

# Grief and Hope

## Helicopter carrying president, FM, and entourage crashes into mountain terrain in northwestern Iran, with rescue operations underway



### Leader voices hope for safe return of president to nation's arms



President Ebrahim Raisi



Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian



The Leader's Representative to East Azerbaijan Province Seyyed Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem



East Azerbaijan Province Governor Malek Rahmati



The helicopter carrying President Raisi and the accompanying delegation takes off from the Giz Galasi Dam area at noon on Sunday, May 19, 2024. ▶ Page 3

## Israelis 'sufficiently humiliated' by Hezbollah

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - The pace of events in the confrontation between Hezbollah and "Israel" is accelerating, with Hezbollah achieving new accomplishments, increasing anxiety and fear among settlers in the northern occupied territories.

This exchange of fire has diminished their hope of returning to their settlements at the beginning of September, as expressed in statements by Israeli officials at both political and military-security levels, as well as by heads of authorities in the north, along with experts, commentators, and settlers.

Overall, their statements indicate that Hezbollah has made strategic achievements against Israel, dragging it into a war of attrition, causing military, economic, and social damage that will take a long time to recover from.

Settlers in the north are feeling humiliated. Israeli political and military officials acknowledge the challenging situation, with no immediate solutions in sight.

Politically, Israeli Minister of Internal Security, Moshe Arbel, described the situation for northern settlers as difficult. ▶ Page 5

## Lebanese journalist: Hezbollah military power keeps Israel at bay

TEHRAN - A prominent Lebanese journalist says the military capabilities of the Hezbollah resistance movement have deterred Israel from launching a large-scale offensive on Lebanon.

"The Israeli army cannot enter Lebanon due to fear of confronting Hezbollah. This is because if a Lebanese citizen was killed by the occupying regime, Hezbollah would kill a settler and if a building was destroyed, the resistance fighters would respond in kind," Ali Shoeib, a reporter of the Al-Manar TV, told the Tehran Times.

He is among one of the foreign guests who have attended an international media festival in Tehran.

The journalist noted that Israel does not dare carry out acts of aggression against Lebanese citizens.

Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging fire since Israel declared war on Gaza on October 7.

The resistance movement has announced that it will not stop attacks on Israel unless the regime ends the genocidal war on the besieged Palestinian territory. ▶ Page 5

## Gen. Soleimani is 'spiritual father' of resistance forces: prominent Arab journalist

By Alireza Akbari

TEHRAN- Martyr anti-terror icon Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani is still the primary source of inspiration for resistance fighters across West Asia, according to Ali Shoeib, a seasoned journalist who has been covering wars and conflicts in the region over the past years.

"We feel the presence of Martyr Soleimani every step of the way. Every breath we take, we feel him right next to us. Especially when it comes to Hezbollah, all the group's accomplishments are achieved in the light of Martyr Soleimani's efforts and endeavours," he said, responding to a question from the Tehran Times on how General Soleimani has helped empower the Axis of Resistance.

General Qassem Soleimani was a prominent military leader who spent multiple decades in different ranks of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) since his early 20s. His last years were spent as the commander of the elite IRGC Quds force. He spearheaded Iran's fight against Daesh terrorists in Iraq and Syria in the 2010s and became a national hero after he managed to annihilate the terror group with the help of allied groups in the region. ▶ Page 3

## UN official praises Iran's 'exemplary' support for immigrants

TEHRAN - Lalini Veerasamy, the head of the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM) office in Tehran, has expressed profound admiration for Iran's exceptional services provided to immigrants.

During a meeting with Behrang Qorbani, the director of the Bureau for Foreign Immigrant Affairs in Fars Province, Veerasamy remarked that she and her colleagues have witnessed the vastness and quality of Iran's immigrant support systems in ways unparalleled in their global experiences.

"Despite the limitations Iran faces, we are deeply impressed by the exemplary services offered to immigrants," Veerasamy stated.

Qorbani emphasized that foreign immigrants in Iran are granted equal access to healthcare, education, and other essential services as Iranian citizens, without any discrimination.

He, however, acknowledged the need to empower immigrants to facilitate their voluntary return to their home countries. The local official urged the UN official to assist in creating pathways for these individuals to achieve their goals.

"While providing welfare services is crucial, it is equally important to empower immigrants so that they can eventually return home," Qorbani pointed out.

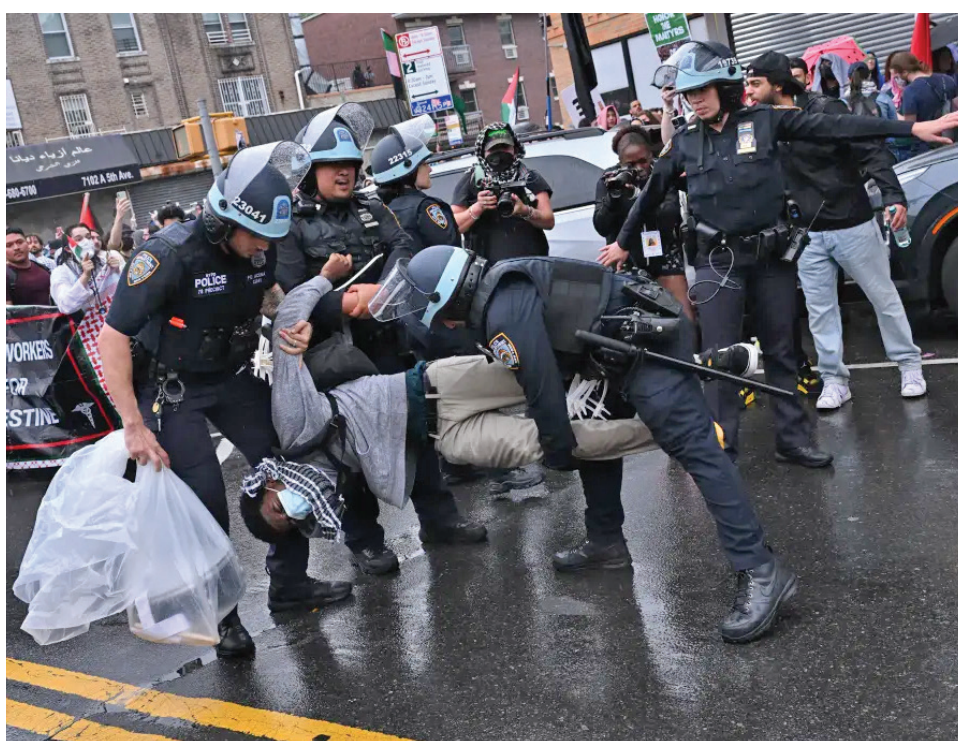
Iran is home to a large population of Afghan immigrants and refugees, who have been forced to flee their war-stricken nation for more security and better economic chances.

In recent decades, Afghan immigrants have become a deeply integrated minority in Iranian society. However, the collapse of Afghanistan's economy following the Taliban takeover in 2021 has forced hundreds of thousands more people to seek refuge in Iran, a host country that's facing its own financial and economic woes due to heavy U.S. sanctions. ▶ Page 3

## Tehran, Tatarstan chambers of commerce ink co-op MOU

TEHRAN - Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIA) and the Union Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan have signed a cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Kazan.

On the sidelines of the 15th edition of the "Russia-Islamic World: KazanForum 2024" on Saturday, Mehdi Sadeghi Niaraki, Vice-President of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, and Shamil Ageev, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan, signed a cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Kazan. ▶ Page 4



## Worldwide outcry: Protesters condemn Israel's genocidal war on Gaza

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Opponents of the Israeli war in the Palestinian Gaza Strip have poured into the streets in the United States, Europe and some other countries across the globe condemning the brutal onslaught on the besieged territory.

The protests also marked the 76th anniversary of the mass expulsion of more than 700,000 Palestinians by Zionists upon the establishment of the Israeli regime in 1948.

Palestinians refer to the tragic event, which falls on May 15 each year, as the Nakba, Arabic for catastrophe. ▶ Page 5



## TEHRAN PAPERS

## The good days of oil exports without JCPOA

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

In a note, the Iran newspaper discussed the latest monthly report of the International Energy Agency on the significant increase in Iran's oil production and wrote: According to this report, the production of 3.3 barrels was the highest figure for Iran's oil production since the United States withdrew from the JCPOA in the past 5 years. Not long ago, Brian Nelson, the U.S. Deputy Treasury Secretary for Financial Intelligence and Terrorism, traveled to Malaysia and Singapore and admitted that he traveled to Malaysia to exert more pressure on Iran within the framework of the sanctions imposed on the oil industry. But in the lower layers of his speech, you can see the inability of the U.S. to confront Iran and also its defeat to exert pressure on different countries in such a way that they may be able to do what they have been propagandizing for years and times (i.e. oil boycott of Iran). However, after completing this trip, what can be obtained from the positions of the Malaysian government is that this American official has failed in his trip and America's desperation against Iran's commercial power has become clearer.

#### Sharh: Sanction challenge in the Tehran-New Delhi agreement

In a conversation with Houshang Taghavi, a senior analyst of the subcontinent, Sharh investigated the agreement between Iran and India in Chabahar port and said: Indians were only looking for a political and diplomatic balancing act by signing an agreement with Iran so that they could have an answer to Raisi's visit to Pakistan. The U.S. sanctions against Iran, especially the Chabahar port, have not changed at all and will lead to a breathing space for New Delhi and the advancement of the agreement with Tehran. American sanctions are not only focused on the issue of the Chabahar port and the relations between Iran and India, but also left the projects related to this port unfinished. They also brought all the plans of Iran and Pakistan to a deadlock in the past years. As long as the sanctions continue, the Indians will not have the potential to implement the contracts signed with the Iranian side. In the past years, the Indian side has attempted to sign a contract with Iran in Chabahar port several times, but none of them has entered the operational phase due to various reasons.

## BRICS resolute in de-dollarization drive: Iranian diplomat



TEHRAN - The member nations of the BRICS economic alliance have expressed unwavering determination to move towards de-dollarization by abandoning the U.S. dollar in trade and economic transactions, according to Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Baqeri Kani.

De-dollarization refers to the process of reducing global dependence on the U.S. dollar as the primary reserve currency of the world.

Speaking at the 15th International Economic Forum "Russia-Islamic World: Kazan Forum 2024," Baqeri Kani emphasized the need for developing necessary infrastructures in various sectors to facilitate this shift.

For nearly a century, the U.S. dollar has maintained its status as the dominant reserve currency, held by central banks worldwide for value storage and cross-border transactions. However, countries are now seeking to lessen their reliance on the U.S. dollar due to concerns over Washington's exploitation of the currency for political purposes. The U.S. has utilized the strength of the dollar to impose sanctions on nations that do not align with its political agenda.

BRICS experts are actively engaged in consultations to establish mechanisms that

#### Donya-e-Eqtasad: Strategic ambiguity in Iran-IAEA ties

Donya-e-Eqtasad dedicated its editorial to the reasons for continuing the challenge and ambiguity in the relations between Iran and the Agency. It wrote: Many theoreticians and analysts of strategic issues believed that the differences between Iran and the United States would end during the Biden era. They thought that Joe Biden was using a strategy that would be the continuation of Barack Obama's policy, but the realities of politics in the United States show that every president has used the mechanisms of comprehensive continuity and limited change compared to the policies of the past, and this made it difficult for Biden to solve the nuclear challenges of Iran and the United States. On the other hand, the economic and strategic sanctions policy of Iran by the United States and some other great powers can be seen as part of the realities of tactical pressure. Iran is always trying to provide the necessary bases for the participation of some other regional countries for regional balancing and peace. However regional wars can be considered among some of the realities that make change the behavior patterns of countries in crisis.

#### Sobh-e-No: America's attempt to escape from predicament

In its editorial, Sobh-e-No pointed out the news of the indirect talks between Iran and the U.S. in Oman. The paper said: The American media outlet Axios has reported about the indirect talks between Iran and the U.S. According to this media, the negotiations were about regional issues. Negotiations that the recent successes of Iran in the field are definitely one of the main causes of its formation. The events that led America to be realistic about Iran and know that in order to manage the region, it must talk with Iran as a regional power and sit at the negotiating table. Today, especially after the attack on the occupied territories, Iran's regional power has been established, and America is forced to sit on the negotiating table with Iran to manage the region. Negotiations with America have many precedents, but most of these negotiations have not succeeded because America has always tried to unilaterally impose issues on Iran. Therefore, the dialogues must be resultful if America has a realistic view of Iran and accepts its role as an influential actor in the region.

will support the de-dollarization objective of the group. Comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa as well as Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, BRICS represents a significant portion of the global population (42%) and economies (27%).

The alliance has emerged as a prominent force in shaping international affairs since its establishment in 2006, often challenging the political and economic dominance of the Western powers.

#### Iran-Russia cooperation boosts peace and security

Elsewhere in his comments, Baqeri Kani emphasized that the deepening cooperation between Iran and Russia does not pose a threat to any other nations. Instead, he said, it aims to enhance the well-being of both countries and promote regional stability and peace.

He highlighted the significant potential for Iran and Russia to strengthen their economic ties by breaking the West's grip on the global economy. The two nations intend to leverage their relationship in various forums, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, he stated.

Baqeri Kani also emphasized the need for independent states to collaborate and forge stronger economic bonds, adding that political multilateralism can help foster stability in economic relations.

Iran and Russia have been consistently developing closer ties in recent years. The two countries have vast and extensive cooperation in a host of fields, including in economy, security, and culture.

# Iran-Azerbaijan: 'unshakable friendship' beyond borders

TEHRAN - On Sunday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev met at the border between their two countries to inaugurate the "Khudafarin" and "Giz Galasi" hydroelectric complexes on the Araz River.

This joint ceremony symbolized a significant step forward in the relationship between Iran and Azerbaijan, highlighting their commitment to cooperation and mutual development.

Addressing the ceremony, President Raisi emphasized the deep-rooted ties between Iran and Azerbaijan. "We, of course, are brotherly, neighboring, and friendly countries. Iran's relationship with Azerbaijan is more than a relationship with a neighbor; it is a kinship," he said. He noted that the bonds between the two nations are based on historical, cultural, and religious ties, which have only strengthened over time.

President Aliyev echoed these sentiments, underscoring the unshakable nature of the Iran-Azerbaijan relationship. "The Iran-Azerbaijan unity and friendship is unshakable. No one can drive a wedge between us," he declared.

"The future development of Iran-Azerbaijan relations is also very positive," said President Ilham Aliyev as he addressed the ceremony.

Aliyev also highlighted the importance of regional cooperation, urging Armenia to engage constructively in resolving regional issues and contributing to stability rather than relying on distant powers.

"I believe that this is reassuring because it gives hope that finally, after a long break, a peace agreement can be signed between Azerbaijan and Armenia. We welcome Iran's support on this issue," underlined the Azerbaijani leader.

The meeting and the dam



inaugurations mark a turning point following a period of strained relations. Last year, tensions rose after an attack on the Azerbaijani embassy in Tehran, which led to its closure. "Personal and family-related problems" were the attack's motivation, according to an early Iranian inquiry. Despite this, both nations have shown a remarkable ability to move past these challenges through dialogue and diplomacy.

Just a few days ago, the Republic of Azerbaijan's foreign ministry spokesperson, Ayhan Hajizadeh, announced that a new location for the country's embassy in Tehran has been determined.

In mid-March, Abbas Mousavi, Iran's ambassador to Azerbaijan, noted that after attempts by both sides to clear up misconceptions, Tehran and Baku have underlined the need to "open a new chapter" in ties between the two neighbors.

The crisis in the Caucasus also posed significant challenges for both countries, considering the historical and geopolitical complexities of the region. Iran, a key player in the region, has maintained a delicate balance by fostering positive relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia. Notably, Iran has consistently emphasized its preparedness to assist in resolving disputes and addressing challenges encountered by these neighboring nations.

Furthermore, it is crucial to

highlight that Iran has consistently cautioned against external interventions in the Caucasus issue, particularly from actors like Israel. The Iranian government has stressed the importance of regional actors working together to find peaceful solutions through dialogue and diplomacy. Sustainable peace in the Caucasus region, as reiterated by Iran on numerous occasions, can only be achieved through constructive engagement and mutual understanding among all involved parties.

Various external and internal pressures tested the diplomatic resolve of both countries. However, the leadership in Tehran and Baku showed commendable restraint and wisdom by opting for a path of dialogue and reconciliation rather than allowing the situation to escalate further.

The "Khudafarin" and "Giz Galasi" hydroelectric complexes represent the largest joint water project between Iran and Azerbaijan. Located in the Khudafarin region in Iran's northwestern province of East Azarbaijan, the dams have a combined capacity of regulating 2 billion cubic meters of water annually and are expected to generate 270 megawatt hours of electricity per year. These projects will provide vital water resources for irrigation and energy, significantly benefiting local economies and communities.

## Tehran conference explores legal pathways to hold Israeli leaders accountable for war crimes

TEHRAN - On Sunday, the Iranian Central Bar Association convened a gathering in Tehran to investigate legal and judicial avenues for holding Israeli officials accountable for the heinous war crimes they have been committing against the people of Gaza over the past months.

The conference, held under the auspices of the World Assembly of Islamic Awakening, brought together legal professionals from Jordan, Russia, Brazil, Algeria, Indonesia, Egypt, Kenya, Pakistan, Syria, Nigeria, Iraq, Tunisia, Uganda, Palestine, and Lebanon. All of whom have been actively engaged in legal actions against Israel.

## IRGC chief says Iran capable of confronting global powers

TEHRAN - The chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has declared that Iran is at a pivotal point in its history, noting the country is capable of confronting global powers and imposing its will.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the First National Hope Media Cup on Sunday, Major General Hossein Salami reiterated that Iran has reached a significant historical milestone.

"Daily reports now highlight several national achievements in advanced technologies, a testament to the country's progress," he noted.

Salami cautioned that Iran's adversaries aim to distort the country's progress, but he praised the nation's ability to turn threats into opportunities. He asserted that

Addressing the gathering, the Iranian Central Bar Association's president emphasized that the Israeli regime's actions in Gaza in recent months constitute crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide under international law and treaties.

The conference aimed to explore the capabilities of national and international bodies in prosecuting the perpetrators of these crimes and to strategize effective legal measures against the Israeli regime.

Various rights bodies have accused Israel of war crimes during its killing campaign that has

without significant enemies and threats, Iran would not have the ambition necessary to reach this level of production and design.

The IRGC chief commander also emphasized the crucial role of the media in shaping public opinion. He noted that the media influences perceptions of reality, raises awareness of events and trends, and fosters political insight, particularly in times when adversaries aim to keep societies uninformed.

Salami highlighted the continuous and critical role of the media in the battle between truth and falsehood. He stated that media could transform a tactical act into a strategic reality, underlining its importance in the modern era.

being ongoing in Gaza since October 7, 2023. The regime has so far killed 35,000 Palestinians, most of whom are women and children. It has razed the majority of buildings in the enclave to the ground, not even sparing hospitals, schools, churches, and mosques. Most of Gaza's population has also been internally displaced.

Some reports suggest the International Criminal Court (ICC) might soon issue arrest warrants against high-ranking Israeli officials based on countless findings proving that their orders have led to instances of war crimes. The U.S., however, has been threatening judges at the ICC to refrain from making such a move.

Reflecting on the True Promise Operation, Salami described it as a targeted strike aimed at pivotal points with limited missiles and drones. "The operation intended to challenge the hub of arrogance and its political stronghold," he added.

The commander stressed that the media can be a beacon of hope in battles. "While adversaries attempt to dim the flames of hope and halt Iran's progress, reality has often defied their expectations," he commented. Salami concluded by urging the media to join in amplifying Iran's achievements, noting that combined efforts can create unparalleled global influence.

On April 13, Iran targeted the occupied Palestinian territories with a barrage of drones and missiles. The

Iranian Minister of Energy Ali Akbar Mehriban described the Giz Galasi dam as a symbol of friendship, constructed according to modern engineering standards. The completion of these projects demonstrates what can be achieved when nations work together towards common goals, setting a precedent for future collaboration.

The ceremony also served as a platform for discussing broader regional issues. President Aliyev noted the ongoing process of defining the borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan, expressing optimism about reaching a peace agreement with the support of neighboring countries, including Iran. He stressed the importance of regional autonomy and independence from external influences. This renewed partnership between Iran and Azerbaijan sends a strong message about the potential for regional cooperation. The successful collaboration on the hydroelectric projects showcases the benefits of shared interests and mutual support. As both countries continue to strengthen their ties, there is hope for enhanced cooperation in trade, security, and cultural exchanges, contributing to broader regional stability.

In a world often divided by conflict and rivalry, the story of Iran and Azerbaijan's reconciliation stands as a testament to the power of diplomacy and the potential for peaceful coexistence. The inauguration of the "Khudafarin" and "Giz Galasi" hydroelectric complexes marks the beginning of a new chapter in their bilateral relations, promising a future of cooperation and progress.

The rekindling of Iran-Azerbaijan relations also opens the door for broader regional initiatives. With both countries showing a commitment to peaceful and constructive engagement, there is potential for enhanced cooperation on issues such as trade, security, and cultural exchange.

retaliatory strikes, dubbed Operation True Promise inflicted damage on Israeli military bases across the occupied lands.

The retaliatory strikes came after the Israeli attack on April 1 against the Iranian consulate in Damascus, located next to the embassy building in Damascus's Mezzeh district.

The airstrike killed two senior Iranian military personnel who were on an advisory mission to Syria as well as five of their accompanying officers.

Iranian authorities have consistently stated their commitment to enhancing the country's military capabilities, with a clear focus on defensive purposes. They have asserted that Iran's defense capabilities are non-negotiable and will not be subject to discussions.

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

## Iran to boost arms exports by 50%

TEHRAN - Brigadier General Reza Talaei-Nik, spokesperson for Iran's Defence Ministry, has announced the country's plan to increase the export of its defence products by 50%.

Speaking on Sunday, Talaei-Nik said the Defence Ministry has made significant progress in enhancing the production of defence equipment and fulfilling the requirements of the Armed

Forces. "Iran has achieved self-sufficiency in meeting its defence needs, enabling it to focus on expanding its export market," he said.

**Technological surprise against potential foes** The spokesman added that despite deciding to boost exports, Iran will make sure to maintain "technological surprise" against potential adversaries. "The Armed Forces have pursued

and will pursue the principle of technological surprise against the enemy and at the same time prevent any kind of surprise in the offensive and defensive fields," he noted. Talaei-Nik also hailed the efforts of researchers at the Defence Ministry for achieving notable successes in technological innovation and the development of modern defence systems.



Helicopter carrying president, FM, and entourage crashes into mountain terrain in northwestern Iran, with rescue operations underway

TEHRAN – A helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi made a “hard landing” on Sunday during a visit to the country’s northwest, the national TV reported.

The incident occurred as a result of dense fog in the region, which is making conditions difficult for rescue teams, the TV said.

The helicopter crashed close to a copper mine called Sungun. It’s located in between Jolfa and Varzaqan in the East Azerbaijan province of Iran and it’s roughly between 70km (43 miles) to 100km (62 miles) away from the city of Tabriz, one of the largest cities in Iran and also the city that the president of Iran and foreign minister were headed toward.

Since Sunday afternoon, 40 separate rescue teams have been dispatched to the forested and mountainous area.

Harsh weather has made the region accessible only by ground teams, as aerial approaches are unfeasible.

The mountainous terrain and natural obstacles rendered communication with the president’s entourage nearly impossible.

An Iranian television reporter said that as it got darker and

colder, the crews approaching the site were avoiding travel by car, due to the roads in the area not being paved, and rain making the ground muddy

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, governor of East Azerbaijan Province Malek Rahmati, and Friday prayer leader of Tabriz Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem were also aboard the copter. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, expressed concern about the missing helicopter in a meeting with families of IRGC personnel.

“We hope that God returns the honorable president and his companions to the arms of the nation.”

“All must pray for the health of this group of civil servants. The Iranian nation must not be concerned or worried, there will be no disruption in the work of the country,” the Leader said.

Mohammad Bagheri, the chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, issued an order on Sunday afternoon for all the equipment and capacity of the army, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and law enforcement forces to be used to find the helicopter.

People in various cities of Iran

gathered to pray for President Raisi and his companions.

Raisi was traveling in East Azerbaijan Province. The incident happened near Jolfa, a city on the border with the Republic of Azerbaijan, some 600 kilometers (375 miles) northwest of Tehran.

Raisi had been in East Azerbaijan early Sunday to inaugurate a dam with Ilham Aliyev, the president of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to the TV, Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi has said the helicopter was forced to make a tough emergency landing due to the bad weather condition.

**National Security Council did not hold emergency meeting on Raisi**

An informed source reported that the Supreme National Security Council has not held a meeting regarding the accident involving the helicopter carrying the President of Iran and his companions.

The source added that the rumors circulating on social media about the council holding an emergency meeting were incorrect.

**Nations express support for Iran**

In a show of regional solidarity, other countries including Turkey, Italy, and Qatar have expressed

their support for Iran following the recent helicopter accident involving Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi. Both countries promptly extended their well-wishes and readiness to assist in any necessary capacity.

Earlier on Sunday, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev met with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and described their parting as a “friendly farewell.”

Aliyev emphasized Azerbaijan’s readiness to assist, stating, “As a neighboring, friendly, and brotherly nation, Azerbaijan is prepared to provide any necessary support.”

The Iraqi government also instructed the country’s Interior Ministry, the Red Crescent and other relevant bodies to offer help to its neighbor Iran and assist in the search for President Raisi’s missing helicopter. The head of Yemen’s Supreme Political Council also noted that their country stand with the people of Iran and their leadership in this difficult situation.

Additionally, a spokesperson for the Russian Foreign Ministry stated that Russia is prepared to offer assistance in locating the Iranian president’s helicopter that was involved in the incident.

## Leader voices hope for safe return of president to nation’s arms

TEHRAN – In a meeting with families of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps on the occasion of Imam Reza’s (pbuh) birth anniversary, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, addressed the worrying helicopter incident involving President Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation.

The Leader stated, “We hope that the Almighty God will return the respected and esteemed President and his entourage to the arms of the nation. Everyone should pray for the health of these people who are serving the Iranian nation. The nation doesn’t need to be worried or anxious as the administration of the country will not be disrupted at all.”

A helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi faced an incident on Sunday during a visit to the country’s northwest, the national TV reported.

The incident reportedly occurred as a result of dense fog in the region, which is making conditions difficult for rescue teams, the TV said.

Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian was also aboard the copter.



Raisi was traveling in East Azerbaijan province. The incident happened near Jolfa, a city on the border with the Republic of Azerbaijan, some 600 kilometers (375 miles) northwest of Tehran.

Raisi had been in Azerbaijan early Sunday to

inaugurate a dam with Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev.

According to the TV, Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi has said the helicopter was forced to make emergency landing due to the whether condition.

## Gen. Soleimani is ‘spiritual father’ of resistance forces: prominent Arab journalist



From Page 1 ▶ The military leader was assassinated on January 3, 2020, during a U.S. drone attack on Baghdad’s airport.

“The remarkable success of Hezbollah in recent months, I believe, is thanks to Martyr Soleimani’s blessings. He has been with us in all stages of our operations.

The soul of Martyr Soleimani is not only present in Lebanon, but he is also with resistance forces across the region, in Iraq, Yemen, Syria, and elsewhere. He was the first and biggest supporter of the Axis of Resistance. I saw

him myself during the Syrian war, sitting on the ground with soldiers and even children and adults,” Shoeib recalled, adding that freedom fighters in West Asia were “orphaned” after the martyrdom of General Soleimani. “He was our spiritual father. He used to tell us to accept even the unfortunate events and endure hardships because ‘there is good in everything’. That sentence will forever stick with many of us.”

The journalist made the remarks on Sunday. Shoeib, currently a reporter with Lebanon’s Al-Manar TV, has been able to closely follow the heavy confrontation of the

Hezbollah Resistance Movement with the Israeli regime in the past 8 months from the southern borders of Lebanon. The journalist has lost several of his colleagues to war throughout his career but remains steadfast in his endeavors to inform the public about the realities on the ground.

**Western media can’t win in battle against truth**

Responding to another question by the Tehran Times, Shoeib stated that Western media outlets would not be able to control the narrative on the Gaza war despite their global dominance which remained uncontested for years.

“We are representing the truth, and they are representing Israel’s evil desires. We are going to win no matter what, because our faith and cause is superior,” he explained.

Mainstream media in the West has been covering the war in Gaza in line with Israeli policies. Western outlets have disseminated false information about the Hamas

resistance group provided by Zionists since the beginning of the regime’s latest round of onslaughts in Gaza. They have meanwhile censored or fabricated the truth about the plight of Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli military.

Despite Western media institutions working in tandem to spread Israeli propaganda, polls across Western nations show that the public has largely turned against the regime.

Reports suggest that a growing number of citizens now believe Israel to be a colonial and apartheid regime that’s forced Palestinians to pick up arms in pursuit of freedom.

Israel’s deadly military campaign in Gaza has so far killed over 35,000 civilians and decimated the entire enclave. Over two million people that remain internally displaced there are also grappling with hunger and disease as a result of a full siege by the regime.

## UN official praises Iran’s ‘exemplary’ support for immigrants

From Page 1 ▶ The cessation of humanitarian aid and the freezing of billions of dollars of Afghan assets by the U.S. have further hindered efforts to stabilize Afghanistan.

Estimates suggest that the number of Afghan refugees in Iran now exceeds 3 million.

However, some have put the number between 6 to 7 million.

While Iran has demonstrated its humanitarian commitment to providing shelter and services to the newly arrived refugees, it believes they should be given the chance to return home with dignity and

respect in the future.

At the same time, Tehran has called on the international community to share the burden and support Iran’s efforts to ensure that these individuals can live in safety and dignity, both in the present and in the future.

### A dark cloud over Iranian football

TEHRAN – The Iranian football scene has been rocked by a major corruption scandal in recent weeks, with allegations of bribery, match-fixing, and manipulation of fixtures casting a dark shadow over the sport.

The scandal first came to light in early May when reports emerged of a corruption investigation involving the football federation’s officials and media figures. The allegations centered on “bribery,” “document forgery,” “match-fixing,” and “fixture manipulation,” sending shockwaves through the Iranian football community.

As speculation mounted about the individuals and clubs involved, the judiciary of Kerman Province, where the investigation is centered, confirmed the existence of the case and announced that those implicated had been summoned for questioning. Unofficial sources named two senior football officials, Khodadad Afsharian, head of the Referees Committee and Soheil Mehdi, head League Organization’s Competitions Committee, as being among those involved. The scandal was also linked to a top-flight club in Kerman Province.

In the wake of the unfolding scandal, both Afsharian and Mehdi stepped down from their positions within the Iranian football federation as the federation’s website announced the appointment of Daniel Moradi as temporary head of the Referees Committee and Mohammadreza Keshvarifard as the acting head of the Organization’s Competitions Committee.

The football federation has maintained that the corruption case dates back to 2021 or earlier.

The Iranian football federation now faces two major challenges: thoroughly investigating and addressing the corruption within its ranks and restoring public trust in the sport. The use of terms like “Calciopoli,” the infamous Italian football corruption scandal, in reference to the current situation highlights the gravity of the situation and the urgent need for decisive action.

Only through decisive action, transparency, and a genuine commitment to ethical practices can Iranian football begin to heal from this scandal and regain the trust of its fans and stakeholders. The road ahead is challenging, but the future of Iranian football depends on the federation’s ability to rise to the occasion.

### Amini moves from Monaco to Nancy basketball team

TEHRAN – Iranian basketball prodigy Mohammad Amini has signed up with SLUC Nancy for the next three seasons. The French club confirmed the news on Friday.

This season, Amini averaged 19.1 points, 7.9 rebounds and 3.9 assists for 21.8 rating in Monaco.

He burst into the spotlight in the last year’s World Cup in Indonesia at just 18 years old with more than 13 points on average with the Iranian team.

### Shahsavari qualifies for Olympics

TEHRAN – Table tennis player Neda Shahsavari will represent Iran at the 2024 Olympic Games.

She defeated Sarvinoz Mirkadirova from Kazakhstan 4-3 in the Central Asia Regional Olympic Qualification to book her place in Paris.

Shahsavari has previously competed in 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games.

Nima Alamiyan also defeated his brother Noshad 4-1 to seal a spot in Paris. Alamiyan has participated in 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games.

The Central Asia Regional Olympic Qualification was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from May 17 to 19.

### Brentford confirm Ghoddos departure

TEHRAN – Brentford football club have confirmed five players who will depart the club this summer.

Shandon Baptiste, Saman Ghoddos and Charlie Goode will leave on 30 June once their contracts expire, while loanees Neal Maupay and Sergio Reguilón will return to Everton and Tottenham

Hotspur respectively.

Versatile midfielder Ghoddos re-joined Brentford on a one-year contract last summer.

In total, the Iran international has made 107 appearances and scored five goals.

His sumptuous strike in the Bees’ 3-0 win over Burnley at Gtech Community Stadium this season won the Premier League’s Goal of the Month award for October.

“Saman is one of the nicest guys I’ve ever met in football, he’s always positive and makes a fantastic contribution at training and around the squad every day,” said Director of football Phil Giles. “It was an easy decision to bring him back last summer and he has completely justified that decision.

“He will always be welcome at the club and of course we shouldn’t rule out him coming back again sometime in the future.”

Giles concluded: “On behalf of everyone at Brentford I want to thank all the players who are leaving us this summer and wish them every success in the future.”

### Mokhtari takes bronze at World Para Athletics

TEHRAN – Alireza Mokhtari of Iran won a bronze medal the 2024 World Para Athletics Championships on Sunday. He claimed the bronze in the Men’s Shot Put F53 with a throw of 8.43 meters.

Georgian thrower Giga Ochkhikidze seized the gold with 8.79 meters and Moroccan Abdelillah Gani won the silver with 8.58 meters.

The 2024 World Para Athletics Championships are organized by the World Para Athletics subcommittee of the International Paralympic Committee. It’s the 11th edition of the event and are being held in the Kobe Universiade Memorial Stadium in Kobe, Japan, from May 17 to 25.

The event was initially scheduled for September 2021 but it was rescheduled to avoid clashing with the 2020 Summer Paralympics which were rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Held in East Asia for the first time and a crucial qualifier for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, the Kobe 2024 Para Athletics World Championships attracted over 1,000 athletes from 100 countries and regions to compete in 168 events.

### Heydari to officiate at World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN – Iranian referee Payam Heydari has been chosen to officiate Nepal and the UAE match in the 2026 WORLD Cup qualification.

Heydari will be assisted by his compatriots Farhad Moraveji and Farhad Farhadpour.

Nepal are scheduled to meet the UAE on June 6 at the Prince Mohamed bin Fahd Stadium in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. Nepal sit bottom of Group H without a single point out of four matches but the Emirati team are first with 12 points.

### Iran Para taekwondo team win Asian championships

TEHRAN – The Iranian para taekwondo team clinched 4 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals in the men’s and women’s divisions to become the Asian Para Taekwondo Championships in Asia.

The 2024 Asian Para Taekwondo Championships was held in Da Nang, Vietnam on May 19th.

In the women’s division, Maryam Abdollahpour bagged a gold medal for Iran after winning against a para-taekwondoka from Mexico.

Another Iranian practitioner Zahra Rahimi in the weight category of -57 kg defeated an opponent from Uzbekistan to clinch the second gold medal for Iran. Also, Aylar Jami in -52 kg, Leila Mirzaei in -65 kg and Marzieh Nasrollahi in +65 kg won bronze medals for Iran.

In the men’s division, Saeed Sadeghian Pour also played in the 63-kg final match against a rival from Mongolia and lost to bag a silver.

In -70 kg weight, Mehdi Pourrahmana won a gold medal for Iran and Amirhamed Haqiqatshenas won a silver medal.

Also, Hamed Haqshenas gained a gold medal in the +80 kg after beating his opponent from Kazakhstan.



## Yerevan willing to join Iran's Chabahar: Indian envoy

TEHRAN - Nilakshi Saha Sinha, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of India to Armenia says that the Armenian officials have shown interest in using Iran's Chabahar port jointly developed with her country.

Speaking to local Armenian media, Nilakshi Saha Sinha, noted that Armenian Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Gnel Sanosyan visited Chabahar port in December 2023 regarding the issue of using the port.

The Indian ambassador drew attention to the fact that the Chabahar port is being jointly developed by India and Iran.

"We are waiting for the details from the Armenian side, and we will definitely take it into account when we receive clear proposals from the Armenian side," the ambassador emphasized, noting that in the discussions between the two countries, Armenian representatives showed interest in using the Chabahar port.

Referring to the possible role of Yerevan in the development of the communication route from India to Chabahar port and then to the Black Sea, Ambassador Nilakshi Saha Sinha noted that Armenia, being a landlocked country, definitely needs more communication projects.

Earlier this month, Iran and India signed a long-term agreement on Monday based on which India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) will operate a terminal at the strategic Chabahar port as it seeks to expand trade in Central Asia.

The agreement was signed in a ceremony attended by Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash and India's Ports, Shipping, and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal in Tehran.

The signing of this agreement is considered a turning point in bilateral and regional commercial and economic cooperation, as well

as facilitating strategic cooperation between Iran and India.

According to Sonowal, the agreement, which had been under discussion for some time, is going to "clear the pathway for bigger investments to be made in the port," he said. Without a long-term agreement, "it's very difficult to invest in a port."

India expects the project will improve its connection with an international north-south transport corridor being developed with Iran and Russia and also improve trade links with Central Asia, Jaishankar said.

"We will see more connectivity linkages coming out of that port," the Indian minister told local media earlier this week.

The Chabahar port serves as a gateway for Indian goods to reach markets in Afghanistan and Central Asia while bypassing India's rival and neighbor Pakistan. India sent 20,000 tons of wheat aid to Afghanistan through the Chabahar port last year.

The cooperation between Iran and India on the strategic port dates back to 2003, when New Delhi agreed to develop the port as well as accompanying infrastructure links during the visit by then-President Muhammad Khatami to India. The project has suffered several delays since then and was weighed down by sanctions on Iran.

As Iran's only oceanic port on the Gulf of Oman, Chabahar Port holds great significance for the country both politically and economically. The country has taken serious measures to develop this port in order to improve the country's maritime trade.

The port consists of Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti terminals, each of which has five berth facilities. The port is located in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan Province and is about 120 kilometers southwest of Pakistan's Baluchistan Province, where the China-funded Gwadar port is situated.

## Iran's MSC operates with 100% capacity to defeat sanctions

TEHRAN - The managing director of Mobarakeh Steel Company (MSC) Mohammad-Yasser Tayyebnia says the leading steelmaker utilizes its full capacity to neutralize the imposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

Tayyebnia made the remarks on Sunday at the closing ceremony of the First National Hope Media Cup in Tehran, noting that Mobarakeh Steel Company, Iran's biggest steelmaker, seeks to use domestic instruments in the process of steelmaking.

The MSC boasts of being the largest producer of direct-reduced iron in the world, he further noted. "The company is the quality producer of over 50 percent of Iran's steel in all major markets including automotive, construction, household appliances, and packaging."

He went on to say that while the Islamic Republic is under sanctions, the company is tasked with defeating the cruel measures of the enemies by operating at 100% capacity.

The World Steel Association (WSA) announced in its latest report that steel production in Iran

during the first quarter of 2024 has registered a 16.3 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

Located in southwestern Isfahan, Mobarakeh Steel Company is the biggest steel producer not only in Iran but also in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The state-owned company is located 65 km southwest of the city of Isfahan, near the city of Mobarakeh. It is one of the largest industrial complexes operating in Iran. MSC was commissioned after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and initiated operations in 1993. It underwent major revamping in 2000.

The First National Hope Media Cup which started on Saturday at the Comprehensive University of Islamic Revolution in the capital city will wrap up today.

The national festival served as a platform where reporters and photojournalists covered the speeches delivered by high-ranking officials and experts on various topics within 36 hours in the country.

## Annual gas supply to power plants rises 11% yr/yr

TEHRAN - Head of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) Dispatching Department Saeed Aghili has said gas supply to the country's power plants increased by 11 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) compared to the year before.

According to Aghili, the NIGC supplied 79 billion cubic meters of natural gas to the power plants across the country in the previous year, IRNA reported.

He put the country's total gas consumption in the previous year at 249 billion cubic meters, which was also 7.0 billion cubic meters more than the figure for a year earlier.

Based on the data released by the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC), the company has also supplied more than \$3.8 billion worth of liquid fuel for the power plants over the past 2.5 years.

As reported, during the mentioned period,

3.6 million liters of gas oil and 2.5 million liters of fuel oil were supplied to 110 power plants across the country.

Back in September 2023, NIGC Head Majid Chegeni said the cumulative gas supply to the country's power plants in the first six months of the previous Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2023) increased by 16 percent compared to last year's same period, registering a new record high.

According to Chegeni, due to the increase in gas supply in the mentioned period, the consumption of liquid fuel in the power plants significantly decreased which resulted in less air pollution.

Mentioning NIGC programs for the gas supply in the cold season, the official said: "We hope that with the measures taken in various sectors from production and distribution to transmission, we will successfully pass this winter as well as last year."

# Tehran, Tatarstan chambers of commerce ink co-op MOU

TEHRAN - Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIA) and the Union Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan have signed a cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Kazan.

On the sidelines of the 15th edition of the "Russia-Islamic World: KazanForum 2024" on Saturday, Mehdi Sadeghi Niaraki, Vice-President of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, and Shamil Ageev, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Tatarstan, signed a cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Kazan.

Elaborating on the details of the signed MoU, Sadeghi Niaraki stated that the agreement was aimed at developing cooperation in the field of information exchange, facilitating delegation visits, showcasing capacities, and promoting bilateral trade.



He mentioned that Tehran province contributes significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and has ample potential for expanding exports of goods and services, noting that the Republic of Tatarstan, with its capacities, particularly in the industries and heavy vehicles sector, also has special capabilities to enhance cooperation and boost bilateral trade.

According to Iran's Consul General to Kazan Davud

Mirzakhani, the value of trade between Iran and the Republic of Tatarstan in Russia increased by 25 percent in 2023 compared to the previous year.

"The value of trade between Iran and the Russian Republic of Tatarstan increased by 25 percent to more than 200 million dollars in 2023," Mirzakhani told Tatar-inform.

According to the official, the trade exchanges between the

two sides stood at \$182 million in 2022.

Referring to the signing of the free trade agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), of which Russia is also a member, Mirzakhani said: "With the implementation of this agreement after its approval in the parliaments and the removal of the customs tariffs on about 7,000 commodity items, it is expected that bilateral trade exchanges will increase significantly."

Russia - Islamic World: KazanForum 2024 aims to strengthen trade, economic, scientific, technical, educational, social, and cultural ties between the regions of the Russian Federation and the member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Russia - Islamic World: KazanForum 2024 was officially kicked off in Kazan on May 16 and concluded on May 18.

## Production of Iran's Oxin steel up 12,000 mt in March-April

TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Khuzestan Oxin Steel Company Ali Mohammadi says the company has produced over 83,000 metric tons (mt) of plates.

The Oxin Steel Company produced more than 83,000 mt of plates in the first month of the Iranian calendar year (March 20-April 19, 2024), Mohammadi said in the closing ceremony of the First National Hope Media Cup underway in Tehran.

The company produced 12,000 mt more

plates compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, he added.

The products of the company are exported to 18 countries, he pointed out.

He went on to say that 10 countries in the world produce wide steel plates, one of which is Iran.

The complex has created jobs for more than 1,500 Iranians so far, further noted.

The World Steel Association (WSA)

announced in its latest report that steel production in Iran during the first quarter of 2024 has registered a 16.3 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

Located in the southern Khuzestan Province, Oxin is Iran's biggest producer of heavy plates.

It is the only local producer of heavy wide steel plate, which can produce it in widths of 1,100-4,500 millimeters with a thickness of 8-150 mm.

## BRICS members pursue ditching dollar in trade transactions



TEHRAN - Iran says member countries of the BRICS group of emerging economies are resolute in pursuing efforts to ditch the U.S. dollar in trade and economic transactions.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani made the remarks on Saturday while speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the 15th International Economic Forum "Russia-Islamic World: KazanForum 2024" in Kazan, the

Republic of Tatarstan.

He said the BRICS members are seriously determined to reduce dependence on the U.S. dollar but they need to develop the necessary infrastructures in various fields to make that happen. He added that experts of the BRICS states are holding constant consultations to establish mechanisms for achieving the de-dollarization objective of the group.

BRICS consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. The group accounts for 42 percent of the global population and about 27 percent of both the world's land area and the world's economy.

The bloc has become increasingly important in addressing international issues since it was founded in 2006, and is often seen as a counterweight to Western political and economic hegemony.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Bagheri Kani said cooperation between Iran and Russia is not detrimental to any country but will promote the two nations' welfare as well as regional peace and stability. Pointing to the great capacities of Tehran and Moscow to strengthen cooperation, the Iranian diplomat emphasized that the two sides are determined to break the West's monopoly on the global economy and prepare the ground for boosting interactions among the independent states.

He said close political relations between the two countries can deepen bilateral economic cooperation, adding, "Iran and Russia will use these capacities in other fields, especially in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS."

Political multilateralism will promote stability in economic relations, Bagheri Kani pointed out.

## TEDPIX loses 62,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN - TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 62,237 points to 2,106,439 on Sunday, which is the second day of the Iranian calendar week.

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

In late April, Head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshghi said the organization is determined to support shareholders in the stock market.

Speaking in a meeting attended by economic operators from financial institutions, analysts, and capital market media, Eshqi said "Political, social, and economic debates have created some high expectations from the stock market."

The official referred to the complexity of the prevailing conditions in the market, announcing the serious determination of this organization to support the rights of shareholders.

"The mistrust among the shareholders under the influence of various factors caused the creation of difficult conditions in the market, and now we need empathy given such a problem and to overcome these

conditions," he said.

Eshqi further said when the condition of the capital market is not very suitable, naturally, private sector companies are not very willing to offer their shares in the stock market and they believe that there is not much value for the companies in this market.

Previous experiences, however, indicate that the current conditions governing the market cannot be continued in the long term, the official added.

## 97 petrochemical complexes operating in Iran: Official

TEHRAN - The head of the National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Morteza Shahmirzaei says that over 97 petrochemical facilities are operating across Iran.

The official referred to the growth in Iran's petrochemical industry, adding that there were only 6 petrochemical complexes in the country when the 1979 Islamic Revolution toppled former Shah and the Islamic Republic was founded 45 years ago.

Noting that the country produces some 550 different types of petrochemical products, he said that each one of these products helps the development of a part of the Iranian industry.

He expected that Iran's petrochemical output will reach 100 million metric tons (mt) by the end of the current calendar year to March 2025.

Shahmirzaei had earlier said NPC is planning to complete 13 new petrochemical projects by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (late March 2025).

"One of the strategies of the petrochemical industry in the year "production leap with people's participation" is to put 12 new petrochemical projects into operation by the end of [the current Iranian calendar]1403 and use all available capacities," the official said.

He stated that the completion of 12 petrochemical projects by the end of this year will have a significant impact on the growth of production and economic development of the country.

The NPC head had previously put the country's petrochemical production capacity at over 92 million tons, and said: "Today

we are almost self-sufficient in the main petrochemical sectors including products and equipment."

Iran's petrochemical industry accounts for 28 percent of the region's petrochemical capacity and 2.7 percent of the world's petrochemical capacity, he announced.

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

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



# Worldwide outcry: Protesters condemn genocidal war on Gaza

## Police in the US and Europe violently attack peaceful protests

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Opponents of the Israeli war in the Palestinian Gaza Strip have poured into the streets in the United States, Europe and some other countries across the globe condemning the brutal onslaught on the besieged territory.

The protests also marked the 76th anniversary of the mass expulsion of more than 700,000 Palestinians by Zionists upon the establishment of the Israeli regime in 1948.

Palestinians refer to the tragic event, which falls on May 15 each year, as the Nakba, Arabic for catastrophe.

Protesters in the United States rallied to commemorate the Nakba and call for an end to Israel's war on Gaza.

### NY police grab protesters

A peaceful protest was held in the Bay Ridge neighborhood in southwest Brooklyn in New York on Saturday but police used violence to prevent it and disperse the participants.

According to Al Jazeera, New York police made over a dozen arrests, grabbed some protesters in random, and dragged them away as people yelled at officers to stop.

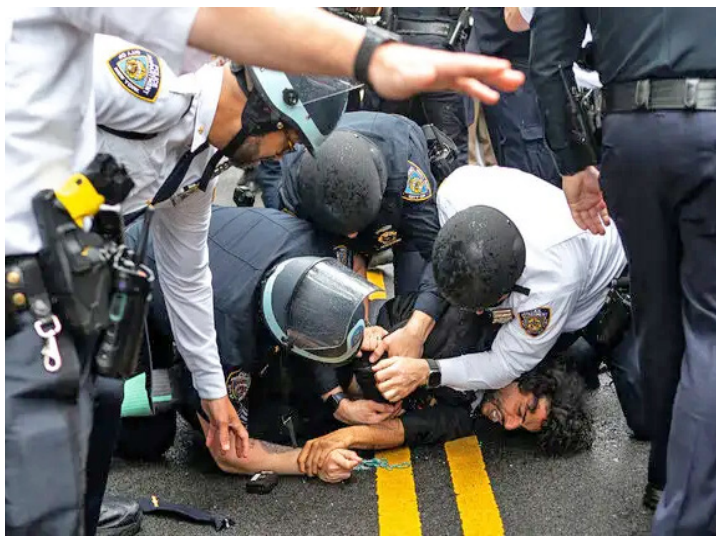
The Doha-based news outlet said officers also beat and punched demonstrators on their upper bodies and around their heads.

### "Genocide is Biden's legacy"

People also protested in the US capital to express support for Palestinians in Gaza and call for ending the war.

"No peace on stolen land. End the killings, stop the crime/Israel out of Palestine," the protesters chanted, according to AP.

The demonstrators in Washington, D.C., also accused President Joe Biden of complicity in the Is-



raeli genocide in Gaza as slogans of "Biden Biden, you will see/genocide's your legacy" echoed through the crowd who braved rain to rally.

The demonstrators came down hard on American lawmakers for approving batches of military aid for Israel.

Last week, House Republicans along with more than a dozen Democrats voted on to pass legislation that would force the White House to provide arms shipments to Israel.

"This Congress does not speak for us. This Congress does not represent the will of the people. We're paying for the bombs. We're paying for the F-16s and F-35s. And then we do the poor Palestinians a favor and send some food," Osama Aburishad, executive director of American Muslims for Palestine, who was one of the speakers of the protest in Washington said.

The protesters also condemned US police for a heavy-handed crackdown against students at college campuses. Up to 3,000 pro-Palestine students, who had set up encampments at US universities and colleges in recent weeks, have been arrested. Their main demand has fo-

ocused on the severance of financial ties between their universities and companies that benefit from Israel's war on Gaza.

### German police attack protesters

Similar rallies were staged in Europe. In Germany, many demonstrators in Berlin carried Palestinian flags and signs reading "Stop the genocide in Gaza" and "Stop the terror of occupation!" while others shouted "Free Palestine, Free Gaza."

Videos on social media show riot police attacking and beating protesters who were chanting slogans against Israel's war on Gaza. Officers made arrests and dragged some demonstrators.

Germany is among the European countries that has adopted extreme measures to contain pro-Palestine protests since Israel launched war on Gaza on October 7.

Germany has also outlawed slogans such as "From the river to the Sea, Palestine will be Free."

### French protests demand ceasefire

Like Germany, France has also launched clampdowns on pro-Palestine protests over the past seven months.

At the weekend, protesters in Paris called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. They demanded President Emmanuel Macron take more serious measures to stop the Israeli aggression.

The demonstrators also commemorated the 76th anniversary of the Nakba which led to permanent displacement of a majority of the Palestinian people from their homeland.

### Brits blast leaders

In the UK, anti-war protesters rallied in the capital condemning officials for their involvement in Israel's brutal war on the Gaza Strip.

The protesters in central London accused Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour Leader Keir Starmer of being complicit in the regime's genocide in Gaza.

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC), which organized the protest, said the march commemorated "ethnic cleansing of 750,000 Palestinians."

British police arrested some protesters accusing them of using offensive placards and chants. The UK cracks down on pro-Palestine protesters under the pretext of antisemitism, an allegation that demonstrators vehemently deny.

The pro-Palestine march was the 14th such event held in London since the Gaza war began.

Some other countries in Europe such as Austria, Italy, Spain and Denmark saw protests against Israel's brutal war on Gaza.

Beyond Europe, people participated in a pro-Palestine rally in front of the German embassy in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand. They called for a ceasefire and an end to Israel's attacks on Gaza.

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

## Israelis "sufficiently humiliated" by Hezbollah

### Lebanese resistance movement inflicts "irreversible" damage on northern occupied territories

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - The pace of events in the confrontation between Hezbollah and "Israel" is accelerating, with Hezbollah achieving new accomplishments, increasing anxiety and fear among settlers in the northern occupied territories.

This exchange of fire has diminished their hope of returning to their settlements at the beginning of September, as expressed in statements by Israeli officials at both political and military-security levels, as well as by heads of authorities in the north, along with experts, commentators, and settlers.

Overall, their statements indicate that Hezbollah has made strategic achievements against Israel, dragging it into a war of attrition, causing military, economic, and social damage that will take a long time to recover from.

Settlers in the north are feeling humiliated. Israeli political and military officials acknowledge the challenging situation, with no immediate solutions in sight.

Politically, Israeli Minister of Internal Security, Moshe Arbel, described the situation for northern settlers as difficult, highlighting that even holding

a meeting with members of the Kiryat Shmona municipality outside their city has proven too risky.

Arbel has urged the Israeli government to address the situation in the north, emphasizing that abandoning an entire area is not an option.

Additionally, Israeli military sources acknowledge Hezbollah's success in striking Israeli intelligence infrastructure significantly since the early stages of the Gaza genocide, which led to additional targets being hit.

This has forced the Israeli army to reinforce multiple defensive capabilities against attacks, allowing Hezbollah to develop its future operations, necessitating further readiness from the Israeli army.

According to Israeli security ministry data, over seven months of fighting between the Israeli army and Hezbollah, the north has suffered 930 cases of damage, with nearly a third classified as "moderate" to "severe" damage.

It is estimated that it will take at least a year after the war to repair. The majority of the damage so far has affected settlements-turned military zones, followed by public buildings, other infrastructure and various properties.

Additionally, Hezbollah has launched approximately 3100 rockets, mortars, anti-tank missiles, heavy artillery shells, and drones towards Israel.

ACLED project data, which maps military confrontations worldwide, indicates that until the end of April, Hezbollah executed 992 attacks during this period.

The former Chief of Staff of the Israeli Northern Command, Major General Amos Yadlin, has stated anyone who believes the Israeli army can stop everything launched by Hezbollah (precision missiles and drones) simply hasn't grasped the situation.

Yadlin added that Hezbollah strategically succeeded in evacuating an entire area (in northern Israel) without paying the price for it.

The former commander of the Ground Forces, Major General Yiftah Ron-Tal, has said Israel is fighting a multi-arena war. In the north, there is a war of attrition, where Israelis are "sufficiently humiliated" with at least about 60,000 displaced from an area-turned combat zone, which Hezbollah practically "created" without paying the price for it.

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

## Lebanese journalist: Hezbollah military power keeps Israel at bay

TEHRAN - A prominent Lebanese journalist says the military capabilities of the Hezbollah resistance movement have deterred Israel from launching a large-scale offensive on Lebanon.

"The Israeli army cannot enter Lebanon due to fear of confronting Hezbollah. This is because if a Lebanese citizen was killed by the occupying regime, Hezbollah would kill a settler and if a building was destroyed, the resistance fighters would respond in kind," Ali Shoeib, a reporter of the Al-Manar TV said.

He is among one of the foreign guests who have attended an international media festival in Tehran.

The journalist noted that Israel does not dare carry out acts of aggression against Lebanese citizens.

Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging fire since Israel declared war on Gaza on October 7.

The resistance movement has announced that it will not stop attacks on Israel unless the regime ends the genocidal war on the besieged Palestinian territory.

Shoeib touched upon Hezbollah's military achievements, saying it has hit 50 important Israeli military bases over the past months.

He said up to 100,000 Israeli settlers have been displaced due to Hezbollah's attacks on the regime's positions.

Shoeib stressed that Israel will fail to achieve its military goals.

Hezbollah has already fought off two Israeli wars against Lebanon in 2000 and 2006. The resistance movement forced Israel to retreat in both conflicts.

Since the 2006 war, Hezbollah has considerably

boosted its military capabilities in the face of Israeli aggression.

Hezbollah Secretary General Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah has already said that the resistance group has 100,000 fighters.

Hezbollah is underpinned by its sophisticated arsenal and has increased its stockpile of missiles from 14,000 in 2006 to about 150,000. The movement has also developed precision-guided missiles and drone programs.

In March, Hezbollah issued a stern warning to Israel over waging a war on Lebanon.

"We, hereby, declare that if they commit a foolish act and attack our territories, there would then be a new version of the 2006 July war," Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem said.

## WORLD HEADLINES

### Media office: Israel has prevented entry of 3,000 aid trucks into Gaza

The Israeli forces have prevented 3,000 aid trucks from entering Gaza in the past two weeks, according to a statement by the Government Media Office in Gaza.

The office said in a statement on Telegram that the army has also prevented 690 sick and wounded people from travelling abroad for treatment as the Rafah and Karem Abu Salem (Kerem Shalom) crossings stay closed, according to Al Jazeera.

"This constitutes a clear danger in light of the collapse of the health system [in Gaza]," the statement said.

"The American administration, the European Union and the international community did not do their duty and did not exercise the role required of them to prevent genocide," it added.

"Rather, they gave the occupation the green light to continue the crime of genocide," the office also said, calling on the international community to put pressure on Israel to stop "the genocidal war".

### Jordan calls for probe into Israeli war crimes

The Jordanian foreign minister called for an international probe into Israeli war crimes in the Gaza Strip.

"Many and documented war crimes have been committed in the Gaza Strip and we demand a comprehensive international investigation, which will stop these war crimes and which will bring to justice those responsible for these crimes or prove who is responsible for these crimes," Ayman Saffadi said at a press conference with UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini.

### UN warns of 'apocalyptic' consequences of Gaza shortages

The stranglehold on aid reaching Gaza threatens an "apocalyptic" outcome, the UN humanitarian chief said on Sunday as he warned of famine in the besieged territory.

"If fuel runs out, aid doesn't get to the people where they need it, that famine, which we have talked about for so long, and which is looming, will not be looming anymore. It will be present," Martin Griffiths said.

"And I think our worry, as citizens of the international community, is that the consequence is going to be really, really hard. Hard, difficult, and apocalyptic," he told AFP on the sidelines of meetings with Qatari officials in Doha.

### UK media's pro-Israel bias revealed

The portrayal of Israel's war on Gaza in the UK media has sparked concerns about bias and one-sided reporting. A recent study by the Centre of Media Monitoring (CfMM) sheds light on these issues, revealing a consistent favouring of Israeli narratives over Palestinian perspectives.

The report examined over 180,000 video clips and approximately 26,000 articles from various British media outlets and take focus on the first month of Israel's war on Gaza. It identifies a troubling pattern wherein Israeli viewpoints are often prioritised, overshadowing the plight of Palestinians. Emotive language is frequently employed to depict Israeli victims, while Palestinian voices are marginalised, and Israeli representatives are allowed to dehumanise Palestinians without proper challenge.

As presented in the genocide case brought against Israel at the International Court of Justice, the report also found that Palestinians had been dehumanised as people. Israeli politicians were given platforms on stations during

### Kamal Adwan hospital in northern Gaza out of service

The Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza Strip has run out of service amid ongoing Israeli attacks, the Palestinian Civil Defense Service said on Sunday.

"Kamal Adwan Hospital in the town of Beit Laha in the northern Gaza Strip is out of service in light of the Israeli army's threats and continuous bombing of the hospital's surroundings," it said in a statement, according to the Middle East Monitor.

"The Israeli army fired artillery shells toward Al Awda Hospital in the Tal-Al-Zaatar area in the town of Jabalia," the statement said.

The Civil Defense Service also said that rescue and medical teams have "recovered hundreds of Palestinian bodies in Jabalia after Israeli bombing," adding that "many others are still under the rubble."

Last Sunday, the Israeli army initiated new incursions into Jabalia and its surrounding areas.

The incursions targeted dozens of homes and infrastructure at the Jabalia refugee camp, which is home to hundreds of thousands of residents and displaced individuals from the northern regions of the Gaza Strip.

### Smotrich intensifies rhetoric against Hezbollah

Far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has called for Israel to issue an ultimatum to Hezbollah and says that if the resistance group does not stop attacking Israel and pull its fighters back from the border, a ground operation should be launched to establish a military takeover in southern Lebanon.

At a faction meeting of his Religious Zionism party held in the north, Smotrich demanded Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu make a clear announcement on a plan to deal with Hezbollah, saying that if necessary, there must be military action on the matter.

"A public ultimatum must be issued to Hezbollah that they completely stop firing and withdraw all forces to beyond the Litani River," Smotrich said.

### 2 Israeli soldiers killed in southern Gaza

The Israeli army on Sunday announced the deaths of two soldiers during fighting in the southern Gaza Strip a day earlier, as the military moved to further expand operations in the enclave.

This brings the total number of Israeli forces who have been killed in the ground offensive in Gaza to 282.

Their deaths come as Hamas has put up fierce resistance against Israeli forces in the battlefield.

which they used dehumanising language, calling Palestinians in Gaza 'human animals' or saying that 'Palestinian children brought this upon themselves'. Whilst media outlets should report statements by Israeli politicians, they should do so with the appropriate context and should refrain from using dehumanising language themselves.

However, the blurring of lines suggests that the population in Gaza shares the responsibility of Hamas' attacks as a result of an election that took place almost two decades ago and in which the majority of today's population of the Strip did not vote, was promoted by many media personalities. Furthermore, the report found that Israelis are about 11 times more likely to be referred to as victims of attacks, compared to Palestinians. When the UK media deploys emotive language, it is far more likely to be used about Israelis than Palestinians, who in consequence are stripped of their humanity. Israeli victims of Palestinian violence are "killed" while Palestinians mysteriously "die".

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



## Qazvin museums embrace overseas students

TEHRAN – In commemoration of International Museum Day [ May 18], a team consisting of Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences' international students have toured Qazvin's museums.

On Tuesday, May 14, 33 overseas students attended the excursion, getting to know the regions history through paying visits to a number of Qazvin museums, as mentioned by the organizers.

The one-day trip aimed at enhancing the students' comprehension of rich history of Qazvin province.

According to the tour organizers, the international students, who hailing from different nations but mostly from India, had stopovers at Qazvin's Chehel Sotun Palace Museum, Ali Qapo Historic Gate and Safavid Garden and Historical Complex.

Home to 845 inhabited villages, the Qazvin region was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. Moreover, the province is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous castle of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

Also known as the castle of the Assassins,



the 12th-century Alamut castle is nestled on top of a peak. It was once a shelter for the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070-1124) who was a spiritual leader of an Islamic sect. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book "The Valleys of the Assassins."

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais in the country, Sa'd-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it's a place for discovering tens of Hojreh shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It's a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, cuisine, and hospitality of Iran.

As claimed by provincial officials, with this new marketing strategy, Qazvin aims to significantly increase its share of international tourists, enhancing its global reputation as a must-visit location in Iran.

## Radkan Tower stands out as inbound tourists magnet

TEHRAN – Khorasan Razavi's Chenaran region, where is home to historic Radkan tower, has witnessed a surge in terms of overseas travelers throughout the course of the last couple of months.

In a recent interview with ISNA, a local official in charge of tourism raised the curtains on tourists' arrivals, pinpointing the notable influx in inbound travelers' visits to the region since the very first day of the present Persian year [March 20], compared to the same figure of a year earlier.

"Most foreign tourists choose two routes, Akhlamd and Radkan, for their visits," Mohammad Taherian-Muqaddam further elaborated. "The Akhlamd route attracts travelers from Persian Gulf littoral states due to the natural attractions, while the Radkan route, with its collection of historical monuments and structures, receives more attention from European tourists."

Tourists from foreign countries, including Germany, Italy, Belgium, Iraq and China, to name a few, not only visit the historical attractions of this county but also familiarize themselves with the region's customs and traditions, especially local cuisine, music, and handicrafts, by staying overnight in ecotourism accommodations, he continued.

Taherian-Muqaddam further shed light on conducted restoration and renovation projects of historical structures within the county in the course of earlier year.

"Among the well-trodden attractions of

Chenaran, we can mention the Radkan Tower, the historical bathhouse and mosque of Radkan city," he brought to light. "As well as the ecotourism village of Akhlamd and the villages at the foot of the mountains."

In his concluding remarks, Taherian-Muqaddam underscored that Chenaran county plays host to many tourists every year, and 11 accommodation units are ready to welcome tourists across the region.

Chenaran county is located 50 kilometers away from the holy city of Mashhad.

Radkan Historical Tower, also known as Radkan Citadel, is a prominent historical landmark located in Chenaran county, Iran.

The tower is believed to date back to the Ilkhanid era (1256-1353 CE) and served various purposes throughout its history, including as a defensive fortification, a lookout tower, and possibly astronomical center.

Constructed using traditional methods and local materials, the tower features a unique architectural style characterized by its sturdy mud-brick walls, intricate geometric designs, and strategic placement of windows and openings for ventilation and light.

Today, Radkan Historical Tower stands as a symbol of pride for the local community and attracts visitors from far and wide who come to admire its architectural beauty, explore its historical significance, and immerse themselves in the rich heritage of Chenaran county.

## Iran in frames



Farmers meticulously cultivate tea leaves in a vast field near Lahijan, Gilan province.

# Xerxes tomb at Naqsh-e Rostam faces erosion threats

TEHRAN – Recent rains have created a relatively large hole below Xerxes I's rock-cut tomb, leading to a longitudinal crack across the Naqsh-e Rostam site.

Evidence suggests erosion and water infiltration pose serious threats to the rock-cut tomb, which is currently under restoration, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Despite this, the director of the Persepolis World Heritage site, located nearby, believes that the erosion around the treasured royal tomb is manageable and can be resolved.

Speaking to ISNA, Alireza Askari Chaverdi, who is responsible for the Naqsh-e Rostam archaeological site, pointed out that several fallen stones have been accumulated in front of Xerxes' tomb.

"Inside the hole, a mysterious structure has been revealed, which has not yet been archaeologically studied but is speculated to be related to a water channel of Naqsh-e Rostam," he said.

The official said what is particularly concerning are the large and deep holes formed below Xerxes' tomb, with cracks extending to the other nearby tombs where Darius the Great, Artaxerxes I, and Darius II have been laid to rest. "In addition, inside Xerxes' tomb chamber, numerous cracks and holes caused by water infiltration have been observed."

Concerning potential threats to this historical site, he said an ancient settling basin above Xerxes' tomb has long ceased to function.

"The rainwater, which should have been collected in this basin, now cascades down with rock debris, accumulating in front of the



tomb."

This archaeologist added that because the water channels at Naqsh-e Rostam have lost their functionality, the water from this waterfall has found its way underground, creating deep holes.

"The more concerning issue is that it is unknown where the rainwater from the mountain is going."

What is happening around Xerxes I's tomb and Naqsh-e Rostam is dangerous because the water could be damaging structures that archaeologists believe are still buried, Askari Chaverdi explained.

Talking about potential dangers to Xerxes' tomb and other structures at Naqsh-e Rostam, he said: since the water channel has lost its function, the overflowing water has penetrated the ground, damaging the walls of Naqsh-e Rostam. Therefore, the settling basin above the mountain must be restored first, the rock falls must be prevented, and the ancient water channels from the Achaemenid and Sassanian periods must be located to redirect water out of Naqsh-e

Rostam as in the past.

To protect Xerxes' tomb near the waterfall, the archaeologists emphasized that the settling basin needs to be restored and archaeologically excavated to prevent the volume of rock from the waterfall from entering the Naqsh-e Rostam site (the area around Xerxes' tomb).

One of the wonders of the ancient world, Naqsh-e Rostam, which bears an array of scenic Sassanid bas-relief carvings, is situated near the UNESCO-designated Persepolis.

The necropolis embraces four tombs where Persian Achaemenid kings are laid to rest, believed to be those of Darius II, Artaxerxes I, Darius I, and Xerxes I (from left to right facing the cliff), although some historians are still debating this.

There are stunning bas-relief carvings above the tomb chambers that are similar to those at Persepolis, with the kings standing on thrones supported by figures representing the subject nations below. There are also two similar graves situated on the premises of

Persepolis, probably belonging to Artaxerxes II and Artaxerxes III.

Beneath the funerary chambers are dotted with seven Sassanian era (224-651) bas-reliefs cut into the cliff depict vivid scenes of imperial conquests and royal ceremonies; signboards below each relief give a detailed description of English.

At the foot of Naqsh-e Rostam, in the direction of the cliff face, stands a square building known as Ka'beh-ye Zardusht, meaning Kaaba of Zoroaster. The building, which is roughly 12 meters high and 7 meters square, was probably constructed in the first half of the 6th century BC, although it bears a variety of inscriptions from later periods.

Though the Ka'beh-ye Zardusht is of great linguistic interest, its original purpose is not clear. It may have been a tomb for Achaemenid royalty or some sort of altar, perhaps to the goddess Anahita, also called Anahita, believed to be associated with royalty, war, and fertility.

Naqsh-e Rostam, which literally means "Picture of Rostam," is named after a mythical Iranian hero who is most celebrated in Shahnameh and Persian mythology. Back in time, natives of the region had erroneously supposed that the carvings below the tombs represented depictions of the mythical hero.

In Western history, Xerxes is best known for his invasion of Greece in 480 BC. Son of Darius the Great, he consolidated his power by crushing revolts in Egypt and Babylon, and renewed his father's campaign to subjugate Greece and punish Athens and its allies for their interference in the Ionian Revolt.

## Echoes of Islamic heritage: Imam Reza (AS) inheritance coin unveiled

TEHRAN – On Saturday, during a momentous event in Mashhad, an inheritance coin of Imam Reza (AS) which was minted in occasion of the eighth Shia Imam's appointment as heir of Al-Ma'mun [the Abbasid caliph], has been unveiled.

"The coin symbolizes the influential presence of Imam Reza (AS) in Iran, especially in the Khorasan region," Seyyed Javad Mousavi noted on the sidelines of the ceremony introducing this valuable historical artifact.

"This coin, preserved in the National Museum of Iran," the provincial official in charge of cultural heritage added. "Is being exhibited for the first time for a month at the Khorasan Great Museum."

Moreover, Mousavi clarified that this coin was minted in the city of Samarkand, where at that time was one of the important cities of Khorasan, and is now located in Uzbekistan.

He further explained the specifications of the coin which dating back to 1200 years ago, stating that it is made of silver, weighs 2.38 grams, and has a diameter of 29.25 millimeters.

"The Imam Reza (AS) inheritance coin is registered in the list of national cultural heritage of the country," Mousavi noted.

The Imam Reza (AS) inheritance coin is not only a national heritage, he underscored, but also a



heritage belonging to the Islamic world.

"Now, the opportunity has arisen for the people of Mashhad and pilgrims," the official wined up. "To witness this valuable historical artifact in the holy city, near the Imam Reza (AS) Holy Shrine."

## 2,400 tourism projects worth \$6.5 billion underway in Iran, deputy minister says

TEHRAN—About 2,400 tourism-related projects worth 4 quadrillion rials (\$6.5 billion) are currently underway across Iran, the deputy tourism minister said on Saturday.

"At present, there are 2,400 tourism projects worth four quadrillion rials under construction all over the country," Ali-Asghar Shalbafian said.

Speaking at the reopening ceremony of the Risbaf Factory in Isfah-

an, Shalbafian highlighted the government's significant progress in the tourism sector. "Since the beginning of the 13th Iranian government, 1,610 tourism projects have been completed," he said.

Shalbafian noted that 81 of these projects, with a combined investment of approximately 970 trillion rials, have achieved over 80% physical progress.

The Risbaf Factory in Isfahan,

which had been closed since the 2000s due to debt to Bank Melli, was reopened on Saturday, May 18, coinciding with International Museum Day. The ceremony saw the presence of provincial and city officials, alongside cultural heritage enthusiasts from Isfahan.

This reopening, according to the official, marks a significant milestone in Iran's efforts to boost tourism and preserve its cultural heritage.

More than six million foreign tourists arrived by air, road, and sea in Iran during the past Iranian calendar year, which came to an end on March 19.

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

## Discover time-honored art of pottery in Gilan region

TEHRAN – Bounded by the Caspian Sea and the Alborz Mountains, the Gilan region of Iran boasts a rich tradition of pottery that dates from millennia.

Archaeological finds in Marlik and Amlash have uncovered numerous pottery artifacts, underscoring the prolonged and significant history of this craft in the area.

Gilan has long been recognized as a major center of pottery in Iran. The local dialect even has a specific term, "Sofal," which refers to fired clay, indicating the deep cultural roots of pottery in the region. Discoveries at archaeological sites in Marlik, Talesh, and Deylaman provide evidence of early human habitation, where people created essential tools and stunning glossy black sculptures using pottery techniques.

In ancient times, Gilan's pottery was produced

in black, red, and grey hues. Rather than using pigments, Gilan's potters employed a firing technique that reduced oxygen in the kiln, altering the mineral composition of the clay to achieve a distinctive black color. This unique method set Gilan's pottery apart from that of other regions.

One distinguishing characteristic of Gilan pottery is its terracotta color, derived from the iron-rich earth of the region. Additionally, Gilan pottery was predominantly utilitarian, crafted more for practical use than for decoration. This practicality is evident in the widespread use of pottery utensils, one of the most notable being the "Gemej." The Gemej is a spherical dish with a conical cap and convex bottom, typically glazed in green, and was commonly used for cooking. Its simple and functional design highlights the practical focus of Gilan pottery.

In Gilan, the majority of potters are women, while men usually undertake the strenuous task of preparing the clay. The tools used in this craft are simple and handmade, and the process of preparing the clay is labor-intensive and involves multiple stages.

Today, Gilan pottery can be categorized into two main groups. The first group includes mass-produced items used in daily life, such as roof tiles, and utensils like Gemej, vases, and saltshakers. Pottery dishes in this group are further classified into those for drinks, serving meals, and cooking. The second group consists of decorative and artistic items, such as clay sculptures.

The time-honored art of pottery in Gilan continues to thrive, reflecting the region's rich cultural heritage and the enduring skill of its artisans.



# IRCS, Singapore Red Cross ready to enhance cooperation

TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and Singapore Red Cross (SRC) National Society conferred on ways to enhance collaborations during an online meeting on May 15.

The head of the IRCS, Pirhossein Kolivand, and the Secretary General of the SRC National Society, Benjamin William, reviewed the potential to expand cooperation via sharing the expertise of the national societies to boost services provided to people, the IRCS website reported.

"Unlike Singapore, Iran is a disaster-prone country. Singapore Red Cross operates in two main areas, boosting resilience and providing humanitarian services. With 10,000 to 12,000 active and dynamic volunteers, we are ready to provide humanitarian services to people in crisis. We can leverage each other's capacities and capabilities by establishing mutual communication," William said.

The SRC humanitarian services in Singapore focus on offering services to the elderly. Moreover, the organization provides mental health services to the families of the elderly and disabled people, and trains children and youth how to assist and care for them, he noted.

"By establishing extensive connections, national societies can enhance their capacities and improve the services they offer. These collaborative efforts make societies more self-sufficient, as well," the official added.



Kolivand, for his part, elaborated on various educational, pharmaceutical, therapeutic, and rehabilitation services provided by the IRCS and emphasized, "We are ready to exchange experiences and knowledge with other national societies."

Referring to the goals of the IRCS, he stated, "Crescent houses were created with the aim of empowering the local people to provide relief in times of crisis."

These houses are connected with the IRCS in a wide network. To empower the youth and boost the resilience of society, they provide disaster identification and prevention education and teach how to act once facing crises.

The IRCS has more than 3 million members which is expected to reach 5 million volunteers in 8 months.

## IRCS is a top organization

On May 8, on the occasion of World Red Cross Day, Kolivand said,

the IRCS is recognized as one of the five prominent societies worldwide thanks to its wide range of activities and great achievements both nationally and internationally.

He highlighted the capabilities, dedication, and selflessness of the IRCS women, who work hard in different sectors.

A total of 300 ambulances and 600 rescue vehicles have been purchased. It is planned to add 1,500 more rescue vehicles to the IRCS fleet, Kolivand stated.

Equipping mountain rescue bases, providing insurance for rescuers, and increasing their incomes were among the other measures to enhance the services.

"The Iranian Red Crescent Society has also been active and successful in international missions like helping earthquake victims in Syria and Turkey which made the organization receive the Turkish government's award for its sacrifice and help," he

further noted.

The official attributed the organization's achievements to the unwavering dedication of volunteers, whose number has already reached 3 million.

Initiatives to develop and empower Crescent houses in remote, deprived areas and enhance prevention and education programs are other parts of the society's effort to expand its services.

The IRCS offers public education and relief services courses in universities, schools, seminaries, and barracks to improve the whole society's resilience in the face of disasters.

Health, treatment, and rehabilitation are another part of the IRCS activities, the IRCS hospitals, pharmacies, and clinics meet the medical and therapeutic needs of thousands of citizens every day.

The IRCS medical centers abroad are reputable worldwide. Soon, the Red Crescent Medical Center will be opened in Tajikistan

As a humanitarian organization, the IRCS is trying to alleviate the suffering of the people involved in accidents, emergencies, and conflicts.

Referring to cooperation with knowledge-based companies, Kolivand said, "Today, collaborations with knowledge-based firms have resulted in advancements in manufacturing orthoses, prostheses, artificial organs, and new medications, with plans to extend cooperation to rescue and relief efforts as well.

## Iran receives measles anti-body kits with WHO, ECHO support

TEHRAN –Iran has received a total of 160 measles antibody kits with the help of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

Measles is potentially a deadly disease. Severe complications include pneumonia, diarrhea, blindness, and encephalitis (brain swelling).

The measles vaccination program in Iran started in 1984 when 34 percent of the population was vaccinated in the first year and 90 to 95 percent of the population after 6 years. Also in 2003, 33 million people were vaccinated with a national program to eradicate measles in the country.

The current procurement aims to enhance measles diagnostic capacities in Iran.

The kits are donated to the Iranian National Measles Reference Laboratory to bolster its capacities to diagnose measles, enhancing the country's ability to respond more effectively to outbreaks, the WHO website reported on May 12.

According to the report, WHO, in collaboration with ECHO, procured and provided the kits to the National Influenza Center, which serves as the National Measles reference laboratory for measles, rubella, and some other respiratory infectious diseases.

Syed Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative and Head of Mission in the Islamic Republic of Iran, said: "The provision of measles antibody kits to the reference laboratory is a crucial step in strengthening the Islamic Republic of Iran's ability to detect and respond to measles outbreaks effectively and maintain measles elimination status.

This collaboration between WHO and ECHO demonstrates our commitment to support countries in their efforts to combat vaccine-preventable diseases."

Measles remains a significant public health concern globally, and timely and accurate diagnosis is crucial for effective outbreak response.

While local health facilities play a vital role in screening and detecting suspected cases, confirmation by the reference laboratory ensures accuracy and prevents false results

The donated kits will enable the laboratory to perform confirmatory tests for more than 12,000 suspected measles cases.

This significantly enhances the country's



ability to identify and contain outbreaks.

Recent surveillance data show that over half of the measles cases in the country are among Afghan refugees.

The National Immunization Program in the Islamic Republic of Iran intends to build further capacities and a quality control mechanism for laboratory surveillance in some Iranian provinces.

This will help reduce the time to diagnosis if measles cases continue to rise.

Since April 2022, the Islamic Republic of Iran has experienced several measles outbreaks following the influx of Afghan refugees and migrants.

Thanks to its timely and comprehensive response, however, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been able to keep free of measles as a public health concern.

## Measles and rubella eliminated in Iran

In April 2023, the World Health Organization confirmed that measles and rubella have been eradicated in Iran, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said.

This success was achieved for the country in a situation where many European countries have not yet received approval from the World Health Organization regarding the eradication of measles and rubella, but the Islamic Republic of Iran has succeeded in eradicating these two diseases, he added, ISNA reported.

Concerns about the spread of measles in the country are growing as the Afghan population grows.

Iran's Primary Health Care (PHC) system is known as a role model in the Health Sector which could be adopted by other countries, both in terms of expanded networking and outreach as well as the successful linkage between the Health Sector and Medical Education institutes, such as Medical Universities, according to UNICEF.

## The kits are donated to enhance the country's ability to respond more effectively to outbreaks.

## Government measures in boosting population growth

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN – The National Population Day is observed on May 19 to mark the date the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, announced general policies on population as per the Constitution.

Underscoring the significant role of the population in national authority, general population policies were announced to compensate for the decrease in population growth and fertility rate over the past years.

Keeping in mind the positive role of the population in the development of the country, it is necessary to make comprehensive plans for the economic, social, and cultural growth of the country in accordance with the population policies, the leader said.

It is also necessary to share the task among the relevant institutions and government bodies to take the necessary measures with accuracy, and strength, and then report the results of continuous monitoring of the implementation of policies.

Ten years following the announcement of these policies, the current government has been successful in implementing them with the approval and enforcement of the Law on Family and Youth Support.

According to statistics, with the formation of the National Population Headquarters, holding continuous meetings, and following up on the actions, the law was implemented successfully in the past 30 months.

The law has tried to prevent the population decline by considering a series of incentives for families.

The incentives include providing families with

plots of land free of charge, free insurance coverage, loans for house construction and child-bearing, and building more infertility treatment centers.

Families with three children will receive free land. According to the latest statistics, some 80,000 families have used this legal incentive and received their lands so far. They also receive a 50 percent discount on the assignment of water and electricity branches and housing construction services.

In general, according to the Iranian Statistics Center, the fertility rate in urban areas is usually higher than in rural areas.

Therefore, free insurance coverage and social support for rural mothers with three children and more was put on the agenda.

It has been customary for young couples to receive marriage loans in the past, but over the past two years, the amount of the loan has been adjusted to the economic conditions of the society. Also, according to the law on the youth of the population, granting loans for childbearing kicked off.

Thanks to the current government efforts, all the institutions have to grant nine-month maternity leave for women.

Preventing illegal abortion and promoting easy marriages are among other measures.

The number of infertility treatment centers in the country has notably increased.

In government centers and the sites covered by Salamat health insurance, 90 percent of infertility treatment costs which are based on subsidized rates are covered by insurance.

Currently, these services include insurance

coverage of 66 items of medicines, 29 items of medical equipment, 72 tests, increasing the age of insured persons subject to treatment from 45 to 49 years, 45 services including fertility preparation, and 33 surgical services for the treatment of infertility.

According to the health ministry, since the implementation of the law, the number of births among mothers aged 20 to 24 has notably increased.

The rate of mothers giving birth to three children increased from 16 percent in the Iranian year 1398 (March 2019–March 2020) to 18.97 percent in 1402 (March 2023–March 2024) and even the fourth childbirth increased from 5 percent to about 7 percent.

The health ministry's responsibilities in the field of health and education are well-defined and it has successfully implemented more than 95 percent of its tasks in the youth law.

Population is one of the important and key points in the 7th national development plan (2023–2027).

Multiple measures are forecast to be implemented in the seventh national development plan (2023–2027) to strengthen the pillars of family and remove obstacles to the growth and prosperity of women.

Increasing the birth rate to at least 2.5 within five years with comprehensive support for child-bearing and providing incentives are other objectives of the plan.

All government bodies are obliged to prepare their plans and programs within the framework of the population growth policy and follow up on their implementation seriously.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## 'Climate change impact on Iran doubles world average'

The effects of climate change on Iran has more than doubled on average compared to other parts of the world, while southern provinces of the country are more likely to bear the consequences, an official with the presidential office has said.

"The Hoomand-Absard station in Damavand county in northeast of Tehran experienced a temperature increase of 2.7 °C over the past 50 years, while over the past 100 years, the temperature rise was about 0.76 °C," ISNA quoted Mohammad Darvish as saying on Tuesday.

## تغییرات اقلیمی در ایران دو تا سه برابر جهان

محمد درویش، دبیر سیاست محیط زیست مرکز بررسی‌های استراتژیک نهاد ریاست جمهوری گفته، ایران با تأثیرات تغییر اقلیمی دو تا سه برابر بیشتر از تأثیرات ایجاد شده در کره زمین روبرو شده است.

محمد درویش، در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایسنا، اظهار کرد: ایستگاه هومند آسرد در دامنه‌های کوه دماوند طی نیم قرن اخیر افزایش دمایی حدود ۲.۷ درجه سلیوس را نشان می‌دهد و این مسئله در حالی رخ داده است که در ۱۰۰ سال گذشته، حدود ۰.۷۶ درجه سلیوس افزایش دما داشته‌ایم.

## First freelancing school to be launched

TEHRAN –The first freelancing school in the country will be established with the assistance of the Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy.

The freelancing school will be launched under the theme of 'experiencing a different world by developing Iran's freelancing ecosystem'.

The main objective is to expand youth employment in the digital age, IRNA reported.

It also aims to promote freelancing culture, empower freelancers, and develop the country's freelance ecosystem.

Focusing on the needs and future of entrepreneurship in the country, the school aims to provide support and educational facilities for those who are looking for innovative and creative strategies in freelancing.

The school can provide different services such as directing freelancers and employers to platforms, developing and promoting freelance culture, encouraging employers to entrust services to freelancers, and encouraging people to become freelancers.

The school determines professional qualifications, helps to identify expert and capable freelancers, and improves the software and



hardware skills of freelancers.

It also helps capable individuals to be known, improves the level of their soft and hard skills, determines the professional qualifications of trainers, and offers shared work space, content production studio, and infrastructure for in-person and distance courses.

Finally, services offered to employers get them to know freelancers and how to work with them, help them access experts in different fields, and provide the opportunity for exchanging opinions and discussions in different fields.

Another initiative of the school is the establishment of Iran's first freelancing social network, where all people active in freelancing can have a presence using the platform.

## The main objective of the freelancing school is to expand youth employment in the digital age.





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## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*Beware of making friends with a fool for he tries to attract you by his behavior and make you like himself.*

**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:27 Dawn: 3:14 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:55 (tomorrow)

## “Approaching Hegel’s Logic” published in Persian

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the book “Approaching Hegel’s Logic, Obliquely: Melville, Moliere, Beckett” written by Angelica Nuzzo has hit the Iranian bookstores.

Qoqnoos Publishing House has published the book in 664 pages with a translation by Hossein Nikbakht, Mehr reported.

In the book, originally published in 2018, Nuzzo proposes a reading of Hegel’s Logic as “logic of transformation” and “logic of action,” and supports this thesis by looking to works of literature and history as exemplary of Hegel’s argument and method.

By examining Melville’s “Billy Budd,” Moliere’s “Tartuffe,” Beckett’s “Endgame,” Elizabeth Bishop’s and Giacomo Leopardi’s late poetry along with “Thucydides’ History” in this way, Nuzzo finds an unprecedented and productive way to render Hegel’s Logic alive and engaging.

She argues that Melville’s “Billy Budd” is the most successful embodiment of the abstract movement of thinking presented in Hegel’s Logic, connecting Billy Budd’s stutter to the puzzlingly inarticulate beginning of Hegel’s Logic, “Being, Pure Being,” identical with “Nothing,” and argues that the Logic serves as an especially appropriate tool for understanding the sudden violent action that strikes Claggart dead.

Through these and other readings, Nuzzo finds a fresh way to address interpretive issues that have remained unresolved for almost two centuries in Hegel scholarship, and also presents well-known works of literature in an entirely new light.

This account of Hegel’s Logic is framed by the need for an interpretive tool able to orient the readers’ understanding of the contemporary world as mired in an unprecedented global crisis.

Angelica Nuzzo is a professor of philosophy at the Graduate Center and Brooklyn College, City University of New York. She is the author of “Memory, History, Justice in Hegel” and the editor of “Hegel on Religion and Politics.”

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831)

was a German philosopher and one of the most influential figures of German idealism and 19th-century philosophy. His influence extends across the entire range of contemporary philosophical topics, from metaphysical issues in epistemology and ontology, to political philosophy, the philosophy of history, philosophy of art, philosophy of religion, and the history of philosophy.

Born in Stuttgart, Roman Empire, during the transitional period between the Enlightenment and the Romantic movement in the Germanic regions of Europe, Hegel lived through and was influenced by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. His fame rests chiefly upon “The Phenomenology of Spirit,” “The Science of Logic,” his teleological account of history, and his lectures at the University of Berlin on topics from his “Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences.”

Throughout his work, Hegel strove to address and correct the problematic dualisms of modern philosophy, Kantian and otherwise, typically by drawing upon the resources of ancient philosophy, particularly Aristotle.

Hegel everywhere insists that reason and freedom are historical achievements, not natural givens. His dialectical-speculative procedure is grounded in the principle of immanence, that is, in assessing claims always according to their own internal criteria. Taking skepticism seriously, he contends that people cannot presume any truths that have not passed the test of experience.

Hegel presents free self-determination as the essence of humankind – a conclusion from his 1806-07 “Phenomenology” that he claims is further verified by the systematic account of the interdependence of logic, nature, and spirit in his later “Encyclopedia.”

He asserts that the Logic at once preserves and overcomes the dualisms of the material and the mental – that is, it accounts for both the continuity and difference marking the domains of nature and culture – as a metaphysically necessary and coherent “identity of identity and non-identity.”

# Fitzwilliam Museum adds Abbas Akbari’s artworks to its collection

TEHRAN- The Fitzwilliam Museum of the University of Cambridge has added seven artworks by the Iranian ceramic artist Abbas Akbari to its rich collection.

The museum contains different works from the ancient times to the contemporary period and from different civilizations and countries. An important part of the collection of works of the museum is related to the Islamic period, especially Iran, and especially the ceramics of the middle century.

The selection of Akbari’s works is a contemporary look at the Iranian ceramic traditions of previous centuries, Honaronline reported.

Akbari, 54, is a multi-award-winning Iranian ceramicist. Holding a Ph.D. in research in arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran, he is a faculty member of Architecture and Arts School at the University of Kashan and also a member of the International Academy of Ceramics.

His particular practice-based research has involved the consultation of historical recipes to rediscover the technique of decorating in lustre, an overglaze technique using metallic oxides that give the finished product a distinctive sheen.

Drawing from his experience



as a pottery artist, he identifies different artistic expressions and technical practices, in order to differentiate the artistic signatures of different potters involved in making lustreware in Gorgan based on the broken lustreware fragments housed in Iranian museums.

He has held several solo and group exhibits and has authored several books and a number of academic articles. He has also won several awards for his artwork from Croatia, Japan, Argentina,

France, and Dominican Republic.

His works are kept at museums in Iran as well as other countries such as Argentina, Japan, Pakistan, Croatia, Spain, Tunisia, France, Germany, Nepal, Italy, and Austria among others.

The Fitzwilliam Museum is the art and antiquities museum of the University of Cambridge. Founded in 1816, it comprises one of the best collections of antiquities and modern art in western Europe.

With over half a million objects and artworks in its collections, the

displays in the museum explore world history and art from antiquity to the present. The treasures of the museum include artworks by Monet, Picasso, Rubens, Vincent van Gogh, Rembrandt, Cézanne, Van Dyck, and Canaletto, as well as a winged bas-relief from Nimrud.

The museum is a partner in the University of Cambridge Museums consortium, one of 16 Major Partner Museum services funded by Arts Council England to lead the development of the museums sector.

## Iran’s children’s literary gems to go on display in Tokyo, Paris

TEHRAN- Copies of the selected Iranian children’s book, as part of the “The World Through Picture Books” program, have been sent to Japan and France, where they will be displayed at the International Library of Children’s Literature in Tokyo and the National Library of France in Paris.

The books will be featured in an upcoming exhibition at the two libraries, according to the Iran Public Libraries Foundation’s public relations office.

In a bid to promote Iranian culture and literature, the foundation participated in the “The World Through Picture Books” program, organized by the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) under the supervision of the Children’s and Youth Library Department.

The program aims to showcase outstanding



picture books from around the world, and as part of this initiative, 10 Iranian picture books were selected through a digital platform and collaborated with librarians to be showcased at the IBBY event in 2023.

The selected books were published in both Persian and English, with bilingual e-book versions available, featuring a range of titles including “Giraffe Spaghetti and Turtle

Salad” by Reza Dalvand, “Are You a Storke or a Woodpecker?” by Ali Khodai, “Uncle Nowruz and The Old Lady” by Asadollah Shabani, “An Umbrella with White Butterflies” by Farhad Hassanzadeh, and “Rain, Sun, and The Story of Tile” by Nader Ebrahimi.

“Seven Horses Seven Colors” by Mohammad Hadi Mohammadi, “No Storm Changes Its Way” by Seyyed Ali Shojai, “Arash: The Tale of the Storyteller Shooting an Arrow” by Marjan Fouladvand, “It Is Spring Time Kids” by Nima Yushij and “The Green Oak” by Azam Mahdavi are also among the books.

This initiative reflects Iran’s commitment to promoting its cultural heritage and literary achievements on the global stage.

Moreover, the books were reviewed during a session on Saturday at the 35th edition of the Tehran International Book Fair.

## Dario Fo’s comedic drama to be performed in Gilan

TEHRAN-The play “All Thieves Are Not Thieves” will be performed at Farabi Hall in Sowme’eh Sara City, Gilan Province, from May 20 to 24.

Mahan Naeimi directed the play based on a comedic drama by Italian playwright Dario Fo titled “The Virtuous Burglar” (also known as “Not All Thieves Come to Harm You”).

Ali Akhavan, Sogand Khan-Zolfi, Bahman Azad, Maryam Dashti, Mahgol Sadat Sahrghi, and Misagh Naeimi are in the cast of the 75-minute play.

The story of the one-act play is about a thief who enters the deputy mayor’s house, while the

deputy comes home with his secret lover Julia and the thief hides in a pendulum clock.

Dario Fo (1926-2016) was an Italian playwright, actor, comedian, singer, theater director, stage designer, songwriter, painter, political campaigner for the Italian left wing, and the recipient of the 1997 Nobel Prize in Literature.

In his time, he was arguably the most widely performed contemporary playwright in world theatre. Much of his dramatic work depends on improvisation and comprises the recovery of illegitimate forms of theater, such as those performed by giullari

(medieval strolling players) and, more famously, the ancient Italian style of commedia dell’arte.

His plays have been translated into 30 languages and performed across the world, including in Argentina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, India, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the UK, the U.S., and Iran.

His work of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s is peppered with criticisms of assassinations, corruption, organized crime, racism, Roman Catholic theology, and war. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, he took to lampooning Forza Italia and its leader Silvio

Berlusconi, while his targets of the 2010s included the banks amid the European sovereign-debt crisis. Also in the 2010s, he became the main ideologue of the Five Star Movement, the anti-establishment party led by Beppe Grillo, often referred to by its members as “the Master.”

His receipt of the 1997 Nobel Prize in Literature marked the “international acknowledgment of Fo as a major figure in twentieth-century world theatre.” The Swedish Academy praised Fo as a writer “who emulates the jesters of the Middle Ages in scouring authority and upholding the dignity of the downtrodden.”

## NYC’s School of Visual Arts students hold moment of silence for Gaza children

A group of students and alumni at the School of Visual Arts (SVA) in New York City staged a moving pro-Palestine demonstration during an exhibition opening at the institution’s Flatiron Gallery in Manhattan Thursday. For over 45 minutes, the activists read the names and ages of children killed in Gaza since October 7, demanding the school’s divestment from Israeli military interests.

The sit-in began a few minutes before the public reception for “How Do You Like Your Love” was scheduled to end. The show comprises faculty and alumni

work exploring themes of gender and race, some created by artists who participated in last night’s sit-in, Hyperallergic reported.

Around 10 activists dispersed throughout the gallery’s lobby and its larger viewing space, where a student show is on display, and entered the tiny street-facing room housing the “How Do You Like Your Love” exhibition while throwing red confetti into the air. Three alumni took seats on the floor. Behind them, activists held three squares from the pro-Palestine quilt that was unfurled in March on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum of

Art. After a moment of silence, protesters distributed red tissue paper in the shape of poppies, a symbol of Palestine, each with the handwritten name and age of a person killed in Israel’s ongoing bombardment of Gaza. Most ages read “3” or “16.” One read “0.”

Organizers made clear that the action was not in protest of the show or its curators, but rather the school’s administration. While some universities across the U.S. have reached agreements with student activists on the question of divestment, the SVA has not.

“The school had just made a statement after the atrocities of

the seventh of October, but nothing since, which seems wrong and one-sided,” an alumnus with work in the show, who asked to remain anonymous, told Hyperallergic. “They’re pretending to be neutral, but you can’t do that and then claim to be neutral.”

The alumnus said they contacted the SVA branch of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), the group behind many of the student protests and encampments across the country. Earlier this month, the organization’s SVA chapter staged a sit-in and action at the school’s administrative offices.

## Cartoon of Day



Support for Gaza from world universities  
Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Türkiye