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SCO and BRICS Valuable Opportunities for Iran



Iran may accept US nuclear inspectors if a deal is reached, says atomic chief

TEHRAN – Iran has signaled it may allow American inspectors working for the International Atomic Energy Organization (IAEA) to monitor its nuclear program—but only if ongoing negotiations result in a favorable agreement for Tehran.

The statement came from Mohammad Eslami, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), during a press briefing on Wednesday.

Eslami emphasized that while Iran has historically rejected inspectors from hostile nations, including the United States, the current diplomatic landscape could lead to a policy shift. “If an agreement is reached and Iran’s demands are met, we will reconsider accepting U.S. inspectors through the IAEA,” he said.

Iran and the U.S. have held five rounds of indirect negotiations since early April to reach a deal that limits Tehran’s nuclear activities in exchange for the termination of sanctions. The date and location for a sixth round of talks are being discussed, according to Iran’s Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi, talking to reporters during an official visit to Oman. ▶ Page 3

Gaza symbolizes the tragedy of unilateralism in global politics: top security official

TEHRAN – Iran’s top national security official has warned that unilateralism in international politics has led to widespread humanitarian disasters across the globe, with the situation in Gaza representing one of the most severe manifestations of this trend.

Speaking at the Moscow Security Conference on Wednesday, Ali Akbar Ahmadian, Secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, said the imposition of the will of dominant global powers on independent nations has fueled chaos and suffering around the world, particularly in West Asia.

“Unilateralism and the coercive agendas of arrogant powers have produced countless tragedies globally. Today, the region of West Asia stands as a living exhibition of these crimes,” Ahmadian stated.

He pointed to the prolonged conflicts and crises in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, noting that each has suffered deeply from externally driven agendas rooted in exploitation and injustice. ▶ Page 2

Oman and Iran can now be considered strategic partners

By Javad Mirgaloubayat

TEHRAN – Five Iranian presidents have made six visits to Oman over approximately 20 years, while Omani sultans have visited Iran three times. Of course, Iran-Oman relations have historical roots, but the relationship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sultanate of Oman gained momentum in the early 1980s, progressing steadily toward strengthening ties.

Various global, regional, and domestic upheavals have not disrupted this trajectory to the extent that today, the two countries can be considered strategic partners.

The close political cooperation between Iran and Oman is no secret these days. However, this appears to be just the tip of the iceberg, as there are likely collaborations that remain undisclosed—such as the two major shocks dealt to Netanyahu during Iran’s secret negotiations with the U.S. and Yemen’s talks with the U.S. This demonstrates that Oman could, at any moment, advance a political project for Iran on a global or regional scale, one that even foreign intelligence services might be unaware of. ▶ Page 2

Humiliating starved people

By Martin Jamshidi

TEHRAN – On Tuesday, thousands of Palestinians clambered over fences to reach the humanitarian supplies at a distribution site run by the previously unknown, U.S.-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), in Rafah, southern Gaza, Al Jazeera reported.

The chaotic scenes of the starved people scrambling desperately for food were recorded in history as a disgrace for humanity. The scenes were also recorded as a humiliation of the Palestinians in Gaza.

According to eyewitnesses, some 50 people suffered injuries because of the stampede. Also, a Palestinian was killed as Israeli soldiers fired in the air to disperse hungry people.

“This is not a natural disaster. It is the brutal combination of manufactured violence and collective global apathy. The famine in Gaza is not collateral damage, but rather the intentional consequence of policies designed by the Israeli government to maximize suffering and death,” Middle East Eye said in a commentary on Wednesday.

Lebanese government violates its own constitution

By Sondoss Al Asaad

SOUTH LEBANON — During his speech at the Arab Media Summit in Dubai, Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam claimed that the Lebanese project is based on “liberation from the duality of arms.”

Salam claimed that his project “is based on the interdependence of reform and sovereignty, which requires the exclusivity of arms, meaning that we must liberate ourselves from the duality of arms, which led to the duality of decision-making and the loss of the national state project.”

Salam added, “Our vision for Lebanon is not a fantasy, but a realistic project: a state of law and institutions, not a state of quotas and clientelism, a state of sovereignty, not subservience, a state of decision-making, not an arena of conflict.”

He emphasized that “we want a Lebanon that owns its own decisions in peace and war, a Lebanon rooted in its Arab identity and affiliation, open to the world, and capable of serving as a bridge of communication between East and West.”

Outcry over U.S.-Israeli aid mechanism

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – An aid delivery system set up by a U.S.-backed company in Gaza crumbles, triggering international condemnation.

The American firm tasked by the Israeli occupation regime with distributing food in the besieged enclave quickly lost control of the sites.

On Tuesday, mass stampedes and severe overcrowding occurred near Rafah on the first day of operations. The following day, Israeli gunfire targeted Palestinians in the area, resulting in the death of one starving civilian and injuries to around 50 others.

The ensuing chaos left the site heavily damaged and forced an abrupt halt to distribution.

Eyewitnesses and media reports described scenes of desperation, with hundreds of thousands of starving Palestinians swarming the area after being cut off from essential supplies for nearly 90 days.

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Finnish ambassador visits Mazandaran, honors environmental legacy of ‘Mother of the Cranes’

TEHRAN – Finland’s Ambassador to Iran, Jani Johannes Raippana, has praised Iran’s vast investment potential, particularly in the northern province of Mazandaran, describing its economic capacities as “unparalleled,” especially in the fields of tourism, fisheries, agriculture, and mining.

Speaking at a memorial ceremony held at the University of Mazandaran in honor of the late Ellen Vuosalo — affectionately known as the “Mother of the Cranes” — Ambassador Raippana expressed Finland’s keen interest in furthering ties with Iran and emphasized the importance of introducing Iranian opportunities to Finnish investors, the University said in a press release on Tuesday. ▶ Page 6



Trade between Iran, Oman can reach \$20b-\$30b: Pezeshkian

TEHRAN – Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said that the value of trade between Iran and Oman can reach \$20 billion-\$30 billion.

The president made the remarks in an Iran-Oman Business Forum in Muscat on Wednesday (May 28).

Emphasizing the position of Iran and Oman in connecting regional markets, the president said: “We can jointly establish strategic ties with important markets in the region and the world by using our geopolitical capacity.”

Referring to his talks with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq the previous day and the agreements reached in these talks, the president stated: ▶ Page 4

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

Return of "nuclear consortium" idea

In an analysis, Hamshahri addressed the return of the "nuclear consortium" idea and wrote: Indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States are underway in a situation where several issues, including the right to enrich within Iranian territory, have become one of the main sticking points between the parties.

By monitoring the news, we can perceive Tehran's positive approach towards the idea of a nuclear consortium. Of course, though Iran has welcomed the whole idea of a nuclear consortium, the plan cannot replace the right to enrich within Iranian territory.

Iran has no problem with the enrichment consortium idea, but under the condition that enrichment is carried out inside its territory, and that other Persian Gulf countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar benefit from Iranian technology in exchange for capital injections.

Of course, as some observers have predicted, the nuclear consortium may face an obstacle, and that is the consent of the mentioned countries to the consortium, because entering it may conflict with their grand nuclear strategy, which is mainly defined in relation to Western technology.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Iran and Pakistan's firm determination to destroy terrorists

In a note, Siasat-e-Rooz discussed the Pakistani Prime Minister's visit to Iran and said: Iran and Pakistan are facing the problem of the presence of terrorists in common border areas.

These terrorists carry out terrorist acts in the two countries and not only clash with border guards and armed forces of the two countries but also assassinate ordinary people.

To eliminate terrorist groups in the region, the two countries must deepen their cooperation so that they can get rid of these terrorists, who are also separatists. The Pakistani Prime Minister's visit to Iran and the meetings he had with the officials of our country, especially with the Leader of the Revolution and the President, show the importance of the visit.

On the other side, the two countries are interested in expanding political, military, and economic relations as much as possible.

It should be said that the visit of the Pakistani Army Commander to Iran with the country's Prime Minister and the meetings he had with Iranian military officials are in line with bilateral cooperation in the region to create greater security.

Deputy FM talks multilateral, international matters with Chinese and Russian envoys



TEHRAN – Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi held separate meetings with the ambassadors of China and Russia on Wednesday to discuss cooperation within BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as well as the latest updates on Iran-U.S. negotiations.

In a post on his X account on Wednesday, Gharibabadi confirmed his meetings with Cong Peiwu, China's ambassador, and Alexey Dedov, Russia's ambassador to Tehran.

"Given the upcoming BRICS summit as well as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the coming months, in separate

Iran: A trip beyond a diplomatic visit

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper examined Pezeshkian's trip to Oman. Domestic or regional experts assess the importance of this trip beyond a diplomatic visit between the two neighbors.

Experts believe that the trip indicates the strategic depth of Iran-Oman relations, which has been reflected in the country's role in the nuclear negotiations. This is while this southern neighbor has always served as a bridge for Iran's sensitive talks with other countries, from the Persian Gulf countries to the United States.

This trip is also an opportunity to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the fields of economy, energy, and transportation. Accordingly, Pezeshkian's trip to Muscat is a symbol of mutual trust and the two countries' desire for broader cooperation. In particular, the signing of 18 cooperation documents between officials from the two countries during Pezeshkian's presence in Muscat indicates that if the relations between the two neighbors have so far been mainly political and diplomatic, now their economic aspect will also become more prominent.

Given these developments, observers believe that relations between Tehran and Muscat are not only friendly but also strategic and can play a vital role in the security and development of the region.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Trade with neighbors

Given its strategic location in the Middle East and bordering 15 countries, Iran has great potential to establish and develop economic relations with neighbors.

These capacities can not only help improve Iran's economic situation but will also create significant economic and trade opportunities for neighboring countries.

To increase the level of trade with neighboring countries, Iran must put several solutions on its agenda. Iran's economic capacity with its neighbors is very high and there is potential for increasing trade and economic cooperation.

Despite certain problems such as sanctions, regional instability, and infrastructure problems, Iran can increase its trade relations with its neighbors by adopting appropriate solutions in terms of economic diplomacy, strengthening infrastructure, and diversifying its exports.

This increased cooperation will not only benefit Iran, but neighboring countries can also take advantage of these trade opportunities.

meetings with the ambassadors of Russia and China, we reviewed the development and strengthening of cooperation within the framework of these two important groups of countries," he noted.

Additionally, Gharibabadi and the ambassadors exchanged views on the recent developments in the indirect talks between Iran and the United States held in Rome.

The two sides are negotiating a deal that would limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the termination of sanctions. Iran keeps in close contact with its allies on the talks' developments.

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While both sides have so far described the talks as largely constructive, significant disagreements remain, particularly over Iran's uranium enrichment program. Tehran has long insisted that halting enrichment is non-negotiable, citing its right to peaceful nuclear technology under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). According to sources familiar with the discussions, Iran's delegation reaffirmed this stance at the outset of the first round of the current negotiations.

The U.S. position, however, appears less consistent. American officials have sent mixed signals in recent weeks, at times suggesting their sole red line

is preventing a nuclear-armed Iran, while at other moments demanding the dismantling of key nuclear facilities and a complete end to enrichment.

During his Wednesday remarks, Eslami reiterated Iran's firm stance on uranium enrichment, calling it the "cornerstone" of the country's nuclear industry. Comparing it to the electricity sector, he argued that without enrichment, akin to a power plant, other nuclear infrastructure would be meaningless. "Taking away enrichment means dismantling the entire nuclear industry. This is Iran's red line, and we have communicated this clearly, both in writing and verbally, during negotiations," he

stated.

He also warned that stopping enrichment would devastate Iran's healthcare system, where one million patients annually rely on domestically produced radioisotopes for medical treatments. "Without 20% enriched fuel for the Tehran reactor, radioisotope production stops," he said. Research reactors, food safety systems, and advanced manufacturing sectors would also face collapse, he added.

Also on Wednesday, Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said the country will show no flexibility on its uranium enrichment program. "Enrichment is an inseparable part of Iran's nuclear industry, and any proposal or initiative that contradicts this principle or undermines this right is unacceptable."

The spokesman also dismissed media reports outlining potential terms of a future deal, calling them "pure media conjecture" pushed with "various motives and intentions."

"None of these claims can be confirmed," he added, without elaborating on specific details of the negotiations.

Oman and Iran can now be considered strategic partners



President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) talking to Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq in Muscat on May 27, 2025

By Javad Mirgaloubayat

TEHRAN – Five Iranian presidents have made six visits to Oman over approximately 20 years, while Omani sultans have visited Iran three times. Of course, Iran-Oman relations have historical roots, but the relationship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Sultanate of Oman gained momentum in the early 1980s, progressing steadily toward strengthening ties.

Various global, regional, and domestic upheavals have not disrupted this trajectory to the extent that today, the two countries can be considered strategic partners.

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tion between Iran and Oman is no secret these days. However, this appears to be just the tip of the iceberg, as there are likely collaborations that remain undisclosed—such as the two major shocks dealt to Netanyahu during Iran's secret negotiations with the U.S. and Yemen's talks with the U.S. This demonstrates that Oman could, at any moment, advance a political project for Iran on a global or regional scale, one that even foreign intelligence services might be unaware of.

In the Arabian Peninsula, Oman—due to structural factors such as religious isolation, geography, and civilizational aspirations—seeks a partner, even an ally, beyond the region.

Similarly, Iran looks for a reliable and steadfast companion in that area. Both countries, recognizing these points and guided by their respective foreign policy doctrines, have gradually moved from initially lukewarm relations toward strategic cooperation over the past four decades.

Today, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Oman are aligned on fundamental policies such as preventing Israeli influence in the region, resisting schemes to partition West Asia, countering extremism, fostering endogenous regional security, promoting peace and stability, advocating coexistence, and respecting the sovereignty of states.

Ties between Iran and Oman have steadily progressed in the past four decades

Relying on these principles, Iran and Oman have collaborated extensively in the region, whether in Yemen, supporting Palestine, countering Israel's influence in various cases, preventing regional tensions, and opposing unilateral interventions by West-

ern powers.

In this context, other sectors—military, economic, and social—have also seen growing progress, though their level of engagement does not yet match that of political relations. While high-level military agreements have been signed and joint exercises conducted, this cooperation must evolve to leverage both sides' technological capabilities, particularly in Iranian arms exports and shared expertise in countering Israeli influence, a critical need for both nations.

On the economic front, despite significant growth over the past decade, Oman is not among Iran's top five trade and economic partners, nor does Iran hold such a position for Oman. This sector, despite the attention of both countries' leaders, still lags behind political ties. Strengthening economic relations would solidify Iran-Oman relations further.

In the realm of public diplomacy, decisions and actions must be taken to bring these two Muslim, anti-Zionist, and resilient nations closer together. Today, the people of Iran and the people of Oman are united like never before, particularly in condemning Israel and standing firm in resistance against it.

Mossad spy Pedram Madani executed: Iran's Judiciary

TEHRAN – The Iranian Judiciary has announced the execution of Pedram Madani, convicted of espionage for the Israeli regime's Mossad intelligence service and large-scale financial corruption.

The sentence was carried out after all legal appeals and procedures were completed.

According to a statement released by the Iranian Judiciary's Media Center, Madani was initially apprehended in Tehran in 2020.

He faced serious charges including "espionage on behalf of the criminal Zionist regime's intelligence service (Mossad)" and "acquisition of property through illegitimate means, involving the receipt of foreign cash currency (Euros) in Europe and digital currency (Bitcoin)."

The Judiciary statement outlined Madani's extensive activities on behalf of the hostile foreign service. Prior to his arrest, Madani frequently traveled outside Iran, particularly to Germany.

"Utilizing training courses provided by Mossad," the statement detailed, "he sought to recruit individuals and collect classified information, transmitting it securely to his

Mossad handler."

Evidence presented during his trial proved damning. Judicial documents confirmed Madani's efforts to transmit sensitive classified data, "including locations and buildings housing critical infrastructure equipment," via secure communication channels to his Mossad officer.

Furthermore, the Judiciary revealed that "during one of several meetings with his service officer in various countries, Pedram Madani met his direct Mossad handler at the Zionist regime's embassy in Brussels."

Digital forensics played a crucial role in the case. "Information recovered from Pedram Madani's electronic devices," the Judiciary stated, "showed exchanges of messages between the accused and his Mossad officer."

Crucially, evidence included an order from the officer instructing Madani to "categorize the information and transfer it to the specialized section of the service." Madani's travels to the occupied territories during his period of collaboration with Mossad were also documented by investigators.

Iranian security services successfully mon-



itored and terminated Madani's espionage network. "With intelligence oversight, his information networks were dismantled, his connection with the service was severed, and he was arrested," the Judiciary Media Center reported.

After undergoing the full process of criminal proceedings, Madani was found guilty of espionage for Mossad. The court convicted him of "Moharebeh" (waging war against God) and "Efsade Fil Arz" (corruption on earth), sentencing him to death.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

SCO and BRICS valuable opportunities for Iran: Leader

TEHRAN – The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, held a meeting with Iran's interior minister and the country's provincial governors on Wednesday.

During the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized that governors are the comprehensive managers of their respective provinces and referred to the favorable public atmosphere in the country for serving the people, he stated, "Officials must go among the people, be present at their gatherings, listen patiently to their concerns, even if expressed harshly, and provide the necessary explanations."

Ayatollah Khamenei pointed to the country's vast opportunities and added, "The country benefits from an immense capacity in its young human capital.

Wherever an institution has recognized and utilized this potential, tangible progress has



been achieved."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also referred to Iran's membership in key regional and international organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, as well as the appointment of a Minister of Interior with in-depth knowledge of the country's diverse regions, as further valuable opportunities.

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the management of various provincial affairs, including matters of diplomacy related to the provinces, by the governors, and stated: "We have many neighboring countries. These very neighbors themselves are one of the opportunities."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution stressed the necessity of preserving the integrity of the

country and confronting corruption, calling the fight against corruption a definitive duty of senior officials.

Ayatollah Khamenei also emphasized, "The first condition for combating corruption is that officials and their families must remain distant from corruption-inducing elements."

He added, "Given the sensitive position of public officials, any involvement in corruption inflicts far greater harm, and its punishment in the sight of God will be significantly more severe."

He also advised governors to uphold religious obligations, avoid what is forbidden in Islamic law, be attentive to religious observances, strive for the realization of the year's slogan, and engage in a serious, coordinated effort to combat the smuggling of goods.

'Nothing left' to discuss with UK if it seeks zero enrichment, Araghchi declares

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi delivered a stark warning to the United Kingdom on Tuesday, stating that London's apparent insistence on "zero enrichment" in Iran renders further dialogue on the nuclear issue futile.

Araghchi's declaration came via a post on the social media platform X, presumably responding to recent remarks by the British Ambassador to the United States, Peter Mandelson.

"Iran has maintained multilateral engagement with the UK and other European JCPOA participants in good faith," the Iranian top diplomat stated, "even as the U.S. continues to show no interest in getting them involved in the ongoing negotiation process."

He then issued the critical challenge: "If the UK position is 'zero enrichment' in Iran—in violation of the NPT and UK commitments as a remaining JCPOA participant—there is nothing left for us to discuss on the nuclear issue."

This firm stance from Tehran follows Ambassador Mandelson's comments at an Atlantic Council event in Washington, D.C., published on Tuesday.

The British envoy launched a series of unfounded claims against Iran's nuclear program. Labeling Iran as "vulnerable" and alleging that its enrichment facilities could produce a nuclear bomb, he echoed the tired rhetoric of Western adversaries seeking

ing to undermine Iran.

Mandelson asserted that Britain "strongly supports the [U.S.] President's initiative in negotiating away these enrichment and related facilities in Iran," claiming that the UK can't "accept" that Iran retains enrichment facilities capable of producing nuclear material.

He also pointedly referenced the potential use of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action's (JCPOA) "snapback" mechanism by European powers.

Iran and the U.S. have held five rounds of indirect nuclear talks since April.

E3 appears opposed to a diplomatic breakthrough between Iran and US

Araghchi's statement underscores Iran's long-standing frustration with the positions adopted by the UK and its E3 partners (France, Germany, and the UK itself) regarding the JCPOA.

While Iran has consistently demonstrated a willingness to engage diplomatically with the E3 – including technical and po-



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi

litical meetings throughout 2024 and 2025 involving officials like Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi – Tehran views the European approach as fundamentally unhelpful.

Iran contends that the E3, led by the UK, has failed to uphold its JCPOA obligations since the United States unilaterally withdrew from the agreement in 2018 under President Trump's first term.

Instead of shielding Iran from U.S. sanctions as promised, European powers reinstated their own sanctions and imposed additional coercive economic measures.

Furthermore, European powers have consistently criticized Iran's necessary and lawful remedial measures, taken in response to the U.S. withdrawal and European non-compliance, while overlooking the root cause of the escalation.

Analysts observe that the UK and Europe find themselves significantly sidelined in the current

indirect nuclear negotiations, primarily taking place between Iran and the United States.

This marginalization, they suggest, fuels the kind of rhetoric displayed by Ambassador Mandelson and may represent an attempt by London to reassert influence or sway diplomatic outcomes amid the sensitive U.S.-Iran talks.

The Iranian position remains unambiguous: the nation possesses an inalienable sovereign right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to pursue nuclear enrichment exclusively for peaceful, civilian purposes. This right has been consistently reaffirmed by Iran's leadership.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei recently dismissed external demands regarding enrichment as "utterly wrong," stressing that Iran requires no external permission to conduct its peaceful nuclear activities.

Gaza symbolizes the tragedy of unilateralism in global politics: top security official



Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), Ali Akbar Ahmadian, speaks at the 13th International Meeting of High Representatives for Security Issues in Moscow on May 28, 2025.

From Page 1 ▶ Ahmadian reserved his strongest remarks for the current situation in Gaza, calling it an "unprecedented crime" unfolding before the eyes of the international community.

"What we are witnessing in Gaza is not only the indiscriminate killing of civilians, but also the slow and deliberate death of women and children through starvation and blockade. It is a humanitarian

catastrophe of historic proportions."

He criticized Western double standards and stressed that the root of these tragedies lies in a global order shaped by domination and inequality. "Western unilateralism is built upon a foundation of oppression and the exploitation of nations," he said.

Ahmadian emphasized that a comprehensive global security

framework can only be achieved through multilateral cooperation and justice. He argued that the current world order must evolve into one that guarantees equal and fair opportunities for all nations.

"In the emerging global security order, we must create conditions where all nations have an equal stake in peace and development. Multilateralism is not just a preference — it is a necessity."

Ahmadian also stressed the importance of human dignity and inclusive participation in global security processes, accusing dominant powers of using sanctions and technological superiority as tools to deprive other nations of their basic rights.

"One clear example is the effort to curtail Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. These actions represent a broader pattern of denying sovereign nations their legitimate entitlements."

'Iran is committed to peaceful nuclear rights'

Reiterating Iran's stance, Ahmadian stated that Tehran remains open to dialogue, but will not compromise on its nuclear independence, including the preservation of its fuel cycle and enrichment activities.

"Iran welcomes diplomatic engagement, but insists on preserving its nuclear rights, including enrichment and a complete fuel cycle. This is a matter of sovereignty and scientific progress."

He concluded by stating that the path toward a multipolar world — one based on cooperation rather than coercion — is the only viable route to lasting peace and justice for all nations.

"Strengthening the foundations of multilateralism and advancing toward a multipolar global system is the path that can bring sustainable peace and justice to humanity."

Women's handball captain Vatanparast optimistic for World Championship

TEHRAN – Iran's women's handball team captain Mina Vatanparast says that they can make history in the 2025 International Handball Federation (IHF) Women's World Championship.

Team Melli are pitted in Pool B alongside Hungary, Switzerland, and Senegal.

The 27th edition of the IHF Women's World Championship will take place in five cities – 's-Hertogenbosch and Rotterdam in the Netherlands and Stuttgart, Dortmund and Trier in Germany – between 26 November and 14 December 2025. "We are grouped with Hungary, Switzerland, and Senegal in Pool B. Hungary are one of the top teams in the world. A few months ago, they managed to defeat the strong French team," said Vatanparast.

"Switzerland also play in the modern European style and are a very formidable team. We have experience playing against Senegal from the Islamic Solidarity Games in Konya, where we narrowly lost by one goal. Although I'm not entirely sure of their current strength at the upcoming World Championship, considering the progress of the Iranian women's handball team, I believe we can overcome this challenge. I hope the national team will, for the first time, advance into the top 24 teams worldwide," she explained.

"We have participated in two consecutive World Championships, facing big and experienced teams. But this year, we plan to perform differently on the global stage. With good planning by the federation, the women's national handball team can make a strong showing at the World Championships, although a tough task lies ahead," Vatanparast stated.

"This is a very significant achievement, not only for the handball community but also for women's sports in general. Some may see qualifying for the World Championships as routine, but we haven't always been in a strong position; we used to rank eighth among eight teams in Asia.

Now, we are among the top four teams in Asia, and Kazakhstan, who were once a formidable opponent for Iran, now consider us as a strong rival," she emphasized.

"The women's national handball team have undergone major changes and transformations. Our playing style has evolved significantly, and we are no longer underdogs.

These achievements reflect the federation's excellent planning for youth development, training talented players, and organizing numerous training camps. I am confident that much greater accomplishments lie ahead for women's handball," Vatanparast concluded.

Iran volleyball team to play two friendlies with Italy

TEHRAN – Iran national volleyball team will meet Italy in two friendly matches on May 30 and 31. The warm-up games will be held as part of preparation for the 2025 FIVB Men's Volleyball Nations League.

Roberto Piazza's Iran will start the prestigious campaign with a match against Brazil on June 11 in Rio de Janeiro.

Iran will also meet the US, Slovenia, and Ukraine, respectively in the following days in Week 1.

The Italian coach named his 16-man team for the VNL on Monday.

El Amloud thanks Persepolis club

TEHRAN – Persepolis Moroccan defender Ayoub El Amloud thanked the Iranian club after parting ways with the Iranian team.

El Amloud's deal has not been extended and he has been deemed surplus to requirements.

He joined Persepolis in last year's July from Moroccan club Wydad AC.

"Every beginning has an end, and every end has a new beginning... I thank the president and the management for their kind treatment, the players for everything, and the technical and medical staff.

I also thank the Persepolis fans, whom I love and who have given me all their love. I am happy to wear this precious jersey with pride. I wish Persepolis a successful career and that it will always be on the path to titles worthy of its past and present, and of its vast fan base, to whom I owe so much and whom I will never forget," El Amloud posted on his Instagram account.

Jahanbakhsh, Azmoun miss Qatar and North Korea matches

TEHRAN – Sardar Azmoun and Alireza Jahanbakhsh will not be playing against Qatar and North Korea in the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Both players have missed the matches due to injury. Team Melli are scheduled to face Qatar at the Lusail Stadium in Doha on June 5.

Iran will also meet North Korea five days later in Tehran. Iran have already secured their place in the 2026 World Cup.

Esteghlal and Malavan set for thrilling Hazfi Cup final showdown

TEHRAN – The Imam Khomeini Stadium in Arak is poised to host the highly anticipated final of Iran's Hazfi Cup on Thursday, a clash between Esteghlal and Malavan.

This season, these two teams have already met twice in the Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL), with both encounters ending in draws. However, in this decisive final, a winners must emerge.

Esteghlal, after a disappointing league campaign that saw them finish ninth, has channeled all their focus into the Hazfi Cup. Their journey to the final underscores their determination to salvage the season. For the Blues, only a victory will appease their dissatisfied fans; anything less will be considered a failure.

On the other side stands Malavan, who enjoyed a more successful league season, finishing seventh. Reaching the Hazfi Cup final marks a dream season for the "Anzali White Swans," offering them a golden opportunity to lift a trophy after many years.

Recent history heavily favors Esteghlal. In their last 11 encounters over the past 11 years, Esteghlal have secured six victories, with five matches ending in draws.

Malavan's last win against the Blues dates back approximately 11 years, a memorable 4-2 victory under Dragan Skočević against Amir Ghalenoei's Esteghlal. Malavan will be eager to end this long winless streak against their formidable rivals in the final.

Tomorrow's match will be the tenth time Esteghlal and Malavan have faced each other in the Hazfi Cup. In their nine previous encounters, Esteghlal have triumphed four times, while Malavan secured three victories.

Two matches ended in draws, both during the semi-final stage when ties were played over two legs.

Malavan's head coach, Maziar Zare, has yet to secure a victory against Esteghlal in his five previous encounters. His teams have managed two draws but suffered three defeats. The final will reveal whether he can break this winless streak. Notably, Mojtaba Jabbari will face Malavan for the first time as a head coach.

Soleymani no longer Iran's women's futsal coach

TEHRAN – The Iran Football Federation has parted ways with women's futsal coach Forouzan Soleymani. Under her leadership, Iran finished in third place at the AFC Women's Futsal Asian Cup China 2025 in mid-May. Team Melli Banovan secured its spot in the FIFA Futsal Women's World Cup Philippines 2025 as one of the top three teams.

However, the federation has decided not to renew her contract. Candidates to take charge of the team are Niloufar Ardalan and Shahrzad Mozafar.

Iran, Turkey customs authorities sign cooperation agreement



TEHRAN – The customs chiefs of Iran and Turkey signed a bilateral cooperation agreement during a meeting in which both sides expressed determination to boost trade ties.

According to the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Foroud Asgari, Iran's deputy minister of finance and economic affairs and head of the IRICA, met with Sezai Uçarmak, Turkey's deputy minister of customs and trade.

The two officials emphasized that the current level of trade and customs cooperation does not reflect the countries' technical capabilities and political will.

Asgari stated that Iran aims not only to restore previous trade records with Turkey but to surpass them, given the current conditions and available resources.

He identified the Bazargan border crossing as Iran's top customs priority, calling it the most important land border and expressing hope that it will soon become a model for other crossings.

Uçarmak highlighted the strategic importance of both countries in the region and said their trade exchanges should match their historical, cultural, and geopolitical significance.

The two sides agreed on the need to enhance infrastructure, activate more border crossings, and specifically increase truck transit between the two nations.

According to data from the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$189 million to Turkey in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21-April 21).

The IRICA data showed that Turkey was Iran's fourth top non-oil export destination in the mentioned month.

Exporting commodities valued at \$538 million to Iran, Turkey was Iran's third source of non-oil import in the said month, the IRICA report added.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$6.8 billion to Turkey in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, 2025.

Akbarpour said that Turkey was Iran's fourth top export destination in the previous year.

Exporting commodities valued at \$12.4 billion to Iran, Turkey was Iran's third top source of import in that year, the official added.

On March 11, Iran's ambassador to Turkey announced a significant rise in bilateral trade between Tehran and Ankara, stating that the trade volume between the two nations reached \$11.8 billion last year and has surpassed \$17.5 billion as of February this year. The figure is expected to hit \$19 billion by year-end.

According to IRNA, citing Iran's Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, Mohammad-Hossein Habibollahzadeh made the remarks during a virtual session of the Iran-Turkey Joint Transport Committee, emphasizing the importance of transit development. He noted that transit and transport volumes between the two countries have increased by \$7.0 billion this year, though further infrastructural improvements are required in rail, air, maritime, and port sectors.

Habibollahzadeh highlighted the significant traffic between Iran and Turkey, stating that six million passengers and approximately 330,000 trucks crossed the two countries' borders last year. In response to the growing trade volume, both countries have agreed to increase border crossings from three to five. Expanding rail connectivity and increasing flights are also part of the agenda.

chemical products. In contrast, Iran's primary exports to Austria consisted of petrochemical products, pistachios, dried fruits, and Persian carpets.

The report described Austria as a pragmatic and low-conflict partner with strong potential for collaboration, particularly in technology and energy. However, sanctions, EU pressures, and competition from China were identified as major obstacles to expanding bilateral ties.

It concluded that unless sanctions are lifted and cooperation deepened, only modest trade growth is expected through the end of 2025. Nonetheless, the report emphasized that easing restrictions could pave the way for broader engagement in key sectors such as engineering and infrastructure.

Annual trade between Iran, Austria rises to \$220m

TEHRAN – Trade between Iran and Austria reached \$220 million in 2024, marking a five percent increase from the previous year, according to the International Affairs Department of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (IRICA).

The report notes that bilateral trade between the two countries, which stood at \$1.2 billion in 1970, has significantly declined over the decades due to international sanctions and geopolitical tensions.

Austria's exports to Iran rose by six percent year-on-year to \$190 million in 2024, while Iran's exports to Austria remained unchanged at \$30 million.

Austria's main exports to Iran included industrial machinery, medical equipment, and

Annual trade with ECO member states hits \$27.6b

TEHRAN – Iran's trade with member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) reached 36.2 million tons worth \$27.6 billion in the Iranian calendar year 1403 (ended March 19, 2025), according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Of the total volume, imports accounted for 8.2 million tons valued at \$13.5 billion, while exports reached 28 million tons worth \$14.1 billion.

Iran's non-oil exports to ECO countries increased by 38.7 percent in volume and 37.5 percent in value compared to the previous year. Imports from ECO members also surged—rising by 36 percent in weight and 54.5 percent in value.

Turkey remained Iran's top export destination within the ECO bloc, purchasing \$6.9



billion worth of goods. It was followed by Pakistan at \$2.42 billion, Afghanistan at \$2.41 billion, Azerbaijan at \$681 million, and Turkmenistan at \$572 million.

On the import side, Turkey was also Iran's main supplier, exporting \$12.47 billion worth of goods to the country. Pakistan followed with \$706 million and Tajikistan with \$93 million

Trade between Iran, Oman can reach \$20b-\$30b: Pezeshkian

TEHRAN– Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said that the value of trade between Iran and Oman can reach \$20 billion-\$30 billion.

The president made the remarks in an Iran-Oman Business Forum in Muscat on Wednesday (May 28).

Emphasizing the position of Iran and Oman in connecting regional markets, the president said: "We can jointly establish strategic ties with important markets in the region and the world by using our geopolitical capacity."

Emphasizing the position of Iran and Oman in connecting regional markets, he said: "We can jointly establish strategic ties with Africa, Russia, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, and Europe and benefit from the geopolitical capacity of the two countries to develop trans-regional trade."

Referring to his talks with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq the previous day and the agreements reached in these talks, the president stated: "What is most important today is to create infrastructure to strengthen the connection of land, sea and air routes between the two countries, because only in such a context can commercial, scientific, industrial and economic cooperation be deepened."

Tehran, Muscat explore banking cooperation

Iran and Oman discussed ways to boost banking ties during a meeting between the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment



Promotion.

According to Oman's state news agency, Qais bin Mohammed al-Yousef held talks on Tuesday with Mohammadreza Farzin in Muscat. The meeting took place as part of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's official visit to Oman aimed at strengthening bilateral economic and financial relations.

The two sides reviewed measures to enhance cooperation in trade and investment, ease financial transactions, and streamline trade procedures between the two countries. Discussions also focused on initiatives to support joint economic projects, stimulate bilateral trade, and facilitate private sector exchanges.

Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to continued coordination and cooperation in areas of mutual interest, with a shared goal of strengthening bilateral relations and promoting sustainable economic growth.

President Pezeshkian arrived in Muscat earlier on Tuesday at the invitation of Omani Sultan

Haitham bin Tariq Al Said for a two-day visit. Following an official welcome ceremony, Pezeshkian held a private meeting with the Sultan at Al Alam Palace before high-level delegations from both countries convened for broader talks.

Muscat is the tenth international destination Pezeshkian has visited since taking office, following trips to Iraq, the United States, Qatar, Turkmenistan, Russia (twice), Tajikistan, Egypt, and Azerbaijan. These visits align with his administration's focus on fostering neighborhood diplomacy, balanced engagement, and expanded regional and international cooperation.

The official visit to Oman marks a significant step in the Iranian government's ongoing efforts to strengthen regional ties and deepen bilateral relations with Muscat.

Iran, Oman should move towards defining joint investment projects

The head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), who has

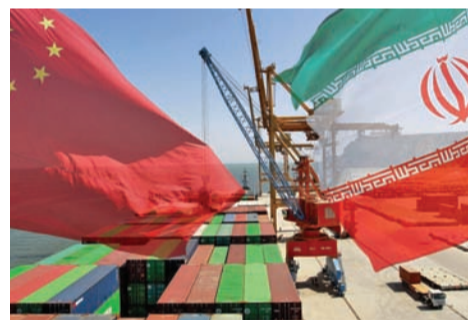
also travel to Muscat, at the head of a trade delegation, attended a conference to review trade opportunities between Iran and Oman and presented seven proposals to deepen Iran-Oman relations in the economic field. He believes that moving towards defining joint investment projects is a suitable solution in this direction.

Addressing the conference, Samad Hasanzadeh said that the presence of entrepreneurs from Iran and Oman in this valuable conference indicates the serious interest of the private sectors of the two countries in comprehensively deepening relations and promoting bilateral economic cooperation.

Hasanzadeh stated that expanding economic relations with neighboring countries is Iran's strategic priority, adding: "Iran's private sector is very keen to cooperate with Omani companies. Given the wide variety of cooperation capacities between the two countries, it is necessary to focus on the future of relations so that, by optimally utilizing new opportunities, a suitable roadmap for joint relations and cooperation that includes the interests of both parties can be defined and drawn."

He considered the cultural and historical commonalities, good neighborliness, and excellent political relations in the region as important capacities for deepening economic relations, adding: "In recent years, the value of trade between the two countries has exceeded \$2 billion, and there is a clear prospect of increasing this figure to a much higher level."

Iran-China monthly non-oil trade stands at \$1.765b



TEHRAN– The value of non-oil trade between Iran and China stood at \$1.765 billion in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21-April 21, 2025), according to data from the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Importing non-oil goods worth \$997 million from Iran, China was the first destination of Iranian products in the first month, and by exporting non-oil products valued at \$768 million to Iran, China was the second source of import for Iran in that month.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, the value of non-oil trade between Iran and China stood at \$34.1 billion in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, 2025.

He said that importing non-oil goods worth \$14.8 billion from Iran, China was the first destination of Iranian products in the past year.

He also announced that by exporting non-oil products valued at \$19.3 billion to Iran, China was the second source of import for Iran in that year.

On May 4, Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted an Iran-China Business Development Forum participated by China's ambassador to Iran, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the chair of the Iran-China Parliamentary Friendship Group, and senior officials from the Tehran Chamber.

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

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

Najafi Arab said Iran and China share thou-

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

He also highlighted recent visits of Iranian private sector delegations to various Chinese provinces and exhibitions, emphasizing the need to identify investment opportunities and facilitate financial exchanges. The Chamber, with over 140 years of history, is prepared to host expert meetings, present economic opportunities, support joint ventures, and activate professional networks between Iranian and Chinese businesses, he said.

China's Ambassador to Iran Cong Peiwu, thanked Iranian participants and the Tehran Chamber for organizing the event. He expressed hope that the forum would help strengthen bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

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

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

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

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

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

markets.

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

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

Speaking at the forum, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), outlined four key strategies for expanding trade with China. The first is technology transfer. He said Chinese companies have made major investments in research and development, much of which has not yet been fully commercialized. Iran, as a long-time partner, seeks deeper collaboration in these cutting-edge sectors.

The second strategy, he said, is increasing trade in high value-added goods. Currently, much of the bilateral trade consists of raw or semi-processed materials. The average value of Iran's exports stands at less than \$400 per ton. "We want to change that," he said, calling on Chinese importers to prioritize Iranian products with higher added value. He welcomed the Chinese ambassador's praise for the competitiveness of Iranian nanotechnology and biotechnology products.

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

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

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

Outcry over U.S.-Israeli aid mechanism

From page 1 ▶ Amid the disorder, Israeli occupation forces (IOF) opened fire near the distribution point. Reporters on the ground say IOF helicopters and tanks also fired on crowds at the aid hub.

Hebrew media later confirmed the military "fired heavily" as Gazans rushed the compound. Reports from Yedioth Ahronoth stated that security staff contracted by the American firm abandoned the site, overwhelmed by the surging crowds.

The breakdown prompted immediate backlash from the Government Media Office in Gaza, which labeled the entire initiative a "systematic policy to perpetuate starvation."

In a scathing statement, the office said the images of desperate Palestinians "taking food under the crushing weight of lethal hunger" exposed the "complete collapse of the so-called humanitarian process."

"This is irrefutable evidence of the occupation's failure to manage the humanitarian catastrophe it deliberately created," the office added, denouncing the use of aid as "a weapon of war and political extortion."



The statement went on to reject any form of humanitarian access that involves buffer zones or corridors controlled by the IOF, urging the UN to immediately open unrestricted crossings and allow independent relief operations.

International reaction has also been swift and sharply critical.

The United Nations called the scenes at the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) site "heartbreaking."

The spokesperson for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated that the U.S.-Israeli model of aid delivery fails to meet basic humanitarian principles of independence and impartiality.

UN aid officials added that what's urgently needed is the reopening of all border crossings and unrestricted access for established humanitarian agencies.

Ahmed Bayram of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) urged the U.S. and Israel to abandon the initiative entirely. "This is not aid," he said.

"It is a performance of suffering. An occupying power that razes Rafah and then invites people back to beg for rations has no moral authority to lead humanitarian operations."

The UN humanitarian office echoed those sentiments. Spokesman Jens Laerke described the measure as "a distraction" that

politicizes assistance, warning of its failure as famine looms in Gaza.

Juliette Touma, communications director of the UN Palestinian refugee agency, said that it had large medical shipments waiting that have been denied entry into Gaza.

"We have over 3000 trucks, not only of food, but also medicines that are lining up in places like Jordan, like Egypt, that are waiting for the green light to go in, and they're carrying medicines and that is expiring soon," she said.

UN aid chief Tom Fletcher previously called the mechanism "a fig leaf for further violence," emphasizing that it violates international norms and undermines longstanding humanitarian protocols.

Reports revealed that the GHF's widely publicized food parcels were paltry and nutritionally insufficient.

As Palestinians streamed through military checkpoints in a desperate attempt to find food, the humanitarian crisis deepened.

The sound of gunfire mixed with the cries of hungry civilians underscored the stark collapse of the U.S.-Israeli aid plan, an initiative many now view not as relief, but as yet another instrument of siege.

Protesters force Israeli ambassador to leave Senegal university

Ambassador Yuval Waks was forced to leave a university campus in Dakar on Tuesday after students protested against his presence and chanted slogans against the Israeli war on Gaza, according to footage circulating on social media.

Waks had been invited to speak at a conference on international relations practices at Cheikh Anta Diop University (UCAD), the country's largest and most prominent higher education institution.

But as he arrived, dozens of students gathered outside the hall, chanting "Free Palestine," "Free Gaza," and "Israel is a war criminal."

Videos shared online show students waving Palestinian flags and booing the newly appointed envoy, preventing him from delivering his speech.

US stops scheduling visa interviews for foreign students, expands social media vetting



The State Department has halted the scheduling of new visa interviews for foreign students hoping to study in the U.S. while it prepares to expand the screening of their activity on social media, officials said.

A U.S. official said Tuesday the suspension is intended to be temporary and does not apply to applicants who already had scheduled their visa interviews. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an internal administration document.

A cable signed by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and obtained by The Associated Press says the State Department plans to issue guidance on expanded social media vetting.

"Effective immediately, in preparation for an expansion of required social media screening and vetting, consulate sections should not add any additional student or exchange visitor visa appointment capacity" until the guidance is issued, the cable says.

Asked about the suspension at a briefing Tuesday, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said the U.S. uses every available resource to vet people applying for visas.

UK and Irish writers pen open letter calling for Gaza ceasefire

Nearly 380 writers from the UK and Ireland have signed an open letter demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, labelling Israel's actions in the enclave a "genocide".

The letter, signed by high-profile writers including Zadie Smith, Ian McEwan and Jeanette Winterson, called on the world "to join us in ending our collective silence and inaction in the face of horror".

The letter also called for the immediate distribution of food and medical aid in Gaza, as well as sanctions on Israel.

"This genocide implicates us all," it concluded. "We bear witness to the crimes of genocide, and we refuse to approve them by our silence."

The letter comes a day after 300 French-language writers, including Nobel Literature prize winners Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clezio and Annie Ernaux, put their names to a similar letter decrying Israel's actions.

On Monday, more than 800 UK-based legal experts, including former senior judges, wrote to UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer calling for sanctions on Israel, and warning that "urgent and decisive action is required to avert the destruction of the Palestinian people of Gaza."

Nations to gather in France to tackle global emergency in oceans

The world's nations are gathering in France next month to tackle what the United Nations calls a global emergency facing the world's oceans as they confront rising temperatures, plastic pollution choking marine life, and relentless overexploitation of fish and other resources.

The third UN Ocean Conference aims to unite governments, scientists, businesses and civil society to take action and raise money to address these and other crises facing the oceans and the people who rely on them for their survival.

Conference Secretary-General Li Junhua told reporters on Tuesday he hopes it will not be another routine meeting but "the pivotal opportunity" to accelerate action and mobilize people in all sectors and across the world.

The conference, co-sponsored by France and Costa Rica, takes place in Nice on the French Riviera from June 7 to June 13. It is expected to bring together more than 60 world leaders, dozens of ministers, about 4,000 government officials and 6,000 members of civil society, Li told The Associated Press.

Lebanese government violates its own constitution



From page 1 ▶ MP Ali Ammar, a member of Hezbollah's Loyalty to the Resistance bloc in the parliament, commented on Salam's provocative statements, urging him to form an emergency task force to extricate the country from its social, economic, educational, and livelihood crises.

Ammar hoped that Salam "would not rely too heavily on nonsense that many before them have tried in order to gain foreign approval."

The Hezbollah MP added, "We have not forgotten the Camp David Conference, the Madrid Conference, the Wadi Araba Conference, or any other conferences under the pretext of arranging peace in the region. None of them were ef-

fective, as the land was not liberated. On the contrary, the Israeli enemy persisted in its aggression and oppression, illegally annexing the Golan Heights and continuing to occupy large areas of land, especially in Lebanon, through the so-called Five Points and other borders that it crosses from time to time."

The five sites overlooking Lebanese towns and the occupied Palestinian territories are: the Labbouneh site, the Jabal Blat site, the Jabal al-Bat site, the site between Markaba and Houla, and the Tallet al-Hamams site.

Reportedly, the Israeli colonial regime also tends to establish two more sites in Labbouneh and Adaisseh.

These strategic sites, in addition to the security belt established by the Israeli enemy (extending from south of Naqoura to the Shebaa Farms heights, 102 meters long and 96 km² wide), confirm, for the thousandth time, the enemy's expansionist colonial nature.

Unfortunately, Salam and Lebanon's anti-Resistance team fool themselves by ignoring that the Zionists were the first to violate Lebanon's sovereignty and interfere in its affairs, amid international silence and involvement of some

far-right forces who claim to be committed to national sovereignty.

In addition to the five points, Israel occupies seven Lebanese villages (Hounein, Malkiyeh, Salha, Abel al-Qamh, Nabi Yusha, Qadas, and Tarbikha). It also occupies the village of Ghajar, areas belonging to the village of Al-Mari, others belonging to Shebaa, and Kfar Shuba, in addition to vast areas of the maritime border between Lebanon and occupied Palestine.

The continued occupation creates a motive among all Lebanese to liberate them, as "it is not permissible to abandon or relinquish any part of the Lebanese lands" based on Article 2 of the Lebanese Constitution, which Nawaf Salam has recently violated when he changed the constitutional name of "Resistance and Liberation Day" to "Liberation Day," as if the land had been liberated on its own without any resistance!!!

Liberation is the responsibility of the Lebanese people, according to paragraph D of the preamble to the constitution, and the people are the source of authority, who voted for the resistance in the recent elections, so why does the Lebanese government violate the constitution, which it claims to be keen to implement?

Humiliating starved people

From page 1 ▶ No wise person can understand why humanitarian aid was halted to the Gaza Strip for 11 weeks. The United Nations said Israel was using food as a weapon.

If Israel's only aim was to starve Hamas fighters to force them to surrender, which did not happen, what was the sin of hundreds of thousands of others? The entire world, particularly Palestinians, will not forget these scenes in which the people of Gaza were intentionally starved.

Philippe Lazzarini, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, condemned the chaotic scenes at the

aid distribution point as "undignified" and "unsafe."

Jens Laerke, a spokesperson for the UN aid coordination office, also criticized the GHF aid plan as "a distraction from what is actually needed, which is a reopening of all the crossings into Gaza, a secure environment within Gaza and faster facilitation of permissions and final approvals of all the emergency supplies that we have just outside the border."

Hardin Lang, vice president for policy and programs for Refugees International, also said the U.S.-Israel-backed aid initiative is run by

military, rather than humanitarian, logic.

The way the food was distributed was another reflection of the Israel-U.S. joint work that has been in force since the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States, mostly provoked by Israel.

When Paul Bremer dissolved the Iraqi army in May 2003, 400,000 Iraqi troops were put out of work. The move set the stage for the insurgency to the extent that secular army officers commanded ISIS terrorists when they invaded Iraq.

It was quite clear that a sea of people who have suffered from

massive starvation would not remain in queues to receive food aid, especially as the amount of food being distributed is like a drop in the sea.

"This is not the way in which you try to feed a population, much less a population that is on the verge of famine," he told Al Jazeera, speaking from Washington, DC.

The United Nations was predicting such chaotic scenes, and that is why they have refused to cooperate with any scheme that fails to respect fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality.

Harvard agrees in settlement to relinquish early photos of slaves

Harvard University will relinquish 175-year-old photographs believed to be the earliest taken of enslaved people to a South Carolina museum devoted to African American history as part of a settlement with one of the subjects' descendants.

The photos of the subjects identified by Tamara Lanier as her great-great-grandfather Renty, whom she calls "Papa Renty," and his daughter Delia will be transferred from the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology to the International African American Museum in South Carolina, the state where they were enslaved in 1850 when the photos were taken, a lawyer for Lanier said Wednesday.

The settlement marks the end of a 15-year battle between Lanier and the nation's most elite university to release the 19th-century "daguerreotypes," a precursor to modern-day photographs.

Lanier's attorney Joshua Koskoff told The Associated Press that the resolution is an "unprecedented" victory for descendants of those

enslaved in the U.S. and praised his client's yearslong determination in pursuing justice for her ancestors.

"I think it's one of one in American history, because of the combination of unlikely features: to have a case that dates back 175 years, to win control over images dating back that long of enslaved people — that's never happened before," Koskoff said in a phone interview.

The AP sent an email seeking comment from Harvard.

A complex history

Lanier, who lives in Connecticut, sued the Ivy League institution in 2019 for "wrongful seizure, possession and expropriation" of the images of Renty, Delia and five other enslaved individuals.

The suit attacked Harvard for its "exploitation" of Renty's image at a 2017 conference and in other uses. It said Harvard has capitalized on the photos by demanding a "hefty" licensing fee to reproduce the images.

The daguerreotypes were commissioned by Harvard biologist Louis Agassiz, whose theories on racial difference were used to support slavery in the U.S. The lawsuit says Agassiz came across Renty and Delia while touring plantations in search of racially "pure" slaves born in Africa.

To create the images, both Renty and Delia were posed shirtless and photographed from several angles.

"To Agassiz, Renty and Delia were nothing more than research specimens," the suit says. "The violence of compelling them to participate in a degrading exercise designed to prove their own subhuman status would not have occurred to him, let alone mattered."

In 2022, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled in Lanier's favor and reaffirmed the merits of Lanier's lawsuit against Harvard after a lower court judge ruled she had no legal claim to the images.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, Egypt to begin tourist exchanges soon: cultural heritage minister

TEHRAN—Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, announced the beginning of tourism exchange between Iran and Egypt in near future.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the cabinet session on Wednesday, Salehi-Amiri said, “The exchange of tourists between Iran and Egypt will begin in the near future,” Mehr news agency reported.

He also said that the ministry has held meetings with the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the tourism cooperation between Iran and Egypt.

“We had a meeting with the Turkish Minis-



ter of Tourism to develop tourism relations. We send 3.5 million tourists to Turkey, while they send about one million tourists to Iran, and we are seeking to create a balance in this regard,” he also said.

Iran to launch specialized hotels for the elderly

TEHRAN—Head of Iran’s National Council on Aging Secretariat, Mojgan Rezazadeh, gave news of launching special elderly hotels and said the council is studying, compiling, and standardizing new centers such as special elderly hotels known as silver generation hotels.

She told IRNA that the idea of silver generation hotels is an arrangement for accommodating elderly tourists so as to have access to all kinds of services.

These hotels are being launched in various provinces, such as Khorasan Razavi province, she said.

Pointing to population changes and necessity to promote elderly sites, she said, “We expect the member and partner agencies of this council to implement the necessary policies in accordance with the needs of society, considering the demographic changes, one of the most important of which is the formulation, standardization, and launch of modern centers.”

Rezazadeh added: Modern centers include residences and hangouts for the elderly, restaur-

ants and cafes for the elderly, specialized elderly clinics.

She said counseling centers, gyms and centers needed by the elderly should be launched according to the required standards.

Rezazadeh explained that silver generation hotels are appropriate recreational, cultural, and sports spaces for the elderly.

Apart from enjoying the tourist spaces, the elderly can benefit from various medical tests and nursing care, she added.

She continued that the elderly enjoy all social interactions and receive various services via specialists who are interested in this field and want to invest.

Regarding the economic benefits of launching silver generation hotels, she said: “By launching these hotels, employment opportunities will be provided for enthusiasts and experts in this field so that they can invest in these areas. Given that the population is aging, we expect that activities in these areas will be considered profitable jobs.”

Uzbekistan builds stronger ties with China through tourism

On May 14, an event showcasing Uzbekistan’s tourism and cultural potential was held in Beijing. Organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in China, the event attracted over 300 guests from various sectors, including representatives from Chinese government ministries, leading tourism companies, cultural institutions, media outlets, and foreign diplomatic missions in China.

The event highlighted Uzbekistan’s welcoming policies for Chinese tourists. Bobir Yakhyaev, consul general of the Uzbek Embassy, outlined the significant reforms Uzbekistan has implemented in its tourism sector in recent years, China Daily reported.

He announced that a bilateral visa-free agreement between China and Uzbekistan has been signed. Starting June 1, citizens of both countries will be able to travel visa-free for up to 30 days — an important step toward deepening people-to-people exchanges.

The year 2025 is designated as Uzbekistan Tourism Year in China. As part of this initiative, a series of cultural events are planned across China, including in Chongqing, Henan, Hainan, and Xinjiang.

In his speech, Yakhyaev noted that as key hubs along the ancient Silk Road, Uzbekistan and China have a shared history of exchange among merchants, pilgrims, artisans, and scholars — connections that continue to inspire strong cooperation today.

At the event, Zang Hongyan, president of Beijing Haina Silk Road Cultural Development Co., Ltd., recounted her personal experiences in Uzbekistan. With more than a decade of experience in educational exchange programs, Zang emphasized the vital role of young people in Uzbekistan — not only as future nation-builders but also as a dynamic force driving bilateral exchanges.

According to the embassy, young people make up 60 percent of Uzbekistan’s population, with more than 600,000 entering the labor market annually — a number expected to reach 1 million by 2030.

“Uzbek youth have a strong and growing interest in China,” Zang said. “We’re actively promoting youth exchange programs and inviting more Uzbek students to visit China.”

According to Zang, the company plans to host a group of Uzbek university students this summer for short-term programs at Chinese universities, including Harbin Institute of Technology in Heilongjiang province and Lanzhou University in Gansu province. As soon as registration opened, more than 100 students signed up immediately.

“Uzbek youth who have visited China are truly impressed by its history, technology, and culture,” Zang said. “They are particularly enthusiastic about China’s advances in AI and new energy vehicles, with brands like BYD and Li Auto being particularly popular. China has many outstanding entrepreneurs, which is also something they are eager to learn from.”

Sabina Baikuvatova, 23, is one of the many young people actively participating in China-Uzbekistan exchanges. She works as the chief sales manager for a major travel company in Uzbekistan.

On her first visit to China, she was struck by the country’s rapid modernization. During her three-week trip, she traveled to several cities by high-speed train and eagerly connected with professionals in China’s tourism industry.

“China is the future — I truly believe this,” she said. “We must strengthen our ties and business exchanges with China.”

Baikuvatova also plans to use Chinese social media platforms such as Weibo, Douyin (Chinese version of TikTok), and Xiaohongshu (RedNote) to promote Uzbek culture, cuisine, and tourism.

“I want to recommend our historical landmarks to my Chinese friends,” she said. “Samarkand is a city of timeless beauty — every corner tells a story of grandeur and artistry. Khiva is like a living museum; wandering through the Itchan Kala fortress reveals the beauty of its mosques.”

“Here in China, I see both countries’ modern appearances with historic hearts.”

Treasury of National Jewels to reopen to the public in Tehran

TEHRAN — After a temporary closure, the Treasury of National Jewels in Tehran is once again welcoming visitors, starting Saturday, May 31 (10 Khordad in the Iranian calendar).

The museum, located in the Central Bank of Iran building at the corner of Ferdowsi Street and Istanbul Crossroad near Imam Khomeini Square, will be open to the public from Saturday to Tuesday each week, excluding official holidays, between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

Tickets are reportedly sold in person until 11:30 a.m. on visiting days. Entry fees are set at 300,000 tomans for international visitors, 30,000 tomans for Iranian nationals, and 15,000 tomans for students and schoolchildren with valid ID cards. (The exchange rate of each U.S. dollar in the open market at the time of writing this report is



Photo depicts Taj-e Pahlavi, a Persian coronation crown used during the Imperial State of Iran (1925–1979). The extremely decorated crown is being kept at the Treasury of National Jewels in downtown Tehran.

approximately 83,000 tomans.)

The Treasury of National Jewels, which had previously remained closed for more than four years following the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2019, holds one of the world’s most extraordinary collections of precious gems and historical artifacts. Each item in the collection reflects a chapter of Iran’s complex and eventful history, echoing stories of triumph, defeat, glory, and royal grandeur.

Beyond its immense economic value, the collection is a testament to the refined artistry and craftsmanship of Iranian artisans throughout the centuries. It represents a significant part of the nation’s cultural and historical heritage.

Operated by the Central Bank of Iran, the museum not only displays the crown jewels but also serves as their legal guardian.

Finnish ambassador visits Mazandaran, honors environmental legacy of ‘Mother of the Cranes’

From Page 1 ► TEHRAN — Finland’s Ambassador to Iran, Jani Johannes Raippana, has praised Iran’s vast investment potential, particularly in the northern province of Mazandaran, describing its economic capacities as “unparalleled,” especially in the fields of tourism, fisheries, agriculture, and mining.

Speaking at a memorial ceremony held at the University of Mazandaran in honor of the late Ellen Vuosalo — affectionately known as the “Mother of the Cranes” — Ambassador Raippana expressed Finland’s keen interest in furthering ties with Iran and emphasized the importance of introducing Iranian opportunities to Finnish investors, the University said in a press release on Tuesday.

“Iran and Mazandaran are full of wonders,” the ambassador remarked. “We will certainly inform Finnish investors of these capacities so they can come and

witness them firsthand.”

Raippana also paid tribute to Ellen Vuosalo, a Finnish zoologist, journalist, and environmentalist who spent more than five decades in Iran advocating for the protection of migratory birds, especially the endangered Siberian crane.

“She proudly identified as a Finn, yet she deeply loved both Finland and Iran,” the ambassador said. “Ellen embodied values we cherish in Finland — resilience, humility, and a profound love for nature — expressed through a spirit that was both gentle and strong.”

Vuosalo, who passed away in January at the age of 95, was a longtime resident of Mazandaran, living in cities such as Ferey-dunkenar, Babolsar, and Royan. Her work included scientific collaboration with Iranian universities and active engagement with local communities to promote wildlife conservation.



“She showed us that even one person can make a difference,” the ambassador said, reflecting on her legacy. “Her work in Iran’s wetlands was not just scientific — it was an act of love and compassion for nature and humanity.”

Home to some wetlands that create a refuge for migratory birds, picture-perfect province has long been a highly popular destination for domestic travelers. Its varied nature features

plains, prairies, forests, and rainforests stretching from the sandy beaches of the Caspian Sea to the rugged and snowcapped Alborz sierra, including Mount Damavand, one of the highest peaks and volcanos in Asia. More than 800 registered historical and cultural sites, 338 km of shoreline, mineral springs in jungles and mountains, waterfalls, and caves are among the major tourist attractions in the province.

Artifacts from Qajar and early Pahlavi eras discovered in Tehran park

TEHRAN — Recent archaeological discoveries made during urban development projects in Yas Park, located in northern Tehran, have been confirmed to date back to the Qajar and early Pahlavi periods.

On Tuesday, Seyyed Ahmad Alavi, head of the Tourism and Cultural Heritage Committee of Tehran City Council, emphasized the importance of these findings, which emerged unexpectedly during infrastructure work in the area.

“Some construction projects in the capital accidentally uncover treasures buried beneath the surface—reminders of the city’s rich historical identity. The latest discoveries in Yas Park are prime examples, with roots tracing back to the Qajar and First Pahlavi dynasties,” he said.

Alavi noted that such archaeological finds highlight Tehran’s deep historical layers and present valuable opportunities for enhancing the city’s cultural heritage and urban tourism.

Gildeh, village of rose and rosewater

TEHRAN — Gildeh, a village in the central district of Shaft county, Gilan province, hosted a rosewater festival.

Rosewater distillation has turned into one of prosperous indigenous industries. With the national registration of the rosewater distillation ceremony of Gildeh village, this traditional industry is on the path to sustainable development, Mehr news agency reported.

Based on available data, some 4,000 liters of rosewater are produced in Gildeh through the use of traditional and local methods during the spring season annually.

Apart from preserving the cultural authenticity, rosewater distillation in Gildeh plays an important role in attracting tourists.

Rosewater distillation in Shaft’s Gildeh village has been registered as an intangible heritage, which has paved the way for greater attention to this local ritual and its promotion at the provincial and national levels.

During the rosewater distillation ceremony, farmers and producers of Mohammadi roses sell their traditional rosewater. The visitors can attend training workshops, handicraft exhibitions, and local products, and become familiar with local culture and customs.

Apart from the cultural aspect, the rosewater festival plays an important role in promoting



the local economy and boosting local tourism.

The presence of domestic and foreign tourists creates an opportunity for introducing the tourism capacities of Shaft.

Morteza Mohammadi, a grower of Mohammadi rose who is involved in rosewater distillation operation, said: “I, as governor of Gildeh rural district, decided to launch a rosewater distillation workshop in Gildeh village given the cultivation of Mohammadi rose. I wanted to revive the industry and introduce it to the local youth as an economic opportunity.”

He added, “At first, the area under cultivation of Mohammadi rose was around two hectares in Gildeh village. But over time and with continuous efforts, it rose to 15 hectares. Close to 50 liters of rosewater used to be produced daily in the past. Currently, I produce seven to eight tons of rosewater daily in my personal work-

shop alone.”

“Apart from rosewater, we produce herbal extracts and herbal medicines.”

“By launching Rosewater Distillation Cooperative Company, we have achieved to introduce our products in domestic and foreign markets.”

Also, Mohammad Zare, a member of the Islamic Council of Gildeh Village, said, “We tried to revive and develop this industry in the village through holding rosewater distillation festival since 2010.”

He added: “During this time, we were able to provide the necessary infrastructure to hold festivals, with the cooperation of residents and officials, and introduce this industry to tourists.”

Apart from introducing rosewater distillation industry, these festivals have led to development of civil infrastructure in the village, he said.

He listed the resistance of the rose to climatic conditions and its low water requirement as advantages of this flower and said: “Due to the climatic conditions, the rose in this region has a high essential oil and aroma.” Referring to the short fruiting period of this crop and its good income generation for farmers, Zare added: “These factors have led to the development of rose cultivation in unproductive gardens and the creation of numerous job opportunities in this sector.”

SCO turned into a powerful force in fight against narcotics: official

TEHRAN – The dedication and commendable efforts of all member states have transformed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) into a powerful institution, particularly in the fight against illicit drugs, Mohammad Narimani, an official with the Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ), has said.

“Coming together to strengthen our collective response to challenges signifies that unity, rather than geography, defines our efforts in the fight against drugs,” Mehr news agency quoted Narimani as saying.

The official made the remarks while addressing a regular meeting of senior officials of Anti-Drug Agencies of SCO Member States, which was held on May 26 and 27 in Xi'an, China.

The situation in the region is becoming more and more complicated in terms of cultivation, production, trafficking of the opiates, psychotropic substances, and their precursor chemicals, as well as drug abuse, he added.

As opium cultivation and production lowers, sometimes they increase, or, in parallel with the decrease in opium production, the production of psychotropic substances such as methamphetamine increases. However, the problem persists and remains strong. Decriminalization of drug-related crimes has also worsened the situation and challenged the fight against narcotics, Narimani stressed.

The official went on to elaborate on the country's successful measures in dealing with illicit drugs and drug trafficking, including the establishment of the Regional Center for Treatment of Drug Use Disorders in



2019. He also proposed establishing a specialized center for substance abuse treatment and demand reduction in Tehran.

During the meeting, the results of the activities of working groups on anti-drug cooperation within the SCO were summarized, and issues of preparation for the upcoming meeting this year of heads of competent authorities of SCO member states empowered to combat illicit drug trafficking were discussed.

The anti-drug agencies meeting was established in 2009. The tasks of this mechanism include developing interstate programs and plans to counter illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and their precursors, organizing scientific and practical conferences, seminars, meetings, and working sessions, and assisting in the exchange of experience in the relevant field.

UNODC lauds Iran's efforts

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) lauds the Iranian government for its substantial efforts and steadfast commitment to tackling drug trafficking.

On December 8, 2024, Alexander Fedulov, the UNODC Iran Country Representative, attended a high-level meeting which was held at the DCHQ on the occasion of the successful seizure of 2,400 kilograms of methamphetamine in Sistan-Baluchestan Province.

During the meeting, Brigadier General Ahmad Ali Goudarzi, the commander of the Iranian Border Guard, shared details of a major drug seizure in Sistan-Baluchestan Province.

On September 10, Iranian forces successfully seized 2,400 kilograms of methamphetamine. This operation underscored the relentless commitment of Iran's border forces, who are at the forefront of combating the production and trafficking of drugs, particularly those originating in Afghanistan.

Brigadier General Goudarzi emphasized that the seizure not only reflects the escalating challenges posed by methamphetamine production in the region but also the dedication of Iran's border guards, law enforcement, and customs officials in addressing this issue.

Officials in addressing this issue.

Fedulov, for his part, expressed his gratitude to Iranian authorities for their invaluable contributions to this global challenge.

Fedulov stressed the importance of strengthened regional cooperation and emphasized the need for further international support to bolster collective efforts in combating drug trafficking across West Asia.

The UNODC Country Representative stated that this successful operation will be presented to the international community as a testament to Iran's noble resolve in combating drug trafficking and its dedication to regional security.

To enhance the operational capacity of the Iranian Anti-Narcotics Police, the UNODC has provided them with two Medical Devices, including a portable Doppler sonography and a veterinary anesthesia machine to support drug supply reduction activities in Iran.

In this line, an event was organized at the premises of the DCHQ in Tehran, with the presence of representatives from the UNODC Iran, DCHQ, and Iranian Anti-Narcotics Police (ANP), the UNODC website announced in a press release on November 18, 2024.

Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries. UNODC has built a strong partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in several areas, including the capacity building for the Iranian law enforcement forces, and has been providing technical assistance to the Iranian Government in their fight against illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors.

WHO supports Iran in preparing paper on palliative care for RC72

TEHRAN – Supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), key representatives from the health ministry, medical faculties, non-governmental organizations, and palliative care providers have met to develop a technical paper on palliative care to be presented to the upcoming 72nd Session of the WHO Regional Committee (RC72) resolution.

The resolution, which supports WHO's goals of improving access to care and achieving universal health coverage, marks a pivotal step towards integrating palliative care into health systems across the Region, WHO website announced in a press release on May 27.

Hosted by the WHO Country Office, the event was held on May 21. The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) and WHO country offices in the Region convened a diverse group of national stakeholders to enhance palliative care across Iran.

The collaborative meeting aimed to build a unified understanding of the current state of palliative care in Iran and chart a course forward aligned with the directives of the proposed palliative care resolution planned to be submitted.

Participants used the WHO regional framework for palliative care to evaluate strategic interventions and progress indicators across 6 critical areas – governance and policy, financing, service provision, medications, education and training and research and surveillance.



Their findings, compiled into a detailed, colour-coded matrix, underscored several notable achievements. These include the establishment of a national palliative care strategy, the integration of specialized palliative care units or teams in tertiary and general hospitals and the inclusion of essential palliative care medicines on the Islamic Republic of Iran's national list.

Postgraduate training and certification in palliative care is also available, and there is a growing focus on operational and implementation research in the field.

Stakeholders outlined strategic priorities for the next 2 years. These include fully implementing the national strategy, integrating palliative care into universal health coverage, revising legal frameworks to ensure safe, regulated access to care and medications and setting national standards for training and accreditation.

Which Afghan nationals are allowed to reside in Iran?

TEHRAN – Afghan nationals who are university students, at-risk women heads of households, children with an Iranian parent, and those who have a job code are allowed to live in the country.

Students whose parents do not have legal permission to reside in the country have to return to Afghanistan by July 6. However, the case is different for university students. Having passports, they can extend their stay in the country, IRNA quoted Nader Yar-Ahmad, the head of the National Organization for Migration, as saying.

Women heads of households whose life is confirmed to be threatened by their return will be able to stay temporarily in the country and benefit from treatment services.

According to the law, being born in Iran does not grant Iranian citizenship. If the child's father is Iranian and the parents' marriage is legally registered, the child will be considered Iranian and will have an identification (ID) card.

In cases where the mother is Iranian and the father is a foreign national, even if the marriage is not registered, the child will receive an ID card with the mother's last name.

If undocumented nationals who have worked under a job code leave the country voluntarily, they can receive a visa to get back to their work, in case their employers agree. However, if they are arrested and deported, they will be banned from applying for a visa.

OIC-15: Islamic policymakers ready for AI-dominated industrial revolution

TEHRAN – Amid a rapidly transforming technological landscape, the Iranian capital played host to a pivotal event this week: the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of the OIC-15 Dialogue Platform.

The meeting, held on May 19-20, 2025, brought together key policymakers from across the Islamic world to discuss the future of artificial intelligence (AI) and its implications for global leadership in science and technology.

At the end of the meeting, a five-page statement was adopted by consensus of Islamic countries, which is a basic document on AI.

With the participation of Ministers of Science and Technology from countries including Iran, Tunisia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, as well as senior officials from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan, Brunei Darussalam, Kazakhstan, and Turkey, the Meeting focused on harnessing AI as a transformative force for societal progress and economic prosperity.

In a series of crucial deliberations, the ministers underscored the urgency for cooperation and innovation among OIC member states to ensure the Islamic zone does not fall behind in the ongoing Fourth Industrial Revolution.

At the meeting's close, the OIC-15 ministers approved the Tehran AI Declaration, a crucial document, marking a significant step toward aligning Islamic countries in shaping a collective AI strategy that reflects their values and aspirations.

Emerging role in fourth industrial revolution

Iranian Minister of Science, Research, and Technology, Hossein Simaei Sarraf, delivered a compelling statement, calling AI “the most profound technological force shaping our world today.”

He emphasized that the Islamic world must act decisively to avoid being sidelined in this new era, with its transformative capabilities spanning

industries from healthcare to agriculture, energy, and beyond.

“The world is undergoing remarkable changes under the influence of artificial intelligence,” Simaei Sarraf said. “If we do not act now, our nations will face severe technological and economic challenges in the coming decades.” The minister's statement aligned with broader concerns over the widening digital divide.

“The International Monetary Fund projects that AI could add up to half a percent annually to global GDP between 2025 and 2030. Yet, the benefits are not being distributed equally,” he warned.

“While North America and China stand to gain significantly from AI, emerging economies in the Global South, including many in our region, face the risk of being left behind.”

The Tehran Declaration, which was finalized at the conclusion of the meeting, stresses the importance of strategic AI education, workforce development, and collaborative research.

As part of the declaration's seven core pillars, the ministers highlighted the need for AI infrastructure improvements, data sharing, and collaborative ventures to foster a sustainable, inclusive AI ecosystem across OIC member states.

A Call for ethics in an AI-powered language of power

The discussion around AI ethics was particularly poignant, with strong remarks made by Malaysian Minister of Higher Education, Zambry Abd Kadir, who cautioned that “AI is not just another tool.

It is emerging as a new language of power. If we do not master this language on our own terms, we may find ourselves subject to definitions that do not reflect our values.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

COP 7 in Tehran to focus on Caspian seal protection

TEHRAN – The Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea, known as COP 7, which will be held in Tehran, will focus on the preservation of the Caspian seal.

The Caspian seal is the only marine mammal in the Caspian Sea. The species is now listed as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list, with its population declining due to various reasons from one million in the past to 70,000, currently.

In recent years, the increase in the discovery of seals' carcasses on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea has raised concerns among environmentalists that the Caspian seal is at greater risk of extinction than ever before. In the past two months, 18 carcasses were discovered on Mazandaran coasts, IRNA reported.

Addressing the coordination meeting for the protection of the Caspian seal species, Shina Ansari, the head of the Department of Environment (DOE), said that given the recent losses of the seals and their critical status, conservation efforts need to be prioritized.

During the 11th Nevsky International Ecological Congress, held from May 22 to 23 in Saint Petersburg, Russia, the five Caspian Sea states (Iran, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, and Kaz-

akhstan) discussed environmental challenges threatening such as shrinking water level, pollution, habitat destruction, and decline in population of marine animals,” IRNA quoted Ansari as saying.

Underscoring the need for regional cooperation to protect the biodiversity of the Caspian ecosystem, Ansari said based on regional diplomacy, it is essential to focus specifically on the Caspian Sea environment to save endangered species, particularly the Caspian seals, through enhanced joint measures, the official noted.

The official went on to highlight the significance of promoting inter-sectoral cooperation among responsible bodies such as fisheries and veterinary organizations, saying that fostering joint efforts will reduce conflicts over the conservation of these species.

Conservation action plan to save Caspian seal

In November 2024, DOE started implementing a national action plan that focuses on the conservation of the Caspian seal.

The main objective of the plan is to conserve the Caspian seal, a rare, valuable, endemic, and endangered species of the Caspian Sea, as the priority of marine environmental activities, IRNA quoted Mohammad Talebi-Matin, an official with the DOE, as saying.

The establishment of a center for the Caspian seal conservation in Tarbiat Modarres University

branch of Noor County is among the important measures taken in this regard.

It has fostered positive interactions between the university and the executive units which is expected to bring about positive results in the protection of Caspian seals in the near future, the official noted.

Executive working groups have been formed in cooperation with governors and other beneficiaries under the management of provincial departments of environment in Gilan, Mazandaran, and Golestan provinces.

Also, the rescue centers of the seals in these three provinces are well-equipped, and a specialized training workshop has already been held for the beneficiaries and rangers, Talebi-Matin said.

The training included basic methods of rescue, release, carcasses disposal, and correct sample gathering.

In addition, examining the seals' carcasses on the beaches to identify the cause of their loss is being pursued with in cooperation of neighboring countries and related organizations.

Caspian seal is in dire need of protection. The preservation of the Caspian seals cannot be merely accomplished by Iran's efforts; it necessitates the collaboration of neighboring countries, including Russia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan.

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System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

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

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

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

سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می‌شود

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

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

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



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MAY 29, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you gain a blessing, do not refuse it by cool and poor thanks.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:02 Evening: 19:34 Dawn: 3:07 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:50 (tomorrow)

Freida McFadden's "The Boyfriend" at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – "The Boyfriend" by American author Freida McFadden has recently been published in Persian.

Translated by Reza Eskandari Azar, the book has been published by Amout Publications in Tehran.

The story of "The Boyfriend" alternates between childhood memories and present-day events, gradually revealing a tangled web of relationships, lies, and deadly intentions.

In childhood, Tom and Slug are inseparable friends since their early years, sharing a bond with Daisy and her best friend Alison. Tom harbors unrequited love for Daisy, while Alison despises Tom, perceiving him as "off," though she remains blind to her best friend Daisy's true nature. Slug, a tall, awkward, pimply kid, secretly harbors feelings for Alison, but he stands no chance, and Tom remains his only ally. Despite Tom's popularity and good looks, he stays loyal to Slug, who is often sidelined.

Fast forward to adulthood: Sydney, a woman in her mid-30s, is jaded by a series of bad dates and recent heartbreaks, especially after breaking up with her police officer ex, Jake. She spends time with friends Bonnie and Gretchen—who lives in her building—and they share a routine of yoga and coffee. Sydney attempts online dating, and her worst date yet involves Kevin, a rude, inconsiderate man who makes her pay half the bill and becomes physically aggressive when she tries to leave. A hero intervenes, saving her from Kevin's assault—an enigmatic, handsome man she later dubs "the mystery hot guy." She's smitten, but he leaves abruptly after helping her, leaving her longing to see him again.

Kevin's obsession with Sydney escalates into stalking, yet she dismisses or down-



plays the danger—failing to involve authorities or take precautions. This oversight leads to tragic consequences: she discovers Bonnie dead after a suspicious visit from Bonnie's boyfriend, Randy, a handyman. As the investigation unfolds, Sydney encounters her ex-police boyfriend, Jake, and begins to suspect Kevin's involvement. Later, during a seemingly perfect date, Sydney suffers a severe nosebleed caused by her medical condition, and the handsome doctor who helps her turns out to be her mysterious "hot guy"—Tom.

As their relationship develops, Sydney uncovers unsettling truths: Tom lies about his last name, uses multiple phones, and becomes evasive about his life. Flashbacks reveal their childhoods, complicated by Tom's mental instability and his obsession with Daisy, who is presumed dead but is actually alive. It's eventually revealed that Daisy, now "Gretchen," is a deranged killer, responsible for multiple murders—including Bonnie and Alison—and obsessed with Tom. She's been stalking him for years, killing women out of jealousy and obsession, including Randy and Bonnie.

Tom, torn and heartbroken, is ultimately forced into a tragic choice: he sacrifices his own safety and attempts to protect Sydney by appeasing Daisy, who is relentless in her murderous pursuit. The story concludes with Daisy killing Randy and attempting to kill Sydney, with Tom intervening in a final, tragic act. Meanwhile, Sydney reunites with her ex, Jake, and receives an anonymous letter from Tom hinting that Kevin was eliminated. The novel ends on a chilling note, leaving the reader questioning the true extent of Tom's darkness and the lingering presence of Daisy's sinister influence.

Nuri Bilge Ceylan's early works to go on screen in Tehran

TEHRAN – The early works of renowned Turkish director Nuri Bilge Ceylan, the films "Small Town" ("Kasaba") and "Cocoon" ("Koza"), are set to be showcased as part of the World Experimental Cinema series at the Art and Experience Cinema Group in Tehran.

On the inaugural day of the World Experimental Cinema event, the films will be screened at Charsou Cineplex on Saturday, starting at 5:00 p.m., Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Following the screenings, a review session will be held with film critic and cinema writer Maziar Fekri Ershad, who will analyze and discuss the films, the report added.

"Kasaba," also known internationally as "The Small Town" or "The Town," is Nuri Bilge Ceylan's feature film debut, released in 1997. The film depicts life in a somber small Turkish town, seen through the eyes of children, as they navigate the growing complexities of adulthood.

Featuring performances by Mehmet Emin Toprak, Havva Sağlam, Fatma Ceylan, and Emin Ceylan, it unfolds across the four seasons, capturing the changing landscape of rural life.

Critics highly praised the film; Camden New Journal highlighted its acclaim, while Metacritic awarded it an impressive score of 89 out of 100 based on four reviews, indicating "universal acclaim." "Kasaba" is celebrated for



Prominent Turkish filmmaker Nuri Bilge Ceylan in an undated photo

its poetic storytelling and evocative portrayal of childhood and community.

The 1995 short film "Cocoon" ("Koza"), a 17-minute black-and-white piece, was featured in the competitive section for short films at Cannes Film Festival.

The film portrays the lives of an elderly couple, delving into themes of separation and reunion through a poetic and contemplative lens.

As a silent, black-and-white narrative, it explores universal

themes of life, survival, and death, featuring images of animals, objects, trees, and both young and old characters. The film is primarily a visual collection of evocative photographs, reflecting Ceylan's background as a photographer. Its minimalist approach and powerful imagery create a profound meditation on the cycles of life and human connection.

Throughout the World Experimental Cinema program series, films from different eras of global cinema are shown every Sat-

urday at Charsou Cineplex. Each screening is followed by a discussion with critics, focusing on the unique characteristics of each work from an experiential and cinematic evolution perspective.

In addition to the discussions, related short films, video interviews with directors (with Persian subtitles), and behind-the-scenes footage of the screened works will also be presented.

Participation in these events is open to the public and free of charge.

Tehran Film Music Symphony Orchestra to debut at Vahdat Hall

TEHRAN – Iran's first professional film music orchestra is set to perform iconic soundtracks from world-famous movies and series.

The Tehran Film Music Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Abdolreza Amirkhani, will hold its first official concert at Vahdat Hall in Tehran on Thursday, performing pieces from the history of cinema, ILNA reported.

Established with the goal of popularizing polyphonic music with a symphonic structure among the public, the orchestra will present soundtracks from renowned films such as "The Lord of the Rings," "Interstellar," "The Godfather," "Cinema Paradiso," "1492: Conquest of Paradise," "The Mission,"

"Le Professionnel," and "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly," as well as the animation "Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron," and the series "Game of Thrones" and "Michel Strogoff."

"We seek to introduce the public to a higher level of music. Film music, due to its connection with visual imagery, is more accessible and understandable for general audiences compared to purely symphonic music. That's why we've selected pieces that are both nostalgic and melodically beautiful," the founder, director, and conductor of the orchestra Abdolreza Amirkhani said.

Before its official establishment, the orchestra had been active since 2013 under the name "Tehran Fara-



bi Art Orchestra and Choir," performing concerts in various genres at venues across Tehran. Notable events include a concert at Milad Tower in 2015 and a joint Iran-Austria performance at Rudaki Hall

in 2020. Eventually, following Amirkhani's focus on film music, the orchestra was officially registered in October 2024 as Iran's first dedicated symphonic orchestra to film music.

India's biggest Palestine art exhibition exposing life under Israeli occupation

From paintings and photographs to graffiti and posters, one of India's biggest-ever showcases of Palestine-related art is now on view in central New Delhi, featuring works by Indian and Palestinian artists that highlight life under Israeli occupation.

"The Body Called Palestine" exhibition at Jawahar Bhawan — next to key government institutions — is a month-long show that will run until May 31, Arab News reported.

Organized by the art collective Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, it features 140 works focusing on themes of resistance, identity and solidarity with Palestine. Some 40 of the contributing artists are Palestinians, 30 are Indians, and others come from places such as the U.S., Poland, Egypt, and Sweden.

"The Body Called Palestine" is the largest-ever exhibition in India on Palestine," Amit Mukhopadhyay, the art historian who curated the show, said. "(It is) the largest in terms of size, in terms of the number of works, in terms of the number of artists."

Among the displayed works is "Searching for Life" by Sliman Mansour, a leading figure among contemporary Palestinian artists. Painted in 2024, it shows three women carefully brushing through the rubble. They are surrounded by destruction and fire in the background — evoking the Gaza Strip, where in the past 19 months Israeli forces have killed tens of thousands of people and reduced much of the region's cities to rubble.

"The Wave," by sculptor Abdul Rahman Katanani, is a 3-meter-high wave made from

barbed wire, representing the Gaza Sea.

"Homes for The Disembodied," an installation by Mary Tuma, shows five flowing black dresses made from one piece of chiffon — a memorial to the Palestinians displaced from Jerusalem who were unable to return to their homes before their death.

"Palestinian artists display the violence of life under occupation and subjugatory difference. The nostalgia and the desire to return to their homeland, the human emotions of alienation, loss, grief, anger, all are reflected in their artistic language and practice," Mukhopadhyay says in his curator's note for the exhibition.

"This expression and language of art may not be similar to any previously existing language system of the world."

Many of the participating Palestinian artists were only able to submit their work digitally. "Their houses and their residential areas and their villages are constantly being bombed... It was impossible for them to send their physical works to us," trust member Suhail Hashmi said.

It did not deter the organizers from displaying them. SAHMAT has prepared huge printouts to present them properly and include as many voices as possible.

"The world has to know, and people in India have to know, the great injustice that is being done to the Palestinian people — how barbaric this continuous, ongoing onslaught on unarmed people is," Hashmi said.

"When we were fighting for our freedom, people all over the world supported our struggle. It is important for us to support anybody, anywhere in the world, fighting for freedom and the right to live peacefully. And the more people know what is going on, there will be at least some reaction."

Vijendra Vij, an Indian artist who has contributed to the exhibition, based his work on the Palestinian poetry of Taha Muhammad Ali, Khaled Juma, Ghassan Zaqtan and others who have been translated into Hindi.

"When I read the poetry of all these poets, they recall the people, places and experience of left-behind homes, trees, fruits, flowers, the earth, the sea, the sky, colors and scents. Even after decades of hard work and attainment of comfort and professional success, the enduring connection to Palestine remains unbroken. That is behind the inspiration of (my) work," he said.

The works have generally received emotional responses, with fear and anger followed by thoughtful observation.

"If you look at some of the works that are quite graphic, you see a bit of fear, you fear for yourself, and you also feel extremely despondent about how people are actually going through those situations," said Saurabh Wasan, an art manager in Delhi.

"Exhibitions like this are very important and very much needed... in whatever small way, we're kind of keeping their voices going. Their voices are still being heard."

Cartoon of Day



Childhood in Gaza

Cartoonist: Ameen Alhabarah from Saudi Arabia