

Inseparable Bonds



Raisi calls for closer Iran-Pakistan ties ▶ Page 3

Tehran, Islamabad reach positive agreements to strengthen ties: FM

TEHRAN- Iran and Pakistan have struck "very good" agreements to advance ties in a number of areas and enhance the interests of the two nations, according to Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

Amir Abdollahian said as much over the phone with Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Muhammad Ishaq Dar, on Sunday.

The Pakistani government's tremendous efforts to set up the essential conditions for Raisi's formal visit were praised by the Iranian foreign minister.

The senior Iranian diplomat stressed that Tehran and Islamabad had historical affinities as well as similarities in a range of cultural, social, and religious domains, which are seen as a major asset in bilateral relations.

President Raisi's visit to Pakistan, according to the foreign minister of Pakistan, will be a watershed in the history of ties between the two Muslim neighbors.

Amir Abdollahian and Ishaq Dar conversed on the advancement of bilateral ties as well as regional concerns that both countries share. ▶ Page 2

Iran insists it will decisively respond to any aggression

TEHRAN- Tehran promises to provide a "stronger response" in the event that Israel attacks its interests or the nation again.

During a weekly news conference on Monday, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani stated, "Iran provided a decisive and legitimate response to an illegal action by the Israeli regime against our diplomatic premises that took place in violation of the international laws."

"But if another mistake takes place, Iran's response will be stronger," he added.

An act of terrorism against Iran's diplomatic buildings in Damascus, the capital of Syria, was carried out by the Israeli regime on April 1.

General Mohammad Reza Zahedi, a commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in Iran, together with his deputy, General Mohammad Hadi Haji Rahimi, and five other accompanying officers, were all martyred as a consequence of the Israeli strike.

On April 13, the IRGC launched a volley of missiles and drones into the seized territory as payback. Operation Truthful Promise, the name of the retaliatory strikes, has caused damage to Israeli military sites located throughout the occupied Palestinian territory.

Possible EU penalties as "reward to aggressor"

In response to the retaliatory attacks, the European Union has announced plans to put more sanctions on Iran. ▶ Page 2

200 Days of Israeli failures in Gaza

Unique Palestinian resilience despite severe hardship

Israel haunted by glaring failures

By Shahrokh Saei

Back-to-back support for Israel is outrageous

By Matin Jamshidi

Mass graves expose Israeli "war crimes"

▶ Page 5

BRICS calls on IRCS to chair health working group

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has been asked to head up the health working group of BRICS, comprised of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

The great capabilities and accomplishments of the IRCS in various fields have made BRICS eager to cooperate with the society, IRNA quoted Alena Peryshinka, co-chair of the BRICS Civil Forum, as saying.

She made the remarks in a meeting with Pirhossein Kolivand, the head of the IRCS, in Tehran on Sunday.

Following discussions with Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the IRCS was decided to be the representative of Iran in BRICS, she added.

Kolivand, for his part, called the IRCS the best candidate to chair the health working group while elaborating on the achievements of the IRCS in recent years. ▶ Page 7



First group of Umrah pilgrims fly to Saudi Arabia

After a decade, the first group of Iranian Umrah pilgrims flew to Mecca in the early hours of Monday in two 85-person convoys. They were seen off by Hojatoleslam Seyyed Abdolfatah Navab, the representative of the Leader for Hajj and Pilgrimage Affairs and Saudi Ambassador to Iran Abdullah bin Saud al-Anzi. They were flown from Imam Khomeini Airport in southern Tehran.

What was the meaning of Iran's signal in its calibrated response?

By Ali Salehian

This is not the first time that Iran and the Zionist regime have faced each other. More than that, one of the reasons for not expanding the level of tension between these two actors is due to the implicitly agreed level of action and reaction of the parties. After October 7, it seems that the Zionist regime is no longer a rational actor due to the shocking blow it received, along with the preference of Netanyahu's personal and party interests over other issues. The number of killings and civilian casualties, the targeting of hospitals, and the shutting off of water, electricity, and food have made even the regime's traditional allies criticize this irrational actor. ▶ Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

The historical defeat of Israel and America in 2024!

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

Kayhan devoted its editorial to the constant crisis of Israel. It wrote: In the words of the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, "The Zionist regime will fail if it leaves Gaza, and if it does not leave, it is also a failure."

This means a historic failure in 2024 after the regretful response, which revives the memory of the 2005 disgraceful failure of Ariel Sharon in leaving Gaza! Also, the prediction of the Supreme Leader of the Revolution is the reality of today's battlefield after about seven months of crime and brutality and the full support of the United States to the Zionist regime. Despite the media propaganda, it has become clear to everyone that this regime is both in crisis to protect itself and in getting out of the crisis. America is also in a crisis to support Israel! American and Israeli political-security analysts, military officials, and heads of Mossad and CIA have concluded and said that Israel is facing the most dangerous crisis in history since its establishment. They warn that "our collapse is near and we will not reach 80 years"! Therefore, this shows that the resistance front has reached its historical goal and is victorious in the field, and the 75-year struggle of the Palestinians was not in vain and is bearing fruit.

Shargh: Response in the form of nation-state

In an interview with Rahman Ghahremanpour, a senior analyst of international affairs, Shargh evaluated Iran's response to Israel and wrote: It must be said that Iran's attack was not due to surprise, that is, although Tehran could strike Israel with the principle of surprise, but it adopted the behavioral logic of the nation-state and did it in a precise and calculated way, to the point that no one imagined that Iran would shoot more than 300 drones and missiles at Israel at the same time and directly from its soil. So, if Iran wanted to strike, it could certainly do so but Tehran shows that it acts as a nation-state actor completely different from regional groups. In general, the same procedure will be repeated by Iran in the future because Tehran should try to pay special attention to the domestic scope, focusing on economic, commercial, and livelihood issues in addition to the parameters of the military, defense, and security scope so that the situation moves in a way that Iran does not enter the process of military deterrence again.

Iranian security chief to visit Russia

TEHRAN - Ali Akbar Ahmadian, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, is set to embark on a visit to Russia following a formal invitation from his Russian counterpart, Nikolai Patrushev. Ahmadian will lead a high-level security delegation to St. Petersburg, Russia, to partake in the 12th Meeting of High-Ranking Officials on Security Issues. Aligned with Iran's policy of multilateralism and continuing the nation's proactive political-security diplomacy, particularly under the Raisi administration, Ahmadian aims to bolster bilateral, regional, and international relations.

He is scheduled to engage in discussions with counterparts from Russia, Brazil, South Africa, China, India, and Iraq. The St. Petersburg security summit, a longstanding annual event spanning over a decade, stands out as a significant international gathering spearheaded by Russia.

A notable aspect of this summit is its focus on countering Western unilateralism, particularly the United States' actions in the realm of international security. Given the summit's pivotal role in international security discourse, Iran has consistently demonstrated active engagement since its inception.

Last year's summit saw the participation of senior security officials from over a hundred countries, underscoring its global significance and interest. The commencement of this year's meeting in St. Petersburg on Tuesday signifies the continued attention and participation of governments, security officials, and both regional and international media outlets.

In early February, Ahmadian arrived in the Iraqi capital Baghdad and held talks with several high-ranking Iraqi officials. Upon his arrival, he was warmly welcomed by Iraqi officials and then held talks with the Iraqi Prime Minister, Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani. During the meeting, Ahmadian reiterated Tehran's commitment to

Iran: Restoration of economic cooperation with the eastern neighbor

In a note, the Iran newspaper discussed Raisi's visit to Pakistan and wrote: Undoubtedly, one of the most important topics that the president will share with his Pakistani counterpart is focused on the implementation of the security-economic cooperation model that has been on the agenda of both sides for months. Pursuing the idea of economic and security cooperation by focusing on the common border of Iran and Pakistan has been considered. An approach that is more within the framework of conventional political and economic consultations than a result of Raisi's special view on the concept of economic diplomacy, which has been put on the agenda through various institutions. Also, intending to open the Iran-Pakistan border market, the country's authorities are trying to prepare their surrounding security environment, especially in the eastern regions of the country, to implement the idea of economic cooperation with Pakistan, something that was not possible to be implemented before due to the geographical isolation of the eastern and southeastern parts of the country and the neglect of the potential capacities in these areas by the previous government.

Javan: Independence brought power

Javan dedicated its editorial to the rise of Iran's political power. The paper said: Iran has become a regional and global power at important stages of its history. At several points in time, we have witnessed the emergence of a significant political power in this land. The victory of the revolution made the Iranian nation so powerful that it became a model for a new actor at the regional and extra-regional levels. Now the force of resistance has become an incredible actor. The "True Promise" operation showed that global and regional relations have changed and the Iranian nation can impose its will and authority hundreds of kilometers away from its borders. Iran's defense power in the distance between Iran's borders and the occupied territories showed that the previous relations and arrangements are no longer valid and new equations of deterrence and offensive power are being formed. The story of "Israel's security" no longer has any meaning and the power level of Iranians has exceeded the region today. The path that started at the beginning of the revolution will continue and bigger signs of it will be seen soon.

Iraq's territorial integrity, vowing to safeguard its security and stability.

They also noted that both sides are keen to follow their collaboration based on the Iran-Iraq security pact in a bid to maintain security of the two neighboring countries.

The Iraqi premier declared that no country has the right to infringe Iraq's territorial integrity, ruling out any unilateral actions by neighboring countries that contradict international principles based on mutual respect for sovereignty. Al Sudani also underscored Baghdad's commitment to the principle of good neighborliness and fostering strong relations with regional and global countries.

Furthermore, he pointed out that such pursuits should not compromise Iraq's sovereignty and security. In another meeting, Ahmadian visited Qasim al-Araji, the Iraqi National Security Advisor where Mohammad Kazem Al-Sadiq, Iran's ambassador to Baghdad, was also present.

In the meeting, Ahmadian said Tehran is always seeking to strengthen its relations with all parties in line with common interests and based on mutual respect. He also emphasized that Iran behaves based on respect for Iraq's sovereignty and that all problems can be resolved through targeted and constructive dialogues.

In the meeting, Al-Araji stressed that the ties between Baghdad and Tehran are distinct and strategic, and the two countries and two friendly nations of Iran and Iraq have many commonalities.

He went on to continue that reciprocal visits between Tehran and Baghdad indicate the depth of relations between the two countries and their common approach to dealing with risks and challenges, which requires direct solutions and should not be taken unilaterally.

The Iraqi National Security Advisor averred that constructive dialogue can solve all problems.

Iran insists it will decisively respond to any aggression

From page 1 ▶ Kanaani stated that the group would be "rewarding the aggressor" if it imposed such measures against the Islamic Republic.

"Should they take such measure, it would go down in Europe's history as a reprehensible action," he added.

The spokesman said the EU has not yet imposed any punitive measures on Tel Aviv for the latter's heinous atrocities in the Gaza Strip, but he was surprised that Brussels could proceed with sanctioning Tehran for its just retaliation against the Zionist regime.

Kanaani, meanwhile, reminded the EU that the Islamic Republic had advanced despite prior sanctions against it. "The sanctions policy is a failed policy," Kanaani declared, urging the bloc to "take lessons from history."

"Isfahan incident did not warrant further investigation"

The spokesman cited the incident in which the air defense of the Islamic Republic shot down three foreign quadcopters close to the capital city of Isfahan, resulting in neither casualties or damage.

He said that after the development, Iran and the U.S. had exchanged "some messages," but he brushed the incident off as little more than a "vexatious" step that "was not worth any follow-up on this level."

"As a committed member state of the UN Charter, Iran proved that it had intended to punish the aggressor within international mechanisms, but unfortunately the Islamic Republic failed to fulfill its duty because of interference by the U.S. and some other members of the UN Security Council (UNSC),"

Tehran, Islamabad reach positive agreements to strengthen ties: FM

From page 1 ▶ Raisi departed Tehran on Monday for a formal two-day visit to Islamabad, leading a high-ranking political-economic delegation.

The president of Iran has met with the prime minister and president of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari, as well as attended a combined meeting of the high-ranking delegations from both nations.

"Europeans must stop selling arms to Israel"

In another phone call on Sunday, Amir Abdollahian and his Finnish counterpart Elina Valtonen reviewed the latest developments in the region and the Tehran-Helsinki relations.

The Iranian foreign minister warned his Finnish counterpart that if European nations are serious about ending the Gaza war and promoting regional peace and sustained security, they must immediately cease providing arms to the Israeli regime.

The Iranian foreign minister emphasized that Iran does not seek out tensions in the region, stating that the aggression and crimes committed by the Israeli regime against Gaza are the primary source of problems in the region.

He also underlined that for peace to be established, the right strategy must be used, and conflicting actions and the use of double standards must be avoided.

According to Amir Abdollahian, everyone should



he said, in reference to a move by the U.S., France, and the UK to prevent the passage of a UNSC resolution that would have condemned Israel for its attack on the Iranian embassy.

"Iran's nuclear doctrine is completely clear"

Elsewhere in his remarks, he detailed Iran's nuclear activities, adding "Iran's nuclear doctrine is completely clear. We consider peaceful use of nuclear energy to be our absolute right."

The Islamic Republic would keep up its peaceful nuclear activities within the framework set by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the agency's safeguards, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), he said.

"Nuclear weapons have no place in Iran's defensive doctrine."

The spokesman recognized the Israeli regime as a "threat to all regional countries," adding that the regime's October-present war on the Gaza Strip showed that "the usurping regime is no partner to peaceful plans, and thinks of nothing other than genocide and forced displacement of Palestinians."

"Iran is definitely faced with a

far-reaching view on the level of the international spheres that the issue of Palestine would not be resolved other than through putting an end to the Israeli occupation."

Security in the Caucasus

Security in the South Caucasus is one of the important priorities of Iran's foreign ministry and other relevant bodies, and this issue affects the security of the region, Kanaani said.

He also said that the presence of foreign military forces damages the security of the Caucasus area and strengthens militarism in the region, all of which are detrimental to peace, stability, security, and safeguarding the interests of the regional nations.

U.S. harsh penalties

Iran has never stopped using all of its diplomatic resources to defend national rights, particularly when it comes to the subject of the harsh U.S. sanctions being lifted, according to Kanaani.

In order to achieve the nation's rights through the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, we will continue to employ all of our diplomatic resources.

He continued by saying that

the topic of easing sanctions is still brought up at international summits.

It was also discussed on the sidelines of the UN Security Council meeting, he stressed.

Incident at the Iranian embassy in Paris

Kanaani also discussed an incident that occurred on Friday at the Iranian embassy in Paris, France, involving an individual who had made threats to blow himself up.

The man has mental health issues, according to the spokesperson, and he didn't have any explosives on him.

He also added that the embassy staff's action caused him to leave the diplomatic station.

He said, "Given that person's background, the French judiciary was supposed to establish a secure atmosphere for the Iranian consulate."

Failed policy of sanctions

According to Kanaani, in order to send messages to Washington, the Iranian foreign ministry maintains constant communication with the Swiss Embassy in Tehran, which represents U.S. interests in Iran.

He said that the sanctions program had failed, pointing out that they had already shown their effects and that they harmed the Islamic Republic while providing no advantages to those who imposed them.

Kanaani stated that those who had previously discussed the imposition of severe sanctions against Iran are now shocked by the nation's technical advancements and that they had to learn from their mistakes.

work to put an end to the conflict in Gaza, and as part of this effort, certain European nations ought to immediately cease providing weapons to the aggressor and the Israeli occupation regime, which uses those weapons to murder Palestinian women and children.

The foreign minister of Iran came to the conclusion that this would put an end to the conflict in Gaza and assist restore security and stability in the region.

According to Valtonen, nobody benefits from the ongoing hostilities in West Asia, and Finland opposes any action that might heighten tensions in the region.

The foreign minister of Finland stated that her nation is extremely concerned about the ongoing hostilities in the region because they may lead to a higher risk of civilian fatalities.

She emphasized the need for peace in the region and brought up issues about the rising death toll among civilians in Gaza and the appalling state of the Palestinian enclave's humanitarian conditions.

She also demanded that a cease-fire should be established in Gaza as soon as feasible and without any restrictions.

Since October 7, 2023, Israeli attacks on Gaza have resulted in at least 34,097 Palestinian deaths and 76,980 injuries.

Tehran favors stability in Balkan

Amir Abdollahian congratulated Ivica Dacic

on the formation of the new Serbian parliament over the phone with his Serbian counterpart on Sunday, stating that Tehran values its relationship with Belgrade.

He also noted that Tehran is willing to fortify its relations with Serbia and that Tehran has a clear policy of promoting stability and security in the Balkans.

Amir Abdollahian expanded on Tehran's approach to the Balkans while highlighting Iran's tenet of upholding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other nations, particularly Serbia.

According to him, Iran's official policy in the Balkans is to uphold the region's stability and security and encourage harmony between all ethnic groups and religious adherents.

For his part, the top diplomat of Serbia praised the close communication between the two nations' high-ranking officials at various levels.

Serbia declares its complete solidarity with Iran, according to Dacic.

He also attacked certain Western governments for using international organizations as a political pressure tool against sovereign states, as well as for applying double standards.

The Serbian minister emphasized that independent governments must stand together more strongly when facing coercive measures.

Military self-sufficiency first achievement of Islamic Revolution: senior commander

TEHRAN - One of Iran's major accomplishments following the victory of the Islamic Revolution was the establishment of a self-reliant military infrastructure capable of safeguarding the nation against various threats, stated a senior military commander.

Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the Deputy Chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination, highlighted this milestone during a press briefing at a ceremony honoring fallen army heroes from the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

"Back then when Saddam Hussein was striking the capital Tehran we did not have the missiles

to respond and even had to ration bullets.

Now we have so many of every weapon that we also get to export them," the military leader said, adding that the "the best way to protect the country is to rely on domestic capabilities."

Shortly after the Islamic Revolution, Iran faced significant military vulnerabilities when Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, supported by Western powers, launched a full-scale war against the newly established Islamic Republic.

Iran's limited ammunition and

weaponry were no match for the sophisticated fighter jets, bombers, and tanks supplied to Baghdad by Western allies.

To bolster its defense capabilities, Iran acquired Scud-B and Frog-7 ballistic missiles from Libya, originally developed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and received essential training from Syria. Seeking further missile resources, Tehran sent a delegation to North Korea and China in 1985.

Over the following three decades, Iran devoted substantial resources to advancing its weapons technology. The country is now an ascendant producer of missiles,

drones and other military weapons in the world. Some reports suggest even huge arms exporters like Russia and China have been replenishing their stockpiles with the help of Iran.

Iran's military capabilities and its sophisticated arsenal of weapons came under the spotlight recently when the country successfully hit highly-protected military targets deep inside the occupied territories.

Tehran's subsequent success at averting an attack by Israel on its soil further highlighted its transformed military position.

Inseparable bonds

Raisi calls for closer Iran-Pakistan ties

TEHRAN - Iranian President says Tehran and Islamabad share "inseparable bonds" and are committed to enhancing their relations across various fields at all levels.

Ebrahim Raisi, who is on a key official visit to Pakistan, made the remarks in a joint press conference with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Monday.

Leading a high-profile delegation, Raisi embarked on a diplomatic journey spanning Islamabad and Sri Lanka. His arrival in Islamabad on Monday was met with a ceremonial welcome, including greetings from Pakistani Minister of Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada and other dignitaries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warmly greeted Raisi, marked by the rendition of national anthems and a display of honor by the Pakistan Armed Forces. Subsequent private discussions between Raisi and Sharif set the stage for a collaborative session involving top-level delegations from both nations.

Before departing Tehran, Raisi underscored Iran's steadfast commitment to Pakistan's security, stressing the mutual advantages of reinforced border security. He articulated the visit's dual agenda: strengthening economic and trade ties while reiterating Iran's dedication to fostering regional cooperation.

Highlighting the deep historical ties between Iran and Pakistan, Raisi emphasized their joint focus on political, economic, and regional collaboration, emphasizing shared values concerning human rights, solidarity with Palestine, and counterterrorism efforts.

During the press conference, Raisi emphasized the imperative for Iran and Pakistan to capitalize



on their substantial capacities to serve the interests of both nations. He highlighted mutual agreements aimed at enhancing relations across economic, political, commercial, and cultural domains, underlining shared commitments to combat terrorism, insecurity, organized crime, and illicit drug trade. Raisi stressed the significance of bilateral, regional, and international cooperation in safeguarding human rights. He expressed dissatisfaction with the current level of trade between the two countries and outlined aspirations to elevate exchanges to \$10 billion. Additionally, Raisi underscored Iran's ability to turn Western sanctions into developmental opportunities and offered to impart Iran's expertise in science, technology, transportation, and transit to Islamabad. During the visit, Raisi commended the unwavering support of the Pakistani people for Islamic values and the oppressed populations of Palestine. He criticized international organizations and human rights advocates for their perceived ineffectiveness, particularly in light of the United Nations Security Council's inaction.

Prime Minister Sharif echoed concerns over Israel's actions in Gaza and called for immediate action to halt what he described as genocide. He advocated for the establishment

of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital and praised Ayatollah Khamenei's support for the Palestinian cause.

Iran, Pakistan sign 8 MoUs, documents to increase trade value

As part of the visit, Iranian and Pakistani officials signed eight agreements aimed at promoting cooperation in various sectors, including trade, science and technology, agriculture, health, culture, and legal and judicial affairs.

These agreements encompassed initiatives such as establishing free trade zones, enhancing cooperation in cinema and media, addressing animal health and security concerns, and facilitating legal and judicial assistance in civil and commercial matters. The signing ceremony also marked the ratification of a security cooperation agreement between the governments of two countries.

"Today in our meeting with [Pakistani] prime minister, and other members of the respective cabinet, we decided to promote the bilateral relations between the two countries at all political, cultural, economic, and trade levels as far as possible," Raisi added at the joint press conference.

Tehran, Islamabad committed to forge stronger ties

The Iranian head of state also met

with Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. The two discussed regional and global developments and "affirmed commitment to peace and constructive dialogue for resolving regional challenges."

During this meeting, Raisi stressed the imperative of closer ties between Tehran and Islamabad, noting the lack of interest from external powers in their strengthening relationship.

He underscored the significance of Muslim unity in addressing regional challenges, particularly in supporting Palestine.

In response, Pakistani Foreign Minister expressed eagerness to expand cooperation with Iran, underscoring the crucial need for unity and solidarity among Muslim nations. The Iranian president is set to meet with his Pakistani counterpart Asil Ali Zardari who helped launch the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project after travelling to Iran in 2013. The two countries signed an agreement in June 2009 for the proposed pipeline to export Iranian natural gas to Pakistan.

Raisi's itinerary includes meetings with Pakistani President, Senate chairman, and National Assembly speaker, along with visits to Karachi and Lahore to engage with provincial leadership.

Raisi's visit marks the first by a head of state to Pakistan following the country's recent elections and the formation of a new government under Sharif's leadership.

Upon concluding his visit to Pakistan, Raisi will embark on a one-day journey to Sri Lanka, following an official invitation from President Ranil Wickremesinghe. The highlight of his Sri Lankan visit will be the participation in the opening ceremony and official inauguration of the Uma Oya Multipurpose Project, alongside the Sri Lankan President.

What was the meaning of Iran's signal in its calibrated response?

From Page 1 ▶ This irrational behavior emanated from the lack of accurate calculation of Iran's behavior in response to changing the red line drawn in the parties' actions. However, it is also possible that due to the understanding of Tehran's intention not to expand the war and engage in a conflict with economic problems and sanctions, there was hope for continued strategic patience from Iran.

However, Iran, whose security is based on deterrence, considered the attack on the embassy a serious violation of its existential interest. In a situation where targeting Iran's nuclear infrastructure has been among the goals of Israel and America for years, the main factor that caused such a decision was Iran's "significant deterrence". However, after this attack on the embassy, what could be the perception about Iran's deterrence?

Now that Iran's determination to respond was inevitable, the question of its ability and design was raised. Iran wanted to give a clear response to Israel in a situation where the Zionist regime was under pressure in the field of public opinion due to numerous violations of human rights, its widening gap with the West and the United States regarding the handling of operations and the future of Gaza. All these elements indicate that Iran did not seek to expand the conflict with Israel and other actors

to open a new front and disrupt this situation.

Therefore, the puzzle of the response to the attack on the consulate had two apparently contradictory and paradoxical variables.

First, the answer must be given in such a way that the damaged deterrence is revived and causes a change in the enemy's perception of this type of strike.

Second, the conflict should not spread, neither in the geographical field nor in the increasing of actors involved.

According to Iran's previous experiences reviving its deterrence, solving this problem and paradox have been two conceivable tools and leverages.

1). Designing a type of military operation that demonstrates its capability (at the tactical and design level) but not at the level of forcing the target to respond.

2). Through political tools. The uncertainty in the minds of the regional and global states regarding their goals should be reduced.

Now, if we examine the "True Promise" operation with this statement, these things are evident. According to previous experiences, Iran and the Axis of Resistance have a specific knowledge and understanding of the weak points

of the Zionist regime. One of the most obvious of these weaknesses is the lack of strategic depth and a clear vulnerability regarding the number of strikes and the number of fronts. Also, using the principle of surprise usually increases the success rate.

However, Iran, knowing these cases, presented a designed response in which it did not involve all the actors of the resistance axis who were active during the past months; at the same time, it responded with minimal quantity and quality (according to the Israeli regime's statistics, Hamas in Al-Aqsa Storm operation had used about 3,500 projectiles) and of course, the start of the attack was already known hours ago. At the same time, during the days before the operation, Tehran had expressed to the regional and extra-regional countries its intention to carry out this "calibrated response."

This operation has shown Iran's maturity in design and implementation. In general, it should be kept in mind that the main audience of deterrence is not public opinion but decision-makers. Security officials must know the type of target selection, weapons, and tactics used better than anyone else. Until now, it seems that Western officials and experts have received this calibrated response.

Ali Salehian is a senior researcher at Governance and Policy Think Tank, Tehran, Iran.

Vice President optimistic about development prospects

TEHRAN- Iran's First Vice President has underscored the nation's clear path toward development, emphasizing the pivotal role of its young, skilled, and innovative workforce as the country's primary asset.

Mohammad Mokhber highlighted that the slogan of the year revolves around nurturing the younger generation and fostering entrepreneurship.

Back on March 20, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, on the occasion of Nowruz, issued a message, saying, "If we plan to increase our production rapidly, we need to get the people actively involved in the economy. We must pave the way for the people

to get involved in production in a tangible manner and remove the obstacles that stand in the way to their participation. There are great capacities in the public sector, which I will explain, God willing. These capacities must become active. They should be used for the benefit of the country and the people. It is for this reason that the slogan that I have chosen for this year is, Surge in production through people's participation. This is the slogan for this year. I hope, God willing, this slogan will be actualized in the best possible way. It is necessary for those who are making the plans for the country to create plans, for experts to collaborate by providing their thoughts, and for those who

are active in the economic sector to, God willing, actively participate in this endeavor."

Mokhber commended the proactive initiatives undertaken by the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, particularly in their dedication to supporting students and the youth.

He emphasized that while Iran boasts abundant natural resources, its greatest asset lies in its educated and dynamic youth, whose contributions drive the nation's progress.

Addressing the global economic landscape, Mokhber noted a significant shift towards the digital economy, observing that many of today's prominent entrepreneurs and capitalists hail from the younger

demographic.

Underlining the Raisi administration's steadfast support for the Relief Committee, Mokhber affirmed the government's commitment to alleviating poverty.

Established in March 1979, the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee serves as a cornerstone of Iran's charitable efforts, striving to uplift impoverished families and restore financial stability. Over the years, the committee has provided vital assistance to millions of individuals and families in need, offering various forms of support ranging from social security coverage for vulnerable populations to educational assistance for students from low-income backgrounds.

Wheelchair basketball coach Dastyar focuses on long-term planning

TEHRAN - Head coach of Iran's men's wheelchair basketball team, Mohammadreza Dastyar, says that the sport needs long-term plan if they want to participate in the Paralympic Games. Iran failed to reach 2024 Paralympic Games after suffering three losses at 2024 IWBF Men's Repechage. Team Melli just defeated Canada in the eight-team tournament.

"We were supposed to hold a training camp in Turkey but we were forced to travel to France without enough preparatory. We had arranged two warm-up matches with Galatasaray and Besiktas but the camp was canceled after Turkish Airline stated that it could not provide services to wheelchair passengers," Dastyar said.

"The Disabled Federation cooperated with the team in every possible way, but we missed our camp in Turkey and went straight to France. In my opinion, the behavior of the airline wasn't logical, but anyway, this is what happened and we need to stay positive and keep going," he added.

"There were eight teams in this tournament that they were very well prepared. For instance, Colombia stole the show in Group B and appeared at an unpredictable level. Unfortunately, for the reasons I mentioned, we could not go to France fully prepared.

"In the game against France, we could have turned the game in our favor in the last seven seconds, but unfortunately did not happen. The late addition of some players to the team made it difficult for us. In the match against the Netherlands, we had analyzed them but they went beyond expectations. In the game against Canada, we managed to win but we did not perform well against Germany in our last match," Dastyar added.

In the end, the head coach said some experts said the failure shows the fundamental changes should be made, but if they want to succeed, they must have a long-term plan.

"We need to form a youth team, so they can achieve success in future in the Asian, World and Paralympics. Our sitting volleyball team, headed by Mr. Hadi Rezaei, is a good example of long-term plan. Mr. Rezaei has always been supported by the officials until they reached the position they are," Dastyar concluded.

Greco-Roman wrestlers earn quotas for 2024 Olympics

TEHRAN - Iran completed its full set of six Greco-Roman quotas for the Paris Olympics after Amin

Kaviani and Alireza Mohmadi clinched the quotas at 77kg and 87kg respectively.

Kaviani defeated Chinese wrestler Rui Liu 6-5 to book a place in Paris.

Mohmadi also won Iran's last quota for the Olympics, beating Uzbekistan's Jalgasbay Berdimuratov 3-2 in the semifinals.

The competition was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Iranian gymnast Olfati secures 2024 Olympics Games berth

TEHRAN - Iranian artistic gymnast Mahdi Olfati secured a berth at the 2024 Olympic Games.

Olfati will be the first Iranian gymnast to compete at the Games in 60 years.

Though the gymnast failed to compete in the Doha final, Olfati had done enough at the first three World Cups to remain as the two atop the men's Vault leaderboard, guaranteeing him a trip to the Games. The 2024 Summer Olympics will bring a total of 318 gymnasts (192 in artistic, 94 in rhythmic and 32 in trampoline) together.

The 2024 Olympics will be held from July 26 to Aug. 11 in Paris.

Vafaei criticizes conditions after crashing out to Trump

TEHRAN - Hossein Vafaei strongly criticized the conditions at the Crucible after crashing out of the 2024 World Snooker Championship in a 10-5 defeat by former champion Judd Trump.

The Iranian described the Sheffield venue as "smelly", compared its practice facilities to "like playing in a garage", and questioned the treatment of players in the course of the marathon 17-day event.

"Everything's so bad - if you ask me if I want to come back here, I would tell you no way," said Vafaei, who is no stranger to Crucible controversy after playing a rash break-off shot in his defeat by Ronnie O'Sullivan last year.

"Forget the history, you want to go somewhere really nice as a player. You walk round the Crucible and it smells really bad. You go to other countries, and everything is shiny. But here it's completely different.

"The practice room - do you see anything special? I feel like I'm practicing in a garage."

Speculation over the future of the Crucible, which has staged the tournament since 1977, has been heightened since world No1 O'Sullivan suggested it should be moved to Saudi Arabia or China when the existing deal expires in 2027.

Vafaei, who made his debut in 2022, is clearly no fan and continued: "Look at the China venues, how fantastic they treat the players, a red carpet and an opening ceremony. The players are treated like stars. But here no one looks after the players, before and after the match no one cares who you are.

"If they don't want to lose the Crucible invest some money, make it shinier, make it nicer, make it more luxury for the people. If they make it cleaner and nicer, people will enjoy it."

Iran too strong for Turkmenistan at CAFA U18 Women's Championship

TEHRAN - Iran defeated Turkmenistan 7-0 at the 2024 CAFA U18 Women's Championship on Monday.

Maryam Dini (two goals), Somayeh Esmaeili (two goals), Tania Jahanshahi, Zahra Khanlarzadeh and Nazanin Mansouri scored for the Iranian team. The Persian girls, who had defeated Uzbekistan 4-2 in their opening match, are also scheduled to play Tajikistan (Friday) and Kyrgyzstan (Sunday), respectively.

The tournament plays an important role and aims to support the general popularization of the Women's game in the region and provide platform to prepare the teams of Central Asian member associations for the Continental competition AFC U20 Women's Championship as well as showcasing their skills and talents through all CAFA media channels.

CAFA contributes their regional football development initiatives which is further supporting the vision of FIFA making the game truly global and vision of AFC to making football the number one sport in the continent.

The tournament takes place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan from April 19 to 28.

A total of five teams compete in an exciting single round-robin format.

Iran defeat Kuwait at 2024 AFC Futsal Asian Cup

TEHRAN - Iran defeated Kuwait 4-0 in Group D of the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Thailand 2024 on Monday. Kuwaiti players scored two own goals and Saeid Ahmad Abbasi also scored twice.

Team Melli had previously defeated Afghanistan 3-1 and Bahrain 5-3.

Iran will play Kyrgyzstan on Wednesday in the quarterfinals.

The competition is underway in Bangkok, Thailand, from April 17 to 28.

Iran's nominal power generation capacity exceeds 92,800 MW

TEHRAN – The nominal capacity of Iran's power plants has reached 92,841 megawatts (MW), according to the latest data released by Iran Grid Management Company (IGMC).

The IGMC data indicate that the country's power generation capacity has increased by 2,036 MW over the past two years, Tasnim News Agency reported.

Combined cycled power plants currently account for the biggest share of the country's power generation with 35,795 MW of capacity; the mentioned power plants account for 38.6 percent of the country's total power generation.

Also, heat and gas units with nominal capacities of 15,829 MW and 24,19 MW have a share of 17 percent and 25.9 percent, respectively, in the country's electricity production.

In total, thermal power plants (including heat, gas, and combined cycle units) account for 81.5 percent of the country's nominal electricity generation capacity with a total of 75,643 MW.

The share of renewable power plants

including wind, solar, biomass, and hydropower in the country's nominal power generation capacity is 1.1 percent with a total capacity of 1,136 MW.

Increasing the country's power generation capacity and preventing blackouts during peak consumption periods have been among the Iranian Energy Ministry's top priorities since the current government administration took office in 2021.

In August 2021, Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian announced that his ministry was planning to boost the country's power generation capacity by 35,000 MW over the next four years.

The mentioned figure would be achieved through the construction of thermal power plants with 15,000 MW of capacity, and renewable power plants with a capacity of 10,000 MW by the public and private sectors, as well as the construction of new power plants with 10,000 MW capacity by large industries.

Iran's civil aviation fleet received 66 new planes in 2 years

TEHRAN – Iran's Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) has announced imports of 66 airliners of different types from the date the current Iranian government took office in August 2021 till March 2024.

Most of the imported airplanes were large wide-body planes, the CAO spokesman Jafar Yazarlou told IRNA on Sunday.

Also, seven light aircraft for training and medical urgency transportation have been imported to the country, Yazarlou added.

He said that five helicopters were imported to the country during the mentioned period, adding that 14 airliners have been overhauled and joined the Iranian airlines during the period.

So, in total, 92 airliners and helicopters have been imported to the country and overhauled since the beginning of the current Iranian government.

Back in July 2023, the CAO head said the number of the country's passenger airplanes were going to increase to 250 by March 2024.

Speaking in a televised program, Mohammadi-Bakhs said some 70 airplanes were going to be added to the CAO fleet by the yearend.

Back in August 2022, Mohammadi-Bakhs said his organization was implementing a comprehensive program based on which the number of the country's passenger airplanes would increase to 550 within 10 years.

Speaking in a meeting with the country's senior aviation officials, Mohammadi-Bakhs said: "Under the framework of this program, fleet

expansion up to 550 airplanes, repairing airplane parts, and indigenizing the knowledge for the construction of aircraft inside the country are set on the agenda."

"Following President Raisi's orders, we have focused all our efforts on a few areas, including buying airplanes, manufacturing airplanes, and repairing grounded airplanes. We need 550 airplanes to meet the country's air transportation demands," Mohammadi-Bakhs said.

According to the official, based on the said program, the government has allowed the private sector to purchase small-scale airplanes and operate them as part of the country's civil aviation fleet.

Knowledge-based companies have also been tasked to work on new programs for the domestic manufacturing of passenger aircraft, Mohammadi-Bakhs said.

"In this regard, three platforms including 50, 72, and 150 passenger aircraft have been suggested to be used for designing domestic airplanes, but what is currently being pursued is the manufacturing of 50-passenger planes in collaboration with Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industry and the ministries of Defense, Transport and Urban Development as well as Industry, Mining, and Trade," he explained.

The official further noted that a consortium of Russian, Chinese, and Indian companies has been formed to participate in the organization's overhaul programs.

Ground laid for foreign journalists to visit site of Beijing intl. film festival

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING- During a program arranged by the China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC), a number of foreign journalists visited the site of Beijing International Film Festival (BJIFF) at Langyuan Station Cultural Center in Beijing on Friday (April 19).

In their on-site visit, the journalists also participated in the BJIFF related activities and got familiar with the cinema sector in China.

The highly anticipated 14th Beijing International Film Festival (BJIFF) kicked off in Beijing on Thursday evening, with Chinese and foreign filmmakers taking to the red carpet for the opening ceremony.

Shen Haixiong, president of China Media Group (CMG), delivered a speech at the opening ceremony and shared his outlook on the Chinese film industry.

A variety of engaging activities were planned, including discussions on topics such as the global distribution of Chinese films and the evolving role of domestic cinema productions at international festivals. With guests from North America, Europe, South America and Japan, the event promises to spark insightful conversations and pave the way for Chinese cinema's global rise in today's dynamic and burgeoning industry landscape.

Langyuan train station is in Jiangfu

Park, North-East Beijing, between the Ba River and the Liangma River. These rivers have been a strategic infrastructure in North East Beijing area and a key feature of its industrial landscape.

As reported by the China Global Television Network (CGTN), stars, industry insiders and the broader global film fraternity gathered on the red carpet of the Beijing International Film Festival this year, sharing their experiences and insights during the opening ceremony of the annual event. They engaged in fervent discussions, probing the impact of films on societal progress, while also dissecting the evolving landscape of cinematic expression, particularly regarding realism and the rise of short-form content.

When asked about their presence at the festival, distinguished figures such as Cameron Bailey, chief executive officer of the Toronto International Film Festival, and Ilda Santiago, director of the Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival, expressed their admiration for the Chinese film industry and the vibrant cultural exchange facilitated by such events.

Reflecting on the pivotal role of films in fostering social progress, director Chen Zhuo emphasized their ability to touch hearts and shape societal values. This sentiment was echoed by esteemed actor

Jiang Wu, who credited the industry's growth to both a conducive environment and the passionate dedication of filmmakers.

The allure of realism in films was a central topic, with actress Xu Fan and actor Wang Jingchun advocating for its authenticity, which they believed resonated deeply with audiences. They contended that realistic portrayals capture the essence of everyday life, engendering a good connection between viewers and the producers.

Furthermore, the discussion veered towards the evolving landscape of cinematic storytelling, including the burgeoning prominence of short videos. Director Chen Yu hailed the diverse narrative formats, foreseeing their indispensable role in future storytelling endeavors. However, Derek Hui, another director, cautioned against imposing rigid distinctions between mediums, advocating instead for a focus on narrative quality irrespective of length.

It should be noted that the China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC), under the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), that arranged this program for the foreign journalists, has initiated a program to build a platform for the media from countries around the world, especially developing countries, to observe China

and study development in this country.

The program aimed at media exchange was halted in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 epidemic.

In each edition of the program, journalists from all around the world gather together to get familiar with the modern China and exchange their experiences in the field of journalism.

In 2024 edition of the program, scheduled to be held from late February until late June, over 100 journalists from more than 90 countries are participating.



Call for Tender 1st Announcement for the Purchase of Flanges (Piping Materials) for Jask Oil Terminal Project, Tender No. 955016

Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company intends to Purchase of Flanges (Piping Materials) for Jask Oil Terminal through a public tender. Therefore, the applicants are allowed to have 10 days after the date of 1st publication of the tender notice in the newspaper to participate in this tender.

To download the tender documents, please visit the tender's section of the IOEC's website: WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS, and Please do not hesitate to contact with Transaction Committee office with Mr Amir Nosrathzadeh with Tel: +9821-82841533 under sign for any inquiries and more information.

Quarterly exports to Pakistan rise 16% yr/yr

TEHRAN – Iran's exports to its neighbor Pakistan increased by 16 percent in the first three months of 2024 compared to the same period last year to reach \$286 million, data released by Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce showed.

According to the ministry data, Pakistan imported \$247 million of goods from the Islamic Republic during January-March 2023, IRNA reported. As reported, Pakistan's imports from Iran in March also increased by 25 percent to stand at \$95.6 million; the imports in January and February stood at \$104.2 million and \$86.2 million, respectively.

Iran was Pakistan's ninth source of imports in the mentioned period.

Pakistan's imports from Iran stood at \$944 million in 2023, registering a 13 percent rise compared to 2022.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi left Tehran for Islamabad early on



Monday on an official visit to the southeastern neighboring country.

Raisi's Islamabad visit is taking place at the invitation of his Pakistani counterpart Asif Ali Zardari.

During his two-day trip, the president will be accompanied by a high-ranking economic-political delegation including some cabinet members.

Tehran-Islamabad trade exchanges to reach \$10b

In his remarks before departing for Islamabad, Iranian President Raisi said that the economic interactions between Iran and Pakistan are set to reach \$10 billion.

Pakistan is an important country which Iran has long-standing relations with, Raisi said on Monday morning, adding that

the two countries have had many economic, political, and religious relations, and favorable cooperation has been established between them.

Iran and Pakistan have common views and have had very good cooperation on the issues of human rights, defending the oppressed Palestinian people, and fighting against terrorism, he added.

In line with neighborhood policies and in line with the policy of holding relations with Muslim countries, we believe that these relations should be improved, Raisi further cited, stressing that both countries are determined to promote their bilateral ties.

He went on to say that he and his accompanying delegation are scheduled to discuss several issues with Pakistani officials including the issues related to borders, security, economy, commerce, and energy.

Iran to host economy ministers of African countries

TEHRAN – Iran will host economy ministers from more than 40 African countries at the second Iran-Africa International Summit set to be held later this month, an official with the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said.

The deputy head of the international businesses promotion office of the TPO pointed to the significance of trade with African states and added that African countries are home to numerous unknown trade opportunities and will play a leading role in global trade in the future.

Africa enjoys untapped resources that have

not so far been introduced, Mohammad Sadegh Ghannadzadeh said, adding that China and Turkey have increased the level of their trade with this continent.

He further noted that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi have placed special emphasis on expanding trade and economic relations with African states.

It is a matter of regret to say that Iran's trade with African countries has fallen into oblivion in the past four decades, so, the organization is trying to take effective steps to boost trade with

Africa, he noted, Mehr news agency reported.

Identifying and introducing the export potentials of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been cited as one of the main goals of the 2nd International Iran-Africa Summit, Ghannadzadeh further stated.

He pointed out that specialized business-to-business (B2B) meetings and various expert-level discussion panels including specialized steel industries, petrochemical, and agricultural panels will be held on the sidelines of the summit.

Iran's PPI falls 16.2% in a year

TEHRAN – The point-to-point Producer Price Index (PPI), which is a measure of wholesale inflation, has decreased 16.5 percent from 40.7 in March 2023 to 24.5 in late March 2024, Tasnim News Agency reported.

As reported, the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is an indication of inflation based on the prices paid by consumers, also decreased by 4.8 percent from 37.3 in March 2023 to 32.6 in March 2024.

In February, the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) put the average inflation rate in the twelve months ended on January 20, which marks the end of the 10th Iranian calendar month Dey, at 42.5 percent, noting that the figure fell by 1.1 percent from the previous year's same period.

The center put the country's point-to-point inflation rate at 35.8 percent in the 10th Iranian calendar month, which means families have

paid an average of 35.8 percent more for purchasing the same package of commodities and services in that month, compared to the same month in the preceding year.

The Statistical Center of Iran has put the average inflation rate in the twelve-month period that ended on March 20, 2023, which marks the end of the Iranian calendar year 1401, at 45.8 percent.

The center had put the inflation rate in the twelve-month period that ended on March 20, 2022 (the end of the Iranian calendar year 1400) at 40.2 percent and that of the Iranian calendar year 1399 at 36.4 percent.

In mid-July 2023, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in an economic outlook report said inflation in Iran which was reported to be 49 percent in 2022 is expected to fall to 30 percent in 2024.

TEDPIX rises 4,000 points on Monday

TEHRAN – After the sharp growth of the last two days, TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose another 4,000 points to stand at 2,316,000 on Monday, which is the third

day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three

ones are the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Afghanistan's 1st rail cargo exported to Turkey via Iran

TEHRAN – Afghanistan's first export shipment containing 1,100 metric tons of mineral ore was exported by train from Roznak station to Turkey via Iran.

In a statement, the Afghanistan Railway Department announced that

this export included talc mineral exported to the city of Mersin, Turkey.

This is the first shipment of Afghanistan's "talc" that has gone to Turkey through Iran, the report added.

Spokesman for the Transportation and Aviation Authority of the Taliban government in Afghanistan Imamuddin Ahmadihad previously announced that import and export between Afghanistan and Turkey will be carried out by land route for the

first time.

Hand-woven carpets and rugs, dried fruits, and precious stones are among the goods exported from Afghanistan to Turkey and other countries.

Washington's back-to-back support for Israel is outrageous

US has made itself an accomplice in Israeli crimes

By Matin Jamshidi

The U.S. House of Representatives approved a \$26 billion military aid package for Israel on April 20. The aid followed just two days after the U.S. vetoed a widely-backed UN Security Council resolution drafted to give Palestine full membership in the United Nations.

Such back-to-back support for Israel comes as Israel has shocked the world with its unthinkable vicious crimes in the Gaza Strip.

Truly, the United States is encouraging Israel to act more brazenly against Palestinians through such inexcusable and blind moves.

While recognition of Palestine as a full UN member could put pressure on Israel to accept a two-state solution, the United States stood against the will of the world and blocked it.

Voting against full membership to Palestine, Robert Wood, deputy U.S. ambassador to the UN, said, "This vote does not reflect opposition to Palestinian statehood, but instead is an acknowledgment that it will only come from direct negotiations between the parties."

Mohsen Armin, a former top Iranian lawmaker and current deputy chief of the Reform Front of Iran, called the U.S. veto "shameful" and said it shows that Washington has closed "its eyes to Israel's crimes". Amin also defied claims by Wood, saying such remarks show that "from the viewpoint of the United States any move for a two-state solution should be done with the



consent of the regime of Israel and without any pressure on it."

With its veto, the United States even disappointed its Western and East Asian allies. Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide expressed his Oslo's "regret" that the Security Council "did not agree on admitting Palestine as a full member of the UN".

Israel has become so arrogant that it summoned ambassadors of France, Japan, South Korea, Malta, Slovenia, and Ecuador as their countries voted in favor of the resolution to give Palestine full membership. Among these six countries, France, Japan, South Korea, Malta, and Slovenia are close allies or friends of the United States.

While the world was angry with the United States for vetoing the widely-backed Security Council resolution, the House approved assistance to Israel 366 to 58, facilitating the path for Israel to speed up its genocidal campaign in Gaza.

Funding Israel's war crimes in

Gaza, which has so far killed over 34,000 and pushed its 2.3 million to the verge of famine, has even unsettled certain American lawmakers. According to the New York Times, thirty-seven liberal Democrats opposed the \$26 billion aid package for Israel because the legislation placed no conditions on how Israel could use American funding.

"Sending more weapons to the Netanyahu government will make the U.S. even more responsible for atrocities and the horrific humanitarian crisis in Gaza which is now in a season of famine," said Representative Jonathan L. Jackson, Democrat of Illinois, the Times reported.

One day after the House approved the aid package, Prime Minister Netanyahu said Israel will step up its military campaign in Gaza.

The military aid also comes after the Washington Post reported on March 29 that the United States has greenlighted the transfer of billions of dollars

worth of bombs and fighter jets to Israel. The new arms package includes more than 1,800 MK84 2,000-pound bombs and 500 MK82 500-pound bombs, according to Pentagon and State Department officials.

Agnes Callamard, Amnesty International's secretary general said the U.S. veto "displays a callous disregard for civilian suffering in the face of a staggering death toll". Also, Avril Benoit, executive director of Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres, or MSF) USA, said, "By vetoing this resolution, the U.S. stands alone in casting its vote against humanity."

The international rights groups also released a statement saying, "By continuing to provide Israel with weapons [and] diplomatic cover as it commits atrocities, including collectively punishing the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, the U.S. risks complicity in war crimes."

The United States is adding insult to injury by its diplomatic and military backing for Israel. There is no doubt that the U.S. has made itself an accomplice in Israel's atrocious war against Palestinians in Gaza.

Regrettably, policymakers in the U.S. see no limit in their backing for a regime that its leaders are war criminals and are starving more than two million population in Gaza. The world is annoyed by so much unethical, unjustified support for Israel. This degree of American support for a regime that is a bone in the throat of the world is outrageous and repugnant.

Israel haunted by glaring failures

Israeli military intelligence chief steps down

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- The resignation of the Israeli military intelligence director has raised serious questions about the ulterior motives lurking behind his decision.

Major General Aharon Haliva, chief of the Israel Military Intelligence Directorate, announced on Monday that he will step down, citing his responsibility for failing to prevent the October 7 military operation carried out by the Hamas resistance movement.

"The intelligence directorate under my command did not live up to the task we were entrusted with. I have carried that black day with me ever since, day after day, night after night. I will carry the horrible pain of the war with me forever" Haliva wrote in his resignation letter.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant approved Haliva's resignation which had been coordinated with Lieutenant-General Herzi Halevi, the head of the Israeli armed forces.

Following the October 7 attack by Hamas, Haliva had accepted responsibility for the failures that allowed the resistance group to catch Israel off guard.

"We failed in our most important mission, and as the head of the Military Intelligence Directorate, I bear full responsibility for the failure," Haliva said on October 17.

200 days of Israeli failures in Gaza

Unique Palestinian resilience despite severe hardship

By Wesam Bahrani

From page 1 ▶ Marking 200 days since Operation al-Aqsa Storm that saw the Israeli army attack Gaza with unprecedented ferocity, major questions remain as to what Tel Aviv has achieved.

By the admission of Israeli officials, former and present military chiefs and political leaders, as well as media analysts, the regime's army has been bogged down in Gaza.

With the exception of death, destruction, and brutality committed in the Gaza Strip, the occupation regime has failed to achieve any of its officially and unofficially stated goals.

The officially stated goals are the elimination of Hamas, wiping out its military capabilities, returning the Israeli captives, and preventing any part of Gaza from becoming a security risk to the occupation regime in the future.

The unofficial goals, which have been stated by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet ministers, are displacing Gaza's population to Egypt, re-occupying Gaza, and rebuilding settlements in Gaza.

Both the officially and unofficially stated goals have been abject failures by the admission of Israelis themselves.

The Israeli minister of war or military leaders try to speak of tactical victories when announcing the discovery of a tunnel shaft and some light arms here and there or even the killing of resistance fighters.

Yet, experts say this is natural as the Israeli army possesses one of the most powerful and sophisticated weaponry and technology in the world.

If it can't achieve these simple tactical achievements, then the end of the Israeli mil-



The attack dealt severe blows to the Israeli military and intelligence services, previously seen as virtually unbeatable.

Israel is a nuclear power which is supported by some other nuclear powers such as the United States. But, Iran's strike exposed the regime's extreme vulnerability.

Israel has resorted to media propaganda to whitewash its intelligence and military fiasco in the face of Iran's strong response to the regime's evil acts.

Haliva is the first high-ranking Israeli official to step down for failing to prevent the October 7 attack. He is also the first official who will quit his post after Iran's drone and missile attacks.

Haliva's resignation has thrown a spotlight on fears that have haunted the Israeli regime over its military and intelligence failures.

Israel's successive military and intelligence defeats at the hands of Iran and regional resistance groups highlight the fact that the regime is as fragile as a spider web.

itary is spelled. This is not something Tel Aviv should be boasting about.

The slogans of the war, 200 days ago, were not the discovery of some arms here or tunnel shafts there.

In its first days of the ground offensive, the Israeli army invaded and occupied northern Gaza and then withdrew its forces after a few months, declaring mission accomplished.

200 days later, Israeli army units are back in northern Gaza, fighting against the Palestinian resistance forces in the same areas that it had invaded on day one.

Half of the Israeli captives have not been released. The other half were released through negotiations with Hamas.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

WORLD HEADLINES

No evidence for Israeli UNRWA claims

Israel has yet to provide supporting evidence of its claims that employees of the UN relief agency UNRWA were involved in the October 7 Hamas attack, an independent review led by the former French foreign minister Catherine Colonna has said.

The Colonna report, which was commissioned by the UN in the wake of Israeli allegations, found that UNRWA had regularly supplied Israel with lists of its employees for vetting, the Guardian reported.

Israeli allegations of the involvement of UNRWA staff in the Hamas attack on Israel led major donors in January to cut their funding to the agency, the main channel of humanitarian support not only to Palestinians in Gaza but to Palestinian refugee communities across the region.

The funding was cut despite the dire needs of 2.3 million people in Gaza, most of whom have been forced from their homes by the Israeli offensive since October 7 and have been struggling to find water, food, shelter or medical care.

Most of the donor nations have resumed their funding in recent weeks.

Mass graves expose Israeli "war crimes"

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) condemned "the horrific massacres" committed by Israel following the uncovering of mass graves in the courtyard of Nasser Medical Complex in the city of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

The organization said in a statement that "hundreds of displaced, wounded, sick people and medical teams have been subjected to torture and abuse before being executed and buried collectively", Al Jazeera reported.

It called for a probe into "a war crime, a crime against humanity, and organized state terrorism", stressing the need for the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice "to assume their responsibilities in this regard".

A mass grave with nearly 300 bodies has been uncovered by Gaza Civil Defense workers at the Nasser hospital in Khan Younis, following the withdrawal of Israeli troops on April 7.

Hamas: Israel must withdraw from Gaza

Hamas's political chief Ismail Haniyeh has blamed Israel for stalling on a ceasefire, saying it refuses to agree to a complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza in order for it to happen.

"Despite dozens of sessions and communications exchanged via our mediators, the Zionist enemy until this point has not agreed to a ceasefire in Gaza. All they want is the return of captives so they can continue the war on Gaza - and this cannot be," Haniyeh said.

The Hamas chief added, "They want Hamas and the resistance to agree to maps referencing the deployment of the Israeli army, as if to say we are legitimizing the occupation of the Strip. There must be a complete withdrawal from the Gaza Strip."

West Bank arrests since October 7 surpass 8,400

More than 8,425 Palestinians have been arrested by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank since October 7, according to the Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs, the Palestinian Prisoner's Society, and the Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.

They said in a joint statement the number includes about 540 children and 66 journalists.

The arrests come with abuse, severe beatings, threats against detainees and their families, widespread sabotage and destruction of homes as well as the seizure of vehicles, money and gold jewelry, the groups said.

Dozens of pro-Palestinians arrested on Yale University campus

At least 40 protesters were arrested during a pro-Palestinian rally at Yale University in Connecticut, the school's police chief told the Yale Daily News.

Those arrested face charges of trespassing, a Class A misdemeanor, Yale Police Chief Anthony Campbell told the campus news publication. Campbell said those arrested would be released after processing.

Tensions at many US universities have been high ever over Israel's war on Gaza since October 7.

At Columbia University in New York, officials announced all Monday classes were virtual.

The decision was made to "deescalate the rancor and give us all a chance to consider next steps," Columbia President Minouche Shafik said.

EU fails to pledge Patriot systems to Ukraine

European Union countries possessing Patriot air defense systems appeared hesitant on Monday to give any to Ukraine, which is desperately seeking at least seven of the missile batteries to help fend off Russian air attacks.

Russia's air force is vastly more powerful than Ukraine's, but sophisticated missile systems provided by Kyiv's Western partners can pose a major threat to Russian aviation as the Kremlin's forces slowly push forward along the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line in the war, AP reported.

Dutch Foreign Minister Hanke Bruins Slot said the Netherlands is "looking at every kind of possibility at the moment" and is offering financial support to a German initiative to help Ukraine bolster its air defenses and buy more drones.

Asked at a meeting of EU foreign and defense ministers why the Netherlands is reluctant to send some of its Patriot systems, Slot said: "We are looking again if we can deplete our store of what we still have, but that will be difficult."

Russia claims control of village in Donetsk

Russian forces have taken control of the village of Novomykhailivka 40 kilometers southwest of the Ukrainian city of Donetsk, Russia's defense ministry has said.

Ukraine's General Staff said in its regular morning report on Monday that Kyiv forces continued to hold back Russian attempts to advance near the village, according to the Guardian.

Russia said on Sunday its forces had gained territory near the key battleground of Chasiv Yar in east Ukraine, taking control of Bogdanivka, a small frontline village less than three kilometers (two miles) northeast of the town.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has urged the US Senate to rapidly ratify the long-delayed military aid package passed by Congress over the weekend, warning that his country was preparing its defenses amid fears there could be a large Russian offensive before the fresh supplies reach the frontline.

Moscow's forces have been able to outsell Kyiv by a ratio of at least five to one, rising to 10 to 1, meaning that Ukrainian artillery has been increasingly unable to prevent Russian forces from massing in advance of ground attacks.

Isfahan to establish private airline

TEHRAN – On Monday, the Isfahan tourism chief announced plans to establish a private airline in the province.

“Considering the high tourism capacity of Isfahan, we are pursuing the establishment of an airline by the private sector in this province,” Amir Karamzadeh said.

“Isfahan does not have an airline company with its main base in this city, and according to the head of the Civil Aviation Organization, several requests to launch an airline in this city have been submitted by a number of private companies, but this work has not yet been realized.”

The official underlined the need for extended collaboration between the governmental and private sectors in favor of the tourism boom in the province. “Today, more than ever, we need the cooperation of the government and the private sector in the province.”

According to available data, Isfahan province registered over four million visits to its cultural sites such as museums and historical structures in 17 days starting before the Iranian New Year.

Isfahan, once a bustling hub of international trade and diplomacy in Iran, now stands as one of the country's foremost tourist destinations for compelling reasons. Brimming with architectural marvels, it boasts unparalleled Islamic structures, vibrant bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined avenues. It's a city made for leisurely strolls, immersing oneself



in labyrinthine bazaars, lounging in exquisite gardens, and engaging with locals.

Dubbed “Nesf-e-Jahan,” or “half the world,” Isfahan has earned its moniker for good reason; to behold it is to behold a world within itself. The iconic blue tiles adorning Isfahan's Islamic edifices and its majestic bridges provide a striking contrast to the arid expanses of the surrounding Iranian landscape. At its core lies the sprawling Imam Square, also known as Naghsh-e Jahan Square, stretching an impressive 500 meters by 160 meters. Dating back to the early 17th century, this UNESCO-recognized square showcases Isfahan's most captivating landmarks, offering a glimpse into the city's rich historical and architectural heritage.

Beyond its cultural riches, Isfahan boasts a flourishing industrial sector, housing steel factories and even a nuclear facility on its outskirts. Furthermore, it has emerged as a prominent center for medical tourism, boasting a state-of-the-art healthcare complex that draws patients from across the globe, cementing its status as a premier destination in the realm of medical tourism.

‘Unprecedented’ discovery of mysterious circular monument near 2 necropolises found in France

Archaeologists have discovered an unusual horseshoe-shaped monument and a collection of weapons and ornaments spanning multiple historical periods at a site in France.

Located in Marliens, a commune in eastern France, the site has a large bowtie-shaped structure, whose middle sports a circular construction measuring 36 feet (11 meters) in diameter. This center cirlet is interconnected by a 26-foot-long (8 m) horseshoe-shaped structure on one side and a jug-handle-shaped feature on the other, according to a translated statement from the French National Institute of Preventive Archaeological Research (INRAP), which carried out the excavations.

Researchers described the finding as “unprecedented,” as there are no other known sites with similar shaped constructions.

Based on the plethora of artifacts found there — including a bundle containing seven flint arrowheads, two protective arm-bands worn by archers, a flint lighter and a copper-alloy dagger — archaeologists de-

termined that the site was occupied during different time periods.

For instance, cut flint objects found in a nearby ditch likely date to the Neolithic period, while the weapons may be traced to the Bell Beaker culture, which emerged around 4,500 years ago, Archaeology Magazine reported.

Other constructions found at the site include several wells with clay lining at the bottom that are thought to be from the Bronze Age, as well as a necropolis with five circular enclosures containing burial remains and a funeral pyre. Based on five copper-alloy pins, an amber-beaded necklace and pottery shards scattered there, archaeologists determined that this portion of the site dates to sometime between 1500 and 1300 B.C.

Lastly, archaeologists unearthed a second Iron Age necropolis containing urns with cremated remains, as well as a collection of bracelets and rings.

(Source: Live Science)

Iran in frames



Photo depicts a gigantic traditional wind-tower distinctive by its six-sided, domed chambers on the rooftop of Khan-e Boroujerdi, a centuries-old treasured house located in Kashan, central Iran.

Iran free zones to draw 3.5m inbound tourists by year's end

TEHRAN – In an attempt to attract both domestic and inbound tourists, Iran's free zones have set sights on witnessing the arrival of more than three million inbound explorers along with millions of domestic travelers before this Persian year is out.

In a recent interview with Mehr, an official in charge of Tourism and Cultural Heritage of free zones revealed that 2,893,000 foreign tourists stopped in the Free zones across the country throughout the course of last Persian year [Mar. 2023-Mar. 2024].

Discussing the number of domestic tourists, Mohammad-Farzaad Mirzaee-Qaleh outlined that more than 30 million non-local plates have been enumerated at the entrance points of the Free zones within the country.

“We have automatic number-plate recognition in place,” the official further explained, “which allows us to count non-lo-



cal plates.”

Airports and ports' arrivals are not calculated in this figure, Mirzaee-Qaleh added.

Highlighting the implemented infrastructures, the director-general pointed to the private sector as a cornerstone which invested a remarkably high volume of cash in the free zones' tourism services sphere.

The director-general added that, given the substantial private

sector investments within the free zones, there is an optimistic forecast of a 30% growth in tourism for 1403 solar year [2024-2025].

“For the first time, the budget planning for these areas will see a notable 27% increase with an eye toward smoothing the path of taking steps forward,” Mirzaee-Qaleh declared.

He also emphasized the initiatives aimed at attracting foreign tourists through overnight stays,

stating that in the course of last year, the free zones hosted around 2,389,300 million foreign visitors, with hopes to increase this figure to more than three and half million by the end of this year.

“To achieve this significant figure, we are coordinating with all relevant organizations,” Mirzaee Qaleh added, “especially the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.”

Citing an example of the plans in a bid to promote Iran's free zones, the director-general mentioned the underway efforts to invite international bloggers and influencers.

Mirzaee-Qaleh in his concluding remarks, also disclosed that negotiations are underway with countries like Iraq, Oman and Afghanistan to bring in more tourism companies.

“If successful, we could see our visitor numbers even exceed three and half million,” he wined up.

Qazvin sets sight on attracting global visitors with new tourism strategy

TEHRAN – A marketing initiative aimed at drawing international visitors to Qazvin province is in progress for the very first time.

Qazvin's director-general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts announced a new initiative with an eye toward boosting inbound tourism through a focused marketing and advertising strategy.

Detailing the strategy, Alireza Khazaeli mentioned that exploiting capacities within the province is considered as the focal point of the initiative.

Regarding the forecasted timeline, the official outlined that arranging the plan is expected to come to an end up until the first half of a Persian calendar year.

“This marks the first time such a comprehensive approach is being implemented in the province,” Khazaeli noted.

The official further detailed the initiative, highlighting that the plan involves identifying target markets and designing promotional activities, featuring participation in international exhibitions and the creation of various advertising materials.

These efforts are part of a broader strategy to showcase Qazvin's rich tourism potential to an international audience, according to the director-general.

“Recognizing and targeting key markets has been an ongoing priority,” Khazaeli said. “This new plan is designed to enhance our visibility and appeal to foreign tourists.”

Qazvin has seen a growing interest from international tourists, as evidenced during the recent Nowruz holidays when the region welcomed hundreds of visitors from European countries, China, Russia, the Persian Gulf region and East Asia, Khazaeli added.

The province boasts 1,516 nationally registered natural and historical sites, positioning it as an attractive destination for cultural and historical tourism.

Home to 845 inhabited villages, the Qazvin region was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. Moreover, the province is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating

options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous castle of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

Also known as the castle of the Assassins, the 12th-century Alamut castle is nestled on top of a peak. It was once a shelter for the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070-1124) who was a spiritual leader of an Islamic sect. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book “The Valleys of the Assassins.”

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais in the country, Sa'd-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it's a place for discovering tens of Hojreh shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It's a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, cuisine, and hospitality of Iran.

As claimed by provincial officials, with this new marketing strategy, Qazvin aims to significantly increase its share of international tourists, enhancing its global reputation as a must-visit location in Iran.

Clay sculpture in Bronze-Age site restored

TEHRAN – A team of cultural heritage experts has recently restored an ancient earthen sculpture excavated from Konar Sandal, a Bronze-Age site in Iran's Jiroft region of Kerman province, southern Iran.

The restoration project which included purification and maintenance processes was carried out in close collaboration with Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, IRNA reported.

Last December, Konar Sandal underwent a fresh archaeological excavation led by Iranian archaeologist Seyyed Mansour Seyyed Sajjadi after a 17-year hiatus.

Situated in the Jiroft plain of Kerman province, the site consists of two mounds a few kilometers apart, called Konar Sandal A and B with a height of 13 and 21 meters, respectively. At Konar Sandal B, a two-story, windowed citadel with a base of close to 13.5 hectares was found. Tablets with scripts of unknown nature were reportedly discovered at the site.

Nestled amidst towering

mountains reaching approximately 4,000 meters in height on three sides, Jiroft's discoveries are regarded by numerous Iranian and international experts as emblematic of a civilization as notable as that of Sumer and ancient Mesopotamia. The remarkable unearthing of the Jiroft site occurred serendipitously in the early 21st century during severe floods along the Halil River, revealing a plethora of previously undiscovered tombs and artifacts believed to trace back to the Early Bronze Age (late 3rd millennium BC).

The initial archaeological excavation at the site took place over two decades ago, spearheaded by Iranian archaeologist Yousef Majidzadeh and an international team of experts. This endeavor unveiled a Bronze Age settlement nestled in the Halil-Rud Valley. During this period, eyewitness accounts described the sighting of “an ancient object floating on the water's surface.” Recognizing its significance, villagers, affected by two years of drought, flocked

to the riverbanks the subsequent day in search of relics dating back 5,000 years.

Despite its historical importance, geological factors led to the site being overlooked by tourists and archaeologists, who typically focused their attention on locations like Mesopotamia, situated roughly 1,000 km away. In 2003, Iran invited Jean Perrot, the esteemed French archaeologist who directed excavations in the Shush (or Susa) area from 1969 to 1978, to lead the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) in exploring Jiroft.

According to Majidzadeh, Jiroft artifacts serve as a “missing link” in understanding the Bronze Age, shedding light on the prevalence of incised chlorite vessels bearing remarkably similar imagery across distant ancient sites from Mari in Syria to Nippur and Ur in Mesopotamia, Soch in Uzbekistan, and Tarut in Saudi Arabia, north of Bahrain. The archaeologist proposes the existence of a school of stone carvers, given the consis-



tent aesthetic observed in these objects throughout the region, indicating a developmental period of 300 to 400 years for these traditions to evolve.

Artisans in Jiroft fashioned pieces adorned with enigmatic iconography and embellished with lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, carnelian from the Indus Valley, turquoise, agate, and other imported semiprecious stones. Majidzadeh highlights their naturalistic style, claiming it to be unparalleled for that era. Surrounded by mountains soaring to around 4,000 meters in height on three sides, Jiroft's discoveries are regarded by numerous Iranian and international experts as compelling evidence of a civilization on par with that of Sumer and ancient Mesopotamia.

Amsterdam bans construction of new hotels as a way to fight overtourism

The Netherlands' Amsterdam will no longer allow new hotel buildings to be built as part of its fight against mass tourism, the local government said on Wednesday, April 17.

“We want to make and keep the city livable for residents and visitors. This means: no overtourism, no new hotels, and no more than 20 million hotel overnight stays by tourists per year,” it said in a statement.

A new hotel in Amsterdam can only be

built if another hotel closes, if the number of sleeping places doesn't increase, and if the new hotel will be better – for example, more sustainable.

However, the rule does not apply to new hotels that have already secured a permit.

The city has been actively trying to limit tourist numbers, which run into the millions per year.

This is the latest in a series of measures

the Dutch capital has taken to mitigate the issue of overtourism in the city.

Last year, the Amsterdam City Council voted to ban cruise ships and close its cruise terminal.

Under a 2021 ordinance called “Amsterdam Tourism in Balance,” the city council is “obliged to intervene” when tourism numbers reach 18 million people.

(Source: CNN)

Stop the pervasive use of plastics

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN –World Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22 to stress the need for collective efforts to protect the earth, address environmental concerns, and promote sustainability, particularly by focusing on the reduction of global plastic consumption this year.

This year's theme is 'Planet vs. Plastics', which underscores the threat posed by plastic pollution and its detrimental effects on human health and the environment.

The day has announced a global campaign to demand a 60 percent reduction in plastic production by 2040, aiming to build a plastic-free future.

In Iran plastic accounts for a large amount of waste so the day puts the emphasis on reducing the use of plastic bags across the country.

Every Iranian consumes an average of three plastic bags daily, and the average life of each bag is only 12 minutes, while it remains in nature for hundreds of years.

In addition to this, disposable plastic containers, plastic tablecloths, plastic packaging, etc., have been produced in large quantities in the country, which has been used a lot due to the change in people's lifestyles in recent decades and has put dou-



ble pressure on the environment.

According to global statistics, Iran is among the top 20 countries in the world in producing plastic waste. Some 4 million tons of plastic waste are produced annually, of which half a million tons are related to plastic bags. In Iran, over 1 million tons of plastic bags are produced annually, 96 percent of which go directly into the trash.

Therefore, the Department of Environment (DOE) plans to enforce the law that bans plastic bag distribution on Clean Earth Week.

The DOE has compiled and approved the standard of biodegradable bags as part of regulations to reduce plastic bags consumption.

It promotes the need to take action now to end the scourge of plastics and safeguard the health of the earth and all living creatures on the planet.

To ensure the health of the earth for the current and next generation, stop the pervasive use of plastic bags, change your lifestyle, and educate your family and friends to protect the environment.

Earth Day started on April 22, 1970. Around 20 million people joined in at various places across the United States, like schools and community centers.

Senator Gaylord Nelson, from Wisconsin, got the idea for Earth Day because he was worried about how the environment was getting worse. In 1969, there was

a big oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. This made Senator Nelson even more determined to do something. He saw how students were protesting against the war, and he thought that the same energy could be used to make people care about pollution.

Senator Nelson talked to the media about his idea to have a big event at colleges to teach about pollution. He got Pete McCloskey, a Republican Congressman who cared about nature, to help him.

As the idea grew, more people got involved from different groups and religions. They decided to call it Earth Day because it sounded like "birthday" and it caught people's attention. Earth Day became a big deal all across the country, thanks to the hard work of many people.

Climate change, man-made changes to nature as well as crimes that disrupt biodiversity, such as deforestation, land-use change, intensified agriculture and livestock production, or the growing illegal wildlife trade, can accelerate the speed of destruction of the planet.

Mother Earth is clearly urging a call to action. Nature is suffering. Oceans filling with plastic and turning more acidic. Extreme heat, wildfires, and floods have affected millions of people.

BRICS calls on IRCS to chair health working group

From page 1 ► The Iranian Red Crescent Society is active in various fields, such as relief operations in response to hazards and emergencies, he explained.

With some three million volunteers and 70,000 professional rescuers, the IRCS provides relief services on roads, mountains, and coasts ceaselessly.

Moreover, it has established crescent houses in different parts of the country where volunteers provide valuable relief assistance before and after emergencies.

The official stressed that education plays a key role in disaster management, noting that IRCS trains students how to prevent and handle emergencies as a way to raise public awareness in society.

Being equipped with 18 helicopters, hundreds of rescue vehicles, and warehouses storing essential items such as food and medicine, the IRCS has enhanced its readiness to address the crisis.

Currently, the IRCS factories produce a range of medicines, medical equipment, medicinal plants, and relief items. Moreover, it has concluded a contract with the Federation of National Populations to manufacture relief tents to be used in international crises.

Kolivand also highlighted the commitment of the IRCS to assist needy people both domestically and internationally citing its support for

people affected by devastating earthquakes in Turkey, Afghanistan, and Syria.

Finally, he mentioned the potential of the society to share its expertise in providing relief and health services to the people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America through IRCS medical facilities.

The great capabilities of the IRCS in various fields have made BRICS eager for cooperation.

The BRICS group, established in 2009, has emerged as a significant force shaping global economic discussions.

Iran, alongside Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia, received an invitation to join this influential bloc effective January 1, 2024, signaling a significant transformation in the geopolitical arena.

Russia chairs the BRICS group in 2024.

Iran is IFRC's strongest member in region

In July 2023, Hossam Elsharkawi, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Regional Director



for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), referred to Iran as the strongest member in the region.

"Among the 192 national Red Crescent and Red Cross societies around the world, the Red Crescent of the Islamic Republic of Iran has always been one of the most important and strongest societies and a reliable member of the Federation."

Elsharkawi made the remarks in an online meeting with Razieh Alishvandi, the Iranian Red Crescent Society's director for international affairs, Mehr reported.

The quick and effective presence of the Iranian Red Crescent Society in the rescue operations and then providing relief to earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria last winter shows the good preparedness of the IRCS in response to natural disasters, the IFRC official highlighted.

ENGLISH IN USE

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System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

A system will be launched to monitor, forecast and report the agricultural lands being hit by drought, Amir Qaderi, an official with Disaster Management Organization has announced.

Over a meeting of a special working group for addressing drought and risks threatening agricultural sector, a plan for establishing a system for monitoring and forecasting agricultural drought in the country was approved and submitted to the Disaster Management Organization for review, he explained.

"Following the study of other countries' experiences and existing global methods, the necessity of establishing a domestic system to recognize the lands prone to agricultural drought was emphasized," he noted.

سامانه پایش و پیش بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می شود

معاون امور بازرسی و بازرگانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور از ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران خبر داد.

به گزارش پایگاه اطلاع رسانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور، امیر قادری روز یکشنبه با اعلام این خبر گفت: طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران طی جلسه ای با حضور مدیران و کارشناسان سازمان مدیریت بحران و وزارت جهاد کشاورزی بررسی شد.

وی ادامه داد: پس از بررسی تجارب داخلی و روش های موجود جهانی، ضرورت استقرار نمونه بومی پایش و پیش بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی مورد تأکید قرار گرفت و با مشارکت مراکز پژوهشی سازمان هواشناسی کشور و پژوهشکده حفاظت خاک و آبخیزداری طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران پیشنهاد شد.

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Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

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WHO enhances prehospital capacities of Iranian emergency organization

TEHRAN – To bolster emergency medical services, the World Health Organization has donated 40 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and 1250 AED pads to the Iranian National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO). The donation was co-funded by the European Union.

These resources will significantly enhance the prehospital capacities of NEMO. The assets will be strategically distributed among the provinces of Hormozgan, Kerman, Khorasan Razavi, and Sistan-Baluchestan. These provinces often face challenges in accessing adequate medical resources during emergency situations.

AEDs can save lives during sudden cardiac arrests. An AED effectively monitors heart rhythms and administers electric shocks to restore normal heart function. Their user-friendly design means AEDs can be operated with minimal medical training, making them invaluable assets in emergency response teams.

"With the increased availability of AEDs, first responders and emergency personnel in the target provinces will be better equipped to provide timely and effective care to those in need," stated Dr Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Represent-



tative and Head of Mission in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"This donation, co-funded by the EU humanitarian aid office, underscores our commitment to strengthen health systems and improve emergency medical services for vulnerable populations, including Afghan migrants and asylum seekers across the Islamic Republic of Iran."

This initiative aligns with WHO's mission to ensure universal access to quality health services, especially in subnational regions in contexts of humanitarian crises. By empowering local authorities and health providers with essential resources, the WHO Country Office in the Islamic Republic of Iran aims to support resilient and sustainable health systems in the target provinces.

Iran to use IORA potential to empower women

TEHRAN –Iran plans to benefit from the potential of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to implement projects for empowering women in the country.

The 9th meeting of the Working Group of the Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWE) of the IORA was held virtually on Monday under the chairmanship of Iran and the presence of representatives of the member states.

The WGWE is the main body tasked with improving Women's Economic Empowerment in IORA and was established in August 2018.

IORA has 23 member states, and 21 representatives attended the meeting.

During the meeting, Khadijeh Karimi, director general for international affairs at the vice presidency for women and family affairs, while announcing Iran's re-election as the chairman of the working group, emphasized the need for boosting cooperation among member states to be able to successfully implement the programs of the working group for the next two years, Mehr news agency reported.

"Currently, IORA's working groups operate separately which has reduced the effectiveness of their actions. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran aims to use the potential of other working groups to enhance women's empowerment. Also, effective communication within the working group should be part of the agenda of other working groups," Karimi said.

The meeting included a report of the work plan for the last two years, ongoing projects, and the proposals of the member countries were discussed and reviewed.

It was decided that the representatives of the member states submit their plans and proposals to our country through the secretariat after consulting with the relevant authorities for further consideration.

IORA work plan

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has recognized the crucial role of Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in achieving sustainable development within the region.

Since 2013, IORA has actively pursued this goal, understanding that empowering women is not just a standalone priority, but intertwined with all other areas of regional cooperation.

This commitment is reflected in IORA's second action plan (2022-2027), which outlines the strategic objective:

"Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, ensuring women's rights, access, and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, and eliminating violence and discrimination against women and girls in all its forms. Realizing the full prosperity of the region requires investing in the empowerment of women and girls."

To achieve this ambitious goal, IORA member states have collaboratively developed a work

plan outlining specific activities and initiatives. This plan serves as a roadmap for advancing WEE across the Indian Ocean region, fostering economic opportunities for women, and ultimately, contributing to a more prosperous and equitable future for all.

Iranian women empowered after Islamic Revolution

The status of women in various fields was improved after the Islamic Revolution and women, as half of the country's population, have been leading in many fields.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in February 1979 by toppling the Pahlavi regime [the last Iranian royal dynasty, ruling for almost 54 years between 1925 and 1979], women were given equal rights to shape their futures. The Islamic Revolution provided them a chance to build their distinct identity and they have been tremendously successful in doing that.

There were extensive changes in the fields of science, education, economy, employment, and presence in management positions for women. Now a large part of activists in various fields of academia, business, and management are made up of capable Iranian women.

Education as a social value for women is seen as real freedom for them. Illiteracy among women and girls has been nearly eradicated as the literacy rate reached 99.3 percent and the ratio of female to male students has increased by 28 percent.

According to the latest data, nearly 60 percent of all university students are females today. The percentage of women in higher education has increased nearly 21 times since the Revolution.

The notable presence of women in the education sector has had a remarkable impact on the job market of the country as well, with women taking more jobs in both the public and private sectors.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in one of his speeches said, "It is wrong to assume, we should prevent women from partaking in economic and social activities with reference to Islam. Islam has not prescribed such a thing. However, Islam has not recommended imposing hard work, tough businesses, or social and political tasks on women, either. Islam has adopted a moderate viewpoint; that is to say, if women have the opportunity and the time, and if it does not prevent them from bringing up their children, if they are enthusiastic and eager and have the physical strength and energy, and if they are willing to take part in social, political and economic activities, they should not be prevented. But if they are forced to take a job and work certain hours per day so that they can have a share in covering the household expenses, this is not what Islam has asked women. Islam considers this as a form of imposition on women." (September 18, 1996)



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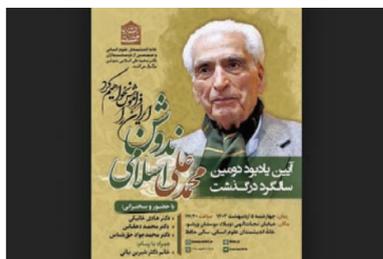
GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The one who gets married has completed half of his/her religion.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:03 Evening: 19:03 Dawn: 3:51 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:21 (tomorrow)

Tehran session to pay homage to late scholar Eslami Nodushan



TEHRAN- On Wednesday, a meeting will be held in Tehran to commemorate the second anniversary of the passing of Mohammad-Ali Eslami Nodushan, a Persian language scholar and expert on Ferdowsi's Shahnameh.

Organized by the House of Humanities Thinkers in Tehran, the session will host a number of scholars including Hadi Khaniki, Mohammad Dehqani nad Mohammad Javad Haqshenas.

Moreover, a message from university scholar and Eslami Nodushan's wife, Shirin Baiani, will be read during the meeting.

The esteemed scholar passed away in April 2022 in Canada at the age of 97. Following his passing, his body was temporarily laid to rest there. After approximately 18 months, in November 2023, his remains were brought to Tehran.

In accordance with his wishes, ceremonies were held in Tehran and Yazd, his birthplace, before Eslami Nodushan's remains were finally interred in Neyshabur, located in northeastern Iran. His final resting place is next to the graves of the celebrated Iranian poet, hagiographer, and Sufi theoretician Attar of Nishapur, and the renowned Iranian astronomer, philosopher, and poet Omar Khayyam.

Nodushan's academic journey began in Yazd, where he graduated from high school before earning his BA in law from the University of Tehran.

He then moved to Paris to pursue his MA and Ph.D. Upon returning to Iran, he began teaching literature and law at the University of Tehran, quickly becoming one of its prominent professors and one of Iran's renowned writers.

His fame extends beyond Iran, reaching thinkers, writers, and scholars around the world. Nodushan's magnificent works have significantly contributed to promoting the Persian language and literature.

Nodushan's tireless efforts to familiarize people worldwide with Iranian literature and his deep sense of patriotism are truly commendable and will continue to inspire future generations.

He spent his life studying the scientific and literary works of Iranian writers and translating books by the world's great writers, all of which have been published in over 50 books.

"Iran's Conscience: Ferdowsi, Rumi, Sadi, Hafez" is one of his wonderful books. This book covers a series of lectures he gave at the Book City Institute in Tehran in the late 1990s.

His studies on Persian poet Hafez are among the most useful sources of information for Persian literature scholars. Among them are "Endless Story of Hafez" and "Contemplation on Hafez".

Some of his massive studies on the Shahnameh (The Book of Kings), the epic masterpiece of the Persian poet Abolqasem Ferdowsi, are contained in the books "The Story of Stories: Rustam and Esfandiar in the Shahnameh" and "Heroes' Death and Life in the Shahnameh".

"Days", his autobiography covering his life story from age 4 to 53, became a bestseller in 2016 when it was first published.

"Testimony for Progeny", which contains helpful advice for the younger generation in Iran on how to find their ways in life, was published in 2019 and turned out to be his last book.

A street in Tehran's District 6 was named after Mohammad-Ali Eslami Nodushan in November 2020, and a bust of the Iranian scholar was set up at the intersection of that street with Vesal Shirazi St.

A boulevard in the central city of Yazd was also named after him at the same time. The City Council in his hometown Nodushan had previously named a square after him.

Fajr Architecture Festival set to debut in 2025

TEHRAN-The first edition of the Fajr Architecture Festival is scheduled to take place during the upcoming Ten-Day Dawn celebrations from February 1 to 10, 2025, which marks the 46th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

The Fajr Architecture Festival will be included in the series of festivals organized by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, culture minister Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili announced on Sunday.

The festival will be organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, as well as the Supreme Council of Urban Planning, the minister said.

"In this regard, we will collaborate with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), and other cultural institutions," he added. "However, it is important to note that the primary responsibility rests with the architectural artists," he emphasized.

The festival is scheduled to be held biennially, he mentioned.

Iranian architecture is a reflection of the rich history, culture, and traditions of the country.



With influences from various civilizations and dynasties that have ruled over Iran throughout the centuries, Iranian architecture boasts a unique blend of styles and techniques. One of the most notable features of Iranian architecture is its intricate use of geometric patterns, intricate tile work, and calligraphy, which can be seen in mosques, palaces, and historical sites across the country.

Modern Iranian architecture continues to blend traditional elements with contemporary design trends, creating a unique aesthetic that reflects the country's dynamic cultural landscape. Architects in Iran draw inspiration from the rich history of Persian architecture while incorporating innovative technologies and sustainable practices.

From skyscrapers in Tehran to cultural centers in Isfahan, Iranian architects are pushing boundaries and redefining the architectural landscape.

The use of natural materials, such as local stone and wood, along with intricate tile work and geometric patterns, creates a sense of continuity with Iran's architectural heritage while embracing modernity.

"Ocean behind the Window" wins at 13th Lucknow International Children's Film Festival

TEHRAN-The Iranian film "Ocean behind the Window" written and directed by Babak Nabizadeh won the Best Feature Fiction Film award of the 13th CMS - Lucknow International Children's Film Festival, held in Lucknow, India, from April 15 to 21.

Nabizadeh's first feature film won the award in the competition section where films from Spain, the UK, China, India, Switzerland, Pakistan, and Indonesia were also present, ILNA reported.

The film centers on a small and remote island where people live under hardship. Borhan is an adolescent who has made an interesting decision to help his family and to introduce the island. He collects a group, holds a carnival and performs traditional music and theater for tourists. Their lives on the island improve and more tourists come, but there is a big problem on the way.

The cast includes Mohammad Azadi, Jafar Ghasemi, Hadiseh Karami, Mehran Mozafari, Hossein Ghanbari, Gholam Ranjbar, Hassan Zakeri, Bahram Komejani, Kiana Ranjbar, and Ayoub Rahimi.



The Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults as the producer, also known as Kanoon, has produced the film. It has been shot in Qeshm and Hengam islands in the Persian Gulf as well as some villages in the southern Hormozgan Province.

The 82-minute fiction has won several awards so far in domestic and international film festivals. It was picked as best children's film at the 13th Annual Iranian Film Festival in the U.S. It has also won UNICEF special award for the best children's film at the 32nd International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Iran, for

depicting the humane, independent and dynamic nature of a child in thinking and decision making, providing a creative educational environment for every child especially those with disabilities, preserving the local culture and nature for children, and creative, artistic and outstanding cinematography and visualization.

Born in Tehran, Nabizadeh, 49, holds a B.A. in theater and dramatic literature. He has directed six short films, some of which have received awards at both national and international festivals.

The CMS Lucknow International Children's Film Festival is one of the most popular festivals in India. Every round of the festival, it hosts thousands of children from various centers and kindergartens.

Organized by the management of City Montessori School, the festival aims at providing a common platform for the producers of children films to project their views for proper development of children's potential through meaningful educative films, and also for promoting friendship and cooperation among people of the world.

Adaptation of Chekhov's "Three Sisters" at Molavi Theater Hall

TEHRAN-An adaptation of Anton Chekhov's 1900 play "Three Sisters" is on stage at Molavi Theater Hall in Tehran.

Written by Mohammad Charmshir and directed by Negin Ziaei, the play has Sepideh Ziaei, Shadi Ziaei, Fatemeh Kazemi, and Mahshid Kazemi in the cast, Mehr reported.

The original play probes the lives and dreams of Olga, Masha, and Irina, former Muscovites now living

in a provincial town from which they long to escape. Their hopes for a life more suited to their cultivated tastes and sensibilities provide a touching counterpoint to the relentless flow of compromising events in the real world.

In this powerful play, a landmark of modern drama, Chekhov masterfully interweaves character and theme in subtle ways that make the work's finale seem as inevitable as it is deeply moving. It

is reprinted here from a standard text with updated transliteration of character names and additional explanatory footnotes.

"Three Sisters" is often included on the shortlist of outstanding plays by Chekhov, along with "The Cherry Orchard," "The Seagull," and "Uncle Vanya".

Chekhov (1860-1904) was a Russian author, playwright, and physician. His career as a playwright produced four classics,

and his best short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics.

Along with Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg, Chekhov is often referred to as one of the three seminal figures in the birth of early modernism in the theater.

The play will remain on stage till May 9 at Molavi Theater Hall located at No. 16, 16th Azar St., Enqelab St.

Cartoon of Day



Israel's War on Gaza
Cartoonist: Emad Hajjaj from Jordan

Susan Sarandon joins anti-Israel protest at Columbia University

Hollywood actress Susan Sarandon joined the pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia University last week, marching with anti-Israel demonstrators and leading them in a chant despite being dropped from her talent agency months ago for appearing at a similar rally.

Footage captured Sarandon marching with a crowd of Columbia students just outside of campus on Friday, as they chanted, "Columbia, you will see! Palestine will be free!"

Another recording captured Sarandon addressing the students, which amounted to a speech she broke into stanzas for the demonstrators to repeat, Fox News reported.

A chunk of Sarandon's speech went, "It is very important to have their voices heard and that this is their right in a democracy, especially in a place of education and supposedly higher thought. To be attacked with racism and intolerance is not acceptable."

She continued in chant form, "There are many, many people who stand with you. You must know

that you inspire so many people, people who are afraid, people who are old and afraid, are looking to you and your voices and your organization and your tenacity and your kindness to make a difference in this situation."

Footage of the actress' presence near campus marked another day of fiery protests at and around the New York City campus that began Wednesday as dozens of anti-Israel activists created an encampment on the main lawn of campus.

The protests continued into the night and into the next couple of days with protesters calling for an intifada and the death of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The tension reached a breaking point on Thursday, when the NYPD arrested 108 people who refused to leave the encampment. Each was given a summons for trespassing.

Among the arrested was Rep. Ilhan Omar's, D-Minn., daughter, Isra Hirsi, who claimed she had been suspended from the nearby Barnard

College for participating in the protests.

Sarandon has made a number of appearances at pro-Palestinian rallies since the Oct. 7 Hamas attack on Israel. Most notably, her appearance and speech at a pro-Palestinian rally in New York City on Nov. 17 prompted her talent agency, UTA, to drop her as a client.

Such repercussions have not deterred Sarandon's pro-Palestinian activism, as she has attended multiple rallies since then, including another one in New York City where over 100 protesters were arrested for blocking traffic around Manhattan.

Since October 7, 2023, the number of Palestinians killed in Gaza during the Israeli military onslaught has surpassed 34,000 and over 77,000 have been wounded. Among the dead are more than 14,500 children and 9,500 women.

The death toll is likely far higher with thousands believed buried under the rubble of buildings demolished in Israeli strikes.