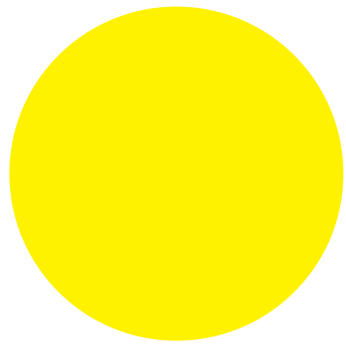


Tehran decries US 'inappropriate behavior' against Iranian migrants



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Veep calls development of oil, gas fields top priority for gov't

Pezeshkian orders probe into student murder as suspects arrested



National Desk

Iran's Minister of Science, Research and Technology Hossein Simaei Sarraf said on Saturday that President Masoud Pezeshkian had ordered an immediate investigation into the murder of an Iranian student at Tehran University, which has sparked angry protests in recent days.

MP urges increased support for Iran's pistachio production, export

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

An Iranian lawmaker demanded that a national organization be set up to ease pistachio exports as the strategic product plays a key role in bringing in income for the country. Speaking to Iran Daily, Shahbaz Hassanpour-Biglari, who sits on the Iranian Parliament's Industries and Mines Committee, said pistachio has become a major industry in Iran, with 23 provinces contributing to its output. Hassanpour-Biglari noted that the industry ranks second only to energy in terms of foreign currency earnings for the country.



Global narratives unbound for youths

26th Int'l Storytelling Festival kicks off in Yazd

Puppets come to life on the streets in central Iran at the opening ceremony of the 26th International Storytelling Festival in Yazd on February 15, 2025. IRNA

Iran spearheading opposition to Israel's 'forced relocation' of Palestinians

ANALYSIS Donald Trump's push for the forced relocation of Palestinians has sparked a firestorm of opposition among Muslim nations, who are rallying together to expose and thwart the colonialist plot. The scheme, aimed at erasing Palestine's existence, has united Islamic countries in solidarity against the unjust agenda. Trump's controversial plan, which includes revoking the right of return for Palestinians after Gaza's reconstruction, has raised alarms across the Muslim world. The callous strategy is not new and has historically received support from certain Arab countries. However, Imam Musa Sadr, a prominent Shia leader in Lebanon, stood firmly against this forced relocation scheme decades ago and rejected it as a conspiracy to dismantle Palestinian resistance and identity.



US colonial plan against Gaza comes to standstill
What are Netanyahu, Trump after?

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Minister urges digital innovation in tourism at Tehran exhibit

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A wildlife haven in Gilan's natural paradise

The Lavandevil Wildlife Refuge, on the outskirts of Astara in northwestern Iran, is a vital sanctuary for wildlife, especially birds. Translated as "Habitat of Flowers," Lavandevil spans the picturesque Hyrcanian forests that meet the Caspian Sea, featuring a diverse landscape of lagoons, trees and sand dunes, alongside fields of pomegranates and rice. At around twenty meters below sea level, the area benefits from high rainfall, fostering its lush environment. Home to around 125 species, including wild boar, golden eagles, and the stunning ring-necked pheasant, Lavandevil serves as an important habitat for various wildlife. As environmental concerns grow, the refuge stands out as a critical area for conservation efforts and biodiversity in Gilan Province.



Tehran decries US 'inappropriate behavior' against Iranian migrants

International Desk

Iran condemned the US government's "inappropriate and humiliating" treatment of immigrants, including Iranian nationals, following its crackdown on undocumented migrants across the United States.

The condemnation came after the US sent 119 undocumented migrants from several Asian countries, including Iran, to Panama, in a move signaling an intensification of the US administration's deportation effort. A military plane carrying 119 migrants from countries including Afghanistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, China, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Pakistan flew from California to Panama City on Wednesday in what was expected to be the first of three migrant flights to the country.

Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei in a statement on Friday called the US move unjustified and a violation of human rights standards.

Baqaei stressed the importance of adhering to international norms, describing the "inhumane actions" of the US government against Iranian nationals as "unacceptable."

"Iran is the homeland of all Iranians, and our compatriots can freely return to their homeland," Baqaei stated, reiterating the Foreign Ministry's readiness to facilitate their return and resolve related issues.

He emphasized that the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will take all necessary measures to protect the rights of Iranian citizens abroad.

In the three weeks since President Donald Trump took office, Americans have witnessed a frenzy of arrests and deportations.

More than 14,000 undocumented migrants have been arrested since Trump's inauguration, US Border czar Tom Homan told 77 WABC radio in an interview on Tuesday.



GETTY IMAGES

Iran confirms receiving messages from new Syrian rulers

International Desk

Iran said Saturday that it had received messages from the new government in Damascus following the ouster of former president Bashar al-Assad.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is indirectly in contact with Damascus," Tehran's special envoy for Syrian affairs Mohammad Reza Raouf Sheibani was quoted as saying by IRNA.

The diplomat said Iran had "also received messages" from Syria, but did not specify the intermediary country facilitating the communication. Sheibani was responding to a question about recent comments by Syria's de facto foreign minister, Asaad al-Shibani, regarding communications with Iran. The Syrian foreign minister said on Wednesday that his country had received positive messages but wanted further reassurance from Russia and Iran.

"There are positive messages, but we want these positive messages to turn into a clear policy that makes the Syrian people feel reassured," Sheibani said at the World Government Summit 2025 in Dubai.

"Our view of the developments in Syria and the restoration of relations with Damascus is forward-looking," Iranian official said, emphasizing that Iran was "thoughtfully" monitoring the situation there.

Iran, an ally of former government, evacuated its diplomatic mission in Syria in December when militants, led by current interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa, overthrew Assad.

Sharaa said in December that Syria "cannot continue without relations with an important regional country like Iran".

He added that ties between Damascus and Teh-



Mohammad Reza Raouf Sheibani

ran "must be based on respect for the sovereignty of both countries and non-interference in the affairs of both countries".

Sheibani, who previously served as Iran's ambassador to Syria, reiterated Tehran's position that the "future and destiny" of Syria must be determined by Syrians alone.

"Iran's positions concerning the developments in Damascus are clear. Given Syria's special position in the West Asia region, we believe that its future and fate must be decided by its own people with the involvement of all political currents," Sheibani stated.

"The stability and peace of Syria are of particular importance to us, and we are against any foreign interference in the affairs of this country," he said.

Sheibani also noted that he has discussed Syria with the Russian president's special envoy for Syria Alexander Lavrentiev and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin during a recent visit to Moscow.

Iranian, Lebanese FMs urge settlement of dispute over flights

International Desk

Iranian and Lebanese foreign ministers discussed a recent dispute over Iranian flights to Lebanon after the Arab country barred two Iranian aircraft from landing in the Lebanese capital on Friday.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his Lebanese counterpart Youssef Rajji in a phone conversation on Saturday called for the settlement of issue and expressed their readiness for "constructive talks in good faith."

On Thursday, Lebanon's Directorate General of Civil Aviation said it had "temporarily rescheduled" some flights including from Iran until February 18 as it was implementing "additional security measures."

Iran's Ambassador to Lebanon, Mojtaba Amani, on Friday said that Tehran is trying to restore flights between the two countries, adding that the Lebanese government had requested that another plane replace the Iranian plane to evacuate Lebanese stranded in Iran.

Saeed Chalandari, CEO of Tehran's Imam Khomeini Airport, said on Friday that Iran had rejected the proposal.

"Naturally, we do not agree to their request, because if there is to be a flight between the two countries, it must be a two-way flight," Chalandari said.

Lebanon dispatched two planes on Friday from its own national airliner Middle East Airlines to bring the stranded Lebanese home from Iran, but Iran refused to allow the Lebanese aircraft to land on its territory.

Lebanon's decision sparked a protest by Lebanese people who blocked the Beirut airport road and burned tires to protest the decision. The developments coincided with Israel's



Youssef Rajji

Abbas Araghchi

threats against Iranian planes landing in Lebanon.

Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adraee had warned the army was prepared "to thwart" any attempts to transfer funds or weapons to Hezbollah resistance group in Lebanon.

Adraee has claimed that Iran and Hezbollah "have been exploiting... the Beirut international airport through civilian flights, to smuggle funds dedicated to arming" the group.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei in a statement accused Israel of disrupting flights from Tehran to Beirut.

"The threat by the Zionist regime to a passenger plane carrying Lebanese citizens has disrupted normal flights to Beirut airport," he said.

Baqaei condemned the Israeli threat as a violation of international law. He also called for the International Civil Aviation Organization and other world bodies "to stop Israel's dangerous behavior against the safety and security of civil aviation."

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Pezeshkian orders probe ...

On Wednesday, 19-year-old business administration student Amir Mohammad Khaleghi was stabbed by two motorcycle-riding muggers who stole his backpack in front of his dorm. Khaleghi later succumbed to his injuries at the hospital. Hossein Simaei Sarraf, who was on a visit to Saudi Arabia, cut short his visit to the Arab country and returned to Iran to follow up the issue.

Authorities have vowed to pursue the case to calm the protesters who are unhappy over the lack of security around the university premises, despite past complaints.

Tehran's public prosecutor Ali Salehi said on Saturday that several suspects have been arrested in this regard so far. However, he said authorities are



working to apprehend "the perpetrator of this crime as quickly as possible and bring him to justice".

Simaei Sarraf said on Saturday that the head of Tehran University's dormitory management had resigned in the wake of the killing.

The minister also denied reports that students had been arrested following

the protests.

Government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani, addressing the matter, said on Friday on X, "The security of students and the peace of families is a duty and priority for the government. We invite everyone to keep the path of dialogue open by maintaining peace."

State news agency IRNA reported that Tehran University caretaker head, Hossein Hosseini, expressed sympathy with the university students by attending their gathering on Friday night.

"Right now, we are all in an emotional atmosphere, but starting tomorrow, we must carefully address the demands in an expert atmosphere and with the presence of student representatives," he was quoted as saying.

Veep calls development of oil, gas fields top priority for gov't



Iran's Vice President Mohammadreza Aref (c) speaks at the meeting, co-chaired by Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad (2nd R), to discuss a pressure boosting project at the South Pars gas field in Tehran on February 15, 2025. fjpresident.ir

Economy Desk

A meeting regarding the implementation plan for the pressure enhancement project of the South Pars gas field was held on Saturday in the presence of Vice President Mohammadreza Aref, where the latest coordination efforts and decisions related to the financial framework and agreement between the Ministry of Oil and the National Development Fund (NDF) were discussed. Aref, speaking at the meeting attended by Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad and NDF Head Hamid Pourmohammadi and related officials, praised the coordination between the Ministry of Oil and the fund in establishing the financial framework for the strategic pressure enhancement project of the South Pars

gas field. He emphasized that the exploitation and development of joint oil and gas fields are among the top priorities and strategies of the current administration. "The implementation of the pressure-boosting project is expected to improve morale in the oil industry and society, increase gross domestic production, and significantly contribute to job creation," noted Aref. The VP stressed the importance of expediting the implementation of this major project to enhance extraction and revenue generation. Additionally, upon the VP's directive, the NDF was instructed to provide all necessary support for investment or financing of the project, and the government was tasked with removing any

administrative obstacles. During the meeting, Paknejad, noted the constructive cooperation between his ministry and the NDF in securing financial agreements for this major national project and stated that productive meetings and negotiations have taken place, resulting in final agreements for financing six out of the seven hubs of the South Pars gas field pressure enhancement project. "The project is expected to increase natural gas production capacity, supply feedstock for petrochemical companies, and significantly contribute to national revenue," Paknejad added. A report on the financial framework for the implementation plan of the South Pars gas field pressure enhancement project and the agreements between the

NDF and the Ministry of Oil was also presented at the Saturday meeting. The strategic pressure enhancement project of the South Pars gas field, with an \$18-billion investment, is projected to generate 45 times the added-value from increased extraction. It will also create direct and indirect employment for 60,000 people.

Iran-Russia cooperation

Also, in an interview with ILNA on Wednesday, Paknejad stated, "We will not miss any opportunity to engage in international arenas and will use every chance to advance our interests through energy diplomacy." Following discussions on increasing import tariffs for Canada, some experts suggested that Iran could leverage emerging

opportunities, particularly in the oil sector. Paknejad added that the OPEC Secretary-General recently visited Iran and held extensive discussions on mutual cooperation. He noted, "As the Islamic Republic of Iran assists OPEC members, other members can also support Iran." Paknejad emphasized, "We use every opportunity to advance our interests through energy diplomacy." Regarding Iran-Russia cooperation in shared oil markets, he said, "We have ongoing projects in oil field development and trade with Russian companies, but I will not delve into details." When asked if similar cooperation exists with other countries, Paknejad responded, "Certainly, yes."

Iran's trade with neighboring countries posts 19% hike

Economy Desk

The spokesperson for the Trade Development Commission of Iran's House of Industry, Mine and Trade, Rouhollah Latifi, announced that Iran's trade with its 15 neighboring countries saw significant growth in the first 10 months of the current year (March 20, 2024-January 19, 2025).

Latifi stated on Saturday that during the period, Iran exchanged 93.57 million tons of non-oil goods valued at \$59.66 billion with its neighbors. This represents a 16.2% increase in weight and a 19.2% rise in value compared to the same period last year.

He noted that trade with neighboring countries accounted for 59.2% of Iran's total trade volume and 57.5% of its total trade value during the 10-month period. Exports to neighboring countries reached 75.38 million tons, worth \$29.78 billion, marking a 24% increase in weight and a 28% rise in value compared to the previous year. Latifi emphasized that non-oil exports to neighboring countries constituted 59.2% of Iran's total export volume and 62.4% of its total export value during the same period.

Iraq, UAE, Turkey as top export destinations

Latifi highlighted that Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Turkey were Iran's top export destinations.

Iraq purchased \$10.18 billion worth of goods, a 31% increase; the UAE imported \$5.96 billion, up 12%; and Turkey bought \$5.54 billion, a 43% rise.

Following these countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan were the next major destinations, with Afghanistan importing \$1.97 billion (a 31% increase) and Pakistan purchasing \$1.94 billion (a 16% rise).

Latifi also provided details on exports to other neighboring countries with Oman: \$1.3 billion (14% growth), Russia: \$889.3 million (17% growth), Azerbaijan: \$572.9 million (14.5% growth), Turkmenistan: \$460.3 million (25% growth), Armenia: \$402.5 million (21% growth), Kazakhstan: \$227.4 million (39% growth), Kuwait: \$192.6 million (34% growth), Qatar: \$112.4 million (24% growth), Saudi Arabia: \$23.8 million (6.492% growth) and Bahrain: \$13.4 million (6.1% growth).

These countries ranked sixth to 15th among Iran's export destinations as neighboring states.

Copper exports hit \$644m in 10 months: **IMIDRO**

Economy Desk

The Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced that the total value of copper exports in the first 10 months of this year (March 20, 2024-January 19, 2025) exceeded 31 trillion tomans, equivalent to \$644 million. According to statistics released by the National Iranian Copper Industries Company, the company's total sales during the stated period reached 133 trillion tomans, marking a 32% increase compared to the 101 trillion tomans recorded in the same period last year. In domestic sales, the National Iranian Copper Company achieved sales of 79 trillion tomans in the first 10 months of the Iranian year 1402 (March 2023-March 2024).

This figure rose by 29% to 102 trillion tomans in the same period of the current year, 1403. Additionally, the value of exports in the first 10 months of the Iranian calendar year exceeded 31 trillion tomans, equivalent to \$644 million. According to IRNA and based on the latest global statistics, the world's total proven copper reserves are approximately 790 million tons, with the majority located in Chile. Australia, Peru, Mexico, and the United States follow in terms of global copper reserves. Iran, with 36.5 million tons of copper reserves, equivalent to 4.2% of the world's total, ranks seventh globally. The reserves are extracted from the Sarcheshmeh, Sungun, and Meyduk mines. Ninety-eight percent of Iran's copper reserves are located in the provinces of Kerman and East Azerbaijan.



IRNA

MP urges increased ...

He added that that around 130,000 tons of pistachios are exported annually, generating around \$1 billion in revenue

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"With proper planning, the figure could double," the MP said while describing pistachio exports as a vital component of Iran's non-oil economy. Addressing concerns over European Union regulations on aflatoxin levels in pistachios, Hassanpour-Biglari stressed the need for strict compliance by farmers and officials to avoid export restrictions.

Aflatoxins are naturally occurring fungal toxins that commonly contaminate crops like corn, peanuts and pistachios, posing health risks. The EU has implemented stringent measures to prevent the import of pistachios containing such toxins.

The lawmaker criticized the lack of attention to the pistachio industry's challenges, noting that the Pistachio Headquarters of Iran has not held a meeting in the past 10 months.

The last meeting, chaired by the agriculture minister, took place in the last Iranian year after a two-year hiatus, focusing on solutions to production and export obstacles.

"While many countries incentivize exports with rewards, the Central Bank of Iran's (CBI) policies toward pistachio producers are inadequate," Hassanpour-Biglari pointed out.

He argued that producers lack sufficient control over the foreign currency earned from exports, as the CBI calculates export earnings at the lower official exchange rate, while producers must purchase inputs like pesticides, fertilizers and other necessities at the higher rates on the free market.

The legislator noted that many orchard owners in Kerman and other regions rely on pistachio production for their livelihoods



IRNA

and called for increased financial support, including loans, to improve orchard productivity and boost output.

Hassanpour-Biglari added that the Parliament is working with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance and the CBI to reduce what he described as "self-imposed sanctions" on the industry.

He urged the government to take necessary measures to preserve Iran's existing export markets while also targeting new ones.

Kerman Province, he said, leads the country in pistachio production and cultivation area, with its pistachios renowned worldwide for their quality and taste. However, the industry has faced challenges in recent years, including severe drought and water shortages, which have hindered orchard irrigation. The MP emphasized the importance of supporting pistachio farmers and addressing water scarcity and other obstacles to production.

He called for research into climate change adaptation and water conservation, as well as the development of mechanized irrigation systems in pistachio orchards.

Iran spearheading opposition to Israel's 'forced relocation' of Palestinians

ANALYSIS

The resurgence of the Zionist scheme to forcibly relocate the Palestinian people to neighboring Arab countries, championed by the president of the United States, has ignited a strong wave of opposition and indignation among Muslim nations and advocates for the Palestinian cause. From the very beginning of this renewed proposal, Iran has been a vocal proponent of the urgent need to establish a united front among Islamic countries against the "colonial plot to erase Palestine." This call to solidarity highlights the escalating tensions surrounding the Palestinian issue and reflects a growing determination to resist perceived injustices.



A person looks at tents sheltering displaced Palestinians in a Gaza City schoolyard on February 10, 2025.

● BASHAR TALEB/AFP

Donald Trump, having returned to the White House as the 47th president of the United States after a four-year absence, has made it abundantly clear that anticipating his unconventional developments and unpredictable statements is hardly a challenge. However, reviving the controversial Zionist plan aimed at forcibly relocating the Palestinian people has left the Islamic world and advocates for the Palestinian cause somewhat astounded. Trump has consistently demonstrated his unwavering commitment to implementing this plan, asserting that Palestinians will forfeit their right of return following the reconstruction of Gaza. This bold stance has sparked significant concern and criticism among those who support Palestinian rights.

The colonial plan for the "relocation of the Palestinian people" is not a new issue and has, at times, received support from certain Arab countries. Imam Musa Sadr, the leader of the Shias in Lebanon, was one of the main opponents of the Zionist scheme for the forced relocation of Palestinians, to neighboring countries, as well as the Arab supporters of this initiative who sought to eliminate the dream of return among Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon and integrate them into Lebanese society. Sadr characterized this plan as a conspiracy aimed at destroying the Palestinian nation and ending their resistance.

Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has repeatedly expressed the Islamic Republic of Iran's clear opposition to this American-Zionist plan.

On June 3, 2010, he stated, "Illegal and oppressive settlement constructions, the demolition of people's homes, and the manipulation of Hebron and Al-Quds with the aim of Judaization are intended to cut off the roots of Islam from the land of Palestine in their misguided belief."

Historical roots

The historical roots of the forced relocation of the Palestinian people trace back to the inception of Zionism, as noted by Theodor Herzl, the founder of this movement:

"When we occupy the land, we shall bring immediate benefits to the state that receives us. We must expropriate gently the private property on the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it any employment in our country. The property owners will come over to our side. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discretely and circumspectly..." David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, was the architect of a plan known as "Plan D" or "Plan Dalet," a military strategy implemented by the Zionist regime during the Palestinian War of 1948 to prepare for the establishment of a Jewish state. This plan commenced in March 1948 and continued until the end of the war in early 1949, playing a crucial role in the expulsion and flight of Palestinians in 1948, an event famously

referred to as the "Nakba." During this period, over 750,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homeland. The term Nakba, meaning "catastrophe," signifies the permanent displacement of the majority of the Palestinian people. More specifically, the Nakba refers to the mass exodus of Palestinians from the land that was to become Israel, resulting in around 700,000 Palestinians becoming refugees almost overnight.

The continuation of this policy during the 1967 war led to a significant outflow of populations from the West Bank, Al-Quds, and the Gaza Strip. Philippe Lazzarini, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, referred to the widespread displacement of Palestinians following the attacks on the Gaza Strip during the 15-month conflict as "the largest displacement of Palestinians since 1948." During discussions with his Saudi counterpart, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi characterized the American-Zionist plan to forcibly relocate the people of Gaza and make them refugees in other countries as part of the broader scheme to eliminate Palestine. He stressed the urgent need for the international community to act decisively against this conspiracy.

Araghchi also communicated Iran's opposition to the US president's plan during his meeting with Antonio Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Hussein Ibrahim Taha, the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. He underscored the importance of a coordinated

and unified stance from the Islamic community to thwart this nefarious scheme. The foreign minister stated, "The forced relocation of Palestinians from Gaza is not only a grave crime synonymous with 'genocide,' but it also carries dangerous implications for the stability and security of the region and the world. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation must urgently convene an extraordinary meeting with the foreign ministers of member states to take decisive and effective action to defend the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

In his conversation with Guterres, Araghchi pointed to his intensive talks with foreign ministers from Arab and Islamic countries, asserting that the strong condemnation of the plan by Islamic nations reflects widespread concern regarding the ongoing gross violations of Palestinian rights and the continuation of their genocide by other means. Iran views the US president's plan as aligned with the colonial conspiracy to erase Palestine, with its Foreign Ministry asserting that it contravenes all principles of international law, international resolutions, and, most importantly, humanitarian principles.

The Iranian foreign minister, in his recent meeting with Palestinian resistance officials emphasized the necessity of a cohesive and resolute stance from Islamic countries regarding this dangerous conspiracy.

Ismail Baqaei, the spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry, has consistently voiced the Islamic Republic's opposition to advancing such a plan since it was first proposed. In response to recent statements by US officials regarding the acquisition of Gaza following the suggestion to forcibly relocate the people of Gaza to Egypt and Jordan, Baqaei described such ideas as astonishing and aligned with the Zionist regime's scheme to eliminate Palestine. He called for a strong condemnation of this by the international community and the United Nations.

Pointing to the responsibility of all governments to help realize the right to self-determination for the Palestinian people and to free them from the yoke of occupation and apartheid, he described the recent claim by the US president regarding the intention to acquire the Gaza Strip as an unprecedented affront to the fundamental principles of international law and the UN Charter. He stressed, "Without a doubt, the people who have stood firm against the most severe crimes and aggressions of the occupying regime for the past 76 years and have re-



The historical roots of the forced relocation of the Palestinians trace back to the inception of Zionism, as noted by Theodor Herzl, the founder of this movement:

"When we occupy the land, we shall bring immediate benefits to the state that receives us. We must expropriate gently the private property on the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it any employment in our country. The property owners will come over to our side."

fused to leave their ancestral land will not allow the US and the Zionist regime to erase their national and historical identity through other means."

The plan for the cleansing of Gaza and the forced relocation of the Palestinians to neighboring countries is viewed as a continuation of the Zionist regime's targeted scheme to completely eradicate the Palestinian nation and is entirely unacceptable and condemned due to its clear contradiction with the principles and established rules of international law and human rights.

The Foreign Ministry has engaged in extensive consultations with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Gambia. The proposal put forth by the country, detailed in an official letter from the foreign minister to the head of the OIC, has received significant backing from numerous Islamic nations. As a result of this broad support, an extraordinary meeting is anticipated to take place in the first half of March, marking a pivotal moment for collective diplomatic efforts within the region.

The article first appeared in Farsi on IRNA.



An English class at a school run by the UNRWA in Amman, Jordan, on February 13, 2024.

● AL JAZEERA

ANALYSIS

Just as the recent cease-fire in Gaza began, the US president and the Zionists made public their plans to determine the fate of Gaza and its people, which are, more than anything, aimed at completing the "ethnic cleansing" project that began in October 2023. The Americans and Zionists, in political coordination, have repeated such plans in recent days without considering the scope of their consequences and implications and with an unrealistic sense of ownership over Palestinian land. In this regard, Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of the Zionist regime, told its Channel 14: "The Saudis can create a Palestinian state in Saudi Arabia; they have a lot of land over there." These statements were made in response to the Saudis' demand for the formation of a Palestinian state as a precondition for Saudi Arabia's normalization of relations with Israel.

The Saudi Foreign Ministry condemned Netanyahu's statements, asserting: "This extremist, occupying mentality does not understand what the Palestinian land means to the brotherly people of Palestine. The Kingdom affirms that the Palestinian people have a right to their land, and they are not intruders or immigrants to it who can be expelled whenever the brutal Israeli occupation wishes. The Kingdom reiterates that the right of the Palestinian People will remain firmly established." Moreover, Saudi Arabia rejected Netanyahu's claim that "peace between Israel and Saudi Arabia is not only feasible, I think it's going to happen," emphasizing that normalizing relations with the Zionist regime without the establishment of a Palestinian state is invalid.

US colonial plan against Gaza comes to standstill

What are Netanyahu, Trump after?



BUENO AIRES TIMES

Objectives of US-Israeli plans

The plans proposed by the US and Israel concerning the displacement of Gaza's population and changing the status of the region emerged within the context of their strategic, security, and geopolitical objectives following the Gaza War. These plans can be analyzed from several perspectives:

- 1. Making Israel secure:** Israel has long portrayed Gaza, especially after Hamas assumed control of the strip, as a security threat. Displacing the Palestinian population has been suggested in order to weaken resistance and disconnect Palestinians of Gaza from their brethren elsewhere in the Occupied Territories. As such, establishing a security buffer zone along Israel's borders is a likely goal of this plan. US control over Gaza or the forced departure of Palestinians could assure Israel that no threats would emanate from the region.
- 2. Entrenching Zionist control over Occupied Territories:** With US backing, Israel may seek to annex parts of Gaza or bring it under direct Zionist control. This aligns with the historical Zionist policy of territorial expansion.
- 3. Undermining Palestinian territorial identity:** Displacing Palestinians from Gaza or scattering them could weaken their territorial identity. Proposing the establishment of a Palestinian state in Saudi Arabia may also be aimed at diverting historical Palestinian claims and fragmenting the Arab world.
- 4. Eliminating the threat of Hamas:** Israel and the US are determined to eliminate the threat posed by Hamas and other Palestinian groups, which use Gaza as a base for attacks against Israel. Displacing Gaza's population could temporarily

reduce this threat.

- 5. Blocking the formation of a Palestinian state:** Netanyahu, invoking the events of October 7, 2023, considers any possibility of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza a "security threat" to Israel, viewing it as a launchpad for future attacks. He has repeatedly rejected the idea of Palestinian statehood, stating that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state would mean the victory of Hamas and Iran.
- 6. Circumventing Saudi Arabia's conditions:** Saudi Arabia has consistently emphasized that normalizing relations with Israel depends on the creation of a Palestinian state, particularly following the October 7, 2023, and Israel's crimes and massacre in Gaza. Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan underscored the two-state solution at a Riyadh meeting, asserting that the establishment of a Palestinian state is Saudi Arabia's precondition for normalizing relations with Israel. By suggesting the relocation of the Palestinian state to Arabian soil, Netanyahu effectively dismisses Riyadh's conditions, seeking to redefine the issue on his own terms.
- 7. Aligning with Trump's plans:** Donald Trump, the US president, has proposed placing Gaza under US control following the war, transforming it into a tourist resort. Netanyahu reinforces a similar narrative by citing Arabia's "empty lands" as a solution for Palestinian displacement.
- 8. Furthering US strategic interests:** Under Trump's leadership, the US likely seeks to strengthen its regional allies, such as Israel. Controlling Gaza could establish a new military or political outpost for monitoring the broader Middle East.

9. Securing resources: Gaza's strategic coastal position in the Mediterranean makes it desirable. Displacing its population and exerting control over the territory could enable Israel or the US to exploit natural resources or expand security projects.

10. Reducing international pressure: Displacing Gaza's population could alleviate international pressure on Israel as the removal of Palestinians from Gaza could allow Israel to claim the Palestinian issue has been resolved.

11. Redefining regional equations: US control over Gaza could shift regional dynamics in favor of the US and Israel, potentially diminishing Iran's influence and that of other regional competitors.

Impact of Netanyahu's recent statements

A member of the powerful Saudi Shura Council, Yousef bin Trad al-Saadoun, just wrote a piece for the Saudi newspaper, Okaz, maintaining that Tel Aviv is using Trump's statements as a diplomatic tool to normalize relations with Islamic countries, including Saudi Arabia, and to divert global public opinion from the crimes of Israeli occupation.

Saudi Arabia's insistence on the precondition of a Palestinian state and its rejection of Netanyahu's proposal indicate Riyadh's reluctance to compromise on the issue at this time. This disagreement could delay or even halt the normalization process. Furthermore, Netanyahu's statements have sparked widespread anger across Arab countries, potentially strengthening regional unity against Israel.

Regional reactions

The Saudi Foreign Ministry has described Netanyahu's proposal as extremist and a violation of Palestinian historical rights, emphasizing that sustainable peace can only be achieved through the two-state solution and the establishment of a Palestinian state in Occupied Territories. Countries like Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, the UAE, Kuwait, and Oman have also condemned Netanyahu's remarks as provocative and a violation of Arab sovereignty, firmly rejecting them. Hamas has condemned the proposal as "supremacist," reflecting Israel's "expansionist ambitions," while praising Saudi Arabia's stance. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, secretary-general of the Arab League, has also condemned Netanyahu's statements, declaring that the Palestinian state should be established solely on Palestinian soil, with East Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital. He dismissed other ideas as "fantasies" entertained by those advancing them.

Regional implications of imperialist plans

1. Escalating tensions: These proposals have intensified tensions between Israel



The plans proposed by Israel and the US are less about achieving peace and more about reshaping the realities on the field and imposing one-sided conditions. These actions will not resolve the Palestinian crisis but risk fueling widespread instability in the region through violations of international law and human rights. In reality, the forced displacement of Gaza's population serves as a tool for achieving Israel's and America's political and strategic goals. It is potentially part of a broader strategy to exert greater control over the Middle East and alter Gaza's demographic makeup.

and Arab countries and could embolden Palestinian resistance groups.

2. Strengthening resistance groups: Forcing the displacement of Gaza's population could fuel Palestinian discontent and bolster groups like Hamas or Islamic Jihad, posing long-term threats to Israel's security.

3. Exacerbating Gaza's crisis: Focusing on Palestinian displacement diverts global attention from Gaza's humanitarian crisis, reducing prospects for a durable cease-fire.

4. Undermining Israel's and America's international standing: These plans will face widespread condemnation from regional and international organizations. It may enable other countries to further reduce US influence in the region.

5. Disrupting peace talks: Such actions could severely disrupt peace processes and erode trust between the parties.

6. Reinforcing the two-state solution: Many countries and international bodies, including the UN, recognize the two-state solution based on 1967 borders as the only lasting path. Deviating from this path risks further regional instability.

The plans proposed by Israel and the US are less about achieving peace and more about reshaping the realities on the field and imposing one-sided conditions. These actions will not resolve the Palestinian crisis but risk fueling widespread instability in the region through violations of international law and human rights. In reality, the forced displacement of Gaza's population serves as a tool for achieving Israel's and America's political and strategic goals. It is potentially part of a broader strategy to exert greater control over the Middle East and alter Gaza's demographic makeup.

In this context, the resistance of Arab countries, the response of international organizations, and the actions of Palestinian groups will play a decisive role in the success or failure of these plans. Netanyahu's recent statements not only highlight Israel's reluctance to accept Palestinian rights but also reflect a broader effort to redefine regional equations in Israel's favor, in line with US plans. This tactic aims to divert attention from Gaza's displacement and reduce international and public pressure. While Israel and the US primarily seek to reduce Hamas's threat and create a security buffer along Israel's borders, the consequences of these plans could be highly negative and dangerous. It already faces strong opposition from Arab countries, undermines the efforts to normalize relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, and potentially empowers Arab and Muslim unity to defend Palestinian rights.

The article first appeared in the Farsi-language newspaper Farhikhtegan.



People walk past an electronic billboard that shows US President Donald Trump (L) shaking hands with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman with the pro-normalization message "We are ready," in Tel Aviv on February 3, 2025.

ARIEL SCHALIT/AP

AFC Champions League Elite:

Iranian clubs to make last-ditch bid for knockout spots

Sports Desk

Three last-16 places in the AFC Champions League Elite will be up for grabs when the final round of the league phase fixtures takes place in the west zone on Monday and Tuesday.

Saudi Pro League heavyweights Al Hilal, Al Ahli, and Al Nassr, plus Al Sadd of Qatar and Emirati outfit Al Wasl have already secured their place in March's knockout round, and the battle for the remaining top-eight spots in the 12-team table will go down to the wire between Tehran archrivals Persepolis and Esteghlal as well as Al Rayyan, Al Gharafa and Pakhtakor. Sitting sixth in the table with eight points, Al Rayyan is in the driving seat to go through, with Al Gharafa (7pts), Esteghlal (6pts), Persepolis (6pts), and Pakhtakor (4pts) in the following spots.

A 4-1 humiliation at Al Hilal last time out in the competition saw Persepolis drop below Esteghlal on goal difference, meaning even a draw against Al Nassr at Tehran's Azadi Stadium on Monday could prove not enough for the Capital Reds to progress.

Persepolis will head into the game on the back of a 3-2 defeat against Sepahan in the domestic cup and head coach Ismail Kartal will hope his backline will improve on its miserable form of late, which has seen Persepolis concede seven goals in three games – a worst record for the club in seven years.

The good news for the Turkish coach is that his Italian opposite number Stefano Pioli is expected to field a weakened lineup for the final-day dead rubber, according to reports in the Saudi media, giving rest to Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo, and Spanish center-back Aymeric Laporte.



Al Gharafa will still be facing a daunting task to progress when playing away to Al Ahli, as its inferior goal difference means a defeat in Jeddah could see the Qatari team be overtaken by the two Iranian clubs in the table.

Pakhtakor is without a win in seven games

and will have to collect maximum points from Monday's home game against Al Sadd to stand a chance of a last-16 place. Esteghlal will know about other results when before playing at Al Rayyan on Tuesday.

Like their city rivals, the Tehran Blues

have managed one win in the competition this term – a 3-0 home victory over Al Gharafa on Day 1 – but even a draw will likely send both sides through, if the final outcome in preceding night's three games go their way.

Sohrab Bakhtiarizadeh's side failed to

capitalize on the home support against Al Shorta two weeks ago, sharing the spoils with the Iraqi champion 1-1. The interim coach, however, will be eager to see his men build on Friday's 2-1 cup win at Shams Azar, as a knockout spot could extend his time on the Blues bench.

Petko Sirakov – Ivan Iliev wrestling tournament:
Iranians grab triple Greco-Roman golds

Sports Desk

Iranian wrestlers bagged four Greco-Roman medals, including three golds, at the Petko Sirakov – Ivan Iliev tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria, on Friday. Representing the country in the 55kg contests, Payam Ahmadi overcame opponents from Georgia and Bulgaria before out-

classing home-favorite Jordan Topalov by superiority (9-0) to walk away with the ultimate prize. Reigning world under-17 champion Amir-Mahdi Saeidi-Nava won a second gold medal for Iran, thanks to a 5-3 triumph over Georgian Anri Tavartkiladze in the 72kg showdown. In the 82kg contests,

Iranian Alireza Mohammad-Hosseini beat Georgia's Saba Mamaladze 7-1 in the semifinals and then was handed the gold medal after Data Chkhaidze of Georgia withdrew from the final showpiece with injury. Meanwhile, Seyyed Taha Masoudi bounced back from a last-four superiority setback against Japa-

nese Manato Nakamura to beat Kazakhstan's Nurgali Sagatov 7-1 and finish his campaign with a consolation bronze in the 63kg contests. Seyyed Reza Azarshab was the other Iranian in action on Friday night, finishing his 82kg empty-handed after a first-round defeat (5-0) against Mamaladze.

CAFA Women's Futsal Championship:
Iranian girls beat Turkmenistan to close in on title

Sports Desk

Iranian girls eased to a third successive victory at the CAFA Women's Futsal Championship, beating Turkmenistan 5-1 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on Friday. Maral Torkaman bagged a hat-trick, with Zahra Kianimesh and Roqayeh Some'eh also on the scoresheet as Iran sat atop the tournament's table with nine points.

Kamila Mingazova scored Turkmenistan's sole goal in the second half.

Three-time defending champion Iran began its title defense in the tournament – featuring five Central Asian sides – with a 9-0 rout of Uzbekistan and then thrashed the Kyrgyz Republic 10-0 on Wednesday. The final round of fixtures will see Iran take on the host at the Dushanbe Indoor Hall today, with Uzbekistan – second in the table with six points – facing the Kyrgyz Republic. The event is part of the Iranian girls' preparation for May's AFC Women's Futsal Asian

Cup, which will resume after a seven-year hiatus in China. Chasing a third successive title in as many editions, Forouzan Soleimani's side will begin its campaign with a game against the Philippines on May 7, before squaring off against Vietnam and Hong Kong in Group B. The top three of the 12-team tournament will punch their tickets for the inaugural FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup – starting November 21 in the Philippines.

Beauty, history of Moshir Bridge



Iranica Desk

The first phase of restoring the historic Moshir Bridge in Bushehr has been completed, according to the deputy head of Bushehr Province's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization. Nasrallah Ebrahimi stated that the Moshir Bridge is one of the most significant historical bridges in Iran in terms of length, span, and foundation, with its origins dating back to the Sassanid period. It has been refurbished during both the Safavid and Qajar periods. He added that due to the collapse

of one of the bridge's spans, the restoration work was very complicated, as one of the arches had been destroyed, and during the restoration process, it has been completely recreated. He continued: "In the second phase, we will focus on the arches and spans that were partially damaged. Additionally, during the first phase of restoration, efforts were made to reinforce the roots of the bridge and strengthen the adjacent caravanserai."

The Moshir Bridge is a valuable structure from the Qajar period, rebuilt in 1869 CE concurrently with the Borzajan Caravanserai,

upon the order of Haj Mirza Abolhassan Khan Moshir al-Molk Shirazi, by a renowned architect from Fars, Haj Mohammad Rahim Shirazi. The bridge features six spans and has a total length of 285 meters. The main materials used in its construction are large and small hewn stones, which are connected by lime mortar and, in some areas, secured with iron nails and rods.

Historians and travelers who have mentioned this bridge and its important role on the trade route from Bushehr to Shiraz include Forsatodolleh Shirazi and British explorer and writer

Lord Curzon.

The Moshir al-Molk Bridge features a hybrid design, combining triangular and linear bridge styles, as well as two types of arches: pointed and Roman. Its length is 130 meters, with six pointed arches — one being the largest and another the smallest, while the remaining four are of equal size. The height of the tallest span is 11.40 meters, and its width is 10.50 meters. Like all ancient bridges, the Moshir al-Molk Bridge operates on a weight-based principle, transferring its weight through its foundations to the riverbed. The stones used in

the construction of the bridge's foundations are large and rectangular up to a height of three or four meters, becoming smaller at greater heights. The larger stones are secured to each other and to the structure of the bridge's foundations with long iron nails, and the arches are reinforced with wooden bracing. The stones used in the foundations are sandstone, which poses a serious risk of erosion to the bridge's structure. The dimensions of the larger foundations of the bridge are approximately 10 meters by 13 meters, making it one of the thickest ancient bridges in Iran

in terms of cross-sectional area. Bushehr itself is a city rich in history and culture, known for its beautiful coastal scenery and historical sites. It has been a significant port city for centuries, playing a crucial role in trade and commerce. Visitors to Bushehr can explore various attractions, including the old port, traditional bazaars, and other historical landmarks that reflect the city's vibrant past. The Moshir Bridge, with its architectural beauty and historical significance, stands as a testament to the region's rich heritage and continues to attract tourists and history enthusiasts alike.

Discover ecological riches of Lavandevil Wildlife Refuge

Spread over more than 1,000 hectares, the Lavandevil Wildlife Refuge is located just five kilometers from Astara in Gilan Province. The name Lavandevil translates to "Habitat of Flowers" in the Taleshi language. The area has become a critical wildlife refuge, particularly for birds. It encompasses part of the Hyrcanian forests, which merge with those along the Caspian Sea, surrounded by an intricate landscape of sea, lagoons, trees, and sand dunes. In the distance, fields of pomegranate and rice can be seen, adding to the region's picturesque beauty. The Lavandevil Wildlife Refuge stretches

from the city of Lavandevil in the south to Astara in the north, bordered by the Caspian Sea to the east and the Astara-Landvil road to the west. Nearby villages include Gholam Mahaleh, Imamzadeh, Dadashabad, and Sibli, contributing to the area's vibrant cultural tapestry. The average elevation of the Lavandevil Wildlife Refuge is approximately twenty meters below sea level, and it experiences high rainfall, enhancing its lush environment. Though Lavandevil is located in Gilan Province, it is significantly influenced by Taleshi culture; additionally, its proximity to Ardebil brings further

cultural diversity. The residents of this northern region of Iran communicate in Farsi, Azari Turkish, and Taleshi languages, reflecting the area's rich cultural heritage.

The Lavandevil Wildlife Refuge serves as a sanctuary for various species, including wild boar, foxes, Persian fallow deer, golden eagles, Eurasian golden orioles, pelicans, martens, whooper swans, a variety of ducks, herons, slender-billed curlews, and cranes, totaling around 125 species. The trees within Lavandevil provide habitat for the ring-necked pheasant, regarded as one of the most beautiful birds in Iran.

This wildlife refuge also attracts numerous migratory bird species that come here to escape the harsh winter weather; it lies along the migratory route connecting Siberia to warmer regions of the globe. Approximately one hundred plant species, fifty medicinal plant varieties, and sixty-five ornamental plants have been recorded in the area, some of which are endemic. Noteworthy among them are straw, cattail, local pomegranate, alder, common medlar, *Pterocarya fraxinifolia*, *Gleditsia*, raspberry, and various lagoon plants.

In addition to Lavandevil Wildlife

Refuge, several other attractions are sure to captivate tourists, including the mausoleums of Baba Hassan, Mohammad Doust, and Baba Ali, the 17-hectare Sadaf coastal promenade, the ancient village of Sibli, Laton jungle, and Laton Waterfall, which boasts a height of about one hundred meters. Visitors can also explore Mieh Kumeh waterfall, Kuteh Kumeh hot water spring, the coastal park of Lavandevil city, and the Sibli rice fields. However, it is worth noting that the region is a significant source of sand and shell extraction, leading to some environmental degradation.



Global narratives unbound for youths

26th Int'l Storytelling Festival kicks off in Yazd

Arts & Culture Desk

The 26th International Storytelling Festival began on February 15 in Yazd, welcoming local and international storytellers at the city's central hall. This event, which runs until February 18, features 98 storytellers from various provinces and several foreign countries, sharing their tales with children, teenagers, and families, IRNA reported. During the opening ceremony, Yazd Governor General Mohammad Reza Babaei praised the establishment of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults.

He recalled the venue's development from a children's library to its current role as a nurturing hub for young minds. Babaei remarked, "I remember when this place was a children's library. Now, it fosters creativity and growth." The provincial official also reflected on the impacts of the institute on his own family. "My child, now a surgeon, was a member of this institution during school. He learned many arts here, becoming an accomplished calligrapher. These achievements are part of his development through the institute." Babaei stressed the significance of storytelling, describing it as "a great

blessing." He noted that storytelling has been integral to human history, adding, "From the dawn of time, people have lived through stories. Even today, no one can escape their influence. Stories encapsulate complexities and hardships in a simple, relatable manner." In closing, he expressed gratitude for the festival, highlighting its role in introducing storytelling to young audiences. He thanked all those involved in organizing this cultural event. Plus, winners of the festival's online categories, including environmental, podcast, and 90-second storytelling parts, were announced.



IRIB NEWS

Int'l Resistance Film Festival rails against global cinematic silence on Gaza war



Arts & Culture Desk

The International Resistance Film Festival sharply criticized the lack of response from prominent global film festivals regarding the ongoing violence in Gaza. Secretary Jalal Ghaffari voiced concerns over the silence surrounding the tragic loss of life, stating that over 50,000 innocent women, children, and civilians have been killed in the region over the past year, according to the official website of the event. With 500 cinematic works centered on resistance submitted to this year's festival, Ghaffari said that "Resistance cinema will be the voice of the oppressed worldwide."

During a recent meeting with

media activists from Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, and Armenia, Ghaffari reflected on the festival's 40-year legacy in promoting cinema as a tool for resistance. He pointed out that the festival stands out as the only international event dedicated to "supporting the oppressed." He added that cinema serves as a crucial cultural instrument for sharing powerful messages with the world, yet lamented that colonial powers have exploited it for their own inhumane agendas. Ghaffari condemned the indifference of major film festivals to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. He noted, "No international cinematic institution has addressed these atrocities." The festival aims to provide a platform for

those silenced by oppression, offering an alternative narrative to the mainstream portrayal of victims in the film industry. He criticized the manipulation of cinematic narratives by governments that seek to distort reality, emphasizing the festival's commitment to amplifying marginalized voices. Ghaffari expressed his vision for a future rooted in humanity, asserting, "The world of tomorrow will be built on kindness and justice." Following Ghaffari's remarks, Esrafil Kaliji, head of the festival's International Committee, acknowledged the valuable contributions of media activists at Cinema Museum of Iran. He stressed that the concept of resistance embodies one of the highest human values, which must be upheld within the film industry. Kaliji articulated a clear stance against the prevailing global hegemonic order, asserting that "Resistance Cinema is determined to break this barrier." Kaliji urged international media professionals to embrace their role as truth-seeking journalists. He expressed confidence that they would align with the cause of resistance, helping to disseminate its humanitarian message across the globe.

Minister urges digital innovation in tourism at Tehran exhibit

Arts & Culture Desk

The 18th Tehran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition served as a platform for Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Reza Salehi Amiri to explore the integration of advanced technologies in the tourism sector. During his visit, he urged stakeholders to adopt artificial intelligence, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) to enhance the country's tourism offerings, IRNA reported. The minister engaged with various exhibitors, emphasizing the critical role of digital solutions in showcasing Iran's diverse attractions. He inspected an AI-powered avatar capable of answering tourism-related inquiries, as well as smart registration systems using NFC technology. These innovations, he noted, are vital for modernizing the industry. Salehi Amiri began his tour by visiting booths representing free trade zones, including Kish, Qeshm, Aras, Arvand, Anzali, and Makou. He met with leaders of these regions, stressing the importance of fostering collaboration and enhancing tourism interactions. His itinerary also included a stop at the booth of university and student associations, where he listened to the concerns of young activists and explored handicrafts developed by students. This engagement underlined the need for educational institutions to contribute to the tourism landscape. He conversed with the head of the tourism products department, discussing the importance of leveraging local and rural



capacities for sustainable tourism development. An agreement was also signed between the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Ardebil Province and the Kish Free Zone. The objective of the memorandum is to establish direct flights between Kish and Ardebil, facilitate tourist exchanges, and share best practices in tourism. His visit also took him to the booths of medical universities such as Tehran, Iran, Shahid Beheshti, Isfahan, and Jundishapur Ahvaz, where he learned about the potential for health tourism. He emphasized the necessity of developing a comprehensive health tourism strategy to attract two million health tourists and generate \$6 billion in foreign revenue. At the Khuzestan cultural booth, the minister immersed himself in the region's traditions, enjoying local hospitality with bitter coffee and sweet tea. He reviewed investment opportunities in water tourism, presented by the Khuzestan Water and Power Organization. These included various tourist complexes and public-private partnership projects aimed at enhancing the region's tourism infrastructure.

Iranian Film Day celebrates cultural ties in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Iranian Film Day took place on February 12 in the city of Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina to enhance cultural exchange and introduce local audiences to the rich tapestry of Iranian cinema. This event, organized in collaboration with various cultural and cinematic institutions, aimed to enhance cultural exchange and introduce local audiences to the rich tapestry of Iranian cinema, ILNA reported. The Iranian Film Day unfolded as part of the Winter Cultural Festival in Konjic, showcasing a selection of four cinematic works suitable for all ages. The event featured the screening of the acclaimed film 'Romanticism of

Emad and Tuba,' alongside animated films 'A Passenger from Ganora' and 'Dolphin Boy.' The director of the Konjic Cultural Center praised Iranian cinema as a leading force on the global stage, producing captivating films and animations. He described the event as a unique opportunity for the people of Konjic to deepen their understanding of Iranian culture. Mohammad Hossein Ansari, the cultural attaché, expressed gratitude to the hosts for their efforts in strengthening the friendly relations between Iran and Bosnia. The event drew a warm reception from cultural enthu-

siasts, with the screenings complemented by clips showcasing Iran's achievements across various fields. In conjunction with the film day, a grand celebration was held at the Iranian embassy in Sarajevo to commemorate the Islamic Revolution's anniversary. Guests received a warm welcome from Ambassador Abuzar Ebrahimi Torkaman, who conveyed greetings from the Iranian government and people. During his address, Ebrahimi Torkaman emphasized the commitment of Iran to fostering peace and stability worldwide. He noted, "Today, the world needs lasting peace more than ever, which

has unfortunately been misused by some powerful entities." He reiterated Iran's readiness to extend friendship to all who uphold ethical and humanitarian principles across the globe. The cultural attaché also enriched the event with a bilingual infographic exhibition showcasing the achievements of the Islamic Revolution, alongside displays of Iranian handicrafts and arts. The exhibition, located at the cultural attaché's office in Sarajevo, included the release of a booklet titled 'Iran: A Magnificent Land' in Bosnian, further promoting Iranian culture during this significant occasion.

