



THE EARLY PHOENIX

A first look at today's most notable stories from the Middle East, selected by ACLS experts
11 January 2023

IRAN

1. [Daughter Of Iran's Ex-President Sentenced To Five Years In Prison](#) (*Iran International*). Faezeh Hashemi was indicted on July 3 for “propaganda against the establishment” and “insulting the sanctities”.

THE GULF & YEMEN

2. [A new Chapter is Approaching in Saudi-American Relations](#) (*Al Sharq Al Awsat*). Official sources revealed that the administration of US President Joe Biden dropped its previous threats of retaliation against Saudi Arabia in the wake of the “OPEC Plus” decision to reduce oil production last year, and is moving at the same time to intensify security coordination with Riyadh to confront Iran in the new year 2023, after three months of apparent tension in relations between the two countries.
3. [U.S. Navy Thwarts Smuggling of Iranian Weapons to Yemen](#) (*:24.ae News*). On Tuesday, the US Navy announced the seizure of more than 2,000 assault rifles that were smuggled aboard a fishing boat in a sea lane between Iran and Yemen. "This shipment is part of an ongoing pattern of destabilizing Iranian behavior," Vice Admiral Brad Cooper was quoted as saying.

IRAQ

4. [IRGC Leader Says Iran Will Not Be a Second Copy of America's Destroyed Iraq](#) (*Al Iraqi News*). The Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, General Hossein Salami, described the cities of Iraq as "shattered, their homes empty and turned into ghost towns," indicating that America wants to transform Iran like Iraq through demonstrations.

EGYPT

5. [Egypt to Receive Second Tranche of IMF's \\$3 Billion Loan by End of March](#) (*Ahram Online*). Egypt is set to receive the second tranche of the \$3 billion loan it secured from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), estimated at around \$347 million, by the end of March, following the completion of the first review of the loan programme, the IMF Mission Chief for Egypt, Middle East and Central Asia Department Ivanna Vladkova Hollar said on Tuesday.

LEBANON

6. [More Bank Raids as Depositors' Rage Intensifies](#) (*Now Lebanon*). As inflation rates climb and the Central Bank rushes to buy dollars on the Sayrafa platform, [Lebanese] depositors' frustrations deepen and bank raids are once again on the rise. Today, two new raids on banks in Sidon and Nabatieh, in south Lebanon, occurred, similar to the series of bank holdups that took place in September 2022. The first one saw gunshots fired at a Sidon branch of BLOM Bank on Tuesday.

TURKIYE

7. [Türkiye Announces New Drug Eradication Operations](#) (*Daily Sabah*). Police seized some 692 synthetic drug pills, 41 grams of methamphetamine, 246 grams of herbal cannabis, four historical artifacts, 1,322 liters of moonshine and several weapons during the operation. Via anti-drug trafficking police operations, which have increased in the last couple of years, the country has also achieved progress in meth seizures, with the Interior Ministry noting that as of December 2022, a total of 15 tons of methamphetamine was seized across Türkiye.

SYRIA

8. [The Arrival of One Million Barrels of Oil and Two Gas Tankers to Baniyas. Will the Fuel Crisis be Solved?](#) (*Syria TV*). A crude oil tanker loaded with one million barrels began unloading its cargo at Baniyas port in Tartous on Monday evening, and two gas tankers amounting to about 4,400 tons of domestic gas arrived for the first time since the beginning of this year.