



Pezeshkian due in Russia today for BRICS summit

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Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain on brink of normalizing relations with Iran

Tehran, Arab World on path to convergence

By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

OPINION

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has embarked on a regional tour, which kicked off in Beirut and has now reached Kuwait and Bahrain. On October 4, amid escalating Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon and just three days after Iran's military operations against Israeli targets, Araghchi arrived in Beirut. He then proceeded to visit Syria, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey. The primary objective of these diplomatic missions was to ease mounting tensions and prevent the conflict from spreading, while also calling for an end to Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Gaza. Supporting the Axis of Resistance and the people of Lebanon and Palestine was also high on the agenda. Araghchi's recent visits to Kuwait and Bahrain are a continuation of these efforts. The concerns about the escalation of existing tensions have made regional consultations more crucial than ever, and naturally, these discussions have been highlighted in the statements of foreign ministers and the media. However, Araghchi's visits to Jordan, Egypt, and now Bahrain are particularly noteworthy in the context of bilateral relations between Tehran and these three countries. If we consider the signing of the agreement to normalize relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia in 2023 a turning point in reviving ties between Iran and Arab countries, Araghchi's visits to Amman, Cairo, and Manama can be seen as a follow-up to that event, bringing the Arab world and Iran closer together.

Although the groundwork for improving relations with Arab countries was laid during the previous administration under Ebrahim Raisi, the new government has picked up the pace, prioritizing enhanced relations with neighboring countries and regional players under its "constructive engagement with the world" program. This initiative is now gaining momentum and is expected to take on a more practical dimension. The Iranian foreign minister is set to visit Bahrain at a time when relations between Tehran and Manama have been strained since the Arab Spring protests swept the region in 2011. The severing of diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran in 2016, following an attack on the Saudi Embassy in Tehran by a group of Iranian citizens, led to several other Arab countries, including Bahrain, Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, and the Maldives, cutting off their diplomatic relations with Iran. However, following the easing of tensions between Tehran and Riyadh, Bahrain remains the only country that has yet to normalize its diplomatic relations with Iran, and now the two countries are on the cusp of a breakthrough.

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From battlefield to broadcast

How IRGC's Media Office Amplified Iran's Military Power

What ensured the lasting success of Operation True Promise 2 in the public consciousness was the strategic and sophisticated media outreach that came along.

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The photo shows a Fattah hypersonic missile before getting launched at Israel during the IRGC's Operation True Promise 2 on October 1, 2024. **MASHREGHNEWS**

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Iran dismisses claims of interference in Lebanon's internal affairs

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Iran participates in 67th Int'l Belgrade Book Fair

The 67th International Belgrade Book Fair kicked off in Serbia, with the Islamic Republic of Iran participating in the event. The book fair, which runs from October 19 to October 27, is being held at the Belgrade Fair Exhibition Center.

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Iran to construct 110 residential units on Abu Musa Island

Iran will start the construction of 110 residential units on the Persian Gulf island of Abu Musa, as announced by Iranian deputy minister of roads and urban development on Monday.

Arsalan Maleki said that Abu Musa, as well as the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, are an integral part of Iran, asserting that construction activities on the trio islands is fully permissible under Iranian law, IRNA reported. The directive for constructing 110 units has been issued to the relevant authorities and organizations, and the construction operations will soon begin, he said.

According to Maleki, the allocation process of the housing units will prioritize the island's current residents, but other interested individuals from across the country can also apply for housing on Abu Musa Island.

Abu Musa Island, located in the Persian Gulf, has strategic importance due to its location and potential resources despite its small size.

Over the years, Iran has faced territorial disputes with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over the sovereignty of the trio islands, with the West and some Arab states taking sides with the UAE.

Judiciary backs private sector, prosecutes obstructors: Mohseni-Ejei

Economy Desk

The Iranian Judiciary throws its weight behind the country's private sector and lawful economic activities, said Judiciary Chief Gholamhossein Mohseni-Ejei on Monday.

Speaking at a meeting of Judiciary officials, Mohseni-Ejei invited traders and businesspeople in the private sector to leverage all their potential and capacities to render sanctions ineffective alongside boosting production.

"We will deal legally and firmly with those who seek to put a spoke in the wheel of economic actors," he warned.

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday announced that the government is ready to cooperate extensively with Iranian manufacturers and traders to solve the problems in the fields of production and export across the country.

Speaking in a ceremony on the same day to mark the National Exports Day in Tehran, Pezeshkian noted that Iran will become stable with proper collaboration with traders and exporters as the government plans to remove obstacles in trade and production.

Iran Air launches daily Tehran-Istanbul flights

Iran Air spokesman Hesam Qorbanali said the airline has established daily flights from Tehran to Istanbul and vice versa for passengers of European routes.

"With the aim of facilitating travel and reducing the European travelers' concerns, we established daily flights from Tehran to Istanbul and vice versa, starting from October 15," Qorbanali noted on Monday, reported IRNA.

The European Union (EU) imposed new sanctions against three Iranian airlines, namely Iran Air, Mahan Air, and Saha Airlines, due to baseless claims of Iran's involvement in the Ukraine conflict by sending ballistic missiles to Russia.

With the imposition of sanctions by the European Union on Iran Air, considering the limited number of direct flights of foreign airlines to Iran, every European flight has become at least 30% more expensive for passengers as connecting flights must be made.

The EU claims that these sanctions are targeted to deter specific policies and activities of Iran, clarifying that it does not intend to disrupt air traf-



fic or people-to-people communication between the EU and Iran in general.

The European Union has adopted restrictive

measures against seven individuals and seven entities. Consequently, Behnam Shahriari, Ali Shadmani, Ali Jafarabadi, Mehdi Googerdchian,

Hamzeh Qalandari, Reza Khosravi Moqaddam, and Mir-Ahmad Noushin have been sanctioned, along with Iran Air, Mahan Air, Saha Airlines, Basamad

Electronic Pouya Company, Iran Alumina, Tayef Tadbir Aria, and Shahid Haj Ali Movahed Research Center. Iran has vehemently de-

nied claims of involvement in the Ukraine war as baseless and politically-motivated, saying the country has not sent ballistic missiles to Russia.

Foreign investment at \$1.8b under Iran's new government



An administration that came into office in Iran in August on a platform of boosting relations with the outside world says it has approved \$1.8 bil-

lion worth of foreign investment projects.

Iran's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance said that a total of 182 foreign in-

vestment projects had been approved by its subsidiary, Organization for Investment Economic and Technical Assistance of Iran (OIETAI), Press TV reported.

It said projects were in Iran's oil and gas, renewables, car manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, food, construction, tourism, transport, services and agriculture sectors.

A latest batch of foreign investment applications approved in an OIETAI meeting on Sunday covered investors from 16 countries, including from five European countries, and Iranians living abroad, said the organization.

It said the new projects were worth \$500 million, adding that it will continue to hold monthly meetings to discuss more foreign investment projects.

The announcement comes amid efforts by the Iranian government to open up to investors from the region and around the world amid sanctions that restrict the country's access to foreign investment and technology.

President Masoud Pezeshkian won the election in Iran in July on a platform of better relations with the world and to solve Iran's economic problems.

OIETAI figures show foreign direct investment (FDI) attracted to Iran in the calendar year to March reached a record of \$5.5 billion.

A bulk of last year's foreign investment in Iran came from China while investors from Turkey and the United Arab Emirates as well as Iranians living abroad had also a large share in investment projects in the country.

Government figures show that another \$2.5 billion worth of foreign investment was attracted to Iranian projects over the past calendar year which was not authorized or registered by the OIETAI.

Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain...

Bahraini officials have taken the lead in this process. The country's Foreign Minister Abdullatif Al Zayani visited Tehran to attend the funeral of Iran's former president, Ebrahim Raisi, and former foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. Al-Zayani also participated in the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) meeting in Tehran, where he met with the caretaker of Iran's Foreign Ministry. During this meeting, the two sides agreed to resume bilateral relations.

Another Arab country that still has strained relations with Iran is Jordan. The foreign ministers of the two countries had not met since 2010, until Amir-Abdollahian and Ayman Safadi met in New York on April 21, 2024. Safadi visited Iran just three days after the assassination of Ismail

Haniyeh, the head of Hamas' political bureau, in Tehran, where he met with the caretaker of the Foreign Ministry and Iran's new president, Masoud Pezeshkian. During his meeting with the Iranian president, Safadi expressed his country's eagerness to expand and deepen relations with Iran and work together to create more stability, security, and calm in the region.

Araghchi's visit to Jordan and his meeting with his Jordanian counterpart and the King of Jordan reflect the strong will of both sides to ease and deepen bilateral relations and regional cooperation.

Iran's diplomatic relations with Egypt have also had their ups and downs. The last time an Iranian official visited Egypt was 14 years ago, when the deputy foreign minister attended the inauguration ceremony of Egyptian

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. However, this visit did not help to break the ice in the strained ties between the two countries, until the former Iranian foreign minister, Amir-Abdollahian, and his Egyptian counterpart, Sameh Shoukry, met on the sidelines of the Islamic Summit in The Gambia and agreed to continue their talks with the aim of resolving all the outstanding issues and normalizing ties.

During his recent visit to Egypt, Araghchi met with his Egyptian counterpart and also held talks with the Egyptian President. According to reports, the two sides agreed to continue their consultations to develop the bilateral relations.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi is also set to meet with his Iranian counterpart on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, and it is expect-

ed that this meeting will give a boost to the normalization of relations between the two countries.

Araghchi's trip to Jordan, Egypt, and now Bahrain is particularly significant not only for discussions and exchanges concerning regional tensions but also as a new pathway for easing and normalizing bilateral relations. It appears that common regional interests and concerns have brought Arab countries and Iran closer together. This does not mean that all the differences and misunderstandings between the two sides have been resolved, but it shows that past efforts to drive a wedge between Iran and the Arab world have not succeeded, and that as relations between the Arab world and Israel have deteriorated, Iran's ties with Arab countries in the region have improved.

Gold hits record high

Gold surged to a record high on Monday while silver struck a near 12-year peak. Gold gained 0.7% to \$2,739.50 per ounce, as of 1350 GMT, after hitting a record \$2,740.37 earlier in the session. US gold futures were 0.7% higher at \$2,750.00, Reuters reported.

"We look for gold to reach to \$2,900/oz over the next 12 months, supported by further rate cuts by the Fed," UBS analyst Giovanni Staunovo said. Traders now see a 90% chance of a quarter basis point cut by the Fed in November.

Spot silver rose 1.2% to \$34.06 per ounce, its highest since late-2012.

"You're starting to see the (silver) market break out, which would entice more people to come in from the sidelines and start picking up silver," Pavilonis added.

"We could see maybe gold slow down its speed and silver start to pick up and catch up with gold."

Platinum rose 0.1% to \$1,014.20 per ounce, its highest since mid-July. Palladium fell 1.1% to \$1,067.49.

Seven lesser-known attractions in Yazd Province

If you appreciate the elegance of traditional Iranian architecture and find solace in historic homes, Yazd is a must-visit. Known as the city of pomegranates, qottab sweets, and a starry desert sky, Yazd preserves an eternal flame and celebrates the ancient Mehregan festival. The traditional houses and ecolodges in Yazd, adorned with colorful orsi windows, cisterns, and wind towers, exemplify the splendor of desert city architecture in Iran.

The best time to visit Yazd Province is during autumn or spring when the intense desert sun softens, and the cool desert nights become more pleasant. It's perfect for a leisurely stroll through the city's mudbrick alleys, where a gentle breeze refreshes the air, surfiran.com wrote

This ancient desert city is brimming with hidden gems that many travelers overlook. From quaint historic neighborhoods to captivating traditional crafts, Yazd offers countless opportunities for cultural exploration. Here, we highlight seven lesser-known attractions that showcase the city's unique character, inviting you to experience Yazd from a fresh perspective.

Timeless majesty of the Harzavil Cypress



● Visitiran.ir

Iranica Desk

The Harzavil Cypress is a giant and ancient tree, estimated to be between 1,000 and 3,000 years old. This unique natural monument stands approximately 30 meters tall and boasts a diameter of nearly four meters.

The name Harzavil refers to a village of the same name, located within the city boundaries of Manjil in Gilan Province. The cypress was registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 1987 and is currently protected by environmental regulations. Villagers consider this cypress sacred, viewing it as a symbol of good fortune. Deeply rooted in their land, it has become a permanent natural landmark for the residents of Harzavil village.

The Harzavil Cypress is also mentioned in the travelogue of Nasereddin Shah Qajar, dating back to the 1870s CE. During his visit, Nasereddin Shah wrote, "We had our afternoon meal in the shade of this colossal tree, and the musicians, hidden among the branches and foliage, played delightful tunes, leaving us in awe."

The Harzavil village, like many others in Rudbar and Manjil, was completely destroyed in the earthquake of 1990. Today, all the buildings in the village date back to the post-reconstruction period and are situated near the ancient cypress tree. This proximity has raised serious concerns, as wastewater and other daily pollutants from the village may threaten the life of this venerable tree. Visiting the Harzavil Cypress is free and open to all, allowing you to explore the village at any hour of the day or night. The cypress trees remain vibrant and green throughout the year, making any season a suitable time for a visit to this natural attraction. However, it's worth noting that the full beauty of the Harzavil Cypress and the wind turbines in Manjil can only be appreciated during daylight hours. Moreover, the wind turbines on the hills of Manjil look especially enchanting at sunrise and sunset.

Abolma'ali Bathhouse



● baland.ir

The Abolma'ali Bathhouse is a historic bathhouse that has been transformed into a traditional restaurant in the old Fahadan neighborhood of Yazd. Constructed with brick, river pebbles, plaster, and *sarooj*, it's a stunning example of Qajar-era bathhouses. The structure features an octagonal antechamber, entrance staircases, hot and cold plunge pools, restrooms, *shahneshin* seating areas, and a *garmkhaneh* (hot room).

Mirror Palace Museum

The Mirror Palace Museum is an exquisite mansion set within a spacious garden, blending traditional and modern architecture. Adorned with intricate plasterwork, mirror mosaics, and colorful orsi windows, this mansion was originally built during the Pahlavi era for the benevolent businessman Sarrafzadeh. Today, it serves as a museum showcasing historic items, including antique lamps and chandeliers. It is located on Kashani Street in Yazd.



● safarmarket.com

Zeinoddin Caravanserai



● wikipedia.org

The Zeinoddin Caravanserai in Mehriz is one of the lesser-known gems of the province, a stunning architectural feat from the Safavid era, built by prominent architect Mohammad Sultan Yazdi over 400 years ago. This caravanserai stands out due to its circular design, offering a unique perspective from above. The brick structure is now used as an ecolodge. On its northern side, a *shahneshin* has been transformed into a dining area, and two sets of staircases lead to the rooftop, providing breathtaking views of the desert landscape. This caravanserai is located 60 kilometers along the road from Yazd to Kerman, about 500 meters from the highway.

Tower of Silence



● balad.ir

To visit a unique cemetery, head to the Tower of Silence, located 15 kilometers from the city of Yazd. Zoroastrians traditionally brought bodies to a high elevation called *dakhmeh*, where they were left exposed to the wind and sun, providing sustenance for scavenger birds. Zoroastrians believed that Earth and fire were sacred and must not be polluted by corpses; hence, they opted for this method rather than burial or cremation. The *dakhmeh* is constructed from raw bricks and plaster to prevent contaminants from seeping into the soil. The circular structure is divided into three concentric areas for men, women, and children, with a central pit called *astodan* where bones were eventually placed. The Tower of Silence is located in the *dakhmeh* mountain range, 15 kilometers southeast of Yazd, near the Safaiyeh area.

Zarch Qanat

Zarch Qanat is the longest qanat in the world, spanning 100 kilometers with over 2,000 wells dug along its route. The qanat begins in Fahraj, passing through the villages of Dehnow and Akramieh before entering Yazd and eventually reaching the town of Zarch. Near the Jaame Mosque of Yazd, there is a branch of the qanat accessible via 60 steps, leading to an area used for ablution by the mosque's worshippers.



● lastsecond.ir

Naji Garden



● top-travel.ir

Naji Garden is a beautiful park featuring a mansion from the Qajar era, which was owned by a man named Naji. It is a stunning example of a garden set along the Najafabad qanat route, emphasizing the importance of qanat systems in desert cities. Located on Dasti Boulevard in the city of Yazd, it lies on the exit route towards Kerman.

Six Windcatchers Cistern

The Six Windcatchers Cistern in Yazd is a remarkable structure built during the Qajar era by Haj Mohammad Hossein Yazdi. As the name suggests, this reservoir features six windcatchers, each designed to keep the water cool by catching and channeling air. The cistern showcases the architectural ingenuity of ancient Persia in managing water resources in arid climates. Visitors can admire the elegant intricacies of its construction, with arched ceilings and beauti-

fully crafted brickwork that highlight the craftsmanship of the time. Together, these attractions offer a glimpse into Yazd's rich cultural heritage and the innovative solutions devised by its inhabitants to thrive in a challenging environment. Exploring these sites provides unparalleled insight into the historical practices and philosophies of Zoroastrian culture and the broader Persian civilization.



● eneshat.com



Missiles launched from Iran toward Israel streak across the night sky as seen from Deir al-Balah, Gaza Strip, on October 1, 2024, during Operation True Promise 2.
 ● ABDEL KAREEM HANA/AP

From battlefield to broadcast

How IRGC's media office amplified Iran's military power



By Navid Kamali
 Foreign affairs expert

Operation True Promise 2 stands as one of the most significant displays of the Islamic Republic of Iran's military prowess in recent years. Not only did it mark a highly successful missile strike against targets within the occupied territories but also became a powerful symbol of Iran's dignity and strength on both regional and global scales. Launched in response to the terrorist actions of the Zionist regime, the operation successfully showcased Iran's advanced missile technology and defensive capabilities to the world.

However, what elevated Operation True Promise 2 beyond a mere missile strike and ensured its lasting success in the public consciousness as a bright testament to Iran's defense capabilities was the strategic and sophisticated media outreach that accompanied it.



In times of limited military conflict, where there is no immediate existential threat to the nation, the public's views are often shaped based on the information they receive. This underscores the necessity for military forces to engage actively with the media — not to manipulate or control the flow of information but to foster a relationship of trust and mutual understanding that ensures accurate representation of military operations.

Through meticulous planning in public relations and information dissemination, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) not only communicated the military message of the operation effectively to both domestic and international audiences but also presented a powerful image of Iran in the regional and global arenas. This image clearly reflected the strength and determination of the Iranian nation in defending its interests and contributed to enhancing the country's immunity against foreign threats in the complex geopolitical environment of West Asia. This image-building success was the result of a skilled media team within the IRGC, whose intelligent interaction with the media and the accurate narrative they constructed transformed Operation True Promise 2 into a symbol of deterrence and national pride, while simultaneously solidifying Iran's position as an undisputed regional power.

The IRGC's recent experience demonstrates the historical connection between military operations and dominating the media. More specifically, it reflects a scientific approach to military image-building, drawing on lessons learned from history. Over time, various methods have been used to document military conflicts, from ancient carvings on stone tablets to modern live video from battlefields. Throughout this evolving process, media has always served as a tool to shape public perceptions of wars and military engagements.

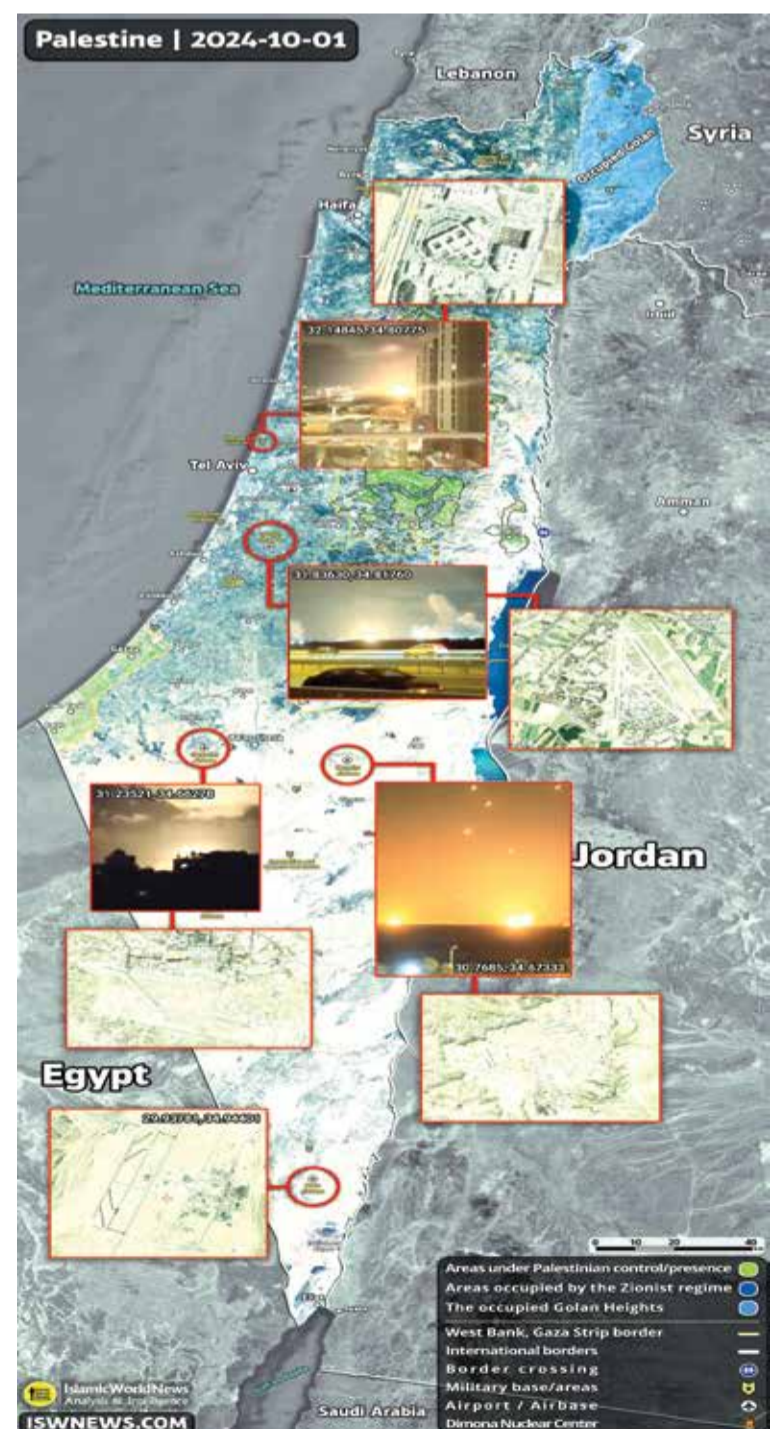
However, historically, armed forces have primarily focused on the hard aspects of warfare, often neglecting its softer dimensions. With the development of societies, especially following the rise of mass media in the 20th and 21st centuries, military forces have increasingly realized the importance of these softer aspects, particularly the battle for "hearts and minds".

In the modern era, victory is no longer defined solely by territorial gains or inflicting heavy casualties on the

enemy. Success is now intrinsically tied to public support, both domestically and internationally. This support, in turn, is heavily influenced by the narratives and images conveyed through media. This makes media not just a chronicler of events but a powerful actor in the conflicts of the modern age, capable of reinforcing or weakening military strategies and affecting the defensive deterrence of a nation.

Given the growing importance of directing the "spectacle" in the defense and security domains, military think tanks have extensively studied the impact of media on public opinion in recent decades. Research shows that media, particularly television and online platforms, can shape attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, especially in the short term. In the long term, media exposure can deeply influence public perceptions. In times of limited military conflict, where there is no immediate existential threat to the nation, the public's views are often shaped based on the information they receive. This underscores the necessity for military forces to engage actively with the media — not to manipulate or control the flow of information but to foster a relationship of trust and mutual understanding that ensures accurate representation of military operations.

Historically, the relationship between the armed forces and the media has been marked by distrust. For example, during the Iraqi-imposed War on Iran, the emphasis of the Iranian military on operational security conflicted with the role of the media, resulting in limited visual documentation of the military's heroic efforts. In contrast, mismanaged media access during the Vietnam War is a classic example of how poor media management can weaken military objectives. Unrestricted access to journalists during the Vietnam War led to widespread critical reporting, which ultimately undermined public support for the war and forced the US government to end the conflict.



The photomap includes photographs of targets Iran attacked during Operation True Promise 2, showing missiles in the sky, explosions nearby, or satellite images of military bases.
 ● ISLAMIC WORLD NEWS



The infographic breaks down the targets and dimensions of Iran's Operation True Promise 2 in Hebrew for the Jewish audience. It was posted on social media accounts of the Farsi-language newspaper Javan, which is close to the IRGC, in three different languages: Farsi, English, and Hebrew.

Learning from this, during the Persian Gulf War, the US utilized the media more intelligently by controlling the narrative and emphasizing coalition efforts to minimize civilian casualties, thereby maintaining strong public support for the war against Iraq. These examples highlight the need for a balanced approach in military-media relations. Traditional, outdated approaches to military communication must give way to modern strategies. The armed forces, especially the IRGC, must focus on fostering deep ties with media professionals, providing timely and accurate information, and addressing legitimate concerns about operational security. This requires training military personnel in media engagement, developing clear communication protocols, and nurturing a culture of transparency within the armed forces. Beyond simply informing the public, the media can play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of a nation's military power and boosting its defensive deterrence. By showcasing the capabilities, professionalism, and heroic sacrifices of elite military personnel, the media can project an image of might and resolve that deters potential adversaries from threatening national and regional interests. This is particularly important in the context of fourth-generation warfare, where non-state actors and rogue states engage in information warfare aimed at undermining public trust and reducing support for military actions. A strong and effective media presence that highlights the positive contributions of the military to national security can counter these adversarial efforts and enhance the nation's defensive capabilities. For instance, following successful military operations, media productions that emphasize the heroism and skill of the armed forces can significantly boost public morale and instill a sense of national pride. Through compelling storytelling,

highlighting acts of bravery by officers and commanders, showcasing technological advancements, and emphasizing the positive impact of military operations on safeguarding national interests, the media can reinforce public support for military actions while sending a clear message to potential enemies that Iran is fully prepared to defend its interests. Nevertheless, excessive use of media or careless portrayal of the military's capabilities can also pose challenges, such as fostering a false sense of invincibility or neglecting the importance of security precautions. Therefore, the goal of military public relations should be to present a balanced and realistic image of military operations, while simultaneously highlighting the professionalism and dedication of the armed forces. This requires a nuanced approach to media engagement that builds trust and credibility rather than simply promoting a specific narrative. In conclusion, the growing influence of social media platforms and citizen journalism has added a layer of complexity to the relationship between the military and the media. While these platforms offer unparalleled opportunities for direct engagement with the public and rapid dissemination of information, they also present significant challenges in controlling narratives and combating misinformation. The spread of fake news, propaganda, and manipulated images, such as deep-fakes, can easily distort public perceptions of military operations and erode trust in official sources. To successfully navigate the evolving media landscape, the armed forces must adopt smart, strategic media engagement practices that acknowledge both the challenges and opportunities of the digital age. As military success in the 21st century is no longer achieved solely on the battlefield but also in the eyes of the public, mastering the media is essential to securing victory in modern conflicts.

Netanyahu appeals to rabbis to garner support

Will it backfire?



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's correspondent in Pakistan

OPINION

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has become so weak that he now has to rely on religion to continue the war. The Israeli society is gripped by the fear of war and has become increasingly divided. The majority of Jews who have migrated from America and Western Europe are ideologically secular. Within Israeli society and political platforms, these people are generally seen as passionate supporters of cease-fire and the return of captives. This group wants an immediate end to the war and poses a significant challenge to Netanyahu's politics.

Netanyahu is aware of this reality, which is why he is prolonging the war. His aggressive actions have not only diminished global support for Israel but have also economically weakened Tel Aviv, making it the most vulnerable entity in the Middle East. Hezbollah's intense attacks have further shattered the perception of Israel's invincibility. Some intellectuals within the Arab world now openly state that if a few Resistance groups can bring the Israeli cabinet to its knees, then Arab states, with their full military strength, could make the existence of Tel Aviv very difficult. To undermine the internal demand to end the war and maintain a war-like atmosphere, Netanyahu aims to use religious elements. Recently, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant visited a Jewish religious school to participate in a prayer ceremony for success in the war. Additionally, Netanyahu has met with Jewish religious leaders during the on-



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (sitting 2nd L) meets with a delegation of prominent Chabad rabbis at the Prime Minister's Office in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) on October 15, 2024.



Israeli police officers in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) clash with ultra-orthodox men during a protest against a possible new law which could end their exemptions from military service.

going war to seek religious backing for the conflict. This meeting was broadcast live on Israeli media, where discussions focused on providing spiritual and religious guidance to cope with the crisis caused by the war. Netanyahu read passages from Jewish religious texts aloud, attempting to intimidate anti-war factions with religious rhetoric. While he succeeded in obtaining religious edicts against opponents of the war, certain realities transcend religious sentiments. Economic devastation may be tolerated, but spilling Israeli citizens' blood for a purposeless war is unacceptable to Jewish society. Jewish religious leaders emphasized the need for unity to face the current expanded war, learning from past tragedies like the Holocaust. The Israeli society is still grappling with the aftermath of the events since October 7, 2023. Rabbi Tamar Elad-Appelbaum is among those leaders advocating for the expulsion of non-Jews from the holy land, offering spiritual and psychological support to wounded Israeli soldiers, families of captives, and those affected by fatalities. Similarly, Yehuda Kurtzer, president of the Shalom Hartman Institute in North America, is working to encourage Jew-

ing this abominable war leads down a path of destruction and impacts a vast region. An unfortunate, yet significant consequence of using religious beliefs for war is the potential increase in hateful acts against Jews, leading to sectarian violence globally. The US, Israel's biggest supporter in this conflict, should urge Netanyahu not to use religion to pursue this dangerous game. Yet, Washington continues to provide substantial military and financial aid to Tel Aviv. The Biden administration initially approved \$6.8 billion in military aid, including missile defense systems and artillery equipment. It has also supplied around \$4.4 billion in weapons from its stockpiles for Israel's military actions in Gaza and Lebanon. By December 2023, total aid to Israel had reached \$17.9 billion, covering military operations such as the deployment of US forces and missile defense systems. Additionally, Pres-



Rabbi Meir Zvi Bergman (sitting), a revered religious leader, reads Torah. Bergman says the way to help Israel is to study Scripture.

ish communities to support the war by framing current events in religious terms. His efforts aim to strengthen Netanyahu's position by discussing the importance of war through fundamental Jewish beliefs and values. Netanyahu's utilization of Jewish beliefs for his political ends in continu-

ident Biden requested \$14 billion in extra aid for Israel as part of a larger \$105 billion aid package. Unaware of the larger harm they are causing, Netanyahu and Biden seem poised to see this war to the end. Time will tell how their actions will come back to haunt them.

Iranian prodigy Faraji throws down gauntlet at global stars

Sports Desk

Iranian teenage sensation Benyamin Faraji says he will be looking to build on his impressive display at the Asian Table Tennis Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan, to reach the heights of the sport in the near future.

Faraji, 14, stole all the headlines when he came from behind to stun Chinese world No. 1 Wang Chuqin 3-2 (11-8, 3-11, 9-11, 13-11, 11-9) earlier in October – the sole victory for Iran during a last-eight loss in the men's team event.

"I was mentally and physically ready for every challenge coming my way before heading to the tournament," said the Iranian, adding: "The atmosphere of the venue was intense. The Chinese federation had brought a huge crowd, who was absolutely electric throughout the contest. But I was fully prepared for the match."

"I don't feel too much pressure when taking on East Asian players. I just focus on my own game and that's what I did to come out victorious against such a world-class player," added the Iranian, who is fourth in the latest men's world under-15 ranking.

"I knew before the match a victory would be a massive breakthrough for me. No-one really expected me to win, but I still played with full confidence and determination. Beating a world and Olympic champion was like a mission impossible for a 14-year-old Iranian, and I am so thrilled to have claimed a milestone triumph."

Faraji came within touching distance of another major upset in Astana, going neck-and-neck



with world number two Lin Shidong, before relinquishing a six-point lead in the deciding game to suffer a 3-2 defeat against the Chinese the men's singles competitions.

"I had a decent performance against him, but I was just unlucky. Shidong is a great player. He had defeated his high-profile counterpart Ma Long before the tournament and made the most

of his experience to beat me. I really regretted the loss, though the Chinese coach came to congratulate me on my performance after the match."

Faraji's sensational campaign at the Asian Championships saw the Iranian jump up by 33 spots at the latest ITTF World Ranking to sit 177th in the men's singles chart.

The Iranian says he is keen on

playing in the top European and Asian leagues in the future.

"To play in the German or French leagues will be a massive privilege for me as I will get the chance to square off against some of the world's best and improve my game in those two prominent events," Faraji said. The young Iranian boy is full of gratitude for his father, who "played a pivotal role in my af-

fection for table tennis when I was just five."

Asked about his ultimate goal in the sport, Faraji said: "Playing in the Olympics, and not just to participate, but to win a medal. I love to see table tennis take the center stage for Iran at the Olympics, just like wrestling does. I wish I can play Ma Long some day and beat him for the Olympic gold."



Iranian Benyamin Faraji is seen in action during his victory over Chinese world No. 1 Wang Chuqin at the Asian Table Tennis Championships in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Oct. 8, 2024.

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Iran futsal coach Shamsaei nearing exit door: Report

Sports Desk

Head coach Vahid Shamsaei is on the brink of parting ways with the Iran futsal national team, according to ISNA. Shamsaei, who led Iran to the World Cup last 16 in September, is on a contract with the Iranian federation until the end of Persian calendar year (March 20), but the sport's governing body is willing to terminate the deal, should the two sides agree on a compensation fee, the news agency wrote on Sunday.

Widely regarded as the greatest Iranian futsal player of all time, Shamsaei took charge of the national team in 2022 but had to settle for a runner-up finish in his

maiden event after a 3-2 loss to Japan in the AFC Asian Cup, a tournament the Iranian great won on eight occasions as a player.

The 49-year-old coach successfully steered Iran to a record-extending 13th Asian title in April, thanks to a 4-1 victory over host Thailand in the final, and when his team headed to the World Cup in Uzbekistan last month, Iranian fans were eager to see their team improve on its best-ever finish at the flagship international event – the third place under former Iranian coach Mohammad Nazemasharieh in the 2016 edition in Colombia after a shootout win against Portugal.

Iran got off to flying start to its campaign, routing Venezuela 7-1, and then went on to finish atop the group table in emphatic fashion by defeating Guatemala (9-4) and France (4-1), though the latter scoreline triggered angry reactions from other teams and a FIFA probe into tanking allegations, as the defeat would have meant an easier path in the knockout phase for the Group F runner-up.

The top spot sent Iran into a last-16 clash against Morocco, where Iran gave away an early lead to suffer a 4-3 loss to the African champion and fail to progress to the World Cup quarterfinals for the first time in 12 years.

Azmoun set to be sidelined for four weeks with knee injury

Sports Desk

Iranian striker Sardar Azmoun is expected to be out of action for four weeks after suffering a knee injury during Shabab Al Ahli's victory in the UAE President's Cup on Saturday.

The prolific forward headed home his 10th goal of the season with nine minutes into the first half to lead the Emirati club to a 2-0 win

against Dibba Al Hisn in the round of 16, before being forced out injured before halftime.

Iranian fans feared the worst as rumors on social media following the game suggested a lengthy layoff for Azmoun due to a ligament injury, but an early assessment indicated that the Iranian should be able to return to the pitch within 30 days. However, the Iranian talisman, who scored twice to inspire Team

Melli to a 4-1 beating of Qatar in the World Cup qualifiers last week, will face a race against time to be available for the country's next two games in its qualification campaign.

Sitting atop Group A with 10 points, Amir Qalenoee's side will play North Korea – in a neutral venue yet to be confirmed – on November 14 before taking on the Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek five days later.



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Iran dismisses claims of interference in Lebanon's internal affairs

Iran complains about Israeli nuclear threats in letter to IAEA

International Desk

Iran rejected the accusation of interfering in Lebanon's internal affairs, saying that there had been a "misunderstanding" regarding remarks by Iran's Parliament's speaker about the Arab country. On Thursday, France's Le Figaro quoted Iran's Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf as saying that Iran was ready to negotiate the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which is seen as a precondition for a cease-fire in the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Lebanese Hezbollah group. The resolution calls for the

Lebanese Army and UN peacekeepers to be the only forces deployed to southern Lebanon. In a rare rebuke of Tehran, Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati accused it of "blatant interference in Lebanese affairs and an attempt to establish an unacceptable guardianship over Lebanon." "Iran has never had any intention or (taken any) action that could be suspected of interfering in the internal affairs of Lebanon," Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said during a weekly news conference. "We hold discussions with any country that has an initia-

tive and a proposal to end the crimes and aggression against Lebanon and the genocide in Gaza," said Baghaei, adding that there had been a "misunderstanding" regarding Qalibaf's reported remarks. Iran has in recent days intensified diplomatic efforts, with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi visiting multiple countries in the region to push for cease-fires in Lebanon and Gaza as well as ways to contain the conflicts. "We are happy that we and all the countries of the region have reached this level of maturity and we share the opinion that protecting peace in the re-

gion is our common duty," said Baghaei of the recent visits. **Israeli nuclear threats** Also in his remarks, Baghaei noted that Iran has written to the UN nuclear agency to complain about Israeli threats to strike its nuclear energy sites. "Threats to attack nuclear sites are against UN resolutions... and are condemned and rejected. Our interpretation is that these cases pose a threat to international peace and [thus] the Security Council should intervene," he added. Israel has promised retaliatory attack against Iran after Tehran launched a barrage of around



200 ballistic missiles at Israel on October 1, itself a retaliation for the assassination of resistance leaders and a commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps.

Israeli strikes target financial association in Lebanon

Israel carried out air strikes targeting branches of a financial association linked with Hezbollah in the southern suburbs of Lebanon's capital Beirut, as well as the south and east of the country. There were chaotic scenes in parts of Beirut late on Sunday as people tried to get to areas that they thought would be safer and multiple explosions were heard, BBC reported.



The Israeli military said it targeted money held by Al-Qard Al-Hassan Association (AQAH). It offers financial services to civilians in areas where Hezbollah has strong support, but Israel and the US accuse it of being a cover for the group to fund its activities. The attacks appeared to mark an expansion of Israel's war against Hezbollah, going beyond military infrastructure used by the group. They took place hours before US President Joe Biden's special envoy to the Middle East arrived in Beirut to explore the possibility of a negotiated end to the war. Israel began an intense air campaign and ground invasion against Hezbollah after almost a year of cross-border fighting sparked by the war in Gaza. Hezbollah began firing rockets into the northern occupied territories in support of Palestinians on October 8, 2023, the day after its ally Hamas's attack on Israel.

More than 2,400 people have been killed in Lebanon since then, including 1,800 in the past five weeks, according to the country's health ministry. Israeli authorities say 59 people have been killed in northern Israel and the occupied Golan Heights. According to the Lebanon's state-run National News Agency (NNA), there were 11 attacks on Dahieh, in southern Beirut. Videos posted on social media showed one AQAH branch on fire in the Laylaki area, only 500m (1,800ft) away from the runway of Lebanon's only functioning commercial airport, and another just to the north in Burj al-Barajneh. A third video showed a multi-story building where there was an AQAH branch collapsing in the Chiyah area. The NNA also said that strikes hit branches in Nabatieh, Tyre and Shehabieh in southern Lebanon, as well as those in the eastern Bekaa Valley towns of Baalbek, Hermel and Rayak.

Pezeshkian due in Russia today for BRICS summit



International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian will leave Tehran for the Russian city of Kazan today to participate in the 16th summit of BRICS group of major emerging economies. According to the president's official website,

Pezeshkian will address several meetings including the BRICS's main meeting and the first session of BRICS Plus. Iranian president will also hold talks with the leaders of the group's member states on the sidelines of the event. According to Iran's Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali, Iran and Russia will also sign a comprehensive strategic partnership treaty. Before his departure for Russia, the Iranian president chaired a meeting with the country's executive officials on Monday, during which they discussed ways to solve the problems and overcome obstacles fac-

ing the implementation of the agreements reached between Iran and BRICS's member states. The BRICS summit in Russia is scheduled to be held from October 22 to 24 in Kazan. According to Russian president's foreign policy aide, Yuri Ushakov, 32 countries have confirmed participation, with more than 20 heads of state attending. Ushakov mentioned that Russian President Vladimir Putin plans to hold around 20 bilateral meetings, suggesting this could become "the largest foreign policy event ever held" on Russian soil. Iran officially became a

member of BRICS at the beginning of this year, five months after it announced its acceptance as a full member into the group along with Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Malaysia have also formally applied, with other countries expressing interest. BRICS was formed by and initially consisted of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, which collectively represent around 40% of the global population, a quarter of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) and about two-fifth of the world's population.

Iran summons Hungary envoy over Persian Gulf trio islands

The Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned Hungary's ambassador in Tehran to convey Tehran's strong protest to unfounded claims about the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf. During their first summit in Brussels, the European Union and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) issued a joint statement on Wednesday, repeating allegations about Iran's sovereignty over the three Persian Gulf islands - Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa, Press TV reported. Hungary's Ambassador Giola Peto, whose country holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union, was called in by the director general of the Western Europe Department at the Iranian Ministry of Affairs on Sunday. During the session, Iranian Foreign Ministry's Director General of West

European Affairs emphasized that all countries, including the EU member states, must comply with the rules and principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, particularly the principle of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of other states. The ministry's official strongly condemned the European Union's unjustified support for some "baseless and illegal" claims against Iran's territorial integrity. The official reaffirmed Iran's sovereignty over the three islands in the Persian Gulf as a historical and legal fact and criticized the EU for taking a biased, incorrect and thoughtless stance in this regard. He noted that the EU's stance lacks any legal value and urged the union

to prevent its repetition and rectify it immediately. The Hungarian ambassador, for his part, said he would convey Iran's protest to his country as soon as possible. The Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater and Lesser Tunbs have historically been part of Iran, proof of which can be found and corroborated by countless historical, legal, and geographical documents in Iran and other parts of the world. However, the United Arab Emirates has repeatedly laid claim to the islands. The islands fell under British control in 1921 but on November 30, 1971, a day after British forces left the region and just two days before the UAE was to become an official federation, Iran's sovereignty over the islands was restored.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



A Revision of the Specific Procurement Notice of the Bidding Documents for Procurement of Remaining Works of DESIGN, BUILD AND OPERATION OF SEPIDAN WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT (NCB No: SEP1 - WWTP)

Following the Tender Notice of Fars Water and Wastewater Company regarding the Design, Build, Installation and Operation of **Sepidan Wastewater Treatment Plant** which was published in this newspaper on September 18, 2024 and September 28, 2024. This is to announce that due to the change in the grade of the qualified bidders from Grade 2 to **grade 3** in Water Category, the Bid submission period has been extended up to 10:30 a.m., **November 24, 2024.**

اصلاحیه آگهی مناقصه پروژه باقیمانده تدارک، طراحی، ساخت، نصب تجهیزات و بهره‌برداری تصفیه‌خانه فاضلاب شهر سپیدان

پیرو آگهی شرکت آب و فاضلاب استان فارس در خصوص مناقصه باقی‌مانده کارهای طراحی، ساخت، نصب و بهره‌برداری تصفیه‌خانه فاضلاب شهر سپیدان که در تاریخ‌های ۱۴۰۳/۰۹/۲۸ و ۱۴۰۳/۰۹/۲۸ در این روزنامه به چاپ رسیده است، بدین وسیله به اطلاع می‌رساند به دلیل تغییر در رتبه مورد نیاز جهت شرکت در مناقصه از رتبه ۲ آب به رتبه ۳ آب، تاریخ بازگشایی پیشنهاد قیمت تا تاریخ ۱۴۰۳/۰۹/۲۴ رأس ساعت ۱۰:۳۰ صبح تمدید گردید.

Iran participates in 67th Int'l Belgrade Book Fair

Arts & Culture Desk

The 67th International Belgrade Book Fair kicked off in Serbia, with the Islamic Republic of Iran participating in the event. The book fair, which runs from October 19 to October 27, is being held at the Belgrade Fair Exhibition Center.

This year's book fair, organized under the slogan "The Word is Free", has brought together 418 publishers from Serbia and abroad, including Iran. Cuba is the guest of honor at this year's event, IRNA reported.

The opening ceremony was attended by Serbian Minister of Culture Nikola Selaković, and Cuban counterpart Alpidio Alonso Grau, ambassadors and cultural representatives of various countries, including Iran's Ambassador to Serbia, Rashid Hassanpour, and Iran's Cultural Attaché, Amir Pourpezeshk.

According to Pourpezeshk, "Iran has good cultural and historical ties with the Balkan region,

which dates back to the Ottoman Empire's presence in the region. For 500 years, the Ottomans ruled the Balkans and had connections with Greater Iran, resulting in cultural and historical ties between Iran and Serbia."

Until a few years ago, the Persian language was taught in most schools and educational institutions in the Balkans, and books such as the 'Gulestan', 'Bustan', and 'Mathnawi' were part of the curriculum, he added. "Currently, there are 50 Persian-speaking poets in the Balkans, and over 1,500 Persian words are used in the Serbian language, which is an important aspect of our cultural ties with Serbia." Pourpezeshk noted.

Miguel Barnet, a renowned Cuban poet, writer, and anthropologist, who was present at the ceremony, said: "As a Cuban writer and intellectual, it is a great honor for me to give the opening speech on behalf of the Cuban delegation. This event is one of the oldest and most im-

portant literary spaces in Europe."

Barnet also praised Serbian culture, saying it has been a reference point for writers in Latin America and the world since the Middle Ages.

He specifically mentioned the Miroslav Gospel and the epic songs that are performed with traditional music.

During the opening ceremony, Selaković and Alonso Grau visited the Iranian pavilion, where they were welcomed by Hassanpour and Pourpezeshk.

The International Belgrade Book Fair features publishers from several countries, including Cuba, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, Congo, Morocco, Germany, Romania, Russia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Croatia, Montenegro, and Iran. In addition to the exhibition, visitors can attend over 500 events on the sidelines of the fair.

The Iranian cultural center in Serbia, with the support of the Iranian Book and Literature



House, is participating in the fair with a 24-square-meter pavilion, showcasing Iranian publications in Persian, English, and Serbian. Four new books

published, with the support of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, will be introduced and unveiled during a special ceremony. These books

include 'Divan-e Hafez', and a magazine featuring success of Iranian women published in the Serbian Literary Association magazine.

Iran's 'deep-rooted heritage' fosters cultural bonds: *Syrian official*



Arts & Culture Desk

In a meeting between the Iranian Cultural Attaché to Syria, Hamidreza Mokhtas Abadi, and the Syrian President's Political and Media Adviser, Bouthaina Shaaban, both sides emphasized the importance of strengthening cultural and artistic cooperation between the two nations.

Shaaban stated that Syria's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is one of the deeply-rooted nations in the world's history and has a long-standing, brilliant civilization and great achievements, are distinct and privileged, and we must strive to expand and promote the level

of these relations and strengthen and deepen bilateral interactions.

"We must work together to expand and deepen our relations," Shaaban said, highlighting the unique and privileged nature of the Syria-Iran relationship. "Our people and government will never forget Iran's support during the difficult days of the Daesh terrorist attacks and the sacrifices of our Iranian brothers alongside our Syrian brothers in the fight against darkness."

Describing the relationship between Syria and Iran as "completely strategic", Shaaban proposed several initiatives to

consolidate cultural, artistic, and media relations, including the implementation of cultural and artistic agreements with Syrian institutions, the formation of joint committees, and the organization of regular meetings to operationalize these agreements.

Mokhtas Abadi, for his part, described the Iran-Syria relationship as "strategic, robust, and deeply rooted". "Without a doubt, one of the deepest, most strategic and strongest foreign relationships of Iran is with Syria, a bond that has been strengthened by the blood shed during the recent events in Syria."

Highlighting the extensive co-

operation between the two countries in various fields, including politics, economy, society, culture, tourism, science, and technology, Mokhtas Abadi expressed his optimism about the future of bilateral relations. "Both countries have a strong foundation for cooperation in education and research, and we need to coordinate more closely between our relevant institutions."

The two sides also discussed ways to promote cultural exchange, including organizing various activities to introduce Iranian culture and civilization, as well as enhancing scientific cooperation.

Iran's 'September 21' receives Best Director Award in Algeria

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian short film 'September 21', directed by Rahman Burhani, won the Best Director Award at the Digital Gate International Film Festival (DGIFF) in Algeria.

In an interview with IRNA on Monday, the film's media advisor, Mehdi



Mansour, said: "The Digital Gate International Film Festival, with the aim of promoting global peace and solidarity, showcases numerous films from around the world every year and awards its winners with valuable prizes."

Mansour stated that the film 'September 21' explores the impact of war on the spirit, body, and future of children and has caught the attention of the judges. Burhani has presented an emotional and insightful portrayal of the lives of children affected by war through this film, ILNA wrote.

According to Mansour, the film features performances by Hossein Nasseri, Amin Tarfi Jalali, Adnan Nasseri, Seyyed Mohammad Saeidi, Sina Tarfi Nejad, Mohammad Halichi, Seyyed Mohammad Mousavi, Jahad Nasseri, Jassem Tarfi, and Maram Nasseri.

'Whales' premiere in Tehran celebrates Afghan-Iranian friendship

The premiere and opening screening of Iran-Afghanistan cinematic work 'Whales', written and directed by Afghan filmmaker Gholamreza Jafari and produced by Mohammad Ahmadi, took place on October 20, at the Charsouf Cinema, hosted by the Art & Experience cinema. The event was attended by the film's creators, a number of artists, and media representatives, ILNA reported.

According to ILNA, at the beginning of the ceremony, Mohammad Ahmadi, the film's producer, thanked the investor and the film's crew, saying,

"Considering the current situation and the circumstances of film screenings, it's worth thanking the Art & Experience cinema group for making such films visible and screened."

Jafari, for his part, referred to the hospitality of the Iranian people, saying, "The reality is that my father's generation has been living in Iran for over four decades, and a generation of Afghan immigrants has been born and raised in Iran, who love Iran very much. For 45 years, Afghan immigrants have been in Iran, and Iranian friends have been hospita-

ble for these 45 years. I really appreciate this hospitality on behalf of myself." Jafari added, referring to the story of 'Whales', "I have tried to be fair in my criticism. I repeat this issue several times, and I don't stutter in saying it.

The fact that the Art & Experience cinema has given me the opportunity to screen a film by an Afghan filmmaker shows this hospitality. I thank them and hope that the two nations can be friends and love each other even more."

