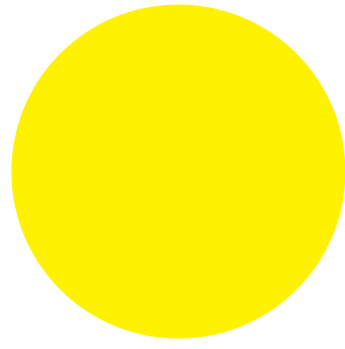


Gov't to solve production, export problems: **President**

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Iran to hit back in kind at any Israeli attack: **Araghchi**

'All targets' identified in Israel

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Iran Flaunts Naval Prowess with Joint Drill

The exercise was held under the motto of "Together for a safe and secure Indian Ocean." It carried the message of peace, friendship, empathy, and collective participation.

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The aerial view shows warships from different countries sailing in Persian Gulf waters during the IONS Maritime Exercise (IMEX) 2024 hosted by Iran on October 19-20, 2024. ● DEFAPRESS



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Putin can help ease Iran-Israel tensions

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Russian President Vladimir Putin has expressed his readiness to mediate between Iran and Israel, although he described it as a difficult task. Does Russia have the capacity to do so? Are Iran and Israel prepared to accept such a proposal? Iran Daily raised the matter in an interview with Hassan Beheshtipour, an international affairs expert and university professor.

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Overhaul operations kick off in Iranian power plants: Official

Economy Desk

The chief executive of Iran Power Plant Repairs Company (IPPRC) announced on Sunday that the maintenance, repair, and overhaul operations have started in Iranian power stations, including Abadan's combined-cycle power plant units.

Masoud Moradi said improving the capacity and strengthening the readiness of the country's power plants is a priority as solving technical problems and carrying out repairs is needed to stabilize electricity generation during peak consumption days, IRNA reported.

The most important mission of the IPPRC is to facilitate the nonstop production of electricity and enhance the stability of the nationwide grid, the official stated.

The IPPRC has recently completed the project of repair and maintenance services of Jandar Gas power plant in the western Syrian province of Homs.

Moradi said on Wednesday that Iran raked in €2.1 million through implementing the project in Syria thanks to its potentials in techno-engineering services.

The Jandar power plant can run on dual-fuel as the primary source being used to power the plant is natural gas. In case of shortage of natural gas, the plant will run on oil, he explained.

Iran's extraterrestrial cultivation focused on basic foodstuffs

Economy Desk

The Agriculture Ministry has put its focus in extraterritorial cultivation on basic foodstuffs such as wheat, barley, oilseeds and the products required for the livestock industry. Abolfazl Raoufi, the head of the Environment Department of the ministry, announced the above on Sunday in a ceremony held in Tehran to mark World Food Day, ISNA reported.

During the last Iranian year (ended March 19), Iran had 400,000 hectares of extraterritorial cultivation in seven countries, which according to the Seventh Development Plan, should reach two million hectares, he noted.

The development of extraterritorial cultivation is one of the main achievements of the Ministry of Agriculture, Moradi said, adding that Iranian investors can work with the ministry in extraterritorial cultivation projects.

Gov't to solve production, export problems: President

Economy Desk

Tehran is ready to cooperate extensively with Iranian manufacturers and traders to solve the production and export problems of the country, said President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Speaking in a ceremony on Sunday to mark the National Exports Day in Tehran, he noted that Iran will become stable with proper collaboration with traders and exporters as the government plans to remove obstacles for trade and production, according to president.ir.

"The government takes every necessary step for you [traders] in global organizations such as Eurasian Economic Union, BRICS, and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)," Pezeshkian said, adding that "we

work together and solve problems."

The president maintained that every organization and body, such as the Supreme Council of Exports, which is needed, should be established, expressing his readiness to hold meetings with Iranian manufacturers and traders to solve problems.

Pezeshkian also criticized some commitments imposed by the Parliament, saying that they have placed excessive burdens on the state and contributed to the country's economic challenges.

"The commitments that the Parliament has imposed on governments do not align with reality," Pezeshkian said. "They have created a debt-ridden government with imbalances in banks and funds, and then they say, 'Solve it.'"



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at a ceremony to mark the National Exports Day in Tehran on October 20, 2024. president.ir

Chabahar Port upgrading commercial capacity of region: MP



By Sadeq Dehqan & Reza Abesh Ahmadlou
Staff writers

A member of the Social Commission of the Parliament said the development of Chabahar Port is not only the basis for the development of trade in Iran, but also a trade gateway

that helps many countries in the region to increase their trade.

Ali Kord told Iran Daily that Chabahar is the only oceanic port in Iran, the development of which not only leads to the removal of poverty from the southern and southeastern provinces of Iran, but also pro-

vides the possibility of connecting landlocked countries in the region, such as Afghanistan and Central Asian states, to high seas waters and develops their trade.

Chabahar Port and Makoran coast have great untapped capacities, said the lawmaker noting that during the 45 years after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, many efforts have been made to develop the region to use its capacities, but the infrastructure was so weak that these efforts have not been satisfactory.

"Chabahar and the potentials of the southern coasts of the country can fetch ample forex for Iran along with job creation and industrial development in the southern parts of the country," he stated.

He went on to say that the realization of these issues depends on the comprehensive development of the southern coasts as well as the attraction of investment in the region, that requires short-, medium- and long-term plans.

Pointing out that Chabahar is one of the important pillars of completing the strategic International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), he said the strategic port plays an important role in sea, air, land and rail transit of the country as it contributes to the development of Sistan and Baluchestan Province and adjacent areas.

Stating that the first step in the development of Chabahar has been taken for many years by turning this area into a Chabahar Free Trade Zone, he said

the port can play a brilliant role in the development of the country thanks to its capacities. The MP went on to say that in this regard, the government should facilitate the attraction of domestic and foreign investment so that investors can freely play a role in the development of the region in accordance with the laws of the Islamic Republic.

Referring to the ineffective investments of Indians and Afghans in Chabahar, he said these investments did not lead to the desired results because they were not properly planned.

We support foreign investors in Iran and Chabahar as the ground is paved now for their investment, the lawmaker concluded.

Iran ready to expand ties with TRACECA members

The CEO of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways Jabbarali Zakeri announced Iran's readiness to boost ties with the TRACECA corridor members. Zakeri made the remarks in a meeting with TRACECA Corridor Secretary General Asset Assavbayev in Tehran on Sunday, IRNA reported.

"The Iranian Railways enjoys good ties with a significant number of TRACECA member countries in the field of transportation, and we hope that this interaction with 13 other countries would be increased," he added. Compared to last Iranian year (ended March 19), rail routes have become more active in the north-south and east-west corridors, Zakeri said, adding that



now a part of the rail network of the north-south and east-west corridors is incomplete, so necessary measures are being taken to fix them.

Assavbayev, for his part, expressed the corridor's members' interest in using the potential of Iran's network, saying that this allows the member countries to increase trade from Central Asia to Tur-

key through Iran. TRACECA is an international transport program involving the European Union and 12 member states of the Eastern European, Caucasus, and Central Asian regions. The program aims to strengthen economic relations, trade, and transport in the regions of the Black Sea basin, South Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Iran, Tanzania sign MoU to develop trade, industrial cooperation

The head of the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) and the director general of the Tanzania Trade Development Authority in a meeting signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance trade and industrial cooperation between the two countries.

At the end of the fifth meeting of Iran-Tanzania Joint Commission on Sunday, Farshad Moqimi and Latifa M. Khamis signed the MoU aimed at enhancing trade and industrial cooperation between the two countries, IRNA wrote. Both sides expressed their readiness to convene a joint committee in the near future to establish a framework that will facilitate and implement collaborative efforts. Moghimi highlighted that



Tanzania's key industrial needs are related to transportation infrastructure, energy supply, raw materials, industrial machinery, mining equipment, and pharmaceutical industry. After a 16-year hiatus, the fifth Iran-Tanzania Joint Economic Commission was held in Dar es Salaam, from October 18 to 20 in the presence of Iranian Minister of Agriculture Gholamreza Nouri Qezel-

jeh. During this meeting, officials and private sector representatives from both countries signed 11 cooperation documents, reflecting the Iranian government's commitment to enhancing cooperation with African countries, particularly Tanzania. The sixth meeting of the Iran-Tanzania Joint Commission is set for 2026 in Tehran.

Unique landscapes of Mesr Desert

Iranica Desk

The Mesr Desert, located in Isfahan Province, is a top destination for tourism and nature enthusiasts who appreciate its boundless beauty. The sand dunes near Mesr village, along

with the presence of camels and specialized off-road vehicles for desert excursions, make this area incredibly attractive, drawing many domestic and international tourists. When planning your trip, be sure to enjoy not only the

desert during the day but also the stunning sunsets and the starry night sky. This desert is regarded as one of the most beautiful natural landscapes in Iran and is a popular spot for nature lovers and desert adventurers. Sur-

rounded by mountain ranges to the west, southwest, and southeast, it forms part of the central Iranian plateau's mountainous terrain. The Mesr Desert boasts stunning sand dunes formed in natural depressions at the foothills of

these mountains, making it a favored destination for both tourists and adventurers, according to IRNA. In recent years, particularly during the tourist season, local residents have increasingly engaged in jobs related to

accommodation and services for visitors to the Mesr Desert. The fame of this desert has transformed their livelihoods; in the past, they primarily relied on agriculture and animal husbandry, cultivating saffron and wheat, and raising camels.



Village and environment

The Mesr Desert is located near a village of the same name, 55 kilometers from Khor, along the route connecting Damghan to Naenin and Isfahan. The village features simple adobe houses with domed roofs and wooden doors, all designed to blend harmoniously with the desert landscape. Adjacent to each home, there is a small barn where residents keep turkeys, goats, and occasionally camels.

While the desert is undeniably beautiful, it can also be harsh and unforgiving. Travelers face several dangers, including shifting sand dunes, the risk of snake and scorpion bites, optical illusions during the day, excessive thirst, and the possibility of getting lost. For those venturing into the desert for the first time, it is advisable to join a Mesr Desert tour, which provides professional guides, eco-lodging, and access to attractions, ensuring a safer and more enjoyable experience.

Best time to visit

The Mesr Desert has a hot and dry climate, resulting in very high temperatures during the warm seasons, while the weather becomes milder in the cooler months. Generally, the days are hot due to the sun's rays, and as night falls, the temperature drops, bringing cooler conditions. Considering this, the ideal time to visit the Mesr Desert is from November to

mid-April. However, the stunning natural beauty and starry skies of the desert make it an attractive destination for nature enthusiasts year-round. Most people who venture into the desert relish the experience of spending nights under the stars and camping amidst its stunning landscapes. If camping isn't your preference, the Mesr Desert offers a variety of accommodations, ranging from traditional eco-lodges to hotels. Many eco-lodges are traditional native houses, showcasing authentic desert-style architecture that immerses guests in the unique charm of desert life.

Camel riding is one of the most enticing activities in the Mesr Desert, allowing tourists to ride camels in designated areas both within the desert and near the village. Today, camel riding has become an essential part of the Mesr Desert tour experience.

All-terrain vehicles provide visitors the chance to drive into the heart of the desert and navigate the sand dunes. Renting off-road vehicles adds an extra thrill, enabling exploration of the desert and the opportunity to perform stunts. The speed and excitement in this pristine environment undoubtedly create unforgettable moments.

Sandboarding is another exhilarating sport that boosts your adrenaline; all you need is a board to enjoy an unforgettable experience. Photography of the Mesr Desert's breathtaking landscapes is also a captivating activity that allows you to

capture lasting memories while appreciating the beauty of your surroundings.

Wildlife

The Mesr Desert is home to a rich diversity of wildlife, including species such as cats, sand foxes, Jafari snakes, rabbits, caracals, various kangaroo and bipedal animals, as well as birds of prey like hawks. Additionally, the desert is inhabited by reptiles such as snakes, lizards, and scorpions.

Gear and clothing

Despite their stunning beauty, desert environments can be harsh and potentially dangerous. Therefore, it is essential to bring the right equipment and have an experienced guide familiar with the area for a safe journey.

Water bottle: Staying hydrated is crucial during a desert trip, as you may not encounter any springs or rivers if you get lost.

Tent: To fully enjoy the desert's breathtaking starry nights, you will need a tent and camping gear for an overnight stay in the heart of the desert.

Clothing: When exploring the desert, it's important to wear clothing that is comfortable for walking and hiking while providing protection against water, wind, and dust. Ideally, your attire should harmonize with the natural surroundings. Wearing long pants and long-sleeve shirts can help prevent sunburn. Lightweight cotton clothing is highly recommended for the Mesr Desert, as it helps keep the body cool.



Echoes of history in Sukias House of Isfahan



Jolfa neighborhood of Isfahan is a unique area where diverse opinions converge, showcasing remarkable aspects of culture and art. This blend is evident in the houses that merge Iranian-Islamic and Armenian artistic traditions, built during the migration of Christians displaced from Jolfa of Azerbaijan to Isfahan. The neighborhood took shape during the reign of Shah Abbas I, featuring elements typical of

other Isfahan neighborhoods, such as a main square, crossroads, waterways, and houses that resemble those found throughout the city. Among these, the Sukias House stands out as one of the surviving structures from the Safavid period, named after its last owner. Architecturally, the Sukias House shares similarities in structure, composition, and appearance with other buildings of its time, while also being functionally

adapted to the culture and customs of Christianity. Although constructed for the Armenian community, it adheres to the architectural style of Safavid-era Isfahan.

The largest space in the Sukias House is the courtyard, resembling a pavilion in line with Safavid design principles, influenced by the Christian garden aesthetics. The building is divided into southern and northern sections relative

to the courtyard, with the southern part overlooking a private courtyard and entry occurring from the northern section through a vestibule. It rises two stories, resting on a platform approximately 40 centimeters high, featuring domed ceilings and arches. The entrance is richly adorned with muqarnas, complemented by platforms beside the wooden door, a vestibule, and a corridor leading to the kitchen, as well as a dedicated prayer

room and rooms overlooking a small columned porch. The courtyard includes flower beds and a pond on the northern side. The northern section contains a hall, a columned veranda, and additional rooms. The primary materials used in construction are adobe, finished with protective coatings.

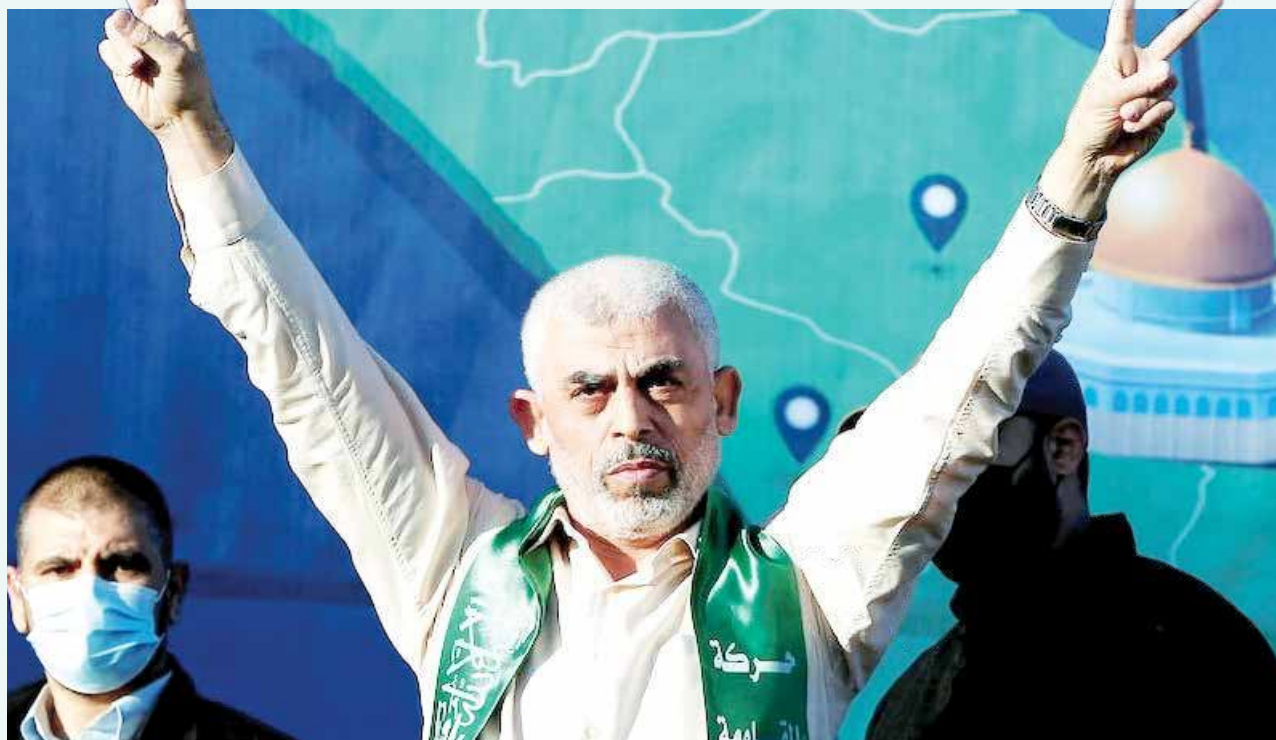
The decorated hall or pool house is cruciform in design, two stories high, with a circular dome over a quadrilateral section and a central pond featuring a fountain. This hall connects to the private courtyard or a separate part of the main courtyard via a wooden door. A corridor in the western part of the building links the two larger primary courtyards and the smaller southern courtyard.

Currently, the Sukias House is under the jurisdiction of the Isfahan University of Art, which is fortunate as the university is committed to preserving and restoring the structure. However, this also means that public access to the building is limited. Nonetheless, visiting this unique site is worthwhile, and coordination with the university is recommended to arrange a visit.

From personal struggles to collective strength: 'Self-Made' in resistance

Understanding secrets of Yahya Sinwar's brave struggle through lens of his novel

'The Thorn and the Carnation' is a captivating novel written by Yahya Sinwar during his long imprisonment in Israeli jails. The narrative offers a deep insight into the resilience and ethics of a man who played a pivotal role in shaping the discourse of Palestinian resistance. Written gradually over the years of his incarceration, the novel explores the psyche of a man confined by walls, recounts a story of endurance, and provides insights into strategic thinking. Regarding the book *'The Thorn and the Carnation,'* two specific articles have been written: one by Hesham Taha and the other by Haneen Odetallah. Taha's article is more of a review of the book, whereas the article titled *'The Philosophy of Hamas in the Writings of Yahya Sinwar,'* authored by Haneen Odetallah, is a deeper exploration of the novel. Originally published in Arabic, Haneen Odetallah uses Sinwar's novel, as a lens to analyze the mindset of contemporary resistance. The article delves into themes of self-reliance, sacrifice, and security awareness. It examines how these concepts emerge within individuals to enhance political supremacy and collective liberation, unveiling the strategic and existential dimensions of the resistance movement. It also offers a unique perspective on Hamas' ideology. In this essay, a translation and summary of the two articles are provided for the readers.



Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar flashes V sign during an anti-Israel rally in Gaza City, on May 24, 2021.
 MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS

A story of resilience

This captivating novel provides a profound insight into the flexibility and ethics of a man who played a pivotal role in shaping the discourse of Palestinian resistance. It explores the psyche of a man confined by walls, narrating a tale of endurance while offering insights into strategic thinking. Readers follow Sinwar's role in leading Palestine through the corridors of his mind, possibly where the seeds of the Operation Al-Aqsa Flood were planted, launched on October 7, 2023. This narrative serves as a testament to the spirit of a people enduring conflict, emphasizing the personal sacrifices represented by Sinwar and his comrades. The themes of liberation and resistance provide a glimpse into the essence of a movement and the heart of one of its most enigmatic leaders. The translation of this collection ensures that Sinwar's intensity and authentic voice remain intact, proving that the power of narrative transcends language barriers. *'The Thorn and the Carnation,'* now accessible to global readers, retains the emotional depth and political insight of the original work. As Sinwar currently orchestrates strategies against Israel from Gaza, this novel emerges as an essential reading for those seeking to understand the ongoing tensions in the Middle East. This is more than a story—it's a slice of history and the determination of a man who is carving his role in Palestine's geopolitical landscape. As Sinwar's strategies unfold, his novel serves as both a reflection of the past and a prophetic glimpse into the region's future.

Not just a fictional work

The novel transcends traditional storytelling, offering an unfiltered glimpse into the daily struggles and ideological battles of its characters. The narrative, as fragrant as cloves and thorny as its namesake, intertwines the lives of a Palestinian family in a coastal Gaza camp, reflecting personal affairs amid harsh realities. This gripping story connects personal fates to broader political turmoil, demonstrating how individual lives are tangibly propelled forward through national struggles. We are

introduced to Mahmoud, the elder son, who becomes a beloved figure of resistance and the story's narrator. His journey from introspection to action challenges us to understand not only the hardships ahead but also the resilience and shared bond that drive this family—and, by extension, the Palestinian people—toward hope and perseverance.

'The Thorn and the Carnation' serves as a call to understand the reality of Palestine—a narrative written by someone who refuses silence and speaks directly to the heart of the global community. It is a tale of resistance, deep cultural identity, and an unyielding pursuit of freedom and justice, as reflected in the authentic voices of its characters.

Yahya Sinwar, a key figure in Palestinian politics, is known for his leadership in Hamas and his influential role in ongoing conflicts with Israel. His novel begins just before the 1967 defeat, when the strip was under Egyptian administration. Ahmed, the narrator, holds a hopeful view of the Egyptian soldiers, believing the Arab armies would crush Israel and free Palestine, allowing the refugees to return home. However, when they are defeated, he is left in shock.

Being child of fighter does not necessarily make one noble!

The novel recounts the beginnings of resistance against Israeli occupation. Ahmed's father and uncle are killed during a battle with the Israeli army. After this, Ahmed finds himself living in a house with his mother, brothers, sister, grandfather, and cousins, whose mother had left them after remarrying. Ahmed becomes politically aware through his older brother, Mahmoud, who joins the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) while studying in Egypt but is arrested after returning. His cousin, Ibrahim, plays a similar role. Ibrahim frequently meets a character named Sheikh Ahmed (Yassin), one of the founders of Hamas, who was assassinated by Israel in 2004.

These two characters and their influence on Ahmed stand in stark contrast to Hassan, Ibrahim's brother. Hassan, who had exhibited bad behavior since childhood, escapes to Israel, where he

lives with an Israeli girl before returning to Gaza to spy for Israel. Eventually, Ibrahim kills him. Through this character, the author shows that being the child of a freedom fighter does not necessarily make one patriotic or noble!

The novel, in its 30 chapters, also portrays the difficult choice faced by some displaced Palestinians to work in Israel. Some saw it as an opportunity to improve their living conditions for their families, while others viewed it as nothing but treason.

Ahmed describes the brutality of the Israeli occupation and the innovation and resilience of Palestinian resistance. Ahmed also recounts several attempts to smuggle weapons and ammunition into Gaza, which, despite their importance, were nearly impossible to accomplish at the time. As a literary device, Sinwar uses the character of Ahmed to represent the patriotic Palestinian who does not belong to any political faction, although he, like most Arabs in general and Gazans in particular, has a religious inclination. Additionally, Sinwar uses Ahmed's innocence toward Islamist resistance to present events in an unbiased, objective manner, relying on Ibrahim's character to convey this perspective. Ibrahim, tasked with identifying Israeli agents, ends up having to kill his brother, Hassan. One of the bitter ironies in this context is the killing of Fayed, Ibrahim's close friend, who was killed by the resistance after collaborating with Israeli intelligence during the first Intifada. It is worth noting that in real life, Sinwar was responsible for identifying Israeli collaborators, and his nom de guerre was "Abu Ibrahim."

Love still endures

Throughout the novel, the life of Gazans is marked by simplicity and humility, whether in their clothing, food, or even love. In one scene, a young Ahmed sends his mother to propose on his behalf after merely receiving a glance from a love interest. The novel also depicts the persistence of Palestinians in obtaining university degrees, even under the harshest living conditions. The narrator addresses a pressing question regarding the West Bank inhabitants' reluctance

to engage in resistance until the first Intifada in 1987. The explanation offered is that if the armies of three Arab nations could not defeat Israel, how could they? Thus, they embraced a policy of "live and let live."

The book also explores the divide among Palestinians over the Oslo Accords of 1993. On one hand, Mahmoud views it as a path to reclaiming the lands lost in 1967, arguing that factions should show restraint from attacking Israel. On the other hand, Ibrahim sees it as a waste of the blood spilled by the resistance.

After the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 and Netanyahu's cabinet reneging on the Oslo commitments, confrontations between Palestinians and the Israeli army flared up, validating Ibrahim's stance.

During the second Intifada, the Israeli army assassinated Ibrahim with a missile. In the final scene, Ahmed ventures out holding Yasser, Ibrahim's son, and Mahmoud carries Israa, Ibrahim's daughter, both men raising Kalashnikov rifles, symbolizing Palestinian national unity and the importance of armed struggle.

This novel should not be seen as a traditional novel. The text includes descriptions of military operations intertwined with the social life of its main character. Sinwar mentions that he wrote this quasi-novel in 2004 in Be'er Sheva prison in Israel under the title *The Thorn and the Carnation* (Al-Shawk wa Al-Qarnafil), a title often used in recent Arab biographical literature to reflect the contrasting experiences of life—love and violence, hope and despair, gentleness and strength. A more fitting title might be something like *Resistance and Faith*, or even *Faith in Resistance*.

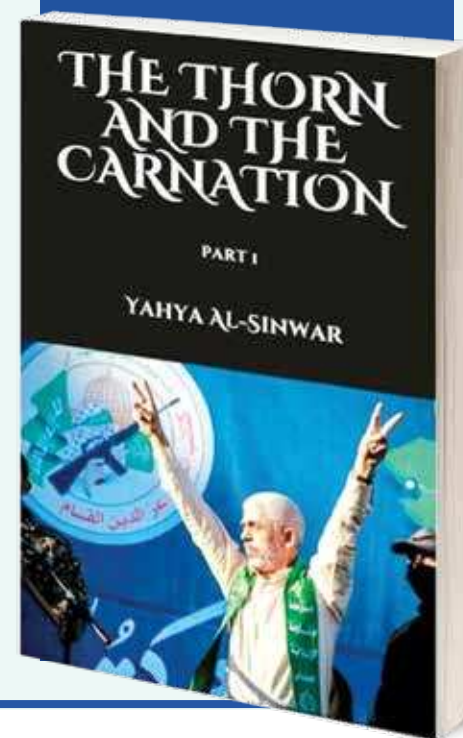
However, Sinwar is not a novelist, and he may be appreciated as a chronicler of Gaza post-1967. Furthermore, Sinwar did not limit his thinking and work to Gaza alone but shed light on the people of the West Bank and the resistance efforts there. From reading *The Thorn and the Carnation*, one can get the sense that the events of October 7, 2023, had been long in the making.

Fruit of years in prison

Sinwar spent 23 years of his life in



'The Thorn and the Carnation' serves as a call to understand the reality of Palestine—a narrative written by someone who refuses silence and speaks directly to the heart of the global community. It is a tale of resistance, deep cultural identity, and an unyielding pursuit of freedom and justice, as reflected in the authentic voices of its characters.



prison, including four years in solitary confinement, yet none of these years were wasted. He learned Hebrew and absorbed everything he could about his enemy, even devising and executing a long-term intelligence plan from behind bars, which was considered highly complex at the time.

In 2004, after an intricate operation that involved significant efforts and recruiting numerous prisoners, Sinwar, still incarcerated at the time, published his novel titled *The Thorn and the Carnation*. The novel delves into the struggles of Palestinians during the historical periods between 1967 and the Al-Aqsa Intifada in the early 2000s, highlighting the rise of Islamic movements in Palestinian resistance—particularly the Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas.

The story expands to include relatives, neighbors, people from the camp, Gaza, the West Bank, and other occupied territories.

A medium for philosophy

The novel features fictional characters, yet all its events are real; the fictional aspect stems from turning these events into a narrative that meets the conditions of a novel, as the author mentions in the introduction. The author's choice to document this critical stage in the history of armed resistance and present it creatively as a novel demonstrates that this effort goes far beyond merely recounting history and its events. It is not just a reflection of past events; it is a deep exploration of the philosophical and moral forces that shape historical movements. The characters in historical novels engage with philosophical struggles within the context of their times. In other words, it serves as a tool to understand the complex relationship between personal beliefs and the broader scope of history. Sinwar steps beyond the confines of traditional historiography to address the dramatic struggles in history, allowing him to explore their philosophical dimensions—particularly the impact of beliefs on history. This enables him to formulate a philosophy for the Islamic Resistance Movement.

Story of a boy from a refugee camp

The story is narrated from the perspective of Ahmed, a boy from a refugee camp, who opens his eyes for the first time to a harsh and unforgiving world: the camp, the war, and the disappearance of his father, a resistance fighter, without a trace. Ahmed observes the camp society, its culture, and his mother's concern for others' honor and reputation—especially when her daughters are involved—and her strictness in this matter. In contrast, Ahmed enjoys accompanying his grandfather to prayer and social gatherings at the camp's mosque. Ahmed watches the political developments in the camp, Gaza, the West Bank, and across the occupied territories. He observes curfews, blockades, the relentless capture of resistance fighters, and collective punishment. He witnesses the normalization of the occupation, material stability, work permits, and leisure trips to the occupied territories, through which more people are coerced or forced to collaborate with the enemy. Ahmed sees Israeli prisons from which he, his relatives, and acquaintances were released and observes the power of determination and organization in changing reality. Most of all, Ahmed sees how the fight for freedom evolves in response to these conditions. Ahmed follows the rise of Hamas through the characters who developed, shaped, and embodied it. The narrator plays the role of an involved observer. He doesn't just watch; he accompanies Ibrahim in his work, studies, and struggle. This distance between Ibrahim and the movement he represents makes Ibrahim a figure whose greatness transcends

the movement. Although Ibrahim does not engage directly with the occupying forces and only attains martyrdom at the end of the book, he knows his fate from the beginning and pursues it without attachment to his wife and children. Perhaps Ibrahim symbolizes a state that the narrator aspires for the political movement to cultivate in society or the ideal individual that the author hopes Hamas will create—a figure who achieves their goals by shaping their self-definition and establishing a political institution for Palestinians.

For the narrator, Ibrahim symbolizes the concept of the "self-made man," which manifests in two instances. First, the narrator mentions that Ibrahim's self-made nature grants him a sense of self-governance and purpose. He even became a professional builder, learning the trade from his friend, with whom he partnered, hired a laborer, and secured medium-sized construction contracts. In the second instance, the self-made individual is also a true leader.



Arab villagers fleeing from an unidentified area in the Galilee in October 1948.
● REUTERS

Thus, being self-made is the foundation of a political leader capable of confronting the circumstances of occupation. "Every day, Ibrahim grew more transcendent and respected in my eyes; he was the one who grew up an orphan after his father was martyred when he was four years old, then was abandoned by his mother while still young, raised among us, and became a self-made man, and a true leader despite his young age and the difficult circumstances under occupation."

"Übermensch" drives the resistance

In existential philosophy, Nietzsche introduces the idea of the "Übermensch" or the "superhuman"; an individual who embodies true freedom and has the power to shape their own destiny. According to Nietzsche, the transcendent individual is one who selects their goals and defines their values and principles without succumbing to societal pressures beyond their control. This concept invites individuals to embrace the "will to power," an inner drive toward freedom and self-sovereignty. Thus, the Übermensch is an intellectual model of a person who breaks societal norms and creates new values.

In contrast, Sinwar's transcendent individual is the self-made political figure; someone who chooses their goals in a way that contributes to their political liberation. They engage in shaping their identity and defining their values within the social and political framework that encompasses them. This process is not merely a personal quest for freedom but a political act that involves challenging and contributing to the formation of collective identity in a way that serves the freedom of the entire society.

The politically transcendent individual, through the self-made philosophy, is a model of the practical person who deals with inherited societal values—social, moral, and religious—as resources to strengthen their commu-

nity's drive for liberation and achieve political ascendance. They understand that their struggle against occupation is an existential battle and a war on the Palestinian "will to power"; that is, a war for their political self-governance. In this context, the self-made philosophy transcends individual autonomy and becomes a tool to influence and shape political discourse. The hardworking individual, committed to achieving their liberatory goal, harnesses all the efforts of others toward this objective. Regarding the Islamic Resistance Movement, it seeks through Islamic values to produce this transcendent individual or this elevated state within the Palestinian individual.

Awakening of Islamic consciousness

The novel begins in the winter of 1967, just before the Naksa (the result of the Six-Day War between Israel and the Arab nations), when Gaza was under Egyptian administration. Ahmed, then five years old, recounts one of his earli-

est memories—his interactions with Egyptian soldiers, whom he frequently visited. They played with him and gave him and his friends pistachio sweets. Then the war begins, and the soldiers shout at them to return, no longer giving them sweets.

"The occupation forces faced fierce resistance in one area and withdrew. Shortly after, a group of tanks and military jeeps appeared, flying Egyptian flags. The resistance fighters rejoiced, thinking reinforcements had arrived, and they emerged from their positions and trenches, firing into the air in celebration. They gathered to welcome the reinforcements, but when the convoy approached, heavy fire was opened on the fighters, killing them. Then, the Zionist flag was raised on those tanks and vehicles instead of the Egyptian flags."

This scene marks an ideological turning point in the Palestinian struggle: the realization of the failure or inadequacy of Arab nationalism as a political current in instilling the necessary seriousness in individuals toward the Palestinian national cause, especially in the face of increasing challenges. The philosophy of the self-made individual carries with it the condition of seriousness and commitment in pursuing one's goals: "Self-made individuals view their goals with respect and conviction and approach their achievement with the utmost seriousness. Without compromise, they are simply committed to doing what it takes to achieve them." Here, the "extraordinary connection between religion and nationalism" achieves this seriousness through the obligation of jihad or holy war, imbuing the national cause with sanctity and planting in the individual the strict seriousness necessary to achieve it, as

A Palestinian man holds an explosive device during an Israeli military raid in the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank, on July 4, 2023.
● MAJDI MOHAMMED/AP



Smoke rises after Israeli strikes on the seaport of Gaza City, in Gaza, October 10, 2023.
● MOHAMMED SALEM/REUTERS

the narrator states: "So that the battle takes its true dimensions and meets the required standards."

When the self-made political individual surveys the situation, they find the Islamic system among the last social systems that has remained steadfast in the face of sociocide—the destruction of society—committed by the occupation. They find, in the intertwining of political practice and faith, in the transfer of the Palestinian's existence and purpose to Allah, a principle that the enemy cannot disintegrate. The self-made individual sees in historical Islamic sites stable political edifices against the occupation's attempts to erode awareness and distort direction. Hence, we find Ibrahim referring to the battle as a "battle of civilization, history, and existence," organizing a trip for the youth to learn about their hidden lands and sacred Islamic historical sites, with the most significant being Al-Aqsa Mosque. These sites embody the flourishing of Palestinian culture, sovereignty, and the shaping of their land's destiny.

Here, the architecture of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the majestic Dome of the Rock stands in stark contrast to the architecture of the refugee camp, which represents the state of confinement for Palestinians. Therefore, Hamas places special emphasis on Al-Aqsa to highlight the sacred historical meanings that immortalize the Palestinian cause, such as the Night Journey of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), forming a point of connection between the land of Palestine and the heavens. Perhaps this is why the battle for the freedom of Palestinian prisoners has been named The Flood of Al-Aqsa—to emphasize that the freedom of Palestinians carries a divine significance, and their liberation is a purpose for which they were created.

'Asceticism' drives struggle through emotions

The novel pays special attention to the stage of "training and preparation" in the history of Hamas's formation. One

day, a sheikh named Ahmed walks by the youth and adolescents in the camp, who wander the streets and pass their time playing. He warns them against idle amusements and urges them to instead engage in prayer, worship, and contemplation, linking all of this to the future of Islam, whose flag, he says, must be raised in the land of Palestine. He then spends decades with them, instilling Islamic values that promote asceticism and the renunciation of worldly desires in favor of the hereafter, creating a generation "capable of sacrifice and selflessness."

Perhaps the novel's thesis is also about love—love, which in Islamic terms represents the strongest bond with oneself and "worldly life." In this novel, it is shown how love, alongside asceticism, reinforces the meaning of existence in political action. The narrator says: "A sense of peace overwhelmed me... Is this love? (...) Later, I was content to watch her go to university from afar. I desired nothing more, not even a glance. It was enough for me to love, and for her to understand that well." Thus, Ahmed is content with knowing love in his own world and postpones pursuing it until the time when he can propose to the woman "who grew up from childhood." He doesn't feel the need for love simply because it is something he has always heard about.

Ibrahim then clarifies to Ahmed that he too knew love but, seeing himself as part of the national struggle, decided not to pursue it. He said: "It becomes a whip that the occupiers lash across the backs of lovers. Ahmed, when they map out this sacred, honorable relationship, they force them to abandon their first love—Jerusalem. Does love still have a place in our lives?" Ibrahim explains how structured asceticism in Islamic philosophy is reflected in political life. It is this training that enables individuals to struggle at any time.

The novel is also referred to as *The Thorn and the Clove* in some accounts.



AFC Champions League Elite: Persepolis out to end winless run

Economy Desk

Persian Gulf Pro League champion Persepolis will vie for a first victory in the new AFC Champions League Elite season when taking on Qatari giant Al Sadd in Doha today.

With just a point from their first two outings and on a run of five consecutive winless games on the continental stage, the Tehran Reds will hope to relive some of the fond memories of the previous meetings with their familiar foes when the final whistle blows at the Jassim bin Hamad Stadium.

The two sides have squared off on seven occasions in the competition over the past six years, with Persepolis coming out on top in four – including a last-eight 1-0 win in their last meeting in 2020.

Qatari international star Akram Afif provided his teammates with three assists to help Al Sadd defeat Al Shahaniya 4-2 in the Qatar Stars League on Friday, while Persepolis has not been in action since claiming a 1-0 victory over Chadormalou in the Iranian top flight a fortnight ago.

Persepolis head coach Juan Carlos Garrido will be without Iran international center-back Hossein Kan'ani and Uzbek star winger Oston Urunov due to injury, though the Spaniard will be happy to welcome back instrumental skipper Omid A'alishah

to the squad after recovering from a hamstring problem.

Meanwhile, Al Sadd fullback Pedro Miguel is set to be sidelined for three months after undergoing a surgery, with Algerian Youcef Atal also missing today's game with injury.

Al Sadd is third in the 12-team table of West Zone with four points – courtesy of a 1-1 draw at Al Ain and a 2-0 win at home against Esteghlal – while a first-day 1-0 loss at Al Ahli Saudi and the 1-1 draw against Pakhtakor in Tehran have seen the Reds sit ninth and outside the knockout spots.

Fresh start for Blues

Persepolis archrival Esteghlal will be back in Champions League action on Tuesday, playing Saudi Pro League giant Al Nassr in the neutral venue of Rashid Stadium in Dubai.

Having lost three of their last four games across all competitions, the Tehran Blues could hardly have asked for a more formidable opponent than Cristiano Ronaldo and co., who step into the game on the back of a 2-1 win at Al Shabab – thanks to a Portuguese star's 97th-minute penalty – in the Saudi Pro League on Friday and are yet to lose a game this season.

Esteghlal's desperate search for a permanent head coach following Javad Nekounam's departure last month came to an end with the signing of South African Pit-



● MOJTABA SALEH/AFC

so Mosimane on Friday night. However, Mosimane, whose Abha side was thrashed by eight goals against Al Nassr in April before being relegated from the Saudi Pro League, will

watch Tuesday's game from the stands, with interim coach Sohrab Bakhtiarizadeh remaining in charge of the bench, the club announced.

Hammered by Zob Ahan (3-0)

in the Iranian league on Friday, Esteghlal began its Asian campaign with a 3-0 win against Al Gharafa at home before falling to an away loss to Al Sadd and is fifth in the West standings with

three points.

Al Nassr, meanwhile, defeated Al Rayyan 2-1 but was held to a 1-1 stalemate at Iraqi side Al Shorta in Baghdad to stand above Esteghlal in the table.

ICF Canoe Polo World Championships: Iranian girls finish fourth to secure World Games berth



● canoief.com

Economy Desk

Iranian women's team sealed a place in next year's World Games after a fourth-place finish at the ICF Canoe Polo World Championships in Deqing, China, on Sunday.

The Iranian girls started the final day of the competition with a 3-2 victory over Singapore, courtesy of goals from Fatemeh Jalilian, Atousa Eslami, and Elaheh Pourabdian, to finish runner-up to the Netherlands in Group WP and progress to the semifinals. Jalilian and Pourabdian were

again on the scoresheet but Iran fell to 7-2 loss to New Zealand in the last-four clash later in the day, before suffering a 2-1 defeat against the Netherlands in the third-place matchup – a third loss to the Dutch women for Iran at this year's event.

New Zealand went on to beat Italy in the final showpiece and lift the women's trophy.

Iranian women got off to a shaky start in the tournament, suffering back-to-back defeats against the Netherlands (6-2) and France (6-1), before bouncing back to beat the Chinese Taipei 3-2 and

stand third in Group WB. Iran defeated Spain 3-2 in their first Group WP game but fell short against the Netherlands and Team GB by the same scoreline (3-2) before beating the Switzerland 4-3 on the penultimate day of the competition.

In the men's draw, Iran had to settle for a 15th-place finish after a 7-4 win against Australia.

Having stood second in the Group MS table, Iran had come out victorious 7-2 against South Africa in the first game of the 15-18 classification round on the final day.

Sinner hopes for long rivalry with Alcaraz

REUTERS – The rivalry between Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz, the world's two highest ranked players, brings out the best in both, Sinner said on Saturday after beating Alcaraz in the final of the Six Kings Slam exhibition event in Saudi Arabia.

Sinner, who won 6-7(5) 6-3 6-3 to bag the \$6 million title, said he hoped for a long rivalry with Alcaraz, after Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic faced off for the final time in the third-place match earlier in the day.

"I wake up in the morning trying to understand the ways how to beat him. This kind of

rivalries, this kind of players, they push us always to our 100%," world number one Sinner said in a post-match interview.

"Hopefully this rivalry will last as long as possible. But there are so many other great players who can jump in ... let's see what's coming in the future," the 23-year-old said.

Italy's Sinner and Spain's Alcaraz have won two Grand Slams each this year, with Alcaraz beating Sinner in closely fought clashes at the French Open semi-finals and the China Open final.

The off-the-court friends have

played each other 10 times on the ATP tour, with 21-year-old Alcaraz winning six matches, including the last three.

"I will do everything so that this rivalry gets better and better ... I am happy to share the court with him," four-times Grand Slam winner Alcaraz said.



Italy's Jannik Sinner (L) poses with the trophy after winning the final against Spain's Carlos Alcaraz in the Six Kings Slam exhibition event in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Oct. 19, 2024.

● HAMAD I MOHAMMED/REUTERS



Iran to hit back in kind at any Israeli attack: *Araghchi*

'All targets' identified in Israel

International Desk

Tehran says it has pinpointed all the military targets it plans to strike across the Israeli-occupied territories in case of an attack by the regime against the country. "We will not leave any attack against Iran unanswered and Israel will receive a proportionate response. We have identified all our targets there and a similar attack will be carried out on their targets," Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in an interview with Turkey's NTV. "Any attack on Iran will be considered as crossing our red lines. Such an attack will not go unanswered. The

necessary response will be given to any attack on Iran's nuclear facilities or any similar aggression." Araghchi specifically noted "any strike" on Iran's nuclear sites. Meanwhile, recently-leaked highly-classified US intelligence has revealed preparations Israel appears to be making for a retaliation against Iran's missile attack on the regime's military positions on October 1. One of the documents, which was compiled by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, says the plans involve Israel moving munitions around. Another document says it is

sourced to the National Security Agency and outlines Israeli air force exercises involving air-to-surface missiles, also believed to be in preparation for a strike on Iran. The US is investigating the leak of the classified intelligence. The documents, dated October 15 and 16, began circulating online Friday after being posted on Telegram by an account called "Middle East Spectator." Analysts said the leak could be a US-led attempt to disrupt the Israeli operation. This is while the Pentagon and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence has

so far declined to comment on the leaked documents, but have not disputed their authenticity. On October 1, Iran responded to the Israeli assassination of Hamas political bureau chief Ismail Haniyeh, Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and IRGC Major General Abbas Nilforoushan by launching as many as 200 ballistic missiles toward the regime's military and intelligence bases all over the occupied Palestinian territories. While the Israeli regime has threatened to retaliate, Iranian officials have warned that Tehran is "ready to respond to any adventurism."



Abbas Araghchi

Iran flaunts naval prowess with joint drill

International Desk

A joint naval exercise participated by naval forces from several countries ended in Iran's southern waters in the Persian Gulf. Naval forces from Iran, Russia, Oman, Saudi Arabia, India, Thailand, Pakistan, Qatar and Bangladesh took part in the military drills which began on Saturday. Rear Admiral Mostafa Tajeddini, the spokesperson for the exercise dubbed IONS Maritime Exercise (IMEX) 2024, said that the naval forces practiced a range of operations including maritime firefighting, search operations, and oil spill prevention, control, and countermeasure (SPCC). The drill is part of the IMEX series of exercises, which began in 2022 when the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) conducted the first edition of its IONS Maritime Exercise

2022 (IMEX-22). The naval exercise was held under the motto of "Together for a safe and secure Indian Ocean." It carried the message of peace, friendship, empathy and collective participation. Tajeddini said that establishing security at the regional and international level is very important, and for this reason, the naval forces of the Indian Ocean launched the military maneuver to increase the level of readiness and coordination. Speaking on the sidelines of the drill, Commander of the Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani emphasized Iran's commitment to its responsibilities within IONS. "The Islamic Republic of Iran is in charge of two crucial committees—maritime security and humanitarian actions—and we are fulfilling these duties effectively," he told reporters.

The admiral highlighted the active participation of several IONS member countries, with some sending naval units and observers to the event, while others joined remotely. The exercise, aimed at enhancing maritime security and protecting global trade routes, represents a significant collaboration among member states. Admiral Irani emphasized that Iran's presence in the region serves as a stabilizing force. "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



UN raps Israel's deadly air strikes in northern Gaza

The UN peace envoy for the Middle East on Sunday condemned Israel's continued attacks on civilians after the regime's air strikes in Gaza's Beit Lahiya killed dozens late on Saturday. "This follows weeks of intensified operations resulting in scores of civilian fatalities and near total lack of humanitarian aid reaching populations in the north," said Tor Wennesland, the UN Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process. Israel's military said it intensified attacks in northern Gaza in early October to prevent Hamas from regrouping. A total of 87 people were killed or missing under the

rubble after an Israeli attack on Saturday on Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza, the Gaza health ministry said on Sunday. "Victims are still under the rubble and on the road and ambulance teams and civil emergency can't reach them," the ministry said in a statement. The strike came two weeks into an Israel's major operation around the town of Jabalia, just to the south of Beit Lahiya. Evacuation orders, directing people south, have fueled fears among many Palestinians that the operation is intended to clear them out of the northern part of Gaza in



A Palestinian child receives treatment at the Kamal Adwan Hospital after an Israeli air strike in Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip on October 19, 2024. ISLAM AHMED/AFP

order to help ensure Israeli control of the area after the war. More than 42,600 Palestinians have been killed during Israel's offensive and thousands more are thought to be buried under the rubble. Much of the coastal enclave has been destroyed and most

of its 2.3 million population has been displaced. As the fighting has continued, health officials have reported stark shortages of food, fuel and medical supplies to treat patients in the three remaining hospitals still partially operating in the area.

Tehran slams Israeli assassination of Iranian woman in Lebanon

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei strongly condemned Israel's assassination of an Iranian woman and her Lebanese husband in a "brutal" act of terrorism in Lebanon. The Iranian woman, named Masoumeh Karbasi, mother of five, and her husband, Dr. Rida Awada, were assassinated in the Lebanese city of Jounieh, north of the capital Beirut, after being targeted by an Israeli drone strike on Saturday, Press TV reported. "The Islamic Republic of Iran will use all available means to pursue the issue and hold the Zionist regime accountable for its crimes," the spokesman said. He pointed to a widely circulated footage that shows the assassination of the Iranian national and her husband in a bustling civilian area and emphasized

that the Israeli regime's act is a blatant example of both terrorism and a war crime. Baghaei also praised Karbasi's legacy as well as her scientific and research records and media contributions in supporting the resistance front. He noted that Israel's brutality in assassinating the Iranian woman is another sign of the inherent hostility of the regime towards Iran. The Iranian spokesperson called on international human rights bodies not to remain indifferent to the act of assassination, which he said is part of Israel's ongoing genocide in occupied Palestine and Lebanon. Israel has been targeting Lebanon since October 2023, after the regime launched a genocidal war on the Gaza



Masoumeh Karbasi

Strip. Since late September, Israel has escalated its strikes against the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah, assassinating its leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and a number of its senior figures. At least 2,350 people have been killed by Israeli fire, and 10,906 others wounded since the clashes began last year, according to the health ministry.

Notice of tender for export sale No. 18/1403/Z

Hereby Golgohar Mining & Industrial Co. announces selling and export 70.000 metric tons of Iron Ore Concentrate (%Fe:66.5) on basis of F.O.B at Rajaei Jetty Bandar Abbas - Iran. Interested bidders should find tender documents at Golgohar website: www.geg.ir. All bids on conformity to tender instructions must be submitted no later than 9:00 A.M. on 29. Oct.2024 to Golgohar complex in sirjan (50 km in shiraz road). Bidders are invited to the mentioned address of the seller with an introduction letter of interested buyer and personal identification of the representative. Tender results shall be announced at 9:00 A.M. on 29 Oct.2024 at Golgohar complex in sirjan.

GOLGOHAR MINING & INDUSTRIAL CO.

Putin can help ease Iran-Israel tensions



By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Russian President Vladimir Putin has expressed his readiness to mediate between Iran and Israel, although he described it as a difficult task. Does Russia have the capacity to do so? Are Iran and Israel prepared to accept such a proposal? Iran Daily raised the matter in an interview with Hassan Beheshtipour, an international affairs expert and university professor.



IRAN DAILY: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned during a visit to Turkey that the region had become a powder keg due to Israel's policies. In your opinion, what concerns or realities is this warning based on?

BEHESHTIPOUR: This warning is based on the criminal behavior and actions of the Israeli regime, which spares no violent act. Israel attacks UN peacekeeping forces in southern Lebanon, targets educational centers and hospitals, pounds refugee camps and shelters, and has no qualms about burning humans alive. The regime is not bound by any international rules, and it is natural that such violent acts will be met with reactions from resistance groups. In fact, violence begets violence. Therefore, Benjamin Netanyahu's aggressive policies have turned the region into a powder keg, which could explode at any moment. This is especially true given Netanyahu's tendency to escalate the crisis to the entire Western Asia region.

Recently, Russian President Vladimir

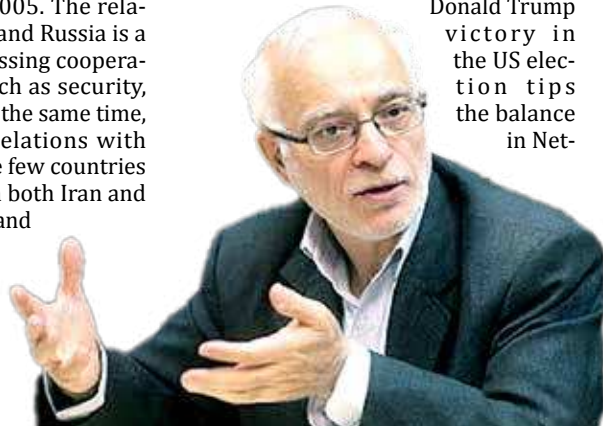
Putin announced his readiness to mediate between Iran and Israel, although he described it as an uphill task. Do you think Moscow and Putin have the power to do so?

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian met with Putin during his trip to Turkmenistan, and I believe that one of the topics of their talks was likely the regional crisis, the Gaza war, and tensions between Iran and Israel. Russia has very close ties with Israel, and Putin has maintained a personal relationship with Netanyahu since 2005. The relationship between Israel and Russia is a structural one, encompassing cooperation in various areas such as security, politics, and economy. At the same time, Russia also has good relations with Iran, making it one of the few countries that has cordial ties with both Iran and Israel. Therefore, Russia and Putin have the capacity to help bring down tensions.

How can Russia's intention to mediate be

realized? Will Israel and Iran accept this mediation?

One side of the equation is Israel, which I doubt will accept mediation for a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip or to reduce tensions with Iran. Netanyahu sees the survival of his hawkish cabinet tied to the continuation of the crisis. If a cease-fire is established, a war inquiry commission will not let up on him, and given the domestic opposition, the conditions for his cabinet to collapse will be set. Unless a Donald Trump victory in the US election tips the balance in Net-



anyahu's favor domestically. Therefore, it seems unlikely that Netanyahu is willing to accept Russian mediation and a cease-fire.

On the other hand, Iran does not seem to have any objections to Russian arbitration. Iran's main goal is a cease-fire and an end to the killing of innocent people in Palestine and Lebanon, and to prevent the war from spreading to the entire region. A cease-fire, from Iran's perspective, is not a compromise or betrayal, but a necessary means for the survival and revival of the Resistance Front. Iran will welcome any measure that brings an end to the war.

Regardless of Russia's close relations with Iran and Israel, does Russia's interests also require the region to see peace and calm, or do you think Moscow's interests lie in the continuation of the crisis?

The answer to this question dispels some of the misconceptions about the relationship between Iran and Russia, as the relationship between the governments of Tehran and

Moscow has been criticized by many on both sides. In particular, many in Iran believe that Russia's interests, due to the war in Ukraine, require the Gaza war to go on and for tensions to heighten between Iran and Israel. In my opinion, this assessment is completely incorrect. Over the past year, the Gaza war has not led to any developments or changes in the Ukraine war, and the Gaza war has not overshadowed the Ukraine war. In fact, at one point, Ukraine even crossed into Russian territory.

Furthermore, if Putin can rein in Netanyahu and talk him into reducing tensions and agree to a cease-fire, this would be a major victory and a trump card for Russia in the international arena, which would boost Moscow's prestige and have a positive impact on Russia's relations with Iran, Arab countries, and the Muslim world.

It is in Russia's interests to restore calm to the region as it would allow Moscow to better dodge sanctions and have better relations with regional countries.

Iran's tourism needs new strategy to flourish



By Hani Rastegaran
Tourism expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Economic policymaking in countries annually sets the guidelines and basis for achieving per capita incomes. Today, world is faced with a broad perspective in the economic sector, which leads to the utilization of monetary and financial cycles in line with achieving the projected revenues in annual budgets. The topic of tourism economics, from one side, has transcended its traditional viewpoint, entering a new flow to utilize emerging resources and capacities. Historical and natural tourism has become a routine, while research on new methods of financing specialized tourism is rapidly growing. The use of gamification techniques, a process-based structure on a defined system for scoring, a process for ranking, and a space for determining optimal points, was previously only relevant

in virtual space algorithms but is now influencing many industries. But how can these new subtleties be utilized in Iran's tourism industry and its economy?

In the Seventh Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the annual attraction of 15 million tourists is planned. Although this figure is small compared to neighboring countries like Turkey, which has a target of 60 million in this area, research shows that there are not enough infrastructures in the country to attract even this number of tourists. Therefore, predictions suggest that if the situation continues without appropriate support, this industry will move towards stagnation and decline instead of economic development and job creation. Thus, support and cooperation from organizations and entities related to specialized areas of foreign tourism, such as creating appropriate accommodations, road infrastructure, and roadside hostels for infrastructure development, is essential. In this context, Iran's membership in economic

groups of developing countries like BRICS can lead to the development and growth of the tourism industry, and in the current Iranian year (2024-2025), policies like mutual visa abolition with various countries and negotiations to facilitate visa issuance must be pursued to promote tourism.

On the other hand, Iran is a land with abundant natural resources and reserves. For years, mines in Iran have been perceived as a material element for wealth generation through the export of raw materials, while other technical and economic aspects have been overlooked. The numerous mines in Iran, including both abandoned and active ones, can provide a groundwork for creating sustainable jobs and income. Open-pit mines of copper, gold, iron, building stones, gemstones, and lead and zinc, if properly utilized to promote tourism, can turn into valuable sites for tourists to visit. These sites potentially offer visits to exploration processes, educational and research activities, exploration and extraction experiences, fa-

miliarity with machinery and tools and their uses, creating mining museums, heritage interpretation centers, and employing specialists and job seekers. The world's new approach is generally that after completing activities and depleting mineral reserves, actions like restoration, conversion into heritage interpretation centers, and using eco-tourism and geo-tourism guides take place so that these places turn into venues for tourist visits and organizing mining tourism tours. Utilizing the knowledge and experience of geo-tourism guides, retired miners, mine experts, and specialists in stones and minerals will turn these visits into purposeful, enjoyable, exciting, and enlightening tours.

The neighboring country, Turkey, generated approximately 800 million dollars annually from 2020 to 2022 solely through specialized tourism in the mining and natural resources sector. Given the definition that abandoned mines, with at least five years of inactivity, can be utilized as a place for visits and are

thus considered non-profit; due to inappropriate market conditions, depletion of mineral reserves, decrease in mineral grade, low quality of minerals, or lack of economic justification for exploitation, their activity has halted and they have become abandoned, presenting a suitable capacity for economic exploitation through conversion into a tourist attraction.

For instance, some mines in Semnan Province, such as the sulfur mine in southern Semnan, Delazian, is a mining area with unique historical and natural features, and thus has been listed in Iran's National Non-Movable Heritage List. Considering that this mine has been identified and exploited since the late Safavid era, and with the application of modern tools, the extraction rate from this mine has significantly increased, it now presents a suitable opportunity to be converted into a tourism site and to invite economic and mining industry activists worldwide and from Iran for visits and enhancing experiences.