

## Real impact of Iran's strike yet to be seen



By Mehdi Sa'adati

*Iranian lawmaker*

**OPINION**  
**EXCLUSIVE**

In the midst of the behind-the-scenes negotiations between Israel's supporters and Iran to stave off Iran's retaliatory measures against the Zionist regime, they agreed to broker a cease-fire deal in the Gaza Strip on the condition that Iran refrained from striking back at Israel. However, in reality, they were not forthright in their remarks; their true intention was to steer Iran away from retaliating against Israel's earlier raid on Iran's consulate in Syria.

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# Warning on Strategic Mistake

## Raisi vows severe response to any Israeli strike

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*Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (c) observes a military parade on the occasion of the National Army Day in the capital Tehran, Iran, on April 17, 2024.*  
● MOSTAFA ROUDAKI/MIZAN

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran's annual steel production tops 32m tons: **ISPA**



**IRNA** – Iran's major steel companies produced 32 million tons of steel products in the previous Iranian year (March, 21, 2023 to March 19, 2024), showing a 5.5 percent hike compared to a year earlier.

This is the highest production volume in the steel history of the country, according to the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA).

Earlier, the World Steel Association (WSA) reported that Iran registered the highest rate of crude steel production growth in January 2024.

China, India, Japan, the United States, Russia, South Korea, Turkey, Germany, Iran and Brazil were the 1st to 10th leading steel producers in the world in January 2024, respectively.

Iran to inaugurate major water project in Sri Lanka



**TASNIM** – Iran will inaugurate the "Uma Oya" multipurpose project in Sri Lanka in the near future.

This significant project will be launched in the presence of the presidents of the two countries.

The Uma Oya multipurpose project is located in the southeast of Sri Lanka, 200 km away from Colombo and includes two dams namely Dyaaba and Puhulpola and two major hydroelectric power plants each with a capacity of 60 megawatts.

The 'Uma Oya' multipurpose project is regarded as one of the greatest technical and engineering service projects of Iranian companies in Sri Lanka.

The purpose of the project is to improve the irrigation of 5,000 hectares of agricultural land, transferring 145 million cubic meters of water and generating 290 GW/h of power in a year.

One of the important features of the Uma Oya project is its scattered and diverse components.

# Oil minister: Unfinished projects worth over \$28b completed

Iran's oil minister said on Wednesday unfinished projects worth more than \$28 billion were completed in the Iranian year of 1402 (ended March 19).

Talking to reporters, Javad Owji added the completion of the projects led to the surge in production in oil, gas, refining, and petrochemical industries and the registration of an economic growth of over 20 percent in the oil and gas sectors, Shana reported.

The Oil Ministry made effective investments during the year-long period, said the top official, pointing out that new investments in partially finished oil projects have been included in a comprehensive plan with the aim of boosting production this year. On Tuesday, Iran's Plan and Budget Organization (PBO) chief said the Oil Ministry has managed to thwart the sanctions aimed at limiting the country's oil production and sales in the international market.

Speaking in a joint press conference with Seyyed Ehsan Khandouzi, the government's economic spokesman, Davoud Manzour added oil is no longer stored in tankers and the amount the country produces has been already marketed.

In addition, Iran's gas exports have considerably increased when compared to the sales before the current administration,



said the official, adding the incumbent government has given top priority to oil and gas exports.

The current administration has tried to bring Iran's oil production and exports closer to

pre-sanctions volumes since it took office in August 2021, said Manzour, adding the country is now producing over 3.5 million barrels of crude oil and gas condensates a day while the figure stood at 2.2 million barrels per

day (bpd) in the first half of the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (starting March 21, 2021).

Iran's oil production in the pre-sanctions era amounted to 3.8m bpd, continued the vice president, concluding that the

government plans to boost the daily output by 100,000 to 200,000 barrels this year as it is seeking to make the maximum use of the oil and gas sectors' capacities for domestic development.

## US struggles in imposing further sanctions on Iran



By Reza  
Abesh Ahmadlou  
Staff writer

### PERSPECTIVE

Recent efforts by the US to impose additional sanctions on Iran have faced significant challenges and yielded mixed results, highlighting a complex web of political, economic, and diplomatic factors at play.

Over the years, the US has illegally imposed a wide range of sanctions on Iran, targeting areas such as nuclear energy, and crude oil.

Despite the existing sanctions regime, the US has faced challenges in imposing additional sanctions on Iran. One key obstacle has been the lack of international support for unilateral American actions, with countries like Russia, China, and European allies expressing unwillingness to further sanctions on Iran.

Following the recent Iranian drone attack against Israel, the US House of Representatives has announced to vote on bills toughening sanctions on Iran, including one aimed at reducing Chinese imports of Iranian crude oil. The bills include the so-called Iran-China Energy Sanctions Act of 2023, which was unanimously approved by the House Financial Services Committee in November.

The bill proposes to "impose restrictions on correspondent and payable-through accounts in the United States with respect to Chinese financial institutions that conduct transactions involv-

ing the purchase of petroleum or petroleum products from Iran."

The bill expands secondary sanctions involving Iran "to cover all transactions between Chinese financial institutions and sanctioned Iranian banks that transact for the purchase of petroleum and petroleum products."

Despite US sanctions on Iranian oil over its nuclear program, its exports of crude are soaring. Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes.

Former US president Donald Trump reinstated US sanctions on Iran's oil in 2018 after pulling out of an international deal on Tehran's nuclear program. The Biden administration has sought to crack down on evasion of those measures with sanctions against companies in China, the United Arab Emirates and elsewhere.

The possible effect on gasoline prices is one reason Biden, a Democrat, may not move strongly to curb Iran's oil exports.

The background of the bill says that Iran's crude oil exports are at a four-year high of 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd), 80% of which go to China's independent

refiners, the so-called teapots.

China has been a major buyer of Iranian crude as it has brushed off all Western sanctions on Iranian, Russian, or Venezuelan oil exports so far.

The effectiveness of sanctions as a tool of pressure has been called into question, as Iran has shown resilience in the face of economic pressure and has adapted its strategies to circumvent sanctions through illicit networks and alternative trading partners.

The failure to secure broader international backing for increased sanctions on Iran has strained US relations with key allies and partners, highlighting divisions within the international community over how to address Iran's behavior. The US's unilateral approach has raised concerns about the effectiveness of its foreign policy and its ability to achieve its desired outcomes.

The failure to achieve desired political objectives through economic pressure alone has led to a reassessment of the efficacy of sanctions as a tool of statecraft and diplomacy will be crucial in shaping the future of US-Iran relations and regional stability.



## Over 2,000 trade, economic firms to partake in Iran Expo 2024



Iran's minister of industry, mine and trade said more than 2,000 trade and economic companies will participate in the 6th Export Potentials Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran dubbed 'Iran Expo 2024'. Speaking on the sidelines of a meeting held in the presence of the Iranian members of the Parliament on Wednesday, Abbas Aliabadi said over 2,000 economic enterprises will showcase their latest achievements and products at the exhibition.

The exhibition is an appropriate opportunity for the domestic producers to display their latest products and achievements to both domestic and foreign visitors, he stated.

More than 70 ministers, prime ministers and presidents have been invited to the 6th exhibition of the export potentials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he said, adding that an Africa and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference will also be held on the side-

lines of the exhibition.

In addition, business-to-business (B2B) meetings will be held between the domestic and foreign traders, which are likely to lead to the conclusion of the trade contracts, Aliabadi underscored. The 6th Export Potentials Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds from April 27 to May 1, 2024.

Iran Expo is an international trade event aiming to help companies to export their products, develop new markets, and promote their industries by serving as a platform for trade and commerce in the Islamic Republic of Iran, regarding the importance of non-oil export position. Iran Expo aims to develop economic relations between Iran and other countries. It targets key sectors and industries which are known to be the producers of high-quality products for export and have more potential for different investments.



A palm grove in Bam  
markazirss.ir



Dehbakri village  
jaazma.com

# Hidden marvels of Kerman Province: Bam Citadel to Dehbakri and Jiroft



Bam Citadel  
IRNA

## Iranica Desk

*If you are a fan of wandering, exploring, or simply enjoying natural attractions, then Kerman Province is a destination not to be missed. Described as a region of deserts, and oases, and renowned for tropical products like pistachios and dates, Kerman offers more than meets the eye. Despite recent droughts, the province boasts roaring rivers and experiences all four seasons in a single day, making it a true land of hidden wonders. Each part of Kerman Province has its unique charm and attractions, making it a diverse and captivating destination. For instance, the southern region of Kerman Province, including cities like Bardsir, Rabor, Baft, Lalehzar, Jiroft, and Kahnuj, as well as the southeast with the historical gem of Bam, offers equally, if not more, enticing attractions compared to the northern provinces.*

Following the spring rains this year, nature and the skies in Kerman Province have collaborated to reveal the breathtaking beauty of creation, showcasing a rare spectacle of natural wonders. In the southeast of Kerman Province, the historical city of Bam, with its remarkable landscapes, stands out as a must-see destination that captivates visitors with its beauty and historical significance.

Bam is often remembered by Iranians for the tragic earthquake of 2003. While this sad event remains etched in our memories, it's important to recognize that there is more to Bam than this unfortunate incident. The city boasts stunning date palm groves that spread across its landscape, nourished by flowing aqueducts. These picturesque palm groves, which envelop the southeastern city, serve as a major tourist attraction, whether you choose to ad-

mire them from the heights of the historic citadel or prefer strolling through the city streets on foot.

Despite its location in the Lut Desert, Bam benefits from its strategic position near the mountains of Kerman and the southeastern highlands, which have enabled the creation of ample water resources for this desert valley. This unique positioning also contributes to a moderated climate, ideal for cultivating dates and citrus fruits. Dates and oranges have been prized agricultural products in Iran and globally since ancient times.

In addition to these agricultural treasures, the warm and hospitable nature of the people of Bam, coupled with their skilled straw handicrafts, add to the city's charm. If you are fortunate enough to experience the refreshing scent of spring rain revitalizing the parched desert soil with the aroma of fresh water and earth, the scenes in this

beautiful city may enchant you, allowing you to relish the joy of being in this land once more.

Walking amidst the melody of spring rain under the shade of palm trees, symbolic of life and resilience, is an experience that transcends mere words on paper, offering a profound sense of connection with nature and the spirit of Bam.

The iconic imagery associated with the city of Bam often features a landscape adorned with verdant palm groves, amidst which stands a majestic structure in hues of soil and clay, resembling a gem set in a ring. This structure is none other than the renowned Bam Citadel, recognized as the largest and oldest adobe building globally.

Listed as one of Iran's cultural heritage sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the Bam Citadel holds significant historical importance as a key site along the Silk Road. Originating from the Sassanian era, this ar-

chitectural marvel sits atop an artificial hill in the northwest quadrant of the ancient city of Bam.

Positioned at a pivotal juncture of the Silk Road and pathways leading to Central Asia, the Persian Gulf, and Egypt, the Bam Citadel suffered substantial damage, with approximately 80% of its structure ravaged by the 2003 earthquake. However, the silver lining lies in the fact that over half of the citadel has been meticulously reconstructed and is now open to the public for exploration.

While thoughts of Bam may evoke images of warmth, deserts, and palm groves, these elements only scratch the surface of the city's diverse realities. Merely a brief 30-minute journey reveals the striking contrasts of nature within this compact region.

Located 55 kilometers southwest of Bam, a village known as Dehbakri offers a stark departure from Bam's familiar

landscape, save for the shared accent of its residents. Serving as a summer retreat, Dehbakri unveils a glimpse of the enchanting paradise nestled within southeastern Kerman and Iran. Few places worldwide offer the juxtaposition of desert, mountains, forests, and rivers within such a short distance, underscoring Kerman's status as a land of hidden marvels.

Journeying from Dehbakri to Jiroft, the primary agricultural hub of Kerman Province and Iran, unveils a tapestry of natural wonders. Amidst towering mountains, crystal-clear rivers twist through the terrain, painting a picture of serene beauty. Despite challenges such as reduced water flow from the Halil Rud River due to factors like low rainfall, drought, and unchecked dam construction, the allure of this region remains intact for intrepid travelers with a penchant for exploring Iran's diverse geography.

Although the Roman and Sassanid emperors used terms such as "restoration" in their approach to the past, a better description of the process is appropriation and innovation, even in situations where there was a strong and continuous sense of the past. Discourse, either textual or verbal, was certainly a keystone in late antique attempts to shape and make sense of the past, yet the sovereigns translated these discursive claims into more tangible expressions for themselves, their court, and the people.

While oral histories and historical texts kept the memory of the past alive, the Sassanid and Roman sovereigns, actually experienced the past — and their place and identity in the present in relation to it — spatially and practically. In other words, certain spaces, structures, and practices functioned as sites of memory for the two realms; that is, they facilitated a vital and compelling experience of the past.

In interacting with them, the sovereigns could manipulate how their societies experienced the past in the present as well as how future generations might remember the past. Although, from a distance, the Ro-

mans and Sassanids used broadly similar ritual-visual techniques to create appropriate sites of memory, the two realms' conceptions of the past diverged. The Romans had a strong linear sense of history, supported both by pagan Roman historians with their concept of eternal Rome and by Christian authors with their focus on history's eventual goal of Christ's Second Coming.

The Sassanids understood themselves to descend from a venerable line of ancestors, some of whom might be classified as historical whereas others existed in the realm of mythology. The early Sassanids understood the Achaemenids to be the last of the mythical Kayanid dynasty and cultivated their relationship with them as it connected them to the ancient Avestan past and was a useful polemic in chipping away the legitimacy of the Arsacids.

In the late fifth century the Avestan conception of the past gained ascendancy and won legitimacy among eastern Iranian peoples as their empire expanded into Central and South Asia, the Sassanid kings became more interested in foregrounding Avestan aspects of their "history" and elaborated connections between

themselves and the larger mythical history of the eastern Iranian tradition.

At this time the Sassanids began to adopt the names and titles of the mythical Kayanid dynasty, such as Kosrow, supplementing names of Old Persian derivation, such as Ardeshir. However, in the later centuries of the empire, the figure of Ardeshir I again resurfaced as an ideal king, and many deeds and witticisms attributed to him show up in several "mirrors for princes."

The question of whether the Sassanids understood themselves to be the successors of the Achaemenids has been the subject of much debate over the last two decades, and the divergent conclusions from that debate have been brought to recent work on both the Sassanid monarchy and their relationship with Rome. As a result, equally divergent arguments have been advanced about the extent of the Sassanids' and Romans' understanding of their position in history and about the effects of the past on contemporary relations. However, it is just as important to consider the question of the Sassanid's relationship with Achaemenid sites and visual culture.

## Roman and Sassanid approaches to the past



Palace of Ardeshir, a Sassanid king, in Firouzabad, Fars Province  
HAMED YEGANEH/SHUTTERSTOCK

The above is a lightly edited version of part of a chapter entitled, "The Lure of the Other and the Limits of the Past", from a book entitled, "The Two Eyes of the Earth", written by Matthew P. Vanepa, published by the University of California Press.

Despite what American Left may want

# Biden will continue his support for Israel



By Henry Olsen  
Senior fellow at Ethics & Public Policy Center

## OPINION

Iran's brazen attack on Israel was thwarted, but it remains unclear if Israel will retaliate.

President Joe Biden purportedly warned Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu not to, telling him to "take the win" instead. This has raised the hopes of some in his party that Biden can prevail on Israel to restrain its response, and that he might even break with Netanyahu if his request goes unheeded.

That is extremely unlikely. Biden is a very unpopular president and needs all the support he can muster. It's clear that both within his own Democratic Party and among voters at large, Biden ultimately will have to back Israel even if it launches an attack that Biden doesn't like.



US President Joe Biden (C) listens to members of Chabad Jewish movement during his visit to Florida in July 2021.

It's easy to see why when one looks at polls. A recent New York Times/Siena College poll taken right before Iran's attack found that American likely voters backed Israel over the Palestinians in their ongoing dispute by a nearly 2-1 margin.

That result is heavily tilted by Trump backers' heavy support for Israel, but roughly a quarter of Biden's voters and 23 percent of those who currently back other candidates also favour Israel over the Palestinians. Cutting off aid or backing away from Israel after it has been assaulted by Iran — a nation widely viewed unfavourably across the American political spectrum — would risk alienating people he needs to beat Trump.

That's particularly true among the Jewish population. Much has been made of the influence Arab voters can wield in marginal Michigan.

But Jewish voters wield greater influence

in many more swing states. They comprised three percent of Arizona's, Nevada's, and Pennsylvania's 2020 voters, and two percent of Georgia's.

Jews even outnumbered Muslims in Arab-heavy Michigan. Biden will not risk losing Jewish votes in five key states to placate Arabs in one.

This is a political explanation for why Biden has continued to provide military aid to Israel during the Gaza war despite his regular statements and insinuations that he wants the war to stop.

Jewish Democrats in America tend to be anti-Netanyahu and would prefer to see Israel prevail over Hamas without causing the civilian casualties its current effort has produced.

But they will not countenance cutting off supply to Israel, even if that means sustaining the invasion they largely deplore. Cutting Israel's lifeline is simply not something

they will countenance, and Biden knows it. Biden thus faces the opposite domestic political situation of nearly every major European leader: YouGov polled seven Western European countries about citizens' views regarding Israel and the Palestinians.

Prior to Hamas's October 7 attack, respondents in every country either marginally favoured the Palestinians or were roughly neutral. Support for Israel soared in the wake of the massacres but started to wane as Israel launched its invasion. Six months into a war with little end in sight, it's doubtful pro-Israel attitudes have remained as high.

European leaders also have to deal with much larger Muslim populations than does the United States.

The Pew Research Center estimated in 2017 that Muslims comprised between five and nine percent of the population in Britain, Germany, France, and other rich

Northern European nations. That share is surely higher today given migration and differentials in birth rates and mortality.

By contrast, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research estimated in 2020 that Jews did not comprise even as much as one percent of the population in any of these European nations.

Biden's political sweet spot lies in convincing Israel to unilaterally halt conflicts that threaten to embroil the US in broader, more public, and potentially controversial support.

He has largely failed thus far in Gaza, although one could say his pressure has slowed down an Israeli invasion of Rafah. It's even less likely he will succeed on Iran, especially when the normally hawkish Israeli public opinion is taken into account.

Indeed, Biden is not the only national leader leaking to the media. Israeli opposition leader Benny Gantz, who joined Netanya-

hu's war cabinet in a show of national unity soon after October 7, reportedly wanted to strike Iran immediately after its attack ceased. When Netanyahu is the dove in the war cabinet, it's clear Biden will not get his wish.

And that brings us back to Biden's dilemma. He's between the rock of Arab and progressive opinion, which wants to move America away from Israel, and the hard place of Jewish and moderate opinion, which wants America to stand behind its ally.

When push comes to shove, Biden will have to go along with the majority, no matter how much he wishes he did not have to make that choice. The alternative — endangering an already uphill re-election battle — is not an option he'll entertain.

The article first appeared on Brussels Signal.

## Price of keeping Netanyahu in power too high



By Michael Burteigh  
Senior fellow at LSE Ideas

## OPINION

It does not bode well when extremist members of the Israeli or Iranian governments recommend "going crazy" as a policy gambit toward the other. The result would be a major war in the Middle East, the immediate effect of which would be to send the price of oil through the roof were the Straits of Hormuz to be blocked in addition to ongoing problems in the Red Sea — problems that Western intervention has made worse.

Iran conjured up that prospect last week by landing Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commandos on an Israeli-owned container ship which was taken back to Iran after "maritime infractions". Each discreet event contributes to the final jigsaw. After Israel assassinated two IRGC generals in Iran's Damascus consulate on April 1, Iran's Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei publicly and repeatedly committed his country to an armed response. He did this at filmed mass rallies. No resiling there then.

But the eventual Iranian response on Saturday was carefully announced in advance (even to the US via their Swiss diplomatic surrogates), with about 300 projectiles crossing the region towards targets in Israel. Flying at about 100mph, the primitive drones took six hours to arrive on targets, which did not include major

cities like Haifa or Tel Aviv. Ninety-nine percent of all Iranian projectiles were downed either by allies (US, Jordanian, and UK ships and planes) or by Israel's own multi-layered anti-missile defences. The only (non-fatal) casualty was a seven-year-old Bedouin child, though a couple of military bases received trivial damage. Both sides can claim a win. Israel showed the resilience of its pan-regional Middle East Air Defence, and would have been pleased with the alacrity with which countries that have been critical of its Gaza campaign of late stepped up to militarily support her. The allies seemed to overlook the fact that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had not given them any advance warning of the Damascus strike, which touched off this latest cycle of violence in the first place.

Even better, from Netanyahu's point of

view, the allies swiftly exchanged their moralising crocodile tears about war crimes in Gaza for collective ingestion of the crudest Israeli propaganda about Iran and all its works. Just listen to how an allegedly stern critic of Israeli war-making like Lord Cameron sounded like any old Iran hawk on Radio 4's Today programme.

But just because very few of Iran's projectiles got through does not mean that Iran can't book some profits too. Technically, it may now have a better understanding of where Israel's anti-missile defences are deployed, and how to overwhelm them in a bigger swarming attack. Iran's spokesmen keep stressing that Israel had to expend \$1bn in expensive American munitions to stop drones, which are like flying lawnmowers and are as cheap as chips. It has also altered the rules in

the shadow war that has been waged for decades. Any further Israeli assassinations of IRGC personnel — or engineers and scientists — will trigger a direct response from Iran against Israel itself.

There was also a clear warning that any nation that aids and abets such activities will also be struck — a clear signal to the US, which has a lot of military bases around the Middle East. No wonder that Joe Biden has explicitly warned Israel not to escalate this current bout further, up to and including stating that if Israel achieves a larger war with Iran, the US won't be facilitating it. That is crucial since without US aerial refuelling tankers, Israeli pilots won't be returning home after bombing Iranian nuclear sites.

Reaching Fordow or Natanz is not like hitting such a target in Syria or Iraq. Is-

# Britain has no business intervening in war in Gaza

So why did it defend Israel against Iran?



By Simon Jenkins  
Columnist, BBC  
broadcaster

## OPINION

*Britain's use of its air force to defend Israel against Iran at the weekend was an emphatic intervention in the war in Gaza. It was more than Britain has done for Ukraine. And while the war in Ukraine does at least have implications, albeit distant, for Britain's long-term defence, Israel's dispute with Gaza has none. It is not Britain's business. So, why did we get involved? Better by far to stick to Britain's sensible decision to keep open a diplomatic presence in Tehran, at least more influential than a few downed drones.*

The answer shone through in the remarks of the Foreign Secretary David Cameron to the BBC on Monday morning. He could not resist reverting to Britain's one-time role as police officers to the world, telling it how Britain expects it to behave. The eagerness of British leaders to cut a dash on the world stage, usually on the coat-tails of the US, seems irresistible. In the past decade, it has sent the Royal Navy to the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and the South China Sea. This craving seems to be resisted by most other European powers (France being occasionally an exception), who sense no similar threat to their security. Britain has a craving to project "global power" that is unrivalled by most other European powers. It is costing British taxpayers billions of pounds. The war in Gaza is a

tragedy for all concerned. It arose from history, geography, politics, and religion, from a long-standing conflict. It is a classic of what modern strategists such as Sir Rupert Smith have called "wars among the peoples". These are not confrontations of weaponry against weaponry. The "utility of war" has shifted to one of people against people, of cities, crowds, streets, houses. There are no rules of engagement or laws of war, only an awful asymmetry of death. Civilians are its chief casualties and humanitarians the chief heroes.

These wars rarely concern outsiders. As now in Sudan, Yemen, Syria, and Myanmar, they concern authority over territory. Yet they acquire an awful appeal to vain outsiders. They drew Cameron into Libya and tried to draw him into Syria. They embedded Tony Blair for years in Afghanistan and Iraq. Even the most tenuous supposed

"threat to British security" — such as Iraq's ludicrous threat to Cyprus — will suffice. Gordon Brown said, when he was in Afghanistan, that it was to keep the streets of Britain safe. The game is merely to find an excuse to intervene. I have lost count of how many times I am told we must fight to fend off a third world war. It is the new battle cry of the warmongers.

There is no question of the widespread involvement of Russia, China, and Iran in local conflicts that inevitably break out across the world. It can be seen in Syria and Gaza, and from central Africa to Latin America. There is every reason for Western nations to discuss how to react to this, as there is for them to seek peace in Israel. Intervening to prolong war cannot be the way to do it.

*The article first appeared on The Guardian.*



The photo shows an RAF Typhoon, the model of the fighter jet used to shoot down Iranian drones heading to Israel.  
REUTERS

rael should also be careful especially if planes have to overfly Turkey, which bristles with anti-aircraft defences. The Russians might also have something to say if they fly over Syria to bomb Iran. Then, there is Jordan, which enabled the IDF to fly into its airspace and downed a few drones itself. There are huge regular Muslim Brotherhood protests about Gaza outside the Israeli embassy in Amman, together with calls to break off trade with Israel and indeed the 1994 Wadi Araba Treaty. What if Iran managed to extend its Axis of Resistance to the Israel-Jordan border, as some including the Saudis fear?

While Netanyahu's war cabinet ponders if and how to retaliate against Iran, without deranging the allied support it has just received, the campaign in Gaza grinds on at lesser intensity. But Netanyahu has not achieved his objectives there. As long as Yahya Sinwar and his fellow Hamas leaders and some thousands of their fighters remain alive, Netanyahu cannot declare victory. As long as that re-

mains the case, Sinwar can maintain that, despite losses, Hamas has survived. While Netanyahu probably realises that his long-time goal of America finishing a war with Iran that he starts will elude him, he also has people like his Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir urging him to go for the kill against Hamas (and Hezbollah, too). That makes it all too likely that Netanyahu will launch a final assault on remnant Hamas in Rafah, since a full-blown invasion of southern Lebanon would revive too many old ghosts, including the costly draw that ensued in 2006. In that sense, the threat from Tehran is useful since Israel's Western allies will swallow their crocodile tears and let him get away with it.

Anyone serious about restoring peace in this region may have to undergo a fundamental rethink.

Until the West has the guts to tell Israelis to move beyond Netanyahu — whose only policy is perpetual war — up to and including restricting arms sales, there is little prospect of a meaningful cease-fire

in Gaza, or indeed avoidance of war with Iran. The war in Gaza is the key to why Iran and its confederates are fighting on multiple fronts. To pretend otherwise is frankly delusory.

The US and Britain have very live memories of rushing into costly wars in places they do not understand, wars that became massively unpopular at home, too. Getting involved in a bigger Israeli war with Iran would be a disaster for Biden and Rishi Sunak — a real case of the tail wagging the dog — not least because of the economic ill-effects but also because it would expose their blatant double standards in apparently giving a "democratic" rogue state carte blanche to do what it likes.

No war is going to rescue Sunak from his fate, but in Biden's case, another war in the Middle East would probably guarantee the election of Trump in his isolationist peace-maker mode. That would be some price to pay to keep Netanyahu in power.

*The article first appeared on iNews.*

# Labour — money for bombs and guns, not the NHS

By Thomas Foster  
Columnist

## OPINION

*Labour is once again proving itself as a reliable backer of imperialism. Keir Starmer — Labour leader — described his commitment to nuclear weapons as "unshakable" and "absolute" in an article he wrote for the Daily Mail last Thursday.*

*And in an interview with the i newspaper on the same day, Starmer said Labour will aim to raise Britain's defence spending to 2.5 percent of Britain's total production "as soon as resources allow".*

*It currently sits at 2.1 percent of gross domestic production (GDP). What this means is ramping up arms spending at a time when ordinary people are struggling.*

On top of this, after Iran's retaliation against Israel, Starmer said that Labour "continue to stand up for Israel's security," condemning "the Iranian regime's decision to subject Israelis to these unacceptable attacks".

Headed, "Our thoughts are with all those in the region who want peace and security, not the fear and instability by Iran."

There was no mention of Israel's initial bombing of an Iranian embassy in Damascus, Syria, or a condemnation of Israel's ongoing slaughter of Palestinians.

It is Israel's political, economic, and military ambitions that lead to instability. Starmer, with his support for Israel and Britain's military, is siding with our imperialist ruling class.

Labour has committed to a "nuclear deterrent triple lock", committing to building the next generation of Dreadnought-type nuclear submarines, to continuing Britain's sea nuclear deterrent, and promising to deliver all future upgrades.

The cost of this is tremendous. Britain's nuclear weapons programme costs £3 billion a year to run and an estimated £205 billion to renew by 2030. And increasing arms spending to 2.5 percent of GDP will cost £16.5 billion a year.

But Starmer rolled back on spending £28 billion a year on climate investments and



Labour leader Keir Starmer (R) and Shadow Defence Secretary John Healey (2nd-R) visit the BAE Systems site housing nuclear submarines.  
FLICKR

refused to commit to free school meals or getting rid of the two-child benefit cap, claiming the policies were "too expensive". Yet there always seems to be a magic money tree for war.

In Starmer's article in the Daily Mail, almost every reference to Labour has the word "changed" before it — "my changed Labour Party is utterly committed to our nation's defence."

But Labour hasn't changed — it's keeping to its historical role as a party that props up the current imperialist system of economic, political, and military competition.

Even Starmer admits this, as he detailed in his article how Clement Attlee, Labour prime minister after the

Second World War, created an independent British nuclear programme after the Second World War.

And Starmer explains how Labour foreign secretary at the time — Ernest Bevin — was a key figure in establishing the NATO alliance, an imperialist alliance built on war. No matter what Starmer wants us to think, nuclear weapons and more military spending contribute to escalating rivalries and a global arms race.

What Starmer's latest statements show is Labour is not diverging from fueling Britain's war machine, all while ordinary people continue to suffer.

*The article first appeared on Socialist Worker.*



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) talks with his Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir (standing) in the Knesset.  
SHUTTERSTOCK

## Asian Wrestling Championships:

## Greco-Roman glory seals team title double for Iran

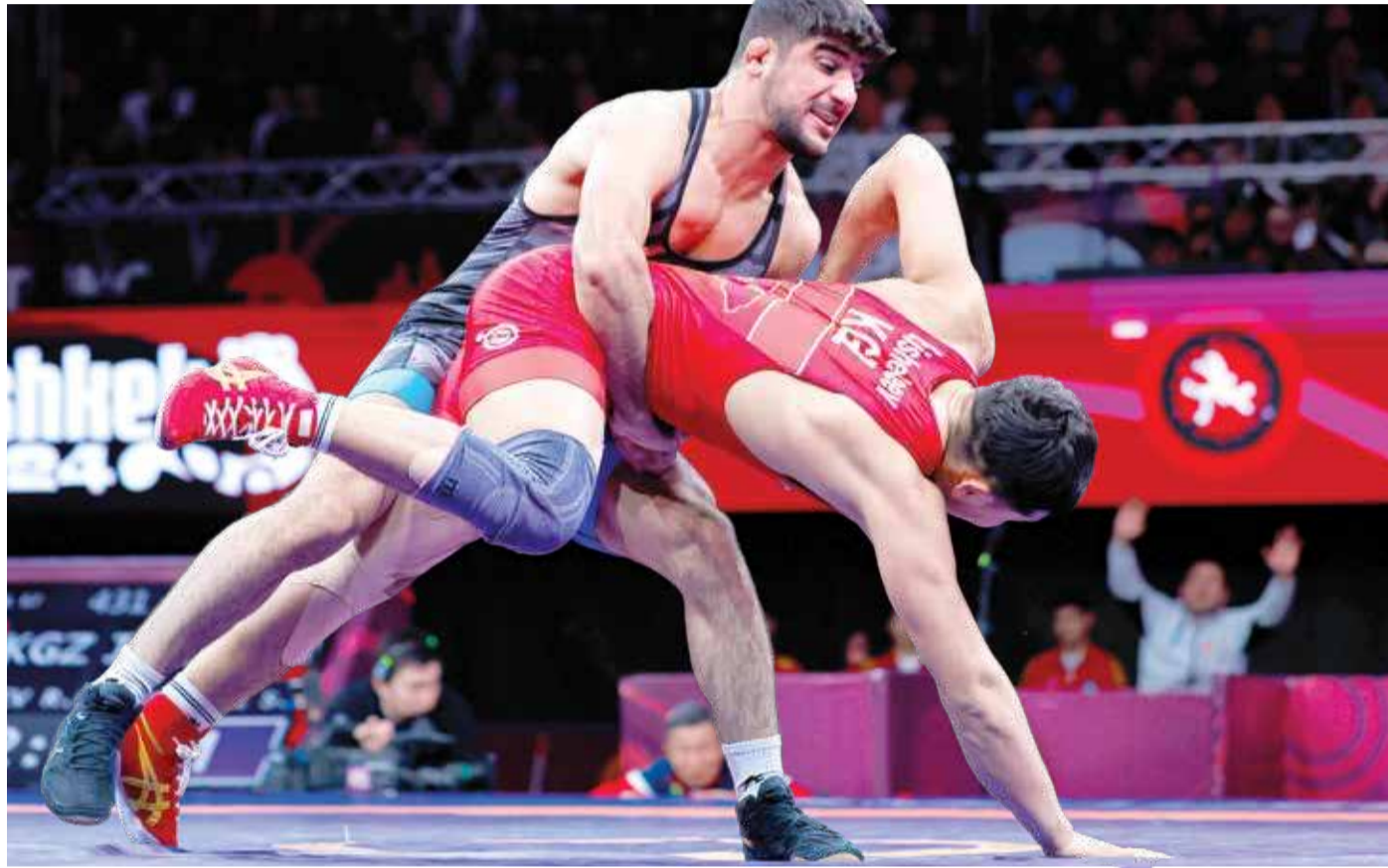
## Sports Desk

Nine medals, including four golds, across 10 weight classes saw Iran clinch the Greco-Roman crown at the Asian Wrestling Championships, completing the men's team title double in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Iran tallied 200 points for a fifth team trophy in six years, and Japan notched up 144 to pip the host to the runner-up spot by two points.

On Tuesday, Saeid Esmaili and Mohammad-Hadi Saravi rounded off an emphatic campaign by bagging double gold medals, while Mohammadreza Rostami and Rasoul Garmsiri had to settle for a couple of silvers after setbacks against Japanese oppositions in the final showpiece of their respective weight classes. Meanwhile, Amir-Reza Dehbozorgi was given a wrestling lesson by the host's reigning back-to-back world champion Zholaman Sharshenbekov in the semifinals, but managed to bounce back to defeat Ilkhom Bakhromov of Uzbekistan (9-0) to take a consolation bronze in the 60kg contests.

Stepping into the 67kg final on the back of three technical-fall victories, former world under-20 champion Esmaili came from behind to edge Kyrgyzstan's Razzak Beishekeev for his first Asian senior gold. The 21-year-old Iranian held out while on the bottom of par terre in the first period, but scored two in the second period with a good second effort when he was on top to silence the home crowd at the Bishkek Arena. Saravi, a winner of four world



Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Saeid Esmaili (blue) goes for a lift against Razzak Beishekeev of Kyrgyzstan in the 67kg final at the Asian Wrestling Championships in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on April 16, 2024.

● KOSTADIN ANDONOV/UWW

and Olympic medals, claimed his second 97kg gold in the competition in dominant fashion, cruising to the top podium without conceding a single point.

The Iranian outclassed Iussuf Matsiyev of Kazakhstan 9-0 in the final, thanks to a pair of gut wrenches from par terre, before a takedown-roll combination to see off the 2022 world U20 sil-

ver medalist in just under two minutes.

Saravi has now walked away with a medal in 16 consecutive international tournaments since 2019, all of which ended with victories – 11 golds and five bronzes – and is among the favorites for a podium finish in the upcoming Paris Olympics in the summer.

In the 72kg final, Rostami

thought he had done enough to beat Shingo Harada when he used a front headlock at par terre for a pair of rolls to go up 5-0, but the unheralded Japanese rolled the Iranian with a whizzer with two seconds left in the first period before making the most of his fatigue after the interval to win 9-5.

Garmsiri, meanwhile, was by far the second best against the

reigning world under-17 champion Taizo Yoshida in the 82kg showdown.

Leading 3-0 in the second period, Yoshida scored four with a reverse body lock throw and then stopped a front headlock roll attempt for another two points to end the bout at 5:31.

Tuesday's results came a day after the Iranians had won two golds as well as a silver and a bronze in

the Greco-Roman contests. World superheavyweight champion Amin Mirzazadeh proved to be in his own league at the continental level, defeating the 2018 world bronze medalist Kim Min-seok of South Korea 5-0 in the 130kg final.

Nasser Alizadeh continued his dominance in the Asian Championships with a 5-0 triumph over Kazakhstan's Nursultan Tursynov in the 87kg final – a fourth successive gold at the competition for the Iranian.

Pouya Dadmarz, a world bronze winner last year, took the 55kg silver after a shock technical-fall loss to North Korean Ro Yu-chol, while Iman Mohammadi recovered from a last-four setback against Japan's Ayata Suzuki to beat China's Tan Haodong 10-0 for the 63kg bronze.

Amir Abdi (77kg) was the only Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler to leave Bishkek empty-handed following a 4-3 defeat against Ibragim Magomadov of Kazakhstan in the bronze-medal contest. The Greco-Roman title followed Iran's freestyle silverware earlier in the Kyrgyz capital.

Rahman Amouzad (65kg), Amir-Mohammad Yazdani (70kg), Mohammad Nokhodi (79kg), Amirhossein Firouzpour (92kg), and Amirhossein Zare' (125kg) all finished their campaigns with the gold, with Hossein Abouzari (74kg), Hadi Vafaiepour (86kg), and Mohammad-Hossein Mohammadian (97kg) adding three bronzes to Iran's medal haul as the country finished atop the table with 190 points – 60 clear of runner-up Japan, with the host in third on 121 points.

## Nosrati named Tractor manager for the rest of season

## Sports Desk

Former Iranian international center-back Mohammad Nosrati was appointed as the caretaker manager of the Persian Gulf Pro League club Tractor for the rest of the Iranian top-flight season.

An assistant to former head coach Paco Jemez, Nosrati takes over of the west-northern Iranian side's bench after the Spanish tactician parted ways with the club in the aftermath of a 4-1 league defeat at home against Zob Ahan – a third successive game without a win for Tractor following home draws against Sepahan (0-0) and Iraslco (1-1).

Tractor is third in the Iranian league table with 40 points – 10 adrift of leader Esteghlal and nine behind Persepolis with seven games to spare.

Nosrati's first game in charge comes away to bottom club Nassaji Mazandaran on Friday before a highly-anticipated home fixture against Esteghlal next Wednesday.

An ex-coach of LaLiga clubs Las Palmas and Rayo Vallecano, Jemez joined Tractor midway through last season and led the



Mohammad Nosrati (L) replaced Spanish Paco Jemez (R) on Tractor's bench.

● TASNIM

club a fourth-place finish in the table.

Despite a busy transfer window in the summer, his team had a disappointing start to the campaign, suffering three defeats in a row – including a 3-1 home setback against Emirati side Sharjah in the AFC Champions League playoffs – and an inconsistent run in the league, which saw the team register seven losses and four draws in 23 outings, coupled with a poor record against fellow top-flight

giants Persepolis, Esteghlal, and Sepahan eventually cost him his job.

During the Spaniard's 15-month stint in Iran, Tractor managed only two wins in nine meetings with the trio while leaving the pitch empty-handed on six occasions.

Tractor has also endured a below-par run against the other top-eight sides in the league this season, winning only two while losing seven in 11 head-to-heads.

## Barcelona destroyed themselves in defeat to PSG, says Gundogan

REUTERS – Barcelona midfielder Ilkay Gundogan said his side had no-one to blame but themselves after they squandered a two-goal advantage and lost 4-1 to Paris St Germain to exit the Champions League on Tuesday.

After winning 3-2 in Paris and taking a 1-0 lead with an early Raphinha goal in the quarter-final second leg, Barca went down to 10 men when Ronald Araujo was shown a red card, before PSG took control of the match and secured a comeback win.

"Very frustrated. Very disappointed. It really felt like that we had full control of the game. Started with a one-goal lead, and then after 10-15 it just felt like we destroyed ourselves," Gundogan told TNT Sports.

"Yeah, (the red card changed the game). This is the Champions League. No matter who the opponent is, in such a tie, such an important game, going one man down so early... it's impossible, then you are out, unfortunately." Following Tuesday's defeat, Barcelona manager Xavi Hernandez berated referee Istvan



● ALBERT GEA/REUTERS

Kovacs and said his performance cost the LaLiga club a spot in the semi-finals.

Kovacs showed red cards to Araujo and Xavi, with five Barcelona players also receiving yellow cards.

Gundogan concurred with his manager's opinion on the referee, saying he should have won a penalty after being tackled by PSG's Vitorinha in the box. "At halftime, (the referee) didn't have such a bad attitude. I haven't seen any of the crucial

actions on the replay, but it felt like he was very quick on the yellow cards for us," the German said.

"In the second half, I think I should get a penalty. He clearly kicks me with his leg – if not, I can continue running. If he doesn't kick me, I don't fall. For me, that's a penalty.

"That's what I told him, to at least have a check, and he gave me a yellow card. I don't know how it looks on TV – maybe my impression is wrong."



# Raisi vows severe response to any Israeli strike

Iran's operation proved Israel's power fragile like 'spider's web'

## International Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on Wednesday reiterated warnings against "the slightest act of aggression" by Israel against Iran's interests and soil, saying it would lead to "a fierce and severe response".

Raisi made the remarks on Wednesday as he addressed a ceremony in the capital Tehran on the occasion of the National Army Day, where forces with various divisions of Iran's Army attended a large-scale military parade, and displayed their new defense achievements, and advanced military equipment and hardware.

Iran launched its first-ever attack on Israel on

Saturday with a barrage of drones and missiles in response to the regime's April 1 attack on the Iranian diplomatic facilities in the Syrian capital of Damascus.

Raisi said Iran's retaliatory operation against Israel shattered the Israeli military's invincibility myth and proved that the regime's power is like a spider's web.

## Strategic setback

The Iranian president said the operation inflicted not only a military defeat but also a strategic setback on the occupying Tel Aviv regime.

He also said the operation dissuaded certain regional Arab countries seeking to

normalize diplomatic ties with the Zionist entity.

"The Zionist regime's defeat was an intelligence, security and military one; but it was a strategic setback above all. Some countries sought to normalize relations with the Zionist regime, but they are now humiliated in the eyes of their own nations. This was a strategic failure for that regime," he pointed out.

In 2020, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco normalized relations with Israel as part of the US-brokered Abraham Accords, vehemently criticized by the Palestinians. "Our armed forces are ensuring security and peace and establishing

sovereignty across the region, and are completely reliable," the Iranian president stated, urging regional countries to rely on their own assets and Muslim forces rather than foreign interference and partnerships with Israel. Raisi also underscored that Iran's Operation True Promise was "limited and punitive," warning the Tel Aviv regime against any military adventurism as a stronger strike could have totally wiped it out. Tel Aviv has vowed to respond to the Iran's operation.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday told the visiting British and German foreign ministers that Is-

rael "will reserve the right to protect itself," his office said.

After meeting the two visiting diplomats, Netanyahu addressed the cabinet where he said that he had been given "all kinds of suggestions and advice" by the country's allies.

"However, I would also like to clarify: we will make our decisions ourselves," he said, according to a statement issued by his office.

On Wednesday, Iran's air force commander Hamid Vahedi warned Iran's enemies against making a "strategic mistake".

"We are 100 percent ready in all aerial fronts," he was quoted as saying by ISNA news agency. He said that



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (C) observes a military parade on the occasion of the National Army Day in the capital Tehran, Iran, on April 17, 2024.

● MOSTAFA ROUDAKI/MIZAN

## Malaysia PM calls Iran's attack against Israel 'legitimate'

### International Desk

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim described Iran's attack against Israel as a "legitimate act".

In a statement on Monday, Anwar said that the attack was a consequence of the Israel's "barbarous" bombing of the Iranian consulate in Damascus, Syria.

He said that Israel's attack on Iran's consulate violated international law.

"When you break the law you invite a reaction," said Anwar. He added that the war between Iran and Israel was not good for the world economy and peace.

World powers have urged restraint after Iran launched more than 300 drones and missiles at Israel late Saturday. The leader of Muslim-majority Malaysia urged Israel "not to take any further retaliation that will aggravate tensions in the Middle East".

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday said that Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was the main party to blame for Iran's attack against Israel. "The main one responsible for the tension that gripped our hearts on the evening of April 13 is Netanyahu and his bloody administration," the Turkish leader, who regularly criticizes Israel and its leadership, said in televised remarks.

"Those who have been silent for months about Israel's aggressive attitude immediately condemned the Iranian response," he said.

"But it's Netanyahu himself who is the first who should be condemned." Erdogan also said the April 1 attack in Damascus violated international law.

## Iranian envoy to UK: Netanyahu aims to trap West into Middle East conflicts

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking to trap the West into a total war across the Middle East that would have incalculable consequences for the region and the world, Iran's top diplomat in the UK said.

Seyed Mehdi Hosseini Matin argued that the West was losing credibility in the Middle East in a way that would ultimately lead to the US leaving the region, and a peace being reached by regional powers alone, The Guardian reported.

"Iran has considered its actions very carefully, and understood that there is a trap, but not for Iran, for the Western countries and allied countries in which they are drawn by the Zionist state into a total war inside the Middle East, and the whole world soon may be unable to control the consequences."

Matin insisted that before the attack on Israel, Iran had urged Western officials – including the British foreign secretary, David Cameron – to back a UN security council statement condemning



Israel for attacking the Iranian consulate in Damascus. It had also urged the West to back an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, he said.

Matin said Cameron had last week refused the Iranian request, even though this week he had admitted that the UK would have responded very strongly if a hostile power flattened a British consulate. "As Cameron mentioned, rightly, every nation has the right to defend itself against this kind of flagrant breach of diplomatic and international law."

He also denied Cameron's claims that there could have been thousands of civilian casualties if the mass attack of Iranian drones and missiles, which decisively moved its years-long shadow war with Israel into the open, had penetrated the defense of Israel and its allies. He said he found such an accusation extraordinary coming from a government that had armed a regime that had killed 34,000 Palestinians.

He said that Iranian forces didn't target any populated sites so as to prevent human casualties.

## Iran against any nuclear activity that damages ties with IAEA

Iran's nuclear chief said the Islamic Republic will not settle for any kind of nuclear activity that undermines the interaction between Tehran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Pointing to IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi's claims about ambiguities in Iran's nuclear program, Mohammad Eslami, said the reports submitted by the UN nuclear agency chief to the Board of Governors or the UN Security Council have two parts, with the first one pertaining to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the second one to safeguards and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Press TV reported.

Highlighting good relations between Iran and the IAEA in the field of safeguards and the NPT, Eslami said, "In this area, the installation of the IAEA's cameras and their constant monitoring is underway, and their knowledge about our measures is always up-to-date."

Iran's nuclear chief said there

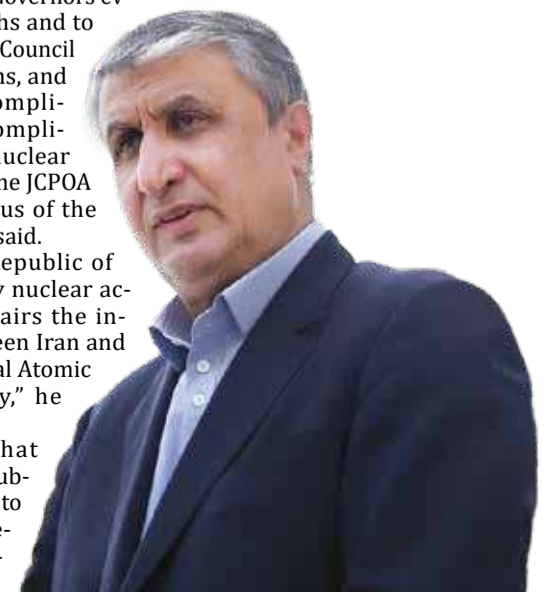
are 120 accredited inspectors of the IAEA for the country's nuclear program, some of whom are stationed in Iran while the others visit the country's nuclear facilities on a regular or unannounced basis.

"The IAEA submits a report about Iran's nuclear activities to the Board of Governors every three months and to the UN Security Council every six months, and the issue of compliance or non-compliance of Iran's nuclear activities with the JCPOA is the main focus of the report," Eslami said.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran rejects any nuclear activity that impairs the interaction between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency," he added.

Underlining that the Islamic Republic is committed to the 2020 strategic law concerning the JCPOA,

the head of the AEOI said if the other side fails to fulfill its obligations, Iran will follow suit and, "If they fulfill their commitments, the Islamic Republic will also live up to its end of the bargain in the JCPOA regarding the clauses on certain restrictions."



# Real impact of Iran's strike yet to be seen



By Mehdi Sa'adati  
Iranian lawmaker

## OPINION EXCLUSIVE

In the midst of the behind-the-scenes negotiations between Israel's supporters and Iran to stave off Iran's retaliatory measures against the Zionist regime, they agreed to broker a cease-fire deal in the Gaza Strip on the condition that Iran refrained from striking back at Israel. However, in reality, they were not forthright in their remarks; their true intention was to steer Iran away from retaliating against Israel's earlier raid on Iran's consulate in Syria. A few days ago, upon learning that Iran's military retaliation against the Zionist regime was imminent, the Western parties reached out to Iran, offering to acquiesce to Tehran's terms in return for Iran holding back its military response to Israel. Nevertheless, Iran declared its intent to strike back at

the Israelis, asserting that its response was a rightful act in the face of Israel's provocation. Citing Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, Iran asserted its right to revenge and respond militarily to the Israeli attack at the Iranian consulate in Syria. Iran conveyed to the West that if they desired a more restrained reaction from Iran, an official announcement of peace in Gaza was necessary. They pledged to make this declaration within a few weeks. However, Iran needed to make a prompt decision. Subsequently, the Western parties put forward another argument, insisting that the Israeli captives held by Hamas must be released before any further action. Iran perceived that the Western parties were aiming to replay their previous ploy with Hamas, merely seeking to stall and not genuinely pursuing peace. Their aim was to prolong their media campaign and misguide Iran's reaction to Israeli aggression. It was on this basis that Iran retaliated militarily against Israel. The Westerners cautioned against

an attack, advising for limitations if an attack were to occur, and specifying that any attack should not originate from Iranian territory. However, Iran defied all their pleas to prevent Israel from violating international law by attacking a consulate and contravening sovereignty of a nation. Israel's threat of military action against Iran was deliberated within the Supreme National Security Council. Iran has made it clear that should Israel proceed with military action; it will respond at least tenfold more extensively and forcefully than Operation True Promise. In Operation True Promise, Israel was given the heads up a few days back that Iran would only go after military targets, steering clear of widespread destruction. Iran announced that its aim was just to deliver a blow as a form of punishment. During this operation, Iran unleashed a fraction of its military might on Israel to send a strong message that it would not hesitate when it comes to protecting its national interests. While it's true that Iran only uti-

lized a small portion of its military clout in this strike, the real impact lies in the missiles and drones involved. The full extent of the operation's consequences and losses is yet to be seen. Despite spending over a billion dollars to fend off Iran's assault and rallying multiple nations to halt the attack, they were unable to withstand even a fraction of Iran's overwhelming power. Their attempt to justify their failure through a misleading media campaign is evident. I firmly believe that the Zionist regime has suffered a severe setback across various political, military, and economic fronts during this operation, and the repercussions cannot be quickly remedied. From Iran's perspective, it exercised legitimate defense, but any future aggression toward Iran will undoubtedly trigger a harsh response. It's evident that the Zionists' reputation took a significant hit due to Operation True Promise, tarnishing its image and credibility further. Meanwhile, messages were relayed to Iran from regional countries and some of Israel's



● REUTERS

allies, urging Iran to refrain from attacking, claiming that Iran lacked the military and technological prowess to engage Israel in combat. Should Israel and its allies take any hostile actions against Iran, Iran will unleash other segments of its military might, targeting all

the bases and regions earmarked for use against it. During the emergency Security Council meeting concerning Iran's strike, some nations voiced their support for Iran's right to legitimate defense, showcasing that there are still advocates for justice in the world.

## Remembering Dien Bien Phu: A landmark victory in fight for Vietnamese independence

### PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

On the occasion of the celebration of the Dien Bien Phu Victory (May 07, 1954-May 07, 2024), H. E. Mr. Luong Quoc Huy, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Islamic Republic of Iran presents the significance of the event:

On September 2, 1945, after the victory of the August Revolution, President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence, declaring to the whole world the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. However, the French colonialists once again intended to use force to reestablish domination over the country. On September 23, 1945, they opened fire to capture Saigon (the city that is nowadays called Ho Chi Minh City), starting the second invasion of Vietnam. Even though the revolutionary government of Vietnam was still young and facing a lot of difficulties, with the will "rather sacrifice everything than lose the nation" the People's Army of Vietnam, under the leadership of the Communist Party and the support of the entire nation, were determined to defeat the French colonialists, with several successful operations, such as "Viet Bac Campaign" in the fall and winter

of 1947, "Border Campaign" in 1950... From the autumn to winter of 1953, the resistance war against the French colonialists took a new turn beneficial to Vietnam. From the defensive position, the Vietnamese army and people took control of the battlefield, continuously launching offensives and counterattacks against the enemy. To save the situation, the French colonialists developed the Navarre Plan, the highest effort supported by the American imperialists, to increase troop strength and military spending, aiming at destroying most of Vietnam's regular forces, to control the territory of Vietnam and pacify Indochina within 18 months. The French expeditionary commander made an airborne insertion of French paratroopers to occupy Dien Bien Phu (a strategic position in the NorthWest of Vietnam), built up an army and military bases there, turned it into the firmest stronghold in Indochina, the so-called "unbreakable fortress". It had 49 bases, divided into three sub-zones for mutual support, with a solid defense structure. The French colonialist army gathered here more than 16,200 troops including 17 infantry battalions, 3 artillery battalions, 1 engineer battalion, 1 tank company, 1 air force squadron, and 1 motorized transport company, to crush Vietnam's army and people.

On the Vietnamese side, to maintain the strategic posture, the Politburo decided to launch the Winter-Spring offensive, with the motto: "Proactively, actively, flexibly destroying the enemy's troop strength, consolidating forces, promoting guerrilla warfare, forcing the enemy to scatter its forces". On December 6, 1953, the Politburo met and decided to wage the Dien Bien Phu Campaign and adopted an operation plan, designated General Vo Nguyen Giap as Commander-in-Chief. The whole country braced itself up for the Dien Bien Phu front in the spirit of "All for the front line, all for victory". The regular forces quickly regrouped, gathered 40,000 troops including 04 divisions of infantry and 01 division of artillery, opened roads through mountains and forests, pulled in artillery pieces, built battlefields, and were ready for offensives. About 260,000 militiamen and young volunteers were also mobilized for Dien Bien Phu, ensuring logistics support for the campaign. With three big offensive campaigns, after 56 days and nights of "digging tunnels through the mountains, sleeping in shelters, shedding sweat and blood", the Vietnamese army fought bravely and resiliently and captured the Dien Bien Phu stronghold. At exactly 17:30 hrs, on May 7, 1954, the "Determine to fight and

determine to win" flag of the People's Army fluttered over the bunker of French General De Castries, putting a complete end to the resistance war against French colonialists, opening a new era, the period of building socialism in the North, creating a favorable premise for the liberation of the South, and national reunification. Dien Bien Phu's victory was an immortal epic of miracle people war and a pinnacle of Vietnam's resistance war against the French colonialists' aggression, creating the basis for concluding the Geneva Agreement to end the war and restore peace in Vietnam. It also opened a new revolutionary period: the transition of the North of Vietnam to socialism meanwhile creating favorable conditions for the liberation of the South and the unification of the country at a later stage. The Victory affirmed the Party's correct and creative resistance policy as well as the growth of the Vietnam People's Army. It put an end to the French colonialism in Indochina, triggering the process of the collapse of the old colonialism all over the world. Seventy years have passed, but the Dien Bien Phu Victory-"the famous triumph that shook the world" remains a source of pride for the Vietnamese people due to its great significance for the cause of building and protecting the fatherland.

## Region's madman now rightly hesitant



By Syed Ali Hassan  
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Baqeri has recently cautioned Israel that any new mistake against the Islamic Republic of Iran will be responded to within seconds. So, whatever happens will not only challenge Israel's security but also undermine it. It is clear that Iran has shattered the Israeli arrogance and deterrence. Both the Israeli leadership and its people are divided. Despite the moderate Jewish forces in Israel reaching an agreement that it's best not to take further action against Iran after its attacks, the Zionist majority opposes this idea. Saturday night, Iran launched air strikes directly against Israel, without employing its modern drones and missiles so as to avoid escalating tensions in the region. By analyzing the statements released by Iran's leadership following the event, it becomes evident that Iran prioritizes peace. Tehran has been supporting the cease-fire in Gaza since day one. Israel's desire for Palestinians to surrender Gaza will not materialize as Tel Aviv has shown an inability to achieve its universally condemned objectives through ground operations against Hamas. It wants Hamas to accept its preposterous cease-fire conditions, but that's not going to happen. For one thing, Israel's history of not honoring agreements and cease-fires is not commendable, to say the least. Through the years, Israel and its allies have reached a number of deals with Palestinians, including Oslo and Camp David, but they did not adhere to a single one. Reports from Iran suggest that the political leadership has delegated the authority to respond to any "Israeli mistake" to the military leadership, and this time, Iran will not hold back on using its weapons. This can possibly endanger Israel's existence. Now that Iran has damaged Iran's reputation, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan should find the courage

to prioritize Muslim solidarity and brotherhood and stop the hand that spills Palestinian blood. Here, we should commend the governments of Iraq, Qatar, Yemen, Lebanon, Oman, and Kuwait, who have supported Iran in various ways, for their zeal. Western imperialism knows very well why Muslim societies are filled with resentment against the West. Western countries are at the doorstep of Muslims. Through condemned interventions, they try to keep the Muslim Ummah subjugated. They have seated Israel as the Middle East's madman so that no one can dare to cut off the hands of the looters. On April 1, when the Israeli cabinet attacked the Iranian embassy compound in Damascus, it was expected that Muslim countries would convene an emergency meeting and express solidarity with Iran. It would have sent a clear message to Israel and its mentors that a grave mistake had been made. However, this did not happen. When Iran lodged a complaint at the Security Council, justice was not served there, either. Therefore, Iran was justified in responding to Israel. Despite all Israeli provocations, Iran has taken a measured response. Now, the ball is in Israel's court. The Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim strongly urged Tel Aviv on Monday not to take any retaliatory action, as it would only escalate tensions in the Middle East. He said that Iran's drone and missile attack on Israel two days ago was justified and legitimate. Evidently, Malaysia has adopted a realistic position. The world needs to show a similar reaction. Only then will Israel be able to understand the true meaning and extent of its international responsibilities and commitments. The Israeli cabinet has already admitted that as a result of Iran's retaliatory "Operation True Promise", Israeli military bases have been damaged. Israeli political and military leadership should ask themselves: if the April 1 mistake led to such a forceful response, then how will Iran respond to an operation carried out in Iranian territory? The specter of a major war cannot be ignored.