

How the Islamic Republic managed a smooth transition period in 50 days

Transition Period Like Never Before



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Iran acting FM asserts Israel is losing war in West Asia

TEHRAN— In an interview with Newsweek on Tuesday, acting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Baqeri Kani asserted that Israel is losing its battle against the Axis of Resistance in West Asia.

Discussing the rise of the Axis of Resistance, which includes groups in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, Baqeri Kani highlighted the increasing coordination among these factions against Israel. He stated that the regional balance of power has shifted in favor of the Resistance since October 7, with Israel unable to alter this new dynamic despite escalating violence. "The Zionists have been trying to continue and intensify the killings and atrocities in Gaza to change the balance, but they have failed to achieve these objectives," he noted.

Baqeri Kani elaborated on his visit to New York, highlighting his participation in two pivotal United Nations Security Council sessions. "On Tuesday, there will be a meeting on multilateralism, and on Wednesday, there will be a session regarding Palestine and the developments in Gaza," he explained.

He stressed Iran's unwavering commitment to multilateral mechanisms and the critical role of the United Nations in fostering global stability and peace. ▶ Page 2

Capacity of Iran's renewable power plants touches 1,200 MW

TEHRAN - The capacity of Iran's renewable power plants has reached 1,199.71 megawatts (MW), based on the latest data released by Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA).

Of the mentioned figure, the share of wind power plants is 31 percent with 366.3 megawatts and the share of solar power plants with 529.9 megawatts is 58 percent, according to the SATBA data for the end of the third Iranian calendar year of Khordad (ended on June 21).

Small hydropower plants account for 9.0 percent of the country's total renewable power with 103.67 megawatts.

Biomass power plants also have a one percent share with 12.5 MW, and the share of expansion turbine power plants with 9.6 MW is also one percent.

Over the past few years, the Iranian government has taken serious measures to accelerate the growth and development of renewable energies in the country.

Diversification of financing models for renewable projects, increasing the ceiling of guaranteed electricity purchase, providing the possibility of buying and selling renewable electricity in the green board of the Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX) and providing the possibility of exporting renewable electricity have been the most important measures taken for this purpose. ▶ Page 4

Hamas: Bombing of UNRWA school a scar on humanity

The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement has issued a statement denouncing Israel's "deliberate bombing of displaced people in UNRWA's al-Razi School in the Nuseirat camp and the Al-Mawasi area west of the city of Khan Younis, which was declared a safe area."

"This is a brutal and shameful act that is a scar on humanity," the resistance movement said.

It reiterated that the administration of US President Joe Biden is a partner to its staunch ally Israel, "which continues to carry out genocide" in Gaza.

"The US administration, led by President Biden, bears full responsibility for this systematic killing of our people, with its continued political and military support for the occupation and its army, and because of its obstruction of international justice in pursuing Israeli war criminals."

British aid group Save the Children has also called the recent attacks on schools and hospitals in Gaza as "horrific".

"The healthcare and education systems are being decimated before our eyes," it said on X, calling for a ceasefire. "Children cannot continue to be at the forefront of this conflict. Hospitals and schools should never be targets."

Gaza resistance forces destroy Israeli tanks

By Wesam Bahrani

The Palestinian resistance fighters continue to attack the Israeli military, which is said to be displaying signs of fatigue and frustration.

The armed wing of Hamas, the al-Qassam Brigades, detonated a rocket from remnants left by the Israeli military, targeting "two enemy Merkava tanks in the Tel al-Hawa neighborhood" in the southwest of Gaza City.

According to a statement published by the al-Qassam Brigades, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) were present near the tanks at the time of the explosions, which "killed and injured" some occupation troops.

Meanwhile, the al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, targeted an Israeli military position and vehicles in the "Netzarim Corridor" in the southwest of Gaza City, using mortar shells.

The "Netzarim Corridor" was built by the IOF after the genocide began in Gaza. The route stretches 6.5 kilometers from an Israeli settlement in the Gaza envelope to the Mediterranean Sea, allowing the IOF to carry out military raids in northern and southern parts of the Strip.

Israel's abhorrent use of Palestinians as human shields in the spotlight

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN— Israel has committed brutal massacres in the Gaza Strip since declaring war on the Palestinian territory more than nine months ago.

According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, the regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has killed over 38,700 Palestinians in Gaza since October 7. Most of the victims are women and children.

Israel has also carried out strikes against hospitals in Gaza and stormed them.

International law has stipulated that hospitals and health centers are considered protected spaces and attacking them amounts to a war crime.

The Israeli army has accused Hamas of using hospitals as its command centers and using Palestinian civilians as human shields. However, it has fallen short of providing any evidence to back up such claims.

On the contrary, there is ample evidence that Israel has used Palestinian civilians as human shields.

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Belarus is a hidden gem

By M.A. Saki

MINSK - On July 7, as the sun was setting, a tall and thin young man was waiting for me from Iran and another journalist from Kazakhstan at Minsk airport. He said I welcome you to Belarus on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As we moved toward the capital Minsk, I was excited by the beautiful landscape. It was the first time that I was visiting Eastern Europe. The forested lands and wheat farms won my attention more than anything else. The green European continent is loved by many people around the world, especially those living in arid and semi-arid areas of our planet.

In the nearly 40-kilometer distance from the airport to the city I couldn't withhold my eyes from looking at the picturesque scenery for a moment. ▶ Page 6



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Iranians hold Tasua, Ashura mourning rituals

Mourning ceremonies were held on the ninth and tenth days of Muharram, called Tasua and Ashura, all over the country.

Every year, the Iranian people, along with other Shiite Muslims around the world, hold mourning rituals to mark the martyrdom of Imam Hossein (AS) and his loyal companions in the Battle of Karbala nearly 14 centuries ago.

Mourning ceremonies are not limited to weeping and beating chests. Cooking votive food, called Nazri, and distributing it among passers-by and the poor is also an integral part of the ceremonies, which is very popular among people.

Azerbaijan reopens embassy in Tehran

TEHRAN - Azerbaijan has announced the reopening of its embassy in Iran following over a year of successful negotiations aimed at easing tensions between the two neighboring countries.

The Azerbaijani Press Agency (APA) cited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a press release, stating, "Following the negotiations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, on July 15, 2024, the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Iran resumed its work at a new address. The Ambassador and the current diplomatic staff have returned to Iran."

Iran, as the host country, has taken measures to ensure the security of the new embassy building in line with its obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the statement added. ▶ Page 3

Tehran urges action to halt Israeli genocidal crimes against Gaza



TEHRAN – Iran's acting Foreign Minister Ali Baqeri Kani has emphasized the urgent need for international efforts to stop Israel's genocidal campaign against Gaza.

During his meeting with Dennis Francis, President of the UN General Assembly, at the UN headquarters on Monday evening, Baqeri Kani discussed global issues and underscored the necessity of more effective measures to halt Israel's aggressive actions in Gaza.

Expressing appreciation for the General Assembly's constructive efforts since the conflict's onset, including the passage of relevant resolutions, Baqeri Kani called for intensified global efforts to end the Israeli regime's attacks and genocidal crimes against Gazans.

Upon his arrival in New York, Baqeri Kani was welcomed by Iran's Permanent Ambassador to the UN, Amir Saeed Irvani. Leading a delegation, he is slated to participate in a UN Security Council session on Palestine and multilateralism.

The upcoming meetings, chaired by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, whose country holds the Security Council's rotating presidency, are deemed crucial by Baqeri Kani for addressing pressing global issues and their implications for Iran.

Highlighting the dire situation in Gaza,

Baqeri Kani condemned the ongoing genocide and systematic crimes perpetrated against its population over the past nine months. He reaffirmed Iran's steadfast engagement on the Palestinian issue, stressing its proactive role in political, legal, and diplomatic forums.

Referring to the late Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian's advocacy at the previous General Assembly and Security Council sessions, Baqeri Kani emphasized Iran's commitment to using the UN Security Council's platform to defend Palestinian rights and expose Israeli atrocities.

Israel's war on Gaza escalated on October 7 when Palestinian Resistance groups launched retaliatory operations into occupied territories. Gaza has since faced a severe blockade, severely restricting essential supplies like food, medicine, electricity, and water.

Casualty figures underscore the humanitarian crisis, with at least 38,664 Gazans killed, predominantly women, children, and adolescents, and 89,097 sustaining injuries during the brutal offensive.

Shortly after the conflict's outbreak, the General Assembly overwhelmingly passed a resolution urging an immediate "humanitarian truce" in Gaza, reflecting global concern over the escalating crisis.

EU extends anti-Iran sanctions for another year

TEHRAN – The European Union has prolonged its sanctions against Iran for another year, citing Iran's alleged military support for Russia in the Ukraine conflict and its backing of resistance groups in West Asia.

The sanctions have been extended until July 27, 2025, as announced by the Council of the European Union on Monday.

"The Council today extended until 27 July 2025 the restrictive measures in view of Iran's military support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and for armed groups and entities in the Middle East and the Red Sea region. Existing restrictive measures will continue to be reviewed annually," the Council stated.

Currently, the sanctions affect 12 individuals and 9 entities, who are subject to asset freezes. Additionally, any provision of funds or economic resources to these targets, directly or indirectly, is prohibited. The individuals listed also face a travel ban to the EU.

Despite repeated denials by Iranian and Russian officials regarding military cooperation in Ukraine, the EU has upheld these sanctions, largely influenced by pressure from the Israeli regime and opponents of the Islamic Republic.

Iran insists that Resistance groups in the region operate independently, particularly those supporting Palestinians in Gaza.

Iran's ambassador holds talks with Turkish deputy minister of Justice

TEHRAN – The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Turkey engaged in discussions with the deputy minister of Justice of the Republic of Turkey to enhance bilateral judicial cooperation.

As reported by IRNA, on Tuesday, Mohammad Hassan Habibullahzadeh, Iran's Ambassador to Turkey, met Khurshid Yildirim, the deputy minister of Justice of Turkey, to address issues such as expediting prisoner transfers, improving the situation of Iranian prisoners, and facilitating the affairs of Irani-

ans residing in Turkey.

The meeting concluded with a verbal agreement to strengthen consular cooperation between Iran and Turkey, emphasizing the need to address the situation of prisoners from both countries.

In 2021, the Turkish Directorate of Migration announced that 115,000 Iranians were residing in Turkey, having obtained residence through investment, citizenship, education, asylum, and tourism.

Iran acting FM asserts Israel is losing war in West Asia

From page 1 ▶ "Unilateralism cannot bring about solutions to global issues. It is not only ineffective but also hinders access to peace, stability, welfare, progress, and development for different nations and people worldwide," he emphasized.

Baqeri Kani pointed to the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a prime example of unilateralism's failures. He also criticized U.S. support for Israel, accusing it of exacerbating the Gaza conflict by supplying advanced weaponry.

Baqeri Kani underscored Iran's dedication to promoting multilateralism as a pathway to a more just and stable world. "Through multilateralism, we can create a world that is more just, more transparent, more democratic, and more stable," he asserted. He noted Iran's active participation in international organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, as part of its efforts to support multilateralism.

Turning to the Palestinian issue, Baqeri Kani called for immediate international action to halt Israeli genocide and aggression in Gaza. He urged the UN Security Council to intervene, even suggesting the use of force if necessary. He stressed the urgent need for humanitarian aid for Gaza and the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian territories. "The Zionists must unconditionally, rapidly, and swiftly evacuate from all of the occupied Palestinian territories in Gaza," he declared.

Baqeri Kani voiced his skepti-



cism about the Biden administration's ceasefire plan in Gaza. "We believe that the United States is not an honest mediator regarding the issue of Palestine and Gaza," he argued. He emphasized that halting the delivery of weapons to Israel would demonstrate genuine U.S. intentions for peace.

Baqeri Kani dismissed Israeli threats against Iran, labeling Israel as an "illegitimate aggressor" unable to confront Iran effectively. He reiterated Iran's commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and emphasized its dedication to peaceful nuclear activities. "Iran will make use of all its potential and capacities within the framework of the NPT and the Safeguards Agreement to expand its peaceful nuclear activities according to its national plans and programs," he said.

Highlighting Iran's strengthening ties with China and Russia, Baqeri Kani focused on regional stability and economic coop-

eration. He praised China's role in mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia and noted Russia's involvement in developing Iran's energy infrastructure. "We believe that Russia and China are making serious efforts to consolidate mutual political confidence in the region," he explained.

Baqeri Kani expressed confidence in Iran's ability to defend itself against any threats, citing the country's advancements in military capabilities and national solidarity. He mentioned Operation True Promise as an example of Iran's deterrence capabilities. "Iran holds the potential and capacity and is determined and brave enough to safeguard its national security, national interests, as well as national sovereignty," he asserted.

Finally, Baqeri Kani discussed the potential for improved relations with the West under the incoming Masoud Pezeshkian's administration. He emphasized Iran's openness to genuine dialogue and mutual respect. "We

believe that now it is the turn and time of the other side to prove this honesty for interaction and, of course, to open a new chapter," he said.

In this comprehensive and multifaceted interview, Baqeri Kani presented Iran's firm stance on regional conflicts, its commitment to multilateralism, and its readiness to defend its national interests.

Baqeri Kani traveled to New York to participate in two open sessions of the UN Security Council. Upon arriving on Monday, Baqeri Kani told reporters that Iran holds the U.S. responsible for Israel's ongoing aggressive actions against the besieged Gaza Strip.

"Currently, the Americans have become a significant barrier to halting the Zionist regime's atrocities," he stated.

Describing multilateralism as "a viable alternative," Baqeri Kani highlighted Iran's membership in international bodies such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), emphasizing that Iran can effectively contribute. "We will utilize the UN Security Council's capacity to underscore the importance of multilateralism in addressing global issues," he added.

He further emphasized that Iran would use this opportunity to advocate for Palestinian rights and spotlight Israeli offenses.

"At this juncture, the Islamic Republic of Iran aims to leverage the UN Security Council's platform to defend the rights and positions of the Palestinian people and expose the crimes committed by the Zionist regime."

Pezeshkian holds meetings with workers and retirees' representatives

TEHRAN- Members of the workers community and representatives from the retirement association convened to discuss their financial demands and concerns in a meeting with the newly elected president.

As reported by Tasnim News, on Tuesday morning, a session was held at the Presidential Office, where members of the workers

community and retirement associations engaged in dialogue with Masoud Pezeshkian, the president-elect, presenting their financial challenges.

During the meeting, Pezeshkian encouraged the community to propose a candidate for the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare, stating, "Suggest your pre-

ferred Labor Minister, and we will strive to select an individual who not only hails from the working class but also possesses the required expertise and capabilities."

Following the inauguration ceremony on July 30, the president will have a two-week window to introduce his cabinet for parliamentary approval.

Foreign Ministry urges remembering Palestinians on Ashura day

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani has called on Muslims worldwide to remember and support the Palestinian people on Ashura Day.

This significant message was shared on Kanaani's X account on Tuesday, coinciding with Ashura, the day commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hossein, the third Shia Imam.

Kanaani expressed his condolences to Muslims globally on the solemn occasion of Imam Hossein's martyrdom, honoring

him as a symbol of resistance against tyranny who steadfastly opposed cruelty and oppression.

Highlighting the enduring relevance of Imam Hossein's legacy, Kanaani urged Muslims to embrace the principles of Ashura, advocating for the rejection of tyrants and support for the oppressed. He specifically called on the global Muslim community to stand in solidarity with Palestinian women and children, and to expose the "evil and terrorist identity of Israel and its criminal supporters."

Kanaani's call for solidarity underscores Iran's longstanding support for the Palestinian cause and its condemnation of Israeli actions. By invoking the spirit of Ashura, he appealed to Muslims to draw inspiration from Imam Hossein's unwavering stance against tyranny and to apply those values in their support for Palestinians facing ongoing adversity.

Over nine months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lie in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medi-

cine.

The conflict in Gaza has inflicted devastating losses, with Israeli actions since October 7 leading to the deaths of at least 38,664 Palestinians, primarily women and children, and injuring 89,097 others.

As Ashura Day is observed globally, Kanaani's message resonates with the broader themes of justice, resistance, and the enduring struggle against oppression, urging the Muslim community to unite in their efforts to support the Palestinian people.

Selection process of new cabinet members underway: Zarif

TEHRAN- The head of the Transition Council for the fourteenth government disclosed the process of reviewing and suggesting members for the new government.

Former Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif emphasized the evaluation of the proposed candidates for the fourteenth cabinet and stated, "A call has been issued to invite nominations from national figures, political parties, scientific and professional associations, and the private sector to introduce potential candidates for the fourteenth

government. Responses have been received, and we are awaiting more proposals."

Previously, the Presidential Office had released a list of 450 committee members tasked with reviewing the ministers for the cabinet of the Masoud Pezeshkian. They will select 3 to 5 final candidates for each ministry, who will then be submitted to the Parliament within the stipulated timeframe for their competence to be assessed and chosen during the vote of confidence session.



President-elect honored with flag from Imam Hussein's shrine

TEHRAN- On Ashura day, the flag of the dome of Imam Hussein's shrine was presented to President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian.

According to IRNA, Pezeshkian and Brigadier General Ismail Qaani, the commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, attended

a mourning ceremony in Tehran amidst a large gathering of people and lovers of Imam Hussein.

Following the mourning, the

flag of Imam Hussein's shrine was handed over to Masoud Pezeshkian, accompanied by wishes for success in his government.

How the Islamic Republic managed a smooth transition period in 50 days

Transition period like never before

By Sadegh Feredounabadi

TEHRAN – The past 50 days have been a remarkable period for Iran, marked by significant challenges and triumphant successes. The nation faced an unexpected and tragic event with the death of President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash on May 19. This profound shock to the country was met with resilience and effective management, culminating in a complex yet smoothly executed electoral process that maintained public satisfaction.

The tragedy of May 19

On May 19, Iran was plunged into mourning with the sudden and tragic loss of President Raisi in a helicopter crash. Raisi was a prominent and influential political figure who had played a crucial role in navigating Iran through numerous domestic and international challenges. His untimely death left a leadership vacuum and raised significant concerns about the stability and future direction of the country's governance and policies.

The electoral challenge

In the wake of President Raisi's death, Iran faced the daunting task of organizing a snap presidential election.

Under Articles 131 and 132 of the Iranian Constitution, a new president should be elected by public votes within a maximum of 50 days from the day when a president dies or is incapacitated.

Under normal circumstances, elections are intricate, requiring meticulous planning and coordination. The sudden need to fill the presidential seat added an urgency



to the situation, necessitating swift action to ensure the continuity of leadership.

The first round of the election required the rapid mobilization of resources and effective communication with the public. Authorities had to ensure that all logistical elements were in place, from polling stations to ballot papers, within a limited timeframe. Building and maintaining public trust was crucial, and the government needed to assure citizens of the transparency and fairness of the electoral process.

Out of the 4 candidates that made it to the final June 28 election, pro-reform Masoud Pezeshkian and principalist Saeed Jalili secured the highest votes and went to a runoff.

The second round of the election introduced additional complexities. This phase involved real-time problem-solving and adaptive strategies to respond to any unforeseen challenges. Election authorities worked diligently to ensure every vote was counted accurately and that the process remained free from any irregularities.

regularities.

Finally, the runoff election on July 5 revealed Pezeshkian's victory with 53.6% of votes.

Pezeshkian's victory marked the end of an intense electoral process and positioned him as Iran's 9th president. The voter turnout was reported to be 49.8%, which showed an increase in comparison to the first round and showcased the rise in nation's determination to participate in the electoral process.

Public satisfaction and international recognition

Despite the inherent challenges, Iran's handling of the election process was exemplary. The country managed to satisfy all involved parties, including political candidates and the general populace. The smooth execution of both rounds of elections, without major problems or issues, stands as a testament to the country's resilience and administrative efficiency.

The successful management of the elections garnered both domestic and international recognition.

Observers noted the calm and orderly manner in which the elections were conducted, reflecting Iran's commitment to upholding democratic principles even amidst adversity. Public satisfaction with the process further underscored the government's success in effectively addressing the crisis.

Moving forward: A new chapter for Iran

As Iran moves forward, the nation stands as a beacon of resilience and adaptability. Overcoming such significant challenges in a short period is a powerful reminder of the strength and unity of the Iranian people. The newly elected president, chosen through a transparent and efficient process, has the mandate to guide Iran towards a stable and prosperous future.

The next steps for Iran will involve consolidating the gains made during this challenging period and building on the foundations of public trust and efficient governance. The new administration will likely prioritize addressing both domestic and international concerns, continuing President Raisi's legacy of steering the country through complex issues with steadfast leadership.

The last 50 days have been critical for Iran, marked by tragedy, challenges, and ultimately, success. The country's ability to navigate these turbulent times and emerge stronger is a testament to its resilience and the effectiveness of its institutions. As Iran embarks on this new chapter, it does so with confidence, ready to overcome any obstacle and achieve its goals.

Iran condemns deadly shooting incident in Oman

TEHRAN – Iran has strongly denounced a tragic shooting attack near a mosque in Oman's Wadi al-Kabir area, Muscat Governorate, during a Shia Muslim ceremony commemorating Ashura, the annual remembrance of the martyrdom of Imam Hossein, the third Shia Imam and grandson of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

Nasser Kanaani, spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, issued a statement on Tuesday condemning the incident and expressing solidarity with the government and people of Oman. He emphasized Iran's stance against divisive actions aimed at destabilizing society.

"We condemn these divisive acts and stand in solidarity with Oman against such attempts to sow discord," Kanaani stated, extending prayers

for mercy and strength to the victims' families.

According to the Royal Oman Police, the shooting resulted in the deaths of five individuals, including one policeman, and the fatalities of three perpetrators. Additionally, 28 individuals of various nationalities sustained injuries during the tragic event.

Video from the scene shows people fleeing near the Imam Ali Mosque, its minaret visible, as gunfire rings out followed by a voice saying, "Oh God!"

"The authorities are actively gathering evidence and conducting investigations to uncover the circumstances surrounding the incident," the Royal Oman Police reported in a statement.

As investigations continue, the Royal Oman Police have not disclosed the identities of the assailants or victims, nor have they provided information regarding the motives behind the attack.

Four Pakistani nationals were among those killed, Pakistani authorities said.

"Pakistan strongly condemns the dastardly terrorist attack. We are heartened that the government of Oman has neutralized the attackers," Pakistan's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Pakistan's ambassador to Oman, Imran Ali, visited hospitals and met with the wounded, an embassy statement said, adding, "all Pakistanis residing in Oman are requested to cooperate with the authorities."

Azerbaijan reopens embassy in Tehran

From Page 1 ▶ The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry also mentioned that steps are currently being taken to organize consular services at the new embassy location, with updates on the restoration of these services to be provided soon.

According to the ministry, the resumption of the embassy's operations will contribute to the further development of Azerbaijan-Iran relations, which are based on mutual respect and good neighborliness. It will also aid in the implementation of agreements reached between the two countries.

The embassy is located in Tehran's Darrus neighborhood, at the intersection of Shahrizad Avenue, Yarmuhammadi Street, Saghi dead end and Firuzkuh Street, in house number 8.

Relations between Azerbaijan and Iran were strained in January 2023 after an attack on Azer-

baijan's embassy in Tehran. The incident led Baku to close the embassy and evacuate its staff, describing the event as a "terrorist act." An initial investigation by Iran suggested that the attack was driven by "personal and family-related issues."

In mid-March, Abbas Mousavi, Iran's former ambassador to Azerbaijan, noted that after attempts by both sides to clear the misconceptions, Tehran and Baku have underlined the need to "open a new chapter" in ties between the two neighbors.

Iran's late President Ebrahim Raisi had commented on the strength of Azerbaijan-Iran relations during a May 19 ceremony alongside Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. The event marked the inauguration of the Qiz Qalasi dam, a joint project on the Aras River at their common border.

"As the Leader of the Islamic Revolution [Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei] said, our relationship with the friendly, brotherly, and neighboring country of Azerbaijan goes beyond neighborliness. Our relationship is a strong kinship bond rooted in the beliefs of the two nations and connects our history and civilization," Raisi had stated.

Raisi emphasized that the relationship between the two nations is unbreakable, despite efforts by adversaries to impede progress in both Azerbaijan and Iran.

Tragically, President Raisi passed away in a helicopter crash following his meeting with Aliyev on May 19. Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian was also aboard the helicopter at the time of the crash.

China welcomes Iranian president-elect's positive outlook on bilateral relations

TEHRAN – China has expressed its appreciation for the recently declared positive outlook on Sino-Iranian relations by Iran's president-elect, Masoud Pezeshkian, and affirmed its readiness to collaborate with the new administration of the Islamic Republic.

The remarks were made by Lin Jian, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, during a press conference held on Monday. Lin was responding to inquiries regarding an article penned by Pezeshkian on Saturday, in which the president-elect emphasized Iran's anticipation of expanded cooperation with China. In this article which was published in the Tehran Times, Pezeshkian highlighted China's consistent support for Iran during difficult times, stating, "We deeply value this friendship."

Acknowledging Pezeshkian's statements, Lin affirmed Beijing's appreciation for his stance on the bilateral ties and expressed China's willingness to work with future Iranian officials to further the steady and long-term development of their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement.

He emphasized that China and Iran have supported each other through the complex regional and international landscape, enhancing strategic mutual trust and promoting cooperation across various fields. The two nations' healthy communication and coordination in regional and international affairs, according to Lin, have benefited both nations and contributed to regional and global peace and stability.

China, Iran's largest trading partner, shares a history of facing various levels of sanctions imposed by the United States. In March 2021, the two nations signed a landmark 25-year partnership agreement aimed at bolstering their economic and political alliance. This agreement, first announced during Chinese President Xi Jinping's 2016 visit to Tehran, outlines cooperation between China and Iran in political, cultural, security, defense, regional, and international domains over the specified period.

Pezeshkian referred to the agreement as "a significant milestone towards establishing a mutually beneficial comprehensive strategic partnership," and expressed optimism about working more closely with Beijing as both nations navigate towards a new global order.

Iran victorious over Kuwait at Asian Junior Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran beat Kuwait 25-23 in the 18th Asian Men Junior Handball Championship on Tuesday.

Iran had defeated China 30-26 in Group B on Monday.

The 18th Asian Men's Junior (U21) Handball Championship will run until July 27 in Amman, Jordan.

The championship serves as a qualifying event for the 25th IHF Men's Junior (U-21) Handball World Championship in Poland, slated for June and July 2025.

The top four teams in the ongoing competition will secure qualification spots for the World Championship.

Maziar Zare reaches agreement with Shams Azar

TEHRAN – Former Malavan Bandar Anzali coach Maziar Zare has reached an agreement with Shams Azar.

The Qazvin-based club that experienced its first presence in the Iran Professional League (IL) last season parted ways with Saeid Daghighi last week.

Now, Shams Azar has reached an agreement with the 39-year-old coach.

Zare has played for the Persepolis club and the Iran national football team.

Former Shams Azar coach Daghighi has been named the new head coach of Malavan Bandar Anzali.

Saeid Daghighi named Malavan coach

TEHRAN – Saeid Daghighi was named the new head coach of Iran's Malavan Bandar Anzali football club on Saturday.

The 38-year-old coach took charge of the team on a two-year contract.

Daghighi led Shams Azar last season and finished in eighth place with the Qazvin-based club in the 2023-24 Iran Professional League (IPL).

Daghighi replaced Mehdi Tartar in Malavan.

Tartar has been named the new head coach of Gol Gohar.

Joining Inter happiest moment of my life: Taremi

TEHRAN – Iran international Mehdi Taremi has given his first interview as an Inter player, explaining that this is the happiest moment of his life, and that he is ready to give his all to win trophies at San Siro.

The 31-year-old striker joined the Nerazzurri on a free transfer following the expiration of his contract with Portuguese giants Porto.

I am very happy to be here today, it is a dream come true for me. I feel good and I am very happy. I have to say that this is the happiest moment of my life, Taremi said in an interview on Inter's club website.

He becomes the first Iranian ever to represent Inter at the senior level.

Yes, I was aware of that and I am very proud. I did everything possible to be here today and finally, I succeeded, he said.

Serie A is one of the most prestigious leagues in the world. I will try to do my best as I have always done until now. I want to give my best here at Inter.

Taremi added that, as a striker, the primary objective is always to get amongst the goals, whether that be scoring them or setting them up.

As a forward, I need to score goals and pro-

vide assists. I need to win matches, which is the most important thing for the team.

I am at Inter, a great club. It's about winning as many matches as possible. We need to focus on this goal and give our best to achieve it. Winning is something that is achieved with the help of everyone: the staff, the players, and the whole club, step by step until the final goal.

Palestine sends eight athletes to Paris

TEHRAN – In a symbolic gesture, Palestine held a small ceremony to send off its official delegation to the Paris Olympics on Sunday, acknowledging the many Palestinian athletes who will not be present.

Jibril Rajoub, head of the Palestine Olympic Committee, stated that 400 athletes, coaches, and sporting officials have been killed in Gaza since October, Al Jazeera reported.

Through this participation, we want to present the suffering of the Palestinian people and the unprecedented killing taking place in Gaza, Rajoub said.

We want this participation to be a message from the Palestinians to the world that it is time for them to be free in their homeland, he added.

Eight athletes will represent Palestine this year, competing in athletics, swimming, archery, taekwondo, judo, and boxing.

Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Varsen Aghabekian Shahin expressed support, saying, "You are not just athletes, you are also symbols of Palestinian resistance."

Palestinian-American swimmer Valerie Tarazi, 24, is among the athletes representing Palestine at the Paris Olympics.

My heart aches for them, Tarazi said, referring to Palestinians in Gaza.

Being in Paris on behalf of Palestine is a very important thing and taking part in a global swimming competition at a time when there are no places to train is surreal, she added.

Palestinian athletes have participated in the Olympics since 1996, when long-distance runner Majed Abu Marahil competed in Atlanta.

Marahil died in Gaza in June after being unable to receive treatment for kidney failure at the besieged enclave's devastated hospitals, officials said.

Iranian women finish third in futsal tournament in China

TEHRAN – Iran finished in the third place in the 2024 CFA (Chinese Football Association) International Women Futsal Tournament.

The Iranian women had lost to Uzbekistan 7-5 in their first match and were held to a 2-2 draw by Vietnam.

Uzbekistan won the tournament and Vietnam came second.

The tournament was held in Lanzhou, China, from July 12 to 15.

The 2024 CFA International Women's Futsal Tournament was a round-robin competition.

Uzbekistan prepare to host the FIFA Futsal World Cup. Three nations will represent Asia at the first FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup, which will take place in the Philippines in 2025.

Ramin Rezaeian joins Esteghlal

TEHRAN – Former Persepolis right back Ramin Rezaeian joined the Esteghlal football team on Sunday.

Rezaeian, 34, has joined Esteghlal as a free-agent player.

He started his playing career in Saba Battery in 2009 and has also played in Esteghlal's arch-rival Persepolis in two stints.

Rezaeian scored a goal for the Iran national football team against Wales in the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Capacity of Iran's renewable power plants touches 1,200 MW



From page 1 ▶ Iranian Energy Ministry has also put it on the agenda to add 10,000 MW to the capacity of the country's renewable power plants by the end of the current government's administration (August 2025).

Considering the fact that the country's renewable power generation capacity stood at about 800 MW when the current government took office in August 2021, the mentioned increase in renewable energy capacity would mean a 13-fold rise.

Back in January 2022, the Energy Ministry and some of the country's private contractors signed memorandums of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the construction of

new renewable power plants across the country.

The electricity generated by renewable sources increased by 28 percent in the third Iranian calendar month of Khordad (ended on June 20) compared to the same month last year.

Renewable sources generated more than 230 million kilowatt hours of electricity, an increase of 21 percent in comparison with a month earlier.

Wind power plants held the lion's share of the rise in the production of electricity by renewable sources.

Based on the Energy Ministry data, renewables, currently, account for nearly seven percent of the country's total electricity generation capacity.

Of the country's total renewable capacity, 44 percent is the share of solar power plants while the share of wind farms stands at 40 percent and small-scaled hydropower plants generate 13 percent of the total renewable capacity.

Iranian-made catalysts ready to enter neighboring countries' markets

TEHRAN- After successfully producing a great part of oil industry catalysts at home, the country now enjoys the potential to export the catalysts to meet the neighboring countries' needs, Shana reported.

The managing director of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC), Jalil Salari, made the remarks adding "Thirty years ago, we were in dire need of catalysts, and while under sanctions we used to refer to Indian companies to get help, but we moved forward step by step and managed to acquire the related know-how and finally used the domestically produced product successfully for the first time in isomerization unit of Arak Oil Refining Company."

Speaking at "Technology Transfer and Local Production of Refining, Petrochemical and Gas Catalysts Conference" here today, he said that by acquiring the technical knowledge of producing catalysts, we started gasoline production, adding that the country now can export the products to oth-

er countries as well as use them overseas in oil refineries including El Palito cracking refinery in Venezuela.

The deputy minister of petroleum for refining said that the country was currently reliant on domestically made catalysts noting that the country's need for catalysts is estimated at 26 thousand tons even though the needs are on the rise mainly due to launching upgrading fuel oil qualification units at oil refineries, a process that can lead to further cooperation between Iranian knowledge-based companies and the foreign partners.

NIORDC managing director said: We are hoping to pave the way for producing other catalysts at home through a competitive process, and at the same time to export domestically produced catalysts, specifically to the neighboring countries.

A memorandum of understanding is on the verge of finalization that can pave the way for producing groups 5 and 6 of catalysts at home, Salari noted.

Fuel consumption expected to fall 10% by late Mar. 2025

TEHRAN - Head of National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) Jalil Salari said following the implementation of the Oil Ministry's recent consumption management programs, fuel consumption in the country is expected to be reduced by 10 percent by the end of the current Iranian year (late March 2025), Shana reported.

"Considering the infrastructure created in the consumption management sector, by the end of this year, we will see a decrease of 10 million liters of fuel consumption in the country," Salari said.

According to the official, the country's fuel consumption which stood at 32 billion liters in the Iranian calendar year 1400 (March 2021-March 2022) has surged to 46 billion liters in the current year, and serious measures should be taken to stop the upward trend.

Stating that the Oil Ministry is the government's top entity in terms of supporting knowledge-based companies, he said: "In the consumption management department, a mapping system has been established for the urban and suburban transportations; launching this system will reduce the daily fuel consumption by five to seven million liters."

Over the past few years, the Islamic Republic has managed to not only become self-sufficient in gasoline production but also become a net exporter of the strategic fuel, however, the significant increase in domestic gasoline consumption in the past

two years has once again raised concerns about the need for imports.

Iran became a net gasoline exporter in February 2019, after the inauguration of the third phase of the Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGS) project which added 120,000 barrels to the country's daily gasoline production.

As previously announced by Salari, the average daily gasoline consumption in Iran rose 11 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1402 (ended on March 19).

The official said that the country's average daily gasoline production has reached 115 million liters.

He added: "Unfortunately, gasoline consumption is rising exponentially in the country, as we had a 20 percent increase in gasoline consumption in 1401, while last year we had an 11 percent rise, and without a doubt, special attention should be paid to fuel consumption management."

There are now over 30 million cars in the country, and the number is rising, and on the other hand, the amount of fuel consumption in the country is far from world standards, and cars are high-consuming, which should be taken into consideration, the official added.

The NIORDC managing director further explained that the annual entry of one million cars into the country's transportation fleet is equivalent to one billion liters of gasoline consumption, and this requires the construction of a refinery with a daily refining capacity of 150,000 to 200,000 barrels, which takes at least four to five years.

Iran's quarterly export of agricultural products up 37% yr/yr

TEHRAN - Iran exported about \$1.027 billion of agricultural products in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 21), registering an increase of 37 percent year on year.

According to Mohammad Sadeq Ghanadzadeh, the deputy head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the exports of the mentioned products also increased 19 percent in terms of weight, IRIB reported.

Pistachios, tomatoes, watermelons, apples and potatoes were the top exported products in the mentioned period.

The official noted that Iran's joining the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and consequently the increase in exports to the members of the mentioned union has been the main driver of the boost in Iran's exports.

Based on the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the Islamic Republic exported 1,562,000 tons of agricultural products worth \$684 million in



the first two months of the current Iranian year (March 20-May 20), an increase of 28 percent in value year on year.

The exports of the mentioned products also rose by 24 percent in terms of weight in the said two months.

Iran exported some 1,260,000 tons of agricultural products worth \$536 million in the same period last year.

In terms of value, the main agricultural items exported in the mentioned period were apples worth \$96.3 million, in-shell pis-

tachios worth \$74.1 million, watermelons worth \$73.8 million, field tomatoes worth \$50.3 million, and greenhouse tomatoes worth \$44.7 million, the report added.

The statistics show that agricultural items accounted for about 6.66 percent of the total weight and 8.53 percent of the total value of Iran's exports in the same period this year.

The value of Iran's exports of agricultural and foodstuff products increased by 22.5 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the spokes-

man of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade said.

According to Ruhollah Latifi, Iranian producers managed to export about \$6.3 billion worth of the mentioned products in the said year, IRNA reported.

As reported, agro-food products accounted for 12.8 percent of the country's total non-oil exports in the previous year.

Iraq was the top destination for Iran's agro-food products in the mentioned year importing \$1.986 billion worth of the said items. The Arab neighbor accounted for 31.5 percent of the total exports of food and agricultural products from Iran.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood in second place, importing \$751 million of the mentioned products, followed by Russia with \$521.5 million.

The value of Iran's total foreign trade including oil and technical engineering services reached \$153.178 billion in the last Iranian calendar year.

Caviar export up 41% in a quarter on year

TEHRAN- As announced by the director general of the Iranian Ministry of Agriculture's Office of Quality Improvement, Processing, and Aquatic Market, the value of Iran's caviar export increased by over 41 percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Abbas Mokhtari said that the country exported 1,353 kilograms of caviar valued at \$721,000 in the first quarter of this year, which indicates also 82 percent rise in terms of weight year on year.

According to the official, the value of Iran's fishery export increased by over 30 percent during the first quarter of this Iranian calendar year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Mokhtari said that the country exported 73,369 tons of fishery valued at \$121.4 million in the first quarter of this year, while the figure was 52,282 tons worth \$93.1 million in the same time span of the past year.

The official also announced that the quarterly fishery export indicates over 40 percent rise in terms of weight year on year.

As previously announced by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran's fishery exports in the last Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) increased by three percent and exceeded \$310 million.

The IRICA said the weight of exported fishery products in the last Iranian fiscal year was 149,000 metric tons, which shows a 12 percent increase compared to the previous year.

During the last Iranian fiscal year, shrimp exports also reached \$98.5 million, accounting for 32 percent of the total export value among Iran's fishery products.

Russia, the United Arab Emirates, and China were the main destinations for Iran's exported shrimp during the mentioned period, showing a decrease of 26 percent in terms of value compared to the previous year.

According to the report, fisheries exports account for less than 70 percent of Iran's total exports, with the UAE, China, Russia, and Iraq being the largest markets for Iran's fishery products.

Iran imported 24,000 metric tons of fishery products worth \$72 million last year, indicating an increase of 121 percent in terms of weight and an increase of 113 percent in terms of value.

318 idle pharmaceutical, food production units revived in a year

TEHRAN - The director general of the Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's Office of Food and Drug Industries has said the ministry has revived 318 idle production units active in the pharmaceutical and food sectors in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

"We haven't just stop at reviving, but we monitored and evaluated these units through the Ministry's provincial organizations to solve possible challenges in their production," Nazanin Darabzadeh told IRIB.

According to Darabzadeh, there are currently

The growth and development of Iran's aquaculture industry has reached the point where the country has become a model for the countries of the region and the world.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) believes that Iran plays a responsible and central role in the fishing and aquaculture industry in the region, and for this reason, it can be considered a model for the countries of the region.

Now the world markets have become the target of the export of the country's fishery products, so that, the value of fishery exports also increased by 67 percent in the Iranian calendar year 1400 compared to the preceding year.

In addition to the executive role of the IFO, the role of research and knowledge-based activities in this field is very important, and the entry of young specialists and knowledge-based experts in various sectors of the fishery industry has made the sanctions ineffective.

In mid-April, the Head of Shrimp and Marine Aquatic Affairs of Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) Ghobad Mokarami said the country's fishery production is expected to reach 206,000 tons in the next two years.

"If we double the number of breeding pools in the next two years, we will reach more than 206,000 tons of fishery production, which is a significant number," Mokarami said.

In early April, a cooperation agreement was signed between 12 companies and groups of stakeholders in the field of fish farming to create a value chain for caged fish farming in the Caspian Sea region in northern Iran.

a total number of 12 influential companies and groups with a long history in various sectors of the industry, including the production of hatched eggs, baby fish nursery as the primary production input, health, nutritional and executive management of fish farms in cages, fish farms on land, export and trading of products, fishing unions and feed production factories, have agreed to create a value chain with a production capacity of 1,500 tons of fish by using all the country's hardware and software technologies to accelerate the development of the cage fish farming industry in the Northern waters of Iran.

The most important projects identified for the creation of this chain value include the completion of the technological equipment of

the caged fish farm, including imaging, farm management software, etc., completion of the equipment and the optimization of the intermediate farms, including the nano-bubble, ozone, and filtration systems, and creation of the production-line of value-added products from fish waste to supply the raw materials of aquatic feed, concentrate production project to increase the safety of farmed fish by using medicinal plants to reduce the consumption of antibiotics, completing and equipping the processing unit including IQF machine, automatic processing, etc.

Design and construction of support float for caged fish breeding farm, completion of surveillance system equipment for breeding and nursery unit, implementation of the project for selection and production of Iranian triploid eggs, creation of a specialized feed production line for fishmeal, and supply of specialized vehicle for transporting fish are other projects to be implemented by the companies.

In a relevant development in March, a nanobubble generating machine was produced by one of the knowledge-based companies in Iran which improves productivity in fish farming ponds.

"Our knowledge based has produced nanobubble generators. These generators can dissolve oxygen and various other gases such as ozone in a nano form for disinfection and purifying wastewater," said Saeed Mokheri, one of the researchers of the Iranian knowledge-based company.

"This product is used in both aquaculture and agriculture. In aquaculture, the machine will increase the population of cool-water fish species by 2-3 times, while it will reduce electricity consumption by 70 percent," he added.

Mokheri mentioned removing the unpleasant smell of fish and improving the quality of farmed fish by making ponds healthier as another advantage of the machine, adding, "This generator will improve the conversion rate of food to protein, control the growth of bacteria and prevent diseases."

"In the aquaculture industry, the two problems of supplying oxygen to the water and the amount of nitrogen caused by the remaining food and fish waste emerge, which cause water pollution. This system is up to 85% efficient compared to the previous systems, whose efficiency was up to 18 percent."

over 8,900 food and medicine production units across the country which provide employment for more than 400,000 people.

The official noted that the production of the food sector increased by 10 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year, while in the medicine and pharmaceutical sector the production growth was six percent compared to a year earlier.

She also mentioned a 10 percent growth in the export of food products and added: "Exports in this area increased from 1.9 billion dollars in [the Iranian calendar year] 1401 (March

2021-March 2022) to 2.1 billion dollars in the previous year.

"Medicine exports increased from 100 million dollars in 1401 to 130 million dollars in 1402, which shows a 30 percent growth," she said.

Darabzadeh further announced a 12 percent decrease in the import of food products last year and added: "Imports in this area decreased from 3.8 billion dollars in 1401 to 3.4 billion dollars in 1402."

Israel's abhorrent use of Palestinians as human shields in the spotlight

From page 1 ▶ Such a practice is not only considered a grave violation of international humanitarian law and a war crime but also forbidden by Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions.

Statements by Palestinians and videos prove that Israel has used civilians as human shields.

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor has documented several consistent testimonies regarding the Israeli army's deliberate use of Palestinian civilians as human shields. The organization said in March that the Israeli army has forced Palestinians into dangerous situations to secure and protect its forces and operations inside the Shifa Medical Complex.

Al-Shifa Hospital is among the health centers that have been raided by Israel several times. The regime's troops have committed massacres in the hospital.

Israeli troops first raided the hospital in November. It is the largest medical facility in the Gaza Strip.

Middle East Monitor cited Nadeen Abu Aloun, a 23-year-old graduate who studied English, as saying that Israeli troops used her as a human shield in three occasions.

Nadeen said the first time she was used as a human shield was on March 20 during the invasion of Al-Shifa Hospital.



Nadeen Abu Aloun

"I was sitting with my siblings and cousins when the occupation army invaded. They savagely stormed our home for no reason, we are ordinary people. They asked me to come with them as I was the only one who spoke English," she told the UK-based news outlet.

She added, "While evacuating us, they forced me to walk in front of the soldiers to secure them; they looked terrified."

Prominent rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have also found evidence that Israel has used Palestinians as human shields.

Al Jazeera has also obtained pieces of footage which show Israeli troops forcing Palestinian detainees to search destroyed

buildings and tunnels or serve as cover for them.

Israel has perpetrated such heinous crimes in the occupied West Bank too.

In June, a video showed Israeli forces in the West Bank had tied a wounded Palestinian man to the hood of a military vehicle during a raid on the city of Jenin, appearing to use him as a human shield.

The United Nations' special rapporteur to the occupied Palestinian territory lashed out at Israel after its forces strapped Mujahed Azmi, a Palestinian resident of Jenin, to a military jeep.

Francesca Albanese called the move "a human shielding in action". She added, "It is flabbergasting how a state born 76 years ago has managed to turn international

law literally on its head. This risks being the end of multilateralism, which for some influential member states no longer serves any relevant purpose."

Nonetheless, such Israeli atrocities over the past nine months are just the tip of the iceberg.

The regime has perpetrated despicable and barbarous crimes against Palestinians since its establishment in 1948.

But the resilience of Palestinians since October 7, has brought the regime's extreme brutalities to the fore.

Israel stands accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court.

The regime is also accused of genocide by the International Court of Justice.

Despite committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, Israel has not been held accountable so far.

This is because some Western countries, in particular the United States, continue to support Israel despite issuing statements against its genocidal war in Gaza.

These countries not only feed Israel's war machine but also embolden the regime to blatantly violate international law as they have failed to take any action in the face of its barbarism in Gaza.

WORLD HEADLINES

Israel kills dozens of Palestinians in "safe zone"

Israeli air strikes have killed more than 60 Palestinians in southern and central Gaza, including one that hit an Israeli-declared "safe zone" crowded with thousands of displaced people.

The day's deadliest strike came on Tuesday afternoon, hitting near a fuel station outside the southern city of Khan Younis in Muwasi, a coastal region that is part of the humanitarian "safe zone" where the Israeli military has told Palestinians to take refuge to escape offensives elsewhere, the Guardian reported.

It occurred in the same area where Gaza health officials said more than 90 Palestinians, including children, were killed by a strike on Saturday that Israel claimed was targeting Hamas's top military commander, Mohammed Deif.

"Commander Mohammed Deif is well and directly overseeing" the operations of the Hamas military wing, Hamas said on Sunday.

Deif is the most popular Hamas official among Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

"Far-right groups that block aid to Gaza receive donations from US and Israel"

The United States and Israel have allowed tax-deductible donations to far-right groups that have blocked humanitarian aid from being delivered to the Gaza Strip.

Three groups that have prevented humanitarian aid from reaching Gaza — including one accused of looting or destroying supplies — have raised more than \$200,000 from donors in the U.S. and Israel, The Associated Press and the Israeli investigative site Shomrim have found in an examination of crowdfunding websites and other public records.

Incentivizing these donations by making them tax-deductible runs counter to America's and Israel's stated commitments to allow unlimited food, water and medicine into Gaza, say groups working to get more aid into the territory. Donations have continued even after the U.S. imposed sanctions against one of these groups.

The three groups examined by AP and Shomrim have slowed the delivery of aid by blocking trucks on their way to Gaza, either by snarling traffic or simply standing in front of the main Kerem Shalom crossing into Gaza.

UN: Everywhere is a potential killing zone in Gaza

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed concern Monday over the ongoing situation in the Gaza Strip, saying "nowhere is safe" in the besieged enclave.

"The extreme level of fighting and devastation in Gaza is incomprehensible and inexcusable...Everywhere is a potential killing zone," Guterres said on X.

It is high time for the parties to the conflict to show the political courage and political will to finally reach a deal, he added, Anadolu reported.

Separately, Guterres spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the UN is calling on all parties to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and to take constant care to "spare civilians and civilian objects."

"I can further tell you that we and our humanitarian partners continue to assist families who are being displaced from northern Gaza to areas in the south," he told reporters.

Dujarric highlighted that the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has said that with each new evacuation directive, families in Gaza are being forced

to make impossible choices: Stay amid active hostilities or flee to areas with little space or services.

"There is no safe place in Gaza. Not shelters, not hospitals, and not the so-called humanitarian zones," he stressed.

Netanyahu orders army to turn off recording of meetings after Oct. 7

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ordered a halt to the recording of security consultations and cabinet discussions held in the underground operations center of military headquarters, Haaretz reported on Monday.

The outlet reports that the Israeli army complied with the orders and stopped using automatic recording equipment in the days following October 7.

Netanyahu reportedly preferred holding the meetings in his own office in Tel Aviv's headquarters to ensure he was not reliant on military recordings.

"In accordance with the provisions of the regulations for the work of the government, all government meetings and ministerial committees have recordings and transcriptions made by the Prime Minister's Office stenographers only," the prime minister's office told Haaretz.

Smotrich demands West Bank annexation if ICJ declares settlements illegal

Israeli hard-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to annex the West Bank should the International Court of Justice (ICJ) declare Israeli settlements illegal.

"I hereby call on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: If the International Court of Justice in The Hague does decide that the settlement enterprise is illegal — respond to them with a historic decision of applying sovereignty to the territories of the homeland," Smotrich said.

The ICJ is set to deliver an advisory, non-binding opinion on the legal consequences of Israel's "occupation of Palestinian territories" on July 19. While Israel has ignored such opinions in the past, the ICJ ruling could add political pressure over the nine-month-old war of genocide against Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

Lapid: Netanyahu is a coward

Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid has dismissed allegations of incitement against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, saying every soldier fighting in Gaza is more threatened than him.

Lapid expressed his views in a post on the social media platform X, referring to a cabinet meeting held on Sunday, Anadolu reported.

"Two hours of discussion in the government about the incitement against him. There is no two-hour discussion about the 101 victims of Kibbutz Bari. There is no two-hour discussion on the opening of the school year in the north on Sept. 1," Lapid said with disbelief.

"Just the incitement against him is worth two hours of discussion? Is that the only thing that matters?" he questioned.

Criticizing the Israeli premier, Lapid said, "Netanyahu is not a victim, he is a crybaby and a coward. Every soldier in Gaza is more threatened than he is."

The opposition leader accused Netanyahu of setting up the "poison machine" and "incitement machine" that are slowly taking over all the media in Israel, "complaining that they are inciting against him."

Gaza resistance forces destroy Israeli tanks Occupation troops reportedly frustrated with ongoing war

From page 1 ▶ But the construction and buildup of IOF troops and tanks in the corridor have made the route, which split the Gaza Strip in half, a prime target for the resistance fighters to attack Israeli forces over the past months.

The latest operations add to others carried out by the resistance movement in Gaza against Israeli forces as part of ongoing efforts to prevent the besieged territory from occupation.

In southern Gaza, clashes intensified inside the Yabna camp in Rafah, with fierce battles reaching as far as Khan Younis, according to regional reporters on the ground.

Palestinian news outlets reported rocket barrages from Gaza towards settlements near the enclave, while Israeli media mentioned sirens sounding at Kerem Abu Salem.

Hebrew media also reported a helicopter landing at the Ein Karem hospital with injured Israeli soldiers and an infiltration into the city of Eilat from the sea.

As the IOF faces escalating problems, nearly ten months after Tel Aviv waged a war that has failed to achieve any of its declared objectives, Israeli media noted that many of-

ficers and soldiers in unit 8200, the largest IOF unit, are speaking about "an atmosphere of paralysis with doubts about officials and mutual accusations".

Israeli media also stated that there is "frustration in the army as a result of [international] investigations over the war's failures".

According to experts in matters related to the Palestinian resistance movement, this frustration indicates Israeli fears of officially declaring the start of the third phase of the war.

Analysts say that frustration within the IOF also reflects doubts about the occupation regime's confidence in achieving the objectives, after failing to achieve the goals set in the first and second stages.

Politicians in Tel Aviv are believed to be trying to buy time before declaring the third stage after failing to weaken the resistance fighters, especially in northern Gaza, or rescue the captives.

This has been evident from the number of times the IOF has invaded northern Gaza, only to retreat later under fire during its 9-month war on the Strip.

On Monday, the al-Quds Brigades published footage of tunnels that are being used to target Israeli soldiers and military vehicles in what will be seen as another setback for Tel Aviv.

Gaza's tunnels are the most important tool being used by the resistance movement for combat, communication and supply lines. They remain intact, according to the armed factions in the enclave.

Alongside tunnels, another significant weapon used by the resistance forces has been mortar shells to strike the gathering of occupation troops.

Almost daily footage published by the Palestinian resistance movement indicates these factions still possess weaponry, tunnel systems, operational capacity, and control.

According to experts, this confirms that the resistance has managed to surpass the first and second stages, demonstrating adaptability and flexibility.

In essence, the Palestinian resistance retains the capability to continue fighting the ground invasion and adapt to its evolving dynamics.

that none of Israel's war goals have been achieved. This has put the Zionist military and political leaders in a dangerous strategic dilemma.

"This business of destroying Hamas, making Hamas disappear — it's simply throwing sand in the eyes of the public," said Israel Defense Forces spokesman Daniel Hagari on Channel 13. "Hamas is an idea, Hamas is a party. It's rooted in the hearts of the people — whoever thinks we can eliminate Hamas is wrong."

The commander of the 12th Brigade of the 252nd Sinai Division is Colonel Liron Betiteo. His unit is tasked with protecting the border with Egypt and was deployed in Rafah due to the lack of combat readiness as a result of exhaustion and losses among troops. Betiteo's comments were unprecedented: he insisted that dismantling the military capabilities of Hamas in the city of Rafah will take at least another two years. He added that the task of eliminating Hamas is not easy, and it requires time and great military pressure because the movement is waging a guerrilla war in Rafah through independent groups which makes dealing with it more difficult. The senior Israeli officer also said that anyone who believes that the air raid sirens will stop within the next year is throwing ash in the eyes of the Israeli people.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

The Zionist entity is in a strategic impasse due to its failure to achieve its declared goals

By Dr Amira Abo el-Fetouh
Middle East Monitor

Nine months have passed since the start of the relentless Israeli war against the Palestinians in Gaza, and the killing of defenseless Palestinian civilians and the destruction of their homes continues. The world watches on, without any serious effort to stop it, not even the UN Security Council, let alone the US or Europe, even though a single resolution under Article 7 of the UN Charter is enough to oblige the Zionist entity to stop the war and impose sanctions on it. This has not happened. It is as if the world is enjoying this brutal war and does not want it to end.

How could it end when the occupation state of Israel is basically defeated? Its leaders wrote the end of the story at the beginning of the war: the defeat and complete elimination of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. This is what their sick imaginations drew up for them, and they thought they could implement it on the ground, but this has not happened and will not happen.

It is unable to achieve them, though, and the government has no plan to end the war other than to start another war. Unfortunately, this is encouraged by the West and even some Arab countries that have normalized relations with the occupation state and also want to eliminate Hamas and so are funding the war under the table.

US Vice President Kamala Harris stressed in one interview: "President Biden and I have been clear:

Israel has a right to defend itself. And we will remain steadfast in that conviction." She added, "Too many innocent Palestinians have been killed." She mentioned the dead as if they were not killed by US-supplied bombs and weapons.

It is unfortunate to hear such statements after it has been proven conclusively that the goal of the Zionist war goes against all internationally-recognized human, legal, political and military laws and values, and cannot be included under the definition of legitimate self-defense.

Thus, the fate of Gaza remains dependent on a number of factors and what the Zionist entity and its allies in the West and in the region are planning to achieve and impose as a new reality that would affect the future and shape of the Palestinian state that they want, and even the future of the entire region.

Netanyahu has issued many threats since the start of his invasion of the Gaza Strip, when he claimed that he would wipe out Hamas militarily and politically, capture its leaders, and return the hostages within less than 48 hours. Now, nine months later, he is reduced to boasting that the Rafah battle will be a critical phase in the path to complete victory and an end to the rule of Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

However, statements by military leaders and strategic analysts from within Israel itself confirm that the reality on the ground is terrible, and very different to Netanyahu's racist statements, and

Belarus is a hidden gem



From Page 1 ▶ It made me feel comfortable after a troubled journey from Tehran to Moscow and then Minsk after strong winds in Moscow had kept flights grounded at the airport and resulting delays.

As the car was nearing the city the young man said we are entering Independence Avenue that houses landmark buildings, such as the diamond-shaped National Library, Parliament and Independence Palace, etc.

The avenue was greatly wide open with special places for sidewalk and cycling on both sides of the street. It was the first time that I saw such a wide boulevard in my foreign trips. First I thought it may be the main street that is so wide but later I found out that all streets in the city of the two million people are wide.

I liked to walk for hours in the streets that look like a park but there was no time. The beauty of the nature is embedded into the city.

Though the capital is not disconnected to the forests, there are many parks in Minsk as well. It is worth noticing that Minsk rose from the ashes after almost total destruction in the course of World War Two.

Clean transport system

Overhead electric buses were picking up passengers in the capital that spans 40,800 square kilometers.

For me it was interesting and commendable to notice that such a sparsely populated city with blue sky is using clean public transportation systems like electric buses and underground metro.

I searched and noticed that the construction of metro had started in November 1977 in Minsk and its first line became operational in June 1984. It has been a great step at its time, exactly 40 years ago.

Wide boulevards

When we as a team of journalists from the countries member to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) visited Vitebsk in northern Belarus in future days I realized that the streets there are also wide and there is overhead electric buses and underground metro network.

Cities in the Republic of Belarus are like garden houses. Multistory housing blocks are widely spread. Forests, ponds and lakes catch the eyes of every visitor even inside cities.

Influenced by these things I wished that one day I could return to the country as a tourist and see different parts of the country.

Sailing Center

The Sailing Center in the Minsk district shines like a star. It is the gem of the city. Taking a yacht trip in the lake, also called Sailing Center Minsk, will leave an impressive memory in the minds of visitors. The lake, surrounded by forest from almost all corners, hosts yacht racing between countries.

Excavations begin at Digvar Tepe after ancient structure found

TEHRAN - Excavations have begun at Digvar Tepe in Ardabil province's Gerbi following the discovery of an ancient brick structure during illegal digging, a local official announced.

"The discovery of a brick structure during illegal digging at Digvar Tepe necessitated authorized archaeological studies," the head of the Archaeology Department of the Ardabil province told IRNA on Sunday. "Which have now commenced with a permit from the research institute of cultural heritage and tourism."

Initially, the excavation will focus on determining the boundaries and area of the historical hill, followed by the excavation of the brick structure, according to Ruhollah Mohammadi.

The restoration and rehabilitation of the discov-

ered structure, likely a public utility building, the official brought to light, will occur simultaneously with the archaeological work.

He further elaborated that Digvar Tepe was registered on the National Heritage List in 2007.

Initial studies, Mohammadi underscored, indicate that the archaeological site, located near the Iran-Azerbaijan border, includes various settlement sections, a historical structure, and graves dating from the first millennium BC to the Safavid era.

Gerbi Mughan, located in northern Ardabil province, was historically a major Parthian settlement, with Parthian artifacts discovered in the villages of Ramazanlu, Daryaman, and Parmeyir.

Also, rains, typical of the continental Europe, in the summertime adds to the beauty of the natural landscape and the cities as well.

A country of lakes

Before visiting the country, I had searched through internet and read that there are more than 10,000 lakes in Belarus, covering a total area of 1600 square kilometers. On the road from Minsk to Vitebsk, the heart of the country's culture, I clearly noticed that Belarus is truly the land of picturesque lakes. According to FAO, there are also about 1,550 small and shallow natural ponds in the country.

Some of my friends who had gone to the three Slavic sisters of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia to study engineering and medicine talked to me about the natural beauties of these countries, including Belarus.

Arrival in the cultural city of Vitebsk one gets a kind of different sense. The city is decorated with Uspensky Cathedral and Holy Resurrection Church among many of other top attractions. The city is highly lively.

The visit to the city corresponded with the holding of the 33rd Slavonic Bazaar Festival, which is intended to foster amity between Belarus and other nations and promote peace and understanding through cultural activities.

Some people, young and old, were doing art activities in Frunze Street, where the international arts festival was to be officially opened at nighttime in the Summer Amphitheater, close to the Holy Resurrection Church. Some were playing music. A very young girl was doing gymnastics to please the visitors, who had poured in the city from different parts of the country to see the festival. The large number of people were frequenting Frunze Avenue and the surrounding streets.

Some had opened small exhibitions to sell art works and hand-made artifacts.

Here in Vitebsk, art, culture, and God gifted natural beauties are embedded together, creating a feeling of calm and empathy between Belarusians and foreign guests and visitors.

In general, the scenic landscape - forests, farms, lakes, swamps, ponds and marshes - coupled with interval rains and park-like wide streets make trip to Belarus memorable.

In addition to being unrivalled in producing huge mining vehicles and an industrial country in certain other industries including tractor manufacturing, Belarus is a hidden gem in terms of natural beauty.

The country's natural beauties and technological achievements made after the Second World War must be cherished and protected with a sincere and deep wish and diligent efforts for an immediate peace in neighboring Ukraine in the south.

Flames of faith: the enduring Muharram ritual of Mashal Gardani

TEHRAN - Mashal Gardani, or the "rolling of the torch," is an annual religious event deeply embedded in the cultural and spiritual fabric of parts of Iran and Iraq. This profound ritual is one of the many shared heritages between the two nations, reflecting the enduring legacy of their historical and religious ties.

Every year, on the night of Tasoua, the ninth day of the Islamic lunar calendar's first month, Muharram, millions of men dressed in black take to the streets and mosques in a powerful display of mourning for the death of Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Imam Hussain (AS). The event reaches its zenith on the eve of Ashura, a day of immense significance for Shia Muslims worldwide.

The ritual, in which participants carry large torches, or Mashaal through the streets and sacred sites has been passed down through generations, not only honors the memory of Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions but also helps reaffirm values of faith, sacrifice, and unity among Shia Muslims.

Symbolically, the torches carried during Mashal Gardani represent the flames that engulfed the tents of Imam Hussain (AS) and his followers. The loud beating of drums serves as a haunting reminder of the sounds made during the attack by Yazid's and Ibn Ziyad's forces, aimed at drowning out the cries of the women and children.



While carrying the torch, or Mashal, the men sing the song of mourning, called Nohe (Photo credit: Mohammad Ali Najib/Al Jazeera)

These torches are often made from long, slender wooden poles with 20 to 40 smaller torches attached, each ignited using traditional methods with thick, woolen cloths soaked in black oil or diesel. Strong and tall individuals from the mourning groups bear the heavy torches on their shoulders, accompanied by others who help ensure the torch does not fall or cause harm.

The origins of Mashal Gardani are somewhat shrouded in mystery, with some tracing its roots back over 500 years. The practice was banned during certain periods, such as the reign of Reza Shah who was the first monarch of Pahlavi dynasty, making its precise histor-

ical timeline difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, its significance has endured, particularly in southern and central Iran, and in major cities of Iraq, such as Najaf, Kazemayn, and Karbala.

In Iran, Mashal Gardani is celebrated in various regions, including Qom, Shahr-e Rey, Ardakan as well as Tehran's Dowlatabad neighborhood, which is home to many Iraqi expatriates.

Each locality has its unique variations of the ritual. For example, in regions like Ardakan, Yazd, the torch-carrying ceremony marks the beginning of Muharram, inviting people to commence their mourning rituals. Elsewhere, such as in the villages of Khour and

Mashal Gardani, is performed on the evening of Tasoua and the night of Ashura, with participants letting the torches burn out naturally as a sign of respect.

In the village of Barakuh, the ceremony involves creating iron belts shaped into cylinders, filled with cottonseed oil or kerosene-soaked wood, which are then ignited. This tradition, registered as intangible cultural heritage in Iran, continues to be highly respected, with some villagers even dedicating their agricultural lands to the maintenance of the Mashaals.

In Iraq's Najaf, small wooden or metal fire holders, known as Mashaal, are crafted and lit during the mourning processions, which traverse public squares and the precincts of holy sites. These Mashaals vary in size and shape, requiring significant physical strength to carry.

Despite its rich history and cultural significance, Mashal Gardani remains a largely regional observance. However, there are ongoing efforts to have this ritual recognized globally. Given its status as a shared intangible heritage of Iran and Iraq, there is a strong potential for Mashal Gardani to be registered as a UNESCO intangible heritage, highlighting the deep cultural and spiritual bonds between these neighboring countries.

Special Exhibition at National Museum celebrates Muharram symbols

TEHRAN- The National Museum of Iran has unveiled the exhibition, "Alam and Tuq: Symbols and Allegory of Muharram," in honor of the Imam Hussain (AS), the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which was martyred in the tenth day of the lunar month in 680 CE.

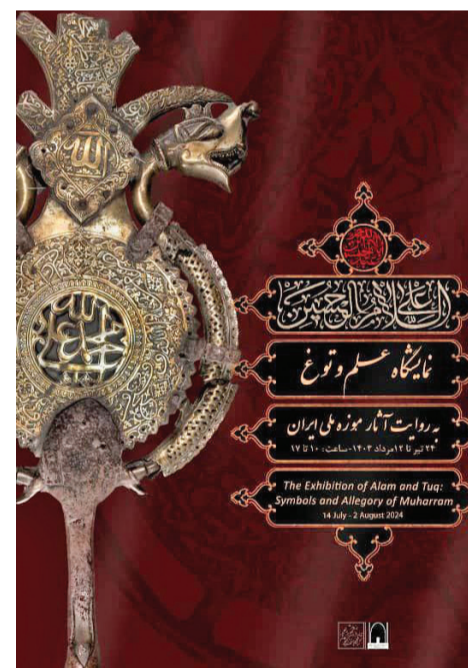
The event, according to organizers, offers a profound glimpse into two of the time-honored religious elements being used by Shia Muslims in rituals integral to Muharram commemorations.

The exhibition was inaugurated on Sunday by Jabrael Nokandeh, the general director of the museum, who emphasized the importance of preserving and showcasing these historical artifacts. "This exhibition not only honors the memory of Imam Hussain (AS) but also serves as a testament to the enduring cultural and religious practices that have shaped our history," Nokandeh remarked.

The display includes 14 meticulously restored objects from the Safavid and Qajar periods, highlights the craftsmanship and religious significance of the era, the official added.

Among the objects on view are the Tuqs, flag heads, and steel fruits—elements deeply embedded in the Muharram ceremonies. These items, crafted from brass, bronze, and steel, are being exhibited for the first time post-restoration. Particularly noteworthy are the steel fruits, including quince and bergamot oranges, which are adorned with intricate gilding motifs and inscriptions, symbolizing the rich artistic heritage of the periods they represent.

The Alams, also known as processional standards, are central to the Shia Muslim commu-



nity's commemorations of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS) and his loyal companions in the Battle of Karbala.

These standards are carried in processions, embodying the spirit of mourning and remembrance that characterizes Muharram. The exhibition's Tuqs, originally used in battlefields, have evolved into ritualistic symbols, deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of Iran, especially since the 7th century AH during the Ilkhanate period. Back then, Tuqs served as ritual accessories for Javanmardan, or chivalrous individuals, with each Khaneghah (Sufi lodge) having its own distinc-

tive "Patuq" sign.

During the Safavid era, Tuqs attained greater prominence, adorned with inscriptions of Quranic verses, the names of God and the Imams, blessings, prayers, dedications, and construction dates. The designs from this period also incorporated dragons and snakes, as seen in surviving miniatures, adding a unique artistic element to these ritual objects. The Iranian Tuqs are particularly notable for their two dragon or snake heads, which cover the upper part of the Tuq, evolving into what is known as "Alamat" or "Alam" banners. These banners often feature metal sculptures of animals and fruits placed between sharp blades.

The Qajar period saw an expansion in the use and ritual significance of Tuqs. "Patuq" became synonymous with neighborhoods, and carrying Tuqs during Muharram was a privilege of the Patuqdar, who led the mourning activities. This tradition of neighborhood-based mourning groups continues to be a vital part of Muharram commemorations throughout Iran.

The exhibition, housed in the temporary exhibition hall of the Museum of Islamic Archeology and Art of Iran, offers visitors a unique opportunity to engage with these historical artifacts and understand their cultural and religious significance. Through this display, the National Museum of Iran not only preserves the memory of Imam Hussain (AS) but also fosters a deeper appreciation of the rich heritage and artistic traditions that continue to shape Iranian culture.

The exhibition is open to the public until August 2, providing a rare glimpse into the historical and cultural legacy of Muharram.

Indian ambassador honors Iran's ancient legacy, proposes richer cultural bonds

TEHRAN - In a meeting focused on deepening cultural ties, Indian Ambassador to Iran, Rudra Gaurav Shresth, lauded Iran as the world's oldest civilization and proposed several initiatives to enhance cultural cooperation between the two nations.

On Sunday morning, Ali Darabi, the Iranian deputy tourism minister, met with Rudra Gaurav Shresth, the Indian Ambassador, discussing the deep-rooted cultural and historical ties between the two countries.

Darabi opened the meeting by highlighting over 3,000 years of cooperation and interaction between Iran and India.

He noted the influence of the Indian style in Persian literature, mentioning the renowned Persian poet, Bidel Dehlavi.

"The cultural diplomacy between India and Iran is ancient and has been preserved throughout the ages," Darabi stated.

The deputy minister also emphasized the

strategic partnership between the two nations, especially in the realm of cultural heritage, referencing the shared effort to register Nowruz with UNESCO.

Darabi proposed holding an Iran-India cultural night and organizing joint museum exhibitions as further steps to strengthen cultural ties.

In response, Shresth lauded Iran as the world's oldest civilization, asserting that the entire country is a cultural heritage site. Numerous other Iranian sites, he suggested, deserve UNESCO World Heritage status.

The Persian language was the official language of India for around 700 years, according to the ambassador.

Even today, he added, Persian is one of the nine classical languages recognized in the Indian Constitution.

Shresth continued that approximately 30% of the vocabulary in northern India has Persian roots and expressed the continuing interest in

learning Persian among the public.

Shresth mentioned the exhibition of "Indian Jades at the Golestan Palace" as an example of successful cultural cooperation, expressing a desire for increased collaboration in tourism, cultural heritage, and handicrafts, citing the underwhelming tourist exchange between the culturally close nations.

The Indian envoy remarked on the evident influence of Persian architecture on Indian landmarks such as the Taj Mahal, proposing knowledge exchange in preservation and promotion of these historical sites.

Pointing to the similarities in artistic works housed in numerous Indian museums, the ambassador suggested collaborative efforts in museum management and preservation.

Furthermore, Shrestha noted India's advancements in IT, proposing joint ventures in creating digital catalogs of museum artifacts.

National network for elite women, female technologists to be launched

TEHRAN – A national network is planned to be launched with the aim of empowering elite women and female technologists in the country.

On July 14, the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy organized a meeting attended by more than 30 technologist women including university professors, CEOs of companies, as well as experts in fields of oil and gas, artificial intelligence, medicine, research, technology, and Telecommunications.

During the meeting, the participants discussed challenges faced by women experts in the mentioned fields, IRIB reported.

They also explored different levels of goals of the network such as enhancing women's technical capabilities, providing targeted and fair contributions, as well as creating transnational connections, and promoting their technical activities.

Iranian women among top 1% most cited researchers

Some 135 out of 938 Iranian researchers who were recognized among the world's top one percent most-cited researchers in 2023 were female scholars.

In 2023, 938 top researchers affiliated with Iranian organizations were identified, which showed a 12 percent increase compared to the previous year.

Over the past decade, the number of highly-cited researchers in the country has been growing.

Women are an important part of society, playing an important role in the development of human soci-



eties, IRNA quoted Ahmad Fazelzadeh, the head of the Islamic World Science and Technology Monitoring and Citation (ISC) Institute, as saying.

One of the indicators of scientific authority is the number of highly cited scientists in each country, and Iranian women researchers have a special place in the field of scientific authority at the national and international level, Fazelzadeh added.

ISC's main responsibilities are to introduce highly-cited researchers and to provide the possibility to identify and introduce elite researchers and scholars.

According to its missions, ISC is responsible for monitoring the status of science and technology in Iran, Islamic Countries, and the world.

One of the indicators of scientific authority is the number of highly cited researchers in each country.

Among Iranian highly-cited researchers, women are also present and have played their part in the scientific authority of Iran.

Using the data indexed in the ISC database, ISC identifies highly cited Iranian researchers in Human Sciences, Social Sciences, Art, and Architecture.

In the latest announced list, highly cited researchers have been introduced in the period of 10 years (2011-2021). The criteria for selecting researchers in this list is the number of citations made to their scientific productions.

According to the recent report of ISC, in the list of one percent of researchers in the world which was based on the Essential Science Indicators (ESI) database, a total of 135 Iranian female researchers were recognized in the areas of Agricultural Sciences, Clinical Medicine, Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Neuroscience and Psychology, Engineering, Material Science, Psychiatry/Psychology, Computer Science, Interdisciplinary, Social Science, generalities and some have obtained the necessary points even in several fields.

Fazelzadeh went on to say that according to the Stanford Uni-

versity List which was conducted by a number of researchers from Stanford University and the Elsevier Institute via analyzing the data of the Scopus database, 60 highly cited Iranian female researchers were among the top two percent in the world (service performance) in eight subject areas including Clinical Medicine, Chemistry, Biomedicine, Strategic Technologies (Artificial Intelligence, Nanotechnology, etc.), Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Physics and Astronomy, Information and Communication Technology, and Engineering.

316 female Iranian highly-cited researchers were among the top two percent of the world (one-year performance) in 14 subject areas of Clinical Medicine, Biomedicine, Chemistry, Engineering, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Strategic Technologies (Artificial Intelligence, Nanotechnology, etc.), Information and Communication Technology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Physics and Astronomy, Environment, Design and Construction, Public Health and Health Services, Biology, Social Sciences, Communication and Textual Research have obtained the necessary points.

Some 46 female researchers in 13 subject areas of Business, Management and Accounting, Geographical Sciences, Psychology, Social Sciences, Knowledge and Information Science, Language and Linguistics, Educational Sciences, Economic Sciences, Sociology and Political Sciences, Language and Literature, Historical Sciences, Theology and Islamic Studies and other areas gained the needed points.

In memory of Maryam Mirzakhani: an exceptional gift for mathematics

TEHRAN - July 14, 2017, was an especially sad day for Iranians around the world. On that day, Iranian-American genius mathematician Maryam Mirzakhani died of cancer when she was only 40.

In 2014, she won the prestigious Fields Medal award for "her outstanding contribution" to building knowledge and understanding of the dynamics and the geometry of curved surfaces. She was the first woman and the first Iranian to win the prize, which is often considered the "Nobel Prize" in mathematics.

In 2016, she was elected to the American National Academy of Sciences, which recognizes outstanding accomplishments in original research. This honor had previously gone to famous scientists such as Albert Einstein, Robert Oppenheimer, and Thomas Edison.

Mirzakhani was born in Tehran in May 1977. "As a kid, I dreamt of becoming a writer," she told the Guardian newspaper after she was awarded the Fields medal. "My most exciting pastime was reading novels; in fact, I would read anything I could find. I never thought I would pursue mathematics until my last year

in high school. I grew up in a family with three siblings. My parents were always very supportive and encouraging. It was important for them that we have meaningful and satisfying professions, but they didn't care as much about success and achievement."

In 1994 and 1995 she was awarded gold medals by Iran's Mathematical Olympiad. She received her bachelor's degree in science from Tehran's Sharif University of Technology in 1999 and was given a scholarship from Harvard University, where she completed a PhD in 2004.

She became a professor of mathematics at Stanford University in 2008, at the age of 31.

In 2006, Popular Science magazine named Mirzakhani on its annual Brilliant 10 list. In 2009 she won the American Mathematical Society's Blumenthal Award for the Advancement of Research in Pure Mathematics. Her other awards include the 2013 Satter Prize in Mathematics and the 2014 Clay Research Award.

"Mirzakhani is the right woman at the right time," said an article published in the UK's Times Higher Education after she had been presented

with the prestigious award, Iran Wire reported.

"Born with an exceptional gift for mathematics, her talents have been nurtured and allowed to flourish, her teachers have recognized and fostered her genius, and her male colleagues have not questioned her ability in a subject where raw brain power is what brings the most respect," it said.

Mirzakhani's achievements "combine superb problem-solving ability, ambitious mathematical vision, and fluency in many disciplines, which is unusual in the modern era, when considerable specialization is often required to reach the frontier," said Curtis McMullen of Harvard University.

At the urging of the Iranian Mathematical Society's Women's Committee, the International Council for Science declared Mirzakhani's birthday, May 12, as the International Women in Mathematics Day in respect of her memory.

In 2022, the University of Oxford launched the Maryam Mirzakhani Scholarships, which provide support for female mathematicians pursuing doctoral studies at the university.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Ministries ink MOU on out-of-school children

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare have signed a memorandum of understanding aiming to bring out-of-school children back to school.

The memorandum of understanding will pave the way for future steps, ISNA news agency quoted Education Minister Mohammad Bat'haei as saying on Sunday. He made the remarks over the 8th session of council meeting for improving educational standards in underprivileged and underdeveloped areas at the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. "The meeting is aiming to live up to educational standards, however, the current conditions are unjustifiable, and we should move faster," he added.

تفاهم وزراء برای بازگرداندن کودکان بازممانده از تحصیل به مدارس

وزارت آموزش و پرورش تفاهم نامه مشترکی با وزارت رفاه برای بازگرداندن کودکان بازممانده از تحصیل امضا کردند. به گزارش روز یکشنبه ایسنا، محمد بطحایی وزیر آموزش و پرورش گفت: امروز تفاهم نامه‌ای امضا می‌شود که نقشه کار برای ادامه مسیر کاملاً مشخص شود. بطحایی در هشتمین جلسه شورای هماهنگی بهبود و ارتقای شاخص‌های آموزشی و پرورشی مناطق محروم و کمتر توسعه یافته که در وزارت رفاه برگزار شد گفت: هدف اصلی این برنامه و شورای هماهنگی ارتقای شاخص‌ها بود، هرچند این روند قابل قبول نیست و باید با سرعت بیشتری حرکت کنیم.

Iranian, Russian universities ink 12 MOUs

TEHRAN – Shiraz University and St. Petersburg University have signed 12 memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to boost cultural, educational, and research collaborations.

The main subjects of the MOUs include enhancing cooperation among faculty members of the two universities, granting scholarships to ten PhD students, conducting summer school for Iranian students by St. Petersburg University as well as winter schools for Russian students by Shiraz University, Mehr news agency reported.

As a part of the agreement, each university will establish a specialized center within the other institution.

The cooperation will also include utilizing the excavation training and research center of Saint Petersburg University by Shiraz University, conducting joint research, holding joint specialized geological training courses for the students from the two universities, as well as holding specialized training courses for Iranian mining engineers by St. Petersburg Mining University.

According to Forpost-sz, a delegation from the St. Petersburg Mining University visited Shiraz University for the first time back in January.

During that visit, administrators, scientists, and young teachers from St. Petersburg studied in detail the methodology of the educational system of the Islamic Republic, and its scientific component, were acquainted with the work of the enterprises of Fars Province, held a number of negotiations with representatives of Iranian higher education, industrialists, employees of government agencies. They defined roadmaps for possible cooperation.

On their return to Russia, the proposals received were analyzed in detail, and on its basis, a competition between research teams was held within the framework of the project "Targeted Scientific Search".

The grant holders traveled to Shiraz again, of course, having received preliminary consent from their Iranian partners to work together.

Several promising topics were clearly "pulling" for future doctoral theses due to their relevance and demand for both countries. This was confirmed during the last visit.

Fostering scientific ties

In June, a delegation from Synergy University of Moscow paid a visit to Amir Kabir University of Technology in Tehran to explore ways to enhance scientific cooperation between the two institutions.

During a meeting, the two sides introduced their competencies and capabilities, IRNA reported.

Also, four programs on holding short-term joint



courses in the fields of business management; professor and student exchange; Persian and Russian language teaching, and conducting joint interdisciplinary courses were developed to be implemented.

These training courses will cover business management; robotics and artificial intelligence; entrepreneurship and technology; smart cities; and information technology; as well as emerging and interdisciplinary fields.

As per the agreement, representatives from the two universities will hold an online meeting next month to discuss further details and ways to initiate the joint programs.

Joint courses on sustainable development

Iran and Russia have held a joint international course titled 'Entrepreneurship and Future Skills' aimed at fostering sustainable development and commercialization of ideas.

The three-month course was held at Amir Kabir University of Technology in Tehran, IRNA reported.

It was organized by the Russian Academy of Foreign Trade and the management faculty of Amir Kabir University of Technology.

Expanding international cooperation is one of the most important strategies of the management faculty of Amir Kabir University of Technology.

The objective of the course was to encourage teamwork to learn and generate ideas in business and sustainable development. Therefore, the course was designed based on learning and enhancing international interaction and participation via online collaboration between professors and students of the two countries.

A total of 30 Iranian and 30 Russian students took part in the course which was conducted with the cooperation of professors from both nations.

Completing a preliminary course, students in Iranian and Russian teams chose topics related to the challenges of sustainable development as well as the macro issues of their respective countries.

The students analyzed the topics and then conducted a comparative analysis of the situation in the two countries. The course helped student groups develop entrepreneurial business ideas in line with sustainable development goals.

Iran shines at International Biology Olympiad 2024

TEHRAN – Iranian students have succeeded in winning two gold medals and two silver medals at the 35th edition of the International Biology Olympiad (IBO) held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from July 7 to 14.

IBO 2024 hosted more than 800 students, leaders, observers, and guests from over 80 countries.

Arash Samadi and Porya Nouri-Niarki won gold medals, while Sepehr Chachi and Mohammad-Reza Yazdkhasti secured silvers, IRIB reported.

The IBO 2023 was held in the United Arab Emirates. The Iranian team ranked third winning two gold and two silver medals.

Recent achievements

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

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

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

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 Nemat-Moein were selected to

advance to the second stage.

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

Also, Karimi and Nosrat-Panah received a certificate for taking part in the competition. This summer, they will participate in the world competition in Geneva, Switzerland, as selected Iranian inventors.

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

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.

Iran ranked fourth next to Taiwan, the United States, and Russia.

The robotics team of Iran won a gold medal and three silver medals in the Dubai International Inventions Show (DIS) 2023.



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JULY 17, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The faithful are tied in kindness and affection together like members of a body, one's pain and hardship affect the others.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:11 Evening: 19:40 Dawn: 3:20(tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:02 (tomorrow)

“Soft Skills for Kids” published in Persian

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the book “Soft Skills for Kids: In Schools, at Home, and Online” written by Nancy Armstrong Melsner has been released in the bookstores across Iran.

Doxa Cultural Institute in Tehran has published the book, which has been translated by Maryam Moayerzadeh, Mehr reported.

Children today are going through a lot—they are busy with school, involved in extracurricular activities, and trying to navigate the world of post-COVID, and other concerns. Teachers and parents are busy too—with work, school, and parenting activities. How will they have the time to teach valuable skills such as manners and respect to children? These are “soft skills”; the skills necessary to work with others and be a respected and valuable citizen in the workplace of tomorrow.

This book focuses on ways that teachers and parents can work together to teach soft skills to the children in their lives. It is not a curriculum program or set of lessons to help children, but rather a series of “teachable moments” in which adults teach strategies to children as they happen. Finally, as the education of children has changed recently due to the recent pandemic with an increased number of children learning online, this book will be a great resource for how adults can work together to help children learn soft skills—in schools, at home, and online.

The book uses a child-centered approach to discuss how to nurture 14 soft skills in elementary-aged children. Often overshadowed by the academic curriculum, mastery of soft skills such as composure and teamwork is widely recognized as critical to the success of students and workers of all ages. Nancy Armstrong Melsner addresses each skill in detail, with clear definitions, illustrations, and ideas that teachers and parents can use to reinforce the skill at school and at home. The book also addresses the opportunities and challenges involved for both teachers



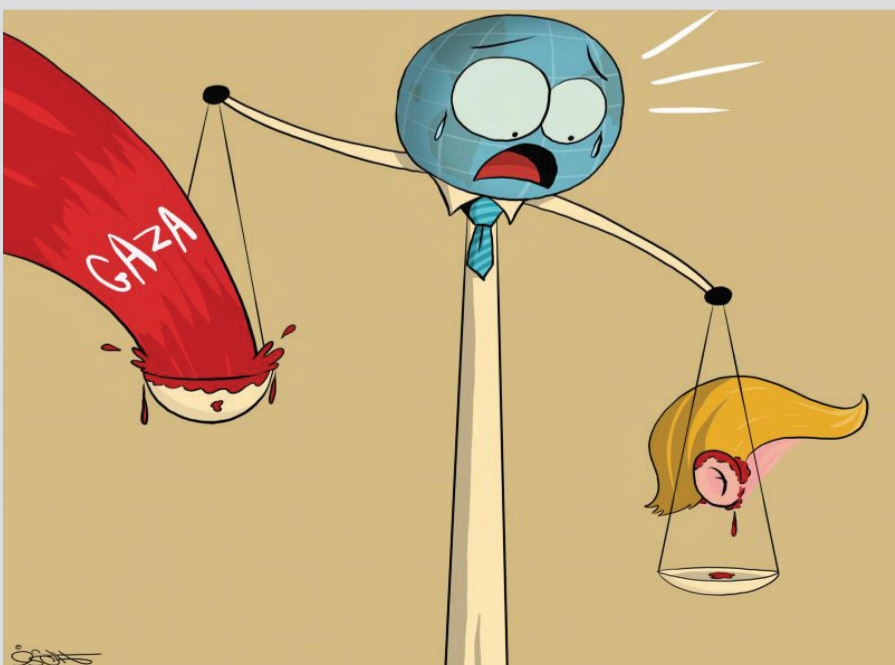
and parents trying to build soft skills in on-line learning environments during remote teaching. This book serves as an excellent resource for administrators, teachers, and parents working together in their efforts to support their children. Jay Fogleman, associate professor of education at the University of Rhode Island wrote about the book.

If educators and parents want to teach social skills and exemplify social emotional learning skills in the classroom and home, then they will benefit from reading “Soft Skills for Kids”—a simple yet intense guide for teaching character development to children.

Melsner provides practical information for implementing lessons for children on empathy, positive attitude, organization, teamwork, and so much more. Every chapter includes guiding questions that provide a pathway for learning how to execute the teaching of the skills, both in person and in online settings. The teaching of these soft skills now just may keep children from learning hard lessons later. This book will change how you approach teaching social skills and leave you feeling good about the results. Jennifer Young Wallace, an associate professor at the Jackson State University explained.

Nancy Armstrong Melsner, 62, is a professor and writer. She has taught for over 35 years and enjoys helping teachers and parents with practical advice for working with kids.

Cartoon of Day



The Hypocrisy
 Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

Rome hosts tazieh performances

TEHRAN- To mark the month of Muharram and the mourning ceremonies for the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), tazieh performances about the martyrdom of Ali al-Akbar (AS), the son of Imam Hussein (AS), were held at the Al-Mahdi Center in Rome, Italy on Saturday and Sunday.

The performances were organized by the Imam-e Rauf group, which has been staging tazieh performances in various European countries since the beginning of the lunar month of Muharram, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

The productions were directed by Hassan Basiri and produced by Amir Mohammad Davoodipour, featuring a cast including Seyyed Ali Sadat Razavi, Majid Khosravan, Mehdi Sayyadi, Seyyed Mortaza Miresmaeili, Mohammad Reza Qorban Asgari, Navid Asjodi, and Amir Soleimani Moqaddam.

“Ali al-Akbar (AS) Tazieh” tells the story of Ali al-Akbar, the son of Imam Hussein (AS), who displayed unwavering bravery and selflessness during the Battle of Karbala, ultimately giving his life while fighting alongside his family against the forces of Yazid’s army.

Earlier last week, the group performed tazieh on the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) in Budapest, the capital of Hungary for the first time.

The event was organized by the Iranian Embassy in Budapest and was held at two locations, a church in the city center and the Iranian Embassy itself.



The performances were attended by a large number of Hungary-based Iranians, as well as Muslims from countries such as Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Bangladesh, and Hungarians interested in Iranian culture and art.

The event was a significant milestone in the history of tazieh performances in Europe, as it was held for the first time at a Christian church in Budapest. The event received widespread attention and admiration from the audience, who praised the beauty and richness of Iranian culture.

The presence of some Hungarian cultural and artistic figures at the event was also notable, indicating their appreciation for this rich Iranian tradition.

The event was a testament to the universal message of peace and friendship that Imam Hussein (AS) and the Ashura uprising convey to all humanity across cultures and religions.

The Iranian passion play tazieh was registered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in November 2010.

Tazieh represents religious events, historical and mythical stories and folk tales. Each performance has the four components of poetry, music, song and motion.

However, stories about the uprising of Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions against the oppressive Umayyad dynasty in 680 CE are more highly regarded by tazieh

troupe and audiences.

Performers are always male, and female roles are played by men, most of whom are amateurs who gain their living through other means but perform for spiritual rewards.

It is a kind of drama that depicts the event of Ashura and is performed in Mahur, Chargah, and Shur Baghdad radifs of Iranian music.

It is based on the Ashura culture and the brave war and martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS). It is a religious play dated back to 9th-century dynamites and Buyids. However, Tazieh performance began during the Safavid era (1501-1736) and flourished during the Qajar era.

Outdoor play explores unseen aspect of Ashura

TEHRAN- The grand outdoor play “More Alone than Christ” will be performed at Velayat Park in Tehran on Thursday.

The play, marking its fifth consecutive year on stage, will run for 50 days, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Directed by Hassan Bazra and produced by

Amir Hossein Taheri, this year’s production focuses on the previously unseen aspect of Ashura and the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS), highlighting the role of Jews in the event. The show will be performed in two sessions every night.

The play, produced by Owj Arts and Media Organization, is expected to attract 6,000 audience members per night. The show has gained

unprecedented public acclaim over the past four years, with approximately 1.5 million viewers attending the previous seasons.

The Ashura event is one of the most dramatic historical occurrences. It marks the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), along with his 72 loyal companions.

4 Iranian short films to compete in 47th Asian American Intl. Film Festival in Manhattan

TEHRAN-Four short films from Iran will participate in the 47th Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF) in Manhattan, New York, the U.S., due to be held from August 1 to 11.

The Iranian participants in the American event include “Sheep” directed by Mehrdad Kabiri, “The Steak” by Kiarash Dadgar, “Plan B” by Nima Rahimpur, and “Totem Night” co-directed by Negin Kamran and Hana Azimonia, Mehr reported.

A 2023 production, “Sheep” is a 15-minute film, which will be screened in the “Shorts: Rise Up!” section of the festival.

The fantasy drama is about Amir, a student who is humiliated by the school principal in front of other students because of his family’s financial situation. As a result, he has a challenge with the school administrator and seeks revenge. Finally, this incident leads to his transformation, both physically and metaphorically, in a way that becomes troublesome for the

school administrator.

The cast includes Maziar Seyedi, Yazdan Kokabi-Saba, Shahrouz Aghaipour, and Mohsen Banihashemi.

The other three Iranian films will take part in the “Shorts: Tales That Go Bump in the Night” section of the festival.

A drama, “The Steak” is an eight-minute flick made in 2023. It depicts a mother who prepares a cake and food for her daughter’s birthday on an ordinary day. Suddenly, the enemy’s Army launches a surprise attack, leaving the mother with no time to escape, to protect her daughter, she hides the girl in a closet. The Soldiers attack the house and kill the mother. A medic soldier discovers the girl and tries to bring joy by celebrating her birthday. However, the birthday changed to a funeral.

Faranak Khamis, Amin Simiar, and Panisa Peyvakht play in the film.

“Plan B,” 24 minutes, is a 2023 drama thriller depicting a father

who discovers his daughter’s secret affair with a man. He decides to kill them both with the help of his young son and defend the family’s reputation. But at the last moment, his plan falls apart.

Majid Potki, Daniyal Mahmoudnia, Mandana Montajebi, and Mohammad Reza Helalzadeh are in the cast.

“Totem Night” is a 19-minute movie produced in 2023. The fantasy, horror, mystery flick is centered on a young girl who lives in the house of an old lady, serving as her nurse. There are a bunch of domestic animals in the house, which the young girl consumes as food and other things.

After living there for a while, the animals’ interactions with the girl become weird. They try to warn her about something but fail. In a nightmare of hers, the girl sees many other girls who used to be nurses in the house and have all morphed into animals. Finally, through magic, the old woman (who looks young) turns the girl

(who looks weak and old) into a rabbit. Now, a new girl comes to the house and takes the rabbit (the previous nurse), repeating the same destiny.

The cast includes Sonia Sanjari and Shahdeh Khodadadi.

Established in 1978 by Asian CineVision, the Asian American International Film Festival is the nation’s first and longest running festival of its kind and the premier showcase for the best independent Asian, Asian diaspora and Pacific Islander cinema. AAIFF is committed to film and media as a tool for social change and to supporting diversity and inclusion in the media arts.

Asian CineVision is a media arts nonprofit devoted to the development, exhibition, promotion, and preservation of Asian and Asian American experiences through storytelling. Its mission is to nurture and grow the community of makers and enthusiasts of Asian and Asian American independent film, television, and digital.

Algeria suspends all major art festivals in solidarity with war-torn Gaza

Algeria’s Culture Ministry announced on Friday that it is suspending all major art festivals this summer in solidarity with the Gaza Strip which has been under a devastating Israeli onslaught since October.

A statement by Culture Minister Soraya Mouloudji said the ministry will instead intensify activities that express the country’s solidarity with the Palestinian cause.

Mouloudji said the decision comes from Algeria’s supportive fixed position toward “the Palestinian cause and its brave legitimate struggle

against Zionist brutality.”

The ministry organizes several major art festivals every summer, including the Timgad International Cultural Festival in Batna in eastern Algeria and the Kazif International Festival in the capital of Algiers.

Israel, flouting a UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate cease-fire, has faced international condemnation amid its continued brutal offensive on Gaza since an Oct. 7 attack by the Palestinian resistance group, Hamas.

More than 38,300 Palestinians have since been

killed, mostly women and children, and nearly 88,300 injured, according to local health authorities.

Nine months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lie in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.

Israel is accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice, whose latest ruling ordered it to immediately halt its military operation in the southern city of Rafah, where more than one million Palestinians had sought refuge from the war before it was invaded on May 6.