



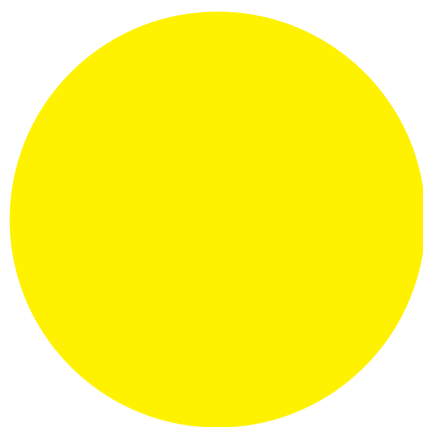
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US paying for Iraq's sovereignty breach



By Hassan Hanizadeh
Middle East affairs expert

EXCLUSIVE OPINION

The attack on Ain al-Asad Airbase serves as an inevitable consequence of the United States' violations of Iraqi sovereignty. It should be viewed as a strong reaction

from the Iraqi nation, expressing their discontent with American interference in their country's affairs. While such attacks have occurred in the past, recent weeks witnessed the Americans attempting to assassinate several leading Iraqi figures and militia leaders, further enraging various Iraqi factions, tribes, and nomadic groups. The Americans have set up 18 military bases across Iraq, pressing ahead with unilateral actions without proper coordination with the central government in Baghdad. Such actions have fomented insecurity and driven a wedge among Iraqi clans. Naturally, insecurity, acts of terror, and, most significantly, the violation of Iraq's national sovereignty and independence have fueled dissatisfaction among Iraqis from all walks of life. The central government appears to be incapable of effectively dealing with the US presence, as the Americans even meddle in the financial affairs of the government—a clear affirmation of their infringement upon Iraq's autonomy. At the same time, reports indicate that the Americans are overseeing the training of ISIS forces in Iraq, potentially for future utilization. Such alarming reports have left Iraqi citizens and political factions, who have already suffered from the violence and crimes of ISIS, deeply concerned.

Hence, the attacks on the Ain al-Asad Airbase have been launched in response to the destabilizing acts and interference by the United States in Iraq's internal affairs. They also serve as retaliation for the recent assassinations of Iraq's popular figures by the US. It is foreseeable that unless the unlawful US presence in Iraq persists, coupled with their arbitrary conduct, such retaliatory attacks will continue to occur.

Both the US and Israel have bases in Iraq's Kurdistan region, against the will of Iraqi officials, where they plot to damage the amicable relations between Iran and Iraq. This has led to border tensions between Tehran and Baghdad, as it directly contravenes the agreements between Iran and Iraq. The US military presence in Iraq has further complicated the already precarious situation within the country.

Moreover, the Americans use the Iraq-Syria border to secretly transfer military equipment to Israel. Such American support for Israel, particularly in the face of the ongoing atrocities in Gaza, stokes anti-US sentiments among the Iraqi Muslim population toward America. However, the primary root cause underlying the multitude of attacks on American bases in Iraq can be traced back to the United States' violation of Iraq's national sovereignty and independence.

Iran Daily's interview with former UN special rapporteur

Israel a Colonialist Solution to a European Problem



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EU ports urged to team up to fight 'very creative' drug smugglers

Drug smugglers in the EU have become so "very creative" that the bloc's seaports should join forces to combat their ever-changing tactics, Belgian Interior Minister Annelies Verlinden told AFP.

That idea is to be promoted Wednesday when Verlinden, along with the European Commission, meets top representatives from around 20 EU ports, Europol officials, other interior ministers and sea transport executives to launch the European Ports Alliance.

The inauguration will take place in Antwerp, the Belgian port city that is the main gateway for cocaine trafficked into Europe.

Despite stepped-up screening, cocaine seizures at the vast Antwerp port each year breaks records. Last year, 116 tons of the drug were intercepted there. And Antwerp is frequently rocked by violence linked to gangs fighting over the hugely lucrative smuggling. The traffickers "are always very creative and that is our challenge - they pay no heed to laws on working time, right to privacy, borders," Verlinden said.

"So, we need to cooperate to be effective," she said. "We need to create this network to combat organised crime."

The port alliance aims to crack down on both the smuggling and the infiltration of the ports by criminal networks.

Private sector buy-in is needed because the steps to be taken could impact legal trading, so a good "balance" needs to be found, the Belgian minister said.

The partnership has a goal of harmonising security measures, to reduce the ability of the gangs to cast around for ports with laxer checks - and also to avoid trading companies moving away to ports with less red tape and security delays.

"We know that the companies are very flexible and, if something isn't working, that they can go elsewhere in a heartbeat. We also want to avoid that," Verlinden said, stressing how economically crucial Antwerp's hub was to Belgium. "In Antwerp, we have a record number of seizures, but we never know what we didn't manage to seize," the minister said, listing reinforced measures with security services, customs officers and a port security corps.

Antwerp's hub now boasts a mobile scanner that passes over selected containers. Five other scanners are to be delivered this year.

Around 100 more customs officers are also expected to be assigned to the port.

According to Belgium's customs service, only 1-2 percent of arriving containers are scanned.

FATF delists Iran from Recommendation 7

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has agreed to remove Iran from the list of Recommendation 7, backing down from its previous decision, IRNA reported.

In a letter of protest to the FATF on January 8, Iran's Finance Minister Ehsan Khandouzi called for the Islamic Republic of Iran's name to be removed from Recommendation 7 and other documents related to UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

Following Khandouzi's letter, FATF President T. Raja Kumar announced the reforms and changes in its standards related to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 to all member countries and the global network of fight against money laundering. FATF Recommendation 7 requires countries to implement targeted financial sanctions to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their financing in compliance with UN Security

Council resolutions, IRNA reported on Monday.

UN Security Council Resolution 2231—adopted in 2015 to implement the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - terminated previous UN resolutions on Iran (1373, 1747, 1803, and 1929) but introduced restrictive measures, including targeted financial sanctions.

The resolution's provisions would be applicable to Iran based on one of two conditions: up to eight years after the approval of the JCPOA, or upon the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) verification.

Given the JCPOA's approval date of October 18, 2015, the first condition applies to the Islamic Republic. Iran received a note from the UN Security Council Secretariat on October 19, which declared an end to restrictions the council had imposed on Iran's missile program.

The FATF is a non-bind-

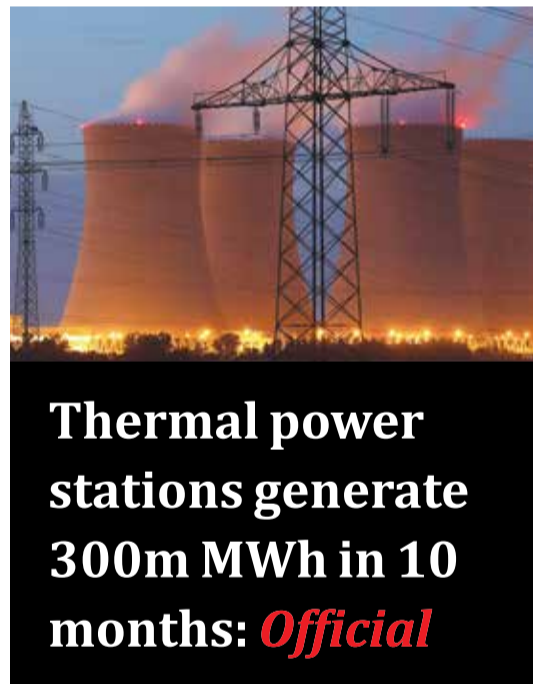


ing regulatory institution formed by the United States and its Western allies, supposedly to counter

terrorism financing and safeguard the integrity of the international financial system.

Critics, however, say the organization reflects the interests of powerful countries seeking to impose

preferences on other jurisdictions, and depends on funds from Western governments.



Thermal power stations generate 300m MWh in 10 months: Official

The electricity generation of Iran's thermal power plants reached 300 million megawatt/hour in the first 10 months of the current Iranian year (started March 21, 2023), announced the deputy head of Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) for strategic affairs.

Iran's generation of electricity from the thermal power plants between March 21 and December 22, 2023 registered a three-percent hike compared to the same period a year earlier, Nasser Eskandari stated, according to IRNA.

In addition to meeting the electricity demands in the power grid of the country, thermal power plants have played a leading role in providing sustainable energy for subscribers nationwide, he added.

Of the total electricity generated, over 53 percent pertains to the combined-cycle power plant units, he said, putting the electricity generated by the combined-cycle power plant units in the country from March 21 to December 22, 2023 at 163 million MWh, showing an about four percent rise compared to the same period in 2022.

Converting gas-fired power plants to the combined cycle power plants is one of the most efficient methods to improve the efficiency of the thermal power plants in the country, Eskandari added.

Iran's non-oil exports to Pakistan hit \$1b in 2023



Pakistan's Ministry of Commerce statistics indicated that Iran exported about \$1 billion worth of non-oil products to the South Asian country in 2023, registering a 13 percent growth compared to a year earlier.

Pakistan imported \$994 million worth of goods from Iran in 2023, the report said, according to Tasnim News Agency.

The country imported \$834 million

worth of non-oil goods from Iran in 2022.

Pakistan's official exports to Iran in 2023 were only \$155,000. Pakistan exported \$21,000 worth of products to Iran in 2022.

Statistics show that Pakistan's export of products to Iran has not exceeded \$200 million in recent years, and it has reached an almost zero level since 2020, registering a declining trend.

Iran exports \$100m worth of medicine in 10 months: TPOI

The director general of the America and Europe Affairs Office of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) said \$100 million worth of drugs and medicine were exported so far in the current Iranian year (started March 21, 2023).

Ahmad Firouzi described the role of trade centers in offering high-quality services for the promotion of trade and economic ties as "important and effective,"

adding that the trade centers have played a more significant role in the incumbent administration, reported Mehr News Agency. About 50 trade centers of the country are active in the world, he said, noting that Iran has more than one trade center in some countries.

The official pointed to the lucrative market in Poland in the fields of importing and exporting medicine,



and noted that this European country imports \$8.5 billion worth of medicines annually. Firouzi said that Poland also exports \$4.5 billion worth of medicines per year to other countries. Poland and Norway are considered as emerging markets for Iran's pharmaceutical and technology-based

companies, he said, adding that half of Iran's medicine exports are destined to European countries.

IRNA also reported on Sunday that researchers at the University of Tehran have produced a polymer widely used in medical and pharmaceutical fields to meet domestic needs amid problems caused by Western sanctions restricting the import of medicines and medical supplies to the country. The copolymer, called poly lactic-co-glycolic acid or PLGA, is an environment-friendly chemical compound that is widely used in medical, pharmaceutical and research fields, including in producing surgical sutures, said Mohsen Shahrousvand, the chairman

of the Polymer Engineering Department at the Caspian Technical Faculty of the Tehran University.

He said that PLGA is also used in producing drug delivery systems (DDS) required for certain medicines that are currently imported to Iran. Because those DDSs are not produced domestically, Iranian pharmaceutical companies have to import PLGA at a high price, he added.

PLGA is globally priced at 100 dollars each gram for research activities and 10 to 20 dollars for medicinal purposes, Shahrousvand said, adding that the Iranian knowledge-based company in charge of producing PLGA is currently working on getting required permissions to

sell the product in internal and international markets. He said that Iranian researchers have already managed to produce PLGA in labs.

Now, with the mass production of this polymer, the current monopoly on its production by a handful of countries in the world will be broken as well, Shahrousvand noted, adding that PLGA is currently produced by the US, Germany, the Netherlands, China, and India.

Iran has been subjected to Western sanctions in the past years, which have mainly targeted its financial sector, making it difficult for the country to import medicines that are not produced domestically.

Discover pristine beauty of Sangdeh Forest in Mazandaran Province

Iranica Desk

If you're looking for a picturesque stroll, consider a visit to the pristine forests of Savadkuh in Mazandaran Province, particularly Sangdeh Forest. Walking through the enchanting beech forest, breathing in the fresh forest air, and listening to the melodious singing of the birds can help you forget the fatigue of daily work and activities.

Sangdeh Forest, with its towering trees reaching up to 40 meters high, is a top destination for nature enthusiasts and tourists. Situated near the village of the same name, this beech forest is a pristine attraction for nature tourism and sightseeing.

The journey to Sangdeh village, surrounded by mountains and forests, is as beautiful, vibrant, and joyful as the village itself. From the village to the start of the forest hiking trail, the dirt road can be navigated using local vehicles. Along the trail, you'll encounter tall beech trees arranged in a special pattern, with the ground blanketed in red and yellow leaves, creating an indescribably beautiful autumn landscape.

The forest is home to a diverse array of trees, shrubs, vegetation, animals, and microorganisms (including fungi, bacteria, and viruses), along with non-living natural elements such as soil, water, temperature, and wind, all of which have combined to create a unique and recognizable environment and habitat. In natural forests, trees of various sizes grow in irregular patterns, and self-growing herbs are plentiful. The forest's veg-

etation moderates the climate and contributes to rain through evaporation and transpiration, with almost three percent of the Earth's rain attributed to forests.

The trees in Sangdeh Forest are part of the ancient Hyrcanian forest, which dates back to the Jurassic period, some 40 million years ago. This region was known as Hyrcania (meaning "land of wolves" in ancient times).

The wood of the beech tree, abundant in Iranian forests, is used for a variety of purposes, including building rural homes and producing various items. While relatively rare in the plains, beech trees are abundant in the forests and highlands. Pure beech forests can be found in Gilan and Mazandaran provinces, at altitudes of over 2,000 meters above sea level. The shade-tolerant beech tree boasts abundant branches and leaves.

Young beech saplings are vulnerable to severe cold, particularly spring frost, which can destroy their leaves. Excessive heat is also detrimental to their growth. While not thriving in cold areas, beech trees yield better results in warmer regions. With shallow roots, they are suitable for forests with thin and calcareous soils.

In dense forests, beech trees bear fruit from sixty to eighty years of age, while in open spaces, they bear fruit from forty to fifty years. In fertile soil they bear fruit every five or six years, and in unfavorable weather, they bear fruit every fifteen years. The fruit of this tree contains five to seven percent oil. The trunk of the beech

tree can grow very large, reaching up to 35 meters in height, with a diameter of one and a half meters.

Beech trees have a lifespan of 200 to 250 years. Their wood is used for making doors, windows, railway sleepers, tables, chairs, sofas, chests, and more, and its consumption is higher than other woods. Fine and good-quality silk fabrics are made from its cellulose, and its charcoal is of high quality.

Near the forest there are several other attractions and natural landmarks in Mazandaran Province that are worth visiting, including Lake Shurmast, Arfaa Deh Forest, and the stargazing site in Alasht. We recommend that if you have time, definitely visit these attractions as well.

The Sangdeh forest can provide a memorable experience for people with different tastes. The forest offers various enjoyable activities, including the following:

Special facilities are not provided in the forest area. Therefore, you are recommended to prepare your necessities before the trip, or in the village of Sangdeh, and consider the necessary arrangements for your other needs (such as drinking water, sanitary services, etc.) in advance.

If you plan to stay overnight in Sangdeh Forest, you have two options: The first option is camping, which is only recommended for experienced people. For this purpose, be sure to bring a tent, sleeping bag, dry food, a first-aid kit, and other necessary camping equipment. The second option is staying in eco-lodges and rural houses.



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Reviving gachmeh-weaving, a boon for culture and economy of Boyer-Ahmad

Iranica Desk

Gachmeh-bafi (gachmeh-weaving) is an exclusive handicraft of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, combining the arts of kilim and carpet weaving. This beautiful and enduring art is the product of the skilled tribeswomen of the region. The process involves weaving the edge and pattern using the carpet-weaving method after the warping.

The tribes of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province use gachmeh for underlay and decoration of their tents and houses, making the handicraft production an important economic and employment opportunity for its weavers. The market for gachmeh is thriving, and it holds a special significance in the region.

The art of gachmeh-weaving was founded by a woman named Naneh Ghol Ghol in the city of Sepidar during the Qajar era. Her legacy lives on, and with the establishment of weaving workshops as well as



IRNA

paying loans, and granting of licenses to enthusiasts, gachmeh-weaving has flourished in the city of Boyer-Ahmad.

The raw materials for gachmeh-weaving include cotton wool yarn for the weft, cotton yarn for the warp, and dye, while the weaving tools include a kilim weaving comb and a knife. This newly born art is indicative of the taste and richness of the tra-

ditions and customs of the inhabitants of the land, and it has become a valuable hand-woven product of Boyer-Ahmad.

Resuscitating gachmeh-weaving

Kazem Rahmani, head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of the city of Boyer-Ahmad, stated that gachmeh-weaving is an



tebyan.net

indigenous and authentic art form, which was revitalized in the past years.

He highlighted the significance of registering gachmeh-weaving on Iran's National Heritage List, adding that the establishment of four gachmeh-weaving workshops is an important initiative taken by the government to revive this art.

Rahmani mentioned that 100

gachmeh-weaving enthusiasts in Boyer-Ahmad have received training, with 20 of them actively involved in the production of this handicraft. He emphasized that providing training courses and offering permits, and low-interest loans are integral parts of the program devised for supporting the handicraft.

In addition, he noted that a to-

tal of 16,000 artisans active in the handicraft sector have been identified in Boyer-Ahmad, with 12,000 of them holding the necessary permits.

Deputy head of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization Mehrnosh Behniazadeh said the production of gachmeh is limited, but some quantities of this product are exported to foreign countries.

She emphasized that many Iranian consumer goods are manufactured using foreign products, and stressed the importance of promoting the cultural value of Iranian handicrafts, such as gachmeh, to encourage their widespread use among the population.

The official mentioned that these handmade products are shipped to foreign countries from other provinces. Additionally, they are showcased and sold at domestic exhibitions in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province at the national level.

Israel a colonialist solution to a European problem

Richard Anderson Falk: The Zionists' vision of a Jewish homeland has always carried within it the current attempts to erase the Palestinians from their own homeland



By Ali Amiri
Cultural critic

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Richard Anderson Falk is an esteemed American professor emeritus of international law at Princeton University. Throughout his career, he has made significant contributions to the field of international law, as well as the United Nations. He has an extensive publication record which includes authoring, coauthoring, editing, and coediting numerous books, among them scholarly ones about the Palestinian issue. In 2008, Falk was appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Israeli violations of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. His efforts to raise awareness about the suffering of Palestinians and the human rights violations committed by Israel have made him the target of defamation campaigns by Zionists. In this extended interview, the 93-year-old professor not only contextualizes the crimes committed by Zionists but also shares his firsthand experiences of Israel's attempts to defame and silence him. He also points out that the rise of anti-Zionist sentiments in the Western population could mark the beginning of the end for Israel's apartheid regime.

IRANDAILY: At first, there's a need to contextualize for our readers Israel's urge to silence pro-Palestinian voices and the voices of the critics of Israel, both in the US and globally. As someone who has experienced it firsthand, can you please explain that urge?

RICHARD A. FALK: Israel is very sensitive to international criticism, especially by critics associated with its base of support in the colonial settler and European colonial states, which together comprise the White Global West. It is also sensitive to pro-Palestine lawfare associated with international institutions, especially the UN, International Court of Justice (ICJ), International Criminal Court, and the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) because its legitimacy as sovereign state partly rests on the claim to be the only democratic state in the Middle East, a (mis)perception reinforced by US at the highest levels of governments pointing to 'shared values' that were at the core of 'the special relationship,' overlooking the crimes against the indigenous majority Arab population of Palestine involving massive expulsion in 1948 and exploitative dominance since at least 1967 over the Occupied Palestinian Territories of East Jerusalem, West Bank, and Gaza.

I was the target of Israeli smears and defamatory attacks during the period I served as Special Rapporteur on Israeli Violations of Human Rights in Occupied Palestine in the period of 2008-2014. The attacks involved slanderous accusations of antisemitism on my part, and also sharp criticism of the UN as biased due to its disproportionate attention given to alleged Israeli wrongdoing.

The UN responded defensively doing whatever it could to distance itself from me, especially during the time that Ban Ki Moon was Secretary General. He explained my remaining as Special Rapporteur by reminding Israel and the world that I, as an unpaid appointee of the Human Rights Council, was not part of the UN civil service and hence beyond his disciplinary reach. This was a virtual admission that the Israel defamatory criticism were justified.

Attacking its critics became a policy tool used by Israel and its Zionist support structure in Global West countries with increasing frequency for two reasons: the weakness of Israel's substantive position creating an incentive to shift the conversation from a focus on its severe violations of law and morality to the credibility of the critics a process that I have called 'the politics of deflection' in which the attention of the media is diverted to the messenger rather than the substantive message about Israel's violations, and the related intimidation directed at activists

and others who dare promote non-violent solidarity initiatives such as BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions). No comparable effort was made to stifle such criticism or activism of South Africa during the apartheid period even though the governments of the US and UK were strategically aligned with apartheid South Africa during the Cold War years. The presence of a pro-Israeli Zionist network that shields Israel from criticism by 'weaponizing antisemitism' in varying ways that cause imbalances in the media and infringements upon academic freedom within educational institutions of the West.

How can we explain Israel's tight grip on public discourse on Israel-Palestine issue for so long? How could it accumulate so much power and influence within different states and international entities? If there is a financial aspect to it, how powerful is it?

This is a complex, fundamental question. Israel established its legitimacy as a new state shortly after World War II in the twilight of the European colonial order, imposing its sovereign claim on a resident Arab majority that identified as belonging to the nation of the Palestinian people. The Zionist project of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine was a dream of a small dedicated movement in late 19th century Europe that became a political project when the UK pledged its support in the Balfour Declaration (1917) for a Jewish Homeland in Palestine, a purely colonial interference with the self-determination rights of people. The statehood of Israel became an attainable goal during the British mandate period in which the UK administered Palestine as an International Mandate on behalf of the League of Nations, and encouraged Jewish immigration, a process accelerated in response to the rise of fascism in Europe, climaxing of lethal antisemitism in the Holocaust that put to death as many as six million Jews in Europe, and caused a sense of guilt on the part of Western liberal democracies for their meager efforts to oppose such genocidal behavior. The British ended their mandate, partly in reaction to Zionist anti-British terrorism dumping on the newly formed UN the daunting challenge of finding a solution to the surging internal conflict in Palestine between settler Jews and indigenous Arabs. The UN relied on British experience with its divide and rule style of colonialism. It established a commission that made recommendations centering on a proposed partition of Palestine into two states with Jerusalem as both their common capital and an international city. The Zionist Movement accepted

partition, the representatives of the Palestinian people rejected it. Against this background Israel was established in the aftermath of a war internal to Palestine between Jewish militia forces and the armed forces of neighboring Arab countries, ending with an agreed 'green line' that was treated as a provisional internal boundary between the two peoples that enlarged Israel beyond the UN partition territorial allocations, giving the Jewish state 78 percent of Palestinian territory rather than the 45 percent contained in the UN plan, and dividing Jerusalem between the two peoples, leaving the control of Palestinian side of the green line to Jordan and Gaza to Egypt.

Even with its military victory and Western diplomatic and economic support, Israel was founded in a context that contained challenges to its legitimacy as a state from its region and indeed from most of the Global South. From the outset Israel realized that its security and status in international life would be greatly helped if it could control the public discourse that shaped international public opinion. Its fragile security was highlighted by the fact that in its early years it was surrounded by hostile larger states that perceived the establishment of Israel in their midst as a territorial, racial, and religious intrusion, a colonialist solution of a European problem at the expense of the Islamic, Arab bloc of countries.

Israel's success in discourse control was greatly aided by the extent of Jewish influence in the large media platforms of the West, especially in the US and UK, as facilitated by the wealth of Diaspora Jews mobilized after Hitler to support the establishment and development of a Jewish state as a place of secure sanctuary in the event of future outbreaks of lethal antisemitism. This propaganda tool was used in sophisticated ways to create great admiration for Israel as liberal democracy in the Western mold and a modernizing success in contrast to the supposedly backward, stagnant, impoverished Palestinian society. In contrast, Israel was portrayed as socially progressive, economically successful, and even managed to make 'the desert bloom.'

At first, there were tensions in the West between support for Israel and maintaining reliable access to the huge oil and gas reserves of the region. Israel was able to resolve these tensions with its victory over its Arab adversaries in the 1967 War, as well as occupying the territories allocated to the Palestinians in 1948. And most symbolically important it unilaterally incorporated Jerusalem as the eternal capital of Israel, an initiative that to this day is not accepted by many governments.



After 1967 Israel shifted its relationship to the US from that of strategic burden to strategic partner, and became a militarily significant actor throughout the region. Israel was allowed to acquire nuclear weapons in defiance of the non-proliferation treaty arrangements. After the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 Israel became even more valuable as the fall of the Shah meant the loss of the only other strategic ally of the West in a region strategically important for energy and control of major trade routes.

At the same time as Israel's apartheid regime engaged in dehumanizing modes of controlling Palestinian resistance and Israel became increasingly clear about its unwillingness to reach a political compromise achieved by bilateral negotiations, resulting in new assaults on its legitimacy became more widely questioned even in Western societies, but not by governments. This process was recently further intensified when the Netanyahu coalition government with Religious Zionism party took over in January 2023, and immediately greenlighted settler violence on the West Bank, violated the sanctity of Muslim sacred sites (especially Al-Aqsa Mosque), and displayed maps at the UN and elsewhere with only Israel present between 'the river and the sea.' Throughout this period Israel's control of the discourse, reinforced by the Zionist well funded network in the Global West used its discourse dominance to demonize its critics. It was helped by the adoption of the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Association) definition of antisemitism, which treated any sharp criticism of Zionism or Israel, however justified by evidence and reasonable, as antisemitism. With possibly tragic irony such false branding seems to be producing real antisemitism in the world in its authentic form of hatred of Jews as an expression of hostility towards the behavior Zionism and Israel.

We hear or read a lot these days about the fact that Israel is an apartheid regime; what is apartheid, and how does Israel qualify as an apartheid state?

Most understandings of the nature of apartheid accept the definition set forth in Article II of the 1973 Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, which reads, "For the purpose of the present Convention, the term 'the crime of apartheid,' which shall include similar policies and practices of racial segregation and discrimination as practised in southern Africa, shall apply to the following inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them:

(a) Denial to a member or members of a racial group or groups of the right to life and liberty of person: (i) By murder of members of a racial group or groups; (ii) By the infliction upon the members of a racial group or groups of serious bodily or mental harm, by the infringement of their freedom or dignity, or by subjecting them to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; (iii) By arbitrary arrest and illegal imprisonment of the members of a racial group or groups.

"(b) Deliberate imposition on a racial group or groups of living conditions calculated to cause its or their physical destruction in whole or in part; (c) Any legislative measures and other measures calculated to prevent a racial group or groups from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country and the deliberate creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups, in

particular by denying to members of a racial group or groups basic human rights and freedoms, including the right to work, the right to form recognized trade unions, the right to education, the right to leave and to return to their country, the right to a nationality, the right to freedom of movement and residence, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association; d) Any measures including legislative measures, designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the members of a racial group or groups, the prohibition of mixed marriages among members of various racial groups, the expropriation of landed property belonging to a racial group or groups or to members thereof; (e) Exploitation of the labor of the members of a racial group or groups, in particular by submitting them to forced labour; (f) Persecution of organizations and persons, by depriving them of fundamental rights and freedoms, because they oppose apartheid."

It was made clear in the understanding of the crime that although South African racial system of exploitative subjugation of the African indigenous population was the model for declaring apartheid to be a Crime Against Humanity, it is applicable to any arrangement that satisfies the treaty definition. It is so regarded by the International Criminal Court, see Article VII(1)(j). In Article VII(2)(h) the nature of the crime is clarified as such that "the crime of apartheid" means inhumane acts of a character similar to those referred to in paragraph 1, committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime."

In the years since 2017 a series of reports sponsored by the UN and issued by widely respected human rights NGOs have confirmed the credibility of earlier allegations that the treatment of Palestinians qualifies in various ways as apartheid. (See detailed reports of UN ESCWA; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; B'Tselem). To some extent, the criminality of Israeli apartheid has been temporarily subordinated to allegations of genocide following the Hamas attack of October 7, 2023. If Israel's [attempts] falls short of its current genocidal effort to coerce Palestinians to leave their homeland, then concerns about Israel's policies and practices of apartheid would undoubtedly be renewed.

Given the recent momentum that the pro-Palestinian movement has gained, especially in the US, do you see any chance for a change in the essence or form of the US support for Israel in the short-term?

There has definitely been a shift in public opinion among the citizenry in Global West countries, but the governments, above all the US and UK continue their support of Israel despite spreading opposition to the devastation of the civilian population of Gaza, making the small crowded region totally unlivable without a massive reconstruction and relief effort.

The governments that continue to support Israel even after its recourse to genocide are influenced by a mixture of strategic interests and what might be called identity politics. The strategic and identity issues converge in relation to Israel as it combines strong military capabilities with a civilizational identity as a high-tech modern society with principal ties to the West, and having a series of hostile Islamic countries and non-governmental movements as its adversaries.



If a wider war breaks out it will be viewed as 'a clash of civilizations' recalling Samuel Huntington's 1993 prediction of the world after the end of the Cold War. Part of this overall picture of stability of Israel's relationship with the liberal democracies of the West despite its unabashed endorsement of genocide in addressing the Palestinian people is best explained by the effectiveness of Zionist funding of political opponents of elected officials critical of Israel, and financing of Israel friendly politicians in these countries where donor leverage remains strong at the national level. Also important, is the absence of organized Palestinian lobbying capabilities in the West that could somewhat diminish pro-Israeli foreign policy biases. If Israel succeeds in implementing its population transfer scenario in Gaza, forcing surviving Palestinians to become refugees in the region, ethnic cleansing will be added to the criminality of genocide in the form of a Crime Against Humanity. This would almost surely lead to mobilization of anti-Western forces throughout the Middle East, adding dangerous new stresses to the fraying bond tying the Global West to Israel. Also, uncertainties as to Israel's reaction to being treated as 'a pariah state' subject to boycotts and even sanctions, and surging militancy among global solidarity groups dedicated to a humane future for the Palestinian people, including more than seven million refugees and exiles living nearby and around the world.

As you've mentioned in your preface to the book, 'We Will Not be Silenced', in Israel's war against Gaza, "the people' become the enemy" and, therefore, to legitimize such a war, one has to dehumanize that people. How has Israel gone on about doing so from 1948 onwards? As Edward Said pointed out in his book, *Orientalism*, the colonial intellectual portrayal of the Arab is a prelude to dehumanization and a sense of Western civilization superiority, especially as assessed through an optic of technocratic modernity. As earlier discussed, Israel was established as the European colonial order was collapsing and in the aftermath of a monstrous genocide that the liberal democratic countries in the West did little to stop until Germany and Japan committed aggression imperiling their overall global hegemony. The early Zionist anticipated the current attempts to erase the Palestinians from their homeland as expressed by the dehumanizing saying: "a land for a people without land for a land without people."

What has complicated life for Israel is that the indigenous nationalism of the Global South as well as the defeat of European colonialism created a sense of the legitimacy of resistance, even armed resistance that has been incorporated to a controversial extent into contemporary international law. The recognition of the inalienable right of a people to national self-determination results in the set-

tlar colonial authority movements as being lawless undertakings, the overt enemy of indigenous populations as denigrated as backward or non-existent. If such tactics do not remove such obstacle, then the settler colonialist move by stages until reaching the genocidal conclusion that unless the indigenous population is utterly marginalized, exterminated, or expelled it will prevail over time. In this sense the settler colonial failed projects of South Africa and Algeria are instructive on the central point that superior military capabilities will not bring the settler regime reliable security, nor will its cruelty and exploitative policies exhibited by its imposed dominance. Despite the darkness of the skies over Palestine at present, it has never been closer to achieving some kind of victory and liberation that was unimaginable just a few months ago.

As my last question, I want to know, in your opinion, what hope is left for Palestinians? They are witnessing, on a daily basis, what seems to be a deadlock, created by the US's unconditional support for Israel, and they have no recourse to the international law.

The best hope for Palestine at this time is the escalation of civil society activism to stop the genocide, as sought by South African application to International Court of Justice, and to isolate Israel in meaningful ways through cultural, sports, and all types of boycotts.

Within the foreign policy of the Global West and in relation to Israel itself there is no basis for a just and sustainable peace being promoted diplomatically and strategically by leading governments or effectively by the UN. Geopolitical primacy in situations of strategic priority, as is the case for the US and Israel, overrides the guidance of international law and the morality of inter-governmental co-existence. This, short of geopolitical reassessment there is no realistic prospect for any sufficient change in the commitment of the West to Israel's security as it seeks to pursue it.

As mentioned before, only civil society activism can change the calculus of strategic interests in the West and Israel in the short run of 5-10 years. As the transformation of South Africa made clear, the impacts of becoming a pariah state in a variety of international arenas made it willing to transform the state from an apartheid regime to a constitutional democracy that facilitated transition by outstanding African leadership, a sympathetic world public opinion, and a focus on racial issue and political rights, which respecting the economic rights and social status of the displaced white settler elite. While Israel for all sorts of reasons cannot be compared to South Africa, there exists a zone of uncertainty that may generate some comparable solution that is above all able to find a framework based on racial/religious equality and a coexistence based on respect for the rule of law and human rights for all.

Infantino condemns 'abhorrent' racism in Italy, England



Milan's Mike Maignan (L) talks to referee Fabio Maresca after allegedly being racially abused by Udinese fans in Udine, Italy, on January 20, 2024.
● JENNIFER LORENZINI/REUTERS

AFP – FIFA president Gianni Infantino called for worldwide stadium bans for fans and "automatic forfeits" for teams whose supporters hurl "abhorrent" abuse following racist incidents in Italy and England on Saturday.

"The events that took place in Udine and Sheffield on Saturday are totally abhorrent and completely unacceptable," he said in a statement.

Fans aimed monkey chants at AC Milan and France goalkeeper Mike Maignan during Milan's dramatic 3-2 win at Udinese, with the game temporarily halted.

Coventry midfielder Kasey Palmer accused Sheffield Wednesday fans of doing the same towards him during their English Championship clash, which his team won 2-1.

"We need all the relevant stakeholders to take action, starting with education in schools so that future generations understand that this is not part of football or society," Infantino said.

"As well as the three-step process (match stopped, match re-stopped, match abandoned), we have to implement an automatic forfeit for the team whose fans have committed racism and caused the match to be abandoned as well as worldwide stadium bans and criminal charges for racists.

"FIFA and football shows full solidarity to victims of racism and any form of discrimination. Once and for all: No to racism! No to any form of discrimination!"

At Udinese, referee Fabio Maresca stopped play during the first half and a livid Maignan stormed down the tunnel with his teammates.

"They're ignorant people... You can be booed or whistled when you're away from home, that's normal, but what happened today has no place in football," Maignan told Sky Sports. Play resumed after about five minutes.

Italy, a country governed by a coalition led by the far-right Brothers of Italy party, is rife with fascist football fan groups, in particular among the hardcore "ultras" who make most of the atmosphere at stadiums.

Last week Lazio were hit with a one-match stand closure after supporters directed monkey chants at Romelu Lukaku during their team's Italian Cup win over local rivals Roma.

Persepolis racing against the clock to name new manager

Sports Desk

When Persepolis rounded off a sensational season with a domestic double back in May, thanks to a derby victory over archrival Esteghlal in the Hazfi Cup final, no one in the Reds camp thought the following campaign would be dominated by the biggest turmoil for the club in years.

Less than eight months on, however, rumors and speculations keep swirling around the Persepolis bench as the club's search for Yahya Golmohammadi's successor drags on.

Having steered his team to three league crowns and an AFC Champions League final in four years, the decorated manager stepped down from his role on the first day of the new year following a run of only three wins in 12 outings – which saw Persepolis crash out of the Asian elite clubs' competition group stage – to put a lid on months of rift with chairman Reza Darvish.

Few of the Reds faithful rued Golmohammadi's departure after a familiar face in Branko Ivanekovich – widely regarded as the linchpin of the team's domestic success over the past seven years – was named as the leading candidate to make a dramatic return to the dugout, but the Oman head coach – also a three-time league champion and an ACL finalist with Persepolis – turned down the offer due to "family and personal" reasons.

With the club confirming that the next manager will come from overseas, several names have been brought up in the media to save the Reds' season and perhaps em-



● ALI SHARIFZADEH/IRNA

bark on another glorious chapter for the team.

An assistant to Carlos Queiroz in Real Madrid and the former manager of Porto and Sporting CP in his home country, Portuguese José Peseiro has been among the rumored candidates in recent days. Peseiro is no stranger to Asian football as he is also an ex-coach of a number of clubs in the Middle East, including Al Hilal, Shar-

jah, and Al Wahda, while he was in charge during Saudi Arabia's ill-fated 2010 World Cup qualification, though he led his team to a first, and only to date, victory over regional rival Iran in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

The Portuguese, however, is unlikely to return to the Iranian capital's iconic venue as he is committed to a contract with Nigeria at the ongoing Africa Cup

of Nations, where his team is second in Group A.

Gianni De Biasi has also been linked to the job but his unimpressive CV might be against the 67-year-old Italian being given the role.

Having had mediocre spells at Serie A clubs Torino and Udinese as well as LaLiga sides Alaves and Levante, the former coach of the Albania national team was last in

charge of Azerbaijan, before being sacked last November following a run of 10 wins in 39 matches.

With the Iranian top-flight resumption right around the corner – once Iran's Asian Cup campaign comes to an end – and Golmohammadi's Brazilian No.2 Osmar Loss Vieira acting as a caretaker in the training sessions, Darvish will be desperate to appoint the new boss in the coming days.

Australian Open 2024:

Ruthless Djokovic, Sinner cruise into quarter-finals

BBC – Top seed Novak Djokovic moved ominously into the Australian Open quarter-finals with a ruthless thrashing of French 20th seed Adrian Mannarino.

Djokovic, chasing a record 25th Grand Slam title, claimed a dominant 6-0 6-0 6-3 win in one hour and 44 minutes.

"The first two sets were the best I have played in a while," Djokovic said.

The 36-year-old will face 12th seed Taylor Fritz in the quarter-finals after the American beat last year's finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas.

Later on Sunday, Italy's Jannik Sinner secured his last-eight spot with a 6-4 7-5 6-3 win over world number 15 Karen Khachanov.

Sinner is one of the favorites to challenge Djokovic in Melbourne. Until Mannarino won the second game of the third set, Djokovic was on course to be the first player to win all three sets without dropping a game at a Grand Slam since 1993 – a feat never achieved at the Australian Open.

When Mannarino did clinch the game, the Rod Laver Arena crowd cheered wildly and the Frenchman broke into a huge smile.

"I really wanted to lose that game because the tension was building up in the stadium," Djokovic joked afterwards.

"I needed to get that one out of the way so I could refocus on what I needed to do to close out the match. I played great from the first to the last point."

An 11th title in Melbourne would take Djokovic clear of Margaret Court's all-time record number of 24 Grand Slam wins.

Djokovic had dropped sets in the first two rounds and said he was struggling with an illness but found form against Tomas Martin Etcheverry in the third round.

Can anyone stop Djokovic?

Fourth seed Sinner continued to underline his title contender credentials as he came through a tough test against Russia's Khachanov.

Sinner was far from his best but managed to survive nine break points and hit 46 winners to come out on top after two hours and 34 minutes on Margaret Court Arena. "Usually when we play it's a tough match, he's [Khachanov] an incredible player, I tried to stay focused, mentally and physically," Sinner said.

"Every match has its own story. Today I won so I'm very happy. We have quite a similar game style, so it's a kind of ping-pong. I tried to mix it up a bit today."

The 22-year-old, who is yet to drop a set in the tournament, is

on course to meet Djokovic in the semi-finals.

Sinner won four titles in 2023 and ended it on a high by leading Italy to a first Davis Cup title for 47 years.

He defeated Djokovic twice in the space of 10 days in 2023 – in the ATP Finals round-robin and Davis Cup semi-finals.

However, Djokovic did claim a dominant victory over Sinner in the final in Turin to win a record seventh ATP Finals title.

Up next for Djokovic is Fritz, who beat Greek seventh seed Tsitsipas 7-6 (7-2) 5-7 6-3 6-3 to reach his first Australian Open quarter-final.

Fritz and Djokovic met in the third round of the 2021 Australian Open, with the Serb winning in five sets. Djokovic has won all eight of their previous matches, including a straight-set victory at the 2023 US Open.

When asked in his news conference about an answer Djokovic gave about the possibility of playing Fritz, the American said: "If I beat someone eight times in a row, I'd be pretty confident playing them, too. I can't really fault him for that."

"I think that I have a lot more level to bring than I've previously brought against him. Hopefully I can play another match like today."



Novak Djokovic serves against Adrian Mannarino during their fourth-round Australian Open match at Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne, Australia, on January 21, 2024.
● ANTHONY WALLACE/AFP

Iran vows revenge for Israeli assassination of IRGC advisers in Syria

International Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has strongly condemned the assassination of five Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) advisers in an Israeli missile strike in Syria, saying such "cowardly" acts will not go unanswered.

"Certainly, the continuation of such terrorist and criminal acts, which are indicative of the increasing failure and defeats of the illegitimate Zionist regime in achieving its malicious goals and the depth of its frustration with the fighters of the resistance front, will not go unanswered by the Islamic Republic of Iran," Raisi said in a statement on Saturday, Press TV reported.

The IRGC said earlier in the day that four of its members serving on a military advisory mission in Syria were assassinated in an Israeli strike on a residential building in Damascus. It said later that a fifth adviser had succumbed to his injuries.

"The recent crimes of the usurping Zionist regime, which.... are committed under the shadow of the support of hegemonic countries, chief among them the United States, and the silence of international organizations will undoubtedly be another stain on the black record of all self-proclaimed human rights advocates," the president said.

He also offered his condolences to the families of the martyrs, the Iranian lead-



• PRESS TV

ership, and the entire nation.

Iran maintains an advisory mission in Syria at the request of Damascus to help the war-torn Arab country fight off foreign-backed militants who have been fighting the democratically-elected Syrian government since 2011.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said Iranian military advisers will continue their anti-terror mission in the region in defiance of Israel's "cowardly" assassination operations. "Undoubtedly, the Zionists' defeat against the will of the people of Gaza cannot be compensated by such cowardly terrorist acts," Amir-Abdollahian said in an X post on Saturday.

Also, Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser

Kanaani strongly condemned the "murderous and aggressive" Israeli attack, adding that the repeated violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria and the escalation of aggressive and provocative attacks on various targets in the Arab country by the criminal and child-killing Zionist regime shows the helplessness of Tel Aviv on the battlefield against resistance forces in Gaza and the West Bank in the past hundred days, and a desperate attempt by the regime to spread instability and insecurity across the region.

The Israeli regime has ramped up its airstrikes on Syria since early October, when it launched the ongoing genocidal war against the Gaza Strip.

US forces injured in attack on base in Iraq: Official

International Desk

US personnel suffered minor injuries and a member of Iraq's security forces was wounded in an attack on Iraq's Ain al-Asad air base on Saturday, a US official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The US military's Central Command said in a statement that the base was hit by multiple ballistic missiles and rockets from inside Iraq. The statement did not confirm the extent of any US injuries but said personnel were being evaluated for traumatic brain injury, Reuters reported.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, an umbrella group of anti-terror fighters, in a statement published on its Telegram channel claimed responsibility for the attack on the Ain al-Asad air base, located about 160 kilometers (100 miles) west of the capital Baghdad, on Saturday evening.

It said the base was targeted by a large number of rockets and the projectiles "directly hit their targets."

Since the Israel-Hamas war began in October, the US military has come under attack at least 58 times in Iraq and another 83 times in Syria by militias, usually with a

mix of rockets and one-way attack drones.

The US has 900 troops in Syria and 2,500 in Iraq on a mission to advise and assist local forces trying to prevent a resurgence of Daesh, which in 2014 seized large parts of both countries before being defeated.

A senior Iraqi commander has said the Baghdad government is determined to end the presence of foreign troops from the US-led military coalition purportedly formed to fight the Takfiri Daesh terrorist group.

The spokesman for Iraq's Joint Operations Command (JOC), Brigadier General Yahya Rasool underscored that with the presence of capable Iraqi forces, the US-led military coalition in Iraq is no longer needed.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani on Thursday repeated his call for the US-led coalition to depart his country, stressing that Baghdad demands the immediate withdrawal of the forces due to their destabilizing activities.

"It is also a necessity for preserving constructive bilateral relations between Iraq and the coalition countries," the Iraqi prime minister noted.

UN chief raps Israel for 'heartbreaking' deaths, including 152 staffers'

Iran criticizes 'unfair' UNSC veto mechanism

International Desk

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Sunday denounced Israel for the "heartbreaking" deaths of Palestinian civilians, including 152 UN staff members in Gaza.

Addressing the opening of a summit of the G77+China in the Ugandan capital Kampala, he called the deaths "a heartbreaking tragedy" for the organization, for their families, and for those they were serving in Gaza.

Guterres was in Kampala to attend the summits of G77+China and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

"Israel's military operations have spread mass destruction and killed civilians on a scale unprecedented during my time as secretary-general," Guterres said.

Lamenting the humanitarian situation in Gaza, Guterres said, "People are dying not only from bombs and bullets, but from lack of food and clean water, hospitals without power and medicine, and grueling journeys to ever-smaller slivers of land to escape the fighting."

He also called it unacceptable to resist statehood for the Palestinian people. Guterres added that the refusal to accept the two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians is totally unacceptable, saying denying Palestinians the right to statehood "would indefinitely prolong a conflict that has become a major threat to global peace and security."

Guterres also warned against letting the war spread to other areas of the Middle East. "We must do all we can to prevent spillover of this conflict across the region - in the West Bank, across the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon, and in Syria, Iraq and the Red Sea."

The Gaza Health Ministry said the death toll in the besieged strip has surpassed 25,000 people.

NAM document

A document released late Saturday at the end of the NAM summit included a condemnation of "the illegal Israeli military aggression on the Gaza Strip, the indiscriminate attacks against Palestinian civilians, civilian objects, the forced displacement of the Palestinian popula-

tion" and called for an immediate and durable humanitarian cease-fire.

On the sidelines of the summit of the NAM in Kampala, the UN chief held a meeting with Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber on Saturday.

The Iranian official criticized the veto power existing in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), calling it an unfair mechanism that weakens the UN position.

"If such a power had not existed, many Palestinian women and children would have not been killed because of Security Council resolutions vetoed by the United States," he added.

He also dismissed the idea of a two-state solution to the conflict between Palestine and the Zionist regime, stressing that the Palestinian people must decide their own fate through the ballot box.

"The Islamic Republic, therefore, rejects a two-state solution to the issue of Palestine and believes that the only democratic solution to the issue is referring to the public votes of all Palestinian people as their right to self-determination without the others making decisions for that nation." Hailing the UN secretary general's stances against the Israeli regime's crimes in Gaza, Mokhber highlighted regional countries' serious concern about the spread of war with the continuation of the Zionist atrocities.

Guterres said that Iran should act as one of the main pillars of what he called a new Middle East where the country should play an active role in promoting peace.

'Immediate halt' to aggression

Meanwhile, Palestinian resistance group Hamas called on Sunday for Israel to immediately stop its "aggression" in Gaza and said only Palestinian people would decide the territory's future. Hamas said in a 16-page document justifying its October 7 attacks in southern Israel that it wanted "the immediate halt of the Israeli aggression on Gaza, the crimes and ethnic cleansing committed against the entire Gaza population."

Reuters, AFP, Tasnim, and Mehr news agency contributed to this report.

TWO STAGE PUBLIC BID FOR SELECTING THE EPCF CONTRACTOR

Phase one of Parsian 1000MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (around 500 MW) on EPCF Basis in Parsian Special Economic Zone

INVITATION NO: 2002090246000006

Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) with representation of Parsian Jonoub Energy Intensive Industries Development Company (PEIIDC), intends to international two stage public bid for Parsian Combined Cycle Power Plant Project. To do this, after qualification evaluation, a short list of eligible experienced companies will be prepared and on next stage they will be invited to technical evaluation.

Interested companies/consortiums (potential Applicants), those who duly organized, registered, existing and having grade one certificate of EPC for power generation sector and or having grade one or two in design (engineering) and grade one in construction certificate of power generation sector from Iran Plan and Budget Organisation for local Applicants or similar certificate from pertinent authorities in their countries, which to be verified by the respective consulate of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for overseas Applicants, are hereby invited to obtain qualification documents, within ten (10) calendar days after the second posting of this invitation notice, from www.setadiran.ir with invitation No. 2002090246000006 dated January 22, 2024.

Deadline for submitting the completed prequalification documents is specified in the Prequalification Questionnaire. It should be noted that Bid process will be done via portal of the government's electronic procurement system (SETAD) available on www.setadiran.ir website. Therefore, Applicants shall conduct the registration process in the mentioned portal and shall receive the electronic signature certificate in order to participate in the Bid, if they have not been a member before.

Bid in brief:

1 Company: Parsian Jonoub Energy Intensive Industries Development Company (PEIIDC) on behalf of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO)

Contact Information:

Bids Department, Parsian Jonoub Energy Intensive Industries Development Company (PEIIDC), No. 1713, 1st floor of National Iranian Steel Company building, Vali-e-Asr Avenue (Above Valiasr Sq.), Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Postal Code: 1594643118, Tel: +98-21-88900172
Email: parsian_ccpp_tender@psez.ir

2 Invitation subject: Two stage public Bid of Parsian Combined Cycle Power Plant (500±10% MW) project on EPCF Basis (phase one)

3 Project's estimated price: Two hundred eighty-five million (285,000,000) Euros.

4 Bid Bond: 1,850,000 Euro The Bid Bond shall be in the form of a bank guarantee issued by an Iranian bank acceptable to the Company According to related circular (governmental transactions guarantees regulation) dated 24/08/1394 as per Iranian calendar (15/11/2015) No. H50659 T/123402. The Bid Bond shall be extendable and shall be valid for six (6) months after the Bid Closing Date.

5 Source of Fund: Up to 15% of the Project costs will be supplied by the IMIDRO's internal resources (according to the IMIDRO's resolution No 1182/2-5 dated 17/01/2023 as per Iranian calendar 27/10/1401) and at least 85% of the Project costs shall be financed by the contractor. The contractor will receive ten (10) equal semi-annual consecutive instalments starting 6 months after issuance of the Provisional Acceptance Certificate of the Plant. According to Company decision, the instalments will be paid in Iranian Rial (IRR). The exchange rate will be calculated based on three working days' average exchange rate before the payment date, which to be issued by central bank of the Islamic Republic of IRAN via ETS (<http://www.sanarate.ir/>), Euro Bid (TT).

6 Place and deadline for receiving documents: The tender documents will be available from 8:00 a.m 2024 January 22, Monday, to 4:00 p.m 2024 February 3, Saturday, through portal of the government's electronic procurement system (SETAD) available on www.setadiran.ir

7 The place and deadline: for submitting the proposal End of office hours, at 4 p.m. 2024 March12, Tuesdaythrough Uploading to the government's electronic procurement system (headquarters) at www.setadiran.ir The physical documents of the tender documents can be delivered after uploading to the electronic procurement system of the government (headquarters) only envelope A to the bidder's address (listed in paragraph 1). Upload and send the rest of the documents, including the quality assessment envelope B and C, only through portal of the government's electronic procurement system (SETAD) available on www.setadiran.ir

8 The place and time of opening the tender envelope: 2024 March 13, Wednesday to the address: listed in paragraph 1

9 Bid Validity Period: Bids shall remain valid for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days after the date of Bid opening.

Organs of 21-year-old Iranian boy save lives of seven



IRNA – Mehdi Emami's organs were donated through a transplant after his brain death was confirmed at a hospital in northeastern Iran. The donation saved lives of seven individuals, said Morteza Rasti Sani, the director of Sabzevar University of Medical Sciences in Sabzevar in Razavi Khorasan Province, on Sunday. After a car incident, Mehdi was rushed to the hospital but he could not regain consciousness and faced loss of brain function, Rasti Sani said. One of his kidneys and his pancreas were transplanted into the body of a 31-year-old man. His other kidney was transplanted into a 40-year-old woman. Mehdi's liver was donated to a 20-year-old patient, his corneas were transported to a national eye bank of Iran and parts of his skin were given to a hospital to treat burn victims, Rasti Sani added.

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Iranian Kazemizad wins American music award



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian composer Aydin Kazemizad was honored at the Akademia Music Awards in the United States for his album 'Hajastam O Vajastam.' Kazemizad is the first Iranian musician to receive the Akademia Music Awards

in the Children's Music Album category, according to reports from International Affairs Department of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. Speaking about the album, Kazemizad expressed, "This album is the result of years of effort, study, and my experience in teaching and direct education of children through music, move-



ment, and play, aiming to enhance various skills and abilities in children." He emphasized his dedication to creating and arranging a variety of practical songs for children. Kazemizad added, "In this album, I tried to create and arrange songs from the perspective of children and their needs, while also understanding children's music on a global scale. I am very happy that the outcome

of these efforts has brought global recognition to me and my country in the field of children's music. I hope this result becomes a turning point in the global production of music for Iranian children." "This buoyant album from Kazemizad is the kind of children's music many of us unconsciously sought out long ago. 'Hajastam O Vajastam' is a heartfelt masterpiece

with phenomenal guitar and instrumental stylings," the album description reads. The audio album 'Hajastam O Vajastam' was composed by Kazemizad, with lyrics by Mustafa Rahmandoust. The album is tailored for children aged four and above. Kazemizad has already won the Bronze Medal for 'Hajastam o Vajastam,' at the Global Music Awards.

Iranian researchers produce polymer vital for making medicines

Iranian researchers at the University of Tehran have produced a polymer widely used in medical and pharmaceutical fields to meet domestic needs amid problems caused by Western sanctions restricting the import of medicines and medical supplies to the country. The copolymer, called poly lactic-co-glycolic acid or PLGA, is an environment-friendly chemical compound that is widely used in medical, pharmaceutical and research fields, including in producing surgical sutures, said Mohsen Shahrourvand, the chairman

of the Polymer Engineering Department at the Caspian Technical Faculty of the Tehran University, IRNA wrote. He said that PLGA is also used in producing drug delivery systems (DDS) required for certain medicines that are currently imported to Iran. Because those DDSs are not produced domestically, Iranian pharmaceutical companies have to import PLGA at a high price, he added. PLGA is globally priced at 100 dollars each gram for research activities and 10 to 20 dollars for medicinal purposes, Shahrourvand said, adding that the Iranian

knowledge-based company in charge of producing PLGA is currently working on getting required permissions to sell the product in internal and international markets. He said that Iranian researchers have already managed to produce PLGA in labs. Now, with the mass production of this polymer, the current monopoly on its production by a handful of countries in the world will be broken as well, Shahrourvand noted, adding that PLGA is currently produced by the US, Germany, the Netherlands, China, and India.

Iranian cinemas thrive with sales of \$2.8m in one month



Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian cinemas reported sales exceeding \$2,842,460 in a one-month period from December 22 to January 20. The cities of Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad, Isfahan, and Karaj emerged as the country's top-selling cinema hubs. Iran's cinema sales experienced a growth of over 100,000 compared to the previous month. The highest sales day was on January 12, with over \$200,000 in revenue. Moreover, December 26, attracted the highest audience, with 238,289 attendees. Among the top-selling films in December were 'Hotel,' leading with sales exceeding \$775,600, followed by 'Hawaii' with sales surpassing \$590,460, and 'Beach Villa' with sales over \$503,960, claiming the first three spots in this month's sales chart.

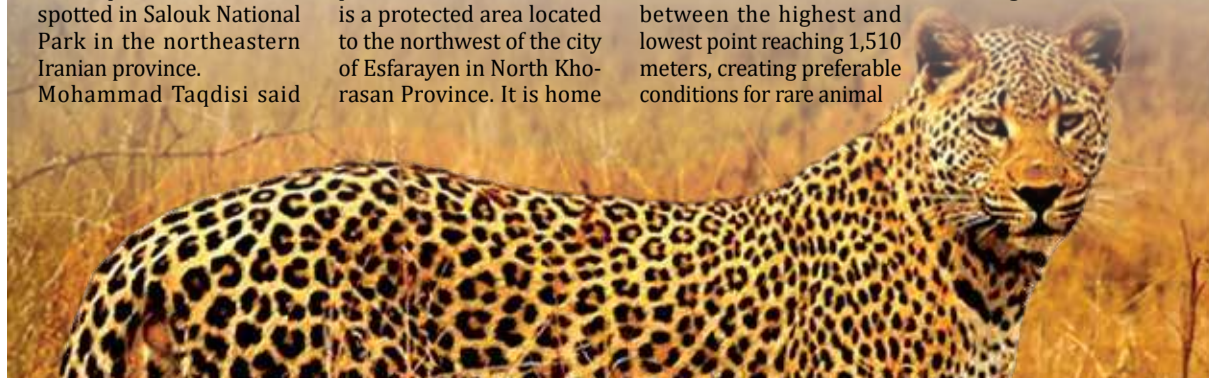
Three Persian leopards spotted in NE Iran

An official at the Department of Environment Protection in Iran's North Khorasan Province said that one Persian leopard and two leopard cubs have been spotted in Salouk National Park in the northeastern Iranian province. Mohammad Taqdisi said

the recently-seen leopards would increase the species seen in the protected area to six based on a previous tally of the wildlife in the park. Salouk National Park is a protected area located to the northwest of the city of Esfarayen in North Khorasan Province. It is home

to a variety of plant and animal species. This protected area is divided into two mountainous and lowland landscapes with elevation difference between the highest and lowest point reaching 1,510 meters, creating preferable conditions for rare animal

species. More than 100 animal species have been identified in Salouk National Park, according to official government figures.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

