

Trump's Persian Gulf Trip: Business Over Peace



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Trump greets Saudi ambassador to the United States, Reema bint Bandar, on Tuesday, May 13, 2025.

Iran hosts 31st nuclear conference as AEOL head stresses 'irreversible scientific gains'

TEHRAN – The 31st edition of Iran's Annual Nuclear Conference commenced on Tuesday in Mashhad, organized by the Iranian Nuclear Society with support from the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOL).

The event, a cornerstone for scientific exchange, focuses on advancing nuclear technology for civilian applications and reinforcing national collaboration in the field.

Key themes of this year's conference include "Applications of Radiation and Modern Radiological Technologies," "Nuclear Fusion Physics and Plasma Technology," "Nuclear Reactors and Quantum Technologies," "Nuclear Fuel Cycle and Materials," and "Nuclear Governance and Sustainable Development." ▶ Page 2

Christian votes in the North not prerogative of Lebanese Forces party

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — The second round of municipal and mayoral elections in the Northern Governorate brought resounding surprises, as sectarian and political incitement, coupled with the electoral money paid in huge amounts, will have the final say in the result of the 2026 parliamentary elections.

As in the Mount Lebanon elections, the Northern elections showed a marked decline in voter turnout.

This sectarian and political tension was evident in the Lebanese Forces' rhetoric, indicating a serious fear among the party of any breach or refutation of its claim to the full popular support of Lebanon's Christians.

It is worth noting that more than 40% of voters in the northern city of Bsharri voted against the Lebanese Forces party.

Free Patriotic Movement leader Gebran Bassil told a press conference: "Their victory symbolizes the strength of our presence and representation in the north, in all the northern districts."

Bassil added the Lebanese Forces "sought to besiege, isolate, and eliminate us wherever they could."

The Lebanese Forces party accused its political opponents in the North of working in favor of the "Axis of Resistance". ▶ Page 5

The death toll from the Gaza genocide may be much higher

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Researchers say the death toll from the Gaza genocide could be much higher than what the Health Ministry in the enclave is reporting.

In its daily briefing, the Gaza Health Ministry has announced that the number of victims of the genocide waged by the Israeli occupation regime against the Gazans has reached "52,908 martyrs and 119,721 injured persons since October 7, 2023".

Since March 18, 2025, when the occupation regime violated the ceasefire agreement, at least "2,780 martyrs and 7,680 injured have been recorded".

In the past 24 hours alone (Tuesday afternoon), the ministry reported that "46 new martyrs and 73 injured" arrived at hospitals across the enclave.

Meanwhile, many victims remain trapped under rubble or in the streets, as ambulance and civil defense crews are unable to reach them due to heavy debris and ongoing Israeli attacks. ▶ Page 5

Iran will not walk back its principles in nuclear talks with US, says Pezeshkian

Iran maintains it will not float military or foreign policy limitations. It will also never cease uranium enrichment in a potential deal with US

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has said his country will stoutly defend its rights and maintain its red lines during nuclear talks with the United States, as the two sides approach a fifth round of the indirect negotiations under the mediation of Oman.

"Indirect talks with the U.S. are being conducted in full coordination with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei," Pezeshkian said during a gathering with independent parliament members. "And Iran will not retreat from its principles during this process."

Pezeshkian also stated on Tuesday that his administration will not allow

the daily lives and prosperity of Iranian citizens to be solely dependent on the outcome of the negotiations with the United States.

The talks come after U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from an international nuclear deal named JCPOA in 2018 and subsequently imposed sanctions against Iran. The JCPOA offered Tehran sanctions relief in exchange for caps on its nuclear activities.

In his first term, Trump had hoped to add restrictions on Iran's military and foreign policy to any nuclear

agreement, but he seems to have since retreated from those objectives. Analysts believe he may still be musing on a potential cessation of uranium enrichment in Iran – something Tehran has already described as a non-starter. Iran's Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi recently noted that Iran has the right to enrich uranium under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

On Sunday, Iranian negotiators, under the leadership of Araghchi, held a fourth round of talks in Muscat with a

U.S. delegation headed by President's Special Envoy Steve Witkoff. So far, the discussions have been characterized by both parties as positive and demonstrating progress.

The last round of the talks came in the shadow of controversial remarks by Witkoff, who had told an American media outlet earlier in the week that Iran should dismantle some of its nuclear facilities and stop the enrichment of uranium. Given the fact that a fifth round has been scheduled, Witkoff likely did not bring up those demands during the Sunday

convention in Muscat.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs, Majid Takht-e-Ravanchi, who is part of the country's negotiating team, told journalists during a book-signing event in Tehran that remarks similar to Witkoff's controversial ones will erode trust in the ongoing diplomatic process.

"A big issue that exists is the fact that we keep hearing contradictory positions from the American side. This makes everything significantly harder than it must be." The diplomat said the location and time of the next round of the discussions have yet to be determined, but added that Iran will proceed "with its eyes open". ▶ Page 2

"Tehran Times Reports...": a look at Iran's history through pages of Iranian daily

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN – Last week, in celebration of Tehran Times' anniversary, an exhibition was inaugurated, offering visitors a rare glimpse into the newspaper's historic journey over the past forty-six years.

The exhibit, now on display at the City Journalists' House in Tehran, presents a curated collection of front pages and archival materials spanning the last four decades, with a special focus on the 1980s. It highlights some of the most pivotal moments in Iran's modern history, providing a vivid snapshot of a transformative era.

But this exhibition is more than just a display of old newspapers; ▶ Page 8



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his Emirati counterpart Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi on May 12, 2025.

Iran, UAE FMs discuss bilateral ties, regional security in Abu Dhabi meeting

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), during an official visit to Abu Dhabi on Monday.

The discussions focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation and addressing pressing regional challenges.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed the "latest developments in bilateral relations across various fields" and explored avenues to deepen collaboration.

A statement by Iran's foreign ministry emphasized the two countries' shared commitment to "strengthening security and stability in the region through increased coordination," underscoring the strategic importance of Tehran-Abu Dhabi ties. ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Israeli media concerned about a possible agreement

In an analysis, Hamshahri addressed Israeli concerns about the promising negotiations between Tehran and Washington on Iran's nuclear program. It wrote: Israeli media wrote that any agreement, even a weak one, could lead to Iran's re-strengthening. Concurrent with the fourth round of the Iran-U.S. talks in Muscat, Israel's tough stances have put pressure on the negotiations. Israel believes that an agreement similar to the JCPOA II, which only limits its nuclear program, would allow Iran to rebuild its economy and strengthen its proxy network, and would ultimately be detrimental to regional security.

Recent developments show that Iran, although in a difficult situation, still has the means to resist. However, if Israel takes military action, especially without full coordination with the U.S., it could lead to wider tensions in the region. Given these conditions, Iran's foreign policy must carefully manage these threats.

Ettelaat: The path to economic development

Ettelaat spoke with Yaghoub Rezazadeh, a member of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the Parliament, about the U.S. oil sanctions against Iran. He said: In the context of the ongoing negotiations between Iran and the U.S., Donald Trump has shown that the United States cannot be trusted, as it imposed oil sanctions on Iran to pressure the Islamic Republic.

Therefore, we must manage the negotiations in a way that does not repeat the JCPOA. We must appear authoritative in the negotiations and, by taking into account the difficult conditions we have in the economic sector, direct the negotiations in a way that will ultimately lead to the lifting of sanctions and, as a result, opening up the economy.

Therefore, if we can pursue the preparations for trade with European countries without the interference of the United States, we can achieve important achievements by relying on our common potential.

To achieve this, we must make the Europeans understand that Iran's dream with America does not justify their move to turn their back on Iran.

In any case, we and the Europeans can reestablish trade and economic relations, which will also be important for European countries.

Iran, UAE FM's discuss bilateral ties, regional security in Abu Dhabi meeting



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his Emirati counterpart Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi on May 12, 2025.

From page 1 ► Araghchi strongly condemned the Israeli regime's ongoing atrocities in Palestine and neighboring states, stating, "The regime's genocidal campaign in Gaza and the West Bank, along with its terrorist aggressions against Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, demands urgent and serious action by Islamic and regional nations to counter this expansionist lawlessness."

He reiterated Iran's call for unified regional efforts to confront Israel's "persistent violations of international norms."

The talks also touched on the status of indirect negotiations between Iran and the

Etemad: Iran and US have entered into detailed issues

Etemad reviewed the fourth round of Iran-U.S. negotiations in an interview with Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh, a political analyst. He said: The two countries' planning for a fifth round means that both sides have tried to take into account each other's concerns and demands. The U.S. knows that the cost of reaching an agreement is much lower than no agreement. If there is no agreement, a wave of extensive costs will fall on the United States. Forbidding Iran from practicing its NPT rights for enrichment will have many costs for the United States. In the far corners of the world, many countries are enriching uranium without having nuclear weapons. This means that Iran cannot be deprived of these rights. Currently, more diplomatic shuttles are underway in the region, and Iran must promote this situation for economic and security relations. If regional relations are pursued in the form of collective security, Israel will be further isolated. Recent developments have shown that the United States does not want to act in the form of Netanyahu's security and military policies, and this is the greatest opportunity that Iran can and should use.

Iran: Important role of Oman as mediator

The Iran newspaper spoke with Mohammad Keshavarz-Zadeh, the former Iranian ambassador to China, about the importance of Oman's role in the recent round of negotiations between Iran and the United States. He said: Oman has played an active and effective role in maintaining the diplomatic channel and creating opportunities to explore new ideas. Although the United States tried to turn the Muscat talks into a prominent meeting by changing its media tone on some fundamental issues, it seems that it was Oman's active involvement that succeeded in managing the course of the talks. Also, Araghchi's consultations with important Arab players, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE, were a smart move that at least managed to prepare the regional atmosphere for holding calm and tension-free negotiations.

Iran has managed to both engage regional countries in the diplomatic process and keep its Asian partners, such as China and Russia, on board. Now is the time for Washington to demonstrate its will to resolve the main differences, especially on issues like enrichment.

United States, with Araghchi briefing his Emirati counterpart on recent developments. While specifics were not disclosed, both sides stressed dialogue as a pathway to resolving disputes.

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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian during a meeting with Iranian lawmakers on May 13, 2025.

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Takht-e-Ravanchi said another unconstructive approach by the

U.S. is its continued clinging to the so-called maximum pressure campaign. "Sanctions are putting pressure on different segments of the population. Our effort in the diplomatic apparatus is to do our best to eliminate the sanctions within the framework of the country's policies," he explained. Washington has renewed already debilitating sanctions against Iran multiple times since the talks started in early April, with its last such announcement coming on Monday.

Meanwhile, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi is attempting to wedge himself into the bilateral discussions. He recently told an Argentine media outlet that even the most extensive military campaign would not be able to completely destroy Iran's nuclear infrastructure, and that Tehran is a large country capable of rebuilding its facilities. The IAEA chief also offered to share his "knowledge" of Tehran's nuclear program with Washington's negotiating team.

The Tehran Times previously learned that the European Troika (Britain, France, Germany) has directed IAEA Director General Grossi to hinder diplomacy between Iran and the U.S. In exchange for his assistance, the European signatories to the JCPOA, said to be griping about their exclusion from the talks, promised Grossi their backing in his pursuit of the United Nations Secretary-General position.

Growing relations of Iran-Russia is 'win-win situation', says Kremlin



Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov

TEHRAN – Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has hailed the recent session of the Iran-Russia Joint Economic Cooperation Committee as a step forward in fostering a mutually beneficial partnership between Moscow and Tehran.

Describing the expanding bilateral ties as a "win-win situation," Peskov emphasized the positive trajectory of relations and pointed to untapped potential in economic collaboration.

"We assess the outcomes of the Joint Economic Cooperation Committee between the two countries as positive," Peskov said in remarks to Iranian news agency IRNA. "We view our relationship with Iran as one of partnership, and we believe it serves the interests of both sides."

Despite facing significant international sanctions, Iran and Russia have strengthened their

political and economic ties in recent years.

Peskov noted that while trade between the two nations is growing, it still falls short of reflecting the full potential of their economic capacities. He called for further efforts to increase trade volume and diversify cooperation across various sectors.

Earlier this month, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi traveled to Moscow at the invitation of his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov.

During the visit, Araghchi delivered a personal message from Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to Russian President Vladimir Putin. The trip was part of ongoing high-level consultations between the two countries, aimed at further cementing their partnership in the face of shared geopolitical challenges.

In April, President Putin and President Pezeshkian signed into law a landmark 20-year strategic cooperation agreement with Iran, originally inked in January.

The comprehensive pact provides a legal framework for long-term collaboration in a wide range of fields including defense, energy, industry, agriculture, finance, transport, scientific research, culture, and technology.

A key provision of the agreement focuses on boosting joint investments in oil and gas exploration, as well as advancing peaceful nuclear energy initiatives.

The treaty also envisions the creation of an alternative international payment system that

bypasses Western financial mechanisms by using the national currencies of both countries.

Amid these developments, speculation has mounted about a possible visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin to Iran.

Speaking to reporters, Iranian government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani confirmed that preparations for the trip are underway, although final details have yet to be announced.

"The trip is under consideration, and coordination is ongoing," Mohajerani said. "Once all the necessary arrangements have been finalized, the Foreign Ministry will make an official announcement."

She underscored that the visit, when it takes place, will serve to deepen strategic dialogue between the two countries and provide an opportunity to discuss both regional and international developments.

Mohajerani also stressed that any official news regarding the visit should come from the Foreign Ministry to ensure accuracy and avoid speculation.

In a statement carried by Russia's RIA news agency, Mohajerani reiterated that the plan for Putin's trip to Tehran is actively being worked out, and that preparations are already in progress.

While the Kremlin has yet to issue a formal confirmation, officials in both capitals appear eager to maintain momentum in the bilateral relationship.

Iran hosts 31st nuclear conference as AEOL head stresses 'irreversible scientific gains'

From page 1 ► The inaugural day featured presentations on topics such as "Research Reactors and Their Global Applications," "Neutron Imaging Systems at the Tehran Reactor," and advancements in radioisotope production and gemstone irradiation techniques.

'Nuclear industry is Iran's pillar of strength'

In a separate event on Tuesday in Karaj, AEOL Director Mohammad Eslami underscored Iran's unwavering commitment to its nuclear program, stating, "The nuclear industry is a source of wealth and strength for the Iranian nation and is neither negotiable nor subject to compromise."

He emphasized that Iran had paid a "heavy price" to attain its nuclear scientific capabilities, call-

ing them a sovereign right and a national achievement.

Eslami highlighted the AEOL's role in transforming scientific knowledge into tangible technologies that benefit the public.

He cited the recent establishment of a cold plasma wound treatment clinic in Alborz Province as an example, noting, "We take pride in making this service accessible to our people."

The AEOL chief also addressed geopolitical challenges, noting that Iran has long been a target of foreign adversaries seeking to undermine its progress.

"Love for the homeland and dedication to service are eternal necessities for our nation," he remarked, reaffirming the country's resolve to safeguard its techno-



logical sovereignty.

Iran's nuclear program continues to expand its peaceful applications, with Eslami reporting the domestic production of over 70 types of radiopharmaceuticals distributed across 230 medical centers.

According to the AEOL chief, approximately 85,000 radiation

technicians currently operate in 6,500 healthcare facilities nationwide, reflecting the program's integration into public welfare.

In his remarks, Eslami reiterated that nuclear technology serves as a "key driver of progress" across sectors, including medicine, agriculture, and industry.

Trump's Persian Gulf trip: Business over peace

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – U.S. President Donald Trump touched down in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday in the shadow of unresolved regional predicaments, while also carrying a list of business proposals reportedly tied to both national and personal interests.

Riyadh marks the first stop on the president's three-country tour of Persian Gulf Arab states, which will include Qatar and the UAE as well. Upon arriving in the Saudi capital, Trump was received by the kingdom's crown prince and de facto leader, Mohammad Bin Salman. After a welcome ceremony featuring spiced Arabic coffee in the Riyadh airport's grand hall, the American delegation then proceeded to Al-Yamamah Palace. There, Bin Salman pledged to invest \$600 billion in the U.S. and also purchase an American arms package worth nearly \$142 billion.

Trump's trip to West Asia mirrors his first foreign tour during his first term in office—which also included the occupied territories. Trump is likely to tout this one as a victory for the American economy, like he did last time, but back home, some democratic officials are all but incensed. They argue that there appears to be an intersection of Trump's presidential duties and his own business interests.

The Qatari royal family is reportedly donating a \$400 million Boeing 747-8 to Trump's presidential library, a gift that would allow him continued use of the plane after leaving office. This, in addition to the Trump family's extensive regional business ventures (skyscrapers, golf courses, and cryptocurrency deals), has amplified Democrats' rage, who are also wagging their finger at Trump for



muddying relationships with traditional American allies like Canada, Europe, and Mexico – typically the first stops for U.S. presidents abroad.

Still, Trump is expected to secure even more “mega” investment deals (as some American media call them) in U.S. energy and manufacturing during his Persian Gulf trip. He also aims to persuade rich Persian Gulf states to buy more U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG) and increase their crude oil production.

Geopolitical currents will keep running

The vision Trump presented for West Asia upon his return to the White House in January differs starkly from the reality he is facing today during his short stay in the region.

He had pledged to be a “president of peace,” end the war in Gaza, and “crush” the Yemeni forces conducting anti-Israel operations in the Red Sea. Yet, three months later, Israel has unraveled the ceasefire deal Trump helped broker before taking office and intensified its attacks and blockade of food and medicine, with no public condemnation from Washington yet in

sight.

In the Red Sea, the U.S. was forced to retreat and announce a bilateral ceasefire with Ansarullah in Yemen after substantial financial losses and the destruction of expensive drones and fighter jets. Yemen continues to strike Israeli targets, showing no signs of diminished military capability.

Closing the deal on Iran's nuclear program was also on Trump's agenda when he was fresh in the office. While he did begin indirect talks with Iran to find a diplomatic solution to the differences between the two countries, it is still unclear whether he would manage to unify his fragmented administration on Iran. Some within his inner circle, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, believe Washington should skip diplomacy and instead attack Iran, a move that would drag Washington into the biggest regional inferno that has existed to date.

While in Saudi Arabia, Trump said he wants to reach an agreement with Iran, but made sure to call it “the biggest and most destructive” force in West Asia before talking about his supposed aspirations. “In the case of Iran, I have never

believed in having permanent enemies. I am different than a lot of people think. I don't like permanent enemies ... I want to make a deal with Iran,” Trump told a Riyadh convention hall filled with people. “But if Iran's leadership rejects this olive branch and continues to attack their neighbors, then we will have no choice but to inflict massive maximum pressure, drive Iranian oil exports to zero like I did before.”

The so-called maximum pressure campaign Trump waged against Iran during his first term never shriveled, even during Biden's occupation of the White House. Furthermore, Analysts believe that Iran's oil exports have not reached zero, not because the U.S. didn't want that, but because it could not make it happen. After several decades of sanctions, Tehran has learned how to circumvent them, and one of its biggest allies, China, has said it will continue buying Iranian oil regardless of U.S. pressure.

Trump had already drawn the ire of millions of Iranians before he began his West Asia tour. The Associated Press reported before the president's arrival that Trump plans to announce the U.S. would now be recognizing the Persian Gulf as the “Arabian Gulf.” The president said last week that he still hasn't decided on that. He has yet to bring up that topic.

So far, it seems that Trump's visit to West Asia is primarily yielding economic benefits, something he himself may have anticipated. “Trump's main goal during his trip to the region is to collect money for the ‘world's biggest economy,’ which is becoming penniless by the day,” stated Amir Ali Abolfath, a North American affairs expert. Unrelated issues will remain tangled, he added.

Prominent Shia scholars convene in Najaf

Ayatollah Javadi Amoli meets with Grand Ayatollah Sistani and Muqtada al-Sadr



Iranian Grand Ayatollah Javadi Amoli met with Iraq's top Shia cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani (L) and leader of the Sadrist Movement Muqtada al-Sadr in Najaf, Iraq.

TEHRAN – In a highly significant moment for the global Shia community, Grand Ayatollah Abdullah Javadi Amoli held a landmark meeting with Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Sistani in the holy city of Najaf on Monday.

The meeting between two of the highest-ranking and most respected Maraji (religious authorities) of the Shia world was marked by discussions on critical religious, intellectual, and social issues affecting the broader Islamic Ummah.

Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, a revered scholar and leading figure in Shia jurisprudence and Quranic exegesis, is currently in Iraq on a pilgrimage to the holy sites. As part of his visit to Najaf, he

paid tribute to the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), the first Imam of Shia Islam, where he offered prayers and engaged in spiritual reflection.

The meeting with Ayatollah Sistani, is being described by observers as one of the most spiritually and intellectually significant exchanges in recent years among top Shia clerics. The two religious authorities conferred on a range of contemporary theological challenges, as well as the current conditions of the Muslim world.

In addition to the meeting with Ayatollah Sistani, several prominent scholars based in Najaf also visited Ayatollah Javadi Amoli at his residence. Among them were Ayatollah Iravani,

Ayatollah Al-Radhi, Ayatollah Javaheri, and Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammad Reza Sistani.

The scholars conveyed their warm welcome and appreciation for his presence in Najaf, a city long considered the intellectual heart of Shia Islam. They commended his deep commitment to religious thought and his continued influence on generations of students and clerics.

As part of his broader engagements in Iraq, Ayatollah Javadi Amoli also met with Muqtada al-Sadr, the leader of the Sadrist Movement and a major political and religious figure in the country.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))



Photo shows PKK Executive Committee member Duran Kalkan announcing the group's dissolution during the PKK's 12th Party Congress held at an undisclosed location in northern Iraq on May 12, 2025.

Ocalan's appeal was first issued publicly in February and reiterated the need for a peaceful resolution to a conflict that has claimed more than 40,000 lives since the PKK launched its insurgency in 1984.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](#))

Tehran welcomes PKK dissolution as step toward regional stability

TEHRAN – Iran has praised the Kurdistan Workers' Party's (PKK) announcement to disarm and dissolve its organization, calling the move a meaningful stride toward reducing violence and enhancing security in Turkey and across the region.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei issued a statement on Tuesday welcoming the PKK's decision, saying it represents a turning point in efforts to resolve decades of armed conflict. “We view this development as a step in favor of peace and stability, both within Turkey and the wider region,” Baghaei said, expressing hope that the full implementation of the PKK's declaration will lead to lasting calm.

The PKK made the announcement following its 12th congress held last Friday in northern

Iraq. In a statement released Monday, the group declared an end to all operations carried out in its name, effectively signaling the conclusion of its armed campaign against the Turkish state.

The congress was reportedly marked by what the group described as “historic decisions” that could reshape the future of Kurdish-Turkish relations.

According to the Firat News Agency, a media outlet closely aligned with the group, the congress included a message from PKK founder and jailed leader Abdullah Ocalan, who has been imprisoned in Turkey since 1999. In his message, Ocalan called on the organization to abandon armed struggle and dissolve itself in favor of a political solution.

Milad Vaziri: Future of Iran's Para archery is bright

TEHRAN – Iran archery coach Milad Vaziri says that the future of the sport in the country is bright.

Vaziri led the Iranian team in the 2024 Paralympic Games but parted ways with the team shortly after the Games and the officials decided to replace him with Zahra Nemati.

Under Vaziri's guidance, Para archery succeeded in winning two silver medals—one in individual women's compound and one in team compound—and a bronze medal in men's individual recurve.

“Quite some time has passed since then, and perhaps it's not right for me to speak about past events now. But as much as we managed to bring smiles to people's faces, that was fulfilling for me. That period was also part of my professional sports career,” Vaziri told Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

“For better or worse, those Games are behind us, and the authorities at the time were satisfied with the results. Changing the coaching staff is common, although it could have been handled differently. Anyway, life goes on for me and the athletes, and we continue our professional activity in other areas,” Vaziri said.

“Now, I am working again to prepare the Iranian young archers and we can introduce a new generation of athletes to our country in the near future. In any case, as I said, these Games are over for me, and I wish success for the archers,” he added.

Reflecting on the perceptions of Paralympic sports, Vaziri said: “The perspectives toward Paralympic sports have changed compared to the past. Previously, the classifications were such that in each category, three or four athletes competed, and sometimes an athlete with just one win could win a medal. But now, the views have shifted. In earlier years, the focus was more on support and assistance for athletes with disabilities.

“Today, that's not the case anymore. Other countries are investing and planning more systematically to win medals. For example, Turkey brought their Olympic head coach to Paris, which shows how perceptions have changed. Korea and the U.S. are also investing systematically and planning thoroughly.

Iran defeat Chinese Taipei in 2025 AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup quarters

TEHRAN – Iran stayed on course to win a third AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup title by overcoming Chinese Taipei in the quarter-finals on Tuesday.

They were made to sweat for the 3-1 victory at the Hohhot Sports Centre by a determined opposition, who were gunning to reach the last four for the first time.

The breakthrough was made by the Central Asians after just two minutes when Mahtab Banaei was fouled by goalkeeper Chu Fang-Yi in the area, allowing Maral Torkaman to step up and smash in the penalty for her second goal of the tournament. But Chinese Taipei did find the equalizer in the 18th minute through a well-worked kick-in routine, which saw Chen set up Liu Wen Ling to lash in her tournament-leading fifth goal from range. After the match finished 1-1 at the end of regulation time, Fereshteh Khosravi and Farzaneh Tavasoli netted deep in extra time to make it 13 wins in 14 matches overall.

Iran will play Japan on Thursday in the semi-finals.

Heerenveen, Jahanbakhsh to part company

TEHRAN – SC Heerenveen is unlikely to extend a new contract with Alireza Jahan-

bakhsh. The attacker is currently injured and is expected to be sidelined for several weeks, which likely means the end of his season.

It is unclear what Jahanbakhsh is suffering from; as head coach Robin Veldman only said that the attacker is no longer being counted on for this season. With the Iranian has an expiring contract, the collaboration with Heerenveen looks to be ending quietly.

The 92-time international wants to look for an adventure outside the Netherlands for next season. He was already looking for that last year, but because Jahanbakhsh was busy obtaining his Dutch passport, he decided to stay in the Eredivisie longer.

Jahanbakhsh was added to the Heerenveen selection in early November. Before that, he had been without a club for a few months, following his departure from Feyenoord. The 31-year-old right winger played 19 league matches for the Frisians, 16 of which as a starter.

He lost his place in the team last month to Jacob Trensckow, who had returned from an injury; against NEC, Jahanbakhsh did not leave the bench. The veteran scored three times for Heerenveen.

Heerenveen are currently eighth in the Eredivisie and will play against RKC Waalwijk (away), Go Ahead Eagles (away) and Feyenoord (home) this season. After that, Veldman's team hopes to qualify for the European play-offs.

Foolad outplay Taichung Bank to top Pool C

TEHRAN – Iran's Foolad Sirjan secured their place at the top of Pool C and booked a quarterfinal berth at the inaugural AVC Men's Champions League after an emphatic 3-0 (25-17, 25-14, 25-13) victory over Taichung Bank of Chinese Taipei on Tuesday at Panasonic Arena.

Foolad Sirjan showcased their firepower and tactical superiority throughout the match, notching their second straight win and collecting a total of 5 points to finish atop the group.

Nakhon Ratchasima QminC VC of Thailand took second place with 4 points, while Taichung Bank, winless in both outings, were eliminated.

French star Earvin Ngapeth and Iranian opposite Mohsen Delavari led the scoring for Foolad Sirjan with 15 points apiece. Middle blocker Concepcion Rojas Javier Octavio added 13 points, while Alireza Abdolhamidi chipped in 11.

With the win, Foolad Sirjan Iranian topped Pool C, advancing to the quarterfinals alongside second-place Nakhon Ratchasima. Taichung Bank, finishing bottom of the group with no points, exit the tournament.

Dutch legend Seedorf appointed as Esteghlal's CEO advisor

TEHRAN – Dutch legend Clarence Seedorf was named as an advisor to the CEO in Iranian football club Esteghlal.

The renowned figure in football's world, was appointed as the club's CEO advisor by a decree from Ali Nazari Joybari.

“Considering the major plans of the Persian Gulf Holding towards building a great Esteghlal and with the support of the club's board of directors, especially the honorable chairman of the board, we have been in negotiations with Mr. Seedorf over the past two months to benefit from his expertise in various areas,” Nazari Joybari said.

Seedorf converted to Islam after learning more in depth about the religion from his Iranian wife Sophia Makramati.

As a player, Seedorf started his playing career in Ajax and has also played in Real Madrid, Inter Milan and AC Milan.

Tehran, Doha discuss boosting bilateral trade



TEHRAN - Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi met with Qatar's Customs Authority Chief Ahmed Al-Jamal, on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2025, stressing the need to enhance commercial ties and develop trade infrastructure to increase bilateral trade volume.

According to the TPO's public relations office, Dehnavi described Iran-Qatar economic and trade relations as growing and highlighted the potential for customs cooperation to accelerate trade.

He said the TPO stands ready to coordinate with other Iranian agencies to follow up on key issues and push them toward implementation.

Pointing to the geographical proximity between the two countries, Dehnavi said Iran and Qatar possess complementary trade capacities and noted that customs agencies would serve as the gateway to deeper commercial cooperation.

For his part, Al-Jamal voiced Qatar's strong interest in expanding trade with Iran. He said the upward trajectory in commercial exchanges could also foster stronger political relations, pointing out that Iranian products have long held a special place in the Qatari market.

Al-Jamal emphasized that Qatar has already implemented measures to facilitate the entry of Iranian goods and believes the current trade volume falls short of its potential, given the strong demand among Qatari traders for Iranian products.

Also, Qatar's Customs Authority chief met with the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) and other senior Iranian customs officials, in Tehran on May 11, to discuss ways to expand bilateral cooperation and share experiences aimed at facilitating and developing trade.

According to the IRICA, the two sides explored strategies to enhance customs cooperation between the neighboring countries.

Foroud Asgari, Iran's deputy economy minister and head of the Customs Administration, described the visit of Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Jamal and his accompanying delegation as highly significant, citing the friendly ties between Iran and Qatar.

During the meeting, Asgari briefed the Qatari delegation on Iran's customs operations, emphasizing that all procedural formalities in the country are now handled through electronic systems.

Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Jamal praised Iran's digital customs processes and expressed Qatar's interest in expanding cooperation with Iran. He noted that the broader political and diplomatic alignment between the

two nations offers a valuable opportunity to deepen customs collaboration.

Al-Jamal also took particular interest in Iran's risk management system, which Asgari further elaborated on during the talks.

Asgari called on the Qatari side to expedite the clearance of Iranian shipments—especially perishable goods—at Al-Ruwais Port, and voiced Iran's readiness to help resolve any related challenges.

The meeting aimed to promote mutual cooperation in areas such as trade facilitation, combating smuggling and customs violations, the secure exchange of electronic customs data, and the organization of joint training programs.

The two sides also agreed to conduct regular joint inspections of ports and customs facilities and to hold periodic meetings between their customs officials to ensure close coordination.

The 10th Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Committee meeting concluded on December 12, 2024, in Doha, with officials from both nations pledging to enhance bilateral economic ties and increase trade to \$1.0 billion annually.

The meeting, co-chaired by Iran's Minister of Energy Abbas Ali-Abadi and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani, focused on expanding cooperation across multiple sectors, including energy, infrastructure, and trade.

The event featured four specialized committees: Trade (covering commerce, banking, and insurance), Infrastructure (transport, agriculture, and ICT), Social and Cultural (tourism, health, and research), and Energy (water, electricity, oil, and gas). Over 60 representatives from public and private sectors of both countries participated in the discussions.

Ali-Abadi emphasized the strategic importance of the partnership, saying, "Today's economic relations between Iran and Qatar require a strategic outlook." He noted that current trade between the two countries stands at approximately \$200 million annually, with plans to increase it fivefold to \$1 billion in the near future.

The official further highlighted a significant energy project involving a 200-kilometer undersea power line to connect Iran and Qatar's electricity networks. Initiated in March 2023, the feasibility study is in its final stages, with implementation set to follow approval.

"This project will revolutionize power transfer between the two nations during peak demand periods and enable electricity transit to third countries," Ali-Abadi stated.

He also expressed Iran's readiness to welcome Qatari investors, envisioning mutual investments of at least \$1 billion annually. Key focus areas include energy, transport, free trade zones, tourism, healthcare, and agriculture.

The Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Committee, established in 1995, has facilitated significant achievements, particularly in water and electricity sectors. The 10th session underlined both nations' commitment to translating agreements into tangible outcomes and fostering regional cooperation.

elers and traders, while demonstrating the high level of technical coordination between Tehran and Moscow.

The second phase, unveiled on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, now allows Russian citizens to pay at Iranian point-of-sale terminals using the Mir Pay app. The rollout creates a seamless and secure retail experience for Russian visitors in Iran and is expected to further boost trade and tourism ties between the two countries.

The final phase of the Shetab-Mir integration is expected to introduce full interoperability between the two card networks, allowing for wider reciprocal usage in both countries.

Monthly trade balance in Iran's free trade zones positive

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN - Iran's Free Zones High Council announced that the trade balance of the country's free trade zones was \$41.463 million positive in the first Iranian calendar month Farvardin (March 21-April 21).

The council announced that the total export of goods and services from the country's free trade zones during Farvardin reached \$100.85 million. In contrast, the imports from these zones, excluding machinery, were announced at \$59.207 million, indicating a positive trade balance of \$41.643 million.

In mid-February, Iran's Free Zones High Council Secretary Reza Masrour stated that regulatory restrictions in free trade zones have hindered their intended function in recent years.

He pointed to past policies, such as the ban on vehicle imports into free zones while allowing them in mainland Iran, as an example of such constraints.

However, recent government efforts have led to the removal of several limitations.

He emphasized the council's focus on enhancing the export role of free trade zones, as a significant portion of their production has historically been directed toward the domestic market, contradicting their core purpose. The new policy framework aims to steer businesses toward ex-



port-driven production.

Masrour highlighted that while free trade zones are more service- and commerce-oriented, special economic zones focus primarily on production and exports.

To improve export performance, new incentives have been introduced for production units engaged in exports.

Additionally, the council has partnered with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) to establish export management companies in free zones to facilitate international trade.

Masrour addressed concerns about smuggling in free zones, stating that all import processes are recorded in official systems.

He also announced a shift in trade exhibition policies, stating that foreign exhibitions, which were previously held outside free zones, have been limited due to high costs. Moving forward, ex-

hibitions will be held exclusively within free trade zones, ensuring they target relevant markets and yield better economic results.

The official revealed plans for a greater emphasis on technology in free trade zones, and mentioned the development of an AI assistant tailored for free trade zones.

On international cooperation, he proposed the establishment of a Supreme Eurasia Trade Council within Iran's Foreign Ministry to strengthen ties with regional economic blocs.

He noted ongoing discussions with Turkey and Pakistan about creating joint free trade zones, although such projects require parliamentary approval.

Masrour concluded by affirming the council's commitment to enhancing the competitiveness of free trade zones, increasing exports, and minimizing smuggling, with continued government col-

laboration to improve policies and investment conditions.

The establishment of free trade zones (FTZs) in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989 - March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azerbaijan Province and Maku in West-Azerbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

As the free trade and special economic zones have great potential to accelerate economic development, the development of existing free trade and special economic zones and the establishment of new zones has become one of the major economic approaches of the Iranian government, and the government is determined to attract investment to these zones.

Iran, Turkmenistan target 30% growth in bilateral trade

TEHRAN - The head of the Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Chamber of Commerce says the two countries are aiming to increase bilateral trade by 30 percent, following the first-ever exhibition of Turkmenistan's export capabilities in Iran — an event driven entirely by private sector investment.

Ramazan Bahrami, who also heads the Industry, Mining and Trade House of Golestan Province, described the three-day event held in Gorgan from May 4 to 6 as a strategic milestone in Iran-Turkmenistan commercial relations and a tangible step toward strengthening regional economic diplomacy.

Held at the Gorgan International Exhibition Center, the event featured 53 private companies and 12 government institutions from Turkmenistan, and attracted significant interest from Iranian industrialists and businesspeople.

"This was the first time since Turkmenistan's independence that such an exhibition took place in Iran, and Golestan Province had the honor of hosting it," Bahrami said. "The exhibition was the result of consensus between the private sector and state institutions, and the outcome exceeded expectations."

He said the expo aimed to expand trade exchanges and showcase Turkmenistan's industrial and export capacities to the Iranian market. The idea for reciprocal trade exhibitions was first approved at the 17th Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Committee meeting, and the Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Chamber was tasked with its implementation.

Bahrami emphasized that the participation of both countries' private sectors in expert panels and face-to-face negotiations provided fertile ground for launching new partnerships. Preliminary agreements were reached in areas including petrochemicals, petroleum products, construction materials, food industries, textiles, and logistics, which are expected to boost bilateral trade once finalized.

According to Bahrami, trade between the two countries reached nearly \$600 million last year. With the momentum created by this exhibition and new commercial interactions, Iran and Turkmenistan are now targeting a minimum 30 percent increase in that figure. "Some of this growth will materialize in the coming months, and the rest will be reflected in next year's ex-

port statistics," he said.

Explaining the choice of Golestan as the host province, Bahrami pointed to strategic ethnic, cultural, and geographical ties. "Over one million ethnic Turkmen live in Golestan and North Khurasan, creating a natural platform for expanding economic, cultural, and social relations with Turkmenistan."

He noted that the event was funded entirely by the private sector, with the government offering oversight, support, and facilitation. "This model proves that meaningful outcomes can be achieved when the private sector is empowered."

Bahrami added that the exhibition attracted delegations from other Central Asian countries, turning it into a broader regional platform rather than just a bilateral affair.

Looking ahead, he said plans are underway to hold a reciprocal Iranian trade expo in Turkmenistan's Balkan Province. "We expect this continued exchange to elevate bilateral economic ties to a strategic level."

He also underscored Golestan's role as a gateway to Iran's northeastern trade corridor, thanks to its shared rail links with Turkmenistan, the Incheh-Borun Free Zone, port infrastructure, and cultural affinities with Central Asia. "If these opportunities are matched with coordinated support, we could witness major transformations in exports, imports, and technology transfer in the coming years," Bahrami concluded.

On May 2, the deputy head of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) called for the removal of key structural barriers—particularly in banking, transport, logistics, and visa issuance—to unlock the trade potential between Iran and Turkmenistan.

Speaking at a joint business forum held during Iran Expo 2025, Peyman Bagheri highlighted the two countries' shared strengths in energy, mining, agriculture, and tourism but said current trade levels fail to reflect those capacities. "Despite deep-rooted historical, cultural, and economic ties, trade volumes remain below potential and need a more proactive approach," he said.

Bagheri urged joint chambers of commerce and trade associations to play a more dynamic role in connecting supply and demand and facil-

Over 1.8m tons of steel products produced in a month

TEHRAN - More than 1.8 million tons of steel products were produced in Iran during the first month of the current Iranian calendar year, Farvardin (March 21-April 21).

As reported, steel products output which was 1.812 million tons in the first month of this year, fell 1.2 percent as compared to the output in the first month of the previous year, which was 1.851

million tons.

According to the latest report by the World Steel Association (WSA), Iran's crude steel production reached 3.3 million tons

in March, marking a 3.7 percent year-on-year increase. The rise coincided with a broader global uptick in steel output during the third month of 2025.

Christian votes in the North not prerogative of Lebanese Forces party

From page 1 ▶ In the South, where the elections will be held on May 24, the committee supervising the implementation of the ceasefire agreement is expected to meet this week in Ras al-Naqoura, headed by its new chairman, U.S. General Michael J. Lehney.

The election will be held amid fears that the Israeli enemy will intensify its attacks to pressure southerners not to vote, particularly in border towns.

Reportedly, the Lebanese government has agreed to transfer all polling stations from municipalities along the border with occupied Palestine to the hinterland, as the Israeli enemy refused to provide guarantees that the prefabricated rooms that were to be used as



polling stations would not be targeted.

In contrast, voting has been permitted in other border towns, such as Rmeish and Ain Ebel (Christian villages where the Lebanese Forces have influence).

Just as the two rounds of elections in the North and Mount Lebanon witnessed declining participation, Sidon will be no different as the Lebanese Forces electoral machine has been observed working to mobilize Christian votes against other lists, claiming they threaten

the Christian presence in Sidon.

Former Prime Minister Sa'ad Hariri's Future Movement's reluctance to contest the municipal elections in Sidon (one of its main strongholds) has led to further fragmentation within the Sunni community.

As part of their follow-up to the implementation of the cooperation agreement to form municipal lists, the leaders of the Shiite duo, Hezbollah and the Amal Movement, held a coordination meeting.

The meeting discussed developments related to the municipal and mayoral elections in the governorates of Beirut, the Bekaa, Baalbek-Hermel, as well as the governorates of the South and Nabatieh over the next two weeks.

War on Yemen raised fears in Washington that US could slide into another endless war: Foreign Affairs

TEHRAN - In the following article published on the Foreign Affairs website, the writer, April Longley Alley, refers to Yemen's Ansarallah movement as the Houthis. Contrary to the claims, Ansarallah only targeted and has announced to continue to target commercial ships linked to Israel in the Red Sea in efforts until Israel stops its genocidal campaign in Gaza. Ansarallah started to fire at U.S. naval ships in the Red Sea only after the Pentagon attacked them.

The following is the major part of the article, titled "How the Houthis Outlasted America":

After seven and a half weeks of heavy airstrikes on more than 1,000 separate targets, the Trump administration's bombing campaign against the Houthis in Yemen ended as abruptly as it began. On May 6, in an Oval Office meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, President Donald Trump simply announced that the Houthis "don't want to fight any more" and that the United States would "accept their word" and "stop the bombings."

Omani Foreign Minister Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi confirmed on X that his country had brokered a cease-fire agreement between Washington and the Houthis, in which the two sides agreed not to target each other. The absence from the agreement of Israel and of "Israeli-linked" ships—a term the Houthis have interpreted broadly in the past—is notable.

What is puzzling about the White House announcement is that the Houthis' position remains essentially unchanged from when the Trump administration began its escalated air campaign on March 15. Ostensibly, Operation Rough Rider—as the U.S. campaign was called—was launched to restore freedom of navigation in the Red Sea. When the operation began, the Houthis were explicitly targeting Israel as well as Israeli-linked ships—though not U.S. ships—and saying they would continue to do so until Israel ends its war in Gaza. Since the outset of the U.S. campaign, Houthi leaders have made clear that if Washington stopped the bombing, they would stop attacking U.S. ships, but their attacks on Israel would continue.

After Trump announced the May 6 agreement, the Houthi spokesperson Mohammed Abdul-salam reiterated this position. In other words, after a U.S. military operation that cost more than \$2 billion and supposedly had a far-reaching impact on Houthi military capabilities, the U.S.-Houthi cease-fire does little but codify the Houthis' original stance. Although Trump claimed that the Houthis "capitulated," the group retains its hold on power and has called the deal a "victory for Yemen."

For the Trump administration, the cease-fire

offered a quick end to what was an increasingly untenable campaign. Not only was the bombing enormously expensive; it was also raising concerns among policymakers in Washington that the United States could slide into another forever war in the Middle East.

This scenario has no doubt pushed by Vice President JD Vance and the more neo-isolationist members of the administration, who have been skeptical of U.S. military adventurism from the start.

It remains unclear if this denouement will create a meaningful enough pause for the Trump administration to wash its hands of the Houthi problem. But if Trump ignores continued Houthi attacks on Israel, there is reason to believe that the Houthis will, for now, avoid attacking U.S. assets. The Houthis would almost certainly have survived, even if the U.S. bombing campaign had continued, but its termination nevertheless has many upsides for them. The group's leaders can now claim to have gone head-to-head with a superpower and won and be relieved of the pressure the U.S. bombing was putting on them.

The cease-fire offered a quick end to an increasingly untenable campaign.

They can also focus on Israel, which is engaged in its own punishing air campaign in retaliation for Houthi strikes, including a ballistic missile strike near Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport in early May. Importantly, the deal with the United States makes it very unlikely that Washington will support a ground offensive against the Houthis by the internationally recognized government of Yemen, an internally divided coalition of anti-Houthi factions which controls the southern and eastern parts of the country. Combined with airpower, such an offensive would arguably be the most effective way to truly pressure the group and loosen its hold on power—although it would carry significant risks.

The Trump administration was right to try to find an off-ramp to an increasingly costly and open-ended air campaign, but the one it chose may cause more harm than good.

Unless Washington quickly coordinates with allies in the region, particularly Saudi Arabia, in a broader effort to maintain military, economic, and political pressure on the Houthis. There is a better alternative: by supporting the UN and other mediators such as Oman, the United

deaths caused by injuries.

Each list included names and, in many cases, age, gender, and ID numbers.

Independent verification confirmed that those named in the ministry's lists were indeed deceased.

Rather than relying solely on the ministry's total, the researchers cross-referenced the three lists, covering the period from the start of the genocide through June 30, 2024.

Their goal was to determine how much the lists overlapped. For instance, if a 30-year-old man appeared on all three lists, his death was likely counted.

However, if each list contained mostly unique names, this indicated many deaths were being missed.



States and its allies in the region and beyond can push for a larger political settlement in Yemen, one that can constrain the Houthis' military capabilities and ambitions. This may seem like a heavy lift, but it would be far more cost-effective than the alternative. In the absence of such efforts, the Houthis will recover and regroup, and may soon present much the same security threat that provoked the Trump administration's campaign in the first place.

A rough ride

The United States first began striking the Houthis under President Joe Biden, who launched a limited campaign of airstrikes in January 2024 to respond to the group's attacks on ships (linked to Israel) in the Red Sea and specifically to its attack on a U.S. warship. The Biden administration sought a calibrated strategy: the aim was to retaliate for the Houthi attacks without intensifying the conflict, causing civilian casualties, or triggering greater regional escalation with Iran. By contrast, Trump was far more aggressive, lambasting Biden for a "pathetically weak" response to the Houthi threat.

Operation Rough Rider has been the Trump administration's biggest and most costly military intervention to date. It involved more than 1,000 strikes against a broad array of Houthi targets, including weapons depots, command-and-control facilities, air defense systems, critical infrastructure, and Houthi leaders. To carry out this ambitious operation, the administration deployed two aircraft carrier strike groups, MQ-9 Reaper drones, and B-2 Stealth bombers, as well as Patriot and THAAD air defenses.

Beyond dramatically stepped-up airstrikes, the administration also ramped up economic and political pressure. In March, it redesignated the Houthis as a foreign terrorist organization, which carries heavy economic and diplomatic penalties. The FTO designation has choked the banking system in Houthi-controlled areas, restricted its ability to import fuel, and also rendered elements of a proposed UN-backed agreement to end the war, which was being negotiated before the Houthi's Red Sea attacks began, impossible to implement.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

The study found minimal overlap between the lists, suggesting the official figures significantly undercount the actual death toll.

Based on their analysis, the real number of the dead could be 46% to 107% higher than what the ministry currently releases.

If this pattern has held since last June, the true number of people killed in Gaza could range between 77,000 and 109,000, amounting to roughly 4–5% of the population before the U.S.-backed genocidal war.

According to the ministry's data, which international organizations have stated as reliable, most of the genocide victims have been women and children.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

US and Saudi Arabia sign \$142bn military deal



U.S. President Donald Trump has received a royal welcome after arriving in Saudi Arabia, his first stop of a three-day regional tour.

The White House says the two countries inked a \$142bn defense sales agreement as part of a \$600bn Saudi investment commitment.

"We like each other a lot," Trump says during talks with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The two leaders have also met a long list of major U.S. business executives who are also in Riyadh for a Saudi-U.S. investment forum.

After Saudi Arabia, Trump is due to visit Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile, David Sacks, the White House's AI and crypto tsar, has defended Trump's move to open up AI technology exports to allies, as several Persian Gulf firms reportedly pursue deals with U.S. counterparts.

Speaking at the Saudi-U.S. Investment Forum in Riyadh, Sacks said a Biden-era regulation, which the Trump administration has announced plans to roll back, "restricted the diffusion or proliferation of American technology all over the world".

"[Diffusion] is not a risk with a friend like Saudi Arabia at all," said Sacks, a close friend of Musk.

WHO warns of permanent effect of starvation on a generation of Palestinians

Malnutrition rates are rising in Gaza and hunger could have lasting effects on "an entire generation", the World Health Organization's representative for the Occupied Palestinian Territory says.

Rik Peeperkorn said he had seen children in clinics who looked years younger than their age.

"Without enough nutritious food, clean water and access to healthcare, an entire

generation will be permanently affected," Peeperkorn told a news briefing by video link from Deir el-Balah, warning of poor health, stunting and impairing cognitive development.

No food has been allowed into Gaza for more than two months, as Israel presses its devastating blockade of the Strip.

Israel has admitted to withholding food, water and other life-sustaining supplies from the enclave as a pressure tactic to get Hamas to release the remaining Israeli captives.

Released prisoners speak of torture in Israeli jails

Over the past few weeks, Israel has repeatedly released a group of Palestinians while providing no explanation.

The prisoners who arrived at Al-Aqsa Hospital here in Deir el-Balah looked visibly exhausted and dehydrated. They told Al Jazeera about the horrific acts of torture they suffered in Israeli jails and called for the release of more prisoners.

Meanwhile, Al Jazeera has received reports of more attacks by Israel. In the Shujayea neighbourhood in Gaza City, a group of people, including children who were fetching flour, were attacked by Israeli drones.

The Israeli military is also detonating huge explosions in the southern city of Rafah as part of its demolition plan aimed at expanding a buffer zone.

Israel expects 50% of Gazans to flee during full-scale assault

Israel expects half of Gaza's 2.3 million people to leave as its military prepares an all-out assault in the next few days to defeat Hamas once and for all, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warns.

Meanwhile, Omar Rahman, a fellow at the Middle East Council on Global Affairs, says President Trump's visit to the region has raised many questions about Israel's war on Gaza and the U.S. relationship with its staunchest ally.

With the U.S. holding direct talks with Iran, Hamas, and the Houthis in Yemen without Israeli input, many observers are wondering where Israel's Netanyahu-led government currently stands with the U.S. Trump administration.

"There's been a lot of talk that Trump might recognize a Palestinian state. Obviously, that would be a huge breakthrough, a huge development," Rahman told Al Jazeera.

Israeli strike kills Palestinian journalist receiving treatment in Gaza hospital



Mourners walk in the funeral procession of Palestinian journalist Hassan Eslaih, killed at dawn in an Israeli strike on the surgeries building of Nasser Hospital, in Khan Younis [Eyad Baba/AFP]

An Israeli drone strike killed Palestinian journalist Hassan Islayeh while he was receiving treatment in the Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis on Tuesday, Middle East Eye reported.

Islayeh, a prominent field reporter and director of the Alam24 news agency, had been recovering from injuries sustained in a previous Israeli air strike last month that targeted a media tent near the same hospital.

That attack killed two journalists and wounded several others.

The earlier strike appeared to target Islayeh directly, hitting his mobile phone, but he survived the incident.

Local media described Tuesday's attack as a "deliberate assassination", noting that he was struck again while being treated in the hospital's burns unit.

Temple within UNESCO-listed Tchogha Zanbil restored



TEHRAN – The first phase of a specialized conservation and restoration project on the Inshushinak Temple, located on the first floor of the Tchogha Zanbil Ziggurat in Khuzestan province, has been successfully completed, a cultural heritage official announced on Monday.

Atefeh Rashnoei, Director of the Tchogha Zanbil and Haft Tappeh World Heritage Base, said the project was carried out in line with international standards for the preservation of earthen heritage structures, focusing on authenticity, integrity, and long-term stability.

Rashnoei emphasized that the conservation work prioritized minimal intervention, the use of compatible and homogeneous materials, and continuous monitoring of existing damages to ensure the temple's current condition is stabilized and future deterioration is prevented.

This project aimed to preserve the authenticity of the materials and structure, enhance the legibility of the temple's architectural form, and extend the building's lifespan while mitigating potential threats, she explained.

Discover Shurgol wetland: a sanctuary for birds, wildlife, and nature lovers



TEHRAN – Shurgol wetland in northwest Iran is a favored destination for nature lovers and eco-tourists due to its rich biodiversity and unique landscapes.

Positioned at an elevation of 1,286 meters above sea level, Shurgol is situated near the city of Naqadeh in West Azarbaijan province. It stands as one of the area's most captivating natural treasures.

The property was designated as a protected area under the Ramsar Convention in 1975. It is home to a wide variety of rare plant and animal species, making it a valuable ecological hotspot.

Spanning around 1,400 hectares, this ecologically rich wetland is located west of the Urmia–Mahabad highway, only a short

The project adhered strictly to theoretical principles of conservation, including the Venice Charter and the ICOMOS guidelines for the preservation of earthen architecture, the official explained.

Believed to have been built around 1250 BC during the Elamite era, the Inshushinak Temple is one of the most significant components of the Tchogha Zanbil Ziggurat, itself one of the world's largest mudbrick structures and among the earliest UNESCO World Heritage sites listed in Iran. The temple is dedicated to Inshushinak, the chief deity of Susa, and is a prime example of Elamite architectural mastery.

Rashnoei highlighted that in situ conservation—protecting the temple in its original location—was a central approach of the project, ensuring that historical layers remain undisturbed while enabling a deeper understanding of the monument's evolution within its natural and cultural context.

“The conservation of the Inshushinak Temple marks another step toward the sustainable safeguarding of this extraordinary global heritage site,” she noted, adding that the project reinforces the commitment to the long-term preservation of the Tchogha Zanbil complex, ensuring its values endure for future generations.

Tchogha Zanbil, also known as the Ziggurat of Dur-Untash, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1979 as Iran's first entry. The site continues to draw international attention as an outstanding representation of Elamite civilization and its architectural achievements.

five-kilometer distance from the renowned Lake Urmia.

The property, aka Shurgol Hassanlu, supports more than 50 species of plants, including reeds, bulrushes, and even carnivorous plants that thrive in its unique aquatic environment. However, the true highlight of Shurgol wetland lies in its diverse fauna. The wetland provides habitat for over 200 animal species, including 194 species of birds such as various ducks, herons, and terns. In addition to its avian inhabitants, mammals such as foxes, wolves, and jackals, along with rare reptiles like snakes and frogs, can also be found in this extraordinary ecosystem.

One of the most fascinating features of the wetland is the presence of the “living fossil” triops, a prehistoric species of tadpole shrimp that has survived for millions of years, offering visitors a glimpse into Earth's ancient past.

With its mild climate, breathtaking natural scenery, and vibrant biodiversity, the wetland provides an exceptional opportunity for birdwatching, eco-tourism, and exploration of wetland ecosystems. It remains not only a vital refuge for wildlife but also a symbol of Iran's commitment to conserving its natural heritage under international frameworks such as the Ramsar Convention.

Rosewater distillation festival underway in Karaj

TEHRAN—Rosewater distillation festival is underway in Karaj's Parsian Shopping Center, Alborz province, said the caretaker of Alborz Cultural Heritage, Tourism, Handicrafts Department.

Nader Zeinali also said that the festival began on May 13 and will run until June 2 from 4-11 p.m., CHTN reported.

He added that 40 stalls dedicated to handicrafts, souvenirs, and local products have been launched at the fairground.

Three stalls have been allocated to traditional beverages and rosewater distillation process, he said. Three rosewater distillation pots have been set up there, he added.

Two music groups from clans of Lor, Kord, Tork, Kormanj, Gilaki, and Daf players perform music during the festival, he pointed out.

Zeinali said the aim behind holding such events is to revive ancient traditions, support the artisans and local producers, and create a lively social atmosphere.

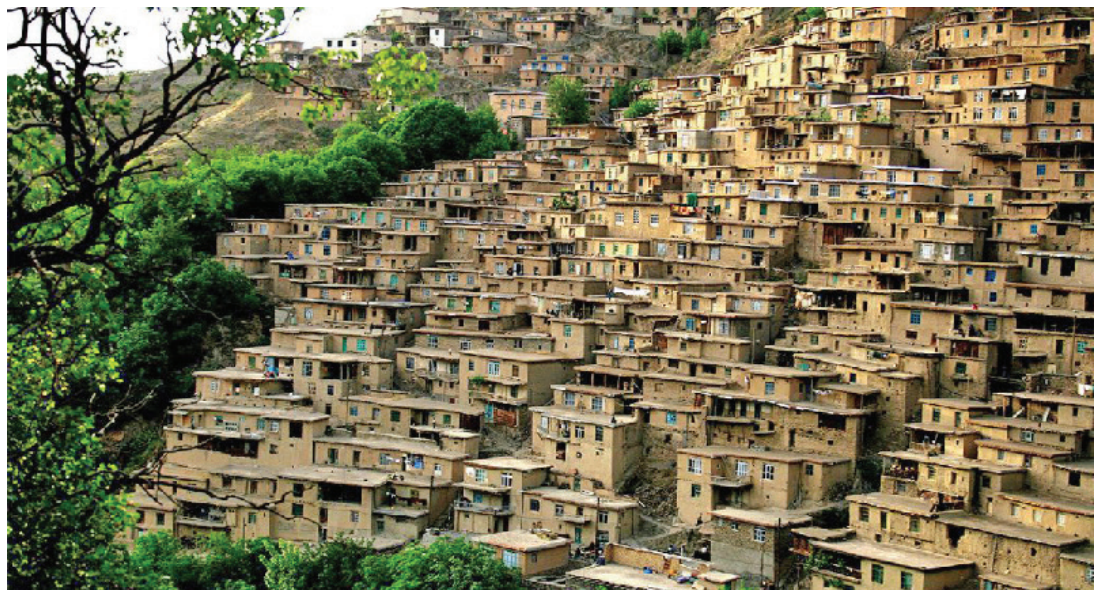
Iranian village showcased as sustainable tourism model at BRICS meeting

TEHRAN – The historic stepped village of Palangan in Iran's Kord-estan province was introduced as a successful example of sustainable tourism that preserves local culture and heritage during a BRICS meeting held in Brazil on Monday.

Addressing the meeting, Seyyed Mostafa Fatemi, Director General of Domestic Tourism Development at Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, highlighted Palangan's significance at the session attended by member countries, including China, Brazil, South Africa, India, Russia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Indonesia.

During the session, a video presentation showcased the unique architecture and cultural fabric of Palangan, underlining its achievements in developing domestic tourism through active local community participation while preserving its historical and environmental values.

Fatemi emphasized the important role that tourism-focused villages play in advancing



sustainable development goals, describing Palangan as a leading example of Iran's efforts to balance tourism growth with environmental conservation and the strengthening of indigenous cultural identities.

“In recent years, the Ministry has prioritized villages with significant cultural and natural po-

tential, adopting a balanced and sustainable approach to tourism development,” Fatemi noted. “The introduction of such projects at international forums reflects these efforts.”

Additionally, Palangan has been selected as one of Iran's eight candidates for the 2025 edition of the Best Tourism Villages global

competition, further cementing its status as a model for sustainable rural tourism.

The BRICS is a forum for cooperation among a group of leading emerging economies. It includes 10 countries – Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Arab Emirates.

Russian visitors connected to Iranian shopping terminals via Mir Pay application

TEHRAN—Card payment networks between Iranians and Russians were connected on May 13, based on which Russian citizens can shop from Iranian shopping terminals through using the Mir Pay application, said the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Iran, Asghar Abolhasani Hastiani.

The application gives a secure shopping experience in the other country, he said, ISNA reported.

Addressing the unveiling ceremony for the second phase of connecting Russia's Mir payment network and Iran's Shetab payment system, he noted that this project is a great measure toward increasing financial cooperation.

He explained that it has been designed in three phases. The first phase was inaugurated successfully to facilitate financial transactions between the citizens of the two countries, he said. The first phase provides the possibility of using bank cards of Iran, which are under Shetab network, in Russian ATMs for tourists, he added.

In this way, now Iranian tourists can easily receive ruble notes from Russian ATMs using the rial balance of their Shetab cards, he pointed out.

The third phase of the project is under prog-



ress, he mentioned.

He expressed the hope that the project will improve the shopping experience of citizens of both nations. In addition, it can be considered a model for international economic cooperation in the region, he said.

Speaking at the same gathering, Nooshafarin Momen Vaghefi, vice governor of Central Bank of Iran for IT technology affairs, said since implementation of this project, nearly two million banking withdrawals have been made by 100,000 Iranian users in Russia.

In the second phase of the project, destinations cities of Russian tourists have been

identified in Iran with cooperation of Tourism Ministry, she said.

The Mir Pay application can be used by Russian tourists in 165,000 spots across Iranian tourist cities, which can be viewed on the Shaparak information database, she added.

Integration of the two countries' banking subsystems is a big step towards creating integrated economic cooperation in the region, completing the de-dollarization process and facilitating economic and tourism relations between Iran and Russia.

By connecting the national payment networks of the two countries, the borders of electronic payments will be removed and a new chapter will begin in the economic and cultural cooperation of the two nations.

In April 2024, the Iranian Foreign Ministry announced that the project to use Mir cards had entered the implementation stage. In May 2022, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said that the countries were discussing how to connect the Mir and Shetab payment systems.

Iran and Russia have been taking serious steps to boost their mutual trade over the past few years.

Remnants of Sassanid architecture identified in Urmia mosque

TEHRAN—Remnants of Sassanid architecture have been identified during archeological excavations at the Jameh Mosque of Urmia in West Azarbaijan province, the provincial tourism chief said.

Morteza Safari added that the West Azarbaijan Cultural Heritage Department, with cooperation and supervision of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage Department, has put on its agenda to conduct excavations at the place of worship, which is one of the oldest mosques of the Azarbaijan region, ILNA reported.

The mosque had been renovated during different eras, he said.

Safari said that Iran is a civilized nation with lots of monuments and sites. West Azarbaijan boasts valuable monuments, sites and hills, he added.

West Azarbaijan has close to 1,400 historical hills and sites, he mentioned. In addition, 1,835 historical monuments have been registered on the national heritage list, he said. It has five global monuments which have been registered on UNESCO's World Heritage List, he added.

Pointing to excavations conducted in Qalaichi (or Ghalay-chi) hill and Chaparabad dam, he said, “since the historical site of Qalaichi was being drained due to the construction of the Chaparabad Dam and was going underwater forever, we conducted serious studies and excavations in this area, which led to valuable results and finding prehistoric settlements.”

Apart from archeological excavations, he said 30 renovation projects were implemented by West Azarbaijan Cultural Heritage De-



partment during last Iranian year. Good works were done in the cultural heritage sector and tourism infrastructure via national and provincial credits worth 1,300 billion rials (\$1.4 million), he added.

He continued that there are 200 dossiers in registration queue.

Safari called the acquisition and release of several historical monuments in West Azarbaijan province important measures taken by West Azarbaijan Cultural Heritage Department. They were in the possession of other executive bodies, such as the Education Ministry, he added.

He explained that the 22nd Bahman School, which is located in Urmia's Imam Square, has an area of 4,000 square meters and a 2,400 square meter built-up area on three floors. Currently, it has turned into Urmia's museum, he added.

Safari pointed out to acquisition of Hedayat ancient school, adding that the school was turned into the House of Handicrafts after undergoing renovation measures.

In addition, Ansari Historical House, which dates back to the Qajar era, was taken over from Ministry of Education. Currently, the first phase of renovation has been conducted, he said, adding the second phase is to be restored this year.

Also, Maku's estate building, as one of historical monuments dating back to the late Qajar era, was placed at the disposal of the West Azarbaijan Cultural Heritage Department.

There are 1,400 hills and ancient sites which are protected by 50 protection unit staff, he said, adding that the staff is not enough for preserving the monuments. Therefore, people should take part and preserve their sites and monuments, he added.

China, UNAIDS to help Iran boost HIV rapid response

TEHRAN – In an effort to enhance the overall resilience of Iran's national AIDS program and HIV testing capacity, Iran's Health Ministry, the China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE), and the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) have convened a meeting to share expertise.

The two-day knowledge and experience-sharing meeting took place in Tehran on April 29-30, focusing on accelerating Iran's HIV response.

This multi-stakeholder engagement brought together more than 30 experts from the two countries and UNAIDS to explore pathways to establishing a domestic manufacturing capacity for HIV rapid diagnostics in Iran, which represents a sustainable pathway to eliminate the HIV testing gap in Iran.

This meeting was organized within the framework of a Joint Agreement signed between CICETE and UNAIDS in April 2024, funded by China's voluntary financial support within the South-South Cooperation framework.

The agreement, which is in line with the priorities of Iran's National AIDS Control Program and China's Global Development Initiative, combines supply chain, capacity development and knowledge exchange solutions to strengthen an important pillar of Iran's national HIV response, namely knowledge of HIV status, the first of the global 95-95-95 targets. This "first 95" is the key to controlling Iran's HIV epidemic.

The first of the United Nations' 95-95-95 targets to end the HIV



epidemic is for 95 percent of people living with HIV to know their HIV status by 2025. HIV testing is therefore essential to achieving "the first 95".

Setting the tone for the rich discussion were opening remarks from the UN Resident Coordinator in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Stefan Priesner; the UNAIDS Regional Director for the Asia-Pacific and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions, Eamonn Murphy; the Deputy-Director of China's National Center for STD/AIDS Prevention and Control (NCAIDS), Xu Peng; and the Advisor on International Affairs to Iran's Deputy-Minister of Health, Mohammad-Reza Rahbar.

This project not only manifests many of the core values of multilateralism but also paves the road for further collaboration between the I.R. Iran, the People's Republic of China and UNAIDS in the field of HIV and health.

It falls squarely within the frame-

work of biomedical and scientific cooperation between the two countries, announced by Iran's Minister of Health and Medical Education, Mohammad Reza Zafargandi, during his recent official trip to China.

National HIV testing campaign

In November 2024, the health ministry conducted a month-long national HIV testing campaign to raise public awareness and identify cases of the disease.

With the theme of 'I will take HIV test, too', the campaign started on November 10 with two main objectives, the health ministry's website reported.

First, since early diagnosis is important as it allows for the timely initiation of treatment, the campaign aimed to encourage individuals to take the test to detect HIV/AIDS infection among key populations.

The second main objective was to provide educational programs in community settings like city centers

and parks to raise public awareness about HIV.

Human immunodeficiency virus is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. It targets the body's white blood cells, weakening the immune system. This makes it easier to get sick with diseases like tuberculosis, infections, and some cancers. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) occurs at the most advanced stage of infection.

Despite all the measures taken in the country so far, there are still many challenges to be addressed. One of the main challenges is the lack of HIV-detecting programs to address the spread of the disease.

UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Program (WFP), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Women, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Bank—works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.

SOCIETY

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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Iran attending 9th meeting of SCO education ministers

TEHRAN – Science Minister Hossein Simaei-Sarraf is participating in the ninth meeting of education ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states, which was held on May 12 and 13 in Urumqi, China.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the official paid a visit to an exhibition, titled Study in China, Brand Identity and Comprehensive Service Platform', showcasing the latest educational, research, and technology achievements of over 20 Chinese universities in different sectors such as agriculture, industry, oil, and petrochemical.

Science ministers of other SCO member states, including China, Belarus, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan, also visited the exhibition, which primarily aimed to boost relations between industry and universities.

The official also participated in the opening ceremony of the 'China-Central Asia industrial, educational, and applied research cooperation 2025 conference', which was held in the presence of some science ministers from the SCO member states.

The event served as a platform for science ministers and the chancellors of Chinese universities to share knowledge and experiences on how to foster cooperation between universities and industry, and propose some of their collaborative projects.

Along with his Chinese counterpart, Yin Hejun, Simaei-Sarraf attended the opening ceremony of the SCO University Conference. The event was attended by education ministers of SCO member states, experts, and scientists specializing in the development of educational contacts within the Organization.

There are 74 universities in the SCO University network, including Shahid Beheshti University of Iran, with more than 2,600 students. Creating and granting scholarships to students of the SCO member countries is one of the main activities of this university. Holding a borderless education week for member universities was another focus of the event.

In 2024, Iran participated in the 8th meeting as a full member for the first time after 20 years of being an observer country.

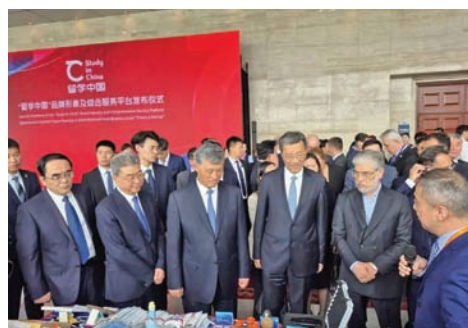
Iran, China underline further enhancing scientific ties

During a meeting held on Tuesday, Chinese Education Minister Huai Jinpeng and Simaei-Sarraf explored paths for the expansion of the educational collaborations between the two countries.

Recognizing Iran's capabilities and high ranking in science and technology, the Chinese official voiced his country's willingness to deepen cooperation between Iran and China by offering training in Persian and Chinese languages as well as facilitating professor exchanges.

"China has so far granted academic scholarships to over 200 Iranian students. The country is willing to attract more Iranian students and have more Chinese students in Iran," he added.

Huai also expressed China's readiness to devel-



op an electronic education platform to enhance educational relations with Iran.

For his turn, Simaei-Sarraf underscored the scientific, cultural, technological, and philosophical commonalities between the two nations, saying that increased interactions among elites will contribute to addressing people's problems and enhancing relations between the two countries.

Highlighting Iran's remarkable progress in science and engineering, particularly in biology, nanotechnology, stem cells, information technology, water engineering, dam and power plant design, aerospace, and medical sciences, he said that Iran is one of the 10 top countries with strategic science and technology in the world.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Simaei-Sarraf stressed the importance of expanding student exchange programs between Iran and China and facilitating sabbatical leave opportunities for faculty members and postgraduate students.

Strategic partnership

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

During a meeting held on April 11 in China, Saeed Habiba, the deputy minister of science, research, and technology, and Sheng Jianxue, the secretary-general of the China Scholarship Council, discussed ways for developing scientific cooperation between the universities of the two countries.

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

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

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

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

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

‘Organ Donation, Life Donation’ week to be marked

TEHRAN – The national ‘Organ Donation, Life Donation’ week will kick off on Thursday and wrap up on May 21.

Each year, the health ministry observes the week focusing on a specific theme to highlight and promote the culture of organ donation following brain death as a therapeutic, social, cultural, and even religious mission that can save the lives of patients in need of organ transplantation.

This year, the week is scheduled to be held under the theme ‘promoting the culture of organ donation after brain death’, the health ministry's website reported.

Each day of the week highlights a particular issue.

Thursday, May 15, 'Importance of organ donation in saving up lives, and improving patients' quality of life'

Friday, May 16, 'Education, an effective component in raising public awareness on organ donation after brain death'

Saturday, May 17, 'Comprehensive information and promotion of organ donation culture following brain death'

Sunday, May 18, 'Interaction, empowerment and enhancement of participatory approaches of governmental and non-governmental organizations regarding organ donation and transplantation'

Monday, May 19, 'Organ donation coordinators: the key pillar of organ transplantation'

Tuesday, May 20, 'Organ donors' families: the

most sublime humans in terms of sacrifice and forgiveness'

Wednesday, May 21, 'The National Organ Donation, Life Donation Day'

Shiraz hosting Eurasian-Iranian organ transplant congress

The fourth annual Eurasian-Iranian organ transplant congress is being held in Shiraz from May 13 to 15.

Hosted by Abu-Ali-Sina Transplant Center, some 80 national and international professors and experts from Iran, Spain, Belarus, the USA, Russia, Belgium, Lebanon, and Austria will deliver speeches in person or online, ILNA reported.

Some 50 participants from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, India, Kuwait, Spain, Sweden, Italy, Turkey, and other countries are attending the congress.

"Abu-Ali-Sina is a unique medical center in terms of rates and success in transplant surgeries," ILNA quoted Ali Malek-Hosseini, known as Iran's father of liver transplant, as saying.

Unlike any other medical center around the world, some 98 percent of kidney transplants in Iran and at this center are performed from a brain-dead donor. It is really important as many countries make use of live donors for kidney transplantation, he noted.

The 'Great Ceremony of Life' will be observed as a concluding event to honor the family members of brain-dead patients.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Special clinic to relieve bereaved coronavirus families

A special clinic will be opened for the first time in the country to provide free psychological services to families who have lost their loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The clinic is called "Soog" (literally meaning mourn) will be inaugurated at Shahid Beheshti Educational and Medical Center in Zanjan province on Wednesday.

The outbreak of coronavirus has changed the lifestyle of many families, Ehsan Fakoor, head of the mental health department of Zanjan University of Medical Sciences said.

Sudden changes in life cause stress, while the coronavirus itself has doubled the stress due to its contagion and the number of lives it has claimed in the world to date, he regretted.

‘کلینیک سوگ’ برای خانواده‌هایی که اعضای خود را بر اثر کرونا از دست داده‌اند

رئیس گروه بهداشت روان دانشگاه علوم پزشکی زنجان از افتتاح نخستین کلینیک سوگ در کشور برای ارائه خدمات رایگان روان‌شناختی به خانواده‌هایی که اعضای خانواده خود را به دلیل ابتلا به کرونا از دست داده‌اند خبر داد و اظهار کرد: این کلینیک ۲۳ همراه امسال در مرکز آموزشی درمانی شهید بهشتی زنجان کار خود را آغاز خواهد کرد.

فکور با بیان اینکه شیوع ویروس کرونا باعث شده است تا سبک زندگی بسیاری از خانواده‌ها دچار تغییر شود، ادامه داد: ایجاد تغییرات ناگهانی در زندگی باعث ایجاد استرس می‌شود، این در حالی است که خود ویروس کرونا به دلیل واگیردار بودن و نیز آمار فوتی‌هایی که تا به امروز در دنیا به جا گذاشته، این استرس را دوچندان کرده است.



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**
Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 43051601
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 43051505
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051430



No. 18, Moghadasi Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.o. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

MAY 14, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The sin which makes you sad and repentant is more liked by Allah than the good deed which turns you arrogant.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:21 Dawn: 3:22 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:00 (tomorrow)

“Tehran Times Reports...”: a look at Iran’s history through pages of Iranian daily



A view of “Tehran Times Reports...” exhibition

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN – Last week, in celebration of Tehran Times’ anniversary, an exhibition was inaugurated, offering visitors a rare glimpse into the newspaper’s historic journey over the past forty-six years.

The exhibit, now on display at the City Journalists’ House in Tehran, presents a curated collection of front pages and archival materials spanning the last four decades, with a special focus on the 1980s. It highlights some of the most pivotal moments in Iran’s modern history, providing a vivid snapshot of a transformative era.

But this exhibition is more than just a display of old newspapers; it functions as a living archive, offering visitors a distinctive window into the country’s past. The carefully selected pages, primarily from the 1980s, showcase the era’s unique graphic styles and key news stories that shaped the nation. These pages have been digitized, restored, and enlarged for display on the walls, allowing visitors to appreciate the details and design elements that defined that significant decade.

This visual display offers a brief but powerful journey through Iran’s turbulent and transformative decade—a period marked by upheaval, war, and significant political change. The 1980s in Iran was a time when every day’s newspaper seemed to carry a special edition, reflecting the intense political and social currents sweeping the country.

Beyond the political headlines, the exhibition offers glimpses into social and cultural trends. By examining the articles, the illustrations, and the overall aesthetic of the pages, visitors can piece together a richer understanding of the era’s preoccupations, hopes, and challenges.

More than just a historical record, the exhibition serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring role of journalism in shaping public discourse and understanding. The Tehran Times, through its decades of reporting, has undoubtedly played a key role in this narrative. The exhibition invites visitors to ponder the trajectory of Iranian society and the evolving role of media. It is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to understand the complexities of Iran’s past.

Cartoon of Day



International Inaction

Cartoonist: Anne Derenne from France

Exhibition of winning shots from global photo competition opens in Tehran

TEHRAN – An exhibition showcasing the selected works of young photographers from across the globe opened at the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization in Tehran on Monday.

Organized in collaboration with the Mehr Media Group, the exhibition displays works chosen from the 2024 Andrei Stenin International Press Photo Contest, providing an opportunity to view innovative and creative images that offer a fresh perspective on the hidden and visible truths of the contemporary world.

The opening ceremony featured speeches by Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati, the CEO of Mehr Media Group, and Rafael Gevorkyan, Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Tehran. Rahmati emphasized the significance of the event, stating: “Today’s exhibition is more than just the opening of a photo collection; it’s a window into the human experience—each photograph narrates a story—sometimes of suffering, sometimes of hope, but always of humanity.”

He highlighted the focus on young photographers from around the world, saying: “In a world where opportunities are often confined to a select few, these young talents, with their brave, precise, and daring visions, have managed to capture the spirit of their times through the language of images.”

Rahmati also noted the growing collaboration between Mehr Media Group and Russian media outlets, adding: “This international photo exhibition has



The CEO of Mehr Media Group, Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati (L), and the Chargé d'affaires of the Russian Federation in Tehran, Rafael Gevorkyan, visit the exhibition of selected works from the Andrei Stenin International Press Photo Contest at Tehran's Art Bureau on May 12, 2025.

roots in a continuous and deep partnership between Iranian and Russian media. Over recent years, Mehr has established close and constructive relations with outlets such as Rossiya Segodnya, TASS, and TV BRICS. These relationships go beyond mere projects, fostering mutual understanding, strategic co-operation, and joint efforts on global issues.”

For his part, Gevorkyan also emphasized the enduring ties between Iran and Russia. “We have been neighbors, are neighbors, and will remain so—this is divine will. Therefore, our collaborations should grow deeper and broader each day,” he mentioned.

The exhibition, which will run for one week, displays works

reflecting themes such as human issues, environmental crises, contemporary conflicts, the beauty of our planet, as well as resilience, hope, and solidarity among diverse peoples worldwide. The exhibition is not only a platform for viewing compelling documentary and creative photography but also a space for dialogue and reflection about our global surroundings.

The Andrei Stenin International Press Photo Contest is an annual competition dedicated to young photojournalists aged 18 to 33, aimed at nurturing and highlighting emerging talent. Founded in 2014 and named in honor of the Russian photojournalist who tragically lost his life while on assignment, this con-

test remains the only one of its kind in Russia focused on discovering new voices in the field of international photojournalism.

This prestigious event, recognized as one of the leading photographic competitions in Russia, received over two thousand entries from 36 countries last year.

An international jury comprising prominent media experts and renowned photographers selected 30 final winners. This year’s winners hail from ten countries: Bangladesh, the United Kingdom, Spain, India, Italy, China, Myanmar, Russia, Syria, and South Africa. Notably, in previous years, young Iranian photographers have also achieved top placements in this global contest.

Iranian, Japanese choreographers to collaborate in performance project

TEHRAN-Iranian director and choreographer Kamyar Salehpour will collaborate with Dai Matsuoka, the Japanese Butoh artist and a member of the Sankai Juku troupe, in a joint project.

According to the media and publicity consultant of the play Sara Haddadi, the performance, produced by Mohammad Hossein Tootoonchian, will be staged in the second half of the year.

Regarding the joint event, Salehpour said: “The main goal is to bridge different styles of choreography to create a new form of performance in the realm of movement and form. We also seek to provide an opportunity for mutual learning and growth.”

To select the final performers for this project, a joint workshop with the presence of

both designers will be held in 16 sessions. The chosen performers will be selected to play roles in this artistic production.

The collaboration aims to convey a message of solidarity and cultural exchange between Iran and Japan to the world, marking a starting point for more artistic collaborations between the two nations.

Kamyar Salehpour’s career as a theater and film director, choreographer, actor, performer, yoga instructor, and specialist in Eastern therapies and complementary medicine includes collaborations with prominent figures such as Bahman Farmanara, Arvand Dashtaray, Iman Afsharian, Mahan Heidari, Hamidreza Naeimi, and others.

He has also taught at institutions like 8mm Film School, Karnameh Institute, Mahan In-

stitute, Samandarian Academy, and Sima Tirandaz Academy. He has participated in training courses in Poland, Germany, China, Lebanon, India, Tibet, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Bulgaria, and more, and has held various workshops in cities across Iran as well as in China, Poland, Lebanon, and Turkey.

Dai Matsuoka is a Butoh master and choreographer based in Tokyo. He holds degrees from Kuwasawa Design School and the Faculty of Culture at Sophia University. He has been a member of the renowned Butoh dance troupe Sankai Juku since 2005, and has traveled to more than 30 countries with the company.

He also runs the organization LAND FES in Tokyo, producing site-specific choreography events and filmed content online.

Over 350 film industry professionals condemn silence over Gaza genocide in open letter

More than 350 renowned figures in the global film industry, including Richard Gere, Susan Sarandon, and Javier Bardem, published an open letter on the eve of the Cannes Film Festival condemning “silence” over the deadly impact of Israel’s ongoing military campaign in Gaza.

The letter, published on the website of France’s Libération newspaper on Monday evening, was headed “In Cannes, the horror Gaza must not be silenced”. It was addressed “For Fatem”, in memory of 25-year-old Gaza artist and photojournalist Fatima Hassouna, Deadline reported.

The young woman was killed in an Israeli airstrike in mid-April just 24 hours after it was announced a documentary exploring her life in the Gaza Strip would world premiere in the Cannes. Ten of her relatives, including her pregnant sister, were killed in same strike.

“She was a Palestinian freelance photojournalist. She was targeted by the Israeli army on April 16, the day after it was announced that Sepideh Farsi’s film “Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk,” in which she was the star, had been selected in the ACID section of the Cannes Film Festival. She was about to get married,” read the letter.

“Since the terrible massacres of October 7, 2023, no foreign journalist has been autho-

rized to enter the Gaza Strip. The Israeli army is targeting civilians. More than 200 journalists have been deliberately killed. Writers, filmmakers and artists are being brutally murdered.”

Eighteen months on, at least 52,600 people have been killed by Israeli military action, according to figures released by the Gaza health authority, while the 2.4 million population is also facing severe food shortages due to a two-month blockade of essential supplies by Israel.

Further signatories include Pedro Almodóvar, David Cronenberg, Costa-Gavras, Julie Delpy, Adèle Exarchopoulos, Jonathan Glazer, Yórgos Lanthimos, Mike Leigh, Viggo Mortensen, Ruben Östlund, and Mark Ruffalo among others.

The letter also highlighted the case of Palestinian filmmaker Hamdan Ballal, co-director of Oscar-winning documentary “No Other Land,” with Yuval Abraham, Basel Adra and Rachel Szor, who was attacked by Israeli settlers and then kidnapped by the army in late March, before being released under international pressure.

“The Oscar Academy’s lack of support for Hamdan Ballal sparked outrage among its own members and it had to publicly apologize for its inaction,” read the letter, referring

to a U-turn by the body.

The letter continued: “As artists and cultural players, we cannot remain silent while genocide is taking place in Gaza and this unspeakable news is hitting our communities hard. What is the point of our professions if not to draw lessons from history, to make films that are committed, if we are not present to protect oppressed voices?”

The signatories expressed regret over the silence of their peers and said: “We are ashamed of such passivity. Why is it that cinema, a breeding ground for socially committed works, seems to be so indifferent to the horror of reality and the oppression suffered by our sisters and brothers?”

“The far right, fascism, colonialism, racist, and Islamophobic movements are waging their battle on the battlefield of ideas, attacking publishing, cinema and universities, and that’s why we have a duty to fight,” the letter continued.

Film industry professionals ended the letter, calling for support. “Let’s refuse to let our art be an accomplice to the worst. Let us rise up. For Fatem, for all those who die in indifference. Cinema has a duty to carry their messages, to reflect our societies. Let’s act before it’s too late.”