

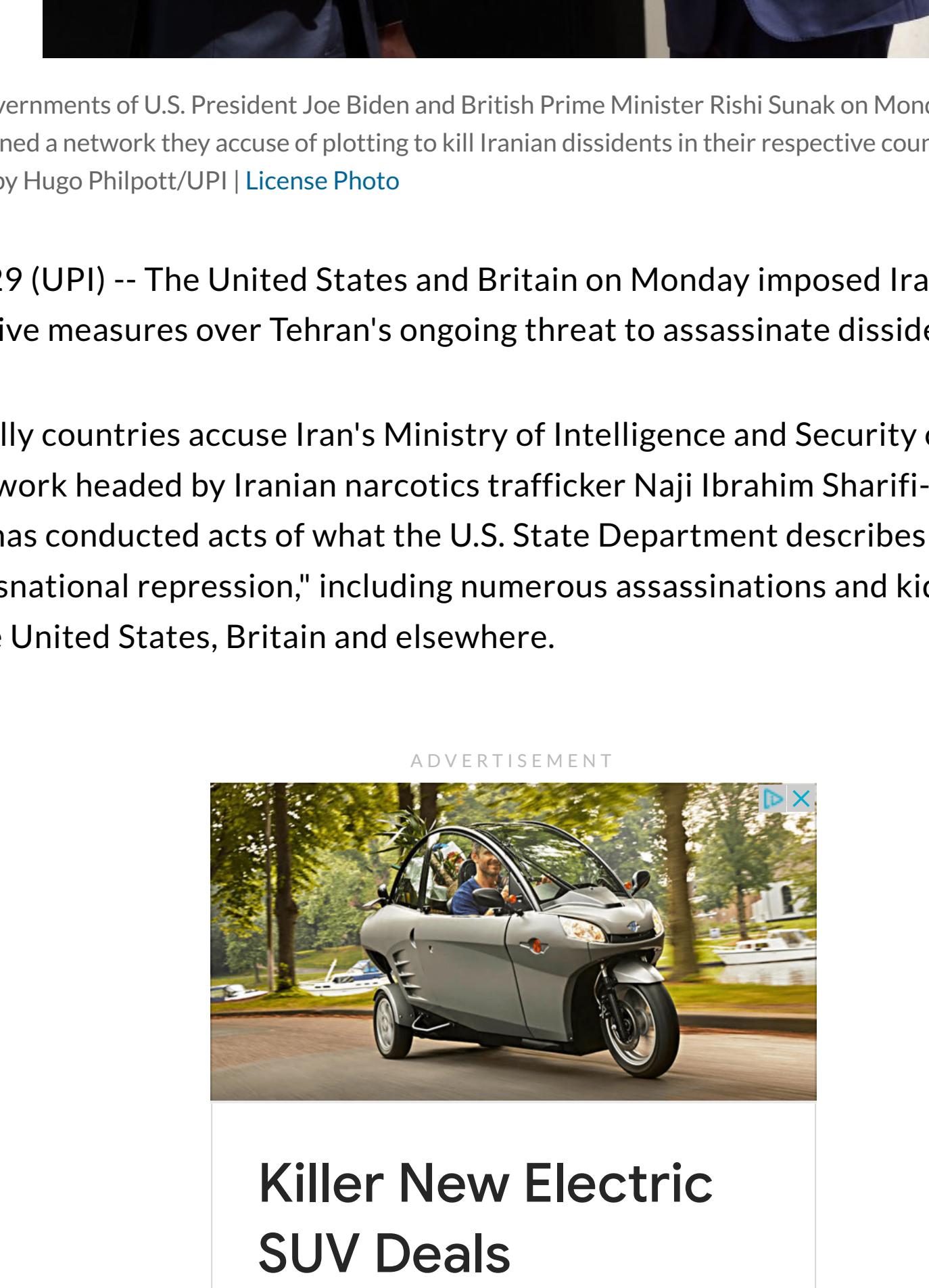
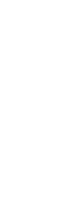


x

U.S. NEWS JAN 29, 2024 / 11:29 PM

**U.S., Britain sanction network accused of plotting to kill Iranian dissidents**

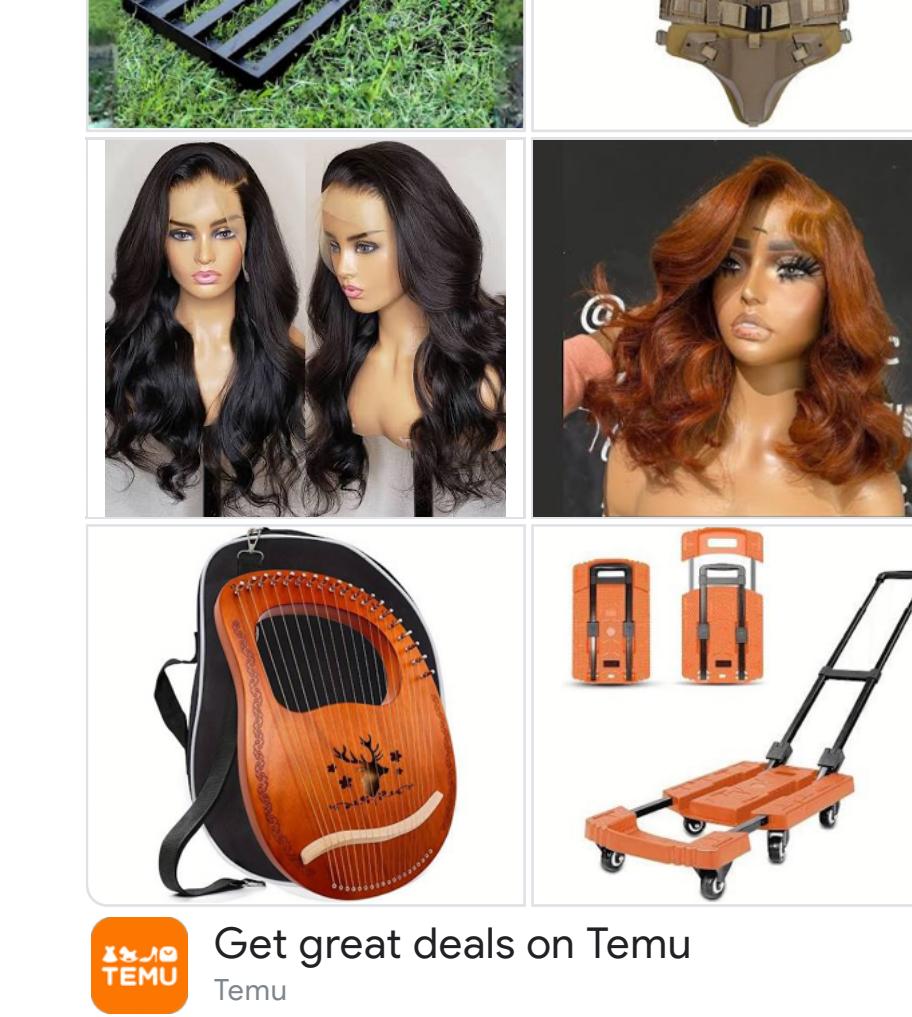
By Darryl Coote



The governments of U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday jointly sanctioned a network they accuse of plotting to kill Iranian dissidents in their respective countries. File Photo by Hugo Philpot/UPI License Photo

Jan. 29 (UPI) -- The United States and Britain on Monday imposed Iran-related punitive measures over Tehran's ongoing threat to assassinate dissidents abroad.

The ally countries accuse Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security of operating a network headed by Iranian narcotics trafficker Naji Ibrahim Sharifi-Zindashti that has conducted acts of what the U.S. State Department describes as "transnational repression," including numerous assassinations and kidnappings, in the United States, Britain and elsewhere.

**Killer New Electric SUV Deals**

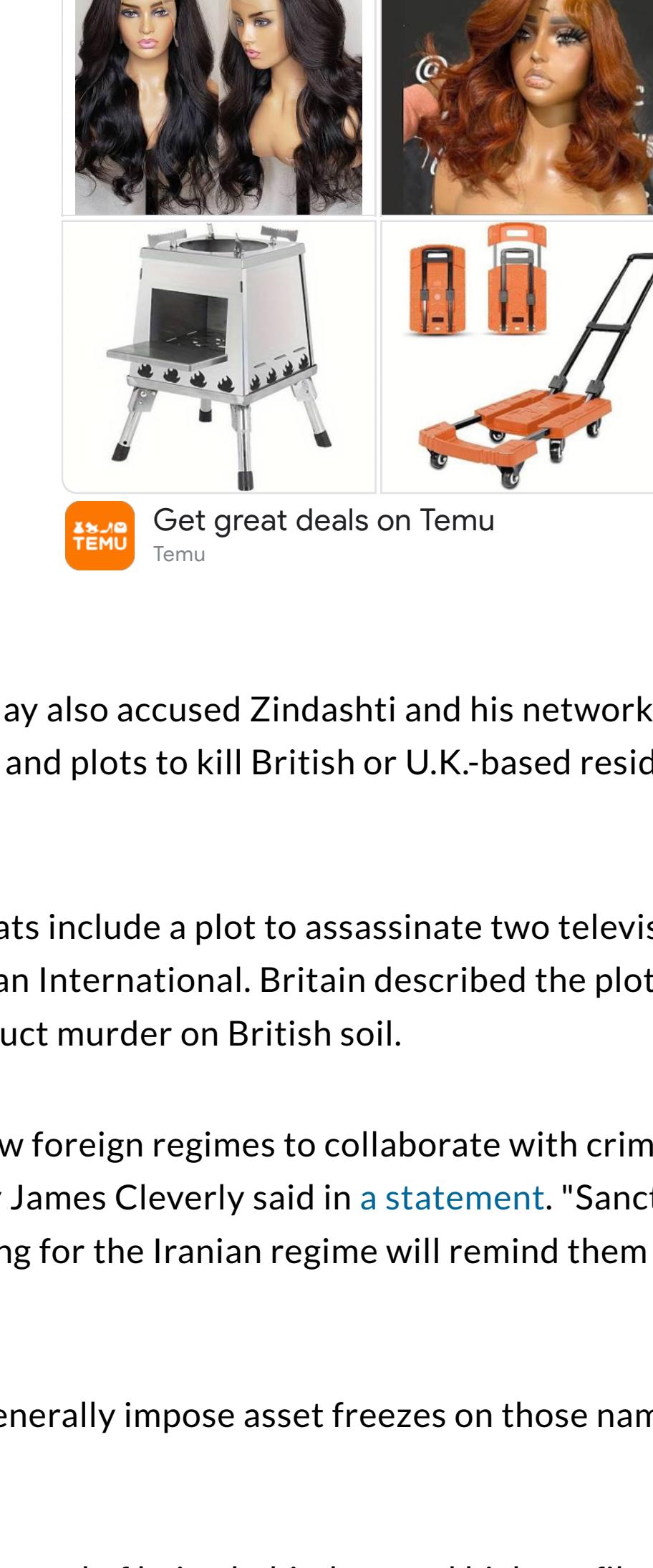
Top searches show Electric SUV deals and offers.

Electric SUV Deals

Open &gt;

The United States said it sanctioned 11 members of the criminal network, and brought charges against Zindashti, 49, and others for scheming to murder two Maryland dissidents, while Britain blacklisted seven people and a group within the Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps over a plot to kill two television presenters with an Britain-based Iranian opposition news channel.

"The Iranian regime's continued efforts to target dissidents and activists demonstrate the regime's deep insecurity and attempt to expand Iran's domestic repression internationally." Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian Nelson said Monday in a statement.



The Treasury on Monday listed a series of assassinations of Iranian dissidents that it holds Zindashti and his network responsible for, including the 2020 kidnapping of Swedish-Iranian Habil Chaab, who was smuggled from Turkey back to Iran where he was executed following a questionable trial.

The network is also being blamed for the assassinations of former Iranian cybersecurity official-turned regime critic Mas'ud Vardanjani in Turkey in 2019 and British-Iranian dissident Saeed Karimian in 2017.

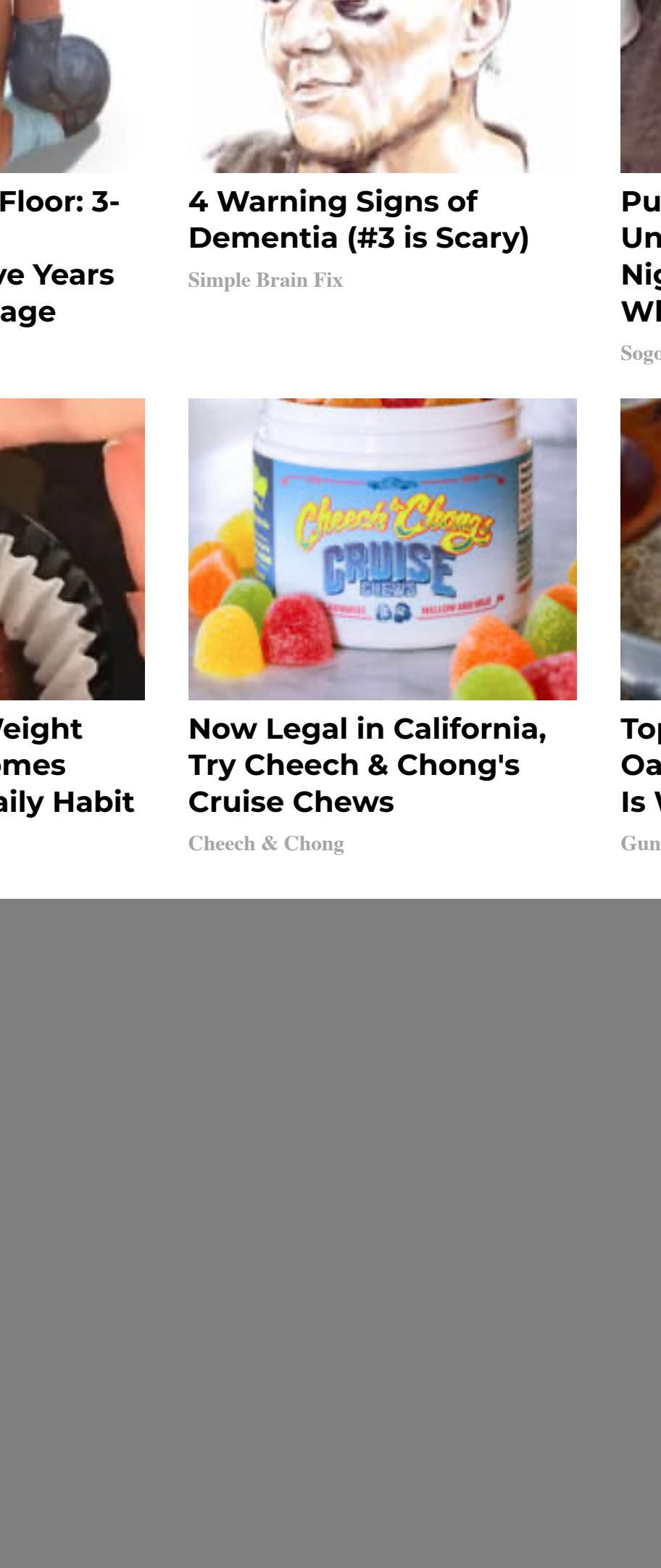
Along with the sanctions, the Justice Department announced an indictment Monday charging Zindashti and two Canadians -- Damon Patrick John Ryan, 43, a member of the Hells Angels Motorcycle Club; and Adam Richard Pearson, 29 -- with conspiring between December 2020 and January 2021 to kill two unnamed Iranian dissidents living in Maryland.

The document accuses Zindashti of recruiting Ryan to head the operation via subscription-based encrypted messaging service Sky ECC, who then contacted Pearson to be involved.

Zindashti and Ryan agreed on a sum of \$350,000 plus \$20,000 for expenses to kill the two people.

Ryan and Pearson are jailed in the Canada on unrelated charges, while Zindashti is believed to be residing in Iran.

"To those in Iran who plot murders on U.S. soil and the criminal actors who work with them, let today's charges send a clear message: the Department of Justice will pursue you as long as it takes -- and wherever you are -- and deliver justice," Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen of the Justice Department's National Security Division said in a statement Monday.



Britain on Monday also accused Zindashti and his network of being behind 15 credible threats and plots to kill British or U.K.-based residents since the start of 2022.

Among the threats include a plot to assassinate two television presenters from news channel Iran International. Britain described the plot was Tehran's latest attempt to conduct murder on British soil.

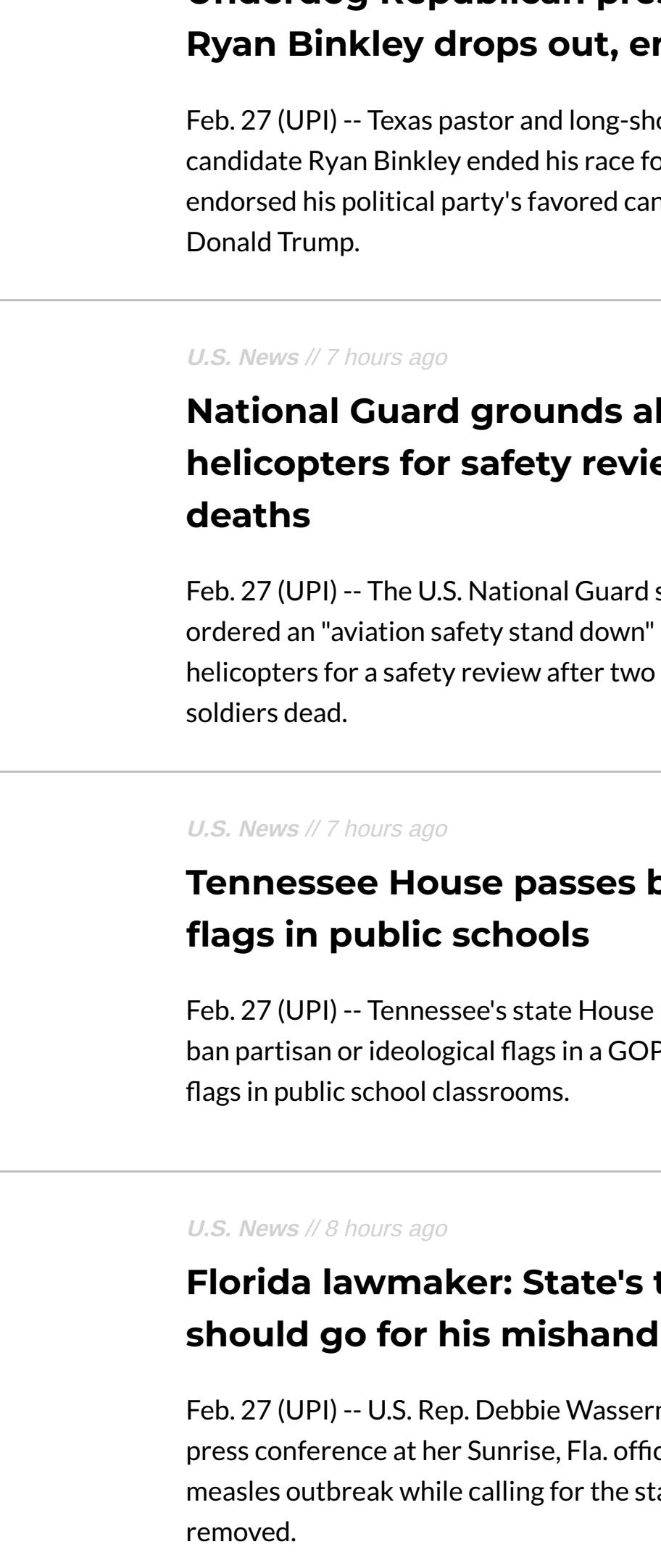
"We cannot allow foreign regimes to collaborate with criminals to threaten us," Home Secretary James Cleverly said in a statement. "Sanctioning these criminal networks working for the Iranian regime will remind them that we will fight back."

The sanctions generally impose asset freezes on those named as well as travel bans.

Iran has been accused of being behind several high profile kidnapping plots in the United States in recent years. In 2021, the United States charged four Iranians with a sprawling international plot to kidnap New York City-based journalist and Tehran critic Masih Alinejad.

In 2020, two Iranian men were sentenced to about three years behind bars for spying on Iranian dissidents and Jewish groups in the United States.

"The United States will continue to use all available tools to hold the Iranian regime accountable for its attempts to extend its repression internationally as well as its ongoing human rights abuses against its own people and its actions to sow instability in the Middle East region and beyond," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Monday in a statement.

**Latest Headlines**

U.S. News 2 minutes ago

**Indiana man pleads guilty to threatening to kill Michigan election worker**

Feb. 28 (UPI) -- An Indiana man has pleaded guilty to threatening to kill a Michigan election worker in the days following the 2020 election.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**Kamala Harris announces plans to boost voting access**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- Vice President Kamala Harris announced plans Tuesday to boost voting access as she met with voting rights leaders at the White House.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**U.S. blacklists vessel en route to China with \$100M in cargo sent by Iran**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- The United States on Tuesday blacklisted the owner and operator of a crude oil tanker that is en route to offload more than \$100 million in Iranian goods in China.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**U.S., Britain unveil new Houthi-targeted sanctions**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- The United States and Britain on Tuesday unveiled sanctions targeting the Iran-backed Houthi militia over its attacks on their military ships as well as commercial vessels transiting the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**Escaped convicted inmate detained in New Orleans hotel room**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- A convicted felon and murderer who escaped Louisiana law enforcement custody by pepper spraying and then stealing the cruiser of his deputy escort during a hospital visit earlier this week, has been apprehended.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**Underdog Republican presidential candidate Ryan Binkley drops out, endorses Trump**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- Texas pastor and long-shot Republican presidential candidate Ryan Binkley ended his race for the White House and endorsed his political party's favored candidate, former President Donald Trump.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**National Guard grounds all Apache helicopters for safety review amid 2 recent deaths**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- The U.S. National Guard said Tuesday that they have ordered an "aviation safety stand down" of all its Army National Guard helicopters for a safety review after two recent crashes that left two soldiers dead.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**Tennessee House passes bill banning pride flags in public schools**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- Tennessee's state House has voted along party lines to ban partisan or ideological flags in a GOP-led measure targeting pride flags in public school classrooms.

U.S. News 2 hours ago

**Florida lawmaker: State's top medical official should go for his mishandling of measles**

Feb. 27 (UPI) -- U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz on Tuesday held a press conference at her Sunrise, Fla. office to address the ongoing measles outbreak while calling for the state's surgeon general to be removed.

UPI

BACK TO TOP

Copyright © 2024 United Press International, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

About UPI

Contact

Corrections

Feedback

Advertisements

Handcrafted Wooden Furniture

Buy premium quality wooden furniture at a reasonable price Classical tree

Terms of Use Privacy Policy

Read More