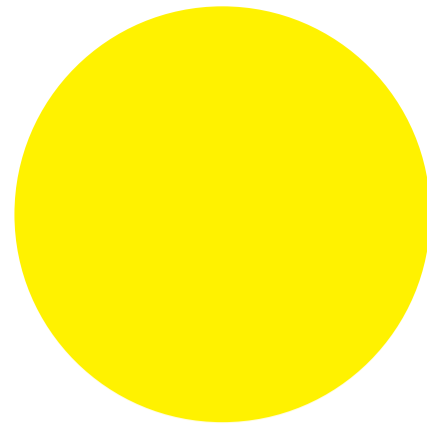


UN warns
Gaza faces
humanitarian
'collapse' as
battles rage

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Iran warns of 'crushing response'

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International Desk

Iran has warned of a "crushing response" to any act of aggression after the United States said it plans to respond to a deadly attack on an American base, for which it held Tehran responsible.

Three US servicemen were killed and at least 25 others wounded in the drone strike on a US base in northeast Jordan near the Syrian border. Washington has blamed the attack on "Iranian-backed groups."

US President Joe Biden said Tuesday he had decided on a response to the drone strike, while insisting he did not want a wider war in the Middle East.

Facing growing pressure in a US election year, Biden said he held Iran responsible for supplying the weapons to the people who carried out the deadly attack.

On the same day, Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations warned that any act of aggression against Iran and its people will be met with a crushing response.

The mission categorically rejected media claims about the exchange of several messages between the US and Iran amid a surge in regional tensions.

"Such messages have not been exchanged at all. Nevertheless, it constitutes a principled policy of the Islamic Republic to respond decisively and forcefully to any hostile move against the country, its interests, and its nationals," it said.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian also said that Iran's response to the threats will be decisive and immediate.

He said that Washington should stop using the language of threats and focus on

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a political solution for the region.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Domestic automakers manufacture over 1.1m cars in 10 months



The director general of the industries office of Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade said the production of cars by the domestic auto manufacturing companies topped 1.1 million in the first 10 months of the current Iranian year (started March 21, 2023).

Mehrdad Khosravi said about 1.107 million cars were produced in the 10 months to January 22, 2024, IRNA reported. Iran has moved towards making the car market of the country competitive by importing cars, he emphasized. Khosravi put the number of passenger cars produced in the current year at about 937,000, showing a nine percent rise compared to a year earlier. Iranian auto manufacturers had produced 863,000 passenger cars last year, he continued. He went on to say that 135,000 pickups were manufactured in the country from March 21, 2023, to January 22, 2024, registering a 34 percent hike compared to the corresponding period last year. In addition, over 250,000 vehicles were produced by the private sector of the country during the period, showing a 66 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

Knowledge-based companies, NIGC sign €500m contract: VP

Iran's Vice President for Science, Technology and Knowledge-Based Economy Rouhollah Dehqani Firouzabadi on Monday said a 500-million-euro contract has been signed with the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC).

Speaking in a special TV program on the Islamic Republic of Iran News Network (IRINN) titled, "Knowledge-Based Companies' Capabilities for Meeting Industries' Needs," the VP added that 12 groups of strategic products, based on the contract, will be made within four years, Shana reported. Last year, he continued, the Presidential Department of Science, Technology and Knowledge-Based Economy and the oil sector signed a five-year contract worth around \$2 billion on manufacturing seven groups of products.

This year's homegrown products exhibition was held through the efforts made by the economic group of the Leader's Office, said the official.

Iran's economy registers 5.4% growth in 2023: IMF



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its latest report put Iran's economic growth last year at 5.4%.

In a report on the World Economic Outlook, which is published once every three months, the international monetary body said that Iran registered a 5.4% economic growth in 2023, showing a considerable in-

crease compared to a year earlier, IRNA reported.

The IMF had put Iran's economic growth in 2022 at 3.8 percent, while having predicted that Iran's economy would increase by 3.7 percent in 2024.

In its report in October 2023, the International Monetary Fund had predicted that Iran's economy would

grow by 2.5 percent in 2024.

The 5.4 percent growth of Iran's economy in 2023 came as the world's economic growth hit 3.1 percent, showing a slump compared to a year before.

The average economic growth of the developed countries in 2023 stood at only 1.6 percent, while their average economic growth in

2022 was 2.6 percent.

In the reported fiscal year, the average economic growth of the developing countries was 4.1 percent. The report added that the economies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) grew by 2% on average, with Saudi Arabia registering a -1.1 percent economic growth in 2023.

CBI's net foreign assets up 5.2%: Data

The Central Bank of Iran's (CBI) data indicated that the bank's net foreign assets registered a 5.2% hike in the Iranian month of Dey (December 21, 2023 to January 22, 2024) compared to the same period last year.

In this period, the monetary base of the bank showed a 20.2 percent growth compared to the end of the previous Iranian calendar year (ended March 20, 2023), it said in a report, according to IRNA.

In addition to improving the foreign assets of the Central Bank of Iran, the rise has led to an increasing share (equivalent to 2.3 percentage points) in one percent growth of the monetary base of the bank in the reported month.

The declining trend of growth of the monetary base continues, with the 12-month growth of the monetary base decreasing from 45 percent as of the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21, 2023) to 31.7 percent in the Iranian month of Dey (December 21, 2023 to January 22, 2024), the CBI added.



MP: Oil Ministry performance in energy diplomacy 'successful', 'transformational'

A member of Iran's Parliament on Wednesday described the Oil Ministry's performance in the energy diplomacy as "successful" and "transformational". Talking to Shana, Seyyed Mousa Mousavi added economic and energy diplomacy has reached a good level under the 13th administration.

The MP said the increase in oil exports, the expansion of Iran's relations with neighboring countries, and the revival of economic and energy diplomacy promise a bright future for the country's economy.

The member of the Iranian Parliament's Energy Committee regarded forex

inflow through oil sales and facilitation of exports as factors in increasing the country's foreign currency revenues.

The oil industry's productivity and economic growth is another achievement of the Oil Ministry under the 13th administration, the lawmaker mentioned.

Iran's oil and gas industry has witnessed a 16.3 percent productivity growth during the 6th National Development Plan (ending 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 owes to the oil industry more than other sectors.

According to the figures released by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the oil industry registered 19.8 percent and 25.6 percent growth in 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 summer 2023 stood at 7.1 percent if the oil sector's growth included and 4.2 percent if excluded



Foreign transit via Iran up 29% in 10 months: IRICA

Foreign transit of goods via Iranian land in the first 10 months of the current Iranian year (started March 21, 2023) registered a 29% hike compared to the same period last year, announced the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA). Mohammad Rezvanifar

said 14.2 million tons of goods were transited via Iran's land from March 21, 2023 to January 22, 2024, IRNA reported.

The deputy economy minister further noted that the Shahid Rajaei Special Economic Zone and the Parvizkhan and Bashmaq borders accounted for the max-

imum volume of goods transited via Iran. According to the official, 4.2 million tons of foreign goods were transited from the customs office of Shahid Rajaei Special Economic Zone, three million tons from Parvizkhan Customs, and 1.5 million tons from Bashmaq Customs.

TPOI official calls on private sector to boost trade ties with Africa

The deputy head of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) for international businesses promotion affairs said the private sector should play a leading role in seizing the opportunity created for increasing trade and economic ties with African states.

Speaking at an expert-level

meeting on reviewing the trade opportunities between Iran and Kenya, held in Tehran, Mohammad Sadeq Qannadzadeh called on traders to make their utmost efforts in line with spurring trade-economic activities with African states, reported Tasnim News Agency.

Emphasizing the use of

fruitful experiences of successful traders in doing business with Africa, the official pointed out that effective measures have been taken such as creating a direct shipping line, financial-banking activities and launching 11 trade centers in line with spurring trade with African states.



Visit wonders of Varzaneh Desert

Iranica Desk

Desert tourism is a popular and enjoyable activity in Iran due to the country's unique geographical features. Known as the "land of four seasons," Iran offers a diverse range of natural attractions including deserts, forests, waterfalls, seas, springs and lakes. During the cold season, areas such as deserts, which are challenging to visit in the hot and exhausting summer, become popular destinations for thousands of Iranian and foreign tourists.

Varzaneh Desert is an ideal location for desert trekking, walking on hot sand and recreational activities in Iran's largest desert recreation site. Visitors can also explore the natural and historical attractions of Varzaneh city and the international Gavkhouni wetland, as well as observe the unique vegetation and wildlife of the desert.



IRNA

Location and size

Located near the city of Varzaneh in the eastern part of Isfahan Province, Varzaneh Desert covers an area of about 17,000 hectares and is situated approximately 10 kilometers from the city of Varzaneh, southwest of the international Gavkhouni wetland. One distinguishing feature of this desert is the diverse wind patterns that give rise to remarkable and extraordinary formations, including longitudinal, crescent-shaped, and pyramid-shaped sand hills, some reaching heights of up to 100 meters. The length of the sand dunes is approximately 45 kilometers, with varying widths from 10 kilometers near Varzaneh to one kilometer in the Jarqavieh Desert.

Distinction between Varzaneh and Khara deserts

In the past, this entire area was known as Khara Desert because the sand dunes were part of the desert regions. However, this area is divided into two distinct parts: Varzaneh Desert near the city of Varzaneh and Khara Desert near the village of Khara.

Most of the sand dunes in Khara Desert, which are about 30 kilometers further from Varzaneh Desert, are fragile and not considered a suitable place for desert trekking and recreational activities. This part of the desert lacks tourist

facilities, and fewer people visit it.

Varzaneh Desert is located near the city of Varzaneh and takes its name from this city. The picturesque sand dunes and unique features of this desert, alongside Iran's largest desert recreation site, have made Varzaneh Desert one of the most famous and popular deserts in Iran. Varzaneh Desert is also known as Hassanabad Desert, and the reason for this name is the accessibility to Varzaneh Desert from Hassanabad, a village near the desert.



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Wildlife and ecosystem

Due to its proximity to Gavkhouni wetland, Varzaneh Desert's rich plant and animal life are prominent and important characteristics. Its unique nature provides an ideal habitat for specific plant growth and a diverse range of beautiful and endearing animals. Unfortunately, in recent years, the decline in water levels in the Gavkhouni wetland and negative changes in the region's ecosystem have led to a significant decrease in the animal population, particularly migratory birds, across the wetland and its surroundings.

Foxes, ground squirrels, hares, wildcats, fal-

cons, horned vipers, and sand boas are just a few examples of the wildlife that call this desert home.

Exploring the sand dunes and hills of the desert is one of the most enjoyable activities in Varzaneh Desert. Walking barefoot on the hot sand and experiencing the unique tranquility and warmth of the desert along with observing the plants and animals of the area are unforgettable experiences.

Walking on the sand dunes and sandy hills is free, offering the opportunity to spend hours wandering the hot sands of the desert.

Night photography and sky observation

Night photography and stargazing are among the top reasons for tourists to visit desert areas. The desert sky at night is a spectacular and incredibly beautiful sight that captivates photography and astronomy enthusiasts. Desert tours at night, observing the sky and

stars, and engaging in night photography are some of the best activities in the desert. While the days in the desert are filled with exciting activities and stunning landscapes, the nights offer extraordinary views of the sky and a soothing silence.

Camping and overnight stays

Pitching a tent and spending the night in the desert is one of the most thrilling experiences to be had in Varzaneh Desert. If you plan to spend a night in the desert, make sure to bring camping equipment. Don't forget to light a fire and gather round it with friends or family to fully experience overnight

stays in the desert. When camping in Varzaneh Desert, remember two things: first, avoid camping in high places and try to set up your tent in the gullies; secondly, ensure that the fire never goes out. To build a fire, be sure to bring your own wood and avoid relying solely on desert wood.

Best time to visit

Deserts are typically warm and dry, making it challenging for non-locals, especially during the hot seasons. It is not recommended to visit Varzaneh Desert in the spring and summer; however, autumn and winter are considered the best times to explore this unique landscape.

Autumn days in Varzaneh Desert offer pleasant temperatures with relatively mild nights, making it an ideal time for a visit. Winter days in Varzaneh Desert are cool and enjoyable, although the nights can be quite cold, with temperatures dropping as low as -10 degrees Celsius. Therefore, if you plan to stay overnight in the desert during winter, ensure you have the necessary equipment and warm clothing.



IRNA

City of Varzaneh

The majority of women in Varzaneh, a historical city, wear white chadors instead of black ones, while most men prefer white clothing. This distinctive feature has earned Varzaneh the nickname of the "White-clad City" of Iran. If you are visiting Varzaneh Desert, be sure to explore this city, located just 10 kilometers from the desert, and take in its unique historical and natural attractions.

Historical attractions

Jaame Mosque: The Jaame (Grand) Mosque of Varzaneh is a significant historical and religious site, dating back to the Timurid era. It is believed that the mosque was originally a fire temple and was later converted into a mosque. Featuring two *shabestans* (prayer rooms) in the east and west of the mosque, a 20-meter minaret, and intricately tiled

mihrab (prayer niche), this mosque has been a site of fascination for centuries. Over the past 500 years, Iranian artists have decorated and renovated the mosque several times, making it a must-see for tourists.

Historic bridge: The historic bridge of Varzaneh, spanning approximately 500 meters,

is situated over the Zayandeh Rud (River) in the northern part of Varzaneh city. It is the final bridge over this river before reaching the Gavkhouni wetland. The bridge was constructed in two stages, with part of it dating back to the Seljuk period, and another part built during the late Qajar period.

US has the wrong address

Head of the snake is in Tel Aviv



By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

OPINION

The Israeli regime's totalitarian policies over the past seven decades have plunged the entire West Asian region into a state of instability and chronic suffering, with no signs of resolution. Israel has not only disregarded United Nations resolutions during this time but also intensified aggression and settlement activities in Palestinian territories, effectively blocking the most optimistic solution to the conflict: the establishment of two separate governments.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the bellicose Prime Minister of this regime, has gone as far as openly rejecting the United States' proposal for a two-state solution, bringing the diplomatic path to a standstill. The Israelis' obstinacy and refusal to accept an independent Palestinian state have been major obstacles to successful diplomacy, despite decades of such efforts that coincided with guerrilla warfare and Palestinian struggles.

Israeli Prime Minister
Benjamin Netanyahu (L)
● AP



Consequently, when diplomacy falters, alternative measures such as military campaigns naturally come to the forefront. Many view Hamas' attack on the occupied territories on October 7 within this context — an act of retaliation against years of siege and violations of the rights of Gaza Strip residents, who are confined to what has been rightly described as the world's largest open-air prison.

However, while Israel and its supporters label their response to the October 7 attack as "rightful self-defense," it has resulted in the loss of over 26,000 Palestinian lives, predominantly women, children, and civilian men so far. This relentless violence has left the Gaza Strip in ruins, prompting William Schomberg, head of the International Committee of the Red Cross' representative office in Gaza, to warn on Tuesday about the imminent collapse of medical services in the region. "Gaza is on the brink of a complete shut-down," he said.

The repercussions of Israel's extensive crimes are only natural. Lebanon's Hezbollah has launched attacks on Israel's border areas in solidarity with the people of Gaza. Yemen's Ansarullah has carried out missile attacks on Israeli positions. Moreover, there are concerns about the security of ships traveling to Israel in the Red Sea, and Iraqi militia groups have targeted both Israeli and American positions. These actions can be seen as responses

to Israel's genocidal acts, of which the United States was a significant supporter.

However, this is not the entire narrative. When the United States blocked diplomatic efforts to halt the conflict at the UN Security Council, South Africa took the Israeli regime to the International Court of Justice over the charge of committing genocide. At the grassroots level as well, the ongoing massacres committed by Israel have sparked widespread reactions, including massive demonstrations worldwide and the establishment of campaigns in support of Palestinians and condemnation of Israel.

The world is calling for an end to the war, but this plea remains unanswered. Statesmen, experts, and even former Israeli officials had warned that prolonging the war would only lead to further escalations and the opening of new fronts against Israel. There were speculations that Benjamin Netanyahu, driven by personal concerns about the aftermath of the war, would refuse any proposal or plan to cease hostilities. Netanyahu seems willing to involve America in the conflict as well as it expands.

Following the recent attack by Iraqi militia groups on an American military base along the Jordan-Syria border that resulted in three deaths and more than 40 injuries, there have been various comments and predictions regarding America's response. The default position of the United States

and Israel is, unsurprisingly, to accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran of involvement in this attack and similar incidents. They continually assert that Iran is the root cause of instability in the region.

The claims and accusations made against Iran ignore obvious facts in the region and are a misrepresentation of the situation. A survey conducted by the Policy Research Center based in Doha, Qatar, revealed the views of citizens from 16 Arab countries, shedding light on the realities in the region. According to the survey, 77 percent of people in the Arab world consider the United States and Israel to be the biggest threats to the security and stability of the West Asian region. Out of those surveyed, 51% identified the United States as the greatest threat to regional stability, while 26% identified Israel. Only 7% considered Iran as the greatest threat. Furthermore, 94% of Arab people evaluated America's positions during the Gaza war as negative.

These negative views towards the United States are indicative of a trend among Arab countries. The American military presence in the region for years under the banner of establishing security and democracy has, instead of bringing stability, security, and democracy, led to destructive wars in the region. Iraq and Syria continue to face instability and insecurity, even after years of American involvement. After two decades of being in Afghanistan, the United States

ultimately handed over the country to the Taliban, the very group it claimed to be fighting against. The end of another regional conflict involving the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Ansarullah occurred as a result of the de-escalation policy pursued by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Therefore, while blaming Iran may be the easiest option for the United States and Israel, it will ultimately bear no fruit. Contrary to a quote attributed to a former Saudi official, "the snake's head" is not Iran but rather, Israel. Failing to assess the situation correctly and disregarding the realities on the ground will only complicate matters further for the United States. The approach of providing unconditional support to Israel and turning a blind eye to the root causes of instability in the region will lead to more destructive consequences for both America and the people of the region.

Many political experts are now advising American statesmen to shift their focus away from pressuring and accusing Iran to instead pressure the Israeli regime to cease its violence against the Palestinian people. The Guardian newspaper has recently warned American statesmen about the disastrous consequences of retaliatory actions against Iran, too. Such actions have prolonged the conflict in Gaza, triggered a full-scale attack by Lebanon's Hezbollah on Israel, and turned the sporadic conflicts in Iraq and

Syria into a living nightmare for the US. Additionally, these actions have the potential to destabilize governments friendly to the United States in Egypt, Jordan, and the Persian Gulf.

The Guardian columnist suggests that President Biden should prioritize addressing the root causes of the crisis without delay. This includes demanding an end to the bombing of Gaza by Israel, facilitating a cease-fire that includes the release of Israeli hostages, and leading a global campaign for the establishment of two states in Palestine. It is clear that an explosion of the conflict in the Middle East benefits no one.

The request made by the United States and the United Kingdom for Iran to use its influence to reduce regional tensions is reasonable and logical, provided that they themselves adopt such a policy. The sporadic attacks on Israeli and American positions in the region can be seen as a natural reaction to the larger crisis, which is Israel's devastating attack on Gaza. Currently, the best course of action for reducing tensions is for the United States and the United Kingdom to exert pressure on their strategic ally, the Israeli regime, to end the war in Gaza and halt the massacre of the Palestinian people. The root cause of this tension lies in Tel Aviv. If Washington's goal is genuinely to establish security and order in the region, as it claims, it must address the correct source of the problem.

Conflicting considerations leave 'few' options for Biden

OPINION

THE ARAB WEEKLY—The killing of three US troops is dragging the United States further into a proxy war with Iran that President Joe Biden had hoped to avoid and that he still hopes can be contained.

After years of trying to ease tensions with Iran through dialogue, and then months of seeking to keep the Israel-Hamas war from escalating, the drone strike by Iranian-backed fighters on US forces in Jordan crossed an unstated red line for the Biden administration. The United States has already been hitting another Iranian-backed group, Yemen's Houthis (also known as the Ansarullah movement). The strikes come after warnings failed to dissuade Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping, which the pro-Iran militias say are acts of solidarity with Palestinianws in Gaza being bombarded by US ally Israel.

The White House has promised a "very consequential" response to the Jordan attack, which comes at the start of an election year in which Biden's Republican rivals are going on the offensive and urging direct attacks on Iran.

But the Biden administration has already stated that it does not want war with Iran, and officials have sought to distance themselves from the attack.

"It's a fork-in-the-road moment," said Alex Vatanka, founding director of the Iran programme at the Middle East Institute.

He said that Iran's goal since the October 7 attack by Hamas on Israel has been "to avoid war with Israel and the United States, but to use this opportunity to squeeze both as part of a long-term game plan." The state knows that, "like Iran, the United States is not interested in a regional escalation."

But Iranian officials also know that, with elections approaching, "President Biden is already being hampered for being weak in the face of foreign adversaries, and that politically, he has to do something."

Vatanka expected further US strikes on Iran's so-called "Axis of Resistance," with messages sent to Iran to make clear that it cannot afford greater escalation.

Thomas Warrick, a former State Department official now at the Atlantic Council, said the United States had no good choices.

Iran will not be deterred by attacks on its backed groups, and a full-blown assault in Iraq could hand Tehran a strategic victory by strengthening calls for US troops to leave.

"The Iranian regime doesn't believe in deterrence the way US policymakers and strategists do," he said.

Other options could include directly targeting a top military site inside Iran or eliminating Revolutionary Guard positions in Syria, where Israel has also been striking Tehran's capacities.

"Neither of these options are good, and both risk keeping the United States embroiled in a regional conflict that the Biden administration was hoping to avoid," he said.

Conflicting pressures

In 2020, after another flare-up with Iranian-backed groups at the start of an election year, then-president Donald Trump ordered a

strike at the Baghdad airport that killed General Qassem Soleimani, the storied commander of an elite Revolutionary Guards unit.

But months earlier, Trump abruptly cancelled plans to strike Iran itself, wary of escalating conflict over Tehran's shooting down of a US unmanned drone.

The Biden administration took office, seeking diplomacy with Iran and negotiating through the European Union on restoring a 2015 nuclear deal scrapped by Trump. The talks collapsed in part over Iran's demands for greater sanctions relief, and an agreement became politically toxic.

But US officials since then have quietly spoken to Iran about regional tensions and, until October 7, the Biden administration had boasted that it had brought attacks on US troops down to a standstill.

Now, while US officials are not speaking in the language of regime change, Vatanka said they have concluded that a "fundamental part of a solution to a large-scale sustained de-escalation in the Middle East requires a very different political order in Tehran".

Ali Vaez, Iran project director at the International Crisis Group, said US fatalities marked a "major step up the escalation ladder by Iran-backed groups" and that Tehran's denials of responsibility carried little weight.

But he said that last year's diplomacy had brought calm, while US strikes in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen have only made Iran-backed fighters more brazen.

"While there is no political space in Washington for engagement with Iran in an election year, diplomacy is the only approach that has reined Iran in," he said.

Striking Iran would dramatically escalate the risk of the wider war Biden says he is trying to avoid, not to mention the possibility of more US caskets coming home in the months before polls open.

But with Republicans urging the 81-year-old to "hit Iran", Biden can ill afford to portray weakness against Tehran as he struggles with low approval ratings ahead of a likely rematch with Donald Trump. "He's under tremendous pressure; the administration's in a kind of a lose-lose situation," Colin Clarke, research director at the Sofian Center in New York, told AFP.



The illustration depicts the complex situation before Iran, the US, Israel, and other regional players after a drone strike by an Iranian-backed Iraqi group hit a US base in northeastern Jordan, killing three soldiers and injuring more than 40 others.

Is US Army going to war?

OPINION

B92—Washington has announced that it will respond to a drone attack on a military base in Jordan, in which three American soldiers got killed.

The Americans claim that the attack was carried out by fighters supported by Iran.

The conflict in the Middle East escalated dramatically after Hamas fighters attacked Israel on October 7 last year.

People across the region are bracing for more violence, but does that mean a major war is likely?

US President Joe Biden blamed the attack on the base on "radical groups supported by Iran and operating in Syria and Iraq" and vowed retaliation. However, Iran denies its involvement and claims that the groups in the region "do not take orders from Iran".

Will there be open conflict?

Over the past decades, we faced the risk of open conflict between Iran and the US on many occasions, which both sides have tried to avoid. However, Biden's political opponents in America point out that there have been 160 attacks on American troops since October 7 and accuse the White House of not doing enough to rein in Iran.

"He has turned our soldiers into easy targets. The only response to these attacks must be devastating military retaliation against Iran's terrorist forces, both in Iran and throughout the Middle East," said Republican Senator Tom Cotton.

However, even Republican presidents have been reluctant to engage in direct confrontation with Iran. During his tenure, Donald Trump repeatedly threatened to attack Iran, but in the end, he did not go beyond economic sanctions and an attack on Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, with the aim of killing Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani. After that, Tehran announced a big revenge. Héloïse Fayet, who works for the International Federation for Human Rights in Paris, thinks it unlikely that the US will

attack Iran directly unless it is shown that the order to strike the base in Jordan came directly from Tehran. "America is more likely to attack Iranian associates," she said. Andrew Boren, a former American intelligence officer, thinks the same. "Calculating the risk of a war with Iran will not be easy and must include an assessment of Iran's nuclear capabilities and the regime's possible responses. The position of regional partners such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Turkey, Israel, and Egypt should also be taken into account," he pointed out in an interview for Politico.

Possible US responses

Biden, who has so far pursued a policy of avoiding conflict and dragging the US into another war in the Middle East, ordered his team to come up with several potential responses to the deadly attack. Among the options are attacks on Iranian personnel in Syria and Iraq or an attack on Iran's navy or facilities in the Persian Gulf, and the Iranian government has already said that a direct attack on Iran would mean crossing a red line.

The US strikes are expected to be carried out within days and could include strikes

on multiple targets. The scale of the attack is not yet clear, but any military action is likely to cause unease among key allies in the Middle East, who fear the outbreak of a regional war. Saudi Arabia wants a restrained response, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has accused the US and Great Britain of trying to turn the Red Sea into a sea of blood. Biden therefore faces a major challenge: how to respond to the attack without risking escalation? He has already announced a response to the deaths of three Americans, and his absence would leave him vulnerable to name-calling from Donald Trump, with whom he is likely to run for president later this year. Whatever decision he makes, it seems that Biden will hardly have the open support of his European partners, with the exception of Great Britain.

"There is no appetite among European states for a major conflict with Iran or in the Middle East. Europe should be worried, but it is difficult to deal with it and worry about Ukraine at the same time, so the Europeans will probably let the US solve these problems on its own," Fayet pointed out.



US soldiers patrol the countryside of the oil-rich town of Rumeilan in Hasakah province, northeastern Syria, on June 7, 2023.

Iranian prodigy Hedayati keen to wrestle Mirzazadeh for Olympic berth

Sports Desk

Greco-Roman prodigy Fardin Hedayati is eager for a bout against fellow-Iranian and reigning world superheavyweight champion Amin Mirzazadeh in the coming months as he fancies his chances of representing the country at the Paris Olympics.

A world under-20 gold medalist last year, Hedayati made his senior debut in style when he cruised to the 130kg gold at the Zagreb Open earlier in January. "Thank God I was at my best in Zagreb," Hedayati told IRNA, adding: "Some high-profile wrestlers were at the tournament but I was fit in every way to take them on. Zagreb was a proper test for me to showcase my prowess."

Hedayati outmuscled Hungarian Laszlo Darabos and China's Wenhao Jiang – in a repeat of the world junior final – as well as Oscar Pino of Cuba and Lithuanian Mantas Knystautas before a final victory over Chinese Meng Lingzhe.

Asked about his toughest bout in the season-opening Ranking Series event, the young Iranian said: "The match against Cuban Pino was surely a hard one. He has a world silver and three bronzes under his belt and has been a top



Iranian Fardin Hedayati celebrates after the victory over China's Meng Lingzhe in the Greco-Roman 130kg final at the Zagreb Open Ranking Series event in January 2024.

contender in the weight class for the past seven years. Knystautas is also a former world bronze winner, while Meng came into the event on the back of an Asian Games silver."

The gold in Zagreb means Hedayati stays on course for an Olympic berth though he is behind Mirzazadeh in the pecking order for a ticket to the French capital. Mirzazadeh, who was unfortu-

nate to leave the Tokyo Olympics empty-handed after a loss to Riza Kayaalp in the bronze-medal contest, stunned the Turkish sensation in the World Championships last September to walk away with

the ultimate prize – a second successive world medal for the Iranian following the 2022 silver – and will be keen to add the Olympic glory to his medal haul. Hedayati, meanwhile, knows he

will face a quite daunting path to throw down the gauntlet to Mirzazadeh.

The two could go head-to-head when taking part in March's Yasar Dogu & Vehbi Emre tournament in Antalya, Turkey, and then Hedayati will have to clinch the Asian gold, should head coach Hassan Rangraz decide to send him to Bishkek in April, to have the chance of locking horns with Mirzazadeh in the Iranian trials before the Olympics.

"My rivalry with the international opponents will go down to the wire so that I can find the opportunity to face Mirzazadeh in the final round of the trials. Amin is a great champion and we are good friends off the mat. I hope I can wrestle him before the Olympics. I'm sure the best wrestler will represent the country in Paris," Hedayati said.

"I'll keep pursuing the Olympic dream and remain focused on the future events. I'll take one step at a time and don't care how the other opponents will fare though I have utmost respect for all of them," said the 19-year-old, for whom the biggest test in his career could come in a best-of-three contest against the world champion before the Olympics.

AFC, Football Australia back Iranian ref Faghani over online abuse



Iraqi striker Aymen Hussein (2nd R) is shown a red card by referee Alireza Faghani during a game against Jordan at the AFC Asian Cup in Khalifa International Stadium, Al Rayyan, Qatar, on January 29, 2024.

● XINHUA



Sports Desk

The Asian Football Federation and Football Australia threw their support behind Alireza Faghani after the Iranian referee was subject to online abuse in the aftermath of last-16 match at the Asian Cup in Qatar.

The high-profile Iranian, representing the Australian football governing body at the tournament, was targeted on social media for his decision to show a second yellow card to Iraq striker Aymen Hussein for his controversial 'grass-eating' goal celebration after giving his team a 2-1 lead in the 76th minute of the game against Jordan on Monday.

Hussein seemed to be mocking the Jordanian players' celebration after their first-half goal.

Down to 10 men, Iraq failed to hold on to the lead as Jordan scored twice deep into stoppage time to win 3-2 and progress to the quarterfinals.

Furious fans took to Instagram to attack the Iranian afterwards, exposing his personal information, while a petition signed by over 750,000 people has called for his suspension.

In a statement released by the Australian Associated Press late on Tuesday, Football Australia said it is "in constant contact with Alireza and is providing he and his family with all the support they require."

"Football Australia is also working with e-Safety and relevant law enforcement agencies on this matter," FA added.

The AFC, meanwhile, did not name the Iranian ref but

said: "We strongly condemn any form of threat, harassment, or disclosure of personal information targeting our referees, players, officials and all stakeholders." The Asian football governing body also banned the "aggressive" journalists who confronted Iraq head coach Jesus Casas after the game. At the post-match press conference, Iraqi journalists were seen shouting at Casas and more than a dozen stormed out while pointing fingers at the Spaniard. Some were led away by officials when they approached the podium.

"The AFC strongly condemns any type of unruly and aggressive behavior and takes a zero-tolerance stance against such actions," it said in a statement. "(The AFC) have taken the swift decision to bar the re-

sponsible individuals from covering not only the AFC Asian Cup but also future AFC tournaments."

Iraq Football Association said the journalists' actions were a "black mark in Iraqi media history".

"These events have no connection to the authentic Iraqi media that is known for its honorable positions," Iraq's FA said.

"We denounce the blatant and abhorrent behavior that occurred against the coach, and we confirm that we have decided not to deal with these media personnel who seek to cause chaos in the future."

Reuters and AFP contributed to the report.

Morocco's Regragui takes responsibility for bitter AFCON exit

REUTERS – Morocco coach Walid Regragui said he took full responsibility for the team's surprise Africa Cup of Nations exit after a last-16 loss to South Africa, lamenting their lack of cutting edge in Tuesday's 2-0 defeat. The Atlas Lions, one of the pre-tournament favourites, became the latest high-profile team to bid farewell to the tournament as they spurned a few goal-scoring chances and were punished by South Africa at the Laurent Pokou Stadium in San Pedro. Evidence Makgopa scored against the run of play in the 57th minute before Teboho Mokoena wrapped up the win in stoppage time, curling home a free kick awarded for a last-man

foul that led to the dismissal of Morocco midfielder Sofyan Amrabat.

"We could have maybe settled the game in the first half but, at this level, you get immediately punished for any chance you waste," Regragui told beIN Sports.

Morocco had a golden chance to draw level with five minutes remaining when they were awarded a

penalty for a handball but Achraf Hakimi blasted his effort against the crossbar.

"The penalty hurt us a lot, and surely we didn't do everything that is required but I take full responsibility," Regragui added.

Morocco were hoping to win their first Cup of Nations title since 1976, having made history at the 2022 World Cup after becoming the first African team to reach the semi-final.

However, their displays have been far from convincing in the Ivory Coast, and they were affected by the absence of some key players against South Africa, including injured duo Hakim Ziyech and Sofiane Boufal. "We will learn from this unexpected stumble ... this is a disappointment for our fans who supported us a lot," Regragui said.



● SIPHIWE SIBEKO/REUTERS



Displaced Palestinians flee from Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on January 30, 2024, amid the ongoing Israel's strikes on the Palestinian territory.
● MAHMUD HAMS/AFP

UN warns Gaza faces humanitarian 'collapse'

Artillery fire pounded southern Gaza early Wednesday as Israel said it has begun flood-

ing Hamas tunnels and mediators sought a halt to the nearly four-month Israel's aggression.

The focus of the fighting in recent weeks has been Khan Yunis, the southern Gaza Strip's main city,

where an AFP reported constant air strikes and shelling overnight. The health ministry

recorded at least 125 deaths across the territory in the latest Israeli strikes.

UN agency chiefs said a bitter row over the main aid agency for Palestinians could "have catastrophic consequences for the people of Gaza". Major donors, including Israel's top ally the United States and Germany, have suspended funding to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, over ac-

cusations that several staff members were involved in the October 7 attack that sparked the war. Withholding the funds was "perilous and would result in the collapse of the humanitarian system in Gaza", the heads of the UN agencies said in a joint statement. Meanwhile mediation ef-

forts gathered pace following a Sunday meeting of top US, Israeli, Egyptian and Qatari officials that produced a proposed framework for a new truce and hostage release. A Hamas official told AFP that a delegation headed by the group's leader Ismail Haniyeh "will be in Cairo to discuss the proposal.

Following the deadliest attack in Israel's history, its military launched a withering air, land and sea offensive that has killed at least 26,900 people in Gaza, most of them women and children, according to the territory's health ministry. In Khan Yunis, where the Hamas government media office said there were

"dozens of air raids" overnight, vast areas have been reduced to a muddy wasteland of bombed-out buildings. According to witnesses, artillery shells hit the area of Nasser Hospital, the city's largest, where the UN humanitarian agency OCHA has said thousands of displaced Palestinians are

sheltering. The Palestinian Red Crescent said on social media platform X that "Israeli shelling and gunfire continue" around another hospital in Khan Yunis. Staff and patients at the Red Crescent's Al-Amal Hospital "and thousands of displaced people, primarily children and women, live in constant fear and anxiety", it said. The Israeli military said it had begun flooding the tunnels with water in a bid to "neutralize the threat of Hamas' subterranean network". An AFP journalist witnessed people fleeing Khan Yunis on Tuesday as explosions sounded nearby. "We left Nasser Hospital... under tank fire and air strikes. We didn't know where to go," said one woman. "We're out in the cold, left to fend for ourselves." Qatar, which helped broker a previous truce and hostage release in November, voiced hope an initial deal now being negotiated might lead to a permanent ceasefire.

The Hamas official said the group is "open to discussing all issues, including prisoner exchange and reconstruction of the Gaza Strip", requesting anonymity due to the sensitivity of the talks. The official reiterated Hamas's demand for "a comprehensive and complete cessation of (Israel's) aggression" and the withdrawal of its troops from Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose office earlier called the negotiations "constructive", ruled out releasing "thousands" of Palestinian prisoners as part of any deal.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran receiving 'perfect signals' from Mahda satellite

The Iranian deputy minister of communications technology said the Mahda satellite, successfully launched into orbit on Sunday, is in 'perfect health,' and the link is not disrupted. Hassan Salarieh, the head of the Iranian Space Organization (ISO), said on Wednesday the satellite, launched along with Keyhan 2 and Hatf 1 nano-satellites, is fulfilling the country's research objectives. He said, "Mahda is a telecommunications satellite that has a power supply and distribution subsystems. This satellite receives its power from solar energy," IFP reported. Simultaneously sending three indigenous satellites into outer space on Simorgh-1 satellite carrier for the first time marked a big stride for Iran.

UAE sends first ambassador to Syria in 13 years



The United Arab Emirates dispatched the country's first ambassador to Syria after 13 years, following the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two Arab countries. The Emirati envoy officially presented his credentials to Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal al-Mikdad at the Arab country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in the capital Damascus on Tuesday. According to Syria's official SANA news agency, Hassan al-Shehi conveyed to the Syrian side his commitment to enhancing bilateral relations between the two countries during his meeting with Mikdad. He also pledged to work to strengthen cooperation and achieve mutual progress between the two Arab countries.

Yemeni forces target US destroyer in Red Sea with missiles

Yemen's Ansarallah movement fired "several" missiles at a US warship in the Red Sea, they said on Wednesday, hours after the US military reported shooting down a missile. Brigadier General Yahya Saree said in a televised speech broadcast live from the Yemeni capital Sana'a on Wednesday that the Yemeni forces had carried out an operation against the USS Gridley destroyer.

He noted that the missile attack came in support of the oppressed Palestinians and resistance fighters in the Gaza Strip and in response to joint American-British aggression against Yemen. Saree underscored that all US and British warships in the Red Sea and the Arab Sea, which are participating in the ongoing aggression against the Arab nation, have become legitimate targets for Yemenis within

the fundamental and inalienable right to defend their homeland and nation, and in reaffirmation of their staunch support of Palestine. The senior Yemeni military figure also emphasized that his country's military will continue its anti-Israel operations until the Tel Aviv regime halts its onslaught against Gaza and eases restrictions on supplies of humanitarian aid for its Palestinian population.

Yemenis have declared their open support for Palestine's struggle against the Israeli occupation since the regime launched a devastating war on Gaza on October 7 after the territory's Palestinian resistance movements carried out a surprise retaliatory attack, dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, against the occupying entity. The attacks have prompted some shipping companies to detour around southern

Africa to avoid the Red Sea, a vital route that normally carries about 12 percent of global maritime trade. Container shipping through the Red Sea has dropped by nearly one-third this year as attacks by Yemen on Israel-bound ships continue, the International Monetary Fund said Wednesday. "Container shipping... has declined by almost 30 percent," said Jihad Azour, director of the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia

department, adding that "the drop in trade accelerated in the beginning of this year." The IMF's PortWatch platform indicates that the total transit volume - including not only containers - through the Suez Canal was down 37 percent this year through January 16 compared to the same period a year earlier. The canal connects the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran warns of ...

Meanwhile, the chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps warned that Iran "will not leave any threat unanswered". "Sometimes, the enemies make threats. And these days, too, we hear some threats in the US officials' rhetoric," Major General Hossein Salami said on Wednesday. "We tell them (the Americans) that you have tested us and we know each other. We will not leave any threat unanswered." The IRGC chief stressed that, "We are not seeking

war, yet are not afraid of it either." Tensions have soared in the region since the October 7 attacks by Hamas against Israel, with US forces in Iraq and Syria coming under attack 165 times by the resistance groups in the intervening months. The resistance groups say the attacks are in retaliation for the US support for Israel in the brutal Gaza war, which has killed at least 26,900 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 65,949 others over nearly four months. An Iraqi resistance group

said it has suspended operations against US forces. Kataib Hezbollah said this was "to prevent embarrassment of the Iraqi government". The US Defense Department said, "Actions speak louder than words." Kataib Hezbollah Secretary-General Abu Hussein al-Hamidawi said in a statement on Tuesday: "As we announce the suspension of military and security operations against the occupation forces - in order to prevent embarrassment of the Iraqi government - we will continue to defend our people in Gaza

in other ways." Lebanon's Hezbollah movement has also launched many attacks on Israeli targets inside the occupied territories in support of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The United States and Britain have also launched a campaign of air strikes against Yemen which has carried out repeated attacks on Israel-bound ships in the Red Sea in solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Yemen's Ansarallah movement also says the attacks on the ships are in support of the Palestinians.

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A rally in Sanaa, Yemen, in 2023

Yemen standing beside Gaza

By Ruhollah Abdolmaleki

Researcher in regional studies

In 2023, as the year wrapped up, the bravery of Palestinian fighters and the resilience of women and children in Gaza against the oppression and crimes of Zionist occupiers kept intensifying. Moving into the new year, a fresh front against the Zionist regime was launched, not only significantly damaging the regime's international credibility but also imposing substantial economic costs on it.

Yemen's involvement in the Gaza conflict, marked by aerial attacks like missile launches at occupied territories, has showcased strategic gains for the oppressed people of Palestine and targeted vital lifelines of the Zionists. Supporters of the Zionist regime in the West have voiced concerns about these actions, openly opposing them and criticizing Yemen's Resistance movement Ansar Allah. For example, the French Foreign Minister labeled Yemen's attack on Israeli ports as a threat to the region. Moreover, a high-ranking Pentagon official said, "Houthi attacks on Israeli ports demonstrate a serious threat to regional security."

Former US President Barack Obama, explicitly linking the security of the Zionist regime to regional security, aligns Western authorities' perception of the regional security threat with a threat to the Zionist regime's security. Apart from the isolated stance of Western countries, those typically aligned with the US have sided with the oppressor instead of defending the oppressed. In a collective and joint statement, these nations, in a new alignment, concluded their arguments by cautioning the people of Yemen about bearing the consequences of attacking the ports of Israeli regime.

Nevertheless, disregarding these threats, Yemeni resistance fighters persist in defending the oppressed Palestinians and confronting the ruthless Israeli criminals. Their actions echo the divine description of true fighters, as expressed in verse 173 of Surah Al-Imran: "Those to whom hypocrites said, 'Indeed, the people have gathered against you, so fear them.' But it [merely] increased them in faith, and they said, 'Allah is sufficient for us, and He is an excellent trustee.'" Subsequently, the United States and Britain issued multiple orders for attacks on Yemen. Despite this, Yemen made it clear that these assaults would not diminish their backing for the oppressed Palestinians. They continued striking against the interests of the Zionist regime. This display of courage and unwavering determination in the face of Western aggression earned admiration from supporters of the world's oppressed. Imam Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, commended the Yemeni fighters, urging them to persist in supporting the people of Gaza amidst oppression. He emphasized, "They struck a blow to the lifeline of the Zionist regime. The US threatened them, but they didn't fear the US. That's how they are! They didn't fear the US. When a person fears God, he does not fear anyone else. What they did is truly and rightly an example of fighting on the path of God."

Yemen's support for Palestinian Cause has history
 Yemen's historical support for the Palestinians and resistance groups like Hamas goes back to the 20th century. One key reason behind Yemen's backing of Palestinian groups, including Hamas, lies in the anti-Zionist stance of Yemeni Muslims and their historical anti-colonial background.

Yemen's history also shows support for Hezbollah and Hamas, including visits from Palestinian leaders. Yemen has supported Hamas through military backing. Yemen served as a channel for sending missiles and armaments to the Gaza Strip in 2006. Amid the heightened conflict led by the coalition of Saudi Arabia and Ansar Allah in Yemen, Ansar Allah fighters collaborated with Lebanese Hezbollah, expanding their arms power and transferring weapons to Hamas in Gaza. Beyond weapon supply, Yemen played a role in military attacks on Israeli targets and maritime transport associated with the Zionist regime.

After Al-Aqsa Flood Operation

The astonishing military operation by Gaza fighters into occupied territories, named Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, marked a pivotal moment in the Gaza people's struggle for the freedom of their occupied lands. In an attempt to compensate for irreparable losses, the Zionist regime unleashed its most brutal and horrendous attacks against the oppressed people of Gaza, receiving political, financial, and military support from its traditional backers in the West. A glance at the statistics of this ruthless massacre reveals that Gaza has turned into a blood-soaked stage for the Zionist regime's crimes. Over approximately 100 days of brutal operations, the regime has killed over 26,000 Palestinians, including more than 10,000 children, 120 journalists, and 7,000 women.

One of the strategies to prevent the continuation of the Zionist regime's inhumane crimes against the people of Gaza involves exerting economic and commercial pressure on this illegitimate and child-killing regime. From the beginning, Imam

Khamenei called on the Islamic countries and countries of the region to undertake this crucial initiative, emphasizing strategic measures such as cutting off economic lifelines to the Zionist regime, including preventing the entry of energy and goods. Yemen, with its longstanding support for the Palestinian people as mentioned above, utilized its capacities to aid the people of Gaza and Hamas. This dealt a severe blow to the structure of the Zionist regime, as briefly explained below:

Attacking Israeli ports

After the Al-Aqsa Flood, Yemeni authorities swiftly came to the aid of the oppressed Palestinians, directing missile and drone attacks toward the coastal city of Eilat in the occupied territories. In October 2023, they launched a ballistic missile and several cruise missiles at the port of Eilat, escalating the intensity of the conflict in the subsequent months. This military initiative strategically deployed their military capabilities and operational focus on specific sections of the occupied territories controlled by the Zionist regime, leading Israel's War Minister, Yoav Gallant, to acknowledge that the Zionist regime is now a target for military attacks on multiple fronts. Economically, Yemeni fighters have inflicted a significant blow to the economy of the Eilat port. Israeli mid-level officials have conceded that since Yemen's attacks on Eilat and ships heading to this port in the Red Sea, the activity of the Eilat port has seen an 85% decrease.

Strikes on Israeli-linked commercial vessels

Despite warnings from human rights organizations about water, food, and fuel shortages in Gaza over the tragic 100-day events, the massacre of the

people and the blockage of essential supplies continue. Ignoring these warnings and using their veto power to support this regime, there seems to be no alternative but reciprocal responses, limiting fuel supplies, and obstructing the free trade of the Zionist regime in international waters. Attacking commercial ships associated with Israel may negatively impact global markets and jeopardize the economic security of this regime, possibly compelling the Zionists to abandon their strategy of imposing famine, exacerbating drug shortages, and causing widespread death in Gaza due to the lack of essential necessities. To accomplish this objective, Yemen successfully disrupted maritime communications along one of the world's major transportation routes in a brief period, presenting substantial challenges to the Zionist regime's economy. Looking at it from a different angle, there has been a global initiative against the Zionist regime, where anti-war and justice-seeking groups worldwide have been actively participating for nearly two decades through the Global BDS Movement ("Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions"). Ansar Allah's actions in Yemen bring a military aspect to this global sanctioning method. Essentially, the same rationale behind launching the BDS movement, which condemns the occupation and colonization of Palestinian territories and the neglect of the rights of Arab Palestinian citizens, aims to cut off international support for the regime. Consequently, there is a consensus to sever the economic lifelines of the regime to halt the unjust slaughter of innocent Palestinians. Following this approach, starting from early December when

Ansar Allah disrupted the Red Sea and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, maritime transport and the flow of goods and energy to the Zionist regime encountered interruptions. The United States, being a key supporter of the Zionist regime, declared that a US warship and several American commercial ships were attacked in the Red Sea. Western governments felt the impact of Yemeni resistance, with the French transportation group CMA CGM announcing the suspension of its maritime transport. Furthermore, the UK reported that one of its ships, crossing the Red Sea, was hit by a missile. Yemen conducted a skillful and diplomatic operation against ships heading to Zionist ports; despite the attacks, no ships were sunk, and the crews faced no serious harm except in self-defense. As a result, major global shipping organizations advised ship owners to avoid this perilous maritime region, leading to a 50% reduction in ship movements through the Babel-Mandeb Strait. Additionally, the Qatari government-owned energy company halted the transportation of liquefied natural gas through the Red Sea. This dealt another blow to the Zionist regime in the maritime trade sector.

Yemen's recent actions have stirred hope across Islamic nations. The Yemeni people's support for the Palestinian cause has garnered remarkable popularity and backing in West Asia, as reported by the Times of Israel. On the flip side, the prospect of a bright future for the Zionist regime appears doubtful, with analysts cautioning that its image and global standing have dwindled. Even if it pursues victory in this crisis (which is far from taking place), it's suggested that it might result in a "pyrrhic victory."