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In Damascus, Araghchi links U.S. and Israeli goals to terrorism in Syria; Assad thanks Iran for support

Ironclad Backing

Pezeshkian slams foreign intervention in West Asia, calls for regional unity

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian underscored the vital need for regional cooperation to establish security in West Asia, asserting that foreign interference is unwarranted.

During a joint session of the government and parliament on Sunday, President Pezeshkian conveyed Iran’s peaceful intentions, emphasizing that the nation is not looking for conflict or violence.

He chastised the Western countries for their double standards, which hypocritically claim to champion human rights and peace, pointing out that they are the true instigators of war and violence.

Addressing the ongoing conflict in Gaza, Pezeshkian expressed his horror at the actions of the Israeli regime.

“For me, as a human being, regardless of my position, it is unimaginable that a regime would allow itself to drop multi-ton bombs on women, children, and defenseless civilians in hospitals and schools,” the Iranian president stated.

He expressed sorrow over the deaths of more than ten thousand children in the conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon, condemning the passive response of those claiming to defend human rights. ▶ Page 2

Libertarianism in Practice: Evaluating Javier Milei’s First Year in Argentina

By Seyed Yasser Jebraily

TEHRAN – As Argentina approaches the one-year mark under the presidency of Javier Milei, a right-wing libertarian and populist who took office in December 2023, it’s time to take stock of the impact of his economic policies. With a year of governance under his belt, we can now assess the effects of his agenda on the country and its people. Elected on a platform of radical neoliberal reforms, Milei promised to eradicate the country’s chronic inflation and economic instability. However, nearly a year into his presidency, it has become increasingly evident that his approach has exacerbated rather than alleviated the economic woes facing Argentina.

1. Austerity Measures and Public Discontent

One of the hallmarks of Milei’s administration has been the implementation of severe austerity measures aimed at reducing public spending. ▶ Page 4

Iran’s exports to Eurasia surge 2.5 times over four years

TEHRAN – Iran’s exports to Eurasian countries have grown by 2.5 times since the country signed a preferential trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) four years ago, highlighting the success of its trade policy.

Mohammad-Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), credited the exponential growth to reduced tariffs introduced through the agreements signed between the two sides.

Iran and EAEU also signed a free trade agreement on December 25, 2023, in St. Petersburg, Russia, aiming to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers and facilitate economic and trade interactions. Once fully implemented, 87 percent of tariff codes for commercial goods between Iran and EAEU member states will drop to zero.

Under President Masoud Pezeshkian’s administration, Iran has emphasized strengthening ties with Eurasian countries to enhance access to global markets. ▶ Page 4

Iran’s strategic resolve: defending Syria and Axis of Resistance

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The alliance between Iran and Syria, forged in a context of regional tensions and sectarian rivalries, has become one of the most solid in West Asia. This strategic bond, combining political, military, and geopolitical interests, has allowed both countries to withstand external pressures and assert their influence in a deeply fragmented region.

From the outset, this relationship has been more than just a pragmatic agreement. During the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), Damascus played a key role as a strategic ally of Tehran, providing arms and acting as a diplomatic bridge to the Arab world during a period marked by Iranian isolation. In the following years, this cooperation expanded into other areas, strengthening the alliance through joint initiatives in security, intelligence, and mutual support against common adversaries. ▶ Page 3

While voices inside Israel admit genocide in Gaza, US threatens ICC

By Narges Pakdel

TEHRAN – Moshe Ya’alon, the former Israeli defense minister, said on Saturday that the leadership in Israel, driven by far-right elements who seek to resettle Gaza, was taking the country down a path of ethnic cleansing in the Gaza Strip.

He specified that the military was already cleansing parts of Gaza of Palestinians while warning that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s government was leading Israel to “destruction”. “The path we are being dragged down is one of occupation, annexation and ethnic cleansing in the Gaza Strip,” Ya’alon told Democrat TV.

The comments by Ya’alon are not surprising. What is surprising is that such a statement is made by a person who served as defense minister under Netanyahu from 2013-2016. Independent analysts have been warning that so much destruction, amazing brutal acts, and starvation are intended to depopulate Gaza from the Palestinians. Even common people believe that Israel is seeking to force Palestinians to leave Gaza. ▶ Page 5

Syria’s Hama stands firm

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Amid a reportedly lightening advance of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham militants towards Hama, the Syrian army has halted any attempts to invade the city.

Mainstream regional media first reported that Hama, like Aleppo, had fallen into the hands of the militants.

However, these reports have proven to be false with the HTS terrorists have not even reached the city’s borders.

The Syrian Ministry of Defense denied reports of a military withdrawal from Hama, underlining that units remain stationed in northern and eastern Hama countryside, fully prepared to repel any terrorist attack.

Units of the Syrian Armed Forces operating in the northern Hama countryside strengthened their defensive lines, deploying various firepower, personnel, and equipment.

The army successfully repelled terrorist groups and prevented any breaches, according to a military source cited by the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA).

The source also reported that the Armed Forces secured several areas after expelling terrorists in strategic locations near the city, killing dozens of them while the rest fled. ▶ Page 5

Nuclear hypocrisy: West’s one-sided narrative on Iran and Israel

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – The article, “What Are Iran’s Nuclear and Missile Capabilities?” by Jonathan Masters and Will Mero, reflects a narrative shaped by Western and Israeli biases, overlooking Iran’s stated policies and the historical context of its actions.

Claims of destabilization

Masters and Mero argue that a nuclear-armed Iran would destabilize the region and pose an existential threat to Israel.

However, this assertion ignores Iran’s consistent affirmation that its nuclear program serves peaceful purposes.

For example, as quoted in their article, a government spokesperson reiterated in April 2024: ▶ Page 2

Maritime diplomacy crucial to Iran, declares Navy chief

TEHRAN – Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani underscored the significance of maritime diplomacy as a fundamental strategy and obligation for naval forces worldwide.

During a ceremony held in observance of Iranian Navy Day at Kish Island in the Persian Gulf, Irani articulated the Iranian Navy’s commitment to leveraging all available resources to promote maritime development, thereby ensuring order and security for the Iranian people.

“Developing maritime diplomacy is a key strategy and responsibility of naval forces globally,” Irani asserted, emphasizing the broader implications for international naval cooperation. ▶ Page 2



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Ham Mihan: Iran and Europe's efforts to get out of nuclear deadlock

In an analysis, Ham Mihan dealt with the efforts of Iran and Europe to get out of the nuclear deadlock and said: It seems that the European Union and the Troika have once again taken up the failed project of building a security consensus against Iran under the management of the Zionist regime. They intensified the sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran and passed two unconsidered resolutions against the peaceful nuclear program of our country. According to the spokesperson of the British diplomatic service, we are committed to taking every diplomatic step to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, including through the "snapback" mechanism if necessary. These statements show that the snapback is gradually becoming a challenge in Europe-Iran relations. But these three countries, through different diplomatic channels, are seeking to reduce the tension over the Iran nuclear issue and are not reluctant to engage in diplomacy with Iran. Therefore, perhaps the Geneva meeting (on Friday) can be seen as an opportunity for the other parties to stay away from any miscalculations and explain the views and demands of the Islamic Republic of Iran in detail.

Jam-e-Jam: Negotiations and failed policy of maximum pressure

In a note, Jam-e-Jam discussed the resumption of negotiations between Iran and three European countries and said: The new round of negotiations between Iran and Europe started on Friday after two years of suspension. Of course, these negotiations were held behind closed doors and in a tense and distrustful atmosphere. The main causes for such an atmosphere are the recent actions of the Union in imposing new sanctions against Iran, as well as drafting a censure resolution against our country's nuclear program (at the IAEA Board of Governors). Recent actions and sanctions against Iran by Europe showed that they want to stand by Donald Trump and pursue the failed policy of maximum pressure on Iran. However, some people in Iran believe that Europe is trying to take the leadership of nuclear negotiations from America with these measures. But most experts believe that Europeans' opposition to Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA at that time was superficial. By claiming to stay in the agreement and encouraging Iran to continue its commitments to the one-sided agreement, Europeans wanted to stop Iran's nuclear

progress so that they could buy time in favor of America and its policy of maximum pressure.

Hamshahri: Saudi Arabia's important offer to Iran

In a commentary, Hamshahri discussed Bloomberg's report about Saudi Arabia's proposal to increase trade cooperation with Iran. It wrote: In a report on its website, the Bloomberg news network said Saudi Arabia is seeking to strengthen relations with Tehran on the eve of Donald Trump's new round of presidency. According to experts, the motivation for such a proposal by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman was to reduce Iran's tensions with the West. Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, wants to strengthen its relations with the United States of America. The Saudis see the two-faceted policy of closer relations with Tehran and Washington as geopolitically important. It is not yet clear what proposal Mohammed bin Salman has made to the Iranian side, but the trade between the two competing countries can be focused on food and pharmaceutical products that are not subject to Western sanctions in the initial stages.

Etemad: Iran's military, and technological abilities important in balance of power

In an interview with Ahmad Shirzad, a former reformist parliamentarian, Etemad discussed the effect of the ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel on developments in Iran and the region. He said: The news of the ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah has been finalized, but the news of terrorist moves in Aleppo, Syria, has been published in the media. Since Hezbollah has close relations with Iran, some of its movements are linked to Iran. Iran succeeded in making good achievements in the recent conflicts. The most important achievement of Iran was that it made clear that it is not afraid of Israel's brutality and is ready to defend itself. It is not possible to predict whether the missile confrontation between Iran and Israel will end in an unwritten and undeclared ceasefire, but it will certainly be very effective in future calculations. Iran's military, technological, and scientific capabilities will play a serious role in the future balance of power. Iran needs peace to resolve the basic problems at home. Of course, Iran needs to show its regional enemies, especially Israel, that it is not afraid of military confrontation. But welcoming tension is not part of the government's plans.

Pezeshkian slams foreign intervention in West Asia, calls for regional unity



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian(L) and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf during a joint session of the government and parliament on Sunday.

From page 1 ► Pezeshkian denounced the role of the U.S. and European nations in the tragic events in Gaza and Lebanon, calling it shameful that these powers provide support and arms for such actions.

Moreover, the Iranian President clarified that Iran harbors no intentions of territorial expansion against its neighbors.

He noted Iran's efforts to resolve misun-

derstandings in bilateral relations, asserting that the situation in the region has improved.

He further emphasized regional unity against Israeli aggression, stating, "This is the first time all countries in the region have come together to condemn Israel's actions against Iran, and I commend our neighbors for this rightful stance," referring to the Israeli airstrikes on Iranian territory on October 26.

Maritime diplomacy crucial to Iran, declares Navy chief

From page 1 ► The navy chief said that as a member of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), Iran's Navy participated in a collaborative naval exercise in October.

The Navy plans to extend its maritime developmental efforts by visiting various countries, aiming to strengthen ties and enhance regional maritime security, Irani emphasized.

Iran's hosting of the Indian Maritime Exercise (IMEX) 2024 further exemplifies its proactive approach to maritime diplomacy. This event attracted numerous members and observers of IONS.

The Iranian destroyer Jamaran played a pivotal role in the joint naval exercise, which saw the participation of naval forces from Russia, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Pakistan, Qatar, and Bangladesh.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rear Admiral Irani highlighted the



Iranian Navy chief Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, and other top officials boarding the Zereh warship on December 1, 2024

sea's vital role as a foundation for peace and friendship among nations, emphasizing its capacity to facilitate communication and cooperation.

"We act as messengers of peace and friendship for our friendly and allied countries," he remarked, underscoring the Navy's commitment to fostering

regional and international harmony through maritime engagement.

Foreign Minister's commendation of Navy's vital role

The ceremony was attended by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who commended the Navy's contributions to national security.

Araghchi, accompanied by several officials, boarded the Navy's Zereh (Shield) warship, demonstrating solidarity with the naval forces.

During a speech at the ceremony, Araghchi expressed gratitude towards the armed forces, stating, "I must especially thank the Iranian Armed Forces, especially today, the Iranian Navy, for ensuring the security of the country in these last two or three months of intense tension."

Araghchi further elaborated on the crucial interplay between diplomacy and military capabilities, noting, "In the last few months, diplomacy, alongside the armed forces and complementing the armed forces, both played a great role in defending the security of the country."

He emphasized how the armed forces' readiness thwarted any potential threats or attacks on Iran, ensuring the nation's security and frustrating adversaries.

Nuclear hypocrisy: West's one-sided narrative on Iran and Israel

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What Are Iran's Nuclear and Missile Capabilities?

Iran's nuclear program and missile arsenal have garnered increased international scrutiny amid its flaring conflict with Israel.

Article by Jonathan Masters and Will Merrow

Last updated November 26, 2024 9:00 am (EST)

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A view of the water nuclear reactor at Arak, Iran, December 2019. (West Asia Times Agency/Reuters)

From page 1 ► "Nuclear weapons have no place in our nuclear doctrine." This long-standing position is rooted in Iran's religious and moral principles.

Meanwhile, Israel's nuclear arsenal—undeclared and outside the framework of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)—is a clear source of regional destabilization that the authors fail to address.

U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA

Masters and Merrow minimize the repercussions of the U.S.'s 2018 withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

This legally binding agreement successfully limited Iran's nuclear activities until the Trump administration abandoned it, as noted in the article.

Following the withdrawal, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken admitted in June 2024 that Iran could produce fissile material for a nuclear weapon in "one or two weeks." Yet, the authors fail to acknowledge that this occurred only after years of U.S. violations of the agreement. The blame for heightened tensions lies with Washington's abandonment of diplomacy, not Tehran.

Mischaracterization of Iran as an aggressor

The article portrays Iran as an aggressor, citing its two missile strikes on Israeli positions in the occupied territories in 2024.

However, Masters and Merrow omit critical context: Iran's actions were responses made in defense. Tehran's direct attacks only came after the regime struck Iran's embassy in Russia and assassinated key Resistance figures including Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

Such double standards frame Israel's aggressions as justified retaliation while labelling Iran's defensive measures as provocations.

Hypocrisy of Western allies

Masters and Merrow criticize Iran for its alleged nuclear ambitions but overlook the hypocrisy of the U.S. and its allies.

While the article discusses Israel's October 2024 strikes on Iranian facilities, it remains silent on Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal.

Moreover, the U.S.—a nation with a history of using nuclear weapons and modernizing its arsenal—continues to provide unconditional support to Israel while chastising

Iran. This selective focus undermines the credibility of the authors' arguments about non-proliferation.

Iran's right to security

Masters and Merrow suggest that Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons would "change the game" for U.S. and Israeli interests, dismissing Iran's legitimate security concerns.

The article acknowledges that "U.S. intelligence officials assess that the Leader of the Islamic Republic has not made a decision to resume the nuclear weapons program that Iran suspended in 2003." Despite this, Iran faces ongoing threats, including direct military strikes, such as Israel's largest-ever attack on Iran in October 2024. Decades of sanctions, covert operations, and aggression have forced Iran to develop a robust defense strategy—not as an act of aggression but as a necessity.

Regional destabilization allegations

The article implies that Iran's potential nuclear capability would spark a regional arms race, citing Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's 2023 statement: "If they get one, we have to get one."

However, Masters and Merrow fail to address the actual drivers of instability, such as massive U.S. arms sales and Israel's unchecked militarization. While Iran's missile capabilities, like the Fatah-1 and Kheibar Shekan, are framed as threats, similar weapons used by Israel against civilians in Gaza are ignored. This selective criticism unfairly vilifies Iran while excusing Western and Israeli actions.

Conclusion

Masters and Merrow's article perpetuates a one-sided narrative that distorts Iran's intentions and ignores the root causes of regional instability.

Iran remains committed to peaceful nuclear development under international law, as evidenced by decades of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

To de-escalate tensions, the international community must hold all actors accountable—especially those who undermine treaties and violate sovereign rights. A fair approach requires scrutinizing Israel's nuclear arsenal, addressing the consequences of U.S. sanctions, and recognizing Iran's right to self-defense in the face of relentless hostility.

Iranian envoy concludes Lebanon mission with praise for Resistance



TEHRAN – The Iranian foreign minister's special representative for West Asia, Mohammad Reza Sheibani, met with the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Nabih Berri, in Beirut.

This meeting, as reported by the Iranian embassy in Lebanon, concluded Sheibani's mission to the country.

During the meeting, Sheibani commended the significant victory attained by the Lebanese government, people, and Islamic Resistance, which resulted in the defeat of the Zionist regime's military efforts.

Sheibani praised the significant victory achieved by the Lebanese government, people, and the Islamic Resistance in defeating the Israeli military. He specifically highlighted their critical role in securing the ceasefire and countering the adversarial objectives of the Israeli enemy.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Turkmen envoy presents credentials to Iran FM



TEHRAN – The newly appointed ambassador of Turkmenistan to Iran Ilyas Ghaypov, delivered his diplomatic credentials to Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Sunday.

As reported by Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting marked the commencement of Ghaypov's diplomatic mission to Iran.

Ambassador Ghaypov reaffirmed his dedication to strengthening bilateral ties and collaboration across multiple sectors, including politics, economics, culture, and security. He highlighted the significance of cooperative efforts in tackling shared challenges and advancing regional stability.

For his part, Araghchi welcomed the new ambassador and reiterated Iran's willingness to improve bilateral relations with Turkmenistan.

Araghchi emphasized the historical and cultural connections between the two nations and underscored the necessity for enhanced economic collaboration, especially in energy, transportation, and trade.

Ironclad backing

In Damascus, Araghchi links U.S. and Israeli goals to terrorism in Syria; Assad thanks Iran for support

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived at Damascus International Airport on Sunday as Syria battles a resurgence of terrorism in its north.

The minister quickly proceeded to the presidential palace for talks with President Bashar al-Assad. Photos from the meeting depict a relaxed Assad, a demeanor perhaps born from years of experience battling terrorism and defending Syria against foreign-backed attacks that began in 2011.

Araghchi reaffirmed Iran's steadfast support for the Syrian government, army, and people, a commitment that dates back to 2011 and significantly contributed to the defeat of Daesh terrorists by the autumn of 2017.

“The sinister goals of these terrorists align with those of our enemies in perpetuating war and insecurity,” the Iranian chief diplomat stated, expressing confidence that Syria would once again prevail against these threats, just as it has done in the past.

In response, President al-Assad expressed gratitude for Iran's steadfast support, acknowledging the Iranian government and people's role in bolstering Syria's resilience against terrorism.

What's exactly happening in Syria?

The Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) terrorists and their allied factions launched major surprise attacks into Aleppo province soon after a ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel came into effect on Wednesday, seizing territory after limited clashes with Syrian forces.

The Syrian army, backed by the firepower of Russian air support, is now battling to reclaim the lost ground. Reports and evidence show Turkey is also playing a significant role in the ongoing clashes by giving military and logistical support to the HTS terrorists. Other factors point to the involvement of Israel, which seems to be seeking to destabilize Syria in an attempt the constrict the flow of Iranian military aid into Lebanon.

Neutral Iran one of the biggest victims of WWI

How the country's sovereignty, integrity, and dignity was trampled by foreign soldiers in WWI



British troops in Iran's Hamedan during WWI. Exact date unknown

By Faramarz Kouhpayeh

TEHRAN – The 1917-1919 famine in Iran, which claimed the lives of 8 to 10 million people out of a population of 18 to 20 million, is sometimes called the Iranian Holocaust.

This catastrophic event, one of the worst calamities of World War I, was due to the British, Russian, and Ottoman invasions that had blatantly disregarded Iran's declaration of neutrality. However, many argue that a stronger Iranian military and more robust government would have prevented or mitigated the invasion itself.

How did Iran's disastrous situation begin?

Iran was already in turmoil before World War I, paving the way for foreign invasion. The Qajar dynasty had seen Iran grow weaker, losing terri-



This latest escalation is just the most recent chapter in Syria's decade-long conflict, a war fueled by foreign intervention. Western states and their regional partners have been arming terror factions in Syria since 2011 when they managed to take advantage of initially peaceful protests to mask their links to Daesh terrorists as support for “freedom fighters”.

Iran, Iraq leaders reaffirm support for Syria amid new terror insurgency

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani engaged in a phone conversation on Sunday evening to address pressing regional security concerns.

The leaders focused on the recent surge in activities by terrorist groups in northern Syria, which they described as a serious threat to regional stability.

During the call, Pezeshkian underscored Iran's commitment to maintaining the territorial integrity of all countries in the region, particularly Syria. He expressed alarm over the resurgence of violence at a time when efforts were being made to establish a ceasefire in Lebanon and attention was shifting towards the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Prime Minister al-Sudani echoed these sentiments, expressing his apprehension regarding the instability emerging in northern Syria. He characterized the actions of terrorist groups as part of a broader strategy by the Zionist regime to undermine Syrian sovereignty and incite insecurity.

Both officials said their governments will support Syria in countering the new surge in terrorism.

The first major wave of terrorism that engulfed Syria during the 2010s and even spread into neighboring Iraq was defeated with the help of Iran and Russia. Although analysts consider the

current terrorist insurgency less severe than the initial wave, they believe Syria will still require the support of its allies, Iran and Russia, to overcome it.

Iran's continued commitment to supporting Syria's security and sovereignty was underscored by Foreign Minister Araghchi's Sunday visit to Damascus, and reiterated by numerous other Iranian officials.

After a parliamentary session on Sunday, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf denounced the timing of the terrorist assaults in Syria as a “Zionist-American plot” to desta-

Iran's strategic resolve: defending Syria and Axis of Resistance



From Page 1 ► The Tehran-Damascus axis solidified after the 1979 Islamic Revolution and found a new pillar in its relationship with Hezbollah, the Lebanese Shiite group that became an indispensable ally for both. In this framework, Syria transformed into a strategic corridor for the delivery of weapons and resources to Hezbollah, thereby enhancing Iran's power projection in the Levant and its position in the regional geopolitical landscape.

In the last decade, marked by the war in Syria, this alliance has been crucial for the survival of Bashar al-Assad's government. The Iranian military support, alongside that of Russia, helped reverse the course of the conflict in favor of Syria, while Damascus became a symbol of the Axis of Resistance against the United States, Israel, and their regional allies. Now, with new challenges on the horizon, Tehran and Damascus are once again coordinating their efforts in response to what they describe as

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

bilize the region.

While reaffirming Iran's unwavering support for Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Qalibaf also said that those behind the attacks would ultimately face consequences, in a warning seemingly directed at not only Israel and the West but also Ankara. “The plotters of these measures (in Syria) must bear in mind that playing with the black card of terrorism will one day backfire on them on their own land,” the speaker warned.

How should Turkey's role be addressed?

Turkey's support for the latest insurgency in Syria directly contradicts its pledges under the Astana Peace Process. In 2017, a four-safe-zone plan was agreed upon by Iran, Russia, Syria, and Turkey. While three zones were established in 2018, Turkey's intervention prevented the creation of the fourth one which was supposed to encompass Idlib, Latakia, and parts of Aleppo. Ankara cited humanitarian concerns for its opposition while promising that it would not allow any terror outfits to plan operations out of the area bordering the Turkish territory.

Some are already calling for a more forceful approach towards Turkey. “In response to the recent developments in Aleppo, including the martyrdom of Iranian advisors, Iran should ‘mistakenly’ target Turkish observation posts in the region,” said a senior Iranian analyst on his X account.

Ankara's alleged support for terrorists in Syria comes as for the past 14 months, it has refused to stop the flow of Azeri oil to Israeli warplanes, oil that transits the Turkish territory and is subsequently used to attack civilians in Gaza.

Authorities in Tehran seem to be prioritizing diplomacy for the time being. The Iranian foreign minister was scheduled to visit Turkey after the conclusion of his trip to Syria.

a “new conspiracy” orchestrated by their traditional adversaries.

In this context, the recent ceasefire reached between Hezbollah and Israel in southern Lebanon has been leveraged to reconfigure fronts in other key scenarios of the West Asia conflict. In Syria, armed terrorist groups backed by Turkey launched a surprise offensive against government positions in the Aleppo province, triggering a new wave of violence in one of the country's most contested regions.

The operation, which included Turkish logistical and air support, enabled the terrorists to seize control of several villages and strategic locations in Aleppo. The clashes, which lasted for several days, resulted in dozens of deaths and injuries on both sides, in addition to causing significant displacement of civilians fleeing the affected areas. The offensive threatens to further destabilize a region already fractured after more than a decade of war.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

Esteghlal aiming to end Al Ahli's unbeaten run

TEHRAN – Esteghlal will have to achieve what no team has been able to do so far – take points off Al Ahli Saudi FC – when the sides meet in the AFC Champions League Elite™ 2024/25 on Monday.

Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli confirmed their knockout stage spot with a fifth consecutive win on Matchday Five while Islamic Republic of Iran's Esteghlal are on four points and in danger of missing the cut.

Having opened their campaign with a 3-0 win over Qatar's Al Gharafa, Esteghlal have not won in their last four AFC Champions League Elite matches, their longest winless streak on the continent since 2013-2014.

The Iranian side have also failed to score in each of the four matches but head into the tie with the better head-to-head record of having won four of their previous six meetings with Al Ahli, with the Saudi Arabian team only having one victory to their name.

Al Ahli, however, will be motivated to extend their winning run after having triumphed in five consecutive matches on the continental stage for the first time.

They are also on a 10-match unbeaten on the continental stage and will look to Riyad Mahrez to provide inspiration yet again, with the Algerian having contributed three goals and five assists so far.

Persepolis, Al Shorta look for keeping hopes alive

TEHRAN – Doha: Persepolis FC and Al Shorta will be desperate to keep their AFC Champions League Elite 2024/25 hopes alive when they square off at the Hamad Bin Khalifa Stadium in Doha on Monday.

Experiencing extremely difficult campaigns, defeat for either side will probably mean the end of their knockout stage hopes.

Jalal Hosseini was critical of Persepolis' performance in the 1-1 draw with Al Rayyan last week, with the assistant coach saying that key players did not deliver against the Qatar side.

The stalemate stretched the Islamic Republic of Iran side's winless run on the continental stage to eight matches (from 2023/24) and with just three points on the board, Persepolis have to defeat Al Shorta if they are to stay in the race.

They have to first tighten up at the back, having dropped six points from winning positions so far this season.

It's a key match against Al Shorta: Garrido

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team head coach Juan Carlos Garrido says that the match against Al Shorta in the 2024/25 AFC Champions League Elite will be a key game for them.

Persepolis FC and Al Shorta will be desperate to keep their hopes alive when they square off at the Hamad Bin Khalifa Stadium in Doha on Monday.

“We've trained well for the match and we are well aware of the importance of the match. It's a key match for both teams,” Garrido said in the pre-match news conference.

“All players are motivated to win the match and we just focus on winning the match. Persepolis have just collected three points in their five previous matches but we deserved more,” the Spaniard added.

“In two previous matches, we lost our victory and I think we need a bit of luck against Al Shorta. In the AFC Champions League Elite we have no easy matches and are the teams to beat in this stage, that's why they are here,” he added.

“Anyway, we have analyzed our opponents and want to win the match. It will be very important for us,” Garrido concluded.

A tough task ahead of Esteghlal against Al Ahli: Mosimane

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team head coach Pitso Mosimane says that there is a tough task ahead of them in the AFC Champions League Elite 2024/25.

Esteghlal will have to achieve what no team has been able to do so far – take points off Al Ahli Saudi FC – when the sides meet on Monday.

The Saudi Arabian side confirmed their knockout stage spot with a fifth consecutive win on Matchday Five while Iran's Esteghlal are on four points and in danger of missing the cut.

“We will face a great team and we have to be honest and accept that Al Ahli are a star-studded team but we want to do our best,” Mosimane said in the pre-match news conference.

“I believe in my team and I am sure we can get result but I am sure it will be a tough match. We will represent Iran football, so we must do our best,” the South African coach concluded.

They are also on a 10-match unbeaten on the continental stage and will look to Riyad Mahrez to provide inspiration yet again, with the Algerian having contributed three goals and five assists so far.

Persepolis captain Alishah undergoes successful surgery

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team captain Omid Alishah underwent a successful surgical procedure on the injury to his face on Sunday.

He broke his nose after collision with an Al Rayyan player in Doha last week.

Alishah will be ruled out for between four and five weeks.

Persepolis will meet Al Shorta in a must-win game on Matchday six of the 2024–25 AFC Champions League Elite in Doha.

The Iranian side sit ninth in the 12-team table, while the eight top teams will qualify for the next stage.

Inter Milan to sell Taremi to buy Salah: report

TEHRAN – Inter Milan are preparing to make a master move in the transfer market by aiming to bring in Mohamed Salah for free next summer.

In order to meet the high salary demands of the Egyptian forward, the Italian club are willing to undergo a restructuring within their squad, putting Marko Arnautovic, Mehdi Taremi, and Joaquin Correa up for sale.

Salah, currently at Liverpool, will see his contract expire in the summer of 2025, allowing Inter to negotiate a pre-contract agreement starting from January, fichajes.net reported.

The 32-year-old left-winger has been a pivotal figure in Liverpool's recent success, winning multiple major titles with them. However, his salary of nearly 11.7 million euros per season poses a significant challenge for the Serie A club, which need to balance their finances to seal the transfer.

Iran’s exports to Eurasia surge 2.5 times over four years

From page 1 ▶ This strategy has translated into tangible growth, with the latest figures from Iran’s Customs Administration revealing a 16 percent rise in exports to EAEU nations in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20–August 20). During this period, the export volume reached 2.2 million metric tons, reflecting a 35 percent year-on-year growth. Iran also participated in the EAEU’s annual meeting held on September 30 and October 1 in Yerevan, Armenia, with a high-level del-

Iran’s largest gold mine reports significant increase in proven reserves

TEHRAN – Iran’s largest gold mine, Zarshouran, has announced a substantial increase in its proven reserves, sparking optimism about a potential surge in production and job creation in northwestern Iran. Mohammad Parvin, acting head of the Zarshouran Mining Company, reported on Saturday that recent exploration activities have raised the mine’s proven gold ore deposits from 27 million metric tons (mt) to 43 million mt. This increase boosts the mine’s extractable gold resources to 116 mt, effectively extending its operational lifespan from 25 years to 65 years. Parvin emphasized that the expansion is expected to attract more investment and create additional employment opportunities

Strengthening ties with Russia, BRICS, SCO central to Iran’s policy



TEHRAN – Iran prioritizes expanding cooperation with regional powers and international organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS, according to Kazem Jalali, Iran’s Ambassador to Russia. The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Moscow announced on its official Telegram channel that it hosted a meeting on Saturday

CBI provides over \$47b of subsidized foreign currency for imports

TEHRAN – The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has provided \$47.375 billion of subsidized foreign currency to importers of basic goods since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20) up to November 30. CBI figures showed that during this period, \$9.899 billion was provided for importing basic goods and medicine, \$26.116 billion for commercial goods, \$981 million for services, and \$10.379 billion for imports that have taken place in return for exports of goods or ser-

Iran’s request to obtain EAEU observer status approved

TEHRAN – A senior Russian official has announced that Iran’s request to obtain the observer state status at the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has been approved at a meeting of the union’s executive body, which was held by deputy prime ministers of the member states. Dmitry Volvach, Russia’s Deputy Minister of Economic Development, made the announcement on Saturday, according to Sputnik news agency. He said that Iran’s request will be considered during an upcoming meeting of the heads of the EAEU member states in December 2024.

egation comprising both public and private sector representatives. During the meeting, Iran’s First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref reiterated the country’s commitment to expanding bilateral and multilateral economic relations with EAEU member states. The success of the free trade agreement underscores Iran’s strategy to integrate more deeply into the regional economy and strengthen its presence in international markets.

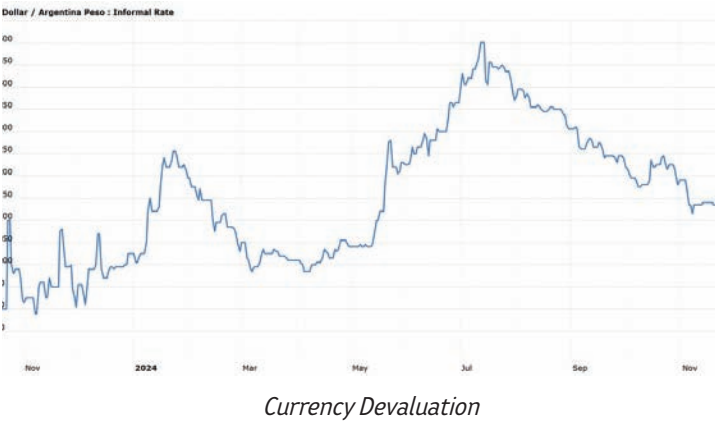
in Iran’s West Azarbaijan province and nearby regions. Owned by the state-run Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Zarshouran is the largest gold mine in West Asia. It is also the leading gold bar producer in Iran, with a monthly output exceeding 100 kilograms, amounting to over 1 mt annually. In February 2023, IMIDRO inaugurated a modern tailings dam at Zarshouran to address environmental concerns about the by-products of mining operations. The development aligns with Iran’s broader strategy to expand its mining and metals sector in response to international sanctions that have constrained the country’s crude oil exports.

featuring representatives from BRICS and railway officials from SCO member states. The gathering included Ambassador Jalali, Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development Jabbar Ali Zakeri, and other key stakeholders. Discussions centered on enhancing collaboration between Iran and Russia across bilateral, regional, and international platforms. Ambassador Jalali highlighted transportation—particularly railway development—as a critical area of cooperation between Iran and Russia. He emphasized the importance of completing joint railway projects to bolster connectivity between the two nations. Jalali further reiterated that strengthening ties with regional and international organizations, including the SCO and BRICS, remains a cornerstone of Iran’s foreign policy strategy, aimed at fostering economic growth and geopolitical alignment.

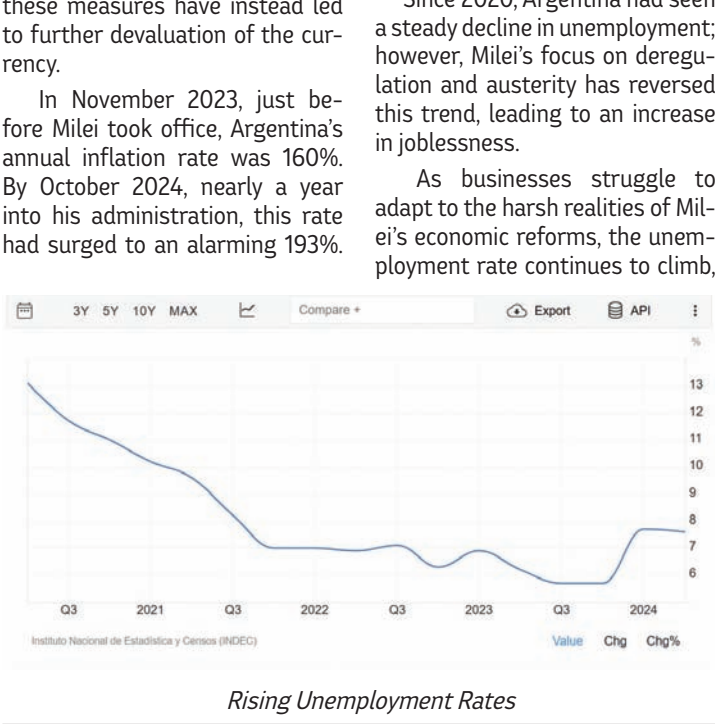
vices from Iran. Basic goods and medicine are imported into Iran at a rate of 285,000 rials per U.S. dollar. The rate is much lower than a market price which is currently hovering around 700,000 rials per U.S. dollar. That comes as importers can also receive hard currency at a rate applied in CBI’s Forex Management Integrated System, known by its Persian acronym NIMA. The price was 450,937 rials per U.S. dollar on August 17.

Evaluating Javier Milei’s First Year in Argentina

From page 1 ▶ While proponents argue that such cuts are necessary to stabilize the economy, the consequences have been devastating for many Argentinians. Social programs that provided essential support to the most vulnerable populations have been slashed, resulting in increased poverty and social unrest. At the close of 2023, just before Milei’s inauguration, Argentina’s poverty rate stood at 41.7%. However, just six months after the introduction of these neoliberal policy reforms, this figure surged to over 53%. This alarming increase in poverty is a direct result of the erosion of purchasing power and the lack of social safety nets, leaving millions



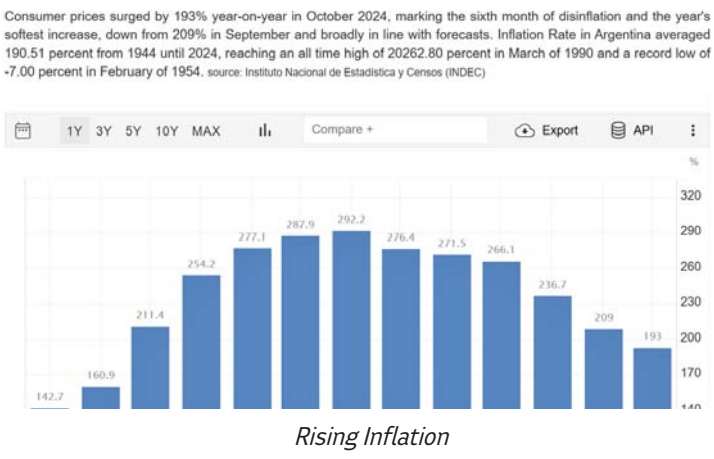
struggling to meet basic needs. The societal fallout from these austerity measures is palpable, as protests erupt across the country, highlighting widespread discontent with Milei’s policies. 2. Inflation and Currency Devaluation Milei’s radical approach to tackling inflation has included a series of controversial monetary policies, such as more dollarization and aggressive official exchange rate hikes. While the intention may have been to stabilize the peso, these measures have instead led to further devaluation of the currency. In November 2023, just before Milei took office, Argentina’s annual inflation rate was 160%. By October 2024, nearly a year into his administration, this rate had surged to an alarming 193%.



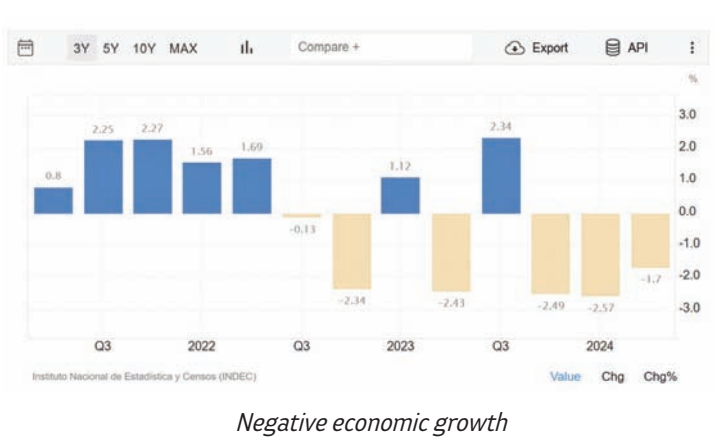
During this time, the exchange rate for the dollar in Argentina’s informal market skyrocketed from approximately 900 pesos to over 1,130 pesos. The official exchange rate also experienced a significant increase, rising from 400 pesos to 1,000 pesos. This steep decline in currency value has resulted in further erosion of purchasing power for everyday Argentinians and contrib-

Iran stresses importance of strengthened rail cooperation among SCO members

TEHRAN – Jabbar-Ali Zakeri, Head of Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI), underscored the need for enhanced rail, transit, and logistics cooperation among member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Zakeri made these remarks during the 5th meeting of SCO railway heads in Moscow, Russia, on Saturday. He proposed the organization of a trilateral meeting between Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan to standardize tariffs and improve freight transportation efficiency. In addition, Zakeri recommended establishing an expert working group to address border-related challenges, identify underdeveloped routes not connected to existing rail networks, and create a financial model to attract the necessary investment for constructing these routes. Highlighting Iran’s strategic geographical position as a bridge between East and West Asia, Zakeri stressed the country’s commitment to strengthening partnerships in transit and logistics with SCO member states. He emphasized the importance of developing both bilateral and multilateral transportation cooperation, particularly in enhancing east-west and north-south transit routes passing through Iran. Zakeri also pointed to the North-South Intercontinental Corridor, which includes key rail crossings such as the Southern Belt Pass (con-



necting China to Europe), the Almaty-Bandar Abbas route, the Almaty-Tehran-Istanbul rail passage, and the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul corridor. He noted that Iran Railways is actively working to improve international rail links by facilitating logistics, increasing capacity, and optimizing conditions to transport goods between China, Russia, Central Asia, India, Pakistan, and Europe. Furthermore, Zakeri emphasized that the North-South Corridor is a key project in global rail transport, with ongoing high-level negotiations between Iran and Russia aimed at completing the Rasht-Astara railway line in northern Iran. The brunt of a neoliberal agenda that has failed to deliver on its promises. Milei’s economic vision has thus far failed to stabilize the Argentine economy. Rather than addressing the root causes of the nation’s economic instability, his radical neoliberal policies have exacerbated existing problems, leaving millions to suffer in silence. The austerity measures have led to a devastating increase in poverty and social unrest, while inflation and currency devaluation continue to erode the standard of living for ordinary citizens. Neoliberalism has once again promised heaven but delivered hell, revealing its ruthless nature and undermining the foundations of livelihoods while sowing the seeds of inequality in its wake.



It is evident that the current trajectory—characterized by the rigid application of neoliberal dogma—is unsustainable. Argentina needs a more inclusive and sustainable economic strategy that prioritizes the well-being of all its citizens. Instead of clinging to ideological tenets that have proven detrimental, the government must shift its focus from market-driven solutions to policies that promote social equity and economic stability. Only through comprehensive and thoughtful reforms can Argentina hope to recover from this crisis and build a more equitable future for all. Argentina should nationalize its natural resources that have been privatized. As one of the Latin American countries most exposed to privatization and appropriation by large transnational corporations, Argentina faces significant challenges. For example, it is the fourth-largest petroleum producer in Latin America. However, by privatizing its petroleum sector and transferring control to foreign companies, Argentina has com-

prevent any diversions. In conclusion, Javier Milei’s first year in office has underscored the limitations and consequences of adhering strictly to neoliberal policies in Argentina. The exacerbation of economic challenges such as inflation, poverty, and unemployment highlights the urgent need for a paradigm shift. For Argentina to forge a more resilient and equitable future, it must reconsider its approach by reclaiming control over its natural resources, stabilizing its currency through de-dollarization, and ensuring that foreign exchange policies support domestic growth. An inclusive economic strategy that values social equity over rigid market ideologies will be crucial in restoring economic stability and improving the lives of all Argentinians. Only then can the nation hope to mitigate the divisive effects of economic disparity and build a sustainable path forward. True prosperity is born not from the strength of the market, but from the might of the state, guiding with purpose and vision.

Syria's Hama stands firm

From page 1 ►In a series of intensive airstrikes, the Syrian military targeted and struck terrorist group positions around Morek, north of Hama, delivering a significant blow to the militants.

Airstrikes have targeted HTS positions in southern Idlib city and the town of Morek in northern Hama.

The Syrian Army is battling to maintain a direct frontline with southern Idlib. Footage showed a convoy of army tanks heading towards Aleppo and Idlib.

Reports have said Syrian and Russian warplanes targeted movements of HTS, formerly known as the Nusra Front, in southern Idlib's countryside.

However, it is a source of concern for the stability of the Arab state that the militants are in control of many parts of Aleppo, the second-largest city in Syria.

Over two million civilians have reportedly been displaced from Aleppo to nearby towns as a result of the presence of Takfiri groups in the city.

Government forces have reportedly repelled attempts by armed groups to advance in southern Aleppo, particularly near Abu al-Duhur Airbase. Footage circulating online appears to show militants in control of an airbase. The footage has not been verified.

The defense ministry has reiterated its commitment to continue operations to expel terrorist



organizations and restore state control over all of Aleppo and its countryside.

Syrian Army units have redeployed near Aleppo's International Airport to protect urban areas, the ministry said.

The army successfully reclaimed key areas along the administrative border between Hama and Idlib, strengthening its control of the region.

Syrian forces also crushed an attempt by militants to advance toward the town of Salma in the Latakia countryside.

The Russian Reconciliation Center in Syria announced that at least 300 militants in Aleppo and Idlib provinces have been killed in joint operations with the Syrian Army.

The center's Deputy Chief Oleg

Ignatiuk revealed that airstrikes targeted militant positions, observation posts, ammunition depots, and artillery sites over 24 hours.

This followed a massive assault by thousands of HTS-led terrorists, many of them foreign nationals, who launched a surprise offensive from Idlib that coincided with the Israeli ceasefire in Lebanon.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad pledged on Sunday to use force to eradicate terrorism, according to state news agency SANA.

The statement was made during a phone call with the acting president of Abkhazia.

Assad emphasized that "terrorism only understands the language of force, and it is with this

language that we will defeat and eliminate it, regardless of who supports or sponsors it," SANA reported.

Syrian media has reported that since the army's counteroffensive three days ago, the casualties of terrorists in Aleppo, Idlib and Hama have reached 1000.

Amidst the military escalation, diplomatic efforts are also underway. President al-Assad held talks with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed.

Assad reaffirmed the Syrian Army's commitment to defending national territory, while both leaders expressed support for Syria's territorial integrity.

Al-Sudani stressed Iraq's readiness to provide all necessary support to Syria to confront armed extremists and all its organizations and affirmed Baghdad's commitment to Syria's stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

"Security and stability in Syria are of critical importance not only to Iraq but to all countries in the region," the prime minister pointed out.

Iraq has closed its border with Syria and deployed reinforcements to secure the area in a bid to prevent a repeat of the 2014 tragedy when Takfiri terrorists crossed into Iraq and waged a three-year terror campaign in the neighboring Arab state.

I am starving in Gaza and I don't believe the world can't do anything



Hundreds of Palestinians gather to buy bread from a bakery in Deir el-Balah, Gaza on Saturday

By Nour Elassy

For over a year now, my family and I have been displaced from northern Gaza to Deir el-Balah in the middle of the Gaza Strip. Throughout this time, we, along with the rest of Gaza's population, have lived every type of torture imaginable and unimaginable. One of them is hunger.

Gaza is now fully dependent on food aid. From a place that could produce its own food and feed its population with fresh vegetables, fruit, eggs, meat and fish, it has now become a place of starvation.

Since last year, the Israeli army has made sure to destroy food stores, markets, warehouses storing foodstuffs, farms and fishing boats. It has eliminated police forces securing aid delivery and distribution, thus ensuring that aid is looted before it reaches those who need it. For a while now, we have been buying "aid" food, not receiving it for free.

We were barely scraping by when the situation took a sharp turn for the worse in October. What began in the so-called "disaster zone" of the north has expanded to the rest of the Strip. Israel's nutritional terrorism has struck the whole of Gaza.

How Palestinian popular resistance became a global movement

By Mandy Turner

November 29 is the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

There is a long history of solidarity with Palestinians from countries and movements struggling against colonialism and oppression across the world – especially from Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

The problem is that Palestinians did not achieve liberation during the high point of anti-colonial struggles.

Instead, they got the fake one-sided peace of the 1993 Oslo Accords, which Israel used to extend its settler-colonial project from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

It is this situation – the failure to provide Palestinians with security, rights, and dignity through the US-sponsored "peace deal" – that led us directly to this day.

For Palestinians in Israel, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza, sumud, or steadfastness, underpins resistance against Israel's attempts to physically remove them and destroy their demand for rights. Because, as Palestinian writer Tareq Baconi reminds us, "The alternative to Palestinian sumud is oblivion."

Yet they are not alone.

There is also a huge diaspora – the Palestinian shatat. Israel's expulsion of Palestinians during the 1948 Nakba and the 1967 Naksa, and through other strategies of dispossession, turned most Palestinians into refugees and exiles.

This means that the struggle for Palestinians to remain or return to their homeland has always

been global, never just local.

In July 2024, the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics estimated there are 14.8 million Palestinians worldwide, over half of which constitute the shatat.

In the past, this was seen as a source of Palestinian weakness. Today, in the time of Israel's genocidal apotheosis, this is a source of strength

The 'Global Axis of Solidarity' against Israel's attempt to erase the Palestinian people is getting bigger every day

because it created the foundations for a Global Axis of Solidarity.

This axis spans villages and civil society groups in Palestine with a vast and ever-expanding network of Palestinians in the shatat and their allies worldwide.

Links with social justice campaigns such as the Black Lives Matter movement have brought a whole new generation of activists into supporting the struggle for Palestinian rights.

Nowhere as bad as Gaza

Palestinians in Gaza are at the sharpest receiving end of Israel's violence. The number of casualties and the images of human suffering coming out of Gaza each day are truly monstrous.

Israel's repression and killing spree is accelerating in the West Bank, but the core of its genocidal actions remains in Gaza.

Palestinians outside of Gaza – inside the "Green Line", Jerusalem, the West Bank, the shatat – repeatedly tell me when I express solidarity and friendship during this genocide that nothing is as bad as Gaza.

In the West Bank, a Palestinian friend told me: "It's taking its toll on everyone. But still, we say al-hamdulillah as it is no way near what our brethren in Gaza have been and still are going through."

Another Palestinian friend in Jerusalem said: "Gaza is now genocide. The West Bank is what Gaza used to be. East Jerusalem is what the West Bank used to be. And '48 Palestine (the Palestinian term for Palestinians inside "the Green Line" with Israeli citizenship) is what East Jerusalem used to be."

This insightful comment neatly captures Israel's constantly accelerating conveyor belt of repression and attempted erasure. By fragmenting Palestinians into segments, Israel has made it easier to divide and rule, exclude and expel, isolate and destroy.

Popular resistance is the rule, not the exception

In *Popular Resistance in Palestine: A History of Hope and Empowerment* Palestinian writer Mazin Qumsiyeh shows how suicide bombings, rocket attacks, plane hijackings and hostage-taking are the exception, not the rule, in the over 100 years of Palestinian resistance.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Trump threatens 100% tariff on BRICS countries if they pursue creating new currency

President-elect Donald Trump said he would require countries that are part of BRICS – a China- and Russia-backed group of emerging economies – to commit to not creating new currency or face 100% tariffs during his administration.

"The idea that the BRICS Countries are trying to move away from the Dollar while we stand by and watch is OVER. We require a commitment from these Countries that they will neither create a new BRICS Currency, nor back any other Currency to replace the mighty U.S. Dollar or, they will face 100% Tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful U.S. Economy," Trump posted on Truth Social on Saturday afternoon.

BRICS had been made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South

Africa since 2011. Earlier this year, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia and Egypt formally joined – the first expansion in over a decade. Thirty-four countries have submitted an expression of interest in joining the bloc of major emerging economies, South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said in February.

The leader of one member country, Brazil's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, in 2023 proposed creating a common currency in South America to reduce reliance on the US dollar.

Using BRICS currencies and banking networks outside the US dollar-denominated system could allow member countries such as Russia, China and Iran to circumnavigate Western sanctions.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



On Saturday night thousands of mourners descended on the site where Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah was assassinated in a massive Israeli air strike on September 27 in Beirut. The site of the strike was lit up in red and festooned with Hezbollah flags. At its center, torches projected light beams into the night sky. Men, women and children wept at the sight of the strike, while the crowd chanted "At your service, Nasrallah".

Israel's war inflicting 'unprecedented and irreversible harm' on Palestinian children

Save the Children has published a new report on the impact of Israel's war on Palestinian children in Gaza.

It said the conflict "has inflicted unprecedented and potentially irreversible harm on Palestinian children, with consequences that threaten not only their futures but the very fabric of Palestinian society for generations to come".

The report identified several short and long-term consequences of the conflict on Palestinian children.

It said children in Gaza face acute risks from explosive weapons, starvation, disease, and lack of essential services, while malnutrition, inadequate healthcare, and constant exposure to violence are inflicting lasting damage on their physical and cognitive development.

Yemen launches missile at 'vital target' in central Israel

Yemen's Ansarallah launched a military operation on a "vital target" in central Israel using a hypersonic missile, the group's military spokesman, Yahya Saree, said in a televised address on Sunday.

The group will continue its attacks until "Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip is halted and the siege is lifted", Saree added.

While voices inside Israel admit genocide in Gaza, US threatens ICC

Analysts also believe Israel is not just seeking to resettle Gaza but to force Palestinians in the occupied West Bank to abandon their native homeland.

Speaking at the annual UN meeting in New York, Netanyahu claimed that Israel does not seek to stay in the Gaza Strip. If it is so, why has his military flattened about 60-70 of the buildings in the besieged Gaza Strip? The scale of destruction in such a small territory housing about 2.3 million population is so great that has made living there almost impossible.

In mid-July, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), citing the UN Environment Program (UNEP), estimated that clearing 40 million tons of rubble in the Strip will take 15 years.

The scale of destruction and death in Gaza convinces everybody with common sense that hawkish politicians want to ethnically cleanse Palestine's indigenous people. Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir told Army Radio on Sunday that "settlement in Gaza should be encouraged".

However, what is shocking is that the United States has angrily rejected reports by UN officials that Israel is ethnically cleansing the Palestinian population in Gaza and has threatened to take punitive measures against The Hague-based International Criminal Court that has issued arrest warrants against Netanyahu and his sacked defense minister Yoav Gallant

for war crimes and Crimes against humanity in Gaza.

And what is more astounding and dangerous is that Republican Tom Cotton has suggested that the United States could invade Holland to protect wanted Israeli war criminals.

"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 law on the ICC is known as The Hague Invasion Act for a reason. Think about it," Cotton wrote in a post on X on Nov. 21.

Remarks by American officials in making threats against the ICC and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) are worrying signs that the world is unfortunately degenerating into lawlessness, chaos, fanaticism, and fascism. In such an environment people in certain parts of the world have the right to feel unsafe and unprotected.

Mandy Turner, a British senior researcher with Security in Context, is quite right when she says the US is "directly militarily involved in Israel's genocide in Gaza" and "shielding it from censure" in the UN, the ICC, and ICJ.

Naturally, a complicit in the genocide resorts to different pretexts and event threats to deny and undeniable fact before the eyes of the people in the world.

Masghati: a culinary jewel of Lar



By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – A translucent dessert, with its gentle floral aroma and silky texture, the Masghati of Lar is a jewel of regional cuisine in the ancient city, situated in southern Iran.

Crafted with care, Masghati is made from a simple yet harmonious blend of rosewater, starch, sugar, and saffron, often adorned with slivers of pistachios or almonds.

Whether enjoyed alongside tea or as a standalone indulgence, its golden hue and tender consistency offer a visually captivating sweet with a delightful taste.

Masghati is more than a treat. For decades, it has become a symbol of hospitality and warmth in Lar and surrounding villages and towns. It is traditionally served by the locals during their many celebrations and gatherings.

Situated in the south of Fars province, and relatively close to the Persian Gulf, Lar beckons culture enthusiasts, researchers and avid sightseers with its rich history and enchanting landmarks.

Century-old tradition

Initiating some 100 years ago, an original form of Masghati was first made to Lar by Haj Mohammad Qannad, a master confectioner who brought this art from Muscat, Oman.

Since then, the Qannad family along with several other counterparts have carefully preserved this legacy, crafting a unique version of Masghati that has become synonymous with Lar itself.

Today, the confection is celebrated as a symbol of Lar's culinary heritage, with its preparation listed in Iran's intangible cultural heritage registry in 2019.

Taste like no other

While Masghati is produced in other parts of Iran, the Lar version is unparalleled in flavor, texture, and quality.

This golden, translucent dessert owes its unique character to the meticulous artistry of Lar's confectioners.

The blend of saffron, rosewater, pistachios, and almonds are cooked to perfection in traditional copper pots, creating a soft, melt-

in-your-mouth treat that leaves a lasting impression.

In addition to be the city's top souvenir, Msghati is also exported to many countries such as the Persian Gulf littoral states, Canada and a number of European countries.

Masghati along with its closest local version Halva-e Megrazi, is often prepared for celebrations, religious events, and family gatherings, making it both a cultural and culinary treasure.

Culinary tour

Nothing compares to the firsthand experience of exploring a new destination. While in Lar, it includes a visit to traditional Masghati workshops.

The city is home to a number of confectioneries, where skilled artisans work tirelessly, combining age-old techniques with innovative flavors.

Observing the labor-intensive process—stirring bubbling pots, pouring fragrant rosewater, and hand-decorating with nuts—is as captivating as tasting the final product.

Health benefits

This indulgent dessert is not just a treat for the palate; it also offers health benefits. Packed with natural ingredients like saffron, almonds, and rosewater, Masghati is believed to boost energy, improve digestion, and enhance memory. With essential vitamins and minerals such as potassium, magnesium, and zinc, it's a guilt-free pleasure that nourishes both body and soul.

Call for recognition

Despite its rich heritage and unique appeal, Masghati of Lar remains somehow unknown in some parts of Iran and beyond. Efforts to brand and promote this delicacy are underway, aiming to position it alongside Iran's renowned sweets, like Isfahan's Gaz and Qom's Sohan. By introducing Masghati to larger markets and tourists, Lar hopes to elevate its standing as a cultural and culinary destination.

A lesser-known travel destination

Beyond its sweet delights, Lar boasts remarkable historical and architectural landmarks.

From the ancient Bazaar of Qaisariyeh to the majestic Dragon Castle (Qaleh-e Ejdeha-Peykar), the city's treasures tell stories of a bygone era.

Moreover, the city's domed water reservoirs and caravanserais reveal its strategic importance as an ancient trade hub, while the lush Bagh-e Neshat offers a peaceful retreat.

No trip to Lar is complete without bringing home the city's most cherished souvenir: the exquisite Masghati.

UN Tourism launches global artificial intelligence challenge

UN Tourism is looking for start-ups and scale-ups that are revolutionizing the tourism sector through cutting-edge solutions.

The Global Artificial Intelligence Challenge will support projects that are leveraging digital technologies to enhance tourism, promote sustainability, and drive economic growth.

Participants are encouraged to address digital transformation, sustainability, inclusivity, and digital governance across key areas, including branding and marketing; smart destinations and deep technologies; scalable education solutions; and efficiency in operations.

Through these categories, the initiative seeks to foster innovation that elevates destination appeal, optimizes resource management, and creates intelligent, impactful tourism experiences.

UN Tourism Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili says: "Innovation is a key driver of the future of tourism."

This Challenge is a unique opportunity for creative minds to contribute to the sustainable and inclusive growth of the tourism sector. We are excited to see the innovative solutions that will emerge from this global initiative."

UN Tourism Executive Director, Natalia Bayona, adds: "AI is projected to add \$15.7 to \$19.9 trillion to the global economy by 2030, with generative AI alone adding \$2.6 to \$4.4 trillion annually. This is transformative power—AI is the future of tourism. The future of tourism is here, and it is intelligent, efficient, and sustainable".

The challenge counts on the support of major partners, including; SPARK, the Innovation Hub of Les Roches from the Sommet Education group, as well as Unicoi, the official cryptocurrency of Unicorn Hunters and Amadeus and its Venture Capital for technology companies.

The Challenge is open to individuals, teams, and companies from across the globe.

Applicants must submit a detailed proposal outlining their innovative solution, its potential impact on the tourism sector, and a plan for implementation.

Proposals will be evaluated based on creativity, feasibility, and scalability. Candidates can apply until 31 March of 2025.

Finalists will have the opportunity to present their pitches at the UN Tourism Demo Day: the UN Tourism Tech Adventures, by the end of 2025.

(Source: UN Tourism)

Shiraz is a safe, promising hub for tourism and investment, Australian ambassador says

TEHRAN – Shiraz, the cultural and historical jewel of southern Iran, recently welcomed Ian McConville, the Australian Ambassador to Iran, during his official visit to the city.

In a meeting with Shiraz's Deputy Mayor Arash Farajzadeh on Saturday, the ambassador lauded Shiraz as a secure and significant center for tourism and investment, despite travel advisories issued by some foreign governments,

A city known for its poetry and culture

Ambassador McConville, who previously visited Shiraz with his family in 2017, emphasized the city's cultural and historical prominence, IRNA reported.

Shiraz is widely recognized in Australia as the city of poets and scholars, with luminaries like Hafez and Sadi holding a special place in global literary heritage, the envoy said.

He noted that several Australian cities share membership in international unions of historic cities, paving the way for potential cultural and educational exchanges.

Opportunities for collaboration

The ambassador also highlighted Shiraz's reputation as a major tourism hub and its potential for agricultural collaboration



with Australian cities.

Shiraz's tourism and agricultural sectors provide promising opportunities for partnerships.

The city's security and hospitality are undeniable assets for attracting foreign tourists, he added, expressing optimism about fostering closer ties between Shiraz and Australia.

Deputy mayor highlights Shiraz's diversity

Farajzadeh, for his part, introduced Shiraz as a microcosm of Iran, describing it as a city with diverse climates, ethnicities, and cultural richness.

He highlighted Shiraz's famed attractions, including its historical gardens, Zand-era architecture, and religious landmarks such as the Shah Cheragh shrine, which draw visitors from around

the world.

Farajzadeh also underscored Shiraz's unique environmental qualities, noting its clean air and favorable climate.

These factors, he said, make the city an ideal location for investments, particularly in tourism infrastructure.

Strengthening urban diplomacy

Shiraz has made significant strides in urban diplomacy, establishing sister-city relationships and participating actively in international organizations such as the League of Historical Cities and the World Association of Major Metropolises. Farajzadeh pointed to events like the commemoration of Shiraz Day in Seoul, Pécs, and Hyderabad as examples of the city's efforts to share its cultural wealth globally.

Culinary heritage of Lar explored at conference in southern Iran

TEHRAN – Lar, a historic city in southern Iran, hosted a culinary conference at the Lar-estan Science and Technology Tower to examine the region's rich gastronomic heritage and its potential for food tourism.

The event held on Thursday evening, was part of the "Parvaseh" series, which marked its fourth installment and brought together culinary experts, researchers, and historians to discuss Lar's unique culinary offerings, such as the famous Masghati dessert and Kebab Lari.

The panel featured international chef Mohammadreza Qasemi, food historian Bahador Amini, and culinary researcher Soroush Parhami, who shared insights into the cultural and economic dimensions of food tourism in Lar and its surroundings.

Culinary identity and economic impact

Chef Qasemi highlighted the economic significance of food tourism, particularly through festivals and culinary travel.

"Lar and Bastak hold an irreplaceable position in southern Iran's culinary landscape," he noted, emphasizing that dishes like Masghati and Kebab Lari possess an unparalleled authenticity that cannot be replicated in other cities.

He also reflected on the emotional connection created by food, saying, "Some dishes leave a fleeting impression, while others, like Masghati, create lasting memories due to their distinct taste and cultural essence."

Qasemi also underscored the need for more accessible culinary knowledge and the

preservation of traditional recipes, pointing out that many iconic dishes risk being lost due to a lack of documentation.

Supporting research and cultural exchange

Amini, a historian specializing in food culture, stressed the importance of research in developing food tourism.

"A major weakness in food tourism across Iran is the lack of scholarly research," he said, advocating for media and cultural institutions to narrate new stories inspired by culinary traditions.

Amini also highlighted examples of cultural exchange influencing local cuisines, such as the adaptation of Omani Halwa into Lar's Masghati, and the transformation of dishes like Shishlik (a dish of skewered and grilled cubes of meat) and various soups in different Iranian regions.

The expert also emphasized the importance of preserving tangible culinary heritage, including traditional workshops and cooking methods, which are integral to the authenticity of Lar's cuisine.

Food as a medium of connection

Parhami, a culinary researcher and hospitality expert, shared personal anecdotes about how food acts as a cultural bridge.

He recounted hosting a Japanese tourist in his guesthouse, encouraging participation in cooking as a way to foster connection.

"Cooking together takes time, and that time creates a foundation for understanding



and cultural exchange," Parhami explained.

Describing food as a "medium," he said, "It's not just about tasting a dish; it's about sharing stories and getting to know another culture through its cuisine."

Sharing his experiences, Parhami said that he had organized international-themed events, including "Nights of Nations," to introduce guests to global culinary traditions.

The conference concluded with a call for collective efforts to enhance Lar's food tourism.

"Small initiatives can lead to significant achievements," Parhami stated, encouraging local businesses, from small-scale Masghati workshops to guesthouses, to collaborate and showcase Lar's culinary treasures.

The event underscored the potential of Lar's cuisine as a cornerstone of its cultural identity and a driver of economic and cultural exchange.

170-year-old fragrance of Naser al-Din Shah's perfume rediscovered



TEHRAN – In an extraordinary discovery, curators at Tehran's Dafineh Museum recently encountered the lingering scent of a perfume belonging to Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, a ruler of 19th-century Persia, from a bottle crafted nearly 170 years ago.

The perfume bottle, part of Naser al-Din Shah's personal grooming set, is a centerpiece of the museum's collection, Mehr reported on Sunday.

The set, made with the finest materials and commissioned from renowned global brands

of the time, highlights the luxurious lifestyle of the Qajar king. Among the remarkable items is a shoehorn crafted from turtle shell, exemplifying the exclusivity of the collection, the report said.

A fragrance that stood the test of time

The perfume bottle, attributed to Louis Vuitton, still exudes a subtle scent, defying the passage of nearly two centuries.

Museum experts were astonished when the delicate aroma was detected upon opening the bottle.

This rare artifact is housed in the gallery of gems and historical adornments, part of the Dafineh Museum, located on Mirdamad Boulevard in Tehran. The museum, which showcases a wide array of historical treasures, is open to visitors daily except Saturdays.

Naser al-Din Shah was the fourth Shah of Qajar Iran from 5 September 1848 to 1 May 1896 when he was assassinated by Mirza Reza Kermani during a visit to the Shah Abdol-Azim Shrine.

It is said that the revolver used to assassinate him was old and rusty and had he worn a thicker overcoat or been shot from a longer range, he would have survived the attempt on his life.

Nasser-al-Din Shah's assassination and the subsequent execution of Mirza Reza Kermani marked a turning point in Iranian political thought that would ultimately lead to the Iranian Constitutional Revolution during his successor Mozzafar-al-Din Shah's turbulent reign.

The monarch was buried in the Shah Abdol-Azim Shrine, in Ray, southeast Tehran, where he was assassinated.

All rural women heads of household under coverage of insurance

TEHRAN –With 9,000 more rural and nomadic women newly getting insurance coverage, 100 percent of the women heads of household in rural areas are fully covered by the insurance, the head of the Welfare Organization has said.

“Currently, there are no women heads of household in rural areas without insurance,” ISNA quoted Javad Hosseini as saying.

One of the target populations of the Welfare Organization is women heads of household who receive various long-life services like skill training and employment from the organization, he added.

Referring to the three steps that are taken by the organization to provide services, Hosseini said empowering and creating opportunities are the first two steps which once accomplished will result in the third step, which is balancing.

Achieving balance leads to social security and social welfare, which is the ultimate goal of all governments, the official said.

Also, the Welfare Organization grants 300 million rials (about 500 dollars) to women heads of household, as well as loans to create employment opportunities, he further noted.

Rural women's role in sustainable development

Rural and nomadic women play a pivotal role not only in the family welfare but also in the country's sustainable development.

Women, as well as men, in villages and rural areas, have a great contribution to all-out national de-



velopment.

They carry out the bulk of domestic work within families and households in villages and rural areas.

Apart from their role in the stability of the family, they are known to play a key role in agriculture accounting for a substantial proportion of the agricultural labor force.

The rural women also make significant contributions to food security and nutrition, land and natural resource management, and daily tasks.

The women of the villages with their different capabilities protect the native identities of communities, they are sources of many cultures and traditions.

Achieving gender equality and empowering women is not only the right thing to do but is a critical ingredient in the fight against extreme poverty, hunger, and climate change.

Over half a million housewives under coverage of insurance

There are more than 511,000 housewives in the country under insurance coverage, an official with the Social Security Organization said in September.

All the women between 18 and 50 years of age can apply for insurance, IRNA quoted Majid Maleki as saying.

Women's participation in decision-making councils of ministries, insurance coverage for rural women, mothers with three or more children, and pregnant women are some of the great measures taken by the administration in recent years. The empowerment programs have resulted in the self-sufficiency of more than 126,000 women heads of household.

The status of women in various fields was improved after the Islamic Revolution and women, as half of the country's population, have been leading in many fields.

After the victory of the Islam-

ic Revolution in February 1979 by toppling the Pahlavi regime [the last Iranian royal dynasty, ruling for almost 54 years between 1925 and 1979], women were given equal rights to shape their futures. The Islamic Revolution provided them a chance to build their distinct identity and they have been tremendously successful in doing that.

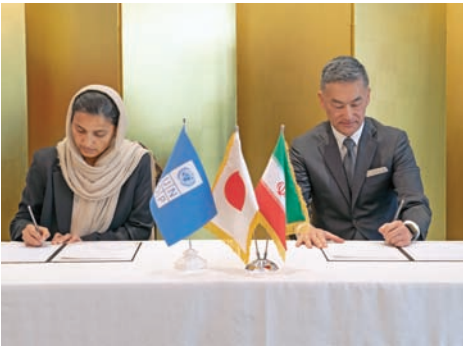
There were extensive changes in the fields of science, education, economy, employment, and presence in management positions for women. Now a large part of activists in various fields of academia, business, and management are made up of capable Iranian women.

Education as a social value for women is seen as real freedom for them. Illiteracy among women and girls has been nearly eradicated as the literacy rate reached 99.3 percent and the ratio of female to male students has increased by 28 percent. According to the latest data, nearly 60 percent of all university students are females today. The percentage of women in higher education has increased nearly 21 times since the Revolution.

The notable presence of women in the education sector has had a remarkable impact on the job market of the country as well, with women taking more jobs in both the public and private sectors.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in one of his speeches said, “It is wrong to assume, we should prevent women from partaking in economic and social activities with reference to Islam.

UNDP welcomes new contribution from Japan to strengthen wetland management, climate resilience in Iran



TEHRAN – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Islamic Republic of Iran has received a generous contribution of JPY 690,000,000 from the Government of Japan to enhance wetland management and strengthen climate resilience in Lake Urmia, Shadegan, Parishan, and Anzali wetlands.

Japan has been a key partner of the Government of Iran and UNDP since 2014 in supporting sustainable natural resource management in wetland basins and diversifying livelihoods of communities reliant on wetlands.

During the signing ceremony on 1 December 2024 the Government of Japan and UNDP signed exchange of notes to implement “The Project for Developing Conservation System of Wetlands in Lake Urmia and Other Wetlands

including their Surrounding Communities.” The project will be jointly implemented with the Department of Environment and in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) from 2024 to 2028.

The project will build on the past achievements and will accelerate efforts to successfully scale up piloted models and practices. By focusing on sustainable agriculture and alternative livelihoods that are adapted to climate change, the initiative seeks to create long-term benefits for local communities while preserving the biodiversity of wetlands as vital ecosystems.

“Over the past ten years, the unwavering support from the People and the Government of Japan has positively impacted agricultural productivity and enhanced livelihoods in target communities. In the next four years, we will continue promoting innovative, water-efficient agricultural practices, while emphasizing scaling up for a better future for all,” said Gulbahor Nematova, UNDP

Iran Deputy Resident Representative.

H.E. Mr. Tsukada, the Ambassador of Japan to Iran stated: “Iran has 26 valuable wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention, including Lake Urmia. These wetlands, which are home to diverse species and migratory birds, must be conserved in cooperation with the international community.

Over the past 10 years, Japan has provided support for Lake Urmia conservation, but in order to further restore the wetland, it is essential to manage uncontrollable water extraction, develop an irrigation system that appropriately respond the climate change, and create sustainable industries such eco-tourism.

In addition to directly tackling these challenges, this project's knowledge and technologies will be utilized in other wetlands in Iran.

We hope that the new project signed today will contribute to the environmental protection and economic development of the areas around the wetlands.”

The four-year project aims to enhance wetland management and strengthen climate resilience in Lake Urmia, Shadegan, Parishan, and Anzali wetlands.

‘Further measures required to preserve forests’

Iran's forest area is approximately 12 million hectares with 0.2 hectares per capita, which is one quarter of the world average, so attention to preserve the forest areas must be four times the global attention, faculty member of the Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands has said.

Mohammad Darvish made the remarks on the occasion of the National Tree Planting Day.

Unfortunately, forests have been taken for granted in the country, as 2 million hectares of the northern forests has been depleted since 1330s (1950s), thus no serious protection measures have been taken, he said.

حفظ جنگل ها نیازمند اقدامات بیشتر

بر اساس آخرین آمار موسسه تحقیقات جنگل ها و مراتع، وسعت رویشگاه های جنگلی ایران حدود ۱۲ میلیون هکتار و سرانه هر ایرانی از جنگل، کمتر از دو دهم هکتار است که یک چهارم سرانه جهانی می شود بنابراین باید توجه ما به حفظ رویشگاه های جنگلی، ۴ برابر توجه جهانی باشد.

محمد درویش عضو هیات علمی موسسه تحقیقات جنگل ها و مراتع کشور روز چهارشنبه همزمان با روز درختکاری و آغاز هفته منابع طبیعی این مطلب را عنوان کرد.

او در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: به نظر می رسد در کشور آن طور که باید به درختان و حفاظت از آنها توجه نمی شود؛ نابودی دو میلیون هکتار از جنگل های شمال از دهه ۳۰ تاکنون گواه این ادعاست.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Tehran, Muscat discuss ways to forge sci-tech ties

TEHRAN –Iranian and Omani officials have examined the potentialities of expanding scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries.

On Saturday, an Iranian delegation including Iran's ambassador to Oman, Mousa Farhang, and the country's cultural attaché, Morteza Babaki-Nejad, held a meeting with Hamdan bin Sulaiman Al-Fazari, President of Sohar University, and some other staff of the university in Muscat, IRIB reported.

During the meeting, the Omani official stressed the good relationship between the two countries and elaborated on Sohar University's status and accomplishments.

Farhang, for his part, highlighted Iran's capabilities in technology and science. The official welcomed the idea of boosting scientific ties with Sohar University; he also voiced the readiness of the embassy to support the plans.

Besides, the officials discussed and made necessary arrangements for holding an Iranian sci-tech exhibition at Sohar University which is scheduled to be held in the near future.

Muscat to host Iran's sci-tech days conference

Iran's scientific and technology days conference was held in Muscat, Oman, from September 16 to 17.

The two-day conference included a technology exhibition and also specialized meetings, IRNA reported.

The exhibition was planned to be held at the History of Science Center of the German University of Technology in Muscat. The specialized sci-tech meetings were held at Sultan Qaboos University with the presence of Iranian scientists from technology parks.

The participants also paid a visit to technology centers in Muscat.

Moreover, Iranian science and technology parks set up 10 pavilions that feature advancement in robotics; nano-technology; modern oil and gas technology; education;

Iranian delegation attends Tajikistan's ICT conference



TEHRAN –An Iranian delegation, representing the Ministry of Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT), has participated in the first conference of innovation and digital technologies of Tajikistan, providing detailed information on Iran's accomplishments and projects in the ICT sector.

The Iranian officials elaborated on the country's achievements in electronic government and post services, high capabilities in manufacturing communication equipment, telecommunication infrastructure, and optical fiber network, as well as electronic authentication which were all well received by the Tajik side, Mehr news agency reported.

They also invited Tajik counterparts to pay a visit to the 25th International Telecom Expo 2024 which is going to be held from December 23 to 26 in Tehran to get more familiar with Iranian companies' capacities.

The officials decided to follow up on agreements made during the visit of Tajik officials of the exhibition, and prepare a draft of a memorandum of understanding to be signed by Tajikistan president in his next visit to Iran.

The first conference of innovation and digital technologies of Tajikistan, known as Digital Tajikistan intl. Plus Forum, was held on November 25 in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

The event served as a platform for the knowledge-based companies to present



health and medicine, road and construction; Information Technology; agriculture and animal husbandry; and transportation industry.

Enhancing sci-tech ties

In December 2023, Mohammad-Sadeq Khayatian, the head of Iran National Innovation Fund, and Abdul Aziz Mohammed Al Hinai, the deputy chairman at the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones of Oman, in a meeting in Tehran stressed the need for the development of scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries.

“In several visits to Iran, I have become familiar with Iranian products, companies, and industries closely,” Al Hinai said, highlighting the significance of research and development.

“Oman can be a gateway for Iranian companies to access the international market,” he added, Mehr news agency reported.

He also suggested creating a network of universities in the Islamic world to lead joint technological working groups.

Khayatian, for his part, said that about 9,300 knowledge-based companies and almost the same number of start-ups are operating in 45 science and technology parks in the country which shows Iran's high capacity in the field of science and technology.

“Despite the cruel sanctions over the past few decades, the export of knowledge-based products has roughly reached one billion dollars per year,” he added.

their capabilities and achievements in the international arena.

It hosted competitive participants from many countries to enter Tajikistan's economic and management infrastructure in the field of digital economy.

The Forum would be an opportunity for the knowledge-based companies of the country to showcase their latest achievements in the field of information technology and an opportunity to become familiar with corresponding public and private companies, ISNA reported.

Holding meetings with leading experts in the financial technology (fintech) industry, gaining access to the most advanced knowledge and technologies as well as providing an opportunity to learn the latest trends, create strong business relationships, and discover the latest technological developments in the fintech industry and innovations that are changing were among the main features of this technological event.

Boosting links in knowledge-based sector

On January 9, the former Vice President for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-based Economy, Rouhollah Dehqani-Firouzabadi, said a range of good opportunities are available for fostering science and technology-based cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan, particularly founding joint consortia for knowledge-based products and services.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Rustam Emomali, the chairman of the Tajikistan National Assembly and mayor of Dushanbe.

The scientific and research centers of the two countries provide the grounds for the development of collaboration, IRNA quoted Dehqani-Firouzabadi as saying.

“We are ready to expand the cooperation in the form of a comprehensive program, relying on young, educated, and expert human resources,” he added.



DECEMBER 2, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Success is the result of foresight and resolution, foresight depends upon deep thinking and planning and the most important factor of planning is to keep your secrets to yourself.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:53 Evening: 17:11 Dawn: 5:28 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:57 (tomorrow)

“The Remarkable Life of Ibelin” to be reviewed at Andisheh Cultural Center

TEHRAN-Andisheh Cultural Center in Tehran will screen the 2024 Norwegian documentary “The Remarkable Life of Ibelin” by Benjamin Ree on Monday.

After screening at 5 p.m., the film will be reviewed in a session attended by film critics Saghi Soleimani and Mohsen Soleymani Fakher, ILNA reported.

In the movie, the secret life of a young World of Warcraft gamer is vividly reimagined when his online friends contact his family after his death.

Mats Steen, a Norwegian gamer, died of a degenerative muscular disease in 2014 at the age of 25.

His parents mourned what they thought had been a lonely and isolated life, when they started receiving messages from online friends around the world.

“The Remarkable Life of Ibelin” provides a fascinating counterargument about how on-line gaming at least can be a lifeline for some individuals who find themselves isolated in the real world.

Born in 1989, Mats Steen started out like many other Norwegian children of his generation: energetic, sweet-natured, unusually pale.

However, his parents Robert and Trude soon discovered that he had Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a genetic condition that eroded his ability to move and breathe and which would eventually kill him at the age of 25. By that point in 2014, Robert, Trude and

Mats’ sister Mia knew that Mats spent hours of his life online playing World of Warcraft using special equipment to accommodate his disability and had been publishing a blog about his life.

Then they signed on to the blog to announce his death, thinking hardly anyone would read it – and a flood of emails came back, for it turned out that Mats, who had been logging into Warcraft by the name Ibelin and using an able-bodied red-haired avatar, had built up an extensive network of friends over the years.

Ibelin had courted women in this digital world, and was even a bit of player at one point, but more importantly he was deeply liked for his kindness and empathy.

Mats’ sage advice had helped a mother and her son (a young man with autism) build their own relationship in Denmark through online interaction, for example.

Mats may have spent most of his time alone (apart from health workers and support staff) in a flat upstairs from his family, but WoW gave him a community.

Using the archive which recorded thousands of words of interactions between Mats/Ibelin and his friends, the film recreates Ibelin’s digital life, using animation in the style of WoW.

More than just a uniquely told portrait of unlikely friendships, Ibelin explores the stigmatization of gaming and the challenges so many parents have in understanding their children’s daily virtual experiences.

14th Iran International FICTS Festival announces winners

TEHRAN-The 14th Iran International FICTS Festival concluded on Friday in Tehran, awarding the winners of various categories.

In the fiction section, the Iranian feature film “Hook” directed by Hossein Rigi was the big winner of the night, grabbing six awards, Mehr reported.

Producer Ali Ashtianipur received the award for the best film. Shahram Najarian was given the best cinematography award and Fardin Khalatbari won the award for best score.

Mohsen Ashtianipur and Sobhan Rakhshani were presented with the award for the best actor in a leading role and the special award for a teenage actor, respectively.

In addition, Seyed Mojtaba Alavi, the secretary of the festival, presented a special prize to the film director Hossein Rigi.

Produced in 2023, the 84-minute movie is about Shir Khan, a boy who embarks on a journey to become a champion in the sport of boxing.

However, various challenges and incidents make his path to achieving his dream quite difficult.

“Arjun Chakravarthy” written and directed by Vikrant Rudra from India won the award for best screenplay. Moreover, Sija Rose received the award for the best actress in a leading role for the film.

The movie is an inspiring sports drama that chronicles the extraordinary life of Arjun Chakravarthy, a determined kabaddi player who represented India in the 1980s.

“The Start” (2022) directed by Yernar Nurgaliyev from Kazakhstan won the best actor in a supporting role award for Yerik Zholzhaksynov.

It is the story of two brothers who, after the death of their father, begin to hunt for robberies. They are noticed by an athletics coach who came from the city to the village to select talented youth.

The brothers face difficult trials, and a tragic incident changes



Actor Pejman Bazeghi holds his award for the film “Captain” at the closing ceremony of the 14th Iran International FICTS Festival in Tehran, November 29, 2024.

their lives. One of them will have to defeat the world champion in the marathon.

Pantea Panahiha from Iran grabbed the award for the best actress in a supporting role for “Captain” directed by Mohammad Hamzei. Moreover, Pejman Bazeghi received a special award by the festival secretary for his performance in the film.

The 2022 movie is about an 11-year-old boy named Isa who is absolutely convinced that he will soon be playing for the Iran national football team.

Nothing can shake his confidence. Not even the fact that he lives in the cancer section of a hospital and gets weaker from treatment to treatment.

In the documentary section, “Desert Lights” written by Rubens Juárez and directed by Katherina Harder Sacre from Chile won the awards for best short film screenplay and director.

“Desert Lights” (2022) takes place in the Atacama Desert in Chile, where Antay and his friends struggle to keep their drought-stricken town afloat.

The award for the best short film in the Paralympic section was given to “The Wall” by Evrim Inci from Turkey.

Produced in 2023, it is a fairy

tale documentary of Büsra Ün, the first female tennis player to represent Turkey in the Olympics, her stance against life, and the sacrifices she has made on the way from her daily life to her sports career.

Iranian filmmakers Shahram Maslakhi and Hadi Shariati received the awards for best feature documentary director and best feature documentary for “The Last 5 Minutes” and “Sattar El Classico,” respectively.

A production of 2023, “The Last 5 Minutes” is about a runner who has no country to live. “Sattar El Classico,” also made in 2023, depicts Elyas who goes to racetracks at the weekends and bets on horses.

Oftentimes his money is on Sattar Mehrani, a jockey widely known as Sattar El Classico.

The award for the best short documentary director was presented to Ehsan Kamarkhani from Iran for “Son of Mountain” (2022).

It deals with a boy who is born with disabilities in both feet and fingers of his right hand. Despite having all the physical disabilities, he turns to mountaineering and meets a person in a mountaineering program who changes his life path.

The International Sports Film

Festival of Iran is the exclusive representative of the Federation Internationale Cinema Television Sportifs (FICTS).

The festival is part of the World FICTS Challenge held across 16 countries worldwide.

More than 620 productions from 72 countries registered in this year’s edition of the festival including more than 250 works and productions from Iran and 370 foreign films.

The festival was held in collaboration with Iran’s National Olympic and Paralympic Committee, the Ministry of Sports and Youth, the IRIB, the Cinema Organization of Iran, and the Tehran Municipality.

The FICTS headquarters is located in Milan, Italy, with over 134 member countries.

The Iranian festival is recognized as one of the 16 global hubs and hosts 34 Asian countries, serving as a gateway for participation in the global festival in Milan, which attracts filmmakers and cinema professionals from these regions.

Winners in each category, including feature films, short films, documentaries, animations, and TV shows, qualify for the Milano International FICTS Fest, which serves as the final phase of the World FICTS Challenge.

“Kianoush’s Garden” to have special screening for people with disabilities

TEHRAN- Iranian film “Kianoush’s Garden”, directed by Reza Keshavarz Haddad, will be screened in a special event on Monday, to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

The film will go on screen at the Book Garden Cinema Complex in Tehran for individuals with visual impairments, hearing disabilities, and Down syndrome, IRNA reported.

“Kianoush’s Garden” follows Hamzeh and Abbas as they plan to invade Kianoush’s son’s garden on his wedding day.

This unexpected incident coincides with the crash of an Iraqi bomber plane near the garden. The arrival of the plane’s pilot in Kia-

noush’s garden sets off a series of unexpected adventures, intertwining the lives of the characters in surprising ways.

Organized by the Soore Cinema Organization and the Eastern Artists Institute in collaboration with the City Image Institute and Lindofilm, the event is expected to attract an audience of 500 children and adolescents with disabilities.

“Kianoush’s Garden,” which has been adapted for the visually impaired with the voice of Mehdi Malekan at the Silver Imagination Studio, was previously screened in Tehran, Mashhad, and Isfahan under the slogan “Cinema for All Children,” drawing enthusiasm from deaf audiences experiencing cine-



ma for the first time.

Currently, “Kianoush’s Garden,” is screening in theaters across the country, having garnered 95 billion rials (about \$160,000) in box office sales.

“Another Perspective” painting exhibition underway at Laleh Gallery

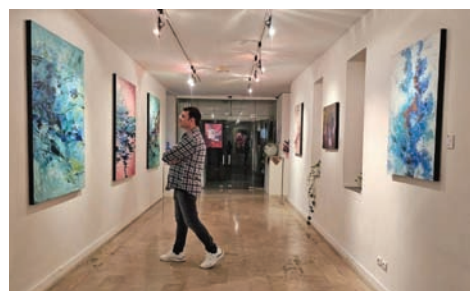
TEHRAN- An exhibition of paintings by Iranian artist Alireza Esmaeili is currently underway at Tehran’s Laleh Gallery.

Entitled “Another Perspective”, the exhibit presents a collection of 20 paintings, all executed in the style of abstract expressionism.

In his exhibition statement, Esmaeili explains that his artworks, through pure forms and colors, invites viewers to appreciate beauty anew.

Regarding the exhibition, he expressed that some scholars in the field of art believe that all forms of artistic expression, in their elevated state, strive to draw closer to music.

“Unity, rhythm, harmony, the organic connection of components with each other



and the entirety, as well as the movement of each element within defined realms and various dimensions while maintaining a harmonic and melodic bond, are among the characteristics that align music with human nature. Such experiences elevate the audience, invigorating their very souls or inspiring them.”

He elaborated: “If a painter follows such a

path, they become closer to the essence of existence, nature, and the beautiful-loving, beauty-seeking human spirit.

I have also endeavored in my works to reflect this and convey a touch of this fluid harmony existing in reality through pure forms and colors, inviting the viewer to a new appreciation of beauty.”

Alireza Esmaeili is a graduate of painting at Sooreh University and has over twenty years of experience in the visual arts.

He is also a member of the Institute for the Development of Visual Arts and an art consultant at the Research Institute of Culture and Islamic Art.

The “Another Perspective” exhibition will be running until December 7 at the gallery located on Fatemi St., off Laleh Park.

Cartoon of Day



The U.S. Soldiers

Cartoonist: Kamal Sharaf from Yemen