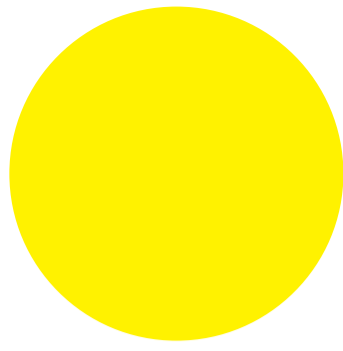


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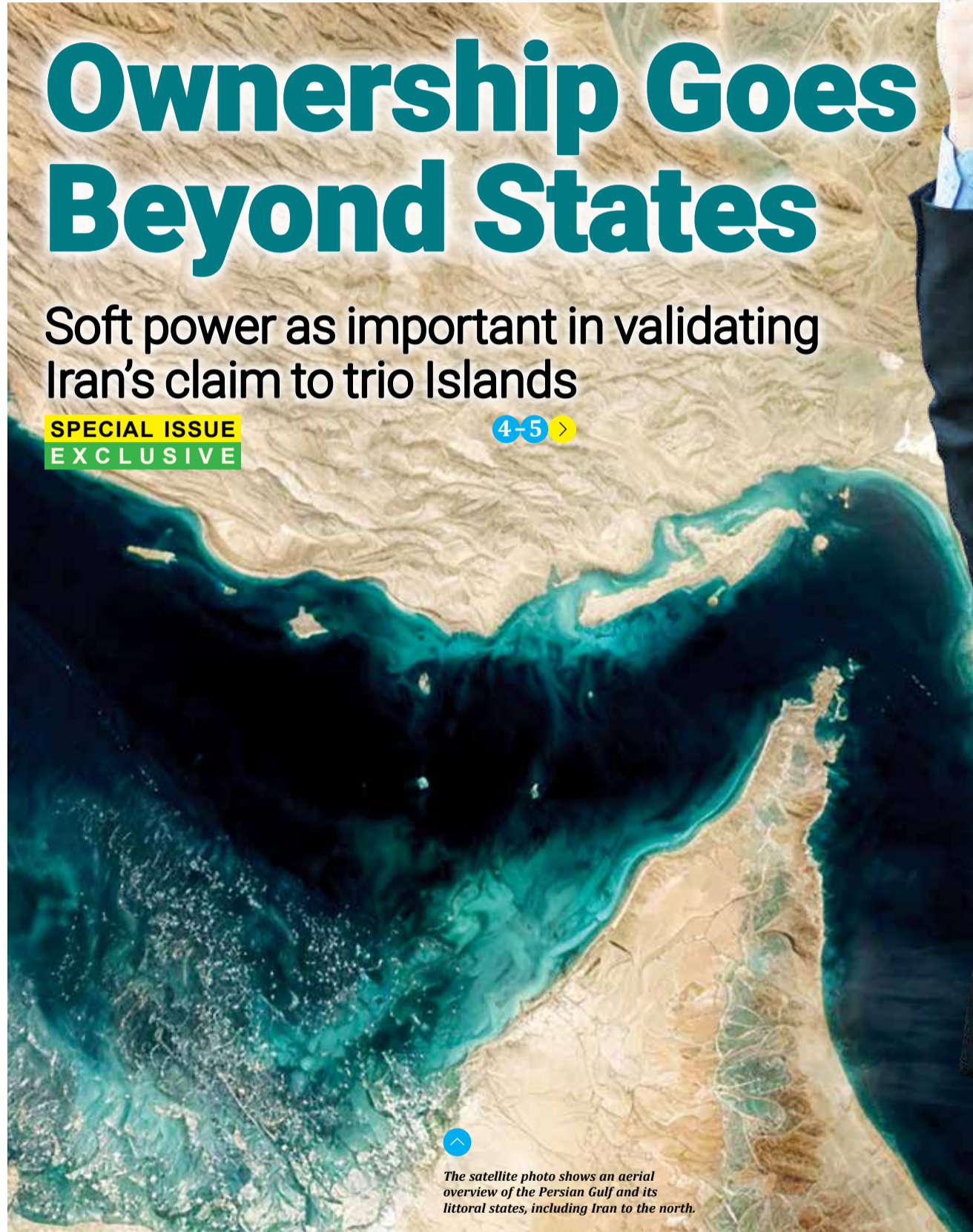
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The satellite photo shows an aerial overview of the Persian Gulf and its littoral states, including Iran to the north.

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Hamas is alive, will remain alive despite Sinwar's loss: *Leader*

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the resistance front remains unstoppable despite the martyrdom of its "prominent figures."

In a message on Saturday, a day after Palestine's Hamas resistance group confirmed the death of its leader Yahya Sinwar in Gaza, Ayatollah Khamenei extended his condolences to his family, comrades, and all those devoted to jihad (struggle) for the sake of God.

He praised Sinwar for his significant role in confronting the "aggressive enemy," describing him as a "shining figure" of resistance and struggle.

"He was a shining figure of resistance and struggle. With a steely resolve,

he stood firm against the oppressive and aggressive enemy," he wrote.

"With wisdom and courage, he struck it (the enemy) hard, leaving behind the irreversible blow of October 7 in the history of this region. And then, with dignity and pride, he ascended to the heavens of the martyrs."

The Leader also emphasized the unwavering trajectory of the resistance front, stating that it remains unstoppable despite the martyrdom of its "prominent" figures.

"Someone like [Sinwar], who spent a lifetime fighting against the usurping and oppressive enemy, deserves no end other than martyrdom. His loss is certainly painful for the resistance front, but this

front did not stop advancing with the martyrdom of prominent figures such as Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, Fat'hi Shaqaqi, [Abdel Aziz] Rantisi, and Ismail Haniyeh, and it will not slow down in the slightest with the martyrdom of Sinwar, God willing. Hamas is alive and will remain alive," he said, referring to Hamas leaders all assassinated by Israel.

He reaffirmed the Islamic Republic's commitment to supporting the resistance fighters.

The Palestinian resistance group said on Friday that it would take strength from the death of Sinwar.

"Yahya Sinwar and all the leaders and symbols of the movement who preceded him on the path of dignity and martyrdom

and the project of liberation and return will only build our movement and resistance in strength," Qatar-based official Khalil al-Hayya said in a video statement broadcast by Al Jazeera.

Hamas's armed wing Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades also vowed to keep fighting Israel until the "liberation of Palestine."

"Our fight will not stop until Palestine is liberated, the last Zionist is expelled, and all our legitimate rights are regained," the group said in a statement. On Friday, Hamas confirmed that Sinwar was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Gaza's Rafah city. Sinwar was named the group's paramount leader on August 6, as a successor to former political



chief Ismail Haniyeh, who was assassinated in Tehran on July 31. Born in a refugee camp in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, Sinwar, 62, was elected as Hamas'

leader in Gaza in 2017. The leader, who spent half his adult life in Israeli prisons, was the most powerful Hamas leader left alive following the assassination of Haniyeh.



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (l) meets the late leader of Palestine's Hamas resistance group Yahya Sinwar in Tehran on February 12, 2012. [khamenei.ir](https://www.khamenei.ir)

Iran: 3+3 cooperation format bespeaks regional will to settle disputes

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi called the 3+3 regional cooperation platform a symbol of the member states' determination to settle regional disputes by regional countries.

Addressing the third meeting of the 3+3 regional cooperation platform in the Turkish city of Istanbul on Saturday, the top Iranian diplomat welcomed the progress in peace talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia, saying that respect for territorial integrity, national sovereignty, internationally recognized borders and not threatening to use force is a requirement for sustainable peace in the region.

The 3+3 consultative platform, comprising the three South Caucasus countries of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan plus Russia, Turkey, and Iran, was established in an attempt to settle regional issues without foreign interference. The dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh region had been at the center of the three rounds of the talks. The land-locked region has always been internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan though it is mostly populated by ethnic Armenians.

Azerbaijan won the 2020 war, regain-



ing much of the Nagorno-Karabakh. Another battle in September left the entire territory under the control of the Baku government after months of blockade. The first 3+3 meeting was held in Moscow, Russia, in December 2021 at the level of deputy foreign ministers and without the presence of Georgia.

The second was held in Tehran on October 23 with the participation of the foreign ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia and Turkey.

In a post on X on Friday, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry said Tehran is ready to promote stability and friendship in the Caucasus region based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all regional states. "Iran stands ready to work with other partners to make the Caucasus a sphere of stability, friendship, and prosperity based on respect for sovereignty, sovereign equality, and territorial integrity of all regional states," Esmail Baghaei wrote.

Netanyahu's residence targeted by Hezbollah drone

Iran's FM: Israel's policies turn region into powder keg

International Desk

Israel said a drone targeted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's residence on Saturday, as Hezbollah launched a barrage of projectiles into the occupied territories.

Netanyahu's office claimed that the prime minister and his wife were not at their residence in the central town of Caesarea during the drone attack and there were no injuries.

Israel has not said whether the targeted building was part of the Netanyahu's residence nor the extent of any damage.

The Israeli occupation forces admitted that the regime's air defenses were unable to intercept the drone as it pierced through occupied territories.

Netanyahu's warmongering policies have led to deaths of nearly 45,000 people in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon over the past year.

Possibility of all-out war

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned of

the possibility of an ever-expanding war in the West Asia region, describing as a "powder keg" the situation in the strategic area following Israel's heightened escalation in the besieged Gaza Strip and southern Lebanon.

Araghchi made the remarks after discussing various regional and bilateral issues with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan on the sidelines of the meeting of the 3+3 South Caucasus Regional Cooperation Platform in Istanbul on Saturday.

"The region has turned into a powder keg, which can put the world in grave danger, and the possibility of war is still high and no one wants this except the Zionist regime, but we are ready for any scenario," he added. Araghchi censured Israel as the "most important source of insecurity" across the globe and said the regime did not scruple to breach international law.

Fidan, for his part, said Tel Aviv is trying to drag Tehran into the war and threatens to target Iran's nuclear facilities.



"We do not want war and we must exercise restraint. A truce should be declared in Gaza and Israel must abandon any threats and aggression."

Hezbollah's attacks

Hezbollah said on Saturday that it fired rockets at northern Israel, including at a military base near the city of Haifa on Saturday.

The group also said it fired a rocket salvo on the northern town of Safid after the Israeli occupation army reported 115 projectiles launched from Lebanon on Saturday. Late last month, Israel dramatically stepped up its air strikes on Lebanon and sent in ground forces after nearly

a year of cross-border exchanges.

Since late September, the war has left at least 1,418 people dead in Lebanon, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese health ministry figures, though the real toll is likely higher.

Israel also hammered Gaza with air strikes, with an overnight raid on Jabalia in the north killing 33 people.

Gaza's civil defense agency said Saturday more than 400 Palestinians were killed in the north of the territory over the past two weeks during an ongoing military assault Israel. The regime's strikes have claimed the lives of more than 42,500 Palestinians since October 2023.

Iran hosts joint IMEX 2024 naval drills in southern waters

International Desk

Naval drills hosted by Iran with the participation of several foreign countries kicked off in the Indian Ocean on Saturday.

The exercises, dubbed IONS Maritime Exercise (IMEX) 2024, are aimed at boosting "collective security in the region, expand multilateral cooperation, and display the goodwill and capabilities to safeguard peace, friendship and maritime security," as reported by Iran's state media.

Participants would practice tactics to ensure international maritime trade security, protect maritime

routes, enhance humanitarian measures and exchange information on rescue and relief operations.

Rear Admiral Mostafa Tajeddini, the spokesman of the joint naval drill, said the exercise, hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy, Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy, naval division of the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization, started in the First Naval Region of the Iranian Navy in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas on Saturday. He added that naval forces from several foreign coun-

tries like Bangladesh, India, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand have taken part in the maritime exercise along with their Iranian counterparts.

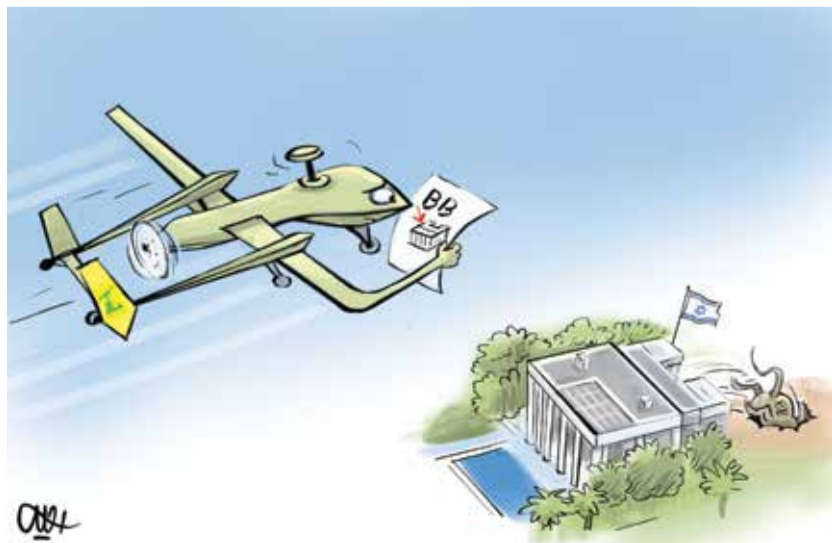
Tajeddini noted that the combined naval exercise would include specialized meetings and workshops in order to transfer expertise to the participating forces. He stated that units taking part in the joint naval drill will play out various scenarios such as fire control, search and rescue operations as well as oil spill recovery and clean-up methods. The naval exercise is held

under the motto of "Together for a safe and secure Indian Ocean," Tajeddini said. It carries the message of peace, friendship, empathy and collective participation.

The IONS features 24 Indian Ocean littoral states, which gather biennially for multilateral meetings and naval exercises.

The IONS is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Khuzestan's Qasemi Gorge; stunning blend of adventure, beauty



Iranica Desk

Khuzestan Province, located in the southwest of Iran, is one of the oldest inhabited regions of the Iranian plateau. This rich historical background, combined with its proximity to the Persian Gulf and the Karun, Karkheh, and Arvand rivers, has given rise to numerous historical, natural, and geological attractions, making it a popular destination for tourism. Qasemi Gorge, situated in Izeh, is approximately 240 kilometers from Ahvaz (the capital of Khuzestan Province).

It is one of the most distinctive sights in western Iran and is ranked among the country's most beautiful gorges. Its location next to the Karun 3 Dam Lake and the options for boating in the valley significantly enhance the experience of visiting. As such, Qasemi Gorge is a must-see destination in Khuzestan Province. Qasemi Gorge is nestled in the east of Khuzestan Province among the Mongasht

Mountains, which are part of the mountain ranges spanning Izeh, Behbahan, and Lordegan, IRNA wrote.

Following the construction and subsequent flooding of the Karun 3 Dam, a vast lake formed behind the dam. Consequently, the Izeh road and a portion of the Shahr-e Kord to Izeh route became submerged. Since then, land crafts and government-operated barges (available for free) have transported passengers and vehicles across the lake at designated times. Additionally, local motorboats are available to ferry passengers at other intervals.

Qasemi Gorge has formed over many years through various geological periods, shaped by the erosive forces of a river flowing from the Mongasht Heights.

The Qasemi Gorge, characterized by its hard and rocky texture, is largely devoid of vegetation. The large polished stones and the flowing water contribute to the visual beauty of the



● eligasht.com

gorge. The entrance is narrow and receives little sunlight, creating a captivating and eerie atmosphere. As you venture further in, the sunlight gradually increases, illuminating the surroundings.

As you glide through the Qasemi Gorge by boat, you will be mesmerized by the grandeur of the walls, while the sound of rushing water intensifies,

and splashes surround you. In that moment, the charming and small waterfall of the Qasemi Gorge reveals itself, enhancing the gorge's allure. The experiences of entering and exiting the gorge are truly breathtaking and unforgettable.

Spring is the ideal time to visit the Qasemi Gorge. During summer, the weather in Khuzestan can be hot and humid, leading

many tourists to steer clear of the region. In most years, during fall and winter, the water level of the Karun 3 dam lake decreases, causing the ground of the Qasemi Gorge to dry out, which diminishes its charm compared to spring. The early hours of the day are the best time to explore this magnificent gorge.

Visiting the Qasemi Gorge offers a range of recreational activities. River rafting on the Karun River and boating are essential parts of this adventure, and the thrill of navigating through the narrow gorge in a motorboat will leave a lasting impression. Rock climbing is another exciting option for enthusiasts, making the gorge a popular destination for both adventure seekers and professional divers. Swimming and water play are also favored pastimes for tourists; if you are a skilled swimmer, don't miss the chance to enjoy the refreshing waters. Watching the waterfall should definitely

be included in your list of activities while in the gorge.

Before heading to the Qasemi Gorge, it's crucial to check the weather conditions. If there's a chance of rain, consider postponing your visit. Due to the gorge's narrowness, it's essential to be accompanied by professional boatmen; attempting to navigate alone may lead to collisions with the walls, posing serious risks.

Adhere to all safety precautions while on the boats, and ensure you wear a life jacket. If you happen to fall into the water in the narrow sections, the risk of drowning under the boat is significantly heightened. For your trip to the Qasemi Gorge, you'll need a variety of equipment. Life jackets and waterproof clothing are the most important items to bring. Additionally, consider packing drinking water and snacks, a cap, sunscreen, extra clothing, suitable footwear for the beach or river rafting, a waterproof camera, and a monopod.

Historic charm of Mir Gholam Hashemi Castle in Darreh Shahr

Iranica Desk

Darreh Shahr is regarded as one of the historical cities in the western part of Iran, situated near the foothills of Kabir Kuh, part of the Zagros Mountain. This city lies on the southern bank of the Seymareh River in the southeastern region of Ilam Province. Darreh Shahr is bordered to the east and southeast by the provinces of Lorestan and Khuzestan, while to the north, northwest, and southwest, it connects with other cities of Ilam Province. The presence of Kabir Kuh at the city's edge has created a forest cover that significantly influences the local climate, providing a unique beauty during late winter and spring, according to IRNA.

Due to the Seymareh River and its location at the foot of the Zagros Mountains, many past governors of Ilam have constructed historical castles in this area. Hashemabad, a picturesque tourist village located 10 kilometers from Darreh Shahr, is also 10 kilometers from the historical city of Seymareh and 126 kilometers from Ilam, the provincial capital. Known for its pleasant climate and advantageous geographic location, this charming village attracts numerous tourists and nature enthusiasts each year. The Mir Gholam Hashemi Cas-

tle, situated within this village, is considered its most significant historical attraction.

This fortress is designed in the four-ivan style, resembling historical buildings from the Sassanid era, and served both military and residential purposes. The history of this ancient castle dates back 1924, and it has been registered on Iran's National Heritage List.

The materials used in the construction of this fortress contribute to its remarkable strength, with numerous interconnected rooms built in a nested fashion. The Mir Gholam Hashemi Castle features 35 interlinked rooms, along with two watchtowers located in the northeastern and western sections. Additionally, there are three guard rooms above the entrance archway on the western and northern sides, which were used as observation points. A parapet approximately one meter high has also been constructed around the entire fortress and along the roof for protection.

The exterior of the castle is made from mud and plaster, leaving no empty spaces visible between its walls. In the central courtyard of the castle, there is a square pool, similar to those found in other fortresses, supplied with water through a channel leading from

the river.

Holes in the walls of the fortress were used for ventilating the air inside the tower. The entrance area of the structure protrudes from the main facade, facilitating easy identification. This entrance is higher than the adjacent walls and, due to additional spaces like the throne room and guard room, has been constructed in two levels.

The architecture of this castle adheres to the four-ivan design characteristic of Sassanid-era structures, making it exceptionally solid and durable for its military and residential functions.

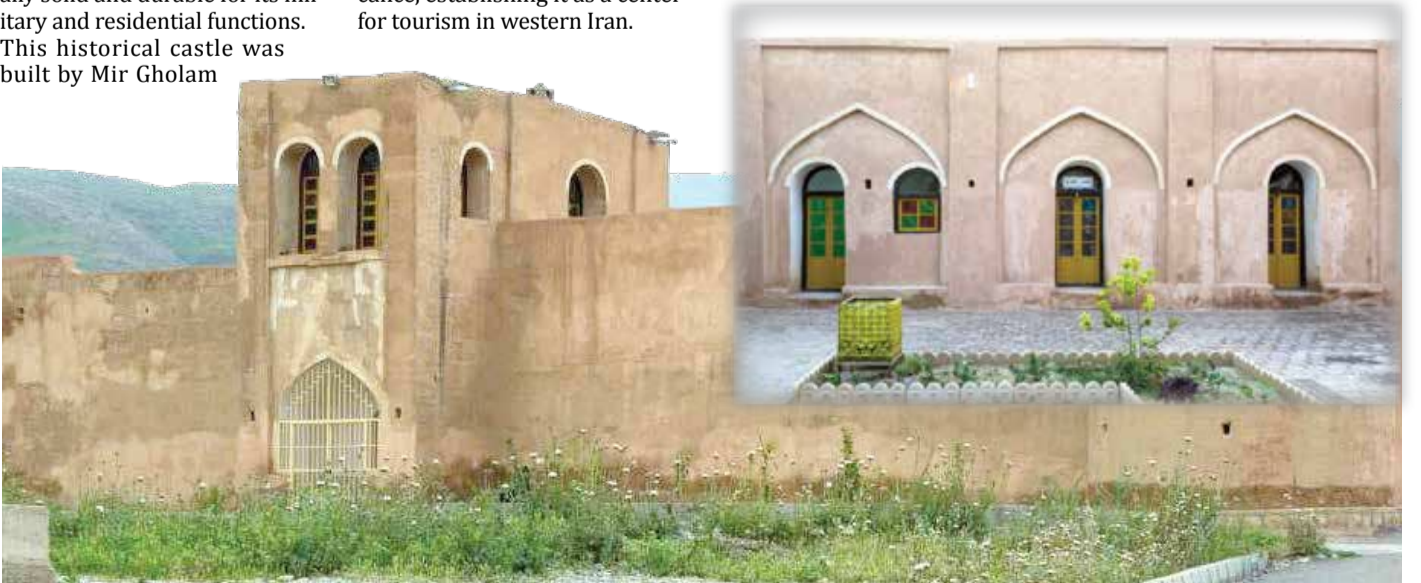
This historical castle was built by Mir Gholam

Hashemi, one of the nobles of Darreh Shahr, during the Pahlavi era, in the Sikan Valley near the river. It was transferred to the Ilam Province's Cultural Heritage Organization by the daughter of Hashemi in 1997.

Darreh Shahr is recognized as the largest ancient city in the western region of the country and is considered the historical hub of Ilam Province due to the richness of its historical resources. Its proximity to Kabir Kuh and the ruins of the ancient city of Madaktu enhances its significance, establishing it as a center for tourism in western Iran.



● tripyar.com



Ownership goes beyond states

Soft power as important in validating Iran's claim to trio Islands



By Seyed Javad Tahaei
Researcher at
Center for
Strategic Research

This article explores the concept of ownership in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and suggests that certain changes are necessary in this regard. The main hypothesis is that, in addition to formal and legal ownership of its territories and islands, Iran also needs to establish spiritual and intellectual ownership of sorts — something that could be termed “reclaimed ownership”.

The article argues that we need to gradually change our understanding of “ownership”. As Iranians, our modern perspective on our country often focuses on nationalist criteria that are relatively recent, whereas Iran’s history spans thousands of years. Moreover, we tend to think of ownership in physical or territorial terms, but it would be beneficial to shift towards a form of ownership that is relational and spiritual. While possession is a personal matter, ownership, in essence, is a relational concept. It is defined as a legal relation between an individual and a thing.

It is important to note that this perspective pertains to a future in which Western schemes against Iran have diminished and the country has assumed a high level of regional power. Therefore, in the current environment where tensions run high, this discussion is intended solely to deepen understanding, without immediate practical or operational implications.

Rethinking Iran

In general, Iran is not a country that can be defined by military or hard power. Throughout history, Iran has been more of a cultural and spiritual reality than a political or military power. Therefore, at this time, it is better to broaden our understanding of our collective identity. We need to understand who we are and what we can strive to become.

The main idea is that concepts like power, security, influence, and ownership, which are often linked with the term ‘national,’ do not align well with the cultural and ethical essence of Iran’s history. Iran cannot act as a military superpower or have the kind of influence beyond its borders in the way that countries such as the United Kingdom have. Moreover, Iran’s diverse and multifaceted social reality makes it difficult for the Iranian government to act swiftly and effectively. Historically, Iran has often been synon-

ymous with having a robust culture and a weak government. Specifically, since the advent of Shia Islam, Iranian culture has been able to smooth challenges that might have arisen from Iran’s geopolitical position, transforming the country into a cultural authority in the world rather than a regional political power. Iranians have focused more on interacting with, attracting, understanding, and even admiring the ‘other’. This ability to admire others has been a key factor in establishing Iran’s cultural authority.

According to this view, Iranians can be effective cultural influencers, but they cannot be effective political dominators. Aggressive policies and enmity towards neighboring nations, instead of strengthening Iran, harm its cultural potential. History shows that Iran has always flourished through relationships and interaction with others, not through enmity and

border-setting.

From this perspective, current policies that are based on national ownership and displays of power, although valid, lack maturity and depth. Displays of territorial pride and national anger might satisfy some feelings in the short term, but in the long term, they hinder the spread of Iranian culture.

Iranians should move towards opening themselves up to neighbors and presenting a cultural image that predates the era of nationalism. Our neighbors should see Iran as a cultural reality, not as a hard power ready for military action. The Iranian government should strive for neighbors to see the Iranian people, rather than an image of Iran’s nationalistic state. In foreign policy, we should showcase the historical Iran that was open to interaction and attraction, not the modern Iran that has been focused more on defining

and separating itself from others.

Modern Iran, due to its tendencies towards domination and thoughts of achieving superiority, has diverged from its authentic path. The Islamic Republic of Iran was formed to end this trend, but this project has not yet been fully realized. Iran is better defined through its interaction and recognition of others, rather than through border-setting and differentiation.

If this perspective is correct, it can be concluded that Iran should be defined more as a cultural and spiritual reality. The more the Iranian government allows cultural-social activities of the society to take the lead, the more it represents the real history of Iran. A deeper understanding of Iran’s cultural potential in pre-modern periods can increase the confidence and openness of Iranian diplomacy, providing new solutions for various issues.

Ownership: A fresh outlook

According to Hannah Arendt, concepts like ownership and class do not fully capture the realities of the modern world; rather, they are interpretations that limit our understanding of these topics. Throughout the twentieth century, the concept of ownership was caught in a dichotomy: liberals believed that the goal of politics should be to protect personal ownership, while socialists argued that liberation from personal ownership would automatically lead to improved political life.

In this discussion, ownership for us is more of a philosophical concept rather than a political or social one. Iran’s ownership of certain territories and islands is indisputable, but the key question is how to exercise this ownership. As Vincent stated, ownership for use is better than ownership that is just for power. In other words, legal and physical ownership is only part of what ownership entails; true ownership is achieved when it is accompanied by initiatives and prac-

tical actions after acquiring it. These actions demonstrate that we not only own something but also actively use and develop it.

When someone truly possesses something, there should be calmness and confidence in their actions. If ownership is properly established, our behavior should be positive and creative rather than tense and reactive. If ownership does not lead to development and real life, it is incomplete. For example, the more a barren land is cultivated, the stronger the ownership over it becomes. Ownership should be such that it leads to initiative and creativity. If the government can act creatively and proactively in foreign affairs, its policy will not be limited to security and legal matters alone. The stronger the ownership, the more the government can distance itself from what it owns while still feeling secure. In contrast, the weaker the ownership, the more it needs to display power. Excessive emphasis on ownership can be

a sign of weakness. Complete ownership does not need to be displayed because if it becomes a matter of awareness, it may lead to questions and doubts. When we truly own something, it becomes part of our identity and existence.

Ownership helps us achieve freedom. Philosophers like Walter Lippmann and Friedrich Hayek have argued that ownership is the foundation of freedom. Through ownership, humans can enter history and civilization and expand their living space. Ludwig von Mises also stated that private property and civilization are inextricably linked.

Ownership gives people identity and distinguishes them within society. This characteristic means that the development of ownership concerns not only individuals but also society as a whole. Expanding ownership brings legitimacy and influence, and the fact that ownership is inherently relational creates inequalities that are not necessarily unjust. The order of the Leader of Iran’s Islamic

Revolution to build housing in the Persian Gulf islands (April 29, 2020) could be seen as the beginning of a process to strengthen Iran’s ownership of these areas. After ownership is solidified, softer policies that attract neighbors can be more beneficial.

In summary, Iran’s interactive and inviting policies on various issues indicate that Iran has reached the stage of complete ownership of its assets. This type of ownership transforms from a legal and objective process to a cultural and human reality. In other words, the more Iranian territories are built and inhabited, and life flows through them, the stronger Iran’s ownership becomes.

Ultimately, ownership becomes complete when it is accompanied by interaction and participation. The goal is for Iran’s ownership of territories and islands to be subconsciously accepted by opposing governments, and to let collaboration and interaction prevail, instead of dis-





A teacher from Abu Musa's Art and Culture Center brings a new homework assignment for the students of a primary school in the island of the Greater Tumb, southern Iran.
● kanoonnews.ir



An Iranian health worker scans newcomers into Iran's southern Abu Musa Island for signs of COVID-19 infection during the coronavirus pandemic.
● IRNA



The photo shows three Iranian children living in the country's southern Island of Abu Musa in the Persian Gulf.
● MOHAMMAD BABAEI/IRNA

Solution to problem

The goal is for Iranian culture and people to influence the surrounding regions rather than focusing solely on the politics and government of Iran. To achieve this goal, engagement with neighbors and even countries that have differences with Iran is essential — though this should follow initiatives such as developing housing on the Persian Gulf islands. Expanding Iranian culture and strengthening ownership is only possible through interaction, not the use of force (except in exceptional circumstances). If a small country, despite obstacles, is ready to engage with Iran, it doesn't matter if it boasts more economic benefits in some areas. In Iranian culture, there are values greater than money and material benefit — such as the idea that the "selfness" of us is more important than our interests.

The ideal situation is for all of Iran's foreign policies to become symbols of cooperation and public diplomacy. Accord-

ingly, Iran's foreign policy in dealing with misunderstandings could be based on the idea that "The selfness of us is more important than the issue of disagreement." Therefore, ownership can be exercised jointly through cooperation with others. This is the same idea Aristotle expressed: It is better "for property to be private and its use communal". Thus, the aim of Iran's foreign policy should be to let the ancient popular and regional flow of life prevail over everything. In such a scenario, no group would benefit more than the Iranians. As the flow of everyday life expands, misunderstandings may not completely disappear, but they will gradually weaken. Instead of focusing on solving the problem, we should drain its energy and weaken its relevance. We often tend to solve problems by using power, thus eliminating them. However, the reality is that a problem rarely has only one solution.

Problems can be delayed, neutralized, or transferred to other areas. The important thing is not to see the problem the way our enemies want us to. If, during engagement and cooperation, concerns about the other side escalate, action should be taken carefully and decisively — but in a way that allows cooperation to resume. Action should be brief, decisive, and without excessive destruction — merely to demonstrate Iran's strength, after which cooperation should be re-established. However, it is preferable that this stage never arises as the need to display power signifies failure in achieving foreign policy goals — goals that are more cultural than political or bureaucratic. Overall, Iran should emphasize its cultural and spiritual depth rather than displaying military and political power. Iran's history shows more cultural finesse and depth than physical power, and this characteristic comes with greater responsibility.

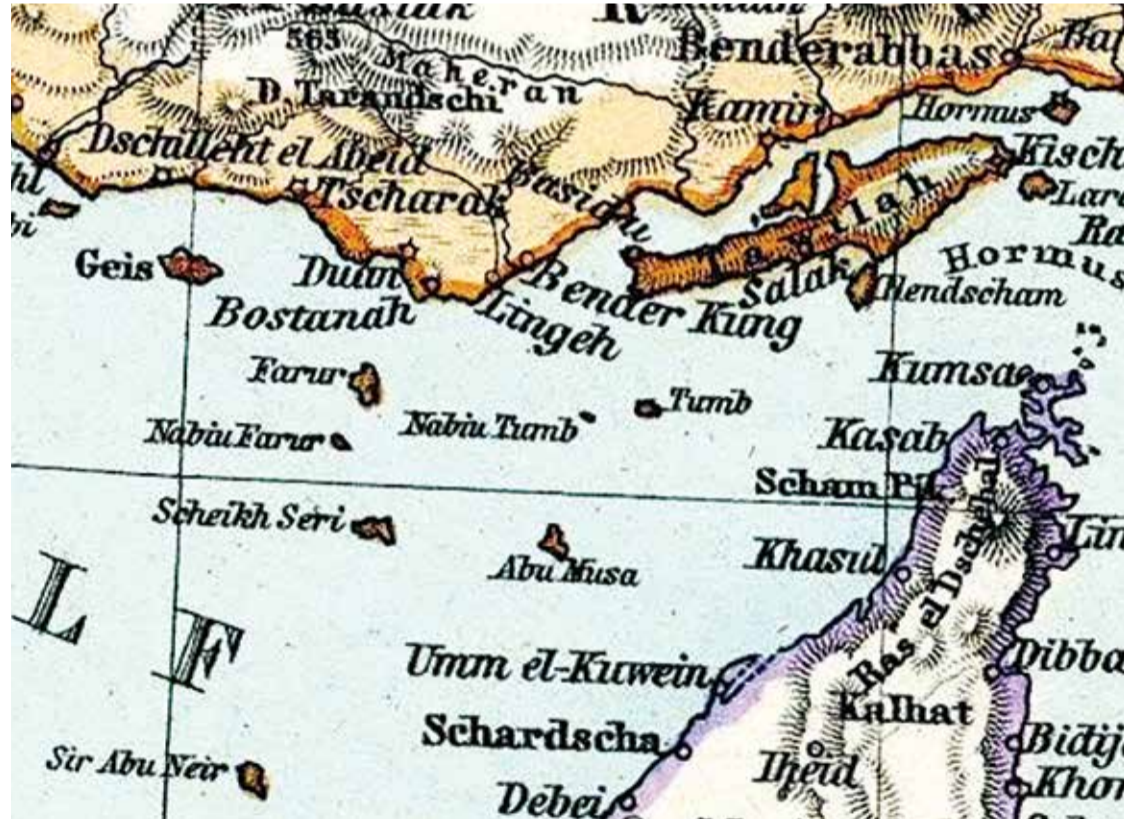
playing power. With increased cooperation and joint activities, misunderstandings will diminish, paving the way for better relationships.

The solution to Iran's foreign policy issues lies mainly within the issues themselves and through direct engagement with neighbors. This engagement should be driven more by the Iranian people and culture than by power and politics. This approach helps us move from hard and formal ownership to cultural and human ownership, strengthening Iran's cultural influence in the region.

Ultimately, belief in the cultural potential of Iran and its people makes direct engagement with neighboring countries possible without the need for displays of power or national symbols. Iranians carry their historical identity and culture with them wherever they go and need no additional displays. The main goal is for Iran to break free from the intellectual constraints of its modern era and return to its true place.



Iranians should move towards opening themselves up to neighbors and presenting a cultural image that predates the era of nationalism. Our neighbors should see Iran as a cultural reality, not as a hard power ready for military action. The Iranian government should strive for neighbors to see the Iranian people, rather than an image of Iran's nationalistic state. In foreign policy, we should showcase the historical Iran that was open to interaction and attraction, not the modern Iran that has been focused more on defining and separating itself from others.



The photo shows a slice of Adolf Stieler's Handatlas (1891) where the three islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tumb, and the Lesser Tumb are colored orange to indicate they were part of the Iranian territory to the north, not the Emirati territory to the southeast.
● WIKIMEDIA

Summary

- 1 The more Iran exerts power in the region, the more it dries up the collective life of Iranians and makes it undesirable.
- 2 Our understanding of ownership is still immature. Legal and physical ownership is just possession, not complete ownership. True ownership is complete when it leads to interaction and connection and is actively used.
- 3 Under normal circumstances, we should keep Aristotle's idea in mind — that the best arrangement is for property to be private and its use communal. Specifically, for border territories like islands, it is better for ownership to be such that neighboring countries are also involved, creating closer bilateral relationships.
- 4 To achieve lasting and peaceful ownership, we must recognize that this path is two-way. Peace is

a collective product and cannot be achieved alone. Complete ownership is achieved through recognition by others, not merely through unilateral displays of power and emphasizing over and over. In general, using violent power for ownership leads to future conflict and hostility. Real security for Iran is not in its own hands but in the hands of its neighbors. In a hostile environment, ownership will never become a stable and accepted reality. Based on what has been discussed, the more Iran emphasizes displays of power, the more it ultimately harms itself as this approach keeps Iran's ownership of its territories incomplete and feeling vulnerable. Thus, we reach a surprising conclusion: while Iran may possess a territory, strengthening this ownership depends on cooperation with neighbors. Neighbors are the main foundation for improv-

ing and consolidating Iran's ownership of its assets. To achieve this, the more Iran's hard power and influence grow, the more it must move towards gentleness and cooperation, using more grassroots and non-governmental methods. This engagement should continue until the issues in foreign policy reach a favorable resolution. This perspective becomes practical when the Iranian government becomes stronger and Iranian society becomes more efficient. These conditions will only materialize when Iran's resistance to Western pressures in the Middle East yields favorable results, leading not to a reduction but an expansion of Iran's choices. The empowerment and strengthening of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a prerequisite for adopting policies of cooperation and friendship, which were also emphasized by Imam Khomeini.



IRGC Navy speedboats sail during a military drill in the waters around Abu Musa Island on August 2, 2023.
● IRNA

'Unyielding' in defending interests of Hamas, Palestine

Who was Yahya Sinwar?

International Desk
PERSPECTIVE

The Palestinian Resistance Movement Hamas announced on Friday the martyrdom of Yahya Sinwar, the head of Hamas' political bureau, "who sought martyrdom and attained it after clashing with a Zionist force alongside other fighters in the Gaza Strip."

Earlier on October 16, Israel said that it had killed Sinwar that day during a chance intense confrontation in the Tel Al-Sultan area of Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip. Despite being part of the Hamas politburo since 2017, his rise in public popularity did not come about until May 2021, when the political party's armed wing, the Qassam Brigades, kicked off the 'Saif Al-Quds' (Sword of Jerusalem) battle in response to repeated Israeli attacks on worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque. The following profile delves into Sinwar's ascent through the ranks of the Islamic Resistance Movement, his ideological convictions, and his role in shaping Hamas' strategies.



Yahya Sinwar (c) greets supporters as he arrives to attend a rally marking Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Day, a commemoration in support of the Palestinian people celebrated annually on the last Friday of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, in Gaza City, on April 14, 2023.
● MAHMUD HAMS/AFP

Born refugee

Yahya Sinwar, also known as Abu Ibrahim, was born on October 29, 1962, in the Khan Younis refugee camp. During the 1948 Nakba, his parents were driven out from their homes in Majdal-Askalan, which was knocked down to have the Israeli settler town of Ashkelon built on its ruins. Scarred by his experiences growing up displaced, under the military occupation of the Gaza Strip — which came about in 1967 — his father said that "Yahya's life was full of agony due to the Zionist aggression. Since his childhood, he was determined to stand up against the occupation."

Early years of political activism

A high performer academically at school, he went on to study at the Islamic University in Gaza, where he helped set up the Islamic Bloc and held several student council positions at the university. In 1982, Sinwar and other members of the student council traveled to visit Palestinian women in Jenin who had allegedly fallen victim to a poisoning attempt by Israelis. It was in response to this visit that he was arrested and thrown into administrative detention (held without charge nor trial) for six months, with the allegation against him being that he took part in subversive Islamist activities. In 1985, he was arrested again. During this second stint in prison, he met and grew close to Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.



Yahya Sinwar is seen during one of his earlier prison sentences.
● VIA MAARIV/POST

Majd Network

At 25, Yahya Sinwar was tasked with setting up a security network, known as Majd, which earned him an uncompromising reputation for dealing with Palestinians who work with Israel. The Majd operated covertly while the Muslim Brotherhood-aligned organization that preceded Hamas, the Mujamma Islamiyya, stayed as a non-combative group until the establishment of Hamas in late 1987. "He makes decisions in the utmost calm, but is unyielding when it

comes to defending the interests of Hamas," Abu Abdallah, a Hamas member who spent years alongside Sinwar in Israeli jails, told AFP in 2017. According to Abu Abdallah, Sinwar was a security operator "par excellence."

In 1988, Sinwar was arrested and reportedly tortured heavily for six weeks after the discovery of armed cells that belonged to the Majd. In 1989, Hamas carried out its first significant armed attack, taking out two Israeli soldiers. Sinwar was convicted on allegations of masterminding the attack and handed a 426-year sentence. He would serve 22 years in prison.

Making most of prison sentences



Yahya Sinwar waves a flag on a bus on his way to Gaza after his release in the Shalit deal in 2011.
● JCPA

Sinwar is said to have kept strict discipline in prisown, learning to speak and read Hebrew fluently and becoming a leader among his fellow prisoners and a focal point for negotiations with prison staff. To fellow inmates, Sinwar was charismatic, sociable, and shrewd, open to detainees from all political factions. He was known for dishing out food to fellow inmates and making kunafa, a dessert of shredded dough stuffed with cheese. He even organized strikes to push for better conditions.

"Being a leader inside prison gave him experience in negotiations and dialogue, and he understood the mentality of the enemy and how to affect it," said Anwar Yassine, a Lebanese citizen who spent about 17 years in Israeli jails, much of the time with Sinwar. Yassine noted how Sinwar always treated him with respect, even though he belonged to the Lebanese Communist Party, whose secular principles conflicted with Hamas' ideology.

During his years in detention, Sinwar also put together a 240-page novel, "Thistle and the Cloves." It tells the story of Palestinian society from the 1967 Mideast war until 2000, when the second intifada began. "This is not my personal story, nor is it the story of a specific person, despite the fact that all the incidents are true," Sinwar wrote in the novel's opening.

In 2008, Sinwar survived an aggressive form of brain tumor after treatment at a Tel Aviv hospital.

Saif Al-Quds

In 2018, under the leadership of Yahya Sinwar, Hamas adopted the policy platform of non-violent resistance in a bid to open themselves up to diplomatic negotiations that could end the siege on Gaza. The Hamas leadership backed the mass non-violent protest movement, known as the 'Great March of Return,' which began on March 30, 2018.

However, following the US decision to unilaterally recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the killing of hundreds of unarmed protesters at the hands of Israeli soldiers, Hamas switched up its approach again. In May 2021, Hamas kicked off the battle of Saif Al-Quds, which was supported by several other armed groups inside the Gaza Strip. Lasting between May 10 and May 21, dubbed the "11-day war", both sides claimed victory.

Since then, Yahya Sinwar's speeches and public appearances have made him a very popular celebrity leader throughout the Arab World. As Israel brought in its most right-wing government in history by 2022, with government authorities making overtures at Al-Aqsa Mosque and signaling at Israeli normalization with Saudi Arabia, Sinwar and other Hamas leaders were seemingly impacted. "Sinwar is a pragmatist, shifting between polit-



ical engagement and armed violence according to circumstances," Hugh Lovatt, a senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, told Al Jazeera in December 2023. On December 14, 2022, Sinwar and other Hamas leaders told a large crowd in Gaza they predicted an "open confrontation" after Israel elected the most right-wing government in its history. Sinwar's threats came up again in early 2023.

Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar (c) shouts slogans as he takes part in a tent city protest near the border with Israel east of Jabalia in the northern Gaza strip on March 30, 2018, to commemorate Land Day.
● MOHAMMED ABED/AFP

Hamas under Sinwar

Being the highest-profiled Hamas leader released in a 2011 prisoner swap deal, Sinwar made his way back to Gaza. Once released, Sinwar quickly climbed up the ladder in Hamas. In 2013, he was elected as a member of Hamas's politburo in Gaza. In 2017, he took on the role of the movement's leader, taking over from Ismail Haniyeh. In the same year, Hamas went through a re-branding and update of its statute, which indicated that the Islamic Resistance Movement would be open to accepting a Two-State Solution. Another war with Israel is "definitely not in our interest," he said at the time. Meanwhile, Sinwar took on a major role in attempting to patch up ties between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority, led by the Fatah Party, but to no avail.



↑ Hamas late leader Ismail Haniyeh (L) and freed Palestinian prisoner Yahya Sinwar, founder of Hamas' military wing, wave as supporters celebrate the release of hundreds of prisoners following a swap with captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit on October 21, 2011, in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip. ● SAID KHATIB/AFP

Regional outreach

In his role leading Hamas in Gaza, Sinwar focused on building up ties in the region. He restored ties with Egypt's leadership and rebuilt links with Iran after disagreements over the war in Syria. "Sinwar has shown himself to be a

skilled leader," Daniel Byman, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, told Al Jazeera, adding that Sinwar pushed the political stakes "even higher" for Israel "because he was released as part of a previous prisoner exchange".

'Mastermind'?



↑ Yahya Sinwar (R), leader of the Palestinian Hamas movement, greets supporters during a rally in Gaza City on May 24, 2021. ● MOHAMMED ABED/AFP

Israeli officials say Sinwar was one of the masterminds behind the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. The surprise attack dealt the most severe blow to that date on the Zionist regime's self-proclaimed invincibility as approximately 1,200 were killed. Mohammed Deif, commander of Hamas's military wing the Qassam Brigades, and Marwan Issa, Deif's deputy, were also said to be behind the attack. Analysts like Lovatt believe Mohammed Deif was the true mastermind of the October 7 attack. But unlike Sinwar, who is known for his fiery public speeches, Deif has not been seen publicly in years. Israel claims that it took out Deif in a

July 13 attack, though Hamas has not confirmed his death. In February, the Israeli military put out images that it claimed show Sinwar — along with his wife, children, and brother Ibrahim — in a tunnel complex in Khan Yunis. The images were reportedly taken just days after the October 7 attack. During the same briefing, Israeli spokesperson Daniel Hagari claimed the military had taken many of the family members of Sinwar and other Hamas leaders captive and were interrogating them. Numerous reports from rights agencies, including the United Nations, have documented the frequent use of torture by Israeli interrogators.

After October 7

Sinwar had operated from Gaza throughout Israel's genocidal 12-month war on the enclave, taking over overall control of the group following the assassination — widely believed to be by Israel — of Hamas politburo head Ismail Haniyeh in late July. Analysts believe that even before Haniyeh's assassination, Sinwar was playing a key role in negotiations for a cease-fire and the exchange of captives and prisoners between Hamas and Israel. Under Sinwar's direction, Hamas kept up its military pressure in Gaza — de-

spite reportedly being affected by Israeli assaults — launching attacks on Israeli positions, as well as keeping up civil administration across the Gaza Strip. Sinwar has been a high-profile target of the Israeli military throughout its Gaza campaign, with numerous claims of the Hamas leader having been trapped or even killed proven false. A devout believer in the Palestinian Cause, his tactician mind that saved him and Hamas members from months of manhunt will be missed in the Resistance Front.

Who might succeed Sinwar?

Israeli analysts weigh in

International Desk PERSPECTIVE

Israeli media have been discussing the potential candidates to succeed Yahya Sinwar, the leader of Hamas, and Iran's role in this selection process. Here's their list of potential candidates.

According to the Israeli website Globes, in the absence of Sinwar — who was assassinated like former Hamas political bureau chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran and Muhammad Deif, the commander of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Al-Mawasi — the list of potential candidates for Hamas leadership has been narrowed. However, the resistance group still has figures capable of stepping into Sinwar's role.

The United States and the European Union have listed the resistance group as a terrorist organization. Reserve Brigadier General Eitan Dangoth told Globes that Muhammad Sinwar, Yahya Sinwar's younger brother, who was imprisoned in Israel for years, is one of the figures inside Gaza who may want to succeed his brother.

However, Idan Zelkovich, a Middle East studies expert, does not see Muhammad Sinwar as a suitable candidate for this position because, at best, he was just a military commander of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam and never had the profile of a political leader among Hamas leaders.

According to Zelkovich, the center of gravity of Hamas leadership is likely to shift back to figures outside Gaza, making Khaled Meshaal and Khalil al-Hayya two potential candidates.

Khaled Meshaal served as the chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau from 1996 until May 2017, when he was succeeded by Ismail Haniyeh. Khalil al-Hayya is a Palestinian politician who serves as the Deputy Chief of the Political Bureau of Hamas since August 2024. Israeli television channel Kan has also mentioned Musa Abu Marzouk, saying he has apparently taken over the military command of Hamas.

Zahar and Hayya have close relations with Tehran, and Hayya recently visited Tehran. However, Khaled Meshaal is known as a prominent figure in Hamas whom Iran does not see fit to lead Hamas. Reserve General Amir Avivi, director of the Bitachonistim (or "Security Experts") group, told Maariv that Hamas still has an active organizational hierarchy, but Hezbollah's recent calls for a ceasefire, unrelated to the situation in Gaza, will isolate Hamas.

Reserve General Amos Yadlin, former head of the Israeli military intelligence organization, wrote on the Maariv website that killing Sinwar was a significant symbolic, tactical, and strategic goal, and it is important that he is no longer on the scene.

Will Sinwar's death end Gaza war?

The death of Hamas' leader has shortened Israeli regime's list, but is this the end of the Gaza war? However, Lucas Weber is skeptical about the impact of Sinwar's death on the outcome of the war in Gaza. The threat intelligence analyst at the Technology Against Terrorism Center emphasized Sinwar's vast experience and high standing within Hamas and among its supporters, saying, "I don't think his killing will fundamentally alter the course of the conflict." Weber continued that Hamas has been fighting for about a year after Israel's retaliatory invasion of Gaza, and defeating this group will be a tough nut to crack.



↑ This screen grab from a handout video released by the Israeli army on October 17, 2024, shows what it says is a drone footage of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar moments before he was killed in the neighborhood of Tal al-Sultan in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip. ● ISRAELI ARMY

↑ The son of senior Hamas official Mazen Fuqaha sits on the shoulders of Hamas's late Gaza chief Yahya Sinwar (C) at a memorial service for Fuqaha in Gaza City on March 27, 2017. Ismail Haniyeh (L), Sinwar's late predecessor as Hamas's politburo chief, accompanies him. ● MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS



↑ In this file picture dated May 26, 2021, the leader of the Palestinian Hamas movement's political wing, Yahya Sinwar (2nd-L), tours the Al-Rimal neighborhood in Gaza City, to assess the damage caused during the recent bombing by Israeli forces. ● MOHAMMED ABED/AFP

In his view, Sinwar's death may necessitate a "change of direction" in Hamas' policies, but it will not significantly impact Israel's efforts to win the war. Weber described Sinwar as a "valuable target" and said that killing him was



a tactical success. Israel eliminated a high-value target at a time when they needed domestic support to expand their military campaign both at home and abroad. According to Weber, the death of Hamas' leader has revealed a high level of change within the resistance group's senior ranks.

Thanassis Cambanis, director of the Century Foundation based in the United States, also weighed in on the issue, saying that assessing the impact of Sinwar's death on Hamas' ability to maintain power in Gaza is difficult. However, he claimed that this event will have two consequences: Firstly, Israel will be emboldened to pursue a complete defeat of Hamas and Gaza with greater intensity, and secondly, this death will create space for negotiations that could ultimately lead to an end to the conflict. The director of the Century Foundation added that neither Hamas nor Israel has shown a serious interest in ending

the war so far, and both sides see the continuation of the war as being in their favor. He foresaw two possibilities for Hamas: After periods of intense resistance, more pragmatic individuals have taken the reins, it has also been observed in some factions or parties that individuals have become even more entrenched in their positions, and with the killing of each leader, their successor has been even more hardline. Trita Parsi, co-founder of the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, also warned that the idea of Hamas' formation, "i.e., the creation of a Palestinian state solely through armed resistance against Israel, has not only not disappeared but has probably grown." He added that Israel's indiscriminate bombing of Gaza and the widespread killing of civilians, including forced starvation, has likely radicalized the Palestinian people and provided more fertile ground for Hamas to recruit.

Khatoon set sights on further progress in Women's Champions League



● MEHR

Sports Desk

Iranian club Bam Khatoon will aim to build on an impressive group-stage run and make a deep run in the inaugural AFC Women's Champions League when the knockout phase gets underway in March. The 10-time Iranian league champion came from behind to beat Group B host College of Asian Scholars 2-1 last week and finish runner-up to Melbourne City with four points. The draw for the last eight of the competition is yet to be made, but young Khatoon striker Sara Didar says she and her teammates don't care who they will face in the next round's single-legged tie, insisting: "We won't be satisfied by just a place in the knockout stage." "Just to progress from the group stage is not the ceiling of our ambitions. We've already set our sights on going further in the knockouts, no matter who our next opponent is going to be. Khatoon players and coaching staff are solely focused on victory in every game and will give their all to achieve that goal," added the Iranian teenager. Having won two in two in the preliminary group, Khatoon began its campaign in Thailand with a 2-1 loss to the Australian champion and was left heartbroken by the 1-1 draw against Kaya of the Philippines after conceding the equalizer deep into stoppage time. "Khatoon players did a great job in Thailand as nobody really expected us to qualify from the group. My players showcased the true potential of the Iranian women. They did themselves and their country proud," head

coach Marziyeh Ja'fari told IRNA. "The first game against Melbourne City was a really tough one. Australia is a powerhouse in women's football and Melbourne had nine international players in the squad. "My players were inexperienced for an international competition, having played only six or seven games abroad over the past four years. They still showed remarkable confidence and delivered a decent performance despite ultimately falling short," Ja'fari added. Khatoon's prolific striker Zahra Qanbari, who scored the 93rd-minute winner against the Thai club, hopes the recent success will help raise the profile of women's football in Iran. When asked about her jubilation after the final-day triumph, Qanbari said: "That strike was truly a milestone for Iranian women's football, as the last-eight berth was a remarkable achievement and a testament to the sport's significant growth in the country in recent years." "Women's football was largely unknown in Iran before the tournament, with many people unaware of its existence, but I'm sure the latest success will contribute to its publicity among the Iranians." The runner-up finish in the group meant Khatoon will face one of Japan's Urawa Red Diamonds, South Korea's Incheon Red Angels, or Ho Chi Minh City of Vietnam in the next round. The semifinals and the final showpiece will be played in a centralized format in May next year.

South African Mosimane appointed as Esteghlal head coach

Sports Desk

South African Pitso Mosimane was named as the new head coach of Esteghlal, the Persian Gulf Pro League club confirmed late on Friday. Mosimane will join up with his new team in Dubai for Tuesday's encounter with Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr in the AFC Champions League Elite. "Esteghlal F.C. is a very big club in the [Persian] Gulf region, with a long and illustrious history. The two Asian Champions League stars on top of their badge tell you what kind of club this is," Mosimane said in a statement. "Their last trophy was won in 2022, and we can believe their fans are hungry for glory once again. The challenge that awaits us is steep, but it is our privilege to lead such a prolific club. I would like to thank the club leadership for placing their trust in us. We are ready to get to work," added the South African, who will be joined by four members of his technical staff in the new job. His appointment brings an end to

the Tehran Blues' desperate search for a permanent coach in recent weeks, after Javad Nekounam stepped down from his role in late September. Nekounam, who led the club to a runner-up finish in the league behind archrival Persepolis last season, endured a poor start to the new campaign, with his team managing two wins in seven outings, while suffering three losses including the defeats in the Tehran Derby and against Al Sadd in the AFC Champions League Elite in Nekounam's last two games in charge. Former Esteghlal center-back Sohrab Bakhtiarzadeh served as an interim coach over the past three weeks, leading the Blues to a 2-1 win at Havadar before a dreadful 3-0 loss to Zob Ahan at home on Friday saw them sit 11th in the league table - eight points adrift of the top. Mosimane's last job was at Abha, though it was one to forget as his team was relegated from the Saudi Pro League last season. However, Esteghlal hierarchy still hopes the 60-year-old, an ex-head

coach of his national team, can build on a decorated career in African club football to restore the good old days for the Blues. Mosimane steered Mamelodi Sundowns to five top-flight titles in his home country, as well as the 2016 CAF Champions League crown, during his six-year stint with the club, before joining Egypt's Al Ahly in 2020, where he won a domestic league and cup double in his first season. The first non-Egyptian African to manage Al Ahly, Mosimane also lifted back-to-back CAF Champions League trophies with the Cairo-based heavyweight in 2020 and 2021, while his team finished third in the 2020 FIFA Club World Cup in Qatar thanks to a shootout victory over Brazil's Palmeiras.

South African head coach Pitso Mosimane signs his contract with Persian Gulf Pro League club Esteghlal on Oct. 19, 2024. ● MT SPORTS



● REUTERS

Martin takes pole in Australia Grand Prix qualifying

REUTERS - World Championship leader Jorge Martin of Pramac Racing put in an impressive performance on Saturday to take pole position ahead of six-time MotoGP champion Marc Marquez in qualifying ahead of today's Australian Grand Prix. Martin secured his third consecutive pole at Phillip Island and sixth of the season with a stunning time of one minute 27.296, almost six tenths of a second

clear of Gresini's Marc Marquez, who had dominated the practice sessions. Aprilia's Maverick Vinales was third quickest, clocking one minute 27.991 to complete an all-Spanish front row, and Marco Bezzecchi of VR46 Racing was fourth. Two-time MotoGP champion Francesco Bagnaia of Ducati, who trails Martin by 10 points in the championship standings, finished

fifth after a slow tire change delayed his second run. "For sure today it was a tricky day, with the wind it was drying fast, we didn't know what to expect in the track. Finally I was able to improve in the second run," Martin said in a post-qualifying interview. "The race will be tough with Marc behind me but I think we are the best in terms of pace so let's go for a good one."