



# Iran bids farewell to slain advisers

People take part in a funeral ceremony held in Tehran on January 22, 2024, for three IRGC military advisers assassinated in an Israeli airstrike on Syria on January 20, 2024. **TASNIM**

**International Desk**  
Hundreds of mourners gathered on Monday in Tehran for the funeral of members of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) assassinated in an Israeli attack in Syria. The strike in Damascus on Saturday killed five members of the IRGC, the military force said. The funeral processions in Tehran were planned for three of the five IRGC members killed in Syria. Another funeral cere-

mony for the other two IRGC members was held in the holy city of Qom. In a statement on Saturday, the IRGC said that five of its members serving on a military advisory mission in Syria were assassinated in an Israeli airstrike on a residential building in the tightly guarded Mezzeh neighborhood, west of Damascus. Military intelligence authorities in Syria have reportedly arrested four members of a security

detachment in wake of the Israeli attack. Speaking to Asharq Al-Awsat, Rami Abdulrahman, director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, confirmed that a colonel, his assistant, a non-commissioned officer, and a civilian have been arrested. Mezzeh is considered "almost completely secure" due to the presence of high-ranking military, political figures, and embassies in the area.

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said Israel's terrorist act is indicative of the regime's failure to achieve its malicious goals and the depth of its frustration with the fighters of the resistance front, warning that the targeted killing will not go unanswered. The strike came four days after the IRGC said it hit an Israeli intelligence headquarters in Erbil, the capital of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan Region.

The IRGC said its Iraq strike was in response to the recent actions of Israel which assassinated IRGC commanders and the resistance front in the region. Last month, an Israeli strike in Syria killed Razi Mousavi, a senior commander of the IRGC's foreign operations arm, the Quds Force. Mousavi was the most senior Quds Force commander to be killed outside Iran in four years. In early January a strike

in southern Lebanon's capital Beirut killed the Hamas resistance movement's deputy leader, Saleh al-Aroui. A US defense official has told AFP that Israel carried out that strike. Days later, a strike in southern Lebanon killed Wissam Tawil, the highest-ranking Hezbollah member to be killed since Israel began its onslaught on the Gaza Strip on October 7. Hezbollah blamed Israel for the attack.

## Iranian FM to visit Egypt: Report

**International Desk**

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian reportedly plans to visit Egypt in the coming days as the two countries are taking steps to restore their diplomatic ties after decades. Arabi 21 website has said that the top Iranian diplomat's upcoming visit is expected to strengthen ties between Iran and Egypt and comes at a sensitive time in the region. In recent months, Tehran and Cairo have been taking steps to restore their relations which were severed in 1980 after Egypt welcomed the deposed Pahlavi ruler of Iran and recognized the Israeli regime. The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry Nasser Kanaani on Monday described as "positive" the atmosphere of negotiations between delegates from Iran and Egypt on restoration of diplomatic ties, stressing that the two regional heavyweights have outlined a road map to resolve existing disputes. "We are currently in a good situation and have made good progress on [bilateral] relations. Consultations are positive, and previous meetings between officials [from the two countries] are indicative of the new positive atmosphere," Kanaani said.

# Tehran, Islamabad to resume diplomatic ties after tit-for-tat raids

Iran and Pakistan announced Monday that their ambassadors would resume their duties after the two countries agreed to de-escalate tensions following an exchange of deadly strikes last week.

"It has been mutually agreed that the ambassadors of both countries would return to their respective posts by January 26," said a joint statement by the foreign ministries in Tehran and Islamabad.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian is due to visit Pakistan on January 29, following an invitation from his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani, the statement said. The decisions were an-

nounced following a phone call between Jilani and Amir-Abdollahian. The two neighboring countries witnessed an escalation of cross-border tensions over Iran's counter-terrorism operations.

On January 16, Iran launched drone and missile attacks on two bases of Jaish al-Adl, an anti-Iran terrorist group that was formed in 2012 and has conducted several attacks on Iranian soil in recent years. The group claimed responsibility for an attack in December 2023 on a police station in the southeastern city of Rask that killed at least 11 Iranian police offi-

cers. On January 10, another attack by the group on a police station in the city killed one officer. The Iranian strikes in Pakistan drew a sharp rebuke from Islamabad, which recalled its ambassador from Tehran and blocked Iran's envoy from returning to Pakistan. Pakistan also carried out strikes on Thursday against what it called bases of the separatist Baloch

Liberation Front and Baloch Liberation Army in regions close to Iran's border. Tehran condemned the attack as unacceptable and unbalanced and summoned Pakistan's charge d'affaires over the strikes on Thursday, which left at least nine people dead. On Friday, Jilani and Amir-Abdollahian agreed in a phone conversation "to de-escalate the situation" between the two countries.

# Borrell: Israel cannot build peace by military means

**International Desk**  
The European Union's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell on Monday insisted on a

two-state solution for Israel and Palestine, as he told Israel it could not build peace "only by military means" ahead of talks with Israeli

and Palestinian diplomats. Borrell repeated the United Nations' condemnation of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's "unac-

ceptable" rejection of calls for a Palestinian state after the war in Gaza. "What we want to do is to build a two-state solution. So, let's talk about it," Borrell said.

He told Israel that "peace and stability cannot be built only by military means... Which are the other solutions they have in mind? To make all the Palestinians leave? To kill them off?" Borrell said. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Sunday denounced Israel for the "heartbreaking" deaths of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and called it unacceptable to resist statehood for the Palestinian people. "Israel's military operations have spread mass destruction and killed civilians on a scale unprecedented during my time as secretary-general," Guterres said at the opening of a summit of the

G77+China in the Ugandan capital Kampala. "This is heartbreaking and utterly unacceptable. The Middle East is a tinder-box, we must do all we can to prevent conflict from igniting across the region." Israel's assault on Gaza has left over 25,000 Palestinians dead, the vast majority women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. The Health Ministry said Monday at least 25,295 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory. The toll includes 190 fatalities in just 24 hours, a ministry statement said, while some 63,000 people in Gaza have been wounded in the conflict since October 7. EU foreign ministers on Monday pressed Israel for an eventual two-state solution with the Palestinians after the war in Gaza, at meetings with the top diplomats from the two

sides and key Arab states in Brussels. The surprise Hamas attack on October 7 on the occupied territories and the subsequent devastating military response from Israel has plunged the Middle East into fresh turmoil and sparked fears of a broader conflict. But while Israel's bloodshed appears to have driven a long-term solution further out of sight, EU officials insist the time is now to talk about finally resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The 27 EU ministers met first with Israel's foreign minister Israel Katz before they were due to sit down separately with the Palestinian Authority's top diplomat, Riyad al-Maliki. The foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia were also holding talks with the European ministers. Netanyahu has drawn condemnation from the United Nations and defied key

backer the United States by rejecting calls for a Palestinian state. Netanyahu has vowed "complete victory" over Hamas after the attacks by the resistance movement's fighters on October 7 that resulted in the deaths of about 1,140 people, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures. Hamas fighters also seized about 240 hostages, and Israel says around 132 remain in besieged Gaza. The EU has struggled for a united stance on the conflict in Gaza as staunch backers of Israel such as Germany have rejected demands for an immediate cease-fire made by the likes of Spain and Ireland. But there is overall backing in the bloc for a two-state solution. Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi said Israel's "continuation of measures to undermine the two-state solution is dooming the future of the region to more conflicts and more war".

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