Straight Truth

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Resistance might opt for more surprise actions if war on Gaza continues: Iran FM

TEHRAN – If Israel's relentless attacks on Gaza continue, resistance forces in the region might alter the situation by making the decision to take more surprise actions, according to Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

"If the Zionist regime's war crimes and genocidal attacks against civilians in Gaza do not come to an end, the region will move towards making a big and decisive decision," Amir Abdollahian said on Wednesday during a press conference with his Turkish counterpart in Ankara.

The top Iranian diplomat warned that the situation might span out of control if Israel does not rein in its brutal bombardments of Gaza, adding that the responsibility of such crisis lies entirely with the U.S. and other countries backing Israel.

"So far 50 Israeli who were being held captive by Hamas have died during the regime's attack," the foreign minister announced. ▸ Page **3**

Al-Aqsa Storm heralds new era for Palestine, region, Muslim world: senior general

TEHRAN- Mohammad Baqeri, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, has said that Al-Aqsa Storm Operation led by Palestinian resistance groups broke the Israeli regime's illusion of invincibility and opened a new chapter for Palestine, the West Asia region, and the Muslim world.

Major General made the remarks on Wednesday during a ceremony in Tehran to honor the thousands of innocent Palestinians who lost their lives as martyrs, including women and children.

The ceremony took place on the 26th day of the large-scale operation led by Hamas against the occupied territories.

"The valiant, surprising and unparalleled defense of Palestinian combatants in Operation Al-Aqsa Storm will be the harbinger of a new chapter for Palestine, the region and the Islamic world," Baqeri said.

Beginning on October 7, Hamas launched the largest offensive against Israel in its 75 years of history in response to the regime's bloody violence against people in the West Bank.

The surprise operation, dubbed Al-Aqsa Storm, has put the competence of the Israeli army and its intelligence bodies under serious question.

In response, Israel launched an insane war on Gaza, so far killing at least 8,796 Palestinians — mostly women and children — and wounding over 23,000 more. ▸ Page **2**

Without U.S. Backing, Israel Would Be Crippled Within Days

▸ Page 3

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A rider called death

By Habib Ahmadzadeh

For the past 17 years hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been held captive in what's known as the world's biggest open-air prison by Israel, an apartheid regime that has no regard for the so-called peace treaties it has imposed on the people of Palestine with the help of its Western patrons.

The truth of the matter is that the current war on Gaza did not begin three weeks ago. The war has been ongoing for the past 70 years between the people of Palestine and the Israeli occupiers. Groups like Hamas and the Islamic Jihad are only natural outcomes to years of devastating crimes against a nation that has now decided that a sudden death would be better than a gradual and degrading one.

Prior to the October 7 attack, Netanyahu's cabinet made plenty of provocative moves to rile Palestinians. It slaughtered tens of Palestinians in the West Bank where the Hamas resistance group has almost no presence. Israeli politicians have also been desecrating Muslims' holy sites, going as far as holding dance parties in the courtyards of the Al-Aqsa mosque. ▸ **Page 5**

More than a dozen Israeli troops killed in 24 hours

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN- The Palestinian resistance in the Gaza Strip has killed more than one dozen Israeli troops in less than 24 hours.

In a statement, the Israeli military announced the names of eleven soldiers that it said had been killed during heavy clashes with the Palestinian resistance near the northern Gaza Strip.

It added that 17 others have been injured, with four in serious condition. But it declined to reveal what rank they belonged to.

In a separate statement earlier, the regime announced the names of another two troops among the rank of its Givati Brigade, who were killed during clashes with Hamas, adding that two others had sustained serious injuries.

The statement failed to provide any information about the location of the casualties. It is widely believed that the Israeli army has dispatched its most elite troops to Gaza. ▸ **Page 5**

Nearly 8,800 killed in Gaza war

At least 8,796 people in Gaza have been killed and more than 22,219 have been wounded, the Gaza Health Ministry said.

In recent days, the Israeli army has expanded its air and ground attacks on Gaza – including houses and hospitals – which has been under relentless air raids since the surprise attack by the Palestinian group Hamas on October 7.

Residents in Gaza have flocked to hospitals and United Nations schools for safety, hoping that Israel will abide by international law and not attack those coordinates.

However, places of shelter have also not been free from Israeli attacks.

Every hour in Gaza:

15 people are killed - 6 are children

35 people are injured

370 people killed every day

Based on the first six days of the war 42 bombs are dropped

12 buildings are destroyed

Iran, Iraq stress using national currencies in bilateral trade

TEHRAN – Iran and Iraq have stressed the need to use the national currencies of the two countries to enhance mutual trade relations, Mehr News Agency reported.

Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Abbas Ali-Abadi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani emphasized using the national currencies for bilateral trade exchanges in a meeting in Baghdad on Tuesday.

In this meeting, which took place in the Iraqi Prime Minister's office in Baghdad, the economic relations between the two countries and ways to strengthen them and strengthen exchanges and partnerships at different levels were discussed and explored.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Iraqi Prime Minister's Office said, "Today, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani hosted Iran's Minister of Industry, ▸ **Page 4**

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Overnight gathering held in support of Yemen striking Israel

TEHRAN – A group of students and others gathered overnight in front of the Yemeni embassy in Tehran on Tuesday night to support the Arab country after striking the Israeli regime.

The gathering took place after the Yemeni armed forces announced that they struck the Zionist regime with missiles and drones in solidarity with the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

The strike comes amid brutal Israeli aggression against the civilians in Gaza which resulted in the killing of more than 10,000.

The Yemeni strikes targeted the southern Israeli port city of Eilat.

Yemeni struck southern Israel again on Wednesday.

Iranian nominees for Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award 2024

TEHRAN-Ten Iranian authors, illustrators, and reading promoters along with a project have been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) 2024.

A total of 245 candidates from 68 countries have been nominated for the 2024 award. The list includes authors and illustrators, as well as storytellers and reading promoters. The laureate will be announced on April 9, 2024, ISNA reported.

The list of Iranian nominees for the world's largest award for children's and young adult literature includes authors Houshang Moradi Kermani, Farhad Hasanzadeh, Abbas Jahangirian, and Jamal Akrami, illustrators Alireza Goldouzian and Nahid Kazemi, author/illustrators Reza Dalvand and Rashin Kheiriyeh, reading promoters Farmehr Monjezi and Ali Asghar Seidabadi, as well as Read with Me project. ▸ **Page 8**

TEHRAN PAPERS

No agreement is possible without Iran

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in the yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

In a note, Kayhan discussed the speech of the foreign minister at the United Nations on the Gaz war and wrote: Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian, in a technical and remarkable speech in New York, put a specific initiative on the table that the Americans should decide on. The foreign minister has said that Tehran is ready to play a more serious role. The key point in Amir Abdollahian's speech was sending a special message from Hamas through the foreign minister. He said that the leaders of the Hamas liberation movement have announced their readiness to release civilian prisoners and that Iran, Turkey, and Qatar are ready to play a role in this important humanitarian issue. Amir Abdollahian's frank words at the United Nations have been faced with a positive response from various actors and have brought together all the governments that seek to play a constructive role in the war and end the Zionist crime. Also, by placing the name of Iran alongside Qatar and Turkey in the equation of the exchange of prisoners, the foreign minister of our country conveyed this message to the axis of evil (the U.S. and the Zionist regime) that no agreement, even limited, will be formed without the involvement of Tehran.

Shargh: Continuation of Tehran's efforts

In a commentary, Shargh addressed Iran's diplomatic efforts for a cease-fire in the Gaza war and said: While Israel first provoked and then attacked the Gaza Strip with the U.S. complicity, they both are accusing Iran of engineering the October 7 attack on Israel. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran, through political and diplomatic moves, is seeking to find a solution to end the killing in the Gaza Strip and establish a ceasefire. On the other hand, the verbal and diplomatic duel between Tehran and Washington has become more intense. (Foreign Ministry spokesman) Nasser Kanani told the Americans to "stop it" after the Western and American authorities continued to make claims against Iran that Tehran was involved in the Palestinian resistance movement's Al-Aqsa Storm Operation and that they did it on the orders of Iran. Iran has repeatedly announced that this operation was entirely designed and implemented by the Palestinian resistance movement, and Tehran does not give orders to the resistance movement and Hamas, and the recent statements of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris addressed to Iran emphasized that Iran should stop. Now we have to see if these calls for "stops" between Iran and America will lead to a reduction in the verbal duel of the parties or not?!

Iran: Tehran's vote for a ceasefire resolution is based on previous positions

The Iran newspaper wrote in an analysis: The Islamic Republic voted in favor of the recent resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in which it emphasized a "two-state" solution to the Palestinian issue, and this vote has been criticized internally. They say this is against the proposal put forward by Iran for holding a referendum on the fate of Palestine with the participation of all the indigenous people. In response to this criticism, the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran declared that Iran's yes vote for the resolution proposed by Jordan regarding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza was in full accordance with the pattern of votes and positions of Iran, and there was no change in Tehran's positions. On the other hand, according to the working procedure of the General Assembly, the Islamic Republic has registered its reservation regarding the two-state solution and the recognition of the sinister Israeli regime in the form of an explanation of the vote. Therefore, due to the contradiction of some of the clauses of this resolution with the definite and stable positions of our country on the issue of Palestine, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not masterminded this resolution.

Farhikhtegan: Baku and Ankara will not give up the Zangezur Corridor so easily

In an article, Farhikhtegan addressed the issue of the Caucasus and Aras Bridge. It wrote: The executive order to build a bridge over the Aras River is a positive message from Aliyev to Tehran that shows Baku has currently given up its plans in the Caucasus at least for now until another time. Although over the past thirty years, the Republic of Azerbaijan has benefited from Iran's safe and stable route to link its mainland to Nakhchivan and Turkey, the capture of the areas in the possession of Armenians this distance is now closer to the new road and bridge. But it seems unlikely that Baku and Ankara have given up the dream of direct connection forever. All the developments of the past three years in the Caucasus region were aimed at realizing this project. That is, both the Second Karabakh War and other developments that took place in the region were in line with this grand project led by Baku and Ankara but supported and guided by other actors behind the scene.

Iran denounces Israeli massacre of Palestinians in Jabalia Camp

TEHRAN- Iran has strongly denounced the Tuesday attack by the Israeli regime on the Jabaliya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the death and injury of hundreds of Palestinians.

"This massacre added another black mark on the already long list of the Zionist regime' war crimes," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said on Tuesday.

The attack on the camp resulted killed or injured at least 400 Palestinians, the majority of them being women and children.

The entire community as a whole, and the UN Security Council in particular, were urged by Kanaani to "act promptly on their international duty to stop the apartheid Zionist regime's killing machine."

Gaza's interior ministry spokesman, Iyad al-Bazum, said that during the blitz American-made bombs had been directed against residential buildings, and that the onslaught had completely destroyed a residential complex.

"These buildings house hundreds of citizens. The occupation's air force destroyed this district with six U.S.-made bombs. It is the latest massacre caused by Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip," he said, calling on the international community "to act immediately to stop Israel before it is too late."

According to the Palestinian government, more than 8,600 Palestinians have lost their lives and over 23,000 have been injured thus far in the conflict. The number does not include the deaths brought on by the Israeli assault of Jabaliya.

In a Saturday post on X, Kanaani said that Israel's "brutal and relentless" crimes in its war on the besieged Gaza Strip have revealed the "moral decay" of the regime's backers, notably the United States, which has justified the regime's atrocities as "self-defense."

"The Zionists' brutal and relentless crimes committed over the past 26 days in Gaza showed the moral decline of the U.S. regime and other hidden and open supporters of the apartheid Zionist regime to the whole world and exposed their hypocrisy," he added.

Kanaani also noted, "The heinous and inhumane crimes of the child-killing Zionist regime against the oppressed Palestinian people in Gaza ... have permanently diminished this regime in the conscience of world people and precipitated its decline."

The spokesperson also called the Palestinian blow to the Israeli regime on October 7 an "irreparable defeat".

Kanaani said, "The Zionist regime and its supporters are doomed to failure in this catastrophic genocide in Gaza."

He alluded to the Israeli regime enforcing a communication ban on the coastal strip during its unsuccessful ground assault on Friday in a separate X post, asserting the blackout was intended to prevent the world from knowing about the regime's defeats.

"The murderous leaders of the child-killing Zionist regime are so unsure of the capability of their army that they have shut down Gaza's internet simultaneously with their purported limited incursion into the region," he highlighted.

Al-Aqsa Storm heralds new era for Palestine, region, Muslim world: senior general

From page 1 ▸ Israel has placed a complete siege on the enclave, depriving the more than two million Palestinian residents of their water, food, fuel, and power.

The United States has been supplying the Israeli regime with thousands of consignments of weaponry ever since the Israeli campaign of aggression against the beleaguered Gaza Strip was launched.

Additionally, Washington has been providing the Tel Aviv regime with a lot of political assistance by vetoing resolutions by the UN Security Council that either demand an immediate end to the regime's aggression or hold it accountable for its crimes.

"Absurd and meaningless"

Major General Baqeri went on to say, "The operation showed that all the notions that the Zionists and their masters had concocted were absurd and meaningless, and all their false delusion of grandeur fell into pieces with this flawless and precise operation."

The senior Iranian commander emphasized that the bombing of defenseless civilians, including women, children, and the elderly, is not and will not be a symbol of strength and victory for the Zionist regime, underscoring that the shameful failure of the Israeli regime cannot be compensated.

"The enemy, who is unable to face confrontation on the battlefield, kills innocent and defenseless people in hospitals, ambulances and houses with planes donated by criminals," Baqeri stressed.

"This is the reality of the United States, Europe and global arrogance, which have displayed the apex of brutality before the eyes of the world," he added.

"Most of the people in the world have shouted for a ceasefire, but the criminal U.S. says a truce, at the present time, suggests the defeat of Israel."

The military chief repeated the proposal by Leader of the Islamic Revolution for holding a referendum with the participation of all Palestinians - Muslims and non-Muslims – to determine the fate of the people, saying this is the only way to end the decades-long conflict.

"There is no fate and end in sight for this battle except the victory of Palestinians, today, all the people across the world are crying out for an end to these crimes and demand relief aid to the people in Gaza," Baqeri said.

He also highlighted, "Should the neighboring countries of Palestine allow people to pass, millions of freedom-seekers of the world will show up at the borders of this holy land to help Palestine."

Affirming that the future of Palestine is quite clear, the top general said, "The future belongs to the Palestinian people and the aggressors and foreign immigrants must leave this land and they have no choice but to do so."

Raisi congratulates Algeria on National Day

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has sent a congratulatory message to his Algerian counterpart, offering congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of Algeria.

In the message, President Raisi congratulated the anniversary of the beginning of the liberating revolution of the country, the achievement of which was the independence and freedom of the historic and proud country of Algeria from colonialism, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

In his message to Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune and the people of Algeria, President Raisi expressed hope that relying on the position of Iran and Algeria in promoting Islamic culture and civilization and enjoying the deep historical and cultural commonalities, the two Muslim countries witness the ever-increasing development of good relations and expanding cooperation in various global and regional fields for the benefit of the highest interests of the Islamic Ummah.

Israel representative "odious behavior" example of inciting hatred: envoy

TEHRAN- Amir Saeid Iravani, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, has stated the Israeli representative's "odious behavior is a clear example of promoting hatred and should be unequivocally condemned."

Iravani said so in letters sent to Secretary-General of the UN Antonio Guterres and President of the Security Council of the UN Sérgio França Danese on Tuesday.

Below is the full text of Iravani's letter:

I am writing to express my strong condemnation and categoric rejection of the recent hate speech, racist remarks, and unfounded allegations made by the representative of the Israeli regime against my Country during the emergency session of the UN Security Council held on October 30, 2023, under the agenda item "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question" (S/2023/9462). Given the format of the meeting, which prevented the Iranian delegation from participating and responding to the unfounded accusations made against my Country, I would like to bring the following points to the attention of the Council members:

1. Once again, the Israeli regime's representative misused the Security Council chamber to spread Iran's phobia and made fabrications and baseless accusations against Iran. Not content with these unfounded allegations, he then resorted to spreading lies, disinformation, and hateful and inflammatory language, while attacking the dignity of Iranian officials. This odious behavior is a clear example of promoting hatred and should be unequivocally condemned.

2. This provocative and irresponsible behavior is entirely consistent with the Israeli regime's long record of utilizing deception and lies as tools. Just last week, following the United Nations Secretary-General's fact-based statement during the UN Security Council open debate on the Palestine issue held on 24 October 2023 (S/2023/9451), in which he correctly stated that Hamas's actions did not occur in isolation or in a vacuum, the Israeli regime's representative attacked the Secretary-General's dignity and engaged in hate speech, even going so far as to demand his resignation as the highest official of the United Nations.

3. The authorities of this regime openly disregard any respect or acknowledgment of the United Nations and openly declare non-compliance with UN resolutions. However, they opportunistically utilize the UN platform to propagate hate, disseminate disinformation, and divert international attention away from the severe atrocities being perpetrated against the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine. This manipulation is facilitated by the unwavering support of the United States.

4. Israel, the occupying apartheid regime, has continued to blatantly violate the fundamental principles and norms of international law, notably international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in occupied Palestine for over seven decades. These violations include brutal massacres, the forced displacement and transfer of civilians, the deliberate targeting of civilians, notably women and children, as well as critical and civilian infrastructure, and the use of starvation as a method of warfare against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. All these criminal actions constitute the gravest international crimes, and their documentation by relevant international bodies is meticulous and extensive. As a result, the Israeli regime must be held accountable and not be permitted to evade responsibility or avoid punishment through disinformation campaigns or by attempting to shift blame onto others.

5. The Islamic Republic of Iran calls upon the international community, in particular the UN Security Council, to fulfill its responsibilities and take resolute actions. These actions must compel the Israeli regime to end its occupation, cease its acts of aggression, and adhere unwaveringly to its international obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

6. I would like to take this opportunity to categorically reject the unsubstantiated allegations against my Country in the letters dated 24 August, 8 and 11 October 2023 from the representative of the Israeli regime addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2023/623, S/2023/744, S/2023/756). It is evident that the Israeli regime is attempting to justify and conceal its criminal acts and atrocities against the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine, along with its persistent breaches of UNSCR 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006), by levying such unfounded accusations.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

Iran wants Israeli rulers tried as war criminals

TEHRAN- The vice president for legal affairs on Wednesday urged active Iranian NGOs to collect signatures so that Israeli rulers can be put on trial as "war criminals".

"The signatures can be submitted to the International Court of Justice (ICJ)," said Mohammad Dehghan on the sidelines of the cabinet session on December 1.

Referring to the Zionist regime's war crimes against the oppressed Gazans, Dehghan also said: "Israel has committed all the crimes mentioned in the ICJ. But the court has failed to condemn the leaders of the Zionist regime."

The vice president blamed the court which evaded responsibility and under the pretext of "lack of money" has refused to condemn the Tel Aviv regime since 2018 when Palestine filed a complaint against the fake regime.

Addressing the ICJ, Dehghan asked the court to condemn the Israeli regime and put an end to Tel Aviv's war crimes.

It should be noted that the Israeli war crimes, including the complete blockade of the Gaza Strip, the unabated bombardment of the residential areas, the cut order, the use of white phosphorus, and genocide, have raised alarms worldwide.

Protocol III of the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons prohibits incendiaries or the use of other substances to attack civilian populations.

He outlined that even if the war in Gaza comes to an end, it is important for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to cooperate and make the Israeli regime pay for its war crimes.

"Palestinians' rights should be pursued," stressed the vice president in the end.

Without U.S. backing, Israel would be crippled within days: Leader

TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Wednesday that Israel will not be able to function without support from Washington.

He made the remarks during a meeting with thousands of pupils ahead of National Day of Students which is also called National Day of Fight against Global Arrogance.

Ayatollah Khamenei condemned the U.S. for its unequivocal support for Israel, saying without Washington's military aid, the regime would not be able to go on for a long amount of time.

"Without America's full-scale support, the Zionist regime would get paralyzed in a matter of only a few days. The Islamic world should also sever all economic ties with the Israeli regime and unite against this regime," the Leader said, adding that Muslims should persist on bringing an end to Israeli crimes against Gaza.

He slammed the massacre of Palestinians in the past three weeks as an "unprecedented crime" in the history of humankind that has shaken masses around the world. The Leader warned that arrogant powers in the world will not be able to reach their vicious goals with bombs and military pressure.

"We are deeply sad for the suffering of the people of Gaza and Palestine. But if we look deeper into the situation, we will understand that Palestinians have, in fact, emerged victorious in this battle, for they have been able to achieve great accomplishments."

Ayatollah Khamenei explained that the great resistance of the people of Gaza has shattered the West's patina of human rights and exposed them to the entire world. That's why hundreds of people have been chanting slogans against the hypocritical rulers of the West in recent weeks.

The Leader pointed out Western propaganda which has been trying to portray recent protests in Western countries as Iran-sponsored. "The gatherings must be a result of the activities of Basij forces in London and Paris!" he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei rebuked Western politicians for labeling Palestinian resistance forces as terrorists, noting that the groups being portrayed as terror organizations are only trying to defend their homeland. "Were the French who fought against Nazi Germany during WWII terrorists? How is it that their fight is considered to be a point of pride and the resistance of Hamas forces is called terrorism?"

> "Were the French who fought against Nazi Germany during WWII terrorists?

The leader lauded Operation Al-Aqsa Storm as an offensive that rooted out years of criminal conduct by the Israeli regime. He stressed that Palestinians managed to carry out the successful operation with the bare minimum.

He also warned Islamic countries against inaction, adding that once Israel gets to crush Gaza, it will begin attacking others in the region.

Ayatollah Khamenei once again pointed out that the Israeli regime has suffered an irreparable blow. "The occupying regime is so powerless and impotent that it's started to lie to its own people. Like how they express concern about Israeli captives but then bomb areas that could lead to the captives' deaths," he averted.

He highlighted the fact that the U.S., Britain, and France have stood alongside Israel and helped the regime with its genocide of Palestinian people. Ayatollah Khamenei urged Muslims around the world to acknowledge these countries' undeniable involvement in Israeli crimes.

"Death to America is a policy"

Referring to the occasion of National Day of Fight against Global Arrogance, Ayatollah Khamenei outlined the roots of Washington's enmity with the Iranian nation.

"Americans and those who, either naively or for other reasons, repeat their words, claim that hostilities and conspiracies of America began after the takeover of their embassy in this country, but this claim is completely false; because historical facts show that American hostility towards the Iranian people began 26 years before the takeover of the embassy, namely from the oppressive coup d›état against Dr. Mossadegh›s national government on August 19, 1953," he pointed out.

The Leader explained how documents obtained from the U.S. embassy showed that Washington had turned into the epicenter of seditions against the people of Iran, months before Iranian students took over the building. Washington was planning coups and civil war while managing a propaganda campaign against Iran's Islamic Revolution.

Referring to the disastrous effects of U.S. domination in Iran, including the establishment of the infamous SAVAK, political impotence, full dependence on Washington, and widespread discrimination, Ayatollah Khamenei noted how the Islamic Revolution did not sit well with Americans.

"Even during the peak days of the revolution, Americans were thinking of coup d›état and mass murder of the nation by sending General Huyser, but the firm determination of Imam and the perseverance of the nation thwarted this conspiracy and the American General was forced to retreat after failing in the massacre of the Iranian people, but Americans are still pursuing the same goal and action in Gaza today."

Ayatollah Khamenei added that "Death to America" is not merely a slogan regurgitated by Iranians, rather, it is a policy that has originated from "the heart of America's endless conspiracies and hostilities towards the Iranian people over the past 7 decades".

Resistance might opt for more surprise actions if Gaza war continues: Iran FM

From Page 1 ▸ Elsewhere in his remarks, he called for boycotting the Israeli regime's products, adding, "We support any political initiative that prevents the spread of war and guarantees the real rights of the Palestinian people."

Amir Abdollahian said it is necessary that Islamic countries establish a court to hold Israel accountable for its "war crimes" against Palestinians.

The senior Iranian diplomat also thanked Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for his stance against the Israeli regime and declared that Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi will soon visit Turkey.

Turkey accuses the West of double-standards

Hakan Fidan, for his part, condemned Western countries for their "double standard" in addressing the Israeli aggression against Gaza.

"Refugee camps, hospitals, and even mosques are under bombardment. The Friday gathering was one of our biggest reactions. We do not accept double standards with Ukraine and Palestine. If we want a just world, we must behave principled and coherent," the Turkish foreign minister stressed.

Fidan continued by warning Israel that its bloodshed of Palestinians "will not lead anywhere". He said Ankara is engaging with different parties to put an end to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

"We follow this action globally and especially with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We pursue diplomacy with the Arab Union, the African Union, the United

Nations, and all countries in the world. Unfortunately, the European Union does not want to hear about a ceasefire".

After the press conference, Iran's foreign minister held talks with Erdogan, where he reportedly discussed the latest developments in Gaza.

Israeli regime is collapsing: defense chief

TEHRAN – Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiyani has said that the Israeli regime is collapsing because it was caught off guard during the recent attack by Palestinian resistance groups.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Ashtiyani said, "Any country is defensively weak if it is truly surprised at one level of surprise and cannot anticipate. The Zionist regime was surprised at all three strategic, operational and tactical levels. Such a regime can be said to be collapsing with this surprise."

He added, "This regime was surprised by a Palestinian fighting group, and this shows that all their claims and the dimensions of their defense and intelligence capabilities were nothing more than deception. They are bogged down and they do not have the possibility to repair their faces or get out of this swamp."

The defense minister said, "The Americans, who are leaders in strategic and calculation errors, have been caught in this quagmire along with the Zionist regime, and America will definitely be hit. Muslims, freedom fighters and countries in the region have some patience. Surely, all countries have different options on the table and are considering them."

He also warned that if Israel and its supporters do not stop their mistakes, they will be harmed seriously in the region and beyond.

"If this war is not stopped quickly and the Zionists and their supporters do not stop their big mistakes, they will definitely suffer serious damage at the regional and extra-regional level. Some European countries that help the Zionists should be careful not to incur the wrath of the Muslims of the world," Ashtiyani said, according to IRNA.

New equipment unveiling

The Iranian defense minister also said that a new long-range air defense system will be unveiled in the coming weeks.

The new system is called Martyr Aliverdi. He did not offer more detail about the Martyr Aliverdi defense system.

The defense minister also pointed to the end of the UN arms embargo on Iran, saying it would help Iran.

"The end of the arms embargo will also increase our defense exports and imports," he said, adding, "We have already had communication and defense interactions with different countries, and the lifting of the arms embargo can lead to more interactions."

He continued, "We have very high capabilities in defense fields and many countries are requesting to buy some of these systems. Since the issue is related to defense, we consider all international conditions and regulations."

SPORTS

Iran's Oladghobad named AFC Futsal Player of the Year

TEHRAN – Iran futsal player Moslem Oladghobad was named as the AFC Futsal Player of the Year.

He was confirmed as the AFC Futsal Player of the Year after guiding his nation to the Final of the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Kuwait 2022, where he was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

Saudi Arabian sensation Salem Al Dawsari and Australian icon Samantha Kerr have clinched the prestigious AFC Player of the Year Award in the men's and women's categories respectively at the AFC Annual Awards Doha 2022 on Tuesday at the Qatar National Convention Centre's Al Mayassa Theatre.

Iran edged by Philippines at AFC Women's Olympic Qualifying Tournament

TEHRAN – Iran ended their Group A campaign in the AFC Women's Olympic Qualifying Tournament - Asian Qualifiers Round 2 with a 1-0 loss against the Philippines on Wednesday.

Philippines took the lead in the 19th minute when Alicia Barker was put through on the right and her cutback found Sofia Harrison, who saw her shot parried by Zahra Kajavi but Tahnai Annis was on hand to tuck home the rebound.

The Southeast Asian side were in control for much of the first half but just before the half-time break, Iran had a chance to equalizer but Zahra Ghanbari's attempt in added time was pushed away by Olivia McDaniel.

Iran looked the better side after the break with the dangerous Ghanbari dominating midfield and even struck the crossbar in the 50th minute, forcing Mark Torcaso to make four changes in the 56th minute - including bringing on Jessica Miclat for goalscorer Annis.

The quadruple substitutions took the sting out of Iran's momentum with the game becoming a more balanced affair for the remainder of the match as Philippines hung on for their second win.

Maryam Azmoun's girls lost to hosts Australia 2-0 in their first match and were held to a goalless draw by Chinese Taipei.

Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games closes with success and growth

TEHRAN - The Closing Ceremony for the 4th Asian Para Games took place on 28th October and signaled the end to six days of competitions that saw 3020 athletes compete in 502 medal events.

Speaking at the ceremony, President of the Asian Paralympic Committee Majid Rashed declared that the Games had surpassed his expectations and taken the Asian Paralympic Movement to a new level.

He went on to state that 33 NPCS were on the medals table and this was the most ever.

He congratulated Yemen (bronze), Nepal (bronze), and Kyrgyzstan (one gold, two silver and one bronze) for winning their first ever Asian Para Games medals and outlined that many records had been broken during the Games, including 279 Asian Games records, 71 Asian records and 20 World Records.

Addressing the athletes, he said; "Athletes, you have inspired us all with your performances and you have shown the world that there are no limits to what can be achieved with determination and courage.

"All of this shows that the Paralympic Movement in Asia is getting stronger. And as I've always said, 'we are stronger together'".

He thanked the people behind the success of the Games; HAPGOC, the local and Chinese government, the volunteers, sponsors and the media.

After lowering the APC flag and playing the APC anthem, Hangzhou mayor Yao Gaoyuan handed over the flag to Rashed, who entrusted it to Hideaki Ohmura, governor of Aichi prefecture and Hideo Nakata, deputy mayor of Nagoya, the host city of the 2026 Asian Para Games.

Competition concluded earlier in the day, with China beating Iran in Blind Football 2-1 on penalties after the game finished 0-0 at full time. The Rowing events ended with China taking four of the Gold medals and Uzbekistan the remaining one.

China finished atop the medal tally for the fourth consecutive edition, after winning 214 golds, 167 silvers and 140 bronzes, the team secured their best record at an Asian Para Games. They were represented by 439 athletes in 390 events of 22 sports. Their athletes set 12 world records and 36 Asian records.

Chinese swimmer Jiang Yuyan won seven gold medals and one bronze, the most in the 4th Asian Para Games in Hangzhou. and because of her achievements, she was named the flag bearer for her delegation during the closing ceremony. The 19-year old is already a star in the sport world, as she has already won two gold, one silver and one bronze medals and broke three world records during the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. On 2021 she even won the Asia Paralympic Committee's 2021 Asian Best Young Athlete Award.

Yuyan lost her right arm and right leg in a car accident when she was three.

Iran and Japan sit second and third in the tally with 44-46-41 and 42-49-59 respectively.

A total of 3,021 athletes from 44 countries and regions took part in Hangzhou, which marked the second time that China has hosted the continental para multi-sports event following its inaugural edition in 2010 in Guangzhou.

Saudi Arabia will likely host 2034 FIFA World Cup

TEHRAN - Saudi Arabia is all but guaranteed to host the 2034 FIFA World Cup after Australia's soccer federation announced it won't submit a competitive bid for the tournament, as the Middle Eastern country establishes itself as an emerging sports hub.

Australia on Tuesday said it would not bid to host the 2034 World Cup, hours before FIFA's deadline for countries to express interest in bringing the world's most-watched sports tournament to their shores.

A potential rival bid from Australia was the only hurdle standing in the way of Saudi Arabia's plan to host the tournament, the New York Times reported, after FIFA announced it would only consider bidders from Asia and Oceania.

The president of the Asian Football Confederation said when bidding began "the entire Asian football family" would stand in support of Saudi Arabia, which would have made it difficult for Australia to win enough of the 211 FIFA federation votes to claim the bid, according to the Times.

Saudi Arabia will be only the second Arab country to ever host the World Cup following Qatar's organizing of the tournament in 2022.

Transit of goods via Iran rises almost 15% in 7 months on year

TEHRAN- Transit of commodities through Iran increased by 14.97 percent during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Mohammad Rezvani-Far said that 9.3 million tons of commodities were transited via the country in the first seven of the present year.

As previously announced by the deputy transport minister, 10.8 million tons of commodities were transited through the country in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Shahriyar Afandizadeh also announced that Iran registered a new record high with the transit of 8.3 million tons of non-oil goods in 1401, adding that 2.5 million tons of oil products were also transited via the country in the previous year.

"Considering the transit of 7.5 million tons of non-oil goods in 1400, we have seen a 10.7-percent growth in the transit of this type of goods in 1401 compared to the previous year", the official said.

"In 1401, we witnessed important developments and achievements in the strategic and operational areas of the country's transit, whose definitive effects will be seen gradually and steadily on the growth of transit from the country in 1402 and the coming years", the deputy transport minister further highlighted.

Afandizadeh then explained: "In line with the activation and development of the North-South International Transport Corridor, in a tripartite meeting in last September between the high-ranking officials of our country and the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku, while aiming to achieve the transit of 15 million tons of goods through this corridor by 2030, agreements were reached in the field of strengthening the cooperation of the three countries in joint investment and financing, the completion and development of key infrastructures and their exploitation, especially the construction of the Rasht-Astara railway line, facilitating cross-border traffic of goods and increasing the quality and quantity of this traffic", adding that the implementation of these agreements is being followed up.

He went on to say, "One of the most important events last year was Iran's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In a short period of time after the meeting of the heads of Shanghai in September 1401 in Samarkand, the first six-party meeting of the transport ministers of Iran and the countries of Central Asia, in addition to Russia and Azerbaijan was held in Tehran in October 1401 with the goal of achieving 20-million tons of annual transit between Iran and Central Asian countries, as an area with a very high role and importance in east-west and north-south transit, especially after the recent regional and international developments, which was approved by the members."

This year, the issue of transit and playing a role in major programs such as those related to China's Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is one of the main priorities of the Transport Ministry in developing transport relations with regional and extra-regional target countries, the deputy transport minister noted.

After seven years of reduction in the transit of goods from the country, the growth path of transit resumed in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022) and with the passage of 12.65 million tons of goods through Iran, a growth of 68 percent was achieved.

The policy of paying attention to neighbors and developing political and economic relations with neighboring countries in the current government, increasing attention to road and rail routes in the world, and the efforts and cooperation of transportation and trade-related organizations in establishing or activating corridors through the country has led to significant growth in transit of goods through Iran.

Iran is one of the countries with a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due.

Paying attention to upstream documents, especially the country's development plans, and the government's decision to develop transit, paying special attention to infrastructure development, reducing transit time, making it cheaper to cross Iran and making more advantages over competitors, due to the short path for customers, can lead to facilitating the development of transit so that the country can reach the desired growth in this due.

In early June, Afandizadeh announced that the Transport and Urban Development Ministry is preparing a five-year comprehensive plan for increasing transportation and transit relations with Central Asia, as well as the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman countries.

The plan includes the basic strategies and executive roadmap in a step-by-step manner for the next five years and will mark the evolution of the bilateral transport and transit relations with the target countries, including the countries of Central Asia and the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, Afandizadeh explained.

This year, the issue of transit and playing a role in major programs such as those related to China's Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is one of the main priorities of the Transport Ministry in developing transport relations with regional and extra-regional target countries, the deputy transport minister noted.

Over 15.4m tons of steel ingots produced in H1

TEHRAN- As announced by the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA), 15.422 million tons of steel ingots were produced in Iran in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22).

As reported, the steel ingot output in the first six months of the present year fell 5.8 percent as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

The country is expected to climb to seventh place among the world's top steel producers by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

Iran, Iraq stress using national currencies in bilateral trade

From page 1 ▸ Mining and Trade Abbas Ali-Abadi. In this meeting, the two sides explored avenues for strengthening bilateral relations and bolstering mutual trade exchanges and participating in various fields."

The Iraqi prime minister expressed his country's readiness to expand bilateral cooperation in the fields of petrochemical industries and fertilizers.

According to this statement, Iran's minister of industry, while conveying the warm greetings of Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi, emphasized the need for advancing trade and economic projects in the face of existing economic challenges in the region and the world.

Iranian industry minister arrived in Baghdad on Tuesday for a one-day visit, aiming to meet and hold talks with senior Iraqi officials in order to explore avenues of economic cooperation.

Iran›s Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy Mehdi Safari also accompanied Ali-Abadi in his visit to the neighboring country.

In his visit, Ali-Abadi also met and held talks with Iraqi Minister of Industry and Minerals Fawzi Hariri, the head of the Iraq Chamber of Commerce and a number of other officials from the country.

As previously announced by an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the value of Iran's export to Iraq increased by 15 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Iran's Industry Minister Abbas Ali-Abadi (3rd L) meets Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani (1st R) in Baghdad on Tuesday.

Farzad Piltan, the director-general of TPO›s Office of West Asian Countries, said that based on the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration, Iran exported commodities worth over $10 billion to its neighbor in the previous year.

By stating that Iraq is one of the strategic partners of Iran in the field of foreign trade and especially exports, he put the value of Iran's import from Iraq at about $200 million in the past year.

Considering Iran›s vast export capacity and Iraq›s large market for Iranian goods, both sides want to expand the volume of bilateral economic exchanges.

Iran and Iraq have set a target of $20 billion in annual trade, and businessmen and authorities of both countries are determined to meet that target, Head of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce Yahya Ale-Es'haq has stated.

"In general, Iran and Iraq have agreed to improve relations and change the monetary and banking conditions so that the central banks of the two countries will ease the current situation and solve the problems," he has noted.

The current administration of Iran under President Raisi has shown great interest in broadening and enhancing trade and economic ties with neighboring states, Ale Es'haq has emphasized.

In late September, TPO hosted an Iran-Iraq business conference in which officials from the two sides discussed ways of expanding mutual business relations.

Speaking at the conference, TPO Head Mehdi Zeyghami stressed the need to balance the trade between the two countries, saying: "The level of trade and economic relations between Iran and Iraq has increased significantly in recent years, and the figure can be increased up to 40 billion dollars if the two sides' trade is balanced."

The government of Iran is ready to cooperate with Iraq for the industrial development of the country in the 2035 horizon, he noted, saying: "Iran is ready to transfer technology to Iraq and develop industrial projects in the country."

"We hope to achieve the goals outlined by the presidents of the two countries by solving issues related to logistics and financial transactions," the official added.

Iranian trade delegation to visit Tajikistan in early November

TEHRAN – The Iran-Tajikistan Joint Chamber of Commerce is going to send a trade delegation to Dushanbe during November 7-12, concurrent with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to the country.

As reported by the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) portal, the visit of this delegation has been organized in collaboration with the ICCIMA and Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

Holding a business conference with the presence of economic operators and officials of the two countries and business visits during the trip will be part of the plans of this visit.

In a meeting between Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mehdi Zeyghami and Tajikistan's Ambassador in Tehran Nizamuddin Zahedi, in late July, the two sides discussed the ways of removing trade barriers and improving economic relations between the two countries.

Speaking in the meeting, the Tajik ambassador emphasized that his country is eager for expanding trade ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Zeyghami for his part said that President Ebrahim Raisi's administration attaches great importance to trade ties with neighboring countries, including Tajikistan, and proposed holding a joint business forum between the two countries during the Iranian president's upcoming visit to Dushanbe.

He also pointed to the decrease in the volume of trade between the two countries and noted that TPO is conducting research for identifying the causes and is taking the necessary measures to remove the obstacles to the development of trade between Iran and Tajikistan.

The official further announced that Iran is going to dispatch a commercial attaché to Tajikistan by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (late March 2024).

Oil Ministry signs 12 deals worth $34m with knowledge-based firms in a year

TEHRAN – Iranian Oil Ministry has signed 12 deals worth $34 million with various knowledge-based companies over the past year, IRNA reported.

As reported, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) with six deals valued at $15 million has had the most deals signed with the country's knowledge-based companies.

The value of the contracts signed over the past year with knowledge-based companies has increased by 110 percent compared to the preceding 12 months.

Iranian Oil Ministry has so far inked a total of 51 deals valued at $68 million with 40 knowledge-based companies for the first-time production of equipment and items needed in the oil ministry.

The production of the mentioned items and equipment, which have been imported into the country so far, is going to save the country $305 million.

The ministry plans to sign 20 more contracts worth $135 million with knowledge-based companies in the current year and the next Iranian calendar year (ends in late March 2025).

Back in May, NIOC Head Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr said the company signed 170 deals and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with knowledge-based firms on the sidelines of the 27th International Oil, Gas, Refining, and Petrochemical Exhibition of Iran (Iran Oil Show 2023).

According to Khojasteh-Mehr, the mentioned documents included 120 MOUs and 50 deals, Shana reported.

Referring to the slogan of this year's exhibition, which is "oil industry, knowledge-based production, and optimal consumption", the official added: "We have had good meetings with the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology and Knowledge-Based Economy in order to solve upstream issues and challenges related to oil and gas fields."

"I hope that at the end of this exhibition, we will witness the finalization of these contracts, and next year, we unveil the products of these [knowledge-based] companies at the exhibition, and this will be the most important achievement," he added.

Iran Oil Show 2023 kicked off in a ceremony in the Iranian capital Tehran on May 17 and was wrapped up on May 20.

In addition to the Iranian firms, some 200 companies from 13 countries took part in this year's exhibition.

TEDPIX drops 10,600 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 10,698 points (0.54 percent) to 1.970,506 on Wednesday.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Head of Iran's Securitas and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi said that using the capacities of the country's private sector in the stock market has been one of the main strategies of the organization over the past year.

"One of the main approaches of the Securitas and Exchange Organization during the past year has been to use the power of the private sector, because government entities and the public sector do not have the necessary characteristics for economic prosperity, so we must increase the share of the private sector in the capital market," Eshqi said in a conference in Khorasan Razavi Province.

Large industries have their own problems and fluctuations, but small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can compensate for these fluctuations, the official said, adding that the main part of the world economy is moving towards small and medium-sized companies because value, employment, and innovation lie in such companies.

The SEO head further noted that the stock market should mainly focus on investment and financing, saying: "We need to direct the liquidity flow towards production."

Emphasizing the important role of the seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026) in securing the future of the capital market, Eshqi stated: "One of the major indicators of investment is predictability, so more action should be taken in the seventh development plan to make the economy more predictable."

He pointed to the holding of investment and financing conferences in provinces as a starting point for a new movement towards promoting investment and said: "Economic enterprises do not have enough familiarity with the capital market and such conferences are bridges that provide the necessary platform in this regard."

More than a dozen Israeli troops killed in 24 hours

Occupation admits to "paying heavy prices" in Gaza

From page 1 ▸ The latest deaths bring the total number of Israeli troops killed since the outbreak of the current war to at least 328.

Addressing the latest loss of Israeli soldiers, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke of "a difficult war" and "painful losses".

In a post on social media, the Israeli minister of war, Yoav Gallant, said the regime's land operations against Hamas "are a hard and painful blow".

He added that "unfortunately" the occupation's war on Gaza and "fighting deep in the Gaza Strip exacts a heavy price".

In remarks made earlier, he spoke of the war on Gaza and how "the prices in the last day were heavy prices". A day earlier, Palestinian resistance factions stated they had engaged in fierce clashes with the invading forces and targeted them in ambushes and traps, while restricting any Israeli military advances to agricultural areas and the separation wall.

Hamas has published a new video showing what it says are their fighters confronting Israeli forces.

The footage was filmed west of the Erez settlement.

The video shows Hamas fighters, carrying rocket launchers, are moving in short and quick steps through the shrubs and small trees.

Gunfire can be heard being exchanged as the resistance fighters rush over the sandy shrubland.

The footage then cuts away to show what appears to be the impact of a rocket being fired.

Another shot depicts an aerial view showing the occupation troops and several tanks mobilized in the desert.

Erez is a settlement in southwest occupied Palestine, located nearly a kilometer from the Gaza separation wall. It was one of the sites targeted by Hamas in the al-Aqsa Storm Operation on October 7.

Palestinian missiles continue to rain down on Israeli military points and settlements.

Rockets fired from Gaza toward the Israeli settlement of Ashdod injured four settlers, according to the regime's officials.

A man was taken to the hospital in a serious condition with shrapnel injuries, Israeli rescue services claimed. Three other men suffered injuries from glass shards.

In a verified video, damaged cars and debris can be seen.

Scores of rockets are being launched from the totally blockaded Gaza every day. The intensity of the barrages, on many occasions, has prevented the Israeli Iron Dome system from living up to its much-claimed accuracy rate. It regularly fails to intercept the incoming missiles. Sirens sounded in Askelon, Ashdod, and other southern Israeli settlements.

> The situation in Gaza "is a text-book case of genocide," says the director of the New York office of High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Global anger continues to rise as images of the scenes at the Jabalia refugee camp, where hundreds of people have been killed and injured in Israeli airstrikes, show people are still searching for casualties.

Gaza's health ministry said six bombs struck the area.

The armed wing of Hamas has said seven detainees, including foreigners, were killed as a result of the Israeli massacre at Jabalia.

The resistance group said three of the detainees were foreigners.

"The al-Qassam Brigades announce the killing of seven of its civilian detainees in the Jabalia massacre, including three holders of foreign passports," it wrote on social media. It puts a dent in the regime's key goals of its ground invasion to "bring hostages home safely".

It is not the first time Israeli airstrikes have killed the hostages being held by Hamas, which has expressed its readiness to free all civilian detainees but says the indiscriminate Israeli bombing is preventing the group from doing so.

The Jabalia refugee camp is located at the northern end of the Gaza Strip and is one of the most densely populated places on Earth.

On Wednesday the regime's warplanes bombed the camp again, leading to "dozens of Palestinians martyrs and many others injuries", according to the Gaza health ministry. In the south, people looked on as an excavator cleared rubble after a residential building was hit by Israeli bombardment in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. Rafah is one of the areas the Israeli military has ordered residents to evacuate.

The regime has once again cut off internet and phone connections across the Gaza Strip, adding to the strict entry of water, food, medicine?, fuel, and other essential supplies.

The Israeli military says it has waged more than 11,000 airstrikes on the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the current war on October 7.

Palestinian civilians, in particular children and women, are paying the price of these bombing campaigns.

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign says, "A child is being killed every 10 minutes." The Israeli massacre is drawing the wrath of regional and international bodies as well as countries.

Yemen has claimed responsibility for a salvo of long-range missile and drone attacks that targeted the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories on Tuesday.

A spokesperson for the Ansarullah government in Sana'a said, "Our forces have launched a batch of ballistic and cruise missiles at Israeli targets in the occupied Palestinian territories."

It is believed to be the third such attack since the latest war on Gaza began. In a blow to the image of the United Nations, a senior UN human rights official has resigned in protest of the organization's handling of the situation in Gaza, where he said "a genocide [is] unfolding before our eyes". Craig Mokhiber, the director of the New York office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, wrote in his resignation letter that it had become "painfully clear" that the UN had failed in its duty "to meet the imperatives of prevention of mass atrocities, of protection of the vulnerable, and of accountability for perpetrators".

He added, the current wholesale slaughter of the Palestinian people, rooted in an ethno-nationalist settler colonial ideology, in continuation of decades of their systematic persecution and purging, based entirely upon their status as Arabs ... leaves no room for doubt or debate... Across the land, Apartheid rules."

The situation in Gaza "is a text-book case of genocide," he continued, with the aim of the "expedited destruction of the last remnants of indigenous Palestinian life in Palestine". He further pointed out, "What's more, the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and much of Europe, are wholly complicit in the horrific assault."

This comes as Bolivia has severed diplomatic ties with the Israeli regime after condemning its "crimes against humanity".

Other Latin American countries have expressed their outrage at the disproportionate Israeli force being used against the civilians of Gaza. Chile and Colombia have recalled their ambassadors from Israel.

A rider called death

From page 1 ▸ Such acts were undoubtedly part of Israel's efforts aimed at provoking Palestinian resistance groups and drawing reactions from them. But what the regime did not expect was getting humiliated by a highly impressive operation that was carried out by people who have been living their lives under a brutal siege.

The tragedy that unfolded at the Al-Ahli Arab hospital, where hundreds of innocent women and children were killed during an Israeli strike, and Netanyahu blaming the event on resistance forces is highly reminiscent of another fake story that was produced by the American propaganda machine during the cold war. It tells the story of a Russian soldier who is tasked with escorting 20 German soldiers to be executed in the streets of Berlin. A family member of one of the soldiers recognizes him during this sad parade and proceeds to beg the Russian man to spare him for the sake of his children and wife who are waiting for his return. The Russian man who knows he needs to turn in exactly 20 people for execution, lets the soldier go and proceeds to choose a random person in the audience to add to the execution list. That civilian was executed

along with 19 German soldiers.

Now, individuals like Netanyahu, who are killing as many Palestinians as the martyrs in the Al-Ahli hospital every two or three days, like the same false story of the Cold War soldier and claiming to replace a dead soldier, do they have the moral authority to disown themselves from any killing?

Telling the people of West Asia that they can reach peace by reconciling with Israel and trying to fool them with glitter, celebrations and pompous claims is like having a doctor named West giving a patient called east painkillers to cure his painful symptoms. The painkillers will only act as a temporary relief until the patient finds out that he has been in fact suffering from cancer and the doctor who didn't want his patient to seek treatment has been hiding the truth.

Perhaps the innocent people of Gaza are experiencing these prophetic words of John›s Revelation in the New Testament: "I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him."

And in this apocalypse, this rider of death, for all the people, is undoubtedly Netanyahu.

Now, the Western backers of Netanyahu's killing campaign like Biden and Macron should be able to answer one very important and fundamental question. If years of brutal siege on Gaza resulted in the creation of resistance groups like Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, what will the killing of thousands of women and children and further displacement of Palestinians lead to for Israel?

Do this rider of death and his supporters not realize that the massacre and genocide of Palestinians these days is only carrier of a basket for a more intense revenge in the future, which instead of the Nile will start from inside the tunnels of Gaza, and like Moses, with complete surprise, will continue within each and every room of Pharaoh›s palace forever.

Biden threatens to veto Israel aid package

US President Joe Biden will refuse to sign a Republican-backed military aid package for Israel if it does not include billions in funding for Ukraine, according to the White House's budget office.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a statement on Tuesday dissecting the Republican proposal, saying it "inserts partisanship into support for Israel" and fails to devote resources for Kiev in its conflict with Russia.

"Congress has consistently worked in a bipartisan manner to provide security assistance to Israel, and this bill threatens to unnecessarily undermine that longstanding approach," the office said, adding that "bifurcating Israel security assistance from the other priorities in the national security supplemental will have global consequences."

Republicans in Congress put forward a $14 billion aid package for Israel on Monday, calling to slash funds set aside for the Internal Revenue Service under Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, and to omit security assistance to Ukraine, among other cuts. Newly appointed GOP House Speaker Mike Johnson has stated he would like to "bifurcate" aid for Israel and Ukraine, going directly against the White House's plan to link the two issues.

WORLD HEADLINES

Israel deploys missile boats in Red Sea as Houthis attack from Yemen

The Israeli military said it had deployed missile boats in the Red Sea on Wednesday as reinforcements, a day after Houthi movement said it had launched missile and drone attacks on Israel and vowed to carry out more.

Images disseminated by the military showed Saar-class corvettes patrolling near Eilat port in the Red Sea, which Israel sees as a new front as its war in Gaza draws retaliation from elsewhere in the region. The Houthi movement said on Tuesday they had launched three drone and missile attacks towards Israel since the start of the Hamas-Israel war on Oct. 7. It vowed there would be more such attacks to come "to help the Palestinians to victory".

In what appeared to be a new attack overnight, the Israeli military said it had intercepted an "aerial threat" over the Red Sea.

Israeli National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi said on Tuesday the Houthi attacks were intolerable, but declined to elaborate when asked how Israel might respond.

India replaces squadron of Soviet-era MiGs with Russian-made Sukhoi jets

The Indian Air Force's Number 4 squadron of Soviet-made MiG-21 Bison fighter aircraft performed its final flight over a base in Rajasthan, where they had been stationed since 1966. From now on, the squadron will operate modern Russia-made Sukhoi Su-30 MKI fighter jets, the Indian Ministry of Defense said in a statement on Tuesday.

The Bison, originally developed in the USSR, was the most advanced MiG-21 jet ever built. "Marking an end of an era, the MiG-21 Bison aircraft were seen for the last time in the skies of Uttarlai in Barmer district of Rajasthan," an IAF spokesperson wrote on X (formerly Twitter). "The MiG-21 Bison flew alongside the Su-30 MKI to mark the occasion."

The MiG-21 was inducted by the IAF in 1963 and was the country's first supersonic fighter, the defense ministry noted, adding that it had participated in all major conflicts involving India since then. New Delhi still operates two squadrons of MiG-21s, which the IAF is planning to phase out by 2025. Each squadron has between 16 and 18 jets.

Taliban urges Pakistan to grant more time for undocumented Afghans to leave

Afghanistan's Taliban government has urged Pakistan to give undocumented Afghans in the country more time to leave as pressure mounts at border posts where thousands of returnees have gathered, fleeing the threat of deportation.

The Pakistani government has given 1.7 million undocumented Afghans in the country until November 1 to leave voluntarily or be forcibly removed.

More than 130,000 people have left Pakistan since the order was given at the start of October, according to Pakistani border officials, creating bottlenecks on either side of crossing points.

Taliban authorities thanked Pakistan and other countries that have hosted millions of Afghans who fled during decades of conflict.

However, in a statement late on Tuesday, they also "asked them to not forcibly deport Afghans with little notice but to give them time to prepare".

China backs peace conference on Palestine to push for 'two-state solution'

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi has expressed support for a broad and authoritative peace conference on Palestine as soon as possible.

The goal is to push for a "two-state solution", Wang said in a call with his Omani counterpart, Sayyid Badr Albusaid, according to a Chinese foreign ministry statement.

Earlier in October, Egypt hosted a summit with international leaders in Cairo, but the meeting ended without agreement on a joint statement.

Iranian-Turkmen tourism festival opens in Ashgabat

TEHRAN – An Iranian-Turkmen festival, throwing the spotlight on top travel destinations, folk arts, local cuisines, traditions, and handicrafts of the two nations, opened yesterday in Ashgabat.

A host of cultural officials, businesspeople, travel insiders, artists, and craftspeople, performance troupes attended the two-day event held at the exhibition hall of the State Academy of Arts of Turkmenistan.

According to organizers, promoting mutual tourism potential is the main goal of the festival.

The event staged an exposition of decorative and applied arts such as carpets and rugs, dishes inlaid with semi-precious stones, and backgammon made of ivory for which the Islamic Republic has been famous since ancient times.

Moreover, visitors were distributed with tourist brochures and booklets to learn more about the tourism opportunities of Iran and Turkmenistan.

Furthermore, representatives of travel companies from two neighboring countries took part in the forum as each travel company presented its stand and the services it provides.

At the end of the opening ceremony of the festival, folk groups performers for the visitors. All guests were invited to taste the national cuisine of the two countries.

Mutual cultural exchanges have gained growth following a meeting between the two countries' presidents last year, said Navid Rasuli, Iran's Cultural Attaché to Turkmenistan.

"Many Iranian tourism companies are active in Turkmenistan, indicating the cooperative relations between the two countries. Furthermore, daily exchanges between the two borders around one thousand people," Rasuli said.

Additionally, the Turkmen people are familiar with Iran, and similarities between the historical, religious, and cultural heritage of the two nations are prevalent, he said and added: "Both countries' tourism companies will hold B2B meetings during this cultural event, and agreements are also in preparation and awaiting signature."

He also noted that from early 2023, an international seminar will be held in Turkmenistan to showcase the country's tourism activities and to better introduce it to the world, following an order from Turkmenistan's president.

The official emphasized that while strict rules for visas and travel to Turkmenistan are necessary, efforts are being made to solve the tourism industry's problems and promote it. "Negotiations between the two countries are already underway in this regard."

Organized by the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), the Embassy of Iran in Turkmenistan, and Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the festival features sections on medical tourism as well.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 27 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list

1.9 million Iranians visit Turkey in nine months

TEHRAN – Turkey welcomed 1.9 million Iranian nationals during the first nine months of the year.

The neighboring country has long been a popular destination for Iranian travelers. According to available data, the Islamic Republic became Turkey's fourth tourism source, with 280,951 visits.

In general, foreign tourist arrivals in Turkey reached 39.2 million, which shows a 12.7 percent increase year on year.

Data released by the Turkish Statistical Institute on Oct. 31, suggests that the transcontinental country fetched $20.2 billion of tourism revenues in the third quarter, which jumped 13 percent compared to that of a year earlier.

Turkey has set a goal to host 60 million tourists and generate $56 billion in tourism revenues during the current year.

Russians constituted the largest group of foreign holidaymakers. 5.2 million Russian nationals visited Turkey during the nine-month period, which showed a robust 34 percent increase from a year earlier.

Travelers from Germany ranked second at 4.86 million, followed by Britons at 3.2 million and Bulgarian citizens at 2.15 million in January-September.

Arrivals from Ukraine increased by 28 percent to around 663,000 despite the ongoing war with Russia, the data revealed.

Istanbul was foreigners' favorite destination, attracting 13.2 million tourists, while Antalya, on the Mediterranean coast, welcomed 12 million foreign holidaymakers in the first nine months of the year. Moreover, the northwestern province of Edirne was visited by some 3.7 million foreigners.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites

Quebrada de Humahuaca

Quebrada de Humahuaca, situated in Agentina's province of Jujuy, follows the line of a major cultural route, the Camino Inca, along the spectacular valley of the Rio Grande, from its source in the cold high desert plateau of the High Andean lands to its confluence with the Rio Leone some 150 km to the south.

The UNESCO-designated valley demonstrates substantial evidence of its use as a major trade route over the past 10,000 years. It features visible traces of prehistoric hunter-gatherer communities, of the Inca Empire (15th to 16th centuries), and of the fight for independence in the 19th and 20th centuries.

According to UNESCO, the property is a highly representative example of the south Andean valleys, with an exceptional system of communication routes and economic, social, and cultural coordination.

This is the most important physical linkage between the high Andean lands and the extensive temperate plains in south-eastern South America. Its impressive natural environment is kept almost intact, with hundreds of archaeological and architectural sites that bear witness to its long and rich history. The valley shows substantial evidence of its use as a major trade route over the past 10,000 years. Scattered along the valley are extensive remains of successive settlements whose inhabitants created and used these linear routes. They include prehistoric hunter/gatherer and early farming communities (9000 BC to 400 CE), large structured agricultural societies (400 CE-900), flourishing pre-Hispanic towns and villages (900-1430/80), the Incan empire (1430/80-1535), Spanish towns, villages and churches (153/93-1810), and traces of Republican struggles for independence (1810-20th century).

Of particular note are the extensive remains of stone-walled agricultural terrace fields at Coctaca, thought to have originated around 1,500 years ago and still in use today; these are associated with a string of fortified towns known as pucaras . The field system and the pucaras together make a dramatic impact on the landscape one that is unrivalled in South America. The valley also displays several churches and chapels and a vibrant vernacular architectural tradition.

The current population, on its part, keeps its traditions in an outstanding cultural landscape. Thus, Quebrada de Humahuaca is an extremely complex heritage system characterized by elements of various kinds inserted in a stunning, impressive and colorful landscape. The interaction between the geo-ecological system and the successive societies and cultures that have occupied it for the last 10,000 years shows space-time continuity that is hard to find in other areas. Separated from the ensemble, only a few properties can be considered unique and outstanding. However, the combination of natural and cultural elements has given rise to a site that is beyond comparison in every sense.

According to the UN cultural body, the prperty reflects the way its strategic position has engendered settlement, agriculture and trade. Its distinctive pre-Hispanic and pre-Incan settlements, as a group with their associated field systems, form a dramatic addition to the landscape and one that can certainly be called outstanding.

Field research investigates early evidence of perfume-making in heart of Iran

TEHRAN – Research commissioned by the Iranian Institute of Anthropology and Culture is investigating history, resources, know-how, and early evidence of perfume-making around the Zagros mountain range in the heart of the Iranian Plateau.

One of the researchers, Masoumeh Rakhsha, says perfume-making and the extraction of aromatic essences have a long history in the country, CHTN reported.

The backbone of the survey is a field investigation to identify, classify, and document aromatic plants and sweet-smelling oils among various Iranian ethnic groups, and tribes-people settling in the Zagros cultural area, she noted.

"Humans have long been tried to extract the pleasant smell of materials and plants in nature in various ways such as burning, steaming, distillation, oil extraction, etc., and use them in their daily lives," she explained.

Talking about the significance of the Zagros area, she said it has long been an important biological resource in terms of plant species and on the other hand it was the cradle of great civilizations such as Mesopotamia and Elam.

"Therefore, it seemed necessary to shed new light on aromatic plants in this area and discuss the method of extraction and how to use them among the ethnic groups living in Zagros."

Rakhsha said the purpose of this research is to identify, classify, and introduce essential oils among the Zagros tribes and to portray the cultural similarities and differences between the tribes living in Zagros. "After that, we seek to introduce the results to (modern) food and pharmaceutical, health and cosmetic industries."

Detail from a bas-relief shows an Achaemenid king sitting on the throne with two silver incense burners of Persepolitan type standing on the front, ca. 487-480 BC. Formerly installed in the Treasury Room, Persepolis, the relief is now on show at the National Museum of Iran, downtown Tehran.

Regarding the methodology of the research, she noted that they follow an ethnographic method which is investigated through interviews, review of texts, and available sources.

The participants in this research constitute ethnic people living in Andimshek, Mazo, Shahzadeh-Ahmed, and Mongerehm, the researcher said.

According to the Iran Chamber Society, plants and flowers, perfumes and aromas always attracted the attention of Iranians since the most remote times. In ancient sources, including the stone inscriptions of the Achaemenian era (c. 550—330 BC), as well as the Greek and Roman sources and Pahlavi texts, clear indications can be found about the Iranians' attention to and interest in, various kinds of perfumes, incenses and sweet aromas.

"In stone images of Persepolis, Darius the Great is predicted while sitting on a nice chair with two scent bottles or incense bones in front of him, and Xerxes is standing behind him while holding the same kind of flowers in the left hand. These flowers are probably Lily of the Valley or narcissus, which were peculiar to the southern Fars region, and which were mentioned in Islamic sources."

As mentioned by the source, in another image the Iranian monarch is shown holding a flower in his left hand while a protruded umbrella is kept over his head. In another bas-relief, an Iranian lady is holding a sweet-smelling blower or apple in front of her face or nose.

Cited by William James Durant, the famed American historian and philosopher, and some other Western sources, Iranians were the first manufacturers of various kinds of perfumes, and discoverers of decorative and cosmetic powders.

Growing and cultivating many kinds of plants and fragrant flowers, obtaining perfumes and golab (rose water) from them, preparation of perfumed oil, manufacturing musk and ambergris and perfumed materials and preparation of sweet-smelling incenses were widespread in ancient Iran, particularly in the Fars region.

Cultivation and growing of many of the perfumed flowers and plants, which were prevalent in ancient times, continued for several centuries after the advent of Islam, and a few of them have persisted till today.

Tehran exhibit features celadon ware from China's Zhejiang

TEHRAN – A collection of cultural material from China's Zhejiang, with arrays of celadon ware among the highlights, has been put on show in Tehran.

The event is jointly organized by the Chinese Embassy in Tehran, Zhejiang Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the Iranian Academy of Arts.

On October 30, in remarks at the opening ceremony of the event, China's Vice Minister of Culture and Tourism Lu Yingchuan said, "looking back at history, China and Iran met and knew each other and learned from one another through the ancient Silk Road."

Cooperation between China and Iran throughout history had led to the creation of superb artworks, the official said.

Moreover, cultural exchanges and collaborations between the two countries had witnessed significant growth in recent years, Lu said.

Another speaker at the ceremony, Majid Shah-Hosseini, who presides over the Iranian Academy of Arts, stressed the longstanding friendship as well as cultural and artistic relations between the two ancient civilizations, which have been reflected in the artworks of the two countries' artists since a long time ago.

Iran's deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian and Chinese Ambassador to Iran Chang Hua also attended the event.

In the ceremony, troupes of Iranian and Chinese musicians performed music pieces, some of which were played on celadon wares.

What is celadon ware?

The term 'celadon ware', also known as green ware, refers to a type of ceramic with a soft grey-green-colored glaze. The effect is achieved by applying an iron-rich liquefied clay 'slip' to the ceramic before it is fired in a kiln. During the heating process, the iron oxidizes to leave a delicate and lustrous green coating.

Despite its later European name, the celadon glaze technique originated in China during the Shang (1600-1046 BC) and Zhou (1046-256 BC) dynasties when potters began experimenting with glaze recipes.

Celadon ware of China's Zhejiang province was featured at the art event held on Oct 30 in the Iranian capital Tehran. (Photo credit: Xinhua)

Today, evidence of the first 'true' celadon ware, when production of the glazes was standardized, comes in the form of excavated shards of celadon ware from the Siqianyao kiln site in Shangyu county, Zhejiang province. These date from the time of the Eastern Han dynasty (25-220).

The world's best tourism villages in 2023

A brand-new list by the United Nations World Tourism Organization is highlighting rural communities across the globe that are harvesting tourism for good.

For travelers looking for inspiration for their next city break, dozens of best-of lists abound. But for those in search of a slower pace, natural scenery and local traditions, there's a different resource to turn to: the world's best tourism villages, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

For the past three years, the UNWTO has recognized villages across the world that "are leading the way in nurturing rural areas and preserving landscapes, cultural diversity, local values and culinary traditions", and it has just put out its list for 2023. These 54 villages were selected based on nine different criteria, including how well they are preserving (and showcasing) their natural environment, their commitment to economic and environmental sustainability and their conservation of cultural heritage.

Here, we take a look at five of the most interesting rural villages around the world from the new list.

Hakuba, Japan

Twenty years ago, Tony Anderson of Melbourne, Australia, came to Hakuba to snowboard. He returned to the village, located in the Japanese Alps about 45km west of Nagano, the next year to buy property – and has lived there ever since.

As a hotelier himself, Anderson says Hakuba's culture of hospitality makes it particularly welcoming for visitors. When he travelled here as a tourist, he remembers going to hotels, only to find them booked up; but rather than being sent away, he was invited to put a futon down in the hallway. Even today, he said, "The policy is never to turn anyone away. Everybody's welcome."

This tradition of hospitality has likely developed for practical reasons, too: when the snow comes, sometimes blocking in the roads, you can't necessarily leave, even if you wanted to. Of course, that makes for excellent skiing and boarding. Most famously, Hakuba, which is surrounded by 10 different ski resorts, hosted many of the events of the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics. Even in the spring, when the cherry blossoms bloom, there is still enough snow on the mountains to ski.

Lerici, Italy

Move over, Cinque Terre: for travelers looking for striking sea views, clean beaches and colorful homes, there's another destination to add to the list in the Liguria region. Located on the north-western Italian coast, 100km south of Genoa (or 10km south of La Spezia, a popular travel hub for getting to the Cinque Terre), Lerici isn't exactly a secret. Still, its location – particularly its lack of a train station – means it's been a bit more protected from overtourism than many of its neighbors.

Dubbed the capital of the "Gulf of Poets", it hosts numerous cultural and artistic festivals, such as the Lerici Music Festival, the Premio Lerici Pea Golfo dei Poeti literary competition, and regular art exhibitions, including at its medieval castle. "Over the centuries, Lerici has welcomed great names in culture, literature and art who have chosen it as a place of inspiration," said Lerici mayor Leonardo Paoletti, including poet Percy Bysshe Shelly, novelist Virginia Woolf and writer and director Pier Paolo Pasolini. "Today this legacy persists."

Lephis, Ethiopia

For natural beauty and wildlife, it's hard to beat the village of Lephis, located in Lephis Forest, around 160km south of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. Travellers can trek or horseback ride past the striking Lephis Waterfall and through hills and valleys, catching glimpses of animals including colobus monkeys, leopards and mountain nyala. Birdwatchers are in for a particular treat, with species including the Abyssian oriole and white-cheeked turaco.

"I often go there with tourists to see fauna and flora," said Biruk Chiksa, a tour guide at Venture Ethiopia Tour and Travel. "I love it a lot." And as Chiksa points out, so do foreign travellers.

> For the past three years, the UNWTO has recognized villages across the world that "are leading the way in nurturing rural areas and preserving landscapes, cultural diversity, local values and culinary traditions".

Douma, Lebanon

Traditional stone houses with red-tiled roofs, views of the surrounding Batroun Mountains, centuries-old churches and a recently restored souk: the village of Douma, located about 80km north-east of Beirut, is nothing if not picturesque.

"My first impression was the beauty of the village," said Rana Tanissa, a Lebanese archaeologist and rural tourism consultant who writes about travel to Lebanon, recalling her first visit to the town. "And the history of the village is incredible – one feels as if you're entering a history book."

In fact, according to the UNWTO, Douma's commitment to preserving its architectural and cultural heritage and "avoiding chaotic urban expansion" played a major role in its selection to the 2023 list.

The UNWTO notes that Douma has protected other aspects of its cultural heritage, too, such as its local food traditions. According to Tanissa, the "Raha sweet", made with biscuits, is one favourite, as are the town's zaatar, olive oil, cheeses and jams. Many of the ingredients come from local farms and vineyards. That said, Douma isn't just about tradition: the village has undertaken a number of new green initiatives, too, including using 600 solar panels to generate electricity for the village, planting trees and encouraging composting.

Zapatoca, Colombia

Six years ago, after spending three decades working as a teacher in other parts of Colombia, Guillermo Rincón Velandia decided to launch the tour company Colombia Trails SAS – and he returned to his native town of Zapatoca, Colombia, to do it. The reasons are many, he said, and they echo why the UNWTO lists Zapatoca, located in the north of the country, as one of its best tourism villages for 2023.

First, there's the natural landscape. Located on a plateau between three canyons some 1,700m above sea level, Zapatoca has a "rich and unique geological heritage", Velandia said, including some of the oldest marine fossils in the world. The diversity of its landscape stands out, too, with ancient underground caves, tropical forests and mountains to hike, trek and explore. The climate, however, is remarkably stable: it maintains a temperature of about 20C year-round, leading locals to call it "The Village with the Silk-Like Climate".

(Source: BBC)

Saipa Wheel Manufacturing Company – Tender for Rectifier

Saipa Wheel Manufacturing Company intends to purchase a 500V/500A rectifier. Interested companies are requested to offer their quote based on the specification mentioned in the attached file on our website:www.kswco.com.Please receive the tender form and send your PI to commercial2@kswco.com by November 07 2023.

For further information please contact Mr. Zanganeh: Mobile: +989123162409

‘Hamoun wetland revival will proceed even without UNDP co-op’

TEHRAN – The head of the Department of Environment (DOE), Ali Salajeqeh, has said the restoration of Hamoun International Wetland will go on even without the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) cooperation.

Salajeqeh made the remarks on the sidelines of a trip to Sistan-Baluchestan Province as he visited the wetland on Tuesday, IRIB reported.

The Hamouns are transboundary wetlands on the Iran-Afghan border made up of three lakes: Hamoun-e Helmand, which is entirely in Iran, Hamoun-e Sabari on the border, and Hamoun-e Puzak, almost entirely inside Afghanistan. The three lakes are linked and fed by water from the Helmand River which starts in the Hindu Kush Mountains in Afghanistan.

Hamoun International Wetland, stretching to 570,000 hectares, is considered one of the most important habitats of aquatic and terrestrial migratory birds and has been a shelter for many rare and endangered species for years.

Visiting the wetland, Salajeqeh said, “Hamoun wetland rehabilitation joint project was agreed to be carried out by the Department of Environment and the United Nations Development Program.

However, they refrained from supporting the project due to the

sanctions and the project came to a halt. Fortunately, the government is following up on this project seriously now.”

Hamoun wetland

In the last two decades, once fertile wetlands have drastically dried up. The Taliban government closed the sluices to the Kajaki Dam on the Helmand until 2002, which aggravated the impact of the worst drought the region has experienced in many decades, brought about partially by climate change and warming temperatures.

The wetland was home to broad plant and animal diversity and was the main source of the region’s economic viability. However, they have nearly dried up due to climate change, dam construction, and other poor water management practices. This has led to large population migrations and a high unemployment rate.

MOU to revive Hamoun Wetland

In 2020, the DOE and UNDP signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to carry out a joint project for the revival of Hamoun wetland, director of Iran’s wetlands protection project said.

The project was called “Improving the comprehensive management of natural resources for the rehabilitation of the wetland ecosystem and supporting alternative living in local communities in the Hamoun wetlands”.

It aimed to focus on the role and connection of people’s lives on Hamoun wetlands as well as Hamoun’s life on people’s lives and at the same time be able to work on the protection of this wetland along with improving the living standards of the people around it, IRNA quoted Ali Arvahi as saying.

Stating that the project was set to run for five years with European Union financial support, he said that “the project might be an opportunity to pilot new ideas or living patterns in the area, and if the government succeeds, it will be able to expand these pilots on a larger scale.”

The project emphasized that the pressure on Hamoun Wetland’s resources, and in particular on the water resources of these wetlands, should be minimized and at the same time help strengthen the cross-border connection of Hamoun Wetland with Afghanistan to allocate water rights of the wetland, he explained.

National diabetes week to be held

TEHRAN – The national diabetes week will run from November 11 to 17 focusing on the prevention of diabetes and diabetes-related complications.

The final year of the World Diabetes Day 2021-23 theme is ‘Access to Diabetes Care’, and this year’s specific theme is ‘Know your risk, Know your response,” IRIB reported.

World Diabetes Day is a global awareness day held on November 14 each year. It became an official United Nations Day in 2006.

November 14 was chosen as it›s the birthday of Frederick Banting, who discovered insulin.

The Diabetes Day highlights the need for equitable access to essential care, including raising awareness of ways people with diabetes can minimize their risk of complications.

Activities will also celebrate the experiences of people with all forms of diabetes to help those impacted to take action, including seeking and obtaining essential care.

According to an official with Health Ministry, each day of the National Diabetes Week 2023 has been assigned a specific theme:

Saturday, November 11: “Pre-diabetes.”

Sunday, November 12: “Diabetes and the role of the media.”

Monday, November 13: “Diabetes, Education, Public contribution, and NGOs.”

Tuesday, November 14, World Diabetes Day, “Diabetes; Know your risks, Know your answer”

Wednesday, November 15: “Diabetes, Improving access to treatment.”

Thursday, November 16: “Diabetes, Healthy lifestyle with healthy nutrition.”

Friday, November 17: Diabetes, Healthy lifestyle with physical activity.”

Diabetes prevalence

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) kill 41 million people each year, equivalent to 71 percent of all deaths globally.

Diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and respiratory diseases are the cause of more than 80 percent of premature deaths due to non-communicable diseases. An unhealthy diet, smoking, physical inactivity, and alcohol consumption are the main related risk factors.

According to global estimates, the number of diabetics in West Asia and North Africa region will increase by 96 percent over the next 25 years.

In recent decades, the prevalence of diabetes and the number of deaths due to diabetes in the world has increased dramatically, and this increase has been much greater for type 2 diabetes.

About 500 million people worldwide have diabetes, the majority living in low-and middle-income countries, and 1.6 million deaths are directly attributed to diabetes each year.

In Iran, diabetics make up about 11.5 percent of the population.

About 6 million people of Iran›s diabetic population are aware and the other half are unaware of their diabetes. The figure is 50 percent in the world and 60 percent in West Asia and North Africa region.

Both the number of cases and the prevalence of diabetes have been steadily increasing over the past few decades. It is expected that by 2030, 578 million people will develop diabetes, and the number of patients may exceed 700 million by 2045.

In 2019, 4.2 million people died of diabetes. And now, 50 percent of coronavirus patients are diabetic.

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Existing vaccines are effective against mutated coronavirus: Iranian expert

The COVID-19 vaccines, which have been so far produced in the world are also effective on the mutated virus, so people who receive the vaccines will be protected against the new virus strain, Massoud Mardani, a member of the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, has said.

What raised concerns about the newly-produced vaccine was the ineffectiveness against the mutated virus, which fortunately studies show, the mutation of the virus and the chromosomal alteration are not enough to change its general nature, he explained.

According to Mardani, it is possible to detect the new coronavirus in Iran. All British and European passengers are tested at the airport for a quick and PCR test, while so far no case has been confirmed in the country, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

واکسن کرونا بر روی ویروس جهش یافته هم اثر می کند

مسعود مردانی عضو ستاد ملی مقابله با کرونا می گوید واکسن تولید و تایید شده در دنیا بر روی ویروس جهش یافته هم اثر می کند و افرادی که واکسن تایید شده را بزنند علیه این ویروس هم مصونیت پیدا می کنند.

مردانی روز سه شنبه در گفت وگو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: آنچه نگران آن هستیم این است که واکسن تولید شده برای کووید۱۹ در دنیا نسبت به ویروس جهش یافته بی اثر باشد که خوشبختانه بررسی ها نشان می دهد، جهش ویروس و تغییر کروموزمومی ویروس به قدری نیست که ماهیت کلی آن تغییر کند.

به گفته او، امکان تشخیص ویروس کرونا جهش یافته در ایران وجود دارد. از همه مسافران انگلیس و اروپا در فرودگاه تست سریع و از موارد مشکوک تست دقیق تر «پی سی آر» گرفته و بررسی می‌شود و تاکنون موردی از این ویروس در ایران تایید نشده است.

Sixth shipment of relief supplies sent to Afghanistan

TEHRAN – The sixth shipment of humanitarian aid has been sent to the earthquake victims in “Zinda Jan” district in Herat Province, Afghanistan.

“Eleven trucks carrying the consignments headed for this country on Monday through Dogharon border in the east of Khorasan Razavi province,” IRIB quoted Mohsen Zakerian, an official with the Iranian Red Crescent Society’s center in Khorasan Razavi province, as saying.

Donated goods included food, oil, rice, canned goods, blankets, detergents, carpets, and medical equipment weighing over 250 tons with an estimated value of more than 100 billion rials (some $200,000).

Zakerian, referring to the previously sent consignments, said, “The past five shipments of humanitarian aid, weighing over 760 tons of goods, were worth 450 billion rials (some $900,000) and were dispatched to quake-affected areas via 29 trucks.”

Four powerful quakes in just over a week have killed more than 2,400 people in Afghanistan, according to the ruling Taliban administration.

They were among the world’s deadliest earthquakes this year, after February’s tremors in Turkey and Syria.

The initial quake measuring 6.3 magnitudes and numerous aftershocks flattened whole villages and destroyed hundreds of mud-brick homes in Heart on October 7. UN officials said more than 90 percent of the victims were women and children.

On September 26, Amir Saeed Iravani, Iran’s permanent representative to the UN, called for immediate and unconditional humanitarian aid for Afghanistan as the country is wrestling with economic woes.

“Iran played a crucial role in the delivery of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan by establishing a novel distribution route that utilized the Chabahar port in Iran. As an example, on July 4th, a substantial shipment of 10,000 metric tons of wheat successfully reached Herat for further distribution to people in need across Afghanistan.

Despite the Taliban’s failure to meet their commitments, we must maintain our constructive engagement with the de facto authorities. This approach is instrumental in seeking the best possible outcomes for the people of Afghanistan and the broader international community.”

Iravani made the remarks during a briefing on the “Situation in Afghanistan” at the UN Security Council.

WHO, Japan to strengthen resilience of Iranian health system

TEHRAN – The World Health Organization (WHO) announced on Wednesday the culmination of a project that saw six state-of-the-art magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines, which the Government of Japan generously funded, and successfully installed in Iranian hospitals.

This initiative represents a significant stride in bolstering the diagnostic capacity and resilience of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s health system, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of patient care.

The advanced 1.5 Tesla MRI machines have been strategically placed in key referral hospitals identified by the Iranian Ministry of Health and Medical Education.

The recipient hospitals are Kosar Hospital, Semnan; Hajar Hospital, Shahrekord; Pasteur Hospital, Bam; 12 Farvardin Hospital, Kahnooj; Imam Ali Hospital, Andimeshk; and Shohada Hospital, Neyriz. Within the framework of the project for strengthening the capacity of health for the COVID-19 crisis in the Islamic Republic of Iran, through the provision of six MRI machines, more communities across the country now have access to vital medical imaging technology, removing the need for patients to travel long distances for diagnostic services.

To ensure the environmental safety and protection of the hospitals and surrounding areas, an environmental assessment was carried out. Any issues were promptly addressed, guaranteeing that the installation of the MRI machines meets the highest social and environmental standards.

Health professionals in the 6 hospitals have received comprehensive training on how to operate cutting-edge imaging devices.

This training empowers medical staff to harness the full potential of the MRI machines, enabling accurate diagnoses and early detection of diseases.

This newfound capability will significantly enhance patient outcomes and provide invaluable support to the Iranian health system.

“The Government of Japan’s generous contribution not only strengthens the medical imaging capabilities of the designated hospitals but also benefits the entire country by enhancing access to advanced diagnostic services.

This collaborative effort between WHO Iran and the Government of Japan exemplifies the positive impact that international partnerships can have on health infrastructure,” said Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative and Head of Mission to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

“We are immensely grateful for the Government of Japan’s support in enhancing the resilience of the Iranian health system,” emphasized Dr Hussain.

“These MRI machines will significantly improve the Islamic Republic of Iran’s diagnostic capabilities, offering more timely and accurate health services to its people.

We believe this joint WHO–Japan project will have a lasting impact on the health and well-being of vulnerable populations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including refugees from Afghanistan who reside in deprived areas of the country.”

“Japan has supported the medical situation in Iran by donating 4.3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines when Iran was in serious need of them.

The provision of medical equipment for hospitals that provide medical services to vulnerable people is another example of our cooperation. I believe that such cooperation enhances the health of the people of Iran,” H.E. Kazutoshi AIKAWA, Ambassador of Japan to Iran, commented.

This initiative not only represents a milestone in the evolution of the Iranian health system but also serves as a powerful example of how international collaboration can help address pressing health needs.

The installation of these MRI machines marks a significant step towards improving health services and early disease detection, ultimately contributing to the regional vision of Health for All by All.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you gain a blessing, do not refuse it by cool and poor thanks.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:48 Evening: 17:08 Dawn: 5:03 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:28 (tomorrow)

Catherine Ashton's memoir published in Persian

TEHRAN – "And Then What: Inside Stories of 21st-Century Diplomacy", a book by Former High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, has recently been published in Persian.

Parvin Qaemi is the translator of the book, which has been published by Iran Publications Institute in Tehran.

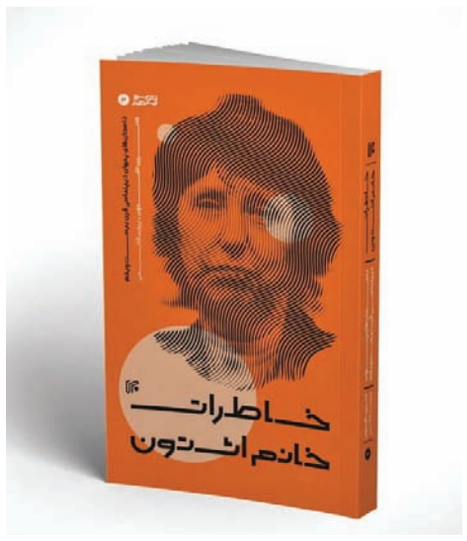
"And Then What: Inside Stories of 21st-Century Diplomacy" details Ashton's experiences as a major player in European politics. Ashton's book takes a closer look at her time as the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the challenges she faced while in that position.

Ashton's writing is sharp, insightful and engaging, offering readers a unique perspective on the complicated world of global diplomacy. In the book, she details some of her most memorable experiences, including her negotiations with Iran over their nuclear program, and discusses the successes and failures of her diplomatic efforts.

One of the standout features of the book is its focus on the personalities involved in international politics. Ashton offers a glimpse into the inner workings of the world's most powerful governments, revealing the complex relationships and alliances that underpin political decision-making.

Throughout the book, Ashton also discusses the role of technology in modern diplomacy, highlighting the opportunities and challenges that digital communication presents to diplomats. Her insights on this topic are particularly valuable, given the rapid pace of technological change and the growing importance of cybersecurity in international affairs.

Catherine Ashton is a British politician and diplomat who has served in a number of high-profile positions over the course of her career. She was born in 1956 in Lancashire, England, and went on to study politics at Bedford College, University of London. After graduation, she worked in various roles in local government and non-profit organizations before entering politics.



Ashton began her political career as a member of the House of Lords, where she served as a Labor Party peer and worked on a number of important issues, including health and social services. In 2009, she was appointed as the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, a position she held until 2014. During her tenure, Ashton played an important role in European diplomacy, representing the EU in negotiations with countries around the world.

Catherine Ashton played an important role in diplomatic negotiations between Iran and the West regarding Iran's nuclear program when she served as the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy from 2009 to 2014. Ashton was responsible for leading the negotiations on behalf of the P5+1 group of countries (the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China) in cooperation with Iran.

Ashton's negotiations were significant, as they contributed to the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in July 2015, which aimed to limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of international sanctions.

Cartoon of Day

Gaza children
Cartoonist: Jihad Awrtani from Saudi Arabia

Iranian nominees for Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award 2024

Frome Page **1** ▸ The global award is given annually to a person or organization for their outstanding contribution to children's and young adult literature. With a prize of five million Swedish kronor, it is the largest award of its kind. Above all else, it highlights the importance of reading, today and for future generations.

Houshang Moradi Kermani, 79, is best known for children's and young adult fiction. His best-known books are "The Tales of Majid," "The Boot," "The Water Urn," and "A Sweet Jam". Some of his books have been translated into English, German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Arabic, and Armenian, among others. Moreover, some of his books have been made into popular local movies and television shows.

Farhad Hassanzadeh, 61, is the co-founder of the Children and Young Adults Authors Institute, the largest NGO of Iranian authors. He has authored over 80 books in various genres from comedy to tragedy, including "The Backyard", "An Umbrella with White Butterflies", and "Snow and the Sun". His books have been rendered into different languages, including English, Arabic, Turkish and Armenian. He has been awarded numerous national awards for his works.

Abbas Jahangirian, 69, has written numerous books for children and teenagers including "Hamoon and the Sea" and "New Year's Day". Some of his books have been translated to Armenian, Kazakh, Arabic, Turkish, Russian, and English. Iran's magnificent history, profound cultural heritage, and astonishing literary works, along with the preservation of nature's ecosystems, the protection of endangered forests and animals, promoting world peace, and conveying emotions of love and grief, resonates deeply in his works, while simultaneously addressing the struggles of teenagers and children.

Jamal Akrami, 66, is the writer of numerous children's books, including "The Sole and the Sea," "The Stranger and the Sea," and "Children of the Moon," a number of which have been translated into English, Spanish, Korean, Turkish and several other languages.

Alireza Goldouzian, 47, is an internationally recognized artist who has illustrated numerous books in Iran, as well as exhibiting his prize-winning children's book art around the world.

Nahid Kazemi is an illustrator and multidisciplinary artist who has published more than 65 children's books. She is the winner of the 2022 Governor General's Literary Awards in Canada. Her recent publications include "Shahrzad & The Angry King," "The Sour Cherry Tree," and "Under the Moon".

Reza Dalvand, 34, is a member of Iranian Illustrators Society. He is the illustrator of dozens of books, including "Where Is My House?" and "Mrs. Bibi's Elephant". His works have been showcased in many solo and group exhibitions in Iran, England, Japan, South Korea, Ukraine and several other countries.

Rashin Kheiriyeh, 44, is an internationally recognized, award-winning illustrator/author who has published over 90 children's books in countries such as the United States, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, Spain, South Korea, China, Brazil, India, and Iran. She has received 50 national and international awards for her books. "Rumi, Poet of Joy and Love," "The Book Tree," and "The Pink Magician" are among her well-known books.

Farmehr Monjezi, 63, has been active for over three decades in promoting reading, authoring, translating, and editing books for children and teenagers. She has translated over 150 books and has been recognized with numerous awards for her outstanding contributions in promoting reading and translation.

Ali Asghar Seidabadi, 52, is a reading promoter and researcher on children and young adult's literature. He has been, for over three decades, involved in activities to design and implement national and regional plans to promote reading and establish libraries and bookstores in rural areas.

Read with Me is a reading promotion project in Iran which takes books and book-related activities to deprived children all over the country. Initiated by the Institute for Research on History of Children's Literature, the plan promotes the slogan "All children deserve to read quality books".

Few have done more for the right of children to a rich inner life than Astrid Lindgren. The creator of stories beloved the world over, she was a renewer of children's literature. She was also a steadfast humanist who made her voice heard in the public debate, speaking with moral conviction, with humor, and always with her focus on children and their future.

Astrid Lindgren (1907–2002) was a Swedish writer of fiction and screenplays. She is best known for several children's book series including "Pippi Longstocking" and for the children's fantasy novels such as "The Brothers Lionheart".

Lindgren worked on the Children's Literature Editorial Board at the Rabén & Sjögren publishing house in Stockholm and wrote more than 30 books for children. In 2017, she was calculated to be the world's 18th most translated author. Lindgren had by 2010 sold roughly 167 million books worldwide. In 1994, she was awarded the Right Livelihood Award for her unique authorship dedicated to the rights of children and respect for their individuality. Her opposition to corporal punishment of children resulted in the world's first law on the matter in 1979, while her campaigning for animal welfare led to a new law, Lex Lindgren, in time for her 80th birthday.

When, in 2002 at the age of 94, her voice finally fell silent, the Swedish Government decided to found an award to honor her memory and to promote interest in children's and young adult literature around the world.

Administered by the Swedish Arts Council, the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award is awarded to those who continue to work in her spirit: with imagination, bravery, respect and empathy, and maintaining the highest level of artistic excellence. The laureates are chosen by a twelve-member expert jury.

The attention of the award leads to more translations and to more children having access to high-quality literature—entertaining, innovative, challenging, or complex.

Semnan becomes Iran's book capital

TEHRAN –The north-central Iranian city of Semnan was selected as the eighth Iranian capital of book during a ceremony in Tehran on Tuesday.

The ceremony was attended by Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Semnan was introduced as Iran's capital of books due to the maximum attention of its management organizations and people, as well as presenting creative plans and programs, the report added.

It was decided during the event that due to the important features of four other candidate cities, namely Evaz, Sabzevar, Shahinshahr and Karaj, a ceremony will be held to appreciate their respective characteristics.

Among the candidate cities, Evaz in Fars province was considered worth appreciation for its public activities and attracting grassroots participation.

Shahinshahr in Isfahan province was appreciated for its active urban management in the field of books and allocating maximum facilities to organizations.

Sabzevar in Khorasan Razavi was recognized for its efforts to promote the discourse of the Islamic Revolution and introduce good books.

Karaj in Alborz province, was appreciated for its efforts to promote reading skills and design creative programs in the field of reading skills.

Notable Iranian filmmaker Dariush Mehrjui to be remembered in France

TEHRAN – Forum des Images, a Parisian cultural center, will pay tribute to the late Iranian filmmaker, Dariush Mehrjui, by screening his 1990 film "Hamoun" on November 5.

Organized in collaboration with the Iranian Cinema Association, the event will explore Mehrjui's career and legacy, with the presence of Fabien Gaffez, the artistic director of the forum, Agnès Devictor, a lecturer and specialist in Iranian cinema, and Nader Takmil Homayoun, the director and head of the Iranian Cinema Association.

Dariush Mehrjui had participated in the Forum des Images' unique program "Portraits of Tehran" in 2003 as a distinguished guest.

"Hamoun" tells the story of Hamid Hamoun, a struggling would-be philosopher, who is haunted by his failed attempt to decipher the meaning of love and pushed over the edge by his artist wife's demand for a divorce.

Born in 1939 in Tehran, Mehrjui was a renowned Iranian filmmaker who was known for introducing realism, symbolism, and the sensibilities of art cinema.

"Sara" (1993), "Pari" (1995), "Leila" (1996), "Mom's Guest" (2004), and "The Orange Suit" (2012) are among his credits. His most recent film, "La Minor," was released in 2020.

Throughout his career, Mehrjui has received numerous accolades and awards for his contributions to Iranian cinema. His films have been showcased at prestigious film festivals globally, earning him a dedicated following of cinephiles and critical acclaim.

Mehrjui was stabbed to death on October 14 alongside his wife Vahideh Mohammadifar at their home in Karaj, Alborz Province. His tragic murder was met with widespread reactions

Audio- described version of "Fireworks Wednesday" for visually impaired released

TEHRAN – A new audio-described version of Iranian director Asghar Farhadi's acclaimed film "Fireworks Wednesday" has been released for visually impaired individuals.

The audio description has been narrated by actress Mehraveh Sharifinia and produced by the Sevina Group.

"Fireworks Wednesday" is a 2006 Iranian film revolving around the character of Roohi, who is hired as a housemaid by a young couple named Morteza and Mojdeh. In the days leading up to the Persian New Year, Roohi becomes embroiled in the middle of the couple's troubled relationship after she begins to suspect that Morteza is cheating on his wife.

As tensions mount between the couple, Roohi also becomes involved in her own personal drama with her fiancé, who is a fireworks salesman.