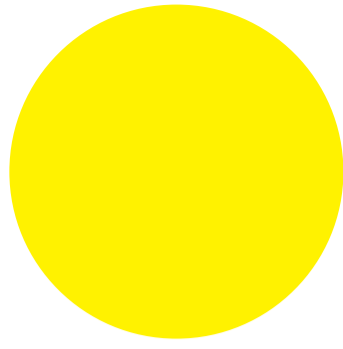


Iran playing active role in global industrial paradigm shift: **Hemmati**

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Stalled dialogues risk turning Middle East into 'failed region'

By **Seyed Hossein Mousavian**
International affairs analyst

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

One of the primary reasons for the increasing complexity and danger in the Middle East is the weakness of the United Nations Security Council. This council, as the highest authority responsible for ensuring international peace, stability, and security, has unfortunately performed very weakly in fulfilling its commitments and duties, to the extent that it has become an ineffective entity. The Security Council's role in ending the numerous wars in the Middle East over the past decades—such as the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, NATO's intervention in Libya, or Saudi Arabia's attack on Yemen—has been virtually nonexistent. When the highest authority responsible for ensuring global peace and security becomes ineffective, the second option is the global powers, which can end crises through their initiatives and cooperation. Unfortunately, part of the Middle East's problems is due to the competition among these global powers, which has entangled the region in instability and prolonged wars, such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, followed by the US invasion of Afghanistan. The third problem is the imprudence and disputes among regional powers. While the region is on the brink of collapse, regional powers like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Turkey do not have serious dialogue and cooperation to solve the problems. Worse, some of the problems are due to the competition among these regional powers. These three voids have put the region on the verge of destruction.

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CBI governor announces plan to launch Digital Rial



The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) plans to introduce its digital currency, the Digital Rial, as part of a broader initiative to modernize the country's banking infrastructure and enhance international financial collaboration.

Mohammadreza Farzin, the governor of the CBI, broke in the news at the 11th Annual Conference on Modern Banking and Payment Systems in Tehran on Monday, according to cbi.ir.

During the event, Farzin described the conference as a platform to assess current policies and chart the future direction of the banking system. "As the governor, this platform allows me to evaluate strategies and set the course ahead. We will incorporate the insights shared here into our policymaking," he said.

The CBI chief highlighted the strengths and challenges of Iran's banking system, underscoring its strong digital infrastructure and noting that, "Iran's Shetab payment network, with transactions processed in under two seconds, is among the most efficient in the region."

"Developing innovative banking systems is a central bank's responsibility worldwide, and we are determined to fulfill this duty in Iran," Farzin added.

Addressing international banking relations, Farzin acknowledged the challenges posed by sanctions but highlighted the progress being made in overcoming them.

"Sanctions remain a significant obstacle, but we've made considerable progress in recent years," he said, pointing to the implementation of the "ACU-MIR" system as an example.

The ACU-MIR system, designed to promote Asian financial cooperation, serves as an alternative to SWIFT, facilitating transactions with countries like India and Pakistan.

Farzin explained that the system became fully operational on October 2, enhancing Iran's ability to navigate and manage the impact of sanctions more effectively.

"We've replaced SWIFT with this platform and strengthened our ties with BRICS, which is shaping global trade with a strategic plan through 2025," he said, adding that the plan focuses on expanding the use of local currencies, creating opportunities for Iran to integrate into the system. He noted that China and Russia are already making efforts in this direction, aiming to settle transactions using BRICS currencies.

Iran playing active role in global industrial paradigm shift: *Hemmati*

Economy Desk

Iran's economy minister, addressing a ministerial panel at the 28th World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) conference in the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh on Monday, highlighted the country's proactive approach to shaping the emerging industrial paradigm and addressing global challenges such as climate change.

"The shifting industrial paradigm and its impact on industrial policy and investment strategies not only shape the future of the global economy but also determine the trajectory of international cooperation and the quality of life worldwide," Abdolnasser Hemmati was reported by Mehr News Agency as saying.

The minister noted that the global economy has faced numerous challenges in recent years, including climate crises, geopolitical shifts, energy market volatility, and inequalities driven by emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and the digital revolution.

He added that global economic growth, which the World Bank data shows rarely exceeded 3.5% annually over the past decade, is now confronted with increasing uncertainties.

The official pointed to disparities between emerging and advanced economies, escalating trade tensions, and disruptions to global supply chains as major concerns for governments worldwide.

However, amid these challenges, Hemmati highlighted the unprecedented opportunities for sustainable development, green economies, renewable energy investment, and digital transformation.

Hemmati emphasized Iran's unique advantages, including its



rich natural, mineral, and energy resources, a young and educated population, strategic geopolitical location, and robust economic infrastructure.

He noted that with 10% of the world's proven oil reserves, 15% of its natural gas reserves, and its position as a North-South and East-West transit corridor, Iran is well-positioned to strengthen global supply chains.

"In renewable energy, Iran holds significant potential for solar and wind power generation, which could not only meet domestic demand but also support clean energy exports to neighboring countries," Hemmati said. He also highlighted Iran's collaborative efforts through regional

and international platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS, and the Eurasian Economic Union, saying, "These partnerships, combined with strong ties with neighboring and Persian Gulf countries, reflect Iran's commitment to fostering mutual cooperation."

Hemmati criticized economic sanctions, emphasizing their harmful effects on not only Iran but also the broader regional and global economies and called for optimized government roles in investment promotion agencies, trade facilitation, and special economic zones.

"Dozens of Iran's special economic and free trade-industrial

zones offer a favorable environment for high-quality investments. With infrastructure facilities and access to regional markets, these zones are pivotal for boosting domestic production, meeting consumer demand, and expanding international exports," he explained.

Hemmati pointed to the effects of technological advancements, environmental changes, and economic necessities on the global industrial paradigm and said challenges include intensified competition for tech investments, the diminishing role of traditional industries in the global economy, and the urgent need for a transition to green technologies.

Developing nations, he said, face additional hurdles such as infrastructure gaps, skilled labor shortages, and limited investment capacities.

The minister pointed out that industries such as petrochemicals, automotive manufacturing, and biotechnology account for about 37% of Iran's GDP, presenting significant opportunities for foreign investment.

"Over the past decade, Iran has also seen remarkable growth in technology-based industries, showcasing its readiness to leverage the Fourth Industrial Revolution."

"To harness these opportunities, Iran's industrial policies and investment promotion strategies must align and amplify each other. Big data, digital transformation, and international collaboration are essential tools for achieving this goal," Hemmati stated.

Hemmati underscored Iran's active foreign policy and national capacities as foundations for playing a pivotal role in the industrial paradigm shift. "With a forward-looking approach, Iran aims to become a driving force for regional and global growth," he said.

The minister also invited all participating governments to strengthen multilateral cooperation and share experiences to build a more sustainable, equitable, and prosperous future for all nations.

With over 130 members representing over 110 nations, WAIPA serves as the primary global organization promoting investment promotion and facilitation. By encouraging FDI and highlighting the role of its members, WAIPA continues to drive global economic growth and development, according to its official website.



Iran to reject cap on output in OPEC+ meet: *Oil minister*

Economy Desk

Iran will strive not to accept limitations on its oil production, the country's oil minister Mohsen Paknejad said in a video shared by state media on Monday.

Markets are also expected to move this week ahead of the OPEC+ meeting on Dec. 1, where the group may stick with deep oil cuts for longer due to weak demand.

The minister stated that Iran will not accept restrictions on its oil production quota during the upcoming meetings of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+, IRNA wrote. He emphasized the country's commitment to maintaining its

quota due to the unique circumstances it faces.

Paknejad said measures were implemented under the next US administration to ensure the continuation of Iran's oil exports with minimal or no challenges.

In response to questions about whether the quantity and quality of Iran's oil sales would change under the Trump administration, the minister expressed confidence, saying, "We are not overly concerned in this regard."

He added that through detailed and regular discussions with international colleagues in the oil sector, strategies were devised to safeguard oil exports against potential disruptions.

Paknejad on November 13

addressed concerns about potential increased pressure on Iranian oil exports amid shifts in US foreign policy or a return to measures reminiscent of the Trump administration's sanctions. He stated, "Necessary precautions have been taken in this regard."

The minister said that the oil sector is prepared for any potential challenges, saying, "Our colleagues in the oil industry have anticipated actions in line with possible restrictions, ensuring no issues arise that could worry the public."

Paknejad also noted that the Oil Ministry's strategic planning is focused on sustaining stable oil production and exports, adding, "There is no specific cause for concern in this area."

Parliamentary panel declares end to residential power outages

Economy Desk

A member of the Iranian Parliament's Energy Committee announced on Monday that scheduled power outages in residential areas have been stopped. According to ISNA, Seyed Esmaeil Hosseini shared the update in a Persian-language post

on his X social media account. He referred to details from the committee's Sunday meeting, which was held to address electricity shortages, that was attended by Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi.

Hosseini added that, "The Energy Committee, with the participation of the minister of energy,

his deputies, and deputies from the Ministry of Oil, discussed the issue on power outages. Following the Supreme National Security Council's resolution and the fulfillment of commitments by the National Iranian Gas Company, residential power outages have been halted starting today (Monday)."



Cultural richness of Emad-o-Doleh Mosque in Kermanshah

The Emad-o-Doleh Mosque is a remarkable structure with a distinctive spatial location. Situated in the heart of Kermanshah, within the traditional bazaar, it serves as a central gathering place for the community. Kermanshah lies in a border region, making it a crossroads of diverse beliefs and cultures from neighboring countries, which has fostered the coexistence of various religions. These attributes have transformed the mosque into a hub for different social classes.

The architecture of the mosque reflects its public utility. Unlike other royal mosques of its time, Emad-o-Doleh Mosque was constructed with simplicity, resembling later mosques and even contemporary buildings in Iran. This is particularly evident in the courtyard's decorations, which feature unglazed narrow bricks alongside vibrant seven-color tiles. In contrast, the prayer hall adheres to traditional brickwork, influenced by the architectural styles of two neighboring countries. The construction method ingeniously accommodates various tastes and aesthetics, setting it apart from conventional architectural traditions.

Emad-o-Doleh is one of the most distinguished mosques of the Qajar era, constructed in 1868 within the jewelers' bazaar with the pa-

tronage of Imam Qoli Mirza Emad-o-Doleh, the ruler of western Iran. Its architectural style incorporates several key elements: 1) façade, 2) entrance, 3) *hashti* (corridor), 4) courtyard, 5) *ivan* (porch), 6) columned prayer hall, 7) watchtower, and 8) adjacent chambers and internal courtyards, all designed in a traditional school or mosque style. The *hashti* acts as a transitional space between two halls, adorned with beautiful patterns created through various ceiling and covering decorations. The surrounding chambers are intended for accommodating students of religious sciences. According to the deed of endowment, these students can utilize these spaces under specific conditions and operate shops within the Emad-o-Doleh caravanserai for a fee. On the northern side of the courtyard, a short *ivan* topped with a watchtower is flanked by two mirrored *ivans* on the western and eastern sides.

Notably, Emad-o-Doleh brought one of the doors from the Imam Ali (PBUH) shrine to Kermanshah,

installing it at his mosque, and in return, endowed a silver door to the holy shrine of Imam Ali (PBUH). This wooden door, dating back to the Safavid period, is currently placed at the mosque's entrance from the jewelers' bazaar and is known as the Qapi of Shah-e Najaf. Additionally, a door on the southwest side of the mosque opens into the junction of the jewelers' and Hoori Abad bazaars beneath the bazaar's largest dome, known as meydan. This door features simple metal decorations inspired by Arabian culture, contrasting with the intricate traditional decorations found in Persian regions. Upon passing through the corridor, visitors enter a spacious courtyard measuring 30 by 35 meters, which includes four *ivans*,

chambers, paths to the internal yard, restrooms, and stairs leading to the roof. The southern *ivan*, considered the entrance to the main prayer hall, is taller and more ornately decorated than the other three *ivans*. An inscription above the mosque's exquisite tiling showcases a ghazal along with the names of the then king (Nasereddin Shah) and the mosque's founder (Imam Qoli Mirza Emad-o-Doleh), as well as the construction date.

At the back of the mosque, an entrance leads into a rectangular prayer hall. The hall's vaulted ceiling and dome rest on fourteen brick columns. The walls and ceiling are adorned with simple brickwork, lacking special decorations, except for the dome's area near the altar, which features colorful tile decorations. In the middle of the southern wall lies the altar, decorated with tiles. The column bases are square at the bottom and transition into octagonal forms as they ascend.

Light enters the prayer hall through openings in the ceiling.

The courtyard's chambers and *ivans* are enhanced by decorative tile work. In the center lies a newly constructed pool with a basement, now cherished by the students. A small wooden room is situated atop the eastern *ivan* of the courtyard. The main entrance is through the eastern *ivan*, which connects to the jewelers' bazaar via a large wooden door.

Another notable feature of cultural and artistic interchange is a large clock, reportedly brought from Switzerland, which is displayed on the west side of the courtyard, atop the mosque's only minaret. This impressive timepiece is immediately visible upon viewing the mosque. The unique tiling, characterized by innovative designs, quality craftsmanship, and exquisite wooden doors, showcases some of the mosque's finest elements. Additionally, two brick pulpits — one in the women's section and another in the men's area — are symmetrically placed on either side of the altar, harmonizing with the bricks of the prayer hall.

The mosque's dual entrances from both sides of the bazaar highlight the significance of spirituality in the culture of Kermanshah. The presence of this sacred structure within the bustling bazaar underscores the historical connection between these two spaces.



Artistry of reverse glass painting in Iran

Reverse glass painting has a history in Iran that dates back over three hundred years. While there is no definitive documentation regarding its introduction, one theory suggests that this art form arrived via southern ports where trade flourished, exposing Iranians to new artistic influences.

Conversely, some experts believe it was introduced from Germany, while others trace its origins to imported goods from India and China, arguing that it was not a locally developed art form, visitiran.ir wrote.

Despite these varied origins, reverse glass painting has successfully adapted to the Ira-

nian Islamic style, becoming distinctive enough to be easily recognized as a unique form of Iranian art. Artists typically use oil or watercolor paints, which may contain various ingredients such as gum Arabic, animal glue, tragacanth, and grape syrup, resulting in a transparent finish. Historically, egg yolk was added to enhance the paint's density, though this made it less durable. Today, linseed oil serves as the primary ingredient for oil paints, with most contemporary artists opting for oil over watercolor due to its viscosity and protective qualities.

The process of reverse glass

painting begins with tracing the desired design in black ink, typically Chinese ink. A layer of varnish is then applied to reinforce the sketch and facilitate better adhesion of the pigments to the glass. Once this is complete, the colors are applied.

In Iran, it is common practice to use tin plates and paper to protect the back of the glass artwork. Popular themes in Iranian reverse glass painting include *gol-o morgh* (flowers and birds), religious narratives, depictions of holy monuments and shrines, tales from the Shahnameh (Book of Kings), ancient Iranian folklore, and intricate calligraphy.



Government's open arms, waiting for a handshake



National Desk

In line with his national government's slogan, "the unity government," President Masoud Pezeshkian has met with several political parties and groups. During these meetings, he has emphasized the necessity of working together to resolve the country's issues. Unlike previous periods, it appears that this time the electoral rivalries have ceased with the establishment of the new government. Both the president's supporters and opponents have set aside their electoral rhetoric. The government is now focused on addressing the needs of the people, and critics have also expressed their willingness to cooperate with the administration.



President Masoud Pezeshkian meets with the members of the Islamic Coalition Party in Tehran on Nov. 11, 2024. president.ir

Pezeshkian's focus on establishing a national unity government and actualizing it through the formation of the cabinet and other governmental bodies, including governors and general-governors, along with his insistence on ending pointless political disputes, has been positively received by his electoral opponents. Currently, no significant tension is evident between political factions. The significance of this matter becomes even clearer when we consider that in previous periods, electoral rivalries often persisted, with winners and losers continuing to engage with the rhetoric

characteristic of the electoral rivalry phase. The current government emerged amid escalating regional tensions, marked by the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. This period also saw the intensification of the war in Lebanon, the assassination of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Iran's General Nilforushan in a Beirut suburb, along with military operations between Iran and Israel. During this time, Pezeshkian traveled to Iraq, Qatar, Turkmenistan, Russia's Kazan (for the BRICS summit), and New York (to attend the UN General Assembly). Despite these pressing concerns and numerous

challenges, the president has not overlooked the significance of engaging with political currents to bridge differing perspectives. Pezeshkian has met with various political factions, including the Reform Front, the Islamic Coalition Party, and the Stability Front of the Islamic Revolution in Tehran, as well as with political activists in Mashhad, since the formation of his cabinet on August 21. During these meetings, he has listened to the viewpoints of political parties and groups, clarified the country's situation to them, and expressed his criticisms of their performance.

Talks with Conservatives

The Islamic Coalition Party, a traditional right-wing party, supported Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf in the first round of the 2024 presidential election and Saeed Jalili in the second round. However, following Pezeshkian's victory, this traditional conservative faction emphasized its commitment to supporting the newly-elected government. Pezeshkian recently met with senior members of the Islamic Coalition Party, where he emphasized the necessity for national and religious consensus, leveraging the talents of all capable individuals, irrespective of partisan, ethnic, or gender perspectives. He also addressed issues such as budget deficits, various unprecedented challenges, particularly in the energy sector,

and crises instigated by Israel in the region. During the meeting, the party members discussed major economic issues, livelihood, inflation, currency, housing, dealing with nurses' issues, and cultural issues, according to the secretary-general of the party. Asadollah Badamchian has stated, "The president, in this meeting, was in favor of continuous communication with the party. The Islamic Coalition Party will fulfill its duty in supporting the government. Our meeting was not for seeking power or position, we have always accompanied all governments, never imposed anything on any government but cooperated with all of them, in general look at the fact that even the party's criticism of the government is a fair critique."

Reformists' appreciation, criticism

The president has had at least two meetings with the members of the Reform Front's presidium, who were his number-one supporters during the presidential election. In his recent meeting with the Reform Front, which was reported on November 8, he touched upon various issues, including the country's economic problems, efforts to create consensus and unity, the selection of governors, the status of pension funds, energy and banking imbalances, the government's foreign policy, problems in the country's educational system, the need to reform the governance system, and the importance of civil society institutions becoming more active. According to Mohammad Salari, the Reform Front members

also discussed the theoretical foundations and practical necessity of achieving consensus, increasing unity between the people, critics, and dissidents with the government, and reducing the gap between the government and the people. They emphasized the need for the president to continue his trust-building approach and deepen it in relation to the system's institutions, the necessity of a development-oriented foreign policy, and the importance of diplomacy and dialogue in international and regional relations based on national interests. They exchanged views on various aspects of good governance, stressed the need to strengthen civil society, political organizations, parties, guilds, and reference groups, create security for investment and invest-

mentors, and emphasized the need to fundamentally combat corruption. They also discussed the legacy of imbalances inherited by the government. The Reform Front thanked the president for his efforts to lift sanctions, respect for people's privacy, involving minorities, women, and youth in the country's administration, lifting Internet filtering, and addressing the issue of hijab. They also appreciated his efforts to bring up the country's problems with the people. However, the reformists also expressed their criticisms during the meeting. Javad Emam, the spokesperson for the Reform Front, noted, "We told the president that we fully understand the problems and limitations you faced in selecting your government colleagues, but unfortunately,

these limitations, as well as the lack of more suitable choices, have resulted in a cabinet that is not entirely cohesive and strong. We reminded the president that it was expected that this shortcoming in the cabinet would be compensated for by selecting governors from among experienced and suitable managers who are in line with your goals. You are better aware that our intention is not necessarily to select your colleagues from among reformists, but rather the criteria for appointments should be ability, conviction, and loyalty to your views, as well as integrity and honesty. At the same time, it is unacceptable that some individuals, despite having these qualities, are eliminated solely due to their reformist leanings."

Hosting electoral rival

The Front of Islamic Revolution Stability, with Saeed Jalili its presidential nominee, was a fierce rival of Pezeshkian during the election period. However, the intense competition of the past few months did not prevent the party from meeting with the president. Pezeshkian, during a meeting with the party members, emphasized the importance of unity and cohesion, as well as the need to engage segments of society that are dissatisfied and harbor grievances. He also talked about issues such as injustice in the healthcare, economic,

and education systems, avoiding harsh and incorrect approaches to social issues, and the need for dignified and respectful behavior towards the people. The members of the front also expressed their appreciation for the president's decisive stances on reforming ambiguous and challenging positions during his trip to New York, supporting the Resistance Axis in response to US and Zionist regime threats. According to Majid Moataqif, the spokesperson for the faction, during the meeting, they discussed the need for a clear definition of "national unity",

adherence to the law in government appointments, the importance of addressing economic issues, exchange rates, preventing instability in the stock market, prioritizing national production over dollar, currency, and gold dealings, a principled approach to the issue of hijab and proper implementation of the law, and social issues. During the meeting, it was emphasized that the Front of Islamic Revolution Stability views the government's success as synonymous with the success of the Islamic Revolution, and supporting the government is deemed a duty.



President Pezeshkian (c) poses for a photo with the members of the Reform Front's presidium in Tehran on Nov. 7, 2024. president.ir



The more meetings that occur, the better political parties and groups will grasp the nation's issues and the government's initiatives.

Meeting with political figures in Mashhad

Pezeshkian has also met with a group of political activists from Khorasan Razavi Province in September, where he said, "Let's start the reform process from ourselves, and if we find ourselves in a situation where we are not worthy of our position, let's step aside." Referring to the concerns and demands raised by the participants during the meeting, he stated, "While I hold the position of president, I am one of you, and I cannot work miracles. We can only overcome our challenges if we all join hands and collaborate."

The president emphasized, "While it is challenging and complex to treat everyone fairly and in accordance with the law, we must unite and act on the profound conviction that we have no alternative but to build our country and address its issues together. If we believe that Iran belongs to all Iranians, we must join hands and construct it for the benefit of all Iranians."

National unity: Missing link in management

The president's ongoing approach, prioritizing national interests over group interests, combined with the government's and political currents' focus on societal concerns and demands, can provide a solution to the country's challenges. The more meetings that occur, the better political parties and groups will grasp the nation's issues and the government's initiatives. Similarly, the government will become more responsive to the concerns and demands of society, thus fostering a greater opportunity for consensus and tackling the nation's problems.

Makoran Coast Development model, a crucial test for government

National Desk

Masoud Pezeshkian has recently announced that the Makoran Coast in southern Iran is set to be introduced as a "new model of development and economic and political hub of the country". During a recent meeting, the second session of "Reviewing and Analyzing Maritime Development Plans with an Emphasis on the Makran Coast," the Iranian president outlined several strategies to expedite the development of Makoran:

- Boosting the local economy
- Providing energy infrastructure with a focus on renewable energy sources
- Speeding up the completion of the region's transportation corridors in collaboration with international partners
- Attracting and concentrating both domestic and foreign investment in Makoran

According to the Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development and the Managing Director of the Ports and Shipping Organization, during the session, the president instructed the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development to formulate a comprehensive maritime development plan, focusing on the Makoran Coast, utilizing both international and domestic consultants, and clearly defining the tasks and responsibilities of executive bodies in this matter.

In light of the president's decree



The third session of reviewing and analyzing maritime development plans, with a focus on the Makoran coastal region, is held on November 17, 2024, chaired by President Masoud Pezeshkian. [president.ir](https://www.president.ir)

will to implement development plans for this region has never materialized, and in practice, it has encountered numerous challenges and obstacles.

It must be acknowledged that the efforts made thus far for maritime development, including the preparation and approval of high-level documents and other initiatives, are insufficient and require consideration of specific requirements. These require-

a unified management structure for policymaking and overseeing executive affairs in maritime development. However, at present, various structures within the government assert responsibility for managing all or parts of the coast.

These include:

- 1- The Makoran Coast Development Council, approved by the cabinet (chaired by the First Vice President).

in the region.

President Pezeshkian emphasized the need to develop a maritime development plan using reputable foreign consultants during the second maritime development session, and tasked the Ports and Maritime Organization with following up on this matter. It is essential to note that the following documents already exist:

A) The Makoran region development document, approved by the Urban Planning and Architecture Commission (communicated in December 2018)

B) The land-use planning of the Makoran Coast development, approved by the Supreme Council of Spatial Planning (in October 2019).

C) The comprehensive plan for the development of the Makoran Coast, the main points of which were approved by the government in December 2023, as well as the program for implementing the development policies for the Makoran Coast approved by the previous government, which was prepared by the Planning and Budget Organization and reviewed by the infrastructure working group of the organization, are available and have been confirmed from various aspects. Considering the aforementioned points, and to resolve the deadlock of infighting among government structures and prevent the mismanagement of public funds, while establishing a cohesive management framework for policymaking and overseeing the execution of maritime development projects, the following options merit exploration:

A) Vice President should revive the activities of the Makoran development council under his management by appointing a new secretary and avoiding its delegation to the coordination deputy. In this case, it would be fitting for the cabinet to grant the Council for the Development of Makoran more authority.

B) Alternatively, if the above option is not feasible, the cabinet should dissolve the council and hand over the integrated

management to Abdolalizadeh, with the approval of effective authorities in accordance with Article 127 of the Constitution. Moreover, given the experiences, track records, and partial mandates of various government agencies, it is advisable to steer clear of delegating the management of Makoran's development to the Planning and Budget Organization and other ministries, including the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. It's important to mention that previously, the management of Makoran's development was entrusted to the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, but it didn't exactly achieve remarkable success. Historically, the Planning and Budget Organization has struggled with effectively managing regional development structures, including the Sistan Development Organization.

In conclusion, to execute the president's orders for developing a new program, it is essential to first avoid any potential setbacks by using the existing documents as the foundation for the work. Secondly, these documents should be reviewed by the responsible agency at a minimum, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and a decision should be made on how to revise them. Thirdly, in accordance with the implementation of Article 68 of the Permanent Development Laws, the bill for establishing the Makoran Coast Development Organization, previously sent to Parliament, should be revised to meet the approval of various ministries before being resubmitted to Parliament. Fourthly, the resolutions from the previous term (2022-2024) of the Council for the Development of Makoran should be thoroughly reviewed due to their non-operational nature.

The article was penned by Mahmoud Hosseini in the Persian language Shargh newspaper.



appointing Ali Abdolalizadeh as the "president's representative for coordinating the implementation of maritime development policies," it is evident that the government's strategy for the country's development centers on maritime initiatives, particularly focusing on the Makoran Coast. This indicates that the government is determined to transform the Makoran Coast (Oman Sea) into a center of sustainable development and, as they describe it, a "new model of development and economic and political hub of the country."

The Makoran region is a critical zone with a strategic geopolitical position and significant development potential, which has been on the radar of policymakers and mentioned in high-level documents for several decades. However, despite this, a strong

ments include:

- 1- Creating a shared understanding of Makoran Coast development among the government and elites
- 2- Focusing on the sustainable development of the region, ensuring resident satisfaction and participation while benefiting the local community from the fruits of progress
- 3- Aligning national development policies with regional development strategies
- 4- Fostering unity in project management and national task allocation

According to the general policies of maritime development, which stress integrated maritime policymaking and national task allocation, along with agile and efficient sea management, the foremost priority is to create

2- The president's Representative for Implementing Maritime Development Policies (Abdolalizadeh).

3- The Planning and Budget Organization, as the developmental institution in charge of managing the project.

4- The Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, especially with the president's recent mandate to the ministry, claims to be in charge of assigning tasks to other executive bodies.

In practice, the management of maritime development is being pulled in different directions by "multiple forces within the government", which has resulted in the stagnation of executive plans and confusion among investors, local residents, as well as mid-level managers and infrastructure project managers

Karate World Cup – National Team Championships: Iran settles for runner-up finish in men's kumite

Sports Desk

The Iranian kumite team had to settle for the men's silver medal at the WKF Karate World Cup following a final defeat against Egypt in Pamplona, Spain.

Having beaten Japan in the semifinals, Shahrman Heravi's men suffered a comprehensive 3-0 loss in Sunday's showdown as the African champions improved on their world silver in Budapest last year.

The setback will still go down as decent result for the Iranians, who were making their first appearance in the final showpiece in six years.

Reigning world 84kg champion Youssef Badawy gave Egyptians an early momentum with a 7-5 victory over Mahdi A'ashouri, before Iranian Mahdi Khodabakhshi and Ali Elsayw fought to a scoreless stalemate.

Saleh Abazari fell to a 5-0 defeat against Abdalla Abdelaziz – also a 2023 world gold medalist – and Ahmed Elmasry rounded off the victory with a 6-1 triumph over Mahmoud Ne'mati. Bahman Asgari, Mahdi Ganjzadeh, Morteza Ne'mati, and Mahdi Shahgol were the other members of the Iranian kumite squad.

Heravi, meanwhile, went on to step down from his role after the final loss, bringing the curtain down on an illustrious ca-



● WKF

reer as the Iranian head coach, which saw him steer the country to overwhelming success over the past decade – including three world team crowns, and five Asian team titles, as

well as Sajjad Ganjzadeh's historic gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics.

The Iranian team began its campaign in Pamplona with a 4-0 beating of North Macedonia

and then came out victorious against Croatia (4-1), Italy (3-1), and Australia (3-2) to finish atop the Pool 1 standings and head into quarterfinals.

Iran secured a dominant 3-0

win against Slovakia in the last-eight round, before coming out on top against the Japanese with the same scoreline, making amends for the semifinal loss to the karate powerhouse

in September's Asian Championships.

Japan still managed to ensure a podium finish in all four categories of the event with a 3-1 win against Italy in the bronze-medal contest.

Elsewhere in the competitions, Japan maintained its stronghold on female team kata, claiming a 15th world title – and fifth in a row – thanks to a final victory (46.60-43.20) over Portugal.

Represented by Mahsa Afsaneh, Maria Hosseinnia, Parisa Rahmani, Kowsar Salehi, the Iranian team beat Switzerland, Colombia, and the Czech Republic, while losing to Spain, to finish second to the host in the pool table, but was unfortunate to leave Pamplona empty-handed after a last-eight setback against Italy.

The Iranian men's kata squad, comprising Sahand Eslami, Yahya Pishzari, Mahdi Shahin, and Mohammad Sadra Shidzi, also stood second in the group phase – courtesy of wins against South Africa, Montenegro, and Poland, and a loss to Japan – but their knockout journey was short-lived following a quarterfinal defeat against the Italians.

Japan overcame Turkey for the men's kata title.

A third gold medal for the Japanese came in the women's kumite event, thanks to a final victory over the United States.

Shamsaei to stay on as Iran futsal head coach

Sports Desk

Vahid Shamsaei will continue in his job as the head coach of the Iranian futsal national team, the country's Football Federation confirmed.

The news was announced after Shamsaei had a meeting with Mahdi Taj, the chairman of the federation, and members of the futsal and technical committees in the national governing body of the sport.

The federation's decision may come as a surprise to futsal fans in the country, following several sources suggesting in recent months that September's World Cup in Uzbekistan was the final episode of Shamsaei's reign

as Iran coach.

"With the support of the federation, my coaching staff and I succeeded in introducing a group of young talents to create a combination of youth and experience for the national team over a two-and-a-half-year period," Shamsaei said during the meeting.

"We still need to learn from our previous mistakes and move towards the future Asian Cup and World Cup tournaments," added Shamsaei. "I firmly believe we need to play against world-class teams to improve our game. We would also benefit from the addition of a top-notch foreign trainer and a goal-keeping coach."

Widely regarded as the great-

est Iranian futsal player of all time, Shamsaei took charge of the national team in 2022 and settled for a runner-up finish in his maiden event after a 3-2 loss to Japan in the AFC Asian Cup, a tournament he won on eight occasions as a player.

The 49-year-old coach successfully led 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, Iranian fans were eager to see their team improve on its best-ever finish at the flagship international event – the third place in the 2016 edition in Colombia after a shootout win

against Portugal.

The Asian powerhouse routed Venezuela 7-1 in its Group F opener, and then went on to win the group 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 a defeat would have meant an easier path in the knockout phase for the group runner-up.

The top spot sent Iran into a last-16 clash against Morocco, where Shamsaei's men 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.



● MOHSEN DAVOUDI/FFIRI

Salah 'disappointed' by lack of Liverpool offer

BBC – Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah says he is "disappointed" by the club's failure to offer him a new contract – and looks more likely to leave than stay.

The 32-year-old, Liverpool's top scorer this season with 12 goals in all competitions, is out of contract at the end of the season.

Salah scored twice in the 3-2 win against Southampton on Sunday, including the winner from the penalty spot, to take Liverpool eight points clear at the top of the Premier League.

The Egypt forward, who joined the Reds from Roma in 2017, told reporters, external after the win at St Mary's: "We are almost in December and I haven't received any offers yet to stay in the club.

"I'm probably more out than in."

Asked if he was 'disappointed' that he is yet to receive an offer to extend his deal, Salah said: "Of course, yeah.

"I'm not going to retire soon so I'm just playing, focusing on the season and I'm trying to win the Premier League and hopefully the Champions League as well. I'm disappointed but we will see."

Only Manchester City forward Erling Halaand has scored more Premier League goals than Salah this season, with the Egyptian netting 10 times

so far in the top flight.

Salah signed a three-year contract extension with the club in 2022, with that deal set to expire in the summer.

"You know I have been in the club for many years. There is no club like this," said Salah. "But in the end it is not in my hands. As I said before, it is December and I haven't received anything yet about my future.

"I love the fans. The fans love me. In the end it is not in my hands or the fans' hands. Let's

wait and see."

Salah is one of three high-profile Liverpool players coming towards the end of their deals. Trent Alexander-Arnold and club captain Virgil van Dijk are both out of contract at the same time as Salah.

After scoring the winner in a 2-1 victory against Brighton earlier this month that took Liverpool top of the table, Salah wrote on X: "No matter what happens, I will never forget what scoring at Anfield feels like."



● MARK ENFIELD/SHUTTERSTOCK

Leader: Israel's bombing of houses in Gaza, Lebanon not victory but 'war crime'

'Arrest warrant not enough, Netanyahu must be executed'

International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said Israel's bombing of houses and hospitals in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon is not a victory but a "war crime."

The Israeli regime has not won its wars on Gaza and Lebanon, and it will never be able to do so, Ayatollah Khamenei said during a meeting with members of the Iranian Basij volunteer force on Monday, on the occasion of Basij Week.

Referring to the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his ousted minister of military affairs Yoav Gallant, the Leader said, "The arrest warrant is not enough, Netanyahu's death

sentence must be handed down."

The Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant over their war crimes related to the ongoing Gaza genocide.

Now, the pair are at risk of arrest if they step foot in any of the 124 countries that signed the Rome Statute establishing the ICC.

More than 44,000 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip as a result of Israeli military action since the beginning of its devastating war on the Palestinian territory in October 2023. Thousands more are missing under the rubble, most of them presumed dead.

According to the Palestinian officials, Israel has killed at least 17,400 children in Gaza. That is one child killed every 30 minutes.

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

Nearly two million Palestinians have been also displaced by the Israel's army and face a grave humanitarian crisis.

The Israeli regime has also claimed the lives of more than 3,750 people and wounded over 15,620 people in Lebanon since October 2023 when Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement began to target Israel's military positions in support of Palestinian fighters in Gaza.

Since then, the Israeli army and Hezbollah have been exchanging fire. But most of the deaths in Lebanon occurred after the regime intensified its strikes on Lebanon in September.



leader.ir

Iran's FM warns about trivializing Israeli genocide in Gaza

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Monday warned about trivializing the crimes and massacres committed by the Israeli regime against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Addressing an extraordinary meeting of the foreign ministers of the Group of Friends of the United Nations

Charter, Araghchi warned about the further tarnishing of the credibility of the UN due to its continued inaction about the Israeli genocide in the Gaza Strip, saying that the international community should not allow the regime's lawlessness and aggression to become the norm.

Araghchi said that Iran considers an arrest warrant issued by the Interna-

tional Criminal Court against Israel's prime minister and his former minister of military affairs as a necessary but belated step on the path to justice and punishment of "the Zionist criminals," calling on the international community to be serious in implementing the ICC rulings.

He described the past 14 months of Israel's genocide in Gaza as a continu-

ation of the 80-year-old "colonial annihilation" plan in Palestine.

Stopping Israel's genocide in Gaza and its aggression against Lebanon requires a worldwide coalition to hold accountable, prosecute, and punish the regime's leaders, as well as to hold accountable the regime's supporters, especially the United States, Araghchi said.

Iran, Azerbaijan start joint war games in border region

Special units of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC)'s Ground Force and the elite divisions of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces have launched a large-scale joint military exercise to enhance security cooperation and strengthen counter-terrorism efforts between the two neighboring nations.

The four-day drill, codenamed "Aras

Joint Exercise," began on Sunday in the high-terrain regions of Aslan Duz County in Iran's northwestern province of Ardabil, Press TV reported.

Rapid reaction units from Iran's IRGC Ground Force and the Republic of Azerbaijan's military are engaging in the collaborative exercise.

The primary goals of the joint military

exercise include bolstering the existing military ties between the two neighboring nations and furthering their joint efforts to combat terrorist organizations.

Another crucial aspect of the exercise involves safeguarding the shared borders of the two nations and fostering defense cooperation at both tactical and operational levels.

This collaboration also aims to enhance military capabilities and is in line with agreements made between the two sides to promote their mutual interests. On November 19, military officials from Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan weighed plans to enhance defense cooperation between the two neighbors. Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani and Azeri commander Major General Farid Aliyev discussed a range of issues during the fourth meeting of the Joint Commission on Military and Defense Cooperation in Tehran.



Iran rejects involvement in murder of Israeli rabbi in UAE

International Desk

The Iranian Embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said it categorically rejects the allegations of Iran's involvement in the murder of an Israeli-Moldovan rabbi in the Persian Gulf Arab country.

It came after the UAE-based rabbi Tzvi Kogan, 28, was found dead by security services last week, following what Israeli officials and an ultra-Orthodox Jewish group he was affiliated with called an anti-Semitic attack.

His corpse was discovered in the Emirati city of Al-Ain, which borders Oman, though it was not clear if he was killed there or elsewhere.

Ayoob Kara, a member of Israel's ruling right-wing Likud party, who promotes economic relations between Israel and the Arab world, claimed there were indications that investigators suspected Iranian involvement.

However, the UAE said on Monday police have arrested three Uzbek nationals for

the killing of the Israeli rabbi.

The statement from the country's Interior Ministry offered no motive for the slaying of Kogan, though an Israeli foreign ministry official later said that he simply had been "killed because of who he was."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office has denounced the killing of the rabbi as a "heinous anti-Semitic terrorist act" and said Israel would do everything it could to bring those responsible to justice.



Stalled dialogues risk...

The current official dialogues regarding resolving ongoing crises,

such as the Gaza war, have so far been fruitless. If the situation continues as it is, in addition to the current "failed states" like Libya and Syria, we will witness more failed states in the region, and even a "failed region," which will have terrible consequences for the region and for global peace, stability, and security, such as the spread of terrorism and energy crises. Therefore, effective and serious actions must be taken to end the ongoing crises.

Two axes will influence the long-term peace and stability of the region. One is resolving the Palestinian crisis, which is essentially the mother of many crises in the region. Over the

past 80 years, there have been about 400 United Nations General Assembly or Security Council resolutions on Palestine, many of which have emphasized the formation of two states as a solution and Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian occupied territories after the 1967 war. Unfortunately, these resolutions have completely failed in implementation because Israel insists on one state, that is, a Jewish state. Of course, there is another view in the region, such as Iran's view, which advocates for one state, that is, a Palestinian state. But ultimately, if the United Nations resolutions are the criterion, the only solution is for Israel to evacuate the occupied Palestinian territories and for two independent states to be formed. The second issue is the problem

of rivalries and disputes among Islamic countries, such as the disputes between Iran and some Arab countries and Arab-Arab disputes. The rows among Arab countries are so extensive that even among the six members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, there are significant disputes, such as border disputes. These conflicts existed before the revolution and continue to this day.

One of the effective and important ways is to create a dialogue forum between Iran and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf. The eight countries of the Persian Gulf should create a new security and cooperation structure in the Persian Gulf region, similar to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe or the European Union. Es-

tablishing such a collective security and cooperation system can end the current harmful rivalries and pave the way for economic growth and development in the Persian Gulf region and take effective steps towards resolving regional crises such as the conflicts in Yemen, Syria, and Libya. The third stage is establishing comprehensive peace and security for the entire Middle East. Making the Middle East free from nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction can be a right start for such an idea. Israel is the one and only regime in the Middle East that has an atomic bomb. Iran has become a "threshold nuclear state," and Saudi Arabia is on the path to acquiring enrichment technology. If Saudi Arabia succeeds, other important countries

like Turkey and Egypt will also achieve this capability. Continuing disputes and crises will encourage these countries to move towards nuclear bombs. Therefore, it is better that the United Nations resolutions on a Middle East free of nuclear weapons be implemented from now on.

Despite all these disputes, many have no hope that these goals can be achieved. But if we want to solve the crises, we must act based on international norms and regulations. The Palestinian crisis can be resolved based on United Nations resolutions. The problem is the unilateral support of the United States and Western powers for Israel. If the United States stops arms shipments to Israel, Israel's wars against Gaza and Lebanon will also stop. If we want nuclear disarmament

to take place, the only way is to implement United Nations resolutions that require Israel to destroy its nuclear bombs. If there is goodwill and political will, by reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and regionalizing its principles in the Middle East, the biggest step towards a Middle East free of nuclear weapons will be taken. For the JCPOA, 13 years of negotiations were conducted between global powers and Iran, and more than 200 nuclear scientists were involved to prepare the most comprehensive non-proliferation document in history under the title of the JCPOA. Therefore, reviving the JCPOA and regionalizing it will be a significant step towards nuclear disarmament in the Middle East.

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'Cultural Diplomacy' can be achieved through translation: *Translator*

Arts & Culture Desk

The head of the Center for Organizing Translation and Publication, Ehsanollah Hojati, emphasized that books are a powerful tool for achieving "cultural diplomacy", and that translating Iranian works can have a significant impact on international relations if done correctly. He talked about the importance of translation in promoting Iranian-Islamic thoughts and culture globally, IRNA reported. Hojati stated that the center's main goal is to introduce and promote Iranian-Islamic ideas worldwide, and to achieve this, a multilingual system will be launched soon to facilitate the translation and publication of Iranian works

in other countries. Hojati explained that the center was established in 2010, following a decree by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, with the aim of promoting Islamic culture and thought worldwide. He noted that the center has been working to introduce high-quality Iranian works to the world through the "reverse translation movement," which involves translating Iranian works into various languages. One of the center's key efforts is to create a network of local publishers and translators in target countries, which enables the center to provide high-quality translations that are

suitable for the target culture and language. Hojati proudly announced that the center has successfully translated and published numerous Iranian works in 30 languages, including German, English, Italian, Bosnian, Romanian, Swedish, French, and Arabic. Regarding the selection of books, Hojati explained that the center reviews published books in Iran each year and, after obtaining the necessary approvals, provides the necessary conditions for their introduction to foreign publishers and translators. He added that this effort helps create deeper and broader understanding among cultures.



However, Hojati acknowledged that the center faces challenges, including coordinating with different publishing laws in target countries and securing financial resources for large-scale projects. Despite these challenges, the center has made progress through careful planning and international cooperation.

Hojati expressed optimism about the center's future, stating that it aims to play an active role in strengthening international cultural interactions. The center is also working on a multilingual system, in collaboration with Allameh Tabataba'i University, to manage and facilitate the translation and publication of Iranian works abroad.

Three Iranian films invited to Italy's Torino Film Festival



Arts & Culture Desk

The 42nd Torino Film Festival in Italy will showcase three films from Iran, including one feature film, one documentary, and one short film. The festival will take place from November 22 to 30, 2024. The feature film 'The Last Act,' directed and written by Peyman Shahbod, will compete in the feature film category. The short film 'Black Scarf,' created by Alireza Shah Hosseini, will be featured in the short film

competition. Plus, the documentary 'Higher than Acidic Clouds,' directed by Ali Asgari, will be presented in the long documentary film section of the festival, ISNA reported. The Torino Film Festival is one of the largest film festivals in Italy. Over its 42 years of operation, it has become a significant reference point for both emerging and established filmmakers from around the world. 'The Last Act' is produced by Mohammad Ahmadi and tells

the story of a film and the private lives of some of its actors and crew members as they travel to a shooting location. The narrative explores how they find common threads that lead them to new meanings in life during the final shots of the film. The cast of 'The Last Act' includes Marjan Qomari, Atabak Naderi, Maryam Qasemi, Masiha Yousefi, Bahram Norouzi, Jalal Etesami, and Neda Jalali. The short film 'Black Scarf,' written and directed by Ali-

reza Shah Hosseini, poses a thought-provoking question: "Do you know anything about spiders? They eat their partners." The film features actors such as Pasha Rostami, Tara Majidzadeh, Lotfollah Saifi, Mahna Seyedi, the late Hatam Mashmooli, Javad Falahatkar, Hasti Qarib, Iraj Abedi, Nasser Ma'refat, and Arshia Cheraghi. The documentary 'Higher than Acidic Clouds,' directed by Ali Asgari, runs for 71 minutes and is presented in black and white.

Palestinian artists plan Gaza Biennale as 'act of resistance and survival'

Palestinian artists in Gaza plan to stage a "biennale" exhibition as an act of defiance against Israel's military onslaught and to focus attention on the plight of the territory's 2.3 million people under more than 13 months of bombardment. About 50 artists from Gaza will exhibit their work within the besieged coastal strip, and are looking for art galleries to host exhibitions overseas. But in order to hold their work to the eyes of the rest of the world, the artists are facing a unique challenge: How to get their art across Israeli siege lines, The Guardian reported. About a quarter of the exhibiting artists managed to cross into Egypt earlier in the war. Of those left behind, some will try to send artworks out of Gaza with aid workers who are sporadically allowed to cross the lines; others will send material electronically in the form of pictures and video, while a few will partner with artists in the West Bank to reconstitute their art remotely. Tasneem Shatat, a 26-year-old from Khan Younis who helped come up with the idea and is a driving force behind the initiative, explained why the artists chose to emulate Venice and other major world cities in calling the proposed show a biennale. The name is also a statement of in-

tent that the biennale will be a recurring event and that Gaza and artists will still be standing in two years' time. The idea is intended as an artistic proof of life in the face of an attempt to strip Gaza's Palestinians of their humanity. It started as a conversation between artists who were seeking each other out to check their friends were still alive, and to compare notes on not just how to survive but how to continue to make art under fire and with rarely enough to eat. "The war stole a lot of things from us and the people of Gaza and it continues to steal everything and yet the world stays silent," Shatat said. "We want international institutions around the world to host these drawings and paintings and put them on display. We won't tell the stories the world already knows well, but we will tell you about the rebirth of the darkness of injustice, we will tell you about a life in the midst of death." The organisers say that, if a host is found abroad to stage a Gaza Biennale, it will be an event unprecedented in modern times: artists under siege and starving managing to stage an exhibition on the world stage. At the very beginning of the war, in October last year, Rufaida Sehwal's

house was bombed and her family had to claw their way out of the rubble to find many of their friends and neighbours lying dead on the street in the Rimal district of Gaza City. In the bombing Sehwal lost 17 years of work as an artist, and a library of nearly a thousand books, and she has been on the move, fleeing the bombing, ever since. She has been displaced seven times. "Continuing to create art in the midst of war and oppression in Gaza is not just a creative act, it is an act of resistance and survival in itself," she said. In a manifesto launching the Gaza Biennale, the artists said it represented "a creative step outside the traditional frameworks of exhibitions. It reflects the sensitivity and specificity of our situation, making it an urgent and exceptional event. At the heart of the artistic purpose is the struggle of a people to survive." The Gaza Biennale project is in its early stages and depends on the intervention of an art gallery or national museum abroad to make it a reality. But Shatat is optimistic. "All the artists' works will come out," she predicted. "They will see the light, and they will cross barriers, borders, and laws, and the whole world will see them. This is the power of art."

105 films vie for spot at 43rd Fajr event

A total of 105 films were submitted for consideration at the 43rd Fajr Film Festival, with producers registering their interest in the Iranian Cinema section of the event. The registration process for feature films took place over 15 days, from October 5 to 20, during which time the 105 films were put forward for consideration, ISNA reported.

As reported by the festival's public relations office, the 43rd Fajr Film Festival, directed by Manouchehr Shahsavari, is set to take place in February of this year. The festival's secretariat has begun reviewing the submitted films to ensure they meet the event's regulations, and those that qualify will be screened by the selection committee after the final versions are submitted.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

