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The slogan of the totalitarians: Either our will, or the destruction of Ahvaz!



This is exactly the slogan that some behaviors and decisions in the city council evoke; decisions that neither smell of rationality nor show any commitment to the people. It may not be believable to many, but the bitter truth is that some council members are so involved in personal desires and fruitless ambitions that they even pay the price of the destruction of the city, but they do not give up on their unreasonable demands. In a situation where dozens of provincial and national figures have stepped forward to resolve disputes for more than three years, and the prayers of more than a million citizens for peace and order in Ahvaz are behind these efforts, and just when the city, after years of confusion and inefficient management, is breathing a sigh of relief with the presence of the new head of the municipality and has reached relative peace, the same group has once again decided to lock the wheel of development and turn the city backwards. These people, knowing that the other side will have no support, are still beating the drum to remove the new administrator and are

demanding that Ahvaz return to the same era of chaos, disorder, uncertainty, and lack of planning; as if their clear message is: "Either the city is destroyed, or our demands must be imposed on the city and its people!" Let's not forget that it was these same people who, with their calculated absences and constant sabotage, kept the council meetings, and consequently the entire city, on hold. It was these same people who, over the course of four years, despite a budget that was unprecedented and unprecedent in the past 46 years, brought Ahvaz to the brink of infrastructural and managerial collapse. A budget that experts said would have reborn the city's face, but the result was nothing but stagnation, backwardness, and public dissatisfaction. These behaviors have no other name than deliberately stopping development, insisting on destruction, and insisting on destroying people's hope. However, on the other hand, a group of city council members, with a deep understanding of the current sensitive situation, have firmly stood by the people and announced that they will not join the destructive



trend until a correct, logical, and citizen-driven decision is made. Such a courageous outlook has led to the correct belief that: Either a capable, clean, competent, and trustworthy municipality should be elected, or the city council should be dissolved and the government should take over; a decision that, although somewhat bitter, is in every way wise, courageous, and in line with saving Ahvaz. Ahvaz no longer tolerates mistakes. The group that destroyed the city for years with wrong decisions should know today that this time the people will only sit at the negotiating table by choosing the best, most professional, and fair option; not by secret deals or behind-the-scenes pressures. Today, Ahvaz needs more than ever reason, thought, courage, honesty, and standing up for the interests of the people; And any decision other than this will leave nothing but the "destruction of the city" on the lips.

From Nowruz to Anime: A cultural talk with Japan's ambassador

In an exclusive interview with Mehr News Agency, Japan's ambassador to Iran, Tamaki Tsukada, elaborated on the shared cultural ties between Tehran and Tokyo, as well as his experience during his time in Iran. Iran and Japan, two ancient civilizations separated by geography but united by deeply rooted cultural sensibilities, share more in common than is often assumed. From elaborate rituals of hospitality to a profound respect for tradition, both societies have developed social norms that prioritize propriety, humility, and continuity with the past. According to Japan's ambassador to Iran, these shared civilizational traits shape not only everyday behavior but also the way the two nations interact on the international stage. In order to elaborate the cultural commonalities between the two nations, Mehr News Agency conducted an in-depth interview with Tamaki Tsukada, Japan's ambassador to Iran, focusing on shared civilizational values, cultural exchange, and the future of Iran-Japan relations.

Speaking about his experience in Iran, the ambassador highlighted similarities that resonate at a personal and societal level—from Iran's *ta'arof* and guest-centered culture to Japan's own etiquette-driven forms of respect. He noted that both countries have spent more than a century navigating the complex transition between tradition and modernity, grappling with the balance between East and West, history and change, peace and conflict.

The Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces :

Iran strengthening air defense to counter threats

The Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces says that the country has placed the strengthening of its integrated air defense shield at the core of its strategy to effectively counter potential threats. During a visit to the Khatam al-Anbia (PBUH) Joint Air Defense Headquarters, Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi toured various operational sections and reviewed measures implemented to strengthen Iran's air defense capacity on Monday morning. Speaking during the visit, Major General Mousavi pointed to measures taken over recent months to enhance the country's air defense capabilities. He stressed that the power of Iran's air defense system is undergoing continuous and sustained development. He said the visit provided an opportunity to directly assess the scope of efforts undertaken by air defense personnel to enhance the country's defensive readiness. Mousavi emphasized that the day-by-day, uninterrupted upgrading of Iran's air defense system is among the country's top priorities. The Armed Forces chief praised air defense forces for their dedication, self-sacrifice, and professionalism, noting that over the past few months they have carried out major and noteworthy actions in improving Iran's air defense capabilities. He described these achievements as deserving of rec-

ognition and appreciation. Mousavi added that the steady advancement of Iran's air defense strength is the result of round-the-clock, tireless efforts by personnel across the national air defense network. He also expressed gratitude to commanders, personnel, and combatants stationed at the headquarters, stating that the progress achieved is the outcome of coordinated, synergistic, and continuous cooperation among scientists, researchers, commanders, knowledge-based companies, defense industries, and the self-sufficiency centers of the Iranian Army and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

(IRGC). In another part of his remarks, Major General Mousavi said the air defense forces of the Army and the IRGC serve as reliable and powerful pillars supporting the air defense headquarters. He noted that these forces play a key role in advancing new strategies and objectives, enhancing both quantitative and qualitative capacities, utilizing modern and updated systems, strengthening human resources, and reinforcing the integrated air defense shield to successfully confront potential threats through close coordination with other responsible forces and institutions.



Iran's FM holds key meeting with Belarus president in Minsk

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi held talks with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko during a meeting at the Independence Palace in Minsk on Monday.

Details of the meeting is yet to be released.

Iran's FM holds key meeting with Belarus president in Minsk According to the Mehr News Agency correspondent accompanying the delegation, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi arrived in Belarus on Monday to hold official consultations with the country's top officials.

During the visit, Araghchi is scheduled to meet with the President of Belarus, the Belarusian Foreign Minister, and the Secretary of the country's Security Council. The talks will focus on expanding bilateral relations as well as discussing regional and international developments.

This marks Araghchi's first visit to Belarus in his capacity as Iran's foreign minister. During the current visit, the two sides are expected to sign three additional documents, including a declaration on cooperation to counter unilateral sanctions, a joint Iran-Belarus statement on strengthening cooperation in international law, and a program for political consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries.