

# Director: Crafting films on 'Sacred Defense' requires poetic perspective



## Arts & Culture Desk

Ensieh Shahhosseini, director and writer of the film 'Missing Hand,' discussed the cinematic portrayal of the "Sacred Defense" era (1980-1988) at a press conference during the 42nd Fajr International Film Festival. Shahhosseini expressed her admiration for the late Parvaneh Massoumi, stating that Massoumi's life was a true miracle. Shahhosseini emphasized the need for a poetic and cultural perspective when creating films about the "Sacred Defense" and the war. The press event also featured a tribute to Massoumi, where festival's president Mojtaba Amini presented a plaque of honor to her nephew. Shahhosseini highlighted the significance of Massoumi's life and contributions to the film industry. Addressing the delay in pursuing the sub-

ject of the film after 12 years, Shahhosseini pointed to external factors and expressed her readiness to film scripts during the period when she was not actively working. Regarding the film's title and its perspective on the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Shahhosseini underscored the cultural revolution's approach and the importance of returning human dignity, echoing the ideals of the founder of Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini. Shahhosseini emphasized her desire to explore hidden aspects of women's lives during the war, resonating with the sentiments expressed by Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani. She clarified that while 'Missing Hand' shares a theme with the book 'Blood Pool,' the narrative, viewpoint, and interpretation are distinct. The director defended the use of local actors, stating that celebrity presence could



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distort the documentary foundation of the film. She explained that the film aimed to preserve the sanctity of martyrs and deliberately avoided showing certain elements, such as the bones of the women's hands, to uphold their honor. Shahhosseini concluded by stating that the film addresses universal themes and stories of women in various situations, both in times of war and peace.

## Over 1.2m health tourists arrive in Iran in one year



### Social Desk

Iran's Deputy Minister of Health and Medical Education, Saeed Karimi, announced that in the past Iranian year, ending on March 21, 2023, the country welcomed over 1.2 million health tourists for medical treatment. According to Karimi, this influx of health tourists resulted in a substantial economic boost of one billion dollars for Iran, adding that, half of this revenue was attributed to healthcare facilities, while the other half contributed to the tourism sector and various other fields. Karimi shared this information during a press conference, explaining that that health tourists encompass individuals who are not residents of Iran. These tourists obtain visas, seek medical services in the country, and then return to their home countries. The deputy minister highlighted the trust health tourists place in Iranian physicians, the advancements of the country, and the well-equipped and standardized healthcare facilities. He stated that the positive perception of Iran's medical services is a significant factor driving health tourists to seek treatment in the country. Currently, 290 healthcare centers across Iran have the capability to provide services to international patients.

## Iran sends third shipment of humanitarian aid to Gaza

Iran has sent a third shipment of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, the head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) said as a massive humanitarian crisis is unfolding in the besieged territory amid Israel's devastating war. Pir-Hossein Kolivand said on Sunday that a ship filled with humanitarian aid for civilians in Gaza had recently left Iran's port and passed through the Strait of Hormuz, Press TV reported. "The aid consignment includes food, medical equipment and medications, tents, blankets, and other critically needed items based on the list provided to the IRCS by the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the Gaza Red Crescent Society," Kolivand said. Kolivand said that Iranians have so far provided IRCS more than 10,000 tons of humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza, which he said is "unprecedented." He added that the Iranian Foreign Ministry is working to facilitate the delivery of more aid to Gaza. Since the war erupted in the Strip on October 7, Kolivand said, Iran has sent two ships and one aircraft carrying aid to Gaza. The first ship sent last month, provided by Iranian public donations, left for Gaza after Iran's first humanitarian aid cargo sent in October

was stopped to be transferred by Israeli forces in Egypt. In November, Lebanon's Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network, citing political sources speaking on condition of anonymity, reported that Egyptian officials have extended apologies to Iranians that they cannot receive any Iranian aid destined for the strip due to the Israeli regime's refusal to allow it to pass through the Rafah border crossing. The 60 tons of humanitarian aid including food, medical supplies, and medicines, was also sent from the Imam Khomeini Airport (IKA) to Egypt in coordination with the IRCS. The heads of humanitarian organizations have time and again reiterated that the closing of entry routes to Gaza, which limit the number of trucks loaded with aid, entering the besieged territory and restrictions on the movement of humanitarian workers have worsened the "catastrophic" humanitarian condition. World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that the death toll from starvation and sickness in coming months could eclipse the number of people killed in Israeli bombardment so far — more than 27,000, according to the Gaza health ministry, the majority of them women and children.

## Syrian Ministry of Culture says US strikes damaged historic sites

The Syrian Ministry of Culture said the overnight US strikes damaged the historical sites in eastern Syria. According to Britain's Sky News, the Ministry of Culture of Syria issued a statement on its Facebook account to react to the recent US airstrike on Deir ez-zor Governorate, during which US fighter jets pounded some sites, including historical monuments. Syrian Ministry of Culture condemns "in the strongest terms the barbaric US bombardment of the Al-Rahba fortress" in eastern Syria's Mayadeen area. In a statement on social media, it says the citadel, located along the Euphrates River, dates to the ninth century, without elaborating on the damage the site sustained. The "blatant" attack violated "all international norms and charters that call for the protection and respect for cultural property," the ministry added. According to Syria's Al-Watan newspaper, Director of the Historical and Archeological Buildings Department at the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) Nazir Awad confirmed that bombardment late Friday caused cracks and fissures in the fortress walls. The full extent of the damage had not yet been assessed, Al-Watan cited Awad as saying. The United States Central Command (CENTCOM) announced on Saturday that American fighter jets conducted airstrikes on 85 positions of resistance fighters both in Iraq and Syria.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
 Cartoonist



## Sri Lanka marks 76th Independence Day

### Arts & Culture Desk

Sri Lanka Ambassador to Tehran G.M.V. Wishwanath Aponu extended a warm welcome to Sri Lankan community, and other guests, celebrating the 76th Independence Day of Sri Lanka. In his welcome remarks, the ambassador emphasized the cultural significance of the occasion, highlighting Sri Lanka's rich history and the resilience of its people. He paid tribute to the heroes who secured the nation's freedom in 1948, setting the stage for Sri Lanka's emergence as a free, sovereign, and democratic nation. The ambassador expressed gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for its unwavering support, acknowledging their role in Sri Lanka's journey over the past 76 years. He emphasized the role of the Sri Lankan community abroad in contributing to the nation's progress and called for their continued support. He acknowledged Iran's recent assistance,



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including urgent medical consignments and support for debt restructuring, as well as progress in humanitarian trade, tourism, education, aviation, sports, and welfare. Looking ahead, the ambassador expressed optimism about achieving the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2048, under the visionary leadership of President Ranil Wickremesinghe. The ambassador extended wishes for peace, progress, and prosperity to the Islamic Republic of Iran.