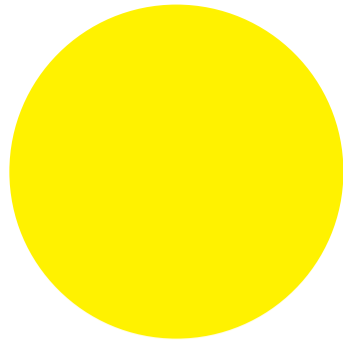


Sheikh Qassem:
Hezbollah
to keep
confronting
Israeli plots in
region



7 >



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| IranDailyWeb

Iran's missile production not affected by Israeli raids: *Minister*

7 >



Iran to Expand Tourism on Abu Musa Island Amid UAE Claim

Iran announced several new projects on Abu Musa Island, southern Hormuzgan Province, including a large tourism center, sports facilities and housing developments.

8 >

ISNA



Parliament okays gov't bill to raise Iran's quota in IMF

2 >



Wrestling World Championships: Geraei grabs Greco-Roman gold, Dadmarz undone in final

6 >



FM: Iran seeking legal action over Israeli use of regional airspace in Oct. 26 attacks

7 >

Third-party candidate for US president Jill Stein: 'Zionism system of ethnic cleansing by design'

4-5 >



SPECIAL ISSUE

Breaking taboos under banner of national unity

By Ebrahim Beheshti
Staff writer

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

The Iranian government appointed Mansour Bijar, a Sunni Baluch, as the governor general of Sistan and Baluchestan province. This is a first for the southeastern province, as Bijar is both a native son and a Sunni Baluch. Simultaneously, the

Parliament has given the green light to the resignation of Abdolkarim Hosseinzadeh, a lawmaker representing of Naqadeh and Oshnavieh from Kurdish regions of Iran, paving the way for his appointment as vice president for rural development and deprived areas. Hosseinzadeh is the first Sunni Kurd to hold this position in the past four decades, thereby opening the door for Sunni representation in the cabinet.

Previously, Mohammad Qasim Osmani, a Sunni Kurdish MP, had made it to the Parliament's presiding board, while Shahrarm Irani, a Sunni Kurdish military officer, had been appointed as the commander of the Army's Naval Force by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. However, until now, Sunni citizens had been shut out of the cabinet.

Page 8 >

Minister urges greater Iran-Turkey transport cooperation

The Iranian minister of roads and urban development described Iran and Turkey as major players in the West Asia region, emphasizing both countries' roles in facilitating goods and energy transit between East and West.

During Turkey's National Day celebration in the capital Tehran on Tuesday evening, Farzaneh Sadeq-Malvajerd pointed to the critical role of both countries in regional trade and energy transit, highlighting their strategic positions as bridges between Asia and Europe and that the collaboration strengthens peace, stability, and security across the region, IRNA reported.

As chair of the Iran-Turkey Joint Economic Cooperation Commission, she added that historical, religious, cultural commonalities and geographic proximity are among the factors that brought the two great nations of Iran and Turkey closer together, and over the centuries, the common border between the two nations transformed into a border of friendship, brotherhood, peace, and stability. The Iranian minister added that deepening relations between Iran and Turkey is crucial, especially amid current complex global and regional dynamics, noting that both countries are key players with a historically influential role in regional developments.

Turkey remains a cornerstone of Iran's neighborliness policies, Sadeq-Malvajerd stated, adding that Iran seeks to enhance ties in political, economic, cultural, scientific, and security arenas. She also noted that recent meetings between top officials from both countries signal a strong political relationship and mutual interest in expanding collaboration.

According to the minister, 2025 is designated as the cultural year between Iran and Turkey in order to fortify diplomatic and social bonds, with new cultural initiatives.

The minister also condemned the recent terrorist attack on Ankara's state-run Turkish Aerospace Industries (TUSAS), which resulted in casualties, offering her condolences and prayers for the victims and wishing swift recovery for the injured. Sadeq further expressed solidarity with victims of state terrorism in Gaza and Lebanon, criticizing the Zionist regime's ongoing crimes in these regions and the West's military support for such operations. Sadeq-Malvajerd was attending the ceremony of Turkey's National Day at the invitation of Turkish Ambassador Hicabi Kirlangic, where she extended her congratulations to the Turkish government and people on the anniversary.

Parliament okays gov't bill to raise Iran's quota in IMF

Members of the Iranian Parliament granted the government the authorization to increase Iran's quota in the International Monetary Fund (IMF). During Wednesday's open session, lawmakers prioritized and subsequently passed the general terms of a bill to raise Iran's quota in the IMF, IRNA reported.

Out of 290 members, 181 voted in favor of a proposal by the Iranian Parliament Commission on Economy, enabling the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) to raise the Islamic country's share in the IMF by 1,783.6 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR). This will increase Iran's overall IMF quota from 3,567.1 million SDR to 5,350.7 million SDR.

Mohammad Reza Farzin, who was officially appointed by President Masoud Pezeshkian as the governor of the CBI on Wednesday, stated that part of Iran's contribution to the IMF will rely on 25 percent foreign currency reserves from other countries, raising the nation's capital in the IMF by around \$1.783 billion.

During the parliament session, Farzin explained that the World Bank has recommended that member states may increase their quotas by as much as 50 percent, warning that if the Islamic Republic's share does not increase, others will increase their capital, and Iran will lose its leadership in the IMF after 50 years.



Mohammad Reza Farzin, the governor of the Central Bank of Iran, addresses an open session of the Parliament in Tehran on October 30, 2024.
● IRNA

Iran lifts iPhone ban, allows new imports after 2023 freeze

Iranians will soon be able to purchase the newest iPhone models—iPhone 14, 15, and 16—after authorities lifted a ban on importing Apple's latest products, according to an announcement on Wednesday.

The prohibition on iPhone imports had been in place since 2023, but the country's telecommunications minister confirmed the shift, saying new models would now be registered in Iran, AP wrote.

Telecommunications Minister Sattar Hashemi took to X, formerly Twitter, to declare that the "problem of registering new iPhone models on the Iranian market was 'solved,' with President Masoud Pezeshkian supporting the move.

While Hashemi didn't provide extensive details, he noted that guidelines for importing the devices would be disclosed shortly. This decision aligns with the CIT Ministry's broader



goal of expanding technology access amid increasing consumer demand.

While the import ban on the latest models was active, Iranians could still purchase iPhone 13 and older models, which retained popularity as status symbols among the country's youth.

Under the ban, newer iPhones brought into Iran became unusable on state-controlled mobile networks after a one-month grace period—typically giv-

ing to foreign visitors.

Before the ban, iPhones accounted for nearly one-third of Iran's \$4.4 billion mobile phone market, according to government statistics.

While iPhones have faced regulatory challenges, other foreign brands remain accessible to Iranian consumers.

Motorola, Samsung, Nokia, Xiaomi, and Huawei smartphones are widely available in Iran, providing alternatives to Apple products.

Japan envoy calls for boost in Tehran-Tokyo ties

Japanese Ambassador to Tehran Tamaki Tsukada has called for the development of cooperation with Iran, while referring to the existence of good grounds for deepening bilateral relations in various areas.

Tsukada made the remarks in a meeting held in Tehran with Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development Farzaneh Sadeq-Malvajerd. The millennium-long record of bilateral ties between Japan and Iran has paved the way for enhancing cooperation on the exchange of knowledge, the construction of housing units and the holding of training courses, the ambassador noted.

He further expressed satisfaction over the achievements gained in such grounds.



For her part, the Iranian minister stressed the importance of expanding ties in the areas of technology and transportation.

Referring to Iran's position in the geopolitics and geo-economics, Sadeq-Malvajerd said the country can act like a bridge between Asia and Europe.

She also said Japan can have access to regional countries including those in the Central Asia region and Caucasus

through Iran.

The two countries have potentials for fostering ties in the area of immunity, smart transportation and earthquake-resistant building technologies.

In the meeting, the minister invited the Japanese officials to visit Iran to see the unique capacities in the country and exchange views about the cooperation.

They also underlined the need to establish direct flight between Iran and Japan.

Exports of mineral products surpass \$6.3b in H1: **IMIDRO**

Economy Desk

Iran's exports of mining and mineral industries products topped \$6.3 billion in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), registering a one-percent drop in terms of value compared to a year earlier, according to the Iranian Mines & Mining Industries Development & Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

IMIDRO stated that Iranian companies active in the mining and mineral industries sector exported over 30.477 million tons of products, valued at \$6.331 billion, in the six months to September 21, reported IRNA on Wednesday.

According to IMIDRO figures, the country had exported 30.492 million tons of mining and mineral industries products during the first six months of previous Iran year (March 21-September 22, 2023).

The largest share of export was related to the production chain of three metal products of steel, aluminum and copper, amounting to 15.855 million tons worth \$4.882 billion.

Also, during March 20-September 21, 2024, about 2.134 million tons of various minerals, valued at \$4.612 billion, were imported into the country to meet the demands of domestic factories, indicating a 19-percent in weight terms while registering

55 percent of increase in terms of value, compared to corresponding figures of last year.

According to IMIDRO, the value of Iran's export of minerals in the previous Iranian year stood at \$13.7 billion, registering a nine-percent increase compared to a year earlier.

The report added that \$7.3 billion worth of the mining and mineral products were imported into Iran from March 2023 to March 2024, showing a 35% rise compared to a year earlier.

Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries in the world. Having 15,000 mining areas, Iran has the sixth largest zinc, seventh largest copper, ninth largest iron ore reserves, and



fifth largest gypsum and barite reserves globally. It also has 3% of the world's total lead and zinc reserves, and huge coal reserves.

Other mineral products such as chromate, and manganese are also found in different regions of Iran.

Restoration projects underway for historic monuments in Anbarabad and Sirjan



Tomb of Salar Reza



Haji Darvish House

Iranica Desk

Restoration operations for the historical Tomb of Salar Reza in the city of Anbarabad, which dates back to the Safavid period, have officially commenced, as confirmed by an official from Kerman Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization.

Nader Alidadi Soleimani stated that this phase of restoration and revitalization will involve repairs made with adobe, plaster, repointing, debris removal, and structural reinforcement, as reported by IRNA.

He elaborated that the building, which hails from the Safavid era, was constructed in the early 11th century AH (17th century CE).

Salar Reza was a Shia Muslim, and his tomb is situated in the Garm Salar Reza village, located at the western foothills of the Jebal Barez Mountain. This site serves as the final resting place for Salar Reza, his family, and his followers. The tomb is housed within a relatively large structure known as *qal'eh* (castle), which features four towers and walls built of stone, adobe, and brick. The Tomb of Salar Reza has been officially registered on Iran's National Heritage List.

Anbarabad is a city in Kerman Province, positioned 257 kilometers south of the provincial capital. It is bordered to the north and west by Jiroft, and to the south by Kenuj and Rudbar, and to the east by Bam and Rigan counties.

In another development, Vahid Hos-

seini, the head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Sirjan, announced the commencement of restoration and conservation studies for Haji Darvish House in the town of Zeidbad. He indicated that this project marks a significant advancement in the scientific restoration of this important building. Hosseini pointed out that the Haji Darvish House is a nationally registered structure, spanning over 2,000 square meters and dating back to the Qajar period. The building was acquired by the Zeidabad Municipality in 2018, and restoration and conservation studies have started in partnership with Sirjan's Cultural Heritage Department.

Haji Darvish was a merchant from

Zeidabad, recognized for constructing most of his residence with the assistance of Yazdi architects. This mansion features a grand windcatcher, a central courtyard, and an array of architectural highlights that exemplify the Qajar era. Parts of the house were built during the Zand period, with additional sections completed in the early Qajar era.

Upon entering the octagonal vestibule, visitors pass through several elongated corridors that lead to the courtyard. The summer quarters, outfitted with a distinctively tall windcatcher, create a refreshing atmosphere. To either side are five-door and three-door rooms, adjoined by exquisitely plastered winter quarters that include a tall fireplace. The

house also boasts a vertical window adorned with colored glass that filters sunlight artistically. In the northern section, there is a kitchen with a separate courtyard, along with several rooms designated for staff rest. The upper floor features additional rooms intended for guards or for rest during the summer nights.

From the entrance vestibule, a door opens to the stable and barn. This house, marked by its tall walls and spacious courtyard, contains numerous rooms meant for the family of Haji Darvish, notably known as Darvish Yusof Ali. In addition to trading spices from Bandar Abbas to Isfahan and Rey, he also owned extensive properties in the region and achieved high ranks in mysticism and spirituality.

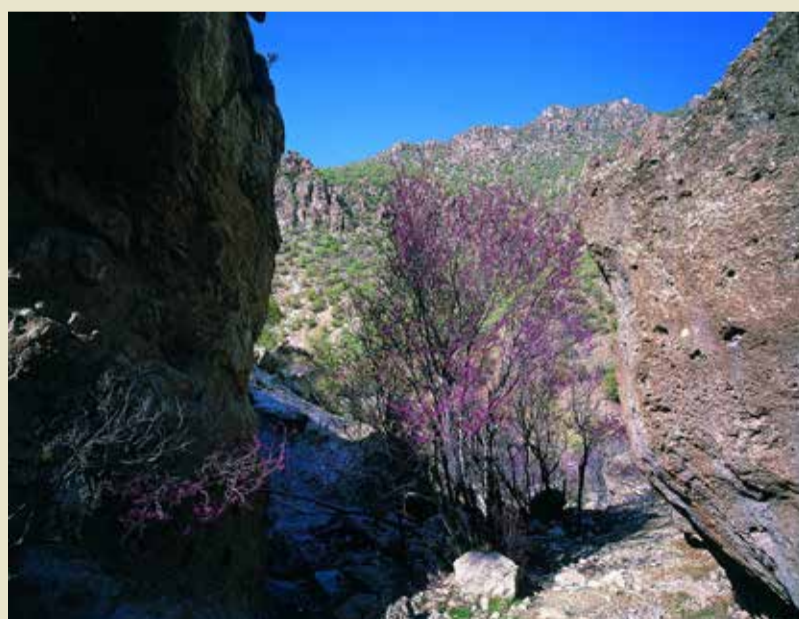
Exploring the enchantment of Arghavan Valley

Arghavan Valley is one of the most beautiful and unique geological phenomena near the city of Ilam. Located along the path to the Ghuchali Gorge, it spans approximately 170 hectares. The valley derives its name from the Arghavan tree, or "Judas tree," which abundantly lines the riverside. Today, it is a popular tourist destination for both locals and international visitors.

The valley provides an ideal environment for various cold-resistant plants and trees, including oak, hawthorn, and a type of maple. The rich vegetation supports a thriving beekeeping industry, known for producing high-quality honey.

The shrubs in Arghavan Valley can reach heights of up to 12 meters. During Farvardin and Ordibehesht (approximately March, April, and May), the gorge transforms into a stunning display of rich purple hues, creating a breathtaking sight for visitors. While Ilam is considered the original habitat of the Judas tree, the area also features dense forests of oak and other species.

The valley is dotted with rivers and several springs, allowing visitors to enjoy refreshing water and spend hours immersed in this natural setting. Judas tree shrubs typically grow along rivers in floodplains with light soil. They propagate through seeds encased in pods and



bloom after one year. The flowers appear in clusters of three to six on branches or even the main trunk. When daytime temperatures exceed 15 degrees Celsius, the flowers bloom, lasting for about two weeks. The blossoms of the Judas tree are edible, offering a sweet and sour flavor that pairs well with other vegetables. Unfortunately, this magnificent plant now faces the threat of extinction. Thanks to its rich biodiversity, the

beekeeping industry continues to flourish in this region. Notably, Arghavan Valley is designated as one of the protected areas in Ilam Province. Located in southwestern Iran, Ilam Province is known for its stunning natural scenery and pleasant weather, making it a hub for numerous tourist attractions. According to historical records, this area was part of the ancient civilization of Ilam. The historical monuments and inscriptions found throughout the



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city stand as testaments to its ancient heritage. Covering approximately 20,133 square kilometers, Ilam Province ranks twenty-second in area across the country. It shares borders with Kermanshah to the north, Khuzestan to the south, Lorestan to the east, and Iraq to the west, with a notable 420-kilometer border with Iraq. A significant portion of the population in Ilam engages in a nomadic lifestyle.

The northern and northeastern regions of Ilam Province are characterized by mountainous terrain, while the southern and southwestern areas consist of low-lying lands. This geographical diversity has resulted in a wide range of natural sights and ecosystems. Situated 710 kilometers from Tehran, the city of Ilam is enveloped by forest-covered mountains, boasting a mild, mountainous climate with particularly pleasant springs.

Third-party candidate for US president Jill Stein: 'Zionism system of ethnic cleansing by design'



By Karan Singh
Freelance
journalist

INTERVIEW

Every four years, politicians and lobbyists urge citizens of the United States to participate in the "most important elections" in the history of the country. Whereas 2024 is no different in that regard, there is in fact a now-or-never sense of urgency looming over the current race to the White House.

On the other side of the world, far removed from the average American's direct line of sight, Palestine and Lebanon remain in a state of bloody unrest at the hands of the Israeli cabinet.

What's unique about this ordeal is that social media users and independent media outlets based in the region have been broadcasting the war crimes taking place there

on a day-to-day basis, leaving no doubts about the callousness of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership. For that reason, Netanyahu's assaults on the surrounding civilian population are crucial to the upcoming elections since the violence in question has always been funded by US taxpayer dollars.

Privy to this pressing threat of war and its broader implications, Dr. Jill Stein has once again stepped up as the presidential candidate for the Green Party in an attempt to put an end to the vicious crusade the Democrats and Republicans are set to persist in. Her unabated denunciation of the Joe Biden-Kamala Harris administration illustrates that not all Jewish people are Zionists and not all Zionists are Jewish — accordingly, Palestinian liberation is at the center of her campaign for People, Planet, and Peace.



The fact that you're Jewish and your running mate is Muslim adds a great deal of credibility to your advocacy for Palestinian liberation. What can you tell us about the Jewish solidarity with Gaza that you've witnessed on the campaign trail?

From the very start, you had Jewish Voice For Peace out there with the students at the campus protests. At Columbia University, there was a huge community Seder for Passover at the Gaza solidarity encampment. It's wonderful to see that the opponents of genocide and advocates for Palestinian human rights are basically advocates for humanity, and they've made it clear that this is not a religious conflict. Jews and Muslims and Christians and atheists and humanists are all together in this shared cause for

humanity. So, the notion that it's antisemitic to oppose genocide, in my view, is the most antisemitic thing one could possibly say.

The issue has never been a conflict of religions; the issue is a matter of Zionism, which is a political ideology basically dedicated to moving people off their land and claiming it. From the get-go, it's been about ethnic cleansing and massacres that were being conducted against the Palestinian people before the State of Israel was even founded. The world has come to a consensus about how to solve that problem, including the rulings of the International Court of Justice, the United Nations Security Council, etc. People are really quite unified in understanding what needs to be done — we need compliance with international law and human rights, and we need to

end not only the genocide but also the occupation as well as the apartheid nature of the Israeli Zionist state.

You were born not long after the Nazi Holocaust. So, you remember a world in which Israel existed for decades before Hamas did. How central is Hamas truly to the turmoil in Palestine today?

Not at all. Hamas is just the latest form of resistance. Occupation is not some innocent incidental; it is about abuse and displacement. It is a murderous and vicious way of life. So, occupation will generate a pushback, like the institution of slavery did. That's just reality — people may not like that, but if you don't like that, then you have to fix the underlying cause of it. The Palestinian Liberation Organization were considered

the "terrorists" before Hamas, but this is all essentially a resistance to occupation and ethnic cleansing.

Christians, Jews, and Muslims lived together peacefully in historic Palestine for millennia. The problem did not arise until Zionists came from Europe and basically began to displace Palestinians. According to the historic archives of the Zionist state, the propaganda surrounding Israel was not true. Israeli historians led the way in surfacing this material and the fact that Zionism was a system of displacement and ethnic cleansing by design. That is the problem. Whether it's Hamas or some other group, there will be resistance to occupation and ethnic cleansing. So, let's get rid of that resistance by getting rid of the fundamental violation of human rights generating that self-defense.

There seems to be a tug of war over progressive values based on what Israel represents to different groups. How do you respond to people who claim that uncompromising support for Palestinian liberation is tantamount to excusing sexual assault and the oppression of women?

Oh, well that's been debunked a long time ago. There's absolutely no evidence that has held up (proving) that the October 7 attacks involved the systematic abuse of women or rape — that didn't hold up any more than beheaded babies or women having their breasts cut off or the fetuses sliced open from the abdomen of pregnant women. That basically did not hold up, whatsoever. You know, the abuse of women is totally out of control now, where women are being slaughtered along with children by the



Green Party candidate Jill Stein speaks about the ongoing genocide in Gaza, on the Allen County Courthouse Green on June 10, 2024, while wearing a Palestinian keffiyeh and standing in front of a Palestinian flag.
● ELLA ABBOTT/WBOI NEWS



"Three sets of American laws are being violated by delivering aid to Israel. It is illegal to send aid to any country that is violating human rights, interfering with the delivery of humanitarian aid, and not complying with the nuclear weapons treaties — Israel is in violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. On all three counts, providing military aid to Israel is illegal." — Jill Stein

thousands in Gaza. That's where women are actually really being abused and destroyed. So, I don't think this is about trying to single out the violence of October 7. Really, (the region) is so overwhelmed by this unending violence that has happened since October 7 and before October 7. I think trying to narrowly focus on October 7 is just misguided, and people who do that have their eyes closed to the much larger situation. You should not miss the forest for the trees here.

We can absolutely solve this problem of violence. So, let's get focused on that — how we stop the violence and how we prevent the recurrent episodes of violence here by basically putting an end to the systematic abuse of human rights and the massacres of women and children and innocent civilians, and displacement and ethnic cleansing as a way of life. That's what has to happen. We need compliance with international law and human rights, and when we do that, the other problems will go away.

You've previously said that the United States can end Israel's ongoing onslaughts in the blink of an eye. How do you pull the plug on an active operation that so many politicians helped enable?

The fortunate thing is that the American people oppose this in huge numbers. That this genocide is being conducted by our colonial misleaders against the will and intentions of the American people is a violation of basic democratic principles.

Three sets of American laws are being violated by delivering aid to Israel. It is illegal to send aid to any country that is violating human rights, interfering with the delivery of humanitarian aid, and not



Jill Stein talks with demonstrators during a protest in support of Palestinians in Gaza, on the sidelines of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Chicago, Illinois, on August 21, 2024.
● REUTERS

complying with the nuclear weapons treaties — Israel is in violation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. On all three counts, providing military aid to Israel is illegal.

Ever since October 7 of last year, the cabinet of Israel has killed thousands of innocent Palestinians, extended that violence to Lebanon, and is now on the brink of war with Iran. What do you believe Netanyahu is trying to accomplish here?

He's trying to stay out of jail. He wants the war to keep going so that the corruption case against him will not come into action. I think he has personal motives here, which may be the most important thing to him, but he has also always kind of pursued a greater Israel through expansion. He's been begging for a war with Iran for decades.

The man does not have an honest bone in his body. His assassination of Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, took place after Nasrallah had agreed to a cease-fire. In a similar way, they knocked off Ismail Haniyeh, the very moderate negotiator for Hamas. Bibi Netanyahu is very much opposed to anything that would advance the peace process.

What does Israel moving farther and farther away from a peace process entail for the United States?

There hasn't been much discussion or reporting about the draft, but it was actually reenacted a couple of years ago. Now, people are being automatically registered for it. They won't be called up until the president decides that we're at war and we need bodies. How horrific would that be if we start paying not only in money and weapons but also in blood? Biden has expressed support for whatever Israel does — the baton for commander-in-chief has basically been passed to Bibi Netanyahu, who's been given free rein to do what he wants. So, it's very much of concern.

There's this notion that Kamala Harris is bad but Donald Trump is far worse. Would the Middle East look any different under a Republican presidency or do you think it's already as bad as it can get?

How much worse can it get than the genocide that's being conducted right now? I mean, you could nuke Palestine. Will Trump do that? Who knows? To me, it's just such propaganda to say that one is better or worse than the other. The current administration is committing genocide right now, and Harris is a part of that. Then, you have Donald Trump saying that he'll finish the job, but who knows what that means because he's also trying to sell himself as a peace president right now. You'd be a fool to believe either of them. We should not be in the business of measuring genocides against each other.

So, yeah, Donald Trump did interfere with the peaceful transition of power after the last election, but the Democrats try to throw political competition off the ballot. That's not okay either. We don't have to wait for Donald Trump for fascism to arrive in this country when the heads of peaceful protesters are being bashed in on college campuses simply because they are expressing the will of the people and the rulings of the International Court of Justice. Making a case for Donald Trump being better or worse

is absolutely nonsense. We have two greater evil candidates; there is no lesser evil.

There are Democrats such as Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar who have taken a stance similar to yours on Palestine. Do you feel an affinity with them or view their involvement with the Blue Party as still being part of the problem?

I think they're definitely part of the solution, but they would accomplish a lot more if they weren't encumbered by the Democratic Party, which is going to pull the rug out from under them. We have to build power at every turn, because where did Bernie Sanders go with his campaign? He headed the budget committee, but everything he did there was basically dumbed down and tossed out. You can't create a revolution within a counter-revolutionary party. There are just too many mechanisms within — you are accountable to big money and to a leadership that will not provide you appointments, committee membership, or the money that they distribute. You're essentially powerless if you're trying to fight for the right thing from inside the Democratic Party, which simply isn't based on those principles.

We don't have time to keep shilly-shallying around and watching Bernie Sanders get savaged twice. I think it should have been enough for anybody to see that was the best they could possibly do, and even the best didn't amount to a hill of beans. If you try to run a campaign with integrity as a Democrat or Republican, every trace of it disappears once it is over: We have a grassroots party that is not controlled by money. The Green Party doesn't accept big money or use any of the loopholes for legalized corruption — there are a whole lot of those loopholes, but we don't use them. We are what we say we are and we'll do what we say we'll do, which the other parties don't. We're trying to encourage people to break off this abusive political relationship that they're in right now.

The United States is directly responsible for reducing Gaza to rubble over the past year. Do you also consider it the country's responsibility to remedy those damages and help rebuild the Strip?

Absolutely. I mean, who else is going to do it? The parties responsible have to do it, which is the State of Israel and the US. There are also others who've

chipped in and sold weapons to Israel. France just pledged 100 million euros in support of Lebanon. So, that's a start. We need both humanitarian aid as well as reconstruction, and they have to happen emergently. It's a tragedy that this magnificent and historic place has been purposefully destroyed.

What do you believe is the actual reason behind the United States' undying support for Israel?

Ronald Reagan's secretary of defense Caspar Weinberger said it very well: Israel is the unsinkable battleship for the US in the Middle East. Why does the US need a battleship? To control Middle Eastern oil. That is really an application of the United States' basic foreign-policy framework, which has been described as "full-spectrum dominance". We must dominate all resources as well as all potential areas of conflict and competition — that is our country's foreign policy in a nutshell. It's absolutely disastrous, and it still applies. On that account, we are headed toward nuclear war on three fronts right now, and we're not going to get out of here alive if that's allowed to persist.

Do you support a two-state solution or a one-state solution?

Right now, we have one apartheid state; I think we need one democracy. As for a two-state solution, the logical question would be to ask how that would look different from what we have now. Palestine now has representation and strong support in the United Nations, but can that work when it hasn't for so many decades? Ultimately, it's hard to believe this is going to get solved without one democratic state that brings justice, equality, and dignity to all its citizens.

The United States government pumps billions of dollars into the Israeli military every year. Based on the plans you've charted out for your presidency and the data you have about these spendings, what issues within the US could that money be used for instead?

We're spending half of our congressional budget on the endless war machine and the Pentagon. If you add up the costs of taking care of our wounded soldiers for the Veterans Administration, nuclear weapons as part of the Department of Energy, the FBI, customs, and border protection, it's more like 60–65% of the budget. It is just like robbing us blind.



Jill Stein (c) is seen linking arms with anti-Israel protesters before being arrested on Washington University's campus in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 27, 2024. AP

So, we need to cut that budget at least in half and put those dollars into healthcare for everyone through a Medicare for All system. We bailed out the crooks on Wall Street. So, we can bail out victims of that same economy by putting an end to student and medical debt. We need at least 15 million units of quality, environmentally-sound housing — so-called "social housing". And of course, we need a Green New Deal to combat the climate crisis. Right now, power is held by politicians who are unaccountable to the people. They are bought and paid for by AIPAC, war profiteers, and Wall Street. So, it behooves the American people to stand up for what it is that we want and need. The genocide itself is a microcosm of our imperial foreign policy, which has left no money to treat the emergencies that Americans are dealing with. 50% of Americans right now are struggling to keep a roof over their heads and meet their monthly rent or mortgage. 50% are within one or two paychecks of being evicted, and the number of people who are subject to eviction and homelessness are absolutely skyrocketing now.

That's just one issue. We also need rent control. We need a tenant bill of rights. There are many things that can be done, some of which need resources while others don't, but our government is instead serving the real estate industry and private equity that is buying our homes, taking them off the market and driving the prices up. The system that is serving the war profiteers right now is also serving Big Pharma and health insur-



"We don't have to wait for Donald Trump for fascism to arrive in this country when the heads of peaceful protesters are being bashed in on college campuses simply because they are expressing the will of the people and the rulings of the International Court of Justice. Making a case for Donald Trump being better or worse is absolutely nonsense. We have two greater evil candidates; there is no lesser evil." — Jill Stein



The front cover of the Arab American News, with pictures of presidential candidates Jill Stein (c), Kamala Harris (l), and Donald Trump, is seen in the newspaper's office in Dearborn, Michigan, on September 18, 2024. REBECCA COOK/REUTERS

ance companies. One out of every three eligible voters did not vote in the 2020 presidential race. Who are those voters? They are younger, lower income, and of color — the people who are the most marginalized are not voting because the zombies being rammed down their throats do not serve their interests. There's a lot of voting power out there if we can get the word out. As a grassroots campaign, we encourage people to volunteer because it's all about phone banking, flyers, door knocking, and tabling to just get the word out and let people know that we can stop the genocide in Gaza and the endless war machine. We can stop the squandering of a trillion dollars a year that should be cut in half. So, we have the funds here at home for public higher education and to ensure that there's a \$25-an-hour minimum wage. The war abroad is also a war at home, against democracy and against working people.

MSNBC, CBS, and The New York Times are just some of the major outlets that have published alarmist articles about your presidential bid. How important a role do you think the mainstream media has played in hindering your reach across the country?

I think they're doing us a favor. Every time they smear us, more and more people wake up. To tell you the truth, I don't read the articles because I don't really care what they think. They've been saying the same stuff about me for a long time because they're very scared, and I consider it quite an achievement that they're now taking out these really dumb ads against me. If you read the social-media commentary about the attacks against us, people are pretty furious for the most part ... except when it's a dedicated Democrat audience, like MSNBC. These smears really push people in the opposite direction. For example, the YouTube comments under our interview with The Breakfast Club are just off the charts. It's thousands and thousands of people saying, "I wasn't going to vote, but now I'm going to register Green and vote for Jill Stein and Butch Ware."

We are at the tipping point. The uprising is going really strong, more than I've ever seen. Now, it's just a question of when we get to the breakthrough point. It feels like we're closer now than ever before.

The article first appeared on the Palestine Chronicle.

Wrestling World Championships:

Geraei grabs Greco-Roman gold,
Dadmarz undone in final

Sports Desk

The second day of the Wrestling World Championships for the non-Olympic weight categories saw Mohammadali Geraei end his long wait for the coveted gold, while Pouria Dadmarz settled for a silver medal in the Greco-Roman competitions.

Eight years after making senior debut for the national team, Geraei, 30, walked away with the ultimate prize of the 82kg contests in emphatic fashion, storming to a 9-0 victory over a shell-shocked Hungarian Erik Szilvassy in the final.

"After eight years, I finally got to experience the world finals," Geraei said.

"I'm truly happy from the bottom of my heart because I could make my fans and family happy, especially my dear wife, who stood by me in tough times and understood me, as well as my parents and all my fans.

"I'm grateful to them; they have always been there for me and supported me, and I dedicate this medal to them," added the Iranian.

Geraei, normally a 77kg wrestler who was competing at the heaviest weight of his career, encountered no problems handling the extra bulk against Szilvassy, a winner of international tournaments this year in Zagreb and Budapest.

After a quick stepout, Geraei stopped an attempted throw by Szilvassy for a takedown, then transitioned immediately to a gut wrench. An unsuccessful challenge by the Hungarian side padded Geraei's lead to 6-0 just a minute into the match.

Geraei, who finished fifth at the Tokyo Olympics but missed out on a berth at the Paris Games,



Iranian Mohammadali Geraei (blue singlet) is seen in action during his last-eight victory over Georgian Gela Bolkvadze in the Greco-Roman 82kg contests at the Wrestling World Championships in Tirana, Albania, on Oct. 28, 2024.

● UWW

then completed a snap-down, go-behind takedown to finish the match in 1:35 and add the world gold to the bronze medals he won at 71kg in 2017 and at 77kg in 2019 and 2021.

"I thought this competition would be really tough. Thank God it ended up being easy," Geraei said.

The Iranian must fill lucky to have had a shot at a fourth world medal.

In November last year, the United World Wrestling banned Geraei for 12 months due to an incident in last year's World Championships, when he threw a bottle of mineral water on the mat during a 67kg quarterfinal,

presumably trying to buy his younger brother Mohammadreza some time to restore stamina in a bout against Japanese wrestler Kyotaro Sogabe, which the Iranian held on to win 11-10.

However, the international governing body of the sport went on to lift the ban in February, though Geraei still failed to make a late tilt at a place in the Summer Olympics.

"These past two or three years have been difficult for me, and due to certain circumstances, I couldn't participate in the Olympics. I hope with this medal I won, I can pave my way to the [next] Olympics and achieve the best medal and my dream."

Earlier on Tuesday, 2023 bronze medalist Dadmarz fell to a narrow loss to Azerbaijani sensation Eldaniz Azizli in the 55kg final.

It was a cagy affair in the Feti Borova Sports Hall as Azizli – victorious in all three previous meetings between the two – had a 1-1 win on last-point criteria to thank for his fourth gold after each received a passivity point.

"I have met the Iranian wrestler before and we know each other well. That is why it was close. I have beaten him four times but this time it was closer," said Azizli, who had beaten Dadmarz 6-1 in their most recent encounter at the Budapest Ranking Se-

ries in June.

It was an ironic defeat for Dadmarz, who had been on the winning end of the same scoreline in his two previous matches. Azizli's gold was the first of the three won by the Azerbaijani wrestlers in Tirana, with Nihat Mammadli (63kg) and Ulyu Gani-zade (72kg) also coming out victorious in the final showpiece of their respective weight classes.

Mohammadreza falls

The Greco-Roman event in Tirana will be one to forget for Mohammadreza Geraei, who, unlike his older brother, failed to meet the high expectations in a new weight class, suffering a

first-round 11-3 defeat against low-profile American Benji Peak in the 72kg contests.

The 28-year-old was once tipped to dominate the 67kg class for years following his back-to-back Olympic and world crowns in 2021, but his form diminished over the following two years, as he settled for the world silver in 2022 before laboring to the bronze in the 2023 edition.

He then missed the chance to defend his Olympic title after comprehensive defeats against Saied Esmaeili in the Iranian trials and when the young prodigy took the Games by storm to win the gold, Geraei, who had been clearly struggling with massive weight losses before every tournament, was convinced to move up to a the 72kg division.

His hopes of a fresh start in his career, however, ended in despair against low-profile American Benji Peak, who defeated Geraei 11-3 but his loss in the next round meant the Iranian would leave Tirana empty-handed.

Former world junior and under-23 champion, Iman Mohammadi was the Iranian contestant in the 63kg class but missed out on the podium after a controversial 2-2 defeat against Russian Sadyk Lalaev in the quarterfinals.

Azerbaijan won the team title with 85 points, followed by Iran, which tallied 51 points, and Armenia (35pts).

Youth World Boxing Championships:

Malek-Katabi secures
historic medal for Iran

● IBA

Sports Desk

Iran's Amirreza Malek-Khatabi secured a maiden medal for the country at the IBA Youth World Boxing Championships by reaching the 86-92kg semifinals in Budva, Montenegro.

An Asian youth bronze winner in May, the Iranian came out victorious (4:1) against Russian Oleg Kliuchagin in the

quarterfinals for the historic success. Malek-Khatabi had begun his campaign with a victory over Taha Turgut Tarhan – after the referee deemed the Turkish boxer unfit to continue.

Standing between the Iranian and a place in the final showpiece is Kyrgyzstan's Tynystan Alybaev, who defeated Zvonimir Zirdum in the last-eight round.

Ahmad-Abbasi retains
Iran's futsal dominance in AFC Awards

AFC – Iran stalwart Saeid Ahmad-Abbasi was named the latest Asian Futsal Player of the Year at the AFC Annual Awards Seoul 2023 on Tuesday.

Abbasi continued a proud Iranian tradition in the award's history by becoming the sixth different player from his nation to win, following in the footsteps of record four-time recipient Ali-Asghar Hassan-zadeh, legendary Vahid Shamsaei, who picked up the award on three occasions, Mohammad Taheri, Mohammad Keshavarz, and Moslem Oladqobad.

Having been edged to the prize by Oladqobad in 2022, there was no denying Ahmad-Abbasi on his second nomination after his eye-catching tournament display at the Futsal Asian Cup in Thailand in April.

The 32-year-old scored in five of Team Melli's six matches, including the final showpiece, to finish with eight goals and one assist as Iran clinched a record-extending 13th triumph. The success was sweet redemption for the Central Asians, who had relinquished their crown in 2022, and Ahmad-Abbasi also took home the Most Valuable Player and Yili Top Scorer trophies. Born in Tonekabon, Abbasi first donned international colours in 2017 and the pivot recently returned to IR Iran by joining Giti Pasand in June after spending time abroad with Spain's Viña Albali Valdepeñas since November 2022.



● AFC

Iran's missile production not affected by Israeli raids: *Minister*

International Desk

The Iranian defense minister said on Wednesday that the country's production of missiles was not impacted by Israel's air strikes against defensive targets across the Iranian provinces of Tehran, Khuzestan, and Ilam last week. Rejecting Tel Aviv's allegations that it had "destroyed" the Islamic Republic's air defense capabilities as a result of the aggression, Aziz Nasirzadeh told reporters that, "There has been no interruption in the process of producing offensive systems such as missiles." "The enemy tried to damage our offensive and defensive system, but did

not achieve much success because we had passive defense measures in place [in advance]."

Israel launched strikes on military sites in Iran on Saturday, citing Tehran's October 1 missile attack that followed more deadly atrocities by the regime against Iran and other regional nations, including Israel's assassinations of the Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and Abbas Nilforoushan, a commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said later that the strikes "hit Iran's defense capabilities and missile production." Iran's armed forces said



A view of Iran's first hypersonic ballistic missile, Fattah-1, developed by the Aerospace Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC)

● ALI SHAFIZADEH/IRNA



the attack killed four soldiers and caused "limited damage" to a few radar systems. Iranian media said a civilian was also killed.

Israel has warned Iran against retaliating, with Tehran asserting that it does not seek war, vowing an "appropriate response."

Nasirzadeh, meanwhile, underlined that Iran would not forgive any incursion against the country on the part of the Zionist regime.

"It is not forgivable [for us] that a regime such as the Zionist regime that lacks identity has dared car-

ry out an act of violation against a strong country with an ancient history," he said, adding that the

Islamic Republic "will respond to the regime in the right place and at the right time."

Pezeshkian: No difference between Iranian ethnicities



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said there is no difference between various ethnicities in the country, stressing that we can achieve national strength and consensus through unity.

He made the remarks during a ceremony to appoint the first Sunni governor general, Mansour Bijar, from the Baluch community in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan. Pezeshkian said resolving the problems facing the province has been one of the main concerns of his government. In September, Iran also appointed the first Sunni governor general for the western province of Kurdistan since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

FM: Iran seeking legal action over Israeli use of regional airspace in Oct. 26 attacks

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Israel had used Iraq's airspace and a US-controlled channel over the Arab country in its latest act of aggression against Iran, adding that the Islamic Republic has lodged a complaint with the United Nations over the issue. Araghchi made the remarks on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting in Tehran on Wednesday as he discussed Israel's unauthorized use of Iraqi airspace for conducting the October 26 attack on Iran that led to the martyrdom of four Iranian servicemen and one civilian.

"The presence of the US military in the region is a reality and the Zionist fighter jets carried out the recent attack against Iran through the airspace opened up by the United States in the region," Araghchi said. He said that in addi-

tion to US-controlled airspace over Iraq, the Israeli regime also used the airspace of other countries in the region for its aggression against the country. Araghchi said that during his recent trip to the neighboring country before the Israeli attack, Iraq's high-ranking officials had asserted that they would not allow the use of their airspace and soil.

The foreign minister also noted that Iran is following up on the complaint lodged by Iraq with the United Nations over Israel's unauthorized move, adding that the country is also in contact with the Iraqi government and other regional countries whose airspace has been used to carry out the attack to file a complaint.

Another senior Iranian commander also said the Israeli regime and its allies' aircraft hovered across the Iraqi

airspace for 25 consecutive days in preparation for possible attack against Iran.

In early October, Iran's Operation True Promise II saw the Islamic Republic launch 200 missiles towards Israeli military and intelligence bases all over the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories in retaliation for the regime's acts of deadly aggression against the country and other regional nations.

Following the Iranian operation, the Iraqi airspace was "at the disposal" of the Israeli regime and its supporters, including the United States, Britain, France, and some littoral Persian Gulf Arab states, during the 25-day period as "they sought to take an offensive measure against us," said Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, deputy chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination.

Sheikh Qassem: Hezbollah to keep confronting Israeli plots in region



International Desk

Sheikh Naim Qassem delivered his first speech as the secretary-general of Lebanon's Hezbollah on Wednesday, saying that the resistance movement will continue fighting to disrupt the Israeli regime's plots across the entire region. Sheikh Qassem warned that the regime and its Western and European supporters are engaged in a "major scheme" to dominate the region.

He told the audience in his televised address that his practical plan is to continue the work of the late leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. Sheikh Qassem said Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, himself, stated at the beginning of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon that it was for the sake of a "New Middle East."

"We are facing a significant project in the region; this is a war that extends beyond Lebanon and Gaza; it is a global war against Resistance."

Anti-resistance plots

"This Zionist war is American, European, and global in nature, seeking to eliminate Resistance in the region."

"All forms of brutality and extermination are being used in this aggression to advance their project, and we must confront it rather

than stand by and watch." "Final victory will be ours," he said in the nearly hour-long video, with the flags of Lebanon and Hezbollah and an image of his assassinated predecessor Nasrallah behind him.

Qassem vowed that under his leadership, Hezbollah will continue the work of Nasrallah and keep fighting a war with Israel while following the same political path. "Helping Gaza is our duty and we will defend it to counter the Israeli threat for the entire region."

'Get out of our land'

Qassem warned Israel it would pay a heavy price if its forces remain in Lebanon, stressing that his group was ready for a prolonged conflict.

"Get out of our land to reduce your losses. If you stay, you will pay more than you have ever paid in your life," Qassem said. Hezbollah was founded in 1982 to confront Israeli occupation and its expansionist intentions and to liberate the occupied land, Qassem stated.

He also addressed criticisms that the Resistance in Gaza and Lebanon provoked the Israeli aggression. He urged the public not to forget 75 years of Israeli atrocities and the role of Resistance in ending the occupation of Lebanon.

"Some argue that Israel was provoked, but does Israel



Lebanon's Hezbollah new leader Sheikh Naim Qassem delivers a speech from an unknown location on October 30, 2024 in this still image from video.

need a pretext? Have we forgotten 75 years of killing Palestinians, displacing them, seizing the land and sanctities, and committing massacres?"

"It is the Resistance that drove Israel out of our land in the past in cooperation with the army and the people. International resolutions did not expel Israel from our land. Rather, it was the Resistance," he said.

The Hezbollah leader emphasized that Resistance in the region is fighting for a dignified future. "The legendary steadfastness of the Resistance in Gaza and Lebanon is an epic of dignity; it will shape the future of our generations."

Sheikh Qassem clarified that Hezbollah is not fighting on behalf of any party but is defending Lebanon. He also praised Iran's support for the Lebanese resistance. Iran has never sought anything in return for its assistance, Sheikh Qassem stated.

"Iran understands the price it pays for its support of Resistance and has provided it—through martyr General Soleimani—with what no one else has ever offered," he said.

Iran-IAEA relations continue on daily basis

The head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said the country's relations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continue on a daily basis. The officials and inspectors of the UN Nuclear Watchdog are constantly visiting Iran to inspect Iranian nuclear facilities, Eslami said. In an apparent reference to recent Israeli threats to attack Iran's nuclear sites, Eslami said the IAEA is duty-bound to protest the regime's actions in the region under the international laws.

Saudi Arabia says no normalization without Palestinian state

Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan on Tuesday reaffirmed his country's position on normalization of ties with Israel, during the opening of the first meeting of the "International Coalition for the Two-State Solution" in Riyadh. "Regarding normalization, the position is clear, as expressed by the Crown Prince: the establishment of a Palestinian state is Saudi Arabia's prerequisite for moving towards normalization," the minister said, stressing that, "The security of the region is linked to resolving this issue."

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran to expand tourism on Abu Musa Island amid UAE claim

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran announced several new projects on Abu Musa Island, southern Hormuzgan Province, including a large tourism center, sports facilities, and housing developments.

This expansion follows the UAE's recent claim on Abu Musa, which Iran firmly rejects as it considers the island an "inseparable" part of its territory.

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Reza Salehi Amiri, revealed plans to establish a 30-hectare tourism center on Abu Musa.

This facility will offer recreational and accommodation options for both locals and visitors, making it easier for Iranian citizens to explore the island.

Salehi Amiri explained that military cooperation has helped open areas for development, stating, "Abu Musa is an inseparable part of our land, and we are working to make it accessible to everyone."

The minister also highlighted broader regional efforts, noting that nearby Chabahar and the Makran coasts are undergoing significant development. A private company has invested \$72.5 million in a major tour-

ism project on the Makran coast, aimed at transforming the area with access to open waters, green spaces, and natural attractions.

On the sports front, Iranian Minister of Sports and Youth Ahmad Donya Mali, emphasized Abu Musa's potential for beach sports.

During his recent visit, Donya Mali announced that sports facilities are set to open by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20), with sufficient funding already in place to ensure timely completion of dormitories, swimming pools, and other facilities.

In addition to tourism and sports, Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Development (MRUD) is launching a housing project on Abu Musa.

Deputy Minister Arsalan Maleki stated that construction on 110 residential units will soon begin, providing homes for locals and applicants from other areas of Iran.

This announcement came shortly after the UAE reiterated its claim to Abu Musa and two other Iranian islands in a joint statement with the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union.



Maleki clarified that construction on Abu Musa is fully permitted under Iranian law, remarking, "The MRUD is legally bound to expand housing on Abu Musa." Plus, the popular Qur'an recital event, 'Mahfel,' is set to

take place on Abu Musa on November 1, featuring hosts from Iranian television and various artists. This cultural event underscores Iran's dedication to fostering a connection with Abu Musa while advancing the island's infra-

structure. Iran strongly maintains that Abu Musa, along with Greater and Lesser Tunb, are historically and legally part of its territory, a position it reiterated in response to the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and EU statement.

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Reza Salehi Amiri speaks on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting in Tehran on October 30, 2024. ● ISNA

Iranian films to be screened at Sulmona Int'l Film Festival in Italy



The 42nd Sulmona International Film Festival in Italy will feature several Iranian short films and animations. The festival is set to take place from November 6 to 9, 2024, in the city of Sulmona, ISNA reported.

According to reports, the festival will present short films such as 'Sheep,' directed by Hadi Babaeifar, 'Decision,' by Negar Ibn Ali, and 'Steak,' by Kiarash Dadgar, in the international short film competition.

In addition, the animation 'In the Shadow of the Cypress,' directed by Hossein Molyemi and Shirin Sohani, will be shown in the short animation category. The short animation 'Tomorrow,' directed by Aryasb Feiz, will be featured in the children's section of the event.

The Sulmona International Film Festival focuses on the world of short films and aims to discover and showcase works by emerging directors each year.

Iran-UK arts, crafts show 'Songs of Big Ben' opens virtually

Arts & Culture Desk

A unique online exhibition, 'Songs of Big Ben,' showcasing visual arts and crafts from Iran and the UK, opened on October 29.

The exhibition, which will run until November 5, presents 47 works by 37 artists and aims to go beyond traditional visual experiences.

The 'Songs of Big Ben' exhibition was organized by the Luminart Art Group,

the Iranian Center for Creative Tourism, and Roma Pulse, with Mina Aalipour as the curator.

Aalipour explained that the artworks were carefully selected for their immersive qualities. "If you pay close attention to these pieces, it's almost as if they have sounds of their own," she said.

Aalipour also shared that a virtual reality tour has been created to enhance the online experience, describing it as

a "souvenir and gift from our team to the artists."

Artists featured in the show include Ali Khosravani Dehkordi, Alma Ghasemi, Amir Reza Ganjifard, Atefeh Niliyani, Avishan Behroozi, Elaheh Ramezani-Zadeh Kermani, Elaheh Pour Aminaei, and several others.

Songs of Big Ben is accessible on Instagram, on Telegram, and through a virtual gallery on Artsteps.



Breaking taboos under..

Although the public had expected the introduction of Sunni ministers, as promised by President Masoud Pezeshkian during his election campaign, this expectation was not met. Nevertheless, Pezeshkian has vowed to make up for this in other government positions. Now, for the first time, native governors have been appointed for Khuz-

estan, Kurdistan, and Sistan and Baluchestan provinces, representing their respective Arab, Kurdish and Baluch ethnic groups. The presence of minority groups and ethnicities in executive positions is not limited to this list, as capable individuals from these groups have also taken on responsibilities in lower management ranks. President Pezeshkian has dubbed his

administration the "Government of National Unity," striving to bolster internal cohesion by appointing competent managers from various political factions, ethnicities, minorities, women, and youth. It appears that under the banner of national unity, the president has managed to shatter a 45-year-old taboo, lifting the "Do Not Enter" sign for Sunnis in high-level executive positions.

This broken taboo has not been met with any overt opposition from other branches of power, and has instead been welcomed, with experts and elites noting that it helps to heal social rifts. This new experience should be taken as a good omen, and we should be hopeful that, under the umbrella of national unity and consensus among governing bodies, political factions,

and elites, other self-imposed taboos stemming from incorrect assessments, misinterpretations, or even benevolent considerations that do not serve national interests or citizen rights will also crumble. These taboos have deprived the people and the political system of opportunities and capacities, and breaking them will be a shot in the arm for the country.