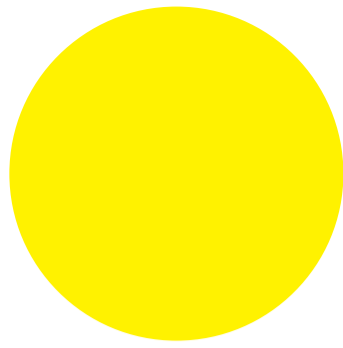


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Political message carried by a military visit to Tehran

By Reza Sadrolhosseini
West Asia affairs analyst

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The visit of the chief of the general staff of the Saudi armed forces to Tehran and his meeting with his Iranian counterpart marks another major step forward in the development of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, two key players in the West Asia region. The two nations' relationship has gone through ups and downs over the years, with two key takeaways: rivalry for regional influence and the understanding that this rivalry must come with healthy and diplomatic relations.

The rapprochement and expansion of ties between Tehran and Riyadh, or their estrangement and lack of cooperation, has always had a ripple effect on the entire West Asia region and even ultra-regional countries. It is no surprise, therefore, that the two countries' relationship has not been immune to sabotage attempts by some regional and extra-regional players. Following the severing of diplomatic ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia, both countries came to the understanding that prolonging the diplomatic freeze would not only harm their own interests but also have negative repercussions on regional security. Consequently, in 2022, Tehran and Riyadh made a concerted effort to normalize relations, which has since led to numerous high-level visits and talks on bilateral and regional issues, including developments related to the Gaza conflict. Page 7 >



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