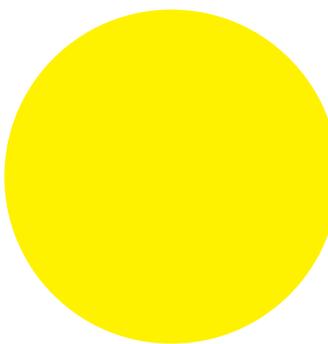


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The rise of modern international order

By George Lawson
Professor at the Australian National University

OPINION

All international orders are made up of multiple political units. Whether these units are empires, city-states, or nation-states, the key feature that distinguishes international from domestic politics is that, in the international sphere, political units are forced to coexist in the absence of an overarching authority. This means that the discipline of International Relations is fundamentally concerned with the issue of 'political multiplicity'. Its guiding question is how order can be generated in an environment that is fragmented rather than unified.

Political multiplicity, though, is only part of the story. Although international relations is a fragmented space, this does not stop political units from interacting with each other. These interactions are what make up international orders: regularized practices of exchange between political units.

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In a letter to UN chief: Iran warns US against any miscalculation of resorting to military aggression



A general view of the UN Security Council

International Desk

Iran's UN envoy urged the United Nations to warn the United States against any miscalculation of resorting to military aggression against the Islamic Republic over recent protests in the country.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Security Council's President Samuel Zbogar on Tuesday, Amir Saeid Iravani said that recent threats by the US President Donald Trump against Iran are in

violation of international norms and regulations. He added that the meddlesome statements by Trump are obviously inciting violence in Iran. Since the beginning of protests in Iran on December 28, US President Donald Trump has repeatedly threatened Tehran with military attack over its response to the riots in the country during which an unknown number of security forces and protesters have lost their lives. Instigated by expressions of

support on behalf of US president as well as Zionist-relied instructions, armed groups and individuals in various cities, including the capital Tehran, turned the protests into violent clashes by dispatching firearms and Molotov cocktails to streets, claiming innocent lives and destroying and setting on fire an assortment of economic centers, religious and public sites, buses, and urban amenities. Iravani said that Trump's reckless comments clearly provoke political instability

and threaten Iran's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security. Iran's envoy added that the US president's call for "taking over of institutions" in Iran "must be understood as an integral component of a broader regime-change policy pursued through the so-called maximum pressure campaign, the escalation of unlawful unilateral sanctions, deliberate social and economic destabilization, the systematic spread of insecurity, and the incitement of young people to return to diplomacy. the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran". He also warned that the US and the Israeli regime are directly responsible for the deaths of innocent Iranian citizens, particularly the youth, in the recent unrest. Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, had earlier expressed concern about recent rhetorics by the US president against Tehran in the wake of nationwide economic protests in Iran, calling on both sides to return to diplomacy.



Araghchi: Iranians ready to defend national sovereignty, security



International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi underlined that Iranian nation is ready to defend the country's national sovereignty and security against any foreign intervention amid the US threats of military attack on Iran. The Iranian foreign minister in a phone conversation with his Emirati counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan dismissed interventionist remarks by American authorities over recent nationwide protests in Iran as blatant interference in the country's internal affairs. "The Iranian nation is determined to defend the country's national sovereignty and security against any foreign mischief and interference," he told his Emirati counterpart. Araghchi said that calm has returned to the country after the recent unrest

which he said was a result of US and Israeli provocation of terrorist elements to derail peaceful protests over economic problems in the country. Al Nahyan, for his part, highlighted the importance of continuous talks between Iran, the UAE, and other regional countries in order to consolidate stability and security in the region. In a separate phone call with his French counterpart Jean-Noel Barrot, the Iranian foreign minister called for Paris's condemnation of the meddlesome measures by some countries in Iran's internal affairs.

Ambassador Mousavi explained how recent peaceful protests in Iran, which began by businesspeople over economic issues, turned into "organized violence" perpetrated by "hostile and suspicious elements." The recent unrest first began with limited protests by some businesspeople over the economic pressure resulted from unlawful and unilateral sanctions imposed on the Iranian people, especially by the United States and several European countries, including Britain, according

to the post. It said the protests remained peaceful for a week during which President Masoud Pezeshkian and his administration entered talks with the protesters' representatives to hear their demands. However, from January 8, things began to change as clear and "organized" violence emerged and continued during the protests, which were instigated by "hostile and suspicious elements," the embassy noted in the post, saying the Iranian government has obtained evidence showing that these elements were "terrorists" who used and distributed weapons, and deliberately targeted civilians and security forces. The embassy directly held Israel responsible for the latest terrorist acts in Iran, which left at least 100 security personnel dead alongside civilians.

Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce: Activating untapped potentials in Iraq's market to boost exports



By Sadeq
Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

A board member of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce stressed the need to enter new sectors of Iraq's market to reach higher figures in bilateral trade.



In an interview with Iran Daily, Hamid Hosseini said that according to official data, Iran's exports to the neighboring country was \$6.7 billion in the first eight months of the current Iranian year, starting March 21, 2025, reflecting a 15% decrease compared to the same period last year. Hosseini said that the data showed Iran's exports to Iraq stood at around 20 million metric tons, valued about \$850 million monthly, indicating a 15% drop in exports.

He, however, expressed optimism that the export level

would rise during the coming months. Last year marked the time Iranian exports to Iraq surpassed \$12 billion, placing the country as Iran's second-largest non-oil export market after China, Hosseini said. "This means that the exports to Iraq were valued approximately \$1 billion monthly last year." According to the businessman, the current potential of Iraq's

boring country has significant demand for goods such as tires, automotive parts, tobacco, and gold, areas where Iranian presence remains limited. Hosseini said that the 15-percent downturn in exports reflects a confluence of factors, including new Iraqi trade policies. The tariffs imposed by the Iraqi government on some items of steel, such as rebar, are among the main reasons behind the decreasing trend of exports, he said. The country has curbed import of rebar to protect its domestic industry.

On the other hand, Hosseini said, the imposition of customs duties on the goods that enter the country through Iraq's Kurdistan region has also been effective in the drop of exports. He explained that part of Iran's exports is made through Kurdistan, which put considerable expense on the Iranian side.

Iran's primary exports to Iraq include construction materials, food products, fruits and vegetables, household appliances, chemicals, and petrochemicals. In contrast, Iran has actually no official imports from Iraq. Imports from Iraq largely consist of metal scrap. Silver and some metals are also among the goods, he said, that are illegally smuggled into Iran.

market for Iranian goods is lower than \$15 billion monthly, but he highlighted that reaching higher figures in bilateral trade requires engagement with new sectors of Iraq's market, including services, knowledge-based products, gold and modern industries. He said Iran holds substantial untapped potential in exporting technical and engineering services to Iraq. Activating this sector could significantly boost the exports. The board member of the joint chamber said that the neigh-

Minister: Oil exports set record in past 14 months despite western bans

Economy Desk

Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad announced on Wednesday that the export of the country's petroleum set a record in the past 14 months despite relentless attempts by the West to curb the Islamic Republic's oil sales. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a weekly cabinet meeting, Paknejad said the sale of Iranian oil continues as in the past but no figures and statistics can be provided due to security concerns and confidentiality of the matter.

"The process of oil sales forges ahead as in the past. Somehow, we cannot divulge the mechanism behind the na-

tional petroleum exports as 'disloyal ears' outside the country seeking to harm Iran's national interests would hear and identify the merits of our oil sales," the minister said, adding, "The volume of our oil sales has in the past 14 months registered a record in the form of export loadings."

Pointing to the restrictions on the Iranian oil sales, Paknejad underlined that the latest US tariff as well as the 'snapback' regime of sanctions failed to bring about serious curb on the country's oil exports as the Iranian petroleum industry "knows well" how to circumnavigate and confront such restrictions.

Paknejad's announcement came a day after US President Donald Trump



Mohsen Paknejad
IRNA

threatened to impose a 25-percent tariff on Iran's trade partners — in an oblique caveat particularly directed at China, which itself strongly threw shade at the anti-Tehran move.

Larijani brands Trump, Netanyahu as 'true killers' of Iranians

International Desk

The secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said on Wednesday that US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were the "true killers" of Iranian people and would be held to account for the merciless violence perpetrated by rioters in two weeks of unrest across the country.

In a post on his X handle, Ali Larijani rebuked Trump for threatening the Islamic Republic and encouraging violence against Iran's top government and security echelon following the foreign-backed



those confronting the riots would "pay a big price." Denouncing the stances of Trump, who also called Iranians to "save the names of the killers and abusers," Larijani said, "We announce the names of the true killers of the Iranian people: 1. Donald Trump; 2. Benjamin Netanyahu."

Over the past two weeks, armed groups and rioters seized on the rightful demands of Iranian grassroots protests against livelihood woes stemming from the national currency depreciation.

The riots — prompted by western and Zionist intrigues — inflicted hefty collateral and infrastructural damage on the country.

The rise of...

These patterns of exchange vary greatly: they can be sparse (limited to diplomatic protocols) or intensive (involving high levels of trade, shared legal codes, common security arrangements, extensive cultural exchanges, and more); hierarchical (as in empires) or purportedly 'egalitarian' (as in the contemporary states system); formal (as in the constitutional structure of the European Union) or informal (as in the notion of a 'sphere of influence').

International orders have existed ever since political units began to interact with each other on a regular basis, whether through trade, diplomacy, or the exchange of ideas. In this sense, world history has seen a great many regional international

orders. However, it is only over the past two centuries or so that we can speak of a distinctly modern international order in the sense of the construction of a global economy, a global system of states, and the global circulation of ideas. One of the most noteworthy aspects of the contemporary international order is the dominance of 'Western' ideas and institutions. 'The West' is usually taken to mean Europe (with particular emphasis on the northern and western parts of the continent) and the Americas (with particular emphasis on the United States). The West looms large in the functioning of the global political economy—just think of the importance of London and New York as financial centers.

The West is also central to global governance—the main home of the United Nations (UN) is in New York, while both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are headquartered in Washington, DC. Western ideas (such as human rights) and Western culture (particularly music) are well known around the world. But why is this the case? Some people argue that Western power has arisen because of its innate strengths: liberal ideas, democratic practices, and free markets (Landes 1998). These people tend to see Western power as both natural and enduring. Others see Western domination as rooted in specific historical circumstances, many of them the product of practices of colonial exploitation and subjugation. For

these people, Western power in the contemporary world is unusual and likely to be temporary.

It is important to note two preliminary points. First, the 'rise of the West' has occurred only relatively recently: over the past two or three centuries. Second, many aspects of its rise can be traced to international processes, such as imperialism and the global expansion of capitalism. These international dynamics allowed a small number of mostly Western states to project their power around the world.

As they did so, they generated a range of new actors that subsequently became leading participants in international affairs: nation-states, transnational corporations, and intergovernmental and non-govern-

mental organizations (IGOs and NGOs). They also helped to bind the globe together through new forms of transport (such as the steamship) and technologies (such as the telegraph).

Although the world continues to be based largely on Western terms, this is changing. The 'modernizing mission' first undertaken by nineteenth-century Japan has now been undertaken in various forms by many of the world's states. Understanding how we got here is crucial to assessing both the shape of contemporary international order and the challenges it faces.

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Development of foreign tourism in Khorasan Razavi Province on agenda

Iranica Desk

The main approach of Khorasan Razavi Province in developing foreign tourism sector is focusing on target markets with cultural, linguistic, and religious commonalities and preparing condition for the private sector to play effective role in international interactions.

Saeed Barzegar, a tourism expert at the Khorasan Razavi Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, said in an interview with ISNA that to realize the objective, a number of governors as well as economic delegations comprising of representatives from private sector, travelled to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan.

Important issues such as establishing and expanding direct flights between countries, introducing travel packages in the

fields of pilgrimage and health tourism, as well as introducing investment opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors, were discussed in the negotiations held during the trips.

He added that in addition, the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization of Khorasan Razavi Province has several programs on its agenda in the field of tourism development. These programs include producing international content utilizing modern technologies such as artificial intelligence, participating in international exhibitions and target market festivals, supporting international virtual tourism businesses, introducing the province's and even the country's tourism services.

Other important initiatives include preparing dossier for tourist villages and cities in the province to the World Tourism

Organization. In this framework, the dossier for the sacred city of Mashhad is being compiled to be submitted for registration as a global tourist city. He added, "Participation in tourism projects of international organizations such as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and other international organizations like the D8 and BRICS, in which Iran is a member, is also on the agenda.

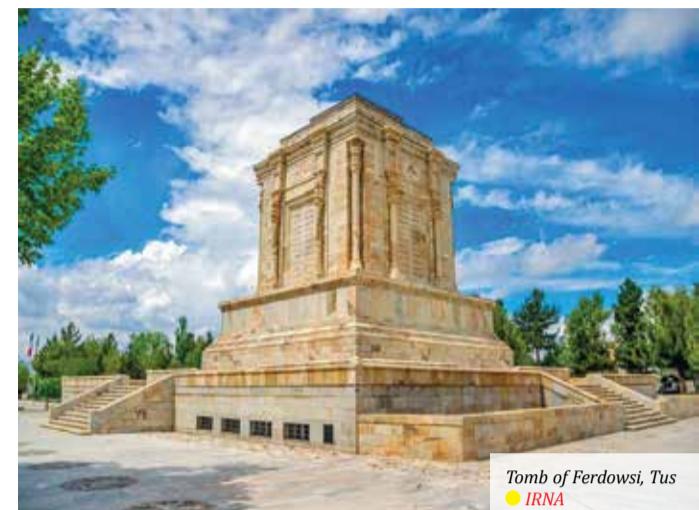
In this regard, a proposal has been made to host the second meeting of the ECO Silk Road Tourism Working Group and the International Food Festival of ECO member countries in Mashhad in April. Additionally, a proposal has been made to implement a joint international Nowruz event with Turkmenistan at the two countries' joint border during Nowruz holidays.

Barzegar said that due to

shared language and culture with countries like Afghanistan and Tajikistan, there is a significant potential for developing cultural interactions with them. These cultural ties can be strengthened through organizing ethnic, poetry and music festivals.

Additionally, countries such as Iraq, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, and parts of Central Asia, which share a common religion, particularly Shia Islam, provide an ideal environment for fostering cultural and religious convergence. This convergence can be enhanced through shared religious rituals and traditions like Ramadan, Muharram, and other common moral and social values, as well as through traditional and religious events.

In addition, scientific and academic exchanges, the implementation of cultural programs, and the holding of artistic and



Tomb of Ferdowsi, Tus
IRNA

religious festivals can play a significant role in strengthening cultural synergies with countries that share a common language, culture, and religion. In selecting target tourism mar-

kets, multiple indicators are considered, among them cultural proximity, common language, and religious similarities, are among the most important criteria.

40 percent of Hasanlu Wetland restored

Iranica Desk

Hasanlu Wetland in Naqadeh, West Azarbaijan Province, has currently 1.5 million cubic meters of water and more than 40% of its area has been restored, said the head of city's Department of Environment.

Akbar Qaemi added this is the first time in several years

that the wetland has not dried up, according to chtn.ir. Referring to the continued filling of the wetland from the Hasanlu Dam, he stated that with the resumption of the Gadr River's flow, this filling will be done through the river. Due to its proximity to the Hasanlu Dam and its vegetation cover, the revival of the wetland, which every sum-

mer hosts migratory birds, can be good news for environmental enthusiasts and birdwatching fans. "Hasanlu Wetland, is one of the important habitats for breeding endangered species in the region, on the other hand, its location next to the historical and touristic Hasanlu village has added to its importance," he said.

Hasanlu village is one of the historical villages in Naqadeh, located 84 kilometers from Urmia. This village boasts lush nature, and one of its unique historical attractions, which draws both domestic and foreign tourists each year, is the "Hasanlu Hill." This site dates back several thousand years and reflects the rich history of the village.



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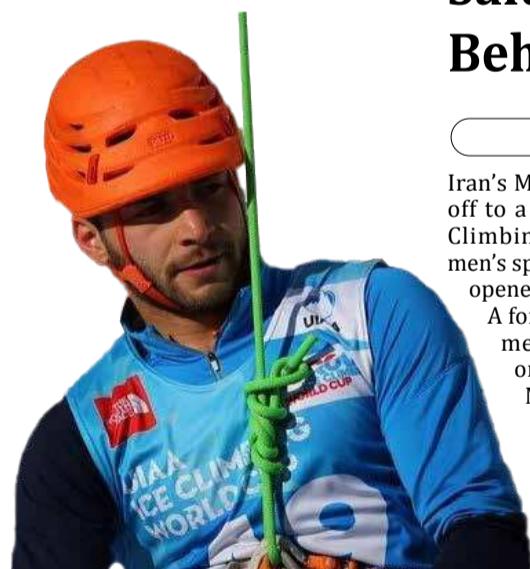
UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup: Safdarian wins men's speed gold, Beheshtirad bags bronze

Sports Desk

Iran's Mohammadreza Safdarian got off to a flying start at the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup, claiming the men's speed gold in the event's season opener in Cheongsong, South Korea. A former lead and combined gold medalist at the World Championships, Safdarian defeated his Mongolian opponent in the final showpiece, with his compatriot Mohsen Beheshtirad settling for bronze. Safdarian had also walked away with the speed gold,

as well as the lead silver, in the World Cup season opener in Cheongsong last year. More than 100 ice climbers from 18 countries competed in the men's and women's speed and lead categories. Safdarian was the only Iranian in the lead competition, settling for an eighth-place finish. Mahin Khalili, meanwhile, represented Iran in the women's speed contest, but was unlucky to miss out on the podium after finishing fifth. The second World Cup event of the season will be staged in Saas-Fee, Switzerland, in two weeks.

Iran's Mohammadreza Safdarian won the men's speed gold at the UIAA Ice Climbing World Cup event in Cheongsong, South Korea.
UIAA



Iranian Hazfi Cup: Esteghlal beats Foolad Hormozgan to progress into last eight

Sports Desk

Persian Gulf Pro League heavyweight Esteghlal defeated third-tier club Foolad Hormozgan 2-0 to advance to the Iranian Hazfi Cup quarterfinals.

Center-back Saman Fallah gave Ricardo Sa Pinto's men an early lead, smashing home from close range three minutes into the game at the Shahid Nassiri Stadium in Yazd.

Young midfielder Esmail Qolizadeh doubled the advantage when his effort from inside the box found the bottom corner with 12 minutes left on the clock as the Tehran Blues remained on course for a second successive trophy in the domestic cup competition.

Standing between Sa Pinto's side



Esteghlal midfielder Alireza Koushki (blue) is seen in action during a 2-0 win against Foolad Hormozgan in the Iranian Hazfi Cup last 16 in Yazd, Iran, on January 13, 2025.

MASOUD ZARE/ISNA

AFC U23 Asian Cup: Lebanon loss sends Iran packing



AFC

Sports Desk

Iran endured yet another dreadful campaign at the AFC U23 Asian Cup, crashing out in the group stage after a shock 1-0 defeat against Lebanon in Riyadh on Tuesday.

Leonardo Shahin sent Iranian goalkeeper Mohammad Khalifeh the wrong way from the spot 11 minutes into the second half at the Al Shabab Club Stadium – after Reza Ghadrizadeh handled the ball in the box – as Iran finished bottom of the Group C table with two points, despite decent performances against 2020 champion South Korea and Uzbekistan, which had made it to the final showpiece in the previous two editions.

Uzbekistan won the group with seven points, two clear of second-placed South Korea, while Lebanon, which had nothing to play for after back-to-back defeats, found a bit of consola-

tion with a third-place finish. With Uzbekistan defeating South Korea 2-0 in the simultaneous fixture, a victory would have seen Iran progress beyond the group stage for only a second time in the competition. However, Omid Ravankhah's men failed to capitalize on their dominance in possession, though they were unlucky to find the net for a third successive game after hitting the woodwork on four occasions. Tuesday's result meant Iran has managed four victories in 16 matches across five appearances in the finals, since the biennial tournament was first introduced in 2013. Elsewhere, Japan defeated 2-0 Qatar to complete a clean sweep of three wins in Group B. The United Arab Emirates also advanced to the quarterfinals with four points, thanks to superior goal difference over Syria after the two sides shared the spoils in a 1-1 stalemate.

Iran, India discuss cooperation in science, publishing

Social Desk

Iran University Press and the Cultural department of the Indian Embassy in Iran on Wednesday discussed the development of scientific, cultural, and publishing collaborations between the two countries.

In the meeting, Amir Masoud Shahramnia, Director of Iran University Press, and Balram Shakla, Cultural Attaché of the Indian Embassy in Tehran, explored potential areas of cooperation in academic publishing, exchange of scientific works, translation of technical texts, and collaboration with Indian universities and reputable publishers, IRNA reported. Shahramnia underlined the scientific standing and reference role of the Iran University Press in the country's

higher education system, expressing the center's readiness to create common grounds for cooperation with universities, research centers, and reputable Indian publishers. He also highlighted the importance of establishing sustainable scientific and publishing collaborations between Iran and India.

Shakla welcomed this approach, stressing the need to strengthen bilateral scientific, cultural, and publishing connections and leverage the common capabilities of both countries, especially in the areas of written heritage, language, and cultural studies.

Other key topics discussed at the meeting included collaboration in joint publishing, translation of scientific works, exchange of university books and resources, and designing

joint projects with reputable Indian universities and scientific institutions. Both sides also exchanged views on the initial steps to define mechanisms for implementing these joint plans and continuing bilateral discussions.

The meeting was a step towards internationalizing the activities of Iran University Press and strengthening scientific and cultural diplomacy between Iran and India; a path that can lead to the signing of cooperation agreements and implementation of joint scientific and publishing projects in the future.

The Iran University Press is an institute affiliated with the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and is responsible with academic publishing affairs.



India's Cultural Attaché Balram Shakla (L) meets Director of Iran University Press Masoud Shahramnia in Tehran on January 14, 2026.

IRNA

Bushehr-Kish recreational ferry service to be launched in late January

Arts & Culture Desk

A recreational ferry service between Iran's southern city of Bushehr and Kish Island in the Persian Gulf is set to be launched in late January during a ceremony attended by influencers, journalists and travel agents, according to deputy minister for Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism, Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpey.

the Grand Ferry, Iran's largest cargo-passenger vessel that sails across the Persian Gulf, will carry passengers and tourists along this route, IRNA reported.

"This will be a pioneer in the development of marine tourist projects," Bandpey said during a visit to the vessel on Tuesday.



IRNA

He expressed readiness to start using this grand vessel for long coast-to-coast routes which has received support from the Tourism Ministry, especially regarding the supply of fuel. The government of President Masoud Pezeshkian has given special priority to the develop-

ment of marine tourism, with the Tourism Ministry and its subsidiaries seriously pursuing this comprehensive plan. Grand Ferry was initially set to serve in a Bushehr-Doha route and connect Iran to the Qatar through the Persian Gulf. The project, however, was never

made operational due to obstacles such as Doha port tariff regulations, investor's issues and fuel prices.

It was later decided that the vessel be used as a recreational ferry for tourism projects. The French-made vessel is 145 meters long, 26 meters wide and 45 meters long. It has 500 beds in 250 rooms and 1,500 seats that can be used for performances.

Grand Ferry successfully docked at Bushehr's Shahid Haghgou port last year. Mohammad Shakibi Nasab, director of ports and maritime department of Bushehr, described it at the time as a new opportunity to promote marine tourism, transport and trade, making Bushehr a major sea travel hub.

Nat'l Toy Festival extended, expects more visitors

Arts & Culture Desk

The 10th National Toy Festival, which began on January 7 and was supposed to run through January 18, is extended to January 20 due to public enthusiasm for the event, announced the secretary of the event, expecting more visitors during the weekend and the national holiday on January 17.

The event is one of the largest and most important toy events in the country, which should be impactful; we are expecting even more families to attend during the weekend and the upcoming holiday, Leila Babaei said, IRNA reported.

Organized by Iran's Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, the event aims to promote domesti-



cally-made toys and support the country's toy industry.

In the toy fair section of the festival, over 2,700 products in the entertainment and toy category have been offered by more than 140 Iranian manufacturers. The festival is intended to support domestic production, strengthen links between designers, manufacturers and investors, organize the toy industry and help establish an innovation system in the sector.

Historical artifacts safe and sound in recent unrest

Arts & Culture Desk

Two weeks of ongoing unrest in Iran exposed the country to some damage, but no harm came to the historical artifacts, except for some graffiti on some historical buildings in Isfahan, the capital of the Safavids and Iran's tourism pole.

Follow-ups in Isfahan Province revealed that the only damage was some graffiti on the walls of the Si-o-Se Pol and parts of the

Naqsh-e Jahan Square, which were removed with public support.

In Tehran Province, on Friday night, a small number of individuals climbed the walls of the Niavaran and Saadabad palaces to enter the historical-cultural complexes, but were stopped and brought down by the people present in the demonstrations.

This shows the people's attention to preserving and safeguarding the country's histor-

ical assets as Iran's national treasures.

Also, in the capital, no damage was observed to the historical artifacts and monuments, specifically Oudlajan neighborhood, adjacent to Tehran's Grand Bazaar, as the initial nucleus of the formation of Tehran city.

Likewise, cultural heritage activists in southern city of Shiraz reported that no damage, even minor damage, has been done

to the historical architecture of Shiraz and the Zandieh complex and other historical artifacts of this city.

The 1945 UNESCO Convention emphasizes that nations and governments are obligated to protect historical artifacts and cultural properties in the event of armed conflicts, wars, and internal clashes.

Fortunately, over the years, awareness-raising by media and cultural heritage activists has

been able to commit people to preserving their cultural assets, and people, alongside officials, have successfully protected historical artifacts from any harm in the face of the current conditions.

This approach clearly demonstrates the difference in the behavior of Iranians in dealing with historical artifacts remaining from different historical periods, centuries, and millennia, with the behavior of the Taliban

during their first rule with the Buddhas of Bamiyan and historical sites in Afghanistan, or the behavior of Daesh with historical artifacts in Iraq and Syria, such as the ancient sites of Babylon and Palmyra and other historical and religious sites.

Iranians have clearly shown that even in the most intense conflicts, people still respect their history, culture, and ancient artifacts and protect them from any harm.

Archbishop hails Iran as 'cradle of peaceful coexistence of all religions'

Social Desk

The archbishop of the East Assyrian Church described Iran as "the cradle of peaceful coexistence of all religions," and in reference to recent acts of rioting, said that the burning of sacred sites and killing innocent people by terrorists is unforgivable.

Bishop Benjamin Marnersay, in an interview with Fars News Agency, referred to the desecration of mosques by rioters, and stated, "A very un-

fortunate event has taken place in our country, and that is the burning of public and sacred sites." He added that rioters have set fire to private and public property and endangered the lives and property of innocent people, adding that these actions have hurt the hearts of all Iranians.

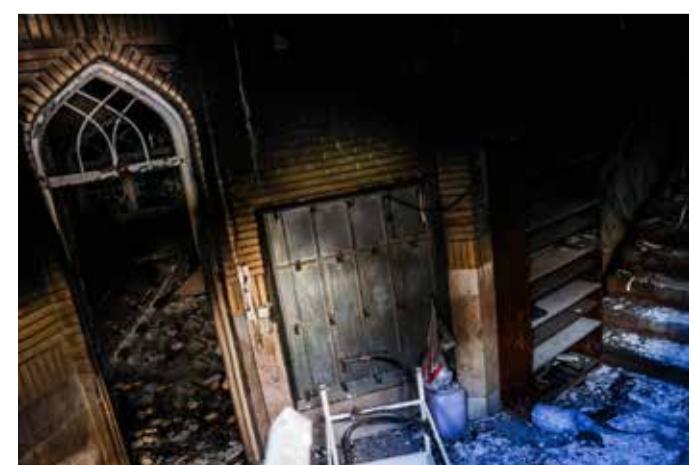
The archbishop, emphasizing that people are engaged in worship in mosques and churches and have spiritual connection with God, added

that it is distressing for any free human being to see sacred sites destroyed and burned. "We do not want any young people from the police, security forces, and all the dear ones who serve this community day and night to be in danger, and for the dear people to be bereaved," he added. Marnersay noted that Iranians consider martyrdom sacred, and expressed his condolences on the loss of people, praying for all bereaved

families from the bottom of his heart and asking God to grant the country's leaders more wisdom and insight to resolve the economic problems of the country, so that enemies cannot exploit the domestic situation.

"We hope, with the wise leadership of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the government and Parliament, and with the support of the people who have always stood behind the system, we

will witness the further flourishing of our country, and that these malicious acts will not be repeated," he said. Marnersay, referring to his recent trip to Croatia and interfaith dialogues, and their effective role in resolving global and international problems, said, "The recognition of nations and religions of each other is of great importance, and we hope that our country's officials will pay special attention to this issue."



IRNA