

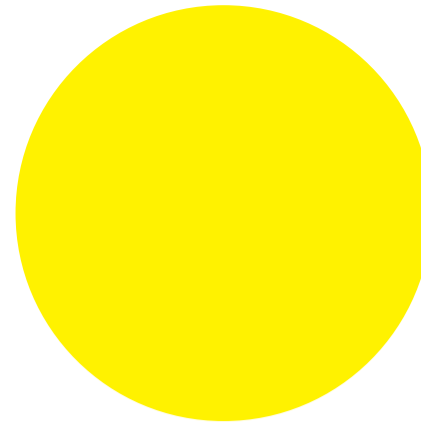


**EXCLUSIVE**

**Win-win situation in Tehran-Riyadh trade with prioritized private sector** **2** >



**Israel kills eight more Palestinians in West Bank** **6** >



# Iran Daily



[irandaily.ir](http://irandaily.ir) | [newspaper.irandaily.ir](http://newspaper.irandaily.ir) | [IranDailyWeb](http://IranDailyWeb)

Vol. 7445 • Monday, November 27, 2023 • Azar 6, 1402 • Jumada al-Awwal 13, 1445 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages



# No Way for Israel to Continue the War

**4-5** >

People walk into Al-Quds Old City as the ongoing Israel's war on Gaza wreaks havoc across the tourism sector. **REUTERS**



**Catch-22 of energy pricing in Iran**

**EXCLUSIVE**

**2** >

**Actor HajirAzad: Learning process in acting is infinite**

In the world of Iranian cinema and television, the veteran actor Kazem HajirAzad has left an unforgettable mark through tens of theatrical, cinematic, and television performances. From the theatrical play 'Rostam and Sohrab' to television series like 'The Passenger of Rey,' 'Mokhtarnameh,' and 'Mortal Wound,' he has been a creative actor, although some believe that his talent remains underestimated.

**EXCLUSIVE**

**8** >



**Juneqan Castle: A majestic testament to Iran's history**

**3** >



**Former French ambassadors called for an end to Gaza war**

**6** >



**Sizable portion of Iranians suffer from obesity**

**7** >



# Eight-month trade exceeds \$75b: IRICA

## Economy Desk

The head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration announced on Sunday that the country's foreign trade reached about \$75.5 billion during the first eight months of the current Iranian year (March 21-November 21). Iran imported 25 million tons of non-oil commodities worth about \$42.5 billion during the eight months to November 21, said Mohammad Rezvani-Far,

adding that the country exported 90 million tons of goods, valued at about \$33 billion in the period, IRNA reported.

"Considering the figures for the exports of electricity and techno-engineering services, Iran will have a \$10-billion trade surplus for the eight months," the official noted.

IRICA will soon release statistics on the exports of oil, electricity and techno-engineering services, so the trade balance of the country will be more

accurate, Rezvani-Far stated. "A developed customs system will be unveiled before the International Customs Day (January 26), in order to eliminate many faults of connecting to other systems as well as fulfilling customs responsibilities in the field of trade and data exchange with other systems." He explained that with the establishment of the system, the capability of electronic exchange of information with the customs offices of other countries will be provided.

## Catch-22 of energy pricing in Iran



By Mostafa Shirmohammadi  
Staff writer

The way energy carriers are priced could directly affect the livelihood of millions of Iranians, whose country has been subject to sanctions for years, leaving behind a struggling economy and underdeveloped infrastructure. Since November 2019, fuel prices have remained unchanged, following a sharp 200% hike in gasoline prices that sparked nationwide protests and left more than 200 people dead, according to what the then interior minister said.

But rumors have it that the government might increase fuel prices again as they are heavily subsidized. Currently, Iran distributes some 230 million liters of fuel each day, with gasoline priced at 30,000 rials (6 cents) per liter and diesel at 6,000 rials (1.2 cents) per liter. Hugely underpriced fuels have created a lucrative business for smugglers who systematically ship gasoline and diesel to mainly neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Turkey, Armenia, and Afghanistan where such commodities are sold even 15 times more expensive than in Iran.

The economic consequences of the illicit trade are far-reaching for Iran as the estimated daily loss of 20 million liters of gasoline and diesel costs the country an arm and a leg, amounting to \$5 billion annually.

Other carriers including electricity and gas also receive huge amounts of subsidy that have virtually rendered efficiency and saving measures ineffective. Every kilowatt hour of power comes at the expense of around 8,000 rials (1.6 cents) but it is delivered to household customers at 1,000 rials (0.2 cents). In other words it is eight times lower than the production cost. Fuel prices are simply unfair when compared to other goods. For instance, a one-liter bottle of mineral water which costs 120,000 rials (24 cents) – four times more than gasoline.

"When the prices are not appropriate at all, consumption automatically goes out of control," Moslem Mousavi, the director general of Iran Renewable Energy Association told IRNA.

A key factor contributing to the unfavorable economic conditions and a lingering budget deficit is energy subsidies which have become a huge drain on public earnings. According to the Oil Ministry, the government allocates around \$100 billion of its income to energy subsidies annually which is more than twice its oil revenues.

Such wallet friendly prices for energy carriers leave no motivation for consumers to take efficiency measures seriously. It's no surprise to see the energy consumption rate off the charts, being twice the global average and up to four times that of developed nations.

Under a sweeping government-proposed bill, known as

the Seventh Development Plan, a substantial reduction in energy consumption has to occur in the next five years, amounting to a daily use of around 1.3 million barrels of oil.

The target seems to be an uphill task for the government. A major roadblock in the way of implementing energy optimization plans is how to bring on board consumers who extravagantly burn highly subsidized energy carriers.

It is a bitter irony for a country that is ranked first globally in terms of having oil and gas reserves to face an electricity shortage in the winter. Energy experts sounded the alarm more than a decade ago that Iran would face shortfalls in gas, electricity, and gasoline by early 2020s.

"We have failed to properly implement energy efficiency measures," Mousavi says. "Around ten years ago, projects and ambitious initiatives were outlined; however, in practice, there hasn't been any notable success. This is primarily due to the lack of economic viability in investing in optimal energy consumption."

The country has no way but to "reform" its energy pricing to hopefully stop fuel smuggling, provide motivation for energy efficiency measures, and set free huge financial recourses being drained by subsidies. The reform plan will definitely have social and political ramifications, but at the end of the day it will benefit the whole nation.

## Win-win situation in Tehran-Riyadh trade with prioritized private sector



By Reza Abesh Ahmadi  
Staff writer

Iran and Saudi Arabia are two major regional powers in the Middle East, with significant economic, political and cultural influence. However, their relations have been strained for years over various geopolitical issues including oil export policy.

In March 2023, after discussions brokered by China, Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to re-establish diplomatic relations, ending a seven-year rift that had severely hampered trade and cooperation between the two countries. This historic move was welcomed by the international community, as well as by the private sectors of both countries, which saw new opportunities for expanding trade and investment.

The private sector plays a vital role in the economies of both Iran and Saudi Arabia, as it provides products and services to meet the needs of their large and diverse populations, as well as contributes to their economic diversification and growth.

The private sector in both countries has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disrupted supply chains, reduced demand, and increased costs. Therefore, the private sector needs more support and incentives from the governments to overcome

these difficulties and to enhance its competitiveness and innovation.

One of the ways that the governments can support the private sector is by facilitating trade and investment between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which have complementary economic structures and potentials. Iran has a diversified economy, with strengths in sectors such as agriculture, industry, mining, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, information and communication technology, and tourism. Saudi Arabia has a more oil-dependent economy, but it is also developing sectors such as renewable energy, health, education, and entertainment.

By increasing trade and investment between the two countries, the private sector can benefit from access to new markets, lower tariffs, cheaper inputs, technology transfer, joint ventures, and economies of scale. This can also create more jobs, income, and welfare for the people of both countries, as well as reduce their dependence on oil revenues and foreign imports.

The Iranian minister of economic affairs and finance in April said Tehran aims to raise annual trade with Riyadh to \$1 billion in the first step of resuming economic ties.

Ehsan Khandouzi added that the target was set by the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran and is based on the two countries' capacities.

Therefore, there is a huge potential for increasing trade between the two countries, especially in sectors such as food, construction materials, chemicals, plastics, metals, machinery, and electrical equipment.

To realize this potential, the governments of Iran and Saudi Arabia need to take several steps, such as:

Signing a free trade agreement that would reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers, and harmonize standards and regulations.

Establishing a joint trade commission that would oversee and promote trade and investment cooperation, and resolve any disputes or issues.

Creating a joint chamber of commerce that would facilitate business-to-business contacts, exchange of information, and matchmaking of potential partners.

Developing transport and logistics infrastructure that would connect the two countries by road, rail, sea, and air, and reduce the time and cost of trade. Providing financial and legal support to the private sector, such as access to credit, insurance, and guarantees.

By taking these steps, the governments of Iran and Saudi Arabia can create a win-win situation for their private sectors, and foster a positive and constructive relationship that would benefit not only their economies, but also their stability in the region.

## Monthly inflation rate drops by 0.1%: SCI

According to the latest figures released by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the country's monthly inflation rate has dropped to 2.2% for the Iranian month ending on November 21.

The report, published on Sunday, revealed that the month-on-month inflation rate in Iran decreased by 2.2% during the Iranian calendar month of Aban (October 23 to November 21, 2023), which shows a 0.1% decrease compared to the previous month, IRNA reported.

Furthermore, the annual (point-to-point) inflation rate also experienced a drop, decreasing by 0.6%, to reach 44.9%.

During the same period, the point-to-point inflation in Iran was estimated at 39.2%.

## Rasht-Caspian Railway to come on stream by yearend: Official

The construction operation of the Rasht-Caspian Railway is being completed, the chairman of Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce said, adding that the railway is expected to be operational by the end of the current Iranian year (March 19, 2024). Hadi Tizhoush-Taban said the Rasht-Astara Railway is another project that can connect the country to the Republic of Azerbaijan, Tasnim news agency reported.

The 164-km Rasht-Astara railway route in Iran's northern province of Gilan has great importance in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), since it is the only remaining rail part of this transport corridor.

## Iran to participate in AgroExpo Uzbekistan

Iranian new technology-based firms (NTBFs) will participate in the International Exhibition for Agricultural Machinery, Horticulture, Plant Production, and Animal Husbandry of Uzbekistan (AgroExpo Uzbekistan).

In Iran's pavilion, a total of 15 NTBFs will showcase their products and capabilities in the field of agriculture and related industries, IRNA reported.

The International event is scheduled to be held in Tashkent, November 29 to December 1, 2023.

The agriculture sector currently accounts for about eight percent of Iran's annual gross domestic product.



## Iranica Desk

Located 40 kilometers from Shahr-e Kord, Juneqan is a city in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province that boasts a rich ancient history and numerous historical sites and tourist attractions. Known for its abundant water resources, fertile agricultural land, and vast grazing areas, Juneqan has long served as a prominent stop along caravan routes.

One of the most renowned historical sites in the region is the Sardar As'ad Bakhtiari Palace, commonly known as Juneqan Castle. This magnificent palace, situated in the heart of Juneqan, was originally a summer residence for Haj Ali Qoli Khan Bakhtiari, also known as Sardar As'ad. He played a crucial role in the Constitutional Revolution and the Bakhtiari tribe's capture of Tehran, IRNA wrote.



fararu.com

## Juneqan Castle: A majestic testament to Iran's history



fararu.com



SAEED FOTOUNI/REISENIRAN.DE

Historians believe that the castle was the center for planning and organizing the revolution under Sardar As'ad's command. Some speculate that Sardar As'ad constructed the palace to facilitate commercial contracts between the Bakhtiari khans and English merchants, making it a hub for important decision-making and ensuring the contracts' successful executions.

The architecture of Juneqan Castle draws inspiration from modern French design, resembling grand European palaces of the 19th century. Its construction was overseen by Amin al-Sultan, the prime minister of Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar. During its prime, the palace wowed spectators

and impressed European Iranologists with its striking beauty. The original design featured expansive gardens, a large central pool, an entrance overlooking an ancient cobblestone road, a magnificent main hall, and intricately decorated walls showcasing Iranian masterpieces like mirror works and wall paintings. Additionally, it housed an extensive library.

Regrettably, only fragments of this once-magnificent two-story palace remain today. The destruction of significant sections can be attributed to various natural and social factors, including neglect in surrounding constructions and improper utilization of the site as a gendarmerie

headquarters, public library, and school. Despite these challenges, Juneqan Castle continues to captivate visitors with its rich historical heritage.

As'ad School is an integral part of Juneqan Castle, situated on the western side of the palace. It is a fascinating historical site that welcomes tourists who visit this monumental complex.

The upper floor of the palace, known as the *shahneshin*, features a courtyard adorned with stone columns in three directions: north, south, and east. The intricate brickwork in these columns is truly captivating. Just one meter below the surface of the palace courtyard lies the basement, accessible through

embedded stairs in the upper floor. Interestingly, each room in the basement was equipped with wall heaters adorned with simple plasterwork, originally utilized for storage by servants. Sardar As'ad Palace boasts beautiful and captivating decorations throughout its premises. Notably, the stone columns in the northern, southern, and eastern parts of the palace are placed side by side, forming an impressive sight. The exterior view of the lower floor is adorned with stone carvings meticulously crafted by Iranian artisans. These decorations comprise rectangular and diamond-shaped stones featuring geometric patterns. Additionally, plasterworks adds to

the aesthetic appeal of the palace, leaving visitors in awe.

The master builders and artists involved in the construction and decoration of Sardar As'ad Bakhtiari Palace have created magnificent and eye-catching ornaments. Flower and bush motifs on the main entrance doors exemplify their craftsmanship, which can be witnessed throughout the upper section of the palace. The use of wood carving and metal embossing techniques further enhances the beauty of these decorations.

Finally, an enchanting section of the palace displays a tall entrance arch with a crescent-shaped ceiling spanning two floors. On either side of this arch, special ob-

servations and guard rooms have been erected, adding another layer of grandeur to the palace's design.

Clay bricks form the main construction material for the palace. Surrounding the structure, you will find rectangular engraved stone frames, standing over 60 centimeters tall. These details showcase the meticulous attention to craftsmanship in the palace's design.

Juneqan Castle, also referred to as Sardar Asad Bakhtiari Palace, is recognized as a significant national monument and historical site. It warmly welcomes foreign tourists and individuals fascinated by Iranian history and cultural heritage.

## Annual shepherd celebration in East Azarbaijan Province

## Iranica Desk

In the picturesque village of Zinjanab in East Azarbaijan Province, a heartwarming tradition takes place every autumn—a celebration that pays tribute to the shepherds and their tireless efforts. This revered and nationally registered shepherd ceremony holds immense significance not only for the local community but also as an intangible heritage of the region.

According to Ali Falsafi, an official responsible for recording the province's intangible cultural heritages, the village of Zinjanab

comes alive with joy and gratitude on the twelfth day of autumn each year, when shepherd celebration takes place, marking the end of months of diligent herding.

From the beginning of summer until this day, shepherds lead their flocks to mountain pastures for grazing. However, during the celebratory event, they bring their flocks back down to the vicinity of the village, where the ceremony is held.

Amidst the festive ambiance, livestock farmers and flock owners assemble, forming two orderly



tourisonline.co

rows. With expectation and appreciation, they observe as each flock passes

through them one by one. Those present at the shepherd ceremony express

their admiration and recognition for well-raised, healthy flocks by shower-

ing them with gifts such as money, clothing, and food—a gesture symbolizing deep appreciation for the shepherds' hard work and dedication.

Conversely, any shepherd whose flock has not thrived faces criticism from the gathered community members. This serves as a reminder to the shepherds that there is room for improvement and motivates them to strive for excellence in the upcoming year. Thus, the celebration not only highlights the achievements of the shepherds but also acts as a catalyst for growth and better

practices in shepherding. Falsafi further explained that this tradition, steeped in history, embodies the collective spirit of the village. He himself has been fortunate to witness this remarkable ritual more than 20 times. Since its national registration as an intangible heritage in 2012, the shepherd ceremony has grown in magnificence. People from neighboring villages and even cities now flock to Zinjanab to witness and partake in this extraordinary event—a testament to its enduring significance and allure.

# No Way for Israel to Continue the War



To succinctly illustrate the impact of the current conflict on Israel's economy, one needs only to glance at the inflation rate in occupied Palestine, which has risen from 3.7% to 5% in this short period. It's crucial to note that one of the fundamental pillars of the Israeli regime is its economy. Since its establishment, economic incentives have been a compelling factor in attracting Jews worldwide. Therefore, when the economic aspect is affected alongside security concerns, it indeed strikes at one of the regime's core foundations, necessitating serious and immediate solutions.

During the initial phase of the current war (48 days until the four-day cease-fire), Israel aggressively targeted Gaza's population with high-cost bombings, mobilizing hundreds of flights day and night, and calling up over 300,000 reserve forces. The regime's Finance Ministry announced in October that the daily cost of the war is

approximately \$270 million. To put this into perspective, it's more than \$8 billion monthly, surpassing the annual budget of the Defense Ministry, which is around \$24 billion. This financial strain prompted the regime to initiate budget reforms in 2023, a matter causing internal disagreements, overshadowed by the war news.

In the past three days, Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper highlighted another figure, stating that Israel incurs a daily cost of \$246 million. Additionally, the Financial Times reported that Israel's budget deficit for the next year (2024) is expected to triple, reaching approximately 5 to 8% of its Gross Domestic Product. Before delving into the details of some of the

expenses incurred by Tel Aviv, it's worth mentioning that the damages from this war are divided into direct and indirect categories. These costs are so substantial that, apart from the global public pressure to halt the war, it may well become an economic factor pressuring the regime's leaders. This pressure is significant as the internal front in Israel is neither willing to endure high human casualties nor prolonged economic damages.

”

The direct and indirect costs of Israel's war against Gaza following Operation Al-Aqsa Storm indicate that the economic situation does not allow the leaders of Israel to continue the war without a time limit.





**Direct Costs of War**

The direct costs primarily include the substantial expenses of the war and the Defense Ministry. The budget for this ministry is approximately \$24 billion. Last week, the economic consultancy firm "Leader Capital Market," based in Tel Aviv, reported that Israeli regime's cost for military operations in the Gaza Strip is likely to reach \$48 billion. According to this report, Israel will likely bear two-thirds of this cost, with the remaining one-third covered by the United States. It's worth noting that Israel has been receiving \$3.3 billion annually from the US. Additionally, it receives \$500 million for enhancing its missile technology. The regime's army has around 170,000 active-duty personnel, having called up 360,000 reserve forces for the current war. This mobilization has imposed a significant financial burden on its Defense Ministry. The regime's internal estimate is \$1.3 billion per month for these expenses. The costs are so high that Israel has recently borrowed \$6 billion with high-interest rates. Consequently, Israel has decided to cancel the call-up for some of these 360,000 reserve

personnel. Another direct cost is related to evacuating settlements in the southern and northern borders. Approximately 250,000 people have been accommodated in hotels and other places. Each day that adds to the war days increases these costs. Another direct cost involves financial aid promised to families, businesses, and traders affected by the war. However, there is increasing dissatisfaction in this regard, as domestic reports suggest that the Netanyahu cabinet has not acted on its promises. The situation created in the businesses and the regime's market resembles the days of the COVID-19 pandemic, perhaps even worse.

**Indirect Costs of War**

The indirect costs encompass any damages arising from the war situation. For example, unemployment has increased, reaching 3.8% by the end of 2023 (in one month) and is expected to rise to 4.5% next year, according to the American credit rating organization Standard & Poor's. Currently, at least 47,000 employees have applied for unemployment insurance from the National Insurance Institute, with one-fifth of the regime's workers currently unemployed. Fourteen percent of all employees in Israel work in technology-related fields. The technology sector is a key element of Israel's economy, with global technology companies also contributing to it. For instance, Microsoft, Google, and Apple have research and development centers in Israel. The pressure has escalated to the point where Microsoft warned that if the war persists, the future of technology in Israel will be jeopardized.

Another sector indirectly affected is tourism, experiencing conditions significantly worse than the COVID-19 period since October 7th. Another indirect cost involves the 360,000 reserve forces called up. On one hand, the regime incurs a monthly cost of \$1.3 billion for this call-up, and on the other hand, since these individuals are currently unemployed due to the call-up, having left their other jobs, it imposes a multiplied cost. Consequently, the Israeli cabinet has decided to cancel part of this call-up. If a subtle reference is made to Hezbollah's activities on the northern borders, the relatively limited impact of Hezbollah's operations on the northern borders of Palestine becomes better understood; on the one hand, it leads to an increase in the call-up and additional expenses, and on the other hand, it keeps one-third of Israel's armed forces on the northern border unused against Gaza. The Israeli stock market, which suffered about \$20 billion in damages in the first two days following the events of October 7, is not experiencing good days. If this situation persists, it will be unbearable for the market. Not to mention the threats from the Defense Minister and Netanyahu himself, indicating that the intensity of the war will resume after the 4 to 8-day ceasefire. Although short and lightning wars are part of the military doctrine of this regime, a prolonged war of up to 50 days is considered economic poison for the regime. All that has been said does not mean that Israel is on the verge of economic collapse; no. No matter how much economic pressure the regime faces, a significant portion is compensated by the US from the taxes of the American people. According to reports, the US will provide about \$14 billion to Israel. However, as expenses increase, the budget deficit will grow, putting additional pressure on the economy and increasing domestic dissatisfaction. The worsening economic conditions, alongside the severe security blow of Hamas operation, will undoubtedly impact the migration trend. The more this trend is affected, the more the negative economic effects will intensify within Israel. Israeli leaders have declared the destruction of Hamas as their main goal in this war and, to some extent, returning the captives is also part of their main objectives to justify this war. However, the outcome of the 25-day ground war has shown that facing Israel is a tough and lengthy

path, and its result is by no means guaranteed. Therefore, the prolongation of the war, in the shadow of unfulfilled objectives, already indicates the challenges it will bring to the regime's economy.

**Migration and Impact on Tourism**

American news publication, Foreign Policy, citing political analysts, reports that the cost of the two previous wars - the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war and the 2014 Gaza war - has been about 0.5% of the gross domestic product and has mostly affected the tourism sector. However, this time, it is estimated that it could be up to 15% in the final quarter of this year. During this period, there is a long list of airlines that have suspended their flights to occupied territories. The cancellation of flights will inflict further damage on the Israeli economy, especially on the tourism industry, which the regime heavily relies on for its revenues. In the 30 days since the start of the Hamas operation, hundreds of thousands of Israelis have fled from settlements near the Gaza Strip, and all signs indicate that they may not return. According to the Israel's Tourism Ministry, hotel rooms are almost entirely occupied not by foreign tourists but by Israeli residents seeking refuge and intending to leave the occupied Palestinian territories. Many have already left Israel by sea; for example, a US ship discharged Israelis from the port of Haifa. More Israelis are planning to leave, and online campaigns emphasize that most Israelis intend to permanently leave settlements near Gaza and other areas. Since Netanyahu returned to power in early January, the migration of intellectuals among Israelis who were previously dissatisfied and angry with their new cabinet has become commonplace. Now, with this backlash against Netanyahu and his cabinet, the migration of eligible Israelis has increased more than ever. With the prolongation of the Gaza war, many Israelis, along with their families, who have either occupied Palestinian territories, traveled outside Israel, or declared their intention to do so. Their main concern is security as the largest war against the Gaza Strip in modern history poses a risk of spreading to borders. According to Alex Zabezinsky, a senior economist at Alex Zabezinsky, "the war against Hamas will cost Israel over 70 billion shekels or about 3.5% of the gross domestic product." He divides the damages into four categories; the direct costs of war, compensation for physical damage, economic aid, and the loss of revenue due to the economic crisis. This estimate is higher than the Bank of Israel and the Finance Ministry, which unofficially estimated that the consequences of the war would reduce the gross domestic product by 2 to 3 percent. Overall, the continuation of the Gaza war could have profound economic consequences for Tel Aviv.



## Cut oil production, Israel will cave to global pressure

International Desk

By Javad  
Mohammad Ali  
Staff writer

### OPINION

The only things that came out of the Riyadh summit between Arab and Islamic States were a statement and a delegation that was sent to the capitals of the permanent member states of the UNSC to beseech them to demand a cease-fire in Gaza. Individually, Arab states did not do any better. Jordan and Bahrain only recalled their ambassadors from the occupied territories, and that was it, which is still more than what any other of them did. Latin American countries have taken more practical steps for Gaza in quantity and quality, when no one ever expected them to say anything.

So far, the response of Arab countries to the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza has been so meager that one wonders that maybe, just maybe, this is the most that they can do, that the balance of power has shifted so much toward Israel and its allies around the world, including the United States, E3, and a few odd countries here and there, that the majority, in fact, cannot stand against the minority on the most visible violation of human rights and senseless, indiscriminate killings. It sounds a bit preposterous because it is. Arab countries have powerful allies, the support of global public opinion, and a weapon that is metaphorically gathering dust: Oil.

Arab countries know that they have this weapon because they once used it. They probably fear that picking it up from the shelf will backfire because this is not 1973. The oil-producing Arab countries imposed an oil embargo in October of that year on the United States, the Netherlands, Portugal, Rhodesia, and South Africa in retaliation for their support of Israel during the Yom Kippur War. Until then, OPEC, which was formed in 1960 by a cartel of Muslim countries, was trying not to step on anyone's toe and just cash in on the increase in oil prices, but Israel was advancing further and further into Egypt and Syria — which, incidentally, was a less grave war crime than what has been going on in Gaza in the past seven weeks. However, Nixon's threat of seizing the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Abu Dhabi brought them back to the negotiating table very quickly in 1974, and ended the embargo.

Now, the member states of OPEC+, which was formed when Russia and 10 other oil-producing countries joined OPEC, are economically independent, tied to major global powers like China and Russia, and have already voiced their condemnation of the Israeli massacre of Gazans. Their main buyer is not the US, either; it is now China. It's not like they have not at times acted against Western interests. Riyadh and Moscow famously drew the ire of the West in early September when they announced a major cut in oil production, which pushed the price of a barrel to \$90.

Cutting oil production is still enough to cause a big ruckus in the global economy. Of course, the sole intention would be to put pressure on Netanyahu to back off, not to cause mayhem for the sake of mayhem. As such, no one is suggesting that the cut would be permanent. No hostility or countermeasures towards OPEC members and Arab states need to occur if their demands and conditions for raising crude production back to previous figures are clearly stated. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi already called on Arab countries at the Riyadh summit to impose an oil embargo on Israel, but if the Arab countries still care about stopping the genocide of their fellow Arab Palestinians, cutting oil production is even easier. It can be implemented instantly, it requires no statement or pre-planning, and not a drop of blood from their citizens would be shed. Israel is already using water, food, fuel, and electricity in the same vein to force Hamas to surrender and Gazans to migrate.

# Israel kills eight more Palestinians in West Bank

International Desk

Israel cannot stop its killing machine in the Palestinian territories, whether in the West Bank or in the Gaza Strip. According to Palestinian health officials on Sunday, Israeli forces claimed the lives of at least eight Palestinians in the West Bank in a 24-hour period.

The killings came as the regime agreed a four-day truce with the Hamas resistance group in the Gaza Strip.

Violence in the West Bank has surged in the weeks since Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7. Israeli forces have killed dozens of Palestinians and arrested hundreds in the West Bank. Israeli settlers have also stepped up attacks. The Palestinian Health Ministry said that five Palestinians were killed in Jenin, while three others were killed in separate areas of the West Bank since Saturday morning. One of those killed, in Al-Bireh in the central West Bank, was a teenager, the ministry said.

The intensified violence in the territory follows more than a year of escalating raids and arrests in the West Bank and deadly Palestinian attacks on Israelis. Before



the Hamas assault, 2023 was already the deadliest year for Palestinians in the West Bank in over two decades.

Israel and Hamas have briefly ceased fire to allow for more aid to enter Gaza and permit the release of captives in exchange for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

The Israeli Army claimed that fourteen Israeli captives and three foreign nationals were handed over to the Red Cross in the Gaza Strip on Sunday. Earlier in the day, Egypt said it received the list of 13 Israeli captives who were due to be freed on Sunday in exchange for the release of 39 Palestinian prisoners on the

third day of the truce, following two earlier exchanges.

Egypt also said it received positive feedback from both sides about the idea of extending the truce for a day or two and releasing more hostages and prisoners. US President Joe Biden told reporters Friday that "the chances are real" for extending the truce.

Meanwhile, Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi called for "a permanent cease-fire and a complete end to this aggression."

But Israeli Armed Forces chief, Herzi Halevi, said Saturday that "immediately at the end of the cease-fire" the

war would continue.

### Aid trucks enter Gaza

The pause in fighting has allowed more aid to reach Palestinians struggling to survive with shortages of water and other essentials. Israel had placed Gaza under a near-total siege.

A total of 61 trucks delivered food, water and medical supplies to northern Gaza on Saturday, the United Nations office for humanitarian affairs said.

Another 187 trucks of vital supplies bound for aid organizations also crossed into the Gaza Strip, it said.

The UN estimates that 1.7

million of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been displaced by the fighting.

### New tanker seized

Anti-Israel sentiment has been on the rise in the region, which has led to measures against the regime. On Sunday, a tanker linked to an Israel-affiliated company was seized off the coast of Yemen by unidentified armed individuals, a US defense official confirmed, following a series of incidents on the same shipping route. Declaring itself as part of the "axis of resistance," Yemen has launched a series of drone and missile strikes targeting Israel since October. Sunday's incident came a week after Yemen seized an Israel-linked cargo ship in the southern Red Sea. Protests against Israel's crimes in Gaza still continue across the world. On Saturday, thousands of protesters carried placards, waved Palestinian flags and chanted slogans before Canada's Parliament in Ottawa, demanding a permanent cease-fire. "A pause is not enough," said Yara Shoufani, a protest organizer, adding that "thousands of Palestinians have been killed and Gaza's infrastructure has been destroyed."

## Former French ambassadors called for an end to Gaza war

France urged to reevaluate Mideast diplomacy for lasting peace

International Desk

Eighteen former French ambassadors, in an op-ed in the popular *Le Monde* newspaper, have called for the acceleration of the process leading to the end of the Israel-Hamas war.

In the op-ed published in *Le Monde* on Saturday, the ex-diplomats stressed that "everything must be done" to extend the four-day truce between Israel and Hamas in order to forge a lasting cease-fire.

The ambassadors said Israel had embarked on a strategy of total war in Gaza that is "as brutal as it is futile, and increasingly contested."

The former diplomats wrote "eradicating Hamas" is more of a slogan than a realistic objective.

"In 2006, Israel had already proclaimed its desire to 'eradicate Hezbollah,' with the known results. Such a strategy is illusory."

Hamas, which has already been targeted by five deadly military campaigns, will inevitably be reborn, the envoys said, noting that the Israeli army will not be able to defeat a movement supported by a large part of the Palestinian population, in Gaza as well as in the occupied West Bank, "in the face of a disqualified Palestinian Authority."

The ex-diplomats said a two-state solution is still worth attempting despite being "increasingly difficult to build" due to the annexation of greater Jerusalem (Al-Quds) and growing settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The solution of a single binational state, mentioned even before October 7, is regaining relevance. But the dilemma remains the same. Either Israel accepts the principle of equality of rights, with the risk of losing the majority for the Jewish population, currently equal to the Arab population on the territory of historic Palestine; or Israel refuses such a principle,



loses an essential part of its soul, and exposes itself to an accusation of apartheid, the op-ed added.

"The summary of six weeks of fighting in the Gaza Strip is overwhelming: More than 13,000 deaths, mainly civilians, including 5,300 children; half of the enclave's real estate destroyed. Israel, under the term 'total war,' is developing a punitive strategy that is as brutal as it is futile, and increasingly contested," they wrote.

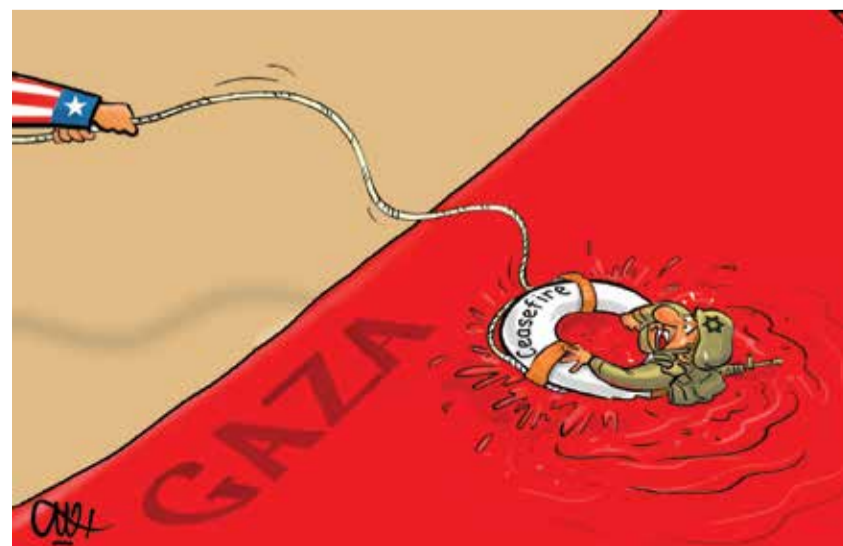
The former diplomats also strongly warned against any temptation to transfer populations to neighboring countries, writing the move "can only be seen as unacceptable ethnic cleansing and, in any case, cannot solve the problem of Israel's security". The op-ed suggested a renewal of the political classes that will occur on both sides, as those currently in place have lost much of their legitimacy.

"On the Palestinian side, elections should be organized as soon as possible and involve all the political forces present."

"A strong commitment from the international community, particularly the permanent members of the UN Security Council and the Arab countries, is essential," they wrote.

"France, which has lost much of its credibility in the Middle East and has seen its image deteriorate significantly in the Arab-Muslim world, must take part in this. However, it would require it to change its diplomacy towards a balanced and coherent policy that is independent from external pressures. Despite some rebalancing, this is not how it is perceived by many countries and public opinion. Such a policy requires courage and clarity, beyond the emotional reactions that this 'total war' provokes," they concluded.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



# Sizable portion of Iranians suffer from obesity



By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

The head of the Center for Endocrine Glands and Metabolism at Shahid Beheshti University's School of Medical Sciences, referring to the growing trend of overweight and obesity in the country, stated that 60 to 70 percent of individuals over the age of 20 in the country are overweight or obese, and only 30 to 40 percent of adults have a normal and healthy weight.

Fereidoun Azizi, in an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, added that the trend of increasing overweight and obesity in Tehran is higher than in other parts of the country, with 70 percent of the population in Tehran being affected by overweight and obesity. (However, it is important for readers to approach these statistics with caution, as the true figures can only be accurately determined through comprehensive scientific research on a large scale.)

Azizi, comparing the obesity situation in Iran with various regions, explained that in Western coun-

tries, especially the United States and Canada, the obesity rate is higher, with a total of 75 percent of the population in these countries experiencing overweight and obesity, and among them, obese individuals have a larger share.

Referring to a research program on the status of overweight and obesity in the country over the past 30 years, he stated that looking at the results of these studies over the three decades, we observe that the population with overweight has gradually decreased during these years, while the population with obesity in the country has increased.

He continued by mentioning that obesity is divided into two levels, overweight and obesity, determined based on BMI or Body Mass Index. BMI is a measurement tool that indicates how proportionate your height and weight are and whether an individual is underweight or overweight. BMI is calculated by dividing weight (in kilograms) by height (in meters) squared. Knowing factors such as age, weight, height, and gender is important

to obtain accurate results.

Azizi said that based on this, individuals with a BMI between 18.5 to 25 have a normal weight, individuals with a BMI between 25 to 30 are overweight, and individuals with a BMI above 30 are considered obese, usually weighing over 100 kilograms.

Referring to the fact that a very low or very high BMI can be problematic for an individual's health, he said that if a person's BMI is below 18.5, the individual may face health problems in terms of body immunity against diseases. The endocrinologist said that over the past three decades, the number of individuals with a BMI between 25 to 30, which used to constitute around 50 to 60 percent of the country's population, has gradually decreased, and the number of obese individuals in the country, which was previously five percent, has increased.

Azizi listed obesity as the most common endocrine and metabolic disorder in the country and explained that after obesity, which is a disease in itself, diseases such as diabetes, osteoporosis, hypothyroidism, and hyperthyroidism

are the next most common endocrine and metabolic disorders in the country.

He noted that in Iran, there are other endocrine gland disorders that are very important and dangerous, although they are not considered common diseases. These include diseases of the supra-renal and pituitary glands, which are very important diseases but do not have much prevalence.

Referring to the fact that obese individuals are divided into two groups, high-risk and low-risk, he explained that one group of obese individuals are those who do not have metabolic diseases such as high blood pressure, high blood fat, high blood sugar, etc., do not smoke, and do not have abdominal obesity. These individuals have a better future.

Azizi continued by stating that in another group, those with metabolic diseases and abdominal obesity have a higher risk of cardiovascular diseases and premature death.

Azizi, pointing out the connection between obesity and fat accumulation in the abdominal area with cardiovascular diseases, said that in women, fat accumulation in the thigh, buttocks, and hands is more, while abdominal obesity is relatively more common in men, and this can be one of the reasons for higher mortality in men.

He said that to measure the level of abdominal obesity, you can place a tape around your waist, starting from the belly button, and 90 centimeters is the starting point for abdominal obesity.

He stated that if a child is obese at the ages of four and five, the likelihood of becoming obese in adolescence, puberty, and adulthood is five times higher than those who have a normal weight at these ages. Also, children who sleep less than 10 to 11 hours in their first year of life are more likely to become obese, showing the importance of attention in the early years.



## Iranian award-winning writer calls for promotion of native language literature

### Social Desk

Samad Rahmani Khiavi, recipient of the prestigious Mehregan-e Adab Award, emphasizes the need for the establishment of regional centers that support and promote native language literature, including Turkic, Kurdish, and Arabic - native languages spoken in Iran. In an interview published on IBNA, Khiavi sheds light on his award-winning book, 'Not Too Late to Love', and shares his profound thoughts on the importance of education and the preservation of cultural heritage.

### Tribute to teachers

'Not Too Late to Love' explores the realms of knowledge, education, and personal growth. Khiavi explains that the book was primarily inspired by his deep gratitude towards the teachers who shaped his academic journey. The novel intricately weaves together the experiences of both Khiavi and his professors, focusing on the intricate relationships between educators and students.

While 'Not Too Late to Love' is written in a novel format and accessible to general readers, Khiavi primarily intended it for



students and their parents. The book offers valuable insights into understanding the dynamics of teacher-student relationships and provides guidance to parents on how to effectively communicate with educators. By reading this book, parents can gain a better understanding of the importance of supporting teachers and addressing any concerns they may have. Khiavi further reveals that his motivation for writing 'Not Too Late to Love' stemmed from his desire to immortalize the memories of his late mother, father, and brother. Furthermore, he

sought to express his deep appreciation for his teachers and professors, acknowledging their significant impact on his life and career.

Despite the challenges faced by the publishing industry, 'Not Too Late to Love' has received three editions and garnered positive feedback from readers. Many expressed their gratitude and praised the book for its relevance and well-developed characters. Khiavi's colleagues and surviving teachers also expressed their satisfaction with the publication. However, some critics pointed out the lack of adherence to modern storytelling techniques.

Khiavi goes on to advocate for

the recognition and promotion of native language literature. He highlights the importance of translating and localizing works written in different languages, including Turkic, Kurdish, and Arabic. He suggests the establishment of regional centers dedicated to native language literature, which would provide a platform for authors and facilitate the dissemination of their works.

When asked about future writing endeavors, Khiavi confirms his commitment to writing in Turkic, his native language. He believes that expressing oneself in the mother tongue allows for a stronger connection with readers and enables a more authentic



portrayal of emotions and experiences. While acknowledging the talent of Turkic speakers in writing Persian novels, he emphasizes the importance of language mastery in creating vivid imagery and capturing nuances. Samad Rahmani Khiavi's award-winning book, 'Not Too Late to Love', not only pays homage to teachers but also sheds light on the significance of native language literature. Through his writing, he inspires readers to appreciate the power of education and encourages the preservation of cultural heritage.

## Portugal's remarkable renewables milestone

Portugal recently accomplished an impressive feat in renewable energy production, surpassing its own electricity demands for an extended period. From October 31 to November 6, the country experienced an unprecedented 149-hour stretch during which renewable energy generation exceeded its consumption, setting a new record. Over this six-day period, Portugal generated 1102 GWh of electricity, while consuming only 840 GWh. This surplus of 262 GWh surpassed the energy requirements of households and industries.

In addition to this accomplishment, Portugal also exported excess electricity to Spain. Furthermore, two more records were established during this timeframe. For 131 hours, renewable energy production exceeded the entire National Electric System's needs, including pumping requirements at hydroelectric reservoirs. Notably, this achievement was accomplished without relying on traditional thermal power generation sources such as Natural Gas Combined Cycle Plants. Moreover, between November 1 and November 5, there were 95 consecutive hours when renewable energy production outstripped consumption without the need for Natural Gas Combined Cycle Plants, enabling Portugal to export electricity to Spain.

These remarkable records serve as evidence that Portugal has been making significant strides in incorporating native renewable sources, while prioritizing security of supply and service quality, as stated by grid operator REN.

Looking ahead, Portugal has set ambitious renewable energy goals. The country aims to generate 85 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030. Additionally, Portugal seeks to decommission all of its natural gas-fired power stations by 2040 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2045, five years earlier than initially planned.

In October, renewable energy accounted for 67 percent of Portugal's power needs, largely due to favorable conditions for hydropower and wind power. Wind power, in particular, reached a historic high last month, breaking records for daily energy production.

Throughout the year, renewables have satisfied 56 percent of the country's energy requirements, with wind contributing 24 percent, hydropower 18 percent, solar power 8 percent, and biomass 6 percent. Natural gas accounted for 21 percent of Portugal's energy production, while the remaining 23 percent was imported from other countries.

Portugal's recent achievements in renewable energy signify its commitment to a sustainable future and showcase its progress toward a cleaner and greener energy landscape.

## Iranian Bolourchi adds another award to his collection



### Arts & Culture Desk

IRNA – Pejman Bolourchi, a world-famous composer and dulcimer player, won the first prize of the World's Best Musicians Competition for his piece 'Contemplation'.

Bolourchi's musical piece, which was the only piece representing Iran at the American festival, was composed in 2021.

This is the second time in the current year that the composer was awarded at this festival. The first time he won a gold medal for his 'Nature Dance'.

The recognition adds to his already impressive list of accolades, which includes winning the Akademia Music Awards in the United States.

'Nature Dance' has garnered widespread acclaim since its release, receiving recognition at the Global Music Awards in January 2022.

Also the esteemed director of the Nahaleh Rudaki Cultural and Art Institute, Bolourchi holds a high position in the realm of Iranian music. His extensive body of work includes captivating solos, ensembles, and compositions that have left an unforgettable mark on the Iranian music scene.

## Mirkarimi's 'The Night Guardian' to hit silver screen in Georgia



ISNA – 'The Night Guardian' by Reza Mirkarimi has been invited as Iran's representative to the 24th Tbilisi International Film Festival in Georgia.

The festival began on November 26 and will run through December 3.

Mirkarimi's film, which debuted at the Fajr Film Festival last year, received nine award nominations and ultimately won the best director category.

Co-written by Mirkarimi and Mohammad Davoud, 'The Night Guardian' follows the story of an innocent village boy whose carefree life is disrupted by his trust in a construction engineer.

After leaving his village due to drought, Rasoul is relieved to find employment as a night guardian at a construction site. However, he soon discovers that something sinister is happening at the seemingly deserted location. As he becomes ensnared in the peculiar circumstances surrounding him, Rasoul finds himself trapped and in danger.

- License Holder:
- Managing Director
- Editor-in-chief
- Int'l & National Desk
- Economy Desk
- Sports Desk
- Iranica Desk
- Arts & Culture Desk
- Social Desk
- Language Editor

Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)  
Ali Kakadezfuli  
Mostafa Shirmohammadi  
Javad Mohammad Ali, Zohreh Qanadi,  
Ebrahim Beheshti, Amir Mollae Mozaffari  
Reza Abesh Ahmadi, Sadeq Dehqan  
Amirhadi Arsalanpour  
Leila Imeni  
Hamideh Hosseini  
Ali Amiri  
Ali Mehran

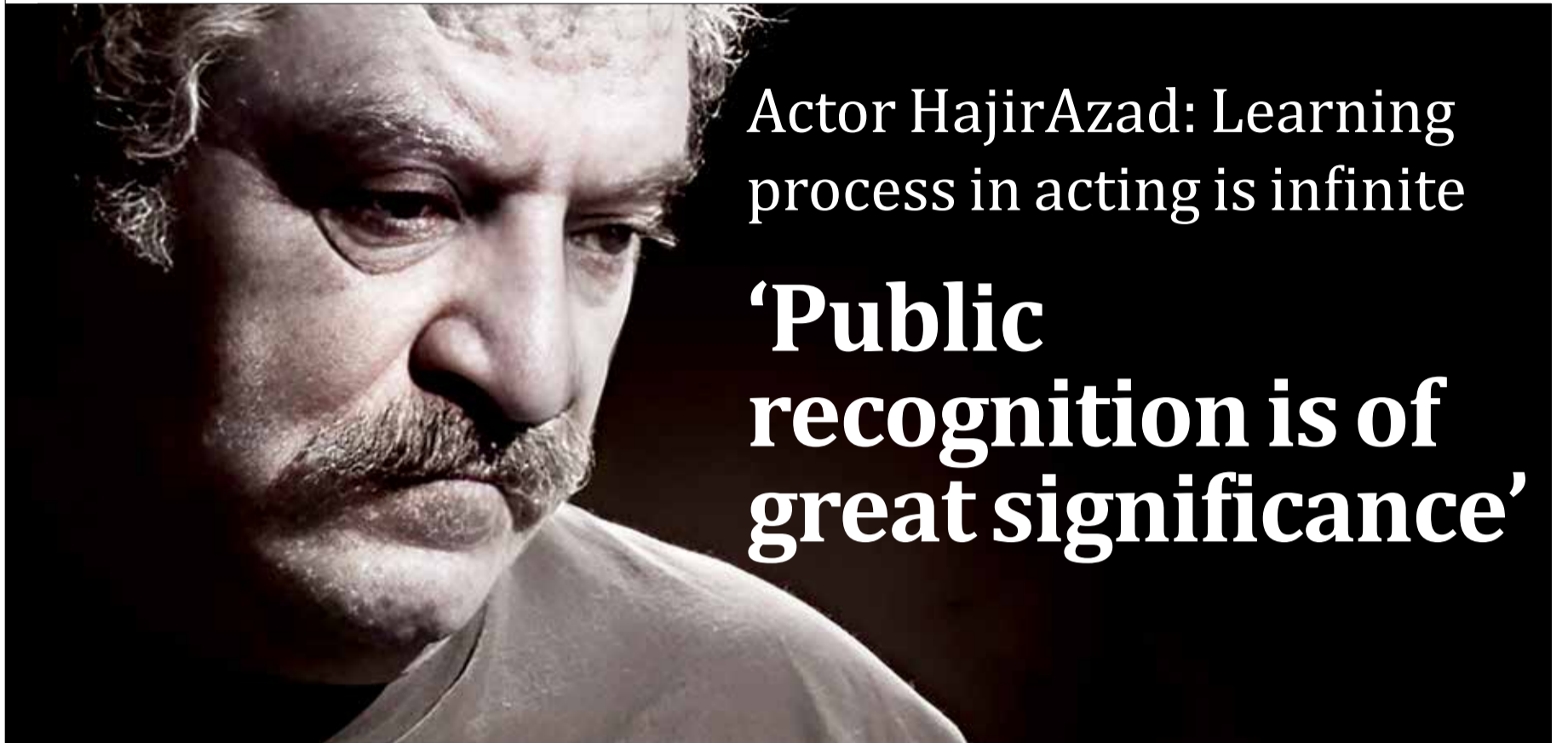
Address: 208, Khorramshahr Ave., Tehran, Iran

- Editorial Dept. Tel: +98 21 84711171
- ICPI Publisher: +98 21 88548892-5
- Advertising Dept. Tel: +98 21 88500601
- & Email: irandaily@iranagahiha.com
- Website: www.irandaily.ir
- Email: newspaper.irandaily.ir
- Printing House: irandaily@icpi.ir
- Iran Cultural & Press Institute



irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir | IranDailyWeb

Vol. 7445 ● Monday, Nov. 27, 2023 ● Price 40,000 Rials ● 8 Pages



# Actor HajirAzad: Learning process in acting is infinite 'Public recognition is of great significance'



Mahdiah Qazvinian  
Staff writer

In the world of Iranian cinema and television, the veteran actor Kazem HajirAzad has left an unforgettable mark through tens of theatrical, cinematic, and television performances. From the theatrical play 'Rostam and Sohrab' to television series like 'The Passenger of Rey,' 'Mokhtarnameh,' and 'Mortal Wound,' he has been a creative actor, although some believe that his talent remains underestimated.

Born on March 21, 1950, in Tehran, HajirAzad began his acting in the theater. At the age of 21, he had his first and last pre-revolutionary TV experience with the three-part 'Rostam and Sohrab' in 1971. His formal training in acting began in 1970, under the guidance of Mostafa Oskoui, focusing on Stanislavski's method. After the Islamic Revolution, he returned to acting with the TV series 'Fresh Air'.

Reflecting on his extensive career, in an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, HajirAzad expressed his belief that the learning process in acting is infinite, and there are lots of things he

needs to learn. He emphasized the challenges of historical roles, such as his character in 'Mokhtarnameh,' requiring a deep understanding of dialogues, lifestyle, and costumes of different eras.

He values pushing his own limits as an actor, seeing it as a beautiful challenge that contributes to an artist's growth.

Despite starting with theater, he prefers cinema and television due to his love for visual storytelling. He believes that being recognized by the audience is of great significance, and any role appreciated by people is valuable for him.

Discussing his recent work, he mentioned his involvement in the series 'Rahil,' currently on TV screens. Among his ongoing projects are 'Breach,' directed by Ali Ghaffari, and another directed by Ida Panahandeh.

De -

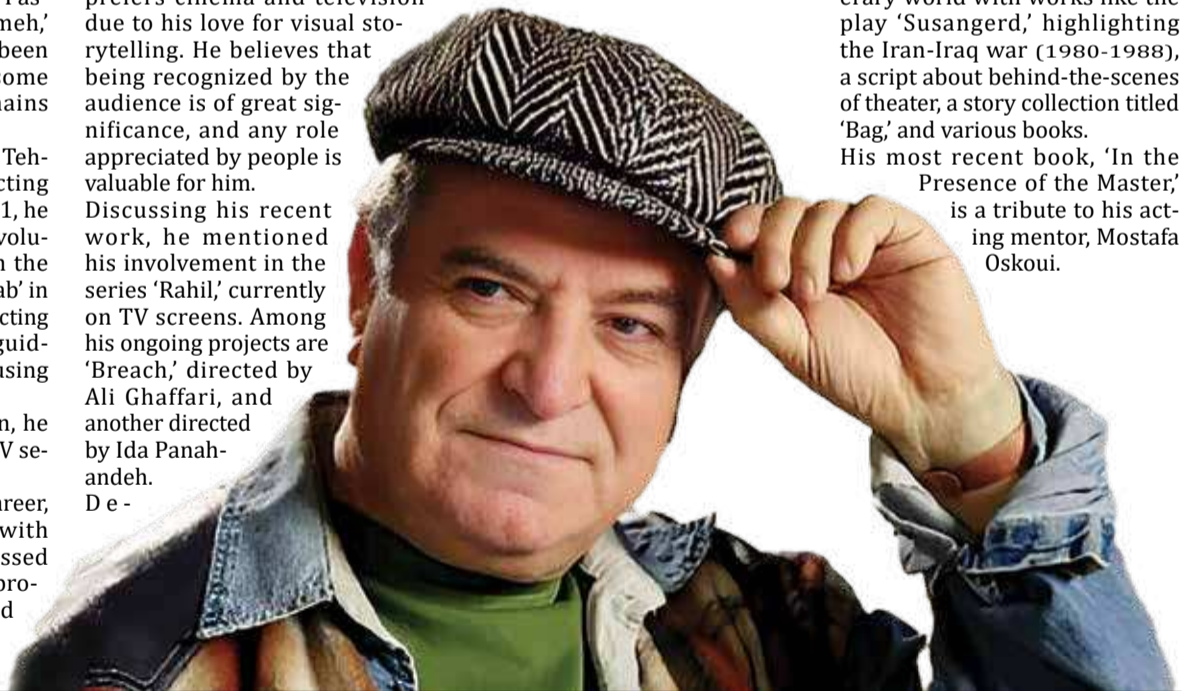
spite a career filled with diverse roles, HajirAzad has rarely played lead roles. Yet, since the 1980s, his face has become known to the audience, particularly after his role in 'Mortal Wound' and 'Mokhtarnameh.'

He stressed that the joy of acting keeps him committed, and retirement is not in his plans as long as he can memorize scripts and perform.

"From the very beginning of my acting career, I have been given serious and challenging roles, but I have a great love for comedy. I had the pleasure of performing in a comedy play, 'God of Carnage,' alongside Elham Pavehnejad and Behnam Tashakkor, in which the audiences burst into laughter," he said.

Away from acting, HajirAzad is a writer, contributing to the literary world with works like the play 'Susangerd,' highlighting the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), a script about behind-the-scenes of theater, a story collection titled 'Bag,' and various books.

His most recent book, 'In the Presence of the Master,' is a tribute to his acting mentor, Mostafa Oskoui.



## Berlinale's WCF to finance Iranian director's work

The Berlinale's World Cinema Fund (WCF) is to provide a total of €360,000 in funding for 14 international projects, including one Iranian project.

The WCF will give \$30,000 for the production of Iranian film 'Boomerang,' directed by Shahab Fotouhi, Screen Daily reported.

In its latest funding round, the WCF has recommended production funding for 11 projects and distribution grants for three films. The 14 independent projects hail from Argentina, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Iran, Mozambique, Nigeria, the Republic of Belarus, Rwanda, Senegal and Thailand. The production funding recipients include 'Demba' by Senegalese writer-cum-director Mama-

dou Dia, whose feature debut 'Nafi's Father' won the best first feature prize Locarno in 2019, as well as Thai director Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke's 'A Useful Ghost,' which earlier this year received support from the Hubert Bals Fund. Boonbunchachoke participated in Berlinale Talents in 2021.

Also supported is Chilean director Diego Céspedes' feature debut 'The Mysterious Gaze Of The Flamingo' which was presented at the Venice Film Festival's Gap-Financing Market in 2022 and at the 2021 Sundance Producers Summit.

The WCF jury made its selection from 194 submitted projects from a total of 62 countries. The members of its jury are the

documentary film producer and creative advisor Marta Andreu (Spain), the director, screenwriter and producer Ayşe Polat (Germany), film scholar and curator Viola Shafik (Germany / Egypt) and Vincenzo Bugno (Italy / Germany), the head of the WCF. Additionally, the jurors for WCF Africa are the producer, festival director of the Pan-African film festival FESPACO and the Berlin festival Afrikamera, Alex Moussa Sawadogo (Burkina Faso) and the filmmaker and curator Dorothee Wenner (Germany).

Last year, in the 35th jury session of the Berlinale World Cinema Fund (WCF), the juries made 11 funding recommendations for projects from Afghanistan, Argentina, Burkina Faso, Colombia,

Georgia, Kenya, Lebanon, Mongolia, Paraguay, Peru and Vietnam. The funding amounts to a total of €493,000. The WCF is pleased to be able to support independent cinema even more strongly in times of crisis and to promote the visibility of the cultural complexity of our world.

WCF was formed in 2004. It has around €1m a year, with backing from the German Federal Cultural Foundation and the German ministry of foreign affairs, that stretches to support the production and distribution of films from areas of the world with limited filmmaking infrastructure. Since 2014 WCF Europe has helped producers working in the European Union to co-produce with WCF-supported territories.