

Netanyahu seeking all-out war



By **Emad Abshenass**
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**OPINION
EXCLUSIVE**

The Israeli regime claimed the lives of four Iranian military advisers, including Brigadier General Sadeq Omidzadeh, the intelligence commander of the IRGC's Quds Force, in yet another covert operation in Damascus, Syria. Terrorism runs deep within the core of Israel's criminal regime, as evident from their recent acts of terrorism in Lebanon. The latest deadly airstrike came upon the heels of an Iranian missile attack on Israel's clandestine intelligence center in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan, which dealt a heavy blow to the regime.

Israel was apparently seeking vengeance and aiming to make up for the major setback it suffered at the hands of Iran. The attack on the Israeli spy center in Erbil, which occurred six days ago, resulted in the loss of several Mossad operatives, including the commander of the agency's foreign operations.

At the same time, Iran's Armed Forces targeted the Daesh (ISIS) stronghold in Idlib, Syria, which was a breeding ground for Daesh terrorists who came into existence with the help of Israel and the United States. Moreover, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps struck a hideout of Jaish al-Adl, a group of anti-Iranian terrorists in Pakistan, who collaborate with Israel and the US. It is only natural for Israel to be infuriated by Iran's vigorous acts against terrorists, especially the assault on the Mossad spy center in Erbil. Consequently, Israel resorted to assassinating Iranian military advisers.

This is only part of the story. The Israeli regime, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, is under immense internal and external pressure. Despite carrying out destructive and genocidal attacks in the Gaza Strip for four months, the Israeli army has failed to achieve its stated objectives.

Netanyahu is acutely aware that the end of the Gaza war spells the end of his political life and that of his far-right cabinet. Hence, he opposes any cease-fire and resists calls for ending the war. Driven by warmongering instincts, the hawkish prime minister fears widespread internal protests and international pressure, which is why he insists on prolonging the war.

Yet, Netanyahu is not content with the conflict in the Gaza Strip alone; he is actively seeking a larger-scale war to involve the US and gain its support. He perceives a major war as a means to delay his own downfall. Therefore, the assassination operation targeting Iranian interests serves as a tactic to provoke Iran and coerce Tehran into entering a war with Israel. Netanyahu and his cabinet are well aware that their weary army lacks the power to fight on new fronts. Their hope lies in the US and the potential confrontation between Tehran and Washington.

However, the Islamic Republic of Iran will not fall into Israel's trap. Nevertheless, Iran's intelligence and security forces will respond to this act of terrorism at an appropriate time and in alignment with Iran's interests, once an investigation is complete.

Four IRGC advisors assassinated in Israeli air raid on Syria

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says four of its military advisors have been assassinated in an Israeli strike in the Syrian capital. **7 >**

Highest ever orbit conquered

Iran Puts Research Satellite into Orbit

7 >



The screen grab shows the successful launch of Iran's indigenous research satellite Soraya into space with the Ghaem-100 satellite carrier of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps.

IEA: Iran accounts for 12% of OPEC nine-month revenues



Iran's oil revenues neared \$34 billion in the first nine months of 2023 despite brutal US sanctions, accounting for 12 percent of OPEC member states' total income.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), in its report, put Iran's oil revenues at \$33.9 billion during the period - two times the income obtained in 12 months in 2020, Shana reported.

The agency put 13 OPEC member states' total revenues from January-September 2023 at \$281.2 billion.

According to the US Department of Energy's estimates, Iran sold only \$17 billion and \$37 billion of crude oil in 2020 and 2021, respectively, while its revenues in 2022 hit \$54 billion.

Iran also had the highest oil production increase among members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 2023 with over 300,000 barrels of oil per day (bpd) rise.

In its latest report, the US Department of Energy put Iran's average daily oil production volume in 2023 at 2.870 million bpd.

According to the report, Iran's oil production volume increased by 330,000 bpd compared to a year earlier.

This is while OPEC's total oil production volume decreased by 630,000 barrels in 2023 compared to the year before. In total, OPEC's member states produced 26.890 million barrels of oil per day in 2023, while they produced 27.520 million bpd in 2022.



Tehran ready for extensive economic collaboration with regional states: VP Mokhber

Iran is ready for extensive economic collaboration to ensure the interests of all countries in the region, said First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber at the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Kampala on Saturday.

The vice president traveled to Uganda to attend the 19th NAM summit, which he described as a platform for independent voices and a venue to which the international community now attaches great significance in its decisions.

Mokhber arrived at Uganda's Entebbe airport on Saturday morning to attend the summit in the capital, Kampala, where he thanked Ugandan authorities for hosting the event and highlighted the great capacities of the Non-Aligned Movement.

He also said the unilateral sanctions of the US and some other countries are a clear example of economic terrorism. He said the independent and free nations of the world do not accept force, imposition and humiliation.

Emphasis on defining common security mechanisms, developing transportation structures, preserving the environment, and creating new networks of inclusive

economic, political, and cultural cooperation were among the other axes of the first vice president's speech at the summit.

The summit is being held as a non-aligned nation, South Africa, has taken Israel before the International Criminal Court in The Hague on a charge of committing genocide in Gaza and demanded that the UN's top court order an emergency cease-fire.

Now in its 106th day, the war has marked a turning point in the colonial relationship between Western philosophy and the rest of the world, where the US and Europeans have stood by and let Israel massacre Palestinians on a daily basis.

Addressing the summit, Mokhber said there is a need to create a new peace-oriented order with the slogan "security for all, insecurity for no one".

Mokhber rejected unilateralism and imperialism, but endorsed resistance against oppression, saying any action taken by the Palestinians to resist by any possible means against occupation is their inherent right. He said, "Attempts by the Zionist regime and its Western supporters to project this legitimate

[Palestinian] struggle as a terrorist act lack legal authority and is a trick and deception".

He called on NAM states to support the end of the Israeli occupation, the return of refugees and a referendum to create a stable and just peace in Palestine and to condemn and stop the killing of the people of Gaza by the Zionist regime. Upon arrival in Kampala, Mokhber stated that NAM member states can wield enormous influence on international developments, particularly in terms of politics and the economy.

"The Non-Aligned Movement projects the voices of the world's independent nations. Nowadays, world powers devote great attention to the decisions taken and policies adopted at alliances formed among developing countries," he said. He added, "Among the Islamic Republic of Iran's objectives as to development of international relations is to value multilateralism and actively participate in major regional and internationally inclusive forums like NAM."

In addition to delivering a speech at the summit, Mokhber held bilateral meetings with some participating countries.

Greater relations with Vietnam

Mokhber and his Vietnamese counterpart Vo Thi Anh Xuan held talks on the sidelines of the summit in Kampala, Uganda, on Saturday. The Iranian VP referred to the historical relationship between Iran and Vietnam as well as existing agreements on agricultural, technical, and engineering sectors, noting that the development of bilateral economic ties is not satisfactory, while these two countries enjoy very good political relations.

He emphasized that the private sector is vital in upgrading economic exchanges between the two countries and called for removing monetary and banking obstacles. Mokhber also attached importance to the formation of a joint trade commission to pursue the implementation of agreed programs and pave the way for more economic and trade cooperation.

The Vietnamese VP, for her part, underscored the need for bolstering efforts in line with the development of trade collaborations, calling for the exchange of delegations to facilitate interactions and economic ties. She also condemned the

imposition of the United States' unilateral and cruel sanctions against Iran, emphasizing the need to utilize the capacity of regional and international organizations to enhance the relationship between Iran and Vietnam.

Bolstering economic ties with Philippines

On Saturday, in another meeting with Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines Enrique Manalo, Mokhber urged strengthening bilateral economic ties. Referring to the deep-rooted ties between Iran and the Philippines and marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Mokhber described the volume of existing trade exchanges between the two sides as insufficient and called for expanding the economic exchanges by activating the private sectors and removing the barriers. He described Iran's capacities in the fields of medicine, medical equipment, agriculture, and petrochemicals as an appropriate platform for developing relations, adding that banking and transportation exchanges are two important challenges for economic interactions,

and the two countries can overcome such obstacles by creating the necessary platforms.

For his part, Manalo termed the positions of the two countries very close in the international arenas and expressed his country's will to develop economic ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Referring to the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, he stressed that the Philippines will spare no effort to stop the war and send humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip.

The 19th NAM Summit, under the leadership of Uganda, was held under the theme "Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence" and brings together more than 120 developing countries on a platform of crucial historic significance.

About 4,000 guests from different member states attended the summit that seeks to address pressing global issues and foster cooperation among member states.

The Non-Aligned Movement is the largest grouping of countries outside of the United Nations, making it an important role player in global and multilateral affairs.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



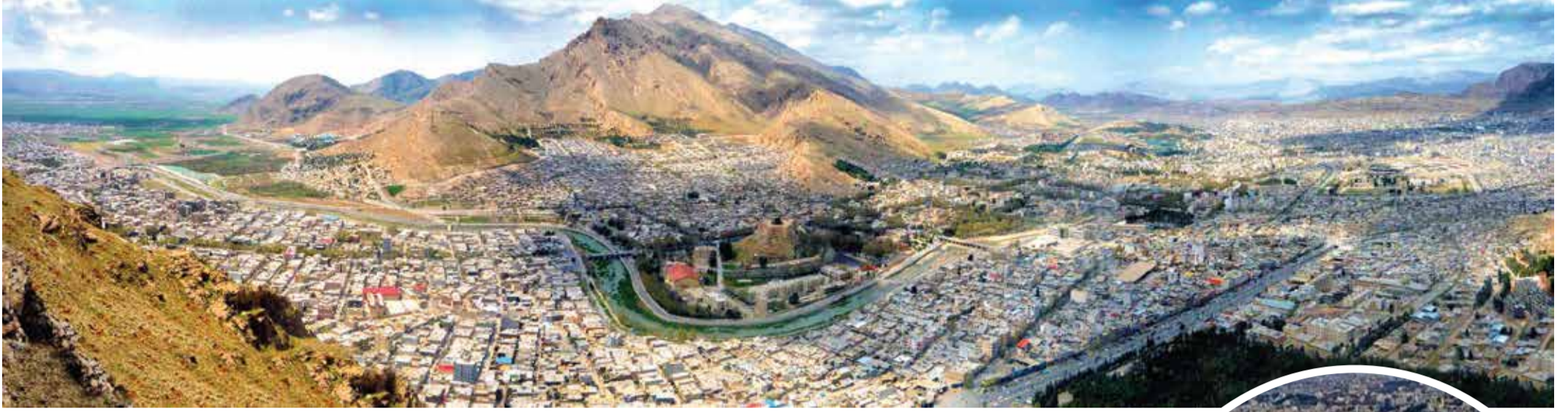
Metals, minerals worth around \$464m traded in IME

The Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) announced that a total of 3.28 million tons of various products, worth about \$464 million, were traded at IME's domestic and export metal and mineral trading hall in the week closing on January 19. According to a report by ime.co.ir on Saturday, over 3.9

million tons of commodities, worth over \$731 million, were traded in its domestic trading and export halls. Among the traded products were 429,975 tons of steel, 1.48 million tons of iron ore, 189,000 tons of sponge iron, 2,210 tons of zinc, 7,650 tons of aluminum ingots, 9,730 tons of copper, 200 tons of

molybdenum concentrate, 18 tons of precious metals, and 1.19 million tons of cement. In addition, 546,578 tons of various commodities, valued at about \$252 million, were traded at IME's domestic and export oil and petrochemical trading halls. Other traded items were 108,642 tons of polymeric

products, 160,500 tons of vacuum bottom, 68,500 tons of lube cut, 33,527 tons of chemical products, 10,710 tons of sulfur, 5,807 tons of base oil, 500 tons of slop wax, 320 tons of feedstocks, and 158,224 tons of bitumen. The IME also traded within the same week 80,058 tons of goods on its side market.



● Khorramabad Valley

Khorramabad Valley: A potential UNESCO World Heritage Site

Iranica Desk

Iran has been known as one of the ancient human civilizations, which has led archaeologists and cultural researchers from different eras to focus on it. The presence of rugged mountains, unique nature, and most importantly, water as the source of human life in Lorestan Province has turned this region into one of the most sought-after areas for human habitation before recorded history, leading to the formation of the first human settlements in this area.

Khorramabad Valley, with the ancient city of Shapurkhist at its center, along with natural attractions and historical sites such as the seven caves, is considered significant evidence of human history in this region.

Recently, the process of registering Khorramabad Valley as a World Heritage Site in UNESCO has begun, which, if successful, will play a significant role in attracting tourists and boosting the economy of Lorestan Province.

Ata Hassanpour, the director general of Khorramabad Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization in Lorestan Province, told ISNA: Some archaeologists and anthropologists believe that after humans left Africa in prehistoric times, they traveled through Asia to Europe and settled in places like the Zagros Mountains, in a valley called Khorramabad, where encounters between Neanderthals and modern humans took place. He added that some, like Professor Marcel Otte, believe that areas in the Zagros Mountains, including Khorramabad Valley, are among the ancient habitats of human-

ity, providing multiple locations for human habitation.

Hassanpour stated that in this ancient valley there are 17 prehistoric sites, seven of which have been the subject of archaeological excavations, including the Qamari Cave, which is one of the five caves in this valley, making a total of seven with two rockshelters.

He added that in addition to the explored caves, there are 10 rock shelters in the heart of Khorramabad Valley. He noted the presence of scattered stone and pottery chips on the surface of the caves and ancient mounds, emphasizing their significance as a valuable guide for archaeologists. He recommended against moving these chips, as their displacement could potentially mislead researchers and archaeologists.

Hassanpour pointed out the formation of caves, attributing the cavities in the heart of the Zagros Mountains to the weathering of limestone formations in these areas.

Further discussing the Qamari Cave, particularly its western part, he mentioned that cave had concluded that this cave, spanning 200 meters, was an endless space that had served as a place of human habitation before recorded history.

He emphasized that these sites indicated favorable living conditions for humans in prehistoric times, particularly in the post-Ice Age period. The presence of abundant water from numerous ponds and flowing rivers, along with prehistoric caves, suitable weather, the presence of animals, and abundant fuel from oak forests, collectively rendered this valley a conducive environment for human livelihood, especially after the hunting pe-

riod and during the agricultural revolution.

He also highlighted the presence of historical houses in Lorestan Province and Khorramabad, dating back to the early Qajar period, up to the first Pahlavi era, as a potential driver for tourism promotion and attracting tourists.

Mohammad Jafari, an economic expert, stated that Lorestan Province has significant potential in the field of tourism, but unfortunately, the historical, ancient, and natural attractions of the region have not been properly introduced to attract visitors.

He emphasized the need for investment in creating suitable accommodations, eco lodges, and improving air, rail, and road transportation infrastructure. According to Jafari, Lorestan is like a paradise in the heart of the Zagros Mountains.

Jafari continued by highlighting that the Zagros Mountains, particularly Khorramabad Valley, was the habitat of early humans, but efforts to introduce this historical significance have been lacking. He stressed the importance of facilitating the process and creating the necessary infrastructure for tourism development.

Referring to the local hospitality in Lorestan Province, Jafari stressed the need for providing up-to-date training to hotel personnel and others in the tourism sector. He also pointed out that the global registration of Khorramabad Valley would attract international and domestic tourists to the region.

Furthermore, he underscored that the capabilities of Lorestan Province, especially Khorramabad Valley, are incomparable to other regions, and the registration of this valley would lead to the development of the regional economy.



● Qamari Cave

Evolution of knowledge and art in Iran

The word knowledge has been defined as a collection of some logical and experimental information in a particular field. The different branches of science do not originate from a unique system, but there may be some close links or relationships between them such as chemistry and physics. No doubt, earth sciences, astronomy and medical sciences are the oldest kind of human sciences. Our forefathers sometimes believed that there are some connections between the different branches of science, for example they assumed that the human's fate or future had something to do with the position of the stars which was studied in astronomy, though nowadays according to the scientific findings that theory no longer carries any validity. Their attempts in the field of astronomy emanated from their curiosity about their environment and their desire to track down the secrets of nature, but their involvement in the earth sciences derived from their need to overcome the natural problems and harmonize with nature. In the face of all their scientific efforts, if they failed to discover the real cause of a natural process, they resorted to some

superstitions which are still remaining among some nations.

The history of science in Iran is so long that it deserves to be studied for many years. Iran can be considered not only as the cradle of science, but also it acts as a junction between east and west. Richard Frye writes: "Iran has been the territory of the important scientific interactions in Middle east. Egyptians, Babylonians and Indians who were once included in the Iranian territory took advantage of each other's knowledge, and in this regard one can say that Iran played an important role in the development of the ancient sciences."

Some historians refer to the fact that even Achaemenian kings were so concerned about scientific activities. For example Ibn Nadin writes: "After Alexander occupied the Persian capital, he gave the order to translate whatever he found in the royal libraries into Greek, and after he withdrew the Persian sciences on medicine, astronomy, etc. he set fire to the books." Ibn Nadin adds: "the Persians had already made some copies of their books and sent them to India and China for a rainy day. Later

Ardeshir Babakan sent out some officials to those countries to get the books back to Iran."

In the course of the Iranian history, many scientific records vanished during the bloody conflicts and invasions. There are also some scholars who refute the fact that there was a scientific development in Iran. If we can name the mental powers as the spiritual powers, so Art emanates from the artist's spiritual inspirations which may take various shapes such as painting, music, poetry, etc. There are some relationships between the different branches of art as Goethe believed that architecture is associated with music and likened architecture to a "solid music". In Persian language, the word art is sometimes a synonym for the word technique. For example, it is usual to say such term as the art of irrigation, perhaps due to the fact that a technique like irrigation is rooted in the human mind and emotion just the way an art is. Even in ancient Egypt, irrigation was called the art of kings, and the Iranians used to place a high value on irrigation, before & after Islam.


 An ancient Persian qanat in Shahzadeh Gardan, Mahan, Kerman Province

Israel's false tautology

Israelis, Jews not the same

By Stephen F. Eisenman
Co-founder of Environmental Justice Foundation

PERSPECTIVE

Israeli leaders have begun to implement a plan they have long been preparing: Gaining complete control of the Land of Israel, "Eretz Yisrael" אֶרֶץ-יִשְׂרָאֵל, including Gaza and the West Bank. I won't detail here the early political and military milestones in the project, except to note that Israel's expropriation of Arab land has been well documented by UN agencies, Palestinian and other scholars, and human rights organizations. That history includes seizures following wars in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973 and settlement activity up until the present. In the last few weeks alone, there has been a major expansion of "wildcat settlement outposts" in the West Bank, according to an investigation by the Israeli group Peace Now, as reported in The New York Times.

On December 25, 2023, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Israeli Knesset member Shani Danon that he was developing a plan to facilitate the "voluntary" transfer of Gazans to other countries. "Our problem," he said, "is finding countries that are ready to absorb [them] and we are working on it." A few days later, Finance Minister Bezale Smotrich said: "The solution in Gaza requires...encouraging voluntary migration and full security control including the renewal of [Jewish] settlement." If Netanyahu, Smotrich, and others accomplish their goal of ridding Gaza of Gazans and extending the Jewish state "from the river to the sea," it will be the bloody culmination of Theodore Herzl's dream of a Heimstätte (a homeland) for the Jews in all of Palestine; it will also be a second nakba (catastrophe) for the Palestinians.



Members of the Jewish Voice for Peace and the If Not Now movement, two Jewish activist groups, stage a rally on October 18, 2023, in Washington, D.C., to call for a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war. ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES



Israeli border police stop Arab women in the Old City of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) on October 3, 2023. CHAIM GOLDBERG/FLASH90



Israeli Arab girls look for passing cars to hand out Muslim prayer books in the main street of the Arab town of Taibe, central Israel, in January 2014. ARIEL SCHALIT/AP

The false tautology

The cabinet of Israel has for decades argued that "Eretz Yisrael" — the total territory of historic Palestine — should be the homeland of Jews alone. That was implicit from the nation's founding but became explicit with the passage in 2018 of the "Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People." The chairman of the committee that drafted the bill and shepherded it through the Knesset, Amir Ohana stated: "This is the law of all laws. It is the most important law in the history of the State of Israel, which says that everyone has human rights, but national rights in Israel belong only to the Jewish people. That is the founding principle on which the state was established." Though the bill was watered down somewhat from its original version, "it still permitted," according to the Israeli Attorney General's office, "harming a person be-

cause of his nationality or religion. That is blatant discrimination." The law also affirms the right of diasporic Jews to emigrate (aliya — עלייה) to Israel, but not Arabs or Palestinians living in the West Bank, Gaza, or elsewhere, even if they are related to Israeli Arabs. Preservation of the Jewish right of return is essential to maintaining Israel's appeal to American and other diasporic Jews. The US has nearly as many Jews — just under 6 million — as Israel, together comprising 3/4 of the global population. By making them de facto Israelis, the right of return expands Eretz Yisrael far beyond existing boundaries and implicates the diaspora in Israeli policy. The underlying ideology of Palestinian exclusion and Jewish inclusion is expressed by the following, implicit (and false) tautology: All (true) Israelis are Jews; all Jews are Israelis.

Of course, not all Israelis are Jews. 21% are Arabs (Palestinian, Druze, Christians, Circassian, and others), denied full recognition in accord with Israel's Basic Law. If you consider the wider region to which Netanyahu's far-right coalition lays claim, including Gaza and the West Bank, the population is divided roughly 50/50 between Jews and non-Jews — the latter mostly Sunni Muslims. (Recent demographic analysis suggests that Jews are now a minority in Israel and the occupied or administered territories.) Neither are "all Jews Israeli." The Right of Return is an invitation, not a mandate, and only about 3,000 Americans per year accept it. In fact, more than twice as many Israeli Jews migrate to the US every year, as American Jews to Israel. In the last few weeks, opposition to the war among young Democratic voters has moved the Biden administration away

from unstinting support for the war and toward a policy of de-escalation, though far too slowly to protect the Palestinian population of Gaza. What's needed now is for American liberals and progressives — Jewish and non-Jewish, but especially Jewish — to demand that continued US support for Israel be conditioned upon an end to the killing, and rapid commencement of negotiations for a long-term peace, along the lines of either a two-state or one-state solution. The slogans for that mass movement have already been deployed by courageous students and faculty, union workers, anti-war activists, and progressive Democrats in the US House of Representatives; They are: "Not in My Name," "Never Again, Anywhere," and "Peace Now."

The full article first appeared in CounterPunch.

Israeli refuseniks picking jail over the Gaza war

He's a baby-faced 18-year-old with a heart full of idealism. When Tel Aviv teen Tal Mitnick refused to enlist in the Israeli army, he was put on trial: on December 26, 2023, he was taken to military prison to serve a 30-day sentence. Standing alone in a country on a determined war footing is an agonising decision. But, speaking at Tel Hashomer, a base near the Gaza fence in central Israel, Mitnick staunchly defended his decision, Al Jazeera reported. "I believe that slaughter cannot solve slaughter," he said. "Violence won't solve violence. And that is why I refuse." The statement appeared on the X account of Mesarvot, a support network connecting "refuseniks" in a campaign against the Israeli

occupation of Palestinian territories. In an earlier interview posted on the account, Mitnick laid out his universalist stance on the conflict. The solution, he said, would not come from corrupt politicians in Israel or from Hamas. "It will come from us, the sons and daughters of the two nations," he said. Friends came out in support of Mitnick, holding placards with phrases like: "You cannot build heaven with blood," "An eye for an eye and we all go blind," and "There is no military solution." Military service is mandatory for most Jewish Israelis, viewed as a rite of passage. In the country's highly militarised society, so-called refuseniks risk being labelled traitors.



A group of students, including Tal Mitnick (C), hold protest signs at the Tel Hashomer military base in central Israel. Mitnick was sentenced to 30 days in a military prison for refusing to serve in the Israel Defense Forces. MESARVOT

Are refuseniks common?

No. Generally speaking, refuseniks may end up serving repeated prison sentences, ordered to return to recruitment centres again and again. Some wind up doing months behind bars before they are eventually discharged.

The Israeli military does have a conscientious objectors committee, but exemptions are usually only granted on religious grounds — the ultra-Orthodox Haredi Jews, for instance, are legally exempt. Refusing to serve as a matter of political principle is not considered a valid objection.

Earlier this year, Amnesty International released a report on Yuval Dag, a 20-year-old who had made his political objections clear before his summons. The army classified his refusal as disobedience and sentenced him to 20 days at Neve Tzedek military prison in Tel Aviv.

The rights group named four other individuals — Einat Gerlitz, Nave Shabtay Levin, Evyatar Moshe Rubin, and Shahar Schwartz — who were repeatedly detained in 2022. Conscientious objectors commonly serve five months or more in prison — a high price to pay for young people doing what they believe to be right.

Many objectors come to their decision after participating in protest movements, whether on climate change, Israel's occupation, violence, and discrimination against Palestinians — a system that many rights groups have compared with apartheid.

Are there any famous refuseniks?

In 2003, a group of Israeli Air Force pilots provoked national fury when they refused to take part in operations in the West Bank and Gaza. Submitting a letter to the media, they branded attacks on the territories as “illegal and immoral”.

The case was noteworthy, involving elite army members like Brigadier General Yiftah Spector, considered a legend in the forces for his attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1982. The cabinet accused the pilots of “pretentious snivelling”.

That same year, the country's elite commandos also defied orders to carry out attacks on the occupied territories. Setting out their position in a letter, 15 reservists from the Sayeret Matkal unit, often compared with the British army's SAS, said: “We will no longer corrupt the stamp of humanity in us through carrying out the missions of an occupation army.”

“In the past, we fought for a justified cause (but today), we have reached the boundary of oppressing another people.”

In 2007, Bar Refaeli, a model, married a friend to avoid military ser-

vice, later telling the press that “celebrities have other needs”. Later, to avoid damage to the companies she worked for, she agreed to participate in an enlistment campaign. The case ignited a debate on how easy it is to dodge conscription.

Hang on, wasn't there dissent in army ranks this year?

Yes, but it was not linked to the occupation. In early March, about 700 reservist soldiers — including some top brass — resigned en masse during widespread protests over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's judicial overhaul. Critics accused him of curtailing Supreme Court powers to shield himself from corruption charges.

Explaining his refusal to serve in the army, Dag said that reservists had resigned because they were afraid of living in a dictatorship. But, he pointed out, “We need to remember that in the occupied territories there has never been democracy. And the anti-democratic institution that rules there is the army.”

Responding to rebellion in the ranks, Netanyahu said: “There's no room for refusals.” Military service was, he said, “the first and most important foundation of our existence in our land...The refusals threaten the foundation of our existence.”

Netanyahu's view is not unusual. Across the political spectrum, with the exception of some left-wing and Arab groups, parties condemn the refusal to serve for a number of reasons. Left wingers worry about polarisation, claiming that refusing to serve will encourage right-wing resistance to removing settlements. Right wingers believe that refusal helps the enemies of Israel.

What does the law say?

The right to conscientious objection to military service is protected by international law, enshrined in Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The UN Commission for Human Rights has stated that states must “refrain from subjecting conscientious objectors to imprisonment and to repeated punishment for failure to perform military service”.

However, it is common practice in Israel, not only to imprison objectors, but to repeat sentences several times. In 2003, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention said that international law banned “double jeopardy”.

Selective objection is not an option. In 2002, the Israeli High Court of Justice ruled that allowing soldiers not to serve in the occupied territories would “loosen the links that hold us together as a people”.

The case had been brought by a group called Courage to Refuse, who said their duties would involve “dominating, expelling, starving, and humiliating an entire people”.

Administrative detention used to terrorize 1948 Palestinians

By Yoav Haifawi
Anti-Zionist activist

PERSPECTIVE

Administrative detention is an Israeli practice of holding Palestinian detainees without charge or trial. The longest period for a single administrative detention decree is six months, but there is no limit on the number of times that the same person may be detained, in continuity or with some breaks. For this reason, administrative detention is regarded as indefinite detention. Although more associated with the Israeli occupation's regime in the West Bank, administrative detention is used in '48 Palestine as well, and since October 7, it has been an important way Israel has repressed and terrorized Palestinians.

I have been reporting on how the little space that existed for Palestinian political expression in the areas held by Israel since 1948 has been crushed since October 7. One of the most chilling examples of this has been the use of administrative detention.



A vigil is held against administrative detention in front of Haifa court before Majd Zgheir's hearing on December 10, 2023. ARAB 48

A tool of occupation

Administrative detentions have always been part of Israel's repressive measures against Palestinians. Beginning in 1948, Israel used an administrative detention policy inherited from the British occupation of Palestine (the so-called “Mandate”). In 1979, Israel's Knesset approved its own “Emergency Powers (Detentions) Law” governing the draconian use of administrative detention. The law only applies during a “state of emergency,” which is meant to be temporary. But, since 1948, the Knesset has always renewed what became a permanent “state of emergency”.

According to this law, administrative detention of Israeli citizens should be presented for approval by the president of the District Court within 48 hours. In the West Bank, an administrative detention has to be reviewed within eight days by a military judge. In the West Bank, there have always been hundreds of Palestinians held under administrative detention, but last year the numbers surged. According to Wikipedia (in Hebrew), there were 967 Palestinian administrative detainees in March 2023, and as of September 2023, before the events of October 7, that number had already grown to 1,264, which would be more than during the tensest period of the Second Intifada. According to a report by Baker Zoabi (in Siha Mekomit), out of some 4,600 Palestinians who were detained in the West Bank since October 7, about

2,800 are administrative detainees — an unprecedented number.

In 48 Palestine, as Israel tried to keep some democratic façade, the usage of administrative detention has historically been more restrained. The biggest wave of administrative detentions in 48 Palestine that I remember happened during the First Intifada. The intifada started on December 9, 1987, and after hundreds of unarmed Palestinian demonstrators were shot dead by the occupation army, the leadership of the 48 Palestinians called for a general strike on December 21, in what they called “the day of peace”. They requested the public not to demonstrate on that day to avoid any provocation from the police. Abna al-Balad, a radical leftist Palestinian grassroots movement challenging the community's traditional leadership, named it “Palestine Day” and called on people to demonstrate in every town and village. In many places, people chose to actively express their anger at the ongoing massacres, and clashes erupted in several areas. Following those events, some ten of the leaders of Abna al-Balad were imprisoned under administrative decrees in the first half of 1988.

Later, administrative detention was used mostly for individual cases. After the mass uprising of May 2021, what we call “Hebat al-Karameh,” Israel issued several administrative detention orders in 1948 Palestine. One of them, Zafer Jabarin, a devoted Muslim who prays too much (for the Shabak's taste) in Al-Aqsa, was in ad-

ministrative detention again this year for four months but was released before the war began.

The oppressive apparatus regards administrative detention as an important and potent tool in its arsenal. They like it because it is easy to use, as there is no need to collect evidence, and the technical procedures are simple and straightforward. But they mostly rely on it and are ready to take the public relations damage connected to using it because it breaks established legal standards to terrorize the public.

The threat of administrative detention works in several ways. First, it is used against activists who are under interrogation who know that if they don't confess to what they are being told to confess to, they can be thrown into prison for an unlimited period anyway. On a wider scale, administrative detention is used to terrorize everyone. Even if you do nothing illegal, the Shabak can always claim that they know what you are dreaming about doing. The war minister would sign any decree put in front of him by the Shabak, and the courts would rubber-stamp it. As Judge Shapira made clear in a censored version of a decree once, administrative detention is intended to prevent “anticipated activity.” And ‘48 Palestinians, like Palestinians everywhere, are always considered anticipated dangers.

The full article first appeared on Mondoweiss.

Israeli police clash with ultra-Orthodox men protesting against the army draft in Al-Quds (Jerusalem). OLIVIER FITOUSSI/HAARETZ



In 2003, a group of Israeli Air Force pilots provoked widespread fury when they refused to take part in operations in the West Bank and Gaza, slamming the operations as “illegal and immoral”. The cabinet accused the pilots of “pretentious snivelling”.

AFC Asian Cup:

Reality check for lackluster Iran after laboring to Hong Kong win

Sports Desk

A narrow 1-0 victory over Hong Kong was enough for Iran to secure a place in the AFC Asian Cup knockouts but head coach Amir Qalenoee was left with plenty to think about ahead of the encounters with more formidable oppositions in Qatar. Often clueless in front of the goal and vulnerable in the backline, the Asian powerhouse had Mahdi Qayedi, who received a surprise callup on the eve of the tournament, to thank for the maximum points against an opponent that had been well-beaten by four goals when the two sides met in the World Cup qualifiers in November.

The 25-year-old bagged his second goal in Qatar in the 24th minute, when his composed effort from a tight angle found the bottom corner.

The result means a draw against the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday will see Iran progress as the Group C winner and get a test against an Asian minnow side in the last 16, but with Japan and South Korea on the horizon in the quarterfinals, Qalenoee, who was clearly frustrated on the touchline through the 90 minutes, knows there is much to improve if his team is to end a 48-year drought in the continent's flagship international event.

"We somehow managed to win the game and stay on top of the group but the performance was definitely not what we were expecting," said Iranian striker

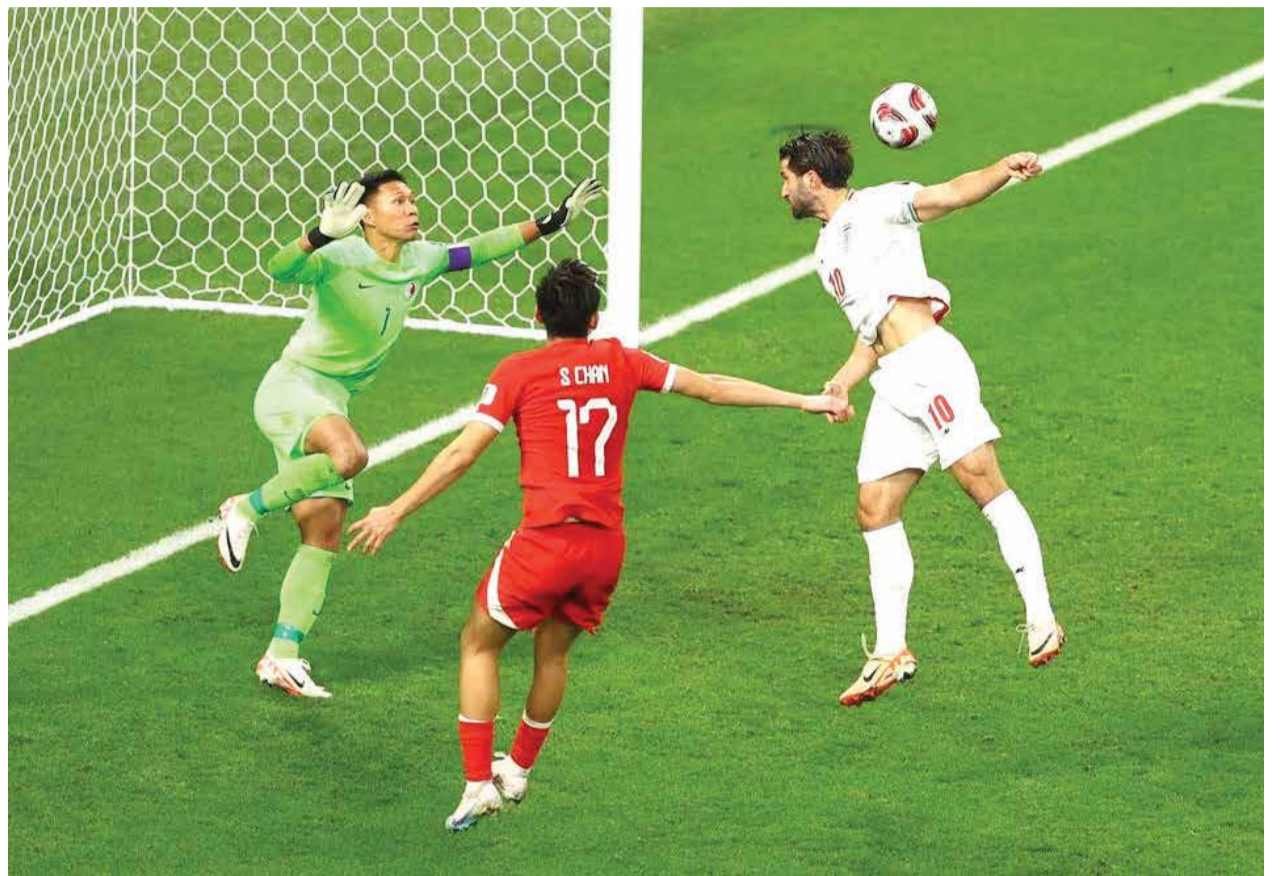
Mahdi Taremi, who had a quiet night at the Khalifa International Stadium before being substituted in the second half, adding: "The players were not mentally ready for the contest though I can't find an explanation for that."

Iranian fullback Ramin Rezaeian, meanwhile, rued "the missed opportunities in the early stages" which led to Hong Kong "finding the courage to push forward."

The Iranian backline gave the ball away cheaply on a couple of occasions and, in fact, the final outcome could have been different, had it not been for the East Asian side – the lowest ranked team in the tournament – lacking the killer touch. Despite the defeat, Hong Kong head coach Jorn Andersen was "proud" of his team's display, saying: "We played against one of the top teams in Asia, 21st in the FIFA rankings, but we did not see the difference between the teams."

"I spoke with the Iran coach before the match and I told him, for me Iran is alongside Japan and Korea Republic as top teams, but today I see my team as very strong. We created many chances, but we could not take our chances and score," added the Norwegian.

Qalenoee, however, had other ideas. "If you see the stats, you can see the difference in shots, possession and chances created. For sure, we still have some errors, but the players and the technical staff are all fighting hard and giving their best," said the Iranian.



Iranian striker Karim Ansarifard (10) goes up in vain for a header during a 1-0 victory over Hong Kong in the AFC Asian Cup at the Khalifa International Stadium, Al Rayyan, Qatar, on January 19, 2024.
● MOLLY DARLINGTON/REUTERS

Persepolis closing in on ex-Asian player of the year Hassan: Report

Sports Desk

Persian Gulf Pro League champion is set to sign Qatari fullback Abdelkarim Hassan on a season-and-a-half long contract – for a reported fee of \$750,000 – according to the media in Iran.

An Asian Player of the Year in 2018, Hassan won four Qatari top-flight titles as well as the 2011 AFC Champions League crown with Al Saad before parting ways with the club in controversial manner to join Kuwaiti side Al Jahra in January last year.

Hassan, 30, has 11 goals and assists apiece in 101 appearances for the national team, the last of which came against the Netherlands at

the 2022 World Cup group stage. The left fullback played an integral role in helping Qatar lift a maiden AFC Asian Cup trophy in 2019 in the United Arab Emirates, where he was named in the team of the tournament.

Hassan was handed an indefinite suspension by the Qatar Football Association last January, while having his Al Saad contract terminated, following a social media altercation with a fan.

Hassan responded to a complaint on SnapChat about Qatar's World Cup group exit on home soil by posting: "Relax, do you think it's war?"

Hassan is to arrive in Tehran on Monday to sign the contract with Persepolis, which is desperately

looking for a new head coach after Yahya Golmohammadi stepped down from his role in the aftermath of 1-1 draw against Mes Rafsanjan in the league on the first of the new year.

Oman head coach Branko Ivanovic was approached to make a dramatic return to the Reds bench, once his Asian Cup campaign comes to an end in Qatar, but the Croatian, who won three league titles with Persepolis before leaving the club in 2019, on Thursday turned down the offer due to "personal and family" reasons.

Persepolis is third in the Iranian league tables with 30 points after 15 rounds of matches – two points adrift of archrival Esteghlal on top.



● MATTHIAS HANGST/GETTY IMAGES

Iran beaten by Qatar, misses out on World Handball Championship berth

Sports Desk

A second successive defeat in the main round of the Asian Men's Handball Championship saw Iran fail to progress to the last four in Bahrain and miss out on a place in next year's World Handball Championship. Having suffered a 25-23 loss to Japan in the Group I opener, Majid Rahimizadeh's men did a great job to bounce back from a 15-13 deficit at halftime against the Asian powerhouse and level the scoreline at 20-20, before the five-time defending champion restored the lead in the closing stages to win 27-23.

Cuban-born Frankis Marzo contributed a game-high nine goals for Qatar, followed by Ahmad Madadi, who finished on five. Mojtaba Heidarpour topped the scoring chart for Iran with seven goals, with Kiarash Taheri and Reza Ezzati chipping three apiece.

The result meant Qatar is joined by Japan, which defeated the United Arab Emirates 29-26 later on Friday, in the semifinals, and the top spot of the group will be at stake when the two sides square off in Isa Town's Sheikh Khalifa Sports City Hall today.

Iran, third in the table on goal difference, will face the UAE today with a win or draw sending Rahimizadeh's side into the fifth-place contest on Thursday. This is first major tournament for Iran under Rahimizadeh, who replaced Montenegrin Veselin Vujović following a group exit in October's Asian qualifiers for the Paris Olympics.

Vujović steered Iran to the fourth place in the previous edition of the Asian Championship

in Saudi Arabia two years ago and a spot at the 2023 world event.



Qatar's Frankis Marzo (10) shoots during a victory over Iran in the Asian Men's Handball Championship in Isa Town, Bahrain, on January 19, 2024.
● IRIHF



Highest ever orbit conquered

Iran puts research satellite into orbit

National Desk

Iran on Saturday launched a research satellite into its highest orbit yet in a new milestone for the country's aerospace program. The Soraya satellite of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) was successfully launched with the Ghaem-100 satellite carrier of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, IRNA reported. This is the first time that Iran has successfully placed a satellite in

an orbit higher than 500 kilometers.

Telecommunications Minister Issa Zarepour said the satellite, which weighs about 50 kilograms, was put in orbit 750 kilometers above Earth.

According to Fars News Agency, the satellite had started sending telemetry data.

The Ghaem-100 carrier rocket, manufactured by the IRGC's Aerospace Division, is capable of carrying a payload of 100kg. It is

Iran's first three-stage solid-fuel satellite launcher.

Top IRGC officials including chief commander Hossein Salami and head of the Aerospace Division Amir-Ali Hajizadeh as well as ISA President Hassan Salarieh oversaw the blastoff.

Over the past decade, Iran has sent several satellites into orbit, and in 2013 launched a monkey into space. In 2020, the IRGC put Iran's first military satellite, dubbed the Nour, into orbit.

UK conducts 50 spy missions over Gaza



AFP

International Desk

The UK military has flown 50 spy missions over Gaza since the start of December in support of Israel, an investigation has revealed. Investigative journalism and media organization Declassified UK said the intelligence gathering flights are conducted using Shadow R1 surveillance aircraft taking off from Britain's controversial Akrotiri airbase in Cyprus, Al Jazeera reported.

It said the government refused to confirm the number of spy flights or what kind of information was passed to the Israeli army when asked.

Palestinian Health Ministry says 165 Palestinians were killed and 280 wounded in Gaza over a 24-hour period.

Deadly Israeli air raids continue to rain down on Gaza as fighting continues in Khan Younis and near Nasser Hospital.

At least 24,927 people have been killed and 62,388 were wounded in Israeli attacks on Gaza since October 7, 2023, when Hamas fighters entered Israel and took numerous captives.

Musa Abu Marzouk, a member of the Hamas political bureau, says the movement does not want to keep the Israeli captives and is seeking a new prisoner exchange deal.

"In the end, Israel will be forced to make a deal, because it failed during more than a hundred days of war to recover any prisoners by force," Abu Marzouk told the Russian Sputnik agency.

US President Joe Biden on Friday said he spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about possible solutions for the creation of an independent Palestinian state, suggesting one path could involve a non-militarized government.

Asked if a two-state solution was impossible while Netanyahu was still in office, Biden said, "No, it's not."

Meanwhile, criminal complaints were filed against Israeli President Isaac Herzog for allegedly committing war crimes in Gaza while he was in Davos for the World Economic Forum, Swiss prosecutors said Friday.

The Office of the Swiss Attorney General said: "The criminal complaints will be examined according to the usual procedure," Reuters reported. It also said it would determine how questions of diplomatic immunity operate given Herzog's Israeli citizenship.

Four IRGC advisors assassinated in Israeli air raid on Syria

International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says four of its military advisors have been assassinated in an Israeli strike in the Syrian capital.

The IRGC said in a statement on Saturday that the advisors were "martyred" along with a number of Syrian forces in the attack in Damascus, Press TV reported.

The attack targeted a three-story residential building in the city's Mezzeh neighborhood which houses

several diplomatic missions. "As a result of an air raid by the barbaric and criminal Zionist regime on the city of Damascus, a number of Syrian forces and four military advisers of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps were martyred," the statement said.

The statement further identified the martyrs as Hojjatollah Omidvar, Ali Aqazadeh, Hossein Mohammadi, and Saeed Karimi. It gave no ranks for them.

Nour News, which is close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, identified

two of the dead in Damascus as Brigadier General Sadeq Omidzadeh, the intelligence commander of the IRGC's Quds Force in Syria, and his deputy, who goes by the nom de guerre Hajj Qolam. The difference in information could not be immediately reconciled.

Israel frequently targets military positions inside Syria, especially those of resistance fighters, who have played a key role in helping the Syrian army in its fight against foreign-backed terrorists.

The Tel Aviv regime has over



the past months carried out airstrikes on various locations in Syria and Lebanon as the illegal entity attempts to expand its aggression against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip to other fronts across the region.

Iran maintains an advisory mission in Syria at the request of Damascus with the aim of helping the war-torn Arab country vanquish the foreign-backed militants

who have been fighting the democratically-elected Syrian government since 2011. Last month, an Israeli air attack on a suburb of Damascus killed Iranian general Sayyed Razi Mousavi, a longtime IRGC adviser in Syria.

Earlier in December, Israel also killed two IRGC military advisors — Mohammad Ali Ataee and Panah Taqizadeh — in an attack in Syria.



People and security forces gather in front of a building destroyed in an Israeli strike in Damascus on January 20, 2024.

AFP

The IRGC announced in a statement that the two officers were martyred against the backdrop of the relentless savagery of the "fake and child-killing" Israeli regime in Gaza.



IRNA

Resistance leaders attest Gaza as symbol at Tehran conference

International Desk

The 12th Conference of Gaza, The Symbol of Resistance, was held in Tehran on Saturday with the participation of esteemed high-ranking guests, military officials, and the families of martyrs of the resistance front and Iran.

In a message to the conference, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement, noted that what makes Gaza the symbol of the resistance is its noble, ground-breaking, and uncompromising efforts to represent the wishes and ambitions of a nation yearning for dignity and victory.

"The number of military officers and soldiers killed by the

Palestinian resistance groups during this recent conflict in Gaza is multiple times that of the Israeli casualties in the Six-Day War in 1967," he said. The Israeli army, which conquered more than 69,000 square kilometers of Muslim lands during the 1967 war, has suffered so many losses in just a part of the Gaza Strip that forced it to "downplay its retreats as entering the next phase of the war," Nasrallah highlighted. "So, the conference's motto was rightly chosen."

The leader of Hezbollah said Operation Al-Aqsa Storm had manifold impacts: it debunked Israel's myth of invincibility, neutralized efforts to brush aside the Palestinian cause, and disrupted the nor-

malization route that has always aimed to put restraints on the will of the Palestinians. The deputy commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) also maintained that the operation tarnished the Zionist regime's dubious military, intelligence, and economic reputation, which in turn denied the United States its source of hope and dependence in the region.

Attending the event, Mohammad Reza Fallahzadeh stated that the Palestinian resistance will continue the fight with the support of other resistance groups located in the West Bank, Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen.

Yemen's ambassador to Iran warned against losing steam in the religious endeavor to stand up for Gazans, who are under the most brutal attacks by the occupying regime, saying that the enemy is already trying to divide the resistance and "has realized the danger".

Making the remarks at the 12th Gaza Conference, The Symbol of Resistance, Ebrahim al-Dailami called for all Muslims of the world to do whatever is in their power to help the oppressed Palestinians, as Allah would reprimand them if they didn't.

Iran, Pakistan agree to de-escalate after airstrikes

Iran and Pakistan "agreed to de-escalate" tensions, after trading deadly airstrikes on targets in each other's territory this week.

The rare military actions in the porous border region of Baluchistan — split between the two nations — had stoked regional tensions.

Iran carried out a missile and drone attack on terrorist targets in Pakistan on Tuesday night, with Pakistan in turn striking militant targets inside Iran on Thursday.

Pakistan recalled its ambassador from Tehran and said Iran's envoy — on a visit home — was blocked from returning to Islamabad. The United Nations, Russia and the United States appealed for restraint, while China offered to mediate.

But after speaking by phone, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani agreed to "continue se-



curity cooperation".

After the call, Amir-Abdollahian said in a statement "the cooperation of the two countries to neutralize and destroy terrorist camps in Pakistan is essential". The two top diplomats "agreed to de-escalate the situation," according to a summary of the conversation released by Pakistan's Foreign Ministry.

They also agreed "close coordination on counter terrorism and other aspects of mutual concern should be strengthened".

The two sides want to cooperate moving forward and return each other's ambassadors to

Tehran and Islamabad, IRNA said.

Meanwhile on Friday, Pakistan Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held an emergency security meeting with military and intelligence chiefs.

A statement after the meeting said the leadership discussed the situation following the airstrikes.

The committee stressed that existing communication channels between Pakistan and Iran "should be used to address each other's security concerns in the larger interest of regional peace and stability," according to the statement.



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A report on historic Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory

A plant that narrates industrial, historical, and social transformations of contemporary Iran



By Sadeq Dehqan

Staff writer

The cement factory of Shahr-e Rey stands as a witness to the industrial, historical, and social transformations of contemporary Iran. It is true that old people and places holds numerous stories and adventures; the tales of an individual, a family, a group, or even a specific place or era. Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory, the oldest cement factory in Iran and the Middle East, and one of the pioneers of modern industries in contemporary Iran, is no exception to this rule.

Founded in the year 1894 around the Sorsoreh Mountain and Bibi ShahrBanu Shrine in the Shahr-e Rey region, south of the capital, by Reza Shah Pahlavi, it marked the inception of the Pahlavi as the country's first cement production line. After half a century of activity, the factory was closed in March 1984 due to reasons such as urban development and the emission of smoke and dust. Over the course of more than half a century of Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory's activity, many people's lives have become intertwined with its story. Haj Hassan Farahani and his father worked together for 90 years at the Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory, covering its entire existence until its dissolution.

Even after the factory's closure, Haj Hassan did not cease working there, and for several years, he has been narrating the oral history of the factory as a guide for the Rey Cement Museum since its conversion. Hassan Farahani, who is at his 70 (born in 1953), commenced his activities in the Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory in 1971 and has experienced various departments of the factory to date. His father had also worked in the factory for over 50 years. The story of Haj Hassan and the cement factory intertwines in such a way that when reviewing their lives, it seems as if you are flipping through the history of the factory.



IRAN DAILY

Foundation story of Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory

Now, hear the story of the establishment and launch of the oldest cement factory in the Middle East from the perspective of Haj Hassan: "In the 18th century, especially in the latter half, when new industries were emerging, Ali Qoli Khan Sepahi, a Qajar descendant, returned to Iran in 1917 after graduating from a university in Zurich, Switzerland. From the beginning, he nurtured the idea of cement production in Iran because, at that time, Iran did not have any cement. Although in Iran, two to

three thousand years ago, there was a lime mortar called "Sarooj" which had a function similar to cement, the term we recognize today as cement has Roman roots and means adhesive. In 1917, Ali Qoli Khan Sepahi signed a contract with the then Ministry of Public Works for exclusive cement production rights in Iran for 30 years. However, due to coinciding with World War I, this matter was not brought up in the Parliament. Until 1925, when Reza Shah Pahlavi an-

nounced his intention to build a nationwide railway. At that time, it was concluded that if they intended to import cement for this project, it would impose a high cost on the project and the country. Therefore, it was decided to establish a cement factory. Consequently, Ali Qoli Khan, with the consultation of several engineers, corresponded with Denmark to import a 100-ton cement production line. With these preparations, the groundwork for the factory was laid, and in 1933, alongside the

Sorsoreh and Safayyeh Mountains (seven kilometers south of Tehran and north of Shahr-e Rey), the factory was launched. The raw materials for cement production include limestone, clay, and a small percentage of raw gypsum. Through research, it was found that the limestone of the Sorsoreh and Safayyeh mountains was superior to other areas for building the factory. For the expansion of the factory, a 200-ton cement production line was purchased from Siemens Germany in 1937. Subse-

quently, in 1939, the request to purchase a 300-ton production line was submitted, but due to the outbreak of World War II, the ship carrying the equipment sank or was confiscated by the Allies in 1941. However, after four years, in 1955, through negotiations with Germany, the equipment reached Iran through the sea, and the third cement production line of Shahr-e Rey came into operation. In total, the factory's production capacity reached 600 tons per day."

Special cooling tower technology

The establishment of heavy cement production lines requires dedicated power and energy, and meeting the power needs for the operation of these lines is achieved through various methods and technologies. Some of these methods are quite interesting and may not be seen elsewhere. In 1933, when the first cement production line entered the country, the city's electricity supply for the factory was very weak. Consequently, along with the production line, steam turbines with a capacity of 1,200 kilowatts were purchased. Farahani explains the power generation process of the factory: "Usually, electricity is produced in thermal power plants and steam turbines by bringing water to a boiling point to generate steam, which causes the turbines to rotate and produce electricity. The continuous production of electricity requires the recirculation of steam and hot water through a process. For this

purpose, steam and hot water are directed towards a cooling tower or a cooling source located behind the roof. The hot water enters the tower through bridges, and through the holes in the bridges, it pours into the pool at ground level from a great height like rain, then returns to the turbine path. This water processing, especially during cold seasons, gives a unique appearance to the cooling tower, as a plume of steam is constantly drawn from the tower into the sky. However, the power generation technology of the Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory did not rely solely on turbines. To increase electricity production in 1956, two diesel generators were purchased from Germany. Initially, coal was used as fuel for these machines, and later, crude oil or mazut was used to meet their fuel needs. Each of these diesel machines produced approximately two and a half megawatts of electricity. In total, the factory had the capacity to



produce six and a half megawatts of electricity. At that time, the factory did not need more than five megawatts of electricity for its own needs. Thus, the surplus electricity production of the factory was sold to places such as the Reza Shah mausoleum, Hazrat Abdul Azim Hassani shrine, Firoozabadi Hospital, Imamzadeh Abdullah, Sheikh Saduq mausoleum, and the Aminabad Psychiatric Hospital, as well as approximately 500 residential units.

Generators similar to those on Titanic

According to Farahani, after the dissolution of the factory, a few years ago, a group from Germany came to buy these diesel generators for themselves. In response, we said, "These machines, which are manufactured by you and were originally sold to Iran as obsolete, how come you are interested in buying them now?" The Germans said that in total, four generators were produced initially, one was sold to Turkey whose

fate is unknown and probably lost. Another machine was on the Titanic ship, which sank, leaving only these two machines that we intend to take to Germany for use in the museum. They were willing to equip the entire cement factory as a museum in exchange for these generators, but in the end, the Germans' request was not accepted, and these two machines were preserved as part of the factory's heritage.

Establishment of museum

Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory, wholly owned by the government, was officially dissolved on March 1, 1985 due to public complaints about pollution and the production and emission of dust. After a few years of closure, it was decided that, due to its position, potential, and capacity as a heritage site, it would be transformed into the "Rey Cement Museum." According to him, the first phase of this museum, inaugurated in 2022, includes the cooling tower section, diesel power generators, and the clinker storage ware-

house (the main material for cement production), and the factory's document center. The next phase of the museum includes the operation of the mining section, maintenance and parts section of cement machinery, which will be operational in the next two to three years. In this phase, the first cement kiln in the Middle East and the cement raw material mill will also be included. In the second phase of the museum, a section is also considered for the establishment of startups, creative businesses, and technology-based firms.

Document section of museum

The document section of the Shahr-e Rey Cement Factory is one of the interesting and fascinating sections of the Rey Cement Museum. In this section, documents related to the factory's personnel, spanning over a hundred and ten years, from the time the idea of establishing the factory was conceived by Ali Qoli Khan Sepahi until the dissolution of the factory, have been collected. According to him, the documents and records in this section include files of the first-generation personnel (fathers) and second-generation personnel (sons) and some documents related to various company expenses such as salary payments, purchases of parts and machinery needed by the factory,

as well as architectural drawings, machinery drawings, and memories of the workers, social, welfare, and cultural issues related to them. The first-generation factory workers include individuals who were engaged in factory activities from the beginning of its establishment until 1980 and were all retired after that year. From 1980 onwards, 600 new employees were hired, and until the dissolution of the factory in 1984, they were all still working. After the dissolution, these individuals were rehired. In the document section, cloth folders contain files of the first-generation personnel, and metal files include files of the second-generation personnel.



IRAN DAILY