



Iranian missiles pass over Al-Aqsa Mosque on their way to their targets in Israel, April 14, 2024

Iran acts legally and morally in punishing Israel

# Clean Victory

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## President Raisi warns of stronger response to future provocations against Iran

TEHRAN- Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has issued a stern warning, saying that any further provocative actions against Iran will be met with a forceful and regrettable response.

The statement follows a recent operation by the Iranian Armed Forces (codenamed Truthful Promise Operation), which was executed in retaliation to the Zionist regime's aggressive actions, including an attack on the Iranian embassy in Damascus on April 1.

In a message to the Iranian people on Sunday, President Raisi praised the efforts of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and emphasized the unity among Iran's defense and political sectors in delivering a decisive blow to the Zionist enemy, marking a significant moment in Iran's history of sovereignty.

Iran launched retaliatory attacks against the occupied territories, after the Israeli regime struck the country's embassy in Damascus on April 1, killing 7 high-ranking military officials.

Israeli reports say Iran fired three waves of drones at Israeli positions, as well as a number of cruise missiles. Footage captured by citizens in Iraq, suggests Iran's famous Shahed-136 drones were among the UAVs launched at the occupied territories.

Iran also confirmed it has begun its retaliation against Israel through a TV announcement.

"In response to various crimes of the Zionist regime, including the attack on the Iranian consulate section in Damascus and the martyrdom of some of our country's military commanders and advisors in Syria, the IRGC's Air Force targeted specific objectives inside the occupied territories by hitting them with dozens of missiles and drones," a news anchor said, reading a statement by the Islamic Revolution Gaurd Corps (IRGC).

## Iran's cement exports up 12% in nearly two years

TEHRAN - Iran's cement exports have grown by 12 percent in nearly two years, according to figures from Iran's Cement Industry Producers Association Ali-Akbar Alvandian, head of the association, said on Saturday that Iran had exported 10.5 million metric tons (mt) of cement in the first nine months of the calendar year 1402 (March 21-December 21, 2023).

As reported, 13 million mt of cement had been exported in 1401, he added.

Alvandian noted that Iran produces about 90 million mt of cement annually, of which 60 million mt is consumed domestically.

According to the official, the cement production in the country has also increased by 12 percent since the current government administration took office in 2021.

There are currently 13 semi-finished projects in the country, he said, adding that the production of white cement will increase by over 8.8 million mt if they become operational.

Iranian cement is exported to 25 countries, including Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Syria. Iran produced 63 million tons of cement in 2021 to be ranked the world's seventh biggest cement producer, IRIB reported citing international statistics. ▶ Page 4

## Iran struck only Israeli military bases, Amir Abdollahian says

TEHRAN- The Iranian Foreign Minister, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, has noted that Tehran targeted only Israeli military bases.

In a meeting with resident ambassadors in Iran on Sunday, he said that "the restraint in legitimate defense and punishment of the Zionist regime means that we did not define any non-military target in our response."

"Our armed forces did not target any economic or civilian location," he added.

Given the recent anti-Israeli operation, Iran's top diplomat stressed that operations were carried out that effectively targeted the intelligence center and the eye of the Zionist regime for directing all operations of the past six months, including the recent operation on the embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Damascus.

He went on to add, "Even in the attack on the military base, which was the operational center of the Zionist regime against the embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Damascus, the necessary precision for dealing with and responding to the Zionist regime was considered." ▶ Page 2

## Tehran says much harsher response awaits Israel if it attacks Iran

TEHRAN- Iran's Armed Forces Chief of Staff, alongside the Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), have issued a stern caution to Israel, emphasizing the repercussions of any potential miscalculation concerning Iran.

Major General Mohammad Bagheri, the Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, has declared that Tehran achieved all its targets and that the retaliatory operation against Israel has concluded.

Iran launched retaliatory attacks against the occupied territories on Saturday, after the Israeli regime struck the country's embassy in Damascus on April 1, killing 7 high-ranking military officials.

During a televised interview on Sunday, General Bagheri asserted, "We've achieved all our objectives," signaling the completion of the operation from the Iranian perspective. He emphasized that while there are no immediate plans for further action, any provocation by the Zionist regime would elicit a robust response. ▶ Page 3

## Palestinians celebrate Iran's retaliatory attacks

By Ali Karbalaei

Palestinians in the blockaded Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank as well as occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem) have welcomed the Iranian retaliatory operation against the Israeli regime.

Across the occupied Palestinian territories - from the Gaza Strip to the West Bank to al-Quds (Jerusalem) many were quick to point out that Iran's retaliation marks the first time a country and not a resistance movement has launched such a penalizing attack on Israeli military bases in modern history.

Palestinian resistance movements, led by Hamas, have hailed the Iranian response.

"We, in the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, consider the military operation carried out by the Islamic Republic of Iran against the Zionist entity, occupying Palestine, as a natural right and a deserved response to the targeting of the Iranian consulate in Damascus and the assassination of several Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commanders there," the Gaza-based resistance movement said in a statement. ▶ Page 5

## Iranian art, cultural community unites in support of nation's response to Israeli regime aggression

TEHRAN- Iranian artists and cultural figures are coming together to show support for the nation's response to Israeli regime aggression.

Through online posts, they are expressing their sentiments and happiness regarding the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps' retaliatory attacks in occupied territories.

Various artists from different fields are sharing images and captions related to 'Operation Truthful Promise,' launched on Saturday night.

Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili, tweeted a verse from the Quran expressing his support and joy for the actions taken. ▶ Page 8



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## Global celebrations erupt following Iran's retaliation against Israel

TEHRAN- From Tehran to Toronto to al-Quds, people worldwide have taken to the streets in jubilant displays following Iran's forceful response to Israel's recent assault on Iran's diplomatic mission in Damascus, Syria.

On Saturday, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) unleashed a series of powerful missile and drone strikes on Israeli-occupied territories, in direct retaliation for the April 1 attack that claimed the lives of Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Zahedi and other IRGC commanders.

In Tehran, crowds gathered at Palestine Square and the University of Tehran, waving flags and chanting slogans in solidarity with the IRGC. ▶ Page 3

## WHO EMRO director paying visit to Iran

TEHRAN - Hanan Hassan Balkhi, the World Health Organization's director for the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, is on a four-day visit to the provinces of Isfahan and Tehran to assess the country's healthcare system's capabilities and progress.

She started the travel on Saturday, April 13, visiting Isfahan University of Medical Sciences as well as several healthcare centers and infrastructures in the province.

Her plan for the next two days will include holding meetings with health authorities, and the WHO representative to the country, participating in a G5 (the group of four countries - Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan - plus the World Health Organization) meeting, and non-communicable disease campaign report meeting, and also paying a visit to the Iran House of Innovation and Technology (IHIT) as well as some health and treatment centers. ▶ Page 7

## TEHRAN PAPERS

## The Strait of Hormuz will be unsafe for the Israelis

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

Kayhan analyzed the seizure of a cargo ship of the Zionist regime in the Strait of Hormuz by the navy of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps and wrote: The Strait of Hormuz is under the control of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Islamic Iran can make the strait unsafe for its enemies in any situation. This fact showed itself once again when the fighters of the IRGC navy, bravely and with authority, captured a Zionist ship in the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz region.

Ever since the Ansarullah Islamic Movement targeted Israel's interests in the Red Sea, the fake regime has been using UAE ports and a land corridor that passes through India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan to transport goods to the occupied territories.

Evidence shows that the powerful Iran wants to fundamentally disable the transportation and sea trade of the Zionist regime and evoke the conditions of the Red Sea in the Strait of Hormuz for Israel. Also, Iran wants to tighten the ring of siege against the terrorist regime of Israel and warn the governments that support the interim regime practically and seriously.

**Siasat-e-Rooz: The old strategy of the West is no longer useful for Iran**

Siasat-e-Rooz dedicated its editorial to the Western policy towards Iran over many years and wrote: A look at the two decades of nuclear negotiations and then the JCPOA of the West shows that they have always prescribed a policy of unilateral self-restraint and instead of following a win-win approach based on accepting the interests and demands of the other party, they seek to oblige one side of the other party.

In other words, the experiences have shown that the West has not and will not adhere to any commitments and cannot be trusted. These experiences made the Islamic Republic of Iran learn in diplomatic trade with Western governments that it should first make the other party fulfill its obligations and then reveal and announce its policy and strategy.

America and those European countries that claim the necessity of Iran's self-restraint must have realized that this strategy is outdated and can no longer influence Tehran's decisions.

**Iran: America has never been honest**

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper discussed the difficult conditions of Biden's policy in the region and said: Biden has

antithesis positions regarding the escalation of the crisis in the region, from declaring support for Tel Aviv against a possible attack by Iran to numerous messages behind the scenes to "do not involve U.S in war"; so this issue has caused even the European allies of the United States to evaluate the withdrawal of this country from the scene of developments in the Middle East as more useful than its presence.

In such an atmosphere, although Tehran has advised Washington not to interfere in the war in a written message, and also the White House has demanded "safe conduct" to protect its bases and military interests in the region, Biden once again expressed his concern about defense support.

The United States has assured Israel in case of a military attack by Iran and has sent CENTCOM commander Eric Kurila to Israel a few days ago to coordinate with Israeli leaders regarding a possible attack.

This is the same approach that has once again confirmed the inaccuracy of the U.S. foreign policy and has worried domestic and foreign observers about the possible costs for this country due to the Iran-Israel war.

**Ettelaat: America does not interfere in the attack on Israel**

In an article, Ettelaat dealt with Biden's words regarding the non-participation of the U.S. in Israel's possible response to Iran.

The paper said: An American official told CNN that the President of this country, Joe Biden, spoke on the phone with the Prime Minister of the Zionist regime some hours after the Iran attack.

He made clear to Israel that Washington would not participate in any possible Israeli actions in response to Iranian attacks.

Although Biden once again emphasized America's commitment to supporting Israel, his statement that America will not participate in Israel's possible action against Iran after the Islamic Republic's missile and drone attack against the Zionist regime is worthy of consideration.

The military authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran had warned America before the massive missile and drone attack against the Zionist regime that any American intervention in this war could lead to the targeting of the country's positions and bases in different places; therefore, it is better not to do anything and not fall into Netanyahu's trap.

## Iran struck only Israeli military bases, Amir Abdollahian says



From page 1 ▶ "Our sole goal in legitimate defense is to punish the Israeli regime," the minister said.

Amir Abdollahian continued by saying that "we have announced to our brothers and friends in the region where America has military bases that our sole goal in legitimate defense is to punish the Israeli regime, and we are not seeking to target individuals and bases of America in the region."

"We have never welcomed escalating tensions in the region, but we have warned that if the United States uses the space or territory of targeted countries to defend and support Tel Aviv in a biased manner, then inevitably the American military base in that country will be targeted," he added.

"We consider the security of our neighbors as our own security," he said.

"We appreciate our neighbors and brothers in the region who quickly received this message and urged America and others to immediately

avoid any war from their land. We are always committed to the security of our brothers in neighboring countries and in the region," he highlighted.

He also pointed out that the neighborhood policy of President Ebrahim Raisi's government is one of the fundamental priorities of Iran, and Tehran regards the security of its neighbors as the its own security.

Iran launched hundreds of drones and missiles against Israel, in an unprecedented attack that came as a response to an Israeli raid on the Iranian consulate in Syria two weeks ago.

The overnight escalation came more than six months into Israel's devastating war on the Gaza Strip, which has killed more than 33,000 Palestinians and pushed the besieged territory to the brink of famine.

The war has driven up tensions in the region, spreading to fronts with Lebanon and Syria and drawing long-range fire at Israeli targets from as far away as Yemen and Iraq.

The international community has reacted with alarm following the attack on Israeli territory.

Tehran had been threatening to attack Israel after an air raid on April 1, widely blamed on Israel, killing 13 people, including two elite Iranian generals.

Tensions between Israel and Iran have soared since Israel's six-month war in the Gaza Strip.

Iran acts legally and morally in punishing Israel

## Clean victory



reads:

"Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security."

**Iran and Israel innately different**

What's evident is that Iran's recent

attacks and the assaults carried out by Israel across the West Asian region have been different in nature.

Every strike the regime has carried out in the past 7 months and before that, was to assassinate individuals inside residential buildings, packed streets or even diplomatic premises. Israeli moves have all been in violation of international law. Topped with the genocide it is currently committing in Gaza, where every hospital, school, mosque, church, and home has been systematically destroyed, Israel has probably become the biggest breacher of international law in history.

Tehran could have easily destroyed big gatherings to give Israel a taste of its own medicine, or hit critical infrastructure to plunge it into social chaos. It, however, decided to play

## Iran foreign ministry issues statement on retaliatory attacks against Israel

TEHRAN- The Iranian foreign ministry issued a statement on Saturday, hailing the "Truthful Promise" retaliatory operation, launched by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), against the Israeli regime.

"On 14 April 2024, the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces have carried out a series of military strikes on Israeli's military bases in response to, and in exercise of its inherent right of self-defense as recognized under Article 51 of the Charter, against Israel's recurring military aggressions, resulting in the martyrdom of the Iranian military advisors present in Syria at the invitation of the Syrian government, in particular the 1 April armed attack against diplomatic premises of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Damascus," it noted.

The statement also said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, while reiterating its

determination to forcefully defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests against any unlawful use of force and aggressions."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran's resort to defensive measures in exercise of its right of self-defense demonstrates Iran's responsible approach toward regional and international peace and security at a time when the occupying apartheid regime's pattern of relentless genocidal campaign against Palestinian people is accompanied with repeated military aggressions against neighboring States and fanning the flames across the region and beyond."

The ministry went on to add, "The Islamic Republic of Iran would not hesitate to take further necessary defensive measures to protect its legitimate interests against any act of military aggression or unlawful use of force."

Iran launched retaliatory attacks against the occupied territories on Saturday night, after the

Israeli regime struck the country's embassy in Damascus on April 1, killing 7 high-ranking military officials.

The overnight escalation came more than six months into Israel's devastating war on the Gaza Strip, which has killed more than 33,000 Palestinians and pushed the besieged territory to the brink of famine.

Israeli reports said Iran has already fired three waves of drones at Israeli positions, as well as a number of cruise missiles.

Footage captured by citizens in Iraq, suggests Iran's famous Shahed-136 drones are among the UAVs launched at the occupied territories.

With the missiles and drone attack, Iran's mission to the United Nations said it now deemed the matter "concluded" and warned Israel of a "considerably more severe" response should the "Israeli regime make another mistake".

## Mission: Iran committed to UN Charter principles

TEHRAN- In a post on X on Sunday, Iran's Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Geneva said that Tehran is committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter and International Law.

"In exercising its inherent right of #SelfDefense under Article 51 of the #UNCharter, and in response to the Israeli regime recurring military aggressions, particularly its armed attack on 1st April 2024 against Iranian diplomatic premises, in defiance of Article 2 (4) of the #UNCharter and in flagrant violation of Int'l Law, and subsequent to the failure of the #UNSC in taking measures necessary to condemn and hold

the aggressor accountable, #Iran carried out a series of military strikes on Israeli military objectives," Iran's Permanent Mission wrote.

"As a responsible Member of the @UN, Iran is committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the #UNCharter and Int'l law, and reiterates its consistent position that it does not seek escalation or conflict in the region," it added.

"While warning against any further military provocations, Iran reaffirms its unwavering determination to defend its people, national security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity against any threat or act of aggression. Iran will

not hesitate to exercise its inherent right of #SelfDefense when required under Int'l Law," it noted.

**Iran to react more resolutely if Israeli regime commits more military aggression again: envoy**

Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN, Amir Saeid Iravani, stated on Saturday that if the Israeli regime carries out another military aggression, Iran will respond with even greater strength and determination. This warning comes after the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps launched numerous missiles and drones at Israeli targets in retaliation for the Israeli terrorist attack on Iran's consulate building

in Syria on April 1.

The full text of Iravani's letter is as follows:

Upon instructions from my Government and pursuant to our letter dated 1 April 2024 concerning the Israeli regime's armed attacks against the diplomatic premises of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Damascus, the Syrian Arab Republic, which led to the martyrdom of seven Iranian senior military advisors (A/78/838-S/2024/281), I would like to inform you that, in the late hours of 13 April 2024, the Islamic Republic of Iran carried out a series of military strikes on Israeli military objectives.

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

## Parliament Speaker says Iran's response to Israel was 'resolute' and 'enlightening'

TEHRAN - The Iranian Parliament Speaker has declared that the response of Tehran to the Zionist regime was "resolute and enlightening."

Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf emphasized during the open session on Sunday of the Islamic Consultative Assembly that the Iranian people's unified stance against the Zionist enemy, which had targeted the Iranian consulate, a symbol of the nation's sovereignty, was "resolute and enlightening."

"The decisive and powerful response of those defending our beloved country's sovereignty has brought satisfaction to every Iranian who values the dignity and security of our esteemed nation," he asserted.

Ghalibaf stressed that Iran's military action in response to the Zionist regime's aggression against Iran's diplomatic premises was consistent with the United Nations Charter.

Additionally, he warned that if the Zionist regime or its allies make another mistake, Iran's response will be more severe. "The desire for retaliation against this usurping and oppressive regime has sparked a wave of joy and pride among Muslims worldwide," Ghalibaf noted.

Ghalibaf asserted that Muslim governments should align themselves with the demands of their people, which include holding Zionist aggressors accountable and not opposing the will of the people.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran upholds the principle that any threat from any country will elicit a fitting and severe response," the senior Iranian lawmaker added.

Continuing, he stated that establishing sustainable security hinges on repentance from any aggressor against the nation,

adding "the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has demonstrated determination in safeguarding the country's land and security, has fulfilled its national duty with authority."

On behalf of the elected representatives of the people, he expressed gratitude to the guardians of Iran's security and dignity.

In conclusion, representatives in the open session of the parliament, chanting slogans of "Death to Israel" and "Islamic Revolution Guard Corps, Thank You, Thank You," expressed appreciation and support for the Revolutionary Guards' drone and missile attack on Israel.

Iran launched retaliatory attacks against the occupied territories on Saturday, after the Israeli regime struck the country's embassy in Damascus on April 1, killing 7 high-ranking military officials.









# WHO EMRO director paying visit to Iran

From page 1 ► expanding coop with WHO EMRO

In February, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi announced the country's readiness to foster cooperation with the World Health Organization's Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office.

On the sidelines of the international conference on quality and safety in healthcare in Doha which was held from February 21 - 25, Einollahi held a meeting with Hanan Balkhi, the newly appointed WHO regional director for the Eastern Mediterranean, the health ministry's website reported.

During the meeting, Balkhi lauded the health ministry for remarkable achievements and commendable progress.

She went on to say, "I am trying to focus on three issues in the Eastern Mediterranean region: empowering human resources in the field of health, improving self-sufficiency in the production of medicine and medical equipment, and fighting against narcotics and treating addicts."

She further noted that it's essential to hold talks with the member states to solve the problems of the Eastern Mediterranean region.

In the end, she expressed hope



to travel to Iran to learn more about the implementation of the Family Physician Program in Iran.

Einollahi, for his part, referred to the country's achievements in the field of the health system, saying, "The Family Physician Program is a preventive health program that is being implemented in 195 cities of the country."

## Iran enhances regional health security

On May 12, 2023, Syed Jaffar Hussain, the World Health Organization Representative and Head of Mission in Iran, appreciated Iran for its efforts to enhance health security in the region.

The WHO representative also thanked Iran for holding the 26th G5 High-Level Experts Meeting on Health Cooperation and the 1st Healthcare Leadership and Governance Training Program, IRNA reported.

G5 countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, plus the World Health Organization) took part in the meetings from May 6 to 10 with the theme of "Joint Work for Solving Joint Health Problems."

Addressing the opening ceremony, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi referred to the unity and cooperation of the countries in the fields of health, treatment, and medical education as a his-

torical necessity.

Achieving, maintaining, and promoting health is never possible in a regional way and does not happen in an isolated region, but requires the cooperation of countries, especially neighboring countries, he stressed.

"To develop health in the countries of the group of five, we must look at health collectively and think about creating and promoting health in all countries.

## Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has announced the country's readiness to foster cooperation with the World Health Organization.

The health sector of Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan is tied to each other. Today, with the relations and cooperation that exist in different sectors between the countries and neighbors, a disease is capable of penetrating all countries."

## Some 12,000 foreign nationals pay insurance premium



TEHRAN - A total of 12,000 non-vulnerable foreign nationals pay insurance premiums on their own, an official with Salamat Health Insurance Organization, has said.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees covers the insurance premiums of 95,000 vulnerable foreigners and the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is not obliged to cover these costs, Mehr news agency quoted Jamshid Shayanfar as saying.

Moreover, 42,000 vulnerable foreigners have received basic insurance coverage with limited government funding due to their residence in Iran; it also aims to prevent the spread of infectious diseases that could impact the health of Iranians, he added.

Recently, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the National Organization for Migration, according to which the extension of authorized nationals' residence permits is contingent upon paying their insurance premiums and obtaining health insurance coverage, Shayanfar said.

Insurance premiums for foreign nationals are set to be almost 90 percent higher than for Iranians based on the approval of the Supreme Insurance Council.

### Services for legal foreign nationals

On March 13, the National Organization for Migration, and Salamat Health Insurance Organization signed a memorandum of understanding to provide health insurance services for legal foreign nationals.

Referring to the health services provided for refugees, Abdollah Mobini, the head of the National Organization for Migration, said that international organizations should shoulder their responsibility and support Iran with the heavy costs [related to refugees], IRNA reported.

## With over 3.4 million refugees, Iran has become the second-largest refugee-hosting country globally.

"Our most important concern is the transmission of diseases and other health problems by foreign nationals, and that's why we consider ourselves obliged to promote the

health of refugees," he added.

The memorandum of understanding takes a big step in improving the health of both host and guest communities. It prevents the heavy costs of prevention, treatment, and healthcare, he noted.

Mohammad-Mehdi Nasehi, the managing director of Salamat Health Insurance Organization, emphasized that providing insurance coverage for foreign nationals is a priority in the country's health system.

He added that it helps both refugees and the country with the heavy costs of treatment and prevention, respectively.

### Free health coverage for 200,000 refugees

With over 3.4 million refugees and refugee-like populations, Iran has become the second-largest refugee-hosting country globally.

About 200,000 foreign nationals in the country have been provided with free health insurance with the financial support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Nasehi said in February.

Foreign nationals who are considered financially struggling can benefit from free health insurance services, Mehr news agency quoted Nasehi as saying.

Stating that the number of refugees in the country is far more than the number of people who have been covered by free insurance, he added that legal refugees can enjoy insurance services by paying their insurance premiums.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Education, labor ministries ink MOU on out-of-school children

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare have signed a memorandum of understanding aiming to bring out-of-school children back to school.

The memorandum of understanding will pave the way for future steps, ISNA news agency quoted Education Minister Mohammad Bat'hai as saying on Sunday.

He made the remarks over the 8th session of council meeting for improving educational standards in underprivileged and underdeveloped areas at the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. "The meeting is aiming to live up to educational standards, however, the current conditions are unjustifiable, and we should move faster," he added.

## تفاهم وزراء برای بازگرداندن کودکان بازمانده از تحصیل به مدارس

وزارت آموزش و پرورش تفاهم نامه مشترکی با وزارت رفاه برای بازگرداندن کودکان بازمانده از تحصیل امضا کردند. به گزارش روز یکشنبه ایسنا، محمد بطحایی وزیر آموزش و پرورش گفت: امروز تفاهم نامه ای امضا می شود که نقشه کار برای ادامه مسیر کاملاً مشخص شود.

بطحایی در هشتمین جلسه شورای هماهنگی بهبود و ارتقای شاخص های آموزشی و پرورشی مناطق محروم و کمتر توسعه یافته که در وزارت رفاه برگزار شد گفت: هدف اصلی این برنامه و شورای هماهنگی ارتقای شاخص ها بود، هرچند این روند قابل قبول نیست و باید با سرعت بیشتری حرکت کنیم.

## Caspian states hold meeting to address environmental crimes

TEHRAN -The second meeting of the representatives of Caspian Sea countries to deal with environmental crimes was held from April 4-5 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The five littoral states, namely Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan, discussed the environmental challenges and harms facing the Caspian Sea.

They also exchanged views on protecting the aquatic resources of the Caspian Sea and upholding national laws related to the environment and the management of natural resources in the Sea.

The officials emphasized the need to enhance and expand judicial cooperation among the five states.

The Iranian delegation led by Gholam-Abbas Toriki, deputy prosecutor general, highlighted the preservation of the Caspian Sea biodiversity, national laws related to the environment, and management of natural resources in the Caspian Sea.

The right to the environment is considered one of the fundamental rights, Toriki said.

"The Caspian Sea is of great economic importance for the littoral states in terms of diverse resources and reserves, distinct ecological features, remarkable genetic richness, and unique biological diversity," he further noted.

"We have gathered to protect the four main components of life in the Sea including water, air, coast, and biodiversity of the Caspian Sea, among which the latter is of significant importance since it involves the preservation of genes and rare species and the ecosystem of the Caspian Sea," Toriki highlighted.

The Iranian delegation discussed the necessity of implementing the "Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea", known as the Tehran Conference, and its additional protocols, which include obligations and legal frameworks for cooperation on prevention, reduction, and control of pollution, protection, maintenance, restoration and logical use of marine living resources and the management of coastal areas which was welcomed by the prosecutors' offices of the five coastal countries.

To deal with environmental crimes in the Caspian Sea, in addition to boosting scientific and educational cooperation between the general prosecutor's offices, it was suggested to create a comprehensive joint information bank to tackle Caspian Sea issues, forecast the compensation system and create special funds to protect and address environmental pollution and money laundering caused by environmental crimes.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Toriki and his Azerbaijani counterpart Kamran Aliyev, held a meeting.

Referring to the good judicial cooperation between the prosecutor general offices of the two countries, Aliyev lauded Iran's effective measures and approaches in solving some judicial challenges. He expressed hope to expand cooperation between the two countries to safeguard the Caspian Sea environment.

### Immediate action to save Caspian Sea

In September 2023, Ali Salajeqeh, the head of the Department of Environment (DOE), said the current environmental problems of the Caspian



Sea require urgent and coordinated action by the five littoral states bordering the sea.

The meeting of the ministers of the contracting parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea with the presence of the ministers of Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan was held from September 30 to 31 in Geneva.

In his speech at the meeting, Salajeqeh stated that the destruction of livelihoods and the marine environment is the result of the shrinking of the water level of the Caspian Sea, IRIB reported.

He said: "Insufficient attention to the quality of the Caspian Sea environment puts the economy and the livelihood of the marginal communities at risk. The only salvation depends on the immediate and coordinated action of all five countries bordering the sea."

Salajeqeh appreciated Mukhtar Babayev, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Azerbaijan Republic, and the officials of the United Nations Environment Program European (UNEP) Regional Office for holding the consultative meeting of the ministers and high-ranking officials of the environment of the member countries of the Tehran Convention and the administration of the interim secretariat of this convention.

"The Caspian Sea is a valuable resource for the people living in its vicinity. It is a common natural heritage that must be preserved for current and future generations," IRIB quoted Salajeqeh as saying.

The official pointed out that by preserving the environment of this sea, people and coastal communities will all benefit from the Sea and economic activities will be reinforced to achieve sustainable development.

"Nevertheless, there are still many challenges ahead to achieve sustainable development in the region. Although guaranteeing a stable future for the Caspian Sea has been covered to an acceptable extent by the Tehran Convention and its additional protocols, drafting a timed implementation plan in line with the Convention and its additional protocols to be implemented in full is far more necessary and urgent.

Pointing to the increase in Caspian seal casualties as a major environmental concern, he called for an immediate meeting between the managers of the fisheries organizations and the environment departments of the five coastal countries.

He also mentioned the other issues caused by the decrease in the water level of the Caspian Sea.

In addition to its negative effects on shipping, it has also affected the livelihood of coastal people, aquatic life, and the unique vegetation of the Caspian Sea, he said.

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



## Qezel Ozan, longest river in west Iran

With a length of around 765 kilometers, Qezel Ozan is the longest river in the western part of the country.

Recent precipitations have breathed new life into the river.

