

## Iran's UN envoy raps strikes on petchem sites, bridges as war crimes

### Economy Desk

Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations has lodged a strong protest with the international body, denouncing recent US and Israeli attacks on a major bridge in Karaj and petrochemical facilities in southwestern Iran as "war crimes" and "state terrorism."

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, the rotating president of the UN Security Council, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Ambassador Amir Saeid Iravani wrote that the targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure, including power, water, and energy systems, constitutes clear war crimes and state-sponsored terrorism designed to instill fear and cause severe harm to civilian populations.

"Such horrific and barbaric actions constitute a blatant violation of international humanitarian law and demonstrate the criminal intent of the perpetrators to inflict widespread suffering on civilian populations," IRNA quoted Iravani as stating in the letter.

The attacks on Saturday hit several companies operating in the Mahshahr Petrochemical Special Economic Zone in Khuzestan Province. According to the



Amir Saeid Iravani  
● IRNA

zone's public relations office, fires at several petrochemical companies were fully contained and extinguished.

Companies damaged in the assault include Fajr 1 and 2, Karun, Razi, and Imam Khomeini Port. According to the deputy governor of Khuzestan, five people were killed in the attack.

The US and the Zionist regime launched their aggression against the country on Feb. 28, with civilian targets and infrastructure among the primary sites struck.

Last week, part of the B1 bridge in Karaj — the tallest bridge in West Asia — was destroyed in the attack.

Condemning the attacks on

civilian infrastructure, Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadegh, emphasized that the destruction would not diminish Iranian engineers' expertise and pride. "Destruction of bridges and infrastructure in various transportation sectors, whether in aviation or roads, may cause damages and reconstruction costs, but this destruction cannot affect the knowledge and pride of Iranian engineers," the minister said Sunday. "We have seen an example of this capability in the Karaj northern bypass highway bridge in Alborz Province, which was designed and built from scratch by proud Iranian engineers."

## Industry group says steel output holds steady despite strikes

### Economy Desk

A spokesperson for Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade said the production process, including steel output, will continue despite damage to major industrial facilities in American-Zionist attacks, citing the proper distribution of production capacities across the country and the localization of industries.

Rouhollah Latifi, spokesperson for the Trade Promotion Commission, condemned the American-Zionist attacks on industrial and production infrastructure in an exclusive interview with IRNA, stating that significant capacities exist in steel, bridge construction, tunnels, petrochemicals, and other sectors.

"Iran annually produces high volumes of iron ore, pellets, and concentrate, and large units such as Mobarakeh Steel and Khuzestan Steel exist — they will not remain idle, and the country's capacities remain active," Latifi said.

The two listed companies, Mobarakeh Steel in the central province of Isfahan and Khuzestan Steel in the southwestern Khuzestan Province, which are owned by shareholders, were hit multiple times by the American-Zionist enemy during the war that began on February 28. Latifi described the recent attacks on industrial and produc-

tion infrastructure as a clear violation of international law and the Geneva Conventions.

### Possibility of quick return to global market

He emphasized that in recent years, Iran has had annual steel exports of \$6-7 billion, adding that with the end of the war and the lifting of sanctions, there is potential for rapid reconstruction of facilities and a return to the global market.

ed value and complete the production chain to final products." Latifi stated that despite more than four decades of sanctions pressure, Iran has achieved domestic capabilities, specialized human resources, and export capacity, and this path will be repeated with increased intensity as restrictions ease.

Latifi also said that attacks on civilian targets, including schools, critical infrastructure, factories, bridges, power plants,



● IRNA

"Steel is not the only current-earning sector," Latifi noted. "Steel-dependent industries and other sectors such as automotive and machinery manufacturing also benefit from this chain. With reduced sanctions and the import of required machinery, there is potential to convert raw iron ore and concentrate sales into higher add-

and power transmission centers, violate the four Geneva Conventions and international law.

"The actions are carried out with the aim of pressuring people's lives and weakening the country's economic power, demonstrating a departure from human and legal frameworks," he said.

## Nowruz box office draws 31,000 viewers despite wartime constraints



● IRNA

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's cinemas sold about \$17,100 worth of tickets to more than 31,000 moviegoers during the Nowruz holidays, official data from the Cinema Management and Screening System (SAMFA) showed, as theaters operated under wartime constraints.

The New Year slate, running through April 4, unfolded in markedly different conditions from post-pandemic seasons, with fewer titles on release and reduced footfall. Even so, the turnout was "notable" given the circumstances, industry figures indicated, ISNA reported.

Four holiday releases led the market. 'Midnight' by Mohammad Hossein Mahdavian topped the chart, drawing over 19,600 viewers and grossing about \$10,700. 'Gambler' by Mohsen Bahari followed with more than 5,300 admissions and roughly \$3,000 in sales. 'Paradise for Criminals,' directed by Masoud Jafari Joza-

ni, logged around 3,200 viewers and about \$1,700, while 'Line of Rescue' by Vahid Mousaian attracted close to 2,900 viewers and generated roughly \$1,600.

Cinemas reopened on March 16, allowing several holdover titles to remain on screen alongside the new releases. Those earlier films drew about 40,000 viewers and brought in more than \$11,400 over the same period.

Exhibitors have rolled out evening programs from 6 p.m. at select venues near major public squares, aiming to "draw in" audiences before nightly gatherings in the streets. The strategy has helped sustain attendance as operators adjust to a tighter slate and shifting viewing patterns.

Other titles currently screening include 'Nilu's Visage,' 'Ahmad,' 'The Electrical Girl,' and animated features 'The Legend of Sepehr,' 'Juliet and the King,' and 'Queen Alishon,' maintaining a diverse lineup across the country.

## Iran's ancient roots trace back 450,000 years

### Arts & Culture Desk

Iran stands among the world's oldest centers of human settlement, with archaeological evidence indicating Neanderthal habitation dating back 450,000 years, cultural heritage expert Jalil Golshan Baqfi said, stressing the country's early role in shaping civilization and imperial governance. Drawing on excavation findings across the Iranian plateau, Golshan Baqfi described Iran as a historic "crossroads" linking East and West since the earliest phases of human presence, showing a civilizational depth that places it at the forefront of early societal development, IRNA reported.

He highlighted the rise of the Achaemenid Empire as the world's first structured empire, spanning territories from Central Asia to parts of Greece and Egypt. Its administrative order and political reach marked a decisive shift in governance models. Early efforts to link two seas during the Achaemenid period, evidenced by inscriptions in Egypt, were described as a "precursor" to later canal-building initiatives.

Golshan Baqfi pointed to the reign of Cyrus the Great as a hallmark of inclusive statecraft, citing policies that upheld religious freedom and the "practice" of diverse rites. The Cyrus Cylinder, widely regarded as an ear-

ly charter of human rights, emphasized coexistence and social harmony.

He added that during the Sassanian era, Iran reached a civilizational "zenith," with advances in architecture and engineering later influencing early Islamic structures. The transfer of knowledge

and technical expertise, he said, left a lasting imprint on mosque design and broader Islamic architectural traditions.

"Iran laid the foundations of imperial order and cultural exchange," he said, describing its legacy as enduring and globally significant.



A view of the excavated remains of a Neanderthal-era human skeleton discovered at an archaeological site in Iran, seen partially embedded in sediment with rib bones exposed.  
● IRNA

## Nationwide theater event honors Minab students

### Arts & Culture Desk

A nationwide children's theater initiative titled 'For What Sin?' has been staged across 21 provinces since April 3 to commemorate students from Minab, as coordinated performances bring artists together in a display of cultural solidarity. The performances coincide with the 40th day since the students were killed in an airstrike on

February 28, 2026, at the Shajareh Tayyebah girls' school in the southern city of Minab, ISNA reported. Mounted under the 'Empathetic Iran' cultural campaign, the program brings together youth theater troupes to perform a single script in a coordinated run lasting through April 20. Around 220 shows by 21 selected groups are being staged in cities nationwide, including at public

gathering points during evening hours, translating collective grief into a shared artistic narrative. The productions frame the "innocence" of the victims while amplifying public solidarity with their families. Turnout has been robust, with audiences gathering in large numbers and engaging with the performances in what organizers describe as a "unifying" atmosphere.



● ISNA