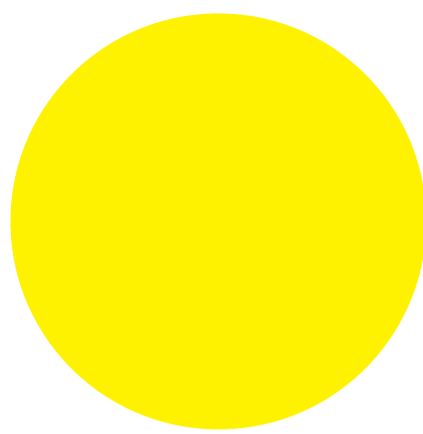




# Intifada resonates with Latinos

LatAm reaction to Gaza tragedy surprises world

SPECIAL ISSUE 4-5 >



# Iran Daily

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Vol. 7454 • Thursday, December 7, 2023 • Azar 16, 1402 • Jumada al-Awwal 23, 1445 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

# Israel vows to make up for

# Oct. 7 Defeat

# with

# assassinations

Sovereignty absurd to **terrorist 'state'**

7 >

According to a leaked recording, the head of Israel's domestic security agency, Shin Bet, has vowed to hunt down members of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas in Lebanon, Turkey, and Qatar.

EXCLUSIVE

## Tehran, Moscow bent on forging strategic partnership

By Shuaib Bahman  
Russian affairs expert

OPINION  
EXCLUSIVE

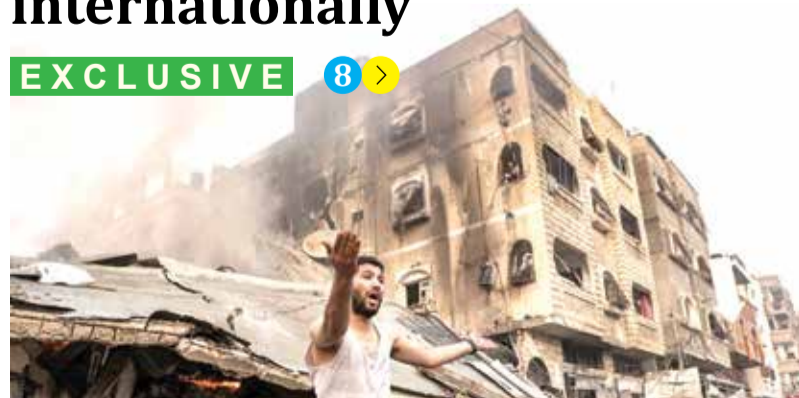
Iran and Russia are seeking to elevate their relations to a strategic partnership and enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation. The two countries have made some progress in this regard, a notable example of which was their coordination during the Syrian crisis.

However, there is still some untapped potential. In the economic sphere, the two did not settle for bilateral ties and were seen collaborating closely under the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). Iran has already signed a preferential trade agreement with the EAEU, and now eyes further partnership opportunities with the union. Iran's geographical location on crucial international transit corridors, its rich energy resources, and its large consumer market offer exciting potential for the EAEU member states. [Page 2 >](#)

Pictures, TV shows featuring Palestine

## More needs to be done internationally

EXCLUSIVE 8 >



In the past few decades, various international films, series, and documentaries have portrayed the challenges faced by the Palestinian people. However, there's a need for more productions through cinema on this topic. This collection aims to show the Palestinian narrative, depicting the resistance against oppression.



## Iran puts into orbit bio-space capsule aboard indigenous launcher

2 >



## Grossi's biased Iran positions poised to derail IAEA

EXCLUSIVE

7 >



## Gazans living in 'utter, deepening horror': UN

2 >

## US concern for regional security 'ironic': Iran

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman has lambasted as "blatant hypocrisy" Washington's professed concern about West Asia's security given its unflinching support for Israel's genocidal war in the besieged Gaza Strip. Nasser Kanaani made the remarks in a statement on Wednesday in response to recent comments by US national security adviser Jake Sullivan, who said Washington is in talks with other countries about the formation of a task force in the Red Sea to protect maritime security in the region, Press TV reported.

The Yemeni Armed Forces have attacked and seized a number of Israeli-owned vessels and Israeli-affiliated tankers off the country's coasts in the Red Sea, in reprisal for the regime's US-backed war against Palestinians in Gaza.

"Contrary to US officials' claims, the military presence of that country in the region's lands and waters has never been a source of security, and the US government, with its illegal plots and interventions, has pursued the security and illegitimate interests of the Zionist regime at the cost of destabilizing regional countries and violating the rights of the Palestinian nation," Kanaani said.

He stressed that the responsibility of providing security in West Asia lies with the regional countries, and can only be achieved through collective cooperation of regional countries, without foreign intervention.

In another statement on Wednesday, Kanaani dismissed as "unacceptable" some paragraphs of the final communiqué of the 44th meeting of the heads of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Doha, Qatar, concerning the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The council's leaders reiterated previous claims that the three Iranian islands of Greater and Lesser Tunbs, and Abu Musa belong to the United Arab Emirates, supporting the UAE's sovereignty rights over the three Persian Gulf islands.

# Iran puts into orbit bio-space capsule aboard indigenous launcher

Iran has successfully put into orbit its bio-space capsule with the domestically-built Salman launcher.

The 500-kilogram capsule, developed by the Aerospace Research Institute of Iran, affiliated to the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, was launched to an altitude of 130 kilometers from the Earth's surface on Wednesday, Press TV reported.

The launch is a step to send humans into space, in line with the Iranian government's plan to revive various sectors of the space industry and consolidate bio-space knowledge.

It was a test for space technologies in the areas of launch, recovery and speed control systems, as well as impact shields, capsule aerodynamic design, and the systems related to control and monitoring of biological conditions.

The Salman launcher is manufactured by the Aerospace Industries

Organization, a subsidiary of the Iranian Defense Ministry. It is capable of launching bio-capsules weighing 500 kilograms.

Spokesman for the Aerospace Research Institute Hossein Dalirian said several bio-capsules systems were tested for the first time, and that the launcher, which was the first version, "performed very well" at its first launch.

He said the Salman launcher achieved great success and carried the 500-kilogram capsule in very good condition.

"This capsule is the result of relying on domestic power and the efforts of space industry experts in the Ministry of Defense."

Despite sanctions imposed by Western countries in recent years, Iran has managed to take giant strides in its civilian space program.

Iran sent its first bio-capsule containing living creatures into space in February 2010, using a Kavosh-

gar (Explorer) carrier.

Speaking to Fars news agency, Iran's Telecoms Minister Issa Zarepour said Tehran will soon conduct suborbital tests of the new generation of bio-capsules, hoping that they will bring the country closer to its space goals. The capsule launched on Wednesday "is about half a ton and has the ability to carry a human, and its suborbital tests are underway," he added.

"It should be taken into account that we are still five to six years away from reaching the point where we can send humans into space."

Zarepour also noted that the Islamic Republic is trying to revitalize works in the field of launching biological capsules after a 10-year hiatus.

Iran is among the top 10 countries leading the space industry, and among the seven leading the bio-space industry.



● IRNA

## GCC claim on Arash gas field rejected



● IRNA

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani denounced the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) statement regarding Iran's Arash gas field, calling it "unacceptable" and rejected it.

The statement considers the ownership of the joint Arash gas field belongs to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Leaders of the member countries claimed that only these two countries have the right to use the gas field resources, mfa.gov.ir reported.

The council called on Tehran to resolve the issue through direct negotiations with the UAE, or through international courts.

Kanaani added that the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistent-

ly adhered to its commitments to international laws, within the framework of rights and obligations, and continues its constructive cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, based on the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. The spokesman added, based on bilateral negotiations with the Kuwaiti government and our negotiation history, the Islamic Republic of Iran has consistently emphasized friendly and constructive cooperation in the energy sector, including in the Arash region.

Referring to the principled policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran aimed at strengthening relations with neighbors, within the framework of good

neighborliness, mutual respect, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, Kanaani underscored our country's commitment to achieving a stable, secure, and prosperous region through cooperation with neighbors and rejecting foreign interventions.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia announced in early 2022 that they had reached an agreement to jointly produce one billion cubic feet (28.3 million cubic meters) per day of natural gas, and 84,000 barrels per day of condensates from the Arash gas field, also known as Durra.

That caused Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji to post a tweet at the time to say that Iran will soon install a drilling jacket at Arash field to resume development operations that had been halted in 2001, after Kuwait threatened to lodge a complaint against Iran in international courts.

The maritime border demarcation dispute between Iran and Kuwait dates back to more than 60 years ago.

Some estimates suggest more than 70 percent of the resources of the disputed gas field, which is believed to contain up to 60 trillion cubic feet (1.7 trillion cubic meters) of gas, lie in waters claimed by Iran.

## Boosting Iran-Oman economic ties crucial: VP

National Desk

Iran's First Vice President has considered industrial and mining collaborations, especially the establishment of industrial estates, as crucial to enhancing relations with Oman.

In a meeting with Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Development, Mohammad Mokhber said that resolving banking and financial issues, easing licensing procedures, and facilitating the movement of trade delegations would create opportunities for investment and trade between the two countries, ISNA reported.

Emphasizing the strong deter-

mination of Iran and Oman's senior officials to deepen economic and trade ties, Mokhber highlighted the need for a swift roadmap for economic cooperation between Tehran and Muscat.

The Omani minister, in turn, stressed the importance of exploring new avenues and solutions for expanding Iran-Oman trade and economic relations. He also commended the positive measures taken in the past two years, including using national currencies in transactions, addressing customs issues, joint commercial projects, industrial and mining investments, and collaboration in the energy sector and shared gas fields.



● ISNA

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Gazans living in 'utter, deepening horror': UN

Palestinians in the Gaza Strip are living in "utter, deepening horror", the UN human rights chief said Wednesday, as he pleaded for an immediate cease-fire between Israel and Hamas.

Volker Turk said there was a high risk of atrocity crimes being committed in such "catastrophic" humanitarian circumstances. "Civilians in Gaza continue to be relentlessly bombarded by Israel and collectively punished - suffering death, siege, destruction and deprivation of the most essential human needs such as food, water, lifesaving medical supplies and other essentials on a massive scale," he told a press conference. "Palestinians in Gaza are living in utter, deepening horror."

He said 1.9 million of the Palestinian enclave's 2.2 million people had been displaced and were being pushed into "ever-diminishing and extremely overcrowded places in southern Gaza, in

unsanitary and unhealthy conditions." "The catastrophic situation we see unfolding in the Gaza Strip was entirely foreseeable and preventable.

### Atrocity crimes

"In these circumstances, there is a heightened risk of atrocity crimes," the United Nations high commissioner for human rights said.

"As an immediate step, I call for an urgent cessation of hostilities and the release of all hostages," he said, adding: "you need to come back to your senses". Nearly 16,250 people have been killed in Israeli attacks in Gaza, most of them women and children. About 900 people in Gaza were killed in Israeli airstrikes between Friday when a truce ended and Monday.

Israeli troops fought fierce battles with Hamas fighters in southern Gaza on Wednesday after reaching the heart of the city of Khan Younis, forcing Pal-

estinian civilians to seek refuge elsewhere as the number of safe areas decreases.

Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas and free 138 captives still held after scores were released during a short-lived truce.

### Dehumanizing statements

Turk said he was gravely concerned by "dehumanizing and inciteful statements" made by current and former Israeli officials, as well as Hamas figures. "History has shown us where this kind of language can lead," he said.

Turk said the human rights crisis in the occupied West Bank was also "extremely alarming", calling for Israeli authorities to take immediate steps to end "widespread impunity" for violations. "The only way to end the accumulative sufferings is ending the occupation and achieving the two-state solution," he said.

# Damash village, a land of landscapes, culture, and cuisine

Iranica Desk

Nestled in the picturesque Gilan Province, Damash village has captivated tourists with its stunning landscapes, idyllic climate, and delectable local cuisine. As visitors explore Damash, they are enchanted by the sight of *Lilium ledebourii*, locally known as Sousan-e Chehel Cheragh, blooming in all its glory.

The village's strategic location between Rasht and Tehran, nestled in the foothills of the Alborz Mountains, adds to its allure. Situated at an impressive altitude of 1,800 meters above sea level, Damash boasts a drier climate and more abundant vegetation compared to other parts of the province.



alef.ir

Damash has a fascinating history rooted in its abundance of lush springs, earning it the reputation as the land of plenty. In terms of climate, the region experiences an average temperature of 10°C, and an annual rainfall of 450 millimeters, creating a semi-humid and moderate climate. This unique environment provides the perfect conditions for the growth of rare plant species like *Lilium ledebourii*, which thrives amidst the dry and sunny surroundings and permeable soil found in Damash.

When interacting with the welcoming locals, visitors will learn that the people of Damash proudly speak the Gilaki dialect. Poultry farming, livestock breeding, and handmade crafts are among the primary occupations that sustain the community. The village's mountainous and steep terrain, unfortunately, prevents agricultural endeavors, as suitable flat lands for farming are scarce. Nevertheless, this has not diminished the vibrant culture in Damash, and the inhabitants continue to embrace their traditional clothing. During ceremonies, weddings, and local festivals, men don a charming ensemble consisting of a jacket, trousers, a coat, and traditional local shoes. Meanwhile, women express their cultural heritage through colorful Gilani dresses and accessories. The historical roots of these traditional garments can be traced back to the remarkable artifacts discovered in Marlik Hill. It is fascinating to discover that the intricate decorations adorning the skirts and beautiful dresses of Gilani women draw inspiration from these ancient relics.

With its natural wonders, rich history, and warm-hearted locals, Damash invites travelers to immerse themselves in an authentic cultural experience while basking in the splendor of its surroundings.

When visiting Damash, don't miss the opportunity to explore and purchase the delightful souvenirs unique to this region. Handmade crafts like socks and handwoven rugs are perfect for bringing a touch of local artistry back home. Additionally, you'll find an abundance of fresh agricultural and dairy products such as walnuts, pistachios, milk, yogurt, and butter. By supporting the local econ-



itavila.com



entekhab.ir



eghtesaad.ir



eligasht.com



alef.ir



alef.ir

omy through these purchases, not only will you bring home beautiful and delicious gifts, but you'll also contribute to the livelihoods of the people in Damash. Gilan Province holds the distinction of being the most diverse province in Iran when it comes to local cuisine, boasting an impressive range of 170 to 220 types of dishes. The favorable climate and fertile soil of Gilan Province have nurtured the growth of various natural

food items, including an array of vegetables, fruits, and legumes. This abundance of ingredients contributes to the remarkable diversity of flavors and dishes found in the region. Damash village, like other parts of Gilan Province, is renowned for its culinary delights. When you venture to this beautiful area, be sure to indulge in the delicious local dishes on offer. The unique flavors and traditional recipes will provide a memora-

ble gastronomic experience. The climate in this region is semi-humid and moderate, creating a pleasant environment for exploration. However, it is important to remember that the weather can become chilly. Make sure to dress warmly to fully enjoy your time amidst the enchanting fog, clouds, green meadows, and colorful flowers that grace the landscape. Exploring the forested areas is a must when visiting this lush

highland. Consider joining specialized agencies that can offer valuable insights into the plant and animal life of the region. With their guidance, you'll have the opportunity to witness the traces of extraordinary animals, such as leopards, and gain a deeper appreciation for the area's biodiversity. If you're an early riser, embark on a forest hike before sunrise for an up-close encounter with the region's captivating wildlife.

Lastly, don't forget to visit the ancient Herzevil cypress. With an estimated age of 1,000 years, this majestic tree has stood the test of time. As a testament to its significance, it was mentioned by Nasser Khosrow in his travelogue almost 900 years ago. A visit to this historic landmark will provide a glimpse into the rich history and beauty of the region.

Every year, the charming village of Damash hosts the vibrant Sousan-e Chelcheragh Festival to coincide with the blossoming of its beloved flower. This festival, filled with enchanting local music and cherished indigenous customs, is renowned as one of the most captivating spring events in Gilan Province, drawing in countless visitors from near and far.

Damash itself is celebrated as a truly picturesque natural wonder within Gilan Province, owing to its mountainous terrain, lush green landscapes, and the majestic Alborz Mountain range that graces its surroundings. In addition to immersing yourself in the beauty of the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower, you can also explore the invigorating mineral springs nestled in Damash. The weather in Damash is typically mild and refreshing during the spring and summer months, transitioning to colder temperatures in autumn and winter.

Rainfall and fog are frequent companions throughout the year in Damash, adding to its ethereal atmosphere. May and June are the favored months for visitors seeking to witness the vibrant bloom of the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower, which adorns the landscape from early May until the beginning of July.

However, you can also plan your journey to Damash during other months of spring, summer, and autumn to relish the delightful climate that envelops this region.

It is of utmost importance to remember that Damash is an unspoiled sanctuary, and the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower stands proudly as one of the world's precious natural treasures. As you venture through this remarkable destination, please treat nature with respect, refraining from littering and ensuring the preservation of the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower by abstaining from uprooting it.

# Intifada resonates with Latinos

## LatAm reaction to Gaza tragedy surprises world



*"If they were to force you out of your homes, what would you do? Palestine bears the burden of Israel's occupation, suffering under the weight of an arrogant occupying regime primed for war. In a recent surge of resistance along the West Bank, be it in the streets of Gaza or the alleys of Jerusalem, stones stand resilient against bullets. Intifada (Arabic for civil uprising)! Intifada! Intifada! Freedom."*

*These verses belong to the song "Intifada," which saw thousands of Chileans participating in an unprecedented event on November 12. They sang in harmony with the Spanish music group SKA-P in Santiago, the capital of Chile.*

*Over the past weeks, in streets located thousands of kilometers from Gaza, resounding voices declare, "Palestine will triumph!" and passionately demand an end to the genocide against the Palestinian people. The rallying cry, "Latin America stands with Palestine!" echoes through the air. Meanwhile, captivating murals adorned with the empowering slogan "Always towards victory" draw attention, featuring the unwavering gaze of a determined young Palestinian.*

*For the people in Latin America, the Palestinian Cause transcends mere politics, resonating deeply as a humanitarian cause. The populace passionately rallies*

*behind Gaza, employing the power of social media to share millions of posts exposing Zionist crimes. Hashtags such as #FreePalestine and #IsraelGenocide prominently circulate, with a poignant video portraying a Palestinian girl surviving a bombing amassing nearly 20 million views.*

*While the Israeli regime had sought to foster close ties with Latin American nations and governments by the United States' backing in recent years, a seismic shift occurred on October 7, 2023. The revelation of the true nature of this regime triggered an exponential surge in animosity among the people in the region towards the Zionists, intensifying with each passing hour.*

### Chile slams Israel's atrocities

On October 19, the area surrounding the Israeli Embassy in Chile took center stage as pro-Palestinian demonstrators boldly voiced unprecedented slogans, including the pointed accusation of "Zionist terrorist." This fervent display gained momentum on November 18, when hundreds of Chileans orchestrated a symbolic act by placing 1,000 shoes in front of the "La Moneda" Presidential Palace in Santiago. Each pair symbolized a child tragically killed in Gaza. A moment of profound silence was observed as a tribute to the victims, punctuated by the impassioned chant, "No to killing children!" Alongside this heartfelt gesture, protesters wielded signs fervently advocating for the protection of Palestinian children.

The Chilean President Gabriel Boric aligned himself with the sentiments of his people. In a post on X, he asserted, "Children are not 'collateral damage' in the war against Hamas; they are the main victims. Nothing justifies this brutality in Gaza. Nothing." Chile's government also took a decisive step by recalling its ambassador from Israel to Santiago.

### Venezuela: Zionists will target us after Palestine

The Venezuelan populace has a longstanding tradition of expressing solidarity with Palestine and resonating their discontent through slogans such as "Israel is just like the Nazis." This substantial support for Palestine traces its roots back to 2009, when the Venezuelan government, vehemently protesting the Gaza massacre, took the bold step of completely severing ties with the Zionist regime.

In a recent speech, President Nicolas Maduro brought a heightened awareness to his citizens, as well as Christians in America and Europe, shedding light on the threat that Zionism poses to Christianity — a topic that had previously been left largely unexplored.

Maduro asserted, "Zionists have adopted an ideology more perilous than that of the Nazis. Their initial actions targeted the people of Palestine through invasion, genocide, and bombings. Subsequently, they will direct their aggression towards the Arab population and all Muslims, with Christians and Catholics next in their line of sight." The belief among Jews that they are the 'chosen people,' and non-Jews are mere animals in human guise obligated to serve them, underscores the gravity of the president's caution.

The Venezuelan President also urged people worldwide to continue the rallies, stating, "We must prevail in this battle for the right to life and the establishment of the Palestinian state."

### Bolivia: We cannot turn a blind eye to Palestinians' suffering

On October 22, San Francisco Square and the streets of La Paz, Bolivia's capital, became the backdrop for a massive demonstration, where protestors fervently called for an end to the Gaza genocide.

Bolivian President Luis Arce declared in a post on X: "We cannot remain indifferent to the plight of the Palestin-

ian people, who have the right to live in peace. We denounce the war crimes in Gaza."

In response to the ongoing Zionist atrocities, the Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially announced the severance of diplomatic ties with the Zionist regime, while condemning the massacre of thousands of civilians.

### Colombia: Netanyahu is a 'crazy' man

Chile is not the only Latin American country where demonstrators have chosen to target the Israeli embassy as a symbolic act of protest. On November 4, 2023, protestors in Colombia defaced the walls of the Israeli embassy in Bogotá, painting them with images of Nazi symbols.

President Gustavo Petro, in a tweet, expressed that the people of Palestine are

enduring one of the most egregious injustices in the contemporary world. Referring to Netanyahu as "a crazy man," he also declared that Colombia will support the complaint lodged by the Republic of Algeria, submitted to the International Criminal Court, accusing Benjamin Netanyahu of war crimes and the mass killing of Palestinian children.



**Nicaragua, Cuba highlight Americas primary responsibility in Gaza war**

Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega and Cuba's President Miguel Díaz-Canel have issued strong responses to the unfolding events in Gaza. Aligned with the sentiments articulated by Imam Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, who emphasized that "the US is definitely an accomplice of the criminals. In other words, in this crime, the US's hand is drenched and stained up to its elbow with the blood of the oppressed, the children, the sick, women, and others," they have implicated the White House as a complicit partner in the crimes committed by the Zionists. In a public address, Ortega held America accountable as the principal perpetrator of the genocide in Gaza, asserting, "Israel's brutal and inhuman war

is not merely an aspect of the United States government; it is part of a larger strategy. Just as America annihilated the natives of North America, other powers are now engaged in similar actions in Asia." The President of Cuba, in a televised speech, characterized Washington as a "collaborator in the heinous acts of the Zionists" for vetoing the ceasefire resolution in Gaza. Díaz-Canel, by sharing images of Palestinian children martyred in Israel's bombing on his X account, conveyed, "History will not forgive the indifferent. It is time to bring an end to the idea of plunder so that the philosophy of war perishes due to a lack of motivation. The people of Palestine are enduring horror today."

**Argentines, Mexicans urge severing ties with Israel**

Argentines and Mexicans have directed their protests toward the embassies of the Zionist regime as well. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, a substantial gathering on October 9 called for the "expulsion of the racist government" of Israel from their country, expressing their dissatisfaction. Likewise, in a sig-

nificant march on November 58 in Mexico City, the capital of Mexico, participants criticized President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's measured stance on the events in Palestine and urged their government to sever diplomatic, political, and economic ties with Netanyahu's cabinet.

**Honduras: Gaza war wake up call for humanity**

President Xiomara Castro of Honduras shared on her official X account: "Silence is complicity in a crime that threatens humanity. Oh, humanity, wake up! We have no more time!" Finally, on November 7, in response to

the dire humanitarian situation of Palestinian civilians in the Gaza Strip, the Castro government "urgently summoned Mr. Roberto Martínez, Honduras' Ambassador to Israel, for consultations to Tegucigalpa, the capital."

**Sending humanitarian aid to Gazans**

The dispatch of 74 and 17-ton shipments of food and medicine by the governments of Venezuela and Bolivia, accompanied by an airlift from the Colombian government providing essential supplies to Egypt, serves as a testament to the humanitarian aid extended by Latin American governments to the people of Gaza. Despite these efforts, the aid has not reached the people of Gaza due to the blockade of the Rafah crossing. It can be asserted that no other region has seen governments and nations express support for Palestine as openly as in Latin America. This assertion finds backing in the statements of Imam Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, on April 4, 6449. He addressed the President of Venezuela regarding the crimes against the people of Gaza that year and the subsequent severance of Caracas' relations with Tel Aviv, stating, "What the Venezuelan government

did was, in fact, the duty of European governments who claim to advocate for human rights and support for humanity. Unfortunately, the claimant European governments acted in the opposite direction during the massacre of the people of Gaza." 54 years later, Imam Khamenei also praised the position of the Cuban president on the issue of Palestine in a meeting that they had on Dec. 4, 6467. The call to sever ties with the Zionist regime, identified by Imam Khamenei as a key means to halt the tragedies in Gaza, complemented by the dispatch of humanitarian aid and the resounding support for Palestine from a populace shaped by figures like Simón Bolívar, José Martí, Fidel Castro, and Che Guevara is not surprising. These figures, embraced by the people, embody anti-oppression and resistance values, which are deeply ingrained in their collective identity.

“ The dispatch of 30 and 73-ton shipments of food and medicine by the governments of Venezuela and Bolivia, accompanied by an airlift from the Colombian government providing essential supplies to Egypt, serves as a testament to the humanitarian aid extended by Latin American governments to the people of Gaza. It can be asserted that no other region has seen governments and nations express support for Palestine as openly as in Latin America.





AFC Champions League:

# Persepolis undone by Al Duhail; Sepahan into knockouts

Persepolis striker Shahab Zahedi is dejected after the final whistle of the 2-1 defeat against Al Duhail in the AFC Champions League at the Azadi Stadium, Tehran, Iran, on December 5, 2023.

● AMIR KHOLOUSI/ISNA

## Sports Desk

Persepolis crashed out of the AFC Champions League after suffering a 2-1 home defeat against Qatari side Al Duhail on the final day of the group stage on Tuesday.

Sepahan, meanwhile, was the only Iranian top-flight club to book a place in the last-16 round despite a 2-1 loss to Saudi Pro League team Al Ittihad in Mecca on the preceding night.

Saleh Al-Amri and Jota netted either side of a Ramin Rezaeian's equalizer to lead Al Ittihad to a top-spot finish in Group C with 15 points – five clear of Sepahan. Sepahan had to wait for the final whistle of the Group A game between Pakhtakor and Al Fayha 24 hours later in Tashkent, where the Saudi team's 4-1 victory over the host saw the Persian Gulf Pro League giant

progress to the knockouts as one of the three best second-placed sides across the five West Zone groups.

## Blues for Reds

However, the result in the Uzbek capital meant Persepolis stepped onto the pitch at the Azadi Stadium in Group E knowing that nothing but a win was enough for the Reds to overtake Al Fayha in the runners-up table. Yahya Golmohammadi's men kicked off the contest right on the front foot and were rewarded for their bright start early on through Shahab Zahedi, whose glancing header went past Qatari keeper Salah Zakaria in the seventh minute.

The rapturous home crowd was silenced a couple of minutes later, when Lotfi Madjer was denied by Alireza Beiranvand but Mohammed Muntari drew Al

Duhail level on the rebound. Persepolis kept digging in and came within inches of the all-important winner 10 minutes from normal time, only to see Giorgi Gvelesiani's effort from the spot-kick go out off the crossbar.

The Georgian center-back was at the center of further misery for the Reds later as he went down when challenged by substitute Michael Olunga near the touchline before the Kenyan striker went on to score with a composed finish with six minutes left on the clock.

The defeat extended the Reds' winless run to six matches across all competitions as Golmohammadi's side last came out victorious against Istiklol FC in the Asian elite clubs event on October 2.

Golmohammadi was left apologizing to the Reds faithful – a part of whom did not hesitate

to show their frustration at the manager and club CEO Reza Darvish at fulltime – though he believed his men were unlucky to miss out on the three points.

"I would like to thank the fans for their large and enthusiastic presence today and also apologize to them for the result, although it was not what we deserved in the end," said the Iranian, who steered the club to the final showpiece of the competition in 2020, as well as a domestic league and cup double in May.

"We still had the chance [to get what we wanted] after the missed penalty, but Al Duhail is a good team with counter-attacking and the buildup play. It was a difficult game for us, but we created enough [to win the game]," added Golmohammadi. Asked about sections of the stands being vocal in their

chants against the Persepolis players after the final whistle, Golmohammadi said: "My players deserve credit and praise for what they have achieved. They have proved their qualities to me and the fans before, but unfortunately there are bad days in football. The important thing for them is to recover mentally as soon as possible."

Golmohammadi and his side will be back in the Iranian league action against Havadar on Saturday, before taking on archrival Esteghlal next Thursday – in what already looks to be a season-defining derby for the Reds. Persepolis is the second Iranian team to leave the Asian competition in the group stage, following Nassaji Mazandaran, which finished its debut campaign with a 2-1 loss in a dead-rubber away to Group D winner Al Hilal on Monday.

## Lakers edge Suns again, advance to NBA tourney semifinal

REUTERS – LeBron James scored 31 points and dished out 11 assists, Anthony Davis added 27 points and 15 rebounds and the Los Angeles Lakers advanced to the semifinals of the NBA in-season tournament with a 106-103 victory over the visiting Phoenix Suns on Tuesday.

Austin Reaves scored 20 points for the Lakers, who will face the New Orleans Pelicans in one semifinal game tonight at Las Vegas. The Milwaukee Bucks will face the Indiana Pacers in the other semifinal, with the final set for Saturday there.

Los Angeles improved to 5-0 during in-season tournament games.

Kevin Durant scored 31 points for the Suns, who lost for the third time in their past four games after a seven-game winning streak. Phoenix lost two of its five games in the in-season tournament, both against Los Angeles.

Devin Booker and Grayson Allen each scored 21 points for the Suns, with Booker grabbing 11 rebounds. Phoenix head coach Frank Vogel, who was the Lakers' coach when they won the 2020 NBA title, is 0-3 this season against his former team.

The Suns took a 95-94 lead on a 3-pointer from Durant with 5:45 remaining, but then they went more than four minutes without a field goal as the

Lakers took a 102-97 lead with 2:20 remaining after six consecutive L.A. points from James.

Durant ended the field-goal drought with a short jumper to bring Phoenix within 102-99 with 1:02 remaining, and Booker brought the Suns within a point at 102-101 on a layup with 30 seconds left.

After missing his first five shots of the fourth quarter, Reaves buried a 3-pointer with 15 seconds left for a 105-101 lead. Durant made a quick layup to get the Suns within 105-103, and Davis sank 1 of 2 free throws with 6.6 seconds remaining. Durant missed a 3-point attempt at the buzzer.



Lakers forward LeBron James gets the rebound against Suns guard Jordan Goodwin (0) during the NBA in-season tournament quarterfinal in Los Angeles, CA, US, on Dec. 5, 2023.

● USA TODAY SPORTS

# Israel vows to make up for Oct. 7 'defeat' with assassinations

Sovereignty absurd to terrorist 'state'

## International Desk

According to a leaked recording, the head of Israel's domestic security agency, Shin Bet, has vowed to hunt down members of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas in Lebanon, Turkey, and Qatar.

Ronen Bar, who has not spoken publicly since October 7, also took responsibility for Israeli security failures that contributed to the Hamas attack, The New Arab reported.

Israel's public broadcaster Kan aired the audio on Sunday, where Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar can be heard saying: "The cabinet has set us a goal, in street talk, to eliminate Hamas."

"We will do this everywhere, in Gaza, in the West Bank, in Lebanon, in Turkey, in Qatar. It will take a few years, but we will be there to do it."

It was unclear when Bar made the remarks, or to whom. The agency declined to comment on the report.

Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas since launching its own air and ground assault on Gaza, which has killed more than 15,500 people, including over

6,000 children.

Israel has bombed Gaza for two months after Hamas fighters launched an attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people.

Other than in Gaza, Hamas leaders reside in, or frequently visit, Lebanon, Turkey, and Qatar.

Qatar helped mediate a week-long truce that saw hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and dozens of Israeli captives released. The truce broke down on Friday.

Bar's comments appear to be the first time that a senior Israeli figure has vowed that Israel will target Hamas figures in Qatar or Turkey, Kan reported.

Bar, who has not spoken publicly since October 7, took some responsibility for the security failure during the attack.

"The security responsibility is ours. Our duty is to provide both security and a sense of security. Unfortunately, on October 7, we were unable to do it," Bar said.

Taher al-Nono, a media adviser to the head of Hamas' political bureau, brushed off Bar's comments, saying: "The threats... do not frighten any of the movement's leaders."

The Wall Street Journal reported earlier this week that Israeli offi-

cial had said they plan to assassinate Hamas officials in Lebanon, Qatar, and Turkey.

Israel has carried out assassinations of Palestinian leaders in the Middle East, Europe, and beyond since its creation in 1948.

On September 25, 1997, Mossad agents, acting under orders from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his security cabinet, attempted to assassinate the former head of Hamas, Khaled Mashal. The agents, disguised as tourists, injected a fast-acting

poison into Mashal but were not quick enough to escape. With the scandal erupting, then-head of Mossad Danny Yatom flew to Jordan and brought an antidote to treat Mashal, with Netanyahu's consent.

However, Israel has not always failed in what can only be called committing "state" terrorism. One should hesitate to call Israel's assassinations around the world "state"-sponsored terrorism, as its agencies do not rely on outsourcing the dirty work to foreign hitmen. They typically roll up their sleeves and carry out assassination attempts in sovereign states.

Mohsen Fakhriyadeh, an Iranian nuclear scientist, was assassinated in a road ambush on November 27, 2020, by a one-ton gun smuggled into Iran in pieces by the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad, according to a report by The Jewish Chronicle. In a June 2021 television interview, former Mossad chief Yossi Cohen offered Israel's closest admission yet of its responsibility for the assassination. In 2018, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu mentioned Fakhriyadeh by name several times in a news conference. "Remember that name," he said. "Fakhriyadeh." Another high-profile target, Yasser Arafat, the former president



nuclear scientist, was assassinated in a road ambush on November 27, 2020, by a one-ton gun smuggled into Iran in pieces by the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad, according to a report by The Jewish Chronicle. In a June 2021 television interview, former Mossad chief Yossi Cohen offered Israel's closest admission yet of its responsibility for the assassination. In 2018, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu mentioned Fakhriyadeh by name several times in a news conference. "Remember that name," he said. "Fakhriyadeh." Another high-profile target, Yasser Arafat, the former president

of the Palestinian National Authority, may have died as a consequence of polonium poisoning, a report by Swiss scientists published by Al Jazeera television revealed, prompting new allegations by his widow that the Palestinian leader was murdered. On February 16, 1992, former Hezbollah secretary General Abbas al-Musawi was killed, along with six other people, including his wife and son. IDF helicopters attacked his convoy with missiles while traveling in southern Lebanon. Fathi Shaqqa, the co-founder of the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine, was also assassinated by Mossad agents in Malta in 1995.

## Tehran, Moscow bent...

On a much larger scale, Tehran and Moscow have teamed

up under two major international blocs. One is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), where military, security, and political cooperation between the two were influential. The development of such cooperation can well be on the agenda of the presidents of Iran and Russia during Raisi's trip to Moscow. The other global organization in question is BRICS. It provided a chance for the two member states to expand their bilateral cooperation and promote their national interests better.

Russia's facilitative efforts in securing Iran's membership in the three aforementioned organizations show that the officials of both countries are determined to realize the establishment of strategic relations. Some 20 years ago, the two signed a comprehensive cooperation document. Not only did it eventually expire, but many of its articles were also in dire need of being updated. What is more, Tehran and Moscow do not stand where they once stood in the world. That is why they emphasize that a new comprehensive document for strategic cooperation between Iran and Russia needs to be drafted and concluded. In the meantime, they are striving to remove any and all existing obstacles.

After the start of the Ukraine war and the subsequent imposition of the West's sanctions on Russia, Moscow threw away its old considerations for not violating sanctions against Iran, which forged even more ties. Moreover, since Moscow's transit routes to Europe have now been blocked, it has had to find new routes and new partners.

The Iranian president has all these topics to discuss with his Russian counterpart during the trip. The two ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza are also areas where the two might have things to say. Russia was among the countries that showed an interest in mediating between Palestine and Israel, despite the increased efforts of the US in minimizing Russia's role in international relations.

So, even though the prospect of Moscow mediating in the Gaza war seems distant, the country still has aces up its sleeves that it can use to put a wrench in the Israeli war machine, as it once did by vetoing the US's biased resolution in the UN Security Council. It's worth noting that the Israeli prime minister has always been after maintaining relations with Moscow. The same goes for many Middle Eastern countries that are not allied with the US, as evidenced by their attempts to expand ties with Russia.

# Grossi's biased Iran positions poised to derail IAEA



By Zohreh Qanadi

Staff writer

## PERSPECTIVE

"There needs to be some re-creation of a system of dialogue with Iran."

These are the exact words that Rafael Grossi, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency told the Financial Times last week, referring to the failed 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

This suggestion by Grossi is a positive step towards paving the path for diplomacy. However, he has also urged world powers not to lose sight of the risks posed by Iran's stockpiling of enriched uranium while attention has turned to the war between Israel and Hamas, which started on October 7.

It's crucial to note that it was Washington that put the agreement under serious threat in

2018, when then-president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the agreement, subsequently re-imposing its unilateral sanctions and more on Tehran, and prompting it to retaliate by ramping up its nuclear activities to levels beyond what was allowed under the JCPOA. In 2015, the decade-old nuclear negotiations between Iran and 5+1 Group – the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China plus Germany – resulted in the lifting of many Western-led sanctions on Tehran in return for curbs on its nuclear activities. But it was the United States, and then the European parties to the deal that were in violation of it.

Trump even made it challenging for other parties to the deal, especially Europeans – Britain, France, Germany – to keep it alive and closed the long-drawn diplomatic path that took years to yield results. He claimed that the deal – which the international community

believed was working – actually undermined the security of the American people he swore to protect and, accordingly, withdrew from the deal. He did this despite a lack of evidence that Iran was violating the agreement, as well as the IAEA's numerous verifications confirming Tehran's compliance with its commitments.

After two years of warnings by Tehran, during which it no longer found reasons to adhere to the deal due to Europe's inability or unwillingness to resist US secondary sanctions, or domestic pressures in Iran, questioning the value of the agreement, the country dropped some of its nuclear commitments under the deal.

The talks on the revival of the JCPOA began in April 2021 in Vienna, Austria. Despite several rounds of talks, no significant breakthrough was achieved since the end of the last round in August 2022.

And now the IAEA chief put the agency's reputation under question, saying talks with Iran might require a new framework, rather than an attempt to revive the 2015 accord.

"Trying to put [a nuclear deal] back into the JCPOA box wouldn't work," Grossi said. "You can still call it a JCPOA but it should be a JCPOA 2, or something, because you have to adapt."

"We're not asking for people to put pressure on Iran but to engage with us," Grossi said. "For this thing to succeed there must be a minimum level of consensus

in the international community... that Iran must really cooperate with us and that it's not a good thing to have latent proliferation points."

Grossi is seeking this cooperation from Iran, while the country has repeatedly emphasized that it will return to its commitments if the other parties fulfill their obligations.

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said last December that if the United States and Western countries lift their sanctions against the Islamic Republic, Tehran will also return to its commitments within the framework of the JCPOA.

Another point is that Grossi mentions a JCPOA 2, or something. However, with both sides returning to the JCPOA, his claimed international concerns about Iran's nuclear program will be addressed.

Regarding negotiations for a new nuclear agreement between Iran and global powers, the head of Iran's Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, Kamal Kharrazi, has recently said that the country insists on the current version of the JCPOA, and there is no need for a new version.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, he emphasized that the only action required in this regard is the return of other parties to this agreement.

The former foreign minister confirmed that although Iran "can build an atomic bomb, its strategy is not to build one". Kharrazi echoed the sentiment

of the head of the AEOL, saying, "If the opposing parties return to the JCPOA, we will also return to it and reduce enrichment."

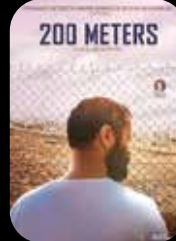
Now we need to see what "framework" Grossi, who has shown a lack of impartiality, has in mind. If he is referring to Iran's defensive and space capabilities, including its missile activities, which Iran has consistently declared as non-negotiable, it requires further clarification.

Moreover, Grossi's statements and actions suggest a departure from the IAEA's traditional role as a neutral nuclear watchdog, raising concerns about the agency's credibility and impartiality in addressing global nuclear issues. Downplaying the significance of the Gaza war, during which nearly 16,000 civilians have been killed, he calls for global attention to Iran's uranium enrichment, while Israel has registered two nuclear threats within the past two months.

Despite widespread speculation, Israel has neither confirmed nor denied having nuclear weapons, adhering to a policy of deliberate ambiguity.

Israel is believed to have between 80 to 400 nuclear warheads, with the first completed around late 1966, or early 1967, but it has never faced serious international scrutiny over this. So, as a neutral nuclear watchdog, it is essential for the agency to uphold its vital role in fostering peaceful uses of nuclear energy and preventing the spread of atomic weapons on the international arena.





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# Pictures, TV shows featuring Palestine

## More needs to be done internationally



Part 2 >

EXCLUSIVE

### Arts & Culture Desk

In the past few decades, various international films, series, and documentaries have portrayed the challenges faced by the Palestinian people. However, there's a need for more productions through cinema on this topic. This collection aims to show the Palestinian narrative, depicting the resistance against oppression. Each piece in this compilation, ranging from documentaries to cinematic films, serves as a window for audiences to observe and connect with the injustices endured by the Palestinian community. Through these films, our goal is to deepen understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, offering a platform for voices – from children orphaned by conflict to a poet and a peaceful protester – that seek to be heard, sharing stories that deserve attention. The cinematic film **'Omar'**, directed by Hany Abu-Assad and produced in 2013. A young Palestinian freedom fighter agrees to work as an informant after he's tricked into an admission of guilt by association in the wake of an Israeli soldier's killing. The film won a special award from the jury of the 'Un Certain Regard' section at the Cannes Festival in its record. Abu-Assad has another film titled **'Paradise Now'** (2005) that follows two Palestinian friends recruited for a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv. It received critical acclaim and was nominated for an Academy Award. The documentary **'Occupation 101'**, (2006) directed by brothers Abdallah and Sufyan Omeish, produced in 2006, winning the Best Editing Award at the 2007 Beverly Hills Film Festival. The film presents a comprehensive analysis of the facts and hidden truths surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and dispels

many of its long-perceived myths and misconceptions. The film also details life under Israeli military rule, the role of the United States in the conflict, and the major obstacles that stand in the way of a lasting and viable peace. **'Broken Cameras'** (2011) is directed by Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi. This documentary follows Burnat's life in the West Bank and his documentation of resistance to Israeli settlements using five different cameras. The animated documentary **'The Wanted 18'** (2014), directed by Amer Shomali and Paul Cowan, tells the story of a group of Palestinians who bought 18 cows and started a dairy farm in the 1980s during the First Intifada. Directed by Mohammed Bakri, **'Jenin, Jenin'** (2002), is a documentary exploring the events that took place in the Jenin refugee camp during the 2002 Israeli military operation. **'The Time That Remains'** (2009), is a semi-autobiographical film directed by Palestinian director Elia Suleiman, spanning several decades, offering a personal perspective on the Palestinian experience. Yaser Murtaja became most notably known for Al Jazeera's documentary **'Gaza: Surviving Shujayea'**. On the 13th day of Israel's assault on Gaza in July 2014, it declared the neighbourhood of Shujayea a closed military zone. That neighbourhood was home to eight-year-old Bisan Daher and her family. Israeli attacks on the area forced thousands of residents to flee and killed at least 72. As Israeli planes flew overhead, a Palestinian ambulance team heard someone crying for help from deep beneath the remains of a home. It was Bisan. Six members of her family had been killed in the bombing.

This film tells the story of her survival against the odds and of the close bond that formed between the young girl and her rescuers. Another documentary made by Al Jazeera is **'Farah: Scarred by Gaza's War'**. When Israeli forces attacked her home in Gaza, killing her mother, grandfather, aunt and three uncles, three-year-old Farah was left with third-degree burns. This film follows her journey as she travels to the US for treatment, undergoing medical care surrounded by unfamiliar faces, and tells the story of the Arab American families who take her in during her nine-month ordeal. **'Skies Above Hebron: Growing up Palestinian in the occupied West Bank'** depicts three Palestinian boys grow up in the divided heart of the occupied West Bank city of Hebron. Over five years, this film follows the challenges and hopes of the boys, Amer, Anas and Marwaan, as they face threats to arrest them and Israeli settlers eager to move into their homes. **'Defying My Disability'**, directed by Ramzi Maqdisi, is a 2016 film in which we meet seven Palestinians aged between seven and 28 with different disabilities. Most were born with them; one was injured in Israeli attacks on Gaza. In the face of conflict, occupation, tragedy and disability – in places ill-equipped to handle special needs – we see how they have learned to navigate complex challenges with optimism and strength. **'Between Fire & Sea: The Man Behind Gaza's Great March of Return'** is also of high significance. "What would happen if thousands of Gazans, most of them refugees, attempted to peacefully cross the fence that separated them from their ancestral lands?" was a question posed by Ahmed Abu

Artema, a Palestinian poet and non-violence resistance activist, on Facebook. His post went viral and became the rallying cry that inspired a movement of peaceful protests known as the Great March of Return. Many of the marches took on a carnival-like atmosphere, with people of all ages and even traditional dabke dancers in attendance. But they were met with violence. This film follows Ahmed as he visits some of the injured and relatives of those killed and tries to reconcile the human toll with his belief in the power of non-violence. Al Jazeera released a featured documentary titled **'The War in June 1967'**. The June 1967 war lasted only six days but its consequences are still felt across the region to this day. It redrew the landscape of the conflict, expanded Israel's territorial claims and confirmed its military dominance in the region. This film examines the roots of the war as well as the six days of conflict and their consequences. **'Israel's Automated Occupation: Hebron'** by Tariq Nafi is a two-part series examines Israeli surveillance in Hebron and Jerusalem. The first part explores AI-powered surveillance in Hebron and the previously unknown facial recognition system "Red Wolf", uncovered by Amnesty International and Breaking the Silence. The second part discusses Israel's surveillance of Palestinians in Al-Quds and the secret Israeli unit responsible for spying on and blackmailing them. **'Rebel Architecture: The architecture of violence'** is the Episode 2, Season 1 of 'Rebel Architecture' which is a short documentary in 2014 by London-based producer-director Ana Naomi de Sousa.

Israeli architect Eyal Weizman explains how architecture plays a key role in Israel's occupation of Palestine and modern warfare. "Architecture and the built environment is a kind of slow violence. The occupation is an environment that was conceived to strangle Palestinian communities, villages and towns, to create an environment that would be unlivable for the people there," says Weizman. **'The present'** is 2020 short film made by Farah Nabulsi. "On his wedding anniversary, Yusef and his young daughter set out in the West Bank to buy his wife a gift. Between soldiers, segregated roads and checkpoints, how easy would it be to go shopping?" the synopsis reads. **'3000 Nights'** is a 2015 drama made by Mai Masri which is about a young Palestinian schoolteacher gives birth to her son in an Israeli prison where she fights to protect him, survive and maintain hope. From documentaries dissecting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict's hidden truths, such as 'Occupation 101', to gripping dramas like 'Omar' and '3000 Nights' that depict personal stories of resilience, these films play a crucial role in having a deeper understanding of these complex realities. They provide a platform for voices that often go unheard, sharing stories that demand attention and empathy. As we navigate the narratives of survival, defiance, and hope within these cinematic creations, it becomes evident that there is a need for more productions that clear up the various aspects of Palestinian life. In a world where storytelling holds great power, these cinematic pieces serve as powerful tools for bridging gaps in understanding and fostering compassion for the Palestinian experience.

