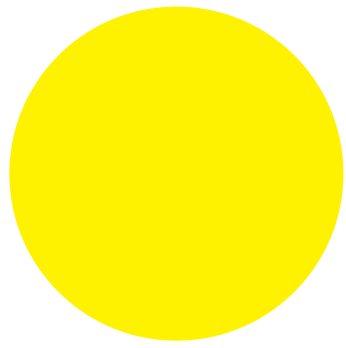


Hezbollah  
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efforts  
for cease-fire:  
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## *Araghchi:* Any Israeli attack on Iran to provoke stronger response

FM begins regional tour to denounce Israeli crimes

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Araghchi's  
diplomatic  
efforts in Riyadh



By Mohammad Bayat  
Mideast affairs expert

OPINION  
EXCLUSIVE

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi flew to Saudi Arabia yesterday for a regional tour of the region that will take him to other Arab countries, following his visits to Lebanon and Syria. The tour comes at a critical juncture, as the Middle East is grappling with a precarious and complex situation, with the threat of a large-scale war looming on the horizon, involving several countries. In fact, the region has not been this close to the brink of war in the past two decades.

In recent days, Araghchi has been emphasizing three key points of supporting the Resistance Front, countering a potential Israeli attack on Iran and striving to bring an end to the conflict and establish a cease-fire.

It appears that Araghchi's regional tour serves two main objectives. Firstly, he aims to keep regional Arab countries, particularly Sunni-dominated nations led by Saudi Arabia, at a distance from Israel or at least urge them to maintain their neutrality.

Secondly, he seeks to forge a coalition to boost chances for a cease-fire. To this end, the top diplomat intends to launch a campaign involving major Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan that have

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been calling for halting the conflict and establishing peace.

## Clay Tablets Repatriated From US on Display

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Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian looks at the ancient artifacts on display at the National Museum of Iran in Tehran, October 8, 2024, after a ceremony marking the return of 30 Achaemenid clay tablets from the US, part of a total of 1,100 artifacts repatriated to Iran. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

October 7 and return to square one:  
Why has Israel fallen 70 years behind?

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Four water desalination units to open in Iran's south

Four water desalination units to be launched in the southern provinces of Hormuzgan and Bushehr by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2024), announced the managing director of the Water and Waste Organization on Tuesday.

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## Parliament has no plan to raise energy prices: *MP*

### Economy Desk

Malek Shariati, who is a member of the Parliament's Energy Committee, said on Tuesday that the Iranian legislature has no plan to raise the prices of gasoline and electricity. He also announced that one percent of oil and gas sales will be allocated to optimize energy consumption across the country, ISNA reported. One percent of the revenues obtained from the country's oil and gas exports, as well as 10 percent of the resources gained from the sale of LPG, ethane, and sulfur, should be deposited in the account of Energy optimization and strategic management organization, the lawmaker explained.

The parliamentarian went on to say that in order to solve the energy shortages, attention should be paid to the consumption management along with increasing production.

Criticizing the low efficiency of the power plants in the country, he said due to the supply of free fuel to the power stations, there was no will to increase the efficiency, and now the efficiency of the power plants is not acceptable.

As much as \$30 billion per year is the value of the fuel that is given to the country's power plants, Shariati said, adding that the country must cut a third of the figure in a five-year plan.

Shariati, referring to the plans made for winter fuel supply, stated that there is no concern as liquid fuel reserves are favorable and the officials of the Ministry of Oil are making their efforts to have no problem in supplying gas. "In addition, we must take measures in the field of consumption management."

Regarding the measures taken to import gas from Russia, the MP noted that Iran is after importing 300 million cubic meters of gas from Russia per day, and the two sides are negotiating to implement the agreement through signing a contract which may take a few years.

Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad last week ruled out rumors about a government plan to hike gasoline prices.

"The government has no such plans on the table," Paknejad said.

The minister noted that the Oil Ministry's priority was not to raise gasoline prices but rather to "manage fuel demand" and curb consumption.

He added that any decision to increase gasoline prices would need to be taken by the all branches of power, rather than being made unilaterally by the Oil Ministry.

# Iran's annual pistachio exports could hit \$2m: *Association head*

By Sadeq Dehqan & Reza Abesh Ahmadlou  
Staff writers

If the export barriers are removed, Iran can earn \$1.5 to \$2 million by exporting pistachios, as announced by the head of the Iran Pistachio Association. Talking to Iran Daily, Mohammad Salehi said Iranian pistachios are very good in terms of taste and quality, so there are always customers for our produce in the international market.

"Except for Australia and the American countries that supply their needs from the US (the world's largest pistachio producer) due to proximity, all other countries buy pistachios from Iran," he noted.

According to statistics, the US is the largest producer of pistachio with 676,000 tons of annual output, which is approximately 67% of the world's pistachio production, and Iran has the second place with 180,000 tons, equivalent to 18% of the world's pistachio production.

Turkey is in the third place with 120,000 tons (12% of the world's pistachio production), followed by Syria and Greece 10% and 7% of the world's pistachio production, respectively.

Despite having the third place, Turkey is not one of the main exporters because most of the country's pistachio production is consumed in the domestic market, Salehi said, noting that Turkish pistachios are used in the food industry and processing for other products, or are available for tourists visiting the



country.

"Referring to Afghanistan's plan to develop pistachio orchards in the country, he explained, Afghans around Herat region have started to develop many pistachio orchards, and these orchards will be fruitful in the next 10 years. So, in the next 10 years, the country will be one of our rivals in the field of pistachio production and export," the association head noted.

This year, pistachio production in Iran is expected to reach about 170,000 tons, he said adding that last year the corresponding figure stood at about 190,000 tons.

Our export currently

stands at over 140,000 tons as due to strict laws and other obstacles; the country cannot export 25,000 to 30,000 tons of pistachio products, he stated, adding that part of the pistachio output is also used domestically.

Pointing out that the export obstacles are actually related to the sanctions, he added, "According to guidelines on commitments of traders for forex revenues, a ceiling has been set for the amount of exports, in such a way that each exporter is allowed to export, for example, up to a certain level of the export value of a product."

Salehi went on to say that

the trader must first bring the forex gained from the export into the country in order to have the license to export again. "Due to banking problems caused by sanctions, the process of fetching the generated forex takes time and it slows down the export process."

The guidelines on obligations of traders for forex revenues is actually an instruction according to which the exporters of services and goods, in order to enjoy tax exemptions, must return the forex obtained from their exports to the economic cycle of the country in accordance with the regulation.

This requirement introduced by the Iranian government was to compensate for the forex restrictions resulting from the sanctions. As a result, along with the export of various goods, a significant amount of forex enters the country, so the hard currency revenue is among the factors of the growth and prosperity of Iran's economy.

Salehi said China imported 200,000 tons of pistachios last year; 15,000 tons from Iran and 185,000 tons from the US. "Until three years ago, China used to supply 70,000 to 80,000 tons of pistachios from Iran and 50,000 to 60,000

tons from the US, but due to export barriers, the US pistachio output is gradually replacing that of Iranian pistachio in the Chinese market."

In order to solve the problem caused by law on commitments of traders for forex revenues, it is necessary to establish communication between the exporter and the importer. The exporter can sell his forex to the importer outside the country so that the importer can bring in products using the forex. Consequently, the forex will actually enter the country's economy and the problem of the exporters will be solved, Salehi concluded.

## Four water desalination units to open in Iran's south



### Economy Desk

Four water desalination units to be launched in the southern provinces of Hormuzgan and Bushehr by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2024), announced the managing director of the Water and Waste Organization on Tuesday.

There are 105 water desalination projects

across the country, of which 87 water desalination plants with a total daily capacity of 511,185 cubic meters are in operation, Hashem Amini said, reported IRNA.

Another 18 water desalination units are being built across the country with a capacity of 90,150 cubic meters per day, of which four units in Bushehr and Hormuzgan provinces with a total

capacity of about 25,000 cubic meters per day will enter service by the end of this Iranian year.

In 15 other provinces, the construction of water softening units is on the agenda, and we hope that by allocating the required credits, their construction process will continue at an accelerated pace.

Last year, Iran launched a major project to trans-

fer desalinated water from the Persian Gulf to three provinces in its arid central regions.

The project includes a 730-kilometer pipeline for transferring up to 200 million cubic meters per year of desalinated water to Yazd, Kerman and Isfahan from desalination plants in Sirik, located on the easternmost mouth of the Persian Gulf.

## Iran, China hold talks on electrifying Tehran-Mashhad railroad

Iran and China held talks to finance the electrification of Tehran-Mashhad train lines, said Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways Jabar-Ali Zakeri on Tuesday.

Zakeri also called for using a new system in Iranian railways to reduce costs and increase efficiency of trains, ISNA reported.

Once completed, the rail route could accommodate

electric trains running at 200 km per hour, traveling between the two cities in six hours.

Tehran-Mashhad, the most frequented railway line of Iran and one of the few double-track lines of the country, with 926Km of length and 50 stations starts from Tehran, and ends in Mashhad in north-eastern of Iran passing through the major cit-

ies of Garmsar, Semnan, Damghan, Shahroud, and Neishabour.

Currently, the highest possible speed on this route is 160 km per hour which will be increased to 200 km per hour after the electrification project is completed. Based on predictions, the railway will carry annually 33 million passengers and 10 million tons of freight by 2032.

Tehran is in negotiations with two Chinese companies to build a 1,100-kilometer-long railway in eastern Iran at a cost of about \$2 billion.

If the talks are successful, the state-run China Railway Engineering Corporation (CREC) and Citic Group will build a rail link from the northwestern city of Mashhad along Iran's eastern border to the port of Cha-



bahar on the Gulf of Oman. The two Chinese companies will carry out the

project on an engineering, procurement and construction basis.

# Ziaieieh School's rich historical legacy in Yazd



rahbal.com

## Iranica Desk

The Ziaieieh School, also known as Alexander Prison, is one of the notable historical sites and attractions in Yazd. This school is registered on Iran's National Heritage List, and its location in the historic Fahadan neighborhood makes it easy to visit other historical attractions in Yazd.

## Historical significance

The building is renowned for its enigmatic history. The entrance is quite low; however, upon entering the school courtyard, visitors are often left in awe by the grandeur and magnificence of this historical structure, which showcases Islamic architecture from the Ilkhanid period. The Ziaieieh School stands as a steadfast reminder of nearly eight centuries of history. Legend has it that Alexander the Great constructed a prison in what is now Yazd on his way to Rey. Later, during the Sassanid era, under the command of Yazdgerd I, a city was established in this area, named "Yazdan Gerd." Despite the lack of historical documents confirming Alexander's presence or passage through this location, local historians often reference it, IRNA wrote.

Yazd's strategic importance made it an advantageous site for Greek military forces, facilitating Alexander's conquest of the Persian and Median provinces. Additionally, the road systems and postal stations from Persia to Khorasan and Rey traversed Yazd. Therefore, the idea of a site related to Alexander's opponents in Yazd is not far-fetched. Local historians speak of Alexander's invasion of Iran, the influx

of his exiles to Yazd, and the fear and animosity the people of that time felt toward him, contributing to the moniker "Alexander Prison."

This building fell into ruin over time, and a pit formed in one section, leading many to believe it was a dungeon, further entrenching the notion that it served as a prison. However, expert examination revealed that this pit was created as part of an underground water supply network, demonstrating the ingenuity of Iranians in their quest for water in a desert region. Most experts dismiss the idea of it being a prison, asserting that if a prison by that name ever did exist, it was separate from the Ziaieieh School.

In reality, the structure was founded as a school in 631 AH (1233 CE) by Ziaeddin Hossein Razi, a prominent mystic, and was completed by his sons, Majdeddin Hassan and Sharafeddin Ali, in 705 AH (1305 CE). The Ziaieieh School served as a center of learning for over 700 years and was a gathering place for discussions among scholars. His-

torical evidence suggests that the Razi family built large houses with tall wind catchers surrounding this structure. At that time, the building had a tall entrance, soaring minarets, and a garden filled with trees, alongside a library and a bath across from it.

## Architectural features

The architecture of the Ziaieieh School is remarkable for its simplicity and elegance, embodying the beauty of the art from that era without excessive ornamentation. The grand structure was built primarily from raw bricks, which perhaps accounts for its resilience and durability throughout the centuries.

The Ziaieieh School showcases Azeri architecture, which became prominent in Iranian architecture following the advent of Islam and during the Ilkhanate period. The construction occurred in two phases: the first involved building an ancient dome that served as a tomb during the Mongol invasion, and the second, approximately 200 years later, saw the

construction of the school itself, including an entrance to the dome.

The dome, standing at 18 meters tall, is made of raw bricks, and its plasterwork, adorned with golden and lapis lazuli watercolor painting, creates an extraordinary visual appeal. Unfortunately, after eight centuries, only remnants of these watercolor decorations remain visible. The dome chamber beneath has suffered significant damage, with no traces of its original inscriptions left. A small museum in this area displays historical inscriptions and gravestones.

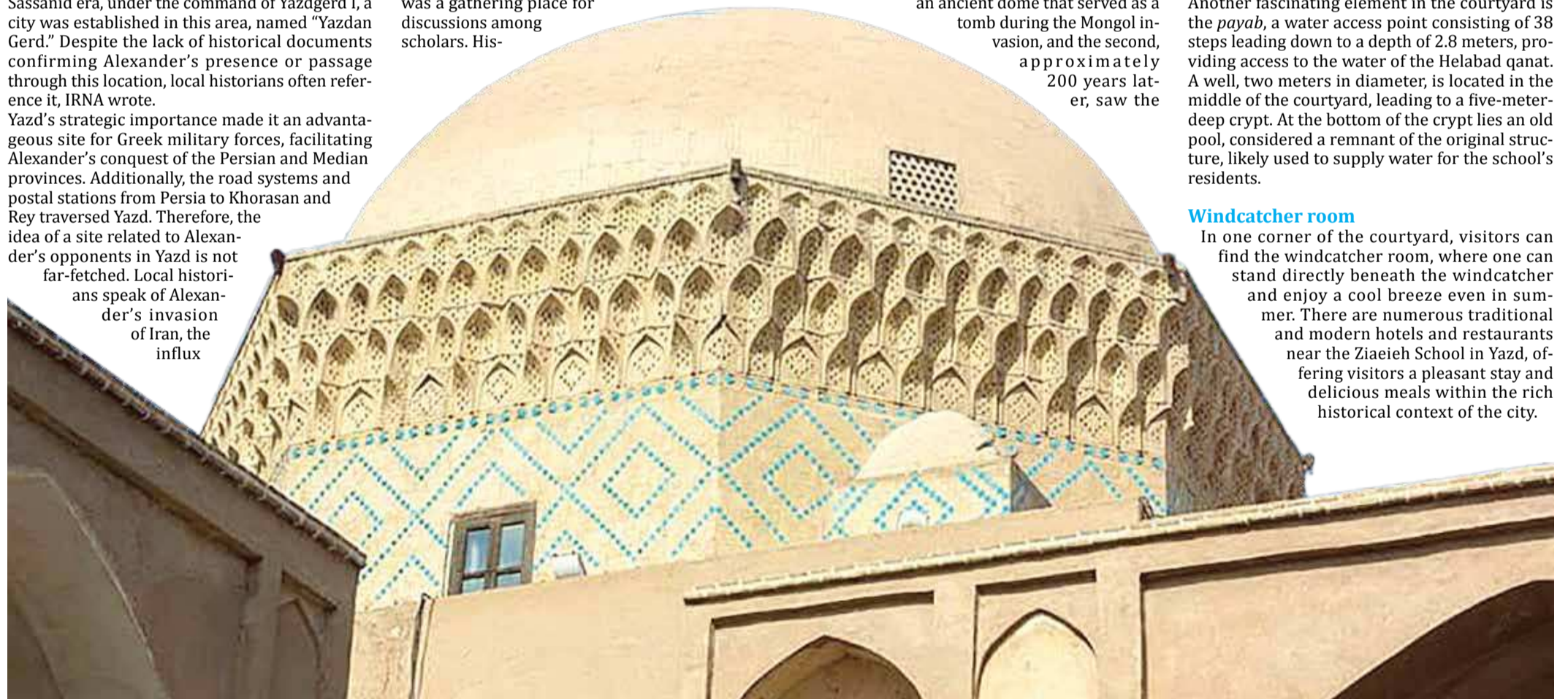
Surrounding the courtyard are various corridors, with the larger ones located on the western side, featuring a plaster mihrab. In addition to smaller porches in front of the rooms, there are four taller porches, giving the structure a distinctive four-porch layout.

## Payab (water access point)

Another fascinating element in the courtyard is the *payab*, a water access point consisting of 38 steps leading down to a depth of 2.8 meters, providing access to the water of the Helabad qanat. A well, two meters in diameter, is located in the middle of the courtyard, leading to a five-meter-deep crypt. At the bottom of the crypt lies an old pool, considered a remnant of the original structure, likely used to supply water for the school's residents.

## Windcatcher room

In one corner of the courtyard, visitors can find the windcatcher room, where one can stand directly beneath the windcatcher and enjoy a cool breeze even in summer. There are numerous traditional and modern hotels and restaurants near the Ziaieieh School in Yazd, offering visitors a pleasant stay and delicious meals within the rich historical context of the city.



# Craftsmanship of Ehrami fabric from Khuzestan Province

Ehrami is a traditional fabric of Iran that is locally produced in Khuzestan Province. This fabric is made using cotton or wool yarn, and textile machinery is employed to create Ehrami fabrics, which typically feature simple geometric patterns.

In the past, a type of ehrami fabric was produced without any pattern and was used as clothing for Ihram during the Islamic pilgrimage of Hajj. Today, however, Ehrami fabrics are woven in various sizes and forms, including prayer rugs, doormats, bed covers, bags, and similar products. In Yazd Province, a fabric called 'harami' is produced, and in Ilam, another type known as 'Ihram' is woven. These fabrics differ

from the Ehrami of Khuzestan Province in terms of material, design, pattern, size, and color. The motifs, colors, and designs of Ehrami fabrics are

inspired by the memory of the weaver. There are no pre-made designs; instead, they are typically created based on a general form. Due to the tech-

nique used in making Ehrami, cursive patterns cannot be applied; the designs are geometric and symmetrical. The most common motifs found in

Khuzestan's Ehrami include diamonds, pines, double diamonds, and simple stripes. The motifs of Ehrami are reminiscent of those found in the

pottery of the ancient Susa civilization, dating back hundreds of years.

Bright and vibrant colors such as red, yellow, blue, green, and white are commonly used in Ehrami fabrics. Today, most of these products measure either 70 by 110 centimeters or 100 by 150 centimeters. The traditional textile machine used for weaving is installed and fixed in the workshop, with the warp yarns arranged horizontally. Like many other textile machines, most of its parts are made from wood. The cities of Shushtar, Dezful, Behbahan, Susangerd, and Masjed Soleyman are some of the most important centers for Ehrami production.



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# October 7 and return to square one: Why has Israel fallen 70 years behind?

International Desk

## ANALYSIS

October 7, 2023, is a historic date in the geography of the Middle East. On this day, the military brigades of the Hamas movement broke through the prison walls imposed by the Zionist regime after years of blockade and entered the occupied territories, resulting in over a thousand deaths and a number of captives. However, one year after this event, an analysis of the situation shows that despite Israel's media manipulations, it remains the main loser on the battlefield.

### A Superficial look at a deep battle

Analyzing the events of October 7 and Operation Al-Aqsa Storm with logical tools, though common, can mislead proper conclusions. The complexity of what the people of Gaza have endured over the past decade makes it difficult to fairly judge their actions on October 7. This humanitarian act must be understood through the worldview of Gaza's people, rather than by conventional standards. It seems that neglecting this key point has caused some to adopt a superficial perspective in analyzing this operation and its outcomes. Claims about the failure of the resistance front due to the martyrdom of its commanders, or comparing the number of martyrs in Gaza to Israeli military casualties, stem from this same superficiality. The undeniable reality on the ground is the martyrdom of great commanders and leaders within the resistance front. Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary-General of the Hezbollah movement in Lebanon, was a prominent figure in the country and one of the most influential political and military personalities in the world. Over three decades, he turned Hezbollah into one of the best military-defense groups in the region, causing some of the heaviest

retreats and defeats for Israel. Similarly, Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau and a key figure in Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, along with senior commanders like Imad Mughniyeh, Fuad Shukur, Ali Karaki, Sayyed Razi Mousavi, Saleh al-Arouri, and many others from Hezbollah, Hamas, and the IRGC, were martyred. These names and statistics are undeniable, but in assessing their impact on the future of the resistance axis, we must ask whether their martyrdom represents a tactical or strategic loss.

The answer lies in another question: Can these individuals be replaced, even in the long term, and will their martyrdom erase the underlying ideology they upheld? A rational analysis suggests that while the assassination of senior resistance commanders is bitter, it impacts the tactical level only, not the strategic one.

### Irrefutable reality in field

Despite Israel having killed more than 40,000 Muslims in the most brutal ways over the past year, some have tried to hold Hamas responsible for these deaths and for triggering the October 7 operations. However, did Israeli extremists not commit genocide against Palestinians before Operation Al-Aqsa Storm or even before Hamas' existence? Is this the first crime committed by this regime under provocation or compulsion? The truth of this occupation cannot be changed through political and media distortions. The weakening of the resistance front after standing against the heavily armed Israeli army for a year may not be surprising, but interpreting this temporary weakness as a definitive end to the resistance against occupation is either a miscalculation due to superficial analysis or media propaganda aimed at concealing the real issue.

### What do the facts say?

A constant variable in Middle



Rockets are fired toward Israel from Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023.  
● ANSEL SCHUBERT/APP



The weakening of the resistance front after standing against the heavily armed Israeli army for a year may not be surprising, but interpreting this temporary weakness as a definitive end to the resistance against occupation is either a miscalculation ... or media propaganda aimed at concealing the real issue.

Smoke rises following an Israeli airstrike in the Gaza Strip on Oct. 23, 2023.  
● ANSEL SCHUBERT/APP

Eastern crises over at least the past five decades is that the Zionist regime:

A) Bears the burden of the oppression faced by the Jewish people and inherits the horrific legacy of the Holocaust, thereby branding anyone who criticizes its "victimhood" as punishable. B) Israel's security, bolstered by the West's high-level deterrence in the form of weapons and equipment, is untouchable and invincible. However, Operation Al-Aqsa Storm shattered these two solid assumptions. A year later, statistics tell an interesting story. Israel's Economy During the War: Global economic institutions estimate that the Zionist regime has spent approximately \$50 billion on the war in Gaza over the past year, a figure expected to rise to \$66 billion

by the end of next year. This amounts to about 12% of the GDP in the occupied territories. This enormous expenditure has created and will continue to create escalating crises in Israel's economy. A sign of this crisis is the downgrade of Israel's credit rating following its attack on southern Lebanon. The most credible credit rating agency, Moody's, announced that Tel Aviv's lack of an exit strategy from the crisis would worsen public financial problems, potentially increasing Israel's budget deficit to 15% of its GDP. The IMF's initial forecast of 3.4% economic growth for Israel has now been reduced to between 1% and 1.9%. Data also indicate a tripling of the budget deficit. The economic crises in construction, tourism, agriculture, and advanced technology sectors are clearly reflected in all statistics released by international institutions. The number of tourists has dropped to one-tenth, with only 15% of the construction sector's capacity remaining, and capital outflows have reached \$2 billion. Additionally, shipping volume has decreased by 16%, and many foreign and even domestic companies in the occupied territories have shut down.

### Security: Who has been weakened?

Israel, as a fabricated and illegitimate entity, has tried for the past 70 years to build itself into a nation-state through military might. Despite support from the West, including nuclear weapons and advanced defense systems like the Iron Dome, this level of backing has yet to ensure Israel's security. Western media have acknowledged this. For example, The Guardian recently reported that Tehran's attacks

revealed Israel's missile defense systems are not as impenetrable as advertised.

Similarly, the Washington Post, following the Promise of Truth 2 operation, revealed that satellite images and recorded videos show dozens of Iranian missiles successfully penetrating Israel's air defense and damaging its military installations. Psychological and Political Conditions in the Occupied Territories: For months, Israeli and Western media have been suppressing coverage of Israel's internal unrest and its security forces' soft repression. However, images and videos from different parts of the occupied lands reveal visible and hidden rage that manifests in unprecedented protests and widespread psychological distress and depression. Statistics show that nearly 100,000 residents near Gaza's border have been displaced, living in hotels or public housing. Meanwhile, the issue of Israeli captives has become a major source of despair and division between the government and the people. Many inhabitants of the occupied territories feel constant anxiety about attacks, leading to a heightened psychological burden and reminding everyone, particularly settlers, of the pervasive lack of security. This concern has become one of the main reasons for the increasing exodus from the occupied territories.

In the long term, it appears that Israel's artificial nation-state project in Palestine may collapse from within, even if it doesn't fall immediately with the aid of US dollars and military support. Thus, Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's remarks about Israel being set back 70 years are based on reality and the available data.



# First lesson of Al-Aqsa Storm: One enemy, one solution

International Desk

## PERSPECTIVE

*As the first anniversary of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm arrives, amidst the brave and resilient resistance of the people of Gaza against the child-killing Zionist regime and numerous Western countries, alongside the silence and incompetence of international organizations, one major lesson emerges from the past year's developments. Recognizing this lesson could provide a strategic pathway to end the current situation in the region and potentially the world.*

A careful review of the past year's developments in Palestine, from Gaza to the West Bank and the occupied territories, as well as the wider region, reveals a significant and undeniable truth: the enemy of Palestine, the region, the Islamic world, and even humanity is one and the same. In pursuit of its domineering interests, this enemy is willing to kill millions and wreak havoc across the world.

The root cause of the genocide in Palestine, the aggression against neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Iran, the assassination of leaders like Haniyeh and Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, as well as Hezbollah commanders, the crisis in Afghanistan, and the turmoil in Egypt and Jordan, is the same. It is the system of domination, embodied by the Zionist regime, which has perpetrated numerous atrocities to ensure its own survival.

Experience has shown that the oppressors and aggressors of the world always pursue a consistent policy: "Divide and rule." They have implemented this policy of division in the Islamic countries through various tricks and continue to do so. The result has been the misunderstandings and tensions that have either led to conflicts between Islamic nations or allowed enemies to exploit the situation by creating terrorists that threaten security. Alternatively, this division has caused neglect of the true enemy and the plots aimed at dominating the region's resources and wealth. The enemy that sows division between Shia and Sunni, promotes Arab versus non-Arab, and encourages Asian versus African Muslims, is the same enemy that for 75 years has turned Palestine into a scene of crime and occupation. It is the same enemy that once occupied Afghanistan, then invaded Iraq, launched terrorism against Syria and Lebanon, and devastated Libya and Sudan. This enemy has also plunged countries like Egypt and Jordan into looting and stripped them of their rightful role in the region. It uses economic and security terrorism to attack Iran and continues these tactics step by step against other Islamic

countries to ultimately weaken the Islamic world, which, united, could wield enormous capacity and wealth to play a global role.

In simpler terms, the enemy of the Iranian people is the same as the enemy of the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people, the Iraqi people, the Egyptian people, the Syrian people, the Yemeni people, the people of Sudan and Libya, and other Islamic nations. The enemy is one, but its methods differ from country to country: psychological warfare in one place, economic pressure in another, war and slaughter in yet another, while in some places, it uses smiles and promises, international laws, or chaos and division.

Although the tactics vary, the war room is the same, and the orders come from the same place. Over the past year, this trend has been evident. Global oppressors and bloodthirsty forces, namely the Zionist regime and its supporters, have not only orchestrated genocide in Gaza but also plunged the entire region into chaos and insecurity. While the Zionist regime appears to be the one destabilizing the region, the real source of the crisis lies in the presence of foreign forces, who, for their own interests, provide comprehensive support to the ruthless and apartheid Zionist regime.

The events in the region during the recent decades clearly demonstrate that the United States and its allies' focus on ensuring the security of the Zionist regime is a cover for their policy of turning this regime into a tool for controlling all the region's resources and using it in larger global conflicts. The energy wars and the struggle over vital resources form the core of the major power disputes, and the US and its partners seek to turn the Zionist regime into the sole gateway for energy and goods in the region and the world. This would ultimately force regional countries



An Israeli force stands in an apartment during a ground operation in the Gaza Strip on Nov. 8, 2023.  
● OHAD ZWIGENBERG/AP

into compliance, making them dependent on these conditions and driving them to submit to the regime and the US.

In other words, the enemies of the region aim to create a new West Asia where all regional countries become submissive players with no independence. This plan was tested in 2006 with the attack on Lebanon and in 2011 with the imposition of terrorism on the region. However, the resistance front, especially the steadfastness of Hezbollah under the leadership of Martyr Nasrallah in the 33-day war, and the involvement of Martyr Soleimani in battles in Syria, thwarted this conspiracy.

A year ago, the enemy attempted to repeat this plot with reconciliatory schemes and efforts to eliminate the resistance. But Op-

Palestinians flee to the southern Gaza Strip on Salah al-Din Street in Bureij, Gaza Strip on Nov. 11, 2023.  
● FATIMA SHBAIR/AP

eration Al-Aqsa Storm thwarted these attempts, and the yearlong resistance of Gaza and Lebanon, coupled with the awakening of the people in the region and around the world, has altered the regional dynamics in a way that counters the enemy's desires. The events of the past year clearly show that every blow to the Zionist regime, regardless of the source, serves the entire region and even humanity, influencing global dynamics. In short, the major problem in the region is foreign intervention. Yet, the governments of the region, through cooperation, can establish peace and stability.

The barbarism perpetrated by the Zionists and their supporters in Gaza and the West Bank, the killings in Lebanon, including the assassination of resistance leaders, and the crimes and aggressions against other countries in the region are actions intended to prevent this very role and impose excessive demands on the entire region and the world.

The key point is that Operation Al-Aqsa Storm and the clear revelation of the Zionist regime's fragility, weaker than a spider's web, and the inability of its supporters to impose their will against the resistance highlight a vital truth: the only way to end this situation is for the nations and governments of the region to remain resilient and not succumb to the plots and terrorism of their enemies.

The lesson from Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, alongside the recognition of the enemy, is that if any nation wishes to avoid being encircled and destroyed by its enemy, it must stay vigilant and view the world of Islam as a whole, not just through a narrow lens. In other words, when

a country sees that the enemy is targeting another nation, it must stand in solidarity with that oppressed nation, assist it, and collaborate to prevent the enemy from succeeding. If the enemy succeeds there, it will surely move on to the next target, and the cycle will continue, as the wolf-like enemy has shown an insatiable appetite for dominance over all nations.

Thus, the unified approach to developments from Afghanistan to Iran, Gaza, Lebanon, and other Islamic countries must be grounded in Islamic unity and cohesion under the banner of the Qur'an and its teachings.

Based on the principles and laws of Islam, and even the international laws crafted by organizations, every nation has the right to defend its land, home, and interests against aggressors. This is a right that belongs to the Palestinian and Lebanese people, just as it does to other nations, and no one, no country, or international body has the right to deny them this.

As we approach the anniversary of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, it is crucial to recognize that the enemy of all Islamic nations and humanity is the Zionist regime and its supporters. Therefore, any action against them is justified and righteous, and it will thwart the schemes of the oppressors. The way to achieve this is through unity and solidarity, as Operation Al-Aqsa Storm reignited global awareness of the Palestinian cause and exposed the criminal nature of the Zionist regime and its allies. This awakening has even reached American and European universities and academic institutions, whose governments are at the forefront of the Zionists' crimes.



# Future bright for Iranian taekwondo after double world junior crowns



## Sports Desk

The recently-finished World Junior Championships was yet another indication of Iranian taekwondo being on the right track under Hadi Saei, the head of the sport's national governing body, over the past three years.

Iranians collected seven gold medals as well as double silvers and bronzes apiece to beat host South Korea to the men's and women's team titles in Chuncheon.

Amirmohammad Ashrafi, the MVP in the men's competitions, Sina Mohtarami, and Mahdi Razmian were the Iranian gold medalists in the men's contests, while Ali-Akbar Ebrahimi won a silver and Amir-Mohammad Nasirahmadi and Amin Ahmadvand bagged a couple of bronze medals.

In the women's draw, Ghazal Houshmand, Parnian Nouri, Aynaz Nasiri, and Hana Zarrinkamar all walked away with ultimate prize of their respective events, with Saghar Moradi settling for a silver medal.

Perhaps Iranian fans should keep all those names in mind as it won't be long before these young prodigies make their senior breakthrough in

the world and Asian competitions. "We're not going to abandon this young generation. We'll keep nurturing them through a right program so that all of them can succeed in the future seniors' events," Saei told IRNA on Tuesday.

"That's what the federation did two years ago and we all saw how it paid off," added the Iranian.

Two-time Olympic champion Saei, who took the helm at the federation in January 2022, built on his winning mentality and years of experience as a taekwondo legend as the country made a clean sweep of medals across four men's and women's weight classes in the Paris Games in August. Of the four medalists, Arian Salimi was only 20 when he won a first Olympic taekwondo gold for Iran since Saei's triumph in Beijing 2008, while former world junior champion Mobina Ne'matzadeh, a women's bronze winner in Paris, is still a teenager.

Iran's Amirmohammad Ashrafi (red) is seen in action during his victory over Italian Matteo De Angelis in the men's +78kg semifinals at the World Taekwondo Junior Championships in Chuncheon, South Korea, on Oct. 2, 2024.

WORLD TAEKWONDO

## Iran's Jahanbakhsh set to join Genoa: Report

### Sports Desk

Iranian international midfielder Alireza Jahanbakhsh is closing in on a move to Serie A club Genoa, according to Vazesh3.

Jahanbakhsh, 31, has been without a team since leaving Dutch heavyweight Feyenoord in July but the Iranian website wrote the winger and his representatives were in Italy in recent days for negotiations with the Italian top-flight side.

The Iranian is now with the national team in Tashkent for a match against Uzbekistan in the World Cup Asian qualifiers on

Thursday, followed by the home game against Qatar in Mashhad's Imam Reza Stadium five days later.

Should Jahanbakhsh join Genoa he will become the second Iranian to move to the Italian top flight this season, following international teammate Mahdi Taremi, who signed for Inter Milan as a free agent from Porto in the summer.

Jahanbakhsh spent three seasons with Feyenoord, bagging 17 goals and 16 assists in 106 appearances across all competitions – including nine Eredivisie strikes.

First introduced to the European club football with Dutch club NEC Nijmegen in 2013, Jahanbakhsh enjoyed his most prolific spell with AZ Alkmaar between 2015 and 2018, where he contributed with 37 goals and 31 assists in 111 outings.

A stellar 2017/18 campaign, in

which Jahanbakhsh finished as the league's leading marksman with 21 strikes, saw the Iranian join Brighton & Hove Albion for a then-club record fee of €22.5 million.

His contribution for the Premier League outfit, however, was limited to four goals and two assists in 61 games, with 31 of those appearances coming in the starting XI.

Jahanbakhsh, who won the Eredivisie title with Feyenoord in 2023 before lifting the KNVB Cup the previous season, while finishing runner-up to AS Roma in the inaugural UEFA Europa Conference League in 2022, will be looking to have a more impressive stint in another major European league with Genoa.

Genoa, which won promotion back to the top division in 2023, has endured a disappointing start to the new campaign as Alberto Gilardino's side has managed one win in seven league games, sitting third from bottom in the table with five points.

## AFC Women's Champions League:

# Iran's Khatoon keen to bounce back against Kaya FC

### Sports Desk

Iran's Bam Khatoon will be looking to build on an impressive second-half performance in the 2-1 defeat against Melbourne City FC when taking on Filipino club Kaya FC in Group B of the AFC Women's Champions League in Pathum Thani, Thailand, today.

Rhianna Pollicina and Marina Speckmaier scored a couple of late first-half goals for the Australian side on Sunday but a much-improved display after the break saw Khatoon find the net through Mona Hamoudi, whose in-swinging corner kick went straight past Melbourne keeper Malena Garcia with 20 minutes left on the clock.

Hamoudi's strike showed Marziyeh Jafari's side is capable of finding the back of the net against even the toughest of defenses and the Iranian coach will surely adopt a more aggressive approach against Kaya.

Kaya, meanwhile, played to a goalless draw against the group host College of Asian Scholars – a result that left Khatoon bottom of the table, although even

a draw today will see the Iranian side have something to play for against the Thai champion on the final day of the group stage.

Kaya head coach Let Dimzon admitted after the first-day stalemate that improvements are needed in the finishing department.

The top two in each of the three groups will be joined by the best two third-place teams in the last-eight round, which will be played in a single-leg knockout format.



Bam Khatoon's Mona Hamoudi (right) and Samaneh Chahkandi celebrate a goal against Melbourne City FC in the AFC Women's Champions League in Pathum Thani, Thailand, on October 6, 2024.

INSTAGRAM



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# Araghchi: Any Israeli attack on Iran to provoke stronger response

## FM begins regional tour to denounce Israeli crimes

### International Desk

Iran warned Israel that any attack against its infrastructure will provoke an even stronger response amid threats of Israeli retaliation against Iran's attack on the occupying regime's military positions.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Tuesday that the regime is fully aware of the wide-range of targets inside Israel that are within the reach of Iranian missiles, warning Israel against testing Tehran's resolve.

Araghchi was speaking at the "Al-Aqsa Flood; The Beginning of Nasrallah" conference in the capital Tehran on Tuesday.

"We tell the Zionist regime not to test Iran's resolve, as any attack on Iran will be met with an even stronger

response than before," he stressed.

"They have seen the power of our missiles with their own eyes."

He spoke after Israel claimed it was preparing a response to Iran's October 1 missile attack on the occupied territories, its second on the entity in six months. On Friday, US President Joe Biden cautioned Israel against attacking oil installations in Iran, one of the world's top producers of crude.

On October 1, Iran launched hundreds of ballistic missiles towards the Israeli entity's military, espionage and intelligence bases all over the occupied territories, inflicting damage on them.

The operation - dubbed Operation True Promise II - came in response to the

regime's assassinations of Hamas' chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and IRGC commander Abbas Nilforoushan, an Iranian military advisory in Lebanon, in Beirut.

### Regional tour

The Iranian top diplomat, who has just returned from his tour of Lebanon and Syria, said he will visit Saudi Arabia and other countries in the region starting on Tuesday to discuss regional issues and work on stopping Israel's crimes in Gaza and Lebanon.

"Our dialogue continues with regards to the developments in the region to prevent the shameless crimes of the Zionist regime in Lebanon in continuation of its crimes in Gaza," Araghchi said.

"Starting today, I'll start a trip to the region, to Riyadh and other capitals in the region and we will strive to have a collective movement from the countries of the region... to stop the brutal attacks in Lebanon," Araghchi added.

Nearly 42,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip as a result of the Israeli onslaught since the beginning of its devastating war on the Palestinian territory in October 2023. The Gaza Health Ministry says more than 16,000 of those deaths were children.

Alongside the fatalities, nearly 60% of buildings in Gaza have been damaged or destroyed since the beginning of the war.

Nearly two million Palestinians have been displaced by Israel's occupation army and face a grave humanitar-



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi addresses a conference dubbed "Al-Aqsa Flood; The Beginning of Nasrallah" in Tehran, Iran, on October 8, 2024.  
● MARZIEH SOLEIMANI/IRNA

ian crisis.

Israel launched the war on Gaza after the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas waged the surprise Operation al-Aqsa Storm

against Israel in response to the regime's decades-long campaign of bloodletting and devastation against Palestinians.

Israel has also since then

been targeting Lebanon. Since late last month, the regime has escalated its strikes on Lebanon, killing more than 2,000 people in the Arab country.

## Hezbollah backs Lebanese efforts for cease-fire: Sheikh Qassem

Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem said Tuesday the Lebanese resistance group supported Lebanese efforts for a cease-fire with Israel, after two weeks of heavy Israeli strikes that killed its leader.

"We support the political efforts that (Lebanese Parliament Speaker) Nabih Berri is undertaking towards a cease-fire," Qassem said in a televised speech, according to AFP.

After nearly a year of cross-border clashes, Israel intensified its bombing campaign on September 23, killing more than 1,100 people and displacing over a million people since,

according to official figures.

A massive Israeli strike killed the party's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut's southern suburbs on September 27.

"Once a cease-fire is achieved, diplomacy can look into all the other details," Qassem said on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati and Berri, a powerful ally of Hezbollah, have for days been striving for an immediate truce between Israel and Hezbollah, independent of Gaza truce efforts.

Qassem, who has taken over until a new Hezbollah leader is announced, said the group's mil-

itary capacities and leadership were still strong despite the heavy Israeli bombardment.

"The party's leadership and the resistance (Hezbollah) are meticulously organized... We have overcome painful blows," he said.

"I would like to reassure you that our capabilities are fine," he said, speaking of "hundreds of rockets" fired at Israel.

Since the Gaza Strip war began a year ago, Israel and Hezbollah have engaged in near-daily cross-border clashes, with Hezbollah saying it is acting in solidarity with its ally Hamas in the Palestinian territory. Prime Minister Ben-



Sheikh Naim Qassem

jamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials have stressed the need to secure the north near the border with Lebanon so evacuated settlers can return home.

"(Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu says he wants to bring back" the displaced to their homes in northern Israel, Qassem said. But "we say that many more residents will be forced to flee" their homes,

he warned. "God willing, we will defeat Israel and it will not achieve its objectives. The Zionists were stunned after their army failed to advance on the ground in south Lebanon," he stated. Qassem added that an election for a new Hezbollah secretary-general would be held "according to the regulations" and the result would then be announced, but he did not give a clear timeline.

## CIA chief: Iran, Israel not after 'all-out conflict'

### International Desk

CIA chief William Burns said the US intelligence community believes neither Israel nor Iran wants "all-out conflict" as tensions between the two sides have increased in recent weeks over the regime's targeted killings of the leaders and commanders of the resistance front.

The CIA chief, however, said there is a large risk of miscalculation.

Burns said that Israel is "weighing very carefully" how it will respond to Iran's attack last week in which Tehran fired some 200 ballistic missiles, but warned there is potential for "misjudgments."

Speaking at the Cipher Brief security conference in Sea Island, Georgia, Burns said, "We face the very real danger of a further regional escalation of conflict."

Iran launched hundreds of ballistic missiles towards the Israeli entity's

military, espionage and intelligence bases all over the occupied territories on October 1, inflicting damage on them. The operation - dubbed Operation True Promise II - came in response to the regime's assassinations of Hamas' chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and IRGC commander Abbas Nilforoushan, an Iranian military advisory in Lebanon, in Beirut. The Israeli regime has vowed response to Iran's attack and speculation has focused on whether it might choose to strike nuclear sites in Iran.

Referring to Iran's nuclear program, the CIA chief said there is no evidence Iran has decided to rush toward building a nuclear weapon.

Burns claimed Iran has advanced its nuclear program by stockpiling uranium enriched to near weapons-grade levels. As a result, Iran

could quickly secure enough fissile material for an atomic bomb if it chose to and there would be less time for the outside world to respond, he said.

Burns said the US has closely monitored Iran's nuclear activity. "We don't see evidence today that such a decision has been made. We watch it very carefully," he said. Former US president Donald Trump pulled Washington out of the UNSC-endorsed agreement in May 2018, imposing severe economic sanctions against Tehran while Iran was adhering to its commitments under the deal and even continued to do so for a year after the US withdrawal.

Tehran scaled back its commitments to the nuclear deal in a series of pre-announced and clear steps after witnessing the other parties' failure to secure its interest under the agreement.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Araghchi's diplomatic efforts ...

It seems that Arab states are caught between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, weakening Hezbollah and Hamas aligns with their long-standing objectives except for countries close to the Resistance Front, such as Iraq, Syria and Yemen. On the other hand, the continuation of tensions and their potential escalation involving Iran would be detrimental to Arab countries. In such a scenario, Iran would likely target US interests in the region, leading to changes in the regional set-up that would harm Arab states.

Consequently, Arab nations will support efforts to weaken Hezbollah and Hamas, but will not back an escalation of tensions between Iran

and Israel.

Araghchi's regional tour will likely focus on diplomatic efforts to address the volatile regional situation and clarify Iran's stance on the Resistance Front and the need for peace.

However, another crucial variable is the United States, and whether its diplomatic efforts are in line with Iran's objectives.

It appears that ending the conflict would be beneficial for the Biden administration, particularly as the nation is headed toward the presidential election.

However, the US, like Arab states, seeks to undermine Hezbollah and Hamas. Hezbollah's influence in Lebanon's political spectrum has

been a major obstacle to US maneuvering in the country, and weakening the group would be advantageous to the US.

Another influential factor in the US is Benjamin Netanyahu's allies in the US political landscape, who are largely involved in Donald Trump's election campaign. Just as a cease-fire would be a boon for Biden and the Democrats in the November election, continued or escalating tensions in Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, and potentially the entire region would be a trump card for Trump and the Republicans. Therefore, it can be argued that Netanyahu's recent hawkish actions are, in part, aimed at supporting his allies in Trump's election campaign.

# Clay tablets repatriated from US on display



## Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian unveiled 30 ancient Achaemenid clay tablets, part of a larger collection of 1,100 artifacts returned from the US, at the National Museum of Iran on Tuesday.

The tablets, which date back to the 6th century BC, were repatriated to Iran after intensive consultations between the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, and the Center for East Asian Studies at the University of Chicago (CEAS), IRNA reported.

The artifacts were returned to Iran on September 26 following President Pezeshkian's participation in the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The clay tablets, inscribed in cuneiform, Elamite, and Aramaic languages, provide valuable insights into the manage-

ment of natural resources, roads, social relations, basic necessities of life, wages, and the economy of Achaemenid society during the rule of Darius I, commonly known as Darius the Great.

"These 30 tablets are without text, but they are actually seals that were used to authenticate documents," Jebrael Nokandeh, director of the National Museum of Iran, said. "They are part of a larger collection that provides valuable information about the economy of the Achaemenid Empire during the rule of Darius the Great."

Nokandeh explained that the 1,100 tablets returned from the University of Chicago are part of a larger collection that was loaned to the institution about 90 years ago. "The original collection is much larger, but we have received 1,100 tablets so far," he said. "We have selected 30 of them for display, and they will be on show until November 20."

The Achaemenid Empire was the largest

of the empires of the ancient Near East, extending from the Balkans and Egypt to India and Central Asia. The clay tablets, numbering about 30,000, were discovered by archeologists affiliated with the University of Chicago in the 1930s while excavating in Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Persian Empire.

About 90 years ago, the tablets were loaned to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago for a three-year period, but they were never returned. The US repeatedly resorted to excuses to put off repatriating the tablets to Iran, according to officials.

In 2006, a US federal court ruling sought to seize and auction the invaluable collection of ancient clay tablets. However, an appeals court later overturned the ruling, and in 2018, the US Supreme Court affirmed the subsequent ruling that the collection cannot be taken away.

Several batches of the tablets and related fragments have been delivered

to Iran in recent years, but thousands of parts are still held in the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Last year, late President Ebrahim Raisi brought home 3,500 tablets from the US after attending the UN General Assembly.

Nokandeh said that the National Museum of Iran plans to display the 30 tablets until November 20, and then they will be sent to Persepolis for further study.

He also announced that the museum plans to publish a book about the tablets in Persian soon. "We will also work on a new exhibition of the tablets at Persepolis, which will provide more insights into the Achaemenid Empire," he said.

"These tablets are not just important for Iran, but for the whole world," Nokandeh said. "They provide valuable information about one of the most important periods in human history. We are happy to have them back in Iran, and we will make sure to take good care of them."

The return of the Achaemenid clay tablets is seen as a significant cultural and historical achievement for Iran, and it is hoped that the remaining tablets will be repatriated to the country in the near future.

According to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, a total of 6,868 clay tablets have been returned to Iran so far, and the remaining 8,100 tablets are expected to be returned within the next five years.

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, who also attended the unveiling

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian looks at ancient artifacts on display at the National Museum of Iran in Tehran, October 8, 2024, after a ceremony marking the return of 30 Achaemenid clay tablets from the US, part of a total of 1,100 artifacts repatriated to Iran. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

ceremony, emphasized that Iranian culture is a "unifying" drive.

Salehi Amiri said that while cultural diversity has its roots in the country's history, the core of this civilization lies in unity and cohesion.

Salehi Amiri pointed out that Iranian culture is rich and has a long history, with the power to build civilizations. He noted that the concept of "national unity" is not a new idea, but rather a long-standing tradition in Iran.

Salehi Amiri also emphasized the importance of cultural heritage, saying it is the core of the nation's identity, and that tourism is a product of stability, security, and cultural diplomacy.

Salehi Amiri went on to say that cultural heritage is Iran's soft power, and that the country needs to leverage this power to showcase its cultural and civilizational capabilities to the world.

He called for a shift in the way the country views cultural heritage and tourism, and emphasized that these sectors should be considered a top priority.

The minister concluded by saying that with the help of cultural heritage and tourism, Iran can achieve its 20-year vision of becoming a major player in the global tourism industry, with the potential to replace oil as a major source of revenue.



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# Iranian, Chinese children's paintings on view in Tehran

The second Iran-China Children's Painting Festival concluded on October 8 with the exhibition of 46 artworks and the selection of 24 winners.

The festival, themed "Traditions in Iranian and Chinese Families," was held at the Ghadir Hall of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA). The exhibition will run until October 21, ISNA reported.

The festival received 693 submissions, from which 24 artworks were chosen by a panel of judges. The event was attended by dignitaries, including the China's Ambassador to Iran Zong Peiwu, and the Managing Director of IIDCYA, Hamed Alamati.

In his opening remarks, Alamati emphasized the significance of cultural exchange between Iran and China, highlighting the two countries' shared history and traditions. He expressed hope that the festival would become an annual event, promoting friendship and understanding between Iranian and Chinese children.

The Chinese envoy congratulated the winners and praised the festival for fostering cultural exchange between the two nations.

He noted the similarities between Iranian and Chinese traditions, citing the presence of fish on both countries' new year tables.

The festival's theme was cho-

sen to promote cross-cultural understanding and appreciation between Iranian and Chinese children. The artworks on display showcased the diversity and richness of both cultures, with vibrant colors and imaginative depictions of traditional family scenes.

The judges' panel praised the high quality of the submissions, noting the creativity and talent of the young artists. The winners were awarded prizes, and the exhibition will remain open to the public for two weeks.

In a statement, the IIDCYA emphasized the importance of cultural exchange and people-to-people diplomacy, particularly among children and young adults. The organization

expressed hope that the festival would become a regular event, promoting friendship and cooperation between Iran and China.

The festival was also attended by Iranian artist and researcher Zahra Dastan, who spoke about the significance of cultural exchange and the importance of understanding each other's traditions.

The IIDCYA has been promoting cultural exchange between Iran and China through various initiatives, including a previous joint painting festival held in 2022. The organization aims to foster greater understanding and cooperation between the two nations through people-to-people diplomacy.

In related news, the IIDCYA

announced plans to hold a future festival on the theme of the Silk Road, an ancient trade route that connected Iran and China. The organization also

expressed hope to involve Palestinian children in future events, promoting cultural exchange and understanding among the three nations.

