



A RAF Typhoon FGR4 aircraft takes off to conduct further strikes against Houthi targets, February 3, 2024.

Sense Of Insecurity On The Rise Among Iranians Amid Threats

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There seems to be a deep sense of insecurity among Iranians due to intense conflicts in the Middle East and a high level of tensions with the United States.

Iranians on social media express their worries every morning about a potential war in the region that could drag Iran into fire. They also discuss a growing economic crisis that is making life increasingly difficult, even for those who are considered well-off.

One of the ongoing concerns is about US responses to Houthi strikes on commercial shipping and attacks by Iranian proxy groups on US forces, that last week left three US soldiers dead in the border area between Syria and Jordan.

Asghar Zargar, a lecturer on international relations, told centrist Entekhab website that "It is unlikely the US would strike Iran." He added that that the United States will not do anything that would threaten the security of the Persian Gulf as Washington does not want to see oil prices rising. However, Zargar noted that if Iran comes under attack, Tehran will launch a heavy retaliatory operation, targeting ships within the range of Iranian forces.

Last week, the looming shadow of a war involving Iran led to an extraordinary rise in exchange rates, bringing the price of every US dollar close to 600,000 Iranian rials.



A money changer holds Iranian rial banknotes as he waits for customers in Tehran's business district January 7, 2012.

Zargar further explained that now with insecurity in the Red Sea region, the United States will not risk threatening the security of the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, the Americans are aware that Iran will not remain silent if its territory comes under attack, which would set the Persian Gulf ablaze.

For ordinary Iranians, however, it is not a matter of pride or military might. It is a matter of life and death and survival under pressure.

The pressure from America, is not the only threat perceived by Iranians. The former head of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Relations Committee, **Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh said last week**, "The Russians have made Iran their accomplice and partner in crime in their war in Ukraine."

Falahatpisheh added that "From Syria to Palestine, the Russians position on Iran's strategic depth has been one of treason. They wanted Iran to be their partner in crime and that is why they said that they get their drones from Iran."

Iran's militant proxy forces in Iraq and Syria have launched more than 160 rocket and drone attacks on US forces since mid-October. Zargar, who lives in Tehran and must be mindful of his public statements, noted that US forces have faced attacks in the region since 2003, with approximately 4,000 US troops losing their lives in military operations. However, the recent deaths of three US soldiers have heightened American sensitivity to such incidents. Still, Zargar suggested that the US is more likely to attack Iran's interests in the region rather than striking targets within Iran.

Highlighting the danger of Iranian officials and commanders focusing on missile development and using them against neighbors, former Foreign Minister Javad **Zarif quoted former President** and Expediency Council Chief Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who said, "Missiles are good but they are not the answer to every problem." Zarif added that in today's world, there are multiple sources of power, and Iran should recognize its area of relative superiority in the international arena. He suggested that Iran advocate the idea of a cease-fire in the Gaza war to reduce international pressure on Tehran.

Zarif added: "In today's world there are multiple sources of power, but we have still not recognized our area of relative superiority," meaning that officials and commanders should not be deceived by their own words about Tehran's massive missile power.

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