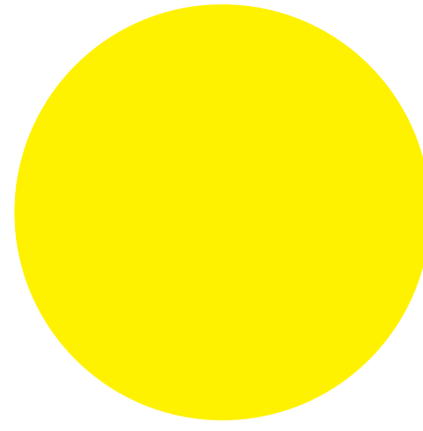


'Horrendous events' in Gaza
'beggar belief':
UN rights chief

5 >



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Second Hypersonic Missile Out

4 >

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (c) addresses top military brass after visiting a display of Iranian defense achievements in Tehran on November 19, 2023.
● leader.ir

Turkmenistan
ready to ramp up
gas exports
to Iran

2 >



US discussed post-
Netanyahu era with
Mideast countries

EXCLUSIVE 5 >



It's your day, but sorry,
it's not your day

Today is World Children's Day, yet children in Gaza wake up to nothing but the horrifying reality of living amidst an ongoing genocide, where their lives hang in the balance with each Israeli bombardment.

EXCLUSIVE

7 >



Raisi criticizes inaction
on Gaza

4 >



NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran expands electricity exchanges with neighbors



Iran is engaged in power exchanges with all its neighboring countries, announced Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi, the spokesman for Iran's state-run electricity industry. According to the official, the main destinations for Iranian electricity exchange are Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, IRNA reported on Sunday. He said the ground is paved for exchanging 400 megawatts of electricity between Iran and Turkey. The official noted that negotiations have been conducted with the energy officials of Turkey in order to export and import electricity from this country. The pilot test of electricity exchange with Turkey was carried out last year, he said, expressing hope that the way will be paved for commercializing it in the near future.

Seven-month exports to Pakistan up 62%

Iran's non-oil exports to Pakistan increased by 62 percent during the first seven months of the current Iranian year (March 21-October 22), compared to the same period last year, announced the spokesman of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade. Rouhollah Latifi said that Iran exported non-oil commodities worth \$1.14 billion to its neighbor Pakistan in the seven-month period of this year, Mehr news agency reported. He also announced that Iran imported commodities valued at \$352.64 million from Pakistan during the first seven months of this year, with 39 percent drop year-on-year. The official had previously announced that Iran's non-oil exports to Pakistan increased by 18 percent in the previous Iranian year (ended on March 20). Pakistan was Iran's fifth largest export market in the previous year, importing non-oil products worth \$1.488 billion from Iran, Latifi said in May. He added that Iran imported non-oil goods worth \$842 million from Pakistan last year, up 170 percent from the previous year.

Turkmenistan ready to ramp up gas exports to Iran

The foreign minister of Turkmenistan said his country is interested in boosting gas exports to Iran.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the 17th Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Cooperation Commission in Ashgabat on Saturday, Rashid Meredov emphasized that Turkmenistan is fully prepared to increase the export of gas to Iran and this issue will be put into effect in the near future, Tasnim news agency reported.

Iran and Turkmenistan inked a gas contract in 1997 to further expand cooperation in the field of gas swap deals, he underlined.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Meredov pointed to the electricity cooperation between Tehran and Ashgabat, adding that his country is willing to export electricity to third countries via Iran.

The head of the Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Cooperation Commission also expressed the willingness of Turkmenistan to develop bilateral relations in the agricultural sector, and added that Iran has gained good achievements in this sector and Ashgabat intends to take advantage of those experiences.

Turkmenistan's foreign minister emphasized that the two countries share cultural and religious commonalities, and that cooperation between the two countries will be in the interest of the two nations.

The two countries signed two cooperation documents, worth about \$1 billion, at the closing ceremony of the 17th Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Cooperation Commission.

The two cooperation documents



were inked in the presence of Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash and Meredov.

They feature the construction of a 242km-road in Turkmenistan and also construction operation of an electricity transmission line and export of parts and equipment of the power industry.

The two cooperation documents were signed by Iran's Deputy Roads Minister and Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC) CEO Kheirollah Khademi, and CEO of Iran Power

Management, Distribution and Transmission Company (TAVANIR) Arash Kordi and their Turkmen counterparts.

In addition, the two sides emphasized launching direct flights between Mashhad and Ashgabat.

Bazrpash pointed to the settlement of Iran's gas debt to Turkmenistan and added that the remaining debt will be settled through bartering with the construction of Kum Dagh-Inchek Boroun Road.

Iran and Turkmenistan also signed memoranda of understanding in the fields of veteri-

nary medicine, agriculture, electricity, power transmission lines and export of electricity equipment and construction materials from Iran to Turkmenistan.

On the proposal of the Iranian side, the 18th edition of the Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Cooperation Commission will be held in Tehran in September 2024.

Meanwhile, the Iranian deputy oil minister for gas affairs said on Sunday that Iran and Iraq have agreed to form a working group on gas exports to the power plants in Baghdad.

Talking to Shana, Majid Chegeni

added the group comprising Iranian and Iraqi experts will work on the extension of the contract before the end of 2023.

He pointed to the recent meeting between Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji and Iraqi Minister of Electricity Ziyad Ali Fazel in Tehran and said the two countries are keen to develop their relations in the gas sector.

Chegeni, who is also the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) managing director, said Iran has been meeting a major part of Iraq's energy needs for many years, adding Baghdad is eagerly seeking to extend the gas deal.

Steel production to increase by 15m tons: *MSC*

Economy Desk

Thanks to enormous investments made in Iran's steel industry, the current capacity of 45 million tons of steel production in the country will reach 60 million tons in the next two years, announced the managing director of Mobarakeh Steel Company (MSC).

Mohammad-Yasser Tayyebnia described the asymmetric growth and lack of balance in the steel production chain as the most important challenge facing the industry, and said our strategy to deal with the challenge is to develop human capital, improve productivity, sustainable social-economic development and

become a green industry, IRNA reported.

"Another strategy is the development of technology and innovation, which are not specific to MSC and can be used in all countries."

The World Steel Association (WSA) in its latest report said Iran produced 22.1 million tons of crude steel in the first nine months of 2023.

According to the report, major steel production companies in the world produced more than 1.4 billion tons of crude steel from January to September 2023, showing a 0.1 percent decline compared to the same period last year.

It said Iran's steel production vol-

ume, from January to September 2023, reached 22.1 million tons.

The 63 major steel production companies in the world produced 149.3 million tons of crude steel in September 2023, registering a 1.5 percent decline compared to the corresponding period last year.

Iran churned out 2.4 million tons of crude steel in September 2023, retaining its 10th rank in the world.

The World Steel Association reported that China produced 795.1 million tons of crude steel in the nine-month period, clinching the first rank in the world, followed by India, Japan, the United States, and Russia, respectively.

Turkey vows to protect Iranian water share of Aras River: *Official*

Turkey has pledged to respect Iran's water share of the Aras River, according to Iranian Deputy Minister of Energy Mohammad Javanbakht.

Javanbakht, who led the Iranian delegation to the second Iran-Turkey Cooperation Committee meeting, which convened on Sunday, said that Turkey has ensured Iran that

dam-making on Aras River will create no limitations for Iranian water resources, IRNA reported.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the meeting, the Iranian deputy minister said that Turkish officials stressed that these dams are mainly aimed at electricity generation. The Turkish officials have

stressed that it would be possible for Iran to use its share of the river during drought, the Javanbakht said.

Problems related to the water share in Aras were discussed in the first session of the Iran-Turkey Joint Water Cooperation Committee, held in 2021, following a visit by Javanbakht to neighboring Turkey.

Discovery of a mysterious hand-carved structure near Rudkhan Castle

A tunnel or natural cave?

Iranica Desk

Rudkhan Castle is a brick and stone medieval structure in Gilan Province. It is a military complex constructed during the Sassanid era (224-651 CE), and later rebuilt during the Seljuq era.

Head of Gilan Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization Vali Jahani said a mysterious structure has recently been discovered near the castle, potentially serving as a part of a tunnel, or an entrance to the fortress itself, or perhaps a natural or manmade cave, ISNA reported.

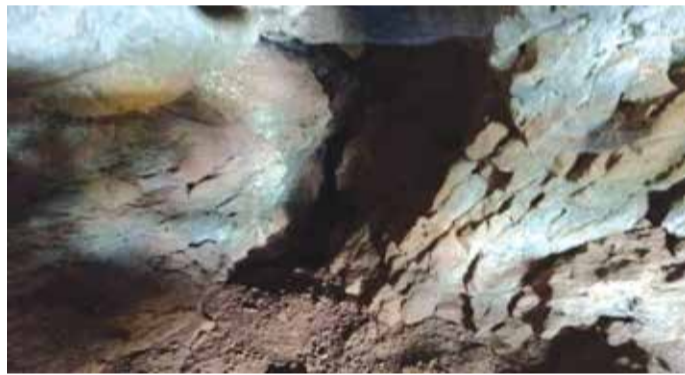
However, experts have stated that further, more detailed archaeological investigations are required before reaching a definitive conclusion.

According to Jahani, Rudkhan Castle is one of the remarkable wonders harboring numerous hidden secrets within its core. This astonishing fortress is located on the summit of a mountain, approximately 20 kilometers from the city of Fuman.

Previous exploratory surveys conducted in the eastern and western sides of the mountain summit revealed the presence of guards responsible for protecting this fortress. Although the cemetery of the fortress remains undiscovered, archaeologists strive to unravel the hidden mysteries of this beautiful structure. Jahani mentioned that during



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● rimino.ir

the examination of the surrounding area, researchers stumbled upon an entirely concealed, peculiar structure hid-

den beneath dense vegetation and trees. This enigmatic structure is not directly related to Rudkhan Castle, and what is ev-



● iribnews.ir

ident is that it likely served as a dedicated outpost for the skilled forces under the command of the fortress.

He added that this structure and the guard who was present inside it seems to have had close connections with the fortress,

constantly monitoring and relaying information about any potential enemy attacks.

According to Jahani, the features of the structure suggest it may have been larger in size. The floor reveals visible evidence of lime mortar and hand-crafted soil, creating a mosaic-like pattern. The mouth of the structure spans around six square meters, with a depth of approximately four meters. These details raise questions about its original function and how it fits into the historical context of the region.

Rudkhan Castle's strategic location, surrounded by a river and dense forests, has made it an impregnable stronghold throughout history. The use of strong materials such as brick, stone, wood, mortar, and lime in its construction, coupled with its unique architecture, further fortified its defenses against enemy forces. It is no wonder that it has earned a place on Iran's National Heritage List.

As we delve deeper into the rich history and architectural wonders of Iran, Rudkhan Castle stands as a testament to the country's vast cultural heritage. Exploring the ancient walls and forts that have withstood the test of time offers a fascinating glimpse into the architectural ingenuity and historical depth present in this remarkable structure.

Evolution of artistic innovations in bronze articles and architectural epigraphy

The appearance of living creatures on bronze articles constitutes an evident innovation, insofar as there is a large group of bronze articles dating from the end of the 11th centuries from the eastern regions of Iran (possibly from Khorasan in the first instance), which are decorated only with geometrical ornament of circles and dots.

At the outset there are no inscriptions on pieces in this group. Arabic inscriptions only appear at a later stage. In actual fact, only one scoop of this type is known, but its ornament of circles and dots no longer plays an independent role, serving only to fill in the background to the inscription, which associates this scoop with another group of bowls, since they also have a similar background to several inscriptions.

This fact attests to the geographical proximity of the two groups in question. Thus, around the end of the 10th century the number of items with geometrical ornamentation decreases and items appear with inscriptions.

A group of bronze items, consisting of bowls and trays, was

manufactured in Mavera al-Nahr (Central Asia). It should be mentioned here because it undergoes changes over the course of the 11th century: the bowls become more massive, the background ornament to the inscriptions becomes finer and the character of the script changes slightly. However, there are no depictions of living creatures on items of this group during the 10th and 11th centuries. It is essential to point out one general feature of all three groups of bronze articles produced in neighbouring areas during the 10th and 11th centuries and that is the absence of inlay. Inlay appears on Iranian (Khorasan) items only in the 11th century and flourishes magnificently during the 12th century. This fact also supports the proposed periodic classification.

Early pieces inlaid with copper and silver – such as the figure of an eagle dating from 180 AH (796-797 CE), or the ewer from Svaneti, and other objects of the 7th-9th centuries – if associated with Iranian territory, are more likely to have come from its western

rather than eastern regions, but they were probably manufactured somewhere in Iraq, the centre of the Caliphate.

The absence of precisely dated examples hinders any assessment of changes in ceramics and textiles, and in this instance archaeological methods do not provide the necessary precision. The question of a periodic classification for architecture has concerned scholars for a long time. During the 11th and 12th centuries great changes can be observed in architectural epigraphy. In the 11th century, the Kufic script becomes more complicated and the so-called "plaited" Kufic makes its appearance.

It is possible that the first examples in architecture are to be assigned to the early 11th century (for example, at Rabati Malik), although in ceramics "plaited" Kufic script is already well represented in the 10th century. At the same time naskhi writing begins to be used as a monumental script. It has also been established that during the 11th century specific types of mosque, madreseh (mosque school)

and minaret became prevalent throughout Iran, though these types were not genuinely new but had already been developed during the preceding ages. In the sphere of architectural decor much that is new emerges in the 11th century, and frequently these innovations occur during the period preceding the creation of the great Seljuk empire.

It has been suggested that radical changes took place in art with the consolidation of Seljuk power.

But as we have attempted to show, these changes were already perceptible much earlier, before the founding of the Seljuk state in eastern Iran. The Seljuks' contribution to art appears to have been very small; it is even difficult to speak of the Seljuk sultans' patronage of art as their dynasty never founded a permanent capital city which would have become a centre for the artistic movements of the period.

The changes in Persian art coincide chronologically with the Seljuk conquest, but it is necessary to seek the cause of these changes in the life of the Iranian cities where



▲ A bowl dating back to late 12th century

craftsmen and artists congregated. But by founding an empire from the Amu Darya (Oxus) River to the Mediterranean, the Seljuks furthered the spread of Persian art to the west.

A large number of Iranian

craftsmen moved to Iraq and Anatolia in the 11th and 12th centuries and collaborated in the creation of a new style in these areas (another group of craftsmen went to the western regions a little later, at the time of the Mongol invasion).

The above is a lightly edited version of part of chapter entitled, "Persian Art: From Antiquity to the 19th Century", from a book entitled, "Persian Art, The Lost Treasures", written by Vladimir Lukonin and Anatoli Ivanov, published by Parkstone International. The photo was taken from the book.

Bibi, Biden irreversibly damaged by Gaza aggression



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

As the Abraham accord was gaining traction, with Bahrain, Morocco, and the UAE normalizing relations with Israel and Saudi Arabia negotiating the same, the Palestinian cause was being gradually forgotten in the days leading up to October 7, 2023. Faced with that prospect, the zealous people of Gaza had no choice but to sacrifice their lives to awaken the conscience of the Muslim Ummah and the international community. On October 7, the Palestinians did just that.

Tel Aviv had been anticipating this reaction from the people of Gaza. The despotic Israeli cabinet did its best to label Hamas's reaction as terrorism and subdue Gazans. The manner in which Netanyahu made President Biden's administration dance to his tune after Hamas's October 7 response is disgraceful for a power like the United States. Historians documenting the recent bout of Israeli aggression on Gaza will surely express utter surprise at Netanyahu's manipulation of the Biden administration and consider it a shameful episode in the history of the United States.

Yet, the damage inflicted on Israel, particularly the blow to its illusory dominance, will not be rectified for years. Its agencies, media, and civil society activists are questioning Netanyahu and his far-right cabinet for neglecting Israel's national security. Despite international objections, including those from the United Nations, and the grief and anger of Palestinians, Netanyahu was persistently building illegal Jewish settlements on Arab lands. However, now it seems unlikely that Israel will encroach on Arab land without facing consequences from the international community.

Sensing a shift in the public sentiment in opposition to Israel's brutal bombings, Western governments have started reconsidering their murderous, unilateral policies. Another significant loss for Israel is that the Abraham Accords initiative is nearing its premature conclusion. All in all, the outlook for Israel is bleak.

Israel's plan to invade Gaza has failed, and it is now facing a prolonged war that may last for months or even years. Military strategists are convinced that Israel will not be able to eliminate Hamas, though the Gaza massacre may indeed lead to the end of Netanyahu and Biden's political careers.

IRGC unveils Fattah-2 hypersonic missile, other military achievements

Leader: Initiative, innovation, key features of Aerospace Force exhibition

National Desk

Iran unveiled the home-grown Fattah-2 hypersonic missile, mobile defense system, drone, and other military achievements on Sunday in the presence of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

During the visit to the Ashura Aerospace University of Science & Technology, Ayatollah Khamenei toured an exhibition showcasing the latest achievements of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force.

The Leader listed initiative and innovation as key features of the Aerospace Force exhibition. However, he cautioned against complacency with the current level of achievements, acknowledging that various military and non-military sectors worldwide are constantly moving forward. He stressed the need for continuous efforts to avoid falling behind.

Ayatollah Khamenei considered the movement and progress within the Armed Forces as swift and desirable, emphasizing the necessity of not reducing the momentum of these advancements. The "Fattah-2" hypersonic cruise missile, the mobile air defense system "Mehran," and the upgraded system, "9 Dey," as well as the drone "Shahed 147," were unveiled. The first version of Fattah, with a range of 1,400 kilometers, was unveiled in June. The warhead of Fattah-1 has a spherical engine running on solid fuel with a movable



nozzle that allows the missile to move in all directions. Fattah-2, however, has been furnished with an HGV warhead that can maneuver and glide at hypersonic speed. An HGV warhead allows the ballistic missile to significantly change its trajectory after launch. The glide vehicle can reach a speed of Mach 5 to 20, depending on its design and utility.

The exhibition, which included missile, drone, defense and space sections, featured new and updated achievements of the young scientists and specialists of the IRGC

Aerospace Force, under the title "From Idea to All-Iranian Product."

The latest measures and developments in the field of launching satellites into space were another part of the exhibition.

Muslim states urged to sever Israel ties for a limited time

Speaking at the unveiling ceremony, the Leader said that Muslim governments should do the major task which is to prevent the flow of energy and goods to Israel. "The Islamic governments

should cut their political relations with the Zionist regime at least for a limited period," he added. Ayatollah Khamenei also urged nations to continue protests in a bid not to let the oppression of the Palestinian people be consigned to oblivion. The Leader also said that Israel has failed to destroy Hamas despite using all its military power and conducting massive bombings on Gaza.

"The defeat of the Zionist regime in Gaza is a reality. Entering hospitals or people's homes is not a victory because victory means de-

feating the opposite side, something that the Zionist regime has not achieved so far and will not be able to do so in the future," he asserted. The whole world, Ayatollah Khamenei said, is faced with the fact that a regime with advanced and sophisticated military equipment has not been able to overcome its opposite side, which has none of this equipment. Israel waged the brutal war on the blockaded Gaza Strip on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas launched Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (2nd R) addresses top military brass after visiting a display of Iranian defense achievements in Tehran on November 19, 2023.
● leader.ir

occupying entity. Since the start of the aggression, the Tel Aviv regime has killed at least 12,300 Palestinians, including more than 5,000 children, 3,300 women, and injured 30,000 others.

Leader.ir, IRNA, and Press TV contributed to this report.

Raisi criticizes inaction on Gaza, hopes for a fair global order

National Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has criticized the international forums for their silence

regarding Israel's crimes in Gaza, saying people around the world seek a fair global order. "Today, people around the world not only hold

hatred towards the Zionist regime and the United States but also feel dissatisfied with all international mechanisms, Raisi said during an inaugura-

tion ceremony of a hospital in Tehran's Shahriar County on Sunday, president.ir reported. He expressed confidence that a fair global system will emerge in the world through the determination of nations.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry, Israeli attacks have killed 12,300 Palestinians, including more than 5,000 children, and 3,300 women, since October 7. The Iranian chief executive also said that the resilience of the people of Gaza teaches the entire world a lesson to resist and declare hatred toward the enemies of humanity.

"The pure blood of 5,000 Palestinian children will cause divine revenge to hit today's pharaohs and end their rule," he said. Meanwhile, in a letter on Sunday, the president of Iran's Academy of Medical Sciences has called



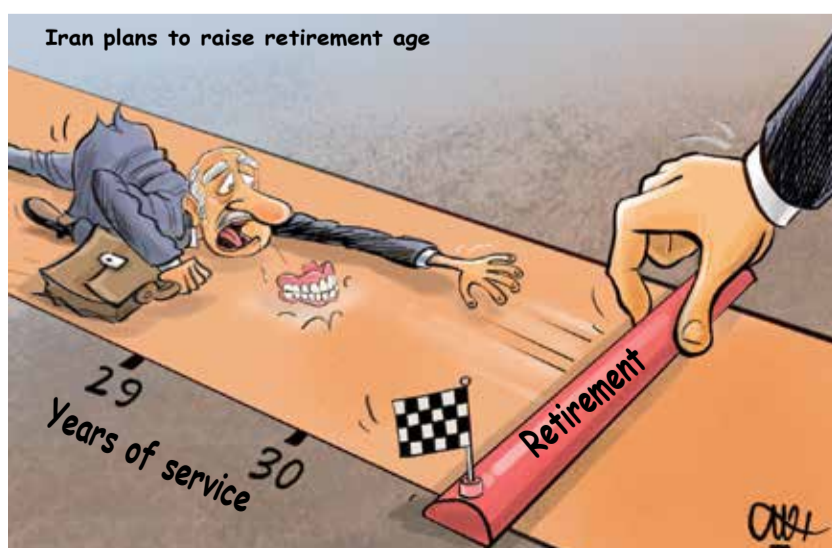
Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi addresses a gathering of people in Tehran's Shahriar County on November 19, 2023.
● president.ir

on the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to either take effective measures to stop Israeli crimes in the Gaza Strip or resign, Press TV reported. Seyed Alireza Marandi told Guterres it's unfortunate that Israel is committing such "unique historical crimes" in your tenure and the UN has done nothing to prevent it. "These dark days will be recorded in history. The least you can do is to stand among the oppressed and helpless people of Gaza and on

behalf of the international community order international aid to be sent to Gaza," Marandi wrote. Marandi also said that during the past 40 days, the countries of the world have witnessed "the great crime" of the Israeli regime, which may be unprecedented in history.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



'Horrendous events' in Gaza 'beggar belief': UN rights chief

International Desk

The level of violence ravaging Gaza in recent days is unfathomable, the UN rights chief said Sunday, with attacks on schools harboring displaced people and a hospital turned into a "death zone".

"The horrendous events of the past 48 hours in Gaza beggar belief," United Nations High Com-

missioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said in a statement. He spoke as the World Health Organization scrambled to evacuate the last remaining patients and staff from the Shifa Hospital, with UN officials describing the Palestinian territory's largest health facility, raided last week by Israeli troops, as a "death zone".

Elsewhere in northern Gaza, a Hamas health official said more than 80 people were killed on Saturday in twin strikes on Jabalia refugee camp, including on a UN school sheltering displaced people.

"The killing of so many people at schools turned shelters, hundreds fleeing for their lives from Shifa Hospital, amid con-

large numbers of women, children and men severely wounded or killed".

"The pain, dread, and fear etched on the faces of children, women and men is too much to bear," Turk said.

"How much more violence, bloodshed and misery will it take before people come to their senses? How many more

25 health workers after the Israeli military had earlier ordered the evacuation of some 2,500 displaced people sheltering on the hospital grounds. Columns of sick and injured – some of them amputees – were seen making their way out of Shifa Hospital Saturday towards the seafront without ambulances along with displaced

Deal on captives

A deal to free captives Hamas seized in its October 7 attack on Israel now hinges on "minor" practical issues, Qatar's prime minister said Sunday, without giving details or a timeline.

"The challenges that remain in the negotiations are very minor compared to the big-

captives.

Israel has so far refused to heed calls for a cease-fire before all the captives are released.

Israel's casualties

The regime's army said Sunday three more soldiers were killed in fighting in the Gaza Strip on Saturday, raising the number of troop deaths there to 62 since the con-

the conflict, resistance groups, including Ansarullah movement in Yemen, have warned Israel over its brutal attacks on Gaza.

Yemen said on Sunday that its armed forces have seized an Israeli ship and detained dozens of its crew members in the Red Sea following warnings by the Yemeni Ansarullah movement



A grab from an AFP TV video shows an Israeli armored vehicle rolling past Palestinians fleeing Gaza City on foot on November 18, 2023.
● BELAL AL SABBAGH/AFP



Palestinians carry an injured person as rescuers search the rubble of a building for survivors following Israeli bombardment in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on November 18, 2023.
● MAHMUD HAMS/AFP

tinuing displacement of hundreds of thousands in southern Gaza, are actions which fly in the face of the basic protections civilians must be afforded under international law," Turk said.

He described the images purportedly taken in the aftermath of the reported Israeli strike on the UN-run Al-Fakhura School as "horrifying", and "clearly showing

civilians will be killed?"

'Death zone'

The World Health Organization said it had led an assessment mission to Shifa Hospital and determined it was a "death zone", urging a full evacuation.

The United Nations health agency said it was developing an evacuation plan for nearly 300 remaining patients and

people, doctors and nurses, as loud explosions were heard around the complex.

All premature babies at the hospital were later evacuated, a health official in the territory said. Eight babies had died in the past days after power supplies ran out at Shifa, with not enough electricity to continue operating the incubators, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

ger challenges; they are more logistical, they are more practical," Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told a joint press conference with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell.

Qatar has helped broker talks aiming to free some of the 240 captives in return for a temporary cease-fire, a mediation effort that has so far led to the release of four

fight began.

Fighting raged Sunday in Gaza, more than six weeks after a shock Hamas attack sparked an air and ground offensive by Israel.

In Gaza, around 12,300 people, more than 5,000 of them children, have been killed in the conflict.

Israeli ship seized
Since the beginning of

that the force will target any Israeli ship crossing the country's territorial waters.

52 people who were on board the ship were also arrested.

The incident came after a spokesman for Ansarullah, Yahya Sarea, said on Sunday the group will target all ships owned or operated by Israeli companies, or carrying the Israeli flag.

US discussed post-Netanyahu era with Mideast countries

PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

The enduring conflict in Gaza has evolved into one of the most devastating and destructive chapters within the intricate Israeli-Palestinian struggle, marked by unprecedented loss of Palestinian lives, particularly those of women and children, at the hands of Israel. This has been carried out through a myriad of air strikes and ground incursions, amounting to thousands, on the besieged coastal enclave. The toll on human life in Gaza has been staggering, exceeding 12,000 deaths with the vast majority being civilians, and resulting in the displacement of hundreds of thousands. The humanitarian situation in Gaza has plummeted into

dire straits, with the population grappling with severe shortages of essential resources such as water, electricity, fuel, and medicine, alongside the looming threat of disease outbreaks. Israel's actions have extended to the deliberate targeting of critical civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, schools, and media offices, in blatant disregard of international humanitarian law. In response, human rights organizations have levied accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity against Israel, underscoring the urgent need for an independent and unbiased investigation.

Israel couches its actions in Gaza as defensive measures against Hamas, the Palestinian resistance group in control of the en-

clave. However, numerous observers have highlighted the disproportionate and indiscriminate nature of Israel's attacks that amplify the underlying factors contributing to the conflict, such as the illegal occupation, blockade, and settlement expansion in Palestinian territories.

The role and motivations of the United States, as Israel's primary ally and sponsor, in the ongoing crisis have come under scrutiny. Meanwhile, a notable dichotomy has emerged: while publicly and practically supporting Israel in its campaign in Gaza, the US has also been engaged in private discussions in the region, seeking to draw a distinction between a "bad Israel" and a "good Israel". Sources, on the condition of anonymity, told



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken talks with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Ankara, Turkey, on November 6, 2023.
● AP

Iran Nuances that US officials have conveyed their disapproval of some Israeli actions in Gaza to regional counterparts, attributing the current conduct in the conflict to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The sources said that Biden administration officials have told a number of regional Arab officials and leaders that Netanyahu will be gone after the current war and that his political rivals will be more willing to negotiate and work with the Arab states. American officials have urged re-

gional states to plan for a post-Netanyahu Israel after the war.

In light of these developments, it became evident that the US strives to maintain the process of normalization between some Arab countries and Israel, despite widespread condemnation of Israel's aggression and oppression of the Palestinian people. Washington seeks to present a potential post-Netanyahu Israeli cabinet as a partner for Arab nations, emphasizing the two-state solution as a viable path to resolve the conflict, despite the formi-

dable challenges created by decades of Israeli policies. However, the US's position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is fraught with inconsistency. While professing support for a solution, it continues to back Israel, the country that denies Palestinians their fundamental rights and self-determination. Additionally, the US decision to recognize Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as Israel's capital and relocate its embassy there, in contravention of international law and UN resolutions, further complicated the situation.

The United States' involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly regarding the assaults on Gaza, has sparked intense debate. Critics contend that the US has not only provided diplomatic support for Israel but has also directly facilitated these attacks through military assistance, including offer-

ing guidance to the Israeli military and potentially participating in the conflict firsthand. As a result, the US's involvement has entrenched it as a party to the conflict, implicating it in the resultant violence and civilian casualties.

Additionally, the US has been implicated in safeguarding Israel from international critique and potential legal ramifications. Detractors posit that Israel's conduct in Gaza amounts to "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity", asserting that the US, by insulating Israel from international scrutiny and condemnation, is facilitating these alleged atrocities.

Furthermore, the US has drawn criticism regarding its role in obstructing initiatives to institute a cease-fire. If successful, such endeavors could have conceivably stemmed the cycle of violence and forestalled further civilian casualties. Critics, however, contend that the US's resistance to these initiatives has permitted the conflict to rage on unrestrained, culminating in an increased toll on human life and suffering.

Iran wins world deaf futsal title



● IRNA

Sports Desk

Iran lifted the men's trophy in the World Deaf Futsal Championships in Sao Paulo, Brazil, thanks to a shootout victory over Sweden.

Alireza Mokhtar-Abadi was on the scoresheet for Iran as the two sides settled for a 1-1 draw before heading into the shootout.

Goalkeeper Mahdi Karam-Ali delivered a heroic performance by denying three Swedish efforts, while Mokhtar-Abadi, Esmaeil Dejeh, and Ali-Akbar Ahmadvand converted from the spot as Iran won the title in the fifth edition of the tournament.

Having beaten the Czech Republic 7-0 in the quarterfinals, Iran demolished Thailand 9-1 – courtesy of Ali Zeinalvand's hat-trick, Mokhtar-Abadi's double, as well as strikes by Karam-Ali, Mostafa Heidari, Amir-Hossein Abdollahi, and Mohammad Jahangiri – for a place in the final showpiece.

Japan defeated Thailand 3-2 to finish on the third podium.

Iran's Geraei to miss Olympics after one-year ban

Sports Desk

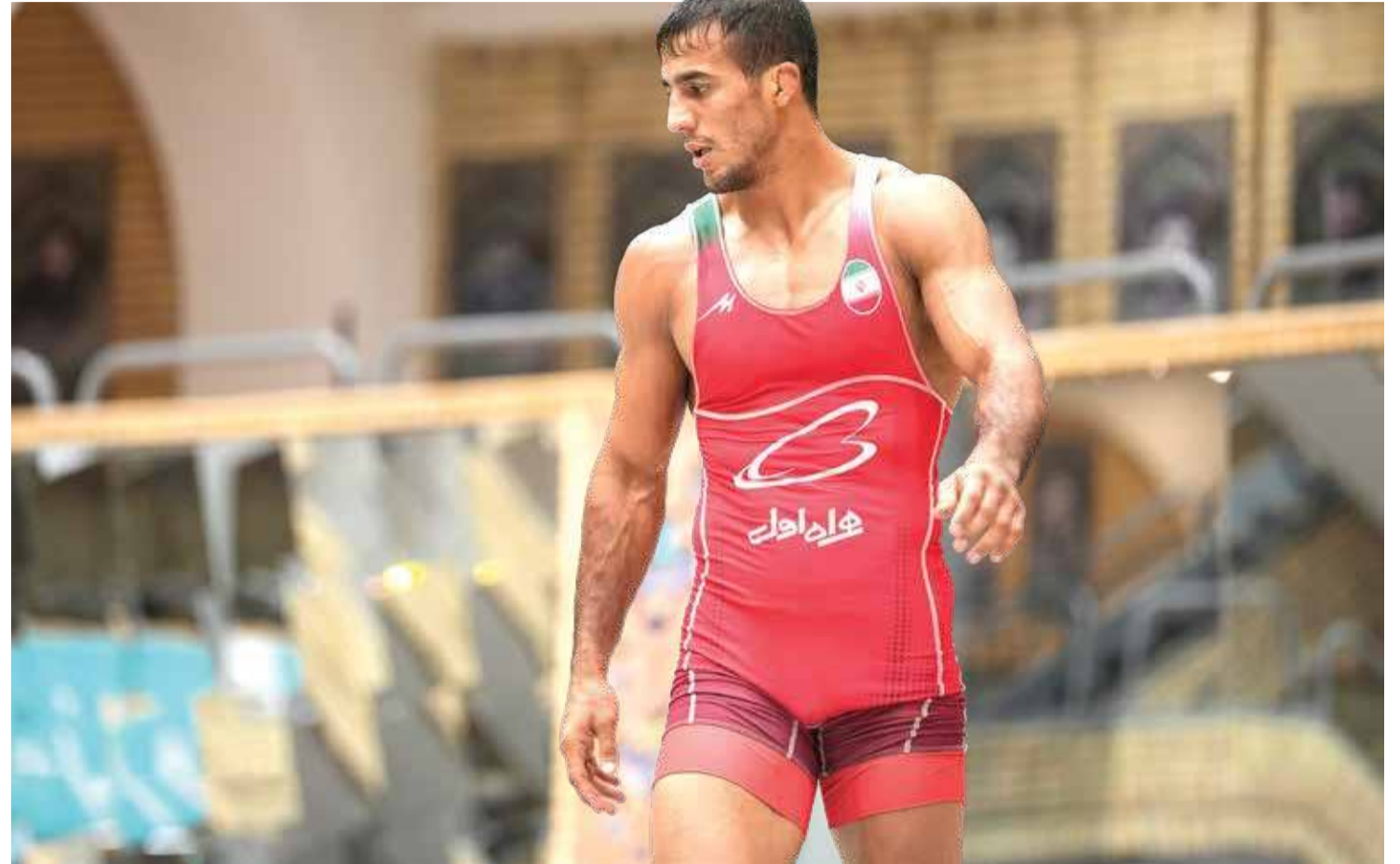
Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Mohammad-Ali Geraei was handed a 12-month ban by the United World Wrestling due to an incident at September's World Championships in Belgrade. Geraei was also fined 1,000 Swiss franc, with the Iranian Wrestling Federation also receiving a 5,000 Swiss franc penalty.

The UWW's decision means the three-time world bronze winner will be ruled out of the Olympic qualification tournaments in the coming months and the main event in Paris itself – starting July next year.

The Japan Wrestling Federation had lodged a complaint over the Iranian's misconduct during a 67kg bout featuring his younger Mohammadreza and Kyotaro Sogabe of Japan in the Serbian capital.

Mohammadreza had a 10-9 advantage over the Japanese but was clearly out of breath with 1:15 minutes left on the clock, when his older brother, who had been knocked out of the 77kg contests earlier, threw a bottle of mineral water on the mat to halt the bout, presumably buying the Iranian some time to restore strength.

A world and Olympic champion in 2021, Mohammadreza held on for an 11-10 victory but a technical-fall humiliation against Azerbaijani Hasrat



● iwfir

Javarov in the quarterfinals saw the Iranian eventually settle for a bronze medal.

A third world medal in as many years was still enough for Mohammadreza to secure a berth at next year's Games in the French capital. Mohammad-Ali, 29, was the captain of the Iranian six-man squad at the

Olympics two years ago, where he delivered some impressive performances but was unlucky to leave Tokyo empty-handed after a defeat against the host's Shohei Yabiku in the bronze medal contest.

Iran Greco-Roman head coach Hassan Rangraz lamented the UWW verdict

as being "harsh", adding: "We were hoping he could finish his career with an Olympic medal." Meanwhile, Alireza Dabir, the chairman of the Iranian federation, said the country would lodge an appeal to reduce the wrestler's ban.

In Geraei's absence, Amin Kavianinejad – a two-time

world junior champion and a silver winner in October's Asian Games – will be the likely frontrunner in Iran's quest for the Olympic quota, though he will have to win the domestic championships next month before competing in the qualification events.

Iran has already bagged

four of the six Greco-Roman quotas for Olympics after Amin Mirzazadeh won the 130kg gold in Belgrade, coupled with the 67kg and 97kg bronze medals for Mohammadreza Geraei and Mohammad-Hadi Saravi, while Mahdi Mohsennejad finished fifth in the 60kg weight class.

Verstappen battles through to win Las Vegas GP thriller

AFP – World champion Max Verstappen claimed the 18th win of his record-breaking season, overcoming a five-second penalty to power to victory in a thrilling Las Vegas Grand Prix on Saturday.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc overtook Red Bull's Sergio Perez on the last lap to grab second place ahead of the Mexican with French driver Esteban Ocon of Alpine finishing fourth at the end of a race which saw multiple lead changes and plenty of overtaking.

Verstappen had been highly critical of the return of Formula One to Vegas after a 41-year absence, saying the event was "99 percent show", but as he drove past the finish line he celebrated with a chorus of "Viva Las Vegas" on the team radio.

"He loves a race like that. Even though he was on the end of a penalty. When he came back...the way he fought. I think he changed his mind about Vegas," said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner.

The Dutchman won by 2.070 over Leclerc but had to work for his victory in what was the latest starting race in F1 history.

"It was a tough one. I tried to go for it at the start. We both braked quite late and I just ran out of grip, so we ended up a bit wide," said the triple world champion.

"The stewards gave me a penalty for that and it put us on the back-foot. I had to pass quite a few cars and there was the Safety Car, so at that point there was a lot going on,"



Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates winning the Las Vegas Grand Prix in Las Vegas, NV, US, on Nov. 18, 2023.
● FINN BLAKE/REUTERS

added Verstappen, summing up the race as "a lot of fun." The Dutchman, starting second on the grid, grabbed the lead in the first turn of the opening lap but was penalised five seconds for pushing Leclerc wide.

The tricky surface was evident when McLaren's Lando Norris crashed out, spinning into the barrier on turn 14 of the fourth lap. The British driver was taken to hospital for precautionary tests.

Ferrari's Monegasque driver Leclerc kept in close touch though and was able to get the lead back, overtaking Verstappen on lap 16.

The Dutchman had to serve his penalty in the pit, leaving him plenty of work to do to regain his lead and when Leclerc went into the pits on lap 22, Perez took over at the front.

Mercedes' George Russell made contact with Verstappen, clipping his front wing, an incident which resulted in a five second penalty for the British driver who crossed the line fourth but ended in eighth place. Leclerc and Perez jostled for the lead but Verstappen was ominously gaining ground and after he passed Perez he then made his decisive move on lap 37.

From then on, Verstappen never looked back, Leclerc slipping into third spot after he out-braked himself and allowed Perez to fly by. But there was one more twist in the tale as Leclerc brilliantly moved past Perez to grab second place. "What a race. I enjoyed it so much. I'm of course disappointed to only finish second, but that's the best we could do," said Leclerc.

Turkey stun Euro 2024 hosts Germany, spoil Nagelsmann's home debut

REUTERS – Visitors Turkey shocked Euro 2024 hosts Germany 3-2 in a friendly on Saturday to spoil coach Julian Nagelsmann's home debut after taking the job in September.

The Germans, racing to get a strong team together for next year's tournament on home soil, still have a way to go and their leaking defence remains a major cause for concern.

The Turks, already qualified for Euro 2024, looked sharp with thousands of their fans in the Olympic stadium, but the hosts eased off after a strong start and an early lead, and the result will do little to fuel German fans' expectations for the tournament next year.

Nagelsmann, who took over from Hansi Flick, enjoyed a winning debut in October away to the United States before drawing against Mexico. "We should have finished off the game in the first 10 minutes," Nagelsmann said. "But from the 25th minute and until the break we did not do much. "We have to keep playing on the same level, every player has to do it. Then that quality will come through in the games."



● FABRIZIO BENSCH/REUTERS

The Germans took a fifth-minute lead when attacking midfielder Kai Havertz, unusually deployed as a left back, converted a Leroy Sane cut-back in front of a sold-out 70,000 crowd.

Sane came close to scoring himself when he saw Turkey keeper Altay Bayindir out of position but his low drive sailed narrowly wide. The visitors made the most of a string of defensive errors to hit back and they cut the deficit through Ferdi Kadioglu's powerful shot after he latched on to a deep cross from Abdulkirim Bardakci in the 38th

minute. Turkey drew level through former Bayern Munich youth player Kenan Yildiz in first-half stoppage time after the 18-year-old was left completely unmarked at the far post.

Niclas Füllkrug levelled three minutes after the restart with a low shot following Florian Wirtz's solo run for his 10th goal in 12 internationals for Germany but the Turks refused to settle for a draw. Salih Özcan hit the post and they earned a 70th-minute penalty for a handball by Havertz which Yusuf Sari converted.



It's your day, but sorry, it's not your day



By Ali Amiri
Staff writer

Today is World Children's Day, yet children in Gaza wake up to nothing but the horrifying reality of living amidst an ongoing genocide, where their lives hang in the balance with each Israeli bombardment. It is the 44th day of Israel's retaliatory war against Hamas, which has transformed the enclave into a "graveyard for children," as UN Secretary-General António Guterres has put it. Over 5,000 Palestinian children have already lost their lives, and there appears to be no stopping the relentless Israeli killing machine. Each day, children of Gaza wake up to the calamitous reality of discovering that 100 or more of their fellow children were mercilessly murdered the day before. Instead of sleeping safe and sound, enjoying sleep as a necessary means to enhance their mental health, many children in Gaza experience stress due to the psychological effects of war. This often leads to symptoms such as vomiting and bedwetting, both of which are responses to extreme fear. In the daytime, instead of going to school and receiving an education that could serve as a stepping stone towards a better future, children in Gaza are forced to seek refuge inside schools that have been transformed into shelters from indiscriminate Israeli airstrikes. Even there, they are not safe, as Israel has even targeted UN-run schools meant to protect children against their brutality. With the ongoing campaign of relentless bombing, education in Gaza has once again been disrupted, and survival has become the only lesson children can learn

amidst such chaos.

Rather than waking up to the smell of freshly baked bread and delicious cheese, a breakfast that every child in the world should be able to enjoy, Palestinian children in Gaza open their eyes to the harsh reality of potential starvation. This is a direct consequence of Israel's total blockade of the enclave, which prevents the entry of essential food and water supplies into the territory. The murderous Zionists not only restrict the flow of sustenance but also demolish wheat mills and bakeries, adding to the plight of children in Gaza. As a result, these children are at a high risk of dehydration and malnourishment. Instead of being provided with the healthy and nurturing food environment they deserve, these children are subjected to the cruel reality of starvation within a war they have no control over and cannot alter.

Instead of being photographed on playgrounds, embellished in colorful clothes that children have the ability to readily sport, the children of Gaza are captured in heart-wrenching images within morgues, draped in body bags. If they are fortunate enough to survive, they are photographed with faces covered in dust, blood, and tears, devoid of those cheerful smiles that typically make browsing photo albums such a joyful activity.

The children of Gaza, who have long resided in what is often referred to as the "world's largest open-air prison," are far from enjoying the protections outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the past 15 years, over a million Palestinian minors residing in Gaza have endured five Israeli assaults on their

homeland. Not only are they denied the rightful legal status accorded to children globally, but they are also subjected to dehumanizing labels such as "human animals" by the Israeli defense minister, which serves to justify their targeting with minimal consequences.

Even if, by some miracle, this cruel war were to end today, many Palestinian children who have endured one of the most intense episodes of conflict in human history will continue to suffer from the long-lasting mental and behavioral consequences. A research paper authored by Palestinian psychologist Iman Farajallah reveals that children who survive wars do not emerge unscathed and often bear a significant psychological, emotional, and behavioral burden.

Also, Ghassan Abu-Sitta, a British Palestinian surgeon working with Medical Aid for Palestinians in Gaza, holds that for those fortunate enough to survive this war, they will have to learn how to go through life without the presence of their family members. He describes this conflict as "a war against children," as they are subjected to constant, indiscriminate air raids, resulting in the loss of lives, families, homes, schools, and hospitals.

And the world is only watching. As we sweep through pictures of Palestinian children being brutally murdered or injured, we would do well to recognize that the savagery of Israeli forces knows no bounds and Palestinian children are being deprived of their childhood.

Today is World Children's Day, and children of Gaza are left to fend for themselves by Western politicians who hesitate to demand an immediate cease-fire.

They didn't make it to World Children's Day



By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

OPINION

The International Convention on the Rights of the Child, approved by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, outlines four fundamental principles: First, no child should suffer from discrimination; secondly, when decisions are made concerning children, their best interests should be prioritized; thirdly, children have the right to live and grow; and lastly, children have the right to freely express their opinions and ideas, which should be taken into consideration in all matters that affect them.

This year, World Children's Day coincides with Israel's devastating attacks on the people of Gaza and the ongoing loss of innocent lives, including children. Throughout history, war has always posed the greatest threat to children. Even the establishment of World Children's Day in 1953 came in the aftermath of World War II, which resulted in countless child casualties, displacements, becoming an orphan, and psychological distress.

However, efforts have been made, both politically and legally, to prevent wars from violating established norms and to protect civilians from the horrors of conflict inflicted on them by warmongers. And yet, for the past 44 days, the world has witnessed heart-wrenching scenes of a new wave of violence in the Gaza Strip. More than 5,000 vulnerable children have been killed by Israeli bombings and didn't make it to the World Children's Day – and the surviving children still live in fear.

Today will be a different day for children in most countries around the world. And yet, in Gaza, November 20 is no different from November 19, or any day since October 7. Despite the fact that 193 countries have signed the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, it seems that they do not have the power to stop the child-killing machine of the monstrous vampire. It appears that the accepted universal rights of children have some unwritten exceptions, as if they depend on whether the children are from Gaza or Kiev.



Isfahan to host Turkmenistan Cultural Week



IRNA – The Turkmenistan Cultural Week is scheduled to take place in the city of Isfahan, Iran, from November 23 to 26.

The event will feature the participation of 40 artists and the Minister of Culture from Turkmenistan.

During the week-long event, Turkmen artists will showcase their works in visual arts, music, handicrafts, film, and cinema.

Cultural weeks serve as key events in cultural and public diplomacy, organized based on cultural agreements between two countries.

The event will be hosted by the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), serving as the cultural diplomacy coordinator of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Turkmenistan Cultural Week will kick off on November 23 at Isfahan's Arts Hall, with the opening ceremony attended by the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the governor of Isfahan, and the Minister of Culture of Turkmenistan.

Throughout the week, alongside traditional Turkmen music performances, there will be exhibitions of handicrafts, artistic and visual works, traditional costumes, Turkmenistan Film Week, and a photo exhibition.

As part of this cultural event, a literary session honoring Magtymguly Pyragy, a shared figure between the two countries, will be held at the University of Isfahan, with the participation of poets and writers from Iran and Turkmenistan.

Previously, Iran's Cultural Days and an Iranian handicraft exhibition were held in Turkmenistan on February 13, 2022, with the presence of the Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance and officials from Turkmenistan.

Latin America cartoon exhibition extended

IRNA – The Latin America Cartoon and Caricature Exhibition, featuring renowned artists from Latin America, was extended due to warm welcome by art lovers, until December 24 at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA). The exhibition, which opened on November 11, was originally scheduled to conclude on November 19. However, the extension was announced as it was warmly welcomed by cartoon lovers.

The show features nearly 400 works from artists representing 15 countries, including Argentina, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Brazil, and Guatemala.

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Two Iranian young artists awarded in South Korean contest

Arts & Culture Desk

Two Iranian teenagers Elena Saadaat Kazazi and Dorsa Hamyani received awards in the 27th Shinhan Postcard Art Competition in South Korea.

The theme of the Shinhan Postcard Art Competition was "Draw Yourself - Let the World Know You," targeting young artists aged 4 to 18. The competition witnessed the participation of talented individuals from around the world, ILNA wrote.

Fatemeh Latifi, an accomplished artist specializing in guiding children and teenagers in the proper use of creativity and painting techniques, expressed pride in the success of the two Iranian teenagers.

She stated, "We have experienced that Iranian child and teenage artists have always deserved top positions in global painting competitions. I have

always tried to guide my students to achieve the status they deserve. Therefore, by participating in international competitions, I aim to showcase the name and art of Iran to the world."

Kazazi, who underwent two years of specialized painting training, won the fourth award of the contest in the 13 to 15 age group. Her artwork for the competition depicted herself amidst colorful and vibrant birds, showcasing her love for these creatures.

Hamyani, selected in the 7 to 12 age group, has been under specialized painting training since the age of six. Her artwork has previously been awarded in the 2023 FAO Painting Competition in the US. Also a winner in a children's painting competition in Romania, Hamyani depicted herself as an explorer, receiving her well-deserved acclaim.



● ILNA

Iranian media outlets condemn Israeli crimes against journalists



No word remains any longer to describe these crimes.

We stand with all freedom-seeking journalists in the world.



● THE BUSINESS STANDARD

In a unified voice, 700 Iranian media outlets, including news

agencies, newspapers, news websites, and journals, issued

a statement condemning the atrocities committed by Israel in killing people and journalists during the Gaza war.

The statement expressed deep sorrow over the deaths of 50 journalists in Gaza, citing intentional targeting of their homes at the hands of Israeli forces.

The media outlets highlighted that these attacks have, on numerous occasions, resulted in the deaths of family members of the journalists, along with the massacre of over 12,300 people in Gaza, including thousands of women and children.

"We, Iranian media outlets, condemn with a heart full of sorrow

the target killing of journalists in Gaza by the occupying Zionist regime," the statement reads.

The media outlets emphasized the necessity of expressing condolences to freedom-seeking people worldwide over the genocide in Gaza. They expressed hope for collective efforts to prevent attempts aimed at hiding these inhumane actions from the world and to facilitate the return of the land to its rightful owners. The statement concluded by honoring the memories of those killed in Gaza and characterizing the crimes as a confirmation of Israel's "tyrannical nature and its supporters' cruelties."

US accused of sending fake Roman mosaics back to Lebanon

Authorities in New York have been accused by leading academics in France and Britain of repatriating fake Roman artefacts to Lebanon.

Eight out of nine mosaic panels that the US authorities recently returned to the Middle Eastern country are not what they seem, according to claims made by Djamilia Fellague of the University of Grenoble.

She claims to have uncovered proof that forgers had copied designs from original mosaics in archaeological sites or museums in Sicily, Tunisia, Algeria and Turkey. "Eight of the nine 'returned' mosaic panels were fakes that [are] relatively easy to detect because the models used

are famous mosaics," says Fellague, The Guardian reported.

She singled out a panel depicting an Anguiped Giant, that she believes is based on a section of the famous mosaics in the Villa Romana del Casale in Sicily, a UNESCO world heritage site.

She also claims to have discovered that a mosaic of Neptune and Amphitrite took as its main model a mosaic found in Constantine, Algeria, which has been in the Louvre in Paris since the mid-19th century. Of the other mosaics returned to Lebanon, she claims that there is only one example for which the forgers were inspired by an actual mosaic from Lebanon – a well-known depiction of Bac-

chus in the National Museum in Beirut.

Christos Tsirogiannis, a guest lecturer at the University of Cambridge and a leading expert in looted antiquities and trafficking networks, believes the evidence is irrefutable. He said that were the revelation to be shown to be true it would be extremely embarrassing for the office of the Manhattan district attorney (DA), which had announced the repatriation of antiquities to Lebanon on 7 September.

Its press release at the time stated that nine mosaics included in the repatriation ceremony were among dozens of Middle Eastern and north African antiquities

that were allegedly brought into New York by a Lebanese antiquities trafficker.

In 2022, the DA's antiquities

trafficking unit (ATU) had obtained a warrant for their arrest and applied for a red notice from Interpol.



● THE GUARDIAN