

TEHRAN TIMES

8 Pages | Price 100,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 46th year | No. 14810 | Wednesday | July 3, 2024 | Tir 13, 1403 | Dhu al-Hijjah 26, 1445



Kharrazi warns Tehran would use 'all means' to back Hezbollah in case of Israeli aggression

Iran Has Hezbollah's Back

Page 3

Iran waiting for the opportunity to conduct 'Operation True Promise II': Senior commander

TEHRAN – Iran is waiting for the perfect opportunity to carry out the sequel to Operation True Promise, which pummeled several Israeli military bases in the occupied territories on April 14, said a high-ranking Iran Revolution Guard Corps official during a gathering with families of the Gaza war victims.

Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of the IRGC's Aerospace Division, listed Iran's major attacks against hostile positions in recent years during his speech. "We successfully targeted and shot down an American Global Hawk aircraft in the Persian Gulf during an operation in 2019. Then we launched 13 missiles at Ain al-Asad in a second operation against the United States," he said pointing to Iran's retaliation of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani's assassination in 2020. "In a third operation called Operation True Promise, we fired 300 missiles and drones," he said.

Operation True Promise, as mentioned by the military official, involved the firing of hundreds of missiles and drones at a number of Israeli military bases in the occupied territories. The bases located across the Palestinian lands were destroyed due to their involvement in an earlier strike on Iran's embassy in Damascus, which resulted in the martyrdom of a high-ranking IRGC official and his deputy.

"We wish to get the opportunity to carry out 'Operation True Promise II'. Though, I still don't know how many missiles we will be using this time," Hajizadeh declared.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the general pointed to the ongoing resistance of Palestinians against Israeli atrocities in Gaza, saying he is certain Palestine will eventually be free. "As a military man with 45 years of experience, I believe that the recent actions taken will lead to the ultimate victory of the Palestinian people," he noted.

Resistance forces wage more sophisticated operations against invaders

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- The Palestinian resistance in Gaza continues to confront Israeli occupation forces for the 270th day in various parts of the Strip. The latest defensive operations have resulted in confirmed casualties among Israeli soldiers and damage to their vehicles.

The Gaza resistance fighters are carrying out sophisticated operations primarily defending Gaza City in the north and the southern region of the Strip.

In Gaza City, resistance fighters successfully repelled an attempt by Israeli forces to advance towards Salah al-Din Street.

Meanwhile, fierce clashes continue to erupt in the Shejaiya neighborhood, where the al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, reported targeting two Israeli Merkava 4 tanks with precision explosive devices, causing significant casualties among the Israeli troops.

The Israeli military has acknowledged at least 44 injuries among its ranks over the past 48 hours.

Additionally, al-Qassam Brigades engaged in intense skirmishes with Israeli forces moving from street to street within Shejaiya, east of Gaza City.

Al-Qassam announced the targeting of an Israeli military unit holed up in a residential building using a TBG shell, resulting in casualties among its members. The brigades also released footage showcasing their fighters confronting and disabling Israeli military vehicles in Shejaiya.

The artillery unit of al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, shelled Israeli forces and their vehicles stationed in Shejaiya with mortar rounds.

In a separate attack, the al-Quds Brigades announced it was engaging in fierce clashes with Israeli troops and military vehicles in Shejaiya. Page 5

Arab states' tangled web of deceit

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Some of the Persian Gulf Arab states stand accused of complicity in Israel's brutal onslaught on the Gaza Strip over their ties with the Tel Aviv regime.

These states have explicitly condemned Israel for its genocidal war on the besieged territory which has claimed the lives of around 38,000 Palestinians over the past nine months.

However, they have maintained relations with Israel and turned a blind eye to growing domestic calls to sever ties with the apartheid regime.

On Monday, the Middle East Eye released a report which implicated the United Arab Emirates in weapons supplies to Israel against the backdrop of the regime's carnage in Gaza.

The UK-based news website revealed that Serbia's main state-owned arms trader, Yugoimport-SDPR, which recently exported over \$17 million worth of weapons to Israel, has developed ties with the UAE.

In the aftermath of the global financial crisis, cash-strapped Serbia sought billions in loans from the UAE in 2013. It courted Emirati investment, including in the arms industry.

The MEE report said Belgrade and Abu Dhabi announced their first arms deal in 2013 which was worth over \$200 million.

Citing the Serbian Defense Ministry, the report said the SDPR also signed an agreement with the UAE in 2022 to sell "a significant amount of ammunition" to the Persian Gulf country.

The findings further suggested that Serbian arms maker, Krusik, which has close links to the SDPR, also reached a deal with Saudi Arabi in 2018 and sent arms to the Kingdom. Page 5

Opinion



270 days of war and crime against Gaza

By Nasser Kan'ani, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman

TEHRAN - Two hundred and seventy days have passed since the start of the military operation and the horrible crimes of the Zionists in the Gaza Strip. This terrible tragedy has set unprecedented records in terms of the volume and depth of brutality committed in contemporary history.

In this unequal war, hospitals and medical facilities were bombed several times and occupied following Israel's military raids. Medical staff were also arrested and tortured by the forces of the terrorist army of the Israeli regime.

During these brutal attacks, more than 150 hospitals and medical sites were targeted, 31 hospitals went out of service, 300 medical personnel were detained and more than 500 people who worked in the medical sector in Gaza were martyred by the Zionist regime's forces.

Bedridden patients in Gaza hospitals were either kidnapped or martyred by the occupying military forces. The peak of this brutality could be seen in the raid on al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza. Page 5

Tourism and cultural heritage: a dual mandate for Iran's next president

By Afshin Majlesi

As Iran approaches its run-off presidential election on July 5, the national tourism sector, which has rarely been addressed during recent debates, faces a pivotal moment.

Whether it's the principlist Saeed Jalili or pro-reform Masoud Pezeshkian, the winner will be heavily responsible for seizing existing opportunities to revive tourism.

In that regard, there are many fundamental issues that the next Iranian president needs to focus on much more than his predecessors.

Firstly, he and his new administration should do their best to restore Iran's global image which suffers from persistent negative portrayals spread by some international media.

Those anti-Iran sentiments must be tackled head-on by re-presenting Iran's true image to the world, which requires a robust strategy.

Moreover, clever marketing and advertising campaigns, immense upgrades of tourism infrastructure and human resources as well as the quality and quantity of air services are among critical areas that need immediate attention. Page 6

With the run-off election approaching, the Tehran Times is publishing an overview of the two contenders' opinions about a diverse area of issues. In this section, you can understand the two presidential candidates' views on the most important issues in today's Iran.



**Iran's 2024 presidential election runoff**

Where Pezeshkian and Jalili stand on key issues

TEHRAN PAPERS

The West fears continued rise of power in Iran

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

In a note, Kayhan addressed the attention of America to Iran's election. It wrote: Western political and media circles follow all Iranian elections with sensitivity and hope that the process of the increase of Iran's power during the presidency of Raisi does not continue. Analysts say the first round of Iran's presidential election showed a decline in support for reformists and principlists. Although some voters are pushing for change by backing the only reformist candidate. Iran is suffering from the economic effects of sanctions. These elections also took place amid escalating regional tensions over the Gaza war between Israel and Tehran's ally Hamas, and diplomatic tensions over Iran's nuclear program. But The Guardian, referring to Iran's victories in the field and diplomacy in recent years, wrote that America is no longer the biggest power in the Middle East. Iran is the biggest power. The position of superior power in the region is now in Iran's hands.

Iran: Strategic diplomatic achievements

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper discussed the revival of relations between Iran and Tajikistan and wrote: One of the special tasks that was put on the agenda of the country's diplomatic system in the 13th government was the revival of relations with the neighbors. In addition to the resumption of bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia, the revival of the severed relations between Tehran and Dushanbe was also of special importance for foreign policy. But in the 13th government, in a short period, it led to the resumption of bilateral relations between Tehran and Dushanbe. The transformation that martyr Raisi made in the country's foreign policy led to Iran's exit from international isolation. Activating the capacities of cooperation with neighboring and independent countries from the West, as well as increasing political and economic interactions with countries that previously had relations with Iran, were actions that were pursued by our country's diplomacy in the last three years. But the most important thing was the resumption of bilateral relations with the countries in which the cooperation capacity was neglected in the previous government. Revival of the severed relations with Tajikistan was one of the important successes achieved during the presidency of martyr Raisi.

Jam-e-Jam: Strategies of enemies is to weaken participation in elections

A review of the recent events related to the

14th presidential election indicated that the enemies of the system tried to overshadow the presidential election with several strategies and disrupt the process of holding the election, but all these conspiracies, which were designed in several phases failed with the consciousness of the security forces and people. Boycotting the elections was one of the main strategies of the regime's enemies, which has a precedent. This project was often followed by foreign media, which are agents of American-Zionist policies. Most of the programs of these networks, which are the claimants of the freedom of speech and the realization of democracy, were used to darken the electoral atmosphere of our country, to discourage people from going to the voting ballots, and use this as a bargaining chip for other destructive actions against the system. Of course, the defeat of the anti-revolution and monarchist groups was not focused on the internal borders, and in a concerted action, they tried to organize an inappropriate atmosphere against the supporters of the system by insulting the voters abroad. However, Iranians abroad also voted regardless of this poisoned atmosphere and provided the basis for the destruction and isolation of enemies.

Ham Mihan: Danger alarm in West Asia

In an explanation, Ham Mihan discussed the increase in the conflict between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah. The paper said: Some observers and analysts believe that the Israeli government is seeking to expand the war on a new front because it has not achieved its declared goals in the Gaza war. According to Lina Khatib, a researcher at the Chatham House think tank, Hezbollah knows that the public opinion in Lebanon has no desire to go to war with Israel and knows that if the war starts, it is possible that the groups supported by Iran as well as Iran will get involved in war, an issue that Iran avoids it. The escalation of tension in West Asia and the extension of the war to Lebanon will bring Iran directly or indirectly into the conflict. In a situation where Iran is under the pressure of extensive Western sanctions, the increase in tensions can cause Western supporters of Israel to increase the pressure on Iran. At the same time, after the direct conflict between Iran and Israel in April and both sides crossing the former red lines and creating "new rules of conflict", the possibility of a direct confrontation between Iran and Israel increases even more.

Tehran to host AALCO conference on countering terrorism

TEHRAN – Tehran, the capital of Iran, is set to host the upcoming Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) conference, focusing on the prevention and countering of terrorism.

This significant event will take place on the 3rd and 4th of July, 2024, at the Institute of Political and International Studies of the Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry.

The conference will commence on Wednesday morning, featuring opening remarks from distinguished delegates representing AALCO, the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the African Union, and numerous experts from AALCO member countries. These addresses will set the stage for a comprehensive discussion on various aspects of combating terrorism.

Organized under four primary themes, the AALCO conference aims to cover a wide array of topics related to terrorism prevention and countermeasures.

The themes include "Prevention and Counter-Terrorism: From Theory to Action," "The Role of International and Regional Organizations in Preventing and Countering Terrorism," "The Responsibility of States and Individuals Concerning Terrorism," and "Regional Cooperation in Preventing and Countering Terrorism." Each theme will be explored through presentations, panel discussions, and expert analyses, providing a holistic view of the current challenges and strategies in combating terrorism.

The conference will highlight the international legal perspectives of AALCO member countries, with a particular focus on Iran's approach to preventing and combating terrorism.

It will also delve into the multifaceted aspects of addressing and thwarting terrorism from the viewpoints of Asian and African nations. This exchange of knowledge and experiences aims to foster greater collaboration and understanding among the member states in their collective efforts against terrorism.

AALCO, originally known as the Asian Legal Consultative Committee (ALCC), was established on 15 November 1956, with seven Asian states as its founding members. Over the years, AALCO has expanded its membership and scope, becoming a vital platform for Asian and African countries to discuss and address legal issues of common concern, including the pressing issue of terrorism.

AALCO has presently 48 members comprising of the major states from Asia and Africa. Two-thirds of the world's population lives in AALCO member states.

As Tehran prepares to host this important conference, the city welcomes delegates and experts from across Asia and Africa to engage in meaningful dialogue and contribute to the global effort to prevent and counter terrorism. The outcomes of this conference are expected to have a lasting impact on international cooperation and legal frameworks aimed at combating terrorism.

Candidates address decreased voter turnout in first presidential debate before runoff

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – The two candidates competing in the July 5 presidential runoff, Saeed Jalili and Masoud Pezeshkian, have acknowledged the decline in voter participation for the first round of the snap presidential election, a decrease of 10% from the 50% turnout seen in 2021.

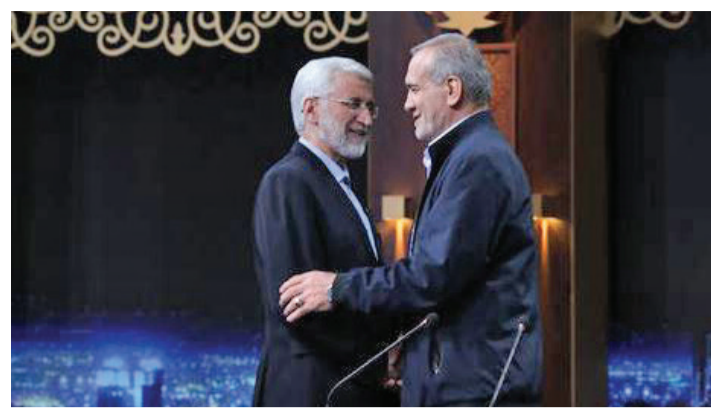
Some analysts believe the disappointment of traditional reformist voters with President Hassan Rouhani's two terms in office caused the majority of them to shun the ballot box during the first round of the presidential race held on June 28.

"The current level of public participation in our government is not enough. We need to make a serious and sustained effort to increase citizen involvement in all areas.

This means identifying the barriers that are preventing people from participating and taking steps to remove them.

To achieve this vision, we must address the factors that have led to declining public participation and create opportunities for people to engage more meaningfully in the administration of our country," Jalili, a candidate aligned with conservative factions, noted.

Jalili also reminisced about the time he spent with Iranian university students during the 2022 fall riots. "If our youth and



students have something to contribute, their voices must be heard. In the early days of the events in 2022, I would visit a new university every week," he announced.

"During these visits, my sessions would last three to four hours, sometimes extending to six or seven hours. There are some concerns that the younger generations have which may not have been delivered to us properly.

However, through engaging with these individuals, particularly the students, in those challenging and tense circumstances, we discovered that mutual understanding was possible."

The candidate emphasized that while the two sides may have not seen eye to eye on every issue, engaging in lengthy discussions allowed for a deeper understanding based on respect

and compassion. "My appeal to you and all my colleagues is to actively participate within universities, engage with students, and attentively listen to their perspectives."

Pezeshkian who won the first round of the presidential elections due to a significant number of conservative voters resonating with his more moderate stance on cultural issues also echoed Jalili's concerns. "It is not acceptable that 60% of eligible voters chose not to participate," the reformist expressed.

Pezeshkian characterized the public as the "bedrock" of society, emphasizing that the rights of individuals must be acknowledged and their voices must be listened to.

Building resilience first step towards facing U.S. sanctions

In the two-hour Monday debate, both presidential contenders also addressed the issue of the U.S.'s

continued breaches of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Pezeshkian outlined a strategy focused on internal strength, emphasizing bolstering the domestic economy, addressing banking and energy imbalances, and fostering national consensus.

He underscored a foreign policy grounded in national interests, aligned with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution's directives.

Jalili advocated for a broader foreign policy approach, emphasizing the cultivation of common interests with a wider range of countries to unlock opportunities for Iran.

He pledged to counter sanctions by focusing on internal resilience and leveraging economic instruments to deter sanctioning entities.

In closing remarks, Pezeshkian stated that his foreign policy would aim to strengthen relations with countries across the world and expressed support for the implementation of both FATF and the JCPOA.

The two hopefuls are set to attend a second presidential debate on Tuesday. This will be their last chance to sway voters on national TV before a campaign ban takes effect early Thursday morning. Over 61 million Iranians are eligible to cast their ballots on Friday.

Iran condemns U.S. human rights record on 36th anniversary of downed passenger plane



TEHRAN – On the 36th anniversary of the tragic downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy guided-missile cruiser in the Persian Gulf, resulting in the death of all 290 people on board, the Iranian Foreign Ministry has issued a strong condemnation of the United States' long history of human rights violations.

"On July 3, 1988, the USS Vincennes shot down Iran Air Flight 655, which was carrying 290 passengers and crew members, including 46 non-Iranian passengers and 66 minors under the age of 13.

Not only the United States failed to apologize to Iran, but it also awarded the USS Vincennes' commander a medal," the ministry said in a statement posted on its official X account on Tuesday.

This statement coincided with Iran's national "Week of Reviewing and Exposing American Human Rights Violations," aimed at highlighting the United States' contentious human rights record both domestically and internationally.

Highlighting the systemic and widespread human rights violations by the United States, the Iranian Foreign Ministry pointed out that American policymakers, under the guise of human rights advocacy, have consistently facilitated illegal interventions worldwide.

The ministry cited studies from 2023 indicating ongoing violations of basic human rights by the United States at various levels,

including unilateral actions and economic sanctions against several countries.

"Under the guise of promoting human rights, American politicians annually pressure or sanction countries that do not align with their political interests.

Such actions, which contravene international regulations and norms and violate international human rights treaties and documents, indicate widespread human rights violations by the U.S. government. Unilateral actions and economic sanctions are among the most significant examples of human rights violations by various US administrations. Many countries currently face American sanctions pressure, including Iran, Russia, Belarus, Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Sudan, Syria, and Lebanon," the statement reads.

Critically, the ministry accused the United States of committing gross and organized human rights violations through unilateralism and the intensified use of economic sanctions without United Nations authorization.

It argued that such actions have had detrimental effects on global human rights standards, exacerbating economic stagnation and marking a significant retreat from the rule of law.

"The use of sanctions as a tool to pressure politically independent countries that oppose US international practices has continued for decades and, at various levels, represents clear instances of human rights violations. These sanctions have had significant negative impacts on nations worldwide, depriving citizens in various countries of their natural and legal rights."

The statement also underscored the human costs of American support for "arbitrary wars," backing despotic governments, and violating the rights of oppressed peoples, including Palestinians.

Over 100,000 Iranians abroad cast votes in presidential election

TEHRAN – Over 100,000 Iranians living outside the country cast their ballots in the first round of Iran's presidential election on June 28, according to Alireza Salimi, a member of the executive committee of the election.

In an interview with Iranian media, Salimi highlighted the "enthusiastic participation" of Iranians overseas as a testament to their patriotism and love for

their country. He cited an example of an Iranian citizen in India who drove for 24 hours to participate in the election.

The official noted in his conversation with IRNA that in some Western countries, Iranians showed up at the ballot box despite unrelenting harassment from anti-Iran groups waiting outside the designated polling stations.

Reports show voters were subjected to verbal, sexual, and physical abuse.

Elsewhere in his comments, Salimi criticized Canada for refusing to allow thousands of Iranian expatriates to vote despite its claims to uphold democracy.

Iranian authorities previously announced over 100,000 eligible voters in Canada were stripped of

their voting rights due to Ottawa's decision. Iranians seeking to vote had to travel to two locations at Canada's border with the United States to cast their ballots.

The election resulted in a runoff between Masoud Pezeshkian and Saeed Jalili, the two candidates with the highest vote totals, as no candidate secured an outright majority. The runoff election will take place on July 5.

Iran has Hezbollah's back

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – An advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has issued a stark warning in a recent interview with British media: any Israeli attack on Lebanon would trigger a decisive response from Iran and the entire Axis of Resistance in support of Hezbollah.

Kamal Kharrazi told The Financial Times that Tehran was “not interested” in a regional war, but would support the Lebanese resistance group with “all means.”

“There would be a chance of expansion of the war to the whole region, in which all countries including Iran would become engaged.

In that situation, we would have no choice, but to support Hezbollah by all means,” he said, adding that “the expansion of war is not in the interest of anyone — not Iran or the U.S.”

In recent weeks, Israeli officials have threatened to launch a devastating attack on Lebanon, vowing to “take it back to the stone age,” unless Hezbollah and residents of southern Lebanon evacuate to an area behind the Litani River, 10 kilometers from the occupied Palestinian border.

The proposal comes after months of destructive attacks on Israeli military positions by Hezbollah. The regime has attempted to force the resistance group to cease its attacks by pressuring the government in Beirut, but Hezbollah says it will continue to strike Israel until the war in Gaza comes to an end.

Is a Lebanon-Israel war on the way?

According to Ali Abdi, an expert on Israel and Palestine, a potential Israeli attack on Lebanon can be analyzed through three key aspects: motivation, decision-making, and capabilities.



“Israel has a strong motivation to attack Lebanon. Besides Hamas forces in Gaza, the group that’s inflicted the most damage on the regime is Hezbollah.

The resistance group has caused significant casualties among Israeli soldiers, and significantly damaged its economy due to nonstop airstrikes, and most importantly, destroyed some of its most advanced espionage like the Miron surveillance base,” he explained.

While a decision to attack Lebanon has yet to be made, Abdi argued that the current political climate makes it easier for Prime Minister Netanyahu to make such a decision.

The recent departure of more moderate ministers from his war cabinet has resulted in a homogenously hawkish leadership, increasing the likelihood of aggressive actions, he noted.

“The third and most important layer to a potential Israeli attack on Lebanon comes down to the regime’s capabilities. Currently, the Israeli military is stretched thin across three fronts: Gaza, the West Bank, and the northern occupied territories.

Launching an attack on Lebanon would necessitate a withdrawal or

reduction of forces in Gaza and the West Bank, weakening Israel’s positions on those fronts.”

Abdi also pointed out another weakness in Israel’s military: its reliance on a struggling reserve system.

The Israeli military heavily relies on a largely inactive reservist system for prolonged conflicts, leading to significant wear and tear on its forces, resulting in demoralization and a sense of hopelessness.

“Even if they were to incorporate the ultra-Orthodox Jewish population through forceful drafting, these soldiers would likely lack the competence of the existing military personnel,” he noted.

Ultra-Orthodox (or Haredi) Jews have been exempted from mandatory military service since the very beginning of the occupation of Palestine. They typically devote their early years to religious study and are largely absent from the workforce.

The Israeli Supreme Court recently ruled that the government must enlist ultra-Orthodox Jews into the military, sparking violent protests from the Haredi community, which holds significant political influence within Netanyahu’s coalition.

The issue of Haredi conscription has become a contentious point of conflict between Netanyahu’s government, the military, and various sectors of Israeli society, further complicating the prospect of a potential war on Lebanon.

What’s awaiting the region if Israel attacks Lebanon?

Hezbollah has gradually increased the quality and quantity of its attacks in the past months. Some of its operations have shocked both Israel and the world due to the employment of highly advanced weaponry. The group possesses a vast arsenal of weaponry, much of which remains untapped.

“I believe Hezbollah has only demonstrated 20 to 30 percent of its true capabilities. In a direct confrontation with Lebanon, Israel will encounter significant unforeseen challenges,” Abdi stated.

Moreover, with several recent statements from top Iranian dignitaries announcing that Tehran would back Hezbollah in case of Israeli aggression, it’s no longer a question of just Hezbollah’s capabilities.

Any Israeli attack on Lebanon would inevitably draw in larger forces, a reality that even the U.S. must acknowledge before greenlighting any such action.

Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, commander of the IRGC’s Aerospace Division, also confirmed this stance on Monday. While recognizing the power and autonomy of regional resistance forces, he emphasized that Iran would stand with Lebanon against Israel, “as it always has.”

“Hezbollah is Iran’s most strategic ally in the region. Just like how Washington can’t abandon Israel, Iran would not be able to leave Hezbollah.”

Tehran condemns global silence on Israeli aggression in Gaza

TEHRAN – The spokesperson for the Iranian Foreign Ministry has condemned the severe and brutal actions of the Israeli military against Palestinians in Gaza, describing them as “unspeakable” and stressing that remaining silent on these atrocities is against the conscience of humanity.

“The pain and suffering inflicted on Palestine and the residents of the Gaza Strip are beyond words,” Nasser Kanaani wrote in a post on his official X account on Tuesday.

Kanaani strongly criticized the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden and other Western supporters of the Israeli regime amid the ongoing violence in Gaza, asserting that they are as culpable as the occupying Zionist entity.

“Silence and inaction in the face of these crimes and brutality are against humanitarian and moral responsibility and are condemned by the conscience of humanity and divine judgment,” Kanaani emphasized.

The conflict in Gaza has led to devastating losses, with Israeli actions since October 7 resulting in the deaths of at least 37,925 Palestinians, primarily women and children, and injuring 87,141 others.

Despite a UN Security Council resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire, Israel’s ongoing actions in the besieged enclave have drawn widespread global condemnation.

UN agencies warn that over one million Palestinians in Gaza could face severe starvation by mid-July as the hunger crisis worsens due to Israel’s continued blockade of humanitarian aid.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has highlighted the dire and chaotic conditions in Gaza, describing the situation as “total lawlessness.”

More than eight months into the conflict, large areas of Gaza lie in ruins, with a crippling blockade affecting the supply of food, clean



water, and medicine.

Thousands of Palestinians are fleeing their homes in Gaza’s Khan Younis as Israeli forces pound the area with bombs and artillery fire after issuing a new evacuation order for the embattled southern city.

The Israeli military’s newly declared evacuation zone in Khan Younis encompasses an area where 250,000 people live, according to Sam Rose, planning director at the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Iran to establish special judicial complex for international crimes



TEHRAN – The Secretary of Iran’s High Council for Human Rights has announced the establishment of a special judicial complex in Tehran province dedicated to handling international lawsuits and crimes.

Kazem Gharibabadi outlined the goals of this new judicial unit on Tuesday, emphasizing the restoration of the rights of Iran and its citizens violated by foreign actions.

The unit also aims to protect the rights of non-Iranian nationals and facilitate their

access to specialized judicial authorities.

This initiative aims to enhance coordination and expedite the processing of such cases.

The complex will focus on several key objectives: Creating a concentrated and well-structured judiciary to address international issues; adopting suitable legal and criminal policies with speed, accuracy, and deterrence in handling international claims; improving efficiency and strengthening interactions between judicial authorities and enforcement officers; and enhancing public confidence in the judicial system’s commitment to addressing violations of Iranian and international rights.

The specialized judges at this complex will address various international crimes, including those committed by non-Iranian nationals and their associates, crimes by Iranian expatriates, and offenses against foreign nationals.

Additionally, crimes occurring on Iranian

aircraft outside Iran or on foreign aircraft within Iran’s jurisdiction will be handled here.

The complex will also address crimes involving foreign political and consular agents, terrorist acts supported by foreign entities, and issues related to criminal judicial assistance, human trafficking, and illegal border crossings.

Gharibabadi highlighted the necessity of this complex in creating a dedicated and efficient structure within the judiciary to manage international legal matters.

This initiative is expected to enhance the legal system’s responsiveness to international crimes and improve the overall administration of justice concerning cross-border issues.

The establishment of this special judicial unit marks a significant step in Iran’s efforts to bolster its legal infrastructure and ensure the protection of rights at both the national and international levels.

Two Iran’s matches among Ones to Watch

TEHRAN – The draw for the AFC Asian Qualifiers - Road To 26 held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Thursday has produced a string of encounters over the upcoming months that Asian football fans can look forward to with great excitement.

Eighteen nations were divided into three groups, with eight confirmed places and a possible additional spot via a playoff on offer for Asia at the FIFA World Cup 2026 to be co-hosted by Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Uzbekistan vs Iran

Uzbekistan team look determined to make amends this time as they put on a good showing in the second round, winning four matches and only dropping points against Iran twice – Igor Sergeev rescuing a 2-2 draw for the White Wolves in Tashkent before they settled for a goalless stalemate in the return fixture on the final matchday.

The two familiar foes will meet again in the third round and Srecko Katanec’s side will believe they can go one better this time around when they welcome Team Melli to the Uzbek capital on Matchday Three with a win likely to hand them a huge fillip in their bid to reach their dream of a World Cup berth.

Iran vs Qatar

Matchday Four in the third round will witness another rematch of an AFC Asian Cup 2023 semi-final as Iran host Qatar at the colossal Azadi Stadium in Tehran on October 15. It was hosts Qatar who got the important win earlier in the year but only after Almoez Ali scored in the 82nd minute to hand the Maroons a 3-2 victory in the last-four clash.

Having successfully defended their continental crown by beating Jordan 3-1, Qatar now face the challenge of making it to their first World Cup through the qualifiers and not as hosts. Marquez Lopez’s side posted five wins, and a goalless draw against Afghanistan, in the second round and will once again rely on Ali and Akram Affif to take them to the milestone.

Team Melli, meanwhile, won four and drew twice in the second round to progress as group winners and will hope to replicate their form from the third round of 2022 qualifiers where they finished above Korea Republic with a record of eight wins, a draw and a loss. And there is no doubting that their fans will be fully behind the team when they face their biggest challenge on the Road to 26 in Tehran on Matchday Four.

Iran Post unveils stamp featuring Para archer Sareh Javanmardi

TEHRAN – Iran Post has unveiled a new commemorative stamp to honor Para archer Sareh Javanmardi.

The event was held at the Iran’s Sports Federation for the Disabled’s headquarters evening Monday.

In recognition of Team Iran’s second place at the 2022 Hangzhou Asian Para Games, National Post Company unveiled a stamp which features a photo of Javanmardi carrying her son on the podium in medal ceremony.

Iran finished in second place in Hangzhou, winning 44 gold medals, 46 silvers and 41 bronzes.

China won the title with 214 gold medals, 167 silvers and 140 bronzes.

Iran lose to Vietnam at Asian Women’s U20 Volleyball

TEHRAN – Iran lost to Vietnam in straight

sets (25-18, 25-16, 25-19) in the 2024 Asian Women’s U20 Volleyball Championship at the Jiangmen Sports Center Gymnasium on Tuesday.

Padideh Bolourizadeh’s team will face powerhouse Thailand on Wednesday in Group C.

The competition started on July 2 in Jiangmen, China and will run until July 8.

A total of 12 teams will vie for top honor and four berths at stake for the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Women’s U21 World Championship.

Group A consists of China, Kazakhstan and Australia. Japan, India and Hong Kong are in Group B and South Korea, Chinese Taipei and New Zealand are drawn in Group D.

Japan are defending champions.

Persepolis to hold camp in Netherlands

TEHRAN – Iranian football club Persepolis are going to hold a training camp in the Netherlands.

Persepolis will travel to the European country in late July.

The Reds prepare for the 2024–25 AFC Champions League Elite as well as Iran Professional League (IPL).

Persepolis claimed IPL title last month but parted ways with its Brazilian coach Osmar Loss Vieira.

The team have reached an agreement with Spanish coach Juan Carlos Garrido.

Taekwondo teams win World Cup Team Championships



TEHRAN – Iranian men and women teams won the titles of the World Taekwondo World Cup Team Championships Series in Chuncheon, Korea.

The male team completed a successful defense of the title on the first day and clinched the gold medal and \$10,000 in prize money with victory against the hosts Korea in the final at the Air Dome at Song-Am Sports Town.

It marked a fifth consecutive triumph in the male event at the World Cup Team Championships Series for Iran, who dominated the competition and won their semi-final against Côte d’Ivoire in three rounds and the final against Korea in two rounds.

Korea had beaten both India and Morocco in two rounds to reach the final, and collected \$7,000 in prize money for their silver medal.

Bronze went to Morocco, who beat Côte d’Ivoire over three rounds to earn \$5,000 in prize money.

It was a successful opening day of competition in Chuncheon, which is hosting three premier World Taekwondo events this week.

The Iranian female team beat defending champions Morocco to win \$10,000 in cash.

Korea beat Côte d’Ivoire and came third and earned \$5,000 in prize money.

A total of 69 athletes from the six countries competed in the World Cup Team Championships Series.

The World Cup Team Championships Series will be followed by the World Taekwondo Demonstration & Breaking Championships on Thursday (July 4) and the World Para Taekwondo Open Challenge on Friday (July 5).

Iran becomes 4th largest oil exporter in OPEC: report



TEHRAN - Iran has risen to become the fourth largest oil exporter within the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) due to a surge in oil production and sales.

Iran's oil and gas condensate exports have now reached their highest level since 2018, when the United States withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal and introduced tough economic sanctions against the country, targeting its oil sales in particular, according to a report by Vortexa, which provides data on the global energy sector.

The report emphasized that Iran's oil and gas condensate exports now account for 9% of OPEC's total crude oil and gas condensate exports.

Iran exported 1.56 million barrels of oil per day from January to May of this year, 250,000 bpd more than Kuwait and Nigeria. This has elevated Iran's ranking to the fourth spot among OPEC's largest crude oil exporters.

Despite Western sanctions, Iran managed to increase its crude oil and gas exports to 1.7 million

bpd in May, the highest level in the past five years.

The report cited the rise in Chinese oil demand and the expansion of Iran's oil tanker fleet as the main factors contributing to the surge in Iran's oil exports.

Ever since the late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi took power in August 2021, the country's oil exports have been on an upward trajectory.

The rise in Iran's oil exports has taken place despite tough U.S. sanctions which aimed to choke off Iran's oil industry as a main source of revenue for the Islamic Republic.

Financial Times cited figures by data company Vortexa last month noting that Iran was exporting more oil than at any time for the past six years, giving its economy a \$35bn-a-year boost.

The report said that Tehran sold an average of 1.56mn barrels a day during the first three months of 2024, almost all of it to China and its highest level since the third quarter of 2018.

"The Iranians have mastered the art of sanctions circumvention," said Fernando Ferreira, head of a geopolitical risk service at the Rapidan Energy Group in the U.S.

Iran's oil minister Javad Oji said in March that oil exports had "generated more than \$35bn" in the preceding year. On another occasion, he said that while Iran's enemies wanted to stop its exports, "today, we can export oil anywhere we want, and with minimal discounts".

48,000 ha of land allocated to National Housing Movement

TEHRAN- The head of National Land and Housing Organization of Iran said 48,000 hectares of land have been allocated to the implementation of the National Housing Movement in urban regions, IRNA reported.

"In the National Housing Movement, we have more than 2.6 million housing units under construction or completed, and 560,000 units have been delivered to applicants," Arsalan Maleki said on Tuesday.

The National Housing Movement is one of the major policies of the 13th government in the housing sector, and according to this policy, the construction of four million residential units is planned in four years.

The National Housing Movement is one of the projects through which the government is trying to help low-income individuals in society become homeowners. As announced recently by Deputy Transport and Urban Development Minister Hadi Abbasi-Asl, 1,867,719 National Housing Movement units are currently under construction in the cities and villages across the country.

While explaining the performance of the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development in implementing the National Housing Movement plan, the official emphasized the acceleration in implementing the Housing Construction Leap Law to achieve the goals of the 13th government.

In late September, Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehرداد Bazrpash announced the launching of a program for allocating free land (in the framework of the National Housing Movement) to young couples in order to help them build houses.

The National Housing Movement to construct four million housing units in four years is one of the major plans of the current government in the

housing sector.

According to the plan, out of these four million residential units, 3.2 million units will be constructed in cities and 800,000 units in villages.

After the National Housing Action Plan (started in 2018), the National Housing Movement is the government's second major program to provide affordable housing units for the low-income classes.

The operation for the construction of 209,212 residential units of the National Housing Movement began in February 2022.

The ceremony to begin the mentioned operation and also to launch some development projects in the housing sector was attended by former Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qasemi.

Also, in July 2022, the minister inaugurated a project for the construction of the first group of affordable housing units for laborers under the framework of the National Housing Movement.

On September 10, 1,278 units of the National Housing Movement were handed over to the applicants in a ceremony attended by Aref Norouzi, the acting director of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of Imam Khomeini.

The mentioned units were delivered to the applicants in five provinces throughout the country.

The Headquarters for Executing the Order of Imam Khomeini has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development to construct 100,000 units under the framework of the National Housing Movement.

According to Norouzi, the headquarters also completed and handed over 2,000 such units back in April.

Iran's second FlightCheck aircraft starts operation

TEHRAN - The head of the Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company declared that the second FlightCheck aircraft arrived in the Islamic country after the finalization of the purchasing process and officially started its operation.

Reza Nakhjavani noted that the aircraft has started its operation after completing the legal flight registration procedures in the International Civil Aviation Organization.

According to the official, the FlightCheck aircraft is scheduled to inspect a flight area of 700,000 square kilometers in the south of the Islamic Republic.

The strategic aircraft will inspect operations related to radar and visual systems as well as

navigation assistance of airports and flight routes in the Islamic country, he added.

Referring to the advantages of the new FlightCheck aircraft for the aviation industry of the country, Nakhjavani argued that the improvement of the safety, speed, and accuracy of flight checks is considered as the added value of the new aircraft.

The official went on to say that after the crash of the only FlightCheck plane of Iran's aviation industry in 2014, the country had to depend on FlightCheck aircraft and experts from other countries, but these operations have been carried out by relying on the knowledge of domestic experts by using the King Air 350i aircraft since 2017.

Iran-Turkey trade reaches \$2.3b in 5 months

TEHRAN - The trade exchanges between Iran and Turkey in the first five months of 2024 reached \$2.3 billion, showing a five percent increase compared to the same month last year.

According to the latest figures released by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT), Iran's trade with the neighboring country stood at \$2.189 billion in January-May 2023.

According to TURKSTAT, Turkey's exports to Iran in the mentioned five months reached \$1.34 billion, recording a 16 percent increase compared to last year's corresponding period.

Turkey's imports from Iran however fell from \$1.038 billion in January-May 2023 to \$960 million in the first five months of 2024.

The trade exchange between Iran and Turkey stood at \$5.490 billion in 2023 with a decrease of 14 percent.

Based on the data previously released by the Turkish Statistical Institute, the value of Iran's



exports to Turkey increased by 19 percent to reach \$3.35 billion in 2022.

Turkey had imported over \$2.82 billion worth of commodities from the Islamic Republic in 2021.

Based on the mentioned data, Iran's imports from the country also marked an 11-percent rise to hit \$3.07 billion in the past year, in comparison with 2021, when the figure was \$2.77 billion.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the trade between the two countries

registered a 15-percent rise in 2022 compared to 2021.

The value of trade between the two neighbors reached \$6.42 billion in 2022, while the figure stood at \$5.59 billion in the preceding year.

Iran's trade balance with Turkey was \$280 million positive in favor of Iran in the past year.

Last July, Iran, and Turkey discussed ways of expanding economic relations along with political ties at the Turkish-Iranian High-Level Cooperation

Council in Tehran.

During the meeting, which was co-chaired by late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the two sides negotiated the extension of the gas export contract between the two sides for the next 25 years.

In the meeting, President Raisi noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to expand economic relations with neighboring countries.

The president also evaluated Tehran-Ankara ties as positive and progressive, saying that the two countries should pursue appropriate policies to move towards increasing their annual trade exchanges to \$30 billion.

On the sidelines of the mentioned meeting, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian also held talks with Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Fatih Dunmez in which the two sides exchanged views on cooperation in energy fields.

Issuance of industrial investment guarantees triples in a year



TEHRAN - The issuance of investment guarantees at Iran's Small Industries Investment Guarantee Institute increased three times in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), an official with the institute said.

According to Nafiseh Ghorbani, the institute issued investment guarantees worth 4.79 trillion rials (about \$9.58 million) in the previous year, IRNA reported.

In terms of numbers, issuance of guarantees

has grown by 366 percent in the previous year compared to a year earlier, Ghorbani said.

"Among the important reasons for the increase in the issuance of guarantees in 1402, special attention to targeting, planning, and continuous monitoring of activities can be mentioned," she explained.

Earlier this month, Iran's Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ehsan Khandouzi said the Islamic Republic of Iran ranks fourth in West Asia in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) after the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

He noted that none of the other countries, namely UAE, Saudi Arabia and Turkey have faced any banking problems in the field of money transfer and sanctions barriers.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Khandouzi pointed to Iran's export of non-oil commodities and put the value of export of non-oil goods during the administration of the late Iranian

President Ebrahim Raisi at \$50 billion.

The economy minister also highlighted the transit of goods via Iranian land and said it has risen from 11.5 million tons in 2021 to 18 million tons.

Iran managed to attract more than \$11.9 billion of foreign capital within the framework of FDI in the past three years, he stated, Mehr news agency reported.

As reported, in the mentioned figure the share of the oil and gas projects has been \$4.8 billion which means the oil industry accounted for 41 percent of the country's total foreign investment in the mentioned two years.

After the oil sector, the industrial sector has had the highest rate of investment attracting, and during the said period over \$4.1 billion of foreign investment was attracted in the mentioned sector.

The industrial sector accounted for 35.3 percent of the total foreign investment.

North-South Corridor to boost Iran, Kazakhstan ties: Mokhber

three billion dollars.

The two countries Joint Economic Committee meeting was co-chaired by Iranian Agriculture Minister Mohammad-Ali Nikbakht and Kazakhstan Deputy Prime Minister Serik Zhumangarin.

During the intergovernmental meeting, officials and business persons from Iran and Kazakhstan met and discussed various issues of common interest between the two countries including banking, transportation and cargo transit, agriculture, trade and energy.

Speaking to the press after the meeting, Nikbakht said this is the second meeting of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) which shows the two countries' determination to expand economic ties.

"Currently, the economic exchange between the two countries is not at a good level; But we have targeted the trade exchange between the two countries to reach three billion dollars," Nikbakht noted.

Zhumangarin for his part pointed to a meeting with Iranian businessmen and said the two countries of Iran and Kazakhstan have vast capacities to cooperate.

"In the 19th Joint Economic Committee meeting, two issues of transportation logistics and bank settlement were agreed upon," he added. The 18th round of Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Economic Committee meeting was held in the Kazakh capital city of Astana on January 24-25.

As reported, the value of Iran-Kazakhstan annual trade rose 20 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

During a meeting between the former Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie and Kazakhstan's Deputy Minister of Trade and Integration Kairat Torebayev, in late April, the two sides discussed the ways for the expansion of trade ties between the two countries.

In the meeting held at the place of ICCIMA, Shafeie emphasized the special position of Kazakhstan as a trade partner for Iran and said the presence of the two countries in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) pacts has opened new doors for the development of economic relations, and the private sectors of the two countries should take advantage of this opportunity.

Emphasizing that paying attention to rail, road and sea transportation infrastructure should be a priority of the two countries, the ICCIMA former head stated: "The most important problem in the way of improving the level of trade cooperation between Iran and Kazakhstan is the issue of transportation. Solving this issue requires the will of the authorities of the two countries. The future of transit between the two countries can be bright due to Kazakhstan's connection to China and Iran's access to the open waters of Southeast Asia, provided that the infrastructure for exploiting this opportunity is available." The Kazakh official for his part emphasized that his country is seeking to improve business relations with Iran as much as possible and said: "Iran is our main way to communicate with Turkey and West Asia. So far, we have had 20 million dollars in financial transactions, and these meetings aim to increase this amount to 60 million dollars."

"Our economies have a good overlap. We are looking for further development of relations between the two countries, especially in the field of vegetables, fruits and fisheries", he added.

Tehran to host Intl. kitchen, bath, sauna exhibition

TEHRAN - The Ninth International Exhibition of Pipes Fittings, Sanitary Valves, Kitchen, Bath, Sauna, Related Industries and Services (PIVEX 2024) is going to be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds during July 8-11.

Over 138 domestic and foreign companies from 10 different countries including China, Türkiye, Spain, Germany, France, Italy, Holland and Finland are going to partake in this year's exhibition.

Several educational and specialized workshops in the fields of marketing, market development, and export of specialized goods, as well as two specialized conferences in the pipe, fittings, and valve industry are scheduled to be held on the sidelines of the exhibition.

Arab states' tangled web of deceit

Arab leaders denounce Israeli carnage in Gaza while they feed the regime's war machine

From page 1 ▶ The UAE and Bahrain deepened ties with Israel after signing the US-mediated Abraham Accords in September 2020. Later Morocco and Sudan joined the two Persian Gulf states and normalized relations with Israel.

The Abraham Accords brought clandestine ties between Arab countries and Israel to the fore. Saudi Arabia was also in talks to formalize relations with Israel. But, Israel's October 7 war on Gaza delayed the negotiations.

Nonetheless, US media revealed in June that General Herzi Halevi, the chief of the general staff of the Israeli military, and US CENTCOM Commander, General Michael Erik Kurilla, held talks with senior generals from several Arab militaries in Bahrain.

According to Axios, military officials from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain and the UAE met with the Israeli and Ameri-



can top generals.

The meetings were interpreted as a stab in the back of Palestinians and their cause. This was due to resentment against Israel and the US over its unwavering support for the regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Last month, a report by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics showed that exports from the UAE, Egypt and Jordan to Israel

have increased in 2024 compared to the previous year.

Such facts and figures have highlighted the duplicity of Arab states as Israel continues its war of genocide on Gaza.

On the one hand, Arab states denounce Israel for massacring people in Gaza. On the other, they promote ties with the bogus entity.

People in the Arab world have regularly held protests or used social media to vent their anger at Israel's brutalities in Gaza. They have demanded their governments break off relations with Israel.

Middle East Eye: The UAE-linked company in Serbia has supplied weapons to Israel amid the Gaza onslaught.

Hence, Arab states make public criticism of Israel to distract attention away from their complicity in Israel's atrocities in Gaza.

It now seems some Arab leaders are serving as pawns of Israel and the United States.

Resistance forces wage more sophisticated operations against invaders

In Rafah, southern Gaza, the resistance forces confronted Israeli incursions into the Saudi neighborhood and the Shaboura refugee camp.

Al-Qassam Brigades reported a successful operation where they targeted and destroyed an Israeli Merkava 4 tank south of Tiran Street in the Tel al-Sultan neighborhood of Rafah.

Earlier, the armed wing of Hamas lured an Israeli unit into a booby-trapped house, previously used in a sniper operation against Israeli forces east of Rafah.

The house was detonated upon entry by the Israeli troops, resulting in casualties among them.

Israeli media sources confirmed the collapse of the booby-trapped building in Rafah, with several soldiers wounded, some critically, who were subsequently evacuated by helicopter to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba.

Furthermore, al-Quds Brigades, in their response to ongoing hostilities, announced the targeting of an Israeli Merkava tank with an RPG shell and engaged in combat with Israeli soldiers near the Western Cemetery in the southwest of Rafah.

The brigades also reported launching rockets targeting an Israeli military command center at the Ami'ad military base using "107

rockets".

To counter Israeli military movements, al-Quds Brigades released footage of multiple explosive devices being detonated against advancing Israeli military vehicles in the southwestern part of Rafah.

In other operations, the armed wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad declared it had launched a concentrated rocket attack targeting Israeli settlements in the Gaza periphery.

Israeli media sources reported an "unusual barrage" of rocket fire towards the Gaza periphery, consisting of 20 rocket shells. The barrage triggered alarm sirens in several settlements.

The Israeli military acknowledged the death of one soldier and the serious injury of another during confrontations with the Palestinian resistance in southern Gaza. Additionally, Israeli media reported that nine soldiers were injured in the enclave, with three in critical condition.

Furthermore, Israeli sources reported that one soldier was killed and ten others were injured, including three critically, in an explosion that occurred during the demolition of a tunnel opening in Gaza.

In another major sign that Israeli forces are finding it extremely difficult to defeat the

Palestinian resistance, the occupation army has ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians from the eastern half of Khan Younis in southern Gaza.

Much of the city has already been destroyed in what was a very long air and ground assault that was wrapped up earlier this year. The Israeli army withdrew under fire, and it appears that the Palestinian resistance forces have regained control of the area.

Large numbers of Palestinians have since moved back in to escape the indiscriminate Israeli bombardment of Rafah.

The evacuation order of Khan Younis's residents is a signal that exhausted Israeli forces will be ordered back in to prolong the genocide.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian Territories, Francesca Albanese, has accused Israeli finance minister Bezalzel Smotrich of being "a key mastermind of Israel's genocidal policies against the Palestinians."

"Even considering the significant political pressure on the ICC, I really don't understand why the ICC Prosecutor has not yet requested an arrest warrant against this man, who is a key mastermind of Israel's genocidal policies against the Palestinians," she stated in a post on social media.

As the occupying power in Gaza, Israel is obligated under international law to supply the population with their basic needs, including electricity.

Before the war, Gaza received most of its electricity from Israel. It also relied on fuel imports to operate power plants.

However, Israeli authorities completely cut electricity supply to Gaza on October 7. They've also severely limited the entry of fuel.

Israeli far-right minister Bezalzel Smotrich has slammed a reported plan to re-supply the Gaza Strip with electricity, which Israel has cut off from the Palestinian enclave for nearly nine months.

Footage posted on social media on Tuesday showed the electricity company in Gaza fixing electricity poles in Deir al-Balah, Middle East Eye reported.

The effort comes in preparation to supply water desalination and sewage treatment facilities, according to Israeli media.

Israel has killed nearly 8,700 Palestinian students since Oct. 7

The Palestinian Education Ministry said 8,672 students have been killed and 14,583 others injured since the start of the Israeli aggression on October 7 against the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

The ministry said 8,572 students have lost their lives in Gaza and 14,089 have been injured.

It added that 100 students have been killed

and 494 others injured in the West Bank.

The ministry said 497 teachers and administrators have also been killed and 3,402 injured in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

674 Israeli soldiers killed in Gaza

The leader of the illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank has announced the death of Major Nadav Noler of Israel's 8th Brigade of the 121st Battalion in Gaza.

Yonatan Kuznitz, the head of the Karnei Shomron Council, was quoted by the Israeli media as saying Noler, who was from Karnei

Shomron, was killed during Monday night's fighting, without elaborating on the exact location. The Israeli media later reported that he was killed in central Gaza's Netzarim Corridor.

Later, the Israeli media, citing a message of the Israeli army to the affected families,

reported that another soldier – Captain Eyal Abneon of the Nahal Brigade – also died with Noler.

The latest deaths raised the number of Israeli soldiers killed since the Gaza war began in October to 674.

270 days of war and crime against Gaza

From page 1 ▶ where after the withdrawal occupation forces, the bodies of the sick and wounded were retrieved from the ruins.

So far, seven mass graves have been discovered in the surroundings of al-Shifa Hospital and the bodies of more than 500 martyrs have been retrieved. They had been brutally killed while they were blindfolded and their hands were tied.

Young children and infants, along with their mothers, were directly targeted by snipers of the invading Zionist army.

On average, five children have died every hour and 17,000 kids have lost one of their parents and live with only one of their parents or guardians.

The indescribable aggression of the Zionists has led to the disappearance of nearly 10,000 civilians and defenseless people in Gaza and the displacement of more than 1.5 million residents of the territory.

The number of children killed by the war machine of the Zionists in the Gaza Strip in the last nine months exceeds the number of victims of wars that have occurred in the world in the last four years and has reached an unbelievable number of 15,200.

From the total number of children martyred in the brutal attacks on the Gaza Strip, more than 14,000 were aged 4 to 13, 180 were three, more than 450 were under three, and 140 were in the first year of their infancy.

In these brutal strikes, not only houses and residential areas and camps, but also tents of the refugees were extensively bombed. On aggregate, more than 75,000 tons of bombs, including white phosphorous bombs, were dropped on the defenseless people in Gaza which surpassed the amounts of combined bombs used in the Second World War.

In these blind and inhumane bombings, more than 10,000 Palestinian women, who are defined as innocent civilians, according to all legal rules and regulations governing military battles, have been martyred.

Schools, universities, educational centers, churches, libraries, museums and mosques have been hit and stormed as war targets. During the attacks of the invading Zionist regime, 311 schools and universities were attacked. As a result of these strikes, more than 8,600 students and nearly 500 teaching staff and teachers have been martyred.

More than 300 mosques, 200 historical places and 3 churches have been completely destroyed. As Israel imposed a total siege on the coastal strip, water, food and medicine were denied to the Muslim and fasting people during the holy month of Ramadan. The Zionist aggressors used starvation, thirst, and preventing delivery of medicine to the sick as weapons of war.

More than 31 Palestinian children have succumbed to starvation due to the continuation of this inhuman act.

Also, more than 10,000 cancer patients are on the verge of death, hundreds of thousands of people have contracted infectious diseases, and more than 60,000 pregnant women are at risk of losing their lives or their children.

The convoys carrying food such as those belonging to the World Central Kitchen were attacked. Some of the employees of the non-profit organization were citizens of European countries who had voluntarily joined the convoys to help Palestinian people.

In the course of these measures, dozens of people affiliated with popular organizations have been killed. Besides, settlers of the occupied areas have set fire to and looted the trucks carrying humanitarian aid, including

food, from the Rafah crossing towards Gaza under the support of the Zionist invading army and in front of the eyes of the international institutions.

They (Israeli forces) have stripped elderly civilian men naked in front of their families after arresting them in order to humiliate them and take revenge on the fighters present in the unequal battlefield of Gaza.

By ignoring all international rules and regulations and with the aim of preventing the publication of news pertaining to the scale of the crimes committed in the Gaza strip, journalists have been defined as military targets and so far more than 150 of them have been killed as a result of direct and targeted attacks.

Despite all these indescribable and innumerable crimes, the unequal and bloody war in Gaza has another side which in practice has highlighted the misery of the Zionist regime and shed light on the fact that the regime is like a house of cards.

After 270 days of bombing, committing all kinds of war crimes and unprecedented destruction of infrastructure and public and private places, the invading army, which was under the illusion of "victory on all fronts", failed to achieve superiority and meet its military and political goals against a resistance movement, which has been under siege and sanctions.

Inside the United States, which is the biggest supporter and partner of the Zionist regime in committing atrocities, people are protesting against the atrocities of the Zionists and American statesmen.

More than 50 universities in the United States and some important European countries have seen strong student protests and faculty sit-ins against the brutal actions of the Zionists. Presently, the name of Palestine and Gaza is more frequent for students and academics in the US and big European countries compared with the names of elite politicians in those countries.

The official recognition of the Palestinian state by many countries, including some European countries has gained momentum, and some governments have reconsidered relations with this child-killing regime independently or under the pressure of public opinion and their political elites.

"Human dignity" has been put to test in a scale as big as the world and the entire human society, and the ragged and pitiful mask has fallen from the face of the self-proclaimed defenders of human rights and now their dishonesty has been clear to all.

Two hundred and seventy days of cowardly war, along with the most heinous and hateful inhuman actions of the Zionists towards women, children, the elderly and the sick in Gaza, is a lasting indicator to judge the level of honor of the so-called human rights advocates.

The unequal war in Gaza exposed the true colors of the so-called human rights advocates in the West and revealed their dirty and blood-soaked hands more than ever.

Undoubtedly, the end of this black era which is full of crimes, will lead to the complete collapse of a regime that, from the beginning of its formation until now, has based its bogus and illegitimate identity on aggression, assassination, mass murder, resorting to all kinds of violence and attempting to commit genocide against defenseless and innocent people and the real owners of the Palestinian land.

The countdown to the complete downfall of the Zionist regime is accelerating and its realization is a matter of time.

Israel wants to exhaust Palestinians with evacuation orders

Israel's evacuation order from the east of Khan Younis shows its inability to achieve its goal of eliminating Hamas and its intent to exhaust the population, Luciano Zaccara, a professor at Qatar University's Gulf Studies Center, told Al Jazeera.

"This demonstrates that they cannot win the war because they wanted to eliminate Hamas physically and politically but so far the group is still there, this is why they need to move people, in order to chase them," Zaccara said.

"It also proves that Israel wants to win

this war by exhausting the people," he said, referring to several previous evacuation orders from different locations in the past nine months of the war.

"In this way, it creates much more trouble and harm for Palestinians who cannot stay for more than one month or 15 days in one place," he added.

The idea that there are safe places to move people to, Zaccara said, "It is not true because every time there has been a displacement there were also attacks".

Golestan Palace welcomes expert assessment of museum artifacts

TEHRAN – The director of Golestan Palace has welcomed the participation of researchers in assessing and identifying artifacts in need of restoration within the UNESCO-listed site.

Afarin Emami on Monday stated that historical and cultural artifacts naturally age and deteriorate over time, often suffering physical and biological damage, Mehr news agency reported.

“Routine examination of relics is crucial for identifying the extent of [potential] damage and determining preventive and restorative measures. Following a cost estimate and allocation of funds, restoration work can be carried out.”

Emami emphasized that these examinations are also vital for preventive conservation. When an artifact undergoes diagnostic research, any events or conditions that could cause damage are identified, allowing for immediate preventive action.

She added that in subsequent research phases, emergency protection and restoration of the artifacts are also addressed. Therefore, these studies not only contribute to the introduction, development, management, and transfer of knowledge in the field of museums but also aid in the proper conservation and restoration of artifacts.

The director of Golestan Palace explained that there is no resistance in the Golestan Palace museums against allowing researchers to examine damaged artifacts. On the contrary, museum management encourages researchers to investigate and identify damage for restoration.

“This approach reduces costs and enhances knowledge development. Hence, Golestan Palace welcomes researchers from various fields to select and conduct research on var-



ious artifacts within this world heritage site.”

To cite an example, Emami mentioned that a recent study focused on the special carpet of the Talar-e Ayneh (“Hall of Mirrors”). This carpet, which had been laid out in Talar-e Ayneh during the Qajar and Pahlavi eras, was moved to storage due to deterioration. “Restoring this carpet is significant for Golestan Palace.”

She explained that although measures were taken to prevent further damage to the carpet, a comprehensive study was needed to understand the damage and devise preventive and restorative strategies.

Located in downtown Tehran, near the city’s historical bazaar, Golestan Palace was once the official residence of the Qajar monarchs who ruled the country between 1789 and 1925. It displays a remarkable mixture of ancient Persian and contemporary European architectural styles, which characterized much of Iranian art in the 19th and 20th centuries.

UNESCO says that the complex exemplifies architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era, including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian arts.

New funds to help protect Rey’s cultural heritage

TEHRAN – The ancient city of Rey, which is now part of the Iranian capital, has received a boost in funding aimed at preserving its cultural and historical landmarks.

In a recent interview with ISNA, the director of Rey’s national heritage site highlighted that one of the major challenges over the past year has been the protection of the magnificent cultural and civilizational heritage of the region.

“Fortunately, with these new funds, some steps can be taken to strengthen the protection of Rey’s cultural heritage and to improve the conditions to some extent,” said Qadir Afround.

These funds, he underscored, include a portion in cash, and a significant amount in treasury bills.

Moreover, Afround brought to light that supplementary funding by the council and Tehran municipality will be used to equip and meet the essential needs of the historical sites.

The historic city of Rey is home to landmarks such as Cheshmeh Ali, Toghrol Tower, Rashkan Castle, Harun Prison, and the Sassanid Fire Temple, some of which require urgent protection, restoration, and archaeological excavations.

Shahr-e Ray or simply Ray, is a county seat in Tehran province. Formerly a distinct city, it has now been absorbed into the metropolitan area of Greater Tehran as the 20th district of municipal Tehran.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Rey



was one of the capital cities of the Parthian empire (3rd century BC–3rd century CE). It was captured by the Muslim Arabs in 641 CE. During the reign of the Muslim caliph al-Mahdi in the 8th century, the city grew in importance until it was rivaled in Western Asia only by Damascus and Baghdad.

Islamic writers described it as a city of extraordinary beauty, built largely of fired brick and brilliantly ornamented with blue faience (glazed earthenware). It continued to be an important city and was briefly a capital under the rule of the Seljuqs, but in the 12th century, it was weakened by the fierce quarrels of rival religious sects.

In 1220, the city was almost destroyed by the Mongols, and its inhabitants were massacred. Most of the survivors of the massacre moved to nearby Tehran, and the deserted remnants of Rey soon fell into complete ruin.

Rey, however, retains enough history to give it a different sensibility. Its key sight is the elaborately decorated Shah Abdol Azim Shrine. Beside the shrine complex is a lively bazaar, while further afield are a couple of historical attractions.

More than 15,000 Malaga residents join anti-tourism demo

More than 15,000 protesters have taken to the streets of Malaga in the latest anti-tourism demo in Spain.

Marchers held up banners which read: ‘We feel strangers in our own city’ and ‘Malaga is for the people of Malaga, tourism forces us out.’

Some of the banners, in many cases pieces of cardboard the protesters had scrawled messages in felt-tip pen on, said: ‘One more tourist is one less local resident’ and others: ‘Padlocks out of our neighbourhoods’ in reference to the coded key holders outside tourist apartment blocks.

(Source: Daily Mail)

Dr. Hessabi’s paternal home ready to welcome visitors

TEHRAN – In a tribute to the late Dr. Mahmoud Hessabi, the revered father of physics in Iran, his paternal home and its surrounding park has been restored, blending a celebration of the late scientist’s legacy with the preservation of Tehran’s historical heritage.

“The renovation aimed to address structural issues, restore and enhance various parts of Dr. Hessabi’s house,” said the mayor of Tehran’s District 12, adding that the effort was made to improve visual appeal, preserve national heritage, and maintain historical sites.

Emphasizing the importance of increasing green spaces and making them accessible to citizens, Vahid-Reza Anarki-Mohammadi stated that the renovation of the 1,200 square meter Hessabi Park carried out, as part of the city’s ongoing efforts to enhance and prepare the capi-



tal’s parks for public use.

The interior mansion of the park, currently functioning as a plant clinic, he elaborated, may have historical structures beneath it, as indicated by civil and historical experts.

“Excavation to uncover these potential structures is also

planned,” Anaraki-Mohammadi brought to light.

Although Dr. Hessabi’s house and museum are located in northern Tehran, in the Tajrish neighborhood, the renowned scientist was born in 1903 in a central Tehran neighborhood, Sangelaj.

Dr. Hessabi’s family home and birthplace now lie within a park named after him.

The Qajar-era house is over 120 years old, once quite large, but now only a small portion of about 200 square meters remains. A central hall and two rooms on either side are the only parts left of Dr. Hessabi’s birthplace.

In the 1980s, Dr. Hessabi visited this house and wished for it to become an academy of ancient sciences. Currently, the Tehran Municipality has turned it into a small cultural center.

Dr. Mahmoud Hessabi, the father of modern physics in Iran, winner of the Scientific Man of the Year award, and the only Iranian student of Albert Einstein, who also appointed as Einstein’s successor at Princeton University is considered one of the most prominent figures in the history of Iran and the world.

Tourism and cultural heritage: a dual mandate for Iran’s next president

From Page 1 ▶ A visa waiver regime initiated by the previous administration should be expanded and intensified. Additionally, unrestricted Internet access and the existing financial and insurance issues must be resolved to ensure an enhanced visitor experience.

To construct high-quality hotels and other tourist infrastructure, potential investors should be confident that their funds are built in a safe and stable environment. It’s the easiest way that helps develop international standards for hotels and other travel infrastructures.



Iranian presidential candidates Saeed Jalili, left, and Masoud Pezeshkian.

Beyond tourism, a great deal of effort is needed to safeguard Iran’s matchless cultural heritage for generations to come. Here, land subsidence may be the most terrifying threat. Prominent examples are the ancient city of Isfahan, Marvdasht Plain, which is home to Pasargadae, Persepolis, and Naqsh-e Rostam, to name a few.

At the end of the day, the next Iranian president should recognize the dual mandate of boosting tourism and safeguarding historical treasures to establish a reliable alternative to petrodollars.

Iran debuts tourism roadshow in Vietnam

TEHRAN – On Monday, Iran launched its first-ever tourism roadshow in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, aiming to boost bilateral tourism ties.

The event featured key officials and private sector leaders from both nations and showcased Iran’s diverse travel offerings, CHTN reported.

The roadshow featured speeches by Iranian deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbfafian and Hoang Dao Cuong, the deputy minister of culture, sports, and tourism of Vietnam, alongside prominent private sector figures.

During the roadshow, Vietnamese individuals who had previously traveled to Iran shared their experiences, portraying Iran as a captivating and diverse tourist destination.

“Through this conference, we hope that the most honest images of Iran will be fully conveyed to Vietnamese travel businesses,” said Ali-Asghar Shalbfafian, addressing the event, “So that they can introduce to the Vietnamese people, helping Vietnamese people have more information about Iran, further promoting the cultural and tourism relations be-

tween the two nations.”

The session included speeches by the Iranian and Vietnamese sides, followed by a presentation narrated in Vietnamese using artificial intelligence. Subsequently, tourism professionals from both countries engaged in discussions and exchanges.

Promotional materials were also distributed among the Vietnamese attendees, providing detailed information on Iran’s various tourism offerings.

Following Iran’s unilateral visa waiver for citizens of 28 countries

earlier this year, there has been a strategic push to organize roadshows to promote Iran’s tourism capacities in these target nations.

The recent initiative led by the cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts ministry, in collaboration with private sector stakeholders, marked the beginning of such efforts in Southeast Asia, with Vietnam as the first host country.

This event marked Iran’s first roadshow in East Asia, with plans to continue in Malaysia and Indonesia in the coming days.

Tazhib: an ancient yet reviving illumination art

TEHRAN – In an age dominated by AI-assisted graphic design, the ancient Persian art of Tazhib offers a compelling counterbalance, emphasizing patience, precision, and a deep connection to tradition.

There are hundreds of Iranians across the country and beyond that keep the ancient art alive. One of those, Mohammad-Hossein Aghamiri, in a recent interview with AFP, has said he sometimes dedicates up to six months to a single design, knowing that one misplaced stroke can mar the entire piece.

Aghamiri’s meticulous approach involves using fine brushes to apply natural pigments onto paper, creating intricate floral patterns, religious motifs, and elegant calligraphy. This art form, which has adorned literary manuscripts, religious texts, and royal edicts for centuries, is known for its non-figurative and geometric flourishes that traditionally decorate the margins of holy books and epic poems.

Aghamiri, 51, is one of the remaining dozen masters of Tazhib in Iran, a craft that was inscribed on UNESCO’s list of intangible cultural heritage last year. With over 30 years of experience, he highlights the unique demands of Tazhib, describing it as a practice requiring immense patience and precision. “It’s not accessible to everyone,” he says, speaking from his studio in downtown Tehran.

The art of Tazhib dates back to the Sassanid era in pre-Islamic Iran but flourished after the seventh-century advent of Islam, which banned human depictions. This historical backdrop underscores the cultural and religious significance of Tazhib, which has

evolved while maintaining its core aesthetic principles.

When a reporter visited Aghamiri, he was immersed in creating a shamsa design, a symbolic representation of the sun, about 50 centimeters across. This design, featuring intertwined abstract, geometric, and floral patterns, had been a work in progress for over four months, with Aghamiri aiming to complete it within six weeks. He uses natural pigments such as lapis lazuli, saffron, gouache, and pure gold imported from China. “Gold has a very strong visual appeal,” Aghamiri explains. “It’s expensive and it enhances the perceived value of the work.”

Coming from a family with a rich history in Iranian craft traditions, including calligraphy, miniature painting, and carpet design, Aghamiri’s work has been showcased in museums across Iran and the Persian Gulf region. The demand for his art extends beyond Iran, with 80 percent of his works being sold in countries like the UAE, Qatar, and Turkey.

In recent years, Aghamiri has also attracted international interest, teaching Tazhib online to students worldwide, particularly in the United States. He hopes to hold workshops in Britain soon, emphasizing that Persian illumination fundamentally differs from European illumination art, which flourished in the Middle Ages. Unlike the more figurative European designs that depict human faces, animals, and landscapes, Persian Tazhib focuses on abstract and geometric patterns.

The recognition of Tazhib by UNESCO in December 2023, requested by Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan, marks a signifi-

cant milestone for this ancient art form. This acknowledgment has rekindled interest and hope for its future. “Twenty years ago, I didn’t have much hope for the future of Persian illumination,” Aghamiri admits. “But things have changed, and I see that this art is becoming more and more popular.”

Tazhib, an intricate form of Islamic illumination, involves decorating manuscripts, book covers, Qur’ans, and various surfaces with elaborate designs using gold, vibrant colors, and delicate patterns. While the term strictly refers to manuscripts decorated with gold or silver, it broadly encompasses any decorated or illustrated manuscript. Islamic manuscripts, therefore, are often referred to as illuminated, illustrated, or painted works.

The resurgence of Tazhib in the digital age highlights a yearning for the tactile, slow, and deliberate processes of traditional craftsmanship. As Aghamiri and other masters continue to preserve and teach this art, they ensure that the legacy of Persian illumination remains vibrant and relevant, bridging the past with the present and inspiring future generations to appreciate and carry forward this exquisite cultural heritage.

In a world where speed and efficiency often overshadow artistry and tradition, the art of Tazhib stands as a testament to the enduring value of meticulous craftsmanship and cultural continuity. Through the dedicated efforts of artists like Aghamiri, this ancient practice continues to illuminate not just manuscripts but also the rich cultural tapestry of Iran and the broader Islamic world.

Benefactors sharply increase contribution to building schools

TEHRAN – Through financing 110 billion rials (about 184 million dollars) over the past three years, the share of benefactors in building schools has increased by 300 percent.

The benefactors have undertaken half of the constructed schools, ISNA quoted Education Minister Reza-Morad Sahraei as saying.

If the same trend continues, constructing schools in areas where the per capita educational space is lower than the national standard, i.e. 5.30 square meters, will naturally become a priority, he said.

Over the past three years, more than 7,000 schools with 32,000 classrooms were built in underprivileged areas, the official stressed.

The fact that 64 percent of schools are constructed in rural areas and underprivileged communities highlights efforts to expand educational equity and opportunities, Sahraei further noted.

Semi-finished school projects

A sum of 60 trillion rials (around \$100 million) has been allocated to completing semi-finished educational projects by the



end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2025), an official with the Ministry of Education has said.

During the late President Ebrahim Raisi's administration, 33,000 classrooms were built and retrofitted with benefactors contributing to half of the funding, IRNA quoted Hamid-Reza Khanmohammadi as saying.

Referring to the construction of schools for Refugees, the official said 111 schools have been built by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the past 10 years.

Highlighting that 600,000 foreign students are currently utilizing the educational capacities of

Iran's schools, Khanmohammadi said 22 schools are currently being constructed, and 6 projects are proposed in challenging locations, which are under review.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should help construct up to 50 schools per year, he stressed.

Rise in newly-built schools

In August 2023, the Organization for Development, Renovation, and Equipment of Schools announced that the number of newly-built schools across the country has increased by 104 percent over the past two years.

On a daily basis, 47 new classrooms have been constructed all over the country during the past

two years.

About 40,000 donors are active and involved in building schools across the country, said Mohammad Reza Jafari, CEO of the School-Building Donors Association.

He went on to say that over 49 percent of schools, amounting to 150,000 classrooms, in the country are built with the participation of school-building benefactors.

Construction of sports spaces, libraries, and developing smart schools are among the current needs in school construction, Jafari stressed.

On July 11, 2023, the 25th conference on honoring school-building benefactors was held at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults in Tehran.

The Majlis (Iranian Parliament) has approved a special budget to support building schools nationwide.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Education should spend one percent of the revenues of state-run companies and the net profits of banks and private institutions to build schools in deprived areas in line with the goal of promoting educational justice.

Tehran plays host to 29th G5 meeting

TEHRAN –The 29th Technical Meeting of the G5 Forum was held in Tehran on Tuesday with the theme of boosting health tourism among member states.

G5 member states including Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Iran, Uzbekistan (as an observer member), and the World Health Organization have attended the meeting.

"During the administration of the late President Ebrahim Raisi, the activities of the group intensified to strengthen regional cooperation with 9 meetings held so far covering various topics such as communicable and non-communicable diseases, cross-border cooperation, blood transfusion, training health managers, women, and family health," Health ministry website quoted the deputy health minister, Mohammad Hossein Niknam, as saying.

"G5 main objectives include enhancing cross-border cooperation; exchanging specialists and expertise; supporting the organization and reconstruction of the health system; facilitating the participation of specialists and researchers in scientific conferences; cooperating in times of crisis," Niknam highlighted.

"Fortunately, over the past three years, member states have formed favorable cooperation to ensure the health of pilgrims during Arbaeen," he added.

West Asia is a disaster-prone region so regional cooperation and successful experience exchange are critical in addressing disasters, he stressed.

The official went on to say that Tajikistan joined G5 last year, and Uzbekistan, which is a member of the European Regional Office of the WHO, will soon join the group; it will pave the way for interregional cooperation.

The 30th meeting of the G5 Forum will be held in Tehran in November with the theme of 'strengthening health tourism' among the member states of G5 and with the presence of the health ministers of these countries.

Moreover, the theme of the 31st G5 Forum, as suggested by the WHO regional director for the Eastern Mediterranean, will be control and reduction of drug use.

Attending the meeting, Jaffar Hussain, the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Iran, underscored the significant role of the G5 in fostering regional cooperation and ensuring the health of people in member countries.

"Iran has a strong health care system, numerous hospitals and Medical Science universities with high capacities as well as advanced medical equipment," the official said.

"In general, the integration of medical education into health services; nationwide health and treatment network system, as well as the government's efforts to develop services and infrastructure, are among the most important factors that have enhanced the country's progress in the health sector despite sanctions," Hussain stressed.

Announcing WHO's readiness to further health services in G5 member countries, Hussain highlighted "We have recently observed

the launch of more than 800 medical projects and hospitals are equipped with 1,800 new beds throughout the country including deprived and border areas in an effort to improve public access to healthcare services, which is a great measure taken," Hussain further noted.

G5 Forum

Iran established G5 in 2005 to promote subregional cooperation in health among the group of four countries –Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan – plus the World Health Organization as the fifth member of the group to provide technical support in improving this collaboration.

Several activities have already been taken under this initiative, with the Islamic Republic of Iran taking responsibility for serving as its secretariat.

The first subregional workshop for G5 countries on health system strengthening was hosted by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination of Pakistan on November 19–20, 2013 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Exchanging experiences on issues related to moving towards universal health coverage; developing national roadmaps and strategies for improving service delivery, population coverage, and financial risk protection; assisting each other in health workforce capacity development activities, health system research, national health accounts, and policy development; developing measurable indicators related to three dimensions of universal health coverage were among the goals of this two-day meeting.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

'Water transfer from Sea of Oman has no environmental risk'

Transferring water from Sea of Oman to central drought-ridden provinces of the country, provided that the environmental requirements are met, will not pose threats to the environment, Issa Kalantari, the Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

To provide the amount of water needed for the country, agriculture and industries, there is no choice but to use seawater, the incredible and abundant resources, now and in the future, Kalantari stated, IRNA reported on Monday.

He went on to say that Iran located in an arid and semi-arid area, is facing environmental problems including water shortage, sand and dust storms due to low precipitation amounts coupled with climate change.

شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان مشکل زیست محیطی ندارد

رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست کشور گفت: شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان به استان های مختلف به شرط رعایت الزامات محیط زیستی، جانمایی مناسب در ساخت آب شیرین کن و راهسازی پساب آن مشکل و مانع زیست محیطی ندارد و از نظر این سازمان بلا مانع است. عیسی کلانتری دوشنبه شب در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: برای تامین آب کشاورزی، آشامیدنی و صنایع کشور چاره ای جز استفاده از آب دریا نداریم و باید چه اکنون و چه آینده به این منابع بیکران و بسیار فراوان رجوع کنیم.

وی افزود: ایران کشور پر آبی نیست و سالهای سال با بحران بی آبی، خشکسالی و مسائل زیست محیطی، گرد و غبار و ریزگردها مواجه است.

Over 570 earthquakes occur in a month

TEHRAN –A total of 573 earthquakes have been recorded across the country over the past calendar month that ended on June 19, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

The epicenter of 26 earthquakes was in neighboring countries, namely Azerbaijan (7), Afghanistan (3), Turkey (1), Turkmenistan (4), Iraq (2), and Armenia (9).

Of the total quakes, 1 had a magnitude of 5 on the Richter scale which occurred on June 18 with the epicenter in Kashmar, Khorasan Razavi province.

Statistically, 235 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 2; 272 earthquakes with magnitudes between 2 and 3; 54 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4, and 11 earthquakes with magnitudes between 4 and 5 have, occurred in the country.

Among the provinces of the country, Kerman with 90, Khorasan Razavi with 59, and Yazd with 50 recorded the highest number of earthquakes in the country.

A total of 6,949 earthquakes were recorded across the country over the past calendar year (March 2023 -March 2024) according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Most of the earthquakes happened respectively in the northeastern Khorasan Razavi, southeastern Kerman, northwestern West

Azerbaijan, and eastern South Khorasan provinces, ISNA reported.

Statistically, 2,268 earthquakes were less than 2 on the Richter scale, 3,685 were between 2 and 3, 796 were between 3 and 4, 181 were between 4 and 5, 22 were between 5 and 6, and 5 were between 6 and 7.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran but more than 6% of the victims of the world earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes. This shows the high level of vulnerability in Iran, according to Mehdi Zare, a professor of engineering seismology.

Iran has entered a decade of earthquakes since the [Iranian calendar] year 1396 (March 2017-March 2018), as the Iranian plateau is shrinking by 30 millimeters per year, Mehdi Zare, professor of engineering seismology at the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES), has said.

The Strait of Hormuz region in the south of Iran has the highest seismic activity in the region and its formation is related to the continuation of the convergent movement between the Arabian plate and the central continental plate of Iran.

Iranian students succeed at Science Olympiad 2024

TEHRAN – Attending the 40th Annual Science Olympiad Tournament at Michigan State University, Iranian students managed to win a bronze medal and two diplomas of honor.

A total of 114 teams from 84 countries presenting 310 scientific projects participated in the competition, Mehr news agency reported.

The competition is held annually for students aged 12 – 18 from June 1 to 15.

Supported by Oxford University, the competition was held in two stages in the fields of technical engineering, computer science, energy, biological science, social science, art, and robotics.

In the first stage, after evaluating the student's projects, 4 Iranian teams consisting of Sina Moqaddam-Nodehi, Paniz Karimi, Ilya Nosrat-Panah, Mahan Qadimi, and Mohammad-Sam Nemati-Moein were selected to advance to the second stage.

Moqaddam-Nodehi won the bronze medal, while Mahan Qadimi and Mohammad-Sam Nemati-Moein received diplomas of honor.

Also, Karimi and Nosrat-Panah received a certificate for taking part in the competition.

These students have also succeeded in becoming members of the World Federation of Inventors. This summer, they will participate in the world competition in Geneva, Switzerland, as selected Iranian inventors.

Recent achievements

A team of Iranian students won five gold medals in different fields of research in the 9th edition of the '1Idea 1World' International Innovation, Design & Startup Competition.

The event, which is considered one of the biggest international idea and technology competitions in the world, was held in the city of Istanbul, Turkey, on April 28-29.

Participants from 24 countries including Iran, Canada, China, Taiwan, The United States, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates participated in the competition both in person and online to showcase their innovative projects in 10 different sub-groups such as medicine and agriculture, IRNA reported.

From among 273 different innovative ideas, the top five ideas received special awards, with two of the awards going to Iranian participants.

In the Taiwan International Science Fair (TISF) 2024, which was held from January 28 to February 2, the Iranian team ranked fourth among 28 countries.

Mehrad Faridi and Ilya Haji from Iran competed with 41 teams during the five-day event which was hosted by the capital city of Taipei, IRIB reported.



Goitered gazelle, a vulnerable species

The long-term survival of Goitered gazelles in central Iran has been threatened because of the isolation of existing populations and genetic threats.

Although large populations were present over a vast area until recently, a decline in the population as a result of hunting, poaching, and habitat loss led to the IUCN classification of *G. subgutturosa* as "vulnerable."



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**
Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



No. 18, Moghadasi Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.O. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

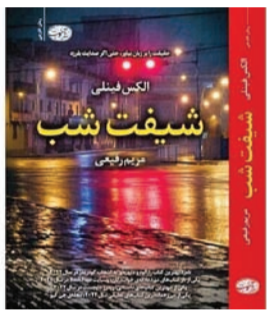
JULY 3, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

It is enough wisdom for you that it clarified salvation and depravity for you.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:08 Evening: 19:24 Dawn: 3:08 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:53 (tomorrow)

“The Night Shift” at Iranian bookstores



TEHRAN- A Persian translation of American writer Alex Finlay’s “The Night Shift” has recently been published by Amut Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Maryam Rafiei.

“The Night Shift” follows the story of four teenagers working at a Blockbuster Video store in New Jersey in the midst of the anticipated chaos and panic surrounding the turn of the millennium on New Year’s Eve 1999, where they were brutally attacked, leaving only one survivor.

The police quickly apprehended the boyfriend of one of the victims, but he fled and was never seen again, leaving behind only questions and unanswered mysteries.

Fifteen years later, another group of teenage employees at an ice cream store in the same town experienced a similar horror, with only one making it out alive.

The eerie similarities between the two incidents sent shockwaves through the community, and the police were left to piece together the puzzle.

Against this backdrop, three lives become intertwined: Amy, the sole survivor of the Blockbuster massacre, who is forced to relive the traumatic events of that fateful night; Jamie, the brother of the fugitive accused of committing the crimes, who is convinced that his brother was wrongly accused; and FBI agent Sarah Keller, tasked with unraveling the secrets behind both nights’ events.

As Sarah delves deeper into the case, she uncovers a complex web of lies, secrets, and half-truths that threaten to upend

everything she thought she knew about the crimes. Meanwhile, Amy struggles to come to terms with her past and find a way to heal from the trauma she suffered.

Jamie’s quest for justice and redemption takes him down a dangerous path, putting him at odds with Sarah and threatening to tear his family apart.

Through their stories, Finlay masterfully weaves together themes of trauma, memory, and redemption. “The Night Shift” is a gripping and poignant thriller that explores how our past experiences shape us and how we can find a way to heal and move forward despite the scars left behind.

Alex Finlay is a critically acclaimed author, renowned for crafting captivating and suspenseful novels that leave readers on the edge of their seats.

His latest works, including the 2021 breakout novel “Every Last Fear” and the 2022 Goodreads Choice Nominee for Best Mystery & Thriller “The Night Shift”, have garnered widespread acclaim and have been translated into a staggering twenty-two languages.

Finlay’s novels have consistently appeared on year-end lists of the best books of the year, a testament to his ability to craft compelling stories that resonate with readers.

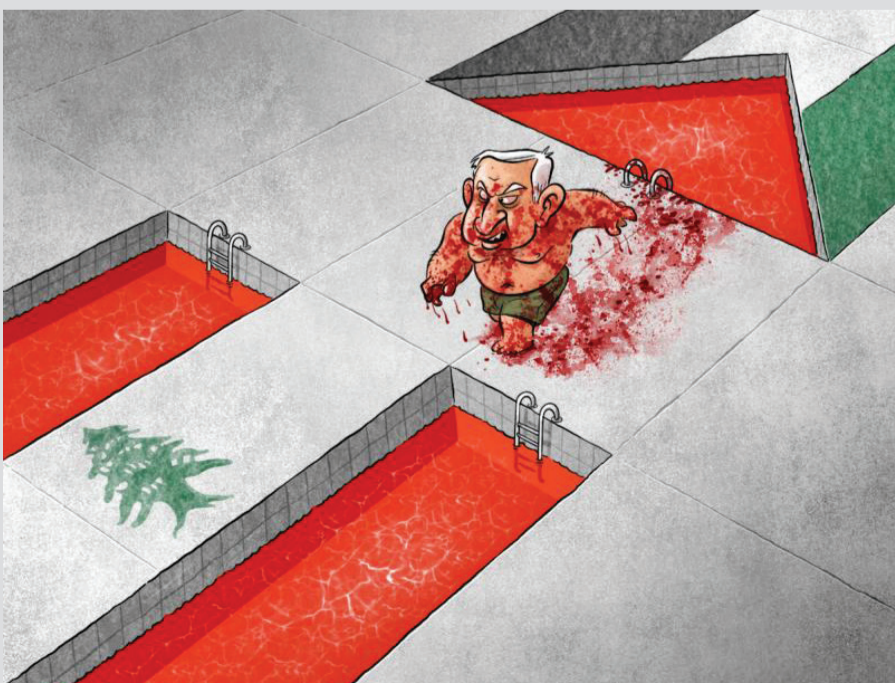
Moreover, his works have been optioned for film and television adaptations, with “Every Last Fear” currently in development for a major limited series.

As an author, Finlay has honed his craft to deliver masterful plots that weave together complex themes, intricate characters, and heart-pumping suspense.

His writing style is marked by its precision, intelligence, and emotional depth, making his stories both thrilling and thought-provoking.

With his continued success and growing fan base, Alex Finlay has solidified himself as one of the leading voices in the world of thriller writing, and his readers eagerly await his next literary offering.

Cartoon of Day



War in Lebanon

Cartoonist: Osama Hajjaj from Jordan

“Servants of the Nation” exhibition underway in Tehran

TEHRAN- A select exhibition of 600 artistic works created by artists from various fields to pay tribute to President Raisi and his companions has been put on display at the Aali Gallery of Tehran’s Art Bureau.

The exhibition, titled “Servants of the Nation”, features posters, paintings, and photographs created by 24 active artists who were inspired by the sacrifices of those who served their country, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

The selected works include 55 posters, eight designs, and 33 photographs of the funeral processions of the martyrs and are a testament to the artists’ admiration and gratitude towards the martyrs, the report added.

Additionally, an online gallery on the Art Bureau’s website also features some of these works.

The exhibition is a result of a nationwide campaign called “Revolutionary Poster Movement” which was launched to pay tribute to the martyrs. Many artists, including Mohammadreza Doostmohammadi, Saber Sheikh-Rezai, Hossein Ferdosian, Mohammad Afraz, Morteza Alishahi and several others, have contributed to this initiative.

According to Mohammad Zaruei, the head of the Visual Arts Center at the Art Bureau, the artists were



inspired to create these works during their visit to the Imam Reza Shrine in Mashhad, where they were tasked with creating art pieces in honor of the Imam’s birth anniversary.

However, their efforts were overshadowed by news of a helicopter crash that occurred on the same night, which led them to create works that reflected their hope for better news about the president’s health. The exhibition is a testament to the artists’ dedication to paying tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in serving their country, he added.

“It is a powerful reminder of the importance of art in expressing our emotions and paying homage to those who have given their lives for our freedom and independence.”

The exhibition will be running until July 6. President Ebrahim Raisi was returning from a ceremony to officially open a new dam on the border between Iran and Azerbaijan on May 19 when his helicopter crashed in from around the world, with leaders from various countries expressing their sympathy and support for the Iranian government and people.

The tragic incident claimed the lives of not only the President

but also Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian and several high-ranking provincial officials, who were among those on board.

The loss of life has sent a wave of grief across Iran, with many government officials and ordinary citizens alike paying tribute to the victims of the crash. As news of the tragedy spread, condolences poured in from around the world, with leaders from various countries expressing their sympathy and support for the Iranian government and people.

20th Tehran Auction to present modern, contemporary Iranian art

TEHRAN-The 20th edition of the Tehran Auction with a focus on modern and contemporary Iranian art is set to be held on July 5 at Parsian Azadi Hotel in Tehran.

In the upcoming edition of the auction, 116 artworks will go under the hammer, which includes works by renowned Iranian artists such as Aneh Mohammad Tatar, Kambiz Derambakhsh, Mokarameh Ghanbari, Reza Bangiz, Taha Behbahani, Shirin Etehadieh, Farshid Mesghali, Farideh Lashai, Hossein Mahjoubi, Sadeq Tirafkan, Nasrollah Afjei, Bita Vakili, Behzad Shishegaran, Reza Derakhshani, Mansour Ghandriz, Sirak Melkonian, Mohammad Ali Taraghijah, Mahmoud Zenderoudi, Nasser Assar, Ali

Shirazi, Mohsen Vaziri Moghaddam, Jazeh Tabatabai, and Sadeq Tabrizi among others.

The works at the auction are priced from one billion rials (\$1,667) to 200 billion rials (\$166,667-\$200,000). Three works share the highest estimate of the auction. An untitled work by Mohammad Ehsai, “End of an Era” from the “Memories of Destruction” series by Aydin Aghdashloo, and “Black Numbers on White” by Farhad Moshiri are all estimated at 100-200 billion rials (\$166,667-\$200,000).

The first of its kind in Iran, the Tehran Auction was launched in 2012 as an independent and private initiative to introduce the best in Iranian

art, ranging from established and emerging Iranian artists to art collectors and the global audience. It is aimed at addressing the increasing interest in modern and contemporary Iranian art and facilitating the acquisition of quality works in reliable ways.

the 19th edition of the Tehran Auction that focused on classic and modern Iranian art was held in January and realized close to \$5 million.

Prior to the 20th auction, the collection of works will be showcased at Tehran’s Parsian Azadi Hotel on July 3 and 4. veteran actor Hossein Pakdel will serve as the auctioneer.

Adaptation of Dostoyevsky’s “The Gentle Spirit” on Tehran stage

TEHRAN-An adaptation of Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s “The Gentle Spirit” is on stage at Book Garden Theater in Tehran.

Titled “Tonight – Borscht & Blood,” the play is directed by the well-known Iranian actor, director, and writer Saber Abar and written by Mehdi Yazdani-Khorram, based on Dostoyevsky’s short story, ISNA reported.

Abar and Fatemeh Naghavi are the only actors of the 60-minute play, which has two performances every night at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Also known as “A Gentle Creature” and “The Meek One,” the story is a compelling study of despair, based



on a real-life incident. A pawnbroker mourns the loss of his wife, a quiet, gentle young girl.

Why has she killed herself? Could

he have prevented it? These are the questions the pawnbroker asks himself as he pieces together past events and minor incidents, changes of mood and passing glances, in his search for an answer that will relieve his torment.

Originally written in 1876, it is a first-person stream of consciousness narrative. It chronicles the relationship between a pawnbroker and a girl that frequents his shop.

The story was inspired by a news report that Dostoyevsky read in the paper about the suicide of a seamstress. Dostoyevsky referred to it as a “meek suicide” that “keeps

haunting you for a long time.”

Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) was a Russian novelist, short story writer, essayist and journalist. Numerous literary critics regard him as one of the greatest novelists in all of world literature, as many of his works are considered highly influential masterpieces.

Dostoyevsky’s literary works explore the human condition in the troubled political, social, and spiritual atmospheres of 19th-century Russia, and engage with a variety of philosophical and religious themes. “Tonight – Borscht & Blood” will remain on stage until August 6 at Book Garden Theater.

Cash-strapped museums struggle with moral reckoning over sponsors’ link to Israel

In June, Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) found itself in a predicament. Its south London building had been occupied by students protesting against the war in Gaza, rendering works of art, staff and visitors unsafe, the public gallery said. The only option? To close until the autumn.

Outcry ensued. Many criticized the protesters for targeting an institution whose politics are broadly aligned with the campaigners, saying their methods were misguided. Others, however, including two artists who were showing at the gallery when it closed, spoke out in support of the campaign. “Some things are rightfully more important right now,” the artist Mark Corfield-Moore posted on Instagram.

CCA, which is located on the campus of Goldsmiths University, has links to Zak and Candida Gertler. Goldsmiths for Palestine, the group behind the occupation, alleges that the couple are personal friends of the Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and donors to his political campaigns. The Gertlers did not respond to a request for comment, the Art Newspaper reported.

Goldsmiths for Palestine also identified a £30,000 investment by the university in Nice Ltd, a surveillance company that had “derived a large portion of its revenue” from arms companies that provide munitions to the Israeli military. Goldsmiths says it is now reviewing its investment policy, but the situation highlights the knife edge that institutions

now find themselves sitting on.

Fossil fuel firms, Big Pharma and arms manufacturers have been the main targets of protests in recent years, but the Israel-Gaza war is fast becoming a flashpoint. Candida Gertler’s involvement in the Outset Contemporary Art Fund, which she co-founded, has prompted artists, writers and other cultural workers to boycott the charity, including some of those exhibiting at the Venice Biennale this year.

Last November, the Zabludowicz Collection closed its London project space after years of boycott campaigns over its ties to Israel.

Hamstrung by deep public funding cuts as well as a stagnant philanthropic landscape, institutions are now trying to balance essential

support with a shift in moral compass, within the art world and in society at large. “The reality is the funding situation is critical,” says Leslie Ramos, a philanthropy adviser and the author of Philanthropy in the Arts: A Game of Give and Take. “More institutions are at risk of closing. Museums fear taking money and offending anyone, and donors are terrified of giving money away, or at least giving money away publicly. We are living in a culture of fear.”

Adding to the complexities, a younger generation of artists are the ones spearheading many of these campaigns against problematic corporate sponsors, meaning arts organizations must balance their need for money with a pool of emerging creatives who are not afraid to protest.