

# Leader says talks with U.S. unwise, unsmart, and dishonorable

The Reason? Experience

*'In the 2010s, Iran's government sat down with Americans, shook hands with them, and acted friendly. A deal was eventually reached, which the U.S. later shunned'* 

'Some believe that if Iran negotiates with the U.S., it can solve certain problems. They should realize that talks with the U.S. are useless in this regard' *'If the U.S. threatens Iran, or acts on its threats, we will threaten them and act on ours. And if they undermine our national security, we will too'* 

## Zarif's Baghdad visit focuses on security, cooperation, and regional peace

TEHRAN – In a bid to strengthen bilateral ties and reinforce regional stability, Iran's Vice President for Strategic Affairs, Mohammad Javad Zarif, visited Iraq on Thursday, holding a series of high-level meetings with top Iraqi officials.

The discussions focused on deepening security and economic cooperation, addressing regional developments, and reaffirming Iran's support for Iraq's sovereignty and independence.

Zarif met with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid, Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al-Sudani, and Parliament Speaker Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, emphasizing Tehran's commitment to defending Iraq's national interests against external threats. The meetings also covered regional crises, including the Palestinian issue, and underscored the importance of continued diplomatic engagement between the two neighboring nations. ► Page **2** 

# Trump disgracefully sanctions ICC amid Bibi trip

### By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – U.S. President Donald Trump has shamefully slapped sanctions on the International Criminal Court (ICC), which issued an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, also known as Bibi.

Trump criticized the ICC for issuing arrest warrants against Netanyahu and ousted Israeli war minister Yoav Gallant, calling the move a dangerous overreach and an attack on "U.S. and Israeli sovereignty." > Page **5** 

## Educational reform in Iran after Islamic revolution

### By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN –Subsequent to the Islamic revolution in 1979, Iran's education system has experienced great changes thanks to the establishment of the Literacy Movement, and the development of educational infrastructure which have resulted in increased education coverage rate, decreased literacy gap between men and women, and the growth of per capita educational space, particularly in deprived areas.

# Opinion **T**Experience of talks could have been different, but US did not want

### By Mohammad Sarfi Editor-in-chief

TEHRAN – Western media and analysts like to have their own interpretations of events. There's nothing wrong with that! As long as these interpretations are not completely contradictory to reality. One of these events is the dispute between Iran and the United States. U.S. presidents, whether Democrat or Republican, disagree on many issues, but Iran is perhaps the only topic on which they have little disagreement.

B believes killing them with a knife is quieter and better; C suggests strangling them with a rope; and D believes they should be gradually weakened and brought down. The difference in the perspec-

# Suppose we've just decided to negotiate...

### By Mahdi Mohammadi

TEHRAN – Let's say we decide to negotiate with Trump under today's circumstances. Here's what's likely to happen: First, the U.S. – and especially Israel – will likely interpret this as a sign of Iranian weakness and a victory for Netanyahu's aggressive policies over the past year and a half. Consequently, from the very start of negotiations, the demands on Iran will probably go far beyond just the nuclear issue. that pressure even while negotiating. Even now, while Trump is seemingly open to talks, he's already been working for over a month to cripple Iran's oil sales and drastically cut its revenue. The language of negotiation and the reality of pressure will be tightly intertwined.

Imagine a group of people intending to take someone's life. Person A says they should be shot;

tives of U.S. presidents toward the Islamic Republic of Iran is more or less of this nature.

However, most Western analysts prefer to turn a blind eye to this reality and accuse Iran's Leader of having a purely ideological approach in this regard, claiming that Ayatollah Khamenei's opposition stems from such a mentality. However, limiting the cause of this opposition to ideology is a distortion of reality.

Because the other side will believe their pressure tactics are working, they'll likely increase Therefore, at this stage, agreeing to formal, public negotiations offers no real advantage. It only validates their pressure strategy and encourages them to escalate it. If they believe they can dictate Iran's national security decisions through pressure, the negotiations are essentially doomed from the outset.

▶ Page 3

The literacy rate among those aged above 6 has risen from 47.5 percent before 1979 to 90.7 percent after the victory of the Islamic revolution, ranking Iran among the top countries in education coverage, ISNA reported.  $\triangleright$  Page **7** 

## Iran inaugurates Shahid Bagheri, its first dronecarrier warship

TEHRAN – In a landmark ceremony attended by senior military officials on Thursday in Iran's southern port of Bandar Abbas, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Navy welcomed its first domestically developed drone carrier, the IRIS Shahid Bagheri, into its fleet.

The drone carrier, a converted commercial container ship repurposed in the course of two years, honors Bahman Bagheri, an IRGC commander martyred during the fight against Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran. ► Page **3** 



## *Tehran will never surrender to pressure: FM Araghchi*

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has reaffirmed his country's unwavering stance against external pressure, stating that whenever the Iranian people face excessive and unjust coercion, they respond with maximum and heroic resistance.

Addressing foreign ambassadors and envoys in Tehran on Thursday, he emphasized that Iran will not yield to economic terrorism and will continue to defend its sovereignty with resilience. > Page 2



# POLITICS

# **FEBRUARY 8, 2025** Straight Truth

# **TEHRAN TIMES** -TEHRAN PAPERS-

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

# Iran's missile power is a major challenge for Israel

In a commentary, Kayhan discussed a report by the American magazine National Interest about Iran's missile arsenal and said: The Revolutionary Guard Navy unveiled a new underground missile base in the southern coastal region. Iran's missile arsenal has expanded significantly over the past decade. Over the past few years, the IRGC has specifically used these missiles to attack ISIS positions in Syria, and the positions of terrorist separatist groups in the Iraqi Kurdistan. But what was more important is that Iranian-backed groups in the region, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, and the Houthis in Yemen, have benefited from Iran's expanding missile arsenal. Iran's weapons stockpile now includes high-precision guided ballistic missiles, drones, and cruise missiles. Such weapons allow Iran to target American military ships in the Sea of Oman and the Persian Gulf. Of course, we should not forget the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world's oil passes and is constantly under the control of Iran, whether through missiles or other asymmetrical tactics. As tensions in the Middle East escalate, Tehran's missile capabilities are becoming a greater challenge for the United States and Israel

### Iran: Negotiation and resistance, Iran's formula against Trump

In an analysis of Trump's second maximum pressure order, the Iran newspaper wrote: Donald Trump has declared that Iran cannot have nuclear weapons but he wants a "verified nuclear peace agreement" with Iran, and the United States must immediately begin working on it. The United States has also tried to limit Iran's oil revenues for decades but has never been able to completely freeze its exports. These oil cargoes are transported by a fleet known as the "Ghost Fleet" outside American control and evade Western banking and insurance services. Oil experts believe it is difficult for Trump to zero Iran's oil exports. On the other side, if Trump tries to impose limitations on Iran's ballistic missile program in his proposed agreement, Tehran will probably not accept it. Saeed Laylaz, a political and economic expert, says though Iran is ready to negotiate, it is ready to resist Trump if necessary.

Sobh-e-No: Saboteurs are fighting each other

In an article, Sobh-e-No dealt with the conflict between foreign-based opposition groups and wrote: According to the latest news, freezing the funds to the opposition groups by the U.S. government has caused physical and verbal conflicts among them. The monarchists insult the leftists and the intellectuals boast against the monarchists. They were waiting for Trump to come to power so that they could "attack" Iran, but they were shocked in the early days of his administration, and Trump froze the funding for them in his first executive order. At the same time, the list of some of the recipients of the dollars has come out and worried them, and now the anti-revolution groups are fighting each other and making revelations against each other. Ataollah Mohajerani, (a former Iranian culture minister and history professor now living in London), Trump destroyed the world of the saboteurs. They thought that with the arrival of Trump and the Trump-Netanyahu alliance, the Islamic Republic would be finished, but Trump has distanced himself significantly from them. Will this move cause the saboteurs to rethink their policies? It is unlikely because if they had been smart enough, they would not have reached this point.

### Hamshahri: I prefer an agreement with Iran

On Trump's new message that he wants an agreement with Iran, Hamshahri wrote: In a message, the U.S. President announced his readiness to reach a verifiable agreement with Iran on its nuclear program by saying that he wants Iran to be a successful country. Trump said that he wants Iran to be a wonderful and successful country, but one that does not have nuclear weapons. Trump believes that we should work on this issue immediately and hold a big celebration in the Middle East when it is finalized and signed. The repeated claim that Iran seeks military goals under cover of its nuclear program comes as officials in Iran have repeatedly emphasized that despite high capacity to enrich uranium, the production and use of nuclear weapons have no place in Iran's nuclear program. Iran's nuclear program has been subject to one of the most stringent monitoring and verification programs of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which has not yet confirmed the veracity of this claim.

## Iran's nuclear program achieving worldclass advancements, declares AEOI chief

# Tehran will never surrender to pressure: FM Araghchi

From page **1** • "We firmly be lieve that active diplomacy and constructive engagement with the world are the keys to global peace, stability, and progress. However, Iran will never surrender to coercion or unjust pressure. We will not compromise on our legitimate rights as we continue on the path of national development."

He reiterated that Iran's diplomatic strength lies in its people, who take pride in engaging in negotiations based on mutual respect and honorable agreements. He noted that for 46 years, Iran has remained fully committed to its international obligations whenever agreements were founded on dignity and fairness.

The Foreign Minister warned that any attempt to impose unjust pressure on Iran would be met with unparalleled resistance. He asserted that Iran's history demonstrates its ability to defeat aggressors and defend its sovereignty with remarkable courage and decisiveness.

"Whenever Iran has faced oppression, it has shattered the dominance of its adversaries, delivering a powerful lesson to those who seek to undermine its independence." he said.

Araghchi highlighted Iran's critical role in maintaining regional and global stability, particularly in combating occupation, terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking.

"Iran has paid a significant price—both materially and spiritually-to ensure security in the region," he stated, emphasizing



the country's frontline efforts in countering these threats.

He also pointed to current administration's commitment to a proactive and independent foreign policy, stressing justice, mutual respect, non-interference, and independence from global superpowers as guiding principles.

The Foreign Minister reiterated Iran's commitment to strengthening relations with neighboring countries and the broader international community, emphasizing that Iran seeks to develop partnerships based on mutual respect and shared interests.

"Iran is ready to expand its good-neighbor policy and enhance cooperation with all nations, particularly those in the region," he affirmed.

Concluding his remarks, the Foreign Minister highlighted Iran's rich cultural and historical heritage, expressing the country's readiness to collaborate across various sectors.

"As a nation with an ancient and spectors have had full access to

## Zarif's Baghdad visit focuses on security, cooperation, and regional peace



### From page **1** > Iran pledges support for Iraq's security, sovereignty

Zarif reaffirmed Tehran's commitment to supporting Iraq's security, sovereignty, and independence during a series of high-profile meetings in Baghdad on Thursday. Zarif made these remarks while meeting with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid, emphasizing the crucial role both nations play in maintainprofound civilization, Iran remains open to cooperation with all countries in diverse fields," he stated.

#### Nuclear weapons never on Iran's agenda: President Pezeshkian

Speaking at the same event, President Masoud Pezeshkian categorically rejected claims that Iran seeks nuclear weapons, calling such allegations unfounded and politically motivated.

"We are not pursuing nuclear weapons. Our dear Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, has issued a fatwa against it," he stated.

He stressed that Iran's nuclear doctrine is based on this religious decree, which explicitly bans the production, possession, and use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Pezeshkian dismissed repeated claims about Iran's nuclear ambitions, noting that International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in-

Iran's facilities.

"Whenever inspectors have wanted, they have come and inspected. They can come a hundred more times. When we have no such intention, why should we keep hearing these baseless accusations?" he asked.

Pezeshkian accused Israel of spreading false claims about Iran's nuclear program while committing aggression against all regional countries.

"The occupying regime of Israel has violated the sovereignty of all nations in the region—yet human rights advocates claim it is merely defending itself," he said.

Addressing ambassadors from Islamic countries, Pezeshkian reaffirmed Iran's desire for genuine diplomatic engagement and regional cooperation.

"Iran seeks sincere relations based on mutual respect and the exchange of experiences," he stat-

He also pointed to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as proof of Iran's commitment to peaceful nuclear development. However, he criticized Washington's unilateral withdrawal from the deal in 2018, which led Iran to roll back its commitments after the other signatories failed to uphold their obligations.

Despite this, Pezeshkian maintained that Iran remains open to constructive diplomacy while standing firm against foreign pressure.

Zarif also met with Iragi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al-Sudani, where both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening cooperation. They highlighted the need to accelerate the implementation of agreements made during recent visits by Iranian and Iraqi officials. The Iranian Vice President and the Iragi Prime

mination

Minister further exchanged views on regional challenges, advocating for continuous dialogue to reinforce stability in the region. During his visit, Zarif held talks with Iraqi

Parliament Speaker Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, who underscored the importance of increasing diplomatic exchanges between Tehran and Baghdad. Al-Mashhadani, who had recently visited Iran, described his discussions with Iranian officials as highly productive.

Zarif also met with Mohammed Al-Hassan, the Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), to discuss Iraq's security, regional dynamics, and the Palestinian issue. Al-Hassan briefed Zarif on UNAMI's latest efforts in Iraq.



TEHRAN – Iran has achieved full mastery of nuclear science and is now ranked among the 18 countries with a recognized nuclear industry, according to Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI).

During a one-day visit to the city of Qom on Thursday, Eslami met with senior religious scholars and clerics to discuss the country's latest advancements in nuclear technology and its broader applications in various fields.

Speaking at the meeting, Eslami emphasized that Iran's nuclear energy program has reached the level of developed nations, despite ongoing opposition from global powers. "Today, the Islamic Republic of Iran has full mastery of nuclear science and is among the select group of 18 countries with an established nuclear industry," he stated.

Eslami highlighted that Iran's progress in

nuclear technology has been achieved despite resistance from "hegemonic powers." He noted that the country remains under some of the strictest monitoring measures imposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) due to its nuclear advancements.

"The global hegemonic system opposes Iran's access to advanced technologies, including nuclear energy," he said. "As a result, our country is subject to the most extensive and stringent inspections by the IAEA."

Despite these challenges, Iran has continued to develop its nuclear sector, which Eslami credited to the research, dedication, and faith of Iranian scientists and engineers. He also acknowledged the strong support of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in guiding Iran's nuclear program.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

also discussed key regional issues, including the ongoing situation in Palestine. President Rashid reiterated Iraq's unwavering stance in support ing regional stability. According to a statement of the Palestinian people's right to self-deter-

from the Iraqi presidency, Zarif stressed that

Iran stands firmly with Iraq in defending its na-

For his part, President Rashid expressed Irag's

Beyond bilateral relations, the two officials

desire to strengthen ties with Iran and expand

bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

tional interests against external threats.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

## Washington targets Tehran's oil exports with fresh sanctions



TEHRAN - The Trump administration has announced a new round of sanctions targeting Iran's oil industry, escalating tensions in a bid to curb Tehran's crude exports.

On Thursday, the U.S. Department of the Treasury unveiled measures against over a dozen individuals, firms, and tankers that it said facilitate Iranian oil shipments to China, India, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Some of the listed entities and individuals had already been sanctioned during the Biden administration.

The move follows President Trump's signing of a National Se-

curity Presidential Memorandum from the previous one, which the (NSPM) on Wednesday, which seeks to "restore maximum pressure" on Iran by aggressively targeting its oil sector.

The memorandum explicitly states the aim of reducing Iran's oil exports to "zero," a goal Trump echoed during a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"We will once again enforce the most aggressive possible sanctions [on Iran]," he declared.

In sharp contrast to his actions, the president struck what seemed to be a contradictory tone during the memorandum's signing ceremony, stating, "I'm unhappy to [sign] it. I hope that it's not going to have to be used in any great measure at all."

With these newly announced sanctions, however, Trump appears to have already initiated the very process he claimed to be trying to avoid. It remains unclear how this renewed campaign would differ

Biden administration also maintained.

Trump first introduced the socalled maximum pressure campaign in 2018 after he withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - an international deal that limited Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanction relief.

During his first term, Trump claimed that the campaign would prevent Iran from "developing nuclear weapons". However, despite the severe impact of the re-imposed and intensified sanctions on the Iranian people's livelihood, Iran's nuclear program has achieved new, and at times unprecedented, advancements.

Officials in Tehran have meanwhile maintained close cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog and repeatedly reiterated their lack of interest in producing nukes.

### New US sanctions 'Illegitimate and unlawful'

Tehran swiftly denounced the

new U.S. sanctions, condemning them as a violation of international norms.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei issued a statement on Friday, calling the measures "entirely illegitimate" and noting that Washington is trying to obstruct Iran's lawful trade with economic partners

"The U.S. government's decision to weaponize sanctions against the Iranian people is an illegitimate and unlawful act," Baqaei asserted, emphasizing that Tehran reserves the right to respond to such "economic warfare."

In similar remarks on X, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi dismissed Trump's policies as a repetition of past failures.

"Reviving the 'maximum pressure' strategy will only provoke 'maximum resistance' from Iran," the top diplomat wrote, adding that "Wise leaders should pursue 'maximum wisdom' instead of repeating doomed tactics."

# Leader says talks with U.S. unwise, unsmart, and dishonorable

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has ruled out any negotiations with the U.S., stating that Iran learned in the 2010s that Washington cannot be trusted.

His remarks, made at a meeting with Air Force personnel in Tehran on Friday, came hours after the U.S. imposed its first sanctions following President Trump's order to renew "maximum pressure" on Iran.

Ayatollah Khamenei told the crowd of high-ranking military personnel that Iran is not opposed to dialogue and negotiations. "The only exception in this regard is the United States. Of course, we do not count the Zionist regime as an exception because this regime is basically not a government at all but rather a criminal gang."

Explaining why the United States is an exception in negotiations, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "Some pretend that if we sit at the negotiating table with Americans, it would solve certain problems, but the reality that we must realize is that negotiations with the U.S. will not have any effect on solving the country's problems."

The Leader highlighted the frustrating experience of the 2010s, when Iran invested two years in intensive negotiations with the P5+1 (Britain, France, U.S., Russia, China, and Germany) to reach a deal, only to see Washington unilaterally scrap it. "Our



government at the time sat with them, engaged in extensive backand-forth negotiations, laughed, shook hands, acted friendly, and did everything possible," he said. "The result was an agreement in which Iran, with considerable generosity, made significant concessions. However, the Americans failed to honor that very agreement."

Ayatollah Khamenei was referring to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), an international agreement struck in 2015 that limited Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for the termination of sanctions.

Current U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear pact in 2018 during his first term in office. He subsequently re-imposed sanctions against Iran, intensified them, and added new ones

#### The Leader noted in his Friday strength, specifically, "the resolve remarks that while Trump offiof dedicated authorities and the cially abandoned the JCPOA, his collaboration of a unified nation." predecessor, who had signed the He pointed to the annual 22 Bahdeal, also failed to honor his comman rally, commemorating the mitments. He explained, "The U.S. anniversary of the Islamic Revolusanctions that were meant to be tion, as a symbol of this national lifted remained in place. And conunity, saying, "God willing, we will cerning the United Nations, they see a further manifestation of this left behind a persistent wound, unity again this year." a constant threat looming over Iran," referring to the "snapback" He also highlighted Washingmechanism that allows signaton's failed attempts to reshape tories to reimpose UN sanctions the world, dismissing such plans on Iran without having to uphold as completely unrealistic and ex-

their end of the agreement. European signatories to the JCPOA have been threatening to invoke the snapback mechanism for months. They, however, have refused to address Washington's official withdrawal or their own defacto shunning of the deal.

Ayatollah Khamenei said lessons must be learned from "two

ception that Iran is weakened and

ripe for submission will make gen-

uine bargaining impossible. They'll

essentially be demanding a ran-

Especially in this situation, ex-

pecting any meaningful easing of

sanctions is unrealistic. If our ad-

versaries believe sanctions brought

Iran to the table, why would they

lessen them? Wouldn't it make

more sense for them to intensify

sanctions to force Iran's surrender

during negotiations? Accepting ne-

gotiations under these conditions

completely undermines any justifi-

And we know what comes next.

som



From Page 1 > The reality is that, firstly, the Islamic Republic of Iran has negotiated with the United States on various issues multiple times over the past two decades. If the issue were ideological, such negotiations would not have taken place at all.

Experience of talks could have been

different, but US did not want

Secondly, as Ayatollah Khamenei has clearly stated, the main reason for Iran's opposition to negotiations stems from the experience of the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action). Iran showed maximum flexibility in the JCPOA negotiations and did not fail to fulfill any terms of the agreement reached in 2015. Meanwhile, the other side refused to fulfill its commitments under various pretexts, and ultimately Trump unilaterally withdrew from the agreement on May 8, 2018. Even after the U.S. withdrawal, Iran fully adhered to its commitments for a year, and only then did it gradually suspend some of its obligations under the JCPOA. What Trump signed a few days ago as a presidential memorandum shows that what Trump says and what he wants are fundamentally different. Trump says he is willing to negotiate with Iran and only wants to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, but what he wants goes far beyond a nuclear agreement. The list of

these demands is so extensive that it even includes Iran's conventional weapons, effectively seeking to strip Iran of even its defensive and conventional weapons in a region where human lives have the least value.

Sitting at the negotiating table with the United States would be tantamount to endorsing the illusion of a "weak Iran" and would have severe consequences for Tehran. In any case, the ball is in Washington's court. If Trump truly seeks an agreement with Iran, he must distance himself from the temptations of Israel and those who dream of Iran's destruction and take a rational path. However, such rationality seems unlikely from someone who dreams of acquiring Greenland, Canada, and Gaza.

Ayatollah Khamenei, in his cation for sanctions relief. speech on April 9, 2015, explicitly stated that if the Americans act The Israelis will argue that their fairly and wisely in nuclear negotiations, this could be an experience for Iran, and negotiations with them on other issues could also be possible. This position shows that Iran's Leader thinks and decides realistically, wisely, and in line with national interests regarding negotiations with the United States. If he is now opposed to negotiations game will play out internally in Iran. with the U.S., it is due to the behavior of the Americans themselves.

From Page 1 
Moreover, enterstall most economic activity. Some ing negotiations under these cirofficials, assuming an agreement cumstances means we can expect is a foregone conclusion, will likely unusually aggressive pressure tacput their work on hold and instead lobby for a deal, arguing that the tics – like those outlined in Trump's national security memo. The percountry can't function without one.

What will be the result? We enter negotiations only to find nothing to agree on. Instead of recognizing our good faith, the other side sees us as weak and vulnerable. Officials neglect their duties, and the population remains in a state of unproductive anticipation. Is this what we really want?

years of negotiations, granting

concessions, making compro-

mises, and ultimately achieving

nothing." He maintained that the

U.S., despite all the JCPOA's short-

comings for Iran, violated and

withdrew from it. "Therefore, ne-

gotiating with such a government

is neither rational, intelligent, nor

honorable, and we should not en-

Recognizing the economic and

livelihood challenges faced by

many Iranians, the Leader as-

serted that the key to overcom-

ing these problems is internal

isting only "on paper." He contin-

ued, "Of course, they also make

comments about us, talk, and

issue threats." The Leader then

stated firmly, "If they threaten

us, we will threaten them. If they

act on their threat, we will act on

ours. And if they undermine our

national security, we will certainly

undermine theirs as well."

gage in negotiations with them."

Of course, things could get even worse. When public anxiety and the expectations of officials reach a critical point, some may start considering even riskier strategies. Under those circumstances, there are certainly individuals in America and Israel who will argue that a significant military or security strike could force Iran's complete submission during negotiations. Is that not a logical next step in their minds?



TEHRAN - The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has confirmed that the upcoming match between Persepolis of Iran and Al Nassr of Saudi Arabia will take place at Azadi Stadium in Tehran on February 18.

The AFC Competition Committee has granted Persepolis the right to host this crucial game at the home ground.

Persepolis aims to maximize attendance by allocating as much of the stadium's capacity as possible to its fans. However, ongoing renovations on the southern side of the stadium mean that this section will likely remain closed for this match.

This game marks Persepolis's final home match in the AFC Champions League Elite, and coach Ismail Kartal's team needs a victory to maintain its chances of advancing in the competition.

## **Final three Iran** football presidency candidates announced

TEHRAN – The final three candidates of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) presidency announced.

Current head of the federation Mehdi Taj, Heydar Baharvand, former President of the Iran Football League Organization, and Amir Abedini, ex-general manager of Persepolis football club, have been confirmed for the post.

The elective General Assembly will be held on March 1.

## Iran, Tajikistan **Olympics** committees to sign MoU

TEHRAN – Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa, president of the National Olympic Committee, who has traveled to Harbin to attend the opening ceremony of the 9th Winter Asian Games, met with Sohibov Shamsullo Mahmadulloevich, vice president of the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Mahmadulloevich stressed the importance

### sports.

SPORT

**IRAN IN FOCUS** 

The opening ceremony welcomed participating countries starting with a performance from a group of young kids.

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Straight Truth

**TEHRAN TIMES** 

Marzieh Baha and Mohammad Kiadarbandsari were Iran's flagbearers in the ceremony.

A young girl on the center of the stage first lit an ice lantern that gradually became brighter, representing the idea that athletes' dreams grow bigger.

Thirty-four young kids, symbolizing the number of participating countries, then danced around the lantern.

Asian Winter Games Harbin's mascots Binbin and Nini came onto the stage and welcomed all participating countries that walked in with their own flags.

Host country China introduced themselves the last in the presence of Chinese President Xi Jinping, International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach and other senior officials.

Over 1,200 athletes across from Asia will vie for medals through the end of the competition on Feb. 14.

## Iran lose to S. Africa at 2025 FIH Indoor **Hockey World Cup**

TEHRAN - Iran lost to South Africa 6-0 at the 2025 Men's FIH Indoor Hockey World Cup quarter-finals on Friday.

Team Melli had defeated Argentina 5-3 and Malaysia 3-0 and lost to Germany 8-3 in Pool B

The top eight teams from across the three pools (the top two in each group, plus the two best third-placed teams) went through to the quarter-finals.

Iran will play Poland on Saturday for the fifth to eighth place.

The competition is being held in Porec, Croatia.

## Sepahan, Malavan share spoils in PGPL

TEHRAN - Sepahan and Malavan football teams played to a 1-1 draw in the 2024/25 Iran Persian Gulf Professional League (PGPL) on Friday.

Sepahan winger Reza Shekari opened the

previous approach was correct and they need to "finish the job." Consequently, they'll undoubtedly push Trump to set extremely stringent terms for negotiations - demanding much more while offering even less. This is the same game they've been playing all along.

At the same time, a significant People will wait to see the outcome of the negotiations, which will likely

I'm not claiming this analysis is entirely accurate, but the truth is that it aligns more closely with our past experiences than any other scenario one can imagine. Do some people believe this time will be different? If so, they need to present a convincing case. I haven't seen one vet.

## Iran inaugurates Shahid Bagheri, its first drone-carrier warship

From Page 1 > Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, Commander of the IRGC Navy, hailed the vessel as "a maritime UAV and helicopter carrier able to conduct missions across the oceans."

#### Warship's features

Equipped with a 180-meter runway, the Shahid Bagheri warship accommodates multiple squadrons of unmanned aircraft, including the Ababil-3, Mohajer-6, and the advanced Qaher-313 stealth drones.

Beyond its drone capabilities, the carrier features short- and medium-range air defense systems, cruise missiles, and guided subsurface vessels, enhancing its ability to counter aerial and maritime threats, according to the IRGC.

Furthermore, the warship has an operational range of 22,000 nautical miles and can sustain year-long missions in distant waters without refueling, a feat attributed to its MAN B&W diesel engine and 41,978-ton displacement.

Onboard facilities—including a hospital with surgical units, sports amenities, and logistical support— also reflect its design for extended deployments.

Another significant feature of the Shahid Bagheri drone carrier is its integration of electronic warfare and signal intelligence (SIGINT) systems, further amplifying its effectiveness in asymmetric warfare.

Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, was another high-ranking military official to address the new addition.

"Just as foreign vessels operate near our waters, we reserve the right to safeguard shipping routes from the Strait of Hormuz to the Indian Ocean," the top general stated.

The deployment of the drone carrier is intended to "guarantee sustainable security for regional waters" and is equipped to respond to any destabilizing foreign presence, if necessary, Bagheri added.

#### 'Drones a pillar in Iran's defense strategy:' expert

Military expert Mehdi Bakhtiari, in an interview with the Tehran Times, highlighted the significance of the Navy's advancements: "Because of its new missions in international waters, the IRGC Navy has started to design and construct new suitable vessels. Among these are the Shahid Soleimani-class vessels, which were unveiled a couple of years ago."

Bakhtiari noted the common practice of converting commercial vessels into military ones. "This approach is both practical and efficient," he commented, pointing to the Makran logistics ship as an example.

He emphasized that the Shahid Bagheri drone carrier, capable of remaining at sea for a year, extends the IRGC's operational reach far beyond the Persian Gulf.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

of enhancing sports interactions and cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan. Mahmadulloevich expressed interest in leveraging Iran's sports capabilities for training and participating in camps and tournaments to promote sports development in Tajikistan.

He also invited Khosravi Vafa to visit Tajikistan and the country's sports facilities.

Mahmadulloevich also showed an eagerness to sign a memorandum of understanding for cooperation between our countries.

"Iran and Tajikistan share a brotherly and friendly bond. Beyond expanding sports interactions in coaching and organizing joint camps or training sessions, we are also interested in learning from your experiences," Khosravi Vafa said.

"I will definitely make the trip at the earliest opportunity, likely in April to sign the sports cooperation memorandum," the Iranian sports official added.

## Iran attends in 2025 Asian Winter **Games opening** ceremony

TEHRAN - The 2025 Asian Winter Games officially kicked off on Friday with its opening ceremony at Harbin International Convention Exhibition and Sports Center in Harbin, China where 34 Asian countries introduced themselves ahead of their quest to shine across 11 scoring just three minutes into the match at the Sirous Ghayeghran Stadium in Bandar Anzali, but Amirreza Afsordeh equalized for Malavan on the hour mark.

In other matches, struggling Nassaji and Chadormalou ended in a goalless draw, as did Mes and Esteghlal in Kerman.

Earlier in the day, Kheybar defeated Foolad 2-0 in Khorramabad.

Tractor lead the league table with 41 points, one point ahead of Sepahan.

## Iran U20 defeat Saudi Arabia in friendly

TEHRAN – Iran's U20 national football team defeated Saudi Arabia 2-1 in a friendly match on Thursday.

Reza Qandipour and Mohammad Dindar were on target for Iran in the match, held in Shenzhen.

The match was held as part of preparation for the AFC U-20 Asian Cup China 2025.

The young Persians are drawn in Group C along with Uzbekistan, Indonesia, and Yemen.

Sixteen teams have been drawn into four groups with not just continental glory at stake, but also four tickets to the FIFA U-20 World Cup 2025 in Chile.

The 42nd edition of the tournament will take place from February 12 to March 1 in Shenzhen.

# ECONOMY



# Tehran, Moscow agree on exhibition cooperation

TEHRAN - On the sidelines of Iran's National Pavilion at the 32nd Prodexpo International Exhibition of Food, Beverages, and Raw Materials in Russia, significant exhibition-related agreements were reached between Iranian and Russian officials.

According to IRIB, during the mentioned event, Maxim Fateev, Director General of EXPOCENTRE AO, and Sadif Beikzadeh, Acting Director of Iran International Exhibitions Company, met and agreed to facilitate the participation of Iranian and Russian companies in eight specialized international exhibitions.

The agreement includes reciprocal preferential discounts and space exchange in exhibitions held by both countries in 2025.

During his visit to the National Pavilion of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Moscow food exhibition, which began on February 4 at EXPOCENTRE and features a wide range of products such as confectionery, tomato paste, nuts, canned goods, olives, sauces, jams, beverages, and more, Fateev expressed hope that enhanced exhibition cooperation and easier access for Iranian and Russian companies to exhibitions in both countries would further boost commercial and economic ties. This agreement marks a significant step toward increasing economic and exhibition-related interactions between the two nations.

Additionally, a separate meeting was held with executives from Moscow's Food City complex, the largest wholesale and retail food market in the city. The two sides agreed to exchange exhibition spaces, enabling Russian companies to participate in Iran's Agrofood Exhibition, while Iranian food industry companies would join events at Moscow's Food City.

With the implementation of a free trade agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia, and leveraging opportunities created through trade with Eurasian Economic Union member states, participation in Russian exhibitions is expected to be an effective measure in utilizing trade diplomacy for international cooperation and achieving quantitative growth targets in Iran's non-oil exports.

Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) and Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry have agreed to strengthen trade relations between Iran and Russia, particularly in the food industry, in late January.

The agreement was reached during a webinar titled "Trade in Iran and Russia with a Focus on the Food Industry," organized by the Tehran Chamber's



International Affairs Department in collaboration with Moscow's chamber and Business Russia.

The event, attended by economic operators from both countries, focused on increasing trade in food and agricultural products while enhancing collaboration between private sector entities. Discussions highlighted strategies for identifying economic opportunities and fostering direct business links between Iranian and Russian companies.

During the meeting, Mehdi Sadeghi, deputy head of the TCCIMA, emphasized that Russia is a strategic market for Iran, citing the ratification of the Iran-Eurasian Economic Union free trade agreement by the Iranian parliament and EAEU member states as a key step toward expanding economic ties

He also pointed to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit to Moscow, during which Iranian and Russian officials signed a long-term strategic cooperation document. According to Sadeghi, this agreement paves the way for joint investments, financial cooperation, infrastructure development, and banking collaboration, all of which should be leveraged by the private sectors of both nations.

To further advance this agenda, the Tehran Chamber is preparing a one-year roadmap for cooperation with the Moscow Chamber. This includes hosting business webinars tailored to targeted industries and facilitating Iranian and Russian firms' participation in trade exhibitions and commercial events.

On the Russian side, Vladislav Chenko, Vice President of the Moscow Chamber, highlighted Moscow's distinct economic structure and consumer behavior. He noted that Moscow residents, compared to the rest of Russia, are willing to pay higher prices for high-quality food products, making the city a prime market for premium imports. He also stressed the city's high influx of international tourists, which boosts demand for diverse food supplies.

# Iran's exports to Oman rise 15% in 9 months on year

TEHRAN - Iran exported approximately \$1.146 billion worth of goods to Oman in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 21, 2024), marking a 15 percent increase compared to the same period last year, according to Abdolamir Rabihavi, the director general for West Asia at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

In an interview with IRNA, Rabihavi noted that Iranian imports from Oman in the same period amounted to about \$631 million, reflecting a nine percent decline year-on-year.

He highlighted recent negotiations in Muscat between Iran's Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak and Omani officials, saying Iran aims to break previous trade records with Oman and achieve a 15 percent growth in trade volume by the end of the year. Rabihavi noted that Atabak led a delegation of government officials, traders, and private-sector manufacturers to Oman for the 21st Joint Economic Committee meeting.

He stated that the committee covered various trade and logistics issues, resulting in numerous agreements, many of which stemmed from a year of negotiations

A key achievement of the meeting was the participation of private-sector representatives, coordinated by the Iran Chamber of Commerce and the Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce.

On the sidelines of the event, bilateral meetings were held with Omani counterparts, and Iranian representatives toured Omani industrial and investment units, gaining insights into Oman's market and production landscape.

Discussions also addressed trade volume, customs and visa facilitation for businesses, maritime transit, leveraging Iran as a transit hub for Eurasian Economic Union exports to Oman, and ways to boost bilateral trade.

Rabihavi highlighted the signing of a cooperation agreement between Iran and Oman and noted that Atabak met separately with Oman's transport minister, energy and mining minister, and the head of the Omani Investment Authority. The ministers then signed the joint committee's agreements and minutes.

Additionally, negotiations on a preferential trade agreement were extended, with plans to finalize and sign the document soon. The agreement aims to lower tariffs and facilitate trade.



ary 25, was described by the Iranian minister of industry, mining, and trade as distinct from the previous 20 gatherings, focused on three key agendas.

Mohammad Atabak has highlighted the signing of the MOU and elaborated on the meeting's agenda.

The first agenda item addressed the establishment of a preferential trade agreement and the elimination of tariffs between the two countries. Atabak stated that this initiative had been approved.

The second agenda item involved supporting joint investments between Iran and Oman. Atabak announced that both nations had reached an agreement on this issue.

The third agenda focused on necessary administrative and customs collaborations to facilitate trade. The minister noted that required planning and task allocation had been completed, and this initiative is expected to yield results shortly.

In meetings with Omani ministers of trade and energy and the chairman of Oman's investment authority on the sidelines of the joint cooperation meeting, the two sides also explored avenues of cooperation in various areas.

Mousa Farhang, Iran's ambassador to Oman, stated that several agreements are in their final stages and are expected to be concluded during upcoming bilateral meetings.

In a meeting with Oman's minister of transport and communications, Atabak explored strategies to facilitate the transportation of goods, passengers, and commercial exchanges. This discussion aimed to expand economic and trade cooperation between the two nations.

In early July 2024, the former Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mehdi Zeighami met the director of trade, industry,

tions in all fields are of paramount importance.

He characterized the trade volume between the two countries in the last Iranian calendar year (ending March 19, 2024) as "unprecedented".

He noted that the initiation of the PTA between the two countries aligns with objectives like bolstering economic relations, augmenting trade volume, creating a safer environment for trade growth, diversifying traded goods, fostering greater competition among businesses, and eliminating trade obstacles faced by both countries.

Also, a business delegation from Oman visited Iran's Imam Khomeini Port in southwestern Khuzestan province in early September 2024 during which they expressed interest in using the commercial capacities of the port for expanding economic ties with Iran.

According to Head of Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce Mohammad-Javad Amani, the business delegation, who arrived in Khuzestan on Saturday, visited Khorramshahr and Arvand Free Trade Zone in order to explore trade opportunities in the area, the portal of Iran Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) reported.

During the visit, the two sides concluded several cooperation agreements, and the Omani side emphasized increasing cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries, Amani said.

Referring to the delegation's visit to the Special Economic Zone of Imam Khomeini Port as the country's largest grain trading center, he added: "Port capacities for the supply of goods, transit, the possibility of re-exporting, as well as making large private sector investments in this area were among the issues that were discussed during the visit

According to the head of Ahvaz

and called for the development of trade and commercial activities between the two sides.

The delegation also visited the loading and unloading operation site of the Imam Khomeini port and became familiar with the port capacities in this regard, according to Amani

Iran shares land or water borders with 15 countries namely UAE, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Saudi Arabia.

Expanding trade with the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government has been pursuing in recent years.

Iran and Oman have signed two memorandums of understanding (MOU) to boost bilateral cooperation and emphasize the importance of using their national currencies in mutual trade instead of the dollar.

The mentioned MOUs were signed during the two countries' 20th Joint Economic Committee meeting in Tehran on December 6, 2023.

One of the MOUs was signed by Ali-Abadi, and Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion Qais Mohammed Al Yousef on supporting joint investment by the two sides.

Iran's Ministry of Industry and Oman's Chamber of Commerce also signed an MOU to boost cooperation in technology as well.

The two sides have also exchanged views on ways of expanding cooperation in the field of fishery and agriculture, deciding to hold a joint fishery exhibition soon.

During the joint committee meeting, Ali-Abadi announced Iran's readiness to jointly implement key industrial projects with Oman including the construction of an industrial park, the establishment of power plants as well and cooperation in maritime transport projects among others.

The Omani minister on his part emphasized the importance of boosting economic and trade relations between Tehran and Muscat.

During his stay in Tehran, Mohammed Al Yousef also met with Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mohammad-Reza Farzin, and stressed the importance of using Iranian and Omani national currencies in mutual trade.

The Omani official said his country wants to have a strong presence in establishing the required infrastructure for banking and monetary transactions in Iran, implementing joint projects, as well as making investments in industrial and mineral projects. Omani investors are also keen to participate in energy projects and to develop Iran's gas fields, he added.

## IMIDRO invests nearly €209m in mining industries

TEHRAN - The Iranian Mines and Mining Indus- dar year (March 20-December 20, 2024). tries Development and Renovation Organization

According to IMIDRO, exploratory drilling by the

(IMIDRO) is currently implementing several projects in the mining industry with €157 million of foreign investment and 270 trillion rials (about €51.9 million) worth of domestic investments.

Speaking at a meeting between the minister of industry, mining, and trade and economic operators in Khorasan Razavi province, in the northeast of the country, Mohammad Aghajanlou said an additional €25 million and 46 trillion rials (about €88 million) are being invested in the mining sector, along with 35 trillion rials (about €67 million) allocated to social responsibility projects.

He noted that IMIDRO signed its largest mining exploration contract this year in Khorasan Razavi province, emphasizing the province's importance as a key mining hub with significant iron ore and non-ferrous mineral resources.

IMIDRO has reported a significant increase in exploratory drilling and investment calls during the first nine months of the current Iranian calenorganization and its subsidiaries grew by 53 percent, reaching 519,581 meters by the end of Azar 1403 (late December 2024), compared to 340,410 meters in the same period last year.

In addition, IMIDRO issued 81 investment calls for exploration projects during the period, marking a 170 percent rise compared to the 30 calls announced during the same timeframe last year. These calls aim to attract investors for all exploration phases and required legal permits, ensuring continuity in activities.

The Industrial Development & Renovation Organization of Iran known as IDRO Group was established in 1967 in Iran. IDRO Group is one of the largest companies in Iran. It is also one of the largest conglomerates in Asia. IDRO's objective is to develop Iran's industry sector and to accelerate the industrialization process of the country and to export Iranian products worldwide.

Rabihavi said another visit is scheduled in two weeks to finalize these discussions.

"The joint committee meeting yielded significant achievements for Iran. If these agreements materialize, trade will grow. Oman has free trade agreements with several countries, including Persian Gulf Cooperation Council members, which Iran can leverage for re-exporting its goods," he concluded.

The 21st meeting of the Iran-Oman Joint Economic Committee, which was held in Muscat on Janu-

and investment development from the Sultanate of Oman to discuss areas of joint investment, industrial matters, and financial affairs between the two countries.

Zeighami said at the time that the first round of the talks to establish a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between Iran and the Sultanate of Oman was held in Muscat.

The trade and economic relations between the two countries have been consistently improving in recent years, he said, adding that the conclusion of the Preferential Trade Agreement and the establishment of close trade and economic rela-

Chamber of Commerce, visiting the factories located in the special economic zone of Imam Khomeini Port, familiarizing with the processing products, and examining the available resources and investment requirements in this area, were also among the goals of this economic delegation's trip to Imam Khomeini Port.

During their trip to Khuzestan, the members of the Omani business delegation pointed out the activity of 14 free and special economic zones in Oman and emphasized the interest in developing economic cooperation with Iran,

The top Iranian banker also said that his country welcomes any measure that helps boost monetary and banking cooperation between the two countries.

Farzin stressed the importance of using national currencies by the two countries in their mutual trade instead of the dollar as well.

## Iran to add 15 new trains to national railway fleet

## Tehran Refinery producing 6.5m barrels of gasoline per day

TEHRAN - The Tehran Oil Refining Company produces approximately 6.5 million barrels of gasoline per day, along with 14 million liters of diesel. according to the company's head.

Speaking on Wednesday, February 5, during a visit by Tehran province lawmakers to the refinery, Abbas Mohseni Nikugoftar stated that the Tehran refinery operates with a daily capacity of 250,000 barrels, accounting for four percent of the country's crude oil refining capacity.

The refinery consists of two processing units, known as Tehran Refinery No. 1 and No. 2.

Nikugoftar emphasized the refinery's vision of becoming a world-class facility, expanding into diverse and profitable energy-related businesses.

He also highlighted the company's mission to create value for stakeholders through stable production of petroleum products and investments in the country's energy sector.

TEHRAN - Iran plans to add 15 high-quality train sets to its national railway network in the next Iranian calendar year (begins March 21), according to the country's deputy minister of transport and urban development.

Speaking at the Congress of Railway Martyrs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jabbarali Zakeri, who is the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) stated that the country is working to expand its railway fleet to meet growing demand, Tasnim News Agency reported.

He also noted that 31 five-star passenger wagons were recently added to the fleet during the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, along with the launch of the five-star Khaavaran-Tabriz-Mashhad train last week.

will begin operations from Hamedan and Kermanshah with private sector investment.

Zakeri emphasized President Masoud Pezeshkian's support for railway expansion, expressing optimism about further rail development in the coming year.

In early January, Iran's Deputy Head of Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructure Company announced plans to build nine strategic rail corridors spanning 17,000 kilometers, contingent upon securing €10 billion in funding.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Abbas Khat-

Over the next two weeks, two additional trains ibi detailed the company's rail projects during a meeting with members of the Iranian Parliament's Budget and Planning Committee, saying that the projects will be completed within three to seven years.

> The company is overseeing 34 rail projects totaling approximately 10,000 kilometers, including 3,000 kilometers under construction and 6,000 kilometers in the planning phase.

Highlighting the significance of the country's development plans, Khatibi explained that about 3,200 kilometers of new rail projects are mandated under transit corridor expansion efforts. The completion of these nine rail corridors would increase the nation's freight capacity to 60 million tons annually.

# Trump disgracefully sanctions ICC amid Bibi trip

From page 1 ► The U.S. president, who signed an executive order after Congress rejected to back the move, delivered a sharp warning to the ICC.

He authorized the freezing of U.S.-based assets belonging to ICC officials involved in investigations targeting citizens of the U.S. as well as its ally Israel.

The order also bars the ICC judicial officials and their immediate families from entering the United States.

Trump affirmed that the U.S. "strongly opposes any action taken by the court against its close ally Israel" and expects its allies to adopt a similar stance.

The move highlights Trump's defiant stance in shielding U.S. officials from accountability for war crimes, aligning with his broader effort to protect Israeli leaders from international prosecution for the numerous war crimes committed during the 15-month Gaza conflict.

The measure coincided with the visit of Netanyahu to Washington.

On Friday, the ICC condemned Trump's action and called on its "125 States Parties, civil society and all nations of the world to stand united for justice and fundamental human rights."



"The court stands firmly by its personnel and pledges to continue providing justice and hope to millions of innocent victims of atrocities across the world, in all situations before it," it added in a statement.

In December, the war court's president, Judge Tomoko Akane, warned that sanctions would "rapidly undermine the court's operations in all situations and cases, and jeopardize its very existence".

The Netherlands, the host nation of the court, also said it regretted the sanctions.

"The court's work is essential in the fight against impunity," Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp said in a post on social media.

The United Nations on Friday sharply condemned Trump's decision and called on him to swiftly reverse the controversial move.

This step is not the first of its kind. Trump had previously imposed sanctions on the ICC in 2020 during his first term in response to its investigations into war crimes committed by U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Anti-war activists have vehe-

Anti-war activists have vehemently condemned Trump's latest move, denouncing it as a deliberate attempt to protect Netanyahu and Gallant from the ICC jurisdiction.

They accused the Israeli prime minister and his former security minister of masterminding war crimes in the Gaza genocide and insisted, "They must be held accountable."

The ICC is a permanent international court established to prosecute individuals for the most heinous crimes, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crimes of aggression.

It has the mandate to hold individuals accountable for these atrocities, whether committed within the territory of member states or by their nationals, ensuring justice for grave violations of international law.

In February 2025 the Haguebased court issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity during the Gaza war.

Evidence was presented to the court which showed that from October 8, 2023, to May 20, 2024, Netanyahu and Gallant were responsible for the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare, as well as crimes against humanity, including murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts.

Despite Trump's actions, the ICC has strongly indicated that its staff won't be intimidated by the White House as it pledges to continue its work.



FEBRUARY 8, 2025 Straight Truth TEHRAN TIMES





#### By Sayyed Pezhman Madany

TEHRAN - In the annals of modern conflict, the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon stands as a striking example of how unarmed civilian movements can disrupt even the most entrenched military occupations.

Despite repeated ceasefires and diplomatic pressure, Israel refused to retreat—until a grassroots civilian campaign, marked by mass marches and the return of displaced families to their villages, rendered its position untenable. This retreat was not merely a military setback for Israel but a psychological triumph for the resistance. It underscored a critical lesson in asymmetric warfare: victory often begins not on the battlefield, but in the mind.

Despite a U.S.-brokered ceasefire agreement mandating Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon by January 26, 2025, Israeli forces refused to fully retreat, maintaining a presence in over a dozen villages. This refusal ignited frustration among displaced residents, who organized protests to reclaim their villages. On January 26–27, Israeli troops killed 24 protesters and wounded over 130, escalating tensions and drawing international condemnation for breaching the ceasefire terms. Mass civilian protests erupted across southern Lebanon, with displaced residents, many accompanied by Lebanese army vehicles. attempting to return to their homes. Israeli forces responded with live fire, killing two and injuring 17 on January 27 alone,

ations, which Israel had prepared to counter, the civilian marches operated outside the framework of "war." They weaponized visibility, exposing the moral bankruptcy of the occupation and stripping Israel of its pretexts for staying. The occupation's infrastructure—checkpoints, fortifications collapsed not under artillery fire, but under the weight of collective defiance.

Israel's miscalculation lay in its narrow focus on military and guerrilla threats. It had anticipated Hezbollah's tactics but failed to account for the power of civilian mobilization. In modern warfare, states often rely on predictive models: they assess an adversary's capabilities, map probable responses, and plan accordingly. When Hezbollah engaged in guerrilla strikes, Israel adapted. But the civilian marches defied categorization. They were neither violent nor passive; they were a form of resistance that weaponized presence rather than weapons.

For an occupier, civilian noncompliance is a nightmare scenario. It denies legitimacy, complicates counterinsurgency, and attracts global scrutiny. By returning en masse, Lebanese civilians transformed the occupied territories from a "security zone" into a moral and logistical quagmire. Israel could not justify firing on unarmed crowds without risking international condemnation.

The withdrawal from Lebanon under-

# How will Bibi's golden pager gift to Trump provoke us?

### By Sondoss Al Asaad

SOUTH LEBANON – Trump's provocative phrase "It was a great operation," after Bibi Netanyahu gave him a golden pager was not surprising. This is the Western barbarism at its finest! It is a reminder to those deceived by Western "civilized" values, panting to appease the Great Satan.

If the Lebanese resistance movement did the same thing against the Zionists or Westerners, would it also be a "great operation"?!

For long, the colonial West has legitimized the use of any possible tool to ethnically cleanse civilians, and cause them permanent disabilities and chronic diseases.

Netanyahu, the criminal, had urged – more than 20 years ago – that after the military war, a cultural war must be waged against us to eliminate Islamic values and replace them with Western values.

The enemy knows that even if they kill us, they will not be able to eliminate the idea of resistance because it is rooted in our culture. It is not stupid and knows very well that shaking the Muslims' allegiance to their Islamic identity is the solution.

This hypothesis is even stipulated in the Holy

Quran: "And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion (Surat Al-Baqarah: 120).

The enemy will not explicitly call us to abandon the Hijab and religious rituals, but rather they will work to spread any means that would distract us from the essence of Islam.

They know that religion is synonymous with politics, and whenever we adhere to our religion, this means that we will not accept injustice, occupation, and the desecration of our sanctities.

Hence, the easiest way to do this is to promote obscenity, the culture of consumption and individualism, to have women abandon chastity, and other liberal values.

This is the same goal of the UN 2030 plan, the normalization agreements, and the fabricated "Abrahamic" religion.

Was not Prophet Abraham's movement a resistance uprising?

Did he not refuse to submit to anyone but the One God?

Did he not resist in defense of his beliefs?

Our peoples in West Asia have long coexisted; the values of love, brotherhood, and compassion prevailed among them until imperialism was implemented: "Divide and conquer." 13 years of patience and steadfastness on principles were spent by Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and his followers in Mecca before the Almighty God ordered them to migrate to Medina.

Then, Medina included a diverse community of Muslims (the Meccan immigrants and the Ansar from the Aws and Khazraj tribes) and the Jews. So, he called on them to sign the "Charter of Medina" which obligated them all to defend the state. But what happened? Did they abide?!

Before him, they fought Prophet Zechariah (AS) until they cut him up with saws, which made the matter difficult for his son Prophet Yahya (AS), who narrated was skilled in the Mosaic Law provisions.

Along with his cousin Prophet Jesus, Prophet Yahya (AS) revolted against Herod, the head of the Byzantine occupation of Palestine at that time, who was not only a dictator but also an immoral adulterer.

When his prostitutes became an old hag, he wanted to marry her daughter. Prophet Yahya denounced that and explained to the people that Herod's relationship was illegitimate. Once that old woman found out, she got angry and asked Herod for the dowry to be Prophet Yahya's slaughtered head.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

### **Canada is merely first in line** All of America's allies should prepare for Trump's coercion

Earlier this week, it appeared as if the Trump administration was going to follow through on its threat to impose a sweeping 25 percent tariff across the board on Canadian exports to the United States. Canada owes the United States "a lot of money, and I'm sure they're going to pay," President Donald Trump claimed. "We may have, short term, some little pain, and people understand that. But long term, the United States has been ripped off by virtually every country in the world." Ottawa was sent scrambling for a response and announced a set of retaliatory tariffs, targeting \$150 billion on an array of U.S. products, including appliances, machinery, and agricultural goods. "Tariffs against Canada will put [U.S.] jobs at risk, potentially shutting down American auto assembly plants and other manufacturing facilities," warned Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

After a series of calls with Trump, however, Trudeau was able at the last moment to secure a 30-day pause on tariffs. (Mexico, which faced a similar threat from Trump, also won a reprieve.) In exchange, Trudeau offered a suite of measures to shore up the Canadian border, including a variety of previously announced investments on increased manpower and surveillance capabilities aimed at curbing illegal immigration and combating the flow of fentanyl.

The pause is good news, especially for Canadians, who would have suffered immediate economic harm had Trump followed through. But in other ways, the damage is already done. Trump's decision to penalize a neighbor, an ally, and one of the closest economic partners of the United States in a manner more commonly reserved for adversaries is an unprecedented move that signals a fundamental shift in Washington's approach to alliances. The treatment he has doled out to Canada is a harbinger of what is to come for U.S. allies in Europe and Asia. In recent days, Trump has chastised Taiwan for its trade surplus with the United States and warned the European Union that tariffs could be "coming soon."

The Trump administration's doctrine of brute-force economic coercion—executed through tariffs, executive orders, and the wielding of Washington's financial hegemony threatens to transform transatlantic and Indo-Pacific relationships into almost purely transactional affairs. The results will hurt everyone involved—and help American adversaries such as China and Russia. In the short term, the most pragmatic approach for Canada (and other U.S. allies, as their turns come) is to respond to Trump's threats in a calibrated and clear-headed manner. This is easier said than done, however, as domestic politics often incentivize responses driven by pride or nationalism. Canadians and others must resist the temptation to lash out. Countermoves and retaliation are necessary, but overreactions will only hurt Canada's economic and security interests in the long run.

#### Transaction man

Trump's approach to foreign policy is rooted in a zero-sum, dealmaking mentality, in which economic leverage represents the primary tool of statecraft. Traditional diplomacy and alliance management are relegated to the sidelines in favor of an aggressive, protectionist agenda that prioritizes immediate economic gains over long-term strategic stability. Although many American allies have become accustomed to criticism from Washington over trade imbalances and defense

spending, Trump is the first U.S. president in the contemporary era to translate those grievances into direct economic warfare against partners—using weapons generally reserved for Washington's foes.

Trump's rhetoric makes clear that his administration views all economic relationships, including those with allies, as inherently adversarial, requiring constant renegotiation under the threat of financial penalties. This approach creates uncertainty among U.S. partners and raises concerns that Washington's commitment to collective security and economic cooperation is contingent on short-term transactional benefits. Trump's defenders argue that his approach is necessary to address trade imbalances and force allies to take their security commitments more seriously. But the longterm consequences of his economic belligerence have been largely negative for all involved. Steel and aluminum tariffs the Trump administration placed on Canada in 2018, for example, prompted retaliatory measures that harmed American businesses and consumers while failing to yield significant strategic gains.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

as demonstrators in villages like Odaisseh and Aitaroun faced gunfire and roadblocks. Hezbollah, framed the protests as defiance against Israeli occupation, while civilians like Mona Bazzi declared resilience: "Bullets don't scare us." The protests underscored a grassroots demand for sovereignty, even as Israel blamed Hezbollah for "inciting" unrest and fired shots at approaching crowds.

Israel's refusal to comply with deadlines became a recurring theme, rooted in its belief that military dominance and geopolitical calculations would prevail. Despite international pressure, Israeli leaders insisted that withdrawal would only occur under "secure conditions," effectively granting themselves veto power over any timeline. This intransigence reflected a confidence in conventional military logic: that superior firepower, surveillance, and fortified positions could indefinitely suppress resistance. However, this calculus ignored a critical variable—the agency of Lebanon's civilian population.

On Sunday, January 26th, a civilian movement emerged. Displaced families from occupied villages began organizing marches, demanding the right to return home. These protests were not explicitly armed but carried profound symbolic weight. Thousands of Lebanese civilians flooded into the occupied zone. The images of unarmed civilians confronting occupation forces shattered Israel's narrative of control.

This movement was revolutionary in its simplicity. Unlike traditional military oper-

scores a paradigm shift in conflict: the ascendancy of psychological and informational dimensions. Modern wars are often won not by overpowering an enemy materially but by outmaneuvering them cognitively. Israel's occupation relied on a rigid playbook—deterrence through force, divide-and-rule tactics, and diplomatic stalling. The resistance, however, rewrote the script.

The Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon offers enduring lessons for asymmetrical conflicts. First, it demonstrates that civilian agency can alter the trajectory of wars, even against materially and technologically superior foes. Second, it reveals the limits of conventional military logic in the face of unpredictable, grassroots resistance. By acting outside Israel's calculations—prioritizing visibility over violence—Lebanese civilians and the resistance movement achieved what cautious warfare alone could not.

Ultimately, this episode reaffirms that modern conflicts are as much contests of perception as they are of force. To prevail, resistance movements must innovate not just tactically but psychologically—crafting strategies that confound an adversary's expectations. In southern Lebanon, the people's refusal to surrender their right to return became the occupation's undoing, proving that the most potent weapon in war is often the one the enemy never sees coming.

# TOURISM

### **FEBRUARY 8, 2025** Straight Truth **TEHRAN TIMES**

# Chinese archaeologists visit Susa's World Heritage site

TEHRAN - On Thursday, a group of Chinese archaeologists, professors, and students visited the UNESCO World Heritage site of Susa in southwest Iran, gaining insights into the region's rich history, civilization, and unique historical artifacts.

According to IRNA, a 12-member delegation comprised of Chinese archaeologists, history, and art professors, and students embarked on a one-day visit to Susa. During their visit, they explored Susa's vast cultural heritage museum and its archaeological sites.

In recent years, the expansion of cultural and economic relations with China has led to an increase in the number of Chinese tourists visiting Iran and Susa.

Weeks ago, Chinese ambassador to Tehran, Chang Hua, visited Khuzestan, where he toured the UNESCO-registered ziggurat of Tchogha Zanbil, the museum, and the heritage site of Susa, as well as the tomb of Daniel the Prophet.

During his visit, Chinese envoy expressed hope that with effective promotion, more Chinese tourists would be drawn to Khuzestan, further enhancing tourism exchange between the two nations.

Situated between the Karkheh and Dez rivers in southwest Iran. Susa was once one of



the most important and glamorous cities of the ancient world. Susa, which has been inhabited for thousands of years, embraces several layers of superimposed urban settlements from around the late 5th millennium BC until the 13th century CE.

The ancient town served as the capital of Elam (Susiana) and the administrative capital of the Achaemenian king Darius I and his successors from 522 BC.

Susa was once part of the historic kingdom of Elam between Babylon and ancient Persia as the lower Zagros Mountains of Persia descend into the Mesopotamian region.

### ly positioned along the historic Silk Roads and the ancient Rayto-Qom route, now lies within the vast expanse of Kavir National Park. Recognized for its architectural and historical significance, Deyr-e Gachin is one of 54 Iranian caravanserais collectively inscribed on the UNESCO World

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN - Situated 80 kilo-

meters northeast of Qom, the

caravanserai of Deyr-e Gachin is

widely known as the "Mother of

Iranian Caravanserais". The im-

pressive monument, strategical-

title "The Persian Caravanserai". These structures once served as essential roadside inns, offering shelter, food, and water to caravans, traders, and pilgrims. Despite seeming to be situated in the middle of nowhere, the placement of caravanserais was carefully determined by water sources, geographical features, and security considerations.

Heritage List in 2023 under the

#### A glimpse inside

Upon entering the major gateway, visitors are faced with a vast courtyard encircled with single-door rooms in a single-story arrangement along with a mosque, bathhouse, and mill. A northeastern alcove and special rooms with three doors opening to the exterior further enrich the site's architectural diversity.

A legacy of centuries

Some sources suggest that



**Deyr-e Gachin: the mother** 

of Iran's caravanserais

the origins of Deyr-e Gachin trace back to the Sassanid era, with historical accounts linking it to Ardeshir I who reigned from 211/2 CE to 224.

Over the centuries, the caravanserai underwent restorations during the Seljuk, Safavid, and Qajar periods, preserving its grandeur and functionality.

### Architectural marvel

Spread across 12,000 square meters, the caravanserai is loosely in the form of a giant Chahar-Taq. Technically speaking, Chahar-Tag is an ancient squareshaped brick room surmounted by a domed roof.

There are various structural elements in the caravanserai including gateways and towers. More precisely, it has four rectangular towers and two half-towers flank the entrance; a site's authentic charm.

mosque with a 300-square-meter prayer space; amenities like a stone mill, bathhouse, two vestibules, and more than 40 rooms; two wells ensuring access to fresh water, and staircases leading to the rooftop.

Beyond the caravanserai, there are additional structures such as a fire temple on the western side, a fortress, a brick kiln, water reservoirs, and a graveyard. Moreover, the surrounding fortified wall is over five meters high, one meter thick, and eighty meters long, featuring crenels for defense.

A highlight is the craftsmanship of Sassanid-era bricks that have intricate details. Some of these bricks were later repurposed for restoration during the Seljuk dynasty, preserving the

#### Persian Caravanserai

Caravanserai or caravansary is a compound word combining "caravan" with "sara": the former stands for a group of travelers and the latter means the building. They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them, with doors in the corners of the yard.

For centuries, caravanserais constituted key parts of a rich circuit of travel and trade by providing shelter, food, and water for caravans, pilgrims, and other trekkers. For many travelers, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravanserai can be a broad experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back to a forgotten age.

The earliest caravanserais in Iran were built during the Achaemenid era (550 - 330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 to 1629, he ordered the construction of a network of caravanserais across the country. Such roadside inns were once constructed along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and animals. The former Silk Road may be the most famous example, dotted with caravanserais.

## Archaeologists uncover 'lost' home depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry

Often referred to as the world's most famous medieval artwork, the Bayeux Tapestry is both an intricate illustration of the events leading up to the Norman conquest of England in 1066 and a historical enigma. Several mysteries still surround the dazzling embroidery, including the identity of its maker, but new research may have found another piece of the puzzle.

The 68.3-meter-long (224-foot-long) tapestry depicts William, Duke of Normandy, and his army killing Harold Godwinson, or Harold II, the last Anglo-Saxon king of England, at the Battle of Hastings. While the embroidery's portrayal of Harold pulling an arrow out of his eye may be a matter of debate, a team of archaeologists says it has confirmed a different detail from Harold's tapestry scenes: the location of his residence in Bosham, England.

The team used a combination of traditional and modern techniques to establish the site of the king's palace, which appears twice in the artwork — once when Harold is feasting in an extravagant hall before setting sail to France and the second time on his return prior to the battle. The researchers reported their findings January 9 in The Antiguaries Journal.

"We often just think of (the Bayeux Tapestry) as a piece of artwork, but of course, it's depicting events and places. And to be able to, with some certainty, locate one of those places from the tapestry on the ground in real life is really exciting," said the study's lead author Dr.

Duncan Wright, a senior lecturer in medieval archaeology at Newcastle University in Newcastle, England.

Archaeological remains from this period are hard to come by, said study coauthor Oliver Creighton, a professor of archaeology at England's University of Exeter. The houses, even for those of high status, were made of timber, and the wood would not have survived. Also, the Norman Conquest likely eradicated most evidence of its predecessors, Creighton added.

The discovery not only sheds light on the final Anglo-Saxon king, it also provides a rare window into a key turning point in history for England, researchers said.

Bosham is named on the Bayeux Tapestry. but the exact location of Harold's residence depicted on the embroidery has not been clear. Over the years, archaeologists had a hunch that a large house built in the 17th century, the focal point of the present-day village that exists there, sat on top of where the palace once stood.

To confirm this location, researchers used a range of methods, such as analysis of standing structures within the current house, ground-penetrating radar to scan and man any buried remains of the medieval palace, and a review of evidence from a 2006 excavation inside the house and the garden.

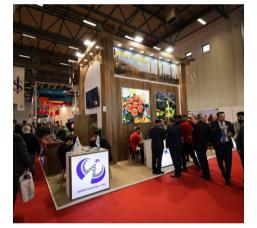
TEHRAN - Iran participated in the Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Exhibition (EMITT), which was held in Istanbul from February 5 to 7.

Cultural performances, featuring traditional dances from various ethnic groups, harvested exceptional attention for the country's pavilion at the event, Mehr reported. "These cultural programs, designed by the Touring & Automobile Club of Iran, were part of Iran's broader efforts at the 28th edition of EMITT to showcase its rich cultural heritage."

The presence of Iran at EMITT, was facilitated by the Club and representing the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. Its pavilion highlighted diverse sectors such as cultural and natural sites, Persian cuisine, and intangible cultural heritage, to name a few. It offered visitors an experience of the country's tourism potential in the realms of eco-tourism, health tourism, and traditional handicrafts.

Beyond visual appeal, Iran's presence was aimed to enhance global partnerships and tional tourism professionals, investors, and

## Iran showcases charm at EMITT 2025



stakeholders.

Hassan Didehban, the cultural advisor of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Istanbul, praised Iran's active and notable participation in this year's EMITT. He highlighted the importance of such international exhibitions for promoting Iran's tourism capabilities.

Didehban emphasized the significance promote sustainable tourism. Moreover, of Iran's presence in global exhibitions and the country offers a rich array of experiencsessions and meetings to engage interna- cellent platform for showcasing the coun- hospitality, vibrant bazaars, and culinary try's tourism potential, the official said.

The head of EMITT, also acknowledged Iran's key role in the regional tourism industry, describing the country's participation as a valuable opportunity to enhance cultural and tourism relations between Iran and Turkey. She expressed hope that this renewed participation, realized after several years, would pave the way for stronger collaborations and increased tourist exchange between the two nations.

The fair recognized as one of the top five tourism exhibitions worldwide, was inaugurated with the participation of high-ranking Turkish officials, including Turkish Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya and Istanbul Governor Omed Khoshnaw, the report said. It brought together 450 active representatives from 110 countries to the TÜYAP Istanbul Fair Center

Renowned for its UNESCO-listed heritage sites, Iran is a treasure trove for travelers. From the architectural splendor of Persepolis and the intricate tilework of Isfahan's mosques to the lush Caspian forests and the rugged beauty of the Alborz Mountains, the Club organized a number of interactive international arenas. It has provided an ex- es. Visitors are also drawn to its renowned delights.

(Source: CNN)

### **Echoes of Iran**



Clay vessel, excavated from Dalma Tepe, northwest Iran, chalcolithic period, ca. 5000-4500 BC, being kept at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Diameter: 17.15 cm; Height: 15.24 cm; Diameter of rim: 13.18 cm

# Nowruz 1404: handicraft exhibits to be set up at city entrances, border crossings

TEHRAN - Iran plans to establish handicraft sales exhibitions at railway stations, city entrances, and border crossings across the country during the Nowruz 1404 holidays.

This initiative aims to support artisans and craftspeople by providing them with opportunities to showcase and sell their handcrafted products to millions of travelers during the peak holiday season.

Maryam Jalali-Dehkordi, Deputy Minister of Handicrafts, announced the plan during the 64th meeting of the National Travel Services Coordination Headquarters. She emphasized that handicrafts will have a strong presence in key travel hubs throughout the Nowruz celebrations.

Reflecting on last year's success, the official noted that over two million holidaymakers engaged with handicraft workshops during Nowruz 1403. She highlighted the significance of Nowruz overlapping with [the lunar month of Ramadan, stating that many traditional handicrafts are deeply rooted in religious and cultural expressions. Visitors to religious sites and shrines will have the opportunity to explore locally crafted artworks.

Jalali-Dehkordi also encouraged the National Travel Services Coordination Headquarters to make full use of Iran's handicraft industry. She suggested that artisans could enrich Red Crescent aid stations, urban service centers, and nomadic settlements along travel routes. Temporary handicraft bazaars could also be strategically placed to attract passing motorists, she added.

Additionally, Jalali-Dehkordi proposed that artists set up



sales and exhibition booths in educational centers, allowing travelers to experience and purchase authentic Iranian handicrafts during their journeys.

According to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Iran's annual handicraft exports currently stand at about \$250 million, with an additional \$250 million in informal "suitcase" exports. However, the global market for handicrafts is valued at \$770 billion, underscoring a significant opportunity for growth.

Currently, a selection of 13 cities and three villages in Iran have been registered by the World Council of Handicrafts as "world cities of handicrafts".

# **Educational reform in Iran** after Islamic revolution

#### By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN -Subsequent to the Islamic revolution in 1979, Iran's education system has experienced great changes thanks to the establishment of the Literacy Movement, and the development of educational infrastructure which have resulted in increased education coverage rate, decreased literacy gap between men and women, and the growth of per capita educational space, particularly in deprived areas.

The literacy rate among those aged above 6 has risen from 47.5 percent before 1979 to 90.7 percent after the victory of the Islamic revolution, ranking Iran among the top countries in education coverage, ISNA reported.

During the 46-year period, the number of students has increased by 10 million, reaching 17 million, and eight schools have been constructed on a daily basis in underprivileged areas.

In 1976, the literacy rate amounted to 47.5 percent; the literacy rate for men and women aged 10 to 49 was 61.8 and 35.5 percent, respectively, indicating a big educational gap. However, in the Iranian calendar year 1402 (March 2023-March 2024), the literacy rate increased to 90.7 percent with 97.8 percent of men and 96.1 percent of women, aged 10 to 49, being literate. After the Islamic revolution, the rate of literacy among women has grown by 2.5 times.

In the past, literacy referred to the ability of being able to read and write, later it included mastering a foreign language. Currently, the term literacy has gone



beyond these concepts, encompassing the ability to solve life problems, and this is what the country is trying to achieve.

Since 1979, school construction has experienced a three-hundred percent growth, rising from 33, 121 schools with 132,484 classrooms to 107,000 schools with 560.000 classrooms now.

Education space per student in Iran has increased from 1.8 square meters at the beginning of the revolution to 5.45 square meters in the current year. Currently, there are over 1,100 stonemade schools. President Masoud Pezeshkian's administration is determined to eliminate and replace stone-made as well as pre-fabricated schools with new schools in a year.

One of the other recent achievements of the education system is preparing and implementing a reform plan, as a bedrock of development. After being reviewed and studied for 12 years, the plan is meant to act as a roadmap to further enhance the quality of ed-

ucation in the country. It has been implemented in ten

schools so far; it is scheduled to be implemented nationwide in three years and is expected to positively transform education.

The plan focuses on management, teachers, families, curriculum, and physical and cultural environment. It aims to help realize students' personal, and social skills and improve educational quality among both students and teachers. It also helps families by enhancing their parenting skills training.

#### Educational equity is not a slogan

President Masoud Pezeshkian has said that the administration intends to transform the education system so that no student is deprived of the right to quality education, highlighting that educational equity is not a mere slogan but a fundamental goal.

It is not acceptable that students in public schools in underprivileged areas do not receive a good education while they have to compete with students in private schools that benefit from the best education, Pezeshkian stressed.

He made the remarks on Thursday in Bojnourd, the capital of North Khorasan province, Borna reported.

The president said providing vocational training alongside education is one of the key areas of transforming educational methods, through which the youth will develop skills needed for a profession after graduating from high school.

Referring to the extensive plans to solve the infrastructural challenges of schools, the president stressed, "We will overcome all school constructing challenges within a year. One of our main objectives is to turn public schools into the best education model."

The president urged governor generals and all executive officials to cooperate with other sectors on a national plan to promote equity in educational spaces within the specified timeframe.

He went on to stress the necessity of public participation and the role of citizens in realizing the major national plan of building schools, saying, "We need to share our plans with the people to build not only schools for their children but also appropriate sports and recreational spaces for extracurricular activities."

Pezeshkian further emphasized the importance of action instead of mere speeches, stating that his administration has prioritized solving the issue of educational space shortages, especially in deprived areas across the country within a year.

## Iran to unveil anti-cancer vaccine in summer

TEHRAN -Iran's National Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (NIGEB) has developed an anti-cancer vaccine that will be released in the summer.

"The vaccine will be able to prevent all cancers," Mehr news agency quoted Javad Mohammadi, head of NIGEB, as saying.

Referring to the two new products manufactured by Iranian knowledge-based companies, namely intravenous immunoglobulins (IVIg) and albumin, the official said IVIg is essential for people with congenital immunodeficiency. Due to their weak immune system, these patients need immunoglobulin injections every 20 days.

Currently, to meet the needs of patients, blood plasma is sent to other countries to be turned into various proteins, including immunoglobulin, and the products are imported to be used by patients. The process is not only costly but also time-consuming, Mohammadi noted.

Albumin is a type of protein made by the liver. It keeps fluid from leaking out of blood vessels, so it is critical for patients suffering from kidney and liver diseases, he added.

"These two products are now available to patients in the domestic market. Knowledge-based companies will soon be able to meet 70 percent and then 100 percent of the market's needs," Mohammadi highlighted.

### National Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology

NIGEB was established in 1989 under the supervision of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. Since then, NIGEB has been given a mandate to undertake original, state-of-the-art research activities.

It was established with dual purposes of

ANCE *laccine* promoting research in avant-garde areas of

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**TEHRAN TIMES** 

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biological sciences and biotechnology as well as providing advanced training and educational programs for scientists and students from other universities and academic institutions.

NIGEB is a pivotal hub for advancing the field of biotechnology in Iran, notable for its focus on multidisciplinary collaboration and ethical progress.

Impressively, they engage in both basic and applied research across various biotechnology sectors while considering the implications of technological commercialization and socio-economic impacts.

NIGEB's commitment to global cooperation and knowledge sharing is essential, particularly in a domain as fast-evolving and globally connected as genetic engineering and biotechnology.

Their work not only propels the scientific community within Iran but also makes significant contributions to international efforts addressing complex issues in agriculture, industry, the environment, and health. This reflects a comprehensive approach to research and education in the field.

## Over 4,000 individuals affected by blizzards rescued

TEHRAN -Since Thursday night, relief teams have provided rescue services to more than 4,000 people who were affected by snow storms in 15 provinces, an official with Crisis Management Organization has said.

The rescuers have helped 2,500 of the individuals trapped in blizzards, by transferring them to safe places and providing emergency shelters to them, IRIB quoted Hossein Zafari as saying.

The temperature is predicted to drop by 8-12 degrees in most parts of the country in the next few days.

According to a report by the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), the relief teams have provided rescue services in fifteen provinces including East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Ardebil, Isfahan, Ilam, Qazvin, Kermanshah, Kordestan, Lorestan, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Mazandaran, Markazi, Hamedan, and Semnan provinces since February 6, the IRCS website reported.



viduals, respectively, the official added. IRCS is a top organization

In September, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) project manager, Faisal Mahboob, lauded the capabilities of the Iranian Red Crescent Society as outstanding.

In May 2024, Pir-hossein Kolivand, head of the IRCS, said the IRCS is recognized as one of the five prominent societies worldwide thanks to its wide range of activities and great achievements both nationally and internationally.

Referring to health, treatment, and rehabilitation as one of the parts of the IRCS activities, Kolivand said the IRCS hospitals, pharmacies, and clinics meet the medical and therapeutic needs of thousands of citizens every day.

The IRCS medical centers abroad are reputable worldwide. As a humanitarian organization, the IRCS is trying to alleviate the suffering of the people involved in accidents, emergencies, and conflicts.

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

## Visually impaired students to benefit from new braille embosser

TEHRAN – The United Nations Children's awareness and fostering a supportive envi-Fund (UNICEF) has procured a high-tech braille embosser for the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Special Education Organization (SEO), which will enhance learning for a total of 7,145 children with visual disabilities across the country.

The Braillo 600 SR2 braille embosser will address the critical need for accessible learning materials among the 7,145 children with visual disabilities currently studying in Iran's formal education system, the UNICEF website announced in a press release on February 4.

This includes 5,239 girls and boys in main-

ronment.

This initiative highlights the commitment of both organizations to promoting inclusion, accessibility, and equal opportunities for children with disabilities in Iran. UNICEF website announced in a press release on January 30.

The nationwide fundraising campaign is designed to improve children with disabilities' lives. The campaign's messages emphasize empowerment, dignity, and inclusion for children with disabilities.

This co-branded campaign will run across all Tejarat Bank branches, ATMs, Tejarat Bank customer clubs, and digital platforms, encouraging the public to donate to UNICEF.

The relief teams have so far conducted 108 rescue missions to save 2,649 individuals affected by snow, pulling 960 vehicles out of heavy snow, the IRCS website quoted Babak Mahmoudi as saying.

They provided emergency shelters, foodstuff, and basic goods to 857, 364, and 111 indi-

The official said he was really impressed by the capacity and the wide range of activities carried out by the IRCS.

"The International Federation will support the activities of the Iranian Red Crescent Society to commence a new phase of collaboration with the society," Mahboob added, the IRCS website reported.

According to a report released by the IFRC on the most important achievements of the Iranian Red Crescent Society during January-December 2023, the IRCS continues to tackle the impacts of climate change, program adaptability, and preparedness efforts that have been triggered by the climate crisis.

**ENGLISH IN USE** 

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Iran spends \$477m on refugee education annually

Iran spends about 20 trillion rials (nearly \$477 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) every year on the education of foreign national students residing in the country, head of the international affairs department of the Ministry of Education has said.

Over 558,000 foreign national children are receiving education in Iran completely free of charge, 474,000 of whom are Afghan children, ISNA quoted Gholamreza Karimi as saying on Wednesday.

Karimi said that there are currently about 137,000 undocumented Afghan students in the country, adding that their parents do not have valid residency documents, "but we have provided the conditions for enrolling them in schools.

## ایران سالی ۲ هزار میلیارد تومان برای دانش آموزان اتباع خارجي هزينه مي كند

ایران هر سال حدود ۲ هزار میلیارد تومان برای ۵۵۸ هزار دانش آموز اتباع خارجی در مدارس سراسر کشور هزینه می کند. به گزارش روز چهارشنبه ایسنا، غلامرضا کریمی رئیس مرکز امور بینالملل و مدارس خارج از کشور وزارت آموزش و پرورش گفت از این تعداد ۴۷۴ هزار نفر آنها اتباع افغانستانی هستند. کریمی با بیان اینکه در حال حاضر ۱۳۷ هزار دانش آموز غیرمجاز در كشور داريم گفت پدر و مادر اين افراد مدارك اقامتي معتبر ندارند اما ما شرايط ثبت نام آنها را مدارس فراهم كرديم.

stream schools and 1,906 in special schools, ensuring more equitable educational opportunities for these students gaining access to inclusive education through enhanced production of braille textbooks.

This initiative addresses a pressing challenge in Iran's education system, where the previous two Norwegian braille embossers, after 35 years of service, have become unreliable and insufficient for current needs.

The SEO must produce approximately 28,000 braille textbooks annually, comprising 194 subject-grade specific textbooks in 279 volumes, to ensure all students have access to educational materials before the school year begins.

Access to braille learning materials is essential for ensuring children with visual disabilities fully participate in society and realize their rights. This new embosser will serve generations of students, with an estimated 214,350 children benefiting over its 30-year lifespan.

UNICEF's procurement of the embosser was especially critical, as international sanctions had prevented SEO from acquiring the equipment directly. This intervention demonstrates UNICEF's commitment to supporting inclusive education and ensuring no child is left behind due to disability.

### Measures focusing on children with disabilities

UNICEF and Tejarat Bank have started a campaign titled 'Disability is part of me, not all of me' which aims to empower children with disabilities in Iran through raising

Under a globally unique program called 'Earthquake Preparedness Education for Children with Disabilities', UNICEF and its partners have developed three books each targeting different stakeholders, i.e. parents/caregivers of children with disabilities, teachers, and policymakers.

Throughout the books, UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in collaboration with the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES), offer guidelines on disaster management, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, focusing on children with hearing impairments, mobility impairments, and autism spectrum disorder so far, UNICEF website announced in a press release on January 19.

Furthermore, four consultative training workshops were held, where teachers, social workers, and aid workers learned and provided feedback on strategies for supporting children with disabilities before, during, and after earthquakes.

The program's journey does not stop here. Plans are already underway to update the guidebooks to include guidelines for children with vision impairments and to expand the resources to address all types of disabilities. This initiative represents a significant leap towards inclusive earthquake preparedness, ensuring a safer and more resilient future for every child in Iran, regardless of their disabilities.

# ELERANDON



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### **FEBRUARY 8, 2025**

### GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Beware, beware of sinfulness. By God, He has veiled His servants' guilt so much as if He has forgiven them. Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:18 Evening: 17:58 Dawn: 5:32 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:57 (tomorrow)

## What's in Tehran art galleries



### Painting

\* Nian Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Hamed Sadr-Arhami.

The exhibition entitled "Dewall" will be running until February 21 at the gallery located at 5 Abhari Alley, Vafai St. off Tur St. off South Mofatteh St.

\* Akbar Raad is showcasing his latest paintings in an exhibi-

The exhibit named "Flowers of Suffering" will run until Feb-

AGNOSIA

ruary 19 at No. 71, 22th Alley, Larestan St. off Motahhari Ave.



\* Paintings by Ali Sharifi are currently on display in an exhibit at Jaleh Gallery.

Entitled "Night Orchestra", the exhibition runs until February 21 at the gallery located at No. 3, Noshahr Alley, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.



\* Shamis Gallery is showcasing paintings by

tion at Bostan Gallery.

a group of artists including Leila Banki, Hassan Ayyazi, Bamdad Rezvanian, Mehrdad Khotai, Masiha Mandegar and Sara KEshmiri in an exhibition.

The exhibit named "Agnosia" will run until February 21 at the gallery located at 8 Daniali St., Andarzgu Blvd. in the Farmanieh neighborhood.



\* Aran Gallery is play-

ing host to an exhibition of paintings by Maryam Farzadian. The exhibition titled "Resume of A Gardener" will run until February 21 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle-le-Chateau St.



# **36th Festival of Films from** Iran kicks off in Chicago

TEHRAN-The 36th Festival of Films from Iran began in Chicago, the U.S., on Friday, showing some of the highlights of Iranian cinema presented at the Gene Siskel Film Center - during the festival and year-round - in the last 36 years.

The festival has selected award-winning films as well as films from globally-renowned directors to show at its current edition, ISNA reported.

The lineup includes "The Sealed Soil" by Marva Nabili (1977), "Close Up" by Abbas Kiarostami (1990), "Leila" by Dariush Mehrjui (1997), "Children of Heaven" by Majid Majidi (1997), "A Separation" by Asghar Farhadi (2011), and "Starless Dreams" by Mehrdad Oskouei (2016).

Now as the festival gears up to conclude its third decade, the organizers are nostalgic for these momentous years of this groundbreaking festival and of a selection of the films that have defined the last 36 years of Iranian cinema. In an ever-shifting cinematic landscape, and in a volatile time for Iran, the festival looks back in homage, while simultaneously looking forward in anticipation. The Festival of Films from

Iran was founded in 1989 and continues as a yearly showcase



that spotlights the innovation, resilience, and humanism of contemporary Iranian filmmakers and acclaimed Iranian auteurs. The festival serves as a window to Iran and its political, social and cultural world, forming and challenging audiences' perceptions of Iran, while also building a richer understanding of the country and its cinema.

The Gene Siskel Film Center is Chicago's premier art house cinema in the heart of the theater district, bringing film lovers together for an unparalleled movie-going experience. It presents a curated collection of eclectic international, independent, and classic cinema with festivals and year-round programming while striving to provide a welcoming space reflective of Chicago's diverse community. As a public program of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Film Center fosters dialogue that sets films in historical and cultural context through panels, lectures, and filmmaker conversations.

Since 1972, the Gene Siskel Film Center of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago has presented cutting edge cinema to an annual audience of 100,000. The Film Center's programming includes annual film festivals that celebrate diverse voices and international cultures, premieres of trailblazing work by today's independent filmmakers, restorations and revivals of essential films from cinema history, and insightful, provocative discussions with filmmakers and media artists. Altogether, the Film Center hosts over 1,600 screenings and 200 filmmaker appearances every year. The Film Center was renamed the Gene Siskel Film Center in 2000 after the late, nationally celebrated film critic, Gene Siskel.

After a week of screening glorious Iranian films, this vear's edition of the Festival of Films from Iran will conclude on February 13.

## 17th Fajr Visual Arts Festival to kick off in Tehran

TEHRAN- The Tehran province section of the 17th Fajr Visual Arts Festival, featuring My Homeland segment, will officially open on Tuesday at Rasul Mehr Gallery in Tehran.

This provincial artistic event will showcase the works of 15 selected artists from Tehran in various disciplines, including painting, calligraphy, sculpture, photography, installation art, performance art, and printmaking.

Leila Banki, Saman Shadanlou, Zohreh Hassani, Mohammad Kariminia, and Mehrad Mehrkish are among the selected artists participating in the festival.

This edition of the festival will be held in



a non-competitive format, focusing on the subcultures, traditions, and local arts of the

My Homeland section of the festival will also take place across all 31 provinces, featuring exhibitions of artists' works curated by the festival's provincial artistic directors.

My Homeland segment will begin in Fars province, with the opening bell signaling the start of the festival ringing from the Sarv Gallery in Shiraz.

Under the artistic management of Behdad Najafi Asadollahi, the Tehran province event will run until February 18.

Tehran's City Theater to stage Slawomir Mrozek's "The Martyrdom of Peter Ohey"

TEHRAN-The play "The Martyrdom of Peter Ohey" by Polish playwright Slawomir Mrozek will go on stage at the City Theater in Tehran from February 9.

Fares Bagheri has directed the

90-minute play, which has Mor-

teza Hoseinzadeh, Farzaneh Mey-

dani, Mohammad Ashkanfar, Amir

Shams, Mehdi Abuhamzeh, and

In the play, a family's home life

Aynaz Jalili in the cast.

across Iran.

As more and more absurd charac-

form him that there's a wild animal ters invade their home (a scientist, in his own home. The tiger attracts a government official, a circus man- a pageant of characters that seek ager, and more), the family must to exploit the tiger on behalf of their decide whether or not to give in and respective institutions. Representawritten in 1959 by Mrozek, a journalist and cartoonist by training during Poland's Stalinist era.

One of Poland's most celebrated playwrights, Mrozek wrote this ab-

country's provinces.

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

The exhibition named "Termite Corrosion" will be running until February 18 at the gallery located at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.



\* A collection of paintings by a group of artists including Hamideh Akbari, Aida

The exhibition will continue until February 21 at the gallery located at 30 Purmusa St.

Paintings by Nasrin Eidi, Mina Golparvar, Sheida Ma-

The exhibition will be running until February 12 at the gallery

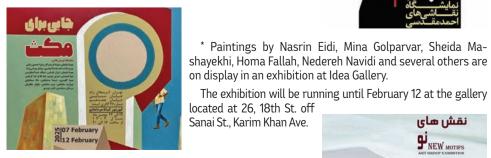
off Somayyeh St.

نقش های

**P**NEW MOTIFS

paintings by Ahmad Moqaddasi. The exhibit will be running until February 17 at the gallery that can be found at 148 Karim Khan Ave.

\* Saless Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of



\* An exhibition of paintings by a group of artists including Bahareh Talebi, Mahnaz Nasseri, Zeinab Yadmand and Paniz Otadi is underway at Ebteda Gallery.

The exhibition titled "New Motif" will run until February 12 at the gallery located at 35 Farrokhi Alley, near Vali-e Asr Square.



turns upside down when a tiger Raad, Parva Karkhaneh, Arian Qasempour and Ofog Hosseini is on view in an exhibition at Soo Gallery.

"Oscar and Lucinda" written by Australian author Peter Carey has been released in bookstores

Maliheh Ghodrati has translated the book and Afkar Publications has brought it out in 540 pages, Mehr reported.

Carey's Booker Prize winning novel imagines Australia's youth, before its dynamic passions became dangerous habits. It is also a startling and unusual love story.

Oscar is a young English clergyman who has broken with his past and developed a disturbing talent for gambling. A country girl of singular ambition, Lucinda moves to Sydney, driven by dreams of self-reliance and the building of an industrial Utopia. Together this unlikely pair create and are created by the spectacle of mid-19th century Australia.

Carey's visionary brilliance, and his capacity to delight and surprise, propel this story to its stun-

join the circus.

The play shows how the hero of its title deals with the appearance of a bloodthirsty tiger in his bathroom. Peter is a decidedly unpolitical and oblivious person, more interested in his daily newspaper than his wife or children. He's so oblivious that suddenly appears in their bathroom. it takes a buffoonish official to in-

tives of science, economics, art and government make themselves at home, while Peter is too ineffectual to stop them.

Slawomir Mrozek (1930-2013) turned from journalism to creating absurdist satires, the peculiarities of which helped him evade censorship. "The Martyrdom of Peter Ohey" was surdist piece as a subtle critique of the political system of the time.

Mrozek began writing plays in the late 1950s. His theatrical works belong to the genre of absurdist fiction, intended to shock the audience with non-realistic elements, political and historic references, distortion, and parody.

## Peter Carey's "Oscar and Lucinda" available in Persian

ning conclusion. TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the novel

> It won the 1988 Booker Prize the year it was released, and the 1989 Miles Franklin Award. It was shortlisted in 2008 for The Best of the Booker, in celebration of the prize's 40th anniversary.

The novel was adapted years later for a film of the same name, released in 1997. It was directed by Gillian Armstrong and starred Ralph Fiennes, Cate Blanchett, and Tom Wilkinson.

Peter Carey, 81, is one of only five writers to have won the Book-

er Prize twice. Carey won his first Booker Prize in 1988, for "Oscar and Lucinda," and won his second Booker Prize in 2001, for "True History of the Kelly Gang".

Carey has won the Miles Franklin Award three times, and is frequently named as Australia's next



contender for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

In addition to writing fiction, he collaborated on the screenplay of the film "Until the End of the World" with Wim Wenders and was, for nineteen years, executive director of the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program at Hunter College, part of the City University of New York.

