

# Election Game with Nuclear Card

## IAEA Board passes European trio resolution against Iran



International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi attends a news conference during a board of governors meeting at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, Austria, June 7, 2021.

## Emergence of Resistance axis within American universities

Dr. Mohammad Reza Hassani Ahangar  
President of Imam Hossein Comprehensive University

TEHRAN - The wise letter from the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to freedom-loving and conscientious students in American universities who support the Palestinian people follows the path previously established by the founder of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini. Imam Khomeini emphasized the critical missions and roles of academics in global developments, famously stating that "universities are the origin of all transformations." According to Imam Khomeini, if universities are aware, they can stand on the right side of history and guide societies. Ayatollah Khamenei's recent letter is distinguished by an essential and important statement: "You (students) have now become part of the Resistance Front, and under the ruthless pressure of your government—which openly supports the usurping and ruthless Zionist regime—you have begun an honorable struggle." ▶ Page 3

## June 28 election: candidates await Constitutional Council's verdict

By Alireza Akbari

TEHRAN — With the registration period for candidates having concluded on Monday, Iran is gearing up for the 14th presidential election.

As the nation prepares for this critical event, various bodies are now sharing the latest information and updates.

Following the closure of candidacy registration, the Constitutional Council, responsible for vetting candidates, now has five days to review and approve the aspirants.

**Electoral countdown: registration closes, vetting begins**

According to Hadi Tahan Nazif, the Council's spokesperson, the vetting process is thorough and time-consuming. He urged the media and online activists to refrain from speculating about the candidates' qualifications until the process is complete.

Tahan Nazif emphasized that the Interior Ministry is tasked with executing the election, while the Constitutional Council oversees the process.

Highlighting the significance of the presidency in Iran's political system, Tahan Nazif referred to Article 113 of the Constitution. He underscored that the president is the second-highest-ranking official after the Leader of the Islamic Revolution ▶ Page 2

## US House launches war against international law

By Matin Jamshidi

TEHRAN - The US House of Representatives on Tuesday started a war against international law by voting in favor of a bill that would sanction the International Criminal Court for seeking arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his war minister Yoav Gallant.

The Republican-drafted legislation followed after ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan recently announced that he is pursuing arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity linked to the Israeli war in Gaza.

The legislation, 247-155, would sanction individuals who have "directly engaged in or otherwise aided" the ICC in prosecuting Americans or citizens of US allies that do not recognize the ICC, including Israel, according to al-Monitor.

However, lawmakers from both parties supported the ICC issuing an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin, whose country is not also party to the ICC, for war crimes in Ukraine.

The sanctions include revoking U.S. visas held by ICC officials, blocking their entry into the U.S. and preventing them from property transactions. ▶ Page 5

## Hamas: "We conveyed our position to mediators"

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - A senior Hamas leader, Osama Hamdan, has emphasized that the Israeli occupation regime will not see its captives held in Gaza except through a serious and genuine deal in which Palestinian prisoners enjoy their freedom.

Speaking at a press conference in the Lebanese capital Beirut, Hamdan said the Israeli response to the offer received by the resistance in May does not equate to a permanent ceasefire and a complete Israeli military withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

Last week, U.S. President Joe Biden also presented a ceasefire proposal based on a similar formula to the May ceasefire proposal with three phases.

The difference between the two is that Biden presented a document that allows the occupation regime to recover male soldiers held in Gaza before Tel Aviv gives any credible guarantees on a permanent ceasefire.

The proposal that Hamas accepted in May allowed the resistance group to release all elderly, sick and female captives but keep hold of male ▶ Page 5

## US hypocrisy on democracy

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN - Continuing unconditional support for Israel came to light in the US House of Representatives on Tuesday as the lower chamber of Congress passed a bill that would impose sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC) due to its efforts to prosecute Israeli criminals.

The legislation was approved with a majority of Republican support by a vote of 247-155.

The bill targets officials of The Hague-based court involved in the case by blocking their entry to the US and restricting any American-based property transactions for them.

The move came more than two weeks after the ICC chief prosecutor said he was seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and war minister Yoav Gallant.

Karim Khan accused Netanyahu and Gallant of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip during the Gaza war.

**Delusion of superiority**

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson threw his weight behind the bill. ▶ Page 5

## "Glory of Persia" illuminates China for six more months

TEHRAN - IRAN has approved a six-month extension for "The glory of the ancient Persia: Exhibition of Iranian cultural relics", following an enthusiastic reception in China.

This decision, revealed by Iranian Cultural Heritage Minister on Wednesday, comes after China's request to prolong the exhibition's duration.

"The extension follows a significant resolution passed six months ago," Ezzatollah Zarghami further elaborated.

"Which approved the "Glory of Ancient Iran" exhibition at the National Museum of China in Beijing."

The exhibition, he added, received an overwhelming response, prompting Chinese authorities to request an extension for display in Shanghai. ▶ Page 6

## Resistance forces now decision-makers in West Asia: Quds commander

TEHRAN- The Commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps on Wednesday, highlighted Resistance groups' important role in regional affairs, noting that Resistance forces have now turned into independent and decision-making entities.

Brigadier General Ismail Ghaani made the remarks when visiting the family of a martyred veteran of the Iran-Iraq war.

"Today, Resistance throughout the region has its own independent and suitable structure and has grown step by step, and today all the elements of the resistance front are in the pursuit of righteousness against falsehood," the senior commander said.

Resistance forces in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and Palestine have gained significant clout and military power in recent years. ▶ Page 3

## Iran vows retaliation against Israel for assassination of advisor in Syria

TEHRAN - The commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), Major General Hossein Salami, has vowed revenge against Israel for the killing of an IRGC military adviser in a recent airstrike on Syria's Aleppo.

In a statement on Wednesday, Salami offered condolences for the martyrdom of Saeed Abyar, who was on an advisory mission in Syria when he was killed in the Israeli attack.

"The Zionist criminals should know that they will pay the price for this crime," Salami said. "We will not rest until we have avenged the blood of our martyr." ▶ Page 2

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## Iran vows retaliation against Israel for assassination of advisor in Syria



From page 1 ► Salami praised Abyar for his support of resistance groups, saying that his sacrifice would inspire future generations of Iranian soldiers.

The Israeli airstrike on Syria took place on Monday, targeting areas near Aleppo. It caused several casualties and significant material damage.

Israel has launched hundreds of attacks on Syria since the start of a Western-instigated war there in 2011, targeting government forces, resistance groups, and Iranian advisors who are in the Arab country at the request of Syrian authorities.

## Countries should not capitalize on IAEA for political purposes: acting FM

TEHRAN – The acting Foreign Minister of Iran has called on Western nations to support the preservation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as a purely technical organization and to refrain from exploiting the UN agency for their own political agendas.

"The IAEA should not turn into a place for political settlement. The agency is a technical institution, and it is expected that all countries, including the member states of the Board of Governors, will deal with the agency based on a technical approach," Ali Baqeri Kani told reporters on the sidelines of a Wednesday cabinet when asked about a recent anti-Iran IAEA resolution before its adoption.

The resolution submitted by Germany, Britain, and France accuses Iran of a lack of cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog. It was passed by a vote of 20 in favor and 2 against with 12 abstentions.

"The destructive approach of some member countries in using the agency's capacity for their political goals will definitely be detrimental to the identity, role, and expertise

## Tehran calls on France to release pro-Palestinian citizen

TEHRAN – Kazem Gharibabadi, the Deputy Chief for International Affairs of the Iranian Judiciary and Secretary General of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, has demanded that France release an Iranian citizen detained by French authorities for expressing support for Palestinians.

In a statement on his X account on Wednesday, Gharibabadi criticized the actions of the French police, describing the detention as a "shameful" example of France's human rights record. He condemned the arrest as an affront to the rights of individuals to advocate for the oppressed Palestinian people.

"Yesterday, I spoke with his wife and officials from the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We are resolute in our commitment to protect our

## Ex-Pakistani minister urges West to end double standard on Iran-Pakistan cooperation

TEHRAN – Former Pakistani Minister of Information and Broadcasting Fawad Ahmed Hussain Chaudhry has called on Western countries to end their double standard regarding Pakistan's cooperation with Iran, particularly on a joint gas pipeline project between the two neighbors.

In an exclusive interview with IRNA, Chaudhry argued that Pakistan should not be prevented from benefiting from its neighborly relations with Iran and the opportunity to resolve its energy crisis. He criticized the West's unilateral sanctions against Iran, which he said have nothing to do with the cooperation between Tehran and Islamabad.

"Either the West must be accountable for overcoming the energy crisis in Pakistan, or it must refrain from the double standard towards Islamabad's bilateral collaborations with Tehran," he asserted.

Chaudhry emphasized that the Iran-Pakistan joint gas project is the best option to address Pakistan's energy crisis, but the illegal sanctions

The last Israeli attack which resulted in the martyrdom of Iranian military officials happened on April 1, when the regime launched airstrikes on Iran's embassy in Damascus, killing a high-ranking Iranian general and his deputy.

The attack, slammed by several countries as a blatant breach of international law, was followed by an unprecedented retaliation from Iran.

After the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei stated that he would make Israel "regret" its decision to strike Iran's diplomatic premises, the West Asian country carried out a large-scale drone and missile operation against Israeli positions in the occupied territories.

The Iranian projectiles, later revealed to have been among Iran's older-generation weapons, successfully hit military bases deep inside the occupied territories.

The U.S., UK, France, and Jordan also aided Israel in downing the drones and missiles.

of the agency," Baqeri added. The diplomat also noted that Iran has capacities in line with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that it has not yet activated.

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), Mohammad Eslami, previously warned that Tehran would firmly respond if the anti-Iran resolution is approved.

Europe has repeatedly accused Tehran of not abiding by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a deal struck in 2016 that limits Iran's nuclear program in return for the termination of sanctions.

Washington unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018 and re-imposed heavy and debilitating sanctions against Iran. European signatories to the deal namely Germany, Britain, and France have not left the pact officially, but have proceeded to cease all trade with Iran.

Iranian officials have been questioning the logic of having to adhere to the JCPOA when the pact's Western signatories refuse to comply with it.

fellow citizens," Gharibabadi announced. He made it clear that the Iranian government is taking the matter seriously and is actively working to secure the detained individual's release.

"The immediate release of this Iranian national is imperative," he stressed, calling on French authorities to act swiftly and uphold international human rights standards.

This incident has further strained relations between Iran and France, with Iranian officials accusing France of hypocrisy and double standards in its approach to human rights. The Iranian government has pledged to continue its efforts to support and defend its citizens abroad, particularly in cases where they believe fundamental rights have been violated.

Washington has imposed on Iran continue to hinder its finalization.

He also praised the role of late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in enhancing bilateral ties between Iran and Pakistan, describing his visit to Pakistan as being "of great importance."

In June 2009, Pakistan and Iran entered into a Gas Sales and Purchase Agreement for a pipeline intended to transport gas from Iran's South Pars Field to energy-hungry Pakistan. The pipeline was designed to supply between 750 million and 1,000 million cubic feet of gas per day.

Iran reported the completion of its section of the pipeline in 2011. However, construction on the Pakistani side has faced repeated delays. The U.S. has been pressuring the new Pakistani administration to refrain from picking up on the project.

Pakistan is currently facing a severe energy crisis resulting from a gap between energy supplies and demands in the country.

# Election game with nuclear card

### IAEA Board passes European trio resolution against Iran

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – After hopes went up for a potential breakthrough in relations between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi along with the European trio stunned observers with remarks and actions indicative of plans to turn the screw on Iran.

During a Monday session with the IAEA Board of Governors, Grossi claimed that the UN agency "has lost continuity of knowledge in relation to the production centrifuges, rotors and bellows, heavy water, and uranium".

He also raised concerns about "public statements made in Iran regarding its technical capabilities to produce nuclear weapons." These concerns appeared to have been addressed during his productive visit to Iran a month ago.

In an interview with the Financial Times shortly after his trip, Grossi optimistically announced that Tehran had shown the desire for "serious negotiations" with the IAEA, adding he prefers not to go down a path that could escalate tensions with Iran.

Grossi's unexpected shift in tone was followed by the passing of an anti-Iran resolution at the IAEA Board of Governors. The resolution proposed by Germany, France, and Britain criticized Iran for "moving away from its JCPOA commitments." It called on Iran to immediately stop its nuclear "escalation" and comply with the limits established by the JCPOA, a pact signed in 2015 regarding the West Asian country's nuclear program.

JCPOA a dead pact killed by the West

From page 1 ► and heads the executive branch, managing the relationship among the country's three branches of government.

"80 individuals have registered to run," he said, adding that the Ministry of Interior has submitted its files to the Constitutional Council, which will review each case meticulously, discussing and debating before reaching a final decision.

According to him, the initial five-day review period can be extended by another five days if necessary. He concluded by warning against speculation, promising that the results of the vetting process would be announced promptly.

Meanwhile, Peyman Jebelli, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), announced on Wednesday that IRIB is ready to host televised debates and other election programs. However, he noted that these plans depend on the Constitutional Council's final decisions regarding candidate qualifications.

On the same day, Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi confirmed that if a runoff election is needed, it will

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani has issued a stern condemnation, stating that shame and scandal will permanently stain the reputations of those who support or remain silent about the Zionist regime's crimes.

In a statement on Wednesday posted on X (formerly Twitter), Kanaani highlighted the dire situation in Gaza. He detailed the near-total destruction of hospitals, the acute shortages of medicine and medical equipment, and the severe lack of food and fuel. He also emphasized the failure of electricity generators, which has now compounded the crisis with a critical shortage of water.

Kanaani cited a report from the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), which underscores that the lack of water has exacerbated the famine in Gaza. With fuel supplies dwindling and vital infrastructure failing, residents are forced to endure long walks in extreme heat to obtain water, further highlighting the severity of their plight.

He asserted that, despite the immense suffering, the resilient



The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action went down the drain when in 2018, Washington decided to pull out from the pact it had signed along with Iran, Germany, Britain, France, Russia, and China. Subsequently, the White House imposed severe sanctions on Iran, thereby breaching the crucial article of the deal that had encouraged Iran to participate in the first place.

"When the E3 criticizes Iran for not fully complying with the JCPOA, it essentially disregards the real reason why Tehran is scaling back on its commitments: the JCPOA is now dead because of the West," said Reza Mir Taher, an expert on strategic affairs. "For 1.5 years after the U.S. left the deal, Iran remained fully committed while it waited for Europe to make the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) work."

Established in early 2019, INSTEX was a special-purpose vehicle (SPV) created by Germany, Britain, and France with the goal of enabling non-

USD and non-SWIFT transactions with Iran in order to circumvent U.S. sanctions. The system was ultimately dismantled by Europe in 2023 after failing to facilitate any transactions between Iran and the European trio. "How do Europeans expect Iran to comply with the JCPOA when they themselves have not? Where is the logic in that? It is only natural that Iran thinks of the deal as useless," Mir Taher added.

Western hopes for Iran's upcoming elections

Before the recent adoption of a new anti-Iran resolution by the IAEA Board of Governors on Wednesday, Iran's Head of the Atomic Energy Organization, Mohammad Esmali, issued a stern warning that his country would respond firmly to any further provocative actions.

In a joint statement after the meeting, Iran, Russia, and China said they still consider the JCPOA valid, asking the West to return to implementing the deal instead of

putting unnecessary pressure on Tehran.

Given that the resolution lacks binding force, the decision by Europe to escalate tensions with Iran following the UN nuclear watchdog's recent productive visit to the country raises questions. One plausible explanation could be linked to the upcoming presidential elections in Iran. Some analysts suggest that the resolution may be a deliberate move to provide an edge to Iranian candidates who are more conciliatory towards the West during upcoming televised debates. Specific contenders have a reputation for leveraging the nuclear program dispute to instill fear in Iranian society and secure electoral support.

"It is unfortunately true that some candidates have instrumentalized important issues in the past to rally support. I think contenders from across the political spectrum need to understand that such an approach is only detrimental to our national interests," Mir Taher stated.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei ordered snap elections in line with Iran's constitution after President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian lost their lives during a helicopter crash on May 19.

The politicians who have nominated themselves to run for president hold different political views. Some are known for hawkish policies toward the West, and some for tying Iran's existence to the revival of the JCPOA, under any circumstances.

## June 28 election: candidates await Constitutional Council's verdict

From page 1 ► and heads the executive branch, managing the relationship among the country's three branches of government.

Minister Vahidi assured that the nomination process proceeded smoothly and highlighted the importance of maintaining high morale throughout the election, echoing directives from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei.

He expressed confidence in the enthusiastic participation of the Iranian people in the upcoming election.

Political heavyweights heat up presidential race

The registration period saw several heavyweight politicians, heating up the competition. Among them is Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who cited calls from the elite to join the race and emphasized the need for experience and skill.

Former Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri also announced his candidacy, aiming to address current issues and introduce new capacities.

Saeed Jalili, a member of the Expediency Council and a three-time presidential candidate, called

for visionary leadership, stating that Iran is at a crucial historical juncture.

Ali Larijani, an adviser to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, registered as well, pledging to form a cabinet with skilled individuals from across the political spectrum.

Former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad also joined the race, highlighting his ongoing engagement with the Iranian populace.

Abdolnasser Hemmati, the ex-Governor of the Central Bank of Iran, declared his candidacy on Friday. In total, over 80 individuals have registered, including one former president, one former Parliament speaker, 38 former and current lawmakers, 13 ex-ministers, and three current ministers. Notably, at least four women are among the registered candidates.

The winner of this election will succeed the late President Ebrahim Raisi, who tragically died in a helicopter crash on May 19 while returning from the inauguration of the joint Qiz Galasi Dam project with Azerbaijan.

## Iran says supporters of Israel will carry mark of 'shame, disgrace'

Palestinian people will ultimately overcome the oppressive actions of the Israeli regime.

Kanaani predicted that the downfall of the "rootless invaders" is inevitable and that the supporters of the Zionist regime, as well as those who remain silent, will carry the mark of shame and disgrace forever etched in history. On Tuesday, Kanaani lamented the inaction by international organizations in response to the Israeli onslaught in the Gaza Strip, attributing this passivity to the destruction of 55% of buildings in Gaza since October 7 last year.

In a statement on the social media platform X (formerly known as Twitter) on Tuesday, Nasser Kanaani expressed outrage over the degree of devastation in Gaza, stating, "In the shadow of the inaction of countries and international organizations, the destruction and mass killing in the Gaza Strip continues insanely and non-stop by the Israeli regime! The United Nations Satellite Center announced that around 55% of buildings in the Gaza Strip had been destroyed or damaged since October 7."

The Palestinian Ministry of Education reported that over 15,000

Palestinian children have been killed since October, when Israel began its offensive against the Gaza Strip. The majority of these children were school students and kindergarten kids. Additionally, 64 students from schools in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, have also lost their lives during this period.

The ministry announced these fatalities on the International Day of Innocent Child Victims of Aggression, highlighting "The Children of Gaza" as the primary focus. The statement emphasized that the children of Gaza are among the most affected by the ongoing Israeli aggression, which began on October 7 of the previous year.

Since the start of the Israeli offensive in Gaza, it has been reported that 620,000 students have been unable to attend school, with an additional 88,000 students deprived of higher education opportunities at the university level.

"Israel has destroyed schools and nurseries and targeted civilians, especially children, who have been forcibly displaced, detained, or deprived of food and medical access," the ministry stated.

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, an independent organization dedicated to protecting human rights, reported on Monday that thousands of Palestinian children in Gaza have tragically lost their lives in Israel's ongoing military assault. Many of these children were killed while they were asleep.

"In Gaza, thousands of Palestinian children have been killed, many while they slept, as part of Israel's ongoing military attack," the organization posted on X. Meanwhile, the media office in the Gaza Strip issued a warning on Monday, stating that over 3,500 Palestinian children are at risk of starvation.

"More than 3,500 children under the age of five are at risk of death in Gaza due to Israeli policies of starving children," the Gaza media office said in a statement, noting a severe shortage of milk and food, a lack of nutritional supplements, and the denial of vaccinations.

According to local health authorities, at least 36,479 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, the vast majority being women and children, and over 82,770 others have been injured.

# Emergence of Resistance axis within American universities

An analysis of Ayatollah Khamenei's letter to American students

From Page 1 ▶ The phrases “part of the Resistance Front,” “ruthless pressure from the White House,” and “honorable struggle” are key focal points in understanding the mission and vision for the movement of American students confronting the U.S. government's support for the crimes of the Zionist regime. In this piece, we will examine Imam Khomeini's views on the transformative role of universities in challenging oppressive governments and its impact on the fate of nations. We will also explore the significant aspects of the recent letter from the Leader of Islamic Revolution addressed to students in the United States.

## The university: a catalyst for transformation

The crimes of the Zionist regime in the Gaza Strip, now affecting the innocent people of Rafah, have recently provoked significant reactions from academic centers, students, and scholars in Europe and the United States. The intensification of the massacre of innocent people in refugee camps in Rafah has sparked a new wave of protests. Referring to the thoughts of Imam Khomeini about the transformative role of universities in world and national affairs, these events, along with the al-Aqsa Storm Operation, have paved the way for new upheavals in the West and America.

Imam Khomeini considered universities to be one of the main pillars of cultural development, believing that the state of a country's universities reflects its cultural standards. He asserted that the culture of a country mirrors the state of its universities. Recognizing the crucial role of universities, he referred to them as factories for creating human beings. Regardless of the type and model of governments, this responsibility is prioritized in the organizational goals of educating and training individuals for the future of the country.

Imam Khomeini also believed: “The role of the university in any country is to create proper human beings, and universities must produce and nurture them.” This highlights the significant focus on this aspect in national planning at macro levels. Besides religious



teachings, the importance and necessity of paying attention to educational environments and their performance are clearly indicated in Imam Khomeini's speeches. He emphasized the role of universities in various dimensions, describing them as the origin of transformations. The importance of the university's role in his words is so profound that Imam Khomeini stated: “The progress of the country is tied to the progress of its universities.” Therefore, reflecting on these statements by the Imam indicates the significant impact of universities and their nurtured individuals on social vitality and dynamism.

## The enlightened university: a promise of change in West

As some American universities have become centers of opposition to their governments' inhumane policies, revisiting the thoughts of Imam Khomeini is essential. Imam Khomeini reminded politicians and governing bodies that these academic centers can transform into hubs of change. This segment of society can be both the origin of transformations and the driver of community advancement; a country's progress depends on the advancement of its universities.

Reflecting on Imam Khomeini's statements reveals the unparalleled role of universities in a nation's prosperity or its misery and wretchedness. He said, “The university is the center of a nation's happiness and, conversely, its misery. The destiny of a nation must be determined by the university. A good university makes a nation prosperous.”

Therefore, the growing awareness in Western and American universities suggests that transforming these institutions into hubs of change in the near future will pave the

way for the development of a Resistance network against colonialism and imperialism.

## Resistance Front within American universities

In his recent letter, Ayatollah Khamenei outlined the future prospects of American elites rising against the injustices of the Zionist regime and the destructive policies of the United States and the West in Asia. He stated: “Dear young students in the United States! This is our message of solidarity and unity with you. You are now standing on the right side of history, which is turning a new page.” This part of the letter indicates that the Resistance in West Asia has become a spiritual supporter and a hub for anti-imperialist and anti-colonial movements in America and Europe.

He further addressed the American students: “You are now part of the Resistance Front.” This clearly signifies the emergence of a new branch within the axis of Resistance—the American Resistance force. Its continuation requires relentless effort and soft power activities aimed at building relationships with the youth and society in American and Western nations. Therefore, cultural organizations within the Resistance Front should strive, as they did at the beginning of the Islamic Revolution by integrating elites like Edoardo Agnelli, to discover justice-seeking elites in these societies. They should work tirelessly to raise their awareness and enlighten them about the truth.

## Engaging with media is essential

In another critical section of the letter, the Leader of Islamic Revolution highlights: “The international Zionist leaders, who control the majority of media outlets in America and Europe, either own them or exert influence through money and

bribery, have unjustly branded this human and courageous move as terrorism! Can a nation defending itself against the crimes of Zionist occupiers in its own land be labeled as terrorists? Or does providing humanitarian aid to this nation and bolstering its defenses equate to supporting terrorism?”

Drawing from this excerpt, it's crucial to underscore the imperative of utilizing the media to shed light on the realities of the Palestinian situation and the injustices perpetrated by the United States against other nations in recent decades. Prioritizing individual media engagement, continuous dissemination of accurate information, and the creation of compelling content in foreign languages to counter the distortion and falsehoods spread by news agencies should be a key focus, given this aspect of Ayatollah Khamenei's letter.

## ‘So, stand firm - as you have been commanded... (11:112)’

The Quran teaches us Muslims and all people worldwide the importance of standing firm in righteousness: “So, stand firm - as you have been commanded... (11:112).” Additionally, it emphasizes fair treatment in human relations: “You do no wrong, nor are you wronged (2:279).” The Resistance Front, by adhering to these principles and acting upon them, is making progress and, God willing, will prevail.

In the closing remarks of his letter, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasizes that the key to overcoming arrogance, tyranny, and preventing innocent bloodshed in Palestine is perseverance. He likens this perseverance to the consistent pursuit of justice over the past five decades, aimed at countering Western terrorism in West Asia, backed by the United States.

It's worth noting that the current developments in American society mark the beginning of a nascent national uprising. These initial movements will evolve into larger waves in the short term, forcing the United States government to retreat from previously instigated conflicts and potentially ushering in more profound long-term changes.

## SPORTS

### Expert hits out at Iran's boxing for failing to clinch Olympics' spot

TEHRAN - Iran's boxing team will not have a representative at the Paris Olympics for the first time in eight consecutive appearances after all seven boxers were eliminated from the Olympic qualifying tournament in Thailand.

This disappointing result comes just 18 months into the reign of Ruhollah Hosseini as president of the Iran Boxing Federation.

The elimination of the Iranian boxers follows their poor performance at the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou. In the aftermath of this latest setback, Hosseini has apologized for the team's failure and attributed it to a lack of youth development in Iranian boxing and ongoing refereeing issues.

This explanation is met with skepticism by some, as Iran managed to secure its first-ever boxing World Championship medal and two Olympic quota places for Tokyo 2020 just 13 months before Hosseini took over the federation.

The Olympic qualifying tournament in Bangkok, Thailand, saw over 600 boxers from around the world compete for a limited number of spots at the 2024 Paris Games. Iran, led by Cuban coach Juan Bautista Fontanills, was represented by Mehdi Parvizi, Daniel Shahbakhsh, Ali Habibinezhad, Kasra Tahmasbi, Meysam Ghashlaghi, Ali Fathi, and Rouzbeh Safdari.

Despite the team's best efforts, they ultimately fell short of qualifying for the Olympics. Hosseini has faced criticism for his management of the team during his short tenure, but some experts believe he made the right decision in hiring a renowned coach like Fontanills.

Akbar Ahadi, a former national team coach, sees the team's failure as a setback and urges the federation to take immediate action to prepare for the future competitions.

“We have always been present at the Olympics for more than 40 years, and now this absence is a failure,” Ahadi said. “This result is not related to Hosseini's 5-6 months of presidency but goes back to the previous years when there was no proper support system. The president has done his best during this time and organized some good international competitions for the national team. He also brought one of the best coaches in the world to Iran. Fontanills has only been with the national team for 3-4 months, and no coach in the world can do miracles in such a short time.”

Ahadi also addressed the decision to replace experienced boxers with younger athletes close to the Olympics, stating that while giving opportunities to rising talents is important, it should not come at the expense of experienced athletes who have proven their worth.

The Iranian boxing team's failure to qualify for the Paris Olympics serves as a wake-up call for the federation. Addressing the underlying issues in the sport, implementing a sustainable youth development program, and providing adequate support to the national team will be crucial for Iran's success in future international competitions.

### Mehrads going for third straight gold in Paris

TEHRAN - Morteza Mehrzad, member of the national men's sitting volleyball team of Iran, is looking for a third straight gold in the Paralympic Games.

With the countdown to the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games well and truly in the final stages, Sport Weeks of Paralympic.org provide the fans with a perfect guide to each of the competitions to be contested in France.

To round off this week, here are the sitting volleyball players to look out for this summer and Mehrzad is among the Ones to Watch.

The tallest player in sitting volleyball -and talisman of the Iranian team- returns to

the Paralympics in Paris, looking for a third straight gold to add to his multiple world and Asian Para Games titles.

Mehrads has previously won two gold medals in 2016 Rio and 2020 Tokyo.

### Zahra Nemati misses 2024 Paralympic Games

TEHRAN - Iran's three-time Paralympic champion Zahra Nemati will be absent in the 2024 Paralympic Games.

Technical Deputy of Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC), Saeid Solgi, said that Nemati will not compete in the Games.

“Nemati has not participated in any training camp after the 2022 Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, and she will also be absent in the Para-Archery European Cup 2nd Leg WRE 2024 to be held in Czech Republic in late June. We preferred not to register her name at the 2024 Paralympic Games,” Solgi said.

“Nemati is a legendary athlete and we are not going to send him to Paris under these conditions due to her lack of physical and technical preparation,” he added.

Nemati is arguably the most popular and successful female Paralympian to come from Iran. She has won golds at three different editions of the Paralympic Games.

Jalil Koohpayehzadeh, head of Iran's Sports Federation for the Disabled, had previously said Nemati would not compete in the Paralympics.

“As you know, Zahra Nemati is the most decorated Iran woman Paralympian but he has not yet registered in the Games. Her participation in the upcoming Paralympic Games is not certain yet,” Koohpayehzadeh had said in the news conference in mid-May.

### Brazilian duo Hidalgo, Rezende absent against Iran

TEHRAN - Brazilian iconic players Yoandy Leal Hidalgo and Bruno Rezende were reportedly absent in the match against Iran.

Iran is scheduled to play Brazil in Week 2 of 2024 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) on Thursday.

Team Melli have started Week 2 with a 3-0 loss against Japan in Fukuoka, Japan.

Yoandy Leal Hidalgo and Bruno Rezende's absence will be a good opportunity for Iran to register its first ever win in the current edition.

### Ghalenoei confirms plan to mix 'experienced with younger players'

TEHRAN - Iran national football team head coach Amir Ghalenoei is going to field experienced and younger players against Hong Kong.

Team Melli are to face Hong Kong on Thursday in Group E of the 2026 World Cup qualifier at the Hong Kong Stadium.

“First of all, I have to say Jom Andersen helped Hong Kong improve and his efforts are commendable. We edged past Hong Kong in our last match despite creating several goalscoring chances. On Thursday, we will lock horn for third time in seven months,” Ghalenoei said in the pre-match news conference.

“We have already advanced to the next round but the match is very important for us and that's why we have traveled to Hong Kong with our complete team.

“We are going to field our experienced and younger players in the match against Hong Kong and want to win the match. Hong Kong football has improved in recent years in my opinion. In our last match held in Doha in 2022 AFC Asian Cup, Hong Kong were very disciplined and made conditions difficult for us,” Ghalenoei stated.

## Resistance forces now decision-makers in West Asia: Quds commander

TEHRAN- The Commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps on Wednesday, highlighted Resistance groups' important role in regional affairs, noting that Resistance forces have now turned into independent and decision-making entities.

Brigadier General Ismail Ghaani made the remarks when visiting the family of a martyred veteran of the Iran-Iraq war.

“Today, Resistance throughout the region has its own independent and suitable

structure and has grown step by step, and today all the elements of the resistance front are in the pursuit of righteousness against falsehood,” the senior commander said.

Resistance forces in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and Palestine have gained significant clout and military power in recent years. The groups have managed to successfully face off against Western and Israeli troops seeking to exploit and occupy their homelands.

Iran has expressed its support for the



Resistance multiple times while emphasizing that it has no say in local forces' decisions.

## Iranian envoy highlights steps toward collective cooperation among Persian Gulf states

TEHRAN - Iran's ambassador to Saudi Arabia has highlighted the significant strides made in fostering cooperation among the eight littoral states of the Persian Gulf.

This development is seen as a direct outcome of the renewed diplomatic ties between Tehran and Riyadh.

June 5 marks the anniversary of the official reopening of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Saudi Arabia, which had been closed for seven years. This

diplomatic milestone followed a tripartite agreement signed in Beijing on March 10, 2023, wherein Iran and Saudi Arabia committed to resuming diplomatic relations within two months. The agreement emphasized mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs.

Ambassador Alireza Enayati noted that the reopening of the Iranian embassy and consulate in Saudi Arabia, along with the subsequent reopening of the Saudi embassy, marked a significant step forward in

bilateral relations.

“Over the past year, these renewed ties have advanced steadily, benefiting both nations on multiple levels,” he added.

Enayati stressed that the improved relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia have positively influenced regional cooperation and enhanced regional stability. He emphasized the potential for broader cooperation among the eight Persian Gulf states, envisioning a comprehensive, development-oriented

partnership.

“We are committed to all-encompassing, development-focused cooperation,” Enayati stated. “We emphasize endogenous security based on the internal strengths of regional countries. Strengthening people-to-people relations and travel is a cornerstone of our bilateral relations. We look forward to collective cooperation among the eight littoral states of the Persian Gulf, and significant steps have already been taken toward this goal.”

## India to earmark 1\$bn for development of Iran's Chabahar

TEHRAN - Iran's deputy minister of roads said India has agreed to allocate \$1 billion to the project on the development of Iran's southeastern Chabahar Port.

Implementation of the contract with India on developing Chabahar Port is the priority of the programs of the Ports and Maritime Organization, Ali Akbar Safaei said.

Negotiations were held with the Indian investors three months ago and signing the

contract on the provision of the relevant parts and equipment at Chabahar Port is at the final stage, the deputy roads minister added.

Pointing to the launch of a joint shipping company between Iran and India, he noted that the Indian company has agreed to finance the development of Chabahar by allocating between \$250 million and \$1 billion.

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

## Iran to collaborate with FAO to become hub for regional food security

TEHRAN - Iran, in association with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is scheduled to hold talks on turning the country into a hub for food security in the West Asia region, an Iranian official said.

Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister Hooshang Mohammadi made the remarks on the sidelines of FAO's 34th Executive Committee (EC) and 24th Governing Council (GC) meeting in Thailand, which is being held June 4-6.

In meetings with the FAO deputy secretary-general and the director-general of the Asia-Pacific Integrated Rural Development Center (CIRDAP), Mohammadi said that given the development of the knowledge-based food security document in Iran, the Islamic Republic proposed to be placed at the center of food security for the countries in the

region, adding that Iran's request is planned to be placed on the agenda for FAO's discussions.

If agreed upon, the UN food agency would invest in Iran and pave the way for providing the country with technical know-how and scientific findings, the deputy minister said, adding that the Islamic Republic is ready to transfer its experiences, studies, and policies regarding rural development.

The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) is a Bangladesh-based intergovernmental organization involved in rural development and poverty alleviation. The CIRDAP includes states such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

## China Oriental Performing Arts Group welcomes foreign media with great performances

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING- A number of journalists from some Asian, African and Pacific countries visited China Oriental Performing Arts Group on Tuesday (June 4).

The visit to this group was organized by the China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC).

During their visit to the group, the journalist visited different parts of the building, including a musical instruments museum where they experienced playing some traditional Chinese instruments as one of the directors taught them how to play.

The directors of the group briefed the representatives of the foreign media about the Chinese oriental performing arts, and the journalists enjoyed watching some performances in that place.

The last part of the visit was a press conference with the director of the group, who explained about the group's activities, and answered the questions raised by the journalists.

The China Oriental Performing Arts Group, under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, is one of the most prestigious national art troupes, originating from the China Song and Dance Troupe, Oriental Song and Dance Troupe as well as China Light Music Troupe.

It has nurtured numerous world-renowned artists, and has created and performed many fine art works that are well-received by local and overseas audiences.

China Oriental Performing Arts Group is a cultural group at national level.

As the predecessors of CHINA ORIENTAL PERFORMING ARTS GROUP CO. LTD, Chinese Song and Dance Troupe and Oriental Song and Dance Troupe are two most prestigious state song and dance troupes in China that have been receiving constant concern and support from several generations of the Party and state's central collective leadership.

They have represented the highest standard of music and dance art in China, nurturing numerous world renowned artists, and creating and performing countless fine art works well received by Chinese and foreign audience.

Having performed all across China, they

have also visited five continents covering more than 70 countries and regions on behalf of China, and participated in many important performances for national affairs, playing a unique role of "cultural envoy" on the diplomatic front.

Shouldering the responsibility of building the prestigious performing brands of "Oriental Song and Dance Troupe" and "Chinese Song and Dance Troupe", China Oriental Performing Arts Group aims to inherit and carry forward the China oriental artistic spirit and characteristics of "inclusiveness of fine Chinese and foreign cultures, richness of artistic expression, adaptability of advancing with the times" accumulated by generations of artists.

In the principle creating art works according to the needs of people, this group showcases Chinese aspirations and highlights oriental characteristics with a unique artistic style, striving to create more fine works that will stand the test of time.

The group will make solid progress while deepening the reform, and achieve the balance between social and economic benefits, so as to make its contributions to the friendship and exchange between China and the rest of the world, and to achieve the China Dream of great national rejuvenation.

As earlier mentioned, the visit to China Oriental Performing Arts Group was organized by the China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC).

CIPCC, under the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), has initiated a program to build a platform for the media from countries around the world, especially developing countries, to observe China and study development in this country.

In each edition of the program, journalists from all around the world gather together to get familiar with the modern China and exchange their experiences in the field of journalism.

In 2024 edition of the program, started in late February, over 100 journalists from more than 90 countries are participating.

Photo: China Oriental Performing Arts Group's directors warmly welcome foreign journalists (By Qianyue Chu, Video Creator, China Oriental Performing Arts Group)

# Iran's non-oil exports to Africa hit \$1.2b in 2 years

TEHRAN - Iran exported \$1.2 billion worth of non-oil products to the African countries during the first two years of late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's term, an official said.

According to Ruhollah Latifi, the spokesman for the trade promotion commission of Iran's House of Industry, Mine and Trade, the total value of non-oil trade with Africa reached \$54.4 billion in the mentioned two years.

President Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash on May 19, adopted the policy of establishing relations with African countries based on mutual respect and shared benefits.

After taking office in August 2021, the late president adopted a new foreign policy oriented towards neighbors, Muslim states, Asian countries and the members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Over the past 40 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has never given up on its principled policy towards Africa due to political and cultural commonalities, despite the sanctions, pressure and disruptions of the West, and has always maintained itself alongside the people and countries of Africa.

As reported, during the Iranian calendar years 1384 and 1385 (March 2005-March 2007), the relations between Iran and the African continent increased in terms of trade, but since 1386, the economic relations between Iran and Africa have decreased due to the economic crisis and cruel sanctions against Iran.

Surveys show that in the past years, due to the lack of restoration of economic relations with Africa, the amount of trade with the countries of this continent has remained at the level



of \$1.2 billion, but according to Mohammed-Sadeq Qanadzadeh, the director general of the Africa Department of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), facilitating the trade route with Africa is happening now and it is expected that the trade figure with this continent will reach \$10 billion in the next three years.

In fact, good steps have been taken to use Africa's capacity, and Africa can be a suitable market for Iranian goods, Qanadzadeh stated.

Last year, the official referred to the beginning of the 13th government's measures to develop relations with the African continent and said: "Over the past [Iranian calendar] year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), a series of measures have been initiated, which were resulted in the visit of about 60 African trade delegations, active presence in the exhibitions of this continent, the opening of 10 trade centers, and the dispatch of three commercial attachés.

"As the result of these measures, Iran's trade with Africa experienced a 100-percent growth from \$650 million in the Iranian year 1399, and also in the first nine months of the year 1401, Iran-Africa trade was equal to the total trade of the previous year,

and we also experienced a growth of about 700 percent in the export of technical and engineering services", he added.

Also as announced by Ruhollah Latifi, the value of trade between Iran and Africa rose two percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

He put Iran-Africa annual trade at 2.545 million tons worth \$1278 billion.

Iran exported 2.452 million tons of products valued at \$1.183 billion to 49 African countries in the past year, showing a one percent fall, and imported 92,898 tons of goods worth \$95.316 million from 23 African countries, indicating 59 percent growth, year on year, according to Latifi.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy Mehdi Safari has said that the economies of Iran and the African continent are complementary to each other, and due to their abundant capacities, significant achievements can be achieved in this due.

He made the remarks at the Scientific and Economic Cooperation Meeting Between Iran and West African Countries (IRAN WAC) which was held in Tehran in mid-March.

As reported, 20 multilateral

and bilateral cooperation agreements were signed between Iran and West African countries in the first day of the mentioned event, and the expansion and deepening of comprehensive economic cooperation was emphasized.

Addressing that meeting, late President Raisi emphasized Tehran's readiness to comprehensively expand cooperation with African countries, especially countries in the west of this continent.

He also said that the current level of trade between Iran and Africa is not acceptable, and according to the capacities and efforts of the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and West African countries, it is expected that the cooperation and economic relations between them will change even more.

As stated by the experts, in order to increase the level of trade with Africa certain infrastructure including transportation and direct shipping lines, as well as proper legal, commercial, monetary, and banking relations must be provided.

It is said that in the near future, the African continent will become a great power in the world due to having 18 percent of the world's population and increasing population growth.

Statistics show that the African continent has 30 percent of mineral reserves, 40 percent of gold, and 90 percent of chromium and platinum in the world. The continent also has the largest reserves of cobalt, diamonds, platinum and uranium in the world.

Also, Africa has 65 percent of the world's arable land, 10 percent of renewable fresh water resources, and 12 percent of the world's oil reserves.

## Iran's exports to Pakistan up 18% in 4 months y/y

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's non-oil exports to Pakistan in the first four months of 2024 has reached \$360 million, showing an 18 percent growth compared to the last year's corresponding period.

The Pakistani Ministry of Commerce's statistics show that Pakistan has imported \$360 million in products from Iran in the first four months of 2024, 18 percent higher than in January-April 2023.

Pakistan's import of products from Iran in April 2024 has hit \$73.2 million, registering a 30 percent growth compared to the same month last year.

The value of Iran's exports to Pakistan totaled \$944 million in 2023, indicating a 13 percent rise compared to a year earlier.

In a meeting between the Head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh and Pakistani Ambassador to Iran Muhammad Mudassar Tipu in Tehran on Sunday, the offi-

cial stressed the need for Iran and Pakistan to exercise barter trade and free trade to materialize a \$10 billion trade target.

Noting that Tehran and Islamabad can cooperate in different areas including pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, energy, auto parts, techno-engineering services, and electronics, he said that the ground is also prepared for cooperation on health tourism.

Hassanzadeh further stressed that an agreement for activating a joint trade council between the two neighboring countries is still in place.

The Iran Chamber of Commerce president said that the two countries have had many talks on the launch of a barter trade system while no practical step has been taken.

He called on the Pakistani government to ease visa requirements for Iranian businesspeople.

The Pakistani ambassador, for his part, re-

ferred to his country's agreement with the late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi for increasing bilateral trade to \$10 billion, adding that Islamabad continues to pursue this agreement.

The Pakistani government has decided for the joint border customs to work round the clock, the ambassador said, adding that it would be very effective if Iran also decides to do so.

He noted that the trade balance is one of the main obstacles on the way of trade between the two neighbors, as he said Iran's exports to Pakistan stand at \$1.6 billion while Pakistan's exports to Iran are so insignificant.

He believed that the exercise of free trade rests upon win-win connections.

The ambassador added that if the Iran Chamber of Commerce recommends businesspersons to the embassy, there would be no problem with the issuance of visas for traders.

## Russia welcomes Iran's request to join EAEU

TEHRAN - Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk says Moscow would welcome Iran joining the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) as an observer member, which he said could happen by the end of 2024.

Overchuk made the comments following a meeting of the EAEU Intergovernmental Council on

Tuesday. He told reporters that there are specific procedures that need to be followed before Iran can join the economic group.

He noted that if the preliminary steps are taken in a timely manner, the decision on Iran's observer status in the EAEU could be made almost by the end of December this year.

He also expressed Russia's interest in developing economic relations with the Iran, saying that the EAEU welcomes mutually beneficial and equal cooperation with all interested countries.

The Eurasian Economic Union is an international economic union comprising Belarus, Ka-

zakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia.

The current observer members of the EAEU are Uzbekistan, Moldova, and Cuba.

Earlier, the Iranian ambassador to Moscow had formally submitted Iran's request to join the EAEU as an observer member.

## Iran, Jordan private sectors to exchange business delegations

TEHRAN - The heads of the chambers of commerce of Iran and Jordan have highlighted the significance of exchanging trade delegations so that businesspeople from both countries will get familiar with the potential of each other.

The Head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh and his Jordanian counterpart Khalil Haj Tawfiq met on the sidelines of the 36th Board of Directors meeting of the Islamic Chamber for Commerce and Develop-

ment (ICCD) in Amman, Jordan, last week.

The Jordanian side welcomed the presence of the ICCIMA head in the event, congratulating him on being elected to the post.

Hassanzadeh, for his part, appreciated Jordan for hosting the ICCD meeting which he said would help strengthen cooperation between the member countries in business areas.

Referring to the urgency for businesspeople on both Iran and Jordan to get further familiar with each other, he highlighted the need for

exchanging business delegations and holding investment opportunities seminars.

The official invited the President of Jordan Chamber of Commerce to visit Tehran at the head of a business delegation for the 40th General Assembly Meeting of the Islamic Chamber due to be held in the Iranian capital in the Fall of 2024.

The Jordanian side welcomed the invitation and said that he will attend the meeting in Tehran.

## House passes bill to sanction ICC over accusing Israel of war crimes in Gaza

By Shahrokh Saei

From page 1 ▶ “The ICC has to be punished for this action. We cannot allow this to stand,” he said.

Johnson added, “If the ICC was allowed to do this and go after the leaders of countries whose actions they disagree with, why would they not come after America?”

His comments clearly indicate that international organizations do not have the right to hold the US and its allies accountable for committing crimes. In the other words, Johnson’s statement suggests that the US is above the law and the ICC must be subservient to Washington’s interests.

### US double-dealing

Although 42 pro-Israel Democrats crossed the aisle to back the House bill, the White House opposed it.

“We have made clear that while we oppose the decision taken by the prosecutor of the ICC, we don’t think it is appropriate, especially while there are ongoing investigations inside Israel looking at somebody’s very same questions, and we were willing to work with Congress on what a response might look like, but we don’t support sanctions,” State Department spokesperson Matt Miller said.

Democrats who control the US Senate are expected to reject the bill.

Both Republicans and Democrats have provided unwavering support for Israel, in particular its war on Gaza.

President Joe Biden has also denounced the ICC request for arrest warrants.

So, opposition to the GOP-led effort by the majority of the Democratic lawmakers and the White



House puts the spotlight on their ulterior motives.

The Biden administration is under growing pressure by American Muslim and Arab voters over its unflinching support for Israel.

They played a key role in helping Biden win the 2020 presidential election

Biden could risk losing the November presidential election if he fails to rally their support.

As a result, the White House has turned to duplicity and double-dealing.

On the one hand, it tries to express support for Israel. On the other, it seeks to appease opposition to Israel’s brutal war on Gaza which has claimed the lives of more than 36,000 Palestinians since October 7.

### International isolation

Nonetheless, the ICC’s move could deal a significant blow to Israel and deepen its isolation.

If the ICC finally decides to issue the arrest warrants more than 120 countries that have signed the Rome Statute are obliged to arrest the Israeli premier and his war minister and then transfer them to The Hague.

The EU foreign policy chief said last month that the bloc’s member states must abide by the ICC’s decision if it issues arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant.

“The mandate of the ICC, as an independent international institution, is to prosecute the most serious crimes under international law.

All States that have ratified the ICC statutes are bound to execute the Court’s decisions,” Josep Borrell wrote on X in May.

Late last month, an investigation by the Guardian, the Israeli-Palestinian publication +972 Magazine and the Hebrew-language outlet Local Call took the lid off a covert Israeli campaign against the ICC.

The probe said Israel has run an almost decade-long secret war against the ICC.

It noted that Israel deployed its intelligence agencies to surveil, hack, pressure, smear and allegedly threaten senior staff of the court in an effort to derail its inquiries into Israel’s war crimes.

According to the Guardian, Israeli intelligence captured the communications of ICC officials, including Khan and his predecessor as prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, intercepting phone calls, messages, emails and documents. It further pointed to a recent intercepted communication suggesting that Khan wanted to issue arrest warrants against Israelis but was under “tremendous pressure from the United States”.

The US approach has shown that it rails against international organizations when its hegemonic interests are jeopardized.

Former president Donald Trump imposed sanctions on top ICC officials, including Khan’s predecessor in 2020, after the court began investigating US war crimes during its occupation of Afghanistan.

Both Tel Aviv and Washington have tried to demonize the ICC for exposing their war crimes.

Such smear campaigns against the court come as the United States considers itself as a role model for democracy around the world and Israel claims to be the only democracy in West Asia.

Democracy means rule by people. Over the past months, anti-war protests have swept US cities and universities.

Demonstrators have called for an end to the Gaza war.

They have also demanded that Washington stop arming Israel.

Inside Israel, protests against the Gaza war have become a regular occurrence.

But, leaders in the US and Israel have turned a blind eye to growing calls for ending the Gaza war.

In the eyes of American politicians, democracy must serve the interests of the US and its allies and overlook their crimes.

Such a definition has turned democracy into sheer hypocrisy.

## UN warns of highest level of starvation in Gaza

If war continues unabated, more than one million Palestinians in Gaza could suffer the highest level of starvation by mid-July, according to a report by the UN’s World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

That would be an increase from 677,000 people who were experiencing famine-level conditions in March, as documented by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, Al Jazeera reported.

The joint WHO-FAO report said hunger in Gaza is being exacerbated by intensive restrictions on aid access and the collapse of its local food system.

“In the absence of a cessation of hostilities and increased access, the impact on mortality and the lives of the Palestinians now, and in future generations, will increase markedly with every day, even if famine is avoided in the near term,” the report said.

## NYT: Israel organized campaign to influence US lawmakers

Israel organized and paid for an influence campaign last year targeting US lawmakers and the American public with pro-Israel messaging, as it aimed to foster support for its actions in the war with Gaza, according to officials involved in the effort and documents related to the operation, the New York Times reported.

The covert campaign was commissioned by Israel’s Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, a body that connects Jews around the world with Israel, four Israeli officials said. The ministry allocated about \$2 million to the operation and hired Stoic, a political marketing firm in Tel Aviv, to carry it out, according to the officials and the documents.

The campaign began in October and remains active on the platform X. At its peak, it used hundreds of fake accounts that posed as real Americans on X, Facebook and Instagram to post pro-Israel comments. The accounts focused on US lawmakers, particularly ones who are Black and Democrats, such as Representative Hakeem Jeffries, the House minority leader from New York, and Senator Raphael Warnock of Georgia, with posts urging them to continue funding Israel’s military.

ChatGPT, the artificial intelligence-powered chatbot, was used to generate many of the posts. The campaign also created three fake English-language news sites featuring pro-Israel articles.

## Hezbollah attacks Israeli soldiers

Lebanon’s Hezbollah resistance movement has carried out a fresh attack against Israeli

military bases. The movement said its fighters attacked a “gathering” of soldiers near the Israeli army’s Birkat Risha site, using close-range missiles.

Earlier, Hezbollah’s deputy chief said the regime will face devastation and destruction if it expands the war against Lebanon.

Sheikh Naim Qassem said the movement is not after the expansion of conflict with Israel but remains ready in the face of any imposed war.

## HRW: Israel’s use of white phosphorous endangers Lebanese civilians

Israel’s widespread use of white phosphorous in south Lebanon is putting civilians at grave risk and contributing to civilian displacement, Human Rights Watch warned.

The HRW verified the use of white phosphorous munitions by Israeli forces in at least 17 municipalities across south Lebanon since October 2023, including 5 municipalities where airburst munitions were unlawfully used over populated residential areas.

“Israel’s use of airburst white phosphorous munitions in populated areas indiscriminately harms civilians and has led many to leave their homes,” said Ramzi Kaiss, a Lebanese researcher at Human Rights Watch. “Israel forces should immediately stop using white phosphorous munitions in populated areas, especially when less-harmful alternatives are readily available.”

## Recognition of Palestinian state gains momentum

Slovenia’s parliament on Tuesday approved the recognition of an independent Palestinian state, rejecting a proposal to call a referendum.

Slovenian lawmakers voted with 52 in favor and zero against recognition in the 90-seat parliament. The remaining MPs were not present for the vote, Politico reported.

By recognizing the Palestinian state, “we are sending hope to the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza,” Slovenia Prime Minister Robert Golob wrote on the government’s X account.

“I am proud that the National Assembly and the government recognized Palestine,” said the Balkan country’s Foreign Minister, Tanja Fajon, adding that Slovenia has become the 147th country around the world to recognize Palestinian statehood.

Last week, the Slovenian government decided to recognize Palestine as an independent and sovereign state following in the steps of Spain, Ireland and Norway as part of a wider effort in recent weeks to coordinate pressure on Israel to end the war in Gaza.

The government initially announced that it would send the decision to parliament by June 13, but it accelerated the process.

## Palestinians recount horrific conditions at Al-Shifa hospital

After Israeli forces pulled out of Gaza City’s vast al-Shifa hospital complex on April 1, following their second raid there, stunned Palestinians who pored over the burnt-out ruins said it reeked of death, the BBC reported.

During the past eight months of war, hospitals have come under repeated attack, with Israel claiming they are used as bases by Hamas. Israel has failed to provide evidence to back up its claim. Hamas has also denied the accusation.

But events at al-Shifa – once the biggest and best-equipped medical facility in the Gaza Strip – have arguably been the most dramatic.

The two-week surprise raid, launched after Israel said Hamas had regrouped at the site, was described by Israel as “precise and surgical”.

With decaying bodies sticking out of the sand piled up by combat bulldozers in the courtyards of al-Shifa, the claim that there had been no civilian casualties was immediately questioned.

In recent weeks, four mass graves have been uncovered at the site, with Palestinian search teams saying that several hundred bodies have been found.

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

## Hamas: “We conveyed our position to mediators”

From page 1 ▶ soldiers until a permanent ceasefire is signed and observed.

Ironically, the United States is piling pressure on Hamas to accept the American version which President Joe Biden says is an Israeli proposal despite Tel Aviv itself refusing to accept it.

Hamdan said, “We have conveyed our position to the mediators, which is that we cannot agree to an agreement that does not guarantee a permanent ceasefire and a comprehensive withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.”

And he underlined that “the (Israeli) occupation will not see its captives (held) with the (Palestinian) resistance except through a serious and genuine deal in which our Palestinian prisoners enjoy freedom.”

Touching on the suffering of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons and makeshift detention centers that have sprung up around Gaza, Hamdan said, “The prisoners are being subjected to the worst crimes of torture and deliberate killing in Israeli occupation prisons since October 7, 2023.”

The senior Hamas official added that the Israeli torture against Palestinian prisoners extends to the occupied West Bank, occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem), and the rising number of Palestinian prisoners in Gaza as well, under an Israeli government that he described as the “most Nazi-like”.

Hamdan pointed out that there is a complete disregard for the tragedies facing Palestinian prisoners in stark contrast to significant Western interest toward Israeli captives, which underscores the Western “bias” towards the Israeli occupation regime.

“Palestinian prisoners are being subjected to the worst kinds of torture and deliberate killing in Israeli prisons.”

He also referred to reports from UNRWA and other agencies that said the occupation regime has sent 225 Palestinian bodies in three containers to the Gaza Strip since last December.

They had been killed after being arrested in the enclave.

The Hamas leader told reporters that the number of prisoners has reached 9,500 since October 7 last year, and they have all been subject to starvation, humiliation, and torture, with their bones and limbs broken.

Among the prisoners and kidnapped Gazans are injured individuals who have also been subjected to all kinds of humiliation, torture, and deliberate execution, according to Hamdan, who added that the Israeli military “made up rules that violate all norms, including international conventions on executing prisoners”.

“There is an international move to save the prisoners,” Hamdan pointed out.

“The (Israeli) occupation has arrested 16,000 women since 1967, including prisoners who gave birth to their children in harsh conditions inside prisons, and they are chained.”

He pointed out that “the (Israeli) occupation still detains more than 200 Palestinian children facing harsh conditions and subjected to all kinds of torture, both physically and psychologically.”

Earlier, the Ministry of Prisoners and Ex-Prisoners Affairs in Gaza warned that the vast majority of Palestinians detained by Israeli forces “go to the unknown inside the (Israeli) occupation’s cells, prisons, and camps,” since the start of the genocidal war on Gaza.

It added that Israeli security agencies continue to interrogate prisoners in an attempt to extract information from them, in oppressive conditions that involve beatings and different forms of torture.

## US House launches war against international law

From page 1 ▶ The House legislation, even if endorsed by the Senate, will not be a game changer because it targets ICC officials involved in the case by blocking their entry to the US, preventing them from property transactions, and revoking American visas held by them. However, if arrest warrants are issued it will deal a serious blow to Israel.

It is hard for Israeli officials to be officially identified as war criminals because their names come next to the Balkan butchers, namely Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, and Slobodan Milosevic. In certain aspects, the crimes that Israel is committing in Gaza are worse. The Balkan war criminals did not kill indiscriminately. At least they did not massa-

cre women, the elderly, babies or boys under a certain age. Also, they did not starve women and children.

The House legislation emboldens criminals in Israel to commit more crimes with greater impunity.

This legislation will surely bring defamation to Congress and openly shows that it exercises double standards.

There is no instance of war crimes and crimes against humanity that Israel has not committed in Gaza since October 7 last year.

The 247 lawmakers who voted for the bill don’t represent the interests of Americans. Rather, they are protecting a regime that

sees no boundary for its crimes.

Israel organized and paid for an influence campaign last year targeting US lawmakers and the American public with pro-Israel messaging, as it aimed to foster support for its actions in the war with Gaza, according to officials involved in the effort and documents related to the operation, New York Times reported on Wednesday.

These corrupt lawmakers have no scruples to target the ICC and launch a war against international law. Even massive protests against the Israeli carnage in American universities did not make them revise their shameful support for the Israeli butchers.

## "Glory of Persia" illuminates China for six more months

From Page 1 ▶ Shedding light on the timeline, the minister stated that the exhibition is set to commence in Shanghai from mid-June.

"Iran is located at what was a crossroads of East-West cultural communication in ancient times, and its art combined elements from various cultures," noted Zhai Yi, a researcher at the Palace Museum and the curator of the exhibition. "It was influenced by many regions across Eurasia."

"From the precious collections of palaces to articles of daily use, in this exhibition, we want to reflect the marvelous material cultural heritage left by ancient Persia within the greater context of mutual learning between civilizations," she added.

"Persian civilization had an inclusive cultural ethos," Zhai stated in her concluding remarks, "In the confluence and mutual learning between cultures, it continues to reveal its brilliance and magnificence, even today."

Testifying the undeniable value of the ancient collection, a delicate Achaemenid golden rhyton (a conical drinking cup, sometimes used for ceremonial purposes) emblazoned with a winged lion has been displayed to the



visitors.

It is noteworthy that there are only two of these distinctive Persian golden rhytons around the world, with one of them being held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

According to the Iranian officials, more than 200 Persian relics which are being put on show, including the golden rhyton, have been insured for 114,250,000 euros by the Chinese government, which is committed to their protection and exhibition.

This extension marks a significant cultural exchange between Iran and China, highlighting Iran's rich historical heritage on an international stage.

## West Azarbaijan museums welcome 50k visitors in two months

TEHRAN - In a remarkable surge of cultural interest, West Azarbaijan's museums have attracted more than 50,000 visitors, throughout the very first two months of the current Persian year (started on March 20).

In the course of about 60 days, 56,000 visitors explored various museums across West Azarbaijan province, according to head of the province's museums.

"This marks a notable increase in visitors compared to last year," Jalil Rostampour continued. "When 160,000 people toured the museums over the entire 12 months."

Furthermore, Rostampour expressed optimism that this trend will continue, leading to a significant rise in museum attendance this year.

Regarding the most visited sites, he mentioned the Baghcheh Jogh Palace Museum, the Urmia Anthropology Museum, the Takht-e Soleyman Site Museum in Takab, and the Qare Church Site Museum, believed to be one of the oldest church buildings in the world, in Chaldoran.

Rostampour also outlined that construction plans for museums in Oshnavieh, Sardasht, Bukan, Miandoab, and the Chaldoran War Site Museum are currently under review.

He emphasized that with the necessary funding, these projects could be completed swiftly to welcome more visitors.

"West Azarbaijan boasts 20 museums," Rostampour wended up. "Of which 10 are managed by the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization, two museums are privately owned, and eight are operated by other entities."

West Azarbaijan, located in the northwest of



Iran, is a region rich in history and culture, home to several notable museums that preserve and exhibit its diverse heritage. The region's museums reflect its complex tapestry of ethnic groups, historical events, and cultural achievements.

Located in the provincial capital, Urmia Museum is one of the most significant cultural institutions in West Azarbaijan. It houses an extensive collection of archaeological artifacts, including items from the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods.

Takht-e Soleyman (Throne of Solomon) is another example of province's eichness, while primarily an archaeological site, the complex at Takht-e Soleyman is often considered a museum in its own right. This UNESCO World Heritage site includes a Zoroastrian fire temple and a Sassanian royal sanctuary, offering a glimpse into the religious practices and architectural prowess of ancient Persia.

These museums collectively offer a comprehensive overview of West Azarbaijan's rich cultural mosaic, from its ancient archaeological sites to the traditions of its diverse ethnic groups. They play a crucial role in preserving the region's heritage and educating both locals and visitors about its historical and cultural significance.

## Photo of the day



Local people in Khiva, Uzbekistan, along with international visitors, celebrate the ancient city's designation as the Tourism City of the Islamic World for 2024.

# Discovering Samarkand: Mausoleum of Amir Timur through the eyes of foreign tourists

By Afshin Majlesi

UZBEKISTAN, Samarkand - During a recent visit to Samarkand, I explored a number of historical gems, including Registan Square, Shah-i-Zinda, and the Mausoleum of Amir Timur, to name a few.

Samarkand, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Central Asia, is known as a crossroads of culture and trade. The city flourished under the rule of various empires, most notably the Timurids who ruled a vast territory that included modern-day Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, in the late 14th century to the early 15th century. Available evidence suggests that its strategic location on the Silk Road made the city a melting pot of diverse cultures, fostering advancements in science, art, and architecture.

There, I observed a large number of foreign tourists, many of whom were visibly entranced by the beauty and magnificence of the historical places.

This made me want to talk to some of the sightseers to hear their thoughts. Here are selections of their perspectives I recorded at the mausoleum of Amir Timur, where the founder of the Timurid Empire is laid to rest:

**Emily from England:**

"The mausoleum is an amazing piece of architecture. The attention to detail and the use of color are phenomenal... It's a remarkable representation of the Timurid architectural style and being here feels like stepping back in time."

**Hans from Germany:**

"It's truly awe-inspiring. The architecture is both grand and impressive. You can tell that a lot of thought and craftsmanship



Jane and John, a couple from England, talk to the Tehran Times correspondent after the finished visits to the Mausoleum of Amir Timur in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on June 1, 2024.

went into its construction. And it's incredible to see its walls and spaces are so well-preserved."

**Yuki from Japan:**

"Here, the symmetry, the colors, and the patterns are mesmerizing. As an artist, I'm particularly drawn to the ornations of the inside and the way they harmonize with the overall structure. There's an atmosphere here that is truly unique."

«The architecture here is just magnificent, and you can really feel the history when you're here.»

**Ivan from Russia:**

"In my opinion, the mausoleum represents a blend of power and beauty. In fact, the architecture here is a perfect representation of Timurid grandeur..."

**Sara from the United States:**

"It's absolutely stunning. The

history here is so rich, and the architecture is just beautiful. I can see why this place is so revered. The preservation of such a historical site is important because it's an incredible piece of history."

**Faisal from Saudi Arabia:**

"The [architectural] techniques used here are sophisticated and advanced for their time. The use of space, light, and decoration is particularly impressive. It's an example of Islamic architecture and a testament to the skill of its builders."

**Lars from the Netherlands:**

"The sheer scale of the building is incredible. It's one of those places where you can easily feel the history all around you."

**Jane and John, a couple from England:**

Jane: "It's absolutely beautiful. However, I did find it a bit too noisy. There were so many people talking loudly, and it took away from the serene atmosphere I was hoping for. In historical sites back in England, visitors tend to be more quiet and respectful of their surroundings, which makes for a more relaxing experience."

## Iran to celebrate Handicrafts Week with special programs

TEHRAN - On the verge of Handicrafts Week, Iran gears up to celebrate artisanal traditions and economic growth with a great number of projects set for unveiling on World Handicrafts Day.

In a sideline meeting on Wednesday, the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced the opening of 144 projects in the handicrafts sector in honor of World Handicrafts Day (June 10).

Ezzatollah Zarghami emphasized the special attention and directives of the late President Ayatollah Raisi to handicrafts, stating that the programs for World Handicrafts Day will commence on Saturday in Mashhad, paying tribute to the late Ayatollah Raisi.

He further added that the opening ceremony of World Crafts Day will be held at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, during which numerous projects related to handicrafts will be unveiled.

The Minister clarified that these 144 projects, valued at 461 billion tomans (approximately nine million dollars) will generate employment for more than a thousand individuals.

"These projects include 127 handicraft production workshops," Zarghami elaborated.

"13 handicraft houses, along with four handicraft markets in various provinces."

He stated that handicraft houses operate in three areas: exhibition, education, and sale of handicrafts. Additionally, by contributing to the restoration of historical buildings, they aid in both cultural heritage preservation and tourism development.

According to the in-charge officials, Handicrafts Week kicks off with the slogan "Renewing the Covenant with the Martyred President" in the city of Mashhad. Additionally, the second day of the week will host the World Handicrafts Day Symposium in Tehran, with the theme "Handicrafts: The Best Public Participation in Production Leap."

The third day will feature a gathering of mayors from Handicrafts World Cities and a commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the World Crafts Council, promoting "Handicrafts as Cultural Narratives on a Global Scale."

Unveiling and inaugurating projects are among the planned activities, including an event in Shiraz with the theme "Handicrafts: Family, Productive, Developmental Navigator."

The sixth day of the Week in Varamin will



focus on nomadic handicrafts, with a session featuring professors and university presidents, highlighting "Handicrafts: Iranian Lifestyle with Cultural Diversity."

Meetings with artists and craftsmen are other part of the agenda in Isfahan and Tehran provinces, under the slogans "Creative Handicrafts by Young Innovators" and "Handicrafts: Preserver of Tradition, Bearer of Values."

Meeting with veteran professors, academics, and traditional artists, as well as the opening ceremony of an Iranian kilim exhibition hosted by Tehran province, are also planned with the themes "Handicrafts in Harmony with the Environment" and "Handicrafts in Harmony with the Environment in Synchronization with Sustainable Economy."

## Türkiye repatriates 55 historical artifacts to Iran

Türkiye repatriated 55 historical artifacts identified as belonging to Iran on Tuesday, Anadolu Agency reports.

The artifacts were taken to Erzurum province and sent to Iran with a ceremony at the Erzurum Archaeology Museum, as part of the work on the return of illegally smuggled artifacts to Türkiye.

Director General of Cultural Heritage and Museums Birol Incecikoz said Türkiye has been carrying out comprehensive

work on artifact smuggling.

Incecikoz said Türkiye has successfully brought back 7,824 artifacts to the homeland in the last seven years.

"We have become one of the rule-making countries in the world in terms of returning illegally smuggled artifacts to our country. As a country, we claim that every cultural artifact is the jewel of the country it belongs to. It must be exhibited in the country where it belongs, it must be

long to that land," he said. "As a result of these policies, today we have come together to hand over to the Islamic Republic of Iran the artifacts that we have proven to belong to the Iranian side."

Incecikoz indicated that the items include a Sassanian sword, 42 coins, a bronze jug and 11 artifacts from the Bronze Age and Islamic eras.

"The return of cultural assets to the lands where they belong will be our motto in all the work

John: "Yeah, the blue tiles and the patterns are just stunning. It's hard to believe something this detailed was built so long ago. It's definitely one of the highlights of our trip so far."

**Olga and Dmitry, a couple from Russia:**

Olga: "The architecture here is just magnificent, and you can really feel the history when you're here."

Dmitry: "We're really glad we made the trip here."

**Marie, a senior visitor from France:**

"It's truly stunning. The complexity of the architecture are just wonderful. I've traveled to many historical sites, but this one is special because of its unique style and the pride of the locals."

**Ming, a university professor from China:**

"Here, the use of color and geometric patterns is quite impressive. It's fascinating to see how the artisans of that time created such beautiful and lasting works."

**Ana from Brazil:**

"I love how the colors and patterns come together to create something so magnificent. It's amazing to think about the history behind this place and the skill involved in making such elevated structures."

As the current tourist season in Samarkand draws to a close with the onset of summer, visitors and locals alike look forward to the more pleasant autumn months when the weather becomes ideal for exploring the city once again.

I must add that the locals I encountered during my visit were hospitable and welcoming. They were an integral part of my experience of discovering Samarkand's historical and cultural wealth.



we will do as a country from now on, especially in the fight against the smuggling of historical artifacts," he added.

Consul General of Iran in Erzurum Mohammed Ebrahimi expressed gratitude for returning the artifacts.

# Striving for global consensus on addressing SDSs

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN –World Environment Day, held annually on June 5, is the largest global event for raising awareness and taking action to protect the planet Earth.

This year, the international day emphasizes Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience.

Considering the role of sand and dust storms (SDSs) in aggravating land degradation, the Department of Environment (DOE) has taken measures at both national and international levels to deal with SDSs.

All over the world, ecosystems are threatened. From forests and drylands to farmlands and lakes, natural spaces on which humanity's existence depends are reaching a tipping point.

Land restoration is a key pillar of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, which is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Preventing soil degradation is an essential aspect of land restoration.

However, 125 million hectares of the country's natural resources are affected by water erosion, and the rate of soil erosion in Iran is six to seven times higher than the world average.

Sand and dust storms are one of the factors contributing to land destruction and accelerating desertification, as well



as other environmental issues such as harm to people's health, well-being, and livelihood; deforestation; loss of land productivity; and decline in biodiversity.

The DOE has so far held a regional conference with the participation of 11 regional countries and a number of international organizations; as well as an international conference with the participation of about 50 countries and 15 international institutions.

Both conferences featured good statements on the establishment of a regional center and a fund to support collaborative efforts at regional and international levels, the implementation of two sub-regional action plans for the west, southwest, east, and northeast of the country.

Moreover, the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) approved a resolution adopted at the international summit on dealing with sand and dust storms which was held in Tehran in September 2023.

Enhancing collaborations among different organizations to manage dust storms produced by internal dust zones effectively; holding bilateral and multilateral meetings with the officials of Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan, Qatar, and Kuwait, and implementing the agreements concluded with these countries to address the SDSs are among other taken actions.

Furthermore, Iran is planning to hold a joint training workshop with the presence of senior representatives of the beneficiary countries in September.

Representatives of Syria, Iraq, Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan will participate in the workshop.

It will focus on the implementation of the action plans contained in the declarations of the two summits held in Tehran and the resolution approved by UNEA-6.

## Our land, Our future

This year's World Environment Day campaign focuses on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience under the slogan "Our land, Our future."

The theme is about bringing back healthy land, preventing deserts from growing, and dealing with water shortages. Trees, healthy soil, and clean water are vital for a healthy planet!

World Environment Day was established in 1972 by the United Nations General Assembly as a platform for raising awareness of pressing environmental problems and encouraging global action. The first was a meeting held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972 where it was debated and discussed. From that point forward, from 1973, the custom has continued ahead with a similar date.

Over the past five decades, the Day has grown to be one of the largest global platforms for environmental outreach.

Tens of millions of people participate online and through in-person activities, events, and actions around the world.

According to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, up to 40 percent of the planet's land is degraded, directly affecting half of the world's population and threatening roughly half of global GDP (US\$44 trillion).

The number and duration of droughts have increased by 29 percent since 2000 – without urgent action drought may affect over three-quarters of the world population by 2050.

## Iranian students attending APHo 2024

TEHRAN –Iran's Physics Olympiad team is participating in the 24th Asian Physics Olympiad (APho), in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The competition commenced on June 3 and will conclude on June 10.

The team has attended the competition for the first time to foster their scientific drive and improve their readiness for the International Physics Olympiad (IPho) 2024, which is scheduled to be hosted by Iran.

The participants are Pooya Asteraki, Farzin Qolivandan, Mohammad-Amin Haaju, Abolfazl Shiri, Seyyed Mohammad Hosseini, Kasra Shekhi, Behrad Mohammadian, and Sara Mousaei.

## APho is an annual Physics competition for high school students from countries across Asia and Oceanic regions.

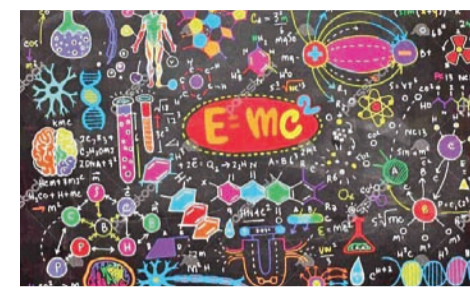
### APho

The Asian Physics Olympiad (APho) originated from the International Physics Olympiad (IPho).

APho started in the year 2000 in Indonesia with about 10 participating countries, and in 2021, the participating countries grew to 26 countries.

It is an annual Physics competition for high school students from countries across Asia and Oceanic regions.

This APHo is a regional platform for students who are passionate about Physics and who are talented, creative, and analytical to solve



complex and challenging questions on Physics, which are widely recognized in the scientific community.

The competition is divided into 2 sections: a 5-hour theoretical examination, and a 5-hour laboratory experiment, consisting of either one or two experiments. Each national delegation is made up of 8 competitors plus two leaders who will compete for the winning prize.

### IPho 2024

The 54th International Physics Olympiad will be held in Isfahan, Iran from July 21 to 29, an official with the Ministry of Education has said.

Participants from around 80 countries are forecast to attend the event, IRNA quoted Reza Hosseini as saying.

Olympiad students make up one percent of the 1.5 percent of gifted students in the country, and every year they make the country proud with their remarkable achievements.

The Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution has approved 14 disciplines, allowing Iranian students to compete with foreign students in international Olympiads.

The country holds a top regional position and ranks within the top 10 globally.

Last year, Iran held a joint camp with China, and two joint mathematics and astronomy Olympiads with Russia to boost educational interactions further. Iran is planning to hold joint online events with Brazil, Belarus, and other countries.

## Iran chairing ILC's General Affairs Committee

TEHRAN –Iran's deputy permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva, Mehdi Aliabadi, has been elected as the chairman of the General Affairs Committee of the 112th session of the International Labor Conference (ILC).

The Conference is being held from June 3 to 14 at two premises: the Palais des Nations and the International Labor Organization (ILO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, IRNA reported.

The General Affairs Committee is a standing committee of the Conference. It consists of 28 members nominated by the Government group, 14 members nominated by the Employers' group, and 14 members nominated by the Workers' group. Each group may also nominate deputy members.

The Committee considers and reports on any matter referred to it by the International Labor Conference.

Abrogation of four international labor conventions is expected to be referred by the Conference to the General Affairs Committee.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, a founding member of the ILO, was one of the first countries in the region to join the Organization. Iran has ratified 15 ILO Conventions including six of the ten core Conventions.

The country has been a member of the Board

of Directors for the past 26 years and the coordinator/head of the Asia-Pacific Group in the 111th session, last year.

### ILO

The ILO is devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labor rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace.

The ILC is the ILO's highest decision-making body.

Since 1919 the ILO, as in 112th session of ILC, has convened governments, employers, and workers of 187 Member States, to set labor standards, develop policies, and devise programs promoting decent work for all women and men.

Government, employer and worker delegates from the ILO's 187 Member States are addressing a wide range of issues, including the protection of workers against the effects of climate change and biological hazards (standard-setting, first discussion), a recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW), a general discussion on decent work, the care economy, and fundamental principles and rights at work, the organization's work agenda and budget, the election of its Governing Body members of the

ILO Governing Body for 2024-27.

Moreover, the inaugural forum of the Global Coalition for Social Justice will be held during the ILC.

It allows Coalition partners to exchange knowledge, tools, and experience, and to showcase activities and initiatives undertaken, or envisaged in support of social justice.

The Governing Body has decided to place on the agenda of the 112th Session (2024) of the Conference an item on the abrogation of four Conventions: the Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935 (No. 45), the Safety Provisions (Building) Convention, 1937 (No. 62), the Convention concerning Statistics of Wages and Hours of Work, 1938 (No. 63), and the Labor Inspectorates (Non-Metropolitan Territories) Convention, 1947 (No. 85).

According to the statute of the ILO, the Conference can approve, by a majority of votes, the abolition of conventions that no longer fulfill their intended purpose or do not contribute to the achievement of the goals of the organization.

The abolition of these four conventions is part of the process of revising the organization's standards to maintain a set of powerful and up-to-date international labor standards or guidelines.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## "Noora" vaccine successfully passing first phase of clinical trial

"Noora" coronavirus vaccine, domestically made by Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences affiliated to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), is successfully passing the first phase of the clinical trial.

The vaccine is well undergoing the first phase of human testing, he noted, adding, the first phase of human testing lasts 2 months, so far more than a month has passed, IRNA reported on Saturday.

He stressed the need to integrate the human testing phase of the Noora vaccine and said that "this must be done to make the vaccine available for the mass vaccination; while many vaccine producing countries have done the same."

## واکسن نورا مرحله پایانی فاز اول تست انسانی را طی می کند

تهران - رییس دانشگاه علوم پزشکی بقیه الله گفت: تزریق دز اول واکسن نورا به تمام داوطلبان انجام شد و دز دوم هم به نیمه تزریق رسیده است. دکتر حسن ابوالقاسمی روز شنبه در گفت و گو با ایرنا، روند فعالیت کارآزمایی بالینی واکسن نورا را مطلوب ارزیابی کرد و افزود: این واکسن به نحو مطلوبی در حال طی کردن فاز اول تست انسانی است.

وی با یادآوری اینکه طبق برنامه ریزی انجام شده طول دوره مرحله اول تست انسانی ۲ ماه است، ادامه داد: تاکنون بیش از یک ماه از این دوره سپری شده است.

وی بر لزوم ادغام مراحل تست انسانی واکسن نورا تاکید کرد و گفت: این کار باید صورت گیرد و بسیاری از کشورهای تولیدکننده واکسن هم از این ظرفیت بهره بردند.



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JUNE 6, 2024

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*A person who analyzes himself receives a benefit, and he who neglects it, is a loser. He who learns a lesson from others, finds insight, and with such insight comes understanding and avoiding ignorance, and he who understands, will be well aware.*

**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times > Noon:12:03 Evening: 19:39 Dawn: 3:03 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:48 (tomorrow)

## Turkish artist's 9-meter painting in Istanbul highlights Gaza's suffering

Turkish painter Kasım Tan depicts the suffering of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to raise awareness about the attacks carried out by Israel on the enclave.

Tan created a 9-meter by 3-meter painting titled "Gaza" in front of the Üsküdar Valide-i Cedid Mosque in Istanbul to support Palestinians through his work, Daily Sabah reported.

Inspired by Picasso's "Guernica," Tan expressed concern as a young artist about depicting the horror of the situation.

"I had a concern about expressing the horror I experienced. We prepared our canvas after obtaining permission from the Mufti's Office and the General Directorate of Foundations. Then we placed it here and started drawing," the 27-year-old artist said.

After the attacks by Israel on Gaza on Oct. 7, Tan went into seclusion to ponder: "What can I do against this genocide?" When he emerged, he decided to create his piece.

The young artist said he mostly creates portraits, but in his Gaza piece, he wanted to depict the striking facial expressions of the Gazan people.

"Here, I aim to transfer to the canvas the unforgettable expressions engraved in our minds from Gaza, using bold lines and confronting the audience eye-to-eye. I've allotted myself 21 days," he said.

"After roughly sketching for the first two weeks, I'll spend the remaining week adding details. I'll occasionally use red paint. This work is a 21-day drawing action by a young artist at 27. I have no idea where this work will take me."

He noted that he has been preparing a series called "Chaos" for about five years. "This series depicts black and white figures gathered in a space, witnessing each other's horror.

The drawings I make in my normal life seem disturbing to people because harsh lines

and expressions unsettle the audience. I'm observing this in this work as well.

Of course, I can also say this: in the face of an existing massacre, people can suppress certain emotions. But when they unexpectedly see them on a canvas, they can react involuntarily."

Tan expressed a wish for more famous artists to undertake similar efforts. "The silence of our artists drove me here. I'm essentially fighting a personal battle for our artists and nation.

I'm glad to be a trailblazer in this regard. Being a bit crazy is necessary for an artist and spending nine hours here drawing alongside people also broadens my perception," he said.

Tan plans to work around the clock in a tent during the final week of the project to finish the painting.

He wants to infuse hope into the work while carefully considering figure placement and perspective.

Despite the challenges of integrating sketches, he is dedicated to crafting a significant piece, and transferring his long-term series onto a large canvas is demanding, but he is committed to creating something captivating.

The artist has received positive reactions from those watching him in Uskudar Square. "Some left tips, some brought water and some asked if I was hungry and offered to bring food," he said.

Many admired his work and said things like, "Well done. I'm proud of you," said Tan. "As I said, this artwork is also an expression of our society's conscience.

After this artwork, I will leave a testament. This testament will be that when Palestine achieves freedom, this artwork should go to Palestine," he added. At least 36,500 Palestinians have been killed and 83,000 wounded in Israel's war on Gaza since last October.

## Iran's National Orchestra to perform with vocalist Abdolhossein Mokhtabad

TEHRAN- The first concert of Iran's National Orchestra in the current Iranian year (started in March) will be held at Tehran's Vahdat Hall, featuring renowned vocalist Abdolhossein Mokhtabad.

Under the baton of Homayoun Rahimian, the National Orchestra will perform a repertoire of popular Iranian pieces on June 8 and 9, ISNA reported.

Maziar Zahreddini will accompany the orchestra as the concertmaster, the report added.

Mokhtabad is a distinguished Iranian singer and composer, and a multiple award-winning artist, having received the Gold Medal at the Global Music Awards in 2020 and the Silver Medal in 2022.

He is a master of traditional Persian music, with his works rooted in the classical Radif style. He is also a skilled musician, proficient in playing the santur, setar, tonbak, and piano. Throughout his illustrious career, he has performed numerous concerts in Iran and



abroad, including countries such as Greece, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, UK, Sweden, Italy, Spain, Austria, Malaysia, Algeria, Oman, Canada, and the United States.

Iran's National Orchestra was founded in 1998 under the conduction of the renowned

Iranian composer Farhad Fakhreddini.

Maestro Fakhreddini attracted a huge number of musicians, including legendary vocalist Mohammadreza Shajarian, to collaborate with the orchestra.

The orchestra had been

formed by Persian traditional instruments, strings and woodwind instruments. During its history, the orchestra focused on Persian composers' compositions including pieces by renowned figures such as Fakhreddini, Ali Tajvidi, and Hossein Alizadeh among others.

## Veteran painter Hadi Jamali passes away



TEHRAN-Iranian veteran illustrator and painter Hadi Jamali, who was recently hospitalized due to an illness, passed away on Tuesday night at the age of 74.

A contemporary artist, Jamali was born in 1950 in Shiraz, Fars Province. His work has been offered at auction multiple times, with realized prices ranging from \$7,600 to \$71,000, depending on the size and medium

of the artwork, Mehr reported.

Jamali is known for the expressive and abstract paintings he created after the 1990s.

He began his artistic studies in painting at the Tehran Academy of Fine Arts. Then in 1971 he was admitted to the Faculty of Decorative Arts and continued his studies in interior design.

After a long break, he resumed his university studies and in 1996, and graduated with a master's degree in industrial design from the Faculty of Art and Architecture of the Islamic Azad University.

He then became a member of the faculty of this university.

In addition to painting, he also taught architecture and authored several books on

art education for high school students. Jamali had several exhibitions in Iran and abroad and won the third International Painting Biennial of the Islamic World in 2004.

In 2000, Jamali joined the +30 group, including artists with different artistic tendencies and styles, and held several exhibitions in Iran, Japan, Italy, France and Armenia.

The group tried to use new media to communicate with the audience.

Jamali also worked in the field of children's book illustration. At the beginning of his painting career, he used calligraphy and elements of the tradition of writing and page layout to achieve an abstract integrity.

But in later periods these elements gave way to a variation of colored squares and rectangles.

## Ramsgate International Film Festival picks 5 Iranian films, series

TEHRAN-The 8th Ramsgate International Film Festival, due to be held from June 25 to 30 in the UK, has selected several Iranian films and series to show in various sections.

In the Web and TV Series section, the Iranian series "Lily's Turn" directed by Ruhollah Hejazi represents the country, Mehr reported.

In the series, the main character Lili, through a mysterious book, discovers that she and her family have lived in many times and places, and now it is Lily's turn to decipher the book and find a valuable painting of her ancestors to make a choice

that gives meaning to all these lives.

The fantasy romance drama series stars Pardis Ahmadi, Hamid Farrokhezhad, and Merila Zarei among others.

The sole Iranian feature film participating in the Feature Film section is "Orbital" written and directed by Maysam Hasanzadeh.

The 72-minute film is about a musician who's lost his lover.

He seeks to unravel the story. He's suspicious of everything, even of his greatest dream, to become like Freddie Mercury!

Milad Khazaei, Mahsa Akbarpur, Rahil Kafi, Reza Sanaei,

and Mostafa Amiri are in the cast.

In the Short Film section, three short films from Iran will take part including "But I Liked Him" by Asal Gharib, "Children of Wild Orchid" by Farshad Mohammadi, and "I Won't Remain Alone" by Yaser Talebi.

The Ramsgate International Film Festival is a celebration of new works by local and international filmmakers, embracing innovative storytelling and new technologies, where diversity and inclusion are a matter of fact. The festival wants to nurture emerging talents and confirmed filmmakers.

The festival focus is to show

new works and help promote film makers. Screenings are complemented by a strong program of quality events and seminars, with industry professionals of high reputation, who have already confirmed their attendance.

The Ramsgate International Film Festival also features discussion panels with prominent industry representatives and special curated programs promoting international cinema.

Disability and accessibility are at the forefront of the festival's pre-occupations and talks / events will be presented to support the community.

## Adaptation of Andrei Konchalovsky's "House of Fools" to go on stage in Tehran

TEHRAN- An adaptation of Russian filmmaker Andrei Konchalovsky's 2002 movie "House of Fools" will go on stage at a Tehran theater hall in Summer.

Sahab Mohebali is the director of the play, which has been named "Lobotomy".

Mohammadreza Hassanzadeh, Sahar Haqshenas, Ehsan Sheikhi, Yasaman Mirzai and Mobina Soleiman Fallah are the main members of the cast for the play.

Lobotomy, a once widely practiced and controversial medical procedure, involves the surgical removal or destruction of certain areas of the brain in an attempt to treat various mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety.

The procedure was popularized in the 1930s and 1940s by Portuguese neurologist Egas Moniz, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1949 for his work.

However, the effectiveness of lobotomy in treating mental illness was later called into question, and many critics argued that it was

a barbaric and inhumane practice that often left patients with severe personality changes, memory loss, and a lack of emotional expression.

"House of Fools" is set in a psychiatric hospital in the Russian republic of Ingushetia in 1996, on the border with war-torn Chechnya.

The story takes place against the backdrop of a world in chaos, where the medical staff has abandoned the hospital, leaving the patients to fend for themselves.

Amidst this chaos, Zhanna, a young woman with a vivid imagination, lives in the delusion that she is engaged to Bryan Adams, a famous pop star. Believing that he is on tour and will one day return to take her away, Zhanna takes on a maternal role among the other patients, trying to maintain order and happiness in the hospital.

The patients, blissfully unaware of the terror of the war raging outside, lead their own lives within the hospital walls. Their lives are filled with music, laughter, and a sense of community.

Among them is Ahmed, a Chechen rebel who captures Zhanna's attention and gives her hope that he will be her future husband.

As Zhanna falls deeply in love with Ahmed, she begins to prepare for their wedding with the help of her fellow residents.

However, fate has other plans, and Ahmed leaves Zhanna without explanation. Crushed and heartbroken, Zhanna returns to the "House", where she resumes her life among the patients. Through her experiences, Zhanna learns to come to terms with reality and find a new sense of purpose.

The film is a powerful exploration of human resilience and the capacity for hope and love in the face of adversity.

Despite the chaos and uncertainty surrounding them, the patients in the hospital create their own world, filled with beauty, music, and joy.

The film's portrayal of their lives is both poignant and uplifting, highlighting the strength of human connection and community.

## Cartoon of Day



Rafah

Cartoonist: Mo Qasem from Netherlands