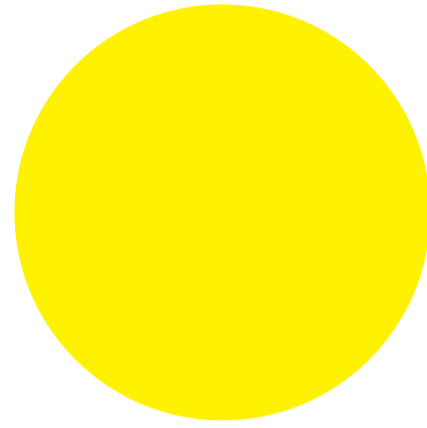




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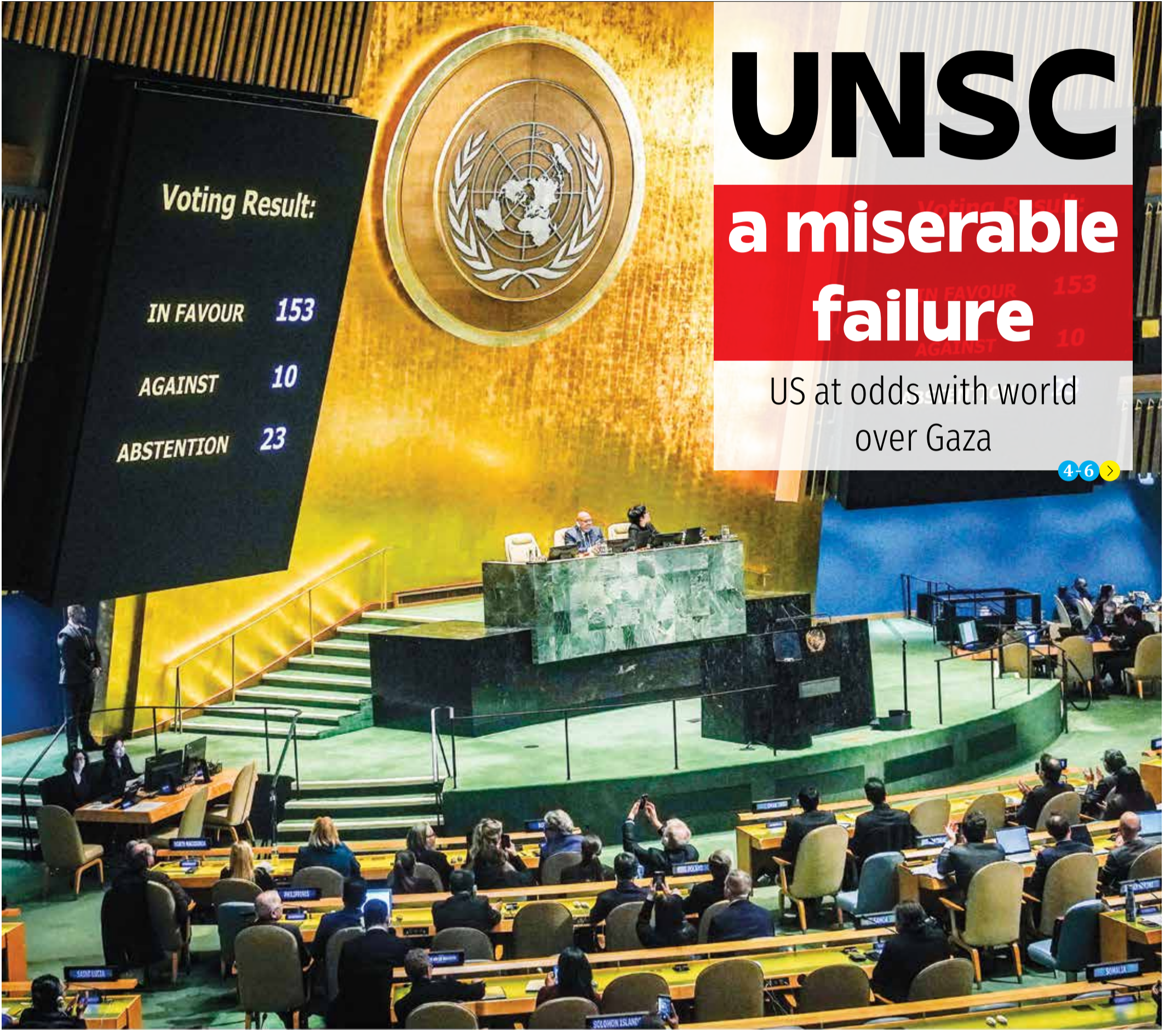


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UNSC

a miserable failure

US at odds with world over Gaza

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Requirements for Iran's cultural reappearance on global stage

By **Mohammad Mehdi Esmaeili**
Iran's Culture Minister

"Cultural surrender" in the face of invading cultures and external powers is considered as "irrational" by Iranians. When foreign governments attacked our homeland in various historical periods, no foreign culture disintegrated Iran; instead, it assimilated in Iran and Islam. Despite the nation's historical awareness of the consequences of foreign domination, some intellectual forces have glorified invading cultures or promoted elements of them, constructing arguments to persuade others to accept the theory of surrender.

"Surrenderism" (or foreignism) and revivalism are opposing cultural poles in Iranian society. Advocates of the "cultural surrender" theory lack progressive ideas for transformation, instead recommending outdated theories based on "modernization" and "Westernization." Some groups in Iran still present "cultural self-destruction" as a novel idea, a detrimental notion injected into society with enticing appearances but carrying significant cultural drawbacks. In contrast, revivalists possess a rich history, historical identity, a comprehensive system of knowledge, flexible literature, and a coherent theory. Formulated as "Reviving the Principle

of Cultural Authenticity," this theory acknowledges that culture shapes the "social structure" as the identity of a society. Page 8 >



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Tehran to have 7,000 EV charging stations: Mayor



IRNA

A sum 7,000 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations will be launched in Tehran within the next couple of years, announced Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani on Wednesday. Zakani said that contracts related to the construction of the new charging stations have been concluded, adding that Tehran will have no problems in terms of the infrastructure and the supply of electricity needed for the stations, IRNA reported. Tehran launched a first batch of 15 EV charging stations in a ceremony on Aug 28, 2023 which was attended by authorities from Iran's Ministry of Industry, Tehran Municipality and the Ministry of Industry have agreed to finish the installation of some 5,000 EV charging stations in the city by the end of the next Iranian year (March 2025), said Zakani. He added that some 170 EV charging stations have become operational in Tehran.

Some \$1.4b attracted in investment for ports development: PMO

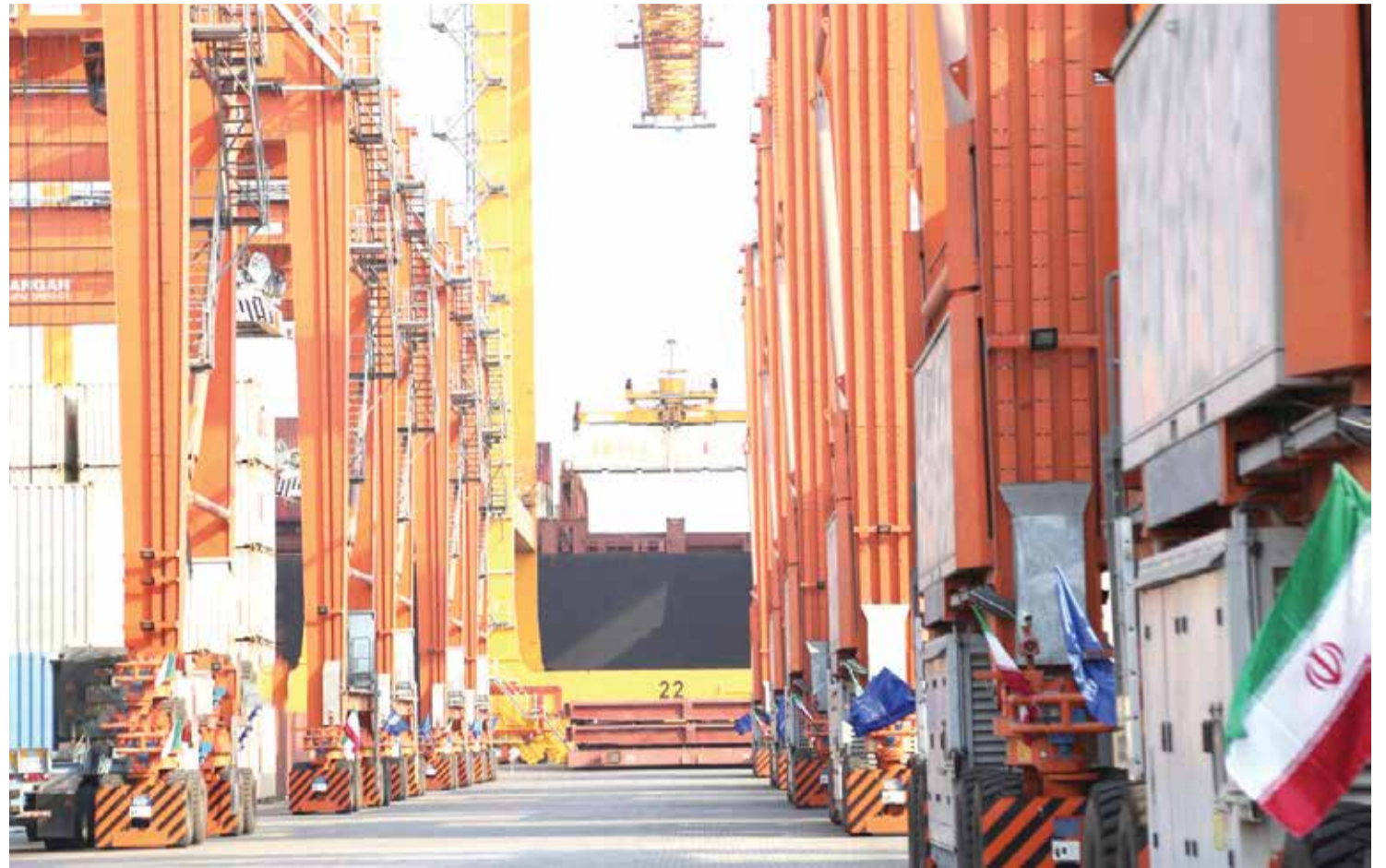
Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) attracted 700 trillion rials (about \$1.4 billion) of foreign and domestic investment for development of Iranian ports, announced Jalil Eslami, the deputy head of the organization.

According to the official, 200 trillion rials (about \$400 million) of the figure will be invested by the country's private sector as the remaining is supplied by foreign investors, IRNA reported.

Underlining the government's serious determination for the development of the country's maritime economy, he noted: "In this regard, a conference dubbed maritime-oriented development will be held by the PMO on the occasion of National Transportation Day on December 19."

Referring to the current government's measures to increase the loading and unloading capacity of Iranian ports, Eslami stated: "The realization of the general policies of maritime-oriented development requires the synergy of all executive, government and maritime bodies."

While Iran is combating the US sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play a significant role in



IRNA

countering the sanctions. This role makes all-out support to ports and more development of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take

some measures to encourage investment making in ports, in addition to facilitating the loading and unloading of

goods, especially basic commodities. The PMO has defined a high number of projects to devel-

op and improve the country's ports, as the country aims to double the capacity of its ports in a course of five years.

'Time to reap fruits' of Iran-Syria economic cooperation

PERSPECTIVE

Syria's emergence from years of conflict and the expansion of stability and peace in most parts of the country have provided Iran with a chance to re-establish economic and commercial cooperation between Tehran and Damascus.

After the destruction caused by years of war, Syria needs reconstruction. According to statistics, almost 40% of government and private buildings in Syria have been destroyed, or seriously damaged, according to Press TV.

The agricultural sector, which accounts for 20% of the country's gross domestic product, and 30% of the employment of workers, is in a bad shape. Sectors of the Syrian industry such as textiles, food and chemical products, which were once famous in West Asia, North Africa, and even Europe, are mostly in tatters. Almost all the industrial and infrastructure towns of the country have been damaged or destroyed, so much so that 80% of the Sheikh Najjar industrial town, one of the most famous production areas in Syria, has been destroyed.

Another area of crisis in Syria is the country's electricity and energy sectors. Of the 39 electricity generating stations in the country, 15 stations have been

completely destroyed, 10 stations partially destroyed, and only one of the eight gas refineries is operating.

Considering the potentials, capacities and experience that Iran has in areas such as building construction, agricultural chains of irrigation, planting, harvesting and conversion industries, construction of power plants and establishment of refineries and petrochemicals, it is best placed to provide the basis for exporting and sending technical and engineering services to Syria with the support of the private and public sectors and raise bilateral economic exchange to more than \$3 billion.

"Iranian companies have priority in participating in the reconstruction of Syria," Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous said in Tehran on Saturday, stating that the Syrian people will not forget Iran for standing by them during years of a terrorist war and unilateral economic sanctions on their country.

According to Damascus-based Al-Watan newspaper, Syria's commercial department emphasized in its meetings in Tehran that the time has come to reap the fruits of cooperation between Syria and Iran.

"Therefore, the agreements in the important areas of economic cooperation and

investment in all sectors are in the implementation stage and are progressing well," it said.

"The most important thing is that what is being worked on today will lead to raising the level of economic rela-

high speed.

Khalil was in the Islamic Republic on Saturday as part of a large delegation headed by Prime Minister Arnous for the 15th meeting of the two allies' joint economic commission after a long

and its implementation will begin in the coming days. Also, the joint insurance agreed upon during President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Syria in May has been finalized, and the issuance of insurance policies will be



This photo shows a joint economic committee meeting of Iranian and Syrian ministers in Tehran on December 9, 2023.

dolat.ir

tions to the point that the two countries aspire to." Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade of Syria Mohammad Samer al-Khalil said that 15-year negotiations between the two countries have reached the implementation stage in the last one year and agreements signed between them are being carried out at a

hiatus. The visit resulted in the signing of a deal on free trade and several memoranda of understanding for tourism, media, sports, museums and libraries cooperation.

Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development Mehرداد Bazrpash said the establishment of a joint bank in Syria has been finalized

activated soon.

He touched on preferential tariffs and many trade tariffs having been cut to zero for 88 items between the two countries, saying the agreement has been finalized and will be implemented in the coming days.

They have also set a target for 50,000 Iranian pilgrims to visit Syria next year. Ba-

zrpash listed energy and electricity another key area of collaboration, saying Iranian companies are about to help Syria repair its national power grid and build new power plants in the country, with the agreement being in the final stages.

The Syrian media described the visit as strategic and unique, while Arab media said it marked Iran's long-term economic presence in Syria and part of its plan to establish an East-West Corridor.

"This trip strengthens the economic and trade relations between the two countries in a way that the interests of the two brotherly nations are secured," said the head of the Syrian-Iranian joint Chamber of Commerce, Fahd Mahmoud Darwish.

"Their participation in the meetings of the joint economic committee of ministers is aimed at promoting joint cooperation and finding solutions to all problems that hinder the exchange of goods and joint investment," he said.

According to London-based New Arab outlet, all indications point to the fact that the agreements between Iran and Syria have been finalized and reached the implementation stage.

"The presence of an Iranian bank in Syria sends a message to the Arabs trying to normalize with the Syrian

government that Iran has established a long-term economic presence in Syria and therefore efforts to reduce its presence in Syria have failed," it cited Yunus al-Karim, an economic researcher, as saying.

By establishing a bank in Syria and strengthening their cooperation, the Iranians will become strong allies of Syria and increase their influence in the country, he added.

Karim also said the presence of an Iranian bank in Syria and dealing with local currencies is expected to help manage religious shrines in Syria and send pilgrims with the aim of developing tourism.

London-based Asharq al-Awsat newspaper said Iran is pushing to activate the Iraq-Syria land transit line through Iraq, as well as a shipping line between Iranian and Syrian ports.

"This project aims to revive a trade line to bypass international economic sanctions and establish what is called the East-West Corridor in Iran," it said.

The newspaper quoted economic sources in Damascus as saying that five major agreements have been concluded for the repayment of Syria's debts to Iran, which include investments in the agricultural sector, phosphate mines, oil wells and a telecommunications project in Syria.

Engross yourself in history, nature, and breathtaking views of Babak Castle

Iranica Desk

Babak Castle, located in the city of Kaleybar in East Azarbaijan Province, is one of the most famous historical monuments in Iran and a popular tourist attraction in the province. It is an ideal destination for history enthusiasts. Situated in a beautiful region, this castle was the residence and battlefield of Babak Khorramdin, one of the most renowned Iranian commanders, for 20 years. Although reaching the castle requires hiking and may seem challenging, the historical significance of the castle and its breathtaking views of the mountains and surrounding areas make it worth the effort, IRNA wrote. Babak Castle was listed as a national heritage site in Iran in 1966. Its restoration efforts began in 1997. If you're interested in historical landmarks, during your trip to East Azarbaijan Province you can embark on an exciting and captivating adventure by climbing up to Babak Castle.



● borna.news

The castle is perched at an elevation of around 2,300 to 2,700 meters above sea level, ensconced within the embrace of a mountain. It is encircled by valleys plunging to depths of 400 to 600 meters.

During the summer, visitors to Babak Castle can witness the presence of the black tents of the Shabsavan tribe in the surrounding mountains of the region.

To get to know these warm-hearted people, all you need to do is ask for permission and enter their area. Additionally, if they have local yogurt, butter, cream, rugs, pottery, and other handmade products for sale, be sure to buy from them.

After a challenging hike, you will finally reach the top of the mountain and Babak Castle, which will leave you amazed by its magnificent view.

In addition to the captivating scenery that makes the challenging journey worth it, and leaves a

lasting memory, the mountainous climate and expansive views of the surrounding environment will amaze and astonish you, helping you forget any fatigue from the ascent. Moreover, the Arasbaran region, especially during spring and autumn, becomes filled with heavy fog, so there is a possibility that you may encounter misty weather during your hike, adding an extra layer of enjoyment to your experience.

The placement of this structure on the peak of the mountain in ancient times enabled a group of 20 soldiers to withstand and defend against an attack from a 100,000-strong army. The distance made it impossible for the archers and soldiers of that time to cause any harm to the guards and soldiers of the castle with their arrows and weapons.

There are many stories and legends about the life and death of Babak Khorramdin. Despite extensive research that has been conducted on him and his activities, a definitive conclusion has not yet been reached. There is not much information about Babak Khorramdin's birthplace, although it seems that his birth dates back to over 1,200 years ago.

The only way to enter the castle is through the main gate. After passing through the gate and the rampart, you will need to cross a narrow 100-meter steep path towards the summit. Then, you will reach the entrance gate of the castle.

On all four sides of the castle and in the mountain walls, there are four semi-cylindrical lookout stations where soldiers could be stationed to oversee areas kilometers away. Access to the main



● mahyanews.ir

fortress requires passing through another entrance with irregular stairs, flanked by two columns on either side.

The castle structure is located after the entrance. Seven rooms surround the main hall, all of which have access to the central hall. In the eastern section of the castle, there are facilities such as rooms and water reservoirs.

According to the architecture, it can be said that the history of this castle dates back to the Parthian and Sassanid periods. Even several centuries after that, in addition to repairs and restoration, some sections were also added to it. Therefore, it seems that Babak Khorramdin restored the main parts and added some sections to it. After 1,200 years, parts of this castle are still standing.

It is highly likely that this structure was a defensive castle, as its architectural style bears a strong

resemblance to of Takht-e Soleiman in West Azarbaijan Province, dating back to the Sassanid era.

To stay near Babak Castle, consider the hotels and eco-lodges available in the city of Kalibar. If you're a nature enthusiast, camping in Babak Castle's campground is a popular choice. The campground offers good sanitary facilities and is suitable for overnight stays.

For the best experience, plan your visit to Babak Castle between late March and early June, or from September to October. Although summer visits are possible, be aware that hiking under the sun's rays can be challenging. The area truly comes alive in autumn, with its intense beauty, but note that visiting Babak Castle in October is recommended.

Lastly, it is not advised to travel to this area during the winter, as the weather can be intensely cold.

Sang-e No village, home to historical landmarks and cultural charms

Iranica Desk

The village of Sang-e No, located near Kojoor in Mazandaran Province, boasts two significant cultural landmarks: a historical cemetery dating back to the early Islamic period, and a Sassanid castle.

The head of Mazandaran Province Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization, Mohsen Bastani, told ISNA that the village

attracts numerous tourists annually. He highlighted the charm added to the mountainous village by its old adobe and stone houses, as well as the presence of two springs.

Bastani mentioned that the cemetery is situated along the road, and the castle overlooks the village from a nearby hill. He further noted that in the ancient past, a spring named Gabrchal caused water to flow into the village, forming seven

small reservoirs.

Highlighting the village's rich history, Bastani stated that Sang-e No dates back 1,300 years, with its inhabitants historically engaged in wheat and barley cultivation, agriculture, and animal husbandry, activities that continue to this day. Sang-e No is situated in the central part of Nour, and according to the 2016 census by the Statistical Center of Iran, had a population of 64 people.



Top body must decide

Purpose or membership, which is more important?

UN Charter deeply flawed

By Mostafa Shirmohammadi
Staff writer

Any human creation, and by extension, any organization, is created for a reason. It has a "raison d'être," if you will. This is most likely reflected in a written piece of paper, most likely called its charter, constitution, or code. If it's an international organization of the highest order, with grand ambitions, its charter will even be made public for all, including its members for generations to know.

Should the need arise, it will branch out and create new subsidiaries or organs to delegate certain tasks. As such, these branching organs have even more specific and pronounced reasons to be. They are formed to handle responsibilities that are too narrow to be given due attention by the whole organization.

I can't think of any international organization that is bigger and more renowned than the United Nations, and I suppose neither can you. Its membership now extends to almost all states in the world. According to Article 1 (1) of the UN Charter, the most important raison d'être or "purpose" of the UN is as follows:

"To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace."

That uses a lot of words to say that the UN is a guardian of peace in the world. If it deems that peace is breached somewhere and principles of justice and international law have been violated, and its non-binding resolutions are being scuffed by the violators, it looks to its enforcement arm, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to issue binding resolutions to member states. Then, if the UNSC resolutions are still ignored, the council can authorize military intervention or impose sanctions. So, out of the UN's six principal organs, the Security Council is charged with the

gravest task.

One can't really expect the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to fulfill the aforementioned purpose since its resolutions are non-binding, and war criminals have no reason to listen to what is essentially a rebuke. Anticipating this, the UN created the Security Council. However, to see the UNSC fail so miserably as of late in achieving its intended purpose, makes one think that either the UN should take out Article 1 (1) or make some fundamental changes to Article 27 of its charter, where it gives five of the council's permanent members the mind-boggling power to veto the votes of other UNSC members, even on matters that are clear violations of peace.

Case in point, Israel, not just in the most recent war on Gaza, but almost from the start of its existence. Time and time again, Israel performed "acts of aggression or other breaches of peace," but the UNSC's record in stopping its crimes has been, at best, spotty, too little too late, and in support of Israel's expansionist plans. The reason: the veto power of the US,

and rarely the UK and France in the UNSC.

Since 1945, 46 UNSC draft resolutions have been vetoed by the US and two by Russia and China. However, the two draft resolutions that were vetoed by Russia and China were extremely one-sided, pro-Israeli efforts by the US during the recent war. Emboldened by the seemingly unwavering support of the US, Israel miscalculated and stepped outside the line a little too much, even for Washington's taste. As a result, the Obama administration abstained once and only once from voting on UNSC Resolution 2334, which demanded an immediate halt to all Israeli settlement construction in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (Al-Quds), enabling the measure to pass. It was a stunning departure from the longstanding US policy, notwithstanding the 1972 draft resolution, which was brief and generic.

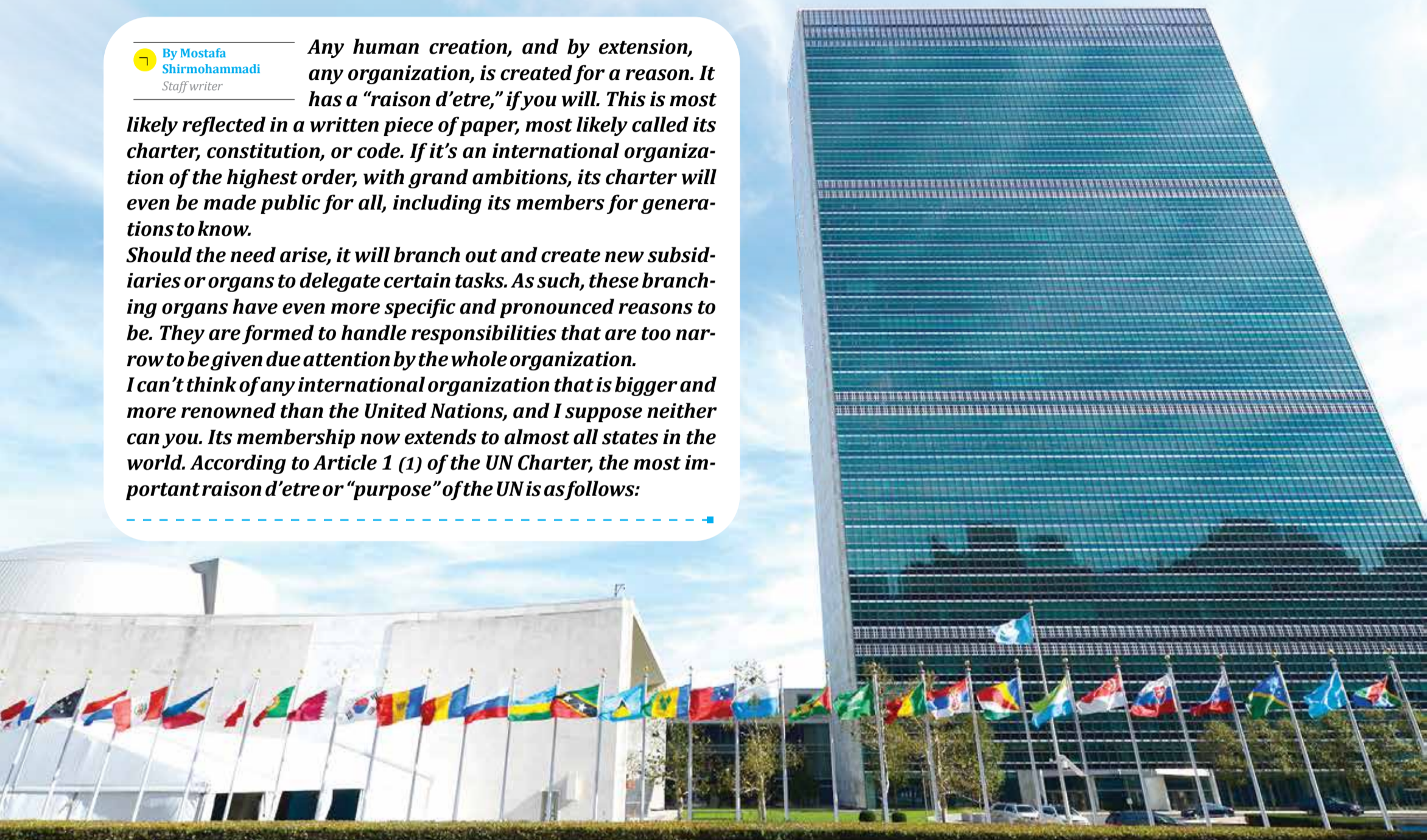
It's important to note that the United States did not stop at vetoing UNSC draft resolutions to protect its ally, Israel. Washington conceived the

Uniting for Peace mechanism during the Korean War to end-run the Soviet veto and supported its use for several decades thereafter. But interestingly, after the Uniting for Peace mechanism began to be used as a way to sanction Israel notwithstanding US vetoes at the Security Council, the United States concluded that the mechanism should be relegated to the dustbin of history, where it remained unused for 30 years.

There's much to be said about what the Security Council decides to vote and act on, but such problems pale next to the counter-intuitive, borderline medieval rule of giving five members veto powers. It's not like this hasn't been pointed out, either. Repeatedly describing the United Nations' charter as "flawed," the then president of Iran Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei told the UNGA in 1987, "The veto power and the permanent membership of the UNSC are two discriminations that must be eliminated."

To illustrate another one of the UN flaws that can be exploited by any rich

nation, one need not look further than the famous confession of its chief. Former secretary-general of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon publicly acknowledged that even when the veto is not an issue, the council and the UN are limited in their abilities to fulfill their purpose. Ban admitted that he removed the Saudi-led coalition bombing Yemen from a blacklist of child killers — 72 hours after it was published — due to a financial threat to defund United Nations programs. Currently, the United Nations, in general, and the United Nations Security Council, in particular, have strayed too far from their purpose and been characterized by a series of ineffective condemnations and calls for restraint. Israel's ongoing war crimes in Gaza should be a wake-up call to nations around the world to shake up some things in the UN Charter. Getting rid of the discriminatory, open-to-abuse power of veto sounds like the first logical step. The veto power is so medieval in nature that not even the Big Five, who wield it, dare or are able to justify it to the whole world anymore.



Trump facing legal challenge over eligibility



The booking photo shows former US president Donald Trump on Aug. 24, 2023, after he surrendered and was booked at the Fulton County Jail in Atlanta, the United States. AP

By Javad Mohammad Ali
Staff writer

With Republican primary voters in the United States heading to the polls in nearly one month, an all-out effort is underway across the country to disqualify former president Donald Trump from running in the 2024 presidential election.

Next year, Republicans will cast their ballots over several months to select their nominee for the presidential election. Iowa and New Hampshire will be the first states that will hold Republican primary presidential elections in January.

Trump, who was denied a second term by the voters in the 2020 presidential election, is trying hard to return to power.

But there are some problems which are hindering his efforts to run for a second term.

Trump's criminal cases

Donald Trump is facing 91 felony counts in four criminal cases which have made it hard for him to easily proceed with his election program.

The cases include a civil fraud lawsuit against his family company, federal cases tied to attempts to overturn the 2020 election results, the removal and mishandling of classified government documents and falsifying business records in connection with a hush money payment to a pornographic actress. However, the US Constitution sets out just a handful of explicit requirements someone must meet to be the president. They must be at least 35 years old, a "natural-born" citizen, and a United States resident for at least 14 years. The Constitution also bars someone who has served as president for two full terms from running again. None of those requirements disqualify Trump, or anyone else charged with a crime, from running for federal office.

Section 3 of 14th Amendment

But one provision in the Constitution, Section 3 of the 14th Amendment, may become a major headache for the former president in the coming months. The provision states that anyone who "engaged in insurrection or rebellion" after taking an oath of office to support the Constitution is forbidden from holding any public office.

Now, a group of voters, especially liberal activists, are trying to invoke the rarely used provision of the Constitution to challenge Trump's eligibility to return to the presidency because of his actions around the Jan. 6 attack on the US Cap-

itol while Congress was gathering to certify the 2020 election results.

Then-president Trump spent weeks before the Jan. 6 riot spreading false claims of widespread voter fraud in his November 2020 election loss to Democrat Joe Biden and encouraging his supporters to rally in Washington. He then encouraged them to march on the US Capitol. Only after hours of deadly violence did he appeal to the rioters to go home.

In the attack's aftermath, the US House of Representatives impeached him on a charge of "incitement of insurrection". Had the US Senate voted to convict him, it would have had the option to take a second, simple-majority vote to bar him from ever serving in office again. But that never happened: the Senate failed to reach the two-thirds majority required to convict Trump, so there was no second vote.

The 14th Amendment was ratified after the American Civil War, and Section 3 was deployed to bar secessionists from returning to previous government posts once southern states re-joined the Union.

It was used against the likes of Confederate president Jefferson Davis and his vice president Alexander Stephens, both of whom had served in Congress, but has seldom been invoked since.

Failed attempts

The legal bid to block Trump has already failed in Minnesota and Michigan. The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled in November that there is currently no state law that prohibits a political party from placing a name on the ballot for "a candi-

date who is ineligible to hold office."

In Michigan, meanwhile, Judge James Redford denied a similar request to keep Trump off the Michigan 2024 presidential primary ballot in November, saying it was a "political question" and not a question to be decided by the courts.

Despite recent failures, the activists have not abandoned their efforts. They have now challenged Trump in Colorado's highest court. Legal experts from both sides expect that one of these cases will ultimately reach the US Supreme Court, which could settle the issue before the Republican primaries in January.

His campaign has called the 14th Amendment case an attempt at "election interference" by "far-left wacko groups." It has said that the legal challenge is "stretching the law beyond recognition" and has no basis "except in the minds of those who are pushing it".

Trump's attorney in the Colorado case argued that the twin dismissals in Michigan and Minnesota were evidence of "an emerging consensus here across the judiciary".

"The petitioner are asking this court to do something that's never been done in the history of the United States," Scott Gessler said. "The evidence doesn't come close to allowing the court to do it." Despite his appalling record during his tenure, especially in his foreign policy and relations with other countries, he is still popular among the Republicans. Trump is the dominant frontrunner for the Republican nomination and is polling neck-and-neck with President Joe Biden ahead of their expected rematch.

US pro-Israel veto further undermines UN



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

The Biden administration's backing of Israel in the aftermath of the attack by Hamas on October 7, 2023, reflects a consistent pattern in recent US history. Despite the humiliation faced by

Arabs, their leaders continue to vie for American approval. Amid the ongoing Israeli aggression against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, Arab and Muslim leaders could have taken steps to protect innocent lives. For instance, Turkey could have halted the crude flow from Azerbaijan to Israel, creating a 40% oil shortage. Additionally, the UAE, Jordan, Azerbaijan, Egypt, and Qatar could have shut down Israeli embassies, isolating Tel Aviv diplomatically. Such measures could have compelled Israel to yield to a cease-fire.

The United States sided with Israel by voted no the United Nations General Assembly's resolution on October 27, calling for an immediate cease-fire and humanitarian aid to Gaza citizens. The no-vote aligns with a historical trend, as the US has previously rejected numerous resolutions critical of Israel, citing the need to protect the regime's security interests.

On December 8, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres convened a council meeting under Article 99, proposing a resolution urging Israel to cease its aggression. Predictably, the US vetoed, claiming the resolution inadequately addressed Israel's security concerns. On October 18, the US also vetoed a resolution seeking a temporary cease-fire for Gazans.

Since 1970, the US has vetoed 43 anti-Israel resolutions, justifying its actions as necessary for Israel's security. The US has been a key supporter of Israel, providing substantial military aid, including an additional \$14.3 billion in 2023. This aid supports Israel's military capabilities, even amid criticism that the US hasn't imposed conditions to safeguard civilians from Israeli airstrikes in Gaza.

The deployment of a US aircraft carrier in the Eastern Mediterranean to protect Tel Aviv from missiles underscores direct US involvement in Israeli aggression. The US determination to shore up Israel stems from its strategic importance and the desire to maintain a Zionist entity, contributing to the ongoing conflict dynamics in the region.



Iran developing chopper, replacing assault rifle in Army: **Minister**



National Desk

Defense Minister Mohammad-Reza Ashtiani said on Wednesday Iran "was taking measures" to develop a new homegrown military chopper.

"We are making an indigenous helicopter at the Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industries Co.," Ashtiani told reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting in Tehran.

In 2009, Iran unveiled its first copter Shahed 285, a light attack and reconnaissance aircraft.

Ashtiani also said the Defense Ministry would gradually equip various military units with a new indigenous assault rifle called Masaf to replace the German HK G3 battle gun. "Masaf is an advanced weapon developed by the Defense Ministry," he said. HK G3 has been used as the official rifle in the Iranian Army for more than four decades.

Ashtiani further spoke of the Iranian-made training jet Yasin.

The aircraft "is one of the most advanced training jets" that would satisfy Iran's needs for such planes to train pilots, he said.

US at odds with world

UN General Assembly calls for immediate cease-fire in Gaza



By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

The United Nations General Assembly has called for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, revealing a significant global divide with the United States siding against the majority. In a vote on Tuesday, 153 UN members supported the resolution for an immediate cease-fire, with only 10 countries opposing and 23 abstaining.

The resolution reflects a stark reality: The world pursues peace, while the US and Israel lean towards war. The vote has no legal force but was the strongest sign yet of eroding international support for Israel's actions. The recent escalation of attacks by Israel on Gaza has increased the opposition to the war, as evident in the growing number of votes in favor of the cease-fire.

Apart from Israel itself, notable countries opposing the truce include the US, Austria, Liberia, Guatemala, and Paraguay. Countries abstaining from the resolution include the UK, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Argentina, Cameroon, Georgia, South Sudan, and Ukraine.

Hours before the UNGA vote, US President Joe Biden criticized Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies, stating that "indiscriminate" bombing of civilians was costing international support. Israel is losing global support. Biden said Netanyahu needed to change his hardline cabinet and that ultimately Israel "can't say no" to an independent Palestinian state, opposed by far-right members of the Israeli cabinet, particu-



Display monitors show the result of voting in the United Nations General Assembly, in favor of a resolution urging Israel to uphold legal and humanitarian obligations in its war against the Gaza Strip, December 12, 2023 at UN headquarters.

larly regarding the two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. However, it appears that not only Israel but also the US and a few other few supporters of Israel are losing international standing. Reports indicate that London and Washington are increasingly isolating themselves amid the global consensus for an end to the conflict. As reported by Sky News, with reference to the abstention vote by the UK and the opposing vote by the US, it is mentioned that London and Washington are increasingly isolating themselves.

Also last week, the US States vetoed a proposed resolution for an immediate cease-fire in a UN Security Council session, with 13 members voting in favor, and

the UK abstaining. Meanwhile, the US president's verbal criticisms of Israel persist, even as Netanyahu announced on X on Tuesday that in detailed discussions with Biden Washington has fully supported Israel's ground assault on Gaza and reduced international pressure to stop the war.

Despite the global outcry against Israeli actions during the past two months and the proposition of UN cease-fire resolutions, the United States, in tandem with Israel, continues to support the ongoing war. The only response from US authorities has been ethical recommendations to Netanyahu's hardline cabinet to distinguish between military and non-military tar-

gets – an advice acknowledged as futile by many.

The UN General Assembly resolutions, while not legally binding, serve as a reflection of global sentiments on contentious issues. The two cease-fire resolutions in October and the recent one clearly demonstrate the United States standing against the world.

The Gaza conflict, accompanied by Israel's inhumane massacres and destruction, has become a significant stage for testing the US' claims of global inclusivity. This is where officials at the White House easily overlooked violations of human rights, the right to life, and compliance with international conventions related to war, genocide, and

war crimes.

Iran, aligning with Muslim and Arab states, has reaffirmed its positive vote for the UN resolution, condemning Israel and recognizing the regime's crimes in Gaza.

After the vote, Amir Saeed Iraivani, Iran's Permanent Representative to the UN, said that, "The situation is entirely clear. A UN member, one of the permanent members of the Security Council, has decided to stand by the criminal regime of Israel and allow it to continue the massacre of civilians in Gaza. The explicit opposition of the United States to a cease-fire implies endorsing war, violence, and ultimately more death for children and women in Gaza."

First Announcement

Tender invitation

Invitation to public tender for Dextrose (DEX)//28000Kg

Tabriz petrochemical company intends to procure its required quantity of Dextrose (DEX) for Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene (ABS) production plant from reputable & reliable producer and supplier of said product. Interested suppliers should submit their request to below email in order to get tender documents until Dec 28, 2023.

Deadline for submission of offers for tender is: January 09, 2024.

Email: n.ahmadian@tpco.ir

Phone No.: +98-41-34217426

Tender	No	Quantity
Dextrose (DEX)	PVS-0241048	28000 kg

Public Relations of Tabriz Petrochemical Company (Public Stock)

First turn published: December 14, 2023

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First Announcement

Tender invitation

Invitation to public tender for: FILTROL GRADED(CLAY-24) TONSIL CO 616 G // 23430KG

Tabriz petrochemical company intends to procure its required quantity of FILTROL GRADED(CLAY-24) TONSIL CO 616 G for ABS production plant from reputable & reliable producer and supplier of said product.

Interested suppliers should submit their request to below email in order to get tender documents until 7 days after the first print.

Email: M.iranmakani@tpco.ir

Phone No.: +98-41-34282973

Tender	No	Quantity
FILTROL GRADED(CLAY-24) TONSIL CO 616 G	PVS-0241044	23430KG

Public Relations of Tabriz Petrochemical Company (Public Stock)

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FM: US to blame for influx of refugees to West Asia, Europe

Iran's foreign minister has blamed irresponsible actions and coercive economic measures of the US for the recent influx of refugees to the West Asia region and also Europe and elsewhere. Hossein Amir-Abdollahi made the remarks in an address to the Global Refugee Forum 2023, in

Geneva, Switzerland on Wednesday, Press TV reported.

The minister said the Iranian government, which is itself hit by the US sanctions, works hard to provide basic services to millions of Afghan refugees in Iran, many of whom entered the country following the chaotic

US withdrawal from Afghanistan and after it took massive economic measures against the country.

The minister said the contributions offered by the UN refugee agency, the UNHCR, only compensate for one percent of the total cost of supporting Afghan refugees in Iran.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



US rapidly losing Arab hearts and minds over Gaza War

By Munqith Dagher & Karl Kaltenthaler

Contributors to Fikra Forum

OPINION

Throughout the fifteen years that following the 2011 withdrawal from Iraq, each American presidential administration has experienced domestic calls to leave the Middle East. However, each time these voices grew louder, a new regional variable emerged that compelled the American administration to return to its traditional role dictated by urgent strategic security and economic interests. After the withdrawal from Iraq, a strategic vacuum led to the emergence of and fight against ISIS, with the deaths of thousands both locally and internationally, and millions from the region displaced. The US military was forced to return to the region to contribute to the efforts to eliminate ISIS. When this goal was declared completed, new regional threats emerged. The war in Gaza has emerged to confirm once again the error of US assessments that contend that this region is no longer important to America's strategic interests.

Iran's positive influence

Moreover, it seems that Iran has been a major beneficiary of this war. On average, percentage of those who say that it had a positive impact in the war is 40%, compared to 21% those who say that it has a negative impact. In countries such as Egypt and Syria, the percentage who say that Iran has a positive influence in Gaza is even higher, reaching 50% and 52% respectively. Such views are underpinned by a near total lack of trust in the US and its intentions. Only 3% of Jordanian respondents say

they trust America, compared to 24-25% who say the same for Russia and China. In Iraq, only 7% of respondents say they trust America, compared to 33% for Iran and China, and 36% for Russia. And as for Egypt, trust in America amounts to only 9%, compared to 51% for Russia and Iran, along with 47% for China. These numbers are the lowest favorability ratings for America in the more than twenty years that we have spent researching public opinion in the region. According to a study by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in 2020, even at

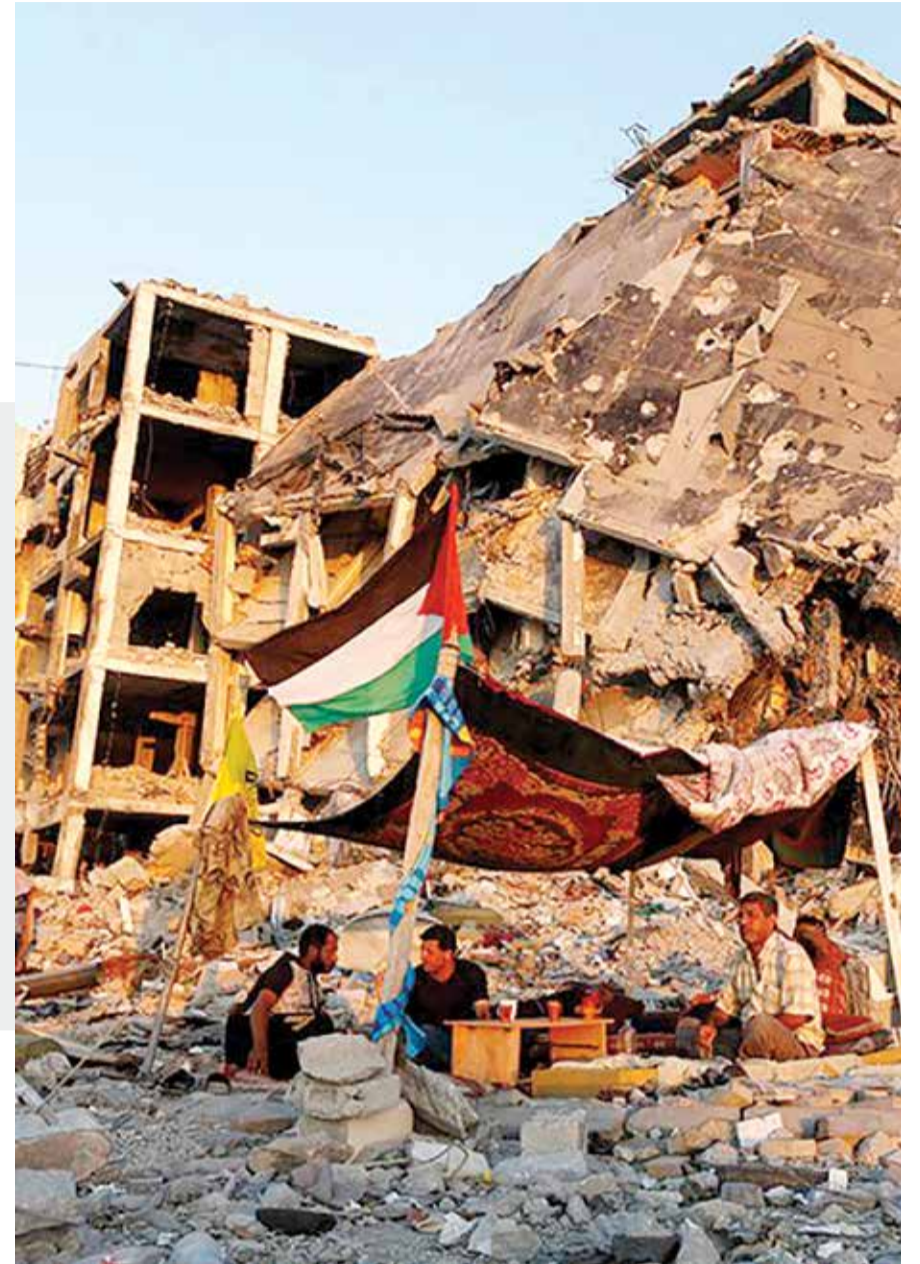
The data from a recent public opinion poll conducted by the independent research group IIACSS and its partners in the region—polling nationally representative samples in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine during the period October 17-29, 2023—indicate that right now, America is losing ground in ways that can impact all priorities identified in the National Security Strategy document. Because of US support for Israel, America's trust and influence among Arabs in the region has reached its lowest point historically, while support for its competitors and strategic opponents—China, Russia, and Iran—has increased. In short, among these six key Arab publics, America is losing compared to its opponents because of the war in Gaza. The percentage of Arabs who believe America has a positive role in the war amounts only to 7%, with figures as low as 2% in countries like Jordan. By contrast, the percentage of Arabs who say that China has a positive role in the conflict included 46% in Egypt, 34% in Iraq, and 27% in Jordan. Positive views of Russia are even higher; the percentage of those who believe that Russia has a positive influence neared half—averaging 47% among the publics surveyed (except in Palestine).

the lowest ebb of American favorability in the region, the negative evaluation of America's policies towards Palestine did not drop below 19%.

It is clear that the way the US has handled the war in Gaza has cost it what remained of a perception of credibility and neutrality among a proportion of these Arab publics. Those who follow what is published in the Arab media and social media platforms that likewise realize how great America's loss of soft power has been in the region over the past month. The US, which has invested trillions of dollars in the Mid-

dle East over the course of a century and expended significant blood and sweat in the region, is in danger of the return on that investment being significantly diminished because of this conflict.

In our recent survey, when asked about the reasons for America and the West's support of Israel, just an average of 8% answered that the reason was to defend civilians who were captive by Hamas on October 7. Half—the significant plurality choice out of three options—said that the reason the West supports Israel is because they hate Islam and Muslims. About



30% answered that the reason was the strength of the Israeli lobby. The majority of Arabs see the West's support for Israel's war against Hamas as support for a war against them.

Losing soft power

One of the most important secrets of American soft power in the face of its competitors is the American model based on human rights, rejection of racism, and repudiation of the "law of the jungle" in international relations. Currently, this public opinion polling emphasizes that the overwhelming majority of respondents do not believe that these principles are being applied in the official American stance on the war in Gaza.

This is sobering information for Western and particularly American policymakers when they consider how the landscape of Arab public opinion has turned so decidedly against them. In essence, the majority of Arabs likely see the current conflict as akin to a new Crusade. Whereas Western governments and publics tend to view Operation Al-Aqsa Storm as either designed to stop regional normalization with Israel, serve Iran's goals in the region, or solidify its control in Gaza, only 13% of Arab respondents listed any of these theories as Hamas' main intention. More than 60% instead chose liberating Palestine, stopping Israeli violations at Al-Aqsa Mosque, or halting settlements.

Only time will tell if these shifts in Arab public opinion toward the US and the rest of the West are a tem-

porary spike in anger at a time when this has become the most pressing popular issue in the region, or whether these attitudes will harden and represent a more permanent shift. Two factors will likely play important roles in the future trajectory of Arab public opinion toward the Gaza War and the West.

The first factor is the duration of the war. Images of dead and wounded Palestinian men, women, and children are now ubiquitous in Arab traditional and social media. In the case of a protracted war, it is possible some Arabs will grow weary of the conflict and turn to other issues, but a significant shift away from the conflict is difficult to imagine given the intensity of media coverage in the Arab world. The longer the conflict lasts and the longer these images flood Arab popular consciousness, the more likely it is that Arab anger will persist or even grow far past the duration of the current conflict.

The second factor that will help shape Arab attitudes about the war and the West is the trajectory that the conflict takes. In other words, the actions of the Israeli government and its Western backers will be critical in how this war is framed in the Arab world after its conclusion. If Israel attempts to shift portions of the Palestinian population out of Gaza or creates a long-term occupation in Gaza, it will further inflame Arab opinion on the conflict and deepen resentment toward the West.

It seems likely that future Arab attitudes towards Iran, China, and Russia will

largely follow the same logic. Rather than being driven by any particular actions or state messaging from these actors, this bump is probably being shaped by the perception that these countries are "enemies of my enemy" as outspoken opponents of the West, each in their own way. How lasting this favorability bonus will be likewise depends on the duration and course of the conflict.

Finally, it is important to assess what the prevailing negative Arab attitudes toward the US means for the relations between the US and these populations' respective governments, and whether Arab opinion "on the street" could pressure Arab governments to curtail relations and cooperation with Washington. While it is unlikely that there will be any profound breaks in relations between the US and friendly Arab governments over this conflict, it will be increasingly uncomfortable over time for Arab governments to publicly engage with US officials if the conflict persists or takes a more deleterious turn for the population in Gaza. It will be important to assess the depth of Arab anger toward the West and understand if and when there is a point in time where Arab attitudes toward the US have soured so badly that the US is no longer viewed as a necessary evil in the region but is instead no longer welcome by most.

The above is a lightly edited version of part of an opinion originally appeared on washingtoninstitute.org.

First Announcement

Tender invitation

Invitation to public tender for BUTYL CHLORIDE // 25,400kg

Tabriz petrochemical company intends to procure its required quantity of BUTYL CHLORIDE for polyethylene production plant from reputable & reliable producer and supplier of said product. Interested suppliers should submit their request to below email in order to get tender documents until December 28, 2023.

Deadline for submission of offers for tender is: January 09, 2024.

Email: l.allafkari@tpco.ir Phone No.: +98-41-34282921

Tender	No	Quantity
BUTYL CHLORIDE	PVS-0241050	25,400 kg

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First Announcement

Tender invitation

Invitation to public tender for Diatomite// 22000 kg

Tabriz petrochemical company intends to procure its required quantity of Diatomite for ABS production plant. Interested suppliers should submit their request to below email in order to get tender documents until January 04, 2024.

Deadline for submission of offers for tender is: January 20, 2024.

Email: me.rahimi@tpco.ir Phone No.: +98-21-88737355#109

Tender	No	Quantity
Diatomite	PVS-0241020	22000 kg

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Pakistan rally arrives in Tehran to promote tourism



Arts & Culture Desk

The Peace and Friendship Rally from Pakistan, aimed at fostering cultural exchange between the two nations, reached Tehran on December 13.

The event, hosted by the Pakistani Embassy in Tehran, welcomed a group of Pakistani off-road lovers who have been touring various cities in Iran under the banner of peace and friendship.

Muhammad Mudassar Tipu, the Ambassador of Pakistan to Tehran, in his exclusive interview with Iran Daily reporter expressed his delight at their presence in Iran, adding that the purpose of the rally is to strengthen the friendly ties between Iran and Pakistan while promoting tourism to Iran.

The envoy emphasized the importance of expanding cultural programs between the two countries, expressing hope that such initiatives would lead to improved relations and increased familiarity between the people of Iran and Pakistan.

Mukarram Khan Tareen, the leader of the Pakistani off-road jeep riders, provided details of their journey to Iran. The 20-member group, including two women and two children, began their journey from Lahore on November 29, traveling in six off-road vehicles.

Tareen highlighted their meetings with Iranian travel agencies during the trip, discussing tourism opportunities.

The rally, spanning 25 days, has taken the participants through cities such as Zahedan, Bam, Kerman, Pasargadae, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Qom, with stops planned in Qazvin, Zanjan, Masuleh, Rasht, Ramsar, Sabzevar, Neyshabur, Mashhad, and Zahedan, before returning to Lahore via Sistan and Baluchestan. Tareen praised Iran as a beautiful country with hospitable people, stating their intention to organize a photo exhibition in Pakistan showcasing the tourist attractions and beauty of Iran captured during their journey.

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Discovery of jar burial site reveals insight about Parthian era

Arts & Culture Desk

Archaeologists uncovered a jar burial site containing unique grave structures believed to belong to a group of warriors who pioneered a distinctive guerrilla warfare style 2,200 years ago, later dubbed as partisans – the unconventional method of irregular warfare designed for timely fight or flight.

Situated approximately nine kilometers from Kiasar, and 85 kilometers from Sari, in the village of Vastmin, the ancient site of Chaardangeh was disturbed during the construction of a major national project – the gas transfer project – in 2015. Bulldozers encountered a vast graveyard dating back to the Parthian era, featuring tens of extraordinary jar burials, according to an article recently published in Asr-e Iran, Persian news website.

The initial impact of the bulldozers led to the destruction of several grave structures, unveiling the footprint of other burials. Notably, one of the tombs exhibits a design reminiscent of a Parthian dome, a style previously unseen.

Led by Abdolmotaleb Sharifi, archaeologists conducted excavations revealing over 10 Parthian burial structures in the Vastmin site. Adorned with large stone slabs, these graves took shape within the earth, displaying unprecedented and fascinating architectural features.

In a meticulous effort supervised by archaeologist Farzad Forouzanfar, the team unearthed the inner chambers of these jar burials, resembling

ancient tombs, where bodies were laid in fetal or contracted positions. Presumably, these familial tombs were unearthed repeatedly to inter fresh bodies.

Like other burial ceremonies, the dead bodies received some gifts, most of which were weapons. Moreover, the archaeologists discovered food offerings inside the graves. Of particular interest is the presence of intact eggs, a rare find in historical archaeology. Over 100 skeletons, mainly of male warriors, were meticulously studied. The burials revealed armed individuals, often accompanied by their horses.

The lead archaeologist, Farzad Forouzanfar, believes that these warriors likely guarded the nearby Parthian capital city of Sad Darvazeh, near today's Damghan.

Notably, one distinctive burial stands out from the rest. This individual, perhaps 18 years old, was found with a golden headband, metal fragments believed to be armor, and a coin in his left hand, though severely deteriorated (placing a coin in the hand, mouth or on the eyes of dead bodies was highly common at the time). The location of the burials, separate from the main cemetery, raises questions about its significance.

While Chaardangeh, now transformed into a museum site, reveals many mysteries, archaeological excavations are temporarily paused. Vastmin holds the key to unlocking more secrets about one of Iran's most significant Parthian-era burial grounds, awaiting more explorations.



asriran.com

Requirements for Iran's ...

Revivalists rely on "cultural thinking" and intellectuals, pushing forward their movement

Page 1 >

for cultural renewal without compromising on the novelty of civilization. "Murdering elites" is the work of surrenderists and foreignists who, in the public domain of culture, engage in translation, adaptation, and imitation of Western cultural highlights. Overcoming this spirit is considered the greatest enemy of cultural development and the worst affliction for the power of thought and culture. Surrenderism and murdering elites have become synonymous, two edges of a sword against culture

and thought. Those representing this approach are accused of murdering elites in Iran because they fear new ideas and innovations.

Today, foreignists and surrenderists object against any cultural prosperity opposing their failed predictions and outdated thought frameworks. They belittle committed intellectuals, willing even to mock the greatest achievements of the revolution and the system, aiming to make the audience feel hopeless about today and the future.

The Iranian government, aware of the danger of the "cultural surrender theory," has developed a comprehensive program

to evaluate costs and benefits. Despite the substantial costs in confronting surrenderists and foreignists, the vision envisions the reappearance of Iran as a "cultural superpower" on the global stage. To realize this, responsible individuals in the government must expedite the restoration of domestic cultural infrastructure and governance while renovating the cultural diplomacy apparatus. Iran, with the potential to enhance its influence in the cultural world, must rejuvenate its soft power.

The cultural life of Iranian society is more vibrant than ever, and things that seemed impossible before are now easier to

achieve. In the near future, Iran will play a bigger role in global cultural changes, making our cultural influence stronger. But it's important to know that changes in civilization are always tough.

Some people who give up easily and those who support foreign ideas keep resisting those trying to revive our culture. They won't stop trying to bring down the morale of intellectuals. Iran, with its Islamic identity, is going through a modern era, and it's normal to see different reactions to this big shift.

The "Coalition for Culture" is our main plan in the united cultural government for this important

revival. We think that significant changes in civilization will only happen if "cultural elites" come back to the public eye. The smart minds of today's Iran are in these cultural elites. They didn't avoid change, stood strong against giving in, paid a big price for this hard path with their lives, and worked hard to bring new ideas to life. They know that the government sees itself responsible for them because, in our opinion, supporting intellectuals is part of protecting the "cultural rights" of the nation. We see this support as a promise to make Iran more powerful in the global cultural scene.



Sixth Week of Spanish Architecture to be held at Iranian Artists Forum

The Sixth Week of Spanish Architecture will open on December 14 with a display of architectural masterpieces from Spain at the Iranian Artists Forum.

Organized by the Spanish Embassy in Iran, the event is set to

begin in the Jalal Shahnaz Hall, IRNA reported.

During the week-long exhibition, 46 photographs capturing the works of two prominent Spanish architects, who have executed diverse projects around the globe, will be showcased in

the Tabestan Gallery.

Santiago Porras, Oriol Pons, and Farhad Azarmi are slated to be the keynote speakers at the opening ceremony of the event. Furthermore, Ambassador of Spain Ángel Losada Fernandez, will be the special guest of hon-

or at the program's inauguration. The Iranian Artists Forum will be closed to the public on December 16 and 17. Enthusiasts eager to explore the exhibition of Spanish architectural wonders can visit the Tabestan Gallery until December 21.