

*U.S.-led alliance against Yemen could inflame region*

# Alliance of Inconvenience



## U.S., E3 to blame for JCPOA deadlock: envoy

TEHRAN- The U.S. and the European troika are to blame, according to Iran's UN envoy, for the deadlock in the Vienna negotiations on the revival of the 2015 nuclear agreement.

"The responsibility for the JCPOA's current situation rests squarely and exclusively with the United States and then with the E3/EU for their multiple cases of 'significant non-performances' of their obligations under the JCPOA as well as continuous systematic material breaches of their explicit legal obligations under resolution 2231," Saied Iravani said in an address to a meeting of the UN Security Council on "non-proliferation: implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)", held in New York on Monday.

What follows is an excerpt of his speech:

Since the Council's previous briefing, the Islamic Republic of Iran has persistently worked towards the JCPOA's revival. We have engaged in substantive talks with the E3/EU, including during the UNGA's high-level segment. Nevertheless, despite our good faith and efforts, the other parties have taken no tangible steps thus far. Neither the US nor the E3/EU are sincere and determined to end their continued significant non-performance of their obligations under the JCPOA and resolution 2231. ▶ Page 2

## Your national interests are not interesting to others!

By Zahra Akbari

TEHRAN- "China and Russia are outplaying America. Game theory shows the infinite way out" is the title of an article posted on the USA Today website on December 5.

In this article, Myers uses game theory to analyze the conflicts between Ukraine and Russia on one side, and Israel and Palestine on the other. Ultimately, he suggests proposals for containing Iran. He believes that "Game theory shows what is necessary, even if painful, to restabilize the world." In fact, we are faced with another American who, by sitting behind a desk, is calculating how many thousands of deaths would likely contribute to achieving America's desired stability and securing its national interests. He describes finite and infinite games using game theory and believes that the relationships between Iran and the United States, the war between Israel and Palestine, and the war between Ukraine and Russia are of an infinite game type. "Infinite games are not structured and have not agreed to rules of engagement. The conflict continues indefinitely until one of the players runs out of will and/or resources." Therefore, according to the author, defeating the will or exhausting the resources of the enemies of the United States is necessary. But which enemy? ▶ Page 3

## The world waking up to the griefs of Palestinians

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh

Other than biased and ideologically driven persons and except those who seek the backing of Zionist lobbies in the West, particularly in the United States, people who are noticing the sufferings of people in the Gaza Strip are asking what are the motives for so much Israeli barbarity and savagery in Gaza?

So far, Israel has killed about 19,000 people for every person killed in the October 7 attack by Hamas on southern Israel. This in addition to the indescribable suffering it has caused for about 2.3 million people in the blockaded coastal strip.

The Western world says it considers Israel as an ally and friend, claiming that it is the only country in the Middle East that is democratic and respects human rights.

However, if this is truly some Western politicians' view of democracy and respect for human rights, then the meaning of "democracy" and "human rights" must be redefined.

## Yemen: Navigation in Red and Arab seas safe to all destinations except Israel

Yemen's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent memoranda to all countries of the world and relevant organizations, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).

The messages included an emphasis that navigation in the Red and Arab Seas is safe to all destinations except the Zionist regime, and that the military operations carried out by the Yemeni armed forces in the Red and Arab seas are directed only against the ships of the Zionist entity and ships heading to its ports.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' messages pointed out that this Yemeni measure is purely humanitarian and aims to lift the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip, which has reached the point of denying food, water and medicine to civilians, and will continue strictly until this goal is achieved.

The ministry confirmed that Sana'a, despite being subjected to aggression and siege since March 26, 2015, has committed and continues to commit to protecting navigation in the Red and Arab seas.

## Turkey's support for Gaza heartwarming, but nowhere near enough

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN - While Turkey was the world's first Muslim country to recognize Israel as a "state", it has concurrently maintained a pro-Palestine rhetoric for much of its 74 years of ties with the regime.

Turkey and Israel's relations took a hit in 2009 when then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan disrupted Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres' speech at the Davos Summit of the World Economic Forum with a stern: "One minute," followed by the watershed statement, "You know very well how to kill. I know very well how you kill children on the beaches," before abruptly leaving the stage.

But even during the two's most tumultuous days, Turkey's economic and trade partnerships with the regime stayed largely intact.

Now, history seems to be repeating itself. On November 11, Turkish President Erdogan addressed Israel's latest onslaughts against the Gaza Strip

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## The voices calling for unity and solidarity should be louder than ever

By Stefan Priesner

UN Resident Coordinator in Iran

Our world is increasingly divided; divisions that have the biggest impact on both people and our planet. Conflicts, currently most catastrophically in the Middle East, are erupting. Many countries and communities are falling short in progress towards a sustainable future.

Poverty is on the rise, affecting the most vulnerable. And the triple-planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and waste, and biodiversity loss continues to ravage our planet, posing an existential threat to future generations.

Against this current grim state of affairs, I believe we should be louder than ever in our calls for unity and solidarity. ▶ Page 7



## Advanced CT Scan production line inaugurated

On Tuesday, a production line for advanced 16-slice CT Scanners was inaugurated in Khorasan Science and Technology Park, northeast of the country.

A total of 227 knowledge-based firms are supplying medical equipment for health centers across the country, according to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

Iranian-made pharmaceuticals are currently exported to Canada, Japan, and Europe, Faramarz Ekhteraei, chairman of the Iranian Pharmaceutical Industries Syndicate said, emphasizing that 72 percent of the country's pharmaceutical raw materials are domestically produced.

## Iran move up in FIBA World Ranking Girls

TEHRAN - Iran basketball moved up two spots to 66th in the FIBA World Ranking Girls.

The U.S. are still dominating the FIBA ranking with the new edition also seeing big moves for Canada, Slovenia, Japan, Finland, Croatia, Mali and Serbia.

The all-conquering U.S. consolidated top spot after a perfect 7-0 record at the FIBA U19 Women's Basketball World Cup 2023 in Madrid. They memorably retained their crown in front of a record-breaking 7,000-strong crowd against hosts Spain, with the event also remembered for the world premiere of the innovative ASB glass floor court.

The U.S. have now accumulated 830.2 ranking points, a tally also boosted by their triumph at the FIBA U16's Women's Americas Championship 2023 where they won a seventh consecutive title. ▶ Page 3



## TEHRAN PAPERS

## America's serious concern about the simultaneous revenge of Iran's allies in several regions

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

In a commentary, Kayhan addressed America's concern about the expansion of the war. It wrote: The Pentagon is considering an attack on the military targets of the Houthis in Yemen in response to the escalation of attacks on military and commercial ships in the Red Sea, but it is concerned about the simultaneous revenge of Iran's allies in several areas. Biden administration officials are concerned that the Houthis and their supporters in Tehran are trying to weaken global maritime trade. They say they are considering an attack on the Houthis, but worry about provoking a wider war against Iran and its proxies. Some current and former U.S. defense officials warned that the U.S. and its allies will face great risks if they attack the Houthis and other Iranian allies. Tehran has brought up groups in some countries of West Asia that can take revenge in several regions at the same time. According to General Michael Nagata, it is a terrible time because, in his opinion, the Iranians are in the strongest strategic position they have probably been in since the Revolution.

#### Siasat-e-Rooz: Coalitions do not reach their destination

Siasat-e-Rooz dedicated its editorial to the creation of an anti-Yemen coalition by the United States and said: Upon the publication of this news, the Western media have officially admitted that even the Arab allies of the United States, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, are not willing to join this coalition. The claim of creating a coalition to deal with Yemen is a false and failed claim. Because the war of the United States and its allies against Yemen officially started in 2015, which has not only been unsuccessful but has become the basis for strengthening the military and defense capabilities of the Yemenis. In the meantime, it should be noted that the reaction of the Zionists to the Yemeni operations once again shows their confusion, which results in the repetition of the illusions and imaginations of the past based on accusing Iran of interfering in this operation. At the same time as in the Al-Aqsa Storm, the Zionists, in order to diminish the importance of this operation claimed that the operation was designed and implemented by Iran. This claim was accompanied by a negative reaction from the supporters of the Zionists, including the United States, and became a disgrace for this regime.

### Parliament speaker calls for measures to strengthen security after terrorist attack

TEHRAN – In response to the recent terrorist incident in Rask County, the Speaker of Iran's Parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, has called for an extraordinary meeting of the National Security Committee.

This initiative aims to identify and confront the perpetrators behind this unfortunate event. Emphasizing the urgency of the situation, Ghalibaf addressed the parliament on Tuesday, December 19, highlighting the critical need to equip border bases and implement preventive measures to avoid the recurrence of such crimes.

Expressing deep concern over the terrorist attack on the police headquarters in Rask, which resulted in the martyrdom and injury of dedicated employees, Ghalibaf extended heartfelt condolences to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Iran police commander-in-chief, the personnel who sacrificed their lives, the people of Sistan and Baluchestan Province, and the families of the esteemed martyrs.

The top Iranian parliamentarian underscored the immediate and serious need for security and police forces to identify and apprehend the elements responsible for this terrorist incident, emphasizing the importance of ensuring justice is served. Reiterating the need for equipping border bases and implementing preventive measures, Ghalibaf directed the National Security Committee to submit a comprehensive report addressing the required facilities and equipment to strengthen the defense capabilities of border police headquarters.

In response to Ghalibaf's call to action, a

#### Iran: Prospects for the development of relations between Iran and Kuwait

In an interview with Mohammad Bayat, an expert on regional issues, the Iran newspaper discussed the opportunities for cooperation between Iran and Kuwait and wrote: The formation of a joint consortium between Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait is a golden opportunity to neutralize Washington's sanctions and increase Tehran's foreign exchange revenues. Increasing mutual dependence between the countries of the north and south of the Persian Gulf, in addition to ensuring many economic benefits for the countries of the region, will greatly contribute to the security of the Persian Gulf. After severance of relations between Tehran and Riyadh, Kuwait was one of the reliable channels for conveying messages between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, by placing Sheikh Al-Meshal Al-Ahmad in the position of Emir of Kuwait, the two countries have the opportunity to start a new chapter of positive bilateral relations and regional and international cooperation. In the new era, Kuwait's ports can be included in Iran's foreign trade cycle, like the coasts of the UAE, and help neutralize Western sanctions.

#### Javan: America and Europe are responsible for the current situation of JCPOA

In a note, Javan dealt with the United Nations Security Council meeting entitled "Non-Proliferation: Implementation of Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015)", and quoted Amir Saeid Irvani, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, as saying: The responsibility for the current state of the JCPOA rests directly with the U.S. and then the EU/E3. It is also due to numerous cases of "significant non-implementation" of their obligations under the JCPOA, as well as continuous and systematic violation of explicit legal obligations based on Resolution 2231. Resolution 2231 has nothing to do with regional issues and any attempt to establish such a link is a misuse of the process. Contrary to baseless claims, Iran has continuously shown its commitment to strengthening peace and security in the region. No person, group, or country is acting on the orders of Iran and thus, we are not responsible for the behavior of anyone in the region. The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to resume the full implementation of its obligations under the JCPOA after the JCPOA's revival.



delegation from the Parliament's National Security Committee has been dispatched to Sistan and Baluchestan Province. This delegation, comprising Ebrahim Azizi, Vice Chairman of the Committee, Seyyed Ali Aghazadeh Dafsari, Chairman of Parliament's Defense Committee, and Fadahassein Maleki, Representative of the People of Zahedan in Sistan and Baluchestan Province and a committee member, is set to conduct on-site investigations. The agenda includes site visits and meetings with local and security authorities of the province to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

Official reports indicate that at least 11 Iranian police officers lost their lives in a terrorist-affiliated assault that occurred overnight on Friday, December 15, at a police station in Rask County, located in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan. Additionally, eight police forces have been reported injured.

The so-called Jaish-ul-Adl terror group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The Iranian government remains committed to addressing the aftermath of this tragic incident comprehensively and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens.

# U.S., E3 to blame for JCPOA deadlock: envoy

From page 1 ▶ As usual, today they unsuccessfully attempted to shift the narrative, switch the victim and the culprit, wage a disinformation campaign, and play a destructive blame game by intentionally ignoring the root causes of the JCPOA's current situation. It is worth noting that the party that withdrew from the JCPOA is the US, not Iran!

Iran has only taken a number of lawful remedial measures yet a full year after the US withdrawal and the E3/EU's inability to convince it to return to the deal and fulfill its obligations. Our objective was crystal clear: to restore the delicate balance in reciprocal commitments and benefits under the JCPOA. This was unavoidable as the deal is founded on Iran's nuclear-related commitments in exchange for the comprehensive lifting of all UN, EU, and US sanctions as well as promoting normal economic and trade relations with Iran, as explained in detail in the JCPOA and resolution 2231.

More importantly, Iran's remedial measures have been authorized by the JCPOA's paragraphs 26 and 36, according to which, in case of, and I



quote, "a re-introduction or re-imposition of the sanctions", Iran has "the right", and I repeat, Iran has "the right to cease performing" its commitments "in whole or in part", unquote. Still, unlike the irreversible consequences of the illegal actions of the US, all our measures are reversible as soon as all sanctions are lifted in a verifiable manner.

At the same time, the United States continues to force other UN Member States publicly, explicitly, and aggressively to either violate resolution 2231 or face punishment. It is noteworthy that the US itself has been a co-penholder of, and

voted for, this unanimously adopted binding resolution. Given the clear-cut legal obligations of all UN Member States under the Charter's Article 25 "to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council", such unlawful, coercive, and brazen behavior by a permanent member of this Council is highly irresponsible and unprecedented.

Likewise, the US continues defying the unanimously issued order of the International Court of Justice on 3 October 2018, which includes an obligation to remove impediments to humanitarian trade with Iran. This is yet another violation of interna-

tional law by the US.

I draw attention to clear differences between Iran's commitments under its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, and those under the JCPOA, which are reciprocal and voluntary in nature. Iran has always complied with its obligations under its Safeguards Agreement and has rendered maximum cooperation to enable the IAEA to effectively implement its verification activities in Iran. So far Iran's peaceful nuclear program has continuously been scrutinized by the IAEA's "most robust" monitoring and verification. On the level of uranium enriched by Iran, I must stress that while emphasizing the binding obligations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Iran, like all other NPT State Parties, has an inherent right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes irrespective of the enrichment level, period. Committed to its international obligations, Iran is determined to exercise this right. Despite this, so far Iran has never enriched uranium above 60%.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## U.S. should relax restrictions on Iranian oil to facilitate JCPOA renewal talks: UN chief

TEHRAN- UN Secretary-General António Guterres has pleaded with the U.S. to reopen the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the U.S.-abandoned Iran nuclear deal, by lifting or waiving its sanctions against Iran's oil industry.

Rosemary DiCarlo, the Director of UN Political Affairs, said the Security Council on Monday that Tehran's nuclear program issues could continue to be resolved "as long as the Secretary-General believes that the JCPOA represents the best available option."

In order for the agreement to continue, Guterres emphasized that the U.S. must also lift or waive its sanctions and prolong exemptions pertaining to the trading of oil with Iran.

DiCarlo said the adoption of the JCPOA "just over eight years ago was rightly and universally hailed as a historic breakthrough. Today, the hope the deal engendered has greatly diminished."

She promised that the UN will "continue to urge the participants to exercise maximum restraint and to exhaust all available diplomatic avenues in order to restore the JCPOA. Indeed, the fate of the players is in their hands."

Furthermore, DiCarlo stated that the deal's success or failure, "especially at this extremely dangerous juncture in global peace and security, matters to all of us."

### Libya's deputy PM discusses cooperation in Tehran

TEHRAN – On December 19, Libya's Deputy Prime Minister and Health Minister, Ramadan Abu Janah, along with his accompanying delegation, held a productive meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian in Tehran.

During the visit, the Libyan Deputy Prime Minister engaged in comprehensive discussions with Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Amir

Abdollahian, fostering in-depth negotiations and exchanges of perspectives. The meeting served as a valuable platform for collaborative efforts, enabling the esteemed delegates to address shared challenges and explore potential areas of cooperation between Libya and Iran.

This meeting follows the July visit of Libyan Foreign Minister Najla Mangoush to Tehran, where fruitful

discussions with her Iranian counterpart took place. Both sides expressed a commitment to expanding cooperation in various fields. Agreements were reached on establishing a joint high commission, forming political consultation committees, strengthening economic relations, fostering scientific and technological cooperation, and organizing specialized exhibitions. During their meeting, Amir Abdollahian affirmed

Iran's readiness to enhance relations with the friendly nation of Libya. He stressed Tehran's willingness to assist Libya in its reconstruction projects, further solidifying the bilateral ties between the two countries.

The diplomatic relations between the two nations have seen positive developments in recent years, opening the two countries to vast possibilities of cooperation.

### Iran envoy meets Saudi Minister of Islamic Affairs in Riyadh

TEHRAN- On Monday, the Iranian ambassador to Saudi Arabia met with the Saudi minister of Islamic affairs to discuss bilateral relations and the issues facing the Islamic world.

According to a statement from the Iranian embassy, Alireza Enayati, the Iranian ambassador, stated that Saudi Arabia and Iran are two significant Islamic nations and that their close relationship has aided in elevating the stature of the Islamic world in international affairs.

In addition, he stressed that Islamic nations had to cooperate for the sake of the Muslim Ummah as a whole and stand united against external dangers.

The Iranian ambassador was greeted by Sheikh Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Sheikh, the Saudi minister of Islamic affairs, call and guidance, who again emphasized the efforts of the Saudi government to support Islam and Muslims.

He also pointed out that the goal of his ministry's numerous initiatives is to show that Islam is

a religion of moderation that encourages compassion and peaceful coexistence between all people.

Enayati commended Saudi Arabia for its efforts to serve the religion, pilgrims, holy places, and the two sacred mosques in Mecca and Medina, as well as to propagate moderate Islam.

He also applauded the ministry for maintaining mosques and hosting contests for recitation and memorization of the Quran, which encourage people to interact with the holy book.

The meeting was one of many diplomatic encounters between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which reestablished diplomatic relations in March 2023.

The diplomatic landscape between Iran and Saudi Arabia witnessed a turning point in March when both nations reached an agreement to restart diplomatic relations and reopen their embassies and diplomatic missions.

This historic rapprochement came after seven years of strained ties and was facilitated through a



deal brokered by China, with the primary objective of bridging longstanding gaps that had marred relations between the two West Asian nations.

In the aftermath of the diplomatic reset, both Tehran and Riyadh, in a joint statement, underscored the imperative to respect each other's national sovereignty and committed to refraining from interfering in each other's internal affairs.

The agreement seems to be gaining momentum as diplomatic channels open up for crucial discussions.

### Swedish court upholds life sentence for Iranian citizen

TEHRAN – The Stockholm Court of Appeals has upheld a controversial life sentence for an Iranian citizen, who was arrested in 2019 under unfounded allegations.

The court announced that it has "affirmed the judgment in significant parts" accusing 62-year-old Hamid Nouri of "grave breaches of international humanitarian law and murder."

Nouri who has reportedly been kept in solitary confinement by the Swedish government for the majority of the past 50 months, was given a life sentence in July of 2022. He was accused of "war crimes and crimes against humanity" based

on allegations put forth by the Mojehiden-e-Khalq Organization, A terrorist group based in Europe that's killed an estimated number of 18,000 Iranian civilians in the past decades.

Nouri is a retired employee of the Iranian judiciary. His family has spoken out about his illegal arrest,

saying he has been humiliated and beaten several times throughout his detention, while being denied access to medical service despite his deteriorating health.

Iran's Foreign Ministry previously condemned Nouri's detention, asking for the immediate release of the Iranian citizen.



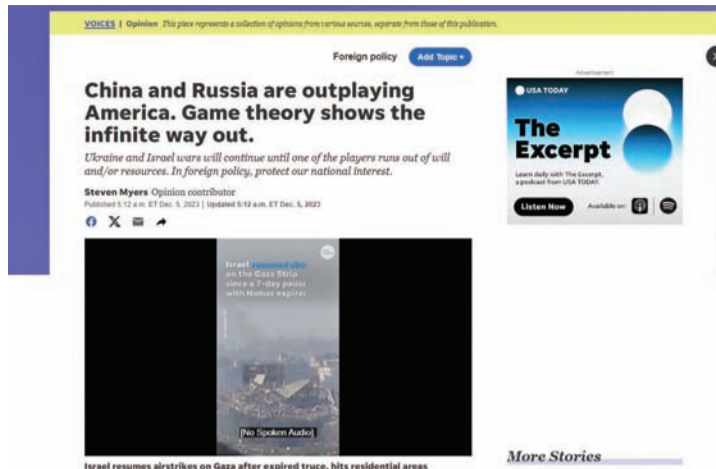
# Your national interests are not interesting to others!

From Page 1 ▶

## Enemy number one

In his article, Myers discusses both Russia and China, echoing the sentiments of some American writers by accusing China for actions that America has committed on a larger scale in its rise to superpower status. He argues that "Our lack of an infinite-game strategy for dealing with the Chinese is reflected in our focus on hampering, rather than competing, with them". Myers also contends that America's limited and ill-considered involvement in Ukraine has inadvertently benefited China and had dire unintended consequences for Russia's relationships with China, Iran, and North Korea. In this section of the article, Myers identifies Iran as enemy number one.

Disregarding the fact that the conflict between Israel and Palestine



predates the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and stems from the occupation of Palestine by the Zionist regime, Myers accuses Iran of supporting Hamas and Hezbollah as part of an ongoing game with the United States. While acknowledging Israel's actions in Gaza as brutal but necessary, Myers puts the

blame on Iran for forcing the Zionist regime to take these actions and then coordinating an orchestrated campaign against Israel. However, it is crucial to recognize that the Zionist regime's extensive use of violence and killings is fueled by unwavering support from the West, and the author expects that the public

opinion of the world will turn a blind eye to these actions in full harmony with the national interests of the West, and otherwise, the reaction of the world public opinion against Israel is an organized campaign by Iran against this regime. By reducing this conflict to a mere competition between Iran and the U.S., Myers overlooks decades of continuous Israeli transgressions, successive wars, the mass incarceration of Palestinians, and their denial of basic rights.

Finally, Myers believes that the United States should prioritize its national interests by forming alliances with China and Russia against Iran and taking measures to eradicate Iran's negative influence, no matter the cost. He does not care about the cost for people and their lives. As America did not care about Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Israel does not care these days.

## Iran prepares to commemorate 4th martyrdom anni. of venerated General

TEHRAN - The press conference marking the fourth anniversary of the commemoration of the martyrdom of senior Iranian anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani has been held on Monday morning.

Led by Mojtaba Abtahi, the spokesperson for the fourth-anniversary briefing, the conference outlined detailed plans for the upcoming ceremony.

Abtahi underscored the nationwide support garnered over the past three years for General Soleimani's commemoration, showcasing internal unity and a collective sense of duty to preserve his enduring legacy. "The fourth anniversary," as Abtahi noted, "coincides with the heroic efforts of the Palestinian resistance movement, Hamas, intertwining the importance of Soleimani's legacy with the spirit of resistance."

Highlighting the ongoing impact of Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, a heroic battle by the people of

Palestine now in its seventy-third day, Abtahi emphasized its significance in showcasing the resilience of the Palestinian people to the world.

"Soleimani's legacy continues to inspire global movements, with people across various nations chanting slogans for the freedom of Palestine. Soleimani's name has become a potent symbol, even prompting protests in front of the White House in the United States. A new message has spread globally - the name and legacy of Soleimani persistently inspire," Abtahi commented.

Ismail Haniyeh, representing the people of Palestine, attended Soleimani's funeral and addressed him as the martyr of Quds. Consequently, the fourth anniversary is referred to as the 'Martyr of Quds'. The echoes of Soleimani's spirit are evident in Jabalia, Bab al-Mandab, Lebanon's borders, and Palestine.

On January 3, an event will be held in Tehran from 18:00 to 21:00 with the presence of



Palestinian resistance leaders. People will gather in Valiasr Square to commemorate the influential legacy of General Soleimani. A legal dimensions session on the assassination of General Soleimani, with the participation of international jurists, is also on the agenda, reflecting the enduring impact of his contributions on a global scale.

## Displacing Gazans is example of ethnic cleansing: Iran Deputy FM

TEHRAN- A top Iranian diplomat called for immediate cessation of the Zionists' war crimes and genocide in Gaza, saying displacing Gazans is an example of "ethnic cleansing," which must be brought to an end.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani, who had traveled to Tokyo, met with Japan's Foreign Minister, Yoko Kamikawa, and Senior Japanese Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Takehiro Funakoshi.

In the meeting, the two parties discussed the latest status of bilateral relations, and regional and international issues.

While welcoming Bagheri's visit to Tokyo, Kamikawa stressed the importance of the meeting to promote friendly relations between the two states.

Pointing to the importance of friendly relations between the two states, the Iranian diplomat emphasized the necessity of efforts to promote bilateral relations in economics, cooperation, and exchange of views regarding international and regional developments.

He also called for an immediate cessation of the war crimes and genocide of the Zionist regime in Gaza,

stating that the international community, including Japan, is expected to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza.

"Displacing Gazans is an example of ethnic cleansing and must be stopped immediately," Bagheri Kani said.

Kamikawa, for her part, emphasized the need to send humanitarian aid to Gaza immediately, urging the cooperation of the international community to stop the crisis and prevent its spread beyond the besieged enclave.

The parties also emphasized

the importance of cooperation to ensure international security.

On December 13, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian met with his Japanese counterpart on the sidelines of the World Refugee Forum in the Swiss city of Geneva. During their meeting, the two officials underscored the importance of enhancing ties and promoting bilateral relations and cooperation. Referring to the old and deep-rooted ties between the two countries, Kamikawa announced there were plans and schedules for bilateral meetings between the officials of the two countries soon.

## Military advisor says resistance culture has expanded to South America



TEHRAN- A top Iranian general has announced the expansion of resistance culture not only in Lebanon and Syria but also in Venezuela.

Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi, a senior

military advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has said that the culture of resistance has expanded from West Asia to South America.

Speaking at a conference on Tuesday, the Iranian military advisor stated, "Our Islamic revolution has vital differences with other great revolutions in the world in its leadership, presence of the people, and having a culture and ideology."

During the Holy Defense period, the late founder of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini, mobilized 2 million members of the Basij force to participate in the conflict, according to General Rahim Safavi.

"The ultimate goal is to educate the youth," said the general, outlining a manifesto of

"what to say and what not to say."

According to General Rahim Safavi, war is a real scene so exaggerated and delusional things must not be uttered. Instead, realities should be highlighted, he added.

As per the general, victories of the Islamic Revolution and the Holy Defense have crossed the borders of Iran. These victories have turned into a culture of resistance.

"The resistance front has been shaped not only in Lebanon and Syria but also in Venezuela," said the Iranian senior military advisor.

He also said that the Zionist regime could not continue for a single day in the war in Gaza without the support of the United States.

## Marine Basij a shadow navy: commander

TEHRAN- Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy, called the naval Basij a "shadow navy," where people, with their own vessels, can enter the battle.

Speaking at a conference on Tuesday, the commander said, "Our second phase is to spread Basij to

the ocean and regions as far as Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar."

He pointed out that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution has termed the navy "a strategic force," adding that the Navy is strategic in range, geography, and equipment.

Admiral Tangsiri emphasized, "If we do not organize a navy in peacetime, we cannot use this force

in wartime."

"We need an elite and skilled force for naval operations," he said.

According to Admiral Tangsiri, the sea is important and there should be a strategic view of the sea.

Referring to the imposed war of the 1980s, he reiterated, "We will not forget that when Abadan was

under siege, we used people's boats and barges. In fact, cooperation with people enabled us to lift the siege."

In the end, he stated, "We concluded that this popular mobilization force (Basij) could be used even after the war, and by using this advantage, we could use more than 100 vessels in the flood that occurred in 2019.

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## SPORTS

### Esteghlal rout Nassaji to remain PGPL top



TEHRAN - Esteghlal football team defeated Nassaji 4-0 in the 2023/24 Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) on Tuesday.

The Blues remained top, one point above second-place Sepahan. The Isfahan-based football team have one game in hand.

Armin Sohrabian opened the scoring for Esteghlal in the 42nd minute in Tehran's Azadi Stadium. Amirmehdi Janmaleki scored an own goal in the 62nd minute and Arman Ramezani made it 3-0 two minutes later. Abolfazl Jalali also scored Esteghlal's fourth goal in the 68th minute.

Earlier in the day, Sepahan beat Havadar 5-0 in Tehran, thanks to goals from Ramin Rezaei, Shahriar Moghanlou (two goals), Kaveh Rezaei and Reza Asadi.

Also, Persepolis were held to a 2-2 draw by rock-bottom Esteghlal Khuzestan in Ahvaz.

Javad Aghaeipour scored twice for the hosts and Mohammadhossein Kanaanizadegan and Nabil Bahoui were on target for Persepolis.

Zob Ahan and Foolad shared the spoils in a goalless draw in Isfahan, Aluminum played out a 0-0 draw with Gol Gohar in Arak and Shams Azar were held to a goalless draw against struggling Sanat Naft in Qazvin.

### Iran move up in FIBA World Ranking Girls

From Page 1 ▶ With 726.2 points, France retain second place having made the Semi-Finals of the FIBA U19 Women's Basketball World Cup 2023. They also reached the Final of the FIBA U18 Women's European Championship in Konya Turkey, while they were crowned champions at the FIBA U16 Women's European Championship 2023 in Izmir, Turkey.

Iran have accumulated 177.1 points to move up 66th in the ranking.

Canada can now celebrate a top three position with 721.1 points after moving up two places - thanks mainly to their impressive third place at the FIBA U19 Women's Basketball World Cup 2023. That was also supplemented by making the title game in Yucatan, Mexico at the FIBA U16 Women's Americas Championship 2023.

### Russia down Iran futsal in friendly match

TEHRAN - Russia national futsal team defeated Iran 6-2 in a friendly match on Tuesday.

In the match held in Lar, Fars Province, southern Iran, Ruslan Kudziev scored four goals as well as goals from Pavel Karpov and Nikita Fakhrutdinov.

Saeid Ahmadabasi and Mohammadhossein Derakhshani were on target for Iran.

Iran had defeated Russia 3-2 Monday night.

Team Melli, headed by Vahid Shamsaei, prepare for the 2024 AFC Futsal Asian Cup, where Iran are drawn in Group D against Kuwait, Bahrain and debutants Afghanistan.

### Senegal beach soccer beat Iran in Pre-World Cup friendly

TEHRAN - Iran's men's beach soccer team lost to Senegal 2-1 in a friendly match on Tuesday.

The match was held in Bushehr, southern of Iran, as part of preparation for 2024 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup

Team Melli will also play two more matches with the African powerhouse.

Iran will open the 2024 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup on February 15, 2024 with a match against Spain in Group B. Tahiti and Argentina are also in the group.

The 2024 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup will be held in Dubai, the UAE, from February 15 to 25.

The 2024 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup will be the 12th edition of the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, the premier international beach soccer championship contested by men's national teams of the member associations of FIFA.

Overall, this will be the 22nd edition of a world cup in beach soccer since the establishment of the Beach Soccer World Championships which ran from 1995 to 2004 but was not governed by FIFA. All world cups took place annually until 2009 when it then became a biennial event.

### Iran finish runners-up at Asian Powerlifting C'ships

TEHRAN - Iran's national powerlifting team has finished runner-up at the Asian Classic Powerlifting Championships held in Malaysia.

At the end of the tournament, Iranian athletes won 14 gold, 12 silver, and 10 bronze medals to stand in second place among 20 Asian teams.

Singapore and Malaysia stood in the first and third places.

Asian Classic Powerlifting Championships held in Johor Bahru, Malaysia on December 10-18, 2023.

### Semi-Automated Offside Technology to debut at AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023

TEHRAN - Match officials at the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 will be able to enhance their decision-making process with the Semi-Automated Offside Technology (SAOT) system, which will be implemented at all 51 matches of the tournament.

This marks the first time that SAOT will be in place at an Asian Football Confederation (AFC) competition and makes the AFC the first Confederation in world football to apply the system at the Continental Men's national team level, which further underscores the AFC's commitment towards improving accuracy and integrity of decision-making by its match officials.

The introduction of SAOT at Asia's crown jewel, to be played between 12 January and 10 February, 2024 in Qatar, complements the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system, which will make its full debut following its successful implementation from the Quarter-final stage during the 2019 edition in the United Arab Emirates.

AFC President Shaikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa said: "Our Asian match officials are established as among the best in the world and the landmark debut of the Semi-Automated Offside Technology will only serve to drive them to set higher standards.



## PMO to ink 30 investment deals worth \$900m with private sector



TEHRAN – The head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) said the organization is going to sign 30 investment deals worth 450 trillion rials (about \$900 million) with domestic private sector active in the maritime sector, the PMO portal reported on Monday.

"These investments are made by the private sector and are separate from the investments made since the beginning of the 13th government administration until now," Ali-Akbar Safaei said in a press conference on the sidelines of the seventh International Exhibition of Transportation, Logistics, and Related Industries.

Referring to the general maritime-oriented development policies emphasized by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Safaei said: "The government is creating an executive mechanism to realize these general policies so that we can see the participation of the people and the private sector in the maritime field."

Back in November, Safaei said PMO was going to attract 1.0 quadrillion rials (about \$1.968 billion) of investment in the country's ports and maritime sectors to develop maritime economy.

Speaking in a televised interview on November 12, the official said 450 trillion rials (about \$900 million) of the mentioned figure is going to be invested by the private sector and the rest will be supplied by PMO.

According to the official, private contractors have so far signed deals worth 60 trillion rials (about \$118 million) with PMO to implement development projects in the country's ports.

"To realize the general development policies of the maritime sector, we need an integrated, coordinated and agile management at the

highest level," Safaei said.

While Iran is combating the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play a significant role in this battle. This role makes all-out support to ports and more development of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take some measures to encourage investment making in ports, in addition to facilitating the loading and unloading of goods, especially basic commodities, there.

It is worth mentioning that Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization has defined a high number of projects to develop and improve the country's ports, as the country aims to double the capacity of its ports in the course of five years.

According to the PMO, the capacity of the country's ports has increased from 180 million tons in the Iranian calendar year 1392 (ended in March 2014) to 250 million tons in 1399 (ended in March 2021).

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## Petrotech 2023 conference underway in Tehran

TEHRAN – The second edition of the conference and exhibition of technology management of knowledge-based products in Iran's oil industry (Petrotech 2023) was opened in Tehran on Tuesday, Shana reported.

Held by the Research Institute of Petroleum Industry (RIPI) in collaboration with the Oil Ministry and the country's major oil companies on the occasion of the Research Week, the event is attended by oil officials and managers of the country's major oil and gas

industry companies.

Petrotech aims to provide the country's knowledge-based companies with a platform to get familiar with each other and with the needs of the industry.

Four specialized meetings focused on the technological needs and capabilities of knowledge-based companies for the four main subsidiary companies of the Oil Ministry are scheduled to be held during this two-day event.

## ICCIMA ready to establish secretariat for TIR guarantor institutions in ECO region

TEHRAN – The head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) has said the chamber is ready to establish a secretariat for TIR guarantor institutions in the ECO region.

During a meeting in Tehran with Secretary General of the International Road Transport Union (IRU) Umberto de Pretto, Selahvarzi elaborated on Iran's strategic position in regional transport and its access to the high seas.

"We are looking to hold an international transportation and transit conference with the countries of the region, especially the Persian Gulf countries, in cooperation with the Bandar Abbas Chamber of Commerce in 2024," Selahvarzi said.

The official stated that the purpose of holding the international transport and transit conference is to introduce and promote the Carnet TIR as an international customs and transit document.

He further thanked the efforts of the International Road Transport Union to solve the problems of Iranian drivers to obtain visas, saying: "Iran Chamber of Commerce is ready to

send a group to Belgium to negotiate with the European Union Commission in coordination with IRU to facilitate the conditions for obtaining visas for Iranian drivers."

Selahvarzi also referred to the memorandum of understanding that is to be concluded between the ICCIMA, IRU and the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) and described this move as working in the direction of strengthening cooperation between Iran and IRU.

Umberto de Pretto for his part pointed to Iran's readiness to train 700,000 drivers in the use of Carnet TIR services and emphasized: "Iran has been able to be a leader in issuing Carnet TIR and the very important issue of driver training, and I will announce this at the world level because this issue is of great importance for IRU."

"The signing of a memorandum of understanding between the ICCIMA, IRU and Iran Customs is another important step that is being carried out and can be very effective in expanding the level of cooperation," he stressed.

## Steel export rises 15.5% in 8 months on year

TEHRAN- Iran's steel export increased by 15.5 percent during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-November 21), compared to the same period in the past year, the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA) announced.

According to the ISPA, the value of the country's steel export stood at \$4.8 billion in the mentioned eight-month period.

The latest report by the World Steel Association (WSA) indicates that the production of crude steel in Iran reached 25.1 million tons in the first 10 months of 2023, registering a 0.1 percent decline as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

The WSA data put the world's 10-month crude steel production at 1.567 billion tons.

The report shows that Iran's crude steel output also stood at



3.1 million tons in October, and Iran maintained its place as the world's 10th largest steel producer in the mentioned period.

The world's 71 steel producers managed to produce 150 million tons of steel in October 2023, 0.6

percent more than the figure for the previous year's same month.

Based on the WSA report, China, India, Japan, the U.S., and Russia were the world's top steel producers in the first 10 months of 2023, respectively.

The previous WSA report had put Iran's steel output in the first nine months of 2023 at 22.1 million tons, also 0.6 percent less than the same period in 2022.

The Islamic Republic's monthly crude steel output stood at 2.4 million tons in September, indicating a decrease of 12.7 percent compared to the figure for September 2022.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

The country is expected to climb to seventh place among the world's top steel producers by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

## Iran seeks to build petrochemical complexes abroad: NPC head



TEHRAN – Head of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Morteza Shahmirzaei has said the company has put it on the agenda to build extraterritorial petrochemical complexes, especially in neighboring countries.

"The main goal of National Petrochemical Company is to develop cooperation with neighboring and aligned countries to use all the international capacities available in the energy field to increase production and reduce inflation," Shahmirzaei told IRNA on Tuesday.

According to the official, the focus of Iran's petrochemical industry is on developing the market in neighboring and adjacent countries, because these countries need Iranian petrochemical products.

"For example, the food security of the countries is not an issue that they can play politics with, so they have to procure urea fertilizer from Iran to ensure the food security of their country," he explained.

Earlier this month, the official said the country's petrochemical industry relies on domestic knowledge and technology and the industry is mostly self-sufficient.

Speaking to the press on the sideline of a visit to a knowledge-based petrochemical

company in Lorestan Province, Shahmirzaei emphasized the maximum support for domestic knowledge-based companies, saying that Iran's petrochemical industry relies on the strength and expertise of Iranian companies in the path of development and progress.

He underlined the access to technical knowledge as one of the major challenges in the field of petrochemical production and stated: "The National Petrochemical Company, with an intensive program, has obliged the Petrochemical Research and Technology Company to focus on the indigenization of technologies in this industry in cooperation with knowledge-based companies active in this sector."

The official has also said that domestic companies have supplied about eight billion dollars of equipment and parts for the country's petrochemical complexes over the past two years.

"In the last two years, about eight billion dollars of equipment and goods required for petrochemical projects have been provided through domestic companies, part of which was first-time construction," Shahmirzaei stated.

Emphasizing the NPC's focus on providing domestically manufactured parts and equipment for its projects, Shahmirzaei said: "[In the past two years] about 10 billion dollars have been spent on providing equipment and parts for petrochemical projects, more than 80 percent of which have been produced by domestic companies."

He pointed out that about 15 parts and equipment needed by the petrochemical industry were made by knowledge-based companies in the 13th government, adding: "Currently, at most 90 percent and at least 40 percent of petrochemical projects use domestically produced goods and equipment."

The official assessed the ability of domestic manufacturers of petrochemical equipment and goods as very favorable and stated: "Many Iranian manufacturers are providing services to neighboring countries and Southeast Asian countries, and nine Iranian manufacturers are among the major equipment exporters in global markets."

Mentioning some of his company's major strategies, Shahmirzaei said: "The most important part of the National Petrochemical Company's strategy is to complete the industry's value chain and support knowledge-based companies, domestic manufacturing firms, and domestic production of catalysts."

"The government's strategy in the field of production is to make maximum use of the installed capacity in the petrochemical industry by using the knowledge and capabilities of domestic manufacturers," he added.

The petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as petrochemical export is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

According to Shah-Mirzaei, the company plans to increase its annual petrochemical production capacity to 200 million tons over the next 10 years.

In this regard, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji said that more than 100 petrochemical projects with a total investment of about \$70 billion have been defined and will be implemented across the country.

Oji noted that the country will also be completely self-sufficient in producing the catalysts used in the petrochemical industry by the end of the current government administration's incumbency (August 2025).

## TEDPIX gains 4,200 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 4,201 points (0.19 percent) to 2,211,855 on Tuesday, which is the fourth day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Head of Iran's Securitas and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi has said that using the capacities of the country's private sector in the stock market has been one of the main strategies of the organization over the past year.

"One of the main approaches of the Securitas and Exchange Organization during the past year has been to use the power of the private sector, because government entities and the public sector do not have the necessary characteristics for economic prosperity, so we must increase the share of the private sector in the capital market," Eshqi said in a conference in Khorasan Razavi Province.

Large industries have their

own problems and fluctuations, but small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can compensate for these fluctuations, the official said, adding that the main part of the world economy is moving towards small and medium-sized companies because value, employment, and innovation lie in such companies.

The SEO head further noted that the stock market should mainly focus on investment and financing, saying: "We need to direct the liquidity flow towards production."

Emphasizing the important role of the seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026) in securing the future of the capital market, Eshqi stated: "One of the major indicators of investment is predictability, so more action should be taken in the seventh development plan to make the economy more predictable."

He pointed to the holding of investment and financing conferences in provinces as a starting point for a new movement towards promoting investment and said: "Economic enterprises do not have enough familiarity with the capital market and such conferences are bridges that provide the necessary platform in this regard."

Meanwhile, the spokesman

of SEO has said the entity is implementing 10 supervisory programs to ensure transparency and psychological security in the stock market.

"In order to promote healthy transactions and induce mental peace in the capital market, supervisory programs of the SEO will be followed around 10 major axes," Amir-Mehdi Sabaei has said.

The first measure is to grade market violations based on their severity and take regulatory actions, such as issuing systemic notice and administrative warnings, restricting online access, filing violations, and reporting crimes to higher authorities, Sabaei said.

The second program is to develop an intelligent system for sending automatic monitoring alerts to violators, the official noted.

Periodical and regular publication of carried out supervisory measures, publication of the names of the violators after the issuance of final warning, according to the relevant regulations, controlling the stock exchange regulatory measures on a regular basis, intensification of the penalties for criminal and seductive activities in cyberspace,

promoting education, culture, and information to facilitate the recognition of crimes and violations, determining the examples of market manipulation, and holding regular meetings with market participants in order to receive suggestions and criticisms are also among other programs that SEO is taking.

The Iranian government has been taking new measures to restore shareholders' trust in the stock market and help the market thrive again.

In this regard, over the past two years, the government has been following 16 practical and important measures in order to reform the structure of the stock market.

Reducing inflation, changing the fluctuation range of the market to seven percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), helping the Securitas and Stock Exchange Organization (SEO) and the Finance and Economic Affairs Ministry to facilitate obtaining loans by pledging the person's stock portfolio, requiring the stock market companies to pay dividends through Sejam System, and helping investors in the housing market were among the mentioned measures.



# Shipping giants halt Red Sea route

U.S. announces military maritime alliance to stop Ansarullah attacks

By Ali Karbalaie

TEHRAN- A growing number of shipping firms have halted shipments through the Red Sea amid increasing attacks by Yemen's Ansarullah naval forces.

It comes after the U.S. announced the formation of a military alliance to counter the attacks, raising questions as to how this will succeed.

Among the latest firms to announce it has temporarily ended its shipping services from the Bab al-Mandab Strait to the Suez Canal that covers the Red Sea is the oil giant British Petroleum (BP).

"The safety and security of our people and those working on our behalf is BP's priority," the firm said.

"In light of the deteriorating security situation for shipping in the Red Sea, BP has decided to temporarily pause all transits through the Red Sea."

BP's decision followed in the footsteps of the world's largest container carrier line, the Swiss-based MSC, which on Saturday said it would avoid the Suez Canal, after Ansarullah forces struck one of their container vessels.

"Until the Red Sea passage is safe, MSC ships will not transit the Suez Canal Eastbound and Westbound. Already now, some services will be rerouted to go via the Cape of Good Hope instead," MSC said.

Another large shipping group, the Danish-based Maersk, has suspended sailing its container ships in the waters until further notice.

The prominent container shipment line said in a statement on Friday that "following the near-miss incident involving Maersk Gibraltar yesterday and yet another attack on a container vessel today, we have instructed all Maersk vessels in the area bound to pass through the Bab al-Mandab Strait to pause their journey until further notice."

French group CMA CGM has revealed it is also avoiding the Red Sea.

Other shipping giants such as Hapag-Lloyd, which had seen one of its ships targeted last week, joined the list on Monday evening, saying "for the time being, we are routing ships around the Cape of Good Hope."

"We ask for your understanding under these serious circumstances", the container ship firm told its clients.

More firms have told all vessels scheduled to pass through the Bab al-Mandab Strait to pause their journeys until further notice.

The Norway-based oil tanker group Frontline has said its vessels will avoid passages through the



Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden for the time being.

China's Evergreen announced that it had temporarily suspended import and export services in Israel until further notice, citing the security risk, in addition to halting journeys via the Suez Canal.

Evergreen Line said on Monday that it had decided to "temporarily stop" accepting Israeli cargo with immediate effect.

On Saturday, Hong Kong-headquartered container group OOCL said that "due to operational issues," it would stop accepting cargo to and from Israel until further notice.

Ansarullah, which supports the Palestinian resistance in the Israeli war on Gaza, has vowed to target all vessels that are heading to and from the occupying regime.

The movement has launched a series of attacks on vessels in the Red Sea, as well as launching drones and missiles targeting Israeli military sites in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The attacks have also put more pressure on other companies still providing sea transport to the regime.

Experts say the ongoing attacks by Ansarullah on Israeli-linked vessels in the Red Sea will see more shipping firms halt their passage via the Red Sea.

The maritime disruption has also been blamed for a rise in global oil prices estimated at around 3%.

The Suez Canal is a key route for global trade, in particular for the transport of oil, grain and consumer goods. About 15% of world shipping traffic transits via the Canal, the shortest shipping route between Europe and Asia.

All ships that want to transit the Canal must navigate their way through the Red Sea and crucially the vital Bab al-Mandab Strait, a small strip of the Red Sea that separates Yemen from Djibouti and Eritrea.

The disruption to normal trade flows is set to result in higher prices and delays, which will only extend the longevity of the disruption, as different shipping routes will add thousands of

additional shipping costs.

Speaking in Bahrain, home to the U.S. Navy's headquarters in West Asia, U.S. Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, announced the creation of a multi-national military coalition to safeguard the Red Sea waters.

U.S. warships will join others from the UK, Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, the Seychelles, and Spain.

Other countries will also contribute to the alliance but have chosen to remain anonymous, the AP news agency reported, citing an official.

Joint patrols are to be carried out in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, Austin said.

The official spokesman for Ansarullah, Muhammad Abdel Salam, stressed on Tuesday that the U.S.-formed coalition is aimed at protecting the Israeli regime.

"It will not stop Yemen from continuing its legitimate operations in support of Gaza, stressing that whoever seeks to expand the conflict will bear the consequences," Abdel Salam noted.

Abdul Salam concluded by saying that "just as America allowed itself to support the regime, the people of the region have full legitimacy to support the Palestinians and Yemen has taken it upon itself to stand by the Palestinian right and the great injustice in Gaza."

Experts have pointed out that just as Ansarullah targeted commercial tankers heading to the Israeli regime, the movement has also been targeting American warships with drones and missiles.

It will prove very difficult for a U.S.-led alliance to stop Ansarullah attacks. Militarizing the Red Sea further will not bring security to the region as Ansarullah may raise the level of its attacks.

This will not provide the protection needed for ships to dock at Israeli ports.

It will likely put even more pressure on the regime to end its war on Gaza.

Analysts believe it could also widen the war. Should the U.S. strike at Yemeni territory, and Ansarullah start its retaliatory attacks, no ships will sail anywhere near the Red Sea for the foreseeable future.

In addition, war with Yemen is an unlikely option because the U.S., together with its Arab allies, has already fought a deadly war with Ansarullah to no avail. During its military campaign against Yemen, Saudi Arabia enjoyed strong backing from the U.S. Therefore, the U.S. is not new to war in Yemen. It knows full well that war in Yemen is not an option given the prowess of the Yemenis.

kilometers to a vessel's journey.

Firms are reportedly sailing around Africa instead, which typically adds nearly 5,000 kilometers to a ship's journey.

That can take up to an additional 14 days for the cargo to reach its intended destination and raise the costs of shipping for consumers.

"War risk insurance premiums are on the rise naturally, but as vessels get rerouted around Africa, shipping supply will be tighter as cargoes travel longer," Frontline CEO Lars Barstad told Reuters. "That would put rates under a strong upwards pressure."

"For ships heading to the (Israeli regime) from Asia, the route around Africa is significantly longer - about 7,000 nautical miles and 10-14 days - than via the Suez Canal. This route also incurs higher fuel costs," Freightos CEO Zvi Schreiber said.

Maersk also said it would apply an "emergency risk surcharge" for all cargo discharged at Israeli terminals.

The regime's own container firm Zim said it had "witnessed an increase in the level of the threat," prompting higher surcharges on its ships, which included charges to Israeli-occupied ports from Asia.

Vessels that are, at the moment, still docking at the regime's biggest ports of Ashdod in the south and Haifa in the north have been switching off their tracking transponders to avoid detection, shipping sources said.

"Ship operators which have called, or plan to call, [at] Israeli ports should limit information access," an advisory issued by leading global shipping associations read. "Published information could be used by (the Ansarullah)."

The cost of shipping goods to the Israeli regime by sea has risen in recent days as some container lines pull out while others impose new surcharges, adding to the regime's supply chain pressures amid its war on Gaza, shipping sources said.

The regime, whose economy relies on seaborne trade, has not said whether it will cover the

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Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## The world waking up to the griefs of Palestinians

From page 1 ▶ If Israel represents an example of democracy and human rights, as the West claims, then why has it prevented Palestinians from deciding about their future and deprived them of having a peaceful, independent, and sovereign state of their own?

Apart from the Western colonial plot to create Israel on the native Palestinian lands in 1948 in which hundreds of thousands of people were driven out of their villages and cities, Israel has been continuously stealing what has been left of the remaining Palestinian lands in the West Bank and incarcerated 2.3 million people in the tiny sliver of Gaza.

In addition to bombarding and making land invasions into the Gaza Strip in the Past, this time, Israel is acting like a person who is terminally insane. It is shockingly violating the laws of war, proportionality, and international law in its war on Gaza.

The way Israel is behaving in Gaza has stunned the world. How one could imagine that the Palestinians in Gaza, whose descendants had been driven out of their lands in 1948, are now being starved as part of a punishment for the October 7 attack in which they did not have a role.

International law professor Richard Falk, who taught at Princeton University, says the situation created for the Gazans is "a nightmare beyond even Kafka's darkest imagining."

No matter the degree of the madness of the



ultra-right government of Netanyahu, the Palestinians, especially the youth, will not give in to Israel's crimes even if the Zionist regime, as it has declared, succeeds in weakening or eradicating Hamas.

The Israeli rulers, the former and current ones, have been ruthlessly suppressing the Palestinians. Yet, they have failed to cause a crack in the will of the Palestinians to get rid of the Israeli occupation, injustice, homelessness, repression, etc. Former British defense secretary Ben Wallace has warned the Netanyahu government's "killing rage" will fuel conflict for another 50 years.

"I am sure that the shame Benjamin Netanyahu feels for not foreseeing the October 7 attacks is deep, especially for someone who presented himself as a security hawk and tough guy. But perhaps that shame is driving him to lose sight of the long term. Wallace wrote in the Daily Telegraph.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## WORLD HEADLINES

### 97 Palestinian journalists killed by Israel in Gaza since Oct. 7

The death toll of Palestinian journalists killed by the Israeli army since Oct. 7 in Gaza has risen to 97, authorities in the besieged Palestinian enclave said on Tuesday.

"The number of journalist martyrs has risen to 97 since the start of the [Israeli] brutal aggression on Gaza," said the Gaza-based government media office.

The last journalist victim was Adel Zorob who was killed in Israeli overnight airstrikes on Rafah city, southern the Gaza Strip, it said.

The office accused the Israeli army of deliberately killing the Palestinian journalists with the aim "to obliterate the truth."

Israel has bombarded the Gaza Strip from the air and land, imposed a siege, and mounted a ground offensive in retaliation for a cross-border attack by Hamas on Oct. 7.

At least 19,667 people, more than 7,700 children, have since been killed, according to Gaza's health authorities.

The number of people wounded also rose to 52,586, the ministry said.

### U.S. Jewish leaders urge Biden to form post-war Israeli-Palestinian peace initiative

Twenty-seven prominent former leaders of the Jewish community urged U.S. President Joe Biden on Monday to declare his intention to pursue a post-war peace initiative that "establishes a path to end Israeli governance of Gaza and the West Bank."

The letter calls for a commitment to a two-state solution as well as pursuing a settlement freeze that would include dismantling illegal outposts and pushing concrete steps to end settler violence.

### U.S. has announced the formation of a coalition to patrol Red Sea

US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has announced the formation of a coalition to patrol the Red Sea in response to Yemen's army attacks on

commercial shipping.

In addition to the U.S., the coalition so far includes Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the Seychelles, Spain, and the UK.

The United States formed this coalition to counter attacks by the Yemeni army on ships moving towards Israel.

The Yemeni army has announced that in retaliation for the Israeli army's attacks on Gaza and the killing of Palestinians, it will not allow the passage of ships destined for the occupied territories.

A Kremlin spokesperson says Russia will not participate in the multinational naval task force announced by the US with the aim of stopping attacks from Yemen in the Red Sea.

"We are not taking part in the operation," Dmitry Peskov said.

### BRICS member charges Israel with war crimes – media

South Africa has submitted all necessary paperwork to the International Criminal Court (ICC), bringing war crime charges against Israel over its offensive in Gaza, President Cyril Ramaphosa said on Monday, according to local outlet Eyewitness News.

More than 19,000 people, mostly women and children, have been killed in Israeli air and ground assaults in Gaza since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to "eliminate" Hamas in response to the Palestinian militant group's October 7 cross-border attack, in which it killed about 1,200 people and took 240 hostages.

Last month, President Ramaphosa condemned the Hamas incursion during an emergency virtual BRICS+ meeting, accusing the militant group of violating international law. He insisted, however, that Israel is committing genocide and blamed the raging conflict on the Jewish state's occupation of Palestinian territory.

### Hamas rejects talks over captives until 'genocidal war' ends

Basem Naem, a senior official from Hamas, has said in a statement that the group was open to any initiative to end the war.

"We affirm our position of categorically rejecting to hold any form of negotiations over prisoners exchange under the continuing Israeli genocidal war," he said.

"We are, however, open to any initiative that contributes to ending the aggression on our people and opening the crossings to bring in aid and provide relief to the Palestinian people," he added.

## Insighters Turkey's support for Gaza heartwarming, but nowhere near enough

From page 1 ▶ during a speech at his country's parliament, calling the regime a "terror state" before asking for an investigation into its war crimes.

Erdogan's remarks prompted Israel to call back its diplomats from Ankara, but they once again failed to affect the extensive trade partnership between the two sides.

Israel is one of Turkey's biggest economic partners in West Asia. It contributed to a bilateral trade volume of over \$8.9 billion in 2022. For quite some time, Turkey's expanding commercial relations with Israel seemed to get overshadowed by its growing vocal support for Palestine. However, the latest Israeli war against Gaza has intensified criticism concerning Ankara's untrammeled economic collaboration with Tel Aviv.

A photo showing a substantial quantity of renowned Turkish coffee packs being distributed to Israeli forces sparked widespread controversy on social media last month. People called for the boycott of Mehmet Efendi's products while slamming the Turkish government for continuing its shipments to the occupied territories.

Some Turkish politicians have also turned

the screw on the state and spearheaded the demand for Ankara to halt shipments to Israel. "Shame on you for providing the food and fuel used by Israeli soldiers," former Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu voiced on X, formerly known as Twitter.

A prominent member of Turkey's Felicity Party also took a harsh stance against the country's longstanding commercial ties with Israel, accusing Erdogan of "complicity in the murder of Palestinian children".

Turkey is a key oil supplier for Israel. Reports show that an oil tanker registered in Malta transported 1 million barrels of Azerbaijani crude from Turkey's Ceyhan Port to Israel's Eilat Port in late October. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline supplies around 40 percent of Israel's annual oil consumption. Activists and politicians around the Muslim world believe closing this pipeline could deal a heavy blow to Israel amid its killing campaign in Gaza.

Also, Israelis continue to gobble up food that's made from agricultural produce imported from Turkey. No Turkish official has yet signaled that shipments to Israel would be stopped, or at least limited, in response to its mass slaughter of Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip.



Why Can't Turkey draw a line?

Erdogan is continuing with his rhetoric against Israel. He has so far described Hamas as a liberation movement and hit back at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, calling him the "Butcher of Gaza". But in contrast to his harsh words, the actions Erdogan can take to pile up pressure on Israel remain notably cautious.

"Turkey is a NATO member and it has close relations with Washington. Though the Turkish President has tried to acquire independent foreign policies in the past two decades, the truth of the matter is that Ankara has always had to be weary of Washington's response," Shoab Bahman, the head of the Institute of Contemporary International Studies in Tehran told the Tehran Times.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))



## Comprehensive atlas of gastronomy tourism unveiled



TEHRAN – A comprehensive atlas of gastronomy tourism in Iran was unveiled in a ceremony held at the headquarters of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts on Monday.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by Ali Darabi, the deputy minister for cultural heritage, Alireza Izadi, who presides over the ministry's heritage registration office, and Seyyed Mostafa Fatemi, who heads the department for domestic tourism development, among other officials and travel insiders.

Addressing the event, Darabi expressed gratitude for the imminent first anniversary of Yalda's UNESCO registration while underlining the importance of gastronomy tourism.

Izadi highlighted the atlas' importance, emphasizing its purpose to better introduce and preserve intangible heritage through meticulous collection and compilation.

Fatemi, for his part, underscored the significance of the guidebook, stating that various events dedicated to gastronomy have been initiated across different provinces to enhance the presentation of diverse culinary traditions.

"Over the past two years, more than 300 gastronomic tourism events have been held countrywide, some in collaboration with other countries," Fatemi said.

Moreover, Fatemi highlighted the establishment of a comprehensive database within the Iranian food federation. He proudly mentioned the formation of a national culinary team, a first-time initiative that secured a gold medal during its inaugural participation in Armenia.

Experts believe the comprehensive atlas marks a pivotal step towards preserving and showcasing Iran's diverse culinary heritage.

Iran, a land steeped in history, art, and culture, beckons travelers with not just its awe-inspiring landmarks but also a culinary journey that's as diverse as the landscapes

that adorn this ancient land. Among the many treasures Iran offers to visitors, its local foods and dishes stand tall as a testament to the nation's culinary heritage.

From Tehran's bustling streets to the remote villages nestled in the Zagros Mountains, Iran's cuisine paints a vivid picture of its cultural mosaic. Despite the influx of global culinary influences, Iran's culinary heritage remains deeply rooted in tradition.

In 2020, the Islamic Republic joined an online campaign launched by the UNWTO to promote gastronomy as an essential part of tourism. Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

No Persian meal is complete without an abundance of herbs. Every table is usually set with sabzi-khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten raw and by the handful. Persian cuisine is, above all, about balance — of tastes and flavors, textures and temperatures.

Experts believe that food tourism has become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism and, at the same time, has naturally positioned itself as an element of diversification of tourism with a high impact on the promotion of sustainable development at the regional and local levels.

Iran's local foods and dishes stand not just as a delight for the taste buds but also as a gateway to understanding its rich history, diverse culture, and the warmth of its people. Exploring Iran's culinary tapestry isn't merely a gustatory experience; it's an immersive journey that connects travelers to the soul of this ancient land.

In a world where borders blur and cultures intermingle, Iran's culinary heritage remains a distinct and cherished treasure—an invitation to savor the flavors that have stood the test of time.

## Ancient Scythians made leather from human skin, findings reveal

Scythians, an ancient group of nomadic people from as early as the ninth century BC, have left us with only a bit of information about how they lived day-to-day. We do know, however, that they were famous warriors for more than two thousand years.

Adding to their tough image, recent findings reveal that Scythian warriors used quivers made from the skin of their defeated enemies.

Living on the vast Pontic-Caspian steppe from about 700 to 300 BC, the Scythians were a mysterious group known for their horse skills and military strength. While there aren't many direct accounts from that time, the ancient Greek historian Herodotus provided us with some vivid details about the Scythians' battlefield actions.

Herodotus reported that the nomadic warriors had some unusual habits. They were known to drink the blood of their enemies and even scrape the flesh from their heads and use it as a hand towel. Herodotus also noted that some of them would remove the skin, along with the nails, from the right hands of their fallen enemies and use them to cover their quivers.

Up until now, we had to trust what Herodotus said about the Scythians' habits. However, a recent study has provided scientific support for these startling claims.

Scientists used various methods to examine

the proteins in forty-five leather samples from fourteen different Scythian sites in southern Ukraine. This helped them figure out which species each piece of skin came from.

Most of the samples turned out to be crafted from sheep, goat, cattle, or horse skin. This makes sense since the Scythians herded these animals, meaning their skin was easy to acquire. Additionally, these four species have tough skin, which is perfect for making leather items.

However, two of the quivers examined by the researchers were made with pieces of human skin.

The researchers were quite surprised to discover two pieces of human skin. The finding backs up Herodotus' assertions about the Scythians' use of their fallen enemies' skin for the purpose of making leather items, such as covers for their quivers.

This human leather was mixed in with the skin of other animals, creating a sort of patchwork quilt made from various species. The researchers explained that the more unusual human and carnivore leather was likely used in the upper sections of the quivers.

Moreover, this suggests each archer possibly crafted his own quiver using whatever materials were on hand at the time, according to recent research.

(Source: Greek Reporter)

## From reed flute to one-centimeter bags, glimpses of Hastijan's cave discoveries

TEHRAN – A special exhibition has been inaugurated at the National Museum of Iran showcasing peculiar findings from Hastijan's Zel Cave, ranging from a Sasanian-era reed flute to one-centimeter bags, sleeves, and pieces of personal ornamentation.

Over the past century, this cave has been looted several times by unauthorized excavators, and many of its Pahlavi-scripted leather inscriptions have been plundered, with a substantial number held in American and German universities and private collections, Mehr reported on Monday.

Now, a few artifacts retrieved from this excavation are on display to underscore their significance. Approximately 35 out of around 300 discovered items are exhibited on the sidelines of the Research Week programs by the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage.

Zel Cave, also known as Takht-e Qaleh, is situated within the rocky body south of Takht-e Qaleh Mountain, approximately 14 kilometers southeast of Delijan and 2.5 kilometers northeast of Hastijan village, on the right side of the asphalt road from Isfahan to Delijan, at an altitude of 1,280 meters above sea level. Its entrance stands at a height of 9 meters, accessible solely through mountaineering equipment and ladders. The cave comprises multiple passages and levels.

Due to unauthorized excavations, the existing architecture within the cave's passages has been damaged.



This cave, which had not been subject to archaeological exploration for 70 years, was excavated in October and November of the current year. Archaeologists concluded that the cave had been emptied of artifacts due to unauthorized digging between the 1950s and 1970s.

Artifacts recovered from this excavation phase include leather fabrics inscribed with writings, wooden tools, pottery fragments, and animal bone remains dating back to the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods.

**A part of a sleeve without an owner!**

Sections of a garment's sleeves, its owner's whereabouts, and their fate remaining unknown, are preserved amid the cave's stones and dry space. These sleeve ends are now showcased in museum display

cases along with a part of a shoe lacking its sole.

Other leather inscriptions from the late Sasanian and early Islamic periods have been found but remain unread. Now, some of these fabrics, leather inscriptions, and ropes made from goat hair are exhibited in the halls of the National Museum of Iran.

**The magic of a reed flute**

One of the findings pertains to a reed flute, remarkably similar in shape and composition to modern-day flutes. This flute indicates that Iran had written materials from the Sasanian era using this instrument. Archaeologists believe that this discovery has pushed back the history of reed-writing instruments by 1,400 years.

Inscribed pottery, a seal in the form of a rose, a ring seal, clay seals, part of a wicker basket, wooden tools, and combs, and a necklace

alongside the fabrics from that period constitute another section of the Hastijan's cave exhibition.

**A letter from brother to sister**

One of the most significant findings from this cave is related to a document written by a brother to his sister. This document, which is being kept at the Bancroft Library in Berkeley, California, demonstrates the importance placed on honoring women's status during the Sasanian period and afterward. The content of this letter has attracted considerable attention from archaeologists, researchers, linguists, experts, and even visitors.

This private letter dates back to the late Sasanian era or the beginning of the Islamic period and was probably written somewhere between Qom and Kashan. It indicates widespread literacy and writing among the Iranian populace before the advent of Islam.

In the document, it is written: May the pearls of my dear sister, whom God may make happier, bring every happiness to my sister. I, through the hand of fate, have sent a bottle of pure oil. Write to me about your health and well-being, and be reassured about my 'well-being' and my children.

However, the last line of this leather inscription, 'Send the oil soon,' remains a matter of dispute among archaeologists. Some claim this sentence exists in the leather inscription, while others refute its presence.

## 207 tourism projects underway in Mazandaran province

TEHRAN – 207 tourism projects, with an estimated value of 369,279 trillion rials (some \$738 million), are currently in progress in Mazandaran, the provincial tourism chief said on Tuesday.

The projects have been estimated to generate jobs for 15,395 individuals when inaugurated, Hossein Izadi added.

"Since the beginning of this year (March 21), 135 preliminary approvals for tourism facilities, predicting an investment volume of 126,723 billion rials and employment for 5,889 individuals, have been issued in the province."

The official said just in the last two months, around 40 preliminary approvals have been granted to investors in tourism areas, foreseeing an investment volume of 4,478 billion rials and the creation of 2,007 job opportunities.

Sandwiched between the towering Alborz

mountain range and the Caspian Sea, the picture-perfect province has long been a highly popular destination for domestic travelers. To cite an example, more than 1.8 million domestic travelers, the majority of whom were from Tehran, rushed the province on August 1 and 2. The consecutive days were declared national holidays by the government due to a heat wave that saw temperatures touch record levels across the country.

Its ever-present green landscapes provide a perfect backdrop for hiking, biking, and exploring. Visitors can take a stroll at the stunning Larijan hot springs, one of the most famous natural attractions in the region, and relax after a long day of exploring. Moreover, the varied nature of the province features plains, prairies, forests, and rainforests stretching from the sandy beaches of the Caspian Sea to the rugged and snowcapped Alborz range, including Mount Damavand, one of

the highest peaks and volcanos in Asia. More than 800 registered historical and cultural sites, 338 km of shoreline, mineral springs in jungles and mountains, waterfalls, and caves are among the major tourist attractions in the province.

When it comes to local cuisine, the Mazandaran region is a food lover's paradise as well. The region is well-known for its diverse cuisine made with fresh and organic ingredients. Many of its popular dishes have a flavorful mix of white rice, fish, and herbs, cooked with sour orange juice. Its distinctive dishes include: Aghuz Mossama (walnut dish), Tah Chin, Torsh Torshu, Do Pati, Espenasak, pumpkin soup, Esfenaj Marji, Kahi Anar (a dish made from pumpkins), Naz Khatun, Qaliye, Khoresht-e Alu and Aghuznun.

In the early 20th century, by constructing seven new roads and railways, the provinces of Mazandaran and Gilan became known as Shomal by all Iranians (meaning "the North" in Persian).

## Air travels in Iran reach 28 million in nine months



TEHRAN – Airports across Iran have seen some 28 million fliers arriving and departing since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), the head of the country's airport police has said.

"28 million air travels have been recorded in the country since the beginning of the year," CHTN quoted Mohsen Aqili as saying on Wednesday.

All air travels were conducted without the slightest disorder and in complete security, the commander said.

"Alongside ensuring travel security, preventing drug trafficking is entrusted to the airport police, and this year, the police have diligently intercepted all kinds of trafficking."

Currently, a combination of international and domestic technologies is at the disposal of airport police, which thoroughly supervise passengers, their scrutiny, and their security, Aqili explained.

"The most up-to-date security systems are stationed at the airports of the Islamic Republic,

ensuring that no concerns arise for people during air travel."

In a landmark decision, Iran agreed on visa exemptions for 32 nations last week. The visa-waiver program was approved for India, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Indonesia, Brunei, Japan, Singapore, Cambodia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Brazil, Peru, Cuba, Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Belarus, Lebanon, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Mauritania, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, and Seychelles. Moreover, the Iranian government agreed to abolish visa requirements for tourist groups from Russia.

The Islamic Republic has previously had visited cancellations with some countries like Turkey, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Oman, China, Armenia, Lebanon, and Syria, in various forms - unilateral, bilateral,

and group visa cancellations, including airport visas, which were implemented in some cases.

Based on an initial proposal, the tourism ministry requested abolishing visa requirements for passport holders from 68 countries, including Finland, Cyprus, and Luxembourg.

The latest data provided by the tourism ministry suggests the number of foreign arrivals in the country reached 4.4 million during the first eight months of the current Iranian year (started on March 21), which shows 48.5 percent compared to that of last year.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 27 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

## Notre-Dame Cathedral spire gets new rooster weathervane ahead of 2024 reopening

A rooster weathervane has been fitted to the new spire of Notre-Dame as work continues to restore the cathedral scheduled to reopen next year.

The sculpture is made of golden copper and replaces one that topped the Paris landmark before the fire that tore through it in 2019.

The original weathervane was recovered from the debris following the fire, but was damaged beyond repair.

The rooster is a national symbol in France.

Notre-Dame is one of Paris's most iconic buildings, with parts of it dating back to 1163.

The fire, which began amid renovation work, destroyed its roof and spire but left much of the building intact.

On Saturday, the new rooster was blessed by the Archbishop of Paris before being hoisted into place by a crane.

A number of relics, including fragments of what is believed by many to be Christ's Crown of Thorns,

were also placed inside.

The designer of the rooster, architect Philippe Villeneuve, said its "wings of fire" were a reminder that "the cathedral can be reborn from the ashes, like a phoenix".

The man in charge of Notre-Dame's restoration, Philippe Jost, described it as "an unparalleled human adventure".

(Source: BBC)



# Iranian students shine in UniKL International Robattle Competition

TEHRAN - Elite students from Iran ranked first in the UniKL International Robattle Competition (UIRC) 2023 and became champions in the category of Innovation.

The competition was hosted by Malaysia and held from December 10 -13, IRIB reported.

The event brought together more than 420 participants, under the age of 17, underscoring its widespread appeal and global representation.

The Iranian team consisted of 34 students from Isfahan, Kerman, Shiraz, Tehran, and Karaj. They competed with their Asian opponents from China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore.

Among the participants, 18 teams were contingent from Iran, and three teams were contingent from Indonesia.

UIRC 2023 featured 4 riveting categories - sumo Robot, Line following Robot, innovation, and technical report.

These challenges tested the mettle of participants' robotic creations, pushing the boundaries of agility, speed, and innovative problem-solving.

Adding an extra layer of excitement to the competition, the Innovation category encouraged participants to think outside the box, devising solutions to real-world problems that showcased the future of robotics.

A group of four students from the Iranian team was able to present the best design of the innovation league and was awarded first place in this section.

"The remarkable thing about the



Iranian team was the strong participation of talented girls and their unprecedented brilliance in the competitions," IRIB quoted Nader Nobakht, the head of the Iranian robotic teams, as saying.

## Intl. Olympiads achievements

The outstanding achievements of Iranian students in international Olympiads have placed the country among the top five nations in the world.

"The educational system of other countries is excellent, yet Iran is among the top 5 countries in the world in the international Olympiads, YJC quoted Elham Yavari, the head of the National Organization for the Development of Brilliant Talents (SAMPAD), as saying.

Yavari pointed to a reform-based plan approved by Iran's Ministry of Education in 2011 that defined a 20-year prospect for the elevation of educational standards and improvement of the educational system across the

country.

Iranian schoolchildren ranked second and grabbed six gold medals in the Second Open World Astronomy Olympiad.

The tournament was hosted by Russia at the Sirius Educational Center from November 14 to 22, IRNA reported.

Iran grabbed one gold medal and three silver medals at the 35th International Olympiad in Informatics, ranking seventh in the world among 91 countries.

The IOI 2023 was held in Szeged, Hungary, from August 28th to September 4th.

The International Olympiad in Informatics is an annual international informatics competition for high school students from various invited countries, accompanied by social and cultural programs.

It is one of the several international science Olympiads held annually around the world. Exceptional high

school students from various countries compete in the prestigious algorithmic competition to sharpen their informatics skills—such as problem analysis, design of algorithms and data structures, programming, and testing.

This year, the Iranian team took five medals, ranking third in the 16th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics held on August 10-20 in Chorzow, Poland.

IOAA is an annual event for students who perform very well academically around the world. Established in Thailand in the year 2006, it was an initiative by five countries including Thailand, Indonesia, Iran, China, and Poland.

Also, Iranian students took six medals, ranking 11th at the 64th International Mathematical Olympiad which was held in Japan on July 2-13, 2023.

IMO is the World Championship Mathematics Competition for High School students and is held each year in a different country.

The Iranian students who participated in the 53rd International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) succeeded in winning four silver medals and one bronze medal which placed the country 11th among 111 participating countries, ISNA reported.

The IPhO 2023 was held from July 10-17 at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center in Tokyo, ISNA reported.

In the 34th International Biology Olympiad (IBO), held in the United Arab Emirates from July 3-11. The IBO 2023 hosted 293 students from 76 countries.

## Tehran, Tripoli ready for cooperation in healthcare sector

TEHRAN - In a meeting with the deputy health minister of Libya, the head of the Food and Drug Administration of Iran discussed ways to cooperate on producing medical and pharmaceutical products.

During the meeting which was held in Tehran on Monday, the officials also agreed on sharing experiences in research, education, blood transfusion, emergency services, and technology.

"Iran is a leading country in the field of health so we are ready to cooperate with Iran in various fields of health and medicine," IRNA quoted the Libyan official as saying.

He added Libya is interested in benefiting from Iran's experience and knowledge in the field of pharmaceutical production, medical equipment, and research.

Heidar Mohammadi, Mohammadi, for his part, referring to the production of 99 percent of medicines in Iran, said, "Iran has achieved self-sufficiency in the field of medicine, medical equipment, food products, cosmetics and powdered milks."

"Currently, six vaccines for coronavirus are being produced by Iranian scientists, and we are ready to jointly produce these vaccines, medicines, and other devices in the health field, as well as transferring technology to Libya," he added.

He went on to say, "The export of Iranian vaccines to neighboring countries shows Iran's capabilities in the field of medicine and pharmaceutical production.

Moreover, Mohammad Hossein Niknam, the deputy health minister for international cooperation, highlighting the importance of health in the world said, "Iran is ready to identify fields of cooperation and expand collaboration in the field of health with Libya."

The parties put forward some proposals to further cooperation in the field of health. These proposals are to be reviewed and implemented in the coming days in meetings, during the visits of the delegation of the Libyan Ministry of Health to Iran's health centers.

### Africa welcomes Iranian medical equipment, medicine

In July, Iranian knowledge-based companies concluded contracts for exporting medical equipment and medicine to Africa.

Amir-Hossein Mir-Abadi, an official with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, said the African market is an attractive opportunity for Iranian knowledge-based companies, IRNA reported.

Referring to the recent visit of President Ebrahim Raisi to Africa, Mir-Abadi said works are underway for exporting 50 types of medical equipment and 10 medicines to Africa.

He touched on the President's visit to the House of Innovation and Technology of Iran in Kenya, saying: "The capacities and capabilities of Iranian

knowledge-based companies for exporting technological products were greatly appreciated."

He also pointed to the establishment of a medical and pharmaceutical equipment exhibition with the presence of more than 10 Iranian knowledge-based companies in Kenya.

In this exhibition, two Iranian companies succeeded in concluding contracts, he added.

The process of registering more than 50 medical devices and also two drugs for export to Kenya has been done, and the registration and process of exporting more than 10 other drugs to this country is in the implementation phase, he explained.

He listed agriculture, food, and livestock industries as among the fields that were highly regarded and needed by African countries.

"In his speech, the president of Kenya mentioned Iran's House of Innovation and Technology several times and the infrastructure created for technological cooperation between Iranian and Kenyan companies."

During his visits to Kenya and Uganda, President Raisi emphasized the need to bolster technological cooperation, Mir-Abadi stressed.

## Iran has achieved self-sufficiency in the fields of medicine, medical equipment, and food products.

In Uganda, an exhibition for knowledge-based products was opened, and in practice, an infrastructure has been created for boosting the export of knowledge-based products and the display of Iranian capabilities, the official added.

"The products presented there were mostly in the field of the food industry, agricultural industry, medicine and medical devices, chemical products and catalysts, building materials and products related to the field of livestock and poultry, as well as medicines and herbal supplements."

In January 2021, Iran opened its house of innovation and technology in Kenya and the first center in Africa.

The center serves as a base for the creation of innovative ideas, the commercialization of these ideas, and the export of Iranian knowledge-based products and services to the East African market.

Exporting technological products of Iranian knowledge-based companies is one of the important and key programs of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, and in this regard over the past years, with the support of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the Iranian houses of innovation have been set up in several countries to develop the global market for knowledge-based products.

These centers have already been set up in countries such as Russia, Turkey, China, Syria, Kenya, Armenia, Iraq, and Uzbekistan.

By supporting innovative ideas, and holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

## The voices calling for unity and solidarity should be louder than ever



From page 1 ▶ Too much sorrow, too much pain. Humanity must come together. Humanity must do better.

We - the United Nations in the Islamic Republic of Iran - joined such calls for unity and solidarity as part of our broader efforts to mark UN Day 2023 in the country; the 78th anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations coming into effect.

We decided to promote the core values that connect us all through the powerful language of art, and we organized a 10-day art exhibition showcasing pieces of art from 35 countries.

This exhibition, titled Humanity, Solidarity, One Planet, was held at - and with the support of - the Niavaran Cultural-Historic Complex in Tehran, from 8-17 December 2023.

In this exhibition, one common thread bound all pieces together: diversity. From an incredible and historical book of poetry to sculptures embedded in the unique traditions of indigenous people, paintings of different styles, calligraphy, photography, and more.

In one section, photo-replicas of gifts that have been provided to the UN Headquarters in New York were also on display, curated to reflect aspirations for peace and harmony.

This diversity is very much reflective of the current prevalent diversity of our world. And, the message that I personally took away was that our differences - as on display at this exhibition - should be a source of strength for our world, not a reason for division and conflict.

Our differences comprise our strength and advantage and they enrich us. Irrespective of the challenges around us, we cannot afford to forget that we are each part of a larger whole.

I found this exhibition important for two reasons. First, because of its theme, which recalls the core principles of the United Nations based on the UN Charter. It reminds us that despite our differences, we all belong to the same family called humanity.

The Charter is also based on the principle of solidarity, reflecting the aspiration that no country and

no person is left behind. And last but not least, the Charter calls on us to protect this precious one and only planet that we all call our home.

Second, the very exercise of bringing nations from various continents, cultures, and traditions together through art and culture, is in the spirit of the global solidarity that our world demands more than ever.

My hope is that this exhibit has provided a window to the incredible stories from so many corners of the world for the people of Iran. This is important because the UN is not only a forum of countries and governments but also a platform for people to come together.

Today is International Human Solidarity Day. So, what better occasion, to reflect on these values that have defined the work of the UN since its birth, than today, a day in celebration of unity in diversity, and promotion of solidarity?

In the words of the UN Secretary-General, "We are a divided world. We can and must be United Nations."

Let us unite our efforts to move towards a world where, finally, unity has triumphed over division, and that we live in solidarity, cherishing our common humanity, on a healthy and vibrant planet.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Iran produces nano-mask with 99.9% lethality to coronavirus

Researchers at the Institute of Materials and Energy affiliated with the Ministry of Science, produced nano face masks that can kill coronavirus by 99.9 percent.

According to ISNA, Abuzar Masoudi, a faculty member of the Materials and Energy Research Institute, said that since the fibers of the fabric are hydrophilic.

Therefore, the behavior of the virus is different, so different masks have been offered, including the FFP1 mask, which prevents up to 95 percent of the virus and up to 80 percent of the bacteria. While the N95 mask resists the virus up to 95 percent, and up to 100 percent of the bacteria.

## محققان ایرانی ماسک نانوباد قدرت کشندگی ۹۹.۹ درصد ویروس کرونا تولید کردند

محققان پژوهشگاه مواد و انرژی زیر نظر وزارت علوم، تحقیقات و فناوری ایران با استفاده از لایه نشانی نانو ذرات به پارچه به بیایی دست یافتند که قادر به تخریب ۹۹.۹ درصدی ویروس کرونا هستند. به گزارش ایسنا، ابوذر مسعودی عضو هیات علمی پژوهشگاه مواد و انرژی گفت بیاف پارچه آب دوست هستند.

از این رو رفتار ویروس متفاوت است و بر این اساس ماسک‌های مختلفی عرضه شده است که از آن جمله می‌توان به ماسک FFP1 اشاره کرد که تا ۹۵ درصد از ورود ویروس و تا ۸۰ درصد از ورود باکتری جلوگیری می‌کند. این میزان برای ماسک N95 تا ۹۵ درصد ویروس و تا ۱۰۰ درصد باکتری می‌شود.



## Turquoise mining in northeast Iran

One of the oldest turquoise mines in the world is located in Neyshabur, northeast Iran.

The mine is forecast to contain some 9,000 tons of turquoise with special color and high quality.





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## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*The envy of a friend is a sign of the weakness of his friendship.*  
**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon:12:02 Evening: 17:14 Dawn: 5:40 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:10 (tomorrow)

## Contemporary veteran artist Hossein Mahjoubi to be commemorated in Tehran



He has often said that his objective of representing the beauty of lush green nature is to remind the masses how greedy mankind has been in destroying the planet Earth.

He is concerned about destruction of the nature. "I am often preoccupied with a few issues. One of them is war that leaves so much destruction behind. The other issue is technological advancements and a mechanical life that have greatly contributed to human life yet taking him away from the nature and robbing him of his peaceful life by creating psychological traumas. Another thing is the man's role in destroying the nature as well as plant and animal species, whereas they have an equal right to live on Earth. Unlike natural waste that is easily absorbed by earth, human waste has turned into a significant threat for life on Earth," he has once said.

Minimalizing the nature and watching the landscape that everyone else simply takes for granted, Mahjoubi creates a world of his own. He is a modernist landscape painter whose paintings of Western landscapes also convey his signature style and evoke his birth place Gilan.

Paintings of Mahjoubi are not mere representations of the nature though. A proponent of abstract painting, the veteran artist attaches so much significance to space, rhythm, and movement. Tall poplars, horses and houses seem to be merely excuses for him to employ such visual elements. Fine lines of trees and soft fluid brushstrokes that depict horses evoke Persian painting. Using a modern visual language, Mahjoubi has incorporated into his work a stylistic application of lines and points that is seen in various schools of Persian painting.

He has held over 90 solo exhibitions and his works have been featured in more than group exhibits in and outside the country including Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and France.

TEHRAN-The ceremony to commemorate contemporary veteran Iranian artist Hossein Mahjoubi will be organized by the Society for the National Heritage of Iran in Tehran on Wednesday.

The well-known painter and architect will be honored at the event, which is to be held at the conference hall of the society at 3 p.m., Mehr reported on Tuesday.

Mahjoubi, started painting as a teenager and later studied painting at the faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran. He also took greenspace architecture courses.

His lasting works in the field of architecture include design and construction of Saei Park in Tehran in 1342 and supervising the construction of Mellat and Niavaran, Laleh, and Shafaq parks, as well as the first desert parks in Iran in the following years.

Mahjoubi, 93, and his paintings are known in Iran and the world. He is famous for his paintings of flowering trees and horses in nature. He is a modernist landscape painter whose works on western landscapes convey his signature style and evoke thoughts and memories of Gilan Province, his birth place.

## Cartoon of Day



Press  
Cartoonist: Saad Almuhammad from Qatar

# Art installation paying tribute to Gazan children

TEHRAN-An audio-visual art installation has been organized in Tehran's Haft-e Tir Square to pay homage to the martyr children in Gaza.

Entitled "Against Oblivion", the event is accompanied by musicians and singing groups, showcasing images of martyr children.

The event features a map of Palestine with children's shoes placed on it and the shoes are designed with video displays, names, and images representing the martyr children of Gaza.

Organized by Owj Arts and Media Organization, the performance will be running until Friday.

On October 7, Israel started a deadly war on Gaza after the territory's Palestinian resistance group, Hamas, launched a surprise retaliation strike against the



occupying regime, codenamed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm.

The Israeli regime's offensive has claimed the lives of nearly 18,000 individuals in Gaza, with a significant majority being women and children. Furthermore, over 49,000 people have suffered

injuries as a result.

UNICEF has recently announced that children and families in Gaza are caught in a catastrophic situation.

Thousands of children have reportedly been killed and

thousands more injured. Children and families in Gaza have been cut off from water, food, fuel, medicine, and other essentials, including safe access to hospitals, following escalating hostilities.

UNICEF has also called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and for unrestricted humanitarian access to allow aid to reach children and families in need, save lives and prevent further suffering.

The cost to children and their communities of the escalating violence will be borne out for generations to come. Children are dying at an alarming rate and being denied their basic rights. Civilians must be protected – children particularly – and all efforts must be made to spare them in all circumstances.

## Cinéma Vérité kicks off in Tehran

TEHRAN- The 17th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran's major international festival for documentary films, kicked off in Tehran's Charsou Cineplex on Monday.

The ceremony was attended by a number of cultural officials, documentarians and film directors, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Speaking at the ceremony, the secretary of the festival Mohammad Hamidi-Moqadam expressed his delight as he revealed the astounding collection of works submitted for this edition of the event.

Notably, the festival has witnessed a remarkable surge in the number of filmmakers participating, making it a true testament to their unwavering dedication amidst the escalating costs of filmmaking, he added.

"Out of the films we received, a distinguished 64 have been hand-picked for the illustrious national section."

"We were graced with a plethora of exceptional films that captivated our discerning judges for the international section," he said and added: "Five outstanding global works were chosen for the Gaza panel."

## Dutch festival picks Baraheni's second film for competition section

TEHRAN-Iranian filmmaker Oktay Baraheni's second feature film "The Old Bachelor" has been selected by the 53rd International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR), which will take place in various locations in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, from January 25 to February 4, 2024.

Written and directed by Baraheni, the movie will have its world premiere at the Dutch event, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

Hamed Behdad, Leila Hatami, Hassan Pourshirazi, Mohamad-Reza Davoudnejad, Reza Rooygari, and Babak Hamidian are in the

cast among others.

Featured in the Big Screen Competition section of the festival, the film will compete with nine other movies from Portugal, Finland, Italy, India, Kazakhstan, and Cambodia among others.

A film director, writer and producer, Baraheni, 49, is a graduate of the fine arts from York University in Toronto, Canada. His successful career includes several short films and a documentary about the well-known Iranian poet and writer Reza Baraheni (his father).

He also explained that advisory committees were involved to ensure diversity and followed the same international standards as the previous year and this approach allowed room for critique, experimentation, and trial and error.

He also highlighted the prominence of youth in this edition, emphasizing the challenges they face. He encouraged them to recognize that success in documentary filmmaking requires patience, sacrifice, and a respect for the past. "Experienced filmmakers play a crucial role in shaping the future for these aspiring young creators."

During the opening ceremony, the audience was treated to a rare glimpse into Iran's Film Archive. The collection included behind-the-scenes footage from Dariush Mehrjui's film "The Cow" and previously unreleased material from Hussein Azadi's documentary "For Freedom." Other unseen documentaries and images related to the Islamic Revolution were also showcased, providing a unique historical perspective.

In an effort to reach a wider audience and

enhance accessibility, this year's festival films will not only be screened at Charsu Cineplex but also at the Film Museum of Iran. This decision aims to expand the reach of documentary cinema, offering more opportunities for enthusiasts to engage with these compelling stories.

The 17th Cinéma Vérité has been organized by the Documentary & Experimental Film Center (DEFC). It aims to represent the history and culture of Iranian Islamic society and present a real picture of what human is facing today in his/her individual and social life through documentary films.

With this objective, the special focus of this edition of the festival is on two national and international challenges: the water crisis and population issues.

A total of 2,454 documentaries from around the world have been submitted to the event including 615 works are from Iran and 1,839 foreign documentaries from Turkey, China, the U.K., Russia, Poland, Spain, Egypt, Argentina, Indonesia, and Germany among others.

The festival will run until December 23.

## Killed in an Israeli airstrike, this Gazan poet broke through the blockade's borders

On December 7, Palestinian poet Refaat Alareer was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Gaza City along with his brother, sister and her four children. In a tribute to the poet, CNN noted that he was killed a few weeks after saying that he and his family had nowhere to go.

CNN, one of many international media outlets to eulogize Alareer, added that he had asked that if he died, could CNN publish the last thing he told the network's Sana Noor Hak? The message: His father, brothers, sisters and his own family all had to evacuate. They deliberated whether to stay together or separate, so that if something happened, at least they wouldn't all die.

The 44-year-old Alareer, who was married with six children, was also a professor of English literature at the Islamic University of Gaza. His writings have been translated into several languages.

"Alareer was one of the leaders of a young generation of writers in Gaza who chose to write in English to tell their stories," The Guardian wrote, adding that he had written a raft of eulogies for Gazans on social media during the war. Time magazine noted the last audio message Alareer sent in before he was killed: The world needed to know what was happening in Gaza.

Before October 7, the name Alareer meant nothing to Israelis, but readers of his tweets on X now know about his criticism of Israel, some of which triggered harsh responses. Alareer denied

that Hamas raped anyone on October 7 and mocked claims of babies being beheaded during the massacre (claims that turned out to be false).

He said all this was Israeli propaganda. Following these and other statements, some people said the Israeli military should kill him.

Years ago, Alareer strove to tell the world what was happening in Gaza; it was difficult to get permission to leave and tell people in person. He started writing short stories in English; 15 such efforts by young writers were collected in the 2014 book "Gaza Writes Back," edited by Alareer. He was also a founder of the initiative We Are Not Numbers, which since 2014 has been collecting English-language short stories by young Gazans.

These efforts made Alareer better known in the West. In 2015, he edited the book "Gaza Unsilenced," whose essays and poems document the ways young Gazans contended with the blockade by Israel and Egypt. He taught young Gazans to use their writing as a tool of Palestinian resistance. He gave them a platform and provided guidance not just on writing but on life in general.

Last year, he wrote a piece for the English-language anthology "Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire."

According to Gazan editor Jihad Abusalim, Alareer's passion was English; for him, language was a tool for battling the academic, cultural and

intellectual blockade on Gaza. A few days before his death, Alareer posted a poem he had written in 2011. "If I must die, let it be a tale," he wrote. Since his death, young Palestinians have been quoting this line at demonstrations. In a tribute to Alareer, the Scottish actor Brian Cox read the poem in a video posted on X.

*If I must die,  
you must live  
to tell my story  
to sell my things  
to buy a piece of cloth  
and some strings,  
(make it white with a long tail)  
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza  
while looking heaven in the eye  
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze—  
and bid no one farewell  
not even to his flesh  
not even to himself—  
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up  
above  
and thinks for a moment an angel is there  
bringing back love  
If I must die  
let it bring hope  
let it be a tale*