

# TEHRAN TIMES

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## Embodiment of Resilience and Ramadan in Gaza



A Palestinian family break their fast among the rubble of their house, which was destroyed by Israeli bombardment, on the first day of Ramadan in Deir al-Balah, in northern Gaza, on March 11.

### Israel's hopes to disintegrate Iran will not be realized: spox

TEHRAN - In a recent development, the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry has issued a stern condemnation of remarks made by a former Israeli military intelligence officer regarding the potential disintegration of Iran.

Nasser Kanaani conveyed this criticism via a post on the X social media platform, formerly known as Twitter, on Saturday, in direct response to comments made by Mordechai Kedar. Kedar, who currently serves as a lecturer at Bar-Ilan University and holds the position of vice president at NEWSRAEL newsfeed, suggested instigating ethnic tensions in Iran as a means to prompt a regime change.

In an op-ed published in The Jerusalem Post on March 13, Kedar proposed the partitioning of Iran into five to six distinct ethnic states. Kanaani underscored that such remarks unmistakably demonstrate the hostile intentions harbored by Iran's adversaries, pointing out that this is not the first instance of such sentiments being expressed by the Zionist enemy.

The spokesman wrote, "This is not the first time such sentiments have been expressed by Iran's adversaries. Kedar's remarks echo previous assertions made by elements within the Zionist establishment, including acknowledgments of Zionist military involvement in neighboring countries."

Kanaani emphasized that the ambitions of those within the Tel Aviv regime advocating for such actions will not be realized. ▶ Page 2

### Iran's GDP growth stands at 4.5% in 9 months: CBI

TEHRAN- Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) including oil grew 4.5 percent in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-December 21, 2023), compared to the first three quarters of last year, according to the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

Based on the CBI data, the figure excluding oil increased by 3.5 percent, IRNA reported.

Earlier, the Statistical Centre of Iran (SCI) had put the country's GDP growth at 5.1 percent in the third quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (September 23-December 21, 2023); the figure excluding oil increased by 2.5 percent.

The SCI data indicate that in the autumn of the current Iranian year, the oil and gas sector was the leading sector growing by 21.8 percent, the industry sector grew by 1.3 percent, the mining sector grew by 0.3 percent and the services sector grew by 4.6 percent compared to the Q3 1401.

As announced previously by the central bank, Iran's GDP grew four percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

The CBI put the GDP growth at 3.5 percent excluding oil.

According to CBI data, the GDP growth was positive in all four quarters of the previous year so that from the first quarter to the end of the fourth quarter of the said year, the economic growth rate of the country was 1.9 percent, 3.9 percent, 4.9 percent, and 5.3 percent, respectively.

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### Hezbollah fires missiles at Israeli targets

Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement says it has carried out missile attacks against Israel's Al-Baghdadi site.

Hezbollah also said it hit the Ramim barracks of the Israeli military near Lebanon's border with the occupied territories with two Burkan missiles.

On Tuesday, Hezbollah also fired scores of rockets at Israeli targets in the northern part of the occupied Palestinian territories, following airstrikes by the Tel Aviv regime targeting a strategic region in the country.

In a statement, the movement said its fighters attacked "the Israeli air and missile command center in the Keila barracks" with more than 100 rockets, along with "the missile and artillery base in Yoav" and nearby artillery centers.

Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging fire since early October, shortly after the regime launched its bloody war on the besieged Gaza following a surprise operation by the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement. The movement has vowed to keep up its retaliatory operations as long as Israel continues its onslaught on Gaza.

### Israeli bloodbath: Airstrike kills 36 relatives in Gaza camp

Displaced by Israeli bombardment, the Tabatibi family gathered in central Gaza to eat together during the first Friday night of Ramadan, a scene that soon turned into a bloodbath.

An airstrike hit the building where they were staying as women prepared the pre-fasting meal, killing 36 members of the family, survivors told AFP on Saturday.

The health ministry in Gaza, which provided the same death toll, blamed Israel for the strike in Nuseirat, while the Israeli military said it was looking into the incident.

"This is my mother, this is my father, this is my aunt, and these are my brothers," 19-year-old Mohammed al-Tabatibi, whose left hand was injured in the strike, said through tears at the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in nearby Deir al-Balah.

"They bombed the house while we were in it. My mother and my aunt were preparing the suhoor food. They were all martyred."

He spoke as bodies were spread out in the hospital courtyard, then stacked on a truck to be driven to a cemetery.

### Ansarullah expands anti-Israeli operations to Indian Ocean

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- Yemeni armed forces have opened a new chapter in operations against Israeli ships as well as U.S. and British ships and warships by expanding their range of fire to the Indian Ocean.

On Friday, the Ansarullah-led Sana'a government announced six new operations in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

In the early hours of Saturday, a British maritime security firm reported a separate "incident" involving an "explosion" 65 nautical miles of Yemen's port city of Hodeidah.

In a press briefing, the spokesperson for the Yemeni Armed Forces Yahya Saree first announced the latest operations in the Red Sea and then revealed that Ansarullah forces have also started targeting Israeli ships and ships sailing to or from Israeli ports across the Indian Ocean and the Cape of Good Hope.

"The naval forces of the Yemeni armed forces carried out an operation against the Israeli ship Pacific 01 in the Red Sea with a number of suitable naval missiles," Saree declared.

### Mongolia to join UNESCO's Nowruz dossier

TEHRAN - Mongolia has voiced its interest in joining the Persian New Year (Nowruz) dossier, a multinational intangible cultural heritage registered with the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

Nowruz, the Persian New Year, has been celebrated for thousands of years at the beginning of spring, on March 20 or 21, by Iranians, as well as some other ethnolinguistic groups in Western and Central Asia.

The Nowruz dossier was initially registered on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage with seven countries involved: Iran, Azerbaijan, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, Mehr reported.

The dossier was edited in 2014 after five countries - Iraq, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan - made an incorporation proposal and re-inscribed it as a 12-nation dossier in UNESCO ▶ Page 6



### 'Carnival of joy' heralds New Year

A festive carnival, called 'the carnival of joy', travelled from Haft-e Tir Square to Laleh Park, central Tehran, on Friday, as people are being prepared to celebrate the New Year which starts on March 20.

As preparations unfold for the spring holidays and Ramadan coinciding with Nowruz, Tehran has revealed plans to serve visitors in the best way possible.

Every year, the Iranian capital welcomes millions of visitors during the spring holidays.

### A changing world order: The formation of counterhegemonic multipolar order

By Professor ZHANG Yuan

As the Russia-Ukraine crisis and the Gaza invasion become increasingly protracted and complex, there has been a significant shift in the balance of power within the interpretive framework of international order. The differences in perspectives on the world order between the West, particularly the United States, and the Global South are widening.

After prolonged military conflicts, there will inevitably be catastrophic humanitarian tragedies, including food security crises and psychological panic. ▶ Page 2



## TEHRAN PAPERS

## Separatism in the service of sabotage

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

In a note, the Iran newspaper addressed the plans of the enemy to divide Iran and said: The enemies of ethnic diversity in Iran, including the British government, have sought to create a crisis, divide the country, and weaken a strong Iran. America, European countries, and the Zionist regime are seeking to activate ethnic and religious division to advance the project of "separatism" in Iran, a project that became the main goal of making Iran insecure during last year's riots. Undoubtedly, the riots that occurred in the country also followed the separatist project. According to the Leader of the Revolution, the American government has created a group in America, which is called the "Crisis Group"; the mission of this group is to create crisis in countries, including our country. They have come to the conclusion that several crises point in Iran must be stimulated and activated including ethnic differences, the issue of religious differences, the issue of gender, and the issue of women. They should be provoked in Iran to create a crisis and through crisis, they can harm our dear country. This is America's program.

**Kayhan: Iran's goal is to reach an agreement**

In an analysis, Kayhan addressed the West's disloyalty in regard to the JCPOA and wrote: In 2018, Trump withdrew from the JCPOA, and Biden refused to revive America's commitments despite the Democrats' criticism of Trump's work. Both Trump and Biden administrations had one feature in common: reneging on their obligations and demanding things beyond the JCPOA. Now, the Western media in Iran have a mission to cause an inflationary shock to the currency market by creating Trump-phobia. This is while they were denying Trump's threat to the nuclear deal during the JCPOA negotiations. Despite these tensions, by putting aside feelings and sensitivities and protecting the interests of the country and the people of Iran, the Iranian side should try to reach a comprehensive agreement with the Joe Biden administration on nuclear and non-nuclear issues, especially lifting basic sanctions. If Joe Biden wins, the agreement with him will continue naturally. But if Trump returns to power and he wants to cancel previous agreements, negotiations and a new agreement will follow with him.

**Vatan-e-Emrooz: Iran's role in the "Golden Triangle"**

In a commentary, Vatan-e-Emrooz dealt with

the recent naval drills of Iran, China, and Russia in the waters of the northern Indian Ocean for the fifth year in a row. It said: By being among the 3 strategic straits, the northern Indian Ocean is known as the "Golden Triangle" in the maritime literature of the world, which is the Strait of Hormuz in its north, the Strait of Malacca in its east, and the Strait of Bab al-Mandab in its west, and a large amount of the world's maritime trade passes through it. During the past years, due to the occurrence of some instabilities in some countries of this region, the communication lines in some important and strategic seas such as the Bab al-Mandab strait, the Gulf of Aden, and the Red Sea became insecure, and the pirates also added to its dangers. In order to deal with these insecurities, many countries entered the scene, and the Islamic Republic of Iran was one of them, with the difference that most of the countries acted under a coalition led by the United States, but countries such as Iran, Russia, and China were independently present in this region, and our country was able to handle security for the commercial ships of Iran and other countries.

**Hamshahri: America is looking to reduce tension against Iran**

In an explanation, Hamshahri pointed out the annual meeting of the American intelligence apparatus with the lawmakers and wrote: The reports published from this meeting show that American security-intelligence decision-makers are more concerned than before about the development of cooperation in the triangle between Iran, Russia, and China; they evaluate this issue as a serious threat to the traditional structure of the international system based on Western-American unilateralism. Although Washington has used sanctions in recent years to control the increasing activities of this triangle, now it seems that trilateral relations have gained more depth and breadth. The current developments in the occupied territories have shown more than ever the failure of American policies in facing the Islamic Republic. In such a situation, although some are trying to push Washington towards a "tough conflict" with Tehran, in the current situation, the U.S. does not have enough power to achieve such a goal and is trying to reduce the level of international and regional tensions.

representation in encouraging participation. He acknowledged that turnout is influenced by multiple factors beyond candidate diversity.

Addressing the guidance provided by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to elected parliamentarians, Tahan Nazif reiterated Ayatollah Khamenei's assertion that public participation is a form of jihad. He emphasized the responsibility of elected officials to fulfill their promises and act as representatives of all citizens.

Regarding allegations of election irregularities, Tahan Nazif reaffirmed the Constitutional Council's role in verifying the accuracy of elections, emphasizing the Ministry of Interior's administrative authority in the process.

"Measures are being taken to investigate reported violations, particularly concerning the validity of voting documents," he said.

Tahan Nazif also discussed the Constitutional Council's objections to transparency initiatives, particularly concerning exceptions outlined in the plan. He underscored the council's concerns regarding the mechanism for identifying these exceptions. Providing an update on the Chastity and Hijab bill, Tahan Nazif noted that the council is currently reviewing the latest resolution received from the parliament.

Addressing efforts to streamline the election process, Tahan Nazif emphasized ongoing initiatives to improve accessibility and efficiency for voters. He urged consideration for future electoral periods and the implementation of measures to facilitate voting.

In conclusion, Tahan Nazif highlighted the significant volume of legislation reviewed by the Constitutional Council during the current Persian year. He outlined the number of resolutions received from the parliament and the government, detailing the approval process and any objections raised by the Constitutional Council.

# Israel's hopes to disintegrate Iran will not be realized: spox

From page 1 ► Furthermore, he emphasized that despite enduring such rhetoric for over four decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to thrive.

Kanaani reminded Israeli authorities that nearly 250,000 individuals from various ethnic backgrounds have made the ultimate sacrifice in the past 45 years to uphold Iran's territorial integrity and safeguard its sovereignty.

"Those who lost their lives for the glory and sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran were men and women who came from northern, southern, eastern, western and central parts of the country with various ethnic backgrounds," Kanaani noted.

He asserted that the aspirations of Zionist perpetrators, who currently face challenges from the Resistance movements in the Gaza Strip, to fragment Iran will remain unfulfilled. "The wishful thoughts to divide Iran, like other futile endeavors of the past four decades, will ultimately fade into obscurity alongside those who perpetuate violence against innocent



civilians, including women and children in the Gaza Strip.

Concluding, the spokesman for the ministry of foreign affairs noted that the resilience and unity demonstrated by the Iranian people will always prevail against these divisive agendas.

He also emphasized that the Zionist regime's continuation of brutal actions against civilians in Gaza will not compensate for their failures during this war.

Many Iranian analysts

acknowledge the idea that certain foreign entities are actively supporting efforts to promote division and discord within the country. The 2022 riots in Iran, as an example, became a shining stage for behind-the-scenes orchestrators who aimed to foment sedition in Iran with the ultimate goal of breaking up the country. Individuals working for foreign organizations and media outlets have been accused of propagating narratives that advocate for Iran's breakup, thereby exacerbating internal tensions and

fueling separatist sentiments.

The role of foreign-based media outlets in amplifying voices calling for Iran's disintegration has come under scrutiny, with concerns raised about the influence of external actors in shaping perceptions of Iran both domestically and internationally. These outlets have provided platforms for individuals and groups advocating for the fragmentation of Iran, contributing to the proliferation of divisive rhetoric and narratives.

One notable example of this phenomenon occurred in October 2022, when Berlin, the capital of Germany, played host to what Western media described as the "biggest" rally ever organized by the Iranian diaspora. The event attracted widespread attention and was accompanied by a barrage of propaganda aimed at promoting the idea of Iran's disintegration. Attendees at the rally were seen waving flags adorned with symbols and slogans associated with separatist movements, further underscoring the growing discourse surrounding the fragmentation of Iran.

## A changing world order: The formation of counterhegemonic multipolar order

From page 1 ► However, the United States, while arming Israel and supplying it with weapons, turns a blind eye to the plight of war-torn Palestinian people, while hypocritically condemning Israel for obstructing international aid to Gaza. The two crises that have spilled over show the essence of the West's self-exceptionalism and the destructive nature of double standards in resolving conflicts. The brutal dichotomy of the United States has greatly diminished the attractiveness of its formula for resolving the world's hotspot issues to the Global South.

**Old world order is collapsing**

The old world order constructed by the United States is collapsing. The image and reality of the United States as a global superpower largely depend on its ability to maintain its dominance in international trade and to set international rules, as well as the demonstration of this capacity. It includes the United States' maintenance of global trade security. But the Red Sea crisis has greatly challenged the United States' existing reputation. The U.S.-led Operation Prosperity Guardians has a limited number of participants. The maritime freedom advocated by the United States is a false maritime freedom. The United States continuously, selectively, and militarily defends its own and allied maritime freedom to maintain its military dominance and the freedom of U.S. military forces to enter world maritime channels at will.

The United States once proclaimed itself as the "indispensable nation" of the world, with world peace under the rule of United States, maintaining the balance of power among nuclear superpowers. The selective intervention of the United States in international conflicts and its biased

behavior in wars have led to the Pax Americana becoming a thing of the past. Classical realism is returning and new mercantilism is rising. The world no longer has faith in hegemony, and countries must bear more self-protection responsibility. The reluctance to actively participate in U.S.-led joint military operations largely stems from the insecurity concern of the leadership regarding domestic stability.

The existing international order is suffering from dissatisfaction. The Global South is dissatisfied with the current international order because it feels it hasn't received the benefits it deserves. Western developed countries are also dissatisfied because their share of benefits has decreased. Additionally, Europe lacks sufficient sustained economic strength, coordinated diplomacy, and defense policy to continue exerting influence abroad. National conservatism is forming a global trend. They abhor the ceding of sovereignty, suspect elite manipulation of the free market, despise immigrants and hate pluralism. The self-styled world police is unable to bear the heavy burden of intervening in all conflicts and crises worldwide. The United States is declining more in its ability to lead the global order than its economic power. The multilateralism pursued by the Biden administration is a mechanism for bilateral and multilateral coordination at the expense of the U.S. ability to coordinate globally. Paradoxically, looking back in history, the creation of the most important multilateral institutions after World War II all had the shadow of the United States. World politics is undergoing rapid change.

The existing global order continues to fragment, with countries becoming increasingly short-sighted, focusing solely on

their own short-term economic gains or security interests. Without the establishment of a new order, both the developed countries and the Global South will lose out.

**The Global South is rising and a New Order is being constructed**

The Biden administration has ambitiously targeted so-called "authoritarians", "dictators" and "tyrants" who challenge the Western order globally. The United States is truly targeting those who challenge the "democratic model" of Western values. The Biden administration has tried to portray rivalry between U.S. with China as a confrontation of two values, a confrontation of democracy and authoritarianism. And the abysmal performance of the United States in stopping the Ukrainian and Gaza crises has made it increasingly difficult to solidly coalesce the external will of different nations on the basis of ideological favor, even for American allies and partners. On the battlefield of public opinion and propaganda, where the American and Western media have long dominated, there is a growing aversion in the Global South to reports, commentaries and messages that exude the moral superiority of the Western world and imbued with Western values.

With Iran, Egypt, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia becoming full members of BRICS on January 1, 2024, BRICS is becoming an organization that represents the Global South. The BRICS expansion is a movement of emerging economies fighting for self-determination of the international discourse on the global stage. Countries of the Global South are collectively shaping a new multipolar order for a new era, unwilling either to be beholden to the Superpower or to return to a world divided into spheres of influence.

**Towards a new multipolar order upholding equity and justice**

The new world multilevel order should avoid falling into the stereotypical mindset of arguing over who should fill the "power vacuum". The concept of a power vacuum is a continuation of the hegemonic world view, a blind faith in, and blind obedience to an unchallenged leadership. Pursuing dominance while remaining vigilant against countries of similar power may lead the powerful to overly prioritize building coercive capabilities at the expense of capacity enhancement for the well-being of the people.

The world order is changing, and U.S. hegemony is no longer welcome. As the global economic growth slows down to prevent conflicts and wars from spilling over, major countries are more willing to take joint efforts to bring more stability and certainty. Rather than counting on the United States to autonomously fulfill its share of international responsibility, the Global South prefers solidarity and mutual assistance among themselves. Cold-war and polarized mentalities would only exacerbate instability and uncertainty in the world. China's Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative are Chinese wisdom and Chinese solutions for accommodating harmonious coexistence and common progress of all countries. The destiny of developing countries should be in their own hands, mutually respecting each other's concerns, and promoting common development in a new multilevel world order upholding equity and justice.

ZHANG Yuan is professor of the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, China.

## Constitutional Council confirms 52 Parliamentary Constituencies

TEHRAN - Hadi Tahan Nazif, the spokesperson for the Constitutional Council, has announced that the cases of 52 parliamentary constituencies from 11 provinces have undergone scrutiny and have been officially confirmed.

Addressing reporters in a press conference held on Saturday, Tahan Nazif extended congratulations on the commencement of the holy month of Ramadan. He further highlighted the approval of the bill aimed at organizing and monitoring border trade by the Constitutional Council, incorporating amendments proposed by the parliament.

Tahan Nazif elaborated on the resolution concerning the organization of government employees by the Constitutional Council. He acknowledged the objections raised by both the Constitutional Council and the Supervisory Board in earlier stages, emphasizing their concerns regarding compliance with Sharia law and constitutional principles. While stating that the resolution has been addressed, he acknowledged that deficiencies within the board persist, as outlined in correspondence received from the Supervisory Board.

Regarding the reported election violations, Tahan Nazif asserted that the March 1 elections were conducted with utmost integrity and transparency. While acknowledging receipt of reports alleging violations, he indicated that some lacked sufficient documentation for further investigation. Discussing plans for electronic voting, Tahan Nazif expressed the council's intention to expand electronic voting to additional areas pending favorable conditions and coordination with relevant authorities. He specifically mentioned efforts to implement electronic voting for the Tehran constituency.

Responding to inquiries about the impact of candidate diversity on voter turnout, Tahan Nazif emphasized the importance of varied political

## Iran Air Force safeguards nation with utmost vigilance: commander



TEHRAN - Brigadier General Ghader Rahimzadeh, the commander of Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base, has underscored the vital role played by the Air Defense Forces in safeguarding the nation's airspace with unwavering vigilance.

During a meeting with joint deputies, Rahimzadeh

expressed gratitude for the dedicated efforts of Air Defense Forces personnel nationwide. He attributed the significant progress achieved in various defense sectors throughout the Persian year of 1402 to the collaborative endeavors of individuals within the Ministry of Defense, research institutions, universities, and knowledge-based companies. "Thanks to the efforts of all involved, the combat readiness of our Air Defense Forces has seen remarkable improvement," stated Rahimzadeh. He emphasized the readiness and vigilance of the Air Defense Forces personnel, who stand as loyal defenders of the Islamic Republic, in ensuring the security of the nation's airspace.

Rahimzadeh also highlighted the imperative of unity among Islamic nations and reiterated support for the Resistance Front in efforts to dismantle

the Zionist regime, referencing Operation al-Aqsa Storm on October 7. During the meeting, officials from the Air Defense Base deliberated on measures implemented in the current year to rapidly enhance the combat capabilities of the Air Defense Forces.

In recent years, Iranian military experts and engineers have made noteworthy breakthroughs in producing a diverse range of indigenous equipment, achieving self-sufficiency for the armed forces. Iranian officials have reaffirmed the nation's steadfast commitment to enhancing military capabilities, including missile power, for defense and deterrence purposes only.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has on several occasions called for efforts to boost Iran's defense capabilities.