



Rafael Mariano Grossi, IAEA Director-General, with Safeguards Trainees 2024 during his meeting with the new trainees at the Agency headquarters in Vienna, Austria. 4 October 2024.

Europe Forcing Iran Out of NPT

As European hostilities continue unabated Iranians question benefits of goodwill and cooperation

Iran's Navy unveils plans for new submarines, expanded global presence

TEHRAN – Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, Commander of the Iranian Navy, announced at a Tehran press briefing on Saturday that the force will soon be receiving a number of new domestically designed and manufactured submarines.

“We will be taking delivery of several new submarines in the near future,” he stated, framing this development within a broader context of the Iranian Navy’s ongoing modernization and expansion of its global presence.

Admiral Irani emphasized the Navy’s success in overcoming various threats and sanctions, asserting that it has made significant progress toward national strategic goals. He highlighted the Navy’s persistent efforts to maintain a strong presence in international waters, explaining plans to upgrade existing vessels and bolster its offshore bases. “We are diligently working to maintain our presence and update our capabilities in all fields,” he said, detailing plans to meet operational demands across a wide range of capabilities. ▶ Page 2

Tehran condemns UK, US ‘hypocrisy’ in blaming others for regional instability

TEHRAN – Iran’s UN Ambassador Amir Saeed Iravani has dismissed U.S. and UK accusations of Iranian involvement in “regional destabilization” and the Ukraine conflict as unfounded.

In a letter to the UN Security Council’s rotating president, Barbara Woodward, Iravani rejected the allegations made during a November 18th Security Council meeting.

“At this meeting, the U.S. representative, in collaboration with the Israeli regime, made an unconvincing effort to shift blame for their shared involvement in Israel’s ongoing violent actions in Gaza and its war crimes in Lebanon by alleging that Iran is destabilizing the region to further its political interests. These claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran are firmly rejected,” his letter read.

Iravani directly accused the U.S. and UK of hypocrisy, citing their unwavering support for Israel as the primary driver of regional instability and a direct contravention of the Security Council’s mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The diplomat emphasized Iran’s consistent and unchanged position on the Ukraine conflict and further asserted that the U.S., through its support of Israel, bears direct responsibility for civilian casualties and destruction in Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon, enabled by U.S.-made weapons and the protection afforded by U.S. vetoes in the Security Council. ▶ Page 2

The ICC’s challenge: Confronting the true perpetrators of the Gaza genocide

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former Defense Minister, Yoav Gallant, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

According to a statement issued by the ICC on November 21, both are charged with offenses committed “at least from October 8, 2023, to May 20, 2024.”

In its ruling, the ICC argued that there is grounds to believe that Netanyahu and Gallant used hunger as a weapon of war in the Gaza Strip, a serious violation of international law. Additionally, they are accused of deliberately depriving the civilian population of essential goods for survival, including food, water, medicine, medical supplies, fuel, and electricity.

Hezbollah paralyzes Israel’s economy

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT – With great slowness and a clear failure to establish control, the Israeli invading army continues its attempt to invade two main axes: the Khyam axis in the eastern sector and the Shama-Bayada axis in the western sector.

As part of the “Khaybar Operations” series, Hezbollah attacked several positions, including the Shraga base north of Acre, the Haifa naval base, the Hatzor air base (a major air wing containing squadrons of warplanes – 150 km from the border) east of Ashdod, etc.

In the course of operations, Hezbollah also killed Zeev Erlich, a Zionist archaeologist, on Wednesday. As a notorious settler, he had entered southern Lebanon with the military to “know the area” by examining an ancient fortress.

In the meantime, the Northern Command of the Israeli military prepared an indictment against the Chief of Staff of the Golani Brigade, Colonel Yoav Yarom,

Hezbollah’s brave resistance in Kham

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – For more than a week now clashes have erupted between Hezbollah fighters and Israeli infantry in the Lebanese border town of Kham.

This is the second time that the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) have attempted to take over Kham since October 1.

The first attempt to occupy the large town took place more than a month ago with the IOF’s 98th Paratroopers Division.

In the second phase of the IOF’s ground operations, Kham has become Tel Aviv’s key military target again.

Over the past several days, the fighting has significantly intensified and escalated as the IOF struggles to take control of the flashpoint town.

Kham and its surrounding villages are Hezbollah strongholds that are known to have a significant Sunni, Druze, and Christian population. It is a sign that all ethnic and religious groups in Lebanon support the resistance movement.

Tombstone of law: US senator suggests invasion of Holland to protect wanted criminals

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – The United States has thrown its full weight behind Israel since the regime launched its war of genocide on the Gaza Strip more than a year ago.

The reaction of American politicians to arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against the Israeli premier and his sacked war minister has also made it clear more than ever that Washington has no scruples about aiding and abetting the regime’s crimes.

On Thursday, ICC pre-trial judges issued arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant for committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and using starvation as a method of warfare among other inhumane acts.

▶ Page 5

Iran to form ‘golden rectangle’ tourism hub in central provinces

TEHRAN – Aiming to boost domestic and international tourism, relevant officials have announced plans to create a “golden rectangle” tourism hub connecting the provinces of Isfahan, Semnan, Markazi, and Qom.

The initiative seeks to capitalize on the unique cultural, historical, and natural attractions of these regions, fostering collaboration among local governments and the private sector to enhance tourism infrastructure and services.

Amir Karamzadeh, the head of Isfahan province’s tourism department, on Friday announced the initiative during a tourism event in Mashhad-e Ardehal near Kashan. He emphasized the untapped potential of Iran’s tourism industry, describing it as a “clean industry” with the capacity for substantial global revenue generation. ▶ Page 6



Iran claim first ever Cerebral Palsy World Cup title

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Ukraine 3-0 Friday night to win the Cerebral Palsy World Cup for the first time.

Team Melli had finished runners-up four times.

Mehdi Shokouhi scored twice as well as a goal from Mehdi Bakhshi.

Iran started the competition with a 4-0 win over Venezuela and also defeated Ireland 3-0 and Germany 4-0 in Group D.

The Persians beat the U.S. 3-0 and Brazil 4-0 to reach the final.

The Netherlands claimed a first victory over Brazil since 1992 to clinch the bronze medal.

The competition was held in Salou, Spain. ▶ Page 3

Cycles of conflict

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – Abigail Hauslohner’s article, “Iran hawks will hold less sway in Trump’s new government,” published in the Washington Post on November 17, delves into the escalating rhetoric from U.S. Republican leaders advocating for a hardline approach toward Iran.

While the piece effectively highlights the resurgence of hawkish policies under President-elect Donald Trump, it falls short in contextualizing Iran’s actions and policies within the broader historical and geopolitical landscape.

A comprehensive understanding of these developments requires an exploration of Iran’s perspective on issues like military threats, sanctions, and U.S. foreign policy.

Hauslohner reports on calls by U.S. lawmakers to target Iran’s nuclear facilities and oil infrastructure as part of a renewed “maximum pressure” strategy. These proposals, however, disregard Iran’s legitimate right to self-defense and sovereignty. ▶ Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Move toward the trigger mechanism

In an analysis, Farhikhtegan analyzed the endorsement of the European-drafted resolution against Iran at the IAEA Board of Governors. It wrote: The recent actions of Western countries, including the European troika (Germany, Britain and France), against Iran, show that Europe has put a confrontational approach on its agenda in dealing with Iran. One of the key goals of these countries is to lay the groundwork for the activation of the trigger mechanism. Since limits on Iran's nuclear program will end in October 2025 based on the JCPOA, European countries are trying to use the available tools to go on with the sanctions before reaching this date. In addition, the West is trying to use Iran as leverage to convince America to support the war in Ukraine. While the President of Ukraine has clearly stated that there is no evidence of Iran's missile assistance to Russia, Europe continues to impose new sanctions against Iran under this pretext. These unjustified sanctions show the aggressive approach of Europe to expand the range of pressure on Iran.

Javan: No need to negotiate with 5+1

In a note, Javan discussed the approval of the European-drafted resolution against Iran at the IAEA Board of Governors without consensus. The paper said: The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency on Thursday night finally approved the resolution against Iran proposed by the three European governments (Germany, Britain and France) with the support of the United States. These countries did not even wait for Grossi's return (from Tehran to Vienna). According to Foreign Minister Araghchi, the Iran nuclear case is now facing great complications compared to the past. Regarding these developments, there is no need to sit at the negotiating table with the 5+1 countries because many things have changed. With the current process, it is unlikely that the rest of the countries party to the JCPOA will fulfill their commitment.

If negotiations are not done for a new agreement before the JCPOA expires, we will face a critical situation, and the European countries that are still party to the JCPOA may look for snapback mechanism that cannot even be vetoed by China or Russia. Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi warned on Friday in response to the approval of the resolution of the Board of Governors: "If Europe implements snapback, our answer is to withdraw from the NPT."

Senior Russian diplomat condemns IAEA's anti-Iran resolution



TEHRAN – Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna, Mikhail Ivanovich Ulyanov, branded the recent IAEA Board of Governors' resolution against Iran as "senseless and extremely counterproductive" in a Friday X post.

Before the resolution was passed, Ulyanov warned that the West was moving towards committing a "big mistake that will have very negative consequences".

The IAEA Board of Governors passed the anti-Iran resolution with 19 votes in favor, 3 against, and 12 abstentions. The measure called for Iran to provide a comprehensive report on its nuclear activities by spring 2025, citing "insufficient cooperation."

While China, Russia, and Burkina Faso opposed the resolution, several countries, including South

Africa, India, and Egypt, abstained from voting.

Iran responded to the resolution by announcing plans to expand its uranium enrichment capacity and accelerate advanced centrifuge technology development.

"No surprise," stated Ulyanov regarding Iran's reaction, noting that Russia had cautioned resolution supporters about inevitable repercussions. Furthermore, Li Song, China's permanent representative to the IAEA, said on Thursday that confrontation will not resolve the Iranian nuclear issue.

Li expressed that China supports the collaboration between Iran and the IAEA in addressing outstanding matters and greatly values the constructive engagement between IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi and the Iranian representatives, as well as the positive outcomes from his visit to Iran last week.

Etemad: Opportunities ahead

In an interview with Taghi Azadarmaki, a professor of sociology, Etemad discussed Iran's diplomatic capacities now that the Republicans have captured the White House and won control of the two chambers of Congress. He said: We see Iran and the world community in new conditions after Trump's rise. In his new approach, Trump disputes, argues and makes deals. However, Iran is in a different situation. Today, dealing with the sanctions is very important for Iran, and no war should happen. But peace at any cost is not suitable for Iran. Iran should adopt a two-sided approach. In fact, both the battlefield and diplomacy should be on the agenda. Applying this two-faceted policy is very sensitive and should be done together. If these two ways are followed, the Iranian society can safely overcome the existing challenges. Currently, the approach of Iranian politicians is highly important, just as military strategies are important in such a situation. The military and the politicians should present a single strategy in two forms so that Iran does not get caught in negotiations in a situation of deadlock or a war without return.

Donya-e-Eqtesad: The need to prevent activation of trigger mechanism

Donya-e-Eqtesad sought the views of Kourosh Ahmadi, a former diplomat, about the goal of the three European countries of Britain, France and Britain in crafting a resolution against Iran at the IAEA Board of Governors. Ahmadi said: The goal of the European troika was clear from the beginning and they are looking to lay the groundwork to activate the trigger mechanism. The recent resolution also has two purposes: first to set the stage for a possible activation of the trigger mechanism, and the second is a continuation of the issues (problems) we have had with the International Atomic Energy Agency over the past 4 years. These issues also include: reducing surveillances, discussing cameras and not giving visas to some inspectors, and finally demanding access to two sites that the Agency and Westerners have called suspicious. It is important to negotiate with the Western parties in these few months to prevent the activation of the trigger mechanism. The outcome of negotiations is also very important. This is while negotiation will take time. Also, according to their opinion, the European countries hope that with this resolution, Iran will either be encouraged or put under some kind of pressure and enter into serious negotiations with the other side after Trump enters the White House.

Iran's Navy unveils plans for new submarines, expanded global presence

From page 1 ► The Admiral specifically addressed the Navy's ongoing submarine construction program, confirming that several new submarines are nearing completion and will soon be commissioned. He also lauded the force's considerable missile capabilities, stating that the Iranian Navy produces a diverse range of missiles. "We possess weapons systems with a range exceeding 1,000 kilometers," he declared, further noting significant advancements in the Navy's electronic warfare capabilities.

Admiral Irani revealed the construction of vessels larger than the Mowj-class, confirming that two such larger warships are currently under construction. Looking ahead to the upcoming national Navy Day celebration on November 29th, he detailed plans



Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani speaks at a press briefing in the capital Tehran on November 23, 2024.

for a ceremony with anticipated attendance from foreign delegates. "This year's Navy Day will feature a ceremony with foreign delegates," he confirmed.

Further plans outlined by the

Admiral include an international maritime emergency response drill, as well as a large-scale combined naval exercise to be conducted before the end of the current Iranian calendar year

(March 20th). He also emphasized the Navy's commitment to regional cooperation, mentioning plans for joint patrols with neighboring countries and the establishment of several new oceanic hubs. "We are currently exchanging cadets and professors with neighboring states, staging combined drills and holding bilateral meetings," Irani asserted, highlighting existing collaborative efforts.

Admiral Irani concluded his statement by asserting Iran's active role in the evolving multipolar world order, emphasizing a commitment to peaceful relations while maintaining a strong stance against adversaries. He stressed Iran's determination to remain an independent and influential actor on the global stage, declaring, "The enemies must bear in mind that Iran will never be isolated."

China will continue cooperation with Iran under any circumstances, says envoy

TEHRAN – China's Ambassador to Iran, Cong Peiwu, has reaffirmed Beijing's steadfast commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Tehran, highlighting the robust nature of their strategic partnership in a recent interview with Tasnim News Agency.

"No matter how the international and regional situation changes, China will unwaveringly develop its friendly cooperation with Iran," the ambassador said, underlining China's resolute stance on the bilateral relationship.

Referring to the economic ties between the two nations, Cong highlighted China's status as Iran's premier trading partner.

"Iran continues to serve as a vital oil supplier to China while successfully expanding its market presence through specialized products, including citrus fruits, pistachios, carpets, and handicrafts," the ambassador added.

Cong highlighted the shared heritage of Iran and China along the ancient Silk Road, noting that their bilateral relationship has transformed into a comprehensive strategic partnership with various dimensions. "Despite international pressures and changing global dynamics, China has maintained its commitment to developing strong ties with

Iran," Ambassador Cong emphasized, positioning the relationship as fundamental to both nations' strategic interests and regional stability.

The ambassador noted that a major milestone in bilateral cooperation was reached in July with the launch of the first "Qom-Yiwu" freight train journey, showcasing the practical execution of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Iran's relationship with China reached new heights with the signing of a 25-year strategic cooperation agreement in March 2021, establishing a comprehensive framework for collaboration across political, economic, cultural, and defense sectors. This agreement, initially proposed during President Xi Jinping's 2016 Tehran visit, is believed to demonstrate both nations' determination to withstand external pressures.

Ambassador Cong also emphasized Iran's strategic importance both historically and in the contemporary context of the BRI.

He noted Iran's consistent participation in the China International Import Expo, describing it as "an important platform for Iranian products to integrate into the Chinese market and enter the global market." Elsewhere in his remarks, Ambassador Cong emphasized that the diplomatic



relationship between the two nations has gained additional momentum through Iran's recent integration into major intragovernmental frameworks.

Iran's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formalized during its 23rd virtual summit in July 2023, followed by its inclusion in BRICS alongside several other nations in early 2024.

The expanded BRICS alliance now represents approximately 40% of the global population and a quarter of the world's GDP, marking a significant shift in international economic and political dynamics.

Iranian students released following visa center clash at Kazan University

TEHRAN – Two Iranian students detained during an incident at Kazan Federal University have been released, the Iranian Consulate General in Kazan confirmed.

Consul General Davoud Mirzakhani announced their release late Friday night following consular intervention. The students were detained at the university's visa center after an incident on November 22nd.

According to a Friday statement, the incident began when students from several countries, including Iran, were renewing visas. A dispute among students triggered a security alarm, leading to police intervention and excessive force resulting in the arrest of the two Iranian students. In response, the Iranian consulate immediately dispatched a representative to the detention facility to assess the well-being of the detained Iranian students.

Furthermore, the consulate lodged a formal complaint with the Russian Federation's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, protesting the alleged police brutality and highlighting the inappropriate conduct of local law enforcement. The consulate also worked to provide accurate information and



Iranian diplomats and students in meeting with Kazan Federal University Vice President for International Affairs Timur Alishev following Friday's clash at the university's visa center.

context regarding the incident to the relevant authorities.

Consul General Mirzakhani also met with Kazan Federal University Vice President for International Affairs, Timur Alishev, expressing concern over the students' treatment and highlighting insufficient university resources and visa processing challenges as contributing factors to the incident. He urged improvements to the visa extension department. Alishev acknowledged these concerns and pledged to create two new centers within the Visa Center to improve student services.

76 terrorists neutralized since start of ongoing IRGC drill in SE Iran

TEHRAN – The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has killed or detained at least 76 suspected terrorists during a major counter-terrorism military exercise in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

The IRGC Ground Force announced on Saturday that 26 terrorists have been killed and 50 captured since the drill began on November 1, with an additional 12 surrendering to the authorities.

The "Martyrs of Security" exercise was launched following an October 26 attack that claimed the lives of 10 Iranian law enforcement officers in Taftan city. The so-called Jaish al-Adl terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attack.

Brigadier General Ahmad Shafaei, the drill's spokesperson, indicated the exercise aims to enhance rapid response capabilities while clearing the region of terrorist presence. The exercise takes place in a province that has experienced repeated terrorist activities along its border with Pakistan.

The maneuver represents one of the largest counter-terrorism efforts in the province in recent years. Founded in 2012, Jaish al-Adl has carried out multiple attacks in the region, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of Iranian civilians and security personnel. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi recently indicated that these terrorist attacks are connected to wider Israeli aggression against the country.

Iran condemns UK, US 'hypocrisy' in blaming others for regional instability

TEHRAN – Iran's UN Ambassador Amir Saeed Iravani has dismissed U.S. and UK accusations of Iranian involvement in "regional destabilization" and the Ukraine conflict as unfounded. In a letter to the UN Security Council's rotating president, Barbara Woodward, Iravani rejected the allegations made during a November 18th Security Council meeting.

"At this meeting, the U.S. representative, in collaboration with the Israeli regime, made an unconvincing effort to shift blame for their shared involvement in Israel's ongoing violent actions in Gaza and its war crimes in Lebanon by alleging that Iran is destabilizing the region to further its political interests. These claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran are firmly rejected," his letter read. Iravani directly accused the U.S. and UK of hypocrisy, citing their unwavering support for Israel as the primary driver of regional instability and a direct contravention of the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security. The diplomat emphasized Iran's consistent and unchanged position on the Ukraine conflict and further asserted that the U.S., through its support of Israel, bears direct responsibility for civilian casualties and destruction in Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon, enabled by U.S.-made weapons and the protection afforded by U.S. vetoes in the Security Council. "It is an indisputable reality that the loss of civilian lives, along with the destruction of infrastructure in Gaza and Lebanon, is occurring with American-made weapons and under the protection of the U.S. vetoes on ceasefire resolutions in the Security Council, which have shielded the Israeli regime from accountability," the Iranian ambassador noted. He concluded by stating that the U.S. and UK cannot evade accountability for their role in perpetuating these conflicts. "The United States and Britain cannot evade accountability while facilitating the actions of the Israeli regime. Their unwavering support for Israel perpetuates ongoing conflicts and undermines the Security Council's efforts to uphold international peace and security."

Europe forcing Iran out of NPT

As European hostilities continue unabated Iranians question benefits of goodwill and cooperation

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – The Europeans' confrontational strategy toward Iran is a high-stakes gamble they cannot win. Not only is this approach failing to achieve its objectives, but it's also pushing Iran towards drastic measures, including a potential withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a course of action initially opposed by many within Iran's leadership.

Having initially condemned Donald Trump's 2018 withdrawal from the JCPOA and outwardly pledged support for Iran, Europe has dramatically shifted course in recent years, adopting an increasingly hostile stance towards Tehran. This shift culminated on November 21, 2024, with the passage of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) censure resolution against Iran, drafted by the European Troika (UK, France, and Germany) – the remaining JCPOA signatories alongside Iran, Russia, and China.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was a deal inked in 2015 between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries. It limited Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the termination of sanctions. The deal has been in shambles since 2018 when Trump unilaterally withdrew Washington and re-instated sanctions against Iran under the "maximum pressure" campaign. Europeans stayed part of the deal despite not being able to take the sting out of the re-imposed U.S. sanctions. Tehran kept complying



with all its JCPOA obligations for some time after the U.S. exit, but began to scale back on some of them in 2020 when Europe joined Washington in strong-arming Iran.

Thursday's IAEA Board of Governors resolution marked the fifth time Iran has been censured for alleged JCPOA "non-compliance". These resolutions consistently demand greater cooperation and access for UN inspectors, yet they completely ignore the West's failure to uphold its own commitments under the agreement. Iran now faces significantly more sanctions than before the JCPOA, suffering a severely damaged economy despite the agreement's promise of economic growth.

The latest anti-Iran IAEA resolution was passed despite Iran having agreed to cap its stockpile of 60%-enriched uranium and accept

new inspectors as a preemptive move. While it lacks immediate bite, the resolution is widely seen as a crucial stepping stone towards the activation of the "snap-back" mechanism – a nuclear option set to expire a decade after the JCPOA's inking. This mechanism, enshrined in UN Security Council Resolution 2231, grants the P5+1 the power to reinstate crippling UN sanctions on Iran should they deem it non-compliant. Tehran has no equivalent mechanism to enforce Western compliance with the JCPOA.

Under such circumstances, more and more Iranians are questioning the benefits of continued engagements with the IAEA. While the country's authorities have announced new measures in response to the latest hostile move by Europe, including the deployment of new advanced centrifuges and expansion of uranium enrichment capacity, an

originally unpopular opinion is rapidly gaining traction among the masses: leaving the NPT.

"We're pressured into signing agreements then pressured when we comply and even pressured when the other side violates the deal," remarked an Iranian office worker in his early 30s. "If we're going to face pressure regardless of our actions, what's the point of cooperating? People's economic woes have only worsened over the years; the Western sanctions are inescapable. But leaving the NPT, and exploring other options, might at least guarantee our security against Western aggression and its proxy, Israel."

Growing Iranian skepticism towards full cooperation with the IAEA fueled by the West's intransigence has also penetrated the top brass within Iran's leadership. Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi's stark warning, delivered in a special news interview on November 21, makes this brutally clear. "If the snapback mechanism is triggered, Iran will withdraw from the NPT," Gharibabadi said adding that the decision was already communicated to Europeans during the late President Ebrahim Raisi's administration.

Europe may currently be basking in the perceived success of its dual strategy—ignoring its JCPOA commitments while simultaneously pressuring Iran. But they could very soon find themselves at a point of no return, where negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program have been derailed forever.

Cycles of conflict

The cost of U.S. strategy in West Asia

From Page 1 ▶ Tehran's missile launches, discussed in the article, are not acts of aggression but proportionate responses to decades of threats and provocations from Israel and its allies. Such measures are seen as necessary safeguards to ensure national security amid persistent external pressures.

The article also highlights a possibility of revival of strict sanctions and punitive measures but overlooks their ineffectiveness in achieving U.S. objectives.

It is apparent that the "maximum pressure" campaign of Trump's first term—including sanctions, military threats, and the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani—has failed to weaken Iran's regional influence or lead to diplomatic breakthroughs.

Instead, it reinforced national unity and deepened mistrust of U.S. intentions. Moreover, sanctions have disproportionately harmed ordinary Iranian citizens, further fueling resentment toward American policies.

While U.S. sanctions are officially aimed at Iran's government, their harshest effects are felt by ordinary citizens. Restrictive measures have crippled Iran's economy, causing skyrocketing inflation and shortages of essential goods, including life-saving medications.

Although Hauslohner touches on potential diplomatic overtures, such as a reported meeting between Elon Musk and Iran's UN ambassador, her focus remains on military posturing.

Tehran has consistently advocated for dialogue as a means to resolve disputes, even during periods of heightened tension. However, past opportunities for negotiation have been undermined by hawkish figures like John Bolton and Mike Pompeo, eroding Tehran's trust in the U.S. as a reliable partner for meaningful diplomacy.

The article portrays Iran as a destabilizing force in West Asia, a characterization that Tehran firmly rejects.

From Iran's perspective, U.S. actions—including unwavering support for Israel and military interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and beyond—are the primary sources of regional instability.

Just in the previous year, Israel received \$17.9 billion in U.S. security aid according to a Brown University study. This aid has persisted despite allegations from United Nations experts that Israel's actions in Gaza are part of a broader genocide, as well as reports of widespread destruction in Lebanon, abuse of Palestinian detainees, and the ongoing blockade of Gaza.

Iran's policies, whether supporting the Axis of Resistance or bolstering defensive capabilities,

Iran hawks will hold less sway in Trump's new term



are now considered necessary responses to external aggression from Israel. These efforts aim to counter foreign domination and maintain a balance of power in the region.

Hauslohner effectively illustrates how domestic U.S. politics shape foreign policy, noting that much of the hostility toward Iran is driven by partisan agendas.

Tehran recognizes this performative antagonism as a tool for rallying domestic political support rather than addressing genuine regional concerns. Such hostility exacerbates tensions and undermines opportunities for constructive engagement.

The article underestimates Iran's historical resilience in the face of external pressure. Decades of sanctions, isolation, and military threats have only strengthened national solidarity and resistance to foreign interference. Calls for regime change, as mentioned in Hauslohner's piece, further solidify Iran's commitment to defending its sovereignty and self-determination.

Rather than perpetuating a cycle of aggression, the U.S. and its allies should pursue mutual respect and dialogue.

Iran has repeatedly proposed regional security frameworks emphasizing cooperation among West Asian nations, free from foreign interference.

While Hauslohner briefly acknowledges the possibility of diplomacy, she fails to fully explore its potential to replace militarism as a foundation for stability.

Ultimately, Hauslohner's analysis of the hawkish shift in U.S. foreign policy under President-elect Trump is thorough but incomplete.

It overlooks the broader implications of these policies for Iran and the region. Tehran remains resolute in its defense of sovereignty and its advocacy for diplomacy over conflict.

Decades of experience demonstrate that military threats and sanctions are both ineffective and counterproductive. Stability in West Asia can only be achieved through mutual respect, dialogue, and equitable engagement—principles Iran has consistently championed. Lasting peace demands an end to coercion and a commitment to understanding and cooperation.

IRAN IN FOCUS

NOVEMBER 24, 2024

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

Iran claim first ever Cerebral Palsy World Cup title

From Page 1 ▶ CP football is played with seven players on each side and smaller goals. Players are split into categories based on their disabilities: FT1, FT2 and FT3, with FT3 players least physically impacted.

Iran's women's futsal team: A forgotten champion! TEHRAN – Iran's women's futsal team, the two-time Asian champions, are facing an uncertain future as the country's football federation fails to provide adequate support.

Despite securing two Asian titles in 2015 and 2018 and being recognized as one of Asia's futsal powerhouses, the Iranian women's futsal team are currently in a precarious state. With crucial tournaments like the 2025 AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup and the FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup Philippines 2025 qualifiers on the horizon, the Iranian Football Federation has yet to outline a clear plan for the team.

Following their 2018 triumph, the federation had pledged comprehensive support for the team. However, these promises have largely gone unfulfilled. While the COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly posed challenges on the team's plans, the federation's continued neglect post-pandemic is alarming, especially considering the active preparations of rivals Asian teams. The team's recent performance in the 2024 CFA (Chinese Football Association) International Women's Futsal Tournament served as a stark warning. Despite these setbacks, Iran football federation's president Mehdi Taj and the futsal committee appear indifferent to the team's plight. A simple request for friendly matches against top Asian and global teams has become an unattainable dream for Forouzan Soleymani's squad! Such matches are crucial for enhancing the players' technical and tactical abilities.

With the 2025 Asian Cup and the 2025 World Cup qualifiers scheduled for May next year, the women's team are in dire need of a strategic plan.

As other countries invest heavily in women's futsal, it's imperative that the football federation take immediate action to ensure the continued success of Iran's women's futsal team. With proper support, this team have the potential to bring more glory to Iran on the international stage.

Greco-Roman defeat Russia in friendly

TEHRAN – Iran national Greco-Roman team edged Russia in a friendly match held in Moscow, Russia on Friday.

The winners were awarded \$10,000 cash prize and the losers granted \$5,000.

Saeid Esmaeli, Alireza Mohmadi and Amin Mirzazadeh had represented Iran at the 2024 Olympics.

The match concluded 5-5 but the Iranian team won, thanks to the better points.

Results:

55kg: Emin Sefershaev df. Puya Dadmarz, 2-1

60kg: Dinislam Bammatov df. Ali Ahmadi Vafa, 7-1

63kg: Iman Mohammadi df. Anvar Allakhiev, 4-0

67kg: Saeid Esmaeli df. Ruslan Bichurin, 9-1

72kg: Mohammadreza Geraei df. Narek Oganyan, 1-1

77kg: Sergey Kutuzov df. Ali Osou, 6-2

82kg: Mohammadali Geraei df. Islam Aliev, 7-6

87kg: Milad Alirzaev df. Alireza Mehmadi, 5-2

97kg: Artur Sargsian df. Mehdi Bali, 7-1

130kg: Amin Mirzazadeh df. Sergey Semenov, 2-2

Nemati appointed Iran's Para archery head coach

TEHRAN – Three-time Paralympic Games gold medal winner Zahra Nemati was appointed as new head coach of Iran's Para archery team.

Nemati, 39, replaced Milad Vaziri, who parted ways with the team shortly after the 2024 Paralympic Games.

Under tutelage of Vaziri, Fatemeh Hemma-

ti won a silver medal at the women's individual compound open and Iran's compound team also claimed a silver medal in the Games.

Mohammadreza Arabameri also seized a bronze medal in Paris at the men's individual recurve.

Nemati became the first Iranian athlete to win Paralympic (or Olympic) gold at London 2012, then successfully defended her title at Rio 2016 – where she also competed in the Olympics – and at Tokyo 2020, cementing her status as one of the sport's greatest.

She missed Paris due to 'lack of physical and technical preparation'.

Pezeshkian emphasizes equal distribution of sports facilities countrywide

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian called for removing monopolies in sports facilities used by executive bodies as part of efforts to promote justice in the sports field.

On Saturday, President Pezeshkian visited the Ministry of Sport and Youth and attended a session with officials of both national Olympic and Paralympic committees. He made recommendations on the development of a comprehensive plan for the future of sport, as well as efforts to promote justice in that field.

The president called for identifying capacities, reforming existing processes, and developing a comprehensive plan for the future as priorities of the Ministry of Sport and Youth.

Pezeshkian also stressed the importance of addressing youth issues as a main focus of the ministry's programs. "Officials of this ministry must pay special attention to the issues faced by the youth in marriage, employment, housing, and their integration into society, developing a comprehensive package [to address] these concerns, he said.

Pezeshkian also stated that the government will make every effort to provide the necessary infrastructure to achieve those goals.

Strengthening and developing public and community sports, giving special attention to women's sport, planning to utilize artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance sports quality, as well as plans for government employees to engage more in sports activities for their health were among other issues stressed upon by the president.

Mes come 8th at Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran's Sanat Mes lost to Al-Shabab Club of Bahrain 36-31 on Saturday at the 27th Asian Men's Club League Handball Championship seven-place match.

Sharjah SC of the UAE will meet Khaleej Club of Saudi Arabia in the final, while Kuwait's Kazma SC face Al-Duhail SC of Qatar in bronze medal match.

The winners will qualify for the 2025 IHF Super Globe.

Khaleej Club entered the tournament as the defending champion, having secured its first title in the 2023 edition held in Sabah Al-Salem, Kuwait.

Shams Azar into 2024/25 Hazfi Cup Round of 16

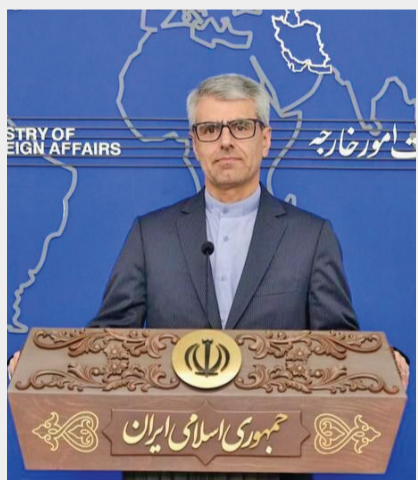
TEHRAN – Shams Azar defeated Shahin Tehran 2-1 in the 2024/25 Iran's Hazfi Cup Round of 32.

Mehdi Mohammadi gave the hosts a lead in the 10th minute and Vahid Sarvari scored an own goal in the 22nd minute to make the scoreboard 2-0. Behzad Rohani pulled a goal back in the stoppage time in Qazvin. Besat Kermanshah edged past Shahrddari Bandar Abbas 1-0 and top-flight Es-teghlal Khuzestan were knocked out of the competition, losing to Paykan 1-0 in Ahvaz.

The Hazfi Cup is an Iranian knockout football competition held annually by the Football Federation of Iran.

Sepahan are defending champions.

ICC arrest warrants against Netanyahu, Gallant hailed by Iran foreign ministry spokesman



TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei welcomed the International Criminal Court's decision to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former War Minister Yoav Gallant.

In a Friday night post on X, Baqaei declared, "Fourteen long months into the occupying regime's genocidal campaign in Gaza, marked by the most harrowing atrocities, the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I finally issued arrest warrants for the two top criminals Netanyahu and Gallant. Of course, their indictment should have included 'genocide' which is manifest."

Baqaei said the warrants were a positive step towards justice. "We welcome any step to serve justice and end the Israeli regime's impunity for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity committed in occupied Palestine and elsewhere," he stated.

He directly attributed the delay in holding Israel accountable to the United States. "Chronic procrastination in holding Israel accountable – mainly due to the US's covert and overt obstructions and bullying – has allowed atrocity crimes to persist in occupied Palestine," Baqaei added.

The spokesperson emphasized the importance of immediate action. "Full and immediate implementation of these arrest warrants will test the effectiveness of the international criminal justice," Baqaei stated, expressing a cautious optimism while voicing concern that the process could be manipulated. "Hope this late decision would not be manipulated through abuse of process."

Over 800 companies partaking in Iran's intl. metallurgy expo

TEHRAN - Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds is hosting the 21st edition of Iran's international exhibition of metallurgy, dubbed IRAN METAFO, during November 23-26, IRIB reported.

As reported, over 540 domestic companies along with 275 foreign exhibitors active in the fields of metallurgy, steel, mining industries, non-ferrous metals, casting, industrial furnaces, heat treatment, and related industries, are presenting their latest products and achievements in this exhibition.

Major companies from 19 countries including Italy, China, Taiwan, France, the UAE, Germany, India, Spain, Singapore, Austria,

Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, Japan, England, Turkey, Belgium, Oman, and Brazil are participating in this exhibition, which is considered the largest exhibition of its kind in West Asia.

The Islamic Republic of Iran ranks tenth in the world in steel production, and exports various metal products to European countries; it also exports a lot of iron products to neighboring countries.

On the sidelines of the exhibition, many specialized conferences, meetings, and educational workshops will be held.

Iran among world's top 4 aircraft refueler builders

TEHRAN - Iran is among the world's top four countries in producing aircraft refuelers, an official familiar with the matter told IRIB.

Navid Salimi said refuelers are the vehicles used for transporting and distributing liquid fuel to aircraft at airports and are currently

manufactured based on certain international standards.

The number of manufacturers of these vehicles is less than five companies worldwide because the manufacturing of these vehicles requires high technology, Salimi said.

Tea export stands at 10,000 tons in 7 months



TEHRAN - Iran exported 10,000 tons of tea in the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), according to the Head of Iran's Tea Organization (ITO) Habib Jahansaz.

Jahansaz said the country also imported 30,000 tons of tea in the mentioned seven months.

According to the official, the government has purchased 11,500 tons of tea leaves from domestic farmers in the mentioned period, Mehr News Agency reported.

Picking green tea leaves in Iran begins in early May every year and usually continues until late October, the official said.

This year, over 124,590 tons of green tea leaves were harvested, and the extracted tea, processed by 158 factories, was about 28,033 tons.

He put the country's demand for black tea at about 70,000 tons, of which 30,000 tons were imported in the first seven months of this year, compared to 40,000 tons last year.

As announced by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the

value of Iran's agricultural products export increased by 28 percent in the seven-month period of this year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

According to the IRICA report, the country exported 3.8 million tons of agricultural products worth \$2.2 billion in the first seven months of the current year, also indicating a 16 percent rise in terms of weight, year on year.

The value of Iran's exports of agricultural and foodstuff products increased by 22.5 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the spokesman of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade has said.

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

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

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

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

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

Inflation rate drops 0.5%

TEHRAN - The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has put the average inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on November 21, which marks the end of the eighth Iranian calendar month Aban, at 33.1 percent, falling 0.5 percent from the figure for the twelve-month ended to the seventh month.

The center put the country's point-to-point inflation rate at 32.5 percent in the eighth month, which means families have paid an average of 32.5 percent more for purchasing the same package of commodities and services in that month, compared to the same month in the preceding year.

The point-to-point inflation rate rose 0.9 percent in the eighth month from the previous month.

In mid-June, the SCI announced that Iran's economy grew by 5.7 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), marking the highest growth since 2017.

In its latest report, the SCI said the growth

of the gross domestic product (GDP) for the year ending in March 2024 at the constant prices of 2017 is equivalent to 5.7 percent of the total GDP and 3.4 percent of the GDP minus oil.

The field of activities of industries and mines group grew by 6.9 percent, the services group by 5.7 percent, and the agriculture group by 2.2 percent compared to the previous year.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest World Economic Outlook, has estimated Iran's inflation to decline to 31.7 percent in 2024 from 40.7 percent last year.

The IMF forecasted that Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) will grow by 3.7 percent this year, up from a previous estimate of 3.3 percent announced in July, IRNA reported.

The IMF said that Iran's current account balance will be 2.9 percent of its GDP this year, slightly up from 2.8 last year.

'Iran can become transit corridor for transferring Japanese products'

TEHRAN - Iran's transit corridor which is a regional hub can play a significant role in transporting Japanese products in the region, Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleh said in a meeting with Japanese Ambassador to Iran Tamaki Tsukada.

"The deep relations between Iran and Japan on environmental issues, especially water, are a good basis for expanding relations between the two countries," Nouri said.

Japanese Ambassador, for his part, referred to his trip to the northwestern provinces of Iran and Lake Urmia, saying that key topics were discussed regarding agriculture, water management, and the restoration of Lake Urmia in the presence of the head of the Iran-Japan parliamentary group.

In October 2023, former Iranian Vice President Mohammad Mokhber proposed a comprehensive transit to link all the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states through Iran.

In his speech, he expressed Iran's readiness to provide transit opportunities to SCO member



states for the North-South and East-West corridors.

"Iran is ready to create a comprehensive transit corridor to connect the member countries of SCO. In line with that goal, it has already taken important steps in the form of the North-South Corridor, which, with its full realization, the commercial and economic access from South and East Asia to the countries of Central Asia, Caucasus, Russia, Black Sea and Europe will be facilitated."

"Iran is a territory of transit and logistics opportunities. In this regard, we are ready to create a transit corridor for the

accession of SCO member countries," Mokhber also said.

In early November, the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted a meeting with Japan's Ambassador to Tehran Tamaki Tsukada in which the two sides explored avenues for economic cooperation.

As the TCCIMA portal reported, in this meeting, the two sides exchanged views on creating a platform for the development of economic relations between the private sectors of the two countries and discussed ways of improving trade relations between Iran and Japan.

In an interview recently conducted by Tasnim news agency, the Japanese envoy has said that the Japanese companies are interested in cooperating with Iran in the energy sector, especially in the hydrogen and ammoniac fields.

"Japanese companies are interested in participation in Iran's energy sector like overhaul of factories and energy equipment," Tsukada stated.

Mentioning the long-lasting history of cooperation between the two countries and the negative impacts that the U.S. sanctions have had on the level of economic exchanges between the two countries, the ambassador said: "If the international conditions improve, I am sure that oil and energy companies in Japan will again show their interest in participating in the Iranian market."

The envoy estimated the current value of trade between the two countries at about \$100 million, noting that this figure is significantly low considering the two sides' capacities and potential for expanding economic ties.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

'Government believes in maritime-oriented development'

TEHRAN- Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Abdolnaser Hemmati emphasized the necessity of developing the maritime-oriented economy, and said: "We have no choice but to develop in this area and we will use all our efforts."

Emphasizing the necessity of decentralization from Tehran, the minister said the 14th government believes in focusing on the development of areas prone to growth, especially in the south of the country, in the form of developing a sea-based economy.

President Masoud Pezeshkian has referred to the government's prioritization of the maritime-oriented economy and the importance of the prosperity of this sector on the country's growth, development and prosperity, and stated that the government is determined to implement maritime-oriented development plans.

He made the remarks in the third meeting of review and analysis of maritime-oriented development plans with emphasis on Makran coastal area, which was held on November 17

under his chairmanship.

During the meeting, reports of various organizations on the process of advancing the goals set in the previous meetings were presented, and the structure, position and activities of the organization in charge of the development of Makran beaches were discussed.

Pointing out that the maritime-oriented economy plays an essential role in the development of countries that have access to seas, the president said: "One of our main priorities in the 14th government is the need to pursue and develop the maritime-oriented economy, for prosperity and economic development in the country."

He further emphasized: "We should consider the concerns of the Leader in the national outlook document, general policies and development plans", adding: "It is necessary to design our development plans with a broad but realistic view so that we can be at the top in the region in terms of economy and technology."

Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), in a recent report, has underlined the importance of the country's maritime capacities and the role that the sector can play in developing the country's economy.

According to the report, maritime sector in Iran has very high capacity in various fields including trade, ports and shipping due to the country's strategic location, long coastal strip in the north and south and access to open waters, and can bring economic prosperity to the country.

"About a third of the country's borders are water borders, so we cannot ignore port and shipping activities because for a country that has long water borders and access to open waters, the prosperity of shipping and maritime trade is essential. Therefore, the government should pay full attention to the strengths and weaknesses of this sector and make the best use of the current capacities with proper planning," the report read.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

TEDPIX gains 24,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 24,445 points to 2,282,058 on Saturday, which is the first day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

In mid-September, the head of Iran Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) said the entity will take the necessary measures to ensure that the direct and indirect interests of the stock market are considered in next year's budget bill.

"We are taking special measures in relation to the budget bill and issues that directly or indirectly affect the capital mar-

ket," Hojatollah Seyedi stated.

He has also said that improving the stock market's efficiency is the main priority of the SEO in the current government administration

"In the 14th government, our mission is to protect the rights and interests of shareholders, facilitate the formation of capital, and improve the efficiency of the market which is the priority of the SEO programs," Seyedi underlined.

"The capacities of the capital market are huge and I believe that this market has room for a leap and now we are on the threshold of that leap," the official further noted.

"Now, in addition to great capital and capabilities of the companies, we have powerful workforces, investors and competent managers in the market, so there is no reason why our capital market should not develop and reach

at least 300 to 400 billion dollars of gross domestic product," he added.

Emphasizing that big steps should be taken in this regard, the official continued: "I have decided to work to this end with high motivation to play a small role in the development of the country."

The head of the Securities and Exchange Organization pointed to the capital market as a regulatory and supervisory body and said: "In this regard, our mission is to protect the rights of shareholders, promote market efficiency and facilitate capital formation, which are connected to each other like the sides of a triangle. But the question is, which of these factors can be the driving force as a more independent variable?"

"The important variable is the improvement of market efficien-

cy, that is, the formation of more capital, which, in addition to increasing capital, also preserves the rights of shareholders," he finally said.

In late January, the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) stressed the need for diverse financing tools in the country, noting that such tools are currently being provided by the stock market.

"To reduce the speculative and profit-seeking activities of dealers in the country, financing tools should be diversified," Mohammad Shirijian said.

"The capital market is an institution that directs capital to production in an efficient manner. Now, to accelerate the process of resource transfer and high productivity, the financing should be directed to the enterprises," the official explained.

Iran ConMine 2024 opens in Tehran

TEHRAN- Iran ConMine 2024, a leading exhibition for construction and mining industries in Iran, opened in Tehran on Saturday, IRNA reported.

The 18th International Exhibition of Mines, Mining, Construction Machinery, and Related Industries and Equipment was opened at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds in a ceremony attended by senior officials including the heads of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Iran Mine House (IMH), and

Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA).

As reported, 212 domestic companies along with 41 foreign exhibitors from Italy, Germany, Turkey, China, Spain, Korea, Japan, and Switzerland are showcasing their latest products and services in this four-day exhibition.

The event provides a good opportunity for overseas exhibitors to interact with local entrepreneurs, establish new business contacts, close new deals and joint ventures, and tech-

nology transfer.

Introducing the capabilities of domestic manufacturers of mining equipment and machinery, creating a suitable platform for developing the export of mineral products, improving the level of technical knowledge of mining industry operators, expanding scientific and research cooperation between universities and mining industries, supporting domestic production, and reducing dependence on imports are among the main goals of holding this exhibition.

Tombstone of law: US senator suggests invasion of Holland to protect wanted criminals

From page 1 ▶ The majority of US politicians regardless of their affiliation with the Democratic or Republican parties expressed outrage at the Hague-based tribunal.

Incumbent Democratic President Joe Biden whose party lost the November election to Republican Donald Trump called the ICC's move "outrageous".

The White House spokeswoman also questioned the court's legitimacy which is based in the Netherlands.

"We fundamentally reject the court's decision to issue arrest warrants for senior Israeli officials. We remain deeply concerned by the prosecutor's rush to seek arrest warrants and the troubling process errors that led to this decision," Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters.

She reiterated Washington's argument that the ICC has no jurisdiction over Israeli officials.

Republicans took a step further. Senator Lindsey Graham, a Trump ally, called for sanctions on the ICC for its warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant.

Then came the bombshell as Senator Tom Cotton suggested that the United States could invade Holland to protect Israeli officials from the ICC's arrest warrants.

"The ICC is a kangaroo court and Karim Khan is a deranged fanatic. Woe to him and anyone who tries to enforce these outlaw warrants. Let me give them all a friendly reminder: the American



Sen. Tom Cotton says the US could invade the Netherlands to protect Israeli officials from ICC's arrest warrants.

law on the ICC is known as The Hague Invasion Act for a reason. Think about it," the Arkansas Republican wrote in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

The Hague Invasion Act that was passed in 2002, was designed to shield US personnel from ICC jurisdiction. It authorizes military action to rescue any American or allied citizen held by the court in The Hague.

In mid-October last year, Cotton condoned the Israeli massacres of Palestinians in Gaza saying, "As far as I'm concerned, Israel can bounce the rubble in Gaza."

Cotton had also said Israel has "every right" to target schools, kindergartens, and mosques in Gaza. He had blamed Hamas for using these sites as military

bases without providing any evidence to back up his claim.

In October last year, Arkansas Republican Sen. Tom Cotton called for the indiscriminate massacre of Palestinians in Gaza.

Israel has killed more than 44,000 Palestinians in Gaza since launching war on the enclave on October 7, 2023.

Israel has also ignored a ruling

issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that called on the regime to stop genocidal acts.

The ICJ found in January this year that there was a risk of violation of the rights of the Palestinian people to protection from genocide.

It ordered Israel to "take all measures within its power" to desist from killing Palestinians in contravention of the genocide convention, to prevent and punish the incitement of genocide, and to facilitate the provision of "urgent basic services".

Israel's actions clearly indicate that it does not care a whit about international law.

The United States's attitude towards the ICC also amounts to a mockery of justice.

The US has spent a record of at least \$17.9 billion on military aid to Israel since the start of the Gaza onslaught. It has also vetoed four resolutions at the United Nations Security Council which called for establishing a ceasefire in Gaza.

Irrespective of the US role in enabling the genocide in Gaza, the comments made by Cotton, who is funded by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), highlight the influence of the notorious Zionist lobbying group on the political landscape of America.

Cotton's threat of military action against the Dutch-based ICC also shows that the US considers its close Western allies as its vassals.

The ICC's challenge: Confronting the true perpetrators of the Gaza genocide

From page 1 ▶ The ICC also issued an arrest warrant for Muhammad Deif, the military chief of Hamas. While Israel claims to have killed him in an airstrike, the ICC stated it could not confirm his death.

Israel, like the United States, is not a member of the ICC and strongly rejected the charges. The Court's prosecutor, Karim Khan, was described by Israeli authorities as a "shame," with his accusations seen as an attack not only on the Israeli military but on the country as a whole.

In an official statement, the office of the Israeli prime minister described the measure as "anti-Semitic." "Israel strongly rejects the unfounded accusations and false actions against it by the International Criminal Court, a politically biased and discriminatory body," the statement read.

The United States, through Acting White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, announced

that the country would not execute the arrest warrants issued by the ICC against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant.

Jean-Pierre called the measure a "flawed process" and explained the reasons behind the U.S. rejection of the ICC's efforts. "Unlike how ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan has treated others, including Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his associates, the prosecutor did not provide Israel with a meaningful opportunity to engage constructively or to properly consider its internal processes," she stated.

This rejection underscores the political weakness of the ICC in the face of global powers. However, the decision to condemn Netanyahu and Gallant could have significant long-term implications for Israel. The country is facing a direct accusation of crimes against humanity, the same type of violations that were used as

justification for the founding of Israel and that sustain its supposed ethical and moral legitimacy.

As Anas Mustapha, Head of Public Defense at CAGE International, points out, the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court dangerously divert attention from the true perpetrators of the ongoing genocide in Gaza. The High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions, particularly the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany, bear the primary responsibility, not only for allowing but for actively facilitating these atrocities.

Israel's allies have armed, protected, and participated in the systematic eradication of the Palestinian people, a crime that cannot be attributed solely to individuals but must be understood as a joint enterprise deeply rooted in settlement colonialism and Western imperialist policies.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Hezbollah paralyzes Israel's economy

From page 1 ▶ on charges of "negligence and carelessness with regard to the lives of soldiers," noting that the Golani officers had accused their brigade commander, General Yair Pelay, of "mismanagement" that led to the death of more than 110 Zionist troops at the border with Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the Israeli Tax Authority estimates the direct and indirect damage in the occupied Palestinian territories on the Lebanese border at more than 5 billion shekels (\$1.35 billion), stating that if a "settlement" with Lebanon is not reached, this value will double.

Yedioth Ahronoth revealed that the damage was to homes, apartments, factories, vehicles, agricultural land, infrastructure, public buildings, electricity and water networks, and more. The newspaper quoted the director of the Compensation Fund at the Tax Authority, Amir Dahan, as saying that two billion shekels were paid in compensation in the northern region.

According to Yedioth Ahronoth, the cost of the damage – direct and indirect – amounted to a quarter of a billion shekels in the occupied Golan Heights that was paid to those affected by the launching of missiles

and drones from Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

As for the south of the occupied territories, especially in the Gaza Envelope area, 1.25 billion shekels were paid in compensation to those affected.

In addition, significant damage was inflicted on property in the center of the occupied Palestinian territories, as one missile that fell in the city of Hod Hasharon caused damage to a large number of buildings. Also, another missile that fell in northern Tel Aviv (occupied Palestinian Jaffa) caused damage costing 50 million shekels.

According to Israeli experts, 50% of employees in the agricultural and tourism sectors in the occupied northern Palestinian territories are currently out of work.

The occupation regime's Ministry of Industry has paid only 2 out of 5 billion shekels in unemployment compensation as the war has caused the closure of several factories near the border. International shipping companies have refrained from shipping through the airport and the port of Eilat, which has affected the production process.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Hezbollah's brave resistance in Khiam

From page 1 ▶ On Thursday, reporters said the IOF attacked the town with up to 100 airstrikes by fighter jets and drones in addition to 2,000 artillery shells.

The heavy Israeli assault destroyed many residential and cultural areas belonging to these ethnic and religious groups, in addition to major damage to roads and markets in the town and surrounding villages.

Despite the heavy bombardment and shelling, the IOF was unsuccessful in taking control amid fierce resistance by Hezbollah fighters.

The resistance forces destroyed two Israeli tanks and killed and injured an unknown number of Israeli troops.

Hezbollah is believed to be using the Kornet,

alongside rocket barrages and direct clashes with light weapons.

Among the key routes that IOF infantry has been trying to use to surround the town is from the occupied Shebaa Farms and the outskirts of Lebanon's Kfarchouba.

This means the IOF is advancing towards the east of the town.

The IOF is also advancing from the south of the occupied Lebanese village of Ghajar.

It explains why all of Hezbollah's statements on confrontations with the IOF in Khiam have read that its fighters are attacking the invaders either from the south or the east.

Reports on Saturday evening said the front in

Khiam is still active and the IOF is trying all kinds of weapons to enter the town.

A correspondent for Lebanese TV Al Manar said "a new attempt by the enemy forces to enter from the direction of the Abel al-Saqi spring, which leads to the northern neighborhoods of the town of Khiam, through the movement of a number of bulldozers and tanks from the eastern side of Wadi al-Khiam, while the sounds of explosions and machine gun bursts are heard in the vicinity."

Hezbollah issued at least four statements on Saturday.

All of them read that "Islamic Resistance fighters targeted a gathering of Israeli enemy forces east of Khiam with a rocket barrage."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Borrell: Hungary has to abide by the ICC warrant against Netanyahu

The European Union's foreign policy chief said warrants by the International Criminal Court are binding for all of the bloc's states.

"The members, the states who signed the Rome Convention, are obliged to implement the decision of the court. It is not optional," Josep Borrell said, speaking at a conference in Cyprus, Al Jazeera reported.

Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban invited Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday to visit the country but several other European nations said the Israeli prime minister would be detained if he set foot on their soil, following the issuing of an arrest warrant for him.

Reacting to Hungary's decision, Borrell said: "What I can say is the arrest warrants issued



by the court has to be implemented also by Hungary, also by Hungary, by all members of the European Union. And if they don't, then there is a legal case of not fulfilment of the legal obligation."

NGOs demand justice: France must arrest Netanyahu and Gallant



Eleven nongovernmental organizations have called on France to enforce an International Criminal Court's (ICC) arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former war minister Yoav Gallant.

The NGOs, including the Ligue de Droit de l'homme (LDH) and the French Palestinian Solidarity Association (AFPS), demanded that France act on the warrants, Anadolu reported.

In a statement, they emphasized the need for France to ensure the arrest of the officials should they enter French territory. It also pressed France to continue supporting the ICC despite external pressures, asserting: "The issuance of these warrants further underscores the need to impose sanctions on Israeli authorities."

The ICC warrants over Gaza are a warning for the U.S., too

As of Thursday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is officially wanted for war crimes and crimes against humanity — a stunning position for the leader of one of the nations closest to the U.S., which positions itself as a champion of international humanitarian law to protect against such crimes.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has unveiled arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his former defense minister Yoav Gallant for alleged crimes during Israel's ongoing offensive in the Gaza Strip, charging the two men with enforcing starvation and killing innocent people during "a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of Gaza."

On Thursday, the court also issued a warrant for alleged crimes against humanity and war crimes for Mohammed Deif, a commander of Hamas, the Gaza-based Palestinian militant group. (Israel claims to have killed Deif, but Hamas has not confirmed his death as it has for its other leaders.)

A White House spokesperson condemned the ICC for targeting the Israelis — without commenting on the court's decision regarding Deif, whom the Biden administration placed under sanctions in September. Accusing the court of "troubling process errors" and overstepping its jurisdiction, the spokesperson said the administration is preparing "next steps." Israel also rejected the charges and blasted the ICC.

But Thursday's move made clear that regardless of Washington's actions, the global conversation around the Gaza war is headed in a direction that will increase pressure on the U.S. and Israel, which heavily relies on American diplomatic and military support.

President Joe Biden has so far declined to reduce U.S. backing for Israel even as international observers, U.S. lawmakers and watchdog groups have said its conduct violates American and international law. Neither has President-elect Donald Trump suggested he would withhold assistance to Israel once he takes office in January.

Legal experts told HuffPost the warrants will boost international scrutiny of Israeli actions enabled by the U.S. and whether the two countries have fulfilled their promises

to respect global standards for shielding civilians during wartime.

While Israel is extremely unlikely to surrender Netanyahu and Gallant, meaning there's a slim chance they'll face trials, "the arrest warrants will not go away," said Adil Haque, a Rutgers University professor.

"Every ICC member has to arrest [the Israelis] if they visit, and at a political level this will compromise their ability to have public contacts with them," he continued.

The U.S. and Israel are not members of the ICC, but 124 of the world's countries — the majority — are. After the warrants were issued, officials in several European countries and Canada said they would respect the ICC order, suggesting they would arrest Netanyahu and Gallant (though some ICC member countries have previously failed to execute ICC warrants). The deputy prime minister of Belgium, Petra de Sutter, argued the continent's reaction could extend to challenging the European Union's association agreement with Israel, which involves a lucrative free trade deal.

The warrants could "stiffen the spine of national authorities in other countries to pursue their own prosecutions related to Gaza," said Brian Finucane, a senior adviser at the International Crisis Group think tank.

Citing the principle of "universal jurisdiction," under which governments can pursue suspects for major international crimes regardless of their nationality or where the incidents occurred, Finucane said: "Israeli officials will face possible criminal exposure in third states for years to come."

Such prosecutions could include legal action against "those aiding and abetting actions in Gaza," he continued — a circle that could include American officials who have overseen weapons transfers to Israel while knowing about its pattern of alleged war crimes.

"Warrants are one more reminder to U.S. officials that they have been aiding and abetting men credibly accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity," said Finucane, who previously worked as a lawyer at the State Department.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran's Bandar-e Khamir recognized by UNESCO as a Global Learning City



TEHRAN – Bandar-e Khamir, a coastal city in southern Iran, has been named one of 12 exemplary cities in UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) for its contributions to lifelong learning and climate action.

The recognition was announced during the UNESCO event "Changing Minds: Promoting Sustainable Lifestyles and Reframing Human-Nature Relationships," Mehr reported

on Saturday.

Bandar-e Khamir was highlighted in the online collection "Lifelong Learning for Climate Action," alongside cities such as Bogota (Colombia), Edmonton (Canada), Espoo (Finland), Uiwang (South Korea), Hamburg (Germany), Jubail Industrial City (Saudi Arabia), Marrakech (Morocco), N'Zerekore (Guinea), Okayama (Japan), Shanghai (China), and Wyncham (Australia), the report said.

Bandar-e Khamir's selection reflects its active role in implementing educational initiatives focused on sustainable development and local climate action.

UNESCO's designation highlights Bandar-e Khamir's commitment to lifelong learning as a tool for environmental stewardship and community resilience.

The GNLC connects cities worldwide to share best practices in promoting education and sustainability.

UN Tourism welcomes new affiliate members, surpassing 500 entities globally

UN Tourism has welcomed 27 new entities to its growing network of Affiliate Members.

The new Members combine a wide range of profiles with diverse backgrounds and types of business: Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), for-profit companies, associations and NGOs, universities and other profiles. In terms of geographical distribution, they come from 16 different countries, representing all the regions: 5 from Africa, 8 from the Americas, 2 from Asia and the Pacific, 6 from Europe, and 6 from the Middle East.

"The incorporation of such a valuable and solid group of new Affiliate Members reflects our commitment to amplifying and fostering a high-quality and geographically diverse global network of affiliated entities within the global tourism ecosystem, now comprising 505 entities. Strengthening connections across both public and private sectors is essential for building a more inclusive and responsible tourism sector," said UN Tourism Director of the Affili-

ate Members and Public-Private Collaboration Department, Ion Vilcu.

The 27 new Affiliate Members include ABAV - Brazilian Association of Travel Agencies, Association of travel & tourism agents in Iraq, China Tourism Group Corporation Limited, Fujairah Tourism and Antiquities Department, Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute, and Hospitality Association of Zimbabwe.

Under the current admission procedure, the candidatures were submitted for consideration and approval of the Executive Council. These candidatures are the results of the implementation of the expansion strategy of the Affiliate Membership, aiming at improving the quality and geographical balance of the affiliates' network.

The admission of these new members was endorsed during the 122nd Session of the Executive Council, which took place in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

(Source: UN Tourism)

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Cueva de las Manos, Río Pinturas



The Cueva de las Manos, Río Pinturas, contains an exceptional assemblage of cave art, with many painted rock shelters, including a cave, with magnificent pictographs surrounded by an outstanding landscape, with the river running through a deep canyon, which were executed between 9,300 and 1,300 years ago.

According to UNESCO, the property takes its name (Cave of the Hands) from the stencilled outlines of human hands in the cave, but there are also many depictions of animals, such as guanacos (Lama guanicoe), still commonly found in the region, as well as hunting scenes that depict animals and human figures interacting in a dynamic and naturalistic manner.

The entrance to the Cueva is screened by a rock wall covered by many hand stencils. Within the rock shelter itself there are five concentrations of rock art, later figures and motifs often superimposed upon those from earlier periods. The paintings were executed with natural mineral pigments - iron oxides (red and purple), kaolin (white), and natrojarosite (yellow), manganese oxide (black) - ground and mixed with

some form of binder.

The artistic sequence, which includes three main stylistic groups, began as early as the 10th millennium BP [Before Present]. The sequence is a long one: archaeological investigations have shown that the site was last inhabited around 700 CE by the possible ancestors of the first Tehuelche people of Patagonia. The Cueva is considered by the international scientific community to be one of the most important sites of the earliest hunter-gatherer groups in South America during Early Holocene that still maintains a good state of preservation and has a singular environment formation, unique at Santa Cruz province.

The rock art, its natural environment and the archaeological sites on this region are some of the very important reasons that made this area a focus for archaeological research for more than 25 years. They made an impact on the observer due not only the deep gorge walls surrounded by a privileged landscape, but also by the artistic compositions, variety of motifs and its polychromies.

These scenes represent a unique evidence to know about the first Patagonian hunters' behaviour and their hunting techniques. Cueva de las Manos, Río Pinturas contains an exceptional assemblage of cave art, unique in the world, for its age and continuity throughout time, the beauty and the preservation conditions of the paintings, the magnificence of the collection of stencilled outlines of human hands and the hunting scenes, as well as the environment that surrounds the place of exciting beauty and for being part of the cultural value of the site itself.

(Source: UNESCO)

Iran to form 'golden rectangle' tourism hub in central provinces

From Page 1 ▶ "This collaboration aims to encourage domestic travel, strengthen Iran's tourism appeal, and provide improved services for tourists by integrating the resources and expertise of these four provinces," Karamzadeh said.

The "golden rectangle" initiative builds on the success of a similar collaboration, the "golden triangle," which links Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd.

Karamzadeh noted that the new plan is intended to extend public-private partnerships in terms of innovation and efficiency in tourism services.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official expressed optimism that the "golden rectangle" will serve as a blueprint for expanding tourism networks across the country.

Glimpses of tourism appeals in the four provinces have been given below:

Isfahan

Often called "Half the World,"



Isfahan is renowned for its architectural wonders, including Naqsh-e Jahan Square, a UNESCO World Heritage site surrounded by iconic landmarks like the Imam Mosque, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, and Ali Qapu Palace. The city is also home to Si-o-se Pol and Khaju Bridge, historical bazaars, and the Chehel Sotoun Palace. Beyond the city, the province boasts charming towns such as Kashan, known for its tra-

ditional houses and the annual rosewater festival.

Semnan

Semnan offers a unique blend of desert landscapes and lush forests. Key attractions include the Golestan National Park, a haven for wildlife enthusiasts, and the historic Semnan Bazaar, which reflects the region's rich trading history.

The province also features reli-

gious sites like the Imam Mosque and traditional caravanserais that evoke its Silk Road heritage.

Markazi

Known for its countless cultural and natural sites, Markazi province is home to the historical city of Arak and the ancient ruins of Tepe Nush-e Jan, a Median fortress.

Visitors can explore the Khomein Museum, dedicated to Iran's revolutionary history, or relax in the picturesque surroundings of Meyghan Lake, a popular spot for birdwatching.

Qom

Qom is best known for the Holy Shrine of Fatima Masumeh, which attracts millions of pilgrims annually.

Qom also offers cultural and historical sites, including the Jamkaran Mosque and the Qom Salt Dome, a geological wonder. The province is a hub for religious education and produces some of the country's finest handicrafts, particularly traditional carpets.

Restoration of historical pigeon tower completed in Isfahan province

TEHRAN - The restoration of the iconic Chehel Borj ("Forty Towers") pigeon tower in the village of Kalisan, located in Falavarjan county of Isfahan province, has been successfully completed.

The restoration was initiated following significant structural damage caused by heavy rainfall over the past two years, Hafez Karimian, head of the Falavarjan's office for tourism and cultural heritage, announced on Friday.

Over 30 billion rials (\$50,000) were invested in the restoration project, which was a collaborative effort between the cultural heritage office, provincial authorities, and the private owner and operator of the tower, the official explained.

The restoration process began last year and was carried out in two main phases. In the first phase, damaged sections of the tower were rebuilt. The second phase focused on comprehensive restoration, including waterproofing and retiling the roof, reconstructing brickwork patterns, repairing decorative plasterwork, applying traditional mud plastering, and landscaping the surrounding area.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Karimian highlighted the tower's architectural and historical significance, describing it as unique in its design and technical construction.

Chehel Borj consists of 32 interconnected cylindrical towers, with a total length of 132 meters and a height of 8 meters, making it the longest pigeon tower in Iran. Built entirely with mud bricks using traditional construction techniques, its fortress-like appearance from a distance adds to its allure.

"Chehel Borj is not only a remarkable example of Iran's pigeon tower architecture but also a vital cultural landmark," Karimian noted. "With the restoration complete, the site is now



open for tourist visits, offering an opportunity to explore this extraordinary structure up close."

Future plans for the site include additional developments such as lighting installations, surveillance systems, and the restoration of an adjacent historic mansion to serve as a traditional guesthouse. A pedestrian pathway connecting the mansion to the tower is also planned, further enhancing the visitor experience.

The giant pigeon tower stands out among Iran's historic multi-towered pigeon houses due to its scale and intricate design. While most multi-tower pigeon structures feature four, six, or at most eight interconnected cylinders, Chehel Borj boasts 32, underscoring its architectural significance.

Now restored to its former glory, this historic monument is poised to become a cultural and tourism destination, celebrating the ingenuity and craftsmanship of Iran's heritage.

Isfahan, in central Iran, is famed for having a rich heritage of pigeon towers; most of them were built in the 17th century. The architecture of these towers is based on the vernacular ar-

chitecture of Iran.

It is an efficient use of space inside the towers; the walls were strengthened with interior arches. The ceiling is of the barrel-vaulted kind.

Isfahan is dotted with bizarre but very picturesque pigeon towers. In contrast to a European dovecot, which often housed pigeons to be used as meat, in Iran, the pigeons were never eaten. Here pigeon towers were used as guano factories to produce fertilizers for the melons that have always been the pride of the region. The guano was also used in the manufacture of gunpowder.

Pigeon towers are of considerable size, often 10.5-12 m high, of sturdy construction and fine proportions. The pigeon houses are usually built of mud-brick. Unbelievably varied, often decorated by ornate cupolas and muqarnas friezes, they are so charming that it is well worth going even great distances to see them.

Although there are never two identical pigeon towers, all conform to a single plan. Each tower consists of an outer drum, buttressed internally to prevent collapse and to support the inner drum that rises perhaps a third as high as the main structure.

Pigeons can get to their nets through some passages which are such narrow that is impossible to other birds such as eagles or falcons to enter. At the bottom, there are some smooth parts of stucco works. These parts can avoid snakes to ascend. In some cases, they put a bowl of milk at the center with limes around it. As snakes like milk, they try to get it but will be stuck in the lime.

Nowadays, due to the wide usage of chemical fertilizers, such pigeon towers just convey memories of the past as significant but strange buildings.

Neyshabur's ancient rainmaking ritual registered on Iran's tourism calendar



TEHRAN - The time-honored rainmaking ritual of "Chooli Qazak" in Neyshabur has been officially registered on Iran's tourism calendar, according to Kamal Khani, the head of the city's Office for Cultural Heritage and Tourism.

Khani explained that the ritual, deeply rooted in Iran's cultural and religious beliefs, reflects the importance of water in the agricultural economy of rural communities. "The scarcity of water has always been a concern for farmers, leading to the devel-

opment of rain-invocation ceremonies, which have been passed down through generations," he said.

The official explained that the practice of rainmaking, known in different regions of Iran, often includes prayers, special rain invocations, and collective rituals. In 2014, Iran's Cultural Heritage Organization officially inscribed the rainmaking ceremonies on the National Heritage List, recognizing their cultural significance.

Khani noted that in Neyshabur, the ritual is uniquely observed through the creation of a traditional fabric doll called "Chooli Qazak." Crafted by village women and mounted on a stick, the doll becomes the centerpiece of the ritual. Children parade it through the streets, chanting verses such as "Chooli Qazak, rain and bless

us..." in unison.

During the procession, villagers contribute sweets, bread, and other offerings to the children, while symbolically pouring bowls of water over them to invoke rainfall. Some researchers draw connections between the ritual and the ancient Persian water deity Anahita, highlighting its links to Iran's pre-Islamic heritage.

Khani emphasized that registering this ritual on the tourism calendar aims to preserve and promote such unique cultural practices while encouraging visitors to experience the rich traditions of Neyshabur.

According to a cultural heritage devotee, the registration of "Chooli Qazak" not only ensures the continuation of this fascinating custom but also celebrates its role in connecting modern

Iran to its ancient roots.

Situated some 70 km west of Mashhad, Neyshabur was founded around the third century CE. Narratives say the town derived its name from its alleged founder, the Sasanian king Shapur I. It grew to prominence in the eighth century and was ruined by invasions and earthquakes in the thirteenth century. After that time, a much smaller settlement was established just north of the ancient town, and the once-bustling metropolis lay underground—until a team of excavators from the Metropolitan Museum arrived in the mid-twentieth century.

The ancient city was once situated on the famed Silk Roads, which ran from China to the Mediterranean Sea, crossing Central Asia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey along the way.

Knowledge-based firms to attend Japan's nano tech expo

TEHRAN –A delegation of Iranian knowledge-based companies will participate in the 24th International Nanotechnology Exhibition & Conference (nano tech 2025) which is scheduled to be held from January 29 to 31 in Tokyo, Japan.

Supported by the Headquarters for the Development of Nano-technology and the Organization for Development of International Cooperation in Science and Technology, knowledge-based companies will showcase their latest achievements in various industrial areas such as nanomaterials, nano-devices, nanostructures, nanostructures' measurement and analysis, convergence of nanotechnology in advanced industries and functional products, ISNA reported.

With the theme of 'Bridge to Future Business: Innovating Nanotechnology', the event is a place where innovative materials and next-generation devices are gathered to explore the implementation of future technologies in society based on nanotechnology, an important common base technology for research and development.



48 countries import Iranian nano-tech products

According to the latest statistics, Iran's nano-tech products are exported to 48 countries worldwide.

The first five export destinations are Iraq, Afghanistan, Russia, Turkey, and Georgia, accounting for some 80 percent of exports, Mehr quoted Emad Ahmadvand, an official with the vice presidency for science and technology, as saying.

A total of 1808 nano-tech products have so far been produced and marketed in 15 different industrial fields based on domestic technologies in the current Iranian calendar year

that ends on March 20.

Based on the survey, the total sale of nano-tech products made in Iran is calculated to be more than 300 trillion rials (around \$600m), Ahmadvand pointed out.

The market's total value is equal to 1.125 billion dollars, with nano-tech products exports accounting for 69 million dollars representing six percent of the entire market value.

Last year, the best-selling products were sanitary faucets, oil and gas nano-catalysts, automotive nano-catalysts, construction and decorative tiles, and optoelectronic products, respectively.

The industrial fields of construction; automobile and transportation; oil, gas, and petrochemical had the largest share of the market, respectively.

Iran a global leader in nano-tech

Iran's achievements in nanotechnology are noteworthy. The increase in scientific publications and sales of nano products proves Iran's rise as a global leader in this field.

One of the industries that have experienced good growth in Iran in recent years is the nanotechnology industry, a subject area that has brought Iran to the impressive fourth place worldwide.

According to StatNano, a leading nanotechnology website, Iran has made great strides in the field of nanotechnology being ranked fourth in terms of nanotechnology publication.

This ranking proves the country's remarkable scientific development.

The site considers the number of scientific articles to compare scientific progress in nanoscience, technology, and industry.

Telerehabilitation program to target underprivileged areas

TEHRAN –The State Welfare Organization is planning to start a telerehabilitation program to train 1,618 children with hearing and physical mobility disabilities all over the country.

"The plan will be implemented in underprivileged areas in 31 provinces," IRNA quoted Fatemeh Abbasi, an official with the Organization, as saying.

The target population has already been identified; it includes children under the age of ten who have not received any rehabilitation services before, Abbasi noted.

To implement the plan, the families of these children will be given tablets through which the training will be provided to them under the supervision of the provincial departments and in cooperation with the non-governmental sector.

Currently, the tablets are being distributed among identified families, the official noted.

Training in the telerehabilitation program is mainly provided virtually. However, in some specific cases, it is essential for the therapist team or the family to provide and receive the training in person.

Virtual training does not replace face-to-face training. In fact, it is a complementary method, she stressed.

In the beginning, the training will target hearing-impaired children and children who are physically disabled. Families will learn how to behave with their children and what measures to take for follow-up treatment.

They will be taught how to take care of



their children with disabilities or, for example, what measures they should take to help the child be accepted by society. Sometimes it is necessary for the rehabilitation team or psychologist to accompany the families.

Currently, the program focuses on services in the fields of health, education, and social empowerment.

The program will also train activities of daily living (ADL). Essential daily life skills will be taught to families with physically disabled children.

The official highlights the significance of early interventions which can prevent further complications for children with disabilities.

In case of success, the pilot program will be implemented nationwide.

Community-based rehabilitation covers 95% of rural population

Some 95 percent of the country's rural population with about 450 thousand people with disabilities are covered by a community-based rehabilitation program.

The CBR program started in 1994, aiming to reduce poverty, IRNA quoted Abbasi said.

This program is carried out through the joint efforts of people with disabilities, their families, organizations and communities, and other governmental and non-governmental entities, especially in the fields of health, education, livelihood, and social affairs, she explained.

Currently, the activities of the community-based rehabilitation program are mainly focused on the access of people with disabilities to services in the fields of health, education, social empowerment, and rehabilitation, the official added.

She went on to say that these measures are carried out in cooperation with the ministry of interior, the ministry of health, the ministry of health, the ministry of sport, and non-governmental organizations, as well as the participation of community members through voluntary work or the formation of village or neighborhood CBR councils.

"For the time being, 1751 non-governmental institutions and 9176 community-based rehabilitation councils are cooperating with us in the implementation of this program."

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

'City-friendly schools' scheme launched in Tehran

The "city-friendly schools" scheme was launched in the capital to promote environmental protection and urban development issues among students, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

Mojtaba Daneshvar, director general of citizenship education at Tehran Municipality, said that the project covers more than 550 schools, consisting of 160,000 students. It aims to familiarize students with the rights and duties of citizens, the environment, waste, transportation and traffic, safety and security, crisis management, he explained.

The training programs will be in the form of workshops, role plays, cultural and educational camps, production of educational content such as books, brochures and posters, he concluded.

آغاز طرح «مدارس دوستدار شهر» در تهران

طرح «مدارس دوستدار شهر» با هدف آشنا کردن دانش آموزان با حقوق و تکالیف شهروندی، محیط زیست و پسماند، حمل و نقل و ترافیک، و ایمنی و مدیریت بحران در مدارس منتخب شهر تهران آغاز شد. به گزارش ایسنا مجتبی دانشور، مدیرکل آموزش‌های شهروندی شهرداری تهران، گفت این طرح بیش از ۵۵۰ مدرسه شامل ۱۶۰ هزار دانش‌آموز را در بر می‌گیرد.

برنامه‌های آموزشی این طرح در قالب برگزاری کارگاه‌های آموزشی، تولید محتوای آموزشی در قالب کتاب، بروشور و پوستر، اجرای نمایش و برگزاری اردوهای فرهنگی و آموزشی خواهد بود.

29 Iranian universities in THE Interdisciplinary Science Rankings 2025

TEHRAN –Times Higher Education (THE) Interdisciplinary Science Rankings (ISR) has placed 29 Iranian universities among top institutions worldwide for interdisciplinary science research.

ISR is a project launched in association with Schmidt Science Fellows; it has ranked a total of 749 universities from 92 countries.

University of Tehran with a global ranking of 77 is placed first in the country.

Shiraz University (ranked 132 globally) Razi University (174), Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (187), University of Tabriz (201-250) ranked second to fifth, respectively.

Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, and Urmia University are ranked joint sixth with a global ranking of 251-300.

Interdisciplinary science refers to the integration of the knowledge, traditions and processes from multiple scientific disciplines.

It can involve multiple academics who collaborate with one another across different disciplines. It may also be a single academic approaching a scientific question across multiple disciplines.

The Interdisciplinary Science Rankings is the first effort of its kind to measure universities' contributions and commitment to interdisciplinary science.

It includes 11 carefully calibrated performance indicators to assess institutions across three key areas, each representing a stage in the life cycle of research projects: inputs (funding); process (measures of success, facilities, administrative support and promotion); and outputs (publications, research quality and reputation).

The methodology is based on 157 million citations, 18 million research publications, and survey responses from more than 20,000 scholars globally.

Massachusetts University of Technology, Stanford University, and National University of Singapore ranked first to third, respectively.

In the ISR 2025, only science disciplines are covered, namely those that fit within the THE high-level subjects of computer science, engineering, life sciences and physical sciences. If a research project involves two or more science disciplines, it is considered interdisciplinary science.

However, if it involves only one science discipline then it is not considered interdisciplinary science research, even if it also involves one or more non-science disciplines.

Recent rankings

The Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asia University Rankings placed 32 Iranian universities in the list of top universities in 2025, compared to 31 universities in 2024.

Published annually since 2009, the QS Asia University Rankings highlight the top universities in Asia each year.

University of Tehran (with a global ranking of 87) is placed first among Iranian universities, followed by Sharif University of Technology (ranking 97 globally) and Amirkabir University of Technology (ranking 114 globally), Mehr news agency reported.

Isfahan University of Technology, Shiraz University, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, University of Tabriz, Shahid Beheshti University, and University of Isfahan are ranked fourth to tenth, respectively.

The Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2025 placed 85 Iranian universities among the top institutions compared to 75 universities in 2024.

The 2025 rankings include 2,092 ranked universities from 115 countries. There are 185 new entries compared with last year.

Recognized as the world's most comprehensive evaluation of university performance, the latest methodology includes 18 carefully calibrated indicators to assess institutions across five key areas: teaching, research environment, research quality, industry engagement, and international outlook.

Sharif University of Technology ranked first in the country with a global ranking of 301-350.

Amirkabir University of Technology, and Iran University of Science and Technology (ranking globally 351-400) were placed second.

Kermanshah University of Medical Science,

and University of Tehran were placed third with a global ranking of 401-500.

Babol Noshirvani University of Technology, Shiraz University of Technology, and Tehran University of Technology were ranked joint fourth, they ranked 601-800, globally.

A total of 100 universities from Iran were ranked by EduRank based on research outputs, non-academic prominence, and alumni influence.

The rankings were determined by analyzing 14.9 m citations received by 1.26 m academic publications made by 310 universities from Iran, the popularity of 867 recognized alumni, and the largest reference database available.

This year, 14131 universities from 183 countries were ranked across 246 topics.

According to the report University of Tehran, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and Sharif University of Technology were the best universities in the country, IRIB reported.

The Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers for World Universities, also known as the National Taiwan University (NTU) Rankings, placed 21 Iranian institutions among the top 1,200 universities worldwide, compared to 18 universities in 2023.

University of Tehran won the best ranking among Iranian institutions, ranking 291 globally.

University of Tehran ranked 30 in chemical engineering as well as energy science and engineering, 34 in mechanical engineering, and 73 in agriculture.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences (with a global ranking of 359), Kurdistan University of Medical Sciences (491), Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (540), and Tarbiat Modarres University (577) were placed second to fifth, respectively.

Tehran University of Medical Science's best ranking globally was 22 in pharmacology and toxicology.

Moreover, Khajeh Nasir Toosi University of Technology and Yasouj University were among the top 1200 institutions in the world based on full-time academic staff.

The 2024-2025 edition of Best Global Universities rankings included 69 Iranian universities, up from 52 in 2023, among the world's 2,250 top universities.

These institutions from 104 countries were ranked based on 13 indicators that measure their academic research performance and their global and regional reputations which helps students to explore the higher education options that exist beyond their own countries' borders and to compare key aspects of schools' research missions.

University of Tehran (with a global ranking of 275), Islamic Azad University (374), Sharif University of Technology and Tehran University of Medical Sciences (516), University of Tabriz (521), and Amirkabir University of Technology (649) ranked first to fifth in the country, respectively.

Shanghai ranking 2024 placed nine Iranian universities among the top 1,000 institutions worldwide.

The 2024 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) was released by ShanghaiRanking Consultancy.

Since 2003, ARWU has been presenting the world's top universities annually based on transparent methodology and objective third-party data. It has been recognized as the precursor of global university rankings and the most trustworthy one.

This year, more than 2,500 institutions were scrutinized, and the best 1,000 universities in the world were published.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences and University of Tehran, which were among the top 500 universities in the world with a rank of 401-500, were placed top in the country.

Tarbiat Modares University (601-700) was placed second.

Iran University of Medical Sciences, Shahid Beheshti of Medical Sciences, and Sharif University of Technology with a ranking of 701-800, shared the third rank in the country.

Amirkabir University of Technology, Iran University of Science and Technology, and University of Tabriz (901-1000) were ranked joint fourth.



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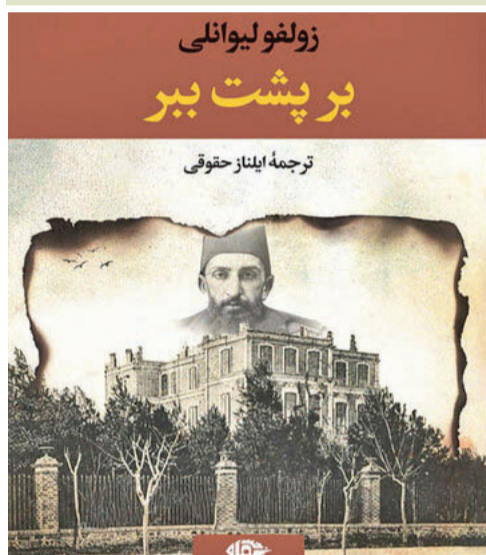
GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He is the wisest and the most knowing man who advises people not to lose hope and faith in the Mercy of Allah and not to be too sure and over-confident of immunity from His Wrath and Punishment.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon: 11:51 Evening: 17:12 Dawn: 5:22 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:50 (tomorrow)

“On the Back of the Tiger” comes to Iranian bookstores



TEHRAN- A Persian translation of Turkish musician and author Zulfu Livaneli's 2024 novel "On the Back of the Tiger" has recently been published by Negah Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Ilnaz Hoquqi.

In "On the Back of the Tiger," Livaneli presents a compelling narrative centered on the life of Abdulhamid II, the last sultan of the Ottoman Empire, who ruled from 1876 until his deposition in 1909. This historical novel, inspired by the memoirs of Atif Huseyin Bey, Abdulhamid's personal physician, delves into the final days of the sultan's life in exile in Thessaloniki, following the tumultuous Young Turk Revolution.

Livaneli paints a vivid portrait of a ruler who, despite his progressive reforms, is often labeled as the "Red Sultan" due to the notorious Armenian massacres that marked his reign. Through the lens of his physician, the novel intricately explores the complexities of Abdulhamid's character and the burdens of power he bore. It depicts the sultan's introspection and the paradox of a leader who sought modernization while grappling with the ethical implications of his policies.

The narrative also serves as a poignant critique of Western hypocrisy, shedding light on the tumultuous political landscape of the era. As Abdulhamid navigates the treacherous waters of exile and reflects on his rule, the novel offers a nuanced

examination of authority, guilt, and the legacy of a man who influenced the fate of an empire.

"On the Back of the Tiger" transcends the historical genre, blending personal and political themes to reveal the inner struggles of a complex figure in a transformative period. Livaneli's work challenges readers to reconsider the interplay between power and morality, urging a deeper understanding of the past and its reverberations in contemporary society.

Born in 1946, Zulfu Livaneli is a renowned Turkish musician, author, poet, and politician. He was imprisoned multiple times during the 1971 Turkish military crackdown for his political beliefs, leading to his exile in 1972. While living in Stockholm, Paris, Athens, and New York, he collaborated with notable artists such as Elia Kazan and Arthur Miller. Livaneli returned to Turkey in 1984, and in 1995, UNESCO appointed him Goodwill Ambassador for his cultural and peace efforts. He resigned in 2016 in protest against the Turkish government's destruction of the historic Kurdish Old Town of Diyarbakir. In addition to serving in the Turkish Parliament and the Council of Europe, Livaneli gained recognition as a writer after a successful music career. His debut collection, "A Child in Purgatory," was published in 1978. His novels, including "Bliss," "Serenade for Nadia," and "Leyla's House," have been translated into 37 languages and adapted into various artistic formats.

Cartoon of Day



ICC Facing IDF

Cartoonist: Emad Hajjaj from Jordan

Iran's "Auntie Knit, I Wear" chosen for 2025 Collection for Young People with Disabilities

TEHRAN- The Iranian sensory book "Auntie Knit, I Wear" has been included in the 2025 IBBY Collection for children with special needs.

Designed and implemented by Sevda Azadi, the book made it onto the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY)'s biennial list for Young People with Disabilities, ISNA reported on Friday.

"Auntie Knit, I Wear," which was selected from eight nominated titles representing Iran, is written by Naser Moradi in Braille. The book features a unique narrative perspective by featuring the story told from the viewpoint of a blind child. Various textures and volumes are used in the making of this work, creating an attractive execution and diversity in textures for visually impaired children.

Its careful craftsmanship and diverse tactile elements are designed to captivate children facing visual challenges.

Back in March, the Children's Book Council of Iran announced the eight nominees for the prestigious IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities, which is compiled biennially by the International Board on Books for Young People.

Alongside "Auntie Knit, I Wear," other notable titles include "The Legend of Namaki" crafted by Setareh Eqtadari, and "The Fox and The Crow" designed and implemented by Samaneh Nadri.

The submissions also included audio versions of "I'm A Scarecrow, But I'm Afraid" by Ahmad



Akbarpur, "You Are an Explorer" by Shahrzad Shahrjerdi and "A Smiling Banana" by Hamidreza Shahabadi.

In the category of books featuring characters with disabilities, Iran put forward "The World Is Mine" by Tahmineh Haddadi and "What's the Scariest Thing You've Ever Done?" by Solmaz Khajehvand as nominees.

Every two years experts collaborating with the IBBY Collection for Young People with Disabilities meticulously curate remarkable titles catering to children and young adults with disabilities worldwide. Situated in Basel, Switzerland, the IBBY headquarters serves as a hub for this spe-

cialized literary endeavor.

Acknowledging that many individuals with disabilities face barriers in accessing or finding books that resonate with them, IBBY emphasizes the importance of tailored publications. These specially crafted books, or thoughtfully selected high-quality works, address the unique requirements of individuals with disabilities, encompassing aspects like design, language, narrative structure, and illustrations.

Located within the Toronto Public Library, the IBBY collection houses an expansive array of international titles designed for, and depicting the experiences of, young people with disabilities. This diverse se-

lection caters to a global audience, offering stories that reflect the diverse lived experiences of those with special needs.

With the objective of fostering inclusivity and expanding literary opportunities for children with disabilities, IBBY biennially unveils a comprehensive list of recommended titles to inspire publishers to develop more inclusive products. These chosen works, featured in the "Books for Children with Special Needs" biennial list, will be highlighted at the prestigious Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2025, shedding light on the importance of representation and accessibility in children's literature.

Shahab Hosseini's "The Last Act" film to attend International Film Festival of Salerno

TEHRAN-The Iranian feature film "The Last Act" directed by Shahab Hosseini will be screened at the 78th International Film Festival of Salerno, which will be held from November 25 to 30 in Salerno, Italy.

It will be the 14th international presence of the film that have gained several nominations and awards in the past two years, IRNA reported.

A 2022 production of the Seven Skies Entertainment company, the film won the Best Film awards at the Toronto International Nollywood Film Festival, the Gladiator Film Festival, and Web3 International Film Festival.

An adaptation of the play "Dernier Acte" by French novelist Gilbert Cesbron, the film story is based on true political events that often happen in many territories, but it was written anonymously without geographical specifications. Cesbron's work is characterized by a great sensitivity to human suffering and an unwavering optimism about the possibility of change and progress.

It tells the story of a government criticizer who is prosecuted and arrested while he was visiting



his family. The conversation between the writer and one of the authorities leads to an unexpected ending.

Gia Mora, James Wagner, Armin Amiri, Mohammad Motalegh, Shelby Seiler, Esmael G. Adivi, Shailene Farabi, and Danil Vederikov are in the cast.

Shahab Hosseini, 50, is an actor, producer, di-

rector, and screenwriter. He is known for his collaborations with Iranian Academy Award-winning director Asghar Farhadi in "About Elly" (2009), "A Separation" (2011), and "The Salesman" (2016). His accolades include a Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Actor, a Silver Bear for Best Actor, and a Crystal Simorgh for Best Actor.

He has played in over 60 films and 15 TV series in more than 20 years. He has also directed four feature films, a play and a TV show. "The Last Act" is his second directing experience in the U.S. following "The Writer Is Dead".

The International Film Festival of Salerno was founded in 1946. Since birth, it has been characterized as a competitive event for Italian and international productions, offering a continuous comparison on the developments of world cinematography.

The festival assigns to cinema an important social function and its finality is to constantly adapt its line with an eye to the evolution of technologies and new audiovisual media. It absolves its original task of divulgation and cinematographic literacy, in line with its tradition.

U.S. National Book Award winner calls for end of Gaza genocide

Palestinian-American poet Lena Khalaf Tuffaha wished a "good morning to beloved Gaza" at the start of her acceptance speech for winning a U.S. National Book Award.

On November 20, at Cipriani Wall Street in New York City, the 75th U.S. National Book Awards emphasized the crucial role of literature during an unsettling time for politics in the U.S. and the world. Writers and publishers spoke about literature as a form of history, resistance, and change-making.

Khalaf Tuffaha - who is of Palestinian, Jordanian and Syrian descent - also marked that it was "the 411th day of the genocide," The National reported.

Her winning collection, "Something About Living," delves into Palestine's history and violence, touching on themes such as diaspora and colonialism while focusing on the hope people hold on to for survival.

"We are now living in the second

November of the American-funded genocide in Palestine," she said. "Our service is needed as writers, our service is needed as human beings in every room, in every space, especially where there is something to risk or there is an opportunity to be lost, or that courage will really cost you - that's what's most needed."

Khalaf Tuffaha went on to say that it was her father Mosa Khalaf, born in Jerusalem in 1938, who told her at the age of five of his homeland that he couldn't live in anymore. She added that it was this story that had driven and motivated her.

"I'm proud to stand here today and to accept this honour as a Palestinian-American on behalf of all the deeply beautiful Palestinians this world has lost and in honor of all those miraculous ones who endure, waiting for us, waiting for us to wake up," she said.

Khalaf Tuffaha also made a point that everyone should feel motivated and angry enough to

speaking up and demand an end to what is happening in Gaza.

"I want us to feel and be uncomfortable and be disoriented and be angry and get up and demand that any administration, no matter what letter it has at the end of its name ... that any administration that we pay for, should stop funding and arming a genocide in Gaza," She added.

Meanwhile, Syrian-American author Shifa Saltagi Safadi, whose book "Kareem Between" won the young people's literature category, also spoke up about Palestine during her acceptance speech.

She began by speaking about her experience of growing up as a Muslim in America and thanking Muslim authors who inspired her to write.

"I would never have believed I could do it if I had not read the words of the people before me who showed me what it looks like," she said. "So often I saw books where Muslims were the villains, and I'm

glad I finally got to write a story where we're the heroes."

Her young adult novel "Kareem Between" is a coming-of-age story, which follows the journey of a seventh-grade Syrian-American boy and his struggles as he makes his way through school. Inspired by the 2017 Muslim ban in the US, Safadi added that despite her novel being about justice and standing up against discrimination and racism, these issues are still somberly pertinent today.

"Dehumanization of Arabs and Islamophobia has been rising more than ever in this past year to justify a genocide of the Palestinian people," she said. "Justice and freedom are for all people. All of our liberations are tied together, from people in Gaza, in Sudan, in Congo, in Syria, in every corner of the world to people here in America and deep within our hearts."

Safadi ended her acceptance speech by saying: "Be brave and free Palestine."