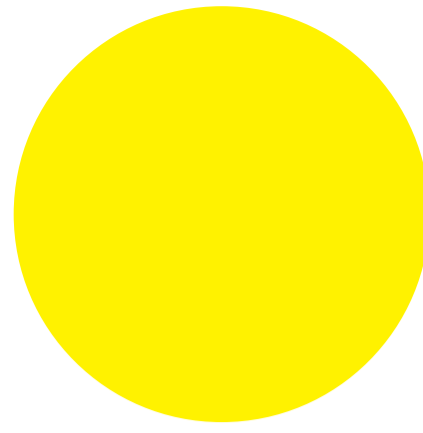


Raisi presents draft budget to Parliament
Bill eyes 8% economic growth for next year

2 >



Iran Daily



irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir | IranDailyWeb

Vol. 7453 • Wednesday, December 6, 2023 • Azar 15, 1402 • Jumada al-Awwal 22, 1445 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

On the blank check God did not give

Chosen to Do What?

Palestinians **dehumanized**, Israelis sold

EXCLUSIVE 4 >



This picture taken from a position along the border with the Gaza Strip shows ultra-Orthodox Jewish youths watching Israeli bombardment of the Palestinian enclave.

AFP



Iran stresses need to preserve Caspian Sea for future generations 7 >

Iranian Jewish MP: Israel doesn't represent all Jews

EXCLUSIVE 4 >



Israel's resumption of war 'huge mistake': Iran MP
EXCLUSIVE 5 >



Iranians eyeing Olympic berths in World Taekwondo GS 6 >

Iranian firms seek new markets at Eurasia Expo
EXCLUSIVE 2 >



NEWS IN BRIEF

Conference on smart grid starts in Tehran



IRNA - The 13th edition of the International Smart Grid Conference with a focus on "Cyber Security" was inaugurated at the Niroo Research Institute (NRI) in Tehran on Tuesday.

The conference will be held for two days with the aim of examining the world's most modern updates and achievements in the field of power networks.

Making efforts to smart power networks is one of the main topics of the conference.

Iran, Uzbekistan agree to reduce transit charges

IRNA - Deputy Roads and Rural Development Minister Shahriar Afandizadeh announced that Iran's collaboration with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan will have a significant impact on transit through the North-South and East-West corridors.

Referring to his meeting with Mamanbiy Omarov, the first deputy transport minister of Uzbekistan, Afandizadeh said that the Uzbek side expressed interest of the Uzbek transport minister to visit Iran's railway, road and port infrastructures soon.

In the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on road cooperation and reducing charges for trucks inside the territory of the two countries.

Dhaka keen on expanding trade ties with Tehran: Envoy

TASNIM - Bangladesh's Ambassador to Iran Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury said that his country is ready to expand trade and economic relations with Iran.

The envoy noted that the two countries have long-standing historical and cultural commonalities that can help enhance the level of bilateral relations in all fields.

He also referred to the unilateral US sanctions imposed on Iran, which have created many problems for business- and tradesmen, saying that Iran's private sector has successfully managed to bypass sanctions.

Raisi presents draft budget to Parliament

Bill eyes 8% economic growth for next year

Economy Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi submitted the national budget bill for the next Iranian year (to start March 20, 2024) to Parliament on Tuesday.

The proposed budget for next year amounts to about 54.18 quadrillion rials (about \$108.36 billion at the free market rate of 500,000 rials per dollar), with an 18 percent rise from the current year's budget, IRNA reported.

The president said that in the budget bill of next Iranian year, based on the emphasis of the Leader and macro-policies, an eight-percent economic growth has been targeted.

The bill has put the government's budget at 24.29 quadrillion rials (about \$48.5 billion), as public resources are estimated at 14.95 quadrillion rials (about \$29.9 billion).

The crude oil income is predicted to be 5.54 quadrillion rials (about \$11.08 billion), and oil sales are estimated at 1.35 million barrels per day at an average price of €65 (about \$71) per barrel.

Like the current year's budget, the next year's proposed budget requires the government to pay 40 percent of its oil, gas, and gas condensate revenues to the National Development Fund (NDF).

Tax revenues are predicted to be 11.22 quadrillion rials (about \$22.44 billion), which is 49.8 percent more than the figure for the current year's budget.

The data provided in next year's budget bill indicate that the government is taking major steps to distance the economy from oil, as a big portion of the income is set to be gained from sources other than oil and gas.

Oil incomes in the next year's budget bill are estimated to be 6.2 percent less than the ceiling allowed in the budget law, accounting for only 22.8 percent of the total revenues.

On the other hand, the share of tax revenues is twice the revenues from oil and gas sales, which means changing the budget approach from oil revenues to sustainable revenues.



President Ebrahim Raisi (R) hands over the draft budget bill for next Iranian year to Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf on December 5, 2023. president.ir

Iranian firms seek new markets at Eurasia Expo



By Mahdieh Qazvinian
Staff writer

The second edition of the Eurasia Expo which is underway in Tehran, December 4-7, is an opportunity for Iranian firms to showcase their potentials including techno-engineering services and products for being exported to a 180-million market.

Specialized seminars and conferences in the fields of transport, banking and monetary issues, trade, scientific, tourism and new technology-based sectors are scheduled to be held on the sidelines of the exhibition. The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which is comprised of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia is one of the most important groupings in Iran's region, which has

common cultural, political and geopolitical points with Iran and is of special importance for the country.

The first edition of Eurasia Expo was held in Tehran in July 2021, with the participation of high-ranking officials of EAEU's member states.

Talking to Iran Daily, Mohsen Mohaqeqian, a consultant to the CEO of the Isfahan Kafriz Company, said his company exports tram wheels to Russia, which are produced using a modern technology.

"Russia is one of the main producers of tram wheels and axles in the world, but our company has succeeded in providing a special attraction for Russian clients by manufacturing high-quality and relatively cheap products," he said.

Iran can take more benefits from extending trade ties with EAEU member states due to its capabilities in all fields, Mohaqeqian concluded.

The Esfarayen Industrial Complex, which is showcasing its products at the exposition, is the largest producer of alloy steel parts in Iran, said Mehdi Es-

mi, the director of foreign trade of the company in an interview with Iran Daily.

"The company exports its products to India, Turkey, Germany and Italy, as well as Eastern European countries through our Russian and Turkish trade partners," he noted, adding that we export approximately 8,000-10,000 tons of steel to Russia annually.

We are making efforts to expand our market in Russia, as the value of our exports to Russia is about 10 million euros per annum, Esلمي noted.

He proposed the development of banking cooperation between Iran and EAEU states to lift export barriers.

Esلمي said the Eurasia Expo of Tehran helps countries to come to know each other's culture of trade.

Also talking to Iran Daily, the engineering director of Iran Kontor Sazi Company said that his firm had attended the 2nd Eurasia Expo for getting new markets in EAEU states.

The company is the first and biggest manufacturer of electricity meters in the Middle East region, Masoud Qane' explained.



Iran, Oman to sign PTA soon: TPO

The head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said that a preferential trade agreement (PTA) will be signed between Iran and Oman in the near future to spur trade and economic activities.

Speaking in an expert-level meeting of the 20th Iran-Oman Joint Economic Cooperation Commission, Mehdi Zeyghami expressed hope that the meeting will pave the way for the two countries to further expand bilateral trade and economic relations, reported IRNA.

The deputy industry minister pointed to his recent visit to the Sultanate of Oman, accompanying Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Abbas Aliabadi, and hoped that visits by trade and economic delegations of the two countries will lead to further expansion of bilateral trade relations.

Zeyghami put the value of trade exchanges between Iran and Oman in 2022 at \$1.8 billion, and said that bilateral trade is expected to increase by yearend. Iran attaches great importance to its relation with the Persian

Gulf littoral states, especially Oman, the TPO chief stated, adding that officials of the two countries pursue cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, investment, mineral, standard, finance, banking, agriculture, fisheries, stockbreeding, transport, oil, gas, petrochemical, energy, tourism, cultural heritage and health care in the joint economic cooperation commission.

The Iran-Oman Joint Economic Cooperation Commission meeting will be held in Tehran on Wednesday.



Neor Lake, a hidden gem attracting nature enthusiasts



pinorest.com

Iranica Desk

For nature enthusiasts seeking pristine and exciting attractions, Neor Lake is a hidden gem nestled in the Talesh Mountains, near the cities of Ardebil and Khalkhal in Ardebil Province.

This stunning lake offers a captivating environment that allows visitors to immerse themselves in nature's beauty. Surrounded by lofty mountains, the area experiences a cold climate and abundant rainfall throughout the year, making it an ideal destination for all seasons, IRNA wrote.

Neor Lake, despite being less known compared to its neighboring attractions, sees a steady flow of tourists year-round. The lake itself is formed during spring when the snow melts, merging the two separate parts

into one. In the spring, the depths of different areas of Neor Lake range from 5 to 13 meters. The smaller part covers approximately 40 hectares, while the larger section spans close to 180 hectares, offering ample space for exploration.

Under the supervision of the Department of the Environment, Neor Lake's ecosystem and climate are held in great importance. The region boasts a diverse array of plant and animal species, drawing the attention of experts and nature enthusiasts alike.

Around Neor Lake, more than 70 species of fragrant and medicinal plants can be found, adding to the area's natural charm. Additionally, the lake serves as a habitat for over 90 animal species, including majestic bears, graceful deer, elegant horses, various types of bats, and even

domestic animals like cows and sheep.

Thanks to its delightful location in a pleasant and forested area with a mild climate, Neor Lake has become a magnet for nature enthusiasts and tourists throughout the year. Despite its relative anonymity compared to other natural attractions nearby, Neor Lake retains its untouched and unspoiled allure. With each passing day, the interest from nature lovers and tourists in this area continues to grow.

The surroundings of Neor Lake also hold significance as vital habitats for tribal settlements, preserving their cultural heritage and traditional ways of life. During late spring till the end of summer, the plains encircling the lake burst into vibrant colors, with an abundance of blooming flowers and lush

meadows, creating a picturesque scene to behold.

To reach Neor Lake, one must embark on a winding mountainous road that offers breathtaking views of the foothill plains. The journey takes approximately 30 minutes and the road is well-paved for a comfortable drive. However, once you arrive at the lake, the surrounding path becomes a dirt road, perfect for those who enjoy hiking and exploring on foot.

Neor Lake is a true treasure waiting to be discovered. Its natural wonders, ecological importance, and peaceful ambiance make it an ideal destination for anyone seeking solace and inspiration in the embrace of nature. Witnessing the breathtaking views of the Talesh Mountains near Neor Lake can create lasting memories. Don't forget to cap-

ture your experiences through photography as you explore the area. During winter, the lake freezes and transforms into a vast ice skating rink with an impressive 80-centimeter depth.

The surrounding landscape is also ideal for cycling, attracting mountain biking enthusiasts. In fact, many cyclists challenge themselves by traversing the approximately 20-kilometer distance between the lake and the Subatan highlands during spring and summer.

Horseback riding and boating are popular recreational activities at Neor Lake as well. While you can rent horses nearby, make sure to bring your own inflatable boat if you wish to go boating. It's important to note that swimming isn't permitted in the lake due to unsuitable water conditions and marsh-like

vegetation in certain areas.

Birdwatchers will delight in observing various bird species during migration seasons in the nearby vicinity. Neor Lake and its surroundings are protected areas where hunting is strictly prohibited. Please respect safety guidelines and help preserve the well-being of the local wildlife and ecosystem. For many tourists, picnicking in nature and spending a day immersed in the great outdoors is a cherished experience. This region's unspoiled natural beauty and pleasant summer climate offer an excellent environment for a one-day nature excursion.

If you're a fan of such recreation, be sure to plan a trip to Neor Lake and its surroundings. Additionally, the lake's abundant fresh water makes it a suitable habitat for fish to thrive.

Tourism development and international connections significant for Kish Island



Iranica Desk

The tourism industry plays a crucial role in the global economy and can significantly contribute to economic development when properly utilized. Kish Island in the southern province of Hormuzgan with its unique geographical conditions and tourism potentials, has always been recognized as a prominent tourist destination in the region.

In recent years, the government has made substantial efforts not only to promote this industry but also to highlight the rich national, religious, and cultural heritage of the country through tourism development on both the national and international levels. Today, Kish Island stands out as a captivating coral island that has successfully captured

the attention of tourists from Islamic countries in the region, gaining recognition as an Islamic tourist destination in the international media.

Azizollah Mohammadi, the managing director of Kish Port and Airport Development and Management Company, emphasized the necessity of establishing direct international flights to Kish Island for the growth and prosperity of tourism in visitor-friendly areas.

He commended the recent international negotiations conducted by the management of Kish Free Trade Zone Organization to establish these flights as highly impactful. Mohammadi highlighted the exceptional geographical location of Kish Island and its numerous tourism opportunities, making it an ideal destination for foreign tourists,

particularly those from Arab and Persian Gulf countries. He acknowledged that the absence of direct flights from foreign origins to Kish Island has been a significant hindrance to the development of foreign tourism, which these ongoing efforts aim to overcome.

Mohammadi announced the successful launch of a direct flight from Baghdad to Kish, resulting in the arrival of 150 Iraqi tourists.

As per the current plans, Iraqi tourists will initially visit the island on a weekly basis, with the intention to increase the frequency to two flights per week in subsequent stages. These developments mark an exciting step forward in expanding tourism opportunities and fostering international connections for Kish Island.

On the blank check God did not give

Chosen to do what?

Palestinians dehumanized, Israelis sold



REUTERS

International Desk PERSPECTIVE

The world has seen its fair share of people calling themselves “chosen” or in covenant with God(s). That is not something new. Some even developed communities that were isolated from the rest of the world and, as such, ruled themselves and other non-believers in their vicinity, whether legally or not. However, none were as extremist as Zionists in Israel are, both in their ideologies and their conduct. Granted, Zionists did not invent the idea, but they sure did take it to ridiculous, supremacist extremes. The idea that the ancient Isra-

elites were chosen by God is found most directly in the Book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, but that can be taken to have a more positive implication for Jews. Some scholars have cited Genesis 12:2 as the part where God clearly vows to turn Abram’s descendants “into a great nation” but also tasks Abram in Genesis 12:3 and Jewish prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 49:6 to be “a blessing unto all nations” and “a light unto others,” respectively. Ignoring such contradictory or explanatory verses and cherry-picking other verses that justify their inhumane desires is a pattern with Zionists. Being chosen by God,

whether you be a prophet or a nation, is not a free, generous gift to anyone who is born to Jewish parents. This is, first and foremost, a task and a heavy responsibility to make the world a better place for “others”. In this sense, Jews are expected by the Lord to take the well-being of others into consideration, naturally more if they are within reach. This much is typical of a merciful Lord if one submits to Him. Robert Gordis, an American leading conservative Rabbi and biblical scholar, wrote, “Few beliefs have been subject to as much misunderstanding as the ‘Chosen People’ doctrine. The Torah and the Proph-

ets clearly stated that this does not imply any innate Jewish superiority. In the words of Amos (3:2), ‘You alone have I singled out of all the families of the earth — that is why I will call you to account for your iniquities [=sins].’” We should take a closer look at the verse cited from the Book of Amos, as it deals another heavy blow to the ethnic supremacist reading of God’s covenant with the Israelites. Amos, one of the Twelve Minor Prophets who preached in the northern Kingdom of Israel, reminds Israelites that they have sinned and are no less guilty than gentile (non-Jewish) nations, and that God is free to judge whether to redeem Israel. God clearly reminds his “chosen people” that their status is not eternal and instead rests on the accomplishment of the aforementioned duties and their being god-fearing. If they fail, the verse reads, “I will punish you for all your sins.” The current state of Israel surely resembles a punishment from God. We like to think that God has stopped punishing whole nations because of living prophets or other reasons, but He promised in Isaiah 2:12, “For the Day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low.” We also know from the Qur’an that “Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allah intends ill for a people, there is no repelling it.” (Surah Ar-Ra’d 13:11) The Jews of Israel have

squandered the opportunity that was given to them by God, and it’s hard to imagine a way back from the massacre of Gazans that they are passively or actively supporting. As we’ve seen, the fall from grace did not happen overnight. While Israelis were patting themselves on the back for being chosen and taking it for granted, their cabinet committed one atrocity after another, not even worried about admitting their inhuman practices of targeting civilians and driving people away from their homes into humiliating refugee camps. Israelis, by and large, have bought in to the idea of being chosen, immune to judgment from the Lord or the Gentiles, and free to do whatever they want. This is not an outlandish claim. Many god-fearing or simply observant Jews and Israelis have pointed out the delusion. The current prime minister of Israel doesn’t mind spouting racist, supremacist, and contra-Biblical doctrines if it pulls the wool over the eyes of his constituents and feeds his hunger for power. Gideon Levy, a senior columnist for the Israeli Daily Haaretz, noted how “the systematic dehumanization of Palestinians enables us Israelis to live in peace with everything.” In his short but impactful address at the National Press Club, which was repeatedly greeted with cheers of approval from the audience, he highlighted the reason why the question of human rights is never brought up in the mind of almost every Israeli. It’s because Palestinians

are not considered “human beings like us” Israelis. That’s shocking to hear, but what other conclusion can an independent-minded journalist like him draw from seeing Israeli soldiers playing games in their tent while a Palestinian bleeds out in an ambulance outside the city of Jenin during the Second Intifada? “I once wrote that we treat Palestinians like animals, and I got so many protest letters from animal rights organizations, rightly so,” he said, to an uproar of bitter, affirmative laughter. Benjamin Netanyahu anticipated that his heartless plans would cause a repulsion, at best, and a revolt, at worst, from Jews worldwide and the people of Israel. So, he indoctrinated the notion that being God’s chosen people means that they are humans, while others, especially Palestinians, are not. This was, more than anything, a manipulative attempt at providing a mental shield for Israelis. The worst defense of any kind for committing crimes against humanity is “we have been chosen, so whatever we do is, by definition, the right thing to do”. It was politically wrong when George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan did it, citing the Unitary Executive Theory as the reason why they, as the highest elected officials of the US, can’t be told what to do as whatever they do is law, and it is wrong here, too. However, one was easier to digest than the other. Not to mention that in the case of Israelis, the defense is based on a skewed, cherry-picking reading of the Old Testament.

Iranian Jewish MP: Israel doesn’t represent all Jews

By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

The Israeli regime considers itself the representative of Jews everywhere. How much does this claim hold true? Do all Jews approve of the acts and positions of the regime over the past few decades? Do its plans and performance line up with those of Judaism? We asked these questions of Homayoun Sameh Yah Najafabadi, the representative of the Iranian Jewish community in Iran’s Parliament. Born in Tehran, he now holds a seat in the Parliament’s Health Committee.

The Israeli regime thinks it represents all the Jews in the world. As a follower of Judaism, how correct do you think this claim is? If Muslims could ever ac-

cept that the terrorist group Daesh truly represents Islam, then Jews worldwide could deem Israel to be their representative. Since no one believes Daesh stands for what Islam stands for, no one should admit that Israel speaks for the Jews. The Israeli regime consists of a bunch of extremist people and views, none of which have any agreement with the teachings of Judaism in deeds or words, as they contrast sharply. In a historically and geographically critical location of the world, that is, the land of Palestine, the Israeli regime seeks its interests, which can’t be further from Judaism, in the name of Jews everywhere.

Does that mean that Israel is abusing Jewish teachings to achieve its political goals and justify its excessive demands? That is so. The Israeli re-

gime only cares about its goals but decides to hide behind Judaism. In fact, Zionists are exploiting the Jewish creed to create legitimacy for themselves. Unfortunately, there are some throughout the world who have been manipulated to buy in to the lies of the Zionists, who, in no way, represent Jews. Of course, everywhere you look, there are extremists who link their extremist acts to a religion, just as Daesh falsely contends that their inhumane moves are Islamic. We even have Zionist Christians.

As a follower of Judaism, how do you feel about the massacre of the people of Gaza by Israel in the last two months?

The crimes that the regime has committed in Gaza are painful to watch for anyone, regardless of faith, ethnicity, or race. All of us, however different we are in

our beliefs, can fathom the depth of the Israeli regime’s atrocities if only we were to put ourselves in the shoes of the innocent civilians of Gaza, and our own children in the shoes of the innocent children there. Unfortunately, the world doesn’t seem to be showing any kind of sensitivity toward this mass killing. International organizations are all talk and no action. They don’t make any meaningful, practical moves to stop the massacre and the bombings. The people of Palestine are under the most brutal attacks, and that moves any human.

In various parts of the world, followers of different religions, each from a different race, coexist peacefully. In Palestine itself, Jews, Christians, and Muslims often lived peacefully together throughout history, but it seems like the excessive demands of

Israel have disrupted this historical order.

Yes, the Israeli regime has sabotaged that peaceful coexistence. Of course, the overextending of Zionists is not related to Judaism. They have incorrect understandings of the teachings of Judaism. We here in Iran live peacefully alongside followers of

other religions. Imam Khomeini, the founder of Iran’s Islamic Revolution, and the Leader Ayatollah Khamenei have always stressed domestic unity. They do not only mean unity between Muslims or Shias in Iran. They mean unity among all Iranians, regardless of their religion or ethnicity. Regrettably, in the past

few decades, we have seen attempts at making rifts among Palestinians, which, I believe, is the evil legacy of the British. Still, I think, just as the Leader of Iran’s Islamic Revolution put it, even though thousands of Palestinians have been martyred, hundreds have joined the resistance movement to pick up the torch.



Gaza reaching 'humanity's darkest hour': WHO

International Desk

The situation in the Gaza Strip is getting worse all the time and approaching humanity's "darkest hour", the World Health Organization said Tuesday.

Richard Peeperkorn, the WHO's representative in the occupied Palestinian territories, told reporters in Geneva Tuesday, via video link from Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, that the number of people on the move from central and southern Gaza was "vastly increasing".

Israeli forces launched attacks on southern Gaza on Tuesday, with attacks pushing civilians into a steadily shrinking area of the besieged Palestinian territory.

After initially focusing on northern Gaza, the Israeli Army has now sent ground forces into the south and urged Palestinians to evacuate.

"The situation is getting worse by the hour. There is intensified bombing going on all around, including here in the southern areas," said Peeperkorn.

"A lot of people are desperate and almost in a permanent state of shock".

"We are close by humanity's darkest hour," Peeperkorn said. "These bombings and the senseless loss of life must stop now, and we need a sustained ceasefire."

James Elder, spokesman for the UN children's agency UNICEF, said that with the population on the move, in two hours "there are 5,000 people where there was no-one previously. Critically in these places, there's no sanitation."



An Israeli military tank rolls near the Gaza Strip on December 5, 2023.
● MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP

Speaking from Cairo after returning from Gaza, he said that in one shelter in Gaza, where 30,000 people were seeking refuge, there was one toilet for roughly every 400 people, meaning queues of up to five hours.

Israel directing civilians towards safe zones it has designated as safe – but which have no toilets or clean water – is creating "the perfect storm for disease outbreak", said Elder.

"Israel is the occupying power: it's they who have to provide food, water, medicine," he added.

'Shameful' inaction

Qatar's ruler hit out at "shameful" international inaction over the Israeli's onslaught on Gaza as he opened a Persian Gulf

Cooperation Council meeting in Doha on Tuesday.

"It is shameful for the international community to allow this heinous crime to continue for nearly two months, during which the systematic and deliberate killing of innocent civilians continues, including women and children," Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani said.

Qatar was a key mediator in negotiations that resulted in a seven-day truce, which saw scores of Israeli captives exchanged for Palestinian prisoners and humanitarian aid, until it ended on Friday.

Qatar's ruler said his country was "constantly working to renew" the truce, but added this was "not an alternative to a permanent cease-fire".

He called for "an international investigation into the massacres committed by Israel" and for the Security Council "to assume its legal responsibility and act to end this barbaric war, and compel Israel to return to credible negotiations to achieve a just solution to the Palestinian issue".

In a joint statement, the [P] GCC expressed "deep concern" with "blatant Israeli aggression" in Gaza.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended the session and accused Israel of "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity in Gaza", which he said "should not be left unanswered".

Both Turkey and Qatar have been vocal supporters of the Palestinian cause and have

opened channels of communication with Hamas.

Storming southern Gaza

Israeli forces launched their storm of the main city in the southern Gaza Strip on Tuesday, where hospitals were overrun with scores of Palestinian wounded and dead.

In what appeared to be the biggest ground assault since the truce collapsed last week, residents said Israeli tanks had entered the eastern parts of Khan Younis for the first time. The Israelis, who seized the northern half of Gaza last month before pausing for the week-long truce, say they are now extending their ground campaign to the rest of the Palestinian territory.

"We're moving ahead with the second stage now. A second stage that is going to be difficult militarily," regime's spokesperson Eylon Levy told reporters in a briefing.

At Khan Younis' main Nasser hospital, the wounded arrived by ambulance, car, flatbed truck and donkey cart after what survivors described as a strike that hit a school being used as a shelter for the displaced.

"We are in the heart of Jabalia, in the heart of Shejaiya (in northern Gaza), and now also in the heart of Khan Yunis," Southern Command chief Major General Yaron Finkelman was quoted as saying in an army statement, describing "the most intense day since the beginning of the ground operation."

The Israeli army has so far lost 80 soldiers since the start of its ground offensive in the Gaza Strip on October 27.

Israel's resumption of war 'huge mistake': Iran MP

Renewed assaults might expand conflict in region



By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

Israel made a "huge mistake" by resuming aggression against the Gaza Strip, an Iranian lawmaker said on Monday, warning about a spillover of war.

"The Zionists' move could lead to the expansion of war beyond Gaza and into the region and even other parts of the world," Fada-Hossein Maleki said in an exclusive interview with Iran Daily.

Maleki, who sits on the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said Israel, backed by the US, was pressing ahead with its war on Gaza in a way that civilian targets, including people and hospitals, were mainly hit in "brutal attacks".

He emphasized that the Zionists' goal in the ruthless massacre in Gaza was an attempt to cover up their defeat from the dominant operations of Hamas in Operation Al-Aqsa. The result was the shattering of the prestige of the Zionist regime, and they sought to present an appearance of victory through widespread massacres of the people in Gaza. Operation Al-Aqsa was carried out by the resistance group Hamas forces on October 7 in response to the Israeli crimes against Palestinians and the desecration of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The operation, branded as "Black Saturday" by Israel, led to the Israel-Hamas war.

The operation is considered an unprecedented failure for Israel. In the first 20 minutes, over 5,000 missiles were fired from Gaza toward Israel, causing significant damage. In response, Israel pounded various parts of Gaza indiscriminately, killing thousands of people, mostly civilians.

Under pressure from the Islamic world and some Western countries, Israel declared a cease-fire. Protesters, rallying across the world, including those from European and American countries, demanded an end to Israeli attacks on Gaza.

The cease-fire, mediated by Egypt and Qatar, commencing on November 24, lasted seven days. During this period, Hamas and Israel exchanged prisoners, and humanitarian aid was allowed into the war-torn Gaza Strip. However, Hamas declared that the conditions for releasing captives would be different, involving talks on ending hostilities, a complete halt, and lifting the blockade imposed by Israel on the coastal enclave.

Maleki emphasized that Hamas having conditions for the prisoner swap was "natural," especially considering "the Zionists' lack of commitment during the cease-fire."

He warned that Israel had begun a "dangerous game" by resuming the war.

"The second phase of the war would definitely drag in many countries and would inflict further damage and hardships on the world," the MP said.

Referring to the motivations behind restarting attacks on Gaza, Maleki stated that Israel aimed to deliberately involve some countries in the war, directly engaging the United States.

"Such decisions have been made in the think tanks run by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet."

Maleki noted that such a situation would usher in a new phase of the war, disrupting the region's security, with some countries not remaining silent, and others being drawn into the conflict.

This, he asserted, is not in the interest of the region and the world.

Israel's nuclear capabilities out in open



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

Israel's nuclear denial policy, often referred to as nuclear ambiguity or the Samson Option, was designed to deter potential adversaries by avoiding the complications and scrutiny that would arise from an open declaration of nuclear capabilities. However, Hamas's Operation Al-Aqsa Storm has provided Israel with the opportunity to admit to having a nuclear weapon.

One of the thousands of rockets fired by Hamas on October 7 fell on the Asdat Macha military base in central Israel, where nuclear missiles were stored. The rocket did not directly hit the missiles but sparked a fire that spread to missile storage facilities and other sensitive weapons.

The Israeli government has not yet released any information about the damage caused to the military base and the surrounding population by the radiation from the nuclear material, but the military base has been evacuated.

According to Hans Christensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project of the Federation of American Scientists, an Israeli military base hit by rockets fired by Hamas contained between 25 and 50 nuclear-capable Jericho missile launchers. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which considers it its primary responsibility to keep a close eye on the nuclear programs of Iran, North Korea, and Pakistan, has not yet started a formal inspection of the site despite clear reports. It is certain that the IAEA, under the United Nations, will not impose sanctions against Israel, nor will it bring this issue to the Security Council, as any resolution against Israel will be vetoed by the United States, Great Britain, and France.

In early November, the Israeli Minister of Cultural Heritage, Amihai Eliyahu, said during a radio interview that the nuclear option would be a way to deal with the Palestinians in Gaza. This clearly means that Israel not only has nuclear weapons but is also ready to use them. Israel has never officially stated its position on

the possession and number of its nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons experts and international organizations say that Israel has more than 200 nuclear warheads. During the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when Arab forces were bombing Israel from the Golan Heights and Israel's military was being destroyed, then Israeli prime minister Golda Meir informed the Arab rulers of her determination to drop nuclear bombs on the Arab capitals. After that, the tide of the war changed, and Israel very deftly and cunningly occupied the strategically important hillocks of the Golan Heights, which it holds to this day.

The IAEA has always ignored Israel's nuclear weapons program, and the justification is that Israel has not signed the NPT, so the agency cannot monitor Israel's nuclear program.

Here is revealed the hypocrisy of the world powers, especially the United States, which allows a usurper state to make nuclear weapons. Yet, the United States and European countries pressure Pakistan to sign the Non-Proliferation

Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The US does not pressure Israel and India to sign the CTBT and NPT, but it imposes sanctions on Pakistan and freezes the financial assets of an already poor country. This double standard has put the world in greater nuclear danger.

The Israeli government's ambivalent stance on nuclear weapons has persisted for decades. This ambivalence ended with Operation Al-Aqsa Storm. An Israeli minister even suggested the nuclear option against Palestinians. It proved that Israel not only has nuclear weapons but is also

ready to use them.

Israel's aggression against the Palestinians in Gaza is having a negative impact on American politics. President Biden's support for Israeli aggression has reduced his popularity among Democratic voters. The Biden administration is causing growing outrage among the American public, who claim that their country is essentially aiding and abetting war crimes on a massive scale.

Political experts say that if a US presidential election were held today, Biden would fail to defeat Trump because he has lost the support of key constituencies, including progressive voters and American Muslims.



● GETTY IMAGES

Iranians eyeing Olympic berths in World Taekwondo GS

Sports Desk

A couple of quotas for next year's Paris Olympics will be up for grabs when the Iranians participate at the World Taekwondo Grand Slam Champions Series – starting December 13 in Wuxi, China. Iranian hopefuls Mahdi Hajimousaei and Mehran Barkhordari had the opportunity to punch their tickets for the French capital through the final series of the World Grand Prix in Manchester, only to miss out on the event after being denied entry visas by the UK Embassy in Ankara.

On Monday, the international governing body of the sport released the Olympic Kyorugi Rankings, in which Hajimousaei moved up by three spots to stand eighth in the men's -58kg weight class, with Barkhordari retaining the 10th place in the -80kg category.

The latest rankings mean that three victory and a fifth-place finish in Man-

chester would have secured the Olympic slot for Hajimousaei, while Barkhordari would have also qualified with a bronze.

"It's a pity that our athletes missed a big chance [to qualify for the Olympics] due to the Britons' foot-dragging," Hadi Saei, the chairman of the Iranian federation, told Fars News Agency, adding: "The British Embassy eventually issued the visas for them on Saturday, but it turned out to be too late as three of the Iranian contestants were to be in action on the first day of the event."

"When you look at the results of the -58kg contests, you realize what an opportunity it was for us to guarantee the Paris berths as all the medal winners in Manchester had been beaten by the Iranian opponents in the previous series this year," added the two-time Olympic gold winner in 2004 and 2008.

A runner-up in the first series of the World GP in

Rome, Hajimousaei pulled off a major upset in September's Series 2 in Paris by defeating reigning Olympic champion Vito Dell'Aquila of Italy – gold medalist in Manchester – on his way to the ultimate prize.

Barkhordari also enjoyed an impressive run in this year's Grand Prix, taking the silver in Rome before grabbing the gold in Paris.

The World champion and a winner of double GP silvers in 2023, Iranian girl Nahid Kiani edged ever closer to the Paris ticket after moving up to fourth in the women's -57kg Olympic ranking. Controversial visa denials have kept the Iranian athletes from taking part at several international events over the past months – most recently in mid-November's World Wushu Championships in Fort Worth, Texas.

The country also had to send a depleted squad to Anaheim, California, for the final week of the preliminary round in the Volley-



ball Nations League in July, while the Iranian freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling

teams were ruled out of October's U23 World Championships in Tirana, Albania.

Iran's Mahdi Hajimousaei (blue) is seen in action during a victory over Olympic champion Vito Dell'Aquila of Italy in September's World Taekwondo Grand Prix Series 2 in Paris.
● WORLD TAEKWONDO

Nadal lowering expectations in 'unexplored terrain' for return

AP – Rafael Nadal has lower expectations for when he returns to the tour in January after a year out.

Nadal announced on Friday he will play at the Brisbane International in Australia in January. The 37-year-old Spaniard has not appeared on tour since last January, when he hurt his hip flexor during a loss in the second round of the Australian Open. He wound up having arthroscopic surgery in June in Barcelona.

Nadal said on Monday in a video on social media that he hopes to again "feel those nerves, that illusion, those fears, those doubts" on the court.

"I have been afraid to announce things because in the end it's a year without competing and it's a hip operation. But what worries me the most is not the hip, it's everything else," he said. "I think I'm ready and I trust and hope that things go well and that it gives me the opportunity to enjoy myself on the court."

Nadal said he knows things may be different after so much time without competing.

"I expect from myself not to expect anything. This is the truth. To have the ability not to demand myself what I have demanded myself throughout my career," he said. "I believe I'm in a different moment, in a different situation and in an unexplored terrain."

"I have internalized what I have had throughout my life, which is to demand myself the maximum, and right now what I really hope is to be able not to do that, not to demand the maximum, to accept that things are going to be very difficult at the beginning and to give myself the necessary time and forgive myself if things go wrong at the beginning, which is a very big possibility."

Last May, a little more than a week before the French Open, Nadal announced he was missing the tournament that has earned him 14 of his 22 Grand Slam tournaments. He said then that he hoped to compete in 2024, which he expected to be his final season.

Nadal finished his message on Monday saying that things could change for the best in a "not-too-distant future" if "I keep the illusion and the spirit of work" and if his "physique responds" well.



● AFP

Second Announcement

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

TENDER NO.: 08-21-0140011

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	CASING 13-3/8 IN. API GRADE P-110 HC (HIGH COLLAPSE), SEAMLESS "N.VAM", THREAD, RANGE 3 (MAX LEN: 40.5 FT), PSL 3, 72 PPF, DRIFT: 12.250 IN".	6,500 LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 320,057/34 EURO or 127,700,000,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment

Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab.
ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN.
PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D. SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS
www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://lets.mporg.ir> 1611478

Second Announcement

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

TENDER NO.: 08-38-9540004

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

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	SLICKLINE, SPOOLED ON IRON REEL SIZE 0.082 IN. X 18,000 FEET	22 RL

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 30,510/04 EURO or 12,480,133,162 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment

Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab.
ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN.
PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D. SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS
www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir <http://lets.mporg.ir> 1611477

Iran stresses need to preserve Caspian Sea for future generations

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian emphasized the need to preserve the environment and resources of the "strategic" Caspian Sea for the next generations. Addressing a meeting of foreign ministers of the Caspian Sea littoral states in Moscow, Russia, on Tuesday, the Iranian top diplomat said that the sea is a common heritage, a center of friendship, and a source of blessings for more than 270 million people of the Caspian Sea countries.

Amir-Abdollahian said the Caspian Sea is considered as a strategic region due its geographical location which links the North-South and East-West corridors.

He also said that the coastal countries are responsible for maintaining stability, security, and sustainable development in the sea. The Iranian foreign minister said that any decision about Caspian Sea issues should be agreed by all five littoral states, stressing the need for the establishment of a secretariat to manage and monitor cooperation among the coastal countries.

He said that using the capacities of the Caspian Sea without taking into account the interests of other coastal



(L-R) Foreign ministers of Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan pose for a family photo during the annual meeting of the Caspian Sea littoral states in Moscow on December 5, 2023.
● URI KOCHETKOV/POOL/AFP

countries would violate the rights of others.

To turn the sea into the symbol of friendship and development, the countries need to strengthen their interaction and cooperation, Amir-Abdollahian said.

Before departing Tehran, Amir-Abdollahian took to his X social media account and stressed the importance of regional cooperation in addressing shared challenges.

"Cooperation and collective participation is of paramount

importance considering the diverse economic opportunities and environmental challenges in this region," he said.

Boosting cooperation

Moscow expects cooperation between the Caspian Sea countries to get a boost following the Third Caspian Economic Forum to be held in Tehran, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said.

"It is important to note that the Caspian issue is a priority

for all of us, as it is regularly discussed by the presidents and heads of government of the Caspian Five.

A serious impetus for cooperation in this format was given during the Sixth Caspian Summit in Ashgabat last June and the Second Caspian Economic Forum in Moscow last October," he said. "We expect further strengthening of this course on the basis of the results of the Third Caspian Economic Forum to be held in Tehran," the top Russian

diplomat pointed out. The Caspian Sea is the world's largest closed inland reservoir surrounded by Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan. Iran has attached high priority to the consolidation of relations with neighboring countries in the region, clinching landmark agreements and entering international economic coalitions as part of the Islamic Republic's policy of confronting Western unilateralism.

Tehran-Moscow deal

After the Caspian Sea meeting, the Iranian foreign minister held a separate meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, during which the two countries signed an agreement to make joint efforts to counter unilateral sanctions.

"We have just signed a declaration on ways and means to counteract, mitigate and compensate for the negative consequences of unilateral coercive measures," Lavrov

said. The Russian minister said this was an important step to "overcome the illegal sanctions that the United States and its allies have made as a substitute for diplomacy."

The agreement has officially been titled the Declaration of the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran on ways and means of countering, softening and compensating for the negative consequences of unilateral coercion measures, according to a report by Russia's state-run TASS news agency. Iran and Russia have already made joint efforts to reduce the impacts of Western sanctions on their economies.

The cooperation increased in early 2022, when the United States and its allies imposed a raft of sanctions on Russia for its war in Ukraine.

Iran has been under US sanctions since 2018, when the then administration in Washington withdrew from a deal on Iran's nuclear program.

Iran rejects UK claims of involvement in attacks on vessels

National Desk

Iran rejected "unfounded" allegations made by the UK government over Tehran's role in resistance groups' attacks against Israel and US targets in the region.

Iran's Foreign Ministry's spokesman Nasser Kanaani said that the British government tries to achieve its special political goals by making such allegations. He said that London is trying to distort the

realities of the region.

A British government spokesperson on Monday claimed that Iran bears responsibility for the actions of the resistance groups in the region.

"As we've previously stated, Iran has long provided military and political support to Houthi militants and it bears responsibility for the actions of its proxies and partners," the British spokesperson said in a statement.

Britain also condemned

attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea by Yemeni forces, saying that the UK is committed to ensuring the safety of shipping in the region.

Three commercial vessels came under attack in international waters in the southern Red Sea on Sunday, in attacks claimed by Yemeni forces. Yemen said it had launched drone and missile attacks against two Israeli ships.

Kanaani underlined that the resistance groups do



● IRNA

not receive orders from Tehran. He said that the resistance groups decide and act based on their own principles, priorities, and interests of their countries. Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations also strongly condemned the "baseless" accusations leveled at

Tehran by a British minister concerning the Middle East crisis, saying the UK's 1917 Balfour Declaration caused the suffering of the Palestinian nation.

In letters sent to the UN chief and the Security Council's president on Tuesday, Amir Saeid Iravani firmly rejected "base-

less" claims by British Minister of State for the Middle East Tariq Ahmad at the United Nations Security Council's Wednesday meeting on "The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question."

The Iranian envoy said that during the meeting, the UK minister overlooked "his own country's responsibility in the current situation in the Middle East and the UK's destabilizing policies, attempted to shift blame onto the Islamic Republic of Iran."

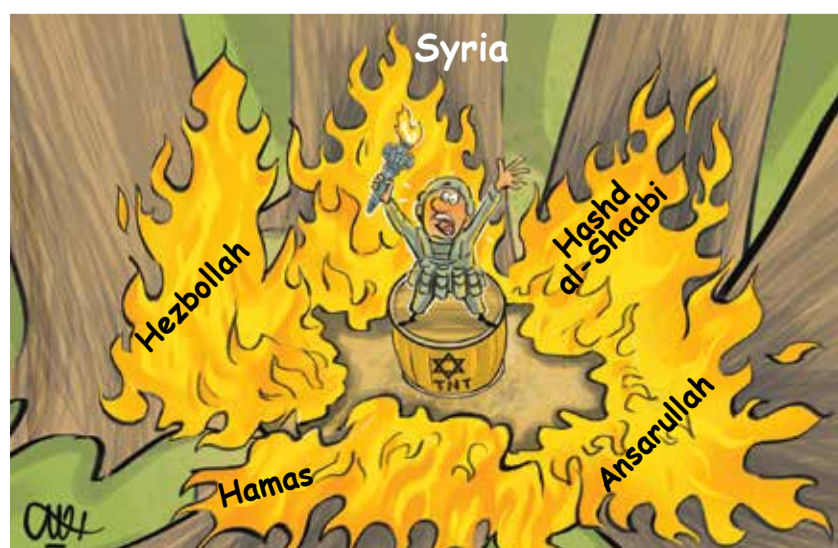
"Undoubtedly, the United Kingdom has certainly played a pivotal role in the prolonged suffering and distress endured by the Palestinian people. The ominous roots of this plight can be traced back

to the Balfour Declaration, signaling the commencement of nearly a century of hardship for the Palestinians," he stated, referring to the document that set the stage for the occupation of Palestine.

Iravani also noted that the UK's "consistent and unwavering support for Israeli atrocities and genocidal aggression against the Palestinian people and regional countries markedly diminishes its moral authority to license judgment on the intentions and policies of others."

In his address to the Security Council, Ahmad alleged that Iran "poses an unacceptable threat to the region through its destabilizing activity and long-term support for its proxies and partners."

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Raisi to visit Russia Thursday

National Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi will travel to Moscow on Thursday for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin as the two countries strengthen economic and military ties in the face of Western sanctions.

Heading a high-ranking political and economic delegation, the Iranian president will visit Russia at the official invitation of his Russian counterpart.

Iran's official news agency IRNA had earlier reported on the planned visit, saying that the two leaders

would discuss "bilateral issues, including economic interactions, as well as discussions about regional and international issues, especially the situation in Gaza, [which] will be high on the agenda of the one-day trip."

"I can confirm. There will be Russian-Iranian negotiations on December 7," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Tuesday when asked about media reports.

Raisi's visit will come a day after Putin travels to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia on Wednesday

for talks on energy and regional politics.

Putin visited Iran in July last year and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov travelled to Tehran in October

for talks with regional counterparts.

The visit by Raisi will be the Iranian president's second visit to Russia after he took office in August 2021.



● IRNA

Head of UNWTO to attend TITE in Tehran



IRNA – Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Zurab Pololikashvili, is set to visit Tehran to participate in the 17th International Iran Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition (TITE).

A specialized session for provincial tourism deputies, attended by Deputy Tourism Minister Ali-Asghar Shalbfafian and the provincial tourism deputies, was held on December 5, in Tehran.

Seyyed Mostafa Fatemi, the Director-General of Domestic Tourism Development, highlighted the emergence of “thematic tourism” in many provinces, stating, “Out of 1,045 announced events, 525 events have been registered, with Gilan Province leading with 46 events.”

Fatemi said that the exhibition, scheduled from February 12 to 15, 2024, at the permanent venue of Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds, will focus on green tourism and a province-centered approach, with booths organized based on specific themes and concepts, similar to the previous year.

- License Holder: Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)
- Managing Director: Ali Kakadezfuli
- Editor-in-chief: Mostafa Shirmohammadi
- Int'l & National Desk: Javad Mohammad Ali, Zohreh Qanadi, Ebrahim Beheshti, Amir Mollae Mozaffari, Reza Abesh Ahmadi, Sadeq Dehqan
- Economy Desk: Amirhadi Arsalanpour
- Sports Desk: Leila Imeni
- Iranica Desk: Hamideh Hosseini
- Arts & Culture Desk: Ali Amiri
- Social Desk: Ali Mehran
- 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. 7453 ● Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2023 ● Price 40,000 Rials ● 8 Pages

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian actress Nazanin Farahani was honored as Best Actress at the Asia-Pacific Film Festival for her performance in the film, ‘The Sun of that Moon,’ directed by Setareh Eskandari.

The award was presented during the sixtieth edition of the Asia-Pacific Film Festival, organized by the Fairtrade Network of Asia & Pacific Producers from November 30 to December 2, in Macao.

‘The Sun of that Moon’ not only secured Farahani the Best Actress accolade but also received nominations in six other categories, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, Best Costume Design, and Best Original Score.

The film, a tale of failed love and endless silences set in the breathtaking landscape of Baluchestan, offers a genuine and distinctive portrayal of this community.

Following its world premiere at the International Film Festival of India, in Goa, the film has participated in various other festivals, including the Zurich Film Festival (Competition Section), Cultura Ramblas Festival (Competition Section), Sofia Menar Film Festival (Retrospective of Iranian Women Filmmakers), and Idromeno Independent Film Festival (Competition Section), where director Eskandari won her first Best Director Award.



Iran’s Nazanin Farahani awarded best actress at Asia-Pacific Film Festival

Iranian modernist musicians perform in Germany

A concert titled, ‘Music for Speakers,’ featuring compositions by Iranian modernist composers, was staged in Germany on December 5.

The concert is an electronic music concert performed by Iranian modernist composers residing in Germany. The event was organized and executed by Iranian composer Amir Teymuri, ILNA reported.

The concert, held at Orgelfabrik Durlach in the German city of Karlsruhe, also featured an exhibition showcasing the works of artists from the State Academy

of Fine Arts Karlsruhe. Mehdi Jalali, a musician, composer, and the head of the Yarava Music group, stated, “This concert included works from various generations of Iranian electronic music composers, featuring performances by 11 Iranian composers living in countries such as Iran, Germany, France, Norway, and the United States.”

Jalali listed the participating composers, including Ehsan Ebrahimi, Deniz Tafaghodi, Amir Teymuri, Shahrokh Khajenouri, Idin Samimi-Mofkham, Shahr-

zad Talebi, Alireza Farhang, Farzia Fallah, Mehdi Kazerouni, and Hana Mesgari.

He provided further details, mentioning that all the pieces performed in the concert were fixed media, and the sound engineering was handled by Teymuri.

Jalali emphasized the special significance of the concert for Yarava Music Group, stating, “For us, the highlight of this concert was the performance of two pieces from the works attended in the Reza Korourian Electroacoustic Composition

Competition.”

Regarding the characteristics of these two works, he explained, “The piece ‘Shin,’ composed by Deniz Tafaghodi, won the second prize in the fifth round of the Reza Korourian Electroacoustic Composition Competition in 2020, recently released.” Additionally, “The Silent Dream,” composed by Shahrzad Talebi, is one of the winners of the second round of the Reza Korourian Electroacoustic Composition Competition in 2017, published in the second year of the ‘Sunset in the Meadow’ competition, he added.



British Museum loan to Greece coincides with dispute over Parthenon Marbles

Greece’s Acropolis Museum launched an exhibition Tuesday that includes a renowned ancient Greek water jug from 420 B.C. on loan from the British Museum.

The exhibit comes during a dispute between the countries over Greek demands for the return of sculptures from the Parthenon temple on the Acropolis that are housed in the British Museum, The Independent wrote. UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak canceled a planned meeting with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis in London a week ago, accusing him of seeking to “grandstand” by publicly campaigning for the return of the Parthenon Marbles while visiting Britain.

Sunak said his government had no intention of re-opening the issue

or amending legislation that would block the artifacts’ return.

Mitsotakis described the incident as “an unfortunate moment” but added that the campaign for their return had received a boost after Sunak’s cancellation drew international attention.

The British Museum said it was continuing talks with Greek authorities and the Acropolis Museum, raising hopes in Athens that an arrangement could be reached to display the sculptures in Greece. On Tuesday, Acropolis Museum director Nikolaos Stamplidis said his museum maintained “excellent relations” with the British Museum and expressed confidence that the Parthenon Marbles would eventually be returned.

“After all, culture is not only about

art. It’s also about relationships,” he said. Excavated in southern Italy, the water jug known as Meidias Hydria, considered to be a masterpiece of the Athenian potter Meidias, became part of the British Museum collection 250 years ago and has not left the London museum until now.

The jug will be displayed at the Acropolis Museum in Athens through April, when it will move to 2024 Olympics host city Paris to be included in an exhibition at the Louvre Museum.

Just over 50 centimeters (19.5 inches) in height, the vessel is decorated with scenes from Greek mythology including a depiction of Heracles, the legendary Greek hero renowned for his strength. The Athens exhibition will open to the public on Thursday.