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Araghchi in Islamabad as Pakistan-India Tensions Swell

Top diplomat says both nations are 'friends' to Iran



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Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (center left) and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (center right) pictured with officials during Araghchi's visit to Islamabad, May 5, 2025.

The deepening security dilemma facing Israel

By Shahin Radfar

TEHRAN - The Sunday missile strike by Yemen's Ansarallah movement on Israel's Ben Gurion Airport marks a significant and alarming breach of security inside Israel.

The attack showed Israel's vulnerability more than ever before, proving that the region is entering a new stage. Now, Israel should lick its wounds. The ripple effects of the attack will continue to resonate across the occupied Palestinian territories for many years.

The missile, identified as a hypersonic ballistic type, struck within the airport's restricted area near Terminal 3, injuring eight individuals and temporarily halting flight operations.

This incident is unprecedented in both scale and audacity. Despite multiple interception attempts, Israel's advanced multi-layered missile defense system—including the U.S.-supplied THAAD and Arrow interceptors—failed to neutralize the incoming threat. This failure raises serious questions about Israel's defensive readiness against new-generation missiles.

Genocide against Gazans goes on unabated

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Dozens have been killed and injured, including women and children, amid relentless Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip.

The Civil Defense in Gaza has reported fatalities and injuries resulting from Israeli attacks on multiple locations across the densely populated coastal enclave.

In the early hours of Monday, 19 Palestinians, including women and children, were killed in intense Israeli airstrikes on residential neighborhoods in northern Gaza, part of an ongoing months-long escalation.

Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson for the Civil Defense, also reported that rescue teams recovered 15 bodies and 10 injured individuals from the rubble of three apartments in a multi-story residential building northwest of Gaza City.

The building was directly struck by three missiles while residents were asleep, and no prior warning was issued.

Basal also confirmed that four people were killed and another four wounded in a strike on a family home in Beit Lahia.

Shiite duo wins Beirut southern suburb elections

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — With a voter turnout of 44.59% and in an environment of excellent security and competitiveness, the Lebanese government successfully organized the first round of municipal and mayoral elections in Mount Lebanon Governorate.

The municipal elections will be held in four stages during the current month, covering all Lebanese governorates. This comes amidst an escalation in tensions surrounding Lebanon, particularly in the occupied Palestinian territories and Syria.

The elections, held for the first time in nine years, followed repeated postponements since 2016. It is obviously a test for political factions to determine the extent of their popular representation ahead of the major parliamentary elections in May 2026, which will be pivotal to the Lebanese political life.

In various municipalities in Beirut's southern suburb (Dahiyeh), a Hezbollah stronghold in Mount Lebanon Governorate, Hezbollah and the Amal Movement, aka the Shiite duo, won unopposed under the "Development and Loyalty List".

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Tehran Times/ Ali Haddadi Asl

The Tehran Times celebrates 46th year of publication in Tehran ceremony

China envoy: An outstanding media representative, Tehran Times is both an active participant and a strong promoter of dialogue among countries

Foreign ministry spokesman: Tehran Times is a forward-looking media outlet and a true partner in advancing Iran's diplomatic goals and global image

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Pezeshkian reaffirms national unity as top priority in meeting with Assembly of Experts

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized national unity as a top priority during a meeting with members of the Assembly of Experts.

He stated he would avoid any actions that could be exploited by the country's enemies or question the revolution's integrity. "If I feel that an action would undermine national unity, I will not do it," Pezeshkian asserted, underscoring his commitment to safeguarding the nation's solidarity. Page 2

Iran unveils cutting-edge missile, says U.S. bases are targets if attacked

TEHRAN — Iran unveiled its latest domestically developed ballistic missile, the Qasem Basir, on Sunday, as Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh issued a stark warning to the United States and the Israeli regime: "We hold no animosity toward neighboring states, but U.S. bases are our targets if war is imposed on us."

The Qasem Basir, an upgraded solid-fuel missile derived from Iran's Shahid Haj Qassem platform, boasts a range of at least 1,200 kilometers (745 miles) and is designed to evade advanced missile defense systems like the U.S.-made THAAD and Patriot. Named in honor of Iran's revered martyred General Qasem Soleimani, both missile systems carry his name. Page 3

Yemen support for Palestine motivated by solidarity, not Iranian direction: foreign ministry

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry has firmly rejected allegations that it is behind the recent actions by Yemen's Resistance movement Ansarullah, calling the claims "baseless" and "an insult" to the Yemeni people.

In a statement on Sunday, the ministry condemned the United States for attributing Yemeni operations in support of Palestine to the Islamic Republic, arguing that such accusations are an attempt to deflect attention from what it called the "genocide" being carried out by Israel in Gaza. Page 2

Pre-mortem vs. post-mortem: How US foreign policy keeps repeating its mistakes with Iran

By Jafar Yaghoubi

TEHRAN – There is a fine line between intelligence and wisdom. Smart people solve problems; wise people, however, steer clear of them. While nation-states, like the U.S., are deemed to be smart in pursuit of their interests, civilization-states, such as Iran, can better be understood as wise.

Although driven by national and security interests, Iranian diplomacy and U.S. foreign policy operate within fundamentally different paradigms—one prioritizing endurance and strategic patience, the other pursuing interventionism and problem-solving at any cost, mostly borne by others! The result of this obsessive problem-solving has been a history of misconceptions, Page 2

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

Ambiguity in the negotiations; neither failure nor agreement

Farhikhtegan analyzed the ambiguity surrounding the negotiations between Iran and the United States and said: The indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States are now in a state of ambiguity; they cannot be considered a failure, nor have they reached a tangible result. Recent developments in the White House have marginalized optimistic predictions of an imminent agreement and show that Washington is not only not seeking an early lifting of sanctions, but is also pushing the negotiations toward a more complicated direction by raising non-nuclear issues, such as accusations against Iran about regional development. Meanwhile, the enthusiasm of some domestic analysts about the possibility of an agreement could lead to unrealistic expectations by the public and weaken the position of the Iranian negotiating team against the American side. The statements of Seyyed Abbas Araghchi after the third round of talks in Oman, which emphasized Iran's cautious approach, as well as the statement of the Foreign Ministry, which was written after the imposition of a new round of sanctions regarding "suspicion about America's seriousness," are a warning against this premature optimism. This situation shows that the talks are shrouded in ambiguity, and any definitive assessment, whether optimistic or pessimistic, requires greater precision.

Etemad: JCPOA talks faced less hurdles

In a note, Etemad discussed the change in the current condition of the nuclear talks compared to the negotiations that led to the JCPOA in 2015. The newspaper said: It should be noted that the current situation of Iran, the United States, the region, and the world has completely changed compared to the time of the negotiations and the JCPOA agreement. In the region, apart from Israel, no other enemy for Iran and the agreement can be imagined. Competitions of this kind cause most of the prominent countries surrounding Iran neither want to increase Iran's tension with others, especially the United States, nor favor a comprehensive solution to the foreign policy issues of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The current America is different from the America of the Obama era, Europe is in a weakened position, and Israel is equally or more anti-Iran. Also, limiting Trump's authority to effectively lift sanctions, increasing non-nuclear sanctions, and the imminent snapback are some of the topics ahead. Therefore, we cannot expect a sudden opening. Perhaps it would be better for Iran itself to craft a set of proposals so that the initiative does not fall into the hands of American or Israeli think tanks and institutes to contain Iran or sabotage the negotiations.

Vatan-e-Emrooz: Chabahar is a strategic port

Vatan-e-Emrooz examined the importance of Chabahar Port and wrote: Chabahar Port has a special place in Iran's economic and trade strategies. The importance of this port is evident not only domestically but also regionally and internationally. It has a high capacity to become an international transit and trade hub. Chabahar Port, as an important trade gateway, can play a key role in international corridors. The port is considered a center for the transit of goods between Central Asian and South Asian countries and can turn Iran into one of the main regional trade routes. Trilateral agreements between Iran, India, and Afghanistan indicate the importance of this port in strengthening regional cooperation and attracting foreign investments. Maximum use of Chabahar Port's capacities will not only lead to the development of trade but also will have an impact on the promotion of Iran's political and diplomatic relations with regional countries and other influential players, such as India and Russia. These interactions create an appropriate infrastructure for economic partnerships and sustainable security in the region.

Donya-e-Eqtesad: Achieving a formula on nuclear enrichment is possible

In an interview with Rahman Ghahremanpour, a senior researcher on international affairs, Donya-e-Eqtesad discussed the postponement of negotiations between Iran and the United States. He said: Today, there are two issues; if the United States wants to limit the talks to the nuclear issue, it is not impossible to reach an agreement on Iran's nuclear enrichment. Some technical solutions can be found that will allow Iran to enrich uranium to 3.67% and give the United States a peace of mind. Of course, we still do not know whether the United States wants to limit the talks to the nuclear issue or raise missile and regional issues as well. If other issues are raised, there is a possibility that the negotiations will end in a deadlock. If both the U.S. and Iran agree to limit the talks to the nuclear issue and not seek a comprehensive agreement, it is possible to find ways to resolve the enrichment issue.

Yemen support for Palestine motivated by solidarity, not Iranian direction: foreign ministry

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry has firmly rejected allegations that it is behind the recent actions by Yemen's Resistance movement Ansarullah, calling the claims "baseless" and "an insult" to the Yemeni people.

In a statement on Sunday, the ministry condemned the United States for attributing Yemeni operations in support of Palestine to the Islamic Republic, arguing that such accusations are an attempt to deflect attention from what it called the "genocide" being carried out by Israel in Gaza.

"These are independent decisions made by a proud and resilient people in solidarity with their Palestinian brothers and sisters," the ministry said, emphasizing that linking them to Iran is "a misleading narrative aimed at covering up the failures and crimes of the Zionist regime."

The statement went on to denounce the U.S. military presence and operations in Yemen, accusing Washington of violating international law by launching attacks on civilian infrastructure under the pretext of defending Israel.

Iran reiterated its long-standing position on respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations and warned that continued U.S. aggression in Yemen and support for Israel's actions in Gaza threaten the stability



of the wider West Asia region and the Red Sea.

The ministry also warned against recent threats made by U.S. and Israeli officials toward Iran, stating that the Islamic Republic will not hesitate to defend its national interests and security. Tehran said it holds both Washington and Tel Aviv fully responsible for any consequences arising from their actions.

Since March 15, the administration of US President Donald Trump has launched daily airstrikes on Yemen and claims to have struck more than 1,000 targets in the Arab country.

The campaign aims to halt the Yemeni military's strikes on Israeli and Israeli-linked vessels in Red Sea shipping lanes as well as their operations that have been hitting targets deep within the occupied Palestinian territories.

Araghchi in Islamabad as Pakistan-India tensions swell

Top diplomat says both nations are "friends" to Iran

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Islamabad on Monday, as he attempts to mediate between Pakistan and India, whose relations have steadily declined since last month.

"Today, our trip to Pakistan had three main goals," Araghchi told reporters after meeting with his Pakistani counterpart, Muhammad Ishaq Dar. "First, we wanted to get a clear understanding of the current situation in the region, especially regarding the ongoing developments between India and Pakistan."

The top diplomat said that both Pakistan and India are "friendly nations" to Iran, and that he was eager to hear Pakistan's perspective on the current situation before heading to India.

A deadly terrorist attack in the disputed Himalayan region of Pahalgam, killing 26 tourists, became a new point of contention between the two neighbors on April 22. India has blamed Pakistan for the attack, but Pakistan has rejected the accusations. That brought about a diplomatic flare-up and exchanges of small arms fire across the border in Kashmir, with Pakistan now saying it is awaiting an incursion by India.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) meets with Pakistani counterpart in Islamabad on May 5, 2025.

Concerned about the potential repercussions of escalating tensions between the two South Asian countries, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian spoke by phone with leaders in Islamabad and New Delhi last month, urging restraint and offering Tehran's mediation services. Iran's close proximity and ties to both nations make it vulnerable to any potential military fallout.

In addition to addressing the regional tensions, Araghchi's discussions in Pakistan also focused on strengthening bilateral ties. "[During this trip], we aimed to discuss and strengthen our bilateral relations with Pakistan, particularly in political, economic, and cultural areas. We discussed these topics and look forward to continuing our discussions in future meetings," the foreign minister told reporters.

For his part, Pakistan's Ishaq Dar affirmed the strong historical, cultural, and religious bonds between Tehran and Islamabad, emphasizing the need to expand cooperation in key areas including trade, energy, border security, and regional connectivity.

Araghchi also brought up the latest developments in the indirect negotiations between Tehran and Washington during his high-level exchanges. Iran and the U.S. have held three rounds of discussions mediated by Oman in April, with the aim of creating a new agreement on Iran's nuclear program following U.S. President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the original agreement in 2018. Iranian officials have been briefing their allies on the progress of these talks since they began.

Iran reaffirms unchanging stance as US talks delayed at Oman's suggestion



Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei during a press conference on May 5, 2025.

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei stated Monday that the decision to postpone indirect nuclear negotiations with the U.S. followed a proposal by Oman, the mediating party, and was agreed upon by all three sides.

"We have heard many claims," Baqaei said during his weekly press briefing, adding that "warmongering factions and anti-diplomacy forces within and outside the U.S., centered on the Zionist regime, have made extraordinary efforts in recent weeks to disrupt the talks."

Baqaei emphasized that Tehran prioritizes the "official stance" of the American negotiating delegation, urging Washington to "demonstrate internal cohesion" and adopt "reasonable, logical, and realistic positions."

The spokesman reiterated Iran's "unchanging position over the past 20 years," stressing its commitment to a peaceful nuclear program.

He affirmed Tehran's readiness for "confidence-building measures" to address concerns raised by other parties, while dismissing objections as "unfounded pretexts." Baqaei concluded, "This stance has been non-negotiable."

Pezeshkian reaffirms national unity as top priority in meeting with Assembly of Experts



TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized national unity as a top priority during a meeting with members of the Assembly of Experts.

He stated he would avoid any actions that could be exploited by the country's enemies or question the revolution's integrity. "If I feel that an action would undermine national unity, I will not do it," Pezeshkian asserted, underscoring his commitment to safeguarding the nation's solidarity.

He further clarified his unwillingness to engage in any activity that could disrupt the country's stability, highlighting his dedication to preserving the existing political order.

Since assuming office in 2024, unity has been a central theme in Pezeshkian's public pronouncements. Reports indicate that Pezeshkian enjoys a positive working relationship with other branches of the Iranian government, fostering an environment of cooperation and dialogue. The president holds routine weekly meetings with Iran's Parliament Speaker and Judiciary Chief, and also maintains close ties with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Pre-mortem vs. post-mortem: How US foreign policy keeps repeating its mistakes with Iran

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unilateral decisions, and diplomatic miscalculations that too often culminate in post-mortem regret rather than pre-mortem foresight. If the United States seeks true engagement with Iran, it must first recognize the limitations of its habitual approach and, for once, avoid imposing unilaterally, be it sanctions or solutions!

The prevalent mode of action in U.S. foreign policy is something like: identifying a perceived crisis, formulating an interventionist solution, and executing it under the assumption of rapid-fire problem-solving. The history of the last two decades teaches us that this approach has repeatedly failed, often contributing to exacerbating the original crisis rather than resolving it.

More than two decades of war and occupation in Afghanistan and Iraq proved the limits of U.S. military and diplomatic power.



Have they learnt from the past? Hardly! The West Asia region is far worse off now than it was before the U.S. invasion. The same vein of thought is still vibrant and pulsating within certain foreign policy circles in the West; the dogmatic obstinacy that prefers wiping the problems off rather than finding a solution.

In contrast, Iran has mastered diplomatic endurance, relying on historical wisdom rather than knee-jerk reactions. Its strategy in navigating hostile policies—be it sanctions, military threats, or covert operations—demonstrates a deep understanding of long-term survival. While the U.S. seeks rapid resolutions, Iran plays the long game, absorbing pressures, recalibrating responses, and waiting for the right moment to act in pursuit of its legitimate interests.

Iran-U.S. diplomacy is not merely a transactional affair as Trump sees it; it is an ideological clash between interventionist problem-solving and long-term avoidance-endurance strategy. If the nuclear issue is merely an agenda item for the U.S. administration, it represents a civilizational matter from the Iranian perspective, an inalienable right.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran unveils cutting-edge missile, says U.S. bases are targets if attacked

From Page 1 ▸ Nasirzadeh emphasized its precision and resilience during a televised interview, stating, "This missile is immune to electronic warfare, does not rely on GPS, and can identify specific targets among decoys with pinpoint accuracy, deviating less than one meter in final tests."

The unveiling follows weeks of heightened rhetoric from Washington and Tel Aviv. U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth recently recklessly threatened Iran on social media: "We see your lethal support to the Houthis. You will pay the CONSEQUENCE at the time and place of our choosing."

Nasirzadeh condemned Washington's "hypocritical" stance, especially as U.S. officials continued ramping up their rhetoric even while Oman-mediated nuclear talks between Iran and the U.S. proceeded, noting, "U.S. officials claim they seek dialogue while simultaneously threatening military action."



Iran's domestically developed ballistic missile, the Qasem Basir, unveiled on May 4, 2025.

"Speaking to Iran with the language of threats is futile," the defense minister asserted.

President Donald Trump has reiterated threats to "bomb Iran" unless the nation accepts a nuclear deal that aligns with his preferences, while the Israeli regime's Benjamin Netanyahu claimed to retaliate against Iran for an Ansarallah missile strike near Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport, saying, "Attacks from the Houthis ultimately emanate from Iran."

Nasirzadeh dismissed these accusations, asserting Yemen's Ansarallah movement acts independently: "The U.S. must stop fabricating crises. Yemen's decisions are its own."

"The U.S. and the Israeli regime speak the language of threats, but they must learn that Iran does not bow to intimidation," the defense minister stated. "Any aggression will meet decisive retaliation."

Iran's proven retaliatory prowess

During his interview, the Iranian general referenced Iran's True Promise I and True Promise II operations—large-scale missile and drone strikes against Israeli military sites in April and October 2024.

These operations, which targeted Israel's critical military infrastructure such as Nevatim and Tel Nof Airbases, demonstrated Iran's ability to penetrate the regime's vaunted Iron Dome and Arrow defenses.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

The Tehran Times celebrates 46th year of publication in Tehran ceremony



Chinese Ambassador(left) and Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati, Managing Editor of Tehran Times (right)



Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Qomi, head of the Islamic Development Organization

TEHRAN – The Tehran Times, Iran's oldest English-language newspaper, celebrated its 46th anniversary on Monday afternoon in a ceremony attended by foreign ambassadors, media executives, and senior cultural officials in Tehran.

The event highlighted the newspaper's legacy as a voice for the Islamic Republic in the international arena and a trusted source of independent reporting on regional and global issues.

In attendance were the ambassadors of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Iraq, the Second Secretary of the Embassy of India, the Cultural Attaché of the Embassy of Japan, and a representative of the Embassy of the Russian Federation—reflecting the Tehran Times' broad diplomatic engagement and international recognition.

Tehran Times a voice of justice in global media: China's envoy

Speaking at the ceremony, His Excellency Mr. Cong Peiwu, the Chinese Ambassador to Iran, hailed the Tehran Times as a respected institution that has remained faithful to its founding mission for over four decades.

"Over the past 46 years, it has always adhered to its founding mission and the principles of objective and fair reporting," he said. "It has vividly introduced Iran's development achievements and unique cultural charm with warm and engaging writing, and deeply interpreted regional and international hotspots from an independent and discerning perspective."

The ambassador also emphasized the paper's role in advancing media diplomacy and inter-civilizational understanding:

"As an outstanding representative of Iranian media, Tehran Times is both an active participant and a strong promoter of dialogue among countries. Through comprehensive and in-depth reporting, it has shown the world an Iran committed to multilateral cooperation and shared development."

Highlighting the challenge of rising protectionism in global trade, the envoy praised Tehran Times for its critical analysis: "Your recent opinion pieces, which deeply analyze the impact of protectionism on developing countries, fully demonstrate that the media are not only recorders of the times but also guardians of fairness and justice. Your voice represents the just voice of the international community."

He concluded by calling for stronger media ties between Iran and China, especially following the recent signing of a cooperation agreement between Mehr Media Group and China's Xinhua News Agency: "Standing at this new historical starting point, let us join hands, using media as a bond and civilizations as bridges, to jointly spread positive energy and promote mutual understanding."

Tehran Times a diplomatic ally in the media: foreign ministry spokesman

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei described the Tehran Times as a "forward-looking" publication, not a remnant of the past: "This is clearly reflected in the content it publishes every day. I extend my congratulations and appreciation to all the dear colleagues at Tehran Times."

He thanked the outlet for being a "steadfast partner in advancing the country's diplomatic objectives and in presenting an accurate and genuine image of our beloved homeland."

Tehran Times an enduring media institution: managing director

Dr. Mohammad-Mehdi Rahmati, Managing Director of the Tehran Times, said the event was more than a newspaper anniversary—it was a tribute to the institutional presence of a revolutionary media outlet.

"We are not just celebrating the anniversary of a media outlet, but honoring the enduring presence of a media institution that emerged from the developments of the Islamic Revolution and became the first English-language newspaper in the country."

He emphasized that the spirit of solidarity among the Tehran Times staff is what truly sets it apart.

Tehran Times voice for the truth and the oppressed: Hojjatoleslam Qomi

Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Qomi, head of the Islamic Development Organization, praised the newspaper's dedication to truth and its steadfast support for the Palestinian cause.

"The Tehran Times began as the voice of the Iranian people to the world—and that movement continues," he said. "Its success lies in the unwavering loyalty of individuals committed to truth and justice."

"Tehran Times reports" archival exhibit opens

As part of the anniversary celebration, the Tehran Times inaugurated a new exhibition titled "As Reported by Tehran Times," displaying historical front pages and rare archival materials from the past four decades.

Editor-in-Chief Mohammad Sarfi said the exhibit aimed to showcase "exclusive and captivating pages" from the newspaper's rich history. "If the Tehran Times is heard today, it is thanks to the dedication of our newsroom colleagues," he noted.

TV BRICS CEO extends congratulations to Tehran Times

Additionally, in a written message addressed to Tehran Times, Ms. Janna Tolstikova, CEO of the TV BRICS International Media Network, congratulated the newspaper on its 46th anniversary and praised the long-standing partnership between the two media organizations:

"Our partnership has been a shining example of successful media cooperation, strengthening the bonds between Russia and Iran through the regular exchange of content and the promotion of shared perspectives," she noted.

"May the Tehran Times's legacy of professionalism and integrity endure for many more years, contributing to the growing friendship between our countries."



Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson (right) and Iraq's ambassador to Iran visit the "Tehran Times reports..." exhibition



Mohammad Reza Nowruzpour, Deputy Minister of Media and Publicity Affairs of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (left)

SPORTS

Skocic's masterclass leads Tractor to historic PGPL triumph

TEHRAN - Dragan Skocic orchestrates Tractor's maiden league title, ending years of anticipation in Tabriz, as relegation drama unfolds in a captivating PGPL week.

The 28th week of the Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) delivered a thrilling spectacle, punctuated by a flurry of goals and the decisive outcomes in both the championship race and the battle against relegation.

In a momentous achievement, Tractor emphatically secured their first-ever Persian Gulf Pro League title with two matches to spare. The passionate supporters in Tabriz erupted in celebration as their beloved team finally reached the pinnacle of Iranian football. This triumph marks the end of a long-awaited dream for Tractor, a club that have invested heavily over the years. This season, their strategic signings proved particularly astute, none more so than the appointment of Skocic as head coach.

The composed and calm Croatian tactician has once again demonstrated his prowess in Iranian football, masterminding Tractor's historic title win.

Skocic's clever transfer dealings, bringing in perhaps lesser-known but highly effective foreign players, were instrumental in their success.

Despite initial controversies surrounding the signings of former Persepolis players such as Alireza Beiranvand, Mehdi Torabi, Danial Esmaeilifar, and Shoja Khalilzadeh, these players delivered outstanding performances, playing a crucial role in Tractor's title-winning campaign.

A key factor in Tractor's dominance was their remarkable team unity, fostered despite the presence of several high-profile players. A consistent starting lineup coupled with tactical flexibility made Tractor a formidable and unpredictable opponent under Skocic's guidance. The PGPL trophy made its journey from Qazvin to Tabriz, ensuring jubilant celebrations for Tractor's devoted fanbase.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the table, Havadar's fate was sealed as they bid farewell to the Pro League and will compete in the Azadegan League next season. Nassaji Mazandaran also saw their survival hopes dwindle significantly, making them strong candidates for the second relegation spot, although a slim mathematical chance remains.

Adding another layer of intrigue to the week was Esteghlal's commanding 5-1 win over Aluminum under the guidance of Mojtaba Jabari. Their emphatic victory has potentially complicated the club's managerial decisions for the upcoming season, as Jabari's impact has been transformative, suggesting a possible reconsideration of a coaching change.

Taremi makes a great contribution: Massimiliano Farris

TEHRAN – Inter Milan football team coach Massimiliano Farris lauded their Iranian winger Mehdi Taremi.

Taremi played against Barcelona as Lautaro's replacement in the match ended 3-3 in UEFA Champions League.

"The match against Barcelona will require lots of concentration, we might need to cut the opposition's time on the ball a bit, it's sometimes needed against these great sides because it can relieve the pressure, we need the win and we will try to win," Farris said in an interview with Inter Milan website.

"Taremi? He's a player we know well and made a great contribution in the game the other night. If Lautaro doesn't make it, there'll be space for another forward and he is one of the candidates," he added.

Mohammadpour: Mirjalili is the world's best goalkeeper

TEHRAN – Iran beach soccer player Movahed Mohammadpour says that their goalkeeper Mehdi Mirjalili is the best in the world.

Mirjalili has played a key role in two matches against Mauritania and Paraguay.

"Mirjalili is the best goalkeeper in the world," Mohammadpour told FIFA. "He's outstanding. We also have a very strong defense, we don't allow opponents many chances, but when he does he always comes up with big saves.

"Then he's the best with his feet. He's really good at setting up plays and scoring goals. We have power plays when he's on the pitch. He has a great understanding with the rest of the players. We link up really well. He's a huge asset for Iran."

Iran will undertake their biggest test of Seychelles 2025 on Monday when they play Portugal. The two-time champion scored 19 goals in their opening two wins, but that doesn't faze Mohammadpour.

"We don't care who is standing in front of us: we will go toe to toe with anyone," said the 30-year-old who finished as the top assister at the last global finals. "We will go all out to beat Portugal and finish top of the group. I think we will beat Portugal.

"We have one target at this tournament: to become champion. Nothing else. That's our only target," Mohammadpour concluded.

Yazdani claims gold in 2025 World Youth Weightlifting

TEHRAN – Hossein Yazdani of Iran snatched a gold medal in the 2025 World Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships on Monday.

Yazdani won for Iran by lifting 144kg in snatch, 190kg in clean and jerk and finished in first place for a total of 334kg in the Men +102 Youths.

Armenian weightlifter Harutyun Hovhannisyan came second on 150-173-323 and the bronze medal went to Ukraine's Volodymyr Chmykh on 143-180-323.

The 2025 Youth & Junior World Weightlifting Championships were held from Apr. 30 to May 5 in Lima, Peru.

Limoochi undergoes surgery

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team winger Mehdi Limoochi underwent foot surgery at a hospital in Tehran on Sunday.

Limoochi, 26, sustained the injury in a match against Esteghlal Khuzestan in early March.

He has undergone ACL reconstruction surgery.

The 26-year-old player will be sidelined for six months after the surgery.

Limoochi scored nine goals for Sepahan in the 2024-25 Iran Professional League.

Mirjalili: We fight for our country

TEHRAN – Iran beach soccer goalkeeper Mehdi Mirjalili says that Team Melli is going to win 2025 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup.

Mirjalili was one of the stars of the last FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup, and he's already sizzling in the Seychelles. After helping Iran edge Mauritania in its curtain-raiser, he was magnificent in a 5-1 reverse of Paraguay. His performance inside The Paradise Arena included two stunning saves and a trademark wonder goal.

"I thank Movahed (Mohammadpour) for saying that I am the best goalkeeper in the world," said Mirjalili. "It's not for me to say if I'm the best. I train really hard. I do three sessions per day. I'm always trying to improve.

"I have to thank my team-mates for being able to score goals. They have confidence in me, and that enables me to try things, to attempt passes, to go for goal.

"Their movement is good, they get in good positions for me, free up space for me," he added.

"The Iranian people have their fingers crossed for us. We will fight for our country, for our flag, for our people," Mirjalili concluded.

Monthly auto output inches up



TEHRAN – Iran's three major carmakers produced a total of 46,703 vehicles in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21-April 20), showing a modest increase from 45,916 units in the same month last year, according to data published on the Codal system.

The figures, reported by IRNA, show that Iran Khodro (IKCO), SAIPA, and Pars Khodro jointly added just 787 vehicles to their year-on-year output, reflecting a marginal 1.5 percent rise. IKCO accounted for the bulk of the growth.

IKCO reported production of 29,107 vehicles in the mentioned month, up 25 percent from 23,315 units in the same period last year—an increase of 5,986 vehicles. However, 194 of the cars assembled this year have not yet entered the commercial stage.

In terms of production breakdown, IKCO built 9,140 Peugeot models, 7,828 Surens, 5,349 Denas, 4,670 Taras, 1,403 Haima vehicles, and 717 units of other models.

The company did not manufacture any Rana models this month, while it had produced 960 of them in the same month last year.

On the sales side, IKCO delivered 7,449 Peugeot vehicles, 7,828 Surens, 4,831 Denas, 4,083 Taras, and 969 Haimas.

Iran seeks strategic trade partnerships with Afghanistan to boost regional stability

TEHRAN - Strengthening economic cooperation between Iran and Afghanistan will contribute to regional stability and create a framework for sustainable partnerships, a senior Iranian trade official said on Sunday.

Payam Baqeri, deputy head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), made the comments at a conference on Iran-Afghanistan trade opportunities, emphasizing the Chamber's commitment to laying the groundwork for enduring commercial ties between the two neighboring countries.

"Iran and Afghanistan can build a win-win partnership by leveraging their respective resources and capabilities," Baqeri said.

"Iran's advanced industrial infrastructure and access to global markets, combined with Afghanistan's mineral wealth, fertile land, and young labor force, make them natural economic partners."

Baqeri highlighted the shared linguistic, cultural, and historical bonds between the two countries, describing them as a strong foundation for economic growth, trade expansion, and durable relations.

He added that expanding bilateral trade would support stability in the region and benefit future generations.

"The outlook for Iran-Afghanistan trade is positive and promising," he said, noting that official data indicates a significant increase in trade volume between the two countries in 2024.

The ICCIMA deputy head described the Chamber's role as a proactive facilitator of trade relations and strategic partnerships.

He said the Chamber is committed to resolving trade barriers through dialogue with governments and enhancing commercial interaction by expanding business networks and holding joint trade events.

He also voiced support for the creation of joint ventures across various economic sectors and said the Chamber was working with educational institutions to help train a skilled workforce in both countries.

"Iran's private sector, with a forward-looking perspective, is ready to participate in Afghanistan's infrastructure, mining, agriculture, energy, and engineering projects," Baqeri said.

He called for Iran-Afghanistan relations to serve as a model for regional cooperation: "A partnership grounded in shared history and a vision for a better future can become a lasting and constructive alliance."

In a meeting with officials from the Taliban-led government on April 30, Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeljeh said Iran is ready to export technical and engineering services in agriculture to Afghanistan.

The minister told Afghanistan's deputy agriculture minister in the meeting that the necessary infrastructure and capacity exist to transfer agricultural expertise and know-how to Afghan professionals.

He noted that Iran and Afghanistan share deep-rooted cultural and historical ties and continue to seek closer cooperation in various fields.

Nouri Ghezeljeh emphasized the need to establish a joint committee between Iran and Afghanistan, based in Kabul, to advance bilateral relations.

"We must seriously pursue the expansion of ties between the two countries, particularly in agriculture," he said, adding that cooperation agreements should be drafted and signed within the framework of the joint committee.

The Iranian minister stressed the importance of expanding economic and agricultural relations with Afghanistan, citing the sector's broad potential.

He said forming the committee and signing memorandums of understanding would help strengthen mutual cooperation.

Meanwhile, Iran and Afghanistan held a joint technical meeting in Kabul, on April 10, to follow up on the implementation of a bilateral economic agreement, the Taliban-led Afghan government's Economic Affairs Office said in a statement.

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

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

Officials also discussed implementing previous decisions in the transport sector, encouraging investment in Afghanistan's mining industry, and streamlining customs procedures.

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

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

In 2024, the bilateral trade volume surged by approximately 84 percent compared to the previous year, reaching a total of $3.197 billion.

Iran's exports to Afghanistan accounted for $3.143 billion of this figure, marking an 83 percent rise from 2023. Conversely, Afghanistan's exports to Iran grew by 116 percent, totaling $54 million.

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

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

Afghanistan's exports to Iran mainly consist of raw materials and agricultural products.

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

Tehran Chamber of Commerce hosts Iran-China business development forum

TEHRAN - The Iran-China Business Development Forum convened at the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), with the participation of China's ambassador to Iran, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the chair of the Iran-China Parliamentary Friendship Group, and senior officials from the Tehran Chamber.

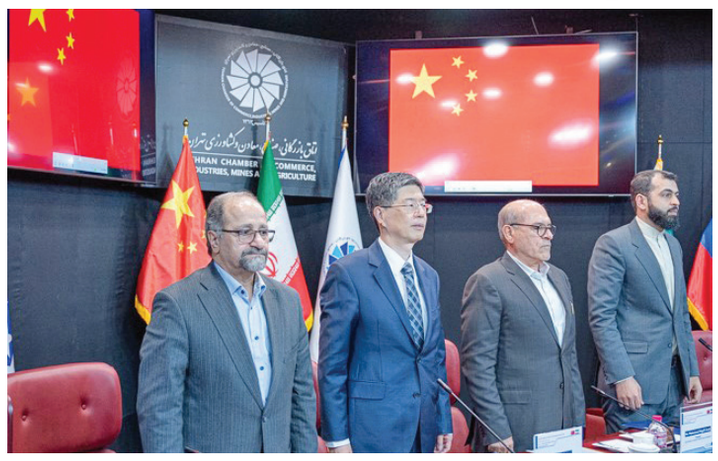
A large number of business leaders from both countries attended the event, where state, legislative, and private-sector strategies for deepening bilateral trade ties were outlined, the TCCIMA portal reported.

Opening the event, TCCIMA Head Mahmoud Najafi Arab welcomed Chinese delegates who traveled to Iran for the Iran Expo. He expressed gratitude for the Chinese ambassador's continued efforts to expand economic ties between the two nations.

Najafi Arab said Iran and China share thousands of years of cultural and commercial relations, which have entered a new phase in recent decades, marked by growing partnerships across multiple sectors. He said the two countries could serve as a model for sustainable cooperation based on mutual respect in today's increasingly interdependent world.

He also highlighted recent visits of Iranian private sector delegations to various Chinese provinces and exhibitions, emphasizing the need to identify investment opportunities and facilitate financial exchanges. The Chamber, with over 140 years of history, is prepared to host expert meetings, present economic opportunities, support joint ventures, and activate professional networks between Iranian and Chinese businesses, he said. China's Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu, thanked Iranian participants and the Tehran Chamber for organizing the event. He expressed hope that the forum would help strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Referencing the recent meeting between the two presidents at the BRICS summit in Russia, Cong said China is fully committed to enhancing cooperation across all sectors in ways that benefit both peoples.



Iran-China ties aligned with Iran's Seventh Development Plan

Also speaking at the forum, Ruhollah Nejabat, chair of the Iran-China Parliamentary Friendship Group, said Iran's non-oil exports to China surpassed $14.8 billion last year, making China the largest destination for Iranian goods and accounting for about one-quarter of Iran's total non-oil exports. Imports from China reached approximately $19.3 billion, or 27 percent of Iran's total imports, making China Iran's second-largest import partner after the United Arab Emirates.

These figures, he said, demonstrate the resilience and strategic importance of Iran-China trade, even amid global economic slowdown, with both countries supplying a significant portion of each other's needs.

Nejabat noted that Iran's Seventh National Development Plan emphasizes industrial modernization and attracting foreign capital and technology. He said Iran aims to upgrade its industries—from automotive and textiles to pharmaceuticals and medical equipment—and that this will be achieved more quickly with partners like China, now a global industrial superpower.

He added that technology transfer and joint investment are two strategic priorities for Iran. Chinese firms, he said, could take advantage of Iran's market size and skilled labor to establish production lines and access broader regional markets.

Conversely, Iran could supply intermediary goods and industrial components needed by Chinese industries. Nejabat said Iran will offer special incentives for foreign industrial investment and provide a secure legal environment for Chinese companies. Infrastructure development—including rail networks, highways, and ports—is also a priority, and many of these projects will require Chinese expertise and participation.

He also pointed to Iran's largely untapped mining sector, including vast reserves of iron, copper, aluminum, and rare earth elements, as an area ripe for development and export growth.

Four trade promotion strategies for expanding Iran-China economic ties

Speaking at the forum, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), outlined four key strategies for expanding trade with China. The first is technology transfer. He said Chinese companies have made major investments in research and development, much of which has not yet been fully commercialized. Iran, as a long-time partner, seeks deeper collaboration in these cutting-edge sectors. The second strategy, he said, is increasing trade in high value-added goods. Currently, much of the bilateral trade consists of raw or semi-processed materials. The average value of Iran's exports stands at less than $400 per ton. "We want to change that," he said, calling on Chinese importers to prioritize Iranian products with higher added value. He welcomed the Chinese ambassador's praise for the competitiveness of Iranian nanotechnology and biotechnology products.

The third strategy is joint production through co-investment. Dehnavi said Iran offers a secure investment climate, with legal guarantees allowing foreign investors to repatriate both capital and profits. "There are many documented cases of investors successfully exiting after profitable ventures," he said.

Iran offers highly competitive costs, a wide range of investment opportunities, and strong security for foreign capital, he added, expressing hope for increased joint ventures with Chinese firms.

The fourth strategy is mutual market access. Dehnavi said Iran produces many goods that are well-suited for the Chinese market and that joint production could also help both countries expand into third-country markets. "This kind of cooperation can make our trade ties deeper and more sustainable," he said.

TCCIMA signals full readiness to support Iran-China business growth

Fereydoun Vardinejad, secretary general of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, said China had stood by Iran during both stable and turbulent times, and that the two peoples share a strong emotional bond.

However, he warned that a lack of information exchange and mutual understanding of economic capacities had led to a wide gap between political relations and economic realities. "Our ties are excellent in potential but need significant work in practice," he said.

Vardinejad called for a "win-win partnership" and proposed several actions: holding specialized business meetings, promoting bilateral trade missions, introducing market opportunities, ensuring trade balance, and supporting private-sector cooperation in areas like creative industries, digital economy, nanotechnology, and biotechnology.

"These steps," he said, "can build deeper and mutually beneficial ties between Iran and China."

Iran invites Sweden to revive joint investment programs in auto, power sectors

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's private sector authority has invited Sweden to revive previous joint investment initiatives in the country's automotive and electricity industries, saying there is ample opportunity for cooperation in sectors not subject to international sanctions, with the government ready to guarantee the return of foreign capital and profits.

Samad Hassanzadeh, head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), made the remarks in a meeting with Swedish Ambassador to Tehran Mathias Otterstedt, emphasizing the potential to restore and even surpass the level of trade relations that once existed between the two nations.

"We welcome the entry of Swedish infrastructure technology into Iran," Hassanzadeh said. "We have had successful joint ventures in the automotive sector and other industries in the past, and we hope to see those experiences repeated."

Hassanzadeh pointed to Iran's diverse investment potential, citing opportunities in petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, food production, handicrafts, and carpets. "Iran's competitive prices create favorable conditions for Swedish participation in our mega-projects, including in power plant development," he added.

Commenting on ongoing negotiations between Iran and the United States, he said, "The government is focused on expanding international relations, and with a positive outlook on the talks, we believe closer ties with Sweden and other European countries are within reach. I am confident these talks will conclude in a way that benefits all parties."

He reiterated that despite existing restrictions, foreign investors have continued to pursue joint ventures in non-sanctioned sectors, with the Iranian government offering necessary guarantees to secure their investments.



ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh (R) meets with Swedish Ambassador to Tehran Mathias Otterstedt on Sunday May 4.

Hassanzadeh formally invited the Swedish envoy to conduct feasibility studies on reviving joint production of Volvo vehicles and other industrial partnerships Sweden once held in Iran, promising that ICCIMA would work to help remove any obstacles.

He also extended an invitation to the president of Sweden's Chamber of Commerce to visit Iran with a business delegation, saying such a visit would strengthen trade ties and allow both sides to become more familiar with each other's commercial environments. He further suggested the creation of a counterpart joint chamber of commerce in Sweden to bolster bilateral cooperation.

For his part, Ambassador Otterstedt said Iran and Sweden's economies were highly complementary and noted strong potential for collaboration in sectors such as heavy vehicles, electricity generation, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, steel, and mining.

Bio-implants production to be developed in Iran via IDRO's contribution

TEHRAN- Iran is expanding its bio-implant production, with the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO) leading efforts to meet domestic medical needs, Hamid Bazargan, IDRO's Deputy for Advanced Industries, stated in a press conference on the plans of the organizations for the modern industries focusing on the bio-implant project of Kermanshah.

He highlighted that while production is focused on local demand, the potential for exports exists if tissue supply challenges are resolved.

One successful initiative in this field is the project of Kish Tissue Regeneration Corporation, which has played a key role in bio-implant development, supported by IDRO.

This technology is currently one of the most advanced technologies in the world and is available only to a limited number of countries, Bazargan said, adding, simply put, the human body cannot rebuild the damaged tissues in some situations; for example, in the case of a severe fracture, platinum is used, but these synthetic materials are not compatible with body tissue and can lead to problems such as arthritis, and the idea was to use the material of the bone itself.

Kish Tissue Regeneration Corporation uses human tissues from deceased individuals and removes living cells down to nanoscale, providing a type of biological scaffold that the patient's body can adapt to and form new tissues, he explained.

Bazargan said: "The Shamsabad factory has been completed and has been operating for a year, and the Kermanshah factory is also about to start production. However, due to a shortage of human tissue, they have not yet allocated the required tissue." Referring to the fact that bioimplants are expensive and that an investment of $7 million has been made for each center, the IDRO deputy head said: "The products are currently being used to meet domestic needs. If the problem of tissue supply is solved, there is a possibility of exporting from the country."

The deepening security dilemma facing Israel

From page 1 ▶ Ben Gurion Airport, located near Tel Aviv, is Israel's primary international gateway. It handles approximately 25 million passengers annually under normal conditions.

It is not only central to tourism and international trade but also critical to the country's global economic connectivity and Jewish diaspora relations.

Furthermore, the airport is deeply integrated into Israel's military infrastructure, facilitating the rapid deployment of troops and equipment.

Security at the facility is maintained through coordinated efforts between the IDF, Israel Police, and demining units.

The missile strike has revealed several critical vulnerabilities in Israel's security architecture:

Missile defense limitations: The inability to intercept a hypersonic missile underscores gaps in the missile defense network, especially against advanced threats combining speed, stealth, and maneuverability.

Geographical exposure: Ben Gurion's location—close to key population and political centers—makes it a high-value target for long-range attacks, even from distant conflict zones such as Yemen.

Intelligence and early-warning failures: The successful missile launch highlights possible intelligence blind spots regarding the evolving capabilities of resistance movements.



The supersonic missile fired by Yemen lands about 200 meters away from Israel's Ben Gurion Airport

Economic vulnerability: The airport's shutdown caused immediate disruptions. Notably, Israel's aviation sector had already suffered a $28.8 million loss in the first nine months of 2024 due to the Gaza conflict, with a 34% decline in passenger traffic and widespread cancellations leading to job losses.

Historical significance of the attack

The missile strike on Ben Gurion Airport represents a turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It not only challenges Israel's image of military invulnerability but also reconfigures regional strategic calculations.

As Abdel Bari Atwan, editor-in-chief of Rai al-Youm, observes, this is the first time a Yemeni-manufactured supersonic missile has reached the heart of one of Israel's most sensitive installations—without assistance from a major power. This development reflects both the technological advancements of resistance groups and a failure in Israeli intelligence and deterrence mechanisms.

The strategic and symbolic significance of the attack can be analyzed in several key dimensions:

First, the attack showed that the Yemeni resistance and groups aligned with the Axis of Resistance have reached a level of capability that can change the equations of battle and put Israel in a defensive position.

Second, this event had significant psychological and social consequences for Israeli society and created a wave of fear and insecurity among the citizens and security institutions of the regime.

Third, the attack was not only a military victory for Yemen but also brought new hope and motivation for Arab and Muslim nations and the Axis of Resistance.

Finally, the attack exposed the hypocrisy and inaction of Arab countries claiming support for Palestine and showed that only nations that believe in resistance can change historical equations.

The attack on Ben Gurion marks the beginning of a new era of regional conflicts in which the resistance forces have taken the initiative, and Israel can no longer consider itself invincible.

Israel may seize all Gaza in expanded operation, officials say



Israel may seize the Gaza Strip and control aid in an expanded offensive against Hamas that was approved by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's security cabinet on Monday, officials said, according to Reuters.

An Israeli military official said it would not be launched before U.S. President Donald Trump concludes his visit next week to the Middle East.

The decision, after weeks of faltering efforts to agree a ceasefire with Hamas, underlines the threat that a war heaping international pressure on Israel amid dwindling public support at home could continue with no end in sight.

A government spokesman told journalists online that reserve soldiers were being called up to expand operations in Gaza, not to occupy it.

Israeli troops have already taken over an area amounting to around a third of the Gaza Strip, displacing the population and building watchtowers and surveillance posts on cleared ground the military has described as security zones, but the new plan would go further.

Yemen declares air blockade against 'Israel' until Gaza genocide halts

The Yemeni Armed Forces announced that it will enforce an air blockade on "Israel" in a statement published on Sunday, in their latest escalation against the Zionist entity in support of Gaza, Al Mayadeen reported.

"In response to Israel's escalating aggression and expanded military operations in Gaza, the Yemeni Armed Forces have declared a full air blockade on Israel," YAF spokesperson Brigadier General Yehya Saree said in a statement.

"The Yemeni Armed Forces will enforce the aerial blockade by repeatedly attacking airports, with Ben Gurion Airport, known as Lod Airport in Israel, as their primary target," he emphasized.

The statement called on all international airlines to take this threat seriously from the moment of its issuance and cancel all flights to Israeli airports to preserve the safety of their aircraft and passengers.

"The proud, free, and independent Yemen will not accept the continued violations that the enemy seeks to impose by targeting Arab nations like Lebanon and Syria. This nation [Yemen] does not fear confrontation and rejects submission and surrender," the statement added.

This comes amid a widespread cancellation of flights to "Israel" by major foreign airlines following the Yemeni ballistic missile that landed just 200 meters from the Ben Gurion Airport on Sunday.

Genocide against Gazans goes on unabated

From page 1 ▶ He noted that the house had been sheltering dozens of displaced individuals, with several still missing beneath the debris.

Additional reports from Gaza indicate that the death toll from a previous Israeli strike on a house in the Sultan neighborhood, west of Beit Lahia in northern Gaza, has risen to six.

Journalists on the ground have confirmed fatalities after an Israeli bomb was dropped on an area southwest of Khan Younis in southern Gaza.

Overnight, various parts of Gaza were subjected to a wave of intense Israeli airstrikes. Homes were destroyed in Rafah, southern Gaza, as well as a neighborhood northeast of Gaza City, using high-powered explosives.

Amid a suffocating Israeli siege, Hamas reaffirmed its rejection of using humanitarian aid as a means of political coercion, aligning itself with the UN's stance against arrangements that compromise humanitarian standards.

The regime has said it may allow some aid to enter Gaza at the end of the month under Israeli military supervision in a bid to pressure Hamas.

In a statement, the Palestinian resistance movement urged the international community not to be misled by what it called the occupation regime's false narratives and called for immediate action to fully lift the siege.

"The continued blockade of aid and obstruction of the humanitarian distribution system clearly reveals the occupation's intentional creation of famine in Gaza," the statement said.

The occupation regime's army is blocking international organizations from accessing fuel storage facilities designated for hospitals, citing their location within so-called "red zones".

Gaza's Health Ministry warned that this policy "threatens the shutdown of vital medical facilities," stating that remaining fuel reserves are only sufficient for three more days.

The Government Media Office in Gaza also criticized Israeli actions, denouncing attempts to use aid as "a tool for political blackmail."

In a statement, the office said, "We firmly reject the Israeli plan to impose a new aid distribution mechanism controlled by the occupation army, which would transform humanitarian relief into a political weapon."

The statement emphasized that the mechanism being forced on the Gaza Strip reinforces the siege and starvation policy.

"We stress the need for aid distribution through neutral international organizations and value all principled positions that have opposed this malicious plan," the office added.

Human rights groups have strongly condemned the international silence and lack of action regarding Israeli restrictions on aid, calling it part of a U.S.-backed Israeli campaign aimed at the extermination of the Palestinian people.

Shiite duo wins Beirut southern suburb elections

From page 1 ▶ The duo won in the Ghobeiry suburb against the "Ghobeiry Gathers Together" list, supported by embassies.

In Haret Hreik, the duo also won against a list supported by the Lebanese Forces party. Despite their recent strained relationship, the duo formed an alliance with the Free Patriotic Movement, which may pave the way for the resumption of the Shiite-Christian alliance in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Pro-Resistance voters emphasized that their participation was "in favor of the resistance approach and the sacrifices of the martyrs."

"We voted to affirm our loyalty to the approach of our supreme martyr, His Eminence Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah," the father of one of the martyrs told Tehran Times.



President Joseph Aoun followed the elections on the ground. Prior to the start of the election, he visited the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, where he was received by Minister of Interior and Municipalities Ahmad Hajjar and Minister of Justice Adel Nassar.

"It is important that these elections were held on time, especially since approximately 90% of the municipalities in Lebanon have been dissolved. Citizens complain that these municipalities are not meeting their needs and requirements, even though municipalities play a fundamental role in the development," Aoun said.

Prime Minister Nawaf Salam also visited the operations room at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities to monitor the vote counting process, stressing that "the election process proceeded smoothly and without any disruption. Administrative complaints were followed up and resolved quickly."

For his part, after the ballot boxes closed, Hajjar said: "The process proceeded smoothly, without any pressure or any significant problems."

Further, Army Commander General Rodolphe Heikal also inspected the Mount Lebanon operations room, where he was briefed on the exceptional security measures taken to ensure the safety of the electoral process.

Trump to hit non-US films with 100% tariff

President Donald Trump announced on Sunday that he would impose a 100% tariff on foreign-produced films, marking the first time his restrictive trade policies have been extended to the entertainment industry, RT reported.

In his post on the Truth Social platform, Trump claimed the American film industry was dying a "very fast death" due to incentives offered by foreign countries to lure U.S. filmmakers.

Since returning to office in January, Trump has imposed sweeping tariffs, culminating in his 'Liberation Day' tariffs introduced on April 2. They target more than 90 US trade partners. Most were paused for 90 days, though a baseline 10% remains in effect. China was excluded from the pause and was hit with a tax of 145% on all imports. Beijing retaliated with 125% tariffs and new export controls on US goods.

Trump said he had directed agencies, including the Commerce Department, to begin "immediately" imposing a 100% tariff on all foreign-produced films entering the US.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

First Announcement

International Re-Tenders announcement

Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar
Marine & Port Services Development Company

The company of Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar, Marine and Port Services Development as a supplier of equipment for the First phase Shahid Beheshti port of Chabahar development hold, International Re-Tenders for manufacture, shipment, training and delivery of the following equipment in two stages and after Qualitative Assessment.

All manufacturers with experience of manufacturing the above said equipment are invited to obtain the CD filled with assessment qualitative forms and tendering documents, with introductory letter and the original copy of the paid amount for Rials 10.000.000 for each bid to the account No. 275187119 in the name of Aria Banader Iranian Chabahar, Marine and Port Services Development with Bank of Tejarat with the following address:

The deadline for purchasing quality assessment documents is 10:00 AM (Local time) on Saturday, 1404/02/27 (corresponding to 2025/05/17).

Add: 40. Kish St., Jahankodak Crossroads, Nelson Mandela Blvd., Tehran, Iran. Postal code: 1518814111

Tel: **+98 21 88190677-8** , Fax: +98 21 88190679 E.mail: ABIC@abiports.com

Tender participation deposits Bank Guarantee with No term and condition extendable for many times for the following Tenders is needed. The above Guarantee will be received along with Technical and price proposal for the qualitative bidders.

- To abide the delivery Date of documents, any Question shall be answered 72 hours before the permitted date of delivery.
- All manufacturers are obliged to abide by the Maximum Utilization of Local Capabilities Law.
- Advertisement price of tender will be paid by the successful applicant.
- The tender participants would first assessed qualitative and after obtaining the minimum score will be participated to the continues stages of tender.

1-Four unites of Ship to Shore Gantry Crane (STS) with Tender No. PE/1001/03 (Amount of Guarantee Euro 561.000 or IR-Rials 403.000.000.000)

2- Ten unites of Rubber Tyred Gantry Container Crane (RTG) with Tender No. PE/1002/03 (Amount of Guarantee Euro 291.000 or IR-Rials 209.000.000.000)

3- Two vessel of Trailing Hopper Suction Dredgers 4000 CUBIC METER (THSD) with Tender No. ME/1001/03 (Amount of Guarantee Euro 911.000 or IR-Rials 655.000.000.000)

Esfahak, a destination for intl. sightseers, thanks to its label of Best Tourism Village



TEHRAN—Tabas Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department said a tourist group including 22 foreign nationals resided in Esfahak village in Tabas, South Khorasan province, for two nights.

Mohammad Arab told CHTN that the foreigners, who visited the Best Tourism Village during May 3-4, were from Ireland, the UK, France, Australia, the U.S., China and South Korea.

They visited the texture of the village, handicrafts workshops, restoration and bricklaying workshops, traditional bathhouse, and the brick arch, he said.

He recalled that Esfahak village was named one of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism on November 13, 2024. Its historical texture was also registered under the number 2108 on National Heritage List, he added.

Arab continued that Tabas with numerous attractions and potentials has turned into a foreign tourist destination.

Some 42 foreign tourists have visited Tabas attractions since March 21, 2025, he added.

The historical village of Esfahak has achieved international recognition by being named one of the Best Tourism Villages for 2024 by UN Tourism.

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

The registration was announced by Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, on November 2024, during the opening day of Iran's 37th National Handicrafts Exhibition.

"Esfahak's resilience and dedication to preserving its cultural heritage serve as an inspiration," said Salehi-Amiri, lauding the village's progress and its embrace of sustainable tourism.

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

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

Esfahak's transformation into a cultural and eco-tourism destination has garnered attention for its unique architecture and sustainable practices, earning the village the prestigious Asia Architecture Award.

Today, it attracts tourists from across the world, drawn to its picturesque adobe structures and commitment to preserving local identity.

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

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

In 2020, Esfahak won a TO-DO Award that is annually presented by the German Institute for Tourism and Development.

Kish to host symposium on tourism market for ECO member states

TEHRAN—Kish Island in the south of Iran will host ambassadors, managers, and tourism activists of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states in a symposium on the tourism market during May 13-15.

The event will be organized by Secretariat of Tourism Market Symposium, Gardoon Tourism Group and Mica Rad Atieh Kish Educational Company with cooperation of Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, ECO Secretariat, and Kish Free Zone Organization, Eqtesad-e Iran reported.

The symposium will be inaugurated in an official ceremony with participation of ECO Secretary General Asad Majeed Khan, high-ranking officials of Tourism Ministry, ambassadors, senior officials of tourism field of eight ECO member states and senior managers of ECO's tourism brands in the first day.

It will continue through holding 11 training workshops from the second day.

In addition, domestic and foreign business-to-business (B2B) meetings will be held on the sidelines of the symposium as one of the most important international investment opportunities in tourism industry.

The Economic Cooperation Organization is an intergovernmental organization that promotes economic, technical, and cultural cooperation among its member states.

Established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, the organization's other member states include Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The ECO is a successful and promising regional organization, and Iran has a serious interest in strengthening intra-regional cooperation and promoting the position of ECO as an effective regional mechanism for economic connectivity.

The international position of the organization is growing.

The importance of the organization became more apparent when the United Nations approved in 1985 that ECO become an observer member of the United Nations, as did the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.



The ECO Region shelters more than 460 million inhabitants and expands over eight million square kilometers of land, connecting the north to south, south, and east to the west, Asia to Europe, and Eurasia to the Arab World. Composed of some Caucasus, South, West, and Central Asian countries, ECO is one of the oldest intergovernmental organizations.

The founding and fundamental goal of the Organization is to create amenable and conducive conditions for the continued promotion of sustainable economic development in the region, aiming at joint welfare and well-being of the Member States.

The ECO stretched the fabric of its cooperative partnership in the early 1990s, welcoming the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as five Central Asian nations, including the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan, as its members.

The ECO member states, bearing their shared cultural and historic affinities in mind, appear to be always ready, receptive, and forthcoming to complement each other, intensifying their collaboration with action and result-oriented motives to achieve the perceived target of greater connectivity and integration in the region.

Minister says cultural diplomacy holds key to stronger ties between Iran and Egypt

TEHRAN--Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri has described cultural diplomacy as the cornerstone of strengthening relations between Iran and Egypt.

He was welcomed by Nasreen Osmanli, an advisor to the Egypt Tourism Authority, and Mohammad Hossein Soltanifard, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Interest Section in Cairo, upon his arrival in Cairo, IRNA reported.

Speaking on the eve of the fourth meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization's tourism ministers, he said Iran-Egypt tourism relations have entered a new and powerful stage and opened up new horizons for strategic cooperation.

Salehi-Amiri emphasized the importance of developing tourism relations between Iran and Egypt.

Referring to Iran's official participation in the D-8 Cairo Summit, he said that strengthening cultural and tourism ties between Iran and Egypt could open a new chapter in their strategic relations.

At this summit, Iran aims to activate multilateral cooperation



potential and reinforce cultural diplomacy with member states, including Turkey, Pakistan, and especially Egypt.

The December meeting between Iranian and Egyptian presidents paved the groundwork for renewed bilateral engagement, with current efforts focused on prioritizing tourism-sector partnerships, he added.

This trip is primarily aimed at facilitating joint initiatives between Iranian and Egyptian tourism agencies, he stated.

Establishing such connections would not only serve the interests of both nations but also foster unity within the Islamic Ummah, Salehi-Amiri said.

By introducing a new framework for technological collaboration in tourism, Iran seeks to enhance its position in emerging regional and global trends, he reiterated.

He continued that Egypt, as one of pioneer nations in history of Islamic civilization and Arab world, boasts numerous historical and cultural potentials which can be attractive for Iranians.

Iranian people are eager to become acquainted with civilizational and religious heritage of Egypt closely, he said, adding this would be a great opportunity for promoting cultural and tourism ties between two nations.

Referring to the richness of Iran's cultural heritage and its unique monuments, the minister said Iran has huge capacities which can be attractive for Egyptians.

"We have many historical monuments which have been registered in the UNESCO's list of World Heritage. It shows the cultural and historical richness of Iran and can be effective in tourist exchange and promoting mutual ties."

Emphasizing on importance of using the medica capacities for introducing and promoting tourism and cultural attractions of both nations, he said, "We should use the national media and social networks effectively. We can introduce tourism capacities of Iran and Egypt through scientific and cultural media and elites of both nations and pave the grounds for attracting the tourists."

Legend of 'Mina and Panther' chosen as global brand for Kandelous village

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – The local legend of "Mina and the Panther" has been selected as a symbolic brand for Kandelous, a scenic village nestled at the foot of the Alborz Mountains of northern Iran.

The captivating folklore has been adopted with an environmental focus to represent Kandelous on a global scale, according to Hossein Izadi, the provincial tourism chief.

Speaking during a recent visit to the village on Monday, Izadi also announced the formation of a dedicated working group to pursue Kandelous' nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage list.

"The tale of Mina and the Panther not only reflects our cultural depth but also conveys powerful environmental themes, making it an ideal narrative to brand this village internationally," Izadi said.

He also noted that wooden signage based on local dialects has been installed throughout the village and that mud plastering is being applied to create a unified visual harmony across Kandelous.

Artworks and mural paintings inspired by the legend have also been developed as part of this branding initiative.

A file compiling several such legends and heritage elements – created with input from the local community – has already been submitted to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage for official recognition.

The story of Mina and the Panther is a haunting love legend that has been passed down for over a century among the elderly of Kandelous. According to local lore, Mina was an orphaned girl with ruby-red eyes who lived alone in a modest home, which still stands today as a popular tourist site in the village.

Due to her unique eyes, she was often shunned by other children, which deepened her sense of isolation.

The legend says that Mina would often venture into the forest to collect firewood, singing loudly to overcome her fear and loneliness. One day, a wild panther, captivated by her voice, began to follow her and eventually traced her path back to her home.

Their unlikely encounters blossomed into a surreal friendship, united by shared solitude and an emotional bond. Over time, the panther would help Mina carry firewood during the day and visit her quietly at night, peeking through her window just to listen



to her sing.

Eventually, the village began to whisper about the mysterious visits of the panther. The ladder Mina used the night she first encountered the panther is now preserved in the Kandelous Museum, a symbolic artifact commemorating the legend.

Kandelous – often referred to as a "Lost Paradise" – offers a blend of natural splendor and cultural mystique. With initiatives like the newly established Environmental House and storytelling-based tourism, officials aim to draw eco-conscious travelers and culture seekers alike.

"We are also working to resolve infrastructure challenges in the region and are introducing the village on international platforms with an educational focus," Izadi added.

This branding through folklore, he believes, will not only protect the village's intangible heritage but also generate sustainable tourism and global recognition.

Kandelous is one of Iran's oldest settlements, with traces of civilization dating back before the Islamic era.

During the Qajar dynasty, the village gained recognition, with Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar reportedly passing through and admiring the craftsmanship of local metalworkers.

The village's architectural charm—featuring wooden-framed windows, gabled rooftops, and winding stone alleyways—reflects its deep-rooted heritage. Unlike many modernized settlements, Kandelous has preserved its historical texture, allowing visitors to experience Iran's rural elegance firsthand.



American archaeologist Robert H. Dyson holds the Golden Bowl of Hasanlu after its discovery in Naghadeh, northwest Iran, in 1958.

Hasanlu Golden Bowl festival added to Iran's national tourism calendar

TEHRAN – The annual Hasanlu Golden Bowl Festival, held in Naghadeh, West Azarbaijan province, has been officially registered in the calendar of national tourism events of the Islamic Republic of Iran, an official announced.

Morteza Safari, the provincial tourism chief, confirmed the registration, noting that the festival is held each year at the historic site of Teppeh Hasanlu.

He underlined that the event is aimed at reviving local traditions and raising awareness of the region's cultural and historical identity through a variety of cultural, artistic, and social programs.

"This year, the Hasanlu Golden Bowl Festival will take place from August 11 to 16 at the archaeological site of Hasanlu in Naghadeh," Safari said. "The event celebrates the discovery of one of Iran's most iconic ancient artifacts –the Golden Bowl of Hasanlu."

The festival coincides annually with the anniversary of the bowl's discovery and is held in the village of Hasanlu to honor the artifact's historical significance

The bowl, a masterfully crafted ancient vessel adorned in relief, is estimated to date from around 800 BC. It was unearthed in 1958 during excavations led by American archaeologist Robert H. Dyson at Teppeh Hasanlu, near the city of Naghadeh in northwest Iran. Today, the relic is housed in the National Museum of Iran in Tehran.

Among the most important objects uncovered at Hasanlu were an unusually decorated silver bowl, several iron garment pins headed by bronze lions, a solid gold bowl, a knife handle with gold cloisonné, and two hollow bronze horse heads that served to hold liquids.

According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, Hasanlu was inhabited from about 2100 to about 825 BC, but the richest period yet excavated dates to the 10th and 9th centuries BC.

The period, often called "Mannaean" after the name of the people who lived in the area, is characterized by a gray pottery accompanied by black and red varieties, the black ware being of much finer quality and probably made in imitation of metal vessels.

Experts say parallels to the motifs on the Hasanlu objects have been found in Elam, Assyria, north Syria, and Urartu, indicating that Iran not only received considerable cultural and artistic stimuli from other areas but also, in turn, exerted influence on West Asia.

Iranian-made pentavalent vaccines to be distributed nationwide



TEHRAN –The health ministry will start distributing domestically made pentavalent vaccines across the country on Tuesday, the head of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has said.

Pentavalent vaccine is a combination vaccine with five individual vaccines conjugated into one. It protects infants against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis B, and Haemophilus influenzae type B.

"The distribution of the first shipment of the locally-made five-in-one combination vaccine will officially commence tomorrow, on Tuesday, all over the country," IRNA quoted Mehdi Pir-salehi as saying.

"So far, about 800,000 units of the vaccine have been developed, and this number is expected to reach 1.2 million units in the next 2 to 3 days," he noted.

The official went on to say that "The main objective is to provide and improve timely access to vaccines to fully cover the country's immunization program; the Food and Drug Administration will manage and monitor the supply and distribution process around the clock."

The pentavalent vaccine was integrated into the national vaccination programme in November 2014. According to the national vaccination program, each child must receive the pentavalent vaccine 3 times at intervals of 2 months. The first is usually at the end of the second month of life.

Recent vaccination program

In line with the polio eradication campaign that kicked off in winter, around 300,000 more children under five years of age are getting vaccinated in two phases in high-risk areas in the country's northern half in spring, according to the health ministry.

Polio is a highly infectious viral disease that largely affects children under 5 years of age. The virus is transmitted by person-to-person spread mainly through the fecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (for example, contaminated water or food) and multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and cause paralysis.

It can be prevented through immunization. The development of effective vaccines to prevent paralytic polio was one of the major medical breakthroughs of the 20th century. The Polio vaccine, given multiple times, almost always protects a child for life.

In the current Iranian year that started on March 20, the first phase was conducted from April 12 to 14, and the second phase is planned to be implemented from June 17 to 19, the health ministry reported.

Polio eradication camping is among the remarkable achievements of the health ministry. The supplementary immunization campaign to eradicate polio in Iran started in 1994. Thanks to the campaign, the country has been polio-free since 2000.

However, in Iran's two neighboring countries, namely Afghanistan and Pakistan, endemic transmission of wild poliovirus is still prevalent. In 2024, the number of wild poliovirus positives in Afghanistan and Pakistan increased by four and twelve times, respectively, compared to 2023.

To prevent the outbreak of the disease in the country, in the past Iranian calendar year which ended on March 20, the annual door-to-door polio vaccination campaign was implemented in two phases, with a month interval between them, targeting children under the age of five in high-risk regions in the southern part of the country.

The first phase was conducted from January 4 to 6, and the second phase started on February 15 and concluded on February 17. During the campaign, some 840,000 Iranian and foreign national children under the age of 5 were immunized against polio by medical universities in Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman, Fars, Hormozgan, Bushehr, Khuzestan, South Khorasan, and Yazd provinces.

Welfare Organization plans to improve the elderly's quality of life

TEHRAN – The Welfare Organization is planning to implement a forty-day training program for old people to improve their quality of life.

The program will include 240 different educational subjects such as health, life skills, arts, communication skills, digital and entrepreneurship, music, sports, games, and other leisure activities, IRNA quoted Ahmad Delbari, an official with the Welfare Organization, as saying.

It will be implemented as a pilot program in Tehran. Each individual will register to participate in the program for forty days within the three-month duration, he said.

Participants will be divided into two groups to attend the sessions either on odd or even days, with educational programs provided daily in two different parts. The first 15 minutes will be dedicated to physical workout, the next 45 minutes will focus on specialized training, and 90 minutes will be allocated to recreational programs. During the educational courses, each person will receive detailed pieces of training that are essential for self-care and improving their quality of life, the official noted. Some short-term educational programs will be accessible through particular websites introduced by centers, Delbari added.

Iran's transition into an aging country 'inevitable'

Considering the fact that the fertility rate in Iran is stabilized at around 1.6 children per woman, which is much lower than the rate required to replace its aging population, the transition of society from young to middle-aged has become inevitable. According to the first five-year national development plan (1989-1993), the policies focused on lowering the total fertility rate from 6.4 children in the Iranian year 1365 (1986) to 4 children in 1390 (2011) and reducing the population growth rate from 3.2 to 2.3 percent in the same period, IRNA quoted Mohammad-Javad Mahmoudi, an official with the National Institute for Population Research, as saying.

However, the taken measures, back then, led to a wide transformation and change in population indicators and a noticeable decrease in population growth and fertility rate far beyond the set goals of the first development plan in the country, the official noted. The results of the census in 2011 and 2016 showed that the trend of the country's demographic changes had a significant deviation from the goals of the first five-year development plan, the official noted.

The population growth in 2011 and 2016 was announced to be 1.29 and 1.24, respectively. The figure reached 0.7 in the past Iranian year (March 2023 –March 2024).

According to the latest census, the number of aged citizens in the country is growing by 3.62 percent which is five times faster than the total population growth rate, which is 1.24 percent. In Iranian year 1385 (2006-2007), there were 5,121,043 men and women aged above 60. In 2015, 10 percent of the country's population was older than 60, ISNA quoted Mohammad-Javad Mahmoudi, an official with the National Institute for Population Research.

In the next 30 years, the population aged 60 years or older is projected to hold a 32 percent share of the whole population, that is, the elderly will account for one-third of Iran's population by 2050, the official noted. Currently, men and women aged above 60 constitute some 11.5 percent of Iran's population, an official with the health ministry has said.

For the time being, elderly women account for 52.3 percent of the total population, outnumbering men (47.7 percent), ISNA quoted Saber Jabbari as saying.

DOE, IFO boost ties to conserve aquatic resources

TEHRAN – The Department of Environment (DOE) and the Iranian Fishery Organization (IFO) will boost collaborations to preserve the aquatic resources in the northern and southern seas.

During a meeting held on Sunday, Ahmad-Reza Lahijanzadeh, an official with the DOE, and Hamzeh Rostampour, head of the IFO, discussed avenues to protect aquatic life, natural habitats, including corals and coral reefs, and restore damaged areas in the northern and southern coasts, IRNA reported.

The officials also conferred on ways to protect and develop mangrove forests and estuaries.

Estuaries are bodies of water where rivers meet the sea; they are considered one of the critical and fragile local ecosystems that provide feeding and spawning sites for many aquatic animals. Fresh water that flows into estuaries triggers reproduction.

Another raised issue at the Sunday meeting focused on fishing in the Sea of Oman, including the methods, standards, and conditions for issuing permits to fishing vessels.

The standards have been defined; the vessels that have all the required legal documents and are equipped with the needed tools will be allowed to go fishing in the Sea of Oman under full supervision.

However, no ship has yet declared readiness following the aforementioned conditions. The same regulation applies to the fishing in the Persian Gulf, Lahijanzadeh noted.

Data bank on species in Persian Gulf, Oman Sea

The head of the Department of Environment, Shina Ansari, has announced the provision of a data bank of more than 5,000 creatures in the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea, saying that it will serve as a regional and even international platform for the preservation of the biodiversity in these waters.

This includes efforts such as preparing an atlas of sensitive marine ecosystems and the identification of unknown coral reef habitats, such as the Shah Alam area on the maritime border with Qatar, which allows for effective and targeted intervention at a macro level, ILNA quoted Ansari as saying.



The official made the remarks on the occasion of Persian Gulf National Day, which is observed on April 29 every year. The day marks the anniversary of forcing out the Portuguese navy of the Strait of Hormuz in the Capture of Ormuz (1622).

The Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, with more than 4,900 kilometers of coastline in Iran, are home to one of the richest marine ecosystems in the world.

The DOE has implemented different measures to conserve the biodiversity of the marine ecosystems, such as developing a data strategy and planning tool to implement scientific and data-driven decision-making.

Any preserving measure without legal support and control will fail to succeed.

In order to strengthen the regulatory and legal framework, the DOE has developed and issued seawater quality standards, discharge regulations at sea, dredging guidelines, waste disposal regulations, and guidelines on oil pollution damage assessment, the official added.

The DOE is implementing other programs such as coral restoration, registering coastal wetlands in the Ramsar Convention, developing a national action plan for mangrove conservation, and monitoring the marine environment, Ansari further noted.

Average age of first-time mothers in Iran is 27.5: report

TEHRAN –The average age of women in Iran giving birth to their first child stood at 27.5 years in the past Iranian calendar year that ended on March 20, according to a report by the National Organization for Civil Registration.

The average age men became fathers was 32.3, the report added. The average age of first-time mothers in urban areas was 28.2, and in rural areas it was 24.4. The average age of first-time fathers in urban areas was 32.8, and in rural areas it was 30, IRNA reported. The average age of first-time fathers and mothers was highest in Tehran (34.8 and 30.6), and lowest in Sistan-Baluchestan (27.2 and 22.6).

Youth population law stabilizes total fertility rate

Enacting the youth population law has stabilized the total fertility rate, slightly increasing the general fertility index over the past two years.After experiencing seven years of decline by about 20 percent, the fertility rate is now stabilized at around 1.6, IRNA reported.

The total fertility rate has experienced a sharp decline since the Iranian calendar year 1394 (2015-2016), as the number of births reached 1.057 million in 1402 (2023-2024) from 1.570 million in 1394. However,Since the Iranian calendar year 1401 (March 2022–March 2023), the downward trend in fertility came to a halt.

The total fertility rate has lowered to 1.6 children per woman from about 2 children per woman.According to Civil Registration Organization's report, the total fertility rate in Iranian years 1396 (2017-2018), 1397 (2018-2019), 1398 (2019-2020), 1399 (2020-2021), and 1400 (2021-2022) were 2,09, 1.95, 1,74, 1.65, 1.61 per each woman, respectively.

Despite offering incentives to encourage childbearing in line with the youth population law, the desired growth in the youth population has not been accomplished yet.

ENGLISH IN USE

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System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

A system will be launched to monitor, forecast and report the agricultural lands being hit by drought, Amir Qaderi, an official with Disaster Management Organization has announced.

Over a meeting of a special working group for addressing drought and risks threatening agricultural sector, a plan for establishing a system for monitoring and forecasting agricultural drought in the country was approved and submitted to the Disaster Management Organization for review, he explained.

"Following the study of other countries' experiences and existing global methods, the necessity of establishing a domestic system to recognize the lands prone to agricultural drought was emphasized," he noted.

سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می‌شود

معاون امور بازسازی و بازتوانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور از ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران خبر داد.

به گزارش پایگاه اطلاع رسانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور، امیر قادری روز یکشنبه با اعلام این خبر گفت: طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران طی جلسه‌ای با حضور مدیران و کارشناسان سازمان مدیریت بحران و وزارت جهاد کشاورزی بررسی شد.

وی ادامه داد: پس از بررسی تجارب داخلی و روش‌های موجود جهانی، ضرورت استقرار نمونه بومی پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی مورد تأکید قرار گرفت و با مشارکت مراکز پژوهشی سازمان هواشناسی کشور و پژوهشکده حفاظت خاک و آبخیزداری طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران پیشنهاد شد.



Mehr / Parnian Ahmadi

Rice cultivation in northern paddy fields

Farmers in northern Mazandaran Province prepare their paddy fields for rice cultivation. This includes steps such as flooding and leveling the land, which are carried out in both traditional and modern ways.

Then, germinated rice seedlings are transplanted from the greenhouse to the main field.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Overlook and forgive the weaknesses of the generous people because if they fall down, Allah will help them.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:15 Dawn: 3:31 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:06 (tomorrow)

Iran, Uzbekistan ready for theatrical cooperation



TEHRAN- The Iranian Deputy for Artistic Affairs at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance Nadereh Rezai, on the third day of her visit to Tajikistan on Sunday, met and held discussions with the representative of the Minister of Culture of Uzbekistan and the head of the Grand Theater of Samarkand.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the International Festival of Professional Theaters, an event in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, that Rezai attended, ISNA reported.

During the meeting Rezai mentioned that due to important historical cities like Samarkand and Bukhara in Uzbekistan, Iranian cultural and artistic figures are always looking for cultural and artistic commonalities that have been presented to the audience in the form of various works so far.

"I and my colleagues in the General Directorate of Dramatic Arts, the Office of Music, the General Directorate of Visual Arts, and the Office of Education and Planning are ready to carry out activities in the near future, by reviewing the proposals for joint cooperation between Iran and Uzbekistan, to advance artistic goals, especially the performance of works," she said.

This path can certainly be the beginning of a new season of artistic activities of the two countries with more careful consideration, she added.

For his part, the Uzbek official said that Irna and Uzbekistan have many cultural and artistic commonalities.

This path can be the prelude to a new season of joint activities between the two countries in the field of theater, he added.

"What is of great importance to me is the planning and execution of various programs, especially in the field of theater, which can be the beginning of new activities in the field of artistic commonalities between the two countries."

"I am sure that given the desirable quality of Iranian theatrical works, numerous events can be held in both countries. For this purpose, I and my colleagues are ready to take the necessary measures and planning for signing a cultural and artistic memorandum of understanding in the near future, in addition to reviewing what has been mentioned," he concluded.

Earlier this week, Rezai met with Tajikistan's Minister of Culture, Matlubakhon Sattoriyon, in Dushanbe to strengthen cultural and artistic ties.

Rezai discussed expanding collaborations and Sattoriyon highlighted shared cultural commonalities and recent progress following a presidential visit. Both officials expressed readiness for a new phase of cooperation.

Rezai proposed inviting Tajik artists to Iran's Fajr Festivals in 2026 and mentioned potential joint music projects, including a performance of Rudaki's poems by an Iranian ensemble and performances by the son of the late maestro Davlatmand Kholov.

The possibility of joint student music ensembles and mutual invitations for cultural visits were also discussed, emphasizing the close artistic friendship between the two nations.

"A State of Passion" to go on screen at Bulgarian festival



British-Palestinian surgeon Dr. Ghassan Abu Sittah in a scene from documentary film "A State of Passion"

TEHRAN- "A State of Passion", co-directed by Lebanese documentarians Carol Mansour and Muna Khalidi, will go on screen at the 18th edition of International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films in Varna, Bulgaria.

Produced in collaboration with Iran's Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC), the film had its international premier in the International Documentary Film Festival of Iran, known as Cinema Verite, in Tehran last year.

"A State of Passion" is a feature-length documentary capturing the harrowing experiences of British-Palestinian reconstructive surgeon Dr. Ghassan Abu Sittah during the brutal realities of genocide in Gaza. The film serves as an intimate portrait of resilience, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment amidst one of the world's most protracted humanitarian crises.

The documentary opens with the chilling aftermath of Dr. Abu Sittah's 43 grueling days in the emergency wards of Al Shifa and Al Ahli hospitals, where he faced relentless bombardment and overwhelming medical emergencies. His pale, shell-shocked visage, broadcasted globally, encapsulates the emotional and physical toll taken by his experiences—a visual representation of hope and despair intermingled. The film details his relentless work treating devastating injuries, such as lacerations and unthinkable amputations performed without anesthetics, and highlights heart-wrenching stories of orphaned children, stripped of their families amidst chaos.

As viewers delve deeper into Dr. Abu Sittah's compelling journey, they are confronted with profound questions: What drives a person to return to such harrowing conditions repeatedly? How does he gather the strength to endure? The film delves into the emotional landscape of his family, who support him wholeheartedly, grappling with the constant fear for his safety yet sharing an unbreakable bond forged by a shared passion for Palestine. This passion for their homeland becomes a unifying theme, providing context for the sacrifices made and the motivations behind his valiant efforts in humanitarian work.

Mansour and Khalidi, as filmmakers and close friends of the Abu Sittah family, bring a deep sense of empathy and understanding to the narrative. They portray not just the struggles of Dr. Abu Sittah, but also the emotional weight borne by his family, illuminating the human cost of war on those left behind. Their dedication to documenting his story is palpable, as they follow him on a journey across various cities—Beirut, Amman, London, Kuwait, and Dubai—where conversations about hope, resistance, and identity unfold.

"A State of Passion" transcends traditional war documentaries by offering a deeply personal lens through which the audience can grasp the realities faced by individuals in conflict zones. It examines the intersection of medical humanitarianism and personal sacrifice, ultimately portraying a rich tapestry of resilience against the backdrop of adversity. The film invites viewers to reflect on the concept of passion—not just as an abstract notion, but as a driving force that fuels acts of courage and compassion in the face of overwhelming odds. Through its raw, emotional storytelling, "A State of Passion" affirms the enduring strength of the human spirit in its quest for dignity, justice, and peace.

18th edition of International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films will be held from June 12 to 20.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza Genocide

Cartoonist: Derkaoui Abdellah from Morocco

Renowned Iranian, international figures to serve in film jury of 5 Film & Photo Awards

TEHRAN-The 6th edition of the 5 Film & Photo Awards has announced the members of the jury for the film section.

The jury team includes well-known national and international figures. The deadline for receiving the submissions is August 11. The evaluation of works will begin on August 12, and the winners will be announced in October, Mehr reported.

Turkish director Gülten Taranc is the international secretary of the festival. In 2016, she directed and produced her first independent feature film, "Wish to Wash in Rains", and received Audience Award at the 53rd Antalya Film Festival. "Snails" was awarded with the "Meeting on The Bridge Award" in 2021; also selected for the 2nd round of consideration for the 2022 "Development Track" in Sundance Film Lab. She is the founder and director of the "International Women Filmmakers Festival (IWFF TURKEY)".

The jury of the film section comprises 13 jurors. The chairwoman of the jury is the Japanese filmmaker Naoko Tajima. The team includes four figures from Iran namely, cinematographers Touraj Aslani and Hooman Behmanesh, actress Setareh Eskandari, and documentary filmmaker Mahvash Sheikholeslami.

The rest of the jurors are filmmaker Mircea Sorin Albutiu and editor Maria Bălănean from Romania, producer Cihan Aslı Filiz and director Aysim Turkmen from Turkey, British filmmaker Andrew Robert Thomas, Serbian director Maša Nešković, and Austrian filmmaker Markus Berger.

Naoko Tajima studied film making at London Film School and started her career in Tokyo, Japan. She has directed more than 300 TVCs, films, branded contents, and music videos.

Her past works as director and cinematographer has been selected and awarded at various film and advertising festivals such as Cannes Film Festival "Best European Shorts", Hollywood Film Festival, Moondance Film Festival, Cairo International Film Festival, Tokyo Short Shorts Film Festival, Moving Pictures International Film Festival, Honolulu Film Festival, Fuji Sankei Group Advertising Award, Nihon Television Advertising Award, CCN Award, ACC Awards, and many more.

Touraj Aslani has graduated in graphics from Kermanshah Conservatory and in film directing from Tehran Sooreh University.

He began to take photographs at the age of 10, and at the age of 14 he started his activities as an experimental cinematographer with an 8mm camera. He started his professional activities at age 25. He has been shooting more than 100 documentary, short, animation, fiction, and experimental movies. In 2000, he became the youngest professional photographer in Iranian cinema.

Hooman Behmanesh is a graduate of cinema directing from Soore University of Isfahan. He began his artistic career as a teenager and made several short films and edited or produced some. He has also served as assistant director on several films.

Finally, it was in 2006 that he began his independent career as a director of photography. Behmanesh is now regarded as one of the most experienced directors of photography in Iranian cinema. He is also a member of the Iranian Cinema Short Film Association, the National Elite Foundation of Iran, the Asian Pacific Academy of Motion Picture Science and Technology.

Setareh Eskandari started her artistic activity in 1993 in company with students of the Faculty of Fine Arts of University of Tehran. She has performed in several films, plays, and TV series.

She served as a judge at the 22nd Pune International Film Festival in India in 2023, following the screening of her directorial debut "The Sun of That Moon" at various international festivals. The film received critical acclaim for addressing significant issues such as women's rights, life experiences, and Baloch culture.

Mahvash Sheikholeslami graduated from the London Film School. Throughout her professional career, she has played a significant role in the Iranian film industry, working as a producer and deputy producer on numerous films and television series.

She has collaborated with renowned filmmakers such as Abbas Kiarostami, Nasser Taghvai, Ali Hatami, Dariush Mehrjui, and others. Since 1996, Sheikholeslami has been making her own independent films, focusing on cultural heritage, environmental issues, and women's stories. She is a permanent member of the Iranian Documentary Filmmakers Guild.

Mircea Sorin Albutiu has a master'a degree in documentary filmmaking. He has directed three documentaries.

Maria Bălănean graduated in film editing and sound design in 2014. Over the last 10 years, she edited documentaries that were screened at many festivals such as Vision du Reel or Ji.hlava IDFF.

In 2017, she joined a master program in visual anthropology, during which she directed her first documentary, Triplex Confinium, which was screened at several festivals and was nominated for Best Short Documentary at Romanian Film Awards (Gopo) in 2022.

Cihan Aslı Filiz was selected as an international producer for Cannes MIPTV's Producers to Watch catalogue in 2022. She was also part of the Berlinale Co-Production Market selection committee in 2020 and 2021.

She has produced numerous internationally acclaimed films. She has also produced works for Amazon Prime Video. Currently, she is developing film and series projects at Bir Film as a creative producer.

Aysim Turkmen attended New School Film Program while she made the short film "Just Like Today" in New York. In Istanbul, she made award-winning documentaries, especially concerning urban issues.

She is on the advisory board of International Women Filmmakers Festival, İzmir. She is the coordinator of the festival's "Creating Characters from Izmir" section, in which filmmaking workshops as well as international masterclasses are organized. She is the founding member of Filmperest, Script Development Group. She's currently working on her feature-length fiction film "Peekaboo" as well as the documentary film "Suburbia Underground" (both films have been funded by the Cinema Production Fund of Turkish Ministry of Culture).

Andrew Robert Thomas has been involved in international creative production spanning the film, television, advertising and publishing industries for over 30 years. He has established production & management company Creative Hybrid, working with the finest international creative talents.

Maša Nešković holds a degree in film directing and a Ph.D. in polymedia art. She has directed short fiction films, short and mid-length documentaries, and a feature film "Asymmetry", which were screened and won awards at international film festivals.

She has directed three prime-time TV series, documentary series for Vice TV, the "Serbia's Got Talent" show, "The X Factor Serbia" show, and several music videos. In addition to her directing work, Maša works as a 1st AD and casting director on films and TV series with both local and international crews.

Markus Berger is an animation filmmaker and visual effects artist, with expertise also in sound design and immersive media, including virtual and augmented reality. After earning his master's degree in digital arts from the University of Applied Sciences in Hagenberg, Austria, Markus moved to Izmir, Türkiye, where he has been a faculty member at Dokuz Eylül University's Faculty of Fine Arts in the Department of Cartoon and Animation since 2014. In addition to his teaching role, he recently completed his PhD in Arts and Design at Dokuz Eylül University.

Throughout his career, Markus has directed several short animated, fiction, and documentary films. He also has experience as an on-set sound mixer and visual effects supervisor, contributing to a range of professional feature-length and short film projects.

The 5 Photo & Film Award is a prestigious and large festival for film and photography. It supports artists from all over the world, especially independent and modern artists, and seeks to create a bridge between different countries and cultures.