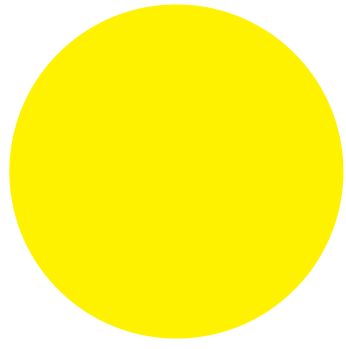


Haniyeh
assassinated
by 'short-range
projectile':
IRGC



Phantom of fear in Israel

Iran not to play the game in Netanyahu's ground

**EXCLUSIVE
PERSPECTIVE**

Iran's expected response to Israel's assassination of Hamas Politburo Chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran has morphed into a nightmare for the Israelis.

The fear and concern in Israel, the futility of such assassinations in the resolve of Palestinian resistance and Hamas, as well as Benjamin Netanyahu's failure to secure the release of prisoners and the negative impact of the targeted killing of the Hamas politburo leader on ceasefire negotiations, have emerged as prominent topics in expert and media analyses.

The Leader of Iran has underscored a severe punishment for Israel, while Iran's representative at the United Nations has stated that Tehran's response to the terrorist act is a legitimate right. However, what has been highlighted in Iran concerning its response to Israel is that Tehran will retaliate not out of sentiment but based on careful security and political evaluations at an appropriate time and place.

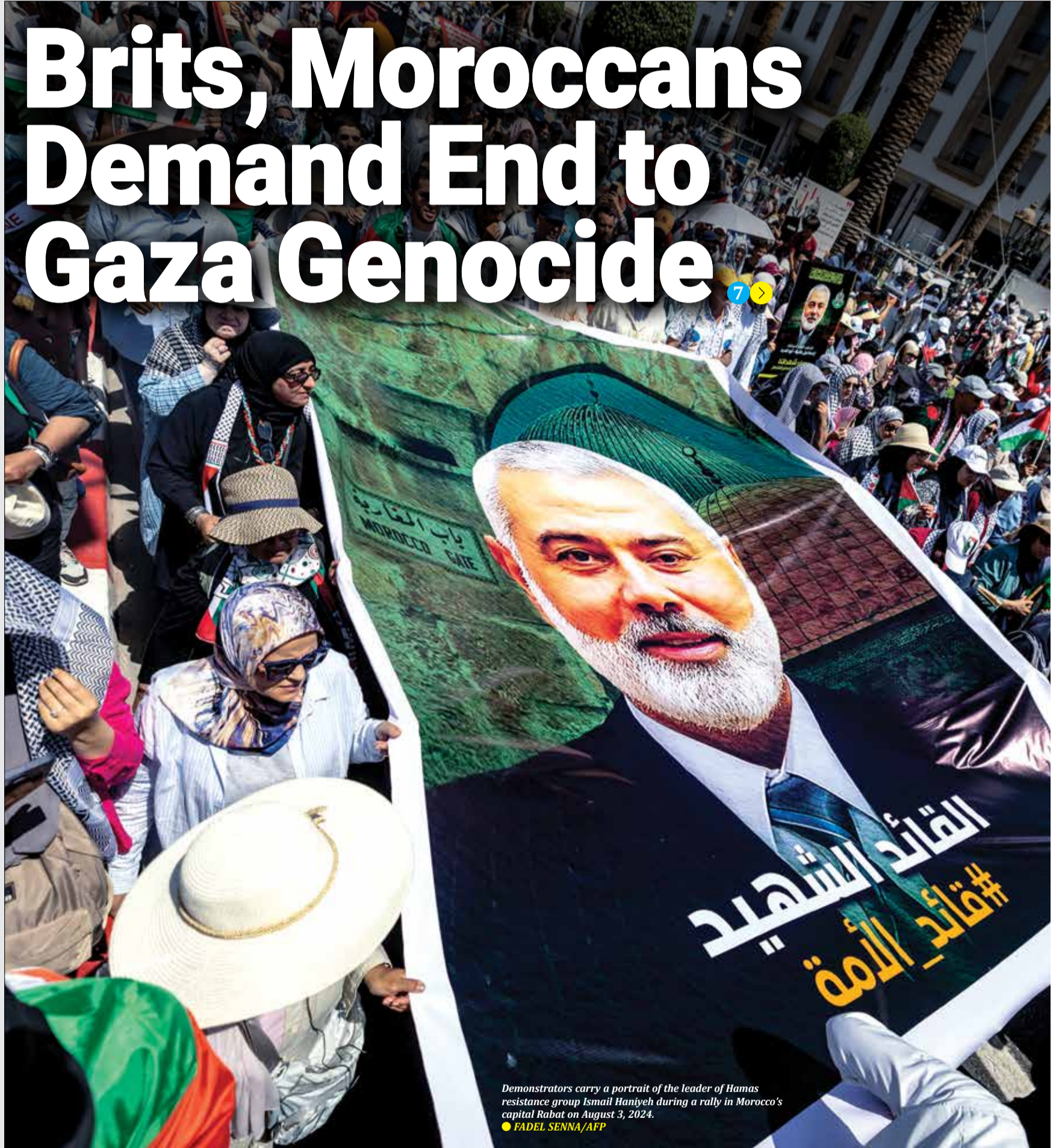
It now appears that a bout of trepidation has enveloped Israeli officials and residents of the occupied territories. In this regard, IRNA quoted Israel's Maariv newspaper as saying that the regime's officials are on full alert for fear of Iran's response to the assassination of Haniyeh. IRNA quoted the paper as saying that for fear of an Iranian attack, fuel and power generators have been sent to the main hospitals and large car parks have been emptied to be used as temporary hospitals.

Assassination has been a conventional tactic of the Israeli regime over the past few decades. However, the question has now been posed more explicitly: Have these assassinations propelled Israel towards its objectives, and in the opposite side have terror acts been instrumental in halting or weakening the resistance against Israeli atrocities? Specifically, what changes will this assassination bring about in the issue of the Gaza conflict in favor of Israel?

Many experts have asserted that Haniyeh's assassination will not yield any favorable changes for Israel in the Gaza war.

Page 7 >

Brits, Moroccans Demand End to Gaza Genocide



Demonstrators carry a portrait of the leader of Hamas resistance group Ismail Haniyeh during a rally in Morocco's capital Rabat on August 3, 2024.
FADEL SENNA/AFP

Real reason Israel assassinating Hamas, Hezbollah leaders

And why it won't stop resistance

4-5 >



SPECIAL ISSUE

Inflation expected to keep dropping in upcoming months: Minister

The ground is paved for the 14th government of Iran to have positive prospects of economic growth, said Economy Minister Ehsan Khandouzi, adding that the inflation is expected to keep descending trend in upcoming months.

2 >

Pot of gold coins bearing marks of Persian Empire unearthed in Turkey



8 >

Morais, new-look Sepahan eyeing ACL Elite berth



6 >

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran-Russia
annual
trade hits
\$4b: *Senior
businessman*

The trade between Iran and Russia stands at \$4 billion, as announced by the deputy head of the Iran-Russia Chamber of Commerce on Saturday.

Talking to ILNA, Roshanali Yekta said agro-products contribute to over 60 percent of Iran's exports to Russia as the country is the main supplier of pistachio, dates, bell peppers and kiwi-fruits in the Russian market. He went on to say that cereals, oilseeds and livestock are the main imported agricultural commodities from Russia.

"Iran became a member of BRICS by taking advantage of its economic diplomacy, and now it should take full advantage of the capacities of this membership," Yekta stated.

He went on to say that there is a need to remove the existing restrictions on financial exchanges, if this happens, a multifold jump is waiting for Iran's trade. The senior trader put the annual trade of Russia at \$700 billion, noting that Iran could play as the re-exporter of Russian products to global markets.

Iran casts over
169K tons of
Al ingots in 3
months: *IMIDRO*

Iran produced more than 169,000 tons of aluminum ingots during the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (starting on March 20), according to the figures by the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

Iran's four major companies have produced 169,141 mt of aluminum ingots from March 20 to June 20, IRNA quoted the IMIDRO on Saturday as saying.

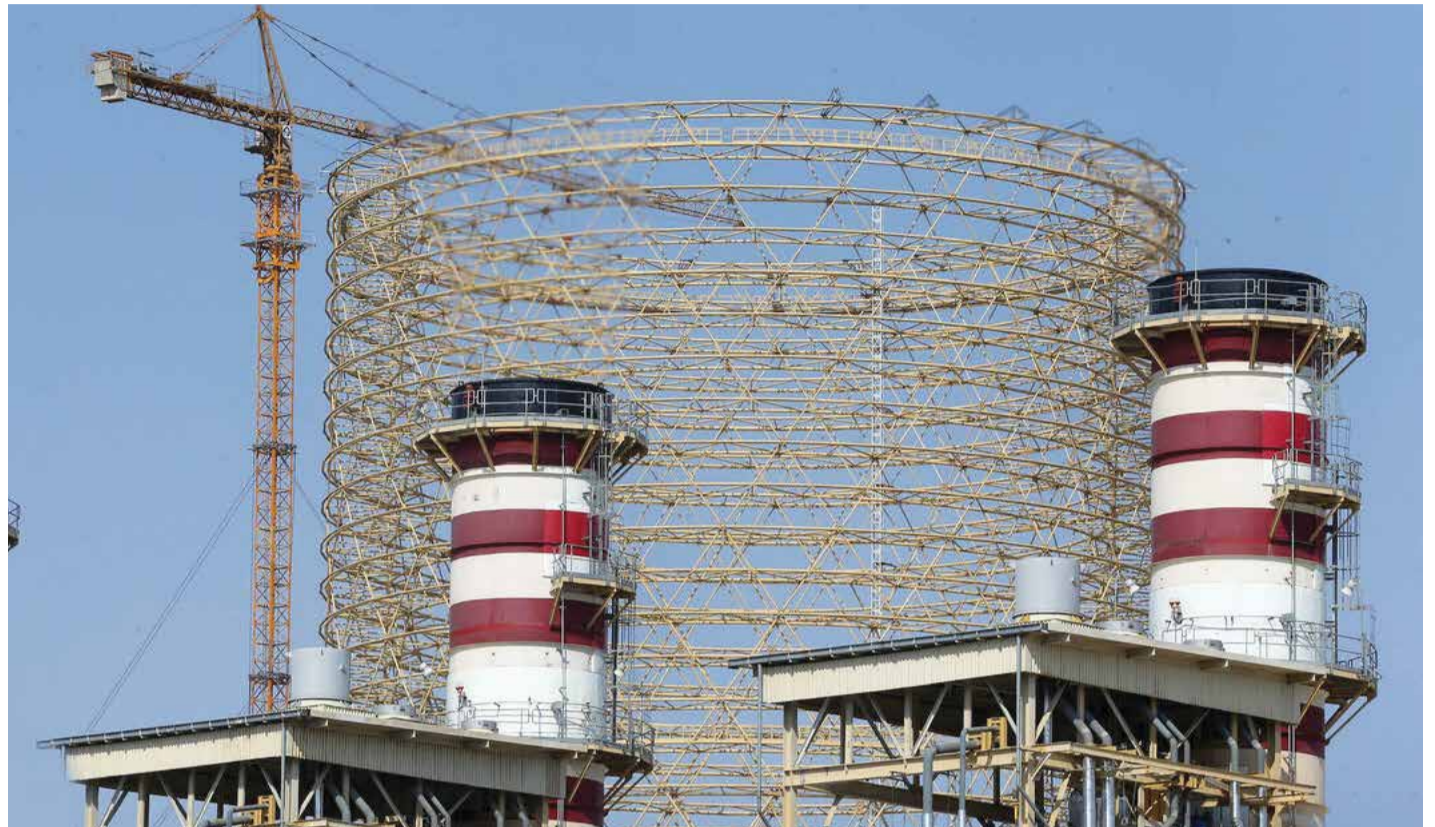
South Aluminum Corporation, Iranian Aluminum Company, Almahdi Aluminum Company and Iran Alumina Company were the main producers of the aluminum ingots in the said period.

According to the latest data, during the three months, 57,539 tons of alumina powder, 97,746 tons of aluminum hydrate, and 180,448 tons of bauxite were produced by Iran Alumina Company.

Iran's techno-engineering
exports up 18% in four months

Iran exported over \$200 million worth of techno-engineering services during the first four months of the current Iranian year (March 20-July 21), indicating an 18% rise compared to the corresponding figure of preceding year, said an official with the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) on Saturday. Mohammadreza Karimzadeh, the director general of the TPO's Department of Technology-Based Products and Techno-Engineering Services added that projects related to the fields of oil and gas, industry, energy transmission lines, IT as well as water and wastewater were implemented in neighboring and African countries. The official said Iran fetched \$15.6 billion from exports of techno-engineering services during the year to March 19, stressing that tourism, road, railroad and marine transit and new technology-based firms were among the main fields related to techno-engineering services.

Iran is exporting technical, engineering and electromechanical services to 19 countries, including Iraq, Armenia and Uzbekistan, said the deputy minister of agriculture for water and soil affairs in May.



Safdar Niazi Shahraki also said that 50 percent of the projects of the ministry are related to water

and soil, reported IRNA. Niazi Shahraki pointed to the smarting of the irrigation system

and noted that intelligent irrigation systems should replace the current systems and the country

should employ irrigation systems according to the world's most modern technologies.

Inflation expected to keep dropping in upcoming
months: *Minister*

The ground is paved for the 14th government of Iran to have positive prospects of economic growth, said Economy Minister Ehsan Khandouzi, adding that the inflation is expected to keep descending trend in upcoming months.

Khandouzi pointed to a new regulation that had recently been in-

roduced by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), saying it has helped the improvement of forex control as well as supervision on the banks. Stating that production sectors of industry, agriculture and energy have come out of recession, he said favorable contracts and agreements have been made to continue the current way.

Meanwhile, the deputy minister of economy for policy-making affairs said on Saturday that the average annual economic growth in the three years of Ebrahim Raisi's administration with and without oil was 5.5% and 4.5%, respectively.

Ali Rouhani noted that the lowest unemployment rate was record-

ed in the last few decades at 8.1% last year.

"At the same time, we experienced an increase in the economic activity rate," he added.

The GDP growth between Iran and the regional countries has been predicted by the international organizations, and Iran ranks first with a growth of 5%.

Monthly renewable
energy output
surges 9%

Iranian renewable power plants generated 261 million kilowatt-hours (Kwh) of electricity in the month to July 21, registering a nine-percent growth compared to the figure for a month earlier.

According to the data released by Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), renewable power plants produced over

923 Kwh of electricity since the beginning of the current Iranian year (March 19), IRNA reported.

The electricity generated by renewable sources also increased by 28 percent in the month ended on June 20, compared to the same month last year.

Wind power plants have the largest share in the production of electricity by renewable sources.

Date: 1403/05/14 - No.: 55/03/11119

INVITATION TO RENEWAL OF ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER
Firstst Announcement
AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

The Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture-Jihad of I.R of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below item of technical, through renewal of one step international tender.

	Name	PACKING	Quantity/ KG
1	Deltamethrin Tech Min 98.5 pct.	50 kg drums	1800

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Monday** dated **5/8/2024** until **Sunday** dated **11/8/2024** (5 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of IRI. Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30-character identification code of 33903978226350065000000000000000.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Monday** dated **9/9/2024** (to the end of official working hours) to our security office located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on **Tuesday** dated **10/9/2024** at **14:00** with the presence of bidder's representatives at our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

We would like to emphasize that the value of the bid bond amount must be only submitted by the bidders in bank guarantee as follows:

The value of the bid bond: **€ 5184** is equivalent to Iranian Rials **2482145856**.

- The bid bond value should be in Euro or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on the exchange rate of Telegraphic Transfer on CBI's ETS website, www.fxmarketrate.cbi.ir, on **27/7/2024**.
- The bidders are also permitted to submit the bid bond in Iranian Rial.
- After approval of ASSC's Financial Manager, the bidders are permitted to use their previous and definite outstanding claims as the bid bond.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

Public relations and international affairs of agricultural support services company

1763258-1674

Kordasht Bathhouse

where tradition meets community

Nestled in the picturesque village of Kordasht in Jolfa, East Azarbaijan Province, the Kordasht Bathhouse stands as a testament to architectural and cultural ingenuity that has withstood the test of time. This historic bathhouse, dating back to the Safavid era, offers a fascinating glimpse into Persian history, art, and traditions. In this comprehensive guide, we will explore the history, architecture, cultural significance, and visitor experiences of Kordasht Bathhouse, providing an in-depth look at one of Iran's most captivating historical sites.

Origins and construction

The Kordasht Bathhouse was built during the Safavid period (1501-1736 CE), a golden age in Persian history renowned for its artistic and architectural achievements. Under the rule of Shah Abbas the Great, the Safavid dynasty invested significantly in public infrastructure, including caravanserais, bridges, and bathhouses. Constructed to serve the local community and travelers along the vital trade route connecting Iran to the Caucasus, the Kordasht Bathhouse reflects the era's dedication to public welfare, *amazin-giran.media* wrote.

Role in the community

Bathhouses, or *hammams*, were central to Persian social life, serving as places not only for bathing but also for socializing, relaxation, and conducting business. Kordasht Bathhouse played a vital role in the village, providing a communal space for residents to gather, cleanse themselves, and engage in conversation. Although it faced periods of neglect and deterioration, local authorities and heritage organizations have recognized its cultural and historical significance. Extensive restoration efforts have been undertaken to preserve the bathhouse's architectural integrity, ensuring it remains a prominent historical site for future generations.

Design and layout

The architectural design of Kordasht Bathhouse is a testament to the ingenuity and craftsmanship of Safavid architects. The bathhouse is divided into several



● *asr-entezar.ir*



● *IRNA*



● *IRNA*

sections, each serving a specific function:

Sarbineh

The *sarbineh*, or entrance hall, is the first section visitors encounter. This spacious area features a central octagonal pool, surrounded by benches and platforms where bathers could sit and undress. Adorned with intricate tilework and stucco decorations, the *sarbineh* showcases traditional Persian artistry.

Garmkhaneh

The *garmkhaneh*, or warm room, is the heart of the bathhouse.

Heated by an underground furnace, this area provides a warm and humid environment ideal for bathing and relaxation. Equipped with marble slabs for lying down, water basins for washing, and private niches for individual use, the *garmkhaneh's* domed ceiling allows natural light to filter through, creating a serene ambiance.

Khalvat

The *khalvat*, or hot room, is the hottest section, designed for intense sweating and cleansing. Featuring a central hot water basin and steam outlets, the *khalvat* provides a therapeutic environ-

ment for bathers and was often used for rigorous bathing rituals and treatments.

Decorative elements

The decorative elements of Kordasht Bathhouse are a highlight of its architectural splendor. The walls and ceilings boast colorful tiles, intricate stucco carvings, and delicate frescoes, depicting floral patterns, geometric designs, and scenes from Persian mythology. These elements reflect the artistic heritage of the Safavid period. The construction of Kordasht Bathhouse incorporates several structural innovations that en-

hance both functionality and aesthetic appeal. The use of domed ceilings and vaulted arches adds to the visual grandeur while improving ventilation and acoustics. The underground heating system, known as the hypocaust, efficiently distributes heat throughout the bathhouse, ensuring a comfortable bathing experience.

Cultural significance

Kordasht Bathhouse transcends its function as a bathing facility; it served as a social and cultural hub, where people from all walks of life could connect. The bathhouse hosted important social gather-

ings, celebrations, and negotiations, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among villagers.

Bathing in a traditional Persian hammam was ritualistic, involving several steps. Visitors would begin in the *sarbineh*, acclimating to the warmth before progressing to the *garmkhaneh* and *khalvat*. The process often included exfoliation with a *kiseh* (scrubbing mitt), massage, and the use of aromatic oils. These rituals were believed to purify the body and soul, promoting both physical and mental well-being.

Symbol of Safavid splendor

The construction and decoration of Kordasht Bathhouse reflect the grandeur and sophistication of the Safavid era. The meticulous attention to detail, use of high-quality materials, and incorporation of artistic elements encapsulate the cultural richness of the period, establishing the bathhouse as a symbol of Safavid splendor.

Visitors to Kordasht Bathhouse can explore its various sections, marveling at its meticulously preserved architectural and decorative features. Guided tours offer insights into the history, design, and cultural significance of the bathhouse, with knowledgeable guides sharing fascinating anecdotes and historical context to enhance the experience.

Photography opportunities

Kordasht Bathhouse is a paradise for photography enthusiasts. The intricate tilework, stucco decorations, and interplay of light and shadow create stunning visual compositions. Visitors can capture the beauty of the bathhouse's architecture and decorations, creating lasting memories of their visit.

Nearby attractions

Situated in a region rich in historical and natural attractions, Kordasht Bathhouse is close to notable sights. Visitors can explore the scenic village of Kordasht, stroll along the banks of the Aras River, or visit landmarks such as the Kordasht Fortress. This region offers a blend of cultural heritage and natural beauty, making it an ideal destination for travelers.

Aash-e doogh, a famous and beloved traditional food of Ardebil

Aash is a rich and hearty soup that Iranians prepare using a variety of herbs. The defining characteristic of all *aash* dishes in Persian cuisine is the inclusion of fresh herbs along with grains such as rice, peas, or bulgur.

Ardebil, the capital city of Ardebil Province, is known for being one of the coldest cities in Iran. This climatic condition has led to the development of several traditional and local foods that are particularly well-suited for colder weather. As a result, there is a wide variety of *aash* dishes and soft foods available in this region, catering to the needs of its chilly environment.

One of the most famous and beloved traditional foods of Ardebil Province is *aash-e doogh*. This

dish is not only popular in Ardebil but also found in other provinces of Iran, including Fars, Kurdistan, West Azarbaijan, East Azarbaijan, Qazvin, and Hamedan. The preparation of *aash-e doogh* varies slightly from region to region, with differences in cooking methods and ingredients. It can also be served as a delightful starter.

Enjoying a bowl of this simple yet delicious white *aash* is particularly satisfying during the colder months, especially on chilly autumn and winter nights. The origins of this dish can be traced to many cold-weather tourist regions, making it a staple of comfort food in these areas. Ardebil's *aash-e doogh* is not only nourishing and healthy but also boasts a unique sour taste and an inviting

aroma. It is a cost-effective meal that is cherished by families throughout Ardebil.

The primary ingredients include chickpeas, rice, various vegetables such as leek, parsley, and dill, along with local sour doogh (a type of Persian yogurt drink), salt, fresh pepper, and garlic. Sometimes, *aash-e doogh* is accompanied by small balls of minced meat that have been mixed with a bit of onion and salt, but without turmeric.

In different regions of Iran, the consistency of this dish can vary significantly. In some areas, it is prepared in a thin, watery form, while in others, it is made thicker and heartier. Additionally, there are subtle but noteworthy variations in ingredients. For instance,

in Tabriz, yogurt is often added to the dish, while in Ardebil, doogh is used instead. This key difference in ingredients can lead to a significant variation in the final flavor. Moreover, the quantity of garlic and the specific types of herbs used can also greatly influence the overall taste. It's worth noting that if you have plans to drive or engage in activities that require a high level of concentration, it may be wise to avoid eating this *aash*. The combination of garlic and doogh can induce drowsiness, which might affect your alertness.



Real reason Israel assassinating Hamas, Hezbollah leaders

And why it won't stop resistance



By Abdaljawad Omar
Researcher

OPINION

On the night of July 30, Israel escalated its military operations, targeting its adversaries across multiple fronts, including Lebanon, Iran, and Palestine. The Israeli cabinet claimed a significant success with the assassination of a Hezbollah commander in the densely populated neighborhood of southern Beirut. Simultaneously, Israel launched a bold strike in the heart of Tehran, killing Ismail Haniyeh, the current politburo chief of Hamas. After 10 months of slowly but steadily losing the escalation dominance it had maintained for decades, Israel is now attempting to reclaim the initiative and reestablish the upper hand by targeting both Beirut and Tehran in under 24 hours.

Israel's actions are not merely about projecting strength; they are also designed to increase pressure on the Axis of Resistance. The strategic objective here is to fracture the unity of this coalition by leveraging its military capabilities to flirt with the prospect of an all-out war — an outcome that neither Israel nor Hezbollah and, by extension, Iran truly desire. This calculated brinkmanship aims to unsettle the adversaries, forcing them to reconsider their unified stance and possibly leading to concessions in Israel's favor.

Israel is banking on the notion that fear of further escalation will push Hezbollah and Iran to exert pressure on Hamas to meet some of Israel's demands during cease-fire negotiations. Additionally, Israel anticipates that any real escalation — particularly one provoked by its targeted actions — would compel the United States and its allies to offer military and diplomatic support. While Washington may not actively seek a major conflict, Israel is confident that the US will not hesitate to come to its aid if the situation escalates. In other words, Israel is pursuing a policy of entanglement and in doing so is taking calculated risks, knowing that if things go awry, the American military will rush to its defense in another war in the Middle East.

For some time now, Israel has been gauging the reactions of its adversaries, particularly noting the subdued Palestinian response to its proclamations that it had successfully assassinated Hamas's military commander in Gaza, Muhammad al-Deif. This observation has led Israeli strategic planners to conclude that while a diplomatic deal remains a priority, such targeted assassinations are unlikely to derail these efforts.

Additionally, Israel's calculations suggest that although Hezbollah and Iran might view incursions into Beirut or Tehran as significant escalations requiring a response, both actors are likely to avoid triggering an all-out conflict that could lead to open warfare. This belief underscores Israel's confidence in its ability to carry out targeted actions without provoking a broader regional conflict.

These maneuvers would likely have taken place regardless of the incident in Majdal Shams. The current operations and series of escalations are occurring at a moment when Israel stands to benefit strategically, even if it ultimately signs an agreement. By accumulating tactical successes, Israel aims to reassert its escalation dominance in its ongoing conflicts with adversaries. This approach reflects a calculated effort to strengthen its negotiating position while ensuring it maintains a decisive upper hand in any potential confrontation. It also seeks to showcase its resilience and will to fight even though the war has dragged on for months on end, with signs of fractures within Israeli



A Palestinian carries a picture of the late Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, who was killed in Iran, during a march to condemn his killing at the Burj al-Barajneh Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon, on July 31, 2024.

IBRAHEEM ABU MUSTAFA/REUTERS

society and the loss of trust in the military. This has most recently culminated in mutinous and insurrectionary riots outside the notorious prison of Sde Teiman protesting the detainment of nine Israeli soldiers accused of gang-raping a Palestinian prisoner.

Israel's history of assassinating Palestinian leaders

The notion of assassination is deeply embedded in the history of the Arab region, with the term itself originating from the region. During the 11th to 13th centuries, amid the turmoil of the Crusades, the Nizari Ismailis — commonly known as the "Hashashin" — employed assassination as a strategic tool to eliminate leaders who opposed their cause. Yet, the significance of assassination in the region extends far beyond mere etymology. This region, long subjected to colonial encroachment and artificially induced disunity, has become a theater where the conventional rules of war can be suspended. In this context, political actors who do not align with Western hegemonic interests are often rendered exceptions, making their leaders legitimate targets in ways that violate rules and norms upheld elsewhere.

In the past century, Israel has refined the practice of targeted assassinations, often coupled with the arrest of key leaders, to eliminate influential political and military figures. This strategy is not merely about neutralizing immediate threats; it is also about shaping the composition and character of the re-

sistance it faces in the region. Through these lethal interventions, Israel seeks to cultivate a leadership class within Palestine and the broader Arab world that aligns more closely with US and Israeli interests, thereby manipulating the dynamics of resistance against its policies of land appropriation, ethnic cleansing, and colonization.

These tactics have proven effective in removing key Palestinian leaders at critical junctures of the struggle. For instance, during the pre-Oslo years, the assassinations of pivotal figures such as Yasser Arafat's second and third in command — Abu Iyad (Salah Khalaf) and Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir) — cleared the way for the emergence of a more pliant leadership, which now has been ultimately epitomized by Mahmoud Abbas.

During the Second Intifada, Israel arrested popular Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti and PFLP General Secretary Ahmad Saadat. It also possibly poisoned Yasser Arafat, and it assassinated the PFLP's military commander, Abu Ali Mustafa, along with key figures within Hamas such as Abdul Aziz Rantisi and Hamas's founder, Ahmad Yassin, ensuring that no real opposition to the entrenchment of Palestine's own comprador class could gain dominance in Palestinian politics. Through such operations, Israel sought to remold the consciousness of the very leadership class that opposed it. After all, if Palestinians, Arabs, or their leaders give up on the cause, then there would be no cause to speak of. New leaders would

not only fear for their lives but would also be more amenable to Israeli goals and objectives.

This policy has served Israel well in the past but has also created unintended consequences. Today, Palestinian disunity is not within a specific coalition or political group; it is disunity marked by a pragmatic comprador class ruling the West Bank, while more homogeneous resistance groups operate from places like Gaza. While the PLO once incorporated various currents, like the stance of Mahmoud Abbas, into its organizational fabric, the current disposition of resistance groups contains fewer disagreements about its strategies vis-à-vis Israel. What differences do exist among the resistance are largely tactical or tied to choices of alliances systems. In other words, assassinating Ismail Haniyeh does not automatically lead to more compliant leadership emerging in his place because the movement from which Haniyeh descends remains united around the framework of resistance.

Moreover, Israel's rejectionism and refusal to accommodate figures like Mahmoud Abbas, or to grant Palestinians even a bantustan state, have shaped Palestinian consciousness in a way that reinforces the belief that only resistance can bring about strategic shifts. This attitude has been bolstered by the fact that negotiations are futile with an Israeli society that is both arrogant and supremacist, epitomized recently by the riots in the Sde Teiman protests for the right to rape Palestinian prisoners.

Assassinating Ismail Haniyeh does not automatically lead to more compliant leadership emerging in his place because the movement from which Haniyeh descends remains united around the framework of resistance. Moreover, the character of Palestinian organizations has evolved, becoming less dependent on a cult of personality or deep emotional ties with individual leaders, and more focused on organizational roles and operational efficacy.

Declining efficacy of Israeli assassinations

Israel's fear of peace, coupled with its insistence on maintaining dominance through force and the ironic presence of figures like Mahmoud Abbas, who, by enabling Israel's colonization in the West Bank without resistance, have led Palestinians and Palestinian resistance groups to dismiss any serious approach towards negotiated solutions. These dynamics have deepened the conviction that meaningful change cannot be achieved through dialogue with an entity that continues to prioritize force and hegemony over genuine peace efforts.

Moreover, Palestinians have both reframed their resistance and institutionalized its organizational structures. The character of these organizations has evolved, becoming less dependent on a cult of personality or deep emotional ties with individual leaders, and more focused on organizational roles and operational efficacy. Gone are the days when resistance groups would collapse into disarray following the loss of a key figure.

Today, Palestinian and Lebanese resistance movements have adapted to the reality that the assassination of a prominent leader may cause a tactical setback, but it does not lead to the disintegration of their operations. In fact, in many instances, these groups have demonstrated resilience, using such incidents as a catalyst for the further consolidation and strengthening of their organizational frameworks. This



Shops are shuttered in the West Bank city of Nablus as Palestinians observe a general strike in protest at the killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in an airstrike in Tehran.

● ZAIN JAAFAR/AFP



Palestinians attend a protest after the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran, in Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on July 31, 2024.

● REUTERS

shift reflects a maturing of the resistance movements, where the focus is on sustainability and continuity rather than on the influence of individual leaders or specific clientelist networks bent on building influence within a specific political formation. So, beyond the immediate tactical impact, what do these assassinations achieve? In some cases, they can backfire, as seen with the assassination of Hezbollah leader Abbas Musawi, which paved the way for the rise of Hassan Nasrallah. In other instances, these actions may even facilitate the

emergence of more innovative and adaptable commanders who can take on key positions. By removing one leader, Israel may inadvertently create space for another, often more formidable leader to emerge. One only needs to look at the development of both Hamas and Hezbollah in the wake of various assassinations at various historical stages to realize that these operations lost much of their power. These assassinations reinforce the bond between political-military organizations and the broader society within which they are enmeshed, making it

much harder for any real schism to develop. Instead of weakening their opponents, such tactics can unintentionally solidify unity and resolve, bridging the gap between armed factions and the larger population. The killing of Hamas leaders such as Ismail Haniyeh, who left Gaza, loosens internal dissent. The real reason for Israel's current policy of assassinations serves more as a mechanism to galvanize its own society rather than genuinely altering the political or military stance of its adversaries. The efficacy of such tactics in destabilizing Israel's enemies has severely dimin-

ished, revealing a shift in the purpose of these operations. Instead of crippling opposition forces, these targeted killings now function primarily as a tool for internal cohesion, rallying Israeli national sentiment and showing Israel's intelligence and operational capabilities. It also permits Israel to claim that it gained the upper hand in the moves to dominate the escalation ladder with its adversaries. Ultimately, these acts are displays of tactical prowess designed to enshrine the supremacy of Israeli power, largely aimed at impressing Israelis them-

selves at a time when Israelis feel that their army and intelligence apparatus failed them. When Israel talks about a "loss of deterrence," it is not so much concerned with how its enemies perceive it but rather with how it perceives itself. The rhetoric of deterrence is less about external threats and more about maintaining an internal narrative of strength and invincibility, ensuring that the image of Israeli power remains intact in the collective psyche of its own society.

The article first appeared on *Mondoweiss*.

Brazen provocation



By Sher Ali Bukhari
Columnist

OPINION

On July 31, Ismail Haniyeh, the chairman of the political bureau of Hamas, was assassinated in Tehran, the Iranian capital, just hours after attending the inauguration ceremony of newly elected Iranian president Masoud Pezeshkian. This event sent political shockwaves across the world. Haniyeh was one of the early founding members of Hamas and served as the prime minister of Palestine in Gaza from 2006 to 2014. Since the outbreak of the war between Israel and Gaza/Hamas, he remained a key figure in pushing for a cease-fire plan, involving many regional countries such as Turkey, Egypt, and Qatar. Although viewed by some as a hardliner, many experts considered him a moderate voice within Hamas.

His assassination sends a clear message to the world that Israel and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are not interested in any cease-fire or political solution to the Gaza conflict. Since the October 7 attacks, Israel has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, and 2 million people in Gaza have been internally displaced. The routine targeting of children, women, schools, and hospitals highlights the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The international community had pushed hard for a peace truce and cease-fire in Gaza, but the killing of Haniyeh has destroyed the entire foundation of the cease-fire process.



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei performs prayer at the funeral of assassinated Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on August 1, 2024.

● REUTERS



Thousands of people gather in Tehran as the funeral procession for Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh begins on August 1, 2024.

● REUTERS

Beyond undermining the peace process, through the killing of high-profile political leaders and scientists in Iran, Israel has violated Iran's sovereignty. Furthermore, such actions are seen as provocations aimed at drawing Iran directly into the Gaza conflict. Although Iran has shown restraint, the pressure is mounting on Tehran to respond. Recent developments indicate that Israel is willing to risk regional war to maintain its campaign in Gaza. For example, Israel has conducted a series of attacks in northern Lebanon, mainly targeting Hezbollah, Iran's chief backed group in Lebanon. Israel has also bombarded the disputed Golan Heights and struck at the

Houthis in Yemen, who are blocking the Red Sea and showing political and military support for the people of Gaza. All these developments suggest that the prospects of a regional war are real, and Israel seems intent on dragging these countries into the Gaza conflict. Since the October 7 attacks, it has become clear that Israel has little regard for international law, sovereignty, humanitarian law, or institutions such as the UNSC, UNGA, ICC, and ICJ. It has repeatedly violated the rules and resolutions of these international bodies, operating on the principle of "Might is Right". Unfortunately, Israel's power and influence are bolstered by the West, par-

ticularly the USA. Israel's strong Jewish lobby in the USA, as documented by Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer, gives it significant control over American domestic politics, influencing the USA's diplomatic, military, and economic posture in favour of Israel. Despite the USA historically championing a two-state solution, it has repeatedly used its veto power at the UNSC to block resolutions critical of Israel, further entrenching the USA-Israel nexus. Meanwhile, other global powers, especially China and Russia, have expressed serious concerns over Israel's actions in Gaza and the region. Both countries have called for a cease-fire and peace in Gaza. China has unveiled a cease-fire proposal and has sought to unify the factions of Hamas and Fatah to counterbalance Israel's power. Some Western scholars suggest that China and Russia may have ulterior motives, wanting the USA to remain entangled in the Gaza conflict to distract it from the war in Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific region. However, many scholars believe that by supporting the Palestinian Cause and advocating for a two-state solution, China and Russia aim to win over the Global South and the Muslim world, thereby increasing their influence in these regions. Regardless of the motivations, China and Russia have emerged as peace brokers in this conflict. The assassination of Haniyeh has stunned Qatar, Turkey, and Egypt, all of whom have issued strong condemnation messages to Israel and the West. This also indicates that there is no lon-

ger a guarantor of peace talks during the Gaza conflict, as Israel's domestic leadership appears more concerned with domestic politics than with captive issues and regional peace. Although Israel has not publicly acknowledged the assassination of Haniyeh, and the USA has denied knowledge of any Israeli intelligence operation related to the incident, many observers understand who is behind the assassination and the true intentions behind killing Hamas's political bureau chief. Israel and its allies, particularly in the West, must recognise that public opinion in the Global South and the West is

turning against Israel's brutal campaign in Gaza. By violating international rules and norms, Israel is demonstrating that it is not acting as a responsible member of the international community. Orchestrating a war against humanity contradicts Western values, liberalism, and the world order. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the West to join the Global South in holding Israel accountable for its campaign against the Palestinian people and to push for an end to the Israeli occupation of a Palestinian land, so that the idea of a Palestinian state can become a reality.

The full article first appeared on *The Nation*.

Taremi set to miss Serie A start with muscle injury



Sports Desk

New Inter signing Mahdi Taremi has been dealt a blow in his bid to find his way into the starting XI after a muscle injury during the preseason.

Having signed a three-year deal with the Nerazzurri last month as a free agent from Porto, the 32-year-old Iranian has suffered a muscle strain in his left thigh and is expected to be sidelined for 10-15 days, the Italian champion confirmed.

Inter will begin its Serie A title defense away to Genoa on August 17.

Lautaro Martinez and Marcus Thuram are likely to be head coach Simone Inzaghi's first choice for the frontline partnership again in the upcoming campaign, with Taremi serving in a backup role, but the Iranian had made the most of extended vacations for the Argentine and the Frenchman – due to their involvement in Copa America and Euro 2024 – by scoring three in five preseason friendlies.

Taremi, who missed Friday's 1-1 draw against Pisa, will hope to be fit for Inter's second league fixture at home against Lecce on Aug. 24.

inter.it

Morais, new-look Sepahan eyeing ACL Elite berth



Sports Desk

The Persian Gulf Pro League season is 11 days away but for Sepahan, the new campaign starts with a game in the preliminary round of the inaugural AFC Champions League Elite on Tuesday.

Portuguese head coach Jose Morais will be eager to make his mark in his third season in charge of the Sepahan bench, starting with a game against UAE Pro League club Shabab Al Ahli in Isfahan's Naqsh-e Jahan Stadium. The winner of the tie will play away to Al Gharafa of Qatar on August 13 for a place in the league stage of the rebranded competition. Runner-up in 2007, Sepahan earned the spot in the round thanks to a fifth domestic cup triumph in June, while the visitors finished second in the Emirati league table last term to be handed a shot at Asian glory.

The two sides have met twice in the continent's most prestigious club event, with both games coming in the group phase of 2014 edition, when Shabab registered a win and a draw against the Iranian opponent.

The game could see Iran international Sardar Azmoun return to his boyhood club for his first Shabab Al Ahli appearance, after the prolific striker joined the Emirati outfit on a three-year contract from Bayer Leverkusen last week.

Rejuvenated Sepahan

Sepahan can't wait to see what their new-look side will have to offer in the new campaign – following a busy summer transfer window, during which the club has managed to secure the services of some of the hottest assets in the market to fill the void caused by the departure of several key players in the squad.

Shahriar Moghanlou, the leading marksman of the Iranian league for the past two terms, left the club to embark on a new chapter in his career with Ittihad Kalba in the UAE, while integral fullbacks Ramin Rezaeian, who registered 14 goals and 12 assists last season, and Milad Zakipour will play for Esteghlal in the upcoming campaign.

Winger Farshad Ahmadzadeh and midfielder Omid Nourafkan also parted ways with Sepahan, but in Javad Aqaeipour, Mahdi Limouchi, and Mohammad-Mahdi Mohebbi, the club has signed three of the most sought-after frontline talents in the Iranian league.

Meanwhile, young Iranian defenders Mohammad-Amin Hazbavi, Saleh Hardani, and Hossein Goudarzi, as well as Tajikistan international Vahdat Hanonov will be marquee additions to the Sepahan backline.



Paris Olympics:

Golden swimmer Marchand sends France into raptures

REUTERS – French swimmer Leon Marchand brought the host nation to a standstill once again on Friday with his fourth gold of the Paris Olympics, while Australian Kaylee McKeown wrote history of her own as the first woman to retain both backstroke titles. Marchand did it in style, roared to the rafters by a rapturous crowd as he joined American greats Michael Phelps and Mark Spitz as the only male swimmers to have won four individual titles at a single Games.

Emphasising his status as the hottest property in the pool, the 22-year-old shattered the 200 metres individual medley Olympic record of one minute 54.23 seconds set by Phelps at the 2008 Beijing Games and replaced it with a new best of 1:54.06.

It is the fourth such record set by the poster boy of the Paris Games, who has taken the burden of expectation and shaped it into another source of strength, in as many finals in the La Defense Arena.

Around the city, and at other venues, crowds celebrated and burst into the national anthem.

At the Stade de France, scene of France's momentous 1998 World Cup soccer triumph and venue for the track and field events, the decathlon 400m had to be delayed due to the noise from the stands.

"Four gold medals is not what I thought I could possibly do," the



French swimmer Leon Marchand is in action in the men's 200m individual medley final at the Paris Olympics on August 2, 2024. MARKO DJURICA/RUTERS

Frenchman said. "I was trying to win one at first. I had four chances of doing it."

Athletics

World record holder Joshua Cheptegei claimed the 10,000 metres title he so desperately wanted on Friday when he found a late surge to win a fantastic race and take the Games' first track gold.

The 27-year-old Ugandan, who took silver in Tokyo and gold over 5,000m, produced a devas-

tating last 600 metres to come home in 26:43.14 minutes – knocking 18 seconds off Kenenisa Bekele's 2008 Olympic record. Berihu Aregawi, part of a three-pronged Ethiopian front-running group almost from the start, finished strongly for silver in 26:43.44 and Grant Fisher took a superb bronze in 26:43.46 – only the United States' fourth medal over the distance since the event was added to the Games in 1912. "My collection for this run is really complete. I'm so excited,"

Cheptegei told reporters.

"Barely 16 years ago when I was watching the great Kenenisa Bekele win in Beijing, it was something that grew in my heart. "I said, 'one day I want to be Olympic champion'. It is the most special day. I can't describe the feeling. I've wanted this for a long time. When I took silver in Tokyo I was so disappointed. I just wanted to win the 10,000m."

Shooting

South Korea's Yang Ji-in won the

gold in the women's 25 metres pistol event at the Paris Olympics on Saturday.

France's Camille Jedrzejewski won the silver, while Hungary's Veronika Major took bronze. Yang and Jedrzejewski were tied on 37 points, forcing a shoot-off in which the Korean prevailed 4-1 at the Chateauroux Shooting Centre. Major also won her bronze via shoot-off, denying India's Manu Bhaker a third medal at the Paris Games.

Football

France set up a men's football semi-final with Egypt after beating Argentina 1-0 in a hostile quarter-final marred by ugly scenes at the final whistle.

Players and coaches from both sides clashed on the pitch at the end as the hosts booked their last-four spot.

France will face Egypt in Monday's semi-final after the Pharaohs beat Paraguay 5-4 on penalties following a 1-1 draw.

Meanwhile, Fermin Lopez scored twice as Spain defeated Japan 3-0 in Lyon to move into the semi-finals.

Abel Ruiz's late tap-in sealed victory for the European side, who will now play Morocco in Marseille on Monday.

Morocco dominated from start to finish at Parc des Princes as they thrashed the United States 4-0 to reach the competition's last four for the first time.

Marchand joined American greats Michael Phelps and Mark Spitz as the only male swimmers to have won four individual titles at a single Games. The 22-year-old shattered the 200m individual medley Olympic record set by Phelps in 2008 and replaced it with a new best of 1:54.06.

Haniyeh assassinated by 'short-range projectile': IRGC



The photo, published via Tasnim News Agency on August 3, 2024 purportedly shows the aftermath of an attack on a building in northern Tehran, Iran, where slain Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was killed on July 31.

International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said Saturday that Israel assassinated Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh using a "short-range projectile" launched from outside of his accommodation in Tehran. "This terrorist operation was carried out by firing a short-range projectile with a warhead of about 7 kilograms – causing a strong explosion – from outside the accommodation area," the IRGC said in a statement. It added that Israel was "supported by the United States" in the attack. Tehran's revenge for the attack will be "severe and (taken) at an appropriate time, place,

and manner," said the statement, which blamed Israel – "the adventurous and terrorist Zionist regime" – for his assassination.

Haniyeh, who was in Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, was killed along with his bodyguard, in a dawn attack on July 31.

The New York Times in a report claimed that Haniyeh was assassinated by an explosive device covertly smuggled into the Tehran guesthouse where he was staying.

Citing seven Middle Eastern officials, the American daily claimed that the bomb had been hidden approximately two months ago in the guesthouse. The guesthouse is run and protected by the IRGC and is part of a large compound, known as Neshat, in an upscale neighborhood of northern Tehran.

However, an informed source in Iran has rejected the New York Times' report, saying that it is full of lies.

No planted bomb

The source told Tasnim News Agency that initial assessment of the site of the explosion and body of Hamas leader indicates that the explosion was not caused by a planted explosive device.

The source said that the latest findings show that a projectile penetrated into the building from the outside by a drone or another carrier and caused the explosion. So, not a bomb or human were involved in the assassination, but modern technologies were used in the terror act.

Iran has vowed revenge for the assassination, with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei warning the Israeli regime of a "harsh response."

In a statement after the incident, Ayatollah Khamenei said that it was the Islamic Republic's duty to avenge the Palestinian resistance leader's blood.

"The criminal and terrorist Zionist regime martyred our dear guest in our homeland and left us bereaved, but it also set the ground for a harsh punishment for itself," the Leader said.

Iran's Acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani has also said that Iran will use its legitimate and inherent right to punish the Israeli regime.

Iranian Jews call for revenge over Hamas leader killing

The Iranian Jewish community strongly condemned the Israeli assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, calling for revenge. In a statement, the community denounced Haniyeh's assassination as a terrorist crime and a blatant violation of international laws, Press TV reported.

"The assassination in Tehran of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas political office, is a terrorist crime and a clear violation of international law," the Jewish Association of Iran said in a statement.

"The Mujahid martyr, who was one of the flag bearers of the Noble Quds liberation movement, had nearly embraced martyrdom on multiple occasions, but even after losing his family members, he did not stop resisting and defending the oppressed people of Gaza, and the Zionists finally martyred him with a treacherous attack on his



● MOHSEN VANAEL/IRNA

safe haven in Tehran," it said.

"The Iranian Jewish community expresses its condolences to the heroic Palestinian nation and the fighters of the resistance front and the Eminent Leader [Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei] for the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the political bureau of the Hamas movement, and impatiently looks for a decisive and appropriate response to this treacherous assassination," it added.

Haniyeh, who was in Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's newly-elected President

Masoud Pezeshkian, alongside other Axis of Resistance leaders, was killed along with his bodyguard, in an attack early on July 31.

Ayatollah Khamenei has warned the Israeli regime of a "harsh response" for Haniyeh's assassination, calling it the Islamic Republic's duty to exact revenge for the Palestinian resistance leader's blood.

"The criminal and terrorist Zionist regime martyred our dear guest in our homeland and left us bereaved, but it also set the ground for a harsh punishment for itself," the Leader said.

Brits, Moroccans demand end to Gaza genocide

International Desk

Tens of thousands of people once again took to the streets in Britain and Morocco on Saturday to protest against Israel's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip, which has killed nearly 40,000 Palestinians over the past ten months.

In London, protesters demonstrated during the "National March for Gaza," calling to end the Israel onslaught and stop arming the regime.

The protesters were holding banners that read, "Stop arming Israel," to demand a halt to the UK government's weapons sale to Israel.

Over the past ten months, huge protests have taken place in Britain's capital and

other major UK cities, demanding an immediate halt to arms sales to Israel.

Data released by the government's business department revealed in June that Britain had issued more than 100 export licenses for the sale of weapons and military equipment to Israel since the regime launched its savage military offensive in the populated besieged territory in October last year.

Meanwhile, Moroccans staged a massive demonstration in the capital Rabat to protest the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on Wednesday. The protesters also condemned normalization with Israel.

Waving Palestinian flags, and brandishing pictures



● AFP

of Haniyeh and a cardboard coffin adorned with his image, thousands of people marched to the parliament building with black and white keffiyeh scarves, which are symbols of the Palestinian cause, draped across their shoulders.

The war in Gaza "is a shame for humanity" Halima Hilali, 64, said.

The Saturday's rally was organized by the National Action Group for Palestine. Since the beginning of the Gaza war on October 7, several large demonstrations have taken place in Morocco calling for the end of normalization. Morocco established official ties in Israel in 2020 as part of the US-led Abraham Accords.

Phantom of fear ...

The Economist has reported that while these assassinations might showcase the intel and operational prowess of Mossad, they do not alter Israel's dire strategic position. Its war in Gaza has been futile for months, and, more importantly, Israel cannot indefinitely engage in battles on all fronts.

Gideon Levy, an Israeli analyst, told the New York Times that the assassination of Hamas leaders and commanders is neither a victory nor beneficial for Israel. He said that Benjamin Netanyahu's aim with these assassinations is to prevent the cessation of the war and possibly expand it. However, with Iran entering the arena, the game will change.

According to this Israeli analyst, contrary to Ne-

tanyahu's belief, Hamas has not been weakened by such assassinations. In fact, today, it is much stronger than before the war began, he said. Politically, Hamas has gained more popularity and acceptance in the West Bank, the Arab world, and globally, and the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh will not change anything, he believed.

One of the negative consequences of the assassination of Haniyeh and Hezbollah commanders will be the halt or failure of ceasefire negotiations. Hugh Lovatt, a Middle East specialist at the European Council on Foreign Relations, in an interview with the Guardian, described the killing as a tactical victory, but a strategic defeat. "Haniyeh was a proponent of Palestinian reconciliation, and of a ceasefire.

So, taking him out of the equation has an impact on the internal power dynamics within the group by strengthening the hardliners, at least in the current term," he said.

Israeli analyst Levy also predicted that indirect negotiations between Israel and the Hamas movement for a ceasefire and prisoner exchange would be halted for a long time. Talks for a cease-fire cannot continue "when you are murdering the negotiator," said Levy. "Either you negotiate or you assassinate. You can't have it both ways," he said, adding that the negotiations "may be postponed for a long time."

The Islamic Republic of Iran previously targeted several areas in Israel with hundreds of missiles and drones in response to the targeting of its consulate

building in Damascus. Now that the illegal regime has once again crossed Tehran's red line, Iran will not let go of its punishment. However, when and how this punishment will take place is unknown, this has become a nightmare for Israel, which must always be on alert. According to many experts, Netanyahu's main goal in continuing the tensions is to extend the war and draw Iran into a conflict with this regime so that the US will also be forced to support Israel and enter a war with Iran. Tehran, however, has emphasized since the beginning of the Gaza war that it does not seek to escalate the conflict. Therefore, while the punishment of the criminal is certain, Iran will not compete in Netanyahu's playground.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Pot of gold coins bearing marks of Persian Empire unearthed in Turkey



A trove of ancient gold coins, bearing the distinctive design of a kneeling archer associated with the Persian daric, has been discovered by archaeologists in Notion, an ancient Greek city in western Turkey. The currency is believed to have been minted in Sardis, a city located 60 miles (97 kilometers) northeast of Notion, providing a fascinating glimpse into the economic influence of the Persian Empire. Researchers think the mercenaries used the hoard as payment, but it's unclear why they buried it. "The discovery of such a valuable find in a controlled archaeological excavation is very rare," Christopher Ratté, a professor of ancient Mediterranean art and archaeology at the University of Michigan and director of the Notion Archaeological Survey, the project that led to the discovery of the coins, said in the statement. "No one ever buries a hoard of coins, especially precious metal coins, without intending to retrieve it. So only the gravest misfortune can explain the preservation of such a treasure." A few stylistic clues indicate that the coins were struck sometime during the fifth century B.C. — a time stamp archaeologists are using to help uncover the se-

quence of events that led to the treasure's burial. "This hoard will provide a firm date that can serve as an anchor to help fix the chronology of the (entire sequence of coins)," Ratté said. "According to the Greek historian Xenophon, a single daric was equivalent to a soldier's pay for one month." In the past few years, the site has been a hotbed for artifact finds, including pottery fragments, also from the fifth century B.C., hidden "in earlier walls incorporated into the foundations of the house," which dates to the Hellenistic period, according to the statement. The Hellenistic period occurred after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. and lasted until the conquest of the final Hellenistic kingdom by Rome in 31 B.C. During the sixth century B.C., Notion was incorporated into the Persian Empire along with other Greek cities. In the early fifth century B.C., it was freed from Persian rule for a time, only to be reintegrated into the empire during the fourth century B.C., according to the statement. Ratté said that these events could have led to the burial and eventual loss of the hoard.



An aerial view of the house shows the locations of the coins as well as other artifacts, including pottery shards.
● NOTION ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

President vows commitment to serving Arbaeen pilgrims



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian pledged his administration's full support for the Arbaeen pilgrimage, urging relevant organizations to honor their commitments to ensure a successful religious event. "We are committed to what the Arbaeen Headquarters has committed to do," Pezeshkian said, in reference to the body in charge of sending Iranian pilgrims to Iraq for Arbaeen and offering services to them during the pilgrimage, IRNA reported. Pezeshkian made the comment on Saturday as he paid his first vis-

it to the headquarters four days after he was inaugurated as Iran's new president. Several Iranian organizations have pledged to contribute to efforts to hold the annual religious pilgrimage. Pezeshkian assured that the government would uphold its promises regarding the provision of services to pilgrims. The President expressed gratitude to the Iraqi government for their cooperation and concluded by reiterating the importance of upholding the values of truth and justice, which are central

to the legacy of Imam Hussein. Arbaeen marks the 40th day since the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Shia Imam and the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Imam Hussein along with his 72 companions was martyred on Ashura, the tenth day on the lunar Islamic calendar. Every year, Muslims from different countries travel to Iraq for a march toward the city of Karbala, which hosts the holy shrine of Imam Hussein, to mark Arbaeen.

Iranian animation 'Before Heaven' awarded at UK's Free Palestine festival

The Iranian short animation 'Before Heaven,' produced by Soureh Film Club, won the first prize in the animation category at the Free Palestine International Film Festival in London, the UK. The film, directed by Ahmad Heydarian and produced by Mohaddeseh

Pirhadi, was selected from among 537 submissions from 77 countries. The festival, which runs until August 4, aims to present a realistic image of Palestine, its people, history, culture, and society, while also showcasing the unwavering faith, hope, and resilience of the people of Palestine

and Gaza in their struggle for freedom, ILNA wrote. Organized by a group of young Palestinian and Arab artists, the Free Palestine International Film Festival seeks to raise awareness about Palestine and bring attention to the ongoing injustice and genocide faced by its people. It provides

a platform for filmmakers and human rights activists to share their perspectives, ideas, and artistic expressions related to Palestine. 'Before Heaven' tells a story about Palestine and has now won its 16th award after being showcased at various international festivals.

Ramsar Museum Complex attracts 88% more foreign visitors

Arts & Culture Desk
The Ramsar Martyrs Cultural-Museum Complex in northern Iran has experienced a significant surge in foreign tourist visits, with an 88% increase in the first four months of the current Iranian year. Official statistics show an average of 25 foreign visitors per day, indicating the success of the complex's initiatives to attract international travelers. The complex's manager, Mohammad Ali Yazdanshenas, attributed the appeal to the diverse range of attractions. From March 20 to July 21 this year, 3,137 foreign tourists visited, IRNA reported. Yazdanshenas added that the number of foreign visi-

tors in the first four months of last year was 1,660, while this year it increased to 3,137, with tourists from 12 countries, including Oman, Iraq, Lebanon, Russia, Italy, South Korea, China, Turkey, Pakistan, Armenia, the US, and the UK. The largest groups were from Iraq and Oman. The daily average of foreign visitors has also increased from 13 to 25 per day during the same period. Yazdanshenas further noted that the total number of foreign tourists visiting the complex in the entire previous year was 3,790, while in just the first four months of this year, the number has already reached about 83% of that figure.



He expressed hope that by the year's end, the number of foreign visitors would double that of the previous year. The complex also recorded a total of 111,961 visitors, including Iranian tourists,

during the first four months of this year. With 280,313 visitors last year, the management aims to raise awareness and promote museum culture to attract even more visitors to this unique cultural and historical site.