diving header at the far post extended the lead.

Australia took greater control in the second half and, as Indonesia tired, Goodwin headed home a rebound after Ernando Ari had saved Irvine's header in the 89th minute. Goodwin then provided the cross for Leicester City defender Souttar to head his 11th international goal from close range.

"I am very proud of my team," said Indonesia captain Jordi Amat. "We knew from the start it would be a tough game. They were more clinical in the first half. We had our chances but couldn't score. We need to work and come back stronger."

Australia will face the winner of Tuesday's tie between South Korea and Saudi Arabia.

## Tennis needs the next generation, says Grand Slam champion Sinner

Jannik Sinner was not about to announce the end of the "Big Three" after his breakthrough Grand Slam triumph at the Australian Open but the 22-year-old Italian does believe tennis needs a fresh generation of champions.

His five-set victory over Daniil Medvedev on Sunday made him the first Melbourne Park winner in 10 years not named Novak Djokovic, Rafa Nadal or Roger Federer - the trio of multiple champions who have dominated tennis for two decades, Reuters reported. Djokovic's incredible success into his mid-thirties has delayed the decline of the "Big Three" but with Federer now retired and Nadal looking set to join him this year, a huge gap is opening up at the top of the game. With his Melbourne triumph, Sinner has joined 20-year-old Carlos Alcaraz in the Grand Slam winners' club, spearheading a clutch of players of a similar age coming through.

"It's quite unpredictable what's coming in the future but still it's nice to be part of this generation," Sinner said as he was photographed with his trophy in Melbourne's Botanical Gardens on Monday.

"I think the next generation is something that this sport needs and it's also a little bit of a game-changer."

Sinner was the youngest Australian Open men's

champion since Djokovic won the first of his 10 Melbourne Park titles in 2008 and even though he beat the 24-times Grand Slam champion in the semi-finals, the Italian was not inviting comparisons.

"He is a different league," he said. "I'm just happy I have this trophy for this year and then we see what's coming. There is still a lot of work to do but I will enjoy my process and then we see what I can achieve in the future."

As impressive as the clean hitting that has taken Sinner into the elite of men's tennis was his cool demeanour on court on Sunday as he withstood an early barrage from Medvedev before rallying from two sets down to clinch the title.

Although he fell to the Rod Laver Arena court after converting championship point, there was no huge outpouring of emotions as Sinner celebrated the biggest victory of his career.

"There were so many emotions in my head and the hard work and the sacrifices I've done throughout my career," he explained.

"Sharing this moment with my team was maybe the best feeling I've had until now.

"It's great emotions, I was just happy, yesterday I still maybe couldn't believe and now I'm starting to realise it, so it's a great feeling."

Sinner said he celebrated his dream start to the new season in understated fashion - a meal with his close-knit team in the early hours of Monday morning - but said it would be straight back to work as he looked to build on his breakthrough.

"Obviously winning the tournament is something unbelievable," he said. "I'm really happy how I performed here and let's see what's coming in the future."



● REUTERS

# Senators outraged after deadly attack on US outpost

## Iran denies role in Jordan drone strike

### International Desk

A series of GOP lawmakers are ramping up the pressure on President Joseph Biden to retaliate against Iran following the strike on the border of Jordan and Syria that killed three US service members and injured at least two dozen others over the weekend.

President Biden and UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron claimed that "Iranian-backed groups," mainly based in Iraq, were accountable for the drone attack on the border of Jordan and Syria on Sunday, which killed at least three American servicemen and wounded 34 others.

Concerns have been raised by US lawmakers and other government leaders that the repeated attacks against US bases and troops signal the risk of the Gaza war escalating into a wider conflict in the Middle East.

In response to the claims, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said the regional resistance groups do not take orders from Iran, nor does the Islamic Republic have a role in their decisions to carry out retaliatory operations in defense of the Palestinian people.

"Iran is not involved in the resistance groups' decisions about how to support the Palestinian people, or defend themselves

and the people of their countries in the face of any aggression and occupation," the spokesman said in a statement on Monday.

Also, in a statement published late on Sunday, Iran's mission to the United Nations said Tehran has no links to the attacks as they are related to the conflict between resistance groups and the US military.

The statement said Iran had no link to the attack, adding that the incident was part of the "conflict between the army of the United States of America and resistance groups in the region, which reciprocate retaliatory attacks."

The attack marks the first time that US military personnel were killed since the start of the Israeli onslaught on Gaza on October 7.

In his statement, Biden said the attack took place in northeast Jordan, near the Syrian border. Jordan, however, says it did not occur on its soil, but in Syria.

The US president said efforts are underway to gather the facts of the attack and vowed revenge.

"Have no doubt - we will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner of our choosing," he said.

Meanwhile, the UK prime minister has urged Iran to de-escalate tensions in the Middle East after the drone attack.

"We are concerned and would urge Iran to continue to de-escalate



The photo shows a satellite view of the US military outpost known as Tower 22, in Rukban, Rwaished District, Jordan, on October 12, 2023.

REUTERS

late tensions in the region... We absolutely condemn what has happened over the past couple of days," Sunak said on Monday. Sunak's spokesperson also told reporters that they believe that the attack was carried out by Iran-backed groups operating in Syria and Iraq, in line with the US assessment.

The Iranian spokesman further said that since the beginning of Israel's onslaught on Gaza, Iran has repeatedly warned against the danger of the expansion of

the conflict in the region due to Israel's continued attacks against the Palestinian people and the US's full support for the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in the besieged strip and the occupied West Bank.

He emphasized that the US's insistence and continuous violation of the national sovereignty of Iraq and Syria and bombing attacks against the groups and people of Iraq, Syria and Yemen have intensified the instability in the region.

Since the beginning of Israel's war against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on October 7, there have been around 160 attacks on US forces in Iraq and Syria. Most of those have been claimed by regional resistance forces.

Iran has frequently said resistance groups act on their own in response to Israeli crimes in Gaza.

The Hill, Reuters, and Press TV contributed to this report.

## Iran, Pakistan to set up consultative mechanism, deploy liaison officers

### National Desk

Iran and Pakistan have reached an agreement on establishing a consultative mechanism and deploying liaison officers between the two countries, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani announced on Monday, IRNA reported.

At a joint press conference

with Jilani in Islamabad, Amir-Abdollahian said Iran and Pakistan are committed to improving their relations and will never allow terrorists to endanger the security of the two nations.

Meanwhile, Jilani said that the two sides agreed on the necessity of cooperation in combating terrorism, and "it was decided that liaison officers from

both countries would be deployed" between the two countries.

The Pakistani official said that they agreed to establish a consultative mechanism at the level of foreign ministers. This mechanism will be formed regularly with the aim of overseeing the progress of collaborations between the two countries.

Addressing the press

conference, the Iranian foreign minister said the terrorists based along the Iran-Pakistan border are supported by hostile third countries.

Many Iranian and Pakistani forces have lost their lives in recent years in the fight against terrorism, he said.

The top Iranian diplomat emphasized that it is inevitable for the two countries to garner their strength to fight terrorism.

Amir-Abdollahian said Tehran and Islamabad have reached an understanding that efforts should be made to improve the economy, development and welfare of the people living along the common border.

He hailed numerous cultural, historical and religious commonalities between Iran and Pakistan, and said the two neighboring states have never had a dispute over their territorial integrity.

Iran regards Pakistan's security as the security of its own and the entire region, the top Iranian diplomat said, emphasizing, "Both sides strongly respect each other's territorial integrity."

Pointing to the constructive cooperation between



Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (L) and his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani speak at a joint press conference in Islamabad, Pakistan, on January 29, 2024.

IRNA

Tehran and Islamabad in international circles, Amir-Abdollahian commended firm support of the Pakistani government and nation for the oppressed Palestinian people.

He noted that the Pakistani government has officially invited Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to travel to Islamabad, and the two countries' foreign ministers agreed to make the necessary preparations so that the visit would take place in the near future.

Heading a high-ranking political, military and security delegation, Amir-Abdollahian arrived in Islamabad early on Monday for a day-long vis-

it to hold key talks on ways to improve relations.

The visit took place after an escalation of cross-border tensions over Iran's counter-terrorism operations on January 16, when Iran launched simultaneous drone and missile attacks on two bases of the Jaish al-Adl terrorist group that has conducted several attacks on Iranian soil in recent years.

Also, characterizing it a response to Tehran's operation against terrorist bases inside Pakistan, nine people, including four children, were killed after Islamabad admitted attacking a village in Saravan in Iran's southeastern Sistan and Baluchestan Province.

## Israeli raid on outskirts of Damascus kills two

Two people were killed and several wounded on Monday in an Israeli attack on the outskirts of the Syrian capital, with Iran's ambassador to Damascus denying reports the location was an Iranian military post.

An Israeli military spokesman declined to comment on the explosions, Reuters reported.

Tasnim news agency said Israel "attacked an Iranian military advisory center" in Syria, but Iran's envoy to Syria, Hossein Akbari, denied the details on the target and said the casualties were not Iranian.

"Today's attack by the Zionist regime's fighter jets on the southern outskirts of Damascus did not target any advisory center of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and no Iranian citizens or advisors were martyred," he said.

"The indiscriminate attacks of the Zionists will not disrupt the resolve of the Axis of Resistance," Akbari added.

Syrian state media, citing a military source, said Israel had launched an air assault on several locations south of Damascus. It said the attack left both dead and wounded but did not specify any numbers.

In a first version of the story on its site, Syrian news agency SANA said the dead included an unspecified number of "Iranian advisers" - a rare admission of Iranian casualties by Damascus - but the site was updated to remove the reference.

Syrian media said the strikes targeted an area near the Sayeda Zeinab shrine in a southern suburb of Damascus on Monday.

The Syrian Defense Ministry confirmed in a short statement the reports of the Israeli regime's strikes and said, "In the Zionist regime's aggression, some places in the south of Damascus were targeted, which led to the martyrdom and wounding of several civilians."

SANA reported that the airstrike was launched from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and targeted several locations in southern Damascus.

Syrian sources said the Monday attack was a failed attempt by the Israeli regime to assassinate more members of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in that area.

Seyyed Razi Mousavi, who was serving as an IRGC military advisor in Syria, was killed in an Israeli airstrike in the same neighborhood of Damascus last month.

Mousavi was one of the companions of Iran's top anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of the IRGC, who was assassinated along with his companions in a US drone strike on January 3, 2020.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist





## Int'l Film Festival Rotterdam unveils poster for 'The Old Bachelor'



ILNA – The International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) unveiled the official poster for the Iranian film 'The Old Bachelor' simultaneously with its screening.

The festival showcased the poster as the film made its debut in Dutch cinemas, ILNA wrote.

Directed by Oktay Baraheni, 'The Old Bachelor' competes in the Big Screen Competition of the 53th edition of the festival.

The international poster design for the film was crafted by Hanif Sarvari and Fatemeh Hassanvand.

Running from January 25 to February 4 in the city of Rotterdam, the festival is renowned as one of Europe's significant cinematic events, aiming to present a selection of independent and creative films of global quality.

'The Old Bachelor' marks Baraheni's second directorial project, featuring his own screenplay and backed by investors Arsalan Baraheni and Amirhossein Abdollahi. The film, starring Leila Hatami, Hamed Behdad, and Mohammad Reza Golzar will premiere on January 30, continuing its screenings until the festival's conclusion on February 4.

# Culture minister emphasizes importance of arts in education system



Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili (C) speaks at the 98th session of the Arts Council held in Tehran on January 29, 2024.  
● IRNA

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili underscored the significance of enhancing artistic education within the edu-

ational system.

Esmaeili made the statement on the sidelines of the 98th session of the Arts Council, held on January 29, adding that an agreement has been signed with the Ministry

of Education in this regard.

Esmaeili discussed the decision to initiate a mentorship program instead of the current semester-based system at Farschchian University of Islamic-Iranian Arts, IRNA

wrote.

Regarding art education in schools, Esmaeili stated, "In the field of education, we need serious attention to the issue of arts."

The minister elaborated, "Art in the Ministry of Education has three crucial dimensions: Formal education from elementary to high school; cultural and educational centers; and the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, alongside additional capacities such as art schools."

Esmaeili expressed concern for the advancement of artistic education and emphasized the necessity of devising a comprehensive arts document within the education system.

He called for collaboration from the Arts Council secretary and other officials, identifying the significant role of educational capacities in achieving the council's objectives.

Highlighting achievements

in the field of music, Esmaeili stated, "Our approach is to award top artistic honors in festivals, a practice not very common in the past."

Mohammad Khazaei, the head of the Cinema Organization of Iran, mentioned the impressive presence of young filmmakers in the Fajr International Film Festival, with 621 submissions from various countries.

He noted the participation of filmmakers from different Iranian provinces, reflecting the government's cultural justice approach.

Khazaei added, "This edition of the festival showcases a diverse range of topics. We almost have no dark or bitter films. Additionally, for the first time, there is a film about retribution. Themes such as resistance, fertility, the role of Martyr Ahmad Kazemi after the Bam earthquake, the events of Karbala, and Imam Reza (PBUH) will be featured in this festival."

## Iran faces 62% drought, 50mm of rain decline in 50 years

### Social Desk

Head of the Iranian Parliament Research Center Babak Negahdari highlighted the pressing issue of climate change in Iran.

Speaking at the 7th International Conference on Climate Change, the Parliament member emphasized the need for an environmentally friendly approach to managing climate change, asriran.com reported.

Persistent observation reveals a continuing trend,

he said, the average temperature has increased by four degrees each decade over the past 50 years.

He added that during the crop year, Sept. 22, 2020, to Sept. 22, 2021, 61.7% of the country experienced drought, while only 19.3% encountered normal conditions.

Negahdari stated that climate change should be a nationwide project, influencing crucial areas such as food security, ecosystems, and energy safety. He introduced two ap-

proaches to address the issue: adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Pointing to the tangible impacts of climate change in Iran, Negahdari underlined the drastic reduction in precipitation from 250mm in the 1970s to 200mm in the 2010s.

The official expressed concern over the health sector, citing increased mortality among the elderly due to rising temperatures. He also highlighted the agricultural challenges, includ-

ing reduced rice, potato, and sugarcane production, as well as the impact of dust storms originating from neighboring countries.

Discussing climate change management, Negahdari stressed the importance of environmental sustainability in developing countries. Negahdari concluded by emphasizing the crucial role of environmental conservation in development, stating that development plans should be tailored to environmental conditions. He highlighted the need to



focus on improving productivity as a key aspect of climate change management, with a greenhouse gas reduction approach.

The 7th International Conference on Climate Change opened on January 29 and will end on January 30.

### FAJR VISUAL ARTS FESTIVAL IN PHOTOS



The 16th Fajr Visual Arts Festival opens in the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art on January 28, 2024.  
● AKBAR TAVAKKOLI/IRNA