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Broken Hearts and Clenched Fists: 'We Are All Palestinians'



Iran says any scenario plausible if Israeli war crimes continue

TEHRAN – Iran's foreign minister who made a three-nation tour around the region has warned the Israeli regime to stop its "war crimes" against Palestinians unless it wants to face a larger response.

During a press conference with his Lebanese counterpart in Beirut, Hussein Amir Abdollahian said new unforeseen scenarios might unfold if Israel does not change its criminal behavior.

"If the war crimes of the Zionist regime are not stopped, any possibility is conceivable," said the top Iranian diplomat.

He added, "We have announced our readiness for a foreign ministers' meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation since three days ago. We had initial coordination with the Secretary-General of this organization. We believe that war crimes against the people of Palestine must be stopped immediately, and the humanitarian siege, cutting off water, electricity, and medicine for the people of Gaza, must be lifted."

He also condemned the U.S. for its hypocrisy, saying Washington urges regional countries to practice restraint while it allows Israel to commit any sort of crime against Palestinian civilians and even provides the regime with weapons. ▶ Page 2

Qatar says committed to deal on freed Iranian assets

TEHRAN – Qatar's Prime Minister on Friday announced his country is committed to fulfilling a deal with Iran and the U.S. which involves \$6 billion of Iranian funds parked in a Qatari bank.

"Qatar is committed to an agreement and will fulfill its obligations and will not do anything without consultations with our partners," Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said during a joint press conference with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, adding that the money will be spent in accordance with the deal.

The U.S. and Iran reached a deal to exchange prisoners in September after some \$6 billion of Iranian assets once frozen in South Korea reached Qatar.

The money was brought to the limelight after American media reported "Washington and Doha have agreed to stop Iran from tapping the \$6 billion fund" after Hamas successfully carried out an attack on the occupied territories on October 7.

Some American officials ended up confirming the reports.

"None of the funds that have now gone to Qatar have actually been spent or accessed in any way by Iran," Antony Blinken told reporters in Israel on Thursday when asked about the funds. "Indeed, funds from that account are overseen by the Treasury Department, ▶ Page 2

Global support for Gaza as people join pro-Palestinian rallies around the world ▶ Page 3

Western complicity in Gaza massacre

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN- In a heart-wrenching turn of events, the Gaza Strip is witnessing a devastating humanitarian crisis as Israel rains down indiscriminate bombs on civilians, killing hundreds of children.

Thousands of others remain under the rubble of collapsed buildings.

Shockingly, the Western world remains largely silent on the war crime, even as entire families are being slaughtered in the conflict. Add to these mad air raids cutting electricity, water, fuel and food to 2.3 million people.

Instead, the West, with the United States and the United Kingdom in particular, are supporting these war crimes, both diplomatically and militarily.

For decades, Israel has been a recipient of substantial U.S. military assistance, with a 10-year deal inked in 2016 for \$40 billion, covering annual grants for military equipment and \$5 billion for missiles. ▶ Page 5

More than 1,800 Palestinians have been martyred

The death toll from Israel's savage attacks on the Gaza Strip continues to rise nearly a week after the regime launched its brutal onslaught on the besieged Palestinian territory.

The Health Ministry in Gaza announced on Friday that at least 1,850 Palestinians, including 583 children, and 351 women have been martyred in six days of incessant Israeli bombardment of the blockaded territory.

More than 7,000 Palestinians have also been wounded in the bombardment.

The regime's air raids claimed at least two dozen lives in the densely populated Jabaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza on Thursday.

Hundreds of thousands of Gazans have also been displaced as a result of the regime's relentless and indiscriminate attacks.

At least 423,000 people have now been forced to flee their homes in the Gaza Strip, the United Nations said. ▶ Page 5

Palestinians blood on Biden's hand

By Alireza Akbari

TEHRAN- The Bulwark.com published a political analysis on October 11 titled "Blood on Biden's Hands?"

Cathy Young, the writer of the article, probed the layers of the ongoing massacre in the Gaza Strip with an attempt to blame the U.S. president for the death toll in Israel, so Biden was directly addressed somehow as a convict from Young's point of view for Zionists' successive defeats.

Al-Aqsa Storm purely Palestinian

"We do not have any information to suggest that Iran either directed or orchestrated these attacks by Hamas... we have not yet seen anything to suggest that they supported or were behind this current attack," said Mathew Miller, spokesperson for the United States Department of State earlier on October 10 regarding claims that Hamas is being backed by Iran.

"Saturday's assault (Oct. 7)... followed two years of subterfuge by Hamas that involved keeping its military plans under wraps and convincing Israel it did not want a fight," said Samia Nakhoul to Reuters on October 10. ▶ Page 2

Opinion Enduring legacy of Hafez and his universal impact

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN – In the realm of Persian poetry, Hafez is a luminous star that has cast its glow across cultures and generations. Born as Khajeh Shams al-Din Muhammad Hafez-Shirazi in the 14th century, this Iranian poet has left an indelible mark on the world of literature, transcending borders and resonating with readers worldwide.

Hafez received a classical religious education and was known for his expertise in Quranic and other theological subjects. The name "Hafez" itself signifies one who has memorized the Quran by heart. He also wrote commentaries on religious classics, showcasing his deep understanding and intellectual prowess. ▶ Page 8



Numerous projects inaugurated in President Raisi's visit to Fars Province

TEHRAN – During President Ebrahim Raisi's second visit to Fars Province, hundreds of development and infrastructure projects in various sectors were put into operation or started.

President Raisi, who arrived at Shiraz airport on Thursday for a two-day visit to Fars Province, was accompanied by almost all of the members of his cabinet.

During the president's visit, over 103 road transportation projects, 20 infrastructure projects in industrial parks and zones, and over 900 gas supply projects were inaugurated or started. ▶ Page 4

Best in children's works receive Golden Butterfly awards in Isfahan

TEHRAN-The 35th International Film Festival for Children and Youth concluded in Isfahan on Thursday, awarding winners of different sections.

The Golden Butterfly for the Best Film was awarded to the feature "Tegar," directed by Anggi Frisca and produced by Chandra Sembiring from Indonesia, ISNA reported on Friday.

The movie also received the Special Jury Award of the International Center of Films for Children and Young People (CIFEJ) and an Honorable Mention for the child actor M. Aldifi Tegarajasa. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

Iran's warning to Israel

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in the yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

In a commentary, Shargh addressed Amir Abdollahian's visit to Iraq. It wrote: Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, during his visit to Iraq and in a conversation with Qasim al-Araji, the Iraqi National Security Adviser, discussed the recent developments in Palestine and the Gaza Strip. The foreign minister emphasized that the Al-Aqsa Storm Operation was completely a Palestinian action and a spontaneous action in response to the continuous and provocative crimes of the Zionists against the Palestinians and the repeated attacks on the Al-Aqsa Mosque. He stated that the U.S. is sending weapons to Israel in a situation in which the Zionist regime is massacring the people of Gaza in front of the eyes of the world. If Israel does not stop its attacks on the civilians of Gaza, the region will face new conditions, he said, adding the Zionists cannot put Gaza under complete siege, bombard citizens, commit war crimes and expect no reaction. Al-Araji also stated that the events in Gaza are a crime against women and children and this is fundamentally unacceptable. He said, "Stopping the killings should be paid attention to and the rights of the Palestinian nation must be taken into consideration."

Hamshahri: Israel seeks China's close ties with Iran to contain Hamas!

In an article, Hamshahri discussed the request of Israel's ambassador in China and said: Irit Ben-Abba, the ambassador of the Zionist regime in Beijing, asked China to use its close relations with Iran to restrain Hamas, and there is a need for Beijing to participate in discussions about the conflicts with Hamas. She claimed that Iran was involved in Hamas's operations. Despite such a claim, coupled with statements by hawkish Republicans and hostile media who seek to drag Iran into the war, the Biden administration has unequivocally said there is no evidence to link Iran to the Storm operation by Hamas.

"We do not have any information to suggest that Iran either directed or orchestrated these attacks by Hamas... we have not yet seen anything to suggest that they supported or were behind this current attack," Mathew Miller, the U.S. States Department spokesperson, said on October 10.

Iran: The nasty victim-playing!

In a note, the Iran newspaper addressed the publication of false news by the Western and enemy media and wrote: The pro-riot media continue to publish lies or undocumented news against the Palestinian fighters to justify the crimes of the Zionist regime. They present the Zionists as "oppressed" to the Persian-speaking audience. The intelligence and military failure of the Zionist regime in the Al-Aqsa Storm Operation was so heavy and sudden that it only took a while for the media and anti-Iran accounts to formulate a media scenario to reverse the facts. One of the pillars of the psychological war of the opposition media was to portray the oppressed as victims to justify and legitimize the crimes of the occupation regime of Israel. One of the keywords used by the opposition media is to portray the oppressors as "civilian citizens". Such a depiction is taking place through hiding the military nature of the settlers. The reality is that there is no "civilian citizen" in Israel.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Industry of fighting against the Islamic Republic!

In an analysis, Siasat-e-Rooz wrote: The opposition against Iran is more based on political vision. It has advantages that encourage people to enter this fray. People without dignity who have no relationship with politics and its complexities, but with knowledge of the benefits that this field brings to them, wear the "clothes of the opposition". So far, several million dollars of Iran's blocked money in America and Europe have been deposited into the account of the opposition following the complaints that these people have raised in the courts against the Islamic Republic, and as long as this approach is ripe for looting and tampering, the number of these opponents will increase day by day. To wear the clothes of the opposition, the history of being imprisoned in Iran for several months is enough; after that a story should be made based on human rights issues, narrated with a tone mixed with oppression, and the media should come to work to reflect it. This is the simple formula of creating an opposition that exists today in the most vulgar possible way. Today, the campaign against the Islamic Republic is like an industry whose activists can gain significant benefits.

Leader post in Hebrew on Palestinian operation appears on wall of Tehran building



On October 7, the Palestinian Hamas resistance group launched an offensive on the Israeli sites, killing dozens of Israeli troops and capturing several others.

"O oppressor Zionists! The October 7 defeat is irreparable. You brought this plague upon yourself," the X post reads, referring to a part of the Leader's speech earlier in Tehran.

TEHRAN – A post on X, formerly Twitter, by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, on the recent attack by Palestinian resistance against Israeli military sites has appeared on the wall of a building overlooking Palestine Square in the capital Tehran.

The post was published in Hebrew on October 10.

Iran says any scenario plausible if Israeli war crimes continue

From page 1 ▶ Amir Abdollahian added over the last few days Iran has asked Egyptian authorities, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to facilitate transfer of food and medicine from Iran to the besieged Gaza Strip. "We invite all Islamic governments to raise their voices loudly for an end to the siege of Gaza and the crimes of the Zionist regime," he stressed.

For his part, Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Rashid Bouhabib reiterated Amir Abdollahian's stance and asked for an end to the siege on Gaza. "We have been alongside the Palestinian people and demand an end to the siege of Gaza and condemn the crimes of the Zionist regime," he said, emphasizing that "the continuation of tensions threatens regional security and international interests".

The Lebanese chief diplomat added, "Everyone should pressure Israel to end its aggression. Stability can only be achieved through a just path for Palestine."

The future depends on actions of Israel!

During a meeting with the secretary general of the Hezbollah resistance movement Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Iran's foreign minister said Israel will determine future regional responses through its actions.

"Officials from some countries are in contact with us and inquire about the possibility of opening a new front in the region, and our response was that future possibilities largely depend on the actions of the Zionist



regime in Gaza," he said.

Hezbollah also released a statement on the meeting, saying, "Recent events and developments in the region were discussed during the meeting including Operation al-Aqsa Storm, the continuous aggressions of the Zionist regime against Palestinian civilians, and the events at the al-Aqsa mosque. In this meeting, the international and regional circumstances and the possible consequences of the conflict were also reviewed."

FM says nobody seeks Iran's 'permission' to open a new war front against Israel

Before traveling to Beirut, Amir Abdollahian met with officials in Iraq. "The actions of resistance groups in the Al-Aqsa Storm Operation were entirely Palestinian and self-motivated, which even Westerners emphasize that Netanyahu's extremist

behavior has created these conditions," he said in a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani in Baghdad.

Amir Abdollahian also said nobody seeks Iran's "permission to open a new front" against Israel, saying everything is "dependent" on the Zionist regime's moves.

"Officials of certain countries in contact with us ask about a possible opening of new (war) fronts in the region. We tell them that our clear-cut response about future possibilities is that everything is dependent on the moves of the Zionist regime in Gaza," Iran's foreign minister remarked.

For his part, Prime Minister Al-Sudani stated, "The issue of Palestine is related to ideology rather than politics."

He added every Muslim and free-minded person in the world backs the rights of Palestinians.

The Iraqi prime minister also said, "We are not surprised by the Al-Aqsa Storm Operation because the rights of the Palestinians cannot go unnoticed, and it is wrong to imagine that through normalization with the Zionist regime the rights of the Palestinians will be put into oblivion."

Amir Abdollahian's is set to visit Syria in the upcoming days.

Israel ordered a "total siege" of the Gaza Strip after Hamas attacked the occupied territories in a surprise offensive on October 7. The number of Palestinians who have died since the start of the war in Gaza rose to 1,799, and there have been 7,388 wounded. More than 500 of those killed are children.

On Friday, Israel also gave 1 million people living in northern Gaza a 24 notice to vacate their homes and move to the territory's south. About 2.3 million people live in the densely populated strip.

Qatar says committed to deal on freed Iranian assets

From page 1 ▶ can only be dispensed for humanitarian goods — food, medicine, medical equipment — and never touch Iranian hands."

Iran strongly rejected the claims by Americans, saying the news holds no water.

"The news is devoid of veracity, the publication of which would tarnish the credibility of the Washington Post," the mission announced in a statement on Thursday local time.

It added that the U.S. senators in question and the White House are all "acutely aware that they cannot renege on the agreement," Press TV reported.

"The money rightfully belongs to the people of Iran, earmarked for the Government of the

Islamic Republic of Iran to facilitate the acquisition of all essential and non-sanctioned requisites for the Iranians," Ali Karimi Magham, an expert at the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, wrote on X.

While U.S. intelligence agencies have failed to find any evidence pointing to Iran's involvement in the Hamas attack, hawkish republican politicians have been pressuring the Biden administration to block Iran's access to the freed assets.

Taking a look at Washington's history, the U.S. seems to be comfortable with not keeping its side of the bargain. It infamously withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018 which was a deal reached between



Iran and the 5+1 group of countries in 2015.

The deal involved Tehran limiting its nuclear program with anti-Iran sanctions getting terminated in return.

Palestinians blood on Biden's hand



territories, Blinken, addressing Zionists, said, "You may be strong enough on your own to defend yourself. But as long as America exists, you will never ever have to. We will always be there by your side," Blinken told Netanyahu.

Blinken also said as Israel's war machine needs to evolve, Washington would work with Congress to ensure they are met.

The U.S. president confirmed the deployment of military aircraft to occupied territories.

Lloyd Austin, the secretary of defense, also gave the message of "unwavering support" to his Israeli counterpart Yoav Gallant, saying Israel will receive an update on operations to restore security.

John Kirby, Coordinator for Strategic Communications at the National Security Council in the White House, also said that the United States would announce more aid to the Zionist regime in the coming days.

Some American supporters of the Zionists were briefly enlisted so far just as a reminder for Young to take a deep breath that the occupation regime keeps its massacre, inhumane actions, and bombardment of the residential areas, schools, and hospitals in the Gaza Strip.

What Americans call "the legitimate right to defend" has so far martyred 1799 Palestinians with 583 children among them.

U.S. backs Israel no matter who rules the White House

Republican Scott went further saying that the White House "didn't just invite this aggression, we paid for it."

The State Department has rejected such accusations, insisting that the money associated with the deal "remains in Doha" and is specifically earmarked for social services. "Let's be clear: the deal to bring U.S. citizens home from Iran has nothing to do with the horrific attack on Israel. Not a penny has been spent, and when it is, it can only go for humanitarian needs like food and medicine. Anything to the contrary is false," department spokesman Matt Miller wrote on X.

A similar line was taken by National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson. "These funds have absolutely nothing to do with the horrific attacks today and this is not the time to spread disinformation," Watson wrote on X.

Upon his arrival to the occupied

IRU to cooperate with IRICA to increase transit through Iran

TEHRAN – The International Road Transport Union (IRU) is going to form a joint working group with the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) and the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) with the aim of increasing the volume of transit through Iran and removing transit obstacles.

The decision in this regard has been made during a meeting between the IRICA head and the IRU secretary general on the sidelines of the 81st session of the TIR Administrative Committee meeting which was held in Geneva on October 11, IRIB reported.

In this regard, it was decided that IRICA would identify the problems and challenges in the way of the transit between Iran and its neighboring countries and report back to IRU in order to take the necessary measures for resolving them.

As announced by Iranian deputy transport minister, on Wednesday, transit of commodities through Iran increased by 15 percent during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Shahriyar Afandizadeh said that 6,539,374 tons of commodities were transited via the country in the first half of the present year.

He said the transit of oil products via Iran rose 7.42 percent, and that of the non-oil goods increased 6.3 percent in the six-month period, year on year.

As previously announced by the official, 10.8 million tons of commodities were transited through the country in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Afandizadeh also announced that Iran registered a new record high with the transit of 8.3 million tons of non-oil goods in 1401, adding that 2.5 million tons of oil products were also transited via the country in the previous year.



“Considering the transit of 7.5 million tons of non-oil goods in 1400, we have seen a 10.7-percent growth in the transit of this type of goods in 1401 compared to the previous year”, the official said.

“In 1401, we witnessed important developments and achievements in the strategic and operational areas of the country’s transit, whose definitive effects will be seen gradually and steadily on the growth of transit from the country in 1402 and the coming years”, the deputy transport minister further highlighted.

Afandizadeh then explained: “In line with the activation and development of the North-South International Transport Corridor, in a tripartite meeting in last September between the high-ranking officials of our country and the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku, while aiming to achieve the

transit of 15 million tons of goods through this corridor by 2030, agreements were reached in the field of strengthening the cooperation of the three countries in joint investment and financing, the completion and development of key infrastructures and their exploitation, especially the construction of the Rasht-Astara railway line, facilitating cross-border traffic of goods and increasing the quality and quantity of this traffic”, adding that the implementation of these agreements is being followed up.

He went on to say, “One of the most important events last year was Iran’s full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In a short period of time after the meeting of the heads of Shanghai in September 1401 in Samarkand, the first six-party meeting of the transport ministers of Iran and the countries of Central Asia, in addition to Russia and Azerbaijan was held in Tehran in October 1401 with the goal of achieving 20-million tons of annual transit between Iran and Central Asian countries, as an area with a very high role and importance in east-west and north-south transit, especially after the recent regional and international developments, which was approved by the members.”

This year, the issue of transit and playing a role in major programs such as those related to China’s Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is one of the main priorities of the Transport Ministry in developing transport relations with regional and extra-regional target countries, the deputy transport minister noted.

After seven years of reduction in the transit of goods from the country, the growth path of transit resumed in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022) and with the passage of 12.65 million tons of goods through Iran, a growth of 68 percent was achieved.

The policy of paying attention to neighbors and developing political and economic relations with neighboring countries in the current government, increasing attention to road and rail routes in the world, and the efforts and cooperation of transportation and trade-related organizations in establishing or activating corridors through the country has led to significant growth in transit of goods through Iran.

Iran is one of the countries with a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due.

Iran exports non-oil goods worth \$2.4b to Turkey in 6 months

TEHRAN- Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$2.4 billion to Turkey during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

According to Mohammad Rezvanifar, Turkey was the fourth top export destination of Iranian non-oil goods in the mentioned six-month period.

Based on the data previously released by the Turkish Statistical Institute, the value of Iran’s exports to Turkey increased

by 19 percent to reach \$3.35 billion in 2022.

Turkey had imported over \$2.82 billion worth of commodities from the Islamic Republic in 2021.

Based on the mentioned data, Iran’s imports from the country also marked an 11-percent rise to hit \$3.07 billion in the past year, in comparison with 2021, when the figure was \$2.77 billion.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the trade between the two countries has registered a 15-percent rise in 2022 compared to 2021.

The value of trade between the two

neighbors reached \$6.42 billion in 2022, while the figure stood at \$5.59 billion in the preceding year.

Iran’s trade balance with Turkey has been \$280 million positive in favor of Iran in the past year.

Last July, Iran, and Turkey discussed ways of expanding economic relations along with political ties at the Turkish-Iranian High-Level Cooperation Council in Tehran.

During the meeting, which was co-chaired by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish President

Numerous projects inaugurated in President Raisi’s visit to Fars Province

From page 1 ▶ Development of the Pasargad Steel Complex in Kavar city was another project that was inaugurated by Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Abbas Ali-Abadi during the mentioned visit.

As IRIB reported, 40 trillion rials (about \$80.3 million) have been invested to complete the mentioned project.

According to the head of the Fars Province’s Industrial Parks Company, some 7.5 trillion rials (about \$15 million) have also been invested to complete 20 industrial and infrastructure projects that were inaugurated in the province’s industrial parks during President Raisi’s visit.

Mostafa Hashemi said the mentioned projects include four major industrial units and 16 projects for developing infrastructure in the industrial parks and zones across the province.

As for the gas supply project,



the acting head of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC)’s Public Relations Office said on Thursday that the mentioned projects include gas supply to two cities, and 63 villages, as well as, 330 industrial projects in the gas industry.

As Shana reported, Mohammad Pishvaei said by supplying gas to the mentioned cities and villages, more than 10,000 households will be provided with access to natural gas through the national network.

The executive operations of gas supply to 41 villages and 500 industrial projects were also started on President Raisi’s order during his visit to the province, he added.

According to the official, over 22 trillion rials (about \$44.2 million) have been invested to complete the mentioned projects.

The inaugurated transport projects also included several rural and main roads, road maintenance, safety projects, fixing accident-

prone areas, and technical building maintenance projects.

The Shiraz-Isfahan freeway was the most important project inaugurated in the transport sector. This freeway has been constructed in six segments with a total length of 212 kilometers.

With the completion of this project, in addition to advantages such as reducing fuel consumption, the route from Shiraz to Isfahan and the north of the country in general has become 135 kilometers shorter.

In another ceremony on Friday, Oil Minister Javad Oji laid the foundation for a petrochemical project in Lamerd city.

Some 160 trillion rials (about \$321.5 million) is going to be invested to complete the mentioned petrochemical complex which is going to create direct jobs for 350 people and 3,500 people will also benefit from indirect employment created by the complex.

Iran, Russia aiming for new horizons in energy cooperation

TEHRAN – Iran and Russia have taken new steps for further expanding ties in the strategic energy sector on the sidelines of the 6th Russian Energy Week International Forum in Moscow.

As the portal of the Iranian Oil Ministry Shana reported, the country’s Oil Minister Javad Oji, who visited Moscow on top of a high-ranking delegation to attend the mentioned international event, met with senior Russian officials to discuss developing energy cooperation between the two countries.

In a meeting with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak on Wednesday, the two sides discussed ways to develop relations in various fields of oil, gas, and petrochemical industries, and explored ways of implementing bilateral contracts and signing new economic cooperation documents.

Speaking in this meeting, Oji said the relations between Iran and Russia have entered a new phase and the two countries are determined to develop and deepen relations in all areas.

The official pointed to the Rasht-Astara railway line, which is part of the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), as one of the most important projects being implemented between Iran and Russia and said: “With the completion of this railway, the North-South intercontinental corridor will be completed and the volume of economic and transit exchanges between the two

countries will increase significantly.”

Later that day, in his address to the 6th Russian Energy Week International Forum, Oji welcomed Russian President Vladimir Putin’s remarks on increasing energy exchanges between the two countries.

The minister further called for taking practical steps to create a gas hub on the northern coast of the Persian Gulf.

Tehran, Moscow ink MOU on oil, gas research co-op

Later on Thursday, Iran’s Institute for International Energy Studies (IIES) and Russia’s Roscongress Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on bilateral research cooperation in the oil and gas industry.

The MOU was signed by Mohammad Sadeq Jaker, the IIES head, and Alexander Stuglev, the Roscongress Foundation CEO, on the sidelines of the Russian Energy Week Forum.

Based on the MOU, the two research centers will jointly study proposed projects for energy cooperation between Iran and Russia as the first step and will announce whether a project is feasible and beneficial.

Iran exports \$9b of petchem catalysts to Russia

The energy officials of the two countries also



Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji (R) and Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak address the 6th Russian Energy Week International Forum in Moscow on October 11.

discussed the expansion of cooperation in the petrochemical sector on the sidelines of the mentioned forum, as the two nations are joining forces to neutralize the negative impacts of the U.S. sanctions on their oil industries.

In this regard, Iranian Deputy Oil Minister Ahmad Asadzadeh, who accompanied Oji on his visit to Russia, told the press that Iranian knowledge-based companies exported over \$9.0 billion worth of petrochemical catalysts to Russia in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22).

According to Asadzadeh, Iran exported \$8.0 billion of such catalysts to Russia in the previous Iranian year, and the current year’s figures indicate an upward trend for the cooperation between the two countries in this field.

Iran’s finance minister, IsDB president discuss bilateral co-op

TEHRAN- Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi met Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) President Muhammad Sulaiman Al Jasser in Morocco on Friday.

Khandouzi accompanied by Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Mohammad-Reza Farzin has traveled to Morocco to attend the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), which are held during October 9-15 in Morocco.

The meeting was a continuation of the intensive negotiations of the past two years with the Islamic Development Bank, with the aim of promoting the joint programs of the two parties.

In this meeting, the latest status of the projects being implemented by the Islamic Development Bank in Iran was discussed and evaluated, and the president of the Islamic Development Bank thanked and appreciated the initiatives of Iran’s finance and economic affairs minister and his accompanying team in the past two years to solve

the outstanding debts of Iran from previous years.

Al Jasser stated that in the current period, despite the remaining issues related to sanctions, due to the serious change in the government’s approach to strengthening its relationship with the bank as one of its most important shareholders, the conditions of cooperation between the two parties have changed significantly.

He expressed hope that with the continuation of this trend, the

remaining issues between the two parties will also be resolved and the groundwork for the implementation of new projects between the two parties will be provided this year.

In this meeting, the program of the Islamic Republic of Iran for cooperation in new areas such as health, technology and science, and the implementation of projects related to these areas was explained to the president and officials of the Islamic Development Bank, which was welcomed by the bank president.

Tehran, Damascus stress expanding energy ties

TEHRAN – The oil ministers of Iran and Syria met on the sidelines of the 6th Russian Energy Week Forum in Moscow to discuss regional issues and recent developments in the energy market, Shana reported.

During this meeting, Javad Oji and his Syrian counterpart Firas Hassan Kaddour emphasized on strengthening cooperation between the two

countries in the energy sector.

“We welcome the expansion of Tehran-Damascus relations as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the Raisi administration have put great emphasis on boosting ties with Syria,” Oji said.

Pointing to President Ebrahim Raisi and his

accompanying delegation’s recent visit to Syria, the minister added, “We have seriously pursued the agreements made between the two states during the visit.”

Kaddour, for his part, attached great significance to the expansion of relations with Iran in different fields, including the oil and energy sectors.



between the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of the two countries.

Western complicity in Gaza massacre

Hospitals turn to morgues as entire families are slaughtered with Western support

From page 1 ► The recent announcements by the administration of Joe Biden of additional military aid to Israel have raised serious concerns about direct complicity in the rising Gazan civilian death toll and casualty rate.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has also pledged to bolster military assistance to the Israeli occupation, including ammunition without providing details, in addition to redoubling U.S. military presence in the region to support the regime.

"In terms of conditions that we would place on the security assistance that we're providing to Israel, we have not placed any conditions on the provision of this equipment," Austin said at the NATO headquarters in Brussels on Thursday.

Similar statements have been echoed publicly by some European states.

Berlin will allow Israel to use two Heron drones the German air force has in use, Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said ahead of a NATO meeting in Brussels.

"We will provide two drones the Israelis had asked for. In addition, there are first requests for ammunition and for ships that we will now discuss with the Israelis," Pistorius said, adding: "We stand by Israel's side."

The UK will send two ships to the Eastern Mediterranean and begin surveillance flights over the occupied Palestinian territories in a show of military support designed to "reassure Israel".



UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said in New York.

Humanitarian organizations have sounded the alarm, emphasizing the dire need for essential supplies to Gaza instead of additional arms to the Israeli occupation.

The international community is facing a moral reckoning as the situation in Gaza deteriorates. Calls for a just and lasting solution to the plight of Palestinians have never been more urgent. The tragic Israeli killing of innocent Palestinians, the destruction of homes, and the disruption of essential services have been met with unwavering American support for the occupying regime.

It is imperative for the global community to come together to provide immediate humanitarian aid and pursue diplomatic initiatives with a major focus on the safety, well-being, and dignity of all the Palestinians affected by this devastating war.



Reports indicate that almost all of the casualties in Gaza are civilians, including an alarmingly high number of children. The deliberate targeting of residential buildings, schools, and kindergartens by the Israeli military has left many with nowhere to turn.

"No parent wants to be forced to give a thirsty child dirty water."

The UN Secretary-General has unequivocally stated that the complete blockade on Gaza constitutes a "war crime", leaving its 2.3 million inhabitants grappling with shortages of electricity, water, food, and medical resources.

The United Nations warns that the number of displaced individuals in Gaza is slowly creeping up to half a million.

Amidst this devastation, Palestinians find themselves cornered. The sole exit point, the Egyptian Rafah border crossing, is closed by Cairo. Israel also is threatening to bomb any supplies entering the Palestinian territory.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said Egypt would not allow the conflict to be settled at the expense of others, in comments reported by state news agency MENA.

It appears Israel wants the Palestinians to flee so that the regime can annex the territory.

Israel has called on Palestinians to leave Gaza or to move to the south of Gaza in 24 hours.

Their only option to avoid the regime's bombardment is the sea.

The UN said it was "impossible" for Palestinians to move to the south of Gaza within 24 hours. "This amounts to approximately 1.1 million people,"

Gaza's medical facilities, already stretched thin, are now on the brink of collapse. Critical shortages of essential supplies, compounded by the blockade, are putting lives at even greater risk. Hospitals are struggling to provide even basic care, and the situation is dire.

A doctor from a local hospital, which has received double its capacity, lamented that "the system is starting to fall apart."

With nowhere to go and limited means of escape, Palestinians in Gaza find themselves trapped in a nightmarish reality.

Israel's air raids on Gaza have seen bombs falling indiscriminately on children, women, hospitals, and other civilian infrastructure. The tragic scenes are being deliberately hidden by Western leaders and their media, who have vowed to "stand by" the regime.

This comes despite Israeli officials making genocidal comments against the Gaza Strip, which Western leaders will "stand by".

Israeli cabinet ministers, generals, and other officials have been saying (for years now) that Palestinians, especially in Gaza, should be completely wiped out, just like Palestine was wiped off of the map.

Yet, Western leaders have refused to condone those comments, instead supporting Israel's bombing campaign, which has shown no mercy and violates all the principles of international law.

"Attacking or bombarding towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings which are undefended" is prohibited under Article 25 of the Hague Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land.

Under humanitarian law, it is illegal to collectively punish civilians. But Israel has wide Western support for its current action against Gaza, which includes the use of white phosphorus.

"White phosphorus is unlawfully indiscriminate when airburst in populated urban areas, where it

can burn down houses and cause egregious harm to civilians," the Human Rights Watch said.

"Upon contact, the weapon can burn people, thermally and chemically," it added.

Moreover, Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states, "Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organisations, is prohibited."

According to Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the destruction of property that is not justified by military necessity and is carried out on a large scale constitutes a grave breach that requires prosecution. Such practices are also considered to be war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

It is important to remember that

50% of the population of Gaza are under the age of 18, making them minors.

The rights group, Euro-Med Monitor, says, "What is happening in Gaza represents a comprehensive humanitarian disaster, especially with the lack of electricity and water affecting more than 90% of residents, and the disruption of various essential supplies," the organisation said in a statement.

About 40 media and press institutions have been damaged or completely destroyed due to Israel's targeting of residential and commercial buildings, including the Palestine and Watan towers; 56 schools and roughly 30 kindergartens have been affected.

Under humanitarian international law, it is illegal to collectively punish

The West is giving carte blanche to the occupation regime to carry out a genocidal mission.

civilians. But Israel enjoys wide Western support for its current crimes against Gaza.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has said that as Gaza is deprived of electricity, food, and water "hospitals lose power, putting newborns in incubators and elderly patients on oxygen at risk. Kidney dialysis stops, and X-rays can't be taken", it added.

"Without electricity, hospitals risk turning into morgues."

Drinking water, already difficult to access, has also become more scarce.

"No parent wants to be forced to give a thirsty child dirty water," it added.

Local medics have told the media that in previous Israeli wars waged against the people of Gaza, there would always be some time without airstrikes.

"But now, there is not a single minute. That's why the casualties keep going up and up," the Palestinian Red Crescent has said.

"This is an unprecedented scope of destruction," Gisha, a human rights group, said. "Israeli decisions to cut electricity, fuel, food and medicine supplies severely compound the risks to Palestinians and threaten to greatly increase the toll in human life."



"The civilian loss this time ... is unprecedented," said Hisham Muhamna, spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Gaza.

At another hospital, Medecins Sans Frontiers doctor Mohammad Abu Mughaseeb said medical supplies had been lacking for years. The intensified Israeli siege meant fast-dwindling stocks would run out in weeks, he said.

The Palestinian Gaza territory is the most crowded place on the earth. It is just 41 kilometers (25 miles) long and between 6 to 12 kilometers (3.7 to 7.5 miles) wide. It is considered the world's largest open-air prison.

For now, UN schools have become the main places of shelter for Gazans who have fled their homes, with families crowded into classrooms.

The West is giving carte blanche to the occupation regime to carry out a genocidal mission.

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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Gaza civilians vow 'death is better than leaving'

Gaza civilians vow 'death is better than leaving' as many refuse to evacuate 'hellhole' despite Israel saying Hamas use them as 'human shields', and UN warning 'the noose around the population is tightening'

Defiant Gazans who refused to evacuate after Israel gave them 24 hours before launching an all-out assault have said they would rather die than leave their homes.

While some heeded the call to leave, by Friday afternoon there was little sign of a mass exodus, despite the UN warning the area is 'fast becoming a hellhole'.

'Death is better than leaving,' said Mohammad, 20, standing in the street outside a building reduced to rubble in an Israeli air strike two days ago near the centre of Gaza.

'I was born here, and I will die here, leaving is a stigma.'

With power supplies cut and food and water in the Palestinian enclave running short after a week of retaliatory air strikes and a full Israeli blockade, the UN said Gaza's civilians were in an impossible situation.

'The noose around the civilian population in Gaza is tightening. How are 1.1 million people supposed to move across a densely populated warzone in less than 24 hours?' UN aid chief Martin Griffiths wrote on social media.

China's Wang says cause of war is 'injustice' against Palestinians

We brought you earlier some comments by the EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell who is in Beijing for talks with Wang Yi, China's foreign minister.

After the meeting, Wang said the cause of the Israel-Hamas conflict was "historical injustice" against Palestinians.

"The root of this problem lies in the long delay in the realization of Palestine's aspiration to establish an independent state, and in the fact that the historical injustice suffered by the Palestinian people has not been corrected," he told reporters.

In a relevant story, a staff of the Israeli Embassy in China was attacked with a knife.

The Israeli diplomat was attacked outside the embassy building in Beijing and was seriously injured. His condition was reported to be stable after being transferred to the hospital.

Only peaceful coexistence with a Palestinian state can resolve conflict – Putin

Israel "certainly" has the right to defend itself against Hamas' brutality, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said. Only peaceful coexistence with a Palestinian state, as proposed by the UN, can resolve the conflict in the long term, he believes.

The Russian leader reiterated Moscow's concern over the escalation of violence in the Middle East, stressing that thousands of Israeli and Palestinian civilians have been killed or injured since last Saturday.

Putin reiterated his position that the ongoing crisis was caused by a failure of US foreign policy. "The

Americans, supported by their European satellites, tried to monopolize the Middle East settlement, but did not care about finding a compromise that both sides would find acceptable."

"The one-sided US line over many years pushed the situation further into a dead end," Putin added, noting that Israel's "settlement activities" contributed to the disruption of the peace process.

More than 1,800 Palestinians have been martyred

From page 1 ► As of late Thursday, the number of displaced people in Gaza had risen by an additional 84,444 people and reached 423,378, the UN humanitarian agency OCHA said.

The coastal territory remains under Israel's complete siege with no access to electricity, water, food, and medicines.

Israel started its onslaught on Saturday after Gaza-based resistance groups launched a multi-front operation against the regime.

Israel used banned white phosphorus munitions against desperate people in Gaza, a human rights monitor said.

In a post on X on Thursday, Maha Hussaini, director of strategies at the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor in Geneva, said that the Tel Aviv regime was "using internationally prohibited white phosphorus in Gaza."

"These munitions are an indiscriminate incendiary weapon that ignites on contact with oxygen. In closed spaces, the toxic fumes can cause asphyxiation & permanent respiratory damage," she added.

Vatican ready to mediate Middle East settlement

The Holy See is ready to mediate in any way necessary to resolve the Middle East crisis, Vatican's Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin said.

"As always, the Holy See is ready for any needed mediation," he said in an interview with the L'Osservatore Romano newspaper and other media outlets of Vatican. "Those who are attacked have the right to defend themselves, but even self-defense must be proportional."

Hamas says 13 captives killed in Israeli air raids

Hamas's Qassam Brigades says 13 captives, including foreigners, have been killed in Israeli air raids on Gaza in the last 24 hours.

"Thirteen prisoners ... including foreigners" were killed in five locations targeted by Israeli fighter jets, it said in a statement.

The statement said six of the hostages were killed in air raids on two separate locations in the northern district and seven more died in strikes that hit three locations in the Gaza district.

US congressman decries Israeli use of white phosphorus

US lawmaker Maxwell Frost, the first Gen Z member of Congress and a rising Democrat, has decried Israel's use of white phosphorus in Gaza.

"My heart breaks as more innocent lives are killed. People in Gaza are calling it hell on earth. [Two] million people live there, half of them being children," Frost wrote in a social media post.

"Israel must follow international law which prohibits the use of white phosphorus, bombing civilians and collective punishment"

Human Rights Watch had confirmed earlier that Israel had used white phosphorus in Gaza and south Lebanon in recent days.

International law prohibits deploying the highly incendiary munition in densely populated areas because of the risk it poses to civilians.

**AL-AQSA
STORM**



Kermanshah province steps up campaign to boost rural tourism



TEHRAN – Kermanshah's tourism department is to intensify its sustained efforts devoted to promoting rural tourism across the western Iranian province.

Kermanshah's tourism directorate is organizing a chain of festivals and events to help promote rural tourism based on a local calendar dedicated to its farm products, the Young Journalists Club quoted the provincial tourism chief as saying on Friday.

"In this regard, we have developed a calendar of tourism events, especially in the field of rural tourism," Dariush Farmani said.

Since some agricultural products of the province such as sunflower seeds, grapes, apples, and peas are now well-known brands in the country, we have prepared various tourism events concerning those products in this calendar, the official said.

The campaign is expected to bring together more visitors to areas that often rely on agriculture and with low populations, such as villages and cottages, homestays, farms, and ranches or eco-lodges, the report said.

Hidden colors and intricate patterns discovered in Parthenon Marbles from ancient Greece

The Parthenon Sculptures, also called the Elgin Marbles, were crafted by ancient Greeks 2,500 years ago to decorate the outside of the Parthenon temple in Athens. Now housed at the British Museum in London, they, like many old sculptures, are a muted mix of white, gray and beige.

But a new study reveals that the famous sculptures' hues weren't always so drab — in fact, they were once painted with vibrantly colored and intricate patterns.

Bright Egyptian blues, whites and purples once covered the statues depicting deities and mythical creatures guarding the fifth-century-BC temple. The colors were used to represent the water that some figures rose from, the snakeskin of a mysterious sea serpent, the empty space and air in the background behind the statues, and figurative patterns on the robes of the gods, the researchers wrote in the study, which was published Wednesday (Oct. 11) in the journal *Antiquity*.

"The Parthenon sculptures at the British Museum are considered one of the pinnacles of ancient art and have been studied for centuries now by a variety of scholars," study lead author Giovanni Verri, a conservation scientist at the Art Institute of Chicago, said in a statement. "Despite this, no traces of color have ever been found and little is known about how they were carved."

As paint often doesn't last long on marble and the sculptures' surfaces weren't prepared to enable adhesion from substances like paint, archaeologists long assumed that ancient Greek artists intentionally left the statues white. This even led historical restorations to remove past traces of paint found on the sculptures, the researchers said.

To investigate the statues' past, archaeologists used luminescent imaging, a technique that causes trace chemical elements from hidden paint on the sculptures' surfaces to glow. The team quickly discovered hidden patterns emerging on the statues' surfaces, revealing floral designs and smudged figurative depictions.

(Source: Live Science)

Nowadays, an increasing number of travelers are looking for something different, such as spending a day in the tranquil countryside, picking fresh fruits, watching rice grow, fishing by the seaside, eating traditional dishes or even staying with locals.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) sees rural tourism as a type of activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle, culture, angling, and sightseeing. Such tourism also possesses characteristics such as low population density, a landscape dominated by agriculture and forestry, as well as traditional social structure and lifestyle.

The UN body aims to turn the spotlight on the "uniqueness" of each village to make tourism a means for further development in rural areas. "We want to recognize the uniqueness of each village and showcase the best initiatives to make tourism a means for a better future in rural areas. As we restart tourism, we work to ensure that we leave no one - and no village- behind," according to UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili.

Having a very diverse natural setting, Iran offers varied excursions to nature lovers. Sightseers may live with a nomad or rural family or enjoy an independent stay. The country is home to abundant historical mansions, caravanserais, bathhouses, madrasas, and other massive monuments, which can buttress its budding tourism and hospitality sectors if managed appropriately and refurbished properly.

Four pigments were primarily found: a blue that was first created by the Egyptians and was the main color used by ancient Greeks and Romans, a purple tint made according to an unknown recipe (most purple was made with shellfish from the ancient Mediterranean, but this one wasn't), and two whites likely derived from the mineral gypsum and bone white, a pigment made from bone ash.

It's likely that these colors were "as visually important as the carving," the researchers wrote in the study, as "it was what the viewer saw."

"The elegant and elaborate garments were possibly intended to represent the power and might of the Olympian gods, as well as the wealth and reach of Athens and the Athenians, who commissioned the temple," Verri said. The researchers found traces of paint on the backs of the sculptures, meaning they were "certainly contemporary to the building" and likely were painted first and then placed on the temple.

The 17 sculptures, once part of a 525-foot-long (160 meters) marble frieze depicting classical Greek myths, were brought to the UK in the 19th century after being ripped from the walls of the Parthenon by Thomas Bruce, the seventh Earl of Elgin and Britain's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. His involvement initially gave the sculptures their "Elgin Marbles" nickname.

Bruce sold the statues, which constituted roughly half of the surviving sculptures, to the British government in 1816. Now kept in the British Museum, the sculptures have been the subject of a formal repatriation controversy between the UK and Greece since 1983.

As the marbles are primarily fragments, the story they tell isn't completely clear. But they include sculptures of gods reacting to the birth of Athena, who is said to have burst from Zeus' swollen head after a mighty blow from the axe of Hephaestus, the Greek god of blacksmiths.

Royal wall unearthed in Persepolis

TEHRAN – A new finding in Persepolis reveals an eastern wall of a grand prehistorical gateway believed to have been constructed upon the order of Cyrus the Great.

Adorned with striking glazed bricks, the astonishing structure, also referred to as the Gate of Cyrus, is constructed entirely from a combination of bricks and tiles. It spans an impressive 40 meters in length, and 10 meters in width, and boasts a substantial thickness of five meters.

One of the charming construction techniques employed in the creation of the structure is the extensive use of bitumen mortar, Mehr reported on Thursday.

Legendary animals, eight-petaled flowers, and a palette of glazed bricks in shades of white, yellow, blue, and green constitute motifs used to decorate the gate, which was one of the most renowned ones in the ancient world.

The discovery was made in a site known as Tall-e Ajori, which has been subject to archaeological work over the past decade.

The royal city of Persepolis ranks among the archaeological sites that have no equivalent, considering its unique architecture, urban planning, construction technology,



and art. Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy) is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province.

The city was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge against the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier. The city's immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire's king. On this terrace, successive

kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall ("Hundred-Column Hall").

This 13-ha ensemble of majestic approaches, monumental stairways, throne rooms (Apadana), reception rooms, and dependencies is classified among the world's greatest archaeological sites. Persepolis was the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and

their empire.

Persepolis is marked by a large terrace with its east side abutting the Kuh-e Rahmat ("Mount of Mercy"). The other three sides are formed by a retaining wall, varying in height with the slope of the ground from 13 to 41 feet (4 to 12 meters); on the west side, a magnificent double stair in two flights of 111 short stone steps leads to the top. On the terrace are the ruins of several colossal buildings, all constructed of a dark gray stone (often polished to a marble-like surface) from the adjacent mountain.

Iranian president sees handicraft fair in visit to Fars province

TEHRAN – On Thursday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi went to a local handicraft exhibition during his two-day visit to the southern Fars province.

During the visit, Raisi unveiled two exquisitely decorated models of the Prophet's Mosque (al-Masjid an-Nabawi) that measured three by two meters, and Hafez mausoleum that measured two meters in height, IRNA reported.

The showcased objects represented 35 handicraft fields, such as woodwork, tilework, sculpture, embossing, textile printing, traditional footwear, and textile, to name a few.

The Islamic Republic exported handcrafted commodities valued at \$300 million to various countries, including the Persian Gulf littoral states and Iraq during the Iranian calendar year 1401, which came to an end on March 20, data

compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts said.

According to available data, about 520,000 Iranian artists are currently active in 299 fields of handicrafts in the country. Moreover, the handicrafts sector of the country has generated jobs for more than 2.5 million people, of which some 1.5 million are registered in government databases and around 0.5 million are licensed workers.

So far, a total of 13 cities and three villages in Iran have been registered by the World Crafts Council as "world cities" of handicrafts.

From exquisite carpets to subtle miniature paintings, and from turquoise inlaid objects to floral potteries, each one hints at skills passed down from generation to generation.

The country's skilled artisans use raw ma-



terials like wood, bones, silk, wool, copper, silver, gold, and gemstones to create exquisite handicrafts. They perform a miracle by infusing their sentiments and cultural ideas into these traditional handicrafts. Because of this, Persian artwork is incomparably valuable compared to many other works of art from around the world.

Iranian delegation attends TTG Travel Experience 2023 in Italy

TEHRAN – A delegation of Iranian travel insiders is participating in the 60th edition of TTG Travel Experience 2023, which opened on Wednesday in the city of Rimini, in the northern Italian region of Emilia Romagna.

Set up at C3 Hall of the fair, Iran's pavilion is run by the Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran (TACI) in collaboration with the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, IRNA reported.

The Iranian pavilion stages cultural evenings, B2B meetings, folk music performances, live workshops, 3D films of historical monuments and tourism destinations, and highlights of Persian cuisines, to name a few.

Moreover, it showcases a collection of handicrafts such as person-



al ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscripts, miniature, textile prints, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textiles, calligraphy, traditional musical instruments, metalwork, and marquetry.

Filled from corner to corner with ancient bazaars, museums, mosques, monuments, gardens,

historical sites, and rich natural and rural landscapes, Iran hosts some of the world's oldest cultural monuments, including 27 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

The three-day event is a key point of reference for the promotion of international tourism in Italy, and this year 55 foreign destinations are present, with more than 1,000 operators from 62 countries and a total of 2,700 exhibitors.

According to organizers, the fair serves as a central platform for representatives of the Italian and international tourism industry to exchange information about trends, innovations, and new products in the tourism sector. It focuses on promoting global tourism and is one of the largest fairs of its kind in Italy. The exhibitors represent a variety of industries,

including tour operators, airlines, transport companies, accommodation providers, and suppliers of innovative technologies and services in the tourism sector.

International operators and key players from leading companies in the tourism industry constitute the main visitors to the fair, which as mentioned by organizers, opens up an opportunity to learn about international trends, analyze and compare new products, and participate in various seminars, conferences, lectures, and round tables. "Here, experiences and knowledge are shared by experts and industry leaders to actively shape the future of tourism and hospitality."

TTG is an acronym for Turismo – Turismo – Garda, where "Garda" refers to Lake Garda in Italy.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Jesuit Block and Estancias of Córdoba

The Jesuit Block in Córdoba, the heart of the former Jesuit Province of Paraguay, contains the core buildings of the Jesuit system: the university, the church and residence of the Society of Jesus, and the college.

According to UNESCO, the 38-ha ensemble of the Jesuit Block and five of its estancias (rural farming and manufacturing establishments) in the province of Córdoba, near the geographical center of Argentina, contains 17th and 18th century religious and secular buildings that illustrate an unprecedented 150-year-long religious, social, and economic experiment.

The Jesuit Block in the city of Córdoba contains the core buildings of the capital of the former Jesuit Province of Paraguay: the church, the Jesuit priests' residence, the university, and the Colegio Convictorio de Montserrat. The Block's supporting estancias – comprised of Alta Gracia (located 36 km from the Block), Santa Catalina (70 km from the Block), Jesús María (48 km

from the Block), La Candelaria (220 km from the Block), and Caroya (44 km from the Block) – each included a church or chapel, priests' residence, ranches for slaves and indigenous peoples, work areas (camps, mills, beating mills, etc.), hydraulic systems (breakwaters, irrigation ditches, canals, etc.), farmhouses, and large extents of land for cattle breeding.

The Jesuit Block and Estancias of Córdoba is an exceptional example of a vast religious, political, economic, legal, and cultural system. It is likewise an excellent illustration of the fusion of European and Native American cultures, with the added contributions of African slave laborers, during a seminal period in South America. The ensemble is a particular example of territorial organization, an economic complement between urban and rural settlements that allowed the Society of Jesus to pursue its educational and missionary goals.

The outstanding nature of this ensemble is

illustrated by the convergence of two typologies: on the one hand, the European convent layout, with a main church, residence, and college in the city; and on the other, novel rural settlements, where the church, residence, and trading post merged in a productive and interrelated territory. This kind of articulation, where the various productive specializations in each estancia were supported by the construction of complex hydraulic systems, was unique in the American cultural context.

The outstanding achievements of the Jesuit Block and Estancias of Córdoba include the development of technologies based on local resources, both material and human, and the use of the respective knowledge of the participants – the religious Order and the indigenous and African slave laborers – all of which resulted in a mixture of architectural, technological, and artistic expressions reflecting mannerist and baroque influences adapted to the locality.

Iran discusses health ties with Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan

TEHRAN- Health Minister Bahram Einollahi, and his counterparts from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan, discussed expanding cooperation in the field of health, medical education, and treatment.

They met on the sidelines of the 70th session of the World Health Organization's Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean held in Cairo, Egypt from October 9 to 12.

Einollahi, in the meeting with Abdul Qadir Patel, the health minister of Pakistan, elaborated on Iran's successful experiences in fighting diseases and transferring health and medical experiences to other member countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Office of the World Health Organization.

Patel, for his part, said, "Reinforcing medical and health cooperation between Iran and Pakistan is in line with the interests of the people of the two countries. In this regard, a joint working group has been formed to study the opportunities for cooperation."

Referring to the cooperation between Iran and Pakistan during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, he lauded Iran's health service system and the great steps it has taken in the field of health insurance coverage.

In his meeting with the Saudi Ara-



bian minister, Fahad bin Abdulrahman Al-Jalajel, Einollahi announced Iranian universities and faculties of medical sciences' readiness to collaborate with Saudi Arabia in scientific, research, and educational fields.

He also stressed that the communication between the scientists of the two countries should expand in the field of research.

Emphasizing that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia can be the hub of health in the region, Einollahi added, "We can help many other countries in the region in the field of infectious diseases."

Al-Jalajel, for his part, stated, "We

welcome the expansion of regional relations, and we are eager to boost cooperation between the two countries in the field of health and treatment."

Einollahi in a meeting with the Sudanese health minister, Haitham Muhammad Ibrahim, said this meeting provides a good opportunity to strengthen health diplomacy, decision-making, and regulation of health policies among the 22 member countries of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean region.

He also announced the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness to share its experiences in the field of containment of diseases and to ex-

port Iranian health-oriented products such as medicine and medical equipment to Sudan.

Ibrahim, welcoming Einollahi's proposal, stated, "Iran and Sudan have the same position regarding global health issues, and protecting global health is a key goal and mission of both countries."

WHO regional committee meeting

The 70th session of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Committee (RC70) was held at the WHO Regional Office in Cairo under the theme "Together for a Healthier Future," and its agenda extends until next Thursday.

Both the WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom and the WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr. Ahmed Al-Mandhari delivered remarks during the opening session alongside several other prominent speakers.

Numerous ministers of health and other representatives of the Members of the Regional Committee were among the many dignitaries to attend the opening ceremony.

This year's session of the Regional Committee coincides with the year-long celebration of WHO's 75th anniversary.

World Migratory Bird Day: focus on water

By Mehdi Garshasbi

TEHRAN - October 14 is the World Migratory Bird Day. This year, the theme for the day is "Water and its Importance for Migratory Bird."

Water is fundamental to life on our planet. The vast majority of migratory birds rely on aquatic ecosystems during their life cycles.

Inland and coastal wetlands, rivers, lakes, streams, marshes, and ponds are all vital for feeding, drinking, or nesting, and also as places to rest and refuel during their long journeys.

Unfortunately, aquatic ecosystems are becoming increasingly threatened around the world and so are the migratory birds that depend on them.

The increasing human demand for water, as well as pollution and climate change, are having a direct impact on the availability of clean water and the conservation status of many migratory birds.

World Migratory Bird Day is an annual awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats.

It has a global outreach and is an effective tool to help raise global awareness of the threats faced by migratory birds, their ecological importance, and the need for international cooperation to conserve them.

Every year people around the world take action and organize public events such as bird festivals, education programs, exhibitions, and bird-watching excursions to celebrate the World Migratory Bird Day.

All these activities can also be undertaken at any time of the year because those countries or regions observe the peak of migrations at different times, but the main days for the international celebrations on the second Saturday in May and in October.

The slogan shows that water resources are very important in protecting wetlands as the main habitat of migratory birds.

World Migratory Bird Day celebrates 12 bird spe-

cies in particular of which 8 find safe havens in natural UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Climate change is amplifying the impact of habitat destruction by depleting natural water systems and depriving migratory birds of vital breeding and stopover sites. These sobering examples go hand-in-hand with recent reports that reveal that the populations of 48 percent of bird species worldwide are in decline.

Birds have found their place in culture, religion, poetry, and music for a long time. So far, about 10,000 species of birds have been identified in the world.

Of course, experts believe that the same number of species has not yet been identified, but the problem is that even the existing birds have not been spared from the danger of humans so the development of urban and industrial life has caused 120 to 130 bird species to disappear in the last three to four centuries.

Even today, despite the awareness of the importance of protecting biological species, 1,200 species of birds are under threat of extinction.

Issues such as the drying up of wetlands, the increase of sediments and sewage and their entry into rivers and wetlands, climate change, and overhunting are some of the main factors that threaten the lives of birds.

In the meantime, there are a large number of migratory birds that fly long distances to spend the winter.

International studies show that the conditions of migratory birds are not suitable and they are threatened by many dangers, especially the reduction of water and the loss of wetlands.

In general, the state of the census and the state of the birds shows the deterioration of the situation of these species.

Accordingly, the world thought of saving the

birds, and in line with the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement since 2006, World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated in order to increase global attention to the category of migratory birds and its importance.

Almost all migratory birds depend on water to travel a long migration distance and to refresh their breath on the way and finally at the destination.

During the flight, the presence of rivers, wetlands, and even small streams plays a vital role in feeding and rejuvenating them. Therefore, if these water bodies are destroyed, the lives of these birds will face a serious threat.

Wetlands are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently. They store water and ensure its quality, providing resilience against drought. They play a central role in sustainable development by supplying all our fresh water. More than 40 percent of freshwater fish are said to live in wetlands.

Wetlands play a major role in protecting the land against floods and the impacts of storms. They provide food and diverse habitats that support genetic, species, and ecosystem biodiversity. Wetlands play a key role in the life cycles of many species and in annual migration patterns.

Iran is rich in terms of having a variety of wetlands due to its climatic diversity. In Iran, 141 wetlands with ecological value with an area of over 3 million hectares have been identified, of which 25 wetlands are designated as wetlands of international importance (registered in the Ramsar Convention) covering more than 1.4 million hectares and four sites are biosphere reserves.

Of Iran's 25 Ramsar sites about one-third are under pressure or in critical condition.

Unfortunately, wetlands are being degraded and lost due to pollution, overexploitation, climate change, and human population growth.

Founding a sci-tech park in Iraq on agenda



TEHRAN- The establishment of a joint science and technology park with Iraq has been put on the agenda, said the deputy science minister for innovation and technology.

He made the remarks on the sidelines of Iran-Iraq Science Week which was held from October 9 to 12 in the capital city of Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi province.

"A memorandum of understanding was signed in Khorasan Razavi Science and Technology Park with Haider Abed Dahud, deputy minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Republic of Iraq," Sajjad Mohammad-Ali Nejad said, IRNA reported.

He went on to say, "Being highly interested in setting up science and technology parks, and concerning their many requests, it was decided to provide them with Iran's experiences."

A joint working group has been formed to pursue the establishment of science and technology parks in Iraq.

Mohammad-Ali Nejad added, "Soon, a joint meeting will be held in Iraq for further discussion and coordination and a memorandum of understanding will be signed to implement the design of the technology ecosystem in this country."

"Our country has gained good experiences in the field of legislation in supporting knowledge-based companies. Transferring these experiences to create soft infrastructures can help Iraq speed up the founding of Science and Technology Parks."

Mohammad-Ali Nejad went on to say the establishment of international parks is on the agenda, it will help domestic knowledge-based companies to export their products to these countries.

Iran-Iraq Science Week

Iran-Iraq Science Week, the first major scientific event between the two neighboring countries, was held with representatives of over 60 universities and educational institutions in attendance.

Hosted by Ferdowsi University, this scientific event aimed to develop diplomatic interactions, academic relations, and cultural exchange.

"The development of academic cooperation and the exchange of scientific knowledge and

modern technologies is one of the main goals of holding this 5-day conference," IRNA quoted Wahid Haddadi-Asl, the Iranian deputy science minister for international affairs, as saying.

He stressed the importance of exchanging experiences and expertise and formulating scientific understandings in many files, some of which relate to the environmental aspect and joint educational programs.

Mohammad Kafi, chancellor of Ferdowsi University, for his part, explained that the universities of the two countries are keen to take successful steps of joint talks and reach a vision that serves the scientific and research side between the two countries.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi Undersecretary for Scientific Research Affairs, Haider Abed Dahud, who headed the delegation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, said that the science week between the two countries summarizes the level of understanding and coordination resulting from the agreement between the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology in the Islamic Republic of Iran and completes the dialogues that took place in Baghdad, the University of Baghdad's website reported.

To expand and promote scientific and technological relations implement joint research projects and develop joint cooperation between the scientific and research centers of the two countries, memorandums of understanding are signed, the Iraqi news agency (INA) reported.

"The memorandums of understanding included a number of cooperation files, including research opportunities for graduates, joint supervision and development of the post-doctoral path, as well as the exchange of students between universities and mutual fellowship in various specializations, cultural, artistic and sports programs, and joint research projects, in addition to benefiting from laboratory services and logistical equipment at the universities of the two countries," INA quoted the website of the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, as saying.

"The memorandums also included scientific cooperation in the field of training and the exchange of scientific consultations related to curricula and academic courses."

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Relief foundation plans to provide 200,000 jobs for the deprived

Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation plans to create 200,000 jobs in order to facilitate income generation for the deprived, as soon as the required budget is provided, Hojjatollah Abdolmaleki, deputy director of the Foundation has said.

He went on to say that some 70,000 job opportunities will open up through entrepreneurs who started their own businesses using the Foundation's loans.

Currently, there are about 400,000 entrepreneurs in the country, he said, adding, only if each of them employ 10 job seekers, the country's unemployment problem will be solved.

۲۰۰ هزار فرصت شغلی برای مددجویان کمیته امداد امام ایجاد می شود

معاون اشتغال و خودکفایی کمیته امداد امام خمینی (ره) گفت: در صورت تأمین به موقع منابع مالی می توان با توجه به برنامه ریزی های انجام شده ۲۰۰ هزار فرصت شغلی تا پایان سال ایجاد کرد.

حجت الله عبدالملکی روز جمعه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: از این تعداد فرصت شغلی ۷۰ هزار مورد از طریق راهبری شغلی کارآفرینان ایجاد خواهد شد. وی با اشاره به اینکه هم اکنون ۴۰۰ هزار کارآفرین حرفه ای در کشور فعالیت دارند، تصریح کرد: به لحاظ راهبری اگر هر یک از ۴۰۰ هزار نفر کارآفرینان حرفه ای موجود در کشور بتوانند برای ۱۰ نفر بیکار اشتغال ایجاد کنند، می توان گفت که در مجموع چهار میلیون فرصت شغلی ایجاد می شود که به صورت کامل مسئله بیکاری حل خواهد شد.



Animal husbandry in Mazandaran villages

A man is providing fodder for cattle in a village in the northern province of Mazandaran, October 8.

More than 100,000 families in Mazandaran make a living from animal husbandry, and about 70% of the animals are raised in a traditional way.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who adopts cupidity as motto in life will be disliked by people, and he who reveals his distress, abases himself before all, and he who is ruled by his tongue has no worth in his own eyes and those of others.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon: 11:50 Evening: 17:49 Dawn: 4:47 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:10 (tomorrow)

What's in Tehran art galleries



Painting

* Paintings by Ali Ansari are on display in an exhibition at Delgosha Gallery.

The exhibition will be running until November 17 at the gallery located at 30 Mohajer Alley, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.

* Shalman Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Mohammad Baqer Azarkia.

Entitled "Entanglement", the showcase will run until October 22 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.



* An exhibition displaying paintings by Behdad Najafi, Pejman Motaqian, Kaveh Afaq, Kambiz Berenji, Maryam Saqafi and several others is underway at Laleh Gallery.

The exhibit named "Autumn" will run until October 22 at the gallery located on Fatemi St., off Laleh Park.

* Paintings by Homayoun Hayati are on display in an exhibition at Doost Gallery.

Entitled "Our Thousand and One Nights", the exhibit will be running until October 31 at the gallery, which can be found at No. 4, 4th St. off Eshqyar St., Khorramshahr Ave.



* A collection of paintings by a group of artists including Zahra Sadri, Masih Qasemian, Golsa Shamlu, Hamidreza Andarz and Bahar Didgah is on display in an exhibition at Shokuh Gallery.

The exhibit named "Rabbit" will continue until October 23 at the gallery located at 19 Amir Nuri Alley, North Salimi St. off Andarzgu Blvd.

* Asr Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by a Savalan Jama'ati.

The exhibit entitled "Elm Tree" will run until October 20 at the gallery located at 18 Delaviz St. off North Mirzaye Shirazi St.



* A collection of paintings by Maryam Salehi is on view in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

The exhibit named "Hue and Harmony" will be running until October 23 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.

* Rayekeh Sajadian is showcasing her latest paintings in an exhibition at Vaali Gallery.

The exhibit named "Unfinished Wish" will run until October 24 at the gallery located at 72 Khoddami St., Vanak Sq.



* Paintings by Elnaz Asri are currently on display in an exhibit at Jaleh Gallery.

Entitled "Rocks, Paper, Scissors", the exhibition runs until October 23 at the gallery located at No. 3, Noshahr Alley, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.

Enduring legacy of Hafez and his universal impact

From Page 1 ► But it is Hafez's poetry that truly captures the hearts and minds of readers. His verses brim with mysticism, love, and profound wisdom. They have not only withstood the test of time but continue to inspire and captivate audiences internationally.

Every year, on the 20th of Mehr on the Iranian calendar, which fell on October 12 this year, Iran and Persian-speaking communities around the world celebrate Hafez Day. This special occasion provides an opportunity to appreciate the significance of Hafez's contributions to literature, spirituality, and humanity as a whole. It is a day to commemorate the man whose poetry has become an integral part of Persian culture, touching the souls of countless individuals throughout history.

Hafez's poetry holds a special place within the literary canon, often described as Sufi poetry due to its spiritual depth and connection to the divine. His works, consisting of ghazals and odes, delve into themes such as love, faith, and the journey of the human soul towards enlightenment. Despite being written centuries ago, Hafez's words remain relevant today, speaking to the universal human experience.

One of Hafez's remarkable qualities is his ability to transcend cultural boundaries. Translations of his poetry into various languages have allowed people from different corners of the world to appreciate



the beauty of his verses. Renowned poets like Goethe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and contemporary writers such as Daniel Ladinsky have been drawn to Hafez's works, undertaking the task of translating them into English and other languages. Through these translations, Hafez's poetry has reached a wider international audience.

Hafez's divan, a collection of his poems, is particularly renowned. Several partial English translations of this work have been produced, including those by Gertrude Bell and H. Wilberforce Clarke. These translations provide English-speaking readers with glimpses into the wisdom and enchanting imagery present in Hafez's original Persian verses.

Hafez's influence extends far

beyond the realm of literature, reaching into the realms of art, music, and philosophy. Artists, musicians, and philosophers have all found inspiration in his profound verses, each interpreting them in their own unique way. Musicians like Shahram Nazeri have transformed Hafez's poetry into soul-stirring songs, while artists have used his words as a wellspring of creativity. Hafez's teachings on love and spirituality have also resonated with thinkers and philosophers, shaping their philosophical perspectives on life.

The celebration of Hafez's poetry continues through annual gatherings and festivals held worldwide. His tomb, known as the 'Hafezieh', located in Shiraz, Iran, serves as a pilgrimage site for poetry enthusiasts and spiritual seekers. Each year,

people from diverse backgrounds come together to honor his legacy and celebrate his enduring impact.

In a world often marked by division and misunderstanding, Hafez's poetry stands as a powerful reminder of our shared humanity. It speaks to the timeless truths that transcend cultural, religious, and linguistic boundaries. His verses serve as a bridge, fostering connection and understanding among people from different walks of life.

Hafez's poetry is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the universality of the human experience. As the poet of love and wisdom, Hafez continues to live on in the hearts of those who cherish the beauty and depth of his verses.

Best in children's works receive Golden Butterfly awards in Isfahan

From Page 1 ► A 2022 production, the movie revolves around Tegar, a child with disability, who wants to be like normal children: make friends and go to school. On his 10th birthday, Tegar shares his dream with his grandfather. The grandpa's decision to make Tegar's dream come true puts him and Wida, Tegar's mother, at odds. Tegar decides to leave home to pursue his dream.

The cinematographic work is a family movie which encourages people to understand equal rights and support within families. The film was adapted from the real-life stories of several people with disabilities.

The film had already won awards for the Best Actor in Balimakarya Film Festival and Best Young Actor in Cannes World Film Festival.

Golden Butterfly for the Best Director went to Domien Huyghe for the film "Sea Sparkle," a joint production of Belgium and the Netherlands.

The film shows Lena, a 12-year-old girl, who loves the ocean. She is as passionate and fearless as her father. But when her father dies at sea in a shipwreck, Lena is determined to prove that a huge, unknown creature is roaming the deep.

The feature animation "Mother Land" by Jaebeom Park from South Korea won the Golden Butterfly for the Best Screenplay.

It narrates the story of Krisha, the daughter



Chandra Sembiring (L) and Anggi Frisca, producer and director of "Tegar" hold their Golden Butterfly awards at the closing ceremony of the 35th International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan on October 12, 2023.

of the Yates, who are the nomad tribe of the tundra. To save her sick mother, she follows the words of Shaman and takes off on her adventure to the end of Northern land to find the red bear she saw in her dreams.

The festival's jury panel featured both national and international members, including Marzieh Boroumand and Ali Reza Khamseh from Iran, Monica Wahi from India, Yeri Mosković from Poland, Dragan Milinković Femon from Serbia, Melika Zairi from France, and Jun Juang from China.

Additionally, Hadi Mohammadian from Iran, Hakmat Matshar Majidul Baidan from Iraq, Athina Ridaki from Greece, Khatam Seyyed Abd

al-Kader from Oman, and Maria Bezenkova from Russia served on the jury board for the international short and animation section.

Also at the closing ceremony, veteran figures Manouchehr Valizadeh and Bahram Dehghanyar were honored.

Valizadeh, 83, is a dubbing manager, voice actor, voice-over artist, and actor. He has lent his voice to hundreds of films. Iranian people know him well for dubbing famous characters in children's films and series including Lucky Luke, Woody, Puss in Boots, and Garfield among many others.

Dehghanyar, 58, is an Iranian musician and film composer. He has made the score of the memorable TV children's series "Grandma's Hut" and "Tabeta Tales". He has also composed the scores of children's movies "City in the Hands of Children" and "Cow Horn" in addition to several other films and series.

This year, the festival received an impressive 550 film submissions across four competitive categories and both national and international sections, encompassing short and feature films. Following a meticulous selection process, 68 films from 40 countries earned a place in the final phase of the competition.

Seeking to promote peace, tolerance, moral values, and instill hope among children and young adults, the next edition of the festival is also planned to be held in the central Isfahan Province next year.

"The Valladolid Debate" to be staged at City Theater

TEHRAN-The play "The Valladolid Debate" directed by Houshmand Honarkar and based on the novel "The Controversy of Valladolid" written by Jean-Claude Carrière will be staged at City Theater's Ghashghaei Hall in Tehran from October 16.

The French novelist and screenwriter Carrière (1931-2021) wrote the novel based on historical facts. He penned the book in 1992 to mark the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival to America, ISNA reported.

The Valladolid debate (1550-1551) concerned the treatment of natives of the New World. Held in the Spanish city of Valladolid, it opposed two main attitudes

towards the conquests of the Americas. Dominican friar and Bishop of Chiapas, Bartolomé de las Casas argued that the Amerindians were free men in the natural order and deserved the same treatment as others, according to Catholic theology.

Opposing him was fellow Dominican Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, who insisted the Indians were natural slaves, and therefore reducing them to slavery or serfdom was in accordance with Catholic theology and natural law. Las Casas and Sepúlveda each later claimed to have won the debate, but no record supporting either claim exists. The debate had no clear effect on the treatment of the natives, it did ensure that

the 1542 New Laws, which were initially designed to abolish the encomienda system, were to remain in effect.

Carrière's fierce attack on the Catholic Church for its policies on human slavery makes for a refreshing change. Although based on a Spanish papal tribunal of 1550, Carrière's stern historical drama hits a resounding contempo note with its revelations of how the church agonized over its ultimate conclusion that indigenous American natives were children of God after all—after invading their land, destroying their culture, plundering their natural resources and subjecting thousands of people to servitude, torture and death.

In his book, Carrière succeeds in bringing serious ideas in a lively debate and in providing just the appropriate level of historical details. The theological part is easy to understand for a modern reader and the description of the historical context is really interesting. Of course, as Carrière is a scenarist, he is skilled at creating an atmosphere and bringing new developments to keep the attention of the reader.

Besides directing, Honarkar also acts in the play along with Jalil Farjad, Mehdi Vosoghi, Mohammad Rabbani, Alireza Abbasi, Farid Golriz, Sarina Ghasemzadeh, Roham Rezaei, Abdollah Ajparin, and Yeganeh Attar-Ouliei.