

Iran (March 10, 2021)

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1a)

Biden Iran envoy boasted of depriving civilians of food, driving up Iranian inequality in sadistic sanctions manual

By Max Blumenthal

March 8, 2021

<https://thegrayzone.com/2021/03/08/biden-iran-envoy-starving-civilians-pain-sanctions/>

„The Joseph Biden administration has named Richard Nephew as its deputy Iran envoy. As the former principal deputy coordinator of sanctions policy for Barack Obama’s State Department, Nephew took personal credit for depriving Iranians of food, sabotaging their automobile industry, and driving up unemployment rates. [...]“

1b)

Biden diplomatic nominee suggests some Iran sanctions will remain

Deputy secretary of state nominee says she agrees that US should keep some sanctions on Iran, regardless of nuclear deal talks

By Middle East Eye staff

March 3, 2021

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/biden-state-department-nominee-suggests-some-sanctions-against-iran-will-remain>

1c1)

Is China Planning on Blocking US Sanctions Imposed on Iran?

By Shahbazz Afzal

March 08, 2021

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/china-planning-block-us-sanctions-imposed-iran/5739189>

„According to some reports China has developed a ‘blocking statute’ to subvert US sanctions imposed on Iran. This follows President Joe Biden’s stance, which amounts to enforcing the policies of the previous US President, Donald Trump, against Iran. [...]“

1c2)

Application of Foreign Legislation and Other Measures

Order of the Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China 2021 No. 1

Rules on Counteracting Unjustified Extra-territorial Application of Foreign Legislation and Other Measures

January 9, 2021

<http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/article/policyrelease/announcement/202101/20210103029708.shtml>

1d)

US allows transactions on Iranian funds in Iraq: Reports

By the Iran Project

March 7, 2021

<https://theiranproject.com/blog/2021/03/07/us-allows-transactions-on-iranian-funds-in-iraq-reports/>

„Media reports and sources have suggested that an Iraqi bank holding billions of dollars of Iranian funds has been allowed for the first time in years to process transactions involving the funds after gaining a waiver from US sanctions against Tehran. [...] The issue of funds was also raised during a Saturday phone call between Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, according to a report on the website of Rouhani’s office. Estimates suggest Iraq owes Iran \$4-5 billion in unpaid dues over imports of natural gas and electricity. The two countries have negotiated on several occasions on how they can transfer the funds, including during a last week meeting between CBI and TBI chiefs in Tehran.“

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2a)

The Next War in the North: Scenarios, Strategic Alternatives, and Recommendations for Israel

By Orna Mizrahi, Udi Dekel, Yuval Bazak

The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University

March 7, 2021

<https://www.inss.org.il/publication/next-war-in-the-north/>

https://www.inss.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Memo211_e.pdf

„In recent years, the northern arena has emerged as Israel’s primary military challenge. The entrenchment of the Iranian-led Shi’ite axis in Syria and Lebanon, attempts by Iran and its proxies to make inroads toward Israel’s border with Syria, and Hezbollah’s growing strength in Lebanon are all factors contributing to increased friction and cause for concern regarding the next war in the north. One thing is certain: a war on the northern front will be unlike all previous wars. as the conflict is likely to include the Lebanese arena, Syria, and possibly even western Iraq. This memorandum presents the findings of a project conducted by the Institute for National Security Studies with the participation of INSS researchers, military and intelligence experts, and former high-ranking IDF commanders who analyzed the gamut of issues that require consideration in advance of the next war in northern Israel. Taking a long-term perspective, it looks at how threats may emerge and outlines the dilemmas, possible alternatives, and opportunities that exist for Israel in the different scenarios, with the aim of assisting the defense establishment and decision makers in Israel in their strategic and operational planning. The authors do not proclaim that war is nigh, nor do they suggest that war is inevitable. Indeed, the common assumption today is that Iran and Hezbollah do not have an interest in war with Israel in the near future. Nonetheless, it is essential that Israel prepare for the possibility of an escalation of the conflict, whether triggered by a change of circumstances, as the result of a deterioration, or due to an erroneous assessment by any side.“

2b)

On 'Shia Backed', 'Iran Backed' Nonsense And Other Warmongering Journalism

By Moon of Alabama

March 5, 2021

<https://www.moonofalabama.org/2021/03/on-shia-backed-iran-backed-nonsense-and-other-warmongering-journalism.html#more>

„The recent U.S. airstrike at the Syrian-Iraqi border and the missile attacks on U.S. bases in Iraq were followed by many examples of bad journalism. [...] Securing consent for running a lethal, worldwide empire requires unremitting propaganda: Redacting the historical record and playing the victim are two useful strategies. The dozens of examples in the FAIR piece are telling. FAIR gets one thing wrong though. The attack was not in Syria, as the U.S. claimed, but on the Iraqi side of the border. [...]“

2c)

Spokesman: Yemeni missile destroys military target in Saudi Arabia's Abha intl. airport with high precision

March 8, 2021

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2021/03/08/646843/Yemen-Abha-airport-Yahya-Saree-missile-attack-Saudi-Arabia>

„The spokesman for Yemen's army says a new missile fired by the country's armed forces and fighters from Popular Committees has hit a "sensitive" military target at Saudi Arabia's Abha International Airport with high precision. [...]“

2d)

‘Sinister Intentions of Enemies’: Iran Slams Report Claiming IRGC Behind Israel Embassy Blast

By Rishikesh Kumar

March 8, 2021

<https://sputniknews.com/world/202103081082285401-sinister-intentions-of-enemies-iran-slams-report-claiming-irgc-behind-israel-embassy-blast/>

„Earlier, media reported that a list of suspects in a low-intensity blast near the Israeli Embassy in Delhi on 29 January was issued by India's National Investigative Agency, alleging that an Iranian elite force might have been behind the plot. Iran's Embassy in New Delhi has categorically rejected a report claiming the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force was behind the blast in the Indian capital on 29 January 2021. While strongly repudiating “unsubstantiated allegations or irresponsible comments” in this regard, the Iranian Embassy considers these reports as steps towards realising the sinister intentions of the enemies of Iran-India relations. The embassy suspect a third party's role aimed to disrupt the bilateral relations at a juncture when ties are being boosted with visits by high-ranking officials and leaders, including security and defence delegations, in recent months. [...]“

2e)

Video: Israeli F-15s Escort American B-52 Bombers in Show of Force to Iran

By Asya Geydarova

March 7, 2021

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/202103071082280624-video-israeli-f-15s-escort-american-b-52-bombers-in-show-of-force-to-iran/>

„Sunday's military maneuver is said to be the seventh mission over the past 6 months. However, it was the first time that the Israeli warplanes were pictured alongside the American bombers. On Sunday, Israeli F-15 fighter jets escorted two American B-52 bombers through Israeli airspace, the Israeli Defense Forces said in a tweet. The military added that the strategical fly-by was "pivotal in maintaining the security of Israeli and Middle Eastern skies." The IDF did not state directly that the maneuver was aimed at Iran, but given the extremely heightened tensions in the region, it is most likely that the fly-by over the region was designed to show force to Tehran. [...]“

2f)

The Middle East's Next Conflicts Won't Be Between Arab States and Iran

By Vali Nasr

March 2, 2021

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/03/02/the-middle-east-s-next-conflicts-wont-be-between-arab-states-and-iran/>

„[...] The Middle East is at the edge of a precipice, and whether the future is peaceful hinges on what course the United States follows. If the Biden administration wants to avoid endless U.S. engagements in the Middle East, it must counterintuitively invest more time and diplomatic resources in the region now. If Washington wants to do less in the Middle East in the future, it has to first do more to achieve a modicum of stability. It has to start by taking a broader view of regional dynamics and making the lessening of new regional power rivalries its priority. “

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3)

Iran-Russia Relationship: Requisites for Transition from Meager Tactical Actualities to Actualization of Deep Strategic Potentials

By Mansoureh Tajik

March 6, 2021

<https://thesaker.is/iran-russia-relationship-requisites-for-transition-from-meager-tactical-actualities-to-actualization-of-deep-strategic-potentials/>

„[...] On March 12, 2001, a near-comprehensive agreement was reached between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation in Moscow. The agreement was signed by Mohammad Khatami, Iran's president at the time, and Vladimir Putin as the Russian president.[1] It has been in place for 20 years and is about to expire in a few days and needs to be either extended or replaced with another much more comprehensive and strategically-oriented long-term agreement. An important written message from Ayatullah Khamenei to President Putin was delivered by Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, the head of the Iranian Parliament, on Monday, February 8, 2021. It appears the latter scenario (i.e. a comprehensive long-term agreement) is inevitably the case. [...]“

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4)

Analysis: Iran slips record volume of oil into China, reaches out to Asian clients for trade resumption

By Nidhi Verma, Shu Zhang

March 8, 2021

<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN2B00OL>

„Iran has quietly moved record amounts of crude oil to top client China in recent months, while India’s state refiners have added Iranian oil to their annual import plans on the assumption that U.S. sanctions on the OPEC supplier will soon ease, according to six industry sources and Refinitiv data. U.S. President Joe Biden has sought to revive talks with Iran on a nuclear deal abandoned by former President Donald Trump in 2018, although harsh economic measures remain in place that Tehran insists be lifted before negotiations resume. The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has started reaching out to customers across Asia since Biden took office to assess potential demand for its crude, said the sources, who declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the matter. [...]“

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5)

Biden pursues Trump’s policy against Iran: Foreign Ministry

By Tehran Times

March 8, 2021

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/458942/Biden-pursues-Trump-s-policy-against-Iran-Foreign-Ministry>

„The new U.S. administration of Joe Biden pursues the same policy that the Trump administration pursued against Iran, Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran’s Foreign Ministry said on Monday. Speaking at a weekly press conference, Khatibzadeh said, “For several years, the United States has been driving in the wrong direction on the highway, thinking that others who are on the right path are going wrong. The sooner the United States realizes the right direction of the highway, the better for the international community and multilateralism.” The spokesman said the U.S. should change its path, fully implement its commitments, and lift sanctions, which he described as “crime.” [...]“

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6a)

The Pope-Sistani Riddle

Francis and Sistani delivered anti-war, anti-genocide and anti-sectarian messages beyond the comprehension of most Western media

By Pepe Escobar

March 10, 2021

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/pope-sistani-riddle/5739394>

„By any historical measure, it was a game-changer: the first meeting since the 7th century between a Roman Catholic Pope and a Shiite spiritual leader regarded as a “source of emulation.” It will take a long time to assess the full implications of the immensely intriguing 50-minute face-to-face conversation, with interpreters only, between Pope Francis and Grand Ayatollah Sistani at his humble home in a Najaf

alley near the dazzling Imam Ali shrine. An avowedly imperfect parallel is that for the Shiite community of the faithful, Najaf is as pregnant with meaning as Jerusalem is for Christianity. [...]“

6b)

Ayatollah Sistani sends messages after Pope's visit to US, Vatican, and Palestine

By Elijah J. Magnier

March 8, 2021

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2021/03/08/646817/Pope-visit-Iraq-Sistani-Shia->

„Two years ago, Pope Francis signed in Abu Dhabi, with the Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmed Al-Tayeb, a document of "Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together." His Holiness the Pope had wanted to sign a similar document with one of the most prominent Shia community representatives globally, the Grand Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Al-Sistani, in Najaf. This did not happen for several reasons. How did the Iraqi authority view the Pope's visit and the role of the representative of more than a billion Christian believers in the world? What would be Sayyed Sistani's message for Pope Francis and the Arab, Islamic and Western worlds now? [...] According to sources in Najaf, the Grand Ayatollah grasped the opportunity of the Pope's visit to send a clear message to all Iraqis and the leaders of the Middle East and the West. His communiqué contained an implicit message also to the Pope, and several "No (s)": 1. No To besieging populations: This is a position and a criticism against the US, which imposes sieges and sanctions on people with the aim to starve countries to bring them to their knees. Accordingly, Sayyed Sistani has defined his position rejecting US policy, putting an end to rumors that the Iraqis wanted the US to stay in Iraq despite the Parliament's decision to seek to enforce the US's departure. 2. No to violence: this is a message that is also on its way - according to the source – to the US, which is killing and bombing the Iraqis. It is also directed towards the Iraqi government, which must respect Iraq's people and avoid the recurrence of violence. 3. No to injustice: A message for the Iraqi leaders, who ignore the injustices the Iraqi people have suffered from since Saddam Hussein's rule continuing to the US occupation - said the sources - lack of services, job opportunities and administrative corruption. This message also aims to address the US forces, which treat the world with double standards, especially in the Middle East, where the Palestinian people suffer under the Israeli occupation, and the Syrian and Iranian peoples are oppressed by unjust sanctions. 4. No to normalization with Israel: The sources said that Sayyed Sistani's statement mentioned "displacement, wars, acts of violence, economic blockades, and the absence of social justice to which the Palestinian people are exposed, especially to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories." This means that Iraq will not normalize with Israel, that the Palestinian cause is supported by Iraq and is the Iraqis' concern. The message also speaks about how countries like Iran and Yemen are besieged by the US that apparently can only use "the language of war" (as the statement mentioned) to the detriment of any concern for social justice. [...]“

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7)

Dowreh Series: Mimi Thi Nguyen and Minoo Moallem in Conversation

By Minoo Moallem and Mimi Thi Nguyen

March 8, 2021

<https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/42477/Dowreh-Mimi-Thi-Nguyen-and-Minoo-Moallem-in-Conversation>

„Welcome to the inaugural entry in the Jadaliyya Iran Page’s newest series Dowreh, from the Persian word meaning (among other things) conversation circle or salon. In this series, we invite scholars, intellectuals, and artists to stage conversations from within, adjacent to, and beyond Iranian studies, with an eye to de-nationalizing our discourses and expanding the terrain of our conversations. In particular, this series looks to bring together intellectuals in both likely and unlikely pairings, asking them to address how they approach their work to make scholarly or pedagogical connections across disparate geographies, temporalities, or objects of inquiry. The first in this series features two U.S.-based scholars of transnational feminist studies, Minoo Moallem and Mimi Thi Nguyen. [...]“