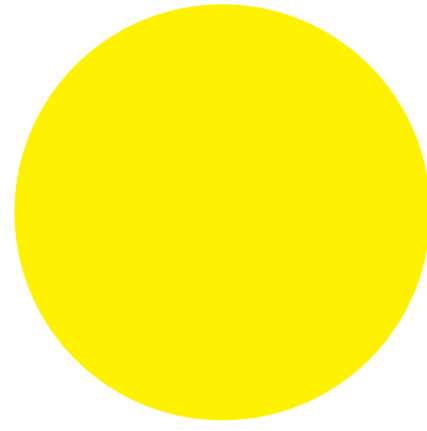


Iran oil output up 50% despite sanctions, to hit 3.6 mbd: *Owji*



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Nationwide rallies in solidarity with Palestinians

Iran for Gaza



Irans take part in a pro-Palestinian rally in the central city of Arak, Markazi Province, Iran, on November 18, 2023. **KAMYAR ZADFAR/ISNA**



Transformation of Bagh Zereshk Mansion of Isfahan into a museum is vital



Iran-Pakistan exhibition highlights Israeli atrocities on Palestinians



European passenger planes overhauled in Iran: *CAO*



FIFA U-17 World Cup: Iran to face Morocco in last-16 round



Cancer causes 55k deaths in Iran each year



Turkmenistan proposes to construct joint economic zone with Iran



Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan has expressed his country's interest in developing ties with Iran and proposed to construct a joint economic zone with Iran.

Rashid Meredov made the remarks addressing the opening ceremony of the economic conference of Iranian and Turkmenistan businessmen in the Turkmen capital city of Ashgabat on Saturday, IRNA reported.

He said that developing trade exchanges, seeking new routes of cooperation, and employing the two countries' capacities are the goals of the conference to provide vast investment opportunities. Referring to the positive economic ties between Iran and Turkmenistan, he added that Turkmenistan has an active economy, natural gas, and oil reserves that provide many opportunities for Iranian investors.

Pointing to the role of border markets in the growth of trade, he noted that Bajgiran border markets are active in two countries and Turkmenistan proposes the creation of a joint economic zone in the Sarakhs and Incheh-Borun regions.

Iran's companies enjoy modern technology, he said, asking Iranian companies to cooperate with Turkmenistan.

Meredov pointed to Iran-Turkmenistan's electricity cooperation, and said that the construction of a power transmission line with 400 kWh is under negotiation with an Iranian company.

Meanwhile, Iran's deputy foreign minister for economic diplomacy pointed to the capabilities of Iranian companies and expressed the Islamic Republic's readiness to implement development projects in neighboring Turkmenistan.

Speaking in the inaugural ceremony of the Iran-Turkmenistan Economic Forum on the sidelines of the "Iran Project" Exhibition, Mehdi Safari said the two countries have high potential to increase bilateral trade. Turkmenistan is Iran's strategic partner in political and economic terms, he added.

Promoting relations with neighbors is one of the priorities of the current administration of Iran, he said.

Today, the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries has increased to about \$500 million, Safari added.

Iran oil output up 50% despite sanctions, to hit 3.6 mbd: *Owji*

Iran's oil production has increased 50 percent since the 13th administration took office two years ago, said Oil Minister Javad Owji.

The minister, who made the announcement at a meeting with some religious sources of imitation, including Ayatollah Seyyed Hashem Hosseini Bushehri and Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi Amoli, in the holy city of Qom, north-central Iran, added that the country's oil production stood at 2.2 million barrels per day (mbd) when the incumbent government took over in August 2021, while the output has now soared to 3.3 mbd, and will hit 3.6 mbd by the end of the upcoming winter, Shana reported. The country's oil production has witnessed a 50 percent hike, and crude exports have increased 2.5 times under the 13th administration in spite of intensified sanctions, he pointed out.

Iran's oil industry was controlled by foreign advisers before the Islamic Revolution and they plundered the country's products, said Owji. "The oil industry has witnessed great events after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, over the past 44 years. No foreign advisers are now present in the country's oil and gas industry, and Iranian oil experts are developing the domestic industry."

In the pre-revolution era, he continued, one gas refinery and one petrochemical plant had been built, while 23 refineries and 65 petrochemical complexes are operating now, said the oil minister, adding that \$14 billion in revenues earned from petrochemical exports in the previous year were deposited into Iran's Integrated Forex Deals System



(NIMA).

A few cities and villages were supplied with gas before the revolution, recalled Owji, adding that 98 percent of the urban population, and around 84 percent of the rural population have now been connected to the gas grid, as 5,700 villages and 40 towns, mainly underprivileged and cold areas, have been provided with gas since two years ago.

The country is currently making 80 percent of the products and equipment needed by the domestic oil industry, said the minister, underscoring that the 13th administration has accel-

erated the implementation of oil projects.

"We have become self-sufficient in the oil and gas industry and are exporting technical and engineering services to countries sanctioned by the US," said Owji, explaining that Iran started exporting technical and engineering services to refineries in Venezuela and Latin America under the 13th administration and reactivated their oil industry, which had come to a standstill due to sanctions.

The incumbent administration has given top priority to the completing of partly-finished projects and the launching of

new projects such as the newly-inaugurated Phase 11 of the South Pars (SP) Gas Field, he pointed out.

Qom Province's gas consumption in all sectors is between four and five million cubic meters per day (mcm/d), said Owji, adding that SP Phase 11 produces some 14 mcm/d and its production will increase by drilling more wells.

Under the 13th administration, he said, domestic gas output has jumped 50 mcm/d, while the country faced no problems with gas supplies during last year's severe winter.

Shifting to projects for reducing

air pollution, the oil minister referred to the collecting of associated petroleum gas (APG), stating 11.5 mcm of flare gas has been gathered per day since the 13th administration took office and the volume of APG to be captured by the end of the year (March 19, 2024) will be equal to the amount produced by one phase of the SP field.

Owji pointed to the impacts of the oil industry on the country's economic growth, concluding that the oil and gas sectors' economic growth stood at 10.5 percent in the year to March 20, 2023, and rose to 19.6 percent in the spring of 2023.

IPGL to soon start operations at Chabahar port

State-owned India Ports Global Ltd. (IPGL) — formed to develop and run Chabahar port in Iran — will soon sign an agreement with the Iranian Port Authority to start a full-fledged operation, Indian Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Secretary TK Ramachandran said. Located in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, on Iran's energy-rich southern coast, Chabahar port is being developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan to boost connectivity and trade ties, PTI reported.

"(To start a full-fledged operation of) Chabahar Port... the agreement was to be signed between IPGL and the Iranian Port Authority. That is in process. It will happen soon," Ramachandran told reporters. Chabahar is an oceanic port. It leads to the Indian Ocean and is the closest route to Afghanistan.



CBI sees oil industry annual economic growth at 15.2%

The Iranian oil industry's economy is projected to grow 15.2 percent this Iranian year (started March 21, 2023), said the country's top banker.

Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mohammadreza Farzin pointed to a 24 percent growth in crude oil output and a 16,000-barrel-per-day (bpd) increase in gas condensate production in the first half of the current Iranian year, forecasting a 15.2 percent economic growth for the oil sector, Shana reported. Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to hit 4.3 percent by mid-March 2024, he continued.

The industrial sector's growth will be mixed, said Farzin, adding some industries will post high growth and some will report decline.

Estimates are based on growth in main domestic industries including oil and agriculture and balance of payments (BOP).



European passenger planes overhauled in Iran: *CAO*

The head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) revealed the repair and maintenance of passenger planes of other countries, including Latin American, European and Asian countries, in Iran.

Mohammad Mohammadibakhsh said countries from Latin America, Europe and Asia bring their planes to Iran for repair and maintenance services or send the engines of their planes to the country for overhaul operations, Tasnim news agency reported.

He added that planes sent to Iran for repair and maintenance operations are Boeing and Airbus.

It has been years that no Iranian planes have been sent to other countries for repair and maintenance services, as Iran has turned into a destination for overhauling services of other countries' planes.

This important national achievement has been made

while Iran is under the toughest sanctions imposed by Western countries including the United States, the CAO chief added.

Mohammadibakhsh said that his organization is seeking more direct flights between Iran and Turkmenistan.

The CAO has instructed Qeshm Air to launch two weekly flights to Ashgabat starting last week, he noted.

Given the commonalities between Iran and Turkmenistan, it is hoped that preliminary steps will be taken to increase the number of flights between the two countries following a visit by Iran's minister of roads and urban development to the Central Asian country, he said. Talks are underway between officials of the two countries for increasing the number of flights, he said, adding that a memorandum of understanding will be inked between Iran and Turkmenistan in the near future.

Transformation of Bagh Zereshk Mansion of Isfahan into a museum is vital

Iranica Desk

The Director of the Museum of Archaeology and Islamic Art at the National Museum of Iran enthusiastically regarded the transformation of the Bagh Zereshk Mansion into a museum as an ideal concept.

Karam Mirzaei emphasized that while the mansion already possesses the fundamental structure needed for a museum, some minor adjustments are required. However, it is crucial to ensure the preservation of the primary architecture, the external boundaries, and the surrounding area of the building. Located in ChaharBagh Bala Street of Isfahan, the Bagh Zereshk building stands as a cherished memorial to both a stunning garden and the bustling textile factories. The people of Isfahan hold fond memories of this place, and it has also left a lasting impression on the countless tourists and visitors who have experienced its beauty.

He said currently, this building stands in a state of isolation amidst the modern residential and commercial areas, along with a nearby metro station. Regrettably, the delightful and poetic Safavid-era garden, once present, has faded away. He suggested that taking into account the historical significance of the structure, its strategic geographic location, and the social needs of the community, it has been proposed to convert this building into a museum, specifically the Isfahan Municipality Museum.

He emphasized that one of the most effective and prevalent

approaches worldwide for the preservation and revitalization of ancient sites and structures is through their transformation into museums. By repurposing these locations, the aim is to safeguard their historical and architectural essence while maximizing their cultural significance with minimal interference.

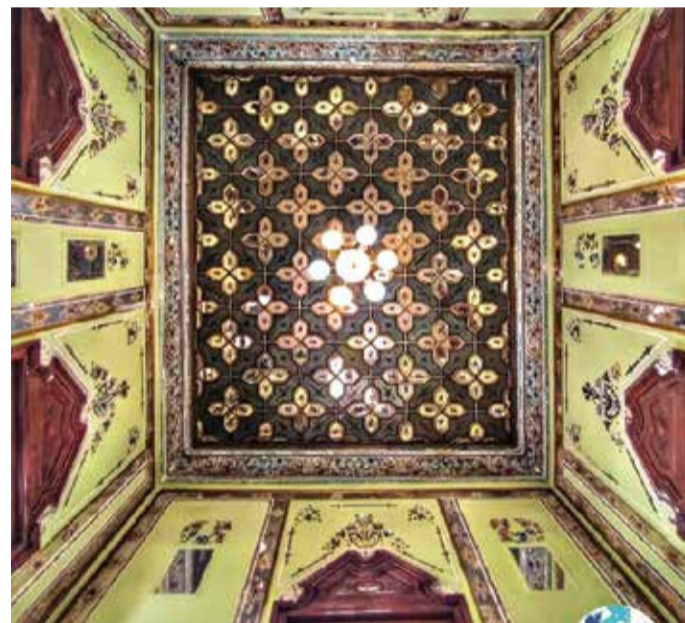
He stated that while some may think that the Bagh Zereshk Cultural Complex could be transformed into other cultural centers, it should be noted that the number of people going to other cultural centers is limited and encompasses a smaller society, while as defined by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), a museum is a non-profit institution whose doors are open to everyone. This makes



● surfiran.com



● MEHDI SHAHDELI/reiseniran.de



● MEHDI SHAHDELI/reiseniran.de

the advantage of turning this building into a museum even greater.

Mirzaei said the philosophy of a museum is to remind visitors of things that have been forgotten, pointing out that, in fact, by establishing this museum a part of people's memories would come alive. This successful museum curator considered the establishment of the Isfahan Municipality Museum an ideal proposal to compensate for some of the damages to cultural and natural heritage that have occurred in recent decades under the name of development.

He said that nowadays, most modern institutions in Iran are trying to preserve the old objects and documents they have and also to reconstruct the histo-

ry of their activities by establishing museums in their original locations or converting part of them into museums.

"Examples of this include the Communication Museum, the Registration Museum, thus the municipality is no exception".

He said that the presence of objects and artifacts may cause damage to decorations and interior views of the building due to the requirements of the display, thus the use of digital tools and modern multimedia displays in this regard is being considered.

The museum curator noted that the display method in this museum is different from traditional and classical museums and stated that a museum object may not be physically present in this arrangement, but its content must be extracted from related topics. Mirzaei noted that Bagh Zereshk mansion has the general and necessary structures for a museum.

He stated that although measures have been taken regarding the welfare facilities, it is still necessary to take further actions for visitors.

"It should be noted that this building and many others that have been converted into museums were not originally built for this purpose, so changes, even minor ones, need to be made to turn them into a standard museum," he noted.

He said that the authorities should first register the mansion on Iran's National Heritage List so that they can benefit from the support of responsible bodies, especially the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism.

Dimdim Castle, a historical landmark in Urmia

Iranica Desk

Dimdim Castle is an important historical site located south of Urmia, West Azarbaijan Province.

Situated on the Urmia-Oshnavieh Road, the castle is nestled within a vast mountain with two peaks. Access to the castle is limited, as it is surrounded by large limestone cliffs and deep valleys, making entry possible only from the east-

ern and western sides of the mountains.

The castle was first explored by Professor Wolfram Kleiss, a German archaeologist and engineer, during his journey from Urmia to Oshnavieh in 1970. He referred to the site as the "prison castle" and attributed its origins to the Urartians, believing that the castle's remains date back to the Middle Ages. Subsequent researchers have also visited the castle,

providing further information and sharing images of its various sections. The significance of the Dimdim Castle led to its registration on the National Heritage List of Iran in 2014. The castle's foundations can be traced back to the first millennium BCE, with evidence suggesting that it gradually fell into disrepair over time. During the Safavid era, Amir Khan Baradoust, the ruler of Urmia, rebuilt the castle on

its ruins, leading to its subsequent identification as the Dimdim Castle in historical sources.

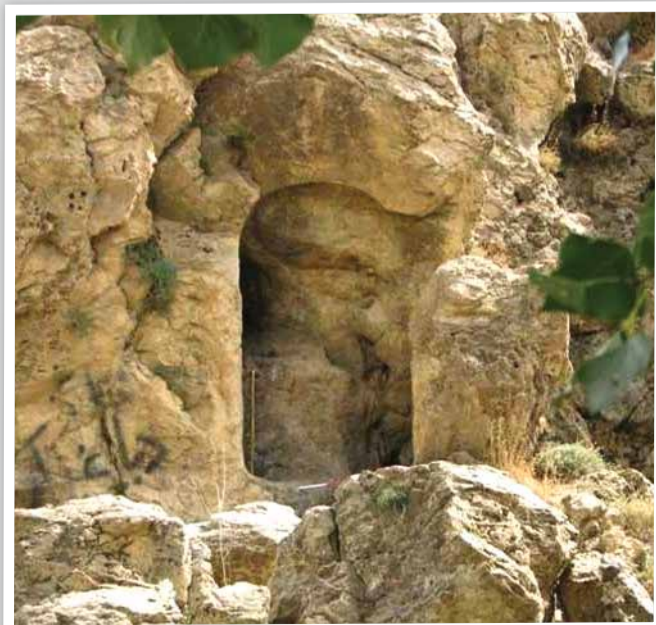
In 2012, experts from West Azarbaijan Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization conducted field research on the castle. Their work involved preparing a comprehensive report, documenting the remaining architectural remnants, and identifying three historical caves and

two ancient cemeteries in the vicinity.

Dimdim Castle played a significant role as one of the most important military fortresses in Urmia, particularly during the Safavid era. Its connections to contemporary castles in the surrounding areas are evident. Although few traces of the castle remain today, and those that exist are severely damaged, systematic archaeological excavations could help identify

elements such as defensive walls, residential chambers, towers, water reservoirs, and other structures.

It is imperative for researchers involved in the field related to the cultural heritage sector to focus their attention on this historical castle. Through further archaeological studies, the forgotten treasures of this remarkable site can be unveiled, preserving its valuable history for future generations.

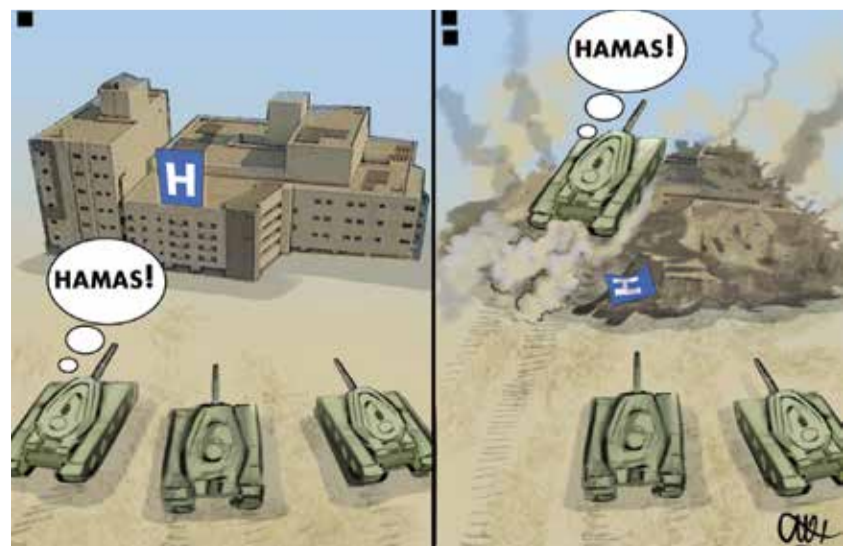


● reiseniran.de



● ASGHAR KHAMSEH/IRNA

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iranians hold nationwide rallies to condemn Israeli crimes



● M.SADEGH NIKGOSTAR/FARS

International Desk

Iranians took to the streets of cities across the country to show their solidarity with Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip who have been under relentless Israeli attacks for weeks now.

Thousands of people, from all walks of life, hit the streets of different cities and provinces on Saturday to express their outrage at the ongoing Israeli bloodshed in Gaza.

They waved Palestinian flags and chanted slogans against the occupying Israeli regime and its western backers, the US in particular.

The protesters also condemned Israeli massacre of innocent civilians and called for the regime to be taken to task for its crimes.

Since the beginning of Israel's aggression on the Gaza Strip after October 7, at least 12,000 people, mostly women and children, have been killed in the regime's attacks. Israel has also imposed a total blockade on the Palestinian territory, restricting the entry of water, electricity, fuel and medical supplies.

Israeli attacks have destroyed thousands of buildings and infrastructures, including hospitals, schools and mosques.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said on Saturday that Israel's attacks on hospitals and medical centers are in conflict with all standards of human rights, international law and the Geneva Conventions.

He said that such a move "makes the criminal nature of this regime (Isra-

el) even more obvious to the world." "After the failure of the Israeli authorities to prove their false claims on Shifa Hospital, its army resumed its attacks on other hospitals in Gaza."

"Attacks on Jordanian & Indonesian hospitals were yet another manifestation of the regime's aggression and brutality," Nasser Kanaani wrote in a post published on X.

On Saturday, 700 Iranian media outlets, including news agencies, newspapers, news bases and publications, also condemned the unprecedented killing of people and journalists by the Israeli regime.

"We, Iranian media, condemn with a heart full of sorrow the martyrdom of 50 journalists in Gaza and the intentional targeting of their homes

by the Zionist occupying regime, which in many cases has led to the martyrdom of the families of these loved ones, along with the killing of more than 11,000 oppressed people of Gaza, among them thousands of women and children who have been turned to blood and dust," they said in a statement.

"The media of the Islamic Republic of Iran honor the memory of the martyrs of the enlightenment path in Gaza, in unison with all the free people of the world, and consider these crimes as another confirmation of the autocratic nature of this fake regime and the brutality of its supporters," they added.

Cities across the world have also been the scene of pro-Palestinian rallies in recent weeks.



● ALIREZA MOHAMMADI/ISNA



Dozens killed in Israeli attacks on civilian shelters

Five nations seek war crimes probe in Palestinian territories



AFP

International Desk

Dozens were killed on Saturday in Israeli attacks on shelters for civilians in Gaza, including a UN school and residential buildings, according to officials in the besieged strip.

An official of the Hamas-run Health Ministry in the Gaza Strip said, "At least 50 people" were killed on Saturday when Israeli forces struck a UN school being used as a shelter for displaced people.

The strike on the UN-run Al-Fakhura School, in the Jabalia refugee camp in the north of the Gaza Strip, happened "at dawn," the official told AFP.

Attacks also continued in the south of the Gaza Strip, with an Israeli airstrike hitting residential blocks that killed at least 32 Palestinians on Saturday, medics said, after the regime again warned civilians to relocate as it turns to attacking Hamas in the enclave's south after subduing the north.

Humanitarian crisis

Such a move could compel hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who fled south from the Israeli assault on Gaza City to move again, along with residents of Khan Younis, a city of more than 400,000, worsening a dire humanitarian crisis.

"We're asking people to relocate. I know it's not easy for many of them, but we don't want to see civilians caught up in the crossfire," Mark Regev, an aide to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, told MSNBC on Friday.

Israel vowed to win against the Hamas resistance group that runs the Gaza Strip after its Oct. 7 attack on Israel, in which its fighters killed 1,200 Israelis and captured 240 others, according to Israeli officials.

Gaza's Hamas government said Friday the death toll from fighting between Israeli troops and Hamas fighters in the Palestinian territory had reached exactly 12,000 since October 7.

The Hamas government said 5,000 children were among the dead alongside 3,300 women, with 30,000 more people wounded.

'Blatant aggression'

On Saturday, Jordan's foreign minister offered blistering criticism of Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip, describing it as "blatant aggression" against Palestinian civilians that threatens to engulf the wider Middle East.

Ayman Safadi's harsh assessment, saying Israel was committing "war crimes" by besieging the Gaza Strip and cutting off food, medicine and fuel shipments, shows how strained relations have become between Israel and Jordan - which reached a peace deal in 1994.

"All of us have to speak loud and clear about the catastrophe that the Israeli war is bringing, not just on Gaza, but on the region in general," Safadi told the International Institute for Strategic Studies' Manama Dialogue summit in Bahrain. "This is not a time for mincing words. This is a time to state facts as they are."

He added: "This is not self-defense. This is a blatant aggression, the victims of which are innocent Palestinians."

Israel did not immediately respond to Safadi's comments, which included a call for an immediate cease-fire and an end to the fighting. However, on hand was Brett McGurk, the White House's National Security Council coordinator for the Middle East, who said that "a release of large number of hostages would result in a significant pause in fighting ... and a massive surge of humanitarian relief."

The European Union's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, added: "It's quite understandable that without the freedom of the hostages, nothing can be solved."

Safadi later offered a sharp retort to that: "Israel is taking 2.3 million Palestinians hostage." Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa opened the annual Manama Dialogue summit on Friday night with a call for a swap between Hamas and Israel for the hostages and a halt in the bloodshed.

"You want to call it a cease-fire. You want to call it a pause. You can call it whatever you want," the prince said. "The intention is a break so people can take



Members of the Palestinian Al-Rifi family who survived an Israeli bombardment, rest at a house after receiving treatment at a nearby hospital, on November 17, 2023, in Deir al-Balah in the center of the Gaza Strip.

MAHMUD HAMS/AFP

stock. People can bury their dead. People can finally start to grieve. And maybe people can start to ask themselves about the intelligence failure that led to this crisis in the first place."

War crime probe

The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on Friday said he had received a joint request from five countries to investigate the situation in the Palestinian territories.

Prosecutor Karim Kahn said the referral had come from South Africa, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Comoros and Djibouti. South Africa said the request was made "to ensure that the ICC pays urgent attention to the grave situation in Palestine."

The ICC already has an ongoing investigation into "the situation in the State of Palestine" for alleged war crimes committed since June 13, 2014.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa told reporters during a visit to Qatar on Wednesday that his country "put through a referral" to the ICC "because we believe that war crimes are being committed" in Gaza. The crimes were being committed "in real time," Ramaphosa said, citing Gaza's biggest health care facility, the Shifa Hospital, as an example. Israel said that Hamas has a command center underneath the hospital, a claim the Palestinian resistance group denies. Prior to their capture of the hospital, the Israel Defense Forces went to great lengths to depict the medical complex as a headquarters for Hamas, from where its attacks on Israel were planned. The evidence produced so far falls well short of that. IDF videos have shown only modest collections of small arms, mostly assault rifles, recovered from the extensive medical complex.

AP, AFP, Reuters, and the Guardian contributed to the report.



Young Palestinians wait for a hot meal prepared by volunteers in Rafah crossing in the southern Gaza Strip on November 10, 2023.

ABED RAHIM KHATIB/FLASH90

Zionist crimes surpass all crimes ever committed



By Sadeq Dehqan

Staff writer

In attacking the innocent people of Gaza and killing thousands of women, children, and even the ill and pregnant, Zionists have put every criminal in history to shame, said an Iranian lawmaker.

In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Asghar Salimi maintained that Israel's crimes in Gaza have shown the brutal nature of the regime to the world.

"For years, the Zionists tried to hide behind the Holocaust, present themselves as oppressed, and repeatedly claimed to have been the victims of a Nazi genocide," he stated.

However, he added, this time, the people of the world were able to closely follow the developments of the war on Gaza and see for themselves who is committing genocide thanks to the free media outlets.

Salimi also pointed out how the artificial military grandeur of the occupying regime was shattered by the October 7 attack of Hamas and the subsequent assault of Israel into the besieged enclave. "The world saw with its own eyes how the regime that tried time and again to introduce itself as the region's top military power and sheriff can't take a step without the support of the United States and has grown desperate in attacking a small force in a small-sized area, so much so that it was forced to take measures that are inhumane and against international law."

The actions of the Israeli regime in Gaza have been so inhumane, the MP noted, that it elicited cries of protest and calls for immediate cessation from everyone, even those who had always been close friends and accomplices of the regime.

Under the current circumstances, Muslim countries need to act fast and put pressure on the US, whether it be political, economic, or security pressure, to halt Israel's military operations, Salimi stressed. He described the outcome of the summit held by Muslim countries on the issue to be "disappointing" so far.

"Unfortunately, some Islamic countries are not even willing to condemn the crimes of Israel verbally," he maintained, contributing to the fact that Israel is brutally targeting Gaza and not adhering to any humane and international norms.

What has been clear as day during the war on Gaza, he said, is that "if it weren't for the support of the US, the Zionist regime would have no power" to continue the war.



Jahanbakhsh ruled out of Uzbekistan game with injury



Iranian midfielder Alireza Jahanbakhsh is injured during a 4-0 victory over Hong Kong, China at the Azadi Stadium, Tehran, Iran, on November 16, 2023.
● HADI ZAND/ISNA

Sports Desk

Alireza Jahanbakhsh was left out of the Iranian squad for the visit to Tashkent ahead of Tuesday's World Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan after suffering a "minor hamstring injury" against Hong Kong, Iran team doctor Parhan Khanlari said. The Feyenoord winger was replaced by Reza Asadi with 15 minutes left on the clock in Thursday's 4-0 victory at Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Roma striker Sardar Azmoun scored an early double with Mahdi Taremi and Ramin Rezaeian finding the net late in the game as Amir Qalenoee's men got off to a winning start in Group E of the Asian qualifiers for the 2026 showdown in Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Jahanbakhsh, who left the Iranian camp for the Netherlands to receive treatment on his injury, will be sidelined for "two weeks", according to Dr. Khanlari, meaning he will also miss the Eredivisie game against Excelsior on his return to club duty, as well as the Champions League clash with Atletico on Nov. 28 in Rotterdam. Meanwhile, Ahmad Nourollahi, who was not even on the bench on Thursday, was omitted by Qalenoee from the squad for what was described as "unprofessional behavior" by the Al Wahda midfielder.

Golgozar striker Saeed Sahrakhizan as well as Sepahan duo Arya Yousefi and Mohammad Qorbani were also left out of the squad for the game in Tashkent - a final outing for Iran before January's AFC Asian Cup in Qatar.

FIFA U-17 World Cup: Iran to face Morocco in last-16 round



Iranian midfielder Amirmohammad Razaqinia (8) celebrates with teammates after scoring the first of his two goals in a 5-0 victory over New Caledonia at the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Bandung, Indonesia, on November 17, 2023.
● PAKAWICH DAMRONGKIATTISAK/GETTY IMAGES



Sports Desk

Iran's fairy tale run at the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Indonesia will continue with a last-16 game against Morocco in Surabaya on Tuesday.

Hossein Abdi's boys routed New Caledonia 5-0 on Friday to finish third in Group C - equal on six points with the two previous champions of the competition in England and Brazil.

Amirmohammad Razaqinia scored twice in the first half, while Esmail Qolizadeh hit the post from the spot in the 25th minute.

Reza Ghandipour added a third 14 minutes from normal time before substitutes Amirhossein Askari and Kasra Taheri were on the score-sheet in the stoppage time to seal a second victory for Iran, which had won a berth in the event after making it to the last four of the U17 Asian Cup in June.

Iran pulled off one of the biggest upsets in the history of the tournament by coming from two goals down at halftime to stun defending champion Brazil 3-2 on the opening day of the group.

Abdi's side, however, was left heartbroken in its second outing in Jakarta after Manchester City product Joel Ndala bagged a 90th-minute winner to lead

England to a 2-1 comeback triumph against Iran.

Elsewhere on Friday, Brazil defeated 2-1 but still had to settle for the runner-up spot behind the 2017 champion on goal difference.

"I'm so happy," Abdi said of his team's progress to the next round, adding: "It was a daunting task but we managed to accomplish it."

"I believe the Iranian players even deserved to qualify as the group winner but we missed too many chances today." Former Persepolis midfielder was also thrilled to see all of his players avoid injuries in their final group game.

"That was a top priority for us today. We're now going to have everyone fit and ready for the Morocco game."

Runner-up to Senegal in May's Africa Cup of Nations, Morocco won Group A in Indonesia - also featuring the host country, Ecuador, and Panama - with six points, thanks to double victories over Panama (2-0) and Indonesia (3-1) while suffering a 2-0 defeat against Ecuador, which will face Brazil on Monday.

"Morocco is a great team and it is going to be a tough match against them, but we will give it our best shot to make sure a year and a half of hard work will pay off. We've set sights on going as far as possible in the tournament," said the Iranian head coach.

James stars to help Lakers beat Trail Blazers

BBC - LeBron James equalled his season-high score of 35 points as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Portland Trail Blazers 107-95 in the NBA in-season tournament. James also registered nine assists for the Lakers, who lead their group with three wins from three games. Victor Wembanyama's San Antonio Spurs lost 129-120 to the Sacramento Kings and, having lost all three group games so far, cannot make the knockout stage.

De'Aaron Fox scored a season-high 43 points for the Kings. Each team play four games in their group, and games in the in-season tournament count towards a team's 82-game regular-season schedule. Spurs' defeat was their seventh in a row overall - but 19-year-old French sensation Wembanyama, who scored 27 points against the Kings, believes they will recover. "All of us, we know we're on a good path," he said.

"Of course it's hard to be patient sometimes, but it's an everyday fight. I know that the end of the season will not look like the beginning of the season."

Charlotte Hornets' Miles Bridges played his first NBA game since April 2022 as they were defeated 130-99 by the Milwaukee Bucks. Bridges missed the whole of the 2022-23 season, having not signed an NBA contract after being arrested and charged over a domestic violence incident, to which he subsequently entered a 'no contest' plea - where a defendant does not admit guilt, but accepts punishment as if they had. The NBA suspended him for 30 games without pay as a result of the incident, but it was deemed that he had served 20 games of the ban by sitting out last season. That left him with a 10-game ban to serve at the start of this season.

Bridges came off the bench to score 17 points in 33 minutes for the Hor-

nets in defeat.

Elsewhere, Kevin Durant scored 38 points, including a three-pointer with 18.8 seconds left, to help the Phoenix Suns beat the Utah Jazz 131-128.

The Boston Celtics were 108-105 winners against the Toronto Raptors, while Orlando Magic beat the Chicago Bulls 103-97.

Joel Embiid registered 32 points, eight assists and seven rebounds to help Philadelphia 76ers to a 126-116 win against the Atlanta Hawks. The new in-season tournament involves a group stage in which 30 teams have been randomly split into six groups of five.

Teams in each group will play each other once before a knockout stage of eight sides.

The quarter-finals will be made up of the six group winners and two teams from each conference who have the best group records in second place.



Lakers' LeBron James (23) drives to the basket during a victory over the Trail Blazers in the NBA in-season tournament at the Moda Center, Portland, OR, US, on Nov. 17, 2023.
● NAJI SAKER/oregonlive.com

Everton fuming after shock 10-point deduction for finance breaches



● JASON CAIRNDUFF/REUTERS

REUTERS - Everton became the first Premier League club to be deducted points for breaching profitability and sustainability rules (PSR) on Friday, when the league docked the Merseyside club 10 points over their finances in the 2020-21 season.

An independent commission imposed an immediate deduction which will see Everton drop from 14th in the standings into the relegation zone with four points, above bottom side Burnley on goal difference. The club described the decision as unjust and said it

would appeal.

The Premier League said it had issued a complaint against the Merseyside club and referred the case to the independent commission earlier this year.

"During the proceedings, the club admitted it was in breach of the PSRs for the period ending season 2021/22 but the extent of the breach remained in dispute," the league said in a statement.

"The Commission determined that Everton FC's PSR Calculation for the relevant period resulted in a loss of 124.5 million

pounds, as contended by the Premier League, which exceeded the threshold of 105 million pounds permitted under the PSRs."

Everton's most recent figures showed a fifth straight year of losses, with their total loss over that period amounting to over 430 million pounds (\$534 million). The club said they had posted a loss of 44.7 million pounds for the 2021-22 season earlier this year. The Premier League said one of the factors that aggravated Everton's default was over-spending on players despite repeated

warnings.

Everton invested nearly 750 million euros in transfers to build the squad since the 2016-17 season. The club was taken over by British-Iranian billionaire Farhad Moshiri in 2016.

"The commission considers that it was unwise for Everton not to have curtailed player purchases," it added. "It was aware of potential PSR difficulties but pressed ahead in the hope that it would make sales of players that would enable it to achieve PSR compliance. Events have proved that to be a poor judgment."

Everton said the sanction was "wholly disproportionate and unjust" and announced its intention to appeal the decision to the Premier League.

"Everton maintains that it has been open and transparent in the information it has provided to the Premier League and that it has always respected the integrity of the process," it said.

"Both the harshness and severity of the sanction imposed by the Commission are neither a fair nor a reasonable reflection of the evidence submitted."

Everton were sold to 777 Partners in September in a deal reports said was worth more than 550 million pounds, with the company acquiring Moshiri's 94.1% stake in the club. The deal is expected to be closed by the end of the year.

Earlier this year, Manchester City were also referred to an independent commission over more than 100 alleged breaches of finance rules since the club were acquired by the Abu Dhabi-based City Football Group. No verdict has been reached in that case.

Uncertainty surrounds solo journey of Omid

Social Desk

Uncertainty surrounds the return of Omid, the Siberian crane who has been traveling alone from Siberia to Iran and back for 15 years. The male creature is the sole survivor of the western population of Siberian cranes who fly to Iran each autumn. Although last year he found a mate named

Roya, a crane that was sent to Iran from Belgium, they could not journey together to Siberia due to the female crane's inaptitude for such a flight, IRNA reported. Now, Iranian environmentalists are concerned about Omid's absence and speculations have begun. Omid has been coming to Miankaleh alone for 15 years, and the Iranian Department of

the Environment are familiar his behavior and travel patterns. DoE placed the cage with Roya in the same location, hoping that the two cranes would pair up and continue the flight path. While the organization's goal is not necessarily to mate them, it would be a positive outcome. Omid was quick to notice Roya's presence and tried to attract

her attention. They spent time together, exploring the lagoon and planning their journey to Siberia.

On March 5, 2023, after 34 days together, Omid and Roya began their migration. However, their journey did not go as expected. After seven days, it was reported that Roya was seen alone in Tonekabon, one of the western cities of Mazandaran Province.

Omid was alone again, and the efforts to establish a pair had failed. Experts believe that Roya's physical strength was not sufficient for the long migration. The migration process is complex, requiring the birds to be fully prepared in terms of fat storage and muscle development.

Roya was brought back to Miankaleh, and efforts are being made to create suitable conditions for her during the summer season. As for Omid, his delay in returning to Iran may be due to weather changes and altered flight path conditions. A DoE official assured that Omid's absence should not be a cause for concern, as it depends on seasonal factors and the temperature in the Siberian regions.

The DoE has plans in place for the mating of Omid and the preservation of his flight path. The local community is eagerly awaiting Omid's return, as they understand the importance of safeguarding the crane's population.



Screen use cause for concern as it impacts our cognitive functioning

Screens have become seamlessly integrated into our daily lives, serving as indispensable tools for work, education and leisure. But while they enrich our lives in countless ways, we often fail to consider the potential impact of screen time on our cognitive abilities.

A clear link was found between disordered screen use and lower cognitive functioning in a new meta-analysis of dozens of earlier studies, according to The Conversation.

The findings suggest we should exercise caution before advocating for more screen time, and before introducing screens into even more aspects of daily life.

A 2020 UNSW report noted a concerning statistic: about 84 percent of Australian educators believe digital technologies are distracting in a learning environment.

And according to the ABC, a recent Beyond Blue survey of Australian teachers identified excessive screen time as the second-most significant challenge for young people, just behind mental health issues.

Despite mounting concerns, more than half of Australian schools have embraced a "bring your own device" policy. Students are spending more time online than ever

before and starting at increasingly younger ages. A 2021 report by Common Sense Media estimated tweens spend an average of 5 hours and 33 minutes using screen-based entertainment each day, while teenagers devote a whopping 8 hours and 39 minutes.

A surge in screen use has led to some individuals, including children, adolescents and adults, developing screen-related addictions.

The impact of screens on our cognitive abilities – that is, our thinking skills such as attention, memory, language and problem-solving – has sparked much debate.

On one hand, some researchers and reporters claim screen use can have negative effects, such as health problems, shortened attention spans and hindered development.

On the other, schools are increasingly adopting technology to boost student engagement. Tech companies are also marketing their products as tools to help you enhance your problem-solving and memory skills.

The recent study, whose findings paint a concerning picture, sought to understand the potential cognitive consequences of

"disordered screen-related behaviors," through conducting a meta-analysis of 34 studies that explored various forms of screen use and compared the cognitive performance of individuals with disordered screen use to those without it. Across these rigorously peer-reviewed studies, individuals with disordered screen use consistently demonstrated significantly poorer cognitive performance compared to others. The most affected cognitive domain was attention, and specifically sustained attention, which is the ability to maintain focus on an unchanging stimulus for an extended period.

The second-most notable difference was in their "executive functioning."

Interestingly, the type of screen activity didn't make a difference in the results. The trend also wasn't confined to children, but was observed across all age groups.

The first explanation for poorer cognitive functioning in such individuals is that disordered screen use actually leads to poorer cognitive function, including poorer attention skills.

It may be the result of being constantly bombarded by algorithms and features

designed to capture our attention. By diverting our focus outward, screen use may weaken one's intrinsic ability to concentrate over time.

Crucially, impaired attention also makes it harder to disengage from addictive behaviors, and would therefore make it harder to recognize when screen use has become a problem.

The second explanation is that people who already have poorer cognitive functioning are more likely to engage in disordered screen use.

Attention is the bedrock of everyday tasks. People with weakened attention may struggle to keep up in less stimulating environments.

Similarly, people with less inhibitory control would also find it more challenging to moderate their screen use. Research also indicates people with impaired cognitive functioning usually aren't as well equipped to moderate their own screen time. It should be noted that many users with disordered screen use are young.



Cancer causes 55k deaths in Iran each year

Social Desk

A recent report has shed light on the alarming number of premature deaths caused by cancer in Iran. Out of the total 122,000 premature deaths under the age of 70, a startling 34,000 can be attributed to cancer. Furthermore, cancer is responsible for 11,000 out of 85,000 premature deaths under the age of 50, according to the report.

The situation appears to be worsening. Experts predict that the number of new cancer cases in Iran will soar to 160,000 in

the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 20, 2024, until March 20, 2025). This projection marks a significant 42 percent increase compared to previous years, IRNA reported.

The report highlights specific types of cancer that are expected to see the most significant increase in incidence. Thyroid cancers are projected to surge by 114 percent, followed by prostate cancers at 67 percent. Breast cancers, colon cancers, ovarian cancer, lung cancers, non-Hodgkin lymphoma cancer, brain and nervous system cancer, stomach cancer, bladder

cancer, and leukemia are also expected to experience notable increases.

In light of these concerning trends, the report emphasizes the importance of lifestyle changes in reducing the risk of premature death from cancer. While there are various factors that contribute to the development of cancer, adopting healthier habits can play a crucial role in mitigating the risk. Experts suggest that Iranians can make a significant impact by making simple changes to their daily routines, such as engaging in regular physical

activity, maintaining a balanced diet, avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol consumption, and undergoing routine cancer screenings.

Efforts to raise awareness about the importance of early detection and prevention are pivotal in combating the rising cancer rates in Iran. Public health campaigns, educational programs, and access to quality healthcare services are essential in empowering individuals to take control of their health and make informed decisions that can potentially save lives.



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Iran to send two dossiers of Lorestan Province for 2024 UNESCO registration



ILNA – In an announcement, Ata Hassanpour, the head of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Department in Lorestan Province, said that Iran allocated its 2024 quotas for registration on UNESCO World Heritage List to Khorramabad Valley and Falak-ol-Aflak Castle.

Hassanpour expressed optimism about making significant progress in meeting long-standing demands of the province. He acknowledged the potential challenges in this process and emphasized collaboration with executive officials, the mayor of Khorramabad, experts, and colleagues in addressing them.

Hassanpour also mentioned special initiatives by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi regarding the release of the area around Falak-ol-Aflak Castle, including the acquisition of 12 shops to free the northern section of the castle's neighborhood. Since there are nearly 60 days left for the documentation, the preparation of the records for both sites is currently underway.

The responsibility for compiling this documentation has been assigned to Hassanpour by Ali Darabi, the deputy minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

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 Amirhadi Arsalanpour
 Leila Imeni
 Hamideh Hosseini
 Ali Amiri
 Ali Mehran

Address: 208, Khorramshahr Ave., Tehran, Iran

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- ICPI Publisher: +98 21 88548892-5
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Iran-Pakistan exhibition highlights Israeli atrocities on Palestinians

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran and Pakistan are collaborating in holding an exhibition, highlighting the atrocities being committed by Israel on the Palestinians. Caretaker Minister for National Heritage and Culture of Pakistan Jamal Shah and Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri-Moqaddam on Friday inaugurated the three-day exhibition. The theme of the exhibition is 'Palestine: Oppression, Resistance, Victory,' and is being held at the Lok Virsa Art Gallery in Islamabad. It is organized by the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in collaboration with the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage - Lok Virsa, tribune.com.pk reported.

The exhibition showcases 76 selected art works in photography, painting, and caricature, focusing on themes related to Quds, Palestine, and Gaza. Syrian Ambassador to Pakistan Ramez Alraee, Iranian Cultural Attaché Ehsan Khazaei, National Heritage and Culture Division Adviser Mohammad Kashif Irshad and Lok Virsa Executive Director Mohammad Uzair Khan were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Jamal Shah said Palestinians were valiant people and would succeed in their legitimate struggle for right to self-determination. He said responsibility rested with the world community and the United Nations to play their



role in stopping the Israeli atrocities against Palestinians. Shah regretted that the cowardly Israel was targeting weaponless Palestinians, their schools and hospitals, adding that the Israeli forces were not even sparing the children.

He said Pakistan did not recognize the state of Israel and had repeatedly called for an independent Palestinian state based on "internationally agreed parameters".

Iranian envoy Amiri-Moqaddam expressed his condolences to the Palestinian nation for the martyrdom of more than 10,000 innocent men, women and children.

"I would like to appreciate the government of Pakistan for the strong position taken by the high officials and different authorities, scholars and people from various walks of life to support the innocent people of Palestine and against the atrocities and genocide committed by the Zionist and fascist regime of Israel," he added.

Amiri-Moqaddam said the Zionist regime broke its own record of barbarism, war crimes and genocide, adding that in the status quo, the Muslim world should take meaningful and tangible measures to first guarantee



a cease-fire, open a humanitarian corridor to Gaza, and then get united to exercise due levers against Israel.

He expressed appreciation for the organizers of the exhibition, participants and all those who contributed to holding this event.

Iran's Cultural Attaché in Pakistan, Khazaei, stated that the people of Pakistan, especially the younger generation, are eager to witness artistic programs and familiarize themselves with the culture of resistance. He emphasized that over the past few weeks, they have demonstrated their unity in supporting the Palestinian people and condemning the crimes of the illegitimate Zionist regime.

Caretaker Minister for National Heritage and Culture of Pakistan Jamal Shah speaks at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at Lok Virsa Art Gallery, Islamabad, Pakistan, on November 17, 2023. ● DAILY EXPRESS

Khazaei added that the exhibition aims to depict the daily suffering of the people in Gaza under the oppression of the occupying Israeli Army. According to Khazaei, organizing this exhibition is a way to shed light on the ongoing events in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly serving as an enlightening narrative against Israel's crimes and the world's silence on the genocide in Gaza.

Met reopens 45 European art galleries after a five-year renovation

Rembrandt, Caravaggio, Goya – all cast in fresh new light – thanks to The Metropolitan Museum of Art's largest infrastructure upgrade in the museum's history.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art will reopen its full suite of 45 galleries dedicated to European Paintings from 1300 to 1800 on November 20, following the completion of an extensive skylight renovation project that began five years ago.

"Look Again: European Paintings 1300-1800" will highlight new narratives and juxtapositions among more than 700

works of art, including pieces by Rembrandt, Caravaggio, and Poussin, as well as the most extensive holdings of El Greco and Goya outside Spain, euronews.com reported.

According to the museum's website, a chronological sequence of displays will showcase the Museum's "world-famous holdings, offering fresh dialogues and thematic groupings".

The newly reconfigured galleries will "illuminate the interconnectedness of cultures, materials, and moments in the collection".

The project was the largest infrastructure upgrade in the museum's history, requiring a \$150 million (approx. €138m) budget.

"The highly anticipated reopening of this vast suite of galleries will invite visitors to reunite with old favorites - and discover incredible recent gifts and lesser-known artworks - all within a newly considered context," said Max Hollein, The Met's Marina Kellen French Director and CEO. Construction teams replaced 30,000 square feet of skylights, which were first constructed in 1939 and last upgraded in 1952. The upgrades provide a better quality of light in the galleries, energy efficiency and ideal conditions for the paintings on display, Hollein explained.

"The completion of the enormous skylights renovation project allows us to display these exceptional works of art within a superb setting, and we look forward to welcoming all to enjoy this splendid presentation of art and ideas for many years to come."



Tehran Symphony Orchestra pays tribute to Gaza's children

Arts & Culture Desk

The Tehran Symphony Orchestra, led by Manouchehr Sahbaei, performed at Vahdat Hall on November 16 and 17, staging works by renowned Iranian and international composers in memory of the children of Gaza.

The orchestra, accompanied by oboe soloist Arian Qeytasi, presented compositions from notable figures such as Iranian composer Hossein Dehlavi, Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi, and Czech composer Antonín Dvořák, according to IRNA.

The orchestra's performance was influenced by the recent Zionist regime's crimes in Palestine, with a special dedication of Johann Sebastian Bach's 'Air' to the children of Gaza before commencing the main pieces.

The first part of the concert included the performance of Dehlavi's 'Suite of Bijan & Manijeh,' featuring movements titled Andante and



Allegro, with Sahbaei conducting and accompanied by string players.

After the suite, the orchestra played Vivaldi's 'Concerto for Strings in G major' in three movements: Presto, Adagio, and Allegro.

In the second part of the concert, with Qeytasi as the soloist on oboe, the orchestra performed Vivaldi's 'Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra in

C Major' in three movements: Allegro non molto, Adagio, and Allegro.

Following the break, the orchestra, now joined by woodwind and percussion instruments, delivered the final part featuring Antonín Dvořák's 'Symphony No. 8 in G major' in four movements: Allegro con brio, Adagio, Allegretto grazioso, and Allegro ma non troppo.

● IRNA