

Trump's Retreat Not B-2 Bluster Led to Oman Talks

Tehran Times understands Trump backed off non-nuclear demands in March letter to Iran



Tehran denounces Berlin's "hypocritical" rights charade, demands reckoning past atrocities

TEHRAN – Iran unleashed a blistering condemnation of Germany's recent maneuvers at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Friday, exposing Berlin's "interfering and hypocritical" posturing and calling for accountability for its complicity in human rights violations, both historical and ongoing.

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmail Baghaei delivered a searing rebuke of Germany's co-sponsorship of a resolution extending the mandate of the UN's Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran, branding it a "politically motivated abuse" of international mechanisms designed to undermine Iran's sovereignty.

The resolution, pushed through with 24 votes in favor, 8 against, and 15 abstentions, has been seen as another example of Western overreach by Tehran. ▶ Page 2

Pezeshkian highlights strategic ties with Baghdad in call with Iraqi counterpart

TEHRAN – In a phone call on Friday afternoon, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian reaffirmed the central importance of Iran's relationship with neighboring Iraq, describing it as one of the most vital pillars of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy.

Speaking with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid, President Pezeshkian emphasized the deep cultural, historical, and strategic bonds between the two nations, stating, "The people of Iraq are not just neighbors to us—they are our brothers. Relations with Iraq are among the most significant arenas of Iran's foreign engagement."

The call, which came amid the start of the new Iranian year and following recent regional religious celebrations, was marked by mutual expressions of goodwill. President Rashid extended heartfelt congratulations to the Iranian people and leadership on the occasion, and sent his personal greetings to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

President Pezeshkian thanked his Iraqi counterpart for the kind words and shared his hope that the two leaders would soon have an opportunity to meet in person. "As you rightly said, I look forward to a face-to-face meeting at the earliest opportunity," Pezeshkian noted. "Such a meeting would allow us to explore concrete pathways to deepen our cooperation, strengthen mutual understanding, and enhance coordination on regional and international matters." ▶ Page 3

Israel's limitless evil acts: From occupation and genocide to open lies

By Parviz Rashidi

TEHRAN – Israel is not only an occupier, racist, and criminal regime but also a regime that feels no shame in telling open lies.

When it was announced in late March that 15 paramedics had gone missing in the southern city of Rafah in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli occupation army kept the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the UN in the dark.

Occupation forces had killed paramedics that included eight Red Crescent staff, six members of the Gaza civil defense agency, and one employee of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees.

The regime's forces had shot dead paramedics in an execution-style and buried them in a mass grave in the Tal al-Sultan area of Rafah city. They had even crushed the ambulances under the sand to cover up the scene of the war crime.

Lebanon and the Muscat negotiations

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — As U.S. pressure on Hezbollah escalates, the Lebanese, as well as those in West Asia and the larger world, are anticipating the U.S.-Iran negotiations.

Ariel Kahana, a diplomatic and US affairs analyst for Israel Hayom quoted political sources as saying that Israel had no prior knowledge of the "agreement" between Trump and the Iranians to begin negotiations, confirming that according to a source in the Israeli delegation, "the shock was evident."

Avi Ashkenazi, a military affairs correspondent and commentator for Maariv further said that Trump informing Netanyahu of his intention to enter into negotiations with Iran was a "real bombshell," especially given the widespread belief that Washington was on the verge of launching a military attack against it.

49% of Israelis doubt victory over Hamas

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Survey reveals nearly half of Israelis believe military force alone cannot defeat Hamas in Gaza.

According to the poll, 49% of respondents said it is not possible to both secure the release of hostages still held in Gaza and remove Hamas from power.

The survey was conducted by the "Viterbi Family Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research", which claims to hold the most comprehensive database of Israeli public opinion surveys.

In contrast, 46% of respondents said they "believe or are certain" that both goals, freeing the hostages and toppling Hamas, can be achieved.

When asked to choose which objective they prioritized, 68% of Israelis said the recovery of hostages should take precedence, while only 25% prioritized the removal of Hamas.

Netanyahu's crackdown on reservists risks deepening division in the society

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – The Gaza war has not only drawn international attention to Israel's military actions but also sparked a rare internal opposition from one of the nation's most elite institutions: the military reservists.

As numerous reservists openly advocate for an end to the Gaza operations, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's response has been one of severe criticism and calls for their dismissal. However, this reaction indicates much more than simply a government's need for control during wartime; it highlights a growing rift between Israel's ruling coalition and the country's established elite institutions.

Netanyahu's support for punitive actions against dissenting reservists is a strategically calculated move, ▶ Page 5

Burning bridges in Buenos Aires: Argentina's reckless rift with Iran

By Ehsan Etesam

TEHRAN – In the grand theatre of international relations, Argentina has once again taken centre stage, but not for a performance worth applauding.

Under President Javier Milei, a.k.a. "Argentina's Trump", the nation has embarked on a reckless and unnecessary hostile approach toward Iran, a move that reeks of compliance with the United States' irrational demands. This strategy, ostensibly aimed at solving Argentina's ever-deepening economic woes, is a textbook case of diplomatic immaturity—one that risks severe consequences while ignoring the lessons of history and the virtues of independent foreign policy. ▶ Page 2



Iranians reignite 'Fridays of Wrath' protests, vow solidarity with Gaza Resistance

TEHRAN – Thousands of Iranians rallied in renewed 'Fridays of Wrath' protests, condemning Tel Aviv's actions in Gaza and Western complicity in the regime's crimes.

Organized by the Islamic Development Coordination Council following the Friday prayers, demonstrators chanted, "Zionist terrorists, with U.S. support, are committing genocide!" while brandishing Palestinian flags.

"Israel has brutally burned women and children alive under a shameful media blackout," read the council's statement, urging global institutions to "break their criminal silence."

Indirectly referencing international inaction, the Council warned that "history will shame those silent" and affirmed Iran's readiness to "support any military action against Zionists." Demonstrators vowed solidarity, declaring, "Gaza's cry is our cry—oppression's end is near."

Akbar Etemad, Iran's first nuclear chief, passes away at 95



TEHRAN PAPERS

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

From distrust to realism;
Tehran's roadmap for engagement

In a note, Shargh discussed Abbas Araghchi's article in the Washington Post and wrote: The article can be considered an intelligent attempt to explain the logic of the Islamic Republic of Iran's diplomacy in the current complex circumstances. On one hand, the text expresses Tehran's readiness to enter into a dialogue based on mutual respect, and on the other, it realistically and without simplistically cites the reasons why Iran is deeply doubtful and distrustful of the true intentions of the United States. The important point is to emphasize the principle that Iran pursues diplomacy not out of weakness but from a position of strength and rationality. In the nuclear dimension, Araghchi, citing assessments by Western intelligence agencies, emphasizes that Iran is not only "not" seeking nuclear weapons but is still adhering to its commitments under the JCPOA. Finally, Araghchi intelligently puts the ball in Washington's court and says the path to engagement is open but conditional on a change in America's language and behavior. The Islamic Republic of Iran, confident in its national strength, pursues a policy of peace but will stay united and powerful in the face of pressure and imposition.

Jam-e-Jam: Negotiation with the West, look to the East

About two weeks ago, Iran responded to Trump's letter and announced that it would accept the U.S. negotiation proposal with three conditions: one is that the negotiation be indirect, and the other is that the mediator for this type of negotiation is Oman, not the UAE, and that these negotiations be at a high level, which the U.S. accepted almost immediately and without resistance. Contrary to Western political and media narratives, it is the United States that is eager for such negotiations.

If the United States had opposed any of these conditions, the negotiations would have been postponed because the Iranian side does not have much need for negotiations. Accepting Iran's conditions shows that Trump was eager for the negotiations as soon as possible. We must make serious changes in foreign policy strategies. "Look to the East" in a situation in which America is noticing the growing power of China and India must be much stronger than a self-interested view and take the form of a strategic view, as we now see that Europe has turned to a strategic trade pact with India in an attempt to respond to Trump, and may even adjust its positions towards China in the future so as not to be the loser in a trade war with America.

Sobh-e-No: Muscat negotiations

In a commentary on the Iran-U.S. negotiations, Sobh-e-No wrote: Donald Trump announced the start of Iran negotiations (last Saturday during a meeting with Netanyahu) in Washington. Although some domestic media initially called Trump's statements a propaganda campaign, the news was confirmed by Iranian officials after a few hours, and it was said that indirect negotiations would be held on Saturday (April 12) in Muscat. Iran is going to the negotiating table because Trump was trying to make Iran look "anti-negotiation and anti-diplomacy" and create a global consensus against our country under a pretext that is Iran is seeking to acquire nuclear weapons and promote the Iranophobia project. However, what makes the fate of these negotiations uncertain is Trump's behavior, contradictory statements, and changing policies. Tehran still has a pessimistic view of Trump regarding his past behaviors. Therefore, Iran's primary goal in entering the negotiations is to verify America's true intentions regarding the nuclear issue. Now, we must wait and see whether the Trump team is serious and negotiates in good faith and whether it will secure Iran's interests or not. Of course, presenting initiatives and acting intelligently and skillfully in negotiations will also be effective in achieving results.

Arman-e-Melli: The society seeks peace, not war

Arman-e-Melli interviewed Dr. Zahra Nejad Bahram, a reformist political activist, about the Saturday nuclear talks between Iran and the U.S. in Oman. She said: Iran and the United States have concluded to resolve their problems through negotiations, which is a positive development, and negotiations have been welcomed by the people. In the current situation, the country's problems have become so complicated that perhaps one cannot expect to move towards lifting sanctions with a single round of negotiations. However, the issue of resolving tensions and engaging in dialogue is a demand of the people, and for this reason, we observed that after it was announced that Iran and the United States are going to negotiate, the society and economy reacted positively. Another point is that Mr. Araghchi was involved in the JCPOA negotiations and was one of our (leading) negotiators. For this reason, he has a complete understanding of the details of the JCPOA negotiations and the challenges facing the country, and in the current situation, he is considered the best negotiator for talks with the United States.

Akbar Etemad, Iran's first nuclear chief, passes away at 95



TEHRAN – Akbar Etemad, a prominent figure in Iran's nuclear history and the first head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, has passed away at the age of 95.

His death marks the end of an era for a man often referred to as the "father of nuclear technology in Iran."

Etemad's journey began with his studies in electrical engineering at the University of Lausanne in Switzerland, where he later earned his doctorate.

His expertise led him to work at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology's Atomic Research Center, where he conducted significant research that would shape his future contributions to Iran's nuclear program.

In 1965, Etemad returned to Iran and was

appointed as a technical advisor for a nuclear reactor research project. By 1966, he had established the Atomic Energy Office within the Organization for Planning and Budget and was named its manager.

His vision culminated in 1974 when he became the first president of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), a position he held until the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

Throughout his career, Etemad was a staunch advocate for Iran's right to access nuclear energy, emphasizing its necessity for the country's development. He voiced concerns about Western powers' intentions and the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency, consistently calling for a principled approach to Iran's peaceful nuclear activities.

Etemad spent his final years in France, where he passed away. The former head of the AEOI, Ali Akbar Salehi, issued a message on Friday, offering condolences over his demise.

"Dr. Etemad, with his foresight, sincerity, and unparalleled honesty, laid such a strong foundation in the nuclear industry and technology that now our beloved country, Iran, proudly and powerfully advances this invaluable legacy," Salehi wrote.

Tehran denounces Berlin's "hypocritical" rights charade, demands reckoning past atrocities

From page 1 ▶ Baghaei stated: "Germany exploits the UNHRC to advance its arbitrary stances against Iran, all while shielding its own shameful record of enabling atrocities across the region."

Germany's arms to Israeli genocide: a stain on its rights claims

Iran's indignation centers on Berlin's role as a key arms supplier to Tel Aviv, a point Baghaei hammered home with unsparing clarity.

"Germany, the second supplier of arms to the genocidal Israeli regime, is complicit in all crimes and egregious violations of human rights and humanitarian law against the innocent people of Palestine and the region," he declared.

Since October 2023, German authorities have approved a significant spike in arms export licenses to Israel, which include advanced military components such as engine parts used in Merkava tanks—a cornerstone of the regime's armored warfare strategy targeting Palestinian territories.



"Germany lacks the legal credibility to portray itself as a human rights sympathizer," Baqaei noted, spotlighting the stark contradiction between Berlin's sanctimonious rhetoric and its actions.

Several Iranian officials, including Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, have amplified this critique, arguing that Germany's silence on Gaza's suffering while condemning Iran reveals a hollow moral façade.

Chemical catastrophe: Germany's historical complicity against Iranian victims

Iran's grievances run deeper than the present, rooted in Germany's unaddressed role during

the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988).

Baghaei invoked this painful history, asserting German state and private sectors had collaborated with Saddam Hussein's regime by supplying the means for chemical weapons that devastated Iranian civilians and soldiers.

Over 100,000 Iranians suffered immediate or lingering effects from these attacks, with countless survivors still battling chronic illnesses decades later.

"Germany must prove its sincerity about justice by accepting Iran's proposal for a joint fact-finding mechanism to uncover the truth behind its companies' role in arming Saddam,"

Baghaei demanded, echoing Tehran's longstanding diplomatic push.

He described this as a moral imperative: "If Germany truly values human rights, it must first atone for its part in enabling war crimes against the Iranian people."

Sharmahd Case: Germany's meddling exposed

Berlin also supported Jamshid Sharmahd, a German-Iranian citizen and leader of the Tondar terrorist group, held responsible for the 2008 Shiraz Mosque bombing that killed 14 innocents, as well as other terrorist acts, according to his confession to Iran's judiciary.

Germany's retaliatory measures following Sharmahd's death in prison—shutting Iranian consulates and recalling its ambassador—have drawn Tehran's ire as blatant interference.

"Germany protects terrorists under the guise of human rights while punishing Iran for safeguarding its people," Baghaei blasted, accusing Berlin of exploiting the case to escalate its anti-Iran agenda.

Iran, Slovakia launch new round of political talks in Bratislava



TEHRAN – Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, met with senior Slovak officials on Wednesday as part of a new round of political consultations between the two countries.

Invited by his Slovak counterpart, Marek Estok, Takht-Ravanchi held wide-ranging discussions in the Slovak capital, Bratislava, focusing on bilateral ties and key developments across regional and international arenas.

The talks between the deputy ministers covered cooperation in political, economic, cultural, academic, and consular fields. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to mutual respect and shared interests, emphasizing the will of their governments to deepen ties across various sectors.

In a significant outcome of the

visit, the two deputy ministers signed a supplementary agreement aimed at avoiding double taxation—an important step in strengthening economic relations.

Takht-Ravanchi also held a separate meeting with Marian Kery, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Slovak National Council. The two officials discussed ways to expand parliamentary cooperation and enhance engagement on both legislative and diplomatic fronts.

Iran, Serbia reinforce diplomatic and economic cooperation

Belgrade – Continuing his regional diplomatic tour, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, visited Serbia on Thursday to take part in the third round of political consultations with Serbian officials.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Western pressure has failed to halt Iran's progress: nuclear chief



TEHRAN – Iran's top nuclear official says the country's homegrown nuclear capabilities have matured into a strategic asset, despite years of Western opposition and pressure aimed at curbing its technological advancement.

Speaking during Friday prayers in Tehran, Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said Western powers have sought to monopolize nuclear technology and have consistently tried to block Iran's progress in the field.

"They set arbitrary redlines for this region, but we have moved beyond those limits," Eslami stated. "Nuclear science in Iran is no longer just a technical achievement—it has become a symbol of national will, deeply embedded in the spirit and determination of our people."

Eslami criticized the West's refus-

al to accept an independent Iran on equal footing with global powers, saying repeated attempts to sabotage Iran's nuclear program have ultimately failed.

"All their hostile efforts, including sabotage and obstruction, have yielded no results," he said. "And by God's grace, they never will."

The nuclear chief also revealed that more than 30 countries have expressed interest in acquiring Iranian nuclear products, underscoring the international demand for the country's peaceful nuclear advancements.

Eslami took aim at the United States for pressuring the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and preventing it from supporting Iran's peaceful nuclear efforts, despite the agency's mandate to promote the use of civilian nuclear energy.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Tehran's envoy in Moscow celebrates strategic accord approval, vows enhanced cooperation

TEHRAN — Kazem Jalali, Iran's Ambassador to Russia, met with Alexander Grushko, the Russian deputy foreign minister, on Thursday to discuss bilateral, regional, and global relations. They stressed strategic cooperation amid shifting international dynamics.

Grushko briefed Jalali on recent developments in Russia's relations with Europe and the United States, underscoring the need for regular diplomatic engagement with Iranian counterparts.

The discussion coincided with ongoing Russia-U.S. negotiations over the Ukraine War and precedes the Iran-U.S. indirect talks in Muscat, Oman.

Earlier, during Grushko's last-month visit to Tehran, he and Abbas Araghchi, Iran's Foreign Minister, reviewed European and regional issues.

Araghchi highlighted Iran's commitment to expanding ties, stating, "Our relations with Russia are progressing robustly across all domains, and we aim to harness untapped potentials for deeper collaboration."

'Duma's approval of partnership treaty a historic step'

On Friday, Jalali celebrated the Russian State Duma's ratification of the Iran-Russia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty, tweeting in Russian with a Persian proverb: "A good year is known by its spring."

This new year began with the signing of our historic treaty, and its approval by Russia's parliament marks a promising dawn for bilateral ties."

The treaty, inked during President Masoud Pezeshkian's January visit to Moscow, establishes a legal framework for long-term cooperation in defense, counter-



Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali meeting Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko on April 10, 2025

terrorism, energy, finance, and cultural exchange.

It awaits final approval from Iran's Parliament and Russia's Federation Council.

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf urged President Pezeshkian's government to expedite submitting the treaty for legislative review, emphasizing its strategic urgency.

Meanwhile, Vladimir Dzhubarov, Deputy Chair of Russia's Federation Council, confirmed the upper house (Federation Council) will review the pact on April 16, pledging support.

Analysts note the agreement reflects Tehran and Moscow's shared vision of countering Western hegemony while fostering Eurasian stability.

Trump's retreat, not B2-bluster, led to Oman talks

Tehran Times understands Trump backed off non-nuclear demands in March letter to Iran

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – Iran and the United States will encounter each other for the first time in months on Saturday afternoon, after the two countries opened themselves up to indirect nuclear negotiations mediated by the Persian Gulf state of Oman.

Since 2021, Tehran and Washington have held at least four rounds of indirect talks, most recently in May 2024. The Oman-mediated discussions centered on escalating regional tensions fueled by unprecedented Israeli aggression in West Asia.

Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, and the United States Special Envoy to West Asia, Steven Witkoff, will be representing the two sides. The U.S. had sought to tap the UAE as mediator for this latest round, a proposal Iran rejected. Washington also proposed direct talks, another request declined by Tehran.

The Tehran Times has learned that the negotiations will proceed in written form, with the Omani Foreign Minister acting as intermediary himself. This format reflects Iran's growing distrust of the U.S. since its withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) under President Donald Trump in 2018. Trump subsequently re-imposed and intensified sanctions lifted under the agreement, prompting Tehran to accelerate its nuclear program in 2020 after it became evident that the remaining signatories could not effectively mitigate the impact of the reinstated U.S. sanctions.



Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei said on Friday that Iran is giving diplomacy a "genuine chance".

"In earnest and with candid vigilance, we are giving diplomacy a genuine chance," he said on X, stressing that Washington "should value this decision made despite their prevailing confrontational hoopla."

The spokesman noted that the outcome of the meeting would determine Iran's upcoming moves.

"We do not prejudge. We do not predict. We intend to assess the other side's intent and resolve this Saturday," Baghaei stated. "We shall reflect and respond accordingly."

The upcoming Saturday talks occur amidst a backdrop of heightened tensions, threats, and diplomatic setbacks. Since taking office, Trump has repeatedly threatened military action against Iran if it refuses to sign a new nuclear agreement. A directive issued shortly after his return to the White House outlined demands for Iran to dismantle its nuclear program, curb its missile and drone capabilities, and sever ties with Resistance groups in West Asia. These demands prompted a firm response from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, who stated that Iran would not engage in talks with a "bullying" U.S., a stance Iranian officials from across the political spectrum rallied to.

Despite Western media portrayals – fueled by comments from figures like U.S. Secretary of State Marko Rubio, who attributed Iran's agreement to indirect talks to Washington's deployment of B2 bombers to Diego Garcia –

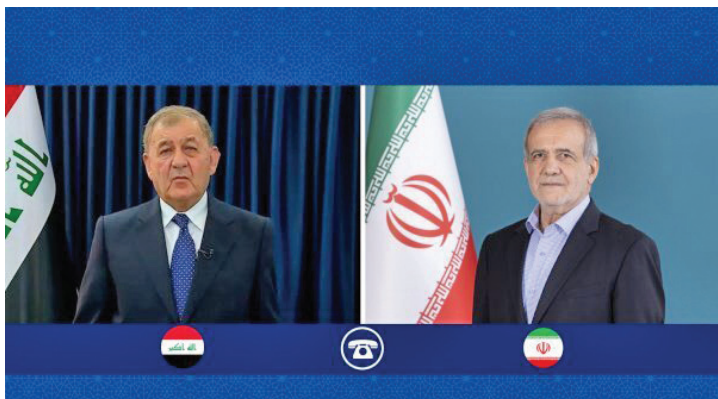
information obtained by the Tehran Times indicates that the talks were mainly scheduled due to an unprecedented shift in stance by Trump.

While Trump has repeatedly claimed his sole concern is Iran's nuclear program, his executive orders and private messages have often addressed broader issues. However, in a letter delivered to Ayatollah Khamenei through an Emirati diplomat back in March, Trump said he is willing to negotiate solely on the nuclear program and exclude discussions of Iran's military and foreign policy. Iranian officials have consistently maintained in recent years that only the nuclear program is open for negotiation.

A source familiar with the matter told the Tehran Times that while Iran is serious about reaching a nuclear agreement, it remains skeptical of the U.S.'s commitment. "This is a test to see if Trump was genuine about what he wrote in his letter," the source said. "We won't tolerate further demands. Even on the nuclear issue, the Americans need to be realistic. If they want us to limit our program but aren't willing to make meaningful concessions, it will never happen."

The source emphasized that Iran is prepared to protect its interests by all means if a win-win agreement is not reached. "They need to understand that we do not seek war, but we are not afraid of it either," the source stated. "Iran's position is clear; it is the United States that must decide whether it wants to resolve issues."

Pezeshkian highlights strategic ties with Baghdad in call with Iraqi counterpart



From Page 1 ▶ He added that Tehran and Baghdad would help advance shared goals—namely, promoting economic development, public welfare, peace, and stability not only for the Iranian and Iraqi peoples but for the broader region as well.

For his part, President Rashid emphasized Iraq's enduring solidarity with Iran, stating, "The government and people of Iraq have always stood alongside the Islamic Republic of Iran and will continue to do so. We have always wished the best for our Iranian brothers and sisters."

President Rashid also expressed readiness for comprehensive cooperation across multiple sectors, underscoring Iraq's openness to deeper engagement in pursuit of regional security, prosperity, and long-term development.

The two presidents concluded their conversation with a shared commitment to continue close dialogue and coordination, reinforcing the message that Iran and Iraq's partnership remains essential to the stability and progress of the region.

Burning bridges in Buenos Aires: Argentina's reckless rift with Iran

From Page 1 ▶ Let's set the scene: Argentina, grappling with an inflation rate that, while down to 84.5% in early 2025 from a staggering 211% in 2023, still suffocates its citizens, is desperate for a \$20 billion lifeline from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The U.S., wielding its influence within the IMF, has dangled this loan as a carrot, but with a catch—Argentina must sever its currency swap agreement with China, a financial mechanism that has been a critical buffer for its depleted reserves. On April 4, 2025, Mauricio Claver Carone, a top Trump adviser, made this condition explicit, framing the swap line as "extortionate" and a tool of Chinese influence. But the U.S. demands don't stop there. Argentina's recent 'judicial' move against Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei reeks of a broader alignment with Washington's anti-Iran agenda, a compliance that extends to reconstructing its already strained relations with Tehran.

sought to retaliate for the cancellation of a nuclear technology and material procurement contract concluded between the two nations during the presidency of Raul Alfonsin. No concrete evidence supported this theory, yet it set the tone for decades of baseless allegations, revealing a rush to judgment that reeks of political expediency rather than a genuine pursuit of justice.

Argentina's risky breaks with Iran and China jeopardizes valuable relationships for uncertain gains from the U.S.

The narrative against Iran gained traction over the years but not through credible evidence. Nine years after the attack, in 2003, Argentina's intelligence service (SIDE) produced the first pile of so-called evidence, conveniently aligned with the early accusations against Iran—raising suspicions of bias in a case already mired in controversy, particularly after the 2015 murder of prosecutor Alberto Nisman, whose death, ruled a homicide, still casts doubt on the integrity of Argentina's judicial process. A key player in framing Iran has been the terrorist organization Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK),



Argentinian President Javier Milei visits the al-Buraq Wall in the occupied al-Quds on February 6, 2024.

whose agenda against Tehran is well-documented; astonishingly, the testimonies of four MEK members were cited 61 times in the warrant, despite their dubious credibility. The key beneficiary of this long campaign appears to be Israel, which has pressured Argentina's judicial system for three decades to pin the blame on Iran. Yet, the evidence presented by Argentine authorities has been so unconvincing that even a British court in 2004 ruled there was insufficient proof to link Iranian politicians to the attack, dismissing the allegations outright. Similarly, Interpol, finding the case against Iranian nationals ungrounded, refrained from executing an international arrest warrant and eventually revoked it—a move that sparked Argentina's outrage but underscored the global skepticism toward these claims.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Foolad crowned Iran volleyball league champions



TEHRAN – Foolad Sirjan defeated Shahdab Yazd 3-2 (25-15, 22-25, 25-16, 25-22) to win title of the 2024/25 Iran Volleyball Super League on Thursday.

Foolad had defeated Shahdab on Tuesday and claimed the title in Best of Three format.

Fourteen club teams competed since September playing 201 games with Foolad Sirjan and Shahdab Yazd competing in the final at the Iran Volleyball Federation Hall in Tehran.

The Iranian volleyball league (IVSL) is a professional volleyball league in Iran at the top of the Iranian volleyball league system. It was founded in 1975 as the Pasargad Cup, but after the Iranian Revolution it was renamed to the first Division. In 1997 the league system was revamped, and the Iranian Super League was established.

Dream Team for the league are as select:

The Most Valuable Player:

Ali Hajipour (Foolad Sirjan)

Best Middle Blockers:

Mohammad Mousavi (Foolad Sirjan)

Masoud Gholami (Shahdab Yazd)

Best Opposite:

Ali Hajipour (Foolad Sirjan)

Best Libero:

Mohammadreza Moazzen (Shahdab Yazd)

Best Setter:

Alireza Behboudi (Shahdab Yazd)

Best Outside Hitter:

Amirhossein Esfandiar (Foolad Sirjan)

Usman Faryad Ali (Shahdab Yazd)

Sepahan winger Limoochi to undergo surgery

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team forward Mehdi Limoochi will have to undergo foot surgery.

He sustained the injury in the match against Esteghlal Khuzestan in early March.

Limoochi will be sidelined for six months after the surgery.

Limoochi has scored nine goals for Sepahan in the 2024-25 Iran Professional League and his absence will be a major blow to the Isfahan-based team.

Sepahan sits second in the table behind Tractor.

We have responsibility to deliver, says Iran's Garachchomaghloo

TEHRAN – Omid Garachchomaghloo believes improvements are needed for Iran if they are to advance to the AFC U-17 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2025 quarter-finals.

The 17-year-old emerged the leading scorer for his side with four goals against Hong Kong at the Qualifiers, and his impactful play in midfield and attack helped Iran to a runner-up finish behind DPR Korea but the Central Asian side's hopes of lifting the title suffered a blow following their 3-2 defeat to Oman on Matchday Two.

"If we fail to improve from match to match and take more responsibility, the only ones who can stop us from going all the way are ourselves," said Garachchomaghloo, whose side must defeat Tajikistan if they are to stand a chance of advancing.

"We have come close to winning this tournament in the past, and have a very good opportuni-

ty to lift the trophy this time around," said the Aria Pars Tehran player. "I, for one, am ready to step up and help my team achieve our goal."

Garachchomaghloo started playing when he was nine, encouraged by his family's love for the game. He has been in the national set up for three years and participated in almost 20 tournaments.

"Of all these, the one that readily comes to mind is the Qualifiers, particularly our games against Hong Kong, China and Jordan, because without those results we would not be here contesting Saudi Arabia 2025."

He has been serious about improving himself since his call-up to the national team.

"I have been playing well so far, but have not had many opportunities to score," he said. "But it does not matter because the team has been performing well."

"My strength is scoring goals, and I want to use this ability to further contribute to my team, but first I need to take ownership of my position as a midfielder."

Iran defeat Kuwait in SAT Futsal Championship Thailand 2025

TEHRAN – Iran's men's futsal team defeated Kuwait 5-0 in the SAT Futsal Championship Thailand 2025 on Thursday.

Masoud Yousef, Mehdi Karimi, Hossein Sabzi, Behrouz Azimi, and Hossein Tayebi scored for the Iranian team.

Iran are scheduled to meet Thailand on Saturday.

This tournament serves as preparation for the AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers (September 16-24, 2025).

Esteghlal suffer ninth loss in IPL

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team lost to Foolad 1-0 in the 2024-25 Iran Professional League (IPL) Thursday night.

With nine minutes remaining, Amirmasoud Abadani scored from the penalty spot in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Esteghlal suffered their ninth loss of the season, dropping to 12th place and sitting seven points above the relegation zone.

Meanwhile, Foolad maintained their fourth position with 45 points, nine points behind the league leader, Tractor.

Persepolis captain Alishah undergoes surgery

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team captain Omid Alishah underwent a successful knee surgery.

He will be sidelined for at least four weeks due to the surgery.

Alishah will miss the vital match against Sepahan in Tehran, slated for next week.

The surgery could keep him out for the remainder of the season and his absence is a huge blow to the club.

Persepolis sit third in the Iran football league.

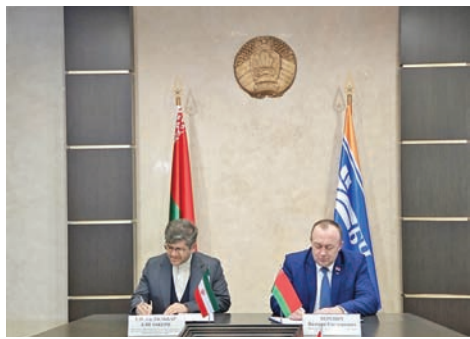
Iran double-amputee athlete successfully climbs Mt. Everest

TEHRAN – Iranian double-amputee mountaineer Sajjad Salarvand, who is suffering from a double leg amputation, has succeeded in climbing the Everest Base Camp route.

He, who is facing the loss of amputation of both legs, has previously conquered many high peaks.

Earlier, Sajjad Salarvand successfully had climbed Kilimanjaro, the African continent's highest peak at 5,895 meters (19,340 feet).

Iran, Belarus sign rail pact to boost north-south transit



TEHRAN - Iran and Belarus have signed a cooperation agreement to strengthen international rail transport and expand the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), according to Iran's state broadcaster.

Jabarali Zakeri, Deputy Transport Minister and head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI), and Valery Verenich, head of Belarusian Railways, signed the memorandum of understanding, highlighting plans to deepen bilateral cooperation on the Belarus-Iran trade route.

The agreement aims to boost rail-based exports and imports between the two countries and expand transit capacity along the corridor.

The two sides also committed to working with the railways of Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan to facilitate freight movement via the INSTC.

Key provisions of the agreement include launching regular, cost-effective freight train services between Iran and Belarus, engaging traders and cargo owners to increase freight volumes, optimizing transportation tariffs to make rail shipments along the Belarus-Iran route more competitive, and developing rail infrastructure to enhance cargo handling capacity along the corridor.

The International North-South Transport Corridor is a multi-modal network of ship, rail, and road routes that stretches over 7,200 kilometers, connecting India, Iran, and Russia, and extending toward Northern and Western Europe via the Caucasus and Central Asia. The corridor is designed to offer a faster, cheaper alternative to the traditional maritime route via the Suez Canal.

INSTC significantly reduces transit time between South Asia and Europe from around 40 days to approximately 20 days while lowering transportation costs by an estimated 30 percent.

Iran plays a central role in the corridor, serving as a critical land bridge linking the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea and onward to Russia and Europe.

The recent Iran-Belarus agreement underscores growing regional interest in developing the INSTC as a strategic trade route amid shifting global logistics patterns and geopolitical reconfigurations.

Iran's annual non-oil export to Pakistan stands at \$2.4b

TEHRAN - Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$2.4 billion to Pakistan in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, 2025, according to an official with the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, said that Pakistan was Iran's fifth top export destination in the previous year.

Speakers at a seminar on the future of Iran-Pakistan relations and regional connectivity emphasized the need for constructive dialogue between officials from both countries to navigate administrative and logistical complexities. They stressed that securing mutual benefits and improving the well-being of the Iranian and Pakistani people require strong political will and reciprocal practical measures.

The seminar, titled "Iran-Pakistan Relations: Trade Outlook and Strengthening Connectivity," was held on March 1 with the participation of the Iranian Embassy and hosted by the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI).

The event brought together prominent experts from Pakistan's diplomatic, media, economic, and political spheres, along with several foreign diplomats.

Among the keynote speakers were Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam, Pakistan's Ambassador to Tehran Muhammad Mudassar Tipu, ISSI Chairman Sohail Mahmood, and former Pakistani Ambassador to Iran Riffat Masood.

They underscored the \$10 billion trade target and key energy projects as crucial steps toward strengthening bilateral relations.

Acknowledging the challenges hindering smooth trade between the two nations—stemming from administrative complexities, logistical barriers, and regional and global developments—speakers emphasized that structured engagement, fostering trust, and mutual respect form the foundation for a resilient and adaptable partnership between Tehran and Islamabad.

Pakistani experts highlighted the importance of enhancing border security, building mutual trust, and advancing projects such as linking the Gwadar and Chabahar ports and collaborating on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to unlock greater trade potential.

Addressing the seminar, Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghadam stated

that trade and connectivity are two fundamental pillars of both global and domestic economies, significantly influencing each other. Reliable and secure transportation, he noted, is a facilitator of sustainable trade, making investment in transit corridors both essential and highly beneficial for investors.

"In today's rapidly evolving landscape, the international community faces two new concepts: tariff wars and corridor wars, both targeting key economic pillars," he said. "Tariff wars, aimed at disrupting supply chains and obstructing trade among Global South nations, threaten international trade and the livelihoods of millions.

Meanwhile, corridor wars—through the creation of competing routes, destructive rivalries, economic terrorism, insecurity, and instability—are designed to sustain unilateralism and hinder sustainable development goals."

Amiri Moghadam highlighted the strategic geographic position of Iran and Pakistan, which play a vital role in connecting the vast networks of Asian and European countries. He stressed that developing transportation infrastructure and strengthening bilateral connectivity would facilitate broader regional interactions.

"With their transit capacities, diverse production sectors, and complementary economies, Iran and Pakistan can enhance their bilateral supply chains as well as those with other countries," he added. "Iran serves as the gateway to Eurasia and the Caucasus, while Pakistan is the entry point to South and Southeast Asia. This unique positioning distinguishes the two countries from their other neighbors."

The Iranian envoy further noted that the two nations share a 1,000-kilometer land and maritime border, with markets and border crossings fostering interdependence.

The Rimdan-Gabd and Pishin-Mand border crossings have been activated to ease trade and facilitate smoother movement, while plans for additional border terminals and marketplaces are underway. However, he pointed out that bureaucratic and logistical hurdles remain, requiring joint efforts to address.

"Iran's Chabahar Port and Pakistan's Gwadar and Karachi ports hold immense potential for strengthening economic linkages between the two nations and the broader region," Amiri Moghadam said.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Non-oil trade with neighbors rises 21% to over \$74b

TEHRAN - Iran's non-oil trade with 15 neighboring countries grew 21 percent in the Iranian year 1403 (ended March 20, 2025), reaching \$74.3 billion, according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

IRICA reported that Saudi Arabia recorded the highest growth rate in trade with Iran among its neighbors during the year, IRIB reported.

In terms of volume, Iran exchanged 112.8 million metric tons of goods with its neighbors, up 16 percent compared to the previous year.

The United Arab Emirates was Iran's top non-oil trade partner



in the region with \$29.2 billion in total trade, followed by Turkey with \$19.4 billion, Iraq with \$12.5 billion, Pakistan with \$3.1 billion,

and Afghanistan with \$2.5 billion.

Trade with Saudi Arabia experienced a dramatic surge, increasing 6,483 percent in value

compared to the year before. Trade with Turkey rose 63 percent, Qatar 46 percent, and Afghanistan 28 percent.

Iran's total trade with Saudi Arabia reached 61,000 metric tons valued at \$25 million in the year.

Of the total non-oil trade with neighboring countries, 89.4 million tons worth \$36 billion were exports, while 23.4 million tons worth \$38.3 billion were imports.

Iran's non-oil exports to its neighbors rose 22 percent in volume and 26 percent in value year-on-year. Imports from these countries remained unchanged in volume but grew 17 percent in value.

China's March Iranian oil imports surge: Reuters

TEHRAN - As reported by Reuters, China's imports of Iranian oil surged in March.

China's oil imports from Iran surpassed 1.8 million barrels per day last month, an all-time high, coinciding with a rise in inventory levels in independent refining hub Shandong

province, according to data by ship tracking firm Vortexa.

Data from analytics firm Kpler put China's Iranian oil imports at 1.71 million bpd in March, up 20 percent from 1.43 million bpd in February and a five-month high, while two

traders who track Iranian flows into China estimated March imports at 1.67 million bpd and 1.8 million bpd, respectively.

China, which opposes unilateral sanctions, buys some 90 percent of Iran's oil exports.

Iran, Afghanistan hold economic talks in Kabul to advance bilateral agreement

TEHRAN - Iran and Afghanistan held a joint technical meeting in Kabul to follow up on the implementation of a bilateral economic agreement, the Taliban-led Afghan government's Economic Affairs Office said in a statement.

According to IRNA's correspondent in Kabul, the session took place at the Marmarin Palace and brought together representatives from both sides to review progress on commitments outlined in the Tehran-Kabul economic pact.

The meeting focused on expanding bilateral trade, resolving current transit-related challenges, facilitating trade processes, and fostering joint cooperation in modernizing Afghanistan's agricultural sector.

Officials also discussed implementing previous decisions in the transport sector, encour-

aging investment in Afghanistan's mining industry, and streamlining customs procedures.

Both sides stressed the importance of continuing such meetings in the future to ensure full implementation of the agreement and to deepen economic ties between the two neighbors.

Recent data indicates a substantial increase in trade between Iran and Afghanistan.

In 2024, the bilateral trade volume surged by approximately 84 percent compared to the previous year, reaching a total of \$3.197 billion. Iran's exports to Afghanistan accounted for \$3.143 billion of this figure, marking an 83 percent rise from 2023.

Conversely, Afghanistan's exports to Iran grew by 116 per-



cent, totaling \$54 million.

Iran has become a primary supplier for Afghanistan, providing about 25 percent of the country's imports.

Key Iranian exports include oil and refinery products, steel, agricultural goods, and construction materials.

Afghanistan's exports to Iran

mainly consist of raw materials and agricultural products.

This growing trade relationship underscores the deepening economic ties between the two nations, highlighting the importance of continued cooperation and dialogue to further enhance bilateral trade and investment opportunities.

Tehran hosting 32nd Beauty & Clean exhibition

TEHRAN - The 32nd International Exhibition of Detergents, Cosmetics, Hygienic and Cellulose Products (Iran Beauty and Clean 2025) kicked off at Tehran Permanent International Fairground, bringing together over 240 domestic and foreign companies.

According to IRIB, 100 companies from 16 countries — including the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, Greece, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain, France, Russia, Italy, Germany, China, India, and Turkey — are participating in this year's event. The presence of foreign firms, particularly from Europe, has increased by 15 percent compared to the previous edition.

Ali Moradi, head of the exhibition's organizing committee, said showcasing new products is one of the key priorities of the event. Other main goals include attracting

domestic and foreign investment, boosting production, creating opportunities for scientific research into consumer preferences and competing products, pre-selling goods, and identifying new sales representatives.

Moradi also highlighted the importance of engaging with the latest global scientific and research standards, fostering employment, enhancing interaction between producers and consumers, and promoting domestic capabilities in the sector. He emphasized the potential to discover untapped standards within Iran.

On the export front, Moradi noted progress in the export of raw materials used in detergents — such as ingredients for cleaning agents, shampoos, laundry powders, dishwashing and handwashing liquids — though he acknowledged that export figures remain modest.

Iran's installed production capacity for detergents stands at 4.5 million tons per year, but only 35 to 40 percent of that is utilized, resulting in an annual output of around 1.5 million tons — more than double domestic demand. Despite this, only 400,000 tons worth about \$250 million are exported annually, indicating underperformance relative to the industry's potential.

In addition, Iran exports \$350 million in cosmetics and hygiene products each year, according to Moradi. The country hosts around 250 detergent manufacturers and 1,850 cosmetics and hygiene product factories.

Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asian countries are Iran's main export markets for detergents.

Electricity available to nearly 59,000 villages

TEHRAN - Recent data by Iran's Energy Ministry shows that nearly 59,000 villages across Iran have been provided with access to electricity.

Figures released by Iran's state electricity company Tavanir on Wednesday showed that some 118 more villages had been supplied with power in the calendar year to late March 2025, bringing to 58,907 the total number of villages in the country with access to electricity, Press TV reported.

The data showed that some 28,500 nomadic families in Iran have also been connected to stable electricity supplies with

some 7,500 using portable solar panels as their main source of energy.

Some 28,500 nomadic families in Iran have also been connected to stable electricity supplies.

Tavanir CEO Mostafa Rajabi said that the company had spent some 150 trillion rials (\$150 million) on electricity projects for rural and nomadic households since 2021, includ-

ing on the renovation of electrical installations in nearly 22,000 villages.

Rajabi said that more than 34,000 kilometers of transmission lines supplying electricity to Iranian villages had been repaired or replaced over the past four years, adding that nearly 7,900 new transformers had been added to the network over the same period.

He said that Iran had also increased its investment in electricity projects in remote islands in the Persian Gulf as part of a government drive to expand housing projects in those strategic islands.

Israel's limitless evil acts: From occupation and genocide to open lies

From page 1 ▶ Autopsies revealed that they had been shot in the chest and head while the hands were tied.

To find a pretext for the evil act, Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, an Israeli military spokesman, claimed several vehicles "were identified advancing suspiciously" without headlights or emergency signals toward Israeli troops, prompting them to shoot. Earlier, Shoshani had claimed that nine of those killed were Palestinian "terrorists".

However, a video discovered on the cellphone of one of the murdered paramedics shows that the ambulances and fire truck that they were traveling in were clearly marked and had their emergency signal lights on.

After the release of the nearly seven-minute recording by the cellphone was presented to the UN Security Council and Israel's false narration of the intentional killing was laid bare, Israel claimed that its soldiers had made a "mistake".

But one should be an idiot to accept such open lies from Israel.

It is not the first time that Israel has intentionally killed medical workers. During its 18 months of barbarity in Gaza, Israel has carried out attacks that have killed hundreds of medical workers and



Search crews use a bulldozer to search for the victims through sand in southern Rafah.

the staff of NGOs and UN organizations, including foreign nationals working in Gaza.

Seven members of World Central Kitchen were killed in an attack on their clearly marked vehicles on April 1, 2024. At the time, Israel again claimed the strike was a "grave mistake" and that it did not intend to harm the WCK workers.

Israel feels no limit in committing any evil act or behavior. It is just because it enjoys impunity. It has never been held accountable for its atrocities since its creation in 1948. The West, particularly the United States, has provided the

most lethal weapons to it, and Washington has vetoed 49 resolutions against Israel at the UN Security Council.

Most probably, a small percentage of the people around the world were not aware of the cruel nature of the Zionist regime until it began attacks on the Gaza Strip following attacks on southern Israel by Hamas on October 7, 2023.

Now, unbiased and honest people in the world and even certain Western politicians have realized that Israel is a genocidal regime in the true sense of the word.

They did not know that Israel does not even spare attacks on

hospitals, patients, and rescue workers, and cuts food, water, and medicine to 2.3 million population.

The West should be ashamed of itself

Since the Gaza war began in October 2023, Germany has emerged as the strongest supporter and arms supplier to Israel after the United States. Now, Germany has called for an urgent investigation into the killings of paramedics.

"There are very significant questions about the actions of the Israeli army now," German Foreign Ministry spokesperson Christian Wagner said.

However, Germany and some other Western countries should be ashamed of themselves for their unwavering support for Israel. Surprisingly, even German philosopher Jürgen Habermas defended Israel's war crimes in Gaza.

The West's blind support for Israel is a blow to Western civilization. In fact, Western civilization is collapsing. For long years, the West has been claiming support for human rights and the right for freedom of speech. However, students and professors who have expressed dismay over Israel's war crimes in Gaza face dismissal and arrest and accused of anti-Semitism.

Netanyahu's crackdown on reservists risks deepening division in the society



From page 1 ▶ closely linked to his personal political survival and his efforts to appease far-right coalition partners.

Israeli reservists challenging the war narrative

Understanding the importance of Israel's reservists is essential for grasping the broader consequences of the ongoing conflict. The Israeli military is frequently known as "the people's army," mainly depending on a reserve force which includes citizens from diverse sectors, such as doctors, tech professionals, farmers, academics, and others. Following the Hamas attack on October 7th, Israel has experienced one of the most significant

mobilizations of reservists in recent decades. These citizen-soldiers have become essential for operations in Gaza and other areas. Besides their military function, reservists act as a vital link between the military and Israeli society, often offering a grounded, civic-oriented view on the conflict. Some reservists have spoken out against the war publicly, demanding its conclusion or questioning its objective. Such opinions, articulated in internal communications or low-profile public statements, are not acts of insubordination but expressions of fatigue or disagreement with strategy. Netanyahu reacted forcefully, demanding that they be dismissed to preserve cohesion and backing for the war. His stance suggests no tolerance for dissent, viewing these types of opinions as a threat to national morale and the war effort, rather than as legitimate concerns on the part of individuals serving in the war. This reaction is not only punitive but sends a clear message: dissent from elites, even in uniform, will not be tolerated.

Israel's democratic image has been shattered

Netanyahu's tactic follows global populist trends in which leaders aim to consolidate power by delegitimizing old centers of authority in the public sphere. The military elite, once untouch-

able, has now become yet another scapegoat. In framing the reservists' allegations as sabotage, Netanyahu cements his bond with his political base, which is more clearly articulated in religious, nationalist, and settler ideologies. The message is clear: loyalty to the state should now mean loyalty to the government.

Israel has always prided itself on being a strong democracy in a hostile region. But when high-ranking military officers are punished for expressing themselves, that democratic veneer gets thin. The Netanyahu government's intolerance for criticism at home belies a slide toward authoritarian governance, where opposition becomes equated with treason. Foreigners will find it ever harder to reconcile their support for Israel with what now appears to be internal repression.

The impact of this situation extends beyond Israel's borders. Important international allies, especially those from Western nations, pay close attention to Israel's democracy, focusing on free speech among its elites. Efforts to limit criticism at home, particularly during a long and controversial military operation, can influence Israel's global reputation.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Lebanon and the Muscat negotiations

From page 1 ▶ Meanwhile, observers believe that the demand from Iran by the US will likely lead to a decline in Tehran's support for the Axis of Resistance movements.

Other observers seriously warn that any negative results will raise the price of a barrel of oil to nearly \$1,00.

Also, some analysts hope that an Iranian-U.S. rapprochement would lead to de-escalation and, consequently, the lifting of restrictions on Lebanon's reconstruction. In an interview, Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri described the negotiations as "fateful".

In parallel, the Saudi Al Arabiya channel fanned the flames of the aggression against Lebanon, coinciding with false allegations broadcast by Avichay Adraee, the spokesperson for the Israeli occupation army, regarding weapons smuggling to Hezbollah through Beirut port.

The suspicious step has widely been read as a prelude to security restrictions similar to those already taking place at Beirut's airport, or perhaps even for a new aggression.

In response to orders from the U.S. spy den (embassy) in Bei-

rut, Nawaf Salam's government rushed to declare: "We will operate at the port with the same force we used at the airport ... We must work to determine the legality of the port and its board of directors, and to review, amend, and implement the laws."

Obviously, this new blatant intervention is in line with the ongoing US-led Israeli aggression, which is not limited to the intention of disarming the resistance movement but rather places Lebanon's vital facilities under the embassy's complete control.

During her recent ill-fated visit

to Beirut, the U.S. Deputy Special Envoy to West Asia, Morgan Ortagus, inquired in detail about the port's affairs, requesting that those close to Hezbollah be excluded from any key positions, especially customs.

On Al Arabiya, while in Abu Dhabi, Ortagus described Hezbollah as "a cancer that Lebanon must get rid of," ordering the Lebanese government to take special measures at Beirut port.

It became clear that Ortagus had toned down her rhetoric in Beirut to avoid embarrassing her anti-Hezbollah allies.

%49 of Israelis doubt victory over Hamas

From page 1 ▶ This trend has grown over time. The same survey conducted in January 2025 and September 2023 shows increasing support for hostage recovery and declining support for the removal of Hamas.

Currently, around 59 Israeli captives remain in Gaza. Israeli military estimates suggest that 35 of them have been killed during the ongoing bombardment and siege of the Gaza enclave.

Abu Obeida, spokesperson for the al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, recently is-

sued a statement saying, "If the enemy is truly concerned about the lives of these hostages, they must negotiate immediately for their release or evacuation. Consider this a final warning."

He blamed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government for the hostages' fate, saying, "Had they cared about them, they would have honored the January agreement. Most of the prisoners could have been home by now."

More than a year and a half into the U.S.-backed genocidal war

on Gaza, Israeli forces have failed to recover any hostages through military action. All those released so far have been freed through ceasefire deals.

The most recent ceasefire began on January 19, 2025, but collapsed on March 18 following Israeli airstrikes that killed hundreds of Palestinians in a single day.

Netanyahu has faced widespread accusations of prolonging the U.S.-backed genocide to maintain his grip on power amid threats from coalition partners to topple the cabinet.

Meanwhile, Palestinian resistance groups have resumed guerrilla-style operations against Israeli occupation forces.

Despite continued military efforts, Israeli media report that only 25% of Gaza's tunnel network, considered key to Hamas's military strength, has been dismantled.

Reuters reported on Thursday that U.S. President Donald Trump has said progress is being made on the return of the hostages and that he was "dealing with both Israel and Hamas", but did not elaborate on the talks.

Xi says there is no winner in a tariff war

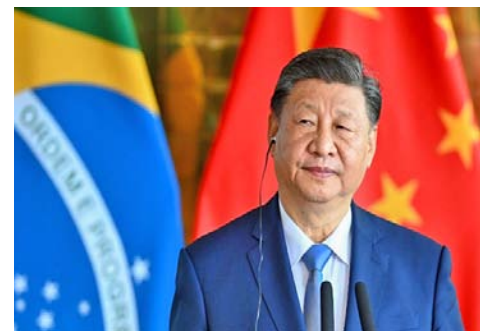
There is no winner in a tariff war, and going against the world will only result in self-isolation, Chinese President Xi Jinping said when meeting with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez in Beijing on Friday.

Xi said over the past 70 years and more, China has achieved development through self-reliance and arduous struggle, never relying on others' mercies, still less fearing any unreasonable suppression.

He added that no matter how the external world changes, China will remain confident and focused on running its own affairs well.

Noting that both China and the European Union (EU) are major economies in the world and firm supporters of economic globalization and free trade, Xi said the two sides have formed a close relationship of economic symbiosis with their combined economic output exceeding one-third of the world's total.

He called on China and the EU to fulfill their



international responsibilities, work together to safeguard economic globalization and the international trading environment, and jointly resist unilateral bullying.

This not only safeguards the legitimate rights and interests of China and the EU, but also serves to maintain fairness and justice within the international community while upholding international rules and order, Xi said.

AIPAC leader boasts of special 'access' to top Trump national security officials in leaked audio



The Grayzone has obtained audio of an off-the-record session from the 2025 Congressional Summit of AIPAC, the main US lobbying arm of Israel. Recorded by an attendee of the panel discussion, the audio features AIPAC's new CEO, Elliott Brandt, describing how his organization has cultivated influence with three top national security officials in the Trump administration – Secretary of State Marco Rubio, National Security Director Mike Waltz, and CIA Director John Ratcliffe – and how it believes it can gain "access" to their internal discussions.

Joining Brandt on the panel was Dana Stroul, formerly the highest-ranking civilian overseeing Middle East issues in the Biden administration's Department of Defense. Stroul made it clear that defending Israel's strategic imperatives from within the US government was a top priority, arguing that Washington should deepen its "mutually beneficial" special relationship with its "strong partner" in Tel Aviv.

Stroul dismissed the bloodbath in Gaza as the result of supposed Hamas tactics which supposedly aim to maximize the amount of children killed by Israel. At the same time, she and her fellow Israel lobbyists fretted about the impact of the post-October 7 war on public support for the self-proclaimed Jewish state. She was particularly troubled by Sen.

Bernie Sanders' attempts to force votes on military aid packages to Israel which, in her view, should never be debated in the open. Another unidentified AIPAC panelist worried that pro-Palestinian academics could eventually influence AI knowledge systems, leading to a dangerous shift in national security policy unless they were decisively suppressed.

The congressional summit was permeated with anxiety, as AIPAC leaders told rank-and-file members to hide their badges when they left the Marriott Hotel for fear they would be confronted by anti-genocide protesters. Other than a handful of sessions, such as a keynote address by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, the conference was strictly off-the-record.

With the cameras off, AIPAC leadership provided unusually candid details of their activities. In one revealing admission, Brandt explained how he and his lobbying organization groomed the future CIA director and other top Trump officials as pro-Israel assets.

Thousands of Pakistani people rally against Israel's bombing in Gaza



Thousands of Pakistani people rallied in Lahore on Friday against the United States and Israel over the war in Gaza.

An estimated 15,000 people attended the rally called by Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, whose

head, Naeem Ur Rehman, called on all Muslim nations to announce a holy war to defend Gaza.

Pakistan maintains no diplomatic ties with Israel and has consistently called for a permanent ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Greenpeace UK boss arrested over US embassy red dye protest

One of the heads of Greenpeace UK has been arrested after water was dyed red outside the US embassy in London by activists, the environmental group said, BBC reported.

Will McCallum, a co-executive director of Greenpeace UK, was among six arrested, Greenpeace said, after they protested against US sales of arms to Israel.

The Metropolitan Police said six people had been arrested on suspicion of criminal damage and conspiracy to cause criminal damage.

A spokesperson for the embassy said the stunt "damaged a 1.5 million gallon water supply on the property, wasting a local environmental resource".

"While the US Embassy supports the right to peaceful protest, we strongly condemn any acts of violence or property damage," they said.

Greenpeace UK said the dye used was non-toxic, biodegradable, food-grade pond dye that does not "pose any risk to people, wildlife or the environment".

Khorasan Razavi province pioneer in registering tourism events

TEHRAN – A total of 86 events have been registered on Iran's national events calendar, of which nine pertain to Mashhad in Khorasan Razavi province, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Yusef Bidkhori added that the registration of tourism events in the national calendar is in line with holding events that are appropriate for drawing tourists and pilgrims across all cities of the province, CHTN reported.

He said, "We have considered a specific time frame for these events so that the pilgrims and visitors could put them on their agenda."

Khorasan Razavi province has pilgrimage tourism majorly, he said, adding the existence of the holy shrine of Imam Reza (A.S.), the eighth Shia Imam, in Mashhad has encouraged all interested tourists particularly Shias, including Iranians and foreigners, to travel to this sacred city.

This is a preliminary stage for drawing tourists, he said. It seems that pilgrimage tourism is the easiest form of attracting tourists, he pointed out. But the longer tourists stay in the province, will be effective on tourism economics, he said.

He also said, "In addition to events, we have taken into consideration the ecotourism accommodation sites. Because we don't want the residence focus to be on Mashhad."

Since Mashhad boasts half of the accommodation centers across the country, there is no problem in accommodating the tourists, he said.

Bidkhori added that ecotourism residences are tourist attractions in the provincial cities. Mashhad is adjacent to these cities, he said.

Ecotourism residences boast three components of tourism, cultural heritage and handicrafts. Tourists can test numerous local cuisines in these residences. Some of these residences have been registered on the National Heritage List.

Culinary tourism

He continued that currently, culinary tourism has gained a considerable status across the province. Some cuisines like Shashlik Kebab (Ribs) have been registered on the National Heritage List. Registration of these foods helps them to turn into brands and draw many tourists. "We promote local cuisines in traditional and ecotourism residences."

He said traditional restaurants have been launched at residential units of Mashhad including hotels, hotel apartments, and guesthouses to render local cuisines.

Bidkhori explained that every pilgrim stays three nights in Mashhad and Khorasan Razavi province on average. He said nearly seven million tourists and pilgrims visited Mashhad during Nowruz 1404 holidays.

Mashhad, the provincial capital, is Iran's holiest and second-largest city. Its raison d'être and main sight is the striking massive shrine complex of Imam Reza (A.S.).

Iran's tourist villages introduced for possible global registration

TEHRAN - The director-general of the Domestic Tourism Development Office, Mostafa Fatemi, said a list of 130 tourist villages has been prepared. He added that given the prerequisites declared by the UN Tourism, eight villages were shortlisted as final candidates for the Best Tourism Villages, IRNA reported.

In a joint webinar with representatives of documents of candidate villages from eight provinces, he said villages of Soheili (Hormozgan province), Kandolus (Mazandaran province), Palangan (Kordostan province), Moeel (Ardabil province), Hasanlu (West Azarbaijan province), Shafi'abad (Kerman province), Baraghan (Alborz province) and Fahraj (Yazd province) have been selected according to criteria set by UN Tourism for 2025 and introduced global registration.

He explained that the globally designated tourist villages with unique tourism attractions gained high scores in terms of cultural, historical and natural attractions. "But, we face serious problems in some indicators like international connections, transportation infrastructures, economic sustainability of tourism sector and gain less scores."

Also, completion of the villages' files was put on the agenda given the indicators such as hygiene, safety and protecting cultural resources, he added.

He said May 18 would be the last chance to complete the documents for candidate villages.

Since 2021, the Best Tourism Villages initiative has aimed to promote sustainable tourism in rural areas, focusing on preserving natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and indigenous lifestyles, in-

cluding gastronomy and local values. Esfahak's inclusion on this global list is a testament to its villagers' dedication to revitalizing their heritage and turning it into a sustainable tourism hub that honors its past while embracing a prosperous future.

Esfahak named one of UN Tourism's Best Tourism Villages for 2024

The historical village of Esfahak, nestled in Iran's South Khorasan province, was named a Best Tourism Village for 2024 by UN Tourism.

The tribute highlights Esfahak's remarkable transformation from a site devastated by a 1978 earthquake into a flourishing cultural and eco-tourism destination that celebrates sustainability and heritage.

Severely damaged by the 1978 earthquake that struck Tabas, Esfahak was once deemed uninhabitable, with residents living in temporary tents. Later, they built makeshift wooden rooms, known as Otagh-e-Choobi (wooden rooms), as they began rebuilding their lives.

With a commitment to sustainability and cultural preservation, villagers re-established the community over the years, developing eco-lodges and restoring traditional homes using ancient adobe techniques.

Esfahak's transformation into a cultural and eco-tourism destination has garnered attention for its unique architecture and sustainable practices, earning the village the prestigious Asia Architecture Award. Today, it attracts tourists from across the world, drawn to its picturesque adobe structures and commitment to preserving local identity.

Kashan where history and arts meet

TEHRAN -- Located on the edge of the central deserts of Iran in Isfahan province, Kashan is one of the main destinations for tourists.

Kashan is known for manufacturing carpets, silk, and other textiles. Today, the city houses most of Iran's mechanized carpet-weaving factories and has an active marble and copper mining industry. Kashan and its suburbs have a population of 400,000, Mehr news agency reported.

Tourist Attractions and Historical Sights

Tape Sialk or Sialk Hill: In 5000 BC, the cavemen of the Iranian plateau began to turn to the plains for new life because of climate change and the formation of fields and grasslands. The historical background of the Kashan district is related to the oldest human settlements on the central plateau of Iran called Sialk and Kashan was one of the first foundations of human civilization. According to archaeological excavations in the Si-

alk Hill of Kashan, the history of human presence in that area can be traced back to 7,000 years ago. In fact, the people of the Sialk Hills, over 5000 years ago, were overthrown by the Aryan whose memorials have been found over different periods of time, which includes long tubs with horse and sun images, iron armor, and swords and spears.

Niasar Waterfall: Niasar Waterfall starts from a water spring near a fire temple dating back to the Sassanid era. Niasar owns all the history and natural view of this ancient spring. The spring also waters the vast lush lands of Niasar. The bedrock that made the water passage of Niasar Waterfall is usually made of lime and through ages made a delightful shape. Niasar waterfall is as high as 25 meters; the enjoyable atmosphere of the surrounding area of Niasar Waterfall is a proper choice for spending some quality time to enjoy the natural scenic view.

Fin Garden: The Fin Garden is locat-

ed 6 km far from the city in the south of Kashan. It dates back to the Safavid period. It is one of the most valuable historical places in Kashan. Some historical sources refer to the date of the garden to the Al-buye reign. The buildings inside the garden include the entrance door and tower, Oshor-Galu, the alcove in the south of the garden, the museum in the west, the small and large bathrooms, and the library in the eastern garden. The Fin bathroom in the Garden is the historic place where Naser al-Din Shah killed his Chancellor Amir Kabir. In the southern part of the Fin Garden, there are two baths known as the small and large baths.

The small bath is from the Safavid era and the large bath is from the Qajar era which was built by Fath-Ali-Shah. The large bathroom was for the courtiers and the small bathroom was for ordinary people. In the southern part of the Fin, there is a spring, which is known as Cheshmeh-Suleimaniyeh. Most garden

Tehran, Astana agree on joint exhibitions and museum collaborations

TEHRAN - National Museum of Iran Director Jebrael Nokandeh and his Kazakh counterpart have arranged to expand joint exhibitions and museum collaborations.

On Thursday, Berik Abdygaliuly during his visit to the prestigious Tehran museum sat with Nokandeh to discuss possible ways to expand ties, emphasizing the importance of cultural cooperation and inter-museum collaborations.

They reached agreements on hosting joint exhibitions and establishing a shared digital database for the exchange of cultural information and artifacts, IRNA reported.

Nokandeh highlighted the shared cultural heritage of the two nations and referred to the memorandum of understanding between their museums.

He expressed Iran's readiness to expand cultural cooperation and inter-museum ties.

Among his proposals was the organization of joint exhibitions and the creation of a shared digital database to facilitate the exchange of cultural data and artifacts, the report said.

Abdygaliuly also emphasized the importance of implementing the terms of the memorandum and pointed out that the shared



Berik Abdygaliuly, Director of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan (L), visits the National Museum of Iran in Tehran on April 10, 2025, ahead of a meeting with Jebrael Nokandeh, Director of the National Museum of Iran (R).

heritage between Iran and Kazakhstan—spanning various historical periods, including the Scythian, Islamic, and particularly the Timurid era—provided strong foundations for further collaboration.

He proposed hosting an exhibition of Iran's National Museum artifacts in Kazakhstan in the current year and an exhibition of Kazakhstan's National Museum collections in Iran in 2026.

Both sides agreed to coordinate and take necessary ac-

tions through official diplomatic channels to organize these joint exhibitions in the near future.

Following the meeting, the guests toured the National Museum of Iran and familiarized themselves with the country's historical and cultural treasures.

The National Museum of Iran, established in 1937 in downtown Tehran, serves as the country's principal museum and a vital institution for preserving and showcasing Iran's archaeological and cultural heritage.

The museum houses a diverse collection of artifacts that span from prehistory to the Islamic era, including invaluable pieces such as ancient pottery, textiles, and coins. As a center for research and education, the National Museum plays a crucial role in fostering an understanding of Iran's rich history and its connections to other cultures, particularly through significant collections like the Chinese ceramics that highlight the interactions along the Silk Road.

Its collections range from the Palaeolithic to the late Islamic period and represent more than a million years of human settlement and cultural achievements in Iran.

The personal jewellery from the Palaeolithic, clay and human figurines from early village communities, the earliest evidence of administrative technology and writing from the 4th millennium BC, Stone reliefs and capitals from Persepolis, the Parthian life-size bronze statue of "Shami Man", the natural mummy of a man called "Salt Man", the Ilkhanid mihrab (prayer niche) of Dar-e Behesht, and the pen and ink paintings (Siah Qalam) of Reza Abbasi from the Safavid period are among the important objects in the museum.

Takht-e Rostam was once on Caspian Sea's southern edge

TEHRAN - Rounds of paleontological research in Iran have uncovered significant evidence of the Caspian Sea's shoreline dating back over 31,000 years, suggesting that the sea once extended much further than its current boundaries.

This discovery has been made at the Takht-e Rostam archaeological site in Neka county of Mazandaran province, northern Iran.

Takht-e Rostam, a site from the Paleolithic era, is situated along the main road between Sari, the providential capital, and Neka. Known for its unique geological features, including limestone formations and flint stones, the site has long attracted human populations. Archaeological studies indicate that it was one of the main human settlements during the Paleolithic period, serving as a workshop for the production of stone tools and hunting implements.

Years ago, Dr. Homayoun Khoshrovan, who conducted geological sediment research at the site, revealed that the area contains sediments dating back to two million years ago from the Caspian Sea.

This makes the site not only significant for its historical findings but also valuable as a natural heritage site, ISNA reported on Friday.

In a significant breakthrough, researchers concluded that approximately 31,000 years ago, the Caspian Sea's southeastern coastline stretched much closer to the Takht-e Rostam site.

The dating of these findings was car-



ried out using optical luminescence dating methods, conducted by the Geophysics Institute of Tehran University, marking a milestone in interdisciplinary research based on local scientific expertise, the report said.

Further excavations at the Paleolithic site in Takht-e Rostam, led by archaeologist Hossein Ramadanpour in 2020, uncovered over 2,600 pieces of stone tools, providing deeper insight into the activities of early human populations in the region.

The evidence suggests that the site was not only a tool-making workshop but also played a crucial role in hunting strategies, allowing human groups to monitor and control their surrounding environment effectively.

These groundbreaking findings, which offer the first dating of a Paleolithic human settlement in the region, were published in

the Iranian Journal of Archaeological Studies, an international journal dedicated to archaeological research.

Takht-e Rostam has been registered as a national heritage site of Iran since March 2002, under registration number 5435, further cementing its importance in understanding ancient human history.

This discovery offers new insights into the relationship between early human societies and their environment, highlighting the significant role the Caspian Sea played in shaping human activity thousands of years ago.

Soaked in a vibrant history, Mazandaran (also known as Tabarestan) was a cradle of civilization since the beginning of the first millennium BC. According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, it was almost overrun in about 720 CE by the Arab raiders.

trees are between 100 and 470 years old.

The Mosque & School of Agha Bozorg: It is one of the most beautiful and magnificent mosques that was built during the Qajar era. The dome of the building, with its beautiful architecture and its design, is very unique and beautiful to look at.

The mosque was built in the late 18th century by master-mimar Ustad Haj Sa'ban-ali. The mosque and theological school are located in the center of the city of Kashan.

Boroujerdi House: The Boroujerdi House is another valuable historical monument that was built during the Qajar period. The most important part of this house is its summer mansion which is located in front of the entrance door.

It consists of a king hall, a room, and five doors with magnificent stuccos. The dome of the summer house is painted with flowers, birds, and animals on it. Also, you can see pictures of Qajar Kings on the wall. One of the features of this

old house is its fantastic wind tower. The Boroujerdi House, has no garden, in its both internal and external sections. The building was built on three floors and on four sides, surrounded by inner and outer courtyards. The Boroujerdi House was one of the main mansions for the accommodation of the king and the courtiers.

The Historical Bazaar of Kashan: Bazaar of Kashan is an old bazaar in the center of the city of Kashan, Iran. It is thought to have been built in the Seljuk era with renovations during the Safavid period. The bazaar has famous architecture, especially at its Timche-ye Amin od-Dowleh section, where a grand light well was built in the 19th century.

Traders who visited the Bazaar usually stayed in these caravansaries because they were close to the main gate of the city and played a significant role in the city's economic activities.

Tabatabaei House: The house of Tabatabaei is known as the bride of Iranian

houses because of its special beauty. This house is near the Boroujerdi house. The house consists of four courtyards, the central courtyard belongs to the exterior and two courtyards belong to the interior and a courtyard for the crew. Another important advantage of building the house in addition to cooling and temperature adjustment is its easy access to Qanat and the resistance against the earthquake.

The interior section of the house consists of a simple five-door room in the center and two courtyards on both sides of the house, with basements where the wind catchers flow the air inside. This was also the residence of the Tabatabai family. The courtyards on the northwest side of the house are larger and have more rooms. Underneath the interior section, there is a large basement that has its own unique characteristics such as wind catchers, a perforated roof, two-sided walls, and the existence of a pond.

Iran to foster scientific ties with China, Russia in line with strategic partnership



TEHRAN – Iranian universities are exploring the potentials for developing scientific and research collaborations with Chinese and Russian institutions under the strategic partnership with the two countries.

During a meeting held on Thursday in China, Saeed Habiba, the deputy minister of science, research, and technology, and Sheng Jianxue, the secretary-general of China Scholarship Council, discussed ways for developing scientific cooperation between the universities of the two countries.

The meeting centered around holding joint academic courses, exchanging professors and students, growing government scholarship programs, expanding technological ties, scientific interactions, and sharing expertise.

During the meeting, Habiba elaborated on academic and scientific potentials, and capacities of Iran.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Iranian official also paid a visit to one of the Chinese technology parks to become more

familiar with their technological capacities and scientific achievements.

Iran and China officially signed the document for 25-year comprehensive cooperation in March 2021.

The document was signed between Iran's former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Back in December 2022, Iran and China finalized 16 memorandums of understanding (MOU) under the framework of the two countries' strategic 25-year agreement.

On Wednesday, Elham Aminzadeh, the vice president of the University of Tehran for international affairs, and Sergey Andreushin, the vice-rector for international affairs at St. Petersburg State University, met in Tehran to explore avenues for expanding scientific collaborations between the two universities.

The Wednesday meeting focused on exchanging professors and students, holding in person, and virtual educational pro-



grams, supervising postgraduate students jointly, conducting collaborative conferences, establishing joint research projects, technology parks, as well as implementing formerly reached agreements.

The officials also proposed planning a short-term visit by the Russian and Iranian students who are studying Persian and Russian languages, respectively, of University of Tehran and St. Petersburg University.

Iranian, Russian universities committed to broadening ties

Based on the comprehensive agreements between the top universities of Iran and Russia, the two sides are committed to furthering long-term and constructive relations in higher education, technology, and innovation.

The establishment of the secretariat for communication between the universities of the two countries is one of the major measures taken. Of course, secretariats and inter-university collaborations should be more active than in the past in deepening scientific communication.

Practical and effective steps are expected to be taken to realize common goals.

The main objective, in addition to promoting relations, is to implement the previously made agreements and open up new opportunities for further cooperation. Hence Iran-Russia comprehensive agreements will pave the ground for enhancing scientific collaborations through conducting joint scientific and technological projects, fostering interactions among educational institutions, and exchanging faculty, staff, and students.

The contracting parties will facilitate the share of experience and information on regulating activities in the field of scientific, technological, and innovative activities, organizing and holding conferences, meetings, seminars, exhibitions, and other scientific events.

Moreover, according to the agreement, the two parties will promote and facilitate the learning of official languages, and the study of literature, history, and culture of the other party in their higher education institutions.

Researchers warn against mangrove loss in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN – According to a study by researchers at National Institute of Oceanography, mangrove ecosystems in the northern Persian Gulf are facing a range of environmental and anthropogenic pressures.

The mangrove tree, as a wonder of the marine environment, offers many benefits to various species including birds, fish, crustaceans, and even some terrestrial animals, and stabilizes the soil, as well. Mangrove forests are rich ecosystems that support the planet and humanity in unique ways by providing conditions for fish growth, storing carbon, and fighting floods.

They are able to store about 6 to 8 tons of carbon per hectare of soil per year. They contribute to the creation of a complete ecosystem. Above water, mangrove trees provide a habitat for birds while amphibians and small fish live on their roots. Mangroves play a crucial role in preserving the beach soil and protecting it from erosion. Mangrove trees play a vital role in maintaining the ecological balance of the sea coast.

Mangrove forests in Iran mostly consist of the *Avicennia marina*, known as Hara, named after the 11th-century great Iranian scientist *Avicenna* or *Abu-Ali-Sina*.

The study assesses the ecological dynamics of the Mangroves of Dayyer City (MDC) in the northern Persian Gulf using a multidimensional approach involving satellite-derived, drone-based, and field-measured data.

Satellite imagery from Google Earth (2011–2022) reveals fluctuations in the MDC area, with notable afforestation efforts until 2018 followed by rapid degradation.

The mangrove forest, initially covering 2.2 hectares in 2011, expanded to 3.2 hectares by 2015 due to afforestation efforts but declined to 1.7 ha by June 2022, ISNA reported.

The construction of a nonstandard road and a bridge in 2018 obstructed freshwater flow from upper areas, emerging as a major factor responsible for the degradation.

Drone-based observations in March 2023 provided a detailed map, revealing that 44 percent of healthy mangroves had been damaged. Field measurements conducted in November 2023 showed higher salinity levels at MDC compared to other adjacent mangrove areas.

Principal component analysis (PCA) also demonstrated differences in the environmental conditions of the MDC compared to those of



the two habitats sampled (Nayband and Melgonzeh).

The study suggests that long-term, multi-stressor monitoring, especially at different points within the mangrove ecosystem, is essential for effective management.

By discussing these local variations in salinity and their impact, the case study highlights how site-specific conditions must be taken into account when assessing mangrove health and interpreting the effect of salinity stress.

The research also stresses the critical need to address human-induced threats to mangrove ecosystems. Urgent conservation and management strategies are essential for mitigating the impact of anthropogenic pressures and ensuring the survival of mangrove ecosystems in the face of environmental challenges.

Moreover, the climate change impacts must be considered when planning conservation and management strategies.

Rising temperatures and sea levels, along with increased salinity, pose long-term threats to mangroves.

Therefore, developing integrated conservation strategies that combine restoration efforts with the mitigation of both human-induced and climate-related stressors to enhance the resilience of mangrove forests is essential.

While mangrove forests face multiple challenges, conservation efforts, community involvement, and sustainable management practices can help mitigate these threats and contribute to the preservation and restoration of these critical ecosystems. The regular assessment of mangrove ecosystems is crucial for conservation, sustainable management, and the well-being of both natural environments and the human communities that depend on them.

Failing to address these challenges will bring about irreparable consequences that will pose major threats to the environment.

Blood donation rises by 1.5% yr/yr



TEHRAN – Some 2.36 million Iranians donated blood over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2024–March 2025), indicating an increase of 1.5 percent compared to the year earlier.

Tehran and Fars, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Mazandaran, and Khuzestan provinces made the largest contributions, IRIB reported.

Over the past (Iranian) year, some four million blood units, including blood products, were transferred to medical centers, IRIB

quoted Bashir Haji-Beigi, the Blood Transfusion Organization spokesman, as saying.

Men made up 95 percent of blood donors, while women's contribution amounted to five percent. Women in Lorestan province, North Khorasan, and Sistan-Baluchestan had the highest share, he added.

Highlighting the need for negative blood types, the official said 90 percent of donors had positive blood.

WHO highlights Iran's capacity

Jaffar Hussain, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to Iran, has highlighted Iran's capacity to serve as a model for other nations in the realm of blood transfusion and rare blood management.

Addressing National Rare Blood Day on January 22, the official praised the country's steadfast commitment to equitable health-care access, ensuring that no one is left behind, regardless of their blood type.

The official commended the country's unwavering dedication to tackling the unique

challenges surrounding rare blood, emphasizing the critical importance of collaboration, innovation, and unwavering determination in this global endeavor, the WHO website announced in a press release on January 27.

World Health Organization has highlighted Iran's capacity to serve as a model in the realm of blood transfusion.

He lauded the Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization's (IBTO) leadership in blood safety and transfusion services, highlighting their remarkable achievement of a 100 percent voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation system, a testament to the principles of universal health coverage in action. He also thanked the blood donors, whose selflessness serves as an inspiration to all.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Some \$4m allocated to promote non-motorized transport

A total budget of 170 billion rials (around \$4 million) has been allocated to promote bike lanes across the capital city of Tehran, encouraging the residents to ride bicycles, Sakineh Ashrafi, deputy mayor of Tehran for planning, urban development and council affairs has said.

One of the main issues taken into consideration through the next year's budget bill, was development of non-motorized transportation, which focuses on active transportation and human powered transportation including walking and bicycling, she explained.

According to Tehran third development plan, biking as a green transport has been taken into consideration in order to mitigate traffic congestion and air pollution, she further noted, ISNA reported on Sunday.

تصویب اعتبار ۱۷ میلیاردی برای توسعه دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی در پایتخت

سکینه اشرفی معاون برنامه‌ریزی، توسعه شهری و امور شورای شهردار تهران از تصویب حدود ۱۷۰ میلیارد ریال اعتبار برای توسعه دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی در پایتخت خبر داد.

وی اظهار کرد: یکی از موضوعاتی که در بودجه سنواتی سال آینده شهرداری تهران به آن توجه شده، موضوع توسعه حمل و نقل عمومی غیرموتوری از جمله دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی است.

به گزارش روز یکشنبه خبرگزاری ایسنا وی ادامه داد: در برنامه سوم توسعه شهر تهران، موضوع توجه به دوچرخه‌سواری به عنوان یک حمل و نقل پاک برای کاهش ترافیک و آلودگی هوا مورد توجه و تأکید قرار گرفته است.

Iranian women among juries for BRICS 'Green Future' contest

TEHRAN – The first international award of women's environmental activities in the BRICS countries, titled 'Green Future', will be judged by 16 juries from ten countries including two female scholars from Iran.

Masoumeh Ebtekar, a professor at Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran, and Simindokht Shirvani-Arani, the director of Scientific and International Cooperation, Nuclear Science and Technology Research Institute (NSTRI) of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), are the two female scholars from Iran to judge the event along with other juries.

Launched by the Council of the Eurasian Women's Forum and Rosatom, the first international contest of women's projects from BRICS countries is dedicated to sustainable development and environment protection.

Promoting environmental initiatives, encouraging peer exchange, and sharing benchmarks across BRICS countries are among the main objectives.

The competition was launched at the IV Eurasian Women's Forum in Saint Petersburg on September 18.

The contest also aims to discover women-driven corporate practices in sustainability environment protection in BRICS countries, promote outstanding environment-oriented projects created by women, and build a global female network for cooperation in the field of environment protection.

Women from Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, who lead environmental projects or initiatives



matched with the following competition's nominations were invited to attend the event.

'Green Workforce' nomination welcomes women leaders who are implementing educational initiatives and mentoring projects that address the current demand for young professionals in eco-oriented fields.

'Ecological Culture' invites women leaders developing public initiatives that promote environmental awareness and eco-friendly behavior in society.

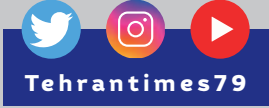
'Environmental Protection' is focused on projects contributing to protection and preservation of specially protected natural areas (SPNAs).

'Green Corporation' focuses on women leaders who are successfully running environmental projects in large industrial companies and in eco-oriented businesses.

'GreenTech' is dedicated to innovative achievements that contribute to environmental protection through science and technology.

The award ceremony will be held in May 2025.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



APRIL 12, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you gain a blessing, do not refuse it by cool and poor thanks.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:06 Evening: 18:52 Dawn: 4:10 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:37 (tomorrow)

What's in Tehran art galleries



Sculpture

* A collection of sculptures by Fatemeh Salkhor is on view in an exhibition at Homa Gallery.

The exhibition named "Yellow Raincoat" will be running until April 22 at the gallery located at No. 8, Fourth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

* Ehsan Toosi is showcasing his latest sculptures in an exhibition at Shirin Gallery 2.

The exhibit entitled "The Inconceivable Misery" will run until April 23 at the gallery located at No. 5, 13th St., Karim Khan Ave.



Installation

* Sets of installation by Siamak Filizadeh are on view in an exhibition at Iranshahr Gallery.

The exhibit named "Winter Slumber" will run until April 28 at the gallery that can be found at 69 Sepand St., off Karim Khan Ave.

Painting

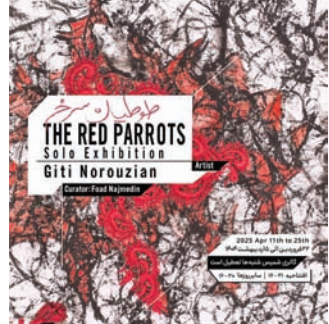
* Ev Gallery is hosting an exhibition of paintings by Pedram Baldari, Beniamin Tavakkol, Mohammad Fasounaki, Nikzad Nojoumi and Nebras Hoveizavi.

The exhibit named "The Past Year, The Upcoming Year" will be running until April 23 at the gallery located at 5 Arabi Alley, North Kheradmand St.



* Shamis Gallery is showcasing paintings by Giti Norouzian in an exhibition.

The exhibit named "The Red Parrots" will run until April 24 at the gallery located at 8 Daniali St., Andarzgu Blvd. in the Farmanieh neighborhood.



* A collection of paintings by Zahra Soltaninejad is on view in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

The exhibit named "Alien 3" will run until April 21 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.



* Paintings by Reza Hedayat are on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

The exhibit named "The Garden of No Fall" will be running until April 24 at the gallery, which can be found at No. 5, Bahrami alley, Mashahir Street, Qaem Maqam Farahani Avenue.



* A collection of paintings by Mansoureh Baghgarai is on display in an exhibition at Tarrahan Azad Gallery.

The exhibition named "Not A Secret" will be running until April 21 at the gallery located at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.



* Aran Gallery is showcasing paintings by Amin Shojai in an exhibition.

The exhibition will be running until April 25 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauphle-le-Chateau St.



Photo

* Asr Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of photos by Amir Hossein Heshmati.

The exhibit entitled "Open Up Your Tired Eyes" will run until April 24 at the gallery located at 18 Delaviz St. off North Mirzaye Shirazi St.



11th Islamic Revolution Art Week kicks off

TEHRAN-The 11th Islamic Revolution Art Week opened on Wednesday during a ceremony with the presence of cultural officials and artists at the holy shrine of Imam Khomeini (RA) and the grave of martyr Morteza Avini.

During the ceremony, a musical group performed, flowers were laid at the grave of martyr Avini, and a portrait of the martyr was unveiled.

Seyyed Ali Mirfatah, the creator of the portrait of martyr Avini, expressed at the event: "If this work and portrait have any blessing or virtue, it is due to the esteemed name of Avini, who truly holds a rightful place in our hearts."

He further stated, "I intended to begin a series of portraits called 'Wall of Faith,' envisioning to depict the faces of all those who have rights over me and to whom I owe a debt, especially those from the contemporary era whose faces we know. I intended to create a collection and hold an exhibition under this title. Each time I prepared a list of names, Morteza Avini's name was at the top."

"We are deeply indebted to and grateful for all martyrs, but martyr Morteza Avini has played a particularly significant role in the thoughts, work, and lives of many of us," he mentioned.

Following the unveiling of martyr Avini's portrait, Mostafa Mohaddesi Khorasani, a prominent poet of the Islamic Revolution,



recited a ghazal he composed on the day of Seyyed Morteza Avini's martyrdom for the audience.

As part of the opening ceremony, a large number of cultural officials and artists from the Art Bureau gathered at the holy shrine of Imam Khomeini (RA) to renew their commitment to the ideals of the Imam and the Revolution.

The art week is organized by the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization every year to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of documentarian Morteza Avini.

Art exhibitions and workshops, and theatrical musical perfor-

mances are being organized during this week.

Avini was martyred by a landmine in 1993 during his last trip to the former Iran-Iraq war zone in southwestern Iran while making the documentary "A City in the Sky" about the fall of Khorramshahr and the liberation of the southwestern Iranian city during the Iran-Iraq war.

He became famous for "The Narration of Triumph" and was called "the master of martyred writers" by his colleagues and war veterans due to the fervent narrations he wrote for his documentaries.

Avini has been commemorated

by various Iranian personalities and organizations on different occasions.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khomeini participated in his funeral procession that began on Tehran's Qarani Street at the Revayat Fath (Narration of Triumph) Cultural Institute, which was established by the Leader's order in 1991 to produce films on the Sacred Defense.

The Cinéma Vérité festival, Iran's major international event for documentary films, also honors films on the war and resistance every year with Avini Awards in a special section.

Centenarian Samineh Baghcheban honored in Tehran

TEHRAN-A ceremony to honor the eminent Iranian educator Samineh Baghcheban was held on Thursday evening at the House of Humanities Thinkers in Tehran.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Ali Rabiee, aide to the president for social affairs, called Baghcheban a woman who has had a lasting role in the folk literature and cultural movements of contemporary Iran, ILNA reported.

"She is a distinguished figure in the field of education, especially for hard-of-hearing and deaf children. She made a major contribution to the development of education," he added.

"She proved that children's literature is not merely for entertainment, but a tool for the cultural and social development of future generations. Perhaps no word better describes her than 'commitment.' She is a role model for women who wish to play an active role in social and cultural arenas — a mother to society and even a mother to Iran. She began with education at home and expanded it nationally," Rabiee noted.

"Samineh Baghcheban was not just a teacher — she was a cultural pioneer. Her leadership, teaching, writing, translation, and involvement in establishing institutions for the deaf all testify to her brilliance, perseverance, and commitment," he stated.

Following that, Fatemeh Mohajerani, government spokesperson, said: "I'm honored to be here among you to pay tribute to a teacher." She then read a message from the President Masoud Pezeshkian for the occasion.

In his message, Pezeshkian praised Baghcheban's enduring contributions to Iranian culture, children's literature, and the education of the hearing impaired.

The president highlighted her vital efforts in safeguarding and promoting Iran's cherished intangible cultural heritage through her compilation of stories, folklore, and Iranian songs, which have resulted in remarkable and impactful works in children's literature.

Furthermore, President Pezeshkian noted that Baghcheban's distinguished name, alongside that of her well-known father, Jabbar Baghcheban — a pioneer in children's education and the founder of the first school for the hearing impaired — will continue to inspire and empower future generations.

Also speaking at the event, Salar Ghasemi, head of the Special Needs Education Organization, said: "Samineh Baghcheban worked alongside her father to educate the children of this land. I'm pleased to announce that we plan to establish a Museum of Culture and Education of Baghcheban soon."

"We currently have ten thousand deaf students, and we still haven't found a better alphabet than the one Baghcheban created," he added.



Mirza Jabbar Asgarzadeh, famously known as Jabbar Baghcheban, established the first Iranian kindergarten and the first school for deaf children in Tabriz. He was also the inventor of Persian language cued speech.

The first kindergarten he established was called "Baghche-ye Atfal," which means "children's garden." That is why he was given the nickname baghcheban which literally means 'gardener' in the Persian language.

He founded a school for the deaf in 1924, located next to his kindergarten. In 1928 he wrote the first Iranian children's book in Persian Titled "Baba Barfi," which means "snow father" in Persian.

Later, the President of the National Association of Sign Language Mohsen Loh-Mousavi took the stage and expressed, via sign language: "Jabbar Baghcheban founded the school for deaf children and later Thamineh Baghcheban took over leadership of the school and served until 1979. She worked hard for deaf children and helped expand deaf education to other cities. I learned my craft from the Baghchebans, and I urge others not to give up and continue their path."

The ceremony concluded with the 100th birthday celebration of Thamineh Baghcheban with her presence on stage.

In a short speech, she said: "I have spent my life loving and serving the deaf. If I had another

chance, I would choose the same path."

Samineh Baghcheban was born in 1925 in Tabriz, northwest of Iran. She completed her Bachelor's degree at Teachers College, Tehran, and was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to continue her studies in the United States. She received her Master's degree from Smith College in 1953 and a scholarship for students from the Middle East was established in her name at Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, MA.

She has dedicated more than six decades of her life to teaching, teacher training, developing the Baghcheban method of teaching Persian to both Iranians and non-Iranians, writing elementary school textbooks that were used throughout Iran, and writing children's books for both hearing and deaf children.

Her father, the late Jabbar Baghcheban, established the first modern kindergarten of Iran. He was also the founder of deaf education in Iran, developing a phonetic hand alphabet which is unique in its kind in the world.

Initially trained by her father and mentor, Samineh has kept the legacy of her late father alive by continuing his work. Her publications include numerous text books, professional papers, and articles in Iranian journals. She has also translated several books from English to Persian.