



Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa is showing an Arab dagger to General Michael Erik Kurilla, Commander of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) in Manama on June 10, 2024.

# Backstabbers

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, Egypt and Bahrain are under fire for betraying the Palestinian cause after meeting CENTCOM commander and the Israeli army chief in Manama despite the regime's war of genocide on Gaza that has claimed the lives of more than 37,000 Palestinians



## China and Iran work together to increase the value of BRICS

By Cong Peiwu, Chinese Ambassador to Iran

TEHRAN-This year is the first year that Iran has formally joined the BRICS mechanism, which provides a new platform for China-Iran cooperation and enriches the vision and potential of the China-Iran comprehensive strategic partnership. From June 10th to 11th, the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, attended the meeting and met with Iranian Acting Foreign Minister Mr Bagheri. Wang expressed warm congratulations for Iran's participation in the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting for the first time as a formal member.

Nowadays, the world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation. It is undergoing major shifts, division and re-grouping, leading to more uncertain, unstable and unpredictable developments. BRICS is an important force in shaping the international landscape. ▶ Page 2

## Voters get in-depth look at candidate policies in TV roundtables, interviews

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN - All six candidates running for president in Iran's June 28 elections appeared on national TV on Thursday and Friday to answer expert questions on their plans and policies regarding the economy, culture, and politics.

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf was scrutinized by cultural figures and affiliates. A significant portion of his address concerned the educational system in Iran.

"Stability in education management is crucial for effective upbringing and learning. Over the past two decades, we have witnessed frequent changes in leadership within the Ministry of Education, with nearly 17 ministers or acting ministers. A consistent and strong management approach is essential for the progress of education," the presidential candidate stated.

"It is imperative to focus on both the school environment and the quality of teachers to drive meaningful transformation in education. Addressing teachers' welfare and status has been a topic of discussion in parliament, and it is crucial to prioritize this aspect in the upcoming government," he added.

Iranian teachers and educators have been demanding higher wages and better retirement programs in the past several years. ▶ Page 3

## Iran reports 5.7% economic growth for year to March 2024

TEHRAN - Iran's economy grew by 5.7 percent in the fiscal year ending in late March 2024, marking the highest growth since 2017, according to the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI).

In its latest report, the SCI said the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) for the year ending in March 2024 at the constant prices of 2017 is equivalent to 5.7 percent of the total GDP and 3.4 percent of the GDP minus oil.

The field of activities of industries and mines group grew by 6.9 percent, the services group by 5.7 percent, and the agriculture group by 2.2 percent compared to the previous year.

Earlier this month, the World Bank (WB), in its latest report, ▶ Page 4

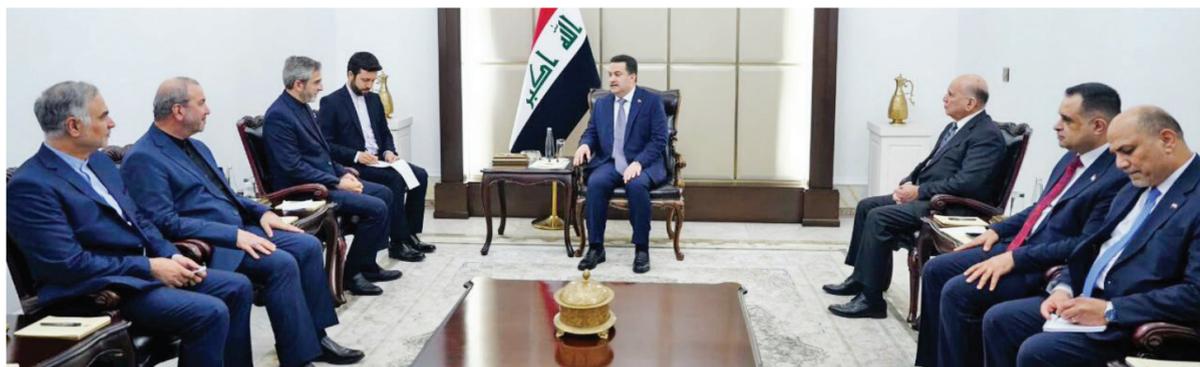
## Iran, Iraq urge international action to end Gaza conflict

TEHRAN - Iran and Iraq have jointly appealed to the international community to help end the ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip.

During a state visit to Iraq, Iran's acting Foreign Minister Ali Baqeri Kani met with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani. The meeting included discussions on regional and international issues, focusing on the severe consequences of the Israeli regime's actions in Gaza.

The officials also reviewed cooperation in security, education, energy, and transportation, and emphasized the need to follow up on existing agreements in these areas.

Baqeri Kani expressed gratitude to Iraq for its role in enhancing regional stability and affirmed Iran's willingness to support Iraq's development road project. ▶ Page 2



## MKO under growing pressure as headquarters raided again

TEHRAN - The Mujahedin-e-Khalq terror organization is facing increasing scrutiny as police around the world are tightening their grip on the group, with French police raiding MKO's headquarters earlier this week.

As reported by Tasnim news agency, police targeted the group's television studio located in a Paris suburb on Wednesday. The MKO was forced to replace live programming with archival content for several hours due to the raid's disruption.

During the raid, security forces seized a cache of weapons hidden at the headquarters and ended up detaining three members of the terrorist outfit.

The move was hailed by Iran's top human rights official, who said there will be "no safe place for terrorists." ▶ Page 3

## Iran's response is decisive and proportionate

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

In an analysis, Javan discussed a recent report by the Reuters news agency in which it claimed that Iran would give a limited response to the IAEA Board of Governors resolution. The paper said: Reuters claimed in its purposeful news that Iran plans to install more centrifuge cascades at both of its enrichment sites this time. Reuters tried to trivialize Iran's action. The incomplete and limited information as well as the creation of an atmosphere published by the Western media against Iran's response is only intended to console the groups opposed to issuing a resolution against Iran and is far from accurate. As Iran has shown before, it responds decisively against destructive policies. Iran's response to destructive policies is decisive and proportionate to those actions. The noteworthy point is that Iran's key to success should be known to simultaneously pursue the increase of our country's nuclear power along with paying attention to interactions and technical negotiations with the (International Atomic Energy) Agency. Iran's technical advances in various nuclear technologies, especially enrichment, show that despite different sanctions pressures and even sabotage, this rapid movement has not been stopped or slowed down.

### Iran: Tehran-Baghdad ties successful model of neighborhood policy

In a note, the Iran newspaper dealt with the visit of Ali Bagheri, the acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Iraq. It wrote: Our country's relations with Iraq have gone through a growing process in the past years, and now these relations can be called a successful model in neighborhood policy. The growing and extensive relations between the two countries in recent years have shown that bilateral and multilateral regional relations can not only be effective in the economic prosperity of countries and the prosperity of people's livelihoods but can also be a guarantee for bilateral, regional, and international security, stability and peace. In addition to all this, what has made the two countries speak with high confidence about the stability of bilateral relations and its positive impact on regional security, peace and stability, was the defeat of ISIS. The United States's extensive efforts and crimes cannot cause a disruption in the strategic relations between the two countries of Iran and Iraq. The two nations will take great steps toward cooperation, and the two Muslim countries will honorably expand friendship and solidarity through mutual respect.

### Jam-e-Jam: Another project also failed

In an analysis, Jam-e-Jam addressed the verdict of the Ontario Court in Canada against

Ukraine International Airlines and the failure of the Western project in blaming Iran for the tragic plane incident in January 2020. It wrote: The case of the Ukrainian plane has reached its current point in a situation where, since the beginning of that tragic incident, a large number of enemies of the Iranian nation in a coherent and multifaceted scenario wanted to accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran of negligence, and tried to present Iran as a country that violates human rights and is considered a terrorist in the public opinion. Western governments also wanted to take advantage of the opportunity with lies and mass media propaganda and put Tehran under the greatest amount of political pressure inside and outside the country. Now, the Canadian court, with its ruling, regardless of the political conflicts of the Western authorities, has undermined all the five-year plans of the enemies and disgraced traitors like Hamed Esmaeilion who wanted to deal a blow to the Islamic Republic of Iran by coalescing with the anti-revolutionary groups.

### Siasat-e-Rooz: A red line that must be known

In its editorial, Siasat-e-Rooz notes that the presidential candidates in Iran shouldn't raise the possibility of entering talks with the West to revitalize the JCPOA as it would discourage Iran's friends. It wrote: The security strategy of the United States and the European troika shows that they want to make China, Russia, and Iran appear as a threat to the world in a way that they seek to use all their capacities on how to approach the decline of the Zionist regime. Now it is suggested that America and its European partners intend to cover up the heavy defeats of the supporters of America and the Zionist regime in the recent European Parliament elections by creating a security environment in the international scene with false cases such as Russia, China, and Iran, and also playing with the keyword of ending the Gaza war, and also prevent the new multilateral order in the world. The behavior of the West shows that the policy of threat and unilateralism is the focus of these countries' policies. Therefore, the candidates of the 14th presidential election need to pay attention to this point and avoid making promises such as revitalizing the JCPOA or lifting sanctions, because, at the current stage, negotiations have no meaning for the United States and its Western partners, and proposing negotiation to revitalize the JCPOA by the candidates will not bring results other than discouraging Iran's friends in the sensitive situation of the region and delusion of the West.

## Leader emphasizes unity and resistance in message to Hajj pilgrims

TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has addressed travelers beginning this year's Hajj pilgrimage, highlighting the unifying and empowering nature of the Islamic rituals.

The full text of the message was read out to pilgrims at the "Renunciation of the Polytheists" ceremony in the Arafat desert near Mecca. The Leader's website, khamenei.ir, released excerpts of the message on Thursday.

"When one contemplates this magnificent gathering and the complex Hajj rituals, they are a source of reassurance and increase the confidence for the Muslims, while being intimidating and a cause of trepidation for enemies," the Leader said in the message.

The Leader's message also pointed to Bara'at min-al-Mushrikeen, a Qur'anic institution, which is an integral part of each year's Hajj pilgrimage and translates into "Renunciation of the Polytheists."

"This year's bara'at must continue beyond the time and place of Hajj to all Muslim countries and cities worldwide. It must continue beyond just the Hajj pilgrims and be extended to the general populace," it read.

"Brothers and sisters, bring your thoughts and actions closer and closer to the truths and luminous teachings of Hajj, and bring back to your homes a reformed identity infused with these lofty concepts. This is the valuable, real souvenir



of your Hajj journey," the message concluded, addressing pilgrims.

The Hajj pilgrimage, one of the five pillars of Islam, involves a series of rituals performed over five days in Mecca and surrounding areas of Saudi Arabia.

This year's annual Hajj pilgrimage is taking place in the shadow of the grim and devastating war that has been raging in Gaza for the past 8 months. Over 37,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have so far lost their lives as a result of Israel's brutal killing campaign backed by Western states. Arab governments, except for Yemen and Lebanese Hezbollah, have largely remained impotent against the regime.

Many Muslims visiting Mecca this year were planning to use the opportunity to call for action against Zionists. Saudi Arabia's officials, however, have warned that no "political slogans" would be tolerated. The decision has ignited a firestorm of criticism against Saudi rulers.

## China and Iran work together to increase the value of BRICS

From page 1 ▶ BRICS' expansion has ushered in a new era for the Global South to gain strength through unity, and the appeal and attractiveness of BRICS has been continuously increasing.

In terms of scale, the BRICS countries account for nearly half of the world's population, and the BRICS has already surpassed the G7 in purchasing power parity. In terms of economy and trade, the BRICS countries' goods trade accounts for about 20% of the world's total, but the trade volume between them only accounts for about 10% of their respective foreign trade, and there is still great potential for growth. The BRICS New Development Bank supports nearly 100 projects, promoting the economic and social development of member countries. In terms of international influence, the BRICS mechanism includes major emerging economies and major countries in all continents. After the expansion, the BRICS mechanism has more influence in international affairs and global governance to safeguard the common interests of developing countries.

As a new Ambassador to Iran for just one month, I deeply feel that Iran, as a major country in the Middle



East, has unique geographical advantages, and plays an important role in international and regional affairs. Iran's inclusion in BRICS has increased the representativeness of the BRICS mechanism, strengthen the force for world peace and development, adding weight to BRICS global influence. The data released by the Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) indicated that the value of Iran's non-oil trade with BRICS group of countries was close to US\$40 billion in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, showing a 14 percent hike compared to same period a year earlier. Among these, China is Iran's largest trading partner. I believe that with further development of cooperation in the BRICS family, we will witness more

BRICS achievements benefiting the Iranian people.

Iran's BRICS story is inseparable from the background of China-Iran brotherhood, and will surely add bright BRICS colors to the picture of China-Iran friendship. Iran is one of the first countries to apply to join the BRICS mechanism. In 2017, President Xi Jinping proposed the "BRICS+" cooperation concept and invited Iran to join. In 2022, China assumed the presidency of the BRICS and launched the expansion process. In 2023, with the support of China and other countries, Iran was accepted as a formal member of the BRICS.

Looking to the future, China and Iran have great potential

for cooperation under the BRICS mechanism. Both sides should give priority to development, pool their efforts for progress, deepen pragmatic cooperation, enhance cultural exchanges, and promote the upgrading of China-Iran friendly relations in all fields. Both sides should safeguard universal security, work together to meet challenges, stick to independence, objectivity and fairness, promote international consensus for peace, and provide new impetus for the political settlement of hot issues. Both sides should uphold fairness and justice, improve global governance, continue to hold high the banner of multilateralism, work closely together in the BRICS mechanism, take the lead in upholding the UN-centered international system, and promote the realization of an equal and orderly multipolar world.

Thanks to the long-standing traditional friendship and high political mutual trust between the two sides, China-Iran relations have maintained healthy and stable development. China is willing to strengthen strategic coordination with Iran, adding BRICS color to the beautiful picture of China-Iran friendship.

## Iran, Iraq urge international action to end Gaza conflict

From page 1 ▶ Prime Minister al-Sudani offered condolences for the loss of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his entourage in a recent helicopter crash.

Bagheri Kani arrived in Baghdad on Thursday morning on a two-day trip for talks with top Iraqi officials.

He reiterated Iran's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties, particularly in the economic sector and addressing regional security challenges.

### Baqeri Kani emphasizes strengthening ties with Iraq

During a joint press conference with Iraq's Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein, Iran's acting Foreign Minister underscored the importance of bolstering strategic relations with Iraq.

He expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality extended by Iraqi officials and acknowledged their condolences over the recent loss of two senior Iranian figures, President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

Baqeri emphasized the deep cultural and civilizational ties between Iran and Iraq, asserting that their cooperation is vital for the security, stability, and progress of both nations.

He stated, "Our cooperation and solidarity are eternal, and the bond between our two nations benefits the security, stability, and progress of both countries."

Baqeri aligned Iran and Iraq's stance on Israeli actions, calling for an end to the "Zionists' genocide" and emphasizing support for the people of Gaza. He warned of possible further aggression by Zionists and reiterated Iran's commitment to regional peace and security.

Baqeri criticized U.S. actions, stating that true political initiatives require stopping support for the Zionists. He called for an immediate end to war crimes in Gaza and unconditional aid to its people.

In his meeting with Fuad Hussein, Baqeri said they discussed a wide range of bilateral, regional, and international issues. He highlighted the strategic cooperation between the two countries and their roles as pillars of regional stability.

Iraq's Foreign Minister highlighted the importance of enhancing security relations with Iran and expressed optimism about advancing bilateral ties. The discussions also covered the security situation in Gaza and regional stability.

The top Iranian diplomat and his accompanying delegation also paid tribute to the late commanders Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis near Baghdad airport. His diplomatic mission aimed to strengthen relations across all sectors with Iraqi officials, focusing on mutual interests and regional stability.

Bagheri Kani also held talks with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid, exchanging views on the latest regional and international issues.

As part of his trip, the top diplomat met with Head of the Supreme Judicial Council Judge Faiq Zidan on the day.

During the meeting, both sides called for expanding judicial relations.

### Iraqi Kurdistan PM meets Baqeri Kani, expresses hope for future cooperation

Baqeri Kani also met with the Iraqi Kurdistan's Prime Minister Masrour Barzani, emphasizing the significance of bolstering economic and trade relations.

## Qalibaf comes first, Pezeshkina second and Jalilian third in presidential race: survey

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – Iran is gearing up for its presidential elections on June 28, following an early call due to the tragic death of President Raisi in a helicopter accident on May 19th, during his third year in office.

On June 9, the Ministry of Interior revealed the final list of qualified candidates to compete in these elections. According to the Constitution, the validation of candidates falls under the responsibility of the Guardian Council, composed of twelve members, half of whom are clerics appointed by the Leader. The remaining six are judges elected by the parliament. Despite lacking legislative powers, the Council plays a crucial role in ratifying all laws passed by parliament to ensure they align with the fundamental Islamic principles of the Islamic Republic.

In addition, according to Article 99 of the Iranian Constitution, the Guardian Council's primary responsibilities include overseeing the electoral processes in the country. Following a thorough analysis of the candidates' profiles, the Council decides to officially approve or reject their nominations.

On this occasion, the Council did not approve the candidacies of prominent figures such as former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Ali

Larijani, former Speaker of Parliament, nor that of former Vice President Eshaq Jahangiri.

The six candidates approved by the Guardian Council, and thus eligible to participate in the elections, are: Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, Saeed Jalili, Alireza Zakani, Masoud Pezeshkian, Mostafa Pourmohammadi, and Amir-Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi.

**Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf:** Born in 1961 in the province of Mashhad, is the current President of the Parliament. Throughout his career, Qalibaf has held prominent roles in Iranian politics. He served as the Mayor of Tehran from September 2005 to September 2017, following his tenure as the Commander of the Police and the Air Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from 1998 to 2005. Additionally, he is an associate professor and faculty member in the Department of Political Geography at the University of Tehran.

Qalibaf has been a presidential candidate on three previous occasions:

- In 2005, he finished fourth in a field that included Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Mehdi Karubi, Mostafa Moeen, Ali Larijani, and Mohsen Mehrzadeh.

- In 2013, he secured second place in competition against Hassan Rouhani, Saeed

Discussions also addressed security challenges and regional stability, with both sides agreeing on the benefits of stability for all regional countries.

Also speaking in a joint press conference with Prime Minister Barzani in Erbil on Friday, Baqeri Kani appreciated the Kurdistan Regional Government for expressing sympathy over the loss of President Raisi and his entourage.

"Religious, cultural, and historical commonalities have created an unbreakable bond between the two countries," Baqeri noted.

"Enemies do not want to see our stability and peace in Iran, Iraq, and the region, but the vigilance of the leaders and high-ranking officials of Iran and Iraq, and especially the friends and brothers in the region, will not allow them to abuse the situation," he stated.

In another meeting, Baqeri Kani and President of Kurdistan region Nechervan Idris Barzani reviewed issues of mutual interest.

Bagheri Kani arrived in Erbil on Friday morning and was welcomed by Rebar Ahmed Khalid, the Minister of Interior of the Iraqi Kurdistan.

### Iran acting FM highlights synergistic relationship between Tehran, Baghdad

In a meeting with Iraq's National Wisdom Movement leader Sayyid Ammar al-Hakim, Baqeri Kani highlighted the synergistic relationship between Iran and Iraq. He stressed that their cooperation benefits the Islamic world and the region at large.

The leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement also lauded the good neighborliness policy of Iran under the late President Raisi and expressed hopes that the policy would continue.

Jalili, Mohsen Rezaee, Ali Akbar Velayati, and Mohammad Gharazi. During these elections, Qassem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, publicly supported Qalibaf, with whom he had developed a friendship during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

- In 2017, he withdrew from the race to support the late President Ebrahim Raisi.

Qalibaf is considered the frontrunner in the upcoming elections.

**Saeed Jalili:** Born in 1965 in Mashhad, is a prominent Iranian politician and diplomat with a PhD in Political Science. During the Iran-Iraq War, Jalili volunteered in the Basij paramilitary forces and was injured in the leg during Operation Kerbala 5.

In the 1990s, Jalili began his career in the office of the Supreme Leader, initially serving as Director General of Inspections. During this period, he played a crucial role in oversight, reporting, and strategy formulation across various sectors of the country. With the advent of the ninth government in 2005, he rose to the position of Deputy Secretary for Europe and America in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in 2007, he was appointed as the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council.

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

# Voters get in-depth look at candidate policies in TV roundtables, interviews

From Page 1 ▶ Qalibaf's remarks were hailed by some of them and dismissed by others, who said previous presidents had made similar promises but failed to bring about meaningful changes.

In a more controversial address, Qalibaf expressed a strong belief in press freedom. He rejected accusations that he has filed complaints against journalists, characterizing the press as the "voice of public opinion."

A well-known Iranian journalist, however, reacted to Qalibaf's comments, claiming that he himself had been brought to court at the current parliament speaker's request.

## Jalili lives up to image of steadfast diplomat

Saeed Jalili's latest TV appearance largely revolved around what he is known for: diplomacy and foreign policies. Jalili, as always, projected an image of a diplomat who knows exactly what he wants and isn't afraid to pursue it.

"In the realm of international relations, it is crucial to maintain



a strong balance of power and not allow it to be weakened. The movements of our adversaries are a direct response to the bolstering of our power infrastructure," he said.

"Throughout my six-year tenure overseeing negotiations, our nation faced numerous threats, including the U.S. military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite these challenges, the United States was unable to carry out any of its threats, largely due to a strategic understanding of the situation," Jalili stated.

The presidential candidate emphasized his belief that the role

of the president is to have a clear vision and make decisive choices without delay. He added that "effective foreign policy should be results-oriented and focused on determining its benefits rather than simply tallying the number of trips and meetings conducted."

## No comments on economy yet

Much to his allies' dismay, the only reformist candidate is believed to have once again delivered a lackluster address on crucial economic issues.

Masoud Pezeshkian expressed his lack of "expertise" in the economy once asked about his most important

plans and goals. Vague comments about good foreign relations and domestic unity seemed to suffice for the presidential hopeful.

Pezeshkian also said he may be "tried" in court, if he fails to fulfill the promises he has not yet fully clarified.

The lack of media attention surrounding the Thursday and Friday remarks from the remaining candidates – Amir-Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, Alireza Zakani, and Mostafa Pourmohammadi – reinforced analysts' predictions that none of the three would garner significant votes. This suggests that Qalibaf, Pezeshkian, and Jalili remain the frontrunners in the presidential race.

## MKO under growing pressure as headquarters raided again

From Page 1 ▶ "We welcome the attack of the French police on the main headquarters of the MKO terrorist group, a thorough inspection of the headquarters, the arrest of three members of the faction, and the sealing of this headquarters. This operation was monitored live by Iran. Iran will leave no safe place for terrorists," Kazem Gharibabadi wrote on X.

The MKO has carried out numerous terrorist attacks against Iranian civilians and government officials over the past decades, killing nearly 17,000 Iranians.

Under the patronage of Saddam Hussein, MKO played a significant role in the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), providing support to the Iraqi dictator. They later assisted in suppressing internal uprisings within Iraq, further cementing their relationship with the regime.

During the administration of Iraq's Nouri al-Maliki, the terrorists were expelled from the Arab country and were forced to relocate to Albania. The European nation has been hosting at least 3000 MKO members since 2016.

In June of last year, however, police in Albania

raided the terror organization's camp due to its involvement in "terror and cyber-attacks" against foreign institutions. One terrorist was killed and dozens of others were wounded during the raid.

The European state subsequently banned MKO's ringleader, Maryam Rajavi, from returning to Albania. Rajavi has been staying in Paris since receiving the entry ban. Reports show the terror chief who is suffering from rheumatism, colorectal cancer, and nervous disease, is currently in critical condition following a severe panic attack a week ago.

## Iran, Azerbaijan stage joint military drill

TEHRAN – Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan conducted a joint military drill on Wednesday aimed at bolstering regional security and countering terrorist threats.

The drill, which took place in Azerbaijan's exclave of Nakhchivan and Poldasht County in the northwestern Iranian province of West Azarbaijan, involved special forces and rapid reaction units from both countries.

The exercises, involving military personnel, combat equipment, aviation vehicles, and unmanned aerial vehicles, were meant to increase the decision-making skills of commanders and their level of professionalism, and enhance the interoperability of participating units, according to the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry.

Commenting on the joint drill, Deputy Commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Force for Operations Karim Cheshak said the exercise involved one battalion comprising the two countries' special and rapid reaction forces.

He highlighted the importance of the bilateral agreement that facilitated this exercise. "Based on the agreements made between

the two countries, a battalion-level exercise was conducted to counter terrorism and ensure the sustainable security of the region, which has been threatened by terrorist groups," Cheshak stated.

The exercise, held over a single day, showcased the operational readiness and tactical capabilities of both nations' armed forces.

"The primary objective of the exercise was to implement a sophisticated military program that utilized a range of operational tactics and techniques to combat terrorist forces and organized crime," Cheshak explained, noting, "The exercise aimed to develop joint staff and intelligence measures to counter threats, transfer knowledge and experience, increase combat readiness, and enhance the skills of military personnel from both countries in conducting combined operations."

Additionally, he noted that the exercise sought to "improve command and staff cooperation, create deep military ties to confront common enemies, enhance operational skills by building capacities and strategic capabilities, and ultimately raise strategic

capabilities for coalition operations."

Cheshak emphasized the strategic goals of the joint exercise, noting that strengthening bilateral relations at both strategic and operational levels was essential for preserving peace and defending common interests in the South Caucasus. He also mentioned that enhancing skills for planning, executing, directing, and evaluating combined operations, and performing such operations with the cooperation of friendly, allied, and neighboring countries were key objectives.

According to Cheshak, the exercise was conducted in four distinct stages: reconnaissance operations, which included signal recognition of terrorist elements and area surveillance using drones and helicopters; combat patrol raids, featuring free-fall parachute operations at terrorist hideouts and subsequent raids; ambush operations, involving tracking terrorist groups through identified routes; and pre-planned artillery fires, army aviation, drone operations, and area clearance to secure the Aras Dam.

Cheshak highlighted that the most important message of this exercise

was the establishment of regional peace and stability. He stressed that the longstanding, friendly, and neighborly relations between Iran and Azerbaijan played a crucial role in strengthening trust, participation, and military-defense cooperation.

He concluded by stating that the result of the joint exercise is peace and friendship for friendly and neighboring countries and a strong stance against nations that threaten the territorial integrity of Iran and Azerbaijan. Back in early October last year, military officials from Azerbaijan and Iran reached an agreement on holding a joint naval exercise in the Caspian Sea.

The two sides also discussed the prospects for expansion of military cooperation between the naval forces of the South Caucasus country and Iran.

It is planned that future exercises will be conducted on a larger scale along the borders of the two countries.

Military officials say this initiative underscores the commitment of both nations to enhancing their military collaboration and ensuring regional security.

make every effort to ensure that the pilgrims perform their Hajj in complete peace and health.

## Iranian acting FM coordinates Hajj preparations with Leader's representative

As Iranian pilgrims prepare to depart for the Hajj pilgrimage, the acting Foreign Minister of Iran held discussions with Abdolfattah Navab, the Leader of Islamic Revolution's representative and head of Iranian pilgrims.

Baqeri Kani highlighted the spiritual significance of Hajj, expressing hope that the pilgrims would gain profound spiritual benefits and return home safely.

He assured that the Foreign Ministry is fully committed to facilitating the pilgrimage for Iranian nationals and is in ongoing talks with Saudi officials to ensure a smooth and peaceful Hajj experience.

Abdolfattah Navab provided an update on the status of Iranian pilgrims and detailed the arrangements for their stay.

Baqeri Kani thanked all Iranian institutions involved in easing the pilgrimage process, particularly the Iranian Hajj delegation, and expressed gratitude to the Saudi officials for their cooperation.

## Iranian, Saudi Arabian FM's discuss Hajj arrangements

TEHRAN –Iran's acting Foreign Minister Ali Baqeri has held a telephone conversation with Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan, discussing the different aspects of Hajj pilgrimage rituals.

During the call, Baqeri expressed gratitude for the efforts of Saudi officials in organizing the Hajj. He highlighted the departure of Iranian pilgrims to the sacred sites and expressed hope that they would successfully complete their Hajj rituals and return home in good health.

In response, Faisal bin Farhan outlined the measures taken to provide facilities for the pilgrims. He assured that Saudi officials would

## Iran and Russia reaffirm strong ties, vow to deepen cooperation

TEHRAN – In a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday, Iran's acting President Mohammad Mokhber congratulated Russia on its Independence Day, emphasizing that the strategic nature of Tehran-Moscow relations is built

on enduring principles.

Mokhber highlighted Iran's commitment to fully implementing all agreements, particularly in trade, transit, and energy sectors. He also stressed the importance of strengthening legal frameworks for mutual

cooperation, citing examples like the North-South transit corridor, BRICS, and the Eurasian Economic Union.

Putin echoed the sentiment, emphasizing the recent approval and signing of a free trade agreement between the Eurasian

Union and Iran as a foundation for expanding commercial ties between the two countries. He hailed the agreement as a suitable ground for the development, strengthening, and dynamism of the commercial relations between Iran and Russia.

## Rasouli wins gold at 2024 Asian Throwing Championships

TEHRAN – Hossein Rasouli of Iran claimed a gold medal in the 2024 Asian Throwing Championships on Friday.

He finished in first place with a throw of 59.05 meters. Qatari thrower finished in second place with 58.96 meters and the bronze medal went to Chinese athlete, throwing 58.65 meters.

The competition started on June 14 in Mokpo, South Korea and will run until on June 18.

The annual tournament features all the best continental athletes around the Asia.

## Handball team lose to Turkey in friendly

TEHRAN – Iran men's handball team lost to Turkey 28-26 in a friendly match on Thursday.

Team Melli is scheduled to meet Turkey once again on Saturday.

The match was held at the Ankara THF Prof. Dr. Ya'ar Sevim Handball Hall.

The Iranian team are headed by Majid Rahimizadeh.

## Iran drop two places at FIFA Women's World Ranking

TEHRAN – Iran's women's football team moved down two places in the latest FIFA Women's World Ranking released on Friday.

Spain continued to maintain top spot in the latest Rankings with France overtaking England to second spot.

A total of 154 matches were played in this cycle including the qualifiers for the Women's Olympic Football Tournament Paris 2024 and the UEFA Women's EURO 2025 qualifiers.

The most striking progress in terms of ranking places was achieved by North Macedonia (123rd, up 12), in the wake of its solid wins over Latvia and Moldova.

The next FIFA Women's World Ranking will be published on Aug. 16.

## Iran learn fate at AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers

TEHRAN – The draw for the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers was finalized at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Thursday.

The 43 teams were divided into 10 groups – seven of four each and three of five – with the Qualifiers to be played between October 19 and 27, 2024.

The 10 group winners and five best second-placed teams will advance to the Finals, with Saudi Arabia scheduled to host the tournament.

Iran will headline Group A, with hosts Jordan, Syria, Hong Kong, China and DPR Korea the other teams hoping to advance to the Finals.

The Finals are scheduled to be played on April 3-20, 2025.

### DRAW RESULT

**Group A:** Iran, Jordan (H), Syria, Hong Kong, China, DPR Korea

**Group B:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia (H), Philippines, Macau

**Group C:** Korea Republic, China PR (H), Bahrain, Bhutan, Maldives

**Group D:** Thailand (H), India, Brunei Darussalam, Turkmenistan

**Group E:** Uzbekistan, Iraq, Chinese Taipei (H), Palestine

**Group F:** Japan, Qatar (H), Mongolia, Nepal

**Group G:** Australia, Indonesia, Kuwait (H), Northern Mariana Islands

**Group H:** Malaysia, Laos (H), United Arab Emirates, Lebanon

**Group I:** Yemen, Vietnam (H), Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar

**Group J:** Tajikistan, Oman, Singapore (H), Guam

## Iran discover rivals at AFC U20 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers

TEHRAN – The draw for the AFC U20 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers concluded at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on Thursday.

The 45 teams were divided into 10 groups – five of four each and five of five each – with the Qualifiers to be played between September 21 and 29, 2024. The 10 group winners and five best second-placed teams will advance to the Finals, with China PR scheduled to host the tournament.

The Finals are scheduled to be played on February 6-23, 2025.

### DRAW RESULT

**Group A:** Vietnam (H), Syria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Guam

**Group B:** Uzbekistan, Bahrain, Chinese Taipei (H), Cambodia, Nepal

**Group C:** Korea Republic, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait (H), Northern Mariana Islands

**Group D:** Australia, Saudi Arabia (H), Palestine, Afghanistan, Macau

**Group E:** Tajikistan (H), Oman, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, DPR Korea

**Group F:** Indonesia (H), Yemen, Timor-Leste, Maldives

**Group G:** Iran, Mongolia, India, Laos (H)

**Group H:** Iraq, Thailand (H), Philippines, Brunei Darussalam

**Group I:** Japan, Kyrgyzstan (H), Myanmar, Turkmenistan

**Group J:** Jordan, Qatar (H), Singapore, Hong Kong, China

## Bam Khatoon to represent Iran at AWCL

TEHRAN – Bam Khatoon are set to compete in the inaugural season of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Women's Champions League (AWCL), which will start in August.

The AFC confirmed that the Iranian team are among the 22 clubs – one from each country – that will participate in the first-ever flagship club competition for women's football in Asia.

Clubs from the top eight AFC Member Associations (MAs), based on the latest FIFA Women's World Ranking as of 15 March 2024, will qualify directly for the Group Stage. This stage features three groups of four teams each, and will be contested in a centralized league format from October 6 to 12.

The remaining 14 clubs, including Bam, will compete in the Preliminary Stage, which consists of four groups: two groups of four teams, and two groups of three teams.

This stage will be played in a centralized league format between August 25 and 31 in either Malaysia, Thailand, Jordan, or Saudi Arabia. The winners of each group will then advance to the Group Stage. Set to be a thrilling showcase of top-class women's club football, the AFC Women's Champions League will also feature an attractive prize purse – every participating club in the Group Stage will each receive a minimum of USD100,000, with additional monies available depending on their eventual placings, meaning that the first ever champion of the prestigious tournament can expect to be rewarded with at least USD1.3 million.

## Saberi takes gold at 2024 Asian Throwing Championships

TEHRAN – Mehdi Saberi of Iran won a gold medal in the 2024 Asian Throwing Championships on Friday. The Iranian shot putter came first with a throw of 19.27 meters.

Chinese thrower finished in second place with 19.26 meters and the bronze medal went to an athlete from the Philippines with 19.23 meters.

Earlier in the day Iranian discus thrower Hossein Rasouli had won a gold medal.

The competition started on June 14 in Mokpo, South Korea and will run until on June 18.

The annual tournament features all the best continental athletes around the Asia.

## Iran exports about 550\$m of medicinal herbs in 2023

TEHRAN - The head of the agricultural commission of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) said some \$550 million of medicinal herbs were exported from the country last year (March 21, 2023 to March 19, 2024).

Speaking on the sidelines of the 31st International Exhibition of Food, Food Technology & Agriculture dubbed "Iran Agro-food 2024", Mohammad Ali Rezaei stated that Iran currently exports medicinal plants to European countries, China, and many Arab countries.

He added that 60 percent of these products are related to the export of saffron products while the other 40 percent belongs to the export of medicinal herbs.

The official put the value of medicinal



plants exported from the country last year at about \$550 million, Mehr news agency reported.

Given the high volume of precipitation witnessed in the current year (started March 21, 2024), it is predicted that more crops with higher quality will be harvested in the country in the current year (started March 21, 2024), he added.

## Iran imports \$92 million of car tires in 2 months

TEHRAN - Iran imported \$92 million of car tires in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March to May 2024), showing a 76 percent growth compared to the same period last year, a report said.

The report put the total value of the car tires imported into the country in the first two months of the previous Iranian calendar year (March to May 22, 2023) at over \$52 million.

The import of tires in the first two months of the current Persian calendar year (started March 21, 2024) indicated an 89 percent growth in terms of weight compared to last year's corresponding period, the report added.

The tire industry has a 60-year history in Iran.

Currently, 11 tire manufacturing companies are active across the country that produce tires for passenger cars, trucks, buses, vans,

road construction, and agriculture machinery, as well as bicycles and motorcycles in addition to other types of tubes.

Some 15,000 people are directly employed in this industry and more than 250,000 people are indirectly involved in the value chain of this industry.

The Iranian tire industry, despite the continuation of sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic conditions, as well as some domestic restrictions, has been following a thriving and successful path over the past few years.

In addition to the successes achieved in terms of the output amount, Iranian tire manufacturers have entered new areas including production of the wide-base tires and the tires of SUVs.

Wide base tires, which are a new generation of heavy vehicle tires, have been produced for the first time in West Asia by Iranian producers.

## Iran, Kuwait stress developing roadmap to expand trade exchanges

TEHRAN - Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Toutouchi and Kuwaiti Minister of Commerce and Industry Omar Saud Al-Omar have urged developing a roadmap to broadening trade exchanges.

In a meeting on Wednesday, Toutouchi and Al-Omar discussed ways to strengthen trade between Iran and Kuwait and develop a plan for joint cooperation.

Toutouchi emphasized that the current economic ties between the two countries are one-sided and do not reflect their long-standing political and cultural rela-

tions.

He suggested that establishing a joint trade committee after a nine-year hiatus and organizing an exhibition of Iran's export capabilities could boost trade, particularly in the food sector.

Meanwhile, Al-Omar expressed Kuwait's willingness to enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Iran, hoping that the joint trade committee would pave the way for greater trade cooperation in the near future.

## Iran reports 5.7% economic growth for year to March 2024

From page 1 ► predicted that Iran's economy will grow 3.2 percent in 2024 and the inflation rate will decrease to 35 percent.

According to the estimate of the international body, Iran's economy experienced a five percent growth and a 40.8 percent inflation in 2023.

The bank has forecast that the industrial sector in Iran will take the lead in 2024, experiencing a 4.9 percent growth, followed by the services and agricultural sectors with a 2.7 and 0.9 percent growth. In addition, the World Bank has predicted that Iran's export of goods and services will exceed 7.1 percent in 2024 compared to the preceding year.

Also, the bank expects that import of products into the country will experience a 1.8 percent growth in 2024 compared to a year earlier.

The balance of Iran's current accounts will also experience positive growth and reach 2.7 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2024.

In late February, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported the Iranian economic growth in 2023 to be 5.4 percent.

The head of Iran's Plan and Budget Organization (PBO) said the country's 5.4 percent economic growth in 2023 was the second-highest rate in the world.

IMF also increased its estimate of Iran's economic growth in 2024, citing a higher-than-expected surge in the country's oil production.

The IMF, in its report published on February 22, forecast a 3.7 percent economic growth for Iran in 2024 while the figure in its October prediction was 2.5 percent.

The IMF data showed that Iran's economic growth reached 5.4% in 2023 while the international agency had predicted a three percent growth for the country in the previous year.

Iran's oil and gas industry's development has a direct impact on the country's economic growth, as the effect was felt during the previous administration's term, when the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and reimposition of sanctions reduced Iran's oil production and exports and even led to negative gross domestic product (GDP) for a couple of years.

# Iran's 2-month steel output up 1.6%: ISPA

TEHRAN - The Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA) said the steel production volume in the country in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March to May 2024) registered a 1.6 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

In this period, iron ore concentrate and pellet accounted for 17.6 percent and 6.8 percent production growth respectively.

According to this report, production of rebar, iron beam and angled iron showed a 1.5 percent growth from March to May 22, 2024.

The association further pointed out that steel production volume showed a 1.6 percent hike in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year compared to last year's corresponding period, IRNA reported.

The World Steel Association (WSA) announced in its latest report that steel production in Iran during the first quarter of 2024 registered a 16.3 percent growth compared to the same period last year.



The report added that the volume of steel production in the world in the 3-month period has risen by 0.5 percent.

More than 469 million tons of steel was produced across the world in January-March 2024, 161.2 million tons of which was produced in March 2024.

Iran has produced 7.6 million tons of steel from January to March 2024, showing a 16.3 percent growth compared to the same period last year, according to Mehr news agency.

China, India, Japan, the US, Russia, South Korea, Germany,

Turkey, Brazil and Iran were the world's top 10 steel producers in the first quarter of 2024.

Production of steel in Iran increased by 5.8 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year 1402 (ended on March 19), as compared to the preceding year, according to the ISPA.

According to the latest data released by the ISPA, the country's steel production reached 29,334 million tons in the previous year.

Of the mentioned amount, 18,452,000 tons were billet and bloom and 10,882,000 tons were

slabs; Billet and bloom production increased by 9.2 percent and slab production increased by 0.7 percent in the previous year.

According to the ISPA data, the production of sponge iron also increased by 8.5 percent in the previous year in comparison to the figure for the preceding year.

Iran improved its global standing in steel production, becoming the ninth-largest producer in January 2024, according to new data released by the WSA.

The Islamic Republic produced 31.1 million tons of crude steel in 2023 to account for 58.4 percent of West Asia's total production in the mentioned year, according to the WSA.

The West Asian nations reviewed in the WSA report, including Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, managed to produce 53.2 million tons of steel in 2023.

The country's steel production increased by 1.8 percent in 2023 as compared to the previous year, when the production stood at 30.6 million tons, based on the WSA data.

## Commercial attachés urged to help Iran's foreign trade



TEHRAN - Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh has underlined the need for Iranian commercial attachés to make further efforts to boost the country's foreign trade.

Hassanzadeh made the remarks during a visit to Iran's embassy in Paris as he is in the French capital to attend the annual summit of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

He believed that the commercial attachés could play a key role in introducing the target markets to Iranian economic operators.

He further noted that Iran and France enjoy trade potentials that can be used to expand the level of trade exchanges and joint investments.

Hassanzadeh added that problems in the way of banking transactions are the main obstacle hindering Iran's trade cooperation with other countries, including France.

Representatives from Iranian state-run banks, who were also present in the meeting, noted that despite the presence of banking infrastructures, the Western sanctions on Iran have prevented the country from taking advantage of these potentials.

Also addressing the meeting, Hossein Pir-moazen, the ICCIMA vice-president, said that the arbitrary sanctions on Tehran has been a major hurdle on the way of Iran's financial transactions.

He, however, stressed that the Iranian private sector has made every effort to find mechanisms for carrying out financial exchanges.

## '75% of Iran's gasoline output meets Euro 4, 5 standards'

TEHRAN - Iran's deputy oil minister said that 75 percent of the gasoline produced in the country complies with EUR 4 and 5 standards.

Once the development units of the refineries are commissioned, 100 percent of the gasoline produced in the country will meet EUR standards, CEO of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) Jalil Salari added.

Speaking to some senior managers of the refining companies, held at the Tehran Oil Refinery, he stated that a part of the development units of the refinery became operational years ago and then, new projects were defined that were halted for some time, the most important of which was the gasoline production unit that was supposed to produce 6.5 million liters of gasoline with EUR 4 and 5 standards.

After the launch of the second phase of the Abadan Oil Refinery and adding the qualitative productions of the Tehran and Shiraz

refineries, 100 percent of the gasoline in the country will be produced with EUR standards, he further said.

Back in May, the head of Imam Khomeini Oil Refining Company said the company was ready to produce gasoline observing requirements of Euro-5 standard rules and regulations.

Majid Rajabi said the company is at the stage of producing gasoline with Euro-5 standards and it will hit the market in a limited volume.

The quality of gasoline has always been a bone of contention between the environmental and oil industry experts.

Despite sanctions imposed against the country, Iran is prepared to produce gasoline with Euro-5 standards.

The Euro-5 gasoline is produced and supplied in coordination with the National Iranian Oil Products Distribution and Refining Company, the official said.

The company has expressed its readiness

to supply all of its produced gasoline and diesel according to Euro-5 standards, he said.

The official put the current volume of the Euro-4 gasoline and diesel produced at the Imam Khomeini Oil Refining Company in Shazand at about 16 and 12.4 million liters respectively.

According to him, the amount of production and supply of Euro 5 gasoline should be coordinated with the refining and distribution company of petroleum products and we act based on the policies determined by them. Of course, Shazand Oil Refining Company is ready to supply its entire production of gasoline and diesel at Euro 5.

He pointed out that with the production of Euro 5 gasoline, the amount of gasoline produced may decrease slightly, and explained: Currently, with the production of Euro 5 gasoline, the amount of gasoline produced may decrease slightly, but with the implementation of a new program, the decrease in production volume can be prevented.



### Call for Tender 2 st Announcement for the Purchase of HVAC System for Belal Project, Tender No. 965814

Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company intends to Purchase of HVAC System for Belal Project through a public tender. Therefore, the applicants are allowed to have 30 days after the date of 1st publication of the tender notice in the newspaper to participate in this tender.

To download the tender documents, please visit the tender's section of the IOEC 's website: [WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS](http://WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS), and Please do not hesitate to contact with Transaction Committee office with MS Mahabdpour with Tel: +9821-82841057 under sign for any inquiries and more information.

## Five Arab states are under fire for meeting CENTCOM commander and the Israeli army chief in Bahrain

TEHRAN- Recent bombshell revelations about clandestine meetings between senior Israeli, American and Arab military officials have sparked widespread outrage and suspicion in the Muslim world, particularly among Palestinian people who view such secretive discussions as a betrayal of their cause amid the Tel Aviv regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip.

US media have reported that Israel's top general held talks with senior generals from several Arab militaries in Bahrain on Monday under the auspices of the US Central Command.

According to Axios, General Herzi Halevi, the chief of the general staff of the Israeli military, and US CENTCOM Commander, General Michael Erik Kurilla, participated in the meetings.

Citing two sources, the Axios report said Halevi met military officials from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and Bahrain in Manama as part of military cooperation between Tel Aviv, Washington and the Arab states.

The US media outlet noted that the US and Israel and their Arab allies have kept mum on the meetings due to regional sensitivity.

"If true, it would be a scandal like no other: It shows the complicity of the US, the Zionist regime and five US Arab allies in the region," Professor Sami Al-Arian, a descendant of Palestinians expelled from Palestine following the establishment of the regime in 1948, wrote on X.

### US-backed Israeli genocide

Anti-Israel sentiment has been on the rise not only in West Asia but also across the world over the regime's brutal onslaught on Gaza which has claimed the lives of more than 37,000 Palestinians in Gaza since October 7.

Resentment against the US over its support for Israel's war on Gaza has also been growing in the Arab



world.

Over the past months, people in Arab countries that have overt and covert ties with Israel have held rallies to vent their anger at the regime's brutalities in the Gaza Strip despite threats of arrest and intimidation.

They have called on their governments to sever ties with Israel.

### Bias towards Israel

Nonetheless, Arab leaders who have publicly criticized Israel for its crimes in Gaza, have taken no action against the regime. This shows that they only pay lip services to distract attention away from their complicity in Israel's appalling atrocities against the Palestinian people.

The latest example of such bias toward Israel has been displayed amid a decision by Saudi Arabia to bar Muslim pilgrims from expressing solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza during the Hajj pilgrimage which officially began on Friday.

Saudi Arabia was considering establishing formal diplomatic ties with Israel before October 7. But the Kingdom had to suspend its normalization plans due to global outcry over the regime's onslaught on Gaza.

Bahrain and the UAE, which normalized ties with Israel in 2020, have tried to nip protests against Israel's genocide in Gaza in the bud.

Reports suggest the Egyptian and Jordanian rulers, whose countries have established formal ties with Israel, have launched clampdowns on pro-Palestine activists.

Palestinians have repeatedly condemned normalization of ties between Israel and Arab states as a stab in the back to their cause.

### Post-war scheme

The Axios report attaches significance to speculation that Arab states have prioritized relations with Israel over the lives of Palestinians.

In fact, the Manama meeting shows that these Arab states have become pawns of Israel and the US in the face of their scheme for Gaza after the end of the war.

Nearly 10 days after launching war on Gaza, Israel acknowledged that the regime's Intelligence Ministry had drafted "a wartime proposal" to transfer the Gaza Strip's 2.3 million people to Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.

However, stiff resistance put up by Palestinians in Gaza seems to have foiled the Israeli plot.

### Dirty trick

The US is now spearheading plans to take control of the Gaza Strip with Israel and Arab states after the war.

The US has stressed that it does not want to establish military presence in Gaza. But it has helped Israel target Palestinians via a port it has

built in Gaza under the pretext of distributing humanitarian aid. Earlier this month, Israel used the port as it massacred more than 270 people in the Nuseirat refugee camp as part of an operation to free four captives.

### Milking cow

In line with efforts to keep its forces in Gaza, the US also needs Arab states as a milk cow. In fact, they have to fork over their petrodollars to ensure that Washington will keep supporting them.

According to Middle East Eye, US officials believe Bahrain is willing to send peacekeepers to Gaza and has called to be more actively involved in post-war planning. This sheds light on the importance of choosing Manama for holding the meetings between the senior military officials of Israel, US and Arab states.

### US stooges

The US has also called on the Palestinian Authority, which stands accused of ineffectiveness and corruption, to play a role in Gaza after the war.

The Palestinian Authority, like some Arab states, has acted as a US stooge trying to smear the Palestinian resistance.

In mid-October, the Wafa news agency cited President Mahmoud Abbas, as saying that "Hamass's policies and actions do not represent the Palestinian people, and the policies, programs and decisions of the (Palestine Liberation Organization) represent the Palestinian people as their sole legitimate representative."

Presently, it seems that Arab states, the Palestinian Authority, Israel and the US are forming an alliance to crush the Palestinian resistance and feed the war machine of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Under the façade of friendship with Palestinians, Arab states are abetting Israel's genocide and implementing the regime's ethnic cleansing plans.

## WORLD HEADLINES

### Putin offers conditional truce

Russian President Vladimir Putin promised Friday to "immediately" order a cease-fire in Ukraine and begin negotiations if Kyiv started withdrawing troops from the four regions annexed by Moscow in 2022 and renounced plans to join NATO. Ukraine responded by calling Putin's proposal "manipulative" and "absurd."

Putin's remarks came as Switzerland prepared to host scores of world leaders -- but not from Moscow -- at the weekend to try to map out first steps toward peace in Ukraine.

Putin blasted the Switzerland conference as "just another ploy to divert everyone's attention, reverse the cause and effect of the Ukrainian crisis (and) set the discussion on the wrong track."

His demands came in a speech at the Russian Foreign Ministry and was aimed at what he called a "final resolution" of the conflict rather than "freezing it," and stressed the Kremlin is "ready to start negotiations without delay."

### Israel committed 3,300 massacres against Gaza since October 7: GMO

Israel has committed more than 3,300 massacres against the Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip since October 7, claiming the lives of over 37,000 victims, a majority of them women and children, the government media office (GMO) in Gaza has said.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the GMO warned that the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip are suffering from starvation, famine and thirst, especially in Gaza City and northern Gaza governorates as a result of closing all crossings to the area and limiting the number of aid trucks allowed to enter, Middle East Eye reported.

The statement stressed that Israel's use of starvation, thirst and denial of medical care as a weapon during this barbaric aggression constitutes an aggravated war crime and a genocide, in flagrant violation of international laws and in disregard of all relevant calls, demands and resolutions.

It called on international and humanitarian organizations, including the UN, to take urgent action and provide the necessary food and humanitarian aid to the people in Gaza, and to force the Israeli Occupation to bring in aid, calling on the Arab and Islamic countries to also exert pressure to break the siege, open the crossings and provide relief to the people there.

### Japan Parliament calls for ceasefire in Gaza

The Japanese Parliament, Thursday, adopted a resolution, calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Palestinian-besieged enclave of Gaza, Anadolu Agency reports.

Lawmakers in the lower house of the Parliament, locally known as Diet, also urged the government to make "extraordinary diplomatic efforts" with other nations to achieve the cease-

fire and release of hostages, Nikkei News reported.

Opposing the Israeli military operations in Rafah city, the resolution said the humanitarian situation was "critical" in Gaza.

Japan has witnessed intermittent protests by civil society groups as well as student community, pressing Tokyo to divest from Israel.

### Ex-Israeli war cabinet member accuses Netanyahu of hindering prisoner deal

Former Israeli War Minister, Benny Gantz, accused Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, on Thursday of obstructing a prisoner exchange deal with Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip for "political reasons", Anadolu Agency reports.

Gantz, who leads the National Unity Party, resigned Sunday from the emergency government, claiming that Netanyahu's actions were preventing a decisive victory in Israel's onslaught against Gaza.

In an interview with Israel's public broadcaster, Gantz said Netanyahu is blocking the prisoner exchange deal based on personal political calculations rather than the interests of Israel.

"Netanyahu has made several decisions recently for personal and political reasons," Gantz added, without elaborating.

"I have tried for several months to influence decisions within the War Cabinet for Israel's benefit, but to no avail," he said.

Israeli opposition accuses Netanyahu of prolonging the onslaught because he believes his "political future" will end when the fighting stops, potentially leading to trials regarding past corruption charges.

### Hamas: October 7 attack reaction to occupation

A senior Hamas official said the movement has "no idea" of how many of the 120 Israeli captives still held in Gaza are still alive.

"I don't have any idea about that. No one has any idea about this," Osama Hamdan told CNN. His comments come as some of the captives have lost their lives in Israeli strikes in Gaza.

He added the October 7 military operation carried out by Hamas was a "reaction against the occupation" and that "what came after that showed the real face of the Israelis...it's not the first time they are killing the civilians."

Hamdan said the ceasefire plan unveiled by US President Joe Biden late last month did not meet the group's demands for an end to the war.

"The end of hostilities must be permanent and Israel must withdraw from Gaza completely," he added.

"Israel wants the ceasefire only for six weeks and then they want to go back to the fight, which I think the Americans, till now, they did not convince the Israelis to accept (a permanent ceasefire)," he said, adding that he believes the US needs to convince Israel to accept a permanent ceasefire as part of the deal.

## Columbia University embroiled in scandal of chemical warfare A former administrator spills the beans about plans to cover up chemical attacks against pro-Palestine students

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN - A leaked audio recording of a former administrator at Columbia University in the city of New York has suggested that officials at the institution have tried to cover up chemical attacks against pro-Palestine student protesters.

Anti-war demonstrators began to hold gatherings in some US universities after Israel declared war on Gaza on October 7.

But, such protests snowballed after New York police attacked students at Columbia University on April 18 to remove an on-campus tent encampment. Officers arrested more than 100 students which sparked a huge outcry.

A large number of colleges across the United States were inspired by the protest encampment pitched by students of Columbia University.

Anti-war activists along with faculty members and university staff established tents on college campuses across dozens of universities in the United States urging officials to meet their demands in divesting from companies benefiting from Israel's war on Gaza and delivery of arms to the regime.

But police launched heavy-handed crackdowns on the protesters. More than 3,000 people have been arrested or detained on campuses across the country so far.

Over the past two months, video footage circulating on social media shows individuals aligned with the pro-Zionist, pro-Israel groups attacking the anti-war demonstrators who had set up encampments on the college campuses. US police have been accused of inaction and allowing vigilantes to beat students.

"Pro-Palestinian students were documented to be the victims of a chemical attack on the campus. It was documented by Public Safety office. I believe some students had documentation from the ER visits they had. One of the students who was harmed in this incident was at the school...was a student at the particular school where I was working. So, I just assumed this again was all hands on that moment. I was told in not uncertain terms to not even touch it," the administrator of Columbia University said in the leaked audio published by Students for Justice in Palestine which is a Columbia University student group.

American university officials and politicians

have condoned police violence against anti-war protesters accusing them of antisemitism, a charge that they reject as baseless.

### "Really demoralizing"

The ex-administrator's admission that Columbia University officials have tried to shut down all communications about the chemical attacks on pro-Palestine students clearly shows the United States is attempting to silence dissenting voices.

"I mean this is really demoralizing to me right. It's like I just saw at this point if we're not even going to communicate empathetically with our own student body during a really, during a crisis...then what are we doing here right, wo this was really demoralizing," the former administrator of Columbia University added in the recording about his feeling over the covering up of the chemical attacks against students.

The administrator said two former Israeli army soldiers were among those who carried out the chemical attacks against the anti-war activists, adding that 15 students were hospitalized and several of them are still suffering major health complications.

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

## Rise in Palestinian support for armed struggle

### Research shows greater backing for Hamas after eight months of Israeli war on Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - A survey by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) shows support for Hamas and the armed struggle to end Israeli occupation rose over the last three months.

The Ramallah-based non-profit organization, which is funded mostly by the European Union, conducts surveys in the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank on a three-month basis.

The latest PSR publication covers a range of issues, many of which stand out by highlighting the will of the people who have endured almost nine months of daily Israeli bombardment,

starvation, and the flattening of houses along with other war crimes committed by Tel Aviv in the Gaza Strip.

PSR points out that the data from the current poll and the one before it was collected during "the ongoing fighting in the Gaza Strip", while the first poll was conducted during the seven-day ceasefire agreement in November.

The poll was conducted between May 26 and June 1 and interviews were conducted in areas that included parts of Rafah and Khan Younis, the central Gaza Strip and all shelters in those regions as well as the West Bank.

Amid unprecedented human suffer-

ing in Gaza, where there is consensus among UN officials and experts that it is the most dire in modern history, the question of support for Palestinian factions is significant.

When asked which political party or movement they prefer, the largest number of Palestinians said the Gaza-based Hamas resistance movement. PSR said the results mean that support for Hamas over the past three months has increased by 6 percentage points.

In the same context, more than half of the respondents believe that Hamas is the most deserving of representing

and leading the Palestinian people today while only 16% believe the Ramallah-based Fatah party under the leadership of Mahmoud Abbas is the most deserving.

Almost all Palestinians believe that "Israel is committing war crimes today", while support for Operation al-Aqsa Storm on October 7 remains high.

More than 90% believe that Hamas did not commit any atrocities against civilians on October 7.

The research shows more than 80% of Palestinians believe that the al-Aqsa Storm put the Palestinian issue at the center of attention and eliminated

years of neglect at regional and international levels.

There has been an increase in the percentage of those who have lost relatives in this war to more than 60% and the results indicate that about 80% of Gazans say at least one of their family members has been killed or injured.

The findings point to an 8-percentage point rise in support for armed struggle to nearly one-third to establish a Palestinian state; and a 4-percentage point increase in support for non-violent resistance to nearly half.

The overwhelming majority of Gazans say they cannot access food or

water and a majority say the pier established by the U.S. military on the coast of northern Gaza does not alleviate the suffering of the population through the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Nearly two-thirds blame the Israelis for their suffering, while most others blame the United States. Placing the blame on Hamas in the Gaza Strip does not exceed 8%.

This will come as a major blow to the government of Benjamin Netanyahu and his cabinet ministers.

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

## From Sanandaj to Uraman: highlights of a road trip through Kordestan

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – Visiting Kordestan is a wonderful opportunity to experience a unique culture and meet people who proudly preserve their rich heritage.

The mountainous province may be best experienced on a road trip, allowing you to fully appreciate its varied attractions and beautiful landscapes. It's highly recommended to have a local guide, who can provide valuable insights into Kurdish culture and ensure a richer experience.

Situated in northwest Iran, Kordestan is known for its vibrant culture and strong sense of identity. Kordestan boasts high, cold mountains and historical terraced villages that provide a diverse array of landscapes to explore.

The capital city of Sanandaj is situated 458 km from Tehran and serves as a key tourist destination with numerous attractions. Marivan, another highlight of the province, lies on the border with Iraq and offers its own unique appeal.

A convenient itinerary might begin with a flight to Sanandaj, where you can start soaking in the Kurdish atmosphere. Must-see sites in Sanandaj include Khosro Abad Mansion, Moshir Divan Mansion, and Asef Varizi House. As you travel deeper into Kordestan, the historical city of Marivan, about two hours drive from Sanandaj, should be your next destination.

Approaching Marivan, you'll notice greener, more mountainous landscapes and an even greater prevalence of traditional Kurdish attire. Combining the highlights of Sanandaj and Marivan with visits to rural areas makes for a comprehensive cultural tour of Kordestan.

From Marivan, you can visit Zarivar Lake and the untouched villages around it, which offer

spectacular natural views. The lake is also a hotspot for birdwatching. Another must-visit is Palangan, a picturesque village known for its terraced houses perched on mountain slopes, where each house's roof serves as another's yard.

The journey to Palangan, a two-hour drive from Marivan through the Kurdish mountains, is beautiful and worth the trip on its own. After exploring Palangan, you may head to Uraman Takht, the most renowned terraced village in Kordestan. Spending one or two nights in Uraman allows you to explore the village and its surrounding mountains, where locals maintain summer gardens.

In 2021, UNESCO added "Cultural Landscape of Hawaraman/Uramanat" to its list for Cultural Heritage, recognizing its testament to the traditional culture of the Hawrami people, an agropastoral Kurdish tribe that has inhabited the region since around 3000 BC.

Leaving Uraman, a day-long drive south through the mountains will take you to many small Kurdish villages, including Bolbar, Zhiwar, Novin, and eventually Hajji.

If indigenous music interests you, several towns are known for making the Tanbur, a traditional musical instrument, and are fascinating to visit.

For those interested in cultural attractions, anthropology, and natural exploration, even a one- or two-week journey through the Kurdish regions of Iran, including both Kermanshah and Kordestan provinces, may be amazing. In Kermanshah province, highlights include Kermanshah city, the Tagh-e Bostan inscription, and the UNESCO site of Bisotun. Moreover, Kermanshah has been recognized as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy. It is also famous for its sweets, which are a must-try!

# 'Glory of Ancient Persia' highly welcomed by visitors in Shanghai

TEHRAN – Following a highly successful run in Beijing, Iran's prestigious loan exhibit "Glory of Ancient Persia" has now opened in Shanghai to widespread acclaim.

The exhibition, which began its Shanghai turn on Thursday, has quickly become a focal point for cultural enthusiasts. On its opening day, the event witnessed a remarkable turnout, with visitors eager to explore the rich history and culture of ancient Persia.

"The Glory of Ancient Persia" features artifacts from more than 60 archaeological sites across Iran, including treasures from the National Museum of Iran, Rasht, Gorgan, and the Persepolis Museum. Additionally, the exhibition



includes items related to Persian culture from the Shanghai Museum and two provincial museums in China, further enriching the display.

Organized by Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts in close collaboration with the Chinese government, this major cultural event showcases over 280 historical artifacts from

Iran.

The exhibition is intended to introduce the grandeur of ancient Persian culture to the Chinese public and to encourage tourism to Iran. With free admission, it is expected to attract large numbers of visitors until it concludes on October 7.

The Islamic Republic has set its sights on attracting millions of Chinese nationals as part of its strategy to boost the tourism industry. The move is part of Iran's broader efforts to diversify its tourism market and reduce its dependency on traditional sources of income.

## Handicraft exports exempted from VAT

TEHRAN – Iran's deputy minister of handicrafts has announced that handicraft exporters will be exempt from paying value-added tax (VAT).

According to IRNA, Maryam Jalali Dehkordi on Thursday announced this decision during a meeting with handicraft artisans in Isfahan on Thursday.

Elsewhere in her remarks, the

official emphasized that one of the key strategies to support craftspeople with the establishment of a comprehensive statistical system.

"This system is intended to identify prominent handicraft artisans and present this data to the country's tax structure to facilitate tax exemptions."

In conjunction with Handicrafts

Week, the deputy minister visited Isfahan to engage with local artisans. Her visit included stops at historical markets and various handicraft workshops, where she met with numerous artists in the field.

Speaking at the meeting, Isfahan's Friday prayer leader, Ayatollah Seyyed Yousef Tabatabaei Nejad, underscored the necessity of di-

versity in handicraft production to meet a wide range of customer needs.

Tabatabaei Nejad highlighted that handicrafts were the first work developed by humans, with most of humanity's early needs, from clothing to utensils, being met through handcrafted items before the advent of factories.

## Mashhad-Lar flights re-established after 14-year hiatus

TEHRAN – After a 14-year hiatus, the Mashhad-Lar flight service has been re-established, fulfilling a long-standing demand for pilgrims traveling to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS).

The first flight, carrying 133 passengers, took off on Thursday morning from Larestan Ayatollah Ayatollahi International Airport to Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan Razavi province, mark-

ing a significant milestone for the region.

The airport chief Mohsen Rafiei announced the resumption of the service, emphasizing its importance to the local community.

This air service has been a longstanding demand of the people, which has been realized through the efforts of local authorities and representatives

in the Iranian parliament, Rafiei explained.

To celebrate the inaugural flight, a traditional water salute was performed, a ceremonial welcome in the aviation industry for an aircraft arriving at an airport for the first time.

Additionally, the special governor of Lar and various local officials greeted the arriving

passengers from Mashhad with flowers and sweets, adding a festive touch to the occasion.

Moreover, departing passengers heading to Mashhad were also bid farewell with flowers and sweets, provided by Lar's senior officials. Rafiei mentioned that from now on, there will be one round-trip flight every Thursday between Lar and Mashhad.

First Announcement



Khouzestan Steel Company

INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER

No.: 52484126

### KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE REFRACTORY MATERIALS FOR STEEL-MAKING

This Company Intends to Purchase the Refractory Items Required Steel-Making Shop by Holding a Public International Tender By selecting One Or More Companies from Top Domestic or Foreign Manufacturing Companies That Have the Appropriate and Acceptable Abilities in Terms of Records and Experience.

Therefore, The Applicant Companies Are Invited to Send the Official Declaration of Their Readiness to Participate in The Tender to The Following Site Address: [Pim.ksc.ir](http://Pim.ksc.ir)

**Note 1:** The Closing Date for Declaration of Readiness to Participate in The Tender Is **29. June.2024**. Deadline For Receipt the Tender Documents Is **03. July.2024**. All Financial and Technical Bids Must Be Delivered to The Address: RAW MATERIAL PURCHASING DEPARTMENT- KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY (KSC)- KM10 AHVAZ & BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD- AHWAZ – IRAN P.O.BOX: 1378 - POST CODE: 61788-13111 On Before the Closing Date **21. July.2024**. The Opening Date of Technical Offer Envelopes Will Be At **11:00 AM On The 23. July.2024**

**Note 2:** THE OFFERED PRICE SHOULD BE VALID UP TO **4 MONTHS AFTER OPENING DATE**

#### Note 3: Terms of The Guarantee of Participating in The Tender:

- 1-The Foreign Companies That Participate Directly In The Tender Must Provide A Corporate Guarantee.
- 2- Foreign Companies That Participate By The Domestic Agent In The Tender Must Provide A Bank Guarantee.
- 3- The Domestic Companies That Participate Directly in The Tender Must Provide a Bank Guarantee.

❖ In order to participate in the tender, Companies must deposit 2% of the amount of their financial offer in the tender as a bank guarantee, financial block or cash deposit to the accounts of Khouzestan Steel Company (in the following account numbers):

- Siba account number: 0102513186002 (Siba number: **IR540170000000102513186002**)
- Sepehr account number: 0100304453001 (Sepehr number: **IR430190000000100304453001**)

**Note 3:** FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS:

Tel No.: +98-61-32136124

EMAIL: [n.roomani@ksc.ir](mailto:n.roomani@ksc.ir)

WEBSITE: [WWW.KSC.IR](http://WWW.KSC.IR)

Second Announcement



Khouzestan Steel Company

INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER

No.: 484400

### KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE REFRACTORY MATERIALS FOR STEEL-MAKING

This Company Intends To Purchase The Refractory Items Required for Its Other Areas Except Steel-Making Shop By Holding a Public International Tender By selecting One Or More Companies From Top Domestic Or Foreign Manufacturing Companies That Have The Appropriate And Acceptable Abilities In Terms Of Records And Experience.

Therefore, The Applicant Companies Are Invited to Send the Official Declaration of Their Readiness to Participate in The Tender to The Following Site Address: [Pim.ksc.ir](http://Pim.ksc.ir)

**Note 1:** The Closing Date For Declaration Of Readiness To Participate In The Tender Is **21. June.2024**. Deadline For Receipt The Tender Documents Is **26. June.2024**. All Financial And Technical Bids Must Be Delivered To The Address: RAW MATERIAL PURCHASING DEPARTMENT- KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY (KSC)- KM10 AHVAZ & BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD- AHWAZ – IRAN P.O.BOX: 1378 - POST CODE: 61788-13111 On Before The Closing Date **12. July.2024**. The Opening Date Of Technical Offer Envelopes Will Be At **11:00 AM On The 14. July.2024**

**Note 2:** THE OFFERED PRICE SHOULD BE VALID UP TO **4 MONTH AFTER OPENING DATE**

#### Note 3: Terms of The Guarantee of Participating in The Tender:

- 1-The Foreign Companies That Participate Directly in The Tender Must Provide a Corporate Guarantee.
- 2- Foreign Companies That Participate by The Domestic Agent in The Tender Must Provide a Bank Guarantee.
- 3- The Domestic Companies That Participate Directly in The Tender Must Provide a Bank Guarantee.

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WEBSITE: [WWW.KSC.IR](http://WWW.KSC.IR)

# Iran floods 'driven by El Niño, climate change': report

TEHRAN - El Niño was the primary driver of extreme rainfall in April and May that caused widespread flash flooding across Iran, as well as Afghanistan and Pakistan, doubling the chance of extreme rainfall, a new World Weather Attribution study found.

Throughout April and May, West Asia was hit by several storms. Flash floods killed at least 500 people in Afghanistan, 124 in Pakistan, and 18 in Iran, destroyed thousands of homes, and wiped out crops, worsening food shortages and threatening agricultural livelihoods.

The study also found that rainfall in the area affected had become 25 percent heavier in the last 40 years, increasing the risk of devastating flash floods.

Although it could not find definitive proof that climate change was responsible for the heavier rain, scientists behind the study said climate change was the "probable explanation".

In addition, drought conditions in many areas prior to the floods - which exacerbated the impact of the subsequent rainfall - were driven by climate change, an earlier report found.



Necephor Mghendi, the IFRC's Head of Delegation for Afghanistan, said: "The findings by World Weather Attribution highlight the critical factors behind the deadly flooding in Afghanistan, emphasizing the increased rainfall from April to May, the influence of El Niño, and the country's high vulnerability to climate-related disasters.

"In response to the severe flash floods that began on 16 April and intensified on 10 May 2024, the IFRC launched an emergency appeal to address the escalating humanitarian needs

in the north-east region of Afghanistan.

## Floods destroyed thousands of homes, and wiped out crops, worsening food shortages.

"These floods have compounded the already challeng-

ing situation faced by Afghan communities, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive and sustained humanitarian assistance.

"Despite Afghanistan's minimal contribution to global climate change, it remains one of the most vulnerable countries to its impacts, as reflected in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index.

"Our efforts are focused on providing immediate relief and supporting long-term resilience to help communities withstand and recover from these devastating events."

Maja Vahlberg, a climate risk consultant at the Climate Centre and a contributor to the WWA report, added: "Flash flooding occurs fairly frequently in winter and spring in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

"However, the recent floods caused a huge number of deaths, particularly in Afghanistan. Improving early warning systems and increasing flood-resilient infrastructure will help at-risk communities avoid the worst impacts of flash floods in the future.

## FDA plans to increase medicine exports by 30%

TEHRAN - The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is developing a plan to increase pharmaceutical exports by 30 percent in the mid-term, an official with the FDA has said.

"In the past years, medicine exports in Iran accounted for a small share of non-oil exports. However, over the past year, it experienced a growing trend," IRNA quoted Seyyed Ali Maboudi as saying.

The official went on to point out that the exports of raw materials and pharmaceutical products over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2023-March 2024) were valued at more than 100 million dollars.

"The Food and Drug Administration is planning to double the medicine exports in the short term and tenfold in the long term," the official added.

Given the impacts of drugs on the health of society in all countries, they are one of the most complicated types of goods to export as they require registration and quality approvals in each destination country, Maboudi stressed.

### Knowledge-based companies manufacturing medications

Some 600 medical equipment companies are active in the country, producing around 99 percent of the medicine supplied to the domestic market. Medical equipment manufacturers in the country produce and supply over 10,000 types of medical equipment to domestic and foreign markets. Now, various pieces of laboratory equipment are manufactured at prices much lower than the same foreign products.

Iranian knowledge-based companies have succeeded in producing recombinant drugs which are mainly used for treating hard-to-

treat diseases such as cancers, MS, hemophilia, and viral diseases.

Developing a system based on artificial intelligence (AI) that can detect breast cancer with 94 percent accuracy, manufacturing new medicines for pulmonary hypertension, coagulation disorders, chemotherapy drugs, and production of anti-cancer drugs titled SinaDoxosome, used in all types of abdominal cancer, Levofloxacin, used for the treatment of infectious diseases, Paclitaxel, to treat various lungs, and skin, ovarian and breast cancers, Doxorubicin, human papillomavirus (HPV) and 'ibrutinib', which is used to treat various blood cancers, have placed Iran among the main producers of medications in the world.

## Over \$100 million of pharmaceutical products were exported in the past Iranian calendar year (March 2023-March 2024).

Medications such as "Cetrerolix Acetate", used for the treatment of infertility, drugs for MS patients (called Synvox), special patients (called Interferon Beta, Gamma, and Alpha), and hepatitis C patients (called pegylated interferon) are other examples of the broad efforts of Iranian researchers.

Medical equipment worth around \$20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually, according to Iran's Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters.



More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made.

Also, over 95 percent of specific ICU and CCU beds and more than 85 percent of operating room medical equipment such as anesthesia machines and other equipment are manufactured with cutting-edge technology in the country.

### Over 60 countries import Iranian medical equipment

On January 13, the head of Iran's Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters said that medical equipment worth around \$20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually.

More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made, IRNA quoted Abdolreza Yaqoubzadeh as saying.

Also, over 95 percent of specific ICU and CCU beds and more than 85 percent of operating room medical equipment such as anesthesia machines and other equipment are manufactured with cutting-edge technology in the country, he added.

Yaqoubzadeh went on to say that the country's need for medical equipment production is three to four billion dollars per year, some one billion dollars of which is imported.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Precipitation forecast to reach above normal in next 3 months

The country is predicted to receive above normal rainfall over the next three months (February 20-May 21), head of the climatological research institute affiliated to Iran's Meteorological Organization (IMO) has said.

The whole country will meet normal and above normal rainfalls, the northern parts will receive above normal rainfall while southern provinces will receive normal to lower-than-normal rainfall, IRNA quoted Iman Babaiean as saying on Sunday.

This month, northern and eastern provinces will receive rain above normal averages, while in the first month of spring precipitation will be at normal amounts across the country, he noted, adding, during the second month of spring rainfall will reach its peak.

## بارش‌های کشور در سه ماه پیش رو بیش از نرمال است

رئیس پژوهشکده اقلیم‌شناسی سازمان هواشناسی گفت: پیش‌بینی‌ها نشان می‌دهد میزان بارش در کشور در سه ماهه پیش رو (اسفند ۹۷، فروردین و اردیبهشت ۹۸) در حد نرمال و متمایل به بیش از نرمال خواهد بود.

ایمان بابایان روز یکشنبه در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: مجموع بارش‌ها در سطح کشور نرمال و متمایل به بیشتر از نرمال است اما در نیمه شمالی، بیشتر از نرمال و در نیمه جنوبی در محدوده نرمال تا کمتر از نرمال خواهد بود.

وی اظهار داشت: بارش‌ها در اسفندماه ۹۷ در نیمه شمالی و شرقی بیشتر از نرمال است، در فروردین ماه ۹۸ نیز بارش‌ها در محدوده نرمال و برای اردیبهشت بیشتر از نرمال پیش‌بینی شده است.

## WFP releases May report on Iran

TEHRAN -The World Food Program (WFP) has released a report, expounding on activities in Iran over the month of May.

In May, WFP food assistance reached 33,538 beneficiaries, which included Afghan and Iraqi refugees as well as Iranian teachers.

Of those assisted, 28 percent were women, 29 percent were men, 21 percent were girls, and 22 percent were boys.

Refugees are assisted with a staple food basket which includes fortified wheat flour (12 kg per person per month) and vegetable oil (810 ml per person per month), while students and their teachers receive a date bar, and/or fortified biscuits. WFP stopped providing milk-in-school snacks in January 2024 due to funding gaps.

In addition to this in-kind food assistance, WFP provides cash assistance to 7,236 Afghan and Iraqi refugee households each month.

In May, households headed by refugee men received Iranian Rials (IRR) 2 million (US\$ 4.8, according to the UN Operational Rate) per person.

Households headed by refugee women received a slightly higher monthly cash allocation, amounting to IRR 2.5 million (US\$ 6) per person due to limited access to working opportunities, leading to higher food insecurity.

To maintain beneficiaries' purchasing power amid deteriorating economic conditions, since June 2023, WFP has increased its cash assistance to vulnerable refugee women and men facing serious risks over their food security and well-being

Through WFP's school meals program, a total of 9,157 refugee school children including their teachers received nutritious school snacks throughout the scholastic year.

The snacks included a date bar and/or whole grain biscuit for every day of school attendance to support their education and nutrition.

Under the same program, around 2,779 girls at primary schools and junior high schools also received cash incentives of 0.5 million rials (US\$1.2) each month to support their education in line with girl's empowerment.

By May 2024, WFP Iran helped ease the financial burden associated with the gluten-free dietary needs of 48 refugee celiac patients from WFP's beneficiaries by providing them with an extra cash amount of 7.7 million rials (US\$ 18.77) per person as a replacement for their usual food entitlement.

To support the income generation and resilience of 352 refugees (59 percent women and 49 percent men), in May, WFP continued supporting the operations of 19 livelihood activities across 17 settlements, including welding, tailoring, baking, and farming.

Following WFP's Disability Inclusion Workplan 2023, WFP implemented a pilot initiative in two settlements, Shahid Naseri of Markazi and Mo-hajerin of Semnan provinces, providing refugees with disabilities a monthly cash top-up of IRR 1 million (US\$ 2.4) on top of their regular entitlement. In May, the program successfully reached 110 beneficiaries targeted for assistance.

On April 3, the WFP released its 2023 report on Iran based on the interim Country Strategic Plan (2023-2025).

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been hosting millions of Afghan refugees over the past four



decades.

According to the report, there are roughly 4.5 million Afghans currently living in Iran.

Around 33,000 of the most vulnerable documented refugees live in 20 settlements in 13 provinces of Iran.

WFP's response in Iran focuses on addressing the food security needs of the most vulnerable refugees living in settlements.

WFP provides food, education, and livelihood assistance through a hybrid modality of in-kind food, unconditional cash, and capacity strengthening to refugees.

In 2023, WFP Iran was able to secure more than 75 percent of its funding and address the daily food requirements of around 33,000 vulnerable refugees.

In addition to the unconditional assistance provided to around 33,000 refugees inside settlements, WFP also provided conditional support for students attending primary schools and junior high schools.

Through WFP's school meals program, around 8,620 refugee school children (49 percent girls) at primary schools and junior high schools and their 610 Iranian teachers (30 percent women) received nutritious school snacks throughout the scholastic year.

The snacks included fortified milk and either a date bar or whole grain biscuit for every day of school attendance to support their education and nutrition.

Under the same program, around 2,900 girls at primary schools and junior high schools also received cash incentives to support their education in line with girl's empowerment.

Following the successful establishment of bakeries in some settlements in the past years, WFP supported equipping a bakery in 2023 in one settlement to improve the efficiency of the baking process and the quality of the bread for around 1,400 inhabitants of the settlement.

WFP's commitment to supporting the government of Iran's assistance response for crisis-affected populations was further reinforced by WFP's provision of locally procured emergency family food packs to around 9,780 Iranian people affected by an earthquake in Khoy City in May, through its cooperating partner, the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS).

WFP continued to play an active role in the interagency fora such as the United Nations Country Team, the Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP), and Interagency Cash, Livelihood, Education, and Protection Working Groups.

WFP also continued its cooperation with its non-governmental partners, including UNHCR, IRCS, and International non-governmental organizations (INGOs) such as Relief International and Norwegian Refugee Council, Cooperazione e Sviluppo (Cesvi) across different forums and scopes such as conducting joint Post Distribution Monitoring with UNHCR and attending various interagency working groups.



## Clad in chamomiles

A vast plain covered with white chamomiles is located in the Fandoqlou forest, near the northwestern city of Ardabil.

The unique beauty of the chamomile plain attracts many travelers to the region.



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JUNE 15, 2024

## GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be afraid of nothing but sins.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:05 Evening: 19:43 Dawn: 3:01 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:48 (tomorrow)

## What's in Tehran art galleries



### Painting

\* A collection of paintings by Shila Piran is on display in an exhibition at Tarrahan Azad Gallery.

The exhibition named "Enamel Citadel" will be running until June 25 at the gallery located at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.

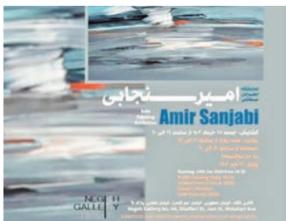
\* A collection of paintings by Sorour Salehinejad is currently on display in an exhibit at Jaleh Gallery.

Entitled "Div Afarid", the exhibition runs until June 28 at the gallery located at No. 3, Noshahr Alley, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.



\* An exhibition of paintings by Niloufar Rezaei is currently underway at Sharif Gallery.

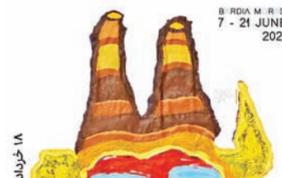
Entitled "Everything Is Moving, Sliding and Disappearing", the exhibit will be running until June 28 at the gallery that can be found at 11 Mahruzadeh Alley, Shariati Ave. near Quds Square.



\* Amir Sanjabi is showcasing his latest paintings in an exhibition at Negah Gallery.

The exhibit named "Horizon" will run until July 2 at the gallery located at 64 Ghaffari St., Jam St., Motahhari Ave.

## FOLLOW THE LINES



\* An exhibition of paintings by Bardia Moradi is underway at Yafteh Gallery.

The exhibition named "Follow the Lines" will run until June 21 at the gallery located at 8 Taleqani Dead End, Yarmohammadi St. in the Darus Neighborhood.

\* A collection of paintings by Zanbagh Lotfi is on view in an exhibition at Bostan Gallery.

The exhibit named "I Hang a Chandelier in My Dream of the Unknown City" will be running until June 25 at the gallery that can be found at No. 71, 22th Alley, Larestan St. off Motahhari Ave.

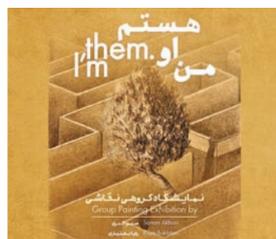


\* Fatemeh Bazrkar is showcasing her paintings in an exhibition at 009821 Projects Gallery.

Named "Blacks and Whites", the exhibit will be running until June 26 at the gallery located at No. 25, 18th Alley, Kheradmand St., Karim Khan Ave.

\* A collection of paintings by a group of artists including Raya Bakhtiari, Sanam Akbari, Bahareh Khoshbakht, Parisima Bahrami, Elham Kazemi and others is currently on view in an exhibition at Baa Gallery.

The exhibit entitled "I'm Them" will run until June 28 at the gallery located at No. 1, Nastaran Alley, Nakhli St., Artesh Boulevard.



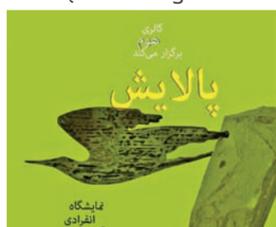
\* A collection of paintings by Masoud Arabshahi is on view in an exhibition at Art Center Gallery.

The exhibit named "Curves and Circles" will be running until July 16 at the gallery that can be found at 145 North Salimi St., Andarzgu Blvd. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

### Statue

\* Hoom Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of statues by Mehdi Ahmadi.

The exhibit will run until June 21 at No. 2, 4th Alley off Qaem Maqam St.



# Arabic version of Moustapha Akkad's "The Message" to be screened in Iran

TEHRAN- The Arabic version of Moustapha Akkad's 1976 epic film "The Message" will be screened in Iran for the first time, with Persian dubbing.

On the occasions of Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Ghadir, the Arabic version of the film, which has never been screened in Iran before, will be shown for the first time at Tehran's Art Garden on June 16.

The Arabic version, also known as "Ar-Risalah", is a unique blend of Arabic and Western actors, which has resulted in a more believable and realistic portrayal of the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The film's director, Moustapha Akkad, is well-known for his international version of the film, "Mohammad, Messenger of God", which has been widely acclaimed.

The Arabic version of the film features more detailed descriptions of the revelation of Quranic verses compared to the international version.

However, due to lack of dubbing, it has not been screened before.

The film's Persian dubbing will be performed by renowned Iranian actors such as Akbar Zanjani, Mohammad Reza Alimardani, Keramat Rudsaz, Mahbod Qana'atpisheh, Yeganeh Ramezani, and others.

The translator of the film is Hossein Shaygan, who has also



translated the Hollywood version of "Mohammad, the Messenger of God". Shaygan has acknowledged that the Arabic version is better translated than its international counterpart.

He is a well-known dubbing artist who has translated many famous films and cartoons over the years.

"The Message" tells the story of the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from his early days to his migration to Medina.

The film is a biographical drama that explores the challenges faced by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as he spread his message of Islam, and the struggles he faced from his opponents, including the

Meccan pagans.

The film's script was written in consultation with Islamic scholars and experts, ensuring that the film remained true to Islamic tradition and history.

"The Message" has had a significant impact on Islamic culture and cinema.

The film's portrayal of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Islamic history has helped to raise awareness and understanding of Islam among Western audiences. The film's success also paved the way for future Islamic films and television productions.

However, the film has also faced controversy and criticism over the years. Some critics have

accused the film of promoting a Westernized view of Islam, while others have criticized its portrayal of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as too Westernized.

Despite these criticisms, "The Message" remains an important cultural artifact that has helped to shape the understanding of Islam.

"The Message" received an Academy Award nomination in 1977 for Outstanding Original Score, which was composed and conducted by the renowned French composer Maurice Jarre.

The score was performed by the esteemed London Symphony Orchestra, elevating the film's musical landscape to new heights.

## Sami Yusuf, Homayoun Shajarian collaborate in new song

TEHRAN-Well-known Iranian-born British singer Sami Yusuf and renowned Iranian classical vocalist Homayoun Shajarian have collaborated in a new track that will be released soon.

The two singers announced in a collaborative post on their Instagram accounts on June 13 that the new song, titled "Existencia", is set to be released on July 1, ISNA reported.

Sami Yusuf, 43, is an Iranian-born British singer, songwriter, composer, producer and an accomplished musician.

He gained widespread fame with his self-produced groundbreaking debut album Al-Muallim (2003), which sold well over 7 million copies and earned him a massive following in the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia.

His music offers a fresh alternative to the mainstream western music.

His fame emanates largely from the religious themes he uses in his songs.

The famous Muslim singer of Azarbaijani descent was born in Tehran. He grew up in London and learned the piano, violin, tambourine, tabla, lute, and Persian instruments tar, santur and daf.

Born as Siamak Radmanesh, he later chose the artistic nickname Sami Yusuf. He sings in English, Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Urdu, Azeri and Malay to complement his multi-instrumental art. As of 2020, he has released



eight studio albums, five live albums and one compilation album.

In his 2015 album "Songs of the Way," Sami was assisted by his father Maestro Babak Radmanesh, A multi-talented artist in music and poetry, and other Iranian musicians in playing some traditional Persian instruments.

Radmanesh's first album as singer "Oh Heart" was released in 2015 in which he had his first duet with his son Sami.

The track "Drier Land" in the album was the first collaboration between Sami and an Iranian singer.

Sami collaborated again with his father in his second studio album "And Now Love," which was released in 2018.

Sami's work is marked by blending different

musical styles and genres, including elements from Sufi, folk, and Rock music. He uses his multilingual and multi-instrumentalist style to address social, spiritual, and humanitarian issues. In recognition of his philanthropy, in 2014, Yusuf was appointed United Nations Global Ambassador for the World Food Program.

Widely regarded as the highest profile Muslim musician in the UK, Yusuf has appeared each year since 2010 on the list of the "World's 500 Most Influential Muslims".

Despite being born in Iran and singing in Persian, he has not performed in Iran yet. However, he has held several concerts, including in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and the UAE.

Homayoun Shajarian, 49, learned singing from his father, the legendary vocalist of Persian traditional music Mohammad Reza Shajarian.

At a young age, Homayoun began studying the tombak, a Persian hand drum, kamancheh (spike fiddle), and Persian traditional vocal Avaz. He started his musical career in the 1990s. Since 2003, he has released more than 20 albums.

During the past two decades, he has held several concerts in Iran and other countries such as Canada, Turkey, the UAE, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland.

## Tehran Symphony Orchestra to stage "From the New World" concert at Vahdat Hall

TEHRAN-The Tehran Symphony Orchestra (TSO) will stage its first concert in the current Iranian year (started March 20) before the beginning of summer at Vahdat Hall in Tehran.

Titled "From the New World," the performance, led by conductor Manuchehr Sahbai, will include pieces by international composers, IRNA reported.

In the concert, slated for June 19, the TSO will perform "Iphigeneia in Aulis: Overture" by Christoph Willibald Gluck, "The Symphony No. 9" by Antonin Dvořák, and "Piano Concerto No. 5 in F Minor" by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Christoph Willibald (1714-1787) was a composer of Italian and French opera in the early

classical period. Born in the Upper Palatinate and raised in Bohemia, both part of the Holy Roman Empire, he gained prominence at the Habsburg court in Vienna.

There he brought about the practical reform of opera's dramaturgical practices for which many intellectuals had been campaigning.

With a series of radical new works in the 1760s, among them "Orfeo ed Euridice" and "Alceste," he broke the stranglehold that Metastasian opera seria had enjoyed for much of the century.

The strong influence of French opera encouraged Gluck to move to Paris in 1773. Fusing the traditions of Italian opera and the French (with rich chorus) into

a unique synthesis, Gluck wrote eight operas for the Parisian stage.

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904) was a Czech composer. He frequently employed rhythms and other aspects of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia, following the Romantic-era nationalist example of his predecessor Bedřich Smetana.

Dvořák's style has been described as "the fullest recreation of a national idiom with that of the symphonic tradition, absorbing folk influences and finding effective ways of using them," and Dvořák has been described as "arguably the most versatile composer of his time".

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was a German composer

and musician of the late Baroque period.

He is known for his prolific authorship of music across a variety of instruments and forms, including; orchestral music, solo instrumental works, keyboard works, organ works, and choral works. Since the 19th-century Bach Revival, he has been generally regarded as one of the greatest composers in the history of Western music.

The Tehran Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1933, is Iran's oldest and largest symphony orchestra.

During the years, celebrated musicians including Rubik Gregorian, Morteza Hannaneh, Haymo Taeuber, Heshmat Sanjari, and Farhad Meshkat took over as the conductor of the orchestra.