

'Iran Won't Retreat in the Face of any Power'

Pezeshkian talks national plans in Sharif University marking Student Day



Tehran, Moscow discuss multilateral cooperation in high-ranking meeting

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During these discussions, emphasis was placed on the significance of ongoing international consultations and the advancement of multilateralism.

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He expressed Iran's determination to continue consultations with its partners to address regional and global challenges.

The two sides emphasized the need for continued dialogue on legal and customs incentives to facilitate trade, strengthen economic ties, and advance a comprehensive cooperation agreement. ▶ Page 2

Attendance of GECF ministers in Tehran reflects Iran's stability

TEHRAN – The minister of oil said that the presence of energy and oil ministers from the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) in Tehran highlights Iran's resilience, stability, and high level of security under current conditions.

Speaking to reporters, Mohsen Paknejad announced that the 26th meeting of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) will commence on Friday in Tehran with the participation of expert delegations.

The ministerial session of the forum will follow on Sunday, December 9, with Iran's Oil Minister chairing the meeting.

Paknejad added that the 26th GECF Ministerial Meeting in Tehran will primarily focus on topics such as gas trade and issues related to boosting gas production among member states.

He noted that among the 12 main GECF members, representatives from around six countries will attend at the ministerial level, while the others will participate at the deputy minister level. ▶ Page 4

A look at Western fantasies of unveiling and its disregard for Muslim women's values

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – The Iranian Parliament has definitively passed the legislation known as the "Support for Families through the Promotion of the Culture of Chastity and Hijab," more commonly referred to as the Hijab Law. According to official sources, the new regulation explicitly prohibits "nudity, the removal of the hijab, and inappropriate attire in public spaces, both physical and virtual."

In Western discourse, the hijab has been frequently employed as a cultural or religious symbol to justify questionable and inhumane policies towards Eastern nations. No care is taken in understating the philosophy of hijab, or how Muslim women say they feel more protected, valued, and independent wearing it.

For the West, which is often tied to secularism, an exclusionary approach that validates certain sensibilities while marginalizing others, the hijab is presented as a symbol of lack or absence of agency. ▶ Page 3

Cinéma Vérité announces lineup for Gaza section

TEHRAN – A total of 23 films from both Iranian and foreign filmmakers will be showcased in the Gaza section of the 18th edition of Iran International Documentary Film Festival Cinéma Vérité, the organizers have announced.

"Out Of Frame", directed by Nidaa Abu Hasna, "Jad and Natalie" by Aws Al-Banna, "Hill of Heaven" by Kareem Satoum, "No" by Hana Awad, "Everything is fine" by Nidal Damo, "24 Hours" by Alaa Damo, "Selfies" by Reema Mahmoud, and "Soft Skin" by Khamees Masharawi, all from Palestine, are among the films included in this section.

These Palestinian films are part of the "From Ground Zero" project, a 2024 anthology film featuring contributions from 22 different Palestinian directors. The project consists of 22 short films, including documentaries, fiction, animation, and experimental works, all depicting the current situation of the people of Gaza amid the ongoing Israeli genocide.

The festival will also screen "Beirut Boulevard" directed by Farah Al-Hashem and "Aida Returns" by Carol Mansour, both from Lebanon, as well as Iranian documentaries "Nahit" by Ehsan Shadmani, "My Family Album" by Mohammadreza Noruzbeigi and "Palestinian Frames" by Saeed Faraji in this section. ▶ Page 8

Syria refutes propaganda claims

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Militant groups in Syria claim to have taken more key areas from the hands of government forces. The government has cautioned against propaganda claims circulating on social media.

The Syrian Army emphasized on Saturday that its forces operating in the southern provinces of Daraa and Suwayda have repositioned and redeployed, establishing a strong and cohesive security cordon in the areas.

A statement issued by the General Command of the Army and Armed Forces read, "The redeployment and repositioning came after terrorist elements attacked the army's dispersed checkpoints and positions, aiming to distract our armed forces, which have begun regaining control in the provinces of Homs and Hama against terrorist organizations."

The statement stressed that the armed forces are addressing developments with a focus on ensuring the safety of the nation and its citizens and will confront terrorism with determination and strength. ▶ Page 5

Silent slaughter: How Israel's pawns abet Gaza genocide

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – Israel has intensified its ethnic cleansing campaign in the Gaza Strip as the regime's stooges in Syria are striving to divert global attention away from the ongoing carnage in the Palestinian territory.

Israel has killed more than 44,600 people in Gaza since launching its war of genocide on the enclave in October last year.

It began a renewed military offensive in northern Gaza in early October this year under the pretext of preventing Hamas from regrouping. However, it is evident that the regime seeks to expel Palestinians from their ancestral lands and pave the way for settlers to move in.

Israel has hindered the provision of essentials such as food to the Gaza Strip, in particular to the north. The regime has used starvation as a method of warfare to further its nefarious objectives.

The United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) has painted a gloomy picture of the humanitarian situation in Gaza. ▶ Page 5

Iran freestyle win title at Asia Pacific Deaf Games 2024

TEHRAN – Iran freestyle wrestling team claimed the title of the Asia Pacific Deaf Games 2024 with an impressive haul of four gold medals, three silvers, and one bronze.

Hamidreza Kanaani, Erfan Sattari, Mohammad Mohammadi and Mohammad Siavoshi claimed four gold medals.

Mohammad Zarei, Ali Shakibazadeh and Mohammadrasoul Ghanbarpour won three silvers and Fereydoon Tavakolinasan seized a bronze.

Iran Greco-Roman wrestling team have previously won the title in the Games.

The tournament, which is seen as a precursor to the Deaflympics in Japan next year, is being held from December 1 to 8 in Kuala Lumpur.



Diplomatic push for Syria

TEHRAN – The foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Russia convened in Qatar on Saturday for high-level talks addressing the volatile situation in Syria.

The meeting, part of the Astana peace process, came amid a surge of hostilities in the

northwest of the country, where terrorists have recently seized significant territory.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi emphasized the necessity of political dialogue and regional cooperation during the discussions. Araghchi has traveled to Qatar to take part in the

Doha Forum 2024 and the meeting of the Astana process on the sidelines of the event. Speaking to reporters after the session, Araghchi highlighted that the focus was on creating pathways to de-escalate tensions, restore territorial integrity, and ensure Syria's sovereignty. ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

The impact of America's "peace through strength" strategy on Iran

In a note, Ettelaat addressed Trump's strategy in foreign policy and wrote: Donald Trump seems to adopt the strategy of "peace through strength" in foreign policy. This strategy, which was somehow implemented in his first administration, is rooted in conservative and traditional principles of American foreign policy. This policy has had great impacts on the countries that America considers its enemies. For example, Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA and the imposition of crippling economic sanctions on Iran led to a great inflation rate, increase in military pressure in the Persian Gulf, and cyberattacks. In effect, they affected the expansion of Iran's regional influence. In line with the "America First" policy, Trump has repeatedly withdrawn from international agreements (such as the JCPOA and the Paris climate agreement). Strengthening regional strategic alliances was another goal of this policy in the Trump administration that was mostly highlighted in the Abraham agreements between Israel and the Arab countries.

Hamshahri: The West's endless claims against Iran

In a commentary, Hamshahri addressed the claims of the U.S. National Intelligence Agency about Iran's nuclear, missile, and drone capabilities. It said: The U.S. has claimed that Tehran is not currently preparing to build a nuclear weapon, but is carrying out activities that will put it in a better position to produce an atomic weapon.

Although Iranian authorities have emphasized that the production and use of nuclear weapons has no place in Iran's defense program and the nature of Iran's nuclear program is purely peaceful, the claim of military goals in Iran's nuclear program is repeated by the United States and its partners and allies. The West has accused Iran of sending missiles and drones to Russia for use in the Ukraine war.

However, unlike the obvious military intervention of the West in the Ukraine war which is sending weapons to the (eastern European) country, Iran does not support any of the warring parties and declared its readiness to mediate to reach a political solution to the conflict.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Deathtrap for terrorists in Syria

In an analysis, Siasat-e-Rooz dealt with the terrorist attacks of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) takfiris in Syria. It wrote: If the takfiris win in Syria, the consequences of such an event will affect countries such as Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, etc. It is impossible to believe that the government and army of Syria, Iran's forces stationed in Syria, and the Russian army were not aware of the movements of Takfiri terrorists stationed in Syria, who are receiving special support from Israel, America, and other countries. To counter such movements, the best policy is to pretend to be unaware so that they are caught in a trap and then the forces of the Syrian, Russian, and Iranian armies. Terrorists enjoy wide support and their media have resorted to psychological operations to present themselves as the victors of the battlefield, but the victors of this battlefield cannot be Takfiri terrorists and the countries and regimes that support them. Syria will survive. Terrorists will not be allowed to occupy, destroy, and divide this country.

Iran: The possibility of changing the equations

Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi started a new round of urgent consultations in Baghdad to extinguish the fire of conflict in Syria. The foreign minister's statements regarding the developments in Syria should be interpreted as a strategy to defend the country's national security against the militants. In the inflammatory atmosphere in Syria, Araghchi's intensive consultations during his trip to Damascus, Ankara, and Baghdad (and Doha on Saturday), along with the telephone conversations of the Iranian president with his Syrian and Russian counterparts in this regard, have shown how serious Tehran's decision to support the Damascus government is. Given its military capabilities Moscow, has put military countermeasures against these attacks on the agenda. At the same time, it has welcomed diplomatic moves to settle the conflict. The current supporters of terrorists, such as Turkey, may not have counted on the role that Iran and Russia can play on the battlefield against armed opponents; a decision that can upset the current equations and undermine the dreams of the aspiring architects of the Syrian battle.

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tinued dialogue on legal and customs incentives to facilitate trade, strengthen economic ties, and advance a comprehensive cooperation agreement.

Initiatives like the North-South Corridor and the 3+3 consultative mechanism for the Caucasus region were highlighted as key areas of focus.

Another part of the discussions involved exchanging views on enhancing international peace and security, especially in the face of pressures from states engaging in unilateral actions that violate international law, human rights, and humanitarian principles.

Additionally, the senior Iranian diplomat discussed the country's relations with North and South American countries, cooperation with BRICS nations, and broader international security matters.

Reaffirming Iran's commitment to transparency in its nuclear activities, Takht-Ravanchi reiterated Iran's dedication to its international obligations and its support for a constructive approach to global affairs.

Diplomatic push for Syria

Iranian, Turkish, and Russian FMs discuss regional peace, stability at Doha

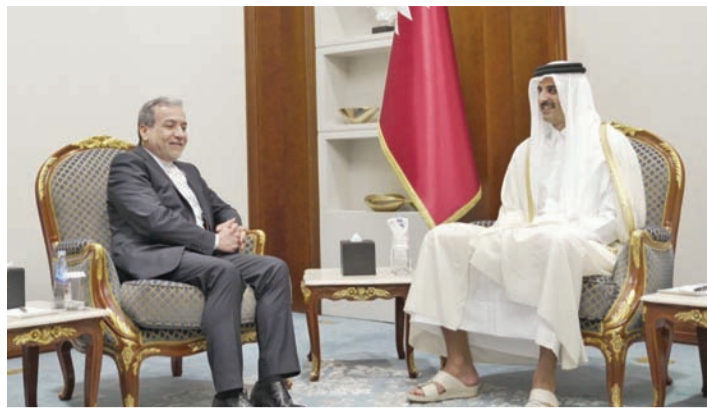
From page 1 ▶ "This was a highly productive meeting," Araghchi stated, noting that it included the participation of United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Geir Pedersen. "We agreed unanimously that hostilities must end immediately and that Syria's territorial integrity and sovereignty must be respected in line with UN resolutions."

The top Iranian diplomat underlined that political negotiations between the Syrian government and opposition groups should begin as a matter of priority. "The initiation of political dialogue is critical to achieving long-term peace and stability," he said.

The trilateral discussions occurred against the backdrop of intensified clashes in Aleppo and Idlib provinces. On November 27, the terrorist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) launched a major offensive, capturing strategic areas. Syrian government forces have since been engaged in fierce battles to regain control.

Syria has been engulfed in foreign-backed conflict since 2011, with Western nations and Washington's regional allies supporting terrorist groups to destabilize the country.

In the meeting, participants voiced collective concern about the humanitarian crisis and reiterated their commitment to finding a political solution to the conflict. They also discussed the need for ongoing



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi holding talks with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on the sidelines of the Doha Forum on Saturday.

consultations with key stakeholders, including the Syrian government and other regional powers.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, separately stated that he, along with his Iranian and Turkish counterparts, are calling for "an end to hostile activities" in Syria, where opposition fighters have made a rapid advance in a major challenge to President Bashar al-Assad.

Araghchi's diplomatic mission in Doha extended beyond the Astana talks. He met with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Qatar's Emir, and Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Qatar to discuss pressing regional crises, including the humanitarian tragedy in Gaza

and the fragile situation in Lebanon.

In another significant meeting, Araghchi conferred with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, focusing on Syrian affairs.

Continuing his diplomatic meetings, Araghchi also had a meeting with his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan.

The Iranian Foreign Minister also held discussions with Hamas leadership, including Mohammad Ismail Darwish, Chairman of the Political Council of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. These talks centered on developments in Palestine and the broader implications for regional stability.

Araghchi reaffirmed Iran's com-

mitment to supporting Syria during a visit to Damascus, where he met with President Bashar al-Assad. "Iran remains steadfast in its support for the Syrian government, its armed forces, and its people in their fight against terrorism," he said, emphasizing Tehran's dedication to maintaining regional security.

While in Baghdad, Araghchi also highlighted Iran's readiness to assist Iraq in combating terrorism and strengthening its institutions. He stressed the importance of coordinated efforts to stabilize the region and align political strategies among neighboring countries.

Araghchi concluded his remarks by reiterating Iran's commitment to advancing dialogue and fostering cooperation. "We will continue consultations with the Syrian government, and other nations involved, to ensure progress in peace-building efforts. The Astana process remains a vital framework for addressing Syria's challenges," he said.

The Astana talks, also known as the Astana format, were founded in 2017, with 21 meetings held to date. The Astana format includes Russia, Iran, and Turkey as guarantor countries in the process of resolving the Syrian crisis, alongside representatives of the Syrian government and opposition, the United Nations, and observer countries: Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq.

Press TV reports key meeting between Iranian advisor and Syrian president in Damascus



Ali Larjani (L), a senior advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad met in the capital Damascus on November 14, 2024.

TEHRAN – According to Press TV, Ali Larjani, a senior advisor to Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, visited Damascus on Friday to convey Iran's unwavering support for the Syrian government as it faces intensified terrorist attacks.

According to an informed source speaking

anonymously to Press TV on Saturday, Larjani met with President Bashar al-Assad on Friday to discuss developments and reinforce bilateral cooperation.

The meeting came amid claims that Iran had withdrawn its diplomatic and military presence from Syria, allegations that Iranian officials were quick to refute.

Yaqoub Rezazadeh, a member of Iran's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, categorically denied reports that Iran had evacuated its embassy in Damascus or pulled its military advisors from the country. "Our advisors and embassy staff remain in Damascus," Rezazadeh asserted on Saturday.

He further dismissed rumors that President

Assad and his family had fled Syria, emphasizing, "The news is baseless. Dr. Larjani met with President Assad in Damascus just yesterday."

Rezazadeh expressed concern over the ongoing escalation in Syria and highlighted Iran's diplomatic efforts to address the crisis. "Negotiations are underway with neighboring countries like Turkey and Iraq, as well as Russia, which holds significant interests in Syria," he said.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei also denied reports of any disruptions to the country's diplomatic mission in Syria. "Our embassy in Damascus continues to operate normally," Baghaei stated on Saturday, refuting claims of an evacuation.

The heightened diplomatic activity follows an alarming surge in terrorist operations in northern Syria. The Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) group, backed by foreign actors, launched a surprise offensive last month, seizing control of several towns and villages in Aleppo and Idlib before advancing into Aleppo city on November 27.

Iran denies embassy evacuation in Syria amid rising terrorism

Tehran – Iran's Foreign Ministry has categorically denied recent Western media reports suggesting the evacuation of its embassy staff from Damascus amidst escalating violence in Syria.

Esmail Baqaei, the Ministry's spokesperson, asserted on Saturday that the diplomatic mission continues to function normally despite the renewed insurgency.

The New York Times reported on Friday that "evacuations were ordered at the Iranian Embassy in Damascus" due to the intensifying conflict.

The article, citing unnamed sources, suggested that some personnel were allegedly returning to Tehran, while others were traveling by land to Lebanon, Iraq, and the Syrian port city of Latakia.

Baqaei, however, dismissed these claims as

baseless, emphasizing that no such evacuations are taking place.

In an interview with an Iranian news outlet, he reiterated, "Those claims are not true. Iran's embassy in Damascus remains operational and continues with its routine activities."

Moreover, Yaghoob Rezazadeh, an Iranian parliamentarian serving on the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, noted on Saturday: "There are currently more than 10,000 Iranians in Syria."

Earlier, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi emphasized that the Israeli regime and its allied anti-Syria militant groups aim to turn Syria into a hub of terrorism and a threat to the West Asia region.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran completes tests for Saman-1 orbital transfer block



TEHRAN – The head of the Iranian Space Organization announced that tests for the Saman-1 propulsion system's orbital transfer block were successfully completed.

Hassan Salarieh announced that the team completed multiple tests for the Saman-1 orbital transfer block after more than 24 continuous hours in orbit.

Salarieh observed that the team effectively completed all tests on Saman-1's subsystems and communication functions.

As he further mentioned, the communication tests with ground stations, which included command transmission and data reception, along with tests for determining status and control, were successfully executed.

The head of the Iranian Space Organization explained that situation control is achieved through multiple methods using cold gas thrusters, with some results showing a high level of accuracy.

On Friday, December 6, the Simorgh satellite carrier launched the Saman-1 orbital transfer block, with two extra cube satellite payloads and a research payload from the Imam Khomeini launch base.

They happily entered an elliptical orbit that reached an altitude of 410 km and a perigee of 300 km.



Heads of Iran's three government branches, President Masoud Pezeshkian, Judiciary Chief Gholamhossein Moheseni Ejei, and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, hold discussions on national and international matters on December 7, 2024.

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – In a powerful address during the Student Day ceremony at the Sharif University of Technology, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian declared that Iran will not retreat in the face of any power, emphasizing the nation's strength and resilience.

Addressing a gathering of students and professors, Pezeshkian underscored the vital role of youth in shaping the country's future.

Highlighting the significance of Student Day as a platform for demanding rights, Pezeshkian remarked, "Students are the hope for the country's future." He praised their ability to express their views freely, stating, "A student is not dependent on positions and ranks; they can speak the truth and defend rights without fear."

Pezeshkian drew attention to recent student protests in the United States and Europe against the ongoing Israeli violence in Gaza and Lebanon, contrasting them with the relatively muted response from Iranian universities. He urged students to raise their voices against injustices, saying, "When a group of killers claims to advocate for human rights while committing atrocities, it is essential to protest against that."

'Elites must lead the way to national vision'

Elsewhere in his address, Pezeshkian emphasized the importance of capable individuals stepping forward



to achieve the nation's vision as outlined by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

"The country belongs to you," Pezeshkian declared, calling for unity among the youth to bring about necessary changes in leadership. He underscored that for the nation to progress toward its envisioned future, elite and competent individuals must take charge while those lacking capability must step aside.

The president highlighted the need for a stronger connection between government and universities, stating, "Our universities are of the second generation. They need to be upgraded to the third and fourth generations."

He elaborated that a fourth-generation university is one that integrates with society to address real-world problems, while a fifth-generation institution should be focused on

long-term goals, looking a century into the future.

Addressing Iranian student movements, Pezeshkian expressed his expectations for them to become advocates for rights, emphasizing that such advocacy transcends political affiliations. "Advocates for rights do not recognize left or right. We must dialogue together," he said. He stressed the importance of informed decision-making, insisting that policies should be grounded in scientific research, international experience, and expert consultation.

'Collective action needed to address FATF challenges'

The president also highlighted the critical need for Iran to implement Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards internally, emphasizing the importance of transparency and accountability in financial transactions.

He urged students and academics to collaborate in addressing systemic issues that he said hinder the nation's economic stability.

The president called for a united effort from universities and elite professionals to tackle these challenges, stating, "With the help of universities and elites, we can solve problems."

Speaking on the matter of official appointments, Pezeshkian explained that the selection process for managers is based on individual capabilities, social capabilities, and structural capabilities. He emphasized the importance of education and communication skills in determining leadership potential.

He posed a critical question regarding societal cohesion: "Are our doctors, engineers, merchants, and industrialists currently moving towards a clear goal, or is everyone moving in a different direction?" Pezeshkian argued that a society with well-defined goals and collaborative efforts among its professionals is more likely to thrive than one where individuals operate in isolation.

As part of his ongoing efforts to improve governance, Pezeshkian announced plans for a meeting with newly appointed governors to discuss strategies for enhancing local administration and addressing community needs. He remains optimistic about the potential for collective action to create a more organized and purposeful society.

Iran volleyball chief Taghavi meets FIVB President Azevedo

TEHRAN – Head of Iran volleyball federation Milad Taghavi met FIVB newly-elected president Fabio Azevedo in Doha, Qatar.

They discussed issues related to Iranian volleyball in the meeting. This was the first meeting of the officials of the Iranian volleyball federation with the new president, in which the request to host Iran in the Volleyball Nations League (VNL) and the World Championship was discussed. Azevedo leads the organization for the next eight years, building on the progress achieved under his predecessor, Dr Ary S. Graça F°.

Greco-Roman wrestlers crowned champions at Asia Pacific Deaf Games

TEHRAN – Iran's national Greco-Roman wrestling team claimed the championship title at the Asia Pacific Deaf Games 2024 with an impressive haul of five gold medals, two silvers, and two bronzes.

In the last rounds of the competition, hosted by Malaysia, Iranian wrestlers delivered outstanding performances across multiple weight categories, further solidifying their dominance in the sport.

Mohammad Bazi (55 kg), Shahab Rahimi (67 kg), Ali Karimi Kohei (72 kg), Mohammad Javad Zeraat Pishah (77 kg), and Erfan Najafi (97 kg) defeated their opponents in the finals to secure gold medals, cementing the team's place at the top of the leaderboard.

Seyed Sadegh Abolvafoei (60 kg) and Mehdi Bakhshi (73 kg) fought hard but lost to their Kyrgyz and Kazakh opponents in the finals to claim silver.

Reza Esmaeili (82 kg) and Shirzad Mehki (87 kg) earned bronze after defeating their rivals in competitions for third place.

Mohammad Mousavi (130 kg) also competed for bronze but fell short in his bout against an Indian rival, finishing in fourth place.

Nourollahi scores as Al Wahda defeat Al Urooba

TEHRAN – Al Wahda football team defeated Al Urooba 3-0 in the 2024-25 UAE Pro League on Saturday.

In the match held at the Nahyan Stadium, Omar Khribin opened the scoring for the host in the 34th minute.

Iran international midfielder Ahmad Nourollahi made it 2-0 four minutes later and Brahim Diarra scored the third goal with eight minutes remaining.

Al Wahda moved up to third place with 18 points, three points behind leader Sharjah.

Al Urooba remained bottom of the table with three points out of nine matches.

Iran to compete at Karting Championship Nations Cup 2024

TEHRAN – President of the Iran Motorcycling & Automobile Racing Federation (MAFIRI) Maziar Nazemi said the country will compete at the Karting Championship Nations Cup 2024.

Iran will send Sam Tavousi, Khashayar Khalili, and Koroush Ghanimati to the event.

MENA Karting Championship Nations Cup 2024 returns to Qatar and will be held at the Lusail International Circuit on December 17 - 21, 2024.

This event will once again bring together the top karting talents from across the Middle East and North Africa region straight to Qatar, the heart of motorsports in the region.

Racers will compete across six categories, ranging from Micro Max (ages 8-11) to DD2 Masters (31+), showcasing the depth of karting talent in the MENA region.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Persepolis suffer home loss against struggling Nassaji

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team lost to struggling Nassaji 1-0 here on Matchweek 10 of the 2024/25 Iran's Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) on Saturday.

Nassaji winger Kevin Yamga scored the visiting team's only goal in the 25th minute.

Nassaji were reduced to 10-man in the 74th minute after Alexander Merkel was shown his second yellow card.

In the stoppage time, Nassaji defender Armin Sohrabian was also sent off for receiving his second yellow card and Persepolis defender Ayoub El Amloud was shown second yellow card.

Persepolis remained third two points adrift of leaders Tractor.

Mohebi helps Rostov beat Krylia Sovetov

TEHRAN – Rostov football team defeated Krylia Sovetov 3-1 in 2024-25 Russian Premier League on Saturday.

Ivan Oleynikov was on target for the visiting team in the 32nd minute but Dominik Oroz scored an own goal in the 37th minute at the Rostov Arena.

Mohammad Mohebi made the scoreboard 2-0 five minutes into the second half and Maksim Ospienko scored Rostov's third goal from the penalty spot in the 72nd minute.

With nine minutes remaining, Oroz was shown a straight red card.

Rostov moved to seventh place with 26 points, 13 points behind leader Zenit.

Ghaedi shines as Kalba, Al Jazira share spoils

TEHRAN – Ittihad Kalba and Al Jazira football teams shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw in the 2024-25 UAE Pro League on Saturday.

Mehdi Ghaedi scored in the 17th minute at the Ittihad Kalba Stadium and Nabil Fekir leveled the score from the penalty spot in the stoppage time.

Kalba remained in seventh place with 12 points, nine points behind leader Sharjah.

Al Jazira also are fourth with 17 points.

PGPL: Esteghlal victorious over Foolad

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team defeated Foolad in their away match at the 2024/25 Iran's Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) on Saturday.

In the match held in Ahvaz's Foolad Arena Stadium, Raphael Silva put the visiting team into the head with a header just three minutes into the match and Amirali Sadeghi made it 2-0 in the 21st minute. Esteghlal moved up to eighth place with 14 points, eight points behind leaders Tractor.

Earlier in the day, Esteghlal's archrivals Persepolis lost to rock-bottom side Nassaji 1-0 in Tehran.

Lech Poznan winger Gholizadeh on Persepolis' radar

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club are going to sign Lech Poznan winger Ali Gholizadeh in the winter transfer window.

The 29-year-old player started his playing career in 2013 with Saipa and has also played in Belgium Charleroi and Turkish side Kasimpasa.

Defending champions Persepolis have previously tried to sign the player twice but failed.

The Reds are favorites to win Iran league but they will have a difficult task ahead in the 2024/2025 AFC Champion League Elite.

Unilateral sanctions hinder climate action, Iran tells ICJ

TEHRAN – At the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the Iranian foreign ministry's director general for international legal affairs, Ali Mousavi, has denounced unilateral Western sanctions for obstructing countries' ability to meet their climate change commitments.

Addressing the ICJ's deliberations on an advisory opinion regarding governments' climate obligations, Mousavi highlighted Iran's vulnerability to climate change despite its relatively low emissions. He emphasized the importance of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDRRC), and international cooperation in addressing the crisis.

Mousavi criticized developed nations for imposing unilateral coercive measures that impede technology transfer and financial support essential for climate mitigation efforts in developing countries. He urged the ICJ to recognize these restrictions as violations of international cooperation principles.

"Developed countries must take the lead in reducing emissions and supporting developing nations through financial resources, technology transfer, and capacity building," Mousavi said, citing the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement as key frameworks.

He stressed the significance of the CBDRRC principle, which assigns differentiated obligations based on historical emissions and current capacities. Mousavi argued that developed nations' leadership should include financial contributions, technology transfer, and capacity-building initiatives for developing countries.

"Without access to technology and resources, developing countries cannot effectively participate in global climate mitigation efforts," Mousavi told the court.

He criticized trade policies like the carbon border adjustment mechanism, calling them disproportionate measures that unfairly burden developing economies.

Iran condemns Ukraine's support for terrorist groups in Syria

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry has issued a strong rebuke of Ukraine, accusing Kyiv of violating international obligations by supporting terrorist groups in West Asia.

Mojtaba Damirchiloo, Assistant Foreign Minister and Director-General for Eurasia, sharply criticized what he termed illegal arms trafficking by Ukrainian officials and their backing of terrorist organizations operating in Syria.

In a statement, Damirchiloo declared that Ukraine's actions represent a clear breach of international commitments to counter terrorism.

He specifically highlighted the danger posed by Takfiri extremist groups in Syria, entities designated as terrorist organizations by the UN

Security Council.

Damirchiloo characterized Ukraine's support for these groups as unethical and a violation of international law, warning that such alliances ultimately fuel global insecurity and violence and invariably backfire on those who sponsor them.

Dismissing Ukrainian allegations of Iranian involvement in the Ukraine conflict as baseless and politically motivated, Damirchiloo asserted that these accusations are designed to curry favor with the "genocidal Zionist regime" and the U.S. in pursuit of financial and military aid.

Reiterating Iran's consistent position, Damirchiloo emphasized Tehran's opposition to the war in Ukraine from its inception, its re-

fusal to interfere in the conflict, and its persistent calls for all parties to engage in dialogue and pursue diplomatic solutions to resolve their disputes.

Local reports as well as statements from Russian officials show Ukraine has been training members of the Tahrir al-Sham terrorist group which launched a major attack into Syria's Aleppo province last week and has been making advancements since then.

A Ukrainian news outlet with ties to the government called the Kyiv Post has also confirmed that the terrorists operating in Syria are "Ukrainian trained". Some reports even suggest that Ukraine's special forces have joined the terrorists in their attacks against the Syrian army.

A look at Western fantasies of unveiling and its disregard for Muslim women's values

From Page 1 ▶ a marker used to define and position women who wear it as subjects devoid of autonomy or decision-making power. However, this perception does not necessarily reflect the experience of those who choose to wear it, but instead responds to a discursive logic that prioritizes values such as visibility and individual freedom, understood within a Western framework.

Moreover, as political scientist Wendy Brown points out, if the West places freedom at the core of its ideals, it must also, inevitably, define its opposite: the lack of freedom.

Brown emphasizes that "the earliest conceptions of freedom are always limited and, potentially, require the structure of oppression that freedom combats." The interaction between the veiled and the unveiled creates a visual psychic economy in which the issue of freedom is imagined as resolved. In this context, the veiled is associated with oppression, absence of agency, and lack of freedom, with the solution to these absences seen, from this perspective, in Westernization, specifically understood as unveiling.

In this sense, it can be argued that, from the Western discourse, the veiled woman forms part of what Anne McClintock calls a "panoptic time," which represents modernity and contrasts with the "anachronistic time" of the veil.

In most analyses of the veil from a Western perspective, the presence of the veiled woman is constructed as a constant reminder of the existence of an "Other" that obstructs the desire for assimilation into modernity and, by extension, into whiteness. On one hand, the body that is, or can be, exposed is presented as a modern, free, secure, conscious, and human body, visible in its presence. This body is contrasted with the invisible body, veiled by insecurities, vulnerability, and, most notably, subhuman in its absence.

In the Western imaginary, freedom, understood as the

The fantasy of unveiling seeks to establish a power dynamic, in which the veiled Muslim woman becomes an object to be unveiled, understood, and controlled by the West

practice of the body, is identified with the performativity of unveiling: the body always unveiled, reflecting the accumulation of the desire for transparency characteristic of modernism.

In this context, the veil evokes the notion of a suffering and wounded body, as Wendy Brown describes, where women who wear it are seen as victims of oppression. In the fantasy of liberation through unveiling, it is assumed that the veil symbolizes suffering and submission, and that, therefore, the women who wear it embody a wounded identity that needs

to be liberated. This liberation is projected as an action that must be facilitated by liberal states, which present themselves as protectors of these women. However, in practice, the act of stripping them of the veil can become a way of imposing a homogeneous vision of freedom and autonomy, without considering the realities of the affected women.

Thus, the veil is not only perceived by the West as a symbol of oppression, but also becomes a space for political intervention, where the state, through the imposition of liberal norms, seeks to "save" women. This approach overlooks their experiences, choices, or particular contexts. In this way, there is a risk of stripping women of their agency, turning their attire into a problem that must be resolved from an external and normative perspective.

The veil, by erecting a barrier between the body of the Eastern woman and the Western gaze, seems to place her body beyond the reach of Western desire and observation. This opaque and enveloping veil creates a mysterious and elusive figure, frustrating the Western desire by making it invisible and inaccessible. The veiled figure's refusal to be observed generates disillusionment in the Western gaze, which, frustrated, subjects this enigmatic figure to constant scrutiny.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran's trade with EAEU grows by 11%

TEHRAN — Trade between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has increased by 11 percent in the first nine months of 2024 compared to the same period last year, according to the union's press service.

This growth comes as Iran is set to be accepted as an observer member of the EAEU at the union's upcoming summit in December 2024.

According to the statement, Iran's exports to the EAEU member countries—Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia—rose by nine percent in the first three quarters of the year, particularly driven by vegetables, fruits, and nuts, which showed an 11 percent increase compared to 2023.

The EAEU also reported that the most significant portion of exports from its member states to Iran consisted of agricultural products, which had increased by more than 10 percent year-on-year.

In addition, the Russian Ministry of Economic Development recently confirmed that Iran's application for observer status was approved during a meeting of EAEU deputy prime ministers in early December 2024, with final approval expected at the heads of state summit in the same month.

Dmitry Volvach, the Russian Deputy Minister of Economic Development, stated that Eurasian leaders will review and confirm Iran's status at the summit, a decision he

predicts will lead to enhanced cooperation between Iran and the union.

Meanwhile, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized in a televised interview that Iran is on the verge of becoming an observer member of the EAEU. He stressed that this status would allow Iran to establish trade relations with EAEU member countries at preferential tariff rates, creating new opportunities for Iranian producers and traders.

The Eurasian Economic Union is a regional economic bloc founded in 2014, comprising Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia. Iran signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with the EAEU in 2024, which, once ratified by the union's member states and Iran's Parliament, will eliminate tariffs on 87 percent of Iran's exports to EAEU countries.

Mirhadi Seyedi, an international trade advisor for the Iran Trade Development Organization, confirmed that the agreement has already been ratified by the parliaments of Russia, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan, while Iran, Armenia, and Kazakhstan are still awaiting parliamentary approval. The deal is expected to be implemented two months after the last parliament ratifies it, bringing significant trade benefits to both sides.

Andrei Slepnev, the EAEU's Minister of Trade, noted that the trade turnover between Iran and the union could reach \$12 billion in the near future, reflecting the growing economic ties between Iran and the region.

Iran, Vietnam urged to boost trade despite banking, transport challenges



TEHRAN — Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Ghadiah Ghiafeh highlighted the pressing need for alternative mechanisms to mitigate banking and transportation hurdles that have increased trade costs between Iran and Vietnam.

Speaking at the Iran-Vietnam Business Forum, hosted by Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) in Hanoi on Wednesday, Ghiafeh noted that the \$200 million trade volume between the two nations does not reflect their full potential. "This figure can grow significantly through com-

prehensive planning, facilitating information exchange, and leveraging modern technologies," he said.

Ghiafeh pointed to opportunities for collaboration in renewable energy, technology transfer, and food and agricultural industries. He also emphasized expanding tourism, joint ventures, and technical and engineering services, along with establishing production units to cater to regional and global markets.

"Over the past year, several trade delegations from both countries have exchanged visits. This, combined with the political will of both governments to enhance economic relations, has created immense opportunities for the private sector," he added.

Ghiafeh called for deeper collaboration between the private sectors of the two countries, urging business operators to craft practical solutions to overcome obstacles and bolster joint ventures.

On the sidelines of the forum, a memorandum of understanding was also signed by Mostafa Mousavi, the chairman of the Iran-Vietnam Joint Chamber of Commerce, and Tran Van Tri, Chair of the Vietnam-Iran Business Council.

Export from Khorasan Razavi province up 30% in 7 months on year

TEHRAN — As announced by a provincial official, the value of non-oil export from Khorasan Razavi province, in the northeast of the country, rose 30 percent during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Yaghoob-Ali Nazari, the governor-general of the province, stated that Khorasan Razavi has had a significant growth in exports this year, adding that the deputy governor-general of the province for the economic affairs and the provincial directors had good support in this field and with the created environment, the ground for this growth was well provided.

As previously announced by the former head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's foreign trade reached \$99.7 billion during the first seven months of the present Iranian year.

Mohammad Rezvanifar said that of the

mentioned figure, \$60.2 billion was the value of the country's export, and \$39.5 billion was the worth of the import.

He put the value of non-oil export at \$32.5 billion, the oil export at \$27 billion, and technical-engineering export at \$700 million in the seven-month period.

Saying that the value of the country's non-oil export rose 15 percent in the first seven months of this year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the official put the weight of non-oil export at 88.7 million tons in the mentioned seven-month, with 11.48 percent growth, year on year.

He further put the weight of the seven-month import at 21.7 million tons.

According to Rezvanifar, the average value of each ton of exported goods has increased by three percent to \$367 and the average worth of each ton of imported products has risen six percent to \$1,819 in the first seven months of this year, as compared to the same time span of the past year.

Iran emphasizes gas diplomacy, rejects political use of energy resources

By Ebrahim Fallahi

TEHRAN — Despite facing intense domestic challenges and unilateral U.S. sanctions, Iran remains committed to its role as a reliable gas exporter, particularly to its neighboring countries, including Turkey and Iraq, without using its energy resources as a political tool, according to Mohsen Paknejad, the Iranian Minister of Oil.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 26th Ministerial Meeting of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), Paknejad emphasized Iran's unwavering dedication to maintaining its role in the global energy sector. He asserted that despite the relentless restrictions imposed by the United States, Iran has consistently honored its energy agreements, particularly with neighboring nations, and has never sought to leverage gas exports for political advantage.

He stated that Iran's commitment to exporting natural gas to key partners such as Turkey and Iraq underscores the country's adherence to international energy principles, particularly those enshrined within organizations like OPEC and GECF. These organizations aim to regulate markets and foster cooperation among member states while minimizing the politicization of energy resources.

A cornerstone of global energy diplomacy

In a world transitioning to more sustainable energy sources, gas has become increasingly valued as a reliable and clean energy option. Paknejad highlighted that the gas sector is one of the most strategic assets for GECF members, emphasizing its role not just in driving economic and political development, but also in promot-



ing synergy among countries. He added that Iran has successfully navigated the challenges posed by U.S. sanctions through robust diplomacy and unique strategies, maintaining both its position in the energy market and its credibility among energy partners.

Iran's gas policy, according to Paknejad, revolves around fostering mutual interdependence and economic-political cooperation, focusing on utilizing gas as a clean and dependable resource, rather than as a tool for coercion. This diplomatic approach contrasts with the often-politicized handling of energy resources in other regions.

Gas diplomacy with neighboring countries

Iran's relationship with its neighboring countries—especially Turkey and Iraq—has remained crucial in the context of its broader energy strategy. Despite being isolated by U.S. sanctions, Iran continues to honor its gas export commitments, ensuring the uninterrupted flow of natural gas to these countries. This steady supply has not only bolstered Iran's reputation as a reliable energy

partner but also reinforced its standing within the GECF, which brings together some of the world's largest gas producers.

Iran-Turkey gas relations

Turkey has long been one of Iran's key gas customers, receiving a significant portion of its natural gas supply through a pipeline that connects the two countries. This partnership has provided Turkey with much-needed energy security while supporting Iran's economy. Despite external pressures, such as the U.S. sanctions on both nations, the gas trade between Iran and Turkey has continued without disruption.

This resilient partnership underscores Iran's policy of energy diplomacy—prioritizing stability and cooperation over political leverage.

Iran-Iraq gas relations

Similarly, Iran has consistently met its gas supply commitments to Iraq, despite political challenges and external sanctions. The two countries share a long border, and Iran has been a critical gas supplier for Iraq, particularly for its power generation needs. This cooperation is vital for Iraq's

economic recovery and infrastructure development, especially in the energy sector, where the country continues to face significant challenges.

In addition to bilateral trade, Iran's gas exports to Iraq have allowed Iran to further solidify its role as a key energy player in the Middle East. The Iraq-Iran Gas Pipeline is a vital component of this collaboration, enabling both nations to benefit from the flow of natural gas to fuel Iraq's electricity grid. These transactions demonstrate Iran's consistent commitment to maintaining strong, stable energy relationships with its neighbors, even in the face of international pressure.

Looking Ahead: Iran's gas sector and regional cooperation

As the global energy landscape continues to evolve, Iran's strategy for its gas industry remains focused on fostering regional cooperation and minimizing the politicization of energy exports. By strengthening ties with neighboring countries and adhering to its commitments, Iran is positioning itself as a central player in the Middle East's energy sector. The country's gas exports to Turkey and Iraq are a testament to its role as a dependable partner, capable of navigating geopolitical challenges and contributing to regional energy stability.

As the Gas Exporting Countries Forum and other international organizations work to ensure the stability of energy markets, Iran's unwavering commitment to its gas trade agreements remains a cornerstone of its broader diplomatic efforts. Despite external pressures, Iran continues to view gas as a tool for cooperation and economic development, not as a lever for political maneuvering.

Attendance of GECF ministers in Tehran reflects Iran's stability

TEHRAN — The minister of oil said that the presence of energy and oil ministers from the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) in Tehran highlights Iran's resilience, stability, and high level of security under current conditions.

Speaking to reporters, Mohsen Paknejad announced that the 26th meeting of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) will commence on Friday in Tehran with the participation of expert delegations.

The ministerial session of the forum will follow on Sunday, December 9, with Iran's Oil Minister chairing the meeting.

Paknejad added that the 26th GECF Ministerial Meeting in Tehran will primarily focus on topics such as gas trade and issues related to boosting gas production among member states.

He noted that among the 12 main GECF members, representatives from around six countries will attend at the ministerial level, while the others

will participate at the deputy minister level.

Paknejad emphasized that the main members of the GECF collectively hold the world's largest gas reserves, with the eight observer members and one guest member—Oman—also possessing significant gas resources.

He reiterated that the attendance of GECF ministers at this time demonstrates Iran's stability, security, and enduring resilience.

Iran's copper industry to boost power supply with 800 MW of renewable energy



TEHRAN — Iran's National Copper Industries Company (NICICO) plans to add 800 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy to its power supply to address energy imbalances and ensure self-sufficiency, a senior

company official said on Sunday.

Gholamreza Molataheri, NICICO Deputy for Strategic Planning, said the company's "Kimia Project," aimed at producing one million tons of copper cathode annually, will require 200 million cubic meters of water, 1,800 MW of electricity, and 1,800 million cubic meters of natural gas.

To meet its water demands, NICICO is leveraging two desalination and water transfer pipelines from the Persian Gulf, which will supply water to central Iran. In East Azerbaijan Province, where the Sungoun Copper Complex is located, NICICO will treat wastewater from nearby

industrial towns such as Ahar and Varzeqan, reducing reliance on fresh water.

The company is also addressing its energy needs with three 60 MW combined-cycle power plants under construction in Shahr-e Babak, Sarcheshmeh, and Sungoun. These plants will initially operate with gas turbines, with steam turbines added later. A 543 MW combined-cycle power plant is also in the pipeline, bringing total conventional power capacity to over 700 MW.

On renewable energy, Molataheri said a 30 MW solar plant in Shahr-e Babak is now operational. NICICO has

signed contracts for three additional 100 MW solar plants and is conducting studies for the development of three 50 MW wind farms. Combined, these projects will add 800 MW of renewable energy to the company's portfolio.

Iran holds some of the world's largest copper reserves, making NICICO a key player in the global copper industry. The company's focus on renewable energy aims to reduce dependency on the strained national grid and support long-term sustainability.

Iran's central bank approves regulatory framework for cryptocurrencies

TEHRAN — Iran is taking a unified approach to regulate cryptocurrencies to balance oversight with economic development, IRNA reported.

The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) recently approved a "Policy and Regulatory Framework for Cryptocurrencies", reaffirming its role as the primary regulator. The framework emphasizes licensing crypto brokers and custodians under CBI supervision while ensuring compliance with anti-money laundering (AML) laws, counter-terrorism financing (CTF) regulations, and tax obligations.

CBI Governor Mohammadreza Farzin highlighted collaboration with other agencies, such as the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, to develop robust regulatory mechanisms for the digital asset ecosystem.

According to the official, the mentioned framework focuses on active regulation and leveraging digital currencies' economic potential.

Echoing these efforts, Abdolnasser Hemmati, Minister of Economic Affairs, stressed the government's commitment to organizing—not restricting—cryptocurrencies. "Attempts to impose limitations have failed. Instead, we aim to manage their risks and capitalize on their benefits, including job creation and bypassing sanctions," Hemmati said.

He criticized internet filtering for its economic impact and called for a shift toward expanding Iran's digital economy. He urged crypto stakeholders to form a unified association to protect their interests.

Iran has emerged as one of the countries using cryptocurrencies strategically amid U.S. sanctions, which have limited its access to global financial networks. In recent years, the government has allowed crypto mining under regulated conditions, viewing it as a means to generate revenue and offset economic challenges. Iran has also explored cryptocurrency for international trade settlements to bypass restrictions, though the sector remains under close scrutiny to prevent illegal financial activities.

The combined efforts by Iran's government and Central Bank signal a growing recognition of digital currencies as strategic tools for economic resilience, positioning the country to better integrate with global financial systems.

Syria refutes propaganda claims

From page 1 ▶ While the Syrian army fights armed groups in Homs and Hama provinces, other militants in southern Syria are attacking Syrian army positions in Daraa and Suwayda.

This has led Jordan to close its border as the fighting in Syria has reached close to Jordanian territory.

Making matters worse for the government in Damascus, militants allied with the United States have reportedly taken control of areas in Dayr al-Zor province near the Iraqi border.

Militants have also claimed to have controlled Quneitra near the Israeli-occupied Syrian Golan, near the occupied Palestine border, Reuters reported, citing two militants and a Syrian officer.

After capturing the cities of Aleppo and Hama in a surprise offensive, militants have vowed to continue heading south and take over the strategic city of Homs. Experts believe the fate of Homs will determine who controls the Arab country.

A Syrian military source stated that "reports broadcast by some media channels about terrorists entering the al-Qaryatayn (a town in central Syria, administratively



part of the Homs Governorate) are unfounded." The source added that Syrian forces remain in their positions in the al-Qaryatayn area and are fully prepared.

Meanwhile, another Syrian military source said that forces operating in the countryside of Hama and Homs "carried out intensive artillery and rocket strikes on terrorist positions and supply lines, achieving direct hits among them."

Additionally, joint Syrian-Russian airstrikes targeted terrorist gatherings in northeastern Homs countryside, killing dozens of militants and destroying their vehicles.

The militant offensive has

been mostly led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham in the northeast, formerly known as the Nusra Front or Jabhat al-Nusra, which was aligned with al-Qaeda.

The Syrian state television reported that "the death toll among terrorists of Jabhat al-Nusra and its affiliated groups has risen to approximately 2,500 over the past week, as the army, supported by Syrian and Russian air forces, repelled their attacks."

Later, a Syrian military source indicated that "terrorists are resorting to entering some villages and areas, requesting permission from residents to film for a few minutes before leaving. They use these clips in their media propa-

ganda to falsely portray control over these areas, aiming to affect the morale of our people and our valiant army."

On Friday, the Syrian army carried out a special operation targeting the Dar al-Kabira - Talbiseh - Rastan axis in northern Homs countryside. According to a military source in the Syrian Ministry of Defense, the operation resulted in the killing of dozens of militants, causing panic, confusion, and mass flight among their ranks.

Meanwhile, a military source denied reports circulated by some media outlets and pages affiliated with terrorist organizations about any withdrawal of Syrian army units from the vicinity of Homs city and its countryside.

On the diplomatic front, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in the Qatari capital Doha on Saturday, to participate in a meeting of the Astana parties and the Doha Forum.

Turkey is hosting a meeting in Doha with Russia and Iran to seek a political and peaceful resolution to the Syrian crisis. The three countries, represented by their foreign ministers, are participating in the Astana format discussions.

Silent slaughter: How Israel's pawns abet Gaza genocide



The UN chief said the "nightmare must stop" in Gaza as Israeli strikes claim more lives in the Palestinian territory.

From page 1 ▶ "This is the reality here. Children screaming and crying for a piece of bread," UNRWA Senior Emergency Officer Louise Wateridge said.

The UN chief has also sounded the alarm about the dire situation in Gaza.

Antonio Guterres said on X that the "nightmare must stop" in Gaza. He noted that the international community "cannot continue to look away".

"The catastrophe in Gaza is nothing short of a complete breakdown of our common hu-

manity," Guterres said.

In a sign of complete disregard for human life in Gaza, Israel continues to perpetrate back-to-back massacres in the territory by hitting residential buildings and health centers.

Reports say dozens of people, including children, were killed in an Israeli airstrike on houses in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza on Friday.

Gaza's civil defense agency also said the Israeli army hit Indonesian Hospital in Beit Lahya in the north of the enclave. More than two dozen people have also been killed in Israeli attacks on and near the Kamal Adwan Hospital.

According to Al Jazeera, Israeli tanks and drones operating around Kamal Adwan Hospital "shoot at any moving object" whether inside the facility or nearby.

Escalating attacks in northern Gaza are in line with Israel's attempts to displace all Palestinians from the area. These brutal raids come as terrorists, who are mainly affiliated to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), have stolen the limelight in Syria.

The terror group which launched an offensive in Syria more than a week ago has occu-

piated areas in the Arab country.

Israel has ruled out any link with the HTS which is the illegitimate child of terror groups such as al-Qaeda and ISIL, also known as ISIS and Daesh.

The HTS has initiated an extensive public relations campaign aimed at cultivating a favorable perception of itself.

UNRWA: "Children screaming and crying for a piece of bread."

But amid growing global outrage at Israel's atrocities in Gaza, the group has neither taken any action against Israel nor harmed the regime's interests.

HTS terrorists are in fact pawns of Israel who have been tasked with assisting the Tel Aviv regime to complete its mission.

Israel has ordered its pawns to raise a hullabaloo as it tries to create a new Nakba. Nakba, or "catastrophe" in Arabic, refers to the mass displacement and dispossession of Palestinians following Israel's establishment in 1948.

Netanyahu is leading Israel into ruin: Der Spiegel

TEHRAN - In a commentary published on December 4, German magazine Der Spiegel said Benjamin Netanyahu is waging an endless war in Gaza and delivering Israel into the arms of extremist right wings to stay in power.

Der Spiegel was openly referring to some notorious members of Netanyahu's cabinet including Itamar Ben Gvir who is a convicted supporter of terrorism, and Bezalel Smotrich who defends annexing the Gaza Strip.

The following is part of the article:

The International Criminal Court has issued arrest warrants for both the Israeli Prime Minister and his former defense minister. With that, Netanyahu is the first freely elected head of government in the world who is suspected of being a war criminal by the judges in The Hague. Netanyahu, the prime minister of Israel, a country that experienced the worst attack in its history on October 7, 2023, is now officially a suspect.

In Israel, all politicians, including Netanyahu's adversaries, voice criticism of the arrest warrant.

Netanyahu, the victim. That is his modus operandi, and it has been for years. In foreign policy, in domestic policy, in his personal affairs: It has always been somebody else's fault. The media, the judiciary, the opposition, the rest of the world, all unjustifiably criticizing him, persecuting him. It is a narrative that has propelled him to numerous election victories, many of them coming after his political career had been declared over. And it keeps his government going, despite ongoing corruption proceedings. Now 75 years old, Netanyahu has served as Israel's head of government for a total of 17 years.

The Hamas attack was the worst day in the country's history. Some 1,200 people were killed and more than 250 abducted and taken to Gaza. Many Israelis believe that Netanyahu bears a share of the responsibility because a number of warnings went unheeded. For a time, Netanyahu was the least liked politician in the country. These days, while his government may not have a majority according to current public opinion polls, his party, the national-conservative Likud, remains the strongest. Snap elections don't appear to be in the near future.

Indeed, Netanyahu just recently expanded his coalition by adding the parliamentary group of a former rival. The fact that thousands, even tens of thousands of Israelis take to the streets every week in anti-Netanyahu demonstrations, including former allies and men like his ex-defense minister Moshe Ya'alon? Doesn't matter. The prime minister has a solid grip on power.

"Netanyahu, who hit rock bottom on October 7, once again has very high approval ratings," says Shtrauchler. Everything is going well for the prime minister - and soon, Donald Trump, who is a huge supporter of Israel, will be moving back into the White House. "I suspect he is waking up every morning with a smile on his face," says Shtrauchler.

Shtrauchler's narrative of post-October 7 Netanyahu is that of a man who has once again managed to free himself from his troubles. Just as Gulliver broke loose from his chains.

But the story can also be told another way: as one of a weak, detested prime minister who is clinging so desperately to his office that he has delivered Israel into the hands of the settlers and

the racists. "Because no one else wanted to deal with Netanyahu anymore, he brought the most extreme right-wing people imaginable into his coalition," says Raviv Drucker, 54, perhaps the best-known investigative journalist in the country. "He gave them enormous power. And since then, we have all been trapped in this nightmare. If the right-wing extremists didn't have Netanyahu in their grip, the war in Gaza would have been over months ago."

A potential prison sentence for Bibi

In this narrative, Netanyahu is pulling an entire country down with him as he fights for political survival. A prime minister who has made Israel's position in the region more tenuous with the war in Gaza, in addition to dividing the international community and triggering protests around the world against the Jewish state.

Which narrative is the correct one?

Der Spiegel spoke with the family members of hostages, political observers and military leaders in addition to former members of Netanyahu's inner circle and others who used to work for him.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Reservist: Israeli soldier was ordered to kill Palestinian holding white flag

A former Israeli reserve soldier who served in the Strip, Har-Zahav wrote, adding that any senior officer who orders the killing of Palestinians simply because of their identity will not face consequences.

In a Haaretz article published on Wednesday, Israeli journalist Chaim Har-Zahav, who served an 86-day reserve mission in the enclave, detailed what he witnessed during that time.

"The lives of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip depend first and foremost on the private and personal scale of values of the command-

ers in the Strip," Har-Zahav wrote, adding that any senior officer who orders the killing of Palestinians simply because of their identity will not face consequences.

In the piece, Har-Zahav relayed an incident that involved a senior commander ordering the shooting of an unarmed man waving a white flag.

Though the general was told the man did not pose a threat and was clearly without weapons, he responded by saying: "I don't know what a white flag is, shoot him it's an order."

Report: US, Canadian universities hire Israeli firms to curb pro-Palestinian protests



A report published on Saturday by the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth said several universities in both the US and Canada have entered into agreements with Israel-linked security companies to suppress pro-Palestine protests occurring on their campuses.

The report notes that after the election of Donald Trump, who pledged to penalize academic institutions that failed to control "rad-

icals and Hamas supporters," a number of universities in both countries turned to Israeli security firms to manage pro-Palestine protests.

The year 2024 saw a wave of campus uprisings across the West in support of Palestine and against Israel's war on Gaza. Students largely demanded their institutions end investments in Israel and Israeli companies.

Israel using detainees as human shields

The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor reports said Israeli forces have used Palestinians as human shields in their continued attempts to evacuate hospitals in northern Gaza.

The Geneva-based group quoted its field teams as saying Israeli soldiers forced Palestinian detainees "to warn hospital staff that all displaced persons and companions of pa-

tients must leave the premises and head to areas controlled by Israeli forces", Al Jazeera reported.

"Many were arrested upon arrival, while others were forced to flee to a checkpoint in the Civil Administration area and eventually to Gaza City," also in the north, according to the monitor.

Activists storm Swiss bank to protest Gaza war

Pro-Palestine activists stormed the branch of a Swiss bank in Basel, distributing leaflets calling for a boycott and condemning its cooperation with Israel and its support for the cabinet of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

A clip posted by the Basel for Palestine account last Friday showed that activists also stormed a UBS bank branch in November, distributing leaflets calling for a boycott and protesting its support for Israel's actions in Gaza and the West Bank.



Activist Raquel Munoz shouts pro-Palestine slogans as she participates in a performance in support of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, in Zocalo Square in Mexico City, Mexico, on December 6.

Over 2,000 ancient seals unearthed in Iran's Tapeh Tyalineh



TEHRAN - Archaeologists have uncovered over 2,000 ancient seal impressions, along with a vast collection of artifacts including pottery, stone tools, animal remains, counting objects, and over 100 animal figurines during the second season of excavations at Tapeh Tyalineh in Iran's Kermanshah province.

The discoveries are shedding light on the social and economic structures of the early third millennium BC, CHTN reported on Saturday.

The initial discovery of clay seal impressions dating back to the early third millennium BC in 2021 drew attention to the site. Following damage to parts of the area, a first season of archaeological excavation was conducted in 2023.

The findings prompted further investigations, now underway in the second excavation season, according to the project's lead archaeologist, Shokouh Khosravi.

Key findings

During excavations of a 25-square-meter area, researchers unearthed more than 4,000 seal impressions, estimated to be 5,000 years old.

These artifacts, combined with other findings from the first season, reveal that Tapeh Tyalineh was likely an administrative and economic center engaged in the exchange and distribution of goods such as animal products, oil, and some kinds of beverages.

In addition to the seals, the excavation has uncovered over 100 intact and broken animal figurines, clay counting tools, pottery fragments, carbonized plant remains, and animal

bones. These materials offer critical insights into the dietary patterns and daily lives of the site's ancient inhabitants.

A unique administrative site

According to Khosravi, Tapeh Tyalineh holds exceptional importance for understanding the economic and social changes in the Central Zagros region, particularly in the Kuzaran-Mahidasht plain (Sanjabi area).

"Tapeh Tyalineh stands out among archaeological sites in Iran for its administrative and accounting finds. Nowhere else in the world has such a large number of ancient seals been discovered in a single location," she explained.

The current excavation season, a collaborative effort between the University of Kordistan and the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, will continue until December 10. It aims to study the site's architecture, spatial usage, and artifact distribution patterns to better understand the economic and social systems underpinning the use of seals and seal impressions.

One of the most significant discoveries in this season has been mudbrick architecture featuring door seals and scattered seal impressions on its floors. "These findings highlight the proximity of administrative buildings to the disposal areas, as many of these items were discarded after accounting and administrative use in antiquity," Khosravi noted.

Economic hub of the Central Zagros

The findings underline Tapeh Tyalineh's role as a key player in regional economic exchanges and administrative organization in the Central Zagros region 5,000 years ago.

Khosravi emphasized the uniqueness of the site, stating, "Tapeh Tyalineh offers an unparalleled opportunity to study an early historic community in detail."

The discoveries from this season promise to enhance our understanding of the ancient societies that once thrived in the region, as well as their complex economic and administrative practices.

The Kermanshah region is a cradle of civilization due to its antiquity and Neolithic sites which have yielded rich collections of stone tools and fossil bones.

Archaeological dig at Notre-Dame unearths 2,000 years of history

The tragic 2019 fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral led to major discoveries during restoration work. Archaeologists unearthed treasures dating back from antiquity to the 19th century.

Busts of the crucified face of Christ, the torso of a man wearing a tunic are some of the artifacts on display at the Musée de Cluny, a museum of medieval art in Paris, where visitors can contemplate nearly ten centuries of history. Around 30 fragments from Notre-Dame Cathedral's rood screen, a stone tribune adorned with statues, are being exhibited for the first time. The tribune formed an enclosure between the choir and the nave where the faithful were seated.

"We thought these elements had been lost forever," said museum's director Séverine Lepape, as she revealed the sculptures, which were made in 1230.

'It's unbelievable'

The remains were unearthed during excavations carried out prior to the reconstruction of the cathedral, after the April 2019 fire.

Around 15 of the medieval sculptures were unearthed during renovation work in the 19th century led by French architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879).

Recent excavations following the 2019 fire uncovered around thousand pieces, including 700 fragments, some of which display polychrome traces that are well preserved. "Polychromy is the colored adornment on the surface. It tells us what people saw when they were confronted with these sculptures before the application of colors disappeared," said Damien Berné, the curator of the exhibition Making Stones Speak. Notre Dame's Medieval

Sculptures, which ends March 16, 2025.

Delicate slivers of color adorn these fragile artifacts: reds, blues, ochres and golds. "The rood screen is an exceptional discovery; the likes of which you only get once every hundred years. When we find a 13th-century sculpture, we're happy, but when we find 1,000, it's unbelievable," said archaeologist Christophe Besnier of the French National Institute for Preventative Archaeological Research (INRAP). "I feel privileged," added the lead archeologist for the February 2022 excavation of Notre-Dame's transept crossing.

Few opportunities existed before the fire to study the prestigious religious building so closely. During radical restoration work overseen by Viollet-le-Duc beginning in 1843, the architect recorded observations in his journal. But it was not until 1847 that an initial excavation campaign was carried out by Théodore Vacquer on the eastern edge beneath the square in front of Notre-Dame. The construction of a car park under the square in the 1960s also allowed for the discovery of architectural ruins, and for the creation of a crypt that would display the remains.

"From an archaeological point of view, the area was relatively unknown, except for the square. Notre-Dame was considered as a historical monument, not an archaeological site," said Dorothee Chaoui-Derieux, the chief heritage curator who has coordinated all the archaeological operations at Notre-Dame decreed by the State since 2019. "We have carried out around 20 diagnostic or excavation operations as part of this project, which have uncovered nearly 2,000 years of history," she added.

(Source: france24)

'Glory of Ancient Persia', an exhibition of top Iranian artifacts, opens in Urumqi

TEHRAN - The "Glory of Ancient Persia", which is a loan exhibition of Iranian artifacts, officially opened at the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Museum in Urumqi on Friday.

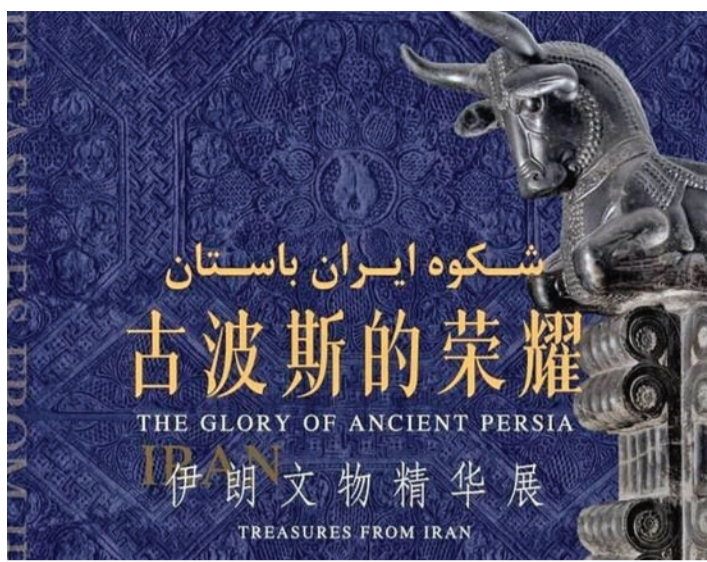
The opening ceremony was attended by Kaisar Abudureyimu, Vice Chairman of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region; Ali Darabi, Deputy Minister of Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts; Mohsen Bakhtiar, Iranian Ambassador to China; Jebrael Nokandeh, Director of the National Museum of Iran; and Yu Zhiyong, Vice President of the Xinjiang Academy of Cultural Heritage and Director of the Xinjiang Museum.

The event was presided over by Xu Ruijun, Party Secretary and Deputy Director of the Xinjiang Department of Culture and Tourism, China Daily reported.

Addressing the ceremony, Nokandeh underlined that museums are not only places for preserving and showcasing cultural relics but also ambassadors of cross-cultural understanding.

"Over the years, the National Museum of Iran and Chinese museums have forged a rich record of positive and valuable experiences."

"This exhibition will further strengthen and develop the friendship between our two countries," Nokandeh added.



As two ancient civilizations, China and Iran have been closely connected through the Silk Road since antiquity. Over 2,000 years ago, an envoy from the Han Dynasty led by Zhang Qian's deputy visited ancient Persia. In the 13th century, renowned Iranian poet Sadi traveled to China, leaving profound impressions of the land, the report said.

Diplomatic relations between China and Iran were established on August 16, 1971. Over the past half-century, cultural exchanges between the two nations have deepened, witnessing the steady development of bilateral ties.

Earlier in 2024, the Palace Museum and Shanghai Museum collaborated with Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and

Handicrafts, along with four Iranian museums, to launch the Exhibition of Iranian Artifacts. The exhibition was successfully held in Beijing and Shanghai, garnering widespread acclaim.

The current exhibition will run for three months, from December 6, 2024, to March 6, 2025, featuring 216 exquisite artifacts from the National Museum of Iran, Persepolis Museum, Rasht Museum, and Gorgan Archaeological Museum.

Organized into three thematic sections—Dawn of the Plateau, Era of Glory, and Art of Faith—the exhibition showcases a comprehensive view of ancient Iran's rich history and artistic charm. The artifacts range from palace architecture to household fur-

nishings, royal treasures to everyday objects, and painting to calligraphy.

Some pieces also incorporate Chinese elements, highlighting the Silk Road's historical and contemporary role in fostering dialogue, promoting cultural exchange, and building a shared future for humanity.

Together, we will foster cultural dialogue, enhance mutual understanding, and jointly promote the preservation and development of cultural heritage. This will further advance the narrative of cultural exchange between our two nations," said He Jia, Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Museum.

"In the future, we will deepen collaboration with Iranian cultural institutions in areas such as museum exchanges, outbound and inbound exhibitions, and cultural relic preservation and restoration."

The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Museum, a cultural landmark on the Belt and Road Initiative, has long dedicated itself to promoting the exchange and mutual learning of Silk Road civilizations.

Urumqi is the capital of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in Northwestern China. With a census population of 4 million in 2020.

Earthquake in Khuzestan: emergency inspection conducted at Shushtar World Heritage site

TEHRAN - Following a series of earthquakes including a 5.6-magnitude one that struck Khuzestan early Thursday morning, emergency inspections were carried out at Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

According to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage's public relations office, a series of earthquakes beginning on Thursday, necessitated immediate assessments to protect and evaluate potential damage to the region's historical assets.

Amin Mahdavia, director of the Shushtar World Heritage Base, led the inspection alongside heritage experts, ILNA reported.

"Following our on-site assessments, we are relieved to report that no damage has been observed to the World Heritage properties or surrounding areas," Mahdavia confirmed.

The earthquakes impacted several cities across Khuzestan province, with 14 tremors recorded as of Thursday. Cities such as Haftkel, Masjed Soleyman, Izeh, and Qaleh Tall experienced intense and moderate quakes, while the tremors were felt in Ahvaz, Bavi, Hamidiyeh, and Shushtar.

The initial and most severe quake, measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale, struck Haftkel at 7:32 a.m. local time. It was followed by aftershocks of 3.2 and 3.5 magnitudes, the report said.

A separate earthquake with a magnitude of 4.8 hit Masjed Soleyman at 7:53 a.m., followed by three subsequent quakes, including a sig-



nificant 5.2-magnitude tremor at 9:08 a.m., originating at a depth of 9 kilometers.

Local authorities and emergency teams remain on alert as aftershocks continue. The Ministry of Cultural Heritage then emphasized the ongoing commitment to safeguarding Iran's historical and cultural sites amid natural disasters.

A living testament to water engineering

The UNESCO-listed Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System is a testament to the ingenuity and creativity of ancient Iranian engineering. Called a "masterpiece of creative genius" by the UN cultural body, these water structures exemplify ancient Iranian engineers' advanced knowledge and skill in water management and architecture.

The property can be considered a living museum of Iran's water industry, providing tangible evidence of the advanced engineering knowledge possessed by the ancient Iranians. Although only parts of this intricate system remain today, the cascading waters, mills, beau-

tiful artificial waterfalls, and pools still create a breathtaking scene in the heart of the city.

Interestingly, these historical water structures have been interconnected for centuries and still function as a cohesive water system.

The system, which dates back to the 5th century BC, involved the creation of two main diversion canals on the Karun River. One of these, the Gargar canal, remains in use today, supplying water to Shushtar through a series of tunnels that power mills. This system forms a spectacular cliff from which water cascades into a downstream basin before entering the plain south of the city, where it has enabled the cultivation of orchards and farmland over an area of 40,000 hectares.

The Shushtar Hydraulic System is not just an ancient marvel; it is a symbol of human ingenuity and the ability to harmonize with natural elements. The system includes a variety of interconnected elements, such as bridges, dams, tunnels, and mills, all working together to manage and utilize water efficiently. The design and construction of these structures demonstrate a profound understanding of hydraulic engineering and a deep respect for the environment.

The legacy of the Shushtar Hydraulic System continues to inspire modern engineers and architects. Its innovative design and functionality have been studied and admired by scholars worldwide. The system's ability to sustain agricultural practices and support the local population for centuries stands as a remarkable achievement in sustainable engineering.

Sassanid-era Rayen fortress undergoes restoration



TEHRAN - A new phase of restoration has commenced on the historic Rayen fortress, one of the largest ancient mud-brick structures in the world, with origins tracing back to the Sassanid era.

According to Vahid Taheri, head of the Rayen Cultural Heritage Office, the restoration began recently with funding from both national and provincial sources.

"This phase of restoration includes flooring, mudbrick repairs, plastering, traditional waterproofing, manual debris removal, and other groundwork," Taheri explained.

Situated on a hill in Kerman province, the mudbrick fort spans over 22,000 square meters and is encircled by a 10-meter-high defensive wall. Within its walls lie elements such as a bazaar, mosque, gymnasium, and residential quarters.

Dating back to the Sassanid period, the Rayen fortress (aka Rayen citadel or castle) is often regarded as the second-largest mud-brick structure globally, after the renowned Bam Citadel.

Recent restoration efforts have added shops and exhibits showcasing local handicrafts, further

enhancing its appeal as a cultural and historical destination.

The Sassanid era is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under the Sassanids, Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions, such as the palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan, which are amongst the highlights of the ensemble.

Crafts such as metalwork and gem engraving grew highly sophisticated, yet scholarship was encouraged by the state. In those years, works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians.

Rock-carved sculptures and bas-reliefs on abrupt limestone cliffs are widely deemed as char-

acteristics and striking relics of Sassanian art, top examples of which can be traced at Bishapur, Naqsh-e Rostam and Naqsh-e Rostam in southern Iran.

In 2018, UNESCO added an ensemble of Sassanian historical cities in southern Iran — titled "Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region"—to its World Heritage list. The ensemble comprises eight archaeological sites situated in three geographical parts of Firuzabad, Bishapur, and Sarvestan. It reflects the optimized utilization of natural topography and bears witness to the influence of Achaemenid and Parthian cultural traditions and Roman art, which later had a significant impact on the architecture and artistic styles of the Islamic era.

A preliminary overview of M5.6 quake in Masjed Soleyman



Figure-1

By Mehdi Zare

Professor of engineering seismology

TEHRAN - A M5.6 Earthquake on 5 December 2024, at 7:32 a.m. local time occurred in Golgir village, 20km southeast of Masjed Soleyman (Figure-1) with two important aftershocks during the first two hours after the mainshock at 7:53 a.m. (M5.0) and at 9:08 a.m. (M5.2).

The mentioned earthquakes occurred in the same place where on 8 July 2019, an earthquake of M5.7 killed one person and injured more than 100 people.

The mechanism of the earthquake on 5 December 2024 (as reported by IGP) was in the form of a near-vertical compressional fault with a northwest-southeast strike and an estimated depth of 25 km, when the east/northeast side of the fault moved upwards (compared to the west/southwest side of the fault).

It seems that similar to the 8 July 2019 earthquake, the causative fault zone is the Ramhormoz fault for 5 December 2024 (Figures 2 and 3).

The M5.7 earthquake of 8 July



Figure-2

2019 in Golgir village of Khuzestan at 20km southeast of Masjed Soleyman caused partial destruction of houses in 10 villages and 8 houses and one death and 112 injuries.

The destruction of buildings, the collapse of the dome of the Masjed Soleyman, and the cracks in the houses' walls were partial results of the 2019 earthquake.

Golgir (in Persian: "a place to produce flowers") had historically freshwater springs, orchards, and many trees. Its abundant rainfall and fertile soil caused an abundance of plants. The growth of all kinds of flowers was the reason why it is called "Golgir".

In recent decades drought caused the destruction of gardens and after digging of many deep wells around the Golgir cement factory, springs have dried up.

Historically, in the early 20th century, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company constructed the Masjed Soleyman airport - close to Golgir, after the discovery of oil, in Masjed Soleyman in 1908 in Tembi-Golgir village.

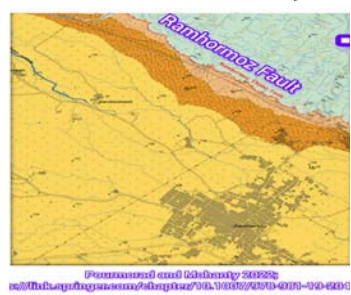


Figure-3

According to young crustal movements, the occurrence of aftershocks in this region is apparently in the form of seismic clusters. In the 5 December 2024 earthquake sequence, similar to the model of stress release in the earthquake of 8 July 2019, aftershocks continue for several weeks to months.

In this area, there are layers of non-resistant crust in the Zagros and the pressure and stress accumulated in the faults release gradually along the fractures. Therefore, a series of earthquakes occur that is called an "earthquake swarm".

The epicenter of the earthquake occurred 20 km south of Masjed Soleyman close to the Aghajari, Shushtar, and Ramhormoz fault zones.

Ramhormoz fault is a compressional fault in that the east/northeast side is raised on the west/southwest part. The length of Ramhormoz fault is 100 kilometers, and it is located on the southern border of Zagros fold belt (Figure-4), marking

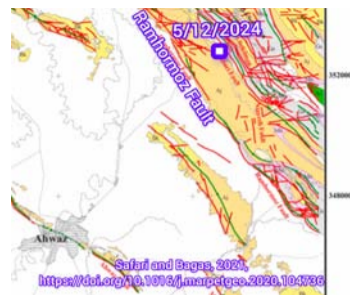


Figure-4

the topographic border with the Zagros foothill zone, making the structural border of the Dezful embayment.

Therefore, this fault is a part of the Khuzestan mountain to plain border that passes through the vicinity of Ramhormoz city in the southeast of Shushtar. Along the Ramhormoz fault the Naftesefid Anticline is thrust over the Quaternary sediments of Ramhormoz alluvial plain.

The dynamics of Ramhormoz fault are motivated by the basement geological structures originating from the Hormuz salt formation, which prevents the distribution of fracture as a plastic buffer. The movement along this fault zone has been significant with compressional displacement in several significant earthquakes of medium to severe magnitude, and there is a possibility of a larger rupture with a severe earthquake in the same place.

Over 26,000 multiple births registered in 8 months

TEHRAN -Within the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year that started March 20, a total of 26,470 multiples were born in the country, according to the Civil Registration Organization.

Tehran, Khuzestan, and Khorasan Razavi provinces had the highest number of multiple births with 2,012, 1,100, and 1,094 cases respectively, ISNA reported.

Out of the 665, 893 registered births, 12,527 were twins, 445 were triplets, 19 were quadruplets, and one was higher-order multiple births.

Over 1m births registered in a year

A total of 1,057,948 births were registered in the country in the past Iranian calendar year (March 2023 - March 2024), the Civil Registration Organization has announced.

Tehran province with 131,176 births and Semnan province with 6,907 births had the highest and lowest number of births, IRNA reported.

Out of registered births, 51.8 percent were boys and 48.2 percent were girls.

According to the Organization, a total of 33,080 multiple births were registered in the country in the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year that ended on March 20, 2024.

Twins made up the majority of multiples born; 31,320 out of 33,080 registered multiple births were twins, and 1,686 births were trip-

lets, IRNA reported.

Tehran province with 14.7 percent and Semnan province with 0.5 percent had the highest and lowest number of multiple births, respectively.

Last year, out of the registered multiple births in the first nine months, 28,148 were twins, 1,506 were triplets, 64 were quadruplets, and 10 were higher-order multiple births.

Some 34.6 percent of registered births were first-born children; 38.9 percent, 17.6 percent, 5.1 percent, and 2 percent were related to second-born to fifth-born children.

In the first nine months of the past Iranian calendar year, more boys than girls were born. Over 51.8 percent of babies born were boys and 48.2 percent were girls.

Youth population law stabilizes total fertility rate

Enacting the youth population law has stabilized the total fertility rate, slightly increasing the general fertility index over the past two years.

After experiencing seven years of decline by about 20 percent, the fertility rate is now stabilized at around 1.6, IRNA reported.

The total fertility rate has experienced a sharp decline since the Iranian calendar year 1394 (2015-2016) as the number of births reached 1.057 million in 1402 (2023-2024) from 1.570 million in 1394. However, since

the Iranian calendar year 1401 (March 2022-March 2023), the downward trend in fertility came to a halt.

The total fertility rate has lowered to 1.6 children per woman from about 2 children per woman.

According to Civil Registration Organization's report, the total fertility rate in Iranian years 1396 (2017-2018), 1397 (2018-2019), 1398 (2019-2020), 1399 (2020-2021), and 1400 (2021-2022) were 2.09, 1.95, 1.74, 1.65, 1.61 per each woman, respectively.

At best, Iran's population with a total fertility rate of 2.5 will reach 102,890,000 by the next seven years, IRIB quoted Mohammad-Javad Mahmoudi, an official with the Civil Registration Organization, as saying.

In May, Hasan Farshidi, an official with the health ministry, said two years after the implementation of the law on supporting families and the youth, investigations have shown that the health ministry has played a central role in the implementation of the law.

"Since the implementation of the law, the number of births among mothers aged 20 to 24 has notably increased," the official added.

The rate of mothers giving birth to three children increased from 16 percent in the Iranian year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020) to 18.97 percent in 1402 (March 2023 -March 2024) and even the fourth childbirth increased from 5 percent to about 7 percent, Farshidi stated.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

E-motorbikes come to curb air pollution in metropolises

The first phase of electric motorcycles development project will be implemented aiming at reducing air pollution in Tehran and other metropolises, IRNA news agency reported.

Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said on Tuesday that electric motorcycles will be promoted in big cities in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

Through the first phase of the project, electric motorcycles will replace the regular ones used by the Ministry of Energy and state-run companies, he explained.

Ardakanian went on to say that, in addition to electric motorcycles being manufactured and marketed from now on, existing motorcycles will also change to use electricity sources.

آغاز طرح برقی کردن موتورسیکلت‌ها با هدف کاهش آلودگی هوا

مرحله نخست طرح برقی کردن موتورسیکلت‌ها با هدف کاهش آلودگی هوای تهران و دیگر کلانشهرها آغاز می‌شود.

به گزارش ایرنا، رضا اردکانیان وزیر نیرو روز سه شنبه گفت برقی کردن موتورسیکلت‌ها با همکاری وزارت صنعت، معدن و تجارت انجام خواهد شد.

وی افزود: هدف این طرح در گام نخست، برقی کردن موتورسیکلت‌های مورد استفاده وزارت نیرو و شرکت‌های دولتی است.

اردکانیان اضافه کرد بر این اساس علاوه بر اینکه از این پس موتورسیکلت برقی تولید و وارد بازار می‌شود، موتورسیکلت‌های موجود نیز برای مالکان آنها برقی می‌شوند.

National strategic plan on waste management due in 3 months

TEHRAN -The Department of Environment (DOE), in cooperation with the ministries of industry, energy, oil, agriculture, and health, is obliged to develop a national strategic plan for waste management by the end of the first year of the seventh five-year national development plan that is March 20, 2025.

The strategic plan will focus on modifying the production and consumption patterns, minimizing waste production, and promoting waste segregation at source.

Large industries such as cement and steel are obliged to utilize solid fuels to meet part of their energy needs, particularly in peak demand.

Also, the Ministry of Energy is required to guarantee the purchase of the electricity generated from waste, and the Ministry of Oil is required to guarantee the purchase of or the issue of a sale license for liquid fuels produced from waste.

Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture is required to guarantee the purchase of organic fertilizers made from recycled waste.

Improper management of waste

Today, one of the most serious problems of the country's environment is improper management of all municipal, household, industrial, hospital, and hazardous wastes, which has caused environmental pollution and a negative impact on the quality and quantity of biological resources (water, soil, and air) and incurs a loss of huge sum of money annually.

Improper management of waste in the country causes 870 trillion rials (some \$1.4 billion) in damage to the environment and natural resources every year, an official with the Department of Environment (DOE) said on January 29.

Some 445 thousand tons of urban, rural, medical, agricultural, and industrial waste are generated per day, equaling 164 million tons per year, leading to land, water, and air pollution, IRNA quoted Mehdi Khadem-Sameini as saying.

Converting waste into fertilizer and energy, using standard waste incinerators, and mod-



ern methods such as digesters and pyrolysis are among the known strategies used in the world for handling waste, but these methods do not exist in the country, he added.

The current methods used in the country for waste management are old, the official noted, regretting that up to 80 percent of the waste that can be recycled to be used for different purposes is discarded.

"Out of around 600 waste management centers across the country, just four to five are standardized. In other words, some 96 percent of the waste is just dumped in landfills."

According to World Bank, the pollution of resources in 2004 incurred a loss of about 8 billion dollars to the country, and the figure rose to about 10 billion dollars in 2009.

According to the DOE, an estimated 10 to 17 percent of the total produced waste is recycled. While in developed countries this number reaches up to 70 percent.

In 2021, Iran ranked 17th in terms of waste production, according to the World Population Review.

Although there will be pollution as long as there is consumption in any way, it can be kept to an acceptable level by considering green options so as not to cause excessive pollution of the environment.

Some 65 percent of waste is "wet" and 35 percent is "dry", while 25 percent is processed and the remaining 75 percent without processing is buried directly and only 10 percent is separated at the source.

National campaign on healthy diet underway

TEHRAN -The 15th national campaign to promote healthy diet kicked off on Saturday and will run for two weeks.

Each year, the national campaign is held focusing on a specific point. This year, it is being held with the theme of 'healthy oil, healthy food, healthy family'. The theme highlights the importance of choosing the right kinds of edible oil and fat, like canola oil, in the diet by clarifying the health risks of trans-fatty acids.

The two-week event aims to raise public awareness, debunk incorrect beliefs about oils and fats, improve nutritional literacy in society, and reduce non-communicable diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer.

The days of the week are named as follows.

Saturday, December 7, 'oil, daily intake of cooking oil'

Sunday, December 8, 'healthy heart with healthy oil consumption'

Monday, December 9, 'role of media in choosing right kinds of cooking oil'

Tuesday, December 10, 'canola, a healthy oil'

Wednesday, December 11, 'oil and incorrect beliefs'

Thursday, December 12, 'role of nutritional indicator in choosing the right cooking oil'

Friday, December 13, 'vegetable oil or animal fat'

Saturday, December 14, 'frying oil best choice for frying'

Sunday, December 15, 'health risks associated with trans-fatty acids'

Monday, December 16, 'oil and weight control'

Tuesday, December 17, 'maintaining health by modifying oil consumption patterns'

Wednesday, December 18, 'oil and chronic diseases'

Thursday, December 19, 'oil and cancer'



Friday, December 20, 'safe edible oil storage and consumption'

Right to affordable, healthy diet

Every year on October 16, the World Food Day is observed globally. Since food is the third most basic human need after air and water, the day highlights everyone's right to adequate food.

The event is observed under different themes each year. This year's theme, 'Right to foods for a better life and a better future', not only stressed the right to sufficient food but also highlighted the right to an affordable, varied healthy diet for everyone.

Yet, over 2.8 billion people in the world are unable to afford a healthy diet, and too many people suffer from hunger.

Unhealthy diets are the leading cause of all forms of malnutrition - undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity, which now exist in most countries, cutting across socio-economic classes.

More vulnerable people are often forced to rely on staple foods or less expensive foods that can be unhealthy, while others suffer from the unavailability of fresh or diverse foods, lack the information they need to choose a healthy diet, or simply opt for convenience.



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DECEMBER 8, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Whoever delights his/her parents, has delighted Allah and the one who displeases them has displeased Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:11:56 Evening: 17:11 Dawn: 5:33 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:03 (tomorrow)

Iran, Armenia seek to strengthen cultural ties through expanded Persian language education

TEHRAN- Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, the director of Iran's Saadi Foundation and Zhanna Andreasyan, the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Armenia met in Yerevan, Armenia on Friday to review Persian language education programs.

The meeting, held at the Ministry of Culture, focused on enhancing the historical and cultural ties between Iran and Armenia and developing educational and language cooperation, ISNA reported.

During the meeting, Haddad-Adel highlighted the importance of strengthening cultural relations between Iran and Armenia as having deep and historical connections, which can pave the way for increased interactions.

He emphasized that the Saadi Foundation is prepared to produce specialized textbooks for Armenian schools, aligning these materials with the educational laws and requirements of the country.

Additionally, he suggested utilizing the expertise of Armenian professors residing in Iran for the development and adaptation of Persian language textbooks specifically for Armenian schools.

Other proposals raised by the director of the Saadi Foundation included organizing professional development courses and teacher training for Persian language instructors, offering scholarships to Armenian students interested in studying Persian, and establishing a bookstore for Persian literature in Yerevan.

The topic of translating cultural and literary works between the two countries was also addressed during the meeting.

For her part, Andreasyan expressed her satisfaction at Haddad-Adel's presence and emphasized the deep-rooted historical ties between the two countries, noting the success of Persian language education in 13 schools in Armenia and the necessity to expand this program.

She announced the Ministry of Culture's

readiness for collaboration to improve both the quantity and quality of Persian language instruction.

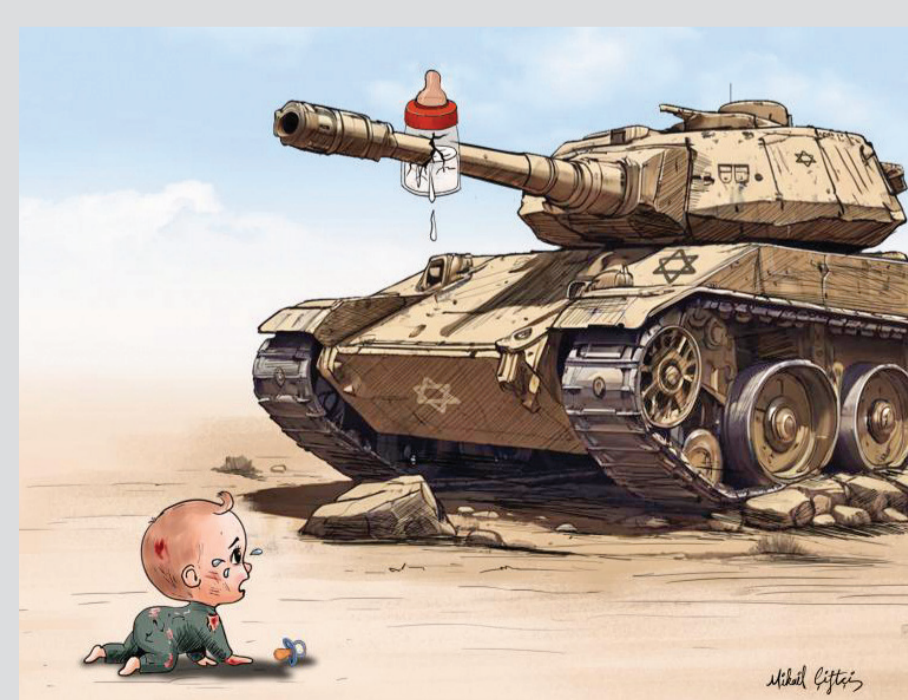
Moreover, both parties stressed the importance of drafting and signing a new memorandum of understanding between the Saadi Foundation and the Ministry of Culture of Armenia to enhance bilateral cooperation and implement joint programs.

Persian, also known as Farsi, is an ancient language spoken primarily in Iran, Afghanistan (as Dari), and Tajikistan (as Tajik), boasting a rich literary heritage that dates back over a millennium. Its script, derived from Arabic, can initially pose challenges for learners unfamiliar with the right-to-left writing system. Persian vocabulary is influenced by both Arabic and various Turkic languages, adding layers of complexity. While the phonetic structure of Persian is relatively straightforward and lacks gendered nouns, the nuances of its grammar, such as verb conjugations and the use of subordinate clauses, require dedicated study and practice, often making it a rewarding yet challenging pursuit for foreign learners.

The difficulty level of learning Persian can vary significantly based on a learner's background and native language. For speakers of languages that share similarities with Persian, such as Turkish or certain Indo-European languages, the transition may be smoother due to overlapping linguistic features.

However, learners from languages with markedly different structures, like Mandarin or Vietnamese, may find the concepts of Persian syntax and grammar more daunting. Additionally, the rich cultural context embedded in Persian literature and expressions can require learners to engage deeply with cultural references to achieve proficiency. Nonetheless, many learners find studying Persian to be an enriching experience, allowing them to gain insight into a diverse and historically significant culture.

Cartoon of Day



Baby Killers Use Hunger as A Weapon
Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Turkey

Cinéma Vérité announces lineup for Gaza section

TEHRAN- A total of 23 films from both Iranian and foreign filmmakers will be showcased in the Gaza section of the 18th edition of Iran International Documentary Film Festival Cinéma Vérité, the organizers have announced.

"Out Of Frame", directed by Nidaa Abu Hasna, "Jad and Natalie" by Aws Al-Banna, "Hill of Heaven" by Kareem Satoum, "No" by Hana Awad, "Everything is fine" by Nidal Damo, "24 Hours" by Alaa Damo, "Selfies" by Reema Mahmoud, and "Soft Skin" by Khamees Masharawi, all from Palestine, are among the films included in this section.

These Palestinian films are part of the "From Ground Zero" project, a 2024 anthology film featuring contributions from 22 different Palestinian directors. The project consists of 22 short films, including documentaries, fiction, animation, and experimental works, all depicting the current situation of the people of Gaza amid the ongoing Israeli genocide.

The festival will also screen "Beirut Boulevard" directed by Farah Al-Hashem and "Aida Returns" by Carol Mansour, both from Lebanon, as well as Iranian documentaries "Nahit" by Ehsan Shadmani, "My



A scene from "Aida Returns" by Carol Mansour from Lebanon

Family Album" by Mohammadreza Noruzbeigi and "Palestinian Frames" by Saeed Faraji in this section.

The 18th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran's major international festival for documentary films, will be held

in Tehran from December 8 to 15.

The Documentary & Experimental Film Center (DEFC) is the organizer of the event. The festival tries to express the relationship between reality and truth through documentary films.

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

3 Iranian films at Paladino d'Oro Sport Film Festival

TEHRAN-Three films from Iran will participate in the 44th edition of the Paladino d'Oro Sport Film Festival, which will take place in Palermo (Sicily), Italy, from December 10 to 15.

Feature film "Beyro" directed by Morteza Ali Abbas Mirzaei and short films "A Drive Through Blackness" by Behzad Rezaei and "AhmadReza Buffon" by Morteza Shahbazi are the three Iranian participants in this year's edition of the festival, ILNA reported.

"Beyro," 106 minutes, is a production of 2022. It tells the life story of Alireza Beyravanvand, the goalkeeper of Iran's national football team, who has tried a lot to be a champion.

The film focuses on the odyssey teenager Beyravanvand embarks on from his birthplace Sarab-e Yas, a small village in Lorestan Province, to Tehran in 2011 when he made his debut in Naft Tehran.

Beyravanvand represented Iran internationally at the AFC Asian Cup in 2015, 2019, and 2023, and at the FIFA World Cup in 2018 and 2022.

In 2017, he became the first Iranian ever to be nominated for an individual award at The Best FIFA Football Awards. He was named the best goalkeeper in the Persian Gulf Pro League for four consecutive seasons and the Iranian Footballer of the Year in 2019. With 23 clean sheets in 37 matches during the 2017-18 season, he ranked as the second goalkeeper in the world for the cleanest sheets.



In addition, Beyravanvand achieved two Guinness World Records during his career, including the farthest distance throw of a football at 61.0026 meters against South Korea in 2016, and the longest football drop kick at 78.014 meters in 2019.

The 12-minute "AhmadReza Buffon," a 2024 production, shows a group of teenagers in a village who are preparing for a football game. As one of their teammates is absent, they are forced to play with a disabled teenager named Ahmadreza who is very interested in goalkeepers and especially the Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon. However, Ahmadreza's poor performance causes the children to kick him out of the playground.

"A Drive Through Blackness" depicts Arash, a theater acting graduate, who drives his car at night to make ends meet. During these nights, he encounters various people and situations.

The Paladino d'Oro Sport Film Festival is the oldest in the world of sports cinema (1979). Promoting the diffusion of sports films and videos, the festival is an international showcase for the large distributions of world cinema, which can meet the productions during Sports Film Week.

It seeks to promote the best quality of sports image productions; organize meetings between productions, film distributors and mass media, and be a teaching tool for schools and universities.

1,500 artists call on Tate Britain to sever ties with organizations complicit in Gaza genocide

More than 1,500 artists and cultural workers have signed an open letter calling on the Tate Britain, the major art museum in London, to sever its connections with "organizations that are deeply complicit with the Israeli regime" and to "take a clear stance against the artwashing of genocide and apartheid."

Furthermore, Scottish artist Jasleen Kaur took the opportunity of receiving the prestigious Turner Prize—awarded annually to a British visual artist—in a ceremony held at the Tate on December 3 to denounce the Israeli crimes and call for a "Free Palestine," World Socialist Web Site reported.

The extensive list of signatories includes, according to Artists for Palestine UK, "more than 60 artists closely associated with Tate (including three out of four of this year's Turner Prize nominees, two of its judges, and many former prize winners and nominees)."

In addition to Kaur, Turner Prize

winners who added their names to the protest include Charlotte Prodger, Helen Cammock and Lawrence Abu Hamdan. Well-known figures such as Jumana Manna, Sophia al-Maria, Gala Porras-Kim, Evan Ifekoya and Dala Nasser were also among the signers.

The signatories point to the ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that Israel is committing "what amounts to plausible genocide" and to the finding by a UN special committee in November that "Israeli policies and practices in Gaza are consistent with the characteristics of genocide, using starvation as a weapon of war and running an apartheid system in the occupied Palestinian territories."

The open letter appeals to the Tate officialdom to break all connections with Outset Contemporary Art Fund, the Zabłudowicz Art Trust and Zabłudowicz Art Projects, including their founders and directors Candida Gertler and Anita and Poju Zabłudowicz.

Hundreds of pro-Palestinian protesters gathered outside the Turner Prize ceremony at the Tate on Tuesday, echoing the calls for divestment. In her remarks, Glasgow-born Jasleen Kaur dedicated her prize to "the artists, the poets, the parents, the students who show me the slow and meticulous work of organizing and world building, the folk who orient their lives towards freedom in practice not theory who advocate for life, not death."

She went on to explain that from where she now stood, on the podium, "I want to echo the calls of the protesters outside, [Applause] a protest made up of artists, culture workers, staff, students who I stand firmly with."

The sincerity of the signatories and protesters cannot be called into question. They are making common cause with the tens of millions around the globe horrified anew on an almost daily basis by the crimes of the monstrous Netanyahu regime and its U.S., British, French and German co-conspirators. No atrocity is

too great for these governments, no act of mass murder unthinkable.

Israel's genocide in Gaza — now in its 427th day — has left at least 44,612 Palestinians dead and some 105,834 wounded. In Lebanon, Israel has killed 4,047 people since October 2023 and keeps violating November 27 truce deal.

Israel has launched a genocidal war on the Gaza Strip following a cross-border attack by the Palestinian group Hamas in October last year.

The second year of genocide in Gaza has drawn growing international condemnation, with officials and institutions labeling the attacks and blocking of aid deliveries as a deliberate attempt to destroy a population.

On Nov. 21, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.