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Strait of Hormuz to remain closed until Iran's conditions are met: Iran army chief

TEHRAN – Commander of the Iranian Army Major General Amir Hatami has stressed that the Strait of Hormuz will remain closed until Iran's conditions are fulfilled, reaffirming the Armed Forces' determination to strengthen the country's maritime capabilities and deliver a severe punishment to the aggressor.

In a message marking Navy Day, Major General Hatami praised the Iranian Navy for its role in safeguarding the country's territorial integrity and confronting threats posed by the enemy. ▸ Page 3

Inauguration of 10 strategic projects adds 32 mcm to country's gas production capacity

TEHRAN- In a major boost to the country's energy capacity, 10 strategic oil and gas projects worth $350 million were inaugurated on Saturday, November 28, in the presence of President Masoud Pezeshkian, adding 32 million cubic meters per day (mcm/d) to Iran's sweet gas production capacity.

The projects—covering the restoration of damaged South Pars trains, pressure boosting at the Homa field, separation at the Tabnak field, the Darkhovin gas transmission line, and flare gas gathering at Marun 3 and 5—are aimed at compensating for part of the seasonal gas imbalance while preventing the waste of national resources. ▸ Page 4

Iran among 10 countries with allograft production technology

TEHRAN – Iran is among 10 countries worldwide possessing the technology to produce allograft tissue products, which are widely used in a range of surgical procedures, including neurosurgery, orthopedics, urology, gynecology, maxillofacial surgery, plastic surgery and wound reconstruction.

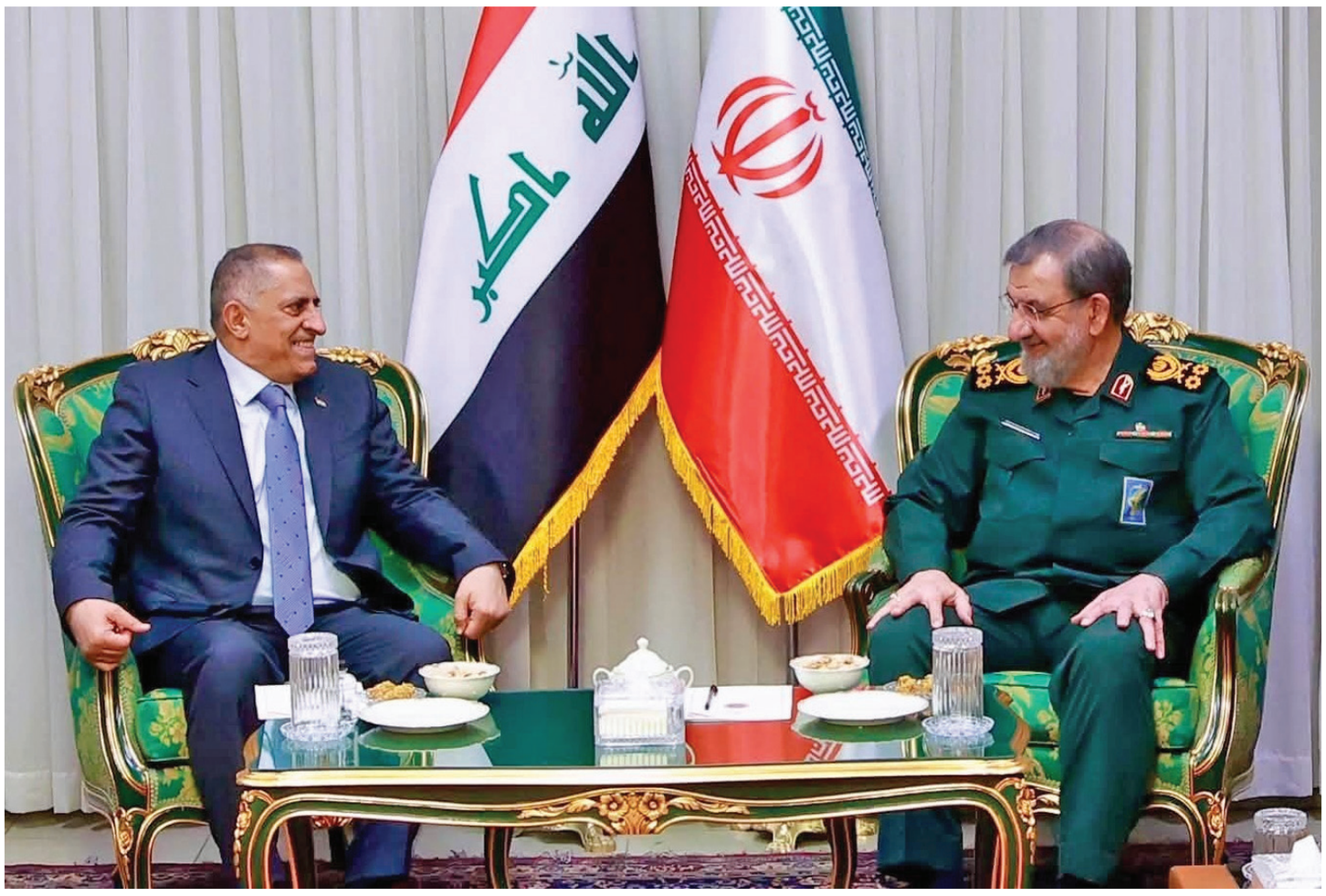
Domestically manufactured allografts have also significantly reduced the cost of certain medical procedures, replacing products that were previously imported at prices of around 20,000 euros with locally produced alternatives costing approximately 90 million rials (about 42 euros), according to a report by ISNA.

Masoumeh Majidi, a faculty member at Tehran University of Medical Sciences, explained that allograft products are derived from donated human tissues, primarily obtained from brain-dead donors who have consented to tissue donation or whose families have authorized the donation. ▸ Page 7

Yemen's Ansarallah has turned Saudi Arabia highly vulnerable

TEHRAN – Yemen's Ansarallah movement and Saudi Arabia are engaged in an escalating cycle of missile and drone attacks, airstrikes and retaliatory threats, with both sides increasingly targeting strategic economic infrastructure and ports.

On November 28, Ansarallah carried out attacks over the preceding 48 hours against several high-value Saudi targets, including King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, the kingdom's main international aviation hub; Saudi Aramco's Jazan refinery, which has a processing capacity of 400,000 barrels of crude oil per day; two power stations in southwestern Saudi Arabia; the Hawiyah gas processing plant in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. ▸ Page 5



Qasim Al-Aboudi, Iraq's National Security Advisor (L), and General Mohsen Rezaei, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, met on Saturday, November 28, Tehran.

Tehran Cautions Against US Sabotage of Iran-Iraq Relations

Iraqi national security adviser holds talks with senior Iranian officials in Tehran

Iran and Iraq vowed full enforcement of their security pact and joint border control, warning that Washington and Tel Aviv seek to misuse Iraqi soil and airspace and strain ties through sanctions, energy pressure and military presence. Tehran says outsiders will not be allowed to disrupt trade, security and friendship.

TEHRAN — Iraq's National Security Adviser Qassem Al-Oboudi held separate meetings with senior Iranian officials in Tehran on Saturday evening and Sunday morning, as part of a visit by a high-level Iraqi security delegation focused on the joint security agreement, border control and counterterrorism coordination.

Al-Oboudi met with Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Mohsen Rezaei late on Saturday, Nov. 28, and with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Sunday morning, Nov. 29.

Rezaei urges full implementation of security deal

In his meeting with the Iraqi delegation, Rezaei stressed the full implementation of the security agreement between the two countries and the establishment of security at the common borders.

"A strong, independent and developed Iraq can be one of the pillars of new security arrangements in the region," Rezaei said, while calling for the expansion of economic cooperation.

He added that the two sides should not allow foreigners to negatively affect that cooperation.

Al-Oboudi, for his part, reaffirmed Baghdad's commitment to comprehensive implementation of the security agreement, saying Iraq will not allow its sky or soil to be used against Iran or other neighbors.

In a statement, Iraq's National Security Council said the two sides discussed mechanisms for joint coordination in combating terrorism, intensifying efforts to control the shared borders, and preventing any security breach or threat. They also consulted on ways to implement and strengthen the joint security agreement in practice.

The statement quoted Al-Oboudi as stressing Iraq's firm commitment to good neighborliness, noting that Iraq's constitution explicitly prohibits any party or group from using Iraqi territory as a launchpad for attacks against neighboring states or to threaten their security and stability. ▸ Page 3



A rally was held in Dublin, the capital of Ireland, on Nov. 28, to mark International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People. Marchers carried a banner that reads "Stop Israeli ecocide in Palestine."

The world marks Palestinian Solidarity Day

By staff writer

TEHRAN — The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was marked on Sunday, November 29, carrying a demand that has outgrown ceremony: end the occupation, lift the siege, stop the killing and make Israel answer for its crimes.

From Gaza and the occupied West Bank to Stockholm, Lisbon, Jakarta and Jeddah, the day became a public indictment of an international order that offers Palestinians symbolic sympathy while allowing Israel's genocidal wars to continue. ▸ Page 5

Senior clerics endorse Ayatollah Khamenei as Marja

TEHRAN – Three senior Iranian clerics have endorsed Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei as a qualified source of religious emulation (Marja), affirming his eligibility to issue religious rulings and be followed by believers in matters of Islamic jurisprudence.

Grand Ayatollahs Seyyed Hashem Hosseini Bushehri, Gholam Ali Safaei Bushehri and Abbas Ka'abi issued handwritten statements in response to inquiries from many believers and followers of the martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, regarding the permissibility of emulating his successor. ▸ Page 2

In exclusive interview with Sri Lankan media

Rahmati: Lasting security in West Asia cannot be achieved without respect for national sovereignty

The CEO of Mehr Media Group, in an exclusive interview with Sri Lankan Media group Lake House, emphasized the role of media in public diplomacy, the need to counter one-sided narratives, and the importance of expanding media cooperation among Global South countries. ▸ Page 2

Majlis approves reform of Intelligence Ministry structure

TEHRAN — Iranian lawmakers on Sunday approved Article 1 of an expedited plan to amend the law on the establishment of the Ministry of Intelligence, introducing two major structural changes: the appointment of a Representative of the Leader in the ministry and the creation of an independent protection organization.

In the open session held virtually on Sunday (Nov. 29), parliamentarians voted to add a new Article 9 to the Law on the Establishment of the Ministry of Intelligence of the Islamic Republic of Iran, adopted in 1983, as part of the single-urgency plan to amend the 1983 establishment law and the 1983 law on criteria for appointing the intelligence minister.

Under paragraph (A) of the new article, a "Representative of the Vali-e Faqih in the Ministry of Intelligence" shall be appointed by decree of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to ensure internal regulations and guidelines comply with Sharia and to provide religious guardianship over the ministry's assigned missions. A note stipulates that the powers and duties of the Representative shall be determined by the Leader. ▸ Page 2

Russian envoy warns US task force in Caspian Sea threatens littoral states

TEHRAN – Russia's ambassador to Iran has warned that the Pentagon's newly established Task Force Iron Gate, whose area of responsibility extends to transit routes in the Caspian Sea, poses a direct threat to the interests and sovereignty of the five littoral states.

In an interview with Iran's Farhikhtegan newspaper, Russian Ambassador Alexey Dedov said the inclusion of Caspian Sea transit routes in the task force's operational remit constituted a clear threat to the interests of the independent coastal states.

"The Pentagon has also included transit routes in the Caspian Sea in this group's area of responsibility. This is a clear threat to the interests of independent Caspian littoral states," Dedov said. ▸ Page 2

Russian envoy warns US task force in Caspian Sea threatens littoral states

From page 1 ▶ He stressed that responsibility for ensuring security in the Caspian Sea rests exclusively with the five countries bordering it.

According to the Russian envoy, Task Force Iron Gate was established under the auspices of the US Central Command (CENTCOM), with its stated primary objective being to prevent the movement of dual-use goods across Iran's borders.

Dedov warned that any attempt to carry out this mission could cause the crisis surrounding Iran to spill over into neighboring regions.

He described the US move as a violation of international law and an infringement on the sovereignty of Iran and its neighboring countries. He also characterized it as an attempt to divert attention from the consequences of the US-Israeli military aggression against Iran in February.

CENTCOM announced on November 7 that it was establishing Task Force Iron Gate to counter the movement of advanced weapons systems, dual-use technologies, sanctioned materials, and illicit revenue streams across Iran's land borders and the Caspian Sea.

The task force is to be based in Florida.

***US seeking to expand influence in Caucasus

Addressing the broader regional implications of Washington's activities, Dedov said Russia viewed the US presence in the Caucasus as an attempt to impose its own rules and political order on the region while weakening historically established ties.

He argued that Washington's objectives went beyond economic competition, saying the United States sought to marginalize Russia and Iran and establish infrastructure under its control near their borders.

Referring to the so-called Trump Route,



Dedov said the US initiative was not genuinely aimed at facilitating transit between mainland Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan exclave through southern Armenia on the basis of mutual interests, or at comprehensively unblocking transport and communication routes across the South Caucasus.

Rather, he said, Washington was seeking to establish a foothold along Iran's northern border with Armenia and gain control over a transport corridor connecting Central Asia to Europe.

Dedov said Moscow would continue cooperating with Tehran to counter 'destructive Western policies.' He identified the 3+3 regional cooperation platform, bringing together Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia alongside Russia, Iran and Turkey, as an important framework for promoting mutually beneficial regional cooperation.

Turning to the conflict involving Iran, Dedov also stressed the importance of Moscow's longstanding initiative for a collective security system in the Persian Gulf.

Dedov said an updated version of the proposal had been presented to Iran and Arab partners in May. The initiative envisages dialogue among all Persian Gulf littoral states, alongside the participation and assistance of external actors genuinely committed to establishing a fair and sustainable balance of interests.

Pezeshkian: Iran seeks negotiations through reason, but will not submit to coercion

TEHRAN– President Masoud Pezeshkian has reaffirmed Iran's willingness to pursue diplomatic negotiations through rational engagement, stressing that the country will not yield to aggression, threats, or attempts at intimidation.

Speaking at a meeting with members of the board of trustees of Tehran's bazaar and representatives of trade unions on Sunday, Pezeshkian said the government was making diplomatic efforts in the hope of achieving results while remaining resolute in the face of coercion.

"We are trying to pursue negotiations through rational engagement, but we will not bow to aggression or whatever hostile actions our enemies take. We will not accept humiliation and will stand firm against coercion and bullying," he said.

The president warned that Iran's adversaries were seeking to stir up public dissatisfaction, fuel unrest and deepen divisions within the country.

He called for national unity and collective efforts to thwart these objectives, emphasizing that cooperation among all segments of society could help the country overcome the current crisis and address its challenges.

"If we join hands together, we can overcome the crisis, and the country's problems can be resolved through unity and cooperation," Pezeshkian said.

He also said the enemy's air, sea, and land blockade was intended to force the Iranian people into submission, expressing confidence that national solidarity and reliance on domestic capabilities would enable Iran to withstand the pressure.

Pezeshkian added that Iran's adversaries had themselves faced serious difficulties during the US-Israeli war against the country, noting that the outcome of the recent elections had also demonstrated this.

Addressing business owners and trade union representatives, the president described them as being on the front line of the economic war and called on them to play an active role in addressing public concerns.

He also urged them to encourage responsible consumption and promote energy conservation as part of broader efforts to manage economic pressures and overcome the challenges facing the country.

IAEA cannot demand inspections while refusing to condemn attacks on nuclear sites, Iran says

TEHRAN – Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami has reaffirmed the transparency of Iran's nuclear activities, saying the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) cannot demand inspections of facilities targeted in military attacks while refusing to condemn those attacks.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday on the sidelines of a visit to an exhibition showcasing the achievements of Iran's nuclear industry, Eslami dismissed media allegations and narratives directed against the country's nuclear program.

He explained that Iran's decision to construct some of its nuclear facilities underground was driven by security considerations, not an attempt to conceal their activities.

The decision, he said, came in response to nearly three decades of threats and attacks by the US-Israeli front against Iran's nuclear industry.

Eslami stressed that Iran's nuclear activities have remained fully transparent and that all the country's nuclear facilities, regardless of their location, have been subject to IAEA oversight.

He also criticized the 'IAEA's double standards,' arguing that it could not demand access to facilities that remain under threat and have already been attacked while refusing to condemn the military strikes against them.

Eslami said the IAEA's insistence on inspections was unacceptable as long as the agency failed to take a clear position against attacks on safeguarded nuclear facilities.

Majlis approves reform of Intelligence Ministry structure

From page 1 ▶ Under paragraph (B), the ministry's protection deputy will be upgraded to an independent body titled the "Intelligence Protection Organization" to safeguard personnel and secure assigned missions, operating within the framework of the ministry's mandate.

According to Note 1, the head of the organization will be proposed by the Leader's Representative in coordination with the intelligence minister, and after confirmation by the Leader, will be appointed by decree of the Representative. The head must possess the required expertise and at least 10 years of mid- or senior-level managerial experience covered by the Civil Service Management Law (2007) and its executive regulations, or equivalent posts in intelligence and security affairs.

Note 2 provides that the organization's statute shall be drafted by its head in coordination with the minister and the Leader's Representative, and



shall be approved by the Leader. Under Note 3, the titles of "Representative of the Vali-e Faqih" and "Head of the Intelligence Protection Organization" will be added to Article 2 of the establishment law.

Lawmakers also approved a revision to the qualification for heading the ministry, replacing the previous requirement of jurisprudential ijtihad. Under the new wording, the minister must hold education at the level of ijtihad or a master's degree, with specialization and experience in intelligence affairs and at least 10 years of mid- or senior-level managerial experience under the Civil Service Management Law or equivalent posts in the Ministry of Intelligence.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf, said the reform initiative originated from a directive of the Leader.

"For colleagues' information, I must stress that the reform of the Intelligence Ministry's structure began with the prudence and order of the Leader," Ghalibaf said, responding to a government representative's remark that the government was not the initial proponent.

Ghalibaf said parliament had asked the government to submit a bill, but its presentation was delayed while the country faced special security conditions. The relevant commission was therefore tasked to pursue the matter in cooperation with MPs and ministry officials.

"I personally held more than eight hours of dedicated meetings with the ministry's managers and caretaker, and efforts were made to incorporate all views that could be applied within the framework of the Leader's directives," he said, adding that submission of a government bill would have been preferable but parliament proceeded due to the delay.

Senior clerics endorse Ayatollah Khamenei as Marja



From page 1 ▶ In his statement, Grand Ayatollah Safaei Bushehri said that following Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei as a source of religious emulation was permissible and valid according to his jurisprudential position.

He further noted that, given the significant interests served by the unity of religious and political leadership, emulating the incumbent Leader was "preferable and more appropriate."

Grand Ayatollah Hosseini Bushehri, meanwhile, affirmed that Ayatollah Khamenei undoubtedly possesses the necessary qualifications to issue religious rulings and serve as a source of emulation at the present time.

In a separate statement, Grand Ayatollah Abbas Ka'abi also endorsed the Leader's religious authority, describing him as "preferable and more qualified."

In exclusive interview with Sri Lankan media

Rahmati: Lasting security in West Asia cannot be achieved without respect for national sovereignty

From page 1 ▶

Regional Crisis & Diplomatic Messaging

In light of the escalating Middle East crisis—particularly the direct military and diplomatic tensions involving Iran, Israel, and the United States—to what extent do the Tehran Times and Mehr News function as strategic diplomatic tools to convey Iran's red lines and state messaging to the global community?

We do not see the media as merely a tool for reporting news. The media is one of the main pillars of national power and one of the most effective tools of public diplomacy in today's world. This role becomes even more important when West Asia faces complex crises and tensions. In such circumstances, the media has a greater responsibility to report facts, explain countries' positions, and help international audiences better understand what is happening.

Mehr News Agency and the Tehran Times, with their different strengths and audiences, play an important part in this effort. Mehr publishes content in several languages, while the Tehran Times, as an English-language newspaper, gives us the ability to communicate directly with international audiences and media professionals.

Our approach is not simply to publish official statements when covering regional developments. We also seek to explain the historical, political, legal, and security-related background of events. For example, the recent war imposed on Iran cannot be properly understood without considering national sovereignty, international law, regional security, and the history of actions taken by the attacking sides.

We believe that Iran's positions should be communicated to the world through accurate reporting, clear reasoning, and supporting evidence. Our aim is to help international audiences access different sources of information and points of view, rather than relying only on one-sided narratives and dominant Western media accounts. This allows them to assess developments with a better understanding of the facts.

Global Impact & Resolution

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East is no longer just a regional issue; it threatens global energy security, maritime trade routes, and economic stability for developing nations like Sri Lanka. Regardless of how this crisis began, humanity as a whole is paying the price. From Tehran's perspective, what is the realistic diplomatic off-ramp or path forward to de-escalate this tragedy?

One of the important realities of today's world is that security is no longer limited by national borders. Developments in one region can quickly affect energy security, international trade, supply chains, and economic stability in many parts of the world. What is happening in the Middle East today is not only a concern for the countries of this region. Developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are also affected by its consequences.

Sri Lanka is a clear example of this reality. Countries such as Sri Lanka, whose economies depend on international trade, energy imports, and stable shipping routes, can be affected by regional conflicts even when they are not directly involved. Higher energy and transport costs, disruptions to supply chains, and uncertainty in global markets can put additional pressure on their economies. From this point of view, regional crises are not only political or security issues; they are directly linked to people's livelihoods and countries' economic development. We believe that countries of the Global South should have a stronger voice in responding to such crises, because they often bear the economic and human costs of tensions in which they have



In our view, the first steps towards resolving the current crisis must include an end to military actions and other steps that increase tensions, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries, and reliable guarantees to prevent such conflicts from happening again. Any diplomatic process must also be based on mutual respect, clear commitments, and recognition of the legitimate rights of all parties involved.

However, we believe that achieving lasting security in the region also requires addressing one of the main roots of instability: the presence and activities of powers from outside the region. By establishing and maintaining military bases, these powers often put their own interests and security concerns ahead of the priorities of regional countries. These bases do not necessarily serve the security of the region and its people. In many cases, they are part of the military and strategic plans of powers that pursue their own goals and interests thousands of kilometres away from their borders. A region that has become an arena for the military and geopolitical rivalries of foreign powers cannot be expected to achieve lasting peace and security.

An even more important issue is that some powers continue to view countries with strategic resources, especially energy resources, through a lens of dominance and exploitation. It is as

We believe that regional security must be ensured by the countries of the region themselves, through their participation and cooperation. The presence and intervention of foreign powers, especially when driven by one-sided policies and exclusive interests, do not help resolve disputes. Instead, they can increase arms competition and deepen mistrust. It is therefore essential to change this approach and recognise that regional countries, including Iran, are independent and sovereign states with legitimate rights. They must have a leading role in deciding their own future and shaping the region's security arrangements.

The United Nations and other international bodies should also play a more effective role. However, they can only do so if they move away from double standards and apply the principles of international law equally to all countries.

We believe that lasting peace cannot be achieved by imposing the will of one side on another. Peace becomes meaningful when the security and rights of nations are recognised, countries' national resources and interests are respected, and no country considers itself above international rules and responsibilities. Security in the Middle East will only be possible when the countries of the region can decide on their future and security arrangements without foreign interference or pressure.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Tehran cautions against US sabotage of Iran-Iraq relations

Iraqi national security adviser holds talks with senior Iranian officials in Tehran

From Page 1 ▶

Araghchi warns of U.S., Israeli misuse of Iraqi territory

In Sunday's meeting at the Foreign Ministry, Araghchi welcomed the positive state of Iran-Iraq relations in all areas of mutual interest, describing security at the two countries' borders as a fundamental bond linking the two nations. He stressed the importance of continued close consultations between competent authorities to neutralize malign and destabilizing factors.

The foreign minister pointed to the record of misuse by the United States and the Israeli regime, and their agents and mercenaries, of the soil and airspace of regional countries, including Iraq, to prepare and carry out military aggression and unlawful operations against Iran.

"As you rightly noted, preventing the misuse by third parties and terrorist elements of a country's territory for aggression against another country is an international legal obligation, and an expectation a friendly neighbor has of a friendly neighbor," Araghchi said.

He also underlined the importance of trade ties and border exchanges as a manifestation of the long-standing and privileged relationship between Iran and



Iraq, adding that it is the joint duty of Tehran and Baghdad, with the history of the past century in mind, not to allow the ambitions and mischief of third parties — who attach no value to friendship among regional nations — to create any misunderstanding between the Iranian and Iraqi peoples.

Border crossings and counter-terrorism coordination

According to the Foreign Ministry, Al-Oboudi pointed to the very good and deep-rooted relations between the two neighboring Muslim states and stressed Baghdad's resolve to strengthen ties and good neighborliness.

He outlined measures taken by Iraq to safeguard security along the entire common border, noting that both the federal government and the Kurdistan Region attach special importance to shared security and to preventing destructive elements from misusing Iraqi territory for hostile and terrorist acts against neighbors.

He said those measures are based not only on moral commitment and good neighborliness, but also on Iraq's international legal obligation to prevent third parties from using Iraqi soil for any unlawful and anti-security moves against Iran.

The two sides also discussed the need for coordination between Iran and Iraq to remove border obstacles and to accelerate technical updates and arrangements in order to avoid disruption to border crossings and bilateral exchanges.

US pressure campaign to drive a wedge between neighbors

Both meetings took place against the backdrop of what Iranian officials describe as a sustained American effort to undermine Tehran-Baghdad ties and turn Iraqi territory into a platform of pressure against Iran.

Tehran argues that Washington has repeatedly used a combination of political, financial and security levers — from pressing Baghdad to cut its imports of Iranian gas and electricity and restricting banking and dollar channels for bilateral trade, to maintaining its military presence in Iraq and demanding limits on cross-border cooperation — to weaken the economic lifeline between the two neighbors.

Iranian officials also warn that the United States and Israel have in the past misused Iraqi airspace for hostile moves against Iran, in violation of Iraq's sovereignty and of Washington's obligation as a guest force not to compromise Iraqi neutrality. Preserving Iraq's constitutional pledge not to allow attacks from its territory, Tehran says, is therefore essential not only for Iran's security but for Iraq's own independence and for stability of border crossings on which millions of livelihoods and pilgrims depend.

Strait of Hormuz to remain closed until Iran's conditions are met: army chief

From Page 1 ▶ He said the Navy, alongside other branches of Iran's Armed Forces, had demonstrated its capabilities in the Strait of Hormuz and the Sea of Oman, exposing the enemy's weakness and helplessness and inflicting successive defeats on it at sea.

Hatami also commended the naval personnel involved in the mission to close the strategic waterway, expressing confidence that the Strait of Hormuz would remain closed until Iran's conditions are met.

He attributed this resolve to the support of the Iranian people and the leadership of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini Khamenei.

The army chief further emphasized that the Navy regards the expansion of Iran's maritime power and the delivery of a decisive punishment to the aggressor as its duty.

Strike on Iranian boat, two tanker explosions amid rising tensions in Strait of Hormuz

TEHRAN – An Iranian fishing boat carrying three people was struck by a US drone off the coast of Sirik County in southern Iran early Sunday, while two oil tankers exploded and caught fire after hitting sea mines in the Strait of Hormuz, according to separate statements by the Iranian Army and the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC).

The Iranian Army said the fishing boat was hit at around 3:30 a.m. local time by a US drone. The vessel belonged to a man identified as Mahmoud Alefteh and was carrying three people at the time of the incident.

Two of those aboard have so far been found and transferred to Sirik Hospital, the Army's Public Relations Office said. The whereabouts of the boat's owner remain unknown, and search and rescue operations are continuing.

In a separate statement, the IRGC Navy said two oil tankers caught fire after striking sea mines while attempting to navigate unauthorized routes in the southern Strait of Hormuz early Sunday.

According to the statement, both vessels ignored maritime regulations and warnings before attempting to pass through an 'unauthorized and fictitious southern route.'

One of the tankers, a supertanker carrying more than two million barrels of crude oil, struck a sea mine and exploded in waters north of Khasab Port. The second vessel hit a mine and caught fire in the eastern part of the strait as it attempted to leave the waterway, the statement said.

The IRGC Navy warned tanker owners and shipping companies against putting their remaining vessels and assets at risk by relying on 'false assurances' from US Central Command (CENTCOM) commanders.

It stressed that assurances by US military officials could not guarantee safe passage through unauthorized routes in the strategic waterway, warning that disregard for maritime alerts could result in severe and irreparable losses.

The statement also cautioned ship commanders that CENTCOM's promises could not eliminate the threat posed by sea mines, which could cause vessels to sink in the Strait of Hormuz.

Araghchi: ECO plays strategic role in regional development

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has highlighted the strategic role of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in regional development, describing it as a vital and reliable platform for strengthening cooperation among member states and building a more promising future for the region.

Araghchi made the remarks on Sunday at a ceremony marking ECO Day, held in Tehran and attended by senior Iranian officials and diplomatic and international representatives based in the capital.

Congratulating ECO member states and the organization's wider community, the foreign minister said the occasion offered an opportunity to celebrate the region's shared values, principles, historical heritage and cultural ties.

He noted that ECO represents the collective aspirations of more than half a billion people across a strategically important region stretching from Europe to China and from Russia to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Araghchi said ECO had established itself as a distinctive actor in the ongoing process of regional economic integration. He pointed to the numerous meetings and events held across the organization's member states in 2026 as evidence of their firm commitment to advancing shared objectives.

He also described the recent meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers as a demonstration of member states' determination to preserve the organization's prominent position and strategic importance amid rapid global changes.

Araghchi expressed hope that further meetings and exchanges would take place in 2027, when Pakistan is due to assume the organization's chairmanship.

The foreign minister identified the development of ECO's new vision for the coming decade as one of the organization's main priorities over the past year. He said the document, drawing on lessons learned from the implementation of the previous framework, places greater emphasis on practical, results-oriented and measurable objectives.

He stressed that the new vision should be further developed and given strategic direction through the guidance of member states' leaders at the 18th ECO Summit, scheduled to take place in Tehran on December 4.

Describing the summit as particularly important for shaping the organization's future, Araghchi said it would reaffirm the collective commitment of member states to advancing ECO's goals and turning their shared aspirations into tangible achievements.

Iran's initiative to end the war

Addressing regional developments, Araghchi said the past year had been difficult for the Iranian people following acts of aggression by Israel and the United States against Iran.

He said the attacks had failed to achieve their objectives in the face of the Iranian nation's steadfast resistance and the determination of the government and people, adding that the aggressors had suffered a decisive defeat.

The foreign minister reaffirmed Iran's commitment to promoting regional peace and stability, saying the country had consistently pursued diplomatic solutions aimed at achieving a just and dignified settlement.

As part of that longstanding commitment, he said, Iran had recently put forward an initiative aimed at bringing the war to an end and restoring peace and stability to the region.

According to Araghchi, the initiative received the support of ECO member states at the organization's 30th Council of Ministers meeting in Islamabad.

Concluding his remarks, Araghchi reaffirmed Iran's full support for ECO, saying that, as the host of the organization's secretariat in Tehran, the Islamic Republic would continue to play an active and constructive role and provide a favorable environment for the effective work of member states and the secretariat.

He described ECO Day as both an occasion to celebrate the organization's shared achievements and a call for greater efforts to realize the region's considerable potential for cooperation.

ECO Day is observed on November 28, marking the organization's expansion in 1992 from its three founding members — Iran, Pakistan and Türkiye — to its current membership of 10 countries. Headquartered in Tehran, the organization seeks to promote sustainable economic development, expand regional trade and strengthen transport, energy and cultural ties among its members.

Tehran is also scheduled to host the 18th ECO Summit on December 3–4.

Iran tightens grip on Strait of Hormuz; US builds new bases fearing Iranian reach

TEHRAN – Brigadier General Hossein Mohebbi, spokesperson for Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), has reaffirmed that the Strait of Hormuz remains under Iran's control and sovereignty, stressing that no vessel would be able to pass the strategic waterway without prior coordination with and authorization from the Iranian Armed Forces, particularly the IRGC.

In remarks to Tasnim and IRNA on Sunday, Mohebbi addressed the latest developments in the Strait of Hormuz, the regional military posture of the United States and 'Washington's continued efforts to undermine Iran.'

Regarding the situation in the strategic waterway, the IRGC spokesperson said he had spent three to four days in southern Iran over the past week, visiting the Strait of Hormuz, its islands and coastal areas.

He described the current situation as the strongest demonstration of Iran's authority and management of the waterway.

Addressing repeated questions about whether the strait was open or closed, Mohebbi was unequivocal: "The strait is closed."

He explained that this means hostile vessels, enemy ships and other vessels cannot pass through without coordination with and permission from the Armed Forces, particularly the IRGC.

The spokesman dismissed attempts by some vessels to transit clandestinely, with their Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders switched off and extensive external support, saying such movements should not be interpreted as evidence that the waterway is open.

Even when vessels manage to enter or cross parts of the strait, incidents involving naval mines and resulting damage do not change its status, he said.

"Such incidents do not mean the strait is open; rather, they confirm the very meaning of its being closed, because these vessels keep running into trouble," Mohebbi said, emphasizing the distinction between authorized passage and unauthorized attempts to navigate the waterway.

On oil shipments to international markets, he said the continued flow of oil from the region did not indicate that the Strait of Hormuz was open, explaining that some shipments were being supplied through alternative routes and infrastructure.

These included Saudi Arabia's East-West Pipeline, the oil pipeline leading to Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates, and other regional pipeline networks. He also pointed to the release of oil from the strategic reserves of countries holding emergency stocks.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

America cannot duck its obligations any longer

Meeting Iran's seven demands the only way forward

By Ranjan Solomon

GOA, INDIA - Washington must abandon its politics of coercion, address Tehran's legitimate demands with sincerity and recognise that the Strait of Hormuz cannot be reopened through threats, military pressure or diplomatic deception. The American people have also delivered a powerful political message against the war.

The United States is running out of excuses. Its response to Iran's demands for ending the war and reopening the Strait of Hormuz has been far from convincing. Washington cannot continue to speak the language of diplomacy while maintaining the instruments of military and economic coercion against Tehran. If the Trump administration genuinely wants peace, it must demonstrate that commitment through concrete action, not carefully worded statements, conditional assurances or diplomatic manoeuvres designed to extract concessions from Iran.

Iran's position is increasingly unambiguous. The Strait of Hormuz will not be reopened simply because Washington wants it reopened. Tehran has placed seven conditions before the United States, and it expects the American government to address them fully and explicitly. Supreme National Security Council Secretary Mohsen Rezaei has made it clear that America's response to Iran's rights and demands is not convincing. Unless Washington responds substantively and fulfils these conditions, the prospect of reopening the strategically vital waterway will remain remote.

This is not merely a disagreement over maritime passage. It is about the credibility of American foreign policy, the consequences of military aggression, the sovereign rights of nations and whether the United States is prepared to accept responsibility for the destruction and instability its actions have helped create.

The seven demands reportedly include an end to hostilities across the Middle East, the release of Iranian assets frozen abroad, the lifting of sanctions on Iran's oil sector, the removal of the American naval blockade on Iranian ports, payment of war reparations, withdrawal of American military forces from the region and an end to threats, interference and further military adventurism against Iran.

These are not demands that Washington can simply dismiss or selectively interpret. They constitute the political and economic framework that Tehran believes is necessary for a sustainable settlement. The United States must engage with each of them seriously.

The blockade cannot coexist with diplomacy

The most immediate obstacle is the American naval blockade of Iranian ports. Washington cannot reasonably expect Iran to negotiate under conditions in which its maritime trade and economic lifelines remain subject to American military pressure. Maintaining a blockade while demanding the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz is a contradiction that undermines the very diplomacy the United States claims to pursue.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Pezeshkian: Naval power essential to protecting Iran's strategic interests

TEHRAN – President Masoud Pezeshkian has underscored the importance of strengthening Iran's naval capabilities to safeguard national sovereignty, protect maritime borders and defend the country's strategic interests.

In a message marking Iranian Navy Day on Sunday, Pezeshkian said the Navy plays an increasingly vital role in securing the country's maritime borders, protecting shipping and communication routes, and safeguarding its strategic interests.

He emphasized that Iran's maritime strength rests on indigenous knowledge and technology, skilled and specialized personnel, domestic industrial capabilities, and a high level of operational readiness.

The president also called for closer coordination and cooperation between the Iranian Navy and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy, stressing the importance of enhancing maritime security across the region.

Pezeshkian paid tribute to naval personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty, particularly those martyred aboard the Dena destroyer, and praised the dedication and sacrifices of the country's naval forces and their families.

We have no choice but to expand economic relations between Iran, Iraq: Iraqi ambassador



TEHRAN- Iraq's Ambassador to Iran, at the meeting "Synergy and Convergence of Think Tanks and Study Centers of Iran and Iraq," emphasized the necessity of strengthening interaction among scientific elites, universities, and study centers of the two countries and deeply examining the capacities and challenges of Tehran-Baghdad relations.

According to ISNA, Yasser Abdul Zahra Al-Hajjaj at this meeting, while thanking the organizers and attendees, stated: "It is a pleasure that today we are in the presence of Iranian thinkers and researchers and the opportunity for dialogue and exchange of views on regional and Iraqi issues has been provided."

Referring to the historical and civilizational background of Iran-Iraq relations, he said: "Speaking of Iraq-Iran relations is speaking of civilizational, historical, and long-standing relations. Today, given the breadth and growth of relations between the two countries in the past two decades in economic, political, cultural, and social fields, it is as if the geographical border between the two countries no longer has its former meaning."

Iraq's Ambassador to Iran, stating that the high level of interactions between the two countries does not mean stagnation in the status quo, emphasized: "The capacities that have been created in the relations between the two countries double our responsibility."

Al-Hajjaj, emphasizing the role of scientific elites and study centers and think tanks of the two countries in strengthening bilateral relations, said: "The role of these institutions in forming a common view between the two nations and the two countries is very fruitful."

He continued: "Interaction among scientific elites, study centers, think tanks, and universities of the two countries can be a starting point for elevating the level of cooperation and advancing these interactions to higher levels."

Iraq's Ambassador to Iran also, referring to expectations from the study centers of the two countries, stated: "Our expectation is that these centers move beyond daily news and temporary issues and move toward a deep examination of the relations, challenges, and harms that have been created in the process of relations between the two countries or may be created in the future."

In another part of his remarks, Al-Hajjaj emphasized the importance of recognizing and understanding the economic and social conditions of Iran and Iraq in the path of examining and expanding relations between the two countries.

Iraq's Ambassador in Tehran, referring to recent regional developments and also the importance of expanding economic relations between Iran and Iraq in the shadow of these developments, said: "We have no choice but to expand economic relations between the two countries. In the future, southern Iraq can play a very significant role in this regard."

Iraq's Ambassador in Tehran also at this meeting elaborated on the consultations made to expand interactions between the universities of the two countries.

In early October, Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development, in a meeting with Iraq's ambassador in Tehran, highlighted the deep historical, cultural, and religious ties between Iran and Iraq, emphasized developing bilateral transport links in the rail, road, air, and maritime sectors, and reported efforts to resolve flight problems between Tehran and Baghdad.

Farzaneh Sadegh, after meeting Iraq's ambassador in Tehran, said in an interview, referring to the deep and historical relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq: "The relationship between Iran and Iraq is one between two countries with civilization, culture, history, and deep religious commonalities, which has brought the peoples of the two countries closer together."

Referring to the presence and solidarity of the Iraqi people with the Iranian people on various occasions, she continued: "At the funeral procession of our martyred leader, the Iraqi people showed their solidarity and affection. Also, every year during Arbaeen, we witness the widespread presence of Iranian pilgrims in Iraq, and in return, in holy Mashhad, Iraqi pilgrims make up a significant portion of pilgrims from Iran's neighboring countries."

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development stressed: "This connection between the two countries is deep and intertwined, and countries that are far from Iran and Iraq in terms of culture, civilization, ethics, and historical and religious commonalities cannot create discord and separation between the two nations."

Referring to shared Iran-Iraq issues in the transport sector, she said: "In the field of rail and road communications, as well as the active borders between the two countries, there are many capacities for cooperation, and air communications are also among the important issues between Iran and Iraq."

Sadegh, referring to maritime capacities between the two countries, said: "There is maritime communication with Iraq and Basra from Khorramshahr port, and in some years, including this year, part of the pilgrims have been transported via the maritime route, and these connections can also be developed."

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development also referred to her meeting with Iraq's ambassador in Tehran and stated: "It is very pleasing that Iraq's ambassador has complete knowledge and mastery of Iranian culture and our country's structures."

Referring to joint rail projects between the two countries, she said: "Regarding issues such as the Khosravi–Khanaqin–Baghdad rail route and also the Shalamcheh–Basra railway, we hope the follow-ups will continue seriously and the ground will be prepared for better communications between the two countries."

Sadegh also referred to road communications between the two countries' borders and said: "In the road sector, too, there are shared issues between Iran and Iraq that must be followed up and strengthened."

The Minister of Transport and Urban Development also stated regarding air communications between Iran and Iraq: "The issue of flights was also considered in this meeting, and given the follow-ups being carried out by both countries, we hope the flight problem will be resolved as soon as possible and air communications between Iran and Iraq will improve.

Iraq's ambassador in Tehran also said: "Today we had the honor of meeting with Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development and reviewing the most important shared topics and a set of fundamental issues that have recently been raised."

Yasser Abdul Zahra Al-Hajjaj, referring to US pressures on air transport between Iraq and Iran, said: "We are seeking to examine mechanisms, solutions, and initiatives that can help resolve this crisis in the current conditions."

Referring to the humanitarian and social dimensions of this issue, Iraq's ambassador said: "Millions of pilgrims travel to the holy shrines, and there are also thousands of students and pupils, a large Iranian and Iraqi community, and extensive trade relations between the two countries."

Al-Hajjaj emphasized: "A large community of nationals of both countries is present in Iran and Iraq, and economic and people-to-people relations between the two sides are very strong and deep-rooted. I believe such a decision cannot reduce the depth of relations between the two countries."

Inauguration of 10 strategic projects adds 32 mcm to country's gas production capacity

TEHRAN- In a major boost to the country's energy capacity, 10 strategic oil and gas projects worth $350 million were inaugurated on Saturday, November 28, in the presence of President Masoud Pezeshkian, adding 32 million cubic meters per day (mcm/d) to Iran's sweet gas production capacity.

The projects—covering the restoration of damaged South Pars trains, pressure boosting at the Homa field, separation at the Tabnak field, the Darkhovin gas transmission line, and flare gas gathering at Marun 3 and 5—are aimed at compensating for part of the seasonal gas imbalance while preventing the waste of national resources. The inauguration also marked the return of 20 mcm/d of gas to the national trunkline through the revival of Refinery 6's third train and Refinery 4 at South Pars, alongside measures that have so far returned about 106 mcm/d of gas to the production cycle.

As reported, the revival and restoration of the third train of Refinery 6 and the return of South Pars Refinery 4 were completed by carrying out 3.6 million specialized man-hours of round-the-clock work in three shifts, removing 4,300 tons of damaged equipment, and investing more than 60 million euros over a compressed period of four months, returning 20 million cubic meters of gas per day to the national pipeline.

The project for the restoration, renovation, and repair of Refinery 6 of the South Pars Gas Complex began in the first days of Ordibehesht (late April) this year and officially returned to operation on 30 Aban (October 21) this year, and today it was officially inaugurated.

Simultaneously with the restoration of Refinery 6, numerous measures were taken to return Refinery 4 to the production cycle and compensate for the feed shortage caused by incidents and the shutdown of offshore lines and facilities, and this plan was also inaugurated today.

The Homa field gas pressure boosting station entered the circuit with a 126 million euro investment by the non-governmental sector to add seven million cubic meters per day to the country's gas production capacity.

The Homa reservoir, from which about 2.9 trillion cubic feet of its initial reserve has been extracted so far, needed this facility from the year 1405 to continue production due to natural pressure decline, and it has now been successfully commissioned.

The Tabnak gas field separation center was inaugurated with an 85 million euro investment. The



Tabnak field has 20.7 trillion cubic feet, equivalent to 586.2 billion cubic meters of gas in place, and 16 trillion and 800 billion cubic feet, equivalent to 475.7 billion cubic meters of recoverable gas.

With the construction of this separation center, the possibility of stabilizing the daily production of 35 million cubic meters of gas in the years 1406 and 1407 was realized, and the final recoverable gas volume of the field was upgraded from 14.2 to 14.8 trillion cubic feet.

Gathering of flare gases at Maroun 3 and 5

Four flare gas gathering plans in the Maroun 3 and 5 complex came online with the aim of protecting resources and generating $22 million in annual revenue, gathering about 30 million cubic feet of gas per day and preventing its burning.

23 million cubic feet per day is the share of 2 gathering and pressure boosting plans, and seven million cubic feet is the share of 2 sweetening plans.

Three plans with a capacity of 26 million cubic feet per day are located in Maroun 3, including the plan for gathering gases from the second stage of Asmari sweetening with a capacity of 15 million cubic feet as the largest part, and low-pressure Bangestan gases of Maroun 3 with a capacity of 8 million cubic feet.

One plan with a capacity of four million cubic feet per day has been implemented in Maroun 5. These projects have provided sustainable employment for 140 people, most of whom are local forces, and the domestic manufacturing share in their equipment reaches 60 percent.

Also, the Darkhovin gas transmission line to the NGL 3200 plant was put into operation with the construction of 61 kilometers of pipeline and a $17.5 million investment.

The executive process of this plan began in the year 1403 and bore fruit in Aban 1405, and today, with the transmission of 70 million cubic feet per day of associated gas from the Darkhovin field to the Hoveyzeh Persian Gulf gas refinery (NGL 3200), petrochemical feed is supplied and the burning of associated gases in flares is prevented.

We must not allow even one cubic foot of gas to burn aimlessly

President Masoud Pezeshkian at the inauguration ceremony of these plans, emphasizing the prevention of flare gas burning and the necessity of optimal use of this national wealth, said: Although the measures taken in gathering these gases are valuable, we must not let even one cubic foot of gas burn or be wasted without purpose.

Explaining the enemy's plans to create dissatisfaction by disrupting energy supply, he added: The enemy seeks to create deficiencies and shortages in order to create social challenges; therefore, strengthening the infrastructure for supplying the people's energy is vital. Successfully passing through the cold season without blackouts, in addition to developing networks, requires the general public's cooperation in the optimal consumption of gas, electricity, and petroleum products.

The President also, referring to the $350 million investment, equivalent to 70 thousand billion tomans, for these 10 projects and the realization of a daily increase of 32 million cubic meters of sweet gas, announced: The host provinces of the oil industry, such as Khuzestan, have an irreplaceable champion role, and we will follow up so that the share of the people of these regions in the development process and benefiting from the projects' advantages is appropriately increased.

Return of 106 million cubic meters of gas to the production cycle

Hamid Bovard, the Acting Oil Minister, at this ceremony, referring to the measures taken to increase gas production along with efforts to gather flare gases, said: So far, about 106 million cubic meters per day of gas has returned to the production cycle.

Referring to the ministry's plans to restore damaged facilities and compensate for part of the gas imbalance, he stated: From Esfand 1404, due to damage to part of South Pars facilities, the Ministry of Oil's priorities were revised, and alongside the restoration of these facilities, increasing production using other capacities, gathering flare gases, and accelerating the implementation of plans were placed on the agenda.

Bovard, referring to the financial resources foreseen for advancing these plans, said: In this framework, about $350 million, equivalent to 70 thousand billion tomans, has been considered.

The acting oil minister, stating that the intensification of sanctions has not been able to create a disruption in the will of the managers and employees of the oil industry to restore and advance projects, continued: With planning and division of work among different complexes, efforts were made to supply priority needs and pursue the implementation of plans by relying on domestic capacities.

Ramin Hatami, CEO of the National Iranian South Oil Company, referring to this company's 70 percent share, said: With the implementation of various plans, about 260 million cubic meters of flare gas has been gathered.

He announced the transfer of 19 new flare gas gathering projects to the private sector next year and added: To reduce the gas imbalance, up to 20 million cubic meters will be added to the daily production capacity before the peak of cold weather.

Gholam Abbas Hosseini, CEO of the South Pars Gas Complex Company, reported the carrying out of 3.6 million specialized man-hours for the restoration and startup of the third gas train of Refinery 6 and the return of Refinery 4 to the production cycle, and said: This operation was carried out at a cost of more than 60 million euros and in a period of four months.

He noted: To implement these projects, 3.6 million specialized man-hours were carried out in the form of three work shifts and around the clock, and alongside that, 4,300 tons of debris were removed from various parts of these refineries.

Hosseini, stating that a wide range of technical and engineering operations was carried out in this path, added: The investment and cost incurred for these projects was more than 60 million euros, and the result of these efforts is the return of a daily capacity of 20 million cubic meters of gas to the country's national pipeline.

Iran-made technology must be tested on production line: ICCIMA vice chairman

TEHRAN- Mohammad Reza Bahraman, Vice Chairman of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), on the occasion of Iran-Made Innovation and Technology Day (November 28), proposed that large mining and industrial companies publish the real problems of their production lines in the form of competitive calls, and from the outset provide in the contract a phased purchase path for solutions that achieve the agreed performance in industrial testing.

In a note on the occasion of Iran-Made Innovation and Technology Day, Mohammad Reza Bahraman described the criterion of a technology's success as its measurable effect on the firm's performance. According to him, in a processing plant, the value of a new solution becomes clear when production line data show that electricity or water consumption per ton of feed has decreased, metal recovery has increased while concentrate grade is maintained, or unplanned downtime hours have fallen. Repetition of the same result in another unit, together with the manufacturer's commitment to supply parts and services, will be the basis for subsequent buyers' decisions and entry into the regional market.

Referring to the pressure of water and energy shortages, restrictions caused by sanctions, and macroeconomic instability on industrial investment, Bahraman emphasized that technology selection must begin with a specific production line problem. In one mine, reducing the electricity consumption of the grinding circuit while maintaining product particle size is a priority; in another mine, reducing fresh water withdrawal while maintaining processing quality may create greater economic value. Determining this priority depends on production data and cost estimates for each problem.

Four proposals from Iran Mine House to bring technology to an industrial contract

1. Competitive calls based on the real needs of the mine and plant

Large mining and industrial companies should annually publish part of their operational needs together with baseline data, test conditions, pilot duration, and acceptance criteria. For example, in testing a grinding control system, electricity consumption per ton of feed before and after implementation should be compared, taking into account feed hardness, operating capacity, and product particle size. Determining the measurement method before the test begins allows the operator and the manufacturer to decide on the result based on the same data.

2. Providing for the purchase path in the pilot contract

The contract should clarify from the outset how, upon verification of the agreed performance, phased purchase or installation on the second line will be carried out. The cost of the test should be divided among the operator, the manufacturer, and the financing institution, and payments should be tied to specified milestones, from installation and commissioning to performance verification. This mechanism makes it more possible for smaller technology companies to enter their first industrial contract and allows the buyer to increase its financial commitment in proportion to the test result.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Syrian churches sound the alarm

By Ali Minabi

TEHRAN – Warnings have grown louder about the real danger facing Christians under the new government in Damascus.

This follows a series of security incidents and criminal attacks targeting Christian citizens in several parts of Syria, which have become increasingly frequent in recent months,

The concern has grown to the point that Christian figures and institutions, both locally and internationally, have issued warnings that the Christian presence in Syria is at risk. Critics fear that, if the situation continues, the country could soon be left without a Christian community.

Since the fall of the previous government, Christians in Syria have faced mounting challenges, including assaults and kidnappings, declining political representation, uncertainty over the new state's direction, and concerns about constitutional equality.

These fears are rooted in a long history of cautious relations with those in power. The Church has traditionally maintained dialogue with rulers, while many Christians supported Bashar al-Assad's government.

They initially avoided opposing the new authorities, fearing the alternatives offered by extremist factions. Following the government's fall, the Church continued engaging with the transitional authorities while reserving the right to speak out whenever the community's interests or members' safety were threatened.

The fall of the former government left Christians facing a new reality: rulers with extremist backgrounds, a deeply divided society, and growing uncertainty over their place in the state and their ability to practice their faith and maintain their social lives without fear.

Caught between official reassurances and a growing number of security incidents, trust has steadily eroded. The issue is no longer simply about protecting churches, but about defining a form of citizenship that can unite all Syrians.

Recent church statements highlight the depth of these concerns. On November 17, 2026, the patriarchs of the Greek Orthodox,



Greek Catholic and Syriac Orthodox Churches issued a joint statement condemning repeated attacks and kidnappings.

They stressed that these were not isolated incidents and urged the authorities to stop the attacks and make investigation findings public. The statement followed the 19 October 2026 kidnapping of jeweller Maher Sankari in Al-Suqaylabiyah and an armed attack on Yuhanna Abdo Arbash, the Greek Melkite Catholic Archbishop of Homs, in his office at the archdiocese. He was beaten and tied up, while money and church property were stolen.

The patriarchs stressed that Christians "are not a punching bag" and reaffirmed their commitment to full citizenship and equal participation in society.

Kidnappings are not a new concern. The Church has its own painful history of such cases. Boulos Yazigi, the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo and brother of Patriarch John X, has been missing since 22 April 2013, when militants kidnapped him alongside Archbishop Youhanna Ibrahim during the war in Syria.

Their fate remains unknown. More than 13 years after their abduction, the circumstances remain unclear, and no one has been held accountable.

Recent developments have added to an already troubling picture. On November 24, the bodies of two young men, Eli Asaad Hilaleh, 17, and Elias Mardini, 18, were found with gunshot wounds in the Damascus countryside.

Separately, the Interior Ministry announced the arrest of several suspects over a robbery at Our Lady of Peace Church in Homs, including the church's guard. It said investigations were ongoing to determine each suspect's role and recover the stolen property.

The announcement drew criticism from Christians, who argued that portraying the incident as an ordinary theft and highlighting the guard's alleged involvement risked diverting attention from the attack on the church and archbishop, reducing it to a simple robbery case.

These reactions show that distrust in the authorities' handling of such cases has become part of the problem, leaving relations with the government strained by suspicion.

This is despite the contacts established between the transitional authorities and church leaders after the fall of the former government.

President Ahmad al-Sharaa met with representatives of Christian denominations, offering an initial opportunity to build a new relationship. However, the bombing of Mar Elias Church in Damascus on 22 June 2025 marked a major turning point.

The attack left several people dead and injured, raising serious questions about the authorities' ability to protect places of worship and counter extremist rhetoric.

Patriarch John X's remarks at the victims' funeral were particularly striking. He held the government responsible for ensuring protection and criticized the absence of officials, marking a clear departure from the Church's traditionally cautious public tone.

Security concerns are closely tied to deeper questions about the nature of the new state. Will all citizens have an equal right to hold the country's highest offices, or will certain positions be reserved for people of a particular religious background? At the heart of the debate are the role of religion in the constitution and the state's ability to protect the rights of all citizens, regardless of their beliefs.

Political representation also remains limited. Hind Kabawat's presence as the government's only Christian member does not, by itself, amount to meaningful Christian participation in decision-making.

Similarly, Christians hold just six seats in the 210-member People's Assembly, five of them presidential appointees, highlighting their limited direct electoral representation. This raises broader questions about political inclusion and the need to move beyond appointing Christian figures to largely symbolic positions.

Al-Suqaylabiyah, in the Hama countryside, offers another example of these concerns. After a Christmas tree was set on fire in late 2024, the town experienced repeated attacks and unrest, particularly in March, July and October 2026. On several occasions, disputes with young men from neighbouring villages escalated into riots, vandalism and gunfire.

However, the impact extends beyond material damage. Churches have been forced to scale back public celebrations during religious holidays, limiting festivities to their own premises.

The question is no longer whether Christians can freely practice their faith inside churches, but whether they can express their identity publicly without fear of attack.

The continuing decline of Syria's Christian population is among the most serious concerns. Archbishop Jacques Mourad, the Syriac Catholic Archbishop of Homs, estimates that only 300,000 to 350,000 Christians remain in the country, warning that their historic presence could shrink further if current conditions persist.

Although no reliable official figures exist, the sharp decline in Syria's Christian population, particularly in major cities, has become increasingly evident.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Yemen's Ansarallah has turned Saudi Arabia highly vulnerable

Yemen threatens to target Saudi Red Sea ports, including Jeddah

From page 1 ▶The Jazan refinery attack was particularly serious. A projectile struck the facility on November 26, sparked a fire that temporarily disrupted operations.

Saudi Arabia's economic and financial landmarks have also come under attack. Ansarallah forces have carried out strikes on the Ras Tanura refinery, one of the kingdom's largest oil-processing and export facilities, and on oil and energy infrastructure elsewhere. Satellite imagery showed a substantial plume of smoke over Ras Tanura, although Saudi authorities said they intercepted drones over the facility and did not confirm a direct refinery impact.

In Riyadh, attacks have also struck buildings in the King Abdullah Financial District, including facilities associated with Saudi Aramco and the Public Investment Fund (PIF), the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund. The PIF tower was reportedly struck twice in November. These incidents have exposed the vulnerability of Saudi Arabia's energy and financial infrastructure, which is central to its ambitions to attract international investment.

Saudi Arabia has responded through its air-defense systems and intensified military operations against positions in Yemen under the control of Ansarallah.

On November 28, Saudi Arabia claimed its air defenses had intercepted several incoming projectiles, including a cruise missile directed towards Riyadh and ballistic missiles targeting southern areas. The Saudi Kingdom also announced an operation to destroy military resources supporting Ansarallah's missile and drone attacks.

Early on November 29, the Saudi-led military claimed that it had intercepted three additional ballistic missiles, two directed towards the Eastern Province and one towards Riyadh. It also claimed to have destroyed an Ansarallah missile launcher in Yemen's Saada province.

Saudis bombard residential areas in Sanaa

Meanwhile, Ansarallah-run media reported that Saudi airstrikes had hit a residential neighborhood in Sanaa, damaging eight homes and three shops and injuring 13 people. The latest Saudi-led operations also follow strikes against Ansarallah-controlled areas, including Hodeidah, Saada and Sanaa.

The latest escalation centers on the Yemeni port of Ras Isa, a major fuel-import terminal in Hodeidah province.

On November 29, the Saudi-led coalition called on civilians to evacuate the port, publishing a map of the area. Media subsequently reported a Saudi attack on the facility.



In retaliation, Ansarallah threatened to target Jeddah and all other Saudi ports along the Red Sea coast, Reuters reported. They also urged shipping companies to withdraw their vessels immediately and called on workers and civilians in the vicinity of the ports to evacuate.

Saudi Arabia, in turn, has pledged to maintain military pressure on Ansarallah and warned that it would target civilian infrastructure. In a November 29 interview with Reuters, Major General Turki al-Maliki described Aden, , a top Saudi military officer, said the interim capital of the Saudi-backed government in Yemen, as a Saudi red line, warning that the coalition would do whatever was necessary to protect the city as Ansarallah forces advance towards it.

Ansarallah is seeking to impose costs on Saudi Arabia by threatening its oil industry, airports, financial institutions, ports and maritime trade. The attacks on Jazan and the strikes on Riyadh's financial district illustrate Saudi Arabia's vulnerability. The latest threat concerning Jeddah and other Red Sea ports raises the possibility of a wider confrontation affecting commercial shipping and energy exports.

Failing to withstand Ansarallah's military advances inside Yemen and attacks on the Saudi financial centers and energy facilities, Saudi Arabia has been launching airstrikes against infrastructure in areas under the control of Ansarallah.

The world marks Palestinian Solidarity Day

Protesters, diplomats demand binding sanctions against Israel on Palestinian Solidarity Day

From page 1 ▶

Rooted in dispossession

The observance falls on November 29, the date in 1947 when the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 and approved the partition of Mandatory Palestine.

The plan opened the way for Israel's creation and the 1948 Nakba, during which about 750,000 Palestinians were expelled or fled their homes. The Arab state envisioned by the resolution never came into being.

The United Nations created the solidarity day in 1977. This year, the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People held its special meeting in New York on November 23, alongside an exhibition titled "Don't Look Away: Gaza/Occupied Palestinian Territory: The Rubble and the People Amidst It."

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said Palestinians have a right to "dignity, justice and self-determination."

He called for an end to the unlawful occupation, unhindered aid for Gaza and a halt to settler violence, settlement expansion, demolitions and annexation threats in the West Bank, including East al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Streets demand consequences

In Stockholm, hundreds filled Odenplan Square to demand an end to Israeli attacks and Swedish arms sales to Israel.

Banners read, "Children are being killed in Gaza," "Schools and hospitals are being bombed," and "Respect the ceasefire immediately."

Activist Gunilla Nilsson said the protests would continue "until the genocide against the Palestinian people ends."

She also called on Sweden's public pension fund to divest from the U.S. technology company Palantir, accusing the firm of complicity through digital systems used in Israeli military operations.

Coordinated demonstrations were planned in Lisbon and Porto, where protesters gathered at Martim Moniz and Praça da Batalha.

Oslo held a demonstration outside the Norwegian parliament, followed by a cultural evening. Malmö organized a major rally at Stortorget.

Diplomats speak, power hesitates

Iran's mission in Geneva wrote on X, "Solidarity must translate into action. Justice must prevail. The occupation must end."

China's President Xi Jinping said Gaza's reconstruction and West Bank governance should follow the principle of "Palestinians governing Palestine."

Russian President Vladimir Putin endorsed Palestinian aspirations for an independent, unified state.

At the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, Secretary-General Nabil Fahmy pressed for accountability, civilian protection and humanitarian relief.

In Jeddah, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation urged more countries to recognize Palestine and demanded an end to Israeli impunity.

The 57-member Islamic body also emphasized Palestinian sovereignty within the June 4, 1967 borders.

Egypt called Palestinian rights legal entitlements, not favors, and rejected forced displacement. Turkey and Qatar said they support an independent Palestinian state.

Pakistan asked influential powers to move beyond expressions of concern.

Hamas urged worldwide demonstrations and sustained pressure to end Israel's aggression, lift Gaza's siege, and uphold Palestinian rights.

Gaza's ceasefire that kills

The day unfolded under a so-called "ceasefire" that has not stopped Israeli fire. Gaza's Health Ministry reported 74,793 Palestinians killed and 176,348 injured since October 2023.

Since the so-called ceasefire took effect on October 11, 2025, it has recorded 1,723 deaths and 6,208 injuries.

Two more Palestinians were killed on Sunday. Majd Shadi Masoud, 16, died in a drone attack in northern Gaza. Nafiz Naji Misran, 24, was killed in a strike near Khan Younis.

The deaths gave the day its sharpest meaning. Palestinians marched in Khan Younis, Ramallah and Nablus, and rallied in Qalqilya and Tulkarm.

Several gatherings defended UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, against cuts to its services. Palestinian Vice President Hussein al-Sheikh called for concrete measures to hold Israel accountable.

Washington's shield

The United States remains Israel's largest arms supplier and has consistently protected it from consequences.

Washington vetoed several Security Council ceasefire resolutions and sanctioned International Criminal Court officials after the court issued an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

President Donald Trump chairs the Board of "Peace," supposedly overseeing Gaza's transition, but reconstruction has stalled.

Board officials have accused Netanyahu's government of obstructing their work.

Former UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said this month that the board "does not use any of its leverage" to relieve Gaza's misery.

Israeli airstrikes and bulldozers keep erasing southern Lebanese villages

TEHRAN — Israeli aircraft, artillery and bulldozers battered through southern Lebanon again this weekend, hitting villages from the border belt to north of the Litani River while the U.S.-brokered "ceasefire framework" stands exposed as an empty farce.

On Saturday, November 28, warplanes hit the outskirts of Baraachit, Wadi al-Salouqi and Kfar Tebnit, according to local media outlets.

Shells fell on about 20 locations, among them Ainatha, Hadatha, Mayfadoun and Zawtar al-Sharqiya, where L'Orient Today saw bulldozers at work. Demolition blasts shook Rub el-Thalathin and al-Qantara, and flares lit Wadi al-Salouqi after dark.

None of it is new. UNIFIL counted 2,840 Israeli artillery rounds, 870 airspace violations and 90 airstrikes in October alone.

Since November 19, spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said, peacekeepers have logged nearly 160 airspace and maritime violations and more than 430 artillery and mortar rounds.

By September, the Lebanese Army had tallied about 7,700 Israeli breaches of the June 26 framework.

The damage is hardening into permanence. In Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, the army says 85 percent of homes are destroyed and the rest damaged. Of 450 families, 60 have resettled.

A UN report on November 12 said Israel holds about 700 square kilometers up to a self-declared "forward defense line," and that around 65 localities are nearly destroyed and inaccessible. Roughly 9,000 people have been killed in Lebanon since the war began in October 2023, according to the health ministry.

The framework ties phased Israeli redeployment to the army restoring state authority and verified Hezbollah disarmament.

In practice, Beirut is told to disarm while Israeli troops, including seven forward bases UNIFIL has observed north of the Blue Line, sit on the ground the army needs to deploy.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has claimed Israel has "full freedom of action" in Lebanon. Washington, which brokered the deal, has leaned on Lebanon to move faster, with no visible pressure on Israel.

Talks have been stuck since August. Prime Minister Nawaf Salam told the AP on November 27 that they are waiting on Israel's electoral transition. UNIFIL's mandate ends December 31, and France is pushing for a limited extension.

Meanwhile, Israel courts Christian villages. Military spokesperson Ella Waweya filmed an Independence Day message in a classroom in Dibil, blaming Hezbollah for the south's hardship.

15 villages called Netanyahu's claim that some wanted annexation "completely fabricated." Analyst Michael Young ties the outreach to an October paper by Tamir Hayman, a former intelligence chief, which describes an Israeli view that weakening Arab states is something to encourage. In Ain Ebl, more than half the town has fled.

Iran, Uzbekistan to expand cooperation in traditional arts and heritage restoration

TEHRAN – Iran plans to send 10 traditional arts and handicrafts artists to Uzbekistan as part of efforts to expand cultural exchanges and technical cooperation, particularly in the conservation and restoration of historic monuments, Iran's heritage minister said.

Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri announced the plan during a meeting with Gayane Umerova, head of the Department of Creative Industries under the President of Uzbekistan, on the sidelines of the Tashkent International Tourism Forum.

The two officials discussed ways to strengthen cultural, artistic and professional cooperation between the neighboring countries, Mehr news agency reported.

Umerova highlighted the historical and cultural ties shared by Iran and Uzbekistan and expressed her country's interest in expanding joint initiatives.

Salehi-Amiri said the planned delegation of 10 Iranian artists, representing various fields of traditional arts and handicrafts, would focus on sharing professional experience,



providing training and exchanging technical knowledge and skills.

The Iranian minister said the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism was ready to establish professional cooperation with relevant Uzbek institutions.

Salehi-Amiri also invited Umerova to attend the Tehran International Tourism Exhibition scheduled for February. The Uzbek official welcomed the invitation.

Ancient Siraf to receive nighttime lighting to boost tourism

TEHRAN – A lighting project for historical sites in the ancient port of Siraf in southern Iran is planned to enhance their nighttime appearance and support the development of night tourism, a provincial cultural heritage official said.

Ali Mahini, deputy head of cultural heritage in Bushehr province, said on Sunday that the initiative aims to highlight the architectural and historical features of Siraf's archaeological sites and improve conditions for visitors after dark.

The project is intended to showcase the port's historical significance and increase its visual appeal at night, Mahini said, adding that lighting installations would be designed in accordance with conservation requirements to prevent damage to the sites' structures and historical integrity.

He said Siraf's tourism infrastructure also needed improvements, including better visitor routes, interpretive signage and the organization of historical areas, to provide a more accessible and informative experience for tourists.

"Siraf is not merely a tourism destination, but part of the historical and civilizational identity of the Persian Gulf," Mahini added.

The development of nighttime tourism could help encourage visitors to stay longer, support local economic activity and strengthen Siraf's position among tourism destinations in Bushehr province, he added.

Located along the northern coast of the Persian Gulf, Siraf was one of Iran's major commercial ports from the Sassanian period through the early Islamic era. It played a significant role in maritime trade linking Western Asia with India, the Far East and eastern Africa, particularly between the ninth and 11th centuries.

The port's archaeological remains include sites dating to several historical periods, reflecting its long-standing role in regional trade and settlement.

Between 1966 and 1973, the British Institute of Persian Studies conducted seven seasons of excavation and survey at Siraf, identifying extensive remains of a major port city on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf.

Historians estimate Siraf's population reached about 300,000 during the early Islamic era, while the modern town has a population of roughly 7,000. The ancient port hosts numerous historical and archaeological sites spanning the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian, Sassanid, Islamic and Qajar periods.

Iran has selected Siraf as its candidate for UNESCO World Heritage inscription in 2026, according to a provincial cultural heritage official.

Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan to hold cultural event in Pakistan

TEHRAN – Iran's southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan is planning to hold a cultural event in Pakistan to showcase its cultural heritage, history and handicrafts, a provincial official said.

Vahideh Rakhshani, deputy head of handicrafts at the Sistan-Baluchestan Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said the event, titled "Sistan-Baluchestan Cultural Night," would be organized in cooperation with Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant provincial institutions.

Speaking on Sunday, Rakhshani also announced plans to organize exhibitions of the province's handicrafts in neighboring countries, including Pakistan and Oman.

She said selected cultural delegations and qualified artisans would be sent to exhibitions in neighboring countries to introduce Sistan-Baluchestan's cultural traditions, history and tourism attractions. The initiatives will be pursued in cooperation with the provincial Chamber of Commerce and the Foreign Ministry's local office.

Rakhshani added that the provincial administration had also approved efforts to explore the possibility of holding a handicrafts exhibition in Lahore, alongside sporting competitions in the city.

The planned cultural initiative comes against the backdrop of longstanding cultural and historical ties between Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province and Pakistan's Balochistan province. Both regions are home to Baloch communities with shared linguistic traditions, cultural practices, music, handicrafts and historical connections that extend across the modern international border.

Students visit Belqeys ruins to learn about cultural heritage preservation

TEHRAN – Students from a village school in North Khorasan province have visited the historic city of Belqeys near Esfarayen as part of an educational initiative aimed at raising awareness among younger generations about the importance of protecting Iran's cultural heritage.

Hossein Rahmani, director of the Belqeys National Cultural Heritage Site, said educating children and teenagers about historical monuments through organized visits was among the priorities of the provincial heritage authorities, Miras Aria news agency reported on Sunday.

During the visit, students learned about the historical significance of Belqeys and the importance of safeguarding archaeological sites against damage and destruction.

Rahmani stressed that preventive measures were essential to protecting ancient monuments, describing education for children and adolescents as one of the most effective ways to foster a sense of social responsibility toward cultural heritage.

Located approximately two kilometers southwest of modern Esfarayen in North Khorasan province, Shahr-e Belqeys is one of Iran's major historical adobe complexes. Covering an area of about 180 hectares, the archaeological site preserves the remains of a medieval city that once served as an important settlement in the historical region of Khorasan.

The site features a massive citadel, defensive walls, residential and commercial remains, pottery workshops, water reservoirs and ancient water-management systems. Archaeological finds, including imported Chinese ceramics, also point to the city's connections with wider regional and Eurasian trade networks.

Often compared in scale and construction to Iran's famous Arg-e Bam, Belqeys is significant not merely as a fortress but as the remains of an extensive urban settlement, offering insights into the region's historical architecture, economy and everyday life.

Second Announcement

National Iranian Oil Company

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0540015

The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) is seeking to procure the specified goods listed in the table below through a Qualitative Evaluation Call for conducting a public tender via the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD). All stages of the tender process including the receipt of tender documents, submission of bidders' proposals, and the opening of bid envelopes, shall be carried out exclusively through the Government Electronic Procurement System (SETAD) portal at www.setadiran.ir Bidders who have not previously registered must complete the registration process on the aforementioned portal and obtain an Electronic Signature certificate to participate in the tender.

Item	Material Description	Quantity	UNIT
1	CASING 5 IN, L-80, SEAMLESS, 18 PPF, VFJL	14,000	LE
2	CASING 5 IN, P-110, SEAMLESS, 18 PPF, VAM FLUSH JOINT	2,500	LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.setadiran.ir, not later than14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 135,526.77 EURO or 275,927,495,190 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

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SPORTS

Iran beat Philippines at FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Asian qualifier

TEHRAN – Mohammad Amini took over to tow a vengeful Iran past the Philippines, 85-72, to regain their winning ways in the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2027 Asian Qualifiers on Sunday at the Karisma Arena.

The young star finished with 20 points, 15 of which he made in the fourth quarter alone as he strapped Team Melli on his back after losing an early 14-point lead and trailing by a field goal entering the deciding frame.

That included an impressive personal 10-0 run, taking matters into his own hands shortly after Mahdi Heydari's conversion to give themselves an 80-67 advantage with 2:16 remaining, all but sealing the deal, fiba.basketball reported.

Amini shot 42.1-percent from the field, spiked by a pair of triples, alongside 6 rebounds, 2 assists, and a steal in a turnover-less performance as he finally got his lick back after struggling in Window 4 last August.

He struggled during that stretch that saw the Iranians fall to Gilas, 68-56, and so it couldn't get any more sweeter for him that one of his best games in FIBA play enabled the West Asian contenders to exact revenge.

In the process, Team Melli laid their harrowing 3-game skid to rest, the last a rout at the hands of Australia last Friday in the same venue, after stopping their Southeast Asian counterparts' 3-game winning streak.

Also coming through with key performances in the triumph were Arman Zangeneh and star scorer Behnam Yakhchali as the tried and tested tandem caused much problems to the much taller Philippines.

Zangeneh made it a long night for the opposing frontcourt by stretching the floor effectively, going 4-of-6 from beyond the arc to finish with 16 points as the former FIBA WASL veteran clicked early in the bout.

Yakhchali, on the other hand, got his rhythm back after a paltry 3-point showing against the Boomers a couple of nights ago and delivered 17 points, 5 rebounds, and 3 assists before fouling out early in the fourth.

Iran deserve to be champions: Ali Naderi

TEHRAN – Iran beach soccer head coach Ali Naderi says that Team Melli's capture of the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2026 came about as the result of hard work and a determination to excel.

The defending champions, in claiming a record-extending fifth title, beat Japan 3-1 in an exciting final on Saturday, and Naderi said his side had benefited from months of training and preparation.

"We organized a beach soccer Premier League in our country, held training camps and played friendly matches before this tournament," he said. "I believe our team delivered its best performance and we deserved to become champions."

The Central Asian side made a slow start against Japan and fell behind early on, but regrouped and leveled on the half hour mark before finishing off the match in the last two minutes, the-afc.com reported.

"We were caught by surprise in the first period because Japan performed differently from what we had expected. They have improved considerably. "However, we have many experienced players, and we tried to adapt to the situation as quickly as possible, adjust our approach, impose ourselves on the game and turn the result around."

Naderi praised his players for their positive mindset and focus.

"We played very well throughout the tournament, and this is due to the players fighting with all their hearts for their country and performing to 100 percent of their ability."

Iran also claimed the Most Valuable Player and Best Goalkeeper awards, with defender Mohaved Mohammadpour finishing with a goal against Japan to take his overall tally to five.

"This award belongs not just to me but to all the players and technical staff," said the 31-year-old. "This was the result of teamwork and our collective effort. From the first day and in every match, I never focused on individual awards. Football is a team sport, and winning as a team has always been my priority.

"But I believe I gave a good performance, and I am very happy with this award, which I dedicate to the people of Iran."

Women's futsal team to face Russia in February friendlies

TEHRAN – Iran women's futsal team will play a series of friendly matches against Russia from Feb. 16 to 22, head coach Shahrzad Mozafar announced.

Speaking about the team's preparations for upcoming competitions, Mozafar said the national team would step up their training camp following the conclusion of the domestic league.

"We are closely monitoring the performances of all national team players and assessing their technical abilities and fitness levels to select the best candidates for our upcoming training camps," she said.

Mozafar also highlighted the importance of introducing young players while maintaining a balance with experienced members of the squad.

"Youth development only works when it goes hand in hand with experience. We began our rebuilding process after the World Cup, monitoring players in youth leagues, the national youth team and the Premier League. Several players have been invited to training camps based on their performances, giving them an opportunity to prove themselves at the national-team level," she added.

The coach said the team could also hold a three-day training camp in January following the current camp to continue evaluating players and improving preparations.

"We want to retain our experienced players while creating opportunities for young talents to develop and strengthen the squad with an eye on future competitions," Mozafar noted.

Regarding the upcoming friendlies, she confirmed that Iran would face Russia from Feb. 16 to 22, describing the matches as an important opportunity to assess the team's progress.

"Playing against Russia has always been beneficial for our team. These matches will help us evaluate the players' technical and tactical levels and identify our strengths and weaknesses. We welcome this opportunity and hope to make the most of it to improve our preparations," she said.

Mozafar concluded by identifying the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in Riyadh, scheduled for April, as the team's main upcoming target.

"Our primary goal is to compete in the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games. We are working to prepare a strong and well-coordinated team through proper planning, training camps and friendly matches," she said.

Iran wins bronze at World Snooker Cup 2026

TEHRAN – Iran secured a bronze medal at the 2026 Oman Team & Men World Snooker Cup after reaching the semifinals of the competition in Muscat on Sunday.

The tournament was held from Nov. 23 to 29, bringing together some of the world's top snooker teams.

Team Iran-1, featuring Amir Sarkhosh and Ali Gharahgozlou, booked its place in the semifinals with an impressive 3-0 victory over Sweden in the quarterfinals. However, the Iranian team failed to reach the final after suffering a 3-0 defeat against Pakistan.

Despite missing out on a place in the title match, Iran finished the competition on the podium, claiming the bronze medal.

Grand Biotechnology Award, National Biotechnology Day to be held

TEHRAN - The 17th Grand Biotechnology Award and the 10th National Biotechnology Day ceremony will be held on December 15, coinciding with Research Week, under the central theme "Biotechnology in the Service of Food Security."

The event aims to promote scientific exchange, encourage innovation, and provide a platform for presenting research projects with practical applications and strong commercialization potential. It will adopt a competitive approach to evaluating research achievements across various fields, including medical, pharmaceutical, agricultural, industrial, microbial, veterinary, plant, and marine biotechnology, as well as natural resources, environmental studies, basic sciences, and interdisciplinary research.

This year, projects addressing food security and the entire food production-to-consumption chain will receive special priority. These include initiatives focused on improving productivity, ensuring sustainable production, reducing food waste, enhancing food health and safety, and developing complementary technologies.

The emphasis on food security reflects the growing importance of biotechnology in addressing challenges facing agricultural production, including climate change, water scarcity, crop diseases, and the need to improve resource efficiency. Biotechnology applications such as genetic engineering, tissue culture, molecular breeding, and biological pest control can contribute to developing more resilient crops, improving agricultural productivity, and reducing reliance on chemical inputs.

Iran has also been expanding its research and development activities in biotechnology, with applications ranging from recombinant medicines and vaccines to agricultural biotechnology and stem cell technologies. Research institutions and universities have played an important role in developing these capabilities, although translating scientific achievements into marketable products remains a key challenge. A 2025 study on Iran's biopharmaceutical industry highlighted the importance of stronger cooperation among academic institutions, industry, and intermediary organizations, as well as improved access to funding and innovation support.

The annual award and National Biotechnology Day are therefore expected to provide an opportunity to showcase research achievements, strengthen connections between researchers and industry, and encourage the development of knowledge-based products that address national needs, particularly in food security.



Measures to advance biotechnology sector

The Vice-Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy has elaborated on the measures that would contribute to the advancement of the biotechnology sector and the development of health technologies in the country.

Concerning the decisive role of biotechnology in food security, health, and the knowledge-based economy, the country has adopted a series of technological and research projects focusing on scientific data analysis, expansion of innovation infrastructure, and enhancement of strategic biotechnology value chains, IRNA reported.

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) for advanced analysis of the country's scientific data in biotechnology is one of the most important steps taken.

AI language models and natural language processing tools are used to conduct extensive mining of scientific articles by Iranian researchers.

Moreover, seven specialized biotechnology centers have been launched at universities. An institutional synergy model has been developed to implement the 'national division of labor in biotechnology' plan, which is being implemented with the help of different agencies, including the headquarters for the development of biosciences and technologies and stem cells, the National Planning and Budget Organization, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, and the Iran National Science Foundation.

The technological missions are communicated to universities, and the distribution of knowledge-based companies operating in various fields of biotechnology has also been identified and analyzed.

Signing memoranda of understanding with universities to boost the scientific capacities of the country and expedite strategic biotech development was among other measures adopted.

To support the strategic biotechnology value chains, various programs are being implemented, including the transition from raw material sales to the manufacturing of high-added-value products. In this regard, a document has been developed to implement the 'biorefinery' project in two fields: nutrient biotechnology and sugarcane biotechnology.

Enhancing intergovernmental collaborations to address challenges associated with food security and the environment, establishing a national clinical research organization in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), and launching two corporate venture capital funds in the regenerative medicine field are among other employed strategies.

Biotech holds 60% share of pharmaceutical exports

Biotechnology products account for a major portion of Iran's pharmaceutical exports, with a share of 60 percent.

In 2025, Haleh Ahmadi, the head of the association of pharmaceutical biotechnology producers and exporters, said some 99 percent of pharmaceutical biotechnology products are manufactured domestically.

Biotechnology products are exported to 40 countries worldwide, compared to 35 countries in the Iranian calendar year, which ended in March 2025. The exported medicines are worth 120 – 130 million dollars, Mehr news agency quoted Ahmadi as saying.

Thanks to the pharmaceutical biotechnology producers, the country is saving 5 billion dollars, which would have otherwise been spent on importing these products, she noted.

Currently, 45 pharmaceutical biotechnology products, including medicines, kits, and medical tools, are produced in Iran, Ahmadi added.

IRCS launches construction of new clinic in Najaf for Iranian pilgrims



TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has begun construction of a new medical facility in Najaf, Iraq, to improve healthcare services for Iranian pilgrims visiting the holy city.

The groundbreaking ceremony was held on Saturday. The existing IRCS clinic in Najaf has been providing medical services for more than two decades. The new facility will be built on a 550-square-meter plot and is planned to comprise 10 floors, IRNA reported.

In September, the IRCS and Iraq's Ministry of Health agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in healthcare, with a focus on medical education, treatment, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment.

The head of the IRCS, Pirhossein Kolivand, and the Iraqi health minister, Abdul Hussein Aziz Al-Moussawi, met in Baghdad on September 17, the IRCS website reported.

The meeting focused on holding joint specialized and subspecialized educational courses, sharing clinical experiences, enhancing specialized skills of Iraqi health staff, and fostering cooperation in manufacturing pharmaceutical and medical tools.

The Iranian official highlighted the high capacity of the IRCS in the field of health, including the extensive network of medical centers, polyclinics, specialized medical and nursing capabilities, large number of volunteers, noting that the IRCS is ready to benefit from its expertise and knowledge to foster collaborations between the two sides.

He also announced the IRCS's readiness to train Iraqi physicians, nurses, and specialized personnel, dispatch Iranian experts, distinguished professors, and medical teams to Iraq, as well as help establish medical and nursing schools in Iraq, particularly Najaf.

For his part, Al-Moussawi lauded Iran's help, saying that "I am deeply grateful for your support. We are committed to directing all of our efforts toward establishing and further developing this cooperation."

IRCS's considerable relief, operational capabilities

Cristhian Cortez Cardoza, the deputy regional director for the Middle East and North Africa of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has praised the relief and operational capabilities of the IRCS, calling for expanded cooperation between the two sides in disaster preparedness and emergency response.

Commending the IRCS's efforts, Cardoza said the society's experience and expertise in disaster preparedness and relief operations, which it shares with other national societies, are highly valuable and help strengthen response capabilities in countries around the world, IRNA reported.

The official made the remarks at a meeting with IRCS head Pirhossein Kolivand in Tehran on November 16.

Emphasizing the need to support the most vulnerable groups of society, Cardoza expressed hope that the two sides would also develop ties in training, preparedness, and enhancing relief services.

For his part, Kolivand underscored the specialized and operational capacities of the IRCS. By expanding international cooperation, and sharing the country's experiences and the lessons learned from relief operations, the IRCS training centers could become the regional hub for training relief workers and operational managers from countries in the region.

Commending the IFRC's support and collaboration with the IRCS, he stressed the necessity of benefiting from modern, smart technologies to boost operational efficiency and accelerate emergency responses.

Iran among 10 countries with allograft production technology

TEHRAN – Iran is among 10 countries worldwide possessing the technology to produce allograft tissue products, which are widely used in a range of surgical procedures, including neurosurgery, orthopedics, urology, gynecology, maxillofacial surgery, plastic surgery and wound reconstruction.

Domestically manufactured allografts have also significantly reduced the cost of certain medical procedures, replacing products that were previously imported at prices of around 20,000 euros with locally produced alternatives costing approximately 90 million rials (about 42 euros), according to a report by ISNA.

Masoumeh Majidi, a faculty member at Tehran University of Medical Sciences, explained that allograft products are derived from donated human tissues, primarily obtained from brain-dead donors who have consented to tissue donation or whose families have authorized the donation.

Following the procurement of organs such as the kidneys, heart and lungs for transplantation, other tissues, including skin, bone, tendons and muscles, can also be recovered, processed and prepared for use in various surgical procedures.



These tissues serve a wide range of medical applications, providing surgeons with biological materials for reconstructive procedures and the repair or replacement of damaged tissues.

Majidi said bone-based graft products are manufactured in different sizes and forms and supplied to neurosurgeons, orthopedic surgeons and maxillofacial specialists, allowing them to select suitable materials according to patients' needs and the requirements of individual procedures.

She added that approximately 3,000 transplant procedures are performed annually using these products.

Highlighting Iran's position in the field, Majidi said the technology for producing allograft tissue products is currently available in nine other countries, placing Iran among the world's 10 technology-holding countries in this area.

Unlike synthetic materials made from plastics or polymers, allografts are derived from human tissues and are prepared for transplantation into another person. Their biological origin makes them valuable materials in procedures requiring tissue reconstruction, structural support or tissue replacement.

However, preparing human tissues for transplantation involves sophisticated scientific and technical processes, she noted, emphasizing that tissue procurement alone is not sufficient to ensure successful transplantation.

The tissues must undergo specialized processing and preparation to ensure their safety, quality and suitability for transplantation, while preserving properties necessary for their intended clinical applications.

Iran's tissue banking and processing capabilities have developed over the years, enabling the production of a variety of grafts, including bone, cartilage, skin, tendons, heart valves and pericardial tissues. Research published by Iranian specialists has also documented the country's tissue-processing infrastructure and the procedures involved in tissue recovery, donor screening, processing, preservation, sterilization, storage and distribution.

The development of locally manufactured tissue grafts has helped reduce reliance on imported products and broaden access to specialized surgical materials, particularly in procedures where suitable biological tissues are essential.

Majidi said the scientific expertise and technological capabilities developed in this field have made it possible to prepare tissues donated by one individual for therapeutic use in another, offering treatment options for patients requiring reconstructive or restorative surgery.

Nationwide campaign to restore 2,000 hectares of rangelands

TEHRAN – The Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization is scheduled to launch a nationwide campaign to restore rangelands in around 400 counties on December 6, with the participation of ranchers, local communities, and environmental enthusiasts.

The initiative aims to restore approximately 2,000 hectares of rangelands by taking advantage of favorable rainfall forecasts and the beginning of the rainy season, Abolqasem Hosseinpour, an official with the organization, told IRNA.

Hosseinpour highlighted the ecological and economic importance of rangelands, noting that the country's average vegetation cover in these areas stands at around 24 percent, which underscores the need for continued restoration efforts.

The campaign will include pit-seeding, direct seeding, and rainfall conservation measures, implemented through biological, biomechanical, and management-based approaches.

Rangelands in Iran cover 83 million hectares. As the country's largest ecosystem, rangelands feature a diverse array of native, medicinal, industrial, edible, and forage species. By supporting over one million households and 37 million authorized livestock units, these rangelands play a critical role in ensuring the nation's sustainable ecological and food security, Hosseinpour further noted.

Rangelands restoration key to combating desertification, drought

Given the vital role of rangelands in food security, the water cycle, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience, their restoration is the key to reversing desertification and enhancing drought resilience.

Experts believe healthy land is essential to thriving economies and societies; it supports agriculture, supplies food, and contributes to water and climate security. Rangelands are among the world's most extensive and yet most neglected ecosystems. They support the lives of about 2 billion people worldwide, including many pastoralists and indigenous people.

Sadly, every minute, an area of land equivalent to four football fields is degraded, leading to biodiversity loss, increased drought risk, and community displacement. The global impacts include rising food costs, instability, and forced migration. Currently, up to half of the world's rangelands are degraded or at risk, with serious consequences for food and water security, biodiversity, climate resilience, and rural livelihoods.

Loss of vegetation, climate change, farming, overgrazing, and deforestation for fuel or construction materials are among the key factors that have exacerbated desertification.

Desertification and drought are global environmental problems that affect all regions of the world and require joint action by the international community to address them.

Increased desertification intensifies the amount of sand and dust that can be swept up by the wind and eventually leads to dust storms with negative impacts on the weather, and in turn worsens desertification.

Investing in sustainable land and water management, improved drought preparedness, and community-led restoration can help secure the rangelands and the people who depend on them.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who adopts cupidity as motto in life will be disliked by people, and he who reveals his distress, abases himself before all, and he who is ruled by his tongue has no worth in his own eyes and those of others.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:11:53 Evening: 17:11 Dawn: 5:27 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:55 (tomorrow)

Majidi's 'Midday Meal' makes Golden Globes' non-English-language eligibility list



TEHRAN- Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi's latest feature film, "Midday Meal," has been included among the 42 titles eligible to compete in the Best Motion Picture – Non-English Language category at the 84th Golden Globe Awards.

The film appears on the official eligibility list distributed to Golden Globes voters, according to an exclusive report published by US entertainment magazine Variety on Wednesday.

The list comprises 42 non-English-language productions from different countries, placing Majidi's film alongside works by internationally recognized filmmakers from France, Spain, Germany, South Korea and other countries.

The inclusion comes after "Midday Meal" received the Busan Award for Best Film at the 31st Busan International Film Festival in South Korea, where it had its world premiere in October. The recognition at Busan also secured the Iranian production eligibility for consideration in the International Feature Film category at the 99th Academy Awards through the festival award qualification pathway.

The film's appearance on the Golden Globes eligibility list is an important step in its international awards journey, although it does not mean that the production has secured a nomination. The final nominees for the 84th Golden Globe Awards are scheduled to be announced on December 7, with the awards ceremony set to take place on January 10, 2027, at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California.

"Midday Meal" tells the story of a rural schoolteacher whose efforts to keep his school operating become increasingly difficult after the financial support for the students' meal program comes to an end. Following the death of the benefactor who had been funding the program, the school faces the prospect of losing its students, many of whom depend on the daily meals to attend classes. The teacher, who is also struggling to secure a stable professional future, finds himself caught between his responsibility toward the children and the harsh economic circumstances surrounding him.

As the situation deteriorates and the prospect of the school closing becomes increasingly real, he makes difficult decisions to keep the children fed and their education uninterrupted. With the support of his mother, he eventually puts his own financial security at risk and becomes involved in oil smuggling to raise the money needed to sustain the school.

Set in an impoverished and drought-stricken village in southeastern Iran, the film examines the relationship between education, poverty and social responsibility. Through the predicament of an ordinary teacher, Majidi turns his attention to children whose access to education is threatened by circumstances beyond their control, while exploring the moral compromises that people may make when confronted with seemingly impossible choices.

The film runs for 133 minutes and stars Mohammad Rahimi in the central role, alongside Kheyri Zakeri, Rahim Bakhshpira and Heybatmorad Damani. It was produced by Majidi and Amir Banan, with the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (Kanoon) serving as the production company.

Majidi co-wrote the screenplay with Hooman Behmanesh, who also served as the film's cinematographer.

Majidi is among Iran's internationally known filmmakers, with a body of work that frequently focuses on children, disadvantaged communities, family relationships and human dignity. His 1997 film "Children of Heaven" received an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film, bringing Iranian cinema wider international recognition. Other notable works include "The Color of Paradise" (1999), "Baran" (2001), "The Song of Sparrows" (2008) and "Muhammad: The Messenger of God" (2015).

The Golden Globes, one of the major annual events in the international film and television awards calendar, will hold its 84th edition in January 2027.

Jean Anouilh's 'Traveller Without Luggage' published in Persian

TEHRAN- The Persian translation of French playwright Jean Anouilh's drama "Le Voyageur sans bagage" (Traveller Without Luggage) has recently been published.

Translated into Persian by Aida Shirini, the book was released by Mehrandish Publications in Tehran.

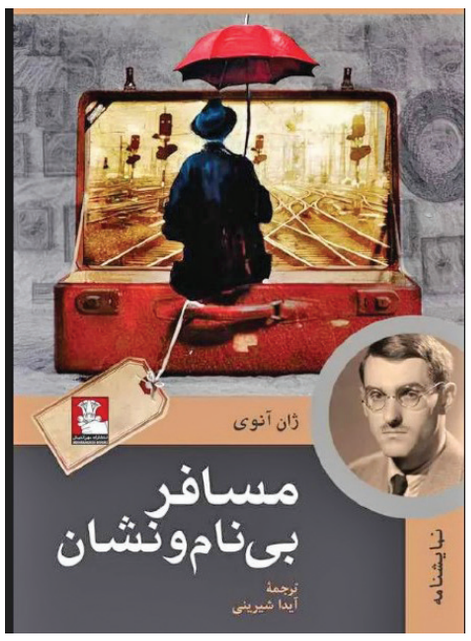
First staged in Paris in 1937, the play explores memory, identity, family ties and the burden of the past through the story of a First World War veteran who loses his memory and is subsequently claimed by several families.

The central character, Gaston, was wounded during the war and has spent 18 years in a mental asylum, where he works as a gardener, without any recollection of his former life. At the age of 36, he is confronted with several families who believe he is their missing son or relative. Each attempts to establish his identity through personal memories, family anecdotes and other details from his past.

However, the competing claims are not driven solely by affection or the desire to reunite with a lost family member. Gaston's wealth and the financial advantages associated with his presumed identity also play a part in the families' efforts to claim him.

As Gaston gradually encounters fragments of his past, the question becomes more complicated than simply identifying his family. The man he is told he once was appears radically different from the person he has become. In particular, his encounters with the Renaud family reveal an unpleasant picture of his former personality, forcing him to confront the possibility that recovering his past may also mean reclaiming an identity he no longer wishes to have.

Rather than focusing directly on the battlefield, Anouilh examines the lasting consequences of war on individuals and their relationships. The play questions whether personal identity is determined by one's memories and history or whether an individual can break away from the past and choose who to become. It also exposes the tensions between family loyalty, social expectations and self-interest.



Jean Anouilh (1910–1987) was one of the prominent French dramatists of the 20th century. Born in Bordeaux, France, on June 23, 1910, he developed an early interest in theater and decided to pursue playwriting after seeing a production of Jean Giraudoux's "Siegfried" in 1928. He later worked as secretary to renowned theatre director Louis Jouvet before establishing himself as a playwright.

His extensive body of work encompasses different theatrical styles, ranging from romantic drama and comedy to darker, more unsettling explorations of human nature. Among his best-known plays are "Antigone," "The Lark", "Colombe," and "The Rehearsal". He died in Lausanne, Switzerland, on October 3, 1987.

Kalhor, Erzincan to perform in Turkey

TEHRAN – World-renowned Iranian musician Kayhan Kalhor and celebrated Turkish musician and singer Erdal Erzincan will perform in Turkish cities in December.

They will first perform in Maltepe on December 14 and then in Istanbul on December 16. Their next performance is in Cayirova on December 18 and their last stop will be in Ankara on December 19, ISNA reported.

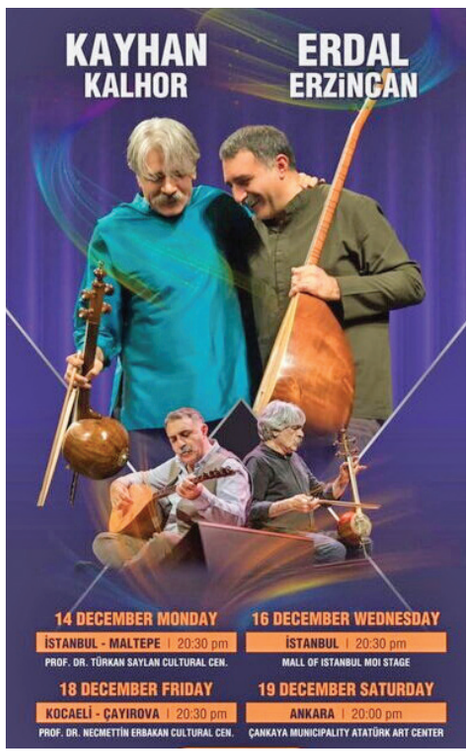
Two masters unite in a spellbinding dialogue between Persian and Turkish traditions. Grammy-winning kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor and renowned baglama player Erdal Erzincan blend improvisation and ancient melodies into music that transcends borders. Their haunting fiery and tender intricate interplay creates an atmosphere of deep reflection and shared humanity.

Grammy Award winner, Womex Artist Award winner and five-time Grammy Award nominee Kalhor is regarded as the world's greatest master of the kamancheh (a spiked fiddle).

One of the most exciting of his innumerable projects and unique collaborations that have attracted audiences around the globe is his duo with the renowned baglama player Erzincan.

Their album "The Wind," in which Iranian classical and Turkish Sufi music were entwined, was released in 2006 by ECM, a Munich-based independent record company, and their collaboration has remained vibrant ever since.

In 2011, the duo recorded a live improvisation album named "How Unseemly It Is to



Follow Blindly," in Busra, Turkey. In August 2013, the album was released through ECM Records in the US.

Kalhor and Erzincan have so far performed together several times at various venues including Tehran's Vahdat Hall, Washington's John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, and Vancouver's Centennial Theater among others.

The classical music traditions of Persia and of Ottoman Turkey that inspire the music of Kalhor and Erzincan share a great deal in common, including the ancient modal compositional system known as maqam, and the idea of improvisation plays a definitive role in their intensely spiritual and emotional performances.

Their music is thoroughly modern and seeks to bring the listener into its trance-like realm by interweaving ecstatic rhythms with sensual melodic phrases. The result is a set of instrumental compositions that flow into each other like one continuous work, with gently drifting passages in which the two instruments echo and improvise on different phrases.

Kalhor, 63, is one of Iran's acclaimed artists. After studying music in Rome, he moved to Canada, where he graduated from the music program at Carleton University in Ottawa.

A master of kamancheh, he is widely known for his stirring improvisations, exquisite compositions, and extensive collaboration with international artists including Chinese American cellist Yo-Yo Ma, New York based string quartet Brooklyn Rider, American string band Kronos Quartet, Argentinean composer Osvaldo Golijov and many other orchestras around the world.

Kalhor has composed works for and played alongside the famous Iranian traditional vocalists Mohammadreza Shajarian and Shahram Nazeri. He has also composed and performed with the Indian sitar player Shujaat Husain Khan and Indian tabla player Swapan Chaudhuri in the group Ghazal.

Cartoon of Day



Palestinian Olives

Cartoonist: Fahd Bahady from Syria

11 foreign documentaries to screen in Cinema Verite's youth section

TEHRAN- Eleven foreign documentaries will be screened in the "Documentary for Teenagers" section of the 20th Iran International Documentary Film Festival, Cinema Verite, which aims to introduce young audiences to documentary cinema from around the world.

The non-competitive section seeks to encourage teenagers to explore documentary filmmaking through experience and dialogue, develop the cinematic knowledge of a new generation, and inspire emerging filmmakers to create works for young audiences, Mehr reported on Saturday.

The selected films include "The Cowboy", directed by André Hörmann from Germany, "Cuidado, niños jugando" by Ana Bárbara Iglesias and Idoia Gastón Sánchez from Argentina, "Zoopark" by Alexey Shabarov from Russia, and "Zico, o Samurai de Quintino", by João Wainer from Brazil.

The section will also feature documentaries from Turkey, Oman, Spain, Palestine, Brazil, Argentina, the United Kingdom, Rwanda, Malaysia and the Netherlands.

The 20th edition of Cinema Verite is scheduled to take place from December 9 to 15 at the Mellat Cineplex in Tehran, with Mohammad Hamidi-Moqaddam serving as festival director.

The Iran International Documentary Film Festival, widely known as Cinema Verite, is Iran's leading event dedicated to documentary filmmaking. Organized annually by the Documentary & Experimental Film Center (DEFC), the festival provides a platform for Iranian and international documentary filmmakers to present their works, exchange ideas and explore contemporary social, cultural and human issues through documentary cinema. Over the years, Cinema Verite has become an important meeting point for documentary filmmakers, industry professionals and audiences, while promoting creative approaches to non-fiction storytelling.

The festival tries to express the relationship between reality and truth through documentary films.