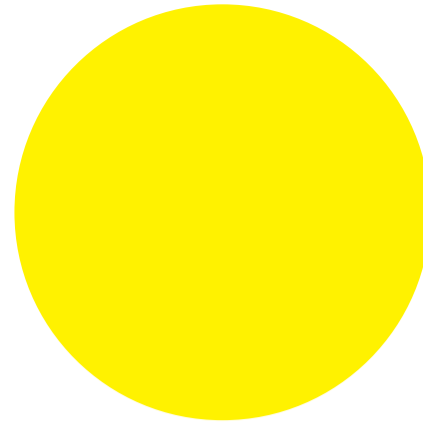


Raisi to Barzani:
Don't allow
Israel, anti-Iran
elements abuse
Kurdistan region



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Leader: This year's Hajj should be disavowal of Israel, its supporters



Hegemonic Monopoly at Stake

Iran ready to transfer nuclear know-how to other nations: *Atomic chief*

Saudi-Israel deal on the back burner



By Emad Abshenas
International affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Contrary to some predictions, the issue of normalizing relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel doesn't seem to be going anywhere, at least for now. The United States is pushing Saudi Arabia to go along with the normalization of re-

lations with Israel to ease tensions in the region. But what's crystal clear is that the internal dynamics in Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, are dead set against any ties with Israel. On the flip side, the terms that Riyadh is laying out for normalization are so stringent that it looks like Saudi Arabia isn't willing to strike a deal. Al Riyadh

newspaper reports that Saudi Arabia won't sign off on any plan for normalization unless Israel agrees to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip. By making this demand, Saudi Arabia is essentially passing the buck to Israel, knowing full well

that the current Israeli cabinet won't budge on the issue of a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. This move by Saudi Arabia is a balancing act that appeases both the US and the Saudi public, as it places the burden of meeting the condition squarely on Israel, which is also steadfastly against it.

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Israel Leaning Over Backwards

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CBI: Foreign currency assets up in 1st month



The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran announced that in the first month of this Iranian year (began on March 20), the country's foreign assets have increased by approximately \$200 million.

According to Mohammadreza Farzin, the increase indicated a positive balance of \$200 million in purchasing foreign assets compared to selling them. Farzin stated that the cash growth rate, which had decreased to 24% by the end of last year, has reached 23% in the first month of the new year, ISNA reported.

He added that the money growth rate, previously at 33% last year, has now dropped to 16% by the 16th day of this month.

As per the Central Bank's announcement, Farzin mentioned that money growth is an important measure for inflation expectations, and a decrease in its growth rate indicates a reduction in inflation expectations.

Hegemonic monopoly at stake

Iran ready to transfer nuclear know-how to other nations: *Atomic chief*

Economic Desk

Iran's atomic chief said on Monday that his country was determined to develop nuclear technology as the Islamic Republic hosted an international forum on nuclear technology.

"Like other member states of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran is committed to advancing nuclear technology," Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said at the opening ceremony of the International Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology 2024 in Iran's central city of Isfahan.

"Collective will of countries to achieve zero carbon by 2050 has become an agreement to multiply the number of nuclear power plants by threefold. We are also striving more rapidly toward achieving atomic energy for industry" he told the three-day event.

Eslami said Iran had planned to produce 20,000 megawatts of nuclear electricity by 2041 via developing new nuclear power plants. He invited countries interested in investing in Iran's nuclear projects currently underway on the country's northern and southern coasts.

Isfahan hosts the international conference with hundreds of domestic and foreign researchers, scientists and officials in attendance, including IAEA Secretary



General Rafael Grossi who met Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Tehran on Monday.

While visiting an exhibition displaying Iran's nuclear achievements on the sidelines of conference, Eslami said the event was well received despite "pressure from imperialists" and that participants pre-

sented high-quality scientific articles.

"Our goal is to show Iran's scientific and technological level to the world through these articles and achievements," the top nuclear official said.

He said Iran was "prepared to fight arrogant countries' dominance and transfer our technologies to other countries to break

down barriers and contribute to emergence of a new scientific order."

The West, led by the United States, claims that Iran's nuclear program has deviated toward "military purposes" which Iran flatly rejects, saying nukes have no place in its nuclear doctrine.

According to the AEOI's deputy chief Javad Karimi, over 500 scien-

tific articles have been submitted to the conference, which includes 16 specialized panels, round-table meetings, and an exhibition.

Around 100 academics, including over 50 foreigners, are taking part in the event in person or via videoconference to expound on the latest scientific achievements in the nuclear industry, Karimi said.

● IRNA

Iran aims for €7.5b in oil equipment exports

Economic Desk

Head of Iranian Petroleum Industries Equipment Manufacturers Association (known as SIPIEM) said that the set target in exporting sector of the oil industry is to reach 7.5 billion euros within the next two years.

Ehsan Saqafi stated that "currently our exports account for 10% of our capacity, with 710 million euros in exports. According to the set target, we must reach

7.5 billion euros within the next two years," ILNA reported.

"We are actively pursuing market development beyond borders and have initiated projects in markets outside the region," Saqafi told a press conference.

He referred to the export of oil industry equipment to Arab countries, neighboring northern countries, and also South America.

He mentioned that in the last 2.5 years, the association's partner-

ship with the present government has grown, and the government has assisted private firms in addressing issues and obstacles to the best of its capacity, stating his anticipation for further collaboration.

Meanwhile, the 28th International Iran Oil and Gas Expo will be held from May 8 to 11, 2024, at Tehran International Permanent Fairground. The head of the event, Gholamreza Jamali said 1500 domestic companies and 250 foreign

companies will be present in this exhibition, IRNA reported.

Jamali added that 12 countries will participate in the exhibition, including Russia, China, France, Japan, India, Austria, Argentina, and Belarus.

The motto of this year's exhibition is the oil industry, production leap, technological optimization, the official said. During the last year's expo, 150 agreements and contracts were signed.

Iran, Iraq urged to use national currencies in trade transactions

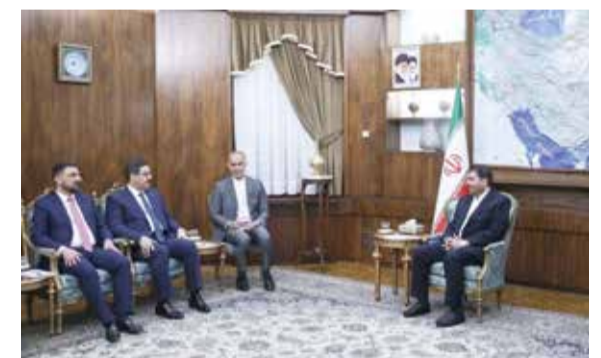
Iran's first vice president said that Tehran and Baghdad should use their national currencies in economic and trade exchanges.

In a meeting with Iraqi Trade Minister Atheer Daoud Salman Al-Ghariri, Mohammad Mokhber referred to the friendly, historical and cultural relations between the two countries and said the two sides should use their national currencies, instead of the currency of a third country, in bilateral trade and economic transactions, Tasnim reported.

Iran attaches great importance to its relations with Iraq, he said, expressing hope that the two countries would witness evermore progress in all areas. Mokhber emphasized the need for expanding economic relations and promoting the level of trade cooperation between Iran and Iraq.

He added that the private sectors of the two countries can play a leading role in enhancing trade and economic relations.

It is necessary that joint economic cooperation commission of the two countries should first identify the obstacles in the



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber (R) meets Iraqi Trade Minister Atheer Daoud Salman Al-Ghariri (L) in Tehran, Iran, on May 6, 2024.

● IRNA

way of the development of bilateral relations and then embark on removing the trade barriers.

The Iraqi minister of trade, for his part, said that Baghdad is determined to strengthen its relations with Tehran in all areas, especially in the fields of trade and economy.

Al-Ghariri also said that Iraq is a lucrative market for Iranian goods and products. 23 documents underway Meanwhile, the two countries are going to sign 23 documents at their joint economic commission to broaden bilateral ties in the fields of energy, transport, trade, export of technical and engineering services, investment, finance and banking.

Speaking at the 6th meeting of the Iran-Iraq Joint

Economic Cooperation Commission, Head of the Organization for Investment Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran Ali Fekri said 23 documents have been prepared to be inked with Iraq at the joint commission to broaden relations in different fields. Fekri said negotiations are underway for finalizing the documents.

The minutes of the negotiations will be inked at the open session of the joint economic commission between Iran's minister of economy and the Iraqi minister of trade.



Visit Shiraz to take a journey through poetry, fragrance and timelessness



● IRNA

● yjc.ur

● kojara.com

Iranica Desk

Shiraz, the capital of Fars Province, is known for its various elements, with poetry being one of the most important. Hearing the name Shiraz alone can lift one's spirits, let alone visiting this city. The city is the resting place of Hafez and Sa'di - two great Persian poets whose poetry books can be found in almost every Iranian household. Perhaps the reason for this city's deep association with "love" can be traced to the fact that it has been the wellspring of romantic poetry, a continuing influence that even today's poets and lyricists draw upon.

Shiraz is renowned for its spring, which is why a day is specifically designated as "Shiraz Day" right in the middle of this verdant season. Although finding tickets to travel to Shiraz during this period by any means other than a personal vehicle may be a challenge, a trip to this city is record-breaking for a simple reason: the pleasant weather, ISNA wrote.

As soon as you exit the airport, train station, or terminal, one of the first things that will catch your eye within a short distance are the trees, whose fresh and green foliage invites your eyes to rest. In this situation, just taking a few deep breaths will help you better understand why the "spring of Shiraz" is so widely spoken of. The combination of the fragrance of fresh plants and orange blossoms is intoxicating to everyone.

Shiraz is renowned for its orange blossoms. Even as you search for souvenirs in the Vakil Bazaar, walking past a dried fruit or perfume shop will lift



● yjc.ur

your spirits with the scent of dried orange blossoms. Although your experience of this fragrance may be limited to just a few orange blossom petals, you can steep in your teapot at home to ease the fatigue of a hectic day.

Shiraz is a lively city where people know how to enjoy the present moment. Instead of worrying about the future, they embrace the joy of the present. It's common to see Shirazi locals singing traditional songs passionately in front of *falood-eh* (a traditional Iranian dessert) shops on spring

nights. This lively atmosphere encourages even busy travelers to pause and immerse themselves in the vibrant energy of the city.

If you are a traveler with a short time to spend in Shiraz, you will need to move quickly! In addition to everything that has been mentioned about Shiraz, the city is also famous for its special sights and attractions; seeing all of them may not be possible in a short trip, which is why travelers often decide to visit Shiraz with a detailed plan.

However, the pleasant weather sometimes dis-

rupts your calculations in a way that you may fall behind your previous schedule! Is it possible on an afternoon in late spring while strolling in the Afif-Abad Garden, to not be captivated by the drizzle of rain and easily leave this space? In such a situation, it doesn't matter what time the next destination is open until - it is you who has decided to live each moment that may never be repeated for the rest of your life.

Shiraz is a big city, so if you venture away from the main historic sites like the Vakil complex, Narejestan-e Qavam Garden, Delgosha Garden, and others, you'll find modern streets and highways like those in the capital city of Tehran. But Shiraz has more to offer than just historical and modern landmarks.

Exploring the city's alleys can transport you back to the Safavid era of Shiraz, with no tall buildings or large malls in sight. Here, you'll find elderly locals sitting under trees, eager to welcome and engage with travelers. If you show interest in their homes and stories, they may invite you in for a cup of tea and share their memories with you.

While life in this part of Shiraz may not be as lively as the memories shared by locals, the authenticity of the place and the architecture of houses that have stood the test of time, despite weathered walls, missing door frames, and chipped tiles, is still apparent. This local fabric offers a glimpse into the social life of the people, even though the last person who truly knew them may have passed away.

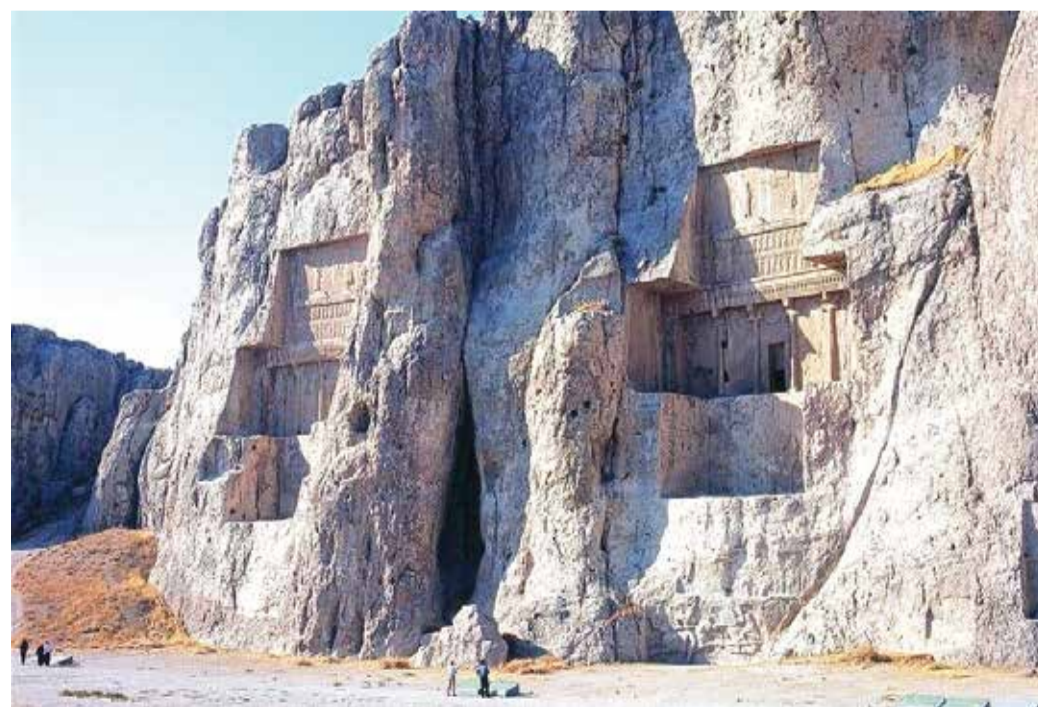
Romans and Sassanids in cross-cultural dialogue

Considering the importance that fostering and shaping their cultures' experience of memory held for the Romans and pre-imperial Sassanids, it should come as no surprise that the past should be one of the first arenas in which they sought to come to terms with their new relationship. Although it took about a generation to enter into their visual cultures, the debate between the two empires took on an urgency in their diplomatic exchanges and internal discourse almost immediately. The extant textual evidence largely stems, on the one hand, from Roman historians who were contemporary with the events and, on the other, from medieval Arabic and Persian texts that were written well after the fall of the Sassanid dynasty but derive from Sassanid historical traditions, if not directly from their court records.

In addition, a handful of passages from the Sassanid inscriptions offer intriguing, yet inconclusive primary source parallels to the secondary and tertiary Islamic and Roman material. In broad terms, the two realms' use and understanding of the past changed as their relationship, power balance, and cultural understandings of history changed.

As they became familiar with each other and accepted each other's right to exist in the late third and early fourth centuries, their diplomatic discourse presented this status quo as the unquestioned state of affairs that had existed since the beginning of time.

The extant textual evidence for Rome and Sassanid Iran's first appraisals of each other indicates that the past provided an important field of debate. It is unclear which culture first deployed the past as



an interpretive or ideological tool after their initial clashes, though it is likely that it was the Romans who initially sought to understand the nature of Sassanid power and Rome's proper reaction to it in terms of the Achaemenid past. Although all scholars might not agree with this statement, the

recurrence of this Achaemenid interpretation in the later Islamic historical and poetic traditions suggests that it was completely integrated into the Sassanids' conception of their heritage, if not as an originally indigenous tradition, then as something appropriated from the Romans.

No matter who introduced it, once in the field of debate, it quickly became an important and recurrent theme in the two realms' polemical encounters.

It is important to underscore that the Romans and Sassanids understood the Achaemenid dynasty in very different ways. Roman knowledge of the Achaemenids' identity, ancestry, and deeds derived from the Greek, historical tradition. The Sassanids, in contrast, understood their "ancestors" through the logic of oral, epic discourse and local legend and heroic activity. The Sassanids knew those we call the Achaemenids to be a part of the mythical Kayanid dynasty and did not call the Achaemenids by that name.

Some scholars have questioned whether that the Sassanids had any knowledge of a previous Persian empire at all. Some even argued that the Sassanids' invocation of the Achaemenids in the Roman sources was entirely a Roman invention. They based their argument fundamentally on the fact that the Sassanids do not specifically or directly identify their ancestors as the Achaemenids. This assertion only holds, however, if one sets an anachronistic modern scholarly understanding of the Achaemenids as the ideal.

While this approach offered an important corrective to earlier notions that the Sassanids consciously sought to resurrect the Achaemenid empire, it ignores the power of the early Sassanids' less than-historical understanding of their place in Iranian and Persian history and does not offer a useful framework for understanding the past in the dynamic of cross-cultural interaction between Roman and Iran.

Israel's organ theft has never been clearer



By Hoda Yousefi
Middle East
affairs expert

**PERSPECTIVE
EXCLUSIVE**

During the past months of the ongoing conflict in Palestine, besides the brutal Israeli air strikes against Palestinian civilians and the massacre of women and children in Gaza, news also emerged at times about Israel's abduction of the bodies of Palestinians and the theft of their organs. Physicians at Al-Shifa Hospital have repeatedly expressed their concerns in this regard, urging human rights organizations to investigate. It has been agreed upon to form an independent fact-finding committee to conduct inquiries into this matter and verify its accuracy to be potentially prosecuted in international courts.



Workers uncover bodies from a mass grave at the Nasser medical complex in Khan Younis, the southern Gaza Strip, on April 22, 2024.
MOHAMED EL SAIFE/CBC

Reinforcing suspicions

After infiltrating Al-Shifa Hospital, the occupying regime's forces dug a mass grave near the cemetery and handed over only 111 out of 180 bodies to the Red Cross several days later. A source, who requested to remain unnamed for security reasons, told Al-Quds Al-Arabi that the Israeli army prevented the presence of the wounded in parts of the hospital ground where the mass grave was later found to be located and then, returned with a truck believed to contain bodies for loading.

After Israeli forces withdrew from Khan Younis, three mass graves containing at least 392 bodies were discovered at the Nasser Medical Complex. According to Wafa News Agency, 165 bodies, including those that were altered beyond recognition, remain unclaimed.

Videos and photos of the victims indicate torture inflicted on their bodies, with some victims being restrained with plastic handcuffs. Emergency and rescue teams have reported discov-

ering bodies with bound hands and abdominal wounds stitched in a manner inconsistent with medical practices in Gaza, leading to suspicions of organ theft.

In particular, rescue teams involved in retrieving the bodies from mass graves at the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis, located in southern Gaza, expressed concerns about potential organ theft by Israeli forces. Additionally, doctors in Gaza hospitals discovered after examining several Palestinian bodies handed over by Israel that some of their organs, including corneas, livers, and kidneys, were missing.

This issue has raised doubts among international human rights organizations regarding Israel's use of Palestinians' body parts for its own patients and/or selling them at exorbitant prices. What further fuels suspicions is that Israel prohibited autopsies on many of the bodies that were delivered a long time after the moment of death. Worse still, some of them have still not been handed over to the Red Cross.

The Zionist regime indeed has a dark history of abducting the bodies of Palestinians. Tel Aviv owns one of the world's largest skin banks for treating burn victims and cancer patients. It is supposed to adhere to standard procedures and use skin cells from volunteers. However, it has long been speculated that Israel obtains the necessary skin cells not from volunteers but from the bodies of Palestinians, using them to treat its own soldiers. None of these actions surely fly under the radar of the cabinet, whether they are carried out by individuals or private entities. Israel's legal system has even enacted laws to facilitate such processes. In 2019, the Israeli Supreme Court authorized the temporary detention and burial of Palestinians in Israel. In the same year, the Knesset passed a law allowing the army to hold the bodies of Palestinians as a punitive measure against them.

Similar past transgressions

In 1979, Yehuda Hiss, the for-

mer director of Israel's Abu Kabir Institute of Forensic Medicine, confessed in a documentary that the bodies of Palestinians who were killed during the First Intifada were used without their families' permission. Meira Weiss, an anthropological researcher, wrote in her book, titled *Over Their Dead Bodies*, about how they removed body parts such as corneas, skin, and heart valves from Palestinians and replaced them with pre-made objects that non-specialists would never notice. She witnessed this when she was working at the Abu Kabir Institute of Forensic Medicine between 1996 and 2002. In 2008, a Swedish journalist named Donald Boström revealed in a report published in the *Aftonbladet* newspaper that Israel had stolen the body parts of 19-year-old Bilal Ghanan. In the report, he also stated that in 1992, Ehud Olmert, the Israeli minister of health, launched a national campaign to encourage organ donation, which was

soon declared to be a success as demand exceeded supply. At the same time, Palestinian youths began to disappear. After a few days, they were handed over to their families in sealed coffins, and Israeli authorities threatened their relatives to bury their sons' bodies at night without autopsy or funeral ceremonies.

In 2011, the FBI arrested an Israeli citizen named Levy Izhak Rosenbaum. After a few days, he confessed to acting as a broker for a criminal network run by the Israeli cabinet that sold illegal human organs in the United States.

These reports are just a few instances of Israel's revealed crimes in this regard, crimes that have never been denied by Tel Aviv.

Over the past few decades and particularly during the recent war on Gaza, the worst forms of organized terrorism, ranging from theft and looting to indiscriminate carpet bombing and massacring civilians, have been perpetrated by the occupying Israeli regime.

The discovery of the possible theft of Palestinians' human organs by Israel has emphasized the need to prosecute such crimes in international courts more than ever before. It is imperative to form a team of international lawyers to expose such crimes on the international stage so that ultimately, the Zionist regime would be compelled to account for its actions, provide compensation to the families of the wronged, and be held accountable for its crimes.

Israel must adhere to international law, which stresses the necessity of protecting the bodies of the deceased during armed conflicts. The Fourth Geneva Convention, in particular, prohibits the mutilation of bodies of non-combatants as well as combatants who are hors de combat (out of the fight) due to wounds, detention, or any other cause. Keeping Israel in line will only be possible through the continuous efforts of individuals and organizations active on human rights issues.

University protests in US signal decline of Zionism



By Zohreh Qanadi
Staff writer

PERSPECTIVE

Pro-Palestinian protests are sweeping through prestigious American universities over the ongoing conflict in Gaza weeks ahead of graduation ceremonies, challenging the influence of the Zionist lobby.

With the death toll nearing 35,000 in the seven-month war in the besieged strip and still rising, tent encampments of protesters that demand universities to cease business with Israel and companies supporting the Gaza war have spread across the US. The resulting police crackdown on some campuses evokes memories of the larger student protest movements during the Viet-

nam War era.

At the moment, American universities are still grappling with clearing out encampments. While some institutions are continuing negotiations, others are resorting to using force and issuing ultimatums, which has often resulted in clashes with police. The number of arrests at campuses nationwide surpasses 2,000.

The response to these pro-Palestinian protests from politicians and University administrators, faculty, and students has roiled college campuses and divided the American public. Tensions are running high as students and activists on both sides of the issue have engaged in heated debates and confrontations. The protests have sparked discussions on

free speech, political activism, and the role of universities in addressing contentious global issues. In addition to condemning the US policies toward Israel and Palestine, including censoring the US' unwavering support for the Israeli regime, the issue of the violation of free speech — enshrined in the First Amendment of the US Constitution — has now been

raised.

Zionists unsettled

While these pro-Palestinian protests challenge the US administration's policies, they appear to frighten its ally, Israel, too. Here is a look at why the student revolt could unsettle the Zionists, headed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. What particularly worries



Police enter an encampment on the UCLA campus in Los Angeles, US, on May 2, 2024.
● JAE C. HONG/AP

Zionism is the surge of this student revolution across American campuses and its potential spread to universities elsewhere, including Europe, where other Israeli allies exist. On Friday, German police broke up a pro-Palestinian demonstration at Humboldt University, arresting several protesters and university students. The group had staged a sit-in in front of the university's main building in central Berlin, shouting slogans such as "Free Gaza", "Israel is a fascist state," and "Germany, stop arms shipments to Israel".

In what is perhaps the most significant student movement since the anti-Vietnam campus protests of the late 1960s, the conflict between pro-Palestinian students and university administrators in the US has revealed an entire subset of conflicts. The widespread movement across American campuses and its potential global impact signal a significant shift in public opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

These protests show that the Israeli violence in the Gaza conflict has undermined Netanyahu's major accomplishment of controlling public opinion. The explosion of this recent uprising may eventually lead to the overthrow of the apartheid Israeli cabinet. Demonstrators have vowed to continue until their demands for US educational bodies to disentangle from companies profiting from the conflict are met.

Peaceful movement

Israel has always thrived on victimhood narratives and relied on stories like the Holocaust and antisemitism throughout its decades-old existence. While Israel's actions in Gaza have tarnished its image as a victim, the Palestine cause has become a current issue within the United States and a focal point of political conflict between generations in the struggle to revive the values of justice and freedom and to halt genocidal wars and racism in all its forms.

Meanwhile, some Jewish students have expressed concerns that the protests have crossed into antisemitism, leaving them apprehensive about stepping foot on campus. US President Joe Biden has also joined congressional voices on both sides of the aisle, calling the protests antisemitic.

Rejecting the accusation, students at the protest have said some counter-protesters attempted to instigate hate speech but insisted their event was peaceful and was aimed at drawing attention to the "genocide" in Gaza and the complicity of their universities in the war.

US to be freed from Zionism

The other main cause for Zionism concern could be that this revolution has started in prestigious American universities such as Columbia University in New York — the city that is a stronghold of the Zionist lobby — and

Harvard University in Boston. This suggests that the future generations of the US may not be influenced by Zionism like their fathers and ancestors were.

The protests at Columbia have been organized by Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD), which describes itself as a coalition of more than 100 student groups. Founded in 2016, it unsuccessfully sought to end investments by Columbia University in weapons manufacturers and other companies that support Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories.

Students of Columbia University, including those of Jewish, Muslim, and Palestinian descent, reactivated the coalition and its divestment demands after Hamas' deadly attack on Israel on October 7 and Israel's over-the-top response in the Gaza enclave controlled by Hamas.

According to British journalist and editor Abdel Bari Atwan, "These students who are subjected to suppression and detention by the US government are not from the ordinary class of the American society; rather, they are the children of congressmen, senators, businessmen, and the ruling political class in the country. In fact, these students will be the new leaders of the US."

Now, this phenomenal wave of protests in solidarity with Palestinians and against Israel's devastating war on Gaza is expanding across the globe, proving that Zionism is in process of decline.



A pro-Palestine rally is held at the steps of Lowe Library on the grounds of Columbia University in New York City, US, on April 22, 2024.
● DAVID DEE DELGADO/GETTY IMAGES

World Press Photo of the Year

Cropping history, reality



By M. Neelika Jayawardane
Scholar

PERSPECTIVE

Inas Abu Maamar wears a plain blue garment and a mustard brown headscarf decorated with a pattern of raised knots. Her arms cradle the shroud covering a small, slumping body, nestled on her lap. Her head and face are bowed into the crook of her left arm. It is as though Abu Maamar is willing the body of her five-year-old niece, Saly, back to life, so that she would

be able to sit one more time on her aunt's lap.

The photograph, taken by Reuters photographer Mohammed Salem on October 17, 2023, was recently awarded the prestigious World Press Photo of the Year by World Press Photo Foundation (WPPF), an independent, non-profit organisation based in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The jury noted that Salem's 2024 winning image — which was given the title, "A Palestinian Woman Embraces the Body of Her Niece" — was "composed with care and respect, offering at once a metaphorical and literal glimpse into unimaginable loss".



Inas Abu Maamar embraces the body of her five-year-old niece, Saly, who was killed in an Israeli air raid, at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, on October 17, 2023.
● MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS

Salem took the photograph at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis. There, he found families had gathered to search for the bodies of loved ones killed in Israeli bombardment on civilian homes, as families have done since Israel began its genocidal assault on Gaza on October 7.

Why did this particular photograph of a mourning woman and a lifeless child captivate audiences around the world? What drew the members of WPPF's jury to this photograph — rather than other photographs that Salem took of the same woman mourning the deceased child?

Cropping out context

Prestigious awards for photography and the juries that determine what is worthy of exceptional praise tend to favour images that hint at layered, if limited in what layers are permitted, narratives, allowing viewers to engage with just enough complexity. Juries often reward images that provide easy entry for those perceived to be the dominant group of viewers.

In another photograph that Salem took of Abu Maamar, in which her face is visible, her mouth is open in a naked expression of distress. This image gives her an individual identity; her grief is a screaming, uncontainable horror.

A plastic chair can be seen to the left of her, white body bags piled up on it. The leg and shoe of a man wearing all blue — a medical professional, perhaps — stands to the far side, the unidentified witness to her grief, perhaps to thousands of such griefs.

The body bags would have alluded to genocide. Audiences would not be able to reduce the narrative to a singular loss, to an isolated, ahistorical moment of Orientalised grieving.

But in this "winning" frame, Abu Maamar's face cannot be seen, her personhood is subsumed, passive, and accepting of divine dictates. Her emotions would be too powerful, her grief too inelegant in its lack of containment, should they be seen by the public.

As long as the suffering is tidy, and coded through Western art historical references to innumerable paintings and sculptures of Mary grieving the death of her son, Jesus, viewers may project a range of narratives onto the woman. This way of framing her does not provoke fear of another's rage — it is not an unwordable, uncontained, roaring suffering. Rather, it is a safe, consumable display of grief and suffering.

WPPF's selection for World Press Photo of the Year was cropped to remove any contextual

Reuters photographer Mohammed Salem won the 2024 World Press Photo of the Year award for this image.
● MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS

material that surrounds Abu Maamar and her niece. The photograph is also cropped, in more metaphorical terms, of the conditions and history that led to this specific child's death and this living relative's unbearable suffering. The materiality of that history — and the millions displaced and starving under siege, the tens of thousands dead and the many under bombed buildings without even the dignity of being shrouded and buried — is strategically made absent.

Such cropping reinforces the reproduction of a particular type of liberal politics and a specific methodology of framing "conflict" essential to liberal ways of grieving. It allows one to continue to insist on "both sides" of the argument, and situate oneself in a location where it is possible to mourn and — unconsciously, perhaps — celebrate one's ability to feel sympathy, without having to truly recognise the genocidal horror playing out in real-time. To recognise it would mean that one would be forced to act.

Cropped images aid the continuation of cropped politics. This dynamic is especially evident in the power imbalance between an army supported by the US and equipped with billions worth of weaponry and armed groups without such support; "those without" are people that the geopolitical West regards as an "Oriental other".

Demanding the elimination of context has been essential to Israel's justification of genocide in Gaza. Excising the context — including any reference to 75 years of dispossession, occupation, imprisonment without trial, torture, daily brutality, and slow genocide — has, in turn, shaped the narrative.

That has been apparent in US media across print, TV, and radio. Mainstream media outlets announce, repetitively, at the beginning or end of reports, that "Israel began its bombardment of [Gaza] in response to the attack by the militant group Hamas on October 7." It is as though Israel's violent exercise of power began on October 7, and only because of a provocation by a Palestinian party.

The full article first appeared on Al Jazeera.

Donovan Mitchell-led Cavaliers rally from 18 down, win series over Magic



● REUTERS

Donovan Mitchell scored 39 points to fuel the host Cleveland Cavaliers to the Eastern Conference semifinals with a 106-94 victory over the Orlando Magic on Sunday in Game 7 of their first-round series.

Mitchell, who scored 17 points in the third quarter, made 15 of 17 free-throw attempts and added nine rebounds. His scintillating performance came on the heels of a 50-point effort in Cleveland's 103-96 loss in Orlando on Friday, reported Reuters.

Caris LeVert scored 15 points off the bench and Max Strus added 13 for the fourth-seeded Cavaliers, who overcame an 18-point deficit to record their fourth win at home in the series. Cleveland, which posted its first playoff series win in six years, will visit the top-seeded Boston Celtics in Game 1 of the conference semifinals on Tuesday. The Celtics captured two of the three meetings in the regular season. The Cavaliers won despite playing without All-Star center Jarrett Allen (rib contusion) for the third straight game.

Orlando's Paolo Banchero collected 38 points and 16 rebounds while playing in his first career Game 7.

Wendell Carter Jr. scored 13 points and Jalen Suggs had 10 points and nine rebounds for the fifth-seeded Magic, who mustered just 15 points in the third quarter.

Franz Wagner made just 1 of 15 shots to finish with six points while dealing with early foul trouble for the Magic.

The Cavaliers shaved an 18-point deficit to 10 at half-time before Mitchell erupted for 17 points in the third quarter, capped by a driving layup to stake Cleveland to a 68-66 lead with 3:08 left. Suggs answered with a pair of free throws before Strus sank back-to-back 3-pointers.

Mitchell and Darius Garland each made a 3-pointer to increase the Cavaliers' lead to 88-77 with 5:53 left in the fourth quarter. The Magic trimmed their deficit to seven before Garland sank a pair of free throws and a short jumper to send Cleveland on its way.

Orlando scored 13 and nine straight points at separate junctures to seize a 33-18 lead early in the second quarter. The Magic pumped that advantage up to 18 at 47-29 following a 3-pointer from Gary Harris before the Cavaliers answered with a 14-6 run to end the quarter.

Roma to seek discount on Sardar Azmoun from Bayer Leverkusen

Roma football club wants to make Sardar Azmoun's deal from Bayer Leverkusen permanent.

The capital club is said to be satisfied with the striker's usage and output, RomaPress wrote.

The player seems to have impressed Daniele De Rossi and is considered a good enough back-up option for next season.

The Giallorossi are said to be

extremely pleased with the Iranian striker, not only by his performances but his attitude and general dedication to the team.

According to La Gazzetta dello Sport, Roma has a €13 million buy option which so far it has refused to activate.

In recent months, the capital club have initiated contact with Bayer

Leverkusen in order to discuss the possibility of keeping Azmoun beyond the expiry of his loan.

Daniele De Rossi is the first one to be delighted at the prospect of Azmoun staying around beyond this season.

The player's future, however, remains closely linked to Roma's chances of qualifying to next year's Champions League.

● ROMA PRESS



Iran's Noshad Alamiyan into Saudi Smash 2024 round of 16



● TASNIM

Noshad Alamiyan from Iran advanced to the Round of 16 of the World Table Tennis (WTT) Saudi Smash 2024 on Monday.

Alamiyan defeated Jingkun Liang of China 3-2 (12-14, 11-6, 8-11, 11-9, 11-5) in the Round of 32, reported Tasnim News Agency.

He had earlier defeated players from Egypt, Belgium and Austria in the event. The competition is being held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from May 1 to 11.

The event consists of a 64-player men's and women's singles main draw alongside a 24-pair main draw for men's, women's, and mixed doubles. A series of thrilling showdowns are locked in across each competition after Thursday's draw, with some of world table tennis stars in action.

Lopetegui agrees to become West Ham manager

Julen Lopetegui has agreed a deal to become West Ham manager at the end of the season.

Current Hammers boss David Moyes has come under increasing pressure after a poor run of results that has seen his side win one win of their past nine Premier League games and exit the Europa League in the quarter-finals, BBC wrote.

West Ham were thrashed 5-0 by Chelsea on Sunday to leave them ninth in the table.

Moyes, who is out of contract in the summer, has repeatedly fended off questions about his future at the club, saying talks will not take place until after their final game at Manchester City on May 19. Former Spain and Real Madrid coach Lopetegui has been linked with numerous jobs since and is thought to be keen on returning to the Premier League after guiding Wolves to safety last term, having joined them when they were



● GETTY IMAGES

bottom of the table. He won the Europa League with Sevilla in 2020 before moving to Molineux two years later.

Wolves finished 13th under Lopetegui last season but he had become frustrated by the club's financial situation before resigning. Moyes, meanwhile, presided over three succes-

sive European campaigns for the first time in the club's history and last June ended the Hammers' 43-year wait for a trophy with a last-minute victory over Fiorentina in the Europa Conference League final.

But many fans are critical of what they view as Moyes' negative tactics.

Palma retain UEFA Futsal Champions with Iranian players

Mallorca Palma Futsal which has two Iranian players proved their UEFA Futsal Champions League triumph as hosts on debut last season was no fluke as they defeated Barça 5-1 to retain the title in Yerevan.

Missing the suspended Ernesto, Palma still began the game the brighter and Didac Plana was soon made to work by Chaguinha, Bruno Gomes (back from a semi-final ban) and former Barça man Mario Rivillos, according to UEFA.

For all the holders' vim, however, it was Barça who took the lead late in the first half, Catela sending Adolfo clear on the right to place his shot inside the far post. With just under two minutes left in the first half, Rômulo levelled as he connected perfectly with Chaguinha's deep corner – but Palma were not out of the woods yet. On five fouls, they then conceded two ten-metre penalties, swapping in captain Carlos Barrón for Luan Muller to deny both Catela and Ferrao. Getting to half-time at 1-1 seemed enough for the reigning champions, yet with seven seconds to go before the break they



● UEFA

struck again, Vilian Lourenço powering in a low free-kick.

Barça piled on the pressure in the second half, with Sergio Lozano (aiming for a record fifth personal title) smashing the ball against the crossbar. Palma kept holding out even as Mamadou Touré hit the post with a shot as powerful

as Lozano's, and Catela seemed certain to score but was denied by a sensational Luan Muller reflex save.

Not long afterwards, it was 3-1 as Luan Muller began an attack that ended with Vilian Lourenço squaring for Neginho to stretch and poke home. Barça tried ev-

erything, with Lozano on as a flying keeper, but he was to receive a red card with just over a minute left for handball.

Now Palma pressed home their advantage as Chaguinha, named Player of the Tournament, rolled the ball into an empty net. Neginho then added another in

the final seconds to truly begin Palma's party.

Iranian international players Hossein Tayyebi and Moslem Oladghobad are members of AE Palma Futsal in Spain.

Antonio Vadillo, Palma coach said "What's better than winning a second time in a row? To win a third! Seriously, I couldn't be prouder of my players because what we achieved was unbelievable. It's not easy at all to play at the level we played tonight and against such a strong opponent like Barça. We fully deserved to win the final and I think we were by far the better team."

Also, Chaguinha, Player of the Tournament said: "To win the Champions League last year was already like a dream come true, but to do it twice in a row? I can't even put it into words. Of course, I'm happy with this award, but I think every single one in the team deserves it and I'm not talking only about the players. It took a lot of hard work from everyone to get here, and tonight we left it all on the pitch because that was the only way we could be celebrating right now."

Leader: This year's Hajj should be disavowal of Israel, its supporters



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei this year's Hajj rituals should be a disavowal of the Israeli regime and its supporters. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a Monday meeting with Iranian officials in charge of Hajj pilgrimage affairs and people who will travel to Saudi Arabia's holy cities of Mecca and Medina to perform the annual

rituals. Ayatollah Khamenei said that the Hajj rituals this year should be held beyond annual ceremonies in the light of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the memory of the blessed Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH). He underlined that the rituals should be a disavowal of the Zionist criminal enemy of Muslims and its supporters. The Leader said the Israeli regime's savage attacks in the Gaza Strip and the resistance of the people of Palestine are clear signs showing the way forward. Ayatollah Khamenei said the strange and huge developments that are underway in Gaza, which have revealed the true face of the "vampire" created from within the

Western civilization, will be recorded for posterity. "These are not issues of interest for today and these days, but rather, they will remain in history," he said. The "Zionist regime" would not have dared to carry out its barbaric acts against Palestinians if it were not for the United States' support, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized. The Leader said it is not possible to behave kindly toward someone who is complicit in or supports a murder. He also said that Iran has not waited and will never wait for others, but the firm support of Muslim countries and nations will stop the continuation of the lamentable situation of the Palestinian people.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei speaking during a meeting with Iranian officials in charge of Hajj pilgrimage affairs and people who will travel to Saudi Arabia for Hajj rituals in Tehran on May 6, 2024. [khamenei.ir](#)

Raisi to Barzani: Don't allow Israel, anti-Iran elements abuse Iraq soil

International Desk

Iranian president urged governments in Iraq and the country's Kurdistan Region not to allow the elements of the Israeli regime and anti-revolutionary groups to abuse the Arab country's soil against Iran. Ebrahim Raisi made the remarks in a meeting with visiting President of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq Nechirvan Barzani in Tehran on Monday. The Iranian president appreciated Baghdad and Erbil for "full and precise" implementation of a bilateral security agreement signed between the two sides. He said that the complete disarmament and uprooting anti-revolutionary elements in Iraqi territory is a necessity. Back in 2023, Tehran and Baghdad signed a security agreement encompassing coordination in protecting



president.ir

the shared border. Under the agreement, the Iraqi government has promised to disarm terrorist and separatist groups based in the Kurdistan region, vacate their military barracks, and transfer them to the camps established by the Baghdad government. In January, Iran launched a missile strike at a main espionage center of the Israel's Mossad spy agency in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The attack totally destroyed the Mossad center there. During the Monday meeting, Raisi also expressed

hope that Barzani's trip would be a turning point in improving the level of political, security, economic and cultural relations between the two sides. "We consider the long border between the two sides as a valuable opportunity to improve the level of relations, but security is the essential foundation of any kind of cooperation and expansion of interactions." Barzani also held a separate meeting with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Hamas: Rafah offensive will not be 'picnic' for Israeli forces

International Desk

Hamas resistance group said on Monday that any ground operation in Rafah will not be a "picnic" for Israeli forces, as concerns mount over a possible offensive in the city. "Our valiant resistance, led by Al-Qassam Brigades, is fully prepared to defend our people," the group said, referring to its armed wing. The movement also called on the international community to take urgent action to stop Israel's planned incursion, saying it threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of defenseless civilians, including children, women and the elderly. Israel's military ordered some 100,000 Palestinians on Monday to begin evacuating from Rafah, signaling that a long-promised ground invasion there could be imminent and further complicating efforts to broker a cease-fire in Gaza. The looming operation in the city - where more than 1 million Palestinians are sheltering and a high number of deaths is feared - has raised global alarm and Israeli's closest allies have warned against it. On Monday, the United Nations agency serving Palestinian refugees said it would not comply with the evacuation order. Israel has described Rafah as the last significant Hamas stronghold after some seven months of war, and has repeatedly said the invasion is necessary to defeat the resistance group. The evacuation call followed intensified disagreement between Israel and Hamas during the weekend cease-fire talks in Egypt to end the seven-month war. Consultations between two other mediators, the United States and Qatar, were ex-



AFP

pected on Monday in Doha but state-linked media in Egypt said negotiations had stalled after the rocket strike killed four Israeli soldiers. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to send ground troops in against Hamas fighters in Rafah regardless of any truce, and despite concerns from countries and aid groups.

'Unacceptable' evacuation

EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell on Monday called the evacuation orders "unacceptable". They "portend the worst: more war and famine", he said, urging Israel to "renounce" the ground offensive. The French Foreign Ministry said it was "strongly opposed" to an offensive on Rafah. Jean-Raphael Poitou, Middle East coordinator for the Action Against Hunger charity, told AFP that the areas now opened for evacuees had previously been "closed because they were considered dangerous". Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeineh said, "The occupation authorities have actually begun preparing to commit the greatest crime of genocide by invading Rafah."

US backs Israel
"The American adminis-

tration, which provides financial and military support to the occupation and stands against the international community to prevent the implementation of international legitimacy resolutions and the cessation of aggression, is the (one) that encourages Netanyahu and his leaders to continue their massacres against the Palestinian people." In a statement, the Israeli military ordered the residents in the city's eastern zone to move to the "expanded humanitarian area" at Al-Mawasi on Gaza's nearby coast. The area "includes field hospitals, tents and increased amounts of food, water, medication and additional supplies," it said. Soon after the war started on October 7, Israel told Palestinians living in northern Gaza to move to "safe zones" in the south - including Rafah near the Egyptian border. Rafah is home to more than 1.5 million displaced Palestinians, who have taken refuge from the war launched by Israel following a Hamas attack last Oct. 7 that killed nearly 1,200 people. Since then, the Israeli onslaught has killed more than 34,600 Palestinians, mostly women and children, besides causing a humanitarian catastrophe.

Saudi-Israel deal...

Therefore, if Saudi Arabia were truly intent on normalization in the present circumstances, it might have refrained from putting such a condition forward - namely, recognition of an independent Palestinian state. By making this demand public, it aims to send a signal to the US to shift its pressure from Riyadh to Tel Aviv, while also aligning with Saudi public sentiment and showing solidarity with the Palestinian people. It could also be seen as an assessment of the current state of affairs within the Muslim world. The atrocities committed by Israel in Gaza have galvanized further anti-Israel sentiment in the Muslim world, making any form of engagement with Israel highly unpopular. Even states previously apathetic toward the Palestinian cause are now compelled to fall in line with their society's sentiments following the Israeli aggression on Gaza, as evidenced by the Turkish government reluctantly suspending economic ties with Israel. Netanyahu's cabinet greenlit a ground assault on Rafah yesterday, a move that would significantly escalate the already complex situation. Therefore, public opinion within countries that once had deals with Israel is now calling for a severing of ties. In such a climate, no leader in the Arab or Islamic sphere is willing to take the gamble of normalizing relations with Israel. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has additional conditions for normalization that are proving hard pills for the US and Israel to swallow.



Poetic beauty of Ferdowsi's work to be introduced globally: *ECO CI chief*

Arts & Culture Desk

During a media event honoring Ferdowsi on May 5, Mahmoud Shaloui, head of the Society for the National Heritage of Iran, and Saad Khan, the Pakistani president of ECO Culture Institute, highlighted the poetic beauty of Ferdowsi's work. Shaloui expressed that if the

Nobel Prize in Literature had existed during Ferdowsi's time, he would have deserved the honor, IRNA wrote. The event, attended by cultural heritage leaders, emphasized the importance of promoting Ferdowsi globally. Efforts to introduce Ferdowsi to new generations include creating TV series,

animations, and films. Collaborations with Farabi Foundation and the Cinematic Organization of Iran were also discussed. The focus on the Persian language has increased significantly, with plans to translate 'Shahnameh' (The Book of Kings) into various languages. In addition, a young translators' association will

be established to cater to the widespread youth interest in this field. Saad Khan stressed that ECO CI's cultural events aim to celebrate iconic figures like Ferdowsi and Rumi on a global platform. He emphasized that these figures transcend borders and belong to all. Ferdowsi's poetry was praised for its beauty, with

hopes for Urdu translations in the future, he said, adding that efforts to learn Persian have begun to facilitate this process. Collaboration between ECO CI and heritage associations has been ongoing since last year, with events like the tribute to Saadi being significant milestones, he concluded.

Iranian literary researcher Oloumi dies at 63

Mohammad Ali Oloumi, an Iranian author, researcher, mythologist, and satirist, who researched 'Shahnameh' – a mythical story written by Ferdowsi about the Persian Empire – died at 63. Oloumi died at his house in Bam in southeastern Iranian province of Kerman due to illness on Sunday evening, IRNA wrote.



Graduated from Faculty of Law and Political Science at University of Tehran, Oloumi started journalism from Iran's Persian-language newspaper Ettela'at in 1980s and began his work in culture and literature more seriously from 1990s. He is said to have taught himself the principles of writing. For years, he was room-

mate of Iraj Bastami – a prominent Iranian singer who was killed in the 2003 Bam earthquake – in Tehran. Oloumi was awarded the prizes for the best book or best satirical book several times. 'Paribad' and 'Azarestan' are among Oloumi's books. He will be laid to rest in the Artists' Section of Bam Cemetery today (Tuesday).



University of Tehran to open branches in Iraq

The University of Tehran is set to extend its reach into Iraq with a branch in Najaf, according to President Mohammad Moqimi. The branch aims to accept students in the near future, with plans for further expansion into other Iraqi cities. Moqimi emphasized the prioritization of scientific cooperation with neighboring countries, particularly Iraq, by the Islamic Republic of Iran. He highlighted the university's strategic approach to establishing branches abroad, focusing on three main regions: The Middle East and Africa, the Eur-

asian region, and the Indian subcontinent. In addition to the initiative in Iraq, Moqimi announced plans for a branch in South Africa, coinciding with an upcoming visit by President Ebrahim Raisi. He also said ongoing efforts to establish branches in Georgia and Dubai, with another branch slated for launch in New Delhi. Regarding the Iraq venture, Moqimi underscored the distinct approach, aiming to tailor programs to meet the needs of the Iraqi government and people. University of Tehran's deputy president for internation-

al affairs Elham Aminzadeh, reported that currently, over 600 Iraqi students are enrolled at the University of Tehran, with the majority pursuing doctoral degrees. The Deputy Minister of Science in Iraq expressed support for the establishment of the University of Tehran branch in Najaf, indicating swift action in the evaluation process to facilitate its realization. The move reflects a broader strategy of academic expansion and collaboration, fostering ties between Iran and its neighbors while providing educational opportunities across borders.

Iran increases penalties for poaching fourfold

Social Desk

The amount of penalties for poachers increased to approximately four times the previous figure, the deputy head of natural environment and biodiversity of the Iranian Department of Environment announced. Hassan Akbari added that various issues were discussed at the meeting, including determining the compensation for the loss of wild animals, which was agreed to be increased fourfold. The

adjustment had not been made since 2019, so efforts were made to ensure that the numbers were adjusted for inflation and reflective of market rates and societal conditions to act as a deterrent, IRNA wrote. While some suggested a tenfold increase in penalties for violations and the loss of species, the decision was made to stick with the fourfold increase after detailed discussions in various meetings leading up to the High Council meeting.

The Iranian President emphasized the need for further review to determine the effectiveness of the increase as a deterrent. The official stressed that the amount of compensation for different species is determined based on their conservation status. Endangered species like cheetahs, leopards, yellow deer, bustards, Houbara bustards, and various falcons had the highest compensation rates. Non-native species entering the country, such as orna-

mental birds and fish, were also categorized based on their population status and other relevant factors. He continued by explaining that a scientific process is followed to assess the impact on species, which may result in minor changes in their classification in the table and subsequently affect the penalty amounts. However, the most crucial aspect is that all species experienced an increase in their compensation for damages.



Iran's 'Macbeth Zar' to be staged in Germany

Iranian theatrical production 'Macbeth Zar,' will be staged at the 34th German Shakespeare Festival on May 9. Ebrahim Poshtkoohi, the playwright and director, has crafted an exquisite adaptation of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth,' blending it with Iran's southern Zar ritual, ISNA wrote.

The 17-day festival will host 24 adaptations and plays on Shakespeare's works and Poshtkoohi's work will be the only work from Asia. The festival will annually host 15,000 audiences. The play's concept is rooted in Zar, a religious rite that involves an individual, usually female, being possessed by a spirit. Zar is the

term used to refer to a type of spirit, the malady they inflict when they descend upon a person, and the ceremony required to soothe the spirits and ease the patient's symptoms. The ceremony includes burning incense, playing music, and performing movement to appease the Zar, which will help relieve the afflicted person.