

Towards 'Maximum Defeat II'

Will Trump once again pursue the ineffective "maximum pressure" policy against Iran? [▶ Page 3](#)



Response to Israeli aggression will be decisive: Iran Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Esmail Baqaei, has strongly reaffirmed the country's right to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty, promising a firm response to Israel's latest military attack.

In a weekly press conference on Monday, Baqaei emphasized that Tehran would not tolerate violations of its borders and would retaliate appropriately.

"We have repeatedly stated that Iran does not seek anyone's permission to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will respond decisively to the aggression perpetrated by Israel," Baqaei declared.

Highlighting the nuclear threats posed by the Tel Aviv regime against Iran, Baqaei further emphasized: "The UN special rapporteur on human rights has called on nations to collectively oppose the Zionist regime's membership in the United Nations. By this reasoning, there is no justification for the regime's participation in international organizations that address global issues and challenges. We encourage other countries to support this initiative." [▶ Page 2](#)

Iranian Google software engineer resigns over company's ties to Israeli military

TEHRAN – Iranian software engineer Alireza Zakeri has announced his resignation from Google over the company's collaboration with Israel on Project Nimbus, a \$1.2 billion AI and cloud services deal that benefits the Israeli military and is used in the ongoing assault on Gaza, which has already claimed over 43,000 lives.

The Computer Olympiad medalist announced his decision to leave Google on LinkedIn, saying he made the decision after the tech giant made it clear that would not be withdrawing from the project.

"I'm happy to announce that I have left Google! Why happy, even though I was working on exciting projects with talented coworkers? Because this decision reflects my values. After learning about Google's involvement in Project Nimbus, I voiced my concerns for several months. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of many employees, leadership chose to maintain its stance and dismiss our collective concerns," part of his message read.

"What good is it for man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?" Zakeri asked.

Google employees in the United States have previously staged protests at company offices in New York City, California, and Seattle to voice their opposition to Project Nimbus. [▶ Page 2](#)

Will the conscription crisis end the aggression on Gaza and Lebanon?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT – The Israeli military and media estimates fluctuate in regard to the conscription and reserve crisis and its impact on the continuation of the war on the Gaza and Lebanese fronts.

Obviously, if the Israeli regime decides to escalate the war it will face serious difficulty to continue relying on exhausted reserve soldiers who have served for more than 200 days and called up more than once.

Recent data from the Manpower Department of the IOF General Staff shows that the military establishment urgently needs more than 10,000 additional soldiers, at least 7,500 of whom for ground battles.

Also, according to Haaretz, of the reserve soldiers who have been called up for service since October 7 last year 54% have served more than 100 days and 18% more than 200 days. Also, according to the army's data, this shortage of troops will entail calling up the Haredim, who threaten to bring down Netanyahu's government if they are summoned, and if Netanyahu does not enact legislation that completely exempts them from compulsory service.

Hezbollah ambushes Israeli infantry

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Heavy fighting has taken place on the Lebanese border between Hezbollah and Israeli infantry units.

The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) have launched another attempt to take control of the strategic Lebanese border town of Khiam.

Reports say the IOF intensified artillery shelling on the outskirts of three neighborhoods to provide cover for the movement of a convoy of Merkava tanks heading toward the Khiam plains and the eastern and southern outskirts of the town of Khiam.

Yet the advance of the convoy is said to have been extremely slow after Hezbollah repeatedly waged rocket attacks on gatherings of the IOF troops. Stormy weather conditions are also believed to have slowed the movement of the occupation forces.

A number of statements issued by the Lebanese resistance movement between Sunday night and Monday morning said Hezbollah fighters fired rocket barrages at the IOF in the vicinity of Khiam.

Hochstein's Lebanon visit: A new attempt to extricate Israel from the quagmire

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – Nearly two months after launching a massive bombing campaign on Lebanon, Israel has not succeeded in fulfilling its objectives.

Lebanon's Hezbollah and Israel began trading fire a day after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared war on Gaza on October 7, 2023. Tens of thousands of people remain displaced in northern Israel and southern Lebanon amid the exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah.

Israel launched massive airstrikes in Lebanon on September 23 this year which was later followed by a ground invasion of the country's south.

Israel said the offensive was aimed at removing Hezbollah from the border area and allowing evacuated Israelis to return to northern Israel.

Israel has killed about 3,500 people in Lebanon since October last year. But it has failed to deter Hezbollah from firing missiles and drones into Israel and return displaced Israelis to the north.

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Solduz wetland hosting white-fronted geese

TEHRAN – The first flock of lesser white-front geese has been spotted in Solduz wetland in Naqadeh county, northwestern West Azarbaijan province.

A total of 19 birds have been seen in the wetland, Borna reported.

The birds are resting and refueling over their long journey from the northern to the southern regions.

They use swamps, freshwater lakes, and wetland habitats with no trees or agricultural, and grasslands to spend the winter. The birds feed on roots, stems, and seeds of the plants and also eat insects, and they fly in a V-formation.

White-fronted geese are known to be endangered; however, an international conservation plan has been developed to recognize and remove the threats to help increase their population. [▶ Page 7](#)



International summit in Tehran honors martyred journalists from Gaza and Lebanon

TEHRAN – The "Assassination of Truth" ceremony took place in Tehran on Monday to honor over 200 journalists killed by Israeli fire in Gaza and Lebanon in the past year.

The event was attended by various Iranian officials, professors, students, local and international media activists, as well as ambassadors from several countries residing in Tehran.

Peyman Jebelli, the director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), spoke at the conference, referencing Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah's declaration that "the time of victory has come," and confirmed that the Resistance leader's prediction has been validated. [▶ Page 2](#)

The West's hypocrisy on Iran's nuclear program: a failure of diplomacy

By Soheila Zarfameh

TEHRAN – The narrative surrounding Iran's nuclear program often leans on alarmist speculation, portraying Tehran as a regional aggressor while sidelining its legitimate security concerns and adherence to international agreements.

These accounts obscure the broader geopolitical inequities that drive Iran's policies, perpetuating myths that derail meaningful dialogue.

In an article published by Foreign Policy, Sina Azodi explores the complexities of Iran's nuclear program amid escalating regional tensions. However, the piece inadvertently highlights a recurring theme: [▶ Page 3](#)

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Obstruction in relations between Iran and U.S.

In an interview with Masoumeh Ebtekar, a reformist political activist, Etemad evaluated the role of those who benefit from sanctions in blocking the relations between Iran and America. She said: Basically, the 'sanctions beneficiaries will not allow Iran's ties with the U.S. and Europe to be resolved and the sanctions get lifted. Undoubtedly, with the presence of Trump, they will again try to consider their interests instead of national interests. The government of Pezeshkian should put an end to this anti-national profession. The Republicans will take full control of the ruling establishment in America soon. Perhaps, when Trump declared that he was not looking for tension and was looking for a solution to the nuclear problem with Iran, some differences could be seen in his approach. Of course, Iran has shown its ability and capabilities in the military field in recent months, and the whole world acknowledges that despite decades of sanctions, Iran has been able to upgrade its defense system. We hope that these measures will, on the one hand, fulfill the interests of Iranians and on the other hand, a ceasefire in the region and an end to the crimes and brutal killings of the Israelis.

Arman-e-Melli: Which direction will Iran-US admin go?

In an interview with Hassan Beheshtipour, an international relations analyst, Arman-e-Melli discussed the prospects of Iran-U.S. relations. He said: It is unlikely that Trump will follow the path of military confrontation with Iran because he knows that if he enters into a direct military conflict with Iran, he will be involved in a regional war. Trump is a deal maker and is waiting to evaluate how to work with the Russians and the Chinese and how he can strike a deal with Iran. On the other hand, if some people seek a military confrontation in Iran's internal politics, they are only spreading provocative thoughts. However, whenever the security and political officials of the new (American) administration are determined, it is possible to more accurately predict the approach of the Trump administration in the coming months. But the reality is that Iran is not looking for confrontation, but for interaction, so the space for this interaction should be created with time. Tensions between Tehran and Washington must be managed. Managing tension is about how to engage with Trump, but if Trump is looking for an all-out confrontation, we have to stand

up to him.

Jam-e-Jam: Trump's second admin is more anti-Iran

Jam-e-Jam wrote after Trump's victory in the American presidential election, some people analyzed that his second administration would be different from his first one. It seems such interpretations mainly originate from "destructive optimism" about Trump's policies in the new era. The fact is that the second administration of Donald Trump is fundamentally different from his first administration. These differences are in line with the future American government's extremist approach, especially in dealing with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, it is not true to think that Trump's policies towards Iran are supposed to be more realistic and based on interaction. There were no normal conditions to take steps toward an agreement or serious negotiations even during the rule of the Democrats, let alone when the new Trump administration that its picks for national security team are radical and anti-Iran.

Donya-e-Eqtasad: Efforts to facilitate financial exchanges

In its commentary, Donya-e-Eqtasad said almost five years have passed since the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) put Iran on its blacklist which has caused significant losses to the Iranian economy. Some believe that without the lifting of the American-led sanctions on Iran, any move in this regard will be useless. Others believe that being on the blacklist has increased the severity of the sanctions and made the effect of the sanctions stronger than before. In the past months, the sitting government has been trying to take steps towards lifting the sanctions and removing the country from the FATF blacklist. Being removed from the FATF blacklist can send a positive signal to the international community that Iran is willing to make economic reforms. Being on the blacklist not only makes banking transactions more difficult but also erodes global trust in the country's financial system. Resolving the FATF issue is a long-term process. From the approval of domestic laws to their implementation and winning the trust of the international community requires time, resources, and political will. However, evidence shows since years ago Iran has taken some necessary measures to remove FATF obstacles.

Iran-China ties remain steadfast amid global shifts, says Leader's aide



TEHRAN – A senior advisor to Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has emphasized that Iran's deepening partnership with China is an ongoing process and even the second-term presidency of Donald Trump will have no bearing on Iran's foreign policy.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a key figure in Iran's international affairs, underscored this position during a Sunday meeting in Tehran with China's Ambassador, Cong Peiwu.

The discussions delved into recent regional and global developments, with both officials reiterating their commitment to fostering stronger bilateral ties.

Velayati highlighted the enduring and strate-

gic nature of Iran-China relations, tracing their roots to shared cultural and historical bonds.

"Iran and China have maintained close and sincere ties over centuries, yielding significant mutual benefits," he noted, adding that both nations remain resolute in enhancing cooperation across diverse sectors.

The advisor pointed to Iran's growing collaboration with China and Russia through platforms like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS as transformative. "These partnerships will undoubtedly leave lasting and critical impacts on the global stage," he remarked.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Response to Israeli aggression will be decisive: Iran Foreign Ministry

From page 1 ▶ The recent tensions escalated after Israeli warplanes, using US-controlled airspace over Iraq, launched strikes on Iranian military installations in Tehran, Khuzestan, and Ilam provinces on October 26. The attacks resulted in the deaths of four Iranian Armed Forces personnel and one civilian, marking a significant violation of Iran's sovereignty.

Iran has resolutely condemned the strikes, labeling them an unlawful act of aggression. Officials in Tehran have vowed to hold Israel accountable and maintain their commitment to respond decisively.

'Israel's threats violate international law'

Baqaei accused Israel of breaching international law through its threats and aggressive actions. "Tehran will determine how and when to re-

spond," he said, asserting that the Israeli regime's actions are emboldened by a lack of accountability and international complicity.

He also criticized the role of the United States in shielding Israel from consequences, saying that obstructionism by Washington has enabled Tel Aviv to continue its crimes unabated. According to Baqaei, these actions not only undermine justice but also amount to complicity in Israel's violations, including alleged war crimes against Palestinians and Lebanese civilians.

'Iran remains committed to constructive engagement with IAEA'

Baqaei addressed ongoing discussions between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). During a recent visit to Tehran, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi met with senior Iranian officials to dis-

cuss ambiguities surrounding Iran's nuclear program.

The Iranian spokesperson stressed that these ambiguities lacked technical justification, but noted that Iran remains committed to constructive engagement with the UN nuclear agency. "Our objective is to ensure the agency can operate without succumbing to destructive external pressures," he said.

'Tehran's support for Resistance ongoing'

Baqaei also highlighted Iran's enduring support for Syria and Lebanon. He pointed to a recent diplomatic visit by Ali Larjani, a senior advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, as a signal of Tehran's commitment to these allies in the face of Israeli aggression.

"Iran will continue to stand firmly

with Syria and Lebanon, using all its capacities to promote stability and security in the region," he added.

In addition, Baqaei underscored Iran's efforts to enhance ties with China, describing the relationship as "deeply consolidated." Tehran and Beijing are actively pursuing a roadmap for long-term cooperation, aiming to maximize bilateral capacities and strengthen their strategic partnership.

'Israel must be held accountable for crimes'

The spokesperson concluded by calling on the global community to hold Israel accountable for its actions, emphasizing that impunity and political obstruction have emboldened the regime. Baqaei urged international institutions to prioritize justice and address Israel's ongoing violations.

International summit in Tehran honors martyred journalists from Gaza and Lebanon

From page 1 ▶ "The truth will never be silenced," he asserted, highlighting the crucial role of media and journalists in the Resistance for courageously unveiling the realities of the Israeli regime.

He noted that the sacrifices of these martyred journalists, who lost their lives to uphold truth, resonate worldwide.

Israel's war on journalism

Since October 7, 2023, Israel has carried out more than 1,600 attacks on journalists in Gaza and Lebanon, resulting in the deaths of over 200 journalists, injuries to more than 150, and the destruction of over 75 media centers.

In a separate speech during the Tehran summit, Mazen al-Sari, a journalist for Paltoday TV and spokesperson for the International Council for Free Media (ICFM), highlighted the unprecedented level of journalist assassinations in Gaza and Lebanon, stating that "the occupiers of al-Quds are assassinating the truth."

He emphasized that Israel, supported by its Western allies, seeks to distort reality, but the ICFM is committed to countering these efforts.

Fatima Ftouni, a field reporter for Al-Mayadeen in Lebanon, expressed her gratitude for the support and solidarity from the Iranian people and the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Hezbollah media chief 'fought till the last moment'

TEHRAN – On Monday, prominent Iranian officials offered condolences over the Martyrdom of Mohammad Afif, the head of Hezbollah's media relations, while condemning Israel for his assassination.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf expressed deep sorrow over the loss of another dedicated media activist, accusing the Israeli regime of continuing its violent campaign against innocent media personnel and journalists amidst an unjust war against the vulnerable populations of Palestine and Lebanon.

He praised Afif's "fearless presence on the battlefield" and his unwavering commitment to supporting the resistance of the oppressed people of Lebanon.

The Iranian official expressed strong confidence that the legacy of Hezbollah media relations chief Mohammad Afif will be upheld by a new generation of media activists.

Afif, along with several colleagues, was killed during an Israeli airstrike on the headquarters of the Lebanese Baath Party in Beirut on Sunday.

The incident marked the second assassination attempt on him in two months, as he previously survived an assault on the Hezbollah media office several weeks ago.

In response to the assassination, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) stated that Afif's martyrdom will not deter Hezbollah's mission, emphasizing that the actions of the Israeli regime will not stifle the global resonance of Hezbollah's message of resistance.

In a statement, the IRGC declared that Afif's successors would carry on his crucial mission of "instilling fear in the hearts of the Zionists."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



"Despite the violence and destruction inflicted by the Zionists, we must honor the resilience of those who resist," she remarked.

The Lebanese journalist pointed out that the media plays a crucial role in showcasing the achievements of the Resistance and exposing the aggressions of Israel, which is why the regime seeks to intimidate journalists.

Ftouni expressed that despite the martyrdom of three more journalists this week, the journalists of the Resistance remain steadfast in their commitment to work.

"The enemy aimed to shatter our resolve, but they do not realize that martyrdom makes us stronger," she affirmed.

During the ceremony, Hani al-Khater, a journalist from Iraq's Alahad TV, emphasized the significance of global awakening, stating, "A special public awareness has emerged following Operation Al-Aqsa Storm."

Additionally, journalists from various parts of the world voiced their denouements to the attacks and aggressions committed by the Israeli regime through video messages, calling for an end to the violence against journalists.

Iranian Google engineer resigns over company's ties to Israeli military

From page 1 ▶ The contract, which is a joint venture with Amazon signed in 2021, provides Israeli authorities and the Israeli military with cloud computing infrastructure, artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities, and other technological services. The Israeli military's actions in Gaza in the past year have drawn intense international criticism, with United Nations experts and multiple countries characterizing them as genocide.

Adding to the controversy, a 2021 report by The Intercept detailed Google's provision of advanced AI technology to Israel under Project Nimbus. This technology, the report alleges, could be utilized for facial recognition and object tracking, raising significant concerns. Activists and academics have expressed alarm over Israel's use of AI in targeting Palestinians, while legal scholars argue that such deployment violates international law. These concerns are amplified by the potential for the technology to contribute to human rights abuses.

Google's official statements so far maintain that the Nimbus contract explicitly excludes "highly sensitive, classified, or military workloads relevant to weapons or intelligence services." The company emphasizes its collaborations with numerous governments worldwide, including the Israeli regime. However, this assertion hasn't quelled the employee protests.

The company's response to the dissent has been firm; at least 28 employees have been dismissed for their involvement in the protests, accused of violating Google's "code of conduct and policies related to harassment, discrimination, and retaliation." The firings have further fueled the controversy, raising questions about Google's commitment to employee freedom of expression and its ethical responsibilities in providing technology to controversial clients.

EU announces sanctions on Iran's shipping lines

TEHRAN – The European Union has significantly escalated its sanctions against Iran, adding Iranian shipping lines to its existing restrictions.

This expansion, announced Monday by the European Commission, is a direct response to refuted allegations that Iran has been supplying Russia with weaponry for its ongoing war in Ukraine.

Specifically targeted are the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), its director Mohammad Reza Khiabani, and several other individuals and entities. The sanctions prohibit any transactions involving vessels, ports, or other infrastructure owned, operated, or controlled by these sanctioned parties.

The EU's justification rests on claims that these sanctioned individuals and entities have facilitated the transportation of Iranian-made unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), missiles, and related technology and components to Russia for use in the conflict. This action follows similar sanctions levied against Iran Air over a month ago, based on the same accusations.

Iran has consistently denied supplying weapons to Russia for use in the war in Ukraine, asking Europe to provide evidence for its claims. Europe has yet to put forth proof for its allegations.

Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, reacted to Europe's latest anti-Iran move on X, stating that there is no legal, logical, or moral justification for the actions taken by the European Union.

"President Zelensky himself has confirmed that no Iranian ballistic missiles have been delivered to Russia," he said, adding, "Yet, the EU refuses to reverse its indiscriminate targeting of air travelers by going after Iranian airlines—a measure ostensibly motivated by our non-existent missile deliveries to Russia."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Towards 'maximum defeat II'

Will Trump once again pursue the ineffective "maximum pressure" policy against Iran?

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – U.S. President-elect Donald Trump is reportedly poised to unleash a renewed "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran. The Trump team aims to "bankrupt" Iran in his second term, according to a report published by the Financial Times.

The report, citing a national security expert close to the transition team, says executive orders targeting Iran, mainly its oil exports, could be signed on the first day Trump enters office.

The so-called "maximum pressure" campaign refers to a set of policies initiated against Iran in 2018 after Trump withdrew Washington from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The deal signed in 2015 limited Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the termination of economic and financial sanctions. Trump called the deal a "disaster" and said he was going to make sure Iran would never develop nukes, promising that he would limit Iran's regional influence in the meantime.

What did Trump target during his first term?

Since 1979, Iran has faced a continuous barrage of sanctions. The Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign wasn't so much about inventing new bans but drastically expanding the reach and enforcement of previous or existing ones.

After withdrawing the U.S. from the JCPOA, Trump immediately brought back sanctions on Iran's energy, shipping, shipbuilding, automotive, and petroleum sectors in an

executive order issued on August 6, 2018. The key difference was the aggressive use of what's known as "secondary sanctions," which penalized foreign entities for conducting business with Iran, regardless of whether those transactions violated their own domestic laws.

The goal was to significantly pressure international actors to comply with U.S. sanctions.

In May 2019, the Trump administration targeted Iran's metals industry — its second-largest export revenue source — by tightening sanctions on its iron, steel, aluminum, and copper sectors. This included sanctions against any foreign financial institutions facilitating significant transactions related to these sectors.

A third major executive order under Trump targeted the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and any entity or individual conducting financial transactions with it. The stated aim was to curb Iran's ballistic missile production, weapons that the then U.S. Special Representative for Iran, Brian Hook, believed only existed thanks to Photoshop.

The succeeding Biden administration, despite expectations, did not put an end to Trump's policies. All sanctions were kept in place, with hundreds more added, according to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Did Trump's policies work?

"The effectiveness of U.S. sanctions against a foreign government is measured not by the economic damage inflicted," said Amir Ali Abolfath, an expert on North American affairs.

"But by the extent to which the sanctions achieve their policy goals and alter the target government's behavior."

A look at statistics before the launch of the "maximum pressure" campaign shows even though Trump made it more complicated for Iran to make money through its oil and metals exports, it did not manage to reduce them to the point Iran would have to alter its policies.

"Iran produces strategically important goods," explained Abolfath. "As long as demand exists, those goods will find a market. While Iran no longer sells oil to Europe, increased sales to China — willing to withstand U.S. pressure due to discounted prices — demonstrate this. The same principle applies to Iranian metal exports."

"There is no doubt that Trump and Biden gave Iran a difficult time. But did they manage to achieve their goals? Absolutely not," Abolfath stated. "Iran's uranium enrichment level has increased from 3% to 60%, and its weapons capabilities have advanced significantly over the past seven years. You don't see its bond with Resistance forces any weaker than it was either."

When it comes to domestic needs, Iran successfully reduced its dependence on European and allied partners (like Korea and Japan) by finding alternative suppliers. The withdrawal of European automakers led to a surge in Chinese car imports, establishing Iran as a major market. Furthermore, Iranian engineers and experts independently completed gas

and oil field development projects previously reliant on Western collaboration. This self-reliance eventually extended to other previously import-dependent industries like food and medicine.

What's there other than sanctions?

A key element of Trump's West Asia policy between 2017 and 2021 was to frighten Arabs from Iran and position Israel as the protector.

This approach is now considerably less viable. Iran's improved relations with countries such as Saudi Arabia, and ongoing efforts to normalize ties with others like Egypt, undermine this strategy. Furthermore, the October 7th attacks dispelled any notion of Israeli invincibility, and the regime's actions over the past year made the continuation of Trump-era normalization agreements ("Abraham Accords") a distant possibility.

Experts believe the only other untested option — the military one — carries immense risk. Such action could trigger devastating consequences for the West, potentially leading to widespread disruption of oil supplies, attacks on Western bases in West Asia, and a fundamental shift in Iran's nuclear policy.

"Washington must eventually recognize that pressure alone won't achieve its goals regarding Iran," Abolfath concluded. "Addressing American concerns requires acknowledging Iran's as well. A win-win solution is the only off-ramp out of this logjam."

The West's hypocrisy on Iran's nuclear program: a failure of diplomacy

From Page 1 ▶ the West's inability—or unwillingness—to uphold agreements, particularly the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The JCPOA: a case study in broken promises

At the heart of Azodi's analysis is Iran's growing debate over its nuclear stance. While much attention is given to Iran's "threshold" nuclear capability, it is essential to place this in the context of the West's handling of the JCPOA. The agreement, signed in 2015, was a landmark deal in which Iran made substantial concessions, reducing its stockpile of enriched uranium, limiting enrichment activities, and subjecting its facilities to rigorous inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Despite these commitments, the United States unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018 under then-President Donald Trump, re-imposing sanctions that had been lifted as part of the agreement. This action, in clear violation of the JCPOA's terms, shattered the trust painstakingly built through diplomacy and left Iran exposed to heightened security risks.

Azodi briefly touches on the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal but fails to fully explore its implications. By abandoning the deal, the U.S. not only undermined its own credibility but also removed any incentive for Iran to com-

ANALYSIS

Will Tehran Make a Dash for the Bomb?

With other components of its defense strategy in tatters, attention turns to Iran's nuclear threshold capability.

By **Bina Azodi**, a professional lecturer of international affairs at the George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs specializing in Iran's nuclear program and national security.



ply with international norms. Tehran, having upheld its side of the bargain, was effectively punished, while the U.S. and its allies faced no consequences for renegeing on their commitments.

This betrayal explains Iran's growing skepticism toward future negotiations and its escalating nuclear rhetoric. As Iranian officials, including Kamal Kharazi, have noted, the nation may reconsider its nuclear policy if its survival is threatened—a direct response to the West's aggressive posturing and broken promises.

Double standards in non-proliferation

One of the most glaring inconsistencies in the West's approach to nuclear proliferation lies in its selective scrutiny. While Iran, a signa-

tory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has subjected its nuclear program to IAEA inspections, Israel—a regime with an undeclared nuclear arsenal—is exempt from similar oversight.

Azodi acknowledges that Iran's nuclear capability remains at a "threshold" status, meaning it has the technical expertise to build a weapon but has not crossed that line. Meanwhile, Israel's nuclear arsenal, widely acknowledged but officially unconfirmed, exists outside the NPT framework and international regulation.

This double standard not only undermines the credibility of Western non-proliferation efforts but also fuels resentment in Tehran.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

IRAN IN FOCUS

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Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

Fans dissatisfied with Iran football performance

TEHRAN – Iran national football team, despite topping Group A in the AFC Asian Qualifiers – Road to 26 World Cup, have faced growing scrutiny following their recent performance against North Korea.

While a 3-2 victory secured their position at the top of Group A, the team's shaky second-half display, which nearly saw them squander a three-goal lead, has raised concerns among the fans and pundits alike.

Coach Amir Ghalenoei has insisted that his team are on the right track, but the squad have been plagued by inconsistencies, particularly among their legion of foreign-based players.

Injuries and below-par performances have hampered the likes of Saman Ghoddos, Alireza Jahanbakhsh, and Sardar Azmoun. Even the team's star striker, Mehdi Taremi, had a subpar second half against North Korea, missing a penalty and scoring an own goal.

The overreliance on foreign-based players has been a double-edged sword for Iran. While these players often bring a higher level of technical ability, their form can fluctuate, and they may not always be fully integrated into the team's tactics. The recent decline in the performance of several key foreign-based players has exposed vulnerabilities in the squad.

As Team Melli prepare to face Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday, the team will need to address these issues and find a way to regain their consistency. The pressure is on Ghalenoei to find a formula for a better performance of his side as soon as possible.

Persepolis to meet Al-Shorta at Hamad bin Khalifa Stadium

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team of Iran will host Iraqi side Al-Shorta in the 2024-25 AFC Champions League Elite.

The match has been scheduled for December 2 in Doha's Hamad bin Khalifa Stadium.

Persepolis sit ninth in the 12-team table with just two points while Al-Shorta is 11th with just a single point.

The top eight teams in each region will advance to the next stage.

Iran to take Kyrgyzstan in World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN – Iran will expect to take another step towards sealing qualification when they play Kyrgyz Republic in Group A of the AFC Asian Qualifiers – Road to 26 on Tuesday at the Dolen Omurzakov Stadium in Bishkek.

Seeking a fourth consecutive and seventh overall appearance at the global showcase, Iran hold a three-point lead at the summit, with the top two sides to qualify automatically for the Finals.

Despite a fightback from DPR Korea, Iran were deserved winners of their tie on Thursday after a dominant first half which saw them taking a 3-0 lead.

Head coach Amir Ghalenoei will want his side to avoid another nervous finish, which was sparked by Shojae Khalilzadeh's 50th minute sending off.

"We have to be able to adapt to different situations. We managed to control the game through our substitutions and we must now shift our focus to the next game," said Ghalenoei.

Kyrgyz Republic, appearing at this stage of the AFC Asian Qualifiers for the first time, only have three points on the board but remain in contention and will be determined to make home ground advantage count against Iran.

Maksim Lisitsyn's lost 3-0 to United Arab Emirates on Thursday with the head coach attributing their heaviest defeat so far in the AFC Asian Qualifiers to mistakes of their own doing.

The Central Asian side were, however, a handful to their opponents in their earlier matches and will hope for a result against Iran, who were restricted to a 1-0 win when the sides met in September.

Iran start 2024 IWBF U23 Asia Oceania Championship on high

TEHRAN – Iran beat the Philippines 80-28 in their opening match at the 2024 International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) U23 Asia Oceania Championship on Monday.

The championship has brought together seven nations – Iran, Australia, India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, and Thailand—to compete for the coveted title and a spots in the 2025 IWBF Men's U23 World Championship.

The top three teams will qualify for the 2025 IWBF Men's U23 World Championship.

The 2024 IWBF U23 AOZ Championship is being held in Bangkok, Thailand from Nov. 17 to 22.

Hayati takes bronze at 2024 Bahrain International Series

TEHRAN – Iran's badminton player Ali Hayati claimed a bronze medal at the 2024 Bahrain International Series on Sunday.

He lost to eventual champion Indian badminton player Kavin Thangam Kavin 2-0 (21-15, 21-19) in the semifinals.

Hayati had defeated Bahrain's Aakash Sakthivel, Indian Manraj Singh and Aashinsa Herath of Sri Lanka.

Thangam also defeated Jewel Angelo Albo of the Philippines in the gold medal match.

The competition was held at the India Club Bahrain in Manama from November 12 to 17.

Bahrain International Series is an open international badminton tournament in Bahrain presented by the Bahrain Badminton and Squash Federation, and sanctioned by Badminton World Federation and Badminton Asia.

This tournament has been a BWF International Series level, and a part of Bahrain International Badminton Festival.

Iran coach Ghalenoei hits out at critics

TEHRAN – Iran football coach Amir Ghalenoei hit back at the critics for their scathing criticism of the team's performances at the 2026 World Cup qualifier.

Iran national football team, despite topping Group A in the 2026 World Cup qualification, have faced growing criticism following their recent performances, especially against DPR Korea.

Iran are scheduled to meet Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday at the Dolen Omurzakov Stadium in Bishkek and will expect to take another step towards sealing qualification.

"We know that how strong Kyrgyzstan are and it will be a difficult match against them in front of their fans. Kyrgyzstan have lost 3-0 in their previous match but they are strong in counter attack. They will defend tomorrow but they have great quality in attack," Ghalenoei said in the pre-match news conference.

"We are ready to secure our berth in the World Cup as soon as possible. I know that some people don't like this and I believe that the criticism is unfair. Our goal is to qualify for the 2026 World Cup and then we want to advance to the next stage for the first time in history," he added.

"I was dismissed shortly after the 2007 AFC Asian Cup, despite we had been knocked out on penalties against South Korea. Now, the recent criticism reminds me of the way they treated me in 2007 and it's unfair," Ghalenoei said.

IOTC improving oil terminal infrastructure in Kharg Island



TEHRAN – The head of Iranian Oil Terminals Company (IOTC) said his company is implementing new projects to improve oil export infrastructure at Kharg Island, IRNA reported.

During a visit to the Kharg Island western wharf, Abbas Asadrouz emphasized the strategic importance of strengthening the export infrastructure in Kharg Island and said: “The repair and renovation project of the island’s western wharf is a big step in developing the country’s oil exports.”

According to the official, renovation of the mentioned wharf, in addition to improving safety, productivity, and efficiency,

will transform the country’s oil export infrastructure.

With the start of executive operations of the mentioned project in the near future, it is expected that the operational capacity of the western wharf will increase significantly and the country’s oil export facilities will be more prepared to create new strategic opportunities for the country.

Kharg Island is a continental island in the Persian Gulf south of Iran.

The island is located 25 km (16 mi) off the coast of Iran and 483 km (300 mi) northwest of the Strait of Hormuz.

Administered by the adjacent coastal Bushehr Province, Kharg Island provides a seaport for the export of oil and extends Iranian territorial sea claims into the Persian Gulf oil fields.

Due to its close distance to oilfield regions, its good offshore position, and suitable depth for gigantic oil vessel berthing, Kharg Island oil terminal has been recognized as one of the country’s most suitable places for crude oil export and loading sites.

‘Malaysian Embassy in Tehran extends warmth of ASEAN to Iranian friends’

TEHRAN– In a remarkable display of culinary diplomacy, the Embassy of Malaysia in Tehran hosted the “ASEAN Crab event,” where ambassadors from five ASEAN nations, including Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Brunei, in addition to the South Korean ambassador, swapped their formal suits for aprons to prepare and showcase signature crab dishes from their home countries.

The event, held in anticipation of Malaysia’s Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2025, transformed the embassy into a vibrant celebration of unity and diversity—hallmarks of the ASEAN spirit.

The spotlight was on the ambassadors, who demonstrated their cooking skills live, offering guests a taste of their national traditions.

From Malaysia’s aromatic curry crab to Vietnam’s delicately noodle crab and Brunei’s fiery chili crab, and etc., each dish told a story of culture, heritage, and the distinct flavors that define Southeast Asia.

Addressing the event, Malaysian Ambassador to Iran Khairi bin Omar said: “This event is more than a culinary showcase; it’s a celebration of ASEAN’s unity in diversity.”

“Through food, we share a part of who we are, strengthening the bonds between our nations and extending the warmth of ASEAN to our Iranian friends”, the ambassador emphasized.

Guests, including Iranian officials, members of the diplomatic community, and food enthusiasts, were treated to a multisensory experience of tastes, aromas, and live culinary demonstrations.



Malaysian Ambassador to Iran Khairi bin Omar delivers speech in “ASEAN Crab event” held at the place of embassy, participated by the ambassadors of Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, and South Korea (sitting around the table)

Each dish, meticulously prepared and presented, served as a reminder of how food can transcend borders and connect people in meaningful ways.

The ASEAN Crab event also served as a prelude to Malaysia’s leadership of ASEAN in 2025, highlighting the organization’s commitment to cultural exchange and people-to-people diplomacy.

It underscored the role of food as a powerful tool in fostering understanding and collaboration between ASEAN countries and the wider world, including Iran.

As the event concluded, it left a lasting impression on attendees, who departed not only with a deeper appreciation of ASEAN cuisine but also with a sense of the vibrant cultural unity that defines Southeast Asia.

Govt. approves new regulations to manage illegal border trade



TEHRAN – The head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) says the government has approved new regulations

for managing illegal trade conducted by smugglers at borders, IRIB reported.

According to Mohammad-Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, the regulations were prepared by TPO in collaboration with the government’s anti-smuggling headquarters and other related institutions.

Based on the new regulations, gradual restrictions are going to be applied on such activities in line with new measures that will take place to improve the business environment in border regions.

Water storage in Iranian dams rises 13%

TEHRAN – Over 22.64 million cubic meters of water is stored behind the dams across Iran since the beginning of the current water year (late September) up to November 16, registering an increase of 13 percent year on year.

Based on the Energy Ministry data, the total capacity of the country’s dam reservoirs

currently stands at 50.5 billion cubic meters indicating that 44 percent of the dam reservoirs are full, IRNA reported.

As reported, the total volume of water inflow to the reservoirs of the country’s dams stood at 2.4 million cubic meters in the mentioned period, three percent less than the figure for the last year’s same period.

Iran-Russia non-oil trade stands at \$1.5b in 7 months

TEHRAN– The value of non-oil trade between Iran and Russia stood at \$1.5 billion in the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), the former head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Mohammad Rezvani said that Russia was the fifth top trade partner of Iran among its neighbors in the mentioned seven-month period.

Iran and Russia have been taking serious steps to boost their mutual trade over the past few years.

In a ceremony on November 11, Russia’s Mir payment network and Iran’s Shetab payment system were connected, as the two countries are increasing their financial cooperation.

Addressing this ceremony, Central Bank of Iran Governor Mohammad-Reza Farzin mentioned integration of the two countries’ banking subsystems as a big step towards creating integrated economic cooperation in the region, completing the de-dollarization process and facilitating economic and tourism relations between Iran and Russia.

By connecting the national payment networks of the two countries, the borders of electronic payments will be removed and a new chapter will begin in the economic and cultural cooperation of the two nations, the official emphasized.

He said: “The project that we are witnessing its inauguration today, started with the aim of creating integration in the payment networks and facilitating financial transactions between the citizens of the two countries.”

Emphasizing that this project is divided into three phases and in each phase, an important step is taken towards the realization of the final goal, the CBI governor said: “The first phase of this project, which was put into operation at the end of September and will be unveiled today, provides the possibility of using bank cards of Iran, which are



under Shetab network, in Russian ATMs for tourists. In this way, now Iranian tourists can easily receive ruble notes from Russian ATMs using the riyal balance of their Shetab cards.”

Farzin further emphasized that the next phases of this project will be unveiled soon with wider facilities and services.

In early July, the CBI governor said a monetary contract has been signed between Tehran and Moscow for carrying out bilateral trade exchanges.

Farzin told reporters that he and his Russian counterpart had a meeting in Saint Petersburg last Thursday where they finalized agreements already signed between the two countries.

During the meeting, the chief bankers of Iran and Russia also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on joint measures to be taken by the two countries for the expansion of economic and monetary ties.

According to Farzin the new monetary contract enables Iran and Russia to trade in local currencies.

He added that based on agreements between the specialized delegations of the two countries, Iran’s Shetab banking system would link Russia’s MIR interbank system by the end of August.

The official said that the new scheme would allow Iranian nationals to take ruble from Russian ATMs using their Iranian banking cards.

“During the meeting, the two sides finalized the requirements to connect Russia’s Mir payment

sides also discussed monetary and banking issues during his talks with Russian officials.

The two countries also agreed to identify mutual agricultural capacities as well as suitable areas for the exchange of agricultural products in order to increase the level of trade in the agricultural sector, according to the official.

He went on to say that the Islamic Republic of Iran has very good capacities in the field of transit and transportation, saying: “During this visit, it was agreed to activate the north-south corridor. This transit route will make the time and distance of transiting goods from Russia and different northern countries to the southern regions much shorter.”

Meanwhile, during a meeting between Iran’s Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Abdolnasser Hemmati and Russia’s Minister of Economic Development Maxim Reshetnikov on September 30, the two sides called for strengthening economic ties between the two countries.

Hemmati met and held talks with Reshetnikov on the sideline of the talks between high-ranking delegations of Iran and Russia at the time.

Referring to the increasing trade between Iran and the member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, Reshetnikov expressed hope that this process will accelerate further.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed customs issues, Russian investments in the oil industry, the progress of the Rasht-Astara railway, the North-South Corridor, truckers’ insurance, trade currency settlement, strengthening the Eurasian Economic Union, and other economic issues between the two countries.

In the same day, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said that an agreement to transform Iran into a regional transit and gas hub is a prime example of cooperation between Tehran and Moscow.

ICCIMA, TSE hold meeting to discuss ways of economic development

TEHRAN – The heads of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) met on Sunday to discuss avenues of cooperation and ways to facilitate economic development.

As the ICCIMA portal reported, the meeting was also attended by the heads of provincial chambers and ICCIMA specialized committees, as well as, a group of economic operators.

Speaking at the gathering, ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh said: “In the current economic situation, in addition to the inadequacies and obstacles, some restrictions have been created for the economy due to sanctions, however, we must be able to lead the economy forward with cooperation.”

Stating that the stock market is a base for economic development and growth, Hassanzadeh said: “Iran’s economy has been difficult to manage for several years.”

According to the official, the stock exchange

should be able to use people’s capital in the development path and create added value for these funds without the interference of other institutions.

“The stock market plays a key role in the economy as a platform to provide funding for production units and economic projects,” he stressed.

Elsewhere in the meeting, Hojatollah Seyedi, the head of SEO, underlined the significant role of the private sector and the ICCIMA in the country’s economy and said: “The country’s economy is shaped by the members of the ICCIMA and the private sector. If this part of the economy is active and creates value, the economy will surely grow.”

“Many pressures have been imposed on the country’s economy, some of these problems are due to sanctions, and some are due to corporate governance and low productivity. For this reason, the capital formation and economic growth rates have decreased,” he regretted.



ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh (L) and TSE Head Hojatollah Seyedi

Pointing out that according to the 20-year outlook plan, the average annual growth of the country’s economy was supposed to reach 8.0 percent by 2025 and Iran would rank first in the region, he said: “The economy faced many adversities and currently, based on the nominal value of capital, we are in the fourth place in the region, after Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and the UAE.”

ICCIMA head, CBI governor discuss private sector issues

TEHRAN – The head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh has criticized the Central Bank of Iran (CBI)’s policies for controlling inflation, saying that the inflation control policies of the central bank are hindering the financing of private sector projects.

Speaking in a meeting with the CBI Governor Mohammadreza Farzin on Monday, Hassanzadeh said: “Although the CBI efforts to reduce inflation is commendable,

the control of banks’ balance sheets is done at the cost of reducing the private sector’s access to financial resources, and unfortunately, the government continues to interfere in allocation of banking resources.”

The CBI policies have caused the private sector, which has always been struggling with financing issues, to face a more severe crisis. The credit facilities of the banks do not cover the liquidity requirements of the production units, especially in the last

months of the year, Hassanzadeh added.

He further mentioned other challenges faced by the private sector economic operators, especially exporters and stated that one of the main demands of the private sector from CBI is to establish stability in the forex market.

“One of the demands of economic operators is to be able to predict the exchange rate for future planning, which we hope will be realized with the central

bank’s help,” he noted.

Farzin for his part said that the CBI has been looking for a new policy to manage the foreign currency market and to provide traders with the necessary foreign currency.

“Since two years ago, the fluctuations of the currency market have increased, and to prevent the consequences of this situation, the Nima system was formed so that foreign currency rates become more predictable,” he said.

Hochstein's Lebanon visit: A new attempt to extricate Israel from the quagmire

From page 1 ▶ Israel has killed about 3,500 people in Lebanon since October last year. But it has failed to deter Hezbollah from firing missiles and drones into Israel and return displaced Israelis to the north.

The Israeli army has also suffered heavy casualties on the battlefield in the wake of the regime's ground offensive which began on October 1.

A week ago, Hezbollah revealed that its fighters have killed over 100 Israeli officers and soldiers while injuring over 1,000 others on the Lebanese border.

Hezbollah media chief Mohammad Afif, who was assassinated in an Israeli strike in central Beirut on Sunday, had already highlighted the failure of Israel's ground offensive in Lebanon.

"After 45 days of bloody fighting, the enemy is still unable to occupy a single Lebanese village," Afif said at a press conference in Beirut's Dahiyeh neighborhood on November 11.

He had also dismissed Israel's claims about the depletion of Hezbollah's missile stockpiles.

"Our missile stockpiles are complete in the same way that they were on the first day [of the struggle against the Israeli regime]," Afif pointed out as he referred to Hezbollah's continued firing of projectiles towards Tel Aviv and Haifa.

In light of Israel's military challenges against Hezbollah fighters, the United States proposed a ceasefire to help the regime



navigate the complexities of the conflict in Lebanon.

Hezbollah said earlier this month that its fighters have killed more than 100 Israeli officers and soldiers and injured over 1,000 others on the Lebanese border.

According to Israeli media, the ceasefire agreement would include the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, the establishment of an international oversight commit-

tee and the deployment of some 10,000 Lebanese army troops along the border with Israel.

The US ambassador to Lebanon, Lisa Johnson, relayed the proposal to the Lebanese government last week.

According to Reuters, US envoy Amos Hochstein will arrive in Beirut on Tuesday to hold talks on the ceasefire deal.

Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri has stressed there must be a guarantee that once a truce is reached "the Israeli attacks in Lebanon will stop on land, at sea, and in the air." He has said that without these guarantees, there would be little benefit from a ceasefire.

The US ceasefire plan for Lebanon is reminiscent of the same tactic that Washington has employed in the course of the Gaza

war.

Israel launched the war on Gaza after Hamas conducted Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, a surprise military attack in southern Israel, which dealt a severe blow to the regime.

In the wake of Israel's failure to make good on its objectives, which mainly include the elimination of Hamas, President Joe Biden unveiled a ceasefire plan for Gaza on May 31.

On June 10, the United Nations Security Council approved a US resolution backing its ceasefire plan which called for ending the Gaza war.

Hamas welcomed the plan but Netanyahu and his cabinet derailed the talks and hampered efforts aimed at establishing a lasting ceasefire in Gaza.

In fact, the US-proposed ceasefire for Gaza was meant to focus attention away from Israel's genocidal war on the enclave which has so far claimed the lives of nearly 44,000 Palestinians.

Washington's truce deal for Lebanon is also aimed at diverting attention from Israel's brutal strikes on Lebanon.

The ceasefire initiatives proposed by the United States appear to be mere political strategies designed to extricate Israel from the quagmire of the wars it has waged on Lebanon and Gaza.

Hezbollah ambushes Israeli infantry

From page 1 ▶ Hezbollah said it targeted eleven gatherings and movements of Israeli soldiers and vehicles at settlements across the border and forces attempting to infiltrate the border/advance in south Lebanon (including south of Khiam) using rockets and artillery shells, causing injuries and deaths.

On Monday, Hezbollah published another four statements announcing that it was firing rockets at Israeli army soldiers "south of Khiam".

A fifth statement issued by the resistance movement later in the day stated its "fighters targeted a gathering of the Israeli enemy forces east of the town of Khiam".

According to reporters on the ground, the IOF has not been able to take control of the town amid heavy fighting that included combat at very close range.

Reports also surfaced on Monday that the IOF was forced to retreat into the southern Lebanese village of Shamaa after the resistance fighters effectively blocked their advance.

Analysts say the resistance movement is setting up a strategic shift with subtle but powerful moves that could have deadly implications for the invading forces.

Reporters on the ground in southern Leb-



"Israeli occupation forces are suffering heavy losses in the ongoing battle for Khiam."

anon say the IOF has failed to achieve any progress in all three directions it has tried to invade the south and ambushed in Shamaa and suffered heavy losses.

The Lebanese resistance movement is defending the south from invasion while keeping firing rockets, missiles, and drones into the Israeli depths.

As Hezbollah fighters confront elite IOF infantry units, they continued to rain down rockets on Israeli settlements on Monday

including Gornot HaGalil, Kiryat Shmona, Nahariya and Margalioth, according to the resistance and Hebrew media.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah announced it has targeted "the Israeli Shraga base (the administrative headquarters of the Golani Brigade) north of the occupied city of Akka with a rocket barrage."

Israeli army radio reported that the IOF "has begun removing military barriers in the settlements near and adjacent to the Lebanese border, and it is expected to withdraw its forces from them in the coming days."

Experts say the report is an acknowledgment of what Hezbollah has confirmed about targeting military gatherings inside those settlements, which the IOF has turned into military barracks.

Hezbollah also said on Monday that it "targeted a gathering of the Israeli enemy forces at the newly established headquarters of the Western Brigade in the Ya'ra barracks, hitting their targets accurately."

Meanwhile, two Lebanese Army soldiers were killed and three others injured, one critically, as a result of an Israeli attack on an army center in the town of al-Mari.

Will the conscription crisis end the aggression on Gaza and Lebanon?

From page 1 ▶ Hence, without the Haredim, it is difficult to continue the war given the fact that they will not fill the gap, especially since they will most likely not participate in any ground missions.

Almost two months before the Republican President-elect, Donald Trump, and his far-right team begin their work, the Washington Post revealed that Israeli Minister of Strategic Affairs, Ron Dermer, informed Trump and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, that the occupying entity is accelerating efforts to push for a ceasefire in Lebanon.

Haaretz said the goal behind the decision is to give Trump's new administration a foreign policy gain as Netanyahu, who

has long been accused by his critics of trying to prolong the war to preserve his political survival, is betting that the right political moment to achieve a breakthrough has arrived.

Israel Ziv, the former director of operations in the Israeli army, has said Netanyahu was waiting for Trump to win the White House to grant him this reward.

Regarding Russia's role in the talks of a ceasefire in Lebanon, Frank Lowenstein, who served as the US envoy for Palestinian-Israeli negotiations during the Obama era, believes that the Russians under Biden do not have an effective role.

Meanwhile, The New York Times commented on Larijani's visit to Beirut as there are no

public indications that Iran and Hezbollah are willing to submit to Israeli demands, especially as the resistance movement has shown its capability to continue launching missiles and drones at the occupied Palestinian territories regularly.

The Times warned that the increased pace of Israeli air strikes on Lebanon, accompanied by the expansion of the ground operation, could undermine the diplomatic track. Amir Avivi, a retired Israeli general, stated that the occupation entity's goal is to destroy more of Hezbollah's military facilities. In addition, there is a belief in the Army's top echelon that this could force the resistance movement to agree to a settlement under more favorable

terms for Tel Aviv.

Despite all the hardships that the resistance movements in Gaza and Lebanon have gone through, the occupation army has suffered 795 fatalities including officers. About 63 of them are squadrons' commanders, in addition to a large number of wounded with permanent injuries.

Netanyahu is thus obligated to reach a "compromise" on the Lebanese front to withdraw as many regular forces as possible and release the largest number of reserve soldiers from the Lebanon and Gaza wars, while keeping the regular forces in Gaza, believing that they will be able to continue fighting.

Prague pro-Palestine protest

Czechs condemn complicity in carnage



People held a rally in the capital of the Czech Republic at the weekend to express support for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip in the face of Israel's genocidal war on the enclave.

Protesters in Prague waved Palestinian flags and held signs calling for peace.

The demonstrators denounced their government's support for Israel.

The Czech Republic was one of only 14 countries that voted against a UN General Assembly resolution in September which called for Israel to end its occupation of Palestinian territory within 12 months.

Pope Francis calls for investigation into 'genocide' in Gaza

Pope Francis has called for an investigation into allegations by experts about "genocide" in Gaza.

In a new book, Hope Never Disappoints. Pilgrims Towards a Better World, the Catholic leader for the first time suggested that Israel's attack on the Gaza Strip could be characterized as a genocide.

"According to some experts, what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of genocide," he wrote, in extracts published on

Sunday in Italy's La Stampa daily.

"This should be studied carefully to determine whether (the situation) corresponds to the technical definition formulated by jurists and international organizations."

Pope Francis is one of the most high-profile figures on the international scene to imply that Israel's actions in Gaza could amount to genocide.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Trump loyalists accuse Biden of trying to start WWII with Ukraine missiles move

Marjorie Taylor Greene and Donald Trump Jr have accused President Joe Biden of trying to start World War III after he gave Ukraine the green light to use US-supplied long-range supersonic missiles to strike inside Russia for the first time.

The Biden administration's granting of Kyiv's request to use the ATACMS missiles outside of its own borders marks a change in stance in the president's final days in office, before President-elect Donald Trump - who has indicated he will limit US support for Ukraine - returns to the White House in January.

The MAGA representative and Donald Trump's eldest son lashed out at Biden's decision in fiery posts on X, Independent reported

"On his way out of office, Joe Biden is dangerously trying to start WWII by authorizing Ukraine the use of U.S. long range missiles into Russia," Greene, who is among the Republicans who want to cut US aid to Ukraine, posted on Sunday.

"The American people gave a mandate on Nov 5th against these exact America last decisions and do NOT want to fund or fight foreign wars.

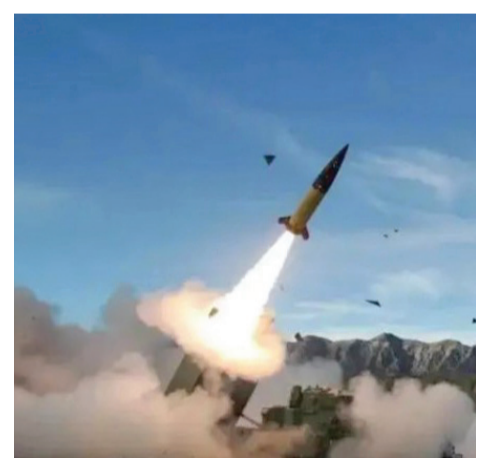
She concluded: "We want to fix our own problems. Enough of this, it must stop."

Trump Jr - who last week told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky that his "allowance" is up now that Trump is returning to the White House - accused Biden of attempting to tarnish his father's legacy by placing the US on the brink of conflict before he takes office.

"The Military Industrial Complex seems to want to make sure they get World War 3 going before my father has a chance to create peace and save lives," Trump Jr said.

"Gotta lock in those \$Trillions. Life be damned!!! Imbeciles!"

The move marks a major policy shift after



Russia's warning that it would regard Kyiv's authorization to use US-made missiles "as a major escalation." Russian President Vladimir Putin previously told Ukraine's Western allies that such a move would represent NATO's "direct participation" in the war.

At least two Russian legislators also warned that the US move risks another world war.

"I have a great hope that [Donald] Trump will overcome this decision if this has been made because they are seriously risking the start of World War III which is not in anybody's interest," said Maria Butina, a member of Putin's party who was previously convicted of acting as an unregistered foreign agent of Russia within the US.

In an interview with Russia's state news agency TASS, Vladimir Dzhubarov, first deputy head of the Russian upper house's international affairs committee, described Biden's decision as "unprecedented" while also warning of a possible global conflict. Dzhubarov said such an action would receive a swift response.

Biden's decision comes with just 64 days left in the White House.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Ancient metalworking workshop unearthed in northern Iran



TEHRAN – An archaeological team has discovered a historic industrial workshop with evidence of metalworking near the ancient village of Masuleh, located some 2,500 meters above sea level in the Gilan province.

The findings shed light on the region's industrial and economic significance during the Islamic medieval period, Mehr reported on Monday.

Vali Jahani, the providential tourism chief, stated that the discovery was made during ongoing archaeological studies aimed at advancing Masuleh's effort to gain a UNESCO World Heritage status.

The excavations, led by Behzad Alitalash, uncovered iron-smelting furnaces and evidence of steel production in the Siyapasieh area, indicating a sophisticated local industry with possible regional and interregional trade connections.

These findings highlight the importance of iron as a strategic material in antiquity, which played a crucial role in social and political dynamics, Jahani explained.

The official also emphasized the discovery's potential to reshape understanding of Masuleh's historical role as a significant industrial center in the region.

Archaeological evidence suggests the production of iron and steel exceeded local demand, hinting at extra production and trade. Researchers are employing laboratory and comparative analysis methods to explore the scale and scope of these interactions, the official noted.

Masuleh, known for its unique stepped architecture, was registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 1975 and temporarily added to UNESCO's heritage list in 2007.

The current discoveries may bolster Masuleh's case for full UNESCO World Heritage status, a long-standing goal for local heritage advocates.

Historically, Masuleh also played a strategic role during the Qajar era, functioning under governmental oversight to supply artillery ammunition. Recent discoveries of sponge iron production—a technique dating back to the Parthian period—further underscore the area's rich industrial history.

UN Tourism Executive Council looks to innovation and investment-driven future

UN Tourism's Executive Council has met again to jointly advance the transformation of the sector.

With the latest UN Tourism Data showing that the sector is on track to reach 96% recovery of pre-pandemic numbers by the end of the year, the 122nd Session of the Executive Council looked to the future, with investments and innovation high on the agenda. The Session welcomed representatives of 47 countries, including 21 Ministers and Vice-Ministers of Tourism, alongside key strategic partners from the private sector, civil society and international finance.

Opening the session, UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili welcomed the example set by Colombia in "betting on tourism" to provide a better future for the country, including for previously-marginalized groups. He said: "Colombia has chosen to invest in tourism, not in weapons or war, and as the only country to have hosted every major UN Tourism event, including two General Assemblies, it is a testament to the power of tourism as a force for change."

The Secretary-General then presented his report to Members. The report sets out the progress made in advancing the Organization's work since the Council last met, again with a special emphasis on the shared priorities of investments into tourism, education and accelerating innovation across the sector. Advancing shared goals according to the UN body is given below:

In Cartagena, the Members of the Executive

Council advanced plans to build a more inclusive, resilient and forward-looking sector, with a focus on:

Innovation: UN Tourism is the global leader in innovation in the sector. Executive Council Members were given an overview of key achievements in this area, including the continued success of its Challenges and Competitions, designed to identify and support the best new ideas and talent. In Cartagena, the winners of two new competitions, the Green Projects Challenge and the Community Tourism Challenge, were formally announced.

Investment: In Cartagena, UN Tourism will present its Tourism Doing Business Guidelines: Investing in Colombia. The publication series continues to grow, with a further 28 editions, each focusing on investment opportunities in a specific destination, now planned. Also in Cartagena, UN Tourism will host a landmark Global Forum on Investment and Innovation to conclude the Executive Council meeting.

Education: Executive Council Members were brought up-to-date with UN Tourism's leading work in promoting tourism education and training at every level. Key advances include the continued rolling out of the Education Toolkit, designed to help Member States introduce tourism as a subject in high schools, as well as the ongoing success of the UN Tourism Online Academy and the growing global network of International Academies in Association With UN Tourism.

(Source: UN Tourism)

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Church and Dominican Convent of Santa Maria

The refectory of the Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan forms an integral part of this architectural complex, begun in 1463 and reworked at the end of the 15th century by Bramante.

On the north wall is The Last Supper, the unrivaled masterpiece painted between 1495 and 1497 by Leonardo da Vinci, whose work was to herald a new era in the history of art.

The complex, including the Church and Convent, was built from 1463 onwards by Guiniforte Solari, and was afterwards considerably modified at the end of 15th century by Bramante, one of the masters of the Renaissance.

Bramante structurally enlarged the church and added large semi-circular apses, a wonderful drum-shaped dome surrounded by columns, and a spectacular cloister and refectory.

The painting was commissioned in 1495 and completed in 1497. The representation by Leonardo da Vinci depicted the moment immediately after Christ said, "One of you will

betray me". Leonardo rejected the classical interpretation of the composition and had Jesus in the midst of the Apostles; he also created four groups of three figures on either side of Christ. The 12 Apostles reacted in differing ways; their movements and expressions are magnificently captured in Leonardo's work.

The genius of the artist is seen especially in the use of light and strong perspective. Unfortunately, Leonardo did not work in fresco but in tempera on a two-layered surface of plaster that did not absorb paint. It was as early as 1568 when Vasari first pointed out problems with this painting technique.

The Last Supper, which Leonardo da Vinci painted in the refectory of the Dominican convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, is undisputedly one of the world's masterpieces of painting. Its unique value, which over the centuries has had immense influence in the field of figurative art, is inseparable from the architectural complex in which it was created.

(Source: UNESCO)

7,500-year-old relics unearthed in western Iran

TEHRAN – Archaeologists working at Qeshlaq Tappeh, a site partially submerged by the Talvar Dam in Iran's western province of Kordistan, have uncovered cultural artifacts and remains dating back approximately 7,500 years.

Mahnaz Sharifi, the head of the archaeological team at Qeshlaq Tappeh in Bijar, on Sunday announced the completion of the fourth field research season, ISNA reported.

She noted that while the lower slopes of the site are submerged, the summit remains accessible for excavation.

Sharifi explained that the nearby Qeshlaq village features over 14 meters of cultural deposits, with evidence of habitation stretching back to the 5th millennium BC.

Then she noted links between the discoveries with the Hajji Firuz Tepe, an archaeological site located in West Azarbaijan province in the north-west of the country, which lies in the north-western part of the Zagros mountain range.

"Remnants of Hajji Firuz and late 6th-millennium BC cultures were also identified, marking a connection to the complex Dalma culture of the early 5th millennium BC."

Hajji Firuz period in northwest Iran can be dated c. 6000–5400 BC. Then, there was a short gap



in chronology, or perhaps a transitional period. The Dalma tradition then emerged; new radiocarbon dates for this tradition are c. 5000–4500 BC. Dalma seems like the result of a long local sequence of development from the Hajji Firuz period.

As mentioned by Sharifi, the excavation yielded architectural remains, decorated Dalma pottery, ornamental beads, and stone tools. These findings illustrate Qeshlaq's historical links with the eastern central Zagros region, the Urmia Lake basin, and Mesopotamia, as well as eastern Anatolia, she said.

"One remarkable discovery was evidence of geological phenomena like landslides, rarely documented

in archaeological studies." Additionally, Qeshlaq features nine meters of early Chalcolithic deposits and five meters of later Chalcolithic deposits, reflecting natural and local influences on cultural practices, the archaeologist said.

"Among these are the use of gypsum for architectural reinforcement and economic reliance on livestock, hunting, fishing, and farming, despite the region's semi-arid climate."

Elsewhere in her remarks, the archaeologist referred to the discovery of Obsidian objects that is a naturally occurring volcanic glass formed when lava extruded from a volcano cools rapidly with minimal crystal growth.

"Obsidian tools discovered at the site may point to trade links with Turkey's Lake Van region, while petrographic, XRF, and XRD analyses of Ubaid-style pottery suggest connections to Mesopotamia."

These findings underline Qeshlaq's role as a trade and communication hub, fostering relationships with regions as far as Anatolia and Mesopotamia.

Sharifi also highlighted social and economic complexities, evidenced by flat and cylinder seals suggesting ownership systems and early social stratification. However, environmental factors may have contributed to Qeshlaq's decline. "Heavy metals such as lead, arsenic, and cadmium, found in the region's water and soil, likely caused long-term health issues that hindered population growth and cultural development."

Sharifi concluded that environmental contamination, intensified by geological conditions in the Talvar Valley, disrupted food chains and may have driven the site's eventual abandonment.

The archaeological findings underscore the rich cultural and historical significance of Qeshlaq Tappeh, offering a window into the region's ancient trade networks, social hierarchies, and environmental challenges.

Arab Union for Handicrafts explores collaboration with Isfahan following national exhibition visit



TEHRAN – A delegation from the Arab Union for Productive Families and Handicrafts has visited the ancient city of Isfahan as part of their official trip to Iran, following their participation in the 37th National Handicrafts Exhibition in Tehran.

While in Isfahan, the delegation explored the city's rich cultural heritage and artisanal workshops, marking a significant step toward fostering stronger ties between Iran and the Arab world. ILNA quoted Isfahan province's tourism chief as saying on Monday.

Organized by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the delegation's itinerary included meetings with local officials and artisans in Isfahan, widely regarded as the heart of Iranian handicrafts, Amir Karamzadeh added.

The delegation led by the union's director Muhammad Abdul Baset Al-Qadah also discussed a range of issues with a number of cultural heritage officials, Isfahan's chamber of commerce, and members of the handicrafts union of the ancient city, Karamzadeh said.

"Isfahan province boasts over 68,000 experienced artisans and nearly 200,000 handicraft workers, operating in 600 collective workshops and 15,000 independent workshops across 29 cities."

Their visit to the Islamic Republic culminated in the signing of an agreement between the union and the ministry aimed to enhance cultural and economic collaborations, focusing on the promotion and exchange of traditional crafts across borders, Karamzadeh said.

A city of historical significance

The ancient city of Isfahan, situated at the crossroads of Iran's north-south and east-west trade routes, reached its zenith between the 9th and 18th centuries. During the Safavid era, it became Iran's capital under Shah Abbas the Great. Renowned for its Persian-Islamic architecture, the city is home to historical landmarks such as Naqsh-e Jahan Square, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Moreover, the ancient city was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran and now it is one of Iran's top tourist destinations for good reasons. It is filled with many architectural wonders, such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It's a city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people.

The Persian proverb "Isfahan nesf-e-jahan ast" (Isfahan is half the world) reflects the city's cultural and historical prominence.

Archaeologists unearth clues to ancient city in northwest Iran

TEHRAN – An archaeological team from Tabriz Islamic Art University has recently uncovered evidence of a historical city in East Azarbaijan province, northwest Iran.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the team has revealed clues to the ancient city of Khonaj, situated near Aq-Kand in the Mianeh region, ISNA reported on Monday.

The team, led by the archaeologist Mehdi Kazempour, began their work in November 2024, discovering artifacts and structures that point to Khonaj's significance as a Silk Road hub and a gateway to the Azarbaijan region, the report said. Among the findings are remnants of architectural spaces and decorations, coins from the Atabegs of Azarbaijan, and a diverse collection

of Islamic ceramics, including lusterware, and cobalt-glazed pottery.

The team also discovered fragments of glass and kiln-related equipment, providing a glimpse into the city's craftsmanship and trade.

Kazempour emphasized Khonaj's historical importance as a central Silk Road junction and its role as a settlement for key historical figures like Alp Arslan (the second sultan of the Seljuk Empire) and the Saadlu family.

"This city served as a gateway to Azarbaijan, making it a pivotal point for trade and cultural exchange," the archaeologist said.

This excavation marks the first formal archaeological mission by Tabriz Islamic Art University and opens new avenues for understanding the history and culture of the region. The findings



shed light on the region's rich heritage and offer a fresh perspective for future research.

The discovery has been hailed as a significant step toward unveiling the secrets of Azarbaijan's past, with the potential to deepen knowledge of its role in the broader historical and cultural landscape of the Silk Road era.

Brazil eyes for increasing tourism cooperation with China: travel bureau head

Brazil views China-Brazil tourism as a key driver of mutual growth, believing it will further strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries. It is also expected that the development of the tourism industry will bring long-term economic and cultural benefits to both China and Brazil, Marcelo Freixo, president of Embratur told the Global Times.

The comments were made as the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro is set to take place on Monday,

which draws global attention to the host Brazil. Embratur, known as Brazilian Tourist Board, is a Brazilian travel promotion and marketing agency.

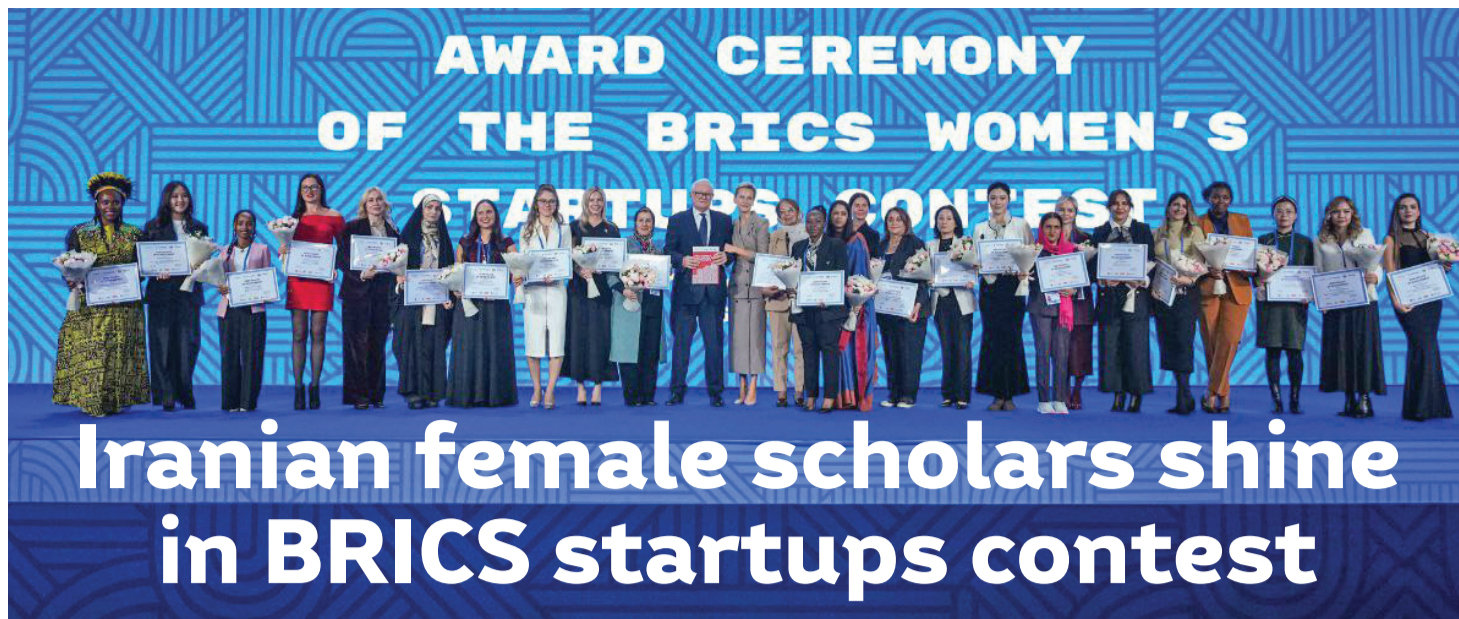
"Brazil has been ramping up its tourism promotion efforts in the Chinese market, aiming to showcase the country's rich and diverse travel offerings, including cultural experiences, nature-based activities such as wildlife observation, and luxury experiences," Freixo said. He added that Brazilian tour-

ism spots such as Iguazu Falls, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Manaus in the Amazon region have gained rising popularity among Chinese tourists.

Freixo noted that, considering China is one of the world's major economies, and that the number of Chinese travelers to Brazil continues to grow, the bureau will put more focuses on unlocking the potential of bilateral tourism industry in the future.

According to him, the agency plans to participate in ITB China, a leading B2B travel trade show to be held in Shanghai next year to promote more communication and exchanges with Chinese travel industry. The country will also increase tourism promotion efforts, improve infrastructure, and provide more convenient and enjoyable services to enhance the overall experience for Chinese tourists.

(Source: Global Times)



Iranian female scholars shine in BRICS startups contest

From page 1 ▶ Karami received the award in the nomination 'Artificial Intelligence' for her project titled 'Automatic Fault Detection in Power Transmission Lines'.

The award in the nomination 'Health and Medicine' went to Abyari, and Ebrahimi for their projects named 'Insightfully scanned glucose monitoring' and 'Immune cell bank for the treatment of cancer and autoimmune diseases', respectively.

Hosseini received the award in the nomination 'Innovation and Infrastructure' with her project called 'Intelligent spoon for tremor alleviation'.

Promoting women's entrepreneurship and unleashing leadership, ensuring the expansion of women's business networks in the BRICS countries are among the main goals of the contest.

It also aims to deepen B2B cooperation among women entrepreneurs, increase the participation of women in the BRICS countries' economies, and create multilateral projects.

The inclusion of women's businesses in global value chains is another goal of the contest.

The general partner of the BRICS Women's Business Alliance series of events is Sberbank PJSC, Russia's largest bank, and a leading global financial institution.

The strategic partner of the Contest is another leader of Russia's banking industry Gazprom-

bank (Joint Stock Company).

Startups from 14 countries will receive communication support from the BRICS Women's Business Alliance.

Female scholars

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

In 2023, 938 top researchers affiliated with Iranian organizations have been identified, which shows a 12 percent increase compared to the previous year. Over the past decade, the number of highly-cited researchers in the country has been growing.

The winners included 26 projects in energy, artificial intelligence, education, agriculture, and aviation.

Women are an important part of society, playing an important role in the development of human societies, IRNA quoted Ahmad Fazelzadeh, the head of the Islamic World Science and Technology Monitoring and Citation (ISC) Institute, as

saying.

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

Among Iranian highly-cited researchers, women are also present and have played their part in the scientific authority of Iran. Using the data indexed in the ISC database, ISC identifies highly cited Iranian researchers in Human Sciences, Social Sciences, Art, and Architecture.

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

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

psychology, culture, sociology, and even religion.

TEHRAN –According to Zahra Behrouz-Azar, the Vice President for Women and Family Affairs, women account for more than 24 percent of inventions in the country, compared to the global average of 17 percent.

"Unfortunately, only 12 percent of entrepreneurship and start-ups are founded by women. We hope that women's presence in entrepreneurship reaches 30 percent by the end of the current administration," Behrouz-Azar noted.

She made the remarks at the first national women's entrepreneurship and business conference that was held on Monday at Tehran's Tarbiat Modarres University.

The official went on to say that in Iran, entrepreneurship officially commenced in 2000. Following that it was defined as a field of study in universities, and the first entrepreneurial major as an interdisciplinary one launched at University of Tehran.

Today, the concept of entrepreneurship is interwoven with various fields such as economy,

With the conceptual development of entrepreneurial thought, women's entrepreneurship begins to grow because there is a difference between men and women in terms of performance, motivation, and access to resources.

One of the most important differences between entrepreneurship among women and men is the issue of motivation.

Men's motivation in entrepreneurship is more concerned with earning a living and increasing wealth, but women all over the world tend to use it to strengthen the family foundation.

The most important goal in women's entrepreneurship in the current administration is to promote motivation.

Men entrepreneurs can more easily provide resources and capital for their businesses, but this happens less for women. Therefore, educated women face funding problems to start off their business.

The government is well aware of the issue and is looking for solutions to boost access to finance for women entrepreneurs, Behrouz-Azar highlighted.

Iran secures position in GII for second consecutive year

According to the 2024 edition of the Global Innovation Index (GI) report, the Islamic Republic of Iran ranks second among the countries of the Central and Southern Asian region, unchanged compared with the last two years.

India and Kazakhstan ranked first and third, respectively. According to this year's report, Iran ranks 5th among the 38 lower-middle-income group economies, which has improved compared to the 2023 ranking, 6th.

However, the country's ranking, among the 133 economies featured in the GII 2024, has dropped from 62 in 2023 to 64th this year.

Switzerland secured the first rank in the GII 2024 report with a score of 67.5 for the 14th consecutive year, closely followed by Sweden and the US at the second and

third positions with scores of 64.5 and 62.4, respectively.

As stated in the 2024 edition, over the past four years (2020-2024), the statistical confidence interval for the ranking of Iran in the GII 2024 is between ranks 56 and 80. Iran performs better in innovation outputs (48th) than in innovation inputs (85th) in 2024.

Published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the report ranks Iran first in Market capitalization, and Trademarks by origin.

It ranks 3rd, 5th, 8th, 17th, 19th, 23rd, and 35th in Software spending, Gross capital formation, Graduates in science and engineering, market sophistication, Domestic market scale, Intangible asset intensity, and Tertiary education, respectively.

Iran (Islamic Republic of) ranks highest in Market sophistication (17th), Knowledge and technology outputs (49th), Creative outputs (52nd), and Human capital and research (64th).

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Environmentally friendly streetlights installed in refugee settlements

TEHRAN –The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in cooperation with the National Organization for Migration (NOM), has installed 3,601 solar-powered streetlights across 11 settlements and four neighborhoods with large refugee populations in Iran to respond to safety concerns in an environmentally friendly and climate-safe way.

Using the 3,601 solar lights reduces emissions by 152.5 tons of CO2 per year, equivalent to the carbon captured yearly by 720 hectares of forest.

The new solar street-lighting is part of UNHCR and the Government of Iran's commitment to refugee protection and empowerment – a partnership spanning four decades.

Its impact extends beyond safety, fostering community engagement, enabling livelihood activities in the evenings, and promoting a sense of normalcy in refugee settlements, UNHCR website announced in a press release on November 5.

Families living in refugee settlements across Iran can now enjoy evening strolls and social gatherings with ease, thanks to improved safety in their communities. What was once a challenge has transformed into a newfound sense of security and freedom, all following the installation of enhanced public lighting in the streets.

By illuminating the streets after sunset, the solar streetlights have transformed the lives of over 50,000 refugees and thousands of Iranians living in the same areas. Now, residents can more confidently go for walks and children can enjoy playing in the evenings.

The solar streetlights have also made settlements safer for women and girls.

"This solar light project exemplifies the power of innovative, sustainable solutions in protracted refugee situations," says Yumiko Takashima, UNHCR Representative in Iran. "It enhances safety and quality of life for refugees and the communities that generously host them and aligns with our global commitment to environmental responsibility."

Street-lighting in refugee settlements also significantly enhances business opportunities and social life. By extending working hours, streetlights enable small businesses to operate beyond daylight, increasing their income potential and fostering economic growth and sustainability within the community.

Additionally, well-lit areas enhance safety and security, encouraging social interaction and stronger relationships within the community and with neighbouring areas.

This improved social cohesion can lead to better integration, mutual support, and collaborative efforts between refugees and host communities, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and resilient environment.

UNHCR supports many public services that are crucial for communities, such as schools and clinics. But I can't recall a project that has so immediately and so drastically changed the life of people," emphasizes Mobin Lashkari, UNHCR's engineer who worked on the project.

"Refugees were recruited by contractors and provided a large part of the manpower to install the lights. Not only was it rewarding for them to see the result, but it also gave them a sense of

ownership," he added.

UNHCR strives to support forcibly displaced, stateless people and their hosts in improving access to services that promote the sustainable use of natural resources and a clean and healthy environment.

The long-term vision is that by 2030, the increasing numbers of forcibly displaced and stateless people fleeing from climate-fueled crises and living in climate vulnerable countries are protected, resilient to the impacts of climate change and living self-sufficient lives.

This vision is in line with UNHCR's "Strategic Plan for Climate Action 2024-2030", supported by multi-year climate action plans for each region. The project is part of a larger greening initiative proposed at the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) and is aligned with Iran's national plan to increase the production of green electricity.

To enhance refugees' health and livelihood opportunities in Iran, there are plans to install solar panels in shelters, providing free lighting and electricity to 800 families. Sewage treatment facilities will be set up in three refugee settlements and solar-powered water well pumps in four other settlements, delivering sustainable clean water and better sanitation to about 20,000 refugees.

As the world grapples with record-high displacement figures, reaching 120 million by May 2024, such initiatives underscore the importance of sustainable, long-term solutions for refugees. Iran, which hosts 3.8 million refugees and refugee-like persons, continues to be a global leader in refugee response, maintaining inclusive policies despite economic challenges.

Iran's support for refugees

Iran's support for refugees is demonstrated through its inclusive policies, which encompass protection, assistance, education, and healthcare, inspiring the global community and positively impacting the lives of refugees.

As the second-largest refugee-hosting country, Iran is currently host to one of the largest and most protracted refugee populations in the world, the majority of whom are Afghan refugees.

The country is home to over 800,000 registered refugees and some 2.6 million undocumented Afghans.

Currently, more than 500,000 Afghan children – including undocumented Afghans and those who have newly arrived in Iran following the Taliban takeover – are benefitting from Iran's inclusive education policies, one of the most progressive in the world.

In total, Iran hosts some 4.5 million Afghans of varying status – including resident permit holders, undocumented Afghans, and family passport holders – many of whom have been in the country for an extended period and require support to strengthen their resilience.

Iran's generous and exceptional services for refugees despite unfair economic sanctions have exceeded expectations and international responsibilities. The government of Iran has made a very generous effort to provide services to millions of refugees and foreign nationals despite difficult living conditions and oppressive economic sanctions imposed on the country.

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Rainfalls brings life back to Gomishan wetland

Gomishan international wetland, northern province of Golestan, is once again partially filled with water with recent rainfalls, the provincial chief of the department of environment has said.

Over the past few days more than 60 percent of the wetland was filled due to the recent rainfalls and now 20,000 hectares of the wetland are covered with water, Amir Abdous said on Tuesday.

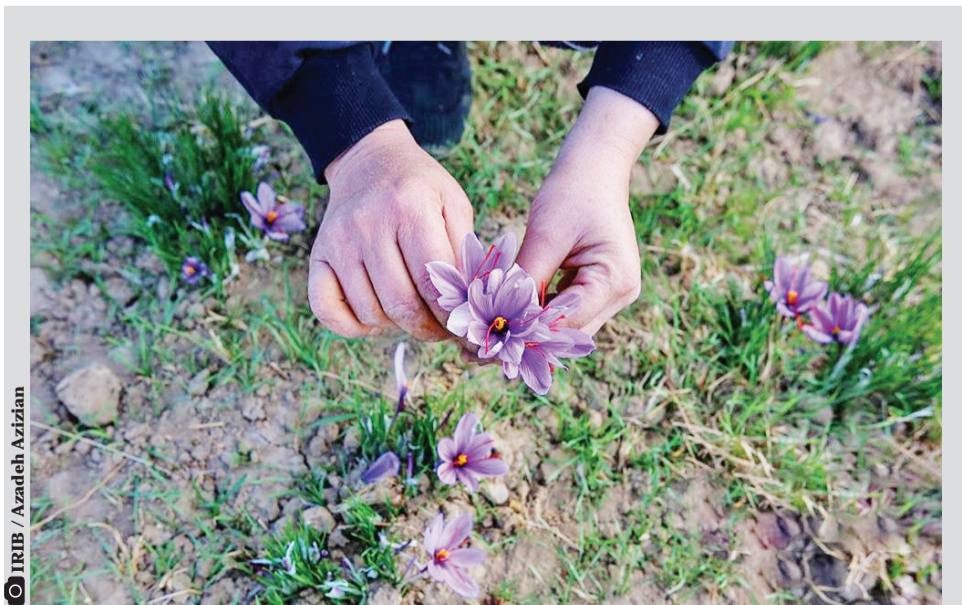
Due to the decrease in the water level at the Caspian Sea the wetland has been dried specially during hot seasons, Abdous said, adding that in winter a small part of the wetland was covered with water.

بارندگی های اخیر زندگی دوباره به تالاب گمیشان بخشید

مدیرکل حفاظت محیط زیست گلستان از آبگیری بخشی از تالاب بین المللی گمیشان در این استان خبر داد

به گزارش خبرگزاری ایرنا امیر عبدوس روز سه شنبه گفت: بارندگی های اخیر زندگی دوباره به این زیستگاه مهم بخشید و بیش از ۶۰ درصد تالاب بین المللی گمیشان آبگیری شد.

وی افزود: به علت پایین رفتن سطح آب دریای خزر تغذیه این تالاب از سوی دریا به حداقل ممکن رسیده بود و تقریباً تمام سطح تالاب بین المللی گمیشان در فصول گرم سال کاملاً خشک و در زمستان نیز بخش بسیار اندکی زیر آب قرار داشت.



Natanz, a hub of saffron in central Iran

Natanz county in the central province of Isfahan is known as the hub of saffron production in the region. With around six kilograms of yield per hectare, Isfahan is the fourth largest saffron producer in the country.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

There are many educated people who have ruined their future on account of their ignorance of religion. Their knowledge did not prove of any avail to them.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:50 Evening: 17:14 Dawn: 5:18 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:45 (tomorrow)

International premiere of Mehran Modiri's "6 AM" in Saudi Arabia



A scene from "6 AM"

TEHRAN—Mehran Modiri's second feature film "6 AM," also known as "6 in the Morning," will participate in the International Competition section of the 4th Red Sea International Film Festival (RSIFF), set to be held from December 5 to 14 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The 89-minute thriller is a production of 2024. Written and directed by Modiri, the film will have its international premiere at the Saudi Arabian festival, Honaronline reported.

In the movie, Sarah is leaving Teheran for three years to study for her doctorate in Canada. Her flight is at 6 a.m. After an emotionally fraught final dinner with her family, she heads to an impromptu farewell party at her friend Farida's apartment, intending to go straight to the airport afterwards. However, when it seems good, things take an unpleasant turn.

The cast includes Mona Farjad, Samira Hasanspour, Mohammad Heidari, Babak Kamangir, Mehrdad Sedighian, Mansour Nasiri, Tinoo Salehi, Saeed Zarei, Khayyam Vaghar Kashani, and Mehran Modiri.

Mehran Modiri, 57, is Iran's leading social satirist. Having studied theater at the University of Tehran, he is now director, actor, comedian, producer, screenwriter, host and singer. In 2017, he directed his first film, "Five in the Afternoon."

The Red Sea International Film Festival val-

ues all cinematic forms, from narrative to animation and documentary, featuring films from Asia, Africa, and across the Arab world.

Mehdi Fleifel's "To A Land Unknown" will have its MENA premiere, a powerful drama that traces the heartbreaking story of two Palestinian refugees stranded in Athens that received funding from RSIFF.

Also debuting as MENA premieres are "Sima's Song" directed by Afghan filmmaker Roya Sadat, a drama that explores the evolution of women's rights during the Russian occupation in the 1970s, and Indian director Reema Kagti's "Superboys of Malegaon," a critically acclaimed comedy based on the true story of a group of amateur filmmakers who come together to create a film that honors their city.

The strand presents challenging cinematic works with innovative filmmaking and great storytelling by emerging and established voices, including the Red Sea FF-funded "To Kill A Mongolian Horse" by Xiaoxuan Jiang, a film that examines the profound bond between humans and horses in Mongolian culture and addresses themes of gentrification and rapid societal change.

Also screening in its MENA premiere is narrative feature "Moon," directed by Iraqi-Austrian filmmaker Kurdwin Ayub, which follows a former mixed martial arts champion in Austria who, looking for a fresh start, jumps at an unexpected offer to go to Jordan to train three teenage daughters of a dazzlingly rich family living in an isolated mansion.

Established in 2019, the festival mainly focuses on new storytelling trends, as well as emerging talents from Saudi Arabia, the Arab world and the rest of the Global South.

The festival looks at establishing a solid foundation for the film industry in Saudi Arabia that may contribute to diversifying the income of the country.

Cartoon of Day



Sadism
Cartoonist: Hala from the U.S.

"Eye to Eye" exhibition at TMoCA extended

TEHRAN—The unprecedented enthusiasm shown by visitors for the visual arts exhibition "Eye to Eye" at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA) led the Deputy Minister for Artistic Affairs at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to approve the extension of the exhibition.

"The exhibition, which focuses on portraiture in modern art, has attracted significant public attention.

In recent days, long queues formed on Kargar Street for tickets to the exhibition. This prompted us to extend it for one more week," Nadereh Rezaei, the Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs who authorized the extension, explained.

The exhibition was basically planned to run until November 17; however, the one-week extension allows art enthusiasts to visit the museum until November 24, ISNA reported.

Curated by Jamal Arabzadeh, a faculty member of the University of Art, the exhibition is organized with a research and educational approach.

This exhibition, referring to certain concepts involved in portraiture, showcases a selection of portrait works from modern and contemporary Iranian and international art, belonging to the collections of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.

Highlighting the audience's interest in the museum's treasured collection, Rezaei said: "Fans of visual arts are always eager to see works from the museum's collection. Our aim is to orga-



nize multiple exhibitions with a research-oriented and artistic approach, exploring themes of contemporary art.

These efforts will undoubtedly appeal to both artists and lovers of contemporary art."

The "Eye to Eye" exhibition showcases 120 works by 43 Iranian and 53 international artists from the museum's collection.

The artists include Francis Bacon, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Vincent van Gogh, Andy Warhol, Alberto Giacometti, James Ensor, Édouard Manet, Jim Dine, Robert Rauschenberg, Fernand Léger, Joan Miró, Kamal-ol-Molk, Bahman Mohasses, Marco Grigorian, Mahmoud Javadipur, Ahmad Esfandiari, Jazeh Tabatabai, Kambiz Derambakhsh, Gholamhossein Nami, Mehdi Sahabi, Far-

shid Maleki, and Kourosh Golnari among others.

Jamal Arabzadeh is an Iranian researcher and curator specializing in modern and contemporary art.

He has contributed to various projects with an educational and research-based approach, aiming to bridge local and global art.

Arabzadeh's work spans fields such as art history and cultural studies, and his innovative curatorial perspective enhances public understanding and appreciation of contemporary art.

Established in 1977, the TMoCA has more than 4,000 items that include 19th and 20th century's world-class Iranian, European and American paintings, prints, drawings and sculptures.

Being the biggest collection of western art in the eastern world, it includes works from almost all artistic periods and movements.

The museum was designed by Iranian architect Kamran Diba who employed elements from traditional Persian architecture.

The building itself can be regarded as an example of contemporary art, in a style of an underground Guggenheim Museum.

Most of the museum area is located underground with a circular walkway that spirals downwards with galleries branching outwards.

Western sculptures by artists such as Ernst, Giacometti, Magritte and Moore can be found in the museum's gardens.

Joshua Oppenheimer to hold master class at Cinema Verite



American film director Joshua Oppenheimer in an undated photo

TEHRAN—Denmark-based American film director Joshua Oppenheimer is scheduled to hold a master class on directing documentaries during the 18th edition of the International Documentary Film Festival of Iran, known as Cinema Verite, in Tehran.

Born in 1974, Oppenheimer is an acclaimed American film director based in Copenhagen, Denmark.

He is primarily recognized for his profound documentary films, notably "The Act of Killing" (2012) and its sequel, "The Look of Silence" (2014), both of which received critical acclaim and numerous accolades, including Academy Award nominations.

His impressive contributions to the film industry have garnered him prestigious awards, such as the Marshall Scholarship in 1997 and the MacArthur Fellowship in 2014.

Oppenheimer's academic journey is remarkable; he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with highest honors in filmmaking from

Harvard University and later obtained a PhD from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design at the University of the Arts London, an endeavor funded by the Marshall Scholarship.

Currently, he serves as a Professor of Film at the University of Westminster, where he shares his extensive knowledge and expertise with aspiring filmmakers.

His initial foray into filmmaking began with "The Entire History of the Louisiana Purchase" (1997), a short film that earned him the Gold Hugo at the Chicago International Film Festival in 1998. However, it was his work in Indonesia from 2004 to 2012 that brought him international recognition.

Oppenheimer is primarily recognized for his profound documentary films, notably "The Act of Killing" and "The Look of Silence".

"The Act of Killing" premiered at the 2012 Telluride Film Festival and focuses on individuals who were involved in the Indonesian mass killings of 1965-66.

This powerful documentary won numerous awards worldwide, including the European Film Award for Best Documentary, a BAFTA

for Best Documentary, and the Asia Pacific Screen Award for Best Documentary, among others. It was also nominated for a Best Documentary Feature Oscar at the 86th Academy Awards.

Following that success, "The Look of Silence," released in 2014, serves as a companion piece to "The Act of Killing."

This film offers a penetrating exploration of the aftermath of the atrocities and was nominated for the Best Documentary Feature at the 88th Academy Awards. It screened competitively at the Venice International Film Festival, where it won several prestigious awards.

Oppenheimer's films have prompted significant discussions about the West's role in the Indonesian massacres, particularly criticizing U.S. complicity in the events.

In a 2015 interview, he highlighted how American support facilitated the killings, an assertion that garnered attention and led to the declassification of numerous U.S. documents related to these events in 2017.

The Documentary & Experimental Film Center (DEFC) organizes the 18th Cinema Verite. The festival tries to express the relationship between reality and truth through documentary films.

This year's edition of the festival will have several sections including the national competition, the international competition, the Martyr Avini Award, "Gaza, Palestine, Resistance," commemoration ceremonies, and other programs on the sideline of the event.

Keyvan Saket to perform at Tehran's Vahdat Hall

TEHRAN—Iranian tar and setar virtuoso Keyvan Saket will hold a concert in Tehran's Vahdat Hall together with his music group, Vaziri Music Band, on November 25.

In the upcoming concert, prominent Iranian singer Vahid Taj will accompany Saket and his band as the vocalist, Honaronline reported.

Saket and Vaziri Band, comprising 15 instrumentalists, have also planned to perform across Iran, the details of which will be announced soon.

Saket, 63, is an acclaimed composer and music researcher. He established the Vaziri Band

in 1996 and has since performed numerous pieces with them. The band's primary goal was to bring about a revival of the traditional style of Iranian master Col.

Alinaghi Vaziri. Together with the band, Saket has held many concerts in Iran, Canada, and Australia.

Saket is the fastest tar and setar (traditional Iranian instruments) player in Iran. He has always believed in introducing Iranian traditional music to the world.

One of his ways of doing so was to promote through his shows what Iranian instruments were capable of playing.

To demonstrate this, he tried to perform well-known pieces from classical composers like Beethoven, Mozart, Paganini, Vivaldi, Strauss, and more.

This mission seemed impossible at first; tar was played with plectrum and most of western classical pieces with the violin.

This meant that a tar player had to have a very quick plectrum to keep a rapid repetition of one note, or a tremolo. And yet, Saket was the only one with an impossibly blistering speed.

Along with his traditional albums, Saket released two modern albums that once again stunned everyone. In his albums,

he performed extremely fast and complex pieces like "The Flight of the Bumblebee".

His astonishing performance at the International Music Exposition in France in 2006, showed the significance of tar and setar globally.

Born in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province, Saket joined the Aref Ensemble under the leadership of the late musician Parviz Meshkati in 1989.

His collaboration with the ensemble continued steadily into 1996 and they released several albums and performed extensively throughout Iran and abroad.