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A Nation's Unity and Resolve in the Ashes of Tragedy

Tehran Times reporter's firsthand account of the Bandar Abbas inferno, and how the country reacted to it

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Photo shows the Tehran Blood Transfusion Centre, where countless citizens visited to donate blood after the Bandar Abbas tragedy on April 26, 2025.

Iran, Tajikistan hold industry talks on sidelines of Expo 2025

TEHRAN — Iran's Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad Atabak met with Tajikistan's minister of industry and new technologies on the sidelines of Expo 2025 to discuss expanding industrial cooperation between the two countries.

According to a statement from Iran's Ministry of Industry, Atabak reaffirmed Iran's readiness to supply Tajikistan with billets, rebar, and steel products as previously discussed.

He added that Iran is fully prepared to meet Tajikistan's needs in the chemical and food industries, offering to establish a mutually agreed mechanism for cooperation.

Atabak emphasized that Tajikistan's requests—whether for factory construction or product supply—can be carried out through bilateral agreements. He noted that plans for the construction and equipping of pharmaceutical manufacturing plants will proceed once the two countries harmonize their standards. ► Page 4

Is replacing UN Resolution 1701 Supervisory Committee chief a routine?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — Following the recent Israeli aggression on the southern suburbs, Lebanese media outlets exaggerated the dimensions of the visit of U.S. General Jasper Jeffers, the head of the committee supervising the implementation of the ceasefire agreement in southern Lebanon.

The visit, however, did not entail any exceptional shift in the committee's role, but was a protocol procedure to replace Jeffers with General Michael J. Lehney.

General Michael J. Lehney graduated from the Virginia Military Institute. He then served in the infantry, air defense, and armored branches. He was subsequently appointed Chief of Staff of the Training, Advise, and Assistance Command in Kandahar, Afghanistan. ► Page 5

Will Iran-U.S. nuclear talks fall victim to U.S. political turmoil and internal discord?

Despite the provocations, diplomatic confusion, and changing faces in Washington, Iran remains committed to dialogue, legality, and diplomacy. "The Islamic Republic will continue its path with strength and determination," Baghaei said on his X account.

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – The fourth round of indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States—set to take place on Saturday—has been postponed, with the Islamic Republic reiterating its firm and unwavering commitment to a diplomatic resolution.

Tehran continues to emphasize dialogue and justice in the face of escalating political instability and conflicting rhetoric from within the American leadership.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi announced late

Thursday that the talks in Rome were postponed in coordination with U.S. and Omani mediators for "logistical and technical reasons." However, the broader picture points to intensifying internal discord in Washington, raising questions about the seriousness and coherence of the U.S. approach.

"There is no change in Iran's determination to reach a negotiated solution," Araghchi wrote

on X. "In fact, we are more determined than ever to secure a just and balanced deal—one that ends unjust sanctions, guarantees the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program, and ensures that the rights of the Iranian people are fully respected."

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei underlined Iran's principled approach, describing the negotiations as "result-oriented" and fully aligned

with international law. He stressed that Iran had entered talks in good faith and laid out clear legal frameworks for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the lifting of unlawful, inhumane sanctions.

Since April, three rounds of negotiations mediated by Oman have been held in Rome and Muscat, with both sides initially praising the talks as constructive.

But while Iran maintains a unified diplomatic front, the American political scene is sending mixed signals.

In a major shake-up, U.S. President Donald Trump on Thursday dismissed National Security Adviser Mike Waltz and named Secretary of State Marco Rubio as his interim replacement. Trump announced via social media that Waltz would instead be nominated as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, calling him a "patriot" who "put America's interests first." ► Page 2

Tourism Triangle: Special rail tour to connect Tehran to Isfahan, Yazd, and Shiraz

TEHRAN – The Railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran has announced the launch of a dedicated rail service aimed at boosting cultural tourism across three of Iran's most iconic historical cities: Isfahan, Yazd, and Shiraz—collectively known as the "Tourism Triangle of Iran."

The first train is set to depart from Tehran on May 12, IRNA reported on Thursday.

The five-day cultural tour, developed in coordination with regional tourism and railway officials, offers passengers a unique opportunity to explore the architectural, historical, and cultural richness of central and southern Iran. The itinerary includes guided visits to major landmarks in all three cities. ► Page 6



Another stain in Israel's infamous short history

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – On May 2, 2025, the Conscience, a vessel belonging to the Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC) carrying humanitarian aid and activists to Gaza, was attacked by armed drones in international waters near Malta. This act of aggression, which the FFC has attributed to Israel, caused a fire and significant damage to the ship, endangering the lives of the 30 human rights advocates on board.

The attack is a clear violation of international law and a stark illustration of Israel's ongoing efforts to maintain its illegal blockade of Gaza, inflict collective punishment on its civilian population, and carry out what many critics describe as a genocidal campaign. ► Page 5

Yemen attacks vital Israeli airbase

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Yemeni forces target a strategic Israeli military airbase with a hypersonic missile in northern Israeli territories.

The Yemeni Armed Forces launched a Palestine 2 hypersonic ballistic missile at the Ramat David Airbase near Haifa, confirming that the missile successfully struck its target after Israeli interception systems failed to stop it.

In a statement, Yemeni military spokesperson Brigadier General Yahya Saree confirmed the use of the Palestine 2 hypersonic ballistic missile in the operation, emphasizing that it reached its target, highlighting the failure of the enemy's interception systems.

The missile reportedly also evaded American interceptor systems deployed by the United States in the region to defend the Israeli regime from Yemeni missile and drone strikes. ► Page 5

The contemporary value of the Bandung Spirit

By Professor ZHANG Yuan

Seventy years have passed since the Bandung Conference (Asian-African Conference) was held in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955. Although the world has experienced many major changes in its order and pattern, the spiritual values represented by the Bandung Conference remain a precious treasure of political consensus in the history of mankind.

At a time when the world is facing a potentially growing threats of isolated neo-economic nationalism and extreme unilateral hegemony, looking back at the Bandung Conference, the spirit of the Bandung Conference, ► Page 5

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Tehran and Baku are too far, too close

In an analysis, Etemad discussed the importance of Iran-Azerbaijan relations. It wrote: Pezeshkian's trip to Baku took place in sensitive circumstances because the ties between Tehran and Baku, after the ups and downs of recent years, need a new opportunity to repair and improve. The Israeli regime's intelligence activities in Azerbaijan and its malicious attempts to disrupt relations between the two neighbors are Tehran's most important concern; an issue that, without defining clear boundaries in the security sphere, could once again cast a shadow over relations. Disagreements related to transit projects, especially Iran's sensitivities to the developments in the Zangezur region and plans to change the regional geopolitics, are other areas of disagreement. In this situation, maximum use of the capacity in border provinces, drawing up transparent strategies to counter security threats, developing tangible economic projects, strengthening academic ties, and involving Iranian companies in the reconstruction of the newly liberated regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan can help strengthen ties. Pezeshkian's trip to Baku, if it leads to tangible results, can be an effective step towards rebuilding this neighborhood path.

Hamshahri: Trump's words and actions don't correspond

In a note, Hamshahri addressed the message of Mike Waltz (the White House National Security Advisor who has been fired from his post but as the U.S. ambassador to the UN), and the Americans' contradictory statements and wrote: The White House National Security Advisor said in his statements that Iran must understand that Trump wants peace and is ready for an agreement and Witkoff is waiting for Tehran to return to the negotiating table. This claim comes at a time when Iran has not withdrawn from the indirect talks with the United States, and last Saturday, after the third round of talks, Oman's Foreign Minister announced that the fourth round of talks would be held next Saturday (May 3). However, in recent days, Washington has undermined the diplomatic process by imposing new sanctions on Iran. These sanctions are designed in line with the failed and criminal policy of "maximum pressure" against the great nation of Iran. This is another clear evidence of the contradictory approach of American decision-makers and their lack of goodwill and seriousness in advancing the path of diplomacy. Therefore, the responsibility for the consequences of the contradictory behavior and provocative

Senior diplomat calls for Iran-Persian Gulf states dialogue amid regional realignment

TEHRAN – Kamal Kharrazi, head of Iran's Strategic Council on Foreign Relations, has called for serious and sustained dialogue between Iran and its Arab neighbors in the Persian Gulf, citing a growing sense of rationality and political maturity across the region.

Speaking on Thursday at the "Persian Gulf in Light of Regional and International Developments" conference in Tehran, Kharrazi said: "Given the maturity now evident among regional states, there is a real need for dialogue between Iran and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf. Iran has always sought this engagement."

The conference was held to mark National Persian Gulf Day, observed annually on the 10th of Ordibehesht—the second month of the Iranian calendar—typically corresponding to April 30. The date commemorates the 1622 victory of Shah Abbas I of Iran, whose forces expelled the Portuguese navy from the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

While highlighting Iran's hard power capabilities, Kharrazi said the time has come to prioritize soft power—through diplomacy, cultural engagement, and regional cooperation. He called attention to Israel's ongoing war in Gaza, particularly since the October 7, 2023 events, as a stark reminder of the need for regional unity.

statements of American officials regarding Iran will lie with the American side.

Ham Mihan: China's support for Iran's nuclear diplomacy

In a commentary, Ham Mihan discussed China's support for Iran's nuclear diplomacy. It said: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, while supporting Iran's nuclear diplomacy, has appreciated Tehran's diplomatic efforts regarding its nuclear program. China previously played a key role in healing the wounds between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Analysts have seen this move as a sign of Beijing's desire to become an influential diplomatic power player in the Middle East. However, the recent crisis in Israel and Gaza, as well as the military operations of Ansarallah against commercial ships linked to Israel in the Red Sea, have challenged China's ability to play a constructive role in managing "hot global issues." China's appreciation for Iran's diplomacy indicates Beijing's desire to deepen relations with Tehran and play a role in the Middle East developments. However, the increase in U.S. sanctions and Trump's military threats (against Iran) indicate that the atmosphere of negotiations will stay tense. China's role as a mediator may be affected if regional crises intensify.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Iran's economy awaits green light from negotiations

Arman-e-Emrooz examined the situation in the Iranian market in light of the nuclear talks between Iran and the United States. The paper said: Iran's economy is awaiting the fourth round of nuclear negotiations. Since the third round of the negotiations between Iran and the United States was held on Saturday (April 26), the market is in a state of caution, which was in contrast to the previous two rounds of negotiations. From the point of view of traders, the market these days is optimistic about the negotiations, but there are traces of fear that may become exciting again with some news. However, market analysts believe that even if a possible agreement is reached between Iran and the United States, due to Iran's non-membership in the FATF, the banking system cannot use SWIFT, which will continue to be accompanied by problems in financial transactions. The market after the fourth round of negotiations between Iran and the United States will fluctuate greatly depending on whether the outcome of the negotiations is positive or negative, and traders are already waiting to see what the market conditions and prices will be like if the outcome of the fourth round of negotiations is positive.

"Israel's actions are part of a larger Zionist strategy—one aimed at territorial expansion from the Nile to the Euphrates," he warned, citing historical Israeli statements after the 1967 war.

Kharrazi reiterated Iran's support for earlier initiatives like the "Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE)" and the newer "Amity Plan (Muslim West Asian Dialogue Association)," which aim to foster dialogue among Iran, Iraq, and the six Arab Persian Gulf states without foreign interference.

He noted that UN Security Council Resolution 598 calls for the establishment of such a forum, though it has yet to materialize. "Now more than ever, with shared threats and economic challenges, the time is ripe for renewed collective action," he said.

Additionally, Kharrazi revealed that Tehran will soon host a high-level Iran-Arab Dialogue Summit at the Center for Political and International Studies. The event is expected to draw participants from several Arab nations, as well as Iranian intellectuals and researchers.

"This is a unique opportunity to present a new, strategic image of Iran," he said. "The future of the region lies in cooperation—across energy, technology, culture, and even security—and Iran is ready for it."

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The reshuffle adds to mounting uncertainty over the direction of U.S. foreign policy, especially as Ru-

Iran warns Trump's sanctions 'deepen distrust' as two sides work for new potential deal

By Garsha Vazirian

TEHRAN – The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a sharp rebuke of the United States on Friday, condemning President Donald Trump's renewed sanctions targeting buyers of Iranian oil as a repetition of "failed tactics" that undermine diplomatic efforts to resolve tensions over Tehran's nuclear program.

The statement followed Trump's Thursday ultimatum threatening secondary sanctions against nations purchasing Iranian energy products, triggering a global oil price rebound.

In a Truth Social post on Thursday, Trump declared: "ALERT: All purchases of Iranian Oil, or Petrochemical products, must stop, NOW! Any Country or person who buys ANY AMOUNT of OIL or PETROCHEMICALS from Iran will be subject to, immediately, Secondary Sanctions. They will not be allowed to do business with the United States of America in any way, shape, or form."

The announcement triggered a \$3/barrel price surge as traders anticipated tighter supply, despite OPEC's current production glut.

Analysts note the threat targets China, Iran's largest oil client, which the U.S. State Department admits imports "by far" the majority of Iranian crude.

Trump's sanction escalation comes amid the postponement of the fourth round of Oman-mediated indirect talks on Tehran's nuclear program, with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi citing "logistical and technical reasons" for the interruption.

Many view this as a continuation of the U.S.'s revived "maximum pressure" campaign, reinstituted in February and aimed at crippling Iran's economy by cutting off its oil revenue—even as negotiations persist, sending mixed signals that undermine diplomatic efforts.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry's response criticized Trump's move as "unlawful" and contradictory to ongoing indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington.

It noted that Iran had engaged in three rounds of talks with "goodwill" after Trump sent a letter to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, ex-

pressing openness to diplomacy.

"While reiterating its commitment to diplomacy, the Islamic Republic of Iran unequivocally rejects coercive and pressure-based approaches, which contravene the UN Charter," the statement read, noting that the U.S. is undermining trust through "economic pressures on [Tehran's] trade partners."

It emphasized that Washington's simultaneous pursuit of sanctions and diplomacy reflects a "justified skepticism" among Iranians about U.S. intentions.

"Repeating failed tactics will only result in the same costly failures of the past," the Foreign Ministry warned, alluding to the collapse of Trump's earlier maximum pressure campaign, which failed to curb Iran's regional influence or nuclear advancements.

"These unlawful measures will not alter Iran's logical, legitimate, and internationally grounded positions," it concluded.

Defying sanctions with record exports

Since the U.S. withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2018, Iran has faced escalating sanctions targeting its oil sector, a policy intensified under the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign.

Despite efforts to curb Iranian crude exports—aimed at driving shipments to "zero"—Tehran has demonstrated remarkable resilience, nullifying the sanctions' intended effect.

While the 2020 exports reportedly averaged 1 million barrels per day (bpd) amid heightened sanctions, recent reports reveal a dramatic surge: Iranian crude exports exceeded 1.5 million bpd in 2024, marking a five-year high.

Iranian Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad, himself under U.S. sanctions, dismissed the renewed pressure: "The desire to reduce Iran's oil exports to zero is a wish they will never achieve. The maximum pressure policy is a failed policy."

Government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani echoed this defiance, stating: "Oil exports cannot be halted, and we will not back down from Iran's share in the global oil market."



U.S. President Donald Trump

Analysts argue that Trump's latest directive faces structural challenges and that enforcement mechanisms remain unclear.

China has emerged as Iran's primary oil buyer, with sales to Beijing alone reportedly reaching \$6.6 billion in 2020—a figure that highlights both Iran's adaptive economic strategies and its resilience amid sustained pressure.

This dynamic also reflects the timing of Trump's recent sanctions escalation and the U.S. strategy of employing secondary sanctions, which unfolded against the backdrop of escalating U.S.-China trade tensions and tariffs.

Principled resolve over chaotic whiplash

Even after the fourth round of indirect nuclear talks between the two countries was postponed, Foreign Minister Araghchi said there is no change in Tehran's "determination to secure a negotiated solution" and that Iran is "more determined than ever to achieve a just and balanced deal"—a stance that sharply contrasts with the United States' contradictory approach.

Many analysts have highlighted Trump's erratic policy shifts and contradictions, especially on trade and sanctions.

Even Richard Nephew, a former Obama-era architect of Iran sanctions, openly doubted the administration's coherence, posing sharp questions on X: "Are they actually going to block all U.S. business with China? Because we've already seen what the tariffs did to the market and will shortly be doing to U.S. shelves. Do his words or those of his Administration matter? Does anyone inside the USG [U.S. govern-

imir Putin. Hardliners within the Trump administration are not exactly his fans, sources tell the Tehran Times. Rubio, particularly, believes that instead of pursuing a deal with Iran, a mission Trump has entrusted Witkoff with, Washington must launch military strikes against the country.

A different group of American officials and former dignitaries not happy with the nuclear negotiations is the Democrats. They do not want Trump to reach a deal with Iran after he unraveled Barack Obama's nuclear pact with the country in 2018, as previously revealed by the Tehran Times.

Meanwhile, the Tehran Times reported Thursday that IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi has been trying to negatively impact the talks by delivering "misleading" reports about Iran's nuclear program to the U.S., acting under pressure from European powers.

By presenting misleading reports to the U.S., Grossi aims to create a false impression about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities. He also appears to be seeking a political role for himself in the negotiation process.

Despite the provocations, diplomatic confusion, and changing faces in Washington, Iran remains committed to dialogue, legality, and diplomacy. "The Islamic Republic will continue its path with strength and determination," Baghaei said on his X account.

ment] actually know the answer to these questions?"

Furthermore, the Iranian Foreign Ministry's assertion that Washington's dual strategy of sanctions and diplomacy is fueling well-founded Iranian skepticism is especially significant.

Following Trump's recent announcement of new sanctions against Iran and its trading partners, analysts and social media users highlighted Ayatollah Khamenei's longstanding warnings about the challenges of negotiating with the U.S., as well as his predictions that such talks would inevitably lead to broken promises and coercion.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution recently asserted: "The nation's affairs should not be dependent on talks," emphasizing ongoing national projects in infrastructure, energy, and defense.

He also pointed out that Iran is neither overly optimistic nor overly pessimistic about the Oman-mediated talks.

Before Trump's diplomatic outreach and Iran's measured reply, Iran's Leader had dismissed negotiations with "bully states" that seek to "dominate and impose their expectations."

Ayatollah Khamenei had predicted that engagement with the current U.S. administration would not alleviate sanctions: "If negotiation aims to get rid of the sanctions, engaging with this U.S. administration won't achieve that. Instead, it will complicate the sanctions issue further and increase pressure on us. Negotiating with this government will only heighten that pressure."

A nation's unity and resolve in the ashes of tragedy

Tehran Times reporter's firsthand account of the Bandar Abbas inferno, and how the country reacted to it

By Mona Hojat Ansari

BANDAR ABBAS – Social media had shown a disturbing, almost surreal scene at the Shahid Rajaei section of Bandar Abbas port. The photos and videos circulating from news sources on April 26th were hard to truly grasp. Five days later, seeing the wreckage in person was even more harrowing.

The drive from the city center took about an hour, and the oppressive heat and humidity typical of southern Iran seemed to intensify as we approached the coast.

Cars weren't allowed anywhere near the blast site. After a short walk, we were close enough to see the destruction. A local journalist pointed to a field roughly a kilometer away where cars had been parked. Even from that distance, the impact of the explosion was clear: roofs buckled inwards, windshields shattered into dust, interiors mangled. As we got closer, we saw a man sifting through the debris before pulling up a piece of a side window. He inspected it and said to someone nearby, "I think this is from my car." As we left the port, he was still searching, seemingly unable to find anything else recognizable.

The epicenter of the blast wasn't a point, but a zone: a 4000 square meter area ripped apart and burnt. Shipping containers lay scattered like discarded toys. Trucks were reduced to charred husks, and the storage areas were nothing but twisted metal frames. We pulled on our masks as we approached. While the smoke had mostly cleared compared to the images I'd seen online, the scene was no less horrifying. Firefighters and aid workers were only just beginning to take in the full extent of the damage, and by their own accounts, it was an almost incomprehensible tragedy.

"The firestorm after the blast was the worst our country has ever seen," said Mohammad Nazari, a firefighter who had been on the scene from the very beginning. "Globally, I'd say the scale probably ranks in the top five."

Nazari and his crew had been dispatched from the east side of Bandar Abbas to the



were people whose skin was hanging off from severe burns."

For the first few hours, local firefighters battled the blaze alone before reinforcements arrived from other provinces. Qodratollah Mohammadi, the nation's top fire official, personally took command. While military helicopters and planes assisted by dropping water and fire retardant, the brunt of the work still fell to the firefighters. Many shipping containers were smoldering internally, and while the aerial water drops helped to cool the area, firefighters had to painstakingly dig through each container to extinguish the remaining flames.

Nazari and his team had barely slept in the past 90 hours. Yet, looking at their faces inside the large makeshift resting tent, exhaustion wasn't the first thing I noticed. Instead, I saw a mix of weariness, resolve, and even a quiet sense of accomplishment. "I think the firefighters went above and beyond," another firefighter on the scene remarked. "We've been going flat out for days, doing all we could to get the situation under control as fast as possible. We couldn't save everyone, and that's something we'll carry with us. But we saved so many lives by acting fast. While the loss of



western coast, arriving among the first responders. "I've been a firefighter for 13 years. I've seen a lot of terrible things in that time. But what I saw that day was unlike anything I'd ever experienced," he said. "When we arrived, we were met by a mass of traumatized people fleeing in terror and confusion. Some were unclothed as their garments had burned away. I saw a man hopping on one foot, having lost the other. Another had lost a hand. And there

life weighs heavy on us, we can honestly say we did everything in our power for our people."

'Artesh sacrificed for the nation'

Managing a crisis like the one in Bandar Abbas requires a two-pronged approach. First, containment: ensuring the fire doesn't spread, extinguishing existing flames, and preventing further explosions. Second, rescue: doing absolutely everything possible to save those

found alive in the affected area.

The exact number of fatalities from last Saturday's tragedy remains unknown. However, the number of injured is confirmed to be over 1,000.

Shortly after the fire erupted, teams from the Iranian Red Crescent Society began searching for survivors. Aid workers, along with ambulances from the city's hospitals, rushed the injured to medical care. The Seyed Al-Shohada Hospital, a medical facility run by Iran's Artesh (Army) Navy, became a primary center for immediate treatment.

As the closest hospital to the Shaheed Rajaei port, the Seyed Al-Shohada – a recently opened facility built with the latest technology and safety features – received around 280 patients that night, many suffering the most severe injuries.

I managed to visit the hospital six days after the incident, by which point the immediate crisis had passed. Inside a conference room, the hospital's chief was thanking the first responders for their tireless efforts. They'd gathered there, the people who had worked those critical first 48 hours to rescue the injured.

Dr. Ali Hossein Abafat was one of them. He'd retired two years earlier, after a 30-year career. But the night of the blast, he'd driven to the Seyed Al-Shohada, uncalled. "The instant I knew what happened, I didn't think twice," he told me later. "All that mattered was helping those who were hurt. The scenes that night... the only thing I can compare it to is the Bam earthquake, back in '03."

I found myself more emotionally affected at the hospital than I had been at the blast site. The doctors and nurses I spoke with were just as weary as the firefighters I'd met earlier. Their descriptions of the patients' conditions were stark and visceral, and they shared the same fierce determination as the firemen. But there was also a sense of relief about them, perhaps because their direct battle with the immediate crisis was over, while the firefighters were still actively working the scene.

Because the hospital was a military facility, everyone I spoke with held a military rank, despite lacking formal military training. But the way they spoke about their community and their sense of duty to alleviate the suffering resonated with the same dedication you'd expect from a soldier describing a mission.

"Every Arteshi (member of Iran's Army) is taught that the Artesh must sacrifice itself

for the people. Everyone who worked here that night truly embodied that," said Dr. Ali Naseri, the hospital's ER doctor and pharmacist. "The first wave of patients arrived just 30 minutes after the incident. Our hospital has around 180 beds, but that night, we received far more. We utilized every single unit of the facility." He went on to explain the staffing situation that night. "Of course, we have a 'crisis code' that goes out in situations like this, calling all medical personnel to the hospital as quickly as possible. But that night, literally everyone was here. Even the hospital cooks helped move patients, and naval forces themselves came over to assist wherever they could." Dr. Naseri told me he felt like he had completed the mission he had as a doctor.

Marine units were also instrumental in maintaining order at the hospital, helping distraught family and friends locate their loved ones. A large area, roughly 200 square meters, was set up in the hospital's courtyard, providing chairs, rest areas, and food for those who had gathered there. The Navy even opened its dormitories to some of the families for overnight stays. All hospital and Navy services were provided to patients and their families free of charge, at the order of the Navy's Commander, Rear Admiral Shahram Irani.

ing gifts: clothes, underwear, shoes, and even carrot juice. They moved through the wards, handing out the items to patients and offering their phone number in case anyone needed anything else.

They explained that many of the patients were likely workers from distant provinces. Stranded hundreds of kilometers from their families, they lacked access to basic necessities. "It's important to be here, to talk to them, to show them we care. Being so far from their loved ones, they need emotional support just as much as practical help," the man said. I learned that this family was one of at least twenty others who had independently organized themselves to visit hospitals across Bandar Abbas, providing aid at their own expense.

Another example of Iranian unity and compassion was the surge in blood donations. Across the country, from Azerbaijan to Kurdistan, Tehran to Esfahan, Khorasan to Sistan and Baluchestan, blood donations jumped by 400% on the day of the explosion, according to Dr. Elham Charsi Zadeh, the technical director at Hormozgan's blood transfusion center.

"While people nationwide offered to donate blood for those affected, we actually didn't need to receive shipments from other prov-



Physicians of the Seyed Al-Shohada Hospital talking to the Tehran Times about the night of the Bandar Abbas tragedy

"The words that come to mind are 'graceful' and 'honorable,'" one patient told me. "Everything the hospital and the Navy did that night was done in a way that respected people's dignity." He had been in a building close to the blast site when the explosion occurred. An employee of an Iranian oil company, he had travelled to southern Iran from Tehran on assignment. His face and head were heavily bandaged. I chose not to disclose his name, as he explained that he hadn't told his family the full extent of his injuries.

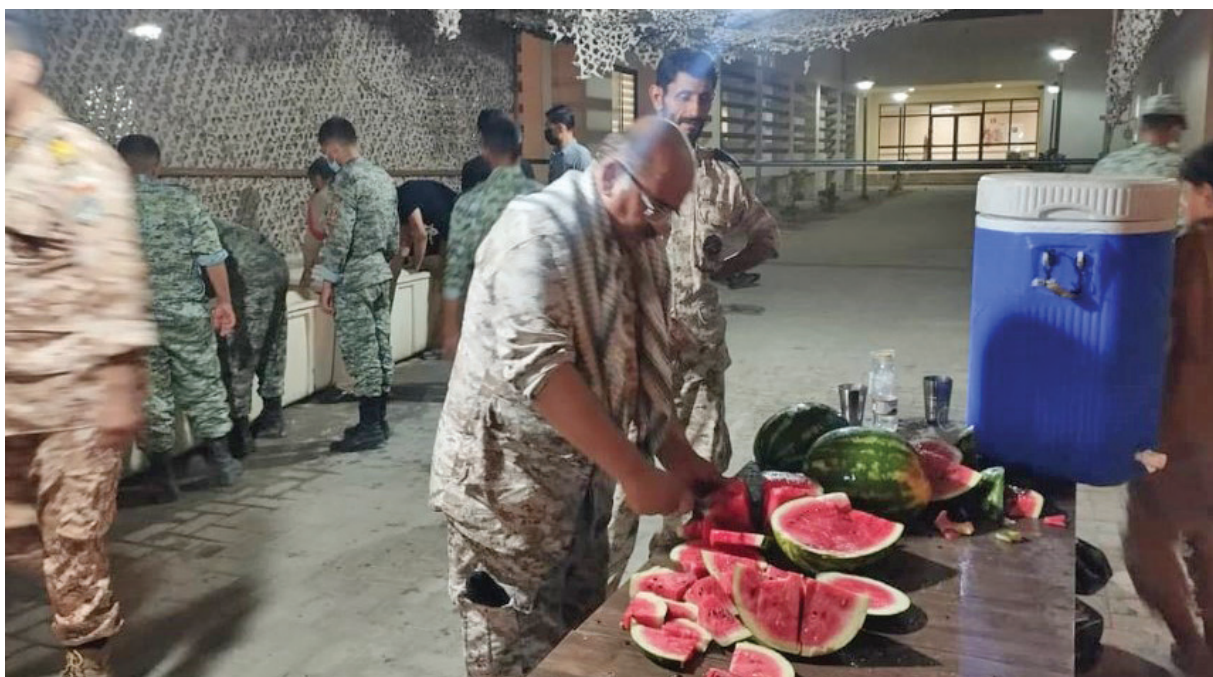
The people's response

When a tragedy strikes, as it did in Iran last week, everyday citizens aren't usually the ones responsible for picking up the pieces. Around the world, people might share social media posts and offer condolences – there's often a feeling that little else can be done. But in Iran, the last thing anyone could do was stand idly by.

During my hours at Seyed al-Shohada Hospital, I met a family of three – a man, a woman, and their young daughter. They'd come bear-

inces," she explained. "So many people visited our facility to donate that we collected more than enough blood." Because blood can only be stored for a maximum of 35 days, the center had to ask some donors to return at a later date, ensuring an adequate supply for patients needing blood during surgeries. "Thousands came to us that day. Of course, this wasn't new. Every time something like this happens – an explosion, a fire, an earthquake, any tragedy – people across the country rush to donate blood, often before we even have time to issue a public appeal."

The fire and explosion that ripped through Bandar Abbas was a brutal tragedy. It didn't just claim lives, it shook a nation to its core. As I stood amid the wreckage and listened to survivors' stories, the weight of loss felt almost unbearable. Yet in that darkness, I witnessed something extraordinary: Everyone was exhausted, everyone was grieving – but no one stopped. In the face of unimaginable tragedy, Iran shows what unity and resilience truly look like.



Members of the Navy providing the families of hospitalized survivors with food and shelter



Head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), Hossein Kolivand, visiting survivors at the Seyed Al-Shohada Hospital

Tehran, New Delhi focus on sanction-free trade in business talks



TEHRAN – Head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) Mahmoud Najafi Arab met with Indian Ambassador Rudra Gaurav Shresth to explore avenues for expanding economic ties between Iran and India, with both sides emphasizing the need to prioritize the exchange of non-sanctioned goods.

The meeting, held at the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, also included the TCCIMA Secretary General and the head of the South Gujarat Chamber of Commerce, who accompanied the Indian ambassador. Discussions focused on enhancing provincial-level economic cooperation led by business chambers.

According to a statement from the TCCIMA, Najafi Arab said that the longstanding historical and economic ties between the two countries provide a strong foundation for deeper cooperation, especially if international sanctions on Iran are fully lifted.

He called for swift finalization of a preferential trade agreement between the two countries and emphasized the importance of tariff reduction. Najafi Arab also highlighted joint opportunities in food security, organic production, smart agriculture, biotechnology, blockchain, and fintech.

He further proposed forming a joint consortium between Iranian and Indian private sectors for maritime and transit corridor projects, including trilateral cooperation with

Russia to develop the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC). Participation in trade and industrial expos in both countries was also encouraged.

Fereydoon Vardinejad, Secretary General of the Tehran Chamber, reiterated the importance of subnational economic cooperation and expressed readiness to collaborate with Indian provincial chambers. He proposed holding virtual meetings to identify mutual business opportunities and suggested establishing a “green channel” between the chamber and the Indian embassy to expedite visas for businesspeople.

Ambassador Shrestha noted that U.S. sanctions on Iran have also had negative repercussions for the Indian economy. He explained that while the Indian government cannot mandate private sector activity, its investment in Iran's Chabahar Port was a clear signal encouraging Indian firms to engage with the Iranian market.

He acknowledged the limited scope of current bilateral trade, which has hovered around \$5.0 billion in recent years, and said that with a broader focus on sanction-free goods, trade could double to \$10 billion within the next three to four years.

The ambassador said India remains a key market for agricultural and food products, and proposed converting the preferential trade agreement into a free trade pact covering food, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals—sectors not targeted by international sanctions.

Also speaking at the meeting, the president of the South Gujarat Chamber outlined the region's main industries, including textiles, diamond polishing, agricultural products, and handicrafts. He proposed signing a cooperation agreement with the Tehran Chamber and invited an Iranian trade delegation to an investment and tourism expo scheduled for August in South Gujarat.

‘Maritime-oriented economy & port development, priorities of transport ministry’

TEHRAN- Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadegh elaborated on the most important programs and macro policies of her ministry, including maritime-oriented development.

She said that the main part of the maritime-oriented economy policies is related to the southern coasts, including Bandar Abbas, Chabahar, and all the provinces located on the southern borders of the country.

“With the planning and comprehensive plan that we are preparing, we will take action to develop the southern coasts with a maritime-oriented economy approach”, the minister further emphasized.

In late December, President Masoud Pezeshkian said that a detailed strategy and private sector's contribution is necessary for transformation in the maritime-oriented economy.

Making the remarks in a session on the development of maritime-oriented economy, the president, while emphasizing the development of a detailed strategy in this field, addressed the necessity of the presence of the private sector in the industries related to the sea and stated: “For the presence of the private sector, it is necessary to prepare and compile the economic frameworks and commercial annexes of the development plans of the sea economy.”

He further put emphasis on the high importance of sea-oriented industries, especially the shipbuilding industry, and said the 14th government pays special attention to sea-related industries and is doing its best to comprehensively examine the issues, problems and opportunities facing the country in this field.

President Pezeshkian has referred to the government's prioritization of the maritime-oriented economy and the importance of the prosperity of this sector on the country's growth, development and prosperity, and stated that the government is determined to implement maritime-oriented development plans.

Meanwhile, Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), in its December report,



underlined the importance of the country's maritime capacities and the role that the sector can play in developing the country's economy.

According to the report, maritime sector in Iran has very high capacity in various fields including trade, ports and shipping due to the country's strategic location, long coastal strip in the north and south and access to open waters, and can bring economic prosperity to the country.

“About a third of the country's borders are water borders, so we cannot ignore port and shipping activities because for a country that has long water borders and access to open waters, the prosperity of shipping and maritime trade is essential.

Therefore, the government should pay full attention to the strengths and weaknesses of this sector and make the best use of the current capacities with proper planning,” the report read.

Increasing the share of the maritime sector in the country's gross domestic product (GDP) under the framework of the newly proposed maritime-oriented policy should be one of the most important concerns of the government, which can be achieved with proper planning, the PMO said.

The share of the sea in the gross domestic product in advanced coastal countries such as the European Union is 50 percent, but the figure is not significant in Iran despite having more than 5,800 kilometers of coastal strip, and this is despite the fact that there are huge capacities for the transit of goods from Central Asian countries.

Iran, Kyrgyzstan seek banking, investment agreements to boost trade

TEHRAN – Iran and Kyrgyzstan must establish financial and banking agreements to unlock the full potential of bilateral trade, said Ghadir Ghiafeh, deputy head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) during a meeting with his Kyrgyz counterpart Mamadsadek Bekirov.

Speaking at the joint session, Ghiafeh said the current \$106 million trade volume between the two countries does not reflect the true capacity of their economic ties. He urged both chambers of commerce to work alongside small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to develop a clear roadmap for increasing bilateral trade.

Ghiafeh highlighted Kyrgyzstan's economic advantages, including its membership in the World Trade Organization, and stressed the country's untapped potential for collaboration with Iran. He noted that while bilateral trade grew by 10 percent recently, the growth remains modest given the scale of possible cooperation.

The implementation of the Iran-Eurasian Free Trade Agreement, set to take effect on May 15, could mark a turning point in trade relations, Ghiafeh added.

He emphasized that banking and financial agreements are crucial to expanding bilateral cooperation and called for stronger private sector connections through participation in trade expos in both countries.

Joint investments in logistics and transportation, he said, would help reduce the cost of goods and increase trade efficiency. He also pointed to Kyrgyzstan's geographic proximity to China, which could be leveraged for efficient transfer of Iranian goods to Kyrgyz and Chinese markets.



ICCIMA Deputy Head Ghadir Ghiafeh (R) meet with his Kyrgyz counterpart Mamadsadek Bekirov in Tehran on Thursday, May 1.

Tourism and overseas farming were cited as additional promising sectors. Ghiafeh noted Kyrgyzstan's rich natural resources, fertile land, and abundant water, and proposed Iranian investment in agriculture to produce crops for export to Iran and other countries.

“There is clear political will at the leadership level in both countries to deepen ties,” he said, calling for win-win industrial and commercial joint ventures.

Bekirov, Vice President of the Kyrgyz Chamber of Commerce, agreed that economic cooperation must serve the interests of both sides. He acknowledged the current trade balance favors Iran, but said efforts should be made to achieve a more equitable exchange.

He emphasized the need to raise awareness among businesses about each country's trade opportunities, and called on chambers of commerce to provide updated information to the private sector. Bekirov also said logistical and financial issues must be resolved through government action.

To enhance trade security, Bekirov proposed establishing a

joint Iran-Kyrgyzstan chamber of commerce, opening trade centers in Tehran and Bishkek, and organizing reciprocal visits to each other's trade fairs.

Iran and Kyrgyzstan held the 14th meeting of their Joint Economic Committee in Tehran, on April 28-29, aiming to expand bilateral ties across economic, scientific, cultural, and technical sectors.

Senior officials from both countries, including Iran's Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeljeh and Kyrgyz Economy and Commerce Minister Sydykov Bakyt Tolomushevich, attended the meeting, which emphasized boosting trade and investment cooperation.

At the opening ceremony, Nouri highlighted agriculture, industry, energy, and technology as key areas of collaboration. He expressed hope that the session would lay the groundwork for a significant rise in economic exchanges between the two nations.

Sydykov echoed these sentiments, noting the long-standing ties between Iran and Kyrgyzstan since 1992 and underscoring multilateral cooperation through organizations such as the Shang-

hai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union.

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref met with Kyrgyz officials on the sidelines of the meeting, stating that Tehran is ready to expand cooperation in technical and engineering services and technology transfer. He pointed to the Eurasian Free Trade Agreement as a mechanism to deepen both bilateral and multilateral ties.

“The economies of our two countries complement each other, particularly in agriculture,” Aref said, calling for greater involvement of the private sector in realizing trade potential. He also called for removing administrative hurdles and accelerating direct air links and visa facilitation.

Aref recalled his past visits to Kyrgyzstan and emphasized the shared cultural and historical heritage that supports closer ties. He said the current session of the commission could pave the way for a new era in bilateral cooperation.

During the closing session, Iran's agriculture minister said the joint committee meeting coincided with the 7th Iran Export Capabilities Expo (EXPO 2025), providing a platform for business networking. He welcomed a memorandum of understanding signed during the meeting to establish a joint investment committee and called for continued efforts to finalize practical agreements.

The two sides reached consensus on joint fish farming, livestock feed production, and cooperation in plant and animal quarantine. They also discussed Kyrgyz investment in Iranian ports, particularly within the framework of the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC).

Iran, Tajikistan hold industry talks on sidelines of Expo 2025

From Page 1 ► The minister also said that Tajikistan's mining development program, including the creation of mining infrastructure and downstream industries, is entering preliminary stages of talks with Iran's state-owned mining holding company, IMIDRO.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian concluded his two-day official visit to Tajikistan in mid-January, marking a significant milestone in bilateral relations with the signing of 23 agreements across various fields.

The agreements, aimed at strengthening diplomatic ties, economic cooperation, and cultural exchanges, highlight the commitment of both nations to overcoming obstacles and expanding collaboration.

During the visit, Pezeshkian emphasized the potential for trade to exceed \$500 million and announced plans for a joint economic commission meeting in the near future.

Key moments of the visit included bilateral talks with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, focusing on fast-tracking joint projects and

removing trade barriers. The presidents hailed the agreements as a foundation for further cooperation in science, education, transportation, and agriculture.

Pezeshkian addressed Tajik academic circles, stressing Iran's commitment to global health and rejecting violence and conflict.

The visit also featured discussions with top Tajik officials, including the prime minister and parliamentary leaders, to facilitate trade agreements, including a preferential trade pact.

The visit culminated in a shared vision for deepened partnerships, with both countries expressing readiness to remove remaining barriers to trade and investment.

Also, a high-ranking Iranian trade delegation, comprising members of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and led by Chamber Head Samad Hassanzadeh, departed Tehran for Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, on January 14.

The delegation was accompanied by Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi Amiri, underscoring the multi-faceted nature of the visit, the ICCIMA portal reported.

Upon arrival in Dushanbe, Iranian and Tajik economic leaders convened for a joint forum aimed at enhancing bilateral trade relations. In this gathering, Hassanzadeh emphasized the extensive cultural and historical ties between Iran and Tajikistan as a foundation for deepening economic cooperation.

He highlighted key sectors such as petrochemicals, oil and gas, medical equipment, and tourism as areas ripe for collaboration.

“Beyond economic discussions, we can leverage our shared heritage in literature, science, and the arts to expand mutual ties.

Tajikistan offers a strategic platform for Iranian investors and businesses seeking to access Central Asian and Eurasian markets,” Hassanzadeh stated.

ICCIMA discusses AI cooperation, banking guarantees in talks with Afghanistan, Oman

TEHRAN – Iran's private sector is seeking closer cooperation with its counterparts in Afghanistan and Oman, while also preparing to launch a new partnership with the Iranian Vice Presidency for Science and Technology to boost the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in industry.

During separate meetings held on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2025, senior officials of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) met with business delegations from Afghanistan and Oman to explore ways to expand trade and investment ties.

Bank guarantees key to trade with Afghanistan

In talks with Haji Younus

Mohmand, President of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Iran Chamber Vice Presidents Mohammad Reza Bahraman and Payam Bagheri emphasized the need to enhance bilateral economic relations and resolve financial bottlenecks.

Bagheri said Iran is working to dispatch a business delegation to Afghanistan soon and stressed the importance of issuing bank guarantees through Iran's Export Guarantee Fund to support cross-border trade.

Mohmand, meanwhile, voiced concerns about limitations facing Afghan investors in Iran and urged Iranian authorities to create a more welcoming environment. Bagheri responded that

the Iran Chamber stands ready to help facilitate Afghan investment in Iran.

Iran-Oman ties: focus on provincial chambers

Bagheri also met with the head of Oman's Sharqiyah Chamber to discuss strengthening economic cooperation. He emphasized the role of Iran's provincial chambers in expanding local-level partnerships with Oman.

The Omani side invited the Iran Chamber to send a business delegation to Oman, noting the importance of mutual trade missions to foster business ties.

AI collaboration with Vice Presidency for Science and Technology

On the same day, Vice Presi-

dent for Science, Technology and Knowledge-Based Economy Hossein Afshin visited the Iran Chamber booth and met with ICCIMA Deputy Head Ghadir Ghiafeh.

Ghiafeh called for a more focused approach to cooperation, suggesting that instead of signing multiple broad agreements, both sides should prioritize two or three key areas annually.

For 2025, he proposed joint work on integrating AI into industrial applications.

As a result, the Iran Chamber and the Vice Presidency agreed to draft a roadmap identifying AI needs in the private sector and industry, and addressing barriers to adoption.

Another stain in Israel’s infamous short history

Israel attacks aid ship bound for Gaza with great impunity

From page 1 ►

Historical context

The ongoing Israeli blockade of Gaza, which has been in effect since 2007 and has been tightened since March 2, 2025, must be taken into consideration when analyzing the attack on the Conscience. The Gaza Strip is currently experiencing a severe humanitarian crisis as a result of this blockade, which limits the entry of necessities like food, medicine, and fuel.

With widespread unemployment, poverty, and food insecurity, the UN and other international organizations have warned time and again that Gaza is on the verge of collapse. Israeli military offensives have repeatedly destroyed the infrastructure and killed thousands of Palestinian civilians, worsening the situation.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition has been organizing missions to Gaza for years to challenge the blockade and deliver humanitarian aid.

This is not the first time an aid flotilla has been attacked by Israel. In 2010, Israeli commandos stormed the Mavi Marmara, a Turkish vessel part of the first Gaza Freedom Flotilla, killing nine activists in international waters. That incident caused a major diplomatic rupture between Israel and Turkey, but no Israeli officials were held accountable.

Fifteen years later, the pattern repeats—with deadlier context and wider implications.

Flotilla attack defied international conventions

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition is still all in on its goal to break the Gaza blockade and get humanitar-



ian aid to the Palestinian people, even after the recent attack. They say they'll keep organizing missions to Gaza and want to hold Israel accountable for what happened.

The coalition is asking the international community to speak out against the attack on the Conscience and to take real steps to lift the blockade on Gaza. They're also calling for an independent investigation into the attack and want those behind it to face justice.

That attack on the Conscience wasn't just wrong—it broke international law. Targeting a civilian ship in international waters goes against the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Geneva Conventions. It also messes with the principle of freedom of navigation and the right to provide aid to those in need.

On top of that, Israel's blockade of Gaza acts as collective punishment, which is not allowed under the Fourth Geneva Convention. This blockade isn't just about cutting off supplies; it aims to hurt the civilian population of Gaza and cause them real suffering

International reactions

The world's reaction to the attack on the Conscience has been pretty quiet. While some governments and groups have shown concern, there hasn't been any strong criticism of Israel or calls for it to be held responsible.

The Maltese government put out a low-key statement saying they're "concerned" about what happened and want more details. Meanwhile, EU officials have mostly stayed silent, and some member countries seem to be discouraging further flotilla efforts because they don't want to upset Israel.

Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Palestinian territories, said she got a worried call from the Freedom Flotilla crew and urged countries to support them. But with such a weak international response, it seems Israel feels it can keep acting without facing any real consequences for breaking international law and hurting people's rights.

The drone strike on the Conscience isn't just a one-off event; it shows a

larger pattern of Israel trying to cut off Gaza and make life there even harder.

This incident shows just how dangerous it is for aid workers trying to help people in Gaza during ongoing attacks and blockades. It makes it clear that we really need a safe route for aid and civilians to get through.

Attack on Gaza aid flotilla as Israel faces ICJ scrutiny

In what constitutes a notable legal event following the recent drone attack on the Gaza aid flotilla, Israel is currently facing scrutiny at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial body of the United Nations. The ICJ finished a week of hearings on May 2 on whether Israel is required to guarantee the uninterrupted flow of important humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

These ICJ hearings also provide important legal and humanitarian context regarding the drone attack on the Gaza aid flotilla. The attack on a civilian aid vessel operating in international waters outside Malta is yet another development in Israel's persistent actions to enforce its blockade and restrict humanitarian access to Gaza. The ICJ proceedings demonstrate the growing impatience within the international community with Israel's policies.

This addition contextualizes the flotilla vessel attack within the broader context of an international legal proceeding that calls into question Israel's blockade and restriction of humanitarian aid to Gaza. And strengthens the criticism of Israel's actions and shows that the world urgently needs to hold it accountable.

Trump ousts Waltz, nominates him for UN post



US President Donald Trump has removed Mike Waltz from his post as national security adviser, and will nominate him as ambassador to the United Nations, the BBC reported.

In a post on social media, Trump thanked Waltz for his work and said he would be temporarily replaced by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who will continue as America's top diplomat.

Waltz had faced criticism for mistakenly adding a journalist to a chat group where sensitive military plans were discussed – a political embarrassment likely to feature during confirmation hearings for the UN post.

The former Florida congressman is the first senior member of the administration to leave the White House in Trump's second term.

“From his time in uniform on the battlefield, in Congress and, as my National Security Advisor, Mike Waltz has worked hard to put our Nation's Interests first,” Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social.

Israel strikes near Syria’s presidential palace

Israel's air force struck near Syria's presidential palace early Friday after warning Syrian authorities not to march toward villages inhabited by members of a minority sect in southern Syria, AP reported.

The strike came after days of clashes between pro-Syrian government gunmen and fighters who belong to the Druze minority sect near the capital, Damascus. The clashes left dozens of people dead or wounded.

Syria's presidency condemned the Israeli airstrike, calling it a “dangerous escalation against state institutions and the sovereignty of the state.” It called on the international community to stand by Syria, saying that such attacks “target Syria's national security and the unity of the Syrian people.”

Trump threatens NATO summit no-show if allies don’t act on spending

Washington's envoy has warned that U.S. President Donald Trump could skip the upcoming NATO summit if other members of the defense alliance do not act on burden-sharing, the Spiegel news magazine reported on Friday, citing European diplomatic sources.

Germany in particular has come under pressure to boost its defense spending considerably, with U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth having spoken with his German counterpart Boris Pistorius on the issue last week, the report added.

UK tells ICJ Israel must lift aid bans

The United Kingdom told the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Thursday that Israel must lift its restrictions on humanitarian assistance to Gaza, ensure civilian protection, and fully comply with international humanitarian law, Anadolu Agency reported.

“It is unacceptable that Israel has blocked humanitarian support from entering Gaza

for nearly two months, meaning that Palestinian civilians, including one million children, are facing starvation, disease, and death,” said UK representative Sally Langrish, recalling the UK Foreign Office Minister David Lammy's recent statement to the UN Security Council in which he urged a return to the ceasefire “to end the relentless death and destruction that Palestinians face daily.”

Langrish emphasized the UK's consistent call on Israel to allow humanitarian access and noted the UK's suspension of certain arms export licenses to Israel in September 2024, citing “the clear risk that certain military exports to Israel might be used in violation of international humanitarian law.”

Trump says he will remove Harvard’s tax-exempt status

President Donald Trump has said he plans to strip Harvard University of its tax-exempt status, the latest salvo against the Ivy League school amid a pattern of broader action against top U.S. universities over campus activism, including pro-Palestinian protests.

“We are going to be taking away Harvard's Tax Exempt Status. It's what they deserve!” Trump said in a post on his social media platform, without specifying when he might take action.

Since taking office in January, Trump has targeted major U.S. universities by freezing federal funding, launching investigations, revoking student visas and making other demands, claiming higher education has been gripped by anti-Semitic, anti-American, Marxist, pro-Hamas and “radical left” ideologies.

Israel’s ongoing siege of Gaza is ‘genocide in action’, says Amnesty

Amnesty International is calling on Israel to end its “war crime of using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare”, the organization has said in a new statement.

“Harrowing new testimonies gathered by Amnesty International throughout April reveal the catastrophic human cost of Israel's two-month-long total siege, where starvation and denial of life-saving essentials are being used as weapons of war in flagrant violation of international law,” the statement read.

According to Erika Guevara Rosas, senior director for research, advocacy, policy, and campaigns at Amnesty International, Gaza is “an inferno of death and destruction” due to the siege and fighting.

Thousands protest against far-right in Berlin

Tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Berlin to protest what they see as a breach of a taboo in post-war German politics.

The protests came after some parties voted alongside the far-right party, Alternative for Germany (AfD), over a non-binding resolution on immigration last week.

Christian Democratic Union (CDU) leader Friedrich Merz, who is tipped to be Germany's next chancellor, had tried to rely on support from AfD twice last week, including for a bill aimed at curbing immigration.

The move sparked anger among many, with organisers of the demonstration saying people had turned out to condemn what they see as a breach of the country's agreement not to work with the far right at the national level.

Yemen attacks vital Israeli airbase

From page 1 ► Saree stressed that the operation was conducted in solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people and their resistance fighters, emphasizing Yemen's staunch opposition to the genocide carried out by the American-backed Israeli occupation regime against the people of the Gaza Strip.

He reiterated the Yemeni Armed Forces' support for the Palestinian resistance forces, commending their ongoing heroic operations against the occupation regime despite blockade, massacres, and suffering of civilians.

Saree further affirmed that Yemen's military support front will continue until the genocide ends and the siege on Gaza is lifted.

This operation marks the second time in as many weeks that Yemen has targeted Israeli military bases near the northern city of Haifa.

The Ramat David Airbase, operated by the Israeli Air Force southeast of Haifa, is considered one of the regime's most important and strategic military installations.

Primarily serving as a base for advanced fighter jets, it houses multiple squadrons of F-16 warplanes and includes facilities such as long runways and fortified aircraft shelters.

Its strategic value lies in its central location among northern Israeli settlements, acting as a major launch point for air operations, particularly in scenarios that also involve Lebanon or Syria.

The base is equipped with advanced defense systems and is integrated with early warning and radar networks.

Israeli media reported that warning sirens were activated in around “250 towns, villages, and industrial zones across northern Israel”. Hebrew media also noted that sirens were heard in the Haifa, Nazareth, Afula, and Wadi Ara regions following the detection of a missile launched from Yemen.

The Yemeni Armed Forces continue their operations in solidarity with Gaza. On Wednesday, they conducted attacks using Yafa drones on Israeli military and strategic targets in Tel Aviv and Ashkelon, in what were said to be precise hits.

The contemporary value of the Bandung Spirit

From page 1 ► which represents the philosophy and determination of Asian and African countries to work together in safeguarding peace and to collaborate in the pursuit of sustainable development, can continue to inspire the hearts and minds of all people today.

Self-reliance, self-strengthening and defiance of hegemonic power

The convening of the Bandung Conference signaled a fierce farewell to the era of colonialism for the emerging Asian and African nation states. In the 1970s, when world politics was still clouded by the shadow

of the bipolar Cold War, a vast number of Asian and African countries faced pressures and threats from powerful hegemonic countries. The Bandung Conference was a milestone of self-determination and self-reliance forged in the diplomatic arena by nation-states that were fearless of hegemonic powers.

In a world where unilateral hegemonic powers continue to bring political uncertainty, the spirit of the Bandung Conference, which rejected economic exploitation and cultural colonization, goes beyond the limitations of the times and remains a guiding force for today's developing countries. The anti-hegemony

Bandung Spirit respects the spirit of self-improvement of all nations, has echoes of the times when it comes to defending their economic and political systems.

Pursuing a more just and equal international order

The Bandung Spirit respects the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, and attaches importance to an international order that creates a just and equitable climate for the economic development and political stability of developing countries.

Although the post-World War II Yalta system, which was dedicated

to building a liberal international order in which resources could flow freely, had also been conducive to long cycles of world prosperity and the avoidance of large-scale hot wars, the world economy was suffering from the risk of recession as the new United States Administration unleashed a tougher tariff war that was hitting trading partners and disrupting global supply chains. Countries across the world have repeatedly witnessed that it is only a just and equal international order that protects the interests of emerging economies, middle powers and developing countries in general.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Is replacing UN Resolution 1701 Supervisory Committee chief a routine?

From page 1 ► In 2019, Lehney was appointed Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations of the 40th Infantry Division, then Commanding General of the 40th Infantry Division in 2022. He currently serves as the Commanding General of Task Force Spartan at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait.

Informed sources stated that there was no reason behind the replacement of Jeffers—whose mission was originally temporary—while other sources claimed that the reason for this was the “harsh” criticism against Jeffers' performance due to his failed role in managing the committee.

These sources pointed out that the move came after the failure of U.S. efforts to transform the committee into a political negotiating committee, and in response to Lebanon's repeated calls on the so-called international community to pressure Israel to halt its ongoing violations of Lebanese sovereignty, which hinder the work of the Lebanese Army.

The Lebanese officials also called for activat-



ing the committee's work to resolve outstanding issues regarding the areas still under Israel's occupation, Lebanese prisoners, and border demarcation.

Meanwhile, there was talk of the Israeli occupation entity's intention to launch a large-scale ground operation against Lebanon under the flimsy pretext of the Resistance's refusal to disarm.

International law affirms the right of any peo-

ple to defend themselves. Accordingly, the Israeli regime is an occupier of the Lebanese territory.

In light of this reality, some fools on Israel's side in Lebanon are suggesting that we, as Lebanese, surrender what Israel considers a threat, then wait for it to kill us without having the means to defend ourselves.

This coincided with escalating statements by Massad Boulos, Trump's senior advisor, who wants the army to clash with the Resistance. However, Hezbollah chief Sheikh Naim Qassem emphasized during his last speech that the army and the Resistance will not enter into a conflict with each other.

Officials in Lebanon must consider, first and foremost, the national interests, not what suits America and Israel! What is happening in Syria clearly indicates that Israel is exploiting the weakness of the neighbouring countries to attack them, and that nothing but the logic of force can deter it.

Tourism Triangle: special rail tour to connect Tehran to Isfahan, Yazd, and Shiraz



From Page 1 ▶ “This rail initiative is designed to strengthen Iran’s tourism sector and showcase the rich cultural heritage of Yazd, Shiraz, and Isfahan to both domestic and international travelers,” said Seyyed Reza Sadat-Hosseini, Director General of Yazd Railways. “We aim to create an unforgettable journey through Iran’s historical heartland.”

Last November, the “Golden Triangle” tourism agreement, originally signed in 2016, was revitalized amid hopes to establish a world-class tourism route, showcasing Iran’s rich cultural heritage and unparalleled historical sites. Key points of the agreement include joint research projects aimed at tourism development, utilizing international networks of the three cities, and organizing conferences, workshops, and special visits between them.

Isfahan

Once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy, Isfahan remains one of Iran’s most prominent tourist destinations. It is renowned for its breathtaking Islamic architecture, including stunning mosques, palaces, and bazaars. Visitors can explore Persian gardens and walk along the city’s tree-lined boulevards, soaking in the beauty and history at every turn. The city’s architectural marvels, such as

Naghsh-e Jahan Square—one of the largest squares in the world—make it a jewel of town planning.

Yazd

Situated in the heart of Iran’s desert, Yazd is a city of ancient ingenuity and timeless charm. Known for its maze of winding lanes, traditional bazaars, and mud-brick architecture, Yazd showcases the clever use of limited resources to create a sustainable urban environment. The city’s ancient qanat system—underground channels that transport water from distant mountains—has been the lifeline of this desert city for centuries. Yazd’s historic wind catchers and domed homes maintain cool temperatures in the harsh desert climate, making it an architectural marvel.

Shiraz

Known as the heartland of Persian culture, Shiraz has a rich history stretching back over 2000 years. This city is synonymous with poetry, education, and the arts, and has been a hub for creativity and intellectual pursuits. Once the capital of Iran during the Zand dynasty, Shiraz is home to some of the most iconic landmarks in the country, including the Eram Garden, the Tomb of Hafez, and the ancient ruins of Persepolis.

Minister highlights Isfahan’s cultural significance at Iran-Africa conference

TEHRAN – In a speech marking the conclusion of the Third Iran-Africa Economic Cooperation Conference held in Isfahan, Iran’s Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, described the city as a “symbol of Iranian civilization”.

On behalf of President Masoud Pezeshkian, Salehi-Amiri welcomed delegates from 38 African nations, expressing appreciation for their visit to “the land of history, civilization, and culture.”

Speaking on Thursday, May 1, the minister said the choice of Isfahan as the venue was deliberate, highlighting its pivotal role in Iranian history, culture, and development.

“Isfahan is not only the cultural and civilizational hub of Iran but also a magnetic destination that embodies both material and spiritual beauty,” he stated. “Its artistic heritage, economic potential, and academic excellence make it



a powerful center of influence.”

Salehi-Amiri further emphasized the city’s multifaceted identity, from being a nucleus of art and music – citing the globally renowned painter Mahmoud Farshchian – to a leading center in industry, medicine, science, and artificial intelligence. “A considerable number of Iran’s most influential scholars have roots in this region,” he noted.

Turning to Iran-Africa relations, Salehi-Amiri underscored the importance of enhancing cooperation. “Africa is a continent of deep-rooted civilization, rich culture, and immense potential,” he said.

The minister criticized what he described as “Iranophobia” perpetuated by global powers, arguing it distorts the true image of Iran. “Despite these efforts, more

than 7.3 million foreign tourists visited Iran in 2024,” he said, adding that over 85% of visitors rated their experience of Iran’s attractions as excellent in post-visit surveys.

Inviting African scientists, entrepreneurs, and academics to visit Iran, Salehi-Amiri highlighted the country’s vast offerings across all 20 globally recognized branches of tourism. “Iran is home to more than one million historical sites—no other place in the world offers this scale of heritage,” he asserted.

The five-day Iran-Africa Economic Cooperation Conference, jointly organized by Iran’s Ministry of Industry, Mines, and Trade and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, began in Tehran and concluded in Isfahan. It coincided with the Iran Expo 2025, the Seventh Exhibition of Export Capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, held from April 28 to May 2 in Tehran.

Iran promotes Carnet de Passages for expanding regional mobility and tourism

Shahid Rajaee Port in southern Iran.

A key outcome of the meeting was the approval of the agenda for the upcoming 10th ECO Heads of Customs Summit, scheduled to be hosted in Tehran.

Addressing the event, the representative of the Touring and Automobile Club of Iran delivered a detailed presentation on the CPD system, also known as the “customs passport” for vehicles. The CPD allows for the temporary entry of personal and commercial vehicles into participating countries without the need to deposit customs duties or cash guarantees at borders.

The presentation was well-received and led to the inclusion of the CPD topic in the meeting’s final report, the report said. Participants acknowledged its potential to simplify customs procedures, encourage international

road travel, and enhance regional integration.

Members of the ECO Customs Committee collectively reaffirmed the importance of adopting CPD procedural standards across all member states, calling it a practical mechanism for boosting road tourism, improving transit logistics, and supporting cross-border economic initiatives.

ECO is an intergovernmental regional organization encompassing countries from Europe, Caucasus and Central and West Asia, and South Asia with more than 460 million inhabitants and over 8 million square kilometers connecting Russia to the Persian Gulf and China to Europe.

According to the organization, its overall objective is to materialize the sustainable economic development of its member states and the region as a whole.



Khouzestan Steel Company

TAFCO CEO Holds Talks with Export Pro Trade Delegation at EXPO 2025

On the sidelines of the 7th Iran Export Capabilities Exhibition (EXPO 2025), a delegation from Export Pro—comprising several prominent figures from Iran’s steel industry—visited the booth of the Khouzestan Steel Group and met with Mr. Saeed Ghasemzadeh, CEO of TAFCO.

During the meeting, Mr. Ghasemzadeh provided detailed technical and engineering insights into the production processes of Khouzestan Steel Company, as well as TAFCO’s mission in localizing parts and meeting the steel industry’s domestic needs.

The two parties also discussed practical methods of procurement and sales, participation in supplier listings, and upcoming tenders of Khouzestan Steel Company.

At the end of the meeting, the TAFCO CEO responded to questions from members of the Export Pro delegation, and the two sides exchanged experiences on enhancing supply chain efficiency and local manufacturing of components.



According to the report, TAFCO—one of the subsidiaries of the Khouzestan Steel Group—has played an active role in the 7th Iran Steel Export Capabilities Exhibition (EXPO 2025), specializing in the localization and supply of domestic parts.



Anzali to become hub for exporting handicrafts to Caspian Sea littoral states

TEHRAN—Maryam Jalali Dehkordi, who serves as Iran’s deputy minister for handicrafts, has emphasized the strategic situation of Anzali Free Zone in Gilan province.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 7th Export Potential Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was held in Tehran from April 28 to May 2, she gave news about the Tourism Ministry’s programs for turning Anzali Free Zone into a handicrafts export hub for exports to Caspian Sea littoral states, IRIB reported.

On Anzali’s trade potentials, she said Anzali can turn into a smaller version of Iran, a space where foreign tourists and merchants can become familiar with Iran’s cultural diversity and enjoy its free zone infrastructures.

She called for establishing specialized handicrafts custom administra-

tion, standardizing the products, and improving the business knowledge of artisans as the most important priorities of the region.

Jalali called preserving the indigenous identity of global handicrafts villages as a necessity. She also said Anzali handicrafts campus should be a cultural representative of all provinces, a live fair of Iranian art and identity.

She said Handicrafts Export Promotion Company will be established with a public joint stock structure and enter the capital market.

This company can play a key role in attracting the investors and turn Anzali into one of the major hubs of handicrafts exports, she added.

Jalali said Anzali free zone has a huge capacity for materializing economic diplomacy on the basis of cul-

ture given its proximity to the main markets such as Russia.

Also, Mostafa Ta’ati-Moqaddam, managing director of Anzali Free Zone Organization, said the largest Anzali handicrafts campus will be established in Anzali.

This complex with focus on basket-weaving which is produced in Fashtakeh village with participation of 1,800 artisans, will be inaugurated by the end of current Iranian year. This complex will be a venue for training, producing, showcasing and exporting the handicrafts, he added.

He also announced the launch of Antonov 26 cargo flights between Rasht and one of the Russian provinces. These flights have been planned with capacity of transferring six tons of handicrafts to target markets in Caspian Sea littoral states every two weeks, he concluded.

Culinary tour held for foreign students of Kermanshah universities

TEHRAN—A culinary tour was held for foreign students across Kermanshah province to familiarize them with spring plants and cuisines, said the head of the Cultural, Social and Sports Department of Kermanshah Municipality.

Iman Derakhshi told ISNA that Kermanshah, as the 37th UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, has unique potential, naming spring plants and cuisines as one of its capacities.

Various spring plants grow in Kermanshah given its special geographic situation and topographic conditions, he said, adding, “Some of these plants have been added to our tables in the form of foods since ancient times.”

This has led to high diversity in culinary tourism during spring, he pointed out. Therefore, efforts have been made to introduce this capacity to domestic and foreign tourists, he added.

“We have put on our agenda to hold culinary tours with focus on spring plants and cuisines. It was held with presence of media persons and tour leaders in Dalahoo last year.”

This year, culinary tour has been held for foreign students

who study in Kermanshah universities, he said, adding that 35 foreign students from Razi University and Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences attended in the event.

He explained that the foreign students were from Nigeria, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Derakhshi expressed the hope that foreign student will be ambassadors for introducing Kermanshah culinary culture and tourism after finishing their studies and returning to their countries.

He mentioned that culinary tour was held in Kortavij village, Dinvar district, Sahneh city.

During the one-day tour, the foreign students were familiarized with spring plants such as shang, paghare, artichoke, rhubarb, venushk (mountain pistachio), kolaneh, etc. and the various dishes, soups, breads, and pickles that are made with them.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

Tehran, Havana follow up on joint biotechnology, vaccine production projects

TEHRAN – Cuban Ambassador to Tehran, Jorge Fernando Nicolás, in a meeting with Alireza Biglari, the Iranian deputy health minister for international affairs, discussed ways to follow up on joint projects, especially in biotechnology and vaccine production projects.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2025, the seventh Exhibition of Export Capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is running from April 28 to May 2 at Tehran's International Permanent Fairgrounds.

A delegation of Cuban officials, headed by the Ambassador, also met representatives of the Pasteur Institute of Iran, the Food and Drug Organization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Trade Promotion Organization.

Referring to the successful experience of cooperation between Iran and Cuba in the hepatitis B and Covid-19 vaccine projects, Biglari termed these relations as a successful model in international scientific interactions.

The seventh edition of Iran Expo, the country's largest and most significant export event aimed at strengthening connections with international markets, brings together representatives from more than 100 countries.

More than 2,000 companies and their representatives from around the globe are participating in the event, seeking to familiarize themselves with Iran's industrial strengths and engage in negotiations and business interactions with some of the country's leading brands across various sectors.



Cuba is one of the countries in Latin America with the highest level of cooperation with Iran in different fields, including the health sector, Ali Jafarian, an official with the health ministry, said in January.

"Thanks to advanced technologies in Cuba, the two countries have benefited from collaborative partnership in the health sector, such as developing Hepatitis and PastoCovac vaccines," IRNA quoted Jafarian as saying.

During the meeting, Mohammad-Hossein Niknam, the former deputy health minister for international affairs, highlighted that following the 10-year agreement reached last year, the joint meeting has gained more importance, particularly in economic and political sectors.

"So far, besides the main document, seven other documents related to organizations have been finalized, and four more documents are being reviewed.

Also, a list of joint projects in

the health sector has been prepared."

During the meeting, the representatives of the stakeholder organizations and bodies presented their opinions and considerations about their own documents.

The participants also stressed the need to follow up on the agreements concluded by the private sector during the Havana International Exhibition in 2024.

The exchange of business delegations, the development of financial models to meet the Cuban markets' needs, and the opening of a credit line for the private sector's activities were among other issues that were emphasized.

strategic ties

In December 2024, Jafarian pointed to the status of Cuba as a political partner in the South American region and said that collaboration between Iran and Cuba is considered to be a strategic relationship.

In October 2024, Niknam and the Cuban ambassador to Tehran, Alexis Bandrich Vega, discussed ways to foster cooperation between the two countries.

The officials attended a coordinating meeting to discuss issues for the upcoming Iran-Cuban Joint Economic Committee Meeting.

Referring to the friendly relations, Vega said the main goal of the meeting was to boost solidarity between the two countries, IRNA reported.

"The two countries seek to establish peace not only between Iran and Cuba but among all the countries of the world," the Cuban official stressed.

Sadly, sanctions have made life more difficult for targeted nations due to imposed barriers and restrictive measures, he added.

Holding the joint committee meeting will bring positive outcomes for the two countries.

Cuba is a safe market for Iran. Also, it can be a reliable friend with potential benefits in the long term for the country.

Niknam, for his part, said the friendly relations between Iran and Cuba are exemplary.

There have always been positive interactions between the two countries, but the current relations can be expanded.

The official also touched on the joint projects to develop vaccines during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He expressed optimism that the joint commission will help develop the relations between Iran and Cuba.

Preparatory meeting for intl. congress on AI to be held



MOU signed to use AI in medical treatment

In January, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology and Tehran University of Medical Sciences signed a memorandum of understanding to use artificial intelligence for medical treatment purposes.

The agreement aims to promote the targeted support of the knowledge-based ecosystem in the field of health with a focus on omics and genomics studies, cell therapy in endocrinology and metabolism, person-centered medicine with artificial intelligence tools for prevention, prediction, diagnosis, and treatment, and finally innovation in the commercialization of products and services, ISNA reported. Statistics have shown noticeable cost savings, about 40 percent, using artificial intelligence in health in advanced countries.

In some specific cases, like breast or lung cancers, artificial intelligence can lower healthcare costs by 80 percent, hence knowledge-based economy should aim to utilize AI to save healthcare costs, IRIB quoted Mostafa Qaemi, the secretary of the Biology Development Headquarters, as saying.

"Smart University of Medical Sciences has compiled a smart healthcare document, which is currently in the final stages of approval.

Once approved, the document is a valuable step taken towards digital transformation in the country's healthcare system," Hassan Bakhtiari, the SMUMS president, said in December 2024.

The SMUMS research center is a suitable place for conducting applied research and recruiting medical researchers.

The center can also help develop treatment and reduce treatment costs, he noted. Highlighting that most of the regional countries are pioneers in artificial intelligence, he said: "Iran needs to strengthen its position in the artificial intelligence sector in the region."

AI plays a key role in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases. It also improves the quality of medical services.

Bakhtiari went on to say that by using AI technology, the development of medical services in disadvantaged and rural areas can be put on the agenda. Telemedicine is one of the areas in which AI can help establish health justice by providing access to advanced medical services in remote areas, he added.

Iran's ranking among Islamic countries

According to the Web of Science, Iran (with 17,458 documents) ranks first in neural network technology as well as multi-agent systems (with 351 documents) among Islamic countries.

The country secures a ranking of 6th in neural network technology and 12th in multi-agent systems globally. Iran ranks second in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and robotics among Islamic nations. The report has included data in a twenty-year period from 2004 to 2023.

According to the report, with 606 publications on three-dimensional printing over a span of ten years, Iran ranks second among Islamic nations.

The report has included data from 2014 to 2023.

Iran attends 2025 BRS COPs in Geneva



TEHRAN – A delegation of officials from the Department of Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Oil has participated in the 2025 Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (2025 BRS COPs) which opened in Geneva on April 28 and will run until May 9.

"Make visible the invisible: sound management of chemicals and wastes" is the theme of the event.

Over 1,600 participants representing approximately 170 countries and regional economic integration organizations, and 260 observer organizations are attending the 2025 BRS COPs.

These legally binding environmental treaties play a pivotal role in protecting human health and the environment from hazardous chemicals and wastes.

The meetings taking place at the Geneva International Conference Centre, were preceded by preparatory meetings on April 27. The COPs will focus on efforts to address hazardous chemical and waste pollution that continues to pose significant threats to human health and the environment.

The seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-17), the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-12) and the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-12) are also held back-to-back in Geneva.

BC COP-17 will consider, among others, classification and hazard characterisation of wastes; technical guidelines on a range of wastes including but not limited to persistent organic pollutants (POPs) wastes, waste lead-acid batteries, pneumatic tyres, electronic and electrical waste (e-wastes), waste containing nanomaterials, mercury wastes, and plastic wastes.

RC COP-12 will consider the listing of 10 hazardous chemicals in Annex III, making them subject to the prior informed consent procedure under the Convention.

SC COP-12 will consider the recommendations from the scientific body to include the following persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in Annex A to the Convention for elimination: 1) Chlorinated paraffins that are used in metalworking fluids as lubricants, and also used in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) products, as well as in paints, sealants, and rubber; 2) Chlorpyrifos an insecticide widely used in agriculture.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

'Climate change impact on Iran doubles world average'

The effects of climate change on Iran has more than doubled on average compared to other parts of the world, while southern provinces of the country are more likely to bear the consequences, secretary of environmental policy at the center for strategic studies affiliated to the presidential office has said.

"The Hoomand-Absard station in Damavand county in northeast of Tehran experienced a temperature increase of 2.7 °C over the past 50 years, while over the past 100 years, the temperature rise was about 0.76 °C," ISNA quoted Mohammad Darvish as saying on Tuesday.

Climate change impact is increasing in southern part of the country, among which Yazd province's condition has raised concern, he said, adding, the industries operating in the province must reduce their dependency on water, otherwise water scarcity might worsen in the region.

تغییرات اقلیمی در ایران دو تا سه برابر جهان

محمد درویش، دبیر سیاست محیط زیست مرکز بررسی‌های استراتژیک نهاد ریاست جمهوری گفته، ایران با تأثیرات تغییر اقلیمی دو تا سه برابر بیشتر از تأثیرات ایجاد شده در کره زمین روبرو شده است.

محمد درویش، در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایسنا با اشاره به گزارش‌های منتشر شده توسط سازمان هواشناسی، وزارت نیرو و سازمان آب، اظهار کرد: ایستگاه هومند آبسرد در دامنه‌های کوه دماوند طی نیم قرن اخیر افزایش دمایی حدود ۲.۷ درجه سلیسیوس را نشان می‌دهد و این مسئله در حالی رخ داده است که در ۱۰۰ سال گذشته، حدود ۰.۷۶ درجه سلیسیوس افزایش دما داشته‌ایم.

وی اضافه کرد: هر چقدر به شهرهای جنوبی‌تر کشورمان نزدیک می‌شویم، تغییرات اقلیمی هم بیشتر می‌شود به طوری که از این میان یزد وضعیت نگران‌کننده‌ای دارد. باید میزان وابستگی صنایع در یزد نسبت به آب کاهش پیدا کند چرا که در غیر این صورت می‌تواند شتاب خشک‌سالی‌ها را افزایش دهد.



First round of Konkur held nationwide

The first round of the Iranian University Entrance Exam, simply known as Konkur, was held across the country on Thursday and Friday.

In total, 957,798 candidates registered for the national exam, 63 percent of whom were women and 37 percent were men.



MAY 3, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Whoever delights his/her parents, has delighted Allah and the one who displeases them has displeased Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:10 Dawn: 3:38 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:11 (tomorrow)

Babolsar hosting August Strindberg's "The Stronger"

TEHRAN-The play "The Stronger" written by August Strindberg and directed by Leila Hosseinzadeh started its performances in Babolsar, Mazandaran Province.

Mahrokh Zabihzadeh, Shayesteh Hosseini, Mehdi Mirramezani, and Taran Esmati are in the cast of the 45-minute play.

"The Stronger" is an 1889 Swedish play consisting of only one scene. The main characters are two women: one of them married and speaking and the other one single and silent.

They meet each other after a long time, by chance, on Christmas Eve in a cafe, and this is the beginning of the story.

The audience witnesses many reactions and imply meaning through the verbal recitation of the married character combined with the silent reaction and physical activity of the unmarried character.

The relationship between the two involves an unseen character; the husband. The play is semi-autobiographical.

It explores the power struggle evident in human psychology, confronting the audience with timeless themes of betrayal, infidelity, and hierarchy working within a masculine hegemonic society.

The women present on stage are representative of fragments of one character's mind. While some parts are incapable of action and controlled by their persona's 'agents', others are capable of speech and autonomy facing the climactic confrontation of a destabilized relationship.

The Stronger is universally considered the quintessential short play and a superb monodrama of great psychological profundity. The play is unique in that the subject of the discussion, the husband, never appears.

In "The Stronger," Strindberg demonstrates what a keen insight and capacity for observation he possessed in regard to human nature and its machinations.

There is, of course, the fairly open question of which of the two women is the stronger,

the married actress who takes all in stride, bends with the winds, and survives in the dog-eat-dog world, or the other one who has failed to bend and broken like a dry reed. But is her observation correct or is it wishful thinking?

August Strindberg (1849-1912) is Sweden's foremost dramatist.

He was also a schoolmaster, journalist, writer of scientific and political treatises, writer of short stories, poet, essayist, and painter.

As a dramatist Strindberg's chief strength lies not so much in dramatic technique as it does in his trenchant and searching power of analysis of the human mind.

His chief plays are very exact and narrow views of the feminine soul.

Some of his own domestic bitterness finds expression in the feminine studies in his plays. He is very fond of showing the power of one character over another.

A prolific writer who often drew directly on his personal experience, Strindberg wrote more than sixty plays and more than thirty works of fiction, autobiography, history, cultural analysis, and politics during his career, which spanned four decades.

A bold experimenter and iconoclast throughout, he explored a wide range of dramatic methods and purposes, from naturalistic tragedy, monodrama, and history plays, to his anticipations of expressionist and surrealist dramatic techniques.

From his earliest work, Strindberg developed innovative forms of dramatic action, language, and visual composition.

He is considered the "father" of modern Swedish literature.

In addition to "The Stronger," Strindberg's important one-act plays include "The Outlaw," "Countess Julie," "Creditors," "Pariah," and "Facing Death."

"The Stronger" will remain on stage at the Black Box of Babolsar Culture and Guidance Department for a month until June 2.

Exhibition of Torres Strait Island Masks unveiled at Australian Embassy in Tehran

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN- On Thursday, the Australian Embassy in Tehran hosted an art exhibition showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the Torres Strait Islands.

Entitled "Evolution: Torres Strait Masks," the event was inaugurated by the Australian Ambassador to Tehran Ian McConville, who emphasized that this exhibition is the first of its kind to be held in Iran.

He highlighted the rich culture and civilization of Iran, stating that this exhibition also reflects the culture of Australia's Indigenous peoples and their ancient traditions.

The event was attended by a distinguished group of gallery owners and Iranian artists, highlighting the importance of cultural exchange between the two nations.

The exhibition, developed by the Gab Titui Cultural Center on Waiben (Thursday Island) in collaboration with the National Museum of Australia, features 12 ceremonial masks, known as Kuyuku Zamiyak.



These ancient masks are not only unique to the world but also embody a spiritual significance.

Traditionally worn by esteemed spiritual leaders, they were believed to possess powers that facilitated communication with the ancestors of the spirit world.

For centuries, ceremonial mask-making has been at the

heart of the Torres Strait Islands' culture, serving as a vital link among the diverse groups inhabiting the region. Crafted from natural materials such as wood, shells, and feathers, these masks played an essential role in uniting communities across the 274 islands that span approximately 48,000 square kilometers.

The exhibition offers a journey through time, exploring the historical significance of these masks and their use in ceremonial rituals.

The event not only celebrates the artistic craftsmanship of the Torres Strait Islanders but also fosters a deeper understanding of their cultural practices and beliefs.

"Elsa Morante Night" to be held at House of Humanities Thinkers



TEHRAN-The literary meeting "Elsa Morante Night" will be held at the House of Humanities Thinkers in Tehran on Sunday.

It will be the 834th session of the Bukhara Nights, which is dedicated to exploring the life and works of the Italian writer, researcher, and translator Elsa Morante, ISNA reported.

Speakers at the event include Antonia Shoraka, Fatemeh Asgari, Manouchehr Afsari, Hamid Namjoo, and Ali Dehbashi.

Elsa Morante (1912-1985) was an Italian novelist, poet, translator

and children's books author. She is known for the epic and mythical quality of her works, which usually center upon the struggles of the young in coming to terms with the world of adulthood. Her novel "History" is included in the Bokklubben World Library List of 100 Best Books of All Time.

The event announcement describes Morante's literary life as a uniquely devoted experience in the realm of 20th-century literature—an author who wholly dedicated herself to literature and fulfilled her longing for living human relationships in passion and ecstasy.

As a chronicler of post-World War II Italy, Morante never ceased to pursue beauty and the thrill of creation. She regarded literature as a luminous testament to the entirety of life, pouring her boundless imagination into it and extending it into the entire realm of reality—joining beauty with truth and raising the flag of love and virtue without ever retreating from exposing the darkness threatening individual and social life.

This perspective was closely tied

to her innate gift for storytelling, allowing her to stand as an equal to her husband, the writer Alber to Moravia. Yet Morante rejected many methodical optimizations, intellectual detachment, and pre-defined norms, instead crafting a luminous, ecstatic, and excessive style of writing.

In her novel "History," Morante writes about her characters from a deliberate distance—so much so that, in her world, "the account of the dead and the living has been erased." From this distance, the faint, almost animal-like moaning of Ida—a character destined for the asylum—can be heard: "I wish I had never belonged to the human race." This is just one of many allusions in "History" that point toward the realm of the animal.

Morante cultivated a love for music, books and cats. Her favorite books included "The Iliad," "Don Quixote," and "Hamlet." She was also interested in Freudian psychology, Plato and Simone Weil.

Most of Morante's greatest works are shaped by her choices and experiences in life and are reflected in

her protagonists. One of the central themes in Morante's work is Narcissism. The majority of Morante's leading characters use autobiography as a way to seek self-therapy and hope. Narration becomes a leading tool. Her writing is essential for the formation of a positive consciousness about her personal memories.

Another important aspect of Morante's work is the metaphor of love. According to her, love can be passion and obsession, and can lead to despair or destruction. Love and Narcissism are themes well connected to each other. Most of Morante's characters seek love, not because they have true feelings for the person they fell in love with, but because they need to cover the feelings of emptiness from their childhood. It is through love and narcissism that Morante introduces other themes such as the role of motherhood and the meaning of childhood experiences.

A segment of a documentary about Elsa Morante's life will also be screened during the event. The House of Humanities Thinkers is located at the junction of on Nejatollahi (Villa) and Warsaw streets.

IAF cinematheque to screen "Universal Language"

TEHRAN-The 2024 Canadian absurdist comedy-drama film "Universal Language" (also known as "The Song of a Turkey") co-written and directed by Matthew Rankin will be screened at the cinematheque of the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) in Tehran on Monday.

After the 90-minute movie is shown, a review session will be held with film critic Mohammad Hashemi, ISNA reported.

The film is set in an alternate reality in which

Persian, rather than English, is the dominant language of Canada, although it remains in co-existence with French.

Described as a "surreal comedy of disorientation" set "somewhere between Tehran and Winnipeg," the film blends the initially unrelated, but gradually converging, stories of Negin (Rojina Esmaeili) and Nazgol (Saba Vahedyousefi), who find money frozen in ice and try to claim it; Massoud (Pirouz Nemat), a tour guide in Winnipeg who is leading a con-

fused and disoriented tour group; and Matthew (Rankin), who quits his unfulfilling job with the government of Quebec and travels home to Winnipeg to visit his mother.

"Universal Language" received positive reviews from critics and was named one of the top 5 international films of 2024 by the National Board of Review. The film was selected as the Canadian entry for Best International Feature Film at the 97th Academy Awards.

Cartoon of Day



Hunter: Gaza nears famine as Israel's total blockade nears third month
Cartoonist: Ramon Diaz Yanes from Cuba

"The AI Conundrum" available in Persian

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the book "The AI Conundrum: Harnessing the Power of AI for Your Organization—Profitably and Safely" written by Caleb Briggs and Rex Briggs has been released in the Iranian book market.

Amin Ansari Charsooghi has translated the book and Tadaee Publications has brought it out in 400 pages, Mehr reported.

Originally published in 2024, it is a timely, practical guide to AI—its strengths, weaknesses, and real-world applications—for business professionals and policymakers.

Artificial intelligence, or AI, can recognize a pattern from any set of data it is given, which is what makes it such an extraordinarily powerful tool. But because not all

patterns are authentic or reliable, AI's pattern-finding superpower can lead to spurious patterns—and to disastrous results for business and government entities that rely on them. Hence the conundrum at the heart of AI: its greatest strength can also be its greatest weakness.

Targeting the businessperson who needs to know how to use AI profitably and responsibly, Caleb Briggs and Rex Briggs offer in this book a foundational understanding of AI that is easy to grasp yet thorough enough to be used effectively.

"The AI Conundrum" draws on the authors' diverse expertise—in pure math, computer science, marketing, data science, and business—to make AI concepts and ap-

plications approachable for readers of all tech levels.

It provides a framework for comparing AI to the next-best alternative, and for gauging where AI is likely to be successful—or to pose greater risk than benefits.

The book Includes dozens of real-world case studies highlighting the successes and failures of AI applications across various industries.

It offers actionable insights for responsible implementation and risk mitigation and provides a worksheet for identifying potential problem areas and performing a cost-benefit analysis on its companion website.

"The AI Conundrum" is an invaluable resource for professionals and

students seeking a full understanding of AI—its applications, limitations, and ethical considerations—as we enter a brave new era.

Rex Briggs is an author and an award-winning marketing ROI researcher. He is responsible for several innovations in digital marketing. He created the first study of Web banner advertising effectiveness. The research is notable because it was the first application of random sampling online, and used design of experiments to measure the in-market impact of online advertising.

Caleb Briggs began coding at 10 and developing AI at 14. He has created several AI applications from scratch, building experience in genetic algorithms, machine vision, natural language, and more.