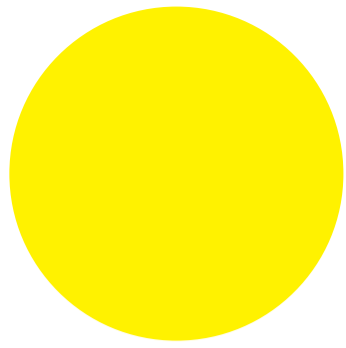


Paris Paralympics:
**Iran retains
sitting
volleyball
crown**



6 >



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> irandaily.ir

| newspaper.irandaily.ir

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IRGC chief: Iran hits 12 Israeli vessels after its oil tankers targeted

7 >



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (1) and Army chief Abdolrahim Mousavi (2nd L) inspect a guard of honor in the Army's command headquarters in Tehran, Iran, on September 7, 2024. president.ir

Pezeshkian: New Government Favors Expansion of Int'l Ties

7 >

Zangezur: A smoldering fire under ashes

By Hassan Beheshtipour
International
affairs expert

**EXCLUSIVE
OPINION**

The border between Iran and Armenia serves as a strategic, geo-economic, and geopolitical gateway for both countries. Landlocked Armenia relies on two routes to access open seas: one through Iran to the south and the other via Georgia to the north, which leads to the Black Sea. Similarly, Iran enjoys two pathways to the Caucasus region: one through Armenia and the other through the Republic of Azerbaijan. As such, the border shared by Iran and Armenia is of vital importance and natural significance to both countries, and any alteration to the existing historical border is strongly opposed by both Tehran and Yerevan. The Republic of Azerbaijan has proposed the creation of a corridor, dubbed the

Zangezur corridor, to access another part of its territory—the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic—and to establish a connection with Turkey. This corridor would effectively sever the border between Iran and Armenia. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the newly independent Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia were recognized in 1991 under the Almaty Treaty, upholding the existing borders from the Soviet era. Twelve independent countries that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union agreed to recognize the intra-Soviet and international borders, emphasizing the need for a broader consensus to alter these established boundaries. The proposed Zangezur corridor not only violates Armenia's territorial integrity but also conflicts with the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Tehran has explicitly drawn a red line, stating that any change to the existing borders will not be tolerated, and it will not permit such actions.

Page 7 >

Iran rejects claims of ballistic missiles transfer to Russia

7 >



IMF reports improved unemployment rate index for Iran

2 >



Pakistan marks Defense Day in Tehran, vows to solidify ties with Iran

8 >



Iranian students win four medals at Int'l Olympiad in Informatics

8 >



Netanyahu, Israeli protesters on same genocidal page

SPECIAL ISSUE 4-5 >

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran's annual pistachio production soars 15%



An official at the Ministry of Agriculture has said that about 300,000 tons of pistachios have been produced in the country in the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2024).

The country's pistachio production in the current year registered a 15-percent hike compared to the previous two years, Director General of the Ministry of Agriculture for Dried Fruits Affairs Dariush Salempour noted, as reported by Mehr News Agency. He stated that pistachios are one of the most important products of the country's agricultural and horticultural sectors, adding that Iran ranks first in the world in terms of pistachio orchards and second in terms of production in the worldwide. More than 300,000 tons of pistachio varieties are annually produced and harvested in the country, half of which is domestically consumed while the rest are exported, he added. Kerman, South Khorasan, Semnan and central provinces are the main pistachio production hubs in the country.

Iran to collaborate with Armenia on \$3b projects

Iran's Ambassador to Armenia Mehdi Sobhani announced that Tehran has planned collaboration with Armenia in projects worth approximately \$3 billion. "We have great potential for cooperation between our countries. The fields in which we already collaborate can serve as a strong foundation for the further development of commercial, political, and economic relations between Armenia and Iran," the Ambassador was reported as saying by Armenpress. He added that Iran has considerable experience in road construction, particularly in bridge construction and in the construction sector in general. "We are determined to utilize all available potential," said Sobhani, noting that Iran supports Armenia and we will continue to do so. Iran's ambassador expressed his belief that a very bright future awaits the relations between Yerevan and Tehran.

IMF reports improved unemployment rate index for Iran



In its latest report, the International Monetary Fund announced that Iran ranks 17th in the world in terms of unemployment rate, as the index is lower than the figure for six European countries and Turkey. The unemployment rate in Iran has decreased in the last three years, hitting 8.1% in the past Iranian year of 1402 (ended March 19) from 9.2% for the year 1400, IRNA reported. The descending trend continued in the spring of this year, so that according to Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the unemployment rate of individuals aged 15 years and older reached 7.7% in the first quarter of 1403, which is 0.5%

lower than the corresponding figure for spring of last year. The recent report of the IMF on the unemployment in 99 countries shows that 11 countries have a double-digit unemployment rate in 2024, the highest unemployment rate with 49.5% belongs to Sudan. North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Spain, Albania, Serbia and Greece are six European countries that have a higher unemployment rate than Iran, according to the IMF report. Turkey, with an unemployment rate of 9.6% ranked 13th in the world ranking, said the report adding that Sweden, Italy, France and Finland have an unemployment rate close to that of Iran in 2024.

Tehran to host IranPlast 2024



Iran's 18th International Exhibition of Plastic, Rubber, Machinery, and Equipment (IranPlast 2024) will start today in Tehran with the participation of 288 foreign firms

as well as 525 domestic companies. Announcing the above, Farid Dousti, the exhibition's organizer said on Saturday that representatives from Russia, Serbia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Belarus, Syria, Iraq, and Oman will attend the event, Iranian Oil Ministry's press service Shana reported. The four-day exhibition will be held on areas including petrochemical raw materials and products, technical engineering services, prefabricated and manufactured products, machinery and equipment, scientific, research, and academic centers, HSE laboratory testing, information technology, and digital transformation, as well as polymer compound services and products.

Iran, Qatar sign MoU on developing Bandar-e Dayyer

Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran and Mwan Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to develop the southern Iranian port of Bandar-e Dayyer.

The MoU was signed by Head of Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran for International Agreements Office Teymour Bashir Gonbadi and Head of Mwan Qatar for commercial affairs Jabor Al-Sulaiti through video conference, as reported by Mehr News Agency. Ahmad Mohammadzadeh, the governor of Bushehr, had earlier announced that owing to the proximity of Bandar-e Dayyer to Al Ruwais port in Qatar and



the economic interactions between Bushehr Province and Qatar, the two sides are eager to expand economic relations in this region.

Iran's non-oil exports to Iraq up 21% in five months

An official at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) said that the country's export of non-oil goods to neighboring Iraq in five months has registered a 21-percent growth.

The director general of the West Asia Office of the TPOI said more than \$4.5 billion of products were exported from Iran to Iraq between March 21 and August 22, 2024, showing a 21 percent rise compared to the same period last year, Tasnim News Agency reported.

Abdolmir Rabiavi pointed out that Iraq is Iran's strategic neighbor with the annual

trade turnover between Tehran and Baghdad standing at about \$10 billion.

It is hoped that Iran's export of products to Iraq by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2025) will reach \$10 billion, Rabiavi stated.

He went on to say that liquid gas, steel sections, different types of petrochemicals, construction materials and foodstuff were the main products exported from Iran to Iraq in this period.

Scrap iron, aluminum and some oil products were the main products imported into the country from Iraq, he added.



OPEC+ production rise expected to start in December

American financial services company Goldman Sachs said it adjusted its expectations for OPEC+ oil production and expects three months of production increases starting from December instead of October.

OPEC+ has agreed to delay a planned oil output increase for October and November, the producers group said after crude



prices hit their lowest in nine months, adding it could further pause or reverse the hikes if needed, Reuters reported. However, Goldman Sachs maintained its Brent crude range of \$70-85 per barrel and a December 2025 Brent forecast at \$74 per barrel.

The investment bank expects the effects of a modest reduction in OPEC+ supply in the upcoming months to be counterbalanced by easing effects from the current softness in China's demand and faster-than-expected recovery of Libya's supply.

"We still see the risks to our \$70-85 range as skewed to the downside given high spare capacity, and downside risks to demand from weakness in China and potential trade tensions," Goldman Sachs said.

Head of Iran's stock market steps down

Majid Eshghi, the chairman of the Board of the Securities and Exchange Organization of Iran, confirmed his resignation on Saturday after a long period that the markets have been in the red, and days into a reported row over low-rate bank loans he had received.

Eshghi said he submitted his resignation in his first meeting with the newly-appointed Minister of Economy Abdolnaser Hemmati, which was approved by the minister.

He, however, dismissed reports of friction and a heated debate during the meeting. Iran's stock market has been the least profitable among investment markets

during Eshghi's stint.

The decision also comes days after a letter was disclosed about details of grating "low-interest loans" to five stock exchange officials, including Eshghi.

On Thursday, Hemmati announced he had launched an "urgent expert review" of the report.



Jozghand, a delightful treat enhancing visitors' experiences in Naraq



delgarm.com

Iranica Desk

Naraq, a quaint city nestled in the southeast of Markazi Province, is set against the backdrop of towering mountains. Rich in historical significance, its array of well-preserved structures has elevated Naraq to a unique status. The city boasts water reservoirs, mosques, bazaars, caravanserais, and historical houses, which, alongside the notable Meteorite Museum, lure tourists to its enchanting charms.

The city's flourishing tourism owes much to its favorable climate and lush orchards. With a history spanning over two millennia, Naraq is a treasure trove of ancient dwellings, reservoirs, mosques, shrines, and other historical relics, set amidst breathtaking natural wonders like waterfalls, caves, springs, and scenic mountains. Naraq offers diverse attractions catering to all preferences.

Beyond its natural and historical allure, Naraq is renowned for its traditional sweet delicacy, *jozghand*, a treat that has become integral to the local culture. This beloved confection adds a delightful flavor to visitors' experiences, reflecting the enduring agricultural traditions of the city.

Jozghand is prepared from two main components: a type of fruit and ingredients that are placed inside it. To make *jozghand*, fruits such as peaches, apricots, plums, figs, and pears are used, but the main fruit utilized in its preparation is a type of local peach called *halg*.

The *halg* is peeled and left in the sun for two to four days to dry, which makes it easier to remove the core due to increased flexibility. Depending on the producer's preference or the consumer's taste, fragrant ingredients like cardamom or cinnamon are also added to the mixture. Some individuals, in addition to the aforementioned ingredi-



iribnews.ir

ents, use chickpea flour to fill the inside of *jozghand*.

Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization of Markazi Province, Mahmoud Moradi Naraq, stated in an interview with ISNA that the highest quality *jozghand* in the region is produced in Naraq.

He elaborated: "The abundance of apricot, walnut, almond, and local peach orchards in the region serves as the primary raw materials for *jozghand* production, contributing significantly to its success in Naraq. Essentially, *jozghand* entails processing these raw materials to make use of orchard products throughout the year."

Moradi Naraq further mentioned, "historical records trace back the production of *jozghand* in the region to over 400 years ago, with Naraq women actively engaged in its production since then. *Jozghand* received national recognition in 2015, culminating in the annual *Jozghand Festival* held in Naraq

during early autumn." They can potentially earn an income equivalent to that of a factory worker."

He mentioned that this product undergoes a processing method without involving any cooking in its production. The annual production of *jozghand* in Naraq ranges between one to two tons. Additionally, this delicacy is crafted in villages surrounding Delijan, Jasb, Natanz, and Ghamsar. One of the driving forces behind the development in Naraq is the organization of events such as the *Jozghand Festival*. The yearly showcase, the liveliness of workshops, and the acknowledgment of its creators draw numerous tourists to the area. The *Jozghand Festival* stands out as one of the most distinctive food tourism festivals in Markazi Province.

tion process, scarcity of raw materials, and demand, *jozghand* commands a high price and is reputed to be one of the priciest traditional sweets in the nation. The key distinguishing factor that sets *jozghand* apart from other confections or local mementos is its untouched preparation stages, ensuring the retention of its essential vitamins and nutrients. Hence, this distinct characteristic of *jozghand* designates it as the most valuable traditional sweet, and it is not unreasonable to regard this organic, nutrient-rich delicacy as the most expensive traditional sweet.

He said *jozghand* is a wholesome, nutritious, and nearly organic treat. Research indicates that the bitter apricot kernel utilized in this product (post-sweetening) contains Vitamin B12, known for its anti-cancer properties. The premium price tag of this sweet signifies its worth and the quality of raw materials employed in the making of *jozghand*.

Despite the unique tourist attractions and historical landmarks in Markazi Province that are valuable assets for the tourism industry's development, a variety of food products are manufactured across different areas of the province. Focusing on these products and backing their producers can enhance small-scale home businesses and support economic growth in households, especially within rural communities.

A noteworthy aspect of these products is the accessibility of all essential raw materials in the region, simplifying the production process. Government assistance in promoting these goods and arranging festivals or exhibitions featuring homemade products can provide motivation, guaranteeing the sustained production of these food items.



fardanews.com

during early autumn."

Regarding the presence of over 100 home workshops producing *jozghand*, Naraq remarked, "If each Naraq woman produces an average of 300 kilo-

Most expensive or most valuable

Regarding its value, is it more about being the most expensive or the most valuable? Due to its elaborate produc-

Enchanting Arpanah waterfalls of Khuzestan Province

Khuzestan Province, known for its tropical climate, boasts regions with pleasant weather and lush greenery that are popular among tourists. Among these is the picturesque Arpanah Waterfalls in Lali.

Picture a verdant landscape where the melodic sound of rushing water emanates from a powerful spring cascading down the mountainside in the form of enchanting waterfalls. Located forty-four kilometers from Lali on the road to Pebdeh, and forty-three kilometers from Andika, the Arpanah waterfalls are a serene retreat accessible via various routes from Masjed Soleyman, Dezful, and Gotvand.

Nestled on a hillside away from the urban bustle, the Arpanah waterfalls offer basic amenities for visitors, although public trans-

portation is not available in the area, necessitating travel by car or taxi. Upon arrival, park your vehicle and embark on a leisurely stroll through the captivating scenery.

As you meander through the lush greenery dotted with solitary trees, you will come across pergolas and cement platforms ideal for picnics and camping. Remember to bring along ample water and food.

Traversing the footbridge over the crystal-clear waters allows you to explore both sides of the spring without limitations. The tranquil pools formed by the spring's flow transition into gentle waterfalls, inviting visitors to take a refreshing dip. The water depth ranges from ankle-deep in certain areas to waist-deep in others, offering a safe environ-

ment for swimming.

The refreshing coolness of the falls, coupled with the verdant surroundings, creates a pleasant microclimate perfect for escaping the summer heat. The journey of the spring's waters continues downstream to Taluk Spring, and ultimately merges with the Kazeron River.

En route to the Taluk Spring, visitors can also admire historical water mills like Nahang Mill. Additionally, exploring the scenic Gotvand Dam and its surrounding lake, locally known as Pol-e Qadim (Old Bridge), provides an opportunity for boat rides and further relaxation.

Arpanah waterfalls, with its natural beauty and tranquil ambiance, promise a rejuvenating escape for nature lovers seeking solace amidst breathtaking scenery.



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Netanyahu, Israeli protesters on same genocidal page



By Belén Fernández
Author, Columnist

OPINION

In July 2014, shortly after the kickoff of Israel's "Operation Protective Edge" in the Gaza Strip — a 51-day affair that ultimately killed 2,251 Palestinians, including 551 children — Danish journalist Nikolaj Krak penned a dispatch from Israel for the Copenhagen-based *Kristeligt Dagblad* newspaper. Describing the scene on a hill on the outskirts of the Israeli city of Sderot near the Gaza border, Krak noted that the area had been "transformed into something that most closely resembles the front row of a reality war theatre". Israelis had "dragged camping chairs and sofas" to the hilltop, where some spectators sat "with crackling bags of popcorn," while others partook of hookahs and cheerful banter. Fiery, earth-shaking air strikes on Gaza across the way were met with cheers and "solid applause". To be sure, Israelis have always enjoyed a good murderous spectacle — which is hardly surprising for a nation whose very existence is predicated on mass slaughter. But as it turns out, the applause is not quite so solid when Israeli lives are caught up in the explosive apocalyptic display.



Protesters rally in Tel Aviv on September 1, 2024 after six Israeli captives were found dead in Gaza earlier that day.
● FLORION GOGA/REUTERS

For the past 11 months, Israel's "reality war theatre" has offered a view of all-out genocide in the Gaza Strip, where the official death toll has reached nearly 41,000. A July *Lancet* study found that the true number of deaths may well top 186,000 — and that is only if the killing ends soon. Now, massive protests have broken out across Israel demanding that the cabinet of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu enact a cease-fire and captive deal to free the remaining 100 or so Israeli captives held in Gaza. Last week, when the Israeli military recovered the bodies of six captives, CNN reported that some 700,000

protesters had taken to the streets across the country. On Monday, a general strike spearheaded by Israel's primary labour union succeeded in shutting much of the economy down for several hours. Although certain wannabe peaceniks among the international commentariat have blindly attributed the protests to a desire to end the bloodshed, the fact of the matter is that Palestinian blood is not high on the list of concerns. Rather, the only lives that matter in the besieged, pulverised, and genocide-stricken Gaza Strip are the lives of the captives — whose captivity, it bears underscoring, is entirely a

result of Israeli policy and Israel's unceasing sadistic treatment of Palestinians. The captives, then, have assumed centre stage in Israel's latest bout of blood-soaked war theatrics, while for some Israelis, the present genocide is evidently not nearly genocidal enough. During a recent episode of the popular English-language Israeli podcast "Two Nice Jewish Boys," the podcasting duo in question suggested that it would be cool to just press a button and wipe out "every single living being in Gaza" as well as in the West Bank. Time to break out the popcorn and hookahs.

At the end of the day, the disproportionate value assigned to the lives of the Israeli captives in Gaza vis-à-vis the lives of the Palestinians who are being annihilated is of a piece with Israel's trademark chauvinism. This outlook casts Israelis as the perennial victims of Palestinian "terrorism" even as Palestinians are consistently massacred at astronomically higher rates by the Israeli military. During Operation Protective Edge in 2014, for example, no more than six Israeli civilians were killed. And yet Israel maintained its monopoly on victimisation.

Family, friends, and supporters of Israeli captives in Gaza take part in a protest on the Israeli coastal road outside Kibbutz Yakum on September 2, 2024.
● ILIA YEFIMOVICH/AP

In June of this year, the Israeli army undertook a rescue operation in Gaza that freed four captives but reportedly killed 210 Palestinians in the process — no doubt par for the disproportionate course. Meanwhile, following the recovery of the bodies of the six captives on Sunday, Netanyahu blamed Hamas for their demise, declaring: "Whoever murders hostages doesn't want a deal." But what about "whoever" continues to preside over a genocide while assassinating the top cease-fire negotiator for Hamas and sabotaging prospects for a deal at every turn?

As the protests now demonstrate, many Israelis are on to Netanyahu. But the issue with the protests is that genocide is not the issue.

Even among Netanyahu's detractors, there persists a general consensus as to the unilateral sacrosanctity of Israeli life, which translates into the assumption of an inalienable right to slaughter Palestinians.

And as the latest episode of Israel's "reality war theatre" drags on — with related Israeli killing sprees available for viewing in the West Bank and Lebanon, too — this show is really getting old. One would hope Israeli audiences will eventually tire of it all and walk out, but for the time being, bloodbaths are a guaranteed blockbuster.

The full article first appeared on Al Jazeera.

The captives have assumed centre stage in Israel's latest bout of blood-soaked war theatrics, while for some Israelis, the present genocide is evidently not nearly genocidal enough. During a recent episode of the popular English-language Israeli podcast "Two Nice Jewish Boys," the podcasting duo in question suggested that it would be cool to just press a button and wipe out "every single living being in Gaza" as well as in the West Bank.



Tens of thousands of Palestinians murdered

Why would six Israelis receive more attention?



By Jamal Kanj
Author

OPINION

September 1, 2024, twenty-seven Palestinian families woke up to mourn their loved ones, including at least 11 who were killed at a "safe" shelter, Safad School in the Zaitune neighborhood east of Gaza City. On the same day, the Israeli occupying army recovered the bodies of six Israeli captives, who died as a direct or indirect result of an Israeli incursion into a tunnel in Rafah.

By the end of the day, the smiling faces and names of these six Israelis were prominently featured across digital and print media, while the murdered Palestinians, were reduced to mere statistics, nameless and faceless. Both groups, however, share one tragic commonality: their demise was caused by the same killer. Bombing without discrimination is a murder without distinction.

Despite being warned of the risk of attempting to release the prisoners by force, Netanyahu opted to sacrifice the Israeli captives to eliminate a political burden that could be seen as an obstacle to achieving his "war goals". Their disappearance — by a deal or death — would free Netanyahu's hand and ease pressure from the public, who otherwise supports his war of genocide in Gaza.

Inarguably, there is an inherent interest for the Palestinian Resistance in protecting the lives of the Israelis, simply to exchange them with Palestinian hostages held in Israeli jails. On the other hand, the Netanyahu coalition cabinet has a political motive to reduce the value of Israeli prisoners in the hands of the Palestinians, and their death could be an option.

The Israeli public protesting in the streets today, individually and collectively, is responsible for nurturing Netanyahu's unrealistic war objectives. The findings in a Pew Research poll conducted last March and April revealed that 67% of Israelis supported Netanyahu's "war goals". In fact, a staggering 86% believed Gazans should not have self-governance, not even the Palestinian Authority. Less than half of Israelis supported prisoner exchange, and 60% opposed halting the war for any such exchange.

In December 2023, support for Netanyahu's war goals was even higher, between 76 and 84 percent. It's significant to mention that the support for the war among Israeli Jews mirrored that of Jewish Americans. In the US, 62% of American Jews approved of Israel's war conduct, compared to 38% of the general American population.

These statistics reflect a broader issue of deep-seated Israeli Jewish dehumanization of Palestinians; A bigotry germinated in the political Zionist culture, where in the Israeli religious and cultural plurality, most Jews perceive themselves to be more equal than non-Jews. Before anyone from the professional victim pack cries out October 7, this predominant attitude among Israeli Jews is neither an anomaly nor a new phenomenon.

In a poll eight years ago in 2016, an undisputed majority of Jewish Israelis (79%) believed that Jews are entitled to "preferential treatment" over non-Jews. When asked if Palestinians should



Bulldozer carries the bodies of Palestinians killed in the north of the Gaza Strip and turned over by the Israeli military during a mass funeral in Rafah on December 26, 2023. ● AP

be deported from their homes, the majority of Israelis agreed.

Imagine, the American Jewish leadership protestation if 40% (1/2 of the Israeli percentage) of white or Christian Americans supported a preference over the other. In the meantime, progressive Americans can ruminate on their reaction if a similar percentage of Americans favored expelling Native Americans from their homes.

Palestinians need not imagine, for this is what they face under the American-financed Israeli-Jewish apartheid.

It is this Israeli public mindset that drove Netanyahu and his racist ministers to take a chance to recover the

Israeli prisoners by force, calculating that success would yield significant political rewards from the same public who is protesting today. In case of failure, the retrieval of bodies reduces the value of the exchange for the Palestinian Resistance. In other words, the Netanyahu coalition favors playing victim over dead Israelis rather than releasing Palestinian hostages from Israeli jails.

Currently, there are approximately 97 Israeli captives held in Gaza, with 33 confirmed dead, most due to Israel's indiscriminate bombings. Additionally, Netanyahu has "successfully" recovered the bodies of 37 dead settlers

in the past eleven months. In spite of this blunder, Netanyahu capitalized on the innate anti-Palestinian Israeli Jewish bigotry to maintain strong support among Israelis, and American Jews for the war of genocide in Gaza.

This time, however, the same public who supported Netanyahu's "war goals," amassed in the streets of Tel Aviv, blaming him for choosing to save his cabinet coalition at the expense of Israeli prisoners. Even US President Joe Biden broke his public silence, blaming Netanyahu for not doing enough to reach a deal.

Biden's latest remarks contradicted his own government officials who falsely

absolved the Israeli prime minister regarding the cease-fire negotiation. Last week, US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken claimed Netanyahu had accepted the so-called "bridging proposal," while CIA Deputy Director David Cohen blamed the Palestinian Resistance for the breakdown in cease-fire talks.

To contextualize the extent of the influence of the Israeli firsters within the Biden administration, consider recent developments in Israel. During last week's Israeli cabinet meeting, the minister of war stormed out, accusing Netanyahu of endangering the lives of Israeli prisoners. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of Israelis filled the streets, protesting Netanyahu's mercurial position on the cease-fire plan. This is while American officials and Israeli firsters, including Zionists like Blinken and Cohen, lie blatantly about Netanyahu's acceptance of a cease-fire plan when in reality, he added 11th-hour demands derailing the plan that was already agreed to by Palestinians.

Western appeasement of Israel, based on the flawed belief that this would give them leverage over Israeli leaders, is rooted in a corrupt philosophy promoted by Israeli firsters, Sayanim. Israeli firsters in the West use their positions to sanctify Israeli Jewish life while they demonize Palestinian life. In the media, the Sayanim excuse Israeli atrocities against Palestinians, and as cabinet officials, they sanitize Israeli malevolence by forging cabinet expert's reports, helping Israel escape accountability and avoid global scrutiny.

Surrounded by Sayanim, Joe Biden has been beguiled by Israeli firsters throughout his political career. This is one of the many reasons the "sanctified" six Israeli Jews count more than the lives of the 41,000 "dehumanized" Palestinians.

The article first appeared on CounterPunch.

Netanyahu nixes July deal to release 3 captives recently found dead



By Sharon Zhang
Reporter

PERSPECTIVE

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu killed a cease-fire deal in July that would have seen the release of three of the six captives whose bodies were recovered by the Israeli military last week, a new report reveals. Experts and people familiar with the negotiations are saying Netanyahu has been purposely sabotaging cease-fire negotiations for months.

According to Israeli paper Yedioth Ahronoth, Israel and Hamas negotiators were close to reaching a deal in July when, at the last minute, Netanyahu introduced a number of demands that would be non-starters for other parties to the negotiations. The demands included Israeli control over the Philadelphi corridor — a strip of Palestinian land encompassing the entirety of Gaza's border with Egypt. This would effectively give Israel control over the entirety of the Gaza border.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stands before a map of the Gaza Strip during a news conference in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) on September 2, 2024. ● OHAD ZWIGENBERG/POOL

This set of proposals was called the "Netanyahu Outline," Yedioth Ahronoth reported, as translated by CNN. The demand that the Israeli military permanently occupy the Philadelphi corridor in particular changed the very nature of the deal, which, according to the paper, was supposed to include a full withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza.

The captives "died because [Netanyahu] insisted" on his demands, an Israeli familiar with the negotiations told CNN. "The moment he insisted to stay in Rafah, to stay in the Philadelphi corridor, it was very clear that it was an obstacle." Netanyahu does not carry sole responsibility for the continuation of the genocide; even some of Netanyahu's biggest critics within Israel are still vehemently in favor of Israel's slaughter. The US, meanwhile, has been participating in the cease-fire negotiations but is still supplying all of the weaponry and diplomatic support that Israel needs to continue its extermination campaign.

But a growing chorus of experts and inside sources say that Netanyahu is deliberately sidelining the lives of captives being held in Gaza in order to continue Israel's genocide — as he continues to use the captives as an excuse to kill civilians en masse.

In recent weeks, Netanyahu has honed in on the Philadelphi corridor in negotiations, and on Monday, hosted a press conference specifically highlighting occupation of the corridor as a sticking point for Israel. Hamas and Egypt are staunchly opposed to the proposal.

Israeli cabinet insiders say that Netanyahu is only using the corridor as a tool to achieve his real goal: delaying and killing cease-fire deals.

"Benjamin Netanyahu decided some weeks ago that he does not want a deal, and when it became possible, he got nervous and did all he could to torpedo it. He figured out that by using the Philadelphi corridor, he could also draw the sane right to his side, and win some points with this group," a source in Netanyahu's coalition told Haaretz.

"The media fell for this spin and is consumed all day long with the question of yes or no to the Philadelphi, when the real question is really the fate of the hostages versus the fate of the coalition," the source said.

That Netanyahu is opposed to striking any cease-fire deal has long been clear to Palestinians and others skeptical of the US officials' motivations for participating in negotiations. For months,



Hamas negotiators have sought to ensure that any deal would actually result in a cease-fire, but Israeli negotiators have been insistent that Israeli forces be allowed to continue their assault as long as they see fit.

Increasingly, however, Israeli sources have been pinning blame on Netanyahu in particular for his sabotage of the talks, saying that he is thinking mostly of his own political standing. Former Israeli negotiator Gershon Baskin also singled out Netanyahu — while acknowledging that the US plays a major role in prolonging the genocide — in an interview with Democracy

A protester wears a mask depicting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with red hands as Israelis rally against the cabinet and to show support for Israeli captives in Gaza, in Tel Aviv on September 1, 2024. ● FLORION GOGA/REUTERS

Now! this week. "It's very clear that Netanyahu doesn't want to end the war, as one of his top negotiators told me on Saturday," said Baskin. "[The Philadelphi corridor] is a made-up issue by Netanyahu to create a new — I don't know what we want to call it — a new excuse for Israel to remain in Gaza."

The article first appeared on Truthout.

Paris Paralympics:

Iran retains sitting volleyball crown;

Rostami, Khosravi shatter records for golds

Sports Desk

The ninth day of the Paralympic Games in Paris turned out to be a glory-laden one for the Iranian delegation as the country's sitting volleyball team claimed a remarkable eighth men's title.

Elsewhere on Friday, powerlifter Rouhollah Rostami and shot put thrower Yassin Khosravi smashed world and Paralympic records en route to the gold medals in their respective events.



Iranian sitting volleyball players and coaching staff celebrate after beating Bosnia & Herzegovina in the men's final in the Paris Paralympics on September 6, 2024. [IRNA](#)

Magnificent eighth

In a fifth final showpiece featuring Iran and Bosnia & Herzegovina, Hadi Rezaei's men, chasing a third successive gold, got off to a shaky start with the European side, which kept Iran from winning the ultimate prize in 2004 and 2012, drawing first blood.

The Balkan team built on some brilliant blocking against Mor-teza Mehrzad's spikes to take the first set 25-22, before the Asian powerhouse, cheered on by Paralympic archery legend Zahra Nemati on the courtside, bounced back in the second. Mehrzad made his presence felt again, dominating in both attack and defense, though the Iranians still had to dig deep for a 30-28 win to tie scoreline at one-all.

The third and fourth sets, however, were the showcase of Iran's undisputed dominance in the sport as points

kept coming for Rezaei's men, with the 25-16 and 25-14 wins giving the country a 3-1 triumph.

"Everyone thought it would be an easy contest for us, but it proved otherwise in the end," said Iranian coach Rezaei.

"All teams work hard for four years to succeed in the Games and that is what the Bosnians had done. That is what sports are all about. We made some sloppy errors in the first set and they made the most of it, though we gradually took control of the game," added the Iranian, who captained the country to the Paralympic crown in 1988, 1992, and 1996.

Earlier in the day, Egypt came out victorious against Germany in a five-set thriller, in which the two teams were separated by just six points, to win the men's bronze.

Redemption for Rouhollah

In para powerlifting, Iranian Rostami headed into the men's -80kg contests on the back of a disappointing finish, by his standards, in last year's Asian Para Games, where he had to settle for a silver.

Chinese Gu Xiaofei, who beat Rostami to the gold in Hangzhou, was eager to come out on top against the Iranian in a second major event but the Paralympics proved to be the Iranian's territory again.

Rostami looked to be back in his emphatic form in La Chapelle Arena as he made a quick work of clinching a second successive Paralympic gold.

His first lift of 230kg turned out to be enough to secure a top-spot finish, with the Chinese rival failing to go beyond 225kg, which eventually gave him a fourth Paralympic silver in a row.

The Iranian was then successful with the 234kg effort, before a final lift of 242kg saw him better the world record – set by himself in 2021 – by one kilogram.

Iraqi Rasool Mohsin's 215kg tally completed an all-Asian podium.

"I had a serious injury in the chest area and the doctors said I wouldn't make it to the Games. Thank God I recovered in time to win a third Paralympic medal," said the Iranian, who also won a silver

in London 2012.

"I had to endure some tough training sessions as I was eager to make up for the setback in the Asian Para Games. I knew what I was going to do from the get-go and had planned for the new world record," said Rostami, whose medal was Iran's second in the powerlifting competitions in Paris.

Mohsen Bakhtiar had to settle for the bronze in a closely-contested -59kg event, where only four kilograms were the difference between the top three. Egyptian Mohamed Elmenyawy tallied 201kg for the gold, with China's Qi Yongkai and Bakhtiar finishing on 200kg and 197kg.



Iranian powerlifter Rouhollah Rostami poses with the men's -80kg gold medal in the Paris Paralympics on September 6, 2024. [paralympic.org](#)

Dream comes true

In Stade de France, Iranian Khosravi stole the show in the men's shot put F57 final by thrashing the Paralympic record four times.

His first four efforts (15.26m, 15.87m, 15.94m, and 15.96m) were all a new high for the Games – with the previous record (15.00m set in 2021) belonging to Chinese Wu Guoshan.

The Iranian then registered 15.57m and again 15.94m in his

final two attempts, which saw him miss out on his own world record of 16.01m, despite finishing 90 centimeters clear of Brazilian silver medalist Thiago Paulino dos Santos.

Hokato Hotozhe Sema's best throw of 14.65m sealed the bronze for the Indian.

"All of my efforts were above the Paralympic record, but, unfortunately, I couldn't better my own world record. This was my first Paralympics and I was really

stressed out and couldn't sleep until four in the morning," said the Iranian, adding: "I'm 32 and spent half of my life dreaming about this day and triumph. I'm so glad all the years of hard work paid off."

Iranian shot put thrower Yassin Khosravi celebrates during his gold-winning F57 campaign in the Paris Paralympics on September 6, 2024. [paralympic.org](#)

Sinner plays down wrist injury before U.S. Open final

REUTERS – U.S. Open finalist Jannik Sinner is hopeful the wrist injury he sustained in a fall during Friday's semi-final win over Jack Draper will not be a bother during the final. Top seed Sinner, the first Italian man to reach a U.S. Open singles final, received medical attention beside the court

during the gruelling straight-set win, while his opponent vomited three times in the New York heat.

"The physio (loosened) it up very fast on court, so after I felt OK in the beginning. Then, after, it went away by playing, which is good," Sinner told reporters.

"Let's see how it is tomorrow when it's cold. It's going to be a different feeling. Hopefully it's nothing to concern about."

The Australian Open champion, who faces American 12th seed Taylor Fritz in the final today, said he expected a difficult match, playing against a home favourite hoping to end

the host nation's 21-year men's Grand Slam drought.

"We're in New York playing against an American, so it's going to be, for sure, the crowd a little bit more on their side. But it's normal. It's like when I play in Italy... so I'm going to accept that," Sinner said.



MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

Pezeshkian: New government favors expansion of int'l ties



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) attends a meeting with officials of the Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters, the construction arm of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in Tehran on September 7, 2024. president.ir

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian said his government seeks to expand Iran's international cooperation and relations, especially with the country's neighbors with the help of domestic capacities.

Referring to the sanctions imposed on Iran with the aim of disrupting the country's international interactions, Pezeshkian said Iran has 15 neighbors who are willing to expand their relations with Tehran.

Pezeshkian made the remarks during a visit to Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters, the construction arm of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

The Iranian president underlined the necessity of using domestic capacities as well as taking advantage of the best international capabilities and experiences for realizing the goals set in the country's Vision Document.

He said that, "If we want to be the region's main power, we should not lag behind our

rivals" in the region.

He also pointed to the importance of the relocation of Iran's political and economic capital to the vicinity of the high seas in south of the country.

Referring to problems facing Tehran as Iran's capital, including water shortage and air pollution, Pezeshkian said there is no way but to relocate the capital to south.

He underlined that the development of the country is not possible with the current methods.

The Iranian president held a separate meeting with commanders of Iranian Army on Saturday during a visit to the Army's University of Command and Staff.

Pezeshkian was elected Iran's president after defeating Saeed Jalili in the country's runoff election on July 5.

The runoff followed a June 28 ballot in a snap election to find a successor to the late president Ebrahim Raisi who died with his foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and others in a helicopter crash in northwest Iran.

IRGC chief: Iran hits 12 Israeli vessels after its oil tankers targeted

Chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami said Iran hit over a dozen Israeli vessels after the regime targeted Iranian oil tankers in international waters.

"They (Israelis) hit 14 of our ships in order to choke off the export of crude oil. Initially, we did not know which party was responsible for the attacks as they were being conducted mysteriously. Finally, we discovered that the Zionist regime was accountable for them and 12 of their ships were hit."

"Once their fifth ship was hit, they held up their hands and called for the cessation of the ship war," Salami said on Saturday during a visit by President Masoud Pezeshkian to Khatam al-Anbiya Construction Headquarters in the capital Tehran, Press TV reported.

He said when the UK seized an Iranian oil tanker off Gibraltar, "we took the Stena Impero and they surrendered", referring to the IRGC's confiscation of the British-flagged tanker in the Strait of Hormuz in 2019.

"They took two ships from us in Greece, we took two ships from them and finally they surrendered," Gen. Salami said, referring to Iran's retaliation in May 2022 after the US seizure of an Iranian tanker off the Greek coast.

"When our two oil tankers headed to Venezuela, the Americans threatened to seize the two oil tankers. I myself and [IRGC Navy chief Rear Admiral Alireza] Tangsiri simulated the operation of seizing an American oil tanker and announced it on radio call. When the Americans saw it, our tankers reached their destination safely," he added.

Salami stated that Iran was going through an extremely difficult period at the time as top Iranian anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani had been assassinated in a US drone strike near Baghdad airport, the COVID-19 pandemic had overwhelmed the country, economic sanctions were being applied at their maximum level, and enemies were trying to completely isolate the Islamic Republic. The IRGC then utilized all capacities at its disposal to domestically develop and manufacture coronavirus vaccines, mitigate the economic fallout caused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, secure the shipping lanes, nullify sanctions, and fight off the threat of foreign-sponsored terrorist groups, he said.

"We successfully managed to shut off all the openings that the enemy had created. The safest shipping lanes now belong to those vessels carrying the Iranian flag," Salami added.

Iran rejects claims of ballistic missiles transfer to Russia

International Desk

Iran's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in a statement denied the allegation of transfer of ballistic missiles to Russia, saying, "Iran's position vis-à-vis the Ukraine conflict remains unchanged."

"Iran's position vis-à-vis the Ukraine conflict remains unchanged. Iran considers the provision of military assistance to the parties engaged in the conflict - which leads to increased human casualties, destruction of infrastructure, and a distancing from ceasefire negotiations - to be inhumane. Thus, not only does Iran abstain from engaging in such actions itself, but it also calls upon other countries to cease the supply of weapons to the sides involved in the conflict," the statement said.

The mission's reaction followed a report by the Wall Street Journal which has claimed Iran has delivered short-range missiles to Russia for use against Ukraine.

Back in August, Reuters also reported that Russia was expecting the imminent delivery of hundreds of Fath-360 close-range ballistic missiles from Iran and that dozens of Russian military personnel were being trained in Iran on the satellite-guided weapons for eventual use in the war in Ukraine.

"We have been warning of the deepening security partnership between Russia and Iran since the outset of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and are alarmed by these reports," said White House National Security Council spokesperson Sean Savett.

"Any transfer of Iranian ballistic missiles to Russia would represent a dramatic escalation in Iran's support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine."

Iran on Wednesday blamed the US and its allies for the continuation of the war in Ukraine.

"The United States and its allies cannot deny the undeniable fact that sending advanced Western weapons, especially from the United States, has prolonged the war in Ukraine and harmed civilians and civilian infrastructure," Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations Amir Saeid Iravani said.

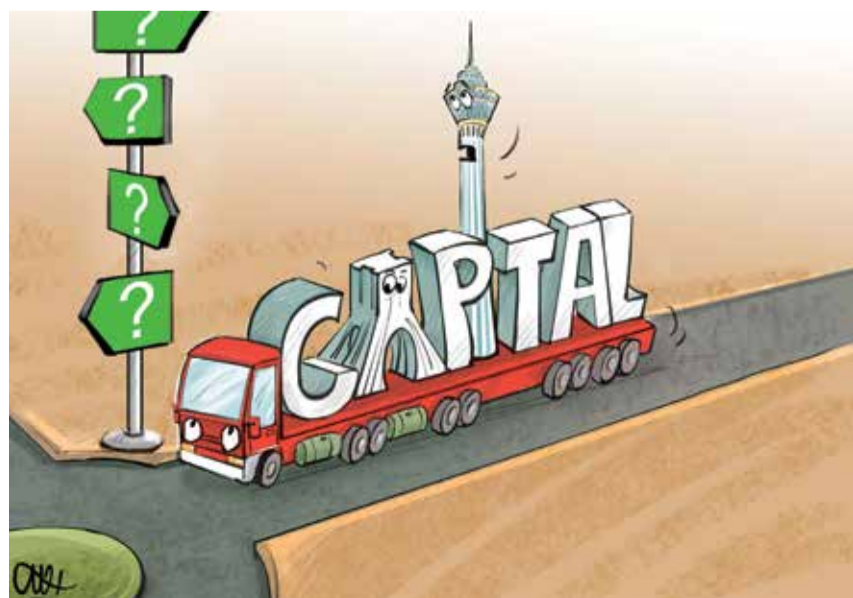
In a letter sent to the UN chief and the Security Council's president, Iravani also rejected the "baseless and misleading" accusations of the United States, Britain and France regarding Tehran's role in Russia's military campaign in Ukraine.

He said Iran "categorically rejects" any allegations suggesting its involvement in the sale, export, or transfer of arms in violation of its international commitments to Russia as "misleading, completely unfounded." Tehran has repeatedly dismissed Western allegations of its involvement in the Russia-Ukraine war.

Iran has called for a cease-fire, blaming the lingering conflict on Western arms supplies to Kiev.

Russia launched what it called a special military operation in Ukraine in February 2022 partly to prevent NATO's eastward expansion after warning that the US-led military alliance was following an "aggressive line" against Moscow.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Erdogan calls for Islamic alliance against Israel

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday Islamic countries should form an alliance against what he called "the growing threat of expansionism" from Israel. He made the comment after describing what Palestinian and Turkish officials said was the killing by Israeli troops of a Turkish-American woman taking part in a protest on Friday against settlement expansion in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

"The only step that will stop Israeli arrogance, Israeli banditry, and Israeli state terrorism is the alliance of Islamic countries," Erdogan said at an Islamic schools' association event near Istanbul.

He said recent steps that Turkey has taken to improve ties with Egypt and Syria are aimed at "forming a line of solidarity against the growing threat of expansionism," which he said also threatened Lebanon and Syria.

Erdogan hosted Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Ankara this week and they discussed the Gaza war and ways to further repair their long-frozen ties during what was the first such presidential visit in 12 years.

Israel's military said after Friday's incident that it was looking into reports that a female foreign national "was killed as a result of shots fired in the area. The details of the incident and the circumstances in which she was hit are under review.

Since last October when Hamas resistance group launched an operation against Israeli positions in the occupied territories, the regime has killed nearly 41,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip - mostly women and children.

The Israel's war on Gaza entered its 12th month Saturday with little sign of respite for the Palestinian territory.



'Eleven months. Enough'

Marking the anniversary, UN Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA) chief Philippe Lazzarini posted on X on Saturday: "Eleven months. Enough. No one can take this any longer. Humanity must prevail. Cease-fire now."

International pressure to end the Israel's war was further underlined by Friday's shooting dead in the West Bank of the Turkish-American activist.

The family of 26-year-old Aysenur Ezgi Eygi has demanded an independent investigation into her death, saying on Saturday her life "was taken needlessly, unlawfully, and violently by the Israeli military".

The UN rights office said Israeli forces killed Eygi with a "shot in the head". Israeli settlements in the West Bank - where about 490,000 people live - are illegal under international law.

Since October, Israeli troops or settlers have killed more than 662 Palestinians in the West Bank which Israel occupied in 1967, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry.

Eygi's death came on the day Israeli forces withdrew from a deadly 10-day raid in the West Bank city of Jenin, where AFP journalists reported residents returning home to widespread destruction.

Zangezur: A smoldering ...

Russia's involvement in discussions about the Zangezur corridor has heightened concerns over escalating tensions in the region. Moscow's intentions seem influenced by Yerevan's proximity to the West, as Russia seeks a presence in southern Armenia under the pretext of deploying peacekeeping forces. However, with no active war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, efforts should instead focus on facilitating a peace treaty between the two countries.

Dialogue is the only way to resolve these disputes and unfounded historical claims. Bilateral talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia or the inclusion of additional parties, such as Iran and Russia, could guarantee Azerbaijan's access to Nakhchivan through existing routes,

be it via Armenian or Iranian territory.

This access does not imply Azerbaijani ownership of these corridors. As emphasized in the treaty that ended the war between the two countries over Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan is guaranteed unhindered access to Nakhchivan without any mention of establishing a new corridor under its control.

Azerbaijan's insistence on altering the historical and international border, regardless of its motives or backing, is irrelevant. What matters is the potential impact of pressing ahead with these claims and any attempts to create the Zangezur corridor: Such actions will ignite tensions and could plunge the region into another conflict. Iran has made its stance clear: it will not tolerate such a project.

Iranian students win four medals at Int'l Olympiad in Informatics



Social Desk

Iranian students won four medals at the 36th International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI), held in Alexandria, Egypt. The Iranian team, which consisted of high school students, won one gold, two silver, and one bronze medal, winning a

ninth-place finish in the team rankings, IRNA wrote. Amir Ali Asgari bagged a gold medal while Amir Hossein Farkhondehfar and Amir Reza Dorosti won silver medals. Parsa Farajpour walked away with a bronze. The top three spots were taken by

teams from China, the US, and Poland. The 36th International Olympiad in Informatics, which kicked off on September 1, drew hundreds of students from 96 countries. The event, which wraps up on September 9, is organized by the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and

Maritime Transport (AASTMT) in Alexandria, with support from the Egyptian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the Library of Alexandria. The Olympiad focuses on strengthening problem-solving skills among students

and is considered the second-most popular student Olympiad after mathematics. Its goal is to promote computer science among high school students. The Iranian team's participation at the Egypt-hosted computer Olympiad was virtual and online due to a delay in the issuance of visas for the students.

Pakistan marks Defense Day in Tehran, vows to solidify ties with Iran

International Desk

The Embassy of Pakistan in Tehran marked the country's Defense Day on September 6, commemorating the sacrifices of Pakistani soldiers in defending the nation's borders and sovereignty. More than 200 people, including high-ranking civil and military officers from the diplomatic community, businessmen, and individuals from all walks of life, attended the ceremony at Pakistan House in Tehran. Ambassador Muhammad Mudassar Tipu welcomed the guests and thanked Brig. Gen. Mohammad Ahadi, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces for International Cooperation and Defense Diplomacy, for gracing the occasion as the chief guest. Tipu said Ahadi's presence would "further solidify our bilateral relations," which

have seen a significant boost since the beginning of the year. "We have opened a new chapter in our relationship, and the political, military, and security leadership of both countries has played a critical and sincere role in solidifying and expanding this vitally important relationship," Tipu added. Defense and Army Attaché Brig. Muhammad Obaid Khan highlighted the significance of Defense Day, underlining the immense courage and sacrifices of Pakistani soldiers. He noted that September 6 marks a key moment in Pakistan's history when the nation stood united to defeat a numerically superior adversary. Khan also drew attention to the plight of people in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir, who have endured decades of injustice and bru-

ality. "On this day, we must also remember the sacrifices of our brethren in Kashmir," he said. Brig. Gen. Ahadi, in his address, congratulated Pakistan on its Defense Day and praised the close relations and cooperation between the two countries' armed forces. He said that effective and serious steps have been taken to establish security on both sides of the common border, with a determination to transform it into a border of friendship and prosperity. "We have taken concrete steps to secure our common border and turn it into a symbol of friendship and cooperation," Ahadi said. The ceremony also featured the reading of messages from Pakistan's president and prime minister. Guests were treated to traditional Pakistani cuisine, which added to the festive atmosphere.

Iranian photographer receives top prize at Hungarian nature festival



An Iranian photographer affiliated with Iranian news agency IRNA Mehdi Mohebi Pour won the Grand Prize at the annual Our Nature photo Award in Hungary aka FotoKozma. Mohebi Pour's winning photo 'The Bitter Death of Birds,' which was taken on Miankaleh

Island, which highlights the plight of birds, earned him the Golden Fox Award at the festival, IRNA reported. The photo festival, which showcases the most inspiring nature photos from around the world, drew 2,000 entries from 187 photographers in 41

countries. A panel of judges, comprising prominent environmental and photography experts, reviewed all the submissions based on artistic and technical quality, as well as their relevance to the theme of the future of nature.

10th edition of IFFZ dedicated to memory of Dariush Mehrjui

The 10th International Iranian Film Festival Zurich (IFFZ) will pay tribute to late Iranian filmmaker Dariush Mehrjui, who was killed along with his wife in October 2023. The festival, scheduled for Sept. 11-19, 2024, in Zurich, Switzerland, will feature 12 Iranian films in competition. The event will also include a classic Iranian film section, showcasing works by renowned directors such as Abbas Kiarostami and Bahram Beyzai, ISNA wrote. Mehrjui, a veteran Iranian director, and his wife, Vahideh Mohammadifar, were found stabbed to death in their home in Karaj, Iran, on Oct. 14, 2023. Yadollah Daj will serve as the festival's secretary.

