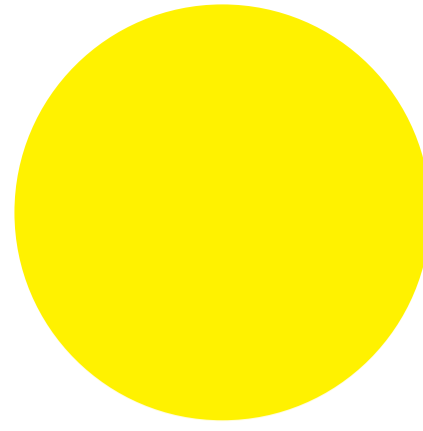


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Iran Daily



irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir

Vol. 7420 • Sunday, October 29, 2023 • Aban 7, 1402 • Rabi' al-Thani 13, 1445 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

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An Israeli M109 155mm self-propelled howitzer fires rounds toward the Gaza Strip from a position in southern Israel on October 28, 2023. *ARIS MESSINIS/AFP*



OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Need for setting up a 'Muscat hotline'

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Cheetahs left to fend for themselves on Mayamey-Abbas Abad road

Once a sanctuary for the magnificent Asiatic cheetah, the region nestled between Mayamey and Abbas Abad in Semnan Province now stands as a killing ground for this endangered species. Within this vast expanse of Khar Turan National Park, it is estimated that a mere 20 cats of this rare breed still roam. However, their survival hangs by a thread, as the transit road from Mayamey to Abbas Abad, stretching 50 kilometers along the southern part of the park, has become a deadly obstacle course.

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Annual pistachio production expected to double

Economy Desk

Estimates indicate that 200,000-210,000 tons of dry pistachios will be produced in Iran during the current Iranian year (started March 21), showing a 100-percent rise compared to the corresponding figure for preceding year.

Jalil Karbakhsh-Ravari, vice president of the Board of Trustees of the Iran Pistachio Association (IPA), told IRNA on Saturday that it's possible for the country to export \$1.5 billion worth of the product annually.

Last year, the country's pistachio production was about 100,000 tons, of which about 30,000 tons, worth \$200 billion, were exported.

The official added that the main reasons for the decrease in pistachio production in the country last year were due to frost damage, heat waves, reduced rainfall, continuous drought, water resource shortages, declining groundwater levels, and a reduction in the quality of groundwater. He also noted that some regulations have hindered exports.

Karbakhsh stated that the major pistachio harvest and the peak of pistachio exports for Iran and other rival countries is around September-October each year.

Currently, the majority of Iran's pistachios have been harvested, so exports should have taken place before the start of the new calendar year. However, it was expected that Iran would have a more significant and better presence in the global pistachio market, but unfortunately could not fulfill it, said the official.

He added that pistachio cultivation areas are expanding in many provinces of the country, as 27 provinces now having pistachio plantations, and Kerman Province still holds the top position, with 50% of production.

Also, South Khorasan, Khorasan Razavi, Yazd, Semnan, and Fars provinces are among the main producers. The official added, "According to global statistics, the United States is the top producer and exporter of pistachios, with 680,000 tons of production. Iran is ranked second and third in pistachio production and exports, respectively.

Karbakhsh-Ravari harbored hope that the government will take the necessary steps to facilitate exports of such products, as pistachio exports have been considered the top non-oil export in the country in recent years.



Crude exports to China top 1.8 mbd: Kpler data



Economy Desk

Iran's oil exports to China topped 1.8 million barrels per day in October, according to data intelligence firm Kpler. Foreign experts and journalists have admitted that the structure of sanctions against Iran's oil sales has completely collapsed, Fars news agency wrote on Saturday. Kpler announced on Friday a record daily exports of more than 1.8 million barrels of Iranian oil to China this month.

In October, Iran was the largest exporter of oil to China, after Russia, as the country surpassed Saudi Arabia by a significant margin. This jump in exports is mainly due to the huge volume of oil reserves in Iran's floating storage. Earlier, Kpler had announced in a report that Iran's floating storage has become zero, while at the beginning of the incumbent government in 2021, about 60 million barrels of Iranian oil remained floating on sea storages, with no customers. According to the released sta-

tistics, the average daily exports of Iranian oil to China during the first 10 months of the current Iranian year was 1.235 mbd, which is 84% more than the figure for the same period last year.

However, the historical record-breaking of Iran's oil exports has been accompanied by different reactions among domestic and foreign journalists and experts.

Homayoun Falakhshahi, a senior crude oil analyst at Kpler, wrote on his X page: "Iran has overtaken Saudi Arabia as China's top seaborne oil supplier in October (Russia remains first when including piped flows), thanks to a massive destocking of crude from floating storage. Arrivals of Iranian crude have averaged >1.8 mbd mtd, a new record - data from @Kpler".

Javier Blas, energy and commodities columnist at Bloomberg also wrote on his X page: "Not only is Iran boosting its production, but it has all but liquidated its massive holding of floating oil storage. Either the White House allowed it, or it is unable to stop it; either way, the sanctions regime has crumbled."

Iran to prepare comprehensive plan for transit: Deputy minister

Iran's Roads and Urban Development Ministry has started preparation of a comprehensive plan for the development of the country's transportation industry, said Deputy Roads and Urban Development Minister Shahriar Afandizadeh on Saturday.

"The country's comprehensive transportation plan is a document based on which all of the country's short-, medium-, and long-term plans for the development of transportation infrastructure should be organized in all sub-sectors,"

Afandizadeh explained, ISNA reported.

As the most important upstream document for the development of the country's transportation infrastructure, the plan came under the spotlight decades ago but hasn't been realized so far due to various reasons. "Over the past few years, the plan has been specifically put on the agenda of the Roads Ministry and will be finalized soon," he said.

According to the official, to compile the mentioned plan, the country's top scientific and academic centers and consulting engineers, with the highest ranks in the field of road and transportation, have cooperated with the ministry.

The plan is being drafted in three main sections, including determining the optimal transportation network based on environmental and economic indicators and criteria.

Transport expo

Meanwhile, the Seventh International Exhibition of Transportation, Logistics, and Related Industries (Iran Trans Expo 2023) will be held in Tehran during December 18-20, IRNA reported.

The exhibition is organized by Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development and the Fund for Innovation and Prosperity of Unions and Associations. According to Gholamre-

za Rezaei, the director of the exhibition, the main goal of the exhibition is to showcase the latest achievements and products in the transportation industry in order to promote competitiveness among the companies and entities active in the sector.

The exhibition will be participated by companies from Iran and several foreign countries including, Russia, China, Spain, and France, Rezaei told reporters. He noted that due to the capabilities of knowledge-based companies and startups, in order to maximize their participation, financial support programs and facilities have been considered for such companies.



Iran exports \$10.4m stems of flower, ornamental plants

An official at Iran's Ministry of Agriculture said that the official statistics show the country exported about 12,300 tons of ornamental plants and flowers, worth about \$10.4 million, in the last Iranian year (March 21, 2022, to March 20, 2023). Elham Fattahifar told IRNA that Iran produces over four billion flowers and ornamental plants, in an area of over 8,250 hectares of greenhouses

and open spaces. Some 610 billion ornamental plants and flowers are cultivated on 640,000 hectares throughout the world per annum, she said adding that Iran ranks fifth among nations in Asia, with the plantation of over 4.295 billion flowers and ornamental plants. The statistics show that Iran produced ornamental plants and flowers worth around 940 billion rials

(about \$1.9 billion) in the Iranian year (March 21, 2021, to March 20, 2022), the official noted. According to Fattahifar, the highest production level of ornamental plants and flowers in Iran belongs to Tehran Province, with 1,720 hectares under cultivation, followed by Mazandaran and Markazi provinces, with 1,322 hectares and 1,133 hectares, respectively.



Borujerd, a haven of nature, culture, and harvest delights



Nature of Borujerd
● itto.org



Bisheh Delan Wetland
● IRNA



Nature of Borujerd
● itto.org

Iranica Desk

If you're passionate about immersing yourself in nature, exploring cultural and historical treasures, relishing the finest locally grown agricultural products, and basking in the beauty of breathtaking landscapes, with perfect weather and azure skies, then you must absolutely not miss out on visiting the enchanting city of Borujerd and its picturesque surrounding villages during the vibrant autumn season. In the enchanting embrace of autumn's golden sunshine, the heart finds solace and delight. And when you intertwine this captivating beauty with the allure of pristine nature and the tapestry of history and culture, prepare to embark on a journey that will multiply your joy manifold, IRNA wrote.

Fortunately, Iran is abundant with such magnificent destinations for autumn tourism. However, each one possesses its own unique beauty and deserves separate attention. Otherwise, excessive cold or exhausting heat might deprive you of the pleasure of your journey.

The city of Borujerd in Lorestan Province, nestled at the foothills of the Zagros Mountains, is one of those places. The beginning of autumn can provide you with perhaps the best opportunity to fully experience the enchanting autumn sunshine, unique nature with blue skies, alongside its rich historical and cultural heritage. If you happen to encounter autumn rain during this journey, you will carry a priceless experience of this trip back home with you.

In general, if you are someone who enjoys visiting nature, cultural and historical sites, having access to high-quality local agricultural products, and experiencing a unique atmosphere with excellent weather and blue skies, do not miss out on Borujerd and its

surrounding villages.

If you have a passion for wandering through the corridors of history, delighting in cultural experiences, and immersing yourself in the vibrant ambiance of a traditional marketplace, then make no mistake – Borujerd awaits you. Its timeless allure is evident in the bustling corridors of its historic bazaar, where you are guaranteed to leave with cherished treasures and memories that endure for a lifetime.

Nestled gracefully alongside the majestic Grand Mosque, the bustling bazaar of this city continues to thrive, effortlessly blending its timeless essence with modern architectural elements. A haven of exquisite craftsmanship, the bazaar showcases renowned traditional arts like knife-making and woodcarving, with a rich heritage that has earned this city the title of Iran's woodcarving capital. Explore this vibrant market, where every corner is a visual feast, offering a glimpse into the captivating traditions that have stood the test of time.

The art of blacksmithing and carpentry are among the many other crafts that one can delight in while strolling through the vibrant market of Borujerd. From the craftsmanship of samovar-making, tailoring, and the production of colorful local garments, to textile vendors, copper artisans, and white felt production, the traditional bazaar of Borujerd offers a delightful showcase of everything. Experience the joy of witnessing these wonders simply by exploring the market and immersing yourself in their captivating beauty.

In addition to the mentioned items, what truly stands out is the presence of high-quality agricultural products from the region. Here is where you can directly purchase food and agricultural products from the farmers themselves, who

have come to the city's market to sell their produce, without any intermediaries.

Welcome to the magnificent historical residence of Ayatollah Borujerdi, a distinguished figurehead in Shia Islam during the 1930s and 1940s. And behold the illustrious historical Grand Mosque of Borujerd, a marvel of architectural craftsmanship commissioned by the order of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar. With its iconic grandeur, reminiscent of the renowned mosque in Tehran, this sacred site stands as a testament to Iran's rich cultural heritage and serves as a charming destination for history enthusiasts.

If you intend to enjoy the beauty of nature and the stunning landscapes of this city, early autumn is the perfect time to travel to this region and delight in the splendor of its mountains, the Bisheh Delan Wetland, and the surrounding villages.

Embrace the allure of autumn as it unveils its captivating treasures. With its perfect weather for delightful exploration and abundance of locally grown agricultural delights, such as a splendid array of legumes, walnuts, and delightful almonds, the season of harvest in this region beckons you with its authentic charm. Experience the joy of direct access to these high-quality, reasonably priced products, cultivated by the hands of local farmers. And remember, this city reveals its own unique wonders in every season, from the blossoming beauty of spring to the sun-soaked adventures of summer, and the enchanting landscapes that winter bestows upon.

Thanks to transportation networks connecting it with Khuzestan Province, and its proximity to the provinces of Isfahan, Markazi, Hamedan, and Kermanshah, Borujerd is easily accessible for residents from various areas.

Literary return movement in the late eighteenth century

In many ways, Isfahan in the late eighteenth century was the perfect place for the 'literary return' movement to take shape, and in other ways it was not so advantageous. From the fall of the Safavids in 1722 until the early nineteenth century, Isfahan was a city in flux, ravaged by turmoil, natural disasters, famine and sieges by different political factions.

Isfahan was both geographically and figuratively at the crossroads of political actors competing for control during a transitional time in its history.

The turmoil of the times, especially following the termination of the Safavid Empire, is often presented as evidence that a definitive historical break occurred in Iranian history not to be resumed until the rise of the Qajars.

With the end of the Safavids the slate in Iran was wiped clean, so it goes, and any societal trends – literary or otherwise – that existed before and after were necessarily deemed disconnected from one another. Depicting the fall of the Safavids in such a way significantly

abets conventional misreadings of the emergence of what would become known as the 'literary return' movement.

Siphoning off Safavid times from what occurred afterwards excludes the recognition of any possible continuity in literary and cultural developments between the two periods. The result is an abstraction of the 'literary return' movement, removed from any previously established social or literary context.

Moreover, the correlating belief that the general turmoil of post-Safavid Iran militated against any discernible environment whereby poets could effectively engage with coterminous social and political structures paves the way for a conceptualization of 'literary return' as a singularly focused movement attendant to rekindling a classical poetic style.

Effectively removing any semblance of non-literary factors from the equation, either during Safavid or post-Safavid times means that no other explanation of the emergence of the 'literary return' movement re-

mains possible. According to such a rationale, it surely must have been a desire to 'return' to the style of the classical masters and expel any last vestige of the so-called 'Indian Style'.

The impact of social and political disruption certainly had a role in shaping the emergence of the 'literary return' movement, but, it neither entirely supplanted literary and social continuities between Safavid and post-Safavid times nor disallowed for the 'literary return' poets being attentive to their social surroundings.

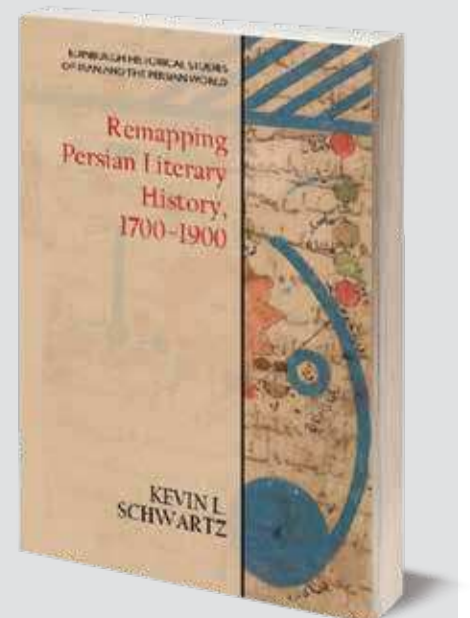
During the mid-to-late eighteenth century, a changing cast of rulers and aspirants continually sought to control Isfahan. Not surprisingly, the city witnessed major periods of political instability, following its initial sacking by Afghan invaders in 1722. The number of groups attempting to gain control of Isfahan and the chaos and oppression ensuing from this jockeying for power are striking. The policies of rulers and mayors did not help. For example, a drought in 1740-1

was exacerbated by Nadir Shah (1736-47)'s policies, which both adversely affected planting and led to problems for residents in procuring food.

The situation following the death of Nader Shah in 1747 was by all accounts disastrous. Attacks, sieges, pillaging and raiding by invading armies followed.

A slight respite from this mayhem resulted from Karim Khan Zand's rule (1751-79), which according to one observer appeared like 'an island of relative calm and stability in an otherwise destructive period'. Even so, the Zand period did not protect Isfahan entirely from bouts of turbulence. During the oppressive rule of Hajji Muhammad Ranani, explored further below, the city also faced a severe famine in 1775 and an earthquake in 1778.

Following the death of Karim Khan Zand, a serious power vacuum ensued, and jockeying for dominance began anew. The situation in Isfahan devolved into anarchy. Battles between the Zands and Qajars followed.



Hamas vows 'full force' fight after Israel widens attacks

International Desk

Hamas pledged to confront Israeli attacks with "full force" after the regime's military widened its air and ground attacks on the Palestinian enclave. Despite international warnings over the humanitarian catastrophe, Israel's military suggested on Saturday that a long-promised ground offensive had begun.

This is while an overwhelming majority of nations – 120 countries – voted on Friday for a United Nations resolution calling for a "sustained humanitarian truce" in Gaza. Also, in a phone conversation on Saturday, heads of the states of Iran and Qatar urged stronger support for Palestinians against the Israeli onslaught that, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry, has killed at least 7,703 people, including 3,500 children.

Israeli incursion foiled

On Saturday, the Palestinian resistance group that runs Gaza said its fighters were clashing with Israeli troops in areas near the border. Hamas confirmed that the Palestinian resistance group foiled the Israeli ground offensive attempting to invade the Gaza Strip

on three axes of the strip. The movement revealed that it lured intruding forces into several ambushes, leading to casualties among enemy lines. Israel said on Saturday morning its troops, sent in on Friday night, were still in the field, without elaborating. The regime had earlier made only brief sorties into Gaza during three weeks of bombardment to root out Hamas fighters, who it said had killed more than 1,400 Israelis.

The most intense airstrike

On Friday evening, Israel intensified its bombardment of the Gaza Strip, the army said, striking dozens of Hamas targets, especially underground tunnels. The blistering air and artillery assault destroyed hundreds of buildings and thousands of houses

across the strip, the civil defense service in the Palestinian territory said. Gaza residents told CNN that the evening's airstrikes were the most intense they have experienced since Israel began to retaliate against Hamas's October 7 attack.

A dire situation

Gaza was under an almost complete blackout, with internet and phone services cut for more than 12 hours by Saturday morning. Telecom firms and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society said it was the result of Israeli bombardments.

Other countries, United Nations officials and aid agencies described a dire situation on the ground in Gaza as ambulances left without cellphone or radio service resorted to chasing the sound of artillery fire to local people

wounded. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk warned on Saturday there was the potential for thousands more civilians to die if Israel presses a major ground offensive in Gaza. The head of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said the blackout was "making it impossible" for ambulances to reach the injured in Gaza.

Nations' vote

In New York, UN member nations voted for a "sustained humanitarian truce leading to a cessation of hostilities" in the war between Israel and Hamas, so that humanitarian aid can reach civilians in Gaza. The vote outcome prompted a burst of loud applause in the assembly hall where delegates had gathered to vote and debate. The US, like Israel, has sharply criticized the effort and was one of 14 countries that voted against it on Friday, CNN reported.

Jordan brought the resolution to the General Assembly after successive attempts to call for cease-fires and humanitarian pauses failed in the more powerful Security Council.

While a UN General Assembly vote is politically significant, it is not binding, and comes amid a lack of global consensus on how to resolve the crisis. Ahead of the vote, Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi urged others to support the resolution, warn-

ing on social media that Israel's expanding ground operations "will be a humanitarian catastrophe of epic proportions for years to come." "Millions will be watching every vote. History will judge," he said.

Iran, Qatar for closer Muslim unity

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani weighed plans for closer Muslim unity to stop the Israeli regime's "war machine".

In a phone conversation on Saturday, Raisi stressed that Palestine is in urgent need of effective and serious support from the world, particularly Muslim nations, to end genocidal Israel's war machine and crimes. The support provided by Western states, especially the US, has given the Zionist regime the green light to commit atrocities against Gaza, Raisi deplored.

The emir of Qatar said the crimes being committed against the people of Gaza attest to the Western countries' double standards, which have already been discredited.

Reaffirming Qatar's support for the legitimate rights of Palestinians to defense and self-determination, Al Thani said regional and Muslim nations can join hands to halt Israel's war machine.

Also, in an interview with Bloomberg Television from Iran's mission to the UN in New York, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian warned

that a ground invasion would have dire consequences for Israel. "Opening of new fronts will be unavoidable and that will put Israel in a new situation that will make it regret its actions," he said.

"This has reached the point of explosion. Anything is possible and any front can be opened up." Criticizing the West's support of Israel, he said, "The US is advising others to show self-restraint, but it has sided with Israel totally".

He also said groups attacking US forces in Syria and Iraq are acting independently, and haven't received direction from Tehran.

'Main culprit' behind Gaza 'massacre'

Addressing a massive pro-Palestinian rally – a crowd of 1.5 million – in Istanbul on Saturday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called Western powers "the main culprit" behind the Israeli army's "massacre" of Palestinians in Gaza.

"If we leave aside some conscientious voices... the massacre in Gaza is entirely the work of the West," Erdogan told the Turkish and Palestinian flag-waving crowd.

Erdogan added that Israel was behaving like a "war criminal". He accused Western powers of "shedding tears" over the death of civilians in Ukraine and turning a blind eye on the death of Palestinian civilians in Gaza.

And he accused Israel's al-

lies of creating a "crusade war atmosphere," pitting Christians against Muslims.

"Listen to our call for dialogue," Erdogan said. "No one loses from a just peace."

The US and other Western countries have offered strong support to Israel but had urged it to hold off on a ground offensive for fear that high casualties among Palestinians would fuel wider conflict.

Moscow's most critical of Israel yet

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that Israel's bombardment of Gaza runs counter to international law and risks creating a catastrophe that could last decades.

Lavrov made the comments, some of Moscow's most critical of Israel yet, in an interview with the Belarusian state news agency Belta.

Global rallies

Millions of demonstrators rallied in cities in Europe, the Middle East and Asia on Saturday to show support for the Palestinians. In one of the biggest marches, in London, aerial footage showed large crowds marching through the center of the capital to demand the government of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak call for a cease-fire.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist





Smoke raises after an Israeli air strike in the northern Gaza Strip on October 28, 2023.
● ARIS MESSINIS/AFP

Need for setting up a 'Muscat hotline'



By Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh
Expert on International Affairs

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Heartbreaking choice

Speaking to CNN by phone from near Gaza's Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, one eyewitness, Salem Ahmad Ammar said that he and his wife had decided to separate in hopes that one would survive to care for their kids.

"Don't know if I (will) live to see the daylight tomorrow morning," Ammar said. "I split from my wife, and the kids went to her parents' house, and I came to the hospital here in the event we die in different places and maybe one of us would live and our kids will live. Difficult choices we are making."

Since the beginning of the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, Arab countries' diplomatic efforts at the UN Security Council and the General Assembly to end the conflict have produced no results.

In such events, diplomacy in parallel with war determines the course of scenarios related to that event. But what is happening in Gaza is not a good example of this policy because, unfortunately, diplomacy is serving the ongoing war in the Palestinian territory.

I believe that Iran, as the most important supporter of Hamas, and the United States, as the most important ally of Israel, were surprised at the beginning of the conflict, but now they should act in such a way that they would not be surprised again. Therefore, I propose setting up a "Muscat hotline" between Tehran and Washington.

Currently, Iran and the US are engaged in a war of words, and this issue usually goes nowhere. Extremely violent conditions prevail in the battlefield and, in such circumstances, it is better for the regional countries to take a long-term view about the event and its consequences and try to strengthen diplomatic channels to put an end to the conflict.

I believe that diplomacy between Iran and the US, in any form, can definitely be fruitful for ending the conflict. If the future of the region, the people of Gaza, especially the children, are important, instead of warning and threatening each other, the US and Iran should seek a solution for the deadly conflict in the Gaza Strip.

The Americans, especially President Joe Biden, tried hard not to fall into the trap of Benjamin Netanyahu's extremism in the past year, but now it seems that this has happened and Netanyahu has dragged the US into the middle of the regime's tensions.

In fact, both sides of the conflict are trying to drag others into the war. If Iran and the US do not have a proper assessment of the situation, the ongoing conflict may lead to a wider conflict between the two countries. But it does not seem that Tehran and Washington intend to worsen the current tensions between themselves, which would be against their national interests.

It seems that Hamas attacked Israel without coordination with Tehran. Just as Israel does not seem to have coordinated with the US in the initial stage of its operation. Now, both Hamas and Israel expect support from Iran and the US, respectively. This support is being given now, but in order to end this devastating war and prevent the killing of more women and children in Gaza, Iran and the United States must manage the situation through diplomacy.

Given the importance of Iran and the US in the world, the idea of setting up a "Muscat hotline" between them can play an important role in resolving the conflict.

"The superpowers at play are not doing enough at the moment," said a protester. "This is why we're here: We're calling for a cease-fire, calling for Palestinian rights, the right to exist, to live, human rights, all our rights."

Echoing Washington's stance, Sunak's government has stopped short of calling for a cease-fire, and instead advocated humanitarian pauses to allow aid to reach

Hebron called on Saturday for a global boycott of Israeli products.

"Don't contribute to the killing of the children of Palestine," they chanted.

Elsewhere in Europe, people took to the streets of Copenhagen, Rome and Stockholm.

Some cities in France have banned rallies since the war began, fearing they could fuel social tensions, but despite a ban in Paris, a small rally took place on Saturday. Several hundred people also marched in the southern city of Marseille. In New Zealand's capital, Wellington, thousands



people in Gaza. In Malaysia, a large crowd of demonstrators chanted slogans outside the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

Iraqis took part in a rally in Baghdad; and in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Palestinian protesters in

of people holding Palestinian flags and placards reading "Free Palestine" marched to Parliament House.

Reuters, AFP, AP, and Tasnim contributed to this report.

Ganjzadeh wins world karate bronze



● IKF

Sports Desk

Iran's Sajjad Ganjzadeh finished his campaign at the World Karate Championships in Budapest with a bronze medal.

Representing the country in the men's kumite +84kg contests, Ganjzadeh – an Olympic champion two years ago – bounced back from a last-four loss to Frenchman Mehdi Filali to beat Croatian Andelo Kvesic 1-0 in the third-place bout.

In a repeat of the final showdown at the Tokyo Olympics, Ganjzadeh had defeated Saudi karateka Tareq Hamedi before a quarterfinal triumph against Babacar Seck of Spain.

A winner of seven world medals prior to the event in Budapest, Ganjzadeh celebrated a third major medal in 2023, following the bronze in July's Asian Championships as well as the gold medal at the recently-finished Asian Games in Hangzhou, China.

Ganjzadeh was also a part of the Iranian kumite team – a winner of three successive world golds between 2014 and 2018 – which was stunned by a 3-2 defeat against Azerbaijan in the last-eight round in Budapest.

Ganjzadeh's medal was the first at this year's event for Iran, which had to send a depleted squad to the Hungarian capital after the host country refused to issue entry visas for the male kata representative Ali Zand as well as the country's female kata trio and the whole para karate team.

Rostamian settles for Asian shooting silver



● FARS

Sports Desk

Haniyeh Rostamian got Iran off the mark at the Asian Shooting Championships Changwon, South Korea, grabbing the silver medal in the women's 25m pistol contests.

The Iranian finished behind Chinese shooter Liu Rui, with Zhao Nan, also from China, taking the bronze.

This was a second continental medal for the Iranian girl – a three-time world bronze medalist – in less than a month after she teamed up with Amir Joharikhov for a third-spot finish in the 10m air pistol mixed team event at the Hangzhou Asian Games.

Asian Para Games: Iran bags 44 golds, pips Japan to runner-up spot



Iranian gold medalist Ahmad Aminzadeh (R) and silver winner Mahdi Sayyadi pose with their superheavyweight powerlifting medals at the Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, China, on October 28, 2023. ● IRNA

Sports Desk

The two-horse race for the runner-up place in the 4th Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, China, ended in Iran's favor as the country overtook Japan to finish behind China in the medals table.

Having spent the best part of the seven-day event in the second place, the Iranians had fallen behind the Japanese on Friday before the final-day heroics saw Iran ultimately collect 44 golds – two more than what the Japanese tallied. Iranian athletes also grabbed 46 silvers and 41

bronze medals while the host, as expected, dominated the Games with 521 medals – including an all-time record of 214 golds. Fatemeh Amirzadegani and Mehrdad Moradi brought the curtain down on a glittering athletics campaign for Iran in Hangzhou as the former was the first to cross the finish line in the women's 400m T12 final, with the latter walking away with the ultimate prize of the men's event. Zafar Zaker, meanwhile, registered a best attempt of 33.58m to take the silver in the men's javelin throw F55 contest.

In the chess competitions, Maliheh Safaei won the women's individual rapid gold in the VI-B1 RND7 class with the Iranian women also beating Indonesia to the top spot in the team event of the category. Abolfazl Kazemian (silver), Leila Zarezadeh (bronze), and Atefeh Naqavi (bronze) were also among the Iranian medalists on Saturday as the country notched up a total 15 chess medals – including four golds – in Hangzhou. Elsewhere on the final day, the Iranian powerlifters dominated the men's superheavyweight contest,



The Iranian chess squad bagged a remarkable 15 medals – including four golds – at the Asian Para Games. ● IRNA

while Nikoo Rouzbahani's 126kg lift sealed the women's +86kg bronze for her. Ahmad Aminzadeh bagged the men's +107kg gold, thanks to a third lift of 266kg. Aminzadeh's fellow Iranian Mahdi Sayyadi settled for the silver with 244kg – nine kilograms clear of Jordanian bronze winner Jamil Elshebli, who had won the gold at the Tokyo Paralympics two years ago. Aminzadeh went on to pay tribute to the late Iranian sensation Siamand Rahman, who passed away at the age of 31 in 2020 but

remains the world record holder of the men's superheavyweight class with 310kg, describing the two-time Paralympic champion as "an unrepeatable legend, whose absence will always be felt in the Iranian team." There were also medals for Iran in blind football – men's silver – as well as archery competitions – Mohammadreza Zandi's bronze in the men's individual W1 open event – as the country celebrated a best-ever finish in the medals table since the Asian Para Games were first introduced in 2010.

Female athletes took credit for 40 medals of Iran's haul – 12 of which were golds – with archers Zahra Nemati and Mohammadreza Arab teaming up for the sole Iranian mixed medal in Hangzhou – a team recurve open gold. The athletics competitions were the most prolific event for the Iranians, yielding 20 golds, coupled with 20 silvers and 10 bronzes. Iranian swimmer Sina Zeighaminejad also enjoyed a memorable run in this year's Games, collecting three gold medals and a silver.

Doncic's 49 points help Mavericks edge out Nets

BBC – Luka Doncic scored 49 points to help the Dallas Mavericks to a 125-120 win against the Brooklyn Nets in NBA. The Slovenian hit four straight three-point shots in the final quarter while Kyrie Irving scored 17 in his first game against the Nets since being traded from Brooklyn in February. Victor Wembanyama secured his first NBA win as the San Antonio Spurs beat the Houston Rockets 126-122 in overtime.

The 19-year-old rookie, who is 7ft 4in, scored 21 points and 12 rebounds. Regarded as one of the game's biggest prospects, Wembanyama was the NBA's top draft pick this year.

The Rockets led by seven points after three quarters, but the French teenager levelled the score at 111 with 20 seconds of regular time remaining then added crucial baskets in overtime.

Elsewhere on Friday, Steph Curry's game-high 41 points inspired the Golden State Warriors to a 122-114 victory against the Sacramento Kings.



Mavericks guard Luka Doncic (77) shoots over Nets' Dorian Finney-Smith (28) during an NBA game at American Airlines Center, Dallas, TX, US, on October 27, 2023. ● ANDREW DIEB/USA TODAY SPORTS

Fellow guard De'Aaron Fox scored 39 points for the Kings in their first home game since losing 120-100 to the Warriors in Game 7

of their first-round play-off series last season. Nikola Jokic led NBA champions the Denver Nuggets to a 108-104

win on the road over the Memphis Grizzlies, contributing 22 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists. Julius Randle came close

to a triple-double with 17 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists as the New York Knicks held off the Atlanta Hawks to win

126-120. Meanwhile, all five of the Boston Celtics' starters scored at least 17 points as they beat Miami Heat in a rematch of the 2023 Eastern Conference finals. The Chicago Bulls edged the Toronto Raptors 104-103 in overtime, with Alex Caruso bucketing a three-pointer with two seconds remaining. Donovan Mitchell's game-high 43 points was not enough for the Cleveland Cavaliers to beat the Oklahoma City Thunder, who won 108-105. Detroit Pistons claimed their first victory under new coach Monty Williams as they triumphed 111-99 against hosts the Charlotte Hornets. German brothers Franz and Moritz Wagner scored 23 points and 17 points respectively to help Orlando Magic to a 102-97 win over the Portland Trail Blazers. Utah Jazz won 120-118 against the Los Angeles Clippers in Salt Lake City thanks to a game-winning three-pointer from Jordan Clarkson in the final 30 seconds.

Cheetahs left to fend for themselves on Mayamey-Abbas Abad road

Social Desk

Once a sanctuary for the magnificent Asiatic cheetah, the region nestled between Mayamey and Abbas Abad in Semnan Province now stands as a killing ground for this endangered species. Within this vast expanse of Khar Turan National Park, it is estimated that a mere 20 cats of this rare breed still roam. However, their survival hangs by a thread, as the transit road from Mayamey to Abbas Abad, stretching 50 kilometers along the southern part of the park, has become a deadly obstacle course.

Tragically, every year witnesses the loss of at least one cheetah due to fatal collisions with speeding cars. Over the past 13 years, a heart-wrenching tally of 13 cheetahs has met their untimely demise along this treacherous stretch of road, earning it the grim moniker, *Youzkosh* (cheetah killer) Road.

Solutions to this pressing issue have been proposed, yet the will to implement them seems to falter. One such

measure is the installation of fencing, designed to prevent the cheetahs from venturing onto the road. However, a mere five kilometers, out of the total 100-kilometer stretch (both north and south roads), have been fenced so far, leaving much to be desired.

Another attempt at curbing the danger involves reducing the speed limit from 110km/hr. to 80km/hr. Despite the installation of numerous signs in the area, it appears that few drivers pay heed to these warnings. Even the introduction of eight cameras along the route has failed to yield the desired results.

In response to two collisions in the first half of this year, officials from various agencies have scrambled to compile statistics and reports, proposing solutions such as increased fencing, the installation of speed cameras and provision of high-speed internet connectivity for them, improved lighting, etc.

An eyewitness recently traveled along this treacherous path, going from Tehran to

Mashhad on Wednesday, October 18, and returning on October 21, from Mashhad to Tehran.

The eyewitness meticulously documented his or her experiences through a car camera, and uploaded the footage on an online streaming platform. The video provides comprehensive data including location, date, time, and speed, bringing forth the following findings:

Out of the claimed eight cameras installed in the area, only five were found to be active, while the remaining three remained dormant, their camera bases serving as mere reminders of their intended purpose. The fencing along this perilous route extended a mere five kilometers, falling short of the necessary protective measures.

Despite the registered speed of the eyewitness's vehicle being below the designated 80km/hr. limit, it became apparent that the majority of drivers paid little regard to this restriction. The video captures a constant stream of cars



overtaking that of the eyewitness, including trailers and trucks, emphasizing the widespread disregard for speed limits.

Curiously, certain sections of the road were marked with 90km/hr. speed signs, adding to the confusion and inconsistency of regulations.

Notably absent were police cars stationed along this dangerous stretch.

Lighting fixtures, crucial for ensuring visibility and safety, were installed along a mere two kilometers of the route. Concrete foundations hinted at intentions for further progress, but progress remained stagnant.

Contrary to the Ministry of Communications' claim of establishing high-speed internet connectivity for the cameras, the reality within



this area revealed a different story. Mobile internet connectivity was sporadic at best, often disconnected, or limited to 2G speeds.

Employing smart cameras to calculate average speeds within this range, coupled with instant SMS notifications to drivers, could serve as a proactive measure in curbing reckless behavior. Sending warning SMS alerts to drivers upon entering this danger zone could potentially save the lives of cheetahs. The cost of these

text messages could be offset by fines collected from offending vehicles on the same route.

The video footage shows that the actions taken by responsible authorities thus far have been woefully inadequate. The promises made to protect this endangered species appear to be nothing more than empty words, with little to no verification or follow-through. Regrettably, the road from Mayamey to Abbas Abad seems to have been aban-

doned to the mercy of fate, leaving the cheetahs to fend for themselves.

Unless effective measures are promptly implemented and drivers take heed of the dangers they pose, the Mayamey-Abbas Abad road will continue to serve as a merciless slaughterhouse for these irreplaceable Iranian treasures.

**This is an edited version of an article originally published by Asriran on October 28, 2023.*

First Announcement

N.I.S.O.C
NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
AHVAZ, IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0140021

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	CASING 5-1/2 IN. API GRADE CRA-110 SUPER, "VAM TOP" THREAD, RANGE 3 (MAX. LENGTH 40.5 FT), 26 PPF	2,000LE
02	COUPLING, CASING, 5-1/2 IN. API GRADE CRA-110 SUPER, 13% CR, UNS41426 SEAMLESS, ALL WEIGHTS VAM TOP	30 NO

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 212,584/47 EURO or 84,669,630,325 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab. ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN. PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex, Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 4644
Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

PUBLIC RELATIONS
www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://iets.mporg.ir> 1593171

Second Announcement

Tender invitation

Invitation to public tender for:
EC-3305

Tabriz Petrochemical Company intends to procure the amount of 31,000 kg of EC-3305 it needs for the Polystyrene Production Plant.

In order to receive tender documents, interested suppliers should send their request to the following email within 7 days after the second printing of the advertisement.

Email: Mr.ghorbani@tpco.ir Phone No.: +98-21-88737355

Tender	No	Quantity
EC-3305	PVS-0241038	31000 KG

Public Relations of Tabriz Petrochemical Company (Public Stock)

First turn published: Oct 24, 2023 Second turn published: Oct 29, 2023

Long-term plan for cheetahs in captivity is to release them in the wild

Social Desk

Azar and Turan, Asiatic cheetah cubs, cannot be released into the wild, announced the deputy of natural environment of Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE).

"Iran, the cheetah, is in good health and has no issues. We are waiting for her natural fertility cycle to occur," said Hassan Akbari, according to ISNA.

Akbari also mentioned that the cheetahs in captivity would be used for breeding, and the next generation of cheetahs born in captivity will be reintroduced into the wild.

The project of cheetah reproduction in captivity reached a new phase with the transfer of three cheetah cubs, Delbar, Kushki, and Iran, to Turan Wildlife Refuge. Also, in March 2021, an 11-year-old male cheetah named Firouz, from the refuge, was brought, in and was meant to mate with Iran, a female cheetah, in a captive environment located at the Turan site. The mating was successful, resulting in the birth of three cheetah cubs in the spring of 2022. Unfortunately, all three cubs died. Last year, two cheetah cubs joined the group of captive ones. These cubs, later named Azar and Turan, were discovered by a shepherd in Khar Turan National Park, their hometown, on December 3, 2022.

"Only cheetahs that have grown up in the wild have the necessary skills to survive in that environment. Instead, efforts are focused on ensuring the safety of the habitats around Turan, increasing prey populations, and improving habitat conditions," he said. Although there are habitats outside the protected area of Turan Wildlife Refuge, such as those in the north and east, they cannot be managed since they are not part of the designated regions.

Measures have been initiated to establish cooperative protection in the east of the refuge, where the private sector assists the DoE in protection and the reproduction of prey species. The priority for reproduction and population growth includes deer, ram, and sheep. The goal is to enrich the southeastern plains of Turan and Laghari plains (west of Bardas-



kan City in Khorasan Razavi Province) with deer, and the heights of certain villages with rams and sheep.

"The private sector is expected to provide assistance in this endeavor. A memorandum of understanding has already been signed to facilitate the proliferation of prey species," Akbari said.

The official further mentioned that preliminary measures have been taken in North Turan region to establish cooperation between the provinces of Semnan and North Khorasan.

"By utilizing the capacities of the governorates, and with the support of the private sector and voluntary protection, the aim is to protect the intermediate area between Turan Wildlife Refuge, Miandasht, and Khoshyeylaq protected areas."

He emphasized the importance of strengthening protection in this intermediate area, as most of the observations made this year were outside the Turan range.

"It is crucial to multiply prey populations and reinforce protection measures in this region," Akbari said. "Turan itself is a natural habitat where, if adequately protected, prey populations will naturally increase. However, due to limited time, efforts are being made to increase prey through reproduction, or release and transfer, ensuring the security of the cheetahs in their habitat."

Akbari finally addressed the issue of reproduction in captivity and the release of Azar and Turan into the wild. "While the immediate focus is not on reproduction in captivity, the long-term plan involves transferring cheetahs to semi-wild conditions and promoting the naturalization of future generations born in captivity," he said.

Ancient inscription with Persian found in Sri Lanka



MEHR – A trilingual inscription in Persian, Chinese, and Tamil, believed to date back to around a century ago, was discovered in Sri Lanka. The inscription, which was prepared in China in 1409, offers a unique glimpse into historical connections in the region.

According to information obtained from Morteza Rezvanfar, an academic staff member of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage & Tourism, the inscription was identified in Sri Lanka in 1911. It was commissioned by a Chinese Muslim commodore named Zheng He and was installed in a Buddhist temple.

Zheng He, a prominent figure in Chinese history, is known for his vast fleet of 217 ships and 28,000 sailors. He made four voyages to the Persian Gulf and has left a historical imprint on Iranian records. His expeditions were monumental. He even visited the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz.

Highlighting the cultural and historical significance of this inscription for both Sri Lanka and China, Rezvanfar noted that several Persian words from the inscription were deciphered nearly 90 years ago by Gholam Yazdani, an archaeology director at the University of Hyderabad in India.

Over 1,800 int'l entries to compete in Cinéma Vérité

IRNA – The 17th Iran International Documentary Film Festival, also known as Cinéma Vérité, received a total of 1,839 works from 113 different countries for the International Section.

This year's International Section showcases a diverse array of documentary works, with 70 percent of the submissions falling under the short documentary category. The remaining entries are divided into long documentaries, at 22.6 percent, and medium-length documentaries, at 6.8 percent.

A total of 811 female directors and 1,028 male directors have submitted films for consideration in this film competition. The variety of voices and perspectives reflects the festival's commitment to inclusivity and diversity in the realm of documentary filmmaking. The 17th edition of the event will be held under the auspice of Mohammad Hamidi-Moqaddam. It provides a platform for filmmakers to share their unique stories and visions, promoting the art of documentary filmmaking on the global stage.

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Iranian, int'l artists exhibit 30 posters on Gaza

Arts & Culture Desk

In response to the brutal attacks by the occupying Zionist regime and the horrific crimes committed against the oppressed people of Gaza, a display of 30 selected posters created by Iranian and international artists will be showcased at the University of Tehran and the Eshraq Cultural Center.

According to reports by the Tasnim news agency, this exhibition sheds light on cur-

rent events and aims to raise awareness and promote solidarity with the people of Gaza.

The poster exhibition, titled 'The World of the Future, the World of Palestine,' will begin on October 29 and will be open to the public until November 5.

It provides a platform for artists to use their talents to address and respond to the ongoing crisis in Gaza, contributing to the global dialogue on this critical issue.



Envoy: Tunisians admire Iran as land of 'rich civilization, culture'

Hadi Ajili, Iran's cultural attaché in Tunisia, emphasized the enduring historical significance of Iran in the minds of the Tunisian elite and the potential for enhanced cultural relations and cooperation between the two nations.

In an interview with IRNA, Ajili discussed the diverse perceptions of Iran within Tunisian society, particularly among academics and artists.

He stated that Tunisian elites, primarily

university professors specializing in Islamic civilization and history, have a solid knowledge of Iran's culture and history. These individuals recognize Iran's historical contributions to civilization and maintain a positive view of the country. Ajili also highlighted that in the Tunisian perspective, there is no historical differentiation when considering Iran; the country is perceived as a unified entity from ancient times to the present. For instance, when Tunisians reference the greatness of Iranian civilization, they do not attribute it to a specific historical period, but rather consider it part of the broader Persian culture.

Regarding the promotion of the Persian language, Ajili explained that, in the past, Persian language classes were presented by the Iranian Embassy in Tunisia. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these classes were temporarily suspended. Nevertheless, efforts are underway to revive these language classes, with the involvement of proficient instructors from Iran and Tunisia.

When it comes to fostering tourism be-

tween the two nations, Ajili described ongoing initiatives, including collaboration with Tunisian travel agencies.

He mentioned that 23 Tunisian tourists were recently sent to Iran, and the Iran Cultural Center provides information and resources to these agencies to facilitate tourist travel. Moreover, cultural influencers in Tunisia have been invited to visit Iran and promote the country through social media and other platforms.

In the field of cinema, Ajili noted that Iranian films have been screened in Tunisian theaters, and Iran has been a special guest at the Tunisian short film festival. Additionally, the Iran Cultural Center has facilitated the exchange of Tunisian and Iranian artists, fostering collaboration in the field of cinema. Tunisians have expressed admiration for Iranian cinema, recognizing its global significance.

Looking ahead, the Iran Cultural Center aims to continue promoting Iranian cinema and explore opportunities for the further development of cultural exchanges between Iran and Tunisia.



Syed Ali Shah Geelani; A life dedicated to Kashmir

By Shehnaz Nawaz
 Researcher at Pakistan's MOIB

OPINION

Syed Ali Shah Geelani was a symbol of Kashmir's resistance. Geelani spearheaded Kashmir's movement for the right to self-determination and was a staunch proponent of merging the Indian-controlled Kashmir with Pakistan. As soon as the news of his death began to make the rounds in the disputed Himalayan region, authorities blocked internet access and deployed hundreds of troops in the main city of Srinagar to prevent a mass funeral procession or protests against Indian rule.

India had reasons to be apprehensive obviously. For decades, Geelani was the symbol of popular resistance for the Kashmiris who either wanted to carve an independent country out of the Himalayan territory or merge with neighboring Pakistan. He headed the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), an umbrella group

of various Kashmiri political and religious groups formed in 1993 to spearhead a movement for the region's right to self-determination. One of the core principles of Geelani's political ideology was the right to self-determination. He firmly believed that the Kashmiri people should have the right to decide their own destiny through a free and fair plebiscite. Geelani's advocacy for self-determination aligned with international norms and the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir, which call for a plebiscite to determine the future of the region.

Throughout his life, Geelani was an ardent critic of the Indian rule in Kashmir. He consistently opposed what he viewed as the Indian government's oppressive policies and military presence in the region. His unwavering stance made him a symbol of resistance against what he and many Kashmiris saw as an occupation. Geelani was a vocal advocate for human rights in Kashmir. He brought attention to the alleged human rights abuses, including

extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, and torture, carried out by Indian security forces in the region. His efforts to shed light on these issues earned him respect from human rights organizations and activists worldwide.

Despite his staunch opposition to Indian rule, Geelani consistently advocated for non-violence and peaceful resistance. He believed in the power of dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the Kashmir issue. Throughout his career, he called for meaningful negotiations between India, Pakistan, and the Kashmiri leadership to find a peaceful and just solution to the conflict.

Geelani's dedication to the Kashmiri cause did not go unnoticed on the global stage. He received international recognition for his efforts to highlight the plight of the Kashmiri people. His speeches and writings have resonated with audiences worldwide, garnering support for the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination.

Geelani's path was fraught with challenges and personal sacrific-

es. He faced numerous periods of house arrest and detention by the Indian authorities. Despite these hardships, he remained steadfast in his commitment to the Kashmiri people's cause, inspiring many with his resilience.

Geelani's life and struggle were defined by his unwavering commitment to the rights and self-determination of the Kashmiri people. His advocacy for non-violence, human rights, and peaceful resistance earned him respect both within Kashmir and on the global stage. As the world continues to grapple with the complex Kashmir issue, Geelani remains a symbol of hope and determination for the Kashmiri people and their quest for self-determination.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this opinion piece are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of Iran Daily. We encourage diverse perspectives and open dialogue within our publication, and the author bears full responsibility for the content of this article.