

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran rejects  
'unilateral'  
GCC statement  
on Arash gas  
field

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani rejected 'unilateral' statements by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on the Arash gas field. Kanaani said that Iran has repeatedly announced its principled position on the matter based on international law. The GCC Ministerial Council made claims about the Persian Gulf Arash natural gas field, which Iran shares with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. It alleged that only the two Arab countries have the right to exploit natural resources from the field. "Making one-sided claims will not create any rights for the claimant. We have emphasized the continuation of technical and legal negotiations with the Kuwaiti authorities," he added. "Raising such issues in unilateral statements is not acceptable at all."

Majority of  
voters think  
Biden too old  
to be effective  
president:  
Poll

A majority of voters in the US believe Joe Biden is just too old to be an effective president, according to a new poll by the New York Times and Siena College. According to the poll's results, 73% of all registered voters believe Biden is too old to be effective, in turn revealing spreading concerns about the 81-year-old president's mental competency, The Guardian reported. The results of the wide-ranging poll, which were first released on Friday, are the latest blow to Biden's election campaign.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

Resignations over Gaza war  
rock Israeli army

Gaza 'powder keg' could spark wider war: UN

## International Desk

Many high-ranking officials have resigned from the Israeli army spokesperson's team due to the ongoing war in Gaza, according to the Israeli media, as UN human rights warned that the war is a "powder keg" with the potential to spark broader conflict in the Middle East. On Sunday, Israeli Channel 14 reported that "The second-in-command in Daniel Hagari's team, Moran Katz, along with many high-ranking officials have submitted their resignations in light of the Gaza conflict".

"The retiring officials also include Gen. Richard Heshit, the Israeli army's spokesperson for foreign media affairs," Anadolu Agency quoted the channel as saying. Israeli reports in recent months have highlighted deep-seated disputes between the cabinet and the army regarding the regime's management of the war and its post-war strategy in Gaza.

Israel has launched a deadly offensive on the Gaza Strip following a cross-border incursion by the Palestinian resistance group Hamas on Oct. 7, 2023. The ensuing

Israeli bombardment has killed 30,410 people and injured 71,700 others with mass destruction and shortages of necessities.

## 'Powder keg'

UN human rights chief Volker Turk said Monday that the Gaza war is a "powder keg" with the potential to spark broader conflict in the Middle East, UN human rights chief Volker Turk said Monday, AFP reported. Turk said it was imperative to take all possible measures to avoid a wider conflagration.

"The war in Gaza has already generated dangerous spillover in neighboring countries," he said in his global update to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

"I am deeply concerned that in this powder keg, any spark could lead to a much broader conflagration. This would have implications for every country in the Middle East and many beyond it." He said that overlapping emergencies made the specter of spillover conflict very real, and cited the examples of Yemen and Lebanon as places where the Gaza war is having a wider effect. "The military escalation in southern Lebanon



between Israel, Hezbollah and other armed groups is extremely worrying," Turk said.

The UN high commissioner for human rights said almost 200 people had been killed in Lebanon and some 90,000 internally displaced. There was also extensive damage to health facilities, schools and vital infrastructure.

"Incidents in which civilians, including children, paramedics and journalists,

have been killed in attacks must be fully investigated," said Turk.

Some 80,000 people have also been displaced from areas in northern Israel along the country's border with Lebanon, he added. Yemen's military forces have been targeting Israeli-linked ships in Red Sea in support of Palestinians. The US, Israel's key ally, has led reprisal strikes on Houthi targets in Yemen in a bid to quash the attacks.

Turk said the Houthi attacks had not only disrupted global maritime trade but had driven up the price of goods, which has had a significant impact on developing countries.

## Truce talks

Meanwhile, mediators and Hamas envoys have made "significant progress" towards a truce in Gaza, Egyptian state-linked TV reported Monday as the talks in Cairo entered a second

day. Egypt, Qatar and the US have been pushing for a cease-fire in the almost five-month-old war, with the latest proposal calling for a six-week halt to fighting and prisoner release.

Raisi: Iran needs no global power  
to ensure its security

President Ebrahim Raisi said Iran's security is "en-

ogenous"; the Islamic Republic does not rely on

any global power to ensure its national security. Raisi made the remarks in an address to the graduation ceremony for cadets studying in the academies of Iran's Armed Forces, which was held in Imam Hassan al-Mujtaba University of Officer and Police Training in Tehran on Monday, Press TV reported.

He said, Iran's security stems from the presence of people in various scenes and from aware-

ness, awakening, and vigilance and the presence of the armed forces.

"Our security does not depend on other countries and conventional powers in the world," the president asserted.

He argued that security is Iran's most vital need, as he pledged to strengthen the defense prowess of the country.

"Defense power, economic stability and cultural capability are three important components of

national strength," Raisi emphasized.

He added that the enemy is hell-bent on hindering the Iranian nation's progress through acts of sabotage, sanctions and threats, but Iranians are resolute on moving in the path of development.

"In this war of wills, the will of the great Iranian nation has achieved victory so far and it will continue to be victorious in the future," the president stated.

He said the Iranian nation's presence in various scenes and its accountability have foiled all the enemies' plots over the past 45 years.

Elsewhere in his address,

Raisi noted that the United States and the Israeli regime have the most despised armed forces in the world, emphasizing that Palestine and Gaza are now the leading issues of humanity.

Israel waged its genocidal war on the besieged Gaza in October, after the Palestinian Hamas resistance group carried out Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

Israel has so far killed at least 30,534 Palestinians, mostly women and children, while injuring 71,920 others.

Israeli attack on Lebanon will ignite  
new version of 2006 war: Hezbollah

The Lebanese Hezbollah resistance movement has warned that any Israeli act of aggression against the Arab country would ignite an advanced version of the 33-day war fought in the summer of 2006, when the occupying regime suffered a humiliating defeat.

"The Zionist enemy continues to threaten us with military aggression, and we respond by means of steadfastness, resistance, and retaliatory strikes," Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem

said on Monday. "We, hereby, declare that if they commit a foolish act and attack our territories, there would then be a new version of the 2006 July war," he said at the sixth International Conference for the Union of Resistance Scholars in Beirut. Sheikh Qassem also cast doubts on Western calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, describing them as theatrical and deceitful.

He underlined that Hezbollah conducts operations against Israeli military out-

posts in the 1948 occupied territories in retaliation for the bloody aggression against Gazans, out of its humanitarian and religious duties towards the oppressed Palestinian nation.

For his part, Osama Hamdan, a senior representative of Hamas in Lebanon, stated that Arab and Muslim nations are duty-bound to join forces and frustrate the Israeli regime's policy of intentionally starving Palestinians in Gaza.

"Our people have withstood the ongoing Israeli aggres-

sion against Gaza for the last 150 days through unwavering resilience and unshakable determination. Gaza-based resistance factions conducted Operation Al-Aqsa Storm at the time when the occupying regime was about to liquidate the Palestinian cause and resistance front."

He stressed that the Axis of Resistance reintroduced the Palestinian issue as the primary concern of the Muslim world, foiled fiendish US plots, and reiterated that it is impossible to coexist with the usurping Tel Aviv regime.