



Hamas Is Alive and Will Stay Alive: Leader

'Martyr Sinwar left behind the irreversible blow of October 7 in the history of West Asia' [▶ Page 3](#)

Potential U.S. involvement in Israeli response will not go unnoticed, Iran's Araqchi warns Biden

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi delivered a full-throated message to U.S. President Joe Biden on Saturday that pulled no punches: The U.S. will face direct consequences if it helps Israel respond to Iran's October 1 retaliatory attack.

"Anybody with knowledge or understanding of 'how and when Israel was going to attack Iran', and/or providing the means and backing for such folly, should logically be held accountable for any possible causality," Araqchi wrote on his X account, with his post also featuring a picture of Biden.

The U.S. President said Washington had been informed about the circumstances of Israel's looming attack against Iran during a Friday visit to Germany. He did not comment on how or when the aggression would be carried out. [▶ Page 2](#)

ICC must hold Israel accountable for crimes in Gaza, Lebanon: Iran envoy

TEHRAN- In a letter to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Hadi Farajvand, the Ambassador of Iran to the Netherlands, has called for urgent action by the legal body to address the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza and Lebanon.

The Iranian ambassador expressed appreciation for the attention and efforts of Karim Khan, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, in investigating the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza.

He then referred to the recent attacks by the Zionist regime, which resulted in the death and injury of thousands of civilians in Lebanon, and called for immediate action to prevent the recurrence of these crimes. [▶ Page 2](#)

Iran's role in regional cooperation

By Hossein Mahditabar

TEHRAN – Iran is hosting the IONS Combined Naval Exercise in the Pacific Ocean, with participation from several nations.

IONS (Indian Ocean Naval Symposium) is a regional platform established in 2008 to foster naval cooperation and interaction among countries bordering the Indian Ocean. The organization includes 25 member states and 8 observer countries. Through its summits, workshops, and naval exercises like IMEX, IONS strengthens regional collaboration in maritime security, addresses common threats, and promotes mutual trust among its members. [▶ Page 3](#)

Iran's trio islands and claims of the old colonist

By Zahra Akbari

TEHRAN – The European Union and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council issued a joint statement at their summit on October 16, 2024, with two notable articles focused on Iran. This note delves into the motivations behind their inclusion in the statement.

Following World War II, as a new world order emerged, a war-torn Europe found itself aligned with the United States, the new superpower. Faced with the devastation of war, Europe had little choice but to follow America's lead, striving to maintain a liberal order against the threat of communism while protecting the continent. The collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the formation of the European Union opened the door for new possibilities, but the EU found itself largely overshadowed by the United States. To break free from this shadow and assert its power as a global player, the EU sought to establish a stronger presence in various regions of the world, including West Asia. [▶ Page 2](#)

Hezbollah continues to target air defence bases in Haifa and beyond

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT- The Israeli enemy forces continue to bulldoze and blow up many homes and civilian facilities in the Lebanese territories especially those bordering occupied Palestine.

An Israeli official told Foreign Policy that the Israeli army deliberately destroyed Aita al-Shaab and Mays al-Jabal in southern Lebanon so that Hezbollah would not use its infrastructure, as it claimed. However, the recent escalations have quickly belied the fact that this barbaric act will not make the border area with Palestine safe for the Zionist invaders, as Hezbollah continues to intensify its strikes on the hostile locations where the enemy's army forces are deployed.

Hezbollah also confronts attempts to penetrate and destroys military sites in the colonial settlements in response to the bloody attacks aimed at compensating for the failure in the battlefields.

Drone from Lebanon hits Netanyahu's residence

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- A drone launched from Lebanon struck one of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's residences on Saturday in a direct hit. This is what Netanyahu's office confirmed.

According to the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth, the drone flew undetected for at least 70 kilometers and struck a building in Caesarea which sits between Tel Aviv and Haifa.

The drone directly hit a building in Caesarea, with shrapnel reaching a neighboring building, according to Yedioth Ahronoth. No sirens were sounded.

Israeli media also reported witnesses hearing a huge explosion. The area around the Israeli premier's residence was quickly sealed off.

Rumors began to circulate quickly online about Netanyahu's life. The Israeli PM was forced to publish a video later in the day showing him walking in a park to ensure his supporters that he was okay and not at home during the time of the attack.

Legacy of fire: Al-Aqsa Storm rages on after Sinwar's killing

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Israel and its main supporter, the United States, have displayed a lot of hubris since the Tel Aviv regime assassinated Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli army said on Thursday that its troops killed Sinwar in the city of Rafah.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Joe Biden have described Sinwar's killing as a major achievement.

Netanyahu said the assassination signaled "the beginning of the end" of the war in Gaza.

Biden also praised Sinwar's killing saying it opened the door to "a path to peace".

The US president and the Israeli premier are under the illusion that the death of the Hamas chief will result in the downfall of the resistance movement.

They have claimed that Hamas has been weakened significantly; with its leadership largely dismantled.

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Iran, Tanzania to expand co-op in agriculture, petrochemicals, tourism

TEHRAN – Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezdelcheh announced about the expansion of cooperation between Iran and Tanzania in the fields of agriculture, petrochemicals and tourism.

Ghezdelcheh who traveled to Tanzania to attend the two countries' fifth Joint Economic Committee meeting, said this meeting is held after several years of postponement, adding that 11 documents have been prepared in various areas of the governmental and private sectors, which will be finalized and signed at the end of the meeting.

"The Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the President emphasize on the development of relations with Africa, and we hope that the signing of cooperation documents will bring these developing relations into a new phase", the minister further emphasized. [▶ Page 4](#)



41st Tehran International Short Film Festival opens at Mellat Cineplex

TEHRAN-The 41st Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF) was inaugurated on Friday at Mellat Cineplex in Tehran with a tribute to the martyrs of Gaza.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mehdi Azarpendar, the festival secretary, said: "This festival has started with the slogan 'A Fanciful World! Of course, we know that the world we live in now isn't all that fancy, but we hope for a time when there will be a great man in the world, making it more fantastic; a great man that calls for an end to the killing of children, so we no longer witness these tragic days," Honaronline reported. [▶ Page 8](#)

TEHRAN PAPERS

Iran's patience may be running thin

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

In a commentary, Kayhan observed the silence and occasional support of some countries in the region for Israel's crimes. It wrote: Israel is engaged in genocide in Gaza and war crimes in Lebanon, while some Arab and Islamic countries in the region preferred profit over honor.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly witnessed the cooperation of these countries with Israel in their actions against the Axis of Resistance and our country.

Iran declared that it would react decisively to any new and possible cooperation of some regional countries with Israel in any new adventure. Undoubtedly, the patience of Iran, the free people of the region, and the awakened people throughout West Asia is running out against these betrayals, and from now on, support and friendship with Israel will be costly for its supporters.

They will determine a fate for the supporters and traitors of the ideal of Palestine, which will turn the profit they have earned for selling their honor into a loss.

Iran: New psychological operation

In an analysis, the Iran newspaper discussed the new psychological operation by the Western media about "Iran's revision of regional policies" and wrote: The anti-Zionist Resistance was revived with Iran and continued in recent decades, leading to the Al-Aqsa storm, and after October 7 of last year, it continues its path with strength.

Propounding the discussion of the necessity of "Iran's revision of regional policies" by some foreign media shows that the supporters of Israel are trying to have a psychological effect on the current equations in the region to weaken the support of Iranian public opinion for the Palestinian issue.

The United States of America, rather than seeking to stop Israel's crimes in Gaza, seeks to maximize the interests of the Zionist regime. In this situation, proposing to change Iran's regional policies and conducting negotiations with America and Europe to thwart the Zionists' plan is pure naivety.

Talking about the need for Iran to revise its regional policies, withdrawing the Palestinian resistance from fighting Israel and agreeing to the peace emphasized by the U.S. and the West, is a project that has been designed with the aim of soft destruction of the resistance.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Repeating the failed game

In an article, Siasat-e-Rooz discussed the West's interest in repeating the failed game of threatening Iran's territorial integrity.

It wrote: The West is seeking to incite a fire in the region to serve the Zionist regime

by provoking the false claims of some Arab countries about the territorial integrity of Iran.

In the critical situation of the region, the countries of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council have used the existing threats against Iran to gain something for their claims on the three Iranian islands.

The change of position of the European countries regarding the three Iranian islands is due to their policy of passivity and blackmail in front of the Zionist regime.

The denial of reality by the countries of the Persian Gulf and the promotion of this denial and illusion by the extra-regional countries may send petrodollars to European companies, but it will not be of long-term benefit to any of the parties.

The claims raised in the meeting of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union have been followed by harsh reactions from the Iranian authorities because the Lesser and Greater Tunb islands and Abu Musa are an inseparable part of the Iranian territory.

Ettelaat: Pezeshkian's scenario to resolve nuclear dispute

In a conversation with Hossein Kanani Moghaddam, a political activist, Ettelaat discussed the functioning of the diplomatic system of the Pezeshkian government.

He said: The performance of the diplomatic system of the Pezeshkian government is a sign of the serious will of the 14th government to restore the country's relationship with the world.

If things are pursued rationally and following national interests, it can increase the hope of reducing and weakening international limitations.

However, the differences between Iran and Europe regarding Iran's nuclear issue have been going on for more than a decade, and the effects of these differences are evident in Iran's political and economic fields.

A good and effective event after the formation of the government of Pezeshkian is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has shown a good dynamic in this short time.

Therefore, it proves that the government, knowing the complexities of Iran's relationship with the West, has made every effort to turn the interaction with the Persian Gulf neighbors into an opportunity to remove limitations.

The tangible fact is that to pass through a period that is full of crises, it seems inevitable for Iran to restore its relationship with the West.

ICC must hold Israel accountable for crimes in Gaza, Lebanon: Iran envoy



From page 1 ▶ Farajvand emphasized that the Zionist regime, with the support of the United States and other countries, has continued committing genocide and war crimes in Gaza for a year, and has now expanded its war to Lebanon.

"The recent crimes of this regime in Lebanon, which have been widely carried out against civilians, are a clear example of crimes against humanity.

These brutal acts pose a serious threat to peace and security in the region and the world, and the international community must act swiftly to end impunity and hold the officials of this regime accountable," he noted.

He concluded the letter with emphasizing the importance of global action to stop

human rights violations and bring justice to the victims of these attacks.

He called for the unity of the global community against these injustices and in support of human rights and human dignity.

Since the outbreak of hostilities on October 7, 2023, the Zionist regime has waged a devastating campaign against the residents of the Gaza Strip, resulting in widespread destruction and a deepening humanitarian crisis.

More than 42,000 Palestinians, most of them women and children, have been killed as a result of the ongoing conflict, which has reduced much of Gaza to rubble.

After turning the Gaza Strip into ruins, this regime launched extensive attacks against various areas in southern Lebanon and United Nations peacekeeping forces, which has faced global condemnation.

Tel Aviv, in defiance of the international community and ignoring United Nations Security Council resolutions calling for an immediate halt to the war, as well as the orders of the International Court of Justice to prevent genocide and improve the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza, continues its crimes in the region.

Potential U.S. involvement in Israeli response will not go unnoticed, Iran's Araqchi warns Biden

From page 1 ▶ Israel says it is preparing to respond to Iran's Operation True Promise II, which saw Tehran fire approximately 200 missiles at the occupied territories early this month.

Iran managed to hit a number of Israeli military and intelligence bases in retaliation for the regime's assassination of top Resistance figures, including Hamas' Ismail Haniyeh and Hezbollah's Sayyad Hassan Nasrallah.

In separate remarks on Friday, Araqchi said neighboring countries had told him that they would not allow Israel to use their airspace to harm Iran.

"All the countries that are geographically located between us and the Zionist regime said that they will not allow their soil to be used against Iran," The foreign minister said during a joint press conference with his Turkish counterpart in Istanbul.

Araqchi who has had back-to-back trips to several regional countries in the past 10 days said all states in the region are of the mind that Israel should be held accountable for its crimes.

"There is an outright rebuke of the crimes of the Zionist regime among them, and they believe that



FM Araqchi said during a Friday press conference in Istanbul that regional countries have assured their territory won't be used by Israel to attack Iran

this regime should be condemned and forced to stop its crimes in Gaza and Lebanon," he said, adding there is complete solidarity between the regional countries and the besieged and embattled population in Gaza.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the top diplomat described the region as a "powder keg" with a high risk of conflict, blaming Israel for the escalating tensions.

He pointedly accused Israel of being the "most important source of insecurity in the world," highlighting the regime's disregard for international law

and its emboldened actions due to U.S. support.

"The Zionist regime is the most important source of insecurity in the world, and the international mechanisms have not been able to hinder these crimes, and the US support has made the leaders of the Zionist regime and Netanyahu bolder," he said.

"This regime has no limits in violating international regulations, and we underpin the necessity of stopping the war and delivery of humanitarian aid."

Israel's ongoing war in the besieged Gaza Strip which

began over a year ago has so far resulted in the slaughter of over 42,000 Palestinians and tens of thousands of more injuries.

Israel has also devastated the majority of the enclave by flattening much of its infrastructure as well as residential buildings, schools, universities, hospitals, and places of worship. Analysts believe the regime's main goal has been to make Gaza uninhabitable.

Zionist authorities have now expanded their war to include Lebanon. The Arab country has been the target of numerous terror attacks by Israeli fighter jets in the past weeks, with over 1.5 million Lebanese believed to have been internally displaced.

Consternation is building as the regime is also bracing to target Iran, a move seen as a dangerous step towards a potential regional conflagration with international and long-standing reverberations.

The U.S. has done very little to rein in Israel in the past year, as regional masses and officials accuse the U.S. of direct complicity in Israeli crimes. Iran has said any aggression against its soil would be met with very harsh and powerful reactions.

Leader's advisor tells UAE to 'review historical records' as dispute over Persian Gulf islands festers

TEHRAN – The chairman of Iran's Strategic Council of Foreign Relations has urged the United Arab Emirates to reconsider its current stance of antagonism towards Iran.

He suggested that the UAE engage in dialogue rooted in historical facts and supporting documentation, in order to foster a more constructive relationship.

Kamal Kharrazi, who is also an advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, made the remarks in response to Abu Dhabi's repeated sovereignty claims over three Persian Gulf Islands – the Bu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb – which official and historical records show belonged to Iran centuries before the UAE was formed.

UAE's latest statement challenging Iran's ownership of the Islands came during the end of a recent summit between the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Union.

Kharrazi said UAE officials must take into account its economic alignment with Iran and abandon the untenable claims over the Persian Gulf islands.

He urged the Arab state to engage in dialogue aimed at resolving disputes and fostering peace and stability in the region, grounded in historical evidence and existing documentation.

The Leader's advisor on foreign affairs also addressed Europe's recent backing of Abu Dhabi's claims.

"The European Union's adversarial stance towards the three islands lacks any legal foundation and serves primarily as a political maneuver to secure aid and financial support from nations in the Persian Gulf, especially the United Arab Emirates, to offset their substantial expenses related to the Ukraine conflict."

The Iranian official emphasized that legal experts are well aware that when British colonial rule ended in the region in 1971, which included the three islands, the newly formed states such as the UAE and Bahrain rightfully transferred ownership of the islands to Iran, as all historical records affirm their Iranian heritage.

"Consequently, the documentation and evidence supporting Iran's claim to the three islands are robust and unequivocal.

Statements made with the intent of garnering financial assistance do not weaken Iran's resolute position on its ownership of these islands or the commitment of its armed forces to uphold its territorial sovereignty," Kharrazi concluded.

The joint GCC-EU statement issued on Thursday called Iran an "occupying force" in the islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Bu Musa.

Iran's trio islands and claims of the old colonist



From page 1 ▶ West Asia holds significant appeal for the EU, but the region is already a crowded field. The United States, China, and Russia have long been vying for influence, each offering unique benefits to secure their foothold.

In its quest for greater acceptance and geostrategic advantage, the EU is willing to go to great lengths. Issuing statements that challenge the sovereignty of other nations seems to come very easy to them.

While this may partially explain the inclusion of Articles 45 and 46 in the EU-GCC statement, the situation is more complex than it appears.

Articles 45 and 46 of the joint statement, which specifically address Iran, use interesting phrasing.

They emphasize adherence to international law, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, and the rejection of force or threats.

However, recommending these principles while Gaza and Lebanon are drenched in blood appears hypocritical, reminiscent of the negative, long-term effects of excessive alcohol consumption on the brain.

The most significant issue raised in the statement is the accusation of "occupation"

against Iran.

The term "occupation" has historically been associated with one regime in the region: the Zionist regime.

Accusing Iran of occupation, while ignoring the region's numerous border conflicts, suggests that the EU is intentionally providing breathing room for the Zionist regime.

Arab leaders and public opinion, witnessing the brutal actions of the Zionist regime and its disregard for humanitarian boundaries, are now questioning when the regime will turn its aggression towards them.

The EU's actions in this situation only serve to deepen negative perceptions and feelings of threat towards Iran and the resistance axis within Arab countries.

While trying to convince Arab nations to ignore the Zionist regime's ambitions of occupation, the EU seems intent on presenting a new, equally dangerous occupier and for now it has set its eyes on Iran.

Iran's position on its three islands is unwavering.

Just as it wouldn't entertain negotiations over the sovereignty of Tehran or Shiraz, it will not compromise on its territorial integrity and negotiate about the three Persian Gulf Islands either.

The United Arab Emirates is well aware that efforts to gain support from countries outside the region, and even to create a global consensus, will not change the reality, and Iran has clearly demonstrated its sensitivity to its territorial integrity.

In fact, security is a matter that only the original inhabitants of this region truly understand.

Just as the UAE needs security for the growth of its cities and skyscrapers, Iran also values peace and cooperation with its neighbors.

Therefore, if anyone deserves criticism for escalating tensions in the region, it is the countries that jeopardize their neighbors' security by hosting U.S. military bases in the area.

Georgia transfers 17 Iranian prisoners back to Iran

TEHRAN – Iran has repatriated 17 Iranian prisoners from Georgia, according to Askar Jalalian, Deputy for Human Rights and International Affairs of the Iranian Ministry of Justice.

Jalalian stated that the transfer reflects growing legal and judicial cooperation between Iran and Georgia.

The 17 Iranians, who were imprisoned in Georgia for drug trafficking offenses, will

now serve the remainder of their sentences in Iran.

The head of the prisoner transfer committee emphasized the importance of understanding drug laws in different countries.

He advised Iranian citizens to familiarize themselves with legal regulations and rights in their destination country and to avoid carrying packages for others.

The official also urged citizens to refrain from possessing illegal substances, including certain painkillers, tranquilizers, and various syrups, and to report any suspicious items to border security forces.

Jalalian further noted that while there is no formal prisoner transfer agreement between Iran and Georgia, the transfer of these individuals was approved by the judiciary and reflects ongoing humanitarian efforts.

Hamas is alive and will stay alive: Leader

'Martyr Sinwar left behind the irreversible blow of October 7 in the history of West Asia'

TEHRAN – In a message following the martyrdom of Yahya Sinwar, the political leader of Hamas, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei praised the Palestinian fighter as a symbol of resistance and struggle, vowing that the Resistance Front would remain strong, despite the loss of prominent figures like Sinwar.

The following is the full text of Ayatollah Khamenei's message issued on Saturday:

"In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Dear Muslim Nations!

Dear courageous youth of the region!

The heroic mujahid, Commander Yahya Sinwar, has joined his martyred comrades. He was a shining image of Resistance and struggle. He stood with unwavering determination against the cruel, transgressive enemy, striking them with his



acumen and courage. He struck the irreparable blow of October 7 [to the Zionist regime] that will be remembered as a part of the history of this region. And then he ascended to the realm of the martyrs with dignity and pride. For one like him who had dedicated his life to the battle against the usurping, cruel enemy, anything less than martyrdom would have been an

unworthy fate.

Indeed, his loss is painful for the Resistance Front. However, this front did not halt its progress in the wake of the martyrdoms of eminent figures such as Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, Fathi Shaqaqi, Rantisi, and Ismail Haniyeh. Similarly, it will not falter the least with the martyrdom of Sinwar either, God willing. Hamas is alive and will stay alive.

As always, we will stand by the sincere mujahideen and fighters, with God's help and guidance.

I congratulate the family of Yahya Sinwar, his comrades, and all those devoted to jihad on the path of God on the martyrdom of our brother, Yahya Sinwar, and I offer my condolences for this loss.

May God's greetings and peace be upon His righteous servants."

Gen. Soleimani's family mourns martyrdom of Yahya Sinwar

TEHRAN – In a statement published on Saturday, the family of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, Iran's late anti-terror icon assassinated by Washington in 2020, expressed deep sorrow over the martyrdom of Palestinian leader Yahya Sinwar.

"The list of crimes committed by the brutal and rabid American regime in the region is endless," the statement read. "This time, the usurping regime has stained its hands with the blood of the great mujahid, martyr Yahya Sinwar."

The family highlighted Sinwar's unwavering commitment to Resistance, noting that his "proud performance over the years had turned him into a nightmare for the child-killing regime." They praised his role in the "proud operation of Al-Aqsa Storm," which they said, "broke the bloodthirsty regime's

covert defenses and destroyed the malicious plans of the enemies of the Islamic world at once."

Sinwar taught humanity not only how to live but also how to die with dignity

The statement further lauded Sinwar's courage and dedication to his cause, describing his final moments as "a scene of honor and unwavering courage." They emphasized that his life "taught humanity not only how to live but also how to die with dignity."

Drawing a parallel to the legacy of General

Soleimani, the family invoked his belief that true fighters are "those who remain stable even when the mountains are shaken; they have given their heads to God and their feet are fixed like nails in the ground; they ignore the horrors and know that victory is God's promise." They declared that "Martyr Sinwar was the prime example of this description."

The statement concluded with a call for unity and inspiration, stating, "It is hoped that the glorious scene of the martyrdom of this noble fighter will inspire current and future generations of the Islamic Ummah."

Iran and Palestinian Resistance movements share deep historical bonds, as they have a common struggle against American and Israeli forces in the region.

Zarif says unity necessary in face of horrifying Israeli crimes

TEHRAN – Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iran's vice president for strategic affairs and former foreign minister, delivered a fiery speech in Esfahan on Saturday, calling for unity in the face of the Israeli regime's unchecked crimes in the region.

During an event in the central Iranian city, Zarif condemned Israel's ongoing illegal acts, highlighting that the regime is committing "atrocities daily," killing innocent people in Lebanon and Gaza.

He specifically cited the recent

bombing of Lebanon and how Israel used 85 tons of American-supplied bombs to assassinate Hezbollah Secretary Chief Sayyad Hassan Nasrallah.

"Our commander Abbas Nilforooshan was also martyred during the attack. We are in this

together," he added.

Zarif further stressed the need for unity in combating international injustice and discrimination against Muslims, emphasizing that "in this day and age, we need to be together and solve problems collectively."

Iran criticizes US, UK for 'dangerous' involvement in Israeli escalation



Plumes of smoke rise from the site of a US-led airstrike in Sana'a, Yemen, on June 7, 2024.

TEHRAN – The spokesperson for the Iranian foreign ministry characterized the attacks by the United States and the United Kingdom on regions of Sana'a and Saada in Yemen as serious breaches of the United Nations Charter and international law, particularly regarding the prohibition of force and the respect for national sovereignty.

Iran's role in regional cooperation

From Page 1 ▶ As a naval forum, IONS plays a key role in enhancing peace and stability in the Indian Ocean region. It allows member states to engage in constructive cooperation, boosting security and synergy in various sectors.

IONS has a strategic and vital role in bolstering regional interaction. It not only provides a framework for military cooperation but also serves as a platform for defense diplomacy and productive engagements at both regional and international levels.

Here are some key benefits of IONS:

1. Ensuring collective security in

the Indian Ocean region

Through exercises and meetings, IONS enables countries to better coordinate their efforts to tackle shared threats like piracy, drug trafficking, and maritime terrorism. Given that the Indian Ocean is one of the world's most vital trade routes, its stability and security are essential to the global economy. By focusing on security challenges, member countries aim to reduce maritime threats and contribute to collective security.

2. Strengthening military and diplomatic relations

IONS provides a platform for countries to deepen their military

cooperation through naval exercises. These activities not only enhance military relations but also improve political and diplomatic ties through security and diplomatic dialogues. This is particularly significant for nations like Iran, which seek to expand their international engagement.

3. Building trust and reducing regional tensions

IONS exercises and training workshops offer opportunities to build trust among member countries. By facilitating close interaction between naval forces and organizing joint maneuvers, nations can strengthen their

military capabilities while reducing the risk of military tensions. Such cooperation helps prevent conflicts and manage regional crises.

4. Expanding non-military cooperation and regional collaboration

Beyond military operations, IONS encourages countries to collaborate on non-military issues, such as humanitarian assistance, natural disaster management, and emergency maritime rescues. Greater cooperation in these areas strengthens member states' roles as key players in maintaining regional security and stability.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran volleyball legend Marouf turns 39



TEHRAN – Mir Saeid Marouf Lakerani, is a name that volleyball fans in Iran and in the world will never forget.

The legendary setter turned 39 on Saturday.

Marouf led Team Melli in the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games. He is part of the golden generation, who dominated Asia for about a decade.

He has enjoyed an amazing career with several clubs in Iran and has ventured abroad to showcase his playmaking talent in Russia, Italy and China.

At national team level he moved up the ranks through Iran's U19 and U21 teams before joining the senior team in 2005, winning numerous medals at continental and world level, as well as a host of individual awards.

Marouf left a lasting legacy for sport in Iran, having helped shape the national team into the world volleyball power it is today.

And for fans around the world, he has certainly provided entertainment like few others before him, while inspiring younger generations of setters with his masterful playmaking.

"I would like to say goodbye to volleyball in silence, but well, this is a good time to talk. See you soon," wrote setter and captain Marouf in his farewell message on Instagram in August 2021.

The 39-year-old player orchestrated Iran through his ability for two decades and led a team that became one of the best in the world.

Marouf left a 'void that can never be filled'.

Pitso Mosimane takes charge of Esteghlal

TEHRAN – Coach Pitso Mosimane and his technical team have joined Esteghlal FC in the Persian Gulf Pro League.

As usual, Mosimane will work with his technical team consisting of Maahier Davids, Kabelo Rangoaga, Musi Matlaba, and Kyle Solomon at the Iranian club.

The South African coach has been without a coaching job since he left Saudi Arabian side Abha in June 2024.

Mosimane, 60, replaced Javad Nekounam, who parted company with Esteghlal last month.

Esteghlal are 11th in the 2024/25 Iran's Persian Gulf Professional League 16-team table with eight points out of seven matches and they are also chasing continental glory in the AFC Champions League Elite after the team finished as runners-up last season.

"Esteghlal FC are a very big club in the Persian Gulf region, with a long and illustrious history. The two Asian Champions League stars on top of their badge tell you what kind of club this is," said Mosimane.

"Their last trophy was won in 2022 and we can believe their fans are hungry for glory once again. The challenge that awaits us is steep, but it is our privilege to lead such a prolific club.

"I would like to thank the club leadership for placing their trust in us. We are ready to get to work," added Mosimane.

Persepolis out to end barren run: AFC

TEHRAN – It will be a meeting between familiar foes when Persepolis FC travel to face Al Sadd SC on Monday, with the Iran side desperate to kick start its campaign.

With just a point to show after two matches and on a run of five consecutive games without a victory on the continental stage, Al Sadd could well be the opposition it needs – having defeated the Qatari side in four of their previous seven meetings.

Al Sadd, however, will also be relishing its chances after a fast start which sees the team on four points as the AFC Champions League 2011 winner eye a knockout stage spot for the first time in four editions.

The match will be held at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium stadium in Doha city, Qatar.

Hadi Choopan gets emotional welcome in Shiraz

TEHRAN – Hundreds of fans poured into the Shiraz Airport as Hadi Choopan returned home on Saturday.

"The Persian Wolf" won a silver medal in the 2024 Mr. Olympia last week held at the Resorts World Theater in Las Vegas, NV.

The gold medal went to Britain's Samson Dauda and American bodybuilder Derek Lunsford finished in third place.

Choopan has won a gold medal in the 2022 edition as well as a gold at the 2024 Arnold Classic.

The bodybuilder is one of the most popular Iranian athletes.

Iranian teams victorious in 2024 Canoe Polo World Championships

TEHRAN – Iranian men's team defeated Malaysia 8-6 and Hong Kong 20-2 in Group S of the 2024 International Canoe Federation Canoe Polo World Championships on Friday.

Iran's women team first lost to England 3-2 and then defeated Switzerland 4-3 in Group P.

The tournament has brought 71 teams from 27 nations together. Twelve coveted spots for the 2025 World Games in Chengdu are up for grabs.

The 2024 Canoe Polo World Championships, organized by the International Canoe Federation, kicked off in Deqing, China, assembling the finest teams from across the globe in a quest for glory.

Persepolis captain Alishah fit for Al Sadd match

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team captain Omid Alishah will be fit for the match against Al Sadd in the 2024-25 AFC Champions League Elite.

With just a point to show after two matches and on a run of five consecutive games without a victory on the continental stage for Persepolis, Al Sadd could well be the opposition it needs – having defeated the Qatari side in four of their previous seven meetings.

Persepolis winger Oston Urunov and defender Mohammad Hossein Kanaani will not be fit for the match but Alishah's return could be really good news for the Reds.

The match will be held at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium stadium in Doha city, Qatar.

BRICS Business Forum welcomes over thousand expert representatives from member countries

The BRICS Business Forum concluded in Moscow. On the second day of the forum, which took place on October 18, panel sessions were held featuring business leaders from Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Iran, the UAE, and Ethiopia.

During the discussions, the participants addressed prospects for BRICS financial and investment cooperation, international trade, and logistical connectivity among member states. They also explored the development of agribusiness, the strengthening of food security, the sustainable energy transition, and the role of technological cooperation in advancing the ESG agenda.

Margarete de Castro Coelho, Head of Administration and Finance at the Brazilian Micro and Small Enterprises Support Service (Sebrae), spoke to TV BRICS about Brazil's proposal to the New Development Bank (NDB) to create special credit lines for small business development.

"Small enterprises are inclusive, diverse, and innovative, and they can play a crucial role in cooperation between BRICS countries. Supporting small businesses is extremely important, as it can accelerate the development of the member states," she emphasized.

The Sebrae representative also noted that it is a great honor for Brazil to take the BRICS chairmanship next year. She expressed confidence that investment in small businesses would become a key topic at the 2025 BRICS summit.

Following the panel sessions, a ceremony was held to honor the winners of the BRICS International Best Practices Competition—the BRICS Solutions Awards. Svetlana Chupsheva, Director General of the Agency for Strategic Initiatives, one of the organizers of the com-

petition, announced the projects that garnered the most interest from the participants.

"The largest number of applications was submitted for technological solutions in artificial intelligence and digital services, followed by projects in new industries and energy. Third place went to biotechnology and public health initiatives," she reported.

Projects were also showcased in the following categories: "Sky, Space, and Communication Technologies," "Climate and Environmental Technologies," "Cognitive Technologies and the Creative Economy," "Platforms And End-to-End Solutions For Government And Public Administration," and "Competencies And Staff Development."

Among the competition winners were representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, China, and the UAE. One of the winners, Joao Pedro Novochadlo from Brazil, told TV BRICS that his company develops technologies for people with visual and hearing impairments. Specifically, they created a device that provides people with disabilities information about city landmarks.

The BRICS Business Forum was held as part of Russia's presidency in the group. It included participation from over a thousand representatives of the business community from the member states.

Earlier that day, the forum's plenary session took place, attended by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin. Video addresses were also delivered by the leaders of Egypt, South Africa, and Iran: Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Cyril Ramaphosa, and Masoud Pezeshkian, as well as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed. The day before, the BRICS Business Council meeting was also held.

(Source: TV BRICS)

Iran's energy minister to attend Belt and Road Energy Ministerial Conference in China

TEHRAN – Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi is going to visit China to attend the third Belt and Road Energy Ministerial Conference in Qingdao, East China's Shandong Province which is due to be held during October 23-24.

Aliabadi is going to represent the Islamic Republic of Iran at the conference on the official invitation of China's National Energy Administration, Mehr News Agency reported.

Strengthening cooperation in energy connection for greater diversity of energy supply; advancing the overlapping of different energy sources to balance energy transmission and security; investing and building base load energy sources to facilitate transition to clean energy; development trends in new technologies such as new energy storage (hydrogen energy, advanced nuclear energy technologies, carbon capture, and application of new technologies are among the subjects that are going to be discussed and explored in this conference.

The establishment of the secretariat of the Belt and Road Energy Partnership (BREP),

the inauguration of a new working group of the BREP cooperation network, the signing of the Belt and Road Energy Cooperation Action Plan for Green Development, the publication of small and smart international practices in energy cooperation and also the publication of the report of the Belt and Road Energy Cooperation Think Tank are also some of the programs scheduled to be held during this conference.

As reported, the third Belt and Road Energy Ministerial Conference is mainly aimed at strengthening international communication and cooperation, maintaining global energy security and stability, and advancing the global transition to clean energy.

With the theme of "Innovation for a Common Energy Future", the conference is going to bring together energy ministers from different countries, foreign ambassadors residing in China, heads of international energy organizations, and senior representatives from leading global energy companies, financial institutions, research institutions, and industry associations.

ICCIMA holds meeting to discuss environmental issues

TEHRAN – The Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Committee of Standards, Environment, Sustainable Development, and Water held a meeting on Saturday to discuss the country's environmental issues, the ICCIMA portal reported.

During the meeting, the members of the mentioned committee stressed that Iran needs to use international capacities to solve the problems of energy, environment and water imbalance and joining the Paris Agreement should not be politicized.

Speaking at the meeting, Reza Padidar, the head of the mentioned committee, said the private sector has seriously pursued participation in the 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP).

"We have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Iranian Energy Commission and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), and we are trying to raise Iran's position in the mentioned conference."

In this regard, the ICCIMA uses the experiences of previous years to pursue the Islamic Republic's environmental demands in cooperation with the Department of Environment in the COP.

"We hope to use all the available capacities for improving Iran's environmental conditions and preventing the increase in the earth's temperature," Padidar said.

Iran, Tanzania to expand co-op in agriculture, petrochemicals, tourism

From page 1 ▶ During a meeting with Tanzania's Deputy Foreign Minister Dennis Lazaro Londo, the Iranian minister called for the expansion of economic ties with the African country.

In the meeting, Nouri Ghezlecheh emphasized the necessity of expanding the relations between the two countries in various fields and said: "Iran and Tanzania have a lot in common and the cultural interests of both sides paves the ways for the development of relations."

He said: "We prioritized the joint committee of the two countries, and in the new government, this is the first joint committee meeting to be held, and this shows the interest of our country in developing relations with Tanzania."

Lazaro Londo for his part said the visit of Iranian delegation to Tanzania is expected to provide the basis for the development of communication between the two countries.

In mid-March, Iranian and Tanzanian tax officials have signed the draft of an agreement to eliminate double taxation on income taxes and prevent tax evasion with the presence of the ambassador of the



Islamic Republic of Iran in Tanzania.

As reported, the draft was signed by Hossein Abdollahi, director general of the Legal Office and Tax Contracts of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and William M. Moja, the acting commissioner of the policy analysis department of the Ministry of Finance of Tanzania.

According to Abdollahi, the two sides have so far held three rounds of negotiations to prepare the mentioned agreement for signing.

This agreement has various goals such as the elimination of double taxation in the two countries, the attraction of direct in-

vestment, further development of economic relations and expansion of tax cooperation between the two countries, exchange of information to promote transparency in the tax behavior of the parties, assistance in tax collection, and the provision of facilities, the official explained.

The final signing and approval of this agreement will be done in the legislative assemblies of the two countries in the near future.

Tanzania is considered one of the most important countries in East Africa and Iran is taking new measures to expand economic ties with this country.

In late November 2022, Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) held the first exclusive exhibition of Iranian products and services in Tanzania in collaboration with the Iranian Trade Center in the African country to showcase the Islamic Republic's trade and export capacities.

According to Ra'ed Mousavi, the head of the Iranian Trade Center in Tanzania, this exhibition was the most appropriate platform to increase the knowledge of East African countries, especially Tanzania, about the products, services, and technological advancements of Iranian companies.

According to Mousavi, companies active in various fields including the agricultural sector, mines and industrial machinery, construction, as well as medicine and medical equipment participate in the first exclusive exhibition of the export capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Tanzania.

In mid-July 2023, Iran's late President Ebrahim Raisi also took a visit to three African countries of Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Industry Ministry prioritizes comprehensive development plan for mining sector

TEHRAN – Iran's Deputy Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Vajihollah Jafari has said implementing a comprehensive plan for developing the country's mines is a priority of the ministry to achieve the goals set for the mining sector in the seventh National Development Plan (2022-2027).

"The strategic plan has been formulated in 17 paragraphs and its priorities have been specified, but we are facing time and resource limitations," Jafari told IRIB.

The Deputy Minister for Mines and Materials Processing emphasized the existence of some challenges in the country's mining sector and said: "Some of these challenges can be solved in the short term and some in the long term with specific policies."

"The processes for resolving current issues should be changed in such a way that the implementation of what is expected in the mining industry, such as the supply of currency and machinery, will be facilitated," he said.

Back in August, Head of Iran Mine House (IMH) Mohammadreza Bahraman said the realization of the 13 percent growth in the country's mining sector set in the country's seventh National Develop-



ment Plan requires \$50 billion of investment.

Bahraman, who is also the deputy head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), emphasized that the infrastructure of the mining sector should be strengthened, saying: "The 7th Development Plan has predicted a 13 percent growth for the mining sector, while in order to achieve this, 50 billion dollars should be invested in this sector."

"One of the most important factors in mining development is to pay special attention to education because all the workers in this sector must be familiar with the rules and regulations," he said.

The official also underlined the need for sup-

porting investors in the mining industry, adding: "Supporting investment in the mining sector can create new opportunities for the development of the production sector, employment, foreign exchange, and business prosperity."

Stating that special laws have been formulated for the development of the mining sector, he said: "Our country has huge capacities in the field of mining, and these capacities should be used optimally."

Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries in the world. Having 15,000 mining areas, Iran has the sixth largest zinc, seventh largest copper, ninth largest iron ore reserves, and fifth largest gypsum and barite reserves globally. It also has three of the world's total lead and zinc reserves and huge coal reserves. Other mineral products such as chromate and manganese are also found in different regions of Iran.

The total proven reserves of Iran's mines are estimated at about 60 billion tons, which is expected to reach more than 100 billion tons with the implementation of the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's exploration programs over 500,000 square kilometers of new mineral zones.

Non-oil export from Alborz province increases 30%

TEHRAN- The volume of non-oil exports from Alborz province increased by 30 percent during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, a provincial official announced.

Mohammad Ansari, the director-general of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, further mentioned United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Somalia, Kenya, Pakistan, Libya and Germany as the main export destinations of the province's non-oil commodities in the six-month period.

Mojtaba Abdollahi, the governor-general of the province, has announced that non-oil commodities valued at over \$1 billion were exported from Alborz province in the past Iranian calendar year 1402 (ended on March 19).

As previously announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil exports increased by 6.5 percent during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Mohammad Rezvaniyar said that the country exported 70 million tons of non-oil products valued at \$25.8 billion during the first half of this year, also indicating 3.5 percent growth in terms of weight, year on year.

According to the IRICA head, Iran also exported \$23.2 billion of oil and \$600 million of technical and engineering services during the mentioned period, boosting the country's total exports to \$49.6 billion.

During this period, the imports reached \$32.6 billion, including \$2.5 billion of gold bullion.

Stating that the country's total trade exchange during the first half of the current year was \$82.2 billion, he added: "During this period, the trade balance of the country without oil and technical and engineering services was 6.8 billion dollars negative, and taking into account oil and technical and engineering services, it was 17 billion dollars positive."

"The average value per ton of export goods increased by three percent to \$366 in the first six months of this year," he noted.

China with \$7.2 billion, Iraq with \$5.2 billion, United Arab Emirates with \$3.4 billion, Turkey with \$2.4 billion, Afghanistan with \$1.1 billion, Pakistan with \$1.0 billion, and India with \$900 million were the main export destinations of Iranian goods during the mentioned period.

These seven countries accounted for 81 percent of the weight and 82 percent of the total value of Iran's exports, according to Rezvaniyar.

The UAE with \$10 billion, China with \$8.5 billion, Turkey with \$5.1 billion, Germany with \$1.2 billion, the Russian Federation and India with \$800 million each, and Hong

Kong with \$600 million were also the top sources of imports for Iran in the first half of the current year.

China, UAE, and Turkey were Iran's top trading partners in the mentioned six months, Rezvaniyar said.

The official has also announced that the value of Iran's foreign trade including oil and technical engineering services reached \$153.178 billion in the last Iranian calendar year 1402 (ended on March 19).

According to Mohammad Rezvaniyar, the value of the Islamic Republic's trade with the partners in the previous year increased by 2.6 percent compared to the same period last year.

The official put the country's non-oil exports, excluding exports of electricity, crude oil, and technical engineering services, at 136.4 million tons worth \$49.33 billion which shows a 9.82 percent rise in terms of tonnage and an 8.87 percent decline in terms of value.

Iran exported \$35.87 billion of crude oil, \$370 million of electricity, and \$1.293 billion of technical engineering services in the mentioned year, according to Rezvaniyar.

According to him, during this period, 48.8 million tons of petrochemical products worth \$19.4 billion were also exported, which shows a decrease of 11.32 percent and 28.59 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively.

During this period, liquefied nat-

ural gas with \$3.9 billion, liquefied propane with \$3.62 billion, and bitumen-oil with \$2.19 billion were Iran's top exported items.

Iran's top export destination during this period was China with \$13.915 billion worth of imports from the Islamic Republic, followed by Iraq with \$9.215 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$6.611 billion, Turkey with \$4.16 billion, and India with \$2.17 billion.

The official put the average customs value of each ton of exported goods at \$362 which has decreased by 17 percent compared to the preceding year.

During this period, 39 million tons of goods worth \$66.28 billion were also imported into the country, which shows an increase of 4.39 percent in terms of weight and 77.9 percent in terms of value, he said.

The country's top five sources of imports in the previous year were the UAE with \$20.782 billion, China with \$18.545 billion, Turkey with \$7.541 billion, Germany with \$2.155 billion, and India with \$1.917 billion worth of imports.

Corn, mobile phones, and gold ingots were the top three imported items followed by soybeans, automobile parts, sunflower seeds, and safflower were the five main items imported by the Islamic Republic.

Rezvaniyar said the average customs value of each ton of imported goods increased by \$5.16 and reached \$1,697.

Drone from Lebanon hits Netanyahu's residence

From page 1 ▶ According to the Israeli military, three drones entered Israeli airspace on Saturday morning, two of which were allegedly shot down. "One additional UAV hit a structure in the area of Caesarea." The Israeli military added.

According to a statement by Netanyahu's office, the drone attack triggered sirens to ring at the Gilot military intelligence base very close to Tel Aviv, which has been targeted by Hezbollah before. It is unclear yet what the connection is between the two incidents.

"A UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) was launched toward the prime minister's residence in Caesarea. The prime minister and his wife were not at the location, and there were no injuries in the incident." The statement alleged.

Israeli Army Radio has cited a security source as saying the regime's security services view the successful drone intrusion as a very serious failure and an investigation has been launched into the breach of Israeli airspace for at least 70 kilometers.

The drone attack has caused significant concern in Israel. Reports say security has been beefed up for senior Israeli leaders, cabinet ministers as well as military officials.



Israeli security forces stand guard near a barrier on a street leading to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's residence in Caesarea on 19 October 2024 (Jack Guez / AFP)

The incident comes a day after Hezbollah announced "the transition to a new and escalating phase in the confrontation with the Israeli enemy."

The Lebanese resistance said the new military strategy was based on directives by the movement's leadership and "will be reflected in the developments and events of the coming days."

This operation indicates that Hezbollah has information on important and strategic locations in Israel.

The attack on Netanyahu's home comes less than a week af-

Attack on Netanyahu's home shows Hezbollah drones can bypass Israel's defense systems and hit their targets successfully.

ter Hezbollah carried out a drone operation against the elite Israeli Golani Brigade's base in Binyam-

ina near Haifa.

The attack left at several Israeli troops dead and scores of others injured. At least eight are still believed to be in serious condition. The attack was the largest to have been waged on Israel since October 8, 2023.

This is in addition to the almost daily barrage of rockets on Haifa and areas across Israel that have left many neighborhoods in ruins.

The spate of attacks has left many questioning the effectiveness of the Israeli defense systems, in particular the Iron Dome, which Tel Aviv prides itself on for intercepting incoming projectiles.

Netanyahu's army declared war on Lebanon with the aim of returning displaced Israelis to the north who fled after Hezbollah traded daily rocket fire with the Israeli military in solidarity with Gaza.

The Israeli bombardment on Lebanon and the mass killing of civilians has seen Hezbollah widen its range of rocket fire from the northern Israeli settlements to Haifa and central Israel.

Experts say at this rate there is no visible path for the Israelis to their homes in the north, especially after the Israeli prime minister's home was bombed.

Hezbollah continues to target air defence bases in Haifa and beyond

From page 1 ▶ As part of the "Khaybar" series of operations, Hezbollah's "Islamic Resistance Operations Room" announced the beginning of a new escalating phase of fighting the enemy, targeting the depth of the occupied territories in occupied Palestinian Haifa, as it launched a salvo of qualitative missiles targeting the city of Haifa.

Other Hezbollah's salvos targeted the Kiryat Elazar site, the main air defence base, west of Haifa, in addition to launching a squadron of attack drones on the Nasharim base southeast of Haifa. Hezbollah launched another squadron on the Ein Shemer base (a missile air defence base and the regional brigade base) east of Hadera. Hezbollah also launched a missile salvo towards the Krayot, north of Haifa.

Through these heroic operations, it is clear that Hezbollah is determined to target the main and sensitive military bases in the Haifa area. This demonstrates the extensive and advanced armament and operational capabilities that the resistance still possesses, despite the ferocity of the fighting and the in-

tensity of US-led genocidal war against most Lebanese areas.

This escalation by Hezbollah belies the claims of the Zionist enemy that it has managed to eliminate its qualitative and strategic capabilities, as well as its military leadership.

In parallel, the resistance continued to target military factories in the northern region, including: the Zevulun base north of Haifa; the Yoav barracks in the occupied Syrian Golan.

Further, Hezbollah targeted gatherings of Zionist enemy soldiers in the occupied city of Safed, around the Lebanese town of Aita al-Shaab, on the outskirts of the Lebanese town of Kfar Kila, and in the settlement of Shlomi.

In the meantime, Hezbollah continues to destroy Merkava tanks, as the resistance targeted a tank around the Israeli Abbad site with a guided missile, which led to its burning and the deaths and injuries of its crew.

Also, Hezbollah's air defence unit confronted an Israeli drone in the airspace of the south with a surface-to-air missile, forcing

it to retreat. Following these fierce confrontations, Israeli Channel 12 reported that the Golani Brigade suffered heavy losses, after losing 9 officers and soldiers.

Meanwhile, the Israeli enemy announced that 50 soldiers and officers were injured in ground combat in the south on Friday alone. Several hospitals in the entity revealed that they received dozens of wounded soldiers, as clashes took place between Hezbollah and the Israeli enemy forces, on the western outskirts of the town of Aita al-Shaab, and anti-tank missiles were launched against the enemy forces, in addition to machine gun fire, artillery shells and rockets, which forced them to retreat, then warplanes were sent to carry out intensive raids in the area, in addition to extensive artillery shelling.

This escalation indeed proves that Hezbollah has regained the initiative despite the US-Israeli air control and intelligence coverage of all Lebanese territory.

Legacy of fire: Al-Aqsa Storm rages on after Sinwar's killing

From page 1 ▶ Israel has massacred Palestinians in Gaza through US military and political support. Tel Aviv and Washington have hindered ceasefire initiatives while asserting their commitment to seeking peace in Gaza.

Israel has killed at least 42,500 Palestinians in Gaza since launching war on the enclave on October, 7, 2023. But Netanyahu's army has failed to defeat Hamas.

The killing of Sinwar serves merely as a pretext to shift focus from Israel's inability to bring Hamas to its knees after a year of genocide in Gaza.

Over the past decades, Israel has killed Hamas leaders and commanders in a desperate attempt to cripple the resistance movement.

Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the founder of Hamas, was one of the prominent individuals targeted in Israel's assassination campaign. The Hamas spiritual leader was killed on March 22, 2004, along with nine other people in Gaza.

He established Hamas in late 1987, coinciding with the onset of the first Palestinian Intifada (uprising) in the same year.

Yassin strongly defended the Palestinian people's right to resist the Israeli occupation and often criticized the Palestinian Authority for discounting the armed resistance option



A person holds an image of Yahya Sinwar during an 'All Out for Palestine' protest against Israeli arms funding at New York Public Library in New York City on October 18, 2024. [Adam Gray/Reuters]

in its dealings with the occupation regime.

Yassin had been confined to a wheelchair following an injury he sustained at the age of 12.

Israel believed that the assassination would result in the eradication of Hamas. However, the Al-Aqsa Storm, the surprise military attack carried out by Hamas on October 7 last year in southern Israel, demonstrated that such actions only serve to empower Palestinians, motivating them to put up resistance against the regime.

More than 1,100 people were killed in the Hamas operation and about 250 others were taken captive. Hamas freed over 100 captives in a swap deal with Israel in November last year.

Sinwar's legacy

The Israeli army acknowledged that Sinwar, the architect of the Al-Aqsa Storm, was killed during a firefight with its forces.

Sinwar's death in the combat zone in Gaza refutes Israel's claims that he was in hiding and used civilians and captives as human shields.

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have hailed Sinwar as a brave resistance leader vowing to continue his path.

Sinwar was the face of the Palestinian armed struggle against Israel's decades-long occupation. He was a selfless commander who battled until the very end.

Israel killed Sinwar but his legacy will rage on like fire and reinforce the Palestinian resistance against the regime's brutalities.

From now on, a new large-scale version of the Al-Aqsa Storm will haunt Israel for good.

Israeli attacks render all major northern Gaza hospitals out of service

Three partially functioning hospitals treating severely wounded patients and sheltering thousands of displaced Palestinian civilians in northern Gaza are now out of service after coming under intense Israeli fire, a Gaza health official told Al Jazeera.

Israeli forces bombed al-Awda Hospital in Jabalia early on Saturday, and have also shelled Kamal Adwan and the Indonesian hospitals in Beit Lahiya over the past few hours.

"We cannot count the number of those killed. The numbers are terrifying," the official told Al Jazeera.

At least one person has been killed and several others were wounded in the strike at the entrance of the laboratory of Kamal Adwan Hospital, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

The Palestinian news agency Wafa also reported that because of the military siege, two intensive care unit patients at the Indonesian Hospital died on Saturday.

On Friday, health officials appealed for fuel, medical supplies and food to be sent immediately to the three northern Gaza hospitals which have been overwhelmed by the number of patients and injuries.



Health staff brings injured Palestinian children to al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir el-Balah after an Israeli strike on the Maghazi refugee camp, in central Gaza Strip, on Friday [Ashraf Amra/Anadolu]

The World Health Organization (WHO) has also accused Israel of preventing at least 50 medical specialists belonging to eight groups from entering Gaza, the first such case of entire organisations being blocked from participating in humanitarian efforts in the besieged territory.

Northern Gaza, once home to more than half of the territory's 2.3 million people, was bombed to rubble in the first phase of Israel's assault a year ago.

UN expert: Israeli drone killing of Palestinian child part of 'widespread' executions

The extrajudicial killing of Palestinian children in Gaza by Israeli soldiers is "systematic and widespread", and intended to "destroy" the Palestinian people, a UN expert said.

Francesca Albanese, UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, made her comments following the release of video footage showing the execution-like shooting of a child in central Gaza by an Israeli drone, Al Jazeera reported.

The harrowing video clip captures the killing and then a missile attack on those who went to the child's rescue.

"While these scenes are hard to process, it is important to understand that extrajudicial executions of Palestinian civilians – often children – are absolutely not isolated incidents," Albanese wrote in a post on social media.

"These events represent a part of the systematic and widespread actions being carried out by Israeli soldiers in Gaza. The rationale? The opportunity to target (and destroy) the Palestinians, which the State of Israel appears determined not to let slip away," she said.

More than 400 people killed in two weeks of Israeli attacks on northern Gaza

Gaza's Civil Defense agency said more than 400 Palestinians have been killed in the north of the territory over the past two weeks during the ongoing military assault by Israeli forces.

"We have recovered more than 400 mar-

tyrs from the various targeted areas in the northern Gaza Strip, including Jabalia and its camp, Beit Lahiya, and Beit Hanoon since the start of the military operation by the occupation army" on October 6, spokesman Mahmud Bassal told the AFP news agency.

Colonial dreams: The unattainable vision of a reconfigured Middle East

By Xavier Villar

MADRID- As explained by Portuguese international relations expert Bruno Maçães, Israel, alongside the United States, believes that the situation in the region is ripe for a political reconfiguration that eliminates all obstacles to its hegemony. Maçães describes this moment as "liquid," suggesting that Israel sees parallels with 1967, when it successfully defeated Arab forces and annexed parts of Palestine, such as East Jerusalem (al-Quds).

Rather than facing a coalition of Arab states, Israel currently confronts the Axis of Resistance, an alliance of states, movements, and fighters that share a common goal of reducing U.S. and Israeli influence in the region. This desire to politically reconfigure the region is not new. Since 1979, with the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, both Israel and the United States have sought, through various means, a regime change in Tehran. In addition to this objective, both countries have aimed to keep Iran isolated and weakened through economic sanctions. Within this framework of "containment," they have also sought to oppose Iran's nuclear development, considering it a threat to their interests.

The policy of containment, isolation, and regime change in Iran intensified a year ago, right after Hamas's "Flood of Al Aqsa" oper-

ation. This campaign is rooted in a colonial revanchism approach that seems to know no end or limit.

During the summer, supported by U.S. backing, Israel redirected its attention toward Lebanon and Hezbollah. In this context, in July, it assassinated Fouad Shukur, a key figure within the Lebanese group, and carried out several terrorist attacks using surveillance devices, walkie-talkies, and other electronic tools. This hyperconfidence led Israel to believe that, following the blows dealt to Hezbollah, the group had been weakened to the point of no longer being a threat to the Zionist colonial project. In this view, the alleged weakening of Hezbollah was seen as a precursor to a direct confrontation with Iran.

The name given by Iranian military officials to the operation against the Lebanese group, "Operation New Order," underscores the intention to reconfigure the region and eliminate all obstacles to that reconfiguration.

This strategy also includes a video of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, supposedly addressing the Iranian people, in which he claimed that regime change in the Islamic Republic was imminent. All of the above exemplifies Israeli hyperconfidence in considering the region as ripe for its political and strategic intentions to modify its structure.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

War Tourism: Khuzestan to hold festival on artistic narratives of Sacred Defense



TEHRAN – Iran's southwestern province of Khuzestan is preparing to host a war tourism festival focusing on artistic narratives of the country's 1980-88 Sacred Defense.

The festival aims to introduce visitors to key historical sites from the Iran-Iraq War, with a special focus on the role of medical personnel and field hospitals.

Through art, the event seeks to promote "resistance tourism" by raising awareness about the social and historical dimensions of the war and preserving its legacy, ISNA reported on Saturday.

According to organizers, participants, including artists, photographers, documentary filmmakers, writers, and motion graphic de-

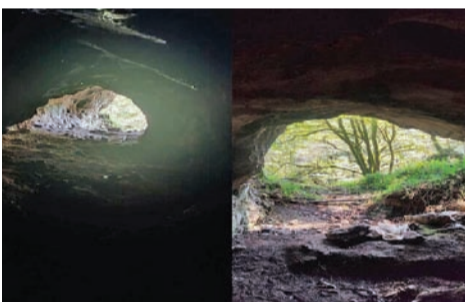
signers, will use creative mediums to highlight the heroic efforts of medical personnel in treating and saving soldiers' lives under extreme conditions.

The festival will be embracing an award ceremony in February 2025, where outstanding contributions will be recognized, Khuzestan, located in southwestern Iran, shares a border with Iraq and is the richest Iranian province in terms of oil and gas resources. It was the most affected region during the eight-year war, suffering significant destruction and losses.

Covering an area of 63,633 square kilometers, Khuzestan borders multiple provinces, including Lorestan to the north, Ilam to the northwest, and the Persian Gulf to the south. Important border points with Iraq include Abadan, Khorramshahr, Shalamcheh, and Arvandrud, each holding historical significance in the war.

Widely known as Sacred Defense in the Islamic Republic, the war was launched by the order of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein nearly 19 months after the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. It was the second-longest war of the 20th century after the Vietnam War.

Prehistorical cave discovered in northern Iran



TEHRAN – A prehistorical cave has recently been discovered in the Siahkalrud rural district of Rudsar county, which is situated in Gilan province, northern Iran.

The cave is a significant find, being the first of its kind situated in a forested area just five kilometers from the Caspian Sea, Veli Jahani, the provincial tourism chief, said on Friday.

The official explained that the cave measures approximately 25 meters in length, and three meters in width, and varies in height from one to three meters due to its unique topography.

Jahani noted that the entrance of the cave appears to be artificially carved, although further studies are needed to confirm this.

The cave's advantageous location near the

Caspian coastline, within the Hyrcanian forests and adjacent to a flowing river, adds to its significance. Preliminary assessments suggest that the cave dates back to prehistoric times.

Jahani emphasized that more detailed studies and research are required to provide accurate assessments of the cave's historical context.

He also highlighted that Gilan is home to over 150 caves, several of which have been registered as national heritage sites, with many being promoted as tourist attractions in recent years.

The lush green province, which is bounded by the Caspian Sea, is a historically and culturally rich region that offers visitors a diverse range of experiences. With its mild climate, lush greenery, majestic mountains, and stunning coastline, Gilan is becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination in northern Iran.

Gilan is also known for its beautiful natural scenery and exotic wildlife. The stunning waterfront of the Anzali lagoon, the majestic Talesh mountains, and the verdant rice paddies are just a few of the natural wonders that attract visitors to the region.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Palace and Park of Versailles

Situated in the Île-de-France region, south-west of Paris, a privileged place both of residence and the exercise of power of the French monarchy from Louis XIV to Louis XVI, the Palace and Park of Versailles, built and embellished by several generations of architects, sculptors, painters, ornamentalists and landscape artists, represented for Europe for more than a century, the perfect model of a royal residence. The architectural planning and the majestic composition of the landscape form a close symbiosis, serving as a setting for the magnificence of the interior decorations of the apartments.

The inscribed property includes the zone enclosing the prestigious ensemble of the Palace, the Trianon châteaux and their gardens, as well as a narrow band of land offering the perspective from the extremity of the Grand Canal. It is the result of a century and a half of work commanded by the kings of France and entrusted to its greatest artists.

The strongest imprint has been left by Louis XIV, who started by enlarging the small brick and stone chateau built by his father, Louis XIII, in 1624. A first addition occurred after 1661 under the direction of Le Vau, in a still strongly Italian style. After 1678, Versailles was once again considerably enlarged and radically modified by Jules Hard-

ouin-Mansart, who successfully introduced a sober, colossal, homogenous and majestic architecture, now inseparable from the memory of the Sun King. The famous Galerie des Glaces, between the Salon de la Guerre and that of the Paix, is the masterpiece of the Neo-classical and typically French style, called Louis XIV. The Orangerie and the Grand Trianon are also the work of Mansart, who was assisted by Robert de Cotte in the construction of the Royal Chapel.

The creations at Versailles during the 18th century are among the most perfect and most celebrated works of the Louis XV and Louis XVI styles: the Petit Trianon by Jacques-Ange Gabriel, the decoration of the apartments of Louis XV by Verbeek and Rousseau, and the apartments and the Hameau de Marie-Antoinette by Mique.

The gardens that complete the Palace, developed during the construction process of the ensemble, were designed by Le Nôtre, creator of the typology of the French-style garden, an open system of axial pathways extending as far as the eye can see and punctuated with flowers and low hedges, flower beds, small streams, large lakes and fountains.

(Source: UNESCO)

Isfahan to host 1st conference of Iran's historical cities

TEHRAN – Isfahan is set to host the inaugural conference of Iran's historical cities on Oct. 31, aiming to connect cities with rich cultural heritages to policymakers in relevant fields, including the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Mohammad-Ali Izadkhasti, the CEO of Isfahan's Urban Revitalization Organization, emphasized the significance of this event during an interview with IRNA on Saturday.

He noted that the gathering, initiated by Isfahan's municipality and supported by several historical cities, will serve as a platform for city managers to discuss shared challenges and experiences.

Izadkhasti mentioned that several meetings with the Ministry of Interior, and the organization of municipalities and rural cooperatives have revealed a lack of unified data and a centralized space for collaboration among historical cities.

"This highlighted the necessity for a collective forum where



these cities could exchange insights and strategies," Izadkhasti said.

He added that the conference aims to enhance the protection of the nation's valuable historical heritage. By forming this assembly, mayors from historical cities will have the opportunity to voice their concerns and share their experiences, fostering collaboration in heritage conservation efforts.

Currently, municipalities are at the forefront of safeguarding historical sites, and the confer-

ence will facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practices in preservation. Over the past year, the Isfahan Renovation Organization has hosted more than 60 scientific sessions, gathering extensive experiences from various cities in heritage management.

Izadkhasti remarked that many challenges faced by historical cities are rooted in similar issues, largely stemming from a uniform approach to modern urban planning that disregards local differences. One of the key objectives of the conference is

to establish a common language in heritage conservation and to recognize these sites not as obstacles to development but as valuable assets with the potential for mutual enrichment.

Earlier this month, in a significant step toward promoting tourism collaboration, the mayors of Yazd, Isfahan, and Shiraz signed a trilateral cooperation agreement titled the "Golden Triangle of Iran's Tourism."

The signing ceremony was held in Shiraz on October 4. Key points of the agreement included supporting joint research projects aimed at tourism development, utilizing international networks of the three cities, and organizing conferences, workshops, and special visits between them.

Together, Isfahan, Yazd, and Shiraz represent a "Golden Triangle" of Iranian tourism, each offering a unique glimpse into Iran's rich cultural, architectural, and historical heritage.

Chinese ambassador highlights Silk Road caravanserais' role in fostering cross-cultural exchange

TEHRAN – Chinese ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu has turned the spotlight on the role of centuries-old caravanserais in linking cultures across the ancient Silk Road.

In a recent interview with Mehr news agency, the ambassador celebrated those roadside inns that once dotted from China to Iran and far beyond to Europe, fostering commerce and cross-cultural exchanges for over two millennia.

The envoy also shared his memories of a recent visit to Semnan, a province known for its rich history, natural beauty, and hospitality, which is home to many caravanserais.

Semnan is a crucial junction on the ancient Silk Road, stretching across thousands of miles, with caravanserais that narrate the 2,000-year-old legacy of the Silk Road, Cong remarked.

He described caravanserais as symbols of innovation, built to support travelers and merchants navigating the vast deserts.

"More than 2,000 years ago, China and Iran were closely connected through the Silk Road. Our ancestors worked tirelessly to construct these rest stops, promoting exchanges between nations along the route," Mehr quoted the ambassador as saying on Saturday.

He then highlighted that caravanserais not only served practical purposes but also embodied the spirit of friendship. "It is said that along the ancient Silk Road, there was a caravanserai every 30 to 40 kilometers, where merchants from different parts of the world stopped, exchanged goods, and then continued to the next caravanserai," he explained.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the ambassador stressed the importance of continuing the historic friendship between China and Iran across generations, adding that regional cooperation would play a vital role in deepening this bond.

"Semnan, with its abundant natural, historical, and cultural resources, holds tremendous potential for development," he concluded.

His remarks underline China's focus on cultural diplomacy and the revival of Silk Road heritage, resonating with the goals of the Belt and Road Initiative, which seeks to revive the spirit of the ancient trade route through modern infrastructure and cooperation.

Caravanserai or caravansarai is a compound word combining "caravan" with "sara"; the former referring to a group of travelers and the latter meaning the building. They of-



ten enjoyed massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard, with stables situated behind them and doors located in the corners of the yard.

The earliest caravanserais in Iran date back to the Achaemenid era (550 - 330 BC). Centuries later, during the reign of Shah Abbas I from 1588 to 1629, a network of caravanserais was commissioned across the country.

In 2022, Iran selected Semnan to represent the country at a union of cities across the Silk Road based on an initiative launched by China to promote tourism along the ancient Silk Road.

'A little hyped up': experts downplay claims over Petra archaeological find

For one of the most famous ancient sites on the planet, there is a surprising amount about the city of Petra – and the Nabataean people who built it – that we don't know for sure.

What exactly were their origins? How did their society operate? And why did they hand-carve such spectacular monuments into the reddish rock of the Jordanian desert?

A recent find at Petra this week promised some "ground-breaking and historic" answers. Described by the team behind it as like finding the holy grail of Petra archaeology, a large tomb has been excavated immediately in front of the Khazneh, or treasury, the most celebrated of its magnificent facades. Inside were 12 bodies and a range of grave goods, reportedly made from bronze, iron and pottery.

"This is perhaps the most significant tomb ever found at Petra and a discovery of historic proportions," said Josh Gates, the presenter of a Discovery Channel documentary that accompanied the U.S.-Jordanian excavation. "The breakthrough could not only reveal the secrets of the treasury above, it could also offer an extraordinary glimpse into the lives

of the early Nabataeans who built Petra."

Breathless global headlines followed – boosted by a photograph of one find that, according to Gates, "looked nearly identical to the holy grail featured in Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade", part of which was filmed outside the Khazneh.

That artefact was in fact the top of a broken jug, and experts in Nabataean burials have been cooler in their assessment of the tomb's significance.

"I think it's being a little hyped up in the media," said Dr Lucy Wadson, an expert on Nabataean funerary traditions who teaches at the University of Edinburgh. She said that while the location of the find inevitably added interest, "we already knew that this tomb existed. The [Jordanian] department of antiquities had already excavated two tombs there, and they left that one closed for a future date, so it's not as if it's something new."

Megan Perry, a professor of biological anthropology at East Carolina University in the U.S. and a leading expert on Nabataean burials, was more outspoken on X: "I'm not amazed @discovery @joshuagates – after

all, I've excavated many tombs in Petra and guess what? THEY F'ING CONTAIN BURIALS! No one is amazed except people who haven't done their research!"

The Nabataeans were an Arab tribe whose origins are still debated, but who rose to wealth and power in the centuries before the Christian era thanks to their position on the trading routes of valuable aromatics such as frankincense and myrrh from the Arabian peninsula to the Mediterranean. At the peak of the Nabataean civilisation, their power stretched from Damascus to northern Arabia. (Hegra, in present Saudi Arabia, where Wadson is a research consultant, is another important Nabataean archaeological site.)

Wadson said the classical-style architecture at Petra, the Nabataean capital, drew on these extensive cultural connections, but while they were certainly a literate culture, they left very few written records. "The Nabataeans didn't really write about themselves. So our ancient textual sources about them are often in-passing comments from Greeks and Romans."

Even tomb inscriptions are rare in Petra, she said, although

some at Hegra have offered intriguing suggestions of a very different society to their contemporaries, in which women could own property and may have had real power.

"What is interesting is that we have tombs in Hegra that are specifically owned by women and were only for the burials of their daughters and granddaughters, on the matrilineal line of descent," she said. "We don't really know why – were these divorced women? Were they sacred courtesans in the temple?"

Coins, too, show Nabataean queens as well as kings, "so the queens obviously had quite a bit of power, and in some cases they ruled on behalf of their children".

Wadson's own "holy grail" discovery would be to learn more of what the Nabataeans believed about the afterlife, she said. "They're not a culture that have written down their own mythology or their own history. But maybe they did, and we just haven't discovered that yet. Papyri, for example, might still remain. This kind of evidence could still be discovered."

(Source: The Guardian)

Qatar, Iraq interested in boosting health co-op with Iran

TEHRAN –Qatari and Iraqi health officials have expressed interest in enhancing cooperation with Iran in the health sector.

The meetings were held on the sidelines of the seventy-first session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO). The meeting was held in Doha, Qatar, from October 14 to 17 under the theme of “health beyond borders: action, access, equity,” the health ministry’s website reported.

During separate meetings, the officials explored avenues for expanding collaborations in the health sector.

Salih Al Marri, Assistant Minister for Health Affairs in Qatar, held a meeting with Alireza Raeisi, deputy health minister for health affairs, and Mohammad-Hossein Niknam, the deputy health minister for international affairs.

The Qatari official highlighted Qatar’s high capabilities in the field of health and expressed the country’s willingness to increase cooperation with Iran’s Health Ministry.

Raeisi, for his part, described the current relations between the two countries in the health sector as great and growing.

Underscoring that the two countries possess good capacities in health infrastructure, disease control, digital health systems, and other areas, he said



that enhancing the cooperation will boost the capacities.

The official proposed improving ties in communicable disease management through early detection and sharing expertise.

According to Niknam, two memorandums of understanding are being signed with Qatar, and the two countries are establishing related working groups.

Also, Riyadh Abdul Amir, Iraqi director of the Public Health Department, announced Iraq’s interest in expanding cooperation in different fields of health by creating a working group to follow up on required issues.

The two officials stressed the need for boosting cooperation in the fields of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Raeisi, for his part, highlighted developing joint activities on digitization of the health system, international health regulations,

and rapid exchange of information to control diseases.

The coronavirus pandemic showed that Western countries and the U.S. did not help other nations during the crisis, so it is essential for Iran and Iraq as well as other neighboring countries to have fruitful cooperation and investment in the field of health to prevent confronting severe health challenges during the crisis, the official noted.

Iran’s health sector a role model: WHO official

The WHO director for the EMRO has called Iran’s health sector a role model in the region.

WHO EMRO is interested in expanding cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran, IRNA quoted Hanna Hasan Balkhi as saying.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with Alireza Raeisi, the Iranian deputy health min-

ister, and Mohammad-Hossein Niknam, the deputy health minister for international affairs, on the sidelines of the Seventy-first session of the WHO EMRO.

A delegation led by Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi participated in the session.

“During my short visit to Iran a few months ago, I became familiar with the capabilities of Iran in the health sector; Iran is a role model in health in the region,” Balkhi noted.

“Utilizing full potentials available in the [regional] countries is essential for us, and we will not hesitate to support the implementation of health programs,” the official noted.

Raeisi, for his part, enumerated priorities in the country’s health sector, namely completing the implementation of the family physician program and the electronic health record program.

Referring to non-communicable diseases as another important issue in the health sector, the official said, “Unfortunately, due to the crises in West Asia, the prevalence of non-communicable diseases has increased, and the onset age of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and obesity has lowered.

Therefore, we are planning to control the risk factors from childhood through old age. To achieve the goal, we need to develop plans in cooperation with the World Health Organization.”

Iranian professor elected as IOAI committee chairman

TEHRAN –Ali Sharifi-Zarchi, a professor of artificial intelligence and bioinformatics at Sharif University of Technology, has been elected as the chairman of the International Olympiad in Artificial Intelligence (IOAI) scientific committee.

IOAI is the most prestigious annual competition in AI for high school students. Its mission is to inspire and challenge young minds to explore the limitless possibilities of AI, fostering the next generation of AI pioneers and problem solvers.

IOAI is a STEM-focused competition aimed at inspiring, developing, and promoting the best students in AI globally.

Each year, IOAI will highlight different AI fields, such as Natural Language Processing (NLP), Machine Learning (ML), and Computer Vision (CV).

As an AI Olympiad, IOAI will actively engage in discussions with the general public about the ethical aspects and the future of AI, primarily through its practical round.

The founders also aim to involve a local celebrity each year to promote IOAI and together with the students to inspire broader community dialogue about AI.

The 1st edition of IOAI took place in Burgas, Bulgaria in August 2024.

A total of 41 teams from 30 countries took part in the competition’s 2 rounds: Scientific Round and Practical Round, with a focus on ML, NLP, and CV.

The Iranian national team achieved remarkable success at the inaugural International Olympiad in Artificial Intelligence, earning a bronze team medal and securing the 18th overall rank in Bulgaria.

The team, comprised of students Mohammad Sadra Kouhestani, Amir Hossein Zarei, Parsa Sadeghi, and Alireza Rahimi Yazdi, showcased their skills in a highly competitive environment, Press TV reported.

In one of the three scientific challenges, the Iranian team delivered the best solution among 41 participating teams from 33 countries, demonstrating an accuracy that surpassed not only their competitors but also the solution provided by the problem’s designer, according to Iranian media reports.



IOAI 2025 will take place in Beijing, China, in the summer.

Iran tops Islamic nations for AI documents

According to a report released by the Web of Science database, Iran ranks first for the highest number of documents in artificial intelligence (AI) among Islamic countries.

The country issued 2,638 AI documents between 2013 and 2022.

Saudi Arabia (2,465) and Turkey (2,303) were ranked second and third, respectively, IRIB reported.

Iran has also been ranked 14th worldwide in artificial intelligence.

Based on the report, the country ranks second in 3D printing and robotics, fourth in the Internet of Things, fifth in 5th generation (5G) communication technologies and big data, seventh in drone technology, and eighth in blockchains among Islamic nations.

The most scientific productions in the last ten years in artificial intelligence have been respectively related to Tehran University, Tabriz University, and Amir Kabir University of Technology.

Also, the data analysis shows that the number of scientific productions of artificial intelligence has improved in the last five years, reaching 577 documents in 2022 from 157 documents in 2018.

Robotics with 1,596 documents, and the Internet of Things with 1,270 documents followed artificial intelligence in terms of scientific production.

Blockchains with 7 documents had the lowest scientific production in the ten-year period.

Iran may rethink refugee policies if global support is not enough

TEHRAN – In case the international community refrains from taking responsibility and fairly sharing the burden of hosting refugees, the Islamic Republic of Iran will probably revise its immigration policies, Nader Yar-Ahmadi, an official with the National Organization for Migration, has said.

Yar-Ahmadi, leading a delegation, participated in the 75th Annual Session of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (ExCom) held from October 14 to 19 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The official made the remarks in a meeting held on the sidelines of the annual session with Flippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Lauding the support and the efforts of the UNHCR in Iran, the Iranian official said the increase in foreign nationals’ population along with educational, economic, cultural-social, and health infrastructure pressure on one hand and the lack of consistency between the UNHCR budget and the needs and costs of refugees in the country on the other hand have caused numerous problems, IRNA quoted Yar-Ahmadi as saying.

The official emphasized less than one percent of the costs of refugees have been paid for; hosting more refugees is improbable, and they have to return to their home country.

“The priority of the country is to resettle vulnerable refugees in third countries, despite promises made in your last visit to Iran in the calendar year 1400 (2021 – 2022) to provide more vulnerable refugees with insur-

ance, sadly, not only the number of those covered did not increase, but it also decreased from 120,000 to 95,000 individuals.

It is essential for the UNHCR to review and boost its support in the field of health and treatment, he stressed.

It should be noted that political issues, including sanctions, must not affect humanitarian activities. Since humanitarian issues are apart from political issues, the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to cooperate with financial supporters of refugees in the country, the official added.

Considering the challenges facing the education system due to the free education of Afghan nationals in the country, it is necessary for the UNHCR to cover the expenses related to their education, including building new schools, improving and equipping schools, and providing teachers’ fees.

Some 25,000 classrooms are needed for the education of foreign students, but since 2021, only 21 schools have been built with the support of the UNHCR in the country which does not meet the needs.

Grandi, for his part, commended the valuable policies of Iran in providing services to refugees in various fields such as education, health, and treatment.

The official acknowledged that with the increase in the number of Afghan nationals, the situation has become more complicated for the country as the aid has not been proportionate to the provided services to refugees in these 40 years.

DOE to establish endangered species conservation committee

TEHRAN –The Department of Environment (DOE) is planning to organize a committee for the preservation of critically endangered species including cheetahs, black bears, and great bustards.

“The Department of Environment is planning to protect endangered species by establishing conservation committees with the help of non-governmental organizations, as well as fostering public, rangers, experts, and government agencies,” IRNA quoted Hamid Zohrabi, an official with the DOE, as saying.

Endangered species

There are many threats to endangered wildlife species, including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and birds.

Habitat destruction, fragmentation, and modification caused by human-led activities such as industrial and residential development, logging, crop farming, livestock grazing, mining, road and dam building, and pesticide use have taken an extreme toll on threatened and endangered wildlife populations at an alarming rate.

Currently, about 128 species of animals and vertebrates in the country are at risk of extinction, some of which are not in good condition, and amphibians are the most vulnerable in this area.

Persian zebra, Asiatic cheetah, black bear, and yellow deer are in danger of extinction.

Zebbras exist in two habitats in Iran; one is

in the Turan protected area in the south of Semnan province, where there are about 250 zebbras, and the other is in the Bahramgur protected area in the southeast of Fars province, where 1,200 zebbras are kept.

The Persian zebra population is estimated to be around 1,500, although the zebra is considered an endangered species according to both national and international regulations.

Asiatic cheetah ranks second among Iran’s endangered species. Including the cheetahs that have probably not been identified, the population of this species in Iran is estimated to be below 30.

Persian yellow deer is also one of the most important species in the world. According to the list provided by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, these deer are in the EN category and the red list, which is considered to be in danger of extinction.

The deer have been released in a limited number of habitats in “Ashk” Island, West Azarbaijan province, and “Dez” National Park, Khuzestan province.

They are also kept in reproduction and breeding centers in Ilam, Yazd, Fars, West Azarbaijan, and Mazandaran provinces.

Asian black bear, which is known as the Baluchi black bear, is another endangered species in the country. It lives mainly in forest areas, especially in mountainous areas at altitudes of 500 to 2,700 meters, and is found in Kerman, Hormozgan, and Sistan-Baluch-

estan provinces in very low quantities.

Action plans to conserve species

The DOE has developed action plans for the conservation of 23 endangered species and the plans are being implemented in the country.

The plans intend to address species such as cheetah, brown bear, leopard, black bear, Persian yellow deer, Persian zebra, and hunting birds from among 86 endangered species.

According to the DOE’s latest report, 86 species in the country are in danger of dying out.

The Department of Environment is planning to create action plans for 20 more endangered species.

In May, Marzieh Mousavi, an official with the DOE, said that among endangered animal species, bustards and Asiatic cheetahs are in a more critical situation, there are roughly 19 species of bustards and 25 species of cheetahs identified in the country.

Efforts are being made to increase their population through habitat protection and prey management in Turan, Miandash, and its neighboring areas, she noted.

The DOE is trying to improve the role of the private sector and local communities in creating a more sustainable livelihood and increasing their protection so that if a cheetah steps out of the protected areas, it survives.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Precipitation forecast to reach above normal in next 3 months

The country is predicted to receive above-normal rainfall over the next three months, the head of the climatological research institute affiliated with Iran’s Meteorological Organization (IMO) has said. The whole country will meet normal and above-normal rainfalls, the northern parts will receive above-normal rainfall while southern provinces will receive normal to lower-than-normal rainfall, IRNA quoted Iman Babaeian as saying on Sunday.

This month, northern and eastern provinces will receive rain above normal averages.

بارش‌های کشور در سه ماه پیش رو بیش از نرمال است

رئیس پژوهشکده اقلیم‌شناسی سازمان هواشناسی گفت: پیش‌بینی‌ها نشان می‌دهد میزان بارش در کشور در سه ماهه پیش در حد نرمال و متمایل به بیش از نرمال خواهد بود.

ایمان باباییان روز یکشنبه در گفت‌وگو با ایرنا افزود: مجموع بارش‌ها در سطح کشور نرمال و متمایل به بیشتر از نرمال است اما در نیمه شمالی، بیشتر از نرمال و در نیمه جنوبی در محدوده نرمال تا کمتر از نرمال خواهد بود.

بارش‌ها در اسفندماه ۹۷ در نیمه شمالی و شرقی بیشتر از نرمال است.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be not ashamed of a small donations; for, despair is much less than that.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:49 Evening: 17:41 Dawn: 4:52 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:16 (tomorrow)

“The Best Butter” at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN- French writer Jean Dutoird's novel “The Best Butter” (Au Bon Beurre) has recently been published in Persian.

Mahmoud Goudarzi is the translator of the book, which has been published by Ofoq Publications in Tehran.

Originally published in 1952, “The Best Butter” captures the complexities of life during the German occupation of France in World War II. The story revolves around the Poissonard family, owners of a creamery called “Au Bon Beurre” located in the Ternes district of Paris, and Léon Lécuyer, an escaped prisoner of war and son of one of their clients.

The narrative unfolds in four main parts, chronicling the Poissonards' unethical dealings in the black market to circumvent food rationing and improve their profits.

Charles-Hubert Poissonard, the opportunistic husband, justifies his actions through self-serving rationalizations while his wife Julie assists him by tampering with products. Their children embody the familial dysfunction: Jeannine is a bookish daughter, and Henri is a spoiled child.

Léon's plight begins with his escape from a camp, only to find himself betrayed by the Poissonards when they report him. He seeks refuge among friends and contemplates joining the resistance. Meanwhile, the Poissonards thrive through duplicitous practices, initially collaborating with the occupying German forces but later distancing themselves from collaboration as they face backlash.

As Léon integrates into the resistance in Lyon, marrying Madeleine, he grapples with personal sacrifice and the moral quandaries of his situation.

The Poissonards' pride escalates when they visit Vichy to present eggs to Marshal Pétain, showcasing their perceived loyalty to the regime. However, when they employ a



new servant, Léonie, her sharp instincts ultimately lead to their unraveling; she alerts the authorities to their fraudulent activities.

In the final part of the novel, as the war draws to a close, Léon is imprisoned but finds solidarity with fellow inmates and eventually becomes involved in a clandestine publication. The Poissonards continue to profit until liberation arrives, at which point they feign alignment with the resistance. The culmination sees betrayal as Charles-Hubert's actions lead to the arrest of Hans Pfeiffer, a naive German soldier seeking connection with the French.

The epilogue fast-forwards to post-war life, revealing the continued morally ambiguous dealings of the Poissonards and the contrasting trajectory of Léon's life, who has become a professor.

The novel closes with a poignant reflection on survival, opportunism, and the moral complexities faced by individuals during dire times, punctuated by the humorous and tragic realities of human behavior in the face of occupation and war.

The book was published in English in 1955, translated by Robin Chancellor. The American title is “The Best Butter” and the British title is “The Milky Way.”

Jean Dutoird (1920–2011) was a notable French novelist born in Paris. Orphaned at seven, he faced significant challenges, including being captured during World War II. After a daring escape, he joined the Resistance and played a pivotal role in the Liberation of Paris.

His literary career began with “Le Complexe de César,” which earned the Prix Stendhal in 1946. Over the years, he published numerous works, receiving accolades for his contributions to literature, including election to the Académie française in 1978 and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1997.

41st Tehran International Short Film Festival opens at Mellat Cineplex

TEHRAN-The 41st Tehran International Short Film Festival (TISFF) was inaugurated on Friday at Mellat Cineplex in Tehran with a tribute to the martyrs of Gaza.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mehdi Azarpendar, the festival secretary, said: “This festival has started with the slogan ‘A Fanciful World’. Of course, we know that the world we live in now isn't all that fancy, but we hope for a time when there will be a great man in the world, making it more fantastic; a great man that calls for an end to the killing of children, so we no longer witness these tragic days,” Honaronline reported.

“A few years ago, we announced that we wouldn't screen films depicting the killing of children, but we never imagined a time would come when, for an entire year, the killing of children would unfold before so many viewers every day. I hope the great man will come and bring these days to an end,” he added.

He was referring to Imam Mahdi (AS), the 12th Shia Imam, who is believed to be still living in occultation and will rise to rid the world of tyranny and injustice.

Later in the ceremony, there was a remembrance of those from Iranian cinema who passed away last year, including Jalil Shabani, Reza Davoudnejad, Bitā Farahi, Mehdi Khalili, Parvaneh Masoumi,



Hossein Sepahvand, Saeed Rad, Sadreddin Hejazi, Mohammad Jafar Bagherinia, Nasser Tahmasb, and Houshang Harirchian.

The ceremony also included a tribute to the veteran short film director Nima Abbaspour, the late documentary filmmaker Mohammad Jafar Bagherinia, and the late director and screenwriter Bahareh Lalehi.

On the first day of the festival, along with film screenings, four specialized sessions were also held, namely “Genre and Auteur,” “Genre and Ideology,” “Genre and Audience,” and “Art Documentary

Photography”.

This year's edition of the TISFF received 13,651 submissions from more than 30 countries. The number of submitted films is a new record in the history of the event, about twice the number of submissions last year. Of the total submissions, 107 short films are competing for the top awards.

The line-up includes 59 short fiction films, 21 animated movies, 18 documentaries, and nine experimental films. The submitted works are from India, China, Poland, the U.S., Egypt, Greece, France, Palestine, Turkey, Spain,

Argentina, Brazil, Russia, Australia, Japan, Germany, Italy, and Cuba among others.

The TISFF has been held for 40 consecutive years in Iran, by the Iranian Youth Cinema Society (IYCS) – one of the most renowned schools of cinema and short film production in Iran and throughout the world.

The festival is approved by the Academy Awards® (Oscars) and the winner of the Grand Prize becomes eligible for the Oscars.

This year's edition of the TISFF will run until October 23.

Painting exhibition inspired by Shahnameh underway at IAF



TEHRAN- A group exhibition of paintings inspired by the Shahnameh is currently taking place at the Autumn Gallery of the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) in Tehran.

The exhibition showcases artworks influenced by the Shahnameh, the epic masterpiece of Persian poet Ferdowsi, ISNA reported on Saturday.

The exhibition will be running at the gallery, located in Artists Park on North Mousavi Street, Taleqani Street, until Monday.

Shahnameh, also known as ‘The Book of Kings,’ is considered one of the greatest works of Persian literature.

Ferdowsi dedicated over thirty years of his life to crafting the Shahnameh, which comprises more than 50,000 couplets narrating the mythical and historical tales of Iran from its inception to the Arab conquests. Beyond its literary merit, the poem serves as a valuable source of Persian history, mythology, and moral teachings.

The enduring influence of the Shahnameh on Iranian culture is undeniable, shaping not only the country's literary landscape but also instilling a sense of national pride and cultural heritage in successive generations of Iranians.

Ferdowsi is the pseudonym of Abu al-Qasem Mansur, (935-1020), who was born in the city of Tus, located in present-day Iran. In 977 CE, he undertook the monumental task of writing the Shahnameh, completing it in 1010

CE after dedicating much of his life to this labor of love. The masterpiece is written in Persian verse and is divided into three parts, chronicling the mythical, heroic, and historical epochs of Iran.

The Shahnameh begins with the creation of the world as outlined in Persian mythology and follows the lineage of Iranian kings, heroes, and legends throughout history. Ferdowsi intertwines tales of courage, romance, deception, and loyalty, creating a tapestry of Persian culture and identity that continues to captivate readers.

The influence of the Shahnameh transcends Iran's borders, having been translated into numerous languages and serving as a wellspring of inspiration for writers, artists, and intellectuals worldwide.

Its themes of heroism, love, and integrity possess universal resonance, striking a chord with individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Beckett “Act Without Words II” on stage at Molavi Theater

TEHRAN-The play “Act Without Words II” by Samuel Beckett is currently on stage at Molavi Theater Hall in Tehran.

The 45-minute play is translated and directed by Elham Irvani. She also performs in the play along with Sonya Esmaeeli.

Written in the late 1950s, it is a short mime by Beckett, his

second after “Act Without Words I”. Like many of his works, the piece was originally composed in French, then translated into English by Beckett himself.

“Act Without Words II” has the focused intensity of the best of Beckett's theater. A mime featuring two protagonists, A and B, it delineates the routines of life circumscribed within the

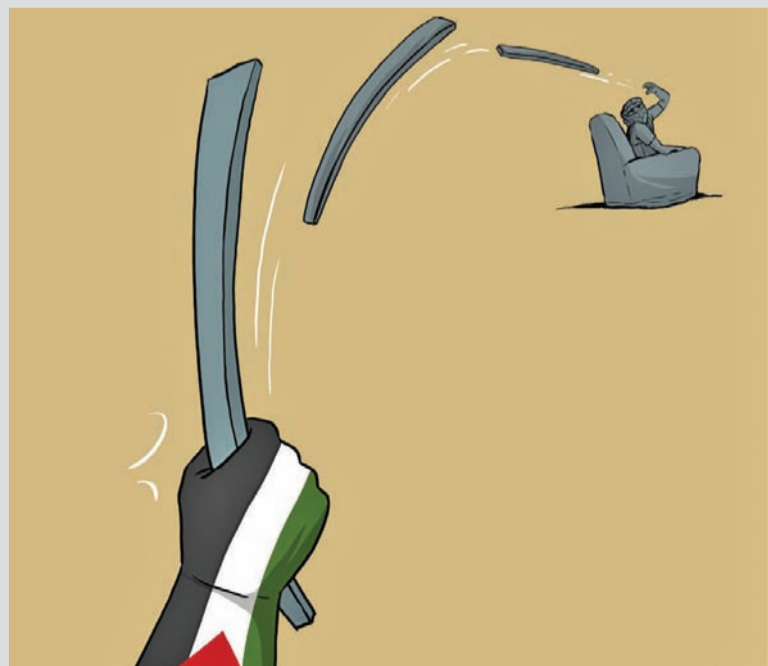
movement from daybreak to dusk. In the short one-act mime, the two characters, who are opposites in pace and personality, are prodded and provoked by a goad to do different actions.

The play presents two individuals emerging in turn from sacks when a poking device goads them into action. They

never meet, but are mutually engaged insofar as one's most important task is to move the other, cocooned inside sack, a little further away from the goad in one cycle in a longer struggle that we do not witness.

“Act Without Words II” will remain on stage till October 22 at Molavi Theater Hall located at No. 16, 16th Azar St., Enqelab St.

Cartoon of Day



And the Resistance Continues
Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen

TMoCA cinemathèque to screen Kubrick's “Dr. Strangelove”

TEHRAN-The cinemathèque of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA) will screen the 1964 political satire black comedy film “Dr. Strangelove” directed by Stanley Kubrick on Sunday.

Starring Peter Sellers in three roles, including the title character, the film satirizes the Cold War fears of a nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union and the U.S.

The full name of the movie is “Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb” but it is simply and more commonly as “Dr. Strangelove”. It is loosely based

on the thriller novel “Red Alert” (1958) by Peter George, who co-wrote the screenplay with Kubrick and Terry Southern, Mehr reported.

The cast also includes George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, Slim Pickens, and Tracy Reed among others.

The story concerns an unhinged U.S. Air Force general who orders a pre-emptive nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. It separately follows the President (Sellers), his advisers, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a Royal Air Force exchange officer (Sellers) as they attempt to prevent the crew of a B-52 (following orders from the general) from

bombing the Soviet Union and starting a nuclear war.

The film is often considered one of the best comedies ever made and one of the greatest films of all time. It received four Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Adapted Screenplay, and Best Actor for Sellers.

The film was also nominated for seven BAFTA Film Awards, winning Best Film From Any Source, Best British Film, and Best Art Direction, and it also won the Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation

Tallinn Black Nights to screen “Hard; Like Cleaning Blood”

TEHRAN- Iranian director Amir Jalalzadeh's short film “Hard; Like Cleaning Blood” will compete at the 28th edition of Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF), which will be held in the Estonian capital from November 8 to 24.

The 15-minute film follows a young woman who escapes her op-

pressive, patriarchal environment in search of freedom, only to be forced to return. Her three brothers, intent on erasing the shame of her departure and restoring the family's honor, devise a plan to kill her. Yet, the blood they spill will leave an indelible mark on their conscience.

The Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival

(Pimedate Ööde Filmifestival, PÖFF) first launched in 1997. Since 2014, it has been recognized as one of the 15 A-list film festivals accredited by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF), joining the ranks of prestigious events such as Cannes, Karlovy Vary, San Sebastián, Locarno, Venice, Ber-

lin, Cairo, Mar del Plata, Goa, and Tokyo. This accreditation is renewed annually.

The festival aims to showcase a diverse selection of world cinema from the past two years, appealing to both local and international audiences. It emphasizes fresh cinematic productions with high artistic value.