

Joint Iran-Pakistan Efforts Needed to Halt Israeli Crimes in Gaza



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei meets with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Tehran on May 5, 2025.

Use of human shields by Israel violates Geneva Conventions: Iran Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN – Iran has sharply condemned Israel for using Palestinian civilians as human shields, calling it a “heinous war crime” and part of a broader campaign of genocide against the people of Gaza.

Citing reports from within Israel itself, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said the practice reflects a deliberate policy that violates international humanitarian law and must be prosecuted by international courts.

At his weekly press briefing on Monday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said: “Unfortunately, this appears to be true, and it is not surprising given the ongoing crimes we’ve witnessed in recent years. This practice is part of Israel’s systematic policy of genocide.”

Baghaei emphasized that such actions are clearly banned under the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

“The use of civilians as human shields is explicitly defined as a serious and heinous crime,” he said. “It is the duty of the ICC, the OIC, and the UN Human Rights Council to document these crimes and pursue accountability in an international tribunal.” ▶ **Page 3**

‘Enrichment is our right’: Iran’s youth rally behind nuclear program as talks continue

By Faramarz Kouhpayeh

Iranians have a deep-seated love for their country, and that’s a big reason why Iran’s been around for thousands of years. Whenever the nation is threatened, people from all walks of life tend to put their differences aside and come together to defend it. The world saw it when Macedonian king Alexander came knocking in 334 BCE, when the Arabs invaded in 633 CE, and again in the 1980s when Saddam Hussein attacked.

These days, maybe a foreign army isn’t the biggest worry, but Iranians are still fiercely protective of what they value, and right now, their peaceful nuclear program is something they hold pretty dear.

This commitment has been on full display in recent days. ▶ **Page 2**

Iran, Iraq emphasize expansion of railway, transit co-op

TEHRAN- During a meeting between Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Farzaneh Sadeq and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al Sudani in Baghdad, the officials emphasized on development of railway and transit cooperation between the two countries.

In welcoming the Iranian minister, the Iraqi prime minister emphasized the expansion of rail and transit cooperation between the two countries, especially in the development route project, and emphasized the necessity of completing the Shalamcheh-Basra rail project, considering it important for the transportation of passengers from the two countries and Central Asia, especially during the Arbæen pilgrimage.

The Iranian minister, who traveled to Iraq with the aim of developing transportation relations and visiting the Shalamcheh-Basra railway project, also met Iraqi Transport Minister Razaq Muhaybis al-Saadawi, and Interior Minister Abdul Amir Al-Shammari in her trip.

Sadeq had previously visited Iraq in September of last year alongside President Masoud Pezeshkian to push forward the Shalamcheh-Basra railway initiative. ▶ **Page 4**

“Killing children as a hobby”

By our staff writer

TEHRAN – Yair Golan, the former deputy chief of staff of the Israeli army, is quite right in saying that Israel is killing children in Gaza as a “hobby”.

This statement is made by a former senior general, not a civilian.

“A sane country does not wage war against civilians, does not kill children as a hobby, and does not engage in mass population displacement,” Golan said in an interview with local radio station Reshet Bet.

Golan also said the Netanyahu government has “no morals”.

The leader of the Democrats party also said, “The Jewish people, who have endured persecution, pogroms, and genocides throughout our history ... are the ones now taking actions that are utterly unconscionable.”

Jews themselves, who have suffered the Holocaust during World War II, are not expected to commit a Holocaust against another nation.

It’s Resistance and Liberation Day, not just “Liberation Day”!

By Sondoss AlAsaad

BEIRUT — Free-minded Islamic and partisan figures did not fail to express their warm congratulations to Lebanon on the 25th anniversary of Resistance and Liberation Day.

However, the government, under the control of the U.S. surveillance den (embassy) in Beirut, altered the term stipulated in Lebanon’s constitution (Decree No. 15215 dated September 27, 2005) from “Resistance and Liberation Day” to simply “Liberation Day.”

This is what the media, funded by some Persian Gulf sheikhdoms and anti-Resistance figures, did.

Over the past days, their political discourse has focused on the “illegitimacy” and “futility” of the resistance, neither south nor north of the Litani River, while legitimizing the systematic liquidation of Lebanese citizens, and the almost daily aggressive bombardment of civilian facilities by Israel.

Israeli jets bomb Gaza school

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Palestinian medics in Gaza report dozens of casualties after the occupation regime bombed a school.

Israeli occupation forces continue their genocidal war on the Gaza Strip, escalating attacks on civilians and shelter sites in a relentless campaign of destruction.

On Monday, Israeli warplanes bombed the Fahmi al-Jarjawi School in Gaza City’s Daraj neighborhood, igniting tents and killing at least 36 Palestinians.

Many victims were burned alive and many of those killed were women and children, including eleven members of a single family who perished in the brutal air raids. The death toll is expected to rise.

At the time of the strikes, the school was sheltering displaced families.

The airstrikes caused a massive fire inside the building, and rescue teams later recovered charred bodies, highlighting the extreme brutality of the attack.

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Iran among countries with advanced cancer treatment technology

TEHRAN – Launching the first national production line for electroporation systems, Iran has become the first country in Asia for advanced cancer treatment technology.

The inauguration ceremony of the Iranian-made device was held on Monday in University of Tehran, IRNA reported.

The homegrown electrochemotherapy ablation system (a new method of targeted treatment of cancerous tumors) is a significant achievement that relies mainly on domestic technical knowledge and global standards.

The electroporation system uses electrical pulses to enhance the permeability of cancer cells and significantly enhance the effectiveness of anti-cancer drugs. ▶ **Page 7**



More than 95% of Gaza’s agricultural land unusable, UN warns

Less than five percent of the Gaza Strip’s cropland is able to be cultivated, according to a new geospatial assessment from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT).

The FAO described the situation as “alarming” on Monday, warning that the destruction of agricultural infrastructure amid Israel’s war on Gaza is “further deteriorating food production capacity and exacerbating the risk of famine”.

The joint assessment found that more than 80 percent of Gaza’s total cropland has been damaged, while 77.8 percent of that land is now inaccessible to farmers. Only 688 hectares (1,700 acres), or 4.6 percent of cropland, remains available for cultivation.

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

The desire to have Iranian drones

In a note, Siasat-e-Rooz discussed the power and value of Iranian drones. It wrote: The manufacturing of drones in Iran dates back to the early years of the Islamic Revolution, when Iranian youth entered the battlefield without any knowledge, during the Sacred Defense years. Thanks to indigenous knowledge and reverse engineering of equipment, Iran benefits from a large and diverse fleet of drones. These drones don't cost a few million dollars. They are only a few thousand dollars.

They are so efficient that even major countries dream of having them. Iranian drones have been talked about for years, and many armed forces around the world have seen their efficiency. Some countries have also bought them. President Donald Trump, who had recently traveled to certain Persian Gulf Arab countries, pointed to the Iranian drones in Qatar in the presence of the heads of the largest American companies, describing them as: "Very good, fast and deadly."

Donya-e-Eqtasad: Government must restore the market's trust

In an analysis, Donya-e-Eqtasad addressed the market's reaction and political developments, especially the nuclear negotiations. It wrote: The market's behavior showed for the umpteenth time this year that the domestic market is optimistic about the political negotiations between Iran and the United States, and this is the most important and reliable indicator for strengthening the possible success of the negotiations.

This behavior is natural in the Iranian economy. In other words, it is understandable and acceptable. It seems that policymakers are not happy with this market behavior and view it as a negative signal in the negotiations, as well as a weakening of the Iranian side's bargaining power and as an abuse by the other side to impose its will on Iran.

However, the reality is that the government should see this role of the market not as a threat and a factor of weakness, but as a great and unique opportunity for internal consensus and national unity, as well as mobilizing the country's capacities in the field of diplomatic warfare, and make the necessary use of it during the negotiations and advancing political and economic goals. The government should use the return of market confidence in itself and its domestic policies and movements as an opportunity.

Iran ready to strike if Israel acts recklessly: Army chief

TEHRAN – Iran's top military commander has warned Israel against escalating tensions, stating that the Islamic Republic is fully prepared to retaliate decisively if provoked.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a ceremony unveiling an eight-volume encyclopedia on the Army's role in the Sacred Defense (period of Iran-Iraq war), Major General Seyyed Abdolrahim Mousavi, Commander-in-Chief of Iran's Army, dismissed Israeli threats as empty rhetoric.

"The Zionist regime is too insignificant to harm the greatness of Iran," he said. "In contrast, the power of the Islamic Republic can confront Israel and its backers with extraordinary challenges."

Referring to the recent wave of hostile statements by Israeli officials, Mousavi said, "If they are in a rush to receive another 'truthful promise,' we are fully ready to deliver an appropriate blow—and we will collect on what they owe us from before."

He further warned that the current Israeli regime lacks the judgment to avoid miscalculations. "They know they are not capable of withstanding the consequences of such challenges. But since the regime is currently run by child-killers and the irrational, any mistake is possible."

Last year, the Islamic Republic demonstrated its military might with Operation True Promise I and II, retaliatory strikes launched in response to Israeli aggression.

The operations, carried out using hundreds

Iran: Redefining neighborhood in new equations

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper discussed the visit of Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif to Tehran and said: Shahbaz Sharif has started a whirlwind diplomatic tour that began in Ankara, visited Tehran (on Monday), and then makes stops in Baku and Dushanbe. This trip, which is a sign of Islamabad's special approach to strengthening bilateral relations with key neighbors and allies, is taking place at a sensitive time given regional tensions. The presence of the Pakistani Prime Minister in Tehran is not just a stop on his regional tour; it is also a sign of the intersection of interests between the two countries in the security and economic fields, especially since the Pezeshkian government has tried to design a new model of bilateral relations and effectively counter efforts intended to harm Tehran-Islamabad relations. According to Mashallah Shakeri, the former Iranian ambassador to Pakistan, this visit is an important step in reviving ties between Tehran and Islamabad; ties that have sometimes been troubled by misunderstandings and geopolitical developments, but have always provided the opportunity to rebuild trust and strengthen ties.

Ettelaat: Why did Witkoff leave negotiating table with Iran?

In an article, Ettelaat analyzed Steve Witkoff's unconventional departure from the negotiations table in Rome by seeking the views of Mehdi Motaharnia, an analyst on international and political issues. He says: Witkoff's departure from the negotiations was unexpected and naturally a bad excuse to express a behavior that will send the message associated with his departure. This departure and its consequences indicate an issue that Witkoff had previously acknowledged that if Iran does not accept the United States' red lines, he will leave the negotiations. Based on what we are now observing, the negotiations have reached a very sensitive stage. These negotiations, which were held with the mediation of Oman, have reached a deadlock. If we want to focus on the main points of the negotiations, we can say that there is a difference over nuclear enrichment. Iran emphasizes its sovereign right to enrich uranium inside the country and believes that the Iranian government should be free to exercise this sovereign right, while the United States demands a complete halt to these activities.



Army Chief Commander Major General
Abdolrahim Mousavi

of ballistic missiles and drones, showcased Iran's ability to strike sensitive Israeli military and intelligence targets with surgical accuracy.

Iranian officials have underscored that the country only deployed a fraction of its firepower during the dual reprisal.

Iran has vowed to serve a "stronger response" to any further Israeli act of aggression against the country or its interests.

The Israeli regime has threatened to launch an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities in the coming months, amid indirect talks between Tehran and Washington over a potential nuclear agreement.

U.S. President Donald Trump has reportedly told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that Washington was, for now, unwilling to support any military action against Iran.

‘Enrichment is our right’: Iran’s youth rally behind nuclear program as talks continue



By Faramarz Kouhpayeh

Iranians have a deep-seated love for their country, and that's a big reason why Iran's been around for thousands of years. Whenever the nation is threatened, people from all walks of life tend to put their differences aside and come together to defend it. The world saw it when Macedonian king Alexander came knocking in 334 BCE, when the Arabs invaded in 633 CE, and again in the 1980s when Saddam Hussein attacked.

These days, maybe a foreign army isn't the biggest worry, but Iranians are still fiercely protective of what they value, and right now, their peaceful nuclear program is something they hold pretty dear.

For Iranians, uranium enrichment is not just policy — it's a matter of national pride

This commitment has been on full display in recent days. Hundreds of Iranian students have been touring the country in the past week to rally outside the country's nuclear facilities. They've gathered at sites including the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant near Qom, the Bushehr nuclear facility in the south, and a nuclear research cen-

ter in Karaj, west of Tehran. Most recently, they rallied outside the Natanz facility in Esfahan province, in central Iran.

"We're here for two reasons," said a 20-year-old female university student majoring in mechanical engineering. "First, to show our support for the Iranian negotiating team. And second, to make it clear that the youth of Iran stand firmly behind our nation's right to a nuclear program. We see this as a national asset, and the younger generations will not stand by and let it be dismantled."

The protests aren't happening in a vacuum—they come at a critical moment in Iran's diplomatic struggles. Since early April, Iran and the United States have been holding indirect talks, aiming to limit Tehran's nuclear activities in return for the termination of sanctions. From the start, Iran has stated clearly that it won't accept just any restrictions. The country intends to continue enriching uranium and will not dismantle any of its nuclear facilities. Despite Iran maintaining these positions for over two decades and repeatedly stating they are non-negotiable, the U.S. seems unwilling to respect these red lines, as its officials have been taking to mainstream media to publicly demand concessions on the nonstarters. This behavior, however, seems to have only strengthened public resolve.

"Uranium enrichment is non-negotiable, not just for this government but for any future one,"

Israel: A threat that jeopardizes US negotiations with Iran



Photo shows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a cabinet meeting

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – For over a month now, Iran and the United States have been holding indirect talks to explore the possibility of striking a new deal on Iran's nuclear program. Despite years of mutual distrust, increasing sanctions, and episodes of tension, both sides have shown renewed willingness to reach an understanding that would ease tensions and strengthen stability in a region long plagued by recurring conflicts.

However, these diplomatic efforts face a major obstacle in Israel's stance, which has ramped up its rhetoric and threats against Iran, clearly determined to block any agreement recognizing Tehran's sovereign right to a peaceful nuclear program. The U.S. administration also voices concern that any military action by Tel Aviv could trigger a regional escalation with unpredictable and far-reaching consequences.

For Tehran, these negotiations represent a legitimate opportunity to advance toward a fair deal acknowledging its right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes—a right backed by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), of which Iran is a signatory. Yet this process is systematically threatened by an Israeli strategy that, far from seeking diplomatic solutions, relies on constant confrontation and the exclusive use of forceful language.

This pattern is not new. During the negotiation of the JCPOA, the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran, the U.S., the P5+1 group, and the European Union, then Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu declared that "all dangers are small and insignificant compared to the danger posed by Iran's nuclearization." This statement sums up Israel's position: a total rejection of any agreement allowing Iran to maintain a peaceful nuclear program, coupled with a relentless campaign to sabotage it.

The fifth round of indirect talks between Iran and the U.S., held on May 23, unfolded amid reports from major media citing informed U.S. and Israeli sources warning that Israel was preparing for a possible strike on Iran's nuclear facilities. Meanwhile, several Israeli officials reiterated and intensified their threats—an ongoing pattern revealing a strategy based on pressure and intimidation aimed at undermining any diplomatic path.

Israel's proclaimed priority of preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons has long served to justify a policy of constant pressure, threats, and destabilizing actions in the region. Under the pretext of protecting its national security, the Israeli regime has systematically denied Iran's sovereign right to peaceful scientific and technological development, recognized internationally. Iran, as an NPT signatory subject to strict international oversight, has repeatedly shown a willingness to negotiate and accept verification mechanisms. By contrast, Israel—never a signatory to the treaty and possessing an undeclared nuclear arsenal—operates under a logic of exceptionalism that weakens the global nonproliferation architecture and undermines regional stability.



explained a graduate student in his mid-20s. "This is something we must maintain for future generations. We've lost so many scientists to assassinations over the years, and we've suffered greatly under sanctions. We can't simply abandon this because Trump is putting pressure on us."

The determination seen in Esfahan mirrors the broader national mood. Protesters carried signs reading "Enrichment is Our Right" and "We Will Stand by Our Country till the End."

Analysts argue that Iran's resilience on the matter is precisely why it holds any leverage at all. Amir Ali Abolfath, a North America affairs expert, notes that the U.S. only returned to negotiations because of Iran's nuclear capabilities. "If we lose this leverage, we lose everything," he said. "Even a new deal could meet the same fate as the JCPOA."

This strategic imperative is well understood by Iran's negotiating team, as highlighted in recent updates from Ebrahim Azizi, Chairman of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee. The team, led by Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, has kept lawmakers closely informed on the progress of talks.

"The briefings from the Foreign Minister and negotiators demonstrate a firm commitment to safeguarding Iran's national interests, preserving our nuclear industry, and advancing our strategic objectives," Azizi told Iranian media on Sunday.

The options discussed in Israeli power circles—from imposing a deal on Iran to military strikes—reveal a deeply belligerent strategy with no genuine interest in diplomacy or regional stability. Beyond realistic proposals, these alternatives express a desire to create hegemony in West Asia through isolation and relentless pressure on Tehran, systematically backed by the threat of force.

Under the rhetoric of an "integrated strategic objective," what is actually pursued is an aggressive, sustained campaign—military, political, and economic—intended to weaken the Iranian state, limit its legitimate influence in the region, and subject it to constant pressure. This logic, besides raising ethical dilemmas, heightens collective insecurity and perpetuates a cycle of confrontation that has already exacted a heavy toll on the region.

The options discussed in Israeli power circles reveal no interest in diplomacy or regional stability

From Israel's perspective, the ideal solution would be the total dismantling of Iran's nuclear program—the so-called "Libyan model." This formula implies Iran's complete subordination, a demand Tehran has firmly and consistently rejected. Despite attempts to portray Iran's program as a threat, Iran has maintained its peaceful nature and cooperated with international verification bodies on multiple occasions.

For Iran, the demand for dismantlement is a red line beyond the strategy—it's a matter of national dignity and sovereignty. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has reiterated that the nuclear debate is merely an excuse to pressure, isolate, and weaken the Islamic Republic with the ultimate goal of promoting political change in Tehran.

This stance is backed by historical precedents. The case of former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, who agreed in 2003 to dismantle his nuclear program in exchange for international normalization only to be overthrown years later with Western intervention, stands as a clear warning to Iran about the risks of surrendering without full guarantees respecting its sovereignty.

President Trump's decision to open a negotiating channel with Iran has unsettled Israel, where fears exist that the U.S. might not support a unilateral Israeli strike against Iran's nuclear sites, especially given the risk of regional escalation. Strategically, an Israeli attack without active U.S. backing would have limited impact, possibly delaying Iran's nuclear development by only about a year. Israel's increasing military operations don't guarantee success in such a complex context; on the contrary, unilateral action could accelerate Tehran's program and complicate diplomatic cooperation with Washington, jeopardizing joint efforts to reach a deal.

In this scenario, if no agreement is reached to limit Iran's nuclear progress and military force becomes an option, Israel would be forced to coordinate with the U.S., though such coordination does not necessarily guarantee Washington's active participation in any strike.

Nonetheless, Israel's current stance reveals the limits of its strategy, marked by a clear dependence on U.S. backing to sustain its aggressive policy. This dynamic shows that rather than seeking a diplomatic solution to end years of tensions, Israel is firmly betting on a military path, endangering not only regional stability but also the real possibility of a negotiated agreement that respects Iran's sovereign right to a peaceful nuclear program.

Therefore, at a time when diplomacy is showing promising signs, the international community must stay vigilant to prevent Israel's agenda—focused on confrontation and force, from destroying the opportunity to advance toward a negotiated solution that guarantees security and stability in the region.

Joint Iran-Pakistan efforts needed to halt Israeli crimes in Gaza: Leader

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, received Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday, engaging in a meeting that encompassed bilateral, regional, and international issues.

A great deal of the Leader's remarks focused on the Palestinian cause and how Islamic countries must join hands to put an end to the plight of the Palestinian people. He particularly emphasized the "special status" of Pakistan within the Islamic world and the necessity for impactful joint activities between Iran and Pakistan to halt the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza.

Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out that Pakistan has not joined the train of countries normalizing ties with Israel in a blatant betrayal of the Palestinian cause, despite constant Western badgering. "While there have been temptations for Islamic



President Pezeshkian receives Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif at the Sa'ad Abad Palace

uation in Gaza has reached a point where ordinary people in Europe and the United States are protesting their governments, yet unfortunately, some Islamic governments stand alongside the Zionist regime under these circumstances."

On the state of bilateral ties, Ayatollah Khamenei described them as having been "warm and brotherly"



Iranian and Pakistani delegations meet to discuss expansion of bilateral ties

countries to engage with the Zionist regime in recent years, Pakistan has never succumbed to these temptations."

He described the Palestinian issue as the foremost concern of the Islamic world and noted the dire conditions in Gaza, stating: "The sit-

throughout the decades. Referring to Pakistan's "commendable stance" during the 1980s Iraqi invasion of Iran as an example of this brotherly relationship, he assessed the current cooperation between the two countries in various fields as below expected levels and added: "The two

countries can assist each other in many areas, and we hope this visit will contribute to the comprehensive expansion of relations in various fields, especially economic, political, and cultural."

Sharif, for his part, expressed great pleasure at meeting with the Leader. He appreciated the positive role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in alleviating the crisis that arose between Pakistan and India and referred to recent developments regarding recent clashes, while mentioning Gaza: "Unfortunately, the international community is not taking any effective action to end the tragedy in Gaza."

The Prime Minister of Pakistan also expressed hope that his constructive negotiations in Tehran would pave the way for further strengthening relations between the two countries.

During another high-profile meeting, Sharif and President Masoud Pezeshkian pledged to expand economic, security, and cultural cooperation, while emphasizing the need for greater solidarity and connection among Muslim nations.

The discussions highlighted the deep historical and religious ties between the two neighbors, along with shared frustration over the

lack of economic integration in the Islamic world. "Europe has managed to erase borders and build a unified market, yet we're still struggling to establish basic trade and scientific partnerships," Pezeshkian said. "This isn't just a setback—it's a failure we must urgently address."

A major focus was boosting bilateral trade, which currently stands at a modest \$2 billion, far below what analysts believe is its potential. Sharif argued that with stronger banking links and political commitment, that figure could jump to \$10 billion. "Our shared history and resources demand closer collaboration," he insisted. "We can't allow outside forces to shape our future."

For years, economic opportunities between Iran and Pakistan have gone untapped. Pakistan's energy shortages could be eased by Iran's vast natural gas reserves, while Iranian manufacturers see huge potential in Pakistan's consumer market of 240 million people. Central to these plans is the long-stalled Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline, a \$7 billion project delayed for over a decade due to U.S. sanctions.

Security was another key topic. Both nations face persistent threats from terrorist groups, prompting an agreement to ramp up intelligence-sharing and counterterrorism efforts.

The border between Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan and Pakistan's Balochistan is home to both a bustling cross-border market and a gathering of foreign-backed terrorists who target security forces and civilians on both sides.

"Terrorism is our common enemy," Pezeshkian said. For his part, Sharif stated that Pakistan will never allow its soil to be used against Iran. "We are ready to have multifaceted cooperation with Iran in counterterrorism efforts," he added.

Golshadnezhad aims for gold at the World Karate Championships

TEHRAN – Atousa Golshadnezhad has expressed her determination to win a gold medal at the 2025 World Karate Championships.

She recently claimed gold at the 2025 AKF Senior Championships held on Saturday.

Golshadnezhad defeated Sevinch Otaboyeva of Uzbekistan 5-1 in the final of the Female Kumite -61kg category. Additionally, she secured a bronze medal in the team kata event.

In an exclusive interview with Tehran Times, Golshadnezhad shared her thoughts on the competition:

"In the individual events, I managed to reach the final by overcoming opponents from India, China, and Japan. In the final, I faced a competitor from the host country, which was very intense. Fortunately, I was able to win the match with a score of 5-1 and claim the gold."

"In the team division, we defeated Indonesia and China but narrowly lost to Kazakhstan. However, we defeated Chinese Taipei in the third-place match to secure the bronze medal," she continued.

"Thanks to this victory, I have secured my qualification for the 2025 World Championships. I hope to replicate this performance in Egypt and bring home the gold medal," Golshadnezhad added.

Regarding the possibility of karate returning to the Olympics, she said: "Why not? We always hope that this will happen." "I believe our team's performance was very good. Out of six quotas for women, we secured one gold, one silver, and two bronze medals, and obtained three confirmed spots for the World Championships. Overall, it's a positive result," she reflected on Iran's team performance.

Payam-e Noor win Asian University 3x3 Basketball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran's men Payam-e Noor defeated China to win the 7th Asian University 3x3 Basketball Championship.

The tournament brought top university teams from across Asia at the Putuo Sports Center from May 23 to 25.

Iran's women Payam-e Noor team also competed in the event.

The two-day competition was held in Putuo, Zhoushan, China.

Tractor to part ways with Tomislav Strkalj: report

TEHRAN – Tractor football team are reportedly set to part ways with their Croatian striker Tomislav Strkalj.

The 29-year-old forward scored eight goals for the Tabriz-based club, but the team is expected to part ways with him.

Media reports indicate that Strkalj has received offers from Iranian, Croatian, and Portuguese clubs.

He joined Tractor last season from Croatian club NK Slaven Belupo.

Luca Carvalho to leave 3x3 basketball team

TEHRAN – Iran basketball federation will likely part ways with Brazilian coach Luca Carvalho.

The Federation is dissatisfied with Iran's performance in the FIBA 3x3 World Cup Qualifier in Baku.

Team Melli suffered two losses against Montenegro and Rwanda in the qualification.

Iran failed to advance to the FIBA 3x3 World Cup under leadership of the Brazilian coach.

Iran draw with Japan in Asian Women's U16 Volleyball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran are drawn with Japan in Pool B of the 2nd Asian Women's U16 Volleyball Championship. After the men's U16 event in Thailand will come to a close on July 19, the focus will next turn to the 2nd AVC Women's U16 Volleyball Championship, the last AVC Championship of the year.

Featuring 16 teams, this tournament also offers three qualifying spots for the 2026 FIVB Girls' U17 World Championship.

Similar to the Asian Men's U16 event in Thailand, the 2nd Asian Women's U16 Championship in Jordan will be split into four pools of four teams each for the pool round-robin preliminaries.

After the preliminaries, the top two teams from each pool will next be divided into two pools – Pool E (for teams from Pool A and Pool C) and Pool F (for those from Pool B and Pool D). The same system will also be applied for classification 9th-16th places, with teams finishing 3rd and 4th places of each pool divided into Pool G (for teams from Pool A and Pool C) and Pool H (for those from Pool B and Pool D).

According to the Sunday's drawing of lots, hosts Jordan are in Pool A with 7th seeds Uzbekistan, Lebanon and Hong Kong China, while top seeds and title holders Japan, 6th seeds Iran, Saudi Arabia and Philippines are in Pool B. Pool C comprises 2nd seeds China, 5th seeds Kazakhstan, Qatar and Korea, with 3rd seeds Chinese Taipei, 4th seeds Thailand, Australia and India in Pool D. Hosts Jordan will kick off their campaign against Hong Kong, China on July 20, the opening day of the eight-day championship. Other matches on the same day will see Uzbekistan take on Lebanon, Japan play Philippines, Iran face Saudi Arabia, China face off against Korea, Kazakhstan meet Qatar, Chinese Taipei challenge India and Thailand take on Australia.

Following the Sunday's drawing of lots ceremony, the official results and sample match schedules have been distributed to the host federations in Vietnam, Bahrain, Thailand, and Jordan. These hosts federations have been requested to finalize the match schedules in accordance with local time and venue availability and submit them to AVC for approval. Once approved, AVC will proceed with final preparations to ensure the successful organization of all four championships.

Sadegh Moharrami linked with Lech Poznan

TEHRAN – Dinamo Zagreb right-back Sadegh Moharrami has been linked with a move to Polish league champions Lech Poznan.

Moharrami's contract is set to expire at the end of June and is unlikely to be renewed.

Lech have already extended an offer to the Iranian player, who is reportedly considering a move to Poznan. There, he would reunite with his national team colleague Ali Gholizadeh. This potential transfer is expected to bolster Lech Poznan's team as they gear up for European competition.

Moharrami, who has been a part of Dinamo Zagreb since 2018, is preparing to depart from the Croatian club after making 143 appearances and securing six national championships, a Croatian Cup, and two Croatian Super Cups.

The 29-year-old, with 32 caps for Team Melli and participation in the 2022 World Cup, is not contemplating a return to his home country.

Iran to play India in 2025 CAVA Nations League opener

TEHRAN – Iran will start the 4th Central Asian Volleyball Association (CAVA) Nations League with a match against India on May 29. Team Melli B have been drawn in Pool A along with Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and India. Pool B consists of Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan.

The event is set to ignite from May 29 to June 4 in Fergana, Uzbekistan.

Use of human shields by Israel violates Geneva Conventions: Iran Foreign Ministry

From Page 1 ► In a broader regional context, Baghaei condemned Israel's ongoing military campaign in Gaza, criticizing the regime's failure to uphold ceasefire commitments.

"It is disgraceful that not even a single truck of food has entered Gaza in recent months," he said, calling on the international community to take action.

"Israel's conduct clearly shows its goal is nothing short of the destruction of Palestine."

Iran reaffirms red lines in nuclear talks

Parallel to its condemnation of Israeli military tactics, Iran reiterated its firm stance on nuclear negotiations with the United States, ruling out any interim deal and stressing that uranium enrichment remains a non-negotiable right under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Baghaei reiterated that uranium enrichment remains a red line for Iran and an essential part of its peaceful nuclear program under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"An interim agreement has never been on our agenda, and for this reason, it has not come up in this round of talks either," he said, referring to the fifth round of indirect talks held in Rome on Friday. The negotiations were led by Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on the Iranian side and U.S. envoy for West Asia affairs Steve Witkoff, with Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi acting as mediator.

"Enrichment is integral to our civilian nuclear

program and falls within our legitimate rights. We will not retreat even slightly from this position," he asserted, emphasizing that Oman's proposals have so far respected Iran's red lines.

He also rejected suggestions that a regional nuclear consortium could replace Iran's domestic enrichment, stating: "While we welcome regional cooperation on fuel production, it can never replace our national enrichment capability."

Foreign Minister Araghchi, speaking after the Rome talks, described the discussions as "one of the most professional" rounds to date and noted that both sides would take proposals back to their capitals for further consultation.

Iran to continue diplomatic engagement with Europe

Responding to recent comments by the U.S. President Donald Trump, Baghaei reiterated that Iran has never pursued nuclear weapons.

"If the U.S. goal is to prevent weaponization, that is achievable. But if the intention is to strip Iran of its NPT-guaranteed rights, then this process will not succeed," he said.

He added that Iran remains open to dialogue with European powers and accused Israel-affiliated media outlets of spreading disinformation to derail negotiations.

"Much of what is reported in foreign media is fabricated by sources affiliated with the Zionist regime, aiming to undermine both Iran-Europe and Iran-U.S. talks," Baghaei claimed.

Decoding U.S. negotiation game

By Mohammad Ghaderi

TEHRAN – The reported U.S. refusal to present a written plan in five rounds of talks with Iran is part of a complex strategy based on game theory. According to this strategy, Washington, while maintaining ambiguity and without accepting responsibility, tries to unilaterally rewrite the rules of the game and keep its outcome in a halo of uncertainty.

Reports suggest that five rounds of indirect talks between Iran and the United States, mediated by Oman, have passed without the United States submitting a single

written proposal, while Iran, according to official announcements, has put a written and specific plan on the table to advance the talks.

Contrary to the rules governing game theory, the United States, by refusing to define fixed rules, seeks to transform this game into an open game with variable rules in order to maintain ambiguity and put itself in a position where it can leave the field of play at any moment or throw the ball into Iran's court.

But in contrast, Iran has attempted to steer the game toward a "closed game with a specific strate-

gy" by presenting a specific plan so that each side, while being committed and accountable, is forced to pay the political and legal cost of their behavior and decisions.

In fact, instead of taking responsibility, exchanging concessions, and accepting strategic costs, Washington behaves in a way that allows it to simultaneously handle several scenarios without accepting any commitment to any of them.

This pattern is reminiscent of tactical behaviors in which an actor tries to disrupt the decision-making power of the other side by hiding its goal,



Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei during a weekly press conference on May 5, 2025.

"We have proven in recent weeks that we are not wasting time. Our approach has been serious, principled, and aimed at reaching a fair agreement."

Iran-Russia strategic treaty to be implemented soon

The Foreign Ministry spokesman, referring to the latest status of the Iran-Russia strategic partnership, stated: "The strategic partnership agreement has already been approved by the Duma, and we have also placed it on the agenda with urgency. It was ratified by the Iranian Parliament this week and sent to the Guardian Council. We hope the agreement will be implemented in the coming weeks." Iran and Russia, as two close and strategic allies, have over the past years deepened relations in various fields, despite heavy Western sanctions.

plan, and priorities, while Iran tries to move the game from a "floating" to a "symmetrical" form by presenting a specific offer.

But what is the strategic goal of the U.S. with this behavioral pattern?

- To create an image of "diplomatic mobility" in the eyes of the public. As Trump said, "Serious progress has been made in the dialogue with Iran." While no documents have been provided.

- To test Iran's behavior without paying, or "free modeling" of Tehran's reactions.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran eyes new oil fields discovery with modern technology



TEHRAN - Iran is progressing ahead of its planned targets in oil exploration and aims to identify new — albeit smaller — oil fields by leveraging modern technologies, a deputy oil minister said on Monday, expressing hope that such developments could pave the way for greater private sector participation through IPC and other contractual frameworks.

Hamid Bovard, who also heads the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), made the remarks during a ceremony marking the anniversary of oil discovery in Iran, according to a statement from the Oil Ministry.

“Exploration is the first link in the oil and gas production chain,” Bovard said, emphasizing the need for historical documentation and archiving in the oil sector. “Iran’s exploration history is proud and illustrious, and I believe such efforts must be continued and strengthened within NIOC.”

He revealed that a dedicated book on Iran’s oil exploration efforts has already been compiled and should be finalized and published.

Bovard also underlined the importance of unconventional resources, such as shale oil. “Lorestan’s shale oil must receive serious attention,” he said, noting that while accessing

large oil fields has become increasingly difficult, many untapped fields still exist across the country.

Referring to the historical significance of Masjed Soleyman, Bovard said the discovery of oil in the city more than a century ago triggered sweeping political, economic, and social changes in Iran.

“If there has been economic progress in Iran over the past 117 years, over 50 percent of it is due to the oil industry,” he said.

Calling oil the “locomotive” of Iran’s economy, Bovard lamented that the resource has often borne the weight of the entire economy, instead of serving as a foundation for broader development. “With better planning and foresight, its role in the national economy could have been even more significant.”

He stressed that Masjed Soleyman “has done a great service to the Iranian people,” but noted the city’s current condition is far from ideal. He voiced hope that renewed efforts by the oil industry could help improve its fortunes.

According to Bovard, the government has approved a budget of 10 trillion rials (about \$20 million at the market exchange rate of 500,000 rials per dollar) for road infrastructure upgrades in Masjed Soleyman. He also welcomed plans for 3D seismic exploration in the region, targeting the deeper layers of the Gachsaran and Asmari formations.

“The oil wells in Masjed Soleyman are just 400 meters deep, and the region holds considerable untapped potential,” Bouard said. He called for a renewed outlook on the city’s future, adding that other oil-bearing layers in Ahvaz also remain underdeveloped.

TEDPIX gains 7,000 points on Monday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 7,000 points to 3.1 million on Monday, which is the third day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

The head of the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) has said that the capital market’s share in the national financing system is going to increase to 50 percent over the next five years, positioning it as a key engine of economic activity, employment, and industrial growth.

Hojatollah Seyedi said the organization’s 14th development plan includes targeted measures to stimulate production, starting with fiscal incentives embedded in the national budget.

He outlined two additional pillars of the government’s production strategy: implementation of the Law on Supporting Production and a five-part economic development plan currently being drafted by the Planning and Budget Organization (PBO).

Seyedi said new investment funds have been created within the capital market to support production, including Murabaha bonds aimed at financing small- and medium-sized enterprises.

He said the Securities and Exchange Organization is targeting a “50-50” financing mod-

el, balancing bank loans and capital market resources, over a four- to five-year horizon. “Initial public offerings in project-based companies have already begun, and infrastructure for Murabaha bond issuance is in place,” he said, noting a surge in applications from producers seeking bond issuance licenses.

In late March, the official outlined the five major plans for enhancing efficiency and transparency in the capital market in the current Iranian calendar year, which began on March 21.

Seyedi outlined five initiatives for the capital market this year, which include expanding the market through initial public offerings (IPOs), especially company-project listings, and increasing the capital of listed companies.

He expressed hope that the number of companies in the capital market would exceed 1,000 this year (currently there are over 700 companies).

Entrepreneurs and private companies are encouraged to take advantage of capital market opportunities, he emphasized.

He continued by explaining the second initiative: enhancing transparency, efficiency, and timely information dissemination in the capital market.

The third program focuses on improving corporate governance systems to ensure listed companies are better managed, achieving higher performance and increased profitability, all aligned with supporting production, the official added.

one in the Central Iranian Oil Fields Company’s operational area, one for the Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PE-DEC), one for Pars Oil and Gas Company, and one as part of a project completed and handed over to the client, he added.

Shafi’ee Makvandi said total drilling depth during the period reached 21,773 meters, marking an increase of 1,619 meters compared to the same period last year.

He also noted that 12 drilling rigs were re-located across operational zones during this period.

NIDC completes drilling of 20 onshore oil, gas wells in 2 months

TEHRAN - The National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) has completed the drilling and development of 20 onshore oil and gas wells during the first two months of the current Iranian year (March 20 – May 21), according to Shana.

Hamidreza Shafi’ee Makvandi, deputy head of NIDC for drilling operations, said the wells included four development and appraisal wells and 16 workover or completion wells.

Of the total wells drilled, 16 were located in oilfields operated by subsidiaries of the National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC),

Iran, Iraq emphasize expansion of railway, transit co-op

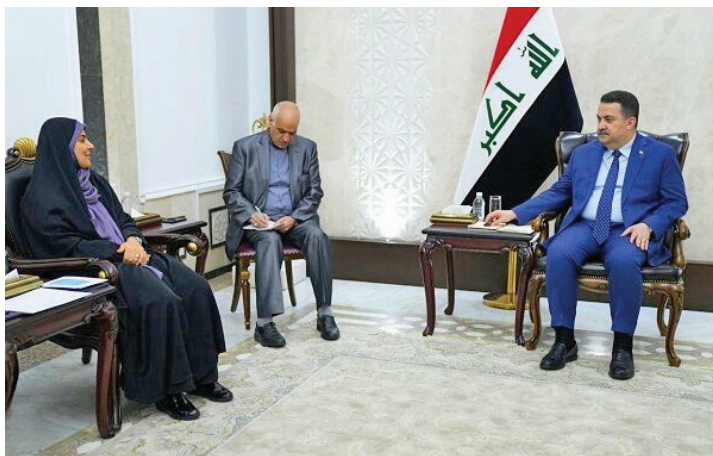
From Page 1 ► The Iranian minister, who traveled to Iraq with the aim of developing transportation relations and visiting the Shalamcheh-Basra railway project, also met Iraqi Transport Minister Razzaq Muhaybis al-Saadawi, and Interior Minister Abdul Amir Al-Shammari in her trip.

Sadegh had previously visited Iraq in September of last year alongside President Masoud Pezeshkian to push forward the Shalamcheh-Basra railway initiative. That three-day visit resulted in the signing of 14 cooperation documents across various sectors, including transport.

According to data from the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$401 million to Iraq in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21-April 21).

The IRICA data showed that Iraq was Iran’s second top non-oil export destination in the mentioned month.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$11.9 billion to Iraq in the past



Iranian calendar year 1403, which ended on March 20.

Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, said that Iraq was Iran’s second top non-oil export destination in the previous year.

Considering Iran’s vast export capacity and Iraq’s large market for Iranian goods, both sides want to expand the volume of bilateral economic exchanges.

Iran and Iraq have set a target of \$20 billion in annual trade, and businessmen and authorities of both countries are determined to meet that target.

In late May 2024, the head of the Department of Spatial Plan-

ning and Regional Planning of the Iranian Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said that Iran exports some 2,200 products, valued at \$12 billion, to neighboring Iraq annually.

Speaking in a meeting entitled “Reviewing opportunities and challenges of attracting Iraqi investors and strengthening trade relations between the two countries in line with demarcating Iran in the regional value chain”, Jafar Hosseini said that Iraq, benefiting from \$85 billion foreign currency reserves, 130 tons of gold reserves, and 147 billion barrels of proven reserves of crude oil, is among the richest countries in West Asia.

Currently, Iran exports over

2,200 various types of goods and products to Iraq, he said, adding that more than half of the active Iranian traders are present in the Iraqi market.

Developing the trade infrastructures to facilitate trade between the two countries, encouraging traders to invest in Iraq, promoting trade through dispatching and admitting trade delegations and participating in exhibitions of the two countries, etc. are suggested to strengthen the trade and economic relations between Iran and Iraq, he underlined.

In an interview in mid-December last year, the ambassador of Iran in Iraq praised the economic relations between the two sides and expressed hope that these relations will be more and better.

Mohammad Kazem Ale-Sadeq announced the value of commercial exchanges between the two countries, and stated that economic relations between Iran and Iraq are very good, and expressed hope that these relations will improve.

The envoy further noted: “Iraq is an important country in the region, and we have very important economic, political, and social relations with this neighbor.”

Annual trade surplus with Oman widens as exports rise, imports fall

TEHRAN - Iran’s exports to Oman increased in the previous Iranian year 1403 (March 2024–March 2025), while imports from the Arab country declined, boosting Tehran’s trade surplus with Muscat, according to data from Iran’s Customs Administration.

Iran recorded a trade surplus of \$764 million with Oman in 1403, up from \$570 million the previous year.

Exports to Oman reached around 6.0 million tons worth \$1.548 billion, marking a 7.94 percent rise compared to the year before.

In contrast, imports from Oman dropped by 9.17 percent to 776,000 tons valued at \$785 million.

Top imported goods from Oman included unrefined gold, animal feed corn, and sunflower seed oil. On the export side, Iran mainly shipped petroleum bitumen, iron and steel billets, and urea.

Oman accounted for 2.68 percent of Iran’s total exports and 1.08 percent of its total imports in the same period.

Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$140 million to Oman in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21-April 21), according to data from the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

The IRICA data showed that Oman was Iran’s sixth top non-oil export destination in the mentioned month.

Iran’s Ambassador to Oman Mousa Farhang says the Arab country’s economic ecosystem is favorable for Iranian private sector companies, encouraging firms to begin with smaller-scale projects to establish a foothold in the Omani market.

During a visit to the Tehran Chamber of Commerce pavilion at the Oman Oil and Energy Exhibition on May 14, Farhang met with Iranian business representatives and company delegates, expressing optimism about Oman’s potential as a destination for Iranian private investment.

“The Omani market is open and welcoming, especially for private Iranian firms. It’s not necessary to start with large-scale projects; even small collaborations can lead to meaningful long-term partnerships,” Farhang said, according to a statement from the Tehran Chamber of Commerce.

Saeed Tajik, head of the Tehran Chamber’s

delegation to the exhibition, highlighted the chamber’s commitment to supporting exporters and attracting foreign investment. He urged Iran’s embassy in Oman to continue facilitating private sector engagement.

Tajik emphasized Iran’s competitive advantages in oil and gas, engineering services, food industries, and agriculture, suggesting these sectors are well-suited for sustainable and competitive activities in Oman.

At the end of the visit, Ambassador Farhang invited the Tehran Chamber delegation to continue discussions at the Iranian embassy in Muscat.

In a related development, Saeed Tajik—who also chairs the Tehran Chamber’s Energy and Environment Committee—visited various booths at the exhibition and met with officials from Oman’s Ministry of Energy and Minerals.

During these talks, both sides agreed to exchange lists of active companies in the energy and mining sectors and discussed mutual recognition of qualified Iranian firms by the Omani ministry to facilitate joint ventures and economic cooperation.

The two parties agreed to formalize their partnership by signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Ministry of Energy and Minerals of Oman and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce in the near future.

In an interview with IRNA in early February, Abdolamir Rabi’havi, the director general for West Asia at Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), highlighted negotiations in Muscat (at that time) between Iran’s Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mohammad Atabak and Omani officials, adding that Atabak led a delegation of government officials, traders, and private-sector manufacturers to Oman for the 21st Joint Economic Committee meeting.

He stated that the committee covered various trade and logistics issues, resulting in numerous agreements, many of which stemmed from a year of negotiations.

A key achievement of the meeting was the participation of private-sector representatives, coordinated by the Iran Chamber of Commerce and the Iran–Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce.

On the sidelines of the event, bilateral meetings were held with Omani counter-

parts, and Iranian representatives toured Omani industrial and investment units, gaining insights into Oman’s market and production landscape.

Discussions also addressed trade volume, customs and visa facilitation for businesses, maritime transit, leveraging Iran as a transit hub for Eurasian Economic Union exports to Oman, and ways to boost bilateral trade.

Rabi’havi highlighted the signing of a co-operation agreement between Iran and Oman and noted that Atabak met separately with Oman’s transport minister, energy and mining minister, and the head of the Omani Investment Authority. The ministers then signed the joint committee’s agreements and minutes.

Additionally, negotiations on a preferential trade agreement were extended, with plans to finalize and sign the document soon. The agreement aims to lower tariffs and facilitate trade.

The joint committee meeting yielded significant achievements for Iran. If these agreements materialize, trade will grow. Oman has free trade agreements with several countries, including Persian Gulf Cooperation Council members, which Iran can leverage for re-exporting its goods,” he concluded.

The 21st meeting of the Iran–Oman Joint Economic Committee, which was held in Muscat on January 25, was described by the Iranian minister of industry, mining, and trade as distinct from the previous 20 gatherings, focused on three key agendas.

Mohammad Atabak has highlighted the signing of the MOU and elaborated on the meeting’s agenda.

The first agenda item addressed the establishment of a preferential trade agreement and the elimination of tariffs between the two countries. Atabak stated that this initiative had been approved.

The second agenda item involved supporting joint investments between Iran and Oman. Atabak announced that both nations had reached an agreement on this issue.

The third agenda focused on necessary administrative and customs collaborations to facilitate trade. The minister noted that required planning and task allocation had been completed, and this initiative is expected to yield results shortly.

‘South Pars pressure boosting project key to Iran’s energy security’

TEHRAN - The pressure boosting project at Iran’s South Pars gas field is vital for sustaining production and protecting the country’s long-term economic interests and strategic energy security, the project’s director said on Monday.

Mohammad-Mehdi Tavasoli-pour, who oversees the initiative, stressed the need for general contractors to set clear execution benchmarks. He was speaking during coordination meetings with representatives from key contrac-

tors involved in the project — including OIEC, Petropars, MAPNA, and Khatam al-Anbiya Construction Headquarters.

According to a statement by Pars Oil and Gas Company, Tavasolipour

noted that the contractors have been involved in the project since its inception, actively contributing to discussions and contract planning. “Today, they have reached a shared understanding and language for executing the project,” he said.

“Killing children as a hobby”

From page 1 ▶ That Palestinian children are being killed as a hobby was explicitly exemplified on May 24. Alaa al-Najjar, a pediatrician, left her ten children at home when she went to work in the emergency room at the Nasser Medical Complex in southern Gaza.

Hours later, the bodies of seven children, most of them badly burned, arrived at the hospital. They were Dr. Najjar's own children, killed in an Israeli airstrike on her family's home.

The bodies of two more of her children, a 7-month-old and a 12-year-old who authorities presume to be dead, remain missing.

Only one of her ten children, 11-year-old Adam, survived. Dr. Najjar's husband Hamdi, himself a doctor, was also badly injured in the strike.



However, it should be noted that those who are butchering Palestinians and confiscating their remaining lands and expelling them from their homes are not Jews. They are Zionists.

The Netanyahu regime is not murdering children with complete impunity. These are acts of geno-

cide, ethnic cleansing, and a new Holocaust?

Just on Monday, May 26, another Holocaust happened as Israeli forces bombed a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City, causing a fire and killing at least 36 Palestinians. 18 of those killed in the attack were children.

The strikes on Alaa al-Najjar's home and the Fahmi al-Jarjawi school in Gaza City are just two examples of hundreds of similar acts in the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023.

Nobody knows when the insatiable thirst of Netanyahu and his fellow murderers for killing will be satisfied. These incessant savage acts are incomprehensible.

The hatred toward Palestinians by Netanyahu and other extremists is very deep. They were just looking for an excuse (the October 7 attack on southern Israel) to purge Gaza and the occupied West Bank of its Palestinian inhabitants.

One way to speed up this vicious project is to kill children as a hobby to frighten families into leaving their homeland in fear for the life of their children.

It's Resistance and Liberation Day, not just "Liberation Day"!

From page 1 ▶ The anti-Resistance movement team does not hide its intention to plunge the Lebanese Army into a direct military conflict with the Resistance.

Paradoxically, they see regional developments, especially in the HTS-led Syria, as a historic and strategic opportunity to erase the Resistance from the national equation: Army-People-Resistance.

They follow this approach with complete and blatant disregard.

Obviously, the anti-Resistance team's shameful performance reflects a race against time to turn Lebanon into an Israeli colony, nothing more, nothing less.

Their flawed incitement campaigns also reflect their fears that any alternative to disarmament (which will never happen) will strengthen one of Lebanon's most important sources of strength, namely the Resistance.

Indeed, it is no longer surprising that this

pro-Israel team adopts the enemy's narratives in their entirety, but disguises their intentions by claiming that Lebanon's interests entail submission to Trumpland's imperialist offers.

This degenerate identification is not new; it has been in coordination with Israel in all stages of the conflict, even before the 1982 invasion. Hence, this team does not hide its bet on intensifying American-Israeli pressure and systematic shelling.

On the other hand, the firm logic underlying the Resistance, expressed by Hezbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Naim Qassem, is Lebanon's incontestable need to accumulate and develop its sources of strength and ensure that Hezbollah is not under pressure, as this dependent team tries to portray.

In his speech on Sunday evening, May 25, 2025, marking the Resistance and Liberation Day, Sheikh Qassem reaffirmed that it is essen-

tial to cherish resistance for the sake of Lebanon's survival, especially as Lebanon, given its geographical and demographic status, is the apple of the eye of greedy imperialists.

The bottom line of Hezbollah's Secretary-General is that despite the media and political uproar of this nationally bankrupt team, which openly adopts the Israeli discourse, the Resistance's roadmap is based on reality and experience.

Hezbollah, however, will not allow Lebanon's future to be jeopardized by adopting options that serve the priorities of its enemy.

What this anti-Resistance team cannot deny, as the recent municipal and mayoral elections have demonstrated, is that the Resistance has a solid popular base aware of the seriousness of the dangers facing Lebanon.

In short, were it not for the "Army-People-Resistance" trilogy, the Israeli army would have reached Beirut in a few days, as in 1982.

Israeli jets bomb Gaza school



From page 1 ▶ The Gaza Health Ministry initially struggled to identify some of the victims due to the extent of the burns. Reports indicate that fortified-piercing missiles were used, pen-

etrating the upper floors and reaching the lower levels.

The Government Media Office in Gaza released a statement strongly condemning what it labeled as a "brutal massacre".

According to the statement, 18 children were among the victims of the massacre, which it characterized as "a direct continuation of the ethnic cleansing and genocide" that the Israeli occupation has been carrying out against Palestinians for almost 600 consecutive days.

In a separate attack, the Gaza Civil Defense reported that 19 Palestinians were killed when an Israeli strike hit a home sheltering displaced civilians in Jabalia, northern Gaza.

Witnesses described terrifying explosions

and continuous airstrikes throughout the besieged enclave.

The occupation regime launched a wave of home demolitions and airstrikes across several areas, including Beit Lahia, Shujaiya, al-Tuffah, and al-Qarara.

In the al-Maghazi refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, occupation forces struck a tent sheltering displaced families inside a kindergarten.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry, the death toll since October 7, 2023, has reached 53,939 killed and 122,797 injured in the ongoing U.S.-backed Israeli genocide.

Since the resumption of the U.S.-backed genocidal war on March 18, "3,785 have been killed and 10,756 wounded."

A Palestinian family fleeing Israel's bombs is displaced for the 10th time in 19 months

The Abu Jarad family is homeless once again. For the 10th time during Israel's 19-month campaign in Gaza, they have been forced to flee, and the latest uprooting was the most painful of all.

In January, during a ceasefire, Ne'man Abu Jarad, his wife and six daughters had a joyous return to their home in northern Gaza.

They hoped it might be the end of their ordeal after more than a year of escaping Israeli offensives by traversing the length of the Gaza Strip and back.

Weeks later, bombs started falling again. They tried to hold out, but the Abu Jarads eventually abandoned their home a second time.

"Each time you take this decision to leave, it's like you're executing yourself by your own hand," Ne'man said.

He spoke in Gaza City, where he and his brothers had set up tents for their families in the rubble-strewn yard of a destroyed apartment building.

The Associated Press has tracked the Abu Jarad family's journey across a territory where nearly the entire population of some 2.3 million Palestinians has been driven from their homes by the war. Like the Abu Jarads, most have moved multiple times.

The latest wave of forced displacement across the territory accelerated after Israel broke the two-month ceasefire on March 18 and resumed its military campaign.

At least 430,000 people have been on the move since then, and more are certain to follow as the Israeli military issues evacuation orders covering greater territory in an accelerating assault.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last



Ne'man Abu Jarad sets up a new tent for his family after they were displaced by the Israeli air and ground offensive in the Gaza Strip in Gaza City, Monday, May 19, 2025. (AP Photo/Jehad Alshrafi)

Wednesday that Israel intends to force the population into the far south of Gaza.

This time, the displacement is unfurling under the threat of famine. Israel blocked all food, fuel, medicine and other aid from entering Gaza starting March 2, pushing hundreds of thousands close to starvation.

It said the blockade and its resumed military campaign aim to force Hamas to disarm and release the 58 hostages it holds. The past week, Israel let in a trickle of supplies, but aid groups say it is far short of what is needed.

Ne'man and his wife, Majida, were visibly gaunter than in January, when AP last spoke to them. Like others, they have struggled to feed their family. Their daughters range from age 6 to the eldest in her 20s, married and with a baby born just before the war began.

"When one of my daughters tells me, 'Baba, I want to eat,' I give her one or two bites so her piece of bread lasts till the end of the day," Ne'man said.

Leaving 'paradise' again

It was only days into the war when the Abu Jarads first left their home in the far north of Gaza, as Israel began fierce bombardment in retaliation for Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel. They returned 15 months later, among hundreds of thousands of Palestinians streaming north on foot during the January ceasefire.

"Our happiness ... was like we were entering Paradise," Ne'man said.

The house was damaged but still standing. Most of their belongings had been stolen or were under rubble. But after months of living in tents, they had a sense of home and privacy again, he said. They did some repairs.

Ne'man, whose garden was his passion before the war, revived some of his flowers.

On March 18, Israel resumed its campaign with one of the heaviest nights of bombardment of the war, hitting across Gaza and killing some 400 people. The military told residents of northern Gaza to leave.

"We said, let's just be patient for a bit, maybe the situation will improve," Majida said.

They didn't want to undergo the pain of displacement again, Ne'man said. His daughters were crying, telling him, 'We want to die in this house, this time we're not leaving,'" he said.

But the shelling and gunfire was intense all around them, he said.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)



INTERNATIONAL

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5

Germany's Merz: Israeli attacks on Gaza no longer justified as fight against Hamas

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz says Israel's recent attacks on the Gaza Strip are taking a humanitarian toll on civilians that can no longer be justified as a military campaign against Hamas.

"Harming the civilian population to such an extent, as has increasingly been the case in recent days, can no longer be justified as a fight against Hamas terrorism," he told broadcaster WDR in a televised interview.

"What the Israeli army is now doing in Gaza – I don't understand, to say it openly," Merz said.

Ben-Gvir and settlers storm Al-Aqsa compound



Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir surrounded by Israeli settlers inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound [Ammar Awad/Reuters]

The Jordanian kingdom's Foreign Ministry has strongly condemned the storming of the holy Muslim site by "extremist" Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and other members of the government and Knesset, who led a large group of settlers.

The movements were accompanied by "provocative and unacceptable practices, in blatant violation of the historical and legal status quo, and of Israel's obligations as the occupying power," it said in a statement.

Ministry spokesman Sufian Qudah said the Is-

raeli officials were trying to "impose new facts on the ground" and were committing a "blatant violation of international law and international humanitarian law".

He reminded that Jordan and its Awqaf Department remain the legal entity with exclusive jurisdiction to administer affairs at the occupied site.

WHO warns most Gaza medical equipment stocks have run out

The UN's health agency has said that stocks of medical equipment in Gaza are running low and that nearly half of basic medicines, such as painkillers, are out of stock.

"We are at stock zero of close to 64 percent of medical equipment and stock zero of 42 percent of essential medicines and vaccines," Hanan Balkhy, the World Health Organization's regional director for the Eastern Mediterranean, told reporters in Geneva.

In remarks last week, Balkhy warned that health conditions in Gaza had reached "crisis levels" and that medical facilities were "barely functional".

Israeli MP joins UNRWA facility occupation

Yulia Malinovsky, a Yisrael Beiteinu party member of the Israeli Knesset, has joined a group that stormed a UN Palestinian refugee agency facility in occupied East al-Quds (Jerusalem).

The Times of Israel reported she set up a makeshift "office" at the building and urged the government to seize control of it.

"Happy Jerusalem Day! Today we mark the day Jerusalem was liberated 58 years ago," Malinovsky, who previously sponsored a bill to ban the UN agency, said in a social media post.

"And today I am proud to also liberate the former UNRWA headquarters in central Jerusalem. The Israeli government, we are here, you are invited to come and see how sovereignty is applied."

Spain convenes European, Arab nations to ramp up pressure on Israel over Gaza war



The international community should look at sanctions against Israel to stop the war in Gaza, Spain's foreign minister said, as European and Arab nations gathered in Madrid Sunday to urge an end to its offensive.

Some of Israel's long-standing allies have added their voices to growing international pressure after it expanded military operations against Gaza.

An aid blockade lasting almost three months has worsened shortages of food, water, fuel and medicine in the Palestinian territory, stoking fears of famine.

Aid organizations say the trickle of supplies Israel has recently allowed to enter falls far short of needs.

The talks in Madrid aim to stop Israel's "inhumane" and "senseless" war in Gaza, Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares told reporters before the meeting opened.

Humanitarian aid must enter Gaza "massively, without conditions and without limits, and not controlled by Israel", he added, describing the Strip as humanity's "open wound".

"Silence in these moments is complicity in this massacre... that is why we are meeting," said Albares. Representatives from European countries including France, Britain, Germany and It-

aly are joining envoys from Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Morocco, the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Norway, Iceland, Ireland and Slovenia, who like Spain, have already recognized a Palestinian state, are also taking part, alongside Brazil.

Time for action

Sunday's meeting also promoted a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa said he wanted to "move as fast as possible to a peace where Palestine and Israel can coexist and bring stability and security for the whole region". Albares told Cadena SER radio after the summit that the event made progress by including more EU powers like France, Germany and Italy in the format. They would "never give up on peace in the Middle East", he said.

The diplomatic drive comes one month before a UN conference on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict chaired by France and Saudi Arabia in New York.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has said his country will back draft resolutions at the United Nations aimed at ramping up aid access to Gaza and holding Israel to account over its international humanitarian obligations.

Bangladesh ambassador visits historical attractions in Urmia, north west Iran



TEHRAN – The Ambassador of Bangladesh to Iran, Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury, has visited the city of Urmia in northwest Iran, where he toured several of its prominent historical and cultural landmarks.

The ambassador's visit on Sunday included stops at the Jameh Mosque of Urmia, the traditional bazaar, and the historic Hedayat School, sites that reflect the city's rich architectural and cultural heritage, CHTN reported on Monday.

During his trip, the ambassador also held talks with representatives of the Urmia Chamber of Commerce. Discussions focused on ways to enhance trade relations between Iran and Bangladesh, with a particular emphasis on considering the tourism potential

of West Azarbaijan, from which Urmia is the provincial capital.

West Azarbaijan province embraces a variety of lush natural scenery, cultural heritage sites, and museums, including the UNESCO sites of Takht-e Soleyman and Qareh Klise (St. Thaddeus Monastery), Tepe Hasanlu, and the ruined Bastam Citadel.

The region was home to several ancient civilizations. According to Britannica, it was conquered by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC and was named Atropatene after one of Alexander's generals, Atropates, who established a small kingdom there. Ultimately, the area returned to the Persian (Iranian) rule under the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: Bryggen

Bryggen is a historic harbour district in Bergen, one of North Europe's oldest port cities on the west coast of Norway which was established as a centre for trade by the 12th century.

In 1350 the Hanseatic League established a "Hanseatic Office" in Bergen. They gradually acquired ownership of Bryggen and controlled the trade in stockfish from Northern Norway through privileges granted by the Crown. The Hanseatic League established a total of four overseas Hanseatic Offices, Bryggen being the only one preserved today.

The UNESCO-designated property has been damaged by a number of fires through the centuries and has been rebuilt after every fire, closely following the previous property structure and plan as well as building techniques. Bryggen's appearance today stems from the time after the fire in 1702.

The buildings are made of wood in keeping with vernacular building traditions. The original compact medieval urban structure is preserved with its long narrow rows of buildings facing the harbour, separated by narrow wooden passages.

Today, some 62 buildings remain of this former townscape and these contain sufficient elements to demonstrate how this colony of bachelor German merchants lived and worked, and illustrate the use of space in the district. It is characterized by the construction of buildings along the narrow passages running parallel to the docks. The urban units are rows of two- to three-story buildings signified by the medieval name "gard". They have gabled facades towards the harbor and lie on either one or both sides of the narrow passages that have the functions of a private courtyard. The houses are built in a combination of traditional timber log construction, and galleries with column and beam construction with horizontal wooden panel cladding. The roofs have original brick tiling or sheets, a result of fast repairs after an explosion during World War II. Towards the back of the gard, there are small fireproof warehouses or storerooms (kjellere) built of stone, for the protection of special goods and valuables against fire. This repetitive structure was adapted to the living conditions of the Hanseatic trading post. The German merchants took up winter residence in the small individual wooden houses and the storerooms were used as individual or collective warehouses. A true colony, Bryggen enjoyed quasi-extraterritoriality which continued beyond the departure of the Hanseatic merchants until



the creation of a Norwegian trading post in 1754, on the impetus of fishermen and ship owners of German origin. Today, Bryggen is a significant part of the historic wooden city of Bergen.

Protection and management requirements

Bryggen, including its cultural deposits, is listed pursuant to the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act and is also protected through the Norwegian Planning and Building Act. The adequate protection plan includes an extensive area that functions as a buffer zone.

Bryggen is privately owned and the majority of the buildings are owned by the Bryggen Foundation, which was established in 1962 with the objective of preserving Bryggen. The remaining owners have established a separate association to secure their interests. The stakeholders at Bryggen collaborate in different constellations of owners and authorities.

"The Bryggen Project" was established formally in 2000. This is an extensive and long-term project for monitoring, safeguarding and restoring Bryggen, including both archaeological deposits and standing buildings.

Bryggen is managed according to a management plan that is revised regularly. A fire protection system with detection and suppression has been installed and is continually being improved. Climate conditions are a key issue and measures have been taken to prepare for future changes. Possible impacts resulting from tourism are monitored.

There is ongoing pressure for urban development in the vicinity of Bryggen. Any development which may have visual impact on the World Heritage property is monitored closely by the cultural heritage authorities.

(Source: UNESCO)

Damghan, a treasure trove for cultural travelers and history enthusiasts

TEHRAN – Steeped in history and dotted with architectural marvels, Damghan in Iran's Semnan province is a treasure trove for cultural travelers and history enthusiasts.

The ancient city, situated about 350 kilometers east of Tehran, is not only famed for its high-quality pistachios – often dubbed "the smiling nuts" – but also for its impressive collection of historical monuments, caravanserais, fortifications, and places of worship that echo the grandeur of bygone eras.

A city of mystics and legends

Legend has it that Damghan's name is rooted in the ancient Persian word 'Moghan', referring to practitioners of mystical arts such as astrology, alchemy, and other esoteric sciences. Originally known as 'Dah Moghan', meaning "ten magi," the name gradually evolved into its present form, Damghan.

Throughout its rich history, Damghan has been a key city along the Silk Roads, serving as a significant trading hub connecting Merv to the Mediterranean coast, as documented in the International Dictionary of Historic Places. The city also provided a gateway to the Parthian capital of Hecatompylos, which rose to prominence following the Parthian conquest of the region after the fall of Alexander the Great.

Key attractions

Tarikhaneh, famed as Iran's oldest standing mosque

Among Damghan's most distinguished monuments is the Tarikhaneh Mosque, believed to be the oldest mosque in Iran still in its original form, dating back to the first century after the advent of Islam. Located in the southeastern part of the city, this mosque, alongside the historic mosque of Na'in in Isfahan province, stands as a rare example of pre-Seljuk Islamic architecture.

Constructed with Sassanid-era building techniques, the mosque bears remarkable resemblance to structures like Sarvestan Palace near Shiraz and the Palace of Ardeshir in Firuzabad. Some histori-



ans suggest that the mosque may have originally been a Zoroastrian fire temple.

The mosque features a spacious courtyard, flanked by porticos on three sides, and a gallery of 18 columns facing the Qibla (direction of prayer). Its Seljuk-era minaret, crowned with what is considered the oldest known tile inscription in Islamic architecture, further enhances its historical significance. The name Tarikhaneh, a fusion of the ancient Turkic term for "sky" or "god" (Tari, Tengri) and the Persian word for "house" (Khaneh), can be translated as "House of God."

Tepe Hessar: an archaeological treasure trove

Located just outside the city, Tepe Hessar is an archaeological site of immense historical importance. Excavated in the 1930s by Prof. Ernst Herzfeld and later Dr. Erich Schmidt, the site reveals multiple layers of civilization, spanning from the 5th millennium BC to the Parthian and Seleucid periods.

Artifacts unearthed from Tepe Hessar, some dating back over 7,000 years, offer a window into the region's ancient past, with evidence of settlements from the Medes, Achaemenids, and later dynasties.

Ancient city walls and fortifications

Remnants of Damghan's ancient fortifications still survive,

with massive walls and battlements once wide enough to accommodate chariots, as described in historical accounts. Visitors can witness the enduring legacy of these defensive structures in the northern and southern outskirts of the city.

Seljuk-era architectural jewels

The Seljuk era enriched Damghan with several remarkable architectural works. Notable sites include the Shrine of Pir Alamdar, the Jame' Mosque (Congregational Mosque) and its iconic minaret, Mansurkuh village, the Tower of Jafar's Tomb, and the impressive Chehel-Dokhtaran Vault. The Seljuks introduced intricate brickwork decorations, breaking the monotony of early Islamic architecture and leaving behind masterpieces of artistic craftsmanship.

Chehel-Dokhtaran Vault: an enduring family mausoleum

Located in central Damghan, behind Jafar's Tomb, the Chehel-Dokhtaran Vault (translated as "Vault of Forty Girls") was built in 1087, according to its Kufic inscription. Remarkably, despite Damghan's location on an earthquake fault line, the mausoleum has withstood the test of time without significant structural damage.

The vault, with its onion-shaped dome, features exquisite brickwork and inscriptions, reflecting

the artistry of the Seljuk period. Standing 14.8 meters tall, the structure was used as a family mausoleum, where inscriptions invoke divine mercy for the deceased.

Cheshmeh-Ali: a picturesque oasis

About 30 kilometers north of Damghan, Cheshmeh-Ali is a lush and scenic spring that has been a favored retreat since ancient times. During the Qajar era, this idyllic setting inspired the construction of several palatial structures, including those built by Fath-Ali Shah and Aqa Mohammad Khan. Fath-Ali Shah's palace, uniquely situated in the center of the lagoon between two springs, continues to attract visitors seeking tranquility and history.

Ismaili fortresses: echoes of a mysterious past

To the north of Damghan, two Ismaili fortresses perch atop rugged mountains, once serving as strongholds for the esoteric Ismaili sect during the medieval period. The Gerdkuh Fortress, located about 5 kilometers from the city, and Mehrnegar Fortress, on Mansurkuh Mountain (22 kilometers north of Damghan), offer breathtaking views and a glimpse into the strategic prowess of the Ismailis.

Archaeologists uncover potential evidence of early maritime activity in southern Iran

TEHRAN – Recent excavations at Iran's Kopal archaeological site have revealed artifacts that could shed new light on early maritime practices, though researchers emphasize the need for further analysis.

The discoveries include a modified flat pebble with holes—possibly a fishing weight or small anchor—found near stone flakes exhibiting Paleolithic characteristics.

Mortaza Hessari, head of the excavation team, pointed out the significance of these finds: "The close association between the holed cobble and stone flakes made with Paleolithic techniques raises important questions about when coastal communities first began utilizing marine resources in this region." He cautioned, however, that "while the flakes show typical Paleolithic features, the cobble itself lacks similar weathering patterns, so we must investi-



gate further before drawing conclusions."

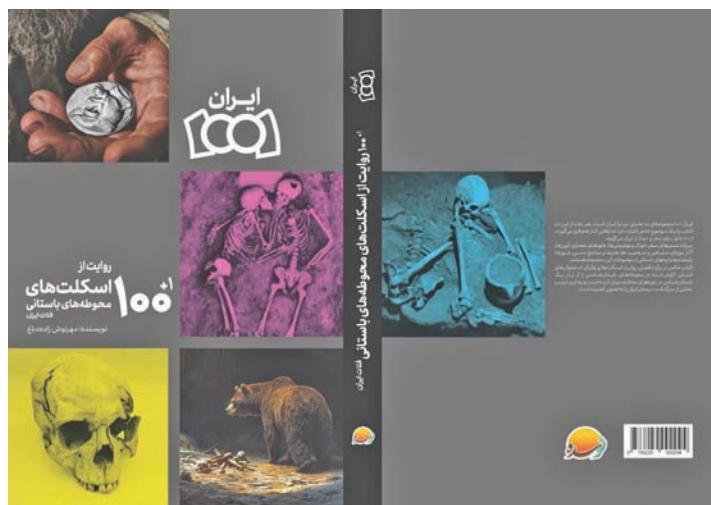
Hessari explained that the team is considering multiple interpretations: "We could be looking at genuine Paleolithic maritime activity, or

perhaps later communities reusing an ancient landscape. The proximity of 4th-millennium BC pottery in nearby trenches shows this site had long-term coastal use, but we need dating evidence to determine if it extends back to the Paleolithic."

As salvage excavations continue ahead of road construction, Hessari stressed the importance of methodical research: "We're conducting microscopic analysis and geological dating to clarify the relationship between these artifacts. Whatever we ultimately discover, this site highlights the Makran coast's rich—and still poorly understood—maritime heritage."

The findings have sparked interest among scholars studying early human adaptation to coastal environments, though as Hessari noted, "This is just the beginning of a much longer scientific conversation."

New book brings ancient skeletons of Iranian plateau to life through storytelling and science



TEHRAN – A newly published Persian-language book titled "101 Narrations from Skeletons of Ancient Sites of Iranian Plateau" by Mehrnoosh Zadehdabagh offers a unique glimpse into the lives—and deaths—of ancient inhabitants of Iran.

Released by Nowsadeh Publications, the 288-page book presents narratives and stories that span from the Paleolithic period through to the Qajar era, providing readers with insights into the evolution of architecture, diet, burial practices, clothing, and environmental adaptation over millennia.

Zadehdabagh combines scientific

research with storytelling to make complex archaeological findings more accessible to a general audience. To bring the ancient world closer to the modern reader, the author also incorporates artificial intelligence-generated imagery to visualize some of the skeletal remains and their contexts.

According to the author, by presenting archaeology through an engaging narrative format, the book seeks to inspire the development of cultural content such as films, animations, video games, and educational materials, particularly for children and teenagers.

Spring rainfalls revive Lake Urmia's reservoirs for wildlife

TEHRAN – Recent precipitations in spring have restored Lake Urmia's reservoirs, with 550,000 litres of water being stored for the wildlife, Behzad Shir-Panjeh, head of National Park of Lake Urmia, has said.

Lake Urmia in the north-western West Azarbaijan province started to dry up in the 2000s. The lake is the largest in West Asia and the sixth-largest salt lake in the world, with a water surface area of 5,000 to 6,000 square kilometers.

The rainfalls in the lake's basin have contributed to the growth of vegetation and shrubs, providing a favourable source of food for wildlife in the islands as the amount of water reserves resurged compared to the past Iranian year (March 2024 – March 2025), he noted.

The official went in to say that there are five water reservoirs in the Ashk Island of Lake Urmia, which is considered one of the most important habitats of Persian yellow deer, and two or one water reservoirs in Espir and Kabudan Islands; the collected water will be released during summer.

The islands are home to Persian yellow deer, goats, rams, various mammals, reptiles, and birds.

Restoration efforts

Through a joint project led by the United Nations Development



Programme (UNDP) and funded by the Government of Japan, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is going to join to promote sustainable agricultural practices and solutions for the conservation of Lake Urmia.

On December 1, 2024, the Government of Japan and UNDP signed an exchange of notes to launch "The Project for Developing Conservation Systems of Wetlands in Lake Urmia and Other Wetlands, Including

Their Surrounding Communities." The project, which runs from 2024 to 2028, will be implemented in partnership with the Department of Environment and FAO.

Focusing on sustainable agriculture and climate-adapted livelihoods, the initiative seeks to deliver long-term benefits for local communities while preserv-

ing the biodiversity of wetlands as critical ecosystems.

Lake Urmia faces significant challenges due to the overconsumption of water resources magnified by climate change impacts, which has severely impacted its ecosystem.

Agricultural activities in the region are increasingly vulnerable to water shortages, a situation exacerbated by the effects of climate change. Studies indicate that these climatic changes could further disrupt agri-food systems and the lake's fragile environment in the future.

FAO with the support of the government of Japan, identified technical agricultural solutions to increase water efficiency in the agriculture sector at the Lake Urmia basin, which may be efficient in saving the internationally known biosphere reserves.

Since 1995, Lake Urmia has been shrinking due to rapid upstream agricultural expansion and climate change. These forces have pushed the precious lake to the verge of depletion and have put the region's health, economy, environment, industry, and agriculture at risk.

Despite the efforts of the Lake Urmia Restoration Program National Committee and its focus on the Lake's restoration since 2013, the continuation of the critical situation demonstrates that sustainability, macro and micro, management solutions should be considered as the main essence of action plans.

In a concerted effort to address the challenges facing the Lake Urmia Basin in 2016, FAO launched the "Integrated Program for Sustainable Water Resources Management in the Lake Urmia Basin," which was funded by the Government of Japan.

Key technical outcomes of this initiative included the implementation of a water accounting plus project in the Lake Urmia Basin and the identification of water-consuming hotspots within the basin. Notably, water accounting revealed the significant contribution of irrigated and rainfed agriculture to the Lake's total evapotranspiration, emphasizing the importance of water-saving measures for the Lake's restoration.

Iranian delegations to attend CPHI & PMEC China, Pharmedi Vietnam

TEHRAN – Iranian knowledge-based companies will participate in pharmaceutical events that will take place in Shanghai, China, from June 24-26, and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, from September 24-27.

CPHI & PMEC China 2025 will be held at the Shanghai New International Expo Center. It's a major pharmaceutical event in Asia, bringing together suppliers and buyers from the entire pharmaceutical supply chain. The event attracts over 90,000 visitors and 3,500 manufacturers.

The event offers a great opportunity for sourcing, networking, and learning. It also facilitates connections between suppliers and buyers.

Supported by the Organization for the Development of International Scientific and Technological Cooperation, the Iranian delegation will pay a visit to the exhibition.

Visiting the production line, holding Business-to-business (B2B) meetings and conferences, identifying opportunities and areas of cooperation, and joint activities, as well as becoming familiar with the latest technologies in the pharmaceutical industry, are among the services provided to the delegation.

In September, knowledge-based companies will set up their pavilions in Pharmedi Vietnam 2025 with the support of the vice presidency for science, research, and technology.

nology.

Pharmedi is the premier B2B exhibition, displaying the latest innovations and achievements of various medical fields from both domestic and international sources. It also provides a platform for networking, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among scientists and experts from different countries and disciplines.

Medical equipment and devices, laboratory equipment and supplies, supplements, imaging and diagnostics, physiotherapy and orthopaedic equipment, dental equipment, pharmaceuticals, beauty products, rehabilitation and physiotherapy equipment, hospital equipment and facilities, and cleanroom construction are among the main focuses of the exhibition.

Over 60 countries import Iranian medical equipment

On January 13, the head of Iran's Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters said that medical equipment worth around \$20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually.

More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made, IRNA quoted Abdolreza Yaqoubzadeh as saying.

Also, over 95 percent of specific ICU and CCU beds and more than 85 percent of operating room medical equipment such as an-

esthesia machines and other equipment are manufactured with cutting-edge technology in the country, he added.

Yaqoubzadeh went on to say that the country's need for medical equipment production is three to four billion dollars per year, some one billion dollars of which is imported.

Some 600 medical equipment companies are active in the country, producing around 99 percent of the medicine supplied to the domestic market.

Medical equipment manufacturers in the country produce and supply over 10,000 types of medical equipment to domestic and foreign markets. Now, various pieces of laboratory equipment are manufactured at prices much lower than the same foreign products.

Iran holds the first place in West Asia for producing medical equipment both in terms of quantity and diversity. Iranian-made medical devices worth around \$50 million are exported to 40 countries annually, IRNA quoted Ahmad Moslemi, a health ministry official, as saying.

Moreover, the official said, the number of products has increased fourfold. Equipment such as implants, as well as advanced medical devices, is manufactured in the country as well.

In addition, the country's medical centers have been equipped with some 15,000 new hospital beds have been added to with 90 percent of the equipment produced locally, Moslemi added

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

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

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

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

سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می‌شود

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

به گزارش پایگاه اطلاع رسانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور، امیر قادری روز یکشنبه با اعلام این خبر گفت: طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران طی جلسه‌ای با حضور مدیران و کارشناسان سازمان مدیریت بحران و وزارت جهاد کشاورزی بررسی شد. وی ادامه داد: پس از بررسی تجارب داخلی و روش‌های موجود جهانی، ضرورت استقرار نمونه بومی پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی مورد تأکید قرار گرفت و با مشارکت مراکز پژوهشی سازمان هواشناسی کشور و پژوهشکده حفاظت خاک و آبخیزداری طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران پیشنهاد شد.

SOCIETY

MAY 27, 2025

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

Supplementary programs at schools to address Iron, vitamin D deficiency

TEHRAN – The health ministry is implementing the national micronutrients supplement programs under which Iron and vitamin D are distributed at high schools to address deficiencies in students, an official with the health ministry has said.

The iron supplementary program started in girls' high schools 23 years ago. According to the program, female students receive one pill each week, for four months during the school academic year, ISNA quoted Ahmad Esmailzadeh as saying.

Iron deficiency causes anemia. It disturbs concentration, negatively impacts learning ability, leads to fatigue, and weakens the immune system. In addition to taking supplements, it is also recommended to consume an iron-rich diet such as meat and legumes, the official said.

The coverage of the iron supplementation program has risen from 57 percent in Iranian year 1400 (2021– 2022) to 91 percent in 1402 (2023 – 2024), he added.

The official went on to say that a vitamin D supplementation program started in the country in 2014. Currently, a vitamin D (con-



taining 50,000 international units) is given to each male and female student in high schools monthly.

Over the past three years, the coverage of the program has surged from 51 percent to 80 percent, indicating effective cooperation among the health ministry, and ministry of education, and parents, he highlighted.

Challenges to the programs include limited budget, school administrators' disagreement, or students' resistance to taking supplements, Esmailzadeh added.

Iran among countries with advanced cancer treatment technology



TEHRAN – Launching the first national production line for electroporation systems, Iran has become the first country in Asia for advanced cancer treatment technology.

The inauguration ceremony of the Iranian-made device was held on Monday in University of Tehran, IRNA reported.

The homegrown electrochemotherapy ablation system (a new method of targeted treatment of cancerous tumors) is a significant achievement that relies mainly on domestic technical knowledge and global standards.

The electroporation system uses electrical pulses to enhance the permeability of cancer cells and significantly enhance the effectiveness of anti-cancer drugs.

Electroporation is highly efficient in the

treatment of various types of cancer, such as skin cancer, such as squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), a common type of skin cancer that develops in the flat cells of the upper layer of the skin, melanoma, and breast cancer.

More than a thousand patients have been treated so far using this therapy; in more than 200 cases, successful treatment has prevented the need for amputation.

According to a report by IRNA in February, an Iranian knowledge-based company has managed to develop a new method for the synthesis of Technetium (99mTc) tilmanocept, a radiopharmaceutical diagnostic imaging agent used to determine lymph nodes that may be draining from tumors.

Since 2013, the U.S. has been the only manufacturer of this radiopharmaceutical agent, IRNA reported.

Lymphatic system is known as one of the main conduits of cancer metastasis. In patients with breast, lung, and genital tract cancers, accurate detection of lymph node involvement is critical for surgeons.

Thanks to this remarkable achievement, about 90 percent of patients with various cancers in the country will gain access to a more affordable and more accurate method for cancer diagnosis and treatment.

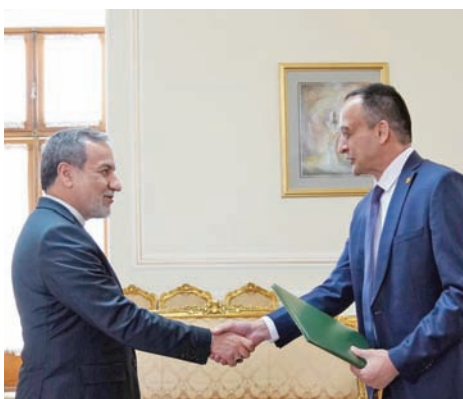
Having passed the preclinical phases successfully, the drug has entered the clinical phase.

FAO's new representative to Iran presents credentials to foreign minister

TEHRAN – Farrukh Toirov, the newly appointed Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to the Islamic Republic of Iran, presented his credentials to Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Minister for Foreign Affairs, on Sunday, 25 May 2025 and officially commenced his assignment.

Toirov, national of Tajikistan, brings over 20 years of extensive experience in international development and agricultural programming to his new role. His diplomatic mission in Iran marks the beginning of a new chapter in FAO's cooperation with the country, aiming to strengthen collaboration in the areas of agricultural production and productivity, fisheries, food safety, sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, climate change mitigation and reduction.

Prior to his appointment in Iran, Toirov held several key positions within FAO, including Deputy FAO Representative in Pakistan and



Senior Programme Officer heading FAO's provincial office in Peshawar. Over the years, he has managed diverse portfolios across multiple regions, including Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation (Chechnya), Somalia, Ukraine, and Pakistan.

Toirov's appointment reaffirms FAO's continued commitment to supporting Iran in achieving its national development priorities.



MAY 27, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Beware! Whoever is cruel and harsh to a non-Muslim minority, curtailing their rights, overburdening them, or stealing from them, I will complain [to God] about that person on the Day of Judgment.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:32 Dawn: 3:09 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:52 (tomorrow)

“The Wishing Game” at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – “The Wishing Game” by American writer Meg Shaffer has been published in Persian by Milkan Publications.

Saeideh Khakpour is the translator of the book first released in 2023.

“The Wishing Game” tells the story of Lucy Hart, a woman whose childhood was marked by neglect and loneliness, growing up without loving parents. She found comfort in books, especially the enchanting Clock Island series by Jack Masterson.

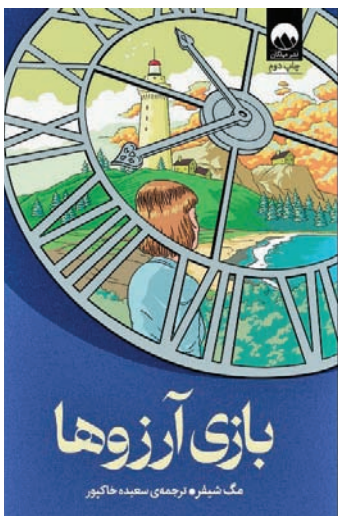
Now twenty-six and working as a teacher’s aide, Lucy spends her days inspiring her young students, particularly seven-year-old Christopher Lamb, who was orphaned after the tragic death of his parents.

Lucy longs to adopt Christopher and give him the family he deserves, but financial instability and uncertain circumstances make her dreams seem out of reach.

Just when Lucy begins to lose hope, a remarkable opportunity presents itself. Jack Masterson, the reclusive author of the beloved series, announces that he has finally written a new book. To promote it, he hosts a contest at his home on the magical Clock Island, inviting four lucky contestants to compete for a single, rare copy of the novel.

For Lucy, the chance to win this coveted prize is more than just a dream—it is a beacon of hope for her and Christopher’s future.

As the contest unfolds, Lucy faces fierce competition from ruthless book collectors



and clever rivals, all eager to claim the prize. Among the contestants is Hugo Reese, the handsome yet grumpy illustrator of the series, whose presence adds both tension and intrigue.

Meanwhile, Jack “the Mastermind” Masterson orchestrates the game’s twists and surprises, hinting at a final revelation that could change everything.

Throughout the competition, Lucy’s unwavering determination and love for Christopher drive her forward. The contest becomes a

journey not only to win the book but also to discover her own strength and hope.

As secrets are revealed and surprises unfold, Lucy learns that sometimes, the greatest wishes require courage and a touch of magic to come true.

Ultimately, “The Wishing Game” is a heart-felt story about resilience, dreams, and the transformative power of hope and love, showing that even in the face of impossible odds, wishes can come true.

Meg Shaffer is a USA Today bestselling author known for her captivating novels, including “The Lost Story” and “The Wishing Game”. Her book “The Wishing Game” was a finalist for Book of the Month’s Book of the Year and was named a Best Book of the Year by Reader’s Digest and The Washington Post.

It has been translated into 21 languages, reaching readers worldwide. Meg earned an MFA in TV and Screenwriting from Stephens College, further showcasing her storytelling talents.

“The Boy and the Sword” available on Apple TV, Amazon Prime

TEHRAN-The animation “The Boy and the Sword” directed by Emad Rahmani and Mehrdad Mehrabi has been released on the global streaming services.

A production of 2023, the 92-minute animated movie, also known as “Sword and Sorrow” has been made available to audiences around the world via Apple TV and Amazon Prime Video platforms, ILNA reported.

The story takes place more than a thousand years ago, in one of the famous cities of Mesopotamia, Madain. When the cruelty of the Sultan was at its peak, upholding justice was throwing one’s life into death’s jaw.

Karen is a seven-year-old child, with his most significant possession being a birthday gift, a wooden sword bestowed on him by his father. But on his very same birthday, things take a tragic twist; the Sultan puts all who disobeyed him and their families to the sword and Karen is one of them.

Thanks to his uncle, Karen survives. They escape the city, and



his uncle entrusts him to the loving Brochim family in a small village named Mahuza. Although Mahuza is always full of love and Karen receives plenty, no second passes without him mourning for his family and dreaming of finishing what his father has started.

Now, after twenty years, in Madain, Karen sees an oppor-

tunity to make his father’s wish come true finally, but he’s also aware of what it will cost.

The animation has so far won several international awards including the Liverpool Indie Awards, Milan Independent Awards, SoCal Film Awards, Sacramento Underground Film & Arts Festival, South Film and Arts Academy Festival, Rome Interna-

tional Movie Awards, Five Continents International Film Festival, Oniros Film Awards, Crown Wood International Film Festival, Bright International Film Festival, Delta International Film Festival, Athens International Art Film Festival, and Indiefare International Film Festival.

Iranian play featuring visually impaired actors to premiere in Armenia

TEHRAN – “Life Is Too Short”, a play performed by actors with visual impairments, is set to take the stage in Yerevan, Armenia.

Written by Mehdi Mehdiabadi and directed by Mojtaba Goharkhai, the production will be staged in the Armenian capital from May 27 to 30, ISNA reported on Monday.

The performance has previously been staged in Iran at venues including the Art Hall, the Center for Theater Production of Iran’s Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults – Kanoon, the Iranian Artists’ Forum (IAF) in Tehran,

Kharazmi University in Karaj, as well as at Iran’s International Theater Festival for Children and Young Adults in Hamedan and the Regional Aftab Festival in Shahr-e Kord, the capital of Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, the report added.

Produced by the Arshek Theater Group, “Life Is Too Short” has garnered multiple awards.

The troupe features nine blind and visually impaired actors. Notably, the performance will be conducted without any tactile cues or visual markers on stage, relying solely on

enhanced auditory senses and spatial awareness.

Performers include Hamidreza Fallahi, Zahra Homai, Elaheh Mohaqeq Baygi, Elham Mohaqeq Baygi, Mina Dehqani, Amir Hamzeh Nakhai, Bahar Mahdavi Taheri, Maryam Qasemi Aqdam, and Mohammad Mohammadi.

Fatemeh Abdolrahimi is the manager of the project, which will be staged in Yerevan as part of cultural exchanges between Iran and Armenia.

Jason Miller’s “Barrymore’s Ghost” to be staged at Iran Art Boutique

TEHRAN – Iran Art Boutique in Tehran will host the play “Barrymore’s Ghost” by Jason Miller from June 6 to 21.

Translated and directed by Hamed Sehhat, it is a 50-minute solo performance with Mohammad Tayeb Taher as the only performer on stage.

“Barrymore’s Ghost” opens up the life of the legendary actor, John Barrymore, in a unique, theatrical manner.

John Barrymore, or Jack Barrymore, or Jake Barrymore, is presented as a ghost haunting an unknown theater, which, at the moment, is in rehearsal for a play. The gods have sentenced Barrymore to this purgatorial existence as penance for his abandonment of the theater and squandering of his talents, in pursuit of fame, greed, and dissipation.

Barrymore disputes these assertions of the gods as he painfully and humorously examines the spectrum of his life. He chronicles his ascen-



dancy to the throne as the finest classical actor of his generation; his arrival to the pinnacle of movie stardom; his intimate and compassionate relationships with his sister Ethel and his brother Lionel; and the explosive debacles of his four marriages. The play has wit, terror, agony and hope, as we watch a mythical character explore the truths and deceptions of his extraordinary life.

Jason Miller (1939-2001) was an American playwright and actor. He won the 1973 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and Tony Award for Best Play for his play “That Championship Season,” and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance as Father Damien Karras in the 1973 horror film “The Exorcist,” a role he reprised in “The Exorcist III” (1990). He later became artistic director of the Scranton Public Theater in Scranton, Pennsylvania, where “That Championship Season” was set.

Cartoon of Day



Famine in Gaza

Cartoonist: Muzaffar Yulchiboev from Uzbekistan

Protestors visit the Whitney after cancellation of pro-Palestine performance

The lobby of the Whitney Museum in New York became the site of a protest by arts and culture workers on Friday (May 23) following the institution’s recent cancellation of a pro-Palestine performance.

The protest, which was announced on Instagram by the group Writers Against the War on Gaza, began around 8 p.m. during the Whitney’s “Free Friday Night” event, which offers a pay-what you-wish admission between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. From the mezzanine level, protestors quietly unfurled a Palestinian flag and a banner reading “Creativity Does Not Have to Rely on Death.” On the ground floor, activists distributed brochures with text printed in the Whitney’s house font that demanded

“the removal of board members tied to genocide, militarism and apartheid,” as well as an end to “institutional artwashing, censorship, surveillance and policing of artists.”

Museum security briefly barred entry to the museum and its galleries. Meanwhile, activists formed a circle in the lobby and called out Whitney leadership for its cancellation of No Aesthetics Outside My Freedom: Mourning, Militancy, and Performance, a piece by artists Fadl Fakhouri, Noel Maghathe, and Fargo Tbakh, on May 12, two days before it was set to take place as part of the programming for an exhibition organized by the Whitney’s Independent Study Program.

Since the cancellation of No Aesthetics, scrutiny has also

been paid to the demotion of Gregg Bordowitz, an artist who formerly served as director of the ISP. According to Artnet News, Bordowitz was demoted in February, but it remains unclear why he was removed to director-at-large. He has publicly spoken out against the cancellation of the performance, calling it an “intrusion” by the Whitney.

The performance was described by those involved as an invitation to mourn the roughly 50,000 Palestinians killed in Gaza since October 7, 2023, and those who have suffered over the decades of Israeli occupation in Gaza and the West Bank. During the hour and half-long duration of No Aesthetics, performers were to interpret “scores” written by Natalie Diaz, Christina

Sharpe, and Brandon Shimoda that conveyed the themes of grief, endurance, and defiance.

As confirmed to ARTnews by a Whitney spokesperson, the performance was canceled after museum leadership viewed a recording of the work’s initial presentation at the Poetry Project, where the piece was staged in collaboration with Jewish Currents. That iteration opened with an address made by one of the performers to attendees: “You may only remain in this audience if you love Palestinians wholly and completely, you may only remain if you love us while we are alive and when we are dead, when we are fighting for survival, dignity, land, return, real and sustainable life using any and all methods available to us.”