

IAEA Board Meeting Kicks Off with Recycled Allegations Against Iran



Rafael Mariano Grossi, IAEA Director General, briefs members of the international press and media on the nuclear safety and security situation in Ukraine and Syria, and the Islamic Republic of Iran at the 1762nd Board of Governors press conference held at the Agency headquarters in Vienna, Austria. 9 Jun 2025

Trump war/peace rhetoric on Iran's nuclear program: More complicated than you'd expect

By Mohammad Khatibi

TEHRAN – In a recent article for Foreign Policy, Rosemary A. Kelanic argues that the best path forward for the U.S. regarding Iran's nuclear program is to maintain the current status quo, acknowledging that Iranian nuclear latency is a longstanding reality. The article's call for rationality in the U.S. administration is admirable. However, Kelanic overlooks several critical contextual factors.

The political landscape surrounding Iran's nuclear program in the U.S. remains volatile, shaped by deep divisions within the Republican Party and calls for military intervention from hardliners. Additionally, Israel's aggressive stance, Tehran's anticipated retaliation, and the Democratic Party's opposition to the current administration's foreign policy are underexplored and underestimated in the analysis.

'U.S. proposal ignores core nuclear issues,' Iran calls for diplomacy grounded in mutual respect

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry has commented on a U.S. proposal reportedly passed to Tehran via the Omani foreign minister during a visit late last month.

"Any proposal that ignores the rights of the Iranian people—whether in terms of our right to enrichment or the need for effective and verifiable sanctions relief—is unacceptable to us," Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei said during a weekly press conference on Monday.

While the contents of the U.S. offer were not officially disclosed, earlier reporting by the American outlet Axios claimed it included limitations on Iran's uranium enrichment capacity—capping it at three percent—a downsizing of its nuclear infrastructure, curtailing developmental work, and offering sanctions relief tied to conditions. The report also mentioned a proposed "regional consortium" for enrichment.

IAEA report built on fabricated espionage data by Israel, says Iran atomic body

TEHRAN – Behrouz Kamalvandi, deputy chief and spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), sharply criticized the IAEA's recent report, revealing that it relies on fabricated Israeli intelligence rather than on legitimate safeguards data.

Speaking on Iranian television on Sunday about both the report and Iran's formal protest note, he stated, "It does not cite safeguards information but cites espionage information from the Zionist regime."

He recalled that issues alleged against Iran were resolved during the early phase of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), from about 2015 until the U.S. withdrawal in 2018. Despite granting IAEA inspectors full access, Iran still faced four resolutions.

Although inspectors claimed they detected "traces" of nuclear material—an everyday finding—the IAEA itself confirmed that the material was natural uranium, not enriched. Kamalvandi argued that the pressure being applied is solely political, aimed at demanding a comprehensive report.

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Iran's security council says 'bank of Zionist targets' ready

TEHRAN – Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) says a recent operation by the country's intelligence forces has provided military units with a list of locations and sites that can be targeted in case of any provocation by Israel.

Iran's intelligence ministry announced on Saturday that it had obtained a "treasure trove" of secret documents regarding Israel's nuclear program and its relations with Western states.

In its statement published on Monday, the National Security Council said the whereabouts of Israel's hidden nuclear sites are among the information acquired through the complex intelligence operation. "These [hidden] sites would be attacked in response to any Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear infrastructure," it added.

Palestine now the world's top concern: Iran Parliament speaker

TEHRAN – Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said on Monday that the issue of Palestine has become the foremost concern of global public opinion, urging the Islamic world to raise the political cost of normalizing relations with Israel.

Speaking during a meeting in Tehran with Jamil Mazhar, Deputy Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Qalibaf emphasized that the Islamic Ummah must hold their governments accountable and push back against efforts to portray ties with the Israeli regime as acceptable.

"We must make normalization costly for those countries," Qalibaf said. "It is our shared responsibility to ensure the suffering of the Palestinian people and the plight of Gaza remain in the global spotlight." ► Page 3

Will UNIFIL be replaced by a multinational force under umbrella of a ceasefire supervision committee?

By Sondoss Al Asaad

SOUTH LEBANON — Israel Hayom writes that the U.S. administration has informed its international partners of its unwillingness to renew the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which is expected to be approved at the end of August.

For its part, the Jerusalem Post explained that UN diplomats expect Washington to face French opposition if it formally proposes ending UNIFIL's mandate, which has been in operation since 1978, during the upcoming Security Council vote.

Annually, the renewal of UNIFIL's mandate coincides with the debate over the role of these forces in the south.

Over the past two years, particularly following the September-November U.S.-led Israeli war against Lebanon, during which the enemy deliberately or unintentionally targeted UNIFIL positions, patrols, and installations, the debate has changed dramatically. ► Page 5

Post-sanctions tourism development in Iran: lessons from Turkey and prospects for the future

By Leila Ajdari

TEHRAN – As someone who has spent decades working in tourism policy and planning in Iran, I have never seen a more critical moment for our industry than now.

With nuclear negotiations once again on the global stage and sanctions possibly easing, Iran stands at the edge of an extraordinary opportunity—one that could reshape our tourism sector and the nation's broader economy. But only if we are ready to seize it.

Iran is not short on treasures. We boast 28 UNESCO World Heritage sites, from the ancient ruins of Persepolis to the stunning Persian gardens and bazaars. ► Page 6



Gaza flotilla journey brings more shame for Israel

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN – In the early hours of Monday, Israeli naval forces forcibly intercepted the British-flagged aid vessel Madleen in international waters, detaining the unarmed crew and passengers, including Greenpeace activist Greta Thunberg and French MEP Rima Hassan, aiming to deliver badly needed humanitarian supplies to Gaza. The operation, which activists and legal scholars call an act of piracy and abduction, is just another step in the growing aggression with which Israel enforces its blockade on the besieged Palestinian enclave.

Distortion will not work

The Madleen, run by the Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC), departed from Catania, Italy, with baby formula, rice, medical supplies. ► Page 5

TEHRAN PAPERS

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

Grossi admits Iran's technical capabilities and the futility of a military option

In a note, Sobh-e-No addressed Rafael Grossi's statements about Iran and wrote: On the sidelines of tensions between Iran and the Agency (IAEA), Grossi made meaningful statements in an interview with Western media: "I am optimistic about indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States. Iran's nuclear capabilities cannot be destroyed by a military attack. Iran's most sensitive sites are located half a mile underground and are very difficult to access." These sentences are a clear admission about Iran's advances in nuclear technology and the futility of threatening options against it. However, Tehran is trying to overcome political pressures and maintain the technical path of cooperation with the Agency. Considering the regional conditions, developments in Iran-U.S. relations, and Tehran's insistence on guarding its nuclear technology, the outlook for negotiations in the coming months will be extremely complex and sensitive. Finally, as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution has repeatedly emphasized, the country's national interests and independence should not be sacrificed, and the advancement of Iran's nuclear technology will remain part of the honorable and unstoppable path of the Islamic Republic.

Arman-e-Melli: Last effort to abort an agreement

In an analysis, Arman-e-Melli addressed the movements of hardliners at home against the nuclear negotiations. It quoted former parliamentarian Kamaledin Pirmoazen, who says: It seems that Iran and the United States have become closer than ever before to reaching an agreement in their negotiations. As we have experienced in recent years, foreign policy movements have little to do with domestic policy, and decisions in this area are implemented under the supervision of the Leadership. However, we continue to see some inside Iran, who have a history of extremism toward the JCPOA, point to issues that are not only repetitive but can also divide the voice of unity within Iran in dealing with the United States. This group does not allow any government to negotiate. This extremist group is always looking for a tense atmosphere, and now they have put the same issue on the agenda. These extremist figures are always looking for bipolarity in the Iranian political scene, and even if the government is reformist, they increase their opposition without thinking about national interests or caring about the future.

Tehran hosts 5th round of Iran-Italy political consultations to boost cooperation



FM Araghchi meets with Riccardo Guariglia, Secretary General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Tehran on June 8, 2025.

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi emphasized the Islamic Republic's readiness to "develop and expand relations with European countries, particularly Italy, based on mutual respect and common interests" during high-level talks in Tehran on Sunday.

The statement came during a meeting with Riccardo Guariglia, Secretary General of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who visited Iran to co-chair the fifth round of bilateral political consultations.

Araghchi underscored the "long-standing and friendly relations" between Tehran and Rome across political, economic, and cultural spheres, highlighting the strategic importance of sustained diplomatic engagement.

Guariglia reciprocated, conveying greetings from Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani and affirming Italy's commitment to "deepen ties based on

Kayhan: Iran changed the regional equations

In an article, Kayhan examined Iran's infiltration into the Zionist regime's security structures and said: In one of the most complex and largest intelligence operations in recent decades, the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence succeeded in dealing an unprecedented blow to Israel's security structures and obtaining thousands of security and intelligence documents regarding the actions and nuclear centers of the usurping Zionist regime. While the world's media outlets are reflecting the dimensions of this extraordinary intelligence operation one after another, what has caught the eye the most is Iran's dominance over the hidden layers of the security systems of a regime that considered itself impenetrable for decades. In addition, the achievement of this operation is a strong political, security, and psychological slap in the face of the Zionist regime and its Western supporters. It is not without reason that the Tel Aviv regime is stunned and has adopted silence. Zionist analysts are concerned that this revelation is only the beginning. According to the Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper, the leaked intelligence documents have not yet been published, and speculation is ongoing about Iran's next goals.

Iran: Impact of possible dissolution of the Netanyahu cabinet on nuclear talks

In an explanation, the Iran newspaper addressed the possible breakup of the Netanyahu government and its impact on the nuclear talks between Iran and the United States. It wrote: One of the opponents of the indirect nuclear talks between Iran and the United States was Israel, particularly Netanyahu. Experience has shown that in election years, due to the lack of a majority coalition in parliament, Netanyahu has revived his voter base by making his decisions more radical. It can be predicted that if we witness the collapse of his coalition government and a new election, Netanyahu, unburdened by the need to maintain the coalition and coordinate with the cabinet, will likely adopt a more destructive course regarding the Iran case and the nuclear issue. Although a direct attack on nuclear facilities is unlikely, the political situation following the dissolution of the cabinet may compel Netanyahu to be more adventurous and increase sabotage efforts. In conclusion, we can say that if the Knesset votes to dissolve the cabinet and heads toward new elections in the occupied territories, we can expect more adventures from Netanyahu.

shared interests."

Araghchi stressed that regular political dialogues "play an important and effective role in fostering better understanding of both sides' positions," adding that such efforts contribute to "regional and global stability". Guariglia described the discussions as "fruitful and constructive," signaling alignment on mutual priorities.

Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, met with Guariglia ahead of Araghchi's meeting with the Italian official, discussing bilateral cooperation in trade, culture, consular affairs, and regional stability.

Both sides detailed their positions on international issues, including ongoing indirect nuclear negotiations between Iran and the United States.

The meeting reaffirmed a historically resilient partnership.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

'U.S. proposal ignores core nuclear issues', Iran calls for diplomacy grounded in mutual respect

From page 1 ► Baghaei emphasized that Iran has made clear its rejection of any attempt to undermine its peaceful nuclear program or move enrichment activities outside its territory. "Iran has completely ruled out foreign interference or sabotage of its peaceful nuclear development," he said, adding that the Islamic Republic insists on the full and meaningful removal of U.S. sanctions.

He clarified that the U.S. offer, while presented through diplomatic channels, fails to address Iran's central demands. "This is simply a U.S. proposal. Naturally, any party to the talks can present its ideas, but this one does not reflect the issues raised by Iran," he remarked.

Baghaei added that Iran is working on a counter-proposal of its own, describing it as "reasonable" and close to finalization. He urged Washington to view this as a diplomatic opportunity. "Our advice to the Americans is to take advantage of this moment," he said.

He concluded by reiterating that the lifting of sanctions remains Iran's top priority in the talks. "This issue has been raised clearly and repeatedly. It is Iran's most important and serious demand," Baghaei stressed. "Why this has not been sufficiently addressed in the U.S. proposal is a matter they must an-



Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei

swer."

Tehran decries Israeli seizure of aid ship headed for Gaza

Speaking at the briefing, Baghaei denounced the Israeli regime's hijacking of a humanitarian vessel en route to the Gaza Strip.

The ship, Madleen, was carrying 12 well-known international campaigners and was part of the Freedom Flotilla Coalition's efforts to break the Israeli blockade on the war-torn Palestinian enclave.

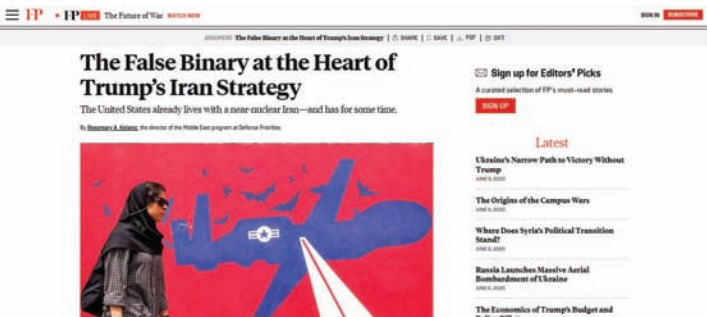
"This attack amounts to one of the most serious and horrifying developments currently unfolding before the eyes of the international community," Baghaei said. "Under international law, this act is unquestionably considered pira-

cy. And given that it was aimed at blocking humanitarian assistance to a population facing genocide, it also constitutes a crime."

The spokesman's remarks followed reports from the Freedom Flotilla Coalition stating that Israeli naval forces had intercepted the Madleen as it neared Gaza's coastal waters, forcibly boarding the vessel and cutting off communication. The group reported on Telegram that the Israeli military had detained all those onboard.

Baghaei noted that among the activists aboard was a Swedish national who had called for international attention before the incident—a reference to Greta Thunberg, who had expressed solidarity

Trump war/peace rhetoric on Iran's nuclear program: More complicated than you'd expect



From page 1 ►

Tel Aviv: Biggest obstacle to peace in West Asia

Israel has long positioned itself as a staunch opponent of Iran's peaceful nuclear program, arguing that any agreement short of the "Libya style" dismantlement is unacceptable. Israeli military officials have openly prepared for preemptive strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, conducting air force drills simulating attacks on Iranian underground facilities like Natanz and Fordow.

However, a full-scale strike would likely require U.S. logistical support, particularly for refueling aircraft and missile defense coordination. Beyond direct military action, Israel has a history of covert operations against Iran's nuclear program. From cyber-attacks (such as the Stuxnet virus) to assassinations of nuclear scientists, Israeli intelligence operations have attempted to slow Iran's advancements. Tel Aviv has a history of deliberate attempts to derail ongoing negotiations between Iran and the U.S., and the article's presumption of the U.S. having full control over Israel's actions is inaccurate.

Tehran has made it clear that any Israeli attack on its nuclear facilities would provoke an immediate

and disproportionate response. Tehran's likely actions include:

Military counterstrikes: Iran would launch missile barrages targeting Israeli military bases, critical infrastructure, and U.S. assets in the region.

Resistance Axis mobilization: Iran's allies in the region, like Hezbollah and Ansarallah, could engage in coordinated strikes, opening a multi-front conflict against Israel.

Accelerated nuclear development: An Israeli strike could push Iran to abandon restraint and begin enriching uranium beyond 60%, potentially crossing the nuclear weaponization threshold.

The risk of full-scale war remains high, with Iran warning that it would defend its sovereignty "to the last drop of blood." An Israeli preemptive attack would fundamentally shift West Asia's strategic balance. Persian Gulf states like Saudi Arabia and the UAE worry that direct conflict could spill over, impacting oil markets and triggering retaliatory attacks across the region.

U.S. Democrats do not fall in line with Trump

Many Democrats advocate for

a renewed diplomatic approach, emphasizing the revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as the most effective means of addressing Iran's nuclear program. They argue that Trump's 2018 withdrawal not only undermined diplomatic progress but also alienated key U.S. allies, particularly European nations invested in the agreement's success. Democrats further contend that Trump's erratic foreign policy made negotiations with Iran more difficult. His administration oscillated between military threats and vague diplomatic overtures, creating uncertainty for both Tehran and U.S. allies.

To counter Trump's policies, Democrats could seek to limit funding for aggressive measures against Iran. Historically, lawmakers have introduced bills aimed at restricting presidential authority on military action, reinforcing congressional oversight in foreign affairs. Democratic leaders may also use public statements and media campaigns to challenge Trump's Iran strategy, framing it as destabilizing and counterproductive. They could collaborate with European allies to counter unilateral actions.

Additionally, congressional committees could investigate Trump's Iran policy, scrutinizing its effectiveness and broader consequences. Potential hearings might focus on sanctions, military planning, and Trump's diplomatic failures.

Divisions in Trump's Republican Party

Beyond the Democratic Party's stance, a significant faction within the Republican Party continues to advocate for military intervention

with the mission prior to the vessel's seizure. "We saw footage today of a Swedish passenger urging the international community to act swiftly to prevent the detention of those on board," he said.

The Iranian official urged global organizations, especially the UN Security Council, to respond decisively to the intensification of Israel's war tactics and blockade strategy. He emphasized the urgency of breaking the siege and protecting Gaza's civilian population, particularly women and children.

The incident comes amid Israel's ongoing genocidal war against Gaza, launched in October 2023. The war has so far resulted in the deaths of nearly 54,900 Palestinians, the majority of whom are reported to be women and children. Alongside the military offensive, Israel has further tightened its 18-year blockade on the coastal territory, severely restricting the flow of food, fuel, and medical supplies.

Baghaei also recalled a similar incident in May, when an aid ship carrying activists, including Thunberg, was targeted by Israeli drones near the coast of Malta. He pointed to that and the 2010 deadly Israeli assault on the Turkish aid ship Mavi Marmara as part of a broader pattern of military aggression against humanitarian missions to Gaza.

as a viable solution to Iran's nuclear program. While some analysts, including Kelanic, suggest that Trump's influence over his party remains dominant, this assertion appears overstated. Many Republican lawmakers argue that Trump's maximum pressure policy—centered on harsh economic sanctions—proved more effective than diplomatic negotiations in curbing Iran's nuclear progress.

Rather than pursuing diplomatic concessions, a substantial number of Republicans favor sustained economic restrictions to exert pressure on Tehran. Some figures within the party have gone further, explicitly endorsing military action as a necessary measure. This position aligns with broader Republican calls for a return to maximum pressure, with some lawmakers even considering preemptive strikes on Iranian nuclear sites if economic measures prove insufficient.

The divergence between Republican hardliners advocating military intervention and Democrats pushing for diplomatic engagement underscores the fundamental uncertainty surrounding U.S. policy toward Tehran. Meanwhile, Israel's aggressive posture and Iran's firm warnings of retaliation raise the stakes, turning any miscalculation into a potential flashpoint for regional conflict.

Kelanic's call for maintaining the status quo overlooks the evolving complexities of the situation. Without a cohesive and realistic strategy, Washington risks perpetuating a cycle of escalation, with far-reaching consequences for regional security and global stability.

Resolved issues, sabotage, and Tehran's warning

Kamalvandi confirmed that the report attempted to reopen long-resolved issues such as the "metal disc" and "Jaber Ibn Hayyan" laboratory cases, settled after IAEA acknowledgment, or the Lavizan-Shian facility case resolved in 2004.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

IAEA report built on fabricated espionage data by Israel, says Iran atomic body

From page 1 ► Regarding IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi's recent Tehran visit, Kamalvandi revealed that Grossi proposed halting the stockpiling of enriched uranium (though not stopping enrichment) and introducing new inspectors.

He described the report as a compilation of longstanding claims designed to portray Iran as uncooperative. "They want to bring political pressure so that Iran abandons its assets," he asserted, adding that Iran's growing scientific

achievements are increasingly unacceptable to dominance-seeking countries.

Kamalvandi then addressed Iran's revocation of several inspector designations. He explained that Iran's protest note contends the IAEA report is cloaked in legal terminology while serving a political agenda.

Recalling the Safeguards Agreement, he stressed that Iran is entitled to accept or reject an inspector. Even though Iran revoked

seven inspectors, 120 still oversee its nuclear program. He also highlighted that the IAEA's Tehran office—staffed by 70 personnel—is unique and accounts for 22% of the agency's global inspections.

He further critiqued the IAEA's reliance on three information sources: data from Iran itself, the Agency's own information, and open or "third-party" sources.

Kamalvandi was especially cautious about the "third party" category, noting that it frequently involves

espionage sources supplying potentially unreliable information for political purposes, such as intelligence from the Israeli regime.

IAEA board meeting kicks off with recycled allegations against Iran

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – Rafael Grossi, the head of the UN nuclear watchdog, has repeatedly bent—if not outright broken—the standards he is bound by in order to appease the West regarding Iran's nuclear program. Unsurprisingly, his latest remarks at a press conference ahead of the June meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors were steeped in bias and political agenda.

The press conference revisited the leaked contents of a confidential report Grossi had provided to IAEA member states on May 31, dredging up old and long-resolved allegations against Iran. The report's claims of "secret" nuclear activities appear designed to lay the groundwork for the U.S., Britain, and France to accuse Iran of violating its non-proliferation obligations during this year's June meeting—just as Tehran engages in indirect talks with Washington over its nuclear program.

Below, we examine Grossi's recycled accusations against Iran and assess whether they hold any merit.

The IAEA's politicized role on Iran

Facing reporters, Grossi fielded numerous questions about Iran's nuclear program, insisting that the draft resolution put forward by the U.S. and E3 (Germany, France, and the UK)—which accuses Iran of non-compliance—is "separate" from ongoing Iran-U.S. negotiations. "There is no formal link between one thing and the other," he claimed, before contradicting himself: "But it is obvious... that there is an interrelation and perhaps a



Rafael Grossi, Director General of the IAEA, speaks to journalists during a press conference at the agency's headquarters in Vienna, Austria, on June 9, 2025.

mutual influence. Not perhaps—for sure. It is a mutual influence."

Yet critics argue and evidence shows that the IAEA, particularly under Grossi's leadership, prioritizes exploiting the nuclear dispute with Iran for political and personal gain over fulfilling its technical and legal duties. As previously reported by the Tehran Times, Grossi has been tasked by the E3 with undermining nuclear talks between Iran and the U.S., from which Europe has been sidelined. His close ties with Israel—including multiple visits to the occupied territories, despite the absence of UN oversight of Israel's nuclear facilities—further erode his credibility.

By recycling old allegations, the IAEA reveals its true objective: not genuine concern over Iran's nuclear activities, but manufacturing a pretext to censure Tehran, thereby creating leverage for extracting concessions at the negotiating table. In exchange, Europe would back Grossi's bid to become the next UN Secretary-General, according to information previously re-

leased by the Tehran Times.

The JCPOA hypocrisy

Elsewhere in his Monday remarks, Grossi claimed that the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA), which the U.S. unilaterally abandoned under Donald Trump, is no longer sufficient—not because the West has rendered it defunct for years, but because Iran scaled back its commitments in response to renewed U.S. and European sanctions.

Ignoring the severe economic toll these sanctions have exacted on Iran, Grossi insisted that even if the JCPOA collapses, the IAEA must retain its inspection rights over Iranian nuclear sites—privileges originally granted under the deal in exchange for sanctions relief. This stance exposes the IAEA's double standards: while Iran is pressured to uphold its obligations, the West faces no accountability for violating the agreement first.

Once again, Grossi's remarks cast doubt on the IAEA's impartiality and its obligation to remain free of political bias.

The flawed alarm over uranium enrichment

On the issue of uranium enrichment, Grossi acknowledged that the activity itself is not prohibited under international law—a point Iranian officials frequently emphasize. "Uranium enrichment per se is not a forbidden activity," he admitted, echoing Tehran's longstanding position.

Yet he still voiced "concern" over Iran's uranium stockpiles, despite offering no evidence that they are linked to a nuclear weapons program. This selective alarmism ignores a key fact: Iran's increased enrichment levels are a direct response to the West's own violations of the JCPOA. If the IAEA were truly impartial, it would address the root cause—Western non-compliance—rather than scapegoating Iran.

A watchdog that barks on command

Grossi's latest statements confirm a troubling pattern: the IAEA, under his leadership, functions less as an impartial technical body and more as a political tool for Western powers. By reviving debunked allegations and ignoring the West's role in undermining the JCPOA, Grossi undermines the agency's credibility.

If the IAEA truly seeks to uphold non-proliferation, it must divorce itself from geopolitical pressures and return to its mandate: objective, fact-based assessments—not politically motivated smear campaigns. Until then, its reports on Iran will remain little more than recycled propaganda, serving the interests of those who pull the strings.

Tabiat survive Broncos, clinch no. 1 spot in Group A

TEHRAN - Tabiat Basketball needed some luck to overcome Ulaanbaatar Xac, 78-76, to lock the no. 1 spot in Group A of the BCL Asia 2025, Monday at the Sheikh Saeed Bin Maktoum Sports Hall.

The FIBA WASL 2025 runners-up rode the hot hands of Stedmon Lemon in erasing a nine-point deficit early to take the lead for good, but almost collapsed in the fourth no thanks to the Broncos' rally.

Fortunately for them, the BCL Asia-East champions could no longer find the mark from deep in the dying seconds and the Iranian side could only heave a sigh of relief after escaping with the narrow victory.

Coach Mehran Shahintab & Co. finished the Group Phase unbeaten in two games and will now wait for their foes in the Quarter-Finals on June 11, in which their Mongolian counterparts have also qualified into, fiba.basketball reported.

Lemon led Tabiat with 23 points, 16 of which he produced in just the game's opening period as he powered the comeback after seeing themselves trailing by nearly a decade, 20-11, with 2:53 on the clock.

"If you check the statistics we were not good in turnovers, some free throws, and in making the three. But the players did their job, especially through good defense," said the champion bench tactician.

Vahid Amiri extends deal with Persepolis

TEHRAN – Persepolis veteran midfielder Vahid Amiri has extended his contract with the team.

The 37-year-old player was close to parting ways with the Reds but on Sunday signed a one-year extension.

"I am very happy to extend my contract. I ask the supporters to continue their support," Amiri said after signing the deal.

"Our responsibility is very heavy, and they should know that there are people who sacrifice their lives, families, and pleasures to bring happiness to them."

Persepolis finished in third place in the 2024-25 Iran Professional League (IPL).

Iran want to get back to winning ways against DPR Korea

TEHRAN - Iran will expect to get back to winning ways when they meet DPR Korea in their final AFC Asian Qualifiers - Road to 26 Group A tie on Tuesday.

Defeat to Qatar on Thursday means Iran still have a bit of work to do if they want to top the group, with Uzbekistan two points behind.

Head coach Amir Ghalenoei wasn't too worried by Thursday's defeat, with Iran having already sealed a fourth consecutive appearance at the FIFA World Cup in March.

"Several players missed the match through injury and this allowed us to try younger players. I think they did well and I am optimistic about the future," said Ghalenoei.

DPR Korea will go into the tie in search of their first win, with a late Kyrgyzstan goal denying them full points on Thursday.

It has been a difficult campaign for the East Asian side, with a return of just three points but victory over Iran will be a perfect way to sign off.

Ravankhah named Iran U23 head coach

TEHRAN – Iran's long search for a new head coach is finally over, with former Havadar football team head coach Ravankhah appointed as the Iran U23 national team head coach.

Two weeks ago, Havadar were relegated from the 2024/25 Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) at the hands of Ravankhah.

Among the candidates considered to lead the

team were former Kheybar head coach Saeid Daghighi and Aluminum coach Mojtaba Hosseini.

The Iran U23 team have been without a coach since parting ways with Reza Enayati due to disappointing results in the 2022 Asian Games.

Iran are placed in Group I of the AFC U23 Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2026 Qualifiers, alongside the UAE (host), Hong Kong, China, and Guam. A total of 44 teams have been drawn into 11 groups for the qualifiers, which are scheduled to take place from September 1 to 9, 2025.

Iran start 2025 PVAO Sitting Volleyball Championships on high

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Australia 3-0 (25-5, 25-7, 25-6) in the 2025 PVAO Sitting Volleyball Championships on Monday.

The competition takes place in Hangzhou, China, from June 9 to 19.

The 2025 PVAO feature both women's and men's sections, but Iran only compete in the women's category.

Competing in Women's Pool A are Korea, Thailand and hosts China, while Pool B consists of Australia, Iran, Japan and Mongolia.

"China are the Paralympic champions and one of the strongest teams in Asia. Japan are also ranked 11th in the world. China, Iran, and Japan will compete for top three places," Hadi Rezaei, manager of the team, said.

Team Melli will play Japan and Mongolia in the following days.

U16 and U19 fixtures announced for CAVA Championship 2025

TEHRAN – The fixtures for the CAVA U16 and U19 Boys' Volleyball Championship 2025 have been released.

The tournament will take place from June 10 to 16 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Iran will kick off its campaign in the U16 category with a match against Kazakhstan. The U16 competition will also feature teams from Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, and two Uzbekistan squads (UZB1 and UZB2).

In the U19 category, Iran will start with a match against India on June 10. The U-19 tournament includes teams from India, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, and two Uzbekistan squads (UZB1 and UZB2).

Iran beat Philippines at 2025 AVC Women's Volleyball Nations Cup

TEHRAN – Iran defeated the Philippines 3-2 (16-25, 25-21, 24-26, 25-23, 15-13) in the 2025 AVC Women's Volleyball Nations Cup on Monday.

Team Melli, who had defeated Indonesia 3-2 and New Zealand in their first two matches.

Iran are drawn in Pool B, alongside the Philippines, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Indonesia, and New Zealand.

Pool A features Vietnam, Australia, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, and India.

The tournament features a round-robin preliminary stage from June 7-12, with a rest day scheduled for Tuesday. The top two teams from each pool after the preliminaries will advance to the cross semifinals on June 13.

The winners of the semifinals will meet in the final showdown on June 14, while classification matches will determine final standings. Notably, the fifth-ranked team in Pool A will play the sixth-ranked team in Pool B for 10th-11th place, while the third- and fourth-placed teams from both pools will compete for their respective rankings.

The Nations Cup is being held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from June 7 to June 14.

Palestine now the world's top concern: Iran Parliament speaker



Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (R) meets with Jamil Mazhar, Deputy Secretary-General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), in Tehran on June 9, 2025.

From page 1 ▶ He praised the Palestinian people's ongoing struggle, describing it as a source of pride for the Islamic world, and expressed hope for the swift release of the PFLP's

Secretary-General, currently held by Israel.

For his part, Mazhar thanked Iran for its unwavering support, calling the Iranian Parliament "the Parliament of the Resis-

tance Axis."

He paid tribute to late Hassan Nasrallah, Ismail Haniyeh, and Yahya Sinwar as martyrs in recognition of their roles in the struggle against Israel.

Mazhar's visit coincided with the 36th anniversary of the passing of late Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic. He credited Imam Khomeini with making Palestine the central cause of the Islamic world and praised the Iranian Revolution for standing by the oppressed.

Mazhar also thanked the Iranian Parliament for consistently defending Palestine in regional and international forums. "We value Iran's firm and principled position at every level in confronting the war being waged on

Iran's intelligence coup exposes vulnerabilities of Israel

By Xavier Villar

MADRID – On Saturday, Iran announced that it had successfully extracted a vast number of sensitive documents and information related to the Israeli regime, reportedly including details about its nuclear programs and facilities. Although Tehran has yet to provide conclusive evidence or technical specifics about the operation's full scope, the announcement has reignited focus on one of the region's most strategically significant rivalries.

Over the past decade, competition between Iran and Israel in intelligence and security matters has intensified, becoming one of the most volatile and decisive fronts in the region. This confrontation, rarely expressed openly, manifests through covert operations, cyberattacks, and clandestine missions aimed at infiltrating and undermining critical enemy infrastructures. Incidents such as the assassination of the prominent Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh and repeated cyber assaults on Israeli infrastructure illustrate the complexity and sophistication of this silent war.

The recent Iranian disclosure arrives amid a tense and highly sensitive backdrop. Just weeks ago, Israel's internal security service, Shin Bet, along with Israeli police, announced

the arrest of two young Israeli citizens—Roy Mizrahi and Almog Atias, both 24 years old and residents of Neshar in the Haifa region, northern occupied territories. Both were formally accused of collaborating with Iran. Although Israeli authorities have not confirmed a direct link to the mass leak of documents, the timing of these events cannot be overlooked.

Growing economic, security, and social woes are leading to increased willingness among Israelis to work against the regime

According to official Israeli sources, the investigation was kept strictly confidential to avoid compromising counterintelligence operations. It is speculated that the arrests occurred after sensitive information had already been transferred out of the occupied territories. This would represent a significant blow to Israeli security services and could indicate a far deeper penetration into the re-



gime's civilian or military apparatus than previously acknowledged.

The volume of documents extracted, according to sources familiar with the matter who spoke to Iran's Radio and Television News Agency, is so extensive that reviewing and analyzing them will take weeks, if not months. Furthermore, it was announced that part of this material will be made public once the preliminary study is complete. This step, common in intelligence disputes between states, serves both to internationally pressure the adversary and to showcase Iran's strategic espionage capabilities.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

7m smart meters to be installed across Iran by late March 2026



TEHRAN – Iranian Energy Ministry aims to install seven million smart electricity meters by the end of the current Iranian year (late March 2026), with the goal of reaching nine million units by the following fall, a senior official at the state-owned Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution Company (Tavanir) said.

vanir) said.

Hamed Ahmadi, the newly appointed head of Tavanir's Office of Smart Systems and Emerging Technologies, told ISNA that smart meters play a key role in improving electricity consumption management. So far, 5.1 million smart meters have been installed across the country.

Breaking down the current deployment, Ahmadi said around 2.9 million meters have been installed in the residential sector, 1.2 million in commercial units, 280,000 in industrial facilities, 340,000 in public sector buildings, 415,000 in the agricultural sector, and 10,000 for self-generating users.

He added that smart meter-based remote readings are expected to cover 70 percent of total electricity usage once the target is achieved.

Over \$1b allocated for medicine imports since March

TEHRAN – Central Bank of Iran (CBI) announced that it has allocated and supplied more than \$1.041 billion for the import of medicines, pharmaceutical raw materials, and medical equipment since the beginning of the current Iranian year (late March).

According to the announcement, between the start of the year and June 7, a total of over \$1.041 billion in foreign currency was provided through both preferential and non-preferential exchange rates.

Under the quarterly budget plan, \$800

million in preferential currency and \$400 million in non-preferential currency were expected to be allocated for these imports during the first quarter of the year.

However, despite a shortfall in the provision of preferential currency by the relevant agencies, the Central Bank—under instructions from its governor emphasizing the importance of public health—managed to supply more than \$525 million in preferential currency and \$520 million in non-preferential currency by June 7.

Sanctions and soul of a nation: Rethinking economic warfare on Iran



By Seyed Mehrdad Bani-Hashemi Kahangi

In the quiet corridors of Iranian hospitals, where children wait for medicine that never arrives, and in the crowded markets of southern Tehran, where inflation is rewriting the price of bread by the hour, one truth has become inescapable: the real cost of U.S. sanctions is not political—it is profoundly human.

For over a decade, Washington has argued that sanctions are a strategic necessity—a way to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions or influence its regional behavior. But the lived experience of millions tells a different story, one that rarely finds its way into the geopolitical calculus: the story of parents unable to afford antibiotics for their children, of students abandoning university dreams to support their families, and of the elderly who now ration both food and medication.

While policymakers often describe these sanctions as “targeted,” in practice they function as blunt instruments. Financial restrictions have paralyzed humanitarian imports. Even exempted goods like medical supplies are routinely blocked by over-compliance from international banks and insurers. In effect, the entire economy becomes hostage—not of politics, but of fear and isolation.

A 2024 report by the Iranian Hemophilia Society revealed that dozens of patients with

rare blood disorders died due to lack of clotting factor medication—drugs that are legally permitted under U.S. law, yet practically inaccessible due to logistical paralysis. These are not side effects. They are the main event.

Beyond the physical toll, there is an emotional erosion at play. Sanctions deepen the rift between Iran and the West, not only through state-to-state confrontation, but by convincing ordinary Iranians that global justice is a fiction. They feel punished not for what they have done, but for who they are—and that psychological wound will outlast any political resolution.

If the international community, and particularly the United States, seeks long-term stability in the Middle East, it must recognize that moral authority cannot be built on economic cruelty. Diplomacy cannot thrive in a climate where medicine becomes a bargaining chip and hunger a negotiation tool.

The Iranian people are not an abstraction. They are doctors working triple shifts without anesthesia. They are poets who can no longer afford paper. They are young men and women building apps by candlelight during blackouts.

To punish a government is one thing. To punish a people is another—and history will remember the difference.

Private sector pitches 30 investment packages as mining investment forum kicks off

TEHRAN – A specialized conference on investment opportunities in Iran's mining and mineral industries opened on Monday in Tehran, bringing together private sector operators and officials from the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

Speaking at this forum, Touraj Zare', head of the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO)'s subsidiary IMPASCO, said the forum aims to forge stronger partnerships between the government and private enterprises.

“Global investment models have evolved—from resource-driven to capital-based, and now to technology-led,” he noted. “Countries that have pursued sustainable mining development successfully have adopted an integrated approach: starting with resources, making them economically viable through capital, and enhancing sustainability and competitiveness through technology.”

Zare' stressed that in today's



volatile and unpredictable economic landscape, mineral resources alone are not enough. “Success requires organizational agility, strategic decision-making, intersectoral collaboration, and mutual trust.”

Referring to IMPASCO's previous collaborations, he said over 70 joint exploration projects with private firms have been conducted in the past five years, covering 500,000 square kilometers through aerial geophysics and geochemical surveys. More than 60 domestic companies have

partnered with IMPASCO under various joint venture models.

Zare' introduced a new model for assigning exploration zones, under which private firms act not merely as financiers but as full development partners—from data and analysis stages through to project completion. “Our goal is to empower the private sector at every step,” he said, describing the approach as a “strategic alliance” for building a smarter, more sustainable, and competitive future in mining.

Deputy Minister of Mining and

Mineral Industries Vajiollah Jafari also addressed the forum, noting that out of 80 known types of mineral resources in the country, only 40 have been properly identified. He emphasized the need for more serious planning and investment in the sector, especially to meet the 13 percent growth target.

“Asset identification is our critical weakness,” he said. “We must clearly know what resources we have and address this challenge head-on.”

Jafari noted that the Seventh National Development Plan includes provisions for leveraging private sector capacities in both exploration and operation phases. He announced that data packages, operational licenses, and 1:50,000-scale geological maps are now available for private sector investors.

To activate underutilized mines, the event introduced 270 exploration licenses bundled into 30 investment packages for private sector participation.

Iran exports non-oil products valued at \$1.094b to UAE in 2 months

TEHRAN– Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$1.094 billion to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21), according to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Foroud Asgari said that the UAE was Iran's third top non-oil export destination in the mentioned two-month period.

Exporting commodities valued at \$2.596 billion to Iran, the United Arab Emirates was Iran's top source of non-oil import in the said two months, the IRICA head added.

As previously announced by Abolfazl Akbarpour, the deputy head of IRICA for planning and international affairs, Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$7.2 billion to the United Arab Emirates in the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, 2025.

Akbarpour said that the UAE was Iran's third top export destination in the previous year.

Exporting commodities valued at \$21.9 billion to Iran, the United Arab Emirates was Iran's top source of non-oil import in the previous year, the official further added.

Iran and the United Arab Emirates signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding economic cooperation in a variety of areas at the end of the two countries' third Joint Economic Committee meeting in May 1, 2024.

The MOU was signed by former Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash and UAE's Economy Minister Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri, who co-chaired the joint meeting.

During the mentioned committee meeting, the two sides stressed the need for further expansion of economic cooperation between Tehran and Abu Dhabi.

Speaking at the end of the meeting, Bazrpash said: “We have held the joint committee between the two countries after 10 years, which is an opportunity to develop the commercial and economic relations between the two countries.”

“The UAE, as Iran's second biggest trade partner, has great strategic importance for us”, the minister said.

Referring to the location of Iran and the UAE in the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC), Bazarpash said: “Access to the markets of the north and south can create an



opportunity for the two countries to cooperate.”

In the end, the minister emphasized solving the banking and monetary problems between the two countries to facilitate bilateral trade relations.

Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri for his part underlined the importance of the meeting, saying: “Holding today's meeting shows the development and expansion of economic relations between the two countries. After China, the UAE has the largest amount of trade relations with Iran. The trade value of the two countries has reached 27 billion dollars and many Iranian companies are established in the UAE.”

“Creating new opportunities for transportation and banking cooperation is one of the achievements of this commission,” the official said.

Referring to the performance of the UAE government in the field of investment, the official said: “The approval of the law on the formation of foreign companies and the government's support for companies that operate in the field of new energies has created a good opportunity for business with the UAE.”

The 3rd Iran-UAE Joint Economic Committee meeting was held in Abu Dhabi from April 30 until May 1, 2024.

Increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government has been pursuing in recent years.

Iran has proposed the formation of a joint working committee between its Chamber of Commerce and the UAE Chambers Confederation to capitalize on the re-export potential of Iranian products through the United Arab Emirates.

Speaking at the Iran Expo 2025 event, in late April, Ghadir Ghiafeh, deputy head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and

Agriculture (ICCIMA), said the initiative would help streamline trade and improve alignment with global standards. “To fully benefit from the UAE's logistics and re-export infrastructure, a formal committee should be created between our chambers,” he told the Secretary General of the UAE Chambers Federation.

Ghiafeh also announced plans to establish the ICCIMA's first overseas Trade and Investment Development Agency office in the UAE, with the aim of attracting foreign investment and enhancing joint cooperation. He added that similar offices would be set up in other countries over time.

Highlighting the need to improve Iranian traders' access to UAE business networks, he called for the official introduction of a UAE Chamber representative in Iran and reiterated Iran's interest in opening an ICCIMA office in the Emirates. “We have already formed a joint Iran-UAE chamber in Iran, but its counterpart in the UAE is essential for advancing private sector collaboration,” he said.

Ghiafeh also emphasized the potential of B2B meetings between Iranian trade delegations—many of whom travel to the UAE annually—and their Emirati counterparts, urging the UAE Chamber to facilitate such events.

He further called for the implementation of existing trade agreements through coordinated action between the two chambers, and said the proposed working committee could help ensure Iranian goods meet international standards with UAE support. “There is ample room for joint investment, and we should actively tap into it,” he added.

Hamid Mohammed bin Salem, Secretary General of the UAE Chambers Federation, welcomed the proposal and confirmed he would convey Iran's request to establish a chamber office in the Emirates. “We are ready to facilitate B2B events and support the development of bilateral trade relations,” he said.

He noted that private sector players in both countries are highly capable but require structured support through their respective chambers to maximize potential. Bin Salem added that there is significant room for cooperation in sectors such as logistics, customs, transport, and food products.

He concluded by expressing readiness to share the UAE's private sector experience with Iran and emphasized that re-exporting Iranian goods through the UAE is a viable opportunity—provided Iranian traders adhere to international standards.

Gas injection to Shourijeh storage facility rises 23%

TEHRAN – Gas injection into the Shourijeh underground storage facility has been increased by 23 percent since the beginning of the season, the managing director of Shahid Hasheminejad Gas Refinery said.

Yahya Feyzi stated that a total of 589 million cubic meters of gas had been injected into the Shourijeh storage site in northeastern Iran as of June 4, marking a year-

on-year increase of 111 million cubic meters compared to the same period last year.

He also announced the installation and commissioning of a domestically manufactured gas turbine at the facility in the Khanqiran operational zone.

“In the first phase of the Shourijeh storage site, launched in 2014, foreign-made turbines were used and the entire startup process

was carried out by international experts,” Feyzi noted.

Iran has two major natural gas storage facilities in Sarajeh and Shourijeh, in which every year the National Iranian Gas Company stores the gas received from gas refineries all over the country to be used in the colder months of the year.

As one of the world's top gas producers, Iran has been following

a plan to expand its underground natural gas storage capacity to ensure that enough natural gas is available during peak demand periods to avoid electricity supply shortfalls in the future.

According to the National Iranian Gas Company's plans, the capacity of the two storage facilities, Sarajeh and Shourijeh, is planned to increase to over seven billion cubic meters in the near future.

Gaza flotilla journey brings more shame for Israel

From page 1 ► and other essential, hoping to break Israel's naval blockade and spotlight the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Nearing the shores of Gaza, the vessel was surrounded by, and boarded by, Israeli commandos from Shayetet 13, with drone and quadcopter support, an irritant white powder was dispersed on board, and all communications were shut down. According to the activists, the situation descended into panic and confusion as they were ordered to raise their hands, struggle into life jackets, and prepare for detention.

The Israeli authorities had confirmed to have seized control of the vessel, detained all twelve activists aboard, and brought it for interrogation and deportation to Ashdod.

The Israeli regime defended the operation as a legitimate security measure. According to the Israeli war minister, Israel Katz, "all means necessary" were employed to thwart any attempt of breaking the blockade.

The Israeli regime's officials claimed the humanitarian mission is a "publicity stunt," labeled the activists as "Hamas propaganda spokespeople." However, these falsifications will not change the people's opinion about Israel's hidden intention.

Global outrage and condemnation

The global response to Israel's seizure of the Madleen was swift and sharply critical. Francesca Al-



banese, UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, demanded the immediate release of the vessel and its crew, calling the breaking of the Gaza siege a legal and moral imperative, and urging Mediterranean ports to send more aid ships.

Amnesty International's Secretary General Agnès Callamard condemned the interception as a "chilling contempt" for international law, stressing Israel's obligation to ensure safe access to essential supplies for Gaza and demanding the activists' unconditional release.

The Turkish government labeled the raid a "heinous act" and "clear violation of international law," branding Israel a "terror state" and calling for international measures to halt its brutality.

European lawmakers and NGOs denounced the action as a blatant violation of law and part of a strategy to starve Gaza. Greenpeace and Palestinian groups echoed these calls, labeling the seizure

piracy and demanding urgent intervention.

Israel's broader blockade strategy

The Madleen incident starkly illustrates Israel's uncompromising and multi-layered strategy for enforcing its naval blockade of Gaza. Israel deploys military force—even in international waters—to preemptively intercept any vessel attempting to breach the blockade, claiming such missions pose a direct security threat regardless of their humanitarian intent.

By redirecting intercepted aid to its own tightly controlled channels, Israel maintains strict oversight over what enters Gaza, a policy critics contend deliberately throttles life-saving supplies and exacerbates Gaza's humanitarian crisis.

Simultaneously, Israeli authorities work to discredit activists by labeling them as Hamas sympathizers or mere propagandists, aiming to undermine international solidarity efforts and deter future

challenges.

Despite mounting global condemnation, Israel's strategy is sustained by robust Western political backing, which insulates it diplomatically and enables continued and suffocating blockade.

Humanitarian and political consequences

Interception of the Madleen has stirred much debate about Israel's blockade, about the activists' rights, and about the humanitarian emergency in Gaza.

Although the mission of the Madleen has been canceled, it has successfully brought to light the extreme measures Israel has resorted to in order to maintain its siege, the complicity of allies, and the urgent need for the international community to resist Gaza's agony.

The flotilla journey may seem mostly symbolic, but it further tarnished Israel's image in the world, which has been pounding Gaza, displacing, killing, and starving its 2.3 million population since October 2023.

"The Madleen may have been stopped at sea, but its message travels far: The blockade is not invisible, nor will it be forever.

Each intercepted vessel, each detained activist, each act of defiance reaffirms that Gaza is not forgotten – and that until freedom is restored and justice achieved, the sea will remain a front line in the struggle for Palestinian liberation," Yara Hawari, co-director of Al-Shabaka, wrote in Al Jazeera.

David Cameron threatened to withdraw UK from ICC over Israel war crimes probe



The British government privately threatened to defund and withdraw from the International Criminal Court if it issued arrest warrants for Israeli leaders, Middle East Eye can reveal.

David Cameron, then foreign secretary in Rishi Sunak's Conservative government, made the threat in April 2024 in a heated phone call with Karim Khan, the British chief prosecutor of the court. Less than a month later, Khan announced that he was seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his then-defence minister, Yoav Gallant, as well as for Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Ismail Haniyeh and Mohammed Deif.

In a statement at the time, Khan called for his office and the court to be allowed to carry out their work with "full independence and impartiality." "I insist that all attempts to impede, intimidate or improperly influence the officials of this Court must cease immediately," he said.

Convoy begins march toward Rafah, demanding total end to Gaza siege

An international solidarity march for Gaza set off for the Rafah border crossing on Sunday as part of a campaign to end Israel's blockade on the enclave and demand a halt to the ongoing war, New Arab reported.

Thousands of participants from 32 countries are taking part in the campaign seeking to deliver much-needed humanitarian aid and show global support for Palestinians in Gaza, who are enduring what legal experts and rights groups have described as a genocide.

The convoys will gather in Cairo on Thursday before heading to the border city of Arish in northeastern Egypt.

From there, participants plan to march on foot to the Rafah crossing, where protest tents will be set up, according to organisers from the Global March to Gaza coalition. It is unclear whether Egyptian authorities, who remain highly suspicious of demonstrations, will permit the march to proceed.

The coalition includes representatives from most European, North and South American countries, as well as several Arab and Asian states, in a show of global mobilisation around the Palestinian cause.

California governor to file lawsuit against National Guard deployment



The California governor announced the legal action on Sunday during an interview on the MSNBC news channel, and he also sent a letter to the Trump administration decrying the deployment of the National Guard as "unlawful".

"Donald Trump needs to pull back. He needs to stand down. Donald Trump is inflaming these conditions," Newsom said during the interview.

In his letter to Trump, Newsom took issue with the law the administration invoked for the deployment, which says such an order must be "issued through the governors of the states".

The letter said there is no need for such a deployment at this time and to do so is a "serious breach of state sovereignty".

Arrests after protest in San Francisco sparks violence

Protests against the deportation of migrants without residence permits have also led to riots in San Francisco, Deutsche Presse-Agentur reported.

Around 60 people were detained after an initially peaceful demonstration in front of a building belonging to the US immigration authority ICE, local CNN affiliate KGO reported.

According to the report, hundreds of people protested on Sunday evening against the raids and deportations of migrants without valid residence permits currently taking place in the state of California.

The mood turned sour when some demonstrators destroyed property, carried out attacks and caused other damage, according to police, the station reported.

In order to break up the demonstration, the authorities declared the protests an "unlawful assembly." Some people nevertheless remained and later damaged buildings and a police car in other streets. Another group refused to disperse. This led to the arrests. According to the report, two officers were injured. A firearm was also seized.

Russia plans to boost economic and military ties in Africa

Russia is working to enhance its economic and military ties in Africa, Moscow has outlined.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declared on Monday that Russia's presence in Africa is "growing". The move is part of an ongoing bid by Moscow to step into a geopolitical vacuum in West Africa as Western powers retreat amid a series of military coups in the region.

"We really intend to comprehensively develop our interaction with African countries, focusing primarily on economic and investment interaction," Peskov told reporters.

"This also corresponds to and extends to such sensitive areas as defence and security," he added. Russia's growing security role in parts of Africa, including in countries such as Mali, Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea, is viewed with concern by the West, and has come at the expense of former colonial power France, whose forces have departed or been expelled from several West African countries over recent years, and the United States.

Greenland 'not for sale': Macron tells UN ocean summit

French President Emmanuel Macron opened the UN Ocean Conference in Nice on Monday with an urgent call for multilateral action to save the seas.

"The first answer is multilateralism," said Macron. "The deep sea is not for sale, neither is Greenland for sale, nor Antarctica," he added in a veiled response to U.S. President Donald Trump's expansionist statements since he took office in January.

"While the Earth is warming, the ocean is boiling," said the French president, as he called for an "open partnership" in science and research to protect the world's oceans.

"The climate, like biodiversity, is not a matter of opinion; it's a matter of scientifically established facts," he added.

A High Seas Treaty will be ratified by a sufficient number of countries at the summit to enter into force, Macron confirmed, noting that 50 countries had submitted ratifications "in the past few hours" before the UN Ocean Conference officially opened.

Intense clashes rock Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Nearly two years into the U.S.-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza, the Palestinian resistance movement remains unbroken.

Reporters on the ground say very fierce and ongoing clashes are taking place between the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) and Palestinian resistance forces in the totally besieged Gaza enclave.

The Palestinian resistance factions are confronting invading forces on several fronts as the Israeli regime is attempting to capture the enclave once again. For example, heavy clashes have been reported in the east of Khan Younis in the southern part of the strip.

Palestinian sources also reported that Israeli helicopters were seen airlifting wounded

soldiers from the area.

Israeli media have reported another major "security incident" in Gaza without specifying the location.

In a related development, the al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, announced they have targeted an Israeli military bulldozer near the Yarmouk site in the Al-Manara neighborhood, south of Khan Younis.

In a separate statement, al-Qassam fighters said that after returning from combat operations, they confirmed the killing of two IOF soldiers at point-blank range east of the Shejaiya neighborhood in eastern Gaza City.

In a press statement, Hamas declared, "The resistance is conducting a war of attrition in response to the genocide against civilians, and

surprises the enemy daily with renewed battlefield tactics."

The movement emphasized that "the occupation's military escalation only worsens its losses and casts the fate of its captives into uncertainty," stressing that "the only solution lies in a comprehensive deal, something Netanyahu continues to reject."

Hamas argued that "the so-called absolute victory Netanyahu speaks of is nothing but an illusion meant to mislead his public."

The group further said, "The endless war Netanyahu desired has become a daily burden," warning that it "will ultimately lead to his political and personal downfall, after the collapse of the illusion of a swift resolution."

Will UNIFIL be replaced by a multinational force under umbrella of a ceasefire supervision committee?



From page 1 ► Constantly, UNIFIL has been targeted by the Israeli enemy, the most notable of which was the bombardment of the UN headquarters in the southern town of Qana during the 1996 aggression.

In June 2022, the Israel Occupation Force's navy also surrounded UNIFIL's Indonesian ship, launching a radar attack on it by six warplanes and a Sa'ar 4.5 corvette; any technical error could have turned the incident into a disaster for the Indonesian soldiers then.

This year, the renewal of UNIFIL coincides with strong Israeli objections to the continued presence of these forces, while countries (specifically the five permanent members of the Security Council) are concerned with the situation in Lebanon.

Washington supports the position of the Israeli occupation re-

gime, while Paris insists on keeping these forces.

France traditionally drafts the renewal proposal in May of each year. This year, it drafted the text almost identically to the formula used to renew the mandate last year, which sparked widespread objections due to its deletion of phrases such as "with the approval of the Lebanese Army" and "granting UNIFIL forces freedom of movement"

Upon her visit to the occupied Palestinian territories, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, heard the displeasure of enemy officials regarding her recent meeting with Hezbollah's security and liaison officer, Wafiq Safa.

The Israeli colonial regime has long claimed that the UNIFIL "covers up" Hezbollah's freedom

of movement in the south of the Litani River and its establishment of camps and weapons depots just meters from its headquarters.

Meanwhile, Beirut awaits the American position, which will be presented by Trump's Deputy Special Envoy to West Asia, Morgan Ortagus, or her successor, regarding the proposal to modify UNIFIL's mandate, reduce its personnel, or halt its funding.

During his meeting with Finnish Foreign Minister Elina Valtonen, President Joseph Aoun affirmed Lebanon's commitment to maintaining UNIFIL in the south, "given the important role it plays alongside the Lebanese Army in maintaining security and stability in the region and implementing Resolution 1701."

Beirut has been advised by Paris to refrain from continuing UNIFIL's traditional missions. Instead, it is suggested that the powers of UNIFIL be expanded by granting the force the freedom to operate without a Lebanese Army escort, while still permitting it to carry out various missions.

Lebanon relies on France for the issue of UNIFIL's budget and its renewal. Sources say that serious discussions are underway in this regard with the concerned countries, particularly China and

Post-sanctions tourism development in Iran: lessons from Turkey and prospects for the future



Travelers look at the grandeur of the Imam Mosque, originally named the Shah Mosque (not pictured), during their visit to the UNESCO-listed Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan. The 17th-century Ali Qapu Palace is seen in the background.

From Page 1 ► Our natural beauty is just as compelling, from the windswept Lut Desert to the green mountains of the north and the coral-rich islands in the Persian Gulf.

Yet despite this, our tourism sector remains underdeveloped, particularly when compared to our regional neighbor, Turkey. In 2024, Turkey welcomed over 52 million tourists and earned more than \$61 billion. Iran, in contrast, still struggles with outdated infrastructure, a shortage of trained tourism workers, and an anemic marketing strategy that barely scratches the surface of our potential.

Learning from Turkey

Turkey's success didn't happen by accident. It was the result of decades of consistent investment, destination branding, and effective governance. Their Tourism Promotion and Development Agency alone has an annual budget of \$200 million, used wisely to reach global audiences through digital marketing, partnerships, and destination storytelling.

In contrast, Iran still lacks an independent tourism authority. Our fragmented system is unable to coordinate investment, branding, or policy. If we're serious about reaching our goal of 20 million international tourists by 2030—a target outlined in Iran's Vision 2025 plan—we need immediate structural reforms.

What needs to be done

To start, Iran must invest in tourism infrastructure—especially hotels, transport, and aviation. We need an estimated 3,000 new four- and five-star hotels and a fleet of modern aircraft to accommodate the anticipated demand.

Equally important is human capital. Currently, we have only about 50,000 trained tourism professionals. We need four times that number, fluent in languages such as Chinese, Russian, Arabic, and English, and trained in hospitality standards that international visitors expect.

Governance reform is essential. I propose the establishment of a National Tourism Agency,

armed with a clear mandate, an adequate budget, and the autonomy to coordinate between provinces, ministries, and investors.

Digital marketing is no longer optional. We must tell Iran's story on platforms where global travelers live—Instagram, YouTube, TikTok—and in languages they understand. Our culture, myths, cuisine, and crafts are all assets that can be digitally exported long before a visitor boards a plane.

Investment: domestic and foreign

Based on comparative models and forecasts, Iran will need approximately \$9.56 billion in tourism-related investments by 2030. Of that, at least \$3.5–\$7.2 billion can come from foreign investors—if we create the right climate through policy incentives like long-term tax exemptions, visa reforms, and joint ventures.

The economic payoff would be significant: 150,000 new jobs, \$20 billion in annual tourism revenue, and spillover benefits for sectors like transportation, construction, and handicrafts.

Will we be ready?

Iran's readiness for a post-sanctions tourism boom is still a question, not a certainty. And that uncertainty is what concerns me most. We cannot afford to treat tourism as a secondary priority in national development. Unlike oil, tourism is sustainable, job-generating, and deeply connected to our cultural identity and soft power.

If sanctions are lifted and we are not prepared, the world will look our way—and then look away. But if we take strategic action now, Iran can finally take its place among the world's top cultural destinations.

The next round of nuclear talks may determine the timing, but the future of Iran's tourism is up to us.

(Leila Ajdari is a former Director General of Marketing and Foreign Tourism Development at Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. She holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Management and Planning.)

Meymand, Hassanabad nationally registered for traditional glassmaking, carpet weaving

TEHRAN – A public celebration is set to be held in Fars province, southern Iran, to mark the recent designation of Meymand as the National City of Traditional Glassmaking and Hassanabad as the National City of Carpet.

The event will take place soon, coinciding with Handicrafts Week, Mohsen Ziaei, the provincial tourism chief, said on Monday.

The event will take place with the presence of nationwide and provincial officials, as well as tourists and art lovers in Meymand and Hassanabad, the official added.

Saying that Meymand has been known as one of the civilizational hubs and rosewater production centers from the distant past, he mentioned that Meymand boasts appropriate climatic conditions and is considered one of the main centers for growing rose and producing rosewater across the country. Due to this feature, the related handicrafts including traditional glassmaking have become popular there, he added.

Ziaei continued that presence of outstanding masters and its long history of activity in tra-

ditional glassmaking art have made Meymand worthy of the title of National City of Traditional Glassmaking. Traditional glassmaking craft is considered ancient and practical handicrafts in Meymand, he added.

Pointing to registration of Hassanabad in Eqid as National City of Carpet, he said this national registration is an important step in line of preserving and promoting carpet weaving art, generating jobs, branding, and further introduction of this original art to tourists and future generations.

On plans for holding celebration of national registration of these two cities, he said the ceremony will be held with support of provincial representatives in Majlis, governors, and related administrative bodies and national registration plate will be delivered to the secretariats of two national cities of traditional glassmaking and carpet.

Ziaei emphasized that these events are an opportunity for reviving the handicrafts which are exposed to oblivion and an effective measure for boosting tourism in the abovementioned regions.

4,000 historical sites, structures at risk from land subsidence, Iranian tourism minister warns

TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, announced during Sunday's cabinet meeting that approximately 4,000 historical sites and buildings across the country are under threat due to land subsidence.

According to a detailed report presented by the minister to the cabinet on June 8, the affected sites include historical monuments, museums, ancient villages, and tourist areas. Salehi Amiri described land subsidence as a "silent earthquake" that is steadily damaging these valuable cultural assets.

"Land subsidence is posing a serious and growing risk to our heritage," he stated, emphasizing the urgent need for monitoring and protective measures. He warned that without immediate intervention, irreparable harm could come to some of the nation's most treasured historical locations.

So far, a number of experts and cultural heritage enthusiasts have highlighted that the phenomenon is already causing



Sightseers visit the ruins of Persepolis in southern Iran.

structural damage in several areas, including the ancient city of Isfahan and the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, and called for inter-agency cooperation to mitigate further risks.

Based on available data, Isfahan has the highest risk of land subsidence in the country, and in terms of the number of cities and the amount of worn-out fabric, it ranks first in the zoning of subsidence.

Sources say that subsidence

in Isfahan is moving at a crazy speed; now, after the penetration of this phenomenon into the residential structures, facilities, and basic infrastructures, it has reached the thresholds of some historical monuments.

As an example, Mehdi Zare, a senior professor at the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology, has raised alarms over accelerating land subsidence near two of Iran's most iconic archaeologi-

cal sites – Naqsh-e Rostam, the necropolis of the Achaemenid kings, and Persepolis, the UNESCO-registered ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire – as unsustainable agricultural practices continue in the fertile plains of Fars province.

Speaking during a recent expert panel on climate change and cultural heritage held at the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (RICHT) late in May, Zare warned that the rate of subsidence in the Marvdasht region, where the Achaemenid treasures are located, has reached between 20 to 30 centimeters annually.

"This phenomenon not only threatens Iran's invaluable cultural heritage but may also have implications for the activation of regional fault lines," he said.

Zare called for urgent measures to control unregulated groundwater extraction and to revise agricultural policies that are exacerbating the crisis. "Overdrawing groundwater beyond recharge levels is unsustainable and dangerous," he emphasized.

Asian ambassadors visit Bisotun complex

TEHRAN—Ambassadors of Malaysia, Bangladesh, Brunei, and Uzbekistan visited the Bisotun complex in the western province of Kermanshah on Sunday.

The top diplomats were attracted by the splendor and grandeur of this historical complex. They called it unique and rich in ancient culture and history, CHTN reported.

On the sidelines of the tour, several traditional athletes performed Zoorkhaneh rituals, which were well received by the ambassadors.

They also visited Shah Abbasi Caravanserai along with their families. This caravanserai is an outstanding sample of the architecture of caravanserais pertaining to the Safavid era.

With its four-porch design,

corner towers, and the use of stone and brick materials, it was a beautiful and practical sight for travelers and merchants of that time. Today, as part of Iran's cultural heritage and history, Shah Abbasi Caravanserai hosts tourists and researchers.

Kermanshah is a region celebrated for its profound historical and cultural significance. Set against the backdrop of the Zagros Mountains, Kermanshah has been an important center of civilization since ancient times.

The province boasts remarkable archaeological treasures, including the monumental rock reliefs of Taq-e Bostan and the ancient inscriptions at Bisotun, which are UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Beyond its historical allure,



Kermanshah features breathtaking natural landscapes, such as the serene Sarab-e Niloofar Spring, the dramatic Quri Qal'eh water cave, and the picturesque Parishan waterfall.

With its blend of historical marvels and natural wonders, Kermanshah offers a rich tapestry of experiences that continue to captivate visitors and highlight Iran's diverse heritage.

Persian carpet returned to UN library in Geneva



TEHRAN — A Persian carpet, which had been on display in one of the United Nations headquarters buildings in Geneva since 1935, has been returned to its place following the renovation of the building.

According to ISNA, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva, Ali Bahreini, wrote in a post on X Social Media page: With the completion of the renovation of the historic United Nations building, the Persian carpet was returned to its place

in this building.

He explained that this 85-square-meter carpet has been donated by Iran to the League of Nations (often referred to as the "predecessor" of the United Nations) in 1935. It is considered a precious part of the historical heritage of the United Nations, he added.

It is noteworthy to say that there is a precious Persian carpet in the United Nations Headquarters in New York, with Saadi's poem written in gold thread in the middle of it.

Ancient clay jars unearthed following road erosion in western Iran

TEHRAN – Two large clay jars, possibly dating back to prehistoric times, have been discovered in Dehloran county of Ilam province, western Iran.

The artifacts emerged following a roadside collapse caused by soil erosion and were promptly transferred to a local museum for preservation and further study.

According to the provincial director of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Farzad Sharifi, the discovery was reported by local residents who noticed the jars partially exposed along the edge of a rural road.

In response, a team comprising cultural heritage experts, archaeologists, protection officers, local police, and the regional prosecutor was dispatched to the site to secure the area and assess the find, the official said.



"Initial evaluations suggest that these clay jars are ancient and were likely used for storing dry goods such as grains or legumes," Sharifi stated.

The jars, made of red pottery, are believed to be remnants of early human settlement and cultural activity in the region.

Both jars were carefully excavated and transported to the provincial storage facility in Ilam for conservation and further archaeological analysis. One jar was found to be fully intact, while the other showed signs of cracking.

Authorities plan to restore and eventually display the artifacts in a number of museums across the province.

"This discovery adds to the growing body of evidence highlighting Ilam's significance as a cradle of early civilization on the Iranian plateau," Sharifi said. He added that the province, known for its deep historical roots, has in recent years yielded numerous valuable finds spanning prehistoric to Islamic periods.

Ongoing studies will determine the precise age and cultural context of the newly discovered jars, the official underlined.

Iran can become SCO regional hub for war on drugs: official

TEHRAN – Thanks to the country's achievements and successful experiences in social harm reduction, prevention, and treatment, Iran can serve as a regional hub for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in combating narcotics, an official with the Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ) has said.

Iran's role in strengthening regional security and addressing common threats, such as terrorism, drugs, and sanctions, can contribute to transforming the SCO into a powerful bloc in the world's multipolar system, IRNA quoted Mohammad Narimani as saying on Sunday.

“The Shanghai Cooperation Organization can help Iran identify and destroy drug trafficking networks and terrorist acts, make the Taliban destroy heroin and methamphetamine laboratories and supply, as well as facilitate access to advanced equipment for monitoring borders,” Narimani noted.

Having borne the heavy human and financial costs in the fight against narcotics, Iran has the right to expect the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to use its political, security, and economic capacities to assist the country in the fight as the cooperation will be beneficial to both Iran and the entire region, ensuring



stability and security, the official concluded.

SCO a powerful force in fight against narcotics

The dedication and commendable efforts of all member states have transformed the SCO into a powerful institution, particularly in the fight against illicit drugs, Narimani said in May.

“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.

Dialogue among civilizations helps eliminate discrimination, foster mutual understanding

TEHRAN – Dialogue among civilizations is known as the most effective way to eliminate discrimination and prejudice, foster mutual understanding and trust, strengthen relationships among nations, and reinforce global solidarity.

As the world grapples with multiple interconnected crises, such as widening gaps in peace, development, trust, and governance, humanity stands at a historic crossroads, facing increasing instability and transformation. The urgent need for solidarity, dialogue, and cooperation has never been more evident.

Dialogue among civilizations not only fosters awareness and appreciation of the universal values shared by humankind but also

promotes peaceful coexistence based on mutual respect.

It serves as a bridge to find common ground in addressing the pressing challenges of our time, ultimately contributing to world peace, human welfare, development, and progress.

Established by the United Nations in 2024, the International Day for Dialogue Among Civilizations is observed annually on June 7.

The International Day of Dialogue among Civilizations provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the value of the diversity of civilizations and promoting dialogue, mutual respect and global solidarity, fostering a more harmonious and interconnected world.

Proposed by China and co-sponsored by

over 80 countries, the International Day of Dialogue among Civilizations emphasizes that all civilizational achievements constitute “the collective heritage of humankind.”

It underscores the importance of respecting civilizational diversity and highlights “the crucial role of dialogue” in maintaining global peace, advancing shared development, enhancing human well-being, and achieving collective progress.

The resolution acknowledges the essential role of dialogue in fostering awareness and understanding of universal values, as outlined in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reaffirming that civilizational achievements are part of humanity's shared heritage.

IRCS shines at IFRC Limitless Youth Innovation Academy

TEHRAN – The innovative project proposed by the Iranian Red Crescent Society's (IRCS) team, led by Setayesh Halimi Mofrad, has been selected among the top ten Final Awardees of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Limitless Youth Innovation Academy — Climate and Environmental Challenge.

These projects address climate change, water scarcity, and environmental challenges through sustainable solutions like biogas

digesters, real-time water monitoring, and waste recycling.

The IRCS' project titled “Reducing environmental harm through innovative electronic waste recycling,” is the first of its kind in the region of the country. This initiative breaks new ground by enabling circularity in a neglected waste stream, transforming an environmental challenge into a replicable, resource-based solution and setting a precedent for localized innovation.

Limitless is a global initiative dedicated to supporting young people to create impactful, innovative solutions to pressing humanitarian issues. This year, the event focused on addressing the climate and environmental challenges affecting communities.

Over 7,000 youth participants and peer mentors from 142 countries participated, collectively developing more than 1,500 innovative projects that impacted over 1.9 million people.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Some \$7b to be allocated to rebuild flood-devastated houses

A budget of 290 trillion rials (nearly \$7 billion) will be allotted to reconstruct and repair housing units destroyed by flood in 18 provinces across the country, Mehdi Jamalnejad, deputy interior minister for urban and rural development has announced.

Flood has devastated some 169,377 housing units, 68,333 of which are beyond repair and must be reconstructed, he stated.

Moreover, household appliances of 109,832 families also have suffered damages, he further regretted.

He went on to say that 20,000 housing units, undergone devastation by recent flooding in Aq-Oala county in northern Golestan province, are under construction.

اختصاص بیش از ۲۹ هزار میلیارد تومان برای بازسازی خانه های سیل زده

معاون عمران و توسعه امور شهری و روستایی وزیر کشور گفت: براساس مصوبه اخیر هیات وزیران مبلغ ۲۹ هزار و ۱۳۰ میلیارد ریال برای بازسازی و جبران خسارات ناشی از سیل در بخشهای مختلف ۱۸ استان پرداخت می شود.

بر اساس ارزیابی های انجام شده در ۲۱ استان کشور، بیش از ۱۶۹ هزار و ۳۷۷ واحد مسکونی شهری و روستایی در سیل های اخیر در کشور آسیب دیده اند که باید دوباره احداث شوند.

جمالی نژاد بیان داشت: در اثر سیل به ۱۰۹ هزار و ۸۳۲ واحد مسکونی نیز خسارت معیشتی وارد شده است.

وی اضافه کرد: امروز ساخت ۲۰ هزار دستگاه واحد مسکونی که در سیل آسیب دیده بودند نیز در آق قلا شروع شد.

SOCIETY

JUNE 10, 2025

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

Blood donation rises by over 5% in 2 months

TEHRAN – Blood donation in Iran has increased by more than five percent in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year, which started on March 21, compared to the same period last year.

Also, women's participation in blood donation has increased by one percent, in comparison to the year earlier, IRIB quoted Mostafa Jamali as saying.

A total of 456,020 blood units were donated over the mentioned period, he added.

The average amount of blood reserves in the country is sufficient for more than 10 days, and for more than 16 days in Tehran, the official noted.

The blood donation rate has reached 27.8 per thousand people, which is favorable.

The country's plasma production has reached roughly 400 liters. However, the country needs approximately one and a half million liters of the product, Jamali said.

Blood donation rises by 1.5% yr/yr

Some 2.36 million Iranians donated blood over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2024–March 2025), indicating an increase of 1.5 percent compared to the year earlier.

Tehran and Fars, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Mazandaran, and Khuzestan provinces made the largest contributions, IRIB reported.

Over the past (Iranian) year, some four million blood units, including blood products, were transferred to medical centers, IRIB quoted Bashir Haji-Beigi, the Blood Transfusion Organization spokesman, as saying.

Men made up 95 percent of blood donors, while women's contribution amounted to five percent. Women in Lorestan province, North Khorasan, and Sistan-Baluchestan had the highest share, he added.



Highlighting the need for negative blood types, the official said 90 percent of donors had positive blood.

WHO highlights Iran's capacity

Jaffar Hussain, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative to Iran, has highlighted Iran's capacity to serve as a model for other nations in the realm of blood transfusion and rare blood management.

Addressing National Rare Blood Day on January 22, the official praised the country's steadfast commitment to equitable healthcare access, ensuring that no one is left behind, regardless of their blood type.

The official commended the country's unwavering dedication to tackling the unique challenges surrounding rare blood, emphasizing the critical importance of collaboration, innovation, and unwavering determination in this global endeavor, the WHO website announced in a press release on January 27.

He lauded the Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization's (IBTO) leadership in blood safety and transfusion services, highlighting their remarkable achievement of a 100 percent voluntary, non-remunerated blood donation system, a testament to the principles of universal health coverage in action. He also thanked the blood donors, whose selflessness serves as an inspiration to all.

Over 125 earthquakes shake Iran in a week

TEHRAN –A total of 127 earthquakes were recorded across the country from May 31 to June 6, according to the seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Statistically, 110 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3; 15 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4; and two earthquakes with a magnitude between 4 and 5 have occurred in the country, IRNA reported.

Of the total quakes, two had a magnitude of 4.1 on the Richter scale, which occurred on June 2 in Khorasan Razavi and Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari provinces.

Among the provinces of the country, Isfahan, with 21, experienced the highest number of earthquakes, followed by Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari and Khuzestan with 13 and 10 earthquakes, respectively.

During the same period, one earthquake hit Tehran province. No earthquakes were recorded

in East Azarbaijan, Alborz, Ilam, Zanjan, Hamedan, Qom, Qazvin, Kordestan, and Lorestan provinces.

A total of 6,272 earthquakes were recorded across the country over the past calendar year (March 2024 –March 2025) according to the Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran.

Out of registered earthquakes, 150 were more than 4 on the Richter scale; at least five earthquakes with a magnitude of more than 4.5 occurred monthly in the country.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes in the world occur in Iran, but more than 6 percent of the victims of the world's earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes.



Life comes back to Bakhtegan wetland

On Sunday, June 8, water was released from Dorudzan dam into Bakhtegan wetland in southern Fars province to help revive the drying valuable reservoir.

Bakhtegan is a Salt Lake with a surface area of 3,500 square kilometers, once Iran's second-largest lake. Several dams on the river had significantly reduced water flow into the lake, increasing its salinity and endangering the lake's populations of flamingos and other migratory birds.



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JUNE 10, 2025

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Allah will cover up on the day of resurrection the defects (faults) of the one who covers up the faults of the others in this world.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:04 Evening: 19:41 Dawn: 3:02 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:48 (tomorrow)

Tehran cinematheque screens “The Gospel According to St. Matthew”

TEHRAN – The Cinematheque of the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) screened a restored version of Italian film director Pier Paolo Pasolini’s 1964 movie “The Gospel According to St. Matthew” on Monday.

The screening was followed by a review session by Iranian critic Parviz Jahed.

“The Gospel According to St. Matthew” (Italian: “Il Vangelo secondo Matteo”) is a landmark film that redefines biblical storytelling through a stark, realistic lens. An epic biblical drama, the film chronicles the life of Jesus Christ from his birth to his resurrection, offering a contemplative portrayal rooted in the Gospel of Matthew.

In line with the Italian neorealist tradition, Pasolini chose to cast non-professional actors, emphasizing authenticity and raw emotion. Filmed entirely on-location in Southern Italy, the movie captures the region’s landscapes, villages, and people, immersing viewers in a tangible, everyday world that contrasts sharply with traditional Hollywood biblical epics.

Pasolini’s decision to use the actual text of Matthew’s Gospel for the dialogue underscores his belief that “images could never reach the poetic heights of the text,” aiming to preserve the sacredness and poetic depth of the scripture.

Pasolini specifically selected Matthew’s Gospel over others because he found it more suitable for cinematic adaptation: he regarded John’s Gospel as too mystical, Mark’s as too vulgar, and Luke’s as overly sentimental. This choice reflects his desire to craft a film that is both spiritually sincere and artistically restrained.

The film premiered at the 25th Venice International Film Festival in 1964, where it received critical acclaim, winning the Grand Jury Prize, the OCIC Award, and the Silver Lion. It was also nominated for three Oscars—Best Art Direction, Best Costume Design, and Best



A scene from Italian director Pier Paolo Pasolini’s movie “The Gospel According to St. Matthew”

Score—and later recognized by the Vatican’s L’Osservatore Romano as the best film ever made about Christ. Over the years, it has been hailed as a classic of world cinema and a defining work within the neorealist genre.

Critics praised the film’s artistic depth and spiritual authenticity. The film received widespread acclaim, reflected in its high ratings on Rotten Tomatoes (92 percent) and inclusion in numerous top film lists, including the Vatican’s list of great films and Roger Ebert’s Great Movies. Notably, the acclaimed Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky admired the film.

The influence of “The Gospel According to St. Matthew” endures as a powerful, poetic, and politically aware retelling of the life of Christ, blending religious reverence with neorealist aesthetics to create a timeless cinematic masterpiece.

Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–1975) was an influential Italian poet, filmmaker, writer, actor, and playwright, regarded as a major public intellectual of 20th-century Italy. He was a controversial figure due to his direct style. His brutal, unsolved murder in 1975 shocked Italy, with recent investigations suggesting a contract killing linked to organized crime and far-right terrorism.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza Freedom Flotilla

Cartoonist: Mohammad Sabaaneh from Palestine

Four Iranian photographers win at 15th Arctic Exhibition of Photographic Art

TEHRAN – The winning works of the 15th Arctic Exhibition of Photographic Art in Norway have been announced, with six photos from four Iranian photographers among them.

All the submitted works to the event were evaluated by a panel of judges and the winners in various categories were announced. They can be visited at the online gallery of the event at its website, Mehr reported.

Mohammadreza Pourian from Iran received three awards at the event including FIAP Gold medal for his photo “Whirlpool of Terror and Tension” and the GPU HM Ribbon for “Pride and Prejudice” in the “Color and Mono Color” section.

He also grabbed the Arctic Exhibition HM for his “Passion of Childhood” at the “Street Photo Color” section.

In the “Color and Mono Mono-chrome general” section the FIAP Gold medal was presented to “Deep Thoughts” by Alireza Pourkhan from Iran.



“Whirlpool of Terror and Tension” by Mohammadreza Pourian

In the “Color and Mono Color” section, Iranian photographers won two more awards as well.

Ali Hasanpour received the BOFK Gold 75 years medal Chair-

Freedom” and Mehdi Ashnadost was presented the NFFF Silver medal for his “Lonely Woman”.

Iranian translator Bijan Ashtari passes away

TEHRAN – Iranian translator and film critic Bijan Ashtari passed away on Saturday, June 8, at his home in Tehran at 64.

Ashtari had been battling cancer in recent years, but the cause of death was announced as a heart attack, ISNA reported.

Through the translation and publication of numerous important works in the field of contemporary history and politics, he made a lasting contribution to raising awareness and deepening historical understanding among Persian readers.

Ashtari began his translation career in the early 1980s in the field of arts and cinema journalism, and also worked for a time as a film critic in newspapers and magazines like “Donya-ye Tass-

vir” (World of Image).

He became a symbol of translating historical texts related to communism, totalitarianism, and various forms of dictatorship across the world — works distinguished by their red covers, often published by Saleess Publication.

From the mid-2000s onward, he embarked on a major project translating biographies and events related to the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc.

Among his well-known translated works are “Young Stalin,” “Literature Against Tyranny,” “Gaddafi’s Harem,” and “The Aquariums of Pyongyang.”

His other notable translated works include “Stalin’s Daughter,” “Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar,” “Manuscripts Don’t Burn,”



and “Comrade: The Life and Death of Ernesto Che Guevara”.

His translations have been reprinted multiple times and have

played an unparalleled role in enlightening a new generation of ideology-weary, history-thirsty readers.

Iranian Film Days underway in Bosnia and Herzegovina

TEHRAN – A cultural program dedicated to the Iranian cinema is underway at the Museum of Literature and Performing Arts in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Titled “Iranian Film Days,” the program was launched on June 9 and will continue for four days until June 12, ILNA reported.

The event is organized in collaboration with the Cultural Attache Office of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Municipality of Stari Grad, the Museum of Literature and Performing Arts, the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, Soure Cinema Organization of the Art Bureau, the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, Farabi Cinema Foundation, and SkyFrame Studio.

Four outstanding Iranian feature and animated films from recent years will be shown

during the four-day program. They include “A Passenger from Gonora” directed by Ahmad Alamdar, “Romanticism of Emad and Tuba” by Kaveh Sabbaghzadeh, “The Dolphin Boy” by Mohammad Kheirandish, and “In the Arms of the Tree” by Babak Khajehpasha.

“A Passenger from Ganora” tells the story of an alien who arrives on Earth and, with the help of a disabled boy and his friends, embarks on a quest to find the ruler of the planet Ganora, lost somewhere on Earth, in order to restore peace to their homeland.

In “Romanticism of Emad and Tuba,” when fate first confronted Emad and Tuba, they both knew that love was more of a skill than excitement and heartbeat and itchy skin.

“Dolphin Boy” is a heartwarming animation about a magical friendship between a dolphin and a boy lost at sea.

Dolphin Snowball rescues a little boy in the waves. Since then, they carelessly grow up together, exciting the marine life with their funny tricks. But one day, the peace of their joyful little world is destroyed by the evil Octopus.

He banishes the boy to land, where he will have to learn to live among people and understand the secret of his origin. A new friend, the kind captain Murvarid, and the faithful Snowball will help the boy cope with all the hardships - whether at the bottom of the sea or on mysterious distant islands. Fabulous adventures await.

“In the Arms of the Tree” tells the story of Kimia and Farid, married for 12 years, whose complex crisis disrupts the beautiful world of their children, who have known nothing but simplicity and kindness in their lives.

Film producer Amir Samavati dies at 65

TEHRAN – Amir Samavati, renowned film producer, passed away in a Tehran hospital on Sunday following heart surgery. He was 65.

Samavati was the producer of “Deep Breath,” directed by Parviz Shahbazi, a landmark film in Iranian cinema. The film received the Crystal Simorgh for Best Screenplay at the 2003 Fajr International Film Festival and was awarded the FIPRESCI Prize at the 2003 Pusan International Film Festival. Additionally, it was Iran’s official submission for the Best Foreign Language Film category at the Academy Awards in 2004.

He also participated in the 23rd Fajr Film Festival with “Café Transit,” directed by Kambuzia Partovi, which earned the Best

Film accolade.

His latest work, “Darband,” directed by Parviz Shahbazi, was screened at the 31st Fajr Film Festival, where it received three Crystal Simorgh awards.

One of his recent international appearances was at the 32nd Fajr International Film Festival with the film “With Others,” directed by Nasser Zamiri, which was honored with a Special Jury Diploma of Honor.

Last year, he portrayed a film producer in Danesh Eghbashi’s “Zapata.” Throughout his career, from 1999 to 2016, Samavati produced numerous acclaimed films and television series.

He also directed the film “Red Garden” and appeared as an actor in various productions, in-



cluding “8:30 P.M.,” “Darband,” “The Rhinoceros,” and “Mortal Wound.”

Born in Hamedan in 1959, Samavati held a degree in directing and editing. He was the CEO of

DeraKhshan Aftab Alamtab, an innovative, knowledge-based film production and distribution company, and a member of the Alborz Science and Technology Park.