

Trump's Pipe Dream: A Losing Bet on Relocating Gaza Population

Israel slaughtered over 47,000 people in Gaza but failed to ethnically cleanse the Palestinian territory ▶ Page 5

Iranian Navy task force deployed to the Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden

TEHRAN – The 100th combat and operational task force of Iran's Navy has set sail for distant waters with a mission that extends beyond combat and intelligence operations to include training duties.

Rear Admiral Hamzeh Ali Kaviani, Deputy Commander of the Navy, and various commanders and officials attended the deployment on Sunday.

This task force, consisting of the logistic support ships Bushehr and Lavan, will conduct patrols in the northern Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.

Since 2008, the Iranian Navy has been deploying combat and operational task forces to ensure the security of shipping lanes and combat piracy.

The Navy's task forces have been regarded as pivotal in assisting vessels in distress, conducting military engagements, visiting allied ports, and escorting commercial ships upon request.

These missions demonstrate Iran's commitment to enhancing maritime security and fostering international cooperation within the region.

A call for BBC accountability

TEHRAN – War and its aftermath define a nation's identity and collective memory.

The sacrifices made by men and women during a nation's troubled history, endure long after the conflict ends, etched deeply into the shared consciousness of their people. This collective memory is not just an emotional connection; it forms the foundation of national identity, symbolizing resilience, honor, and unwavering commitment. The way a country preserves and honors the memory of its fallen heroes reflects its most cherished values.

A recent incident in Iran has brought the fragile nature of this collective memory into sharp focus, igniting widespread outrage across the country. Two teenage girls were filmed dancing at the memorial site for the unknown martyrs of the Sacred Defense era—the period of the Iran-Iraq War—in Tehran, a location imbued with immense national and emotional significance.

While many saw this act as deeply disrespectful and as an affront to the values and sacrifices of those who gave their lives in defense of the nation, what added further fuel to the fire was the way BBC Persian reported on the incident.

Rather than referring to the site as “the graves of unknown martyrs,” BBC Persian chose to describe it as “the graves of unnamed war casualties.” ▶ Page 2

17 feature, short films to attend 3rd Iranian Film Festival New York

TEHRAN—A total of 17 films from Iran will be screened at the 3rd edition of the Iranian Film Festival New York, which will take place from January 29 to February 6, at the IFC Center, New York, in collaboration with Daricheh Cinema and IFC Center.

The participants include 13 feature films and four short films. This annual event celebrates and promotes Iranian cinema, providing a key platform to showcase the diversity of the Iranian film industry, Mehr reported.

This year, the festival introduces a new section, Hidden Gems from Iran, featuring rare and lesser-seen films that offer a fresh perspective on Iranian filmmaking.

The program opens with the U.S. premiere of Oktay Baraheni's “The Old Bachelor,” which won awards at the Rotterdam and London film festivals, promising to captivate audiences with its provocative storyline and captivating performances by the glamorous Leila Hatami, Hassan Pourshirazi, and Hamed Behdad. ▶ Page 8

Killing Lebanese returning to destroyed homes is tragic

By Narges Pakdel

TEHRAN – Israeli soldiers killed at least 15 civilians and a soldier and wounded at least 80 others in south Lebanon as the people were returning to their homes after a deadline for the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon had passed.

Killing ordinary people who were returning to their demolished homes is a tragedy. This tragedy took place after months of homelessness and ensuing problems. This tragedy was committed by invading forces whom war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu has called the “most civilized army” in the world.

Some of these thousands of citizens who were returning to their places of living are still grieving the loss of family members who were brutalized in Israel's intensive savage and indiscriminate bombardments of southern Lebanon. Just tragedy after tragedy.

Some pro-Israel officials in the West may argue that Israel had already warned the Lebanese not to return to their homes, but a return to one's home doesn't deserve cold-blooded murder. What a crime had they done that they were ruthlessly soaked in the blood? This is an important question that self-proclaimed defenders of human rights in the West, who blindly defend Israel, must answer.

Lebanese return to border villages but settlers refuse

By Sondoss AlAsaad

KHIAM – Up to the time of writing this report at least 15 citizens including a soldier in the Lebanese army were martyred and dozens more were injured as Israeli invaders attacked southerners returning to their towns and villages after the expiration of the 60-day deadline for the withdrawal of the invading army. The occupation forces also kidnapped other citizens. No official figures released yet.

The Israeli occupation forces opened fire on the armless citizens who stood directly in front of the Merkava tanks, amidst intensive patrols by the UNIFIL forces that blocked the roads to prevent them from advancing to their border towns.

The citizens went out in defiance of the threats by Avichay Adraee, the spokesman for the Israeli army. In parallel, the Lebanese army urged them to “adhere to the directives of the military units.”

President Joseph Aoun expressed his jubilation along the southerners, stressing that Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity are “non-negotiable.” Aoun said that he is following up – at the highest levels – the return of the displaced citizens and “guarantee their rights and dignity.”

Freed Palestinians: Traumatic conditions exposed

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The second batch of Palestinian prisoners freed from Israeli jails have shared harrowing stories of their time in Israeli prisons.

Upon their release, Israeli occupation forces also harassed them and their families, along with their supporters.

Below are some of the notable Palestinians freed by the resistance fighters in Gaza.

Mohammed al-Tous

Aged 69, he was dubbed “the dean of Palestinian prisoners” for being the longest-serving prisoner in Israeli prisons.

Al-Tous spent 39 years in Israeli jails after participating in national and resistance activities.

The veteran prisoner was first arrested in 1983 for six months after raising Palestinian flags on electricity poles in his hometown in the occupied West Bank.

His resistance activity against occupation led to his arrest again in 1985. Al-Tous was subjected to extensive periods of interrogation, during which his jailers used various types of torture methods.

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HPV vaccination to be implemented nationwide

TEHRAN –The health ministry is planning to include the Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination in the country's immunization program to prevent the prevalence of cervical cancer and genital warts infection, an official with the health ministry has said.

“Genital warts are not common in the country, so the vaccination mainly focuses on the prevention of the infection,” IRNA quoted Alireza Raeisi as saying.

HPV vaccine, the same as the influenza vaccine, will be recommended for those at higher risk of getting the disease, the official noted.

In December 2024, vaccination is the best way to prevent the disease; the vaccine has already been introduced in 140 countries. ▶ Page 7



Kabul visit yielded tangible progress on critical bilateral issues: Iran FM

TEHRAN – Abbas Araghchi, the Iranian Foreign Minister, has called his visit to Kabul “productive, with tangible steps taken toward resolving key concerns.”

Araghchi arrived in Kabul on Sunday, leading a high-level political and economic delegation.

The visit aimed to discuss a range of issues affecting both Iran and Afghanistan, with a particular focus on regional security, water rights, migration, and economic cooperation.

‘Water rights: a shared responsibility’

Araghchi's first meeting was with Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, the Prime Minister of Afghanistan. ▶ Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Economic prosperity lies in joining FATF and lifting sanctions

In an analysis, Etemad discussed the importance of joining FATF and said: Accepting FATF standards and implementing them in the monetary and banking system is necessary, but not sufficient. In addition to joining FATF, we must plan to overcome the oppressive sanctions. By accepting FATF standards like 200 other countries in the world and taking serious steps to overcome the sanctions, Iran's economy and people's lives will prosper. This will not surely be achieved unless we reconsider past methods and behaviors. And by strengthening international communications and exchanges and normalizing economic relations with different countries, we can get the national economy out of the deadlock. Only then the dignity and national honor of Iranians will be preserved. A weak Iran may encourage and intensify the greed of enemies. But a stable and prosperous Iran will ensure the survival of the establishment and nullify threats. All experts, regardless of their political affiliations, must guard national interests and not let the Iranian nation be further encroached upon by low-minded people at home and greedy enemies abroad.

Jam-e-Jam: America is not trustworthy

In a note, Jam-e-Jam discussed the unreliability of America and said: (Military) threats against Iran's nuclear facilities not only will have no results for the enemies but will also make us more determined on our path. Due to these threats, the Islamic Republic of Iran has created conditions in which the enemies will not be able to carry out such actions. However, the issue of possible negotiations with America is also worth considering. In the intensive long-term nuclear talks that led to the JCPOA, we witnessed America's disloyalty to its promises and non-compliance with an important international treaty. Therefore, America cannot be trusted, even if negotiations are held and reach a conclusion. In any case, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its permanent policy of fighting against the oppressive sanctions and the necessity of their removal. Negotiations with the Europeans have been held several times so far, but if the United States abandons its hostile policy of sanctions, different conditions will be created based on which the Islamic Republic of Iran can make new decisions.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Military power alongside popular support

Siasat-e-Rooz dedicated its editorial to the correct attitude towards America and wrote:

A noteworthy point regarding negotiations is that these days Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and Guterres, the secretary general of the United Nations, have claimed to be concerned about Iran's nuclear activity. The silence of these individuals in the face of Trump's words and the military threats of the Zionist regime creates many ambiguities in their sincerity. Although Trump's words seem like negotiations in a vacuum, giving the Zionists the opportunity to make claims of military options that also include Iran's nuclear facilities is against international law and international security. In any case, what lays the groundwork for peace and removing the shadow of war from Iran is not diplomacy but military power with popular support. Today, if Trump does not mention military options, it is not because of a change in his approach, but rather because of the authority of the Iranian armed forces. They have shown their power to enemies by holding several maneuvers these days.

Ettelaat: In these circumstances, we must interact with Russia

Ettelaat discussed the signing of the strategic partnership between Iran and Russia in an interview with Ahmad Bakshayesh, a member of the parliament. He said: The signing of the strategic partnership agreement between Iran and Russia has created a wave of hope for improving the current situation in society. Therefore, the 14th (sitting) government must prepare the groundwork for Iran's presence in the global economic markets with an efficient program to resolve some economic problems. In such a condition that sanctions have deprived Iran of the possibility to trade in European markets, economic interaction and transactions with Russia and China will be very helpful. Iran and Russia, as two important neighbors, can have mutually beneficial cooperation. However, both Iran and Russia are under Western sanctions and can meet each other's needs as much as possible through economic interactions. If we don't cooperate effectively with Russia and miss the opportunity we will make a strategic mistake.

'No personal motive,' Parliament probes judges' assassination



TEHRAN – Ebrahim Rezaei, spokesperson for the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, announced the formation of a committee to investigate the assassination of Supreme Court judges Ali Razini and Mohammad Moqiseh.

He stated that according to reports presented in the session, the perpetrator's motive was "not personal but linked to the influence of the Mojahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) terrorists."

On January 18, the Supreme Court of Iran witnessed a shocking tragedy with the assassination of Judges Razini and Moqiseh.

Both judges were well-known for their involvement in critical cases concerning espionage and terrorism.

A funeral was held in the wake of their untimely deaths, attracting hundreds of mourners, including many esteemed officials, who came together to pay tribute to the remarkable legacy of these notable figures in the judiciary.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, sent a heartfelt message to the funeral, expressing profound sorrow and extending his condolences to the grieving families of the two martyrs.

Explaining the joint session between the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission and the Legal and Judicial Commission of the Parliament on Sunday, Rezaei stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review the assassination incident of the martyred judges, with representatives from the judiciary and various Iranian security agencies in attendance.

He provided further details, stating, "Information about the attacker was shared during the session, revealing that he was a service staff member who served as a butler, naturally trusted by the judges. They had helped and shown kindness to him multiple times."

Rezaei added that the attacker, a 31-year-old man, acted with complete professionalism, and the weapon used in the attack was a Turkish-made Colt pistol.

He noted that the assailant's background included delinquency and violent behavior, adding that "some of his relatives were members of the MKO."

Rezaei also noted that individuals have been summoned, detained, and interrogated in connection with the incident, and the investigation is ongoing and requires further examination.

"There is a possibility that the attacker was trained," the spokesperson concluded.

Khartoum's top diplomat to visit Tehran

TEHRAN – Sudan's Foreign Minister Ali Youssef is scheduled to visit Iran within the next month to bolster bilateral cooperation.

"The Foreign Minister of Sudan will travel to Iran to increase our joint engagements," Sudan's Deputy Ambassador to Iran, Khalid Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, announced on Sunday.

The announcement follows a recent meeting between Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Sudan's chairman of the Transitional Sovereignty Council Abdel Fattah al-Burhan in New York.

"Iran is a strong country, and with the diplomatic approach of President Pezeshkian's administration, enhancing our bilateral cooperation is now within sight," Al-Sheikh noted in an interview with an Iranian news agency.

Highlighting Iran's resilience against sanctions, he added, "Sudan, similar to Iran, has experienced sanctions, but we are very pleased that Iran has successfully over-



come some of the world's largest sanctions."

The deputy ambassador elaborated on the historical relationship between the two countries, saying, "Iran and Sudan have maintained good relations over the past 20 years, and we hope to see these collaborations increase in the current circumstances."

Reflecting on his tenure in Iran, Al-Sheikh expressed, "I am very happy to serve as an ambassador in

Iran; it's a very secure and beautiful country."

He added that the two countries are currently negotiating for economic and trade delegations from Sudan to visit Iran.

Regarding his visit to the Iranian Kish Island, Al-Sheikh commented, "This was my first trip to this beautiful island; Kish has vast economic potential and can play a significant role in enhancing international relations in the region."

He also spoke about the "Kish Expo," saying, "It was very appealing to us; for the first time, a delegation from Sudan participated in an international exhibition in Iran, which is of great importance to us."

Historically, Iran and Sudan maintained close ties, especially since 1989.

However, in 2016, diplomatic relations were re-evaluated after the incidents involving the Saudi Embassy in Tehran, during which Sudan aligned itself with Saudi Arabia.

Recent developments have shown a shift towards reconciliation.

In October 2023, both countries agreed to restore diplomatic relations, motivated by mutual interests in facing regional conflicts and economic challenges.

There have also been discussions about expanding economic ties, including trade and investment opportunities, with Sudan looking to leverage Iran's experience in managing international sanctions.

Resistance victories highlight genuine Islamic solidarity: Hojjatoleslam Qomi



TEHRAN – Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Qomi, head of the Islamic Development Organization, emphasized the significance of demonstrating Islamic cohesion during a press conference for the National "Qodsian" Poetry Festival in Tehran on Sunday.

"We have witnessed the manifestation of true Islamic unity in the victories of the Resistance Front, and I hope these victories are also adorned with art and poetry," he stated.

At the unveiling of the festival's poster, Hojjatoleslam Qomi expressed his joy about the event, saying, "I am pleased that today we are unveiling a congress centered around poetry, which wisely focuses on the strategic principle of unity."

The ceremony was also attended by Nasser Abu Sharif, the representative of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad Movement in Iran.

Hojjatoleslam Qomi further elaborated, "God willing, this congress will be more than just a literary gathering; it will be a step forward in strengthening the epic spirit based on wisdom within the Islamic community."

The head of the Islamic Devel-

opment Organization emphasized the role of poetry in not just expressing emotions but transforming them into an epic narrative.

"The greatness shown by figures like Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Yahya Sinwar, along with other martyrs of the Resistance Front, should be narrated through poetry, which is one of the goals of this festival," he added.

Hojjatoleslam Qomi emphasized that one of the festival's primary objectives is to steadfastly uphold pure Islam and its unshakable foundations.

"If we lose our unity and coalition among Muslims, it will delight our enemies and create difficulties for the Islamic community," he stated.

Hojjatoleslam Qomi added that the Iranian people have consistently supported Palestine to the best of their abilities.

"Their contributions, such as personal jewelry donated to the Resistance Front, each tell a story. For instance, the martyr's wife who recently gave her wedding ring to aid the people of Gaza exemplifies the pinnacle of our nation's self-sacrifice for the Palestinian cause," he concluded.

People from Tabriz prepare to meet Leader to commemorate 1978 uprising

TEHRAN – On Sunday, Hojjat al-Islam Ahmad Motahari Asl, during a coordination meeting for organizing the delegation of Tabriz residents to meet the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, emphasized the historical and international importance of this gathering.

He highlighted the profound influence of Tabriz and Azarbaijan on Iran's modern history, stating, "Tabriz and Azarbaijan, due to their pivotal role in shaping Iran's history, their anti-Pahlavi struggles, and their contributions to the victory of the Islamic Revolution, hold a unique and esteemed position in the eyes of the Leader. This upcoming meeting must be meticulously planned to ensure it becomes a memorable milestone in Iran's historical narrative."

The gathering is set to coincide with the anniversary of the historic February 18, 1978, uprising by the people of Tabriz against the Pahlavi regime. Reflecting on this historic moment, the



representative of the Supreme Leader in East Azerbaijan and the Imam of Tabriz Friday Prayer added, "On this significant occasion, 2,500 citizens from Tabriz will have the honor of meeting the Supreme Leader, as they have done in previous years. This tradition underscores the deep connection between the people of Azerbaijan and the values of the Islamic Revolution."

Motahari Asl further stressed the need for careful planning to highlight the symbolic importance of the delegation. "Tabriz and Azerbaijan's contributions to the history of Iran go beyond mere events—they represent a legacy of resistance, resilience, and national pride. Organizing this meeting with proper attention and respect is vital to honoring that legacy and ensuring its place in the annals of Iranian history," he remarked.

The delegation's visit to meet the Leader is not only a tribute to the sacrifices of the people of Tabriz during the Islamic Revolution but also serves as a reminder of their enduring influence on Iran's political and cultural identity. The event is expected to draw national and international attention, showcasing the unity and pride of a region deeply intertwined with Iran's revolutionary history.

Kabul visit yielded tangible progress on critical bilateral issues: Iran FM

From Page 1 ▶ During the meeting, Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund welcomed Araghchi and emphasized the importance of the longstanding brotherly and friendly relations between Iran and Afghanistan. He highlighted the many common interests the two nations share, including cultural, religious, and geographical ties. Akhund called for utilizing all available resources and capacities to further deepen the relationship across all sectors.

Akhund expressed Afghanistan's deep gratitude towards Iran for its role in hosting Afghan refugees and migrants over the last five decades. He praised Iran for facilitating the return of undocumented Afghan nationals with dignity, underlining that Afghanistan sees this as an ongoing priority.

The conversation then shifted to the critical issue of water resources. Akhund reiterated Afghanistan's firm commitment to providing Iran with its rightful share of water from the Helmand River, emphasizing that the Afghan interim government considers this a religious, ethical, and humanitarian obligation. Even in the absence of a formal treaty, Akhund stressed that Afghanistan has no intention of withholding Iran's share of water, and there are no obstacles preventing its delivery.

Security along their shared borders was another focal point of the discussions. Akhund acknowledged that the two countries must collaborate more closely to enhance border security, particularly in light of the persistent threats posed by terrorist groups. He offered Afghanistan's readiness to exchange intelligence and increase cooperation in combating these security challenges, underscoring the importance of stability for both nations.

In response, Foreign Minister Araghchi highlighted the Iranian government's continued commitment to strengthening relations with Afghanistan. He noted that Iran views its relationship with Afghanistan as a critical element of its neighborhood policy, which seeks to foster good neighborliness and mutual ben-



efit. Araghchi reaffirmed Iran's willingness to enhance cooperation in various fields, including trade, economic development, and cultural exchange.

Araghchi emphasized that security is a shared concern for both nations and called for greater collaboration to combat terrorism and ensure the safety of all ethnic groups in Afghanistan, particularly the Shiite and Persian-speaking communities. He also discussed the ongoing issue of Afghan migrants in Iran, advocating for a more structured approach to facilitate the repatriation of undocumented Afghan nationals. Araghchi stressed the importance of international support to manage migration issues and ensure the wellbeing of Afghan returnees.

'Shared historical, cultural bonds must be capitalized to benefit both sides'

Later in the day, Araghchi met with Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi, the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan. This meeting focused on expanding economic cooperation and addressing regional developments that affect both countries.

Araghchi noted the deep cultural and historical bonds between the two nations, emphasizing the need to capitalize on these shared foundations to benefit both sides. He reiterated Iran's readiness to work closely with Afghanistan to address mutual concerns, including water rights, migration, and border security. Both sides agreed on the importance of improving economic, commercial, and cultural ties.

Mujahid expressed gratitude for Iran's warm hospitality toward Afghan refugees and reiterated the Afghan interim government's commitment to improving national security. He emphasized the importance of joint efforts in securing the border and combating terrorism, including better communication and information sharing between the two nations.

Mujahid also discussed Afghanistan's ongoing initiatives to modernize its defense capabilities, particularly in the realm of border security. He assured Araghchi that Afghanistan was committed to strengthening cooperation with Iran to ensure a stable and secure border region.

At the end of his visit, Foreign Minister Araghchi reflected on the progress made during his meetings in Kabul. In talks with reporters, Araghchi expressed optimism about the future of Iran-Afghanistan relations. He noted that despite the political changes in Afghanistan over the past several years, the shared history, culture, and geography of the two nations continue to bind them.

Araghchi acknowledged that Afghanistan has undergone significant changes in recent decades, particularly following the civil war and the rise of various extremist groups. He emphasized that these developments have had a direct impact on Iran, particularly in relation to migration, terrorism, and regional security concerns.

While discussing these issues, Araghchi stressed that diplomacy and dialogue are essential for managing the challenges both nations face. He reiterated that Iran's foreign policy aims to secure the interests of both countries, regardless of the political system in place in Afghanistan.

Looking forward, Araghchi expressed confidence that the discussions held during his trip would pave the way for continued cooperation. He noted the importance of addressing critical issues such as water rights, border security, and migration in a constructive manner to reduce tensions and build a stronger, more stable partnership.

Muttaqi expressed his appreciation for Iran's continued support in hosting Afghan refugees, a relationship that spans over four decades. He affirmed that the Taliban is prioritizing the return of these migrants as security and economic conditions improve. Muttaqi also discussed the ongoing challenge of drought, which affects both Afghanistan and Iran, and committed to ensuring that water distribution remains fair and benefits both nations, despite the regional climate challenges.

The issue of border security also featured prominently in the talks. Muttaqi outlined the Taliban's efforts to strengthen security along its border with Iran. He stressed the need for enhanced coordination and increased border control to prevent terrorism and criminal activities from destabilizing both countries.

'Diplomatic cooperation needed to tackle security concerns, terrorism'

In another crucial part of his visit, Araghchi met with Mullah Mohammad Yaqub Mujahid, Afghanistan's Acting Minister of National Defense. This meeting delved deeper into the defense and security aspects of the bilateral relationship.

Araghchi highlighted the interlinked security challenges faced by both Iran and Afghanistan, particularly in dealing with terrorism, drug trafficking, and cross-border crimes. He called for more robust cooperation between both countries' defense authorities to address these issues effectively.

Iranian delegation in Minsk to monitor Belarus presidential elections



TEHRAN – An official Iranian delegation has traveled to Minsk to observe the presidential elections in Belarus at the invitation of the country's government.

The delegation, led by the director general of the Elections Office within Iran's Interior Ministry, is participating as international observers to monitor the electoral process.

As part of their agenda, the Iranian team will visit polling stations across the capital city of Minsk to assess voting procedures and ensure compliance with established regulations. This initiative is in accordance with arrangements made by Belarus' Central Election Commission.

The presidential election, held on January 26, is conducted under the framework of the Belarusian constitution, which stipu-

lates a direct voting system. The elected president will serve a five-year term in office, continuing a tradition of executive leadership chosen by popular vote.

The president will be considered elected if more than half of the citizens participating in the election vote in his favor. Over 44,000 domestic and nearly 500 international observers are monitoring the election process.

Five candidates are vying for the post of head of state, including incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko, who has led Belarus since 1994. His rivals are the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party Oleg Gaidukevich, entrepreneur Anna Kanopatskaya, first secretary of the Communist Party Sergey Syrankov, and leader of the Republican Party of Labor and Justice Alexander Khizhnyak.

IRGC begins reconstruction efforts in flood-stricken villages of southeast Iran



TEHRAN – In response to the severe floods earlier this year that caused widespread damage to villages in Chabahar, Konarak, and Dashtiari in Sistan-Baluchestan province, the IRGC Ground Forces have initiated major reconstruction efforts, aiming to rebuild infrastructure and improve living conditions in the affected areas.

Brigadier General Majid Reza Hassanzadeh, Deputy Commander of the IRGC Ground Forces' Deprivation Alleviation and Public Aid Headquarters, announced the completion of several key projects during a recent visit to the region.

Speaking at the inauguration of development initiatives, he revealed that seven residential units have been constructed or repaired for families impacted by the floods. Additionally, 11 flood barriers have been built to reduce the risk of future flooding.

"As part of a broader initiative,

water distribution networks have been installed to serve 27 villages. So far, seven villages are benefiting, while work continues in the remaining 20 villages. Another critical project involves constructing three 15,000-cubic-meter water reservoirs, which are expected to significantly alleviate water scarcity in southeastern Iran," he asserted.

During his visit, Hassanzadeh inspected the ongoing water supply projects and emphasized their importance in enhancing the quality of life for local residents. A joint meeting between Mansour Bijar, governor of Sistan-Baluchestan, and Brigadier General Hassanzadeh was held to evaluate progress, prioritize upcoming steps, and address funding requirements for these initiatives.

The water supply efforts in Sistan-Baluchestan represent approximately 25% of Iran's national water supply campaign.

Kartal will succeed at Persepolis: Engin Firat

TEHRAN – Former Iran coach Engin Firat believes that Ismail Kartal is a strong choice to lead Persepolis and that he can be successful with the Iranian team.

The 63-year-old coach was appointed by Persepolis on Friday and traveled to Tehran on Saturday morning.

Kartal has signed an 18-month contract with the club. Last season, he amassed 99 points with Fenerbahçe, the highest total in a single season in the club's history, although they fell short of winning the championship.

"Kartal has proven himself over many years in Turkey's football and is a tactician who can withstand pressure. He is set to lead Persepolis, which is as esteemed as Fenerbahçe in Turkey. At Persepolis, winning is a must, and he has previously demonstrated that he can perform under pressure," the former head coach of Kenya told Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

"I believe he is capable of helping Persepolis, but the only challenge for him is that he will be working outside of Turkey for the first time. Additionally, I'm unsure about his English proficiency for communicating with the players, but given his coaching experience, he can find success at Persepolis."

"Working at Persepolis will undoubtedly be a valuable experience for Kartal. As someone who has previously worked with the Iranian national team and local clubs, I consider Iran my second home. It is a fantastic country," the former Saipa coach added.

"Iran's league is very competitive, with five or six teams vying for the title each season, whereas in the Turkish Super League, we only had two teams competing for the championship last year. Therefore, Iran's league is more competitive than the Turkish league," he noted.

"Ismail Kartal will need to adapt to Iran's league and culture. Every match in Iran will be challenging. I think the championship may be out of reach this season, but he can build his team for the next season," Firat concluded.

10-man Persepolis beat Tractor, Sepahan defeat Kheybar

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team earned a big home win against Tractor in the 2024/25 Iran's Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) on Sunday.

In the match held in Tehran's Azadi Stadium in front of about 50,000 spectators, Soroush Rafiei and Giorgi Gvelesiani were on target for Persepolis.

Rafiei's fight-footed gave the hosts a lead in the 11th minute.

Just before the halftime, Persepolis midfielder Mohammad Khodabandelou was shown a straight red card for a harsh tackle on Ricardo Alves.

Gvelesiani also headed the ball past in the 77th minute to seal a 2-0 win for Persepolis in Tehran.

In Isfahan, Sepahan defeated Kheybar 2-0 thanks to goals from Reza Shekari and Mohammad Karimi (penalty).

Foolad also rallied from 2-0 down to beat Mes in Rafsanjan.

Sepahan moved top with 38 points, followed by Tractor and Foolad with 35 and 34 points, respectively.

Bahmanyar wins gold at 2025 Karate 1Premier League

TEHRAN – Sara Bahmanyar of Iran claimed a gold medal at the 2025 Karate 1-Premier League held in Paris, France.

She defeated her compatriot Masoumeh Mohsenian 6-3 in the final match of the Female Kumite -50kg.

Also, Ali Meskini of Iran defeated Albanian athlete Orges Arifi 9-6 in the Male Kumite -60kg bronze medal match.

Nearly 400 athletes from about 70 countries took part in the prestigious event from Jan. 24 to 26.

The city of Hangzhou, China, is set to host the second tournament of the 2025 Karate 1-Premier League season from March 14 to 16. Following the highly successful inaugural event in Paris, this tournament promises to deliver another thrilling showcase of karate talent on the global stage.

Fathi to officiate at 2025 CAFA Women's Futsal

TEHRAN – Zari Fathi of Iran has been chosen to officiate at the 2025 CAFA Women's Futsal Championship.

The tournament will bring five teams Tajikistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan together.

The 2025 CAFA Women's Futsal Championship is the upcoming fourth edition of the CAFA Women's Futsal Championship, the annual international futsal championship organized by CAFA for the women's national futsal teams of Central Asia.

The tournament is set to be hosted in Dushanbe, Tajikistan for the third time, from 7 to 17 February 2025.

Iran the three-time defending champions having won every previous edition of the tournament.

Iran to play N. Korea at 2025 AFC U17 Asian Cup opener

TEHRAN – Iran will open the 2025 AFC U17 Asian Cup with a match against North Korea.

Abbas Chamanian's boy will play the Korean team on April 5.

Iran is also scheduled to play Oman and Tajikistan on April 8 and 11, respectively.

The 16 teams, divided into four groups, will not only be bidding for the coveted trophy but also for the eight spots at the FIFA U17 World Cup Qatar 2025 – the first edition of the newly expanded 48-team strong annual tournament.

The AFC U17 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2025 will be held on April 3-20.

Iraqi forward Hussein linked with Persepolis

TEHRAN – Persepolis football club has reportedly offered \$500,000 to Qatari club Al Khor to sign Ayman Hussein.

The Iraqi striker had been previously linked with the Iranian giant.

Persepolis, who have recently hired Turkish coach Ismail Kartal, are going to strengthen for the remainder of the season.

The Reds sit fourth, five points behind leader Tractor in Iran football league.

Iran champion of CAVA Beach Volleyball Championship 2024

TEHRAN – Iran emerged champions of the CAVA Beach Volleyball Championship 2024 on Sunday.

Iran's Amir Ali GhalehNovi/Abolhassan Khakizadeh defeated Sri Lankans Anjana/Sandun 2-0 in the final match.

A total of 18 teams, 9 apiece in both men's and women's divisions, competed in the rescheduled tournament, which was initially planned to take place last December, but was postponed due to some reasons.

Iran's steel production sees modest growth in 2024, reaching 31m tons



TEHRAN - Iran's steel producers ended 2024 with modest growth, as the country's production of this key metal reached 31 million tons.

According to the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the latest report from the World Steel Association shows that Iran's steel production grew by 0.8 percent last year.

This was despite an 8.2 percent decline in production during December, when energy shortages, particularly of gas and electricity, impacted output, reducing it to 2.6 million tons.

The World Steel Association's table confirms that Iran retained its position as the world's tenth-largest crude steel producer.

The total output of the association's 71 member countries reached 1.839 billion tons, marking a 0.9 percent decrease compared to 2023.

However, global steel production in December grew by 5.6 percent to 144.5 million

tons.

China maintained its leading position with just over 1.005 billion tons of production.

India ranked second globally with a significantly lower production volume of 149 million tons, followed by Japan in third place with 84 million tons.

The United States produced more than 79 million tons, Russia over 70 million tons, South Korea 63.5 million tons, Germany 37.2 million tons, Turkey 36.9 million tons, and Brazil 33.7 million tons, occupying the fourth to ninth spots, respectively.

Among the top 10 steel-producing countries, Turkey recorded the highest growth rate at 9.4 percent. It was followed by India with 6.3 percent, Brazil with 5.3 percent, and Germany with 5.2 percent.

Meanwhile, the steepest declines in production were reported by Russia, down 7.2 percent, South Korea, down 4.7 percent, the United States, down 2.4 percent, and China, down 1.7 percent.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

The country is expected to climb to seventh place among the world's top steel producers by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

Iran's steel production is estimated to reach 32 million tons in the current year (ends on March 20).

IDRO highlights green fuel projects, renewable energy development

TEHRAN - Journalists visited the bioethanol production project of Zagros Green Fuel, a subsidiary of the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO).

During the visit, Saeed Jafari, IDRO's Deputy for Modernization and Industrial Projects, emphasized that the establishment of the Zagros Green Fuel Development Company marked a significant stride toward achieving sustainable development goals and utilizing renewable energy sources.

Jafari stated that IDRO, as one of Iran's primary industrial and developmental organizations, leads pioneering projects in clean energy.

He highlighted that the Zagros Green Fuel project not only reduces environmental pollution but also generates new job opportunities, thereby supporting economic development in western and southwestern regions.

He explained that the project was approved during the Leader's visit to Kermanshah Province. Initially state-funded, private sector investment was invited in November 2023 to expedite project completion.

IDRO offered company shares in two stages on the Tehran Stock Exchange: 20 trillion rials (about \$40 million) in October 2023 and 16 trillion rials (about \$32 million) in November 2024. This reduced IDRO's ownership stake to 35 percent.

The bioethanol refinery in Kermanshah began equipment installation in May 2024, followed by trial operations in September.

Jafari also reported progress on a bioethanol project in Kohgiluyeh-Boyer-Ahmad Province, which is 34 percent complete. The project is expected to exceed 90 percent progress by the end of 2025, with full operations slated for 2026. Funding has been partly secured through the capital market.



Jafari outlined the projects' reliance on grains such as corn, wheat, barley, and sorghum.

Iran's annual grain market amounts to 26 million tons, while a 200,000-liter-per-day plant requires 180,000 tons annually. These facilities can also process grain waste.

The Kermanshah plant, for example, uses 270,000 tons of corn daily. Annual outputs include 66 million liters of ethanol and 66,000 tons of high-protein animal feed (DDGS).

Bioethanol, a plant-based octane booster, improves fuel quality and reduces vehicle emissions. This refinery additive has been used in approximately 90 countries for over 20 years, replacing MTBE. Unlike bioethanol, MTBE contaminates groundwater and harms the environment.

With Iran producing 120 million liters of gasoline daily, Jafari emphasized the need for six million liters of bioethanol daily to make the country's gasoline more eco-friendly. This requires establishing at least 30 similar plants nationwide.

Jafari reaffirmed IDRO's commitment to supporting domestic and foreign investors by streamlining licensing and removing obstacles to similar projects. He stressed that IDRO's role is to facilitate development and overcome challenges to ensure the success of these initiatives.

TEHRAN - The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has put the average inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on January 20, which marks the end of the tenth Iranian calendar month Dey, at 32 percent, falling 0.5 percent from the figure for the twelve-month ended to the ninth month.

The center put the country's point-to-point inflation rate at 31.8 percent in the tenth month, which means families have paid an average of 31.8 percent more for purchasing the same package of commodities and services in that month, compared to the same month in the preceding year.

The point-to-point inflation rate rose 0.4 percent in the tenth month from the previous month.

The SCI has announced that Iran's economy grew by 5.7 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19, 2024), marking the highest growth since 2017.

Iranian ports handle nearly 195m tons of goods in 10 months

TEHRAN - The Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) of Iran announced that a total of 194.79 million tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at the country's ports during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2024- January 19, 2025).

According to the PMO's statement, oil product unloading totaled 23.53 million tons, while unloading of non-oil products reached 44.16 million tons, bringing the total unloaded goods to 67.69 million tons.

Oil product loading at PMO-controlled ports amounted to 64.41 million tons, and non-oil product loading totaled 62.69 million tons, resulting in a combined loading volume of 127.10 million tons by the end of the 10-month period.



The total volume of oil product loading and unloading during this period stood at 87.94 million tons, while non-oil product operations accounted for 106.84 million tons. Altogether, 194.79 million tons of oil and non-oil products were handled.

The ports handled 2.57 million

twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of containers during this period, marking a 13 percent increase compared to the same period last year, which saw 2.28 million TEUs processed.

Iran's ports have a total nominal capacity of over 260 million tons per year, allowing them to

handle a wide range of oil and non-oil commodities. Key ports, such as Shahid Rajaei Port in Hormozgan Province, account for a significant portion of the country's trade activity due to their advanced infrastructure and strategic location along international shipping routes.

Investments in port infrastructure have further enhanced the efficiency of loading and unloading operations, reducing turnaround times for vessels.

The PMO has emphasized the importance of increasing port capacity to accommodate growing trade volumes and support Iran's economic development goals. Upgrades in equipment, digitalization of operations, and expanded storage facilities are part of ongoing efforts to optimize port efficiency.

Iran exports commodities worth \$389m to Armenia in 9 months

TEHRAN- Iran exported commodities valued at \$389,079,674 to Armenia in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20 - December 21, 2024), according to a report published by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

The IRICA report put the country's weight of goods exported to Armenia in the mentioned nine-month period at 1,482,112,041 tons.

Iran and Armenia signed a barter trade agreement on the sidelines of the 3rd Eurasian Economic Forum in Yerevan in early October 2024.

The agreement was signed by Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mohammad-Ali Dehghan Dehnavi at the presence of Iranian Minister of Industry, Mining, and Trade Mohammad Atabek and Armenian Economy Minister Gevorg Papoyan.

Iran views barter agreements as a major tool to avoid U.S. sanctions that restrict its access to international trade.

The signing of the deal came after Iran opened its trade center in Yerevan. The center, built over an area of 18,000-square meters, has 107 booths and stalls that sell Iranian-made consumer goods, chemicals and other industrial products. Armenian businesses have also a share in the retail and wholesale facility.

Iranian ambassador in Yerevan Mehdi Sobhani described the facility as the "largest Iranian trade center in the world", saying it will lead to a major increase in trade ties be-

tween Iran and Armenia.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the parties emphasized the removal of financial and banking obstacles and restrictions, facilitating the issuance of guarantees for Iranian technical and engineering service contractors in Armenia and some other customs restrictions.

The Armenian side announced the decision of the Armenian government to invest in Iran's Chabahar Port.

He also referred to the importance of opening a commercial center of Iran in Armenia, calling on Atabek for support and assistance in setting up an Armenian business center in Iran.

Iran and Armenia seek to increase the value of their trade ties to \$3 billion per year. Iran also views Armenia as a gateway to trade with members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

In late September 2024, officials and private sector representatives of Iran and Armenia discussed ways of increasing economic cooperation including the establishment of a joint free trade zone in Armenia.

An Iranian business delegation, which was in Armenia to attend the Eurasian Economic Forum, attended a meeting with the directors of Mantashyants Business Club which is Armenia's largest international business club to explore avenues of cooperation.

During the meeting, Iranian and Armenian economic operators and business persons discussed the fields of cooperation while in-

roducing their fields of activity.

Speaking at the gathering, the chairman of the board of directors of Mantashyants Club, pointed out that this group is the largest business complex in Armenia, which has 650 members from 18 different countries around the world.

"We have close cooperation with the Iranian Embassy in Armenia and we hope that the level of our interactions with the Tehran Chamber of Commerce will also improve," Vahram Mirakyan said.

Mirakyan further spoke about the readiness of this group to introduce partner companies to Iranian economic operators in Armenia.

He considered the development of trade with Iran to be important and expressed hope that these exchanges would increase the volume of commercial transactions between the two countries.

Elsewhere in the meeting, TCCIMA Head Mahmoud Najafi Arab mentioned the high capacity and ability of the members of the Iranian trade delegation present in Armenia and other members of the TCCIMA and said: "Some MPs are also present in the business delegation sent to Armenia by the Tehran Chamber, and this shows the importance of developing the country's trade exchanges with Armenia."

He also underlined the importance of exchanging business delegations to improve the level of economic relations between the two countries and invited the Armenian side to visit Iran to continue the talks.

Iran-Germany trade reaches €1.37b in 11 months

In the first 11 months of 2024, German exports to Iran amounted to €1.16 billion, a six percent rise from €1.09 billion during the same period in 2023.

However, Iranian exports to Germany declined by six percent, reaching €208 million compared

to €222 million in the previous year.

In November 2024 alone, the trade volume between the two countries reached €124 million, up two percent from €122 million in November 2023.

German exports to Iran in November fell by one percent to €101 million, while Iranian exports to Germany grew by 17 percent to €23 million—the highest monthly export figure from Iran to Germany since March 2023 (€32 million).

ICCIMA outlines requirements for boosting mining growth

TEHRAN - Mohammadreza Bahraman, deputy head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), has outlined the essential steps to achieve an eight percent economic growth target and a 13 percent growth in the mining sector as envisioned in the Seventh National Development Plan.

Speaking on a news program, Bahraman emphasized the importance of leveraging the country's vast mineral resources and addressed the obstacles that must be overcome to increase the mining sector's growth

rate from the current three percent to the 13 percent target.

"We are blessed with abundant resources, including oil, gas, and various minerals. These minerals, when processed to create added value, require energy—a sector in which Iran has a unique global advantage. With one percent of the world's population and landmass, we hold seven percent of the world's mineral reserves," he said.

Bahraman stated that reaching the 13 percent target requires addressing several critical factors, which have been outlined in a

comprehensive report submitted to the relevant authorities.

He urged government agencies to avoid becoming obstacles to private-sector exploration efforts, emphasizing that achieving the ambitious growth targets necessitates reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies.

He also highlighted Iran's competitive edge due to its access to energy and vast mineral wealth, urging the government to trust the private sector and remove barriers to investment and development.

Inflation rate drops 0.5%

In its latest report, the SCI said the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) for the year ending in March 2024 at the constant prices of 2017 is equivalent to 5.7 percent of the total GDP and 3.4 percent of the GDP minus oil.

The field of activities of industries and mines group grew by 6.9 percent,

the services group by 5.7 percent, and the agriculture group by 2.2 percent compared to the previous year.

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

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

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

Trump's pipe dream: A losing bet on relocating Gaza population

Israel slaughtered over 47,000 people in Gaza but failed to ethnically cleanse the Palestinian territory

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Soon after Israel launched war on Gaza on October 7, 2023, plans were promptly set in motion to forcibly displace and ethnically cleanse Palestinians from the coastal enclave.

Nearly a week after the initiation of the genocidal war, Israel's Intelligence Ministry drafted a wartime proposal to transfer the Gaza Strip's 2.3 million population to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.

The offer, dated October 13, was initially released by Sicha Mekomit, a local news outlet.

It suggested relocating Gaza's civilian population to tent cities in northern Sinai, followed by the construction of permanent cities and an unspecified humanitarian corridor. Additionally, a security zone would be created in Israel to prevent the displaced Palestinians from entering.

The authors of the document considered it the most desirable for Israel's security.



Hamas has urged Trump not to repeat "failed" ideas tried by his predecessor Joe Biden after he suggested the relocation of 1.5 million Gazans into Egypt and Jordan.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office downplayed the significance of the document which drew condemnation from Egypt and the Palestinians.

Nonetheless, the Financial Times reported in late October 2023 that Netanyahu sought to convince European leaders to put pressure on Cairo to accept refugees from Gaza.

The FT noted that the Israeli premier had put forward the proposal in meetings with European officials. The report said



Solidarity among Palestinians and backing for resistance groups have been emphasized following a ceasefire that came in the aftermath of Israel's military setbacks in the war on Gaza

the Czech Republic and Austria floated the Israeli idea that led up to a summit of EU leaders, but key European countries, notably France, Germany and the UK dismissed it.

Israel's war on Gaza lasted for more than 15 months until the regime had to sign a ceasefire with Hamas which went into effect on January 19.

During the conflict, Israel killed more than 47,200 people in Gaza and destroyed much of the territory to make it uninhabitable for Palestinians. However, Palestinians remained steadfast and foiled Israel's plans by putting up stiff resistance.

Israel's war on Gaza began shortly after Hamas carried out the Al-Aqsa Storm. It was a surprise military operation in southern Israel. More than 1,100 people were killed in the Hamas attack and about 250 others were taken captive. Dozens of the captives are still held in Gaza. Several of them have been released since the implementation of the ceasefire.

Since the start of the war, Netanyahu had repeatedly said fighting would continue until Israel eliminated Hamas and returned all captives. But the regime was forced to accept the truce agreement following the failure of its military strategy.

Despite Israel's setbacks, US President Donald Trump has de-

clined to chase the rainbows.

Speaking with reporters on board Air Force One on Saturday, Trump suggested the possibility of relocating the population of Gaza to Egypt and Jordan.

Pointing to Israel's devastating military campaign in Gaza, the US president said, "It is literally a demolition site right now, almost everything is demolished and people are dying there. So, I would rather get involved with some of the Arab nations and build housing in a different location, where they can maybe live in peace for a change."

He added, "I would like Egypt to take people. You're talking about probably a million and a half people, and we just clean out that whole thing and say: 'You know, it's over.'"

Addressing King Abdullah II of Jordan, Trump said, "I would love for you to take on more, 'cause I am looking at the whole Gaza Strip right now, and it's a mess. It's a real mess."

Palestinian resistance movements strongly condemned Trump's comments.

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) said Trump's "proposal falls within the framework of encouraging war crimes and crimes against humanity by forcing our people to leave their land".

The resistance group added that Trump's proposal is "in line

with the worst of the agenda of the extreme Zionist right and a continuation of the policy of denying the existence of the Palestinian people, their will and their rights".

It called on Cairo and Amman to reject Trump's idea.

Bassem Naim, a member of Hamas's political bureau, also came down hard on Trump.

"As they have foiled every plan for displacement and alternative homelands over the decades, our people will also foil such projects," he said.

Trump's suggestion is reminiscent of the Nakba, Arabic for catastrophe, the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948.

Zionist military forces expelled at least 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and lands a day after the establishment of Israel on May 14, 1948.



The Palestinian Islamic Jihad said Trump's proposal for the relocation of Gazans "falls within the framework of encouraging war crimes and crimes against humanity".

Trump's comments now indicate that he is egging on Zionists to carry out another ethnic cleansing campaign.

After more than 15 months of the war in Gaza Israel realized that efforts aimed at crushing the Palestinian resistance and expelling Palestinians from the strip amounted to fighting a losing battle.

Trump may keep harping on his proposal but will have to wake up to the fact that he is flogging a dead horse.

Freed Palestinians: Traumatic conditions exposed

From page 1 ▶ Like many other prisoners, he was subjected to hanging and beating while denied medical treatment to obtain confessions, but he withstood the pressure despite enduring various forms of mistreatment.

The torment he faced, along with the loss of weight, was clear to see on his face and body in the videos that went viral following his release.

Nael Barghouti

Other reports suggest that Barghouti, 67, has spent 44 years in Israeli jails. He is the longest-serving Palestinian prisoner. Barghouti was first jailed in 1978.

Raed al-Saadi

Al-Saadi is widely believed to be the longest-serving Palestinian prisoner from the occupied West Bank city of Jenin. He was abducted and detained in 1989.

Mahmoud Shreiteh

Shreiteh was active in resistance operations as enshrined under international law.

His activism led him to become wanted by the occupation regime. His family pursued and threatened, Shreiteh's house was raided several times, his five brothers were arrested, and his house was bombed until he was arrested in 2002.

Shreiteh was transferred to the Moscow interrogation facility and subjected to harsh interrogation for more than three months. He was held in solitary confinement for more than 50 days. He was also deprived of visiting his family and parents.

Saeed Al-Bana

Al-Bana, 44, from Tulkarm was freed after 21 years in Israeli prisons.

In 2003, he was arrested by Israeli forces for joining the resistance against occupation. Saeed suffered from cancer while in prison and was the victim of deliberate neglect by the jailers.

Nasim al-Zaatari

Al-Zaatari was abducted in September 2003 for helping the resistance in al-Khalil, also known as Hebron in the occupied West Bank.

During his 22 years in Israeli prisons, Nasim was subjected to many punishments, faced several rounds of solitary confinement, and like many Palestinian prisoners was denied family visits.

Naji Bisharat

Bisharat was arrested in February 2002 for partaking in the anti-occupation resistance.

Israeli occupation forces abducted him after a year-long pursuit during which his family suffered from raids and continuous search of their home. During his interrogation, which lasted for more than three months, he was subjected to violent and harsh torture.

Ashraf Zughayer

Zughayer had been imprisoned since 2002 for joining the West Bank resis-

tance forces during the second intifada.

Wael al-Jaghoub

Al-Jaghoub was arrested in 1992 and sentenced to six years in prison for his resistance against the occupation.

With the outbreak of the second Intifada, his activist role reemerged, and in May 2001, Israeli forces arrested him again and sentenced him to life imprisonment.

He was subjected to harsh and extensive periods of interrogation and solitary confinement several times.

In total, the Israeli occupation regime released 200 Palestinian prisoners in the second phase of a prisoner exchange operation as part of the ceasefire agreement, with the freed prisoners expressing gratitude to the resistance movement in Gaza.

The Palestinian Prisoners Affairs Commission and the Palestinian Prisoner Society clarified that the released prisoners in this phase included individuals serving life sentences and those with high prison terms.

However, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) physically assaulted and brutally beat up some of the Palestinian prisoners before their release.

The IOF also stormed the house of a freed Palestinian prisoner in occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem) on Saturday only a few hours after his release.

One Palestinian described the dire conditions faced by prisoners and detainees, revealing systematic abuse, starvation, and psychological warfare at the hands of jailors, especially since the October 7 al-Aqsa Storm Operation in 2023.

Al-Jaghoub described the conditions in detention as "a complete war crime, involving starvation, torture, assaults, and deprivation of medical care."

He noted, "The occupation prevents prisoners from receiving any news, isolating them entirely from the outside world."

According to the Prisoners' Media Office, the IOF assaults on freed prisoners stem from their frustration over the success of the exchange deal.

The Israeli treatment of the freed prisoners stands in stark contrast to the release of Israeli captives in Gaza, who always seem in good shape.

Hebrew media acknowledged that the four Israeli female soldiers freed on Saturday in Gaza appeared in good health, stating, "There is no urgent need to transfer them to Soroka and Barzilai (hospitals); they will be taken to Beilinson (a reception center for the soldiers)."

Israeli media confirmed that the soldiers were in good condition and did not require hospitalization.

Lebanese return to border villages but settlers refuse

From page 1 ▶ Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri also said, "Today you are proving – far and near – that you are great in your national affiliation," adding that "the blood and wounds of the defenseless southern Lebanese constitute an explicit and urgent call to the international community and the countries sponsoring the ceasefire agreement to take immediate and urgent action to compel Israel to withdraw immediately from the Lebanese territories it still occupies."

In turn, caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati stressed that the southerners' patriotism "has become an example to be followed and a testimony – written in blood – that no right is lost if there are demands behind it." He warned that "any retreat from the commitment to the provisions of the ceasefire agreement will have dire consequences."

Nawaf Salam, the prime minister-designate, also confirmed his commitment to "the priority of securing the conditions for rebuilding these villages."

Hezbollah MP Ali Fayyad described the return of the southerners as a completely his-

toric moment of change, "just as the mujahideen and martyrs changed the course of the war; the people are breaking the equations that the Israeli enemy sought to establish."

Meanwhile, it seems that the return of the colonial settlers to north Palestine will require huge efforts by Israel's security and political leadership as they have lost their confidence in them following an unprecedented displacement process in the history of the occupying entity, according to a study conducted by the Union Center for Research and Development.

The Lebanese think tank highlights the "inferiority" that these occupiers suffer from compared to other colonial settlers in occupied Palestine and this will leave serious repercussions in the long run. Hence, promises to convince them to return will be of no use, given their previous experiences in this regard.

It further reveals that more than 13,000 northern Israeli settlers are still living in hotels and houses funded by the occupation entity. About 50,000 others have perma-

nently integrated into the communities to which they have taken refuge, bringing the total number of those who refuse to return – two months after the end of the war – to 63,935.

The study warns against emptying the north so that it becomes a soft underbelly that helps Hezbollah; among the colonial settlers' prime demands are: establishing a buffer zone in southern Lebanon; launching an asymmetric military operation in the event Hezbollah violates the ceasefire agreement; building new advanced shelters in conjunction with a comprehensive development plan; not postponing immediate financial compensations; supporting and developing the health sector; etc.

The Union Center for Research and Development points out that the occupied northern Palestine has undergone structural changes that will have strategic repercussions, as it has transformed from a tourism and entertainment center into a strategic "defense line" for the depth of the colonial entity, which will constitute a huge economic burden on the occupation entity's budget.

Killing Lebanese returning to destroyed homes is tragic

By Narges Pakdel

TEHRAN – Israeli soldiers killed at least 15 civilians and a soldier and wounded at least 80 others in south Lebanon as the people were returning to their homes after a deadline for the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon had passed.

Killing ordinary people who were returning to their demolished homes is a tragedy. This tragedy took place after months of homelessness and ensuing problems. This tragedy was committed by invading forces whom war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu has called the "most civilized army" in the world.

Some of these thousands of citizens who were returning to their places of living are still grieving the loss of family members who were brutalized in Israel's intensive savage and indiscriminate bombardments of southern Lebanon. Just tragedy after tragedy.

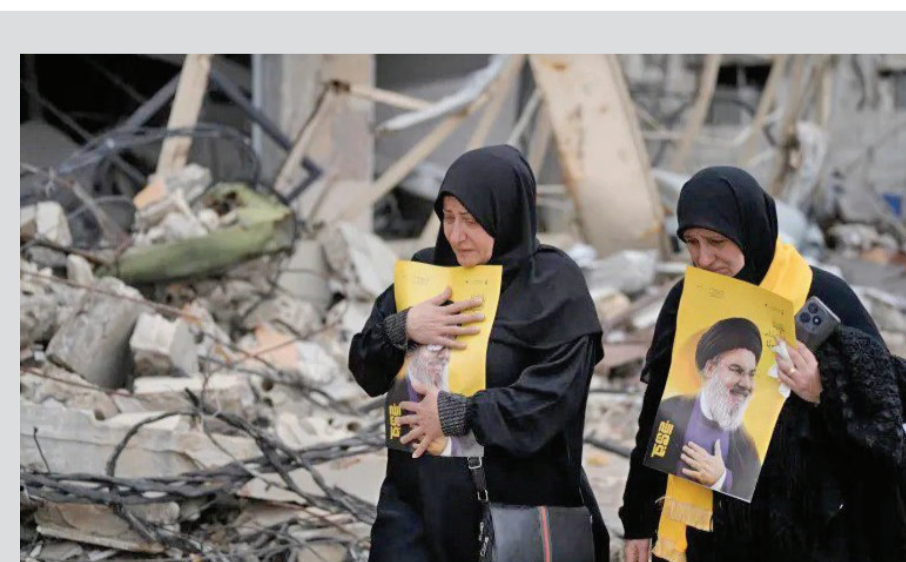
Some pro-Israel officials in the West may argue that Israel had already warned the Lebanese not to return to their homes, but a return to one's home doesn't deserve cold-blooded murder. What a crime had they done that they were ruthlessly soaked in the blood? This is an important question that self-proclaimed defenders of human rights in the West, who blindly defend Israel, must answer.

It seems that the thirst of some Israeli

forces' thirst for killing is insatiable.

Most probably, they are nervous that the Hezbollah resistance movement is structurally intact despite losing some senior commanders and their leader and that the resistance fighters in Gaza are demonstrating a heroic reappearance after nearly 16 months of relentless barbaric war on the coastal strip.

Those who are familiar with Israel's dirty war tactics and malicious intentions say Israeli forces killed displaced Lebanese civilians because they want to remain in south Lebanon and create a buffer zone on the Lebanese territory.



Women hold portraits of martyred Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah as they check the destruction in their village of Aita al-Shaab on January 26. [Bilal Hussein/AP]

MP calls for global registration of Shirez Canyon



TEHRAN - Ali Emami-Rad, a member of the Iranian Parliament for Kuhdasht and Rumeshkan, has urged authorities to take immediate steps to pursue the global registration of Shirez Canyon, a stunning natural phenomenon located in Kuhdasht county, Lorestan province.

During a meeting with Atta Hasanpour, the provincial tourism chief, Emami-Rad emphasized the immense potential of Shirez Canyon for achieving UNESCO World Heritage status. "The global registration of this natural attraction would significantly contribute to the economic development of Kuhdasht," he stated.

A natural wonder in heart of Zagros Mountains

Shirez Canyon, situated 45 kilometers northeast of Kuhdasht, lies within the Zagros Mountain range and is renowned for its unique geotouristic features. The canyon's springs flow into the Seimare River, a tributary of the Karkhen River, creating a picturesque landscape of eroded sedimentary rocks dating back to the Devonian period (a geologic period that lasted from 419.2 to 358.9 million years ago).

Emami-Rad also highlighted the broader significance of preserving cultural and natural heritage in the region, which boasts an array of historical and natural attractions. "Kuhdasht has the potential to become a premier tourism destination," he said, urging for enhanced infrastructure and sustainable

tourism development.

Efforts underway for preservation and development

Hasanpour supported the call for global registration, underscoring the canyon's popularity among nature enthusiasts. He pointed to other significant sites in Kuhdasht, such as the prehistoric rock carvings of Mir Malas and Humian, which attest to the region's ancient heritage.

Moreover, proposals for establishing a tourism camp in the Changari area and addressing land ownership issues near Shirez Canyon were discussed at the meeting.

The MP believes that securing a global status for Shirez Canyon could unlock significant economic opportunities for Kuhdasht. The region's rich combination of natural beauty and historical significance positions it as a potential hub for domestic and international tourism, he said.

Home to various nomads and tribal communities, Lorestan was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan (Lorestan) Bronzes noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs, date from this turbulent period. Moreover, Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid dynasties.

ancestors of the first Tehuelche people of Patagonia.

The Cueva is considered by the international scientific community to be one of the most important sites of the earliest hunter-gatherer groups in South America during Early Holocene that still maintains a good state of preservation and has a singular environment formation, unique at Santa Cruz province.

The rock art, its natural environment and the archaeological sites on this region are some of the very important reasons that made this area a focus for archaeological research for more than 25 years.

They made an impact on the observer due not only the deep gorge walls surrounded by a privileged landscape, but also by the artistic compositions, variety of motifs and its polychromies.

These scenes represent a unique evidence to know about the first Patagonian hunters' behaviour and their hunting techniques.

Cueva de las Manos, Río Pinturas contains an exceptional assemblage of cave art, unique in the world, for its age and continuity throughout time, the beauty and the preservation conditions of the paintings, the magnificence of the collection of stencilled outlines of human hands and the hunting scenes, as well as the environment that surrounds the place of exciting beauty and for being part of the cultural value of the site itself.

(Source: UNESCO)

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

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

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

The entrance to the Cueva is screened by a rock wall covered by many hand stencils. Within the rock shelter itself there are five concentrations of rock art, later figures and motifs often superimposed upon those from earlier periods.

The paintings were executed with natural mineral pigments - iron oxides (red and purple), kaolin (white), and natrojarosite (yellow), manganese oxide (black) - ground and mixed with some form of binder.

The artistic sequence, which includes three main stylistic groups, began as early as the 10th millennium BP [Before Present].

The sequence is a long one: archaeological investigations have shown that the site was last inhabited around 700 CE by the possible

The British Isles are home to some of the most dramatic and unforgiving coastlines in the world, much of which has remained untouched and isolated for centuries. Scotland's northeastern coast is no exception, where jagged cliffs and treacherous terrain conceal a network of ancient and mysterious caves. Among these are the Covesea Caves - near Inverness - which contain some

of the most enigmatic archaeological sites in Britain. Carved by nature and time, the caves are extremely inaccessible, requiring great skill to locate and enter. Despite the perilous journey, a team of archaeologists previously ventured into the Covesea Caves to uncover their long-held secrets.

Their findings were explored in the Smithsonian Channel's documentary,

Mystic Britain: Mummies, revealing a discovery that shocked the scientific community—evidence of ancient mummification practices in Britain.

The finding was extraordinary, as mummification is traditionally associated with the ancient Egyptians, not Bronze Age Britons. Yet the Covesea Caves appear to have been a sacred site where the dead were not merely

buried but carefully preserved.

Dr Lindsey Büster, a researcher at the University of Edinburgh, reflected on the challenges ancient people would have faced in reaching these caves. She explained: "For prehistoric people to make the effort and to make the journey would have been really arduous and quite a difficult thing to do."

The dangerous climb suggests the

site held immense spiritual or ritual significance, drawing people back repeatedly over generations. Dr Büster believes there was something inherently mystical - or even magical - about the caves that made them a chosen resting place for the dead.

When archaeologists began excavating the cave floors, they were met with an astonishing sight: human bones

scattered across the ground. These remains, however, were far from ordinary. Some of the hand bones still retained soft tissue, specifically ligaments - a highly unusual find for remains dating back 3,000 years to the Bronze Age. "It's not something we expect when we're excavating a site that's 3,000 years old," Dr. Büster remarked.

(Source: express.co.uk)

Nahavand's Nagarechi Hill may hold clues about Seleucid era in Iran

TEHRAN - Nagarechi Hill situated in Nahavand country of Hamedan province is emerging as a pivotal archaeological site that could shed more light on the Seleucid era in Iran.

Iranian archaeologist Mohsen Khanjan has described the discovery of a tumulus-shaped tomb on this hill as groundbreaking, with the potential to revolutionize Nahavand's tourism sector.

Nahavand, a region with over 7,000 years of continuous human habitation, is home to numerous historical relics, with Nagarechi Hill being one of its most significant landmarks. Located southeast of Nahavand amidst orchards and farmland, this eight-meter-high circular mound is believed to date back to the Seleucid period.

Discovery and importance

Two excavation phases, conducted in September 2019 and May 2022, uncovered Iran's first known tumulus tomb at Nagarechi Hill.

According to Khanjan, the site is unparalleled in the country and may contain the burial of a prominent Seleucid figure, such as a high-ranking general or satrap.

Historical records, including a mention by Naser al-Din Shah, suggest the tomb was previously looted, leaving no artifacts or skeletal remains behind.

Khanjan emphasized the hill's proximity to the Laodicea temple (in Nahavand), as a vital link in understanding Seleucid architecture and burial customs.

The discovery could fill gaps in knowledge about the Hellenistic influence on Iranian culture and attract international archaeological and tourist interest.

Challenges and future prospects

The excavations have drawn attention from cultural enthu-



siasts highlighting the hill's potential to redefine the narrative of the Seleucid era in Iran. However, further research has been hindered by financial constraints.

Nahavand's Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has requested an 800 billion tomans (some \$10 million) budget to fund ongoing archaeological activities, including a third excavation phase at Nagarechi Hill.

According to Khanjan, the findings from the first two excavation seasons strongly suggest connections between Nagarechi Hill and the Laodicea temple, reinforcing the site's historical importance.

The temple itself, believed to be constructed by Antiochus III, underscores Nahavand's prominence in the Seleucid empire.

The lack of surviving Seleucid-era artifacts and architectural evidence in Iran makes Nagarechi Hill a unique research opportunity. Khanjan explained that discoveries here could reveal much about Seleucid funerary practices, architectural influences, and their integration with Iranian traditions.

Such findings have the potential to transform Nahavand into a major archaeological and tour-

ist destination.

In addition, local officials are urging immediate action to secure the necessary funding to continue excavations.

"This discovery is unprecedented in Iran and could illuminate many dark corners of Seleucid history," said Mohammad Ahmadi, head of Nahavand's Cultural Heritage Department.

Glimpses of Seleucid heritage in Nahavand

According to Khanjan, Nagarechi is a circular hill with a height of about eight meters situated among orchards in the southeast of Nahavand.

"Nahavand was one of the towns that Seleucids built during their Iran rule over occupied Iran, using their artisans, teachers, artists, historians, traders, ... to Greekize Iranian land."

Khanjan believes the discovery can be of great help to archaeologists in illuminating the dark corners of the Seleucid period on the Iranian plateau.

Over the past couple of years, Khanjan has led several archaeological seasons to possibly unearth the Laodicea Temple believed to be placed beneath the Dokhaharan's sanctuary.

As mentioned by him, in addition to a Greek inscription, oth-

er significant objects such as bronze statues of Greek gods, a stone altar, a column head, a column shaft, a column base, and pottery pieces had been discovered in the Dokhaharan neighborhood.

"Regarding those findings, we concluded that the history of the city of Nahavand goes far back in prehistoric times, contrary to what previously believed it only dates back to the Seleucid period."

In 1943, archaeologists discovered an 85x36 centimeter ancient inscription of 30 lines written in Greek calling on the people of Nahavand to obey the laws of the government.

The inscription indicated the existence of the Laodicea Temple, which had been built by the Seleucid king who ruled Asia Minor, Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC), for his wife Queen Laodicea.

Two of the inscriptions as well as four bronze statuettes unearthed at the site are on display in the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran.

And, column capitals and bases are currently being used as decorations in Nahavand's Hajian Bazaar and several other parts of the city.

The Seleucid Empire was a Hellenistic state ruled by the Seleucid dynasty, which existed from 312 BC to 63 BC; Seleucus I Nicator founded it following the division of the Macedonian Empire, vastly expanded by Alexander the Great.

Seleucus received Babylonia (321 BC) and from there expanded his dominions to include much of Alexander's near-eastern territories.

At the height of its power, the Empire included central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

Besh Qardash: a destination worth discovering while in northeast Iran



At the heart of Besh Qardash stands a historical mausoleum belonging to Sardar Mofakham, a prominent ruler during the late Qajar period.

This architectural marvel, with its 12-meter-high tiled dome, brickwork, and four intricate minarets, is recognized on the national list for cultural heritage.

The monument was once resorted upon the order of Naser al-Din Shah, the fourth monarch of the Qajar dynasty, during his travels to Khorasan in the 19th century.

Natural beauty and therapeutic springs

Spanning an area of approximately 380 hectares, Besh Qardash boasts a lush Persian garden, towering sycamore trees, and various species of native flora, including Shiraz cypress, wild hawthorn, and maple.

The site's therapeutic springs, originating from five stone cracks, converge to form the Chaharmoghhan River, which nourishes nearby villages before joining the Sumbar River.

These mineral-rich springs are believed to have healing properties, attracting visitors seeking wellness alongside leisure.

Facilities and attractions

Besh Qardash is more than a scenic retreat; it's a well-equipped tourist hub offering a range of amenities. Highlights include:

Botanical gardens that serve to showcase the region's diverse plant life.

Swimming pools and fish ponds that are perfect for family-friendly relaxation.

Historical structures that include paved routes, stone staircases, and decorative fountains reminiscent of Persian architectural traditions.

Cultural and recreational facilities that range from restaurants and a motel to sports grounds and cultural camps. The site ensures a comprehensive experience for every visitor.

The site also offers ample parking and gazebos for picnics, making it a popular destination for residents and tourists alike, especially during weekends.

Getting there

Besh Qardash is conveniently located along the Bojnord-Esfarayen road, ensuring easy access for travelers.

Its proximity to other attractions, like Baba Aman Forest Promenade, makes it an excellent addition to a broader exploration of North Khorasan.

Why visit Besh Qardash?

Whether you're drawn by its historical significance, natural beauty, or the promise of therapeutic relaxation, Besh Qardash delivers on all fronts.

From the tranquility of its ancient plane trees to the elegance of its Qajar-era mausoleum, this site offers a multifaceted experience that showcases the heart and soul of northeastern Iran.

For travelers looking to combine cultural enrichment with outdoor adventure, Besh Qardash is a destination worth discovering.

Babol, Kiashahr, Gandoman, accredited as world wetland cities

TEHRAN –Three more Iranian cities namely Babol in northern Mazandaran province, Kiashahr in northern Gilan province, and Gandoman in southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, have been awarded Ramsar wetland city accreditation.

The city of "Bandar Khamir" near the Khorkhoran International Wetland in Hormozgan province was recognized and introduced as the first wetland city in Iran by the Ramsar Convention in 2022, IRNA quoted Arezou Ashrafzadeh, an official with the department of environment (DOE), as saying.

In the same year, the city of Varzaneh, in the east of Isfahan province, and Bandar Khamir, near the Gavkhuni International Wetland in Isfahan province, was recognized as wetland accredited city, as well, Ashrafzadeh noted.

A city's commitment to wetland conservation, awareness, active engagement in sustainable practices, and integration of wetland conservation into planning makes it a strong candidate for this recognition.

A candidate city for the Wetland City Accreditation will be assessed and recommended as an Accredited Wetland City by



an Independent Advisory Committee after being proposed by the Contracting Party (through its Ramsar National Focal Point or Head of Administrative Authority) on whose territory it stands.

List of 31 newly accredited Wetland Cities, announced at the 64th meeting of the Standing Committee.

These cities will receive their certificate in the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15) which will take place from July 23 to 31 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

There are also 25 sites in the country designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites), covering a sur-

face area of 1,488,624 hectares.

Wetland City Accreditation scheme

The 172 Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands have agreed to the conservation and wise use of wetlands in their territories.

Recognizing the importance of cities and urban wetlands, the Convention has introduced a Wetland City accreditation scheme (Resolution XII.10).

This voluntary scheme provides an opportunity for cities that value their natural or human-made wetlands to gain international recognition and positive publicity for their efforts.

The Wetland City Accreditation scheme will encourage

cities in close proximity to and dependent on wetlands, especially Wetlands of International Importance, to highlight and strengthen a positive relationship with these valuable ecosystems, for example through increased public awareness of wetlands and participation in municipal planning and decision-making.

The Accreditation scheme should further promote the conservation and wise use of urban and peri-urban wetlands, as well as sustainable socio-economic benefits for local people.

Urban wetlands are prize land not wasteland and therefore should be integrated into the development and management plans of cities.

When preserved and sustainably used, urban wetlands can provide cities with multiple economic, social and cultural benefits.

During storms, urban wetlands absorb excess rainfall, which reduces flooding in cities and prevents disasters and their subsequent costs. The abundant vegetation found in urban wetlands, acts as a filter for domestic and industrial waste and contribute to improving water quality.

IRCS holding rescue, relief Olympiad



TEHRAN –The Rescue and Relief Organization of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is holding a rescue and relief Olympiad from January 21 to 30 in northern Mazandaran province.

A total of 256 men and women rescuers from all over the country compete in four-member teams, ISNA quoted Babak Mahmoudi, an official with the IRCS, as saying.

The main objective of the Olympiad is to improve the physical fitness and skills of the IRCS rescue forces to enhance their efficiency in providing relief services in times of disaster.

The rescue and relief Olympiad involves

seven steps including navigation (forest, valley, and mountain), water rescue, rescue basket, emergency accommodation (setting up tents), prehospital care, road-rescue missions (stabilizing, saving, and transferring victims), and mountain search and rescue.

The men's part of the competition concluded on Saturday, and the women's competition commenced on Sunday. "Currently, over 600 women rescuers are providing relief services at the IRCS.

Women's quick response teams, the same as men's, are capable of performing all missions in different situations such as accidents, floods, and earthquakes.

Even, in some cases they outperform men since a majority of the victims in hazards are women and children," Mahmoudi noted.

IRCS is a top organization

In September 2024, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) project manager, Faisal Mahboob, lauded the capabilities of the IRCS as outstanding.

The official said he was really impressed by the capacity and the wide range of activities carried out by the IRCS.

"The International Federation will support

the activities of the Iranian Red Crescent Society to commence a new phase of collaboration with the society," Mahboob added, the IRCS website reported.

In May 2024, Pir-hossein Kolivand, head of the IRCS, said the IRCS is recognized as one of the five prominent societies worldwide thanks to its wide range of activities and great achievements both nationally and internationally.

Referring to health, treatment, and rehabilitation as one of the parts of the IRCS activities, Kolivand said the IRCS hospitals, pharmacies, and clinics meet the medical and therapeutic needs of thousands of citizens every day.

The IRCS medical centers abroad are reputable worldwide. As a humanitarian organization, the IRCS is trying to alleviate the suffering of the people involved in accidents, emergencies, and conflicts.

"Today, collaborations with knowledge-based firms have resulted in advancements in manufacturing orthoses, prostheses, artificial organs, and new medications, with plans to extend cooperation to rescue and relief efforts as well," the official noted.

Envoys visit Tehran Wagon Manufacturing Company

TEHRAN – A group of ambassadors and high-ranking officials paid a visit to the Tehran Wagon Manufacturing Company

on Sunday.

Officials from Burkina Faso, Cuba, Nicaragua, Turkmeni-

stan, and Malaysia, as well as high-ranking officials from Sudan, Poland, Romania, Mali, Ghana, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Russia,

Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Indonesia, and Venezuela got acquainted with the company's capacities and achievements.

ENGLISH IN USE

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21m Iranians undergone hypertension control test

TEHRAN – Over 21 million Iranians have so far undergone blood pressure test and the data have been registered by the national campaign for controlling hypertension, deputy health minister Alireza Raeesi announced.

Some 404,000 individuals have registered their blood pressure information on the ministry's network, Raeesi said, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

He further noted that blood pressure stations also have measured the blood pressure of about 5.4 million people nationwide, adding 13,751 stations have been established across the country.

So far, some 15.1 million information also have been submitted on the integrated health system, he also added.

He further called on the residents aging 30 or above to refer to the stations in order to find out whether they are hypertensive, and start early intervention.

ثبت فشار خون بیش از ۲۱ میلیون نفر در بسیج ملی کنترل فشار خون

معاون بهداشت وزارت بهداشت از ثبت فشار خون بیش از ۲۱ میلیون نفر طی اجرای بسیج ملی کنترل فشار خون خبر داد.

به گزارش ایسنا، علیرضا رئیسی افزود: از مجموع این تعداد بیش از ۴۰۴ هزار نفر فشار خون خود را در سامانه ملی خوداظهاری فشار خون ثبت کردند.

تاکنون ۱۳ هزار و ۷۵۱ ایستگاه ثابت و سیار در اقصی نقاط کشور راه اندازی شده است و بیش از ۵ میلیون و ۴۰۰ هزار مورد فشار خون هموطنان در ایستگاه‌های ثابت و سیار سنجش فشار خون ثبت شده است.

بیش از ۱۵ میلیون و ۱۰۰ هزار مورد در سامانه یکپارچه بهداشت (سیب) ثبت شده است.

او به همه هموطنان دارای سن ۳۰ سال به بالا توصیه کرد به مراکز بهداشتی، درمانی و ایستگاه‌ها برای سنجش فشار خون مراجعه کنند.

Midwives: critical in every crisis

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN –Midwives play a key role in providing health care by preparing the health system to deal with difficult challenges during a crisis.

The world is grappling with an unprecedented number of complex crises including natural disasters, wars, and the ongoing consequences of climate change which disproportionately affect women and girls in families, exposing them to greater risks such as pregnancy complications and gender-based violence, while limiting their access to essential health services.

Midwives can provide up to 90 percent of sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, and adolescent health (SRMNAH) services, even in humanitarian crises.

With minimal resources and equipment, midwives are able to provide safe births and antenatal and postnatal care in crisis situations, provide childbearing services, reproductive health and comprehensive prenatal care, and support for survivors of gender-based violence.

Midwives support breastfeeding mothers and ensure that babies receive safe, healthy, and reliable nutrition, educate the affected community, and equip them with the knowl-

edge and tools to stay safe and healthy in times of crisis.

Despite midwives' critical role in health systems to prepare for and respond to crises, they are often not valued and are excluded from crisis preparedness and response efforts.

It is the time to recognize midwives as essential health professionals and strive for their inclusion in all stages of crisis preparation and response.

Hence, the theme of the International Day of Midwives 2025 is Midwives: Critical in Every Crisis.

For midwives to respond effectively to crises, we need to ensure they are fully safe and equipped with the training, tools and resources they need to save lives and protect their rights in the most difficult challenges.

In May 2024, Farah Babaei, an official with health ministry, said a total of 80,000 midwives are working in the country.

"In terms of midwifery education, Iran tops the regional countries and is ranked third in the world based on the international educational ranking," Mehr news agency quoted Babaei as saying.

Midwives also play a critical role in youth population growth, the official added.

HPV vaccination to be implemented nationwide

From page 1 ▶ In the Eastern Mediterranean region, countries such as Saudi Arabia, Libya, Qatar, and the U.A.E have already started the national implementation of the HPV vaccination for the target population.

The official went on to say that a bivalent HPV vaccine targeting subtypes 16 and 18 associated with many cancers cervical cancers has already been produced in the country. However, the vaccine is not effective enough against types 6 and 11, which are responsible for genital warts.

Cervical cancer

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women globally with around 660 000 new cases and around 350,000 deaths in 2022.

The highest rates of cervical cancer incidence and mortality are in low- and middle-income countries.

Cervical cancer is caused by persistent infection with the human papillomavirus (HPV). Women living with HIV are 6 times more likely to develop cervical cancer compared to women without HIV.

Prophylactic vaccination against HPV and

screening and treatment of pre-cancer lesions are effective strategies to prevent cervical cancer and are very cost-effective.

Cervical cancer can be cured if diagnosed at an early stage and treated promptly.

Iranian-made HPV vaccine

In January, an Iranian knowledge-based company announced readiness to meet the needs of regional countries as well as North Africa for the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine.

The product has been manufactured at a much lower price, 75 percent cheaper, compared to foreign samples.

Producing the HPV vaccine needs one of the most complicated technologies in the world, and Iran has been able to produce the vaccine domestically.

Passing quality control tests and pre-clinical trials, the clinical trial of the HPV vaccine started in 2019 on healthy volunteers.

Once the vaccine proved its safety and effectiveness in increasing the antibody titer, it obtained the Food and Drug Organization's approval to enter the market in 2020.

Why data is called the new oil

By Soroush Saki

Have you ever wondered why people compare data to oil? At first glance, it might seem like a strange analogy. After all, oil is a physical resource that fuels our cars and powers factories, while data is intangible and lives in the digital realm. But this comparison is more than just a catchy phrase—it's a way to understand the immense value and impact of data in our modern world. Let's break it down.

Think about crude oil. In its raw form, it isn't very useful. It needs to be extracted, refined, and transformed into gasoline, plastic, or other products to unlock its value. Data works in a similar way. Numbers, clicks, and other raw information by themselves don't mean much. However, when they are collected, organized, and analyzed, they can reveal patterns, predict trends, and provide insights that businesses and individuals can act on. For example, your favorite streaming platform doesn't just guess what you might want to watch next; it uses your viewing history and other data to recommend shows and movies tailored to your preferences.

During the industrial revolution, oil became the driving force behind new technologies and industries. Similarly, in today's digital age, data powers innovation across sectors like healthcare, finance, education, and entertainment. Take urban planning as an example. Cities around the world are using data to reduce traffic congestion, optimize energy use, and improve public services. In healthcare, data helps doctors make better diagnoses, predict disease outbreaks, and develop personalized treatment plans. The possibilities seem endless.

But why is data so valuable? The key lies in its ability to help us make better decisions. Retailers, for instance, analyze customer shopping habits to predict future demand and manage inventory more efficiently. Weather agencies use historical data to provide more accurate forecasts. On an individual level, data enables personalization—whether it's the ads you see online or the playlist curated just for you. In many ways, data makes our lives easier and more convenient.

However, it's important to remember that data isn't without its challenges. The more we rely on data, the more questions arise about privacy and ethics. Who owns the data we generate? How should it be used, and by whom? These are important questions in an age where data breaches and misuse of personal information have become all too common. Another issue is that not everyone has equal access to the tools and expertise needed to make the most of data, which can widen the gap between large corporations and smaller players. And let's not forget the environmental cost. Data centers consume enormous amounts of energy to store and process the information we generate every second.

Despite these challenges, the comparison between data and oil highlights the transformative power of this resource. Unlike oil, however, data is renewable. We create more of it every day as we interact online, use our devices, and go about our lives. The real question isn't whether data is valuable, it clearly is but how we can use it responsibly to benefit everyone. If we can strike the right balance between innovation, ethics, and sustainability, the data-driven revolution could shape a brighter future for us all.

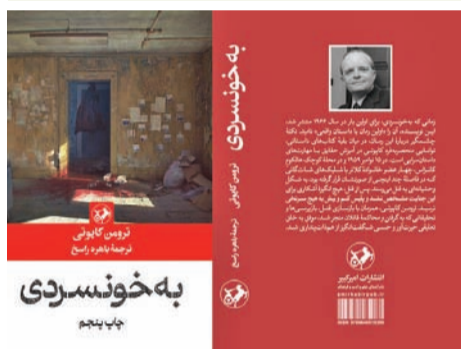


Turning away from knowledge is the excuse of the negligent.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:16 Evening: 17:42 Dawn: 5:43 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:10 (tomorrow)

Persian edition of "In Cold Blood" republished



TEHRAN- The 5th edition of the Persian translation of American novelist and screenwriter Truman Capote's 1966 novel "In Cold Blood" has recently been published.

Amir Kabir Publications in Tehran is the publisher of the book translated by Bahereh Rasekh.

"In Cold Blood" captures the harrowing true story of the Clutter family's murder in Holcomb, Kansas, in November 1959, blending the lines between journalism and literature in a groundbreaking manner.

Crafted by Capote, the book is often heralded as the epitome of the "New Journalism" genre, a term Capote coined to describe his innovative nonfiction novel approach.

Although other authors had previously ventured into similar territory, Capote's meticulous detail and compelling narrative style have cemented "In Cold Blood" as the quintessential example of this literary form.

The book followed several successful works by Capote and was originally serialized in The New Yorker before its release as a complete novel in 1965. The extensive six-year research and writing process, however, took a personal toll on Capote, ultimately leading him to refrain from publishing additional works following its release.

The narrative revolves around the tragic death of Mr. and Mrs. Clutter and their teenage children, Kenyon and Nancy.

In a brutal crime that shocked the small community, the Clutter family was discovered bound and shot in their home, with only minor possessions missing.

Capote became aware of this gruesome event through a report in The New York Times

and, intrigued by its shocking nature, travelled to Holcomb even before the killers were apprehended. His research was aided by his friend Harper Lee, who later gained fame for her classic novel, "To Kill a Mockingbird."

The murderers, Dick Hickock and Perry Smith, initially evade capture, leaving minimal clues behind and displaying no personal ties to the Clutter family.

Throughout the text, Capote delves into their motivations, particularly focusing on Perry's troubled psyche—his feelings of inadequacy, and a tumultuous childhood that bred resentment towards the world. While Dick embodies the image of a criminal outlaw, he too grapples with the heavy impact of their deeds, leaving his motivations shrouded in ambiguity.

The aftermath of the Clutter family's murder profoundly affects the residents of Holcomb, including Nancy's close friends and acquaintances. The community struggles to reconcile their perception of the Clutters as the "least likely" murder victims, fostering a pervasive atmosphere of fear and paranoia where trust erodes among neighbors.

Al Dewey, the lead investigator on the case, becomes engrossed in the quest to uncover the truth, allowing the case to consume his life.

As anxiety mounts in Holcomb, Perry and Dick continue their lives with a deceptive sense of freedom, even venturing to Mexico. For a time, it appears they might escape justice altogether.

However, the investigation eventually turns, aided by a living witness and physical evidence that links them to the crime scene, including possessions stolen from the Clutters.

Once apprehended, both men confess their roles in the heinous act. They are tried, convicted, and sentenced to death after several years on death row.

Throughout their imprisonment, particularly Perry begins to share his innermost thoughts and motivations, shedding light on the complexities behind his life decisions and the fateful night of the murders.

"In Cold Blood" presents not only a chilling true-crime story but also an in-depth exploration of human psychology, the dark undercurrents of American life, and the profound impact of crime on communities and individuals alike.

Cartoon of Day



From Gaza to West Bank

Cartoonist: Emad Hajjaj from Jordan

17 feature, short films to attend 3rd Iranian Film Festival New York

3 IRANIAN FILM FESTIVAL NEW YORK

Jan 29 - Feb 6, 2025
3rd IFC Center, NYC



TEHRAN-A total of 17 films from Iran will be screened at the 3rd edition of the Iranian Film Festival New York, which will take place from January 29 to February 6, at the IFC Center, New York, in collaboration with Daricheh Cinema and IFC Center.

The participants include 13 feature films and four short films. This annual event celebrates and promotes Iranian cinema, providing a key platform to showcase the diversity of the Iranian film industry, Mehr reported.

This year, the festival introduces a new section, Hidden Gems from Iran, featuring rare and lesser-seen films that offer a fresh perspective on Iranian filmmaking.

The program opens with the U.S. premiere of Oktay Baraheni's "The Old Bachelor," which won awards at the Rotterdam and London film festivals, promising to captivate audiences with its provocative storyline and captivating performances by the glamorous Leila Hatami, Hassan

Pourshirazi, and Hamed Behdad.

Other new films include the world premiere of Hamid Nematollah's thriller "The Killer and the Savage," the New York premiere of Manijeh Hekmat's "Junks & Dolls," and "In the Arms of the Tree" by Babak Khajepasha, which was Iran's submission to the Oscars 2025 though it did not make it to the final nominees.

This year's edition also offers a special focus on the work of acclaimed actress Fatemeh Motamed-Arya, who will attend the festival to present screenings of five of her films, including new restorations of her collaborations with filmmaker Mohsen Makhmalbaf, "Once Upon A Time, Cinema" (1992) and "The Actor" (1993), along with "Avalanche" (2015) by Morteza Farshbaf, "The Blue Veiled" (2019), and "Once Upon A Time, Abadan" (2021) by Hamidreza Azarang, screening in its US premiere.

Born in Tehran, Fatemeh Motamed-Arya, 63, is a multi-award-winning actress.

She first got involved in theater during her teen years, and received her degree in theater from Tehran Art Institute. She is one of the most significant actresses of post-revolutionary Iranian cinema and has been called.

She has been nominated 10 times for the best actress award at the Fajr International Film Festival and won the Crystal Simorgh four times.

In 2020 Fatemeh Motamed-Arya, was appointed the "Ambassador of Mental Health" by the Iranian Scientific Association of Psychiatrists and the UNESCO Chair of Health Education. She is the public face and endorser of the Iranian Diabetes Information Association.

Motamed-Arya is public face and endorser of the Autism Association of Iran, as well as Behnam Daheshpour charity. She is an active member and public face and endorser of Mahak Society to support children with cancer and the biggest charity in Iran.

She was selected as the ambassador of the Mehrafarin Charity Society during a ceremony in 2008, at the Niavaran Cultural Center, as well as World Food Program (WFP).

The other Iranian feature film to be shown at the festival include "Atomic Heart" by Ali Ahmadzadeh, "Facing the Rook" by Sam Kalantari, and "A Hairy Tale" by Homayoun Ghanizadeh.

The participating short films include: "The Route" written and directed by Babak Beigi, "Ms. Iran's Husband" by Marjan Khosravi, "The Last Whinny of a Horse that Had Dreamt of Becoming a Butterfly" by Mahdieh Mohammadi, and "Anita Lost in News" written and directed by Behzad Nalbandi.

The Closing Night Film of the festival will be "Cause of Death: Unknown," directed by Ali Zarnegar, the winner of the Shanghai International Film Festival 2023.

Adaptation of Voinovich's "Tribunal" on stage in Tehran



TEHRAN- An adaptation of Russian writer Vladimir Voinovich's play "Tribunal: A Courtly Comedy in Three Acts" is currently on stage at Shahrzad Theater Complex in Tehran.

Nader Naderpour is the director of the play, which has been translated into Persian by prominent Iranian translator Abtin Golkar.

Alireza Qorbanzadeh, Saleheh Dorani, Armin Hemmati, Sama Ahmadi and Aida Moradi are the main members of the cast for the play, which will remain on stage until February 8.

"Tribunal: A Courtly Comedy in Three Acts" serves as a biting satire of the 1960s and 1970s Soviet show trials, reflecting the experiences of one of the Soviet Union's most notable dissidents.

Voinovich, often hailed as 20th

Century Russia's "greatest living satirist," drew inspiration from his reactions to the Sinyavski/Daniel trial in 1966, an event that incited him to launch a series of scathing letters directed at Premier Leonid Brezhnev and the Soviet Writers' Union. This passionate engagement ultimately led to his expulsion from the Soviet Union in 1981.

"Tribunal," therefore, stands not merely as a comedic work but as a tribute to the brave souls who resisted Soviet oppression during the Cold War, while simultaneously critiquing the broader cultural censorship faced by dissident writers globally.

In the tradition of the theatre of the absurd—mirroring the styles of luminaries like Aristophanes, Sartre, Frisch, and Havel—Voinovich constructs a narrative that is both darkly humorous and outrageously absurd.

The play unfolds as Senya and Larissa Suspectnikoff, oblivious to the theater's true nature, enter what they believe to be a Chekhovian comedy.

Instead, they find themselves entangled in the farcical and sinister workings of a Soviet criminal tribunal. The stage is set with eerie reminders of a court setting: benches for the Prosecutor and Public Defender, and even a cage for the Defendant, while

Themis, the Goddess of Justice, awkwardly balances the hammer and sickle against a Kalashnikov.

The atmosphere quickly shifts as ominous sounds echo from outside—siren wails and the blaring lights of police vehicles create a palpable sense of dread.

When the Tribunal Members swagger onto the stage in a theatrically exaggerated manner, the audience realizes they are trapped in a grotesque mock trial. Security forces, armed and vigilant, block the exits, effectively rendering the spectators captives in this surreal performance.

Voinovich ingeniously collapses the barrier between reality and fiction, immersing the audience in the psychological turmoil that defined the Soviet experience during Brezhnev's stagnation.

As the initial discomfort settles in, Larissa voices her growing confusion, questioning the presence of armed guards. Senya, attempting to reassure her, dismisses her fears as mere theatrics.

Unbeknownst to them, their questioning will lead to their unwelcome roles as defendants in this farcical trial. The Chairman's assertion, "Where there's a show-trial, we need somebody to

try!" epitomizes the absurdity of the proceedings.

Despite Senya's claims of innocence, the tribunal remains indifferent, and by the end of Act I, he finds himself caged, while Larissa stands helplessly by, torn between belief in her husband's guilt or innocence.

As the comedy unfolds, Voinovich navigates the tenuous balance between humor and tragedy, exploring themes of personal and political identity. Eventually, Senya transforms into a global dissident figure, inciting advocacy and protests in Western democracies.

Yet the play poses critical questions: Is he a hero or simply a pawn in a larger geopolitical game, forced to conform to the caricature of a "Soviet dissident"?

The final act leaves these questions unresolved as Senya is taken offstage, prompting the audience to confront the complexities of truth and representation in a world rife with absurdity and oppression.

Voinovich's masterful work thus encapsulates the essence of dissent in the face of an unforgiving regime, leaving a resonating impact on audiences both within and beyond the Soviet sphere.

"A History of Xenophobia in the United States" published in Persian

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the book "America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in the United States" written by Erika Lee has been released in the Iranian bookstores across Iran.

Amir Mirhaj has translated the book that has been brought out by Ketabsaraye Tandis Publications in 384 pages, IRNA reported.

The United States is known as a nation of immigrants. But it is also a nation of xenophobia. In "America for Americans," Erika Lee shows that an irrational

fear, hatred, and hostility toward immigrants has been a defining feature of the nation from the colonial era to the Trump era.

Benjamin Franklin ridiculed Germans for their "strange and foreign ways".

Americans' anxiety over Irish Catholics turned xenophobia into a national political movement. Chinese immigrants were excluded, Japanese incarcerated, and Mexicans deported.

Today, Americans fear Muslims, Latinos, and the so-called brown-ing of America. Forcing readers to

confront this history, Lee explains how xenophobia works, why it has endured, and how it threatens America.

Erika Lee is an award-winning historian and author, the inaugural Bae Family Professor of History, a position she began in July 2023, and a Radcliffe Alumnae Professor at Harvard University. The granddaughter of Chinese immigrants, Lee was recently elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences and testified before Congress in its historic hearings on anti-Asian discrimination and violence.

In addition, she is still active as an award-winning author, known for her non-fiction work upon the subjects of immigration and Asian American history in America. Previously, she was the Rudolph J. Vecoli Chair and Director of the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota.

As an author, Lee is noted to have written five non-fiction books, for which she has received multiple awards such as the American Book Award and the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature.