

Western media claims hundreds of Iranian missiles transferred to Russia after failing to prove similar drone allegations

Missile Claims

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – After multiple failed counteroffensives, Ukrainian forces managed to embarrass Russia with their August incursion of Kursk which remains ongoing. However, it seems that the move is unlikely to bleed Moscow or deal a serious blow to it. With that, the West is left to find a culprit for its lost war in Ukraine, and its eyes have once again landed on Iran.

The Wall Street Journal claimed on Friday that Iran has sent hundreds of short-range ballistic missiles to Russia for use in the Ukraine war. The American outlet did not provide any evidence for its claims and only cited unidentified "American and European officials" to back its claims. It noted that the alleged weapons delivery has happened despite "stern warnings from the West", asking Iran not to arm Russians. The report came less than a month after the paper assessed that ties between Iran and Russia are "being strained", partly due to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York was quick to refute the unsubstantiated claims. "Iran considers the provision of military assistance to the parties engaged in the

Iran-Russia cooperation is conducted under bilateral agreements and adheres to international law and standards, having no connection to the Ukraine crisis

conflict - which leads to increased human casualties, destruction of infrastructure, and a distancing from ceasefire negotiations - to be inhumane," it said on Friday, adding, "Thus, not only does Iran abstain from engaging in such actions itself, but it also calls upon other countries to cease the supply of weapons to the sides involved in the conflict."

As for the Americans, officials in the White House seemed to be hesitant to confidently confirm the WSJ's report. National Security Council spokesperson Sean Savett said Washington is "alarmed" by the reports it is receiving on Iran's alleged weapons transfer to Russia, while CIA director William Burns told the Financial Times in London that he is concerned, but cannot comment on whether he believes Tehran has actually given Moscow ballistic missiles.

This is not the first time that charges have been made against Iran regarding the Ukraine war. Western and Ukrainian officials have repeatedly accused the West Asian country of providing Kamikaze drones to Russia, an alleged move they believe has significantly helped Moscow in its war efforts.

No evidence has been presented to anyone, including Iran itself, regarding Tehran's alleged provision of drones to Russia. Former U.S. Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley even claimed that Iran has military personnel stationed in Ukraine to help Russians use the drones. Those big claims were never supported by evidence either. ▶ Page 3

Iraq relocates anti-Iran terrorist groups as part of security agreement with Tehran

TEHRAN – Iraq has begun relocating anti-Iran terrorist groups from its Kurdish region along the Iranian border to camps located deeper within its territory, in accordance with a security agreement between Baghdad and Tehran.

This move is part of ongoing efforts to ensure greater security in the region and curb terrorist activities near the shared border.

The Komala terrorist group, a well-known separatist organization, issued a statement confirming that it had vacated its bases in the Zargweh area and relocated its forces to the Swarash district, near the city of Dukan, approximately 40 kilometers north of their previous location.

This action aligns with the security pact that Iraq and Iran concluded two years ago, which mandates that all terrorist and separatist groups near Iran's borders be disarmed and relocated away from the frontier. ▶ Page 3

Powerlifter Aminzadeh collects Iran's eighth gold at 2024 Paralympics

PARIS – Ahmad Aminzadeh, Iranian powerlifter, claimed a gold medal on Sunday in the 2024 Paralympic Games.

He won the gold with bars validated at 253, 258 and 263 kg at the Porte de La Chapelle Arena.

Ukrainian Anton Kriukov (251kg) and Georgian Akaki Jintcharadze (250kg) won the silver and bronze medal, respectively.

His compatriot Aliakbar Gharibshahi (up to 107kg) had won a gold medal Sunday morning.

Aminzadeh's gold was Iran's eighth gold in the 2024 Paralympic Games.

Shooter Sareh Javanmardi, shot putter Amirhossein Alipour, javelin thrower Saeid Afrouz, powerlifter Rouhollah Rostami and Aliakbar Gharibshahi, sitting volleyball, and shot putter Yasin Khosravi and had previously won seven gold medals in Paris.

Iran's trade with OIC member states rises 15%

TEHRAN – The value of the trade exchanges between Iran and the other 56 members of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) reached \$26.7 billion in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), registering a 15 percent increase compared to the same period a year earlier.

According to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the volume of the trade exchanges between Iran and OIC member states in the mentioned five months reached 42.3 million tons, also 10 percent more compared to the previous year's same time span. ▶ Page 4

Iran ranks world's third top country in intl. Olympiads

TEHRAN – Attending several international Olympiads in 2024, Iranian students managed to win 10 gold medals, 10 silver medals, and two bronze medals, ranking third globally.

The United States and China ranked first and second, respectively. South Korea and India both ranked fourth, ISNA reported.

This year, they competed against other countries in the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI); the International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics; the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO); and the International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO), the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO), as well as the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). ▶ Page 7

Deepening cracks in the apartheid regime

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – Widespread disillusionment and deep divisions in Israel over the war in Gaza are back in the limelight in the wake of huge and unprecedented protests held in cities such as Tel Aviv at the weekend.

An estimated 750,000 people took to the streets in Israel on Saturday night. Organizers say 500,000 Israelis rallied in Tel Aviv marking the largest-ever demonstration in the regime's history.

Some 250,000 others attended rallies in cities including Jerusalem (Al-Quds) and Haifa fuming over the Israeli army's failure to return the remaining captives.

More than 11 months have passed since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered his army to invade Gaza after Hamas carried out a surprise military operation in southern Israel dubbed the Al-Aqsa Storm.

More than 1,100 people were killed during the Al-Aqsa Storm and 250 Israelis and foreigners were taken captive.

Around 100 captives still remain in Gaza, but about one-third of them are believed to be dead. Israel has freed eight captives and recovered the bodies of dozens of others. More than 100 of them were also released in a swap deal with Hamas in November last year. ▶ Page 5

Hezbollah responds to Israeli massacre

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Lebanon's Hezbollah has targeted Israeli military positions in the northern settlements.

The resistance movement announced the settlements of Kiryat Shmona and Shamir were targeted with barrages of Falaq and Katyusha rockets.

Israeli military informed settlers in Kiryat Shmona not to leave fortified areas, as sirens repeatedly sounded, as well as in three other settlements. Israeli Army Radio acknowledged that a building in Kiryat Shmona was hit by Hezbollah's rocket attacks.

The Lebanese resistance has been acting as a support front in solidarity with Gaza since October 8, 2023. The daily exchange of fire with the Israeli military has at times risked blowing into a full-scale war.

Some 100,000 Israelis have left the north and sought refuge in Tel Aviv and elsewhere. Analysts have put the number at 300,000. Officials in the north have accused the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of abandoning them.

Experts believe there is not much else that Tel Aviv can do to bring the settlers back unless there is a ceasefire in Gaza. In that case, Hezbollah has said it will stop attacks. ▶ Page 5



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Russia's wrong position and abuse of reformers

In a note, Kayhan addressed the new position of the Russian authorities regarding the so-called Zangezur Corridor. It wrote: A possible establishment of the Zangezur Corridor, which will lead to serious geopolitical challenges in the South Caucasus region, faced a decisive reaction by the authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran and warned the parties against any geopolitical changes in this region. Now the radicals who claim reforms with the aim of damaging relations between Iran and non-Western powers such as China and Russia are trying to create a problem in Iran's relations with the non-Western world and make a foreign policy shift towards the West. The important point is that Iran should not undermine the path of our country's rising relations with Russia as a partner that is considered as a friend in Iran's foreign policy through self-interested stances. Undoubtedly, the main problem in the recent issue of the Zangezur Corridor, both at the international level and at the domestic level, is the lack of awareness about the priorities.

Shargh: The border challenge of the new government

In an article, Shargh pointed to Iran's border challenges in the South Caucasus region and said "Israel has made every effort to be Iran's priority and force Tehran to interact with it, and now it does not want to abandon this issue easily. Therefore, Israel will seek its interests and will not allow an agreement to be struck between Iran and the West without considering Tel Aviv's interests. In other words, it will do its best to change the direction of the West to prevent what happened in 2015 that finally led to the conclusion of the JCPOA. Another issue that can put pressure on the diplomatic system of the country is the eruption of a war in the northwestern borders of Iran. The 14th government (the Pezeshkian government) should keep in mind the sensitive situation of Karabagh and manage the situation there with tact. While Israel and NATO have an active presence in the region and both have an influential presence in both Armenia and Azerbaijan, we should not allow the situation in Karabagh to turn into a crisis for Iran, something that both NATO and Israel are eager to create.

Jam-e-Jam: Corporate media campaign against Iran

Jam-e-Jam analyzed the Iranophobia campaign by the Western corporate media and wrote: For analyzing the national image of a country, it is important to study the effect of media on the audience as well as their dimensions. But the most important issue is the audience. Our country has been the target of the American Zionist "Iranophobia" project for decades. This project has been pursued by the official media outlets and Hollywood since the Islamic Revolution. They have sought to present a negative, insecure, and backward image of Iran to undermine the inspiring image of Iran in the minds of people around the world. Usually, tourism is purely viewed as a source of income, but interaction with the people of the regional countries, as well as countries that have historical or religious affinity with Iranians are the best way to deal with the long-term and costly project of Iranophobia.

Iran: A balance between competition and cooperation by the new government

Achieving the first economic, scientific and technological position in the region as outlined in the "outlook plan" and the general policies announced by the Supreme Leader is being analyzed by the Iran newspaper. The foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on the three principles of "honor, wisdom and expediency.

Accordingly, expanding bilateral and regional cooperation, avoiding tension in relations, and trying to free the region from the military presence of foreigners can be met through cooperation and interaction with neighbors. Achieving first place in the region not only will make the sanctions on Iran costly for the sanctioners, but also greatly increase the bargaining power in the negotiations to lift the sanctions. The regional doctrine is a clear path to what was proposed in the previous governments under the titles of "stronger region" and "neighborhood policy". However, these goals can be realized by creating internal motivations and seeking external benefits.

Pakistan seeks to boost trade with Iran through SCO: official



TEHRAN- Pakistan's commerce minister, has reaffirmed the nation's dedication to boosting bilateral trade with Iran and other regional allies through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

In an interview with the Iranian media, on the eve of the 23rd meeting of the SCO's trade and economic affairs ministers, which Pakistan will host, Jam Kamal Khan shared insights into the country's trade initiatives.

He announced plans for a forthcoming trade delegation to Iran, highlighting Pakistan's commitment to pursuing trade relations with Iran and regional partners through non-sanctioned avenues within the SCO framework.

Kamal Khan emphasized the significance of the upcoming SCO meeting in Pakistan, which will see participation from key delegations of member states, and noted, "The strong representation from countries such as China, Russia, and Iran presents an excellent opportunity to identify new avenues for regional collaboration and to share effective strategies in trade and economic matters."

Kamal Khan stated, "Pakistan anticipates productive and close collaboration with the new Iranian government. We are committed to enhancing business cooperation at both

bilateral and regional levels. In this context, we are exploring various solutions, particularly for non-sanctioned trade routes under the SCO."

Pakistan's minister of commerce also confirmed that the visit of the Pakistani delegation to Iran remains a priority.

Kamal Khan mentioned, "Trade committees are actively engaged at high levels between the two nations."

He also expressed confidence that significant discussions with Iranian officials will take place during the SCO trade ministers' meeting in Islamabad, focusing on bilateral trade and economic relations, including the utilization of border markets.

The 23rd Meeting of the Trade and Economic Affairs Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) provides a vital forum for member states to engage in discussions regarding economic and trade collaboration under the SCO framework.

This meeting emphasized the enhancement of trade relationships, the optimization of customs processes, and the promotion of deeper economic partnerships among member nations. The ministers shared insights on various topics, including the facilitation of trade in goods and services, the encouragement of investment, and the execution of SCO economic initiatives.

The gathering of SCO Trade and Economic Affairs Ministers is crucial for progressing the regional economic agenda and fostering sustainable development throughout the SCO area.

Iran and Pakistan are key participants in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

PKK member leading terror attacks in Iran killed, says Turkey

TEHRAN – The Turkish National Intelligence Agency (MIT) has announced the killing of the leader of the Iran branch of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorist group in a targeted operation in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq.

In a statement issued on Saturday via X, the agency confirmed the death of Saliha Akbiyik, the head of the Iranian faction of PKK.

As noted by the daily Milliyet, the decision to neutralize this key figure, who was on Turkey's wanted list for terrorist activities, was strategically made.

Ankara emphasized that this individual, actively pursued by Turkish intelligence operatives, was killed in a meticulously planned operation executed at an optimal moment.



Slain PKK terrorist Saliha Aybiyik, better known by the nom de guerre Nujijyan Amed

Saliha Akbiyik, known by the code name "Nozhiyan Amad", is believed to have joined the PKK in 1993. Besides leading terror acts on Iranian soil, she oversaw operations of militants seeking

refuge along the Iran-Iraq border, according to Turkish media.

Turkey asserts that Akbiyik joined the PKK's rural unit in Mersin, Turkey, underwent training at the group's camp in

Greece, and engaged in various political, military, and social activities associated with the PKK.

During her time in Iraq, she reportedly participated in armed terror operations in regions such as "Qandil," "Zab," "Metina," and "Makhmur."

The PKK is classified as a terror organization by several countries, including Iran, the United States, the European Union, and Turkey.

Its activities have included numerous bombings, assassinations, and other forms of violence, resulting in thousands of deaths in the region. The group, mainly based in Iraq, pursues separatist goals and is believed to have close ties with the Israeli regime.

Iran rejects involvement in Russia-Ukraine war

TEHRAN- The spokesperson for Iranian Foreign Ministry, stated that Iran has never been involved in the Ukraine conflict and has consistently advocated for a political resolution to the ongoing war.

In a statement on Sunday, Nasser Kanaani addressed recent claims regarding the alleged transfer of Iranian short-range ballistic missiles to Russia for use in Ukraine, which have surfaced in various Western media outlets amid escalating hostilities between Russia and Ukraine.

He reiterated, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently opposed the war and supports a political dialogue to resolve the differences between Russia and Ukraine, aiming to bring an end to the conflict."

Kanaani emphasized, "Iran has never participated in the conflict or its prolongation."

Kanaani also affirmed that Iran's fundamental stance on the Ukraine crisis remains unchanged and dismissed the

allegations regarding the transfer of ballistic missiles to Russia as unfounded, attributing them to certain Western nations pursuing political agendas.

The spokesperson pointed out that military cooperation between Iran and Russia predates the Ukraine war, stating, "This cooperation is conducted under bilateral agreements and adheres to international law and standards, having no connection to the Ukraine crisis."

On Thursday, Amir Saied Irvani, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, categorically rejected the "baseless and misleading" allegations about military arming of Russia by Iran in a letter addressed to the UN Secretary-General and the president of the UN Security Council.

Western countries, especially the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, have consistently accused Iran of providing military support to Russia since the onset of



the conflict in February 2022.

Iran has previously maintained that its missile program is exclusively for defensive purposes and complies with international standards.

Additionally, security officials have denied allegations concerning the transfer of missiles to other countries, describing these claims as part of a "Disinformation campaign" designed to discredit the government.

Army chief pledges unwavering support for new government



TEHRAN – The commander-in-chief of the Iranian Army says the units under his command will

do everything in their power to help the new Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian pursue his plans and policies for the development and prosperity of Iran.

Major General Seyyed Abdulrahim Mousavi made the pledge on Saturday, as he and several other commanders received the president at the Iranian Army Command and General Staff University (DAFOOS).

Mousavi emphasized that the Iranian Army is constitutionally responsible for safeguarding the country's independence,

territorial integrity, and the Islamic Republic's system. He stressed the importance of the Army remaining both doctrinally sound and popular with the people.

"The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has consistently highlighted these aspects as well as the Army's effectiveness," Mousavi added.

He further noted that his appointment decree outlined four key missions: enhancing combat readiness, fostering spiritual and insightful excellence, addressing the needs

of personnel, and promoting synergy.

Mousavi expressed pride in the Army's substantial progress despite facing sanctions and challenges. He noted that the Leader has acknowledged the current Army as more faithful, revolutionary, and effective than ever before.

"In alignment with the strategy of the supreme commander of the Iranian Armed Forces, the military is dedicated to supporting the success of the fourteenth government and fostering synergy," Mousavi emphasized.

IRGC commander says Zionist regime supports Iranian border sabotage

TEHRAN – Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour, Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces, has condemned the Zionist regime's backing of sabotage groups operating along Iran's borders.

Speaking during a local ceremony in Rasht, Gilan province, General Pakpour asserted that recent investigations have uncovered evidence of the Zionist regime's involvement in supporting these groups and facilitating terrorist activities targeting Iran's security checkpoints.

The commander highlighted a noticeable shift in the tactics and strategies of warfare, pointing out the evolving nature of conflicts in the region. "We are witnessing significant changes in the

nature of modern warfare, which demands that our military units stay updated and prepared to confront these new realities," General Pakpour remarked.

He explained that today's warfare tactics, particularly those employed by terrorists and counter-revolutionary elements, are far more advanced than those seen in previous conflicts. The types of equipment and techniques used by these groups have evolved, making it imperative for Iran's military forces to adjust their strategies accordingly.

General Pakpour went on to mention recent terrorist attacks on police stations and security checkpoints in the southern regions of the

country, which he attributed to well-supported and sophisticated terrorist networks. He alleged that powerful foreign entities, including intelligence services, were backing these terrorist organizations in their efforts to destabilize the country.

The IRGC Ground Force, according to Pakpour, remains fully equipped and ready to neutralize any attempt that threatens Iran's security.

"We are prepared to crush any movement that endangers the nation's safety before it has a chance to grow," he warned, underscoring the readiness of Iran's military forces to protect the nation against both internal and external threats.

Air Force commander reaffirms readiness to defend nation against any threat

TEHRAN – Iranian Air Force commander Brigadier General Hamid Vahedi has emphasized the Air Force's unwavering preparedness to defend the country against any external threats, as tensions in the region remain high.

Speaking on Sunday at the Shahid Nojeh Air Base in Hamedan, Vahedi addressed a gathering of

pilots and Air Force personnel, expressing pride in their dedication and resilience.

During his speech, General Vahedi praised the technical teams within the Air Force for their outstanding efforts in maintaining the fleet, despite the ongoing challenges posed by international sanctions. These sanctions, aimed at crippling Iran's military

capabilities, have failed to hinder the Air Force's mission readiness, thanks to the tireless work of its maintenance crews.

"The persistence and ingenuity of our technical staff have been instrumental in ensuring that our pilots can continue executing their missions," he said.

Vahedi also reaffirmed the

Air Force's commitment to the strategic objectives set by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

He underscored the importance of following the Leader's directives closely, stating, "It is crucial that we fully adhere to and implement the instructions of the Supreme Commander to ensure our continued success and security."

Missile claims

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By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – After multiple failed counteroffensives, Ukrainian forces managed to embarrass Russia with their August incursion of Kursk which remains ongoing. However, it seems that the move is unlikely to bleed Moscow or deal a serious blow to it. With that, the West is left to find a culprit for its lost war in Ukraine, and its eyes have once again landed on Iran.

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The American outlet did not provide any evidence for its claims and only cited unidentified “American and European officials” to back its claims. It noted that the alleged weapons delivery has happened despite “stern warnings from the West”, asking Iran not to arm Russians. The report came less than a month after the paper assessed that ties between Iran and Russia are “being strained”, partly

due to Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine.

Iran’s mission to the United Nations in New York was quick to refute the unsubstantiated claims. “Iran considers the provision of military assistance to the parties engaged in the conflict - which leads to increased human casualties, destruction of infrastructure, and a distancing from ceasefire negotiations - to be inhumane,” it said on Friday, adding, “Thus, not only does Iran abstain from engaging in such actions itself, but it also calls upon other countries to cease the supply of weapons to the sides involved in the conflict.”

As for the Americans, officials in the White House seemed to be hesitant to confidently confirm the WSJ’s report. National Security Council spokesperson Sean Savett said Washington is “alarmed” by the reports it is receiving on Iran’s alleged weapons transfer to Russia, while CIA director William Burns told the Financial Times in London that he is concerned, but cannot comment

on whether he believes Tehran has actually given Moscow ballistic missiles.

This is not the first time that charges have been made against Iran regarding the Ukraine war. Western and Ukrainian officials have repeatedly accused the West Asian country of providing Kamikaze drones to Russia, an alleged move they believe has significantly helped Moscow in its war efforts.

No evidence has been presented to anyone, including Iran itself, regarding Tehran’s alleged provision of drones to Russia. Former U.S. Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley even claimed that Iran has military personnel stationed in Ukraine to help Russians use the drones. Those big claims were never supported by evidence either.

In fact, the West and Kyiv, have actively refused to engage in any sort of interaction to prove how they have concluded Tehran is arming Russia. According to the late Iranian Foreign

Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, shortly after Ukrainians and their Western patrons made the drone claims, Zelensky scuppered talks scheduled to discuss the allegations with Iranians.

It is hard to figure out why the West is so fixated on pointing the finger of blame at Iran. After all, with or without foreign weapons, it is expected that Russia will eventually win the war. Bit by bit, Ukraine is collapsing, and no amount of anti-Iran rhetoric will alter that outcome.

Western hypocrisy on full display

The West’s accusations against Iran, and its outrage over alleged Iranian weapons transfers to Russia, raise a fundamental question: why is the West free to supply billions of dollars in weapons to Kyiv for use against Moscow, while no other country should be able to do the same for Russia? How is trade between two sovereign nations any concern of the West?

The West’s complicity in the ongoing Gaza war and its unwavering support for the Israeli regime have amplified these questions. How can Europe and the U.S. openly fund a genocide and show no remorse, while simultaneously criticizing others for allegedly aiding their rivals?

These unanswered questions make the Western narrative harder and harder to sell.

The crisis in Ukraine is ongoing because Westerners have been obstructing peace efforts and supplying Kyiv with growingly deadly and more sophisticated weapons.

Iran, China, North Korea, or any other country does not play a major role here, even if, in an unlikely scenario, Western accusations against them are one day proved to be true.

Iran’s victory overshadowed by criticisms

TEHRAN – Iran made a winning start to their Group A campaign in the AFC Asian Qualifiers – Road to 26 on Thursday as Amir Ghaleneoi’s side handed Kyrgyzstan a 1-0 defeat at Foolad Shahr Stadium but the critic hit out at the National Team’s performance.

Despite securing three points against Kyrgyzstan, Team Melli’s performance has been met with significant criticism from the fans and experts alike.

The 1-0 victory, courtesy of a Mehdi Taremi goal, was unable to mask underlying concerns about the team’s overall play.

Many have pointed to the lack of fluidity and creativity in Iran’s attacking play.

The performance of seasoned players like Alireza Jahanbakhsh and Saeid Ezatollahi has come under scrutiny, with some suggesting that younger, more dynamic players should be given more opportunities.

In response to the criticism, Iran’s star striker, Mehdi Taremi, defended the team’s performance, attributing the shortcomings to the poor quality of the pitch and the lack of adequate facilities in Iranian football.

“It was a relatively good game, considering the conditions we had.

Let’s remember that the first game is always difficult.

Qatar, who have won the Asian Cup twice, lost, Korea drew, and Australia also lost,” Taremi said in a post-match press conference.

“I don’t want to compare ourselves to anyone, but I have a question for you: What facilities do you provide for players in clubs? Do you have fields?

Do you have hardware facilities? What have you given to the players that you want them to improve?

You can trust me that if the turf is not good, you can’t play football. We have tactics and we want to play on the ground, when we want to play on the ground the quality of the ground must be good.”

With the UAE up next in Group A, Team Melli face a tough test. The UAE’s 3-1 victory over Qatar has heightened the pressure on Iran to improve their performance.

As the qualification campaign progresses, it remains to be seen whether Iran can address the criticisms and mount a serious challenge for a place in the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Iran fail to qualify for 2025 U19 Basketball World Cup

TEHRAN – Iran failed to advance to 2025 FIBA U19 Basketball World Cup following 87-61 loss against New Zealand on Saturday.

The top four teams will qualify for the World Cup in Switzerland.

Carter Hopoi delivered a game-high 28 points and 5 rebounds, while Tama Isaac provided 24 points, 4 rebounds, and 7 assists as they formed a strong 1-2 punch to lead the Junior Tall Blacks in breaking away for good in the second quarter.

Isaac himself nailed back-to-back treys before Hopoi came through with a bucket inside for an 8-0 run toward a 35-22 lead, and it would be all New Zealand since as they marched onto Sunday’s Semis unscathed, still, after four games.

A total of 10 players scored at least 2 in the win, and that’s big thanks to the way they shared the wealth as evidenced by the 20 assists they chalked up.

By reaching the next round, the Junior Tall Blacks have remained on pace of bettering their finish from 2018, where they settled for silver behind Australia.

With their win, New Zealand have formalized the first of two Semi-Final

Iranian parliament speaker urges stronger ties with Tajikistan

TEHRAN – Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has called for strengthening the relationship between Tehran and Dushanbe, emphasizing the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation in various sectors.

In a series of congratulatory messages marking the anniversary of Tajikistan’s independence, Qalibaf reached out to his Tajik counterpart and Tajikistan’s President Emomali Rahmon, underlining the historical ties between the two nations. Qalibaf highlighted the critical role parliamentary interactions play in fostering closer relations and expressed hope that the partnership between the two countries would expand further.

He noted that by tapping into the existing

capacities of both nations, Iran and Tajikistan could work together to advance their mutual national interests across a broad range of fields.

He also emphasized the significance of the long-standing cultural and historical connections between Iran and Tajikistan, and the potential these ties hold for the future.

“Through deeper parliamentary collaboration and mutual understanding, we can ensure that the friendship between our countries continues to grow, benefiting both of our peoples,” Qalibaf stated. Additionally, on Saturday night, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian joined in the celebration by congratulating President Rahmon on Tajikistan’s independence anniversary.

Pezeshkian reiterated that enhancing regional cooperation, particularly with the Republic of Tajikistan, remains a top priority for the 14th government of Iran’s foreign policy. “I am confident that the relations between our two nations, built on mutual respect and shared values, will strengthen and flourish even more than in the past,” President Pezeshkian said in his message, underscoring his belief that the future holds even greater opportunities for collaboration between the two countries.

The messages from Iran’s leadership reflect a clear commitment to fostering stronger diplomatic and economic ties with Tajikistan, as both nations look to deepen their cooperation in the years ahead.

Iraq relocates anti-Iran terrorist groups as part of security agreement with Tehran



TEHRAN – Iraq has begun relocating anti-Iran terrorist groups from its Kurdish region along the Iranian border to camps located deeper within its territory, in accordance with a security agreement between Baghdad and Tehran.

This move is part of ongoing efforts to ensure greater security

in the region and curb terrorist activities near the shared border.

The Komala terrorist group, a well-known separatist organization, issued a statement confirming that it had vacated its bases in the Zargweh area and relocated its forces to the Swaresh district, near the city of Dukan, approximately 40 kilometers north of their previous location.

This action aligns with the security pact that Iraq and Iran concluded two years ago, which mandates that all terrorist and separatist groups near Iran’s borders be disarmed and relocated away from the frontier.

In recent weeks, the Iraqi authorities have intensified efforts to fulfill the terms of this agreement, particularly ahead of an upcoming

visit by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian to Baghdad.

To demonstrate goodwill and progress, Iraqi officials forced other groups, including Komala, to move their forces to new camps. Several other factions, such as the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, had already evacuated their bases in line with the agreement.

The security pact was established following a series of Iranian missile and drone strikes on terrorist bases in northern Iraq nearly two years ago.

These strikes were in response to provocations by anti-Iranian groups during the 2022 foreign-backed riots, which Tehran accused of fomenting unrest in the region.

President Pezeshkian, who is set to visit Iraq on Wednesday, will embark on his first official foreign trip since taking office in late July. His administration has made it clear that strengthening ties with neighboring countries is a top priority.

In a recent meeting with Iraq’s prime minister, the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei stressed the importance of fully implementing the bilateral agreements that have been signed between the two nations in recent years.

Over the past two decades, Iran and Iraq have been working to enhance their diplomatic, economic, and security cooperation.

Iran’s response to external threats will be calculated: Bahraini cleric

TEHRAN – Sheikh Abdullah Al-Daqq, Deputy Leader of Bahrain’s Shia community, has emphasized that Iran’s response to any external threats will be measured and strategic.

In an interview with the Iranian media, Al-Daqq highlighted that Iran’s actions are driven by careful planning, reflecting both a deep strategic approach and the nation’s strength and capabilities.

Al-Daqq further noted that Iran, following the teachings of Imam Khomeini, fears only God and remains unshaken by any worldly threats. “This mindset, rooted in a belief that only God’s will should be acknowledged, forms the foundation

of Iran’s resilience in the face of pressure and external challenges,” he explained.

He went on to say that Iran’s current patience and silence should not be misunderstood as weakness, but rather as a display of wisdom and prudence. According to Al-Daqq, this approach signals the country’s readiness for a decisive and forceful reaction when necessary.

“The patience Iran is showing today hints at something significant on the horizon,” he remarked. “When the time comes, Iran’s response will demonstrate both its strength and strategic wisdom.”

Al-Daqq concluded by affirming that Iran’s calm, calculated approach reflects its

commitment to standing firm against any threat while upholding its core principles and values.

Ismail Haniyeh, the political bureau chief of the Palestinian Resistance movement Hamas, and one of his bodyguards were assassinated at their residence in the Iranian capital on Wednesday, July 31, 2024. Haniyeh was present in Tehran to participate in the inauguration ceremony of Masoud Pezeshkian, the newly elected president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In response, high-ranking Iranian officials have vowed to avenge Haniyeh’s death, asserting Iran’s right to retaliate against this violation of its sovereignty by Israel.

Iran's trade with OIC member states rises 15%

TEHRAN - The value of the trade exchanges between Iran and the other 56 members of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) reached \$26.7 billion in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), registering a 15 percent increase compared to the same period a year earlier.

According to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the volume of the trade exchanges between Iran and OIC member states in the mentioned five months reached 42.3 million tons, also 10 percent more compared to the previous year's same time span.

Iran exported 33.6 million tons of non-oil goods worth \$13.5 billion to OIC member countries and imported 8.7 million tons of commodities valued at \$13.2 billion from them in the first five months of the current Iranian year, Mohammad Reza-zanifard said.

The deputy economy minister added that the country's exports to OIC members registered 16 percent and 8.0 percent increase in value and weight respectively in the mentioned period, while the import of products from the mentioned countries also increased by 18 percent and 15 percent in terms of weight and value.

Among the OIC member states, the United

Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, and Oman were Iran's major trade partners, the IRICA head noted.

Back in May 2023, the former head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) stressed the need for establishing a joint Islamic market among OIC members over the next 10 years.

Addressing a gathering of the heads of OIC member chambers of commerce on the sidelines of the "Russia - Islamic World: Kazan Forum 2023" in Russia, Gholam-Hossein Shafeie said: "An important issue that has been discussed a lot in the past and the organization should pay attention to it in the current situation is the creation of a common Islamic market in the next 10 years, which can be achieved by concluding a free trade agreement among Islamic countries and removing tariff and non-tariff barriers."

"Experts have worked on the Islamic market plan, and using the experiences and studies of these experts can definitely be a way forward," he added.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which was formed in 1972, today has reached a position where, according to statistics, the future of the world's energy would be in the hands of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Shafeie said in his speech.

Iran, Turkey discuss expansion of trade ties between private sectors



TEHRAN - During a meeting between a delegation of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA) and the senior directors of the Turkish Exporters Union (TiM), the two sides explored the ways to improve and develop trade relations between the private sectors of the two countries.

In the meeting, held at the place of TiM in Istanbul, the areas of development of commercial cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries were discussed and the use of advantages and capacities in the fields of tourism, food, textile and pharmaceutical industries was emphasized, the TCCIMA portal reported.

In this meeting, TCCIMA Head Mahmoud Najafi-Arab referring to the trade balance of 1.6 billion dollars between the two countries, which is also positive for Turkey, mentioned the re-export of some Iranian products through this country as one of the opportunities to optimize the trade relations between the two countries.

Recalling that Turkey has great power and experience in the field of tourism, he mentioned the use of the capacity of Turkish tourism companies to cooperate with the Iranian tourism industry and to increase the attraction of foreign tourists to Iran as another area of development of relations between these two neighboring countries.

Najafi-Arab also pointed to Iran's high power and knowledge in the textile industry and said that by setting up a joint cooperation program, the global expertise of Turkish companies can be used to strengthen the branding of Iranian products in international markets.

The TCCIMA head then pointed to the technical knowledge and expertise of Iranian companies in the pharmaceutical industry, especially in biotech drugs and probiotic industries, and emphasized on strengthening cooperation between the two countries in these sectors.

Addressing the same meeting, TiM Deputy Chairman Ahmet Gulec explained about this large Turkish private sector union and reminded that currently 150,000 Turkish

exporters are members of this union and 61 export associations of this country also form the body of this large entity.

According to him, this union covers 27 product groups in the agricultural, industrial, mining and service sectors, and supporting Turkish exporters for their greater presence in the world markets is one of the main goals of the union.

He further put the export value of Turkey in 2023 at \$357 billion and the import value at \$410 billion, and reminded that the country plans to rise the value of products export to \$375 billion and the value of services export to \$200 billion by 2028.

He called the joint investment and the construction of Turkish factories in Iran and vice versa, among the capacities of joint cooperation and reminded that the TiM is ready to cooperate and interact with the TCCIMA to strengthen and develop the exports of the companies of the two countries.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of non-oil trade between Iran and Turkey stood at \$4.125 billion during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-July 21).

As reported, Turkey was Iran's second biggest trade partner among the neighboring countries during the four-month period.

In early July, Director of Asia and the Pacific Office of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) International Affairs Department Niloufar Asadi said a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Iran and Turkey should replace the previous trade agreements between the two countries to boost economic exchanges.

In a meeting with the Consul General of Iran in Istanbul, Asadi referred to a previously reached preferential trade agreement between Iran and Turkey under the framework of the Group of Eight Developing Islamic Countries (D8) and said: "Considering the shortcomings of the previously signed preferential trade agreement and the necessity to improve and develop it, I suggest that a free trade agreement between the two countries replaces the previous agreements."

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

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

25MW solar farm inaugurated in Kerman province

TEHRAN - A solar farm with the capacity of generating 25 megawatts of electricity came on stream in Shahr-e Babak Copper Complex in Kerman province, and was connected to the national power network on Sunday, IRIB reported.

This solar farm, which is established in 42 hectares of land, can play a key role in removing electricity imbalance in the country.

As reported, the establishment of a 100-megawatt solar power plant in the near future, to provide sustainable energy and improve people's quality of life, is being investigated and planned.

Back in February, the head of the technical office of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) has said that five solar parks are currently being constructed across the country, Mehr News Agency reported.

"The government has approved the plan for the establishment of 17 solar parks in six provinces, five of which are being constructed," Ruhollah Ebrahimi said.

According to the official, the mentioned parks are being established in Qazvin and Kerman provinces.

The Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), on behalf of the Energy Ministry, is in charge of the construction



of the mentioned solar parks, and so far this organization has had good cooperation with ISIPO for the implementation of the said plan, Ebrahimi explained.

Last month, Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) reported that Iranian renewable power plants generated 261 million kilowatt-hours (Kwh) of electricity in the fourth Iranian calendar month of Tir (June 21- July 21), registering a nine-percent growth compared to a month earlier.

The electricity generated by renewable sources also 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.

In late July, SATBA Head Mahmoud Kamani said 600 renewable power plants with a total capacity of 13,500 megawatts (MW) are under construction across the country and with these power plants going operational the share of renewables in Iran's power generation will reach 15 percent.

"We hope that by implementing these power plants, the share of renewable energies in Iran's electricity production will increase to more than 15 percent in the next two years," Kamani said.

Based on the Energy Ministry data, renewables, currently, ac-

count 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 hydro-power plants generate 13 percent of the total renewable capacity.

In early August, SATBA reported that the capacity of Iran's renewable power plants has reached 1,199.71 MW.

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.

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.

Tehran hosting Iran Plast 2024 exhibition



TEHRAN - Iran's 18th International Exhibition of Plastic, Rubber, Machinery, and Equipment (IRAN PLAST 2024) opened at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground on Sunday, Shana reported.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by senior officials from the industry including Head of the National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Morteza Shahmirzai, and Deputy Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Baradaran.

As reported, 525 domestic companies and 288 foreign exhibitors from China, Italy, Taiwan, South Korea, Turkey, France, India, Ger-

many, Spain, and Russia are showcasing their latest products and services in the four-day exhibition.

Representatives from Russia, Serbia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Belarus, Syria, Iraq, and Oman are also visiting the exhibition in the form of 12 business delegations with the aim of expanding cooperation with Iranian companies.

The exhibition covers various commodity and service groups including petrochemical raw materials and products, technical engineering services, prefabricated and manufactured products, machinery and equipment, scientific, research, and academic centers, HSE laboratory testing, information technology, and digital transformation, as well as polymer compound services and products.

As the biggest event in the petrochemicals and plastics industry in West Asia, Iran Plast was held for the first time in 2002 on the initiative of Iran's National Petrochemical Com-

pany (NPC) to boost the domestic plastics industry market, facilitate the global marketing process and present in international markets.

The exhibition, which is classified among the world's prestigious exhibitions of the plastic industry, seeks to provide a platform for developing the domestic plastics industry market.

A statistical look at the previous editions of the exhibition shows that this event has been following a growing trend despite all the problems and issues created by external factors like the U.S. sections.

Meanwhile, the 15th International Forum on Iran's Petrochemical Industry (IPF) was held on August 4 and 5 at the IRIB Conference Hall.

During the two-day event, which was organized by the National Petrochemical Company (NPC), more than 40 Iranian and foreign speakers, and the representatives of 70 domestic and foreign companies participated.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

ICCIMA hosts gathering of economic enterprises

TEHRAN - Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) held the 14th conference of the country's economic enterprises dubbed "Economic enterprises, leaders of development" on Saturday to explore challenges and opportunities facing the mentioned entities.

Chaired by the ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh, the conference was attended by representatives of several economic enterprises from various provinces.

As the ICCIMA portal reported,

the event has received more attention due to the government's approach in using the private sector's capacities, and a part of it is dedicated to the introduction of the country's top enterprises.

Speaking at the conference, Hassanzadeh emphasized that the private sector is seeking to clarify the position of enterprises in the country's economy, adding: "Economic enterprises guide and direct the individual efforts of businesses and are a bridge for communication between people and the

government."

Underlining the role of enterprises in expressing concerns and economic problems and finding operational solutions to face them, Hassanzadeh said: "In recent years, we have seen that after the implementation of any policy, challenges emerge, the cause of which is the lack of consensus with enterprises; While the principle of consulting organizations and economic enterprises is emphasized in the law."

Pointing out that the multiplicity

of organizations granting licenses for establishing enterprises and the existence of parallel economic entities are among the problems in this field, he said: "Using the capacity of economic enterprises is one example of specialization that leads to productivity growth. Based on this, we hope that the 14th government will take advantage of their capacity in the policy-making process so that the private sector can fulfill its great mission in the path of economic development."

Iran's share of Kuwaiti market should increase, says official

TEHRAN - The head of the Iran-Kuwait Chamber of Commerce has criticized the low level of trade relations between the two neighbors, calling for an increase in trade exchanges between the two countries, IRNA reported.

Ebrahim Gholamzadeh put Kuwait's imports from other countries at about \$52 billion based on the latest statistics and said: "Despite having the privilege of being a neighbor to Kuwait, Iran has a very small share of the mentioned figure, which should be increased."

Speaking in a press conference in Tehran on Saturday, Gholamzadeh invited Kuwaiti businessmen and investors to visit Iran to learn about the countless capacities and golden investment opportunities in the country, and added: "Iran is ready to welcome foreign investors, especially from Kuwait, in various

fields, including industry, agriculture, services and tourism."

"The existing capacities in the agriculture and industrial sectors of our country can contribute to the food security of Kuwait," the official said.

He further put the Islamic Republic exports to Kuwait in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) at \$198 million, adding that Kuwait also exported \$12 million of goods to Iran in the mentioned year.

Food products, construction materials, and minerals were the top commodity items exported from Iran to Kuwait, while machinery and industrial equipment accounted for the lion's share of Iran's imports from the Arab neighbor.

Back in June, Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Toutouchi and Kuwaiti Minister

of Commerce and Industry Omar Saud Al-Omar held talks and called for developing a roadmap to broadening trade exchanges.

During the meeting, Toutouchi emphasized that the current economic ties between the two countries are one-sided and do not reflect their long-standing political and cultural relations.

He suggested that establishing a joint trade committee after a nine-year hiatus and organizing an exhibition of Iran's export capabilities could boost trade, particularly in the food sector.

Meanwhile, Al-Omar expressed Kuwait's willingness to enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Iran, hoping that the joint trade committee would pave the way for greater trade cooperation in the near future.

Deepening cracks in the apartheid regime

Frustration spills over as 750,000 Israelis protest Gaza war failures

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Widespread disillusionment and deep divisions in Israel over the war in Gaza are back in the limelight in the wake of huge and unprecedented protests held in cities such as Tel Aviv at the weekend.

An estimated 750,000 people took to the streets in Israel on Saturday night. Organizers say 500,000 Israelis rallied in Tel Aviv marking the largest-ever demonstration in the regime's history.

Some 250,000 others attended rallies in cities including Jerusalem (Al-Quds) and Haifa fuming over the Israeli army's failure to return the remaining captives.

More than 11 months have passed since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered his army to invade Gaza after Hamas carried out a surprise military operation in southern Israel dubbed the Al-Aqsa Storm.

More than 1,100 people were killed during the Al-Aqsa Storm and 250 Israelis and foreigners were taken captive.

Around 100 captives still remain in Gaza, but about one-third of them are believed to be dead. Israel has freed eight captives and recovered the bodies of dozens of others. More than 100 of them were also released in a swap deal with Hamas in November last year.

Since the start of the war on October 7, the Israeli army has failed to achieve any of its goals which mainly include the elimination of Hamas and returning captives.

Protesters in their weekend rallies called on Netanyahu to reach a deal with Hamas to secure the release of the captives.

"I think even those who were



maybe reluctant to go out, who are not used to protest, who are sad but prefer to be in private space within their sadness, understood our voice must join together to one huge scream: Bring the hostages with a deal. Do not risk their lives," said Efrat Machikawa, a protester in Tel Aviv and the relative of one of the captives.

Protests were marked by scuffles and police arrests.

Bibi must go!

Demonstrators in Jerusalem (Al-Quds) gathered outside Netanyahu's residence calling for the release of the captives while chanting "the regime's lies won't bring about security".

The demonstrators also called for an end to the Gaza war, the downfall of the Netanyahu cabinet, and another general strike to build up economic pressure for a deal.

Protesters also called for Bibi's ouster in Caesarea, as they gathered near one of his private residences.

Protests over the release of captives have become a regular occurrence in Israel over the past months.

But Netanyahu has insisted that he will continue the war

that the premier is ready to sacrifice captives to remain in power.

Israeli officials including Gallant and Chief of the General Staff Herzi Halevi have admitted that Netanyahu is using the Philadelphia Corridor as a pretext for his political interests.

Such developments have turned a spotlight on widening cracks within the Israeli establishment and society.

Besides, large protests have been held across the world in the past months calling for an end to the Gaza war.

Protests against Israel's war of genocide which has so far claimed the lives of about 41,000 Palestinians in Gaza have highlighted the regime's domestic and international isolation.

But such protests are the result of the strong resistance put up by Palestinians.

The Israeli army, through the unwavering support of the United States and some other Western allies, has failed to eliminate Hamas.

Israeli troops have suffered heavy blows at the hands of resistance fighters on the Gaza battlefield.

Resistance fighters have also dealt severe blows to the regime's army during its recent large-scale assault on the occupied West Bank.

Growing rifts in Israel and the power of the Palestinian resistance will ultimately bring the occupiers to their knees and force them to retreat from Gaza with tails tucked firmly between their legs.

until "total victory" over Hamas. War minister Yoav Gallant said last month that Netanyahu's "total victory" dream is nonsense and gibberish.

The Israeli premier stands accused of throwing a wrench into the ceasefire negotiations to keep himself in power. He considers a permanent state of war as a lifeline. This is because his cabinet will collapse if the war ends and he will be held to account for failing to prevent the Al-Aqsa Storm Operation.

Netanyahu has made up a new excuse to sabotage a ceasefire proposal that was laid out by US President Joe Biden in late May and welcomed by Hamas. The UN Security Council later approved a US resolution backing the ceasefire plan.

But Netanyahu has set new conditions to derail the talks.

He has dug in on his position that Israeli troops remain on the Philadelphia Corridor, along the Gaza-Egypt border, which is a major sticking point in the ongoing negotiations with the Hamas resistance movement.

The record number of Israelis who joined the Saturday rallies have even got wise to Netanyahu's schemes. They have realized

Hezbollah responds to Israeli massacre

Northern settlements hit with rocket barrages

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - Lebanon's Hezbollah has targeted Israeli military positions in the northern settlements.

The resistance movement announced the settlements of Kiryat Shmona and Shamir were targeted with barrages of Falaq and Katyusha rockets.

Israeli military informed settlers in Kiryat Shmona not to leave fortified areas, as sirens repeatedly sounded, as well as in three other settlements. Israeli Army Radio acknowledged that a building in Kiryat Shmona was hit by Hezbollah's rocket attacks.

The Lebanese resistance has been acting as a support front in solidarity with Gaza since October 8, 2023. The daily exchange of fire with the Israeli military has at times risked blowing into a full-scale war.

Some 100,000 Israelis have left the north and sought refuge in Tel Aviv and elsewhere. Analysts have put the number at 300,000. Officials in the north have accused the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of abandoning them.

Experts believe there is not much else that Tel Aviv can do to bring the settlers back unless there is a ceasefire in Gaza. In that case, Hezbollah has said it will stop attacks.

The Lebanese resistance movement issued its first statement of the day on Sunday that read:

"In support of our steadfast Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, and in backing their heroic and honorable resistance, and in response to the enemy's attacks on (Lebanon's) resilient southern villages and peaceful homes, especially the horrific massacre in the town of Faroun that resulted in the martyrdom and injury of civil defense members, the Islamic Resistance fighters bombed the Kiryat Shmona settlement on Sunday, 8-9-2024, with a barrage of Falaq rockets."

Reports suggest five batches of about 100 surface-to-surface rockets were launched from southern Lebanon.

In a second statement, Hezbollah said its fighters bombed "the Kiryat Shmona settlement for the second time with an intense barrage of rockets".

A third statement said the Lebanese resistance movement "bombed the Shamir settlement with a barrage of Katyusha rockets".

Hezbollah targeted Israeli "spy equipment at the Malkia settlement with an attack drone, hitting it directly and destroying it," the movement declared in a fourth statement.

In a fifth statement, Hezbollah "targeted [Israeli] spy equipment at the Ruwaisat Al-Alam site in the occupied Lebanese Kfar Shuba Hills with appropriate weapons, hitting them directly and destroying them."

The maritime Ras al-Naqoura site and the positions of Israeli officers and soldiers were the subject of a swarm of assault drones, according to a sixth statement by Hezbollah on Sunday, which added that the targets were hit precisely.

In another statement, Hezbollah also announced that "a gathering of Israeli enemy soldiers was targeted with artillery shells, resulting in a direct hit".

At the same time, Israeli assaults on southern Lebanese villages continued, with airstrikes targeting the town of Maroun al-Ras and another strike on the village of Aytaroun, both close to the Lebanese border.

Hezbollah's operations on Sunday mainly came in response to Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon's villages, particularly the massacre in Faroun, which killed at least three medical personnel and left several wounded. Among the injured were two with the Lebanese civil defense who are reportedly in critical condition. The operations were also part of the daily support for the people and resistance fighters in the Gaza Strip.

Lebanese Health Minister Firas al-Abiad has disclosed that since October 8 last year, 27 emergency personnel and health workers have been killed while 94 others wounded in the Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

Palestinian factions hail 'heroic' operation at West Bank-Jordan border

Palestinian resistance factions have hailed as "heroic" a retaliatory shooting operation near the Allenby Bridge on the border between the occupied West Bank and Jordan in response to Israel's unending genocidal war on the besieged Gaza Strip.

In a statement on Sunday, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement said, "This heroic act is the most genuine expression of the sentiments of the Jordanian people, as well as the Arab and Muslim nations, towards the brutal massacres committed by the enemy."

It said "such heroic operations are the only response understood" by the United States which has been a partner in Israeli crimes in Gaza and the West Bank, Press TV reported.

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas also described the heroic operation as a "natural response" to the crimes committed by the occupying regime against Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

It also noted that the shooting operation "reaffirms the Arab peoples' rejection of

the occupation, its crimes, and its ambitions in Palestine and Jordan," adding that it confirms their strong support for the Palestinian resistance.

Hamas further called on all Muslims to rise against Israel's aggression against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, as well as the regime's "vicious assault" on the civilians in the West Bank.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

WORLD HEADLINES

Over 600,000 students in Gaza denied education



The Palestinian Ministry of Education has said that a day before the school year starts, more than 600,000 students are being denied learning opportunities.

"The Israeli onslaught on Gaza has killed or injured more than 25,000 children, including 10,000 students. It has also destroyed 90 percent of the 307 public school buildings," the ministry said in a statement, Al Jazeera reported.

"Access to education is a right, so despite the bombardment, the ministry is trying to launch e-learning opportunities or to even provide classes inside tents.

Israel targets 16 shelter schools in Gaza in one month

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor said its field team has documented Israeli air strikes at midnight on Saturday, September 7, targeting the Halimah al-Saadiyah School in Jabalia Al-Nazla, north of the Gaza Strip.

The building was sheltering hundreds of forcibly displaced people. The attack killed four Palestinians and injured others.

Earlier on Saturday, Israeli aircraft also bombed Amr Ibn al-Aas School, another shelter for displaced people north of Gaza City, killing four Palestinians, including a child.

According to the human rights group, since the beginning of August, Israel has bombed 16 schools used as shelters in the Gaza Strip, killing 217 Palestinians and injuring hundreds - many of them women and children.

Nearly 3 dozen Palestinians arrested in West Bank

Israeli forces have arrested at least 35 Palestinians in the occupied West Bank at the weekend, Wafa reported.

A joint statement from the Palestinian Prisoner's Society and the Palestinian Authority's Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs said those arrested included former prisoners and that Israeli forces summoned one woman for questioning.

The statement also highlighted the ongoing extensive raids, mistreatment, and threats against detainees and their families by Israeli forces, which include field interrogations and the destruction of homes.

It added that the systematic arrest campaigns have become a central policy of the Israeli forces and have intensified significantly since the war on Gaza began.

Gaza civil defense says 83 personnel killed since last October

The Gaza civil defense announced on Sunday the death of its deputy director for northern Gaza in an Israeli airstrike, raising the number of personnel killed since October 7, 2023 to 83.

In a statement, spokesperson Mahmoud

Bassal mourned "the martyrdom of Mohammad Abdelhay Morsi, the deputy director of civil defense in northern Gaza, who was killed in an Israeli strike targeting his family's home early this morning in the Al-Alami area of Jabalia."

Bassal said that besides the 83 personnel killed, over 200 others are wounded, Anadolu reported.

He highlighted challenges faced by the civil defense teams, including a shortage of specialized rescue equipment and a lack of fuel and spare parts necessary to continue their operations to protect lives and property.

Harris, Trump deadlocked in new New York Times poll

Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump are neck and neck in a major new national survey, with less than two months to go before Election Day.

The poll, from The New York Times and Siena College, has Trump at 48 percent to 47 percent for Harris among likely voters, within the poll's margin of error. The results are similar to a survey from the pair from July, right after President Joe Biden dropped his reelection bid.

The poll comes ahead of Harris and Trump's ABC News debate on Tuesday night, the only scheduled debate so far between the two candidates. And that debate could be even more crucial for the vice president: According to the poll, 28 percent of likely voters said they feel like they need to learn more about Harris, compared to 9 percent who said they need to know more about Trump.

Additionally, 47 percent of likely voters viewed Harris as too liberal, while 32 percent of likely voters saw Trump as too conservative.

Ehud Barak: Israel is faltering and nearing defeat

Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak stated that Israel is faltering in the Gaza Strip, lacking both a strategy and a clear plan of action, according to the Israel Hayom newspaper.

Barak further remarked that Israel is closer to defeat than to achieving a decisive victory.

WHO: Over 20,000 dead in Sudan conflict

More than 20,000 people have been killed in the ongoing conflict in Sudan between the army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group since April 2023, the director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Sunday, Anadolu reported.

Speaking at a press conference in Port Sudan during a two-day visit to Sudan, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said 10 more million people have been internally displaced in addition to two million refugees in neighboring countries.

"The scale of the emergency is shocking, as is the insufficient action being taken to curtail the conflict and respond to the suffering it is causing," he said.

He said almost half of Sudan's 25 million population needs urgent intervention while 70% of the country's health sector is no longer operational.

The WHO chief called on the "world to wake up and help Sudan out of the nightmare it is living through."

On Saturday, Ghebreyesus reiterated the WHO's commitment to addressing the pressing humanitarian and health issues in Sudan, including insecurity, mass displacement, floods, famine, and disease outbreaks.

Mashhad airport transfers 273k passengers in final days of Safar



TEHRAN - About a quarter of a million passengers have traveled through Mashhad's international airport during the last ten days of Safar, the lunar month commemorated as the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam.

"273,680 passengers were transported through Shahid Hashemi Nejad International Airport during the final days of the month of Safar," said a local official speaking to reporters on Sunday, adding that the passenger traffic is calculated from August 30 to September 8.

Mahmoud Amani-Bani further explained that this number of passengers was transported through 2,005 incoming and outgoing flights at the airport.

The airport, he continued, handled 793 domestic inbound flights carrying 108,371 passengers and 788 domestic outbound flights with 107,433 passengers during this period.

Additionally, there were 212 international inbound flights with 29,256 passengers and 212 international outbound flights with 28,620 passengers, according to the official.

"On September 4, which coincided with the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Reza (AS), a record was set for the highest number of flights in a single day, with 241 flights and 32,900 passengers passing through Mashhad International Airport," Amani-Bani brought to light.

Imam Reza (AS) holds a revered place in Shia Islam, particularly among Iranians, due to his historical and spiritual significance. As a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the eighth Imam in Twelver Shia Islam, Imam Reza is honored with numerous titles, including Reza, Alem Al-Muhammad, Gharib Al-Ghoarba, Shams Al-Shomous, and Moin Al-Zoafa. His martyrdom anniversary, known as the "Day of Mourning," is a time of deep reflection and commemoration for millions of his followers.

The pilgrimage to Imam Reza's shrine is not only a significant spiritual event but also a testament to the deep devotion and cultural significance attached to the Imam among Shia Muslims.

In August 2020, the spiritual tradition of pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) was registered on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Gilan welcomes 6.2 million travelers in eight days



TEHRAN - Gilan province, situated along the Caspian Sea in northern Iran, has played hostess to around six million visitors during the recent holiday period, as revealed by a local tourism official.

"The province welcomed approximately 6.2 million visitors from August 31 to September 7," Vali Jahani told IRNA on Sunday, emphasizing that Gilan will remain in a special service condition for tourists until September 22.

The influx of visitors was facilitated through both land and air travel, with the majority arriving by personal vehicles, he fur-

ther elaborated.

Jahani pinpointed that during this period, 683,113 cars entered the province, with the peak on September 2, when over 110,000 vehicles were recorded. The busiest route, he added, was the Qazvin-Rasht Freeway.

The director-general noted that accommodation facilities, both permanent and temporary, were fully booked during this time, with over 8.5 million overnight stays registered. "The occupancy rate of these facilities reached 110% over recent holidays," he outlined.

In his final words, Jahani stated that currently, Gilan has 3,176 official accommodation units with about 50,000 beds, including 115 hotels, 51 apartment hotels, 102 tourist complexes, 19 entertainment and recreational units, 171 eco-lodges, five traditional lodgings, and 2,660 guest houses.

Gilan province in northern Iran, along the Caspian Sea, is known for its lush landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and status as a tourism hub.

New pathway to enhance visitors' experience at 1,600-year-old palace

TEHRAN - A new tourist pathway is being constructed to enhance access and protection at the Sassanid Palace in Sarvestan, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

"Two projects aimed at safeguarding and organizing the World Heritage-listed Sassanid Palace in Sarvestan will be implemented soon," said a local tourism official, speaking on the sidelines of a visit to the Sassanid site on Sunday.

Mohammad Sabet-Eqlidi further explained that a safe visitor pathway and access to the architectural spaces of the Sarvestan Palace will be constructed with an allocated budget of over 13 billion rials (some \$25,000).

The director-general added that the project involves the development of a dual-purpose pathway (both protective and tourist-oriented) for the brick dome of the Sassanid Palace.

With the completion of these projects, access via stairs to the top of the dome will be provided for visitors and tourists, allowing them to view the interior spaces from above, according to Sabet-Eqlidi.

Sarvestan Palace is a Sassanid-era structure located in Fars province and is one of the World Heritage sites included in the Sassanid Archaeological Landscape. This monumental building is situated 13 kilometers south of

Sarvestan and along the route from Shiraz to Fasa in southwestern Iran.

The palace, a magnificent structure measuring 37 by 45 meters, features two large domes, arches, various portals, and is constructed with architectural materials such as rubble stone and plaster, with some brick ceilings. It includes numerous sections, blending spaces seamlessly together.

The main parts of the building consist of five iwans, two domed halls, two columned halls, three rooms, and a central open space. The palace, locally known as "Qasr-e Sasan" or "Chartaq," is commonly referred to as the Sarvestan Palace.

The building showcases the architectural continuity from the ancient era to the Islamic period. The Sassanid Palace in Sarvestan was inscribed as part of the "Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region" on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2018. This archaeological landscape encompasses eight historical sites across three historical areas: Firuzabad, Bishapur, and Sarvestan, located in southeastern Fars province.

The Sassanid era (224-651 CE) is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under the Sassanids, Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance.

Discover world's largest natural 'plant pots'

TEHRAN - Within and on the margins of the UNESCO-registered Lut Desert stand some of the most extraordinary natural formations in the world; the nabkhas.

These unique elements, which have been registered on Iran's national list of natural elements, are dubbed as the world's largest "natural plant pots" by some locals in Kerman province.

Those marvels of nature offer a rare glimpse into the intricate interplay of environmental forces that shape desert landscapes.

Jewel of desert

Fahraj county, situated some 260 kilometers southeast of Kerman, the provincial capital, is often referred to as the "green jewel of the desert."

The region, featuring giant dunes, shifting sands, salt plains, wind-sculpted kaluts, nabkhas, ancient fortresses, and diverse historical sites, has become a dream destination for adventurers and nature enthusiasts alike.

Moreover, Fahraj is known for its palm groves and vibrant vegetation, which provide a striking contrast to the surrounding barren sands of the Lut Desert.

This unique oasis-like environment not only enhances the natural beauty of the area but also holds significant potential for tourism and economic development.

The diverse landscape offers



a unique blend of natural and historical attractions, making Fahraj a promising location for investment in tourism infrastructure.

Elevated nabkhas

The nabkhas of Fahraj have earned the distinction of being the tallest of their kind globally.

In October 2021, the "world's largest" nabkha was discovered in the Lut Desert, measuring an astonishing 21 meters in height. This nabkha is taller than those found in Africa and other desert regions worldwide, underscoring the uniqueness of the Iranian formations.

Aside from Iran's Lut Desert and the Sahara in Africa, no other places in the world host nabkhas. These formations typically occur on flat surfaces with moderate sand levels and high groundwater availability or sufficient moisture to sup-

port plant growth.

A heaven for ecotourism

The villages of Asadabad and Jahanabad in Fahraj county are gateways to the highest concentration of nabkhas, presenting excellent opportunities for developing eco-tourism in the area. As natural phenomena of global significance, these giant plant pots draw the attention of tourists, scientists, and nature lovers, making them valuable assets for promoting sustainable tourism and local economic growth.

In addition to showcasing these remarkable formations, there is immense potential to develop infrastructure to support tourism around Fahraj and its surrounding areas. Building eco-friendly facilities, establishing guided tours, and promoting cultural experiences can help attract more visitors to this unique region, providing much-needed

economic benefits to the towns and villages on the edge of the desert.

Accumulation of wind-blown sand around vegetation

The nabkhas are formed by the accumulation of wind-blown sand around vegetation, such as tamarisk or haloxylon trees.

Over time, these plants trap sand at their base, creating a mound that resembles a giant plant pot.

The process of nabkha formation can take decades, and some are believed to be as old as a thousand years.

These natural structures play a crucial role in stabilizing shifting sands and retaining moisture, contributing significantly to the ecological stability of desert environments.

Nabkhas are primarily found around the Lut Desert and in areas like Shahdad, Fahraj, and Rigan.

However, the nabkhas in Fahraj stand out due to their exceptional height, with some towering up to 20 meters — nearly the height of a five-story building. This unique characteristic makes them some of the tallest natural plant pots in the world, earning them global recognition.

Efforts underway for UNESCO registration of Varamin's 14th-century mosque

TEHRAN - The head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Office of Varamin county has announced the preparation of a dossier for the Jameh Mosque of Varamin to seek UNESCO World Heritage status.

Mohammadreza Tajik stated that representatives from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts have begun assessments and field visits to compile the dossier for the historical and religious monument.

The goal is to submit this dossier to the United Nations World Tourism Organization for consideration as a collective World Heritage of Iranian mosques.

Tajik emphasized the support and cooperation of the Tehran province's Cultural Heritage Office in this effort, noting that the initiative aims to make optimal use of the region's tourism potential and bring transformation to the Varamin plain.

He expressed hope that with the establishment of a tourism committee at the provincial and local levels, Varamin will achieve global and international recognition.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official added that the Jameh Mosque of Varamin represents the historical and religious identity of the land it is located in, serving as a symbol of its ancient and proud civilization.

Tajik highlighted that registering a site on the World Heritage list offers numerous benefits, including enhanced protection and preservation, as well as the promotion of its values to a global audience.

He noted that such recognition would turn the mosque into a global tourist destination, attracting numerous international and domestic visitors.

The official further mentioned that the preparation of the dossier was among the requests raised during the visit of the former tourism minister, Ezzatollah Zarghami, to Varamin last September.

It also reflects the demands of local authorities, experts, researchers, artists, and the people of Varamin.

He added that the Jameh Mosque of Varamin is an example of a four-ivan mosque, featuring an inscription dated 722 AH (1322-23 CE). Its construction began under the order of Sultan Muhammad Khodabandeh (Oljeitu) and was completed during the reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan, the last ruler of the Ilkhanid dy-



nasty, a division of the Mongol Empire that encompassed the present-day countries of Iran, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, as well as parts of Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

"The mosque showcases exquisite craftsmanship in brickwork, tilework, stucco with Islamic designs, and calligraphic inscriptions, reflecting the highest levels of artistry and beauty."

The mosque showcases exquisite craftsmanship in brickwork, tilework, stucco with Islamic designs, and calligraphic inscriptions, reflecting the highest levels of artistry and beauty.

The terms "Jameh Mosque," "Masjed-e Jameh" and "Friday Mosque" are used in Iran for a grand communal mosque where mandatory Friday prayers are performed; the phrase is used in other Muslim countries but only in Iran does it designate this purpose.

Four-ivan layout

The Jameh Mosque of Varamin follows the four-ivan (portico) plan. On the qibla (south) side of the courtyard, a broad and shallow iwan with an arched muqarnas semidome leads onto a domed hall with a mihrab.

The dome rises from a sixteen-sided drum with alternating windows, resting on an octagonal transitional area formed

by four squinches. The height of the dome chamber, which rises above the height of the other iwans, accentuates this important space.

The mosque's decorative treatment is rich on the surface; the materials employed include plaster, glazed and unglazed terracotta, and glazed tile-mosaic work.

A portal iwan of the mosque features glazed terracotta in dark and light blue, forming a geometric pattern on a background of unglazed terracotta.

Its sunburst dome features a medallion at its center, from which descends an arabesque of a diamond geometric motif that expands with the curve of the dome.

The qibla iwan above the dome chamber is decorated with richly ornamented geometric patterns in terracotta, above which an inscription band runs horizontally and marks the beginning of the iwan's vault, which comprises a cluster of muqarnas units. These units are, in turn, constructed out of smaller bricks.

The spandrels of the arches of the four squinches feature glazed terracotta and incorporate in their vaults three tiers of muqarnas. Four windows are situated on the walls of the chambers, each between two squinches.

30 mosques selected so far

Earlier in July, the Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced that 30 historical mosques across 12 Iranian provinces have been identified as eligible for possible inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Ali Darabi made the remarks during his visit to the Jameh Mosque of Saveh, one of Iran's candidates for this collective heritage listing.

In every corner of Iran, cascades of photogenic domes and minarets can be seen as inseparable elements of mosques, some of which are widely known as timeless benchmarks of Islamic architecture.

Among the country's must-see, gorgeous places of worship are Nasir Al-Molk Mosque in Shiraz, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque in Isfahan, Shah Cheragh Mosque in Shiraz, Imam Mosque of Isfahan, Jameh Mosque of Yazd, Blue Mosque in Tabriz, Goharshad Mosque in Mashhad, Vakil Mosque in Shiraz, Agha Buzorg Mosque in Kashan, to name a few.

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN – Observed annually on September 8, the International Literacy Day highlights literacy as a fundamental human right for all.

It reminds everyone of the significance of literacy in creating a more literate, just, peaceful, and sustainable society.

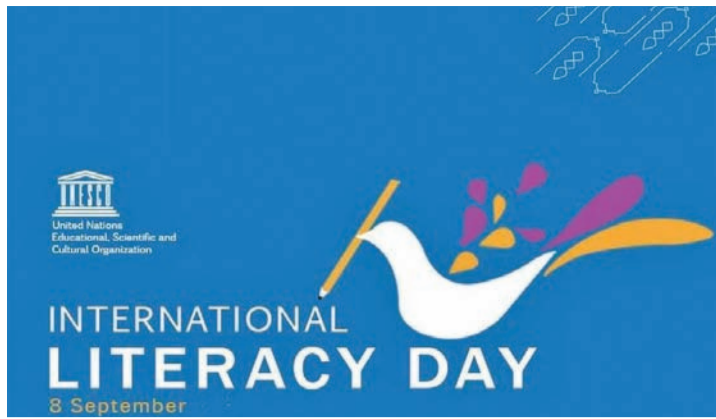
Literacy is a foundation for people to acquire broader knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviors to foster a culture of lasting peace based on respect for equality and non-discrimination, the rule of law, solidarity, justice, diversity, and tolerance, and build harmonious relations with oneself, other people and the planet.

In 2022, however, at least one out of seven adults aged 15 and above (754 million) lacked basic literacy skills. Additionally, millions of children are struggling to acquire minimum levels of proficiency in reading, writing, and numeracy, while some 250 million children of 6-18 years old are out of school.

Eradicating illiteracy

The Literacy Movement Organization was established in the country a year after the 1979 Islamic Revolution by the order of Imam Khomeini with the aim of eradicating illiteracy.

At that time more than half of Iran's population, over the age of six, was illiterate. A great number of children were deprived of attending school. With the population growth back



then, the number of illiterate people increased.

Eliminating illiteracy in the country, promoting cultural independence, and educational justice, were among the most important goals in the formation of the literacy movement.

Now, Iran is on the verge of removing illiteracy.

Over the past years, the Literacy Movement Organization has implemented projects that have been effective in blocking the causes of illiteracy and have been able to promote literacy in different age groups and strata, including foreigners, prisoners, soldiers, parents of illiterate students, employees, workers and women who are the heads of the household.

As the new definition of "literacy" is no longer confined to reading and writing, the first mission of the literacy movement is not to overcome basic illiteracy.

'Literate village and student movement' are among the new

projects that have been implemented by the Literacy Organization Movement.

The former is a national program for enhancing the literacy rate in rural communities planned to be implemented in ten pilot provinces of the country.

The program kicked off on August 22 as announced by the Literacy Movement Organization.

The latter refers to the Literacy Movement Organization's plans to benefit from the capacity of students to improve the country's literacy rate in the near future.

The project will engage students and leverage their capabilities and knowledge in tackling illiteracy.

High school students who are interested in teaching can volunteer to be chosen as teachers.

They will primarily identify illiterate people in their families

and relatives, and then register them in a system designed by the Literacy Movement Organization. Once the recorded information is confirmed, they can start teaching.

The main objectives of the plan are to lower the illiteracy rate in the country, make students more engaged with society by enhancing their interactions with others, and develop their communication skills. The students will also gain job experience which will serve as a valuable addition to their résumé.

2024 theme

This year, the International Literacy Day will be celebrated globally under the theme of "Promoting multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace".

There is a pressing need to harness the transformative potential of literacy for promoting mutual understanding, social cohesion, and peace.

In today's world, in which multilingualism is a common practice for many, empowering people by adopting a first language-based, multilingual approach to literacy development and education is particularly effective for its cognitive, pedagogical, and socio-economic benefits.

Such an approach can help promote mutual understanding and respect, while solidifying communal identities and collective histories.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

Precipitations at normal levels in water year so far

TEHRAN – Normal precipitations have been recorded in the current water year that started on September 23, 2023, reaching 232.5 millimeters so far, the Metrological Organization reported.

A significant amount of rainfall deficit was compensated through the precipitations in spring.

Despite the increase in rainfall, the accumulated deficit in precipitations still persists.

According to the report, the provinces of Semnan (33 percent), Qazvin (26.3 percent), and Tehran (24.9 percent) have received the lowest amount of precipitation.

Also, Bushehr, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Fars, and Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad have experienced less-than-normal rainfall.

However, 27 provinces have received more rainfall compared to the previous water year which ended on September 22, 2023.

Low rainfall forecast for fall

According to numerical weather prediction modeling, the fall weather is forecast to be warmer than normal with low precipitation, Metrological Organization has reported.

"During the past 13 months, the average temperature in each month has been the highest on record which is caused by extreme temperature anomalies," ISNA quoted Ahad Vazifeh, an official with Metrological Organization, as saying.

The warm and cold phases of the Pacific Ocean affect the weather, but this indicator cannot be relied on this year because the transition from El Niño (warm phase) to La Niña (cold phase) is going on slowly, he added.

Most models indicate weak La Niña conditions from November to February. In this condition, indicators that change in the short term such as the North Atlantic Oscillation (Nao), and Mad-

den-Julian Oscillation (MJO) become more effective and impact, he further noted.

Transition into La Niña or neutral conditions?

According to recent forecasts, there is the possibility of either neutral conditions or a transition into La Niña.

Concerning the fact that the cycle is currently moving from El Niño to La Niña, Sadeq Ziaei, an official with national center for forecasting Iran metrological organization, said: "There is over 60 percent chance for neutral conditions and 38 percent chance for experiencing La Niña in the country by August 20," ISNA reported.

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a climate phenomenon that has three parts El Niño, La Niña, and neutral phases.

El Niño and La Niña are opposite extremes of the ENSO, which refers to cyclical environmental conditions that occur across the Equatorial Pacific Ocean.

La Niña is characterized by unusually cold ocean temperatures in the Equatorial Pacific, compared to El Niño, which is characterized by unusually warm ocean temperatures in the Equatorial Pacific.

These changes are due to natural interactions between the ocean and the atmosphere. Sea surface temperature, rainfall, air pressure, and atmospheric and ocean circulation all influence each other.

Ziaei pointed out that in addition to the ENSO, other cyclonic events such as Acetic Oscillation (AO), NAO, MJO, and the Indian Ocean bipolar affect Iran's atmospheric condition.

Under optimal conditions, when La Niña dominates, there is a 60 percent likelihood that the fall season in Iran begins later, and the probability of facing a dry year increases.

Iran ranks world's third top country in intl. Olympiads

TEHRAN – Attending several international Olympiads in 2024, Iranian students managed to win 10 gold medals, 10 silver medals, and two bronze medals, ranking third globally.

The United States and China ranked first and second, respectively. South Korea and India both ranked fourth, ISNA reported.

This year, they competed against other countries in the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI); the International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics; the International Physics Olympiad (IPhO); and the International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO), the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO), as well as the International Biology Olympiad (IBO).

Iranian students grabbed a gold medal, two silver medals, and a bronze medal at the 36th IOI, ranking 9th among 96 countries. Hosted by Alexandria, Egypt, the event was held from September 1 to 8.

Iran attended the event online and ranked ninth globally. Amir-Ali Asgari grabbed the gold medal, Amir-Hossein Farkhondeh-Far and Amir-Reza Dorosti won the silver medals, while Parsa Farajpour-Sarabi received the bronze medal.

In a remarkable achievement, Iranian students won five gold medals, ranking first in the 17th IOAA which was held from August 17 to 27 in Vassouras, state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The five-member team comprised Hannaneh

Khorramdashti, Mohammad-Mehdi Keshavarzi, Arya Fateh-Kerdari, and Ali Naderi-Lordjan, Mehr news agency reported.

This year, over 250 students from 57 countries participated in the event.

Five Iranian students who attended the 54th International Physics Olympiad managed to win a gold medal and four silver medals, improving the country's ranking from 17th in 2023 to fourth this year.

Iranian students managed to win 10 gold medals, 10 silver medals, and two bronze medals.

The 54th edition of the IPhO commenced on July 22 in the city of Isfahan and concluded on July 28.

A total of 200 elite students from 47 countries including Russia, China, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Kuwait, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Mexico, Turkey, and some other countries participated in the nine-day event, IRNA reported.

Iran grabbed one gold medal and three silver medals at the 56th IChO which was held in Saudi

Arabia from July 22 to 30.

The IChO 2024 was held under the slogan 'Building Connections Together'.

A total of 333 talented men and women from 90 countries participated in the competitions of the 56th edition of the IChO, under the supervision of 260 international specialists in the field of chemistry, at King Saud University in Riyadh.

Ramtin Moradi Mazhar succeeded in winning a gold medal, while Alborz Rezaei, Amirkia Salimi, and Mohammad-Yasin Salehi Marzijarani secured silvers.

The 65th IMO was held from July 11 to 22, in Bath, United Kingdom. This year, 108 countries and 609 students competed. The Iranian team scored 137 points, earning 19th place.

Radin Zahedigolpayegani won the gold medal, Iliya Yazdanivarzi, Amir-Hossein Yazdanizadeh, and Sepehr Alipour grabbed silvers, while Parsa Saberi won the bronze medal.

Iran 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-Niaraki won gold medals, while Sepehr Chachi and Mohammad-Reza Yazdkhasti secured silvers, IRIB reported.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Special plan prepared to attract overseas Iranian researchers

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has prepared a special plan to attract scientists and researchers living abroad, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The project aims to promote "supporting technological activities and startups", "postdoctoral facilities", "supporting employment in innovation centers and accelerators as a trainer and consultant", "providing facilities for opportunity studies", "providing housing facilities", "supporting employment in reputable domestic companies", "support for lectures and specialized workshops" and "support for cooperation as invited and appointed professors".

It is estimated that about one percent of all Iranian students are studying abroad, which is not above the international average of around 3 percent.

طرح ویژه برای جذب پژوهشگران ایرانی مقیم خارج

جذب محققان و پژوهشگران خارج از کشور یکی از اولویت‌های کشور محسوب می‌شود و در این راستا معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری طرحی ویژه پیشنهاد کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا، معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری، این طرح شامل «حمایت از فعالیتهای فناورانه و ایجاد شرکت‌های نوپا»، «تسهیلات پسا دکتری»، «حمایت از اشتغال در مراکز نوآوری و شتابدهنده‌ها به عنوان مربی و مشاور»، «تسهیلات دوره فرصت مطالعاتی»، «تسهیلات مسکن»، «حمایت از اشتغال در شرکت‌های معتبر داخلی»، «حمایت از برگزاری سخنرانی و کارگاه‌های تخصصی» و «حمایت از همکاری به عنوان اساتید مدعو و معین» است.

بر اساس برآوردها نزدیک یک درصد از کل مجموع دانشجویان ایرانی در خارج از کشور تحصیل می‌کنند. این رقم در مقایسه با میانگین بین‌المللی که حدود ۳ درصد است، رقم بالایی محسوب نمی‌شود.



Exhibition on Iran-made stationery underway

The 10th edition of the national exhibition on Iran-made stationery and other school items opened at Tehran's Grand Mosalla on Saturday and will run until September 21.

More than 200 companies have put their products on sale. The new school year will officially start on September 22.



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Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



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

SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be afraid of nothing but sins.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:02 Evening: 18:38 Dawn: 4:18 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:43 (tomorrow)

Israel-Gaza conflict in focus at Venice awards ceremony as multiple winners voice support for Palestinian people

The Venice awards ceremony had a political edge on Saturday evening as multiple winners used their acceptance speeches to express sympathy for the Palestinian people and condemn Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

"As a Jewish American artist working in a time-based medium, I must note, I'm accepting this award on the 336th day of Israel's genocide in Gaza and 76th year of occupation," said U.S. director Sarah Friedland as she accepted the Luigi de Laurentiis prize for best first film for "Familiar Touch."

"I believe it is our responsibility as filmmakers to use the institutional platforms through which we work to redress Israel's impunity on the global stage. I stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine and their struggle for liberation," she continued.

Friedland's film, which played in the Horizons competition, also won the section's best director award, while Kathleen Chalfant, clinched best actress for her performance as a woman getting used to life in an assisted care home.

Chalfant also alluded to the conflict in her speech expressing her hope that the catastrophic turn of events in the region would come to an end so that people on both sides could "live in peace, freedom and justice."

Received with strong applause in the room, Friedland's comments came amid growing condemnation of Israel's 10-month military campaign in Gaza. The conflict was sparked by the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, which killed more than 1,000 people and resulted in 251 people being taken hostage.

The Israeli response has devastated the densely populated strip, and resulted in the deaths of more than 40,000 Palestinians and injured more than 94,000, according to the Hamas-run health ministry. Israel believes around 60 to 70 hostages are still alive in

Gaza.

Palestinian filmmaker Scandar Copti echoed Friedland's words as he accepted the best screenplay prize in the Horizons section for his "Happy Holidays," about four interconnected characters living in Haifa, navigating different generational and cultural backgrounds.

"I stand here deeply honored, yet profoundly affected by the difficult times we're living through over the past 11 months, our shared humanity and moral compass have been tested as we witness the ongoing genocide in Gaza," he said.

"This painful reality reminds us of the devastating consequences of oppression, which is a theme in our film. Our film looks at how moral narratives can bring us together as communities, but also blind us to the suffering of others."

The health ministry in Gaza reported that at least 40,861 people have been killed and 94,398 wounded in Gaza by Israel Defense Forces since the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023.

More than 2.1 million people in Gaza—nearly the entirety of its population—face "imminent famine," the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, an joint effort of UN agencies and international aid groups, reported in June.

In January of this year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered Israel to take steps to ensure acts of genocide, as defined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, were not committed by its forces in Gaza.

The court did not rule that Israel was committing genocide, but did declare its legal right to proceed with the genocide case brought by South Africa. Israel and the United States have rejected all accusations of genocidal intent.

Cartoon of Day



A School in Gaza

Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Turkey

First Etqan cultural festival to kick off in Tehran

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN- The first cultural and artistic festival of Etqan will begin in Tehran on Thursday, featuring a series of stage performances, as announced by the event's secretary during a press conference at Tehran's Art Bureau on Sunday.

The festival, which aims to enhance the culture of work and effort, transforming these concepts into public discourse, has received a diverse array of submissions, highlighting the creativity and talent present in different art forms, Mohammadreza Baqeri said.

A total of 2,545 artworks have been submitted to the festival across various categories, including posters, cartoons, photographs, poetry, short stories, stand-up comedy, and both stage and street theater performances, he added.

The largest number of participants came from Tehran, Razavi Khorasan, and Kerman provinces, while the least



participation was from Kordestan province, he mentioned.

Baqeri stated that this event needs to gain visibility, emphasizing that media involvement can significantly aid in this endeavor.

The festival will also feature a

comprehensive awards program, distributing prizes across all categories, including trophies, diplomas, and cash rewards.

The Etqan Festival is a cultural and artistic initiative aimed at promoting the culture of work. It is aligned with the Leader's emphasis on the need to foster a

work-centric culture.

Organized by the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare in collaboration with the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, the festival will come to an end on September 16.

Iranian short "The Last Day" to be premiered at Busan International Film Festival



TEHRAN-The Iranian short film "The Last Day" directed by Farzad Samimi will be premiered at the 29th Busan International Film Festival (BIFF), due to be held in South Korea from October 2 to 11.

It has been selected to be screened in the Wide Angle - Asian Short Film Competition section of the festival, a section dedicated to outstanding short films and documentary

films that offer broad cinematic viewpoints and distinct visions, ISNA reported.

"The Last Day" is the story of the last meeting between a mother and his son in the final hours before his execution order.

The cast includes Pantea Panahiha, Payam Ahmadiania, Mohammadreza Rashidi, Pouria Khorram, and Parham Esmaeli Majd.

Other than Samimi's film, there are 9 shorts present in the section from China, India, Philippines, Indonesia, and Taiwan among others.

Earlier, it was announced that the Iranian feature film "For Rana" directed by Iman Yazdi was selected in the Asian film competition section New Currents.

The film, which will also have its world premiere at the event, is about the struggles

of parents with a daughter needing a heart transplant.

Well-known actors Hamed Behdad and Pantea Panahiha play the main roles in this family drama.

The Busan International Film Festival has grown from Korea's first international film festival to Korea's largest and has become an event loved by many filmmakers and audiences not only in Asia but also in the world.

The main focus of the BIFF is to introduce new films and first-time directors, especially those from Asian countries.

Another notable feature is the appeal of the festival to young people, both in terms of the large youthful audience it attracts and through its efforts to develop and promote young talent.

Tehran meeting to explore Persian literature's impact on cinema

TEHRAN- In celebration of National Cinema Day, the Film Museum of Iran will host a seminar titled "The Role of Persian Literature in Cinema" in Tehran, featuring filmmakers from Turkey.

The event is organized in collaboration with the International Council of Museums

(ICOM) on Tuesday, coinciding with National Cinema Day, IRNA reported on Saturday.

The seminar will also include a short screening of iconic films by renowned Iranian filmmakers who have made significant contributions to depicting Iran's culture and traditions on the big screen, the report added.

The event will be attended by cultural consultant and filmmaker Selim Uzbun from Turkey, Chairman of ICOM Seyed Ahmad Mohit Tabatabai, International Deputy of the Saadi Foundation Ali Mousavizadeh, Iranian documentary filmmaker Keyvan Tabatabai, and President of the ECO Cultural Institute Saad

Khan.

Attendance to this insightful seminar is free and open to all interested individuals.

Iran's National Cinema Day is celebrated every year on September 12 to recognize and honor the remarkable impact of Iranian cinema on the global film industry.

Winning works of the 1st Pars International Photo Award on display

TEHRAN-The exhibition of the winning works of the first Pars International Photo Award was inaugurated at Imam Ali Religious Arts Museum in Tehran on Saturday.

With the aim of developing the art of photography, supporting talented young people and artists, playing the role of social responsibility in the field of supporting culture and art, as well as introducing the capacities of Pars Special Economic Energy Zone (PSEEZ), the public relations management of PSEEZ,

has organized the first Pars International Photo Award.

The first edition of the event included three sections namely "Oil Industry," "Family," and "Environment and Travel". Photographers from 63 countries submitted their works to the event and their photos were evaluated by the jury including Freddy Van Gilbergen from Belgium, Haitham Al-Farsi from Oman, and Mohamad Reza Chaiforoosh from Iran.

Pars International Photo Award is held with

the patronage of the Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP).

Pars Special Economic Energy Zone was established in 1998 for the utilization of South Pars oil and gas resources and encouraging commercial activities in the field of oil, gas and petrochemical industries.

The exhibition is open to the public until September 12 at Imam Ali Religious Arts Museum located at Esfandiar St., Valiasr St.

Thomas Hobbes's "On the Citizen" available in Persian

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the book "On the Citizen" by Thomas Hobbes has been released in the Iranian book market.

Translated by Yashar Jeyrani, the book has been published by Now Publications in 332 pages, Mehr reported.

"On the Citizen" is one of Thomas Hobbes's major works. The book was published originally in Latin from Paris in 1642, followed by two further Latin editions in 1647 from Amsterdam. The English translation of the work made its

first appearance four years later (London 1651).

It is the first of a trilogy of works written by Hobbes dealing with human knowledge, the other two works in the trilogy being "On the Body," published in 1655 and "On Man," published in 1658.

This work comprises three parts: liberty, dominion, and religion. In the first part, he describes man's natural condition, dealing with the natural laws; in the second, the necessity of establishing a stable government is indicated.

Finally, in the third part, he writes about religion.

"On the Citizen" is the first full exposition of the political thought of Hobbes. It is written in a clear, straightforward, expository style, offering readers a more digestible account of Hobbes' political thought than even "Leviathan" itself.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was an English philosopher. Hobbes is best known for his 1651 book "Leviathan," in which he expounds an influential formulation of social contract theory.

He is considered to be one of the founders of modern political philosophy.

Hobbes contributed to a diverse array of fields, including history, jurisprudence, geometry, optics, theology, classical translations, ethics, as well as philosophy in general, marking him as a polymath.

He was also a scholar of classical Greek history and literature, and produced English translation of "Iliad," "Odyssey" and "History of Peloponnesian War".