

## ► Political solution to Red Sea crisis, cease-fire in Gaza urged

# US low-cost warning to Houthi militia shows 'little impact'

By GT staff reporters

The "low-cost warning" issued by the US-led coalition to Yemen's Houthi rebels may not have a significant impact on easing tensions on the Red Sea, and the coalition's persistent use of military tactics could exacerbate the situation, analysts warned, calling for international efforts to achieve a political resolution to both the Red Sea crisis and a cease-fire in Gaza and to avoid further spillover of the conflicts in the Middle East.

On Wednesday, a group of countries led by the US, including Australia, Canada, Germany and Japan, warned Yemen's Houthi rebels of "consequences" unless they immediately halt sea attacks that are increasingly disrupting global commerce. The Biden administration described the joint statement as a final warning as he weighs possible military strikes against the Houthis if attacks per-

sist, according to media reports.

Given the US' current strategy in the Middle East and the spillover effect of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the US may intensify its operations targeting ships of the Houthi rebels in the Red Sea waters, Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

The expert noted that the likelihood of the US extinguishing the Houthi rebels in Yemen is low due to the complex political situation in the country and the regional diplomatic dynamics.

The Houthi militia's recent attacks on Israeli ships in the Red Sea were aimed at showing support for Palestine and asserting their presence in the region while seeking political transformation. Additionally, a US attack on the Houthi militia in Yemen would disrupt negotiations among the group, the Yemeni

government, and Saudi Arabia, which would not align with US interests in the region, said Liu.

The "final warning" is the latest attempt by the US to deter the Houthi group, considering the US' limited resources in terms of fleets and soldiers for large-scale military operations in the region. The US also faces challenges in effectively attacking the decentralized militia group, which is hidden within Yemen's complex landscape, Ding Long, a professor with the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

Noting that the crisis may persist as the US-led coalition has not only failed to resolve the issue but instead heightened the risk of a larger conflict with the Houthi militia, Ding pointed out that the root cause of the Red Sea crisis lies in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the resolution relies on a cease-fire in Gaza.

## Epstein list 'tears off fig leaf' from US political elites

By Chen Qingqing

As the disclosure of the Epstein list shocked US society, it also has triggered a wide range of discussion across China's internet as some experts believed the timing of the disclosure is driven by the upcoming presidential election, particularly as it implicates former US president Donald Trump.

Overall, the release of the list has once again torn off the "fig leaf" from the US political elites, intensifying ordinary people's disdain and disillusionment toward them, some experts said.

Former presidents Bill Clinton and Donald Trump are mentioned in newly unsealed Jeffrey Epstein-related court documents, but they are not accused of any wrongdoing involving the disgraced sex trafficking financier, the USA Today reported on Thursday.

Trump's name appears in a document in which Epstein is quoted as saying he would invite the then-real estate mogul to join him at a casino. In another document, a witness said she was never asked to engage in sexual relations with Trump, the media report said.

"I believe the public disclosure was driven by electoral politics, particularly with implications toward Trump. It seems more like a political stunt," Shen Yi, a professor at Fudan University, told the Global Times.

Before the list was released, an article in Newsweek speculated about Trump's relationship with Epstein, guiding readers with conjecture, Shen said.

"The timing of the list's release being this close to the election cannot be considered coincidental," Li Haidong, a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, told the Global Times.

The list, which includes political and business elites and their intricate connections with Epstein, also reflects on whom American politics truly serves and may prompt public questioning of the legitimacy of current US political figures and the political system, Li said.

Based on publicly available information, Epstein appears to have had closer ties with the Democratic camp, but that doesn't necessarily mean Republican figures are completely insulated, said some experts, who believe that the release of this list has once again torn off the "fig leaf" from American politicians.

### ► Panda frenzy



**South Koreans flock to the panda pavilion at Everland Park in Yongin city, South Korea, to catch a glimpse of twin pandas Rui Bao and Hui Bao on January 4, 2024. Thursday marked the first time the twin pandas, born in South Korea, met the public. After the twins were born in July 2023, the number of pandas in South Korea rose to five.**  
Photo: VCG

## US abuse of natl security to discriminate against Chinese students criticized

By GT staff reporters

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin has expressed strong dissatisfaction and opposition to the US' treatment of Chinese students following reports that several of them had been subjected to lengthy interrogations upon entering the US, had their electronic devices including phones and computers inspected, and that some even saw their visas revoked and

were given five-year ban from entering the US.

Wang accused the US of wantonly suppressing and ill-treating Chinese students traveling to the US with lawful and valid identifications and visas during a routine press conference on Thursday. He stated that every month for the past few months, the US deported dozens of Chinese arriving in the US, including students.

The Global Times has learned that multiple Chinese

international students were recently subjected to extended interrogations upon entering the US, and had their personal electronic devices such as phones and laptops inspected. Some of these students had their visas revoked and were informed that they cannot enter the US for the next five years.

One of the students, who asked to be referred to as T, a Yale University PhD candidate and an undergraduate from a top university in Beijing, re-

turned to the US on December 19, 2023. Upon arrival at Dulles Airport near Washington DC, T was taken to a private room for an eight-hour interrogation, during which he was asked questions such as whether they received scholarships during their undergraduate studies or funding from the Chinese government, and their electronic devices were inspected.

After the interrogation, T was informed that their F-1 student visa was canceled and

was barred from entering the US for five years without being given a reason.

China urged the US to stop bullying and restricting Chinese students in the name of national security, and to ensure the security and lawful rights and interests of Chinese students and scholars in the US, Wang said.

