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Figures like Rubio and Waltz looking to undermine diplomacy with Iran

Will Hawks Get to Sacrifice American Interests for Israeli Ambitions?



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio (L) and National Security Advisor Michael Waltz.

Iran rejects fabricated names for Persian Gulf, affirms sovereignty over strategic islands

TEHRAN – In a letter to the United Nations Security Council, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN, Amir-Saeid Iravani, denounced recent attempts to challenge Iran's sovereignty over the Persian Gulf and its three strategic islands, calling such claims "a blatant violation of international law and the UN Charter."

The ambassador's letter, addressed to the Security Council president on Tuesday, condemned the "fabricated naming" of the Persian Gulf in a statement issued by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council's 163rd meeting of foreign ministers.

The term "Persian Gulf" is the sole historical and legal designation for this body of water, substantiated by centuries of international documents and historical texts.

For over 2,500 years, the Persian Gulf has served as a crossroads of civilizations, deriving its name from the ancient Persian empires that shaped the region's cultural and geopolitical identity.

Since the Achaemenid era, this designation has appeared consistently in global maps, treaties, and UN documents, with the United Nations upholding the Persian Gulf as the only legitimate name. ▶ Page 2

Iran seeks closer agricultural ties with BRICS members

TEHRAN – Iran's agriculture minister said the country's relations with BRICS members are set to deepen, following Tehran's active participation in the 15th BRICS Agriculture Ministers Meeting, IRIB reported.

Speaking at a press conference on the outcomes of the event, Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeljeh said Iran's proposals were positively received and approved by all BRICS member states, and were included in the summit's final declaration.

Among the key proposals submitted by Iran were the creation of a sub-working group on fisheries, the establishment of a union of agricultural research institutes, and the formation of a vaccine producers' consortium.

The Iranian delegation also pushed for expanded financial cooperation, investment, and trade among BRICS countries, he added.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Iranian delegation held bilateral talks with agriculture ministers from Brazil and India. The two sides discussed expanding exports of Iranian products such as caviar, pomegranates, apples, kiwis, and dried fruits to Brazil. It was agreed that export barriers would be addressed and necessary protocols developed. ▶ Page 4

Yazd recognized as world city of traditional jewelry by World Crafts Council

TEHRAN – The historic city of Yazd has been officially designated as the world city of traditional and handcrafted jewelry by the World Crafts Council (WCC), marking another significant international cultural achievement for Iran.

In that regard, Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri on Monday, congratulated the nation, especially the people and artisans of Yazd, on this milestone, describing it as a powerful symbol of the deep connection between the country's ancient traditions and modern creativity.

"This recognition is a clear testament to Yazd's rich cultural and artistic potential and reflects the effectiveness of our 'heritage diplomacy' strategy, aimed at strengthening Iran's cultural brand and social resilience," Salehi-Amiri said in a press conference. ▶ Page 6

World must be held accountable for failing to prevent the Gaza genocide

By Matin Jamshidi

TEHRAN – Much has been said about Israeli cruelty in the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023, but the world has proven incapable of ending this 21st-century tragedy.

The tragedy in Gaza shows that the world is frighteningly helpless in the face of bloodthirsty rulers like Benjamin Netanyahu. It is not without reason that some say the world is like a jungle.

Israel has not only put 2.3 million Palestinian Gazans in a cage, but it is also committing indescribable brutalities against them.

How much more cruelty should Israel commit against Palestinians in Gaza so that the world realizes that the criminal rulers in Israel are a disgrace to the world, whose actions generate extremism?

Some historians or even common people may have thought that murderous persons like Radovan Karadzic or other vicious persons like Slobodan Milosevic or Adolf Hitler would not find a chance to commit war crimes or crimes against humanity any longer. However, they are now seeing that Netanyahu's army is unstoppably burying innocent people under rubble before the eyes of the world.

Art that glorifies genocide and is sponsored by Washington is decadent

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — The U.S. spy den (embassy) in Beirut concluded the so-called "Thread of Hope" exhibit featuring 68 works of art by Lebanese artists over the course of a year.

In the presence of Lebanese Minister of Culture Ghassan Salameh, U.S. Ambassador Lisa Johnson said: "Throughout the conflict [between the resistance peoples and the US-backed Israeli occupation entity], your works did something extraordinary. They inspired us, provided us healing and escape. They reminded us of our shared dreams for a better and brighter future."

Shamelessly, Johnson used the term "period of conflict" to obscure the reality of the U.S.-led Israeli war of extermination waged since October 7, 2023, in which thousands of innocent people have been slaughtered.

The treasonous Lebanese artists expressed their gratitude to the ambassador for the "generous" hospitality, glorifying the imperialists, displaying their work in the courts of the colonizers, ignoring a tragic reality created by the American criminal

Hamas attacks the Israeli military

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Hamas kills and injures more Israeli occupation forces as the regime expands its genocide against civilians.

The armed wing of Hamas, the al-Qassam Brigades, has announced a new deadly operation against Israeli occupation forces (IOF) in northern Gaza.

The al-Qassam Brigades revealed that "after returning from the frontlines, our fighters confirmed that they lured a Zionist engineering unit to the mouth of a pre-rigged tunnel."

"As soon as the unit reached the location, the tunnel was detonated, leaving the occupation soldiers dead and wounded east of al-Tuffah neighborhood, east of Gaza City."

The Palestinian resistance executed a complex ambush against the IOF recently and published footage of the deadly operation on its social media platforms.

Israeli researcher Azi Ashken wrote in the Hebrew newspaper Maariv that "contrary to initial assessments, Hamas still retains a fighting force made up of a large number of armed fighters, some of whom are organized into brigades and battalions."

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West exploited media to influence JCPOA talks, and Iran wants to prevent a repeat of that

By Staff Writer

TEHRAN – Western governments have long wielded the media as a political tool. They use it to justify their crimes against other nations, manufacture consent for future ones, and demonize their adversaries. This practice is as old as World War I, when both sides crafted narratives through newspapers, posters, films, speeches, and cartoons to persuade their people that sacrificing their lives for a conflict of devastating destruction was essential.

In the modern world, the media offers Western states an additional channel of manipulation: it can be used to pressure opponents in diplomatic negotiations. ▶ Page 3



Tehran-Beijing ties on upward trajectory: Iran's judiciary chief

TEHRAN – In a meeting with the President of China's Supreme People's Court, Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Ejei, the Chief of Iran's Judiciary, praised the growing bilateral relations between Tehran and Beijing.

He emphasized that both nations are committed to strengthening global peace and security.

Leading a high-ranking judicial delegation, Mohseni-Ejei arrived in Hangzhou on Monday afternoon to attend the 20th Meeting of Chief Justices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states. Upon arrival, he was received with an official welcome by Chinese officials. ▶ Page 2

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

Beware of the enemy's strategies in the Oman talks

Kayhan devoted its editorial to the need for vigilance by the Iranian negotiating team with the U.S. in Oman and wrote: The third round of negotiations is scheduled to be held again next Saturday in Muscat, and like the second round, it will be indirect. Both our nuclear team and the American side know that the main points of disagreement are over the enrichment level, giving guarantees to lift sanctions, and the order of steps to return to commitments. However, Trump's sixty-day deadline to reach an agreement and the role of Oman's mediation could lead the course of negotiations either toward progress or a deadlock. Our experience with the JCPOA and the policy that the Americans have always followed in discussions should have proven by now that with more than two decades of talks on the nuclear issue, there is no way for any mistakes or errors. Therefore, the nuclear team, especially the expert team that is scheduled to enter into the details of any agreement starting on Wednesday (April 23), should pay attention to every word of the American side so that a mistake like the text of the JCPOA is not repeated.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Moving in the right direction

Siasat-e-Rooz dedicated its editorial to Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi's visit to Beijing, arguing: One of the important goals of Araqchi's visit to China is to continue consultations and the role that China would play in the nuclear negotiations. Although indirect negotiations are currently underway between Iran and the United States, and some talks have also taken place with the Europeans, Tehran emphasizes that it will never forget the role and position of China and Russia and will take advantage of their capacities against the behavior of the West. Iran, China, and Russia are the main players of a new world order against the West's destructive unilateralism. They emphasize that the world no longer needs the crisis-generating nature of capitalism and needs new approaches. Achieving this requires intensive and numerous consultations, and Araqchi's visit to Beijing could be a step in this direction. Evidence shows that the United States, despite claims that it seeks negotiations, is putting together a puzzle to encircle the three countries militarily. In these circumstances, it seems that the convergence

of the three countries against this military conspiracy is an undeniable necessity.

Jam-e-Jam: Trump's unstable behavior is a major challenge in negotiations

Jam-e-Jam discussed the possibility of Trump accepting Iran's rightful demands in negotiations in an interview with Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Marandi, a political analyst. He said: Trump's behavior and decisions in recent years have always been accompanied by instability and sudden turns. We have witnessed this instability both in the trade war and in regional issues such as the Gaza genocide, where one day he is in favor of a ceasefire and the next day he is in favor of genocide. Regarding Iran's nuclear activities, one day he makes harsh statements and the next day he becomes mild. It is impossible to make accurate predictions about Trump. Of course, this makes the path of negotiations more difficult. The key point is that even if any agreement is reached with the United States, the certainty that the American side will remain committed to its obligations is still accompanied by serious doubts. The United States' history of violating its commitments, coupled with Trump's unpredictability, are two factors that should not be ignored. Therefore, it is not possible to draw a precise vision of the future of the negotiations at this time.

Farhikhtegan: Diplomacy may be a trap to justify harsh measures

One of the most likely scenarios in U.S.-Iran relations is the use of diplomatic negotiations as a trap to justify harsh measures, such as attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities or resistance groups in the region, especially in Yemen. In this scenario, Donald Trump's initial positive statements and strategic silence are part of a possible plan designed to present the United States as a good-willed negotiator. However, the main goal may be to cause the negotiations to fail by making unacceptable demands and then legitimizing military action or new sanctions by claiming "Iran's lack of cooperation." Numerous pieces of evidence support this possibility. A military attack on Iran could have far-reaching consequences, including escalating regional tensions and retaliatory attacks on U.S. military bases. Also, the response of resistance groups in Yemen and Lebanon could widen the scope of the conflict and impose heavy political and economic costs on the United States and its allies. The history of American foreign policy shows that such strategies have been used in the past, and the possibility of their repetition cannot be ignored.

Iran Foreign Ministry condemns Kashmir terror attack as 'heinous crime'



Indian security forces patrolling the site of a deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, on April 22, 2025

TEHRAN – Esmail Baqaei, spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, issued a firm condemnation of Tuesday's terrorist attack in Pahalgam, India, which killed and wounded dozens of civilians, including foreign nationals.

Describing the assault as a "severe crime violating all international legal norms and human rights principles," Baqaei expressed Tehran's solidarity with New Delhi in an official statement, offering condolences to victims' families and wishing injured survivors a speedy recovery.

The spokesperson reiterated Iran's "unwavering opposition to terrorism in all its forms," stressing the necessity for "strengthened regional and global coordination to eradicate this scourge and hold perpetrators accountable."

He emphasized that Iran, as a "steadfast ad-

vocate for multilateral anti-terror frameworks," urges immediate action to prosecute those behind the attack.

The attack in South Kashmir's Pahalgam Baisaran Valley, a popular tourist destination, has been described as the deadliest strike on civilians in the subcontinental area since 2019.

Preliminary reports indicate at least 30 deaths and dozens more injuries.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called the incident "unprecedented in scale" compared to recent civilian-targeted violence, while authorities continue to verify the final casualty figures.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned the attack on X, writing: "Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice."

Iran rejects fabricated names for Persian Gulf, affirms sovereignty over islands

From page 1 ► Furthermore, historical records—including 19th-century British maps commissioned by the Marquess of Salisbury—corroborate Iran's long-standing sovereignty over the region.

'Full and unquestionable sovereignty over the Iranian islands'

Ambassador Iravani also categorically rejected "unfounded interference" in Iran's sovereignty over Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb, describing such claims as "unacceptable meddling" that contravene the principles of territorial integrity and non-interference.

The Persian Gulf Cooperation Council's recent statement, which echoed the UAE's territorial claims, was dismissed as "baseless and devoid of legal



A satellite view of the Persian Gulf

merit."

The ambassador also emphasized the country's dedication to international norms and regional stability.

"Iran has always emphasized adherence to international law

and the promotion of peace and stability in the region," Iravani said.

He reiterated Iran's willingness to engage in constructive dialogue with Arab neighbors, provided such talks respect sovereignty and historical realities.

The islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb—located in Iran's Hormozgan province and long integrated into Persian trade and security networks—remain pivotal to the nation's territorial integrity.

In 1971, following the withdrawal of British forces, Iran consolidated its control over these islands by signing a memorandum of understanding with Sharjah, a precursor to the United Arab Emirates.

Moreover, historical evidence—from Persian governance dating back to the 6th century BCE to 19th-century British colonial records—corroborates Iran's enduring ties to a region strategically positioned near the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for 40% of global oil trade.

Tehran-Beijing ties on upward trajectory: Iran's judiciary chief

From page 1 ► During the meeting, he thanked China for hosting the SCO judicial summit and, addressing his counterpart, noted: "Your professional background shows that you have risen through all levels of the judiciary to attain China's highest judicial post. In this sense, we share similar paths, as I have also served across various judicial roles in the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Referring to the comprehensive 25-year cooperation agreement between Iran and China, Mohseni-Ejei noted the document as a major framework for deepening bilateral ties.

He also emphasized the civilizational heritage of both countries, calling it a strong foundation for expanding relations in various fields. "The current trajectory of Iran-China relations is positive, and we both seek to uphold international peace and stability," he added.

The Iranian judiciary chief urged for deeper legal and judicial collaboration between the two nations, citing shared values and similar experiences in facing global developments.

Criticizing Western double standards on international issues—especially in matters related to terrorism and human rights—he said: "Some Western powers adopt self-serving definitions of global challenges and attempt to impose their narrative on the rest of the world. We must stand united against such approaches."

Mohseni-Ejei emphasized the need for enhanced cooperation among SCO members in tackling organized crime, cybercrime, drug trafficking, money laundering, and terrorism. "We should also leverage public participation more effectively to counter destabilization efforts by certain hegemonic Western states," he said.

Condemning Israeli actions in Gaza, he said: "For more than a year and a half, the Zionist regime has committed war crimes, deliberately targeting civilians, refugees, the sick, and children. The SCO must use its platform to help stop this ongoing genocide."

Zhang Jun, President of China's Supreme People's Court, welcomed the Iranian delegation, calling their visit "historic and memorable."

He acknowledged Iran's strategic importance and expressed China's desire for long-term relations. "Judicial cooperation is a vital part of our bilateral relations. In recent years, we've seen steady growth in this area, and we hope this continues," he said.

Zhang expressed support for enhancing economic, social, and cultural ties, citing past meetings with senior Iranian judicial officials as constructive. He welcomed Mohseni-Ejei's views on strengthening judicial capabilities and added, "The world faces serious challenges like unilateralism, misuse of technology, terrorism, and human rights violations. We must respond collectively with shared wisdom."

Justice upheld against convicted terror operative responsible for 2017 border attack

TEHRAN – Iranian Judicial authorities have finalized the legal process against Hamid Hosseinnejad, a resident of Chaldoran County, for his role in a 2017 terrorist attack that claimed the lives of eight Iranian border guards.

Iran's Supreme Court upheld his death sentence on March 31, following a lengthy trial and execut-

ed him on Monday.

Hosseinnejad was apprehended in April 2023, after verified intelligence and his confessions confirmed his involvement in smuggling militants affiliated with a U.S. and EU-designated terrorist organization into Iran.

This PJAK terror group, part

of a broader network operating from Iraq's Kurdistan Region, has been implicated in assassinations, child soldier recruitment, and cross-border attacks.

"His actions directly enabled the infiltration of terrorists into sovereign territory," read an Iranian Judiciary statement, noting that the cell's other members were

neutralized in prior operations.

Authorities have reiterated calls for full implementation of the Iran-Iraq security agreement and other similar security initiatives to dismantle these networks and stabilize border regions, preventing the terror groups' exploitation of the border region between the two countries.



He concluded by noting that Chen Wenqing, China's top political and legal official, had traveled from Beijing to meet Mohseni-Ejei—underscoring the importance of the visit.

Iran-Pakistan judiciary chiefs meet in Hangzhou

Later in the day, Mohseni-Ejei met with Yahya Afridi, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The Iranian official praised Pakistan's constructive role in regional and global affairs.

"In Iran, there is a favorable view of Pakistan's international engagement. As two friendly, Muslim neighbors, we can play a vital role in advancing regional and global peace through joint judicial cooperation," he said.

Iran-Turkey judicial cooperation based on good neighborliness

Mohseni-Ejei also met with Ömer Kerkez, President of Turkey's Court of Cassation. Highlighting the deep-rooted ties between the two nations, he said: "Iran and Turkey have always maintained broad relations based on mutual respect and good neighborliness."

Judicial dialogue with Uzbekistan

In another bilateral meeting, Mohseni-Ejei met with Bakhtiyor Islamov, Uzbekistan's top judicial official. He emphasized the cultural and historical bonds between the two nations, noting existing agreements and the need for more practical steps toward implementation in legal and security cooperation.

Meeting with Chief Justice of India

Mohseni-Ejei met with Dhananjaya Yeswanth Chandrachud, Chief Justice of India, where both sides discussed the strategic roles of platforms like the SCO and BRICS.

"Iran firmly believes that cooperation within SCO and BRICS can help overcome global challenges, particularly in the security domain. We must expand our ties in areas of shared interest," he said.

Strengthening ties with Kazakhstan

In a meeting with Mergaliev Islam Bek, Kazakhstan's senior judicial official, Mohseni-Ejei highlighted several bilateral agree-

ments. "We stress the need for full implementation of these agreements to improve our legal cooperation," he stated.

Iran-Tajikistan: cultural bonds, shared perspectives on human rights

Speaking to senior Tajik judiciary officials, Mohseni-Ejei pointed to the countries' cultural and linguistic commonalities, adding: "These shared values can bring our perspectives on global challenges—including human rights—closer together. We value Tajikistan's views on these matters."

Judicial diplomacy a cornerstone of SCO engagement: deputy FM

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, highlighted the significance of Mohseni-Ejei's participation in the SCO summit, noting the presence of all SCO chief justices.

He said the summit would address deepening cooperation and combating terrorism—issues the Foreign Ministry will continue to follow up on. "Some SCO members suffer from terrorism. Collective action against it is essential, and the judiciary chief will propose actionable strategies."

Gharibabadi also pointed to discussions on legal issues surrounding unilateral sanctions. "Many SCO countries face unjust sanctions. Their judicial systems must play a key role in holding sanctioning states accountable."

Another agenda item includes streamlining the extradition of criminals and prisoner transfers. "SCO members must work together to prevent fugitive criminals from evading justice across borders," he said.

Finally, Gharibabadi noted Iran's proposal for creating mechanisms to resolve trade disputes: "Given the close commercial ties among SCO members, the judiciary can help by establishing specialized courts. This has proven effective in Iran's cooperation with countries like Iraq."

He concluded by emphasizing Iran's commitment to multilateralism in legal and judicial cooperation—not just in politics, but as a guiding principle for engagement within SCO and BRICS.

Figures like Rubio and Waltz looking to undermine diplomacy with Iran

Will hawks get to sacrifice American interests for Israeli ambitions?

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN - Analysts suggest that Donald Trump's promises to prioritize the concerns of the American people and end U.S. involvement in foreign conflicts were key factors in his return to the office. However, his purported pursuit of domestic recovery and diplomacy may be jeopardized by individuals within his own inner circle.

As he began to once again occupy the White House in January, Trump purged his administration of numerous individuals he felt had not served him during his first term, including prominent figures like Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and National Security Advisor John Bolton. But his replacements -Marco Rubio and Michael Waltz - are equally, if not more, inclined to advocate for policies that could lead to costly and destructive conflicts.

The U.S. says it has three main rivals in the world: China, Russia, and Iran. So far, Trump has taken the confrontational path with Beijing and began a tariff war with the world's second-biggest economy, broke with the traditional American stance on Moscow and sought peace with Vladimir Putin, and left his initial intransigence on the content of a deal with Iran, engaging in new negotiations on Tehran's nuclear program. These new discussions only address Iran's nuclear activities. Trump pulled out of a nuclear agreement signed in 2015 during his first term because he believed



it should also include limitations on Iran's military and foreign policy. It is believed that Pompeo and Bolton had a central role in the creation of this conviction of the president.

Sources have told the Tehran Times that Rubio and Waltz are actively working to derail the talks with Iran, which are nearing a third round. They believe that instead of pursuing dialogue and a potential diplomatic solution, America should immediately move towards a war with Tehran, attack its nuclear sites, and possibly its oil refineries.

Their efforts to crimp diplomacy are mainly focused on disparaging the current group of American negotiators and casting doubt on Tehran's intentions and official positions, which have shown no signs of inconsistency over the past decade.

In their endeavors, the two top officials are also getting rid of

any lower-ranked figure that objects to their warmongering. Dan Caldwell, a Marine Corps veteran advising the Secretary of Defense until recently, says he was fired from his position because he was opposed to a war with Iran. He claims he was not responsible for leaks that were used as a justification for his purge.

"A war with Iran risks being incredibly costly in terms of lives and dollars, and instability in the Middle East," Caldwell told a prominent American reporter during an interview. "So, you could see catastrophe both in the form of a global depression, potentially, and the deaths of a lot of Americans in that region and here in the wake of a war with Iran."

Iran has said that in case of any attacks on its interests, it would deliver a devastating response. Back in March, the Tehran Times was told that the country's armed forces had loaded their missiles

onto launchers.

"Figures like Rubio and Waltz work more for the interests of Israel than the United States. They have extremely deep ties with Zionists and AIPAC. It was even revealed recently that Waltz used to work directly for Israel's military," said Mohammad Mehdi Abbasi, an expert on North American affairs. The two officials want Washington to fight a war for Israel, which would have devastating consequences for both the United States and the world, he added.

"For now, the hardline and hawkish faction within Trump's administration, known for their bellicose rhetoric, has not succeeded in persuading Trump to initiate a war with Iran," the expert stated. "However, there is no guarantee that this will remain the case."

During the president's first term, Pompeo persuaded him to assassinate top Iranian military general Qassem Soleimani, a move that resulted in the first attack on an American base since WWII, and caused dozens of American soldiers stationed in Iraq to become "brain-dead", according to U.S. media reports. The assassination also failed to impact Iran's ties with regional Resistance forces in any meaningful way.

While taking his oath this January, Trump said he was planning to become the president of "peace". But that may largely depend on whether he would be able to change course this time around.

West exploited media to influence JCPOA talks, and Iran wants to prevent a repeat of that

From Page 1 ► force them to make more concessions, and shape the narrative around any resulting agreement.

In the case of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the West's grip on the media and the resulting propaganda campaigns created significant hurdles for Iran's negotiating team. The U.S. and European parties to the 2015 deal (Germany, France, Britain) managed to create uncertainty within other factions of the Iranian government about what was actually happening in Vienna. They also successfully spread anxiety among Arab states in the region, which had far less friendly ties with Tehran at that time.

However, the West's most significant impact was on the lasting perception of the JCPOA. The Wall Street Journal's publication of the initial fact sheet, which omitted Western concessions and portrayed the deal as a Western victory and an Iranian loss, fueled anger toward the Iranian negotiating team for purportedly "failing" to secure a favorable agreement - a sentiment that somewhat persists even today.

Now, Tehran is once again participating in negotiations regarding its nuclear program after the JCPOA was thrown into disarray by U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018. This time around, however, Iranians are more alert, and American lies are somehow less believable.

Trump, who returned to the White House in

January, has already made several attempts to shape the talks to his advantage. Shortly before the talks began on April 12, he stated to American media during a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that the talks were going to be held directly. Another of his attempts involved claiming that Iran had agreed to come to the negotiating table because it was afraid of his threats of military action. However, the reality, according to previous information obtained by the Tehran Times, is that Iran only agreed to enter talks because Trump had said in a letter delivered to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution that he was willing to only discuss the West Asian country's nuclear program, and not mention its military and foreign policy.

Iranian officials, meanwhile, have been proactive in communicating the state of the talks and countering misinformation. Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi are quick to report on the sessions once they are over. And several Iranian media outlets have informed the Tehran Times that accessing the Foreign Ministry for briefings on these indirect negotiations is now easier than it was during the JCPOA's formulation in the 2010s.

This, of course, is a thorn in the side of the West and its stenographers. During the first round of the indirect discussions that took place in Oman, only one media outlet from each side

was allowed to enter Muscat. The second round held in Rome last week, however, saw far more journalists throng to the location of the talks.

Several American media outlets seemed to have taken umbrage at the fact that Iran's negotiating team had allowed Iranian journalists to travel to Italy with them. The Washington Post, for example, claimed Tehran had tried to "control" the narrative of the talks because an IIRB reporter (who was standing next to all other media crews across the street from the compound where discussions were taking place) went live often. (The conditions outside the compound were challenging, with long waits and harsh sun, making it difficult to maintain energy; the IIRB reporter's persistence was notable.)

Similarly, a BBC Persian reporter, who was also stationed outside the negotiating compound, tried to demonize the Iranian journalists present by claiming that they had been "hand-picked." The reporter did not specify the basis for this claim or explain any advantages these journalists had over other members of the media covering the event.

It appears that the West even objects to Iranian media covering these developments and to Iranian officials issuing statements. Yet they seem to find no problem with their own media outlets presenting lies or inaccurate information.

Iran, Tajikistan sign landmark security pact amid growing bilateral ties

TEHRAN - Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni has arrived in Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe, on a two-day official visit aimed at boosting security cooperation and expanding bilateral ties.

Momeni was officially welcomed by Tajik Interior Minister Ramazon Rahimzoda and First Deputy Minister Alim Shazoda upon arrival.

The visit centers on the signing of a joint action plan and high-level meetings with Tajik officials to deepen coordination on security, law enforcement, and counter-narcotics efforts. It follows a recent uptick in diplomatic exchanges between the two countries.

Speaking after talks with his counterpart, Momeni announced

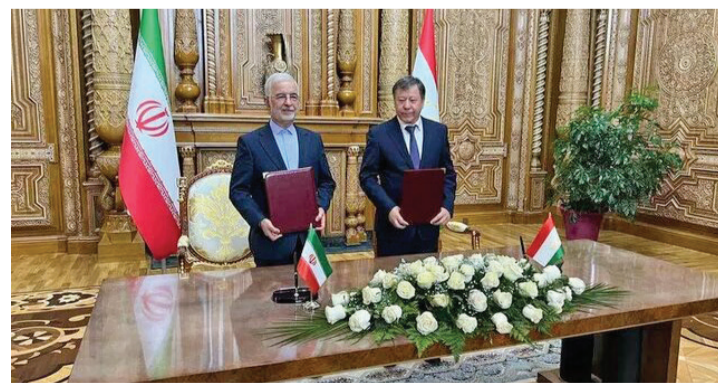
the signing and exchange of a new Security and Law Enforcement Cooperation Agreement between Tehran and Dushanbe.

"This document lays the foundation for a new framework of broader collaboration," Momeni said. "We believe the security of Iran and Tajikistan is closely interlinked."

He also highlighted the momentum created by Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit to Tajikistan, which he said opened a "new chapter" in bilateral relations.

Cultural, historical, religious, and linguistic commonalities between the two nations were also highlighted as key drivers of cooperation.

The newly signed agreement



covers multiple areas including cross-border security, civil affairs, and drug control. Both sides also agreed to leverage each other's training facilities and police equipment to further operationalize the pact.

"This agreement not only strengthens our existing coop-

eration," Momeni said, "but creates a clear structure for deeper engagement. We are convinced that Tajikistan's security is Iran's security—and vice versa."

He concluded by reaffirming the commitment of both interior ministries to broaden cooperation in the months ahead.

Saipa out of 2025 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship

TEHRAN - Iran's Saipa were defeated by Vietnamese club VTV Binh Dien Long An 3-1 (22-25, 25-15, 25-20, 25-15) in the 2025 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship on Tuesday.

Tran Thi Thanh Thuy scored 18 points for the Vietnamese club.

Saipa, who had lost to Beijing BAIC Motor in Pool C, failed to qualify for the quarterfinals of the Championship.

The 2025 AVC Women's Volleyball Champions League is the first edition of the newly-rebranded AVC Women's Volleyball Champions League, and the 25th overall edition of the formerly named Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship, an annual international women's volleyball club tournament, organized by the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) with the Philippine National Volleyball Federation (PNVF) and the Premier Volleyball League (PVL).

It is being held in Pasig, the Philippines from April 20 to 27.

Iran's blind football determined to qualify for 2028 LA: coach

TEHRAN - Iran's blind football team head coach, Javad Felfeli, has expressed the team's determination to secure a spot in the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles.

The team made history at the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio, where they claimed a silver medal. However, four years later, they unexpectedly withdrew from the Tokyo Games, being replaced by Thailand.

Currently, the team are preparing for the upcoming 2026 Asian Games in Nagoya.

"Our team have not participated in any international competitions since the 2022 Asian Games in Hangzhou. In January, we held national championships for both youth and senior levels, which also served as selection trials for the national team," Felfeli said in an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times.

"We have started our camp with a mix of experienced and young players, including two players from the youth team. We are focusing on technical and tactical training, but our primary emphasis is on physical fitness to ensure that the players reach an adequate level of readiness," he added.

When asked about the team's preparations for upcoming events, Felfeli stated: "We are currently concentrating all our efforts on the 2028 Paralympic Games, but before that, we have the Asian Para Games in Nagoya. The camps have commenced for this purpose, and in September, we will participate in the 2025 IBSA Men's Blind Football Nations Cup in Kochi, India."

Esteghlal linked with Jose Morais: report

TEHRAN - Esteghlal football club have reportedly begun negotiations with former Sepahan coach Jose Morais.

The Portuguese coach left Sepahan in November of last year to take charge of the Turkish team Bodrum.

Now, the Blues are looking to hire the 60-year-old coach as a replacement for Miodrag Bozovic?

Currently, Esteghlal sit 11th in the 16-team Iran football league table.

Correa, Taremi would save Inter around €12 Million

TEHRAN - Joaquin Correa and Mehdi Taremi could part ways with Inter Milan at the end of the season after failing to match expectations.

Per Gazzetta dello Sport via FCInterNews, the duo's exit would save the Nerazzurri around €12 million in gross salary.

It's no secret that Inter will not offer Joaquin Correa fresh terms. Therefore, the former Lazio forward will leave the San Siro after four years as a free agent in June.

Meanwhile, Taremi could encounter the same fate amid a dreadful maiden season in Serie A.

Correa earns around €3.5m net per season. Despite his high salary, the Argentine has never impressed at the San Siro and will leave the club as a flop.

On the other hand, Taremi joined the Nerazzurri from Porto on a Bosman deal only last summer.

Though the Iran international arrived with lofty ambitions, he has failed to settle in the new surroundings.

He takes home approximately €3m net per year, which makes the club consider his immediate sale.

Iran names squad for 2025 Beach Soccer World Cup

TEHRAN - Iran head coach Ali Naderi has named his team for the 2025 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup.

He has called up 12 players for the competition, which will be held in Seychelles from May 1 to 11.

All 16 nations that will grace the FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup Seychelles 2025 have now confirmed their official squads for the upcoming tournament.

The tournament - in which the world's best beach soccer players from all six confederations will compete for the title of world champions - will be the first edition held in an African country. It also marks the first time that the Seychelles will host a FIFA event.

Iran are defending champions.

AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup 2025 star Ali Mirshekari will spearhead the charge for Iran, who will look to improve on their third-place finish last time out.

Miran are drawn in Group B along with Portugal, Mauritania, and Paraguay.

Iran squad:

Mehdi Mirjalili, Mohammad Dastan, Abbas Rezaei, Reza Amirzadeh, Saeid Piraamoon, Ali Nazem, Mehdi Shirmohammadi, Ali Mirshekari, Movahed Mohammadpour, Mohammadali Mokhtari, Mohammadali Nazarazadeh, and Mohammad Masoumizadeh

Tabiat learn fate at 2025 WASL Final 8

TEHRAN - The FIBA Regional Office-Asia has confirmed the groupings for the FIBA West Asia Super League (WASL) Final 8 2025 following an online draw conducted on Tuesday.

A video conference attended by representatives of all participating ball clubs was held as the May 10-18 showpiece, to be played at the Stade Nouhad Noufal in Zouk Mikael, Beirut, Lebanon.

Al Riyadi, who is the defending Basketball Champions League Asia (BCL Asia) champion, will be representing the Sub-Zone League in the Final 8 together with Iran's Tabiat Basketball and Sagesse SC of Lebanon.

The FIBA WASL-Persian Gulf League, on the other hand, will consist of new champion Shabab Al Ahli along with Ittihad Club and Al Qadsia SC, both of which were among the competition's newcomers this season.

These six teams will be joined by BC Astana and Tamil Nadu, representatives of CABA and SABA, respectively.

Following the single round-robin group stage, the top two teams from each group will progress to the Semi-Finals, while the third and fourth-placed teams will be eliminated from further contention.

Subsequently, the winners of the Semi-Finals will advance to the Final to vie for the championship, with the losing sides set to meet in the Third-Place Game as all gamedays will feature double-headers.

The two finalists will earn a spot in the BCL Asia 2025, the highest club competition in the continent.

Iran seeks closer agricultural ties with BRICS members



Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezlehjeh (L) and India's Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

From Page 1 ► Ghezlehjeh said that while Iran is on track to achieve self-sufficiency in meat production, it may still use Brazil's infrastructure to

export halal meat to Muslim countries in the region.

He also noted that Iran is working to boost exports of livestock and poultry products using domestic capacities, while continuing imports of key animal feed ingredients such as corn, soybeans, and oil.

The minister said the trip included a visit to the Port of Santos—the largest port in South America—where Iranian trade accounts for around seven percent of the port's 180-million-ton annual capacity. Santos officials expressed readiness to cooperate with Iranian firms on establishing a dedicated terminal and joint investment projects.

Ghezlehjeh also met with Iranian businesspeople based in Brazil and international companies active in agriculture, which he said would pave the way for deeper economic and trade engagement in the future.

Mashhad to host investment expo aimed at boosting industrial financing

TEHRAN – The International Exhibition of Exchange, Banking, Insurance, Privatization, and Investment Opportunities will be held from May 21 to 24 at the permanent fairground in Mashhad, providing what organizers say is a valuable platform for financing production and attracting investment.

According to the head of the Securities and Exchange Information and Education Com-

pany, Hassan Mohammadi, the decision to host the event in Mashhad is in line with the government's decentralization agenda for nationwide programs.

He added that similar exhibitions will be organized in other provinces in the future, using various formats to expand outreach and foster regional economic engagement.

IOMOU 2024 CIC results: High MLC compliance in Iranian ports

TEHRAN – The Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding (IOMOU) Secretariat has released the results of its 2024 Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC), highlighting widespread compliance with the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC) among ships calling at Iranian ports and other IOMOU member states.

The inspections, conducted from 1 September to 30 November 2024, focused on seafarers' employment agreements and wage-related provisions under the MLC. According to the Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran (PMO), nearly all inspected vessels were found to be in conformity with MLC standards, the PMO published on its website.

Over 1,100 Ships Inspected Across the Region

Allah-Morad Afifipour, Director General of Maritime Affairs at the PMO, confirmed that a total of 1,116 ships flying 59 different flags were inspected under the campaign. He noted that the high compliance rate reflects ongoing efforts by port authorities to ensure decent working and living conditions for seafarers.

Iran's Active Role as a Port State

Afifipour emphasized Iran's continued active participation in regional port state control initiatives. "Targeted inspections serve as a key mechanism to monitor the condition of foreign-flagged vessels entering our ports," he said, stressing Iran's commitment to international maritime conventions.

Corrective Measures for Non-Compliant Vessels

The PMO stated that while most vessels complied with MLC requirements, findings from the CIC are being reviewed by relevant authorities. Specific action plans will be developed to address any deficiencies identified on flagged vessels, ensuring full adherence to international maritime labor standards.

The Indian Ocean MoU is one of the nine regional port state control agreements worldwide. It aims to eliminate substandard shipping through coordinated inspection campaigns among its member countries.

South Pars phase 11 gas output hits 20 mcm/d

TEHRAN – Gas production from Phase 11 of the South Pars field has reached 20 million cubic meters per day (mcm/d) following the completion and commissioning of the eighth well, the managing director of Pars Oil and Gas Company announced.

According to a report from the company, Touraj Dehghani said drilling of the eighth well—Well No. 2 at platform SPD11B—has been completed. The well has now entered production following acidizing and flow testing operations.

Dehghani praised Petropars, the contractor for the development of Phase 11, for its performance and noted that with the necessary approvals from the National Iranian Oil Company's production supervision department, the well has been successfully connected to the SPD11B platform and brought online.

In last November, Dehghani announced that a new well has gone operational at the field's phase 11 to increase its production.

"As promised before, to complete the production capacity of phase 11 of South Pars, the drilling of the seventh well (well number 12) at the location of platform 11B of this joint field was completed and the well went into operation last night (Saturday, November 10)," he told Shana.

"After the acidification operation is completed in the coming weeks, the gas extraction

from this well will reach its full capacity," he added.

When fully developed, South Pars Phase 11 will have a production capacity of two billion cubic feet per day, or 370,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. The gas produced will be fed into Iran's gas network.

Iran had previously awarded the development of the phase 11 project to a consortium comprised of France's Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), and Petropars, a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC). However, Total and CNPCI pulled out of the project in 2019 due to U.S. sanctions.

Petropars is developing the phase 11 project after its partners left the contract.

The drilling operation for the first well of the mentioned phase was officially started in December 2020. In the early production stage, the output of this phase will reach 500 million cubic feet (equivalent to 14 million cubic meters) per day.

South Pars field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is the world's largest gas field, covering an area of 3,700 square kilometers of Iran's territorial waters.

The giant field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

Over 1,300 idle industrial units revived in a year

TEHRAN – Iran revived 1,344 idle industrial units across the country in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) as part of efforts to boost production capacity and bring workers back to factories, according to a senior official from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

Reza Ansari, head of the Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO), told IRNA that the revival of these units marks a key step toward enhancing productivity and reducing unemployment.

Tehran province led the effort with 125 reactivated units, followed by Isfahan with 124. Other provinces including Fars, East Azarbaijan, Khuzestan, Alborz, and Markazi also played a significant role in reactivating dormant factories.



Ansari said the main obstacles facing these units included a shortage of working capital, currency fluctuations, banking and financial issues, difficulties in securing raw materials, energy supply imbalances, and infrastructure problems. In some cases, full ownership transfers from

original owners to new investors were necessary to restart operations.

He noted that other challenges—such as shareholder disputes, outdated production lines, legal issues, and bank-mediated ownership transfers—had created serious bottlenecks, but pro-

vincial authorities helped return these facilities to operation.

"Provincial industrial parks companies took various steps last year to renovate and modernize economic and industrial units, and this diagnostic and support initiative will continue this year as well," Ansari said.

He added that in line with the Leader's designation of this year as the "Year of Investment in Production," ISIPO is prioritizing infrastructure development—including electricity and water supply—for industrial renewal, while also working to resolve broader issues facing production units.

"The industrial sector holds vast potential for production growth," Ansari stressed. "But to fully realize it, we need to attract more investment across various industries."

Tehran, Tashkent eye joint investment fund to boost economic ties

TEHRAN – A senior Uzbek delegation welcomed Iran's proposal to establish a joint investment fund during a high-level meeting with the National Development Fund of Iran, as both countries explore broader economic cooperation spanning energy, infrastructure, and mining.

On April 20, Shokhrukh Gulomov, Uzbekistan's Deputy Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade, met with Mostafa Seyed Hashemi, Deputy Chairman of Iran's National Development Fund (NDF), and Reza Abbaspour, Deputy for International Affairs, in Tehran. The two sides discussed avenues to expand bilateral trade and finance collaborative projects.

Seyed Hashemi emphasized the cultural and geographic proximity between the two nations and noted that bilateral trade in the past year reached approximately \$450 million, with Iran exporting \$368 million worth of goods and importing \$81 million. He said the positive trade balance of \$287 million points to strong potential for further growth.

Highlighting that Iran currently holds less than a one percent share in Uzbekistan's \$36 billion import market, Hashemi proposed a roadmap to increase exports and foster integrated supply chains. He underscored the NDF's experience in financing major infrastructure, energy, and transportation projects and formally proposed the creation of a bilateral investment fund to finance industrial, export-oriented, and tech-based ventures.

The proposal was well received by the Uzbek side, and the two delegations discussed cooperation on a petrochemical project under review in Uzbekistan. Hashemi also called for the formation of a joint economic commission to coordinate follow-up on proposed initiatives.

Mining the future: strategic collaboration in resources

In a separate meeting, Mohammad Aghajani, Head of the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), described the mining sector as a promising frontier for Iran-Uzbekistan cooperation. He pointed to Iran's export

of technical and engineering services and its expertise in producing steel, copper, and gold.

Aghajani emphasized that Iranian companies have developed significant capabilities in direct reduction iron (DRI) technology, which has already been exported abroad, and suggested this could form the basis of joint projects with Uzbekistan.

He noted Iran's position as the top steel producer in the Middle East and the tenth globally, and expressed readiness to expand joint ventures in mining and downstream industries.

Iranian firms poised for joint projects in Uzbekistan

Aghajani affirmed that Iranian companies are ready to undertake mining projects in Uzbekistan under various established contract models. In response, Gulomov said Uzbekistan is seeking strategic cooperation with Iran across the entire mining value chain—from exploration to finished products.

He also highlighted plans to establish joint ventures in mining and beyond, adding that bilateral cooperation will extend into oil and gas, petrochemicals, and power generation. Cultural commonalities, Gulomov said, further strengthen the foundation for deeper economic engagement.

Meanwhile, speaking in a meeting with Uzbekistan's Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Shokhrukh Gulomov, Samad Hassanzadeh, the head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), said the country's private sector is ready to pursue joint investments in Uzbekistan and called on Tashkent to implement a reciprocal visa waiver to ease travel and boost tourism between the two countries.

He said mutual visa exemption would facilitate travel for businesspeople and citizens while supporting the development of tourism.

The ICCIMA head stated that the upcoming preferential trade agreement between Iran and Uzbekistan, expected to be signed next month during the joint economic commission, could raise the level of bilateral trade cooperation.

Persian Gulf Star Refinery capacity rises 3m liters

TEHRAN – With the implementation of major repairs in the gasoline production unit of phase two of the Persian Gulf Star Refinery and the installation of a new heat exchanger for this unit, the production capacity of gasoline at the world's largest gas condensate refinery has been increased by three million liters.

According to the Public Relations and International Affairs Department of the Persian Gulf Star Oil Company, the managing director of the company explained this initiative: "In the early days of the current Iranian calendar year 1404 (started on March 21), adhering to the Leader's remarks and fulfilling the year's slogan, new investments were made in the gasoline production unit of phase two of the Persian Gulf Star Refinery to increase the production capacity of the world's largest gas condensate refinery through the replacement of this

unit's heat exchanger."

Gholamhossein Ramezanzpour added: "The massive operation of replacing this exchanger was carried out with groundwork, improvements, preventive maintenance, and repairs by the skillful young specialists at the Persian Gulf Star Refinery."

He emphasized: "With the massive operation of replacing the heat exchanger in phase two of the gasoline production unit at the Persian Gulf Star Refinery, quality improvement, an increase in octane levels, and a production capacity increase of gasoline at the refinery to 45 million liters per day have been achieved."

Ramezanzpour further highlighted the importance and sensitivity of this matter and the critical role of the Persian Gulf Star Refinery in producing strategic fuel products and meeting the country's energy needs.

He stated: "Alongside execut-



ing such a large-scale activity in the massive heat exchanger replacement operation, the creativity and capabilities of the young engineers at the refinery were directed towards enhancing the efficiency of the gasoline production unit while focusing on environmental considerations and adhering to all regulations and standards."

The managing director con-

cluded by saying that in the second half of last year, the Persian Gulf Star Refinery's daily gasoline production also saw a five-million-liter increase, rising from 37 to 42 million liters per day.

He attributed this production growth to improved processing conditions in the gasoline production units, increased pressure in these units, and the operation of new compressors.

Anti-war protests continue to sweep across the globe as activists demand an end to the violence and oppression faced by Palestinians. Demonstrators are calling for an immediate ceasefire, the lifting of the Israeli blockade on Gaza, and a halt to genocide and ethnic cleansing.

In major cities worldwide, including Brussels, Manchester, Berlin, Seoul, Montreal, and numerous others, protesters have gathered to express solidarity with Gaza.

In Brussels, demonstrators declared, "You will see that Palestine will be liberated," while in Manchester, anti-war activists took part in large demonstrations demanding accountability for war crimes in Gaza. Massive rallies in



Pakistan have condemned the Zionist regime's actions, with thousands marching in support of Gaza.

Student activism has been particularly prominent. At Columbia University in New York City, a group

of students and graduates staged a sit-in, chaining themselves to campus doors to protest threats to expel supporters of Palestine. This symbolic act called on the university administration to protect the rights and safety of anti-war stu-

dents.

Other notable incidents include Swedish police arresting an elderly man who was attacked for holding a Palestinian flag, while his assailants were released, highlighting tensions even in Europe.

The global movement demands an end to U.S. military funding of Israel, divestment from companies profiting from the conflict, protection for anti-war activists, and increased humanitarian aid to Gaza.

These protests reflect a growing international outcry against ongoing Israeli military operations and the broader occupation, emphasizing solidarity with the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and justice.

Art that glorifies genocide and is sponsored by Washington is decadent

From page 1 ▶ Their contributions were described by Johnson as "healing"!

All the art sponsored by the American embassy is nauseating as it covers up colonial hegemonic policies; a vulgar art begging for Johnson's praise and appreciation!

The exhibit is indeed nothing but a waste of authentic art, and replacing it with decadent art that does not reflect the true identity of Lebanon, which has been resisting American imperialism since the 1980s.

Meanwhile, MP Hassan Fadlallah, a member of the Loyalty to the Resistance parliamentary bloc, said, "When the enemy fails on the ground, it resorts to political pressure led by the United States of America."

During a memorial service for the martyrs of the resistance in Tyre, Sayyed Fadlallah pointed out that there are "Lebanese voices working for this pressure, responding to the persistent Israeli attacks by raising their voices of incitement against the resistance."



MP Sayyed Hassan Fadlallah recalled the four priorities that the Lebanese government must address before discussing a defense strategy, which are: halting Zionist attacks on Lebanon; expelling the occupation regime from the entire south; liberating all prisoners of war held by the enemy; and rebuilding what the Israeli enemy has destroyed.

Besides, Hezbollah offered its condolences on

the passing of the Pope of the Catholic Church, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Pope Francis.

Hezbollah considered the Pope's "explicit positions calling for an end to the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip until the last moments of his life, his condemnation of the massacres being perpetrated against our people in Palestine, his demand for humanitarian aid, his official recognition of the State of Palestine, his support for the Palestinian cause, and his constant support for Lebanon at all stages and his condemnation of the Israeli aggression against it, embody the sincerity of his call and his commitment to human values that reject injustice everywhere."

Hezbollah called on the Lebanese, of all sects and backgrounds, to recall the words of Pope Francis, "who described Lebanon as a message of great meaning, expressing a model of coexistence and national unity, and to draw from his spirit the wisdom and strength to confront challenges and counter attempts to sow discord and division."

Hamas attacks the Israeli military

From page 1 ▶ "Operations against Hamas tunnels are like emptying the sea with a small spoon, just in the northern Gaza Strip, everywhere you set foot, you find a tunnel opening," Azi Ashkenazi added.

The Palestinian Civil Defense reported multiple civilian casualties following a series of Israeli airstrikes across various areas of the Gaza Strip.

Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson for the Civil Defense, told AFP that "the occupation launched several intense airstrikes at dawn on Tuesday targeting Gaza City, Beit Lahia, Beit Hanoun, and Khan Younis."

He added that seven members of the same family were killed when Israeli warplanes bombed

their home in a neighborhood west of Gaza City.

Strikes were also reported in the al-Tuffah neighborhood, east of Gaza City, and on a road west of the city.

Reports from the ground indicate that the IOF heavily targeted the center of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, launching airstrikes on areas east of the city.

In the al-Sabra neighborhood, at least eleven people were burned to death after a fire engulfed a home struck by multiple airstrikes.

In a separate attack on a family home in Khan Younis, more civilians, including children, were killed.

Additional casualties were re-

ported after an Israeli airstrike hit a tent sheltering displaced people in the al-Katiba neighborhood of Khan Younis.

Alongside the air raids, the IOF carried out intense demolition operations east of Gaza, while shelling continued across various parts of the Gaza Strip.

Israeli warplanes conducted particularly violent airstrikes and demolition operations east of Gaza City, injuring several Palestinians.

Precision strikes also targeted remaining rescue equipment such as bulldozers and heavy machinery in different parts of the Strip. These tools, according to UN agencies, are critical for rescuing victims trapped under the rubble from previous strikes.

The IOF launched another round of home demolitions, razing areas east of Gaza City and in Rafah.

On Tuesday, the Gaza Health Ministry announced that over 66 people had been killed and more than 120 injured within the past 48 hours.

Preliminary figures show that since March 18 when the Israeli regime broke a ceasefire agreement, the death toll has reached 1,890, with at least 4,950 wounded.

Since the beginning of October 2023, the total number of Palestinian fatalities has risen to 51,266, with 116,991 injured, according to Health Ministry data.

continued, adding that it marked a "significant blow" to Israeli-Vatican relations.

The right-wing newspaper Israel Hayom said the pontiff will be remembered in Israel "mainly for his harsh statements against the war in Gaza."

Similarly, the far-right Channel 14 called him Israel's "harshest critic."

Zvika Klein, the editor-in-chief of the Jerusalem Post, characterized Pope Francis' criticism of Israel and support for Palestinians under its assault as "unconditional support for Hamas."

"There was a certain optimism in the Jewish world when he was appointed," Klein said. "There was a very great disappointment here from the Israeli and Jewish sides [due to] harsh statements especially in recent months"

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



the Vatican, wrote that he was "the pope who brought the world closer to him and disappointed Israel!"

The pope's position on Israel after the start of the war deserved "harsh criticism", Schutz

Criticism and celebration in Israel after death of Pope Francis

The Vatican's announcement of Pope Francis' death on Monday morning was met with a mix of celebration and criticism in Israel, where politicians, pundits and social media users focused on the pontiff's condemnation of Israel amid its war on the Gaza Strip, Middle East Eye reported on Monday.

The pope, aged 88, passed away after denouncing the "deplorable humanitarian situation" caused by Israel's onslaught on Gaza and expressing his "closeness to the sufferings... of all the Israeli people and the Palestinian people" in his final address on Easter Sunday.

"I appeal to the warring parties: call a ceasefire, release the hostages and come to the aid of a starving people that aspires to a future of peace," he said.

Rafi Schutz, Israel's former ambassador to

World must be held accountable for failing to prevent the Gaza genocide

From page 1 ▶ Netanyahu and co-criminals like Israel Katz are not just satisfied with butchering Gazans. They are also collectively starving them.

"Gaza has become a land of desperation," Philippe Lazzarini, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA, said on X. He added, "Hunger is spreading and deepening,

deliberate and manmade."

Collective punishment is a concrete example of a war crime.

"It's been 51 days since any humanitarian aid has entered Gaza," U.S. Senator Sanders said on X on Monday, citing Katz's previous statement that "no humanitarian aid will enter Gaza" as evidence of a "war crime".

The world should be held accountable for giving Netanyahu, Katz, Yoav Gallant, and others a free hand to commit genocide in Gaza. World leaders are indirectly responsible for not doing enough to stop the carnage in Gaza. The lack of enough will to stop ethnic cleansing in Gaza may produce other war criminals in the world.

Putin says open to direct talks with Ukraine

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday he is open to the possibility of bilateral talks with Ukraine for the first time in years, as pressure from the United States builds on both sides to agree to a quick peace deal, CNN reported.

U.S., European and Ukrainian officials are set to meet this week in London after Washington warned that it could abandon its efforts on ending the conflict if there were no signs of progress.

Speaking to reporters, Putin said it could be

possible to discuss the halting of strikes against civilian infrastructure directly with Kyiv.

"We have a positive attitude towards a ceasefire," Putin also said, referencing Russia's decision to implement a surprise 30-hour Easter truce - which both sides accused each other of violating.

"That is why we have always said that we take a positive attitude to any peace initiatives," Putin said. "We hope that the representatives of the Kyiv regime will feel the same way."

Israeli spy chief accuses Netanyahu of demanding illegal operations

Israel's spy chief has accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of trying to fire him for his refusal to commit illegal acts aimed at protecting the leader's personal and political interests, Al Jazeera reported.

Ronen Bar, chief of Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence service, made the assertion in an affidavit to the Supreme Court on Monday. Netanyahu's move last month to dismiss Bar was suspended by the court pending an investigation, and the ensuing tussle has provoked large protests, with crowds accusing the prime minister of endangering democracy.

Netanyahu said he would sack the spy chief due to a breakdown in trust, supposedly linked to Hamas's attack in October 2023 that led to the Gaza war.

However, Bar said Netanyahu's decision was motivated by a series of events between November 2024 and February 2025.

In the unclassified part of the court submission, Bar said Netanyahu had told him "on more than one occasion" that he expected Shin Bet to take action against Israelis involved in antigovernment demonstrations, "with a particular focus on monitoring the protests' financial backers".

Hamas delegation heads to Egypt to discuss Gaza truce

A senior Hamas official told AFP on Tuesday that a delegation from the Palestinian group had departed for Cairo to discuss "new ideas" for achieving a ceasefire with Israel.

"The delegation will meet with Egyptian officials to discuss new ideas aimed at reaching a ceasefire," the official said, following Hamas's rejection of Israel's most recent offer last week.

The announcement came after Gaza's civil defence agency said that a spate of Israeli air strikes since dawn on Tuesday killed at least 25 people across Gaza.

Israel resumed an intense air and ground offensive on Gaza on March 18, ending a two-month ceasefire that had largely halted the fighting in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Harvard sues Trump admin over threats to cut more than \$2b in funding

Harvard sued U.S. President Donald Trump's administration Monday in a sharp escalation of the fight between the prestigious university and the Republican, who has threatened its funding and sought to impose outside political supervision, AFP reported.

Trump has sought to bring several prestigious universities to heel over claims they tolerated campus anti-Semitism, threatened their budgets, tax-exempt status and the enrollment of foreign students, but Harvard has refused to bow.

"This case involves the Government's efforts to use the withholding of federal funding as leverage to gain control of academic decision making at Harvard," the Ivy League university said in a lawsuit filed in a Massachusetts federal court that named several other institutions targeted by Trump.

"The Government's actions flout not just the First Amendment, but also federal laws and regulations," said the complaint, which called Trump's actions "arbitrary and capricious".



Trump is furious at Harvard for rejecting government supervision of its admissions, hiring practices and political slant and last week ordered the freezing of \$2.2 billion in federal funding to the storied institution.

The lawsuit calls for the freezing of funds and conditions imposed on federal grants to be declared unlawful, as well as for the Trump administration to pay Harvard's costs.

Trump approval rating dips

President Donald Trump's public approval rating edged down to its lowest level since his return to the White House, as Americans showed signs of wariness over his efforts to broaden his power, a Reuters/Ipsos poll that closed on Monday found.

Some 42% of respondents to the six-day poll approved of Trump's performance as president, down from 43% in a Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted three weeks earlier, and from 47% in the hours after his January 20 inauguration.

The start of Trump's term has left his po-

litical opponents stunned as he has signed dozens of executive orders expanding his influence over both government departments and over private institutions such as universities and law firms.

While Trump's approval rating remains higher than the ratings seen during most of his Democratic predecessor's presidency, the results of the Reuters/Ipsos poll suggest many Americans are uncomfortable with his moves to punish universities he sees as too liberal and to install himself as the board chair of the Kennedy Center, a major theater and cultural institution in Washington.

Neolithic and Chalcolithic archaeological site discovered in Mahallat, central Iran



TEHRAN—Iranian archaeologists in Markazi province have uncovered a prehistoric settlement site which dates back to the late Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods, according to provincial heritage officials.

Hossein Mahmoudi, the Deputy Director of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of the province, announced the discovery, saying that the newly identified site offers valuable insights into early human habitation in the region.

"The site, located in the southwest of Mahallat, provides clear evidence of human settlement during the late Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods," Mahmoudi told Mehr news agency. "This discovery highlights the transition from the Neolithic period to the Chalcolithic era, estimat-

ed to have occurred between 5200 and 4500 BC."

One of the key findings at the site is the presence of red pottery attributed to the Cheshmeh Ali cultural site (which is located in southern Tehran), a hallmark of the late Neolithic to early Chalcolithic transition. This type of pottery is a significant cultural indicator in prehistoric Iranian archaeology.

Mahmoudi emphasized the cultural shift that took place during the Chalcolithic period (approximately 4500–3000 BC), marking a major evolution in human lifestyle, particularly with the introduction of copper metallurgy and the use of the potter's wheel.

"The Chalcolithic period represents a pivotal phase in human development, bringing about technological and social changes that distinguished it from the earlier Neolithic period," he explained.

Further analysis is underway, particularly topological studies that are also being taken to officially register the site on Iran's National Heritage List, Mahmoudi said.

As mentioned by the official, the discovery adds a new layer to the understanding of Iran's ancient history and highlights the region's significance in early human development.

Geno Mountain, a destination for tourists and ecotourists

TEHRAN — Geno Mountain, 30 km northwest of Bandar Abbas, Hormozgan province, is located between Bandar Abbas and Hajjiabad. It is considered a section of Southern Zagros Mountain Range.

With a height of over 2,300 meters, it is the sixth high summit across the province. Its weather is always seven or 10 degrees Celsius less than Bandar Abbas, CHTN reported.

Its weather is pleasant and cool in spring and autumn.

Geno Mountain was declared a protected zone in 1972. It was put on UNESCO list as one of Iran's 13 biosphere habitats given its unique natural characteristics.

This 43,000-hectare region is the habitat of tens of rare flora and fauna species.

Diverse flora species, including low-density forests, shrubs, fruit trees, and herbal plants, grow in Geno Heights. Trees like fig, pomegranate, apple, apricot, grape, and almond trees have doubled the natural beauty of this area.

Geno is home to species such as the Persian leopard, hyena, jackal, antelope, ram, ewe, fox, rabbit, and wild boar. Birds of prey and migrants such as the falcon, partridge, huma, and jay, are also seen in this area. Also, rare species of amphibians and reptiles live in the flowing waters and springs of Geno Mountain, which indicates the health of the ecosystem of this area.



Geno Mountain was put on UNESCO list as one of Iran's 13 biosphere habitats given its unique natural characteristics.

Warm water spring

Geno's warm water spring is one of the most attractive parts of Geno Mountain. The spring, which has high temperature and mineral water rich in sulfur, chlorine, and calcium compounds, is useful for treating many skin and joint diseases.

The presence of two separate swimming pools for women and men, and amenity spaces around them has turned Geno into one of the most important health tourism targets in southern Iran.

A rare fish, named Aphanisginaonis, lives in this hot spring. This fish is difficult to see with the naked eye due to its high speed and small size.

Taq-e Bostan historic site cleaned on National Earth Day



A group of non-governmental organizations and environmentalists cleaned the historic site of Taq-e Bostan and the areas in the precincts of this ancient monument.

TEHRAN — Director of Taq-e Bostan, Mohammad-Mehdi Feyzaghahi, said the historic site of Taq-e Bostan in Kermanshah province was cleaned up on April 22, which marks the National Earth Day.

He told ISNA that a group of non-governmental organizations and environmentalists cleaned the historic site of Taq-e Bostan and the areas in the precincts of this ancient monument.

During this symbolic measure, the garbage scattered and released on surface level of the historic site of Taq-e Bostan and Khosrow Parviz

Hunting Ground was collected, he said.

He explained that environmentalists and non-governmental organizations took part in the event. The goal behind this measure was to inculcate the culture of keeping the earth clean and preserve the important historical monuments of the province, he said.

Taq-e Bostan is connected to a Sassanid-Parthian cultural heritage axis. It was originally part of a Parthian royal hunting garden where Sassanians later added their own regal stamp. It features a series of extraordinary bas-reliefs of victorious Sassanid kings, which have been inscribed into the base of a towering cliff.

It consists of a series of properties from prehistoric to historical periods such as Morad-Hasel Tepe, an ancient village, a Parthian graveyard, and Sassanid hunting ground. However, the most significant property of the complex belongs to the Sassanid one which comprises two porticos (large and small Ivans) as well as outstanding bas-reliefs from the same period.

What doubles the beauty of Taq-e Bostan is the existence of a lake in front of the arches, which has existed for over 1,000 years due to the presence of several bubbling springs among the old and towering trees.

Yazd recognized as world city of traditional jewelry by World Crafts Council

From Page 1 ► The designation follows a thorough evaluation process, including a field visit by a team of WCC experts earlier this year.

The experts conducted on-site assessments, engaged with local craftspeople, and explored Yazd's capacity to represent the global standard in traditional jewelry-making.

The minister also credited the success to the joint efforts of the Yazd provincial government, private sector partners, and the region's vibrant community of craftspeople and entrepreneurs.

"Their collaboration in building creative production and distribution networks played a vital role in achieving this global recognition," he said, calling it "a successful model of harmonizing grassroots and governmental capabilities."

This is not the first time Yazd has gained international acclaim.

In 2017, the city's historic urban fabric was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as the first historic city in Iran to receive such status.

Salehi-Amiri described this new recognition as "a fresh step forward in Yazd's journey toward global prominence and its



A traveler photographs traditional handcrafted jewelry displayed in a shop window in Yazd, a UNESCO-listed city in central Iran.

firm place in the world's cultural knowledge ecosystem."

In addition, the minister emphasized the importance of handicrafts in shaping Iran's creative economy.

"Yazd's traditional jewelry, with its deep roots, unique techniques, and authentic aesthetics, has the potential to redefine Iran's role in the global, culture-driven economy," he added.

Zargari of Yazd

The history of Zargari, or the art of jewelry making, in the historic city of Yazd dates back approximately 2,000 years, as supported by reliable evidence.

This ancient craft has been

passed down through generations, maintaining its distinctive and intricate techniques that make Yazdi jewelry nearly impossible to replicate. Some exquisite pieces, dating back 500 years, are found exclusively in Yazd.

Jewelry making is one of the most renowned traditional arts of Yazd, recognized both in Iran and internationally as Yazdi Zargari.

Unlike the standard 18-karat gold commonly produced in Iran, Yazd's traditional goldsmiths craft their pieces with a fineness of 20 karats.

This higher purity level is one of the key factors behind the es-

teemed reputation of Yazd's traditional jewelry.

Available evidence shows the discovery of jewelry from the Parthian era, dating back around 2,000 years, in the historic region of Mehriz.

These findings further attest to the city's deep-rooted legacy in gold ornamentation.

One of the most iconic jewelry pieces from Yazd is the "Chin-Abi" chain, named after its unique manufacturing technique.

The hallmark of this chain is its extraordinary softness, designed to mimic the fluidity of water.

It is crafted from delicate gold-en filaments, rods, and 20-karat gold rings unique to Yazd, often combined with copper and silver alloys.

Other traditional chain-making methods, such as "Hel Malileh Yazdi," "Toop Malileh Yazdi," and "Hel va Gol-e Yazd," are distinctive techniques belonging to Yazdi Zargari.

Those time-honored craftsmanship techniques have been officially recognized and registered as part of Iran's intangible cultural heritage, ensuring their preservation for future generations.

Yazd to host first intl. academy for handwoven textile

TEHRAN — An international academy dedicated to the art of traditional handwoven textiles and carpets is set to open soon in the historical city of Yazd, marking a significant step toward the revival and preservation of Iran's rich textile heritage.

According to Hamidreza Soleimani, CEO of the Dafineh Museum Group—an affiliate of the Mostazafan Foundation—the initiative will be launched in collaboration with the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and housed within the newly inaugurated Tar-o-Pud (Warp and Weft) Museum in Yazd.

"This cultural and educational center, proposed by the museum group, will focus on introducing and teaching both loom-based and non-loom textile arts," Soleimani stated.

"The academy will function as a prestigious institution offering training in textile crafts that are recognized by UNESCO as part of humanity's intangible cultural heritage."

Soleimani emphasized that the academy aims not only to preserve these "fading traditions" but also to reintroduce them to younger generations through a series of workshops and educational programs.

These efforts, he said, are expected to breathe new life

into "forgotten" practices and strengthen the identity of Yazd as a historic center of textile craftsmanship.

The academy is set to follow the goal of reviving Yazd's textile industry, which was once a major hub in the country, he noted.

"Given Yazd's rich cultural and economic potential, the academy is also designed to foster job creation and encourage youth involvement in traditional crafts."

Educational programs will include practical workshops in handweaving, textile design, and weaving techniques.

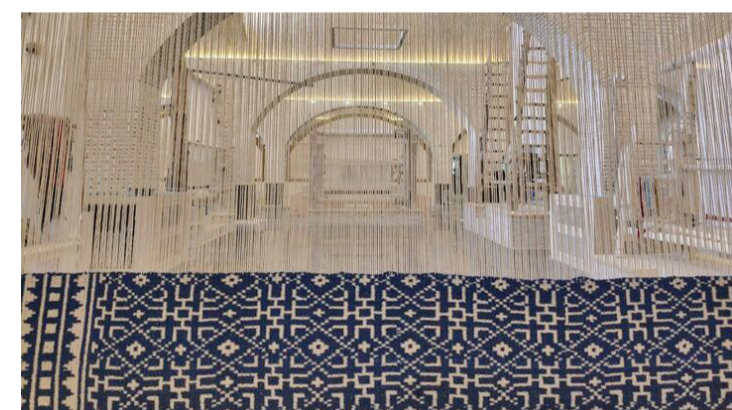
Additionally, the academy plans to host seasonal exhibitions and special events showcasing the work and products of local artisans.

Highlighting the broader impact of the initiative, Soleimani said, "This academy represents a key step in reviving authentic textile arts and unlocking Yazd's potential for cultural and economic development.

It is also expected to significantly contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage and the promotion of tourism in the region."

Tar-o-Pud Museum, a tribute to textile heritage

On March 1, the Tar-o-Pud (meaning "Warp and Weft")



Museum, dedicated to the rich history of Iranian textiles, was officially inaugurated within the abandoned Janoub Spinning and Weaving Factory, a 70-year-old landmark in Yazd.

The museum presents a vast collection of carpets, fabrics, and woven artifacts, some dating back over a millennium.

Among its highlights are rare fabrics from the Buyid dynasty to the late Qajar era, exquisite carpets from the Qajar period, and traditional handwoven crafts from Iran's desert and central regions.

A restored Qajar royal tent also features prominently in the museum's display, offering visitors a glimpse into the opulence of Iran's past.

Constructed in the early 1950s by Reza Sarrafzadeh, a prominent merchant and member of

Iran's National Assembly, the factory was one of the region's most significant textile production centers.

At its peak, it employed 700 workers, producing 900 bundles of fabric annually.

The factory's distinctive shape, inspired by the vernacular architecture of Yazd, remains a testament to the region's rich cultural heritage.

The museum is set to provide an immersive experience with recreated traditional weaving workshops and fully functional carpet looms.

Visitors can interact with craftsmen and even participate in weaving processes. Some of the looms, reconstructed using 180-year-old designs, will revive forgotten weaving techniques, including those used to create rare textiles.



Provinces of Khorasan Razavi and Gilan launched over 1,000 handicrafts pavilions in Nowruz marketplaces.

TEHRAN — Over 5,400 billion rials (\$6 million) worth of products made by Iranian artisans were sold at 12,000 makeshift stalls and local marketplaces during Nowruz 1404 holidays, said an official with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism

Iran sells \$6 million worth of handicrafts during Nowruz

and Handicrafts.

Farzad Ojani told IRNA that since the necessary infrastructure, such as POS machines, is available to the artists, the sale rate of handicrafts in Nowruz markets and fairs was declared by artisans to the cultural heritage experts, and they registered it in systems created by the Tourism Ministry.

He said provinces of Khorasan Razavi and Gilan launched over 1,000 handicrafts pavilions in Nowruz marketplaces, given the number of cities and cultural heritage sites, and ranked top grade.

The type of handicrafts is related to the indigenous fields of each province, he said. Therefore, the products of each region differ, he added.

For example, knifemaking and tapestry is common in Zanjan province, while ceramic making is popular in East Azarbaijan prov-

ince, basket weaving in Ilam province, khatamkari in Isfahan province, and felt making and carpet weaving in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province.

He said the handicrafts experts of the ministry paid close attention to fair pricing of handicraft products to define the prices within the market price range.

"We try to use all capacities and sites under the domination of the cultural heritage department to encourage the visitors to purchase local handicrafts after visiting the historical sites."

Based on available data, Iran exported \$224 million worth of handicrafts during the past Persian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2025), with an equal amount estimated to have been exported through suitcase trade, according to the Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri.

National population week to be marked

TEHRAN – The national population week will be observed from May 14 to 20 under the theme 'children, life assets'.

The days of the week have been named as follows: Wednesday, May 14, 'Father, mother, good sense of life'; Thursday, May 15, 'Motherhood, elixir of youth'; Friday, May 16, 'Desiring a child'; Saturday, May 17, 'My lonely child'; Sunday, May 18, 'I want to stay alive'; Monday, May 19, 'My life in old age'; Tuesday, May 20, 'Child-friendly society'.

Youth population law stabilizes total fertility rate

Enacting the youth population law has stabilized the total fertility rate, slightly increasing the general fertility index over the past two years.

After experiencing seven years of decline by about 20 percent, the fertility rate is now stabilized at around 1.6, IRNA reported.

The total fertility rate has experienced a sharp decline since the Iranian calendar year 1394 (2015-2016) as the number of births reached 1.057 million in 1402 (2023-2024) from 1.570 million in 1394. However, since the Iranian



calendar year 1401 (March 2022–March 2023), the downward trend in fertility came to a halt.

The total fertility rate has lowered to 1.6 children per woman from about 2 children per woman.

According to Civil Registration Organization's report, the total fertility rate in Iranian years 1396 (2017-2018), 1397 (2018-2019), 1398 (2019-2020), 1399 (2020-2021), and 1400 (2021-2022) were 2.09, 1.95, 1.74, 1.65, 1.61 per each woman, respectively.

Despite offering incentives to encourage childbearing in line with youth population law, the desired

growth in the youth population has not been accomplished yet.

At best, Iran's population with a total fertility rate of 2.5 will reach 102,890,000 by the next seven years, IRIB quoted Mohammad-Javad Mahmoudi, an official with the Civil Registration Organization, as saying.

In May 2024, Hasan Farshidi, an official with the health ministry, said two years after the implementation of the law on supporting families and the youth, investigations have shown that the health ministry has played a central role in the implementation of the law.

"Since the implementation of the law, the number of births among mothers aged 20 to 24 has notably increased," the official added.

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

According to Saber Jabbari, an official with the health ministry, men and women aged above 60 constitute some 11.5 percent of Iran's population.

For the time being, elderly women account for 52.3 percent of the total population, outnumbering men (47.7 percent), ISNA reported.

The aging of individuals signifies increased life expectancy. However, population aging demonstrates a shift in the distribution of a country's population towards older ages which is not a favorable indicator. In other words, the number of young people in society declines in comparison to the elderly population. It is one of the most important challenges facing the country.

Intl. Urban Search and Rescue training course underway



TEHRAN – Tehran Disaster Mitigation and Management Organization is hosting an international Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) course, which kicked off on Monday and will conclude on Thursday.

Representatives from Tehran Fire Department and Safety Services Organization, and Tehran Disaster Mitigation and Management Organization (TDMMO) are participating in the course.

Instructors from the Emergency Situations and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters of the Russian Federation (EMERCOM) are providing training discussions online, Mehr news agency reported.

The course covers topics such as the history, methodology, objectives, and structure of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), the five principles of assessment, the search and rescue process, key actions at each stage,

Documents and forms required by USAR teams, ethical considerations, and the INSARAG external classification.

The head of TDMMO, Ali Nasiri, has expressed optimism that the current training course will lay the ground for Iran's membership in INSARAG. So far, more than 70 organizations from 90 countries have succeeded in joining

INSARAG.

Upon completion of the current course, instructors from the INSARAG secretariat and EMERCOM will hold an in-person coordination (UC) course in Tehran in the current Iranian month (April 21– May 21), Nasiri added.

A simulation exercise (SIMEX) and a 36-hour full-scale exercise (Full Scale) are also scheduled to be conducted in Tehran, and the country is set to achieve international classification in 2026.

Tehran crisis management team attends INSARAG course

TDMO team represented Iran in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) training course, conducted in cooperation with the Emergency Situations and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters of the Russian Federation (EMERCOM) and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The specialized training course aimed at improving coordination and command in international search and rescue operations, focusing on the Incident Command Management System (ICMS). It was held at the Academy of GPS of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Russia, ILNA reported on April 15.

Instructors from Armenia, Brazil, and Turkey taught participants about coordinating and managing international search and rescue operations with the help of specialized software. They also got acquainted with the principles of the data collection and processing system over the course of a week.

Moreover, operation teams were taught how to quickly send information from the emergency site to international search and rescue coordination centers via smartphone or similar devices.

In the ICMS, information is processed, summarized and used to collaborate with the authorities of the affected country on deciding priority areas to receive relief and rescue services.

Designed based on INSARAG standards, ICMS is currently used by internationally certified teams and has been deployed in relief missions in various countries, including Lebanon, Libya, Turkey, Morocco, Thailand, and Myanmar.

In March 2024, The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and Tehran Fire Department were assessed by the INSARAG and EMERCOM.

The initial assessment mission was held from March 9 to 14 to achieve international classification according to the INSARAG standards.

Capacity building is at the heart of INSARAG and the EMERCOM of the Russian Federation, as a member of the INSARAG network, agreed to provide its technical expertise to support this initiative, UN Website announced in a press release on March 19.

Throughout the week-long mission, INSARAG and EMERCOM representatives met with Iranian officials and visited the Relief and Rescue Center of IRCS and Training Center of Tehran Fire Department.

The mission was initiated in response to a request from Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was facilitated by the Tehran Disaster Mitigation and Management Organization on behalf of the National Disaster Management Organization (NDMO).

This mission established a roadmap for the remaining steps ahead of the completion of the classification process.

Hearing screening campaign covers 97% of target population

TEHRAN – The national hearing screening campaign has covered around 97 percent of the target population, an official with the health ministry has said.

Hearing screening can detect possible hearing loss in the first days of an infant's life. Hearing impediments or hearing loss can be treated by timely detection and early intervention, such as the use of hearing aids or cochlear implants, IRNA quoted Jafar Jandaqi as saying.

The official made the remarks on the occasion of the national health week, being held from April 21 to 27.

Currently, the country is providing free cochlear implants, and the people are paying just for the hearing tests, which is planned to be done free of charge soon, as well, the official added.

Highlighting that Iran is sharing its expertise and technology in treating hearing loss to other countries, Jandaqi said, "More than 50 per-

cent of hearing loss and problems in adults and 60 percent of hearing loss and impediments in children can be prevented through health care measures."

The prevalence of hearing loss among school-age children in the country has been reported to be about two percent. Around three to five infants of every 1,000 children have hearing loss, he noted.

Some 25 out of every 1,000 preschool children are also detected with hearing impairments, making it essential to expand the screening programs, Jandaqi stressed.

According to health minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi, some 2,000 cochlear implants are performed annually in Iran.

People with hearing loss can benefit from early identification; use of hearing aids, cochlear implants and other assistive devices; captioning and sign language; and other forms of educational and social support.

UNDP official elaborates on activities in Iran

TEHRAN – Currently, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) activities in Iran are centered around four key areas, including social and economic welfare, health, environment, and disaster risk reduction, Ayshanie Medagangoda-Labé, the resident representative ad interim for UNDP in Iran, has said.

The official made the remarks addressing the ceremony held on the occasion of 20 years of UNDP and Welfare Organization partnership, Mehr news agency reported.

"One of the main tasks of the United Nations Development Program is to introduce successful models from other countries and introduce them to the Welfare Organization. We always try to secure the necessary financial resources to support activities being carried out in Iran."

The top priorities of the UNDP in the economic, social welfare area include conducting research, supporting micro and small enterprises, and improving the social and economic well-being of at-risk groups, like female heads of households and vulnerable youth, the official noted.

Health is the second work area, which involves combating communicable and non-communicable diseases. Here, the UNDP works closely with other UN agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The third area is the environment. The UNDP is trying to protect the country's natural resources, wetlands, and biodiversity. It also assists in addressing climate change impacts through complying with international standards.

The official went on to say that in the energy sector, the focus is on using renewable resources. Currently, Iran is just using one percent of its potential capacity in renewable energies such as solar, wind, and water.

"We hope to be able to utilize domestic and in-

ternational capacities to develop solar energy in different centers, such as health," Medagangoda-Labé said.

The fourth area of the UNDP activities in the country is disaster risk reduction. The successful experience in reducing sand and dust storms is a typical example of cooperation in this sector, the official further noted.

Recent collaborations

In March, the Department of Environment (DOE) and the UNDP signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to enhance the country's capacity to address air pollution using new technologies.

"Access to special [air] pollution monitoring systems provided by the United Nations Development Office can contribute to solving the country's environmental problems, particularly air pollution, more effectively," the head of the DOE, Shina Ansari, said on the sidelines of the signing ceremony.

UNDP in Iran is committed to continuing to support efforts in Iran to strengthen economic resilience, reduce emissions, and achieve a sustainable energy future.

It actively supports the country's transition to renewable energy and improved energy efficiency. To support long-term sustainability, UNDP developed an energy efficiency certificate framework, approved by the Economic Council, and equipped laboratories and vocational training centers to improve skills in the clean energy sector.

Iran has significant potential for renewable energy, with 60,000 MW of solar capacity and 30,000 MW of wind potential. National targets aim to install 30,000 MW of renewable energy by 2030 and reduce power consumption by 10,000 MW. However, challenges such as energy intensity remain, the UN website announced in a press release on January 28.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran capable of manufacturing any medicine in two years

Iranian pharmaceutical industry and scientists are capable of producing any kind of medicine over a two-year period, Mohammad Reza Shانهساز, head of Food and Drug Administration, has said.

Some medicines are not currently manufactured domestically as their production is not economically justifiable because of low consumption, he added, IRNA reported.

In some cases, medicines are new pharmaceutical molecules that have recently been produced worldwide, he noted.

"The U.S. has sanctioned medicine as far as possible, but we have been able to provide patients with the required medicine, and currently there is no shortages," he explained.

ایران می تواند هر دارویی را ظرف دو سال تولید کند

رئیس سازمان غذا و دارو گفت هر دارویی را می توانیم طی ۲ سال در داخل کشور تولید کنیم.

به گزارش ایرنا، محمدرضا شانه ساز روز دوشنبه گفت این یک بلوف نیست و صنعت داروسازی و دانشمندان کشور توان تولید همه داروها را دارند. به گفته شانه ساز، برخی اقلام دارویی که اکنون در داخل تولید نمی شود به علت کم مصرفی است زیرا توجیه اقتصادی ندارد یا مولکول های دارویی جدیدی هستند که به تازگی در دنیا تولید شده اند. او ادامه داد: آمریکا هر دارویی را که توانسته تحریم کرده اما ما توانسته ایم از راههایی که می دانیم داروهای مورد نیاز بیماران را تامین کنیم و اکنون دارو به میزان کافی در سراسر کشور وجود دارد.



Clean energy, clean earth

Households in a rural district in Neyshabur, northeast of the country, are using solar power to help reduce greenhouse gases and protect the environment.

World Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22. The theme for Earth Day 2025 is 'Our Power, Our Planet,' inviting everyone around the globe to unite behind renewable energy and to triple the global generation of clean electricity by 2030.



APRIL 23, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The best form of devotion to the service of Allah is not to make a show of it.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:03 Evening: 19:03 Dawn: 3:49 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:20 (tomorrow)

Stephen King's "Under the Dome" published in Persian

TEHRAN- A Persian translation of American author Stephen King's novel "Under the Dome" has been published in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Mohammad Javadi. Tandis is the publisher of the book.

Published in 2009, the story of "Under the Dome" unfolds in a struggling small town in Maine, Chester's Mill, which faces an extraordinary crisis when an invisible, dome-like barrier suddenly envelops the community, cutting it off from the outside world.

The plot spans eight days, from October 21 to October 28, 2017. The catastrophe begins at 11:44 a.m. on October 21, when the barrier descends abruptly, resulting in immediate injuries and fatalities.

Among those trapped is former Army Captain Dale "Barbie" Barbara, who had intended to leave Chester's Mill due to a local dispute. The police chief, Howard "Duke" Perkins, is killed when his pacemaker malfunctions near the Dome, leaving a power vacuum that is swiftly filled by James "Big Jim" Rennie, a used car salesman and the town's Second Selectman.

Big Jim sees this crisis as an opportunity to consolidate his power and ruthlessly manipulates the situation to his advantage.

Following Duke's death, Big Jim appoints the inept Peter Randolph as the new police chief and begins recruiting a police force filled with dubious characters, including his son, Junior Rennie. Junior, suffering from difficulties stemming from an undiagnosed brain tumor, has a violent past, having committed several murders that go unnoticed.

Meanwhile, Colonel James O. Cox, positioned outside the Dome, contacts Julia Shumway, the town's newspaper editor, and instructs her to re-

lay a message to Barbie. He proposes that Barbie act as the government's agent to investigate the Dome, effectively reinstating him in the military with newfound authority. This action incites the ire of Big Jim and his cadre of rogue officers, leading to increased tensions.

As Big Jim stokes fear and uncertainty among the townsfolk to solidify his grip, Barbie, Julia, and a handful of residents form a resistance against his expanding tyranny.

When Barbie is wrongfully imprisoned for murders orchestrated by Big Jim, the situation escalates, culminating in a desperate attempt by the townspeople to locate the Dome's source.

They uncover a mysterious, extraterrestrial device on an abandoned farm, which the leatherhead aliens appear to have set up as part of a cruel entertainment experiment.

As the residents' desperation mounts, a violent confrontation ensues between Big Jim's faction and those opposing him.

In the ensuing chaos, a catastrophic explosion results in the deaths of thousands, effectively decimating the town and leaving only a few survivors to face the toxic aftermath.

Among them are Barbie, Julia, and a group of resilient townspeople who struggle to survive amidst asphyxiating conditions.

In a final confrontation, Barbie and Julia reach out to the alien beings responsible for the Dome.

By appealing to their empathy and shared humanity, they manage to convince a solitary leatherhead to relinquish control, resulting in the Dome's gradual disappearance. This act releases the survivors from their suffocating prison, allowing the toxic air to clear and providing a bitter-sweet resolution to the calamity that had befallen Chester's Mill.

36th TIBF to present over 31,000 titles for children, young adults

TEHRAN-Two weeks to the 36th Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF), 230 publishers have registered to participate in the children's and young adult section, a board member of the Cultural Association of Children and Youth Book Publishers said.

"The number is 31 more than last year. Additionally, 28 publishers will be represented through agencies," Mehr quoted Mohammad Taqi Haghbin as saying.

"Publishers in this section will have a total space of 13,000 square meters, which marks an increase of 2,000 square meters compared to last year," he added.

"A total of 31,792 titles will be presented in the children's and young adult section by the publishers, all of which have been approved by the Iran Book and Literature House," Haghbin noted.

Referring to the accessibility of all publishers' books for readers in this section, he said: "To ensure readers can access books from all publishers, we will have a collective pavilion in the children's and young adult section that will offer books from publishers which, for any reason, are not physically present at the fair."

"Overall, there isn't a single



publisher in this section that will be absent from the fair this year.

As mentioned, the interest in participating in this section has increased compared to last year, which shows that despite economic challenges, innovation in the publishing industry makes continued participation possible, which is a hopeful sign for the future of the publishing industry," he asserted.

Recognized as a national heritage and event, Tehran International Book Fair not only invigorates and enriches the country's

culture but also attracts the attention of cultural figures and book lovers from across the globe.

The cultural event has turned into a landmark, momentous book fair in West Asia after 35 editions in a row.

Millions of visitors inspect the fair every year, including thousands of university students, scholars, and their families.

The event currently serves as the most significant cultural event in Iran. On average 2,500

domestic and 600 foreign publishers participate in the landmark event.

The foreign publishers substantially offer their materials in English or Arabic however titles in French, German, Chinese, Korean, Russian, or Japanese are also available.

The 36th TIBF is set to take place from May 7 to 17 at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla.

"Let's Read for Iran" has been chosen as the slogan for this edition of the book fair.

Adaptation of Sadi's "Gulistan" anecdote on stage at Tehran theater



A poster for Iranian director Rahmat Amini's play "Indian Liver".

TEHRAN- A loose adaptation of one of the anecdotes from the renowned Persian poet Saadi's "Gulistan" is currently being performed at Tehran's Sangelaj Hall.

Rahmat Amini is the writer and director of the play entitled "Indian Liver".

Farzad Berahman, Delaram Torki, Navid Jahanzadeh, Amin Zare and Mehdi Mehryar are the main members for the play, which will remain on stage until April 28.

A short yet captivating tale about the character of kings in Sadi's "Gulistan" has become the basis for a humorous play that has roots in the past and a manifestation in the present.

A king has fallen ill with a dreadful disease, and the remedy for his ailment is the liver.

"Gulistan" or "The Rose Garden", is the most famous work of Sadi, one of the most celebrated Persian poets of the 13th century.

This collection is a masterpiece of Persian literature and is divided into eight chapters, each dealing with different aspects of life, ethics, and morality.

Sadi's writing is characterized by its eloquence, wisdom, and wit, making him a beloved figure in Persian literature and culture.

One of the key themes in Sadi's work is the importance of kindness, compassion, and generosity.

His poems often emphasize the value of be-

ing a good person and treating others with respect and understanding.

Sadi's words encourage readers to strive for personal growth, self-improvement, and moral integrity.

Sadi is renowned for his masterful use of anecdotes in his works, particularly in the "Gulistan".

These brief, engaging tales often feature moral lessons, sharp wit, and insightful observations about human nature and society.

Sadi's anecdotes encapsulate complex ideas in a simple yet poignant manner, making them accessible to a broad audience.

Through the interactions of his characters—kings, merchants, and common folk—he explores themes such as justice, wisdom, love, and the folly of human behavior.

This storytelling technique not only entertains but also encourages readers to reflect on their own lives and the social dynamics around them, solidifying Sadi's legacy as a timeless commentator on the human condition.

Sadi is renowned for his masterful use of anecdotes in his works, particularly in the «Gulistan».

Cartoon of Day



Gaza
Cartoonist: Mohammed Afefa from Palestine

Iranian filmmaker Shiva Sadegh Asadi to judge at Anney Festival

TEHRAN-Iranian filmmaker and painter Shiva Sadegh Asadi will serve as a juror at the 49th Anney International Animation Film Festival, set to be held from June 8 to 14 in France.

She has been selected as one of three jury members for the short competition section of the festival, Mehr reported.

Sadegh Asadi will serve along with Andrew Ruhemann, a British Oscar-winning film producer, director and the founder of Passion Pictures and Christopher Sanders, an American filmmaker, animator, and voice actor.

A graduate of animation from Tehran University of Art, Sadegh Asadi is has directed several notable animations, including "The Kitten" (2013), "Maned & Macho" (2017), "Crab" (2020), "Satin" (2022), and "Aquatic" (2024) and have won international admiration and awards, notably the Hiroshima International Animation Festival Jury Award and the Filmfest Dresden Audience Award in 2022.

She has gradually developed her early painterly style by combining it with stop-motion techniques.

She uses objects and pieces of paper to

create distorted figures and fragmented space, combined with the representation of various viewpoints, perspectives and timeframes in a single shot.

Sadegh Asadi considers her paintings to be the main source of inspiration for her animated films.

In both her paintings and films, she focuses on the human being's inner self, dealing with themes including dreams, gloomy fantasies, femininity, abuse, family, and relationships.

The Anney International Animation Film Festival, officially abbreviated in English as the Anney Festival or simply Anney, was created in 1960 and takes place at the beginning of June in the town of Anney, France.

Initially occurring every two years, the festival became an annual event in 1998.

It is one of the four international animated film festivals sponsored by the International Animated Film Association.

The festival is a competition between animated films of various techniques (traditional, cut-outs, claymation, CGI, etc.) classified in various categories including feature films, short films, films produced for television and



advertising, student films, and films made for the internet.

Throughout the festival, in addition to the competing films projected in various cinemas of the city, an open-air night projection is organized on Pâquier, in the center of the town, amongst the lake and with the mountains.

According to the topic of the festival, classic or recent films are projected upon the giant screen. At the closing ceremony, the winners of various categories are awarded.