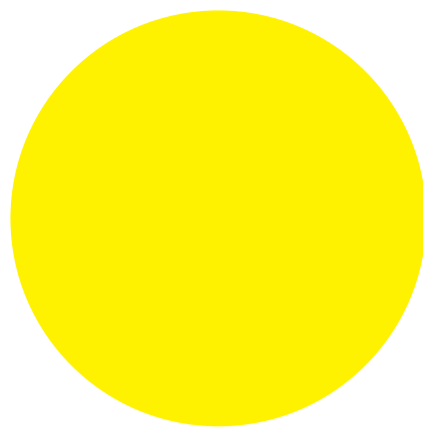


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Palestinian militants move towards the border fence with Israel from Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023.

AFP



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Tender announced for renewable project of 4,500 MW



Economy Desk

The Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) on Sunday called for the largest tender for the construction of a solar power plant in Iran, with a capacity of 4,500 megawatts.

In order to encourage the private sector to invest and participate in the country's economic projects, SATBA intends to hold a one-stage tender, with a qualitative evaluation in relation to the participation of domestic and foreign private sector investors in solar power plant construction projects, IRNA reported.

The head of SATBA announced on Sunday that 10,500 megawatts of renewable power plants will be built through financing.

The power plants will be built in the next two years, Mahmoud Kamani said, adding that the construction of solar power plants requires obtaining a series of permits, including land allocation permit, environmental permit, and electricity grid connection permit.

"For the building of 15,000 megawatts of renewable power plants, the construction sites have been announced, as initial agreements were made with institutions to add these power stations to the grid," the official said. Kamani noted that the development of renewable power plants saves fossil fuel consumption and reduces air pollution.

Egg output to surge to 1.3m

Economy Desk

World Egg Day takes place on October 9 every year, and since the first event in 1996, celebrations have grown and evolved. Over 100 countries across the globe celebrated World Egg Day in 2022, with events like competitions, digital campaigns and festivals to mark it as a special day.

By the end of 2023, Iran's annual egg production will increase to 1.3 million tons, and it will have taken ninth place in the world, according to a report by ISNA.

Iran is no exception. World Egg Day is held in Iran at the same time as in other countries annually, to highlight the importance of egg production in the country, said Mohammad-Ebrahim Hassan-Nejad, the deputy of livestock production affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture at the conference on World Egg Day.



Iran's five-month steel products up 8%

Economy Desk

Iranian steelmakers cast 6.68 million tons of steel products during the first five months of the current Iranian year (March 21-August 22), registering an eight percent rise compared to the corresponding figure of last year, which was 6.18 million tons.

According to figures by the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the steel products included round bars, steel beams, coils, profiles, sheets and pipes, according to IRNA.

IMIDRO statistics also indicated that a sum of 1.19 million tons of steel prod-

ucts was made by Iranian steel complexes during the month to August 22, up two percent compared to the related figure for last year, which was 1.17 million tons. The country also churned out 9.67 million tons of steel ingots during the first five months of the current Iranian year, while the corresponding figure for the

preceding year was 9.57 million tons.

Iranian steelmakers produced 19.7 million tons of crude steel in the first eight months of 2023, according to recent statistics released by the World Steel Association (WSA), indicating that the country stands at tenth place among steel producing countries.

Steel mills of the country kept the rising trend for the eight-month period despite a major drop in production during the summer due to problems in the electricity supply.

The country's steel ingot production up to August 2023 registered a 24.1 percent shrinkage compared to the figure for August 2022.

Crude oil extraction from Sepehr-Jofeir Oilfield kicks off



Economy Desk

Iran has started pumping 21,000 barrels per day of crude from Sepehr-Jofeir Oilfield in the southwestern Iranian province of Khuzestan, which is delivered to the processing unit of West Karoun Refinery, announced a member of Energy Committee of Iranian Parliament on Sunday. Qassem Saedi said the oilfield, with an area of 352 square kilometers, is located in the east of the Azadegan Oilfield, west of the Karun River, and is considered the deepest and most pressurized oilfield in Iran, IRNA reported.

According to the initial contract, if all of the 21 wells of the oilfield are put into operation, it will be possible to produce 110,000 barrels of oil per day, which is definitely effective in economic growth and employment of young people in the region, he noted.

The lawmaker put the total amount of investment to complete all phases at \$2.8 billion, saying that \$440 million has been allocated for the first phase of the project. The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and a company affiliated with the Bank Pasargad have signed an upstream deal within the framework of the Iran Petroleum Contract (IPC) and operations for the development of Sepehr-Jofeir field which began in September 2019.

Iran receives \$43m in damages from US government

Iran said it has received \$43 million in damages from the United States, under Case No. A15 of the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal.

The Center for International Legal Affairs of the Legal Vice Presidency of the Iranian President said in a statement that the amount was deposited into the country's bank account in The Hague, the Netherlands, IRNA reported on Sunday.

The case involves Iranian properties that had not been transferred to Iran after the conclusion of the Algiers Declarations.

"The Iran-United States Claims Tribunal issued Award No. 604 in favor of Iran and ruled that the US government must compensate for the damage it caused to the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran," read the statement. "Following repeated and persistent follow-ups by the Center for International Legal Affairs of the Legal Vice Presidency of the Iranian President to secure Iran's rights based on the verdict, the amount of \$43 million has been deposited by the US government in the account of the Islamic Republic of Iran at a Dutch bank in The Hague, for damages plus its interest," it added.

The development comes as the US has faced successive legal defeats against the Islamic Republic through international legal channels.



Iran, D-8 discuss cooperation on energy developments

Economy Desk

Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian held a meeting with Secretary General of the Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8) Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam on energy developments around the globe.

Mehrabian described D-8 as a very important organization that was established by influential countries which created great effects in the development of relations between these countries in

different periods, IRNA reported. The increase in the volume of trade relations between member states of D-8 is much lower than the growth rate of world trade, the minister criticized, adding that it is necessary to conduct a reform to strengthen the pact between the countries.

"Iran welcomes the strengthening of the organization and is ready to take good steps in this direction, but this issue is multifaceted which must be formed by all member countries," Mehrabian



said. Speaking at the meeting, Imam said considering the importance of the energy issue and also paying special attention to the establishment of coopera-

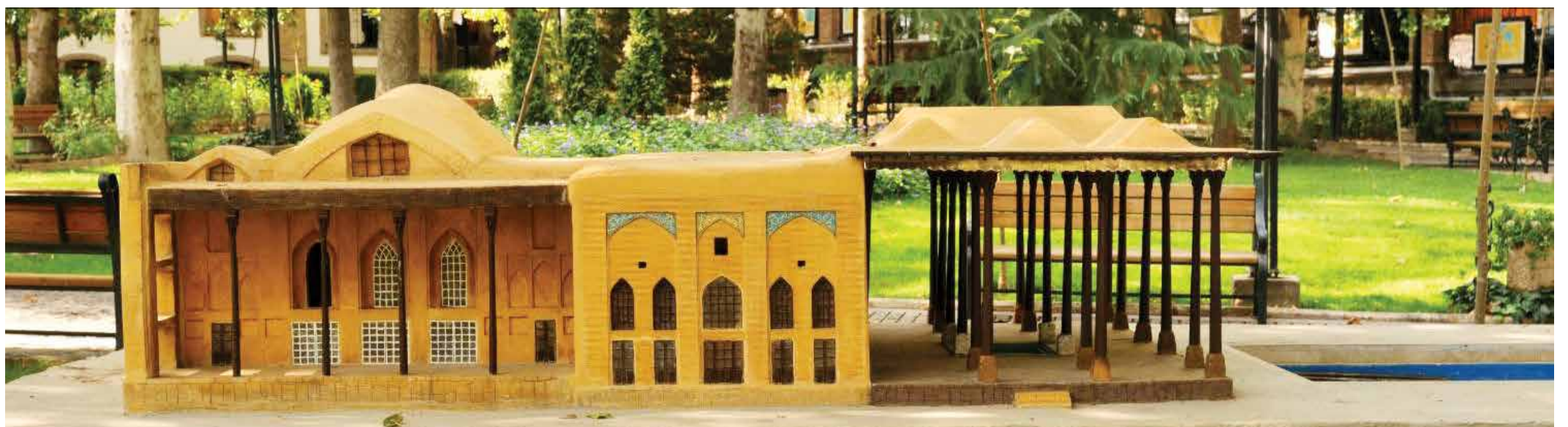
tion in this field, it is desirable that Iran announces a time for holding the meeting of energy ministers of D-8.

Iran is one of the coun-

tries that is much more advanced and progressive in the field of energy than other countries of the organization, the secretary general noted.



Iran's Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian (R) talks with Secretary General of the Developing Eight Organization for Economic Cooperation, Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, in Tehran on October 8, 2023. IRNA



Beauty and cultural richness of Iranian Art Museum Garden in Tehran



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

The Persian garden is a renowned style of garden architecture, known for its unique design and structure. It is one of the oldest and most important garden styles in the world, and is a popular attraction for foreign tourists visiting Iran. Key features of this style include a central building known as a *koshk*, water streams flowing through the garden, and the presence of plants, trees, and a pool. The garden is typically enclosed by high walls and may also include separate summer and winter buildings.

If you also incorporate delicate and artistic plaster, brick, mirror, and lattice works into the buildings and architectural elements of Iranian gardens, you will find out why they are so popular among foreign tourists. Paradise is a word that has been borrowed from Persian (*pardis*) into English and French, and it is used to mean heaven, showing the beauty and magnificence of Iranian gardens.

The Iranian Art Museum Garden, located in the Elahieh neighborhood of Tehran and covering an approximate area of one hectare, is one of the examples of these gardens. It was built in 1931, featuring the architectural style of that period.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Ebrahim Kamali, director of



Ebrahim Kamali

the Iranian Art Museum Garden, said that this beautiful site has been operated as a museum garden since the spring of 2007, following the renovations that were carried out inside it. He added that among the general public, this museum garden has become famous because of the beautiful replicas of famous tourist attractions of Iran that have been installed there. These replicas, which were built in Italy in the 1970s and installed in the museum garden in 2006, include models of Chehel Sotoun and Hasht Behesht palaces of Isfahan, the Fin Garden of Kashan, Qabus Tower of Gonbad-e Qabus in Golestan Province, Naqsh-e Rostam in Fars Province, Saint Thaddeus Cathedral (Qareh Kelisa) Church of Chaldoran in West Azarbaijan Province, the Tomb of Daniel of Shush in Khuzestan Province, Sultanieh Dome of Zanjan and Shams-ol-Emareh Edifice, Milad Tower and Azadi Tower in Tehran.



Qareh Kelisa

He noted that the works selected for Tehran's First International Sculpture Symposium have been installed in the museum garden, thereby contributing to its artistic richness.

Kamali asserted that museums hold a significant position in numerous countries across the globe, as they contribute to the advancement of their culture, contemporary art, and the conservation of the remnants of their respective regions' civilizations.

He said that the primary structure of the garden, known as Negarkhaneh-ye Pardis, regularly showcases exhibitions of visual art created by both local and international artists, as well as hosting a variety of art and handicraft workshops throughout the year.

"In order to encourage collaboration between Iranian artists and those from abroad, we have made it a priority to organize exhibitions that feature international artworks. We are proud to have successfully hosted two exhi-



Sultanieh Dome

bitions that showcased the artistic creations of Swiss and Mexican artists," he observed.

He stressed the significance of art in promoting interaction and unity between nations, highlighting that in today's world, it is essential to acknowledge and appreciate diverse cultures and traditions to bring authenticity to human life. Additionally, he emphasized that art is the most powerful tool for human development and progress in the contemporary world.

He continued that art serves as a universal language of communication between various cultures, and giving it serious attention in our lives can lead to the creation of a better world – one in which peace is highly valued and discrimination, whether hidden or obvious, is eliminated from human experience.

"We are delighted that tourists are enjoying their visit to this museum garden, leading to positive interaction be-



Shams-ol-Emareh Edifice

tween locals and foreign visitors. This has fostered mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures." "This cultural dialogue is the most important thing that is intended to happen in the Iranian Art Museum Garden, and we aim to host prominent artists from around the world and hold joint exhibitions and programs here in collaboration with foreign embassies," he said.

Kamali highlighted the crucial role of art and historical museums in shaping human identity and evolution. He expressed optimism that the Iranian Art Museum Garden can attain the required standards across all domains to accomplish these objectives.

"Over the next three months, we have planned a range of events that align with the goals and policies of the museum. These include a program to honor the country's top artists, as well as cultural exhibitions and gatherings," he concluded.

From carpets to culture: Evolving Polish-Persian connection

Having transcended the political and diplomatic relations that connected Poland and Persia since mediaeval times, the ties between the two countries further strengthened when Poland discovered Persia as a cultural magnet and a resource of art collections. The first recorded Perso-Polish contacts date back to the year of 1474, when Caterino Zeno (Catherinus Zeno, active in the late 1400s), the ambassador of the Venetian Republic, visited the court of the Polish King Casimir IV Jagiellon (ruled from 1447-92) in Kraków to negotiate about an anti-Ottoman coalition. To bring this about, he brought a letter from Uzun Hasan (ruled from 1453-

78), the ruler of west Iran. These contacts laid a foundation for Polish fascination with Persian art, and this fascination by degrees manifested in various forms. For instance, the customs registries of Krakow mention Persian carpets on sale in the city as early as the end of the 15th century. Apart from carpets, textiles, tents, weaponry and precious stones were also imported from Persia, and the demand for these objects was steadily increasing.

One of the most interesting aspects of this predilection was Sarmatism, a term which designates the dominant lifestyle, culture and ideology of the Polish nobility between the 16th and 19th centuries.

The underlying cause was a false belief that Polish nobles were descended from an ancient Iranian people—the Sarmatians—who flourished from about the 5th century BCE to the 4th century CE. Sarmatist ideas permeated and thoroughly "orientalised" various aspects of Polish material culture—such as clothing, hairstyle, weaponry, harness and furnishings.

But for a long time, Polish contacts with Persia were confined to material culture. While outwardly showing an awareness of Persia, the Polish elites in fact had not much concern with its religion, geography or literature. Factual knowledge about the country was mostly derived from travellers' accounts,

published in Latin or Italian. A notable group of Polish travellers included Catholic missionaries, who made significant careers in Safavid Persia.

The Jesuit Tadeusz Krusinski (1675-1751), for example, earned a reputation at the court of Shah Sultan Hosseinn (1694-1722) as an interpreter and counsellor. His treatise provides an eyewitness perspective of the inevitable downfall of the Safavid dynasty.

Persian literature also remained almost unknown in Poland until the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The introduction of Persian literary work into Poland was associated with Samuel Otwinowski (1575-1650) —

the court dragoman, secretary and Persian and Turkish interpreter of Kings Sigismund III and John II Casimir Vasa.

He was an amateur yet talented literate of Persian poetry, who translated for the first time the Golestan of Sa'di into Polish between 1610 and 1625. The probability that the translation was made from a Turkish copy does not belittle its value as the first Polish translation from any Middle Eastern language. Although the entire translation was not published until the 18th century, poetic excerpts from the Golestan had become widely popular among Polish readers of pre-modern times.



Towards the end of normalization?

Saber Gol-Anbar
International Analyst

Contrary to some analyses and opinions, I find it unlikely that, in the aftermath of what is currently unfolding between Gaza and Israel, a widespread uprising or intifada will emerge on the western border, Jerusalem, or within the Arab community in Israel, given the complex and unique conditions of these regions, unless a protracted and extensive war erupts, spiraling out of control and engulfing the entire Middle East. Developments in Jerusalem and the western border have been on an upward trajectory over the past two years, and this trend is likely to continue and possibly intensify.

For now, it may be too soon for mediators to respond quickly and halt the war. Israel is likely to continue its attacks on Gaza and its infrastructure for some time, possibly in pursuit of pressuring Hamas for the release of Israeli captives and achieving significant gains. However, recent experiences over the past two decades have shown that it is unlikely this process will lead to the liberation of Israeli hostages.

Hamas's most significant challenge following today's extensive attacks is its political spokesperson's position on gaining leverage over Israel. The most critical card that Hamas holds is the captivity of dozens of Israeli military personnel, including several high-ranking officers. From this standpoint, it is highly likely that, in the negotiations that have already begun for a ceasefire or more seriously in the hours and days to come, Hamas will put forward conditions, including preventing extremist Jews from entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque or even halting settlement construction, among others. However, the realization of these conditions is unlikely, even if Israelis make promises through mediators regarding the Al-Aqsa Mosque. It remains unlikely that such pledges will materialize into action in the future.

Two areas where Hamas can likely gain from Israel are the exchange of prisoners and the lifting of the blockade on the Gaza Strip. Given the substantial number of Israeli captives today, Hamas can probably secure the release of many Palestinian prisoners. It should not be forgotten that, after the capture of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in 2006, Israel was compelled to release over a thousand Palestinians following several years of negotiations. Considering the large number of new Israe-

li captives, almost all Palestinian prisoners (around five thousand) may be subject to exchange in the future. However, this exchange will take time, possibly months or even several years. It is not unlikely that the exchange of prisoners may occur in multiple stages. Regarding the lifting of the Gaza blockade, Hamas is likely to pursue its removal as a significant precondition in any exchange agreement.

Today's war marks another page in the long-standing conflict and crisis in Palestine. While there have been turning points in the history of conflicts and confrontations on both sides, this conflict will continue, and an immediate resolution is currently inconceivable.

I mentioned the deadlock in peace and reconciliation talks, the failure of treaties like Oslo, and negotiation initiatives, the wars of the past two decades, and the strange growth of right-wing ideology in Israel, culminating in the establishment of an entirely right-wing government. These developments have strengthened Hamas's position in Palestinian society and will make the weight of these organizations in Palestinian internal equations even heavier in the face of today's unprecedented attacks. Therefore, it is not far-fetched to imagine that, in the not-so-distant future, the United States will make every effort to understand the effects and consequences of this situation, aiming to halt this trend and strengthen Hamas's rivals, preventing the negative impact of this situation on the normalization process in the region and weakening Iran. Netanyahu, if he remains in power, may be forced to agree to the resumption of these negotiations, presenting other proposals, even though this may be a noisy affair; it is still unlikely to yield a definite outcome.

Considering the widespread repercussions of recent events for Israel, it is also possible that political changes will occur in Israel, temporarily resolving differences and forming a crisis cabinet with the participation of some opposition factions to manage the current situation. Efforts to bring opponents into the government have already begun. However, if such a change occurs, it is unlikely that it will provide relief for Netanyahu from the consequences of today's attacks in the future, even if, with the inclusion of opponents in the cabinet, he may seize the opportunity to take tension-provoking measures in the region.

Raisi: Cruelty against Palestinians won't go on forever

Israeli death toll almost twice that of Gaza

International Desk

Two days after the Palestinian Hamas resistance group launched a surprise attack against Israel, which was met with a bombardment of civilian targets in the Gaza Strip, the death toll from the Israeli side is reported to be nearly double that of the Palestinians.

The Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza has updated the death toll to 380, adding that some 2,200 others have been wounded as a result of the ongoing Israeli attack on the besieged coastal enclave, according to Al Jazeera.

Israeli air strikes hit housing blocks, tunnels, a mosque, and homes of Hamas officials in Gaza as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed "mighty vengeance for this wicked day."

The UN agency for Palestinian Refugees, UNRWA, said over 20,000 people were sheltering in 44 of its schools around Gaza by Saturday evening. "The number (of displaced) is rapidly increasing," said Inas Hamdan, acting public information of-

ficer in Gaza.

The agency said three of its schools suffered "collateral" damage from Israeli airstrikes. The agency also said its operations of nine water wells around the Gaza Strip were stopped early Saturday. Operations in three wells resumed Sunday, said Hamdan. The agency's food distribution centers, which provide for over 540,000 of Gaza residents, have been closed since Saturday.

In southern Israel, supported by a multi-pronged assault of rocket barrages, Hamas fighters fought Israeli security in army bases and towns and killed at least 659 people, according to Israeli TV. A flare-up on Israel's northern border also threatened to draw into the battle Hezbollah, a fierce enemy of Israel's, which is estimated to have tens of thousands of rockets at its disposal, AP reported.

Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets and shells on Sunday at three Israeli positions in a disputed area along the border and Israel's military fired back using armed drones.



Relatives carry the bodies of infants from the Abu Daka family who were killed in Israeli strikes on the southern Gaza Strip during their funeral on October 8, 2023 before their burial in Khan Yunis.
● AFP



Israel in a Catch-22 situation

Saudi-Israeli normalisation talks in jeopardy

If the idea of the Hamas attack was to focus international attention on the almost forgotten Palestine cause, it has succeeded in doing so. Palestinians living in the West Bank as well as Arabs in Israel and around the region could well respond to what is termed a battle of survival. Arab rulers in the region will find it difficult to ignore the voices of ordinary people from the mosques and bazaars, where there is overwhelming support for Palestine.

Hezbollah in Lebanon has welcomed the Hamas action and said that the operation served as a "retaliation against the ongoing offences and transgressions by the occupiers." It appealed to "all free individuals worldwide" to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian movement.

As the world scrambles to prevent the situation from escalating further, the chances of normalisation of Saudi-Israeli diplomatic ties have become much more difficult. Just a few weeks back, Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu had said during his address to the United Nations General Assembly about an imminent deal with the Kingdom that could change the landscape of West Asia. Now, chances of that seem rather remote.

The Saudi Foreign Ministry's initial statement on Saturday gave an indication of which way the wind was blowing. The Kingdom had long warned "of the dangers of the explosion of the situation as a result of the continued occupation, the deprivation of the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights, and the repetition of systemic provocations against its sanctities," the statement noted.

The normalisation talks between Israel and Saudi Arabia had also hinged on giving concessions to the Palestinians, which now will be extremely difficult for Netanyahu. He presides over a government filled with religious leaders and hard-right-wing groups willing to give no concessions.

Catch-22 situation

US experts have called the latest Hamas attack the most sophisticated and well-coordinated assault on Israel since the Yom Kippur War of October 1973, led by a coalition of Arab countries. So far, Hamas, the resistance group that runs the Gaza Strip, has killed more than 600 Israeli soldiers and civilians. Earlier rocket attacks fired from Gaza rarely met their targets or resulted in deaths. Most of these home-assembled rockets were easily shot down by Israeli forces. But Hamas has overhauled its fighting capabilities to be able to carry out the rocket attacks with military precision and at the same time successfully breach the heavily guarded border fencing to send in fighters into southern Israeli towns.

Israel is in a catch-22 situation, the fact that Hamas was able to capture several Israeli soldiers and civilians will give it pause. Israeli citizens have been driven off to hiding places in underground tunnel networks that crisscross the Gaza Strip. So, rescue operation could risk their lives. The lack of intelligence is also because Hamas is com-

pletely out of the grid with electronic devices like cell phones and laptops avoided and messages passed on by couriers. Neither Israel nor the US nor any of its Western allies have any human people on the ground to act as spies and give an indication of what is happening.

Hamas is hoping that it can exchange its 5,000 or so Palestinian prisoners freed in exchange for Israeli citizens. Hamas had already said that Operation Al Qsa Storm was also meant to help free Palestinians from Israeli prisons. Expectedly, Tel Aviv hit back with a series of airstrikes inside Gaza killing more than 600 people and injuring large numbers. The death toll in Gaza will rise considering the dismal state of the medical infrastructure in the area. Whether there will be a full-scale invasion by Israeli troops inside Gaza is not known but experts believe that could prove a difficult proposition and could risk the lives of Israeli prisoners.

The full article first appeared on Outlook India.

Reactions pour in

Lauding the Palestinian resistance for the "history-making" move against Israeli cruelty and acts of aggression, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi expressed the Islamic Republic's support for the Palestinian nation's legitimate right to defense.

In a message released on Sunday, the Iranian president called on the world to wake up to the reality that the accumulation of cruelty and injustice against the Palestinian nation, the continued harassment of Palestinian women and prisoners, and the constant desecration of Al-Aqsa Mosque won't go on forever and will be faced with the resistance of nations.

In separate phone calls with Ziyad al-Nakhalah, Secretary General of the Palestine Islamic Jihad, and Ismail Haniyeh, head of the political bureau of Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, on Sunday, President Raisi reviewed the situation underway in the occupied lands.

Tasnim news agency also quoted Raisi as saying, "The Zionist regime and its supporters are responsible for instability in the region".

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said President Joe Biden's direction was

to "make sure that we're providing Israel everything it needs in this moment."

He added that disrupting a potential normalization of ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia could certainly be part of the motivation for Hamas's attack.

The world's largest bloc of Muslim countries has condemned what it refers to as "Israeli military aggression." The Saudi-based Organization of Islamic Cooperation said Sunday that it is "greatly concerned about the developments on the ground and the dangerous Israeli escalation in the occupied Palestinian territory."

A senior White House official said Saturday it was "too early to say" whether Israel's arch-foe Iran was "directly involved" in the large-scale attack by Palestinian resistance group Hamas.

Clare Daly, an Irish member of the European Parliament, criticized the double standards adopted by the EU Commission Chief Ursula von der Leyen for condemning Hamas, saying that Leyen is "criminally giving Israel carte blanche for the spectacle of shocking violence it will now unleash against desperate civilians caged in Gaza, dressed up as self-defense."



Smoke and flames pour from a highrise building after an Israeli force strike in Gaza City on October 8, 2023.
● REUTERS



Hangzhou
Asian Games:Iran captures 13 golds,
stands seventh in medals table

Sports Desk

A number of 54 medals, including 13 golds, saw Iran finish seventh in the medals table of the Hangzhou Asian Games in China. Iranians also collected 21 silvers and 20 bronzes across the 15 days in Hangzhou. Iran's golds came in volleyball, wrestling, wushu, kurash, athletics, sport climbing, karate, and chess competitions, while there were also podium finishes in rowing, taekwondo, artistic gymnastics, weightlifting, roller skating, mountain

bike cycling, table tennis, fencing, shooting, canoe sprint and kabaddi.

On Sunday, karateka Sara Bahmanyar brought the curtain down on the campaign for the 285 Iranian athletes by bagging a bronze in the women's kumite -50kg contests, thanks to a 6-5 victory over Japan's Miho Miyahara. Bahmanyar's medal was the 18th for the Iranian female athletes and teams in Hangzhou – including Haniyeh Rostamian's shooting bronze in the 10m air pistol mixed team contest – though none of the country's 77 women walked away with a gold.

Despite some historic achievements, Iran's run in the Games will fairly go down as a failure, as the number of golds was seven short of the figure the Iranians tallied for a sixth-place finish in Jakarta-Palembang

2018, while it was the lowest for the country since 2006, when Iran grabbed 11 gold medals in Doha.

In fact, Iran had to wait until the penultimate day of the Games to reach double figures in gold medals – courtesy of title-winning performances by freestyle wrestlers Younes Emami, Hassan Yazdani and Amirhossein Zare' as well as a maiden chess triumph for the men's team.

Iran's total medal haul was also down by eight from five years ago, though the country was represented by 93 more athletes in Indonesia.

For all the lack of success in certain events – most significantly football, weightlifting, basketball, and shooting – the Iranian Ministry of Sport and the National Olympic Committee could still find silver lining elsewhere in the Games.

The Iranian men's chess team – comprising Parham Maq-

soudloo, Bardia Daneshvar, Mohammad-Amin Tabatabaei, Amir-Reza Pouraqabala, and Pouya Idani – was joined by Mahdi Olfati, Faranak Parto-Azar, and Taraneh Ahmadi in writing their names into the Asian Games' history books.

Olfati won a first-ever medal for the country in artistic gymnastics – a men's vault silver – while Parto-Azar's cross country bronze was a maiden mountain cycling medal for Iranian women.

Ahmadi also bagged a first roller skating medal for Iran, taking the bronze in inline freestyle skating speed slalom.

Meanwhile, Alamian brothers, Nima and Noshad, also enjoyed a memorable campaign as their men's doubles and team – Amirhossein Hodaei – bronzes were the first table tennis medals in the Asian Games for the country in 65 years.

Dominant host

China, as expected prior to the Games, topped the medals table with a record 201 gold medals. China, which surpassed the previous high of 199 golds it won on home soil in Guangzhou 2010, also scooped 111 silvers and 71 bronze medals – finishing well clear of East Asian rivals Japan, which had 52 golds, and South Korea on 42.

India stood fourth with 28 golds – a massive improvement for the Peninsula after the eighth place in 2018 with 16 golds.

Uzbekistan and the Chinese Taipei also ended above Iran in the table, claiming 22 and 19 golds respectively.



Despite some historic achievements, Iran's run in the Games will fairly go down as a failure, as the number of golds was seven short of the figure the Iranians tallied for a sixth-place finish in Jakarta-Palembang 2018.

Persian Gulf Pro League:
Sepahan maintains perfect run; Esteghlal edges Mes

Sports Desk

Issa Alekisir bagged a brace on his debut as Sepahan routed San'at Naft Abadan 4-1 at home to keep its perfect start to the Persian Gulf Pro League season.

Esteghlal, meanwhile, defeated Mes Rafsanjan 1-0 – courtesy of a second-half own goal by the host center-back Meysam Taymouri.

In Isfahan's Naqsh-e Jahan, summer signing Morteza Asadi headed home his fifth goal of the campaign to put Sepahan in front with 13 minutes into the game before Arya Yousefi's effort went in off Iraqi keeper Fahad Talib's hand for the home side's second on the half-hour mark.

Alekisir, whose contribution in the second part of last season played a pivotal role in the league and cup glories for Persepolis, had to wait for two months to make a first appearance for Sepahan – due

to a contract registration issue – but it took him only 33 minutes of playing time to open his account in the yellow jersey.

The striker dribbled past a defender and then his effort from an acute angle found the bottom corner, though he refused to celebrate out of respect for his former club.

Alekisir's second of the night came in the 50th minute, when he tapped in from close range on the rebound after Mohammad Karimi's sizzling strike was initially kept out by Talib. Prolific skipper Taleb Rikani pulled one back for the visiting side 11 minutes from normal time but it proved too little too late as San'at fell to a third defeat in five outings.

The victory was the fifth in as many games for Jose Morais's men, though they were deducted four points by the Iranian football governing body last month over a budget cap violation during the summer transfer window.

Elsewhere, there was little to separate Mes and Esteghlal during the course of the 90 minutes, but Javad Nekounam's men believed they deserved a first-half spot-kick when Mehrdad Mohammadi went down in the box by Taymouri, with the referee thinking otherwise.

The Tehran Blues still had their ex-defender to thank for the maximum points, as Taymouri's header on a Saeed Mehri's cross found the back of Mes net seven minutes after the break. The away win took Esteghlal's tally for the season to 12 points.



▲ Sepahan striker Issa Alekisir (top) celebrates with teammates after scoring during a 4-1 victory over San'at Naft Abadan in the Persian Gulf Pro League at the Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium, Isfahan, Iran, on October 7, 2023.
● MOHAMMAD AMIRHOSSEINI/varzesh3.com

Ex-FIFA boss Blatter slams
decision for World Cup
in six countries

REUTERS – Former FIFA PRESIDENT Sepp Blatter has criticised the decision by world soccer's governing body to hold the World Cup in six countries across three continents.

Morocco, Spain and Portugal were named hosts of the 2030 tournament, while Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay will also host the opening matches to mark the tournament's centenary, FIFA said in a surprise announcement on Wednesday. The decision was criticised by Sepp Blatter, who was FIFA President from 1998 to 2015, before being forced out after a corruption investigation.

"It is absurd to tear the tournament apart in this way," Blatter told Swiss newspaper SonntagsBlick.

"The World Cup finals must be a compact event," he said, adding this was important for the identity of the event, for the organisation and for visitors.

Blatter, once one of soccer's

most powerful figures, has previously criticised FIFA for awarding the 2022 tournament to Qatar, saying the Middle East country was too small.

The 87-year-old said the 2030 tournament should take place in South America, marking the 100th anniversary of the first event which was hosted and won by Uruguay.

"For historical reasons, the 2030 World Cup should have belonged exclusively in South America," he told the newspaper.



● ARND WIEGMANN/REUTERS

Wildlife rehabilitation clinic at the heart of Tehran



Social Desk

In the past, animals in distress or seized from smugglers in Iran were often condemned to death. However, the Pardisan Park Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic now provides a sanctuary where these animals receive better care and are prepared for their return to the wild. This clinic serves as a special facility for treating and rehabilitating sick animals

from all over Iran. It houses creatures rescued from smugglers or brought in by individuals. As these animals are not yet ready for release, they are kept in various-sized cages to improve their condition. Different species are released back into nature during specific seasons and under controlled circumstances. Birds of prey, foxes, bears, swans, eagles, and partridges are among the animals that have found

refuge in this clinic, undergoing necessary treatment. After a period of time, these animals either find new homes in zoos or are released into the wild. Mahyar Mar'ashi, a veterinarian specializing in wildlife diseases, explained that the Pardisan Quarantine Center takes in injured or sick animals found in the wild or brought in by people. The animals undergo quarantine and treatment. If they are deemed fit for

release, they are returned to their original habitat. Those unable to be released are sent to authorized animal care centers or zoos. Mar'ashi emphasized the importance of not separating young animals, such as lambs and chicks, from their mothers in nature. People often mistake the absence of a mother as abandonment and mistakenly take these animals. However, the mother may

have temporarily left to find food and will return. Separating the young from their mothers can hinder their ability to survive and reintegrate into the wild. Regarding keeping wild animals as pets, Mar'ashi strongly advised against it. Wild animals should remain in their natural habitats to preserve Iran's wildlife, which is a valuable national asset. Only a few ornamental animals with specific conditions can be

kept as pets. Unfortunately, during certain times, such as New Year's Norouz, there is an illegal trade of species like the Lorestan salamander, non-native snakes, and turtles that harm Iran's ecosystem. It is crucial that we prioritize the well-being of our country's wildlife and fulfill our responsibility to protect them. Wild animals should never be kept in homes, apartments, or gardens.

● FARS

Give a child the life of a child



By Reza Gerami

Children's rights activist

OPINION

The world celebrated International Children's Day on October 8, and I am compelled to draw attention to a group of young individuals who often go unnoticed – the children who sell flowers or clean car windshields at the intersections in Iranian cities.

These children, who sacrifice their childhood for a meager wage, are deprived of their basic rights. They should be dreaming, not working! They should be enjoying their innocence, not toiling away on the streets. These children of labor are not from another planet; they could easily be our own, given they have been robbed of their rightful place in society.

Like our own children, they dream of wearing new clothes on New Year's Eve, going to school, learning to read and write, and playing with their toys at night.

Yet, there are reportedly over two million working children in the country, 60% of whom are Iranian. 45% of them fall between the ages of 10 and 14, and 34% have dropped out of school. Even more concerning, 24% of these kids have never had the opportunity to go to school.

Upon examining the relevant laws, it becomes evident that Iran lacks comprehensive legislation against child labor. While Article 79 of the Labor Law prohibits the employment of children under the age of 15, except for chores and personal work, the provision falls short in protecting these kids. Consequently, the work these children undertake on the streets is deemed a crime, leading to their arrest or mistreatment.

Let us not forget the shocking reports that surfaced about the exploitation of children in recycling centers, revealing the dire conditions endured by those scavenging in the garbage. These children face the risk of contracting diseases, with some even meeting their untimely end within these waste separation facilities.

The prevailing economic conditions in Iran, rising prices, and misguided policies have contributed to an increase in the number of working children. These circumstances have also enabled illegal gangs to exploit them further. Relevant authorities should reconsider their approach. Instead of adopting ineffective and burdensome measures that only inconvenience these children, they must address the root cause of child labor.

The focus should be on providing better living conditions for these children and their families, rather than making unproductive efforts to clean the face of the cities at any cost. Only through fundamental change can we truly make a difference in the lives of these children and ensure a brighter future for them.

Over 2000 dead in Afghanistan earthquake IRCS rescue & relief teams in Herat



● AP

The death toll from powerful earthquakes in western Afghanistan has crossed 2,000, a senior Taliban leader said, adding the number might rise further in one of the deadliest quakes to hit the country in two decades. Suhail Shaheen, the Taliban spokesperson based in Qatar, announced that many people were missing and rescue operations were under way to save people trapped under the rubble in the wake of a magnitude 6.3 earthquake in Herat province, according to Al Jazeera. Shaheen said there was an urgent need for tents, medical and food items in the areas hit by the disaster, as he appealed to local businessmen and NGOs to come forward to help people in need.

In response to the natural disaster in the neighboring country of Afghanistan, the Iranian Red Crescent Society has sent 10 operational rescue and relief teams to the quake-stricken Herat from Razavi, South and North Khorasan provinces, ILNA reported.

In addition, a relief cargo, including 500 relief tents, 1,000 carpets, 4,000 blankets, 500 sets of dishes, 500 ten-day food packages, along with search and rescue equipment, was sent to Afghanistan.

"Besides the 2,060 dead, 1,240 people are injured and 1,320 houses are completely destroyed," said Abdul Wahid Rayan, spokesperson at the Ministry of Information and Culture. About six villages have been destroyed and hundreds of civilians have been buried under the debris, he said, calling for urgent help.

The magnitude 6.3 earthquake hit 40km northwest of the city of Herat at about 11 am on Saturday (06:30 GMT), according to the US Geological Survey (USGS).

Six artificial islands to be built in Mazandaran

Social Desk

Deputy Governor of Mazandaran province has announced plans to construct six artificial islands as part of the province's comprehensive development initiatives. These islands, which will be built off the coast, are set to accelerate the region's construction projects and contribute to the balanced growth of various sectors.

Ahmad Tavakoli highlighted the government's commitment to supporting the development of the province. He emphasized that the construction projects in Mazandaran have gained momentum under Raisi administration, with a focus on achieving balanced and comprehensive growth across all sectors, IRNA reported. One of the noteworthy projects approved by the government is the construction of the Chalus-Tonekabon-Ramsar freeway. Spanning 90 kilometers, this freeway is expected to enhance transportation infrastructure while taking into consideration environmental concerns. Additionally, the construction of six artificial islands stands out as another significant undertaking that will further help Mazandaran's development.

The construction of artificial islands is a well-known phenomenon globally, with countries like the United Arab Emirates and the Netherlands leading the way. These man-made islands have proven to be successful in promoting tourism, creating new real estate opportunities, and expanding economic activities.



DoE, industries to cooperate to combat Persian Gulf pollution



Social Desk

The Director General of the Marine Pollution Investigation and Counteraction Office of Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE) has announced a collaborative effort between the environmental and industrial sectors to combat pollution stemming from petrochemical and oil activities in the southern regions of the country, including the Persian Gulf.

Omid Sediqi highlighted the two main sources of pollution in marine waters. The first source comprises land-based pollutants that originate from various manufacturing industries located in coastal areas, such as refineries, petrochemical plants, and steel mills. These industries discharge their wastewater into the sea, including those in the Persian Gulf watershed, which release their wastewater into underground waters or rivers, ISNA reported.

Sediqi further explained that important areas like Asaluyeh and Bandar Imam, which house extensive petrochemical complexes, contribute to both air pollution caused by flares and torches, as well as water pollution due to effluents. The Marine Pollution Investigation and Counteraction Office is actively collaborating with these complexes, urging them to complete their sewage treatment systems.

He further emphasized that their work with petrochemical industries, particularly in Asaluyeh and Bandar Imam, is underway. "We have requested these industries to recycle their wastewater, and the process has already commenced," Sediqi said, adding, "However, it is crucial for the treatment plants of these facilities to be completed first, as some were previously incomplete. Once the industrial wastewater is effectively treated, it can be reused."

Rumi belongs to all humanity



Arts & Culture Desk

Head of the National Library and Archives of Iran, Alireza Mokhtarpour, emphasized the cultural, linguistic, and religious commonalities between Iran and Turkey, stating that the works of well-known figures like Rumi are not only of high importance for Persian speakers but belong to all humanity, regardless of their geographical origins.

During a visit to various sections of the Iranian library, Darya Ors, Chairman of Ataturk Higher Institute of Culture, Language and History, met and held discussions with Mokhtarpour.

In the meeting, Ors expressed hope for broader cooperation in the fields of culture, language, written heritage, and archives, especially in light of reduced bilateral collaboration due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mokhtarpour emphasized the cultural, linguistic, religious, and neighborly ties between the two countries, highlighting that today, the works of great personalities such as Rumi, irrespective of their geographical origins, are not only of importance to Persian speakers but are the heritage of all humanity and all eras.

Mokhtarpour highlighted the importance of implementing the cooperation agreement between Iran and Turkey's national libraries, which had been disrupted due to the spread of the coronavirus.

Furthermore, Fatemeh Sadr, Deputy for Research and Digital Resources at the National Library and Archives of Iran, emphasized the scientific and research activities of faculty members in fields such as Iranian studies, Islamic studies, and artificial intelligence.

She also stressed the need for further cooperation in education, research, and digitalization of resources.

Esmat Momeni, deputy director of the Iranian national library, expressed hope for fruitful collaborations in book exchanges, especially in the fields of Iranian studies and Islamic studies, given the presence of over 7,000 libraries in Iran benefiting from library services.

During the Turkish delegation's visit, Yüksel Özgen, president of the Turkish Historical Society, Eger Ünale, head of the State Archives Organization under the Presidency of Turkey, Osman Murat, caretaker of the Turkish Language Foundation, and Faruk Özpilavcı, head of the Turkish Written Works Organization, were also in attendance.

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Children's cinema potential for box office growth in Iran

Arts & Culture Desk

Despite the thriving comedy genre dominating the Iranian cinema landscape, children's cinema may hold the key to sustained box office success.

A recent analysis of film production in the children and adolescent genre reveals that, despite numerous festivals dedicated to the theme within the country's film industry, it only accounts for just over 7% of total productions in the last decade.

Examining production statistics shows that the golden era of children's cinema in Iran was in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Since then, the genre has experienced ups and downs, leaving some critics concerned about its future, according to Tasnim news agency.

A decade-long examination of various film genres in Iranian cinema from 2011 to 2021 demonstrates that a total of 910 films were produced by industry professionals. Among these, children and adolescent films added up to a mere 7.14%, or 65 related works, with 15 of them being animated films.

Many cinema critics argue that besides its important role in educating the future generation, the economic potential of the children's genre should also permit special attention from industry

stakeholders and policy-makers. Properly planned production and marketing strategies for children's films could undoubtedly produce significant box office returns, given that children often visit cinemas with their families, reducing the reliance on single-ticket sales.

Economic significance

The economic significance of the children's genre becomes evident when examining sales figures for various genres during the same period. Children and adolescent films, with a total box office performance of \$2.67 million, ranked fourth in sales, after comedy, drama, and social genres, indicating the important economic potential of this genre if properly managed by industry authorities.

Iranian filmmaker Marzieh Broumand said, "It's a fact that children need to watch films and go to the cinema. While many watch films and series at home, going to the cinema is a 'shared experience'. It provides a space for laughter, tears, excitement, and group enjoyment."

Broumand emphasized, "We must produce contemporary children's and adolescent content that is not only entertaining but also controlled in terms of content. Thus, adapting existing regulations in children's cinema to cater to an audience that has changed



over the years and relates to different themes is essential."

Children's cinema must be taken seriously

Broumand added, "In every country, cinema requires various cinematic forms to maximize its audience reach, and children's cinema is one of them. Children's cinema and families can grow together. We need to take family cinema seriously."

Statistics regarding various film genres in Iranian cinema production from March 20, 2012, to August 23, 2023, demonstrate that a total of 910 films with various genres have been produced in that period. Thus, the drama genre tops the list, with 217 films, representing 23.84% of the total, followed closely by the social genre, with 201

films, making up 22.08%. Comedies come in third, with a 16.81% share, comprising 153 films.

Conversely, the documentary genre ranks fourth, with 93 films, making up 10.32% of the total productions. Next in line is the children and young adult genre, producing 65 films, with a 7.14% share, while romantic films secure a 4.94% share, with 45 works. War dramas rank fifth, with 43 films, and a 4.72% share.

A deeper look at the data reveals that over 73% of the total works produced in this period fall under the drama, social, comedy, and documentary genres. The remaining 27% is divided among the children and young adults, romantic, war, mystery, crime, thriller, historical, biographical, adventure, horror, fantasy, and sports genres.

Children's genre, a potential

Children and young adult films within the examined period have grossed a total of \$2.67 million. This places them in third position in terms of revenue, following comedies, dramas, and social films.

The statistics highlight the economic importance of the children's film genre and its potential to rejuvenate the Iranian film industry, given proper planning and investment by relevant authorities.

Mohammadreza Karimi-Saremi, an official from the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, emphasized the need for support and coordination in the field of children's cinema.

He stressed that animation, in particular, has the

potential for substantial returns, both economically and culturally, and should be promoted.

He also noted that cinema can play a vital role in education and upbringing, and children's cinema can serve as a valuable tool for diversifying and enriching the cultural and educational environment. In a nutshell, the analysis of the children and young adult film genre in Iranian cinema indicates both untouched potential and a need for increased attention and support. With its unique capacity to attract audiences and generate revenues, children's cinema could be a key driver of growth in the Iranian film industry, but it requires strategic planning, investment, and greater collaboration with educational institutions to fully realize its potential.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Tehran's Golestan Palace hosts photo exhibit on Iranian capital

A collection of photos of the Iranian capital, Tehran, is on show at the UNESCO-designated Golestan Palace in Tehran. The three-day exhibition opened on October 8 at Shams-ol-Emareh ("Edifice of the Sun"), a 19th-century architectural gallery located within Golestan Palace. Organized to mark Tehran Week which, comes to an end on October 12, the event features a selection of 40 artworks taken by 20 photographers, CHTN reported. Golestan Palace was once the official residence of the Qajar rulers who ruled the country between 1789 and 1925. The decorated property displays a remarkable mixture of ancient Persian and contemporary European architectural styles, which characterized much of Iranian art in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The Iranian capital has many to offer its visitors including the Grand Bazaar, Treasury of National Jewels, National Museum of Iran, Glass & Ceramic Museum, Masoudieh Palace, Sarkis Cathedral, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, and Carpet Museum of Iran, among others.

