



SAGE Intelligence Brief –

IMPENDING AMERICAN VENGEANCE ON IRAN?

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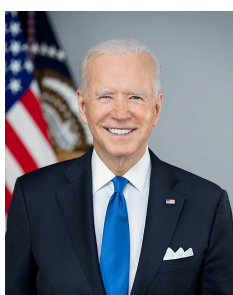


Figure 1.
U.S. President Joe Biden
Image Credit, Wikimedia Commons.



Figure 2.
Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi
Image Credit, Wikimedia Commons.

- ⇒ 2024 is an election year in both Iran (Iranian Islamic Consultative Assembly election, 1 March 2024) and the U.S. (Presidential Election 5 November 2024)
- ⇒ President Joe Biden was delivered ‘a potential gift’ by an Iranian proxy attack on a U.S. base in Jordan where some 3 U.S. military personnel were killed and some 34 were injured (28 January 2024.)
- ⇒ Up to now, Iranian proxies in the region have conducted over 150 of rocket, drone, and missile attacks on the U.S. Middle East presence since the Hamas 7 October 2023 attack on Israel. Many of these attacks failed to cause casualties.
- ⇒ The fact that U.S. military personnel have now been killed means that Biden is forced to act. Failure to act will make him look weak to his domestic political opponents as well as his Middle Eastern strategic adversaries.
- ⇒ Biden’s numbers in the presidential race thus far are [extremely poor](#) and he looks likely to lose the November 2024 elections.
- ⇒ A successful military action that rolls back Iran’s proxy network, perhaps inclusive of selective strikes on Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) regionally deployed assets and assets within Iran might well give inspiration to restless Iranians who believe that the time for the Ayatollahs is over.

- ⇒ Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is an unpopular political leader with an approval rating hovering around [28 percent](#), while Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is physically feeble at 84 years old – mirroring the physical feebleness of U.S. President, 81-year-old Joe Biden.
- ⇒ Decades of military posturing, poor governance and shocking economic management have impoverished Iran, a country that should be rich and prosperous considering its resource wealth and young, technically minded population.
- ⇒ It is unlikely that average Iranians would rally around the flag en masse to defend the theocratic regime if it came under foreign attack.
- ⇒ Such an attack might stiffen domestic political opposition, leading to renewed and intensified instability or even organised resistance to the regime.
- ⇒ Will a successful and decisive attack on IRGC assets produce the kind of political consequences that may topple the Ayatollahs, while enhancing Biden's American political standing as a 'wartime leader'?
- ⇒ Any such attack would have to be so completely overwhelming that it produces complete policy paralysis in Tehran.
- ⇒ Americans love a military victory and a successful U.S. led attack on Iranian assets will produce a bump in Biden's polling. However, will it be enough to counter the Trump juggernaut?
- ⇒ Trump will be looking for any signs of weakness in Biden's reaction to Iranian provocation. Indeed, he has already said that: "*This attack would NEVER have happened if I was President*" ([The Times of India](#) 29 January 2024).
- ⇒ Many Americans are tired of 'forever wars' in places they don't know, understand, or care about.
- ⇒ The financial strains of a near constant war footing from 1947-2024 (with few clear-cut military victories during this time) has had its effect on a jaded and increasingly isolationist mood of the American public.
- ⇒ Furthermore, any strike that severely cripples or topples the Ayatollahs holds the prospect for '[mission creep](#)' since the chaos unleashed in Iran will have broader regional effects.

LIKELY SCENARIO?

- ⇒ Biden will limit his strike on Iranian assets, likely to Syria and possibly Iraq. This will limit his exposure to mission creep and perhaps give him a 'quick victory' which may reflect well in the polls.

This analysis is subject to evolving developments in the region, and further updates may be warranted.



*Figure 3. F/A-18 Hornets and Super Hornets conduct in-flight refuelling with a U.S. Air Force KC-10A Extender.
Image Credit, Wikimedia Commons.*



*Figure 4. Iranian drone exercise in 2022.
Image Credit, Wikimedia Commons.*

About SAGE International:

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