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## Pezeshkian: US lacks commitment, dialogue is not the problem

TEHRAN – In an interview NBC aired on Wednesday based on its “independent translation” of Masoud Pezeshkian’s remarks, the Iranian president said Iran is always open to dialogue, but what obscures its efforts is Washington’s lack of commitment to its agreements.

“The problem we have is not in dialogue,” Pezeshkian said. “It’s in the commitments that arise from talk and dialogue that we’ll have to commit to.

Iran and the P+1 group of countries (the United States, UK, France, Germany, Russia, and China) signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015. The agreement limited Iran’s nuclear activities in exchange for the termination of sanctions.

In 2018, however, Donald Trump withdrew from the deal and re-imposed sanctions. Iran began to scale back on some of its own commitments in 2020 after European signatories to the JCPOA also scrapped the pact in practice.

“We upheld all the commitments that we had to commit to,” Pezeshkian told NBC. “But unfortunately, it was the other party that did not live up to its promises and obligations.” ▶ Page 3

## No direct talks with U.S. until JCPOA return: Araghchi

TEHRAN – Addressing the 2018 U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has made it clear that Tehran would not engage in direct nuclear negotiations with the U.S. until Washington returns to the deal and clarifies its policies.

“After the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA, the Europeans held negotiations with Washington. Our position remains unchanged: we will not negotiate directly with the U.S. on the nuclear issue until they rejoin the JCPOA and demonstrate their commitment,” he asserted during a televised interview on Tuesday.

He also emphasized the country’s steadfast commitment to diplomacy and its peaceful nuclear energy program.

### ‘Ready for talks, firm on rights in nuclear negotiations’

Araghchi reiterated that Iran has never abandoned the negotiation table, underscoring the country’s confidence in the non-military nature of its nuclear activities. ▶ Page 2

## Zionists call for military, economic, and destabilizing measures against Iran in Trump’s first 100 days

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – An anti-Iran group based in the United States with close ties to pro-Israeli lobbies says it has turned in a comprehensive plan of aggressive measures to incoming U.S. President Donald Trump – a plan that the group says will force Iran into submission.

The recommendations published on the United Against Nuclear Iran’s websites seem to advocate a stricter continuation of the so-called maximum pressure campaign Trump adopted during his first term in office which lasted from 2017 to 2021.

### What the UANI hopes Trump would do

The anti-Iran group’s plan is characterized by broad sanctions, military threats, and efforts to destabilize Iran. Here’s a breakdown of all UANI recommendations for Trump’s 100 days in office: ▶ Page 3

# Gaza Ceasefire: Israel Finally Gives in to Resistance

A man waves Palestinian flags as Palestinians react to news on a ceasefire deal with Israel, in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip, January 15, 2025.

## Was JFK assassinated by his successor, and is he the last one?

By Ehsan Etesam

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian’s firm denial of Iran’s intention to assassinate Donald Trump, juxtaposed with recently surfaced claims linking Lyndon B. Johnson to the JFK assassination, prompts a significant question: does Iran know what Trump knows?

A new audio tape, purportedly revealing that Johnson, who was elected as the next President after John F. Kennedy, orchestrated the assassination of JFK, has reignited conspiracy theories surrounding one of America’s most scrutinized historical events. The tape, which surfaced on social media,

## ‘Palestine will constitute future of human rights and international law’

By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN – Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, a professor in global thought and comparative philosophies, says tech billionaire Elon Musk who openly backs “extremist figures” in Europe is “facilitating extremism and misinformation”.

Moghaddam has analyzed the ideological tenets driving Musk in his last book on Artificial Intelligence.

“One of the central arguments that I make in these studies is that Musk is driven by an ideological framework reflecting a combination of hyper-capitalism,

## When will we wake up from our slumber!?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT – With the 60-day ceasefire deadline approaching, i.e. on January 26, Israeli violations of the truce are escalating south and north of the Litani.

On Friday, Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, will visit Lebanon to chair the fourth meeting of the five-member committee to discuss the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces from southern Lebanon and the deployment of the Lebanese army in the border towns.

In the last meeting, chaired by Amos Hochstein, the US envoy to West Asia, it was decided to deploy the Lebanese army in the entire western sector between January 7 and 23.

## Yemen strikes Tel Aviv and electricity plant

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Yemeni forces have kept up military pressure on the Israeli regime with more attacks targeting sensitive sites.

The spokesperson for the Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, announced the execution of two military operations against targets belonging to the Israeli occupation in occupied Palestine.

Saree stated that the Yemeni Air Force carried out a qualitative military operation, using a number of drones to attack occupation targets in Tel Aviv.

He added that the Yemeni Armed Forces’ missile unit carried out another operation, ▶ Page 5

## Iran-Russia trade reaches \$1.9b in 9 months

TEHRAN – Iran’s Customs Administration (IRICA) has reported that non-oil trade between Iran and Russia reached 3.447 million tons of goods, valued at \$1.902 billion, during the first nine months of the current Iranian year (March 20- December 20, 2024), IRIB reported.

Iran’s exports to Russia totaled 1.056 million tons worth \$803 million, marking a 14 percent increase compared to the same period last year. Imports from Russia stood at 1.491 million tons, valued at \$1.099 billion.

The spokesperson for the Trade Development Commission of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce highlighted bell peppers as Iran’s leading export to Russia during this period, with a 175 percent increase in weight compared to last year. ▶ Page 4



## Tajikistan welcomes Pezeshkian for high-ranking visit

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian arrived in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, on Wednesday night to begin his official visit to the central Asian country.

He is accompanied by a high-ranking delegation that will engage in several key diplomatic and cultural activities over the course of the trip.

Upon his arrival at Dushanbe’s airport, President Pezeshkian was warmly welcomed by Tajik President Emomali Rahmon. The two leaders are expected to hold discussions on a wide range of bilateral, regional, and international matters. Following his arrival, President Pezeshkian visited Samani Square in Dushanbe, where he laid a wreath at the memorial of Amir Ismail Samani, a prominent historical figure venerated by both Iranians and Tajiks. ▶ Page 2



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

## FATF, a challenge or solution?!

In a note, Jam-e-Jam discussed the opinion of the supporters and opponents of FATF and wrote: Acceptance or non-acceptance of the FATF demands has been the subject of political debates in the country for several years. Those in favor consider joining FATF as a basic requirement to enter global markets and remove financial barriers facing Iranian businessmen. They believe that not joining the institution is one of the main obstacles to removing financial sanctions coupled with economic and commercial problems for the country. On the other side, the opponents believe that this institution, as part of the economic tool of the West, seeks to establish supremacy over the global economy. Opponents of FATF believe that joining the institution can threaten Iran's economic independence. What is clear is that no person inside and no institution outside the country can guarantee that accepting the controversial demands of FATF can lead to the removal of Iran from the FATF blacklist. Since the voting mechanism is based on consensus all main member countries must vote to remove Iran from the blacklist.

### Ettelaat: Shadow of sanctions will not go away from Iran's economy anytime soon!

In an interview with Ahmad Janjan, an economic analyst, Ettelaat discussed the issue of sanctions and their effects on Iran's economy. He said: Unfortunately, Iran has experienced economic crises in various forms in recent decades, and this phenomenon has become more important in recent years due to the cruel sanctions of the United States. The signing of the JCPOA (before Trump's exit) had a (positive) influence on the economic conditions of the country and of course the living conditions of the people. It became possible to attract foreign capital and increase oil exports and other commodities. Donald Trump's decision to withdraw the United States from the nuclear deal has caused obstacles to Iran's economic interactions with the outside world. It must be admitted that the shadow of sanctions will not go away from Iran's economy anytime soon. The government and officials should design and implement short-term and long-term plans to manage the country's economic situation and overcome the problems.

### Etemad: Misunderstanding the FATF

Etemad talked with Mahmoud Sadeghi, a law professor and reformist political activist, about misunderstandings regarding the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). He said: Some radical wings claim that the acceptance of FATF will push Iran toward many problems, and Iran's national security will be endangered. But it is not like that. Countries will have obligations and cooperation towards each other. If a report from a member country reaches the supervisory body based on the mechanisms and standards that have been accepted by all countries, the supervisory body has to investigate the case, make a decision based on its internal system, and announce the result. There is no coercion. There is only a kind of cooperation. But an illusion has been created that all financial transactions in Iran will come under the monitoring of the body. Some are worried that Iran will face problems in bypassing the sanctions. But today you do not have a more secure country than Russia and China. Russia is embroiled in war and sanctions. However, these two countries are members of FATF.

### Arman-e-Melli: Iran-Europe efforts to reach an agreement

In an article, Arman-e-Melli discussed the second round of talks between Iran and Europe in Geneva. It wrote: It seems that Iran and Europe should negotiate on various issues. The most important bottleneck is the nuclear file, which apparently the Europeans have decided to send from the Council of Governors of the IAEA to the United Nations Security Council. Negotiations related to the nuclear issue are under the heavy shadow of the war in Ukraine because the Europeans believe that Iran has provided drones and missiles to Russia. Therefore, the prerequisite for the start of nuclear negotiations between Iran and Europe is to remove some obstacles. According to what has been announced, the JCPOA will expire in about 10 months, and possibly Iran's nuclear program will take its normal course, otherwise, it will be more difficult to resolve the nuclear case let alone sign a comprehensive agreement. Therefore, it seems that Iran and Europe intend to reach a compromise so that clinching a new nuclear agreement would not face more difficulties or obstacles.

## Syria's sovereignty must be respected, Iranian diplomat tells UN envoy



TEHRAN — Mohammad Reza Ra'ouf Sheibani, the Iranian foreign minister's special representative for Syrian affairs, emphasized the importance of respecting Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, asserting that the country's future should be determined solely by its people.

During a Wednesday video call with Geir Pedersen, the UN Secretary-General's special envoy for Syria, Sheibani stressed the necessity for all involved parties to refrain from meddling in Syria's internal matters.

This stance reflects Iran's long-standing position in supporting Syrian self-determination, a principle that multiple Iranian officials have recently reiterated.

The discussions between the two rep-

resentatives revolved around the latest developments in Syria, particularly concerning the recent Israeli regime's military aggression, which has led to further territorial occupation.

Sheibani condemned these actions as blatant violations of international law, highlighting how Israel's aggressive maneuvers threaten not only Syrian sovereignty but also regional peace.

Both representatives sounded the alarm about the resurgence of terrorist activities and violent extremism in Syria, warning of its potential ripple effects across the region.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

# Tajikistan welcomes Pezeshkian for high-ranking visit

From page 1 ▶ On Thursday, after a formal welcoming ceremony, Pezeshkian is scheduled to meet with his Tajik counterpart for high-level talks aimed at enhancing cooperation between the two nations.

Accompanying President Pezeshkian on this diplomatic mission are several key Iranian officials, including Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad, Economy Minister Abdolnaser Hemmati, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleji, Atomic Energy Organization Head Mohammad Eslami, Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi, Roads and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadegh, and Central Bank Governor Mohammadreza Farzin.

During the visit, Esmail Baqa-



ei, spokesperson for Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, confirmed that a number of significant cultural and diplomatic initiatives will take place,

including the inauguration of an Iranian Red Crescent Health Center in the country.

The Iranian ambassador to

Tajikistan, Alireza Haghghian, also highlighted several events planned for the visit, such as a joint business, investment, and tourism conference that will involve over 300 Iranian and Tajik economic leaders and investors. The event aims to foster deeper economic ties between the two nations.

Other notable activities include the reopening of the Persian Language and Literature Research Institute and a special meeting between President Pezeshkian and Iranian expatriates living in Tajikistan.

Following his stay in Tajikistan, President Pezeshkian will travel to Moscow for further discussions and the signing of a comprehensive cooperation agreement between Iran and Russia.

## No direct talks with U.S. until JCPOA return: Araghchi

From page 1 ▶ Araghchi reiterated that Iran has never abandoned the negotiation table, underscoring the country's confidence in the non-military nature of its nuclear activities.

"In the nuclear issue, we never left the negotiation table because we have always been confident in the peaceful nature of our nuclear program," Araghchi stated.

While reaffirming Iran's openness to dialogue, Araghchi acknowledged that some of the excessive demands from other parties had complicated the negotiation process. Despite these obstacles, he emphasized that Iran's primary objective remains the resumption of nuclear negotiations.

"Our main demand is to find a path that leads to the resumption of constructive talks," he said.

Araghchi described recent discussions with the European trio—the United Kingdom, France, and Germany—as promising. These talks, attended by senior Iranian diplomats Majid Takht-Ravanchi and Kazem



Gharibabadi, alongside European Union foreign policy chief Enrique Mora and other European representatives, showed signs of progress.

"The talks with the Europeans were essentially positive," Araghchi said. "We observed a serious commitment from their side and a desire to resolve the issue through dialogue."

While welcoming negotiations, Araghchi emphasized Iran's strategy of resilience

against sanctions. Echoing the guidance of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, he stressed the importance of neutralizing the impact of U.S. and European sanctions by relying on domestic capabilities.

"We do not abandon the course of negotiations, but neither are we dependent on it. Our focus is on overcoming sanctions through self-reliance and domestic strength," Araghchi said.

He further underlined Iran's insistence on participating in negotiations that uphold the nation's dignity and honor.

Araghchi also discussed the involvement of Russia and China in the nuclear talks, noting that despite tensions between Europe and Russia over the Ukraine crisis, both countries remain active participants in discussions on Iran's nuclear program.

"The issue of Ukraine has created some divisions between Europe and Russia, but both Russia and China continue to play a role in the nuclear issue," he explained.

## Palestinian unity crucial in face of Zionist regime's war crimes, Iran warns



TEHRAN — The spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, Esmail Baqaee, has issued a strong condemnation of the Zionist regime's intensified military actions and human rights violations against the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, calling on all Palestinian groups to set aside internal differences and strengthen their unity to confront the ongoing aggression effectively.

"Maintaining cohesion among Palestinian factions is critical to resisting the occupying regime's efforts to sow division," he stressed in a statement published on Wednesday.

Baqaee underscored the failure of the occupying regime to achieve its goal of crushing Palestinian Resistance over the past 16 months.

"The Zionist regime is attempting to mask its failures through horrific measures, including the mass killing of women and children, the destruction of healthcare facilities, mosques, and civilian homes, and targeted attacks on journalists and medical personnel in Gaza," he said. He added that similar measures are being employed in the West Bank, including assassinations, mass arrests, and relentless aerial bombardments.

Baqaee's remarks came as international efforts continue to negotiate a halt to what he described as ongoing genocide in the region.

Baqaee pointed to recent attacks, including the killing of dozens of civilians in Gaza over a 24-hour period and a drone strike in the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank on Tuesday, which killed six Palestinians. Among the victims was a 15-year-old boy. The attack, carried out by an Israeli drone, also injured several others. Local reports identified the remaining victims as young men aged between 23 and 34, including three brothers.

The spokesperson further condemned the actions of extremist Zionist settlers, who have ramped up their attacks on Palestinian civilians and Islamic holy sites in the West Bank and Al-Quds.

The Iranian official also highlighted the international community's obligations, particularly those of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to ensure peace and security. He urged the Council to adopt firm measures in its upcoming emergency session to address the crisis.

Baqaee emphasized the necessity of enforcing international legal rulings, including those of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), against the Zionist regime.

He called for accountability measures, such as supporting indictments from the International Criminal Court (ICC) against the regime's leaders for crimes against humanity. "The world demands an end to the culture of impunity that has enabled the apartheid regime to carry out heinous crimes without consequences," Baqaee declared.

## Iran to expand military drills near nuclear sites



TEHRAN — After demonstrating successful air defense capabilities near its nuclear facilities in Esfahan, Qom, and Markazi provinces, Iran will further enhance security through additional military drills in these areas, according to Mohammad Eslami, Head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization.

The nuclear chief made the announcement on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, praising the nation's military and civil defense readiness.

Eslami underscored the significance of the air defense drill, which showcased the capabilities of Iran's armed forces to protect the country's skies. "The air defense exercise near Natanz demonstrated the extensive capacities of our military forces and their ability to safeguard the nation's airspace. This exercise is a testament to the dedication and readiness of our forces," he stated.

During the past two weeks, Iran's Army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) conducted a joint air defense exercise near Iran's nuclear facilities in Natanz, Fordow, and Khondab. The drill aimed to as-

sess the readiness of air defense units to safeguard the sensitive site from potential aerial threats. On at least one occasion, Iranian forces practiced downing bunker busters over the country's nuclear sites.

The heightened media focus on what seems to be a routine military exercise likely stems from recent speculation in Western and Israeli media regarding potential plans by the incoming Trump administration to target Iran's nuclear facilities.

This speculation was further fueled by a report from Axios, which claimed that National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan recently presented President Biden with potential U.S. military strike options on Iranian nuclear sites, should Tehran take steps toward developing nuclear weapons prior to Trump's inauguration later this month.

Eslami also provided updates on Iran's nuclear energy ambitions, specifically the 20,000-megawatt nuclear power generation project, a long-term national priority set for completion by 2041.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))



# Pezehs kian: US lacks commitment, dialogue is not the problem

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“We upheld all the commitments that we had to commit to,” Pezeshkian told NBC. “But unfortunately, it was the other party that did not live up to its promises and obligations.”

When asked about incoming U.S. President Donald Trump’s policies, Pezeshkian expressed hope for peace.

He acknowledged the long-standing tensions between the U.S. and Iran, noting, “Ever

since the very beginning, the U.S. has tried to topple Iran.”

He urged Trump to contribute to peace rather than bloodshed.

On the topic of potential Israeli military strikes against Iran, Pezeshkian asserted that Iran is not looking for war, but would firmly respond to every aggression.

“We do not fear war, but we do not seek it,” he said. He expressed

hope that an attack would not occur, as it would be detrimental to all parties involved.

Pezeshkian addressed the accusations of Iran seeking to manufacture nuclear weapons, dismissing them as a scheme to fabricate a pretext for conflict.

He reiterated that Iran’s actions have been peaceful and that the tensions serve no party’s interests.

When questioned about Iran’s position in the region, Pezeshkian refuted claims that Iran had been significantly weakened.

He emphasized that Iran is more coherent, robust, and secure compared to the previous year.

In response to allegations of a plot to assassinate Donald Trump, Pezeshkian denied any such plan, calling it a scheme to feed into Iranophobia.

When asked if there was ever an Iranian plot to kill Trump, the President firmly stated, “Never, by no means.”

## Zagros: Iran’s pioneering signal intelligence destroyer joins naval ranks

TEHRAN – In a ceremony on Wednesday, Iran’s first signal intelligence destroyer, “Zagros,” was officially welcomed into the Southern Fleet of the Navy in the Gulf of Oman.

High-ranking officials attended the event, including Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh, the Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics, and Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, the Commander of the Navy.

Additionally, the presence of Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, and Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, Commander-in-Chief of the Army, highlighted the significance of this occasion.

Zagros, a product of domestic innovation and expertise, marks a significant leap forward in Iran’s naval capabilities.

Rear Admiral Irani, speaking at the ceremony, emphasized the destroyer’s strategic importance and credited the relentless efforts of individuals across defense, science, and industry in bringing this advanced vessel to fruition.

He noted that the destroyer will serve as the Navy’s “alert and vigilant eye in the depths of the seas and oceans,” equipped with state-of-the-art technology produced entirely by Iranian youth.

“This destroyer incorporates the most advanced advancements in electromagnetism, electronics, and cyber technology across sub-surface, surface, and aerial domains,” the navy chief stated.

Additionally, Major General Bagheri highlighted the fundamental role of defensive power in ensuring national security and strength in his address, emphasizing the need for Iran to leverage its substantial maritime resources to



enhance its regional and global standing.

He also highlighted the strategic importance of the Gulf of Oman and the Makran coast, regions where the Navy is enhancing development to increase their strategic significance.

Bagheri stressed the importance of military readiness and future planning, citing the Zagros Destroyer as a testament to forward-thinking defense initiatives.

“Given that the Navy is tasked with securing the Sea of Oman, the Indian Ocean, the West Asia region, and all global seas and oceans, it requires such a valuable intelligence capability,” he remarked.

In a broader context, Bagheri contrasted national independence with reliance on global powers, suggesting that dependency would lead to “humiliation and disgrace.”

He praised the collaborative efforts of the

nation’s youth, defense industries, and the Navy in designing and building the Zagros, presenting this achievement as a gift to the Iranian people.

Addressing the residents of Sistan and Baluchistan, the Makran coast, Chabahar, and Konarak, Bagheri assured them of the military’s commitment to their security and peace, facilitating the nation’s progress towards its ambitious goals.

He encouraged investment in the country’s maritime assets, highlighting the current tranquility and security of Iran’s seas as an invitation to harness these natural blessings.

Bagheri concluded by expressing gratitude to the families of military personnel for their unwavering patience and support, acknowledging their vital role in the nation’s defense endeavors.

## Zionists call for military, economic, and destabilizing measures against Iran in Trump’s first 100 days

From Page 1 ▶ Escalatory military threats: The UANI calls for a clear U.S. policy of military intervention against Iran’s nuclear program and retaliation for Resistance groups’ operations against illegal American bases in West Asia.

Even more sanctions: The Zionist entity calls for a total embargo on Iranian oil, coupled with secondary sanctions on those who continue to purchase it (including China).

Undermining diplomacy: The UANI plan essentially dismisses any potential for diplomatic engagement. By calling for the dismantling of the Iran nuclear deal and immediate invocation of the UN snapback mechanism, the plan asks to close the door on any future negotiations.

Domestic destabilization: Certain recommendations suggest that the U.S. should capitalize on public anger over economic and

social conditions in Iran, many of which are attributed to U.S. sanctions, to deliberately instigate widespread chaos and instability.

Regional destabilization: The UANI plan also recommends intensifying regional instability by increasing the likelihood of conflicts and further empowering Israel. Aggressive actions, such as targeting Ansarullah leaders and increasing weapons shipments to Arab partners, are some of those suggestions.

Propaganda campaigns: Consistent with its agenda to undermine internal stability in Iran, the group urges Trump to escalate the use of propaganda channels to sow division among the Iranian people, fuel widespread mistrust, and deliberately provoke domestic hostility and violence.

**Why the UANI will have to keep hoping**

The recently proposed plan offers little in the way of genuinely

new solutions. They are actions that Washington has either historically struggled to implement or has consciously avoided.

Take, for example, the issue of sanctions. Both the first Trump administration and the succeeding Biden one aggressively pursued a policy aimed at reducing Iran’s oil exports to zero. Despite these efforts, Iran successfully circumvented sanctions, albeit at the cost of selling oil at a reduced price. The current proposal suggests sanctioning all purchasers of Iranian oil. However, given that China is the largest importer of Iranian crude, the question arises: does the U.S. truly possess the means to effectively compel China to halt these purchases? The geopolitical reality suggests a negative answer.

Furthermore, the idea of “regime change” through funding internal unrest within Iran is another strategy with a long and demonstrably poor track record. The

West has repeatedly attempted this approach over the past four decades, with consistent failure. There’s little reason to believe that it will prove any more successful this time around.

This leaves one option that Washington has historically refrained from pursuing: a direct military strike against Iran’s nuclear facilities. This hesitancy is not rooted in a concern for the potential civilian casualties but stems from the awareness of the catastrophic consequences. An attack on Iran’s nuclear sites would almost certainly trigger a shift in Iranian nuclear doctrine, and push the country to develop nuclear weapons. Similarly, any military attack on Iranian military installations risks a devastating retaliatory response, given the broad range and capabilities of Iran’s missile and drone arsenal, which can target numerous American bases throughout the region and beyond.

### Young Iranian basketballer Fallah: A tale of patience

TEHRAN – Parsa Fallah has consistently showcased his impressive basketball skills this season, demonstrating why he’s a vital asset for Oregon State.

The junior forward, standing tall at 6-foot-9, has a knack for leaving defenders in his wake with a splendid array of post moves. He currently stands as the Beavers’ third-leading scorer, contributing an impressive 10.8 points per game as the team gears up for crucial West Coast Conference matches against Santa Clara and Pacific this week.

A basketball coach spotted Fallah one day playing soccer and suggested he try his sport. Fallah didn’t like it at first, but at his father’s urging, stuck with it.

Fallah evolved into one of the country’s top young players, as he played key roles for Iran at FIBA U19 and U20 tournaments.

When former Southern Utah coach Todd Simon identified Fallah as a player he’d like to add to his program, he acknowledged getting a player from Iran to the U.S. “would be a little bit of a process.”

There’s only so much future for a basketball player in Iran, however. Fallah said basketball ranks no higher than fifth or sixth among sports in his country, oregonlive.com reported.

“It’s kind of a sport for the rich people back home,” Fallah said. “It’s like golf and tennis here. Rich people play that stuff.”

Fallah came off Southern Utah’s bench during the 2022-23 season. It was five games into the campaign, during a game at Kansas, that Simon thought he had something.

“He comes off the bench, and had eight (points) and eight (rebounds) in 13 minutes,” Simon said. “Right then we knew, OK, he’s not afraid of anything. He was the best big on the floor in that game. We knew he was going to be special.”

The following year, Fallah started every game, averaging 13.2 points and 6.0 rebounds a game. Late in the 23-24 season, Fallah began to think about transferring. He loved Southern Utah and the coaching staff. It’s where he met his wife, Ellie.

“I need to bring my family here. Family is really big for me, my little brother, my parents,” Fallah said.

### Iran Super Cup clash: Sepahan vs. Persepolis

TEHRAN – The fans gear up for the upcoming Iran Super Cup showdown between Sepahan and Persepolis, scheduled for this Friday.

This encounter not only promises to be a thrilling contest on the pitch but also serves as a significant event in the broader context of Iranian football, showcasing the rivalry, skill, and passion that characterize the sport in the nation.

Historically, both Sepahan and Persepolis are two of the most successful and revered clubs in Iranian football. Persepolis, based in Tehran, have a rich legacy with numerous trophies to their name, and are known for their large, enthusiastic fan base. The team have enjoyed considerable success in the Iran Pro League and the AFC Champions League, establishing themselves as a powerhouses in the region.

On the other hand, Sepahan, hailing from Isfahan, have also made a mark in Iranian football since their establishment. The club have been a consistent contender in domestic competitions, known for their disciplined approach and tactical prowess. The rivalry between these clubs dates back many years, and each encounter is highly anticipated, making this Super Cup clash particularly noteworthy.

### Persepolis captain Alishah expected to be fit for Sepahan

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team captain Omid Alishah is expected to be fit against Sepahan in the Iran’s Super Cup match.

The match is slated for January 17 in Arak’s Imam Khomeini Stadium.

Alishah broke his nose after collision with an Al Rayyan player in late November.

The 33-year-old midfielder started his training two weeks ago.

Iran league champion Persepolis, who has recently parted ways with Spanish coach Juan Carlos Garrido, will meet Hazfi Cup winner Sepahan on Friday.

### Sepahan defender Hazbavi to miss Persepolis match

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team defender Amin Hazbavi will be absent in the match against Persepolis.

Sepahan will play Persepolis on Friday in the Iran’s Super Cup.

The match will be held in Arak’s Imam Khomeini Stadium.

Hazbavi’s absence is a big blow to Sepahan.

### Rahimi to lead Iran’s sitting volleyball in 2026 Asian Para Games

TEHRAN – Former Iran national team sitting volleyball team captain Mohammadreza Rahimi has been named as head coach of Team Melli in the 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan.

Rahimi, has won two gold medals with sitting volleyball team in 2000 and 2008 Paralympic Games as well as a silver medal in the 2004 Paralympics.

Hadi Rezaei will once again lead Iran in the Paralympic Games. He will head Team Melli in the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

Iran’s sitting volleyball team claimed their eighth gold medal in Paris.

### Brazilian winger Guilherme Pira leaves Chadormalou

TEHRAN – Chadormalou Brazilian winger Guilherme Pira parted ways with the Iranian club.

The 24-year-old player has joined his homeland team Brusque Futebol Clube.

Pira joined the Iran side but failed to live up to the expectations.

Brazilian midfielder Wallace Madeira is set to leave the team.

Chadormalou will face Sepahan next week in Yazd.

### Sadeghi deemed surplus to requirements

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club will part company with their midfielder Saeid Sadeghi in the January transfer window.

The 30-year-old player joined Persepolis in 2022 from Gol Gohar.

Sadeghi has been reportedly linked with his former club in January.

Additionally, Persepolis are looking for a replacement for head coach Juan Carlos Garrido, who left the club by mutual consent in late December.



## Only 44% of Iran's dam capacity filled halfway through winter

TEHRAN - Iran's major dams are entering the second month of winter with only 44 percent of their capacity filled, leaving 56 percent of their storage empty. This comes after a lackluster autumn rainfall that failed to alleviate the impacts of ongoing droughts.

According to the latest statistics, rainfall from the beginning of the current water year (starting late September) until January 12 amounted to just 51.5 millimeters, significantly impacting surface water flows and reducing inflows into dams, which are crucial for meeting the country's water needs. Furthermore, snowfall—an essential contributor to dam reservoirs—has also been insufficient this year.

Mohammadreza Kavianpour, head of the Water Research Institute of Iran, has previously linked global warming to the melting of snow and glaciers. He highlighted that this process, which started in the polar regions, is reducing the extent of natural glaciers worldwide, including Iran, where 110 glacier zones exist. Kavianpour emphasized that climate change is causing a shift from snowfall to rainfall, reducing snow cover and its thickness, which are critical for water management.

## Iran's 9-month non-oil export to UAE stands at \$5.3b

TEHRAN - Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$5.3 billion to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 21), the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Forud Asgari said that the UAE was Iran's third top export destination in the mentioned nine-month period.

Exporting commodities valued at \$15.3 billion to Iran, the United Arab Emirates was Iran's top source of import in the first nine months of the present year, the official further added.

In early August 2024, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Tehran said over 122,000 Iranian business persons were working in the UAE.

"Economic figures show that Iran-UAE business interactions have increased in recent years, and more than 122,000 Iranian businessmen are doing business in the UAE," Saif Mohammed al-Zaabi said in a meeting with Head of Iran Chamber of Cooperatives Bahman Abdollahi.

Pointing out that the problems of Iranian and Emirati businessmen and economic operators are not political but in the legal field, he admitted: "Cooperation between the two countries in the field of sea and air transport has also increased."

Abdollahi for his part introduced some of the capabilities of the cooperative sector in Iran and said: "Cooperatives have an important and effective position in Iran and a significant part of the production in our country is done by cooperatives."

Iran and the United Arab Emirates signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding economic cooperation in a variety of areas at the end of the two countries' 3rd Joint Economic Committee meeting in May 1, 2024.

The MOU was signed by former Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash and UAE's Economy Minister Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri, who co-chaired the joint meeting.

During the mentioned committee meeting, the two sides stressed the need for further expansion of economic cooperation between Tehran and Abu Dhabi.

## TEDPIX drops 431 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 431 points to 2,866,222 on Wednesday, which is the fifth day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock ex-

Recent data from Iran's National Water Information Office reveals a three percent drop in water inflows to dams since the start of the current water year. From late September to January 13, 5.67 billion cubic meters of water entered major dams, compared to 5.86 billion cubic meters during the same period last year. Conversely, water outflows from dams have risen by four percent, reaching 7.75 billion cubic meters, up from 7.45 billion cubic meters in the previous year, underscoring a growing water imbalance.

Despite reduced inflows and increased outflows, the total water volume in dams has increased by nine percent. As of January 13, dam water reserves stand at 22.48 billion cubic meters, compared to 20.57 billion cubic meters during the same period last year. However, eight major dams have reported water level reductions ranging from 25 to 75 percent.

The combined challenges of reduced precipitation, insufficient snow accumulation, and higher water consumption are amplifying water resource imbalances in Iran, raising concerns about the country's ability to address ongoing drought and water scarcity issues effectively.

Speaking at the end of the meeting, Bazrpash said: "We have held the joint committee between the two countries after 10 years, which is an opportunity to develop the commercial and economic relations between the two countries."

"The UAE, as Iran's second biggest trade partner, has great strategic importance for us," the minister said.

Referring to the location of Iran and the UAE in the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), Bazarpash said: "Access to the markets of the north and south can create an opportunity for the two countries to cooperate."

In the end, the minister emphasized solving the banking and monetary problems between the two countries to facilitate bilateral trade relations.

Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri for his part underlined the importance of the meeting, saying: "Holding today's meeting shows the development and expansion of economic relations between the two countries. After China, the UAE has the largest amount of trade relations with Iran. The trade value of the two countries has reached 27 billion dollars and many Iranian companies are established in the UAE."

"Creating new opportunities for transportation and banking cooperation is one of the achievements of this commission," the official said.

Referring to the performance of the UAE government in the field of investment, the official said: "The approval of the law on the formation of foreign companies and the government's support for companies that operate in the field of new energies has created a good opportunity for business with the UAE."

The 3rd Iran-UAE Joint Economic Committee meeting was held in Abu Dhabi from April 30 until May 1, 2024.

Increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government has been pursuing in recent years.

Iran shares land or water borders with 15 countries namely UAE, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Saudi Arabia.

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

# High-level Iranian trade delegation visits Tajikistan to strengthen economic ties

TEHRAN - A high-ranking Iranian trade delegation, comprising members of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and led by Chamber Head Samad Hassanzadeh, departed Tehran for Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, on Tuesday, January 14.

The delegation was accompanied by Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi Amiri, underscoring the multi-faceted nature of the visit, the ICCIMA portal reported.

Upon arrival in Dushanbe, Iranian and Tajik economic leaders convened for a joint forum aimed at enhancing bilateral trade relations. In this gathering, Hassanzadeh emphasized the extensive cultural and historical ties between Iran and Tajikistan as a foundation for deepening economic cooperation. He highlighted key sectors such as petrochemicals, oil and gas, medical equipment, and tourism as areas ripe for collaboration.



"Beyond economic discussions, we can leverage our shared heritage in literature, science, and the arts to expand mutual ties. Tajikistan offers a strategic platform for Iranian investors and businesses seeking to access Central Asian and Eurasian markets," Hassanzadeh stated.

### Key agreements and future prospects

The forum witnessed the signing of several memoranda of understanding between Iranian and Tajik companies, paving the

way for increased joint ventures. Attendees also participated in one-on-one discussions to explore potential partnerships. Hassanzadeh noted that Iranian businesses have the expertise to contribute to Tajikistan's industrial development, including projects in steel production, refineries, and advanced technologies.

Highlighting Iran's capabilities, the ICCIMA head remarked, "We possess competitive pricing and innovative solutions, making us

a strong partner for Tajikistan in sectors like engineering services and exports of building materials, agricultural products, and pharmaceuticals."

### A strategic partner for Iran

Ahead of the trip, Hassanzadeh described Tajikistan as a strategic destination for Iranian investors. "The stable political and social relations between our nations, combined with the trust shared by our presidents, provide a solid framework for expanding bilateral trade," he told Iranian media. He highlighted Tajikistan's reliance on Iranian expertise and competitive exports as a key opportunity for growth in sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and industrial development.

With the Iranian delegation's visit marking a new chapter in economic diplomacy, both nations have reaffirmed their commitment to leveraging cultural affinities for stronger economic ties. Tajikistan remains a vital partner in Iran's efforts to enhance its presence in Central Asia and beyond.

## Gasoline production surges 10m liters in 3 months

TEHRAN - The National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) has reported a significant increase in gasoline production between September and December this year. Technical upgrades across multiple refineries have raised daily production by more than 10 million liters, increasing the national daily average to 107 million liters in December from 97.5 million liters in the first five months of the year.

This increase was achieved through enhanced operations at various refineries, including Esfahan (+1.8 million liters), Imam Khomeini Shazand (+3.3 million liters), Bandar Abbas (+0.8 million liters), Tabriz (+0.3 million liters), Tehran (+0.5 million liters), Persian Gulf Star (+3.2 million liters), Shiraz (+0.1 million liters), and Lavan (+0.1 million liters).



Mohsen Paknejad, Minister of Oil, stated in a meeting with senior oil officials on January 11 that the increased production levels have prevented significant foreign currency

outflows that would otherwise have been required for importing gasoline and diesel. He also noted that diesel production rose by 11 million liters per day during the same period, further reinforcing the country's energy security.

Mohammad Sadegh Azimifar, head of NIORDC, highlighted several key projects that contributed to the increased production. These include the isomerization project at Shiraz Refinery, the hydrocracker unit at Abadan Refinery, and process improvements at other facilities.

These initiatives under the 14th government have added 10 million liters of gasoline and 11 million liters of diesel to daily production capacity, reflecting Iran's growing self-reliance in energy production and reduced dependency on imports.

## Iran-Russia trade reaches \$1.9b in 9 months

From Page 1 ▶ On the import side, Iran's largest import from Russia was raw gold, totaling 3,595 kilograms and valued at \$281 million.

In recent years, Iran and Russia have been steadily increasing their trade across the Caspian Sea, involving goods such as

building materials, timber, fertilizers, and more recently, arms. Hundreds of Iranian companies now have a foothold in the Russian port of Astrakhan, north of the Caspian Sea.

Furthermore, Russia and Iran are working on infrastructure projects to enhance trade routes.

According to an intergovernmental agreement signed with Iran in May 2023, Russia will allocate an interstate loan of 1.3 billion euros for the construction of the Rasht-Astara railway, a key segment in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). This project aims to connect Russia to India via Iran and

Azerbaijan, offering a shorter and more efficient trade route.

These developments reflect a deepening economic partnership between Iran and Russia, with both nations seeking to strengthen their trade ties and reduce reliance on Western markets amid geopolitical tensions.

## Iran to establish 24 solar energy industrial parks

TEHRAN - Iran's Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) has announced the approval of 24 specialized industrial parks dedicated to solar energy.

According to ISIPO Managing Director Reza Ansari, four of these parks have already reached the operational stage, with land allocated to interested investors, IRNA reported.

Ansari emphasized the need to create an attractive environment for private sector investment in the electricity industry, particularly in renewable energy projects. He noted that addressing challenges such as power and gas outages, which have negatively impacted production, requires structural changes in energy management and a shift in the Ministry of Energy's role. He highlighted ISIPO's efforts to support the establishment of renewable energy plants and the development of electricity infrastructure to meet industrial energy demands.

Ansari described solar energy as a critical resource for supplying power to production units in industrial parks. He revealed that the total electricity consumption in Iran's



industrial parks during the autumn of this year was approximately 3,000 megawatts, a demand that could be met with proper planning through solar energy solutions. He also pointed out that industrial parks are not just economic entities but also social and economic institutions created by the people.

Iran currently has 870 industrial parks and zones, hosting over 53,000 production units that employ about 1.1 million individuals. With the inauguration of new units, this employment figure is expected to grow significantly. Ansari also underlined ISIPO's commitment

to renewable energy production, aiming to reduce the energy supply-demand imbalance through initiatives such as solar industrial parks, distributed generation (CHP and DG), and enhanced electricity transmission infrastructure.

As part of this strategy, ISIPO has identified 124 priority electricity projects, including power line extensions and substation construction. These projects are being implemented through partnerships with provincial planning organizations, regional power companies, and industrial park operators. Additionally, Ansari highlighted plans for 115 solar zones within existing industrial parks, spanning over 5,158 hectares, to further support renewable energy generation.

The announcement was made during a meeting with key officials, including representatives from the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, the Armed Forces' Economic Resistance Committee, and the Basij Engineers Organization. Discussions focused on strategies to address energy imbalances and expand renewable energy infrastructure in Iran.

## Iran calls for investment in renewable energy at IRENA summit

TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) Mohsen Tarzatab stressed the need for more innovative financing solutions in the renewable energy sector.

Speaking at a session on innovative financing for renewable energy projects during the second day of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Summit, Tarzatab highlighted Iran's experience in launching the Green Board at the

Energy Exchange.

Tarzatab stressed the need for more innovative financing solutions in the renewable energy sector to provide adequate investment guarantees and ensure that projects are completed within the agreed timelines. He emphasized that IRENA could play a vital role in

shaping these processes. The 15th IRENA General Assembly opened on Tuesday, January 14, in Abu Dhabi, UAE, under the theme "Accelerating Renewable Energy Development and the Path Forward." The event was attended by nearly 500 representatives from 170 member countries.



# Elon Musk driven by ideological framework reflecting hyper-capitalism and techno-imperialism: philosopher

'Palestine will constitute future of human rights and international law'

From page 1 ▶ right-wing political leanings, and techno-imperialism," the professor from the SOAS University of London tells the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

The leading scholar also said the "crimes committed in Palestine will determine the future of international law and human rights all over the world."

Following is the text of the interview:

**Donald Trump has again threatened to reclaim the Panama Canal and has not ruled out using military force or economic sanctions to pursue acquisition of the Panama Canal and Greenland. What do such threats reveal about Trump's personality or state of mind? In his January 6 press briefing, Trump also threatened Canada calling the border between the two countries an "artificially drawn line." His remarks came just a few weeks after he called Canada the 51st U.S. state. What sense does such a covetous eye on Canada send to the world, especially to American friends and allies especially as the Canadian FM said "we will never back down in the face of threats"?**

The threats are meant to be a negotiating tactic, that starts with a maximalist demand to coerce a net-positive outcome. It is largely taken from the business environment that Donald Trump and his regime is steeped in. The problem is of course, that this approach is uneducated, as mundane business approaches that may work in the real-estate sector, can't be applied to the complexity of world politics. The Trump presidency will hollow out any remaining residues of foreign policy competency from the civil service in the United States. There won't be a Cyrus Vance or Zbigniew Brzezinski. Rather comparable to authoritarian systems where leading positions are allocated in accordance with allegiance to the regime in power, rather than competence to do the job, Trump is staffing his cabinet with compliant yay-sayers. What emerges is a strategic incompetence that is truly dangerous for the stability of the international system.

**Aren't such threats a blow to international order and disrespect to other countries' sovereignty or an encouragement toward anarchy?**

From a scientific or conceptual perspective, the current international system is anarchic in any case, as there is no organisation that could mitigate conflict. Trump exacerbates this trend, as war becomes an ever-more present prospect in the conduct of international affairs. Sovereignty is the first casualty within such a system. The best prophylaxis against becoming



the prey of predators in such a system is to a) maximise the legitimacy of the state through democratic accountability and respect for human rights to minimise the gap between state and society which would be exploited from the outside and b) a robust international diplomacy to complement that domestic legitimacy of the state with an international strategy. Again: In an anarchic system where sovereignty is eroded by an overt form of imperial foreign policy, as Trump clearly stands for, the first line of defense to ensure stability is legitimacy, engineered by implementing democratic acceptance of the government by the population and international recognition as a stable, peaceful and accountable actor. There is no military solution to the dilemma of legitimacy. In fact, militarised, authoritarian policies are the biggest threat to national security. In the Iranian context, this requires a swift and sustained institutionalisation of "mardom-salari," as a central strategy to shift the crux of governance from a national security approach to a human security emphasis. In a world where we are more connected than ever, peaceful diplomacy and more democracy is not a luxury, but a necessity for survival.

**Isn't Trump's U.S. emerging as a bully that would threaten the Western alliance and even NATO? For years American officials have been floating the idea that the U.S. is the leader of the "free world", however, such remarks show that the U.S., at least under Trump, is emerging as a bully in the world. Please give your own opinion. Can Trump's threats force Western allies to reassess their policies or take a departure from the U.S. in terms of defense and economy in the long run? Also, don't you think that Trump's remarks embolden powerful countries to frighten others?**

The so-called "West" has been fractured along social, cultural and political lines for a long while, now. There is still a powerful elite consensus that keeps the idea together, and NATO is the main factor. However, the reality is that even in the United States and certainly in Europe, inevitable demographic changes also because

## When will we wake up from our slumber!?

From page 1 ▶ However, this did not happen due to the escalation of the Israeli occupation army's attacks in conjunction with bulldozing and bombing operations.

It is worth noting that it is not just the Israeli spy drones that do not leave the skies of the south. Coinciding with the visit of US General Jasper Jeffers, head of the committee, to the headquarters of the Fifth Brigade in Al-Bayada, US drones flew in the skies south of the Litani River and monitored geographical

coordinates. Military sources suggest that the US drones flew from military bases in the Western Galilee settlements inside the occupied Palestinian territories. In addition to these drones, there was talk of spy drones controlled by UNIFIL forces, which monitored Hezbollah's military facilities.

The occupation forces warned Lebanese army soldiers against approaching the separation wall in Ras al-Naqoura and asked them to leave, saying that the occupation has been

## Yemen strikes Tel Aviv and electricity plant

From page 1 ▶ targeting the "occupation's power station in the Umm al-Rashrash area (Eilat), southern occupied Palestine, with a cruise missile."

General Saree confirmed that both operations successfully achieved their objectives, noting that they were conducted "in support of the oppressed Palestinian people and their fighters, as a response to the massacres against our brothers in Gaza, as part of the fifth phase of support in the promised liberation battle and the sacred war, and in response to the Israeli aggression on our country."

The military spokesman emphasized that the armed forces will continue conducting military operations against the Israeli occupation regime, highlighting their ability to strike additional military targets in the coming period.

He reiterated that these operations would not cease unless the aggression on Gaza stops and the blockade is lifted.

Also on Wednesday, Yemeni Armed Forces announced that the American aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman and a number of its warships were targeted in the northern Red Sea region with cruise missiles and drones.

of irreversible immigration patterns, will alter the political and socio-economic landscape forever. This is why the resurgent right-wing in Europe, Trump himself and Elon Musk are bandwagoning, to ward off this movement towards increasing social and multicultural hybridity. Theirs is an effort to keep the social status quo from being altered, to keep the elites in power without impingement from the "brown people" or collaborating "leftists". It is those social trends that will determine the future of the "West". Trump and the European right-wing know this, which is why they want to fortify their privileges. But the push from below, from immensely resourceful civil societies are already recalibrating the political landscape. Trump may well be a transitory moment in this trend. The future of the United States will be co-determined by the current minorities as the Latino and African-American population is set to constitute the majority in the country in a couple of decades and for the first time in history. When I speak to Chinese, South American or other intellectuals and strategists from the non-Western world, they are aware of such social factors when they think about international politics. In Iran, too, such demographic and social trends need to be integrated into a science of international politics.

**Trump also repeated his threat that "all hell will break out in the Middle East" if Hamas does not release hostages by the time he takes office. What else remains that Trump's administration can do against Gaza as the enclave is already a hell?**

The horrors of Gaza can only be fathomed by the Palestinians, while it must be showcased as a historical crime by any concerned individual in the world. In essence, this battle to showcase the crimes committed in Palestine will determine the future of international law and human rights all over the world. If it is accepted that the Benjamin Netanyahu administration plunges the whole international system into a sick denial of the crimes committed on a daily basis, we are all doomed, as our own human security will

dealing – for years – with the liberated area of Ras al-Naqoura as a buffer zone.

Meanwhile, the colonial schemes that were hatched in the dark are now being announced in public. Without any ambiguity, the Israelis and the Americans no longer hesitate to declare their expansionist intentions, disregarding the principles of international law, especially respect for the sovereignty of states and their territorial integrity.

This coincides with the return of

be a target. So the battle goes far beyond the issue of Trump. Palestine today is a battleground that will constitute the future of human rights and international law. I should say that I am in no doubt that History will judge Netanyahu and the Israeli state with the full force of scholarly rigour. You can't murder yourself to legitimacy and geopolitical success. As for the proclamation of Trump: It is that zero-sum negotiating tactic that I mentioned, which does not leave much room for diplomacy or educated discourse.

**Elon Musk, a close aide to Trump, is also using offensive language against European leaders including the German chancellor and president. Please give your own opinion as a philosopher.**

This question relates to some of the issues that I have researched in two studies on Artificial Intelligence: "Is Artificial Intelligence Racist? The ethics of AI and the future of Humanity" (Bloomsbury 2023), and the forthcoming "The myth of good AI: Manifesto for Critical AI studies" (Manchester University Press, 2025). The latter book has several sections on Muskism, the ideological tenets driving Elon Musk. One of the central arguments that I make in these studies is that Musk is driven by an ideological framework reflecting a combination of hyper-capitalism, right-wing political leanings, and techno-imperialism. His focus on profit maximization often aligns with controversial stances, such as his support for extremist figures. Furthermore, Musk's management of his social media platform, X, has been rightly criticized for amplifying harmful content under the guise of promoting "free speech," facilitating extremism and misinformation. Muskism, thus, reflects an ethos that reinforces power hierarchies, promotes technological determinism, and neglects the complexities of social justice and cultural empathy. Politically, Muskism stands in opposition to agendas of social equity, inclusion and multiculturalism. In addition, Muskism displays an insidious suspicion towards the Humanities and Social Sciences. As such, it can be treated as an ideological system that is essentially anti-cultural and incredibly uneducated on social and political matters. After all, both Musk and Trump are where they are because of money and not because of their competence in terms of politics. Their claim to power has been possible because US democracy has been increasingly superseded and undermined by a particularly extremist form of hyper-capitalism with all of its very visible, authoritarian and illiberal manifestations.

Trump, who may capture Greenland and the Panama Canal by force, and what Israel Katz, the Israeli war minister, has leaked regarding dividing Syria into cantons.

In parallel, it coincides with the continuation of the genocidal war in Gaza; the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem; the political coups in Lebanon; the ongoing threat of aggression against Yemen; and threats of striking Iranian nuclear facilities.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

On Tuesday, the Yemeni Armed Forces announced a qualitative operation targeting the Israeli occupation's Ministry of Security in Tel Aviv using a Palestine 2 hypersonic ballistic missile. In a statement, the forces confirmed that the missile reached its target, and the interception systems failed to counter it. The statement noted that this was the third operation within 12 hours.

The government in Sanaa has stressed that it will increase military operations against the occupation regime.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## Gaza ceasefire: Bibi bites the bullet

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Israel's military failures have come to the forefront after reaching a ceasefire with Hamas that aims to end the regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip.

Israel was compelled to accept the truce agreement due to its inability to achieve its military objectives.

Reports say the ceasefire will be implemented in three phases and will pave the way for the release of Israeli captives. Israel would also release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. The deal is expected to result in the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza.

Israel launched war on Gaza on October 7, 2023, shortly after Hamas carried out a surprise military operation in southern Israel dubbed the Al-Aqsa Storm. More than 1,100 people were killed and about 250 others were taken captive during the Hamas operation.

Nearly 100 of those captives still remain inside Gaza, a third of whom are believed to have died. Palestinians say they have lost their lives due to Israeli strikes against the enclave.

Since the start of the war, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had repeatedly promised to continue fighting until "destroying" Hamas by achieving "total victory" over the resistance movement and returning all captives.

Former war minister Yoav Gallant, who was given the axe by Netanyahu, had already poured cold water on Netanyahu's dream of defeating Hamas.

Gallant told the Knesset members in August 2024 that Netanyahu's "total victory" slogan is "nonsense" and "gibberish".

In June last year, the Israeli military spokesman also challenged Netanyahu's war aim.

"The idea that it is possible to destroy Hamas, to make Hamas vanish — that is throwing sand in the eyes of the public," Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari told Israeli media

He added, "Hamas is an idea, deeply rooted in the hearts of the residents of Gaza."

In addition, the Israeli military's intelligence and the US intelligence community downplayed Netanyahu's claim regarding the elimination of the Hamas resistance movement.

About 15 months after launching the Gaza onslaught, Netanyahu had to bite the bullet as his war dreams were shattered.

More than 800 Israeli troops have been killed since October 7, 2023. Hamas also put up resistance against the Israeli army on the battlefield despite the regime's brutal strikes in Gaza.

Amid Israel's lack of achievements, the regime prolonged the war in a desperate attempt to create the impression that it had made gains.

The Israeli army has killed more than 46,600 Palestinians in Gaza, including 17,000 children in the 15-month war, which could be regarded as the regime's sole achievement!

The administration of US President Joe Biden provided the Israeli army with unwavering military support during the Gaza war. It stands accused of complicity in the genocide in the enclave.

The United States has spent a record \$179



*Fragile fortress: Le Monde wrote in October 2023 that the Israeli army's defenses "collapsed like a house of cards" after Hamas conducted the Al-Aqsa Storm. The narrative has now materialized, highlighting the reality that Israel is as fragile as a spider's web.*

billion on military assistance to Israel since the start of the regime's genocidal war on Gaza, according to a report for Brown University's Costs of War project, released in October last year.

Earlier this month, the Biden administration informed Congress about a planned arms sale to Israel valued at \$8 billion.

The Biden administration also vetoed several resolutions at the UN Security Council that were aimed at establishing a ceasefire in Gaza.

Israel's barbaric war on Gaza has deepened the regime's isolation and that of its main supporter, the United States.

The Israeli premier is a wanted criminal whose arrest warrant has been issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) over committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

Israel also stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

The Israeli army's military setbacks in Gaza also widened domestic divisions. Protests against Netanyahu's failure to meet his war goals became a regular occurrence in cities such as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (al-Quds).

For now, the ceasefire has clearly demonstrated Israel's vulnerability.

After Hamas conducted the Al-Aqsa Storm, Western media acknowledged that the operation exposed the Israeli military's fiasco.

Le Monde wrote in October 2023 that the Israeli army's defenses "collapsed like a house of cards" in the face of the Hamas attack.

These narratives have now materialized, highlighting the reality that Israel is as fragile as a spider's web.

The United States along with Egypt and Qatar mediated ceasefire talks between Hamas and Israel.

Outgoing President Joe Biden and incoming President-elect Donald Trump decided to end the Gaza war because they woke up to the fact that the regime will fail to secure the release of captives through military means and defeat Hamas.

Presently, they want to ensure Israel's survival which hangs in the balance over its military failures.

## Was JFK assassinated by his successor, and is he the last one?

From page 1 ▶ allegedly features Clifton Carter, a former DNC executive, admitting LBJ "hired Mac Wallace to assassinate JFK." Shared widely on multiple platforms, the tape has not been independently verified, yet it has stirred significant discussion.

The claim has added to decades of speculation that challenges the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole assassin. Malcolm Wallace, with his criminal history and alleged ties to LBJ, has long been a figure of interest in conspiracy circles. However, evidence linking him directly to JFK's death has remained circumstantial at best.

The reaction on social media has been one of excitement, with many users viewing the tape as potential proof of government involvement. However, without authentication, it remains speculative. This development comes at a time when public interest in the JFK assassination shows no signs of waning, with each new piece of alleged evidence sparking renewed debate – interest that was significantly fueled by

Trump's repeated promises to "disclosing JFK assassination evidence upon taking the office".

Historically, claims of "new" evidence have often been debunked or found to be exaggerated, highlighting the challenge of separating fact from fiction in the digital age. Critics argue that such tapes need rigorous scrutiny to avoid misinformation. The National Archives, responsible for JFK assassination records, has yet to comment on this tape.

This latest claim taps into the deep-seated scepticism about government transparency and the official narrative of the assassination. If proven true, it would suggest a level of corruption at the highest levels of the American government, a notion that resonates with conspiracy theorists but requires substantial proof.

Now, addressing the elephant in the room and the potential connection point between these events: who orchestrated the assassination attempt on Trump last year?

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))



## Tehran, Dushanbe discuss cultural and economic synergies



TEHRAN - In an economic forum between Iran and Tajikistan on Wednesday, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts emphasized the profound cultural and historical ties between the two nations and called for strengthening tourism and economic cooperation to enhance bilateral relations.

Seyyed described Tajikistan as Iran's enduring link to the Caucasus and Eurasia for millennia. He stated, "The identities of the Iranian and Tajik peoples are intertwined, and this shared heritage is a source of pride for both nations. Through the efforts of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, we aim to transform this cultural and social identity into a robust economic partnership."

Salehi-Amiri identified tourism as a key avenue for fostering closer ties and announced plans to promote the unique tourist attractions of both countries to their respective populations. "One of the primary goals is to increase the number of tourists between Iran and Tajikistan to 100,000 within a year, a milestone agreed upon during this forum."

During the forum, several cooperation agreements were signed between Iranian and Tajik companies. The event also provided an opportunity for one-on-one discussions among business representatives, paving the way for exploring and expanding new areas of collaboration.

## Hilton partners with Saudi tourism authority to showcase charms of Riyadh, Jeddah, Al Ula and Makkah

Hilton (NYSE: HLT) and the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) have joined forces to unveil a vibrant campaign celebrating Saudi Arabia's diverse travel offerings. This groundbreaking initiative uses compelling short films and photographs to highlight the unique appeal of destinations such as Riyadh, Jeddah, Al Ula, Makkah, and Madinah. The visuals invite travelers to explore the Kingdom's iconic landscapes, rich history, and warm hospitality.

Building on a successful collaboration in 2023, the campaign has expanded its reach, targeting audiences across the Middle East, South Africa, Europe, and Asia, including the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The effort underscores STA and Hilton's shared commitment to showcasing Saudi Arabia's allure to global travelers.

This initiative follows the signing of a 2023 memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Hilton and STA, aiming to strengthen cooperation in promoting the Kingdom as a premier travel destination aligned with Vision 2030. Hilton's growth strategy for Saudi Arabia is equally ambitious, with plans to more than quadruple its footprint in the country. The hospitality giant is set to add over 70 hotels, 18,000 rooms, and create 15,000 new jobs—over half of which are earmarked for Saudi nationals.

The campaign's immersive content offers a virtual journey through Saudi Arabia, spotlighting its spiritual landmarks, historical gems like Diriyah, breathtaking oases, and dramatic landscapes. It also highlights Hilton's world-class accommodations across the Kingdom, including properties such as Waldorf Astoria Jeddah – Qasr Al Sharq, Hilton Riyadh Hotel & Residences, and Conrad Makkah, emphasizing the exceptional service and luxury experiences travelers can expect.

Currently operating 21 hotels in Saudi Arabia, including the newly opened Hilton Riyadh Olaya and The Hotel Galleria Jeddah, Curio Collection by Hilton, Hilton is accelerating its expansion. Future projects include three resorts in Al Ahsa, developed in partnership with Dan Company, and new properties in Madinah through collaborations with Rua Al Madinah Holding and Taiba Investments. Among these is the first Waldorf Astoria in Madinah, underscoring Hilton's commitment to enriching Saudi Arabia's hospitality landscape.

This dynamic partnership is a testament to Saudi Arabia's growing prominence as a global travel destination, inviting visitors to experience the magic of the Kingdom with Hilton at the forefront of their journey.

(Source: Travel and Tour World)

## Glimpses of World Heritage sites: City of Quito

Quito, the capital of Ecuador, was founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city and stands at an altitude of 2,850 m above sea level. Despite the 1917 earthquake, the city has the best-preserved, least altered historic centre in Latin America.

The UNESCO-designated city offers a remarkable example of the Baroque school of Quito (Escuela Quiteña), that brings together the indigenous and European artistic traditions and which is renowned for providing the greatest contribution of Spanish America to universal art.

The height of this art is represented by veritable spiritual citadels, among which are San Francisco, San Domingo, San Augustin, La Compana, La Merced, the Sanctuary of Guapulco and the Recoleta of San Diego, to name just the principal ones. These are recognized not only for their artistic value from the architectural viewpoint but also for their decorative elements (altarpieces, paintings, sculptures).

The city of Quito forms a harmonious ensemble where nature and man are brought together to create a unique and transcendental work. The colonizers knew how to adapt their artistic sensibility to the reality that surrounded them,

building their architecture in a very complex topographical environment. Despite this, the architects were able to confere stylistic and volumetric harmony to the ensemble.

The urban routes are based on the original plan and include central and secondary squares as well as checkerboard-patterned streets and are aligned on the cardinal points of the compass. In the city centre, there are convents and churches as well as houses (1 or 2 floors with one or several patios), usually built with earthen bricks and covered with stucco, combining the monumental with the simple and austere.

The city of Quito, the cradle of Pre-Colombian cultures and an important witness of Spanish colonization maintains, for the time being unity and harmony in its urban structure despite centuries of urban development.

Elevated to the title of capital of the Audience of Quito, it assumed the political direction and patronal control over the villages and towns. This is the maximum representation of the step towards forming socio-economic development, creator of a true national idiosyncrasy expressed through its unique tangible and intangible heritage.

(Source: UNESCO)

# Discover 'Alexander's Prison' and its fabled dungeon

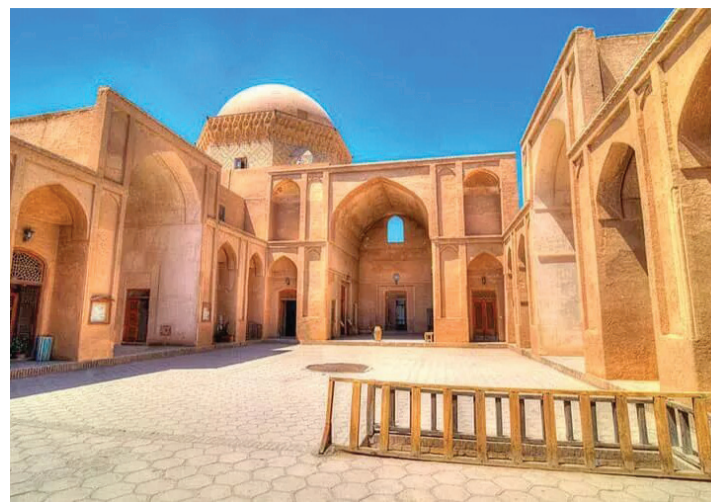
TEHRAN - This 15th-century domed structure, better known as Zendan-e Iskandar ("Alexander's Prison"), derives its name from a reference in a Hafez poem and legends surrounding its origins.

According to folklore, a deep well in its courtyard was constructed by Alexander the Great and used as a dungeon.

Situated in the heart of Yazd's historical Fahadan neighborhood, this monument lies close to the eleventh-century Davazdeh Imam Shrine. The name Zendan-e Iskandar is tied to the tale of Alexander building a castle in this region to imprison captive princes. In some literary works, Yazd itself is referred to as Zendan-e Iskandar.

The mausoleum, located in the southeast corner, is connected to the courtyard and main iwan through two doorways. It is a square structure, 8.8 meters per side, supported by thick walls to bear the weight of its 18-meter-high dome. The mausoleum's prominent dome dominates both the courtyard and the surrounding skyline.

Constructed primarily of mud brick, with baked brick used for the dome's outer shell, the building features a decorative



three-tier muqarnas cornice in the octagonal zone of transition. While the courtyard and surrounding spaces lack ornamentation, the tomb chamber's interior is adorned with floriated Kufic inscriptions and painted plaster vegetal motifs, characteristic of the Muzaffarid period.

Historical accounts suggest the structure and its adjoining buildings were part of the Madarasa Zaiyya, a religious school commissioned in the late 13th century during the Il-Khanid era by Ziya' al-Din Husayn-e Razi and his family. According to the Tarikh-e Jadid-e Yazd (The New History of Yazd), the school featured a grand portal with

towering minarets and was surrounded by opulent mansions equipped with tall wind catchers (badgirs). However, as noted by Iraj Afshar, the exact identification of the building as Madarasa Zaiyya remains uncertain due to the absence of epigraphic evidence.

The existing structure follows a typical 13th-14th century madrasa layout, with a rectangular courtyard flanked by three iwans. The larger western iwan is accompanied by smaller northern and southern iwans, each adjacent to rectilinear cells of varying depths—likely the result of later alterations. At the courtyard's center lies a payab, an under-

ground chamber providing access to the qanat (underground water channel) beneath the building.

Zindan-e Iskandar served as a site for oil production until the 1970s and fell into disrepair before its restoration by the National Heritage Organization of Iran in the 1980s. Since then, it has become a tourist attraction.

### A don't-miss destination

In July 2017, Yazd's historical core was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visitors frequently describe Yazd as a must-see destination, celebrated for its mudbrick houses with innovative wind catchers (badgirs), atmospheric alleyways, and numerous Islamic and Iranian monuments that define its striking cityscape.

Cultural heritage experts view Yazd as a testament to the resourcefulness of its inhabitants in adapting to desert conditions. The city's historical core is a treasure trove of mudbrick houses, bazaars, bathhouses, water cisterns, mosques, synagogues, Zoroastrian temples, and ancient gardens. Yazd's harmonious coexistence of Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism further enriches its cultural and spiritual heritage.

## Iran plans to boost tourism ties with Tajikistan

TEHRAN - Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has announced extensive plans to strengthen ties with Tajikistan in tourism, trade, and cultural collaboration.

Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri made the remarks during the dispatch of a commercial delegation from Iran's Chamber of Commerce to Tajikistan, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Highlighting the shared cultural and linguistic heritage between the two nations, Salehi-Amiri emphasized Tajikistan's strategic importance as a neighbor. "There are significant cultural and civilizational commonalities between the two nations... Tajikistan is one of Iran's strategic priorities in enhancing relations with neighboring countries," the minister stated.

He pointed out Tajikistan's unique potential to bolster economic and cultural cooperation. As part of the broader Nowruz cultural domain and sharing a common language, Tajikistan holds a key position in fostering deeper



ties with Iran.

The minister revealed determined goals to attract more Tajik tourists to Iran. Currently, approximately 8,000 Tajik citizens visit Iran annually. However, plans are underway to increase this number to 100,000 visitors. "Developing tourism not only strengthens cultural connections but also contributes to

trade growth and job creation," Salehi-Amiri noted.

In addition to the Tajikistan initiative, the minister reflected on recent visits to other regional countries, including Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, underscoring the Iranian government's focus on enhancing regional partnerships. Efforts are being made to establish the necessary infrastructure to fully achieve those opportunities.

The plan is in line with the government's broader strategy to promote regional cooperation and capitalize on shared heritage for mutual economic and cultural benefit.

Earlier this month, Salehi-Amiri met with Tajikistan's Ambassador to Iran, Nizomidin Zohidi, at the ministry's headquarters in Tehran, discussing ways to strengthen ties in tourism and cultural cooperation. During the meeting, Zohidi proposed the complete removal of visa requirements between the two countries. Salehi-Amiri promised to advocate for the initiative at the governmental level.

## Iranian artist unveils metal-engraved copies of Quran in Qatar



TEHRAN - An Iranian artist has unveiled four unique editions of the Holy Quran, intricately engraved on metal sheets, in Qatar.

The masterpieces, varying in size and weight, showcase the artist's exceptional craftsmanship and innovation, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

According to the semi-official news agency, Seifollah Mohamadpouram, a renowned artist specializing in Quranic engravings, created the Qurans in four distinct sizes and weights: 3 kg, 8 kg, 12 kg, and 18 kg. Each edition is crafted from metal sheets of varying dimensions and thicknesses.

The 3 kg Quran was produced using metal sheets measuring 10 x 15 cm with a thickness of 0.3 mm. The 8 kg version features sheets sized 20 x 24 cm and a thickness of 0.4 mm, with two pages engraved on each sheet. Similarly, the 12 kg Quran comprises sheets of 20 x 20 cm with a thickness of 0.5 mm, also featuring two pages per sheet.

The largest of the collection, the 18 kg Quran, is divided into three volumes, each containing 10 sections (juz). It was engraved

on sheets measuring 20 x 24 cm with a thickness of 0.5 mm.

These extraordinary Qurans highlight the artistry and devotion involved in their creation. However, ISNA did not specify the exact location or timing of the unveiling event.

The metal-engraved Qurans represent a remarkable fusion of traditional Islamic artistry and modern techniques, captivating audiences and demonstrating the depth of Iranian craftsmanship.

## Polish archaeologists uncover ancient residence and mysterious mask in Libya's Ptolemais

In Libya's ancient city of Ptolemais on the Mediterranean coast, Polish archaeologists have uncovered a dwelling equipped with an advanced drinking water collection system, and a mysterious mask.

In 2023, archaeologists from Poland's University of Warsaw made their way back to Ptolemais following a thirteen-year break due to the Libyan civil war. This city, founded by the Ptolemaic dynasty, played a significant role from the 4th century BC until the Arab conquest in the 7th century AD. The study of urban structures was the main focus of this research season, and the results were unexpected.

During excavations in June 2024, archaeologists from the University of Warsaw revealed part of a residential complex in the ancient city of Ptolemais. The residence, dating to the late 2nd or early 3rd century CE,

featured a sophisticated rainwater collection system including an impluvium that channeled water into underground cisterns.

Piotr Jaworski, head of the Polish Archaeological Mission to Ptolemais, explained that the heart of the eastern area of the house was a small peristyle, surrounded by a kitchen, a staircase, and a room with a mosaic.

A peristyle pool that collected rainwater and routed it to two subterranean cisterns was the centerpiece of the home's sophisticated water collection system. The house was rebuilt in the late Roman era after being damaged by earthquakes in the third century. Three stone containers at the entrance serve as proof of this and may have been used for offerings or taxes, according to researchers.

A human face carved in hydraulic mortar inside a cistern was among the most fascinating discoveries. The mask's origins are

unclear due to its lack of distinguishable features, leading to a variety of interpretations. Similarities to carvings found in Libyan sanctuaries are noted by archaeologists, indicating potential local connections or influences. It is possible that the owner of the house or those involved in its creation were of Libyan origin, but this remains speculative.

Ptolemais, founded in the 3rd century BC, was an important cultural and religious center in Cyrenaica. This place attracts researchers, among others, because of its historical complexity. It most likely still holds many secrets.

With ongoing archaeological efforts, researchers aim to better understand the function of structures on the acropolis and uncover insights into life in ancient Ptolemais.

(Source: arkeonews.net)



# WFP determined to support Iran in hosting refugees

TEHRAN –Maysaa Alghribawy, the new representative of the World Food Program (WFP) in Iran, has announced the organization's commitment to supporting Iran as one of the biggest refugee hosting countries.

Highlighting the challenges faced by the WFP in the region, Alghribawy asked for enhancing cooperation and interactions with the country to advance the organization's efforts and responsibilities in Iran, as well as the region, foreign ministry website reported.

The official made the remarks on Sunday, January 12, in a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, while presenting her credentials, and giving an account of this humanitarian organization's programs and operations in food security.

Araghchi, for his part, underscored the significance of promoting collaborations saying that "addressing humanitarian crisis, including refugees and migrants' crisis, in West Asia requires regional and international cooperation."

## Some 4,000 authorized Afghans enter Iran daily

In November 2024, the head of the National Organization for Migration, Nader Yar-Ahmadi said nearly 4,000 Afghans with valid passports enter the country every day.

Approximately, six million Afghans, including documented and



undocumented ones, are residing in the country, ILNA quoted Yar-Ahmadi as saying.

Migration can be due to many factors such as regional crises including political, social, and even natural crises which provoke social changes.

Stating that foreign nationals entering any country need a deposit of at least 100,000 dollars for a one-year residence permit, the official said the country is looking for thorough documentation of individuals who have entered the country to organize them better.

## Iran may rethink refugee policies

In October, Yar-Ahmadi said, "In case the international community refrains from taking responsibility and fairly sharing the burden of hosting refugees, the Islamic Republic of Iran will probably revise its

immigration policies."

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

The 75th Annual Session of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (ExCom) held from October 14 to 19 in Geneva, Switzerland.

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

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

"The priority of the country is to resettle vulnerable refugees in third countries, despite promises made in your last visit to Iran in the calendar year 1400 (2021 – 2022) to provide more vulnerable refugees with insurance, sadly, not only did the number of those covered not increase, but also decreased from 120,000 to 95,000 individuals.

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

Considering the challenges facing the education system due to the free education of Afghan nationals in the country, it is necessary for the UNHCR to cover the expenses related to their education, including building new schools, refurbishing and equipping schools, and paying teacher recruitment costs.

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

## UNICEF, ISCC expand partnership to support children

TEHRAN –The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Iran-Switzerland Chamber of Commerce (ISCC) have signed a three-year partnership to further support children, particularly the vulnerable ones.

The new agreement aims at improving the lives of children, especially the most vulnerable in the country. Under this collaboration, the ISCC will provide financial support to UNICEF's programmes in Iran.

The entities will also exchange knowledge and expertise to help children survive and fulfil their potential, the UNICEF website announced in a press release on January 14.

"UNICEF has benefited from the Iran-Switzerland Chamber of Commerce's support in the past, particularly in implementing responsible business practices for children, organising skills training courses for adolescents as well as providing nutrition support for vulnerable children," said Monika Oledzka Nielsen, UNICEF Representative (ad interim) in Iran, adding: "Building on the success of our initial partnership in 2018, the expanded three-year partnership will continue to leverage the strengths of the ISCC for the children in the country."

ISCC President, Sharif Nezam-Mafi, for his part, mentioned, "For Iran-Switzerland Chamber of Commerce partnering with the United Nations Children's Fund yields substantial benefits for our society, and especially for our members intent on fostering positive societal impact. Elevating child welfare, education, and health through concerted action is a significant stride towards a more inclusive, nurturing world."

The three-year partnership agreement was co-signed on January 12, 2025, by the UNICEF Iran Representative a.i and ISCC President in a ceremony to commemorate the 10th anniversary of ISCC.

Iran Switzerland Chamber's objectives are to promote and facilitate better business relations between Iran and Switzerland, provide essential information about doing business in these markets and bring business leaders together to facilitate contacts and provide platforms for networking in both countries.

By championing ethical, sustainable, and community-focused practices, ISCC contributes to the health of its society both in Iran and Switzerland.

### Recent partnership

In November 2024, the UNICEF and Book City Institute signed a three-year agreement



to promote children's welfare and rights across the country.

This collaboration aims to leverage the unique strengths, networks, and expertise of both organizations to support the most vulnerable children in various provinces of the country, the UNICEF website announced in a press release.

As part of this partnership, the two partners will launch a series of advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives to foster a love for reading among children.

Key activities will include organizing book-reading leagues and clubs for vulnerable children, instituting cultural awards to honor children's book authors and publishers, and mobilizing resources to support UNICEF's critical programs in Iran.

On September 9, 2024, the Iran-Austria Joint Chamber of Commerce (IAJCC) and UNICEF signed a three-year agreement to work for the welfare and well-being of children in Iran.

As per this partnership, the IAJCC will mobilize its members' financial support for UNICEF programs in Iran. UNICEF and the IAJCC will also work together to offer opportunities for the business sector to mitigate negative impacts and yield positive results for children.

"UNICEF highly appreciates the support of the IAJCC to promote responsible business practices among private and public sector aimed at advancing children's welfare in Iran in different areas such as healthcare, nutrition, social protection, clean water, and education," said UNICEF former Representative in Iran, Robin Nandy, adding, "We look forward to more such partnerships to place children's rights at the heart of the corporate sustainability agenda."

## Iran ranks second in 3D printing publications among Islamic nations

TEHRAN –According to a report released by the Web of Science database, with 606 publications on three-dimensional printing over a span of ten years, Iran ranks second among Islamic nations.

The report has included data from 2014 to 2023. The country's global ranking in 3D printing publications is 22, IRNA reported.

3D printing refers to the process of creating three-dimensional objects layer by layer. Each layer is placed one after another.

According to the report, three-dimensional printing and additive manufacturing publications in Iran experienced notable growth from 2010 to 2023.

University of Tehran (with 83 documents), Amirkabir University of Technology (with 83 documents), Tarbiat Modarres University (with 40 documents), and Tehran University of Medical Sciences (with 37 documents) had the highest number of publications.

Turkey (with 779 documents), and Malaysia (with 543 documents) rank first and third, respectively.

Iran, with 65 documents, ranks first among Islamic countries in four-dimensional (4D) printing, the country ranks 11 globally.

The country ranks second in publications related to the fifth generation of the industry (Industry 5.0) with 1,625 documents. Turkey (with 1,817 documents) and Malaysia (with 1,611 documents) rank first and third, respectively.

In the fifth generation of the industry, technologies such as 4D printing, collaborative robots (cobots), augmented and virtual reality, cognitive

computing, digital twins, and additive manufacturing are used.

Iran ranks 23 in additive manufacturing technologies, 29 in cognitive computing, 37 in virtual reality, 38 in digital twin technology, 42 in augmented reality, and 60 in collaborative robots globally.

### Iran ranks first in neural network technology

According to the Web of Science, Iran (with 17,458 documents) ranks first in neural network technology as well as multi-agent systems (with 351 documents) among Islamic countries.

The report has included data in a twenty-year period from 2004 to 2023.

The country secures a ranking of 6th in neural network technology and 12th in multi-agent systems globally.

Turkey with 9,078 and Saudi Arabia with 7,971 documents in neural network technology rank second and third respectively.

In multi-agent systems, Tunisia with 233 documents, and Morocco with 231 documents are placed second and third.

Iran ranks second in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and robotics among Islamic nations.

The country also ranks 16th in the world in AI technologies; 25th in visual computing and natural language processing; 17th in machine learning; and 27th in robotics.

The trend of scientific production in neural networks, machine learning, and AI technologies in Iran has been upward in the last decade compared

to other AI-related technologies.

According to the results, in the field of neural networks, the trend of scientific production has been upward increasing from 950 documents in 2014 to 2,207 documents in 2023.

In machine learning, scientific productions have risen from 81 documents in 2014 to 1656 documents in 2023.

Also, in the field of artificial intelligence, scientific productions have escalated from 98 documents in 2014 to 647 documents in 2023.

Over the past 20 years, the majority of scientific productions in the field of artificial intelligence have been associated with the University of Tehran, Tabriz University, and Amir Kabir University of Technology; and in visual computing and natural language processing, the University of Tehran, Amirkabir University of Technology and Sharif University of Technology are ranked first to third respectively.

The majority of scientific production in machine learning is connected to the University of Tehran, Amirkabir University of Technology, and Tarbiat Modares University; and in robotics, it is attributed to the University of Tehran, Sharif University of Technology, and Amirkabir University of Technology.

University of Tehran, Tabriz University, and Iran University of Science and Technology in neural networks, and Amirkabir University of Technology, Iran University of Science and Technology, and University of Tehran in multi-agent systems, account for a significant share of scientific productions.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## 59 Iranian universities among world's top for academic quality

TEHRAN – A total of 59 Iranian universities are listed among the top 3,000 institutions in the world in terms of academic quality, according to the 2021-2022 report released by University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP). The URAP ranking system's focus is on academic quality. URAP has gathered data about 3,000 Higher Education Institutes (HEI) in an effort to rank these organizations by their academic performance based on several indicators, including article, citation, total document, article impact total, citation impact total, and international collaboration.

Data for 3,000 HEIs have been processed and the top 2,500 of them are scored. Thus, URAP covers approximately 12% of all HEIs in the world, which makes it one of the most comprehensive university ranking systems in the world. Three Iranian institutions are ranked below 500, namely, the University of Tehran, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, and Tarbiat Modares University.

## ۵۹ دانشگاه ایران در فهرست رتبه بندی URAP

در رتبه بندی سال ۲۰۲۱-۲۰۲۲ انستیتو انفورماتیک دانشگاه فنی خاورمیانه (URAP) که بر کیفیت تحصیلی متمرکز است، ۵۹ دانشگاه ایران قرار دارند.

این نظام داده ها و اطلاعات مورد نیاز رتبه بندی را در باره ۳۰۰۲ موسسه آموزش عالی جمع آوری کرده است که تقریباً شامل ۱۲ درصد مؤسسات آموزش عالی جهان است. از تقریباً از ۳۰۰۰ دانشگاهی که در این رتبه بندی ارزیابی شده است، URAP به معیارهای مختلفی توجه دارد که در مجموع بر عملکرد آکادمیک تأکید می کند.

سه دانشگاه تهران، علوم پزشکی تهران و تربیت مدرس با قرار گرفتن در بین ۵۰۰ دانشگاه نخست افتخار بزرگی را برای آموزش عالی کشور به ارمغان آورده اند.

در رتبه بندی URAP دانشگاه هاروارد با کل امتیاز ۶۰۰ در صدر جدول این نظام رتبه بندی قرار دارد. رتبه های دوم و سوم به ترتیب در اختیار دانشگاه تورونتو و یونیورسیتی کالج لندن است. رتبه دانشگاه استنفورد ۴ گزارش شده است.





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JANUARY 16, 2025

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Why should a human being boast? His beginning is a sticky embryo, and his end a terrible corpse. He can neither secure his subsistence, nor ward off death.*

**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon: 12:14 Evening: 17:34 Dawn: 5:45 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:13 (tomorrow)

## New Tajik Persian culture research institute launched in Dushanbe

TEHRAN- The Tajik Persian Culture Research Institute was inaugurated in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on Wednesday in a ceremony attended by the Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, the Minister of Culture of Tajikistan Matlubakhon Sattoriyon and a number of Iranian and Tajik cultural and literary figures.

Speaking at the ceremony, Salehi-Amiri stated that the Persian language serves as a fundamental pillar of the cultural identity for both nations, CHTN reported.

"Today is a blessed day for the two nations of Iran and Tajikistan. The Persian language is one of the most important elements of the cultural identity of these two nations, which Ferdowsi, as the symbol of this sweet language, has preserved."

"In today's world, violence and conflicts have imposed heavy costs on nations, but what remains enduring is the cultural and linguistic bond between Iran and Tajikistan," he added.

"The Persian language is the language of mysticism, ethics, symbols, and rich poetry that has stood firm against historical invasions," he noted.

Salehi-Amiri emphasized that the opening of this research institute could herald a new chapter in the cultural relations between Iran and Tajikistan. He mentioned that the first project of this center would focus on researching the linguistic roots and dialects of Persian and Tajik.

He also announced that the findings of this research would be presented to the presidents of both countries as a testament to the deep cultural and historical connection between the two nations.

This ceremony reflects the determination of both countries to preserve and enhance the shared heritage of the Persian language and develop cultural cooperation, he concluded.

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



Finally a Ceasefire?

Cartoonist: Maarten Wolterink from the Netherlands

# Ruholamin unveils new painting to mark Father's Day

TEHRAN- Iranian artist Hassan Ruholamin unveiled a new artwork on Tuesday to celebrate National Father's Day and the birthday anniversary of Imam Ali (AS), the first Shia Imam, which was observed on January 14 this year.

The digital painting showcases a depiction of Imam Ali (AS) holding the Zulfiqar sword in his hand.

Ruholamin has several canvases depicting stories on Imam Ali (AS). One of them is "The Conqueror of Khaybar" which depicts the Imam removing the door of the enemy's fort in the Battle of Khaybar, which was fought in the year 628 between Muslims and the Jews living in the oasis of Khaybar.

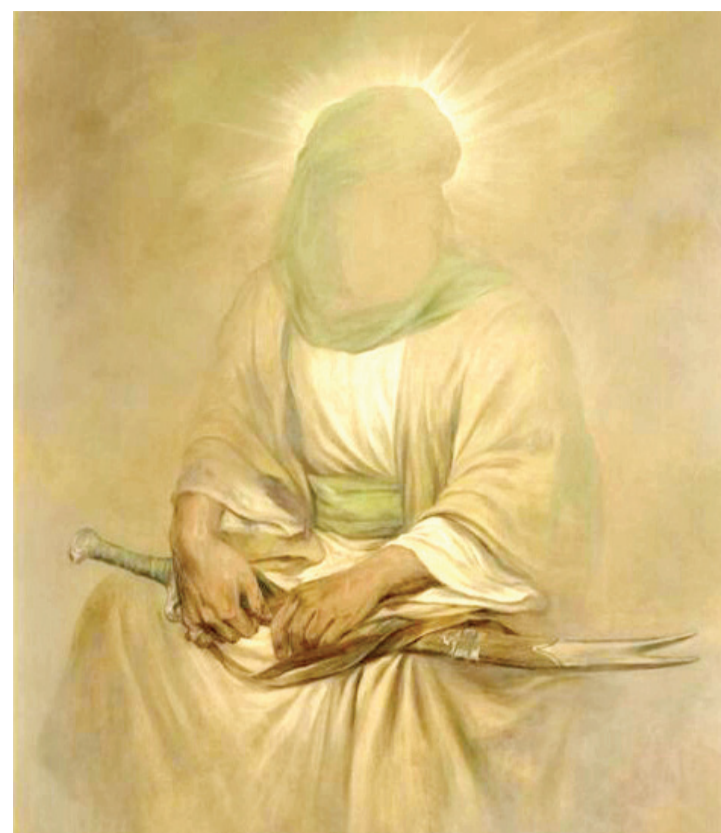
He has reproduced the artwork in the form of a mural on the Imam Ali (AS) Highway, which was unveiled to celebrate Eid al-Ghadir in 2022.

Last year, Ruholamin commemorated the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Ali (AS) with his canvas entitled "The Candle of Bayt al-Mal".

The painting, which portrays a story from the Imam's concern for justice during his caliphate, was unveiled on Ruholamin's Instagram.

In his post, Ruholamin wrote that the artwork has been created to commemorate the major event in the history of Islam and dedicated it to his followers.

The artwork depicts the Imam putting out a candle in one hand,



while holding another burning one in his other hand during his meeting with Talha and Zubair, two companions of the Prophet Muhammad (S).

It has been produced based on a story, which broke in the early days of the Imam's caliphate when Talha and Zubair went to meet Imam Ali (AS) to discuss a personal matter while the Imam was putting public affairs in order at the Bayt al-Mal, the public treasury in the Islamic concept. The Imam extinguished the candle purchased with public funds, instead lighting another one that

he purchased with his own personal funds.

"Now, you have come for some personal work, so I must use the candle purchased with my personal funds," said Imam Ali (AS) when his guests asked about his actions.

Ruholamin, who is best known for his paintings on early Islamic historical events, has created a captivating collection of artworks dedicated to the theme of Ashura over the years.

One of the works of the collection is "Daddy" depicting the

Imam in his final farewell to his three-year-old daughter Roqayyeh (SA).

The 110 X 130-centimeter oil painting shows the Imam embracing Roqayyeh before going to the battlefield while his horse, named "Zuljinah", and the enemy forces can be seen in the background.

The collection also includes "The Sky Fell Down", "The Farewell", "After Abbas (AS)", "Are You My Brother?", "Monastery of the Monk" and "Beginning of Silence".

"The Sky Fell Down", featuring the last moments of the life of Imam Hussein (AS), is a highlight of the collection.

The painting depicts the Imam on his horse, severely injured by arrows, while the enemy is waiting to bring down the Imam.

Ruholamin spent nine months doing the painting, which was unveiled at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art in November 2018.

"Monastery of the Monk" is another artwork from his Ashura collection.

The painting depicts the meeting of a monk with Khawli ibn Yazid al-Asbahi, a member of Umar ibn Sad's army, when he was taking the head of Imam Hussein (AS) to Yazid ibn Muawiyah, the second caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, after the Ashura event.

The artist has also blended modern events and with stories from Islamic history in some of his works.

## Rumi's art exhibition: a platform for cultural exchange between Iran, Turkey

TEHRAN- An art exhibition showcasing Persian poet and mystic Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi's poetry through calligraphy, gilding, and miniature painting, was inaugurated in Ankara Music and Fine Arts University, Turkey on Monday.

The opening ceremony was attended by Cultural Attaché of Iran in Turkey Seyyed Qassem Nazemi, Deputy Ambassador of Iran in Turkey Mohammad Hossein Shojai, the Vice Rector of Ankara Music and Fine Arts University Baris Demirci, Head of the Art section of Jihad-e Daneshgahi Amin Mokhtari, and supervisor and artistic consultant of the event Hamid Reza Jamshidi, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Organized by Iran's Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research, known as Jihad-e Daneshgahi in collaboration with the Ankara University of Music and Fine Arts, the exhibition features 40 exceptional pieces crafted by 16 distinguished calligraphers alongside talented artists in the fields of illumination and miniature painting, the report added.

All works have been developed at the specialized short-term training center of the Jihad-e Daneshgahi.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Nazemi emphasized the importance of cultural ties between Iran and Turkey.

"One of the key and influential areas for enhancing these relations is art, where both countries share rich commonalities, particularly in disciplines such as calligraphy, illumination, miniature painting, and other traditional arts," he stated.

In his address, Mokhtari emphasized: "This institution has a special focus on promoting Iranian-Islamic culture and art on an international scale. One of the primary priorities of



the Jihad-e Daneshgahi in the arts sector is to support the development of cultural and artistic economies and create bilateral pathways for the flourishing of this vital domain."

He continued: "This exhibition presents a valuable opportunity to showcase the art of Iranian calligraphy and to introduce the immortal verses of Rumi, the great Iranian poet and mystic, to the world. This event can serve as a pivotal point for enhancing cultural and artistic exchanges between Iran and Turkey, laying the groundwork for further collaborations in the cultural and artistic arenas between the two countries."

Baris Demirci declared that one of the primary goals of the Ankara Music and Fine Arts University is to provide academic training for artists and added: "In this regard, the organization of events such as the current exhibition is considered a complementary program and priority within this path."

He expressed gratitude to the Iranian artists participating at the event, stating: "I thank you for selecting this university as the venue for this calligraphy exhibition of Rumi's works, providing us the opportunity to wit-

ness these invaluable pieces."

During the exhibition, visitors can explore the depth of Persian artistry through 40 remarkable calligraphic works created under the guidance of renowned artist Hamid Reza Jamshidi over a period of more than six months, showcasing meticulous craftsmanship.

To enrich the exhibition atmosphere, a unique fragrance named "Rumi" has been designed, permeates the space. Inspired by subtle and calming scents, this fragrance reflects the spiritual essence and mystique inherent in Rumi's poetry.

In addition to the visual feast, selected verses from Rumi's mystical poetry are being recited in both Persian and Turkish, accompanied by soothing music, inviting attendees on a profound spiritual and introspective journey into the poet's profound thoughts and teachings.

Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi (1207 to 1273) is one of the most widely recognized and celebrated poets in the world. His works have been translated into multiple languages and continue to inspire readers globally. Rumi's spiritual teachings and poetry have deeply influenced the entire Islamic world.

Rumi was born in present-day Afghanistan and later migrated to Konya, Turkey, where he lived most of his life and wrote the majority of his works. As a result, the city of Konya became a vibrant center of Sufism, an Islamic mystical tradition, and a hub of intellectual and artistic activity.

After Rumi's death, his followers established the Mevlevi Order, also known as the Whirling Dervishes, which is still active in Konya today. The Mevlevi Order is a mystical order of Islam that follows Rumi's teachings and practices.

## "Smart Kid" mobile screening extended

TEHRAN- The mobile screening of the Iranian 3D animation "Smart Kid", which has been titled the best-selling animation and children's film in the country, will extend until the end of March.

The postponement of the online release of the movie, coupled with requests from the public and schools, led to the decision to continue mobile screenings in various regions, IRNA reported

on Wednesday.

The "Smart Kid" screenings will take place in cities that lack cinema theaters up until the end of March, after which the film will be available for online viewing.

Directed by Behnoud Nekoui, Mohammad Javad Jannati and Hadi Mohammadian, "Smart Kid" had its national premier at the 41st Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in February, 2024, where it won the Best Animation award.

It is a joint product of Honar Pooya Group and the Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescent. Nearly 250 Iranian artists have been involved in the production of the animation.

It tells the story of Mohsen, a little boy who loves superheroes. He always tries to help anybody he comes across. Once he encounters an expired Iranian species and he decides to help the

animal to get back to his homeland. However, a trip to the heart of the jungle, fighting the hunters and facing expired creatures is the start of a complicated adventure for Mohsen.

Hooman Hajabdollahi, Mina Qiaspour, Mir Tahari Mazloumi, Hedayat Hashemi, Javad Pezeshkian, Touraj Nasr, Mahsa Erfani, and Nazanin Yari are among the voice actors.