

Israel facing heightened global isolation over Gaza war crimes



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

PERSPECTIVE

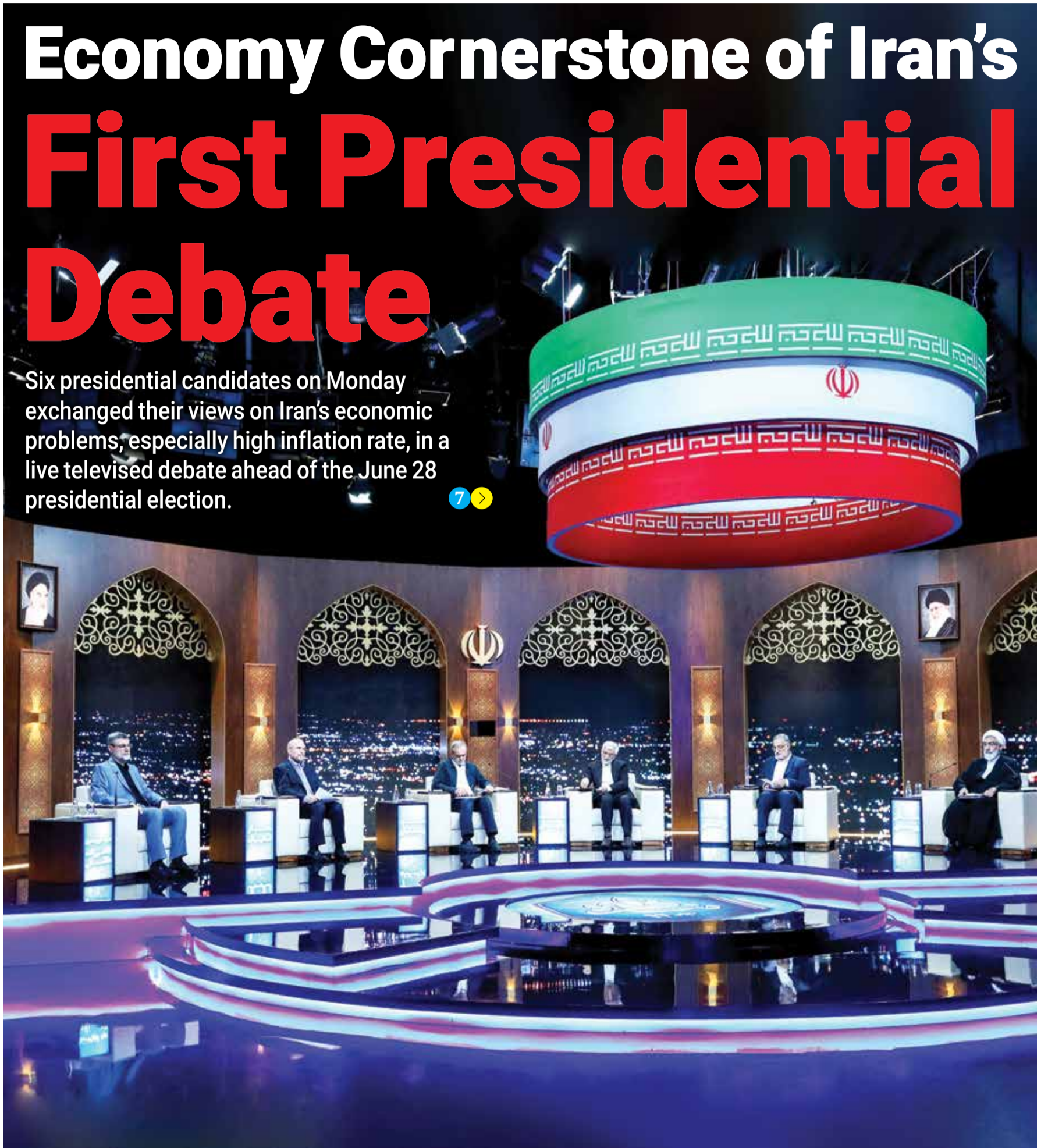
Over 140 countries have recognized Palestine as a state. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ordered Israel to cease its months-long onslaught on the besieged Gaza Strip but the regime has utterly turned a blind eye to the call. Spain has filed a request with the court to join South Africa in a case against Israel for mass killings of Palestinians. According to global media reports, the United Nations will release a list of countries and groups that have committed war crimes against children during conflicts in its annual report. Israel's ambassador to the UN, Gilad Erdan, expressed anger on Friday over the inclusion of Israel in the list. The list, which is expected to be published at the end of June, will also include the Gaza-based resistance movements of Hamas and Islamic Jihad to maintain a balance. The report focuses on violations of children's rights in war-torn areas. Both Hamas and Islamic Jihad are designated as what are claimed to be "terrorist" organizations by the US and some EU countries. The war between Israel and Hamas-led resistance groups in Gaza has now entered its ninth month. According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, one in every twenty Palestinians has been killed or injured by Israeli military actions, and most of Gaza's 2.4 million population have been displaced, searching for shelter and food. In Tel Aviv, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's war cabinet is facing severe criticism. Extremist Zionists in the cabinet are determined to eliminate every point of Palestinian resistance and oppose any ceasefire in the war.

Page 2 >

Economy Cornerstone of Iran's First Presidential Debate

Six presidential candidates on Monday exchanged their views on Iran's economic problems, especially high inflation rate, in a live televised debate ahead of the June 28 presidential election.

7 >



'Secret Democrat plot' to swap out Biden before 2024 election: Report

7 >

Chanteh-weaving: Nomadic artistry from Fars Province

3 >



Iran looking for good finish in 2024 VNL

6 >



Iranian film 'Into Zephyr' to be screened at Portuguese festival

8 >



Iran, Afghanistan's trade grow by 13%

EXCLUSIVE

A senior businessman from the Iran-

Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce stated that the trade between the two neighboring states had reached two billion dollars in the last Iranian year (ending in March 2024), showing a 13% increase from the previous year. In an interview with Iran Daily, the secretary of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce Amin Seyghalzanan said, "With the ongoing expansion of commercial ties between the two countries, we anticipate a minimum 15-percent rise in the trade volume between Iran and Afghanistan by the end of this year (which began on March 20, 2024)." 2 >

Iran, Afghanistan's trade grow by 13%

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

A senior businessman from the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce stated that the trade between the two neighboring states had reached two billion dollars in the last Iranian year (ending in March 2024), showing a 13% increase from the previous year.

In an interview with Iran Daily, the secretary of the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce Amin Seyghalzanan said, "With the ongoing expansion of commercial ties between the two countries, we anticipate a minimum 15-percent rise in the trade volume between Iran and Afghanistan by the end of this year (which began on March 20, 2024)."

He predicted that the trade volume between the two nations would reach around 2.3 billion dollars by the end of this year.

Referring to the advantages of developing economic relations with neighboring countries, the official said that if the economic interests of the two sides "are intertwined, the prospects for trade and a shared economy between the two nations are promising due to the significant potential for enhancing future collaboration."

He highlighted the present political and security conditions in



Afghanistan, noting that after enduring years of instability, the country is now enjoying a relatively improved security situation across the country. Furthermore, Afghan officials have adopted effective economic strategies and prudent decisions across various sectors, such as promoting lo-

cal manufacturing, indicating a strong commitment to this issue.

"Today, Afghans prefer Iran and Iranians as their primary choice for engaging in different sectors of their economy and trade. The rest depends on our dedication, foresight, and effective policymaking to capitalize

on these opportunities and advantages," he said.

Seyghalzanan referred to the joint chambers of commerce as influential entities in boosting trade relations between countries, noting that these chambers are "the sole official private sector organizations where members, advocates, and business operators from countries

are present and truly represent the private sector."

He pointed to the interest of the two countries' traders in bilateral collaboration, saying, "The cultural and language similarities between the two countries have been effective in this regard. Moreover, due to Iran's use of advanced technology in manufacturing its products and industries, Afghans are interested in Iranian products and seek to transfer these technologies to their country, especially considering the proximity of the two countries, which facilitates the transfer of technical knowledge and products."

According to the joint chamber of commerce secretary, Afghans welcome joint investments with Iran in the fields of industry, mining, and agriculture. Seyghalzanan added that, "Currently, Iranians, both in the public and private sectors, are actively involved in the extraction, exploitation, and production of minerals in Afghanistan."

The Afghan authorities also welcome cooperation with Iran in the agriculture sector," Seyghalzanan said, affirming that this sector benefits both countries.

"Afghans welcome Iran's involvement in Afghan agriculture for overseas farming," he said, proposing that Iran could invest in the neighboring country to grow water-intensive

crops, thereby prioritizing the import of these products from Afghanistan.

Seyghalzanan concluded that, "The stronger and more fundamental the economic ties between Iran and Afghanistan become, the easier it will be to manage future relations and potential tensions between the two countries."

He also noted that a significant portion of Afghan traders reside in Iran, stating, "Part of Iran's exports to Afghanistan consists of our regular direct exports, but another part is conducted by Afghans to Afghanistan and other countries. This means Afghan traders residing in Iran or traveling to Iran with visas contribute to the export of Iranian goods to Afghanistan and other countries."

The commercial attaché of Iran in Afghanistan said Iran's non-oil export to the neighboring country registered a 41-percent growth in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 20, 2024) compared to the same period last year, increasing by \$102 million.

Hossein Roustaei has recently said that Afghanistan is Iran's sixth export target market and that the neighboring country is one of the export target countries with the highest positive balance of trade with Iran.

Home appliance exports earned \$400m in year to March



Iran's exports of home appliances generated some \$400 million in the previous Iranian calendar year from March 21, 2023 to March 19, 2024, industry figures show, Press TV

reported. Secretary general of Iran's Home Appliances Manufacturers Association said on Monday that rising exports of household appliances from the

country is a sign the industry has progressed several years after it started almost from scratch.

"Exports over the last year were some \$400 million which is a sign of better quality of products and parts in various types of home appliances that have been able to compete in international markets," said Omid Fazelinia.

Industry figures showed that total output of home appliances in Iran had reached 19.5 million units in the year to late March, up by 18.2% from the previous year.

Fazelinia said targets introduced by the Iranian administration require the country's home appliances industry to further expand by 15% in the year to March 2025 to reach

an output of 22.5 million units. Iranian households relied on foreign brands, especially the South Korea-based Samsung and LG, for a bulk of domestic appliances they needed before 2019 when Iran came under US sanctions.

The country introduced a ban on imports of foreign brands of home appliances to help develop the budding domestic industry and to cut back on hard currency spending.

The ban also came amid Iran's row with South Korea over more than \$7 billion of funds that had been blocked in two banks in the East Asian country due to US sanctions.

The funds were released to Iranian bank accounts in Qatar last year under an agreement mediated by the Arab country.

Minister: 1.5m cars to be rolled out by yearend



Iran's Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade said 1.5 million cars will be produced in the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2025).

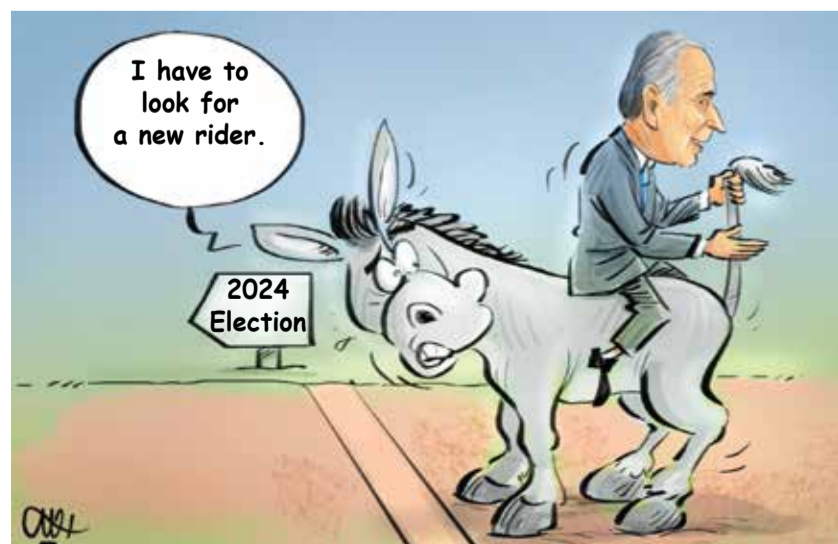
More than 1.5 million cars will be manufactured in the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year, Abbas Aliabadi said, speaking at the 19th International Auto Parts Exhibition 2024 dubbed "IAPEX". The Industry minister criticized the poor quality of

cars produced in the country and called for boosting the quality of the cars to be competitive in the international arena, Mehr news agency reported.

Aliabadi said Iran should be industrialized and that the country has a high potential for industrialization.

The 19th International Exhibition of Automotive Parts, Accessories and Sets kicked off on June 18 and will run through June 21, 2024.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran sells medicinal, pharmaceutical products to 50 countries

The Iran Food and Drug Administration (IFDA) said the country exports raw materials and pharmaceutical products to approximately 50 countries around the world.

"Iranian raw materials and pharmaceutical products are exported by nearly 100 companies to about 50 destinations," Asef Mahdavi, secretary of the IFDA's export policymaking council, announced, Press TV reported.

Iranian companies have the capacity of producing medicines several times more



than meeting domestic needs, he added.

The medicines developed in Iran are competitive with the European ones in terms

of their price and with the Indian ones in terms of their quality.

Mahdavi also noted that the export of medical equip-

ment grew by 300 percent in the first four months of this year.

Earlier, IFDA Head Heidar Mohammadi said that Iran's pharmaceutical market is worth over \$2 billion, adding that 99 percent of drugs used in the country are produced domestically.

Over the past years, Iran has made great strides in the medical sector despite illegal Western sanctions.

It has become self-reliant in producing medicines and health equipment and increased sales to many countries.

Chanteh-weaving: Nomadic artistry from Fars Province



Chanteh or *ayinehdan* is a traditional handwoven product of the nomadic people in Fars Province. It is often described as the "knapsack of the dervish" made of rugs and carpets sewn together in a sack-like form, with leather pieces attached. These bags are worn around the neck and used to carry small items.

In carpet terminology, a *chanteh* refers to a small handwoven weave that is smaller than saddlebags and does not have separate compartments. The primary material used in creating a *chanteh* is similar to that of a carpet, with the main difference being the size. These products are exclusively woven by women and serve as practical pouches for holding various items used in the daily lives of nomadic

A *chanteh* is typically crafted from two pieces of a 30 by 40 rectangular fabric that are sewn together on three sides to create a pocket-like structure. Adorning two sides of the bottom are colorful pom-poms, and a handle made from the *chanteh* fabric allows it to be carried like a traditional bag.

To create a *chanteh*, a loom is only set up when weaving more than five pieces at once due to its narrow width. With one set of loom, a weaver can produce anywhere from ten to twenty *chanteh* pieces featuring various designs. There are multiple techniques for producing a *chanteh*, including methods utilized in weaving carpet, kilim, ja-



jim, saddlebags and others. *Chanteh* weaving incorporates both Persian and Turkish knots, with wool yarns utilized for both wraps and wefts. Typically, white yarn is used for the wraps, while the wefts are dyed using natural pigments in shades like red, gold, blue, and green. The weaving process takes place on horizontal looms. The diversity of motifs and pat-

terns in *chanteh*-weaving is extensive. However, craftswomen often focus on preserving key elements that reflect the ancient cultural heritage of the region. These motifs delve into legendary beliefs and symbols from antiquity, marking the origins of the prehistoric era. Some motifs can be traced back to pottery artifacts from the 4th to 3rd millennium BCE, while others

draw inspiration from reliefs found in the Achaemenid, Sassanid, and early Islamic eras.

In Qashqai weavings, motifs such as peacock feathers, paisleys, suns, goats, birds, eight-petal flowers, zigzags, crosses, anemones, and desert bushes are commonly featured, showcasing a rich tapestry of historical and cultural significance.

Iranica Desk

Gilan Province, with its pristine and beautiful nature, lush green forests and numerous historical attractions, is one of the tourist destinations in the north of the country that attracts many tourists and travelers. Anzali Wetland, Saravan Forest Park, Masouleh Village, Roudkhan Castle are among the attractions of this region. Avisho or Abisho Cave is also one of the notable attractions of Gilan Province, located in Masal in a mountainous area amidst the forests of Shandermand district.

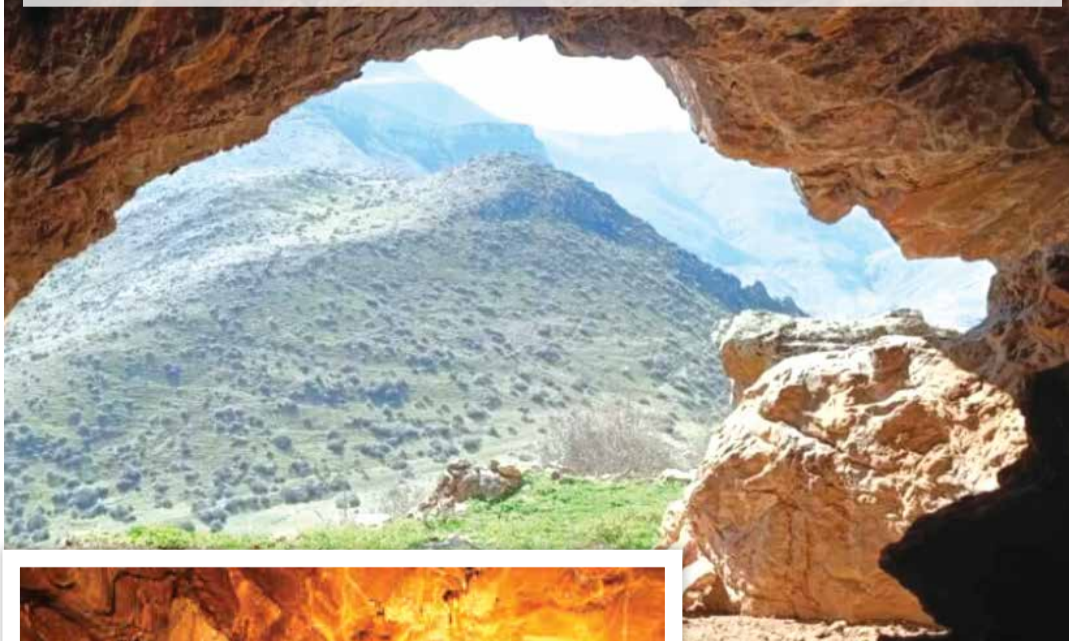
Masal is home to more than 17 large and small caves, with the largest one being Avisho, situated at an altitude of 1300 meters above sea level in a low-water valley.

Avisho is a Talysh language meaning "a place where water falls." It is said that the cave got its name from a spring located nearby.

So far, cavers and mountaineers have explored and discovered about two kilometers of the astonishing depths of this cave. This cave was registered in the National Heritage List in 2010.

Avisho Cave is a limestone and water cave with seven springs and a river flow inside. In such a way that the water flow can be seen from the beginning to the end of the cave, it has nine main shafts and one secondary shaft. Working your way into the cave, you will see unique and diverse

Visit mystical depths of Avisho Cave in Gilan



limestone formations. These formations have been created as a result of the dissolution of limestone rocks in water:

The stalactites are among the attractions of this cave, hanging either as columns or located on the ground, and it is interesting to know about the formation of these stalactites, which are ac-

tually limestone deposits. Most caves are formed in limestone and gypsum rocks, which contain calcium carbonate that can easily be dissolved by acid.

During rainfall, raindrops absorb carbon dioxide present in the air, becoming acidic and capable of dissolving limestone rocks in them. Therefore, when

acidic water containing limestone drips from the cave ceiling, vaporizing, the limestone deposits remain, forming these spectacular stalactites.

On the way to Avisho Cave, you will encounter lush green forests with stunning views and enchanting springs that will make your drive enjoyable.

On UAE's unfounded claims over three Iranian islands

China at most verbally supports Tehran-Abu Dhabi dialogue



By Afifeh Abedi
Regional affairs expert

OPINION

The United Emirates does not have historical and legal documents to put forward to international courts regarding its territorial claim over the three Iranian islands. For this reason, the UAE uses every opportunity in bilateral, multilateral, and international relations, most recently with China, to give substance to its self-proclaimed ownership over the islands.



Chinese President Xi Jinping (4th L) and Arab leaders pose for a group photo during the China-Arab summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on December 9, 2022. **REUTERS**

Expecting China to alter its position in the face of Iran's protest is not realistic. Since this is not the first time that Beijing has made such claims about the three islands, Tehran should have been ready beforehand with a decisive yet roundabout diplomatic stance to avoid a war of words. There will, however, be diplomatic avenues for Iran to offer a reciprocal and diplomatic response to China's recent unfriendly stance.

All historical and international documents, as well as Iran's long-standing military sovereignty over the three islands, confirm the country's right to sovereignty over them. However, the efforts of the United Arab Emirates should not be taken lightly. Political and legal initiatives in bilateral and multilateral relations and international institutions should be utilized to counter their endeavors. Simultaneously, local development and Iran's defense and security measures along the borderlines should also be bolstered and kept current. China's stance against Iran's sovereignty over the three islands can be assessed from various angles. The key takeaway for Iran is that Tehran requires a degree of strategic autonomy and independent deterrence. Iran should not rely on the backing of external parties in critical matters of defense and security. Simultaneously, it is important to bear in mind that expecting China to alter its position in the face of Iran's protest is not realistic. Since this is not the first time that Beijing has made such claims

about the three islands, Tehran should have been ready beforehand with a decisive yet roundabout diplomatic stance to avoid a war of words. There will, however, be diplomatic avenues for Iran to offer a reciprocal and diplomatic response to China's recent unfriendly stance. Iran's stress should be constant and unbending on the issue of territorial sovereignty, which should also be declared in a straightforward manner to all parties, be they China, Russia, Syria, etc. Nevertheless, it should be taken into account that both Iran and China's positions in this matter — and all other bilateral or multilateral cases — are always taken based on a combination of priorities and requirements of the foreign policy of countries at the level of bilateral, regional, and international relations. China's stance is to back the solution of dialogue and negotiation between Iran and the UAE to settle the dispute about the three Iranian islands, while Iran's stance is its historical and non-negotiable sovereignty over the three islands.

In my opinion, China arguably cannot go further than this stance or even adopt a political or economic initiative for resolving territorial disputes in the Persian Gulf because a stance beyond verbal support for dialogue can become more contentious. This goes against Beijing's principled stances, current regional approach, and general avoidance of stirring the regional and international pots. China's refusal to come on board as a strategic partner for Iran does not mean that the relations between Tehran and Beijing are worthless. Just as we believe that despite America's historical hostility and the Europeans' current hostility, Iran should not leave the negotiation table with the Western parties and stop benefitting from various negotiation methods. In the same way, we should accept that the relations between Iran and China should not fall victim to the predictable stance on the three islands. Iran and China naturally have cooperation and common interests in some areas and make use of each other's capac-

ities, but in some areas, they also have differences of opinion and conflicts of interest. Iran's approach to China and all other actors should be grounded in realistic and interest-oriented pragmatism. An opportunity will come up for Iran to increase its bargaining power against China. Patience and strategic pragmatism should be adopted in these cases. Iran does not have a strategic ally. Iran shares common strategic interests with actors such as China and Russia in some major regional and international issues. The political and diplomatic comments coming from some Iranian officials about the strategic relations with China and Russia are not accurate, and, of course, they pursue specific political and diplomatic goals that are not necessarily against national interests. Some of these statements seek to strengthen Iran's multilateralist policy. I have always emphasized that Iran must act intelligently in combining, separating, and synergizing its declared and practical stances.

Dialogue and de-escalation



By Maleeha Lodhi
Former Pakistani
ambassador to US, UK,
and UN

OPINION

Increased diplomatic engagement between the US and China has helped to bring down the temperature in their fraught relationship, but it has not yielded any agreement on the key issues that divide them and drive tensions in their intense strategic competition — Taiwan, war in Ukraine, trade, technology curbs, and military postures, especially in the South China Sea.

The visit of the US secretary of state to Beijing in late April was part of the effort to improve communication and contain tensions between the two countries. Antony Blinken's trip took place against a mixed background of escalating tensions but also modest advances in cooperation and communication in certain areas.

This resulted from the meeting last November between Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in San Francisco. Their first face-to-face meeting in over a year produced a tentative thaw in frosty ties. It led to the restoration of high-level military-to-military contacts, suspended by Beijing in 2020, and an agreement on counter-narcotics cooperation.

Last April, the two leaders also spoke on the phone. The increased dialogue was reflected in the conversation between the defence ministers and US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's visit to China last April. The first talks on artificial intelligence between the two countries are due to take place in the coming weeks.

But just hours before Blinken's arrival in Beijing, the US Congress approved billions of dollars of assistance for Taiwan to counter China in the so-called Indo-Pacific region. This was part of a \$61bn aid package that included funding for Ukraine and Israel. It also involved the requirement for TikTok's Chinese parent company to sell its stake in the social media platform or face a ban in America. In this election year, US officials have threatened higher tariffs on Chinese imports, with Biden calling for tripling tariffs on Chinese steel and aluminium — clearly as part of his re-election campaign.

Not surprisingly, Blinken was told at the outset of his trip that the US had to choose between cooperation and confrontation. China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said during the talks that while dialogue and cooperation had



China's President Xi Jinping (R) speaks with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (L) during their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on April 26, 2024.

● REUTERS

increased in "various fields", "negative factors" in the relationship are "still rising and accumulating". He warned against any transgression of China's red lines. A Chinese foreign ministry statement said Wang also criticised Washington for taking "an endless stream of measures to suppress China's economy, trade, science, and technology", aimed at containment of China.

However, he acknowledged "the China-US relationship is beginning to stabilise" and called for progress in areas where the two countries agreed. This was echoed by Blinken, who said the US "seeks to deepen cooperation where our interests align" while reaffirming

the US commitment to "maintaining and strengthening lines of communication to advance that agenda and deal responsibly with differences to avoid any miscalculations".

Both the US and China want to avoid a collision course even as their strategic competition intensifies.

The high point of Blinken's visit was of course the meeting with President Xi. That the Chinese president received him indicated Beijing's desire to calm tensions with Washington. Warning against "vicious competition", President Xi told Blinken that the US and China should be partners and not rivals — who "help each other succeed and not harm each other".

China, he said, wants to see a "confident, open, and prosperous United States" but expected the US to see China's development in a positive light. According to a statement issued by the Chinese foreign ministry, Xi also told Blinken that both sides "should honour words with actions rather than say one thing and do another". He called for "mutual coexistence" and emphasised the need to follow through on what was agreed between him and President Biden in San Francisco to improve bilateral relations.

The readout from the American side was that Blinken conveyed US concerns on a number of issues, especially China's military assistance to Russia in the Ukraine war. Speaking to the media before the meeting, he said Russia "would struggle to sustain its assault on Ukraine without China's support", pointing out that Beijing supplied machine tools and several dual-use items critical for Russia's defence industry. This posed a threat not just to Ukraine but also to Europe and was a red line for Washington. He said after the meeting the US will wait to see how China addresses this concern, warning that sanctions could be imposed if Beijing did not respond. This injected a jarring note into the otherwise positive atmospherics of Blinken's trip. The Chinese reaction was predictably sharp. A foreign ministry spokesman rejected "groundless" US accusations as an effort to shift blame, while Wang made it clear that "China is neither the creator of the Ukraine crisis nor a party to it". But days later, Washington went ahead and sanctioned several Chinese companies for supplying Russia with components

for military use.

Nevertheless, Blinken's visit reflected an effort by both sides to stabilise the relationship and limit the turbulence and volatility that have come to characterise Sino-US ties. But beyond this effort to ease tensions, which is important, there was no evidence of any narrowing of differences between the two sides on core issues. Moreover, the run-up to the US presidential election in November is likely to see a significant amount of China-bashing, given the political consensus and popular sentiment in America that advocates a tougher posture towards Beijing. Both Biden and Donald Trump can be expected to vie with each other in striking a more aggressive stance on China.

Taiwan will continue to be a dangerous flashpoint in the US-China confrontation, especially as the region surrounding it is bristling with heightened military activity. The military build-up and a series of recent incidents in the South China Sea also present obvious risks. The resumption of high-level military contacts between China and the US will be important to enable the two countries to reduce the risk of any inadvertent or accidental conflict.

Even if the recent US-China diplomatic engagement has not produced any breakthroughs on contentious issues, it indicates that neither side wants unmanaged tensions to push the two countries onto a collision course, which would have unpredictable consequences for them as well as the rest of the world.

The article first appeared on Dawn.

China doesn't need to invade to achieve Taiwanese unification

By Dan Blumenthal and
Fred Kagan
Scholars

OPINION

The US faces the most challenging international security environment since the end of World War II.

The war in Ukraine rages even as the war continues and threatens to expand in the Middle East. Meanwhile, the People's Republic of China continues to harass and intimidate its neighbors, and Washington is more acutely aware of the threat of a Chinese attack against Taiwan.

More attention to Taiwan's security is welcome, but the current public discourse remains too focused on the threat of a Chinese invasion of the island. Beijing still has other options to force unification short of invasion, including an escalation of its ongoing hybrid warfare campaign against Taiwan. US policy is not well-designed to deter or defeat such a strategy.

China is more likely to pursue a "short-of-war coercion campaign," as we call it, centered on political and economic warfare accompanied by limited kinetic action than an invasion of Taiwan for three main reasons:

First, annexing Taiwan by means short of war significantly limits possible damage to other Chinese grand strategic objectives. The People's Republic of China's long-term strategic goals are to continue to build up what it calls its comprehensive national power and become the world's leading power. It then aims to decisively reshape international politics and place itself at the center. Although Chinese leader Xi Jinping clearly believes that unifying Taiwan with the mainland is a key component of this grand strategy, he may be loath to risk China's march to geopolitical dominance by starting a full-scale and likely global war.

Second, a short-of-war strategy centered on political warfare and limited kinetic action could be successful. Taiwan's most recent elections highlighted deep domestic political divisions, coinciding with a rise in skepticism of America's support. These sentiments are further reinforced by the fact that Taiwan remains internationally isolated. Taiwan's status is sui generis in international affairs: it is a fully func-

tioning nation-state not recognized by the international powers. This creates an opening for China's manipulation of Taiwan's understandable fears of abandonment.

Third, strategies short of war are consistent with Chinese strategic thinking and previous behavior. A number of Chinese warfighting concepts reference the utility of fighting wars using means beyond traditional applications of kinetic force. These concepts have been employed regularly in Chinese "gray zone operations" in the South and East China Seas and Taiwan Strait. Given their general success, China will likely intensify their employment in a campaign to annex Taiwan.

Our new report demonstrates that Beijing can realistically accomplish such a strategy. By adopting the mindset of Chinese strategic planners, we devised a plausible short-of-war coercion campaign that would let China establish political control over Taiwan without an invasion or overt military blockade. The campaign we modeled ran for four years, from the inauguration of a new Taiwanese president through his first term. During this period, China would break the US-Taiwan relationship, degrade the Taiwanese government's ability to govern, and significantly un-



Chinese and Taiwanese flags are seen on a street in Kinmen, Taiwan.

● TYRONE SIU/REUTERS

dermine the Taiwanese will to resist and US desire to aid Taiwan.

We found that four years of constant Chinese air and naval incursions, a quasi-blockade, political warfare and manipulation, extensive cyber and physical sabotage of Taiwan's critical infrastructure, and deadly force on offshore islands would generate "cognitive overload" within the Taiwanese government and a sense of chaos throughout Taiwan's populace.

During the course of such a campaign, the US would be inundated with Chi-

nese information warfare and become convinced that Taiwan is not "worth" going to war over, especially following new economic deals with China. Those who are skeptical of China's ability to paralyze US responses have not been paying attention to Russia's political warfare against the US since 2015, which almost led to a rupture with NATO over Ukraine. In particular, if China's campaign to inflict pain does not trigger any of the indicators and warnings of the invasion the US is preparing for, the US might well stay out of

a Chinese coercive campaign.

In our notional campaign, after Taiwan is thrown into chaos and seemingly abandoned by its strongest ally, China then seizes the opportunity to offer "peace," promising to halt the coercion campaign and guarantee a level of autonomy in exchange for cooperation following guidelines dictated by Beijing.

The Taiwanese government, despite having no desire to become part of China, chooses to end its people's suffering, agreeing to a plan that would eventually lead to the unification China desires.

The scenario outlined in our report does not represent our assessment of what we think will necessarily happen. Rather, it seeks to demonstrate that a short-of-war coercion scenario is realistic and highly dangerous.

Beijing has many ways to successfully gain control of Taiwan, including intensifying its ongoing "gray zone" operations. China may seek to exploit Taiwanese vulnerabilities, primarily Taiwan's international isolation and lack of alliance relations, in a coordinated short-of-war coercion campaign that inflicts massive pain on Taiwanese society and prevents US intervention.

The full article first appeared on The Hill.

Taremi will be nice Inter Milan surprise: Agent



● TASNIM

Agent Federico Pastorello said that Iran international Mehdi Taremi will surprise fans at Inter Milan. The Iranian forward will arrive as a Bosman transfer (the ruling allows a player to leave a club on a free transfer as soon as his contract expired) from Porto next month. Pastorello told TMW: "He is very eager to start, he made a choice many months ago and he will be a wonderful surprise. "I was the intermediary in the negotiations, he is not my client, but I found an extraordinary boy. "He will certainly adapt very well, it will be a nice surprise for the fans too."

Iran, HK share spoils in 2024 Junior AHF Cup



● IRNA

Iran's U-21 hockey team was held to a goalless draw against Hong Kong in the Men's Junior AHF Cup 2024 on Monday. Iran had lost to Chinese Taipei 8-0 and Oman 2-1 in its first two matches in Pool B. Bangladesh, reigning champion in men's Junior AHF Cup, has been placed in Pool A along with Thailand, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Singapore. The four semifinalists will advance to the next edition of the Junior Asia Cup.

Iran looking for good finish in 2024 VNL

Iran, who has not yet won a single match in the 2024 Volleyball Nations League (VNL), is looking to register its first win in Week 3. Eight of the world's strongest men's volleyball national teams - Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Iran, Japan, the Netherlands and the US - have arrived in Manila to delight the Filipino fans with their matches in competition week three of the men's 2024 Volleyball Nations League Preliminary Phase, at the end of which all the participants in next week's VNL Finals in Lodz, Poland will be known, wrote Tasnim News Agency.

With six of these teams already booked for the Paris 2024 Olympics and one running a distant shot at qualifying, the spotlights in Manila will fall mainly on the heated race for the berths in the VNL quarterfinals.

Iran will open its week three campaign on Wednesday at 14:30 (Tehran time) against the US, before facing tough games against Netherlands on Thursday, against France on Friday and against Germany on Saturday.

Iran is the clear underdogs in the pool. It is the only winless team in



● TASNIM

VNL 2024, trailing in the table on 0-8 and 2, but still holding a mathematical shot at the Finals in Lodz.

The VNL Preliminary Phase features three competition weeks per gender, with each of the 16

teams playing 12 matches. The seven best-ranked national teams in the Preliminary Phase will join

hosts Poland for the Finals, which will be held in Lodz from June 27 to 30.

Celtics rout Mavericks to win record 18th NBA championship

Jayson Tatum produced a dazzling 31-point display as the Boston Celtics dominated the Dallas Mavericks 106-88 to clinch a record-breaking 18th NBA championship crown on Monday.

Humbled by Dallas in a 38-point game four drubbing on Friday, Boston slammed the door on any chance of a Mavericks fightback to seal a 4-1 series victory at an electric TD Garden, AFP reported.

Tatum spearheaded a superb performance at both ends of the floor as Boston pulled clear of their arch-rival Los Angeles Lakers to stand alone with 18 NBA titles.

The emphatic win came 16 years to the day after Boston's last NBA Finals win - over the Lakers - in 2008.

"Oh my God. It's a surreal feeling. We did it," a jubilant Tatum exclaimed after the triumph. "We did it - oh my God, we did it!"

"This is an incredible feeling. I'm lost for words. I'm sorry."

Jaylen Brown, who was named Finals Most valuable Player, gave

Tatum scoring support with 21 points, while Jrue Holiday added 15 and Derrick White 14.

The defeat marked a miserable end to the finals for Dallas duo Luka Doncic and Kyrie Irving, who had led the Western Conference fifth seeds on an improbable giant-killing journey to the NBA Finals.

Doncic, sensational during the Mavs' game four rout of the

Celtics, finished with 28 points.

"I'm proud of every guy that stepped on the floor, all the coaches, all the people behind," defeated Doncic said afterwards. "Obviously, we didn't win the Finals, but we did have a hell of a season and I'm proud of every one of them."

Asked what was going through his mind, Doncic replied: "Nothing. Sad we lost."



● REUTERS

Irving meanwhile scored a meagre 15 points while being taunted with chants of "Kyrie sucks!" by Celtics fans still rankled by his departure from the team in 2019.

Top-seeded Boston meanwhile reasserted their superiority in convincing fashion after their game four blowout, leading by double digits from late in the second quarter until the final buzzer.

The Celtics laid the foundations for victory with a controlled first-half performance that saw them open up a 67-46 lead at the break.

Payton Pritchard put the seal on a superb first two quarters for Boston, launching a mammoth buzzer-beating three-pointer from near half-court that gave the Celtics a 21-point advantage. Boston had been swiftly into their groove early on, building a 9-2 advantage in the first quarter with their swarming defense never allowing Dallas to build any kind of rhythm.

After Boston took a 13-5 advantage the Mavs rallied to narrow the gap to two points

at 17-15, but Boston's defense reclaimed the initiative soon afterwards.

Two quick steals from Tatum and Sam Hauser allowed the Celtics to pull away to 28-18 at the end of the first quarter.

Boston's defense gave no respite to Irving and Doncic, restricting Dallas's stars to just 14 points between them in the first quarter.

By contrast, Tatum and Brown threatened to over-run the Mavs defense.

There was no let-up from Boston after the restart, with Holiday's cutting layup putting Boston 26-points clear at 78-52 early in the third quarter.

There were flickers of a Dallas recovery in the latter stages of the third quarter, but Boston remained in control to lead by 19 heading into the final period. With the TD Garden roaring them on, there was never any chance the Celtics would be denied and Boston continued to find mismatches to score freely and retain a comfortable double-digit advantage to close out the win.

France edge Austria in Euro 2024 opener as Mbappe gets broken nose

Maximilian Woeber's own goal was enough to give France a winning start to their Euro 2024 campaign on Monday as they edged Austria 1-0 in their opening game but Kylian Mbappe came off late on with a broken nose.

Woeber diverted Mbappe's cutback into his own net seven minutes before half-time in Dueseldorf to allow the French, one of the leading contenders to win the tournament, to come through a stiff test, AFP reported.

Austria have been much-improved under Ralf Rangnick and they often made life uncomfortable for the 2022 World Cup runners-up, who saw Mbappe leave the field near the end after being hurt in a collision. He had earlier failed to convert a

glorious chance that would have allowed France to win by a wider margin, and sources close to the player confirmed he had broken his nose in the accidental clash with Kevin Danso.

"He is in a bad way. He is not well. His nose is a mess, that's for sure. That is the black mark of the evening for us," France coach Didier Deschamps said, without confirming the extent of the injury.

"We had the chance to put the game to bed and it is true that we could have been more precise in attack, but it's very good to start with a victory," Deschamps said of the result.

Despite Mbappe's injury, France will be relieved to have emerged victorious after a build-up overshadowed by talk of politics rather than football.

Mbappe and other French players had spent much of their time before the media in recent days answering questions about upcoming elections in the country which could see the far-right National Rally become the biggest party. Any slip-up here would have led to suggestions their minds had not been fully focused on the competition.

Instead, the result leaves France level on three points in Group D with the Netherlands, who defeated Poland 2-1 on Sunday.

France and the Netherlands meet next in Leipzig on Friday, while Austria face Poland the same day in Berlin.

"We are obviously disappointed with the result. No France player scored against us in 100 minutes, just a very unfortunate own goal,"

said Rangnick.

"I think Didier Deschamps was really happy when the final whistle came which shows how well my team played."

Austria had enjoyed some impressive results coming into the tournament and their team is on familiar ground during these Euros - Rangnick is from Germany and eight of their starting line-up played in the German Bundesliga last season.

The French, however, are arguably the most talented team at the tournament, led by their captain Mbappe.

He endured a miserable time at his only previous Euros in 2021, failing to score and missing the decisive penalty in a shoot-out defeat by Switzerland in the last 16.

The new Real Madrid signing will wonder how he did not score in this game, with his first big opportunity arriving inside eight minutes.

Antoine Griezmann and Theo Hernandez combined to release Mbappe, who cut in from the left and shaped to curl a shot into the far corner before instead aiming for the near post.

However, Austria goalkeeper Patrick Pentz managed make the save.

The Austrians settled into the contest and passed up a wonderful chance of their own to go ahead on 36 minutes.

Skipper Marcel Sabitzer touched down a Michael Gregoritsch cross from the left for Christoph Baumgartner, but he was foiled by goalkeeper Mike Maignan.

That proved crucial as France took the lead two minutes later. Ousmane Dembele gave the ball to Mbappe on the right, and he produced a stepover to get to the byline before his cutback was nodded into the far corner of his own net by the unfortunate Woeber.

Mbappe was then thwarted by Pentz as he tried to go around the goalkeeper in first-half stoppage time, but that was nothing compared to the chance he squandered 10 minutes after the restart.

Adrien Rabiot sent Mbappe away, bounding in behind the Austrian defence, but he somehow put his shot wide with just the goalkeeper to beat.

That left the game in the balance, and Austria continued to push for a leveller, without success.

Economy cornerstone of Iran's first presidential debate

National Desk

Six presidential candidates on Monday exchanged their views on Iran's economic problems, especially high inflation rate, in a live televised debate ahead of the June 28 presidential election.

It was the first of five debates planned in the 9 days remaining before the vote in a campaign to replace late president Ebrahim Raisi who was killed in a helicopter crash on May 19.

The candidates discussed their proposals and plans for Iran's economy, struggling under sanctions from the United States and other Western nations. They all promised they would try and get the sanctions lifted and introduce reforms. The candidates also discussed inflation, the budget deficit, Iran's housing problem and ways to fight corruption.

All the candidates had an understanding on imbalance between increase in salaries and inflation rate. One of the candidates and

current lawmaker, Masoud Pezeshkian, said that the country's high inflation has made it difficult for the government's employees and retirees to provide their families with the essentials for a normal life.

The candidates also talked about the effect of liquidity volume on inflation. The current Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who is the most prominent candidate, believes that increase in liquidity is one of the main factors behind high inflation in the country.

However, candidate Alireza Zakani, the mayor of Tehran, believes that the liquidity will be useful if it is used in appropriate sectors.

Mostafa Pourmohammadi, another candidate and a previous interior minister under former president Hassan Rouhani, criticized the policies of Iran's central bank to control the price of foreign currencies. He said that the Central Bank of Iran has ordered the banks to stop granting loans to companies – the issue that has



affected production in the country. He considers curbing inflation as a prerequisite for financial stability in the country. Saeed Jalili believes that to curb inflation, foreign currency market should be controlled. Five of the candidates are conservatives while the

sixth candidate, lawmaker Pezeshkian, 69, is a heart surgeon who has the support of some pro-Reformists. Among those running for president are also Iran's Vice President, Amir Hossein Qazizadeh Hashemi. During the four-hour debate, Qalibaf also promised

he would be a "strong" president who would support the poor, better manage the economy and effort to remove sanctions through diplomatic means. Pezeshkian said the sanctions were a "disaster" and also lobbied for less restrictions on the internet.

All the candidates pledged to strengthen the country's currency, the rial, which has plunged to 580,000 against the dollar. The rial was 32,000 to the dollar when Iran and world powers reached a deal with world powers in 2015 on Iran's nuclear program.

Iranian presidential candidates take part in the first debate in Tehran ahead of the election scheduled for June 28.
● MORTEZA FAKHRINEJAD/IRIB



President Biden's second possible freezing episode in the last week has sparked renewed speculation that Democrats are secretly plotting to replace him on the ticket and shifted focus to his make or break first debate with Donald Trump later this month.

According to a Democratic strategist quoted by DailyMail.com, only a quartet of influential figures – former president Barack Obama, former president Bill Clinton, former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, possess the clout to force the 81-year-old president out, India Today reported.

However, Biden, noted for his tenacity and the most recognized leader of the Democratic Party, could dig in his heels and continue running in the run-up to the election, which could potentially exacerbate party discontent.

What is also complicating matters further is Biden's "complicated" relationship with Obama. Biden is believed to harbor lingering resentment towards Obama, who endorsed

Hillary Clinton over him in the 2016 primaries and reportedly discouraged his 2020 run, according to the DailyMail.com report.

In late May, Obama briefly appeared at a White House state dinner for the Kenyan president and his wife Michelle was not present. According to a Democratic source, Michelle Obama, who harbors no close personal feelings for the Bidens, flatly refused to accept the invitation, the report claimed.

The Obamas have intentionally maintained a distance from the White House since Biden, the oldest US president, was elected in 2020, knowing that their public appearances would trigger a sense of nostalgia among the people when they once liked their nominees.

However, Obama was present at a recent Democratic fundraiser at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles, along with Biden. The 81-year-old president, who has faced criticism over his advancing age and his decision to run for a second term, appeared to freeze up on stage. At the event, Biden

seemed to lock eyes with the crowd, standing still like a statue for about 10 seconds until Obama, still smiling and waving, swooped in, taking his hand and gracefully guiding him offstage. The incident came days after he appeared to wander away from other world leaders during the G7 Summit in Italy last week.

Meanwhile, in a strategic move, the Democratic Party has opted for an online nomination with a virtual roll call to formally select Biden as their nominee ahead of the DNC convention in Chicago in mid-August, the DailyMail.com reported. This virtual framework could also facilitate a more controlled process should the party decide to pivot and nominate a replacement candidate.

If a swap was to be executed, the new nominee would likely be introduced and endorsed by high-ranking Democrats in a public event. Notably, Vice President Kamala Harris is reportedly not the preferred replacement, according to sources, adding another layer of complexity to the situation.

Gaza gov't says 3,500 children at risk of dying

Gazan Government Media Office issued a stark condemnation on Tuesday, accusing the Israeli regime and the US administration of exacerbating the famine that threatens 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza.

The declaration highlighted the immediate threat of famine, particularly to Palestinian children, with approximately 3,500 at risk of death due to severe malnutrition and lack of medical supplies. The media office emphasized the widespread suffering across Gaza, exacerbated by a 40-day total closure of

crossings leading to severe shortages in local markets. It described the blockade as a deliberate policy targeting vulnerable groups, including children and patients, denying them essential food, medicine, nutritional supplements, and vaccinations crucial for survival. Urging swift intervention, the Gazan government demanded the immediate reopening of Rafah and Karam Abu Salem crossings to facilitate the entry of critical aid. United Nations rights chief Volker Turk told the UN Human Rights Council in Gene-

va he was "appalled by the disregard for international human rights" and "unconscionable death and suffering". The United Nations has said aid access to Gaza has been severely hindered by factors including insecurity, the closing of crossing points to the territory, and Israeli procedural delays. Since the start of Israeli military operations around Rafah in early May, when the vital crossing was seized and closed, "aid delivery and humanitarian access deteriorated further," Turk said.

Hamis demanded the opening of both the Kerem Shalom and Rafah crossings, the group said in a statement accusing Israel and its close ally the United States of the "crime of preventing the entry of aid and food as a tool for political pressure". Displaced Palestinian Ali Hassan, sheltering in a tent in central Gaza's Deir al-Balah, told AFP "Eid al-Adha this year is not like previous holidays." "There is no meat or sacrificial animals, we don't even have clothes for the children," he said.

Second Announcement


N.I.S.O.C
 NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY
 AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO.: 08-38-0240003

National Iranian South Oilfields Company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
1	COILED TUBING REEL STRING, QT-800 TAPERED TYPE H2S SERVICE, 15000 FT.	5RL

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no. 1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded. The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 39,185/76 EURO or 17,347,730,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials through technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab. ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P.

NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI, IRAN PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL.

NOTE: Based on enactment issued by Nisoc's Tender committee, foreign companies must submit a Bid Bond Guarantee amounting to aforementioned (paragraph 1) Euro amount. Otherwise, their quotations will not be considered.

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

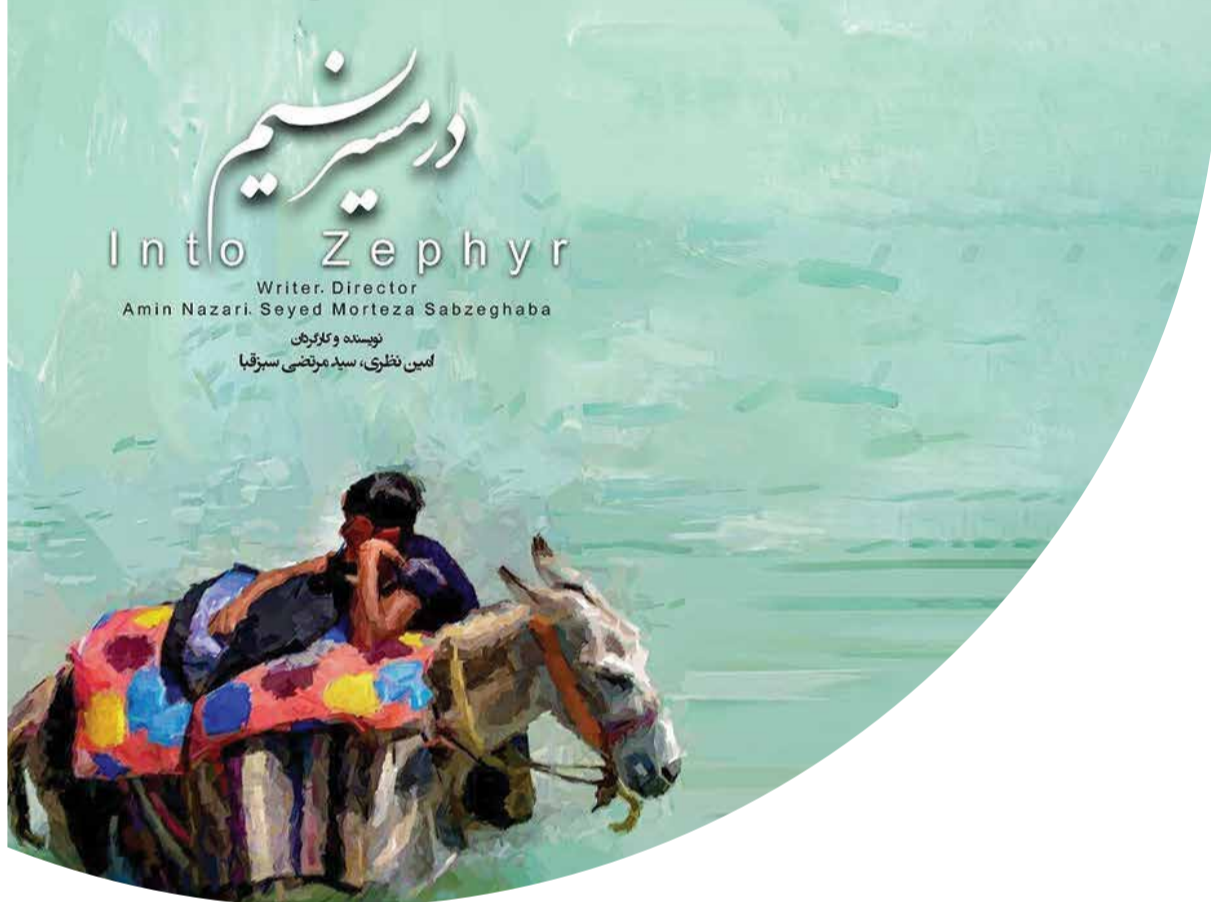
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex, Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
Tel. No.: 061 34 12 4644
Fax No.: 061 34 45 74 37

PUBLIC RELATIONS

www.shana.ir
 www.nisoc.ir
 <http://lets.mporg.ir>

1731433

Iranian film 'Into Zephyr' to be screened at Portuguese festival



The Iranian film 'Into Zephyr,' co-directed by Amin Nazari and Seyed Morteza Sabzeghaba, will be screened at the 6th International Heritage Film Festival in Portugal. Sabzeghaba, one of the directors, told IRNA on Tuesday that the documentary focuses on the remote

village of "Tange Dez" in northern Dezful, Khuzestan Province. The village lacks basic living facilities and can only be accessed by crossing the salty water river, IRNA wrote. The film has previously won awards at the 2nd Varsity International Film Festival in Africa and the

1st Bioscope Global Film Festival in India. It was also nominated for Best Film at the 6th Three Acts of Goodness Micro Film Festival in China. The International Heritage Film Festival, established in 2016, aims to promote cultural heritage through various media, with a fo-

cus on cinema. The festival showcases anthropological films that highlight the material and immaterial heritage, customs, education, architecture, and the sustainability of communities. The 6th edition of the festival runs from June 16 to September 30 in Évora, Portugal.



574 concerts held across Iran in one month

The Music Office of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance announced that 574 concerts were staged across Iran from April 20 to May 20. During this period, 487 singles received approval for release. According to the report, 254 stage musical performances received permits, resulting in 574 total per-

formances. In addition, eight music videos were approved, three groups were sent abroad, and one foreign group performed in Iran. Nine studios received permits to establish or renew their activities, IRNA wrote. The Music Office also issued permits for 487 singles. These included 27 traditional and national

songs, 323 pop songs, 53 local and regional songs, 49 fusion songs, six electronic songs, 24 classical songs, one anthem, and four children's songs. In the album category, 29 albums received permits, including 10 traditional and national albums, 10 pop albums, two local albums, two fusion albums, and five classical albums.

Nine patients killed in hospital fire in northern Iran

Nine patients died after a fire broke out in the basement of a hospital in the city of Rasht in northern Iran.

The six women and three men killed were in the intensive care unit of Qaem Hospital, local authorities said. All the patients in the facility were evacuated. Mohammad Taghi Ashoubi, the head of the Gilan University of Medical Sciences, told reporters on Tuesday that an intubated patient who was in the intensive care unit had died, while eight others were killed earlier.

"The cause of death of these patients is being investigated by the Gilan medical examiner," he was quoted as saying by the state-run IRNA news agency.

Five infants who were at Qaem Hospital were transferred to the 17 Shahrivar Children's Hospital and were in good health, he said.

The fire started in a room on an underground floor of the hospital, where the emergency power generators were located, state



media reported. The authorities have not commented on unconfirmed reports that the fire broke out after the extensive use of emergency power generators amid power cuts as Iran endures scorching summer heat.

The fire is believed to have started at about 1:30am (22:00 GMT on Monday) and the cause was being investigated.

The 250-bed hospital was caring for 142 patients at the time of the incident, 33 of whom were in intensive care. Dozens of peo-

ple had to be transported to multiple healthcare facilities in the area.

Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said he has been in contact with provincial officials to coordinate assistance for the injured, ensure the safety of the hospital to restart operations, and investigate the cause of the fire.

Hadi Salimi, the head of the Red Crescent Society in the province, told state media that 26 teams comprising 75 emergency responders were dispatched to the hospital from eight counties.

PICS OF THE DAY



Paytakht Orchestra Concert led by Shahram Tavakkoli performs classical masterpieces at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on June 17, 2024. The pieces ranged from Beethoven's Egmont to Brahms' Hungarian Dances.
● IRNA

Pop star Dua Lipa says criticism of Israeli war in Gaza was for 'greater good'

The pop star and soon-to-be Glastonbury headliner Dua Lipa said she is willing to risk a backlash over political statements after she recently described military operations in Gaza as "Israeli genocide". In an interview with the Radio Times, the 28-year-old said she repeatedly checked

herself before making a statement, but did so if she felt it was for the "greater good" and worth the risk, The Guardian reported. The Grammy award-winner last month reposted to her 88 million Instagram followers a graphic from the group Artists4Ceasefire, along with the hashtag

#AllEyesOnRafah, which trended in the days after Israel's bombing of the city in Gaza. She wrote: "Burning children alive can never be justified. The whole world is mobilising to stop the Israeli genocide. Please show your solidarity with Gaza." Recently, she was refer-

enced in an Israeli drill rap song that called for violence against public figures who have expressed pro-Palestinian views. Lipa told the Radio Times: "When I speak about things that are political, I double-, triple-check myself to be: 'OK, this is about something that is way bigger than me,

and it's necessary - and that's the only reason I'm posting it.' That is my only solace in doing that. 'It's always going to be met with a backlash and other people's opinions, so it's a big decision. I balance it out, because ultimately I feel it's for the greater good, so I'm willing to [take

that hit].'" Lipa, who was born in London to Kosovan-Albanian parents, suggested her heritage influenced her overt politics. "[Speaking up is] a natural inclination for me, given my background and heritage, and that my very existence is somewhat political - it's

not something that is out of the ordinary for me to be feeling close to," she said. Lipa is due to headline Glastonbury at the end of this month on the Pyramid stage in Pilton, Somerset. Her most recent album, Radical Optimism, was released last month to favourable reviews.