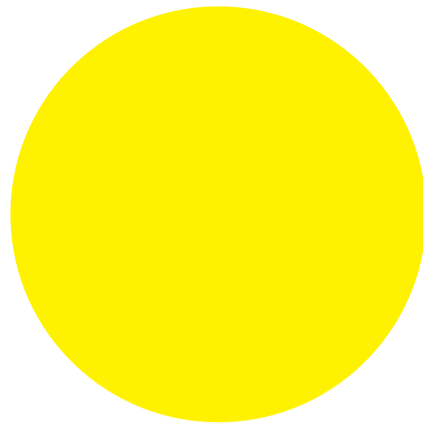




# Israel's 'lawful' genocide

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## Time ripe to oust Netanyahu for good



By Ebrahim Beheshti  
Staff writer

### OPINION

With the true colors of Israel revealing more by the day, the winds of change are no longer favoring Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet. Under the pretext of the October 7 attack by Hamas, Netanyahu's hawkish cabinet has embraced a military strategy that lacks support or justification. Even the United States now hesitates to offer unconditional backing to Israel's military policies. The world's public opinion sees the four months of devastating bombings in Gaza, resulting in the deaths of innocent women and children, as nothing short of "genocide."

Long before Western politicians grasped the magnitude of the catastrophe and its global consequences, people took to the streets in various cities worldwide, from Tehran to Berlin, London, and Washington, protesting Israel's heinous crimes. They condemned the Israeli genocide and expressed solidarity with the people of Gaza.

The gravity of the situation in Gaza left no room for silence from either the United Nations or governments worldwide. Following South Africa's bold move to sue Israel in the International Court of Justice, the largest Muslim country, Indonesia, along with Slovenia, has declared support for another lawsuit against Israel for its violation of Palestinian rights. Furthermore, the Iranian vice president for legal affairs has announced Tehran's intention to join South Africa's ICJ complaint as a third party. Moreover, Mexico and Chile, have lodged complaints with the International Criminal Court regarding Israel's crimes during the Gaza war.

On Thursday, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and expediting the provision of aid to the war-ravaged enclave. It also endorsed the ICJ measures in ending the Gaza war while emphasizing the need for a new European initiative to revive the political process.

Regardless of the outcome of these legal actions, what matters most is the new international momentum against Israel. The one-sided narratives that initially portrayed Israelis as victims and defenders of their legitimate rights, expertly made up by the mainstream media in support of Tel Aviv, have lost their credibility.

Page 2 >

## From military strikes to diplomacy

# Iran, Pakistan stress 'brotherly' ties

7 >

# New Legal Fronts to Open

## More states to sue Israel over Gaza crimes

7 >



People sit inside the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the day of the trial to hear a request for emergency measures by South Africa, who asked the court to order Israel to stop its military actions in Gaza and to desist from "genocidal acts" committed against Palestinians during its war on Gaza, in The Hague, Netherlands. ● REUTERS

**Iranian oil minister, Turkmen president discuss energy cooperation** 2 >



### Minister: Clothing most important cultural symbol of any civilization



Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili emphasized the cultural significance of clothing during his visit to the 12th Fajr Fashion and Clothing Festival on January, 19, 2024. 8 >

**Embark on a journey through history, culture, and commerce in Rasht Bazaar** 3 >



**Iran's economic growth at 7%: PBO** 2 >



**Persepolis coach quest to continue as Ivankovic snubs Reds offer** 6 >



## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Iran's economic growth at 7%: PBO



The head of Iran's Plan and Budget Organization (PBO) said on Friday that with the efforts made by the incumbent government, Iran's economic growth has reached seven percent, from zero and negative values registered two years ago.

The country's economic growth reached 7% in the first six months of this year (started March 21, 2023), said Davoud Manzour, according to IRNA.

The government has plans to identify the obstacles facing producers, the PBO head noted, saying that the main problem of producers is sales and marketing. Every year about \$15 billion worth of agricultural products are imported, Manzour said, adding that most of the imported products can be produced in Iran.

## Over 24m tons of steel produced in nine months

Iran's major steel mills have produced 24.49 million tons of steel ingot and 16.63 million tons of various types of steel products in the first nine months of the current Iranian year (March 21-December 21, 2023).

Statistics show that the production of steel ingot and various types of steel products in the country grew by three percent and about 0.25 percent, respectively, compared to the preceding year's corresponding period, reported Tasnim News Agency.

Meanwhile, Iran has produced 44.84 million tons of iron ore pellets, showing a 10 percent hike compared to the same period in 2022. The major Iranian steel production companies have also exported 5.62 million tons of steel ingot and 2.48 million tons of various types of steel products in the nine-month period.

The report added that 7.22 million tons of iron ore pellets and 1.21 million tons of sponge iron were exported by Iran between March 21 and December 22, 2023, showing a 97 and 93 percent growth, respectively.



## Iranian oil minister, Turkmen president discuss energy cooperation



Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji and Turkmenistan's President Serdar Berdimuhamedov and high-ranking officials held talks on the expansion of bilateral cooperation in Ashgabat on Thursday.

Heading a delegation during his two-day visit, Owji and top Turkmen officials exchanged views on gas trade and exports of oil products, technical-engineering services and equipment, Shana reported.

Majid Chegeni, the deputy oil minister who is also the managing director of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC); Ahmad Asadzadeh, Iran's deputy oil minister for international

affairs and trade; and Peyman Kehtari, adviser to the minister and head of the Ministerial Office, are accompanying the oil minister.

Carrying a message from Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi to his Turkmen counterpart Berdimuhamedov, Owji also talked to Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov and Deputy Prime Minister for Oil and Gas Batyr Amanov.

On December 19, 2023, Raisi, in his phone call with Berdimuhamedov, expressed his satisfaction with the considerable growth of bilateral relations, particularly the increase in the two nations' trade volume in

recent years.

The Iranian president also stressed the need for speeding up the implementation of the energy, transport, and transit agreements reached between the two countries during Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Cooperation Commission meeting.

Berdimuhamedov, for his part, expressed gratitude to Iran for its active participation in the joint commission and side exhibitions, saying Turkmenistan is ready to broaden cooperation with Iran and put bilateral energy, transport, transit, and cultural agreements into action.

## Indian Embassy celebrates ITEC Day in Tehran



By Reza Abesh Ahmadlou  
Staff writer

The Indian Embassy celebrated the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation ITEC Day in Tehran on Thursday.

The celebrations commenced with the welcome remarks by Indian Ambassador to Iran Rudra Gaurav Shresth, which was followed by sharing of experience and memories in India by ITEC alumni, which also included rich Indian cultural traditions.

The Indian envoy briefed the attendants with fully-funded scholarships offered by the ITEC program and called for the program's introduction to other Iranians by the alumni and Ira-

nian media.

ITEC is the leading capacity building platform of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Instituted in 1964, ITEC is one of the oldest institutionalized arrangements for international capacity building, having trained more than 200,000 officials from over 160 countries in both the civilian and the defense sector.

Building on India's vast and rich network of governance- and development-related expertise available in higher educational institutions and training facilities, ITEC offers nearly 10,000 fully-funded in-person training opportunities through nearly 400 courses offered at over 100 eminent institutes in India each year.

Since 2014, India has offered close to 100,000 world-class capacity building trainings and scholarships at premier institutions in India, along with a chance to experience the culture and hospitality of India. Even during the disruptions occasioned by the COVID pandemic, the ITEC program continued with its commitment to share India's development experience with the world, providing online health care and governance related trainings to nearly 10,000 professionals through digital platforms.

Interested applicants can refer to the following website for further details about courses and fully-funded scholarships of the ITEC program:

[https://www.itecgoi.in/upcoming\\_courses](https://www.itecgoi.in/upcoming_courses)



Indian Ambassador to Iran Rudra Gaurav Shresth  
IRAN DAILY

## Iran's nine-month exports to Iraq up 33%



The value of Iran's exports to Iraq during the first nine months of the current Iranian year (March 21-December 21, 2023) has risen by 33 percent compared to the same period a year before, said Iran's special commercial envoy to Iraq.

Farzad Piltan stated that Iran exported natural gas (\$1.5 billion), steel products (\$750 million), plastic products (\$557 million), dairy products (\$273

million), metal minerals (\$260 million), processing industry products (\$214 million), tile and ceramics (\$187 million), and chocolate and pastries (\$140 million) to Iraq in the nine-month period, Mehr News Agency reported.

Iran's import of products from Iraq in that period has shown a 236 percent growth compared to last year's corresponding period, he added.

## Oil prices rise on strong IEA, OPEC demand estimates

Oil prices rose as the IEA joined producer group OPEC in forecasting relatively strong growth in global oil demand this year, with price impetus also coming from disruption to US output and geopolitical risks in the Middle East.

Brent crude futures gained 37 cents, or 0.5%, to \$78.25 a barrel by 1005 GMT while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 55 cents, or 0.8%, to \$73.11, Reuters reported.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) now expects oil demand to grow by 1.24 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2024, up 180,000 bpd from its previous projection, its monthly report said. The agency cited improved economic growth and lower crude prices in the fourth quarter.

The Organization of the Pe-

roleum Producing Countries (OPEC) had said on Wednesday that it expected demand growth of 2.25 million bpd this year, unchanged from its forecast in December. The producer group also said oil demand is expected to rise by a robust 1.85 million bpd in 2025 to 106.21 million bpd.

The IEA's executive director, Fatih Birol, told the Reuters Global Markets Forum that he expects oil markets to be in a "comfortable and balanced position" this year despite Middle East tensions, rising supply and a slowing demand growth outlook.

Oil's range-bound trading in recent days reinforces the narrative that investors are shrugging off concern that tankers may be at risk from attacks in the Red Sea, said Ehsan Khoman, analyst at bank MUFG.

In top oil-producing US state North Dakota, meanwhile, oil output fell by 650,000 to 700,000 bpd because of extreme cold weather, the state said.



## Time ripe to ...

Netanyahu's recent comment, openly opposing the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, has challenged America's stance as Israel's staunchest supporter and ad-

vocate for a two-state solution. The BBC's Persian service reported that Washington's attempts to curb the destruction and civilian casualties caused by Israel have hit a deadlock, leading to growing frustration

over the Biden administration's unwavering support. There are also demands that urge the US government to condition American aid to Israel. It appears that Israel is facing more international pressure

than ever before, with critics and opponents tightening the noose around the regime. Taking into account the mounting internal pressure against Netanyahu's warmongering policies and the failure of the

regime's military to achieve its goals in Gaza, it becomes clear his extremist cabinet is facing adverse winds. The stage is being set both inside and outside Israel to bid farewell to Netanyahu.

# Embark on a journey through history, culture, and commerce in Rasht Bazaar



MEHR



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## Iranica Desk

The Grand Bazaar of Rasht, the capital city of Gilan Province, is the largest open-air market in Iran. This traditional bazaar, a key attraction of the city, features several squares and caravanserais. The architecture of these ancient structures adds to the site's charm. Fresh local foods including fish and native vegetables fill the air with their enticing scents.

Each part of the bazaar represents various aspects of the local culture, making it highly attractive. Spanning an area of 24 hectares, Grand Bazaar of Rasht hosts 14 caravanserais dating back to the Qajar and Pahlavi periods, interconnected by alleys, IRNA wrote. Shopping at the bazaar offers one of the most intriguing experiences in a trip to Rasht. Here, a diverse range of goods, from agricultural products to various types of fish and foodstuffs, awaits. Moreover, the pleasure of visiting the old caravanserais should not be overlooked. The Grand Bazaar of Rasht comprises

various sections, including:

**Taqi Bozorg Caravanserai:** Constructed in 1903, this caravanserai is situated on the southern side of the Taqi Koochak Caravanserai and the *rasteh* of jewelers (*rasteh* refers to a series of shops in the same occupational group).

**Taqi Koochak:** This caravanserai is located on the northern side of Rasht Bazaar, adjacent to Haj Morteza Mosque, and connects to the Taqi Bozorg Caravanserai.

**Sa'adat Taqi:** Situated near the Grand Square of the bazaar, Sa'adat Taqi plays a significant role in the urban market. Its history dates back to the Qajar period, and it was previously considered one of the important commercial centers of the city.

**Mohtasham Caravanserai:** Built concurrently with other caravanserais, it is located on the northwest side, with the Golshan caravanserai to the west and the Herbalists *rasteh* to the east.

**Chinichian Caravanserai:** In the northwest section of the bazaar, the Chinichian Caravanserai was built by the Chinichian brothers. This histor-

ical site offers a glimpse into the past and is a must-visit for history enthusiasts.

**Malek Caravanserai:** It is another notable caravanserai in Rasht built during the Qajar period. This bazaar-style structure was used for the export of rice to Russia and sending silk to Kashan and Yazd, making it an important hub for trade in the region. The Grand Bazaar of Rasht is a vibrant and bustling market, drawing in tourists with its array of scents and colors. Local food items and snacks, such as *Kolucheh* (a type of cookie) of Fuman and *Reshteh Khoshkar* (a type of crispy sweet), can also be found throughout the market. For those interested in handicrafts, the market also offers a variety of options to explore and purchase.

The market's vibrant and welcoming ambiance attracts countless visitors annually regardless of whether they have any shopping plans. As such, it is highly recommended that you visit this lively and bustling market when exploring charming Gilan Province.

# New archaeological discovery unveils historical importance of Garan Hill

## Iranica Desk

Iranian archaeologists have unearthed a significant discovery in the Dehloran plain of Ilam Province: a brick inscription in the Akkadian Script, along with inscribed bricks believed to be part of the water supply system of the ancient Elamite civilization. This finding underscores the political and economic significance of the Garan Hill, which is located in the western region of the Elamite settlement area. According to Mohsen Zeinivand, a seasoned archaeologist with experience in this area, Garan Hill is situated in the Dehloran plain, a part of Ilam Province in the southwest of the Iranian plateau. Positioned three kilometers east of the Doiraj River and 2,800 meters northwest of the Musian Hill, the Garan Hill spans 17 hectares. It comprises a prominent conical elevation in the southern region and several irregular mounds scattered across the east, north, and west, ISNA wrote.

Further elaborating on the site, Zeinivand noted that the main hill stands at a height of 20 meters, while the surrounding mounds range from three to six meters in height. The entire expanse of the main hill is enveloped by a low, uniform plateau approximately 20 meters wide, which separates it from the surrounding mounds. This formation suggests the possibility of a protective moat encircling the hill, providing additional fortification.

He mentioned that Garan Hill, the largest human settlement from the second millennium BCE until the end of the Achaemenid period, holds significant archaeological importance. During a survey of the main hillside, several broken bricks, some with inscriptions, were unearthed. Unfortunately, due to soaking and weathering, the inscriptions on these bricks were illegible, but in one instance, a few incomplete words in the Akkadian language were readable. The archaeologist further ex-



IRNA

plained that another remarkable find was a simple yet intriguing piece of brick, featuring grooves on its surface. This discovery is reminiscent of similar artifacts abundant in Mesopotamia, depicting geographical maps, urban planning, temple and palace layouts, irrigation systems, and agricultural lands from the third millennium BCE up to the first millennium BCE. Zeinivand states that the pat-

terned lines on the brick represent four distinct shapes: a river, a mountain, a dam, and irrigation channels. The situation in the northeast of the Dehloran plain, where the Doiraj River flows from the Siahkuh and enters the plain, resulted in water supply issues due to climate change over the past millennia, leading to the deepening of its bed. Consequently, a dam was constructed to raise the water level of the river and

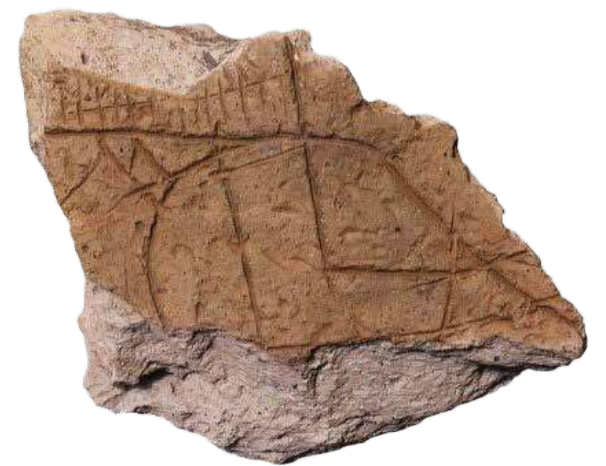
facilitate the flow of water into the channels during the ancient Elamite period.

The archaeologist has also discovered evidence of dams built using reeds or tree branches a hundred years ago on the Euphrates River north of Dezful, which is likely to be depicted on the brick map of Garan as well. It is believed that the irrigation channels branching off from the Doiraj River and supplying the settlements of Garan

and Musian are part of an ancient Elamite civil engineering project, the plan of which was depicted on the brick before its implementation.

This area has attracted attention due to its significance as the main route from Shush to Mesopotamia and its abundant water and natural resources suitable for agriculture. Therefore, the discovery of material evidence related to these components is not surprising.

ISNA



# Israel's 'lawful' genocide

## UN definition of genocide will let Israel off the hook at ICJ

By Reza Raadfar  
Political analyst

### EXCLUSIVE PERSPECTIVE

As laudable as South Africa's attempt at charging Israel in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is, it is destined to lose the case for charging Israel with genocide because of the unfortunate inclusion of a single word in the UN definition of genocide, which makes almost all similar cases impossible to win. The word is "intent".

Usually, when a solid case is lost, we deep down hope that it's at least for a good reason. We wouldn't mind as much if the counter-arguments were more solid, or the evidence was insufficient or shaky. We hate to lose a case, on which the very lives of thousands of people depend, before the trial is even started, but the UN settled on a toothless legal definition years ago, and people have paid for it time and time again with their precious lives.

I was going to console myself, and hopefully, you, by saying the old adage, Gazans will live to see the day when justice would be served. But the question is, will they live?

The case against Israel revolves around the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (generally referred to as the Genocide Convention) that was drawn up in 1948 following World War II. Both Israel and South Africa were signatories to the convention. As another instance of political compromise between signatories to UN conventions, that final approved draft is starkly different from the initial draft.

According to Article II of the 1948 Genocide Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, as such: Killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

There has been a recorded debate at the UN body surrounding the use of certain term. For example, removed from the definition was politically-motivated killing as well as acts of cultural destruction due to opposition from certain countries.

There was another troublesome term

in the definition that apparently flew under the radar, at best, or was included to make the signatories effectively agreeing to nothing, at worst, and that was "intent". More specifically, what has proven to sabotage almost any case for genocide in international courts, whether it be International Court of Justice (ICJ) or International Criminal Court (ICC), is the requirement of proving "special intent" or "dolus specialis".

Some jurisdictions classify intent into general and specific. A general intent crime is one that requires the defendant to act with a culpable intent, but not for the purpose of causing a specific consequence. This generally means that the prosecutor merely has to show, depending on the criminal statute, that a person acted with intent, knowledge, recklessness, or negligence. A special intent crime, on the other hand, has to happen with the exclusive intent for causing a specific consequence. Courts have held that, even if the actual act of the crime (or actus reus) is shown, prosecutors need to show that the criminal intent (or mens rea) of committing that crime is the only reasonable inference that can be drawn from the facts. If the crime in question was the intent, but the facts show there was also another intent behind the actions, the prosecutor will have failed to prove the crime, and the defendant will be exonerated.

Similar to common law crimes,

genocide requires the proof of both actus reus and mens rea. Specifically, in order to find someone guilty of genocide, the prosecution needs to show that the defendant actually committed the actions they are accused of, and they did so with the sole intent of destroying, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. The actus reus of killing isn't necessarily difficult to prove; the mens rea element is difficult to prove.

As a result, genocide is difficult to prove under the current definition, and other charges are often used in its place. The dolus specialis burden has been met in the past by showing that genocide was "the only reasonable inference which can be drawn" from a pattern of conduct, the ICJ stressed in the case of Croatia v. Serbia. Some examples where it was specifically shown were in the killing of more than 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in Rwanda by Hutu extremists in 1994; the massacre of Bosnian Muslim men and boys by Bosnian Serbs in Srebrenica in 1995; and the forced displacement of and attacks on ethnic groups by Sudanese forces and militias in Darfur in the early 2000s. However, there were significantly more cases where the special intent for committing genocide was not inferred and the accused was exonerated. In fact, of the 31 currently active cases under the ICC in 2024, only former Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir faces charges of genocide. The seemingly insurmountable task of proving genocide has disheartened many prosecutors who pleaded for it in international courts and discouraged others from ever touching it. More importantly, victims and survivors of

many genocidal acts have been deprived of achieving the true justice and solace they deserve because of this extremely high standard.

As Nicholas Owens wrote, "It would be beneficial for the ICC and other Tribunals to rely on a different standard than the current dolus specialis standard they have been using, ideally one with a lower mens rea requirement; lowering the standard while still maintaining a higher level of intent than the remaining three crimes in the Rome Statute [namely, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression] would make the burden of proving genocide more achievable, while still keeping the intent of the Genocide Convention and preserving the uniqueness of the crime of genocide."

In our daily lives, we seldom take on a big project with a single aim in mind. It is just as easy for a military or political leader to prove that in performing a genocidal act, he or she was pursuing another goal. You don't need a very shrewd legal counsel to remind you to insist on having exclusively other humanitarian, political or even economic goals in court or even in the media before you're ever accused. You just have to keep your intentions of genocide private and never write or express anything that would later make you liable. If you do these simple things, you're in the clear to ethnically cleanse a community and never be found guilty by international courts.

It was already expected that the Israeli legal team at ICJ will stick to what Tel Aviv has repeatedly said: That Israel is only looking to destroy Hamas, and civilian casualties are accidental or inevitable since the war is an urban area. However, Tel Aviv's declared goal shows nothing more than that Netanyahu had at least a decent legal counsel from the start of the war that kept reminding him to declare his goal of

Palestinians carry flags and banners as they gather at Nelson Mandela Square in Ramallah, West Bank, to demonstrate in support of the genocide case filed by South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice.  
ISSAM RIMAWI/ANADOLU AGENCY





Police officers disperse demonstrators who have gathered outside the International Court of Justice during a hearing on a genocide complaint by South Africa against Israel in The Hague, Netherlands, on January 11, 2024.

AFP

## South Africa's aim at ICJ is lawfare



By Jonathan Katzenellenbogen  
Freelance journalist

### PERSPECTIVE

The South African government is proud of its activist foreign policy in speaking out on the big international issues of the day. Its case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague last week was applauded domestically and abroad as a sign that South Africa really cares about the Palestinians and human rights.

The case may also be an attempt at domestic nation-building. Such spectacles as Team SA in The Hague take minds off power cuts, the state of the economy, and unemployment, and are useful for mobilisation just months before an election. And just like the Springboks, many felt the need to support Team South Africa at The Hague.

But the case is not a sports game, it is really lawfare — using the courts to damage and delegitimise an opponent. Lawfare is part of many wars and campaigns, and it can do great damage.

#### Israeli cause

Even if the ICJ rejects South Africa's case, the Israeli cause will have been damaged as they have been seen to have been placed in a dock. Popular opinion does not look at the intricacies of a case. It is the visuals of Israel defending itself against having conducted genocide as well as the pictures of bombed buildings and children being rushed to hospital that count in people's minds.

It is almost as though winning the case is all incidental to South Africa. It is the show of a large legal team in The Hague that really counts. The Court, on its own, cannot enforce these provisional measures. It will require a United Nations (UN) Security Council vote, as well as the possible deployment of UN peacekeeping troops. Due to the sheer danger and political risks, no country probably wants to send troops to Gaza.

There is no chance this case will speed up a political settlement of the conflict. Lawfare is about propaganda and raising pressure on an opponent. It is not fundamentally about truth and justice.

And the case is not about bringing about a peaceful settlement between Israel and Hamas. There is an open question as to why no Arab countries have joined South Africa in taking this case to the ICJ. Surely, a show of wider support at the Court would have shown that South Africa has allies. That would have added to the lawfare value of the case.

A number of Arab countries expressed their support for the case, but that was all. It is the US, the Egyptians, the Saudis, and the Qataris who are actually seeking a solution to the war and the freeing of the Israeli hostages held by

Hamas. The case before the ICJ is irrelevant to the worthy work of trying to reach a settlement of the Gaza war.

#### Encouraged

Although no Arab countries joined South Africa at The Hague, it is possible that Pretoria might have been encouraged to petition the ICJ. Alec Hogg, who runs BizNews.com, has said it is hard to miss the coincidence between the ANC's dramatic financial turnaround from last October and the government's interest in Gaza.

The court might come up with provisional measures in a matter of days, but deciding whether or not genocide has been committed could take years. The South African legal team in The Hague last week asserted, but did not really prove, that genocide had taken place. They said there was a pattern in the Israelis inflicting massive numbers of civilian deaths, and used quotes from Israelis, including extremists, to back their case. What they did not prove was the official intention to conduct genocide. At the start, South Africa's legal team must have known they could only win at a stretch.

Mia Swart, a South African legal academic, who praises South Africa's case as "bold", wrote in The Sunday Times earlier this month that it is a very difficult case to win but, "the application forms part of a multipronged approach to assert the rights of Palestinians." So, then it is really about lawfare. Given South Africa's failure to prove genocide, what is the court likely to decide?

#### No jurisdiction

The court could say it does not have jurisdiction over this matter, as there

was no prior dispute between South Africa and Israel. Petitions cannot be decided upon by the ICJ without the existence of a dispute in which both parties have directly exchanged their views. Israel argued that the ICJ should turn down South Africa's petition on these grounds.

South Africa sent a "note verbale", a diplomatic message, to Israel raising concerns about genocide in Gaza on December 21 last year. On December 26, the Director General of the Israeli Department of Foreign Affairs replied, proposing a meeting with his South African counterpart at his earliest convenience to discuss the issues raised. However, Israel's attempt to deliver the message was refused due to the holiday, and the South African Department of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation advised the Israelis to hand-deliver the note on January 2, 2024. But in the meantime, on December 29, 2023, South Africa instituted action against Israel in the ICJ.

The Israelis argued that South Africa rushed to court without taking up their offer to hold talks to engage in the dispute. On January 10, the South Africans eventually replied to the Israelis, saying that there was no point in holding talks.

The South African Department of Foreign Affairs might have neglected to fulfill a basic requirement to bring a petition to the ICJ.

But South Africa's petition to the ICJ was about waging endless lawfare on the issue. A win would have been good, but it has still been able to make its point.

*The full article was first published by The Daily Friend.*

A special intent crime has to happen with the exclusive intent for causing a specific consequence. No other inference may be drawn.



destroying Hamas, even though he is effectively eradicating Palestinians from Gaza. How do we claim that? Easy. We — and the South African legal team at ICJ — tackle both actus rea and mens rea of Israel's genocidal acts in Gaza — and it would still not be enough for the UN court to deem it genocidal — absurdly. The actual act of the Israeli genocide is laid out for all to see. Civilian casualties in Gaza are maximized as the Israeli army continues to drop dumb bombs on civilian-dense areas it finds using an artificial intelligence system called "Habsora," ("The Gospel"), as revealed by an investigation by +972 Magazine and Local Call. Whoever is not killed by bombardments on hospitals, refugee camps, and residential buildings is still living in "the world's largest open-air prison," where water, food, and power are intentionally scarce.

The intent would have not been too hard to prove, either, if demonstrating general intent or any other reasonable standard was required. In arguing the case for Israeli genocide in Gaza at ICJ, the South African legal team was able to draw on a comprehensive database, compiled by Law for Palestine, which meticulously documents and collates 500 statements that embody Tel Aviv's intention to commit genocide and incitement to genocide since October 7, 2023. The statements by Israelis with command authority — leaders, war cabinet ministers, and senior army officers — and by other politicians, army officers, journalists, and public figures reveal the widespread commitment in Israel to the genocidal destruction of Gaza. The Israeli cabinet and military officials have verbalized their genocidal intent towards the Palestinian people, according to Al Jazeera. On October 9, 2023, when announcing the full blockade, Israeli Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant described the 2.3 million people in Gaza as "human animals". On October 29, Netanyahu

used Judaic scripture to justify the killing of Palestinians. "You must remember what Amalek did to you, says our Holy Bible," he said, quoting a verse that goes on to say: "Now go and smite Amalek ... kill both man and woman, infant." On November 5, Heritage Minister Amihai Eliyahu said one of Israel's options in Gaza is to drop a nuclear bomb. He also explained that no humanitarian aid should be provided to Palestinian civilians as "there is no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza". There has been a litany of other official statements employing dehumanizing language towards Palestinians, along with incitement by common Israelis for the "annihilation of Gaza". These reveal the intent to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, indeed, genocide. In the case of Kayishema and Ruzindana, who were accused of committing genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, the Trial Chamber decreed that the evidence of genocidal intent can be inferred from "the physical targeting of the group or their property; the use of derogatory language toward members of the targeted group; the weapons employed and the extent of bodily injury; the methodical way of planning, the systematic manner of killing". It added, "The number of victims from the group is also important."

Nevertheless, by including the requirement of proving a special intent for committing genocide in its definition of genocide, the United Nations has dropped the ball in a spectacular fashion. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will most likely avoid liability for killing over 24,000 people in Gaza just because of this legal minutia. So, we will continue to see the same pattern happen again and again until the UN wakes up to the fact that its narrow, easily circumventable definition has let many war criminals go unpunished and amplified many genocides.

## France investigates tax breaks in PSG's Neymar transfer



● GETTY IMAGES

### INSIDE THE GAMES –

France's finance and economy ministries were raided earlier this week as part of an investigation into the 2017 transfer of Brazilian football superstar Neymar to Paris Saint-Germain, according to AFP.

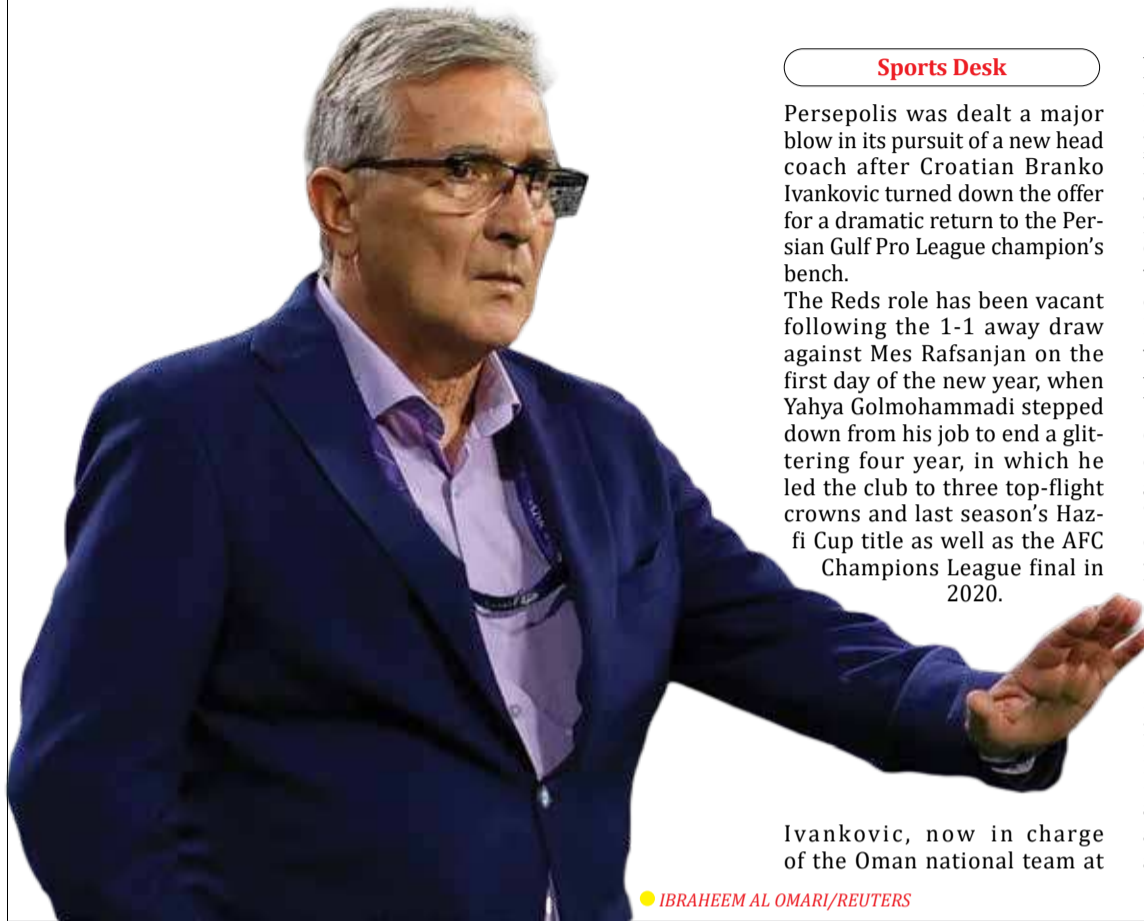
The operations were carried out by police officers from the Central Office for the Fight Against Combating Corruption and Fiscal Fraud (OCLC/CF) and the National Police Inspectorate (IGPN) in the presence of investigating magistrates Vincent Lemonier and Serge Tournaire, a second source close to the matter told AFP. Investigators searched several departments of the General Directorate of Public Finances (DGFiP), including the office of former director general Jérôme Fournel, recently appointed chief of staff to Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire. These suspicions are part of a magistrate's investigation into the influence peddling of the club's former communications director, 57-year-old Jean-Martial Ribes, which has been ongoing since September 2022.

The magistrates are questioning whether the former Macronist vice-president of the National Assembly, Hugues Renson, sought "tax advantages" for PSG in the transfer of the Brazilian superstar to the club's capital for 222 million euros – the most expensive in history. In an investigative report sent to the examining magistrate on 21 November, the IGPN questioned the possibility of "influence peddling" by Hugues Renson. According to this report, the former "dircom" clearly "requested (...) the services" of the former advisor to Jacques Chirac at the Élysée, on the basis of 10 years of messages with him found on Mr Ribes's phone.

The former vice-president of the National Assembly stated on 24 July that he had informed Gérald Darmanin, the then Minister of Public Accounts, of a "PSG-related matter", apparently concerning the taxation of the transfer. Gérald Darmanin "agreed (...). The important thing is to produce these documents. They will protect you", Hugues Renson wrote to Jean-Martial Ribes in particular.

At the time, the minister publicly "welcomed the taxes Neymar would be able to pay in France". He also assured the public that his services would closely monitor the transfer's financial arrangements. On 3 August, the historic agreement, worth 222 million euros, was finalised and announced.

# Persepolis coach quest to continue as Ivankovic snubs Reds offer



● IBRAHEEM AL OMARI/REUTERS

### Sports Desk

Persepolis was dealt a major blow in its pursuit of a new head coach after Croatian Branko Ivankovic turned down the offer for a dramatic return to the Persian Gulf Pro League champion's bench.

The Reds role has been vacant following the 1-1 away draw against Mes Rafsanjan on the first day of the new year, when Yahya Golmohammadi stepped down from his job to end a glittering four year, in which he led the club to three top-flight crowns and last season's Hazfi Cup title as well as the AFC Champions League final in 2020.

Ivankovic, now in charge of the Oman national team at

the Asian Cup in Qatar, is widely regarded as the linchpin of Reds' domestic success over the past seven years – also leading his side to three league titles, a cup triumph, and a maiden place in the Asian elite clubs' competition final before parting ways with Persepolis by the end of 2018/19 season.

Persepolis chairman Reza Darvish was in Doha on Thursday to lure Ivankovic back to the job but Persepolis announced later on the day that the Croatian declined the position for "personal and family" reasons.

"Iran has been like a second country to me and I love Persepolis and its supporters but, unfortunately, I am not in the right situation at this time, from a family and personal point of view, to return to Iran," Persepolis quoted the former Iran manager as saying.

Ivankovic's decision means Persepolis will now be facing a race against time to appoint a new coach before the Iranian league resumption, once the

national team's Asian Cup campaign is over.

Persepolis is third in the table with 30 points after 15 rounds of matches – two points adrift of archrival Esteghlal on top – and crashed out of the AFC Champions League after finishing second to Al Nassr in Group E in November.

Brazilian Osmar Loss, an assistant to Golmohammadi, has been in charge of the first team's training sessions in recent days and could be handed a caretaker role for the rest of the season if the club's quest for a new coach ends in vain.

Iranian sports website Varzesh3 reported late on Thursday that the club will make an approach for Spanish coach Javier Pereira, who led Shanghai Port to the Chinese Super League title in 2023 but left the club in December.

The Spaniard, 57, is also a former manager of Alavés and Levante in his home country while serving as an assistant coach in Premier League clubs Watford and Fulham.

**BBC** – Jannik Sinner showed why he is one of the favourites for the Australian Open title by thrashing Argentine Sebastian Baez to reach the fourth round. The Italian fourth seed, 22, raced into the second week in Melbourne with a 6-0 6-1 6-3 win in less than two hours.

He won four titles in 2023 and ended it on a high by leading Italy to a first Davis Cup title for 47 years. Sinner, who is bidding to reach a first Grand Slam final, said he was trying to smile and laugh more on court.

"We know that every match, every tournament is important, but it's also more important to stay in a good mood always," he said.

A relaxed Sinner showed his good mood on Margaret Court Arena as he joked with his coaching team moments before securing the win against 26th seed Baez.

"In matches, I used to be really, really serious, which I still am, obviously," he added.

"But sometimes you have to smile, you have to laugh a little bit, because it's also important and it changes your attitude on the court. I think in a positive way."

Sinner will face Karen Khachanov next after the Russian 15th seed overcame a third-set wobble to beat Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic 6-4 7-6 (7-4) 4-6 7-6 (7-5).

Also on Friday, Stefanos Tsitsipas beat Frenchman Luca Van Assche to set up a fourth-round meeting with American 12th seed Taylor Fritz.

The Greek seventh seed rushed into a two-set lead, but had to fight back from a 2-0 deficit in the third to win 6-3 6-0 6-4.

Meanwhile, Fritz came from a set down to beat Hungary's Fabian Marozsan 3-6 6-4 6-2 6-2.

## Australian Open: Sinner underlines title credentials in Melbourne



● ELOISA LOPEZ/REUTERS



● PHIL NOBLE/REUTERS

## Former world pole vault champion Shawn Barber dies at age 29

**REUTERS** – Shawn Barber, the Canadian record holder and 2015 world champion in pole vault, has died at the age of 29.

Barber's agent Paul Doyle confirmed to Reuters he died Wednesday at home in Kirkwood, Texas of medical complications.

"More than just an incredible athlete, Shawn was such a good-hearted person that always put others ahead of himself," Doyle said on Thursday. "It's tragic to lose such a good person at such a young age." Barber claimed gold at the

2015 Pan American Games and weeks later, the then 21-year-old upset a field including silver medalist Raphael Holzdeppe of Germany and favourite Renaud Lavillenie, who won bronze, in capturing the world title in Beijing.

Barber's best jump of 6.0 metres set on Jan. 15, 2016 is still the Canadian record. He also competed at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

Barber first competed in pole vault at the age of seven, shattering the U.S. high school record by more

than a foot before winning back-to-back NCAA indoor titles for the University of Akron in 2014 and '15 and then the 2015 NCAA outdoor title.

The vaulter held dual citizenship as his father George, his coach for most of his life, was born in Kirkwood, northwest of Toronto. When he was first named to a Canadian team he said he chose to compete for Canada to follow in his dad's footsteps.

Barber is survived by his father, mother Ann, and brother David.

# New legal fronts to open More states to sue Israel over Gaza crimes



## International Desk

Israel faces heightened international scrutiny in the International Court of Justice for its actions in Palestine, with the United Nations asserting that its "relentless" bombardment of Gaza violates international law.

Indonesia and Slovenia have shown their support for another case against Israel at the ICJ concerning violations of the rights of Palestinians.

Both countries said that they will be joining proceedings that seek an advisory opinion on Israel's control of, and policies, on the

occupied Palestinian territory. The hearing will begin on 19 February.

The UN General Assembly voted in December 2022 to request that the ICJ issue an advisory opinion on whether Israeli policies against Palestinians violated international law.

The request was made almost a year before the beginning of Israel's ongoing war on Gaza, in which more than 24,000 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory.

"The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination must be respected. Israel's occupation

of Palestine, which has lasted for more than 70 years, will not erase the right of the Palestinian people to independence," Indonesia's Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi was quoted as saying by the Indonesian foreign ministry.

Ljubljana said that Israel's war on Gaza and increased Israeli violence in the occupied West Bank were the reasons for its decision to take part in the action.

"In the light of recent events in Gaza and the West Bank, Slovenia, as one of the few EU countries, has decided to actively participate and present its views in these

proceedings before the International Court of Justice, which has been asked to give an advisory opinion," Slovenian Foreign Minister Tanja Fajon said at a press conference.

In a separate case at the ICJ, public hearings were held last week for South Africa's case that accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza.

South Africa's case against Israel was backed by several countries. A decision on whether to back the demands of South Africa, which includes an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, is due to be made by the court in the next few weeks.

Indonesia said it supported South Africa's case against Israel, though it is not a signatory of the 1948 Genocide Convention. Slovenia has been calling since October for a cease-fire in Gaza. Also the European Parliament on Thursday called for a "permanent cease-fire" in Gaza - but on condition that all Israeli hostages are released immediately and Hamas dismantled.

## Violence case at ICC

Meanwhile, Mexico and Chile expressed "growing worry" on Thursday over "an escalation of violence" after several months of war between Israel and Hamas in a referral to the International Criminal Court (ICC) over possible crimes.

Hamas launched a surprise attack in Israel in October, killing 1,200.

The Israeli retaliatory offensive on the Hamas-led Gaza Strip has led to increasing international alarm and scrutiny over the deaths of civilians, especially children. Gaza health authorities said on Thursday the war's death toll had risen to 24,620, with many more feared buried under the rubble.

In a statement, Mexico's Foreign Ministry argued that the ICC was the proper forum to establish potential criminal responsibility, "whether committed by agents of the occupying power or the occupied power".

"The action by Mexico and Chile is due to growing worry over the latest escalation of violence, particularly against civilian targets," it said.

Both the ICJ and the ICC handle cases of alleged genocide, with the former resolving disputes between states and the latter prosecuting individuals for crimes.

## Pakistan-Iran tension: Resolution lies only in diplomacy



By Syed Ali Hassan  
Iran Daily's  
correspondent  
in Pakistan

## OPINION

Iran and Pakistan have traded barbs after both sides launched cross-border strikes with heavy weaponry.

Iran targeted the hideouts of Jaish al-Adl in Pakistan's Panjgur and Turbat in Baluchistan late on Tuesday in response to two deadly attacks by terrorist group on Iranian border guards. In the border region of Saravan in Iran, according to Iranian media, nine individuals were killed in attacks by the Pakistani military.

In such a complex situation, the primary issue continues to be the secondary status, with the presence of terrorist havens and the resulting terrorism in both countries. Iran and Pakistan have exchanged evidence regarding terrorist havens and the elements involved in terrorism at the official level.

The insurgency of nationalist and militant forces is at an alarming level in Pakistani Baluchistan, receiving support and approval from the local population. Similarly, incidents of terrorism persist in Iranian Sistan and Baluchestan.

However, the situation in Iranian Sistan and Baluchestan does not mirror that of Pakistani Baluchistan. The border areas of Iranian Sistan and Baluchestan, including the capital city Zahedan as well as Chabahar port, are predominantly inhabited by Sunni Muslims, who share familial ties with Baloch residents in Pakistan.

Due to this shared cultural connection, both brotherly nations have granted special status to the Baloch residing on the border. Local Baloch can travel between the two countries without visas, and Baloch residents on both sides engage in marriages, forming close bonds. The border area carries a history of friendly relations and brotherhood.

I have personally witnessed instances of religious harmony in Sistan and Baluchestan multiple times. In the grand mosque and affiliated seminaries in Zahedan, many people, including followers of the prominent Pakistani Islamic scholar Mufti Taqi Usmani, offer prayers on Fridays. This includes individuals from the Shia sect as well.

Governments of Pakistan and Iran must unite to thwart the designs of foreign powers and prevent further tragic events. The terrorist organization Jaish al-Adl is active in Iran, and Pakistan is well aware of its activities. The organization poses a clear threat to Iranian nation. Both Pakistan and Iran are aware of the roots of the issue. Pakistan acknowledges that it lacks the means to prevent elements with nefarious designs from entering Iran through its 900-kilometer-long border.

In 2019, Pakistan and Iran agreed to form a joint Rapid Reaction Force with the aim of ensuring the protection of border areas and targeting separatist groups. Pakistan and Iran need to put into action the Rapid Reaction Force promptly to resolve border issues and mitigate the common threat of terrorism. Otherwise, both countries will continue to face the consequences. Both neighbors need to address this issue through diplomatic channels, as the region cannot afford a new cycle of hostilities.

## From military strikes to diplomacy Iran, Pakistan stress 'brotherly' ties

## International Desk

Iran and Pakistan are determined to resolve issues through dialogue after an exchange of military strikes between the two "brotherly" nations. Iran has addressed "the friendly and brotherly government of Pakistan" after a tiff over Islamabad's drone attack on an Iranian village near their border, calling on Islamabad to prevent the establishment of "terrorist bases" on its soil.

In a statement issued on

Thursday, Iran's Foreign Ministry said it "condemns the unbalanced and unacceptable action of Pakistan in the drone attack on non-Iranian citizens in a village on the border wall of the two countries".

Nine people, including four children, were killed after Islamabad admitted attacking a village in Saravan in Iran's southeastern Sistan and Baluchestan Province, characterizing it a response to Tehran's operation against terrorist bases

inside Pakistan.

"While the Islamic Republic adheres to the policy of good neighborliness and brotherhood between the two nations and the two governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, and does not allow the enemies to darken the good and fraternal relations between the two countries, it considers the security of the people and the territorial integrity of the country as its red line," the Foreign Ministry statement in

Tehran said.

"And it strongly expects the friendly and brotherly government of Pakistan to adhere to its commitments in preventing the establishment of bases and armed terrorist groups on Pakistan's soil," it added.

Meanwhile, Pakistani President Arif Alvi on Thursday said his country fully respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states and expects the same from other nations not to violate international law.

Alvi said that Pakistan and Iran are "brotherly countries and they needed to resolve issues through dialogue and mutual consultation".

"The sole objective of today's act was in pursuit of Pakistan's own security and national interest, which is paramount and cannot be compromised," Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said.

Iran on Thursday summoned Pakistan's charge d'affaires following the missile strike. United Nations Secre-

tary-General Antonio Guterres urged both sides to "exercise maximum restraint to avoid a further escalation of tensions," his spokesperson said on Thursday.

"The secretary-general underlines that all security concerns between the two countries must be addressed by peaceful means, through dialogue and cooperation, in accordance with the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and good neighborly relations," Stéphane Dujarric said.

## Kerman bombings terrorists killed, arrested: Intel Ministry

Iran's Intelligence Ministry said on Friday it had killed two terrorists and arrested some others linked to a Daesh-claimed terrorist attack in the southeastern city of Kerman on January 3.

The ministry said in a statement that the terrorists had been involved in the "orchestration and implementation" of the deadly bombings on the assassination anniversary of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, during which 94 people were killed and 211 oth-

ers injured.

The statement said the two "non-Iranian" terrorists were besieged by Iranian operative and were both killed in an exchange of fire, Press TV reported.

The Intelligence Ministry said they had planned a two-stage scenario involving an armed attack on a police station in Kerman and setting a "booby trap" on the way of police officers, both of which were foiled.

It also announced the arrest of Mohammad Imran

Tanvir, nicknamed "Abu Imran", a bomb-making specialist and one of the leaders of Daesh-Khorasan, which is affiliated with the Daesh terrorist group.

The Intelligence Ministry also arrested "Mahtab", another ring leader of the terrorist group, who is currently under interrogation and entered the country under the guise of a worker.

The also said several other terrorists had been arrested before staging acts of terror in various parts of the country, including



the holy city of Mashhad. The Intelligence Ministry said Mohammad Adel Aref, known as "Adel Panjshiri", had been tracked down and identified during the latest intelli-

gence operation. Being at large in the present time and suspected to have holed up in a neighborhood in western Tehran,

Adel was charged with a suicide bomb attack at the Kabul University in Afghanistan, among other convictions.

## Iran ranks sixth in global energy consumption intensity

Social Desk

ISNA - Iran's energy consumption intensity ranked sixth in the world, the Deputy for Education and Public Participation at the Environmental Protection Organization said, attributing it to the low energy efficiency in the country.

He emphasized that the predominant use of fossil fuels contributes to air pollution, urging all organizations to take responsibility and collaborate.

The official emphasized that contemporary environmental issues influence all aspects of human life, turning the environment into a social matter requiring cross-the-board cooperation from all walks of life.

Nourallah Moradi identified air pollution as a current challenge stemming from economic and industrial factors, emphasizing its extensive social repercussions. Without targeted public participation, governments would struggle to effectively manage environmental issues, especially air pollution.

Moradi underscored the increasing public awareness of the detrimental effects of environmental hazards like air pollution on daily life, businesses, and health.

He stated that raising awareness has led to increased public demand for addressing air pollution through media coverage, especially on social networks.

He mentioned that January 19 has been designated as the day for "Clean Air, Education, and Public Participation".

It is a reminder for public participation and social responsibility, and recognizing the essential role of education, cultural development, and information dissemination in solving air pollution.

The National Clean Air Week (January 16-22) aims to mobilize the government, private sector, and citizens to collectively contribute to achieving clean air for the well-being of present and future generations.

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# Minister: Clothing most important cultural symbol of any civilization



Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili visits the 12th Fajr Fashion and Clothing Festival in Tehran's Museum of Fine Arts on January 19, 2024. IRNA

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, emphasized the cultural significance of clothing during his visit to the 12th Fajr

Fashion and Clothing Festival on Friday.

Esmaeili stated that clothing is the most crucial cultural symbol for any civilization and forms the basis for distinguishing different cultures.

He highlighted Iran's Islamic identity, expressing that the country has always prioritized modesty and distinctive attire, considering it an integral part of the Iranian civilization, IRNA wrote.

Acknowledging the impact of

modern technologies on the fashion industry and cultural shifts, the minister stressed the need to preserve the roots of Iran's indigenous, traditional, and cultural heritage.

He said that the festival should not only be limited to artistic and museum activities but should also contribute to the mass production of affordable clothing, aligning with the country's cultural values.

Esmaeili emphasized the importance of effective policymaking and implementation to overcome challenges.

He praised the participation of non-professional and independent artists in the festival, highlighting its role in providing a platform for showcasing their creations.

The minister emphasized the government's serious commitment to supporting the fashion and clothing sector through related work groups.

He projected strengthening the industry's foundation, ensuring it reaches a desirable condition in terms of production and sales. Discussing the festival's focus on children and teenagers, Esmaeili

noted the necessity of enhancing this sector. While expressing the need for greater efforts in this field, he observed a lack of significant works during his visit, underscoring the importance of catering to the younger demographic.

Majid Emami, secretary of the General Culture Council of Iran, stated that the festival's goal of promoting the work of individual artists, particularly those operating in smaller towns, has been achieved.

Emami addressed the ongoing crisis in Palestine, stating that the international-themed section of the festival, titled "Fashion and Resistance," highlights global concerns.

Designers worldwide, particularly in Arab and Islamic regions, incorporated Palestinian motifs and concepts to showcase resistance against global injustice, he added.

With over 1,300 submissions to the 12th edition of the festival, approximately 180 works are on public display at the Museum of Fine Arts. The exhibition opened on January 18 and will run through January 24.

## Iran's Kalhor, American Yo-Yo Ma to stage joint concert

Arts & Culture Desk

Renowned musicians Kayhan Kalhor and Yo-Yo Ma are set to perform a joint concert. Kalhor, a well-known *kamancheh* (an Iranian spiked fiddle) virtuoso, and Yo-Yo Ma, an American cellist of Chinese descent, will

perform a joint concert accompanied by the Orchestra of the Americas, a Grammy-winning Latin symphony orchestra consisting of musicians aged 18 to 30.

The concert is scheduled for June 11 at the Hill Auditorium of the University of Michigan in Ann Ar-

bor, Michigan, US.

Kalhor will showcase his new compositions for double concerto for cello and *kamancheh* during the performance. Prior to this collaboration, Kalhor and Yo-Yo Ma released an album titled 'Sing Me Home' with their group, the Silk Road Ensemble.



## Scientists discover alarming evidence of global warming acceleration

Since the 1960s each decade has been hotter than the last, exactly as predicted

by many climate models. But there has been some debate in the science

community about whether or not this rate of warming is accelerating, particularly in light of last year's climate chaos.

A few months ago former NASA climatologist James Hansen, who published one of the main early papers warning the world about global warming, authored a study suggesting the rate of warming has jumped by 50 percent since 2010, Science Alert reported.

This was met with skepticism from colleagues, despite a degree of acceleration being predicted in some climate models. "[Hansen's study is] not implausible but not particularly well supported by the literature," Berkeley climate scientist Zeke Hausfather told the Associated Press.

Now, a new study led by environmental scientist

Audrey Minière from Paul Sabatier University in France has found signs of accelerating heating in ocean temperatures too.

"Detecting an acceleration of Earth heating has remained elusive to date, despite suggestive evidence of a potential increase in heating rates," the researchers write in their paper.

Minière and team calculated the amount our oceans were warming was steadily at about 0.15 watts per meter squared (W/m<sup>2</sup>) each decade around the 1960s. But since then this has risen to a rate of 0.91 W/m<sup>2</sup>.

There is a large variability in their results and the data is less reliable for earlier years, the researchers caution, but their findings are consistent across several different datasets. A recent literature review

also suggests that between 1971 and 2020 the ocean's heating rate was equivalent to 0.48 W/m<sup>2</sup>, whereas by 2006 to 2020 the rate had increased to 0.76 W/m<sup>2</sup>.

"While there is increasing evidence of an acceleration of warming, it's not necessarily 'worse than we thought' because scientists largely expected something like this," Hausfather told The Washington Post. There are several theories behind what could cause this potential acceleration, from changes in cloud cover and the staggering decrease in sea-ice creating a feedback system, to natural variability in combination with increasing contributions from human activities.

"The long-term acceleration of Earth warming aligns qualitatively with the rise in CO<sub>2</sub> concen-

trations and the decline in aerosol concentration during the same period," Minière and colleagues explain. "But further investigations are necessary to properly attribute these changes."

Current data demonstrates we'll soon smash beyond the global commitment of limiting warming to 1.5 °C, regardless of whether the heat increases are accelerating or not.

We're already feeling, or at least witnessing, the consequences. All that extra energy in our atmosphere is jerking climate systems to one extreme or another like a wobbling spinning top just before it topples over, resulting in deadly floods, fires, and storms.

"There won't be any argument [by] late next spring, we'll be way off the trend line," Hansen believes.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

