

Ayatollah Khamenei's first position on the attack on Israel:

## Operation 'True Promise' Manifested Willpower of Iranian People in International Arena



### Raisi visit to Pakistan: an opportune moment for cementing cooperation

By Muhammad Mudassir Tipu  
Pakistani Ambassador to Iran

TEHRAN - In a significant milestone in the diplomatic relations between the neighboring countries, Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, accompanied by a high-level delegation of his important cabinet members and senior officers, is set to visit Pakistan from April 22-24, 2024 at the invitation of Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

During the visit, President Ebrahim Raisi would hold meetings with the leadership of Pakistan to explore various avenues of cooperation to further solidify the existing bonds.

Pakistan and Iran enjoy deep historical ties which are anchored on religious, social, and cultural affinities. Both countries share a border of over 900 km, which holds considerable importance for regional connectivity, fostering economic growth and cooperation in various spheres. ▶ Page 2

### Iranian President to visit Pakistan, Sri Lanka

TEHRAN - In a significant diplomatic move, the Iranian president is set to depart for Islamabad early Monday morning, responding to an official invitation from his Pakistani counterpart.

Leading a delegation of high-ranking economic and political officials, Ebrahim Raisi aims to strengthen bilateral ties between the two nations.

As reported by Tasnim, Raisi's itinerary for his two-day visit to Islamabad is packed with crucial engagements. These include a private meeting with Shehbaz Sharif following an official reception by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, alongside a joint session of high-ranking delegations from both countries.

During this diplomatic mission, the Iranian president is scheduled to engage with his Pakistani counterpart, Asif Ali Zardari, and participate in discussions with scholars, intellectuals, traders, and economic activists across various cities of Pakistan.

Upon concluding his visit to Pakistan, Raisi will embark on a one-day journey to Sri Lanka, following an official invitation from President Ranil Wickremesinghe. The highlight of his Sri Lankan visit will be the participation in the opening ceremony and official inauguration of the Uma Oya Multipurpose Project, alongside the Sri Lankan President. ▶ Page 3

### Iran, Hamas military operations have shattered Israel's image of invincibility

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- After the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Six Day War, Israel has always tried to project an image of itself as a powerful entity with an invincible army.

However, the October 7 military operation carried out by the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas and Iran's recent missile and drone attacks against Israel have seriously challenged the regime's aura of invincibility.

Over 1,100 people were killed when Hamas conducted Operation Al-Aqsa Flood in southern Israel and more than 250 others were taken captive. Dozens of the captives still remain in Gaza.

Soon after Hamas launched the surprise attack, Western media acknowledged that the operation exposed the Israeli military's fiasco.

Le Monde wrote at that time that the Israeli army's defenses "collapsed like a house of cards" in the face of the Hamas attack. ▶ Page 5

### Operation True Promise: Gaza must remain the focal point

By Batool Subeiti

BEIRUT-The most important aspect of Iran's retaliatory strike against the Israeli occupation entity on April 13th is the establishment of a new deterrence equation: If Iranian territory is attacked, the response will be inevitable and rapid.

The era whereby the entity can hit Iranian figures or attack Iran maliciously without facing direct consequences is gone. Iran proved through this attack that it has the will, morale, ability and decision to execute what it says. The Israeli occupation entity was not expecting Iran to respond in this way; however, Iran has given its greatest enemy the excuse to enter the equation and act as a facilitating front to ending the war in Gaza; in a similar manner to how Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq have operated as a supporting front these past six months.

It is a credit for Iran that openly states the quantity and type of drones and missiles it was firing towards the entity, knowing well the US satellites were monitoring, with American ships and air defenses that were ready to down the flying objects. Iran was almost sending a challenge to its adversaries. ▶ Page 5

### A war with Iran is not going to happen

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN - If you are a committed Zionist who is deeply disturbed by Iran's attack on the occupied territories and Israel's lackluster response to it, you may be inclined to launch a new propaganda campaign to convince the West of the urgent "need" to confront Iran.

The successful Iranian attack against Israeli positions on April 14 kept the entire region on its toes for over 5 hours. This occurrence could have been the perfect chance for Zionists to finally launch the devastating assaults they had been dying to hit Iran with. But perhaps even to Iranians' surprise, all Israel could do was further humiliate itself by launching a "missile attack" that later got reduced to "limited" action conducted by MAVs once it became clear the regime had failed miserably at striking positions inside Iran.

While this failure may have eased tensions for Western states trying to avoid a war with Iran, it served as a wake-up call for Zionists as it made them realize that Israeli threats against Iran have been a bravado all along. Even worse, Iran's new conditions for the regime have signaled an end to the "Death by a thousand cuts" strategy, and Israel's newfound reliance on the West means the regime now has less room to act recklessly. ▶ Page 3

### U.S. awards Israelis \$26bn for Gaza genocide

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- The U.S. House of Representatives on Saturday approved a massive foreign aid package, including a controversial \$26 billion for the Israeli occupation despite the Gaza genocide.

The bill is backed by the Democrat-controlled Senate, which is expected to be easily passed and then rubber-stamped into law by President Joe Biden within the coming days.

Among the bill's provisions, the Israeli military will receive around \$14 billion, which includes \$3.5 billion to purchase advanced weapons systems.

\$4.4 billion has been allocated for the Israeli forces to obtain other military supplies and U.S. military services. ▶ Page 5



### Madrid march: Stop arming Israel

People have rallied in the Spanish capital to express their anger at Israel's brutalities in the Gaza Strip.

Protesters in Madrid denounced Israel for committing acts of genocide in Gaza.

Carrying the Palestinian flag, they slammed Washington for supporting Tel Aviv's war on Gaza, calling the U.S. and Israel "super terror".

The demonstrators demanded that the U.S. stop arming the regime.

They also called for an immediate ceasefire in the besieged Palestinian territory.

### Project for linking Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia electricity grids to be implemented soon

TEHRAN - An electricity connection project between Iran, Russia and the Republic of Azerbaijan is at the final stage and will be implemented in the near future, an official at Iran's Energy Ministry said.

The implementation of this electricity project will provide the possibility to import electricity when the country needs it and export the surplus electricity to these countries, the head of the international office of the ministry stated.

Mojtaba Akbari also pointed to the possibility of exporting the electricity generated from renewable sources to the three neighboring countries of Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan and noted that the Turkish minister of energy visited Iran. ▶ Page 4



# Iran is victorious in the field

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

In a commentary, Hamshahri discussed the change of approach in the Iran-Israel conflict and wrote: Although about a week has passed since the implementation of the True Promise operation, the investigation of the various angles of this operation and the consequences and developments resulting from it are still at the top of the analyses of international think tanks. It is an operation that observers consider to be a crossing of long-term patterns between Tehran and Tel Aviv. In the first encounter with the shock caused by Iran's drones and missiles attack on some military targets in the occupied territories, the decision-makers in Washington and Tel Aviv put the approach of "achievement-manufacturing" on the agenda and tried to make Tel Aviv look successful in "repelling Iran's attack" and show it as a victorious on the field but the point here is that the True Promise operation while stabilizing Iran's deterrence power showed Iran's strategic power in the region. According to Susan Maloney, Vice President of the Brookings Institution and Director of the Foreign Policy Program, the Middle East seems to have been freed from an important danger, and after Iran's drone-missile attack on Israel, Washington hopes that peace will be established in the conflict between Tehran and Tel Aviv.

## Iran: Collapse of the fake hegemony

In an analysis, the Iran newspaper discussed the collapse of the fake regime's hegemony and said: The Zionist regime tried to respond to the True Promise operation which destroyed the fake hegemony of this regime by attacking one of Iran's military bases.

But Amir Abdollahian described this attack as follows: "The flight of two or three quadcopters in Isfahan is like a toy that our children use in Iran." Despite the efforts of the Western media circles to exaggerate the Israeli attack in Isfahan, the timely interception of the Iranian military base's anti-aircraft defense has left nothing but silence and anger for the Israeli authorities. This means that Iran's upper hand in the "field" can make Tel Aviv the definite loser of any possible conflict.

Therefore, when the American network ABC News quoted an American official and claimed that Israeli missiles had hit a center in Iran, no reliable media confirmed this news. Even Ben Gvir, the minister of internal security of the Zionist regime, simply preferred to react to the recent events by saying, "The Iranians are mocking us after this action".

## 'Iran is trying to create a new normal in the region'

TEHRAN- An analyst affiliated with the Atlantic Council think tank, stating that Iran has created a new normal in the region with its direct attack on Israel, called for the management of the situation by the United States.

William F. Wechsler, an analyst at the Atlantic Council, in assessing the regional developments, stated that as Iran carefully considered how and where to respond to Israel's attack in Damascus, the United States and Israel must take action to manage the situation after Iran's response.

He believes that Tehran's goal was clearly to prevent Israel from targeting its diplomatic facilities again, as they were safe places for diplomats and experts to use.

Wechsler stated, "Iran, through its attack, operationally sent an undeniable message that it does not want to escalate the situation further and ignite a real war in the region. With this goal in mind, Tehran chose long-range attacks that were defensible and emphasized in its messages for the United States to stay out of the issue."

The American think tank report claimed that the current situation has ended in Iran's favor after October 7. In the current regional circumstances, Iran's nuclear program has moved out of the spotlight, continues to progress unhindered, and has even crossed points that were previously deemed unacceptable. In addition, Iran has so far prevented any real threat to Hezbollah, which serves as a bulwark against Israel's attack on its nuclear infrastructure.

He added that Iran has created a new precedent by directly attacking Israel, and is now capable of doing so directly from Iranian soil. Therefore,

## Ham Mihan: The policies of Iran and Turkey should complement each other

Ham Mihan dedicated its headline to the policies of Tehran and Ankara regarding Palestine and wrote: Hadi Borhani, an analyst of Israeli issues, said in a conversation with this newspaper that Turkey's active support for the Palestinians is defined in the financial, political, and international fields. What Turkey does not want to interfere is military issues. Financial aid is also done as much as possible so that it does not harm Ankara's interactions and relations with other countries. If we look at the geopolitics of the region, we realize that Iran and Turkey are important countries in the Palestinian issue. However, the roles of Tehran and Ankara in this field are different. Iran is very active in the field of supporting Palestinian militant groups in the military dimension, and Turkey supports the Palestinians politically, internationally and to some extent financially. The role of these two countries can complement each other and if coordination between Tehran and Ankara happens, it will ultimately benefit the Palestinians. If the understanding spreads in the two countries that the two sides complement each other, something positive will happen in the Palestinian issue.

## Etemad: Trying to change the phase from the field to diplomacy

In a conversation with Ali Bigdeli, an expert on international affairs, Etemad dealt with the entry of new actors, including Egypt and Jordan, into indirect negotiations between Iran and Israel. The paper said: The best way in any equation in the field of foreign policy is negotiation and dialogue. This path can reduce the anger between Iran and Israel and even America. Iranian Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian's visit to New York and his unannounced meeting with Egypt's Foreign Minister indicate that Egypt is acting as a mediator in this crisis. Even some European officials secretly changed this situation with secret diplomacy so that Israel would not take unconventional action. The situation that was formed after Iran's attack on Israel is the result of the efforts made in the diplomatic channel. This is the right thing to do. It seems that part of our differences with Israel has ended for now. However, Israel's enmity will not end and may continue to hit Iran's regional arms. This is a separate discussion, but the differences and conflicts between Iran and Israel have been reduced to a great extent as a result of diplomacy.

Iran has created a key point, something it has gradually strengthened over the decades.

The report emphasized that Iran has normalized its assistance to its proxies, as it has been doing in Yemen for some time, and has gained new capabilities through Yemen's Ansarullah movement to close the Bab al-Mandab Strait whenever it wants. Tehran has also demonstrated its ability to threaten Israelis through Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The writer of the report stressed that Tehran has successfully created a norm and precedent in terms of directly attacking Israelis, which could be valuable for Iran if it acquires nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Iran has shown both the limitations of the United States and its own reliable capabilities. While Washington has been committed to Israel's security for decades, the direct threat to Israel now comes without a military response from the United States.

In another part of the report, it is mentioned that Iran's recent actions have alerted the Arab states in the Persian Gulf not to rely on the unreliable and ineffective security umbrella of the United States.

The Atlantic Council expert concluded by stating that "Iran's goals were rational and calculated, and Tehran played with an understanding of its strengths and the weaknesses of its adversaries."

He called for Israel and the United States not to allow Iran to achieve the aforementioned goals, instead Washington should let Israel take action against Hamas, pursue the normalization process, and change the region's geopolitics against Iran.

# Iran, Oman mull plans for Gaza ceasefire

TEHRAN- The Omani foreign minister denounced the destabilizing actions of the Israeli regime in the region, stating that the only option to reestablish regional stability is to put a stop to the war crimes committed against Gaza.

The most recent events in the region were addressed over the phone on Saturday between Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi and his Iranian counterpart.

The senior Omani diplomat denounced the Zionist regime's destabilizing acts and emphasized that stopping the Zionists' war crimes in Gaza is the only way to bring stability back to the region.

Hossein Amir Abdollahian expressed gratitude to the Sultanate of Oman for taking a firm stance on the latest events in the region.

The two ministers emphasized the necessity of international efforts to bring an immediate truce to the region, terminate the atrocities committed by the Zionist regime in Gaza, and provide humanitarian help to the Gazan people.



Since October 7, 2023, Israeli attacks on Gaza have resulted in at least 34,049 Palestinian deaths and 76,901 injuries.

During a phone call with his counterparts from Turkey, Syria, Saudi Arabia, India, Qatar, Egypt, Malta, the UK and Russia, Amir Abdollahian reiterated Iran's right to lawful self-defense.

The Iranian foreign minister has increased diplomatic efforts following Tehran's military action against Israel in response to the Zionist regime's attack on Iran's consulate in Damascus.

Amir Abdollahian clarified that Iran purposefully limited its retaliatory operation against the

Israeli regime, characterizing it as a preventive measure meant to chastise and caution the Zionist regime.

Amir Abdollahian made it abundantly evident to the foreign diplomats that Tehran's right to a legitimate defense and international law, as guaranteed by Article 51 of the UN Charter, were fully upheld by Iran's armed reaction against the Israeli regime.

The Iranian foreign minister reaffirmed Iran's opposition to war and tensions, describing the Zionist regime as the primary cause of insecurity and instability in the region and advocating for coordinated measures to put an end

## U.S., Israeli regime indignant over IRGC might, top general asserts

TEHRAN- Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri, the Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, praised the "might and influence" of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as the cause of the intense resentment that the U.S., Zionist regime, and their supporters have against the revolutionary force.

In a message on Saturday, Major General Baqeri praised IRGC Commander Major General Hossein Salami on the anniversary of the foundation of the IRGC.

The top commander also stressed that the IRGC's strength, influence, and resolve to foil the evil plans of the U.S., the Zionist regime, and other regional and international allies are the reasons behind the enmity and animosity felt by the enemies of the Iranian people toward the organization.

He also praised the Iranian armed forces' April 13 "Truthful Promise Operation" on Israeli military targets as a brilliant punitive action against the criminal and fraudulent Zionist regime.

The senior general hailed the IRGC for its pivotal role in Iran's development across multiple domains and for providing support to the Iranian people during difficult times.

He further stated that the IRGC has served as an inspiration to those who are interested in the Islamic Revolution and has grown into a powerful

force capable of opposing Zionism and the hegemonic system's threats.

The Israeli regime's bombing on April 1 that targeted seven Iranian military officers and advisors in Syria prompted the IRGC Aerospace Force to unleash tens of missiles and drones in the early hours of April 13.

According to reliable information, Iranian missiles striking Israeli sites represent that the retaliatory operation has been far more effective than anticipated, the commander of the IRGC stated.

## Iran Civil Defense assesses nation readiness for possible threats

Iran's Civil Defense Organization's second permanent committee meeting took place on Saturday with the aim of assessing the executive bodies' readiness to counter possible hostile threats.

The committee's members attended the meeting, which is the second since the year's beginning and was presided over by General Baqeri.

The secretary of the permanent committee and head of Iran's Civil Defense Organization, Brigadier General Gholam-Reza Jalali, gave a report on the defensive actions taken by the Iranian executive apparatuses in response to recent regional and national events at the meeting.

## Army, IRGC to respond decisively to trespassing red lines: commander

Praising the "holy" unity between the Iranian Army and the IRGC over the past 45 years, Sayyari said this togetherness has remarkably increased the armed forces' combat readiness and transformed the two military units into a "solid foundation and an impregnable fortress" in defending the country.

The Iranian commander also underlined that the unity strengthened "the unbreakable will of the Islamic Ummah across the geography of resistance."

Sayyari stressed that the Army and IRGC played an "unparalleled" role in the fight against terrorist

groups, especially the destruction of Daesh, as well as the neutralization of conspiracies by global arrogance.

Sayyari said the unity of the Army and the IRGC has put in despair Iran's enemies and their regional and extra-regional allies, especially Israel's child-killing regime.

"Any desperate attempt and trespassing on the borders of Islamic Iran and crossing the red lines of the holy Islamic Establishment would be met with True Promise... and a decisive, crushing and regrettable response," he added, referring to the victorious anti-Israel operation by the Iranian armed forces last week.

to the Zionist regime's atrocities and genocidal crimes in the Gaza Strip.

He also said that Iran supports the development of security and tranquility throughout the region, spanning from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, as well as long-term peace in Gaza.

In an interview with NBC News on Friday night in New York, he said that "what happened last night (Thursday night) was not a strike, and they were more like toys that our children play with – not drones."

Amir Abdollahian also stressed that Tehran was not planning to respond unless Israel launches a significant attack.

"As long as there is no new adventurism by Israel against our interests, then we are not going to have any new reactions," he said.

But the foreign minister warned that if Israel did attack Iran, the response would be swift and severe.

"If Israel takes a decisive action against my country and this is proven to us," he said, "our response will be immediate and to the maximum and will cause them to regret it."

For his part, Baqeri demanded that the executive bodies follow the guidelines set forth by the permanent committee in order to preserve and enhance their readiness.

Among the topics that were agreed during the meeting were keeping an eye on the enemy's cyber activity and taking appropriate defensive action, as well as funding civil defense programs.

Other topics covered at the meeting included reviewing the nation's civil defense goals for the executive bodies and exchanging agreements; the approval of these items was pushed to the next meeting.

The chief of staff of the Iranian Armed Forces presides over the permanent committee of Iran's Civil Defense Organization, which is the country's highest decision-making body in the civil defense sector.

Decisions made by this committee are legally binding on all governmental, non-governmental, and military entities.

Iran's infrastructure has lately been the target of many cyberattacks, especially after the country-wide riots in September 2022 that were supported by foreign powers.

The Islamic Republic has managed to thwart many of those attempting to disrupt public services.

From page 1 ► Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan as an independent state, while in 1979, Pakistan was the first country to recognize the Revolutionary Establishment in Iran.

Pakistan-Iran relations have witnessed an upward trajectory over the last few years. President Raisi felicitated Prime Minister Muhammad Shebaz Sharif on assumption of office for the second time, 5 March 2024.

Pakistan and Iran possess immense potential for trade and investment collaboration, given their strategic geographical locations and abundant natural resources. The visit presents an opportune moment for leaders from both sides to explore avenues for leveraging each other's strengths in sectors such as energy, agriculture, and infrastructure development. By deepening economic ties, both countries can unlock new opportunities for growth and prosperity,

benefiting not only their respective economies but also the broader region.

President Raisi's visit is expected to focus on enhancing connectivity between Pakistan and Iran. The development of road infrastructure can significantly bolster trade and people-to-people exchanges, facilitating smoother movement of goods and fostering greater regional integration. Both countries agreed last year to enhance the bilateral trade to the tune of US\$ 5 billion by 2028.

In addition to economic cooperation, security and regional stability are likely to feature prominently in discussions between President Raisi and the Pakistani leadership. Both countries face common challenges, including border security issues and the threat of terrorism. Collaborative efforts in intelligence sharing, border management, and counterterrorism measures would help promote peace and stability in the region.

Iran has been extending vocal support on the Kashmir issue at the highest level. The Supreme Leader, on a number of occasions, has spoken against the Indian Government's policies on Kashmir.

President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Pakistan underscores the importance of bilateral relations and the shared commitment of both countries to deepen cooperation across various domains. By leveraging their geographic proximity and historical ties, Pakistan and Iran will forge a stronger partnership that benefits not only their citizens but also contributes to peace and prosperity in the broader region. As both nations navigate the complexities of the contemporary geopolitical landscape, their continued engagement and collaboration are essential for realizing their shared goals of development, stability, and progress.



Ayatollah Khamenei's first position on the attack on Israel:

# Operation ‘True Promise’ manifested willpower of Iranian people in international arena

TEHRAN- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei met with a group of senior commanders of Iran's Armed Forces on Sunday. During the meeting, the Leader sincerely expressed his gratitude to the Armed Forces for their efforts and accomplishments in recent events.

“By God's grace, the Armed Forces exhibited a positive image of their abilities and authority, as well as a commendable representation of the Iranian nation, showcasing the emergence of the Iranian nation's willpower in the international arena,” he emphasized.

While extending his congratulations for Army Day and also the anniversary of the establishment of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, Ayatollah Khamenei underscored that the recent achievements of the country's Armed Forces have created a sense of glory and greatness about Islamic Iran before the eyes of the world and global observers. Ayatollah Khamenei stressed that



the number of missiles launched or hitting their targets, which has been a focus of the enemy, is secondary. The primary issue, he pointed out, was demonstrating the emergence of the willpower of the Iranian people and the Armed Forces on the global stage and this is what has upset the other side.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution appreciated the thoughtful planning exhibited by the Armed Forces in their actions. “Various incidents are associated with both costs and benefits. What's important is to minimize

the costs and increase the gains through careful planning, and this is exactly what the Armed Forces successfully accomplished in recent occurrences,” he highlighted.

While appreciating the efforts and activities of the Revolutionary Guards, the Iranian Army, and the police forces, Ayatollah Khamenei advised and reminded the Armed Forces to continue their efforts and endeavors to confront the hostilities and the enemies by relying on innovatory and creative methods. “You should not stop for even a moment because stopping signifies

regression. Therefore, innovations in our armaments and strategies, as well as recognizing the enemy's tactics, must always remain on the agenda.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution further highlighted the necessity of upholding the Iranian nation's reputation on the global stage. “Ensure that in recognizing talented and skilled individuals, you also maintain strong faith in the Almighty God and place your trust in Him, understanding that His promise to defend the believers is definite and inviolable,” he added.

During the assembly, Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces, also presented a brief report on the current state of preparedness and prowess of the Armed Forces while referring to the significant developments of 1402 SH and also the initial weeks of 1403 SH [2023-2024], including Operation Al-Aqsa Flood and Operation True Promise as punitive measures against the Zionist regime.

## A war with Iran is not going to happen

By Soheila Zarfame

TEHRAN - If you are a committed Zionist who is deeply disturbed by Iran's attack on the occupied territories and Israel's lackluster response to it, you may be inclined to launch a new propaganda campaign to convince the West of the urgent “need” to confront Iran.

The successful Iranian attack against Israeli positions on April 14 kept the entire region on its toes for over 5 hours. This occurrence could have been the perfect chance for Zionists to finally launch the devastating assaults they had been dying to hit Iran with. But perhaps even to Iranians’ surprise, all Israel could do was further humiliate itself by launching a “missile attack” that later got reduced to “limited” action conducted by MAVs once it became clear the regime had failed miserably at striking positions inside Iran.

While this failure may have eased tensions for Western states trying to avoid a war with Iran, it served as a wake-up call for Zionists as it made them realize that Israeli threats against Iran have been a bravado all along. Even worse, Iran's new conditions for the regime have signaled an end to the “Death by a thousand cuts” strategy, and Israel's newfound reliance on the West means the regime now has less room to act recklessly.

In an unprecedented situation like this, the only option left for Zionists is to come up with something new that would provoke the West into a conflagration with Iran. However, much to their dismay, it seems they are left with the

same good old narratives that are unlikely to prove persuasive.

One of these attempts at finding new grounds for war with Iran could be seen on the Wall Street Journal on April 20. A longtime advocator of direct American strikes on Iran with deep links to AIPAC came hand in hand with an Iranian oppositionist to warn the West about a grim future in an article titled “Iran's nuclear Calculus has now become more dangerous”.

The article contains remarkably fresh falsehoods, even when considering its source as Zionists. It draws a parallel between Tehran's alliances with regional resistance groups and Britain's colonial rule in West Asia. The authors, however, fail to explain how the British regime's history of violence, oppression, and exploitation in Arab nations equates to Iran's logistical backing of anti-colonial movements.

In a desperate attempt to blame everything on Iran, the article then miraculously condemns Iran for the Al-Aqsa Storm operation as well as the devastating effects of the war in Gaza. It argues that while Iran may have not “greenlighted” the October 7 Palestinian operation, it surely benefits from Israel's prolonged killing campaign in Gaza, while purposefully omitting Tehran's diplomatic endeavors to halt the violence in the besieged region over the last seven months.

The only thing the authors don't blame on Iran is Washington's vetoes of the UN Security Council resolution advocating for peace in the

war-stricken enclave.

After demonizing Iran as the root of instability and all evil, the article suggests that the country may be contemplating the development of nuclear weapons. It highlights statements from the IRGC about potentially altering Iran's nuclear doctrine without acknowledging that these remarks were made in response to Israel's feared preparations for an attack on Iranian nuclear sites. The article also fails to mention that Iran's concerns were valid, given the Israeli strike on April 19 that appeared to target the Natanz nuclear facilities. It then talks about how the latest Israeli attack on Iranian soil may have amplified the Leader of the Islamic Republic's predilection for nukes.

### Why the West won't be fooled

It has now become evident that Iran does not need nuclear weapons to protect itself against Israel and the regime's failed attack on Iranian territory perfectly encapsulates that.

The West also knows that Iran does not have the willingness to go nuke, as the country agreed to ink the JCPOA and even despite the West's full violation of the pact, did not fully abandon it.

If the West one day concludes that Tehran might pursue nuclear weapon, it can take far easier paths to stop that process. Instead of launching an attack against Iran and plunging the entire region into chaos, Western states can simply return to the JCPOA, and save their dollars for their more important conflicts Russia and China.

With financing provided by the Sri Lankan government, over 400 Iranian engineers have played a pivotal role in its implementation, contributing from consultation and design to execution.

Back in August 2023, Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ali Sabry visited Iran and met with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir Abdollahian in Tehran.

During a joint press conference, the top Iranian diplomat called the visit “a turning point in Iran-Sri Lanka ties.”

Commercial Services, commenced on Saturday in Baghdad and will continue for four days.

This 12th session of the exhibitions, under the patronage of Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, facilitated international cooperation and the exchange of defense technologies.

In recent years, Iranian military experts and engineers have made noteworthy breakthroughs in producing a diverse range of indigenous equipment, achieving self-sufficiency for the armed forces. Iranian officials have reaffirmed the nation's steadfast commitment to enhancing military capabilities, including missile power, for defense and deterrence purposes only.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has on several occasions called for efforts to boost Iran's defense capabilities.

Despite historical limitations, Iran witnessed an unprecedented \$1 billion revenue in military exports last year, marking a significant shift. This milestone underscores Iran's growing influence in the international market, setting the stage for continued advancements in military technology and strategic capabilities.

## Title chase heats up in Persian Gulf Pro League

TEHRAN - The 24th week of the Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) concluded with victories for both Esteghlal and Persepolis, maintaining the Blues' one-point lead at the top of the table. With just six matches remaining, the title race is heating up, leaving fans on the edge of their seats.

Both Esteghlal and Persepolis now face a pivotal week, as they prepare to go head-to-head with fellow powerhouses Sepahan and Tractor. The team that emerge victorious from these crucial encounters will hold a significant advantage in the title race.

After the 25th week, Esteghlal, with Javad Nekounam as their coach, will compete against Zob Ahan, Foolad, Nasaji, Gol Gohar, and Paykan. It's worth mentioning that none of these opponents are currently in the top half. Esteghlal could take advantage of this favorable schedule to strengthen their lead.

The upcoming matches for Persepolis, led by Brazilian coach Osmar Vieira, include Nasaji, Havadar, Esteghlal Khuzestan, Shams Azar, and Mes Rafsanjan.

### \*Home advantage and the fight for survival

Esteghlal will enjoy three home matches to close out the season, while Persepolis will also have the same number of games at the Azadi Stadium. Additionally, Persepolis' final match of the season will be at home, potentially allowing for a larger and more passionate crowd.

It's worth noting that Persepolis will face three teams from the bottom of the table – Paykan, Esteghlal Khuzestan, and Nassaji – who are all battling relegation. These matches could prove to be more challenging than expected, adding another layer of intrigue to the title race.

### \*The relegation battle

At the other end of the table, the fight for survival is intensifying. Foolad (21 points), Esteghlal Khuzestan (20 points), Nassaji (19 points), and Sanat Naft (16 points) find themselves in precarious positions. Sanat Naft, in particular, are facing the prospect of relegation for the second consecutive year.

As the Persian Gulf Pro League enters its final stretch, the tension is palpable. With both Persepolis and Esteghlal vying for the coveted title and the relegation battle heating up, the remaining matches promise to be filled with drama and excitement. Stay tuned for the latest updates as the Iranian football season reaches its climax.

## Azmoun expected to play against Bologna

TEHRAN - Sardar Azmoun is expected to return to Daniele De Rossi's team within the next few days.

The Iranian striker has been missing for the past three weeks with an injury suffered while on international duty in Turkmenistan.

The initial prognosis estimated a recovery period of up to 4 weeks.

Over the last few days, Azmoun has ramped up his workload in training, reports IL Tempo, and was partially involved in group training activities on Tuesday.

He is expected to be called up for Roma's upcoming match with Bologna in Serie A on Monday.

## Iran start 2024 CAFA U18 Women's Championship in style

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Uzbekistan 4-2 at the 2024 CAFA U18 Women's Championship on Sunday.

Maedeh Birang, Tania Jahanshahi, Maryam Dini and Somayeh Esmaeili were on target for Iran.

The Persian girls are also scheduled to play Turkmenistan (Monday), Tajikistan (Friday) and Kyrgyzstan (Sunday).

The tournament plays an important role and

aims to support the general popularization of the Women's game in the region and provide platform to prepare the teams of Central Asian member associations for the Continental competition AFC U20 Women's Championship as well as showcasing their skills and talents through all CAFA media channels.

CAFA contributes their regional football development initiatives which is further supporting the vision of FIFA making the game truly global and vision of AFC to making football the number one sport in the continent.

The tournament takes place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan from April 19 to 28.

A total of five teams compete in an exciting single round-robin format.

## Iran futsal coach Shamsaei believes in his players

TEHRAN – Iran futsal team head coach Vahid Shamsaei believes that his players will emerge victorious in every match if they play to their abilities.

Iran faced a tough challenge for the first time, needing to overturn a one-goal deficit to secure a 5-3 victory against a determined Bahrain side on Saturday.

Head coach Vahid Shamsaei acknowledged that his team initially struggled to maintain their composure in the match.

“The game became difficult for us due to the pressure our players felt about advancing to the next round,” said Shamsaei. “Initially, we performed well in the first, second and third minutes. However, after conceding a goal, we shifted to a defensive stance.

“I believe in my players, they played well against Bahrain. We face a difficult situation as this is a World Cup qualifying match. I want to tell my players that if they play to their abilities, we will win,” he added.

## Iranian women rowers secure 2024 Paris berths

TEHRAN – Fatemeh Mojalal in the single sculls and Mahsa Javar and Zeynab Norouzi in the lightweight women's double secured their berth at the 2024 Olympic Games.

In the 2024 World Rowing Asian and Oceanian Olympic and Paralympic Qualification Regatta held in Chungju, South Korea, the Iranian rowers grabbed their seat to the Paris Olympics.

The women's single sculls A-Final was easily won by the reigning Olympic silver medalist, Anna Prakatzen, now representing Uzbekistan, with 7:31.28 ahead of Japan's Shioh Yonekawa 7:35.93 and Fatemeh Mojallal (7:37.07) after the 2,000-meter race.

Behind them, in order, came in Joanie Delgado of the Philippines, Hue Pham Thi of Vietnam and Aisyah Mohamed Rafa'ee of Singapore.

The lightweight women's double sculls was won by Japan, just two seconds ahead of Iran who had dominated the race until the final stages with 7:04.78, allowing both crews to secure a spot for Paris. Uzbekistan team came third.

## Sepahan beat Malavan in away match: PGPL

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team kept their title hopes alive with a 2-1 win over Malavan on Sunday in the 2023/24 Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL).

In the match held in Bandar Anzali's Ghayeghran Stadium, Mohammadreza Soleymann was on target for the hosts in the 11th minute but Ramin Rezaeian leveled the score from the penalty spot just before the break.

Shahriar Moghanlou made it 2-1 in the 73rd minute. Earlier in the day, Zob Ahan defeated Aluminum 2-1 in Isfahan.

With six weeks remaining, Sepahan are third with 45 points, eight points behind leaders Esteghlal.



## Iranian President to visit Pakistan, Sri Lanka

From Page 1 ► The Uma Oya Multipurpose Project, featuring two dams and a 120-megawatt power plant constructed by Iranian contractors, is hailed as one of Sri Lanka's largest civil engineering endeavors, valued at approximately \$500 million.

The purpose of the project is to improve irrigation of 5000 acres of agricultural land, transferring 145 million cubic meters of water and generating 290 GW/h of power in a year.

performance, the Mohajer-6 has become a significant asset for military forces in need of reliable unmanned aerial vehicles.

The International Security and Defense Exhibition, attended by military dignitaries from 22 nations, including representatives from the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Support of the Islamic Republic, showcased various military industry achievements such as Mohajer drones, Gaza Long-Range Drones, Dehlawiyeh anti-armor missiles, air defense systems, and personal weaponry.

Iran also displayed anti-UAV systems, border guard systems, and thermal cameras at the event.

Furthermore, Iranian electronic industries demonstrated expertise in electronic warfare, anti-drone systems, border surveillance, and thermal imaging technology, emphasizing Iran's commitment to innovation and defense capabilities internationally.

The exhibition saw the participation of 112 international military equipment companies, underlining its significance on the global stage.

The exhibition, organized by the United Company for Exhibitions and Conferences in coordination with the General Company for Exhibitions and



## Project for linking Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia electricity grids to be implemented soon

From page 1 ► last month and asked his Iranian counterpart to establish cooperation in the field of renewables and also exchange of the electricity.

Expert-level talks for the exchange of electricity have started between Iran and Turkey, he said, adding that detailed information on this issue will be announced within the next two months, IRNA reported.

Back on January 31, the head of the Iran Electricity Grid Management Company said the technical platform for exchanging electricity between Iran and Turkey has been prepared using the world's latest technologies.

Mehdi Moqimzadeh pointed out that new technologies will make it possible for the country to export electricity to Europe.

Upon the signing of a contract for the operation of a 400-kV BtB HVDC power transmission line between Khoy in Iran and Van in Turkey, it is possible to exchange electricity between the two countries with the most modern technologies, he noted.

He went on to say that the electricity exchange between the two neighbors will strengthen cooperation and economic development, adding that this provides diversification and reduces dependency on other energy sources.

## Iran, Syria call for implementing joint industrial projects

TEHRAN - An Iranian delegation currently in Damascus has met with Syrian government officials to discuss the implementation process of joint industrial projects, with both sides emphasizing the need to boost economic cooperation, especially among private companies of the two countries.

Iranian Ambassador to Syria Hossein Akbari and his accompanying delegation met with Syrian officials such as Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Mohammad Samer al-Khalil, Minister of Industries Abdul Qadir Jokhdar, and Fadi al-Khalil, the head of Syria's International Cooperation and Planning Organization, IRNA reported citing Al

Ekhbariya website.

Samer al-Khalil told the Iranian delegation that joint investment projects are an important opportunity to realize the common interests of the two countries and a way to encourage Syrian companies to cooperate with Iranian companies that have scientific and practical experience as well as excellent facilities.

Abdul Qadir Jokhdar informed that the meeting focused on joint projects related to the production of tires, tractors, and milk powder, which was previously discussed by Syrian Prime Minister Hossein Arnous during his trip to Tehran.

## 2,000 worn-out taxis to be replaced with EVs in Tehran

TEHRAN - Municipal authorities in Tehran have decided to replace 2,000 worn-out taxis with electric vehicles (EVs).

Shadi Maleki, the caretaker of the Taxi Organization of Tehran, said on Saturday that the measure takes place as part of plans to renovate the city's transportation fleet to help improve air quality.

She said that based on an agreement between the Taxi Organization of Tehran and Modiran Vehicle Manufacturing Company, owners of taxis older than 10 years can register for a supportive

package to receive EVs in exchange for their taxis.

Some 27,500 taxis, as well as 5,000 vans, are scheduled to join Tehran's transportation fleet this year, the official said, adding that some 10,000 electric taxis will be supplied to the applicants in the first phase.

The head of Modiran Vehicle Manufacturing Company has also said that an agreement has been signed for the supply of 2,000 cars. He noted that in the first phase, the company will supply 1,000 vehicles.

## Tehran, Doha to ink new contracts in energy sector

TEHRAN - Iran and Qatar plan to ink new contracts in the near future to boost bilateral ties in the energy sector, an official with Iran's Ministry of Energy said.

Connecting the electricity grids of Iran and Qatar is one of the main measures taken for the development of the electricity cooperation, Mojtaba Akbari, the director of Iran's Ministry of Energy for International Affairs said.

## TEDPIX rises over 27,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN - TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 27,146 points to 2,312,990 on Sunday, which is the second day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges,

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

# Annual agro-food exports increase over 22%



TEHRAN - The value of Iran's exports of agricultural and foodstuff products increased by 22.5 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the spokesman of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade said.

According to Ruhollah Latifi, Iranian producers managed to export about \$6.3 billion worth of the mentioned products in the said year, IRNA reported.

As reported, agro-food products accounted for 12.8 percent of the country's total non-oil exports in the previous year.

Iraq was the top destination for Iran's agro-food products in the mentioned year importing \$1.986 billion worth of the said items. The Arab neighbor accounted for 31.5 percent of the total exports of food and agricultural products from Iran.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood in second place, importing \$751 million of the mentioned products, followed by Russia with \$521.5 million.

The value of Iran's total foreign trade including oil and technical engineering services reached \$153.178 billion in the last Iranian calendar year.

According to the Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA Mohammad Rezvanifar, the value of the Islamic Republic's trade with the partners in the previous year increased by

2.6 percent compared to the same period last year.

The official put the country's non-oil exports, excluding exports of electricity, crude oil, and techno-engineering services, at 136.4 million tons worth \$49.33 billion which shows a 9.82 percent rise in terms of tonnage and an 8.87 percent decline in terms of value.

Iran exported \$35.87 billion of crude oil, \$370 million of electricity, and \$1.293 billion of technical engineering services in the mentioned year, according to Rezvanifar.

According to him, during this period, 48.8 million tons of petrochemical products worth \$19.4 billion were also exported, which shows a decrease of 11.32 percent and 28.59 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively.

During this period, liquefied natural gas with \$3.9 billion, liquefied propane with \$3.62 billion,

and bitumen-oil with \$2.19 billion were Iran's top exported items.

Iran's top export destination during this period was China with \$13.915 billion worth of imports from the Islamic Republic, followed by Iraq with \$9.215 billion, the UAE with over \$6.611 billion, Turkey with \$4.16 billion, and India with \$2.17 billion.

The official put the average customs value of each ton of exported goods at \$362 which has decreased by 17 percent compared to the preceding year.

During this period, 39 million tons of goods worth \$66.28 billion were also imported into the country, which shows an increase of 4.39 percent in terms of weight and 77.9 percent in terms of value, he said.

The country's top five sources of imports in the previous year were the UAE with \$20.782 billion, China with \$18.545 billion, Turkey with

\$7.541 billion, Germany with \$2.155 billion, and India with \$1.917 billion worth of imports.

Corn, mobile phones, and gold ingots were the top three imported items followed by soybeans, automobile parts, sunflower seeds, and safflower were the five main items imported by the Islamic Republic.

Rezvanifar said the average customs value of each ton of imported goods increased by \$5.16 and reached \$1,697.

Iran's trade with its neighbors also increased by 1.35 percent in the previous year to reach \$60.773 billion, according to Rezvanifar.

He put the weight of non-oil trade with the neighboring countries at 95.924 million tons in the said period, which was 2.45 percent less than the figure for the preceding year.

During the past year, Iran exported \$28.288 billion worth of goods to its neighbors, while importing commodities valued at \$32.485 billion.

Iran's exports to neighboring countries decreased by 9.51 percent in the mentioned year; while the imports from neighboring countries increased by 13.17 percent.

He named Iraq, the UAE, Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan as the top importers of Iranian goods among the neighboring countries, and the UAE, Turkey, Russia, Oman, and Pakistan as the main sources of imports in the previous.

## NIOC inks contract with local firm to collect seismic data in northwestern Iran

TEHRAN - The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has signed a contract with domestic firm Neign Afaq Kish Energy Development Company (TENCO) to implement 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional seismic operations in the north and northwestern Iran over a two-year period.

The contract was signed between the Head of the NIOC Directorate of Exploration Mehdi Fakour, and TENCO Head Abdolrasoul Aghajani on Tuesday, April 16, Shana reported.

The contract covers an area spanning 900 square kilometers and 1550 square kilometers respectively to collect 3-dimensional and 2-dimensional seismic data in Moughan region in the northwest of the country.

Based on the contract, 15 million euros and 10 trillion rials (about \$ 20 million), will be spent to carry out the operations that finally will lead to the clarification of the oil and gas exploratory situation in the region.

At the signing ceremony of the contract, TENCO's managing director thanked the NICO's Directorate of Exploration for concluding the contract, saying the two sides have been working with each other for fifteen years to help the oil industry as far as it concerns making progress and providing services.

"We hope that the completion of this project will be another step in the direction of attaining our mutual goal which is the oil industry prosperity," he added.

## Foreign journalists pay visit to Museum of Communist Party of China

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING- Journalists from around the world paid a visit to the Museum of Communist Party of China (CPC), located near Beijing Olympic Park in the northern part of the city, on Thursday (April 18).

The museum made its debut to the general public on July 15, 2021, attracting thousands of visitors to pay tribute to the CPC's centenary history.

The museum completed construction in May 2021, following 1,000 days of work by nearly 50,000 people.

The magnificent architecture takes the shape of the Chinese character "gong," which looks like a horizontal H. "Gong" means workers or labor in Chinese, implying that the CPC is the vanguard of the Chinese working class, the Chinese people, and the Chinese nation.

A site devoted to permanent and comprehensive exhibitions of the Party's history, it shows how the CPC has united and led the Chinese people in blazing ground-breaking paths and demonstrates the fine spirit and precious experience drawn from within.

More than 2,600 pictures and 3,500 pieces or sets of exhibits are on display. Among the items is the manuscript of Karl Marx's notes from Brussels.

It should be noted that the foreign journalists' visit to the museum was organized by China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC).

CIPCC, under the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), has initiated a program to build a platform for the media from countries around the world, especially developing countries,

to observe China and study development in this country.

The program aimed at media exchange was halted in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 epidemic.

In each edition of the program, journalists from all around the world gather together to get familiar with the modern China and exchange their experiences in the field of journalism.

In 2024 edition of the program, scheduled to be held from late February until late June, over 100 journalists from more than 90 countries are participating.

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



**Iranian offshore Engineering & Construction**

**Call for Tender 1<sup>st</sup> Announcement for Supply of Diesel Generator Package Related to the Belal Gas Field Development Project, Tender No. 955012**

Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company intends to purchase the Tender of **Diesel Generator Package Related to the Belal Gas Field Development Project** through a public tender. Therefore, the applicants are allowed to have **20 days** after the date of 1<sup>st</sup> publication of the tender notice in the newspaper to participate in this tender.

To download the tender documents, please visit the tender's section of the IOEC's website: [WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS](http://WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS), and Please do not hesitate to contact with Transaction Committee office with Tel: +9821-82842740 under sign for any inquiries and more information.

*Second Announcement*



**Brief Notice of International Tender No.**

It is hereby notified that Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) intends to purchase 4 Items Resin as per the required conditions and technical specifications through two-stage international Tender. Accordingly, all the prospective bidders are kindly requested to visit ESCO's website [www.esfahansteel.ir](http://www.esfahansteel.ir) so as to obtain the tender document and upload their techno-commercial offer to ESCO's website (through Sourcing Field) max. up to 24.04.2024 at 23:00 p.m.

It is evident that this letter is only for notification purpose.

*Yours Respectfully,*

*S.J.Rafiei,*

*Refractory Materials Purchasing Management*

**Esfahan Steel Company**



From page 1 ► Following the Hamas operation, the Israeli army declared war on Gaza with the aim of uprooting Hamas and returning captives.

Nearly 200 days into the war, the regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has failed to achieve “total victory” over Hamas and “destroy” it.

Netanyahu has tried to paper over the regime's vulnerability and weakness in the face of the Palestinian resistance by vowing to continue the war until eliminating Hamas.

Endless Hamas

Since October 7, Israeli military chief Herzi Halevi has generally spoken of “dismantling” rather than eliminating or eradicating Hamas, a term implicitly acknowledging that even a protracted war will not be able to destroy the resistance group.

Former Israeli air defense commander Brigadier General Zvika Haimovich: Iran is a superpower in tactical ballistic missiles and UAVs.

In mid-February, assessments by Israel's military intelligence showed that even if the regime dismantles Hamas's organized military capabilities, it will continue to operate in Gaza.

The assessments also indicated that “authentic support remains” for Hamas among Gazans.

In March, the U.S. intelligence community said in its annual report that Israel will likely face Hamas resistance “for years to come”.

Western officials have also acknowledged that Israel won't be able to overcome the Palestinian resistance.

The EU foreign policy chief said on February 18 that Israel needs a political, not a military, solution to the conflict with Palestinians.



Speaking during a panel discussion on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference in Germany at that time, Josep Borrell warned that Israel cannot defeat Hamas through military means.

Israel has been starving Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and killed more than 34,000 people in the besieged territory but it has failed to achieve its military goals.

In the wake of the Gaza onslaught, Israel has carried out frequent attacks in Syria. The regime's air raids have killed Iranian military advisors who had been deployed to Syria at the invitation of the Arab country to help it fight terror groups such as Daesh.

Several Iranian military advisors including a top commander were assassinated after an Israeli strike demolished Iran's consulate in Damascus on April 1st.

Two weeks later, Iran launched a salvo of more than 300 drones and missiles at Israel in retaliation for the Israeli bombing. The Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) dubbed the operation “True Promise”.

The Iranian large salvo transformed geopolitics in West Asia.

Israeli miscalculations

Following Iran's reprisal strike, multiple American officials asserted that the Israelis had badly miscalculated, thinking that Tehran would not react strongly, that's according to The New York Times.

“After it became clear that Iran would retaliate, U.S. and Israeli officials initially thought the scale of the response would be fairly limited, before scrambling to revise their assessment again and again,”

the American newspaper reported.

Former Israeli air defense commander Brigadier General Zvika Haimovich also acknowledged that Iran is a “superpower in tactical ballistic missiles and UAVs.”

His comments are reminiscent of a similar admission made by former U.S. Central Command chief Kenneth McKenzie.

In an April 2021 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, McKenzie said the U.S. is “operating without complete air superiority” for the first time since the Korean War because of Iran's drone capabilities.

Israel vulnerability

Former veteran American diplomat Chas Freeman, who served as the U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia (1989–92), said Iran carefully hit Israeli military targets during its drone and missile attacks.

“It appears that in a major base in the south, where they struck, they were able to achieve a level of accuracy that was quite extraordinary,” he said.

Freeman, now a senior fellow at Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, added that Israelis lie about the damage caused by the Iranian attacks.

“What they showed was they had the capacity to clog and render Israeli defenses overburden. They now know where all the radars and missile sites are,” he added.

The retired U.S. diplomat noted that Iran's drone and missile attacks have exposed Israel's vulnerability.

“Iran succeeded in panicking

the Israeli population....it can overwhelm Israel's defenses if it chooses to do so and Israel cannot defend itself without the active participation of the United States, the UK, France and in this case Jordan,” he said.

Freeman added, “From a strategic point of view, from a soft power point of view, it was a huge success; Iran accomplished its objectives and it left Israel with an intolerable dilemma. Israel cannot continue to behave as though it can act with impunity.”

If Israel now assassinates an Iranian, Tehran will retaliate in kind, Freeman said.

He pointed out that Iran has achieved the neutralization of the American forces in the Persian Gulf that it long sought in the wake of the attacks on Israel.

Former veteran American diplomat Chas Freeman: Iran is able to overwhelm Israel's defenses if it chooses to do so and Israel cannot defend itself without the active participation of the United States and its allies.

Operation True Promise and Operation Al-Aqsa Flood have shaken the Israeli regime to the core.

The operations made it clear that the rules of engagement in West Asia have completely changed.

Operation True Promise proved that Israel which has been perceived as an absolute military and intelligence power, is nothing more than a paper tiger.

Operation Al-Aqsa Flood also shattered the image of Israel's invincibility and highlighted the fact that the era of hit-and-run has ended.

“To avert imminent famine, and further preventable deaths from disease, we need a quantum leap in humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza,” he said.

Famine has taken hold in parts of Gaza, made worse by acute shortages of shelter, medicine and clean water. Almost everyone in the enclave now depends on donated food, as the genocidal Israeli war is in its seventh month.

That hasn't been reflected in the “U.S. bill for Israel”, which experts say will encourage Tel Aviv to expand its war crimes in Gaza and open a path for the invasion of Rafah, the last place of refuge where Israeli ground forces have yet to invade.

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

ditions and to get rid of Gaza altogether. The Iranian retaliatory strike has already created a much better ground and atmosphere for Palestinian negotiations and has strengthened their position.

According to a report by Bloomberg on April 15, Amos Yaldin, a former director of Israeli military intelligence, the Iranian attack may lead to a strategic change in “the war in Gaza and even its end.”

Israeli sources also told CNN on April 15 that Israel was set to take its first steps towards a ground offensive on the city of Rafah but delayed it after Iran launched a retaliatory attack on military and intelligence targets in Israel on April 13.

America is taking Iran very seriously, avoiding confrontation and applying pressure on the Israeli occupation entity to come to its terms. There is more desperation to end the war altogether, as its consequences are becoming uncontrollable. The occupation entity's situation has become fragile, and this inevitably facilitates a ceasefire and an end to the war on Gaza.

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

WORLD HEADLINES

Mass grave found at hospital in Gaza's Khan Younis

Palestinian civil defense crews have uncovered a mass grave inside the Nasser Medical Complex in Gaza's Khan Younis.

More than 200 bodies have been recovered as Israel has continued bombardment of the devastated coastal enclave for more than six months, Al Jazeera reported.

The discovery on Saturday, and continuing into Sunday, comes after the Israeli military withdrew its troops from the southern city on April 7. Much of Khan Younis is now in ruins after months of relentless Israeli bombardment and heavy fighting.

Earlier, a mass grave was discovered at al-Shifa Hospital following a two-week siege. It was one of several mass graves found at al-Shifa – the largest medical facility in the coastal enclave.

Israel's war on Gaza has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, devastated Gaza's two largest cities and left a swath of destruction across the territory.

At least two-thirds of the casualties are children and women.

Hamas warns against Rafah onslaught

Hamas Political Bureau Chief Ismail Haniyeh has said tens of thousands of people in the Gaza Strip have been killed by using US weapons, adding that Washington's veto against the establishment of a Palestinian state at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) effectively provides political protection for Tel Aviv's actions.

In an exclusive interview with Anadolu, he added that the U.S. veto of full UN membership for Palestine shows that Washington has embraced the Israeli position and opposes the rights of the Palestinian people.

Haniyeh warned against a possible military operation by the Israeli army in Rafah and said that it could lead to a massacre against the Palestinian people.

Regarding the resistance of the Palestinian people, Haniyeh said, “If the Zionist enemy enters into Rafah, Palestinian people will not raise the white flag. The resistance fighters in Rafah are ready to defend themselves and resist attacks.”

Israeli minister seeks sanctions against PA

Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir demanded the imposition of “immediate sanctions” against the Palestinian Authority in response to “the Biden administration's political decision” to blacklist the Israeli military's Netzar Yehuda battalion.

The army unit stationed in the occupied West Bank has been accused of human rights abuses by officials in the U.S. State Department, Al Jazeera reported.

Ben-Gvir called on Prime Minister Netanyahu to sanction the PA, confiscate its funds, and formulate “a series of severe sanctions against the Palestinian banks”.

Israel “deliberately obstructing” healthcare services for Palestinians

The Palestinian Health Ministry has accused Israel of “deliberately obstructing” healthcare services for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank.

“This policy constitutes a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and exacerbates the suffering of civilians,” it said.

Israeli forces killed 14 Palestinians during a raid in the occupied West Bank on Saturday, while

an ambulance driver was killed as he went to pick up wounded from a separate attack by violent Jewish settlers, Palestinian authorities said, Reuters reported.

Israeli forces began an extended raid in the early hours of Friday in the Nur Shams area, near the flashpoint Palestinian city of Tulkarm and were still exchanging fire with armed fighters well into Saturday.

Israeli military vehicles massed and bursts of gunfire were heard, while at least three drones were seen hovering above Nur Shams.

At least 485 Palestinians have been killed and 4,900 others wounded in attacks by Israeli forces and settlers in the West Bank since last October, according to Palestinian health officials.

Russia: Ukraine's end inevitable

Providing new military assistance to Ukraine from the United States will not help prevent the inglorious end of the Kiev regime, Russian First Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Dmitry Polyansky said.

“That's what happens when the head of state doesn't care about his own people and sells out his country. Nothing to celebrate here,” he wrote on his page on the social network X.

Calling Ukraine the anti-Russian “private military company,” the diplomat said that now it “will function a little longer, more money will be pocketed, more weapons stolen, and tens of thousands of Ukrainians will go to meat grinder.” “But the inglorious end of the Kiev regime is inevitable, regardless of this new package and all the futile efforts of its U.S. and NATO backers to keep it alive,” he stressed.

China: AUKUS risks nuclear proliferation in Pacific

China's foreign minister has accused Western powers in the AUKUS security pact of provoking division and risking nuclear proliferation in the South Pacific.

On a weekend visit to strengthen Beijing's ties with Papua New Guinea, Foreign Minister Wang Yi lashed out at AUKUS, which provides for the United States and Britain to equip Australia with nuclear-powered but conventionally armed submarines, The Arab News reported.

The three-way AUKUS agreement “runs counter” to a South Pacific treaty banning nuclear weapons in the region, he told a news conference in Port Moresby.

AUKUS also “raises serious nuclear proliferation risks,” the Chinese foreign minister told reporters after meeting with his Papua New Guinea counterpart Justin Tkatchenko.

Rights group seeks probe into role of tech firms in killings Gazans

A human rights group has said that the role of major technology companies and international social media platforms in the killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza must be investigated.

“These companies need to be held accountable if found to be complicit or not to have taken adequate precautions to prevent access to, and exploitation of, users' information,” the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor said.

There are frequent reports that Israel uses a number of artificial intelligence-supported technological systems to illegally track and monitor Palestinians, the group said.

“Google and Israel are collaborating on several technology initiatives, including Project Nimbus, which provides the Israeli army with tools for the increased monitoring and illegal data collection of Palestinians, thereby broadening Israeli policies of denial and persecution, plus other crimes against the Palestinian people.”



## Research center identifies accessibility challenges for middle and lower classes

TEHRAN - The Research Center of the Iranian Parliament has reported that a significant portion of the middle and lower classes of society, as well as the disabled and elderly, have been deprived of the benefits of tourism due to the lack of infrastructure and supportive policies.

The center's studies also indicate that policymaking in the field of domestic tourism development has been unsuccessful in recent decades, and tourism is not a quality and accessible product for the general public, ISNA reported.

Even increasing the number of domestic trips through strengthening the pattern of unplanned tourism, reliance on private cars, and based on staying at the homes of relatives and friends has not provided the expected functions of domestic tourism for Iranian households.

The Parliament Research Center, by examining the status of quantitative and qualitative indicators of domestic tourism, has concluded that there is a serious issue in the possibility of benefiting from the advantages of tourism among the middle and lower classes and disabled and elderly individuals in society.

It explained that between 2001 and 2021, in terms of quantity (except during the limited days of the coronavirus pandemic), domestic tourism in Iran has been on the rise. "However, statistics show a shrinking share of travel and recreation from the expenditure basket of Iranian families."

According to the research center, the quantity of trips has been affected by factors such as repeated trips by affluent households or an increase in mandatory trips, and this has not led to qualitative development in this area.

One notable issue is the uneven spatial and temporal distribution of domestic trips across



the country, with more than 50% of trips occurring in less than 20% of the country's provinces, mainly during the Nowruz holidays and a few crowded holiday periods. Moreover, most of these trips are made by private cars (77%) and based on staying at the homes of relatives and acquaintances (76%).

Moreover, the research center revealed that domestic tourism in Iran has faced the decision of households to economize on initial travel expenses, and economic issues have also increased the tendency of domestic travelers towards unplanned and car-dependent trips, and there is a significant gap between the number of households that have traveled and those that have not in the statistics related to households without private cars.

"In fact, private cars play a significant role in the distribution of travel in Iranian households, and accessibility to a private car is decisive for access to domestic tourism."

A way to reduce travel expenses and benefit from discounts is to conduct group trips or recommended tours, while the overall tendency towards these types of trips does not show a growing trend according to the Parliament Research Center's investigation.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 27 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

## Thousands protest against over-tourism in Spain's Canary Islands

Tens of thousands of demonstrators have hit the streets of Spain's Canary Islands to demand changes to the model of mass tourism they say is overwhelming the Atlantic archipelago.

An estimated 57,000 people joined the protests, which began at midday (11:00 GMT) on Saturday, Spanish media reports said, citing the central government's representative in the islands.

Flag-waving crowds packed the streets of the main towns across all of the archipelago's seven islands, chanting and whistling, and holding placards with slogans like: "The Canary Islands are not up for sale!"; "A moratorium on tourism"; and "Respect my home".

"It's not a message against the tourist, but against a tourism model that doesn't benefit this land and needs to be changed," one of

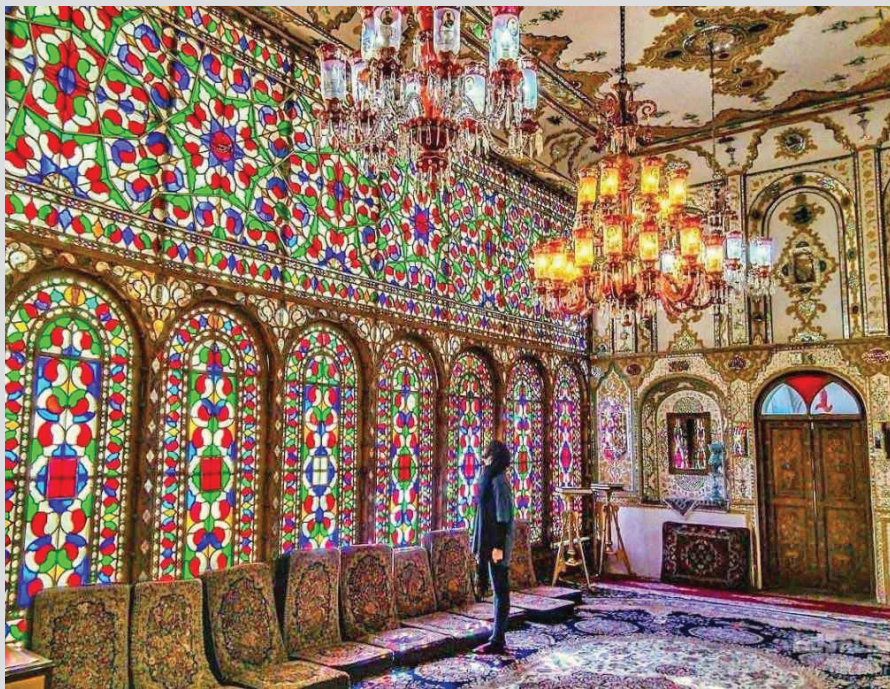
the protesters told the Reuters news agency during the march in Tenerife's capital, Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

Smaller marches were held elsewhere in the island group and other Spanish cities, all of them organized by about two dozen environmental organizations ahead of the peak summer holiday season.

The protests were called by some 20 social and environmental groups who say tourist overcrowding perpetuates an economic model that harms local residents and damages the environment.

They want the authorities to limit the number of visitors and have proposed introducing an eco-tax to protect the environment, a moratorium on tourism and a clampdown on the sale of properties to non-residents.

## Iran in frames



A sightseer visits Mollabashi (Motamedi) House, situated in Isfahan. Throughout the house, visitors can admire fine examples of traditional Persian architecture, including intricately carved wooden doors, stucco decorations, and embellished ceilings.

# Persepolis director underscores fight against lichens

TEHRAN - Research and field investigation for combating lichens is still underway on the stones in Persepolis, a celebrated World Heritage site in southern Iran, the World Heritage site's director said on Sunday.

"Moreover, documentation of the location of the lichens is ongoing," Alireza Askari-Chaverdi said.

"Lichens are one of the most damaging factors to historical buildings, especially stone monuments. The operation of cleaning lichen in Persepolis is carried out in workshop format by a team of conservation and restoration experts and continues to this day."

Referring to news circulating on social media under the title "Persepolis infested with lichens," Askari-Chaverdi stated: Lichens are one of the most damaging factors to historical buildings, especially stone monuments. This problem is less prevalent in Iran and much more prevalent in stone structures in European countries, especially Italy.

The expert stated that lichens come in many different types, adding: "According to biologists, lichens are formed by a close association of fungi and algae. In this symbiosis, algae produce organic materials through photosynthesis, consumed by fungi, and on the other hand, fungi dissolve mineral materials in the stone through acid secretion, consumed by algae."

He continued: Although not all experts agree with this theory, all experts, including cultural heritage specialists and biologists, believe that lichen growth can damage stones.



"Due to the diversity of lichens, a definitive and uniform treatment has not yet been presented. Different countries propose different solutions for their cleaning, and although some appropriate methods have been used, there are also criticisms of them."

In the past, experimental conservators used water and brush to clean lichens, which is the easiest method but has many disadvantages, including the spread of lichens, not removing the roots of lichens, and the emergence of new types of lichens, he explained.

Askari-Chaverdi stated that laboratories in Persepolis have been conducting extensive studies on the types and methods of lichen cleaning for the past 17 years in collaboration with international and Iranian specialized centers and these studies are still ongoing.

He emphasized that it can be said that Persepolis was the first Iranian site where lichens were subjected to specialized examinations and the first place where scientific treatment of lichens was conducted, and a significant number of these damaging fac-

tors have been removed from the surface of stone artifacts.

In 2001, only a part of the site was experimented on by Iranian-Italian conservation and archaeology teams, and in this project, Iranian experts and experts from the University of Bologna and some other institutions participated, he said.

"After positive results from the use of a type of lichen remover were obtained, in 2019, two palaces at Persepolis were cleaned of lichens and stone artifacts were restored by borderless conservators in collaboration with Iranian experts."

He noted that an Iranian-Italian archaeological and conservation team conducted experiments on one of the undecorated walls at Persepolis to be re-examined after several years. The important point is that lichen cleaning and its growth are very complex, and to see the results of cleaning, a multi-year period is required.

"For example, lichen removal materials may have been found useful in Italy, but may not be suitable in Iran due to the type of lichen, the type of stone, and the suitable climatic conditions."

Therefore, drug use cannot be done without continuous and specialized studies. For this reason, experts and the management of Persepolis use any lichen removal material based on its useful records in Persepolis."

Furthermore, Askari-Chaverdi emphasized that usually lichen cleaning should be accompanied by protective and restoration measures, and it is necessary to define a conservation workshop for each section for protective and restoration measures to be taken after lichen cleaning; otherwise, lichen cleaning may not only be positive but also harmful to historical artifacts.

He underlined the existence of lichens and fungi on stone artifacts is not a new or strange subject and said: Wherever there is stone, there is likely to be lichen. This issue has been the subject of research and practical actions during the history of the conservation and restoration of the Persepolis collection and practical and effective measures have been taken."

"During the past two years, monitoring of lichen removal operations with new methods of lichen control has been carried out by conservation experts on site. Despite the benefits of this method, it cannot be considered the definitive way to save inscriptions and artifacts in order to remain safe from destruction caused by lichens."

For this reason, the importance of research, complementary, and analytical studies resulting from previous studies to achieve newer and more effective methods is underway, he concluded.

## Coins, other relics recovered in Maragheh

TEHRAN - East Azarbaijan's authorities have recovered hundreds of historical metal coins along with some other relics from a private residence in the village of Gol Tapeh.

As revealed by the provincial police commander in charge of protecting cultural heritage, during an inspection by law enforcement at a private house in the village of Goltappeh, some historical objects along with hundreds of coins were discovered.

Gholamreza Zeinali revealed on Sunday, that immediately after the discovery, the protection unit officers arrived at the scene and upon further investigation, uncovered various historical items including a ceramic statue, an

ancient metal statue, and a decorative plaster inscription.

"Also, 1,760 historical metal coins were discovered and confiscated," the commander noted.

The official further explained that all the relics were collected for legal processing by judicial authorities.

The artifacts will undergo further analysis and preservation efforts to ensure their historical significance is properly documented and protected, the commander said.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz, the capital of East Azarbaijan, embraces several historical and religious sites, including the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz,

and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. The city became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295-1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later, the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital. It was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and the Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

## Rhubarb Festival celebrates Kuhsorkh's local products, crafts

He also highlighted the significant role of local crafts in the tourism sector, noting that workshops in various traditional crafts have thrived, creating around 40 new jobs within the county.

Also, a provincial official in charge of Marketing, Training, and Domestic Tourism, emphasized the festival's role in strengthening national unity and economic prosperity.

Ali-Akbar Ahmadzaeh pointed to the efforts aiming to officially recognize the Rhubarb Festival in the national calendar of tourism events, with an eye toward attracting more tourists to the region.

Moreover, Reza Rabiee, Kuhsorkh's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts chief, added that the festival included cultural performances, traditional music, and comedy shows, enriching the visitor experience.

He noted that the recent rains had provided ideal conditions for rhubarb cultivation, making this period optimal for the festival.

The event also featured a live broadcast by Khorasan Radio, further highlighting the festival's success in bringing the communi-

ty together, Rabiee outlined.

The fourth annual Rhubarb Festival concluded with significant success, according to the Kuhsorkh's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts chief.

The event, organized jointly by the municipality and the city council of Riyush, saw sales of around three billion rials in handicrafts, souvenirs, and agricultural products, reported Reza Rabiee.

The festival featured 70 stalls, offering a vibrant display of local products including traditional handicrafts, honey, dairy items, rhubarb-driven products such as syrups, and various local dishes.

Rabiee also highlighted that out of the total sales, 400 million rials were attributed to handicrafts, while the remaining 2.6 billion rials came from other local products and souvenirs.

Kuhsorkh, known for its tourism potential, especially in traditional textiles and agricultural produce, actively promotes these festivals to attract tourists and introduce them to the area's rich heritage and local products, the official added.

"Currently, the region boasts approximately 250 artisans work-

ing in various crafts," Rabiee stated, "contributing robustly to the local economy and cultural preservation."

Rabiee, in his concluding remarks, pinpointed that the success of events like the Rhubarb Festival not only boosts the local economy but also plays a crucial role in showcasing Kuhsorkh's diverse tourist attractions and artisanal capabilities on a broader stage.

### Fam tours spotlight culture

Kuhsorkh, a district renowned for its agricultural and rural tourism potential, played host to a special tourism familiarization tour on Friday [April 19].

Organized under the auspices of the Khorasan Razavi Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the event was aimed at introducing travel agency managers and licensed tour guides to the region's diverse attractions.

Seyyed-Javad Mousavi, Khorasan Razavi's director-general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, addressed participants emphasizing that the tour was part of a broader strategy to promote sustainable tourism rooted in Kuhsorkh's agricultural wealth and cultural heritage.



# AI to help improve waste management

TEHRAN –The Department of Environment (DOE) aims to use artificial intelligence (AI) in waste management through a specifically defined project, an official with DOE has said.

Referring to the fact that plastic accounts for a large amount of waste, Mehdi Khadem-Sameni said the ministry of industry is responsible for supervising the implementation of waste management law and the distribution of plastic bags, but the results have not been satisfying so far, IRNA reported.

He made the remarks on the occasion of Clean Earth Week.

The National Clean Earth Week will start on April 22 with the theme of “Investing in land, developing recycling and green productivity.”

The event will put the emphasis on reducing the use of plastic bags across the country.

The Department of Environment plans to enforce the law that ban plastic bag distribution on Clean Earth Week, the official added.

There are five types of waste, including, urban, rural, agricultural, medical, and industrial waste. Particular industrial and medical waste demand additional measures, Khadem-Sameni added.

The DOE has compiled and approved the standard of biodegradable bags as part of regulations to



reduce plastic bags consumption, he said.

Many countries including Pakistan and Bangladesh have already implemented bans on plastic bag distribution.

Failing to observe the law will result in legal actions to be taken.

Considering the high volume of waste produced in the country and its adverse effects on human health and the environment, it seems that the revision of waste management is very crucial.

Within the past Iranian calendar year, March 2023 – March 2024, a total of 5,117 tons were produced per day in Tehran with 200 to 250 tons known to be medical waste, and some 828 cases were industrial.

**Improper disposal costs environment \$1.7b annually**

Improper management of waste in the country causes 870 trillion rials (some \$1.7 billion) in damage to the environment and natural resources every year, an official with the Department of Environment (DOE) has said.

Converting waste into fertilizer and energy, using standard waste incinerators, and modern methods such as digesters and pyrolysis are among the known strategies used in the world for handling waste, but these methods do not exist in the country, he added.

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

different purposes is discarded.

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

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

**Developing AI infrastructure**

By allocating 50 trillion rials (some \$100 million), the public and the private sector will develop the infrastructure for artificial intelligence operators in the current calendar year, which started on March 20.

The importance of artificial intelligence cannot be denied. However, it's hard to keep pace with the rapid [global] growth in the area, Rouhollah Dehqani-Firouzabadi, the vice president for science and technology, said, IRNA reported.

He made the remarks while attending the first meeting of the national steering committee's working group on artificial intelligence.

The main objective behind founding the national steering committee is to promote and develop AI in the country with the help of both the private sector and the public sector, he added.

## National health literacy movement to be implemented

TEHRAN – The national health literacy movement will be implemented in 10 provinces of the country in line with the theme of the second day of the national health week, an official with the health ministry's Persian medicine office has said.

It's a specialized program that aims to promote health and a healthy lifestyle and will involve multilateral interaction between the ministries of health and education, IRNA quoted Hossein Rezaei-zadeh as saying.

The initiative will start at schools targeting teachers, students (from first to sixth grade), and their parents.

Using graphic techniques and educational principles tailored for children, the program seeks to convey simple, practical messages about healthy lifestyles in the form of stories.

Health literacy and skills for maintaining a healthy lifestyle are among the most important elements for fostering health and wellbeing within families and society.

In the first phase of the program, a total of 300,000 students will learn about health, healthy nutrition, and lifestyle to improve family health.

**National health week**

The national health week is held from April 20 to 26 under the theme of ‘Family health and popularization of family health’.

The health ministry has chosen different topics for the days of the week, IRNA reported.

Saturday, April 20, Family health, universal right and responsibility

Sunday, April 21, Family health from education to better education

Monday, April 22, Family health and the Earth health

Tuesday, April 23, Family health and psychosocial health

Wednesday, April 24, Family health and health culture

Thursday, April 25, Family health and youth population

Friday, April 26, Healthy nutrition and universal workout

This year's theme highlights supporting and highlighting the need to access high-quality and affordable healthcare services for everyone in the country; ensuring everyone, particularly vulnerable or marginalized groups, receives equity services, and promoting people's role in providing and maintaining universal health.

It also underscores the need to strengthen and enhance the resilience of the healthcare system to be able to effectively confront health potential threats with unknown features.

**Health is a universal right**

Health is a universal right and responsibility that is not limited to any specific age group, culture, or nationality, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has said.

All members of society from their childhood to old age have the right to access high-quality health services without financial worries.

Access to clean drinking water, soil, air, and food is a fundamental right and responsibility, the Health Ministry's website quoted Einollahi as saying.

He made the remarks on the occasion of World Health Day 2024, calling upon decision-makers to create conducive environments for individuals to actively participate in creating and maintaining health, from home to the community and the environment.

He went on to say that the family health program and referral system in Iran is one of the most advanced health programs in the world. It aims to enhance everyone's access to health services, promote well-being, and achieve significant welfare objectives.

Launched last year, the program seeks to foster a healthy, vibrant society through national and collective efforts at all levels of society.

The national health week will set health priorities for the next year in alignment with the national plans and priorities.

**Family health program and referral system**

Family Health Program and the Electronic Referral System prioritize the involvement of individuals, aiming to enhance community health literacy and empower individuals in overseeing the healthcare system.

People are encouraged to actively engage in assessing community needs, promoting health education, supporting local health priorities, and assisting in healthcare provision.

# SOCIETY

APRIL 22, 2024

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

## Prenatal screening for SMA to kick off

TEHRAN –The ministry of health has announced that spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) screening will be launched in the current Iranian year which started March 20.

SMA is a disease that robs people of physical strength by affecting the motor nerve cells in the spinal cord, taking away the ability to walk, eat, or breathe.

It is the number one genetic cause of death for infants. It affects approximately 1 in 11,000 births, affecting any race or gender.

The plan aims to prevent the birth of children with SMA, IRNA quoted Hossein Farshidi, an official with the Health Ministry, as saying.

Three groups will be screened for SMA including the public, those who have married their relatives (consanguineous marriage), and parents of children with SMA.

A domestically developed diagnostic kit will be used for screening SMA.

**SMA treatment**

Currently, more than 600 people in Iran, most of whom are children, are suffering from SMA.

Nusinersen with the brand name SPINRAZA is the first medication for the treatment of SMA that was approved by international organizations in 2016 to treat the disorder and is now used in more than 50 countries.

In August 2023, the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) announced that the second shipment of SPINRAZA medicine which is used for the treatment of spinal muscular atrophy patients arrived in the country.

In August 2022, the first shipment of Evrysdi, an oral medication used to treat SMA, was imported to the country, said Saeed Azamian, CEO of the SMA Association of Iran.



Risdiplam, sold under the brand name Evrysdi, is the first oral medication approved to treat the disease.

The U.S. sanctions, preserved under the Joe Biden administration, have restricted the financial channels necessary to pay for basic goods and medicine, undermining supply chains by limiting the number of suppliers willing to facilitate sales of humanitarian goods to the country

**442 rare diseases identified in Iran**

A total of 442 rare diseases have been identified in the country according to a recent report by the Rare Disease Foundation.

The incidence of rare diseases is very low to the extent that maybe one or two people with a certain rare disease are present in the country. Some rare diseases such as ‘butterfly skin or EB’, ‘Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA)’, ‘Metabolic diseases’, ‘Autism’, and ‘Dystrophies’ are among the most common cases in the country. A sum of 50 trillion rials (about \$100 million) was allocated in the past Iranian calendar year that ended on March 20, 2023, IRNA reported, adding that the figure rose to 70 trillion rials this year.

Considering the number of patients identified, the needed medicines, and medical tools, a sum of 150 to 180 thousand trillion (about \$300 million) is expected to be allocated for the current Iranian calendar year, beginning on March 21.

## IJBD ranking rises from Q4 to Q3

TEHRAN –According to the recent ranking published by SCImago, the ranking of the Iranian Journal of Breast Diseases (IJBD) has improved from Q4 to Q3.

In addition to the Impact Factor or Impact Index, rankings of journals in each subject category are divided into quartiles by both Journal Citation Report (JCR) and SCImago Journal and Country Rank ( SJR)

These quartiles rank the journals from highest to lowest based on their impact factor or impact index.

There are four quartiles: Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4.

Q1 is occupied by the top 25% of journals in the list; Q2 is occupied by journals in the 25 to 50% group; Q3 is occupied by journals in the 50 to 75% group and Q4 is occupied by journals in the 75 to 100% group.

The journal considers articles for publishing on all aspects of breast cancer research including prevention, diagnosis, treatment,

and rehabilitation of breast diseases in basic sciences, clinical trials, health sciences, social sciences, and medical engineering.

The Iranian Journal of Breast Diseases is indexed in Scopus, Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC), Scientific Information Database (SID), Magiran, and CIVILICA Database.

**Measuring Scientific activity**

There are several different metrics that are used to measure and evaluate the quality of scientific publications.

Scientific production is measured and evaluated based on a series of criteria relating to the quantity of works published and the number of times that these works have been cited. Among these criteria it is helpful to highlight the number of works published; the total number of citations received; the average number of citations per work published; the number of significant works published; and the number of citations received by the most frequently-cited works.

## ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

### Iran capable of manufacturing any medicine in two years

Iranian pharmaceutical industry and scientists are capable of producing any kind of medicine over a two-year period, Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz, head of Food and Drug Administration, has said.

Some medicines are not currently manufactured domestically as their production is not economically justifiable because of low consumption, he added, IRNA reported.

In some cases, medicines are new pharmaceutical molecules that have recently been produced worldwide, he noted.

“The U.S. has sanctioned medicine as far as possible, but we have been able to provide patients with the required medicine, and currently there is no shortages,” he explained.

### ایران می تواند هر دارویی را ظرف دو سال تولید کند

رئیس سازمان غذا و دارو گفت هر دارویی را می توانیم طی ۲ سال در داخل کشور تولید کنیم.

به گزارش ایرنا، محمدرضا شانه ساز روز دوشنبه گفت این یک بلوف نیست و صنعت داروسازی و دانشمندان کشور توان تولید همه داروها را دارند.

به گفته شانه ساز، برخی اقلام دارویی که اکنون در داخل تولید نمی شود به علت کم مصرفی است زیرا توجیه اقتصادی ندارد یا مولکول های دارویی جدیدی هستند که به تازگی در دنیا تولید شده اند. او ادامه داد: آمریکا هر دارویی را که توانسته تحریم کرده اما ما توانسته ایم از راههایی که می دانیم داروهای مورد نیاز بیماران را تامین کنیم و اکنون دارو به میزان کافی در سراسر کشور وجود دارد.



### Inverted tulips in full swing

Clusters of bell-shaped inverted tulips decorate mountainous areas of Kuhrang, western Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, now that spring is in full swing.

The flower, also known as the crown imperial tulip, has been adding a colorful touch to the local landscape.



TEHRAN TIMES



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Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430  
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603  
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Moghadasi Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran    P.o. Box: 14155-4843    Zip Code: 1599814713

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*The best among you is the one who doesn't harm others with his tongue and hands.*

**Prophet Muhammad (S)**

Prayer Times » Noon:12:03    Evening: 19:03    Dawn: 3:51 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 5:21 (tomorrow)

## Casablanca film festival picks four movies from Iran

Sa'ed Soheili acts in a scene from "The Town" by Ali Hazrati

TEHRAN- Four Iranian movies are competing in the 3rd edition of the Festival International du Cinéma Indépendant de Casablanca-FICIC (Casablanca International Independent Cinema Festival), which is currently underway in the Moroccan city.

and "Winners" by Iranian-British director Hassan Nazer are competing at the main section of the festival.

"The Town" narrates the story of Navid Falahati, a young man interested in acting, who is accepted in the audition for a movie. In order to join the movie, he must accept some special conditions and performs mental and psychological exercises for his role in an isolated town.

Sa'ed Soheili, Kazem Sayyahi, Mahtab Servati, Homayoun Ershadi, Roya Javaidnia, Shahrokh Forutanian, Morteza Zarrabi, and Saqi Hajipour are the cast of the film.

The Persian-language drama "Winners" is set in a deprived area of a small Iranian town where children are required to work to help support their families.

Nine-year-old Yahya is one such child, his little hands scouring through massive piles of junk in search of hidden treasures. One day, Yahya strikes literal gold by finding an unclaimed Oscar statue, the curious item leading the boy into an adventure-filled journey.

Supported by Scottish public body Creative Scotland, the film was shot entirely in Iran with an all-Persian-language cast, including

Reza Naji, the winner of the Berlinale Silver Bear for "The Song of Sparrows".

"The Camel and the Miller" by Abdollah Alimorad is on screen at the animation section of the event, while "Hamster" by Fatima Nofely is competing in the short film section.

Produced by the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon, "The Camel and the Miller" tells the story of a miller who gets the help of a camel to grind his grain. But one day, the camel gets sick and the miller replaces him with an agricultural machine.

This solution seems to be fine, but despite the characters' apparent reserve, they slowly realize how attached they are to one another.

A joint production of Iran and France, "Hamster" follows the story of Mahi and Pouya, a couple on a trip who wake up to the tragic discovery of their friends' deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning, for which they hold themselves accountable.

As Mahi grapples with the guilt and responsibility of their friends' deaths, she struggles to come to terms with the harsh reality of their situation.

Despite the fear and uncertainty that looms over her, she decides that running away will only make matters worse and believes that staying to confront the consequences is the right thing to do.

Pouya, on the other hand, is driven by fear and self-preservation, pushing him to consider fleeing from the scene in a bid to avoid facing the reality of their actions.

As the rift between Mahi and Pouya deepens, the tension between them reaches its breaking point.

In a race against time, Mahi and Pouya must come to a decision that will not only define their own fates but also determine the course of their relationship.

Casablanca International Independent Cinema Festival will run until April 25.

# Quranic calligraphy collection unveiled at Niavaran Cultural Center

TEHRAN- The "Dowlat of Quran" collection, featuring unseen calligraphy works by Iranian master calligrapher Yadollah Kaboli, was recently unveiled at the Niavaran Cultural Center in northern Tehran.

The collection, which highlights the artistry of Quranic calligraphy, comprises 15 pieces of equal dimensions and size that were penned during the holy month of Ramadan in 1997, and is one of the most unique collections in the field of Quranic works, Mehr reported on Sunday.

Kaboli is a member of the Supreme Council of the Iranian Calligraphers Association and has made significant contributions in the field of calligraphy.

The unveiling coincides with the ongoing "Narration of Rain" exhibition, a specialized showcase of Quranic arts at the Niavaran Cultural Center.

Featuring 170 artistic works centered on Quranic verses by renowned artists such as Gholamhossein Amirkhani, Ali Ashraf Sanduq-Abadi, and Ahmad Shafiha, the exhibit offers a diverse range of creative expressions.

The exhibition will be held until May 19 welcoming enthusiasts of calligraphy and Quranic verses.

Quranic calligraphy holds profound spiritual significance as it involves the intricate and skilled rendition of verses from the Quran, the holy book of Islam. This unique form of calligraphy requires not only technical precision but also a deep understanding of the sacred text, with each stroke and curve carefully crafted to convey the beauty and essence of the

divine words. Quranic calligraphy is not merely a visual art but a form of devotion and reverence, with calligraphers often spending years honing their skills to master the intricate script and create works that inspire awe and contemplation.

The art of Quranic calligraphy has been passed down through generations, with each calligrapher infusing their own style and interpretation into their work. From elaborate compositions

adorning mosque walls to delicate manuscripts housed in museums and collections, Quranic calligraphy showcases the harmonious blend of artistry and spirituality. The intricate patterns and fluid movements of the Arabic script serve to enhance the meaning and significance of the verses, inviting viewers to reflect on the profound teachings of the Quran and appreciate the beauty of the written word.

## Sahra Asadollahi wins best actress award from Beirut International Women Film Festival

TEHRAN-Iranian actress Sahra Asadollahi won an award at the 7th Beirut International Women Film Festival (BWFF), which was held from April 14 to 19 in Beirut, Lebanon.

She grabbed the Best Actress award of the International Short Fiction Films Competition section of the festival for her performance in the short film "Spasm".

Asadollahi, who has also directed the movie, plays in it along with Tino Salehi and Mohammad Nima Mazaheri, ILNA reported.

Running for 25 minutes, the movie depicts a girl who has dreamed of acting since childhood, like a horse that wants to be the first in all competitions.

Asadollahi, 32, has performed in over 40 feature films, short films and TV series including "The Salesman" (2016), "Beyro" (2022) and "Filicide" (2020).

Besides directing "Spasm," she has also directed two more short films, "Kash" (2021) and

Sahra Asadollahi in a scene from "Spasm"

"The Massage Room" (2021), and a documentary "Acting Audition" (2021).

Beirut International Women Film Festival is an annual event organized by Beirut Film Society, under the theme "Women for Leadership" highlighting the role of women as leaders in their societies; and gathering filmmakers and cinema lovers from all over the world. BWFF tackles issues such as gender equality, sexual

## Book discussing issues of God and time hits bookstores

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the book "God and Time" written by Natalja Deng has been released in the Iranian bookstores.

Soroush Publications has published the book with a translation by Mohammad-Ebrahim Maghsoudi, Mehr reported.

Originally published in 2018, the book discusses the God of

Western religions including Islam, Christianity and Judaism, who is said to be eternal. But what does that mean? Is God somehow beyond time, living a life that does not involve one thing after another? Or is God's relationship to time much more like ours, so that God's eternity just consists in there being no time at which God doesn't exist?

Even for non-believers,

these issues have interesting implications for the relation between historical and scientific findings on the one hand, and religion on the other. This element introduces the reader to the requisite metaphysical background, and then examines reasons for and against thinking of God as timeless.

Deng is an associate professor of philosophy at Underwood

International College, Yonsei University, Seoul/Incheon, South Korea. She was previously a postdoc at the University of Cambridge (within the TWCF project "Theology, philosophy of religion, and the sciences"), at the Center for Philosophy of Religion at Notre Dame, and at Eidos, the Genevan Centre for Metaphysics. She originally studied physical natural sciences at Cambridge, and then philosophy at Oxford.

## Authors withdraw from PEN America Literary Awards in protest against stance on Gaza

Thirty authors and translators have signed an open letter to PEN America in which they declined, or withdrew their work from consideration for, the organization's 2024 Literary Awards, in protest against its "failure to confront the genocide of the Palestinian people and defend our fellow writers in Gaza."

In the letter, sent to the board of trustees this week, the writers said they "wholeheartedly reject PEN America and its failure to confront the genocide in Gaza" and demanded the resignations of the organization's CEO, Suzanne Nossel, its president, Jennifer Finney Boylan, and its entire executive committee, Arab News reported.

The signatories include the co-founder of the PEN World Voices Festival, Esther Allen, as well as Joseph Earl Thomas, Kelly X. Hui, Nick Mandernach, Alejandro Varela, Maya Binyam and Julia Sanches.

Allen this month said she had declined the PEN/Ralph Manheim Award for Translation. She posted a message on social media platform X on April 5 in which she said she had done so in solidarity with more than 1,300 writers who had criticized PEN America for its silence "on the genocidal murder of Palestinians," and "in

celebration and memory of, and in mourning for, all the Palestinians silenced forever by US-backed Israeli forces."

Similarly, Binyam recently withdrew her debut novel "Hangman" from consideration for the PEN/Jean Stein and PEN/Hemingway awards.

In an email to PEN America, a copy of which she posted on X on April 11, she said she considered it "shameful that this recognition (of her work) should exist under the banner of PEN America, whose leadership has been steadfast in its dismissal of the ongoing genocide, and of the historic struggle for Palestinian liberation."

In their open letter this week, the signatories said: "Writers have a responsibility to be good stewards of history in order to be good stewards of our communities."

They added that they "stand in solidarity with a free Palestine," and refuse "to be honored by an organization that acts as a cultural front for American imperialism" or "take part in celebrations that will serve to overshadow PEN's complicity in normalizing genocide."

In response, PEN America said: "Words matter and this letter deserves close scrutiny

for its alarming language and characterizations. The current war in Gaza is horrific. But we cannot agree that the answer to its wrenching dilemmas and consequences lies in a shutting down of conversation and the closing down of viewpoints. We respect all writers for acting out of their consciences and will continue in our mission to defend their freedom to express themselves."

The awards are due to be handed out during a ceremony on April 29 in Manhattan.

At least 34,000 Palestinians have been killed and about 77,000 wounded in Israeli attacks on Gaza since October 7. Moreover, 1.7 million (75 percent of Gaza residents) have been displaced.

According to the UN experts, between 60 and 70 percent of all homes in Gaza, and up to 84 percent of homes in northern Gaza, are either fully destroyed or partly damaged. The World Bank, UN and EU estimate that damage to the Strip thus far is \$18.5 billion or 97 percent of the total GDP of Gaza and West Bank. A staggering 72 percent of this estimate is the cost of housing, while another 19 percent is the cost of civilian infrastructure, including water and sanitation, power and roads.

Cartoon of Day



Google Fires Workers Protesting Contract with Israel  
Cartoonist: Omar Al Abdallat from Jordan